A Sophist on Omniscience, Polymathy, and Omnicompetence: Δ. Α. 8.1–13

THOMAS M. ROBINSON

(1) τώ δ' αὐτῷ ἀνδρός καὶ τάς αὐτάς τέχνας νομίζω κατὰ βραχὺ τε δύνασθαι διαλέγεσθαι, καὶ τάν ἀλάθειαν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπισταθαι, καὶ δικάσασθαι ὅρθως, καὶ δαιμονειν οἶνον τ' ἤμεν, καὶ λόγων τέχνας ἐπισταθαι, καὶ περὶ φύσεως τῶν ἀπάντων ὡς τε ἔχει καὶ ὡς ἐγένετο, διδάσκει. (2) καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ὁ περὶ φύσιος τῶν ἀπάντων εἰδὼς πῶς οὐ δυναστεῖται περὶ πάντων ὅρθως καὶ πράσσει τόν ὑπάνταν ἐπισταθαι ταύτην. 3 ἔτι δὲ τό τέχνας τῶν λόγων εἰδως ἐπισταθεῖται καὶ περὶ πάντων ὅρθως λέγει. (4) δεὶ γὰρ τὸν μέλλοντα ὅρθως λέγειν περὶ ὄντων ἐπισταθαι περὶ τοῦτων λέγειν. (5) τοι δὲ λόγοι πάντες περὶ πάντων τῶν ἐ<ντόνων ἐντί>. (6) δεὶ δὲ ἐπισταθαι τόν μέλλοντα ὅρθως λέγειν περὶ ὅτων καὶ λέγοι; (7) ἐντὸς τῆς ταῦτας πάντων, τήνα δὲ ποτὶ τοῦτον τά δέοντα παρέξεται, αἰ χρῆ. (8) καὶ μὴ ἐπισταθεῖται αὐλέν, οὐ δυναστεῖται αὐλέν, αἱ καὶ δέ ποτέ πράσσει. (9) τόν δὲ δικαίουσαν ἐπισταθεῖαν δεὶ τό δίκαιον ἐπισταθαι ὅρθως· περὶ γὰρ τοῦτο ταῦτα δίκαι. εἰδῶς δὲ τοῦτο ἐιδοῦ καὶ τό ὅπεναντίον αὐτῷ καὶ τά <ἄλλα αὐτοῦ> ἐξερεύνα. (10) δεὶ δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ τῶν νόμων ἐπισταθεῖαν πάντας· αἱ τούτων τὰ πράγματα μὴ ἐπισταθεῖται, οὐδὲ τῶν νόμων. (11) τὸν γὰρ ἐν μισακαίν νόμον τό ἐπισταθαι; ὅσπερ καὶ μισακάν· δός δὲ μὴ μισακάν, οὐδὲ τῶν νόμων. (12) δόν γα


For a full apparatus criticus the DK text should be consulted. The apparatus criticus here given merely indicates points of divergence from that text (O = “all manuscripts”; F₁ = Laurent. 85, 19; F₂ = Laurent. 85, 24; Y₁ = Vatic. 1338; Y₂ = Vatic. 217).
<μᾶν> τὰν ἀλάθειαν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπίσταται, εὑπτησίς ὁ λόγος ὅτι πάντα ἐπίσταται. (13) ὅσε ὁ <κατὰ> βραχύ <διαλέγεσθαι δύναται>, δεῖ νῦν ἐρωτῶμεν ἀποκρίνεσθαι περὶ πάντων· οὐκὼν δεῖ νῦν πάντ᾽ ἐπίστασθαι.


**Translation**

(1) I consider it a characteristic of the same man and of the same art to be able to converse in brief questions and answers, to know the truth of things, to plead one's cause correctly, to be able to speak in public, to have an understanding of argument-skills, and to teach people about the nature of everything—both how everything is and how it came into being. (2) First of all, will not the man who knows about the nature of everything be able also to act rightly in regard to everything? (3) Furthermore, the man acquainted with the skills involved in argument will also know how to speak correctly on every topic. (4) For the man who intends to speak correctly must speak on the topics of which he has knowledge; and he will, one must at any rate suppose, have knowledge of everything. (5) For he has knowledge of all argument-skills, and all arguments are about everything that is. (6) And the man who intends to speak correctly on whatever matter he speaks about must know < > and <how to> give sound advice to the city on the performance of good actions and to prevent them from performing bad ones. (7) In knowing these things he will also know the things that differ from them, since he will know everything. For these <objects of knowledge> are part of all <objects of knowledge>, and the exigency of the situation will, if need be, provide him with those <other objects>, so as to achieve the same end. (8) Even if he does not know how to play the flute, he will always prove able to play the flute should the situation ever call for his doing this. (9) And the man who knows how to plead his cause must have a correct understanding of what is just; for
that is what legal cases have to do with. And in knowing this he will
know both that which is the contrary of it, and the <other things?> differ-
ent in kind <from it?>. (10) He must also know all the laws. If, however,
he is going to have no knowledge of the facts, he will have no knowledge
of the laws either. (11) For who is it knows the rules (laws) of music?
The man acquainted with music. Whereas the man unacquainted with
music is also unacquainted with the rules that govern it. (12) At any rate,
if a man knows the truth of things, the argument follows without dif-

In this eighth chapter of the Νευσοι Λόγοι the last vestiges of discussion
in terms of λόγοι and counter-λόγοι have gone; what we have in their
place is what might be called an essay on the characteristics of the para-
digmatic sophist/orator/politician. Its point of contact with most of the
earlier chapters is perhaps its defense of what could be described as
another identity-thesis (see 8.1, <τώ δ' αὐτῶ> ἀνδρός καὶ τῶς αὐτάς τέχνας
κτλ.). With the whole chapter one might profitably compare Pl. Euthyd.
293-297 (where a similar omniscience-thesis is professed by Euthydemus
and Dionysodorus; cf. Gorg. 458c [?] and Soph. 232b ff. (where the said
omniscience-thesis—among other things—is criticized). In the Sophist
in particular and Δ.Λ. 8 (see Dupréel 311-312) a number of claims about
the sophist’s τέχνη are couched in fairly similar (though far from identical)
terms: compare, e.g., Soph. 232d 1-2, Δ.Λ. 8.6, 8.9, 8.10; Soph. 232c
8-10, Δ.Λ. 8.1 (fin.); Soph. 232b 11-12, d2, e3-4, Δ.Λ. 8.1 (init.), 8.3
(init.) 8.5 (init.), 8.13 (init.)—on the assumption that Plato’s references
to ἀντιλογική, ἀμφιβάτησις etc. are references to what the sophist of
the Δ.Λ. calls τό κατὰ βραχὺ διαλέγεσθαι δύνασθαι, τὸ τῶς τῶν λόγων τέχνας εἰδέναι
etc.; Soph. 234d4 (τῶν πραγμάτων τῆς ἀληθείας), Δ.Λ. 8.1, 8.12; Soph. 232c
4-5, Δ.Λ. 8.1 (περὶ φύσιος τῶν ἀπάντων), 8.2. In view of the affinities,
it seems a fair inference that Plato is (consciously or unconsciously) drawing
upon the Δ.Λ. in writing this section of the Sophist; Dupréel (240) makes
the further suggestion, however, that Δ.Λ. 8 and 7 (fin.), along with Pl.
Polit. 305c-e, themselves have as a common sophistic source Hippias.
But Hippias, so far as is known, never laid claim to omniscience (see
n. ad 8.2 [περὶ πάντων]), and he can hardly be singled out among Greek
writers for the belief that ἡ ποιτική was the supreme τέχνη.

Untersteiner (ad 8.13) sees in the “ring-composition” of this chapter
the influence of Hippias. But this view turns on his belief that the Anonymus
Iamblichi is also the work of Hippias (see Untersteiner, Rend. Ist. Lomb.
di Sc. e Lett. 77, f.2, 448-449), and this is a view which as far as I know he is unique in holding. On the whole question of the putative dependence of Δ.Λ. 8 on Hippias see Dupréel 192-200, 240; Untersteiner ad loc., with litt.

The chapter can be summarized as follows. One and the same τέχνη gives a particular person:

(a) the ability to discourse κατὰ βραχύ (see section 13)
(b) knowledge of "the truth of things" (see section 12)
(c) the ability to plead one's cause in court (see sections 9–11)
(d) the ability to speak in public (see sections 6–8)
(e) an understanding of argument-skills (see sections 3–5)
(f) a knowledge of the nature of everything (see section 2)

(1) κατὰ βραχύ — see Hippias B6 (DK6), Pl. Prot. 329b3–4, 334d ff., Gorg. 449b8 ff., Th. 1.64.2; cf. Pl. Soph. 241e5, κατὰ σμικρόν. From the evidence of the first three passages referred to, a natural translation would be "briefly"; from the evidence of the latter two, "little by little." Perhaps elements from both are intended: the man under discussion can examine a topic briefly, and also meticulously, going over each and every aspect of the problem in patient and systematic detail. ἀλάθειαν — books on "Truth" were written by Protagoras (B1 [DK6]), and Antiphon (B1 [DK6]). For the phrase τῶν πραγμάτων τῆς ἀληθείας see Pl. Soph. 234c4 (cf. Phd. 99e7?), and compare 8.12 below. δικάσωσθαι — "to plead one's cause." See below, 8.9, δικάζεσθαι ἐπιστάμενον. The word refers to private suits, as a rule, rather than to public prosecutions (see LSJ9, s.v. δικάζω, ΠΙ δ). ὑπὸδεος — "correctly," "appropriately"; i.e., in a way conducive to persuading the jury of the rightness of one's cause. The significance of (and ambiguities in) the word are felt more and more as the chapter progresses. On Protagoras' apparent commitment to ὑπὸδεοσ see Pl. Phdr. 267c6 (= Protagoras Α26 (p. 262.5) DK6). περὶ φύσιος κτλ.] — see Pl. Prot. 337d 3–4 (Hippias speaking), Soph. 232c, ὅσα φανερὰ γῆς τε καὶ οὗρανοῦ κτλ. τῶν ἀπάντων — the phrase τῶν ἀπάντων suggests a reference to the world "as a whole," and the subsequent phrases would, if this interpretation is correct, most naturally refer to the origin and present state of such a world. Such an interest in the world we can fairly guess that the sophist Hippias professed and encouraged; cf. Pl. Hipp. Mai. 285, Hipp. Min. 367e; Levi, 300–301.

(2) περὶ πάντων — "in regard to everything" (in the distributive sense; contrast the collective τῶν ἀπάντων at 8.1, 8.2). For the use of περὶ see LSJ9 s.v., ΠΙ 5.
The fallacy is, of course, the fallacy of Division; collective and distributive propositions are not such that the former necessarily entail the latter. The move is easily made in Greek, since “all” and “every” are the same word. Whether Hippias ever claimed such omniscience in practical matters seems to me in doubt (see below); and even if he did, there is no particular reason for thinking that he would found such a claim on the fallacy of Division here so neatly exhibited by the author of the Δ.Λ.

For Untersteiner, ad loc., in this section of the Δ.Λ. “si esprime la corre-
razione necessaria fra l’universalità di physis, nelle sue molteplici qualità,
e l’universalità del conoscere, cioè la scienza enciclopedica.” But omni-
science (here = omnicompetence; cf. πράσσει) is neither (pace Unter-
steiner) synonymous with encyclopedism nor even a logical corollary of it. So one must search elsewhere than in Hippias’ encyclopedism for proof that Δ.Λ. 8.2 and 8.12–13 are Hippian in inspiration. One such source could be Pl. Hipp. Min. 363d 1–4, but even here it is not clear (assuming for the moment—with Untersteiner [Soph. 8 (86) A 8]—that we are looking at a genuine testimonium) that the clause ἀποκρινόμενον τῷ
βουλουμένῳ διὶ ἐν τίς ἐρωτῶ is a claim to omniscience; the καὶ . . . καὶ could be taken to mean simply that Hippias is ready to read (or deliver from memory?) his set pieces and answer any questions concerning them that people might care to put—not any questions on any (imaginable) topic.

For Dupréel (199) Socrates has Hippias’ claim to omniscience in mind when at Pl. Hipp. Min. 372b he says, “I obviously know nothing” (φαίνομαι οὐδὲν έδίδω). But this again does not necessarily follow: Socrates’ remark is just as understandable if Hippias proposed encyclopedism, or for that matter any degree of knowledge.

δρθῶς—“rightly,” in the sense of “correctly,” “fittingly,” “appropriately.” See n. on 8.1 (δρθῶς). δρθῶς καὶ πράσσει: for the idiosyncratic position of the καὶ see 6.11 εὐφυή καὶ γενόμενος, and ibid. ἐστι δὲ τις καὶ φύσις. The textual change proposed by DK (in the light of 8.6) seems unnecessary; the purely intellectualist ethics that is apparently being proposed is no more surprising than that which is frequently attributed to Socrates.

However, the sequence knowledge—action is made without any attempt at explanation of the basis for it. Perhaps the author is assuming that knowledge “how” (to act rightly) is one of τὰ ἀπαντα that are known.

(3) τέχνας τῶν λόγων—"argument-skills" (?). The phrase is a loose
one, and could tolerate a number of interpretations, like “linguistic
skills,” “logical skills,” “rhetorical skills,” “reasoning skills,” and the like.
Sprague’s “the art of rhetoric” is perhaps a little too restricted, since there
is no evidence in 8.3–5 that it is public speaking that is involved. Rather, 8.6–8 seems to deal with such public speaking (δομαγορεῖν) and 8.9–11 with the ability to plead one’s cause in court. So I tentatively opt for a translation which underscores the sophist’s dialectical ability in argument with his peers, be this in the public glare of a παινηγορίς or the semi-public forum of a law-court or the privacy of a home.

δρήσει λέγειν]—given the ambiguities of the adverb δρήσει (see above, n. on 8.1 [δρήσει]), the author is able to make his case here because he has at his disposal a word covering both “nonfallaciously” and “soundly” and the combination of the two. All that his argument in fact leads to is a claim that the sophist’s reasoning-skills will enable him to produce valid arguments on every topic—though not necessarily sound ones; but, given the ambiguity of δρήσει, the argument would perhaps appear to some to have proved that on every topic a man knowing the τέχνη τῶν λόγων will produce arguments that are both valid and sound (i.e., truth-delivering)—and it is undoubtedly this latter effect that the sophist is out to produce, as the subsequent sections make clear.

(4) περὶ ὧν ἐπίσταται]—a defense of the startling phrase περὶ πάντων used in the preceding sentence. Knowledge of the particular subject-matter involved is, along with understanding of the τέχνη τῶν λόγων, in any given instance a sine qua non of τὸ δρήσει λέγειν (for the ambiguities of the phrase see n. above). And we know, says the author (see 8.2) that the σοφιστής in question has knowledge of everything (see n. on 8.2 [περὶ πάντων]). For a clarification of the latter claim see below, 8.7 (with n. on 8.7 [ἐπίστασαείται]), 8.8.

As Taylor sees (124), δεῖ—λέγειν is unexceptionable Socratic doctrine; Dupréel (194) suggests that 8.4–5 is aimed at the rhetoric of Gorgias, with its stress on form at the expense of content, but this seems to be an aspect of the rhetorical art that is hardly uniquely Gorgian.

γ’ ἀφ’]—see J. D. Denniston, The Greek Particles (Oxford, 1954) 43. The reference is back to the statement of 8.2 (fin.): “and he will, one must at any rate suppose (γ’ ἀφ’), as we have seen; see above 8.2 (fin.); and see also 8.5] have knowledge of everything.” But at 8.2 (fin.) all that was claimed was universal practical knowledge (εἰδῶς . . . περὶ πάντων . . . πράσσειν); there was no suggestion that omniscience was anything more than omni-competence.

<περὶ> πάντων—ἐπίστασαείται]—for a similar claim (based upon a series of arguments purporting to prove that a knowledge of anything implies a knowledge of everything) see Pl. Euthyd. 293b ff. Compare Euthyd. 295b ff. for the same claim, this time based on the argument that because we
have a faculty (the ψυχή) with which we “know everything we know”
therefore we know everything. At Pl. Soph. 233c it is suggested that sophi-
ests πάντα . . . σοφοί τοῖς μαθηταῖς φαίνονται because δοκοῦσι πρὸς ταῦτα
ἐπιστημόνες ἔχειν . . . πρὸς ἀπερ ἀντιλέγουσιν and ὑφόσι . . . τοῦτο πρὸς
ἀπαντά (cf. Rep. 598c 7 ff.). Whether one can infer from this, however,
that any sophist ever made a serious claim to such omniscience (now, ap-
parently, from the evidence of 8.5, understood in an all-embracing sense)
is doubtful; at best it might have been put forward as a paradoxical
debating point, or as a (pseudo-) synonym for encyclopedism, on the safe
assumption that intelligent observers at any rate (not least other sophists)
would spot (or at least sense) the fallacies in the reasoning. Plato, one
must assume, had such a philosophically educational intention in com-
pounding the Euthydemus.

(5) This section is ostensibly a reason (γάρ) for the final claim of 8.4,
<περ> πάντων—ἐπιστασείται. The first part is simply a repetition of earlier
claims (8.1, 8.3), except that the universality there implicit is now made
explicit; the second part is new. Literally, “All arguments are about every-
thing that is,” it could prima facie be interpreted in terms of argument-
form: i.e., there is nothing [=, one must assume, no event, action, or state
of affairs] that falls outside of the purview of all argument-forms. A more
likely interpretation, however (if the section is to succeed in its ostensible
purpose of explaining the final claim of 8.4, in which πάντων appears
to be used distributively; cf. 8.2 fin.), is in terms of argument-content:
i.e., the sum total of argument-content (actual and possible?) covers the
sum total of what is (actually and potentially?) real/the case. On the first
interpretation the sense of πάντως is clearly distributive (“every argu-
ment”), on the second it is collective (“all arguments”). Either way, one
is now far beyond the omniscence claim of 8.2 (<περ> πάντων . . .
πράσσειν).

(6) δεὶ—the topic now under discussion would appear to be, follow-
g the general inverse-sequence of the chapter, δεμανορεῖν (8.1, fin.), and
the reference to διδάκτευν τὴν πόλιν κτλ. seems to confirm this.

δεὶ—κωλύειν—as in previous instances, any prima facie plausibility the
proposition has stems from an exploitation of ambiguities: in this instance
in the use of δεὶ and ὑφόσι. In the case of δεὶ the natural interpretation
is in terms of duty: “the μέλλων ὑφόσι λέγειν has a duty to know . . .”
eetc.; the interpretation the author wishes the reader to place upon it,
however, is, “the μέλλων ὑφόσι λέγειν cannot help knowing . . .” etc. For
the same ambiguity (and the same intent) see below, 8.9, 8.10. In the case
of ὑφόσι, the first instance exploits the same ambiguities as were found in
its use at 8.3 and 8.4 (see nn. ad loc.); the second is less problematic, and seems to mean simply “sound,” or something similar (compare 8.9 below, \( \text{ἐπιστασθαι} \) δρθῶς). For a similar stress on τὸ ὀφθὼν see [Pl.] Minos 317c.

(7) The sentence is one of the most difficult in the treatise, and emendation and interpretation is more than usually speculative. If my interpretation is correct, the author is suggesting that, should a δημιουργὸν possess the knowledge requisite to giving the πόλις sound advice, he can be sure that Necessity, the mother of invention (see 8.8, δὴ, and on the general topic Guthrie 2.473), will provide him with all other (less important?) knowledge. The possession of actual knowledge of what it takes to be a good δημιουργὸν is eo ipso the possession of potential knowledge of everything else (see 8.8, δυνασεῖται). In attempting to make these contentions plausible, the author appears to confine himself to instances of knowledge “how”; at any rate no instances of other forms of knowledge are mentioned.

For alternative interpretations, see Untersteiner ad loc., with litt. ταῦτα]—i.e., the contents of 8.6 above. \( \text{ἐπιστασεῖται} \)—sc. “at least potentially,” as the rest of the section, and 8.8 below, make clear. The bald claim of 8.4 (\( \text{fin.} \)) has been clarified. \( \text{ἔστι γὰρ κτλ.} \)—“are part of.” See LSJ\(^9\) s.v. \( \text{εἰμί} \), C II. τὸν πάντων]—“all [objects of knowledge]” in the sense of “the totality of [objects of knowledge]” (see n. on 8.5 above, \( \text{fin.} \)). \( \text{τῆνα} \)—i.e., τὰ ἑτέρα above (like, e.g., knowledge of flute-playing; see 8.8 below). \( \text{τῶνῶν} \)—i.e., the possession of knowledge of everything. τὰ δέοντα]—see Thuc. 1.22.1 et alibi; cf. Isocr. 3.25, οὐδὲν τῶν δεόντων πράσσοντες. (Unique to the Δ.Λ., however, if my emendation \( \text{παρέξεται} \) is correct, would be τὰ δέοντα in the subject-position.) \( \text{παρέξεται} \)—for \( \text{παρέχεσθαι} \) in much the same sense as \( \text{παρέχεσθαι} \) see LSJ\(^9\) s.v. \( \text{παρέχω} \), \( \text{παρέχομαι} \).

(8) \( \muὴ \)—with all the MSS (from which DK unaccountably diverge without signalling the fact). \( \text{ἐπιστασθαι} \)—Doric subjunctive. The author is, of course, on the interpretation here suggested, discussing “actual” knowledge only. \( \text{δὴ} \)—i.e., “whenever the situation calls for doing this”; see above, 8.7, τὰ δέοντα. For the distinction between “actual” and “potential” knowledge see n. on 8.7, and n. on 8.7 (\( \text{ἐπιστασεῖται} \)).

(9) \( \text{δεῖ} \)—see n. on 8.6 (\( \text{δεῖ} \)) above. τὸ δίκαιον]—simply, “that which is just.” Taylor (126, n. 2), recalling how Plato (Socrates) uses the term αὐτῷ τὰ πράγματα at Phaedo 66c 1–2 of the Forms, takes τὸ δίκαιον here and τὰ πράγματα at 8.10 and 8.12 to refer to the Platonic (Socratic) “objective reality” that is αὐτῷ δ ἔστι δικαιοσύνη. But τὰ πράγματα, as I suggest below, is surely best taken as simply “the facts,” and τὸ δίκαιον as a hint
that the proponent of the views of Δ.Λ. 8 is in an essentialist tradition. That he should have adhered to the further, Platonic doctrine of transcendental essentialism seems most unlikely—though the doctrine of the “presence” of τὸ ἴδες to a (false) λόγος (Δ.Λ. 4.5) undoubtedly has a Platonic ring to it. εἰδότει καὶ τὸ ὑπεναντίον]—i.e., τὸ ἄδικον.

τὰ <ἄλλα αὐτῶ? ἐπιτεροῖα]—for a similar usage see Anc. Med. 9, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἄλλα κακὰ ἐπιτεροῖα τῶν ἀπὸ πληρώσεως. If this reconstruction is correct in essence, the author is clearly acquainted with the notion of concept-clusters; i.e., with the notion that a concept of a particular sort (e.g., τὸ δίκαιον) can only be said to be completely perspicuous in the context of a knowledge of its contrary (in this case τὸ ἄδικον) and of those related concepts which, in (actually or apparently) differing from it, shed light upon it (in the case of τὸ δίκαιον such a related concept would perhaps be ἡ ἴσονομία).

(10) δεῖ]—see n. on 8.6 (δεῖ). The required sense here is “cannot help but.” αὐτῶν]—sc. τὸν δικαίεσθαι ἐπιστάμενον (8.9). τὰ πράγματα]—“the facts,” “what goes on.” See below, 8.12, τῶν ἀλάθειαν τῶν πραγμάτων. The term is much used by the author, and is of very large extension. See, e.g., 5.11.

The sense of the section is, apparently, as follows:

The δικαίεσθαι ἐπιστάμενος cannot help but know all the νόμοι.

But knowledge of the laws is itself contingent upon knowledge of τὰ πράγματα.

Ergo the δικαίεσθαι ἐπιστάμενος has knowledge of τὰ πράγματα. In an earlier argument, the author had glossed his own phrase “the skills involved in argument” (τὰς τέχνας τῶν λόγων 8.3) as in fact a reference to the skills involved in all arguments [i.e., all forms of argument] (πάντων τῶν λόγων τὰς τέχνας 8.5). In the present instance, too, one senses a similar desire to gloss τὰ πράγματα (i.e., all the facts relevant to law-making, law-implementation, etc.) as <πάντα> τὰ πράγματα (i.e., all facts), so as to lead to the desired conclusion that certain people can justifiably claim to know “everything” (8.12). But the cautious γὰ <μάν> of 8.12 indicates perhaps that he feels that the fallacy would this time be too transparent, and the move is not in fact made; an ambiguity in the phrase τῶν ἀλάθειαν τῶν πραγμάτων (8.12) does the job instead. For Taylor (126, n. 2; cf. Levi 301) τὰ πράγματα (here and at 8.12) is the equivalent of the Platonic (for Taylor the Socratic) αὐτὸ ὃ ἐστιν δικαιοσύνη. See, however, n. on 8.9 above (τὸ δίκαιον).

(11) νόμοι]—the author understandably assumes a close analogy between law and the “rules” of μοισικά, since a single Greek word, νόμος,
covers both. But the νόμοι of 8.10 relate to a body of facts (τὰ πράγματα), while the νόμος of 8.11 relates to a τέχνη (ἀ μουσικά). However, in context it seems possible that the term μουσικά refers to the “field of music” as an object of “acquaintance” knowledge, rather than to skill in playing or composing μουσικά, thus lending the analogy some measure of support. For a similar use of the term μουσική see Pl. Thht. 206b (φθόγγοι are the στοιχεῖα μουσικῆς—a piece of “book” knowledge in no way contingent upon one’s having mastered any instrument).

(12) γα <μέν>—an indication that in the author’s eyes 8.10 and 8.11 have in themselves been insufficient to demonstrate the truth of the thesis of 8.4 (fin.).

τῶν ἀλήθειαν τῶν πραγμάτων—see 8.10 (πράγματα) and n. on 8.1 (ἀλήθειαν). The author clearly feels that this is the proposition most likely to win general acceptance, and one sufficiently strong to “prove” the thesis of 8.4 (fin.), even if others are rejected. The reason for his assumption seems to be his confidence that the average reader will instinctively unpack the phrase τῶν πραγμάτων in a generic sense—i.e., as <πάντων> τῶν πραγμάτων (see final n. on 8.10 above). Plato also uses the phrase (Soph. 234c)—a ἀπαξ in his writings—in what seems to be such an all-embracing sense, and given the context (a discussion of sophistic practices) a clear possibility emerges that τῶν πραγμάτων ἡ ἀλήθεια was a favorite sophistic catch-phrase (and perhaps even a specifically Protagorean one; see Diog. Laert. 9.51, Eurip. fr. 189 Nauck), to which an allusion was in the context not inappropriate. For his more normal phrasing see Phd. 99c (τῶν ὄντων τῆν ἀλήθειαν), Men. 86b.

(13) <κατὰ> βραχύ—given the apparently inverse structure of the rest of the chapter, it seems natural to expect at this point a reference back to 8.1; so I follow Blass and DK in inserting <κατὰ>. δεῖ . . . δεῖ—for the ambiguity see n. on 8.6 (δεῖ). The first instance involves duty (self-imposed or otherwise), the second one hypothetical necessity.

If I have understood him correctly, the sophist has constructed a series of arguments in which it is claimed that there exist certain people who are, not simply polymaths and encyclopedists (like, say, Hippias), but also persons endowed with omnicompetence and omniscience. Just why the (apparently one-sided) arguments are included in a work that at any rate begins with a set of antithetical λόγοι (Δ.Λ. 1–4) is not immediately clear, but one might suggest that basic and interesting ambiguities (if

not direct antitheses) are to be found in a number of key words, giving the chapter a dialectical tension it does not at first sight possess: πᾶς, for example, can be used collectively or distributively; δεῖ can be used of duty or hypothetical necessity; ὑπὲρ can mean "nonfallaciously" or "soundly" or both. With such terms at his disposal, the sophist can construct an amazing phantasmagoria of non-sequiturs, an object of bewilderment and perhaps irritation to the uninitiated among his hearers, to others however probably just another routine (like the Euthydemus?) for the exercise and toning of philosophical muscles. How much of this was the conscious purpose of the author we cannot of course know with certainty. If he was the "talentlose Verfasser" of whom Diels (ad Δ.Λ. 1.1) spoke, we can only assume that he was largely if not wholly insensitive to the ambiguities just mentioned, had as a consequence no such philosophically reputable purpose in mind as the one I have just alluded to, and almost certainly did not himself profit philosophically from the treatise he had just composed. While this is possible, it seems to me much more likely, given the care with which the chapter is composed, that we are looking at a sophist endowed with skills at least as sharp as those demonstrated by the sophists in Plato's Euthydemus (where no one believes for a moment that they were fooled by the ambiguities in their own arguments). The difference perhaps is that the sophists of the Euthydemus seem to be merely clever; if they have any honest propaedeutical purpose in mind, it does not appear from the dialogue (Plato's own purposes are, of course, something different). The author of the Δ.Λ., by contrast, in this chapter seems to me both clever and serious, and for that reason alone the possibility of a reputable propaedeutic purpose on his part should not, I think, be discounted.

*University of Toronto*