

I. Meno's Original Questions and Socrates's Turn to the Substantial Question

- 70a - 71d Opening
- The questions
 - Socratic ignorance
- 71e - 73 c First definitions:
- the one and same form
- 73d Second definition: "to be able to rule over men"
- 74e Third definition: justice is virtue
- the analogy of shape
- 75d Socrates's invitation
- contra the speechifying characteristic of sophists
 - the goal of true answers
- 76c - 77a Socrates's "theatrical" explanation of shape
- 76e: "remain and be initiated"
- 77b - 79e Fourth definition: "to desire beautiful things and have the power to acquire them"
- 77e: no one knowingly desires the harmful
 - 78c: alternative formulation – "the power of securing good things"
 - 78d: addition of words "justly and piously"
 - 79b: species (a virtue) and genus (virtue as a whole)
- 80a - 80d Metaphor of torpedo fish
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II. Meno's Paradox and Socrates's Rejoinder

- 80d - 80e Meno's Paradox: "He cannot search for what he knows—since he knows it, there is no need to search—nor for what he does not know, for he does not know what to look for."
- 81a - 82a Theory introduced that all learning is recollection
- 82b - 86c Proof of theory by questioning the slave boy
- 84b-c: admission of ignorance and recognition of its benefit
 - 86a: "true opinions which, when stirred by questioning, become knowledge"
 - proof of immortality of soul
 - 86c: invitation to "try to find out together"

III. *Resumption of the Original Line of Questioning*

- 86d - 89a Meno resumes original line of questioning
- 86e-89a: Socrates introduces hypothetical method
- 89a Fifth definition: virtue is wisdom (*phronesis*, i.e., a kind of knowledge)
- 89c: knowledge of eternal truth
- 90a Anytus & question of the transmission/acquisition of wisdom
- metaphor of technical craftsman
 - 91d: discussion of famous sophist, Protagoras
 - 92e: Anytus suggests morals best learned from gentry
- 93e "one could not blame the poor natural talents of the son for his failure in virtue"
- a catalog of important Athenian gentry and their progeny
 - if virtue could be taught, it would be passed from son to father
 - 94e: Anytus warns Socrates
- 95c Gorgias: denies virtue can be taught and so devotes himself to "make people clever speakers"
- 96c: "a subject which has neither teachers nor pupils is not teachable"
- 96e Socratic goal: "knowledge of how good men come to be"
- 97a-100b Knowledge versus right opinion: equally useful
- story of the statues of Dadelus: the distinction of knowledge
 - 98a: recollection = "tying opinions down by (giving) an account of the reason why"
 - 99c: the politician as soothsayer or prophet
 - 100a: the idea of statesman "who can make another into a statesman"
 - conclusion of dialogue: virtue is a gift from the gods

Source:

Plato. *Meno*. Translated by G.M.A. Grube. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1976.