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Philosophy and Spectatorship. Competitive and Non-Competitive Virtues in Pre-Platonic Conceptions of *sophia* and *philosophia*

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1. Wisdom (*sophia*) is a virtue (*aretê*), that is, a kind of human excellence. There are other kinds. At times, one of them is claimed to be fundamental. Thus, Tyrtaeus equates excellence with courage.¹ For Theognis, "all excellence is comprised in justness".² Heraclitus, by contrast, claims that sound judgement" (or "moderation": *sôphronein*) "is the greatest virtue".³ Socrates, in Plato's *Laches*, suggests that excellence may be equated with universal expertise regarding good and bad (i.e. with *sophia*).⁴

My discussion, in the sequel, will be indifferent to all such claims. Wisdom will be taken to be just one virtue among others.

2. There is no adequate uniform rendering of the Greek term *sophia* in English. LSJ propose: 1. skill in art, i.e. Aristotle's *aretê technês*,⁵ 2. sound judgement in matters of common life, 3. learning, etc. My "wisdom", in the opening passages of this paper, is but a makeshift (and may

¹ Tyrtaeus fr. 12, v. 13-20, echoed by Theognis, v. 1003 ff. Similarly Theognis, v. 867 f.

² Theognis, v. 147 f.: ἐν δὲ δικαιοσύνῃ συλλήβδην πᾶσ' ἀρετὴ 'στι, / πᾶς δέ τ' ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός, Κύρνε, δίκαιος ἔών.

³ DK 22 B 112: σωφρονεῖν ἀρετὴ μεγίστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαῖοντας. - STEMMER 1998, 1534 comments: "Auch Heraklit sieht die 'größte T[ugend]' in einer intellektuellen Haltung, dem Verständigsein (σωφρονεῖν), das sich darin äußert, 'die Dinge ihrer Natur nach wahrzunehmen und das Wahre zu sagen und zu tun'." - This interpretation requires that ἀρετὴ be paired with σοφίη, with the comma after σοφίη (not after μεγίστη). Cf. GLADIGOW 1965, 113 and KAHN 1979, 43. I am not really convinced and, therefore, retain the traditional punctuation.

⁴ Platon, *La.* 199c-e ("expertise ...": ἐπιστήμη ... περὶ πάντων ἀγαθῶν τε καὶ κακῶν καὶ πάντως ἐχόντων, c6 f.). - On the value of σοφίη, see also Xenophanes, DK 21 B 2.12/14.

⁵ Aristotle, *E.N.* VI 1141a9-12. The phrase quoted may also (and more aptly) be rendered by "excellence in craftsmanship".

serve to merely indicate that *sophia* is at issue). "Expertise" is far more often appropriate than "wisdom".

With respect to other cases, the term may be also explained as follows: He or she is *sophos / sophê* whom it is wise to ask for advice. Note that nonsense would be made of this formula if "*sophos*" and "wise" were taken as equivalents.

3. Since virtue is goodness, the meaning of "virtue" depends upon the meaning of "good". Of the latter term, the use as an attribute may be taken as basic. Assume, then, that *F* is some general term like "man", "ass", or "knife" - or "warrior", "sailor", "daughter", "friend" etc. Then it may make a difference whether some *x* is a **good *F*** or not, whether *x* is a **better *F* than *y***, etc. Obviously, the criteria relevant to the valuation depend upon *F*. For example, to be sharp is a criterion for being a good knife, to be strong and courageous are criteria for being a good warrior, to be frank and faithful for being a good friend, etc. Virtues, then, are the characteristics that correspond to the relevant criteria of goodness. Thus, sharpness is one of the virtues that make a good knife; strength and courage are virtues which, in combination with others, make a good warrior; similarly, faithfulness and frankness are virtues of a good friend, etc.

The choice of relevant criteria may be disputed. Let *F* be "citizen". The relevant, i.e. "political", virtue is often equated with virtue in general. Accordingly, the above-mentioned claims that "virtue" is courage, or justness, or moderation, etc. may be taken as referring to the criteria for "political" virtue.

4. Similarly, *sophia* is the virtue that makes a good advisor or expert. Plato's description of *sophia* as expertise in valuation is still in accord with this.⁶ It should be noted, however, that the ultimate standard of valuation to which *sophia*, informed by dialectic, refers (i.e. the Form of the Good) is also meant by Plato to serve as a principle from which all deductive reasoning starts.

⁶ Plato, *Rep.* IV, 428d6: σοφία = φυλακική (sc. ἐπιστήμη, c11). Its function is to provide εὐβουλία (d10) with respect to one's integral concerns. Cf. *ibid.* d1-3: ... ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ὅλης, ὄντινα τρόπον αὐτὴ τε πρὸς αὐτὴν καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας πόλεις ἄριστα ὁμιλοῖ. Here, ἄριστα may be taken as presupposing a standard of valuation which, according to Bk. VI, is only provided by the relevant Form. It should be noted, however, that the passage quoted clearly echoes *Prot.* 318e5-319a2 (Protagoras speaking): ... τὸ δὲ μάθημά ἐστιν εὐβουλία περὶ τῶν οἰκείων, ὅπως ἂν ἄριστα τὴν αὐτοῦ οἰκίαν διοικῶι, καὶ περὶ τῶν τῆς πόλεως, ὅπως τὰ τῆς πόλεως δυνατώτατος ἂν εἴη καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν. The Protagorean origin of this conception of εὐβουλία is hard to deny.

Only the latter item is preserved in Aristotle's description of *sophia* as scientific knowledge with an account of principles.⁷ Valuation, which was a practical issue in Plato, is replaced here by the contemplation of final causes, including the function of God as the ultimate final cause in the world.⁸ (Accordingly, *philosophia* is equated by Aristotle with research on principles.)

5. Success and, in particular, winning are forms which the display of virtue may take. In this case, if *F* is the relevant general term (e.g. "warrior", "sailor", "daughter", or "friend") being *F* is supposed to entail involvement in some competition. He or she is seen to be the better *F* who succeeds. Virtues so displayed may be called "competitive", as opposed to the "cooperative" virtues required by contract or partnership.⁹

It should be noted that the competitive character of a virtue is not just determined by the choice but, rather, by the interpretation of *F*. For Shakespeare's *Lear*, on the one hand, to be a good daughter is a matter of contest (to enter into which the one truly good daughter refuses). On the other hand, the moral may be drawn from the *Iliad* that Achilles, who is a champion in all kinds of competitive virtue, nevertheless fails to be a good warrior, as long as he lacks the cooperative virtues required.¹⁰ In the 5th century, this moral is all the more important since fighting in the phalanx replaced single combat.

6. The degree to which craftsmanship is a matter of competition, and excellence is a matter of superiority, may vary from branch to branch. In particular, presenting one's results to the public and even engaging in a contest may be essential to the practice of the craft (or art) in question.¹¹ Such is the case in, e.g., housebuilding, mantics, navigation, horseriding, weaving, painting, sculpture, rhetoric, poetry, etc.

As far as I can see, the pre-Platonic use of *sophos* and *sophia* as terms of praise is mainly exemplified by such branches as mentioned. Sculpture is Aristotle's example for the conception

⁷ Aristotle, *E.N.* VI, 1141a17-20. Cf. *Met.* I, 982a31 f.: σοφία (b8: τὸ ζητούμενον ὄνομα) ἰσὶ ἡ τοῦ μάλιστα ἐπιστήτου (i.e. τῶν πρώτων ἀρχῶν καὶ αἰτιῶν, b9) ἐπιστήμη.

⁸ Aristotle, *Met.* I, 982b10; "ultimate final cause", cf. b7: τὸ ἄριστον ἐν τῇ φύσει πάση.

⁹ Cf. ADKINS 1960, 6 f.

¹⁰ On Achilles' later display, in *Il.* 23, of cooperative virtue see the paper read by Kostas Kalimtzis at this conference.

¹¹ Both "craft" and "art" are meant to translate τέχνη, with "craft" suggesting a branch in the division of labour and, accordingly, a way to earn one's living. "Art", by contrast, is rather meant to suggest a demanding activity which is skillfully performed.

of *sophia* as excellence in craftsmanship (with this excellence, in turn, being conceived of as "exactness").¹² With respect to rhetoric, the very same language is used in a Euripidean fragment.¹³ Poetry is directly referred to by *sophiê* in Solon; the relevant term of praise is *epistamenos* ("skillful").¹⁴

A particularly competitive framework is presupposed when, in Pindar, *sophos* is the term that describes the good poet. "He", says Pindar, "who is born to know many things is *sophos*", and is an eagle among crows since nothing but croak is the yield of instruction.¹⁵ It is noteworthy that the same idea is also expressed by Pindar in terms of strength: "That which a man is born for is always the strongest (*kratiston*). Many humans have striven to acquire fame by means of trained excellences. But each thing in which God has no part is none the worse for remaining unsaid".¹⁶ Similarly, in the contest of poets arranged by Aristophanes professional expertise is professional strength.¹⁷

7. In the first of Pindar's sayings just quoted, *sophia* is so paired with knowledge as to suggest a context which transcends professional issues. The kind of knowledge required by poetry refers

¹² Aristotle, *E.N.* VI 1141a9-12: Τὴν δὲ σοφίαν ἔν τε ταῖς τέχναις τοῖς ἀκριβεστάτοις τὰς τέχνας ἀποδίδομεν, οἷον Φειδίαν λιθουργὸν σοφὸν καὶ Πολύκλειτον ἀνδριαντοποιόν, ἐνταῦθα μὲν οὖν οὐδὲν ἄλλο σημαίνοντες τὴν σοφίαν ἢ ὅτι ἀρετὴ τέχνης ἐστίν· - For housebuilding (Homer, *Il.* 15.412), mantics (Aeschylus, *Sept.* 382), and navigation (Hesiod, *Erga* 649, Archilochus, fr. 41 D., Aeschylus, *Suppl.* 770) see LSJ, s.v. σοφία and σοφός, and GLADIGOW 1965, 9 ff.; for weaving (Anacreon fr. 109 B.) and vase-painting POLLITT 1974, 22n28 [p. 93]; for horseriding (Alcman fr. 2.2 D.) GLADIGOW 1965, 12.

¹³ Euripides, fr. 206 N. (from the *Antiope*, ca. 410 B.C.): ὦ παῖ, γένοιτ' ἂν εὖ λελεγμένοι λόγοι / ψευδεῖς, ἐπῶν δὲ κάλλεσιν νικῶεν ἂν / τάληθές· ἀλλ' οὐ τοῦτο τὰκριβέστατον, / ἀλλ' ἡ φύσις καὶ τοῦρθόν· ὅς δ' εὐγλωσσία / νικᾷ, σοφὸς μὲν, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὰ πράγματα / κρείσσω νομίζω τῶν λόγων ἀεὶ ποτε. - That is to say, enduring success in rhetoric (cf. v. 6: κρείσσω ... ἀεὶ ποτε) is provided by exactness (v. 3: τὰκριβέστατον) and competence (v. 5: σοφὸς μὲν, suggesting a maximum of σοφία which is missed by mere εὐγλωσσία, v. 4). "Nature and correctness" (v. 4: ἡ φύσις καὶ τοῦρθόν) are claimed to be the standards with which rhetoric ought to accord. It goes without saying that there is no real inconsistency with Aristotle's claim (at *E.N.* VI, 1141a9) that σοφία is only attested when a maximum of exactness is attained.

¹⁴ Solon fr. 13.52 (Edmonds, Loeb): ἰμερτῆς σοφίης μέτρον ἐπιστάμενος. Similarly, Sappho fr. 56 LP: οὐδ' ἴαν δοκίμωμι προσίδοισαν φάος ἀλίω / ἔσσεσθαι σοφίαν πάρθενον εἰς οὐδένα πω χρόνον / τεαύταν. Cf. GLADIGOW 1965, 13.

¹⁵ Pindar, *Ol.* 2.86-88: σοφὸς ὁ πολλὰ εἰδὼς φυᾶ· μαθόντες δὲ λάβροι / παγγλωσσία κόρακες ὡς ἄκραντα γαρυέτων / Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνια θεῖον.

¹⁶ Pindar, *Ol.* 9.100-104: τὸ δὲ φυᾶ κράτιστον ἅπαν· πολλοὶ δὲ διδασκαῖς / ἀνθρώπων ἀρεταῖς κλέος / ὦρουσαν ἀρέσθαι· / ἄνευ δὲ θεοῦ, σεσιγαμένον / οὐ σκαιότερον χρῆμ' ἕκαστον.

¹⁷ Aristophanes, *Ran.* 766 and 780: τὴν τέχνην σοφώτερος, *ibid.* 770: κράτιστος τὴν τέχνην.

to a past which is only accessible by myth, to divine concerns and divine actions, to questions of appropriateness in human conduct, etc. It differs in emphasis rather than scope from Presocratic teachings "about everything",¹⁸ and from Presocratic narrations of the formation of the world and, thus, of the "nature" of things "from the beginning".¹⁹

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that *sophia*, as it is displayed in Presocratic writings, is no less competitive than in poetry. Again, the framework may be aristocratic. In its description, Heraclitus does not hesitate to quote the saying of Bias of Priene that "the many are bad, only few good". In Parmenides, the "knowing man" is clearly distinguished from the "ignorant mortals"; after divine instruction in cosmology, "no insight of mortals shall ever outstrip" him.²⁰

8. So far, I have presented evidence illustrating my first claim, viz. that *sophia* is a competitive virtue. My second claim, that *philosophia* is not, might be taken as a mere truism since, strictly speaking, *philosophia* is no virtue at all. *Philosophia* is the thing to which "philosophic" (*philosophos*, adj.), or "philosophizing" (*philosophēōn*), people are devoted. It is an activity characteristic of a certain way of life.²¹ As such, it is distinguished from a virtue by its very category.

Yet, *philosophia* may have to do with virtue in various ways. Contemplation of virtue, on the one hand, is an essential feature in the description of it in Plato's *Apology*.²² On the other hand, "philosophic" life may be described as the display of virtue. Plato's *Apology* and *Charmides* leave no doubt that the relevant virtue is moderation (*sôphrosynê*) rather than expertise (*sophia*);²³ only in the *Republic*, *philosophia* is the display of the latter.

¹⁸ "About everything": Xenophanes, DK 21 B 34.2: *περὶ πάντων* (cf. FRÄNKEL 1962/76, 382; LESHER 1992, 167 f.; LONG 1999, 10; differently GUTHRIE, *HGP* 1,395; HEITSCH 1983, 77; KRS, no. 186); Democritus DK 68 B 165: *περὶ τῶν ξυμπάντων* (Cicero, *Academica* II 23, 73: *quid loquar de Democrito? ... qui ita sit ausus ordiri haec loquor de universis*); for a quotation in Greek, see Sextus Empiricus, 7,265).

¹⁹ "From the beginning": Hesiod, *Th.* 45 and 115, [Hippocrates], *V.M.* 20.1: *ἐξ ἀρχῆς* (cf. JOUANNA 1990, 208; HEINEMANN 2000, 20n20; differently FESTUGIÈRE 1948, 60).

²⁰ Heraclitus, DK 22 B 104. Parmenides, DK 28 B 1.3: *εἰδῶτα φῶτα*, B 6.4: *βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδὲν*, B 8.61: *ὡς οὐ μὴ ποτέ τις σε βροτῶν γνῶμη παρελάσσει*.

²¹ My description is meant to allow that "philosophic" life is primarily devoted to scientific research and, more generally, to theoretical issues. HADOT 1999 may be one-sided in playing this down.

²² Plato, *Apol.* 28e5-6, taken together with 38a2-5; similarly, 29d4-30a2.

²³ See below §12.

9. In pre-Platonic language, *philosophos* and its cognates can refer to an attitude which, in view of the Latin equivalents of *phileô*, may be described as amateurship or dilettantism.²⁴ Taken in this way, "philosophizing" is an activity popular in Periclean Athens.²⁵ "Philosophizers" (*philosophountes*) neither are nor intend to become experts (*sophoi*) or professional scholars (*sophistai*). Rather, they are devoted to knowledge for its own sake - and, hence, to conversing with scholars and experts, to attending "philosophical" debates and presentations (*philosophoi logoi*),²⁶ to engaging in the relevant controversies,²⁷ to reading and discussing books written by experts who lived earlier (*tôn palai sophôn*),²⁸ etc.

Socrates, in Plato's *Apology*, is one such "philosophizer" and so is Kallias who, in the *Protagoras*, hosts the sophists and is praised by Socrates for his *philosophia*. The same kind of activity is referred to when Socrates, in the *Charmides*, asks about *philosophia* and about boys to talk with and when Calicles, in the *Gorgias*, claims that *philosophia* is not appropriate for adults. It also underlies the passage where Phaedo, at the beginning of the dialogue named after him, recalls the encounters *en philosophia* of Socrates and his friends.²⁹

10. This, however, is not the whole story about pre-Platonic conceptions of *philosophia*. For the author of *On Ancient Medicine*, it belongs to "philosophy" to write "about nature" in the way Empedocles did.³⁰ In a late play by Aristophanes, "philosophic thinking" is ironically paired

²⁴ This may serve as a shorthand for BURKERTS "oberflächlichen φιλοσοφία-Begriff" (1960, 175; cf. *ibid.* 172 ff.).

²⁵ Thucydides 2,40,1: φιλοκαλοῦμέν τε γὰρ μετ' εὐτελείας καὶ φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἄνευ μαλακίας.

²⁶ *Gorgias*, *Hel.* c. 13, DK 82 B 11 (see also below § 11). - BRISSON (1990, 55n16) additionally adduces the phrase γνωμολογίαι τε λαμπραὶ καὶ φιλόσοφοι (DK 87 B 44a) which, however, is only found in the description by Philostratus of Antiphon's *Peri homonoias*.

²⁷ Cf. the opening sentence of the *Dialexeis*, DK 90: Δισσοὶ λόγοι λέγονται ἐν τᾷ Ἑλλάδι ὑπὸ τῶν φιλοσοφούντων περὶ τῷ ἀγαθῷ καὶ τῷ κακῷ.

²⁸ Cf. Xenophon, *Mem.* 1,6,14, where Socrates reports that "philosophizing" (§2: φιλοσοφούντας) includes this: καὶ τοὺς θησαυροὺς τῶν πάλαι σοφῶν ἀνδρῶν, οὓς ἐκεῖνοι κατέλιπον ἐν βιβλίῳ γράψαντες, ἀνελίπτων κοινῇ σὺν τοῖς φίλοις διέρχομαι, καὶ ἂν τι ὀρώμεν ἀγαθὸν ἐκλεγόμεθα.

²⁹ Plato, *Prot.* 335d6-7, *Charm.* 153d3-5, *Grg.* 484c5-8, *Phd.* 59a3.

³⁰ [Hippokrates], *V.M.* 20.1: Λέγουσι δὲ τινες καὶ ἰητροὶ καὶ σοφισταὶ ὡς οὐκ εἶη δυνατόν ἰητρικὴν εἶδέναι ὅστις μὴ οἶδεν ὃ τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος. ... Τείνει δὲ αὐτοῖσιν ὁ λόγος ἐς φιλοσοφίην, καθάπερ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς ἢ ἄλλοι οἱ περὶ φύσιος γεγράφασιν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὃ τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ὅπως ἐγένετο πρῶτον καὶ ὀπόθεν ξυνεπάγη.

In HEINEMANN 2000, 22 f., I suggested that φιλοσοφίη here refers to the relation between "philosophic" laymen and professional scholars (σοφισταί). Andrei LEBEDEV, in a private communication, convinced me that this is insufficient, if not entirely wrong. It cannot be denied that φιλοσοφίη here

with "expertise".³¹ In Plato's *Phaedo*, the description as *philosophos* of Evenus is probably meant to suggest a Pythagorean background.³²

This language can be traced back to the beginning of the 5th century. "Philosophic men", according to Heraclitus, "must be inquirers of quite a lot of things".³³ In Herodotus, "philosophizing" is paired with traveling "as a spectator" (*theôriês heineken*).³⁴ The latter phrase reappears both in Aristotle's description, in the *Protrepticus*, of *phronêsis* and in Heraclides Ponticus' report, rendered by Cicero and Iamblichus, about the self-description as *philosophos* by Pythagoras.³⁵ In this report which clearly echoes Plato in many respects, *theôria* is also meant to be opposed to *technê*,³⁶ that is, to the kind of knowledge that is only valuable by virtue of the purpose it serves. The point is that *theôria* is pursued for its own sake.

Similarly, a saying is ascribed to Anaxagoras which recommends to live for the sake of "viewing" (*theôrêsai*) the heaven and the world-order;³⁷ a Euripidean fragment lets this "order" be formed of such things as are "by their nature immortal".³⁸ In Plato's *Apology*, it is said to be a

refers to an activity which is exemplified by "Empedocles and others writing on nature from the beginning". It should be noted, however, that being a σοφιστής is clearly distinguished from doing φιλοσοφίη. The argument attributed to "certain physicians and scholars" is claimed to "lead them to philosophy" and, thus, to committing a mistake. The author thereby suggests that "philosophy" does not belong to the regular business of neither.

³¹ Aristophanes, *Eccl.* 571: {Χο.} νῦν δὴ δεῖ σε πυκνὴν φρένα καὶ φιλόσοφον ἐγείρειν φροντίδ' ἐπισταμένην / ταῖσι φίλαισιν ἀμύνειν.

³² EBERT 2004, 113 ff., See also his 2001. - I do not think that EBERT is right in relying on the *Suda*'s report that Zeno of Elea wrote a book πρὸς τοὺς φιλοσόφους (2004, 114, cf. 2001, 431); see CAVEING 1982, 134 f. (not mentioned by EBERT).

³³ DK 22 B 35: χρὴ γὰρ εὖ μάλα πολλῶν ἴστορας φιλοσόφους ἀνδρας εἶναι.

³⁴ Herodotus 1,30,2 (Croesus addressing Solon): ... ὡς φιλοσοφῶν γῆν πολλὴν θεωρίας εἵνεκεν ἐπελήλυθας· κτλ. - I am grateful to Andrei LEBEDEV who, in a note on another Ms. of mine, drew my attention to this.

³⁵ Aristotle, *Protr.* B 44 (Düring, = fr. 58 Rose, p. 69.15): ἔνεκα τῆς θείας. Cicero, *Tusc.* 5,9: *visendi causa*; Iamblichus, *V.P.* 12/58: θείας ἔνεκα. See also Aristotle, *Protr.* B 18 (Düring) where Pythagoras is claimed to have described himself as θεωρός ... τῆς φύσεως. - It should be noted, however, that the relevant fragments of Aristotle's *Protrepticus* are only known from excerpts in Iamblichus which may be contaminated with material deriving from Heraclides Ponticus. See BURKERT 1960, 166-169.

³⁶ Cf. Heraclides Ponticus in Cicero, *Tusc.* 5.8: *artem ... se scire nullam*.

³⁷ DK 59 A 30 (= Aristotle, *E.E.* 1216a11 ff.): τὸν μὲν οὖν Ἀναξαγόραν φασὶν ἀποκρίνασθαι πρὸς τινα διαποροῦντα τοιαῦτ' ἄττα καὶ διερωτῶντα, τίνοσ' ἔνεκ' ἂν τις ἔλοιτο γενέσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ μὴ γενέσθαι, 'τοῦ' φάναι 'θεωρῆσαι τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν περὶ τὸν ὅλον κόσμον τάξιν'. - Similarly, Aristotle, *Protr.* B 19 (Düring); but cf. BURKERT 1960, 168.

³⁸ Euripides fr. 910 N.: ὄλβιος ὅστις τῆς ἱστορίας / ἔσχε μάθησιν, / μήτε πολιτῶν ἐπὶ πημοσύνην / μήτ'

commonplace that all "philosophizers" are engaged with "things in the sky and below the earth".³⁹ In the *Phaedo*, by contrast, the "nature" inspected by people who are properly devoted to "philosophy" is the realm of Forms.⁴⁰

In sum, the evidence thus recorded suggests a pre-Platonic notion of "philosophic men" (*philosophoi andres*), or "philosophizers" (*philosophountes*), devoting themselves to "inquiry" (*historia*) and "spectatorship" (*theôria*) in cosmology and related fields of interest. It is probable, if not at all certain, that Pythagoreans were at first referred to by this. Accordingly, the original meaning of *philosophos* might have been "companions of the wise man" (i.e. of Pythagoras himself).⁴¹

Taken in this way, *philosophia* isn't clearly distinguished from *sophia* (of which it rather is the acquisition or exercise), and is no less competitive than the latter.

11. Quite another form of spectatorship is at issue when, in Thucydides, Athenians are blamed for being mere "spectators (*theatai*) of speeches and listeners of deeds",⁴² and for acting in the assembly like a panel of judges to assess rhetorical performances. This description suggests an *agôn* taking place on the stage, and the people of Athens forming the audience. Similarly, the Athenian way of "philosophizing", mentioned by Thucydides,⁴³ may be described as a habit of forming the audience when *sophia* is displayed by experts.

On the one hand, therefore, both laymen and professional scholars (*sophistai*) may engage in such "contests of philosophical discourses" as are mentioned by Gorgias.⁴⁴ Yet, on the other hand, given the Athenian way of spectatorship just described, "philosophizers" are also the spectators of, and may avoid becoming involved in, the contest.

εις ἀδίκους πράξεις ὁρμῶν, / ἀλλ' ἀθανάτου καθορῶν φύσεως / κόσμον ἀγήρων, πῆ τε συνέστη / καὶ ὅπη καὶ ὅπως. / τοῖς δὲ τοιοῦτοις οὐδέποτ' αἰσχυρῶν / ἔργων μελέδημα προσίζει.

³⁹ Plato, *Apol.* 23d4-7: τὰ κατὰ πάντων τῶν φιλοσοφούντων πρόχειρα ταῦτα λέγουσιν, ὅτι "τὰ μετέωρα καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ γῆς" καὶ "θεοὺς μὴ νομίζειν" καὶ "τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν."

⁴⁰ Cf. *Phd.* 103b5: ἐν τῇ φύσει (similarly, *Resp.* 597b6 and *passim*, *Parm.* 132d2). For "inspection" of Forms cf. *Phd.* 65e2: θεωρεῖται; *ibid.* 66e1-2: αὐτῇ τῇ ψυχῇ θεατέον αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα, etc.

⁴¹ For descriptions of Pythagoras as σοφός, see KRS no. 256-259: Heraclitus, DK 22 B 129; Herodotus 4, 95; Ion of Chios, DK 36 B 4; Empedocles, DK 31 B 129.

⁴² Thucydides 3,38,4: εἰώθατε θεαταὶ μὲν τῶν λόγων γίνεσθαι, ἀκροαταὶ δὲ τῶν ἔργων, echoing Homer's μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμεναι πρηκτῆρά τε ἔργων (*Il.* 9,443).

⁴³ Thucydides 2,40,1 (see above §9).

⁴⁴ Gorgias, *Hel.* c. 13, DK 82 B 11: ... φιλοσόφων λόγων ἀμίλλας.

12. So does Socrates, and so do his friends. His disavowal of knowledge, in Plato's earlier dialogues, is meant to distinguish him from all kinds of experts. He never engages in the contest of knowledge-claims. He never knows better.

Yet, his rôle in "contests of philosophical discourses" isn't confined to being part of the audience. Socrates enters the stage as an examiner. To "philosophize", in Plato's *Apology*, means to examine oneself and others (and thus to provide "the greatest good for man").⁴⁵ By setting this into a Delphic framework, Plato suggests that the examination of others is subordinate to self-examination.⁴⁶ The same framework is set in the *Charmides* for the definition of moderation (*sôphrosynê*) as "self-knowledge".⁴⁷ In the sequel, this definition is only refuted by mistaking the relevant kind of knowledge as "expert knowledge" (*epistêmê*).⁴⁸ With this in mind, one may conclude that moderation (*sôphrosynê*) rather than competence (*sophia*) is the virtue displayed in the way of examination with which "philosophizing", in the *Apology*, is equated.

The examination may, and usually does, take the form of a "refutation" (*elenchos*) which, however, is only superficially meant to refute a statement at issue. Rather, the Socratic *elenchos* is meant to refute a relevant knowledge-claim and, thus, may also affect some more general excellence-claims in the background. In the competitive setting described, it may thus give rise to "disgrace" (*elencheiê*) and to shame, i.e. to the very emotion that motivates all kinds of virtue. The Athenian way of spectatorship, described by Thucydides, from which the Socratic way of philosophizing is derived still requires this setting. Taken in a Socratic sense, philosophy is the display of moderation within a competitive framework.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Plato, *Apol.* 38a2-6: ... τυγχάνει μέγιστον ἀγαθὸν ὃν ἀνθρώπῳ τοῦτο, ἐκάστης ἡμέρας περὶ ἀρετῆς τοὺς λόγους ποιῆσθαι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων περὶ ὧν ὑμεῖς ἐμοῦ ἀκούετε διαλεγομένου καὶ ἑμαυτὸν καὶ ἄλλους ἐξετάζοντος, ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ, κτλ.

⁴⁶ Cf. *ibid.* 21b-c, 23a-b.

⁴⁷ Plato, *Charm.* 164d3-5 (Critias speaking): σχεδὸν γάρ τι ἔγωγε αὐτὸ τοῦτό φημι εἶναι σωφροσύνην, τὸ γινώσκειν ἑαυτὸν, καὶ συμφέρομαι τῷ ἐν Δελφοῖς ἀναθέντι τὸ τοιοῦτον γράμμα.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 165c4-6 (Socrates speaking): εἰ γὰρ δὴ γινώσκειν γέ τί ἐστιν ἡ σωφροσύνη, δῆλον ὅτι ἐπιστήμη τις ἂν εἴη καὶ τινός· ἢ οὐ; - Ἔστιν, ἔφη, ἑαυτοῦ γε.

⁴⁹ I am grateful to Anthony Alcock for having polished my English.

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