

I. Introduction

This paper studies Xenophon’s dozen or so uses of the term *philosophos* and its cognates. I present the unfamiliar observation that Xenophon never in his own voice calls Socrates a “philosopher,” and his Socrates refers to himself as a “philosopher” at most once. The point of this paper is to explore what this remarkable fact means. As it turns out, we cannot easily determine Xenophon’s motivations for foregoing explicit attribution of “philosophy” to Socrates. I speculate on this fact, which I find related both to Xenophon’s apologetic goals and to his skepticism about intellectual fads. I also show that there are similar difficulties in understanding Plato’s oblique correlations between Socrates and “philosophy,” and this similarity prompts useful reflections about the image of Socrates in the fourth century. What proves easier to see in the course of this study are some important features of Socrates’ position in fifth- and fourth-century Athenian intellectual and political culture. These features have not always received careful scrutiny; recognizing them could advance both Socratic studies and the investigation into the early generations of the discipline called “philosophy.”

Andrea Nightingale, in the most influential recent work on the birth of the discipline of philosophy, also observes that Xenophon does not call Socrates a “philosopher”—indeed, she is the only other author I know who observes it. She explains her observation in a way that the evidence does not sustain. She claims that “philosophy” did not refer, during Socrates’ life and much of Xenophon’s, to “a specific kind of pursuit practiced by a distinct kind of person,” but instead simply to a general affinity to intellectual cultivation.¹ Only in Plato’s so-called middle dialogues did the meaning of “philosophy” undergo a change, to something like the contemplation of the eternal verities through dialectic; only then did the “philosopher” become the specific kind of person who practices the specific activity of philosophy.² Though Nightingale does not spell out her reasoning, the late development of “philosopher” as a term referring to a specific class of people would have to explain Xenophon’s not calling Socrates a philosopher in one of two ways. Xenophon may have wanted to avoid anachronism, and refused on those grounds to deploy the term “philosopher” in its novel fourth-century form to call the fifth-century Socrates a specific kind of practitioner. Or, the worry about anachronism never arose because Xenophon never had access to the novel form. This would be the case if Plato’s novel use never made it far enough from the Academy for Xenophon, in exile in Elis and Corinth (if he did indeed stay away from Athens),³ to adopt it as a description of Socrates, even were he to find him a suitable candidate for that term. And there is yet another assumption on which Nightingale’s argument relies. Her argument assumes that Xenophon would never even have had occasion to speak of Socrates as partial to intellectual cultivation, which she takes to be the denotation of the term available to him.

I am not sure how plausible any of these assumptions are: that Xenophon either aimed to avoid anachronism or was ignorant of Plato’s semantic innovation, and that he did not want to treat Socrates as a cultivator of intellect.⁴ Fortunately, assessing their plausibility would demand supererogatory investigation. For Nightingale’s argument has an overriding flaw. A closer look

¹ Nightingale 1995, 17.

² Nightingale 1995, 14-19; cf. Cooper 2007, 23-24n4.

³ On Xenophon’s exile, see Dorion 2003, xxx-xxxii.

⁴ It does seem that Xenophon thought Socrates cultivated his intellect, e.g., *Mem.* 4.7.1-7, *Oec.* 11.1.

at Xenophon's uses of "philosophy" terms shows that, contrary to her claim, Xenophon does in fact use the term to refer to specific practices of specific practitioners. Xenophon calls certain men with distinctive ways of talking and reasoning "philosophers." He also depicts the vengeful Critias, the student-stealing Antiphon, and, indirectly, the self-aggrandizing Callias as treating Socrates as "doing philosophy," and each takes Socrates' very specific activities and character-traits as what makes him merit this attribution. This means that Xenophon could have called Socrates a philosopher, and meant by that a practitioner of a specific practice, had he wanted to. He could also have had his Socrates call himself a philosopher, had he thought it appropriate to.

So we must wonder why Xenophon does not call Socrates a philosopher even though he could have, and even though he has his other characters do so. We can reject some possibilities. It must at least have occurred to Xenophon to call Socrates a philosopher, since he did think to have other people call Socrates a philosopher. He evidently thought the term adequately familiar and informative—i.e., neither esoteric or jargon—given that he uses the term elsewhere without explanation and in contexts of colloquial conversation. It could hardly have been an accident of composition that he never got around to calling Socrates a philosopher, since he wrote many hundreds of pages about Socrates and about topics related to philosophy, and is obviously a conscientious writer.⁵ Given the political risks in being called a philosopher (*Mem.* 1.2.31, *Plato Apol.* 23d), it might seem that Xenophon, in prosecuting his apologetic mission, would strive to eliminate all such implications that Socrates did philosophy. While an explanation by appeal to Xenophon's defense or praise of Socrates is surely apt, Xenophon does not defend Socrates from imputations of "philosophy" in anything like the way he defended Socrates from other imputations, for example, association with Alcibiades and Critias, corrupting the young, or being useless. This would, anyway, be an uncharitable explanation, for Xenophon would have failed to eliminate those implications; he mentions "philosophy" in provocative proximity to Socrates throughout his Socratic writings. A final implausible view is that Xenophon was simply uninterested in, and unmoved by, the question whether, and if so, in what respect, Socrates was a philosopher. This is implausible because Xenophon shows that a friend of Socrates simply cannot be agnostic about the question.

This number of rejected ideas still leaves, however, a range of plausible hypotheses. Since others called Socrates a "philosopher" (Critias, Antiphon, aggravated crowds), Xenophon may have thought it obvious that Socrates was in fact a philosopher, and so simply made no efforts to state the obvious. If Xenophon never called Athens "democratic," we would do better to say that he thought it went without saying than that he denied its legitimacy as democratic. Against this idea, it might not have been so obvious that Socrates counted as a "philosopher," given the narrowly circumscribed way "philosopher" may have been defined; and even if it were obvious, the way Socrates practiced philosophy appears, in Xenophon, to have differed from the way others practiced it. The proponent of this hypothesis might respond that Socrates' being a philosopher, even if contentious in the years right around his execution, probably became settled upon later in Xenophon's career, when Xenophon probably wrote most of his Socratic writings.

A second plausible hypothesis is that Xenophon found it immodest, or ludicrous, to have Socrates call himself a philosopher. He could find it immodest only if he himself judged—or he knew Socrates to judge—"philosopher" to be a great and rare status, one that it would be boasting to attribute to oneself. He could find it ludicrous only if, by contrast, he himself judged—or he knew Socrates to judge—"philosopher" to be a pompous and silly name, one that it would be boasting, but deludedly so, to attribute to oneself. This hypothesis, influenced by

⁵ On Xenophon's carefulness with words, see Higgins 1977, 1-10.

Plato's dialogues that vaunt philosophy and present Socrates as humble, perhaps goes too far in assuming Xenophon so admires "philosophers."

A third plausible hypothesis is that Xenophon wanted to dissociate Socrates from phony philosophers. The thought would be that the true philosophers are probably those who do not call themselves philosophers. But in Plato's *Apology*, Socrates, though denying the appellation "wise man," which is falsely attributed to and taken up by conceited men, explains the appropriateness of the term—he is wise in a human way, knowing that he is ignorant. In Xenophon, he does not explain the way he is an actual, not just a pretending, philosopher. So this hypothesis is arguing from silence, and is thus unfalsifiable. We would expect instead that Xenophon would call Socrates a "true philosopher," or at least defend the appellation.

As I see it, there are two remaining possibilities. The first is that Xenophon, in neither affirming nor explicitly denying that Socrates was a philosopher, wanted to keep his attitude ambiguous or obscure. He may not have wanted to draw attention to the matter—and in this he seems to have succeeded, at least until Nightingale's book and the present paper. He may have found either position awkward: by denying what seemed obvious to many, he might come to seem to protest too much, and by affirming it, he may have compromised the memory of Socrates. The plausibility of this position rests on believing that Xenophon did not have a more active reason to avoid advocating for Socrates' philosophicality or non-philosophicality.

There is a different way to explain Xenophon's neither affirming nor denying. I am not sure this way is the right way, but it has a certain appeal, one worth following up on. It is that Xenophon may have wanted to *distance* Socrates from the appellation. By distancing, I mean that Xenophon may not have wanted to assess the *truth* of the charges that Socrates was a philosopher at all. He may instead have wanted to show that Socrates could not be correctly understood in *terms* of his being a philosopher.

Xenophon appears to think of Socrates as a unique moral and intellectual exemplar. Limiting ourselves to the superlatives in the summary end of the *Memorabilia*, Xenophon calls Socrates "most helpful" (ὠφελιμώτατον), "best" (ἄριστος), and "most happy" (εὐδαιμονέστατος) (*Mem.* 4.8.11). Yet, as we will see, "philosophy" had already come to refer in Xenophon's time to certain stereotyped ways of acting practiced by increasingly discrete and recognizable groups of people. Socrates was prone to be assimilated to such groups, as his writings also show. Such assimilation was not unreasonable. Xenophon presents philosophers as concerned with dialectical clarity and rigor, especially about core value terms (*Anab.* 2.1.12-14; *Mem.* 1.2.19, 1.2.31, *Cyr.* 6.1.41), the uptake and teaching of practical and impractical wisdom (*Symp.* 1.5, 4.62, 8.39, *Cyn.* 13.6-9, *Por.* 5.4), and regimens of self-improvement (*Mem.* 1.6.2, 4.2.23, *Oec.* 16.9). Xenophon attributes to Socrates all these concerns. But sharing traits with philosophers does not make it intellectual or rhetorically correct explicitly to call Socrates a philosopher; it might make more sense to present him as standing out from such groups. Xenophon's narratives and conversations suggest that he thought that calling Socrates a "philosopher" would obscure something special or true about him.⁶

A member of a group, whether exemplary or marginal, risks being charged with the crimes, real or imagined, committed by others in his group. His value to society is judged by the value of the practice of his group more than by value of his own contributions. And his self-understanding may be taken to be "committed member of the group" rather than whatever else it happens to be. In other words, being a "philosopher" in classical Greece does not just mean

⁶ Classen 1984, 164-166, leans toward arguing something similar about Xenophon's distancing of Socrates from *sophistai*, a group whose practices Xenophon finds overlaps in many places with Socrates' practices.

loving wisdom or endeavoring to recognize one's ignorance through self-examination. It means doing what other philosophers do, with approximately their level of skill and subtlety, with their self-satisfaction and confident radicalism, and with their aloofness from the non-philosophers around them. As we will see, Xenophon seems to have found philosophers as a group to be not altogether practical, perhaps a little silly, mannered in speech, and resistant to hard experience. Xenophon was not perhaps so cynical and biting as a Callicles, who absolutely rejected the practice of philosophy by adults (*Grg.* 484c-d); but Xenophon's faith in work, striving, and the concrete care for other people may have put him at odds with the philosophers he knew about. Perhaps remarkably, given his time spent with and thinking about Socrates, and his sympathy for Socrates' fastidious ways of reasoning, talking, and acting, Xenophon, like the anti-Socrates masses with whom he lost patience, may have accepted the standard stereotyped view of philosophers as big talkers, fond dreamers, charismatic teachers, and gullible students. From his perspective, Socrates may have been better than those called philosophers, even if he fit the visible descriptive criteria for being called a philosopher. Thus despite an overlap in practical or character traits between Xenophon's view of Socrates and his view of philosophers, Xenophon takes care to present Socrates as somebody other or more than a person recognizable by means of his membership in some group. Socrates is best described not as a philosopher—even if it cannot be denied that he is in some respects one—but as an eminently useful, virtuous, free, and happy man.

If this explanation for Xenophon's silence about Socrates' being a "philosopher" should be even partly true, it would serve to advance our understanding of Xenophon's picture of Socrates in his society—that is, our understanding of Xenophon; our understanding of Socrates as Xenophon saw him and as he saw others seeing him; and our understanding of that society. But it would also serve a more general purpose. It would advise against calling Socrates a "philosopher" without careful qualification, deliberate anachronism, or ideological supposition. As we will see at this paper's end, Plato's Socrates also rarely said of himself that he did philosophy. All the same, the history of philosophy can hardly exclude Socrates. This means that the history of philosophy and the history of "philosophy"—i.e., of a discipline of practitioners so named by themselves or others—do not always coincide, and should not be conflated. Not all philosophers were always called "philosophers"; and perhaps not all so-called "philosophers" are (from our or Aristotle's perspective) philosophers. Xenophon's contrast between Socrates and the "philosophers" of the late fifth or early fourth century, the annealing decades during which both philosophy and reflections on Socrates came most dramatically together, helps us see the divergence between the history of "philosophy" and the history of philosophy.

In fact, Xenophon's treatment of philosophy and Socrates provides unique testimony to the early history of philosophy (or "philosophy"). Unlike Plato, Xenophon does not think systematically about the ways "philosophy" ultimately contributes to happiness, whether in one actual or potential form or another, whether in contrast to or in similarity to other practices. Unlike Isocrates, Xenophon does not advocate for his peculiar practice by calling it "philosophy" and treating "philosophy" as an honorific to be reclaimed from its abusers.⁷ Unlike Aristotle, Xenophon does not set Socrates squarely within a history of philosophy that includes Thales, Parmenides, Zeno, Diagoras, and others (except Anaxagoras, *Mem.* 4.7.6-7).⁸ These differences between Xenophon's approach and his near contemporaries' suggest an impartiality of

⁷ For Isocrates on *philosophia* see Wersdörfer 1940, Wilcox 1943, Timmerman 1998, Livingstone 2007, Wareh 2012, Collins 2015, Part II.

⁸ See, e.g., Frede 2004.

Xenophon's testimony, or at least a balancing-out bias. Xenophon looks not to have wanted to vindicate or applaud "philosophy"—even if he admired some of its characteristics—whereas Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle did; Xenophon might therefore give a less tendentious account of Socrates' position within the then swirling controversies about philosophy.⁹

This paper assesses each of Xenophon's sixteen instances of "philosophy" words. I begin with the oddest use, a pleonasm at *Mem.* 4.2, where "philosophy" means a certain course of study. I proceed to study the remainder of the *Memorabilia* instances, where we see how Xenophon negotiated other people's imputations to Socrates of "philosophizing." In two other Socratic works, to which I turn next, Xenophon puts Socrates in vivid comparison with so-called "philosophers." The uses of "philosophy" words in the non-Socratic writings show further, in two ways, the distinctness of a group called "philosophers," and thus support the claim that Xenophon can and does see Socrates in light of groups of people called "philosophers." At the end I adumbrate some surprising similarities between Xenophon's and Plato's treatment of Socrates as a philosopher.

As we proceed, we will be looking for evidence in support of one hypothesis or another, even though we will likely gain no compelling support. But we may gain some confidence about some matters in the history of "philosophy." As I have mentioned already, there were a group of people called "philosophers" in the late fifth and early fourth centuries, defined as such for reasons more specific than their intellectual cultivation. This group of people had its detractors. Xenophon had some sympathy with the detractors. Xenophon also wanted to distance Socrates from the (money-seeking) sophists. But he does not see the "philosophers" as the only alternative to the "sophists" (excluding a claim in the very dubious *Cynegeticus*), and since he does not seek to define, or redefine, the term "philosopher," he does not go out of his way to suggest that Socrates would be *better* understood in those terms.

II. 'Philosophizing a philosophy'

Memorabilia 4.2 illustrates Socrates' pedagogy for those self-confident about their education and wisdom (4.2.1). Euthydemus has collected books from poets and wise people, and he assumes that private possession or study of them suffices for political and rhetorical expertise (11). By asking a sequence of questions, Socrates undermines Euthydemus' assumption. He reminds Euthydemus that all the wisest politicians and experts had teachers (2–6), and shows that to whatever use Euthydemus has put his library, he remains ignorant about statesmanship's basic knowledge, the objects of justice (12–19). By undermining Euthydemus' confidence in his political preparations and competence, Socrates brings him to a salutary self-discovery:

But by the gods, Socrates, [Euthydemus] says, I really thought I was philosophizing a philosophy (φιλοσοφεῖν φιλοσοφίαν) through which I thought it best to be educated in the matters appropriate for a man striving to be a gentleman: but now, how do you imagine I am, spiritless, seeing myself, despite my earlier efforts, unable even to answer

⁹ A difficulty with relying on Xenophon for information about the history of "philosophy" is that he wrote over a four-decade career but we do not know the order or decade in which he wrote his individual works. We know, too, that he was absent from Athens from 401, and so would have had either to rely on his memory of the fifth-century world of Socrates or depend on books, correspondence, and visitors. See Higgins 1977, 132-32; Dorion 2003, ccxl-cclii. Similar difficulties confront the person reconstructing the early period of philosophy from our best other sources, Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle.

what I'm asked on the topics it's most necessary to know, and having no other avenue traveling along which I might become better? (*Mem.* 4.2.23)¹⁰

Euthydemus understands “philosophizing a philosophy” to be an effortful and deliberately chosen intellectual route to improvement, where that improvement would allow him to become a gentleman and thus also to answer questions about the most important topics.¹¹

For Euthydemus, the route to becoming a gentleman, the route he calls “philosophizing a philosophy,” has something to do with collecting books (γράμματα πολλά συνειλεγμένον, 1; ἔτι γε συνάγω, ἕως ἂν κτήσωμαι ὡς ἂν δύνωμαι πλεῖστα, 8; κεκτημένους, 9; συλλέγεις, 10). Neither Socrates nor Euthydemus state what the latter has done or means to do with those books. Consistent with Euthydemus’ rejection of tutelage, he probably has not acquired them to discuss them with others (cf. 1.6.14). Rhapsodists acquire the complete verses of Homer and doctors acquire large sets of medical texts (4.2.10); since both kinds of practitioner learn much of what they need to know orally, their acquisitions might seem useful mostly as reference. But it does not seem that Euthydemus meant to assemble a reference library. If he did, he would have told Socrates—and would have had to tell any other interrogator—that he could answer questions only after consulting his library. Nor does he ever say that something he knows comes from some authoritative book. Accordingly, Euthydemus must mean to read his books on his own, and as he acquires ideas from them to incorporate them as his own ideas. Some books that he has read must be about justice; he admits that has reflected (κατανενοήκας), a lot (μάλα), on the relationship between justice and goodness, and can exposit (ἐξηγήσασθαι) what is just and what is not just (12). We might even guess that Socrates uses in his examination of Euthydemus’ views about intentional injustice the example of deliberate versus accidental misreading (μὴ ὀρθῶς ... ἀναγινώσκῃ, 20) to draw attention to Euthydemus’ self-education through reading.

Euthydemus couches his autodidactic sentiment in a grammatically noteworthy construction. He uses a cognate accusative pleonasm, “philosophizing a philosophy,” to intensify and draw attention to the action; this pleonasm is recorded only twice in Greek literature before the Christian period.¹² Opening his speech with this remark reveals the terms in which he thought about his practice of collecting books; it also expresses his surprise at the practice’s failure. He had conceived of his activity as “philosophizing” and “philosophy,” and intended to reap philosophy’s great benefit, the development into a gentleman, but nevertheless failed to do it. We may be inclined to believe that his course of study had been justified to him as “philosophy” and promised wonderful results at its completion, and here he is finding that “philosophizing a philosophy” can fail to produce those results. That “philosophizing a philosophy” has some unity as a course of instruction and adopting a specific lifestyle—such as collecting and reading books about justice and politics—is suggested by a use of the same pleonasm a couple generations later. In Philemon’s (ca. 363-262) play *Philosophers*, somebody explains the odd traits of a main character: “For he philosophizes a new philosophy; he teaches hunger and takes students; he dines on a single loaf, with a fig for dessert, and water as a digestif.”¹³ The play appears to treat

¹⁰ All translations are by the author.

¹¹ Smith 1903, 207, renders it “following a plan of study”; Dorion 2011, 12, has “the philosophy that I studied.” I note that Xenophon’s *Symposium* 8.3 suggests that the content of gentlemanliness [καλοκάγαθία] is not always be totally clear.

¹² See Allen 1996, 107–111, on Plato’s uses of pleonastic constructions, relevant since Xenophon is a contemporary; see more generally Norwood 1952, 281–283, with references.

¹³ Φιλοσοφίαν καινὴν γὰρ οὗτος φιλοσοφεῖ | πεινῆν διδάσκει καὶ μαθητὰς λαμβάνει. | εἷς ἄρτος, ὄψον ἰσχάς, ἐπιπιεῖν ὕδωρ.

“philosophizing a philosophy” as following a coherent and planned approach to self-improvement; the subject of the joke has developed a new approach, apparently based on *autarchia* or desire-reduction. This dramatic fragment includes no reference to philosophy’s expected reliance on dialectical exchange, critical defense of one’s reasoning, or mentorship. It suggests instead a way of life that is unusual (teaching hunger!), seemingly indirect (one fig!), but probably reasoned-out (it’s a three-course meal). Euthydemus’ procedure is similarly unusual (Alcibiades, Critias, Pericles, and others in the *Memorabilia* are not said to have read a lot of books), indirect (management of a household, perfecting speeches, or fighting in war would seem more direct routes), and reasoned-out (the books are from the authors purported to be wisest).

When Socrates replies to Euthydemus’ consternation, he does not say that Euthydemus was right to philosophize a philosophy but should from now on philosophize a different and better philosophy. Nor does he say that Euthydemus thought he was philosophizing a philosophy but failed to, misled as he was by mistaken authors. He goes on instead to encourage knowing himself (24–30), getting clearer about what’s good and what’s not good (31–35), and figuring out who he means to govern once he is a statesman (36–39).¹⁴ These are presumably the most important topics, those that a gentleman should know and about which he should be able to answer questions. None of this Socrates calls “philosophy,” neither here nor anywhere else in Xenophon’s Socratic works.

Since Xenophon does not present Socrates as speaking of his own or recommended actions as “philosophizing a philosophy,” we might wonder why Euthydemus does. Euthydemus did overhear the brief conversations Socrates used specifically to draw him in (4.2.2–8); but if Socrates had used the unusual phrase “philosophize a philosophy” there, we would expect Xenophon to have had him use it elsewhere, and more importantly, we would expect Euthydemus, in the passage quoted above at 23, to say something like, “I thought I was – *as you put it* – philosophizing a philosophy,” and then to forego the gloss on that term, given that Socrates would obviously know exactly what it means. Euthydemus’ motivation to collect and study books, and to call that activity “philosophizing a philosophy,” must have come, therefore, from someone besides Socrates. Hippias—who becomes Socrates’ interlocutor two chapters hence (4.4)—advocated becoming extensively learned (πολυμαθής, 4.4.6) for the sake of one’s political education (4.4.7–8).¹⁵ He or someone like him could have been one of the wise authors whose books Euthydemus collected (σοφιστῶν, 4.2.1; τῶν σοφῶν ἀνδρῶν, 4.2.9). It is clear that by the late 390s, Athenians used “philosophize” or “philosophic” to refer to political preparation or thinking (Thuc. 2.40.1, Ar. *Ecccl.* 571).¹⁶ “Philosophizing (a philosophy)” thus would likely have been a name, within a social circle of intellectual-political aspirants, for the studious preparation for a political career.¹⁷ This need not have been the only available use of the term, but it does seem like a dominant one in Athens, and the one that Euthydemus uses.

¹⁴ On *Mem.* 4.2, see Morrison 1994; Dorion 2003, clxxix-clxxx, 2004, 240-51, 2011, 64-115; Johnson 2005; Danzig 2010, 179-199; Rossetti 2011; Moore 2015, ch. 6.

¹⁵ Cf. *Prot.* 318e1–319a2, *HMj.* 281a1–283b4, Węcowski 2009.

¹⁶ In Thucydides’ funeral oration, Pericles admits that Athens “philosophizes, but without weakness,” as well as “pursues beautification but with economy,” and then explains that philosophizing is deliberating about civic matters in preparation for martial or other emergencies (2.40.2-3). In Aristophanes’ play, the Chorus urges Praxagora to think up a politically-profound idea—as it turns out, communism of property and conjugal partners—by telling her to “arouse a philosophical thought” (φιλόσοφον ἐγείρειν | φροντίδ’).

¹⁷ Cf. Dorion 2011, 83.

Xenophon presents Socrates as helpful for people seeking a political career; indeed, the entire Book 4 of the *Memorabilia* shows a course of political education. Yet *Mem.* 4.2 shows Socrates' education to comprise, at least in part, tough questions and indirect answers. Certainly it shows Socrates as more or other than a dispenser of sage bromides, etiological myth, allegorical thought experiment, and realist analyses of public institutions. These are the elements we know to be in the writings of the fifth-century writers called "wise men" or "sophists," including Hippias (cf. *Symp.* 1.5, 4.62), Protagoras (*Symp.* 1.5), and Prodicus (*Mem.* 2.1.21–34, *Symp.* 4.62). Those writings addressed problems of ethics, economy, and politics, and provided arguments or illustrations of views. From the uses of "philosophy" that we see in Thucydides and Aristophanes, as well as throughout Xenophon, it seems likely that imbibing this written work could be called "philosophizing."

Socrates diagnoses the failures in Euthydemus' education. He does not know himself (4.2.24–30); he seems persuaded by theological agnosticism or atheism (4.3.3–17); he does not understand justice (4.2.11–19), conceivably because Hippias, plausibly a teacher of his, also does not understand justice (4.4.5–25); he does not recognize the importance of *enkrateia* ("self-control") to the acquisition of pleasure (4.5.9); and he may lack precise understanding of the moral concepts he so seeks to learn (4.6.2–12). These failures are not necessarily failures of "philosophy" itself. But they are failures consequent to not studying with other people, in particular, not studying with Socrates. "Philosophy" surely had great cultural capital with Euthydemus and those he admired. The high esteem given to "philosophy," to the extent that it was a methodical study of the matters of highest import, is reasonable. But Xenophon shows that it is Socrates, not "philosophy," that is most useful.

Xenophon's desire to laud Socrates rather than to link him to a novel pedagogical trend seems to explain Xenophon's insouciance about defining Socrates vis-à-vis philosophy. This could be phrased as Xenophon's being unconcerned about "philosophy" and the jargon of the day. It could also be phrased as Socrates' concern to help Euthydemus in general rather than to correct his ideas about "philosophy." A contrary view might be that Euthydemus frames his efforts as "philosophy" exactly because he believes Socrates to be a philosopher, and that this would be the best way to appeal to Socrates' empathy, as though he were to complain, *look, I'm doing exactly what you would have wanted, with no success!* We cannot readily discount this view altogether, but its pertinence may be small. Euthydemus' unwariness about Socrates' tricks of examination, and his appreciation of the *sophoi* and *sophistai* who act quite differently from Socrates, suggests that he hardly knows him. Thus Euthydemus' imputation of "philosophy" to Socrates would not prevent Xenophon from simultaneously distancing Socrates from "philosophy"; indeed, it may provide just the reason to do so. The term is just not analytically, or rhetorically and apologetically, useful.

As we will soon see, the *Memorabilia* uses "philosophy" words four times before Book 4. Several times the word arises in the context of charges against "philosophy" or "philosophers" or "philosophizing." The fact that "philosophy" received a bad name from some quarters suggests that Xenophon could have had a strong strategic reason for dissociating Socrates from it. He may have wanted to keep Socrates independent from a class of intellectual practitioners liable to social disapprobation. It is notable, in this respect, that Xenophon uses no "philosophy"-group words in his *Apology*. To the first book of *Memorabilia* we now turn.

III. Charges against "philosophy" in the first book of the *Memorabilia*

a. Self-styled philosophers

The first two chapters of the first book of the *Memorabilia* defends Socrates against the diverse charges levied against him. In chapter 2, Xenophon vindicates Socrates' association with Alcibiades and Critias. In section 19, Xenophon responds to the hypothetical claim that because that pair were bad at the end of their lives, Socrates must never have made them good in the first place:

Now perhaps many of those claiming to philosophize (πολλοὶ τῶν φασκόντων φιλοσοφεῖν) might say that a just person never becomes unjust or a disciplined person hubristic or a person who has learned anything of which there is learning ignorant. But I do not acknowledge such things to be this way. (*Mem.* 1.2.19)

Xenophon epitomizes a common position among those who say of themselves that they “philosophize.” Xenophon takes these claimants to philosophy to argue about justice, discipline, knowledge, and the permanence of virtue, and perhaps to form these arguments from abstract claims and deductions, for example from the nature of opposites. Xenophon makes no charges against these topics or methods of argument. He even allows that there are claimants to philosophy who do not accept the permanence of virtue, as he does not. But Xenophon clearly distinguishes himself and Socrates from this group of “those who claim to philosophize.” He does not speak of “we who claim to philosophize” or of “those who philosophize as opposed to those who have no grounds for their claims about virtue.” He suggests that there is a distinctive group of people who understood or present themselves as “philosophizing,” and that he is addressing something distinctive about them.

It is tempting to read Xenophon to be saying “those claiming (i.e., falsely) to philosophize,” with the implication that he or Socrates might be among a different but related group, those who *truly* philosophize.¹⁸ Were this so, then Xenophon's ground for claiming that these self-styled philosophizers do not really philosophize would have to be that they simply have the wrong view about the permanence of justice, discipline, or knowledge, and that all who truly philosophize accept the correct view about it. That it is their view at issue is clear from the fact that Xenophon does not complain about their mode of argument (as being, e.g., needlessly paradoxical or captious), and when he argues at length for the contrary view, the impermanence of justice (1.2.19–28), he uses a range of argumentative styles, and indeed enough argument to suggest that the view he opposes really does have genuine and not merely eristic adherents. But this view, that Xenophon is distinguishing between “self-claimed philosophizers” and “true philosophers,” has three unacceptable consequences. First, since only “many” of those claiming to philosophize hold the false view about moral permanence, and there are only two views—either a just person cannot or can become unjust—then some of those “claiming to philosophize” actually hold the view Xenophon accepts, and thus they would be not merely claimants to philosophizing, but real instances. Of course, frauds are sometimes right, but it would be a harsh attitude to call them frauds at the very moment they are right. Second, if truly philosophizing

¹⁸ Smith 1903, 22, asserts that Xenophon here refers to the Sophists (as does Santoni 1989, 92n24), and says that φασκόντων “often suggests the idea of *alleging, pretending*” (italics in text). This is possible, but the end of 1.2.31 provides evidence against this reading. There, Xenophon says that neither did he ever himself hear Socrates teach the art of words, nor did he ever hear someone claim (φάσκοντες) that *they* heard Socrates do this. Obviously Xenophon means “claim truthfully”; it would be irrelevant to his defense of Socrates to say that he never heard people “merely claim”—i.e., falsely accuse—Socrates of doing this. I prefer Dorion 2003, I 13, who translates “se targuent,” *pride themselves*, where the issue is not the truthfulness of their claim but the pleasure with which they make it.

depended on having the correct view, then philosophers could never disagree; one of the positions, being false, would no longer be philosophical! In theory, Xenophon could think that Socrates is the one true philosopher because he has the one true view, and this is why he always says the same thing; but absolutely none of Xenophon's other uses of the term "philosopher" coordinate it with having the correct view. The third unacceptable consequence of assuming that Xenophon is distinguishing between false and true claimants to philosophy is that it would make Xenophon's remark here seem nothing more than a jab at the pretensions of the self-styled philosophizers, and yet Xenophon does not seem prone anywhere to settling *that* score. He seems rather to try to keep Socrates out of that debate. I might mention one other consideration connected to our use of the term "so-called." If someone tries to get us to accept his position about virtue on the grounds that he is—so he claims—a philosopher, then we might be wary of that credential; we would hope that he could appeal to better evidence for that position on virtue than a self-appointed status as expert. But if someone, who happens to call himself a philosopher, tries to get us to believe his position by giving an argument, then we can have no reason, simply because he calls himself a philosopher, to doubt that status. In this passage at 1.2.19, Xenophon is using "so-called" in this latter way.

We will make better sense of this remark if we reject the "claiming (falsely)" view and suppose instead that Xenophon means to identify a type of person who argues, since not all arguments come from philosophers, and not all arguments appeal to the same types of reasoning (cf. 1.2.17). Xenophon may have specific men in mind as these self-styled philosophers, for example Antisthenes or Plato.¹⁹ But these arguments may be widely deployed; there must be more than a few philosophers in Athens by this time, as we will see below. In any event, though "many of those who philosophize" could be a coy reference to just one or two men, the reference works only if Xenophon could refer truly to "many ... who philosophize."

If the short work called the *Dissoi Logoi* were actually from the end of the fifth century, then it would give us information about this group of self-styled philosophers.²⁰ The work begins with the statement that "contrasting arguments are said in Greece by those philosophizing about the good and the bad" (δισσοὶ λόγοι λέγονται ἐν τῷ Ἑλλάδι ὑπὸ τῶν φιλοσοφούντων περὶ τῷ ἀγαθῷ καὶ τῷ κακῷ, 1.1). These contrasting arguments are abstract, about the nature of good and bad as such; some who philosophize say that the good and bad are distinct, others that they are the same.²¹ The document proceeds to provide the sort of evidence for the opposing positions that their proponents might advance. It does not show any forensic purpose to which these arguments would be put. This suggests that philosophizing, for the author of the *Dissoi Logoi*, simply involves knowing and working out positions about the good and, for example, the admirable (2), the just (3), the truth (4), the teachability of virtue (6), and the relation between kinds of knowledge (8). The last but incomplete extant chapter begins by saying that memory is the greatest discovered instrument for both philosophy and for wisdom (ἐς φιλοσοφίαν τε καὶ σοφίαν, 9.1). This last chapter suggests, though does not prove, that philosophy, which is the deployment of the kinds of arguments listed in the *Dissoi Logoi*, could be used in developing one's capacity for political or forensic debate. I say it does not prove it because we might think of these philosophers as men with a hobby of disputation, clever but not obviously practical or insightful. In any event, the *Dissoi Logoi* defines "philosophers," as Xenophon appears to depict

¹⁹ Dorion 2003, I 90, thinks these so-called philosophers are in fact philosophers, perhaps like Antisthenes.

²⁰ On this dating: Levi 1940, Ramage 1961, Robinson 1979. Skeptical about this dating: Conley 1985, Burnyeat 1998.

²¹ On the nature of these arguments, see Gera 2000, Scholz 2003, Bailey 2008.

the self-style philosopher, not by the quality or truth of their arguments—philosophers explicitly disagree—but as a sort of identity shared among those with a similar practice, set of questions, and preferred mode of answering those questions.

Xenophon thus acknowledges a group of people who say of themselves that they philosophize. He does not say whether he thinks that they wrongly call themselves philosophers, and accordingly he does not say whether he thinks that there are people who are actually philosophers but do not claim, boast, or pretend to philosophize.

b. A disparagement commonly used against the philosophers

Later in *Mem.* 1.2, Xenophon shows that people used “philosophy” words not just to describe themselves but also to describe others. Xenophon reports that Critias avenged an insult from Socrates—Socrates tried to discourage the Euthydemus of Book 4 from associating with Critias (1.2.29–30)—by using his legal powers as member of the Thirty against him:

And in the laws he proscribed the teaching of the art of words (λόγων τέχνην μὴ διδάσκειν), taking contumacious aim at him [Socrates] and, lacking any other way to take him down, attacked him with this disparagement commonly (το κοινῇ) used by the masses against the philosophers (τοῖς φιλοσόφοις) and slandering him before the masses. But for myself, neither did I myself ever hear Socrates do this, nor was I aware of another claiming to have heard him do this. (*Mem.* 1.2.31)

What we learn from this passage is that by 404 BC, there were philosophers. Presumably this means they were called philosophers then, too. It is possible but unlikely that Xenophon means to identify certain people as having actually been philosophers even though nobody then used that name. Xenophon does not divulge what people thought about philosophers in general. He notes only that they were often disparaged as teachers of the art of words.²² The idea seems to be that this teaching was taken to be bad and philosophers were often—though perhaps not always, or only—taken to be teachers of it. (In Plato’s *Apology*, Socrates says that accusations about making the worse argument better were “handy against *all* those philosophizing” (τὰ κατὰ πάντων τῶν φιλοσοφούντων πρόχειρα ταῦτα λέγουσιν, 23d2-6).)

Xenophon says that he has no evidence that Socrates ever taught the art of words. He does not say whether Socrates was actually a philosopher. He does not say that because the disparagement was commonly used against the philosophers it was therefore used against Socrates. What he does say is that Critias decides to use a disparagement that has already been used against the philosophers against Socrates. Given that he wants to take Socrates down in this manner, we must assume that Socrates has not yet been taken down in this manner, that is, as teaching the art of words in the way often imputed to philosophers. (I note that the *Clouds* does not use the word “philosopher.”) Of course, it is not as if Socrates is only five years before his death being discovered to be what he always has been—as it happens, a philosopher. It is not even immediately clear whether Critias thought Socrates actually was a philosopher, as he understood the term. All we know is that Critias accuses Socrates of teaching the art of words because he thought the accusation might stick, and could take Socrates down. Perhaps the “masses” thought, rightly or wrongly, that Socrates was a philosopher, and thus that the accusation fit. Perhaps, though, the masses did not think about Socrates’ being a philosopher, and

²² It is obscure what exactly “the art of words” means, per Dorion 2003, 98-100; but even Socrates realizes that, which is why he asks Critias for clarification.

thought only that Socrates, *like* the philosophers, taught the art of words, and that they definitely disapproved.

Critias' edict proscribed teaching the art of words. It proscribed what many people thought, rightly or wrongly, was part of philosophy. Because Socrates was forbidden from teaching the art of words, he wanted to get clearer about what teaching that art amounted to. By asking these questions he would end up getting clearer about what people thought philosophy amounted to (even if Critias or the masses did not think that Socrates was a philosopher).

Socrates asks Critias whether the edict prohibits correct or incorrect reasoning (1.2.34). Though Socrates may simply be trying to be provocative, he might rightly think that should he be considered a teacher of the art of words, he would be teaching people to use their words correctly. This is certainly what Xenophon thinks Socrates does in fact try to do (4.6). Xenophon never calls the correct use of words "philosophy"; probably he recognizes that this would be an overestimation, or underestimation, of philosophy's scope. Critias ignores Socrates' suggestion and says that the edict only forbids Socrates from having conversations with the youth (τοῖς νέοις... μὴ διαλέγεσθαι, 1.2.35). This obviously exceeds teaching any art, since it includes talking with sellers of goods, and hardly applies only to philosophers. Nevertheless, Critias' idea is that philosophers either actually or in the popular imagination talk to young people, those who are not yet intellectually mature (οὐπω φρονίμοις) but may be interested eventually in participating in public deliberation (35). He has in mind training the young for political engagement, as we have already seen. Critias identifies a specifically Socratic activity, the one that perhaps bothers him so much: "asking questions to which you know the answer" (36). This still does not quite get at Socrates' activity, so he reduces it to talking about "cobblers, builders, metal workers... cowherds" (37), Socrates' familiar examples. Socrates pities Critias and tells him that what Critias wants to forbid is his talking (with the young) about that for which these are examples: justice, holiness, and similar topics (1.2.37). So Critias realizes that what he really wants to forbid is Socrates' asking of the youth leading questions about ethical, political, and theological matters, presumably matters they need to think about before becoming public men. Critias thinks that Socrates talks about virtues, using inferences from mundane examples, for the sake of education, and that this teaching of the art of words is connected with philosophers.

It is possible that the philosophers disparaged for teaching the art of words do something rather different from what Critias thinks Socrates in fact does. There may be only enough similarity for the disparagement, fomented elsewhere, to be made sensible to the masses when applied to Socrates. But it is also possible that, though we could not see it at first, Critias does think that Socrates is a philosopher as Critias understands Socrates and understands philosophers, and even as Xenophon understands them (cf. 1.2.19 and 4.2.23). After all, Socrates implicitly admits that there is a way in which he teaches the art of words, and a way in which he talks to ambitious youth about moral and political questions.

Then why is Xenophon indirect in his retelling of Socrates' conversation with Critias? Why not deny, or have Socrates deny, that Socrates is a philosopher, if he denies that Socrates teaches the art of words (as popularly understood)? Or why not admit that Socrates is a philosopher but not a nefarious or phony one like others? Or why not take on the larger case of philosophers in general, and say that while they do teach the art of words, every Athenian should be glad of it? My sense is that Xenophon believes that nothing good would come from calling Socrates a philosopher, or from defending his status as philosopher, or from showing that he exemplifies or excels all other philosophers in his philosophicality. On the one hand, it would associate Socrates on Xenophon's authority with an often disreputable crowd. On the other hand,

it would add an unnecessary term from which Socrates would have to be cautiously differentiated. Neither task would advance Xenophon's desire to demonstrate Socrates' exceptional life and goodness.

c. Philosophers and happiness

Whereas Critias treated philosophers as teachers to outlaw Socrates' conversations, Antiphon in *Mem.* 1.6 treats philosophers as teachers to deride Socrates' failure at teaching. Xenophon presents a set-piece where Antiphon aims to poach Socrates' associates. Antiphon addresses Socrates with the intention that their conversation (διελέχθη) be overheard by those around them. His gambit opens with two references to philosophy:

Socrates, I thought that those philosophizing would necessarily come to flourishing more (τοὺς φιλοσοφούντας εὐδαιμονεστέρους χρῆναι γίγνεσθαι). But you seem to me to have won the opposite from philosophy (τάναντία τῆς φιλοσοφίας). [After all, you are poor and do not charge tuition....] Now if just as the teachers of other practices show their students to be imitators of themselves, you too were to treat your associates in such a way, consider yourself to be a teacher of misery (κακοδαιμονίας). (*Mem.* 1.6.2–3)

Antiphon has a commercial view of philosophy; this might have been expected from Xenophon's introducing him a sophist (τὸν σοφιστήν, 1.6.1).²³ He thinks that philosophizing amounts to teaching students and associates (cf. 1.6.12). As we will see below, others as well took philosophy to be a pedagogical profession. Antiphon also thinks that philosophizing, ideally practiced, makes one flourish. This view, that philosophy leads not merely to discoveries or mental diversion but actually a more flourishing happy life, is familiar from Isocrates and Plato. But Antiphon links the pedagogical-professional aspect of philosophy to its flourishing-causing aspect more directly than Isocrates and Plato do. He here implies that philosophizing makes one flourish because it brings tuition payments from one's students. Antiphon makes a fee from his students; they are glad to pay him because by they believe that if they imitate him they will themselves mature into money-making and thus successful philosophers.

Because Antiphon has explained the success of philosophy by appeal to its for-profit teaching, he can ignore philosophy's specific topics. But since there are non-philosophical teachers, and because he has just claimed that Socrates teaches but not for profit, it is unclear on what grounds he presents Socrates as philosophizing (Socrates makes explicit his opposition to tuition: he later says that those who sell their wisdom, called "sophists," are like prostitutes, 1.6.13). He could have several types of evidence. Socrates could have said of himself, in some other conversation, that he philosophizes; but we have no evidence for this, either before or after this exchange with Antiphon. Other people could have said that Socrates philosophizes; this is likely, given that Antiphon sees Socrates as a competitor for students. Antiphon could have a richer picture of philosophizing than he at first admits, and sees Socrates' practice fitting it; a later conversation between Antiphon and Socrates might hint at Socrates' practice.

Xenophon reports a conversation where Antiphon jokes that Socrates is just but not wise: because he charges no fees to those who spend time with him, his knowledge (ἐπιστάμενος) and

²³ Thus Smith 1903, 61, is misleading to gloss τοὺς φιλοσοφούντας as "lovers of knowledge" and to derive from Plato *Rep.* 376b that this just as much means φιλομαθεῖς; Antiphon addresses Socrates not because Socrates loves wisdom or learning but because while he has the trappings of a certain kind of teacher, he is not making any money from it. Santoni 1989, 321, has "engaged in a philosophy," which is better.

wisdom (σοφός) must be empty; but at least he doesn't greedily mislead people about its value (ἐξαπατᾷς ἐπὶ πλεονεξία, 1.6.11–12)! The joke reveals three things about Antiphon's view of philosophy. First, it involves spending time with people in knowledge-based discussion, where wisdom counts for the most. Second, since these people might be willing to pay a fee, they are probably young people looking to improve their chances in the world. Third, though here Antiphon speaks explicitly of commercial justice, his joke would be really apt only if (certain) philosophers aimed for justice as well as for wisdom. Plato's *Republic* Book 2 and the Platonic *Clitophon* show that understanding justice had popular appeal, political relevance, and an intellectual imprimatur, even if those two dialogues do not link "searching for justice" explicitly with philosophy.²⁴ We might guess that Socrates exemplified this commitment to conversations about justice. All the same, Antiphon acts as though he appreciates Socrates' commitment to justice only as a fiduciary responsibility to potentially naïve or enthralled associates. His act may not be dissembling or unusual. The contemporaneous discussions about justice we know about emphasized the external or instrumental benefits of being just; Antiphon perhaps thinks all philosophers, given that they are paid teachers foremost, think about justice in a way that pays for them and would pay for their students, who after all need to justify paying their teachers. Thus Antiphon perhaps sees philosophers as a class of teacher on the basis of whose wisdom students will pay to learn about justice. Obviously this would be an unsurprising consequence, since the sophists that Euthydemus read (4.2), the familiar topics of philosophers (1.2.16), and the content of Socrates' teaching when teaching the art of words (1.2.37) all include justice as the primary matter.

As always, Xenophon does not in his own words or through Socrates explicitly deny the implication that Socrates is a philosopher. But he does not explicitly accept or modify the implication either. Instead Xenophon has Socrates explain what actually typifies him. In the midst of Socrates' discussion with Antiphon he gives a good example. Regarding the "treasures of the wise men of old, which they left behind in the books they wrote, opening them up with my friends I [Socrates] go through them, and should we see anything good, we focus on it and we consider it a great advantage, if we become useful to one another" (1.6.14). Xenophon says that from this practice he judges Socrates to be blessed (μακάριος) and able to lead his listeners to excellence (καλοκἀγαθία). We see the contrast with Euthydemus' practice discussed in *Mem.* 4.2. Looking at books is valuable only when exercising judgment in conversation about their best and useful elements, and applying their discoveries on oneself and others. In the previous conversation with Antiphon, Socrates says that divinity comes through minimizing one's desires, which he practice (1.6.10). So Socrates reads carefully with friends, seeks the good, minimizes desire, and thinks about becoming more divine. For Xenophon, these traits are eminently useful.

In the *Memorabilia*, then, both Critias and Antiphon see Socrates as near enough to the group called "philosophers" as to charge him with the abuse thrown at philosophers or to make fun of his failure to meet philosophy's monetary ideals. In either case, their association of Socrates with this group of philosophers makes sense. Socrates talks with others about the careful use of language and about justice and the other virtues. But Xenophon does not affirm the title of "philosopher" for Socrates. In the context of Socrates' encounter with Critias, Xenophon recognizes that much of the populace despises philosophers. In Socrates' encounter with Antiphon, Xenophon knows that much of the populace thinks philosophers desire profit. Under neither perception does it help Socrates' case to associate him with philosophers.

Let us now move from the *Memorabilia* to Xenophon's other Socratic works.

²⁴ See Moore 2012 on the popular appeal of "searching for justice."

IV. Callias the philosophical impresario

Xenophon's *Symposium* opens with Callias planning to host a party for his beloved, a champion fighter named Autolycus. The three uses of "philosophy" words in the dialogue are directed toward Callias. This suggests that Xenophon deploys the words only to draw a risible portrait of Callias' reputation as an intellectual impresario.²⁵

The dialogue's drama opens when Callias spots Socrates, Critobulus, Hermogenes, Antisthenes, and Charmides, and bids them come home with him. He exhorts them by telling Socrates that he and his friends' "purified souls" (ἐκκεκαθαρμένοις τὰς ψυχὰς) would make his dinner brighter (λαμπροτέρων) than military and political people would (1.4). Socrates responds:

You are always playing us for a joke and trivializing us, since you have given much money to Protagoras for wisdom (σοφία), and to Gorgias and Prodicus and to many others, but you regard us, by contrast, as being some sort of lay philosophers (ἀτυρογούς τινας τῆς φιλοσοφίας). (*Symp.* 1.5)

Callias ignores the start and finish of Socrates' response, the twice-made claim that he insults Socrates and his friends. He agrees with the second part, that he has paid much tuition to these sellers of wisdom. He says that until now he has hidden his ability to speak fluently and wisely (πολλὰ καὶ σοφὰ λέγειν), but this party will allow him to show them that he is worthy of much serious esteem (1.6).²⁶ This self-congratulation does not itself convince Socrates to join the party. Socrates accepts only when he learns how hurt Callias is at his and his friends' hesitation (1.7).

In this passage Socrates implies that Callias has an idea about the nature of philosophy. A philosopher has a purified soul and the wisdom enabling him to speak well. This is the only time Xenophon uses the verb for "to purify thoroughly" (ἐκκαθαίρω). To understand it we must turn to Plato, who uses it four times. In the *Euthyphro* (3a1), Socrates says that Meletus wishes to "purify thoroughly" the city of corrupting influences; this leads him to prosecute even Socrates. In *Republic* Book 2 (361d5), Socrates calls Glaucon's hypothetical men, the just man stripped of all appearance of justice and the unjust man stripped of all appearance of injustice, "purified thoroughly," like statues, of all irregularities and foreign matter whatsoever, even the most natural ones. In *Republic* Book 6 (527d8), Socrates advocates for a long education in geometry and astronomy on the grounds that they purify thoroughly an organ in every soul, brushing off the blindness caused by everyday pursuits. Finally, in the *Second Letter* (314a7), Plato tells Dionysius that his lessons are learned only through repeated hearings, "just as gold is purified thoroughly," the ore purged a little more with each pass. So in Plato "thorough purification" is connected three times to philosophy and once to politics, and means an expunging of any foreign matter or imperfection. If Xenophon uses the word with the same range of connotations, his Callias would think, even if implicitly, that philosophers have undergone a purging, perhaps of confusion and of everyday concerns, through repeated and challenging effort. This is not too esoteric an idea—it is what any refined practitioner does to attain his mastery—and so Callias may very well accept it. Callias' idea of the philosopher also includes oratorical excellence, an idea we have already connected to Euthydemus' and Critias' idea of the philosopher.

Socrates neither accepts nor rejects the imputation that he is a "lay" philosopher, the term "lay" usually applied to a self-employed farmer, benefited by no assistants (*Oec.* 5.4, *Cyr.*

²⁵ On Callias, Pl. *Apol.* 20c, *Th.* 65a, *Alc.* 119a; Freeman 1938, Wolfsdorf 1998, 127-9, Bowen 1998, 13.

²⁶ On the importance of this passage, see Rettig 1879, 273, Gray 1992, 61.

7.5.67).²⁷ Socrates simply notes that Callias' claim that he and his friends are purified of soul, and good dining companions, means that Callias takes them for ersatz philosophers. Neither Socrates nor Callias explicitly identify the professional philosopher against whom Socrates stands in contrast. Nightingale thinks it is Callias, because he, like a professional farmer, employs others and is himself employed by nobody.²⁸ But against Nightingale, a professional philosopher could conceivably be the one with an expansive business, who works for others and not just himself; this would mean that Protagoras, Gorgias, and Prodicus, teachers of wisdom all, are the professional philosophers. Antiphon, for one, thought that philosophers worked for others. In fact, these opposed positions might have little difference between them, for if Protagoras and the others taught Callias what they knew, Callias would become like his teachers. But there would still be some difference, for despite his extensive training Callias has not become a teacher.

We can leave aside the question concerning the professional philosopher, however, because Socrates asserts that Callias sees him only as a lay, not full-blooded, philosopher; and Callias does not disagree with this assertion. The joke is probably that Callias esteems only those whom he is willing to pay. A lay philosopher is one who charges no money for his services, but still shares, in Callias eyes, in the purification and luminous speech characteristic of proper philosophers. Neither Xenophon as narrator, nor Socrates as character, evaluates Callias' assumption that Socrates is a (marginal, shadow, self-employed) philosopher. The ensuing conversation does of course vindicate Callias' assumption that Socrates and his friends have great facility in speaking cleverly. But Socrates remains distinct from either Callias and his ilk, or from Protagoras and his ilk. Readers committed to Socrates' being a philosopher might say that Xenophon therefore judges Callias, Protagoras, and the rest as not actually philosophers (whether professional and lay), and Socrates, even if he a lay philosopher, as still a philosopher. But it would beg the question to assume that Socrates is a philosopher and that Xenophon's silence supports that view.

The word "philosophy" arises again when, in chapter four, Socrates returns to talk of Callias' studies. Explaining how Antisthenes acts as amatory intermediary, Socrates says to Antisthenes that he "intermediated with wise (σοφῶν) Prodicus, when you saw that [Callias] loved philosophy (φιλοσοφίας ἐρῶντα) and the other one needed money" (4.62). Antisthenes did the same with Hippias, from whom Callias learned mnemonic devices. We do not know whether Socrates considers Hippias a purveyor of philosophy as Callias understands it. Still, we know with certainty that Callias considers Prodicus a philosopher, that philosophers wish to work for money, and that the love of philosophy may lead one to study with a teacher of philosophy.²⁹

²⁷ Winans 1881, 48, gives an overly derisive translation, " 'a sort of quacks,' 'independent dabblers,' 'amateurs.'" Bartlett 1996, 134, translates "self-taught" (similarly Ollier 1961, 38, "autodidactes") but no other uses of the adjective supports this view. Bowen 1998, 27, gives "do-it-yourself," rightly emphasizing the amateur nature, but implying that Callias, who does not do it himself, is the real philosopher (cf. Watson 1857, 151, "workers for ourselves in the pursuit of wisdom"). On 129, however, Bowen glosses the term "independent farmer." Bowen also claims (89) that Xenophon admires *autourgoi* for their strength and freedom (*Oec.* 5.4). See also Huß 1999, 86.

²⁸ Nightingale 1995, 16. Bartlett 1996, 134n7, class Protagoras, Gorgias, and Prodicus as "Sophists or rhetoricians"; this implies that Callias, who is not self-taught, is the "philosopher." Higgins 1977, 15, also calls those three men Sophists, but Callias a "supporter" of them, and Socrates the "philosopher." Winans 1881, 48, judges Protagoras and the rest to be the philosophers.

²⁹ Bowen 1998, 63, obscures this in glossing Callias' love of philosophy as "passionate for learning"; and in his note (113), he claims that "philosophy was a passion," where in fact the passage only treats it as an *object* of passion. Huß 1999, 312-3, takes this use of "philosophy" to have an ironic coloring.

The word “philosophy” arises for a final time in the *Symposium* in the encomium to psychic love and self-improvement that Socrates addresses to Callias. Should he, Callias, wish to be a good partner to Autolycus,

you should look into what kind of knowledge (ἐπιστάμενος) made Themistocles sufficient to free the Greeks, you should look into what Pericles ever knew (εἰδώς) so as to be reputed the most powerful advisor among his people, you should observe how Solon, having philosophized (φιλοσοφήσας), ever established the most powerful laws in the city, and you should also seek out by what practices (ἀσκοῦντες) the Lacedaemonians are reputed to be the most powerful commanders. (8.39)

Socrates puts four verbs in parallel: “having the knowledge to,” “knowing how,” “philosophizing,” and “practicing.”³⁰ The first, second, and fourth mean “an ability based in thought”; the parallel construct implies that “philosophizing” also refers to a source of ability based in thought. The reference to Solon’s philosophizing recalls Herodotus’ story, at *Histories* 1.30, about Croesus’ meeting with Solon. Solon had been traveling in voluntary exile from Athens, having just established laws there that he wanted not to be able to change (1.29). When he visits Croesus, Croesus notes that news of Solon’s wisdom and wandering preceded him, in particular that he “philosophized” (φιλοσοφήσας) and traveled the world for the sake of reflective observation. Croesus may be treating Solon’s philosophizing as his varied experiences and encounters. Since Solon was in fact traveling for the sake of (preserving) his laws, however, his philosophizing might have some wider compass, like engaging in sound but paradoxical leadership by absenting himself from his city. Xenophon seems to be thinking of the account on which Herodotus drew, but he has modified it, putting the philosophizing ahead of law-making. This treats philosophizing as working up the political acuity or moral insight appropriate for effective laws.³¹ But Socrates’ remark lacks informative detail, and so it appears that he uses it only because Callias highly esteems philosophizing.

Taking these three references to “philosophy” into account, we see that the *Symposium* treats “philosophy” as something Callias has a taste for and identifies some of the major intellectual players of the Socratic era as exemplars of philosophy. In Callias’ view, at least as Socrates puts it, philosophy is the study of the skills highly valued in sympotic settings—public display of clever and novel speech, an ability prepared through much concerted effort. But he also accepts that it has its realization in legislation. Socrates supposes that Callias thinks of him, Socrates, as a sort of second-string or unaffiliated philosopher. Because we have little reason to believe that Callias has an unusual view of philosophy, we may believe that his view is Xenophon’s view. In other words, Xenophon may also think that philosophy is a rhetorical skill that has its realization in political action. Socrates is a marginal case of this sort of practitioner.

V. A final Socratic reference to “philosopher”

The word “philosopher” arises once in the *Oeconomicus*, when Ischomachus is teaching Socrates about agriculture.³² As Ischomachus offers to tell him more, Socrates compares his desires to those a philosophical man would have:

³⁰ Bowen 1998, 83, uses “wisdom” in place of “having philosophized”; Ollier 1961, 77, has “les profondes meditations.”

³¹ More generally, Huß 1999, 432: “Bezeichnet hier das Bemühen um σοφία mit politischem.”

³² Interestingly, Ischomachus is married to Chryssilla, who later married Callias.

—So Socrates, [Ischomachus] said, from where do you wish (βούλει) we might begin reminding you about farming? For I know that I will say quite a lot you already know about the necessities in farming.

—Ischomachus, I said, it seems to me first pleasurable to learn (πρῶτον ἂν ἡδέως μανθάνειν)—for this is most of all <particular to> a philosophical man (φιλοσόφου γὰρ μάλιστα ἐστὶν ἀνδρός)—how I might, should I wish to (βουλοίμην), get the most wheat and most barley from working the earth. (16.9)

Socrates somehow likens himself to a philosophical man. He obscures how precisely. The explanatory interjection could point either backwards or forwards, focusing on, as I see it, any of four points. (i) A focus on the order of instruction (πρῶτον... μανθάνειν). A philosophical man finds it pleasurable to learn things in a *specific order*, first things first, or at least to set things out in a specific order. It would be inefficient to go willy-nilly or in the wrong order. (ii) A focus on the “first.” A philosophical man likes to learn the most fundamental matters first, in this case doing the most obvious thing farmers do, which is growing cereals. In either of these first two cases, the philosophical man would be the one who does not prefer to learn only whatever is easiest, or lies most readily at hand, or is most popular, or is most coolly sophisticated. (iii) A focus on “should I wish to.” Socrates repeats Ischomachus’ word “wish” (βούλομαι), now in the optative. A philosophical man gets pleasure from learning first how to do what he “might wish” to do. He learns in preparation, acquiring the knowledge on which likely future actions will have to be based (cf. Thuc. 2.40.1–2).³³ This contrasts with learning only once necessity is upon you, or bungling through something with no knowledge at all. The philosophical man recognizes that he is ignorant but also that he may later wish to act, so he learns what does not have immediate or self-evidence importance. (iv) A focus on “pleasurable to learn.” The philosophical man gets pleasure from learning.³⁴

While none of these four possibilities seems uniquely or even characteristically “philosophical,” the third is compatible with the use of “philosophy” in *Mem.* 4.2. Euthydemus’ philosophizing amounted to studying books for the sake of becoming an effective gentleman (which is what Socrates he wants to know about in the *Oeconomicus*, e.g., 6.13-17, 11.5-6). Euthydemus did not admit to enjoying learning *per se*, but to learning what he would have to learn in order to succeed in the speeches and actions appropriate to the political life. He seems to have understood the importance of a curriculum, even if he did not understand the proper ordering of it, for example, knowing oneself first. The uses in *Mem.* 1, which have philosophers talking of justice and other virtue terms, might be compatible with any of the first three possibilities: learning what is fundamental, or learning what needs to be talked about first (e.g.,

³³ This is akin to what seems to be the view of Strauss 1970, 185, who gives three possible interpretations of the special characteristic of the philosopher in this passage, accepting only the third: the philosopher is the one who (i) wishes to *get* the richest harvest of crops, (ii) wishes to *know how* to get the richest harvest of crops, or (iii) wishes to know *in case he should wish* to get the richest harvest of crops. Wedderburn and Collingwood 1876, 99, translate in this way, admittedly with an odd effect: “in the first place I should be glad to hear what a philosopher more than all men ought to know, how, if I wished, I could so till the ground...”

³⁴ Pomeroy 1994, 185, emphasizes the “desire to learn,” translating “first I think I should like to learn (for it is very characteristic of a philosopher to *want to learn*)” (my italics); see also Nightingale 1995, 16n8, and Chantraine 1949, 95, who translates “cette curiosité est d’un vrai philosophe,” and comments that philosophy amounts to searching for truth, and calls this a Socratic notion. Audring 1992, 99, by contrast, emphasizes the learning itself, “– den das Lernen steht einem Philosophen am meiste an –.” Watson 1857, 129, leaves it indeterminate.

before policy-matters), or learning about topics that might arise in exigent circumstances. In *Symposium*, Callias' love of philosophy means wanting to be able to talk cleverly and with apparent insight; and Solon's philosophizing means thinking incisively about law and public arrangements. Though neither are inconsistent with the fourth possibility, the enjoyment of learning, neither are explained by it. Both are better approximated by the first three possibilities.

What it means does not, of course, explain why Socrates makes this off-handed remark. He is assuredly not just announcing, in the middle of another thought and sentence that he is a philosopher, or excusing his asking a question. He seems to be giving a defense of a somewhat peculiar kind of question. "Philosophical men" pursue unexpected lines of investigation, and yet if Ischomachus approves their way of life, then he will tolerate them. Socrates has been speaking in a mannered way throughout his conversation with Ischomachus, articulating with marked formality the moral precepts underlying his pupilage. A remark from the previous chapter shows this well. Socrates says to Ischomachus:

Your opening remarks are admirable and not the sort to turn a listener away from his desire. And given that it is easy to learn—especially because of this—go through the matter for me. While it is not shameful for you to teach the easier matters, it is very shameful for me not to understand them, and especially if they happen to be useful. (15.13)

Socrates appears to want to show that his learning has moral rectitude and, by mentioning on this sole occasion those engaging in higher thought, that it has an intellectual provenance admissible to his interlocutor.

All this leaves the question whether Socrates is saying of himself that he is a philosopher, and that it is because he is a philosopher that he asks these questions, or by contrast, that he is asking a kind of question that is legitimated by philosophers' making it their habit to ask them. This question is sharpened and made difficult by the fact that Socrates says neither that he is a philosopher nor that he differs from philosophers. He makes a provocative claim relevant to this point five chapters earlier. Socrates has just asked Ischomachus to teach him about the activities of a gentleman (11.1). Ischomachus says that he will, just with the hope of getting correction (μεταρρυθμίσης) from Socrates where he needs it (11.2). Socrates demurs; he has gained the reputation for being a man who prattles on, beats about in airy meditation, and is called poor (ἀδολεσχεῖν ... καὶ ἀερομετρεῖν ... πένης καλοῦμαι, 11.3). Socrates must refer to the claims made against him in Aristophanes' *Clouds* and Eupolis (fr. 386, 388 KA), and that Plato reprises in his *Apology*.³⁵ In Aristophanes' play, Socrates is not called a philosopher; we do not know about Eupolis'. In Plato's dialogue, as well as in *Mem.* 1.2.31, he is accused of talking and investigating the sky as people think all "philosophers" do. In the *Oeconomicus*, Socrates is admitting to having the reputation he has elsewhere, of a silly, impractical, not-very-gentlemanly person. But he says this without reference to "philosophy"; and perhaps it is only to our latter-day ears that we hear him as essentially saying that he is accused of being a philosopher. But we should not hear him as saying this, because when he does mention the "philosophical man" at 16.9, we cannot understand it by appeal to what he said in 11.3. It would not even make sense to, given that none of his possible meanings of "philosophical man"—about the pleasure in learning in sequence, or in preparation, or for no reason at all—overlap with the accusations reported at 11.3 that supposedly disqualify him as a judge of Ischomachus' gentlemanliness.

³⁵ Cf. Pomeroy 1994, 309.

In light of these considerations, I think that Socrates is saying that both he and Ischomachus are “philosophical men” to the extent (at least) that they know the value of pursuing certain kinds of questions (for one of the four reasons listed above). Whether Socrates is considered a “philosopher” *simpliciter* is not part of this exchange. All that matters is that this conversation about gentlemanliness advances well when its interlocutors embrace what most characterizes a philosopher, finding out about particular issues.

Having now looked at all of Xenophon’s Socratic writings, ought Xenophon’s Socrates be said to be a “philosopher” or to “philosophize a philosophy”? In one respect, sure. Socrates wants to learn about justice and the other virtues through methodical conversation; he wants to be successful on the basis of that learning, which is to be prioritized over other topics of learning; he applies himself vigorously to his projects; and he does something like teaching. But the fact that we may call Socrates a “philosopher” stands in a remarkable relation with the fact that Xenophon does not, in his own voice, call him a “philosopher.” As we have seen, the name has a powerful rhetorical function. The Critias and Antiphon examples show it to be involved in disparagement. The *Symposium* examples show it to be involved in the production of clever speeches. When Euthydemus situates himself within the intellectual life as someone “philosophizing,” he reveals his self-blinding political aspirations. Xenophon never denies that Socrates is a “philosopher.” But whereas many others seemed quite ready to associate Socrates with “philosophy,” he appears to have been diffident, even consciously diffident, about the matter. There is always the chance that Xenophon was not diffident, and that, quite the opposite, simply thought it so obvious that Socrates was a philosopher that he did not need to say so. But again, the name “philosopher” was no neutral description during the age of Socrates; it was an ethically charged term that people used for condemnation and praise. Xenophon’s sensitivity to Socrates’ reputation, and to the rhetorical force of the name “philosopher,” suggest that he would not simply have assumed that everyone knew—and knew in the right way—that Socrates was a philosopher.

VI. Non-Socratic writings

Xenophon uses “philosophy” group words on four occasions outside his Socratic writings. By studying them we can develop some of this paper’s claims only indirectly related to Socrates: that for Xenophon the term referred to a discrete group of people, a group with a characteristic manner and one that could become the source of bemusement. In three of Xenophon’s uses of “philosophy” group words, they refer to abstract, deductive reasoning; in an overlapping three, they refer to a group of people contrasted with “sophists.”

Near the beginning of the second book of the *Anabasis*, an Athenian responds to Phalinus, who had encouraged the outnumbered Greeks to lay down their arms.

—Phalinus, now, as you see, there is nothing good for us except our arms and our virtue. Having our arms we imagine that we could also use our virtue; but surrendering them, that we would be deprived of our bodies. Do not imagine, then, that we will surrender to you our only goods, but that we will fight with them even over your goods (ἡμῖν οὐδὲν ἔστιν ἀγαθὸν ἄλλο εἰ μὴ ὄπλα καὶ ἀρετὴ. ὄπλα μὲν οὖν ἔχοντες οἴομεθα ἂν καὶ τῇ ἀρετῇ χρῆσθαι, παραδόντες δ’ ἂν ταῦτα καὶ τῶν σωμάτων στερηθῆναι. μὴ οὖν οἴου τὰ μόνα ἀγαθὰ ἡμῖν ὄντα ὑμῖν παραδώσειν, ἀλλὰ σὺν τούτοις καὶ περὶ τῶν ὑμετέρων ἀγαθῶν μαχοῦμεθα).

—Hearing these things, Phalinus laughed and said, You seem a philosopher (φιλοσόφῳ... ἔοικας), young man, and you speak not without charm; know, however, that you are foolish (ἀνόητος), if you imagine that your virtue would trump the power of the king. (*Anab.* 2.1.12-13)

A “philosopher” speaks of “goods” (ἀγαθά) and “virtue” (ἀρετή), and draw connections between them and the “body” (τὸ σῶμά), that is to say, being alive. Perhaps it is an additional point contributing to Phalinus’ judgment that the Athenian speaks like a “philosopher” that he speaks with charm (λέγεις οὐκ ἀχάριστα)—with clarity, witty concision, and deductive reasoning, here an exhaustive disjunction. Phalinus also thinks that the Athenian is foolish. This need not mean that while the Athenian “seems” (ἔοικας) a philosopher, he in fact is not because he is in fact foolish. The Athenian is obviously not a (professional) philosopher anyway, given that he is in fact a soldier. Phalinus’ point is only that his speech mimics that of philosophers; and young men are prone to study with and thus mimic philosophers. Since being like a philosopher is speaking in certain argumentatively precise ways and about the topics surrounding—at least in this case—fundamental questions of life, including virtue, death, and value, this must be what philosophers do. This is more than intellectual cultivation, because it is the Athenian’s specific way of talking that incites Phalinus’ remark. It is not clear whether philosophers are expected to have the right answers to these questions; but it might be assumed that they are not always eminently pragmatic.

A very similar use of a “philosophy” word, as proper to deductively rigorous speech about fundamental questions of value, is found in the *Cyropedia*. Araspas has fallen in love with Persia’s most beautiful woman, Panthea, but she is married, and so he intends to leave her alone. Cyrus asks Araspas whether he will be able to do this. Araspas says he will, and explains:

It’s clear that I have two souls: this I have now philosophized (πεφιλοσόφηκα) with the unjust sophist Eros (μετὰ τοῦ ἀδίκου σοφιστοῦ τοῦ Ἔρωτος). For being just one <soul>, it is not simultaneously both good and bad, nor does it simultaneously love both admirable and shameful effects, and likewise simultaneously want and not want to do them; so it’s clear that there are two souls, and when the good one rules, it does admirable things, and when the base one rules, it tries to do shameful things. And now, since she [Panthea] has taken you as ally, the good one rules and quite completely. (*Cyr.* 6.1.41)

This passage is like the one in *Anabasis* in treating “philosophizing” as a course of distinctively abstract and compact reasoning. It is also similar in being about fundamental questions of life, in this case the soul, love, and the good.³⁶ The reference to philosophizing “with the unjust sophist Eros” links philosophy with sophistry, as we will see again twice below. The “with” (μετά) must mean here “in contest with.” Eros must be an unjust sophist to the extent that Eros is deceptive, deviously clever, and a facile employer of deep concepts. Philosophizing with Eros presumably means arguing against Eros with as much facility and concept-employment as Eros has. Philosophizing then involves a powerful rhetorical procedure, though perhaps also with an orientation to truth rather than mere conviction.

In the *Poroi*, Xenophon lists the beneficiaries of civil peace: ship-owners and merchants; dealers in cereals, wine, oil, and livestock; entrepreneurs in judgment and money; artisans,

³⁶ Cf. Plato’s *Symposium*, Alexis *Phaidros* fr. 247K-A, Demosthenes *Erotikos*.

sophists, and philosophers; and finally, poets and the ones deploying their poetry (5.3-4). We may infer that Xenophon treats philosophers as a distinct group of people not unrelated to artisans and sophistic teachers. Xenophon does not say why they need peace to do their work. We can only speculate that it is because they travel, or because they talk to otherwise idle young men, or because their critical questions would cause discomfort during war, or because their verbal disputes require leisure.

The last pair of passages comes from Chapter 13 of the *Cynegeticus*, a treatise praising hunting. This is the only place in the Xenophontic corpus that explicitly praises philosophers and rejects sophists. Indeed, it is the only place in the corpus where the author seems to include himself among the philosophers! In the work's penultimate chapter, we read the personal and civic advantages to hunting wild animals. The treatise's final section continues this encomium. Its first half discusses advice-giving in general. The author contrasts himself with so-called "sophists." These men profess to lead the young to virtue, but those of his generation, he says, have had no successes. They write books that please without edifying; in particular, they lack wholesome maxims conducive to learning virtue:

Many others, too, censure the current crop of sophists, and not philosophers (τοὺς νῦν σοφιστὰς καὶ οὐ φιλοσόφους),³⁷ because they instruct in words (ἐν τοῖς ὀνόμασι σοφίζονται), not in thought (νοήμασιν). (*Cyn.* 13.6)

Not a single one of them [sc. sophists] is or ever was wise (σοφός), but it satisfies each to be called a sophist, which is a term of reproach at least among the thoughtful (εὖ φρονοῦσι). I recommend guarding against the teachings (παραγγέλματα) of the sophists, but not to dishonor the reasonings (ἐνθυμήματα) of the philosophers. For while the sophists hunt the young and rich, philosophers—who share their friendship with everyone—neither honor nor dishonor the fortunes of men. (*Cyn.* 13.9)

The author goes on to argue that politicians benefit the commonwealth much less than hunters do.³⁸ We see in these passages and summary a contrast between two apparently similar groups, "sophists" and "philosophers," and an argument that, despite the apparent similarities in the current crop of both, they differ in important ways. Philosophers use reasoning and thought; sophists by contrast make wordy announcements. Philosophers teach without insisting on payment; sophists work only with the financially able. We see also that the names of groups may mislead, *sophistai* being close to *sophia* and to *philosophoi*.

I have referred to the author of this passage as "the author" rather than Xenophon. This is because the *Cynegeticus*, alone of the reputed works of Xenophon, has regularly been deemed only partially or not at all by Xenophon. Many readers have found the style and syntax most unfamiliar; this is especially so for Ch. 13.³⁹ I observe that the extent of clever antithesis seems

³⁷ Phillips and Willcock 1999, 87, translate "the present-day Sophists, who are not philosophers"; this suggests that the earlier generation of sophists could in fact have been philosophers; the authors think he might mean those like Gorgias, and follow Isocrates *Against the Sophists* 19 and Plato *Sophist* 268b. I do not think that the Greek supports this complex thought.

³⁸ On this argument see Kidd 2014.

³⁹ Skepticism by Watson 1857, 330 (Ch. 13 does not seem genuine), Seymour 1878 (Ch. 13 and much else not written by Xenophon), Thomson 1969 (an early use of computer statistics), Classen 1984, 154 (since Xenophon does not elsewhere excoriate sophists), and Labiano 2012 (finding the work unified but inauthentic) may be added to Valckenaer, Radermacher, and Breitenbach. Higgins 1977, xii, treats its reputation as inauthentic as reason to ignore

extraordinary. Nowhere else does Xenophon throw himself so powerfully in with the philosophers. Nowhere else does Xenophon treat philosophers as identified by something other than their words; and indeed he always emphasizes their use of words, even if they used them rigorously or abstractly. Elsewhere, Xenophon allows us to reconstruct valuable details about philosophers; here their only trait is that they teach with reason. On one occasion Socrates calls sophists “prostitutes” (*Mem.* 1.6.13) because they sell their goods. But Xenophon does not otherwise treat *sophistai*, for example the authors of the books Euthydemus collected, as themselves benighted; he seems to think that Euthydemus’ inadequacies were his own.⁴⁰ Thus on the grounds collected by athetizers added to the peculiarity of these remarks at 13.6 and 9, I do not think Xenophon is the author. Even if Xenophon is, however, they support one claim I have been heretofore making. Xenophon sees “philosophers” as the name for a distinct group of people, distinct enough in method and in social contrast as to make these sharp claims. If Xenophon wrote *Oec.* 13, we would also expect that Xenophon would be happy to include Socrates among the philosophers, even though he does not in fact do so. But his rhetorical goal here, which is to defend teachers of hunting against other kinds of teachers, is particular enough that his present point should not be taken to outweigh the evidence from all his other works. And that evidence is that Xenophon writes ambiguously about Socrates’ being a “philosopher.”

Xenophon discusses philosophers infrequently but with a sort of realism, recognizing that a self-styled or other-lambasted group of so-called “philosophers” is part of Athenian society and provides an ideal of practice or pedagogy among a subset of that society. Socrates spends time within or alongside this subset. He shares many of its habits or aspirations: accumulating knowledge, talking well, toilsome self-improvement, and confidence in the importance of discipleship. But there is something marked, even fashionable about membership among “philosophers,” and they are subject to politically or culturally motivated criticism. Xenophon had enough work defending Socrates from criticism. It seems likely to me that Xenophon intends to avoid linking Socrates too expressly with that current of contemporary intellectual association.

VII. Plato

Plato’s use of “philosopher” in connection with Socrates might provide some context for Xenophon’s. This paper is no place for a substantial study of Plato’s use, so in this final section I simply identify two relevant features of Plato’s work. The first feature we may notice is that many of Plato’s dialogues do not mention “philosophy” or “philosophers” or “philosophizing” at all. These are the *Ion*, *Meno*, *Euthyphro*, *Crito*, *Laches*, *Menexenus*, *Hippias Major*, *Alcibiades*, and *Clitophon*. This means that at a time when Plato could use the term “philosopher” to refer to Socrates—Plato’s *Apology* shows this—he does not have the occasion or desire to. He seems uninterested in establishing a contrast or other relation between Socrates and “philosophers.” The example of Socrates as a practitioner of the way of life admired or analyzed by Plato counts for

it from an otherwise comprehensive study of Xenophon’s work. Richards 1898 allows for authenticity but thinks Ch. 13 shows Xenophon either immature or senile, and says of the passage quoted above from 13.6 that “It may be right to bracket these words, but a strong enough case is hardly made out against them” (390). Sanders 1903, who reviews the scholarship to his day, cautiously accepts a young Xenophon, as compiler of earlier hunting literature, as its author. Gray 1985 argues for authenticity but does not address any literature cited in this note; she is largely followed by Doty 2003. Phillips and Willcock 1999, 21, 25, accept authenticity with almost no discussion, and follow the dating of 391 and dismissal of worries about inauthenticity of Delebecque 1970, 33-35.

⁴⁰ Cf. Classen 1984.

more than Socrates as a model of “philosophy.” It seems also clear that Plato does not aim to vindicate Socrates by transferring the positive evaluation of “philosophy” to the man.

Plato’s *Apology* shares much with Xenophon’s *Mem.* 1.2.31. Socrates observes that people think he is evil and corrupts the youth; but when they are asked by doing what and by teaching what, “they can say nothing, and are ignorant, but in order that they not seem at a loss, they say what’s available (πρόχειρα) against all who philosophize, namely that they study the things in the sky and the things under the earth, and do not believe in the gods, and make the worse argument the better” (23d1-7). As it was in Xenophon’s remark, it is unclear whether Socrates mentions those philosophizing because this charge has its origin in disparagement of philosophers or because those hurling these accusations at Socrates judge him to be one of the philosophers. In any event, Socrates denies this charge, and reaffirms that these accusers are ignorant (23d10). He does not here say whether they are wrong to class him as a philosopher, or wrong that all philosophers do the same thing. Yet some pages later he admits to philosophizing, albeit in a different fashion. The god stationed him, as he “thinks and understands it, to live philosophizing and examining [him]self and others” (28e9-10). He obviously does not mean philosophizing in the way others mean it, as studying the things in the sky and so forth. Thus “examining himself and others” must be his gloss of “philosophizing.” Socrates certainly does not seem to be boasting that he philosophizes. He must think either that “philosophizing,” properly understood, does name his activity, or rather than dispute with his accusers that he philosophizes, he accepts the name with a qualification (cf. Thuc. 2.40.1). Socrates soon imagines that the jurors might wish to acquit him, as long as he stops, as he imagines their words, “spending time in this search (ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ζητήσῃ διατρίβειν) and philosophizing” (29c9-10). He imagines them accepting, if provisionally or dubiously, his reinterpretation of “philosophizing.” In his response to this imagined plea bargain, he reinforces this reinterpretation: “I shall not stop philosophizing and urging you and showing you” that his neighbors should care for virtue, etc., by means of cross-examining them (29d5-30a2). Again, Socrates ensures that “philosophizing,” which apparently will be attributed to him whether he likes it or not, is rightly understood.

Were we to study Plato’s other dialogues, we would see an important difference between those works and Xenophon’s. Plato has an unambiguously positive view of philosophy, and depicts Socrates as both engaging in it and urging others to do so too. He takes on more directly people’s criticisms of philosophy and Socrates’ philosophizing, as much in the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* as in the *Apology*. Indeed, it is against this background that Xenophon’s reserve about Socrates’ philosophizing is so apparent. The motivation for that reserve is hard to establish with precision. I have suggested that it might be a conscious decision to vaunt Socrates as a moral and practical exemplar, where assimilation to a contemporary group may not advance that goal. But even if it is unconscious, or this is not Xenophon’s goal at all, we have learned something important about “philosophy” in the late fifth and early fourth centuries. These “philosophers” were a peculiar group, and while they certainly approved of their own ways of talking, thinking, and living, many others withheld judgment, took some ironic distance, or positively disparaged them. Thus who counted as, or counted themselves as, “philosophers” would depend not only on the practices unique to “philosophy” and whether a person exercised those practices, but also on what was to be accomplished by calling, or not calling, someone by that name.

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