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STANTON, G R
1973



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Source: *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 94, No. 4 (Winter, 1973), pp. 350-364

Published by: The Johns Hopkins University Press

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SOPHISTS AND PHILOSOPHERS: PROBLEMS OF CLASSIFICATION.

Educated Greeks with literary and philosophical interests who lived and travelled in the eastern provinces of the Roman empire have proved difficult to classify, particularly in terms of the contrast between sophists and philosophers. Consider, for example, Plutarch, Dio of Prusa and Aelius Aristides. Philostratus, the ancient biographer of the sophists, wrote several pages on Aelius Aristides, included Dio in his work with some qualifications and excluded Plutarch. G. W. Bowersock, in his important book on the relations of the Greek sophists with the Roman imperial government includes numerous discussions of Aristides but treats Plutarch and Dio not as sophists but as men of letters and philosophers.¹ He discusses the problems of classification and shows that despite the real rivalry between philosophers and rhetors (the latter category including sophists) the two professions could be conflated.² Should we, then, accept his classification of Aristides, but neither Plutarch nor Dio, as a sophist? Would such classifications have been acceptable to these men themselves?

There is another problem with regard to these Greek-speaking men of letters: their philosophical alignment. Are we to consider them as Stoics or Platonists or what? This problem is more acute with respect to men generally regarded as philosophers. Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius are the two Stoic-inclined Greek writers whose work survives *in extenso*. The old Stoics, such as Zeno and Chrysippus, are extant only in fragments and it is difficult to reconstruct precisely what they believed. Hence Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, together with the Latin writer

¹ G. W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1969). He generally follows the limits of Philostratus (*ibid.*, p. v.), but points out that Philostratus numbered eloquent philosophers, such as Favorinus of Arelate and Dio of Prusa, among the sophists (*ibid.*, p. 11, citing *VS*, pp. 479 and 484). He discusses Philostratus in chapter 1.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 11-15 (where he also examines 'rhetors' and 'sophists' and concludes that they are the same, except that not all rhetors will have been professional men and hence sophists) and 110.

Seneca, tend to be quoted widely as authoritative sources for Stoic doctrine. The example *par excellence* of this approach is the source book edited by W. J. Oates, where Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius are taken as the major sources for Stoicism just as Epicurus and Lucretius are the great exponents of Epicureanism.³ Repeatedly in histories of philosophy Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius are treated as the chief representatives of later Stoicism, if not of Stoicism as a whole.⁴ It is rarely considered whether such men wished to be identified as orthodox Stoics.⁵ Moreover, philosophical systems such as Stoicism and Platonism underwent important changes before the first century of our era and a man may agree with the earlier rather than with the later proponents of the system. The purpose of this paper is to see how some of the sophists and philosophers of the first and second centuries classified themselves. The first part examines their concepts of their own professional role, the second part their concepts of their philosophical alignment.

I. SOPHISTS OR PHILOSOPHERS?

In the case of Plutarch the reader finds a wide range of connotations attaching to the term 'sophist' in various contexts. *Sophistes* is used in a neutral sense, as when Plutarch wishes to identify a man (for example, to distinguish Bion of

³ W. J. Oates, *The Stoic and Epicurean Philosophers* (New York, 1940). By contrast C. M. Bakewell, *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1939) has separate chapters on the Stoics (chap. 17), on Epictetus (20) and on Marcus Aurelius (21).

⁴ For example, R. D. Hicks, *Stoic and Epicurean* (New York, 1910) pp. 113-52; E. Zeller, *Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy*, 13th ed. (London, 1931) pp. 266-72; W. Windelband, *History of Ancient Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1956) pp. 303-19; A. H. Armstrong, *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*, 3rd ed. (London, 1957) pp. 144-46; J. L. Saunders, *Greek and Roman Philosophy after Aristotle* (New York, 1966) p. 8. In *The Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics*, 2nd ed. (London, 1892) Zeller uses Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Heraclitus and Cornutus—'those Stoics whose complete works are extant'—as the basis for the whole of part 2 on the Stoics; but he realizes that he is setting forth Stoic doctrine in the form it assumed after Chrysippus (pp. 53-56).

⁵ An exception is the admirable work by A. Bonhöffer, *Epiktet und die Stoa: Untersuchungen zur stoischen Philosophie* (Stuttgart, 1890).

Borysthenes from other men of the same name)⁶ or to refer to the seven wise men.⁷ There are more than thirty occurrences in a neutral sense.⁸ In other contexts the word is probably intended to be derogatory⁹ and in yet others it is certainly so.¹⁰ σοφιστής καὶ ἀλαζὼν ἀνὴρ is obviously a term of abuse.¹¹ Related terms—σοφιστικός,¹² σοφιστικῶς,¹³ σοφιστιῶν,¹⁴ σοφιστεία,¹⁵ σοφίσματα,¹⁶ and σοφιστεύω¹⁷—tend to be derogatory. More so, I think, than words related to δημαγωγός.¹⁸ Plutarch does not make a clear distinction between rhetors and sophists, but the former are criticized in some passages, as are οἱ ῥητορικοὶ σοφισταί.¹⁹ Even when the word σοφισταί has no derogatory overtones, the sophists are sometimes attacked; moreover, Plutarch wrote a work criticizing the sophists.²⁰ When sophists are compared

⁶ E.g., Plut. 727d, 1126a, *Phoc.* 18.6. Reference of the type '727d' are to the essays, letters, dialogues and lectures collectively known as the *Moralia*. Diogenes Laertius lists ten men called Bion (4.58) and describes the one in question as σοφιστὴς ποικίλος (4.47).

⁷ 385d-e, 478b-c. On the earlier uses of the word see also 96a (v.l.), 387d, 857f (referring to Herodotus), *Them.* 2.5-6 and G. B. Kerferd, *CR* 64 (1950) 8-10.

⁸ Other examples: 131a-b, 223f, 538c, *Comp. Dem. Cic.* 1.2.

⁹ E.g., 229a, 814c, 988e-f, *Luc.* 7.4, *Alex.* 53.1.

¹⁰ E.g., 408d (cf. H. Bolkestein, *Mnemosyne*, 4th Ser., 17 [1964] 373-74), 580b, 710b, 992c, 1066c.

¹¹ 1118d, 1124c; cf. 81b, 419a, Epict. 2.20.23 (= Epic. fr. 368 [Usener]), Dio Prus. 4.33.

¹² 48d, 71a, 446c, 713f, 756d, 778b, 1116f.

¹³ 129d, 659f, 999b.

¹⁴ 42a, 545c.

¹⁵ 78f, 1043e.

¹⁶ 1034e-f, 1113f.

¹⁷ 486c, 1047f. Plutarch avoids using the word when talking about his own lecturing in Rome (522d).

¹⁸ Cf. δημαγωγός in *Comp. Thes. Rom.* 2.3, *Cim.* 19.3 with the neutral usage in 785a, 790e, 813a; δημαγωγεῖν in 525c with 330c, 802d; and δημαγωγία in 784b, 802e, *Per.* 4.6 (all neutral contexts).

¹⁹ Criticism of rhetors in 59f, 447e, 1000d, but not in 235e, 788d, 1087b (cf. ῥητορεύειν in 1033b). For the lack of a clear distinction, cf. πολλοὶ τῶν ῥητόρων καὶ τῶν σοφιστῶν in 131a and οἱ ῥητορικοὶ σοφισταί in 543e-f.

²⁰ No. 219 in the Lamprias catalogue: Πρὸς τοὺς διὰ τὸ ῥητορεύειν μὴ φιλοσοφοῦντας (Plutarch, *Moralia* VII, ed. F. H. Sandbach [Leipzig, 1967] p. 9). Cf. E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa* (Leipzig, 1909) I, p. 380. Examples of criticism of sophists: 215e, 709b.

with philosophers, the sophists normally suffer in the comparison²¹ and Plutarch seems to identify himself with the philosophers.²² Certainly *φιλόσοφος* is used to compliment or indicate something or someone to be admired.²³ Plutarch has a high opinion of *φιλοσοφία* although he realizes that philosophers can differ among themselves.²⁴ He discusses the parts of philosophy and what a philosopher should do;²⁵ he wants philosophy kept pure, free of difficulty and sophistry.²⁶ Some of his works, however, show a great deal of rhetorical training. Even if these works are relegated to a rhetorical period (for example, before A.D. 67), they can still be shown to contain criticism of sophists and a high opinion of philosophy.²⁷

Dio of Prusa has always been difficult to classify. Not long after his death Lucian wrote that Dio was a *philosophos* exiled for his frankness and independence and he links Dio with Musonius and Epictetus. Much later Photius called Dio a sophist and philosopher by profession, and this summary is repeated by the *Suda*.²⁸ Synesius of Cyrene rejected Philostratus' classification of Dio as a professing philosopher who adopted a style characteristic of the sophists (and was thus classed popularly as a sophist because of the beauty of his language).

²¹ 48d, 328b, 999e, 1000d.

²² Note especially 43e-44a (cf. 38f-39a, 41b-d).

²³ 330a, 384f (*ὁ φύσει φιλόσοφος*), 609c, 1118b; neutral use in 220e, 352c, 457d. Compare *φιλοσοφώτερον* in 363d, *Sol.* 3.1 (but cf. 1115c) and *φιλόσοφος καὶ πολιτικός* in 46b, 88b. *τὰ φιλοσοφούμενα* (353d, 1072f), *φιλασώφημα* (269b, 1125b), *φιλοσοφεῖν* (796d-e, 1063d) and *συμφιλοσοφεῖν* (77c, 122b) are generally neutral.

²⁴ Regard for *φιλοσοφία*: 713d, 716d, 831e, 1108b-c. Divisions: 76a-b, 1108d. Cf. the two works listed together in the Lamprias catalogue: 63. *Περὶ τοῦ μίαν εἶναι ἀπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος Ἀκαδήμειαν*; 64. *Περὶ τῆς διαφορᾶς τῶν Πυρρωνείων καὶ Ἀκαδημαϊκῶν*.

²⁵ 46b, 48d, 122e, 138b-c, 378a, 382d-e, 999e; cf. *διαλεκτική* in 386d, 387c (cf. 387d) and progress *ἐν τῷ φιλοσοφεῖν* in 75c.

²⁶ 76a, 78e-f, 580b.

²⁷ 318e, 328a-c, 330e, 351a. Cf. C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome* (Oxford, 1971) p. 14 n. 6. Jones (*ibid.*, n. 5) gives some other examples of Plutarch's impatience with the schools of the sophists: 802e (*σοφιστικός*), 815b (*ρήτορες*), *Comp. Dem. Cic.* 2 (*σοφιστής*), *Pomp.* 77.3 (*ρήτορικῶν λόγων διδασκαλος*).

²⁸ *Luc. Peregr.* 18; *Phot. Bibl.* 209 (165a); *Suda* s.v. (collected in von Arnim's edition of Dio, vol. II, pp. 313, 320, 328).

Synesius preferred a division of Dio's career into two parts: (1) ἀγνώμων σοφιστής; (2) φιλόσοφος. He argues that although Dio was a philosopher he attacked philosophers and philosophy seriously and in no uncertain terms. He suggests a division of speeches corresponding to the parts of Dio's career: (1) πρὸ τῆς φυγῆς; (2) μετὰ τὴν φυγὴν.²⁹ This division has been an influential one. But it is too neat for the evidence of Dio's own usage.

In Dio's speeches the word *sophistes* is sometimes used in a neutral sense;³⁰ on other occasions it is probably derogatory.³¹ In many contexts *sophistes* is certainly a term of abuse and ἄνθρωπος σοφιστής or τὸ τῶν σοφιστῶν γένος is derided.³² Some of these cases are in a speech which could be dated to Dio's 'sophistic' period.³³ Dio does not include himself among the sophists and in the speech at Olympia he specifically rejects the sophistic label.³⁴ In fact, Dio's attitude to σοφιστής appears to be similar to his attitude to δημαγωγός: he realizes that he acts like one, but he does not like being called one.³⁵ On the other hand Dio identifies himself with the φιλόσοφοι³⁶ and he generally evinces a high opinion of φιλόσοφοι in contrast with σοφισταί, ῥήτορες and πολιτικοί.³⁷ But in one speech, not necessarily of his 'sophistic' period, his interlocutor pays a very doubtful compliment to philosophers.³⁸ Moreover, Dio is critical of 'so-called philosophers'.³⁹ It seems that, like Plutarch, Dio wished to be regarded as a philosopher.

²⁹ Synes. *Dion* 1.1-3, 8-9, 12 (ed. K. Treu in *Schriften und Quellen der alten Welt* 5 [Berlin 1959]); on the text of 1.3 see K. Latte, *Classica et Mediaevalia* 17 (1956) 95. In general, cf. G. W. Bowersock, op. cit. (n. 1) pp. 10-11, 110-11.

³⁰ Dio 12.10; 19.3-4; 47.16; 54.1-2, 4; 66.12.

³¹ 8.33; 12.5; 32.68; 55.7.

³² 3.27; 4.32-38, 78, 131-32 (Diogenes speaking); 6.21; 8.9, 36; 10.32; 32.11, 39; 35.8-10; 58.2.

³³ 11.6, 14 (this speech is a sophistic display).

³⁴ 12.13, 15; Dio distinguishes himself from the sophists in 4.14 and the derogatory passages.

³⁵ 34.38; on the association of σοφισταί with δημαγωγοί see 4.131-32 and 77/78.27.

³⁶ 12.5, 15, 38; 33.14-16; 48.14; 49.14.

³⁷ 12.5; 22.5; 24.3; 34.3; 71.8; cf. 19.4, 43.6.

³⁸ 60.9-10; cf. comments on 11.6, 14 above.

³⁹ 13.11; 32.8, 20; 72.2; 77/78.34-35. On Dio's concept of the role of

Aelius Aristides attacks philosophers and does not, apparently, wish to be identified with them.⁴⁰ But this does not necessarily make him a sophist. As E. Mensching and C. A. Behr have pointed out, *sophistes* is used as a term of abuse by Aristides.⁴¹ But not in every occurrence. Behr claimed that *sophistes* was always an abusive word in Aristides' work. He lists a number of supporting examples but his claim is decisively refuted by A. J. Festugière, who lists examples of non-pejorative usage⁴² and other examples where the pejorative connotation stems from Aristides' application of the word to rivals or to bad orators.⁴³ The whole of speech 34 K falls into the last category; Aristides was clearly pleased with this attack on bad sophists.⁴⁴ Even so, there remains a residue of passages where *sophistes* is a term which Aristides would not wish to have applied to himself. Yet he also raises the work of a sophist above that of a philosopher.⁴⁵ Critical as he is of philosophers, Aristides may not have been pleased to be labelled a sophist.

a philosopher, see 34.3, 52; 48.14; 49.1-13, S. Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* (London, 1904) pp. 367-82 and B. F. Harris, *The Moral and Political Ideas of Dio Chrysostom with Special Reference to the Bithynian Speeches* (Thesis, Auckland, 1966) pp. 114-16, 177-78, 204-5; on Dio's conversion, A. D. Nock, *Conversion* (Oxford, 1933) pp. 173-74 and B. F. Harris, op. cit., pp. 110-14.

⁴⁰ G. W. Bowersock, op. cit. (n. 1) p. 11. An example of an attack on philosophers is 46, pp. 402-4 D. References to Aristides' speeches marked with a 'D' are to Dindorf's edition (Leipzig, 1829), those marked with a 'K' are to Keil's incomplete edition (Berlin, 1898).

⁴¹ E. Mensching, *Mnemosyne*, 4th Ser., 18 (1965) 62 n. 3; C. A. Behr, *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales* (Amsterdam, 1968) pp. 66 n. 17, 106-7 and n. 39, 169 (on 49.8 K).

⁴² *REG* 82 (1969) 148: 23.2 K; 28.24 K; 28.81 K; 36.9 K; 49.8 K; 50.61 K. To these can be added 50.95 K (a sympathetic reference) and also 50.100 K, if Behr's emendation $\delta \Phi\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ is not accepted (cf. Keil's apparatus, C. A. Behr, op. cit., pp. 65-67 n. 17, G. W. Bowersock, op. cit. (n. 1) p. 13 n. 3, A. J. Festugière, loc. cit., pp. 147-49, I. Avotins, *AJP* 92 (1971) 348-49).

⁴³ 28.128 K; 33.29 K; 34.47 K; 50.95 K (which I place in the previous category); 51.39 K (cf. next note).

⁴⁴ 51.38-41, esp. 39 K. On Aristides' relations with sophists see A. Boulanger, *Aelius Aristide et la sophistique dans la province d'Asie* (Paris, 1923) pp. 145-46, 256-62 and esp. 265-70.

⁴⁵ G. W. Bowersock, op. cit. (n. 1) p. 11 and n. 3.

By contrast, Epictetus clearly thought of himself as a philosopher. When, for example, he demands, 'Did you learn that at the feet of the philosophers?'⁴⁶ what is meant by 'that' is the precise opposite of the teaching of Epictetus. Because the anecdote about a certain Italicus is isolated,⁴⁷ its point has been disputed. But the story is meant to indicate that Epictetus was a genuine philosopher; that Italicus had a great reputation among the Romans as a philosopher; but that Italicus vehemently did not wish to be an austere philosopher of Epictetus' ilk. It is implicit in the terseness of the introduction to the anecdote that Epictetus did not approve of the Roman popular feeling about philosophers. Time and again *philosophos* is used as a term of great honour—a 'philosopher' obviously has the highest status for Epictetus.⁴⁸ The exchange in 3.9.10 implies that he considers himself a philosopher. Occasionally 'philosophy' is defined more strictly, as when he distinguishes the establishment of standards (*κανόνες*), which is the task of philosophy, from the application of these standards, which is the task of the 'good and excellent man' (*ὁ καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός*).⁴⁹ Elsewhere he emphasizes that his pupils should act on their philosophical principles rather than speak of themselves as philosophers.⁵⁰ But on the whole, the word *philosophos* represents both the ideal for his own life and the objective of the education he provided.⁵¹ That Epictetus was recognized as a philosopher is shown by the fact that, when Domitian banished all philosophers from Rome (about A.D. 93),⁵² he was obliged to leave too. The reader

⁴⁶ Epict. 3.26.9; cf. 3.24.30-31.

⁴⁷ 3.8.7: Πῶς ἔχουσι Ῥωμαῖοι πρὸς φιλοσόφους ἂν θέλῃς γινῶναι, ἀκουσον. 'Ιταλικὸς ὁ μάλιστα δοκῶν αὐτῶν φιλόσοφος εἶναι παρόντος ποτὲ μου χαλεπήνας τοῖς ἰδίοις, ὡς ἀνήκεστα πάσχων, 'Οὐ δύναμαι', ἔφη, 'φέρειν. ἀπόλλυτέ με, ποιήσετέ με τοιοῦτον γενέσθαι', δέξας ἐμέ. 3.9 concerns an unnamed rhetor going to Rome for a lawsuit and 3.8.1-6 is about dealing with external impressions.

⁴⁸ 2.13.23, 2.14.7-9, 3.26.7, *ench.* 32.1; cf. 3.13.23.

⁴⁹ 2.11.24-25; cf. 3.24.110-14.

⁵⁰ *ench.* 46; cf. 3.26.13.

⁵¹ 2.14.7-8; 3.7.17; 3.9.13; 3.10.7, 11; 4.8; *ench.* 22-23; cf. 2.11.

⁵² The older authorities ascribed the references in Gell. 15.11.3-5, Suet. *Dom.* 10.3 to A.D. 89 (see H. von Arnim, *RE* 6 (1909) 127; cf. E. T. Salmon, *A History of the Roman World from 30 B.C. to A.D. 138*, 3rd ed. [London, 1957] p. 235). On the likelihood of A.D. 92-93 see

is constantly aware that Epictetus is not in Rome, but in Nicopolis.⁵³

Epictetus distinguishes himself from the sophists by his anecdote about Diogenes' insult to a sophist⁵⁴ and by the derogatory connotations he gives to σοφιστικός,⁵⁵ σοφίζεσθαι⁵⁶ and σόφισμα.⁵⁷ The implication is that he sides with the philosophers against the sophists. Again, he contrasts his own position with that of a layman (ιδιώτης). In 3.19 the philosopher obviously receives approval, while the layman has not grasped the central points of Epictetus' teaching.⁵⁸ Mixing with laymen is dangerous to all but the most resolute philosophers.⁵⁹ However, in arguing with an Epicurean, Epictetus casts himself among the laymen and refers to the Epicureans as 'philosophers'.⁶⁰ This enables him, after revealing an inconsistency, to challenge the Epicurean to be a proper philosopher, perfectly consistent with his own doctrines.⁶¹ It is clear that Epictetus wished to be regarded as a philosopher.

Marcus Aurelius also aligned himself with the philosophers and certainly not with the sophists. At the end of his introductory book Marcus thanks the gods that he did not fall in with any sophist; this would have been as bad as becoming involved in literature or the solution of syllogisms.⁶² He feels that he may not have been able to disentangle himself from their clutches, even though he had set his heart on philosophy. Twice his

A. N. Sherwin-White, *JRS* 47 (1957) 126-27 and F. Millar, *JRS* 55 (1965) 142; cf. D. R. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism from Diogenes to the 6th Century A.D.* (London, 1937) p. 139 n. 1. Millar suggests (p. 148) that the political application of the expelled philosopher's teaching could have been subversive, if an interlocutor can ask, ὑμεῖς οὖν οἱ φιλόσοφοι διδάσκετε καταφρονεῖν τῶν βασιλέων; (1.29.9). It should be pointed out that the teacher's overt answer is: μὴ γένοιτο.

⁵³ 1.1.19, 1.9.27, 1.10.2-6, 1.26.10, 2.6.20, etc.

⁵⁴ 3.2.11; cf. 2.20.23 (= Epic. fr. 368 [Usener]).

⁵⁵ 1.27.6, 3.8.1.

⁵⁶ 1.7.11, 2.25.2, 4.5.3; σοφιστεύειν is neutral in the title of 3.21.

⁵⁷ 1.27.2, 2.16.3, 2.18.18, 3.26.16; cf. 1.7.33 and σοφισμάτιον in 2.18.17.

⁵⁸ Cf. *ench.* 48.

⁵⁹ 3.16, *ench.* 46.

⁶⁰ 3.7.1.

⁶¹ 3.7.17.

⁶² M. A. 1.17.9.

adoptive father, Antoninus Pius, is praised for not being a sophist,⁶³ and in both cases adherence to philosophy appears as a virtue in the context.⁶⁴ Elsewhere sophists and their art are seen as something to be opposed.⁶⁵ On the positive side, philosophy (as has already been hinted) is highly valued. It is a central principle in Marcus' life.⁶⁶ It is dearly sought after, the peak of his ambition.⁶⁷ For Marcus philosophy is a way of life and he would like to be considered a philosopher.⁶⁸

What is surprising in this analysis is that what is common to Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius is shared to a large extent by Plutarch and Dio and to a lesser extent by Aristides. For it is not only Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius (of these five) who wish to be considered philosophers and not sophists. Plutarch is critical of the sophists and tends to use terms like σοφιστικός in a derogatory fashion. Dio specifically rejects the idea of being called a sophist. Both Plutarch and Dio seem to identify themselves with the philosophers. Aristides' position is not so clear. Like Dio, he can use *sophistes* as a term of abuse. But he is also critical of philosophers as a class. The picture can be broadened a little by an examination of epigraphical evidence. On inscriptions the terms *philosophos* and *rhetor* are linked with reference to one man,⁶⁹ but not, apparently, *philosophos* and *sophistes*. This usage, as well as that of the five authors considered above, suggests that *sophistes* is a term of a different order from *philosophos*. Those who describe a man as both *sophistes* and *philosophos*, as do Synesius of Cyrene, Photius and the *Suda* (on Hippias of Elis and Dio of Prusa), belong to a later age in which *sophistes*, like *philosophos*, refers to a man's profession. In the first and second centuries *sophistes* can be used in a neutral sense, but it tends to have a derogatory connotation when applied to men of letters.

⁶³ 1.16.4, 6.30.3.

⁶⁴ 1.16.5, 6.30.1.

⁶⁵ 1.7.1, 7.66.

⁶⁶ 2.17.2.

⁶⁷ 8.1; cf. 1.6, 1.14.2, 5.9, 6.12, 9.41.

⁶⁸ See also 2.10 and 12.27, where φιλοσόφως and φιλοσοφώτερον are used to indicate approval.

⁶⁹ For references and discussion see G. W. Bowersock, op. cit. (n. 1) pp. 11-12.

II. PHILOSOPHICAL ALIGNMENT.

Epictetus, Dio and Marcus Aurelius are commonly classified as Stoics and Plutarch as a Platonist. But an examination of their concepts of their respective positions does not fully support such decisive classifications in terms of philosophical schools. It is true that Plutarch is basically a Platonist: he discusses Plato's ideas at length, as in the *Platonicae quaestiones* and the *de animae procreatione in Timaeo*, and he supports Plato against Zeno.⁷⁰ The Epicureans (as well as the Stoics) are slighted and their views attacked in his writings.⁷¹ He has a hostile attitude to the Stoics, whom he sometimes attacks without naming; elsewhere he explicitly rejects their views or refers to them in derogatory fashion.⁷² His extant works exhibit two major lines of attack on the Stoics: they contradict themselves⁷³ and their views are opposed by common conceptions.⁷⁴ However, he absorbed a number of Stoic ideas and he is found approving of *συμπάθεια*⁷⁵ and even *ἀπάθεια* and *ἀραπαξία*—despite his bitter attacks on *τὰ ἀδιάφορα*.⁷⁶ So he is not as completely committed to a single school, Platonism, as one might have supposed.

Dio was primarily indebted, within the philosophical spectrum,

⁷⁰ Plut. 1034c-f (where Plutarch tends to assume that Plato is correct). In 387f the narrator (presumably Plutarch) refers to his becoming a member of the Academy. On Plutarch's philosophical position, see K. Ziegler, *RE* 21, I (1951) 704-5, 938-47, H. Weber, *Die Staats- und Rechtslehre Plutarchs von Chaironeia Schriften zur Rechtslehre und Politik*, 16 (Bonn, 1959) pp. 18-24 and A. J. Gossage, 'Plutarch' in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Biography* (London, 1967) p. 72 n. 13.

⁷¹ Slightings: 164f-165a, 532b, 789b. Attacks on Epicurean views: 420b-d, 1086c-1130e *passim*.

⁷² 75f-76a (where the example shows the Stoics are intended) 449f-450a, 710b, 830b, 935b.

⁷³ For example, stated of Chrysippus is 1049a-c and of the Stoics in general in 1062a, e, 1070e, 1084d.

⁷⁴ Using *κοινὰ ἔννοιαι* and/or *προλήψεις* (e.g., 1059f-1060e, 1073c-d, 1084a) or *παρὰ τὴν ἔννοιαν* and other forms of shorthand (e.g., 1063c, 1071b, 1086b).

⁷⁵ 140e, 142e-143a; cf. 432b.

⁷⁶ Compare 82f, 1092a with 1061d, 1064c-d, 1071f-1072a. On Plutarch's attitude to the Stoics see H. von Arnim in *SVF* I, pp. x-xv, M. Pohlenz, *Hermes* 74 (1939) 1-33, F. H. Sandbach, *CQ* 34 (1940) 20-25, R. H. Barrow, *Plutarch and his Times* (London, 1967) pp. 45, 102-8.

to the Cynics and the Stoics.⁷⁷ An extended example of his debt to the Stoics is contained in his use of the idea of *homonoia* in the universe to fortify his advice about *homonoia* among men and among cities. In his speech at Prusa on *homonoia* with Apamea he points to the eternal and majestic τάξις, ὁμόνοια and σωφροσύνη in the heaven as a whole and its components. The elements should be observed, because they and the entire universe are preserved by their mutual *philia* and *homonoia*. If this *koïnonia* were ever dissolved and *stasis* ensued, they would be subject to destruction. To *philia* and *homonoia* is also attributed the predominance of ether and its appointed periods. Peace, justice and the law of reason prevent the destruction of the universe, although the risk of such destruction is contained in πλεονεξία and διαφορά. If such strong and great beings as the sun, moon, stars and planets co-operate and submit to their *koïnonia* with one another, why cannot πολίχνια of mere mortals and weak ἔθνη do likewise? ⁷⁸ B. F. Harris has pointed out the direct link with Stoic ideas in the terminology used to describe the harmony of the universe: στοιχείων ἁρμονία, συμπαθής, ἐπικράτησις αἰθέρος, ἀήρ, πῦρ θεῖον.⁷⁹ Dio's particular stress is on the application of this metaphysical theory to relations between one city and another. He makes similar points on the relevance of celestial experiences to human ones elsewhere.⁸⁰ When he apologizes for the apparent remoteness and lack of affinity between the universe and human affairs he uses words which have Stoic connotations: σκοπεῖτε γάρ, εἰ καὶ τισι δόξει μετέωρος ὁ λόγος καὶ οὐ πᾶν τι ὑμῖν συμπαθής, ὅτι . . .⁸¹ Despite this indebtedness to Cynic and Stoic ideas and terminology, it is difficult to argue

⁷⁷ For the debt to Cynicism see Dio's speeches on kingship, the Diogenes speeches (6, 8-10) and D. R. Dudley, *op. cit.*, (n. 52), pp. 148-58. On the debt to Stoicism see Synesius, *Dion* 1.11 and B. F. Harris, *op. cit.* (n. 39) pp. 240-46.

⁷⁸ 40.35-39. Cf. Chrysippus' statement that Zeus is εὐνομία, δίκη, ὁμόνοια, εἰρήνη, etc. (*SVF* II.1076).

⁷⁹ Cf. *SVF* II. 323a, II.600-601, H. von Arnim, *Leben und Werke des Dio von Prusa* (Berlin, 1898) p. 488 and B. F. Harris, *op. cit.* (n. 39) p. 174 and n. 5.

⁸⁰ 38.11, 18 (38.17 in von Arnim's edition); 48.14; cf. also 1.42-43, 3.75, 12.34, H. von Arnim, *op. cit.* (n. 79) pp. 365-67.

⁸¹ 40.36 (the second καὶ inserted by Reiske).

that he is definitely a Cynic or a Stoic. As far as I can see, there is only one passage where he seems to identify himself with the Stoics.⁸² And he openly attacks Cynics, at least those of the popular kind.⁸³

There is more justification for classifying Epictetus as a Stoic. For he not only speaks of 'we who are called Stoics' (*ἡμῶν τῶν λεγομένων Στωικῶν*)⁸⁴ when he is arguing with an Epicurean, but he occasionally assumes Stoic doctrines as a basis for argument.⁸⁵ However, Epictetus is not so closely identified with the Stoics that he cannot stand apart and demand to be shown a Stoic; 'but you can show me thousands who recite the petty arguments of the Stoics'.⁸⁶ In line with this is his exclamation, 'Why do you call yourself a Stoic?'⁸⁷ His educational policy is distinct from that of the early Stoics, with whose doctrines he most closely agrees.⁸⁸ For he teaches many who are not able to stand by their principles firmly.⁸⁹ He is interested in beginners in philosophy⁹⁰ and gives advice on progress.⁹¹

In disputing the validity of other philosophical positions Epictetus generally assumes the point of view of the Stoics.⁹² He argues against Epicureans and Academics at some length. His usual method is to show up inconsistencies in Epicurean or Academic doctrine. For example, if Epicureans hold that there is no natural fellowship between rational beings, why do they care for men sufficiently to try to persuade them of this?⁹³ How can one who claims that no universal statement is true

⁸² 36.29 ('our men' and 'they').

⁸³ 32.9-10, 33.14, 34.2; cf. D. R. Dudley, *op. cit.* (n. 52) pp. 143-48.

⁸⁴ Epict. 3.7.17.

⁸⁵ 1.14.1-2, 2.4.8-11 (cf. fr. 15); Stoic viewpoints are also expressed in 2.1.18, 2.8.6-7, 3.18.

⁸⁶ 2.19.22; cf. the reference to *λογάρια* of the Stoics in 1.29.56.

⁸⁷ 2.9.19, 3.24.41.

⁸⁸ A. Bonhöffer, *op. cit.* (n. 5) *passim*.

⁸⁹ Consider, for example, 2.19.20-28.

⁹⁰ 2.11.

⁹¹ 1.4. Cf. I. Bruns, *De schola Epicteti* (Kiel, 1897) pp. 20-22.

⁹² 2.20.12, 3.7.17.

⁹³ 2.20.6-17; cf. 1.20.17-18, 3.24.38 (also on Epicureans). On Epictetus' attitude to Epicurus see R. Laurenti, *Sophia* 28 (1960) 59-68.

prove his claim?⁹⁴ But Epictetus is also adept at accepting an opponent's views and then showing how absurd they are if applied rigidly.⁹⁵ The only reference to the Peripatetics in the surviving discourses is derogatory, while the adherents of Pyrrhon, like those of the Academy, appear as opponents.⁹⁶

Epictetus, however, has a high opinion of the Cynics.⁹⁷ In his long chapter on their position,⁹⁸ he dispels some current misconceptions of the Cynic's life and outlines his view of it. But Epictetus' advice to the potential Cynic is largely a summary of his own teaching.⁹⁹ Some new points are expounded, notably the functions of a Cynic missionary: first, as *ἄγγελος*, to show men that they have gone astray in seeking the true nature of good and evil where it is not to be found (outside their moral purpose); secondly, as *κατάσκοπος*, to discover what things are friendly to men and what are hostile.¹⁰⁰ The Cynic, to Epictetus, is a kind of model Stoic, whose way of life is indeed possible, but not practicable for all men.¹⁰¹ In this chapter, as in many others, Diogenes the Cynic appears as an example to others. He was a proper scout,¹⁰² he feared no man of power;¹⁰³ as with Socrates, many aspects of Diogenes' character provide a model;¹⁰⁴ quotations of or allusions to his sayings are fre-

⁹⁴ 2.20.1-5, 28-35; cf. 1.27.2, 15.

⁹⁵ 1.23, 3.7 (Epicureans); 1.5 (Academics).

⁹⁶ 2.19.20; 1.27.2, 15.

⁹⁷ See 4.8.30.

⁹⁸ 3.22: *περὶ κυνισμοῦ*. For analysis and discussion see D. R. Dudley, *op. cit.* (n. 52) pp. 190-98.

⁹⁹ Especially 3.22.13-22, 31-44, 53-61, 100-6. Cf. J. M. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1969) p. 54.

¹⁰⁰ 3.22.23-30, 38, 69. The word 'missionary' is justified by the phraseology of the chapter, esp. *ἀπὸ τοῦ Διὸς ἀπέσταλται* (3.22.23). Cf. A. Bonhöffer, *Epiktet und das Neue Testament*, *Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten* 10 (Giessen, 1911) p. 321, comparing NT 2 Cor. 5.20.

¹⁰¹ 3.22.45-49, 62-65, 67-71, 86-90, 107-9. Cf. D. R. Dudley, *op. cit.* (n. 52) p. 199.

¹⁰² 1.24.6-10, 3.22.24.

¹⁰³ 2.13.24, 3.21.19, 3.24.70, 4.1.156.

¹⁰⁴ 3.22.57, 60, 80, 88; 3.24.40, 64-73; 3.26.23; 4.1.114, 152-56; 4.9.6; 4.11.21-22. On the use of Socrates, Diogenes and other figures as examples in moral training, see B. L. Hijmans, Jr., *Ἀσκησις: Notes on Epictetus' Educational System* (Assen, 1959) pp. 72-77.

quent.¹⁰⁵ So we have in Epictetus a Stoic, but one who is able to stand apart from the Stoic tradition and use ideas and examples from at least one other tradition.

Marcus Aurelius is another man whom it is difficult to consider as an orthodox Stoic. Among the philosophical schools he is closest to the Stoics, but he stops short of full acceptance of the Stoic position.¹⁰⁶ Certainly he promotes Stoic doctrines: that disturbance comes only from our opinion of things;¹⁰⁷ the attainment of tranquillity;¹⁰⁸ that the universe is a single living creature;¹⁰⁹ and the sympathetic connection of all things (*συνπάθεια*).¹¹⁰ However, frequently he lays down both Stoic and Epicurean alternatives, when it does not affect his point.¹¹¹ But when he faces directly the alternatives, 'either a medley and interlacing and dispersion (of atoms) or a unity and order and providence' he chooses the second because it gives him emotional satisfaction ('if the second be true, I am reverent, I am calm, I take courage in that which administers all'). For if the former be true, he argues, why should he continue to live in a world of chance and accident?¹¹² Occasionally, when both Stoic and Epicurean alternatives are allowed, the Epicurean is not really considered as the argument develops.¹¹³ Of all the philosophers the Stoics are held in the highest esteem.¹¹⁴ At the same time, Marcus can differ from other Stoics, such as Seneca.¹¹⁵ Many philosophers are quoted or taken as examples—

¹⁰⁵ 2.3.1; 3.1.30; 3.22.24, 58, 60, 91; 4.1.30, 156. Cf. Schenkl's note on 4.1.156.

¹⁰⁶ Compare the views of E. V. Arnold, *Roman Stoicism* (Cambridge, 1911) pp. 122-27 and M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*, 2nd ed. I (Göttingen, 1959) 341-53.

¹⁰⁷ M. A. 4.3.4.

¹⁰⁸ 4.24 (*εὐθυμία*), 11.18.5 (*ἀπάθεια*).

¹⁰⁹ 4.40; cf. Diogenes Laertius 7.139, 142-43.

¹¹⁰ 4.27, 5.26, 9.9.2.

¹¹¹ 6.4, 6.24, 7.32, 8.25, 9.39, 10.7.2.

¹¹² 6.10.

¹¹³ 10.6.1-2; in 11.18.1 the possibility that the universe consists of atoms is immediately dismissed.

¹¹⁴ 5.10.

¹¹⁵ Compare the beginning of 6.1 (*ἡ τῶν ὄλων οὐσία εὐπειθής καὶ εὐτρεπής*) with Sen. Prov. 5.9 (*non potest artifex mutare materiam; hoc passa est*). Farquharson, on 6.1, points to the evidence of Plutarch (1051c-d, 1076c-d) for divergence among Stoics.

and they are by no means confined to Stoics.¹¹⁶

Both Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, then, stand apart to some extent from traditional Stoicism. Marcus does so more than Epictetus, whom one cannot imagine allowing Epicurean doctrine as the basis for developing his views in the way that Marcus does.¹¹⁷ Nor is there anything in the *Meditations* of Marcus which corresponds to Epictetus' special view of the Cynics. But I have tried elsewhere¹¹⁸ to dispel the widespread belief in a particularly close relationship between these two philosophers. What is important to note here is that one cannot simply assume that Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius are representative of Stoicism. Their own statements on their positions undermine such an assumption. Nor can Plutarch and Dio be assigned once and for all to a specific philosophical school. There is similar doubt about the sophist/philosopher distinction. There is a tendency for Greek-speaking men of letters who produced works worthy of the Second Sophistic¹¹⁹ to want to be regarded as philosophers and not as sophists.¹²⁰

G. R. STANTON.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND (AUSTRALIA).

¹¹⁶ For a list of quotations see the *index nominum* in Schenkl's or Haines' edition.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Epictetus' approach in 2.20.6-20 and 3.7.

¹¹⁸ *Phronesis* 13 (1968) 183-95.

¹¹⁹ One could place the *de fortuna Romanorum* of Plutarch or the Trojan oration (11) of Dio of Prusa alongside, say, the Roman oration (26 K) of Aelius Aristides.

¹²⁰ When this article was completed in 1971, I had not seen D. Babut, *Plutarque et le stoïcisme* (Paris, 1969). Babut argues, among other things, that Plutarch was a determined opponent of Stoicism and that his general world view never coincides with fundamental Stoic doctrines despite frequent formal agreement between Plutarch and Stoic writers. This view does not give sufficient weight to passages such as those listed in notes 75 and 76. The traditional division for Dio into pre- and post-exilic speeches is found still in P. A. Brunt, *PCPhS* n.s. 19 (1973) 9-34, who, however, stresses Dio's loose attachment to Stoicism.