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A.—PHILOSOPHERS

1. Plato

It is not very often that Plato allows himself to dwell on the history of philosophy as it was before the rise of ethical and epistemological inquiry; but when he does, he is always illuminating. His artistic gift and his power of entering into the thoughts of other men enabled him to describe the views of early philosophers in a sympathetic manner, and he never, except in a playful and ironical way, sought to read unthought of meanings into the words of his predecessors. He has, in fact, a historical sense, which was a rare thing in antiquity.

The passage of the *Phaedo* (96 a *sqq.*) where he describes the state of scientific opinion at Athens in the middle of the fifth century is invaluable for our purposes.

2. Aristotle

As a rule, Aristotle's statements about early philosophers are far less historical than Plato's. He nearly always discusses the facts from the point of view of his own system, and that system, resting as it does on the deification of the apparent diurnal revolution of the heavens, made it very hard for him to appreciate more scientific views. He is convinced that his own philosophy accomplishes what all previous philosophers had aimed at, and their systems are therefore regarded as "lispering" attempts to formulate it (*Met.* A, 10, 993 a 15. It is also to be noted that Aristotle regards some systems in a much more sympathetic way than others. He is distinctly unfair to the Eleatics, for instance, and in general, wherever mathematical considerations come into play, he is an untrustworthy guide.

It is often forgotten that Aristotle derived much of his information from Plato, and we must specially observe that he more than once takes Plato's humorous remarks too literally.

3. Stoics

The Stoics, and especially Chrysippos, paid great attention to early philosophy, but their way of regarding it was simply an exaggeration of Aristotle's. They did not content themselves with criticising their predecessors from their own point of view; they seem really to have believed that the early poets and thinkers taught doctrines hardly distinguishable from their own. The word *συνολικεῖον*, which Cicero renders by *accommodare*, was used by Philodemos to denote this method of interpretation,⁽¹⁾ which has had serious results upon our tradition, especially in the case of Herakleitos.

4. Skeptics

The same remarks apply *mutatis mutandis* to the Skeptics. The interest of such a writer as Sextus Empiricus in early philosophy is mainly to exhibit its contradictions. But what he tells us is often of value; for he frequently quotes early views as to knowledge and sensation in support of his thesis.

5. Neoplatonists

Under this head we have chiefly to consider the commentators on Aristotle in so far as they are independent of the Theophrastean tradition. Their chief characteristic is what Simplicius calls εὐγλωμοσύνη, that is, a liberal spirit of interpretation, which makes all early philosophers agree with one another in upholding the doctrine of a Sensible and an Intelligible World. It is, however, to Simplicius more than any one else that we owe the preservation of the fragments. He had, of course, the library of the Academy at his disposal, at any rate up to A.D. 529.

B.—DOXOGRAPHERS

6. The Doxographi Graeci

The *Doxographi Graeci* of Professor Hermann Diels (1879) threw an entirely new light upon the filiation of the later sources; and we can only estimate justly the value of statements derived from these if we bear constantly in mind the results of his investigation. Here it will only be possible to give an outline which may help the reader to find his way in the *Doxography Graeci* itself.

7. The "Opinions" of Theophrastus

By the term *doxographers* we understand all those writers who relate the opinions of the Greek philosophers, and who derive their material, directly or indirectly, from the great work of Theophrastos, (Φυσιῶν δοξῶν ἡ (Diog. v. 46). Of this work, one considerable chapter, that entitled Περὶ ἀλθήσεων, has been preserved (*Dox.* pp. 499-527). And Usener, following Brandis, further showed that there were

important fragments of it contained in the commentary of Simplicius (sixth cent. A.D.) on the First Book of Aristotle's Φυσικὴ ἀκρόασις (Usener, *Analecta Theophrastea*, pp. 25 *sqq.*). These extracts Simplicius seems to have borrowed in turn from Alexander of Aphrodisias (*c.* A.D. 200); cf. *Dox.* p. 112 *sqq.* We thus possess a very considerable portion of the First Book, which dealt with the ἀρχαί, as well as practically the whole of the last Book.

From these remains it clearly appears that the method of Theophrastos was to discuss in separate books the leading topics which had engaged the attention of philosophers from Thales to Plato. The chronological order was not observed; the philosophers were grouped according to the affinity of their doctrine, the differences between those who appeared to agree most closely being carefully noted. The First Book, however, was in some degree exceptional; for in it the order was that of the successive schools, and short historical and chronological notices were inserted.

8. Doxographers

A work of this kind was, of course, a godsend to the epitomators and compilers of handbooks, who flourished more and more as the Greek genius declined. These either followed Theophrastos in arranging the subject-matter under heads, or else they broke up his work, and rearranged his statements under the names of the various philosophers to whom they applied. This latter class form the natural transition between the doxographers proper and the biographers, so I have ventured to distinguish them by the name of biographical doxographers.

I. DOXOGRAPHERS PROPER

9. The Placita and Stobaeus

These are now mainly represented by two works, viz. the *Placita Philosophorum*, included among the writings ascribed to Plutarch, and the *Eclogae Physicae* of John Stobaios (c. A.D. 470). The latter originally formed one work with the *Florilegium* of the same author, and includes a transcript of some epitome substantially identical with the pseudo-Plutarchean *Placita*. It is, however, demonstrable that neither the *Placita* nor the doxography of the *Eclogae* is the original of the other. The latter is usually the fuller of the two, and yet the former must be earlier; for it was used by Athenagoras for his defence of the Christians in A.D. 177 (*Dox.* p. 4). It was also the source of the notices in Eusebios and Cyril, and of the *History of Philosophy* ascribed to Galen. From these writers many important corrections of the text have been derived (*Dox.* pp. 5 *sqq.*).

Another writer who made use of the *Placita* is Achilles (*not* Achilles Tatius). For his Εἰσαγωγή to the *Phaenomena* of Aratos see Maass, *Commentariorum in Aratum reliquiae*, pp. 25-75. His date is uncertain, but probably he belongs to the third century A.D. (*Dox.* p. 18).

10. Aetius

What, then, was the common source of the *Placita* and the *Eclogae*? Diels has shown that Theodoret (c. A.D.445) had access to it; for in some cases he gives a fuller form of statements made in

these two works. Not only so, but he also names that source; for he refers us (*Gr. aff. cur.* iv. 31) Ἀετίου τὴν περὶ ἀρεσκόντων συναγωγήν. Diels has accordingly printed the *Placita* in parallel columns with the relevant parts of the *Eclogae*, under the title of *Aetii Placita*. The quotations from "Plutarch" by later writers, and the extracts of Theodoret from Aetios, are also given at the foot of each page.

11. The Vedusta Placita

Diels has shown further, however, that Aetios did not draw directly from Theophrastos, but from an intermediate epitome which he calls the *Vetusta Placita*, traces of which may be found in Cicero (*infra*, §12), and in Censorinus (*De die natali*), who follows Varro. The *Vetusta Placita* were composed in the school of Poseidonios, and Diels now calls them the Poseidonian Ἀρεσκοντα (*Über das Phys. System des Straton*, p. 2). There are also traces of them in the "Homeric Allegorists."

It is quite possible, by discounting the somewhat unintelligent additions which Aetios made from Epicurean and other sources, to form a pretty accurate table of the contents of the *Vetusta Placita* (*Dox.* pp. 181 *sqq.*), and this gives us a fair idea of the arrangement of the original work by Theophrastos.

12. Cicero

So far as what he tells us of the earliest Greek philosophy goes, Cicero must be classed with the doxographers, and not with the philosophers; for he gives us nothing but extracts at second or third hand from the work of Theophrastos. Two passages in his writings fall to be considered under this head, namely, "Lucullus" (*Acad.* ii.), 118, and *De natura deorum*, i. 25-41.

(a) *Doxography of the "Lucullus."*—This contains a meagre and inaccurately rendered summary of the various opinions held by philosophers with regard to the ἀρχή (*Dox.* pp. 119 *sqq.*), and would be quite useless if it did not in one case enable us to verify the exact words of Theophrastos (*Chap. I. p. 50, n. 4*). The doxography has come through the hands of Kleitomachos, who succeeded Karneades in the headship of the Academy (129 B.C.).

(b) *Doxography of the "De natura deorum."*—A fresh light was thrown upon this important passage by the discovery at Herculaneum of a roll containing fragments of an Epicurean treatise, so like it as to be at once regarded as its original. This treatise was at first ascribed to Phaidros, on the ground of the reference in *Epp. ad Att.* xiii. 39. 2; but the real title, Φιλοδήμου περὶ εὐσεβείας, was afterwards restored (*Dox.* p. 530). Diels, however, has shown (*Dox.* pp. 122 *sqq.*) that there is much to be said for the view that Cicero did not copy Philodemos, but that both drew from a common source (no doubt Phaidros,

Περὶ θεῶν) which itself went back to a Stoic epitome of Theophrastos. The passage of Cicero and the relevant fragments of Philodemos are edited in parallel columns by Diels (*Dox.* pp. 531 *sqq.*).

II. BIOGRAPHICAL DOXOGRAPHERS

13. Hippolytus

Of the "biographical doxographies," the most important is Book I. of the *Refutation of all Heresies* by Hippolytos. This had long been known as the *Philosophoumena* of Origen; but the discovery of the remaining books, which were first published at Oxford in 1854, showed finally that it could not belong to him. It is drawn mainly from some good epitome of Theophrastos, in which the matter was already rearranged under the names of the various philosophers. We must note, however, that the sections dealing with Thales, Pythagoras, Herakleitos, and Empedokles come from an inferior source, some merely biographical compendium full of apocryphal anecdotes and doubtful statements.

14. The Stromateis

The fragments of the pseudo-Plutarchean *Stromateis*, quoted by Eusebios in his *Praeparatio Evangelica*, come from a source similar to that of the best portions of the *Philosophoumena*. So far as we can judge, they differ chiefly in two points. In the first place, they are mostly taken from the earliest sections of the work, and therefore most of them deal with the primary substance, the heavenly bodies and the earth. In the second place, the language is a much less faithful transcript of the original.

15. "Diogenes Laertius"

The scrap-book which goes by the name of [Diogenes Laertios](#), or Laertios Diogenes (cf. Usener, *Epicurea*, pp. 1 *sqq.*), contains large fragments of two distinct doxographies. One is of the merely biographical, anecdotic, and apophthegmatic kind used by Hippolytos in his first four chapters; the other is of a better class, more like the source of Hippolytos' remaining chapters. An attempt is made to disguise this "contamination" by referring to the first doxography as a "summary" (κεφαλαιώδης) account, while the second is called "particular" (ἐπὶ μέρους).

16. Patristic Doxographies

Short doxographical summaries are to be found in Eusebios (*P. E.* x., xiv., xv.), Theodoret (*Gr. aff. cur.* ii. 9-11), Irenaeus (*C. haer.* ii. 24), Arnobius (*Adv. nat.* ii. 9), Augustine (*Civ. Dei*, viii. 2). These depend mainly upon the writers of "Successions," whom we shall have to consider in the next section.

C.—BIOGRAPHERS

17. Successions

The first to write a work entitled *Successions of the Philosophers* was Sotion (Diog. ii. 12; R. P. 4 a), about 200 B.C. The arrangement of his work is explained in *Dox.* p. 147. It was epitomised by Herakleides Lembos. Other writers of *Διαδοχαί* were Antisthenes, Sosikrates, and Alexander. All these compositions were accompanied by a very meagre doxography, and made interesting by the addition of unauthentic apophthegms and apocryphal anecdotes.

18. Hermippus

The peripatetic Hermippus of Smyrna, known as *Καλλιμάχειος* (c. 200 B.C.), wrote several biographical works which are frequently quoted. The biographical details are very untrustworthy; but sometimes bibliographical information is added, which doubtless rests upon the *Πίνακες* of Kallimachos.

19. Satyros

Another peripatetic, Satyros, the pupil of Aristarchos, wrote (c. 160 B.C.) *Lives of Famous Men*. The same remarks apply to him as to Hermippus. His work was epitomised by Herakleides Lembos.

20. "Diogenes Laertius"

The work which goes by the name of Laertios Diogenes is, in its biographical parts, a mere patchwork of all earlier learning. It has not been digested or composed by any single mind at all, but is little more than a collection of extracts made at haphazard. But, of course, it contains much that is of the greatest value.

D.—CHRONOLOGISTS

21. Eratosthenes and Apollodorus

The founder of ancient chronology was Eratosthenes of Kyrene (275-194 B.C.) ; but his work was soon supplanted by the metrical version of Apollodoros (c. 140 B.C.), from which most of our information as to the dates of early philosophers is derived. See Diels' paper on the *Χρονικά* of Apollodoros in *Rhein. Mus.* xxxi.; and Jacoby, *Apollodors Chronik* (1902).

The method adopted is as follows:—If the date of some striking event in a philosopher's life is known, that is taken as his *floruit* (ἀκμή), and he is assumed to have been forty years old at that date. In default of this, some historical era is taken as the *floruit*. Of these the chief are the eclipse of Thales 586/5 B.C., the taking of Sardeis in 546/5 B.C., the accession of Polykrates in 532/1 B.C., and the foundation of Thourioi in 444/3 B.C. It is usual to attach far too much weight to these combinations, and we can often show that Apollodoros is wrong from our other evidence. His dates can only be accepted as a makeshift, when nothing better is available.

1. Cf. Cic. *De nat. d.* i. 15, 41: "Et haec quidem (Chrysippus) in primo libro de natura deorum, in secundo autem vult Orphei, Musaei, Hesiodi Homerique fabellas accommodare ad ea quae ipse primo libro de deis immortalibus dixerat, ut etiam veterrimi poetae, qui haec ne suspicati quidem sunt, Stoici fuisse videantur." Cf. Philod. *De piet. fr.* c. 13, ἐν δὲ τῷ δευτέρῳ τὰ τε εἰς Ὀρφέα καὶ Μουσαῖον ἀναφερόμενα καὶ τὰ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ καὶ Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ Εὐριπίδῃ καὶ ποιηταῖς ἄλλοις, ὡς καὶ Κλεάνθης, περιᾶται συνοικειοῦν ταῖς δόξαις αὐτῶν..

2. See Introd. § II. Ephoros said that Old Miletos was colonised from Milatos in Crete at an earlier date than the fortification of the new city by Neleus (Strabo, xiv. p. 634), and recent excavation has shown that the Aegean civilisation passed here by gradual transition into the early Ionic. The dwellings of the old Ionians stand on and among the debris of the "Mycenean" period. There is no "geometrical" interlude.

3. Herod. i. 29. See Radet, *La Lydie et le monde grec au temps des Mermnades* (Paris, 1893).