

SONDERDRUCK

HERMES

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR KLASSISCHE PHILOGIE

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121. BAND · 1993 · HEFT 2



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XENOPHANES FR. 18 D.-K. AND THE ORIGINS OF THE IDEA OF PROGRESS*

Xenophanes 21 B18 D.-K. is preserved by Stobaeus Eclog. 1.8.2 (I, p. 94, 2–3 WACHSMUTH) as an illustration of the maxim that »Time is the great discoverer«. It reads as follows:

οὔτοι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς πάντα θεοὶ θνητοῖσ' ὑπέδειξαν¹,
ἀλλὰ χρόνῳ ζητοῦντες ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον.

Fragment 18 is generally thought to be the earliest expression of a belief in some type of human progress². Many scholars, however, most notably GOMPERZ, have understood these lines as further proposing a rejection of divine revelation on the one hand (18,1), while asserting the importance of independent human seeking on the other hand (18,2)³. This human »seeking« is sometimes characterized as addi-

* I would like to thank L. TARÁN, who kindly read earlier drafts of this paper, and offered many valuable and insightful comments. Of course, I alone am responsible for the views which are here expressed. I would also like to thank D. OBBINK, D. SIDER, and J. LIDOV for their remarks, and especially J. H. LESHNER, whose stimulating paper on Xenophanes B18, read before the GWU Seminar on Ancient Mediterranean Cultures, encouraged this response.

¹ Eclog. 1.8.2 actually reads παρέδειξαν; ὑπέδειξαν is given at Flor. 3.29.41 (III, p. 635, 11–12 HENSE), and is correctly preferred by all the editors; see E. HEITSCH, *Xenophanes. Die Fragmente* (München und Zürich, 1983), 135.

² See, e.g., E. ZELLER, *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 5. Auflage (Leipzig, 1892) I 1, 549 n. 1; A. O. LOVEJOY and G. BOAS, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1935), 194; H. CHERNISS, »The History of Ideas and Ancient Greek Philosophy,« *Studies in Intellectual History* (John Hopkins, 1953), 25 f. (= H. CHERNISS, *Selected Papers*, ed. L. TARÁN [Leiden, 1977], 39 f.); R. MONDOLFO, *La comprensione del soggetto umano nell'antichità classica*, trans. L. BASSI (Firenze, 1958), 629–35; L. EDELSTEIN, *The Idea of Progress in Classical Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1967), 3–19; D. BABUT, *L'Idée de progrès et la relativité du savoir humain selon Xénophane (Fragments 18 et 38 DK)*, *Revue de Philologie* 51 (1977), 217–28; J. BARNES, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, revised ed. (London and New York, 1982), 140; E. HEITSCH, 135–41. That the fragment asserts a belief in progress is denied by J. H. LESHNER, *Xenophanes on Inquiry and Discovery: An Alternative to the »Hymn to Progress« Reading of Fr. 18*, *Ancient Philosophy* 11 (1991), 229–48.

³ See especially. TH. GOMPERZ, *Griechische Denker* (Leipzig, 1896), I, 132 ff.; E. ZELLER – W. NESTLE, *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 7. Auflage (Leipzig, 1923) I 1, 673 n. 1; A. KLEINGÜNTHER, *Πρώτος Εὐρητής*, *Philologus*, Supplementband 26, Heft 1 (Leipzig, 1933), 40–43; W. A. HEIDEL, *Hecataeus and Xenophanes*, *Am. Journ. Phil.* 64 (1943), 271; A. LUMPE, *Die Philosophie des Xenophanes von Kolophon* (Diss. München, 1952),

tionally involving a *systematic* development of human knowledge, i.e., an accretion of knowledge by gradual and minute steps⁴. The interpretation of GOMPERZ is based largely on the assumption that Xenophanes could not have given much credence to traditional notions of divine revelation insofar as he did not adhere to traditional views of the gods⁵, while he otherwise seems to be fully in harmony with the methods and aims of Ionian science⁶. Moreover, it has often been observed that just such a distinction is to be found in later authors⁷, and in such a way as seems occasionally to recall Xenophanes' own formulation of the problem⁸. And so, in accord with this interpretation, GOMPERZ translates the fragment thus: »Zeigten die Götter den Sterblichen doch nicht Alles von Anfang, Sondern suchend finden sie *selbst allmählich* das Bessere«⁹. GOMPERZ' analysis of the fragment has important implications for our understanding of the origin of the idea of

45; M. UNTERSTEINER, *Senofane. Testimonianze e Frammenti* (Firenze, 1956), CCXXXII-VI; W. K. C. GUTHRIE, *A History of Greek Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1962), I, 399 f.; H. FRÄNKEL, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy*, trans. HADAS and WILLIS (New York and London, 1973), 333 (= E.G.P.P.); P. STEINMETZ, *Xenophanesstudien*, Rh. Mus. 109 (1966), 60; EDELSTEIN, 3 f.; LESHER, 241 ff.

⁴ See, e.g., GOMPERZ, I, 132 f.; LUMPE, 45; FRÄNKEL, *ibid.*; also cp. Isoc. Paneg. 32 (cited in n. 11 *infra*); Lucr. V, 1448-57; Vitruvius 36.8-12; [Hippocr.] De Prisc. Med. 3 (esp. I, 576,8 f. [LITTRÉ] = C.M.G. I 1,38,2 f. = Hippocrate: de l'ancienne médecine, texte établi et traduit par J. JOUANNA [Paris, 1990], t. II.1, p. 121, 14 f.).

⁵ See frs. B14-16 and 23-26, with nn. 29-30 *infra*; and cp. EDELSTEIN, 11. Xenophanes is also reported (Cic. De Div. 1.3.5; Aëtius 5, 1, 2 [= DIELS, Dox. Gr., 415]) to have rejected *μαντική*. The provenance of this report cannot be established with any certainty. Neither Cicero nor Aëtius is likely to have known Xenophanes directly, and both are presumably relying indirectly on Theophrastus (for Cicero, cp. Acad. 2, 118 with ND 1. 11. 28; also A. FINKELBERG, *Studies in Xenophanes*, Harv. Stud. 93 [1990], 147-54; for Aëtius, see J. MANSFELD, *Theophrastus and the Xenophanes Doxography*, *Mnemosyne*, 40 [1987], 286-312). Xenophanes may have made some statements on divination, or the report in question may have arisen simply as an inference drawn from the type of material collected in the following note (cp. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* [Berkeley, 1951], 196 n. 7). But obviously, even a complete rejection of *μαντική* would not of itself require Xenophanes' denial of all divine communications or endowments; see text *infra*, with nn. 37-38 and 45. As such, the question of *μαντική* need not be pursued in the present context.

⁶ See, e.g., A 32-33, 38-46; B 19, 29-30, 32-33, 37; also KLEINGÜNTHER, 42; FRÄNKEL, E.G.P.P., 333; and the extended discussion of this point in LESHER, 244 f. Proponents of this view commonly understand the aims of Ionian science in terms of empirical research (see K. DEICHGRÄBER, *Xenophanes περί φύσεως*, Rh. Mus. 87 [1938], 20 ff.), though the notion should clearly be taken in a more general manner; see CHERNISS, 22 n. 1 (= Sel. Pap., 36 n. 1).

⁷ E.g., Isoc. Paneg. 32; Chaeremon 71 F21 TrGF (SNELL); Moschion 97F6 (SNELL).

⁸ On Isoc. Paneg. 32, however, see P. SHOREY, Note on Xenophanes Fr. 18 (DIELS) and Isocrates Panegyricus 32, CP 6 (1911), 88-89 (= P. SHOREY, *Selected Papers*, ed. L. TARÁN [New York, 1980], I, 224-25).

⁹ TH. GOMPERZ, *Gr. Denk.* I, 132 f. (*italics mine*). Cp. *Greek Thinkers* (trans. MAGNUS and BERRY [London, 1901-12]) I, 162: »Never the Gods showed mortals everything from the beginning, but they search for themselves until they discover the better.« (*Italics mine*; n.b. that the English translators omit GOMPERZ' *allmählich*; and see n. 11 *infra*).

Progress, for it places our earliest formulation of this notion into the context of a »rationalistic« polemic upon the *sources* from which our knowledge is to be derived.

GOMPERZ' interpretation has occasionally met with some dissent¹⁰, and several points can be made against his view at the outset. First of all, as SHOREY long ago observed, GOMPERZ is guilty of over-translating, for neither his »selbst« nor his »allmählich« correspond to anything in the Greek¹¹. Secondly, several proponents of GOMPERZ' view have sought to defend their position by stressing the linguistic associations of the verbs contained within the fragment, claiming that ὑποδείκνυμι is a proper word for the revelations of the gods¹², while ζητοῦντες ἐφευρίσκουσιν can plausibly be used of Ionian research. It is said, in other words, that Xenophanes here contrasts what the gods *reveal* or have not *revealed* (οὔτοι . . . ὑπέδειξαν), with what we mortals may *discover* (ἐφευρίσκουσιν) *by our own research* (ζητοῦντες). But the words in question need not refer to »revelation«, »investigation«, and »discovery«, and the standard use of these terms throughout the Sixth Century was far more general¹³. Consequently, GOMPERZ' interpretation cannot be based solely upon the semantics of these words. But even more importantly, it should be noted that unless the logic of the fragment dictates otherwise, there is no *a priori* reason to suppose that Xenophanes intended any strong opposition between θεοί and θνητοί simply because θεοί is the subject of 18,1, while θνητοί is to be supplied

¹⁰ See, e.g., SHOREY, 88 f.; CHERNISS, 25 f. (= Sel. Pap., 39 f.); BABUT, 220 f.; HEITSCH, 138; also W. VERDENIUS, Xenophanes Frag. 18, Mnemosyne, Ser. IV, 8 (1955), 221.

¹¹ See CHERNISS, 26 (= Sel. Pap., 40); HEITSCH, 140; and contrast Isoc. Paneg. 32 ἦν . . . ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς σκοπῶμεν εὐρήσομεν ὅτι τὸν βίον οἱ πρῶτοι φανέντες ἐπὶ γῆς οὐκ εὐθὺς οὕτως ὥσπερ νῦν ἔχοντα κατέλαβον, ἀλλὰ κατὰ μικρὸν αὐτοὶ συνεπορίσαντο. Nor should the negative of 18,1 be translated by »Never . . .«, as MAGNUS and BERRY propose (see n. 9 *supra*); for while such might be correct for οὐδὲ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς (»Not even from the beginning . . .«), it cannot be a proper rendering of οὔτοι, which simply calls attention to the negative; see DENNISTON, The Greek Particles² (Oxford, 1950), 543 f. GOMPERZ' *doch nicht* is, in this respect, superior.

¹² Cp. F. PFISTER, Epode, R.E. Suppl. IV (1924), 339; UNTERSTEINER, CCXXXIV; LESHER, 237 ff.

¹³ For ζητοῦντες (simply = »to look for«), see Il. Ξ 256–8; Hes. Op. 399–400; h. Ap. 214–15; h. Merc. 391–2; also R. J. CUNLIFFE, A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect² (Norman, 1963), s.v. δίζημαι; and for ἐφευρίσκουσιν (= »to come upon«, »to meet with«, »vorfinden«), see HEITSCH (138), who concludes that »Die Worte des Xenophanes bedeuten also nicht, daß die Menschen durch Forschung Besseres erfinden, sondern sie besagen, daß sie suchend auf etwas treffen, das besser ist als das bisher schon Bekannte. Das Neue und Bessere gilt hier grundsätzlich als Entdeckung, nicht aber als Erfindung und Produkt eines schöpferischen Aktes.« (Italics mine). As for δείκνυμι, which can be used of the revelations of the gods, see CUNLIFFE ad loc.; also J. GONDA, ΔΕΙΚΝΥΜΙ. Semantische studie over den indo-germanschen wortel deik- (Diss. Utrecht, 1929). Here again, common usage was far more general. B18 seems to be the earliest occurrence of ὑποδείκνυμι, and is usually explained by reference to Hdt. 1, 32, 9 (πολλοῖσι γὰρ δὴ ὑποδέξας ὄλβον ὁ θεὸς προορίζους ἀνέτρειψε). In this latter passage, however, the word does not mean »to reveal«, but only »to give a glimpse of«; cp. Thuc. 1, 77, 6 and 4, 86, 5; also n. 38 *infra*.

as the subject of 18,2. For the archaic view would not have assumed a complete disjunction between men and gods¹⁴. Consequently, even the assertion of human discovery in 18,2 will not necessarily preclude the continued cooperation of the gods¹⁵. From all these considerations, then, it should be clear that nothing in the language of the fragment in any way necessitates GOMPERZ' interpretation. And so, in order to determine precisely what Xenophanes does aim to express in B18, we must undertake a fresh examination of the problem.

The principal difficulty with all interpretations of fr. 18 is that we no longer possess the context in which these lines originally occurred¹⁶, and this has led scholars to seek the meaning of the fragment in matters outside of the fragment itself¹⁷. Yet before we resort to such measures, it is worth our while to consider whether or not the fragment may be interpreted on its own terms; and indeed, the logic and structure of these lines do supply us with some information by which B18 may be approached.

That some type of contrast is intended is made certain by Xenophanes' use of *ἀλλά*, which is often used when a writer wishes to emphasize a point by denying one thing while simultaneously asserting something else¹⁸. As such, the contrast of the fragment must lie between the word or words introduced by *οὔτοι* and *ἀλλά*; that is, between the assertion made in 18,1 and that contained in 18,2. Now, the most obvious contrast is that of the two time expressions, *οὔτοι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* and *ἀλλά χρόνῳ*, each of which is stressed by its position at the start of its respective line¹⁹. *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, of course, simply means »from the beginning«, a somewhat unusual, though by no means unparalleled equivalent of *ἐξ ἀρχῆς*²⁰. *χρόνῳ*, on the

¹⁴ For Xenophanes' view of gods and men as »die zwei Klassen, in welche die Gesamtheit der persönlichen Wesen zerfällt«, see (pace GUTHRIE I, 375) ZELLER I⁵ 1, 530 n. 3; cp. ZELLER-NESTLE I⁷ 1, 650 n. 3; also FINKELBERG, 146 n. 101, who cites later authorities, but who overlooks the important study by E. KEMMER, *Die polare Ausdrucksweise in der griechischen Literatur* (Würzburg, 1903), esp. 76–88. For the archaic mode of thinking in »polar opposites«, see H. FRÄNKEL, E.G.P.P., *Index A*, s.v. »[4.7]« (= pp. 525 f.).

¹⁵ See SHOREY, 88 f., who cites Epicharmus 23 B57: *ὁ λόγος ἀνθρώπους κυβερνᾷ κατὰ τρόπον σφίξει τ' αἰεί. / ἔστιν ἀνθρώπων λογισμός, ἔστι καὶ θεῖος λόγος / ὁ δέ γε τάνθρώπου πέφυκεν ἀπὸ γε τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου, / . . . / ὁ δέ γε ταῖς τέχναις ἀπάσαις συνέλεται θεῖος λόγος, / ἐκιδιάσκων αὐτὸς αὐτούς, ὃ τε ποιεῖν δεῖ συμφέρον. / οὐ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος τέχνην τιν' εὔρεν, ὁ δὲ θεὸς τοπᾶν.*

¹⁶ We do not even know the type of work for which these lines were written; see EDELSTEIN, 3 n. 2; STEINMETZ, 54–68; FINKELBERG, 157 n. 117.

¹⁷ For an example of this procedure, see LESHNER, where a wide-ranging discussion of Greek divination and early *ἰστορίη*, together with a consideration of other Xenophanean fragments and testimonia, leads to a highly original interpretation of the fragment.

¹⁸ For this common use of complementary *ἀλλά*, see KÜHNER-GERTH II, 282 (= § 534.2. a); DENNISTON, *Greek Particles*, p. 1 (s.v. *ἀλλά*, I.1.b); cp. II. O 688–91: *οὐδὲ μὲν Ἔκτωρ / μίμνεν . . . , ἀλλ' . . . ἐφορμάται*; also Xenophanes 21 B 30,5 DK.

¹⁹ So BABUT, 220.

²⁰ See L.S.J., s.v. *ἀρχή* 1.b, with the passages there cited.

other hand, when thus opposed to ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, will bear its usual sense of »later«, »in the course of time«²¹. It is therefore clear that Xenophanes has deliberately drawn our attention to the simple temporal contrast: »Not from the beginning . . . , but in the course of time. . . .«

This, however, does not exhaust the sense of the fragment, for even apart from the temporal words it is clear that the fragment requires that a certain independent stress be placed on the πάντα of 18,1. While this emphasis on πάντα has good external supports²², it also follows from the logic of the line. 18,1 does not universally deny all original showing by the gods, but far more modestly asserts that from the beginning, the gods did not show »everything« to men. Obviously, we cannot infer from this statement that the gods did not show anything at all, but only that there were *some* things that were not given at the outset. This, to be sure, does not exclude the possibility that some things may have been so shown. As such, the proposition expressed by 18,1, though ostensibly universal, is really particular in quantity, and it is this which causes the πάντα to play an emphatic role in the line, as Xenophanes' point is thereby seen to be the qualified point that the gods did not show *everything* to men at once. Finally, the πάντα of 18,1 is further highlighted by the statement offered in 18,2. The principal clause of 18,1 (οὔτοι . . . πάντα . . . ὑπέδειξαν) is answered, of course, not by χρόνῳ, but only by the principal clause of 18,2, thus placing each of these clauses into a complementary relationship (οὔτοι . . . πάντα . . . ὑπέδειξαν, ἀλλὰ . . . ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον)²³. This correspondence shows that ἄμεινον cannot be taken adverbially, but rather, like the πάντα of 18,1, so ἄμεινον must also be substantive²⁴. In this case, the claim that the gods did not show everything to men, is balanced by the assertion that in time, men find »the better«, an opposition that serves to focus attention on each of the two

²¹ See L.S.J., s.v. χρόνος 3.c; also, H. FRÄNKEL, *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens* [München, 1955], »Die Zeitauffassung in der Frühgriechischen Literatur,« 20 f. Stobaeus, it is true, apparently presumed that Xenophanes was thinking of 'Time' as a sort of quasi-active agent of change, distinct from and independent of mortal activity (see EDELSTEIN, 66). This is somewhat in accord with certain Sixth Century views that tended towards a personification of Time: e.g., Solon fr. 10.1; 4.16; 36.3; Simonides 13.1; Theognis 967 (WEST); FRÄNKEL, *Wege und Formen*, 9 f.; and, for examples from later authors, Plut. de Sept. Sapient. 153D; Diog. Laert. 1,35; and the passages collected by MONDOLFO, 636 f. But the fact that χρόνῳ modifies the verbs, and is not the subject of 18,2, shows that Xenophanes did not consider time in the way Stobaeus implies; see EDELSTEIN, 10 f.

²² This emphasis on πάντα finds its external support in Δ 320 (ἀλλ' οὐ πως ἅμα πάντα θεοὶ δόσαν ἀνθρώποισιν), and is fully consistent with the probable sense of Xenophanes B36 (ὀππόσα δὲ θνητοῖσι πεφήνασιν εἰσοραάσθαι; cp. Barnes, 140).

²³ N.b. the chiasmic arrangement.

²⁴ The article certainly is not required for the substantive adjective; see B. L. GILDERSLEEVE, *Syntax of Classical Greek* (New York, 1900–1911; rpt. 1980), § 36; also n. 34 *infra*. Taken adverbially, 18,2 would read »they do a *better* finding«; cp. the well-known apophthegm found in Mimnermus 7,2 (WEST) ἄλλός τις σε κακῶς, ἄλλος ἄμεινον ἐρεῖ.

substantive adjectives. Xenophanes' point, then, can thus far be summarized as follows: »*Not from the beginning did the gods show everything to men; but in the course of time, ζητούντες, they find the better.*«

There, is, of course, as GOMPERZ and his followers have seen, a further opposition between θεοί and θνητοῖσ' or, to be more precise, between θεοὶ . . . ὑπέδειξον in 18,1 and ζητούντες ἐφευρίσκουσιν (sc. θνητοί) in 18,2. It should now be apparent, however, that this opposition is far less marked than are the previous two. We have already noted that there is no clear semantic contrast between the principal verbs, as is sometimes claimed²⁵. But more to the point is the following consideration. 18,1, as we saw, does not exclude the possibility that some things may have been shown to men by gods, and so hardly amounts to a universal denial of all divine communications. 18,2, on the other hand, replies with ζητούντες ἐφευρίσκουσιν (»as they seek, they find«)²⁶. Now, we may well agree with MONDOLFO²⁷ that Xenophanes here endorses the view, albeit implicitly, that finding ἄμεινον is dependent upon an »elemento volitivo« as an essential condition – for it is, after all, up to θνητοί »to look about and find«. But even this claim, we have seen, will not necessarily exclude the continued cooperation of the gods²⁸. Consequently, MONDOLFO's position must be distinguished from that required by GOMPERZ, whereby this »volitional element« is to be the *sole* condition for our »discoveries«. From all this, however, we clearly see that the fragment does not point to any explicit or exclusive disjunction between divine revelation on the one hand, and independent human seeking on the other: for all Xenophanes denies is that the gods gave everything to men at once, while adding that in time, and no doubt partially through their own volition, men find »the better«.

Before proceeding, we should note that Xenophanes' use of the plural θεοί has troubled many commentators, and has often been discussed²⁹. But this question should not hinder our interpretation of the fragment. In the first place, it may be recognized that the problem of Xenophanes' general 'theology' remains a topic of dispute, and it is by no means certain that Xenophanes would not admit a plurality

²⁵ See nn. 12–13 *supra*. BABUT (220 f.) objects that the presumed opposition between the activity of the gods (18,1) and that of mortals (18,2) is seriously weakened by the fact that the relevant θνητοί is not even stated in the second line. Yet this is inconclusive, for θνητοί *must* be supplied as the subject of 18,2.

²⁶ Ζητούντες, we saw (n. 13 *supra*), simply means »to seek«, and so does not imply any systematic investigation of any sort. The participle, of course, is broadly circumstantial; but in the absence of a larger context, no greater specificity can be attained.

²⁷ See MONDOLFO, 149 f.

²⁸ See n. 15 *supra*.

²⁹ See, e.g., FREUDENTHAL, Ueber die Theologie des Xenophanes (Breslau, 1886), 4 ff.; ZELLER-NESTLE I⁷ 1,643 ff., esp. 649 n. 2; LUMPE, 26 f.; UNTERSTEINER, XLIII–XLIX; W. PÖTSCHER, Zu Xenophanes frag. 23, Emerita 32 (1964), 1–13; BABUT, Sur la théologie de Xénophane, Revue Philosophique 164, (1974), 401–440; FINKELBERG, 146 n. 101.

of gods³⁰. But however this may be, the fact remains that 18,1 is clearly polemical³¹, and so does not of itself commit Xenophanes either to the existence or to the non-existence of θεοί.

We may now try to evaluate the implications of the fragment. 18,1 states »*Not from the beginning did the gods show everything to men*«. This claim, as we have said, does not preclude the possibility that *some* things may have been so shown³². But the statement of 18,1 is cast as a negative, and so more clearly implies a recognition, on the part of Xenophanes, that there was a certain lack (οὔτοι . . . πάντα . . . ὑπέδειξαν) or insufficiency in our original (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) condition. 18,2 then replies »*but in the course of time, as they seek, men find (or 'come upon') the better*«³³. Several points need to be clarified. In the first place, we have already seen that ἄμεινον is substantive. In fact, it should be taken as the *abstract* noun; for if Xenophanes were thinking of any concrete or particular better thing(s), he would more properly have written ἄμεινόν τι or (τὰ) ἀμείνω³⁴. Furthermore, if we were to take the adjective concretely, we would greatly weaken the contrast with 18,1; for there is little point in the claim that the gods did not show *everything* to men, but that in time, they find some *better* thing(s). Consequently, in claiming that men find »the better«, Xenophanes does not state that there is some *particular* better thing which they find, but rather, as they seek, they come upon a general state of »betterment« – that is, upon a general amelioration of their prior lot³⁵. The second point to note is that since 18,2 follows closely as the complement of 18,1 (οὔτοι . . . πάντα . . . ὑπέδειξαν, ἀλλὰ . . . ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον), it is especially with reference to man's original state of insufficiency (18,1) that he will subsequently seek and find »the better« (18,2). We must therefore suppose that what men seek and find involves *material* improvements, since only such material ad-

³⁰ See, e.g., B 23,1 (εἶς θεός, ἔν τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισι μέγιστος); and cp. B 1,24; 34,2; and 36 (with n. 22 *supra*). For the general problem of Xenophanes' 'theology', see HEIDEL, 275 ff.; also H. CHERNISS, Aristotle's Criticism of Presocratic Philosophy (Baltimore, 1935), 220 n. 15.

³¹ See nn. 37–38, with text *infra*; and, for further examples of a polemical use of the plural θεοί, cp. B 11,1; 12,1; 14,1; 15,4 (and 16,1).

³² See text above, with n. 45 *infra*.

³³ For ἐφευρίσκουσιν = »to come upon«, see n. 13 *supra*.

³⁴ For this common use of the abstract neuter singular adjective, see KÜHNER-GERTH I, 267 (= § 403 γ); and, for examples without the article, K.-G. I, 268 *imit.*; also cp. Parmenides 28 B 8,25 D.K. (ἔδον γὰρ ἔδοντι πελάξει) with B 4,2 (τὸ ἔδον τοῦ ἔδοντος ἔχεσθαι). Many instances of this abstract τὸ ἄμεινον might be cited (see, e.g., Sept. Sapient. 10 A 3 δ. 14 D.K. [= Vorsokr. I, 64,8] δίδασμε καὶ μάνθανε τὸ ἄμεινον; also the very common use of εἰς or ἐπὶ τὸ ἄμεινον). But note especially the proverbial ἔφυγον κακόν, εὔρον ἄμεινον (Carm. Pop. fr. 9 PMG = Dem. 18. 259), and Ar. Plutus 498 καίτοι τούτου τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τίς ἂν ἐξεύροι ποτ' ἄμεινον. For the more concrete ἄμεινόν τι (Hdt. 7, 141,2; Dem. 21.109), and the distributive plural τὰ ἀμείνω (Hdt. 7,145,1; 172,1; Eur. Suppl. 196–7; Ar. Lys. 650), see K.-G., § 403 γ Anm. 3; also GILDERSLEEVE, S.C.G., §§ 42–44.

³⁵ So already MONDOLFO, 632; and see text *infra*.

vancements adequately answer to men's aboriginal needs; and from this we can infer that men seek and find just those discoverable *arts* through which they may obtain this general amelioration³⁶.

Now, it has been observed by others that what Xenophanes rejects with his οὔτοι . . . πάντα θεοὶ . . . ὑπέδειξαν is not divine revelation as such, but the old Homeric view that *all* the arts are *exclusively* gifts of the gods³⁷. This has been thought to attest Xenophanes' interest in the nascent problem of *Kulturgeschichte*³⁸. But it should be noted that Xenophanes' formulation of the problem lacks many of the distinctive features of the standard »Culture-history«, including the notion of the mythological bearer of the arts, and that B18 seems on the whole to operate at a higher level of generality³⁹. We must, therefore, try to specify the set of ideas with which the fragment operates.

Xenophanes begins by claiming »Not from the beginning did the gods show everything to men«, and thus reveals a clear recognition of a certain lack or insufficiency in our original or primitive condition. In the course of time, however,

³⁶ See next paragraph *infra*. Xenophanes certainly knew of, and took an interest in the advancement of the material arts (see EDELSTEIN, 4 and 11 ff.; also HEITSCH, 138 f.). But the attempt to distinguish carefully between moral and material development (see, e.g., Pl. Hipp. Maj. 281D) evidently belongs to a later age, and Xenophanes would no doubt have wished to include among the ameliorating arts what we might call »intellectual« achievements; cp. 21 B 2, 11 f. (ἀμείνων . . . ἡμετέρη σοφίη), with B 1, 22; B 11–12; 14–16; and, for σοφίη of the »poetic art«, see C. M. BOWRA, Xenophanes and the Olympic Games, Am. Journ. Phil. 59 (1938), 257 ff. For the rest, he seems to have understood that material improvements need not translate into moral ones (cp. B 4, with B 3), though he did not apparently believe the development of the material arts was *necessarily* productive of moral turpitude (with B 3, cp. B 1 and B 22); contrast Leshner, *passim*.

³⁷ Cp. FRÄNKEL, Wege und Formen, Xenophanesstudien, 341 n. 3; ZELLER-NESTLE I⁷ 1, 673 n. 1. For the popular view that the arts were exclusively the gifts, or even the preserve of the gods, see KLEINGÜNTHER, 9–15; HEITSCH, 137 f.

³⁸ See, most notably, KLEINGÜNTHER, 40 f. Sometime during the Sixth Century, the popular view that all the arts were gifts of the gods seems to have given way to the notion that many of these arts were brought forth, at some determinable point in time, by great individuals, or Culture-heroes. For early (i.e., 6th Cen.) interest in *Kulturgeschichte*, see EDELSTEIN, 9 n. 19; KLEINGÜNTHER, 26–39; LOVEJOY and BOAS, 193 f. Such a notion, however, necessitates neither a faith in *gradual Ionian research*, nor any denial of divine revelation; for such introductions were generally ascribed to the sudden stroke of an extraordinary individual, demigod, or god: e.g., Triptolemos (Marmor Parium 12 JACOBY [cp. KLEINGÜNTHER, 7 n. 6]); Palamedes (Gorgias 82 B 11a, 30 D.K.); Orpheus (Aristoph. Ran. 1032 [κατέδειξε]; [Dem.] 25.11 [καταδείξας]; Eur. Rhesus, 944 [ἔδειξε]); and, for this use of δεικνυμι of »first inventors«, see K. THRAEDE, Das Lob des Erfinders. Bemerkungen zur Analyse der Heuremata-Katalogue, Rh. Mus. 105, 1962, 163 ff.); Prometheus (Aeschylus P.V.); Hephaestus (h. Hephaestus, 1–7); *theos* (Eur. Suppl. 201–15). For references to the later heurematic literature, see K. THRAEDE, Erfinder, R.A.C. 5 (1962), 1191–1278; also T. COLE, Democritus and the Sources of Greek Anthropology, 2nd edition (Atlanta, 1990), with the review by A. GRAESER, Gnomon 41 (1969), 9–16.

³⁹ This generality is quite remarkable, and has been properly stressed by EDELSTEIN, 6.

men look about; and in doing so, they come upon discoveries that answer to these primitive wants, and thereby obtain a »better lot«. This paraphrase, of course, provides us with an unequivocal statement of Xenophanes' belief in human progress. But it also indicates that, in Xenophanes' view, our original state of insufficiency is somehow to be connected with the expectation of continuing improvement (18,2)⁴⁰. None of this, surely, implies that Xenophanes has grasped the notion of a necessary *law* of Progress, inherent either in human or in external »nature«. But it does confirm the claim of MONDOLFO⁴¹ that Xenophanes here expresses the belief, common enough among later writers, that human discoveries are impelled by the recognition of human needs. Χρειῶ πάντ' ἐδίδαξε· τί δ' οὐ χρειῶ κεν ἀνεύροι⁴². While Hesiod had given voice to the notion of a Golden Age, with its aboriginal state of material superabundance⁴³, Xenophanes said that the gods did not, in fact, give everything to man at first⁴⁴. The implication, of course, is that man had many remaining needs; and this, presumably, is why he must continue to search (ζητοῦντες) for their solution. In the course of doing so, he finds and he will find the several arts – one today, and another, no doubt, tomorrow – through which he may obtain a general amelioration of his lot (ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον)⁴⁵. From this, however, we can clearly see that the context of the fragment is not the »rationalistic« opposition proposed by GOMPERZ, but the more general problem of Primitivism and human Progress⁴⁶.

⁴⁰ That this improvement is, in fact, somehow »continuing«, is suggested by the contrast between the tenses of the principal verbs; for the present (ἐφευρίσκουσιν), when contrasted with the aorist (ὑπέδειξαν), should imply that the process of discovery is to be viewed as incomplete. As such, Xenophanes may have thought of progress as continuing on into the future; cp. EDELSTEIN, 5 n. 7; also BABUT, 221.

⁴¹ See MONDOLFO, 629 ff.

⁴² Archytas of Amphissa fr. 3 in J. U. POWELL, *Collectanea Alexandrina* (= *Plut. Mor. fr.* 132 and 147 [SANDWACH]); cp. also Democritus 68 B5 D.K. = *Vorsokr.* II, 136, 12–13 (καθόλου γὰρ πάντων τὴν χρειῶν αὐτὴν διδάσκαλον γενέσθαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις), and the other passages cited by MONDOLFO.

⁴³ Cp. Hes. *Theogony* 109–20, esp. 116–18 (ἔσθλα δὲ πάντα / τοῖσιν ἔην· καρπὸν δ' ἔφερε ζείδωρος ἄρουρα / αὐτομάτη πολλὸν τε καὶ ἄφθονον); and cp. 109 f. (Χρῦσεον μὲν πρῶτιστα γένος . . . ἀθάνατοι ποίησαν . . .).

⁴⁴ Compare the italicized words in the previous note.

⁴⁵ While ἐφευρίσκουσιν ἄμεινον apparently alludes to those discoverable arts that will ameliorate our lives, οὔτοι ἀπ' ἀρχῆς πάντα . . . ὑπέδειξαν should imply that *some* things had been given at the outset. These *some* things, however, need not be any primitive arts as such; and a comparison with the passage just quoted from Hesiod rather suggests that Xenophanes allows that certain of our needs might be satisfied by the natural production of the earth (aided, to be sure, by the gods). Compare this with the later commonplace (*divina natura dedit agros, ars humana aedificavit urbes*) found in Varro, *De re rustica* 2.1.3 ff.; and cp. Lucr. V. 780–836, with 925–1027.

⁴⁶ In using this terminology it is best to follow LOVEJOY and BOAS, who treat these two notions as antithetical, defining Primitivism as an »assumption, as to the time . . . at which the most excellent condition of human life, or . . . the world in general, must be supposed to occur« (1 f.); or

To be sure, on the basis of this claim we cannot infer that Xenophanes produced a full-blown anthropology in one of his lost works⁴⁷, or even that Xenophanes considered the primal state to be one of savage »brutishness«⁴⁸. But on the strength of the foregoing analysis, it may at least be stated that B18 clearly asserts a confidence in the possibility of progress; and that this conception was expressed in connection with a polemic against certain traditional and »primitivistic« notions of the origin of human well-being. But more importantly, it may now be inferred that the very origin of the idea of Progress, insofar as the genesis of this idea is thought to be shown by the formulation of B18, will have arisen from a reflection upon the course of human history, and upon its variable distribution of human goods, and not, as GOMPERZ' view implies, from a »rationalistic« opposition between divine revelation and human search – that is, not from a polemic on the sources from which our *knowledge* of the arts is to be derived, but rather from a consideration of the *historical* problem of the origin and development of human goods⁴⁹.

Washington, D.C.

ALEXANDER TULIN

as »the discontent of the civilized with civilization« (7). In their terms, Xenophanes' position is to be characterized as »anti-primitivistic«; see 192 ff.

⁴⁷ This was suggested by GUTHRIE, I, 400 f.; III, 62 f.; also E.A. HAVELOCK, *The Liberal Temper in Greek Politics* (New Haven and London, 1957), 106 f.

⁴⁸ GUTHRIE also ascribed the doctrine of primeval brutishness (θηριώδης) to Xenophanes, but he is vigorously opposed in this by M. J. O'BRIEN, *Xenophanes, Aeschylus, and the Doctrine of Primeval Brutishness*, *Cl. Qu.* 35 (1985), 264–77; also L. WOODBURY, *Phoenix* 24 (1970), 353. Apart from certain linguistic arguments, O'Brien's reason for refusing Xenophanes the doctrine is his claim that »nothing in the wording [of B18] requires it« (270), and because he doubts the early dating of certain other passages (e.g., h. Hephaestus, 4; Aeschylus [?] P.V., 447–57) which do contain this notion. But more to the point are the cautious comments of EDELSTEIN (10 n. 20 and 24 n. 7), which O'Brien cites.

⁴⁹ To be sure, the question as to whether or not Xenophanes *could* have accepted GOMPERZ' opposition will obviously depend upon our determination of several other aspects of Xenophanes' thought (cp., e.g., nn. 29–30), and so falls outside the scope of the present paper. That he could *not* have accepted this opposition is maintained by VERDENIUS; see contra, J. LOENEN, *In Defense of the Traditional Interpretation of Xenophanes Frag. 18*, *Mnemosyne*, Ser. IV, 9 (1956), 135–6; also BABUT and LESHER *passim*. But however this may be decided, the foregoing analysis will suffice to show that the opposition seen by GOMPERZ is not at all the point of B18.