

## CONTENTS

*Acknowledgments* vii

*Introduction* ix

*Note on the Translation* xliii

### HOW TO KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Chapter 1. Skepticism: The Big Picture 1

Chapter 2. Arguments to Have Up Your  
Sleeve: The Modes 39

Chapter 3. Talking and Thinking Like a  
Skeptic (and Not Like Anyone Else) 87

Chapter 4. Going After the Other  
Philosophers: Logic 117

## CONTENTS

### Chapter 5. Going After the Other

Philosophers: Physics 151

### Chapter 6. Going After the Other

Philosophers: Ethics 181

*Glossary* 199

*Persons Referred To* 203

*Notes* 207

*Further Reading* 221

περὶ τῆς ἀνωτάτω διαφορᾶς  
τῶν φιλοσοφιῶν

- [1] Τοῖς ζητοῦσί τι πράγμα ἢ εὗρεσιν ἐπακο-  
λουθεῖν εἰκὸς ἢ ἄρνησιν εὐρέσεως καὶ ἀκατα-  
ληψίας ὁμολογίαν ἢ ἐπιμονὴν ζητήσεως.  
[2] διόπερ ἴσως καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν  
ζητουμένων οἱ μὲν εὐρηκέναι τὸ ἀληθὲς ἔφα-  
σαν, οἱ δ' ἀπεφήναντο μὴ δυνατὸν εἶναι τοῦτο

## CHAPTER 1

# Skepticism: The Big Picture

*Sextus gives an overview of skepticism in the opening of book I of Outlines of Pyrrhonism: except for one minor omission (in section [7]), I include the whole of this.*

### On the Most Basic Difference among Philosophies

[1] Suppose you're investigating some topic: chances are, the result is that either (a) you make a discovery, or (b) you deny making a discovery and admit the matter is not to be grasped\*, or (c) you keep on investigating. [2] So equally, when it comes to the things investigated in philosophy, some people have claimed to have discovered the truth, some have declared that it is not possible for this to be grasped, and some are

## CHAPTER 1

καταληφθῆναι, οἱ δὲ ἔτι ζητοῦσιν. [3] καὶ εὐρηκέναι μὲν δοκοῦσιν οἱ ἰδίως καλούμενοι δογματικοί, οἷον οἱ περὶ Ἀριστοτέλην καὶ Ἐπίκουρον καὶ τοὺς Στωικούς καὶ ἄλλοι τινές, ὡς δὲ περὶ ἀκαταλήπτων ἀπεφήναντο οἱ περὶ Κλειτόμαχον καὶ Καρνεάδην καὶ ἄλλοι Ἀκαδημαῖκοί, ζητοῦσι δὲ οἱ σκεπτικοί. [4] ὅθεν εὐλόγως δοκοῦσιν αἱ ἀνωτάτω φιλοσοφίαι τρεῖς εἶναι, δογματικὴ Ἀκαδημαϊκὴ σκεπτικὴ. περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἄλλων ἑτέροις ἀρμόσει λέγειν, περὶ δὲ τῆς σκεπτικῆς ἀγωγῆς ὑποτυπωτικῶς ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος ἡμεῖς ἐροῦμεν, ἐκεῖνο προειπόντες, ὅτι περὶ οὐδενὸς τῶν λεχθησομένων διαβεβαιούμεθα ὡς οὕτως ἔχοντος πάντως καθάπερ λέγομεν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ νῦν φαινόμενον ἡμῖν ἱστορικῶς ἀπαγγέλλομεν περὶ ἐκάστου.

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

still investigating. [3] It is those strictly called dogmatists\* who think they have discovered it—people like Aristotle\* and Epicurus\* and the Stoics\* and some others; it's Clitomachus\* and Carneades\* and other Academics\* who have declared they are dealing with things not to be grasped; and it's the skeptics who are still investigating. [4] Hence it makes sense that the most basic philosophies are thought to be three: dogmatic\*, Academic, and skeptical. About the other ones, it will be appropriate for others to speak; right now it's about the skeptical approach that we are going to speak in outline, with the following preface—that on none of the things to be discussed do we insist\* that the matter is definitely as we say, but on each one we are reporting like a case study, according to how it now appears to us.

## CHAPTER 1

### περὶ τῶν λόγων τῆς σκέψεως

[5] Τῆς σκεπτικῆς οὖν φιλοσοφίας ὁ μὲν λέγεται καθόλου λόγος ὁ δὲ εἰδικός, καὶ καθόλου μὲν ἐν ᾧ τὸν χαρακτῆρα τῆς σκέψεως ἐκτιθέμεθα, λέγοντες τίς ἔννοια αὐτῆς καὶ τίνες ἀρχαὶ καὶ τίνες λόγοι, τί τε κριτήριον καὶ τί τέλος, καὶ τίνες οἱ τρόποι τῆς ἐποχῆς, καὶ πῶς παραλαμβάνομεν τὰς σκεπτικὰς ἀποφάσεις, καὶ τὴν διάκρισιν τῆς σκέψεως ἀπὸ τῶν παρακειμένων αὐτῇ φιλοσοφῶν· [6] εἰδικὸς δὲ ἐν ᾧ πρὸς ἕκαστον μέρος τῆς καλουμένης φιλοσοφίας ἀντιλέγομεν. περὶ τοῦ καθόλου δὴ πρῶτον διαλάβωμεν λόγου, ἀρξάμενοι τῆς ὑφηγήσεως ἀπὸ τῶν τῆς σκεπτικῆς ἀγωγῆς ὀνομάτων.

### Περὶ τῶν ὀνομασιῶν τῆς σκεπτικῆς

[7] Ἡ σκεπτικὴ τοίνυν ἀγωγή καλεῖται μὲν καὶ ζητητικὴ ἀπὸ ἐνεργείας τῆς κατὰ τὸ ζητεῖν καὶ σκέπτεσθαι, καὶ ἐφεκτικὴ ἀπὸ τοῦ μετὰ τὴν

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

### On the Accounts of Skepticism

[5] There is one account of the skeptical philosophy called “general,” and another called “specific.” The general one is where we expound the features of skepticism, telling how it is conceived, what are its starting points and its arguments, its criterion and its aim, what are the modes of suspension of judgment, how we employ the skeptical statements, and the distinction between skepticism and the philosophies closest to it; [6] the specific one is where we argue against each part of so-called philosophy. Well, let’s deal first with the general account, beginning our survey with the names of the skeptical approach.

### On the Ways Skepticism Is Named

[7] The skeptical approach, then, is called investigative, from its activity involving investigation and inquiry, and suspensive from the reaction



## CHAPTER 1

ζήτησιν περὶ τὸν σκεπτόμενον γινομένου πάθους, . . . καὶ Πυρρώνειος ἀπὸ τοῦ φαίνεσθαι ἡμῖν τὸν Πύρρωνα σωματικώτερον καὶ ἐπιφανέστερον τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ προσεληλυθέναι τῇ σκέψει.

### Τί ἐστι σκέψις

[8] Ἔστι δὲ ἡ σκεπτικὴ δύναμις ἀντιθετικὴ φαινομένων τε καὶ νοουμένων καθ' οἷονδήποτε τρόπον, ἀφ' ἧς ἐρχόμεθα διὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις πράγμασι καὶ λόγοις ἰσοσθένειαν τὸ μὲν πρῶτον εἰς ἐποχὴν, τὸ δὲ μετὰ τοῦτο εἰς ἀταραξίαν.

[9] Ἐξ ἀνάγκης μὲν οὖν αὐτὴν καλοῦμεν οὐ κατὰ τὸ περιέργον ἀλλ' ἀπλῶς κατὰ τὸ δύνασθαι ἄφαινόμενα δὲ λαμβάνομεν νῦν τὰ αἰσθητά, διόπερ ἀντιδιαστέλλομεν αὐτοῖς τὰ νοητά. τὸ δὲ καθ' οἷονδήποτε τρόπον δύναται προσαρμοζέσθαι καὶ τῇ δυνάμει, ἵνα ἀπλῶς τὸ τῆς δυνάμεως

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

that comes about in the inquirer after the investigation . . . and Pyrrhonian, from the fact that Pyrrho\* appears to us to have gone in for skepticism in a more full-bodied and obvious way than those before him.

### What Skepticism Is

[8] The skeptical ability is one that produces oppositions among things that appear and things that are thought in any way whatsoever, from which, because of the equal strength in the opposing objects and accounts, we come first to suspension of judgment, and after that to tranquility\*.

[9] We call it an “ability” not in any elaborate sense, but simply in terms of *being able*; “things that appear” we are taking here as the things perceived with the senses, which is why we contrast with them the things that are thought. “In any way whatsoever” can be connected with the ability (meaning that we’re

## CHAPTER 1

ὄνομα, ὡς εἰρήκαμεν, παραλαμβάνωμεν, καὶ τῷ ‘ἀντιθετικῇ φαινομένων τε καὶ νοουμένων’ ἐπεὶ γὰρ ποικίλως ἀντιτίθεμεν ταῦτα, ἢ φαινόμενα φαινομένοις ἢ νοούμενα νοουμένοις ἢ ἐναλλάξ ἀντιτιθέντες, ἵνα πᾶσαι αἱ ἀντιθέσεις ἐμπεριέχωνται, λέγομεν ‘καθ’ οἰονδήποτε τρόπον’. ἢ ‘καθ’ οἰονδήποτε τρόπον φαινομένων τε καὶ νοουμένων’, ἵνα μὴ ζητῶμεν πῶς φαίνεται τὰ φαινόμενα ἢ πῶς νοεῖται τὰ νοούμενα, ἀλλ’ ἀπλῶς ταῦτα λαμβάνωμεν. [10] ‘ἀντικειμένους’ δὲ λόγους παραλαμβάνομεν οὐχὶ πάντως ἀπόφασιν καὶ κατάφασιν, ἀλλ’ ἀπλῶς ἀντὶ τοῦ μαχομένου. ‘ἰσοσθένειαν’ δὲ λέγομεν τὴν κατὰ πίστιν καὶ ἀπιστίαν ἰσότητα, ὡς μηδένα μηδενὸς προκεῖσθαι τῶν μαχομένων λόγων ὡς πιστότερον. ‘ἐποχὴ’ δὲ ἐστὶ στάσις διανοίας δι’

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

taking the word “ability” in a simple way, as we said), or with “producing oppositions among things that appear and things that are thought”; since we oppose these in a variety of ways—opposing things that appear to things that appear, or things thought to things thought, or interchanging them, so that all the oppositions are included—we say “in any way whatsoever.” Or “in any way whatsoever” goes with “things that appear and things thought,” meaning that we are not investigating *how* the things that appear do appear, or the things that are thought are thought—we’re taking these in a simple way. [10] We speak of “opposing” accounts not necessarily in the sense of an assertion and a negation, but simply in place of “conflicting.” “Equal strength” refers to an equality in terms of trustworthiness or its absence, so that none of the conflicting accounts is ahead of any other as more trustworthy. Suspension of judgment is when thought comes to a stop; because of

## CHAPTER 1

ἦν οὔτε αἴρομέν τι οὔτε τίθεμεν. ‘ἀταραξία’ δέ ἐστι ψυχῆς ἀοχλησία καὶ γαληνότης. πῶς δὲ τῆ ἐποχῆ συνεισέρχεται ἡ ἀταραξία, ἐν τοῖς περὶ τέλους ὑπομνήσομεν.

### Περὶ τοῦ σκεπτικοῦ

[11] Καὶ ὁ Πυρρώνειος δὲ φιλόσοφος δυνάμει τῆ τῆς σκεπτικῆς ἀγωγῆς ἐννοία συναποδέδεται· ἔστι γὰρ ὁ μετέχων ταύτης τῆς δυνάμεως.

### Περὶ ἀρχῶν τῆς σκέψεως

[12] Ἀρχὴν δὲ τῆς σκεπτικῆς αἰτιώδη μὲν φαμεν εἶναι τὴν ἐλπίδα τοῦ ἀταρακτῆσειν· οἱ γὰρ μεγαλοφυεῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ταρασσόμενοι διὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἀνωμαλίαν, καὶ ἀποροῦντες τίσιν αὐτῶν χρῆ μᾶλλον συγκατατίθεσθαι, ἤλθον ἐπὶ τὸ ζητεῖν, τί τε ἀληθές ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς πράγμασι καὶ τί ψεῦδος, ὡς ἐκ τῆς ἐπικρίσεως τούτων ἀταρακτῆσοντες. συστάσεως δὲ τῆς

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

this we neither deny nor put forward anything. Tranquility is a trouble-free condition, or calmness, of the soul. How tranquility comes in alongside suspension of judgment we will suggest in our remarks on the aim.<sup>1</sup>

### About the Skeptic

[I1] The Pyrrhonian philosopher was in effect already explained in the conception of the skeptical approach; it's the person who has a piece of this "ability."

### About the Starting Points of Skepticism

[I2] The starting point that causes skepticism, we say, is the hope of getting tranquility. Highly gifted people, being bothered by the inconsistency in things, and at a loss as to which of them they should give more of their assent to, went for investigating what is true in things and what is false, on the assumption that by determining these things they would achieve tranquility. But

## CHAPTER 1

σκεπτικῆς ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ μάλιστα τὸ παντὶ λόγῳ  
λόγον ἴσον ἀντικεῖσθαι· ἀπὸ γὰρ τούτου κατα-  
λήγειν δοκοῦμεν εἰς τὸ μὴ δογματίζειν.

### Εἰ δογματίζει ὁ σκεπτικός

[13] Λέγομεν δὲ μὴ δογματίζειν τὸν σκεπτικὸν  
οὐ κατ' ἐκεῖνο τὸ σημαινόμενον τοῦ δόγματος  
καθ' ὃ δόγμα εἶναι φασὶ τινες κοινότερον τὸ εὐ-  
δοκεῖν τινι πράγματι (τοῖς γὰρ κατὰ φαντασίαν  
κατηναγκασμένοις πάθεσι συγκατατίθεται ὁ  
σκεπτικός, οἷον οὐκ ἂν εἴποι θερμαινόμενος ἢ  
ψυχόμενος ὅτι δοκῶ μὴ θερμαίνεσθαι ἢ ψύχε-  
σθαι), ἀλλὰ μὴ δογματίζειν λέγομεν καθ' ὃ  
δόγμα εἶναι φασὶ τινες τὴν τινι πράγματι τῶν  
κατὰ τὰς ἐπιστήμας ζητουμένων ἀδήλων συγ-  
κατάθεσιν (οὐδενὶ γὰρ τῶν ἀδήλων συγκατα-  
τίθεται ὁ Πυρρώνειος). [14] ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἐν τῷ  
προφέρεσθαι περὶ τῶν ἀδήλων τὰς σκεπτικὰς  
φωνάς, οἷον τὴν 'οὐδὲν μᾶλλον' ἢ τὴν 'οὐδὲν

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

the starting point of the skeptical setup is, above all, every argument's having an equal argument lying in opposition to it; for from this we seem to end up not having doctrines\*.

### Whether the Skeptic Has Doctrines

[13] We say that the skeptic does not have doctrines not in that more everyday sense of “doctrine” in which some say that a doctrine is when you agree to something<sup>2</sup>—for the skeptic assents to the reactions that are forced on him by appearance\* (for example, when being warmed or cooled, he would not say “I think I’m not being warmed or cooled”); we say that he does not have doctrines in the sense in which some say that a doctrine is the assent to some unclear matter investigated by the sciences—for the Pyrrhonist does not assent to anything unclear. [14] He doesn’t have doctrines even in uttering the skeptical phrases *about* unclear things—for example, “No more”<sup>3</sup> or “I determine nothing,”



## CHAPTER 1

ὀρίζω' ἢ τινα τῶν ἄλλων περὶ ὧν ὕστερον  
λέξομεν δογματίζει. ὁ μὲν γὰρ δογματίζων ὡς  
ὑπάρχον τίθεται τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐκεῖνο ὃ λέγεται  
δογματίζειν, ὁ δὲ σκεπτικὸς τὰς φωνὰς τίθησι  
ταύτας οὐχ ὡς πάντως ὑπαρχούσας· ὑπολαμ-  
βάνει γὰρ ὅτι, ὡσπερ ἡ 'πάντα ἐστὶ ψευδῆ'  
φωνὴ μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ ἑαυτὴν ψευδῆ εἶναι  
λέγει, καὶ ἡ 'οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ἀληθές' ὁμοίως, οὕτως  
καὶ ἡ 'οὐδὲν μᾶλλον' μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ ἑαυ-  
τὴν φησι μὴ μᾶλλον εἶναι καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τοῖς  
ἄλλοις ἑαυτὴν συμπεριγράφει. τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ  
ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων σκεπτικῶν φωνῶν λέγομεν.  
[15] πλὴν ἀλλ' εἰ ὁ δογματίζων τίθησιν ὡς ὑπάρ-  
χον τοῦτο ὃ δογματίζει, ὁ δὲ σκεπτικὸς τὰς  
φωνὰς αὐτοῦ προφέρεται ὡς δυνάμει ὑφ' ἑαυ-  
τῶν περιγράφεσθαι, οὐκ ἂν ἐν τῇ προφορᾷ  
τούτων δογματίζειν λεχθεῖη. τὸ δὲ μέγιστον, ἐν  
τῇ προφορᾷ τῶν φωνῶν τούτων τὸ ἑαυτῷ φαι-  
νόμενον λέγει καὶ τὸ πάθος ἀπαγγέλλει τὸ ἑαυ-

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

or any of the others about which we'll speak later. For someone with a doctrine puts forward as a reality the matter on which they are said to have a doctrine, but the skeptic does not put forward these phrases as definite realities; he supposes that, just as the phrase "everything is false" says that it is itself false along with the others, and likewise "nothing is true," so too "no more [this way than that]" says that, along with the others, it is itself "no more" the case [than its opposite], and for this reason brackets<sup>3</sup> itself together with the others. We say the same about the other skeptical phrases too. [15] But if the dogmatist puts forward as a reality the thing on which he has a doctrine, while the skeptic utters his own phrases in such a way that they are potentially bracketed by themselves, he cannot be said to have doctrines in uttering them. But the most important thing is that in uttering these phrases he says what appears to himself, and announces without

## CHAPTER 1

τοῦ ἀδοξάστως, μηδὲν περὶ τῶν ἔξωθεν ὑποκειμένων διαβεβαιούμενος.

### εἰ αἴρεσιν ἔχει ὁ σκεπτικός

[16] Ὅμοίως δὲ φερόμεθα καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐρωτᾶσθαι εἰ αἴρεσιν ἔχει ὁ σκεπτικός. εἰ μὲν <γάρ> τις αἴρεσιν εἶναι λέγει πρόσκλισιν δόγμασι πολλοῖς ἀκολουθίαν ἔχουσι πρὸς ἄλληλά τε καὶ <τὰ> φαινόμενα, καὶ λέγει δόγμα πράγματι ἀδήλω συγκατάθεσιν, φήσομεν μὴ ἔχειν αἴρεσιν. [17] εἰ δέ τις αἴρεσιν εἶναι φάσκει τὴν λόγῳ τινὶ κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον ἀκολουθοῦσαν ἀγωγὴν, ἐκείνου τοῦ λόγου ὡς ἔστιν ὀρθῶς δοκεῖν ζῆν ὑποδεικνύοντος (τοῦ ὀρθῶς μὴ μόνον κατ' ἀρετὴν λαμβανομένου ἀλλ' ἀφελέστερον) καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἐπέχειν δύνασθαι διατείνοντος, αἴρεσιν φάμεν ἔχειν· ἀκολουθοῦμεν γάρ τινι λόγῳ κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον ὑποδεικνύντι ἡμῖν τὸ ζῆν πρὸς τὰ

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

opinions\* the way he himself is affected, making no firm statements\* about the objects actually out there.

### Whether the Skeptic Has a School of Thought

[16] We go a similar way on the question whether the skeptic has a school of thought. If one says that a school is an attachment to many doctrines that are consistent with one another and with apparent\* things, and by “doctrine” one means assent to an unclear matter, we will say that he does not have a school. [17] But if one says that a school is an approach that follows a certain rationale in line with what appears, where that rationale indicates how it is possible to seem to live properly (“properly” being understood not only in terms of virtue but in a more straightforward way) and extends to the ability to suspend judgment, we say that he does have a school; for we do follow a certain rationale that, in line with what appears, marks out

## CHAPTER 1

πάτρια ἔθνη καὶ τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὰς ἀγωγὰς καὶ τὰ οἰκεῖα πάθη.

### εἰ φυσιολογεῖ ὁ σκεπτικός

[18] Παραπλήσια δὲ λέγομεν καὶ ἐν τῷ ζητεῖν εἰ φυσιολογητέον τῷ σκεπτικῷ· ἔνεκα μὲν γὰρ τοῦ μετὰ βεβαίου πείσματος ἀποφαίνεσθαι περί τινος τῶν κατὰ τὴν φυσιολογίαν δογματιζομένων οὐ φυσιολογοῦμεν, ἔνεκα δὲ τοῦ παντὶ λόγῳ λόγον ἴσον ἔχειν ἀντιτιθέναι καὶ τῆς ἀταραξίας ἀπτόμεθα τῆς φυσιολογίας. οὕτω δὲ καὶ τὸ λογικὸν μέρος καὶ τὸ ἠθικὸν τῆς λεγομένης φιλοσοφίας ἐπερχόμεθα.

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

a life for us that fits with ancestral customs and the laws and the culture and our own reactions.

### Whether the Skeptic Does Natural Science

[18] We say similar things on the question whether the skeptic should do natural science. If the point is to make declarations with strong confidence about any of the things on which doctrines are held in natural science, we do not do natural science. But if the point is to be able to oppose to every argument an equal argument, and to achieve tranquility, we do engage in natural science. This is also how we cover the logical and the ethical parts of so-called philosophy.

## CHAPTER 1

### εἰ ἀναιροῦσι τὰ φαινόμενα οἱ σκεπτικοί

[19] Οἱ δὲ λέγοντες ὅτι ἀναιροῦσι τὰ φαινόμενα οἱ σκεπτικοί ἀνήκοοί μοι δοκοῦσιν εἶναι τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν λεγομένων· τὰ γὰρ κατὰ φαντασίαν παθητικὴν ἀβουλήτως ἡμᾶς ἄγοντα εἰς συγκατάθεσιν οὐκ ἀνατρέπομεν, ὡς καὶ ἔμπροσθεν ἐλέγομεν· ταῦτα δὲ ἐστὶ τὰ φαινόμενα. ὅταν δὲ ζητῶμεν, εἰ τοιοῦτον ἔστι τὸ ὑποκείμενον ὁποῖον φαίνεται, τὸ μὲν ὅτι φαίνεται δίδομεν, ζητοῦμεν δ' οὐ περὶ τοῦ φαινομένου ἀλλὰ περὶ ἐκείνου ὃ λέγεται περὶ τοῦ φαινομένου· τοῦτο δὲ διαφέρει τοῦ ζητεῖν περὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ φαινομένου. [20] οἷον +φαίνεται+ ἡμῖν γλυκάζειν τὸ μέλι (τοῦτο συγχωροῦμεν· γλυκαζόμεθα γὰρ αἰσθητικῶς), εἰ δὲ καὶ γλυκὴ ἔστιν ὅσον ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ, ζητοῦμεν· ὃ οὐκ ἔστι τὸ φαινόμενον ἀλλὰ +περὶ τοῦ φαινομένου λεγόμενον+. εἰ δὲ καὶ ἀντι-

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

### Whether the Skeptics Do Away with Apparent Things

[19] Those who say that the skeptics do away with apparent things seem to me not to be listening to what we say. We don't overturn the things that lead us, owing to a passive appearance and whether we like it or not, to assent—as we said before;<sup>4</sup> and these are the apparent things. When we investigate whether the actual object *is* such as it appears, we allow that it appears, and our investigation is not about the apparent thing but about what's *said about* the apparent thing; and that's different from investigating the apparent thing itself. [20] For example, honey appears to us to sweeten; we agree to this, for as a matter of sense-perception, we are sweetened. But whether it *is* indeed sweet as far as argument is concerned,<sup>5</sup> we investigate—which is not the apparent thing but something said about the apparent thing. And even if we



## CHAPTER 1

κρυς κατὰ τῶν φαινομένων ἐρωτῶμεν λόγους, οὐκ ἀναιρεῖν βουλόμενοι τὰ φαινόμενα τούτους ἐκτιθέμεθα, ἀλλ' ἐπιδεικνύντες τὴν τῶν δογματικῶν προπέτειαν· εἰ γὰρ τοιοῦτος ἀπατεῶν ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος ὥστε καὶ τὰ φαινόμενα μόνον οὐχὶ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἡμῶν ὑφαρπάζειν, πῶς οὐ χρὴ ὑφοραῖσθαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἀδήλοις, ὥστε μὴ κατακολουθοῦντας αὐτῷ προπετεῦεσθαι;

### περὶ τοῦ κριτηρίου τῆς σκεπτικῆς

[21] Ὅτι δὲ τοῖς φαινομένοις προσέχομεν, δῆλον ἀπὸ τῶν λεγομένων ἡμῖν περὶ τοῦ κριτηρίου τῆς σκεπτικῆς ἀγωγῆς. κριτήριον δὲ λέγεται διχῶς, τό τε εἰς πίστιν ὑπάρξεως ἢ ἀνυπαρξίας λαμβανόμενον, περὶ οὗ ἐν τῷ ἀντιρρητικῷ λέξομεν λόγῳ, τό τε τοῦ πράσσειν, ᾧ προσέχοντες κατὰ τὸν βίον τὰ μὲν πράσσομεν τὰ δ' οὐ, περὶ οὗ νῦν λέγομεν. [22] κριτήριον τοίνυν φημὲν εἶναι τῆς σκεπτικῆς ἀγωγῆς τὸ φαινόμε-

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

do go ahead and raise arguments against apparent things, we put these forward not with the aim of doing away with the apparent things, but for a show of the dogmatists' rashness; for if argument is so tricky that it just about snatches apparent things from under our eyes, how can we not be suspicious of it on unclear matters, and hence avoid following it and acting rashly?

### On the Criterion of Skepticism

[21] That we pay attention to apparent things is clear from what we say about the criterion of the skeptical approach. A criterion is spoken of in two ways: there's the kind that is used for the purpose of trust on a matter of reality or unreality—and we'll talk about this in the account that involves counter-arguments;<sup>6</sup> and there's the one for acting—by attending to this in life we do some things and don't do others, and this is the one we're now talking about. [22] So, we say that the criterion of the skeptical

## CHAPTER 1

νον, δυνάμει τὴν φαντασίαν οὕτω καλοῦντες· ἐν πείσει γὰρ καὶ ἀβουλήτῳ πάθει κειμένη ἀζήτητός ἐστιν. διὸ περὶ μὲν τοῦ φαίνεσθαι τοῖον ἢ τοῖον τὸ ὑποκείμενον οὐδεὶς ἴσως ἀμφισβητήσει, περὶ δὲ τοῦ εἰ τοιοῦτον ἔστιν ὁποῖον φαίνεται ζητεῖται.

[23] τοῖς φαινομένοις οὖν προσέχοντες κατὰ τὴν βιωτικὴν τήρησιν ἀδοξάστως βιοῦμεν, ἐπεὶ μὴ δυνάμεθα ἀνενέργητοι παντάπασιν εἶναι. ἔοικε δὲ αὕτη ἢ βιωτικὴ τήρησις τετραμερῆς εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὲν τι ἔχειν ἐν ὑψηλήσει φύσεως, τὸ δὲ ἐν ἀνάγκῃ παθῶν, τὸ δὲ ἐν παραδόσει νόμων τε καὶ ἔθῶν, τὸ δὲ ἐν διδασκαλίᾳ τεχνῶν, [24] ὑψηλήσει μὲν φυσικῇ καθ' ἣν φυσικῶς αἰσθητικοὶ καὶ νοητικοὶ ἐσμεν, παθῶν δὲ ἀνάγκῃ καθ' ἣν λιμὸς μὲν ἐπὶ τροφήν ἡμᾶς ὀδηγεῖ, δίψος δ' ἐπὶ πόμα, ἔθῶν δὲ καὶ νόμων παραδόσει καθ' ἣν τὸ μὲν εὐσεβεῖν παραλαμβάνομεν βιωτικῶς ὡς ἀγαθὸν τὸ δὲ ἀσεβεῖν ὡς

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

approach is what is apparent, in effect here meaning the appearance; for it has to do with a reaction, with how we're affected whether we like it or not, and so is not up for investigation. I mean, whether the actual object *appears* this way or that, surely no one will dispute; it's whether it *is* as it appears that gets investigated.

[23] Paying attention, then, to the things that appear, we live without opinions according to the routine of life, since we can't be completely inactive. This "routine of life" seems to have four aspects: one is involved with the guidance of nature, one with the necessity of how we're affected, one with the handing down of laws and customs, and one with the teaching of skills. [24] Natural guidance is how we are naturally perceivers and thinkers; the necessity of ways we're affected is how hunger drives us to food and thirst to drink; the handing down of laws and customs is how, as far as our lives are concerned,<sup>7</sup> we accept being pious as good and

## CHAPTER 1

φαῦλον, τεχνῶν δὲ διδασκαλία καθ' ἣν οὐκ ἀνενέργητοί ἐσμεν ἐν αἷς παραλαμβάνομεν τέχναις. ταῦτα δὲ πάντα φαμὲν ἀδοξάστως.

### τί τὸ τέλος τῆς σκεπτικῆς

[25] Τούτοις ἀκόλουθον ἂν εἴη καὶ περὶ τοῦ τέλους τῆς σκεπτικῆς ἀγωγῆς διεξελεῖν. ἔστι μὲν οὖν τέλος τὸ οὐ χάριν πάντα πράττεται ἢ θεωρεῖται, αὐτὸ δὲ οὐδενὸς ἔνεκα, ἢ τὸ ἔσχατον τῶν ὀρεκτῶν. φαμὲν δὲ ἄχρι νῦν τέλος εἶναι τοῦ σκεπτικοῦ τὴν ἐν τοῖς κατὰ δόξαν ἀταραξίαν καὶ ἐν τοῖς κατηναγκασμένοις μετριοπάθειαν. [26] ἀρξάμενος γὰρ φιλοσοφεῖν ὑπὲρ τοῦ τὰς φαντασίας ἐπικρῖναι καὶ καταλαβεῖν, τίνες μὲν εἰσιν ἀληθεῖς τίνες δὲ ψευδεῖς, ὥστε ἀταρακτῆσαι, ἐνέπεσεν εἰς τὴν ἰσοσθενῆ διαφωνίαν, ἣν ἐπικρῖναι μὴ δυνάμενος ἐπέσχευ· ἐπισχόντι δὲ αὐτῷ τυχικῶς παρηκολού-

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

being impious as bad; and the teaching of skills is how we are not inactive in the skills we take up. And we say all this without opinions.

### What Is the Aim of Skepticism?

[25] After this, the next thing for us to go over would be the aim of the skeptical approach. Now an aim is what everything is done or considered *for the sake of*, while it is not itself *for* anything; in other words, it's the endpoint of the things desired. We say up to now that the skeptic's aim is tranquility in things to do with opinion and moderate reactions in things that are forced on us. [26] For though he began to do philosophy with a view to deciding among the appearances and grasping which were true and which false, so as to achieve tranquility, he fell into a dispute with sides of equal strength. Since he couldn't resolve it, he suspended judgment. But when he suspended judgment, it just

## CHAPTER 1

θησεν ἢ ἐν τοῖς δοξαστοῖς ἀταραξία.

[27] ὁ μὲν γὰρ δοξάζων τι καλὸν τῆ φύσει ἢ κακὸν εἶναι ταρασσεται διὰ παντός· καὶ ὅτε μὴ πάρεστιν αὐτῷ τὰ καλὰ εἶναι δοκοῦντα, ὑπὸ τε τῶν φύσει κακῶν νομίζει ποινηλατεῖσθαι καὶ διώκει τὰ ἀγαθὰ, ὡς οἶεται· ἅπερ κτησάμενος πλείοσι ταραχαῖς περιπίπτει, διὰ τε τὸ παράλογον καὶ ἀμέτρως ἐπαίρεσθαι καὶ φοβούμενον τὴν μεταβολὴν πάντα πράσσειν, ἵνα μὴ ἀποβάλλῃ τὰ ἀγαθὰ αὐτῷ δοκοῦντα εἶναι. [28] ὁ δὲ ἀοριστῶν περὶ τῶν πρὸς τὴν φύσιν καλῶν ἢ κακῶν οὔτε φεύγει τι οὔτε διώκει συντόνως· διόπερ ἀταρακτεῖ.

ὅπερ οὖν περὶ Ἀπελλοῦ τοῦ ζωγράφου λέγεται, τοῦτο ὑπῆρξε τῷ σκεπτικῷ. φασὶ γὰρ ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ἵππον γράφων καὶ τὸν ἀφρὸν τοῦ ἵππου μιμήσασθαι τῆ γραφῆ βουληθεὶς οὕτως

## SKEPTICISM: THE BIG PICTURE

so happened that tranquility in matters of opinion accompanied this.

[27] For the person who has the opinion that anything is by nature good or bad is disturbed all the time. When the things thought to be good are not available to him, he believes he is being persecuted by things that are by nature bad, and he pursues those that (as he thinks) are good; but upon getting these, he falls into even more disturbance, both because of being excited beyond reason and measure, and because, fearing a change, he does everything in order not to lose the things he thinks are good. [28] But the person who is indefinite about things good or bad in their nature neither flees nor pursues anything intensely, and for this reason has tranquility.

What happened to the skeptic is the same as what's told about the painter Apelles. They say that he was painting a horse and wanted to depict the horse's froth in the painting; but it was