



“Calling philosophers names: *‘Philosophos’* and the origin of a discipline.”



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Have philosophers always been “lovers of wisdom”? That’s what Plato’s Socrates says they are. Yet I argue that he is in fact accommodating a term that had been used ironically or pejoratively against his ilk (compare Freak or Queer). Linguistic, literary, and philosophical analysis shows that *philosophos* began as a name-calling name, for a person prone to act like a Sage (*Sophos*) – that is, giving political or life advice – in a way that seemed hardly justified by his scholarly mode of learning.

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