

Dialogue, Conversation, and Disputation as “*Play of Logos*”: Based on Johan Huizinga’s *Homo Ludens*

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This paper reveals that dialog, conversation, and disputation of philosophy can be articulated as a “Play of logos” by referring to the viewpoint of Johan Huizinga, a 20th-century Dutch historian. In his book *Homo Ludens*, Huizinga investigated the play-element of philosophy citing many examples of Platonic dialogues or disputations from the Middle Ages, which fits his definition of human nature as a combination of play and culture. Therefore, it is instructive to reconsider some characteristics of philosophy from the perspectives of Huizinga centered upon conversation, dialogue, and disputation as argued in the book because this has not been adequately considered by philosophers or historians of Western philosophy.

Philosophy deals with problems faced by nature, human beings, and God. Here, it is asserted that philosophers concern themselves with these problems while also tightly holding to the play-elements, as can be seen in many examples from Plato and Descartes. Per Huizinga, the origin of philosophy was a form of play or a “knowing game.” In ancient Greek philosophy, the Sophists (mainly), with their exhibitionism and agonistic aspiration, were characteristic of this mindset. This is particularly clear in Plato’s dialogues, which provide evidence of the play-elements of philosophy.

Philosophers seek to not only justify their arguments but also use effective verbal expressions, which we call rhetoric; such expressions appear in their discourse, especially during disputations or dialogue. This paper concludes with examples of Plato and Descartes in such conversation, dialogue, and disputation of philosophy as formulated by a “Play of logos,” which leads us to a more enlightened discussion on not only the relationship between philosophy and rhetoric but also content and forms of disputation within philosophy, as a method of opening a new way to redefine philosophy as a “Play of logos” henceforth.

key words: Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, philosophy, logos, play

I Preface

The chapter, “Play-forms in Philosophy,” in Johan Huizinga’s *Homo Ludens* addresses the discipline of philosophy from the perspective of the play-element. Although he is renowned as a Dutch historian, Huizinga’s work has not received enough attention in the context of the history of philosophy. More, Huizinga did not directly address philosophers in his writing. Nonetheless, his remarks on philosophy, and in particular, his approach to the study of philosophy from the perspective of the play-element as detailed in *Homo Ludens*, may shed new light on our conception of the discipline. It is especially noteworthy that Huizinga’s interest in philosophy appears to be centered on its dialogue, conversation, and indeed, on its disputation. The context of this attention pertains to the fact that the play-element is manifested in these elements because not only are there winners and losers in disputation, numerous pieces of rhetoric bearing the play-element also emerge through dialogue or conversation. This paper draws on arguments rendered in

Homo Ludens to reveal that dialogue, conversation, and disputation in philosophical questioning are all forms of the “Play of *logos*” that largely encompasses all western philosophy. Huizinga’s texts are known especially for their focus on the *sub specie ludi* perspective—in other words, for their spotlight on the perspective of the universal vision of the play-element. Based on a close reading of *Homo Ludens*, the current treatise argues that dialogue, conversation, and disputation of philosophy can be summarized as the term “Play of *logos*.” This definition is tenable because the history of philosophy shows, as we know, that philosophers through the centuries have disagreed with each other in their attempts to address and define aspects central to philosophical inquiry such as nature, what it is to be a human being, and the notion of transcendence, including the conception of God. As a result, philosophical debates and inquiries have inevitably involved artistic rhetoric and consequently, discourses of philosophy certainly bear the character of the “Play of *logos*.”

II Philosophy as Play in *Homo Ludens*

The initial examination pertains to Huizinga’s view of philosophy as articulated in *Homo Ludens*. Huizinga regards philosophy as a kind of competition; more specifically, as a type of athletic contest. It is in this sense that he defines philosophy as play. He writes,

“All knowledge—and this naturally includes philosophy—is polemical by nature, and polemics cannot be divorced from *agonistics*.”¹

At the end of the chapter entitled “Play-forms in Philosophy,” he argues that philosophy is inseparable from polemics which, in turn, are inseparable from agonistics. Huizinga also suggests that philosophy has always embodied a competitive element. He compares philosophical debates to athletic competitions, especially because both domains—philosophy and athletics—are founded on a format that presupposes victory and defeat. Put another way, both domains generate winners and losers. In *Homo Ludens*, Huizinga cites ancient Greek sophists and the general format of scholastic debates during the Middle Ages as examples that evidence the fact that philosophical inquiries have always involved agonistics. He especially focuses on the ancient Greek sophists and Socrates to show that play is an inevitable aspect of philosophy. In fact, he argues that the ancient Greek sophists and Socrates exemplify the play-element of philosophy better than any other instance in the history of philosophy. Notably, this chapter begins with the sentence: “at the centre of the circle we are trying to describe with our idea of play there stands the figure of the Greek sophist.”² He suggests that any form of philosophy that delves into the problems that afflict human beings exhibits the characteristics of play from its inception. Although signs of dialogue or disputation may not be evident, such as the proclamation of winning or losing in Plato’s works, it can manifestly be understood that Socrates and Aristotle (and perhaps even Augustine), try to defeat their antagonists by trying convince their opponents about the validity of their standpoint, which implies their desire to ‘win’ over their adversaries.

Based on this suggestion, it could be argued that the role and value accorded to sophists in ancient Greek society were analogous to the role and value we now attribute to competitive athletes. The sophists were expected to showcase their knowledge, and professional athletes exhibit their physical prowess. Moreover, in *Man, Play, and Games*, Roger Caillois elucidates that play-elements, which actively presuppose winners and losers, influenced the nature of *Agôn* in ancient Greece.³ A sophist was also expected to *defeat his rival in a contest*, and this anticipation certainly bears resemblance to contemporary competitive sport: “In short, the profession of [a] sophist was quite on a par with sport.”⁴ *Homo Ludens*, therefore, advances the view that ancient philosophy is, at the very least, play and that it may be designated as a type of competitive

sport.

In addition, the book also indicates that philosophy is undertaken in the form of a *dialogue* or a *conversation*. Notably, Plato also regarded dialogue as a pivotal mode of philosophy. In fact, much, if not all, of Plato's work is presented as dialogues. This phenomenon strengthens the suggestion that ancient philosophy was a competitive undertaking and that it embodied the notion of play. Huizinga also probes the interplay between the notion of play and art. He further argues that Plato's dialogues epitomize the play-element:

"If these things do not suffice to reveal the play-element in philosophy there is ample evidence of it in the Platonic dialogues themselves. The dialogue is an art-form, a fiction; for obviously real conversation, however polished it may have been with the Greeks, could never have had the gloss of the literary dialogue. In Plato's hands it is a light, airy thing, quite artificial."⁵

In sum, Huizinga argues that in ancient times, philosophy was primarily undertaken as a dialogue or conversation and as disputation which also involves the play-element. Plato, he argues continually, was also aware of the play-element of his dialogue. Markedly, Plato typically sought to engage his interlocutor or opponent in a philosophical argument to resolve conflicts and differences of opinion.⁶ Moreover, his dialogues, especially *Gorgias* or *Protagoras*, were structured like a competitive debate. These texts embodied not merely the notion of play, but also the spirit of combat. Plato's dialogues involved Socrates and the sophists as competing interlocutors. For Plato, philosophy was artistic play, and dialogues involved linguistic trickery. In Platonic terms, philosophical dialogues and debates were also characteristically competitive. Huizinga highlights that Plato's dialogues, conversations, and disputations with the sophists were always combative. As a result, Huizinga argues, Plato's dialogues inevitably embody play-elements, both artistically and linguistically. In Huizinga's opinion, Plato's artistic, competitive, and dialogue-based philosophy has long lasting significance because:

"Our only pretension here is to indicate, very cursorily, the indubitable play-qualities in the art of declamations and disputations which succeeded the Hellenistic era. No very elaborate detail will be required, since the phenomenon always recurs in the same forms and its development in the West is largely dependent on the illustrious Greek model."⁷

Huizinga contends that the play-qualities, or play-elements, of Plato's philosophy were passed on to other philosophical traditions over time. Cicero's work, for example, clearly incorporates play-elements in the form of a dialogue.⁸ This iteration comprises one of the focal ideas advanced by Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*.

So far, it has been noted that philosophy, by nature, is polemical play. However, it is important to identify the key topics, questions, and concerns of philosophers. Are philosophical debates merely a variety of artistic expression? Is defeating one's interlocutor the sole purpose of these debates? The next chapter will delve specifically into these questions. It must be remembered that to examine these particular questions tantamount to focusing on philosophy as a form of play. To this end, the chapter turns its attention on Huizinga's treatment of Descartes' philosophy to apprehend Huizinga's elucidation of the play-element in philosophy in modern philosophical treatises.

III God, Nature and Human: On the Case of Plato and Descartes

What topics, questions, and concerns have typically occupied the minds of philosophers? Although it does not seem possible to provide a precise and definite answer to this question, it is nonetheless a vital point of

inquiry for historians of philosophy.⁹ It may be observed that philosophy developed new concerns in the instances of Socrates and Plato. In addition to questioning nature and natural phenomena, philosophy began to concern itself with human affairs. The following quote from Plato's *Phaedrus* accurately captures this shift in the focus of philosophy:

"Forgive me, my friend. I am devoted to learning. Landscapes and trees have nothing to teach me—only the people in the city can do that."¹⁰

Ernst Cassirer claims that¹¹ most of Plato's Socratic dialogues represent this movement in philosophy. Increasingly, philosophy began to concern itself with problems that were seemingly unique to human beings. During the period of Socrates and Plato, for instance, philosophy started to apply itself to virtues such as justice, love, wisdom, etc. By focusing on the trickery employed by the sophists, Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* makes clear that texts such as *Gorgias* or *Sophists* also investigated human affairs.¹² Even Plato's philosophical concerns soon evolved beyond human affairs. Nonetheless, *Timaeus* focuses on the creation of the physical universe by the demiurge, an artisan-like figure. It is noteworthy that this work of Plato has aroused much academic debate. Although most of *Timaeus* involves the creation of nature and the universe, it turns its attention in the final segment to the right way of living. Thus, while *Timaeus* engages in its argument regarding the construction of the world and the universe, the text does not exclude the issue of the manner in which human beings should exist in the physical universe from the ambit of *Nature*.¹³ As stated above, Plato suggests that the physical universe was created by the demiurge. Plato also focused on the question of God: whether God exists, God's significance and functions, and God's forms, among other questions. To this end, he attends to the myths of ancient Greece, which are also known as *mythos*. Although Plato scrutinizes nature from several perspectives, the varied viewpoints all refer to the notion of *mythos*. *Phaedrus*¹⁴ and *Statesman*¹⁵ are relevant examples in this context. Also, as Jean-François Pradeau demonstrates,¹⁶ Plato argues in *Laws*, especially in Book I,¹⁷ that the gods control human beings just as a puppeteer controls his puppets. In fact, it is rather evident that Plato's Socratic dialogues deal primarily with human beings, human affairs, nature, and the gods. Using Huizinga's contentions, it may be argued that philosophy in general, and not just Plato's philosophy, embodies the notion of play. Perhaps it would even be more accurate to iterate that Plato's philosophy attends to human affairs, nature, and the gods as subjects of play. In addition, Plato addresses these topics in the form of dialogues, a form that has influenced much of Western philosophy. At the same time, it is important to not overstate the influence of Plato's philosophy on contemporary philosophical disputation. As Bertrand Russell declares,¹⁸ philosophical traditions and concerns are usually manipulated by diverse sociopolitical circumstances. Plato's philosophy, for instance, probably created very little impact, if any, on Eastern and African philosophical conventions and practices. This is an important caveat. The difficulty or the impossibility of examining all of Huizinga's remarks about philosophy within the scope of an article should also be acknowledged. This paper therefore concentrates on a single chapter, "Play-Forms in Philosophy," in Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*. In the last paragraph of the chapter, Huizinga elucidates that the emergence of the natural sciences in the 17th century heralded violent controversy and sociopolitical changes because this development caused a crisis of faith and urged people to question authority.

"You have to be for Descartes or against him, for or against Newton, "les modernes," "les anciens," the flattering of the earth at the poles, inoculation, etc."¹⁹

Unsurprisingly, Huizinga refers to Descartes in the context of sociopolitical changes that occurred because of the advent of the natural sciences. It is common knowledge that Descartes' philosophy ushered in some

violent controversies in the 17th century.²⁰ Further, his writings are believed to signify the beginning of modern philosophy. It is also known that Newton was critical of Descartes' philosophy.²¹ In *Meditations*, Descartes claimed to have proven the existence of God and as an assumption of the validity of his proof of divinity, he wrote treatises such as *Passions of the Soul* and *The Description of the Human Body*. In the latter discourse, he applies his mind to the human body and its mechanisms from the perspective of a natural philosopher. In fact, Descartes later became a natural scientist and physiologist.²² On the one hand, his interest in nature and human physiology are represented in works he composed prior to *Discourse on the Method*, such as *The World* and *Treatise of Man*. On the other, following the completion of *Meditations*, Descartes wrote increasingly on morality and ethics, developing his ideas on these issues through his correspondence with Princess Elizabeth.²³ Descartes' interest in problems concerning human beings, nature, and God is evident even without a detailed analysis of his writing, a fact that strengthens Huizinga's suggestion that philosophy, in general, deals with these same issues. This point assumes more importance in the next chapter. Based on Huizinga's assessment of the works of Plato and Descartes, it can thus be argued that philosophy especially embodies the notion of play when it delves into problems concerning the natural, the human, and the divine. Also, the methods of conversation, dialogue, and disputation employed in philosophy are articulated as the "Play of logos" when they are engaged in relation to the subjects of God, nature, and humanity. This methodology of the *rhetoric* distinguishes the discipline of philosophy from mathematics or logic and is essential to the creation of a demonstration that is delivered with rich verbal expression. The philosopher's rhetoric must therefore be more closely investigated to prove that dialogue, conversation, and disputation indeed form the "Play of logos."

IV Rhetoric as "Play of logos" in Philosophy

In Chapter 3 of *Homo Ludens*, Huizinga illustrates that "the nobleman demonstrates his 'virtue' by feats of strength, skill, courage, wit, wisdom, wealth or liberality."²⁴ He asserts that a nobleman also excels in verbal expression and is generally superior to his antagonists. This example evidences that interlocutors traded verbal expressions to compete against each other. Specifically, verbal expressions were tools for professional speakers, and this example represents the play-element of philosophy. Although this paper focuses on Plato's conversation and dialogue, the verbal expressions of Plato and the sophists have received much scholarly attention through history. Guthrie, for example, conducted a detailed analysis of the methods and verbal expressions of the sophists.²⁵ Barnes explicated the concept of argument in ancient philosophy, and Nussbaum revealed the intimate connection between philosophy and literature by citing Greek tragedies.²⁶ Kastely investigated the *rhetorics* of Plato, concentrating on his Republic,²⁷ while Tofghian argued the relationship between Plato's myths and his dialogues.²⁸ Rowe examined the method of philosophical writing through Plato.²⁹ The keen interest demonstrated by scholars in Plato's *rhetoric* or his writing style continues unabated. Only a few academics, however, have discussed the component of play. Roger Caillois suggested that Plato's conversation and dialogue is conceptually very similar to *Agôn*. As discussed in the last chapter, the ancient philosophical practice of using dialogue, conversation, and disputation continued into the Middle Ages. Thus, the knowing-game, the competitive dialogues, and the disputations became extensions of the types of debates undertaken by the sophists. According to Huizinga:

"The agonistic element inevitably comes to the fore at such times. It manifests itself in the most varied ways at once. To beat your opponent by reason or the force of the word becomes a sport comparable with the profession of arms... In the Schools of the 12th century the most violent rivalry, going to all the lengths of vilification and slander, reigned supreme...the hum of argumentation, quibbling, and hair-slitting lies over all. Pupils and masters try to befool one another with 'snare of words and nets of syllables,' with a thousand

and one stratagems and subtleties.”³⁰

Huizinga also cites the example of Abelard, a scholastic philosopher who shunned the weapons of war in favor of the dialectic armaments. In this context, Huizinga argues that disputations were amalgams of rhetoric, war and play for scholars, calling attention to fact that Muslim theologians practiced competitive dialectics as an eloquent art form. Debates and disputations, Huizinga notes, also flourished in churches and schools.³¹ Like the ancient Greeks, students and prospective monks attempted to master the art of *rhetoric* to win debates and arguments during the Middle Ages. In *Homo Ludens*, Huizinga contends that knowing-games and poetry are inevitably and naturally related to each other because both require excellent rhetorical expression. He adds that among other means, the wisdom of archaic thought is expressed through poetry.³² Interestingly, he also suggests that the element of play connects ancient wisdom and poetry and together, these two disciplines gave birth to the subject of philosophy. According to Huizinga, archaic thought inevitably involves philosophical knowledge, wisdom, and poetry. On the unification of poetry and disputation, Huizinga states:

“As a form of competition proper, archaic poetry is barely distinguishable from the ancient riddle-contest. The one produces wisdom, the other words of beauty. Both are dominated by a system of play-rules which fix the range of ideas and symbols to be used, sacred or poetic as the case may be; both presuppose a circle of initiates who understand the language spoken. The validity of either depends solely on how far it conforms to the play-rules. Only he who can speak the art-language wins the title of poet.”³³

Thus, for Huizinga, rhetoric, disputation and poetry are rather inseparable. It is perhaps not problematic to add the terms *conversation* and *dialogue* to the above if the example of Plato is taken into account. Moreover, Huizinga also suggests that it is impossible to distinguish poetry from competition or disputation. According to Huizinga, poetry generates beautiful expressions, whereas rhetoric makes use of those beautiful expressions. In addition, a system of play-rules governs both philosophy and the knowing-game. Huizinga seems to suggest that poets and philosophers have a lot in common with athletes.

Accepting the discussion above, an attention to Descartes’ text mentioned in the previous chapter accords an instructive viewpoint to articulate philosophy as the “Play of *logos*” from this point onward. More concretely, discussions focusing on the verbal expressions of philosophers and their *rhetoric* when they dispute each other could be further developed. As Ferdinand Cosutta or Nicholas Grimaldi have discovered, Descartes significantly demonstrates *rhetoric* alongside his argumentation. The most famous instances of this exhibition are, for example, the *piece of wax* analogy in *Meditation II*,³⁴ the *tree of science* analogy,³⁵ and his use of the notion of the animal machine. Descartes developed the conception of the animal machine in 1638.³⁶ He also argued that God’s presence may be realized or inferred through epistemology. To this end, he cited the inferable, yet imperceptible, vastness of the sea and the chiliagon as analogies:

“When we look at the sea, our vision does not encompass its entirety, nor do we measure out its enormous vastness; but we are still said to “see” it. In fact, if we look from a distance so that our vision almost covers the entire sea at one time, we see it only in a confused manner, just as we have a confused picture of a chiliagon when we take in all its sides at once. But if we fix our gaze on some part of the sea at close quarters, then our view can be clear and distinct, just as our picture of a chiliagon can be, if it is confined to one or two of the sides.”³⁷

Descartes contended that we cannot recognize God in entirety just as we cannot see *all* of the sea. On the other hand, he maintained that we can actively recognize a part of God just as we can, from close quarters,

train our attention on a specific portion of the sea. Some of Descartes' philosophical arguments are built on *rhetoric* or on metaphors. In fact, his preface to the *Principles of Philosophy* is replete with such techniques, for example:

"As for the individual, it is not only beneficial to live with those who apply themselves to this study; it is incomparably better to undertake it oneself. For by the same token it is undoubtedly much better to use one's own eyes to get about, and also to enjoy the beauty of colors and light, than to close one's eyes and be led around by someone else. Yet even the better is much better than keeping one's eyes closed and having no guide but oneself. Living without philosophizing is exactly like having one's eyes closed without ever trying to open them; and the pleasure of seeing everything which our sight reveals is in no way comparable to the satisfaction accorded by knowledge of the things which philosophy enables us to discover. Lastly, the study of philosophy is more necessary for the regulation of our morals and our conduct in this life than is the use of our eyes to guide our steps."³⁸

In the above quote, Descartes uses rhetoric to underscore the difference between those who pursue philosophy and those who do not. He exhibits similar techniques of *rhetoric* and metaphor in *Author's Replies to the Seventh Set of Objections*³⁹ for example, and Descartes utilizes them often in his writing as he plays with verbal expressions. In other words, it would not be inaccurate to declare that he disputes and *plays* with interlocutors by using his abilities to reason. From a Descartes' example, a new way to discuss philosophy opens up: conversation, dialogue, and disputation are the "Play of *logos*" since philosophers argue and play with rhetoric and verbal expressions on the basis of their reasoning, or their rationality.

It now becomes imperative to investigate the *rhetoric* or verbal expressions of philosophers in their conversations, dialogues, and in their disputations as they present their arguments concerning divinity, humanity, and natural phenomena. Such examination will help develop Huizinga's theory of the 'play-element of philosophy.' It will also reinforce the possibility of redefining philosophy as the "Play of *logos*."

V Conclusion

Inspired by Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*, this paper argues that the methods of conversation, dialogue, and disputation employed by philosophy can be articulated as the "Play of *logos*." However, a more detailed investigation is required to strengthen the validity of the conclusion of this paper, although some examples from Plato, Descartes, and Huizinga's theoretical background do seem to conform the contention. A focus on the topic of philosophical disputation will add depth to the discourse on this issue because there are innumerable instances to demonstrate that the ancient philosophers developed or sophisticated their argumentations while in the midst of contestation. The following questions highlight the problems with this definition: First, what form of disputation does philosophy primarily employ? Second, what are the rules that govern philosophical disputation? Philosophers employ different forms of disagreement. The philosophical methods employed by Descartes, for instance, are not the same as the ones employed by Plato, Augustine, or Kant. Moreover, these philosophers belonged to different eras. They operated in different sociopolitical settings and responded to different antagonists. Overall, this example is illustrative of the difficulties involved in identifying a common mode of argumentation. In fact, is it even feasible to look for such a common mode?

Third, how exactly are philosophy, poetry, and *rhetoric* interlinked? Although Cicero also addresses this question, this paper only concerns itself with the perspective of play presented in Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*. Finally, and most importantly, it must be remembered that this paper only compares the philosophical methods of Plato and Descartes. Further research must inquire whether the instances of Plato and Descartes also apply to other philosophers. More layered investigation is especially required to project the

manners in which philosophers utilize their rhetoric and verbal expressions in dialogue, conversation, and disputation along with a more exhaustive scrutiny of the works of Plato and Descartes. The path to redefining philosophy as the “Play of *logos*” will be opened if it can be demonstrated philosophers make active effort to achieve their goals through the usage of *rhetoric* or verbal expression as indispensable tools.

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Notes

- 1) Johan Huizinga. *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*. Angelico Press, 1949, p.156.
- 2) Johan Huizinga, *Ibid.* p.146.
- 3) Roger Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games*. Meyer, Barash (Trans.), Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001, pp. 108-110.
- 4) Johan Huizinga, *op. cit.* p.147.
- 5) Johan Huizinga, *op. cit.* p.150.
- 6) As for Huizinga’s comments, Plato’s *Euthudemos* represents the typical behavior of sophists; they typically indulge in trickery and mock others’ arguments.
- 7) Johan Huizinga, *op. cit.* p.153.
- 8) In this respect, Cicero’s *Tusculan Disputations* is a typical example because most of the work takes up a form of dialogue between “M,” which implicitly designates teacher, and “A” who supposed to be a disciple.
- 9) In Anthony Kenny’s *A New History of Western Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012 or Kevin Perry’s *Philosophy*. Berkley: Zephyros Press, 2015, Articles were divided based on the questions on which the philosophers struggled in each era.
- 10) Plato, *Phaedrus*, in: *Plato Complete Works*, John M. Cooper (ed.), Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997, p.510.
- 11) Ernst Cassirer. *An Essay on Man*. New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1972, pp.4-5.
- 12) Johan Huizinga, *op.cit.* p. 148. For Huizinga Greek conversation, which includes behavior of sophists, contains play-elements. Cf. Huizinga, *op.cit.* p.148. “Games, or what we might call *jeux d’esprits*” designated to catch people out by trick-questions, held an important place in Greek conversation.”
- 13) Plato. *Timaeus*. In: Plato. *op.cit.* pp.1287ff. Especially, 88bff.
- 14) Plato. *Phaedrus*. In: Plato. *op.cit.* pp.524-534. Especially, 246a-257c.
- 15) Plato. *Statesman*. In: Plato. *op.cit.* pp. 309-316. Especially, 268d-274e.
- 16) Jean François Pradeau (ed.). *Les Mythes de Platon*. Paris: Flammarion, 2004, pp.141-145.
- 17) Plato, *Laws*. In: Plato. *op.cit.* pp. 1338-1339, and 1471-1472. Especially, 644d-645c, and 803b-804c.
- 18) Cf. Bertland Lassell. *A History of Western Philosophy*. Or we should refer Louis Gernet. *Anthropologie de la Grèce antique*. Paris: Flammarion, 1995, pp.227ff.
- 19) Johan Huizinga, *op.cit.* p.156.
- 20) For referring some example, Descartes work of *Authors’ Replies to the Fifth Set of Objections, Seventh set of Objections with the Author’s Replies*, and *Letter to Voetius* shows Descartes’s bitter controversies for his antagonists.
- 21) Michio Kobayashi. *La Philosophie Naturelle de Descartes*. Paris: Vrin, 1993, pp.115ff.
- 22) René Descartes. *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes Volume I*. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff,

- & Dugald Murdoch (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, p.327 (CSMI) . Descartes writes as follows that is well known: "my intention was to explain the passions only as a natural philosopher, and not as a rhetorician or even as a moral philosopher."
- 23) Cf. René Descartes. *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes Volume III*. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, Dugald Murdoch & Anthony Kenny (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 256ff. (CSMK)
- 24) Johan Huizinga, op.cit. p.65.
- 25) Cf. Guthrie's *The Sophists*. Although the work does not merely focus on methodology or rhetoric of sophists, his argumentation gives us a basic background on investigating sophist's method and essence on verbal expressions.
- 26) Cf. Nussbaum, Martha C. *Philosophy and literature*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Philosophy*. It may somewhat strange that we cite references on Greek tragedy. We, however, already knows that Homer influences or gives an inspiration on Plato's work. So, we should not exclude our attention to Greek literature.
- 27) Cf. Kastly, James L. *The Rhetoric of Plato's Republic: Democracy and the Philosophical Problem of Persuasion*.
- 28) Omid Tofighan analyses Plato's dialogues. Although his investigation does not cover all of Plato's works in this book, its methodology for focusing Plato's individual works is worth noting for us.
- 29) Cf. Christopher Rowe's work of *Plato and the Art of Philosophical Writing*. Especially, pp.266-272.
- 30) Johan Huizinga, op.cit. p.155.
- 31) Johan Huizinga, op.cit. p.155.
- 32) Johan Huizinga, op.cit. p.107.
- 33) Johan Huizinga, op.cit. p.133.
- 34) René Descartes. *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes Volume II*. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, & Dugald Murdoch (eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 20-22. (CSMII)
- 35) René Descartes. op. cit. p.186. (CSMI)
- 36) René Descartes. op.cit. p.99. (CSMK)
- 37) René Descartes. op.cit. p.81. (CSMII)
- 38) René Descartes. op. cit. p.180. (CSMI)
- 39) In Seventh Set of Objections with Replies, Descartes analogizes his method with architect as follows. René Descartes. op.cit. p.366. (CSMII) "Throughout my writings I have made it clear that my method imitates that of the architect. When an architect wants to build a house which is stable on ground where there is a sandy topsoil over underlying rock, or clay, or some other firm base, he begins by digging out a set of trenches from which he removes the sand, and anything resting on or mixed in with the sand, so that he can lay his foundations on firm soil. In the same way, I began by taking everything that was doubtful and throwing it out, like sand."

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「ロゴスの戯れ」としての対話、会話、そして論争 — 『ホモ・ルーデンス』を基盤として—

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本稿では哲学における対話や議論、また論争が「ロゴスの戯れ」として総括し得ることを20世紀オランダの歴史家ヨハン・ホイジンガの議論より明らかにする。彼の著作『ホモ・ルーデンス』において、彼は多くの事例——プラトンの対話篇、また中世における論争——を引用しながら哲学における「遊び」の要素を探索する。それらは遊びと文化の結合体として人間本性を定義する同書の議論に相応しい。従って、ホイジンガの観点から対話や議論、そして論争に焦点化して哲学の諸特徴を再考することは意義深いと言える。というのも、こうした議論はこれまで哲学者あるいは西洋哲学史家たちによって十分に考察されてこなかったからである。

哲学は自然や人間、そして神といった問題に直面するものである。ここで哲学者たちは自らこれらの問題に取り組む一方、プラトンやデカルトの場合における多くの事例に見られるように、哲学は遊びの要素と固く結び合わされていることが断定されねばならない。ホイジンガによれば、哲学の起源は遊びの形式、言うなら「知識を競うゲーム」のそれであった。古代ギリシア哲学において、主にソフィストたちにその考え方の典型が——自らの自己顕示主義や競技を志向する熱意を根拠として——見られる。

哲学者たちは単に自らの論証の正当化を試みるばかりではなく、効果的な言語表現をも用いたのであって、それをわれわれはレトリックと呼ぶ。そうした表現は哲学者たちの言説やとりわけ論争、そして対話のうちに現れる。本稿はプラトンやデカルトの事例より、それら哲学における会話、対話や論争が「ロゴスの戯れ」と定式化されると結論づける。このことによりわれわれはより啓かれた議論——哲学とレトリックの関係にとどまらず、哲学内部での論争の内容と形式といった議論——に導かれる。その議論は以後「ロゴスの戯れ」として哲学を再定義するための新たな道を拓く方法ともなろう。

キーワード：ヨハン・ホイジンガ、ホモ・ルーデンス、哲学、ロゴス、遊び

