were inclined to minimalism in this respect: comfort and softness, they supposed, were signals of corrosive 'luxury' (*tryphê*). The Macedonian monarchs, however, showed that even formidable warriors could ease their limbs on gentle couches, and epigraphic records of temple treasuries indicate that gods and heroes were deemed to appreciate such things as footstools, tables, and washbasins. Particularly helpful in Andrianou's method is the explanation of distinctions in the vocabulary, from Homer onwards, of such items. I hankered for a chapter addressing the visual evidence, especially on painted pottery, and was left unclear why the author judged this 'inherently problematic' (17) – but as it is this will be a standard reference work.

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Philosophy[87]

Writing general introductions for beginners and non-specialist readers is a difficult task, and even more so when the introduction is supposed to cover such a vast and diverse terrain as ancient philosophy from its origins to the first century BCE. M. R. Wright's *Introducing Greek Philosophy*[88] is a solid attempt at this difficult genre: after a broad-brush chronological map in Chapter 1, she opts for the thematic approach in the rest of the book, with a non-trivial selection and arrangement of key areas of ancient philosophical discourse: 'Language, Logic and Literary Form' (though very little is recognisable as 'logic' here); 'Cosmologies'; 'Pagan Monotheism'; 'Souls and Selves'; 'Believing, Doubting and Knowing'; 'Leadership, Law and the Origins of Political Theory'; 'Ethics, Goodness and Happiness'. The book is sound and intelligently written, with occasional slips (e.g. *five* books of Lucretius' *De rerum natura* [60]), unclear allusions (e.g. 'knowledge of knowledge' is a 'master science that would bring with it a "theory of everything"' [132]), surprising omissions (e.g. there is virtually no discussion of Hellenistic scepticism in the epistemology chapter), and puzzling suggestions (e.g. while Plato separates the intelligible forms from the constantly changing sensible world of opinion, 'for Aristotle the two worlds are contiguous, defined by the path of the moon' [151]). Wright has a certain tendency to focus on Presocratic and Platonic thought much more extensively than on Aristotelian and Hellenistic philosophy, even where the subject matter would suggest a more balanced approach, and the book perhaps lacks a pinch of flair and attention to the current relevance of ancient ideas and arguments to be as fully successful a protreptic to ancient philosophy as it could be, but beginning readers will certainly learn much from Wright's reliable history. A different kind of introductory

[87] In introducing my first philosophy subject review for *Greece and Rome*, I would like to thank George Boys-Stones for having provided such an admirable, if daunting, model of how to write reviews in which accessibility, informativeness, scholarly acumen, and expository flair are happily wedded, and for suggesting me as a possible candidate to take over the task he performed so effectively for ten years.

[88] *Introducing Greek Philosophy*. By M. R. Wright. Durham, Acumen Press, 2009. Pp. xii + 244. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-1-84465-182-5; paperback £14.99, ISBN: 978-1-84465-183-2.

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work, consisting in a multi-authored effort, is *The Sophists*, edited by Patricia O'Grady.[89] The book's declared 'aim is to inform and delight' (7) readers through an ensemble of short studies on individual figures and key themes within the sophistic movement, 'written in a straightforward uncomplicated style suitable for students and non-specialists' (1). It succeeds in its twofold aim only partially and unevenly. While some chapters are reasonably informative and reliable basic introductions to their subjects (e.g. Lavery on Protagoras), and others make for some engaging reading (e.g. O'Grady's introductory discussion of 'What is a Sophist?' and Sweeney's conclusive 'The Relevance of the Sophists Today'), there is much in the book that is too simplistic (see, for example, claims such as 'none of them [sc. sophists] was entirely bad' [18], or the choice of devoting one chapter to Callicles as a historical sophist, attributing to him everything that the *character* Callicles says in Plato's *Gorgias*) and too partial (e.g. Silvermintz manages to discuss the *Dissoi Logoi* without ever mentioning the importance of antilogy for the history of later scepticism – or, incidentally, its very problematic dating). To proceed with introductory books, Acumen Press has succeeded in the feat of offering us two commendable introductions to Plato in the very same year. Andrew Mason's[90] declared aim is that of reconstructing and explaining Plato's central *ideas*, thereby consciously sacrificing or minimizing Plato's more aporetic production, such as the early dialogues and the *Theaetetus*. As for the early 'Socratic' dialogues, Mason's choice is supported by his espousal of a nicely balanced strain of developmentalism, for which he argues in Chapter 2; his overall approach to how to read the Platonic corpus and deal with the 'Socratic question' is sensible, but beginning readers would have benefited from a clear summary of the gist of the rival unitarian options. This is a relatively minor quibble for what is, otherwise, a very convincing introduction to Plato, consistently clear, lucid, and philosophically insightful. Mason's discussion of the theory of Forms in Chapter 3 is one of the best I have read, and not only at this introductory level (my only doubt here concerns his too easy claim that, independently of the possible Platonic arguments for the Forms, or solutions to puzzles against the Forms, Plato 'had a deep intuitive conviction' [59] in the existence of Forms throughout his career). The book deals with other key themes in Plato (knowledge, soul, politics, ethics, god) in similarly convincing fashion, ending with a useful and well-structured final chapter on Platonic 'aesthetics'. It is regrettable that Mason does not offer more extensive guidance for further reading, and opts for quoting Plato's *ipsissima verba* very rarely, thus failing to convey the unique attractiveness of the way in which Plato's views and arguments, which he reconstructs and discusses so effectively, work 'in action' in the dialogues. But I will adopt this book as a useful tool in my undergraduate teaching in the future, and colleagues might want to consider doing the same. The late David Evans' 'primer'[91] is shorter, but not thereby less valuable, than Mason's introduction. It also offers a thematic presentation of the 'core' of Plato's 'subtle, versatile and multifaceted' thought (vii), with emphasis on the role that *arguments* play in Platonic thought. In

[89] *The Sophists. An Introduction.* Edited by Patricia O'Grady. London, Duckworth, 2008. Pp. viii + 256. Paperback £20, ISBN: 978-0-715-63695-4.

[90] *Plato.* By Andrew S. Mason. Ancient Philosophies. Durham, Acumen Press, 2010. Pp. viii + 224. Hardback £50, ISBN: 978-1-84465-173-3; paperback £14.99, ISBN: 978-1-84465-174-0.

[91] *A Plato Primer.* By J. D. G. Evans. Durham, Acumen Press, 2010. Pp.ix + 163. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-1-84465-227-3; paperback £12.99, ISBN: 978-1-84465-228-0.

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the process, it takes less care to inform us of what Plato said, or of the broader framework of Platonic writing, than to interpret it and translate it into interesting philosophical puzzles and arguments. Leaving aside some exaggeration (see, for example, the crude description of Platonic myth as mere 'attractive embellishment' of argument and narrative [134]), Evans offers his readers much food for thought, and, elegantly plated, not only for beginners but also – and perhaps especially – for intermediate or even advanced readers who need to be stimulated into reading (or re-reading) Plato philosophically. Evans starts with an interesting portrayal of Plato's project in the *Republic*, because of the centrality of this dialogue and the way in which it integrates in a coherent argument all the key philosophical themes (knowledge, reality, dialectic, value, causality and change, politics, art, and psychology) that occupy Plato in the corpus (and are the subject matter of the following chapters). Each chapter is completed by a judicious and useful selection of suggested further reading (from this point of view Evans' primer beats Mason's introduction). I was less convinced by Thomas Cooksey's Continuum *Reader's Guide* to Plato's *Symposium*.[92] Cooksey offers some basic information about the context of the dialogue (e.g. Greek symposia and homoeroticism), but his analysis of the text (and of the scholarly literature with which he engages) is too often superficial, muddled, or simply incorrect. I was puzzled, for example, by his use of 'dialectical' on pages 13–14, according to which the *Symposium* is supposed to be the 'dialectical counterpoint' of the *Republic* because the two dialogues *supplement* each other, since the '*Republic* focuses on the political dimensions of the individual … the *Symposium* focuses on the private dimensions'; surely Christopher Rowe has never suggested that Plato could easily have omitted the first five speeches, in which he simply makes a display of his artistic skills, *pace* Cooksey (57); I could not make sense of the idea that 'an *encomium* falls within the realm of debate or somewhere between debate and conversation' (62); and 'the soul-children' that Socrates the midwife helps to deliver are not 'wisdom', or at least not always (67). The most useful section of the book is the final chapter, in which Cooksey offers some interesting information (albeit with little analysis) on the way in which the *Symposium* has been received by, and has influenced, illustrious readers in the history of Western thought, including Petronius, Ficino, Tolstoy, and Lacan. I conclude this Platonic section of my review with Stephen Miller's *The Berkeley Plato*;[93] this is not an ancient philosophy book, but a fascinating 'archaeological detective story' in which the author argues for the plausible, albeit conjectural, conclusion that the so-called 'Berkeley Plato', a herm that has long been considered a modern forgery, is actually a genuine ancient portrait of the philosopher, probably created in the second century CE, perhaps on the basis of a much earlier original datable back to 370–365 BCE (possibly Plato's bronze statue in the Academy). Independently of the merits of Miller's archaeological arguments, which I lack the expertise to judge, the connection he draws between the herm's inscription from the

[92] *Plato's* Symposium. *A Reader's Guide*. By Thomas L. Cooksey. London, Continuum, 2010. Pp. 174. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-0-8264-4067-9; paperback £14.99, ISBN: 978-0-8264-4417-2.

[93] *The Berkeley Plato. From Neglected Relic to Ancient Treasure. An Archaeological Detective Story*. By Stephen G. Miller, with an appendix by John Twilley. Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, CA and London, University of California Press, 2009. Pp. 176. Hardback £34.95, ISBN: 978-0-520-25833-4.

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myth of Er in the tenth book of the *Republic* ('Blame belongs to the one who chooses. God is blameless'), the ribbons that adorn the head of Plato (a typical symbol of athletic victory), and the closing of the *Republic* at 621c–d is undoubtedly ingenious: 'if we lead the good, the just, the wise life, at the end of the race we will be victorious and go on our final victory lap, our *periagermos*, to collect our ribbons' (55), just like the immortalized Berkeley Plato. This presupposes that the creator of the herm knew and understood enough of Plato as a philosopher. Although Miller probably overstates his case when he writes that 'our knowledge of Plato – man, author, teacher, citizen – has been enriched' (56) by his investigation, this nicely illustrated little book might deserve a look by Plato scholars at least as much as by archaeologists and art historians.

Even in the context of the recent trend towards proliferation of companions, handbooks, guides, and introductions of all sorts and covering all areas of ancient philosophy (to which this review clearly attests!), *The Blackwell Companion to Aristotle*,[94] edited by Georgios Anagnostopoulos, is a particularly welcome addition, filling a genuine gap in the market. The forty chapters, written by leading experts, cover a number of key topics of Aristotle's philosophy with breadth and depth that clearly surpass previous companions (e.g. Barnes's *Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*), and often also the standard monographs on Aristotle (e.g. Ross, Ackrill, and Shields). The chapters, articulated in five main parts (1. 'Aristotle's Life and Work'; 2. 'The Tools of Inquiry', including logic and epistemology; 3. 'Theoretical Knowledge', including metaphysics, physics, psychology, and biology; 4. 'Practical Knowledge', including ethics and politics; 5. 'Productive Knowledge', including rhetoric and poetics), vary in length and scope, and, together with more wide-ranging and traditional topics (such as 'Deductive Logic', 'The Aristotelian *Psychē*' or 'The Nature and Goals of Rhetoric'), the reader will find a number of more narrowly focused, essay-style chapters (e.g. 'Aristotle on Universals' and 'Mixing the Elements'). This state-of-the-art companion is bound to become a standard tool for university lecturers who need compact, reliable introductory discussions of the main aspects of Aristotle's thought for their advanced undergraduates and graduate students, and a useful resource for scholars who are approaching less familiar Aristotelian topics for the first time. The bibliographies of the various chapters tend to be rather basic, and include little literature that is not in English. An index of passages would have been welcome.

In *Doing and Being*,[95] Jonathan Beere offers in-depth analysis of one fundamental Aristotelian text, Book Theta of the *Metaphysics*, which grapples with the concepts of power, possibility, capacity/potentiality (*dunamis*), activity/actuality (*energeia*), fulfilment (*entelecheia*), and change (*kinēsis*), and their complex relationships (I have adopted Beere's translations of the relevant Greek terms, but one of the most distinctive and interesting theses of the book is that, in fact, it is misleading to think of *dunamis* and *energeia* as somehow homonymous, or to use the different translations capacity/potentiality and activity/actuality as if they selected different *meanings* of the two words). Beere begins by usefully placing the Aristotelian project against the

[94] *A Companion to Aristotle*. Edited by Georgios Anagnostopoulos. Blackwell Companions to Philosophy. Malden, MA and Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. Pp. xviii + 648. Hardback £115, ISBN: 978-1-4051-2223-8.

[95] *Doing and Being. An Interpretation of Aristotle's* Metaphysics *Theta*. By Jonathan Beere. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. xiv + 367. Hardback £48, ISBN: 978-0-19-920670-4.

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background of the 'battle of Gods and Giants' in Plato's *Sophist* (I was surprised, however, by the suggestion that for Plato 'the Forms associate with Change, and this association enables them to think and live' [10]) and within the framework of the previous books of the *Metaphysics*, also offering an admirably lucid preliminary sketch of the overall structure and expository strategy of Theta. In the rest of the book, he develops a detailed, clear (as far as notoriously difficult texts such as, e.g., Theta 3 and 4 allow), and philosophically perceptive analysis of Theta, chapter by chapter, that will deserve careful study by any student of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (it is at least worth mentioning here Beere's 'analogical' interpretation of the semantics of the term *energeia*, which greatly emphasizes the priority of its original 'activity' nuance [Chapters 8 and 9]). Much more than his metaphysics, Aristotle's ethics has seen a trend towards philosophical rediscovery, reassessment, and reappropriation in the last few decades. The meta-ethical aspects of the philosopher's virtue ethics have been subject to more intense scrutiny than his conception and classification of ethical virtue itself, however. In *The Virtue of Aristotle's Ethics*,[96] Paula Gottlieb aims to rectify this state of affairs, by focusing especially on 'those parts of Aristotle's theory that are often denigrated or neglected, such as Aristotle's doctrine of the mean and the nameless virtues' (1); these parts can shed light on other key but problematic aspects of Aristotelian ethics (e.g. moral dilemmas, emotions, practical syllogism, and the 'unity' of ethical virtues and their complex interconnection to practical wisdom). Gottlieb declares her aim to reach a wide readership, from undergraduate students to Greek philosophy specialists and virtue ethicists; her admirably clear style, her numerous synopses of the argument, and her constant effort to read Aristotle, as much as possible, in his own terms and sympathetically make the attempt largely successful. The majority of chapters are sufficiently self-contained to be profitably read as self-standing essays on key aspects of Aristotle's virtue ethics, but at the same time they are intelligently unified by the *file rouge* of Gottlieb's valiant defence of the importance and wide-ranging implications of the Aristotelian insight that ethical virtue is a mean. I mention here Chapter 6 on moral dilemmas as a good example of the virtues of Gottlieb's approach: she identifies what is distinctive, and ultimately attractive and instructive, in the way in which Aristotle approaches moral dilemmas and 'dirty hands' scenarios from a perspective radically different from the one prevalent in modern discussions. Not all chapters, however, are equally compelling: in Chapter 8, Gottlieb argues that Aristotle's notoriously obscure 'practical syllogism' plays a central role in his ethics, and in the explanation of why and how practical wisdom requires ethical virtue, but I find her reconstruction unconvincing. For example, at *Nicomachean Ethics* 7.3.1147a25–33 there is no suggestion whatsoever, *pace* Gottlieb (165), that temperance itself functions as the middle term in the mentioned practical syllogism concluding that one should not eat sweets. According to Gottlieb, awareness of one's own virtue ('I am a temperate human being'), as opposed to, for example, one's own physical state (e.g. 'I have diabetes'), plays a key role in the minor premise of the syllogism, but surely the justification why I should not eat sweets is that they are not healthy for people in certain conditions, such as diabetes, and I am a diabetic, and not that it is generally inappropriate for temperate

[96] *The Virtue of Aristotle's Ethics*. By Paula Gottlieb. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009. Pp. xix + 241. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-0-521-76176-5.

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persons to indulge in sweets, and I am temperate (Gottlieb's interpretation also bears the counterintuitive consequence that only virtuous persons use practical syllogisms). I devote the second half of this review to a number of recent publications in the area of Hellenistic philosophy. As James Warren remarks in his enjoyable short introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism*,[97] 'Epicurean philosophy has always tended to provoke strong reactions' (1) because of strong pre-existing attitudes towards its materialistic account of the universe and its hedonistic ethics: these reactions, whether negative or positive, have often sprung from misunderstandings of the real import of these and other foundations of Epicureanism. Warren's *Companion* is a valuable new tool for readers who need a reliable hand to avoid or dispel such misunderstandings: it contains a set of consistently high-quality chapters, written by leading experts and covering all the main areas of Epicureanism, from physics to epistemology, from psychology to ethics (some of these go well beyond the introductory nature that we have come to expect from companions in terms of completeness and technical sophistication, e.g. Atherton's chapter on Epicurean philosophy of language). I was particularly impressed by the way in which the first three chapters succeed in reconstructing in an informative, lively, and interesting way the history of the school, from its roots in Hellenistic Athens, through the Roman Republic and Empire, and on to later antiquity. This kind of diachronic approach is always liable to produce pedestrian results, but the triad of chapters by Clay, Sedley, and Erler is among the highlights of this *Companion*, and particularly effective in emphasizing the point, often missed, that Epicureanism, just as other Hellenistic schools, was a developing philosophy that was able to respond as well as contribute to the developing cultures of antiquity. The author of the (excellent) eighth chapter on 'Action and Responsibility', Tim O'Keefe, also published in 2010 his own introduction to Epicureanism[98] in the fast-growing 'Ancient Philosophies' series by Acumen Press (the same as Mason's *Plato*). This book targets a slightly less advanced readership than the *Companion*, and will be an ideal tool for teachers and undergraduates who need a reliable and engaging general introduction to Epicureanism, for example within survey courses on ancient philosophy, or in the context of more specialist courses focusing on certain aspects of Epicureanism. The writing is clear and enjoyable, and O'Keefe has a knack for placing Epicurean arguments effectively within the broader framework of ancient philosophical debates. Some more quoting of key primary sources would have been welcome, but O'Keefe's paraphrases and summaries are reliable, and the main narrative, which typically steers clear of scholarly controversies but is clearly backed by solid scholarship, is supplemented by a 'Further Reading' section that provides information on the main ancient sources to be consulted (with useful references to the Long–Sedley and Inwood–Gerson collections) and on two or three key pieces of secondary literature in English for each main topic. As Warren notices in his introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism*, a feature that makes the study of Epicureanism

[97] *The Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism*. Edited by James Warren. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009. Pp. ix + 342. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-0-521-87347-5; paperback £19.99, ISBN: 978-0-521-69530-5.

[98] *Epicureanism*. By Tim O'Keefe. Ancient Philosophies. Durham, Acumen Press, 2010. Pp. xvii + 206. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-1-84465-169-6; paperback £14.99, ISBN: 978-1-84465-170-2.

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rather unusual in ancient philosophy is the steady flow of new texts, new readings, and new material to be integrated into our overall understanding of the school, in particular from the pool of Herculaneum papyri and from the Oinoanda inscription. Benjamin Henry contributes to this ongoing process with a new edition, accompanied by the first complete English translation, notes, and introduction, of P.Herc. 1050, which preserves rather more than one-third of the fourth book of Philodemus' *On Death*.[99] The fragmentary text of thirty-nine columns has been reconstituted by Henry with the help of infrared imaging technology and is reproduced photographically at the end of the volume (some of the published pictures are virtually illegible, but some are nice and clear, and the reader can consult them against Henry's edition). The translation is literal and reliable and, together with the edition of the Greek text, will be an invaluable tool for further philosophical analysis of this intriguing Epicurean source. Henry himself, in the introduction, does little more than summarize the text, while his description of the papyrus and its discovery, unrolling, and editing is a fascinating piece in its own right, presented with commendable precision and, at the same time, accessible to non-specialists. Reading the remnants of the Epicurean arguments against the fear of death reconstructed and translated in Henry's book, and realizing that they probably represent less than *one-tenth* of the original length of Philodemus' treatise *On Death*, is a healthy reminder of how much ancient philosophical literature we have lost, how much we can hope to recover in the future, and how much interpretive work remains to be done on what has been rediscovered in the last couple of centuries. Two recent publications in Italian focus on more canonical texts in the Epicurean tradition. In *Epicuro.* Epistola a Erodoto,[100] Francesco Verde offers a reliable (albeit occasionally over-literal: see, for example, 'insecabili' for the adjectival use of *atoma* in §41) Italian translation of the letter to Herodotus, with Marcovich's Greek text (with a few alterations) and an extensive commentary, which is extremely lucid, perceptive, and well informed and an invaluable mine of up-to-date bibliographical references (the volume includes a forty-page bibliography). The book opens with a short introduction by Emidio Spinelli, who provides an intelligent discussion of the prominent role of memory and memorization in Epicureanism, and especially in Epicurus' own adoption and justification of the *genre* of didactic letters (the interesting suggestion that the programmatic occurrence of *tupos* in the opening §41 refers to a mnemonic material *imprint* is more conjectural, I believe, than Spinelli allows). Carmelo Salemme's *Le possibilità del reale*[101] provides a Latin text (surprisingly, it is not clear *whose* edition), with Italian translation and running commentary, of the meteorological section of the sixth book of Lucretius' *De rerum natura*. The commentary is learned enough, but quite unoriginal and focused almost exclusively on minute textual, linguistic, and literary issues. The essay on pages 95–112 promises to be more far-reaching with its discussion of the relationship between

[99] *Philodemus*, On Death. Translated with an introduction and notes by W. Benjamin Henry. Atlanta, GA, Society of Biblical Literature, 2009. Pp. xxxiv + 160. Paperback £27.50, ISBN: 978-1-58983-446-0.

[100] *Epicuro.* Epistola a Erodoto. Translation and commentary by Francesco Verde, with an introduction by Emidio Spinelli. Rome, Carocci, 2010. Pp. 275. Paperback €23, ISBN: 978-88-430-5320-9.

[101] *Le possibilità del reale. Lucrezio,* De rerum natura *6, 96–534*. By Carmelo Salemme. Naples, Loffredo Editore, 2009. Pp. 142. Paperback €14.50, ISBN: 978-8-875-64328-7.

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analogy and metaphor in Lucretius' art and the Epicurean doctrines of *simulacra* and multiple explanations, but I found it somewhat lacking in rigour and lucidity. Stoicism has also received its fair share of attention in the last couple of years. *God and Cosmos in Stoicism*, edited by Ricardo Salles,[102] is a nicely cohesive set of papers all exploring, from different and complementary angles, the intimate connection between theology and cosmology in the Stoic system. The volume is prefaced by an extremely useful introduction, in which Salles does a very good job of drawing a map of the terrain and summarizing the key contentions of the various contributors, thus putting them in fruitful conversation from the start. Part I of the book focuses on the active and demiurgical character of God (Bénatouïl), his corporeal but non-materialistic nature (Gourinat), and fate as the chain of causes through which God acts throughout the cosmos (Sauvé Meyer). Part II turns to Stoic conflagration (Salles) and elemental theory (Cooper), and studies how Stoic cosmology relates to Peripatetic sources (Kupreeva). The third and final part examines the ethical and religious implications of Stoic philosophical theology (Algra), and especially the ethical dimension and influence of physics, cosmology, and theology (Boeri and Inwood). The quality of the scholarly analysis is high and, while the triad of more technical treatments in Part II will probably be almost exclusively of interest to specialists, the other, more wide-ranging discussions will serve as an excellent, albeit not comprehensive, introduction to Stoic cosmology and theology for advanced students, too (from this point of view, I will just mention Bénatouïl's extremely lucid treatment of the Stoic 'hands-on', 'micro-managing' providentialism and Sauve Meyer's clear elucidation of the idea that the Stoic 'chain of causes' (*heirmos*) is actually best understood in relation to the Stoic doctrine of universal cosmic 'sympathy', and thus as the cohesion of all bodies into a unified *network* and *interweaving* of reciprocal influences). A project analogous to that undertaken by the authors of the papers of Part III underlies long stretches of Christoph Jedan's *Stoic Virtues*,[103] which focuses on the theological underpinning of Stoic (particularly Chrysippean) virtue ethics on the basis of the idea that 'the religious tenor of Stoic philosophy provides the key for an adequate understanding of…a number of counterintuitive and seemingly incoherent Stoic statements' (e.g. the self-sufficiency of virtue for happiness, the non-graduality of virtue, and the versatility and contentiousness of practical prescriptions) (3). The book opens with a clear overview of the Stoic 'religious world view', including corporealism, theology, and fate (I am not sure, however, that I understand Jedan's suggestion that the two distinct pictures of fate according to which (a) only certain landmarks in individual human lives are fated or (b) absolutely everything is fated coexisted in Chrysippus, probably because their difference escaped his notice: certainly the Chrysippean description of fate as a preliminary cause is by no means indicative of a traditional picture of personal fate, *pace* Jedan [40]). The rest of the book is nicely structured in three main parts that deal with Stoic characterizations of the virtues themselves, theories of how human beings can attain virtue, and 'practices' of virtue. This core of the book makes a

[102] *God and Cosmos in Stoicism*. Edited by Ricardo Salles. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. x + 274. Hardback £40, ISBN: 978-0-19-955614-4.

[103] *Stoic Virtues. Chrysippus and the Religious Character of Stoic Ethics*. By Christoph Jedan. London and New York, Continuum, 2009. Pp. xi+230. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-1-4411-1252-1.

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valuable fresh contribution to the literature on Stoic ethics, which has tended to eschew the kind of painstaking textual and philosophical analysis of our sources on the Stoic theory and classification of virtue that Jedan undertakes. The volume ends with two useful appendixes containing tables of Stoic and Aristotelian virtues and a brief comparison between the two sets – in fact, Jedan could usefully be read in parallel with Gottlieb on Aristotle's virtues. By contrast, and surprisingly, Jedan has virtually nothing to say on the Socratic origin of the central Stoic ideas concerning the complex unity and plurality of virtues and their nature as knowledge. Stoic ethics is the subject matter of two other recent publications. The second-century-CE Stoic Hierocles is widely recognized as an important source for our knowledge of Stoic philosophy. Ilaria Ramelli, via David Konstan, now offers the first complete English translation of all of Hierocles' writings (the surviving papyrus sections of the *Elements of Ethics*, the extracts from *On Appropriate Acts* in Stobaeus, and five short Suda fragments), with facing Greek text (the Bastianini–Long edition for the *Elements*, von Arnim for the rest), commentary, and an extensive introductory essay.[104] The *Elements of Ethics* is one of our key sources for the Stoic doctrine of *oikeiōsis* ('appropriation'), which has been at the centre of extensive scholarly interest in the last few years, while *On Appropriate Acts* focuses on the 'duties' (*kathēkonta*) that human beings have towards others (as Ramelli clarifies [xliv–xlvii], there is in fact a direct, albeit ultimately problematic, philosophical connection between the two Stoic theories). Ramelli's essay and commentary are extremely informative, and particularly thoughtful in identifying what of Hierocles' discussion draws on early Stoicism, what on later Stoicism, and what might be distinctively Hieroclean. As far as I can judge, she does not appear to advance any especially novel interpretation of Hierocles' thought and output but, thanks also to its very extensive *status quaestionis* and bibliography (perhaps with a slight bias towards Italian literature, including forty-three titles by Ramelli herself!), the book is certainly going to become a standard tool for anyone who engages in research on Hierocles and his contribution to our understanding of Stoic ethics. John Sellars' *The Art of Living*[105] is not, strictly speaking, a new addition to the literature on Stoicism, since the book was originally published by a different press in 2003. Readers who are already familiar with Sellars' work will find a six-page preface to this second edition, in which the author tries to address some of the reactions to his book that have emerged since its first publication (the rest of the book is unchanged, including pagination). New readers will encounter an eminently readable, engaging, and intelligent book that ultimately fails to convince of its main and most controversial contention that, for the Stoics, as especially manifested by Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, 'philosophy is something that is *primarily* expressed in one's way of life' (4), an 'art of living' in which *logos* ('philosophical arguments, theories, and doctrines') 'is merely the first part of a philosophical education' and 'will always remain secondary' to the practice itself of self-transformation honed through constant training or 'spiritual exercise' (*askēsis*)

[104] *Hierocles the Stoic*. Elements of Ethics, *Fragments, and Excerpts*. By Ilaria Ramelli. Translated by David Konstan. Atlanta, GA, Society of Biblical Literature, 2009. Pp. lxxxix + 179. Paperback £17.99, ISBN: 978-1-58983-418-7.

[105] *The Art of Living. The Stoics on the Nature and Function of Philosophy*. By John Sellars. Second edition. London, Bristol Classical Press, 2009. Pp. xiv + 228. Paperback £16.99, ISBN: 978-1-85399-724-2.

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(170). As Sellars admits, it is of course a commonplace (and, I should add, a true one) that, in antiquity, philosophy was typically conceived as a way of life, and the Stoics were no exception; what is too simplistic, and not very helpful in clarifying the real issue of the exact interrelation between theory and practice, is Sellars' attempt to argue for the *primacy* of *askēsis* over *logos* in Stoicism as two clearly distinct 'stages' of education in the (ultimately Socratic) 'art of living' (I am not sure how this main contention is supposed to be reconciled with the suggestion that 'philosophical exercise should be understood as a *supplement*' to philosophical theory [108]). That the dichotomy with which Sellars operates is too rigid is also illustrated, I believe, by his dubious enrolment of Aristotle in the *logos* party of those who see philosophy as a purely theoretical enterprise, and by his strained division of philosophical works into treatises devoted to *logoi* and texts concerned with *askēseis* (e.g. Epictetus' 'guidebook for philosophical apprentices' and Marcus Aurelius' own written 'spiritual exercise'). Moreover, the emphasis on 'training' and 'exercise' as central to the Stoic conception of 'art' (*technē*), and thus also to the 'art of living' (Chapter 3), seems to me to depend on Sellars' question-begging paraphrase of *sungegunasmenōn* as 'brought into a system through training or exercise' in Zeno's definition of *technē* (69). Also, the use of Seneca's well-known distinction between *decreta* and *praecepta* in support of the dichotomy *logoi*/*askēseis* (75–8) appears only partially relevant: *praecepta* are *logoi* no less than *decreta*, and are not forms of 'training' or 'exercise', although, unlike *decreta*, they directly and explicitly guide practice. Discussion of the concept of the self in ancient philosophy (starting from the question of the very existence of such a concept, and its possible development) has been among the hot topics in the last couple of decades. The study of Roman philosophy, its contributions, and distinctiveness, has also attracted renewed scholarly interest, and Seneca has been a protagonist of this revival. It is not surprising then to find, at the crossroads of these two tendencies, an interesting volume entitled *Seneca and the Self*,[106] in which the editors have collected eleven essays by major scholars in the field (including Anthony Long, Brad Inwood, Christopher Gill, and Elizabeth Asmis, to signal only the authors of the more philosophically oriented essays, all of very high standard). It is an open question whether, and in what sense, Seneca had a distinctive or philosophically innovative conception of the self at all, and ultimately this collection of essays does not leave the reader with a single, straight answer to the question, which in fact is rarely asked in these blunt terms. The editors' 'more modest' aim is to bring together philosophers, literary critics, and cultural historians in a conversation that identifies and emphasizes what the major areas of debate and disagreement are around which an answer might begin taking shape. One qualm we might reasonably have about the whole project, even in this modest declension, is that it is not always clear with what notion of 'the self' the various authors are working when they engage with the question of the nature of the Senecan self: some papers seem to beg the question by *assuming* that Seneca's references to the soul or the mind or 'oneself' can be considered illustrative of Seneca's own conception of the 'self' (Inwood's contribution is a healthy cautionary note against this dangerous tendency). There is no denying, however, that

[106] *Seneca and the Self*. Edited by Shadi Bartsch and David Wray. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009. Pp. ix + 304. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-521-88838-7.

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the plurality of voices and approaches is enriching, and the division of the volume into three parts ('Philosophical Perspectives', 'Seneca and Roman Culture', and 'Reading the Tragedies') does not betray any naïve attempt at pigeonholing the diverse aspects and manifestations of Seneca's thought and output. I can only signal here Long's excellent introductory essay, 'Seneca and the Self: Why Now?', in which we are presented with a marvellously nuanced discussion of why Seneca's 'performative self' (24), especially as embodied in his letters, resonates so much with us today, despite some of its clearly 'pre-modern' features (34). Seneca also plays an important role in Raymond Angelo Belliotti's *Roman Philosophy and the Good Life*,[107] which the author himself presents as 'a book for those who are drawn to Roman history and politics, and, especially, for those who enjoy viewing philosophy in action' (ix) and want a picture of the major philosophical influences in Rome in the Late Republic and early Empire, and of the role that philosophy played during these times of political upheaval (for example, Chapter 4 is devoted to the Ides of March and the philosophical allegiances of the protagonists). While informing readers of the historical, political, and philosophical milestones of the age, Belliotti also engages extensively (either directly or by borrowing the voices of modern philosophers) with the ideas and arguments that the Romans inherited from the Hellenistic schools: for example, he argues *in propria persona* that death 'can be bad for human beings' (against the Epicureans; 115–40), that 'emotions are the ballast of a robustly, meaningful, valuable life' (against the Stoics; 217–21), and that the assassination of Caesar was morally justified (158–77). This snapshot should be sufficient to convey the sense of how peculiar this book is. Belliotti is probably trying to juggle too much at the same time (history, politics, history of ideas, philosophical reflection) to be really convincing in any aspect of his multifaceted enterprise (his history of Hellenistic and Roman philosophy is superficial at best, often no more than bare doxography), but there is something refreshing in his approach; the book is not a memorable piece of ground-breaking scholarship, but makes for some engaging reading accessible to non-specialists. Academic scepticism had an important standing in Roman philosophy, which Belliotti underplays in his book. I conclude this review with two recent significant publications on ancient scepticism. Despite its slightly misleading subtitle, Casey Perin's short book, *The Demands of Reason*,[108] focuses on the specific ancient version of Pyrrhonism presented by Sextus Empiricus in his *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. Perin exercises himself with four related and vexed exegetical cruces: Sextus' declared commitment to continued inquiry after truth, his reliance on basic principles of rationality, the scope of his scepticism, and its consequences for the possibility of human agency. Perin makes a lucid, albeit not air-tight, case for his most interesting contention – that Sextan Pyrrhonism is not a form of anti-rationalism: the Sceptic retains an interest in truth independent of his pursuit of tranquillity, and thus remains committed to the fundamental 'demand of reason' that it is irrational to give

[107] *Roman Philosophy and the Good Life*. By Raymond Angelo Belliotti. Lanham, MD and Plymouth, Lexington Books, 2009. Pp. xxi + 249. Hardback £44.95, ISBN: 978-0-7391-3969-1; paperback £18.95, ISBN: 978-0-7391-3970-7.

[108] *The Demands of Reason. An Essay on Pyrrhonian Scepticism*. By Casey Perin. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. 130. Hardback £27.50, ISBN: 978-0-19-955790-5.

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your assent to something you have no more reasons to affirm than to deny. The nature of this commitment, which of course cannot be dogmatic, but on Perin's analysis is not an involuntary mental reflex either, would require, however, more sustained elaboration than offered in the book. Perin's approach is all the more interesting in light of the fact that he also defends a judicious version of the 'rustic' (and apparently anti-rationalist) interpretation of the scope of Sextan Pyrrhonism (but some more focused discussion of what would count as a non-doxastic, non-perceptual appearance would have been welcome), with one of the most sustained critical discussions I have encountered of Frede's rival 'urbane' interpretation. Although a fully coherent Pyrrhonian philosophy cannot be extracted from Sextus' work, Perin argues in the conclusion that a reasonably coherent account of what is most central to it is possible. In offering his account, however, Perin shrugs off too briskly the importance of the (supposedly 'deviant') 'value argument' for suspension of judgement at *PH* 1.27–8 and of the therapeutic nature of Pyrrhonism (the relevant ladder simile at the end of *Against the Logicians* is ignored). Despite these reservations, his monograph is an excellent addition to the already rich literature on the topic, and I recommend it wholeheartedly to everyone interested in ancient Pyrrhonism. The *Cambridge Companion to Ancient Scepticism*,[109] edited by Richard Bett, provides a much broader introduction to the subject. This well-planned volume offers a historical survey of the main schools and individuals who adopted sceptical positions and arguments in ancient (Western) thought, from 'proto-sceptical' thinkers to Sextus Empiricus (Part I); thematic analyses of key aspect of ancient scepticism, such as belief, argument, action, ethics, and the sceptics' relation to, and attitude towards, other disciplines (Part II); and a final quick foray into the post-classical influence and transformation of scepticism (Part III). All in all, this *Companion* is a solid introduction, and yet another valuable addition to the popular Cambridge series, and is bound to become a standard tool for non-specialists and students (the volume also includes a well-structured, up-to-date, and reasonably extensive bibliography, and detailed indexes). The standard of the contributions is by and large good or very good (with only the regrettable exception, in my opinion, of Pellegrin's discussion of Sextus Empiricus), and some chapters, especially in Part II, have enough depth, sophistication, and originality to be of interest to more advanced readers also (see especially Perin on belief, which summarizes some of the results of Chapter 3 of *The Demands of Reason*; Vogt on action; and Bett on ethics). What a multi-authored volume like this inevitably loses in terms of its ability to offer a unified and coherent narrative of the historical and philosophical development of ancient scepticism, it gains thanks to the enriching variety of approaches and interpretations (from this point of view, the partial overlapping of some of the chapters is not unwelcome). Readers who approach the *Companion* with a pre-existent philosophical interest in epistemology and scepticism will perhaps feel that something more could have been done to place the presentation of ancient scepticism within the theoretical framework of current discussions of sceptical arguments and within the broader map of the whole history of sceptical

[109] *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Scepticism*. Edited by Richard Bett. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. xii + 380. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-52-187476-2; paperback £19.99, ISBN: 978-0-521-69754-5.

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ideas and thinkers. But the *Companion* certainly offers more than enough, in quality and quantity, to assist these readers in undertaking such a project by themselves.

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General

There are two ways to present courses on learning ancient languages. First comes the all-singing, all-dancing, language-learning-is-fun approach, with multicoloured text and lots of pictures; then there is the traditional, tell-it-how-it-is, pictures-and-coloured-boxes-aren't-going-to-make-it-any-easier-to-do-what-you-have-to-do school of language acquisition. In its presentation, *Classical Latin. An Introductory Course* by J. C. McKeown appears to be located within the old-school textbook category, but manages nevertheless to exude a sense of the fun of learning Latin.[110] Chapter 1 opens without frills or fanfare with the first conjugation, and the course proceeds methodically through conjugations and declensions until we reach the promised land of subjunctives and impersonal verbs. In each chapter, grammar is helpfully reinforced with linguistic exercises and extended passages for reading. The book is designed as a one-year course for undergraduate beginners and covers a lot of ground very thoroughly. This will be a useful addition to any teacher's shelf and a helpful tool for the more mature beginner of Latin. It is the only book I have ever encountered that is jointly dedicated to an author's wife and dogs (two Missouri Fox Trotters called Maev and Tanz). *Epic and History*, edited by David Konstan and Kurt Raaflaub (part of an ongoing series of 'comparative histories'), is a volume of collected essays focused on the relationship between narrative poetry and history, and highlighting some of the diverse ways in which the past is memorialized as a cultural product.[111] The topic is one of great interest for Classicists but what makes this book important is the fact that the theme is taken beyond the confines of the familiar worlds of Greece and Rome into less familiar territory, from Hittite epic to South African Ngumi praise poetry. Out of twenty-four chapters, only four are concerned with Greek and Roman epic. The broad cross-cultural and transhistorical approach (stretching over more than four thousand years) makes for a stimulating read, posing questions such as: 'is there a single definition [of epic] that can embrace the varieties of narrative poetry (and prose) produced in the several societies under consideration, from Sumer to South Africa?' (1); 'to what extent is it safe to infer that [written] compositions are the culmination of an earlier (or ongoing) oral tradition?' (1); 'do the epic narratives themselves change as the tradition in which they are embedded is appropriated by different interests within the society, or as one cultural form gives way to another?' (5). It is very good to be reminded that epic is more than 'just' Homer and Virgil, and one is able to return to the familiar territory of Classical epic with a new sense of

[110] *Classical Latin. An Introductory Course*. By J. C. McKeown. Indianapolis, IN, Hackett Publishing Co. Pp. 500. Paperback £28.95, ISBN: 978-0-87220-851-3.

[111] *Epic and History*. Edited by David Konstan and Kurt A. Raaflaub. Chichester and Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. Pp. xiv + 442. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-4051-9307-8.

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