academic scene? 'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step' says the ancient Chinese *Laozi*. On a long journey of furthering inter-cultural dialogue and understanding our own cultural legacies from the perspective of another, this volume is one, but by no means small, step for Sino-Hellenic studies.

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COOPER (J.M.) **Pursuits of Wisdom: Six Ways of Life in Ancient Philosophy from Socrates to Plotinus**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012. Pp. xiv + 442. $35/£24.95. 9780691138602.

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Cooper's 'Preface' tells us that he found the theme articulated in his title and subtitle through engaging with Pierre Hadot's books *Philosophy as a Way of Life* (Malden, 1995) and *What is Ancient Philosophy?* (Cambridge MA, 2002). He was attracted to Hadot's interpretation of philosophy as 'a full and complete way of life for its adherents' (x). But Hadot does not accord reason its rightful central place: reason and its capacity to discover truth through theory, argument and analysis, characterized in the 'Introduction' (chapter 1) as 'the only ultimately acceptable basis on which to live' human life as a whole; with philosophy as 'the art or discipline that develops and perfects the human capacity of reason' (6). Cooper seeks to give his readers an account of the way this basic conception of philosophy is worked out by the Socrates of the *Apology* (chapter 2), the founding document of the whole tradition, and then by Aristotle (chapter 3), the Stoics (chapter 4) and Plotinus (chapter 6), each in an extended study. Plato himself is obviously the missing person: he is put (26–27) in the 'too difficult' tray (where is *he* in his dialogues, full as they are of conflicting, never dogmatically presented ideas?).

Chapter 5 deals with Epicurus and the Pyrrhonist Sextus Empiricus: neither quite fits the pattern Cooper identifies elsewhere. Of the Epicurean life, described with strikingly little emphasis on the *tetrapharmakos*, he concludes (276): 'however much grounded in the results of philosophical analysis and argument, and however much the psychological motivation provided by firm belief in these results steers Epicureans in living their life, that life cannot be said to involve, in any essential way, the practice of philosophy, that is, of philosophical reflection, analysis, discussion, and argument'. For the sceptic, reason and philosophy *fail* to deliver 'any authoritative instructions for how we should live'. That being so, the sceptic's life is lived 'without *any* authority'. 'It's just a life that one leads' (300): but always with a sort of hope that more reasoning *might* bring positive results – though would not that (Cooper asks) disturb the perfect tranquillity that living according to appearances only is supposed to deliver (303)?

But even the Stoics are not thoroughgoing Socratics. Philosophy certainly plays an essential role in the Stoic way of life (223): 'It provides the basic principles used in continuously structuring that life, and providing the motivating thoughts and desires on which it is led, day-by-day'. Yet the constant Socratic practice of daily philosophical discussion and inquiry is 'not a required part of the life lived in accordance with nature': 'any and every human life, in whatever station and external circumstances, can be a Stoically well-lived one' (224). So in the end, Cooper's heroes are Aristotle and Plotinus. Aristotle, of course, identifies two distinct ways of life: the contemplative and the life of practical virtue. One might suppose that only in the former is the full Socratic agenda delivered. Cooper thinks otherwise (143): 'The thinking and analysis and systematic argument, and systematically organized understanding, that belong to philosophy as a whole, both practical and theoretical, as its defining and distinctive characteristic, are engaged and expressed in all the thoughts that give rise to and direct all the choices, actions, and activities constituting the whole of their lives' [i.e. those of 'philosophers of human affairs'].

Cooper is a master of careful, lucid and even exposition of philosophical systems, uninterrupted by all but very occasional quotations from the sources. The effect is the more marked given his avoidance here of debate with other scholars and interpretations. Those who know his previous writings will find much that is familiar, but quite a bit that is not. The real surprise is the Plotinus chapter (which incidentally bears many more traces of its lecture origins than earlier sections of the book). Cooper turns out to be a huge enthusiast: 'Not before Plotinus do we find a full and philosophically rich, self-critically alert, exposition of late Platonism'; and 'the depth

and subtlety of Plotinus' grasp of the many intricate philosophical problems a Platonist confronts in explicating and defending' his world-view far exceeds that of later Platonists (316–17). Cooper's complex but as always lucid account of the extraordinarily difficult Plotinian system is for me the highlight of the work.

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SHARPLES (R.W.) **Peripatetic Philosophy 200 BC to AD 200: an Introduction and Collection of Sources in Translation** (Cambridge Source-Books in Post-Hellenistic Philosophy). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. xix + 309. £22.99. 9780521711852.

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Robert W. Sharples (1949–2010), one of the Peripatetic tradition's most gifted and meticulous scholars, here sets out to introduce the province of Greek and Roman philosophy 'least known in the English-speaking world ... to those who might be familiar with some aspects of ancient philosophy, but not with that period, and might be encouraged to work on it' (vii). The result is an admirable and accessible 'bird's-eye view' of the primary sources for Aristotelian thought in the Hellenistic period and early Roman Empire, which fills a crucial lacuna between the existing sourcebooks in English for the Hellenistic schools (A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Cambridge, 1987) and late antiquity (R.R.K. Sorabji, *The Philosophy of the Commentators, 200–600 AD: A Sourcebook* (3 vols), London, 2004).

During the early Empire, as Sharples points out, Aristotle's works were discussed at length both by 'those who identified themselves as belonging to the Aristotelian tradition' and by those who did not (viii). Sharples does not aim to capture every significant source for the reception of Aristotle, but develops a narrative around themes of characteristic importance in the Peripatetic school of thought or 'Aristotelianism' (xii–xiii). The construction of the modern category 'Aristotelianism' is itself dependent on the work of ancient commentators such as Alexander of Aphrodisias, and 'there is a particular interest in examining the stage in that process which preceded Alexander himself' (xi).

Adapting the contours of Long and Sedley, *Peripatetic Philosophy* is organized along thematic lines. Following a brief survey of the leading personalities and sources (chapters 1–6), the disciplines of logic, ethics and physics are treated in that order, an arrangement of the *corpus Aristotelicum* that flourished in late antiquity and may have developed in the early Empire. Under each topical heading, selected texts are printed in translation, followed by a detailed discussion. The great majority of the translations were prepared for this volume; the care invested in their development might be illustrated by Sharples' reproduction of 'Philo [of Alexandria]'s distinctive affectation in style and vocabulary' (178).

A sample of the material covered: under the rubric of 'Logic', Sharples explores questions associated with the interpretation of Aristotle's *Categories* – a text whose complexity challenged philosophers to pick apart disciplines that we should today distinguish as linguistics, semantics, logic, epistemology and metaphysics (chapters 7–10). Sharples follows with substantive discussions in each of these areas, treating key developments in metaphysics, such as the analysis of Aristotelian form as quality attributed to Boethus of Sidon (chapter 12), and innovations in logic, such as the 'discovery' of the fourth figure of the syllogism (chapter 13). Under 'Ethics', we encounter the Peripatetics' modifications of the Stoic doctrine of *oikeiōsis* (chapter 15), their positions on the moderation of passions (chapter 16) and on the role of bodily and external goods in happiness (chapter 18). Finally, 'Physics' offers a smorgasbord of topics where Aristotelians contributed, including debates regarding the Aristotelian 'fifth element' (chapter 21), providence and determinism (chapters 22–23), the soul (chapter 24) and sensation (chapter 26), concluding with Peripatetic treatments of the Aristotelian intellect or *nous* (chapter 27).

The discussions that follow each topic aim to equip the reader with basic contextual information, to distinguish the complex of sources layered beneath each text and to signpost puzzles or scholarly debates with references for further study. For example, when Seneca, *Letters on Morals* 85.2–3, cites certain 'Peripatetics', Sharples notes that the label that might signify historical figures or unspecified opponents developed for the sake of the argument, and briefly surveys evidence on either side (147–48).