

Institute for Art History in Florence in April 2018. The key contribution lies in the disciplinary range of approaches to ‘material worlds’, above all by exploring ancient ideas, objects, and themes in light of early modern ideas about art, nature, and science. Guy Hedreen sets the scene in his engaging introduction, which crosses back and forth between ancient writers and their Renaissance readers, while tackling the disciplinary charge of art history’s ‘dematerialisation of the material objects art historians work with’ (1); a larger aim, as Hedreen puts it in his coda, is to ask how to ‘understand the relationship, both temporally and conceptually, between the early modern period and antiquity’ (273). The shadow of the Elder Pliny looms large throughout: in Verity Platt’s discussion of wax (which translates into Italian a paper concurrently published in another pioneering book), for example;<sup>18</sup> in Sarah Blake McHam’s chapter on ‘Pliny’s Hierarchy of Materials and its Influence in the Renaissance’; and in Carolyn Yerkes’s analysis of ‘The Architecture of Echoes’, which takes its cue from Pliny’s description of echoes that reverberate seven times (*HN* 36.23). At the same time, though, the quest to ‘cross chronological and disciplinary boundaries’ (vii) leads to some highly innovative approaches: among the many highlights is Morgan Ng’s paper on ‘Terremoti artificiali’, which explores early modern ideas about mining, excavation, and the subterranean world in connection with Aristotelian meteorology.

I close by noting that this marks the end of my pleasant liturgy for *Greece & Rome*. In my first review (*G&R* 66.1 [2019], 143), I made the point that ‘Change is what keeps the study of classical art and archaeology in business.’ Over the last four years, I hope to have kept readers abreast of such developments – in terms of the rise and fall of particular subjects, certainly, but also in relation to changing practices of scholarly publishing (just witness the proliferation in the last couple of years of open-access titles – including no fewer than five reviewed in this issue, all published by De Gruyter). I may be passing on the baton, but I look forward to reading what changes lie ahead.

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### *Philosophy*

As Andrea Nightingale notes in her persuasive new monograph, scholars often seem reticent to acknowledge the theological context within which Plato develops his metaphysics.<sup>1</sup> By analysing and emphasizing the language of divinity applied to the forms, soul, and cosmos across four dialogues, the *Symposium*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, and *Timaeus*, Nightingale builds a case for rehabilitating Plato’s status as a fundamentally

<sup>18</sup> The English-language article – which comes heartily recommended – appears in A. Anguissola and A. Grüner (eds.), *The Nature of Art. Pliny the Elder on Materials* (Turnhout, 2021).

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy and Religion in Plato’s Dialogues*. By Andrea Nightingale. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xii + 296. 4 illustrations. Hardback £29.99, ISBN: 978-1-108-83730-9.

'theological philosopher'. She argues that the tendency to sideline Plato's theological thinking compromises our reading of the dialogues: 'To understand his philosophy, we need to locate his ideas in the context of Greek religious discourses and practices' (8). Nightingale achieves this in two ways. The first is by offering brief but useful explanations of key Athenian rituals and belief sets, such as the Eleusinian Mysteries, epiphany, and Orphism. The second is by analysing allusions to and adaptations of these practices and ideas within the dialogues. Her conclusion is that, via his explanation of knowledge, psychology, and metaphysics in terms of the divine, Plato develops a novel conception of human beings, and philosophers in particular, in terms of their relation to the divine.

Some may note the absence of the *Republic* and *Laws* from the list of dialogues treated, and Nightingale addresses this directly in her introduction. The need to treat each dialogue as a whole made it impossible to do justice to these two lengthy texts except in a further volume. This is an entirely reasonable point, and she is, of course, willing to refer to relevant passages from these texts when necessary. Nevertheless, one is left with the feeling that several key aspects of her analysis, such as the discussion of apprehension of the forms in terms of epiphany, would be enhanced by more detailed discussion of the *Republic* in particular. In her first chapter ('The Forms, the Good, and the Divine'), Nightingale offers a brief survey of the theory of forms and notes, quite rightly, that there is a general tendency to ignore their description as *theios* in favour of the more philosophically respectable or, some might say, interesting epithets of permanence, incorporeality, stability, etc. Here Nightingale does make use of the *Republic* to remind us that there the form of the good is treated as 'highest divinity in Plato's metaphysics' (60), analogous to the sun-god, which conveys divinity to the other forms.

The four central dialogues are discussed in individual chapters, which both tease out elements of the individual texts and show points of continuity and contrast between them. Chapter 2 ('Eternal Longings') discusses the *Symposium*, with a particular focus on the significant theme of divine epiphany across different speeches. Nightingale argues that Diotima's speech treats the human soul as mortal, drawing a contrast with the eternal nature of forms themselves. She suggests an intriguing contrast between desire for two different types of immortality. While Aristophanes describes mortals as desiring immortality with 'godly power', Diotima explains human desire in pursuit of immortality with goodness. Nightingale stresses that the apprehension of the form of beauty is described in epiphanic terms and, while this seems absolutely right, I was left wondering what consequences this has for our understanding of Plato's epistemology or methodology. Perhaps, as she suggests, Plato 'tries to revolutionize the reader's perception of the physical and intelligible realm' (113), but it is still unclear to me how we should act on this revolutionized perception.

Chapter 3 ('Dialogue of Self and Soul') turns to the *Phaedo* and outlines the analysis of the soul in terms drawn from Orphism. Nightingale finds further hints of divine epiphany of the form of beauty in the *Phaedo*'s myth, offering a particularly interesting account of the location of the philosophers within the aethereal realm as a sign of their closeness to God. The *Phaedrus* is the subject of Chapter 4 ('Wings of Desire') and here Nightingale finds further evidence of the role of epiphany (in part as described in poetry) as introducing the forms as divine and explaining our potential interaction with them. She also reads the dialogue's discussion of myth itself as reflecting a general

theme in the dialogue of how we should talk about the gods and, indeed, those divine forms that stand higher even than the gods, the forms.

In the fifth and final chapter ('The Gods Made Visible'), Nightingale turns to the *Timaeus*. Here she concentrates on the question posed by her former chapters: how can we come to see the forms? Of course, the answer is through philosophy and, in particular, astronomy, and to recognize the cosmos itself as an image of the higher divinities of forms. Here I would have appreciated more discussion of the gnarly question of how the Demiurge himself stands in relation to the forms, but I was particularly persuaded by Nightingale's suggestion that 'becoming like God' is a matter of 'resetting our clock' to 'divine time' through philosophy. Nightingale makes a strong case for the need to take seriously the divine status of the forms and the significance of this for our own potential for philosophical progress.

Those looking for Plato's view on the traditional gods themselves may not find everything they want here, but the case for understanding the forms as standing over and above the gods is strong and this book opens up very many useful directions for further study. More than once, for example, Nightingale describes Plato as introducing the forms as 'new divinities', often represented as standing higher even than the gods themselves. It would be interesting to consider this idea further against the background of the charge brought against Socrates of 'introducing new gods' and the likely reception of Plato's innovation within the cultural context that Nightingale so persuasively argues to be fundamental to our understanding of his thought.

As a follow-up to their *Plato's 'Statesman' Revisited* (2020), Beatriz Bossi and Thomas Robinson have now turned to the *Theaetetus*, gathering together sixteen chapters divided across five parts.<sup>2</sup> As one would hope and expect, the individual chapters treat the dialogue from a diverse range of perspectives. Two chapters deal with the setting and framing of the dialogue. David Sedley surveys plausible examples of 'Plato's Self-References' across dialogues other than the *Theaetetus*, to support the influential reading he offered in *The Midwife of Platonism* (2004). Michel Narcy, meanwhile, considers 'The Old and New Socrates in the *Theaetetus*', emphasizing his status within the dialogue as a figure with positive answers to offer. The two chapters on 'Method' include an interesting discussion ('On Plato's Methodological Strategy [*Theaetetus* 151d–186e]: From Hypothesis to Self-Refutation') by Graciela E. Marcos de Pinotti of the place of the *Theaetetus*' methodology in relation to both the *Meno* and the *Sophist*, with a particular focus on hypothesis and an argument in favour of Plato's continued adherence to Socratic strategy.

In the second of five chapters on knowledge and perception ('On Socrates' Manipulative Dealing with *Theaetetus*' First Claim about Knowledge'), Bossi considers the rationale behind what she takes to be Socrates' disingenuous response to *Theaetetus*' first definition, in aligning it with Protagorean and Heraclitean thought. She suggests that, although Socrates avoids the most natural and plausible interpretation of *Theaetetus*' suggestion, he is justified in doing so by his broader dialectical concerns. Xavier Ibáñez-Puig ('"We Are What We Eat": The *Theaetetus* as

<sup>2</sup> *Plato's 'Theaetetus' Revisited*. Edited by Beatriz Bossi and Thomas M. Robinson. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2020. Pp. viii + 309. 1 colour illustrations, 18 tables. Hardback £109, ISBN: 978-3-11-071526-2.

a Philosophy of Education’) discusses the ways in which the dialogue draws parallels between the character of proponents of certain positions and the nature of those positions. He suggests that this reflects an interest in the philosophy of education and the tension between sophistry and philosophy in ‘the formation of good men and women’ (145).

In the first of four chapters on ‘Knowledge and Thought’, Thomas Robinson presents a discussion of ‘Soul in the *Theaetetus*’ as a means of reflecting on its place within the corpus relative to other works and Plato’s own biography. Elsewhere in this section, Francisco Gonzalez (‘Thinking as Conversation in Plato’s *Theaetetus*’) resists the suggestion that dialectic is ever separable from dialogue for Plato. In one of three interesting chapters on ‘Reception’, Claudia Mársico considers the *Theaetetus* as engaged with other Socratics, particularly Antisthenes. She develops an enlightening reading of Socrates’ dream as alluding to Antisthenes’ semantic analysis. Overall, there is no doubt that this volume will be of great value to those with an interest in Plato’s *Theaetetus*, and in the broader questions with which it engages.

While on the topic of Platonic epistemology and method, it is worth noting the publication of a new collection by one of the most significant scholars in the field, Gail Fine.<sup>3</sup> *Essays in Ancient Epistemology* brings together thirteen of her influential essays on Plato, Aristotle, and Sextus, along with a new, synoptic introduction. The importance of these essays is already well established, and students and scholars will be grateful to have them collected in a single volume.

The publication of two slim volumes marks the beginnings of a new series from Cambridge University Press on The Elements in Ancient Philosophy, edited by James Warren. These short books – some might be tempted to say pamphlets – aim to offer brief and accessible discussions of key ideas, texts, authors, and questions in ancient philosophy. The diversity inherent in this aim is demonstrated neatly by the first two publications in the series. Franco Trivigno presents an enlightening and useful discussion of Plato’s *Ion*.<sup>4</sup> Trivigno strikes a balance between general introduction and the presentation of a particular and interesting interpretation of the dialogue. He argues for reading the *Ion* as a dialogue about ‘models of poetic reception’ (4), with an emphasis on audience expectation and response. Taking the focus on rhapsody seriously – and as more than a stand-in for poetry in general – Trivigno maps out different models for understanding the relation between poet, rhapsode, and audience, and argues that the text supports a notion of ‘critical expertise’ as allowing for the understanding of poetry for those who are not themselves poets. The final section – on what positives we may find in the *Ion* and the suggestion that poetry may sometimes be an appropriate topic for rational interpretative efforts – is particularly interesting. This book, at just under seventy pages including a bibliography, will be particularly valuable for undergraduates studying the *Ion* or non-specialists trying to get a grip on the nuances of Plato’s treatment of poetry beyond the *Republic*.

<sup>3</sup> *Essays in Ancient Epistemology*. By Gail Fine. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp. x + 417. Hardback £80, ISBN: 978-0-19-874676-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Plato’s Ion. Poetry, Expertise, and Inspiration*. By Franco V. Trivigno. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. 68. Paperback £15, ISBN: 978-1-108-71345-0.

In his Cambridge Element, Matthew Duncombe adopts a different approach.<sup>5</sup> Rather than analysing a particular text, he sets out to give an account of ancient thinking about the puzzle of ‘relative change’. He concentrates on the different approaches of Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and Sextus, differentiating them primarily in terms of their attitude towards the compatibility of relative change and inherence. This is an accessible and engaging discussion that will be of particular value to undergraduate students grappling with ancient metaphysics for the first time.

Every so often the debate about the value of ‘companions’ and ‘handbooks’ rumbles around again. Should we be pointing students towards neatly packaged summaries of philosophical texts, or to the challenges of the texts themselves? Of course, it is relatively rare that such books actually present neatly packaged summaries. And, in some cases, they can serve to demonstrate the richness and importance of a particular area, and thereby to convince students and scholars alike to turn to texts that might otherwise be thought short on appeal. Sophia Connell has done a great service in editing *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle’s Biology*.<sup>6</sup> The volume she has produced presents eighteen chapters that serve as testament to the fascination and significance of Aristotle’s biological works, directly addressing the fairly entrenched (although by no means universal) marginalization of this extensive section of the Aristotelian corpus.

As one might expect, several of the chapters focus on the question of the context for Aristotle’s biological writings, both within his wider thought and methodology and against the contemporary philosophical and medical background. Monte Ransome Johnson (‘Biology and Theology in Aristotle’s Theoretical and Practical Sciences’) discusses the continuum between god and animals, and thus between theology and biology, in Aristotle’s thought. He provides a useful perspective on the consistency of Aristotle’s philosophy, without getting bogged down by the weight of established debates on the topic, ending with some useful reflection on the unification of the two areas within Aristotle’s ethics. Karel Thein (‘The Presocratics, Plato, and Aristotle’s Biology’), meanwhile, considers Aristotle’s biology against the background of Platonic and Presocratic (specifically Anaximander’s and Empedocles’) thought, arguing that Aristotle stands apart due to his distinctive rejection of the notion that the same causal account should be used for both the cosmos and the animals and plants within it.

Methodology is another theme common to several chapters. Mariska Leunissen raises the important question of the role of empiricism within Aristotle’s biological works, with a focus on the *History of Animals* (‘Empiricism and Hearsay in Aristotle’s Zoological Collection of Facts’). She considers his general commitment to empiricism but notes, in an interesting final section, that he is not averse to including evidence from folklore or hearsay (although generally marked as such), especially in cases where his research has not yet reached or cannot reach. Leunissen suggests in conclusion that the *HA* remained a work in progress, subject to revision in the light of new evidence. Charlotte Witt offers an account of ‘Aristotle’s Biological Metaphysics’. She notes

<sup>5</sup> *Relative Change*. By Matthew Duncombe. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. 63. Paperback £15, ISBN: 978-1-108-71342-9.

<sup>6</sup> *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle’s Biology*. Edited by Sophia Connell. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xviii + 355. 2 illustrations. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-107-19773-2; paperback £24.99, ISBN: 978-1-316-64787-5.

that animals and artefacts are often explained in the same way. We might wonder why, given the significant role given to ‘life’ within Aristotle’s theory of substance. Witt suggests that the apparent inconsistency of treating art and life as sometimes analogous and sometimes essentially different can be resolved by recognizing that living beings have a particular way of being –namely, ‘being actively’ – that is not available for artefacts. For living creatures, activity is the goal and a means of approximating to divine being. I particularly enjoyed Connell’s chapter (one of two she contributes) on ‘Animal Cognition in Aristotle’. She argues, contrary to some scholarly positions, that Aristotle allows that animals demonstrate intelligence in quite a few ways, thereby establishing a continuity between animals and humans. For Connell the significant difference between animal and human cognition in Aristotle is that only humans have the ability to decide to act *against* habit and nature.

The final few chapters deal with questions around the reception of Aristotle’s biology. David Depew, for example, gives an interesting account of the apparent similarity between Darwin and Aristotle, via the former’s commitment to intrinsic final causality. He goes on to suggest that this similarity was obscured by the ‘havoc wreaked on the doctrine of final causation by monotheistic philosophical theology’ (261). Overall, this is a rewarding and enjoyable collection that will undoubtedly encourage more interest in the biological works, both on their own terms and as a fundamental part of the Aristotelian corpus as a whole.

In rehabilitating Aristotle’s biology, Connell and her contributors will be supported by the new volume edited by Andrew Falcon and Stasinios Stavrianeas.<sup>7</sup> *Aristotle on How Animals Move* provides the first extensive treatment of *On the Motion of Animals* in English. The book includes two introductory essays, discussing issues of structure, methodology, and reception. It also includes a new translation of the text, supported by nine interpretative essays on consecutive sections. As a whole, the volume clearly demonstrates the methodological significance of the work and will prove a hugely useful resource.

Questions of the relation between animals and the cosmos are further addressed by a new collection edited by Ricardo Salles.<sup>8</sup> *Cosmology and Biology in Ancient Philosophy* brings together fifteen chapters on the relation between the microcosm and the macrocosm from across the ancient tradition, from early Greek philosophy to Avicenna, taking in Plato and the Platonic tradition, Aristotle, Hellenistic philosophy, and Neoplatonism along the way. Salles contributes a useful introduction reflecting on the nature of ‘cosmobiology’ and the central questions of causation and zoogony that tend to dominate such discussions. The notion of World Soul understandably features in several chapters, including Andre Laks’s discussion (‘Souls and Cosmos before Plato: Five Short Doxographical Studies’) of how the later interpretative tradition is partly responsible for claims that early Greek philosophers attributed souls to the cosmos. The Platonic conception of a World Soul is discussed from different

<sup>7</sup> *Aristotle on How Animals Move. The De incessu animalium. Text, Translation, and Interpretative Essays*. Edited by Andrea Falcon and Stasinios Stavrianeas. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xviii + 315. 15 illustrations, 6 tables. Hardback £90, ISBN: 978-1-108-49133-4.

<sup>8</sup> *Cosmology and Biology in Ancient Philosophy. From Thales to Avicenna*. Edited by Ricardo Salles. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xii + 311. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-108-83657-9.

perspectives by Barbara Sattler ('The Ensouled Cosmos in Plato's *Timaeus*: Biological Science as a Guide to Cosmology'), John Dillon ('The World Soul Takes Command: The Doctrine of the World Soul in the *Epinomis* of Philip of Opus and in the Academy of Polemon'), and Salles ('Why is the Cosmos Intelligent? [2] Stoic Cosmology and Plato, *Timaeus* 30a2–c1'). I particularly enjoyed Dimitri El Murr's alternative approach, in his chapter on the physical nature of the cosmos ('Platonic "Desmology" and the Body of the World Animal [*Tim.* 30c–24a]'). This is a topic also treated, from the later Stoic perspective, by Emmanuele Vimercati ('Cardiology and Cosmology in Post-Chrysippean Stoicism').

Those of us who long to hear more women's voices within the texts of ancient philosophy will be interested in the publication of a new work on Hypatia, by Silvia Ronchey.<sup>9</sup> This is a revised, updated, and translated (by Nicolò Sassi) version of her Italian *Ipazia*, first published in 2010. Ronchey sensibly treats Hypatia as more of a symbol than a historical figure, although this work does present itself, provocatively, as telling 'the true story'. Aimed at both a popular audience and scholars, the book is divided into narrative sections and chapters discussing the evidence for the claims asserted in the narrative. At times, this can feel frustrating, not least in the way that the narrative sections combine different authorities to produce a unified and suspiciously tidy narrative. The book is on stronger ground as it moves into a discussion of the construction of Hypatia as a symbol and quasi-mythic figure, and her modern construction as the 'first female intellectual'. The work does a great service in collecting so much evidence and is to be commended for being explicit about the methodology it adopts. There is no doubt that those seeking to learn more about Hypatia will be well rewarded by picking up this book.

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### Reception

While this issue's selection of books on classical reception is diverse in subject area and methodology, one theme they all share is a focus on place and space. *The Classics in South America* by Germán Campos Muñoz and *Time and Antiquity in American Empire* by Mark Storey are particularly focused on Classics and the spatiality of empire.<sup>1</sup> South America's location beyond the extent of the world known to the Roman Empire provided an interesting point of departure for the classically inclined

<sup>9</sup> *Hypatia. The True Story*. By Silvia Ronchey. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2021. Pp. xvi + 268. Hardback £72.50, ISBN: 978-3-11-071757-0.

<sup>1</sup> *The Classics in South America. Five Case Studies*. By Germán Campos Muñoz. Bloomsbury Studies in Classical Reception. London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Pp xi + 256. 4 b/w illustrations. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-3501-7027-8. *Time and Antiquity in American Empire. Roma Redux*. By Mark Storey. Oxford Studies in American Literary History. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp x + 256. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-0-19-887150-7.