distinguishing between vindication and overturning arguments. Finally, three elaborate case-studies (on Democritus' νόμῳ thesis, Platonic ontology and the Cyrenaic apprehension of πάθη) illustrate Plutarch's sophisticated thinking in the *Adversus Colotem*. In each case, Colotes' position is reconstructed and Plutarch's objections are meticulously explained and evaluated. Kechagia's precise analyses of these three sections from the work repeatedly show how Plutarch raises intelligent and justifiable points of criticism and deserves to be taken seriously as a philosopher.

Kechagia's general approach is sound, her arguments are clear and fair, and many of her conclusions and suggestions rest on a painstaking analysis that combines philological *akribeia* and due attention to significant details with an accurate insight into the philosophical relevance of Colotes' and Plutarch's arguments. Occasionally, her interpretation can be called into question or completed, although such instances should, *more Plutarcheo*, usually be regarded as 'shortcomings in some particular excellence' (*Life of Cimon* 2.5). For reasons of space, I confine myself to two brief examples.

Kechagia successfully considers Colotes' work against the background of the Epicurean tradition, yet to my mind, too much emphasis is laid on the fact that later Epicureans only defended their master's views and were not interested in developing these doctrines (78–79). This widespread conviction has rightly been nuanced in recent research (see, for example, M. Erler, 'Autodidact and student: on the relationship of authority and autonomy in Epicurus and the Epicurean tradition', in J. Fish and K.R. Sanders (eds), *Epicurus and the Epicurean Tradition*, Cambridge, 2011, 9–28). It is true that the issue of orthodoxy was extremely important in later Epicureanism (as it was in other schools), but there was more room for innovative developments than Kechagia suggests.

Kechagia devotes several interesting pages to Plutarch's habits of citation, arguing that Plutarch saw no problem in introducing slight modifications in his quotations when these did not distort the original meaning. This is no doubt correct, but Kechagia's reference to the *Consolatio ad Apollonium* actually risks undermining her argument, even apart from the problem of the work's authenticity. For by strategically omitting the term ἴσως in 108D (a lengthy quotation from Plato's *Phaedo*), Plutarch in fact strikingly modifies the original meaning of the Plato passage, giving it a much stronger apodictic flavour. Also, Kechagia's reference in this context to Plutarch's *hypomnēmata* (85) is problematic, for we can be fairly sure that Plutarch had Colotes' book on his table when he wrote his reply and that he did not rely on his notebooks in this case (given the fact that the *Corpus Plutarcheum* does not contain typical clusters of recurrent material that are connected with Colotes).

But these are minor quibbles, which do not detract from the overall quality of the book. This is an excellent study that fully realizes its goals and deserves a prominent place in the scholarly literature on Plutarch's philosophical works.

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ROSKAM (G.) and VAN DER STOCKT (L.) *Eds.* **Virtues for the People. Aspects of Plutarchan Ethics**. Leuven, Leuven University Press, 2011. Pp. 384. €64.95. 97809058678584.

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Following K. Ziegler's monumental article on Plutarch in the *Realencyclopädie* (1951), a large proportion of Plutarch's *Moral Essays* has been dubbed as 'popular philosophy'. Ziegler's characterization was not meant to be deprecating. It nonetheless contributed to – or perhaps reinforced – the view, held by a number of modern scholars until recently, that many of Plutarch's ethical treatises are really only 'light-touch' philosophy, offering commonsensical advice on textbook questions of practical ethics such as 'how to contain one's anger' or 'how to tackle garrulity'. These works were not considered philosophical enough to warrant scholarly scrutiny and as a result have remained relatively unknown. The present volume edited by Roskam and Van der Stockt sets out to redress the balance and shed much-needed light on Plutarch's 'popular-philosophical' essays by studying them 'as a group' (10) and by focusing on their underlying philosophical arguments, literary techniques and target-audience, as well as on their interconnections.

The volume has its origins in an academic conference, but it is decidedly not just a set of conference proceedings. It contains 15 insightful and carefully-written papers by some of the most distinguished scholars in Plutarchean studies. The editors' introduction cogently lays out the *raison*

d'être of the volume and succinctly explains how the contributions, arranged in four sections, blend together to illuminate different aspects of Plutarch's practical ethics. Part 1 ('Virtues for the people') discusses the concept of 'popular philosophy', its relevance and audience. Part 2 ('Some theoretical questions on ethical praxis') focuses on the theoretical underpinning of Plutarchan ethics. Part 3 ('Virtues and vices') explores the psychotherapeutic dimension of Plutarch's programme of moral education. Part 4 ('"Popular philosophy" in context') deals with the socio-cultural, literary and rhetorical context of the 'popular-philosophical' essays. Whilst all the contributions are of high quality and merit individual attention, due to space limitations I will inevitably have to pick out and discuss here only a few as a sample.

L. Van der Stockt, using the German conception of *Popularphilosophie* of the 18th century as a backdrop, provides a penetrating analysis of the structure and literary common-places in Plutarch's *On Having Many Friends*. He argues that Plutarch employs the traditional techniques of literary and rhetorical persuasion, rather than strictly logical arguments, to show that having only one true friend is the only viable alternative to many fleeting friendships that are damaging. Van der Stockt notes that 'Plutarch is appealing to the "ideology of a friend's *virtue*", the prevailing set of opinions and behaviours concerning virtue and *philia* in his circle' (31). This is a particularly interesting suggestion, which could have perhaps been exploited further through an exploration of who the target audience of this treatise may have been.

C. Pelling's contribution discusses the content and target audience of Plutarch's 'popular philosophy' in an oblique and creative way, namely by looking at the *Lives* and the pivotal role of 'popular wisdom' in Plutarch's carefully plotted narrative there. There is some sort of pragmatic wisdom, Pelling argues, which emerges from Plutarch's biographies and which neither the rich and powerful statesmen (for example Croesus or Demetrius) nor the 'over-theorized' (for example Cato or Dion) grasp; yet this wisdom is not *for* the ordinary people, the *demos*, either. Rather it is meant for the 'educated *pepaideumenoi* that become a staple of Greek thought in the Second Sophistic' (56). Quite apart from illuminating the concept of Plutarch's popular philosophy, Pelling's paper shows extremely convincingly how we can read the *Moralia* through the lens of the *Lives*.

J. Opsomer's contribution starts off by laying down the basic principles of Platonist moral psychology that underlay Plutarch's ethical works. Against this background, Opsomer explores in a resourceful way Plutarch's view of the relationship between virtue, character and luck: he first succinctly discusses the theory on virtue, luck and contingency, as found in the *On Moral Virtue*, and he then shows how this theory works in practice, by examining the *Life of Dion* as a case-study. Opsomer skilfully disentangles the Platonist ideas underpinning the presentation of Dion's character in the *Life* and demonstrates that Plutarch's applied ethics, as seen in practice in the *Lives* and in some of the *Moralia*, suggests that human virtue, character and ultimately *eudaimonia* are not immune to contingencies.

P.A. Stadter discusses the concept of *philonikia*, love of victory or competitiveness, and Plutarch's approach to it both in the *Moralia* and in the *Lives*. He highlights the ambivalence of the term in classical literature and goes on to show most convincingly how this ambivalence is reflected in Plutarch's work. Stadter argues that in the *Moralia* Plutarch treats *philonikia* as a passion, a case of excessive spiritedness in the soul which needs to be brought under the control of reason. At the same time, in the *Lives* Plutarch recognizes the positive outcomes of 'good *philonikia*' in cases, such as Aristides', where competitiveness had a noble motive, the liberation of Greece. Stadter's contribution pertinently brings to light Plutarch's 'pragmatic' (254) moralism: his Platonist moral psychology may view *philonikia* as a disease or imbalance of the soul, but equally Plutarch is able to appreciate that the reality of past history sometimes justifies competitiveness.

J. Mossman and F. Titchener focus on Plutarch's 'animal essays', *Which are Cleverer: Land Animals or Sea Animals* and *Gryllus*. By exploring Plutarch's rhetorical techniques and methods of argument (comparison, anthropomorphism, animal metaphors), Mossman and Titchener aptly show that, apart from being refreshing, rhetorically subtle pieces, these essays have greater philosophical *gravitas* than is usually assumed: they allow Plutarch to argue his moral points delicately and effectively by using animals as a 'kind of surrogacy' (274). Both essays vindicate animal reason against the Stoic view, which denies animals any rationality; and perhaps most importantly, they demonstrate the multiple connections between humans and animals at a moral level. Thus, Mossman and Titchener carefully conclude that Plutarch has the chance to

'combat a mindset which [he] sees as mistaking the place of man in the universe' (295).

Overall, Roskam and Van der Stockt's volume is a very welcome addition to the flourishing Plutarchean scholarship of recent years and one that provides an excellent springboard for further rehabilitation of Plutarch's 'popular philosophy'.

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FALCON (A.) **Aristotelianism in the First Century BCE: Xenarchus of Seleucia**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. xi + 227. £54. 9780521876506.
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This fascinating study of a little-studied philosopher not only provides a thorough and illuminating account of Xenarchus' work and engagement with Aristotelian philosophy, but also an excellent example of how to approach a philosopher about whom so little is known. As well as giving us a scholarly and meticulous resource on Xenarchus, Falcon uses his study as the basis for a persuasive reappraisal of certain assumptions concerning the historical development and reception of Aristotelian physics.

Traditionally, Xenarchus has been viewed as an adversary of Aristotle, who contested the *De Caelo*'s arguments for a fifth, celestial, substance. Falcon paints a very different picture, of Xenarchus as a fully-fledged Peripatetic, who used an intense and detailed critical reading of Aristotle to try to make Aristotelian physics compatible with the dominant philosophical ideas of the early post-Hellenistic period. It is only when viewed anachronistically, in terms of the Aristotelian orthodoxy represented by Alexander of Aphrodisias (and his followers), that Xenarchus appears to rebel against the Peripatetic tradition. As Falcon argues, Peripatetic thought in the first century BC was characterized by a return to Aristotle, through detailed and scholarly, but by no means uncritical, engagement with his written work. As a parallel, Falcon mentions Strato, who managed to become Head of the Peripatetic school, even though he regarded the heavens as fiery *contra* Aristotle (14–15).

The book is divided into three sections: Xenarchus' life and work; the texts, translations and notes; and three essays on 'reception', both Xenarchus' own reception of Aristotle and the later reception/influence of Xenarchus. Generally, this framework works well (although at times direct combination of fragments with points being made in the first section might have helped to aid textual continuity and to avoid a small degree of repetition).

In terms of historical details, Falcon offers convincing challenges to various ideas and conjectures. For example, the view that Xenarchus was responsible for Ariston and Cratippus becoming Peripatetics would place Xenarchus' philosophical activity earlier than evidence suggests (12) or Falcon's challenge of Donini's view that post-Hellenistic Aristotelian exegesis is purely made up of attempts to systematize and justify Aristotle's views.

Falcon suggests that Xenarchus' own views were based on an actual reading of *De Caelo* (28) and that Xenarchus was a creative philosopher in his own right, not simply an astute and knowledgeable reader of Aristotle. Through his suggestion that the helix is a simple line, Xenarchus questions the Aristotelian thesis that the existence of only two simple lines, straight and circular, means that we can posit two simple motions. Far from being a systematic demolition, Xenarchus' critique is selective, so that he actually defends the appropriateness of Aristotle considering simple lines within a work of physics (31). For Falcon, a key point of Xenarchus' critique is that we should not necessarily posit a fifth substance to explain circular celestial motion, since fire has circular movement, when fully realized. However, this would still leave Xenarchus with the problem of explaining the eternity of the world and how fire escapes generation and destruction; and there is simply insufficient evidence to say that Xenarchus definitely reduced 'celestial motion to the circular motion of perfected fire' (36). Falcon also points out differences between Xenarchus and Stoic physics, but also how Xenarchus adapted Aristotelian ethics, in a way which was compatible with Stoic influences.

Falcon concludes with three short essays on reception. In the first, which looks more closely at Xenarchus in the broader context of Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic reception of Aristotle, Falcon uses his view of Xenarchus as a Peripatetic to show just how radical and controversial Aristotle's physics was in the ancient world. Aristotle departed from Academic/Presocratic interest in generation of the world and suggested a view of unity without uniformity. Seen in this context, Xenarchus' rejection of the fifth substance was an attempt to hold on to Aristotelian physics, but