

but not vice versa. According to this interpretation Aristotle's criterion turns out to be a special application of Plato's criterion to natural, teleological beings.

Finally, and most impressively, B. provides a coherent and plausible interpretation of Aristotle's culminating argument in Book θ that every *energeia* is better than its *dunamis*. As B. notes, this claim from Chapter 9 has received very little scholarly attention even though it is obviously an important aspect of the view presented in Book θ . There are at least two reasons for this; first, the text is unusually terse and difficult, and second, Aristotle's intermingling of metaphysics and normativity is foreign to contemporary philosophical practice. On the latter point B. does an excellent job of orienting the reader to the world of classical philosophy, which intermingles metaphysical issues with questions of value very freely, and of placing this chapter in the context of Aristotle's metaphysics as a whole. B.'s suggestions for the interpretation of both the meaning of particular texts and their broader philosophical significance are original and sensible. I particularly appreciated B.'s explanation of the significance of Aristotle's argument that the eternal principles of our world are good, his suggestion that goodness is *energeia* for Aristotle, and his explanation of how this is so. The connections that B. draws to Aristotle's discussion of the good in his ethical writings are fascinating and provocative. This is a groundbreaking discussion of an important and often overlooked dimension of Aristotle's metaphysics.

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SOPHISTIC ARGUMENT

TINDALE (C.W.) *Reason's Dark Champions. Constructive Strategies of Sophistic Argument*. Pp. xiv + 178. Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2010. Cased, US\$49.95. ISBN: 978-1-57003-878-5.

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The recent resurgence of scholarly interest in the sophistic movement has partially rehabilitated the image of the sophists. T.'s book attempts to further their rehabilitation with respect to sophistic argumentation. In Part 1 he undertakes the defensive aspect of his task, making the case that Plato and Aristotle have disproportionately shaped the legacy of sophistic argumentation. In Part 2, using copious examples, T. outlines various strategies of argumentation, evaluates them and connects them to their heirs in contemporary rhetorical argumentation theory. This book is part of The University of South Carolina Press's series 'Studies in Rhetoric/Communication', and it seems mainly to be directed at those working in the history of rhetoric and argumentation.

In Part 1, T. attempts to diagnose the origin of the bad reputation that sophistic argumentation has. He claims that the presentation of eristic argumentation in Plato's *Euthydemus* and in Aristotle's *Sophistical Refutations* caused the assimilation of sophistic to fallacious argumentation, and, further, that the differences between them and the sophists concerning argumentation boil down to theoretical differences about the nature of reality and our access to it. Neither of these claims is especially controversial, and they could have been easily defended in a single chapter. Much

more controversial is T.'s further claim that Plato unfairly employed the standard of his own philosophical positions on the nature of reality and language to judge the sophists' position (pp. 41–3, 55–6). An adequate defence of this claim would have required a much deeper analysis than T. offers. In his discussion of the *Theaetetus* (pp. 39–43), for example, T. makes it seem like the central objection to Protagoras' 'man is the measure' maxim is that it renders dialectic, and thus the Platonic philosophical project, absurd. But the main charge there is that Protagorean relativism is *self-refuting*.

A basic question for T.'s account in Part 2 is which strategies of argumentation are to bear the label 'sophistic'. The question whom to include in the canon of sophists is much trickier than one might think. There is relative agreement about the core group: Protagoras and Gorgias are central figures, while Prodicus, Hippias, Thrasymachus, Critias and Antiphon are secondary. From there, it becomes less clear: cases have been made on behalf of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, Antisthenes, Alcidas and Isocrates. T., in part motivated by the paucity of fragments, takes a liberal view: he includes the core group; assumes that Antiphon the Rhamnusian and Antiphon the Sophist are the same; and includes such fourth-century figures as Alcidas and Isocrates. Though the inclusion of the author of *Against the Sophists* is not without precedent, T.'s attempt to denigrate the significance of Isocrates' text by calling it 'fragmentary' (p. 66) is at best disingenuous and at worst a careless mistake. Perhaps more worrying for T.'s approach, however, is that these fourth-century authors were likely to have been influenced by developments in rhetorical argumentation that were independent of the sophists. For example, in Chapter 9, on ethotic arguments (pp. 131–42), no mention is made of Lysias, though he is widely considered to be an innovator in this area. While T. certainly takes defensible positions here, it is notable that much of his evidence comes from texts that are only disputably labelled 'sophistic'.

T. is at his best in Part 2, when he is discussing individual strategies of argument. He surveys uses of *eikos* arguments (Chapter 5), the *peritropê* (Chapter 6), the *antilogoi* (Chapter 7), signs, commonplaces, allusions (Chapter 8) and ethotic argument (Chapter 9). Each strategy of argumentation picks out a range of possible arguments which are illustrated with a variety of exemplars from ancient texts. For example, in discussing the *peritropê*, T. shows that it includes a 'wide range of reversal arguments' which use some aspect of the opponent's argument against him; it is adversarial in nature and aimed at showing 'inconsistency or contradiction' (pp. 87–8). The examples come from Gorgias, Antiphon, Plato's Socrates and Plato's depiction of eristic in the *Euthydemus*. These chapters contain the most interesting and compelling reflections, and they could have easily been expanded. For example, T.'s discussion of reversal arguments in Gorgias takes up less than two pages, and one is left thinking that more could be said. In addition, the connections to contemporary uses of the arguments and to rhetorical argumentation theory are disappointingly slim.

The least satisfying part of the book is Chapter 10, 'Justice and the Value of Sophistic Argument', where T. attempts to defend the enduring value of sophistic strategies of argumentation in terms of justice. Following Protagoras, T. wants to make truth relative to the experience of individuals (p. 144) while at the same time grounding this view in more general claims about justice and human nature (pp. 146–7). He cannot have it both ways. Plato saw this point clearly, though nothing about it depends on Platonic doctrine, or on moral realism for that matter. Much more promising is the thought with which T. ends, namely, that by self-

consciously reflecting on reason, strategies of argumentation and the audiences to which arguments are directed, we can improve the quality of a community's deliberations (p. 152).

Historians may find the scholarly quality of the book lacking in places. Two conspicuous errors come to mind. First, in discussing Antiphon's death, he runs together the Rhamnusan/Sophist Antiphon with yet another Antiphon, the son of Lysonides described in Xenophon (*Hell.* 2.3.40). T. thus winds up claiming that Antiphon was 'executed by the Thirty' for being 'a member of the oligarchic government of the Four Hundred' (p. 75), a claim which hardly makes sense. Second, in defending the inclusion of Alcidamas in the canon of Sophists, T. makes it even harder on himself by mistakenly calling Alcidamas' text *Against the Sophists* instead of *On the Sophists* (pp. 66, 151). He also refers to the very same text as *On Those Who Write Written Speeches* (p. 117), a mistake which is compounded by the inclusion of both titles in the index (p. 173).

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ANCIENT EPISTEMOLOGY NATURALIZED

GERSON (L.P.) *Ancient Epistemology*. Pp. x + 179. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Paper, £15.99, US\$28.99 (Cased, £45, US\$85). ISBN: 978-0-521-69189-5 (978-0-521-87139-6 hbk).
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This book contains both a theoretical frame and a historical picture of the *Erkenntnisproblem* in ancient philosophy from the Presocratics to Plotinus. The theoretical frame opens and closes the book by discussing, at the beginning (Chapter 1), the difference between ancient epistemology and the modern 'Standard Analysis' of knowledge as justified true belief, and, at the end (Chapter 8), the difference between ancient epistemology and various brands of contemporary naturalized epistemology from Quine to Williamson. G. ambitiously presents ancient epistemology as 'a third approach' (p. 1) to epistemology, an alternative to both the two main contemporary accounts of knowledge, Standard Analysis and naturalism.

This bold metaphilosophical claim obviously presupposes that it is possible to talk of ancient epistemology as one thing, namely, that 'the millennium-long dialogue in antiquity concerning the nature of knowledge' (p. ix) shares the same basic approach to the problem. Now, what gives a unity of style to the historical picture is, according to G., the shared belief that knowledge is a natural state like fever or pregnancy or a natural kind like gold, i.e. 'a real feature of the world' (p. 5) or (echoing Heidegger?) 'a way of being in the world' (p. 150). This shared belief, namely naturalism, is actually what distinguishes epistemology as a philosophical discipline 'from the beginning of ancient Greek philosophy up to Descartes', together with the view that it is 'irreducible to the enterprise that we would call empirical science' (p. 1, cf. pp. 9 and 12). In this sense, ancient epistemology is neither a form of Standard Analysis, which views knowledge 'as a concept and not as a real feature of the world' (p. 5), nor of contemporary naturalism, which tries to reduce epistemology to an empirical science.

This is no doubt an original and attractive story, which G. tries to make plausible, with admirable coherence and tenacity, in both the theoretical frame and the