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

historical picture of his book. But it is also a doubtful one for at least two reasons. First of all, it seems quite unfair to blame the Standard Analysis for viewing knowledge as a concept and not as a real feature of the world. Clearly, according to Standard Analysis, *knowledge* is not a concept but a kind of belief, i.e. a standing or dispositional mental state. What Standard Analysis tries to do is a purely logical and conceptual analysis of the *concept of knowledge*: you may blame it for doing only an armchair philosophical exercise in the style of *a priori* epistemology, but not for confusing knowledge with the concept of knowledge. Secondly, the contemporary alternative to such an armchair philosophical exercise is to view knowledge as a psychological state to be studied by natural science, psychology as in Quine's celebrated paper 'Epistemology Naturalized' (misquoted at p. 153 as 'Naturalized Epistemology') or also cognitive ethology as now suggested by Hilary Kornblith (cf. pp. 157–8). But, in G.'s opinion, ancient epistemology is a form of naturalism rooted not in empirical science but in metaphysics (p. 11). So it is a philosophical discipline just like modern and contemporary *a priori* epistemology and not a chapter of natural science like Quine's epistemology naturalized: the only difference would be that the armchair philosophical exercise, in the case of ancient epistemology, is not conceptual analysis but metaphysical speculation. But then it is strange to call 'naturalism' a metaphysical account of knowledge like the one reconstructed in this book, and it seems question-begging to answer, as G. does (p. 155), that 'the naturalism of ancient epistemology turns upon an understanding of nature more capacious that anything found today'.

If the shared belief of ancient epistemology is its naturalism, in G.'s meaning of the word, the other main tenet of the historical picture is that ἐπιστήμη is always understood as the highest form of cognition (where 'cognition' translates Greek γνῶσις, p. 7). Such an 'exalted' notion of knowledge is particularly evident in the three main philosophical heroes of the book, namely Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus, but also, as we shall see, in the 'all-knowing infallible sage' (p. 124 n. 9) of Stoicism. So Chapter 3 (the longest chapter of the book) is a careful examination of the highest form of cognition in Plato's *Republic* 5–7 and the *Theaetetus* (actually a condensed version of Chapters 4 and 5 of G.'s book *Knowing Persons: a Study in Plato* [2003]); Chapter 4 reconstructs the highest form of cognition in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* and *De anima* 3.3–8; and finally Chapter 7 meticulously puts together Plotinus' scattered remarks on the highest type of cognition in the *Enneads*. The other three chapters of the historical picture, namely Chapter 2 on the origin of epistemology from Xenophanes to Democritus and the two chapters on Hellenistic epistemology, dogmatic (Chapter 4 on Epicureanism and Stoicism) and sceptical (Chapter 5 on Pyrrho, Academic Scepticism and the Pyrrhonian revival), though original and full of interesting remarks, look like a kind of corollary *vis-à-vis* the remaining three main chapters.

There is not space here to examine the exegetical details that underpin G.'s reconstruction of ἐπιστήμη or knowledge as the highest form of cognition in Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus. In outline, he argues that what is distinctive of knowledge as the highest form of cognition is its infallibility: one can know only when one infallibly knows, and to say 'I know but I may be mistaken' simply makes no sense. Now, according to G., infallibility is guaranteed only if knowledge is not a propositional attitude like belief, for every proposition is a representation and representation can always be false. So knowledge, beginning with Plato, is not of propositions but of Forms or intelligibles, and that is why the objects of belief and the objects of knowledge are radically disjoint and a justified true belief does

not turn the true belief into knowledge, as 'a justified homicide does not turn the homicide into something else' (p. 5). Being non-propositional, knowledge is essentially self-reflexive, for it is a mental state consisting of the cognitive identity of intellect and intelligibles (p. 135), an identity that is possible only for an immaterial or incorporeal intellect.

If this is the heavy metaphysics of knowledge that can be distilled, in G.'s view, from ancient epistemology as a whole, I find it quite implausible that such an 'exalted' notion of what knowledge is may be viewed as a form of naturalism and that '[c]ontemporary epistemology can only be enriched by keeping its ancient counterpart in the discussion' (p. 165). In a telling passage from *Knowing Persons*, G. quite explicitly reveals his belief that 'not only the interpretation of ἐπιστήμη that I am developing is correct but […] if the concept of knowledge has a clear and distinct meaning, then it is going to be not far removed from what Plato takes ἐπιστήμη to be' (p. 158). But many scholars would disagree with G.'s interpretation of Plato's and Aristotle's epistemology from a Plotinian point of view, and find his concept of knowledge quite obscure and confused. Besides, this concept risks having a distorting effect in the interpretation of philosophical traditions different from the Platonic one. In his analysis of the Stoic concept of ἐπιστήμη, for example, G. never mentions the four definitions of ἐπιστήμη that Arius Didimus attributes to the Stoics (Stob. 2.74, 1–3 = *SVF* 3.112, *FDS* 385, LS 41H). Instead, he emphasises the Stoic distinction between what is true (τὸ ἀληθές) and the truth (ἡ ἀλήθεια) that we find twice in Sextus Empiricus (*M* 7.38–45 = *SVF* 2.132, *FDS* 324; *PH* 2.80–3 = *FDS* 322, LS 33P). What is true is an incorporeal true ἀξίωμα or assertible, whereas the truth is a corporeal disposition of the human ἡγεμονικόν, namely of the ruling part of the human soul. The link between the two is given by the definition of the truth as 'knowledge that is capable of asserting everything that is true' (ἐπιστήμη πάντων ἀληθῶν ἀποφαντική) (Richard Bett's translation). The plausible inference is that Stoic ἐπιστήμη is propositional knowledge, for what is assertible is a true or false ἀξίωμα, namely a proposition. On the contrary, in G.'s view, the Stoic wise man 'really does possess the truth, not a representation of it', 'he assents to the truth, not to supposedly true propositions' (p. 110), i.e. he assents to 'the corporeal truth that is the cause of the proposition's being true' (p. 109). In this way, the ἐπιστήμη of the Stoic sage is but a materialistic variant of self-reflexive cognitive identity: 'the wise man is the truth he knows' (p. 109). My only comment is that I find all this simply arbitrary and without any textual foundation.

The book closes with a basic bibliography, strictly Anglophone, of further readings, which tries minimally to compensate for the absolute lack of scholarly debate in the text. There is at least one notable omission in the section on Plato: John Lyons' analysis of Plato's cognitive vocabulary *Structural Semantics* (1969). There is a useful *index locorum* and a final general index. As for the editing, it is, alas, not impeccable: besides some trivial misprints, I detected a number of misquotations, e.g. p. 39 n. 14: '*Met*. 13' instead of '*Met*. 14'; p. 63 n. 3: '*Rep*. 533E' instead of '*Rep*. 533D'; p. 67 n. 9: '*EN* 6.5' instead of '*EN* 7.5'; p. 94 and n. 5: '*Letter to Menoeceus* D.L. 10.34' instead of simply 'D.L. 10.34'.

This is the first publication of a new Cambridge series, 'Key Themes in Ancient Philosophy', edited by C. Osborne and G.R.F. Ferrari. The series has the praiseworthy aim of producing books intermediate between general introductions and specialist monographs. Does G.'s book succeed in finding the right middle? It seems likely that, like *Knowing Persons*, it will be judged by some scholars to be 'insight-

ful' and 'provocative', and by others to be simply 'unnerving'. But it is too difficult for use in teaching or for people generally interested in ancient philosophy, and too idiosyncratic for specialists; so I fear it is likely to disappoint both audiences.[1]

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ASCLEPIADES

SENS (A.) (ed., trans.) *Asclepiades of Samos. Epigrams and Fragments*. Pp. cxvi + 353. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Cased, £90. ISBN: 978-0-19-925319-7.
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Following the original decision by A.S.F. Gow and Denys Page to publish all known Hellenistic epigrams in their monumental *Hellenistic Epigrams* (1965) by author, a foundation was laid for the study of the individual poets in separate and full monograph form. In the last decade, for instance, Asclepiades himself has already been the subject of two commentaries, one in Spanish by Luis Arturo Guichard (2004) and one in Greek by Ioannis S. Nastos (2006). Now we have S.'s edition, at 469 pages to Gow–Page's 12 pages of text and 37 of commentary. And, not to detract from Gow–Page's achievement for a minute, Asclepiades proves eminently worth the extra attention, and S.'s efforts prove eminently welcome.

The Introduction provides all the vital information concerning traditional subjects like Asclepiades' life and works, the transmission of the text and the problem of ascriptions in the *Greek Anthology*. Throughout, S.'s treatment is balanced and judicious, rightly emphasising, for example, that Meleager's very personal selection of the poems he included in his *Garland* may well have left us with an unrepresentative sample of Asclepiades' total output, which makes the question of the authorship of the poems of multiple ascription all the harder. Of particular value is S.'s contextualisation of Asclepiades' cardinal contribution to the development of Greek erotic epigram. S. succinctly traces his debts to earlier elegy (the paraenetic element), lyric (the evocations of erotic encounters), and comedy and mime (the motif of the comast's dramatic monologues, and the dramatisations of a host ordering food for a party). The section on Asclepiades' points of contact with his contemporaries Theocritus, Apollonius, Callimachus, Posidippus and Hedylus demonstrates clearly his priority and vital influence.

Alongside these more traditional editorial concerns, S. offers comment on matters which have become the subject of more recent scholarly interest, in particular Asclepiades' use of motifs from inscriptional epigram, and his placement of narrative voice and genre. It proves impossible to identify the narrators with the poet, even when an epigram addresses him, as in XVI, where the exhortation for him to drink could be a self-address or, in tune with the practice of early elegy, the words of a fellow-symposiast. Again, meanings of words are made to shift in the course of a poem, as in IV, where the adjective applied to a woman, *πιθανή*, at first appears to mean 'persuasive', or 'alluring', but in the course of the poem seems better taken as 'compliant', with the connotation 'sexually available'.

[1]Warm thanks are due to Jonathan Barnes, Gail Fine and Jane Orton for improving my review with very helpful suggestions of both form and content.