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*R*EASSESSING CICERO'S PHILOSOPHY: NEW PUBLICATIONS AND CURRENT APPROACHES

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Over the past three decades, the study of Cicero's philosophical thought has undergone significant development. This has resulted in a revision of the previously widespread and unjust assessment that reduced the merits of the Arpinate chiefly to the transmission of the doctrines of Hellenistic Greek philosophical schools into the Roman context. Scholars were also prepared to recognise, to some extent, Cicero's originality in the fields of ethics and political philosophy.

Three books published over two years (2022–2023) provide an example of a new, markedly deeper reading of Cicero's philosophy. The studies they contain reveal that he was not only a prolific thinker, but also an innovative one. His synthesis of Greek philosophy within the Roman context was a thoroughly original project. Moreover, we come to see that Cicero had something valuable to contribute to speculative thought, epistemology, theology, cosmology, and beyond. Many of the texts collected in the volumes under discussion further demonstrate that the synthesis of philosophy and rhetoric was not only a distinctly Roman endeavour, but more precisely a Ciceronian one.

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Stefano Maso, *Cicero's Philosophy*, De Gruyter: Berlin–Boston 2022 (*Trends in Classics: Key Perspectives on Classical Research*, 3). Pp. XIV + 178. ISBN 978-3-11-065839-2.

The first of the publications under discussion is a monograph by Stefano Maso, titled *Cicero's Philosophy*, published in 2022 by de Gruyter in the series *Trends in Classics: Key Perspectives on Classical Research*. This is a *par excellence* synthetic work. The author presents the key issues of Cicero's philosophy in an accessible and concise manner. His exposition is enriched by detailed references to the relevant scholarly literature, with particular attention paid to the most recent publications.

The first chapter, titled *Cicero's Philosophical Apprenticeship*, serves as an introduction. Maso outlines the most important facts concerning Cicero's biography, the course of his political career, and the broader historical background to his literary activity. In the second part of the chapter, the author discusses Cicero's intellectual formation and education, with particular emphasis on oratory and philosophy. Attention is given to Cicero's teachers, both in Italy and in Greece. In the final section of the chapter, Maso highlights the originality of Cicero's synthesis of rhetoric and philosophy—an issue that has been the subject of intense scholarly debate in recent years and is now well established, not least due to Ingo Gildenhard's monograph, *Creative Eloquence: The Construction of Reality in Cicero's Speeches*.¹

The second chapter focuses on the mature phase of Cicero's philosophical output. The author discusses the motivations that led the Arpinate to engage intensively in philosophical writing, and examines the political context, which influenced not only the choice of topics, but also the content of his works. Maso analyses Cicero's philosophical treatises, not limiting himself to the best-known texts, but also considering those that are less frequently read. He further attempts to reconstruct the content of works that have been lost or survive only in fragments.

A standout chapter is the third, titled *Contemporary Research on Cicero as a Philosopher*. It provides a survey of the most recent positions and publications related to Cicero's philosophical writings. Before turning to this overview, however, the author seeks to revise the traditional image of the philosopher—one shaped primarily by the Greek tradition—by expanding it in accordance with Cicero's own views. According to Maso, Cicero's dependence on the philosophical schools of Hellenism and the compilatory nature of his writings in no way diminish the originality of his thought (to say nothing of the fact that, without Cicero's works, our

¹ Gildenhard 2010.

knowledge of Hellenistic philosophy would be incomparably poorer). For Maso, Cicero was not so much a flawed philosopher as a philosopher of a new type. The author also addresses Cicero's popularity in the centuries following antiquity. The Arpinate's authority remained largely unquestioned until the end of the eighteenth century. The nineteenth century brought a thorough reassessment of Cicero's legacy, largely reducing his significance to that of a transmitter of Greek philosophy into the Roman world. The limitations of this perspective began to be recognised in the second half of the twentieth century. At the same time, a true renaissance in Cicero studies has taken place over the past three decades. Maso repeatedly puts forward arguments in support of the view that this reductionist tendency was mistaken. He shows, for example, how Cicero, in the spirit of the New Academy and certain strands of sceptical thought, addressed epistemological problems. Some of these—such as the nature of perception, impressions, the *kataleptic* criterion, and others—were not given a subtle treatment until the modern period. In the final part of the third chapter, the author explores the essence of the Ciceronian synthesis of philosophy and rhetoric, including the role of *exempla* in Cicero's philosophical writings. The chapter concludes with reflections on ethics, determinism, and teleology.

The fourth chapter presents a selection of topics related to Cicero's philosophy. While by its very nature it does not offer a comprehensive survey, also due to the book's relatively modest length, it does provide insight into a new way of approaching Cicero's philosophical thought. The key issues discussed include the question of sources, the degree of Cicero's dependence on Greek philosophical schools, and the areas in which he engaged in independent reflection. In this regard, the chapter addresses questions such as the formulation of Ciceronian scepticism (or, more precisely, probabilism), the problem of determinism and human free will—in other words, classical philosophical problems. The chapter also devotes space to Cicero's critique of Epicureanism and Stoicism. Maso further reflects on the nature of Ciceronian eclecticism, which he does not regard as a flaw, but rather a conscious choice on the part of Cicero—one that results in a form of philosophy that never loses touch with *praxis*.

The fifth chapter, titled *Cicero's Philosophical Vocabulary*, concludes the monograph. It differs in character from the preceding chapters. Here, the author discusses eight terms drawn from the philosophical lexicon of Cicero: ἀδιάφορα – *indifferentia*; βούλησις – *voluntas*; εἰμαρμένη – *fatum*; καθῆκον – *officium*; κατάληψις, καταληπτική φαντασία – *comprehensio, visum comprehendibile*; οἰκείωσις – *conciliatio*; πιθανόν – *probabile*; πρόληψις – *anticipatio, praenotio, praesensio*. This is an exceptionally instructive contribution to our understanding of how Cicero adapted Greek philosophical terminology to a Latin conceptual framework. The task

involved not only identifying Latin equivalents for Greek terms, but also interpreting or reinterpreting their semantic range. In this respect, Cicero demonstrated remarkable inventiveness and philological competence.² It should also be noted that the Arpinate coined many Latin neologisms in the field of philosophical terminology—an area of study that remains, in itself, a fascinating subject of scholarly inquiry.³

The book concludes with a brief *Epilogue* of just over one page, which succinctly recapitulates several of the key positions articulated throughout the volume. The author writes, among other things: “It is clear, at this point, that Cicero’s role shifts from that of a simple mediator of Greek tradition and culture to that of the philosopher intending to pursue an educational, moral and civic project” (p. 6). It is a pity that the author did not opt for more extensive concluding remarks. In its current form, the epilogue is unlikely to satisfy any reader.

The monograph is clearly structured and carefully edited. Its language is both lucid and precise, while remaining accessible—an aspect that, given the book’s modest length, significantly broadens its potential readership. In addition to scholars working in philosophy, literature, history, or classical philology, the book is also likely to attract a broader humanities readership. While specialists in Ciceronian philosophy will be familiar with many of the theses presented (though Maso’s book does offer original insights), students and researchers not regularly engaged with this subject matter will no doubt appreciate its contents.

Jed W. Atkins, J.W., Thomas Bénatouïl (eds), *The Cambridge companion to Cicero’s philosophy*, Cambridge University Press Cambridge–New York 2022. Pp. xviii + 357. ISBN 978-1108416665.

The second publication under review is *The Cambridge Companion to Cicero’s Philosophy*, edited by Jed W. Atkins and Thomas Bénatouïl. Like the monograph discussed above, it aspires to introduce readers to Cicero’s philosophy in the spirit of recent heuristic approaches. As a collective volume, its polyphonic character and multiplicity of perspectives are inherent to its structure.

The *Companion* brings together eighteen contributions by as many authors, each addressing a different aspect of Cicero’s philosophy. This *varietas* appears to have been a deliberate editorial choice. As the editors state in the preface, their

² Powell 1995: 273–300; Gildenhard 2010.

³ Gildenhard 2010, *passim*.

overarching aim was to present texts “viewed through the lens of recent scholarship.” Accordingly, their primary criterion was to highlight what they call “the most recent Ciceronian revival” (p. xiii).

The volume opens with an introduction by Thomas Bénatouil, in which the author outlines a broad catalogue of criticisms that have traditionally been levelled against Cicero's philosophy. He emphasises that the present volume constitutes a refutation of these charges, carried out from a range of scholarly perspectives. Bénatouil addresses, in particular, two labels that have long been associated with Cicero: first, that of a translator and compiler of the Greek philosophical tradition rather than a creative thinker in his own right; and second, that of an amateur philosopher, engaged in philosophy only on an occasional basis. The introduction notes that the contributors present a variety of approaches to Cicero's legacy, making the volume broadly interdisciplinary in nature.

In the first chapter (*Cicero's Philosophical Writing in Its Intellectual Context*), Claudia Moatti sketches the historical and intellectual landscape of first-century BCE Rome to situate the emergence of Latin philosophy within it. Cicero is cast in a threefold role: as witness, participant, and architect of new intellectual practices. The author explains the reasons behind the Romans' initial reservations toward philosophy, and why the project of transplanting it to the banks of the Tiber was delayed, gradual, and required adaptation to local conditions. For Cicero, philosophy became a tool for describing a complex socio-political reality—what Moatti calls “the formalisation of reality” (p. 16). Formalisation, in turn, led to systematisation: a reduction of content and further analytical refinement of description. There is no doubt that Cicero recognised the potential of these tools; after all, he was their co-creator in the Roman context. In the latter part of the chapter, Moatti presents Cicero as the central figure in this intellectual revolution.

The authors of the second chapter (*The Ciceronian Dialogue*) are Charles Brittain and Peter Osorio. Their contribution focuses on Cicero's use of the dialogue form. In their view, he employed this mode of writing as a means of reasoning, of juxtaposing different arguments and positions, and of subjecting individual theses to critical scrutiny. It functioned as a genuine school of critical thinking. This mode of shaping philosophical content can be found both in Cicero's earlier dialogues (*De oratore*, *De re publica*, *De legibus*) and in later ones (*Tusculanae disputationes*). Undoubtedly, Cicero's scepticism also left its mark on his dialectical method.

Sophie Aubert-Baillet, in the third chapter (*Philosophy in Cicero's Letters*), examines the presence of philosophy in Cicero's letters. As the author emphasises, philosophy is omnipresent in his correspondence, though references to it are highly dispersed. It manifests itself, first, in the use of philosophical terminology, and second, in Cicero's discussion of specific philosophical issues. Such terminol-

ogy is also employed in the kind of intertextual play so characteristic of Cicero's style. His correspondence further contains numerous reflections on the practical dimension of philosophy.

In the fourth chapter, titled *Philosophy in Cicero's Speeches*, Catharine Steel examines Cicero's use of philosophy to achieve specific rhetorical effects. She shows how he employed philosophy instrumentally—for instance, to justify his own actions, to discredit his opponents, or to demonstrate argumentation *in utramque partem*. The author stresses that the Arpinate skilfully adjusted both the depth and scope of his philosophical references to suit his audience.

In the fifth chapter, Carlos Lévy returns to a topic already touched upon earlier: Cicero's philosophical vocabulary. Although considerable scholarly progress has already been made in this field, it still holds immense potential for further development. The author emphasises that Cicero aspired to make Latin a language capable of expressing complex philosophical thought on a par with Greek. Cicero lamented that, in Italy, philosophy had long lagged behind poetry and rhetoric. His ambition was not merely to introduce Greek terminology into Latin, but to reshape it creatively in the spirit of Roman *mores maiorum*. He saw himself as the architect of the Latin philosophical language. Though he was not solely responsible for laying its foundations for this language, there is no doubt that he played the most significant role in its development. Others, such as Lucretius and Varro, also made important contributions in this domain.

In the following chapter (*Cicero and Plato*), Malcolm Schofield explores the relationship between Cicero and the work of Plato. Platonic influences are evident in many areas of Cicero's philosophy. One such area is his correspondence, where Plato is undoubtedly presented as an authority for Cicero, even if Cicero often distanced himself from some of his ideas. The letters also reveal a certain intellectual kinship between the two figures and, to some extent, a similarity in their respective fates. More importantly, however, Platonic influence is clearly visible in Cicero's dialogues. These inspirations concerned, among other things, form: many of Plato's dialogues served as models for Cicero's adaptations. *De re publica* and *De legibus* are the most closely aligned with the Platonic format. As Schofield notes, Platonic inspiration played a somewhat lesser role in Cicero's later writings.

Chapter seven, written by Tobias Reinhardt and titled *Cicero's Academic Scepticism*, presents a detailed analysis of Cicero's sceptical stance, tracing the evolution of his views from his earliest writings, such as *De inventione*, to the treatises composed at the end of his life. At the outset of his career, Cicero appears as a radical sceptic, though not in the Pyrrhonian sense, but rather within the framework of the New Academy, inspired by Arcesilaus and Carneades. While this approach seems applicable to Cicero's youth, most of his active political life (until the end

of the 60s) is characterised by a more moderate scepticism. In his “classical” works from the end of this period — *De oratore*, *De re publica*, and *De legibus* — he adheres to the principle of arguing for opposed positions (*in utramque partem*). The writings from the 40s are more varied, but Cicero remains faithful to Academic scepticism, drawing also on the concept of *probabilitas* developed in the Carneadean tradition. Reinhardt's contribution is erudite and reveals many nuances of Ciceronian scepticism, while also demonstrating that Cicero consistently maintained this stance throughout his life.

Clara Auvray-Assayas, in her chapter (*Cosmology, Theology, and Religion*), examines Cicero's approach to theology and religion. The key work she analyses is the dialogue *De natura deorum*. The issue of Cicero's scepticism, discussed by Tobias Reinhardt in the preceding chapter, resurfaces in Auvray-Assayas' treatment. The Arpinate's scepticism is reflected in the dialogical structure of *De natura deorum*. The author argues that, in relation to Platonic dialogues, Cicero makes an intriguing shift: he refrains from pronouncing on the ontological status of the gods. Instead, he adopts an epistemological and anthropological approach to religion. On the first matter, he suspends judgement; on the second, as Auvray-Assayas writes, he seeks “to provide some understanding of the psychological conditions which account for the formation of human conceptions of the gods.”

The ninth chapter, by Elizabeth Begemann, is titled *Determinism, Fate, and Responsibility*. The author offers a detailed analysis of two of Cicero's late treatises from 45–44: *De divinatione* and *De fato*. As Begemann emphasises, Cicero adheres to Academic scepticism while simultaneously rejecting determinism and affirming individual free will. Such a position is hardly surprising when considered in light of his political philosophy and his *praxis* of civic engagement. At the same time, he emerges as a supporter of traditional divinatory practices—what Begemann terms “artificial divination.” His stance on this issue may best be described as pragmatic.

In the tenth chapter, titled *Cicero on the Emotions and the Soul*, Sean McConnell demonstrates how Cicero conceives of philosophy as a “medicine for the soul.” The focus of his study is *Tusculanae disputationes*, written in 45 following the death of Cicero's daughter, Tullia. The work takes the form of a *consolatio*, but above all constitutes a profound reflection on the nature of suffering. In *Tusculanae disputationes*, Cicero also addresses the question of the soul's immortality. Most importantly, however, he presents a path toward alleviating the pain and sorrow of the soul, drawing here on the Stoic cognitivist theory of emotion. McConnell's chapter is yet another contribution that highlights the practical utility of Cicero's philosophical thought.

The eleventh chapter, *Ethical Theory and the Good Life*, is authored by Raphael Woolf. Drawing on *De finibus*, written in 45, he shows how Cicero critically

engages with various ethical schools, ultimately siding with the pluralism of the Old Academy as developed by Antiochus of Ascalon. The critique begins with Epicureanism, which Cicero considers incompatible with Roman values, due to its hedonistic foundations. He also rejects Stoic ethics, including their theory of *oikeiosis*, and criticises their monism. In the end, he deems the pluralist ethics of human perfection proposed by Antiochus the most suitable for Roman realities.

Gretchen Reydam-Schils, in her chapter titled *Ethical Theory and the Good Life*, explores Cicero's approach to social ethics in *De officiis* (44). In this work, Cicero develops the Stoic concept of *oikeiosis* and an ethics grounded in nature. In the same Stoic spirit, he also establishes a hierarchy of duties and defines the scope of the notion of appropriateness (*decorum*).

Gary Remer, in chapter thirteen (*Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Politics*), addresses a theme also explored in other contributions: Cicero's emphasis on the connection between rhetoric, philosophy, and political praxis. According to the author, this triad is synthesised in the ideal of *eloquentia* grounded in *sapientia*. Remer argues that Cicero followed the Platonic conception of wisdom and the Stoic notion of *decorum* (especially in rhetoric). As indicated in *De oratore*, the *orator perfectus*, who is to be *eloquens*, naturally unites philosophy, rhetoric, and politics. Cicero laments that, since the time of Socrates, Greek culture has brought about a rapid separation of rhetoric and philosophy. The implementation of Cicero's ideal, however, proved unrealistic under the conditions of the late Republic.

Walter Niegorski, in chapter fourteen (*Cicero's Republicanism*), attempts to define the character of Cicero's republicanism. A key to understanding it lies in the starting point: the question of what the *res publica* is. In *De re publica*, Cicero defines it as the *res populi*, a community founded on a just consensus among citizens (*iuris consensus*) and the common good (*utilitatis communio*). As always in Cicero's thought, the foundations of a functioning state go beyond institutions, magistracies, and the roles played by political actors; they must also be grounded in ethics and morality. As Niegorski rightly emphasises, Cicero's republicanism would be incomplete without the central role of *libertas*, realised in various ways, including through public discourse. The author also highlights the significant influence that Cicero's republican ideals had on the constitutions of modern states, especially in the United States of America.

Jed W. Atkins, in the fifteenth chapter, addresses two principal themes: the concept of just war and the relationship between cosmopolitanism and patriotism. Drawing primarily on *De re publica*, *De officiis*, and *De legibus*, the author argues that Cicero's theory of just war anticipated similar ideas that would emerge in the Middle Ages and the modern era. Cicero imposed not only ritual but also moral requirements for declaring war – it had to be waged for a just cause. The

Ciceronian dilemma of choosing between the Stoic ideal of cosmopolitanism and Roman-style patriotism created a tension that was difficult to resolve. Ultimately, Cicero embraced the republic as the highest value.

In the sixteenth chapter, titled *Cicero and Augustine*, Anne-Isabelle Bouton-Touboulic explores the reception of Cicero's thought in the writings of Augustine of Hippo. She first highlights the transformative role played by Cicero's *Hortensius* in shaping Augustine's intellectual development. In the second part of the chapter, Bouton-Touboulic examines selected elements of Ciceronian philosophy that Augustine reinterpreted or revised. One such example is Cicero's Academic scepticism, which Augustine viewed with suspicion. Bouton-Touboulic argues that he even constructed a forced interpretative move that this scepticism was merely a "façade" maintained by Academics who, in truth, held dogmatic beliefs – a stance she describes as "esoteric dogmatism." Augustine was even more critical of Cicero's views on determinism and free will. The chapter also addresses Cicero's republicanism, which Augustine creatively reinterpreted by enriching it with the concept of *vera religio*.

Chapter Seventeen also addresses the reception of Cicero's thought, this time in the modern era (*Cicero and Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*). In his survey, Daniel J. Kapust explores the extraordinary popularity and authority of Cicero in the eighteenth century. Philosophers of various Enlightenment currents held the Arpinate in great reverence. Within the tradition of sceptical philosophy, he was praised by figures such as John Locke and David Hume. Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, who was close to Locke's intellectual circle, though distinct from him in moral philosophy, also drew heavily on Cicero's ethics. Cicero was likewise admired by Adam Smith and John Adams, the latter of whom was even dubbed the "American Cicero." Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant, by contrast, maintained a more reserved stance towards the Arpinate. Daniel J. Kapust demonstrates how central a figure Cicero was for the Enlightenment – a popularity that would, however, wane in the nineteenth century.

The final chapter of the volume, authored by Martha Nussbaum and titled *Cicero and Twenty-First-Century Political Philosophy*, addresses the influence of Cicero's political philosophy on contemporary debates. The author focuses on three key topics: cosmopolitanism, ageing, and friendship. For Nussbaum, several ideas promoted by Cicero retain a universal and global relevance. Among them are the concepts of "universal justice" and "natural law." In both cases, political boundaries were, at least in principle, morally irrelevant to Cicero. Nussbaum also discusses the issues of old age and friendship, drawing on the dialogues *De senectute* (45) and *De amicitia* (44). She argues that Cicero's texts resonate more strongly with our age and that the Arpinate should be studied more widely – even more widely than those of Plato and Aristotle.

The overview presented above makes it unequivocally clear that Cicero's philosophy is a highly complex subject with immense research potential. The contributors to the volume have not only succeeded in overcoming the dismissive assessments once levelled against Cicero but have also articulated the seemingly self-evident yet often neglected claim that Cicero's writings must be analysed not only considering Greek inspirations and influences, but also against the backdrop of their Roman context. The chapters collected in the volume are of a very high scholarly standard. The *Cambridge Companion to Cicero's Philosophy* offers an excellent introduction to the field, both for experienced researchers and for those wishing to gain a deeper understanding of the intricate edifice of the Arpinate's philosophical thought.

Nathan Gilbert, Margaret Graver, Sean McConnell (eds), *Power and persuasion in Cicero's philosophy*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2023. Pp. ix + 268. ISBN 978-1-009-17033-8.

The third book under review is also a collective volume. It is organised into two parts: *Techniques and Tactics of Ciceronian Philosophy* and *Political Philosophy and Ethics*. As the title of the volume suggests, the subject of the study is the interplay between rhetoric and philosophy in Cicero's oeuvre. In the introduction, the editors emphasise that writing on philosophical topics was, for Cicero, a substitute for oratorical activity, which was significantly limited in the 50s. It was at the same time a form of political engagement through the written word. For Cicero, rhetorical success (*eloquentia*) and philosophical excellence (*sapientia*) were two sides of the same coin. In his view, the ideal politician ought to be proficient in both domains. As the editors point out, the contributors were interested in situating Cicero's philosophical thought in the external socio-political conditions of the first century BCE. According to their declaration, the essays collected in the volume aim at close analysis and attention to detail.

The volume opens with Raphael Woolf's contribution, *Cicero on Rhetoric and Dialectic*. The author examines the relationship between dialectic and rhetoric in philosophical discourse. In Cicero's view, dialectic—that is, the ability to argue formally—was an indispensable part of the philosopher's craft. By contrast, the deployment of rhetoric was, to some extent, optional, since, according to Cicero, scholars are capable of engaging in refined dialogue without resorting to excessive means of persuasion: *mollis est enim oratio philosophorum et umbratilis* (Or. 19.64). Rhetoric, particularly when treated instrumentally, may thus become a potential threat to

the ideal of philosophical dialectic. Nonetheless, Cicero made significant efforts to achieve a harmonious synthesis of the two disciplines—at least in his own works.

James E. Zetzel is the author of the second chapter, *Cicero's Platonic Dialogues*. He addresses the relationship between Cicero's dialogues and those of Plato. Cicero's treatises—*De oratore*, *De re publica*, and *De legibus*, among others—clearly contain references to Plato. However, as Zetzel emphasises, Cicero's dialogues are not Platonic but rather “meta-Platonic.” What does this mean? It means that Cicero engages with Platonic models ironically, and at times even antagonistically. This stance was, at least in part, a consequence of his commitment to defending Roman values.

The third chapter, authored by Georgina White and titled *Mos dialogorum: Scepticism and Fiction in Cicero's Academica*, explores the literary and philosophical potential of the dialogue form in Cicero's work. For a thinker who often juxtaposed competing views, this structure was particularly well suited. According to White, the dialogical format enabled Cicero to strengthen his case against Stoic dogmatism, especially that of Antiochus of Ascalon. The *Academica* centres on an epistemological debate in which Cicero rejects the Stoic theory of the “cognitive impression” (*phantasia kataleptikē*), offering a series of refutatory examples drawn from everyday experience.

Chapter Four, titled *Nos in diem vivimus: Cicero's Approach in the Tusculan Disputations*, is authored by Geert Roskam. It examines the significance of the phrase “*nos in diem vivimus*” (“we live from day to day”), found in Cicero's *Tusculanae disputationes*. This phrase encapsulates the character of Cicero's Academic scepticism, which relied on the constant re-evaluation of judgements in light of new data and arguments. Such an approach was both flexible and contextual, deliberately precluding any notion of a definitive answer.

The final chapter of the first part of the book, titled *Cicero the Philosopher at Work: The Genesis and Execution of De officiis 3*, is authored by Nathan Gilbert. The chapter addresses the question of Cicero's philosophical originality in *De officiis*. Gilbert seeks to determine the extent of Cicero's dependence on Panaetius, particularly in the first two books of the treatise. At the same time, he emphasises the originality of Book III, which presents a more nuanced critique of Stoic ethics, along with a polemic against Epicurean traditions. Drawing on Cicero's correspondence with Atticus, the author presents this exchange as evidence of the philosopher's evolving views. The result is a nuanced analysis of Cicero's original contribution to the philosophical traditions of Hellenism.

The second part of the book also comprises five essays. The first of these, and the sixth in the volume, is by Malcolm Schofield and is titled *Iuris consensu Revisited*. The author analyses the phrase *iuris consensu* from Cicero's famous defi-

nition of the state, noting at the outset that its proper interpretation poses significant difficulties. Schofield argues that *ius* should be understood as ‘justice’ or ‘law’, though not in the literal, legal sense, but rather as a kind of moral principle. In his interpretation, the phrase *iuris consensu* should be taken to mean ‘agreement on justice’ or ‘agreement on law’.

The author of the seventh chapter is Margaret Graver. Titled *The Psychology of Honor in Cicero's De re publica*, it explores Cicero's development of a concept of political motivation that combines rational (philosophical) arguments with the desire for honour and glory as a reward for service to the fatherland. Cicero distinguishes between *gloria vera*, grounded in the judgment of authorities, and *fama popularis*, which might be arbitrary and wholly undeserved. Graver also examines Cicero's approach to the emotions, drawing attention to his use of Stoic philosophy. Cicero contrasts the irrational and harmful *cupido* with *voluntas*, the appropriate form of striving. In this psychology, reason plays a crucial role as the faculty that renders emotions effective and appropriate.

Jed Atkins addresses the question of just war in his chapter, seeking to reconstruct Cicero's theory on the subject. He emphasises that in Rome, war was an immanent feature of political life—indeed, a civic duty. Cicero attempted to integrate this duty within the framework of Roman *virtutes*. The *ius ad bellum*, or right to go to war, is fulfilled when the war is declared in a just manner. A war, in turn, is waged justly and with moral legitimacy (*ius in bello*) if certain conditions are met, such as the absence of greed, the defence of allies, respect for treaties, and the humane treatment of the defeated—though this last element, as Atkins notes, is subject to qualifications. The moral foundation for declaring a just war is natural law, which Cicero discusses, among other places, in *De re publica* 3.33.

Katharina Volk, in the ninth chapter titled “*Towards a Definition of Sapientia: Philosophy in Cicero's Pro Marcello*,” reconstructs Cicero's rhetorical strategy in the speech *Pro Marcello*, which she interprets as sincere and devoid of any hidden agenda to criticise Caesar. At the heart of the speech lies the concept of *sapientia*, which Cicero attributes to Caesar. This attribution forms the basis for a programme of republican renewal, presented as a constructive proposal directed at Caesar himself.

The tenth chapter, *Old Men in Cicero's Political Philosophy*, concludes the volume. Its author, Sean McConnell, examines the figure of elderly sages (*senes*) in *De senectute*. By juxtaposing this dialogue with *De re publica*, he reveals an intriguing shift: while in the earlier work from the 50s Cicero had placed the *optimi* (*optimates*) at the head of the republic—as a reservoir of magistrates and leaders—in *De senectute* of 44, he saw the *senes* assuming this role. McConnell suggests that this shift can be interpreted both as the result of Cicero's own ageing and as a response

to the specific political circumstances of the 40s. It was intended as an encouragement for elder statesmen to take an active part in the service of the republic. The institutional reinforcement of this group, Cicero hoped, would come through a renewed prominence of the Senate, a prospect he also advocates in *De senectute*. McConnell emphasises that Cicero's proposals were of a practical nature and not merely the nostalgia of an ageing leader.

One must agree with the editors of the volume that the book "draws attention to detail". The contributions it contains are indeed meticulous, erudite, and of a very high scholarly standard. The primary audience of the volume will be more advanced researchers; however, it may also be useful to other readers.

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The publications discussed demonstrate an impressively high scholarly standard. They are analytical in the best sense of the word, addressing numerous issues that have either not been previously explored or even recognised. They are undoubtedly a sign that the renaissance of interest in Cicero's philosophy is a lasting development, rather than a passing trend. More importantly, however, they reveal the complexity of Cicero's philosophical legacy.

First and foremost, it becomes abundantly clear that the thematic and conceptual scope of Cicero's philosophical legacy is vast. This makes it all the more puzzling that such richness was long overlooked—perhaps due to the persistent label of Cicero as a mere compiler of Hellenistic philosophy. Today, we know that, in addition to addressing ethical and political questions, Cicero also explored matters of epistemology, metaphysics, theology, and cosmology. He did not shy away from central philosophical problems such as determinism, free will, or the existence of the gods.

Secondly, Cicero is our gateway to Hellenistic philosophy. His compilatory approach did not preclude inventiveness or original contribution in the selective appropriation of doctrines—or elements thereof—within his own philosophical project. Of course, distinguishing what is Greek from what is Roman in Cicero's philosophy is a difficult task, though one that is both stimulating and thought-provoking.

Thirdly, alongside Lucretius, Cicero was the most important architect of Latin philosophical terminology. In this respect, his work remains a point of reference for later texts and cannot be overlooked by scholars of imperial philosophy.

Fourthly, Cicero's philosophical convictions were closely intertwined with his political engagement. His political philosophy never detaches itself from *praxis*. The ethical foundations of service to the Republic are set out in *De re publica*, *De*

legibus, *De officiis*, and many of Cicero's treatises. Without careful attention to this body of work, many of Cicero's political decisions may remain unintelligible to us.

Finally, Cicero's philosophical writings exerted a profound influence on authors of Late Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the early modern period. The reception of the Arpinate's thought is a subject of great value in its own right, and one of considerable interest.

One shortcoming of the publications under review is the inconsistency in the overall picture of Cicero's thought that emerges from them, which can, of course, be attributed to the diversity of perspectives. Another issue is whether the current wave of appreciation for Cicero is excessive. Whether this admiration is ultimately warranted remains to be seen. One can only hope that the current surge of interest in Cicero's philosophy will result in new publications and, with them, a deeper understanding of the thought of this outstanding intellectual of antiquity. The works reviewed here undoubtedly pave the way for such developments.⁴

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⁴ At the same time as the reviewed publications, the following also appeared: Schofield 2021; Paulson 2022; Vielberg 2023; Bufacchi 2023.