

The final contribution, O. Coloru's 'The Iranian World of Herodian', is another article distinguished by widening the range of evidence and lines of enquiry for thinking about Herodian. Coloru illustrates, *inter alia*, the unlikelihood of the Sasanians, as Herodian avers, framing their claims to empire in Achaemenid terms, and persuasively argues that this claim has more to do with the ultimately Herodotean discourse within which Herodian is composing. Coloru is also illuminating on Herodian's echoes of the Late Republican preoccupation with the idea of Roman soldiers going over to the Eastern enemy; to the example of Labienus, which Coloru gives (p. 305), one might add the *miles Crassi* of Horace (Hor. *Carm.* 3.5.5–12).

This is generally a well-produced volume, with few obvious errors of fact that evaded the proof-reader. That being said, Herodian does not provide a 'scholarly gloss about the male and female gender of the cult of the Moon' near Carrhae (p. 162). That gloss appears in the *SHA* (*M. Ant.* 7.3–4), as correctly stated earlier in the same article (p. 161 n. 31); Herodian refers merely to a temple of Selene (Hdn. 4.13.3). Commodus does not feel 'threatened by the possibility of losing power at the advent of his reign' (p. 204); Herodian makes it clear that this is a pretext to mask his desire for the soft life of Rome (Hdn. 1.6.3). The nominative form of τοὺς ἐξέχοντας is οἱ ἐξέχοντες, not οἱ ἐξέχονται (p. 205). None of these small glitches affects the argument, however.

In sum, then, the Herodian vogue continues; long may it do so. Galimberti and his contributors have, with this volume, played a signal role in its continuance.

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COMPANION TO PLOTINUS REVISITED

GERSON (L.P.), WILBERDING (J.) (edd.) *The New Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*. Pp. xxiv + 471, figs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Paper, £26.99, US\$34.99 (Cased, £79.99, US\$105). ISBN: 978-1-108-72623-8 (978-1-108-48834-1 hbk).
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This *New Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, edited by Lloyd P. Gerson and James Wilberding, comes 25 years after *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, edited by Gerson. The publication of a new Companion devoted to Plotinus stems from the need not only to address fundamental philosophical issues in the *Enneads* (as in the case of the earlier volume), but also to do so in the light of new findings concerning ancient texts and neglected topics.

Like the previous volume, this new one includes sixteen contributions by specialists in the Platonist tradition, who outline the main problems in a clear manner. The work is preceded by an introduction by Gerson, who has not authored any of the chapters, and by the list of the *Enneads*, both as arranged by Porphyry and in their chronological order. The chapters are divided into five thematic sections (Part 1: 'Historical Context'; Part 2: 'Metaphysics and Epistemology'; Part 3: 'Psychology'; Part 4: 'Natural Philosophy'; Part 5: 'Ethics'). Rather than providing a systematic treatment, these thematic sections offer a selection of specific topics that are thoroughly discussed, showing that it is

impossible to separate any aspect of Plotinus' philosophy from his metaphysical thought and historical background. Moreover, the book clearly points to the need to read Plotinus by tackling the difficulties related to the structure of the dialogues, the enigmatic nature of certain Platonic statements, and the importance of Aristotle and of Plotinus' criticism of Aristotelian metaphysical positions, as well as Plotinus' polemics against the Stoics, Epicureans and Peripatetics.

The volume is well balanced and provides a convincing outline of Plotinus' philosophy, even though the structure of the contributions varies: some discuss long textual excerpts, while others opt for a broader reassessment of specific topics in the light of new doctrinal acquisitions, preferring to focus the analysis on a few textual examples. The book's chapters, both individually and as a whole, succeed in demonstrating the strength of the arguments presented and the complexity of Plotinus' exegetical world. All the chapters support their arguments with substantial notes, located at the end of each, which helps ensure a smooth textual flow. The *index locorum* allots approximately nine pages to thinkers other than Plotinus and about thirteen to Plotinus. While there are no glaring inconsistencies, cross-references are almost absent.

In the introduction, rather than stressing that the volume serves as a reference work for students who are new to Plotinus and non-specialists who will benefit from clear and lucid remarks, Gerson correctly emphasises the usefulness of a new Companion especially in relation to the considerable increase in studies on Neoplatonism: this is demonstrated by the 33-page final bibliography (vs the 22-page one in the previous volume), which is not only up to date but also carefully laid out for each chapter. At the same time, the volume is not meant to replace a direct reading of Plotinus; rather, it is designed to serve as a valuable guide to the *Enneads* with all its details, obscurities and contradictions, especially because Plotinus' writings can hardly be regarded as systematic: the Plotinian 'system' ultimately concerns basic entities, principles of operation and the effort to develop a unified explanation of the world.

The first part emphasises the need to place Plotinus in a historical context that, nevertheless, remains limited to the exegesis of Plato and Aristotle, Gnosticism and Christianity, and later Platonism. E.D. Perl, 'Plato and Aristotle in the *Enneads*', opens the first section by reflecting on Plotinus' complex relationship with Plato and Aristotle. Interestingly, Perl detects an early tendency in Plotinus to harmonise Plato and Aristotle. So – if I understand correctly – Perl is not arguing that Plotinus was truly responsible for the integration of Plato and Aristotle, but rather highlighting the fact that in Plotinus we can detect a Platonic use of Aristotle to refute certain theories, based on an acknowledgement of certain points of continuity between Plato and Aristotle. S. Gertz, in 'Plotinus, Gnosticism, and Christianity', offers an interesting analysis of the relationship between Plotinus and the major religious movements of his time, namely Christianity and Gnosticism. Gertz shows that it would be possible to read Plotinus' criticism of the Gnostics as an indirect attack on Christians too, since the philosopher may have seen the Gnostics as a Christian splinter group. While familiar with Plato, the Gnostics turned to esoteric texts, published under the guise of Eastern wisdom and purporting to be divine revelations concerning the intelligible world and the origin and destiny of the universe and the human soul. M. Martijn's chapter, 'From Plotinus to Proclus', discusses the relationship between Plotinus and the other Neoplatonists, showing that the Neoplatonists share certain common assumptions and proceed by gradually developing seeds already present in Plotinus. G. Aubry's chapter, 'The One as First Principle of All', is devoted to Plotinus' main innovation, namely the postulation of an absolutely transcendent first principle. One of the problems related to this postulation, and discussed in the chapter, is the possibility (or rather almost the

contradiction) of only being able to reach this principle through an experience of complete absorption into the One, i.e. a mystical experience.

Part 2 delves into the conceptual framework of Plotinus' metaphysics. It opens with a chapter by M. Bonazzi, 'Plotinus and the Theory of Forms', reconstructing Plotinus' view of Plato's theory of Forms. He rediscusses the Middle Platonic effort to define the causal role of the Forms and Aristotle's theory of Intellect according to a perspective that supports the notion of the coincidence between knowledge and being, and consequently between epistemology and ontology. S. Slaveva-Griffin's chapter, 'Plotinus on Number', concerns the essential role of number in the Neoplatonic model of the universe. The chapter demonstrates that Plotinus is not interested in quantitative and arithmetical numbers. Slaveva-Griffin explains why number, which is an ontological unity, is 'substantial' for Plotinus by reinterpreting Aristotle's understanding of the quantitative production of number in light of the generation of Intellect and the one-many structure of the intelligible world. M.J. Griffin, in 'Plotinus on Categories', presents Plotinus' categories for intelligible being and sensibles, elucidating the philosopher's criticism not only of Aristotle's categories, but also of the Stoic ones. C. Tornau, in 'Plotinus on Knowledge', points out that the Plotinian theory of knowledge overcomes certain problems raised by Scepticism. Even if the Sceptics' point about sense perception is granted, the cognition of Intellect is infallible because it is immediate and non-representative: Intellect knows its objects simply by knowing itself; hence, Plotinus' great epistemological paradox may be seen to lie in the fact that all knowledge is fundamentally self-knowledge.

Part 3 deals with the topics of the union of soul and body, the powers of the soul, the passions of the soul, sensitive perception, memory and imagination, and the theory of individuality. Each of these points is investigated with great precision. D. Caluori, in 'The Embodied Soul', reconstructs Plotinus' account of body-soul relations and operations as a synthesis of Platonic theories, Aristotelian principles and Galen's anatomical discoveries. He then discusses the rational form of the soul by explaining how this soul is active in relation to the body even though its activities do not take place in the body. In particular, he shows that Plotinus interprets and generalises a statement in the *Timaeus* that the body of the world is in the World-Soul. P. Remes's chapter, 'Self-Knowledge and Self-Reflexivity', analyses the problem of self-knowledge as part of Plotinian epistemology. Remes demonstrates that Plotinus addresses both the issue of the structural characteristics of self-reflexivity and self-consciousness and that of ethically purposed self-conversion.

Like the other sections, Part 4 presents contributions that also engage with Plotinus' philosophical background and his knowledge of Aristotle's treatises. R. Chiaradonna's 'Eternity and Time' is the first of only two chapters that had the same title in the earlier *Companion*. It deals with an issue that is not only fascinating, but also puzzling. A. Smith, the author of the chapter on eternity and time in the earlier *Companion*, had certainly stressed this point, but without grasping an interesting feature of the *Enneads* as a whole, namely the use of the first-person plural 'we', which Chiaradonna analyses in depth. D.M. Hutchinson, in 'Composition of Sensible Bodies', sets out to re-evaluate Plotinus' natural philosophy, by outlining Plotinus' attempt to show that Aristotle's theory of primary substance is incomplete and incoherent (also by comparison to Plato's *Timaeus*). J. Wilberding, in 'Nature: Plotinus' Fourth Hypostasis?', discusses the idea that with Plotinus we can start talking about the 'metaphysics of nature'. This chapter also demonstrates the importance of placing a precise topic in a broader theoretical framework: to examine Plotinus' account of Nature, it is necessary to take his theory of procession and reversion into consideration.

The fifth and last part is a well-reasoned attempt to examine how Plotinus incorporates the world, the problem of evil and fate into his ethical framework. The subject of

J. Opsomer's chapter, 'Matter and Evil', had already been addressed in the earlier *Companion* by D. O'Brien, who had reached the conclusion that Plotinus was able to preserve the idea of non-being as a 'contrary' by circumventing Aristotle's *Categories*. For his part, Opsomer emphasises how Plotinus assimilates 'true non-being' with evil and matter, that is evil itself and the principle of evil. He therefore highlights how Plotinus uses Plato's *Sophist* to explain that evil is a special kind of non-being. However, evil is not non-being as absolute non-being, because that simply does not exist, nor is it non-being as otherness. Rather, it is non-being as 'a kind of form, that is, of what is not', namely 'the part of the nature of the other that is opposed to the being of each thing' (p. 346). M. Tuominen, in 'Virtue and Happiness', analyses the treatises *On Virtues* and *On Happiness* to show that ethics is not an entirely theoretical affair. She offers insightful observations on the Plotinian way of proceeding, which entails criticism of other philosophical schools. C.I. Noble, in 'Plotinus on Providence and Fate', interestingly shows that Plotinus' discussions of providence and destiny are influenced by *Timaeus*' non-literal exegesis of the cosmological account and are largely directed at resolving the apparent tensions within Platonism regarding the goodness and teleological orientation of the cosmos.

The picture that emerges from this new Companion is highly interesting, useful and almost complete, despite the divergent research perspectives and approaches adopted by the various authors. The only shortcoming of the volume arguably lies in the absence of a discussion concerning the literary form used to convey Plotinus' innovative way of doing philosophy in the classroom, a topic whose importance scholars tend to underestimate.

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CICERO'S INTELLECTUAL MANIFESTO

ZETZEL (J.E.G.) *The Lost Republic. Cicero's De oratore and De re publica*. Pp. xii + 367. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. Cased, £64, US\$99. ISBN: 978-0-19-762609-2.

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Two large-scale treatises, the voluminous *De oratore* and the now tattered but once majestic *De re publica*, represent Cicero's most ambitious intellectual ventures of the 50s BCE and by all accounts his most original contributions to Roman literature. Yet these important works are not easy to read today, with their elaborate architecture, their dense cultural references, their bold and yet subtle argumentation and, of course, the fragmentary preservation of the *De re publica*, reconstruction of which requires skills that few people now possess. We can be glad, then, to have the guidance of Z.'s first-rate study. With Z.'s inimitable combination of authority and insight, *The Lost Republic* should be owned and consulted frequently by everyone who has an interest in Cicero and his times.

Building on many years of research, Z. brings to bear a dazzling range of methodologies: from historical reconstruction, analysis of argument and comparison