Introduction: Some Remarks on the Historical Meaning of the Hellenistic Peripatos

As it is recounted both in ancient sources and by modern scholars, the history of the Peripatetic School after Aristotle and Theophrastus may be summed up in one word: decline.

(Lynch 1957: 135)

This book is devoted to some Peripatetic philosophers who were Aristotle’s direct and indirect pupils, or at any rate heirs,¹ in the period from Theophrastus of Eresus (the head of the Lyceum between 322 BC, the year of Aristotle’s death, and c. 288/286 BC, when Strato of Lampsacus was appointed scholarch) to Cratippus of Pergamum, one of the most prominent Aristotelian philosophers of the 1st century BC, who lived roughly in the time of Cicero (who died at Formia in 43 BC) and whom I regard as falling within the Hellenistic Age. Most of the present research therefore focuses on Peripatetics from the Hellenistic period (which I continue to date according to convention: from Alexander the Great’s death in 323 BC to the Battle of Actium in 31 BC).² These philosophers make up a historically highly significant circle that has arguably been somewhat neglected and marginalised by modern studies on Hellenism – some positive exceptions notwithstanding – and which indeed already received much the same treatment in Antiquity, as we shall soon see. Moreover, the period around the years 31–30 BC is not only significant for chronological reasons; in a recent study drawing upon Arabic sources, Matthias Perkams (2019)³ hypothesises that Andronicus of Rhodes taught Aristotelian philosophy in Alexandria before 30 BC (as is widely known, he was responsible for the crucial ‘editing’ of Aristotle’s works⁴ – where this is chiefly to be understood as the process of corpus/canon-organisation/formation and not, of course, in the sense of modern textual criticism, an example of which is instead provided in Porphyry’s editorial work on Plotinus’ treatises).⁵ According to Perkams, Andronicus produced his edition based on early Aristotelian manuscripts from the library in Alexandria. Be that as it may, the most significant point is that, according to Perkams’ reconstruction,

¹ Concerning the previous use of this term (heirs) see Baltussen 2016 (and the earlier Dillon 2003).
² For a first overview of the chronological boundaries of Hellenism, see Spinelli’s remarks in Dorandi-Spinelli 2016: 19–24, and Sellars 2018: 5–11.
³ On Perkams’ 2019 study see, however, below, XXIII n. 53.
⁴ On Andronicus’ edition, see below, XVIIIff.
⁵ See Dorandi 2010, and Hatzimichali 2013: 1, 12, and 18–23.

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after 30 BC Andronicus accompanied Augustus to Rome, where he may have completed his editorial work (possibly by using Tyrannion’s manuscripts, originally from Apellicon’s library), so the late dating of Andronicus’ ‘edition’ is quite plausible. If this is the case, we find an almost perfect coincidence between the conventional end of the Hellenistic Age and Andronicus’ edition, which is usually regarded as a major watershed between Hellenistic Aristotelianism and Imperial Age Aristotelianism.⁶

The specific aim of this volume is not only – or not so much – to reconstruct certain aspects of the doctrines developed by the philosophers belonging to this tradition, but also – and especially – to consider these thinkers from a comparative perspective within the more general context of philosophy in the Hellenistic Age. In this period, interactions between the various schools (often for polemical purposes) were very common, and they are so significant that they frequently help to explain intellectual developments and ‘course corrections’ in the philosophy of a school or thinker.

The most widely-investigated polemical relations are those between Stoics and Epicureans and between Stoics and Academics, especially in the late 3rd and early 2nd centuries BC.⁷ Only rarely do scholars take the Peripatetics into account in this field of enquiry; and they most often do so by exclusively comparing their doctrines to Aristotle’s in order to detect any continuity or discontinuity with respect to his original philosophy.⁸ Of course, it is quite legitimate – and indeed, historically essential – to carry out this kind of comparison, but it means touching upon only a partial aspect of this philosophical history. It is equally important and interesting to consider the doctrines of Aristotle’s (direct or indirect) heirs in relation to coeval philosophical schools, from the Old Academy to the ‘sceptical’ one, from Epicurus’ Garden to Zeno’s Portico. What also makes these philosophers interesting is another crucial factor: if, on the basis of the scanty and fragmentary information available, we study the philosophy

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⁷ See, for instance, Ioppolo 1986 and, more generally, the articles collected in Ead. 2013 concerning the philosophical debate between Stoics and Academics.

⁸ See Kupreeva 2018: 295–301. Baltussen 2016: Ch. 6 also covers the interaction between the Peripatetics and other schools.
of Strato of Lampsacus, Hieronymus of Rhodes, or Clearchus of Soli (to mention just a few significant examples), we will easily note how these philosophers tend to either critically distance themselves from Aristotle’s authority or deal with fields of knowledge that Aristotle had ignored or only implicitly discussed in his research.\(^9\) This is an extremely relevant factor, if we consider it in the light of the issue of doctrinal faithfulness in other schools: leaving aside the ‘sceptical’ turn made by the Academy with Arcesilaus (who, significantly, based his ‘scepticism’ on a reading of Plato’s works, yet at the same time emphasised Socrates’ authority)\(^10\) – a turn that marked a deep break in the history of the Platonist tradition –, in Zeno’s school and even in Epicurus’ one divergences among disciples, while certainly to be found, seem somewhat less severe than those marking the Hellenistic Peripatos.

Antiochus of Ascalon, for example, was well aware of this distinctive feature of Aristotle’s school, at least judging from the testimony provided by Cicero’s *Academica*. In the *Varro* (33–34 = *Strato* 8B Sharples), Antiochus’ spokesman, Varro, explicitly states that his philosophy brings together philosophical doctrines that are only apparently different and heterogeneous. Antiochus’ philosophical ‘syncretism’, based on Plato’s authority more than Socrates’, rests on the doctrinal unity between the Platonist Old Academy (at least up to Polemo, and with the obvious exception of Arcesilaus and his successors, down to Philo of Larissa) and the Peripatos, which is to say Aristotle and Theophrastus (but see Cic. *Fin. V 5, 12 = Theophr. 498 FHS&G*), but clearly excluding Strato of Lampsacus (*Nam Strato eius auditor quamquam fuit acri ingenio tamen ab ea disciplina omnino semovendus est*). While there are various reasons for this exclusion, it is quite evident that in Antiochus’ eyes Strato’s philosophy was in certain respects difficult to reconcile with Aristotle on account of its marked naturalistic interests, reflecting a problematic relationship with the Atomists’ materialism (as Cicero himself acknowledges in *Lucullus*, 121 = 18 Sharples).\(^11\) It goes without saying that Antiochus’ position is rather unique and would be worth exploring in greater depth – but this is not the place for such an enquiry.\(^12\) Here I will only state that, in all likelihood, Antiochus is presenting an exaggerated view of Strato, while recognising his sharp intelligence. Antiochus’ exaggerations aside, the key point is that Strato appears to be, if not incompatible with

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\(^12\) I shall refer to the collected volume by Sedley 2012.
Aristotle’s school, then certainly divergent with respect to it (consider, for instance, his choice to introduce the concept of void to explain certain kinds of movement).\textsuperscript{13} Strato is only one among many examples that could be invoked within the context of the Hellenistic Peripatos.

Strato’s case clearly shows that the central problem in the analysis of Hellenistic Peripatetic philosophers concerns both their faithfulness to Aristotle and their essentially marginal position, not only in modern scholarship but also in Antiquity, as Antiochus’ interpretation somehow seems to confirm. The issue of the Hellenistic Peripatos’ marginality is a complex one – and in my view, this concept does not at all correspond to decadence, as some scholars have argued (see below, n. 21). It is undeniable that the extremely fragmentary condition of the texts makes it most difficult to appreciate the importance of Aristotle’s heirs; yet it is equally undeniable that the Hellenistic ‘stage’ was chiefly dominated by Epicureanism, Stoicism, and the ‘sceptical’ Academy.\textsuperscript{14} This situation partly contributed to the marginalisation of Peripatetic philosophy in the Hellenistic Age prior to the post-Hellenistic revival from Critolaus and then Andronicus onwards: in Cicero’s philosophical works, for example, far less interest is shown in Plato and Aristotle (particularly the latter’s school treatises) than in the philosophical problems (particularly epistemological and ethical ones) raised by the other philosophical schools of the period, starting from the Epicurean and the Stoic, and in Aristotle’s case, his exoteric works (which Cicero evidently knew, read, and quoted).\textsuperscript{15}

The problem of faithfulness to Aristotle concerns the legal status of the ‘philosophical school’ in the Hellenistic Age, a controversial and widely-debated

\textsuperscript{13} See below, 184 ff.
\textsuperscript{14} See the relevant remark in Gottschalk 1997: 114 – 115 about the philosophical activity of Aristotle’s immediate followers (especially Theophrastus, Eudemus, and Strato): “Hellenistic philosophy was dominated by the Stoic and Epicurean systems and any competitor had to meet the expectations they aroused. Only professional philosophers, or those intending to become professional philosophers, would be interested in the analysis of philosophical problems. What most hearers were looking for was moral guidance underpinned by an appropriate doctrine of the nature of the world and the place of humans within it.”
\textsuperscript{15} On this crucial topic, see the essays collected in Fortenbaugh-Steinmetz 1989 (and more specifically Görler’s article in that volume, reprinted in 2004; see Görler 2004) and, more recently, Nicgorski 2013, and Dillon 2016. See too Rashed 2021: CCCXXVI: “[...] durant un siècle et demi, de nouveaux thèmes philosophiques, marqués par la question du critère de vérité, dominant les débats. Platon et Aristote parurent inutiles dans ce contexte et, pour cette raison, ne furent pas lus, y compris par ceux qui nominalement s’en réclamaient.”
issue.¹⁶ This is not the place to address such an issue; however, I find the conclusions reached by Alberto Maffi (2008) very convincing. Maffi rules out that philosophical schools (at any rate in the 3rd cent. BC) were fully-fledged juridical institutions, noting that in all likelihood they were institutions essentially based on a personal (and hierarchical) relationship between a teacher/scholarch and his pupils.¹⁷ Be that as it may, the one element worth stressing – in my view – is that not all Peripatetics were Aristotelians stricto sensu; indeed, many tackled topics that were not always a focus of interest for Aristotle. It may therefore be more fruitful to speak of Peripatetics or, in relation to certain figures, of philosophers who had a Peripatetic bent or admired Aristotle (let us think of Strabo and Nicolaus of Damascus). If this is the case, another crucial point must be stressed: ancient, and hence Hellenistic, philosophical schools were usually venues for open debate,¹⁸ where even those opinions which were deeply opposed to, or simply diverged from, those of the founder were commonplace and indeed welcome.¹⁹

As far as Peripatos’ chronology is concerned, it is very difficult to reconstruct the succession of scholarchs for the mother-school of Athens owing to the scanty

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¹⁶ See at least (for the status quaestionis too) the very plausible conclusions reached by Dorandi (in Dorandi-Spinelli 2016: 24 – 31); more specifically on the institutional aspects and the internal organisation of the Peripatetic school, see Natali 2013: Chs. 2, and 3. Always stimulating and important are von Staden 1982’s pages (esp. 93 – 96) on the relationship between institutionalization and hairesis in the Greek medical tradition. See also Glucker 1978: 166 – 192.

¹⁷ See Long-Sedley 1987: 5 – 6. Not even the episode of the ‘law’ issued by Sophocles of Sounion (see Diog. Laërt. V 38) in 307/306 BC (on which see the useful study by Haake 2008; see also Id. 2020: 78 – 83) – forbidding anyone to become the head of a philosophical school without the approval of the Council and popular Assembly – may be invoked as an argument in support of the ‘juridical status’ of philosophical schools. As is widely known, this ‘law’ was revoked, in all likelihood in the following year, in 306 BC.

¹⁸ Here we ought to bear in mind the important conclusion of the Sophistical Refutations (184b 3 – 8), in which Aristotle seems to adumbrate the possibility of discussing the research he has just conducted in the light of further investigations. On this famous passage see Fait 2007: 225 – 226.

¹⁹ From this perspective, I fully agree with what Falcon 2012 writes concerning Xenarchus of Seleucia’s relationship with Aristotle: “That Xenarchus departed from Aristotle’s philosophy cannot be disputed. But his departures, no matter how significant they are, do not necessarily make him a rebellious follower of Aristotle. I have urged that a more nuanced approach to the surviving evidence about this philosophical activity is possible. To begin with, I have recommended taking the idea that Xenarchus was a Peripatetic philosopher very seriously. I have also argued that we should not assume that the first-century BCE return to Aristotle was bound to end up in acceptance of his thought. Quite the contrary. What we know about Xenarchus suggests that disagreement with Aristotle was a possible outcome of the early engagement with his works.” (201)
surviving evidence. The sequence Theophrastus, Strato, and Lyco seems plausible. Lyco’s death can probably be placed between 226/225 and 225/224;\(^{20}\) after Lyco, the history of the Peripatos’ scholarchs is very difficult to reconstruct.\(^{21}\) Aristo of Ceos became head of the school after Lyco and before Critolaus;\(^{22}\) the latter took part in the famous Athenian embassy to Rome in 156/155 along with Carneades and Diogenes of Babylon, and it is most likely that he had already become scholarch by that date.\(^{23}\) Critolaus’ pupil Diodorus of Tyre succeeded him as head of the school (see e.g. Clem. Alex. Strom. I 14, 63 4 = Diod. Tyr. 1 Wehrli = Critol. 4 Wehrli); Diodorus’ is the last scholarch we know of in the Hellenistic Age.\(^{24}\)

The available data do not allow us to determine whether or not an official Peripatetic school was still in existence up until the end of the Hellenistic Age, namely the Lyceum founded by Aristotle; it is most likely, for example, that the Peripatetic Cratippus, whom Cicero held in great esteem, was the head of a sort of private school or circle inspired by Aristotelian philosophy.\(^{25}\) Aristotle had founded the Lyceum in Athens, and Theophrastus – in complete continuity with his teacher – displayed a deep attachment to Athens\(^{26}\) (where, through the help of Demetrius of Phalerum, he purchased a kepos that became the venue for his classes, but which should not be confused with the Lyceum).\(^{27}\) However, the term ‘Peripatetics’ did not apply only to those who resided in Athens more or less permanently, but also to those who lived in Rhodes, for example, such as Eudemus, Praxiphanes (but see below, 83), and Hieronymus.\(^{28}\)

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\(^{20}\) See Dorandi 1991: 76, and Id. 1999a: 37.

\(^{21}\) This, along with Cicero’s influential yet questionable opinion (entirely dependent on Antiochus) in the De finibus (V 5, 13: Simus igitur contenti his [scil. Aristotle and Theophrastus]. Namque horum posteri meliores illi quidem mea sententia quam reliquarum philosophi disciplinarum, sed ita degenerant ut ipsi ex se nati esse videantur), possibly accounts for Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1881’s well-known remarks on the “totenschlaf der aristotelischen philosophie” (83) under Lyco, rightly downplayed by Mejer 2004: 284 – 286, Lefebvre 2016: 24, and especially White 2004.

\(^{22}\) See Hahm 2006: 184 – 186.


\(^{24}\) See Dorandi 1999b: 59: “The Peripatos, after Lyco, witnessed a rapid decline to the point where under Diodorus of Tyre the school had practically disappeared as an institution. It recovered its prestige only in the first century BC with Cratippus of Pergamon.” See also Hahm 2007: 96 – 97, and Tsouni 2019: 64.

\(^{25}\) See below, 155ff.

\(^{26}\) See Rashed 2019 (and Id. 2021: CCCXXXII–CCCXXXIV), and Wöhrle 2019: 11 – 30.


Now, given the nature of ancient philosophical schools as venues for debate, it is hardly surprising that Critolaus’ ethical doctrines verged on Stoicism⁹ (at least partially, and also from a terminological perspective, notwithstanding the fact that he remained a staunch champion of the Peripatetic cause against the Stoics), for instance;³⁰ that – as already noted – Strato of Lampsacus acknowledged the void’s existence; that Clearchus of Soli theorised a psychology marked by Platonic elements;³¹ that Cratippus endorsed divination; that Xenarchus of Seleucia did away with the idea of aether³² (the fifth substance thanks to which, according to some evidence,³² Critolaus was able to justify the corporeality of the soul, possibly following Strato’s physicalism); that Boethus of Sidon ruled out that form might coincide with substance (with all the consequences that followed from this – not merely in the logical-categorial domain, but in the psychological one as well);³⁴ and finally, that Theophrastus perceived the status of the nous in De anima Γ 5, as well as the relationship between the motion of the heavens and the First Unmoved Mover, as clearly problematic, thereby laying the foundations for the ‘solution’ later proposed by Alexander, and based on the notion of imitation.³⁵

The history of Hellenistic schools is also particularly interesting for another reason: the context no doubt promoted open doctrinal debate within these schools, but at the same time, the cases of certain philosophers leaving one current of thought for a completely different one suggest that each school nonetheless had its own particular doctrinal orientation (albeit not a dogmatic one) which was constituted by its founder’s writings and thought. Take Dionysius of Heraclea, for instance: a pupil of Zeno’s, he later joined the Cyrenaics (Diog. Laërt. VII 167 = Dionys. Herac. SVF I 422; see also Cic. Fin. V 31, 94 =

29 On Critolaus’ ethics as a turning point in the history of Peripatetic philosophy, see esp. Inwood 2014: 51–72. We must bear in mind that Critolaus’ moral views are criticised in Didymus’ epitome of Peripatetic ethics: this confirms the existence of a debate within the Peripatetic tradition (see Tsouni 2016: 131–135, Szaif 2018, and Hatzimichali 2018; on Peripatetic ethics in the Hellenistic Lyceum more generally, see White 2002 with Inwood 2002’s comments, and Russell 2010).
30 On this specific point see Hahm 2007: 87–89, Szaif 2016: 128–139, and, more generally, the insightful study by Kupreeva 2009.
31 See below, 127 ff.
32 See Falcon 2012.
34 See Griffin 2015: Ch. 6, and now, especially Chiaradonna 2020a, Id. 2020b, and Auffret 2020: 392 ff.
35 See Theophr. Metaph. 8a 1–2 with Berti 2000.
SVF I 431) and the Epicureans (Athen. Deipn. VII 14, 281D = SVF I 430). According to Diogenes Laertius (V 36), Theophrastus “first studied with his compatriot Alcippus of Eresos, then after studying with Plato, he went over to Aristotle.” (transl. White) As far as the Aristotelian school is concerned, from a passage in Philodemus’ Index Academicorum (XXXV 2–16),36 we know that Aristo of Alexandria and Cratippus of Pergamum left Antiochus’ school (which after him was headed by his brother Aristus) in order to become Peripatetics. The Philodemus passage is fragmentary, so we do not know the exact reasons for the two philosophers’ ‘departure’ from the Academy. However, Andronicus’ ‘rediscovery’ of Aristotle in those years must certainly be regarded as an important source of attraction that is not to be underestimated37 – although not all scholars agree on this point.38

One of the major issues in the study of the Hellenistic Peripatos is the actual availability and circulation of Aristotle’s works. The ‘editing’ of his writings by Andronicus of Rhodes (1st cent. BC)39 led to the establishment of a fixed textual canon – something which, along with other factors, was responsible for the vast and enduring resurgence of interest in Aristotelian works. In the post-Hellenistic period, with Alexander of Aphrodisias, it gave rise to a new way of concretely practising philosophy, namely the production of commentaries.40 Now, prior to all this, the Peripatetics focused on Aristotle’s texts (albeit not with the distinctively systematic approach they were to develop later) on the one hand;41 on the

36 Antioch. T3 Sedley; Cratipp. 1 Dorandi-Verde; Aristo Alex. T 1 Lakmann; Aristo Ascalon. T 1 Lakmann. See below, Ch. 6: 157–159.
38 As is widely known, this is the case with Frede 1999, who tends to underestimate Andronicus’ role in the revival of Aristotelianism; according to this scholar, Andronicus’ ‘publication’ of Aristotle’s writings was the consequence of an already consolidated interest in the Aristotelian works: “the renewal of Aristotelianism was not due to Andronicus’ edition of Aristotelian texts, but to a renewed interest in Aristotle and his writings, even the text of his writings, which then also led to Andronicus’ work.” (775)
40 See Donini 2011: 211–281. Fazzo 2004: 4 rightly emphasises that “Aristotelian philosophy found in the commentary format not only a means of transmission, but also a preferred tool for the development of doctrine. A closed system, but not a static one, it evolved in two main directions: internal consistency and external competitiveness.”
41 Concerning Theophrastus’ and Strato’s philosophical activities after Aristotle, Sharples 2010 states: “What they did not for the most part do [...] was to regard Aristotle’s writings as containing a body of doctrine which it was their task to interpret. This, the invention of Aristotelianism, was to come later, its foundations being laid in our period [scil. 200 BC-AD 200]. Much of the work of Aristotle’s immediate successors was in what we would now regard as natural science rather than philosophy.” (IX) Sharples’ point of view, however authoritative, does not seem very
other, they set out to discuss, investigate, integrate, and even reformulate his philosophy by altering this or that aspect of his system, which – broad and articulated as it may have been – was evidently not perceived as being unassailable or truly complete and all-encompassing. At times a fleeting reference to a problem or a very brief discussion of a given question by Aristotle was enough to spark renewed interest among the Peripatetics. I believe it is very important to stress that it would be historically misleading to assume that the first Peripatetics were not at all familiar with Aristotle’s scholastic treatises: Theophrastus, Strato, and especially Eudemus – to mention but a few examples – confirm that exactly the opposite was the case.⁴²

Recently, in a landmark book Marwan Rashed (2021: CCL–CCCLXV) has dealt in great depth with the controversial history of the corpus Aristotelicum and its circulation in the Peripatos after Theophrastus’ death. Rashed’s analysis is very rich and would deserve to be reconstructed and discussed at length. For reasons of space, I will here limit myself to summarising Rashed’s conclusions concerning the actual circulation of Aristotle’s works in the Peripatos directed by Strato. In brief, according to Rashed (2021: CCLI–CCLII), Aristotle’s rich library (which must have included the copies of Speusippus’ writings which he had acquired for three talents: see Diog. Laërt. IV 5 = Speus. 2 Isnardi Parente = 1 Tarán, and Düring 1957: 338) did not go directly to Theophrastus after the philosopher’s death, but rather to his son Nicomachus (whose didaskalos – Diog. Laërt. V 39 – and guardian Theophrastus was: Diog. Laërt. V 12–13): for as long as Nicomachus lived, Aristotle’s books belonged to him. When Nicomachus died an untimely death, Aristotle’s books went to Theophrastus. From the Testament (Diog. Laërt. V 52: τὰ δὲ βιβλία πάντα Νηλεῖ) we know that Theophrastus left all his books to Neleus of Scepsis (and not Strato) who was the son of Coriscus (a disciple of Plato – see Diog. Laërt. III 46 – and an associate of Aristotle’s during his time at Assos; see White 2021: 213 n. 53). Strabo (XIII 1, 54 = 37 FHS&G: ἀνήρ καὶ Ἀριστοτέλους ἣκρομένος καὶ Θεοφράστου) informs us that Neleus was a disciple of Aristotle and Theophrastus (see Gottschalk 1998: 291–292); Neleus’

convincing to me; it is, perhaps, excessively peremptory and does not seem to take into account the actual variety of interests among Aristotle’s early followers (on this point see Lefebvre 2016: 27–31’s remarks). Above all, as the case of Eudemus’ case clearly shows (see below, n. 56), it overlooks the fact that these philosophers were also working on Aristotelian texts with which they were familiar. Even Sharples’ distinction between philosophy and natural science seems excessively clear-cut to me: I wonder why this distinction should apply to the early Peripatetics, but not to Aristotle himself.

⁴² See Wehrli 1969: 96–97, and below, n. 56.
loyalty and closeness to Aristotle are probably the main reasons why Theophrastus left his books to Neleus rather than Strato (see Rashed 2021: CCCXXXIII).

From Diogenes Laertius (V 58) we know that Strato was also the tutor of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (309/308–247 BC; king from 283 BC). I should add that this is an important fact which suggests that Strato spent some time in Alexandria (see Glucker 1998: 310). Furthermore, we cannot exclude that he played a significant role in the transmission of the knowledge of Aristotle’s works and philosophy to that city (on Theophrastus see Diog. Laërt. V 37). Now, taking into account Theophrastus’ staunch loyalty to Athens, “les protections alexandrines de Straton ne pouvaient être vues par Théophraste que d’un mauvais œil.” (Rashed 2021: CCCXXXIV) This is probably another reason for Theophrastus’ bequest to Neleus, although Neleus himself later established close relations with Ptolemy Philadelphus. Nevertheless, Neleus remained somewhat faithful to Theophrastus: he did not sell the original autograph works by Aristotle and Theophrastus to the Alexandrians, but only let them be copied (see Rashed 2021: CCCXXXVII).

In the text quoted above, Strabo further states that the books inherited from Theophrastus were taken to Scepsis by Neleus and then left to his heirs. On the basis of a passage from Athenaeus (Deipn. I 4, 3A – B = 40 FHS&G), rightly examined by Rashed (2021: CCCXI – CCCXIII), we know that Ptolemy Philadelphus acquired for the library of Alexandria all the books by Aristotle and Theophrastus to be found not only in Athens (most likely via members of the Lyceum) and Rhodes⁴³ but also in Neleus’ own collection. According to Rashed (2021: CCCXLI, CCCLXV), Ptolemy’s acquisition of Neleus’ books did not take place in Scepsis but while Neleus was still in Athens. Before his departure for Scepsis around 280 BC, Neleus probably had the books by Aristotle and Theophrastus copied by Ptolemy’s emissaries, who later brought them to Alexandria. Now – and this is the most interesting point – after Neleus’ departure and after the works by Aristotle and Theophrastus had been transcribed by the Alexandrians, “on peut douter que le corpus savant d’Aristote existait encore à Athènes: le Lycée n’était pas une université où chaque étudiant possédait son exemplaire du corpus Aristotelicum. Les maîtres eux-mêmes ne le lisaient pas.” (Rashed 2021: CCCXL) According to Rashed,⁴⁴ with the exception of Theophrastus and Eudemus,⁴⁵ Strato⁴⁶ “à en juger par la liste de ses œuvres, n’a jamais commenté

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⁴³ The reference here may be to those books of Aristotle’s which, already before the latter’s death, Eudemus had taken with him to Rhodes: cf. Rashed 2021: CCCXL.
⁴⁴ Who in this way lends credibility to Strabo’s and Plutarch’s evidence – see below, n. 56 – about the limited circulation of Aristotle’s works immediately after Theophrastus’ death.
⁴⁵ Who had a strong interest in the letter of Aristotle’s texts.
une ligne d'Aristote et oriente ses recherches originales dans un autre direction [...] il ne s'intéresse déjà plus vraiment à Aristote. [...] Le désintérêt de Straton pour la lettre du texte aristotélïen se mue en un désintérêt plus global pour la recherche philosophique.” (Rashed 2021: CCCXXXVI)

Of course, this is a perfectly valid conclusion, but perhaps an equally plausible alternative is possible. Firstly, it is extremely difficult to find a Peripatetic philosopher from the Hellenistic period who comments on Aristotle’s works, as philosophers commonly do in the Imperial period. However, this does not mean that the Peripatetics of the Hellenistic Age did not know Aristotle, and did not read, quote, or discuss his work. If one carefully studies the evidence on Strato’s philosophy, one realises how his physics (which certainly presents innovative features within the Aristotelian tradition) is essentially based on a constant, critical yet not polemical, engagement with Aristotle’s physics: Strato’s conception of time or place shows this well (see below, 107ff.). From the list of Strato’s works it is certainly clear that he did not write any commentaries, but the titles of these texts clearly reflect the philosopher’s acquaintance with at least some of Aristotle’s school treatises. Now, this engagement with Aristotelian physics means that Strato must have been familiar with at least some of Aristotle’s works on nature: where else could he have read these writings if not within the Lyceum? As we have seen, Rashed quite rightly acknowledges that Strato could have read Aristotle’s autographs before Neleus’ departure for Scepsis; this is a plausible solution. If we date Neleus’ departure to 280 BC and take account of the fact that Strato was a scholarch for eighteen years, from c. 288/286 to 271/270 BC (see Diog. Laërt. V 58 with Sharples 2011: 15 n. 29, and White 2021: 215 n. 58), then it is clear that Strato had plenty of time to study Aristotle’s works, which legally belonged to Neleus (assuming, that is, that Neleus allowed Strato to access them).

Moreover, it seems difficult to image an ancient philosophical school which did not possess an ‘official’ collection of its founder’s writings (clearly in addition to other books by other authors). In the case of the Lyceum, the existence of a school library containing one or more copies of Aristotle’s works (probably dependent on the autographs belonging to Nicomachus and Theophrastus that Neleus later took with him to Scepsis) cannot be ruled out. Although one must be very cautious, some archaeological investigations have unearthed traces of the Academy’s library (see Hoepfner 2002, and Lygouri-Tolia 2020; on the ar-

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46 Who, however, was able for some time to draw on the books owned by Neleus before he left for Scepsis.
47 See Chiaradonna 2016: 297.
chaeology of the Academy see the comprehensive monograph by Caruso 2013, along with Verde 2014). Given the proximity of the Academy and the Lyceum, everything suggests that the school founded by Aristotle also had a library room within its gymnasium (Lygouri-Tolia 2020: 62, 64). ⁴⁹

Finally, it is interesting to briefly consider Strato’s Testament in Diogenes Laertius (V 62). Strato left Lyco in charge of the school “because some of the others are too old and some too busy.” (transl. White) Strato also left him all the books, except for those he himself had written (καταλείπω δ’ αὐτῷ καὶ τὰ βιβλία πάντα, πλὴν ἄνω τοι γεγράφαμεν). It is very difficult to make sense of these words and to understand why Strato did not want to leave his own works to Lyco. From what we read in the immediately preceding section of the Testament, it would appear that Strato did not hold Lyco in high esteem (see also Cic. Fin. V 5, 13 = Lyco 11 Stork-Fortenbaugh-Dorandi-van Opuijsen); the reason for his choice, therefore, could be personal. What is certain is that Strato classified the book material into two categories: all books (τὰ βιβλία πάντα) and books written by him. Now, what could the expression τὰ βιβλία πάντα refer to? I think it might be a reference to the ‘official’ library of the Lyceum that probably also contained the works of Aristotle (and Theophrastus), but not those of Strato (see Grayeff 1974: 70, and especially Gottschalk 1972: 342). The scholarch was somehow obliged to leave the school’s books to Lyco, since he had designated him as his successor. Of course, there is no certainty about this matter, but I think we cannot exclude the circulation and presence of Aristotle’s works (some of them? All of them?) even in the post-Theophrastean Hellenistic Peripatos.

It is usually assumed that, before Andronicus (and, I should add, after Eudemus and Strato), it is especially with Critolaus that we witness a gradual return to the study of Aristotle’s scholastic treatises and to what has been described as “a form of orthodox Aristotelianism.” (Sedley 1997: 100)⁵⁰ While

⁴⁹ See Lygouri-Tolia 2020: 60: “Specifically, Hoepfner argues that the north central hall was not an equivalent to Vitruvius’ ephēbeion, but the library of Plato’s school. He was led to this conclusion by the arrangement of the north part of the building, which resembles installations intended for libraries. The central hall must have functioned as a library, with bookshelves built into the lateral walls. The three outer sides of the library were surrounded by a corridor, which functioned as a ventilating chamber behind the library, ensuring that the papyrus rolls were effectively aired. In other words, the papyrus rolls did not touch the walls. Hoepfner ascribed the same function to the spaces on the north side of the palaestra of the gymnasium of the Lyceum.”

⁵⁰ On Critolaus’ desire to imitate the ancients (i.e. the ‘Peripatetics’ before Strato, namely Aristotle and Theophrastus: see Lefebvre 2016: 26), see Cic. Fin. V 5, 14 = 11 Wehrli: Critolaus imitari voluit antiquos, et quidem est gravitate proximus [...]. The Cicero passage is rather controversial
Critolaus would appear to have been interested “in Aristotelian doctrines rather than in Aristotelian texts” (Sharples 2010: IX) judging from the surviving evidence, it has rightly been noted that, even though he distinguishes himself from his predecessors (particularly on account of his specific interest in ethics and physics and his polemical attitude, especially towards the Stoics), “the fact that he must have learned about Aristotelian philosophy somewhere suggests some doctrinal continuity within the school.” (Lefebvre 2016: 26) This strikes me as a reasonable and indeed crucial point which justifies the idea that the members of Aristotle’s school to some extent already shared the same interests and method in the Hellenistic Age, partly on the basis of their familiarity with Aristotle’s works, or at least some of them. Naturally, it is very difficult to tell exactly how many, and which, of Aristotle’s works were circulating in the Hellenistic Age: this depended on various factors, particularly the actual interests of those reading these works, in addition to the availability of such texts. Finally, we must also take into account the fact that each Aristotelian work has its particular tradition and transmission, which may also depend on geographical factors: the works circulating in Athens may not have been circulating in Rhodes or Alexandria, and vice-versa.

from a textual perspective; in any case, we must bear in mind that the opinion reported by Cicero depends on Antiochus (see Sedley’s guide to the testimonies for Antiochus in Sedley 2012: 345): on this, see Hahm 2007: 78–81, and the convincing historical reconstruction by Kupreeva 2009: 136–150, who maintains that Antiochus’ incorporation of Peripatetic physics in his syncretistic philosophical view (see Cic. Varro 24–29) in all likelihood depends on Critolaus (who was probably active about two generations prior to Antiochus himself; for a different position see Sedley 2002, who famously states that Cicero’s report on physics may be referred to the Academic Polemo’s physics, which, however, is rather difficult to reconstruct owing to the scarcity of the evidence, but with the exception of Aetius’ well-known testimony – Plac. I 7, 29 = Dox. p. 303, M-R 374 = Polemo 121 Gigante – according to which the world is (a) god for Polemo; on this passage see Reydams-Schils 2013: 41–42). Again, see Tsouni 2019: 63, and Wehrli 1969: 110.

51 See Barnes 1997: 12–16.
52 On this last point see the important study by Primavesi 2007.
53 See the insightful remarks by Hatzimichali 2016: 82–84, with Wehrli 1969: 96. Having mentioned Alexandria, I will again refer to the recent study by Perkams 2019; on the basis of Arabic sources (al-Fārābī: according to Rashed 2021: CCLXVIII: “c’est Porphyre qui constitue la source ultime du récit d’ al-Fārābī”), Perkams states that Andronicus produced his edition mainly on the basis of the Aristotelian manuscripts in Alexandria (but in all likelihood he completed his edition in Rome, where Andronicus followed Augustus around 30 BC). This study is surely very interesting and insightful but, more cautiously, I believe that it cannot be ruled out that the tradition to which Perkams refers is aimed at promoting Alexandria’s role as a center of Aristotelian studies (see Rashed 2021: CCCXIX–CCCXXII, and CCLVII–CCLX).
Therefore, only by viewing the Peripatos as a philosophical current interested in research across a wide variety of fields is it possible to understand why Lyco, for instance, like Hieronymus of Rhodes, had a keen interest in the problem of education (to which he devoted specific works); why Eudemus focused on arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and theology; why Dicaearchus explored the musical field; or why certain Peripatetics, such as Aristo of Ceos or Satyrus of Callatis, wrote biographies while others took an interest in proverbs (Theophrastus, Clearchus), doxography (Theophrastus), paradoxography (consider the pseudo-Aristotelian *De mirabilibus auscultationibus*), geography (Agatharchides, but also Strabo, at least in some respects), botany (Theophrastus, Phanias of Eresus), or grammar (Praxiphanes). Certainly, to borrow an apt expression from Han Baltussen (2016: 159), there existed an “essential tool kit” of Aristotelian doctrines which was roughly respected. However, the Peripatetics’ critical reflection could even concern this kit, and this occurred without them slipping into contradiction with the label of *Peripatetikoi*.

This observation calls for a more general reflection on Aristotelianism in the Hellenistic period, which in some respects seems to take a non-technical (that is, not strictly systematic) form – as Wehrli rightly notes, insofar as it favours individual and monographic treatises, this current seems to abandon the totalising and systematic view which distinguishes Aristotle’s philosophy. In this respect it stands in contrast to later Peripatetic philosophy, as is suggested by a well-known and controversial passage from Strabo (XIII 1, 54) on the nature of post-Theophrastean Aristotelianism. Hellenistic Aristotelianism is not systemat-

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54 On Satyrus’ Aristotelianism, see the discussion by Schorn 2018: 255–259.
56 On the presence of Aristotle’s exoteric works within the Peripatetic school after Theophrastus, see the rather controversial testimony by Strabo XIII 1, 54 21–26 (37 FHS&G; see Barnes 1997: 2–12; see too Plutarch. Sull. 26 1–3 = 38 FHS&G with Rashed 2021: CCCIII–CCXCIII): “The result was that the earlier school of Peripatetics who came after Theophrastus had no books at all, with the exception of only a few, mostly exoteric works, and were therefore able to philosophise about nothing in a practical way, but only to talk bombast about commonplace propositions (συνέβη δὲ τοὺς ἕκ τῶν περιστάτων τοὺς μὲν πάλαι τοῖς μετὰ θεόφραστουν οὐκ ἔχουσιν ὀλίγως τὰ βιβλία πλὴν ὁλίγων, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἐξωτερικῶν, μηδὲν ἔχειν φιλοσοφεῖν πραγματικῶς, ἀλλὰ θέσεις ληκυθῆσαι).” (transl. Jones) In the wake of Düring 1976: 47–48, and Moraux 1973: 15–17, I believe that Strabo’s evidence about the absence of Aristotle’s books within the Lyceum after Theophrastus cannot be taken seriously, although Strabo’s closeness to Peripatetic philosophy (see Hatzimichali 2017: 17–18) and the fact that his teacher was Tyrannion (XII 3, 16 = *Tyrann. T* 2 Haas) from Amisus in Pontus (it is well-known that Tyrannion played a crucial role in the restoration of the copies of Aristotelian works, as we learn again from the same Strabo passage: on Tyrannion’s life see Haas 1977: 93–96, and, now, Zaccaria 2020; see also Barnes 1997: 16–21) would suggest that this testimony is reliable. Although the library was owned by the scholar,
ically and invariably based on the exegesis of the so-called acroamatic or esoteric treatises, as the subsequent Aristotelianism of the commentators will be. Rather, it seeks to alternatively defend or discuss and problematise philosophical theses already developed by Aristotle or those doctrines which stood at the centre of the Hellenistic debate with other schools, but always starting from the theoretical ‘heritage’ of Aristotle’s teaching. What I mean here are (individual) problems raised by Aristotle’s works that are particularly controversial and difficult to resolve, or questions which Aristotle had not addressed in detail or had merely implicitly referred to (consider – to give but one example – the topic of fire, to which Theophrastus devoted a treatise).\textsuperscript{57} Ultimately, this means that Hellenistic Peripatetics show, on the one hand, a rather solid degree of continuity with Aristotle’s original teaching, but, on the other, display different interests. Indeed, stimulated by the key doctrines examined by other coeval philosophical traditions, these Peripatetics introduced new topics within the framework of Aristotelian philosophy: to take but one example, consider the Hellenistic Peripatetics’ introduction of the problem of fate and providence in the field of physics.\textsuperscript{58} Despite the far from negligible difficulties in providing a historical reconstruction of the Hellenistic Peripatos, it must be stressed once again that this complex and varied philosophical tradition is far from being a ‘footnote’ in the history of Aristotelianism, but rather an integral part of it, as it is of Hellenistic thought more generally.\textsuperscript{59} The Peripatetics engaged with the Epicureans (see Gigante 1999, and Verde 2016), as well as the Stoics (\textit{pace} Sandbach 1985: 2–3, and 55–57; see Hahm 1991, Bénatouil 2016: 56–58’s reply, Long 1998 – specifically on Theophrastus’ \textit{minimal} influence on the Zenonian Stoa – and Kupreeva


\textsuperscript{58} See Sharple 2002: 13–18, and Kupreeva 2018: 300–301; see also Horn 2008, and Baltussen 2016: Ch. 5.

\textsuperscript{59} See Sellars 2018: 28.
2009); and the Epicureans and the Stoics reacted not just to Aristotle’s doctrines, but also to those of his heirs. This makes the idea that the Peripatos contributed to the evolution, and possibly to the transformation (or stabilisation), of certain doctrines quite plausible. Therefore, bearing Hellenistic Aristotelianism in mind also means more accurately grasping fundamental conceptual aspects of Epicureanism and Stoicism (as well as of other philosophies): further confirmation of the fact that all Hellenistic philosophies remained in dialogue with Plato, Aristotle, and their direct schools.

The present volume is divided into three parts exploring three broad themes, each of which is discussed in two chapters: Knowledge, Time, and Soul. In the first part, devoted to knowledge, the first study (Ch. 1) focuses on the relationship between the method of multiple explanations – which is found not just in Epicurus but also, mutatis mutandis, already in Aristotle and Theophrastus – and the role of sense perception in Theophrastus’ and Epicurus’ epistemology. The main aim is to disprove the idea that, as far as the use of the method of multiple explanations is concerned, Epicurus slavishly follows Theophrastus; here a prominent role is played by the so-called Syriac-Arabic Meteorology, as recent studies have hypothesised (Bakker 2016), but Theophrastus’ meteorology can hardly be regarded as the sole influence.

The other study (Ch. 2) is devoted to the scientificity of sense-perception; a valuable account by Sextus Empiricus informs us that Speusippus theorised an epistemonike aisthesis within the context of his doctrine of knowledge. This notion of sense-perception was taken up (probably directly from Speusippus) by Diogenes of Babylon in the musical field, as we know from a testimony in Philodemus’ De musica. It is particularly noteworthy that, while in Strato of Lampsacus no epistemonike aisthesis akin to Speusippus’ one is to be found, his epistemology is marked by a high degree of ‘collaboration’ (not to be understood as an identity) between sense perception and the intellect in a way that proves quite compatible with Aristotle’s previous teaching on this issue. The final section of this contribution examines the criticism which the Peripatetic philosopher Aristocles of Messene (1st cent. BC-1st cent. AD) developed of the

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60 I will only mention the case of the Epicurean philosopher Polyaenus of Lampsacus, who wrote a work against Aristotle’s Peri philosophias (Philod. Piet. col. XXXVIII 1091–1099 Obbink = Polyaen. 29 Tepedino Guerra; see also Obbink 1996: 478–479); I believe that his information is highly significant, as it strongly confirms the relevance of Aristotle’s so-called ‘unpublished’ works, alongside his treatises (which, in any case, must have been circulating even outside the Peripatetic school, as Epicurean sources suggest: see above, n. 56).
Epicurean doctrine of affections (pathe), understood as the canons of knowledge.

The second part is devoted to the topic of time. The first study (Ch. 3) explores the Physika of Eudemus of Rhodes; more specifically, his discussion of time is compared with the analysis in Book 4 of Aristotle’s Physics. One thesis upheld concerns precisely the Physika, which only survives in fragments, particularly from Simplicius: this work would appear to have been used chiefly for educational purposes, possibly in the teaching and interpretation of Aristotelian physics. I believe it is undeniable that Eudemus’ Physika presupposes direct knowledge of the Physics, which shows how Aristotle’s works must have been circulating, at any rate in Aristotelian schools in Athens and Rhodes. The other chapter (Ch. 4) studies Strato’s exegesis of the Aristotelian conception of time. With respect to the Aristotelian definition provided in Book 4 of the Physics, Strato further defines and stresses the notion of quantity, while at the same time emphasising how time is constituted of indivisible entities. It will be useful to examine this position in the light of Diodorus Cronus’ theory of amere and the breakdown of the ‘granularization’ of space and time that some sources attribute to Epicurus.

The third and last part of the volume concerns the topic of the soul. Again, Strato of Lampsacus and especially Clearchus of Soli are the focus of the first study (Ch. 5), which is chiefly devoted to the issue of sleep. Clearchus wrote a work on sleep that is now lost; judging from the few available testimonies, especially Proclus’ commentary on Plato’s Republic, it seems as though part of this text dealt with the doctrine of the soul. A careful investigation of these fragments suggests that Clearchus’ psychology was not very compatible with the Aristotelian one. Rather, it seems reasonable to hypothesise that Clearchus consciously approached genuinely Platonic perspectives in the field of psychology, possibly through the mediation of Aristotle’s exoteric works, which in the Hellenistic Age (but also in other periods) enjoyed considerable success.⁶¹ One example of this is the fact that Clearchus admits the possibility that the soul may temporarily leave the body. This is not entirely surprising given what has been previously argued with regard to the Hellenistic Peripatos. It is worth recalling in this respect that in a passage of John Sikeliotes (201 31–203 8 Walz; Epicur. part. 244a, p. 348–349 Usener), an 11th-century Byzantine commentator of Hermogenes’ De ideis,⁶² we find the expression οἱ Περιπατητικοὶ οἱ περὶ Πλάτωνα, “the Peripatetic followers of Plato” or “the Peripatetics who deal with Plato”: it is very

⁶¹ See Falcon 2016: 117.
⁶² See Sedley 2018.
likely that this expression is a reference to some Peripatetics (Clearchus included).\textsuperscript{63} By contrast, Strato adopts a very different stance with regard to the phenomenon of sleep, which is explained in physiological terms by referring to the \textit{pneuma} of the soul. The question of whether Strato actually posited a \textit{hegemonikon} and \textit{pneuma} for the soul is widely debated. Some scholars believe that our sources have been influenced by Stoic vocabulary, or even that Stoic psychology influenced Strato’s. Actually, notwithstanding the language used by the sources, which may have translated Strato’s doctrine using Stoic terms, for chronological reasons it cannot be ruled out that Strato posited the existence of \textit{pneuma} as a central part and constitutive matter of the soul independently of the Stoics by redeveloping certain Aristotelian doctrines.\textsuperscript{64}

The final study (Ch. 6) focuses on Cratippus, one of the most prominent Peripatetics of Cicero’s day. Cicero himself, who held the philosopher in great esteem, provides crucial information for reconstructing Cratippus’ philosophy – as far as this is possible – in the \textit{De divinatione}. This doctrine appears especially problematic because, according to Cicero, Cratippus posited the separability of the rational part of the soul from the body and the possibility of natural divination. Scholars have widely debated whether Cratippus’ position was an original one, or whether it depended on some previous philosophical doctrine. In this chapter I hypothesise that, within the Peripatetic tradition, a ‘forerunner’ for Cratippean psychology, or at any rate a significant antecedent for it, is to be found in Clearchus, whose doctrines are examined in the previous chapter.

The volume ends with an \textit{Appendix} which \textit{prima facie} does not concern any of the major topics previously discussed. It focuses on the physician Asclepiades of Bithynia by examining the possible influence of Epicurus and Strato of Lamp-sacus, particularly as regards Asclepiades’ theory of \textit{ogkoi}, which supports the idea of a connection between medicine and the Peripatos, which has also been investigated in recent studies.\textsuperscript{65}

Some of the material presented here derives from previously published articles that have been completely revised, redeveloped, and broadened in view of this book. Chapters 2 (with the exception of § 2.2: see Verde 2021, and of the \textit{Coda:} see Verde 2018b) and 3 are entirely new; a first presentation of the contents of Ch. 1 is provided in Verde 2018a, of Ch. 4 in Verde 2012, of Ch. 5 in Verde

\textsuperscript{63} See below, 128 n. 6.
\textsuperscript{64} See e.g. Berti 2017: 93.
\textsuperscript{65} See Berryman 2020.
2022, and of Ch. 6 in Verde 2018c. Finally, the Appendix at least partly draws upon Verde 2019.

References


References


