Sylvain Delcomminette, Pieter d'Hoine, Marc-Antoine Gavray (eds.),

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This volume grew out of a conference held in Brussels on the reception of the *Phaedo* in antiquity, concentrating on the period before Damascius and Olympiodorus. Its subject-matter fits neatly with the recent trend of following the aftermath of some of Plato's dialogues in antiquity.

Aristotle's approach to the themes exposed in Plato's dialogue focuses on not only the theory of the soul (in *De anima* and in the lost dialogue *Eudemus*), but also physics. Sylvain Delcomminette draws attention to the fact that Aristotle puts the emphasis elsewhere, on the account of the causes. He argues that Aristotle had the *Phaedo* in mind when he discussed the material in *Phys* I, *Met.* A, and *Gen. et Corr.* The Aristotelian causal theory was developed with a view to Plato's account. Furthermore, the description of the earlier philosophers' views in *Met.* A much resembles Socrates' account of the earlier views he encountered in his youth. The important difference is that Aristotle's description is impersonal and fully anti-Platonic in claiming that "*all men by nature* desire to know". Of course, he also rejects the causal efficiency of the Ideas. However, Aristotle seems to admit the principle of the "second sail", which involves attaining knowledge through λόγος. Based on the analysis on *Phd* 105A2–D5, he claims that the passage is the origin of Aristotle's view of scientific syllogism, where the middle term refers to the cause of the conclusion.

Causal theory aside, the dialogue was regarded in antiquity as an effort to establish the immortality of the soul. For this reason, critiques of the arguments came quite early. Strato's objections pose specific problems, discussed by Han Baltussen. They were preserved in the Neoplatonic commentary on the *Phaedo* that is attributed to Damascius. It means that Strato's original possibly went through four or five phases of rewording and therefore appropriate interpretation requires adjusting to the pattern presupposed in Damascius' refutation. Baltussen examines both Strato's arguments and Damascius' responses by pointing to the distinction of different meanings of a term or to the use of generally agreed views as starting points. He shows that Strato's puzzles were focused on arguments which support dualism.

Francesca Alesse concentrates on the use of the dialogue by the Stoics. She insists that the Stoics are indebted to the *Phaedo* for some of their arguments. The

Stoic definition of virtue (*SVF* I.376), that virtue is one according to the notion of δύναμις, employs a simile of money as a means of exchange that we find in *Phd* 69A. The thesis on the inseparability of contraries (60B4–C4) was also used by the early Stoa as we know it from Aulus Gellius (*SVF* II.1169). The general problem of Alesse's approach may be that some of the alleged connections are not verbatim quotations or explicit references. Sometimes the allusions are clear (e. g., Epicte-tus' *Diss.* I.1.14–15 referring to *Phd* 81C8–10), while other times they seem to be too general, as is with the concept of death as separation of soul from body. In many cases the author may seem all too generous in tracing Stoic arguments back to our dialogue.

Lorenzo Corti examines Sextus Empiricus' use of some of the puzzles raised in the *Phaedo* against the dogmatic notion of the number two. The core of his discussion is the analysis of Sextus' *M* IV.21–22, supplemented with *M* X.308–309, where we find emphasis on the generation of two by juxtaposition and conjunction in time. Proper understanding of the passages in Sextus requires an interpretation of *Phd* 96E–97B and 101B–C. Corti argues with Menn¹ that Plato relies on Epicharmus to show that growth cannot be explained by means of addition. Through an analysis of the expression τὰ δύο γηγόνεσθαι in 97A7, along with similar expressions in 97B1 and 101C1, he claims that the word δύο is in a subject position, which implies that the sentence is not about a first and a second unit coming to be two, but rather about the coming to be of two *things*. An analysis of *PH* III.164–165 and *M* X.328–330 demonstrates that by attacking the Platonic notion of indefinite duality, Sextus is not raising the puzzles put forward by Epicharmus; instead, he considers the case of the coming to be of two things and indicates a query it produces.²

Geert Roskam discusses Plutarch's reception of the dialogue. As he shows, the dialogue was used in different texts for different purposes. Beyond mere references, it exerted a considerable influence that cannot simply be derived from one single passage. The motif of *exemplum Socratis*, the way Socrates behaved throughout, is present in Plutarch's whole work. The combination of arguments and narration in Plato's text finds echo in the *De genio Socratis* and the *Amatorius*, and one can say that the *Phaedo* is the narratological model of that treatise. Plutarch also takes over an interesting argumentative strategy: counting the pros and cons of the competing views (see *Phd* 89C11–91A3), which occurs many

¹ S. Menn, "On Socrates' first objections to the physicists (*Phaedo* 95e8–b8)", *OSAP* 38 (2010), pp. 37–68.

² It would have been interesting to examine whether the Academic notion of δύας involves two separate items, as Sextus clearly takes it, or two aspects of the same item.

times in Plutarch, especially in *De esu* (II 998D–F) and *Non posse* (1104A–1107A). Harold Tarrant examines the role of the dialogue in Numenius' use of allegorical interpretation. Socrates' mythical allusions (61E, 84E–85B, 110B–C) give rise to all sorts of remarks about Pythagorean wisdom. Tarrant emphasizes that Numenius regarded Plato as a follower of Pythagoras, and slightly inferior to him, and consequently he felt no obligation to use everything found in the Platonic corpus. Because of the Pythagorean interlocutors, the *Phaedo* was especially important. There are two obvious cases of Numenius' interpretation of passages from the dialogue: fr. 56 with the discussion of *φρουρά* (interpreted in its meaning 'prison') at 62B, and fr. 49 which relates to the discussion of the inferior soul's reincarnation into appropriate animal bodies. It is likely that other passages, too, allude to Plato's text. To take just one example, fr. 35.5–10, with the rivers below the earth, may refer to the rivers mentioned in 111d–114b. In sum, Numenius used the *Phaedo* not to furnish proofs for the immortality of the soul, but to understand the ancient wisdom about the status of human life.

Plato's *Phaedo* played a crucial role in Neoplatonism. Unsurprisingly, therefore, is the second half of the volume devoted to these interpretations. Riccardo Chiaradonna focuses on a chapter in Plotinus' *On the immortality of the soul* (IV.7.11). The proof Plotinus offered there for the immortality of the soul shows *Phaedo*'s central position in the argument. Chiaradonna shows that the discussion of the corporealist accounts is directed also against Strato's critique. Plotinus' aim was to defend Plato's thesis of immortality by a supplement: the soul is endowed not only with life, but also with being. Plotinus also corrected Plato's analogy between soul and fire by distinguishing the way life is in the soul from the way heat is in fire. Heat is a quality in a material composite, whereas life is identical with the soul. It implies that life and being are the same in the soul. As a consequence, the argument of the *Phaedo* was used to show a basic principle of Plotinus' metaphysics.

Pieter d'Hoine examines Syrianus' use of the dialogue. He insists that Syrianus wrote a monograph on the argument from contraries, a claim based on Damascius' and Olympiodorus' discussion of the matter. The mediator was Proclus, who inserted the text into his own commentary.³ The argument itself raises many problems, three of which d'Hoine discusses at length. What is the argument's scope and purpose? What kinds of contraries does it rely on? Why does the tran-

³ See Olympiodorus, in *Phd.* § 2.8–10 and Damascius in *Phd.* I § 183–206. We know from Marinus (VP 12.11–15) that Plutarch of Athens also urged Proclus to take notes on his lectures on the *Phaedo*. Because of the divergences of the two accounts, however, it might be difficult to reconstruct Syrianus' interpretation.

sition from one contrary to the other presuppose something that undergoes the change? It is a great merit of d'Hoine's discussion that he shows how Syrianus' responses relate to modern interpretations. To mention just one example, Syrianus seems to restrict the scope of the argument by saying that its aim is not to prove that the soul is immortal, but only that it is not dispersed immediately after its separation from the body (*ap. Damascius, in Phd* I.183). The surviving references to Syrianus' analysis of the proof from recollection centred around Socrates' introduction of the Forms (74A–75A). Syrianus seems to stress not only that the passage refers to the innate concepts as genuine objects of thought that are ontologically prior to the numerous sensible objects, but also that recollection of innate forms is the first step towards knowledge of the transcendent Forms.

Alain Lenoird examines some aspects of the affinity argument by Proclus, Damascius and Olympiodorus. He argues that the six features mentioned by Plato (divine, immortal, intelligible, unitary, indissoluble, identical to itself – 80A10–B5) were interpreted by the Neoplatonists in a way that reflects their complex ontological structure. He also shows that the explanations aimed at incorporating these features into their own framework. In *Theol. Plat.* I.26 (113.18–114.4 S-W) Proclus interpreted them as the attributes of the divine. Isolating one single passage (80A10 ff), which refers to the divine triads in the *Parmenides*, he used the *Phaedo* for theological purposes alien to the established σκόπος of the dialogue. The explication of the term νοητόν in *Theol. Plat.* I.26, 117.15 ff indicates that Proclus transformed the argument to demonstrate the soul's affinity with the divine, i. e. with the eternal as opposed to the perishable.

Sebastian Gertz traces down the way Damascius explained the transition from immortality to imperishability of the soul in the final argument. It turns out that Damascius was just as sceptical about the validity of the argument as modern interpreters, since he admitted the possibility that the soul may perish when it exists on its own, separated from the body. In his answer to Strato's critique, Damascius acknowledged that even if the soul may not die through suffering loss of life, it would still suffer a different kind of death when it becomes separated from the body (*in Phd. i.443*). Furthermore, we are offered evidence that Damascius revisited the final argument in order to make it convincing (*in Phd. i.449–465*); he believed that the assumptions for the improvement are implicit in Plato's text.

The Pythagorean (or, rather, Pythagorizing) notion of the soul as harmony was much discussed in antiquity, starting perhaps with Aristotle. Franco Trabattini compares the accounts we find in Damascius (*in Phd.* I §§ 368–374) and Philoponus (*in DA* 142.22–31), and argues that they ultimately come from Aristotle's *Eudemus*, a dialogue now lost, where Aristotle rejects this theory. The arguments, as far as we know, are largely based on Plato's objections in the *Phaedo*, except for the one which relies on the difference between substance and quality. It says that

whereas the soul is a substance, harmony is not, since the former does not admit degrees, while the latter does. The argument does not turn up in the *De anima* because there Aristotle was no longer interested in the kind of substance dualism suggested in the *Phaedo*.

There are three extant commentaries on the *Phaedo* from the sixth century. The authors, Damascius, who left us two treatises, and Olympiodorus, came from different environment, Athens and Alexandria. This gives us the opportunity to compare their views and trace the differences back to the intellectual milieu of the two schools. Bran Demulder and Gert Van Riel aim to show that the occasional differences do not arise from the differing measure of state control or censorship. Rather, they are due to the difference in teaching program and audience. Olympiodorus was involved in the ἐγκύκλιοι ἐξηγήσεις, an educational program for wider audience, whereas Damascius lectured to a dedicated group of would-be philosophers. On examining Olympiodorus' remark (*in Gorg.* 47.2–3), they show that the distinction between “we” and “us” is not made between pagans and Christians, but between those who are in the possession of the cultural tradition and those who are awaiting education. The discussion of suicide (61C–62B) and the degrees of virtues (68B–69E) give further pieces of evidence for the authors' case. Even if he did not compose a commentary on the dialogue, Simplicius also had quite a few things to say about it. He refers to it mainly when discussing the theory of causes and cosmological implications of the final myth.

Marc-Antoine Gavray concentrates on the two erroneous references; once (*in Phys.* 464.25–29), as a matter of fact, Simplicius quoted the *Phaedrus* (245D), elsewhere (*in Phys.* 666.23–26) he did it in the context of the *Timaeus* (see also *in DC* 517.11–13). Both texts show that Simplicius integrated the Platonic exegesis of the *Phaedo* into the discussion of Aristotle's work with the aim of harmonizing the authors' views. He read the final myth as saying that the earth has a stable position in the centre of the cosmos, with which he agreed, not only with Aristotle's thesis, but also with Plato's cosmological doctrines in other dialogues.

In sum, the volume offers a fine insight into the ancient interpretations of the *Phaedo*. It has an extensive bibliography and two indices, of places and names.