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Cover

Mašhad, Kitābhāna-i Āsitān-i Quds-i Raḡawī 300, f. 1v
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, *grec* 1853, f. 186v

Book Announcements & Reviews

Siglas

CDA – Cristina D’Ancona

EC – Elisa Coda

GM – Giovanni Mandolino

MZ – Marianna Zarantonello

VK – Veysel Kaya

R.C. Fowler, *Imperial Plato. Albinus, Maximus, Apuleius*. Text and Translation, with an Introduction and Commentary, Parmenides Publishing, Las Vegas - Zurich - Athens 2016, X + 362 pp.

Devoted to the Platonism after Plutarch and before Plotinus, this book contains the English translation of and commentary on Albinus' *Introduction to the Books of Plato* (pp. 27-78), Maximus of Tyre's *Dissertation 11, What is Good According to Plato?* (pp. 81-131), and Apuleius' *On Plato and His Doctrine* (pp. 135-291). It also includes a Bibliography (pp. 293-313) and the indexes of passages, topics, and selected Latin and Greek terms (pp. 315-62).

R.C. Fowler sets for himself the task of examining the "revival of Plato" that took place in the second century of the Christian era. This is a period not only of a general "revival of Hellenism and classical Greek philosophy" (p. 2), but also of a renewed attention paid to the Platonic dialogues: "Interest in Plato and Platonism spread in the second century CE, and, as a result, further developed with respect to four main areas: an interest in philosophical polemics, an increase in Platonic commentaries, the development of handbooks, and the rise of the philosophical sophist, or Platonic rhetor" (p. 14). The latter is described as "a type of performing intellectual who displays an interest in Plato: this sort of figure can be seen to come out of the tradition of Dio Chrysostom in the first and second century CE. Maximus of Tyre is an excellent example of a Platonic rhetor, mixing sophistic flourishes with his generally Platonic metaphysical approach in the name of educating – and certainly entertaining – Roman youth (*neoi*) in order that they choose to live virtuous, philosophical lives" (p. 18).

Fowler deliberately confines himself to the Platonic camp, but a revival of the same kind characterizes also the second-century Aristotelianism: suffice it to mention the prominent figure of Alexander of Aphrodisias. Predictably, the revival of Platonism and that of Aristotelianism interacted with each other, and it is Fowler's conviction that Albinus, Maximus of Tyre and Apuleius attest a somewhat syncretistic attitude: "All of these three authors accept the harmonized aspects of Aristotle within Platonism as it came down to them, or at least show no marked interest in excising the Peripateticism that had found its way into their versions of Platonism" (p. 17).

The historiographical issues involved in the study of this moment in the history of Platonism are at times controversial, and it is a pity that none of the studies by Matthias Baltes, with their deep insights and all-embracing erudition, is taken into account. Nor is taken into account *Der Platonismus in der Antike*, the well-known collection of texts that was initiated in 1983 by Heinrich Dörrie and continued by Matthias Baltes until his untimely death in 2003, and that is currently on its way towards conclusion under the direction of Christian Pietsch. An example of the controversial issues where Baltes' voice is conspicuous by its absence in this volume is Albinus' treatment of the Platonic dialogues.

A little known author for us, because the only work that has come down to us is the short *Prologue* translated into English in this volume, Albinus was a Platonist of some repute in post-classical Antiquity, if Galen (*De Libris propr.*, 2, *Scripta min.* II, p. 97.11 Müller) says that he decided to continue his training in Smyrna (probably between A.D. 149 and 157) in order to attend his lectures, and if Proclus labels him and his teacher Gaius as the "most prominent Platonists (τῶν Πλατωνικῶν οἱ κορυφαῖοι)" (*In Remp.* II, p. 96.13 Kroll). Whether or not he was among the authors read before Plotinus' lectures (Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 14.10-14 = Dörrie-Baltes, *Der Platonismus in der Antike*, III, *Baustein* 76.3) depends upon the identification of Gaius' ὑπομνήματα mentioned by Porphyry with Gaius' commentaries on the Platonic dialogues as edited by Albinus, that are mentioned in the *Pinax* of the manuscript Paris, BnF, gr. 1962 at f. 146 v (Ἀλβίνου τῶν Γαίου σχολῶν ὑποτυπώσεων Πλατωνικῶν δογμάτων). There is a general scholarly consensus that the *Prologue* originally was part and parcel of Albinus' edition of Gaius' ὑποτυπώσεις.

One of the most important among the historiographical issues that I alluded to before consists, in broad strokes, of the following: in his 1879 dissertation entitled *Der Platoniker Albinus und der falsche Alkinoos* J. Freudenthal advanced the hypothesis that the "Alcinous" indicated in the manuscripts as the author of the *Handbook of Platonism* (Διδασκαλικὸς τῶν Πλάτωνος δογμάτων) was the same Albinus who authored our *Prologue*. Merging Albinus and Alcinous with one another paved the way for the identification of a special kind of Platonism, that of the so-called "School of Gaius", whose existence was suggested by the testimonies of Galen and Proclus alluded to above. The hypothesis that Albinus and Alcinous were one and the same philosopher of Platonic allegiance was disproved by M. Giusta ("Ἀλβίνου Ἐπιτομή οὐκ Ἀλκίνοου Διδασκαλικός?", *Atti*

dell'Accademia delle Scienze di Torino. *Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche* 95 [1960-61], pp. 167-94) and by J. Whittaker ("Parisinus Graecus 1962 and the Writings of Albinus", *Phoenix* 28 [1974], pp. 320-54; 450-6). On the basis of this fact and of other scholarly debates that I cannot summarize here, the very existence of a "school of Gaius" has been challenged. This "school" allegedly presented some typical features in its interpretation of Plato's legacy, that have been possible to reconstruct on the basis of Albinus' discipleship at Gaius' feet on the one hand, and on the other on the basis of the version of Platonism presented both in the *Prologue* and in the *Handbook of Platonism*. This version shared the main traits of what is usually labelled Middle Platonism. In the wake of the discussions of the '90s of the past century about the denominations to be given (or not given) to the Platonic currents of thought in post-classical antiquity, the idea of "redrawing the map of Middle Platonism" was advanced in scholarship and forms the background of the book by T. Göransson, *Albinus, Alcinous, Arius Didymus*, Göteborg 1995. In his 1996 review of this book, entitled "Muß die 'Landkarte des Mittelplatonismus' neu gezeichnet werden?", *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* 248 (1996), pp. 91-111, M. Baltes calls the issue into question. Though convinced of the validity of Giusta's and Whittaker's arguments about Alcinous' authorship of the *Handbook of Platonism*, he raises the question: "Wie sehr hat sich die 'Landkarte des Mittelplatonismus' nun verändert?" (p. 109) and answers as follows: "Es scheint, daß der *Didaskalikos* sich geistesgeschichtlich doch klar einordnen läßt, nämlich in die Zeit des Gaios, Albinos und Tauros, und in dieselbe Zeit gehört auch der *Anonymus Theaeteti*. Zwar sollte man vorsichtig sein mit dem Ausdruck 'Schule des Gaios', aber zwischen den genannten Autoren herrschte doch so etwas wie eine gemeinsame Weltanschauung. Von daher ist es also durchaus verständlich, daß Freudenthal in dem Autor des *Didaskalikos* den Albinos gesehen hat. Denn wenn er irgendwohin zu stellen ist, dann an die Seite des Albinos, des Tauros und des *Anonymus Theaeteti*" (p. 111). It would have been useful for the reader of *Imperial Plato* to get Fowler's opinion on this.

Albinus' *Prologue* contains a controversial reading order of Plato's dialogues. A textual problem affects this passage, and various solutions have been tentatively proposed by the editors of the *Prologue*, whose list begins by no less a scholar than Johannes Fabricius in his *Bibliotheca graeca* published between 1705 and 1728, and ends with B. Reis, *Der Platoniker Albinos und sein sogenannter Prologos. Prolegomena, Überlieferungsgeschichte, kritische Edition und Übersetzung*, Reichert, Wiesbaden 1999 (Serta graeca, 7). The problem is accounted for by Fowler as follows: "This is an extremely controversial portion of the text, which is in very bad shape. Reis (1999) suggests that a medieval scribe transcribed a list in two vertical columns as if it were a continuous horizontal text. A changed list is found in W [i.e. the manuscript Vindobonensis suppl. gr. 7, which is the archetype of the textual tradition: see Reis, p. 280], corrected by the recent manuscripts, and shows that, in the direct or indirect production of W, continuous text was changed into table form. I have followed Reis' reconstruction of the list (including his additions), but it should be noted that other reconstructions are certainly possible" (n. 29 at pp. 42-43). The text translated (pp. 42-43) and published (p. 73) is Reis', with the latter's apparatus modified only to the effect of having "Reis scripsit" instead of "scripsi" of the original. Thus, the reader is left with the note to the translation that I have quoted above, and with the text as established by Reis: it is not clear what the "changed list" mentioned above alludes to, and what Reis' additions are, unless one compares Reis' text with Reis' apparatus, both reproduced at p. 73. To reconstruct the point about the corrupted passage and to account for the various proposals advanced by philologists goes beyond the limits of this book announcement, but it would have been better, in my opinion, not to be obliged to go back to Reis' edition in order to get an idea of the problem and the solutions proposed.

Another point on which Baltes' studies would have been profitably taken into consideration is Apuleius' account of the nature of the Platonic Forms. Apuleius says: "Ἰδέαζ vero, id est formas omnium, simplices et aeternas esse, nec corporales tamen; esse autem ex his, quae deus sumpserit exempla rerum, quae sunt eruntve; nec posse amplius quam singularium specierum singulas imagines in exemplaribus inveniri gignentiumque omnium ad instar cerae formas et figurationes ex illa exemplorum inpressione signari" (1, 6, 192-3 Beaujeau = p. 248 in the volume under examination). Fowler translates: "Moreover, the Ideas [ἰδέαι], that is, the Forms of all things, are primary and simple and eternal, yet are not corporeal; and from these, which God turned his hand to, are the model of things which are and will be. It is not possible to discover more than individual images of the individual types among the models; and the forms and shapes of all the things of this world have, like wax, been marked out by the imprint of these models" (p. 157). In his note to this passage (p. 157,

n. 66) he refers to the editor of Apuleius' *De Platone et eius dogmate* J. Beaujeau for the remark that "Apuleius' presentation of Platonic Ideas is rather 'thin' and covers only one of their characteristics (i.e., 'as compared to the sensible world'). Alcinous (...) provides their other characteristics (and the more common take on them) in his treatment, i.e., Form is 'in relation to God, his thinking; in relation to us, the primary object of thought; in relation to Matter, measure; in relation to the sensible world, its paradigm; and in relation to itself, essence' (trans. Dillon [1993], 16)]". Fowler's note is longer than this, but the rest is devoted to the topic of the Forms as *exempla rerum*, on which more later. Let's pause to observe that the rather surprising *tamen* in Apuleius' sentence "nec corporales tamen" ("yet are not corporeal") is not commented upon. What on earth can it mean that the Ideas are simple and eternal, even though they are not corporeal? This is an intriguing sentence, on which Baltes' remarks shed light. In his exegesis of this passage, that forms *Baustein* 127.3 of *Der Platonismus in der Antike* (volume V, 1998) Baltes writes: "Daß sie [i.e. the Forms] als solche *simplices*, 'einfach' sind, ist konventionell (...). Auch daß die Ideen ewig genannt werden, ist nicht weiter auffällig. Auffällig ist allerdings, daß sich daran anschließt: *nec corporales tamen*, 'und gleichvoll nicht körperlich'. Es scheint, daß Apuleius andeuten möchte, daß die Ideen keine einfachen, ewigen, aber körperlichen Dinge sind – wie di Atome Demokrits oder Epikurs" (pp. 239-40). In a footnote, Baltes calls attention to passages from Plutarch's *Adversus Colotem* and other works where similar attention is paid to keeping apart the first and simple principles of Plato from those of the Atomists, that are equally first and simple, but corporeal. As for the question of the paradigmatic role of the Forms in Apuleius' account, later on in the same note 66 of p. 157 Fowler claims that "While Apuleius doesn't deny the doctrine that the Ideas are the thoughts of God, he is at least silent about it, unless one takes 1.9.8-11 to be an allusion to this idea ('to serve the divine craftsman, and to be present for everything he invents')". However, also the expression *esse autem ex his, quae deus sumpserit exempla rerum, quae sunt eruntve* points to the typical Middle Platonic doctrine of Forms as the "thoughts of God". This becomes evident if one takes into account Baltes' remark that "Wichtig ist dann der folgende Satz (...), der Gott habe unter den Ideen diejenigen ausgewählt, die ihm als Vorbilder für die zeitlichen Dinge dienen sollten. Dies ist eine der ganz wenigen Stellen, an welchen ein Platoniker sagt, das Vorbild des *Timaios*, das alle weiteren Vorbilder für diese Welt in sich birgt, (...) sei nicht identisch mit dem gesamten Kosmos der Ideen, vielmehr sei dieser umfassender als das Vorbild, das nur eine Auswahl darstelle" (p. 240). In other words, the Demiurge makes a selection among the many Forms that are located in the intelligible model, making use only of the *singulae imagines* of the *species* he wants to inform the matter with. The implication is that the Forms that are *exempla rerum* are those which are present to the divine mind for demiurgic purposes. One may obviously disagree with Baltes' interpretation, but it would have been useful to take it into account.

Some mistakes are present in the volume. There are misprints, like *alkētheian* as a transliteration of ἀληθειαν (p. 38) or *supplemendum putant* for *supplendum putant* (p. 73), but the following are not misprints: the claim that Porphyry's *Isagoge* is "transmitted in a Latin translation" (p. 8); *testamentum* for *testimonium* (p. 28 n. 6); "Abū Fārābī" for "al-Fārābī" (p. 49); *Sigla codices* for *Sigla codicum* (pp. 70, 120, 242).

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Ch. Riedweg (ed.), *Philosophia in der Konkurrenz von Schulen, Wissenschaften und Religionen. Zur Pluralisierung des Philosophiebegriffs in Kaiserzeit und Spätantike*, herausgegeben von Ch. Riedweg in Zusammenarbeit mit R. Füchslin u. C. Semenzato sowie Ch. Horn und D. Wyrwa. Akten der 17. Tagungs der Karl und Gertrud Abel-Stiftung vom 16.-17. Oktober 2014 in Zürich, De Gruyter, Boston - Berlin 2017 (Philosophie der Antike, 34), X + 393 pp.

After an Introduction by Ch. Riedweg (pp. 1-2), the opening paper by M. Perkams, "Einheit und Vielfalt der Philosophie von der Kaiserzeit zur ausgehenden Antike" (pp. 3-31) discusses the ways to classify post-classical thought. After a survey from Hegel onwards, Perkams presents his own classification: Imperial Age, Late Antiquity properly speaking, and the 6th century, described as "einen besonderen, dritten Abschnitt der Spätantike" (p. 4). First comes the Imperial age, with its features of traditionalism, i.e. the conviction that