

helpful distillation of Irigaray's difficult reading of the cave as womb with a largely shared reflection on Diotima as woman, priestess, and stranger, Hyland opens up "Plato" as a space hospitable to the most critical feminism—and in the process makes credible the claim that such hospitality is the core character of the dialogues themselves. (He sustains this same spirit of discriminating welcome throughout his following chapter on Cavarero's imaginative reappropriation of marginal women in *In Spite of Plato*.) (4) Hyland closes his study with a chapter on the one Continental, Gadamer, who also discovers the anti-Platonist Plato that dialogue form implies. Hyland works through a remarkable web of dialectical relations. To note the crux: the young Gadamer is attuned—surely by *Being and Time*—to the "irreducibly existential dimension" (169) of the dialogues, and this moves him to resist what the early Heidegger insists upon, the approach to Plato by way of, in Heidegger's own surprising words, the relatively "clear" and "distinct" formulations of Aristotle (32); at the same time, the phenomenological attunement to life that Gadamer discovers in the dialogues also turns him back to Aristotle, occasioning his discovery of a similar attunement to praxis and the Good. Hence the older Gadamer's thesis of the "unitary effect," or underlying agreement, of Plato and Aristotle. Gadamer thus moves with Heidegger against both Heidegger and Aristotle to a dialogical Plato, and then with this Plato back to a kindred Aristotle.

Such circling may move one to reflect on the remarkable hermeneutic complexity of the situation Hyland's study reflects. If we do, we may wonder whether there are not further folds to the irony of the Continentals' misreading than he thematizes. Do we owe thanks as well as objection to the ways in which the four thinkers mistake Platonism for Plato? Would Hyland—would we—have had provocation to seek in the Plato who wrote dialogues what the Continentals seek to save from the hegemony of Platonism, had they not first mistakenly identified the two? That is, would they have first recognized what they seek to save, had they not felt the oppressive weight of that hegemony, and would Hyland—and we—have first been moved to our appreciation of the generosity of the irony of the dialogues, had we not first been oriented by what the Continentals seek to save?

MITCH MILLER

Vassar College

Société d'études platoniciennes. Études Platoniciennes. Vol. 1, Annuaire européen d'études platoniciennes. Edited by Luc Brisson and Jean-François Pradeau. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2004. Pp. 348, € 35,00.

This is the first volume in what is projected to be an annual series published under the auspices of the Société d'études platoniciennes, with sponsorship in France, Italy, and Spain. The introductory editorial note by Jean-François Pradeau (7) states the Society's intention for the series to publish in five languages (German, English, Spanish, French, and Italian), sometimes on a particular theme or particular work, but always to contribute to the knowledge of Plato's works and the Platonic tradition. Here one can only briefly indicate the range of contents of this first volume.

There are three parts. The first, entitled "Platon," includes six articles on Plato. Anne Merker, "Corps et châiment chez Platon" (11–50), reviews relevant sections of *Gorgias*, *Timaeus*, and *Laws* and argues that, in fact, the body has most significantly both a semantic and a cosmological function in Plato's view. Klaus Schöpsdau, "Richten und Strafen. Zum Strafrecht in Platons *Nomoi*" (51–72), offers a more general explanation of judgment and punishment in Plato and thus might more usefully have preceded Merkur's article. For Francisco Lisi, "El mito del *Político*" (73–90), the myth, perhaps paradoxically, turns out to reveal Plato as a philosopher of history. Francesco Gregorio, "Ὁ καλῶς: elements pour une métacritique de l'interprétation de la *République* de Platon" (91–112) examines in detail the reading of Plato's text that can be extrapolated from Aristotle's criticisms of it. Among the surprises, he finds an Aristotelian irony which he considers a sure sign that Aristotle

read Plato well (111). Walter Leszl's long article, "Plato's Attitude to poetry and the fine arts, and the origins of aesthetics" (113–98), is, in fact, only part I of a longer discussion, the second part of which will appear in volume II of this series (asterisked note to 199) in which he tries to replace Kristeller's view that the system of "fine arts" is a distinctively modern idea and hence absent in ancient authors. The weakness of the case as stated thus far is that Leszl fails to recognize the important distinction between concepts explicitly articulated and those which later scholars find "implied" by what ancients "must have" thought and confirmed by certain "traces" in what they write. Like Leszl's article, Francesco Bearzi's "Il contesto noetico del *Simposio*" (199–251) is part of a much longer connected study of the four passages—Diotima's speech in the *Symposium*, *Republic*, excursus in *Seventh Letter*, and *Phaedrus* 247–50—in which intellectual intuition is treated. Despite its seemingly mysterious language, he sees the view presented as rigorously rational.

The second part, "Tradition platonicienne," contains only two articles, and thus is not in balance with part one. Francesco Fronterotta's "La genèse et la succession des réalités atemporelles. Un argument paradoxal chez Plotin (Ennéades V 1 [10] 6, 19–22)" (255–70) finds that Plotinus's argument leads to the paradoxical conclusion, reminiscent of certain conclusions in the *Parmenides*, that a truly atemporal reality could be neither thought nor spoken. In "La doctrine des degrés de vertus chez les néo-platoniciens. Une analyse de la *Sentence* 32 de Porphyre, de ses antécédents et de ses conséquences" (271–86), Luc Brisson introduces the views of virtue in Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, before expounding the four types in Porphyry, who, he claims, first makes possible the idea of degrees of virtue, and looking briefly at some later Neoplatonic formulations.

The third part, "Notes et lectures critiques," includes a review article by Francisco Fronterotta, "L'unità del Platonismo : Alcuni studi sulla tradizione medioplatonica e neoplatonica" (289–98) and a "Bibliographie des études platoniciennes : années 2002–2003" (299–348), introduced by Luc Brisson and following the model first developed by Harold Cherniss and now followed by Brisson and his collaborators at CNRS.

This is an excellent volume, all in all. That each article is based on solid research in several languages and across boundaries of interpretive orientation is to be applauded. The annual Bibliography will be a particularly useful aspect of the series for students of Plato. Every research library and every serious Plato scholar should certainly subscribe.

GERALD A. PRESS

Hunter College

Herbert A. Davidson. *Moses Maimonides: The Man and His Works*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. Pp. x + 567. Cloth, \$45.00

Herbert Davidson is a scholar of exceptional brilliance whose previous studies of medieval Jewish and Islamic philosophy have been widely acclaimed. In the present work, he ventures beyond philosophical argument to encompass an analysis of every aspect of the life and work of one of the most celebrated—and controversial—figures in Jewish history, Moses Maimonides (1138–1204). In so doing, Davidson discloses a formidable knowledge of Talmud and rabbinic literature, as well as of the history, science, astronomy, medicine and philosophy of Maimonides' day. Davidson offers elegant descriptions and often challenging evaluations of Maimonides' life, education, and work: the rabbinic *oeuvre*, philosophical and medical treatises, and miscellaneous epistles.

Maimonides' accomplishments do not include a number of works commonly but mistakenly attributed to him, in Davidson's opinion. He offers persuasive reasons (though admittedly not always conclusive proof) for rejecting Maimonidean authorship of a "Treatise on Logic," and the Epistles "In Opposition to Astrology" and "On Religious Persecution." Davidson's rejection of the last named epistle abets his interpretation of the early period of Maimonides' life, according to which he was not compelled to convert or to dissimulate a faith in Islam, as many think.