

Review: GOURINAT, Jean-Baptiste (*dir.*). *L'éthique du stoïcien Hiéroclès*. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2016. Pp. 175. ISBN 978-2-7574-1273-2. EUR 22,00.

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For those who like Classics and also enjoy puzzles, the History of Hellenistic and Late Ancient Philosophy can be a great fount of joy. First because very often one does not have complete primary sources, so it is necessary to rebuild the arguments of philosophers or schools; second because to rebuild these arguments one uses the results of research on other fields, as history, archaeology, paleography and papyrology. Thus, the joy is not only to piece together a thought from fragments, but also to provide the pieces.

Some recent examples of puzzles in the area of Stoic ethics are the “newly” discovered Hierocles’ texts: *Elements of Ethics* (PBerol 9780) and some chapters of *On Appropriate Acts* (preserved by Stobaeus). And since Hierocles is “un auteur antique très jeune, puisqu’il est né en 1901” (p. 5), there is still a lot to be said about his thought, which can be very illuminative and furnish important details on the Stoic doctrine of *oikeiōsis*, as well as on embryology, domestic economy and marriage.

So, organized by Jean-Baptiste Gourinat, we have *L'éthique du Stoïcien Hiéroclès*, a very complete and accurate work, which covers the majority of the features and issues of Hierocles’ thought. The book is composed by reviewed versions of the papers presented in the second *Rencontre Internationale de Philosophie Ancienne* – which happened at the École Normale Supérieure de Lyon in April, 2011 – plus a general introduction written by Thomas Bénatouïl.

The introduction offers a brief history of the discovery of Hierocles’ *Elements of Ethics*, and it also briefly shows how Hierocles’ fragments in Stobaeus came to be considered as another work called *Peri kathēkontos*, even though there are no testimonies to this title. Bénatouïl also presents the main themes of Hierocles’ thought relating them to the following papers: 1- Jean-Baptiste Gourinat’s *La gestation de l’animal et la perception de soi*; 2- Christopher Gill’s *La continuité de la perception depuis la naissance*; 3- Francesca Alesse’s *La représentation de soi et les différentes formes de l’appropriation chez Hiéroclès*; 4- Marcelo Boeri’s *L’oikeiōsis et les rapports avec les dieux selon Hiéroclès*; 5- Christelle Veillard’s *Hiéroclès, les devoirs envers la patrie et les parents*; 6- David Konstan’s *Hiéroclès, sur la famille et l’économie domestique*; 7- Ilaria Ramelli’s *Extraits du traité Sur le mariage de Stobée*. The papers are followed by the abstracts of the conferences, in both French and English.

Now, on the papers, the first one, by Gourinat, aims specifically to analyze the columns I-III of *Elements of Ethics*, stressing the Stoic theory on animal’s generation,

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¹ This review was already published by BMCR. If you are interested, take a look @ <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2016/2016-11-05.html>

which is not a theme usually present in Stoic accounts on ethics, for in their majority these accounts start with the description of animals after they are born, not before it. So Hierocles' *Elements of Ethics* is extremely important, since it is a Stoic text which clearly intends to show how the principle of *oikeiōsis* installs itself into the living beings after the rise of the soul, allowing the sensations and impulses, hence self-perception and self-preservation. Albeit Hierocles' approach on embryology is *sui generis*, Gourinat emphasizes that it is orthodox, mainly when compared with other accounts provided by Cicero, Diogenes Laertius and Plutarch.

Written by Gill, the second paper examines the columns III-VI of *Elements of Ethics*, concerning animals' self-perception after their birth. Since animals, as well as human beings, are born with the ability of perceiving and improving themselves, it is natural for human beings to develop themselves until they are able to recognize the truth as the only good. And it is not necessary to believe in some kind of initial ground that must be favorable to this ethical development, unlike Plato and Aristotle thought. The animals are psychophysical wholes, able to defend themselves and, regarding human beings, to organize themselves to improve their possibilities of surviving and achieving the *telos*.

The third paper is by Alesse and on *Elements of Ethics*, col. VI, 29- IX,10. She presents two schemes and uses them to interpret the above-mentioned columns of Hierocles' work. The first scheme (column VI, 27 to the end of column VIII) is on how animals develop a self-representation to which they need to assent and which go along with *oikeiōsis*. Alesse thinks that the assent given to the self-representation is not only given to something as the physical characteristics represented, but also to the value aggregated to these characteristics, as the predicate follows the subject in a phrase. The second scheme consists of the reduction of the different kinds of appropriation to one first kind, the self-appropriation, which grows larger until it includes other beings, starting by the breed.

Aiming to analyze Stobaeus (*Eclog.*I, 3, 53 p.63, 6-27; I, 3, 54, p. 64, 1- 14; II, 9, 7, p. 181, 8- 182, 30), the fourth paper, written by Boeri, offers some interpretation on the duties of mankind towards the gods. So the author starts with a portrayal of gods as creatures with unalterable and stable judgments, relating them to Stoic conceptions of virtues and knowledge. Thus, like gods, the sages are also unchangeable. So the gods cannot be responsible for the evil, but they can be responsible for things that human beings consider evil, such as natural disasters. Unlike ordinary people, the sages, on the other hand, understand the world order, and they know that even natural disasters are not bad in themselves. Indeed, the only cause of evil is vice, opposed to virtue. Boeri argues that if the gods are part of the cosmos and if the Stoic cosmopolis can be an expansion of *oikeiōsis*, hence, by the very *oikeiōsis*, human beings should recognize the gods as sharing the same community with them – the community of rational beings. And then they should honor the gods, for they are paramount examples of rationality and virtue.

In the fifth paper, Veillard examines the Stoic topic on the duties of human beings towards parents and country, as approached by Hierocles (Stobaeus, *Eclog.* III, 39, 34, p. 730, 17-731, 15; III, 39, 35, p. 731, 16- 733, 6; III, 39, 36, p. 733, 7-734, 10; IV, 25, 53, p. 640, 4-644, 15). Veillard deals with the famous metaphor of the concentric circles, stressing and explaining how the individual reason expands itself through some kind of transference of affection: from the affection towards itself, and then embracing larger groups as the family – starting by the parents, since they teach us how to love and they are our constant friends –, and extending the affection towards the human kind. But even if the metaphor of concentric circles is the best-known way to explain the expansion of *oikeiōsis*, it is grounded on a cosmic explanation: the obedience to the duties occurs by understanding that human beings are part of the

transmission of the causal chain which emanates from god since the creation of the cosmos, and as well as the cosmos is ordered, human actions are appropriate precisely when they are conservative of the social order. Veillard's paper is very detailed and precise, and it also comments on the very structure of Hierocles' fragments as preserved by Stobaeus, as well as its problems, comparing them with doxography or texts of other conspicuous Stoic philosophers.

The sixth paper, by Konstan, is on the duties to relatives and it analyzes Stobaeus' extracts on the relationship between brothers and sisters. Probably these extracts were part of Hierocles' *On Appropriate Acts* (*Eclog.* IV, 84, 20, p. 660, 15-664, 18 & 84, 23, p. 671, 3-673, 18). The aim of the paper is to shed some light on the theme of "putting yourself in the place of the other", extending the *oikeiōsis*. Konstan describes this process, first by the radical example of the slaves, second by the example of brothers and sisters. Konstan also emphasizes the differences between Hierocles' approach on sympathy and Christians' proverb which exhorts one to "not do to others what you would not like to be done to yourself". After that, there is a detailed description of the metaphor of concentric circles and of the role this metaphor plays in Hierocles' account on how the process of expansion of *oikeiōsis* occurs.

Finally, written by Ramelli, the seventh and last paper aims to provide analysis of the five extracts of the work *On the marriage*, which was probably also part of *On Appropriate Acts* (Stobaeus, *Anth.* IV, 67, 21-24, p. 502, 1-507, 5; IV, 75, 14, p. 603, 8-605, 16; IV, 85, 21, T. V., p. 696, 21-699, 15). The article starts with Hierocles' arguments on the necessity of thinking the issue of marriage as part of the wider issue on the appropriate acts. An approach of these acts, in its turn, is crucial for thinking about the social *oikeiōsis*, and having a family and taking care of it are the starting points of this kind of *oikeiōsis*, i.e. the social one. After a brief exhibition on the five extracts on marriage, Ramelli deals with the subject matter of the relations between the concepts of *oikeiōsis* and *kathēkonta*, from the early Stoa until Hierocles himself. And to piece together these specific relations, Ramelli uses fragments and doxography present in works of authors such as Porphyry and Cicero, comparing these fragments with Arius Didymus and stressing Hierocles' own position on this issue. After that, the comparisons are, on one hand, between Musonius Rufus and Hierocles – both comprehend marriage as *homonoia* and *koinōnia*, close to the traditional Stoic conception of the sages' friendship – and, on the other hand, between Hierocles and Atipater – both share the same technical terminology and the emphasis on the marriage as *kathēkon*. As the result of the above-mentioned comparisons, we have the identification of what is original in Hierocles' thought on the topic of marriage.

As stated before, *L'éthique du Stoïcien Hiéroclès* is a very complete book, composed by very creative, well-written and precise papers on each major topic of Hierocles' thought. I sincerely hope it can help filling the gap on the issue of Stoic conception of *oikeiōsis* and also be that fount of joy for those who like Classics and puzzles.

Data de envio: 22-09-2017

Data de aprovação: 24-09-2017

Data de publicação: 22-12-2017