Stefano Valente: Schironi, From Alexandria to Babylon

Ἑλίος παρὰ Πέραι, oltre ad Hsch. μ 1335 e 1336 L., si veda anche Syn. ιυ 219 C. = Ph. ι 446
Th. (cf. l'app. di Theodoridis per ulteriori rimandi) = Su. ι 1045 A. Μίθραν: Μίθραν νομίζου-
σιν εἶναι ὁ Πέραι τὸν ἑλίον καὶ τὸν τοῦτον θύουσιν πολλὰς θυσίας (a Fozio e Suda rimandava
già Hunt). Fr. 3, iii, r. 22: il lemma – perduto – doveva certamente cominciare con μ-, per cui
sarebbe preferibile scrivere con Hunt μ... μ, come del resto annota la S. nel commento (p.
112). Fr. 5 rr. 14, 15 and 17: la S. afferma che qui «nothing is visible. The explanations
of these lines were probably short. The fragment thus preserves the far right of the original
columns (p. 117); tuttavia, non si può escludere che il vacuo dei rr. 14s. sia dovuto al passag-
trio tra una sezione alfabetica e la seguente. Fr. 10a: le integrazioni poste a testo alle rr. 35 e 10
sono problematiche, poiché presuppongono una colonna decisamente più stretta delle altre
conservate per intero (30 lettere di r. 5 contro «an average of fifty-one letters per line», p. 95).
Fr. 18: nonostante i dubbi della S., per cui qui «the handwriting appears slightly different
from that of the other fragments: μ has the same flat and large bowl, but α has a more round-
ed loop than usual» (p. 128), un simile tratteggio di α mi pare ravvisabile, ad es., nei fr. 3, i,
rr. 8–10 e 11, r. 6 (cf. pl. 3 e 9). Fr. 19, r. 2: S. scrive [τρόποι] e osserva che «the first letter is a
numeral, presumably a book number, as in other entries. Only in fr. 3, iii, 3 is α used to indi-
cate an adverb, προτέρων or πρώτα, 'at first'» (p. 129), propendendo infine per la prima delle
due possibilità. In entrambi i casi, tuttavia, si dovrebbe stampare conseguentemente uno
spazio tra le due lettere e in apparato proporre ιτα 'Π' oppure ιτα p.

Alle 'Conclusions' (pp. 132–139), dove sono ricapitolate le acquisizioni del vo-
lume, tengono dietro una tavola di comparazione tra l'edizione presente e quelle di
Hunt e della medesima S. negli Oxyrhynchus Papyri ('Old and New Numeration
of the Oxyrhynchus Glossary Fragments', p. 141), la 'Bibliography' (pp. 143–155),
gli accurati 'Indices' (pp. 157–176) e i 'Plates' (1–13), dove sono riprodotti in bianco
nero i frammenti del glossario.1

Il volume della S., al di là di alcuni aspetti discutibili, legati in particolare ad un
intento di ricostruire e normalizzare il dettato lessicografico e linguistico, costitui-
sce un importante punto di partenza per ulteriori approfondite indagini
sull'erudizione greca di età alessandrina e imperiale e sui suoi rapporti – oscuri ma
continuativi – con la lessicografia bizantina.2

Hamburg

Stefano Valente

Anna Maria Ioppolo: La testimonianza di Setio Emprico sull'Accademia Scettica. Napoli:

Anna Maria Ioppolo has spent much of her career studying the Academy in its
skeptical period. Her 1986 book ‘Opinione e scienza: il dibattito tra Stoici e Acca-
demici nel III e II secolo a.C.’1 was a major contribution to a then newly flourishing
discussion on the skeptical Academy and its confrontation with the Stoics.4

1 Le riproduzioni sono generalmente di ottimo livello, ad eccezione di pl. 6 fr. 5, la cui
dimensione è troppo ridotta per risultare chiara (ottima invece quella in <http://www.papyrology.ox.ac.uk/POxy/>).
2 Scarsi i refrusi: p. 1 n. 1 r. 1 si leggava κατά τῶν p. 58 app. r. 6 «γνώρισμα»; p. 74 r. 9 «κατά τῆς».
3 Naples: Bibliopolis.
4 Major critical essays in English were Julia Annas, 'The Heirs of Socrates', Phronesis 33
in Ancient Philosophy 6 (1988), 231–53.

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Since then a considerable amount has been written on the subject. Ioppolo’s new work is designed in part as a revisiting of the area and an assessment of the scholarship that has appeared since (and often in reaction to) her 1986 book, in part as a synthesis of the results obtained in a number of her own more recent articles (14–15). But it has a quite distinct format, consisting of a detailed, line-by-line analysis of the two major texts in which Sextus Empiricus deals with the skeptical Academics, in the first book of Outlines of Pyrrhonism (PH 1.220–35) and the first book of Against the Logicians (M 7.150–89). These two passages take different approaches, and have sometimes been seen as in various ways inconsistent; Ioppolo generally resists the latter conclusion, being more inclined to see the differences as due to Sextus’ different goals or purposes in the two works. Of the three main chapters, the first deals with the discussion in PH 1 and the other two with the discussion in M 7.

Sextus’ treatment in PH 1 occurs in the course of his discussion of philosophies that might be thought to share common ground with his own Pyrrhonist skepticism. Sextus himself strongly resists this idea, and in fact is not willing to use the term ‘skepticism’ of any other outlook but that of the Pyrrhonists themselves. As Ioppolo observes, Sextus shares with his predecessors Aenesidemus and Timon the desire to distance Pyrrhonism from the Academy (20–1); yet it is clear that in the first and second centuries CE there was a widespread tendency to assimilate the two (22). Sextus is therefore swimming against the tide, and his particular agenda naturally raises the question of the impartiality and historical accuracy of his account (26–7). His approach, on Ioppolo’s reading, is to contest the Academics’ skeptical credentials, but also to emphasize differences among the Academics themselves (32–3); in both respects Arcesilaus emerges as something of a special case.

Sextus depicts Carneades and his successors as plainly non-skeptical, seeing their advocacy of the pithanê phantasia, ‘persuasive appearance’, as committing them to an assent that is incompatible with skepticism. As Ioppolo points out, this seems to ignore the interpretation of Carneades by his successor Clitomachus, as revealed by Cicero and other sources; it also seems (unlike Sextus’ account in M 7) to pass over the fact that the pithanê phantasia was devised in response to the charge of apraxia – that is, that action is impossible in the absence of assent (29–35). In the case of Arcesilaus, by contrast, Sextus offers several different possible interpretations, one of which, explicitly endorsed by Sextus himself, assimilates Arcesilaus to Pyrrhonism far more than any other Academic (42–4). Seemingly against this is another interpretation offered by an anonymous ‘someone’, according to which Arcesilaus, unlike the Pyrrhonists, speaks in terms of the real nature of things (45–8); Ioppolo rightly remarks on Sextus’ apparent hesitation about this reading, although I find unconvincing her suggestion (46, 48) that there may have been a non-dogmatic understanding of ‘in reference to nature’ (pros tên phusin) that Sextus is not mentioning. A third possible interpretation, which makes Arcesilaus a secret (dogmatic) Platonist with a skeptical front, is, as Ioppolo says, barely credible (48–9); acute in this context is her observation that the verse from Aristo of Chios, introduced to support this reading, actually contradicts it, since it makes Arcesilaus an open Platonist and a secret Pyrrhonist. But this still leaves open the question of Sextus’ purpose in
introducing it, assuming that he did not just thoughtlessly copy it from his source (an assumption that Ioppolo generally, and I think rightly, resists). The position of Arcesilaus in Sextus’ story is thus somewhat ambiguous – which is perhaps not surprising, given that he has offered a highly conciliatory picture of Arcesilaus in the course of a discussion which is supposed to emphasize the differences between the Pyrrhonists and all other philosophers. Ioppolo sees as a further sign of Sextus’ uncertainty the fact that he never actually uses the label ‘Academic’ to apply to Arcesilaus.

Sextus’ treatment of the Academics also includes a discussion of whether the Academy’s founder Plato was a skeptic. Sextus himself argues that he was definitely not. But he also speaks of an opinion held on the subject by his Pyrrhonist predecessor Aenesidemus. Unfortunately it is not clear what opinion he attributes to Aenesidemus, since the text is corrupt at the crucial point (PH 1.222); Ioppolo argues in some detail (52–74) that Aenesidemus did consider Plato a skeptic, and hence that Sextus is disagreeing with him. The considerations she offers seem to me ingenious but not conclusive; indeed, I have argued elsewhere for the opposite conclusion, in an article that Ioppolo appears not to have seen.

What I find more plausible is Ioppolo’s suggestion that Aenesidemus could be the source of Sextus’ Pyrrhonizing interpretation of Arcesilaus, and quite possibly of the dogmatic interpretation of Carneades as well (74–80); our other evidence for Aenesidemus’ critique of the Academy (primarily Photius, _Bibl._ 169b18–171b35) seems uniformly to refer to those who spoke of the pithanê phantasia, which would include Carneades and his successors but would exclude Arcesilaus. If, against Ioppolo, we take Sextus to be agreeing with Aenesidemus on whether Plato was a skeptic, then that would of course open the possibility that Sextus is also using Aenesidemus as a source in the section on Plato. The one place where it seems clear that he must have used a different source – and here I am agreeing with Ioppolo – is the esoteric interpretation of Arcesilaus (PH 1.234).

The second chapter covers Sextus’ discussion of Arcesilaus in _Against the Logicians_ (M 7.150–8). The Academics figure in this work as part of Sextus’ review of positions on the criterion of truth, both positive and negative. But immediately, as Ioppolo observes (81–4), Arcesilaus seems again to occupy an ambiguous position, when Sextus says that he did not propose any criterion _proëgoumenôs_ (M 7.150), translated «in senso stretto»; it is far from obvious, at least initially, whether this is supposed to amount to an assertion or a denial of the existence of a criterion. Arcesilaus is also portrayed as doing nothing but responding to the Stoics; here too, as in _PH_ 1, a distinction is drawn between his approach and Carneades’, which Ioppolo again plausibly sees as a deliberate strategy on Sextus’ part. _M_ 7.155 seems to conflict with this; when Sextus says that it follows from the previous argument that «according to the Stoics too» the wise person will suspend judgement, the «too» (kai) appears to imply that Arcesilaus also holds this view in his own person. Yet, as Ioppolo emphasizes (97), it

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is only the non-existence of the Stoic criterion that has been argued for, and so they are the only ones driven to *epoche*, suspension of judgement (or to its equally unwelcome alternative *doxa*, opinion) by this argument. Thus, if Arcesilaus does adopt *epoche* in his own person, it must be on the basis of other considerations not mentioned. Now, our other evidence on Arcesilaus, from Cicero, Diogenes Laertius and Numenius, strongly suggests that he did indeed adopt *epoche*. It therefore seems to follow that Sextus’ *kai* is not unwarranted, but that his picture is incomplete; by focusing exclusively on Arcesilaus’ dialectical engagement with the Stoics, and by certain other choices of terminology, he deliberately leaves Arcesilaus’ exact status unclear. Ioppolo’s argument here (101–9) is subtle and attractive.

We move now (109–30) to a careful consideration of M 7.158, in which Sextus describes Arcesilaus’ remarks on the conduct of life. Here Ioppolo stresses the immediate change of tone; Sextus now presents Arcesilaus’ position directly, with no mention of the Stoics. As in her 1986 work, she takes Sextus word *edei*, ‘it was necessary’, to indicate that Arcesilaus is obligated to show (and not just as a dialectical maneuver) that universal suspension of judgement is both livable and conducive to happiness; this may well be correct, although I have argued elsewhere that it is not conclusive. While the view laid out makes use of several concepts that are of Stoic origin – especially the central concept of *eulogon*, ‘the reasonable’ – both the degree to which these concepts are altered from their original Stoic context and, again, the complete lack of explicit reference to the Stoics (120–1), are read, with some justification, as supporting a non-dialectical reading. Ioppolo also points out that we have another text, Plutarch *Adv. Col.* 1121F–1124B, which gives Arcesilaus’ explanation of how action is possible in the absence of assent; this account makes appeal to our natural reactions, and Sextus’ claim that the conduct of life ‘is not of a nature’ (*ou pephuken*) to be accounted for without a criterion may be an allusion to this part of his view. Yet the *eulogon* does not, by itself, seem adequate as an account of how action is even possible, being better suited to serve as a response to the different charge that rational choice is impossible for someone who suspends judgement; moreover, as Sextus describes it, it only seems capable of being invoked retrospectively, as opposed to being used as a method for making choices. If we combine the evi-

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1 Opinione e scienza, 123.

2 Along with most scholars, Ioppolo accepts the text *ho peri pantôn epechôn*, ‘the one who suspends judgement about everything’, rather than the mss. reading *ou peri pantôn epechôn*, ‘not suspending judgement about everything’. In my translation of *Against the Logicians* (Cambridge, 2005) I followed the mss. reading, and Ioppolo argues at some length against this (110–13). I am now persuaded that this was a mistake – not so much by Ioppolo’s explicit counter-arguments as by the plausibility of the entire picture that she constructs of Sextus’ attitude to Arcesilaus; given this picture, Sextus would not have flatly accused him of failing to suspend judgement, as the mss. reading would have him doing.

3 113–14, n.79 wrongly attributes to me a dialectical interpretation of Arcesilaus in this passage; see Richard Bett, ‘Carneades’ Pithan on: A Reappraisal of its Role and Status, Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy 7 (1989), 59–94, at 91. My point was not that Arcesilaus’ strategy should be read as dialectical, but that the word *edei* could not be used as evidence against this view.
dence of Sextus and Plutarch, we get a somewhat fuller and more satisfactory story of Arcesilaus’ ideas on action. But this suggests that Sextus is omitting part of that story, something that is in any case plausible given his complete silence about the Stoics’ and the Epicureans’ charges of apraxia against Arcesilaus (which we know about from Plutarch and elsewhere). Ioppolo suggests that this may be deliberate on Sextus’ part, and due to the fact that Arcesilaus’ conception of how action is possible actually seems rather close to Sextus’ own, as expounded in PH 1 and M 11; Sextus’ silence about Arcesilaus’ criterion of action in PH 1, despite his criticisms of Carneades’ and Clitomachus’ ideas in the same area, may have the same motivation. In any case, Ioppolo concludes (128–30), Arcesilaus’ position in Sextus’ scheme in M 7 is peculiar. Although the opening of the entire section on the criterion of truth (M 7.46) distinguishes just two main positions – accepting or denying the existence of a criterion – Arcesilaus does not comfortably fit either one; Sextus wants to distinguish Arcesilaus from Pyrrhonism, but cannot easily make him into a negative dogmatist. As in PH 1, then, Arcesilaus occupies a special position as compared with the rest of the Academy.

The third chapter deals mainly with Carneades’ treatment of the same topics, ending with a discussion of possible sources for the entire M 7 passage on the Academics. Ioppolo (131) points out an immediate difference in Sextus’ treatment of Carneades; unlike Arcesilaus, who directed his arguments solely against the Stoics, Carneades is said to have mounted arguments against all previous philosophers who had posited a criterion. Even though the argument then summarized largely narrows down the credible options (which are subsequently attacked) to those presented by the Stoics, this seems to be an accurate way of introducing it. What is less clear is whether the sharp difference of approach alleged by Sextus is real; as Ioppolo observes (138–9), other evidence from Plutarch and Cicero indicates that Arcesilaus, or that the Academics quite generally, engaged in argument with Epicureans as well as with Stoics. So Sextus may be exaggerating the contrast between Arcesilaus and Carneades in order to highlight intra-Academic disagreement. What is common to both, however, is that the arguments against a criterion are presented by Sextus as purely dialectical (141); and in Carneades’ case this is signaled by the concluding phrase ‘deploying [them] against [antiparexagôν] the other philosophers’ (M 7.166, cf. antidietas-seto, M 7.159).

In contrast with this is the simple ‘take a position’ (diatattesthai, M 7.166), used to describe what Carneades did in his discussion of the conduct of life; Ioppolo plausibly sees this (142) as at least pointing towards a position that Carneades himself adopted. This would of course be consistent with the dogmatism of which Sextus accuses Carneades in connection with this position – namely, the pithanê phantasia – in PH 1. I must admit that I am not entirely clear whether Ioppolo ultimately sees the M 7 passage as taking the same line; as far as I can see, she never returns to precisely this point. She does, however, accuse Sextus of confusing Carneades’ position in several places, and even of making it incoherent. He speaks at one point (M 7.173) of the pithanê phantasia as a criterion of truth (rather than a criterion of action, such as Sextus himself accepts); at the very least this is not accompanied by adequate explanation. He also switches, particularly towards the end of the account, from psychological to epistemologi-
cal language: that is, from speaking in terms of the subjective persuasiveness of the *pithanê phantasia* (which carries no implications concerning the objective state of things) to its role in assessing what is actually true. Finally, it looks as if the account is over by *M 7.185*, but then Sextus goes over a number of points a second time, again with notable intrusions of (seemingly unnecessary) dogmatic language. These points are all well taken; space does not permit me to examine Ioppolo’s careful and intricate account in any further detail.

The chapter ends with a consideration of Sextus’ source or sources for the *M 7* account as a whole. Ioppolo convincingly rejects the suggestion of Antiochus as the main source (despite his mention at *M 7.162*), given the disagreements that are set up between Stoics and Academics and also between the two Academics themselves (176–7). More likely is a Pyrrhonist source, with Aenesidemus being the obvious candidate; some suggestive parallels are drawn with Aenesidemus’ language and approach as revealed (to the very limited extent that anything is revealed about Aenesidemus) in other sources. However, the anomalies in Sextus’ account of Carneades, referred to in the previous paragraph, may be due to his imperfect integration of two different sources. The extent to which Sextus modifies his sources to suit his own agenda is debatable. However, as Ioppolo remarks in conclusion (188–9), there are clearly complex strategies at play in both *PH 1* and *M 7*, and historical accuracy is not Sextus’ primary concern.

The book ends with two appendices. The second is a reprint of a 1995 paper on the reception of Socrates in the skeptical Academy and the Pyrrhonist tradition; I shall say nothing about that here. The first is an examination of Cicero, *Lucullus* 32, in which two sets of people are distinguished who denied the possibility of apprehension (*katalêpsis*) in the Stoic sense. One of these groups is clearly Carneades and his Academic successors. More disputed is the identity of the other group, who are said to hold flatly that ‘everything is uncertain’; Cicero (or rather, the speaker Lucullus) has sometimes been seen as referring to the Pyrrhonists, newly resurgent in Cicero’s day, sometimes to Arcesilaus. In her 1986 book Ioppolo argued for the latter position; here she supplements her earlier argument, appealing largely to considerations drawn from the context of the *Academica* as a whole. She makes a good case, although the argument is inevitably speculative in places.

As my summary has no doubt revealed, this is not a book for beginners. It presupposes knowledge of the Academic and Pyrrhonist skeptical traditions, and it addresses the texts, and secondary literature on those texts, at a level of detail that is likely to interest only specialists in these areas. But for those who fit that description, it is a valuable new resource from a scholar in very full command of her topic.

Baltimore

Richard Bett

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2 Opinione e scienza, 65–70.