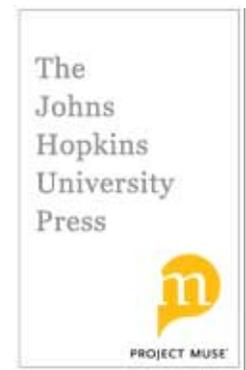




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The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages.
I. Stoicism in Classical Latin Literature, and: The Stoic
Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages. II.
Stoicism in Christian Latin Thought, and: Ethics and Human
Action in Early Stoicism, and: Aristotle and the Stoics
(review)



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cally they could not have thought of a loan as a means of productive investment. Prohibitions against usury made good sense so long as the economy was static and did not produce any surplus wealth, and money itself was conceived of as a means of facilitating exchange of goods.

The question of the nature and justification of interest, as Langholm reminds us, is by no means a settled issue even in the ideologically and religiously divided contemporary world. "It is only when we ourselves possess a consistent theory of interest," writes Langholm wisely, "that we can blame another age for the lack of it." (150).

There is only one criticism that I would make of this excellent book, and that concerns its title. *The Aristotelian Analysis of Usury*, without a subtitle, is somewhat misleading. The book is actually about the *scholastic* analysis of usury, and even granted Aristotle's towering presence in the Middle Ages, the scholastics were heirs to other sources as well. Besides, and this is important, their outlook was not the same as that of Aristotle. Perhaps Noonan's book preempted the most natural title. This said, it must be emphasized that the content of the book does justice to the subject. I must recommend this book to all students of economic and political thought for its brevity, sobriety, and intellectual substance.

ANTHONY PAREL

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Marcia L. Colish. *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages. I. Stoicism in Classical Latin Literature*. Studies in the History of Christian Thought, Vol. 34. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985. Pp. x + 446. 144 Guilders.

Marcia L. Colish. *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages. II. Stoicism in Christian Latin Thought*. Studies in the History of Christian Thought, Vol. 35. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985. Pp. x + 336. 116 Guilders.

Brad Inwood. *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*. New York: The Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1985. Pp. x + 348. \$29.95.

F. H. Sandbach. *Aristotle and the Stoics*. Supplementary Vol. No. 10. Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1985. Pp. xi + 88. Paper, NP.

Marcia L. Colish's *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* is a work of extraordinary ambition and energy. Finding fault with the methods of both philosophers and philologists, the author classifies her work rather as "intellectual history" (I: 5). After a brief survey of Stoic doctrines (I: 7-60), Colish explains what became of them at the hands of writers from Cicero to Martin of Braga. There is much here that is deserving of careful reading. The author rightly views the Stoic tradition—distinct from Stoicism itself—as an evolving entity constantly adapted and modified to meet the requirements of later ages. One might, therefore, speak with justification of Cicero's influence upon the Stoic tradition of the doctrine of natural law (II, 60). Volume I's chapter on Cicero is outstanding in most respects, treating him as a thinker whose seemingly contradictory attitudes to Stoicism depended primarily upon the subject under discussion. In this way, skepticism in epistemology gave way to Stoicism in ethics

as the dominant philosophy. One of the author's greatest strengths lies in the synthesis and delineation of modern scholarly approaches to the many diverse authors and genres discussed, so that in a sense each chapter's review of scholarship nicely reproduces in miniature the effect of the whole work: the isolation of "traditions" of interpretation surrounding the formulators of the Stoic tradition itself. (It is unfortunate, therefore, that the massive bibliographies of both volumes contain so few items published after 1975.) Colish reveals an especially intimate understanding of the details of Roman law, though the conclusions reached here are almost completely negative: that Stoic influence upon Roman law is rather limited. Volume II makes explicit as a guiding principle the important observation that the same author might exhibit both a positive and a negative attitude to Stoicism depending upon the immediate *rhetorical* requirements of the argument (II: 5). While often implicit in Volume I, this principle is deserving of earlier emphasis. For so much of ancient literature in all of its genres is rhetorical in the sense that correspondence with a writer's personal experience and conviction may not always be assumed. Thus the ambivalence toward Stoicism of authors such as Vergil, Horace, and Juvenal may be as much a function of the rhetoric of the moment as the contradictory attitudes of the Latin apologists and Church Fathers.

Unfortunately, both philologists and philosophers will find things to lament in these two volumes. A very cursory check of some of the Latin texts cited turned up more than forty misprints in Volume I alone. Minor errors: Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* is referred to throughout in the genitive case (*Tusculanarum disputationum*, 127, 137, 140). Augustine does not employ the arcane active form *mentire* in the *De mendacio*, but the normal deponent *mentiri* (II: 193). Life according to nature in the Stoic formula is *naturam sequi*; not *naturam sequere* (II: 53 *et passim*). The author seems unaware that the use of square brackets marks an editorial deletion from the text (I: 219), not a parenthesis. The word *totam* in *Aeneid* IV (I: 239) does not refer to Dido's being a "complete" madwoman, but to her wandering through the "whole" city.

Philosophers will likely find fault with some of Colish's interpretations of Stoic doctrine. Most critics would agree that the Stoics are complete determinists. Yet here we read: "Man has no choice in matters controlled by necessity. However, within the limits of a thing's given nature and history there exists a realm of possibility. Thus, the present and the future admit of some open alternatives, which are contingent on man's choice" (I: 35). Later, Cicero is castigated for misconstruing the Stoic position on fate, since "the Stoics found a place for contingency within their teaching on fate, a fact of which Cicero was perfectly well aware" (I: 121). Subsequent writers are also mistakenly measured for conformity with Stoicism by the false yardstick of contingency: Vergil (I: 232), Lucan (I: 274), Statius (I: 278), Silius Italicus (I: 281), the Roman historians (I: 290), St. Jerome (II: 78), Prudentius (II: 107), and Augustine (II: 232). Now Colish reveals an especially detailed knowledge of the philosophy of St. Augustine. Is she perhaps reading back into the Stoics the exemption of choice from causal determinism which Augustine attributes to them in *City of God*, V? If so, this seems an unfortunate confusion of Stoicism with the Stoic tradition. Next, I was puzzled by the repeated insistence that the Latin *habitus* ('disposition') is somehow particularly Aristotelian

rather than Stoic (I: 85; II: 69, 134)—especially confusing inasmuch as the author comments at one point on the Stoic doctrine of *habitus* (II: 140). Third, the claim that the Stoics—unlike Aristotle—did not place man on a biological continuum that included the lower animals (I: 230, 345, 358; II: 168) will likely become outmoded with the publication of Brad Inwood's book (reviewed below). Finally, Colish's views on the still imperfectly understood Stoic concept of the *phantasia katalēptikē* will win few adherents. These 'cataleptic presentations' are presented as requisite stages of a three-step epistemic process whereby ordinary *phantasiai* become cataleptic through the activity of the *hēgemonikon* (I: 51–52, 137, 338).

In short, I found Colish's *The Stoic Tradition* informative and exciting as intellectual history, but sometimes glaringly weak in its grasp of philological and philosophical detail.

The title of Brad Inwood's *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism* may slightly mislead the reader, since the author makes no attempt to define exactly what the Stoics meant by an 'action', despite the prominence of the key concepts of *energeia* and *kinēsis* in the surviving fragments of their ethical and physical doctrines. Instead, the bulk of the book is taken up with impulse, "the ethically significant aspect of an action" (53), and its relationship to the antecedent phenomena of presentation (*phantasia*) and assent. Overall, the book is a model of philological and philosophical precision and is likely—dare I say fated?—to become a standard work on Stoicism for many years to come.

The author follows the trend of modern scholarship in locating the roots of Stoic doctrine in problems bequeathed to the Hellenistic schools by Aristotle. (But see F. H. Sandbach's book, reviewed below.) Aristotle, Epicurus, and the Stoics are all found to have a two parameter explanation of action in terms of a desiderative state and an informational or cognitive component which activates it (9). True, the Stoics found no place for any sort of Aristotelian psychic dualism between reason and a lower animal soul. Nevertheless, Aristotle seems to have anticipated or even influenced the formulation of Stoic psychology in a number of ways. Both the Stoic theories of *phantasia* and of assent have significant forerunners in Aristotle's works (10–17). Perhaps most striking of all, Aristotle's use of the syllogism in his model for the activation of the desiderative and informational elements clearly anticipates later Stoic use of grammatical and logical categories in the elaboration of a psychology of action.

Before moving to a detailed discussion of the theories of presentation, assent, and impulse, Inwood emphasizes the importance for the Stoics—only rarely appreciated by commentators—of the distinction between dispositions (*hexeis* in Greek) and motions (*kinēseis*), which are occurrences. (I would suggest that Gilbert Ryle's *The Concept of Mind* be made required reading for anyone undertaking work on Stoic psychology.) Much conceptual confusion has arisen among modern commentators through the failure to recognize that philosophers at least since Aristotle have frequently employed the same vocabulary of technical terms both in dispositional and occurrent senses. *Hormē* ('impulse'), for example, may sometimes indicate an event within the soul and sometimes a stable and abiding condition productive of such events. Therefore, the classification of *hormai* among both the powers (*dunameis* or *hexeis*) of the soul and among its activities (*kinēseis*) in no way points to conflict among the Stoics about the

status of the *hormai* or to confusion among the later Greek and Roman doxographers (33–41). (Inwood's meticulous analysis of concepts here becomes especially helpful later in the discussion of the passions in Chapter 5.) The book succeeds splendidly in its isolation and analysis of the individual concepts of presentation, assent, and impulse. Less successful—and perhaps even contradictory—is the complex argument that these three phenomena are the middle links in a *causal* chain beginning with *logos* (the power of the mind) and terminating in the overt behavior that constitutes action.

Presentation initiates the sequence of mental events that results in action. The sort of presentation that stimulates impulse, the *phantasia hormêtikê*, indicates to an agent the presence in the environment of something of interest. Next, in a manner which our sources leave obscure, a *lekton* accompanies or subsists with the *phantasia* and spells out its content in a form appropriate for assent. Inwood coins the phrase “hormetic proposition” (59) for this *lekton* and emphasizes its status as a *cognitive* event. Impulse then formulates the assent—if given—as an *imperative* to act. According to the Stoics, assent is given to propositions, while impulse is directed at predicates contained within these propositions. The author explains as Stoic shorthand the occasional identification of assent with impulse on the grounds that impulse is directed at the very predicates contained in the propositions to which assent is given. For example, suppose that a man sees a piece of cake and forms a presentation of it in his mind. If a “sweet tooth” is among his psychic dispositions, he is likely to form the hormetic proposition “it is fitting for me to eat this cake.” Should assent be given, impulse forms an imperative to act: “You, eat this cake,” and the action of eating follows unless otherwise prevented. Note here that the hormetic proposition and the imperative both share the predicate “eating this cake,” so that the line between assent and impulse is naturally blurred (60–64). Yet how precisely are we to understand the complex interaction that commences with the underlying, abiding disposition of the soul and terminates in an action such as the eating of cake? Inwood's account is for the most part *causal*, but I have difficulty reconciling Chapter 3 with Chapter 5 on this point.

In his discussion of impulse in general (Chapter 3), Inwood states that *logos* “is not itself an element in the causal sequence of events in the mind; but it is the power of the rational soul which makes possible assent” (58–59). In Chapter 5, however, the claim is advanced that the enduring *hexeis* or dispositions according to which assent is given are stable opinions and “the collection of them is termed *logos* (164). Yet now this *logos* is described opinions as the “fundamental cause” (163) of the passions and actions which arise from it. In terms of the model so carefully constructed in Chapter 3, a disposition or *hexis hormêtikê* such as the “sweet tooth” is viewed as somehow only making possible or disposing its possessor to assent to a hormetic proposition such as “it is fitting for me to eat this cake.” Yet in Chapter 5, this disposition becomes a fundamental cause. If the author is employing *logos* in two different senses, the distinction needs to be made clear. This causal account of action is completed with a number of complementary propositions: (1) presentation causes assent (46)—a thesis with good support from Cicero; (2) assent causes impulse (54, 131); (3) assent causes action (69, 251); (4) impulse causes action (62, 100, 113, 251). I propose here to concentrate on number 4, which is argued in the greatest detail (48–54 *et passim*).

In Aristotle, impulse (*hormē*) seems to be synonymous with the various forms of desire, and we have unambiguous evidence that Aristotle regarded desire—in an *occurent* sense—as the cause of action (cf. *De Motu Animalium*, 701a34–35). But what evidence exists to support Inwood's thesis that the Stoics regarded occurrent impulse as the cause of action? He assembles the texts of seven ancient authorities including Stobaeus, where impulse is described as a movement of soul "toward" or "directed at" something involved in action. Yet in none of these citations is the thesis clearly stated. In fact, when Seneca tells us that Chrysippus went so far as to identify the impulse with the action walking, the causal model seems to break down completely. (I am unconvinced by the claim that Chrysippus is only engaging in hyperbole here [53]). Now A. C. Lloyd ("Emotion and Decision in Stoic Psychology," *The Stoics*, ed. John Rist [Berkeley, 1978], 244) has proposed an alternative model for the relationship between presentation, assent, and impulse, and Inwood concedes that he may be right (54, n. 69). According to Lloyd, these items are not the stages of a *causal* process but rather different *aspects* of the same phenomenon. Lloyd's model has the virtue of accounting for the blurring of the distinction between assent and impulse, which Inwood has so well and fully explained in terms of the possession of common predicates in their corresponding propositions. If extended a step further to embrace the action itself, the aspectual model would make good sense of Chrysippus' telescoping the impulse to walk with the action walking. *Logos* or *hexis* would then emerge as the fundamental internal cause of a sequence extending from presentation to action.

The ubiquity of the notion of cause in the explanation of human behavior marks my only reservation with this well argued and enormously important book. Indeed, such disagreement is only to be expected in a field where the evidence is often so meager and the need for hypothesis and conjecture so great.

The book is almost flawlessly produced by Oxford University Press. Besides minor typographical errors on pages 154 and 268, the only mistake that might give the reader pause is the unfortunate "object of perception of thought" (14), where the author obviously intended "object of perception *or* thought."

What evidence exists that the works of Aristotle read today were known to philosophers of the third century B.C. outside the school of Theophrastus? This question must be distinguished from more thorny problems surrounding the dates of publication of the Aristotelian corpus. On the one hand, Carnes Lord ("The Early History of the Aristotelian Corpus," *AJP* 107 [1986]: 140–41) has recently written: "Certainly, the idea that all of Aristotle's school treatises were unknown in the Hellenistic period can no longer be sustained." Yet as the distinguished scholar F. H. Sandbach points out in *Aristotle and the Stoics*, a book available is not necessarily a book consulted (12). Nor should the existence of influence be first assumed in order then to be discovered (16). Certainly, the trend of modern scholarship has been to view the Stoics as greatly influenced by Aristotle in many areas of their philosophy. In this slim volume, however, Professor Sandbach reviews the evidence for such a connection and argues that it is meager indeed.

Sandbach's case is strong in the field of logic. Stoic propositional logic and semiotics

bear little trace of Aristotelian influence. But can the same be said for the Stoic theory of *phantasia*, which the author argues bypasses Aristotle in the attempt to solve epistemological problems raised by Plato (21–23)? On this question, the reader should also consult Inwood's compelling case for an Aristotelian background to the Stoic theory (above, 9–17). In the chapter on ethics (24–30), the range of sources discussed seems far too narrow to support the sweeping generalization: "I believe that all attempts to see Stoic ethics as a development from Aristotelian or Peripatetic thought have been unsuccessful" (30). I find the discussion of possible sources for Stoic physical doctrines far more persuasive and detailed. In the end, Sandbach has made a strong case that Aristotelian influence upon the Stoics is often greatly overestimated. All students of Hellenistic philosophy will profit from this timely and unorthodox essay.

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James A. Weisheipl, O.P. *Nature and Motion in the Middle Ages*. Edited by William E. Carroll. *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 11. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1985. Pp. xii + 292. \$31.95.

Although most of the essays here collected have been published elsewhere, this volume is still a fitting memorial to its late author. James A. Weisheipl was a staunch defender of continuity in the development of scientific thought, and his arguments for this position gain force when displayed in connected sequence. The arrangement proceeds from a general discussion of the concept of Nature, through more particular considerations of crucial issues in the understanding of motion, to a re-generalization of the evolution of modern science. The most difficult of the essays is the first, "The Concept of Nature," where Weisheipl uses a specifically Aquinian interpretation of Aristotle to establish his thesis that "Aristotle did not explain natural motion by the constant exerted efficiency of a mover, as is often thought." While the argument is cogent and well-documented, many readers will wonder whether the interpretation is not wholly that of Aquinas; indeed, in some passages Weisheipl leaves the impression that St. Thomas's version of Aristotle is the *original* version. There were moments when I found it hard to believe that Weisheipl knew Aristotle in Greek, for example. Certainly this is not a result of sloppy scholarship; it is a consequence of Weisheipl's mastery of Aquinas. Nevertheless, arguments based on interpretations of Latin terms are not wholly convincing to the linguistic purist. The essay purports to be a clarification of the views of Aristotle; I would call it a clarification of the Aristotle of Aquinas. As such, however, it is of considerable value to the historian of scientific thought, and when taken with the following essays makes up a very plausible defense of continuity in philosophical orientation, if not in scientific practice. Weisheipl's point that *mathematical* physics is not and cannot be the whole of "natural philosophy" is well-taken. His argument for the continuing importance of natural philosophy (as opposed to metaphysics or the current variety of philosophy of science) may not convince committed opponents, but it is worthy of careful consideration.