

René Brouwer. *The Stoic Sage. The Early Stoics on Wisdom, Sagehood and Socrates*. Cambridge Classical Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. x, 230. \$90 (hb.). ISBN: 978-1-107-02421-2.

This is a book about the wisdom of the elusive Stoic sage. René Brouwer demonstrates a deep and thorough scholarship on the topic, which has indeed been relatively neglected. He presents ample textual evidence from a broad range of sources that goes well beyond FDS, SVF, and LS; one especially notable example is the rehabilitation and close reading of Plutarch's *Synopsis* (2.2). He also offers admirable depth in the secondary literature, across several generations, and the book is at its best when Brouwer is adjudicating the scholarly debates (e.g. 3.2.1c, 3.2.4b). *The Stoic Sage* consists of two papers previously published (chapters 2 and 3), with material from another incorporated into chapter 4; its structure, roughly summarized, is this: what is wisdom, how does one get it, did the Stoics have it, and what do they owe to Socrates?

Chapter 1 is an analysis of two surviving definitions of wisdom, *knowledge of human and divine matters* and *fitting expertise*. Brouwer begins by arguing that the first definition is original to the early Stoics, then carefully parses the definition in terms of the Stoics' three parts of philosophy: logic (knowledge), ethics (human matters), and physics (divine matters) (1.2.2a). However, this tripartite schema does not fit the two-part definition of wisdom—knowledge is not one of the domains of wisdom, alongside human and divine matters, but rather what wisdom itself is. As a result, the analytic apparatus is distracting from Brouwer's insights, here and throughout when he invokes the three parts of philosophy, e.g. in connection with self-knowledge (1.2.2c), virtue as having cognitions (1.2.2c), and the opposite states of the sage and non-sage (2.2.2, 2.2.3); but surprisingly, *not* in connection with the three topics he attributes to Socrates: dialectic, ethics, and theology (4.2). Likewise, Brouwer's distinction between a *cognitional* and *dispositional* analysis of wisdom, i.e. between an expertly structured *grasp* of something and the *state* that enables that grasp (1.2.2c), also works against his insights—a dispositional state of soul is not only what makes the sage divine, nor merely what enables the sage to have secure cognitions, but also itself a system that is expertly structured (1.2.2c, 1.3.2, 4.3).

Chapter 2 defends the Stoic view that attaining wisdom is an instantaneous and radical change between opposites, which nevertheless goes unnoticed by the sage. Brouwer argues at length that awareness is not a necessary condition of the change—wisdom construed as a physical disposition is the sole necessary and sufficient condition. Here one wishes for a greater connectedness between the chapters: the cognitional analysis of knowledge as secure grasp in chapter 1 presumes an epistemic internalist account, however chapter 2 seems to presume an externalist picture. These positions are not incompatible (the one being about individual cognitions, the other about the state of soul that makes those cognitions infallible), but addressing their convergence or divergence would have given a nice depth to the treatment, and made the cognitional-dispositional apparatus itself more precise and productive throughout. Another point of analysis that would have been welcome, especially given Brouwer's general objective to neutralize apparent paradox in Stoic views, concerns the Stoics' seemingly incompatible commitments to the radicality of the change, on the one hand, and moral and epistemic progress on the other; (e.g. 3.2.2b, 3.2.2c, 3.2.3, 3.2.4a, 3.2.4c, 4.4).

In Chapter 3 Brouwer considers the question whether the Stoics considered themselves to be sages or not. Making his way through Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus (and even Sphaerus and Persaeus), he argues that they did not, and then, in Chapter 4, that this modesty is part and parcel of the Stoics' taking Socrates as their model. He considers in closing the interesting possibility that the Stoics did take Socrates to have achieved wisdom at the end of his life, which makes for a nice connection between chapters 3 and 4. Even better would have been to return to the question posed at the outset of chapter 3, what status the Stoics assigned to their doctrines, if they did not consider themselves to have achieved wisdom. Despite these wishes for more, Brouwer's work is certainly a significant contribution to the topic and required reading for anyone specializing in the nature of the Stoic sage.

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