

THE *PSEUDOPYTHAGORICA*
AND THEIR PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND
A DISCUSSION OF
ANGELA ULACCO, *PSEUDOPYTHAGORICA DORICA*

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I. *The 'Pseudopythagorica' and first-century BC philosophy*

Angela Ulacco (henceforth U.) has just published an Italian translation, with an introduction and extensive commentary, of four pseudo-Pythagorean treatises: pseudo-Archytas's *On principles*, *On opposites*, and *On intellect and sense perception*; and pseudo-Brotinus's *On intellect and discursive thought*.¹ These titles will probably say little, if anything, to those who are not familiar with certain relatively unexplored areas of ancient philosophy; these works are full of technicalities; even their language – a kind of literary version of the Doric dialect – is obscure and difficult to translate. And yet these pseudo-Pythagorean forgeries are interesting from many perspectives: they reflect an important phase in the development of ancient philosophy; their philosophical views are intriguing and difficult to reconstruct; their influence on later philosophy was significant. By focusing on these treatises, U. draws a most interesting picture of a crucial phase

¹ ANGELA ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica. I trattati di argomento metafisico, logico ed epistemologico attribuiti ad Archita e a Brotino*, Introduzione, traduzione, commento, De Gruyter, Boston–Berlin 2017 (Philosophie der Antike, 41). This note was presented at the Philosophical Review Club (University of Leuven) on 13 December 2017. I would like to thank Andrea Robiglio for inviting me and the audience for many insightful questions and comments. Thanks are also due to David Sedley and Tiziano Dorandi for their invaluable suggestions on Plutarch's passage. All mistakes are, of course, my own.

in ancient philosophy, that is the period around the first century BC that marks the transition from Hellenistic to Imperial philosophy.²

The pseudo-Pythagorean forgeries are among the most enigmatic works in the ancient philosophical corpus. These treatises are transmitted under the names of some Pythagoreans, such as Archytas (4th cent. BC). Actually they are forgeries, which reflect a later philosophical content. Most of them are preserved *via* quotations in late sources such as Iamblichus, Simplicius, and Iohannes Stobaeus; yet a small number of pseudo-Pythagorean treatises have an individual manuscript tradition. For some reasons, then, at some time between the third century BC and the beginning of Neoplatonism someone composed forgeries which incorporated philosophical material mostly drawn from Plato and Aristotle, and attributed these forgeries to some Pythagorean philosophers. Why so? Is it possible to circumscribe the date of composition of these forgeries more precisely? Do they reflect a specific philosophical environment? As predictable, the answers to these questions vary. In her substantial introduction, U. gives an up-to-date *status quaestionis* of the scholarly debate and outlines a number of interesting hypotheses about these controversial issues. The research about the *Pseudopythagorica* includes some milestones. Among these are Eduard Zeller's discussion in his *Philosophie der Griechen* and works by such scholars as Paul Moraux, Wilhelm Burkert, Holger Thesleff, Matthias Baltes, and Thomas Alexander Szlezák. Recent literature includes the works of (among others) Mauro Bonazzi, Bruno Centrone, and Phillip Horky.³

Actually it was Eduard Zeller who first put forward a hypothesis about the genesis of the *Pseudopythagorica*, which still remains plausible, at least as regards some of these treatises. According to Zeller, we should situate the genesis of this corpus at Alexandria in the first century BC, for it was at that time at Alexandria that a renaissance of interest in ancient Pythagoreanism took place after the Hellenistic age.⁴ As we shall see later on, the Platonist and Pythagorizing philosopher Eudorus of Alexandria (1st cent. BC) played an important role in this revival and it is a likely guess that at least some of the forgeries were composed in his circle.

² For further discussion see the articles collected in MALCOLM SCHOFIELD (ed.), *Aristotle, Plato and Pythagoreanism in the First Century BC. New Directions for Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013.

³ For details and references, see the *status quaestionis* in ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 1–10. A valuable recent overview can be found in BRUNO CENTRONE, «The pseudo-Pythagorean Writings», in CARL A. HUFFMAN (ed.), *A History of Pythagoreanism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014, p. 315–340.

⁴ See EDUARD ZELLER, *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, vol. III/2, Reisland, Leipzig 1923⁵ (repr. 1963), p. 123.

U. is judiciously cautious. She remarks that the pseudo-Pythagorean forgeries did not emerge out of thin air at the beginning of the Roman Empire. And, independently of the existence of Pythagorean circles, it is far from implausible that some of these treatises were composed at a relatively early date.⁵ That said, some features certainly point to a specific philosophical environment and this seems to confirm Zeller's intuition:

1: Some *Pseudopythagorica* contain substantial allusions to texts and theories from Aristotle's treatises. This fact suggests a date of composition around the first century BC (or later), that is roughly the same years in which the so-called 'Andronicus edition' of Aristotle's works came into being. This is an extremely controversial issue but – whatever the details – Aristotle's treatises certainly had limited circulation in the Hellenistic age and their circulation enjoyed a renaissance around the first century BC.⁶ –

2: Many pseudo-Pythagorean forgeries reflect an agenda which is typical of first century BC philosophy. Very broadly speaking, their philosophical content is inspired by Plato and the Academy; in addition to this, they contain allusions to Hellenistic terms and theories; finally – as we have just seen – the *Pseudopythagorica* reflect some knowledge of Aristotle's school treatises.

3: Two important treatises from this corpus are paraphrases of, respectively, Plato's *Timaeus* and Aristotle's *Categories*: these are pseudo-Timaeus of Locri's *On the nature of the world and the soul* and pseudo-Archytas's *On universal logos*.⁷ Actually Plato's *Timaeus* and Aristotle's *Categories* were, so to speak, the star texts in first-century BC philosophical debates and their interpretation was closely connected to the revival of Aristotelian and Platonist philosophies after the Hellenistic age.

4: Some pseudo-Pythagorean treatises point to issues in the interpretation of Plato and Aristotle which are distinctive of first-century BC exegesis: this holds especially for the treatise on the categories, whose connection to the early commentators on Aristotle has convincingly been shown by Thomas Alexander Szlezák.⁸

⁵ See ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 5.

⁶ For an overview, see NOW ANDREA FALCON, « Aristotelianism in the First Century BC », in Id. (ed.), *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Aristotle in Antiquity*, Brill, Leiden–Boston 2016 (Brill's Companions to Classical Reception, 7), p. 101–119. A classic discussion is provided by MICHAEL FREDE, « Epilogue », in KEIMPE ALGRA et al. (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1999, p. 771–797.

⁷ See MATTHIAS BALTES, *Timaios Lokros über die Natur des Kosmos und der Seele*, Brill, Leiden 1972 (*Philosophia antiqua*, 21); THOMAS ALEXANDER SZLEZÁK, *Pseudo-Archytas über die Kategorien. Texte zur griechischen Aristotelexegese*, de Gruyter, Berlin–New York 1972 (*Peripatoi*, 4).

⁸ See SZLEZÁK, *Pseudo-Archytas über die Kategorien*.

We will soon come back to these issues in more detail. For the time being, it is worth raising the question as to whether these treatises present homogeneous philosophical views or not. U.'s outline is clear and is soundly based on recent scholarship. Actually the Doric pseudo-Pythagorean writings display a homogeneous philosophical account of reality, mostly drawn from Plato and the Old Academy, which is based on the existence of two metaphysical principles: a principle of determination and one of indetermination. These principles are taken to provide a sort of explanatory model for all areas of philosophy, from physics to theology, from logic to ethics and politics.⁹ And yet, as U. remarks, this is not the whole story. These Academic theories are supplemented (and sometimes amended) via Aristotle and Hellenistic philosophies.¹⁰ For example, in a recent article, U. and Jan Opsomer have interestingly shown that the theory of elements in pseudo-Timaeus is indebted to Aristotle's theory of matter and form, whereas some distinctive aspects of Plato's account are omitted or modified.¹¹ So the philosophical background of these treatises is multifaceted: saying that they are indebted to Plato is certainly not enough. Rather, they reflect a distinctive reading of Plato against a Pythagorean background, with philosophical supplements drawn from Aristotle and from the Hellenistic philosophies.

These remarks lead us to two questions raised by U.:

- 1: What texts and what authorities lie behind the *Pseudopythagorica*?
- 2: What idea of the Pythagorean (and more generally philosophical) tradition emerges from these works?

U.'s assessment is predictably based on the previous debate, but she brings new material to the discussion *via* her detailed interpretation of the pseudo-Pythagorean treatises pertaining to logic, metaphysics and epistemology. As seen earlier, the canon of authorities in these works points to the first century BC and, more precisely, to a philosophical environment which displayed, among others, the following characteristics: 1) a dogmatic Platonist stance which emphasises the connection between Plato and the Pythagorean tradition; 2) an interest in Aristotle's treatises. Such features seem to point to Eudorus of Alexandria, an interesting example of a Pythagorizing Platonist who has sometimes been regarded as one of the archegetes of Imperial dogmatic Platonism (what scholars from Karl Praechter onward call 'Middle Platonism').¹²

⁹ See ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9–10.

¹¹ See ANGELA ULACCO, JAN OPSOMER, « Elements and Elemental Properties in Timaeus Locrus », *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, 157 (2014), p. 154–206.

¹² See ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 6 and 12–13, with further references. On Eudorus, see *infra*, Section III.

These remarks help answer the second question. As a matter of fact, talking about Pythagoreanism in the Imperial age means talking about a certain form of Platonism.¹³ Certainty cannot be attained, but it is likely that after the decline of the Hellenistic and Sceptical Academy those Platonist circles which aimed to revive a dogmatic reading of Plato's philosophy, centred on theology and metaphysics, chose to emphasise the Pythagorean legacy of the Platonist tradition; and, in addition to this, they also integrated at least parts of Aristotle's philosophy into their philosophical outlook (after all, Aristotle was a major source for Plato's Academy). So their Plato was as Pythagorizing Plato; and their Pythagoras was the archegete of Plato's and Aristotle's philosophy.¹⁴

As U. remarks, in this general framework the usage of ancient sources and the reference to ancient authorities had no merely antiquarian significance; rather, it was part of a precise view of the philosophical tradition.¹⁵ In a recent article, Marwan Rashed and Thomas Auffret have suggested that Eudorus of Alexandria prepared an edition of *Metaphysics* A which – according to these scholars – supplemented Aristotle's text with « un certain nombre d'ajouts à la tonalité pythagoricienne » (more on this below).¹⁶ The genesis of at least some *Pseudopythagorica* can be interpreted as part of this 'return to the Ancients'. It was part of the wider project to establish a Pythagorean philosophical tradition, which integrated – at different levels – Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle. This enterprise was an exceedingly successful one. The *Pseudopythagorica* were regarded as being genuine Pythagorean writings by the subsequent tradition, which accepted and further developed their account of the philosophical tradition: this explains why the *Pseudopythagorica* have mostly been preserved through Neoplatonist writings. To mention just one famous example, Iamblichus regarded Archytas as being the source of Aristotle's *Categories*: this is the reason why Simplicius (who incorporated Iamblichus's now lost commentary into his

¹³ On this, see BRUNO CENTRONE, « Cosa significa essere pitagorico in età imperiale. Per una riconsiderazione della categoria storiografica del neopitagorismo », in ALDO BRANCACCI (ed.), *La filosofia in età imperiale. Le scuole e le tradizioni filosofiche*, Bibliopolis, Napoli 2000 (Elenchos, 31), p. 137–168.

¹⁴ There is an extensive bibliography on this. Here I would only recall the seminal paper by PIERLUIGI DONINI, « Platone e Aristotele nella tradizione pitagorica secondo Plutarco », in AURELIO PÉREZ JIMÉNEZ et al. (eds.), *Plutarco, Platón y Aristóteles*, Ediciones Clásicas, Madrid 1999, p. 9–24 (repr. in PIERLUIGI DONINI, *Commentary and Tradition. Studies in Aristotelianism, Platonism, and Post-Hellenistic Philosophy*, de Gruyter, Berlin–New York 2011 [Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca et Byzantina, 4], p. 359–373).

¹⁵ ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 7.

¹⁶ THOMAS AUFFRET, MARWAN RASHED, « Aristote, *Métaphysique* A 6, 988a 7–14, Eudore d'Alexandrie et l'histoire ancienne du texte de la *Métaphysique* », in CHRISTIAN BROCKMANN et al. (eds.), *Handschriften- und Textforschung heute: Zur Überlieferung der griechischen Literatur Festschrift für Dieter Harlfinger aus Anlass seines 70. Geburtstages*, Reichert, Wiesbaden 2014 (Serta Graeca, 30), p. 55–84, here p. 82.

commentary on Aristotle's treatise) preserves substantial passages from pseudo-Archytas's logical treatises (see Simplicius, *In Cat.*, p. 2.15–25).¹⁷ As a matter of fact, the Pythagorean account of the philosophical tradition lasted well beyond Late Antiquity and, just to mention another famous example, it played an important role in early modern philosophy: authors such as Ficino and Kepler were supporters of the Pythagorean philosophy whose origin lies in these post-Hellenistic forgeries.

These remarks of course cannot be seen as some kind of *passe-partout* hypothesis and they have to be supplemented with a detailed exegesis of the texts. For example, parallels with the early interpretations of Aristotle around Andronicus bring crucial support to the dating of these treatises to the first century BC: from this perspective, Szlezák's commentary to Archytas's treatise on the categories remains a model for the scholarship in this area.¹⁸ In U.'s volume each treatise is translated into Italian and the commentary explores in detail all the issues raised by these works: the status of the text, problems of translation, parallels with other ancient sources, philosophical content, etc.

II. Pseudo-Archytas's 'On opposites' and the Peripatetic commentary tradition

As previously noted, parallels with the early commentators of Aristotle play an important role in the debate about the *Pseudopythagorica*. This is particularly important for the interpretation of the logical treatises, such as *On opposites* (Περὶ ἀντικειμένων) which is based on the second part of the *Categories* (the so-called *Postpraedicamenta*, which Andronicus regarded as inauthentic) and fragments of which are preserved in Simplicius's commentary. These hitherto neglected passages are extremely interesting and we are now lucky to have U.'s commentary. U. aptly describes the aim of this work:

Lo scopo dell'autore dell'apocrifo è stato probabilmente quello di ricostruire questa sezione delle *Categorie* [that is the *Postpraedicamenta*], rendendola adatta a un sistema pitagorico-platonico e così rivelare, indirettamente, la fonte e il modello pitagorico dello stesso Aristotele.¹⁹

Of course, Aristotle's *Categories* is the main source of *On opposites*, but U. interestingly detects echoes of other works such as *Metaphysics* Δ and the *Divisiones aristoteleae*. We are thus immediately placed, so to speak, in Eudorus's philosophical environment and U. offers a detailed reconstruction of all the

¹⁷ See SIMPLICIUS, *In Aristotelis Categoriae commentarium*, ed. KARL KALBFLEISCH, Typ. et impr. Reimer, Berolini 1907 (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, 8).

¹⁸ See *supra*, fn. 7.

¹⁹ ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 65.

issues related to the early exegesis of the *Categories*, which can shed light on the pseudo-Pythagorean work. So, for example, she connects pseudo-Archytas's care in ordering the various kinds of opposites (opposites are ordered according to their degree of proximity to substance: see Simplicius, *In Cat.*, 407.16–26 = [Archytas], p. 15.15–20) with the debates about the order of the categories around Eudorus.²⁰ She also remarks (rightly in my view) that pseudo-Archytas's emphasis on contraries could be connected to the metaphysical views expounded in the treatise *On principles*: there we find an opposition between two first principles and this opposition is seen as that between two contrary genera (more on this below). U.'s discussion is sound, learned and well argued. Yet in some cases it could be interesting to emphasise more the parallels with the early debates on Aristotle. I would only mention one example taken from the passage about affirmation and negation:

κατάφασις δὲ καὶ ἀπόφασις [καὶ] λόγου εἶδεα [καὶ μᾶλλον] ἐντι καὶ ἀλαθέος καὶ ψευδέος μᾶλλον ἐντι σημαντικά. τὸ γὰρ ἦμεν ἄνθρωπον ἀληθές ἐστιν, ὅκκα ὑπάρχει, ψευδὲς δέ, ὅκκα μὴ ὑπάρχει, ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς λόγος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς ἀποφάσις· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὰ ἀλαθῆς ἢ ψευδῆς παρὰ τὸ πρᾶγμα τὸ σημαινόμενον· ἀληθῆς μὲν, ὅκκα ὑπάρχει, ψευδῆς δέ, ὅκκα μὴ ὑπάρχει. (Simplicius, *In Cat.*, p. 408.10–14 = [Archytas], p. 16.6–11)²¹

²⁰ References are given according to Thesleff's pagination: see HOLGER THESLEFF, *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period*, Åbo Akademi, Åbo 1965 (Acta Academiae Aboensis, Ser. A, Humaniora, 30.1). See ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 13, 70–71. On pseudo-Archytas's ordering of opposites, see PAUL MORAUX, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen von Andronikos bis Alexander von Aphrodisia*, vol. II: *Der Aristotelismus im I. und II. Jh. n. Chr.*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1984, p. 623–628. On the debates around Eudorus, see RICCARDO CHIARADONNA, « Autour d'Eudore. Les débuts de l'exégèse des *Catégories* dans les Moyen Platonisme », in MAURO BONAZZI, JAN OPSOMER (eds.), *The Origin of the Platonic System. Platonisms of the Early Empire and their Philosophical Contexts*, Peeters, Louvain 2009 (Collection d'Études Classiques, 23), p. 89–111; MICHAEL GRIFFIN, *Aristotle's 'Categories' in the Early Roman Empire*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2015 (Oxford Classical Monographs), p. 78–99. The relevant sources are now collected and discussed in GEORGE BOYS-STONES, *Platonist Philosophy 80 BC to AD 250. An Introduction and Collection of Sources in Translation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2018 (Cambridge Source Books in Post-Hellenistic Philosophy), p. 418–436 (Texts 15A–Q).

²¹ Text after Thesleff's edition (followed by U.). At [Archytas] 16.7 = SIMPLICIUS. *In Cat.*, p. 408.10 the text is dubious. MSS have *κατάφασις δὲ καὶ ἀπόφασις καὶ λόγος εἶδεα καὶ μᾶλλον ἐντι κτλ* Kalbfleisch *in app.* suggests *λόγου εἶδεα [καὶ]*. Thesleff retains Kalbfleisch's correction of *λόγος* with *λόγου* and, in addition, he omits the second *καὶ* and the *μᾶλλον* (see the text quoted above). In his translation of Simplicius, Richard Gaskin adopts Kalbfleisch's text and his translation is: « Affirmation and negation are, rather, forms of sentence, and also are, rather, significative of true and false. For *that a man is* is true, when it obtains, and false, when it does not obtain. And the same account holds of the negation too: for it too is true or false depending on the signified object – it is true when that obtains, and false when that does not obtain » (RICHARD GASKIN [ed.], *Simplicius: On Aristotle Categories 9–15*, Duckworth, London 2000, p. 152). See the detailed discussion in ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 77.

This is a difficult passage and I am (cautiously) inclined to agree with U. that there is no need to connect *σημαντικά* at p. 16.8 with *ἀλαθέος καὶ ψευδέος* at the previous line. While syntactically very plausible, this connection would conflict with 16.10–11, where pseudo-Archytas identifies what is signified (*τὸ σημαϊνόμενον*) not with the true and the false, but with « the signified object » (*τὸ πράγμα τὸ σημαϊνόμενον*).²² This is U.'s translation:

Affermazione e negazione sono poi specie del discorso sia del (discorso) vero sia del (discorso) falso e sono a maggior ragione significanti. Infatti, che 'un uomo è' è vero quando (la cosa) sussiste, e falso quando non sussiste. Lo stesso discorso vale anche per la negazione: infatti, anche quella è vera o falsa a seconda della cosa che è significata.²³

In her commentary U. rightly remarks that pseudo-Archytas's vocabulary is not that of Aristotle's *Categories* (see *Cat.* 10.13a37–b36). Unlike Aristotle, Archytas connects terms related to semantics (*σημαντικά, τὸ σημαϊνόμενον*) to the discussion about affirmation and negation, truth and falsehood.²⁴ U. adduces some well-known parallels from *Metaphysics* (*Δ* 7.1017^a31–35) and *De interpretatione* (2.16a16–18; 2.16a20; 4.16b27; 5.17a23, etc.) which can explain pseudo-Archytas's approach. So she remarks that:

Archita [...] sembra aver coniugato una teoria sull'affermazione e negazione che poteva ricavare dalle *Categorie* [...] con alcuni influssi derivanti del *De interpretatione*, non utilizzato nella sua teoria più complessa del giudizio.²⁵

This is extremely plausible, but I wonder if we could go a little further in the interpretation of these lines. Actually pseudo-Archytas's vocabulary is the same as that which the commentators used to explain the subject of Aristotle's *Categories*. Simplicius informs us (*via* Porphyry) that the Peripatetic Boethus of Sidon (1st cent. BC) regarded the categories as utterances that signify beings: « according to the categories the division takes place in so far as expressions have a relation to beings, since they are significant of the latter » (Simplicius, *In*

²² As Gaskin remarks, here the « signified object » must be « must be a *complexe significabile*, i.e., something like a proposition (in the modern sense) or Meinongian objective, or possible state of affairs, if negative existential statements are to be accommodated. For in the case of the statement that a man does not exist the signified object obviously cannot be a man » (see GASKIN, *Simplicius: On Aristotle Categories* 9–15, p. 231, fn. 846).

²³ ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 62.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

Cat., p. 11.26–27).²⁶ Indeed, Boethus regards the categories as simple signifying expressions, that is as words taken outside of any propositional statement. Archytas talks instead about statements and their meanings. But another passage from Simplicius informs us that Boethus focused on propositional statements too, suggesting that, unlike simple words, statements signify thoughts and not πράγματα. This is, according to Boethus, the view of the Ancients, that is of Aristotle: « Boethus says that, among the Ancients, the only things said or signified were intellections, for truth and falsehood are not in the realities, but in thoughts and the developments of the intellect » (Simplicius, *In Cat.*, 41.28–42.1).²⁷ Pseudo-Archytas seems to hold a different view: whereas Boethus argues that true and false statements merely signify thoughts, Archytas says that truth and falsehood depend on the signified *object*: καὶ γὰρ αὐτὰ ἀλαθῆς ἢ ψευδῆς παρὰ τὸ πρᾶγμα τὸ σημαίνόμενον. This vocabulary could indeed point to Stoic semantics (according to the Stoics, statements signify propositional objects, that is the so-called *lekta*). Or, rather, pseudo-Archytas could simply be adopting, in this section about propositional statements, the vocabulary used in discussions about the subject of the *Categories*. Be that as it may, it would be interesting in my view to further connect this and other passages from the treatise *On opposites* to the early debates about the *Categories*.

III. Pseudo-Archytas's 'On principles' and the reception of Aristotle's theology

U.'s collection is opened by pseudo-Archytas's *On principles*, a short treatise which is preserved by Iohannes Stobaeus (1.41.2, p. 278 Wachsmuth = p. 19.5–20.17). As U. remarks in her Introduction, the author develops a dualist account of principles. These are regarded as both logical principles, through which we can explain all domains of being, and cosmological principles, that is as ultimate causes from which everything derives. The origins of this doctrine are clearly to be placed in the Pythagorean and Academic traditions: each reality can thus be traced back to the two supreme principles which governs two opposite series (*sustoichiai*) of entities.²⁸ This treatise, however, also contains some interesting

²⁶ κατὰ δὲ τὰς κατηγορίας ἡ διαίρεσις γίνεται, καθὸ σχέσιν ἔχουσιν αἱ λέξεις πρὸς τὰ ὄντα, σημαντικαὶ τούτων οὔσαι. Trans. MICHAEL CHASE, *Simplicius: On Aristotle's 'Categories 1-4'*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY 2003, p. 27.

²⁷ ὁ δὲ Βόηθος μόνον λεγόμενα καὶ σημαίνόμενα τὰς νοήσεις εἶναί φησι παρὰ τοῖς ἀρχαίοις· οὐ γὰρ εἶναι τὸ ἀληθές καὶ τὸ ψεῦδος ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν, ἀλλ' ἐν διανοίαις καὶ ταῖς τοῦ νοῦ διεξόδοις κτλ. Trans. CHASE, *Simplicius: On Aristotle's 'Categories 1-4'*, p. 56. On this passage, see RICCARDO CHIARADONNA, « Les mots et les choses », in RICCARDO CHIARADONNA, MARWAN RASHED (eds.), *Boéthos de Sidon: Exégète d'Aristote et philosophe*, forthcoming.

²⁸ See ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 10–11. Ulacco follows Thesleff and adds the excerpt in Stobaeus, 1.41.5, p. 282 Wachsmuth = p. 36.13–37.12 (Ἀρχύτου ἐκ τοῦ Περί ἀρχᾶς) to pseudo-Archytas's *On intellect and sense perception*. Contra, see JAAP MANSFELD, « 'Pythagoras' and

allusions to Aristotelian theories. So pseudo-Archytas regards the two principles as corresponding to matter and form (p. 19.17–20). This is a perfectly Aristotelian move, since Aristotle had already regarded the One and the indefinite Dyad, that is the Academic metaphysical principles, as corresponding to form and matter respectively (see *Metaph.* A 6.988a8–14). Yet the analogies with Aristotle do not stop at this. Pseudo-Archytas develops a hylomorphic reading of the Pythagorean principles, whereby he posits the existence of a level of them which is immanent in things: principles are thus seen as genuine constituents of things in the same way as form and matter. Most interestingly, pseudo-Archytas argues that a third principle is necessary beyond form and matter: this principle acts as a mover, or, to be more precise, as a prime mover (p. 20.10: τὸ πρῶτως κινέον), and makes it possible to explain movement which cannot be explained through matter and form alone. So our text ends with a theory of three principles: matter, form, and the prime mover which pseudo-Archytas regards as a God which is not only intellect, but even above intellect: οὐ νόον μόνον εἶμεν δεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ νόω τι κρέσσον (p. 20.13–14).

Building on previous studies (in particular some important articles by Mauro Bonazzi),²⁹ U. persuasively connects this account of principles to three issues:

1: The reception of Aristotle. Pseudo-Archytas's outline of principles appears to be an Aristotelising version of the Pythagorean account, since pseudo-Archytas's tripartition is obviously close to Aristotle's distinction between material, formal, and moving cause. Archytas's argument that an external mover is necessary to produce movement so that form can determine matter recalls what Aristotle says in *Metaphysics* Λ 4.1070b22–24. And, of course, pseudo-Archytas's characterization of God as 'prime mover' has an obvious Aristotelian echo.

2: The metaphysics of Eudorus of Alexandria. Pseudo-Archytas's account of principles is interestingly similar to Eudorus's Pythagorean metaphysics as reported by Simplicius (*In Phys.*, p. 181.7–30 = 30 Boys-Stones). Eudorus makes the distinction between a supreme principle (ἀρχή), that is the first one which is the God above all, and a couple of subordinate principles or rather elements (στοιχεῖα), that is the One-Monad and the Dyad, which govern two opposite series of beings. Eudorus's tripartition *apud* Simplicius is indeed close to that of pseudo-Archytas, and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ lurks behind both texts. As shown by Bonazzi, Eudorus's distinction between principles and elements is probably

ps.Archytas' *On Principles* », forthcoming, who argues persuasively that that passage belongs to the treatise *On principles*.

²⁹ See MAURO BONAZZI, « Eudoro di Alessandria alle origini del platonismo imperiale », in MAURO BONAZZI, VINCENZA CELLUPRICA (eds.), *L'eredità platonica. Studi sul platonismo da Arcesilao a Proclo*, Bibliopolis, Napoli 2005 (Elenchos, 45), p. 115–160; and ID., « Pythagoreanising Aristotle: Eudorus and the Systematisation of Platonism », in SCHOFIELD (ed.), *Aristotle, Plato and Pythagoreanism*, p. 160–186.

connected to Aristotle's distinction between intrinsic elements and the external moving principle in *Metaphysics* Λ 4 (the same passage mentioned above in connection to pseudo-Archytas's account).

3: The Middle Platonist account of principles. Interestingly, U. sets pseudo-Archytas's account in parallel to the standard account of principles developed in pre-Plotinian Imperial Platonism. As a matter of fact, in several sources we find the distinction between three principles, that is God, matter, and form. This distinction (the so-called *Dreiprinzipienlehre*) was part of the interpretation of the *Timaeus* and has been regarded as a central thesis of Middle Platonist cosmology.³⁰ Pseudo-Archytas's tripartition incorporates the three principles account into the Pythagorean distinction of opposite series, thus giving an original version of this school doctrine.³¹

This is only a short survey of the issues raised by this treatise. In her commentary U. offers an in-depth discussion of these and other aspects of *On principles* and in what follows I would like to explore some issues related to the reception of Aristotle.³² Certainly, pseudo-Archytas's *On principles* reveals an Aristotelian background and this background is likely to connect the treatise to Eudorus. It is very important, however, to distinguish between facts and plausible speculations. What we know about Eudorus for sure is that he raised a number of critical arguments about Aristotle's *Categories* (fragments in Simplicius, *In Cat.*).³³ Furthermore, Eudorus is connected to some textual work of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, since in a very obscure passage Alexander of Aphrodisias (*In Metaph.* 58.25–59.8) explains that Eudorus proposed a textual amendment to Aristotle's report on Plato's theory of principles at *Metaph.* A 6.988a10–11. It is tempting to connect Eudorus's amendment of Aristotle's text with his Platonist-Pythagorean philosophical project. Aristotle's reports on Plato and the Academy were in fact a crucial source for any account of the Old Academic theory of principles and Eudorus could very well have been engaged in a close interpretation of these

³⁰ For some qualification, however, see now FEDERICO PETRUCCI, *Taurus of Beirut: The Other Side of Middle Platonism*, Routledge, London–New York 2018, p. 76–84 and 99–104.

³¹ On this, see ULACCO, *Pseudopythagorica Dorica*, p. 12–13.

³² What follows is based (with some changes and supplements) on RICCARDO CHIARADONNA, « Théologie et époptique aristotéliennes dans le médioplatonisme: La réception de *Métaphysique* Λ », in FABIENNE BAGHDASSARIAN, GWELTAZ GUYOMARC'H (eds.), *Réceptions de la théologie aristotélienne. D'Aristote à Michel d'Ephèse*, Peeters, Louvain 2017 (Aristote. Traductions et Études), p. 143–157. On Plutarch's passage, see SILVIA FAZZO, « The *Metaphysics* from Aristotle to Alexander of Aphrodisias », *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 55 (2012), p. 51–68. VALERIO NAPOLI, « Le denominazioni della *Metafisica* e della sua scienza nella filosofia tardoantica », *Peitho/Examina Antiqua*, 1 (2012), p. 51–82, esp. p. 60–62 offers a valuable survey.

³³ See *supra*, fn. 20.

texts. As noted earlier, Auffret and Rashed even suggest that Eudorus of Alexandria prepared a Pythagorizing edition of *Metaphysics A*.³⁴

No ancient source, instead, overtly connects Eudorus with *Metaphysics Λ*. Mauro Bonazzi has suggested that Eudorus's distinction between the One-God and the couple Monad-Dyad is indebted to Aristotle's account of principles and elements in *Metaphysics Λ* 4. This is a most interesting suggestion and I am inclined to agree. Pseudo-Archytas's account of principles and his reference to the prime mover could point to the same Aristotelian source. That said, neither Eudorus nor pseudo-Archytas mention the most characteristic theories of *Metaphysics Λ*: the doctrine of *energeia*, the theory of God's self-reflexive thinking, and its causal role with respect to the heavens. Both Eudorus and pseudo-Archytas are completely silent about these issues. The most distinctive vocabulary of Aristotle's *Metaphysics Λ* is absent in their accounts. So the least one can say is that their reading of the *Metaphysics* was selective. They may well have relied on passages from Aristotle which were strictly related to the Platonist-Pythagorean theory of principles, while neglecting other passages which in fact contain Aristotle's most distinctive views about God and motion. From this point of view, the reception of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in Eudorus and pseudo-Archytas is completely different from what we find in later sources such as Alcinous's *Didaskalikos* and (of course) Plotinus.³⁵ There the presence of Aristotle's theology is unmistakable: Alcinous and Plotinus employ Aristotle's theories and vocabulary in their accounts of principles. It is only Alcinous and Plotinus who clearly integrate Aristotle's theory of the prime mover as activity and self-reflexive thinking into the Platonist account of God and Forms. Nothing of the sort exists in early Middle Platonism (unless indeed Alcinous is a contemporary of Eudorus, but this seems unlikely). So even if we grant that Aristotle's *Metaphysics* lies behind Eudorus and pseudo-Archytas, what we find are only generic references, which point to a very selective theological reading of Aristotle against the background of the Academic-Pythagorean account of principles. We must wait more than two centuries for a proper integration of Aristotle's theology into the corpus of Platonism.

IV. Plutarch, Eudorus and Aristotle's 'epoptics'

A famous passage from Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* can shed further light on these issues. When talking about the philosophical training of Alexander, Plutarch reports that he was not only well aware of Aristotle's ethical and political doctrines, but that he also « participated in those secret and more profound

³⁴ See *supra*, fn. 16.

³⁵ See ALCINOUS, *Didaskalikos* 10, p. 164.7–166.14. For further details, see CHIARADONNA, « Théologie et époptique aristotéliennes dans le médioplatonisme ».

teachings which Great Men,³⁶ by designating them through the special terms ‘acroamatic’ and ‘epoptic’, used not to impart to many » (*Alex.* 7 5.668 A–B).³⁷ We will soon come back to this passage. For the time being, it is enough to note that Plutarch presents Aristotle’s acroamatic teaching much like some secret Platonist-Pythagorean teaching for initiates. The term ‘epoptic’ is a clear sign of this fact, as it seems to be an unmistakable allusion to the language of mysteries adopted in Plato’s *Symposium* (210a). In Imperial philosophy the term ‘epoptic’ denotes theology, i.e. the knowledge of principles which is the highest part of philosophy.³⁸ Hence, according to Plutarch, Alexander’s acquaintance with Aristotle’s acroamatic teaching entails that Alexander was a kind of initiate into the profound mysteries of Aristotle’s secret and epoptic teaching. Plutarch reports that when Alexander learned that certain treatises on these matters had been published in books by Aristotle, he wrote a letter to his master complaining about it: ‘for in what shall I surpass other men if those doctrines wherein I have been trained are to be all men’s common property?’ (*Alex.* 7 7.668B).³⁹ Aristotle replies to this letter and reassures his ambitious student by saying that his *logoi* are in fact both published and unpublished: for in truth the treatise *Metaphysics* is written for those already trained therein (i.e. in Aristotle’s philosophy), whereas it is useless for teaching and learning (*Alex.* 7 9.668C).

What I have just offered is a loose paraphrase, since the Greek text is somewhat unclear. Before going into details, it is worth noting that these letters are also preserved by Aulus Gellius (*Noctes Atticae* XX V.1–13), whose testimony, however, differs from that of Plutarch in certain respects. Gellius actually provides details that are missing in Plutarch. First, he specifies that he took this information from the « book of the philosopher Andronicus [ex Andronici philosophi libro] » (XX V.10).⁴⁰ Secondly, Gellius provides a full quotation of Aristotle’s letter, whereas Plutarch provides what looks like a paraphrase of it, which condenses the first sentence of the letter.

³⁶ See *infra*, p. 236.

³⁷ ἔοικε δ’ Ἀλέξανδρος οὐ μόνον τὸν ἠθικὸν καὶ πολιτικὸν παραλαβεῖν λόγον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἀπορρήτων καὶ βαθυτέρων διδασκαλιῶν, ἃς οἱ ἄνδρες ἰδίως ἀκροατικὰς καὶ ἐποπτικὰς προσαγορεύοντες οὐκ ἐξέφερον εἰς πολλοὺς, μετασχεῖν. English translation (with slight alterations) by BERNADOTTE PERRIN in *Plutarch’s Lives VII: Demosthenes and Cicero – Alexander and Caesar*, Harvard University Press–Heinemann, Cambridge, MA–London 1967 (Loeb Classical Library), p. 241. A detailed discussion of these lines can be found in FAZZO, « The *Metaphysics* from Aristotle to Alexander of Aphrodisias », p. 56–60.

³⁸ For further details and references, see again CHIARADONNA, « Théologie et époptique aristotéliciennes dans le médioplatonisme », p. 150–151.

³⁹ τίνι γὰρ δὴ διοίσομεν ἡμεῖς τῶν ἄλλων, εἰ καθ’ οὗς ἐπαιδεύθημεν λόγους, οὗτοι πάντων ἔσονται κοινοί;

⁴⁰ On Andronicus’s work see now MYRTO HATZIMICHALI, « The Texts of Plato and Aristotle in the First Century BC », in SCHOFIELD (ed.), *Aristotle, Plato and Pythagoreanism*, p. 1–27, here p. 19: « This work contained Aristotle’s biography, his will, probably some spurious letters, and a catalogue of Aristotle’s works, the Pinakes referred to by Plutarch ».

Gellius

Ἐγραψάς μοι περὶ τῶν ἀκροατικῶν λόγων οἰόμενος δεῖν αὐτοὺς φυλάττειν ἐν ἀπορρήτοις. Ἴσθι οὖν αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐκδεδομένους καὶ μὴ ἐκδεδομένους· ξυνετοὶ γάρ εἰσιν μόνοις τοῖς ἡμῶν ἀκούσασιν. (XX V.12)

Plutarch

[...] Ἀριστοτέλης ἀπολογεῖται περὶ τῶν λόγων ἐκείνων, ὡς καὶ ἐκδεδομένων καὶ μὴ ἐκδεδομένων ἀληθῶς γὰρ ἢ μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ πραγματεία, πρὸς διδασκαλίαν καὶ μάθησιν οὐδὲν ἔχουσα χρήσιμον, ὑπόδειγμα τοῖς πεπαιδευμένοις ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γέγραπται. (7 9.668C)

Gellius's reference to Andronicus has obviously attracted the attention of scholars and it is indeed plausible that Andronicus's book (whatever it might have been) was the ultimate source for both Plutarch and Gellius. Yet their narrations contain interesting differences. It is not only the case that Gellius provides a fuller account of the same source used by Plutarch. First, Gellius describes Aristotle's acroamatic teaching in a very different way from Plutarch. Whereas Plutarch conveys the ideas that Aristotle's acroamatic teaching was a secret epoptic teaching for initiates, Gellius offers a much more sober version (which indeed might well be that of Andronicus):

ἀκροατικά autem vocabantur, in quibus philosophia remotior subtiliorque agitabatur quaeque ad naturae contemplationes disceptationesve dialecticas pertinebant' (XX V.3).⁴¹

Secondly, Gellius' quotation of Aristotle's reply contains no allusion to the *Metaphysics*.

ξυνετοὶ γάρ εἰσιν μόνοις τοῖς ἡμῶν ἀκούσασιν.

Here Plutarch's text is considerably expanded:

ἀληθῶς γὰρ ἢ Μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ πραγματεία πρὸς διδασκαλίαν καὶ μάθησιν οὐδὲν ἔχουσα χρήσιμον ὑπόδειγμα τοῖς πεπαιδευμένοις ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γέγραπται.

⁴¹ See, on these lines, MATTHIAS PERKAMS, «Die Ursprünge des spätantiken philosophischen Curriculums im kaiserzeitlichen Aristotelismus», *Elenchos*, 36 (2015), p. 149–164, here p. 152, who thinks that 'dialectic' has a Platonic sense in this passage. This could be possible, but a more neutral meaning ('logic', as is usually the case in Hellenistic and Imperial philosophical terminology) seems more likely to me.

Unfortunately these lines are far from clear.⁴² Suffice it to say that there is no reason to correct the text against the consensus of the manuscripts, as proposed by Ziegler (*ἡ περὶ τὰ φυσικὰ πραγματεία*). The reference to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is actually confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt by Simplicius: Πλούταρχος [...] ἐν τῷ Ἀλεξάνδρου βίῳ ἐπὶ τῇ ἐκδόσει τῆς μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ ταῦτα γέγραφθαι φησὶν (Simplicius, *In Phys.*, 8.30). Furthermore, whatever the meaning of *ὑπόδειγμα* (Perrin's translation as 'memorandum' is probably wrong), the overall meaning of the final sentence is relatively clear. Either (by translating *ὑπόδειγμα* as 'example', by joining *χρήσιμον* to *ὑπόδειγμα* and by putting a comma after this word, as recently suggested by Jonathan Barnes):⁴³

[...] the treatise *Metaphysics*, lacking any useful example for teaching or learning, has been written for those already trained therein.⁴⁴

Or (by following the usual reading that joins *ὑπόδειγμα* to *τοῖς πεπαιδευμένοις*, by putting a comma after *χρήσιμον*, and by translating *ὑπόδειγμα* as *specimen*, illustration):

[...] the treatise *Metaphysics* is of no use for teaching or learning, but has been written as a *specimen* for those already trained therein.

In both cases, this sketchy description of the *Metaphysics* appears to be problematic if we start from our current reading and understanding of this work. But things are of course very different if the *Metaphysics* is seen as an outline of Aristotle's secret epoptic views about first principles (which is what Plutarch takes it to be). Starting from this perspective, one could well read some theological sections of Aristotle's work (esp. those in books A and Λ) as a cryptic and summary discussion that can only be useful for those already trained in the field. I certainly do not intend to deny that Andronicus was Plutarch's ultimate source about these letters, but the way in which Plutarch reports the whole story seems to point to a different philosophical background, i.e. that of the Platonist-Pythagorizing reading of Aristotle. This is further confirmed by a passage in Clement of Alexandria (*Stromateis*, 1 28.176.1–3), who, probably relying on the same tradition, identifies Aristotle's metaphysics with the epoptic part of philosophy. These conclusions are further suggested by a second passage from Plutarch's *On Isis and Osiris* (382 DE), where Plutarch takes the term 'epoptic' to designate the highest part of philosophy, i.e. that which leads to what is first, simple and immaterial. Plutarch ascribes this view not only to Plato, but also to

⁴² For a fuller account I would refer again to the articles mentioned *supra*, fn. 32.

⁴³ See FAZZO, « The *Metaphysics* from Aristotle to Alexander of Aphrodisias », p. 57, fn. 23.

⁴⁴ On these lines, see the in-depth discussion in *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Aristotle, and this makes the parallel with the *Life of Alexander* extremely interesting. Therefore, in both works Plutarch presents Aristotle's philosophy as culminating with epoptics, i.e. something like a Platonist-Pythagorean account of theology.

In some seminal contributions, Pierluigi Donini and Jaap Mansfeld suggested that Eudorus's Pythagorizing reading of *Metaphysics A* was the source of Plutarch's account of metaphysical principles and dualist philosophers in *On Isis and Osiris*.⁴⁵ Certainty is impossible to attain, but Eudorus is a good candidate for explaining Plutarch's allusions to Aristotle's epoptics too, both in *On Isis and Osiris* and in the *Life of Alexander*. There Plutarch claims to be reporting the view of some 'Great Men' (οἱ ἄνδρες; see *Alex.* 7 5.668B) about Aristotle's epoptic and secret teaching. David Sedley has investigated Philodemus's use of the words οἱ ἄνδρες to designate the founding members of the Garden, who were traditionally accorded canonical status: Epicurus, Metrodorus, Hermarchus, and Polyaeus.⁴⁶ Plutarch's passage offers a valuable (and to my knowledge overlooked) parallel. It would of course be interesting to know more about the identity of Plutarch's 'Great Men'. In view of the imperfect tense used by Plutarch (οὐκ ἐξέφερον, 'used not to impart to many'), we may suppose it could even be that οἱ ἄνδρες here, just as among the Epicureans, refers specifically to the school's authoritative founding members.⁴⁷ If this were the case, Plutarch would be ascribing the epoptic reading of Aristotle's metaphysics to the ancient masters of fourth-century philosophy, i.e. the philosophers of the Academy and of the Lyceum before the Hellenistic schools (the 'Ancients' according to the typical vocabulary of first-century BC philosophers). Such a view would of course again point to Eudorus's qualified integration of Aristotle into the Platonist and Pythagorean tradition.

It is in fact unlikely that Plutarch is making any direct allusion to the *Metaphysics*. Nothing really suggests that he was familiar with this work: for example, he does not mention the *Metaphysics* in the list of works dealing with Plato's Ideas in his *Against Colotes* (1114F–1115C).⁴⁸ Plutarch may have borrowed the reference to the *Metaphysics* from Andronicus, but I would be cautious on this issue. Firstly, the treatise is not mentioned in Gellius, and secondly, Plutarch's

⁴⁵ JAAP MANSFELD, *Heresiography in Context: Hippolytus' 'Elenchos' as a Source for Greek Philosophy*, Brill, Leiden–New York–Köln 1992 (*Philosophia antiqua*, 56), p. 274–296; PIERLUIGI DONINI, « Testi e commenti, manuali e insegnamento: la forma sistematica e i metodi della filosofia in età postellenistica », in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II.36.7, de Gruyter, Berlin–New York 1994, p. 5027–5100 (repr. in DONINI, *Commentary and Tradition*, p. 211–281, here p. 266).

⁴⁶ DAVID SEDLEY, « Philosophical Allegiance in the Greco-Roman World », in JONATHAN BARNES, MIRIAM GRIFFIN (eds.), *Philosophia togata I*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1989, p. 97–119, here p. 106.

⁴⁷ I owe this remark to David Sedley, *per litt.*

⁴⁸ For details, I would refer again to CHIARADONNA, « Théologie et époptique aristotéliennes dans le médioplatonisme », p. 155.

mention of the *Metaphysics* appears to be part of his overall Pythagorizing account of Aristotle's epoptic acroamatic teaching. So if Plutarch did not insert this reference to the *Metaphysics* himself, I would suggest that he was relying not only on Andronicus, but on another source too that interpreted Aristotle's acroamatic teaching as dealing with epoptics and regarded Aristotle's *Metaphysics* as the highest part of this esoteric teaching. In addition to this, Plutarch's source referred this Platonist-Pythagorizing reading to the Ancients, the old masters of philosophy of the Academy and the Lyceum (Plutarch's 'Great Men'). As noted above, Eudorus would be a natural candidate for this role and I would suggest that his reading lies behind Plutarch.

So it seems plausible that Eudorus and his circle read the *Metaphysics* in a way that was both selective (since they only focused on sections dealing with first principles and theology) and ideologically opinionated, since they took the *Metaphysics* to be a cryptic outline for those already trained in Aristotle's secret and epoptic teaching. This is certainly bizarre, but it is after all no more implausible than what we know about the Pythagorizing reading of the *Categories* made by Eudorus and his circle. In his treatise *On universal logos*, pseudo-Archytas says that Aristotle's first category includes the Ideas ([Archytas], *Cat.*, p. 30.23–31.1); Philo outlines Aristotle's ten categories when describing the virtues of the Decad (*De Decalogo* 29–31). Something like this must hold for Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. So I would propose to regard Plutarch's passage as evidence of the fact that Eudorus and his followers took some sections of the *Metaphysics* to be a sketchy outline of Aristotle's epoptics and I would also suggest that this was part of their overall Platonist-Pythagorizing reading of Aristotle. And it seems to me that the Aristotelian background in pseudo-Archytas's *On principles* fits very well with this general framework, which is of course *toto caelo* different from that of later philosophers such as Plotinus.

This review has mostly dealt with the Aristotelian background of the *Pseudopythagorica*. This is of course a partial account. Among other things, U. spends much effort and ingenuity to outline the Platonist and Hellenistic background of the *Pseudopythagorica*. I would only recall her discussion about Stoic epistemology and Plato's line analogy in pseudo-Archytas *On intellect and sense perception* and pseudo-Brotinus's *On intellect and discursive thought*. These treatises actually provide very interesting evidence about post-Hellenistic debates about the criterion of truth. U.'s detailed interpretation supplements a number of recent studies devoted to these issues.⁴⁹ The *Pseudopythagorica* are still rather neglected works. U.'s book is a most welcome contribution to the recent

⁴⁹ See, in particular, MAURO BONAZZI, *À la recherche des idées. Platonisme et philosophie hellénistique d'Antiochus à Plotin*, Vrin, Paris 2015 (Histoire des doctrines de l'Antiquité classique 46). A recent discussion can be found in GIULIA DE CESARIS, PHILLIP SIDNEY HORKY, « Hellenistic Pythagorean Epistemology », *Lexicon Philosophicum*, 6 (2018), p. 221–262.

trend of scholarship that counters this attitude, an attitude which certainly does not do justice to the historical and philosophical significance of these treatises. Indeed, all those who investigate this part of the ancient philosophical tradition will refer, from now on, to U.'s fine monograph.