Great Britain, but rather a polemical tool to which, lacking recourse to any others, they would surely "be driven."

When one explores Adams's notes of this debate, again one finds that much of the discussion revolved around which line of argument would prove most efficacious: appeals to nature or, as Mr. Duane claimed, to "the laws and constitution of the country from whence we sprung, and charters, without recurring to the law of nature; because this will be a feeble support."[2] In the end, however, Congress did insert one brief appeal to natural law—*not* natural rights—within nearly a dozen references to "the principles of the English constitution...the several charters or compacts...the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural-born subjects, within the realm of England...the foundations of English liberty...[and their claim that Americans were entitled] to the common law of England." It is quite difficult, then, fairly to describe such language as reflecting a purposeful design to create, as Zuckert suggests, a "natural rights Republic."

In Part Four, Zuckert in three pieces discusses the rule of law, John Rawls, and Alasdair MacIntyre and Alan Gewirth. Zuckert makes much of Locke's concept of self-ownership. However, instead of evidence one confronts a string of assertions that fail to mention the tension in Locke's thought between self-ownership and man's ownership by God. It appears that Zuckert decided that the more prominent of the two arguments in the *Two Treatises* could simply be ignored.

Zuckert is clever and learned. But perhaps because he too regularly writes for an audience for whom much of what is contested in the history of political thought is already dogmatically settled, he fails to deliver the books he promises. To do so, he must wean himself from dependence on fellow travelers who uncritically accept half-argued claims and, what might be, less than honest scholarly practices. This would demand patience and a sustained focus, something lacking in the essays in this volume. But Zuckert has the ability to meet this challenge, and his readers should encourage him to write the book that lies still-born in this poorly conceived and executed collection of essays.

1. Adams, "Extract from Autobiography," in *The Works of John Adams*, ed. C. F. Adams, II:374. **2.** Adams, *Diary* for 8 September 1774, in *ibid.*, II:371.

Interpreting Ancient Texts

Mark Shiffman

What is Ancient Philosophy? by Pierre Hadot; translated by Michael Chase, *Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002. 352 pp.*

Pierre Hadot, emeritus professor of classical history at the Collège de France, is highly regarded among scholars of ancient philosophy for his authoritative commentaries on Plotinus and for an outstanding study of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* (*The Inner Citadel*, Harvard, 1998). In broader intellectual circles, however, he is better known for a thesis, presented schematically in earlier essays, that receives magisterial treatment in *What is Ancient Philosophy?*

That thesis, briefly stated, is that we thoroughly misunderstand ancient philosophy when we take it to be the elaboration of intellectual "systems," because its essence is above all the choice, prac-

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tice, and justification of a radically transforming *way of life*. Given that this thesis amounts to a wholesale indictment of the way contemporary philosophy professors teach ancient philosophy, it is not surprising that this thesis has generated more discussion among theologians interested in forms of spiritual life and classicists interested in ancient institutions than among those professionally trained in ancient philosophy. Hadot eloquently convicts the philosophy professors of having mistaken the icing for the cake.

According to Hadot, in order to interpret properly the texts of ancient philosophy that have come down to us, we must understand their role in the life of the ancient schools. These texts were mostly written for students who had already chosen to follow the way of life practiced in a particular school; their purpose was not to set arguments before a reading public, but rather to lead disciples along a path of spiritual progress (and sometimes to induce members of a larger public to enter onto that path). Accordingly, the reader must approach ancient philosophical texts not as insufficiently rigorous precursors to the modern systematic treatise, but rather as elaborations of demanding and formative "spiritual exercises." Hadot draws a distinction between "philosophical discourse" and a "philosophical way of life," and he argues that the former should properly be regarded as one of several means for actualizing the latter: "Philosophical discourse, then, originates in a choice of life and an existential option—not vice versa." The student chooses the school and the way of life it embodies, and the school helps him to uncover the implications and rational foundations of his choice and to conform himself to it more thoroughly.

What is Ancient Philosophy? consists of three parts of quite uneven quality. In Part One, treating the understanding of wisdom in Greece before Plato founded the Academy, Hadot examines as it were the prehistory of the philosophical schools. Poets like Hesiod treated speech, especially speech that elevates the hearer's soul to a vision of cosmic scope, as a kind of therapy that frees the soul from the weight of its cares. The sophists "invented education in an artificial environment," making of virtue something to be taught in lectures rather than something to be learned by keeping company with sturdy citizens. Most radically of all, Socrates turned the attention of his hearers away from external objects of knowledge, reinterpreting wisdom as a practice of putting one's own way of life into question that reveals to us our ignorance and generates a sense that "we are not what we ought to be." This Socratic revolution culminates in Plato's *Symposium*, where the philosopher is defined as an erotic and unfulfilled lover of wisdom, who necessarily falls short of the ideal of the perfect, godlike sage. According to Hadot, all these elements come together in the life of the ancient philosophical schools.

In Part Two, by far the best and richest section of the book, Hadot examines the various ancient schools of philosophy, from the Academy to late antique Neoplatonism, and then presents an analytic summary of his results. His aim here is to make explicit the ways in which each school effected a specific spiritual transformation in its students. In every case, "philosophy consists in the movement by which the individual transcends himself toward something which lies beyond him," and in so doing renders his life more rationally coherent. Every school maintained that an incoherent and unexamined life led to disturbance and sickness of soul. They differed primarily in their understanding of the causes and remedies. Hadot tries to show how it is possible to trace most of the practices and even the doctrines of the schools back to this source.

In treating the philosophy of the Helle-

nistic and Imperial eras (his primary area of expertise), Hadot presents an outstanding and delightfully lucid exposition of the doctrine and the life-principles of each of the schools. Especially interesting is his discussion of the similar ends reached by different means and doctrines in the physics of the Stoics and of the Epicureans. Stoics were asked to meditate on the necessary causal order of all events so as to realize how little is in our control. This helped limit the will to the control of our moral intentions, and to reinforce the rule of reason in the soul by recognizing that it rules things for the best in the cosmos. Epicurus, on the other hand, says explicitly that the primary end of the study of nature is to convince ourselves of the dissolution of the soul after death as well as of the lack of overall order and of providential deities, so as to free the mind from sources of anxiety. Both physical doctrines enable us to limit our concerns to the immediate moment, a moment viewed in a cosmic perspective that renders its significance quite small in the grand scheme of things but of utmost importance in the conduct of our lives. By organizing doctrines around the animating center of the way of life that gives them coherence, Hadot is able to tell the story of these ancient schools in an illuminating way that engages the attention of the student interested (or potentially interested) in the concrete problems of ordering one's soul.

Hadot's examinations of Plato and of Aristotle are not as satisfying. The former is quite rich in insight, while the latter is surely the weakest section of Part Two. Neither convinces the reader that the model applied so persuasively to the later schools is altogether adequate to the task for these preëminent thinkers. To Stoics and Epicureans, peace of soul no doubt took precedence over the exacting search for truth, and to gain such peace the disciple generally swallowed whole the words of the revered master. As teachers, however, Plato and Aristotle seem to have taken up a task arguably much more difficult: to teach students how to search doggedly and honestly for *truth*. This is not to deny Hadot's thesis, but rather to ask how one should apply it when the search for truth *is* the way of life. It would not seem that we can subordinate discourse to life so easily here, but must search for their unity in an "ethics of inquiry" that seeks to combine spiritual longing and aspiration on the one hand with intellectual scruple and modesty on the other. We would then need to make sense of how this ethics of inquiry, in which Plato and Aristotle are arguably closer to one another than either is to any other ancient school, issues into divergent streams in the Academy and the Lyceum.

Similarly, Hadot points out that the philosophical teacher served as a kind of spiritual guide and made use of the recognized power of rhetoric to influence the direction of the soul. This implies that the student submitted to the master's authority to give direction, which certainly makes sense in long-established schools whose end is primarily to achieve peace of soul. But Plato and Aristotle had to found schools more or less from scratch. What kind of authority did they enjoy, and how did they gain it? Plato, to be sure, voiced a healthy suspicion of the power of rhetoric over the soul, even when wielded by a philosopher. Integral to his demonstration of good will toward the student seems to have been a practice of criticizing the tendency of students to treat their teacher in partisan fashion as a divine oracle of wisdom. Hadot fails to see this problem, probably because of his reliance on a model generated by his in-depth study of the later schools. It is a problem that would have to be faced squarely by anyone trying to teach philosophy as a way of life in a contemporary academic setting.

Part Three, "Interruption and Continu-

ity: The Middle Ages and Modern Times," is probably the most disappointing section of the book. Hadot begins promisingly by examining how early Christian apologists were able to understand Christianity as *the* philosophy "because it was a style of life and a mode of being, just as ancient philosophy was" (though here again the centrality of the search for truth ought to be asserted). He goes on to show in some detail how early Christians, especially the desert monastics, took over specific principles and practices from the ancient schools and gave them distinctly Christian meanings. On this basis, he proposes a striking historical thesis: "It is this spirituality, strongly marked by the way of life of ancient philosophical schools, that was inherited by the Christian way of life in the Middle Ages and Modern times."

What, then, went wrong, such that philosophy is now presented as a systematic discourse without any fundamental relation to a way of life? First, the medieval monasteries practiced inherited spiritual exercises without an accompanying and integral philosophic discourse, using the Neoplatonist amalgam of Plato and Aristotle as an "independent" discourse in their theological debates. Second, the medieval universities, when they recovered Aristotle's own discourses, treated them scholastically as texts upon which to comment rather than as instruments of spiritual formation, and they made philosophy an intellectual instrument of theology.

Hadot rightly draws our attention to the desert monk Evagrius of Pontus when he wishes to illustrate the early Christian appropriation of ancient practices. He fails, however, to tell the story of John Cassian, whose Latin tome conveying the wisdom of this Greek hermit was read daily at the common meals of Europe's Benedictine monasteries. We also hear nothing of Albert the Great, for whom the spiritual discipline of Aristotle's natural philosophy fit seamlessly with Christian spirituality, and who educated Thomas Aquinas. Nor do we read a word about Bonaventure's critique of the medieval university and his own Franciscan-Neoplatonic-Aristotelian spirituality. One wishes that this exemplary historian of ancient institutions had found a worthy collaborator for the later part of his tale (*e.g.,* the author of *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry* [1999], Alasdair MacIntyre).

Hadot himself admits that, although he has presented the "theoreticizing" of philosophy "as a result of the encounter between Christianity and philosophy," he has not treated this encounter adequately. But this question goes to the heart of his conception of the ancient schools. Not only has Hadot borrowed his rubric of "spiritual exercises" from the founder of the Jesuits, but he also makes the claim that for all the ancient schools "what motivates [the] choice of life and choice of discourse is love of mankind." This fundamental point receives no clarification or integration into his narrative. One has to ask what exactly is meant by love of mankind when, as in the case of Lucretius, the sweetest delight in life is to look down from a height at men suffering under the follies from which one has freed oneself. Is Plato closer to Christianity or to Lucretius? This problem would raise all the unasked questions about the relationship of the pagan and the Christian ethic, nature and grace, magnanimity and charity.

By a process Hadot does not render sufficiently clear, our universities have inherited the scholastic model and continued in it. Hadot discusses Montaigne, Descartes, and Kant as modern philosophers who have taken up the traditional conception, and runs off a representative list of others (which ought to include more British thinkers, such as Smith and Hume, and includes Marx when it ought not), until one begins to have the impression that only the medieval scholastics

and their professorial heirs—or perhaps the institution of the university itself—are the culprits in this story. Hadot's final thoughts lack the reflection upon the university and the society in which it has taken shape that would enable one to assess the prospects for philosophy as a way of life making a comeback; but he is a helpful and highly readable guide to what it was in its heyday.

Maverick Conservatism

DOUGLAS A. OLLIVANT

Willmoore Kendall: Maverick of American Conservatives, edited by John A. Murley and John E. Alvis; foreword by William F. Buckley, Jr. *Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2002.*

WILLMOORE KENDALL (1909-1967) remains one of the most important figures in mid-twentieth century conservatism. His penetrating scholarship on Locke, his writings on the internal tensions inherent in majority rule, his early involvement with *National Review*, and his role in founding the graduate school at the University of Dallas are achievements that one might expect to have cemented his place in the cultural memory of the Right. Yet, as the first full essay in this collection reminds us, Willmoore Kendall has not been "abundantly remembered." Despite his forceful presence at critical moments in the development of American conservatism, Kendall produced neither disciples nor a legacy in the manner of a William F. Buckley, Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, or Russell Kirk. The clear intent of this collection is to remedy this lacuna in our intellectual history, at least partially.

The world "collection" is here used deliberately. This work is not a book in the traditional sense, nor even a volume of assembled essays (the editors themselves note in the preface that "this is not a conventional book"). Instead, this collection is as eclectic as the man it honors, consisting of a foreward and a preface, seven essays exploring various aspects of Kendall's life and work, the surviving correspondence between Kendall and Leo Strauss, and a reprinting of Kendall's 1967 review of the 1964 Strauss festschrift, *Ancients and Moderns*. While the material is, at first glance, a hodgepodge, the net effect is—in the old adage—greater than the sum of its parts.

As might be expected from the inclusion of the last two items noted above, many essays deal in some way with the relationship between Kendall and Leo Strauss. In particular, the essays by John Alvis on "The Evolution of Willmoore Kendall's Political Thought" and George Anastaplo on "Willmoore Kendall and Leo Strauss" treat the interaction between these two noted scholars at some length.

But the essays also serve to highlight the issues that set Kendall apart from his mid-century peers. Of particular value is the contribution by Kendall's long-time co-author, George W. Carey, who lucidly expounds Kendall's lifelong fascination with the issues involved in majority rule, beginning with his doctoral dissertation and continuing through his final unfinished essay on the "intensity problem." Carey illuminates the continuities in Kendall's thought, such as his dedication to the importance of small, coherent communities in a properly conservative democratic theory. He also highlights the changes, most notably Kendall's gradu-

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