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Aristotle and Hellenistic Philosophy

[...] In his introduction to *Le concept de nature à Rome* Carlos Lévy eloquently argues – largely on the basis of the work of A. Pellicer (*Natura, étude sémantique et historique du mot latin*, Paris 1966) – that this contrast is artificial and that, in fact, the Latin term '*natura*', which only seems to appear from the second century BC onward, developed into a « calque sémantique reproduisant les caractéristiques du terme grec ». The first section of this collection of articles deals with the larger cultural background and studies the way the concept of *natura* figures in the context of Roman literature of the 1st century BC (J. Fabre-Serris, « Nature, mythe et poésie ») and of Roman thought on prodigies (F. Guillaumont, « La nature des prodiges dans la religion et la philosophie romaine »).

The central section of the volume deals with the transmission of Greek philosophy to the Romans. It contains a well-written contribution by Daniel Dellatre on a subject which, by the way, is only remotely related to the main theme of the book : Philodemus' *De musica* (« Aperçus sur l'épicurisme de Philodème de Gadara. A propos du *livre IV* du *De musica* et la distinction stoïcienne entre sensation naturelle et sensation savante ») and two articles on doxography (C. Auvray-Assayas, « Les constructions doxographiques du *De natura deorum* et la réflexion cicéronienne sur la physique », and C. Lévy, « Doxographie et philosophie chez Cicéron »). Lévy offers some salutary warnings against the tendency to ascribe similar lists of *doxai* in various texts too easily to a single doxographical source. However, I find myself unable to go along with him when he attributes such a tendency to assume an *Einzelquelle* to Jaap Mansfeld, whose work on the *Sitz im Leben* of the *placita* has on the contrary always preferred to apply the more 'flexible' concept of a *tradition* (or *traditions*) rather than to adopt the more rigidly stemmatic approach as exemplified by Diels (a point, by the way, which seems to be recognized by Auvray-Assayas in note 2 of her contribution to this volume).

The final part of the volume consists of five " case studies ". We are offered a longish but learned article by Bernard Besnier on the second book of the *De natura deorum* (« La nature dans le livre II du *De natura deorum* de Cicéron »), an essay on Seneca's *Naturales Questiones* (F.-R. Chaumartin, « La nature dans les *Questions Naturelles* de Sénèque »), and no less than three contributions on, again, Lucretius (G. Droz-Vincent, « Les *foedera naturae* chez Lucrèce » ; A. Gigandet, « *Natura gubernans* » ; J. Kany-Turpin, « Nature et cosmologie dans les livres V et VI du *De rerum natura* »). If my understanding is correct this volume is the first in a projected series of three (all of them on " nature " – the two remaining ones will deal with the naturalistic basis of ethics and, the nature of social ties). It will of course prove especially useful to students of Cicero and Lucretius. [...]