Introduction

David Sedley

This book is not *The Cambridge Companion to Antiochus*. Although the distribution of chapter topics attempts to cover all the major aspects of Antiochus' work and significance, their content does not represent an attempt to set out in orderly fashion what we know or reasonably believe about these questions and to present even-handedly whatever issues remain controversial. Authors have been given free rein to defend their own preferred viewpoint on controversial issues, and they will certainly not all be found singing from the same hymn sheet. This, the first book in English ever devoted entirely to the study of Antiochus, is above all an attempt to take debate forward. Nevertheless, anyone seeking to know the state of the art on Antiochean issues, and to find guidance on navigating the ancient testimonia and modern scholarly literature, will find the book an appropriate place to start.[1]

The book is born of a project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, entitled 'Greco-Roman Philosophy in the First Century BC' (see Acknowledgements, p. viii). Constructed around a weekly research seminar and two major international workshops, the project sought to advance our understanding of a significant watershed in the history of philosophy. The first century BCE is the period in which philosophy loosened its historic moorings in the great philosophical schools of Athens and entered the Roman world, often attaching itself to such cultural centres as Alexandria and Rome.[2] It is no exaggeration to say that the character of philosophy as an intellectual activity was permanently changed by this transition. Cut adrift from the historic institutions which had linked them to their revered founders, the major philosophies shifted their efforts increasingly onto the study of their foundational texts. The Roman imperial age was thus an age in which philosophy centred on the newly burgeoning

[1] For a more succinct and very helpful overview, see Barnes 1989.
[2] On the nature of this transformation, see Glucker 1978, Hadot 1987, Frede 1999, Sedley 2003a.

industry of textual commentary, above all commentary on the writings of Plato and Aristotle. In this new climate, it became common to treat these two philosophers as the authoritative twin voices of a single philosophical project. The 'harmony' of Plato and Aristotle, although it remained controversial, is in a way the hallmark of the new age.[3]

At the start of this transformation stands an enigmatic figure, Antiochus. He is regularly known as 'Antiochus of Ascalon', but there was in antiquity no other significant philosopher named Antiochus, and it seems safe to drop the toponym.

Trained for many years in the Academy under Philo of Larissa (school head from 110 BCE), Antiochus initially endorsed the dialectical scepticism which had dominated this school – in the phase widely known as the New Academy – for many generations, above all under the inspirational leadership of Carneades in the mid second century BCE. But he came to believe that this sceptical turn and the consequent refusal of fixed doctrine were untrue to the legacy of Plato, the school's revered founder. On that basis, he reconstructed on his own behalf a philosophy which could be attributed to the 'Old Academy', the school which he saw himself as reviving or perhaps refounding.

Antiochus' secession from the 'New Academy' to re-establish this alternative 'Old Academy' is one of the major events of late Hellenistic philosophy. It is remarkable, for example, that Cicero, who in 45–44 BCE wrote a series of philosophical works aimed at bringing Greek philosophy to a wide Roman readership, regarded the philosophy of Antiochus as one of the four that merited inclusion, alongside Stoicism, Epicureanism and the New Academy. He did not give any separate treatment to either Plato or Aristotle, and it seems reasonable to say that for the purposes of exposition he was prepared to regard Antiochus as their contemporary voice.

Antiochus' change of direction was not simply a matter of reverting to the direct study of Plato's dialogues, with or without the additional input of the founder's first successors, Speusippus and Xenocrates. Two particular twists were added.

The first was the inclusion of Aristotle as an authentic representative of that early Academy, despite the fact that he had left it in order to found his own school. Thus the 'ancients' whose philosophy Antiochus purported to be reviving were a broad coalition of the major fourth-century BCE philosophers, including Plato, Speusippus, Xenocrates, Aristotle, to some

[3] See especially Karamanolis 2006.

extent Theophrastus, and, probably, before them all, Plato's own teacher Socrates as well.

The second twist was an uneasy accommodation with the Stoics. They had been the dominant philosophers of the third and second centuries BCE, tracing their own origins back to Socrates in particular, and for this among other reasons being the Academy's chief rivals. Much of Antiochus' philosophical work sounded to his contemporaries very like Stoicism, which had after all provided the conceptual and terminological framework in which philosophical issues were being discussed. Some went so far as to call Antiochus a Stoic. But it would be closer to his real view to say that in his eyes the Stoics were dwarfs on the shoulders of the Platonist giants. From that privileged vantage point the Stoics were perhaps enabled to see a little further and a little more sharply than the giants could, and it was therefore appropriate for the moderns to talk in their idiom and even to borrow their insights. But Antiochus emphatically did not consider himself a Stoic.

Beyond there, opinion divides regarding the extent of his concessions to Stoicism. All scholars agree that on at least some basic points Antiochus was advocating a return to the ancients. This applies above all to his central ethical thesis, that the goods that contribute to a happy life are not, as the Stoics insisted, exclusively moral ones. But he also advocated the possibility of knowledge, thus reversing the sceptical tradition of the recent Academy. From what authority did he derive this thesis? Cicero's *Academic Books* survive (incompletely) in two drafts. The *Lucullus*, book 2 of his first draft, tells us in effect that Antiochus took over Stoic epistemology for his own purposes. But the book 1 which survives from the later draft (*Academica* 1) is believed by some to point instead to a Platonic epistemology: in it Antiochus' spokesman, Varro, certainly ascribes a non-Stoic epistemology to the ancients, but the trickier question is whether he is thereby also advocating that epistemology, or allowing that the Stoic alternative has now superseded it. The conflict between these two competing interpretations of Antiochus' theory of knowledge will be visible in the chapters which follow, notably those of, respectively, Mauro Bonazzi (Chapter 14) and Charles Brittain (Chapter 5). On the latter, more Stoicizing interpretation, Antiochus conceded that the Stoics had 'corrected' the ancients on some issues; on the more archaizing one, his aim was not to make any concessions to the rival school but, if anything, to appropriate or subordinate it to his rediscovered Platonism. This latter interpretation emphasizes the extent to which Antiochus saw Stoicism as a merely verbal, rather than substantive, departure from the old doctrines.

Another problem on which unanimity will not be found in the chapters that follow is how Antiochus identified the philosophy of the 'ancients'. Was Plato in his eyes not only the founder of the tradition but also its ultimate authority? Or when Aristotle differed from Plato, as he was seen to do at least regarding the theory of Forms, did Antiochus feel obliged to privilege the revisionary doctrine over the original? If the latter, should we infer that Antiochus took as the early school's authorities not its founder, but its final summative spokesmen, and Aristotle in particular? The highly Aristotelian content of at least some parts of Antiochus' ethics (see the chapters of Georgia Tsouni and Terence Irwin in particular) can lend this option credence. Or – an intermediate possibility – did he seek to synthesize a single body of doctrine out of all the writings of the 'ancients', without systematically privileging any one over the others? The discussions in the present volume bear closely on these questions but do not resolve them.

We also have to ask how far Antiochus' breakaway movement reflects the circumstances in which philosophy found itself in the early first century BCE. Did its uprooting from its ancestral home in Athens and its consequent need to compete in the educational marketplaces of wealthy cities such as Rome and Alexandria inflame rival pretensions to ownership of the Academy's true legacy? Both Antiochus and Philo were refugees from Athens (Antiochus in Alexandria, Philo in Rome) at the time when their rift became fully open. Moreover, an analogous splinter group formed, perhaps around the same time, in Alexandria when Aenesidemus refounded the sceptical school of Pyrrho, probably as the consequence of a different schism in the New Academy, one between hardline and mitigated sceptics. This pattern raises the question whether sectarianism is a sign of the times. Were other disciplines than philosophy riven by sectarianism in those same cultural centres? Rebecca Flemming's chapter, which compares the medical successions of the first century BCE, is an important first step towards the broader picture that may eventually provide a full answer. Meanwhile Roberto Polito's chapter invites us to question just how sharp a schism, doctrinally speaking, it was that Antiochus instituted, and Malcolm Schofield's Chapter II helps to bring out a degree of methodological proximity that continued to link Antiochus to Carneades' New Academy.

A further perennial question concerns Antiochus' lasting influence on the history of philosophy. That he had a considerable impact among the Romans of his day is beyond doubt. Not only did Cicero, as already

remarked, regard Antiochus' school as worthy of listing and reporting among the canonical four, but Antiochus recruited among his followers leading members of the Roman intelligentsia. These Roman Antiocheans, treated in the chapters by David Blank and Carlos Lévy, included no lesser figures than Varro and Brutus. Indeed, Cicero himself was deeply influenced by Antiochus and at times leant strongly towards his philosophy, as explained by Malcolm Schofield in Chapter 11, despite the fact that in all probability he at no time transferred his formal allegiance to the Old Academy. Antiochus' influence at Alexandria was also considerable (see again Lévy's chapter). Given in addition the extent to which Antiochus' philosophical positions prove to anticipate later Platonist developments, why need there be any doubt that he was the inaugurator of Middle Platonism?

This is a question tackled in the concluding chapter, by Mauro Bonazzi, who emphasizes many probable continuities between Antiochus and the Platonism of the imperial era. Some will nevertheless continue to question the direct influence of Antiochus himself on the later tradition. For one thing, whatever following he attracted in the early to mid first century BCE, there is little sign that his school as such continued for very long after his death. His impact on the contemporary philosophical scene probably owed much to personal charisma. (In a text newly re-deciphered by David Blank – see Appendix, **T3** – even the Epicurean Philodemus declares his personal affection for Antiochus.) Although the influence of his ideas continues to be detectable in his aftermath (see again Blank, Lévy), there is no sign that they constituted a new orthodoxy in anybody's eyes. Moreover, in the generation or two after Antiochus the style of philosophy changed to what is nowadays sometimes called 'post-Hellenistic philosophy',[4] whose features included a rapidly growing focus on direct textual analysis of the old masters Plato and Aristotle. The *ipsissima verba* of Plato came to dominate the agenda to an extent that is hard to parallel in what we know of Antiochus:[5] we cannot even be sure how much of the works of Plato and Aristotle he ever studied. Perhaps as a result of this transformation in the style of philosophy, Antiochus' contribution was largely forgotten, his name virtually never occurring in the philosophical writings of later Greek Platonists. If his influence on the new direction that Platonist philosophy took was seminal, it also went all but unnoticed.

[4] Cf. Boys-Stones 2001 for the term 'post-Hellenistic philosophy' and some of its dominant features.
[5] For further remarks on this question, see David Sedley, Chapter 4.

The book is structured as follows. Chapters 1–3 seek to locate Antiochus in his historical, philosophical and cultural context. Chapter 1 by Myrto Hatzimichali, 'Antiochus' biography', establishes what can be reconstructed of his life. Chapter 2, Roberto Polito, 'Antiochus and the Academy', explores further the institutional and philosophical nature of his secession. Chapter 3, Rebecca Flemming, 'Antiochus and Asclepiades: medical and philosophical sectarianism at the end of the Hellenistic era', opens up a new area of research, the question of how far the philosophical sectarianism of Antiochus' age may have been paralleled in other disciplines.

The next two chapters embark on the interpretation of Antiochus' philosophical stance, with an initial focus on his epistemology. Chapter 4, David Sedley, 'Antiochus as historian of philosophy', argues that after his rift with Philo in 88 BCE Antiochus' construction of philosophical history, with regard to epistemology in particular, underwent a major change. Chapter 5, Charles Brittain, 'Antiochus' epistemology', examines this part of his philosophy in its own right, defending a Stoicizing reading of it.

The next group of chapters turns to ethics and covers a series of central issues raised by the conspectus of Antiochean ethics in Cicero, *De finibus* 5. Their titles should be self-explanatory: Chapter 6, Georgia Tsouni, 'Antiochus on contemplation and the happy life'; Chapter 7, T. H. Irwin, 'Antiochus, Aristotle and the Stoics on degrees of happiness'; Chapter 8, Malcolm Schofield, 'Antiochus on social virtue'.

We then turn to a pair of particularly controversial aspects of Antiochus' philosophy, with Chapter 9, Brad Inwood, 'Antiochus on physics', and Chapter 10, G. R. Boys-Stones, 'Antiochus' metaphysics'. These bear closely on the question of Antiochus' respective relations to the early Academy and to Stoicism.

Chapter 11, Malcolm Schofield, 'The neutralizing argument: Carneades, Antiochus, Cicero', returns to the central ethical debate between Antiochus and the Stoics but views it especially from the point of view of Antiochus' relation to his Academic predecessor Carneades, and from that of Cicero's relation to Antiochus. It thus offers a smooth transition to our final group of chapters, which explores Antiochus' influence. Chapter 12, David Blank, 'Varro and Antiochus', and Chapter 13, Carlos Lévy, 'Other followers of Antiochus', chart what signs can be found of Antiochean motifs and theses among those who were directly or indirectly his pupils. Finally, Chapter 14, Mauro Bonazzi, 'Antiochus and Platonism', is both backward- and forward-looking, offering one synoptic characterization of Antiochus'

philosophy and connecting it, in largely positive terms, to the advent of Middle Platonism.

In the volume's Appendix I have compiled a guide to the testimonia for Antiochus. Every chapter of the book has the task of evaluating evidence, but an overall conspectus of the primary evidence is to be found only here, based on H.-J. Mette's numeration of Antiochus' testimonies.[6] It would not have been realistic to print the entire body of testimonies here, because they properly include (even if Mette did not choose to include them) three whole speeches from Cicero's dialogues. Instead, what is offered is a complete set of texts and translations for the non-Ciceronian testimonies, along with a succinct conspectus of the Ciceronian ones.

All the translations used in the Appendix are my own. However, no uniformity has been imposed upon the volume as a whole. Hence the translations of the same passages used by individual authors in the preceding chapters may differ, both from each other and from those in the Appendix.

Abbreviations of titles of ancient works correspond in most cases to those used in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd revised edition, Oxford 2003). The main exception is the abbreviations of Galen's titles, which follow those listed by R. J. Hankinson, *The Cambridge Companion to Galen* (Cambridge 2008), 391–403.

Only one verbatim quotation survives from Antiochus (Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Professors* 7.201, included in **F2**, see Appendix), and the remainder of the evidence is entirely indirect. Nevertheless, the recognized testimonies will be limited to passages which cite him by name. Antiochus' influence has been detected in numerous other ancient texts. These include the whole of Cicero's *De finibus* book 4, in which Cicero, doubling up as speaker and author, criticizes Stoic ethics from what seems a recognizably Antiochean standpoint, albeit without once naming Antiochus. They also include a long doxographical passage in Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* book 7 (141–260), which explicitly cites comments by Antiochus at two points. It remains controversial among interpreters (e.g. Brittain vs Sedley in this volume) whether in the remainder of the passage, over and above those two citations, we are hearing Antiochus' voice. Neither of these substantial texts can properly be listed as a 'fragment' or 'testimonium' of Antiochus in any case, but both will be brought into play at certain points in the present volume.

[6] Mette 1986–7.

It has at times been fashionable to detect Antiochean content much more widely in later authors, in a way comparable to the treatment sometimes accorded to Antiochus' contemporary the Stoic Posidonius. Pan-Antiocheanism, that is, has at times threatened to rival pan-Posidonianism in the scholarly literature. The use of sources in the present volume will at any rate be found to be a great deal more restrained than that.[7]

[7] General accounts of Antiochus include Luck 1953; Mette 1986–7; Dillon 1977: 52–106; di Stefano 1984; Barnes 1989; Fladerer 1996; Görler 1994; Dorandi 1994b; Karamanolis 2006: ch. 1; Tarrant 2007. Glucker 1978, although less about Antiochus than the title may suggest, makes a major contribution to the historical contextualization of his work.

CHAPTER 1

Antiochus' biography

Myrto Hatzimichali

The principal aims of this introductory chapter on Antiochus' biography are to set out the historical background and review the circumstances and events that arguably had an effect on the development of Antiochus' distinct philosophical position. Inevitably, any presentation of this topic will be dominated by what we do not know rather than what we do, because the evidence is not only limited but also in many cases controversial. The main characteristics or turning points of Antiochus' life, about which something more can be said, are his philosophical conversion and abandonment of scepticism; his relationship with Lucullus and the extent of his political activities; the Alexandrian episode known as the '*Sosus* affair'; and the establishment of his own school (*diatribē*).

For Antiochus' life we do not have the benefit of a biography by Diogenes Laertius, who ends his series on the Academic succession with Clitomachus (4.67). We do, however, have a section on Antiochus from the papyrus preserving the *History of the Academy* by the first-century BCE Epicurean Philodemus (*Index Academicorum*, *PHerc.* 1021, columns XXXIV 34–XXXV 16);[1] this text offers some interesting but also tantalizingly fragmentary information, which will be discussed in more detail towards the end of the present chapter, since most of its information relates to the end of Antiochus' life and his legacy. The preserved sections of the papyrus do not offer any chronological help regarding Antiochus (in contrast to the detailed chronology for Philo of Larissa, XXXIII 1–41); we must suppose that some dates for Antiochus were given in lines 17–34 of column XXXIV, which are largely illegible.

Thus all we know about Antiochus' birth is that he came from Ascalon in Palestine (part of ancient Syria), not far from Gaza. Two sources, Stephanus of Byzantium and Strabo, mention Antiochus among the most celebrated natives or products of the city (see **T4a–b**). Stephanus mentions the

[1] The entire text is edited in Dorandi 1991; for the section on Antiochus see now Blank 2007.

nickname Antiochus 'the Swan', for which he is the only source. Scholars have connected it with Antiochus' polished and graceful style,[2] since swans were renowned for their song and were associated with Apollo and the Muses (e.g. Callimachus, *Hymn to Delos* 249–55). It would be interesting to reflect a bit more on the origin of this nickname: for instance, it could reflect particular appreciation in some quarters of his late work and his 'swansong', which must have been the *On the Gods* (Plut., *Luc.* 28.7); or it might suggest that Antiochus himself took a calm and optimistic attitude towards death, such as the one attributed to swans by Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo* (84e3–85b9). Alternatively, it could be that a parallelism with Plato was intended by the nickname: Diogenes Laertius (3.5) relates an anecdote according to which Socrates dreamt of having a cygnet on his knees, one which promptly grew wings and flew away in sweet song. The next day he met Plato and identified him as the swan from the dream.[3] On this comparison, Antiochus would be like Plato either in having a sweet but weak voice (Plato is called 'weak-voiced' at Diog. Laert. 3.5), and/or in flying quickly and successfully from his teacher's knees.

For Antiochus' date of birth we have to make an approximate calculation based on the information that he was a pupil of Philo of Larissa and probably also of the Stoic Mnesarchus.[4] The former became scholarch of the Academy in 110 BCE (during the archonship of Polycleitus, *Index Ac.* XXXIII 15–17), and the latter was prominent in Athens at about the same time (he had been a pupil of Diogenes of Seleuceia according to Philodemus' *History of the Stoa* (*Index Stoicorum* LI 4–5;[5] cf. Cic. *De or.* 1.45)). It is normally supposed that Antiochus came to Athens fairly early in Philo's scholarchate because, at a time when Mnesarchus and Dardanus were still prominent Stoics in Athens (i.e. during the 90s BCE), Antiochus had already been in the Academy for an unusually long time (see Cic., *Luc.* 69, cited below).[6] Therefore, if Antiochus was twenty to twenty-five years old when he came to study with these teachers, he must have been

[2] Barnes 1989: 51; Görler 1994: 965.

[3] Almost nothing is known about Diogenes' source here, the Περὶ βίων by a certain Timotheus of Athens, which was also used in the lives of Aristotle, Speusippus and Zeno (*RE s.v.* no. 15). The story is also told by Apuleius (*De Platone* 1), who embellishes it with the details that the cygnet had flown from Cupid's altar in the Academy and that Socrates exclaimed: 'hic ille erat, amici, de Academia Cupidinis cygnus'.

[4] There is no reason to suppose, simply because Mnesarchus and Dardanus are mentioned in tandem by Cicero (*Luc.* 69), that Antiochus was also a pupil of Dardanus; see Barnes 1989: 53–4.

[5] The text is edited in Dorandi 1994a.

[6] Glucker 1978: 19–20 thinks that by 87 BCE Mnesarchus and Dardanus may have been too old to be prominent teachers, and they could even have been dead. See also Barnes 1989: 53 and 69 with n. 76; Görler 1994: 939.