

of slaves, freedmen, supply sergeants, and petty accountants. The results were seriously dysfunctional» (p. x).

In a real sense, MacMullen is describing the effect of an ethic that tolerated favors and favoritism but not their sale, implicitly encouraged the practice of bribery and extortion made possible through the ambiguity of the law, the larger number and intrusiveness of laws and government bureaucrats, the isolation of the emperor, and a prevailing higher level of violence, with the result that more and more public officials exercised their authority for private profit. The consequences were a decline in power, in honor, in obligation, and in military security, as the effects of corruption were widely felt in governmental and military circles.

Certainly, MacMullen has provided us with much food for thought, though his analysis to a great degree centers on the premise of the corruptibility of human nature as the primary cause for the decline of Rome and intimates (even if he denies) that we are witnessing similar corruption and decline in American public life in our own day.

Corruption and the Decline of Rome is indeed another thoughtful and worthy contribution to our understanding of the functioning and malfunctioning of one of the world's most powerful political and military powers.

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Iamblichus: Exhortation to Philosophy. Including the Letters of Iamblichus and Proclus' Commentary on the Chaldean Oracles. Translated from the Greek by Thomas Moore Johnson, with a Foreword by Joscelyn Godwin. Edited by Stephen Neuville. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Phanes Press. 1988. Pp. 128. Cloth \$ 25.00. Paperbound \$ 14.95.

Iamblichus of Chalcis in Syria (ca 260-330 A. D.) was a pupil of Porphyry, who was himself a pupil of Plotinus. In the *Exhortation to Philosophy* Iamblichus goes directly to Plato and Aristotle and, in Joscelyn Godwin's words in his Foreword, «reduces the immensity of Plato's and Aristotle's thought to manageable proportions» and exhorts us «to add a further dimension to our lives, and one that is definitely rich», one that would seem to suggest that «the practice of philosophy is nothing more or less than what we would call meditation». Thomas Moore Johnson's translation was done in 1907 and published in an extremely limited edition in 1920, which is now not readily available. It is now the first time that this rare work is made generally available to the greater public.

Iamblichus early argues that «wisdom alone is good and ignorance alone is evil» and that «philosophy is the desire for and the possession of science» (pp. 35-36). He makes the Platonic distinction between the body and the soul, with the soul divine and good and ruling over the body. It is a soul characterized by reason, courage, and desire. In a characteristically Platonic way, Iamblichus insists that the soul is better than the body: «For the soul is of such a nature that it urges and checks, and says what to and what not to do» (p. 47). The primary function of the soul is the acquisition of truth. The element of intellect and insight is divine, according to Iamblichus. In fact, he calls it a god. It is, of course, the soul alone that can contemplate the realities of things, that is what we know as, the Platonic Ideas.

Consequently, the function of philosophy is to purify by separating the soul from the body and through this liberation ultimately to effect contemplation of the form or Idea of the Good. The soul is immortal and «since the soul proves to be immortal, there is no escape from evils, nor salvation, other than by becoming as good and as wise as possible» (p. 68). Iamblichus urges us to pursue Virtue in order to live happily, and it is the philosopher in his pursuit of knowledge who learns «*what man is, and what it becomes him, as distinguished from every other creature, to do or suffer, into all this they make diligent inquiry*» (p. 70). It is also emphasized by Iamblichus that «God can never be unjust, but is wholly just, and nothing can be more like Him than the perfectly just man» (p. 72). So «Every man, therefore, if he aims to do anything, should act with virtue, knowing that all possessions and pursuits are base and infamous» (p. 84). It follows then that «*If therefore goods are inherent in the life according to virtue and in that alone, then the things that are truly good and pure joy accompany the philosopher alone*» (p. 85). The argument is subsequently made that philosophy must be cultivated and practiced above all other human pursuits for rational and moral reasons.

«The Golden Verses of Pythagoras» (so attributed) offer an epitome of that individual's philosophy. The Fragments of Iamblichus give us letters concerned with fate, temperance, wisdom, and truth, while excerpts from the «Commentary of Proclus on the Chaldean Oracles» discuss the relations of the gods, body, and soul, and philosophy. The end of Iamblichus' *Exhortation* contains select Pythagorean aphorisms and extensive commentaries on them.

The Exhortation to Philosophy is a labor of love on the part of a number of sensitive individuals who have sought to make this and other contributions of Iamblichus available to a larger public. They are to be commended for having produced a highly attractive and highly usable reissue of a most basic source for the understanding of Platonism and neo-Platonism.

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Gisela Walberg, *Tradition and Innovation, Essays in Minoan Art*, Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz am Rhein, 1986, σελ. VIII/161.

*Ἡ συγγραφεὺς ἀνήκει εἰς τοὺς ἀφωσιωμένους ἐρευνητὰς τῆς Μινωϊκῆς καλλιτεχνικῆς δημιουργίας ἐρευνῶσα ἀπὸ εἰκοσαετίας καὶ πλεον τὰς ἐκδηλώσεις τῆς καὶ δημοσιεύουσα τὰς παρατηρήσεις τῆς. Ἐκ τῶν πολλῶν σχετικῶν δημοσιευμάτων τῆς δύο ἔχουν κριθῆ ἐδῶ ὑπὸ τοῦ Γ. Στ. Κορρέ, τὸ *Kamares, A Study of the Character of Palatial Middle Minoan Pottery*, 1976 ἐν «Πλάτων» 36 (1977) σελ. 318-322, καὶ τὸ *Provincial Middle Minoan Pottery*, 1983 ἐν «Πλάτων» 36 (1984) σελ. 187-191. Διὰ τοῦ παρόντος ἔργου ἡ Σ. ἐπιχειρεῖ ὄχι γενικὴν τινα σύνθεσιν περὶ τῆς Μινωϊκῆς τέχνης, ἀλλὰ ἀπλῶς νὰ θεωρήσῃ ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς καὶ νὰ