

## *Presentation*

*Arete* is ten years old. It is, to be sure, a modest anniversary, which nonetheless gives us the opportunity for an academic celebration. It is with this intention that we decided, almost two years ago, to prepare a special volume dedicated to explaining, from different points of view, the notion that gives our journal its name: the *notion of arete*. We invited our usual collaborators and friends, and other philosophers who have dedicated part of their work to studying the origins or repercussions of that notion in the history of philosophy. The echo in response to our proposal genuinely surprised us. The best testimony to that is, naturally, the contents of the volume we now put in our readers' hands. Nevertheless, we also received many other messages supporting our initiative. It seemed clear, in view of all these favorable reactions, that our invitation coincided with an acute concern of contemporary philosophical reflections. It seems we are facing a true renaissance of interest in *arete* and in the whole contour of reflections this notion implies or evokes. It is a coherent universe of problems, not to say a paradigm that opens its way in contemporary philosophical discussions, also manifest in the works we have received.

We have arranged these works in three large sections, according to the research domains in which they develop. The first section, which we call *Origins*, contains the contributions that deal with the notion of *arete* in ancient philosophy. It is there where the term was sealed, both in the literal and in the figurative sense, since Greek philosophy required a vast deliberative process for the notion to find its known conceptual profile. The history itself of the notion of *arete* is associated with the deliberative dimension essential to its content. The works we there include are dedicated to analyzing the meaning of *arete* in some ancient works and authors. Yet this reinterpretation also expresses the way in which contemporary debates have refined our sensitivity or oriented our vision to a better understanding of original texts. It is, in fact, a to-and-fro movement of

reciprocal and fruitful influences: ancient texts inspire us and we reread them motivated by the questions of our present reflection.

*Traces* is the name of our second section. We there find works that explicitly discuss the notion of *arete* in the works of modern and contemporary philosophers. They are efforts of reinterpretation that show us how some authors have tried to interpret originally the tradition of *arete*, incorporating it to their own systematic vision. Among them, Cornelius Castoriadis' text, which we are proud to publish, deserves special mention. When our invitation arrived in Paris, in December 1997, Castoriadis had just passed away. His wife, Zoé Castoriadis, had the kindness and generosity of answering and offering us an unpublished text of a seminar her husband had conducted in 1984 on virtue and autonomy. We want to thank Zoé Castoriadis, and express to the philosophical community our satisfaction for being able to include in our volume a still unknown text by this remarkable philosopher of our century.

The third section, *Echoes*, offers works that deal with the repercussions of the *arete* paradigm in recent philosophical debates. They are not, strictly speaking, studies about the meaning of the notion, but instead reflections on its actuality or pertinence in facing the problems of present times belonging to the tradition associated with *arete*. These works develop mainly in two fields: in the field of ethics, on the one hand, some discuss the range and pertinence of a eudemonistic concept in moral reflection; in the more general field of philosophy and epistemology, on the other hand, others discuss the present meaning of the ideal of "excellence" expressed in the notion of *arete*.

We are doubly gratified to celebrate this anniversary by offering to the philosophical community a rich body of material for reflection on the notion of *arete*, which is precisely the one that gives our journal its name and has inspired its works since its foundation.

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*Arete* was founded in 1989. An initiative of members of the philosophy faculty members of the Humanities Department of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, the journal adopted the name that, long ago, other professors of the former Faculty of Letters had given to a journal of philosophy and letters. It appeared, as we then pointed out, "as a homage to the striving and enthusiasm of those who preceded us in the

difficult task of publishing a philosophical journal which engages us in a promise of continuity and seriousness.”

In these ten years of existence, *Arete* has become part of the inorganic history of Peruvian philosophy. Not only because it is an instrument for divulging national and international philosophical discussion, but also because it is a written testimony of some relevant philosophical events in the life of this country. *Arete* has published the conferences of national and international colloquiums, and special volumes dedicated to honoring important Peruvian thinkers. *Arete* has recorded the conferences of the First French-Peruvian Philosophy Colloquium on “Morals and Politics”; those of the Third National Colloquium on “The Notion of Analysis”; the commemorative conferences on Descartes’ anniversary. Among its issues one can also find homages to Felipe MacGregor and Juan Bautista Ferro, which gave rise to an extensive and emotive participation of Peruvian philosophers. Many other Peruvian authors have collaborated in different ways with articles, documents, book reviews or obituary notes, giving our journal the vital context of reflection that is co-substantial with its name.

*Arete* thanks the Peruvian philosophical community for its collaboration and trust. Again, it offers its pages to collecting the works of philosophical research currently being done in this country.

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All the articles of our anniversary volume are previously unpublished. Practically all of them have been specifically written for this occasion. This agrees with an editorial decision taken before we extended invitations to potential collaborators. Thus we were forced to reject some contributions, in spite of their magnificent quality, since they had already appeared in another journal or language. We are thus proud to be able to offer such an important volume of previously unpublished contributions on the notion of *arete*’s history.

This motive led us to make other editorial decisions. So that this volume may be accessible to a vaster community, we are publishing the contributions both in their original language and, naturally, in their respective translations in Spanish. In both cases, as is usual in our journal, we include an abstract of each work in Spanish and in English.

On the other hand, since this is a volume that contains many works with quotations in Greek and Latin transcriptions, and since the quotation norms in different modern languages allow certain variation margins, we

decided to publish the texts strictly respecting the quotation criteria of the different authors. This explains the differences among articles concerning the Greek quotations and the accentuation rules in Latin transcriptions. We have also respected the quotation and punctuation conventions of the respective languages. The Spanish translations, on the contrary, have maintained our journal's habitual editorial criteria.

Due to the amount and complexity of the contributions, the editorial work of this anniversary volume has demanded an enormous and uninterested effort of many people. Special thanks we owe to the journal's assistance editorial team, headed by Mariana Chu and composed, in this volume, by Levy Del Águila, Julio del Valle, Silvia Koniecki, Michell Nicholson, Martín Oyata, Rocío Reátegui, Carla Saenz and Eduardo Villanueva, all of them students or *alumnae* of our philosophy program who, for months, patiently contributed in editing and correcting these articles' galleys in permanent communication with their authors, until the final form that is being offered here. In addition, other students of the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences have collaborated with some translations and other eventual editorial work.

Finally, the Editorial Committee expresses its appreciation to all the authors that have generously contributed with their works to this academic celebration. To the Rector of this University, Prof. Salomón Lerner, and to the Dean of the Humanities Department, Prof. Jeffrey Klaiber, S.J., we also acknowledge their support to this initiative.

The Editor-in-Charge  
(Translated by Rosemary Rizo-Patrón)