Philosophers and historians of philosophy have traditionally read Cicero’s *On Ends* for its discussion of the highest good in Hellenistic philosophy and so as a kind of handy textbook introduction to Epicurean and Stoic (and perhaps Antiochean) ethics, for which other extant sources are scanty and often fragmentary. In treating *On Ends* as a kind of doxographical quarry, the text is naturally dismissed as a philosophical work in its own right. In response to such a reading, a recent trend in scholarship has been to try to rehabilitate Cicero as a philosopher *sui generis*, that is, to stress his own philosophical achievement rather than his accomplishments as doxographer. The present volume stands in this tradition and proposes nothing less than a ‘philosophical reassessment of the *De Finibus*’ (p. 2). The volume reunites nine papers that were presented at the 12th *Symposium Hellenisticum* in Budapest in 2010 and that specifically deal with *On Ends* with a particular focus on Cicero’s philosophy and presentation. The essays of the volume together broadly cover the whole Ciceroian text: They are a kind of upper-level overview of the philosophical Cicero of *On Ends*. Just as past *Symposium Hellenisticum* proceedings that were published and that have now become standard reference works for scholars in the field, the insightful articles in *Cicero’s De Finibus: Philosophical Approaches* offer much food for thought. The volume is highly recommended for scholars working in the history of Hellenistic philosophy and those interested in discovering Cicero not only as a rhetorician or a compiler of older views, but as a philosopher in his own right.

The contribution in the volume that most directly deals with Cicero’s overall philosophical outlook is by Charles Brittain. As one of the editors, Julia Annas, herself notes in the introduction, this article could read as the one that sets the stage (that is why it is the first article in the volume), but there is also some use in reading it last, as the one that sums up the philosophical Cicero (it seems to have been presented last at the Symposium Hellenisticum, see p. 4). In particular, Brittain’s text concerns the kind of skepticism Cicero defends; it discusses how exactly Cicero is to be understood as a philosopher. Brittain distinguishes between a mitigated skeptical reading, according to which Cicero allows for the qualified endorsement of some (ethical) philosophical views, and a Carneadean skeptical reading, according to which Cicero does not allow for the endorsement of any philosophical views. Closely examining the structure and the narratological set-up of the dialogue, Brittain first dismisses the evidence for the mitigated skeptical reading and second shows how Cicero’s
argument shares features of a Carneadean skeptical approach. In the final section of his article, Brittain explores the philosophical motivation for Cicero’s skepticism and draws an interesting parallel between the ethical discussion of *On Ends* and the epistemological one in Cicero’s *On Academic Skepticism*. As Brittain himself admits, this comparison remains a sketch, but it opens an avenue for future research: Reading the *On Academic Skepticism* as a methodological treatise to make sense of other Ciceronian texts seems like a promising way to enhance our understanding of Cicero as a philosopher.

Whereas Brittain’s article is the only one that deals with the dialogue in such a global way, the other articles mostly consist of more detailed analyses on Cicero’s treatment of more specific issues. While the contributors of the volume and the editors have inserted numerous cross-references to other papers, it is somewhat unfortunate that the question that Brittain answers (‘what is Cicero’s overall philosophical methodology?’) and his results are not more explicitly taken up by most of the contributions in the volume (the notable exception is Christopher Gill’s text). Certainly, it would have been interesting to hear more explicitly, rather than try to piece together, how the detailed analyses relate to and provide support for the big picture. But this perhaps is an unfair criticism, given the nature of the volume, whose concept is precisely to offer a plethora of perspectives rather than one unified account of the philosophical Cicero.

Among the three contributions that deal with books 1 and 2 and so the Ciceronian treatment of Epicurean philosophy, Pierre-Marie Morel’s piece stood out to me most. While James Warren’s and Dorothea Frede’s articles treat topics that have already received a considerable amount of attention (Epicurean pleasure and friendship respectively), Morel’s essay focuses on Torquatus’ account of Epicurean virtue in book 1 and Cicero’s refutation thereof in book 2. This topic has received surprisingly little attention. Morel rightly observes that Torquatus’ presentation is very much unlike the one we know from *Letter to Menoeceus* 132; the division of the virtues into four cardinal virtues is rather to be associated with the Academics or Stoics. To explain the discrepancy, Morel adduces two hypotheses. According to the first, Torquatus is trying to present Epicurean ethics to a Roman public and so adapts the Epicurean ideas to make them more palatable for his audience. According to the second, Torquatus is not at all changing Epicurean ideas, but rather using a clever argumentative strategy to show that even Academic, Peripatetic, or Stoic virtues are only instrumentally goods for receiving pleasure. Morel favors the second view, but I am not quite convinced of this suggestion. Before passing a judgment on the Ciceronian account and its authenticity, it would be helpful to do some more research into the presentations and development of Epicurean