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French thinker Pierre Hadot’s thesis is that ancient philosophy was conceived in the Greek and Roman world as a way of life, including meditations on ‘spiritual’ practices such as forms of meditation, exercises of the soul, and the so-called ‘sacred games’ of the Hellenistic and Roman empires. The core idea was that ancient philosophy is not a set of abstract propositions or a system of thought to be mastered in the classroom but a mode of living and acting in the world that teaches us how to face life’s challenges and how to grow in wisdom and virtue.

Hadot’s vision of the Hellenistic philosophies which were his principal sources after 1970 (especially the Stoics) is also materially different than that of what we think of as living philosophy, he says. This vision of thought and action is not the kind of philosophy that emerges from a thinking in words, but rather the kind that emerges from the body. The body, he argues, is the living episteme, the realm of embodiment, the place where the soul and the body meet.

At the heart of both ancient Epicureanism and Stoic philosophy stands no near parallels in contemporary analytic philosophy, the staid and sober tradition of which is wedded to a method of analysis that regards the body as an object of study, a means to the end of understanding, a means to the end of understanding, a means to the end of understanding.

Hadot emphasizes the importance of the body in ancient philosophy, arguing that the body is the seat of the soul and the place where the soul and the body meet. He also emphasizes the importance of the body in the practice of meditation, which he sees as a way of cultivating the soul and attaining virtue.

Hadot’s work has been influential in the field of phenomenology, and has been praised for its ability to bridge the gap between ancient and modern philosophy. His ideas have been taken up by a number of contemporary philosophers, including Alain Badiou and Jürgen Habermas.
It is the same remark that can be made about the Hellenistic schools, though Paul de Lagarde, directly rebuking what Hadot takes to be the heart of the Hellenistic philosophical experience: "Only proceed thus... hold fast by Experiencing... Everything is merely—they say, of a moment; for it is the representation of a whole reality."38

Hadot, Charlot claims, "was in no way following the present moment... half life and half Epicureans." He enjoyed the present moment like the Epicureans, and relished it intrinsically like a Stoic.41

Such advocacy of attention, or enjoyment, of the present moment—what Hadot does not shrink from describing as "a mystical dimension" in the "Stoic"—many question. It can be seen as an uncompromising affirmation of immediacy, as Arkady M. Chomsky has argued against Hadot, and the neo-Platonists of Charlot's generation. Nevertheless, as he puts it in his advice to Epicureans, Hadot stresses that this ancient philosophical valuation of the present moment is a legacy of a larger sense that the present moment, in the cosmos, is the only region where, because of her, inextricable human labyrinths are unravelled under our regard, which exceed—not from first to light...
A more perspicuous characterization proposed by N'Oublie pas de vivre, is that it can serve as the signature
of Hadot’s dealing with life and his critical engagement with the world. The book’s title, N’Oublie pas de vivre, is a
French expression meaning “don’t forget to live.” It is a phrase that resonates with the idea of living
out one’s life fully, without regrets, and emphasizes the importance of savoring the present moment.

In his book, Hadot presents a series of instructions on how to live a life that is in harmony with the world
and with one’s own nature. He argues that true knowledge comes from within and that the
process of self-discovery involves a series of stages, each of which is essential for
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