

This is an excellent book for those who wish to read a new translation and commentary of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, and it is also a fount of wisdom for those scholarly readers who wish to re-evaluate the modern view of Aristoxenus and the Pythagorean ethical system he echoes in his *Pythagorean Precepts*. H. has provided a valuable piece of research for all those interested in the Pythagorean tradition, as captured in Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*.

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FRAGRANCES IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

SQUILLACE (G.) *Il profumo nel mondo antico. Con la traduzione italiana del Sugli odori di Teofrasto. Nuova edizione aggiornata.* (Biblioteca dell'Archivum Romanicum 499.) Pp. xx + 280, colour pls. Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2020 (first edition 2010). Paper, €22. ISBN: 978-88-222-6688-0.

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This book is the new, updated edition of a valuable work dedicated to the study of fragrances in the ancient world and to Theophrastus of Eresus' *On odours* (*Peri osmōn*). Together with the useful edition edited by F. Focaroli (with a preface by S. Beta [2009]), S.'s version of the Theophrasteian treatise is the most recent Italian translation of this work. It is also worth mentioning the volume edited by U. Eigler and G. Wöhrle, *Theophrast De odoribus: Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar* (1993), which remains a decisive contribution on Theophrastus' *On odours*.

The book is structured as follows: the preface, written by Lorenzo Villosi, a well-known creator of fragrances, is followed by a short foreword by S., in which the motivations for this second edition are explained. This second edition appears to be very different from the previous one of 2010: it includes quite a few revisions, corrections and updates due to S.'s increased expertise on the subject of fragrance in antiquity. For this reason, readers interested in the subject and the book should prefer the second edition to the first. Part 1 is entirely devoted to the *De odoribus*: there is a clear introduction followed by the Italian translation of Theophrastus' writing with facing Greek text (although, unfortunately, there is not always correspondence between the Greek text and the translation: see e.g. pp. 54–9). Part 2, dedicated to 'Perfumes and Aromatic Substances', opens with an essay on 'The Art of Perfumery' and also contains a long and useful 'Documentary appendix'. This section includes Italian translations of the most significant passages from ancient authors who dealt with the issues addressed by Theophrastus, namely aromatic substances, odours, sense-perception, the relationship between fragrance and medicine, the role of fragrance in myth and aromatic wines. The volume closes with an outline of ancient units of measurement, some tables relating not only to the various themes touched on by the *De odoribus* (e.g. the derivation of odorous substances from plants, types of perfumes, methods of creating fragrances) but also to specific ancient authors or collections of works that deal with fragrances such as Pliny the Elder,

Athenaeus and the *Corpus Hippocraticum*. S. then offers chronological information on the most significant and sometimes lesser-known authors mentioned in the book; this is followed by maps, a list of abbreviations and a bibliography. Finally, there are three indexes: names and places; plants, perfumes and aromatic substances; and literary and epigraphic sources.

The importance of the *De odoribus* is at least twofold: on the one hand, it is a treatise unique in Greek science and philosophy on account of its subject matter. It is, therefore, an extremely precious work that decisively enriches our knowledge of fragrances, perfumes and, in general, the odours of the composite reality to which Theophrastus belonged. On the other hand, the *De odoribus* is one of those writings (probably, originally, not a work in itself but one of the books, perhaps the eighth, of the *De causis plantarum*) that are very important testimonies to the cultural and scientific atmosphere that must have prevailed within Aristotle's school. As S. correctly points out (pp. 6ff.), the wealth of detail in the contents of the *De odoribus* would be unthinkable without Alexander the Great's expedition to Asia, which contributed substantially to the knowledge of fragrances and spices previously unknown to the Greek world. But as a good and experienced Aristotelian, Theophrastus is aware that scientific and naturalistic investigations are to be carried out actively and empirically in the field; it is for this reason that it is quite probable to imagine that the philosopher frequented the perfumers' shops, which must have been numerous in Athens at the time.

Given the limited space of this review and considering my historical-philosophical interests, I do not want to deal here with the contents of the *De odoribus*, but I would like to dwell briefly on the significance of this writing in Theophrastus' works. S. (pp. 9–10) writes that the treatise on odours marks a clear detachment of Theophrastus from the lines of research of Aristotle (but also of Plato) because the Stagirite had never dealt with perfumes and the *technē* of their creation in such a comprehensive and exclusive way. In fact, neither Plato nor Aristotle has a specific interest in odours; Plato in the *Timaeus* and Aristotle in the *De anima* and the *De sensu et sensibilibus* (cf. for precise references S., pp. 84–90) dealt with the 'physiology' of odours and the sense of smell, but only briefly, not dedicating any specific treatment to the subject. Theophrastus must have been aware of this: in this regard § 64 of the text (in which Democritus is mentioned) is significant. Now S. interprets the new content of the *De odoribus* as a sign of yet another (even polemical) detachment of Theophrastus from the Master's theories. I would certainly have been more cautious about this; this point should have been dealt with in more depth since it is, in my opinion, highly significant and extremely delicate. First of all, it should be kept in mind that Aristotle's school (as well as the ancient philosophical schools in general) is not a closed and dogmatic environment, but a structure open to discussion: debates over the founder's work were not off-limits, given that, beyond anything else, it remained central to the doctrinal life of the school. For this reason, to speak of Theophrastus' polemic against Aristotle is an incorrect and partial view. As H. Baltussen has pointed out (*The Peripatetics: Aristotle's Heirs, 322 BCE–200 CE* [2016], especially Chapter 1), Aristotle's texts were constantly debated by his followers, but this is not the reason to conclude that Theophrastus and the Peripatetics deliberately wanted to polemicise against the founder of the school. Above all, the philosophy of Aristotle's immediate successors refers directly to the Master's work, which is discussed, but not necessarily in polemical tones. From this point of view, to consider Theophrastus a critic of Aristotle is incorrect and reductive. One can well be a pupil of Aristotle and belong to his school while critiquing this or that doctrine. Theophrastus' opuscula and his botanical writings deal with topics that Aristotle did not study in detail. This does not mark a detachment of Theophrastus from Aristotle; if anything, it marks an opening, since these works would not exist

without Aristotle's earlier investigative and methodological model. With the *De odoribus* Theophrastus introduces a new theme, which certainly broadens the horizon of the research of the Peripatos, but his approach is consistent with the Aristotelian scientific method.

Usually, as a proof of Theophrastus' (alleged) disloyalty to Aristotle, the so-called *Metaphysics* is mentioned: yet, as L. Repici has persuasively shown (*Teofrasto: Metafisica* [2013], especially pp. 9–46), it is difficult to consider this Theophrastean work as a document of anti-Aristotelian positions. Rather, it is a work focusing on *aporia*, which is a fundamental tool of dialectical investigation and a research method already theorised and widely employed by Aristotle. Theophrastus' polemical target is rather the late Plato of the doctrine of principles and the Academic philosophers (Speusippus and Xenocrates: cf. G. Wöhrle, *Theophrast von Eresos: Universalwissenschaftler im Kreis des Aristoteles und Begründer der wissenschaftlichen Botanik. Eine Einführung* [2019], pp. 27 and 68–70).

Finally, a mere suggestion and a line of enquiry: as in the *Metaphysics* (see e.g. 4a13, 4b8: εὐλογώτερον, 6b21: εὐλόγως), in the *De odoribus* (see e.g. 52: εὐλογον, 61: in the latter case I would not translate the adverb εὐλόγως as 'obviously', as S., p. 55, does) the occurrences of words related to εὐλογος / εὐλογον are interesting. From Diogenes Laërtius (4.29) we know that Arcesilaus was a pupil of Theophrastus; it is well known that the practical 'criterion' of εὐλογον plays a central role in Arcesilaus' philosophy, and usually the interpreters (cf. e.g. A.M. Ioppolo, *Opinione e scienza: il dibattito tra Stoici e Accademici nel III e nel II secolo a.C.* [1986], pp. 128–9) rightly refer it back to Aristotle and the Stoics. I believe that a comprehensive survey of the occurrences of εὐλογος / εὐλόγως in Theophrastus' works could be fruitful in order to verify if it is possible to assume some influence of the Peripatetic philosopher on Arcesilaus regarding the use of this terminology.

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MENANDER'S *SAMIA* AND PERFORMANCE

WRIGHT (M.) *Menander: Samia*. Pp. viii + 166, ill. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Paper, £17.99, US\$24.95 (Cased, £55, US\$75). ISBN: 978-1-350-12476-9 (978-1-350-12477-6 hbk).

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For a scholar like myself who is interested in Menander's reception today, it is a pleasant surprise that W.'s companion to Menander's *Samia* begins with the author's confession: 'Samia was the first Greek play I ever watched – in Evis Gavrielides' stunning production in the open-air theatre at Epidaurus in July 1993 – and I have had a soft spot for it ever since' (p. vii). Gavrielides's production was innovative and addressed to a modern Greek audience, at a time when Aristophanes reigned supreme and Menander was relatively unknown.