A basic drawback is that in P.'s view symposium and komos partly overlap. Therefore the separate treatment of either side seems inappropriate. I think it is hardly possible to deal with these blurring aspects without also touching the interrelated subjects of sacrifice and Dionysiac festival. What I miss most in such a bright and merry perspective is a generic framing of symposium and komos in the typical world-upside-down and a connection with the characteristic themes such as utopia, Golden Age, as well as the ritual occasion where both *komos* and symposium play an equally decisive rôle. Especially the victorious *komos* at the end often alludes to the aspired victory of the comic poet and directly transcends the inner system of fiction towards the outer frame of the ritual performance. There is a complete ignorance of new approaches of the performative dimension of Aristophanes with his specific oscillating between inner and outer linguistic instance. The cultic and religious aspect of Dionysus is hardly ever mentioned. P. is not aware of possible ritual plot-patterns integrating the *komos*, as P. Sfyroeras, *The Feast of Poetry: Sacrifice, Foundation, and Performance in Aristophanic Comedy* (Diss. Princeton, 1992; Ann Arbor, 1993) tried to do in the wake of Francis Cornford.

She stresses the point that 'the komos has not received very much attention in recent years' (p. 6). Therefore it is a severe flaw not to mention the best modern treatment by P. Ghiron-Bistagne, *Recherches sur les acteurs dans la Grèce antique* (Paris, 1976), esp. pp. 207–97. She is not up to date with the research on the *status quaestionis*; other very basic titles are neglected, e.g. S. Peirce, 'Death, Revelry, and *Thysia*', *Class. Antiquity* 12 (1993), 219–66 (confirming the cheerful view). She even does not know the most fundamental study on the symposium and food by P. Schmitt Pantel, *La cité au banquet. Histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques* (Rome, 1992), esp. pp. 222–31 ('La cité nourricière selon Aristophane'). Last but not least, she ignores my book *Der Chor in der Alten Komödie. Ritual und Performativität* (Munich, 2001) (published in fall 2000!) whose second chapter deals entirely with the *komos* and provides a new cultural and performative approach on the issue.

P. has assembled a lot of material, but we might have easier access to it through lexica. For the reader interested in literary and cultural interpretations of the sophisticated author Aristophanes deeply grounded in the genre of Old Comedy this contribution is disappointing. *Quid novi*? The all-encompassing and stimulating book on the intriguing subject has still to be written.

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## SOCRATES AND THE SOCRATICS

G. Romeyer Dherbey, J.-B. Gourinat (edd.): *Socrate et les Socratiques*. Pp. xi + 531. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2001. Paper, FFr 320. ISBN: 2-7116-1457-3.

The book under review is a set of twenty-one essays on the historical Socrates, the minor Socratics, and modern receptions of Socrates, assembled from discussions and seminar presentations at the C.N.R.S. between 1992 and 1994. The series was surely inspired by the publication in 1990 of the second edition of Gabriele Giannantoni's *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae* (*SSR*), and the volume presents itself as an accompaniment, a prelude, or a postlude to this collection. Giannantoni himself

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contributed the introduction and an essay on Aeschines' *Alcibiades* (also published in Italian in *Lezioni socratiche*, Naples, 1997). Upon his death in December 1998, the present volume was dedicated to his memory.

*SSR* has potentially opened a new era in research on Socrates and Socraticism, and Giannantoni's introduction appears under a title ('Les perspectives de la recherche sur Socrate') that promises to tell us how things have changed and where they are headed. This essay turns out to fall short of its billing, as does the collection as a whole, although some individual essays are excellent. Giannantoni calls for (1) a history of modern historiography on Socrates (and delivers a predictable sketch from Hegel and Schleiermacher to Vlastos and his pupils). He follows up with a call for (2) a 'radical historicization of the figure of Socrates', that is, closer study of Socrates in his fifth-century social context, including the variety and functions of the *Sokratikoi logoi*. The Socratic texts, though, must (3) be interpreted as literary texts, not propositions, arguments, or doctrines. By following these imperatives, we can learn more about the nature of Socrates as the first true philosopher, who used discussion not to find or assert a definitive truth, as in science, but to search for what he did not know.

The other twenty essays tend to take on these projects, but the reader is disappointed by the rather random coverage (we learn about reception—perhaps 'historiography'—of Socrates by Aristotle, Heidegger and Karl Popper, and tangentially Nietzsche, but not Schleiermacher or Vlastos), and, especially, by the scant use and citation of *SSR*. Only seven essays treat the fragmentary minor Socratics (three on Antisthenes' speeches and logic, one on Diogenes of Sinope's *Politeia*, Giannantoni on Aeschines, R. Muller on the concept of freedom in Socrates and his followers, and Brunschwig on Cyrenaic epistemology). An essay on Heidegger's seminar on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* $\Theta$ addresses Heidegger's attraction to the Megarians' argument, but this is hardly a study of the Megarians themselves. The majority of the essays, including two of the three on Antisthenes, are in fact based on passages in Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle, and thus make little acknowledgement that the publication of *SSR* was important for the history of Socratic studies.

At least three essays are published elsewhere in English: D. Morrison on Socratic justice appeared in *Ancient Philosophy* 15 (1995), C. Kahn on Socrates in Plato and Aristotle is Chapter 3 of *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue* (Cambridge, 1996), and Brunschwig's piece is roughly identical to his contribution to the *Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (1999).

The essays are arranged in six categories, all under the two large headings 'Socrates' and 'The Socratics'. The eleven essays on Socrates open with two fairly factual sketches of Socrates and his trial (Romeyer Dherbey and L. Brisson), separated by Morrison's essay on justice in *Memorabilia* 4.4. Four pieces on substantial issues in the thought and methods of the historical Socrates follow: C. Viano, 'La cosmologie de Socrate dans les Mémorables de Xenophon', draws interesting comparisons between *Memorabilia* (1.1.11–15, 4.7.1–10) and Plato's *Timaeus*. J.-F. Balaudé and J.-B. Gourinat explore dilemmas connected with Socratic irony and doctrine, the first regarding the hedonist argument in Plato's *Protagoras* and the second regarding moral doctrine in general. Gourinat looks to *SSR* for some of his material (chiefly Aeschines), but errs on the side of excessive breadth. L. Rossetti recasts his familiar case (e.g. *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 22 [1989]) for attributing to Socrates a fundamentally rhetorical approach to his interlocutors. Rossetti, too, tries to locate Socratic rhetoric in texts of multiple Socratics, but one is left with the worry that what he is perceiving could be more Plato's rhetoric than Socrates'. The final four essays on

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'Figures of Socrates' include Kahn's piece; a piece by J.-F. Mattéi on 'Socrates the Stranger' as an ontological figure, related to the origin and nature of philosophy; a compelling article by M.-C. Bataillard showing the failure of Aristotle as a historical source for Socrates, as his Socrates, throughout the *Metaphysics* and especially the three ethical works, is none other than the author of the (erroneous) thesis that virtue is knowledge; and a piece by M. Gourinat on Karl Popper's *Socrates*.

The nine essays on the Socratics open with three pieces supposedly addressing the transition from Socrates to his followers (although this is an issue that characterizes every occasion on which Socrates entered written literature). C. Natali gives an interesting reading of the Socrates in Xenophon's *Oikonomikos*. Giannantoni looks at Alcibiades as a positive example of the converted Socratic pupil in Aeschines and other Socratic literature. R. Muller proposes that Socrates and his followers are crucial players in the evolution of western concept of freedom, and that amid a rhetoric of 'negative freedom' (after I. Berlin), we see a positive freedom for virtue, which itself remains ill-defined. The section on Antisthenes includes Romeyer Dherbey on the *Ajax* and *Odysseus* as opposing views of warfare and A. Brancacci and M. Balmès on the tortuous questions of Antisthenes' logic in, respectively, Socrates' dream in Plato's *Theaetetus* 210c–202c and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* H.3. In a final set of essays on the schools, S. Husson compares Diogenes' *Politeia* to that of Plato, A. Boutot asserts the importance of the Megarians for Heidegger's reading of Aristotle, and Brunschwig reassesses Cyrenaic epistemology.

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## RETHINKING THE ELENCHUS

G. A. Scott (ed.): *Does Socrates Have a Method? Rethinking the Elenchus in Plato's Dialogues and Beyond*. Pp. xiii + 327. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002. Cased, US$45. ISBN: 0-271-02173-X.

In his famous paper on Socratic method, 'The Socratic Elenchus' (*Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* I [1983], pp. 27–58, reprinted with revisions in G. Vlastos, *Socratic Studies* [Cambridge, 1994], pp. 1–37), Vlastos claimed that although Socrates was himself exclusively a moralist and therefore not reflective or self-conscious about methodology and its terminology, there was nevertheless a logical structure common to many important arguments in the early Socratic dialogues. The interlocutor asserts a thesis, p. Socrates shows the interlocutor that he is also committed to other views, *q*, *r*, which are inconsistent with p. Socrates and his interlocutor conclude that *p* is therefore false. Vlastos claimed to be not merely describing the structure of Socratic method, but also revealing a rather serious threat that lurks within it. How can Socrates possibly claim to have proved that *p* is false, when all he has actually done is show that *p* and *q* are inconsistent? The interlocutor, had he been a little more shrewd, might have gone on to deny *q*, leaving *p* unscathed.

What we must see is that this is not a narrowly logical or methodological problem, but one that cuts to the core of any Classicist's or philosopher's attempt to understand Socrates in Plato's early dialogues. At stake here is nothing less than the question of whether there is a viable constructive side to Socratic philosophy. Does Socrates merely show that his interlocutors are inconsistent, or does he draw conclusions that

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