Francesca PENTASSUGLIO, *Eschine di Sfetto. Tutte le testimonianze*

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platonicienne et l'articulation entre cette érotique et le politique à partir de concepts contemporains. O. Renaut fait du discours de Pausanias consacré à la pédérastie un « défi à l'érotique pédagogique platonicienne » (p. 230) et « un discours capital pour l'éducation platonicienne, dans la mesure où il pose le problème spécifiquement politique de la régulation des mœurs sexuelles, de leur compatibilité avec la loi, mais surtout de l'usage, par le législateur, des relations (homo-)érotiques pour l'éclosion de la vertu, non pas chez les philosophes, mais pour la Cité tout entière » (p. 230). À travers ce discours, la pédérastie ne saurait se réduire à une affaire de sexualité et elle engage moins un affaiblissement des normes de genre que leur élaboration. Ce faisant, c'est une lecture traditionnellement admise de Platon, contempteur de la pédérastie, qui se trouve mise en question. Ce sont également nos catégories contemporaines d'« homosexualité » et plus généralement de « sexualité » ou encore d'« éducation » qui sont rendues à leur contingence.

À travers les contributions réunies dans cet ouvrage, Platon apparaît donc tout à la fois comme un témoin et comme un penseur, ses dialogues comme le témoignage d'un certain nombre de représentations qu'il contribue aussi à déconstruire, à problématiser, à faire évoluer. L'ouvrage échappe de ce fait au clivage qui oppose trop souvent historiens de la philosophie et historiens de la sexualité. Il contribue à enrichir de façon significative les études platoniciennes et nous engage à penser et à repenser de façon problématisée un certain nombre de catégories contemporaines au cœur de débats et de luttes pleinement actuels, comme le suggère d'ailleurs l'article de P. Ludwig.

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Francesca PENTASSUGLIO, *Eschine di Sfetto. Tutte le testimonianze*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2017 (Paperback), 672 p., ISBN 978-2-503-57774-6.

The new book of Francesca Pentassuglio on Aeschines has come to fill an essential vacuum. The studies on Socratic philosophies have an interesting history that combines moments of great recognition with others of almost total disrepair. They were prominent in Antiquity and constituted a space where many lines were connected and enhanced the quantity and quality of the philosophical dialogue. Nothing at that time could make us suspect their subsequent fate and the development of an enormous difference between the 'major' Socratics, Plato and Xenophon, and the 'minor' Socratics, a category that brings together Megarics, Eliacs and Cyrenaics, as well as figures such as Antisthenes, Aeschines and Simon the Shoemaker. Some of them had a significant influence on Hellenistic philosophy, but these lines were, in turn, obscured by the passing of time, so that their luck was ultimately similar to figures who did not produce schools.

In the long run, we keep little information about all of these philosophers, most of it in the form of indirect testimonies, even though the phenomenon of Socratic dialogue marked the classical period with an unprecedented amount of works by prolific authors united in what Aristotle considers a literary genre in its own right. Aeschines is one of these solitary thinkers who shone in his time with a glow that made him famous for a long period. The ancient sources testify to the importance attached to his texts by many authors who believed that he exceeded Plato in style. His significance in the general framework can be measured by the number of preserved fragments of its dialogues, whereas in the case of other well-known Socratics we only have testimonies. On the other hand, the fact that he did not form a school nor were his ideas adopted as inspiration by

other philosophical groups placed him in a marginal situation within a field that became itself marginal.

This situation worsened during the twentieth century because of historiographical reasons that put in the background the studies on the Socratics at large. These reasons were often associated to the speculative nature of many approaches due in part to the lack of a philologically reliable integral edition. That objection was covered by Giannantoni's edition of the *Socratis et Socraticorum Fragmenta* published in 1990. Since that moment, a growing amount of studies and translations into modern languages have appeared. This process is not easy and has been carried out at an unequal pace, which is why the appearance of Pentassuglio's book, the first contemporary major work devoted entirely to the work of Aeschines, is good news.

The work is presented as a translation of all the extant texts, with a preliminary study and a commentary, but strictly speaking, it is more than that, since it contains three parts with full weight. The first two hundred pages, about a third of the book, constitute a treatise that starts from the presentation of Aeschines as a writer of *sokratikoi logoi*. From a methodological perspective, the work draws from the well-known criticisms of Louis-André Dorion to the *quaestio socratica* transposing the historical issues in favour of a study of the *sokratikoi logoi* as a phenomenon.

The study examines the figure of Aeschines through the evaluation of the testimonies about his biography. This point is especially important given that, as is well-shown in Pentassuglio's text, the tradition attributed great importance to Aeschines' life. There is a line that praises him to the point of considering him a Socratic model and another that criticises him as an impostor and a swindler that betrays the Socratic heritage. At the same time, some testimonies depict him as a wealthy citizen, whereas others describe him as an indigent, and the list could go on. In all cases, Pentassuglio offers a careful analysis of the sources and the interpretations supported in the secondary bibliography. She develops penetrating reports on the possible origin of the testimonies and examines their compatibility taking into account the phenomenon of forging anecdotes from theoretical views which is usual in ancient doxography and the connection of these stories with the ideas and prejudices of that time.

The examination of Aeschines' works leads to an extensive analysis of each dialogue highlighting their theoretical contributions. In this manner, Pentassuglio finds elements to oppose the readings that minimise them by drawing attention to the relevance conferred to Aeschines within the Socratic circle, the stylistic and dramatic mastery that can be inferred from the extant material and the properly philosophical developments. For instance, Pentassuglio examines the main aspects of the analysis of the dramatic structure of the *Aspasia* and its system of Chinese boxes that exceeds in complexity the parallel text of Plato's *Symposium*, as well as the discourse of Themistocles in the *Alcibiades* as a synthesis of the peculiar and worthy features of Aeschines' style. She also highlights its relationship with the protreptic composition, along with the developments on the notions of *eros* and *paideia*.

It should be noted that this study includes substantive contributions to the comprehension of the dialogues. Some of them have received more attention, such as *Alcibiades* and *Aspasia*, and Pentassuglio combines subtle views which provide a thorough assessment of previous readings. The rest constitutes a slightly studied part of the *corpus* that includes *Axiochus*, *Callias*, *Miltiades*, *Rhino* and *Telauges*. We conserve fewer testimonies of these dialogues so that the speculative nature of many ideas is higher, but at the same time, it is essential to increment our efforts to examine these texts and their issues as they allow broadening our knowledge of Aeschines' real contributions.

Undoubtedly, Aeschines was not only interested in the topics of love and education. The examination of these testimonies allows identifying a kind of social interest related to the analysis of poverty, and it also shows Aeschines' concern for the interpretation of recent history as a philosophical issue. We know that this aspect had particular relevance in the Socratic circle given that the charges against Socrates included the accusation of corruption of the young citizens, and that was related to his closeness to controversial characters such as Alcibiades, Critias and Charmides. Hence, the description of these relationships in the works of his disciples is part of a corporate operation of defence of their common master.

However, the case of Aeschines is especially striking as his works reflect a particular interest in recent history, the inferences that can be drawn about the desirable behaviour of the rulers, and the election of a way of life. Pentassuglio's study dedicates an in-depth analysis to this dimension. She also deploys possible connections between the dialogues that help to compose an overall image of this philosophy. The case of the links between *Miltiades* and *Telauges* is a clear case that allows reconstructing the horizon of the latter, of which we preserve very few testimonies.

It is especially interesting that the study tries to connect Aeschines' works with those of some other intellectual characters of his time, such as Gorgias, which is particularly relevant, and his Socratic fellows. Indeed, the work constitutes a detailed exploration of Aeschines' philosophy, but it also draws connections with other lines contributing to a general program of reconstruction of the multiple exchanges that formed the thought of this foundational period.

The second part of the book contains the testimonies and fragments of Aeschines. It includes the text in the original language of all the extant texts on his life and works as well as the epistolographic material with an Italian translation. It does not include, however, a critical apparatus and only in a few cases there are brief mentions referring to variants and translation options, sometimes mentioning differences with other authors. This arrangement makes the reading easy, although it makes the work dependent on the consultation of other editions with more philological information.

The translation follows Giannantoni's text, but it is based on the revision of other critical editions and adopts in some cases different variants. It also presents a dozen testimonies not included in Giannantoni's edition and suggests the places that they could have occupied in the general context of Aeschines' works. Four of them constitute possible additions to the dialogues, and two of them are the product of a re-evaluation of testimonies included in previous editions but discarded in the *SSR*. In all the cases, Pentassuglio presents convincing arguments to support the inclusion within the *corpus*.

Regarding translation, it should be noted that this type of works presents major challenges. They are composed of passages from a large number of authors of very different periods, so that they require a specialized expertise of the translator, who must have linguistic and lexicographical knowledge, but also a broad theoretical ability to account for material that offers different and in many ways more considerable difficulties than the comprehensive texts of better-known authors. In this context, the result is excellent as the translation is accurate and the texts preserve the variety of styles. As a result, it offers a high-quality material that will surely provide a basis for future studies on this captivating Socratic philosophy.

The third part, which occupies the second half of the book, is dedicated to scholarly commentaries on each passage. It constitutes a kind of expansion and deepening of the material contained in the first two sections. Indeed, it renders the details that support the interpretations presented in the essay of the first part through extensive exegesis of

each line. At the same time, it offers numerous philological, linguistic and grammatical indications that make this study a section suitable for scholars. This is a good option as it allows concentrating in an independent space several details that could have hindered the reading of the first sections.

In this way, the book combines parts proper for a broader audience that may be legitimately interested in Aeschines and the Socratic philosophies, without depriving scholars of the detailed discussion that must be undertaken in order to promote this field. This point is especially important because this work belongs to a cutting-edge area and it is prerequisite for its growth that it becomes increasingly visible in contemporary historiography beyond the limits of the philological community.

It was a good asset to insert an appendix dedicated to the history of modern editions of Aeschines' extant texts, including those from the beginning of the eighteenth century and those that were published between 1850 and 1912. From this study, it is possible to appreciate the evolution in the area and how it fell into disrepair during the twentieth century until it recovered their significance in recent years. In this context, the work of Pentassuglio constitutes a substantial contribution to the development of this field, and it will surely gain a well-deserved place in the tradition of studies on the Socratic philosophies.

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David LEFEBVRE, *Dynamis. Sens et genèse de la notion aristotélicienne de puissance*, Paris, Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 2018 (Bibliothèque d'histoire de la philosophie), 607 p., ISBN 978-2-7116-2765-3.

On ne peut que saluer la parution de cet ouvrage important, dont le sous-titre exprime d'emblée l'originalité et la force : élucider le sens de la notion aristotélicienne de *dynamis* par l'étude de son histoire ou de sa genèse (cf. p. 7 et 32). Cette méthode de travail répond à la volonté de débrouiller les fils d'une ambiguïté bien connue de la notion aristotélicienne de puissance, qui se partage entre deux acceptions principales, explicitées en *Metaph.* Θ : d'une part, la puissance *kata kinesis*, qui désigne un principe actif ou passif de changement, par opposition à l'impuissance ; de l'autre, un sens plus ontologique, qui exprime un mode d'être par contraste avec l'*energeia*. Ce sont la nature et les raisons de cette « double orientation de la *dynamis* aristotélicienne » que l'ouvrage se propose d'éclaircir. Mais, s'il s'agit là d'une question somme toute classique, dans le champ des études aristotéliciennes, l'ouvrage innove en se proposant de dépasser les deux méthodes ordinairement mises en œuvre pour résoudre cette ambiguïté : tantôt par un commentaire interne du livre Θ, tantôt par une lecture génétique cherchant à replacer ce double sens de la puissance au sein d'une évolution d'Aristote (lecture génétique dont l'auteur montre les limites méthodologiques et textuelles, p. 14-22). Car si l'ouvrage ne manque évidemment pas d'offrir une étude précise des thèses et de la construction du livre Θ, s'il ne dénie pas non plus, à l'évidence, tout intérêt à une perspective historique, il formule en revanche l'hypothèse que l'ambiguïté de la puissance aristotélicienne ne peut trouver sa solution qu'à la condition de sortir du seul cadre des textes d'Aristote, pour les replacer au sein d'une histoire plus large de la notion de *dynamis*, à la fois sémantique et conceptuelle, afin de comprendre ce que le Stagirite en recueille, accepte, modifie ou prolonge.

À l'originalité de cette méthode se joint celle du point de départ que David Lefebvre