

BOOK REVIEW

Socrates and the Socratic Dialogue. Edited by ALESSANDRO STAVRU AND CHRISTOPHER MOORE. Leiden, NL: Brill, 2018. Pp. viii + 931. Hardback, \$262.00. ISBN: 978-90-04-32191-5.

With *Socrates and the Socratic Dialogue*, co-editors Alessandro Stavru and Christopher Moore have assembled a welcome addition to the growing body of scholarship on the ancient reception of Greek philosophers. This sprawling volume, spanning over 800 years of Greco-Roman literature, attempts to provide an overview of three intertwined aspects of Socrates' reception: the iconic figure of Socrates himself, the genre of the Socratic dialogue and the varied interpretations of key philosophical ideas attributed to Socrates. The overall approach is intertextual and reception-oriented, and the result is a diverse collection of essays that largely sidesteps the search for a "historical" Socrates, asking instead what the philosopher and the dialogic genre meant to thinkers throughout antiquity (4).

After a short introduction addressing historical trends in Socratic scholarship, the volume consists of 40 chapters arranged chronologically into five sections. Since considerations of space preclude detailed reviews of every chapter, what follows are schematic outlines of each section.

Part 1, "Around Socrates" (31-138), begins by examining the subgenre of anti-intellectual comedies in Athenian Old Comedy (Bromberg). Against this backdrop, subsequent chapters assess Socrates' reception in Aristophanes (Capra) and Isocrates (Murphy), his "Protagorean" portrayal in Aristophanes and Plato (Corradi) and the origins of the written Socratic dialogue (Redfield).

Part 2, "The Immediate Socratic Circle" (141-234), examines the reception of Socrates in the fragmentary writings of his closest contemporaries, including Antisthenes (Suvák), Euclides of Megara (Brancacci), Aristippus (Urstad), Aeschines of Sphettus (Mársico) and Phaedo of Elis (Di Lanzo). The contributions in this section are particularly cohesive, and provide valuable discussion and reevaluation of the intellectually diverse early Socratics. Vladislav Suvák's chapter on the ethical Socratism of Antisthenes' twin epideictic speeches, *Ajax* and

Odysseus, stands out as a fine demonstration of how Socratic reception can extend to genres beyond philosophy.

Part 3, "Plato" (237-431), consists of nine chapters on Socratic reception in Plato. It begins with chapters comparing Plato's portrayals of Socrates with those of Xenophon and of later Hellenistic writers (Brisson), and assessing the changing meanings of *philosophia* in the Classical period (Rossetti). Following these are chapters on Plato's treatment of Socrates' *daimonion* (Jedrkwicz), Socratic expert-analogies (Sandstad), the Silenic characterization of Socrates in the *Euthydemus* (Erler), Socrates' attitude toward natural philosophy in the *Phaedo* (Müller), the practical vs. theoretical modes of life in the *Gorgias* (Jordović), the Platonic *dubia* as evidence for the reception of Socrates (Tarrant) and a close reading of Socratic passages in Plato's *Lovers* (Peterson). As the editors frankly acknowledge, scholarship on these subjects could fill multiple volumes, but the scattershot approach in this chapter does nicely capture the possible range of formal, philosophical and character-based approaches to understanding Plato's Socrates.

Part 4, "Xenophon" (435-597), addresses explicit Socratic themes in the *Memorabilia*, *Oeconomicus* (Dorion) and *Symposium* (Alvino), as well as implicit political and ethical topics in the *Hiero* (Zuolo) in Xenophon's other non-Socratic works (Humble). This detailed coverage of virtually all of Xenophon's writings offers an insightful and useful survey of Socratic themes in Xenophon. Noreen Humble's contribution is particularly valuable in this respect, rehabilitating the renaissance notion of Xenophon "Socraticus" by illustrating the pervasiveness of philosophical themes and modes of argument in all genres of his writing.

Part 5, "Later Reception" (601-854), the longest section of the volume, surveys Socratic reception in Aristotle (Smith), Aristoxenus (Stavru), Epicurus (Heßler), the Stoics (Bees), Cicero's *De officiis* (Renaud), Persius (De Brasi), Plutarch (Roskam), Apuleius (Drews), Maximus of Tyre (Trapp), Diogenes Laertius and the anonymous author of *PHib* 182 (Dorandi), Libanius (Nesselrath), Themistius and Julian the Emperor (De Vita) and Proclus (Layne). For most classicists this section will offer a wealth of new information and perspectives not found in the standard handbooks on Socrates and Plato. While it is regrettable that this survey of later reception does not include any Jewish or Christian authors, the diversity of authors and genres in this section is a helpful reminder that Socrates is more than just a character in the literature of 5th and 4th century Athens.

Overall, the coherence of the volume would have been improved by including more cross-reference and dialogue between chapters. For instance, Urstad provides interesting analysis of an anecdote from Diogenes Laertius in which

Aristippus mocks Diogenes the Cynic for washing his own vegetables (195). Yet when Brisson discusses another version of this anecdote that substitutes Plato for Aristippus and mocks him for *not* washing vegetables, there is no discussion of possible links between the two versions and what they might signify. This sort of engagement is inconsistent throughout the volume, which seems a missed opportunity in a collection with an avowedly intertextual and reception-based approach.

Aside from the occasional lack of dialogue between chapters, and with the exception of a handful of minor typographical errors, the overall quality and editing is high, and the volume is worth reading for anyone interested in expanding their perspective on the literary legacy of Socrates. Due to the impossibility of exhausting such a broad topic in a single volume, readers may find it helpful to know that Brill has recently published a *Companion to the Reception of Socrates*, also edited by Moore, which fills certain gaps in the present collection (e.g. early Christian reception) and extends its coverage to the modern period. While certainly not the final word on the subject, Stavru and Moore's *Socrates and the Socratic Dialogue* provides a valuable starting-point to investigate the history of Socrates' literary reception.

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