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Review
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Source: *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 7, Fasc. 1 (1954), pp. 79-80
Published by: Brill
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/4427585
Accessed: 22-06-2016 22:54 UTC

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G. J. DE VRIES, *Antisthenes Redivivus*. Popper's Attack on Plato. Amsterdam, North-Holland Publishing Company, 1952. p. 66.

Whereas the ideological and systematic-philosophical aspects of Prof. Popper's "The Open Society and Its Enemies" have met with remarkably little criticism, it is the philological-historical side of the first volume which has caused some noteworthy repercussions amongst "Platonists" (are they merely detached students of Plato or do they also share his philosophical credo?). An extensive account of their disagreements with Popper can be found in Dr de Vries' booklet.

Its disposition is not quite satisfactory: for those who have studied Popper's book—and who else would read his ardent antagonist? —much of the paraphrasing is superfluous. On the other hand de Vries too often limits himself to a kind of esoteric hints without going into the details of the matter.

Now, have Popper's theories been refuted? It is difficult to attach a clear meaning to the term "refutation" in this context. In general one might feel doubts about the conceptual framework from which Popper derives his categories of interpretation: it is not developed from within Plato's work, but rather extrinsically applied to it. Yet, Popper always takes great pains to give the references in support of the hypotheses he wants to defend. But then two questions are all-important: are the quotations he offers correctly interpreted, and how are they selected? Now Popper's case is admittedly presented in a forensic manner and this frequently leads him to pleading in optima forma. Here de Vries' exposures of particular misinterpretations may serve as a warning to be on one's guard. And in spite of Popper's careful selection of supporting evidence de Vries succeeds in citing counterexamples. It is often hard to make out how seriously such objections ought to be taken, especially in an oeuvre of such a complicated structure as Plato's. But de Vries renders it at least plausible that some of Popper's theories stand in need of being modified (apart from the few he has better drop altogether).

And this, I think, is the main conclusion to be drawn after one has again been confronted with the weak spots in Popper's arguments. Even within its narrow scope his interpretation of Plato has overshot the mark. But a mark there is, and as against certain observations of de Vries and some other critics it may be worth while to emphasize, finally, the following point. It is true that from a purely historical angle we cannot understand Plato's ethical and political doctrines without the whole systematic context of his "dialectics", which may have been developed independently;

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Popper is apt to forget this. Admitting this, however, does not at all imply—as some of his critics too easily assume—that on the level of justification and evaluation an appeal to Plato's "dialectics" is of any avail to defend its political extension. Once we come to see the latter in all its nakedness, without the specious transcendental wrappings, we may still feel inclined to side with Popper, albeit with a good deal of reservation.

IJMUIDEN, Moerbergplantsoen 181. G. NUCHELMANS

H. BARDON, *La Littérature latine inconnue.* Tome I. *L'Epoque républicaine.* Paris, Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1952. 382 p. Pr. 1600 Frs.

M. Bardon, Professeur à la Faculté des Lettres de Poitiers, a eu l'heureuse pensée d'écrire une histoire littéraire de tous les auteurs Latins qui ne sont connus que de nom ou par quelques fragments. La manière dont M. Bardon a traité sa matière a l'avantage que les écrivains dont nous avons un ou plusieurs ouvrages ne sont plus des figures isolées, mais, en outre, il les a replacés dans une orientation plus exacte. Pour donner un exemple, le chapitre premier „Des origines à Térence" nous montre que Plaute vivait dans une période d'intense production dramatique. Grâce à un goût littéraire très fin M. Bardon a réussi excellemment à caractériser les contemporains de Plaute. Voici son jugement d'un fragment de Trabea (Cic. Tusc. IV. 67): „Il y a ici une impatience jeune et naïve qui séduit. Le style est aisé, asyndétique, peu archaïque; comme le sentiment qu'il exprime, il est fraîcheur et vivacité".

Le livre se composera de deux tomes dont le deuxième qui n'a pas encore paru étudiera les auteurs de l'époque impériale. Le premier volume contient les chapitres suivants: I Des origines à Térence, II Au temps de Térence et de Scipion Emilien, III Au temps des Gracques, IV Au temps de Sylla, V Autour de Cicéron: Philosophes et orateurs, VI Autour de César et de Salluste: Historiens et pamphlétaires, VII Autour de Varron: Savants et techniciens, VIII Autour de Lucrèce et de Catulle: Les poètes.

Malgré l'incertitude des sources l'auteur a écrit un livre clair et intéressant qu'on lit d'un bout à l'autre avec le plus grand plaisir. Quoique un grand nombre des renseignements se trouve aussi dans le premier volume de Schanz-Hosius (1927), M. Bardon est plus complet et en a fait une véritable histoire. Comparez par exemple ce que Schanz-Hosius disent des poètes comiques Iuventius et Vatronius (p. 124, 125) avec les pages que l'auteur français a vouées à ces deux poètes obscurs dont le nom même est incertain. Pourtant M. Bardon n'est nulle part fantaisiste, au contraire il

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