

associated with other qualities of the objects they describe: *flavus* could be "blond", "golden" and it could also evoke the image of movement of hair, water or corn. Modern colours covered by *flavus* range from blue to yellow to red (Fig. 1). The same applies to *viridis* which is "green" as well as "verdant" and "vigorous". *Caeruleus* evoked rather the appearance of deep sea or copious waters than sky-blue (but *caeruleus* comes from **caelu-leus*). These problems are the subject of the chapter on philosophical thought on colour. For example, for Lucretius, colour was a secondary quality for any sensed object, a by-product of the shape, size, arrangement and movement of atoms. It is consequently open to interpretation and could be transitory, like the colour of the sea. Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* uses colour extensively to classify various materials and to describe natural phenomena. For Pliny, the colours associate with other qualities, particularly with regard to how colour could be artificially produced in his times and how this created "fake" colours compared to the earlier, natural and undeceiving colours.

The rhetorical concept of colour was often connected with the physical appearance of the body, for example, the blush of embarrassment. It was related to moral and ethical qualities as well as expressing emotion. It also had much in common with the authentic/fake discourse encountered in Pliny – colour could be artificial and thus deceitful. This leads to the discussion of the body, how its colours could be perceived as natural or unnatural, altered by using, for example, cosmetic products. The natural colours of a person could be used to indicate his/her ethnic origin as well as analyse his/her character and values. The body's natural colours could be altered with dyes and other cosmetic substances and this concerned especially the female body. The deception and trickery associated with use of make-up and wigs was also applied to women and their character. Yet, the unadorned woman also was a target of ridicule.

Bradley's book is a fascinating and thought-provoking read. It gives us tools to analyse and understand the use of colour in various Roman contexts and perhaps also to understand the differences between our tastes and the Romans'. When a *triclinium* with cinnabar-based wall paintings was recreated for an exhibition presenting one Pompeian house ("Domus Pompeiana" at the Amos Anderson Art Museum in Helsinki in 2008), the room was perceived by many visitors as garish, vulgar and far too bright. Our modern perceptions of colours suitable for decoration are clearly different from the Romans: the rainbow is different for us and the Romans.

Eeva-Maria Viitanen

CLAUDIA BARACCHI: *Aristotle's Ethics as First Philosophy*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2008. ISBN 978-0-521-86658-3 (hb). IX, 342 pp. GBP 50, USD 94.99.

Claudia Baracchi has written an ambitious book in which she gives a re-interpretation of Aristotle's ethics. As the title of her book suggests, she argues that ethics was first philosophy for Aristotle. This argument is striking because it is strongly against the traditional view according to which Aristotle considered theoretical study of the first causes and principles to be first philosophy.

Baracchi does not want to argue that the priority of wisdom (*sophia*), contemplation (*theoria*), understanding (*nous*) and knowledge (*episteme*) over prudence (*phronesis*) and action (*praxis*) should be overturned. Rather, her argument is that "the theoretical is always in-

formed by a set of practises" (p. 1), and that "encountering phenomena, the world, or nature in the broadest sense is always a matter of *ethos*" (ibid.)

This argument needs some clarification because there are, of course, different ways in which the theoretical can be informed by a set of practises. It is evident that some of these ways are easily accounted for in terms of the traditional view. For example, a traditional interpreter is ready and willing to admit that, according to Aristotle, wisdom, contemplation and knowledge are fundamentally based on experience and sense perception, something that Baracchi curiously associates with *ethos* and *praxis*. Furthermore, a traditional interpreter has no problem in admitting that our theoretical pursuits arise from our desire to know. Thus, in order to differentiate her hypothesis from the traditional view, she needs to give an argument that is substantially stronger than the traditional claim about the dependence of wisdom, contemplation and knowledge on experience, sense perception and intellectual desire.

I had some difficulties in identifying Baracchi's argument, but this is what I came up with. Baracchi wants to argue that the theoretical is not only dependent on *ethos*, but is a matter of *ethos*, which is an inclusive notion ranging from perception, appearance and belief to action. This point gradually emerges when she discusses *Metaphysics A* and *Posterior Analytics B.19* in her "Prelude", paying attention to those sections in which Aristotle discusses desire for knowledge and the role of sense perception, experience and induction (*epagoge*) in acquiring knowledge. Much of her discussion only supports the weaker dependence claim, but she thinks she can draw further conclusions. For example, when commenting on Aristotle's considerations about wisdom as knowledge of first causes and principles (981b28–982a2), she argues, "wisdom will name an apprehension that lies beside and beyond demonstration, an apprehension that is in fact defined by belief and is itself a matter of belief – which again marks the belonging of wisdom in the order of appearance and of the practical" (p. 27–8). Here she takes quite a step from knowledge to belief, and I failed to realise how she could justify taking it.

However, a step such as this helps us to understand why Baracchi makes the statement in the first place that ethics is first philosophy. She seems to assume that first philosophy is to be contrasted with demonstrative knowledge, and that all that cannot be demonstrated is, in fact, a matter of belief and, then, *ethos* or action. However, the problem is how she could possibly justify this assumption. It is uncontroversial that Aristotle distinguished ordinary beliefs from understanding and wisdom, which are knowledge to the highest degree (see, e.g., *Nicomachean Ethics Z*). It is also beyond doubt that in the *De Anima*, he drew a clear line between perceiving, believing and thinking on the one hand, and desiring and acting on the other. In light of these distinctions, there seems to be no direct link between wisdom and *ethos*, or the practical.

However, let us suppose for the sake of argument that this traditional understanding is mistaken. Then one might argue that although there is some evidence to the contrary, Aristotle did not actually intend to draw a clear line between wisdom and prudence. This would be an extreme position, one that Baracchi is not explicitly willing to adopt. Nonetheless, her main section on *Nicomachean Ethics* and especially its last chapter leaves one with the impression that her position is something quite close to this. One of her conclusions is that "one the one hand, prudence was shown as inherently 'theoretical'... while, on the other hand, wisdom is shown crucially to rest on sensible-intuitive evidence" (p. 212). I was somewhat puzzled by her argument that prudence is inherently theoretical because the reasons she gave for this claim only related prudence to the contemplation of what is good to a person in a given situation.

Even so, this argument is of some importance to her as she argues that prudence "seems to disrupt" the traditional, schematic order of intellectual virtues such as wisdom and prudence (p. 208).

The main section of the book consists of a discussion of *Nicomachean Ethics* A to H. Baracchi divides her discussion into five chapters which are entitled as follows: "Human Initiative and Its Orientation to the Good", "On Happiness", "On the Soul", "On Justice", "The Virtues of the Intellect". Each of these themes is examined in light of a number of textual citations, some of which are rather extensive. In spite of her conspicuous attention to the text, the author does not attempt to go deeply into the arguments contained in the text nor does she intend to set them in their immediate context. Rather, her main interest is to re-read the text with a view to showing that even in his most theoretical considerations, Aristotle laid heavy emphasis on intuitive, experiential and practical conditions that inform those considerations. As a result, some earlier scholarly concerns are put in a new perspective. The author concludes, for example, that her interpretation enables us to question the traditional "schematization of the virtues", which have given rise to the long-standing debate on whether the human good only consists of wisdom or also includes other virtues (p. 213, n. 63).

The main section is followed by an "Interlude" discussing *Metaphysics* Γ. Baracchi concentrates on Aristotle's considerations regarding the principle of non-contradiction. She aims to show that this principle is "intrinsically related to the ethics of discourse" (p. 232). This means that the principle does not only regulate the way in which we can speak and use language in a sensible way. It also "signals or is itself a manifestation of the good, of the good at work, in action" (p. 233). This further claim is associative and remains ill-founded.

The concluding section on *Nicomachean Ethics* Θ to K does not substantially add to the main arguments of the book, but it elaborates on them in the light of Aristotle's discussion of friendship.

In general, Baracchi's study arises, roughly speaking, from a phenomenological tradition in which "the practical" is given precedence over "the theoretical". It is not easy to specify in a few words what this means, but the basic idea is that the practises through which we encounter the phenomena place certain fundamental conditions on our theoretical activities. The author attempted to show that we also find this precedence, a "modern intimation", as she says (p. 2), in Aristotle.

As a result of this approach, the author's arguments are heavily informed by her overall interpretation of the importance of *ethos* to Aristotle's theoretical considerations. She interprets *ethos* and *ta ethika* in the most general terms. According to her, they are "aspects of demeanour revealing character and the presence (or absence) of a sense of appropriateness, adequacy, precision, or even tactfulness with respect to any given circumstance" (p. 55). She argues that for Aristotle, "the central concern of the ethical investigation will be the response to the requirements inherent in any situation" (ibid.). In the chapters on the *Nicomachean Ethics* she then examines how Aristotle attempted to harmonize human orientation to the good and to action and the circumstances. The result is a massive re-reading of the whole treatise.

I encountered some difficulties in seeing whether the author made progress in discussing the relevant passages. This was because she rarely referred to other interpreters or reviewed their interpretations in detail. However, given the highly critical starting point of the study, one might have been entitled to expect that the author would situate her new interpretation in this scholarly context and argue in detail against the traditional view.

To sum up, this book is an articulation of a certain philosophical outlook on Aristotle's ethics. I suppose it will be better understood by readers who share the author's outlook. However, those who require a more detailed textual analysis in support of the proposed interpretation will be less satisfied.

Mika Perälä

NATALE SPINETO: *Dionysos a teatro. Il contesto festivo del dramma greco*. Storia delle religioni 16. "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, Roma 2005. ISBN 88-8265-321-8. XII, 436 pp. EUR 230.

Il presente libro di Natale Spineto, noto storico delle religioni e ottimo conoscitore della religione greca, è dedicato alle rappresentazioni teatrali messe in scena durante le varie festività dionisiache ateniesi, colmando così una notevole lacuna negli studi dionisiaci. Mentre i preziosi lavori di Arthur Pickard-Cambridge (in particolare *The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens*, Oxford 1946) erano maggiormente di carattere filologico, Spineto mette a fuoco il contesto storico-religioso delle celebrazioni teatrali.

Nel volume si offre una minuziosa e ben documentata ricostruzione delle quattro festività dionisiache, gli Anthesteria, i Lenaia, le Grandi Dionisie e le Dionisie campestri (κατ' ἄγρούς), soprattutto dal punto di vista della religione civica e del calendario dei culti dionisiaci. Vengono sottolineati i molti aspetti della figura di Dioniso e dei rituali pertinenti al suo culto, come pure i rapporti tra le varie feste del dio nonché il significato della coltivazione della vite e la produzione del vino. In particolare, viene illustrato, nella scia di Angelo Brelich, attraverso la nota "alterità" ed "estraneità" del dio Dioniso, il ruolo del teatro come rappresentazione di una realtà diversa da quella ordinaria. Oltre alla discussione della flessibilità del dio e delle sue varie manifestazioni nelle quattro celebrazioni, Spineto analizza in maniera autorevole la partecipazione di più categorie sociali, quali stranieri, donne, giovani e bambini, alle festività dionisiache (soprattutto alle Grandi Dionisie). Tutte queste celebrazioni drammatiche con i loro rispettivi elementi e rituali, integrate nelle strutture socio-politico-religiose della *polis*, sembra che non servissero ad altro che a produrre una dialettica di sospensione e riaffermazione da parte di Dioniso dell'identità cittadina. Come nei suoi miti, il dio regolarmente sconvolge l'ordine per poi ricrearlo, così le feste in suo onore, mettendo in dubbio l'ordine civico, ne riaffermano il valore.

Il saggio di Spineto rappresenta un ulteriore esempio della notevole capacità e produttività della Scuola romana di storia delle religioni: un lavoro magistrale in termini qualitativi e monumentale per quello che riguarda l'analisi delle tantissime fonti rilevanti.

Mika Kajava

HEIKE KUNZ: *Sicilia. Religionsgeschichte des römischen Sizilien*. Religion der Römischen Provinzen, Band 4. Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2006. ISBN 978-3-16-149085-9. XX, 424 S. EUR 109.

Sicilia. Religionsgeschichte des römischen Sizilien offre una panoramica utile e ricca di materiali sui culti religiosi della Sicilia antica. Appartiene ad una collana di monografie sulle