

Aischines Von Sphettos: Studien Zur Literaturgeschichte Der Sokratiker

THE CLASSICAL REVIEW

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AESCHINES THE SOCRATIC.

Aischines von Sphettos: Studien zur Literaturgeschichte der Sokratiker. Untersuchungen und Fragmente von HEINRICH DITTMAR. [Vol. xxi of Philologische Untersuchungen, edited by Kiessling and Wilamowitz-Moellendorf.] Berlin: Weidmann, 1912. Svo. pp. xii. 326. 10 m.

AESCHINES of Sphettus is a somewhat shadowy figure even to those who have bestowed some attention on the literature of the Socratic circle. He founded no school; and it is generally admitted that his contribution to the progress of philosophy was insignificant—a result which remains undisturbed by the exhaustive investigations of Dittmar. Nevertheless, his writings long continued to be in vogue, and the possibility of their recovery would by no means be a matter of indifference. For there is a consensus of testimony among the ancients that his dialogues, no less than Plato's, were instinct with the genuine Socratic spirit (Diog. L. 2. 61, etc.); and as an independent witness to the personality of his master, he would control the inferences to be drawn from the divergent testimony of Plato and Xenophon. Of course, the scanty evidence which survives is much too incomplete clearly to display the features of the Aeschinean portrait; but by ingenious combination of the materials which he has gathered together, Dittmar has succeeded in recovering as much as is available for our information of the scope and purpose of some of the principal dialogues.

The book is divided into two parts: the first (pp. 1-244) contains a detailed investigation in six chapters of the six dialogues *Aspasia*, *Alcibiades*, *Axiochus*, *Miltiades*, *Callias*, and *Telauges*, and of their influence upon contemporary literature; and the second (pp. 247-310) a critical edition of the ancient *testimonia* relating to the life and writings of Aeschines, and a collection of the existing fragments. In the latter portion is included (p. 299 ff.) a collection of the remains of four dialogues of Antisthenes (*Aspasia*, *Heracles*, *Cyrrus*, *Alcibiades*)

which are held to be closely connected with the writings of Aeschines. The book is provided with adequate indexes, and its critical equipment is worthy of the well-known series to which it belongs. The paper and printing are good, and I have noticed very few misprints.

Some of Dittmar's results may be briefly indicated. The purpose of the *Aspasia* was to promulgate the Socratic doctrine that men and women are capable of the same virtue, by pointing to the example of Aspasia's intellectual and political achievements, and of her eminence as the adviser of Pericles and the instructress of Lysicles the sheep-dealer. It was from her too that Socrates had learnt his philosophical conception of the true nature of *êpos*. On the other hand, Antisthenes, in his dialogue of the same name, considered Pericles to have fallen short of his own ideal of wisdom; the uncompromising foe of Aphrodite saw nothing but subjection to *êdonê* in the statesman's connexion with Aspasia. Dittmar infers that the dialogue of Antisthenes was directed against Aeschines, and that the latter was also the source of the bantering references to Aspasia in the *Menexenus* of Plato. The *Menexenus* is assigned to 386, and the *Aspasia* of Aeschines was not much earlier. Another allusion to Aeschines' dialogue is discovered in Xen. *Oec.* 3. 14, where Socrates promises to introduce Critobulus to Aspasia, as capable of instructing him more thoroughly in the proper position of a woman in domestic management. Wilamowitz conjectured that this was intended as an acknowledgment of the compliment which Aeschines had paid to Xenophon by describing an interview of Aspasia with him and his wife. Dittmar accepts the suggestion; but, as Gomperz (*Greek Thinkers*, iii. 342, E. tr.) remarks, it is by no means obvious. It is equally incapable of proof—in spite of Dittmar's confident assertion—that Xenophon's account (*Mem.* 3. 11) of Socrates' colloquy with Theodote was inspired by Aeschines. The longest chapter (pp. 65-177)

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