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*Caddedi on the Tellaro: A Late Roman Villa in Sicily and
its Mosaics* by R. J. A. Wilson (review)

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precisely because Aristophanes argued for its relevance and excellence. Telò further claims that textiles, especially the “cloak” of the book’s title, formed a crucial metaphor from Aristophanes’ writings that suffused the scholarly conception of *Clouds* as canonical. Unfortunately, Telò offers hardly a shred (pun intended) of evidence that any scholars in antiquity deployed this metaphor in the way that Telò insists happened. Furthermore, while there is much that is unknown about how much Aristophanes revised the original *Clouds* into the version that is now available, Telò explicitly dodges the problem generally (126–27), and in particular the short bits of text that do survive of the original *Clouds* that are distinct from the extant revised version. When so little evidence is available, it is fair, even mandatory, to expect a modern scholar to account for all the evidence that we do possess.

Instead, Telò makes a number of claims about the “affect” of Aristophanes’ textile metaphors in the parabases of *Clouds* and *Wasps* (a “proto-canonical maneuver” in Telò’s terminology). A bewildering range of metaphorical extensions are linked from diverse parts of the plays. For Telò, the scripts are something to navigate without explanation of method, principle, or direction. In an age of dynamic scholarly analysis of plays as performed in real time, such a method at minimum demands rigorous justification. Telò would have been better off capitalizing on such scholarship rather than marginalizing it; for example, Compton-Engle’s superb work on costume is relegated to a minor note [125n8]). Instead, Telò draws dramatic conclusions from the skimpiest of linguistic parallels; for example, he seems to find it a marked phenomenon (36) that Aristophanes uses the common verb γινώσκω more than once. Telò’s repetitive claims earn less sympathy when laced with notes complaining about the tendentiousness of other scholars (126–27, 135). It is unintentionally revealing when Samuel Beckett turns up as a reference point (120, 157), for Telò actually reads Aristophanes as a meditation on literature, authority, and decency as they become manifest in a densely comic world. Indeed, the book may well have been more successful as such a reading rather than as an argument for unsupported historical claims. Consequently, Aristophanes’ paradox remains and awaits a more compelling explanation.

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R. J. A. Wilson. *Caddeddi on the Tellaro: A Late Roman Villa in Sicily and its Mosaics*. Babesch Annual Papers on Mediterranean Archaeology, Supplement 28. Louvain, Paris, and Bristol, CT: Peeters, 2016. Pp. viii, 200. €80.00. ISBN 978-90-429-3388-0.

Caddeddi on the Tellaro fits into a long-standing body of scholarship (though often lacking for some sites) on Sicilian archaeology, with a special focus on Roman housing and *villae*. Among these, the most celebrated is certainly the complex of Piazza Armerina in the province of Enna. Wilson reports (vii) that he started to write this work in 2012, when he was “Guest Fellow” at the Getty Research Institute. The Roman villa was discovered in the early 1970s in an

agricultural area close to the river Tellaro, not far from Noto (Syracuse). The villa, built in the fourth century C.E. and destroyed by fire in the fifth century, lies beneath an early-modern farmhouse. The *masseria* was lived in until the nineteenth century. A thorough review of all the excavation reports and finds has never been published, and this book is therefore undoubtedly crucial for fully understanding one aspect of the complex, that is, its exceptional and well-preserved flooring decoration.

As one of its main objectives, the book offers an accurate, close examination of the Cadeddi villa's mosaics and includes six sections or chapters. First, *Background* (1–25) helps to situate the villa in the regional archaeological context. It also incorporates specific examinations of other Roman *villae* in Sicily, including those in Patti Marina (10–15), Pistunina (15), Gerace (15–21), and Settefrati (21–22). “The Cadeddi Villa: An Overview” (26–42) is a description of the entire complex, accurately focusing on the plan, the rooms, and the distribution of their mosaics. However, this part is a little incomplete in its coverage of the history of the villa's excavation (26)—a history that the author appears to have summarized in anticipation (one hopes) of a more complete publication of the excavation results. Chapter 3 (43–62) contains a detailed analysis of the fragmentary mosaic found in room 8, showing the ransom of Hector's body. Wilson provides all the pertinent links with contemporary mosaics and other fine art objects (for example, the Berthouville *oenochoe*). The mosaic of Bacchus (room 9) is described in chapter 4 (63–74), including coverage of all its decorative elements, such as the crater with pomegranates (fig. 4.18).

The last descriptive section, entitled “The Hunt Mosaic” (75–103), details a spectacular and complex floor that shows an elaborate hunting scene featuring varied characters and animals. Wilson properly analyzes all aspects of the action portrayed therein, albeit focusing on a series of sub-scenes, which he describes separately (for example, “the picnic,” 90–95). “Discussion” (104–32) is clearly one of the most significant sections of the book: here, Wilson continues his discussion of various aspects of the hunt scene and its stylistic elements, also contextualizing the floor within the context of other significant African mosaics. A set of thematic appendices (A on saddles, 133–35; B on shoes and legwear, 135–46) further enhances this monograph.

Last but not least, many clear and varied high-resolution illustrations greatly enhance Wilson's book. These images are not only relevant to the Cadeddi villa's mosaics (including enlargements and details; see, for instance, figs. 3.17–21 and 4.3–9), but they also extend to a series of comparative elements such as fruits (fig. 4.10), animals (fig. 5.34), and other mosaics (figs. A.7–12). All 197 illustrations are listed in a dedicated section (151–59).

In conclusion, Wilson's book is undoubtedly an essential resource for scholars interested in late-Roman Sicilian archaeology. It is to be warmly welcomed for four main reasons. First, it offers new data on the Cadeddi villa, data that are still awaiting full publication. Second, the many images represent a crucial strength of this well-documented book. Third, the Cadeddi villa's mosaic floors shed new light on late-Roman art in Sicily, on the inspiration that it draws from classical mythological and religious repertoires, and on its links with northern Africa. Fourth, the introductory section includes some new pictures of the Patti Marina villa in the province of Messina—a villa that, sadly, still lacks adequate coverage in modern scholarly publications. Finally, this monograph promises to represent an important starting point for academic coverage of, and systematic

data revisions for, all Sicilian *villae*, a project that would contribute significantly to improving our knowledge of the island's archaeology during the Roman period.

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C. W. Marshall and Tom Hawkins (eds.). *Athenian Comedy in the Roman Empire*. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2016. Pp. vi, 295. \$39.95. ISBN 978-1-47258-883-8.

Scholars have attended, albeit intermittently, to the reception of Greek comedy in the Roman imperial period (see E. Fantham, "Roman Experience of Menander in the Late Republic and Early Empire," *TAPA* 114 [1984], 299–309, and R. B. Branham, *Unruly Eloquence: Lucian and the Comedy of Traditions* [Cambridge, MA, 1989]), but the past decade has witnessed a flourishing of such studies in monographs and select chapters in Oxford handbooks, Cambridge companions, and festschriften. This volume is a valuable participant in this flourishing for the balance it achieves of topical variety and thematic focus throughout its thirteen chapters. Contributors treat diverse authors, texts, and evidence, yet each chapter remains firmly rooted in a measured consideration of the received genre. Readers with an interest in Athenian comedy, Old or New, or in a cautious yet productive approach to comic reception, will discover much of value in this well-executed volume.

The introductory chapter, "Ignorance and Reception of Comedy in Antiquity," coauthored by the volume's editors, begins with an overview of Greek comedy to contextualize the array of studies to follow. The potted survey offers a smooth-reading but citation-rich outline of the theatrical genre, proceeding from the earliest comic performances in Athens to Hellenistic New Comedy and its transformation during the Roman Republic. Marshall and Hawkins then introduce questions that the subsequent studies tackle, required reading if one wishes to understand the volume's modest ambitions. The editors regard the personified *Aгноia* (Ignorance) "as a kind of muse for this project" (2), and they make clear that the assorted contributions articulate explorations in—rather than definitive boundaries to—the study of comic reception in the Empire: "This is not a complete account, nor even a representative survey, but it does offer a number of new studies that complement what we know about comedy in this period" (13).

The editors' alertness to *Aгноia's* sway in their designated field of study is evident in the restraint with which they and other contributors routinely approach discussions of reception. Consider a quote from Marshall's chapter on the second-century C.E. sophist Aelian (chapter 11). Having suggested that Aelian had access to certain of Eupolis' plays, Marshall states, "In other cases, we simply do not know enough about lost comedy to be able to determine with precision how much Aelian actually knew" (205). Chapters throughout the collection acknowledge comparable gaps in evidence while nevertheless laboring to reveal what scholars can and do know.

Contributions average twenty pages in length (including endnotes) and advance in loose chronological order through the Empire. Readers can begin