

XIII.—Theophrastus as a Literary Critic

G. M. A. GRUBE

TRINITY COLLEGE, TORONTO

There are no works of criticism extant after Aristotle until we come to the first century B.C.; we have to rely on fragments and references in later authors and scholia, and the lack of the original works is nowhere more tantalizing than in the case of Theophrastus. His name is constantly coupled with that of Aristotle as an important critic; we know that he wrote a number of works on poetry, oratory, language, and style. As he was the successor of Aristotle, a man of powerful intellect, we are bound to try and reconstruct his theories; but, in attempting to do so, we are easily led to exaggerate any differences we can find between his opinions and those of his master. Attempts have been made to trace back to him such later critical formulae as those of the "virtues" of style and the "three styles," and they have met with a more favourable reception than they deserve. In view of this, it seems necessary to review the evidence afresh, and an unprejudiced review of it will show, I believe, that, while Theophrastus was no copyist and had some interesting things to say, yet his own outlook was entirely Aristotelian; he restated, elaborated, interpreted the theories of Aristotle without important change; no un-Aristotelian theory or formula can fairly be traced to him.

That the two philosophers were in close agreement on many critical questions has always been admitted. Both wrote on the function of each section of a speech;¹ both discussed the general themes² with which an orator has to deal and the commonplaces in which he should be trained to do so;³ both disliked the continuous or strung-along style as against the periodic.⁴ There is a striking

¹ *Rhet.* 3.14–19 and Quintilian 4.1.32. Theophrastus is there mentioned on the exordium only, but this implies consideration of the parts of a speech.

² Theon, *Prolegomena* in Walz 1.165 and the discussions of subject matter in *Rhetoric* from 1.4.

³ *Rhet.* 2.18.2 and 2.19 and the references to Theophrastus in Alexander's Commentary on the *Topics*, Berlin ed. 1891 (Wallies) where see Index Nominum under Theophrastus.

⁴ *Rhet.* 3.9.2 and Cicero *Orator* 228.

similarity in the advice they both give on matters of detail, as, for example, that the boldness of metaphors can and should be mitigated by using such expressions as "such as" or "if one may venture to say so" in introducing them.⁵ We know from considerable fragments that Theophrastus too was fully aware of the tremendous influence of music upon character and emotions.⁶ Such differences as we do find in their treatment of the same subjects, while always of interest, are usually of minor significance and, in our search for original literary theory in Theophrastus, we should not be tempted to exaggerate them.

For example, we have, from each philosopher, an attempt to explain the beauty of words.⁷ Aristotle first states that words are beautiful *ἐν τοῖς ψόφοις ἢ τῷ σημαινόμενῳ*, i.e. because of their sound or their meaning, and then goes on to discuss a third point, the associations of particular words. He then restates the three factors as *τῇ φωνῇ ἢ τῇ δυνάμει ἢ τῇ ὄψει ἢ ἄλλῃ τινὶ αἰσθήσει*. Theophrastus, as quoted by Demetrius, speaks of the beauty of words as *τὸ πρὸς τὴν ἀκοὴν ἢ πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν ἢ δὴ, ἢ τὸ τῇ διανοίᾳ ἐντιμον*. The first of these is clearly the sound of the words. Theophrastus (or Demetrius) goes on to explain that by pleasing to the eye he means that what is pleasant to see is also pleasing when heard; as we should say, it recalls a pleasing picture. This is Aristotle's *τῇ ὄψει*. *τὸ τῇ διανοίᾳ ἐντιμον* means that we prize the meaning presented to the mind, which is the same as Aristotle's *τῷ σημαινόμενῳ* or *τῇ δυνάμει*. There is therefore complete agreement between the two philosophers that the beauty of words is due to sound, meaning, and associations; though the formulae look different at first sight, they mean the same. Aristotle's discussion, however, taken as a whole, is clearer; he realizes that associations may be related to other senses than sight and he therefore expresses his third factor as *τῇ ὄψει ἢ ἄλλῃ τινὶ αἰσθήσει*. Whether Theophrastus' omission of this refinement is due to his definition being more popular, or to incomplete quotation by Demetrius, or to some other cause, the two philosophers are essentially in agreement.

⁵ Ps.-Longinus, *Subl.* 32.3. This advice is not found in our texts of Aristotle.

⁶ Plut. *Quaest. Conviv.* 623A quotes from Theophrastus the three *ἀρχαί* of music as *λύπη*, *ἡδονή* and *ἐνθουσιασμός*; also *De Recta Rat. Aud.* 38A; Athenaeus 14.624; further on Theophrastus' attitude to music and catharsis Zeller, *Aristotle and the Earlier Peripatetics* (London 1897) 2.415-416, and J. Croissant: *Aristote et les Mystères* (Liège 1932) 113-116.

⁷ *Rhet.* 3.2.13 and Demetrius, *Eloc.* 173-174. Also Dion. Hal., *Comp.* 16.

Another subject on which we have parallel statement is the nature of *γνώμαι*.⁸ Aristotle, in a fairly full discussion, defines them as statements of a general nature as to what is to be sought or avoided in the realm of human action. The definition from Theophrastus is shorter, but essentially the same. Both philosophers divide maxims into two main classes: those that do not require any reason to be added because they express an opinion that is generally accepted, and those where the reason should be stated because the opinion expressed is either paradoxical or at least controversial. The terminology is largely the same in both writers and the three examples quoted from Theophrastus all occur in Aristotle (*Medea* 296; that health is good for man; and Stesichorus' famous saying to the Locrians; *Rhet.* 2.21.2,5,8). Aristotle, however, has a further subdivision of both main classes: the first type is subdivided into (a) those that need no added explanation because they are already known, and (b) those that do not need it because their truth is realized as soon as they are uttered; the second main group is also subdivided into (a) those sayings that are part of an enthymeme, and (b) those that are not (*Rhet.* 2.21.3–6). If our late evidence on this point is to be trusted, these further elaborations were ignored by Theophrastus, but all that is quoted from him on this point is to be found in Aristotle.

Sometimes Aristotelian theory is elaborated and developed. Theophrastus, like his master, believed that prose should have rhythm without being metrical; he too condemned trochees and dactyls in prose and had a preference for paeonic feet. We are told that he discussed the subject of rhythm with more precision⁹ and we find that, whereas Aristotle is concerned with paeons only at the beginning and the end of a sentence or clause, Theophrastus seems to have recognized that prose-rhythm is more than the use of metrical feet in those positions and that a whole sentence might, for example, have a paeon-like rhythm without the precise use of

⁸ *Rhet.* 2.21, and Gregory of Corinth in Walz 7.1154, quoted by A. Mayer, *Theophrasti περί λέξεως Libri Fragmenta* (Leipzig 1910) 143. Aristotle's definition is: ἀπόφανσις, οὐ μέντοι περί τῶν καθ' ἕκαστον . . . ἀλλὰ καθόλου. καὶ οὐ περί πάντων καθόλου . . . ἀλλὰ περί ὧσων αἱ πράξεις εἰσὶ, καὶ αἰρετὰ ἢ φευκτὰ ἐστὶ . . . and his two kinds are ὅσαι παράδοξόν τι λέγουσι ἢ ἀμφισβητούμενον and ὅσαι μηδὲν παράδοξον. That of Theophrastus reads: καθόλου ἀπόφανσις ἐν τοῖς πρακτέοις (or πρακτικοῖς) and his three kinds are παράδοξοι, ἔνδοξοι, and ἀμφίβολοι or ἀμφισβητούμεναι.

⁹ Cic. *De Orat.* 3.184–5, *Orat.* 172: Theophrastus vero eisdem de rebus etiam accuratius; and 218.

feet at the beginning or end, and in this way achieve a certain distinction.¹⁰ Here we find an interesting refinement of Aristotelian theory.

While Aristotle somewhat reluctantly admitted the increasing importance of delivery and curtly dismisses the subject in the *Rhetoric* (3.1.3–4), Theophrastus apparently dealt with it more fully, recognized it as basic and insisted that it required a knowledge of psychology.¹¹

Theophrastus may have gone further than his master in his recognition of historical development in matters of style, for he noted the differences brought by Herodotus and Thucydides in the writing of history.¹² He evidently discussed the nature of the three kinds of rhetoric recognized by Aristotle since he said that deliberative rhetoric must be free of affectation and he shared what seems to have been a general Peripatetic prejudice against epideictic rhetoric when he stated, following Aristotle, that epideictic had nothing to do with practical affairs and was concerned only to give pleasure.¹³

When Quintilian (10.1.27) tells us that Theophrastus recommended the reading of the poets as extremely useful to the orator, and that many have followed him in giving this advice, it is certainly implied that it originated with him. Yet even here he only formulated what is implied in the *Rhetoric*, indeed in all Greek criticism since Gorgias.

Perhaps the most original fragment of Theophrastus is that which states: "You must not express everything with precise elaboration but leave some things for your hearer (or reader) to perceive and work out for himself. When he infers what you have omitted he will be not merely your hearer but your witness, and a quite friendly one, because he thinks himself rather clever and you have given him the chance to exercise his intelligence. To say

¹⁰ Demetrius (41) quotes from Theophrastus as giving a paeon-like effect the following clause: τῶν μὲν περὶ τὰ μηδενὸς ἄξια φιλοσοφούντων, in which, strictly speaking, there are only two paeons — ∪ ∪ ∪ near the beginning and ∪ ∪ ∪ — near the end. This is quoted as a παράδειγμα μεγαλοπρεπείας. For Theophrastus' use of this word see notes 16 and 27.

¹¹ Our authority for this is late but specific. See Walz 6.35–6 = Rabe, *Prolegomenon Sylloge*, p. 177.

¹² Cic. *Orat.* 39.

¹³ Quintilian 3.8.62 and 3.7.1.

everything is to convict your hearer of stupidity, as if you were talking to a fool."¹⁴

To this we may add the definition of frigidity attributed to Theophrastus,¹⁵ namely "that which goes beyond the form of expression appropriate to the subject," i.e. an inappropriate dignity or nobility of language. The form of words may be Theophrastus' own, the content is entirely in accord with the discussion of frigidity in the *Rhetoric* (3.3).

So far our evidence shows Theophrastus to be, in criticism as in other things, a disciple of Aristotle who repeats, develops, and elaborates the theories of his master, capable of saying intelligent things on his own (such as his advice to leave some things for the reader to infer) but nowhere departing from Aristotelian critical theories in any important respect. The same impression is confirmed by any fair reading of three passages in later authorities which are of no particular importance except that attempts have been made to extract too much meaning from them.

These passages are:

1. Simplicius, in his Commentary on the *Categories*¹⁶ of Aristotle, quotes Porphyry as drawing a distinction between words as expressing meaning (the categories) and words considered only as λέξεις or formal parts of speech. Questions arising under the latter aspect are dealt with, we are told, by Theophrastus in his work on "The Elements of the Proposition" and by other writers of his school (or other writers on the subject — the reading is doubtful), e.g. whether only nouns and verbs are properly elements of a proposition (λόγος) or whether articles, conjunctions and the like should be counted as such; they are obviously parts of speech (λέξεις). Simpli-

¹⁴ Demetrius 222. Cf. *προλεγόμενα τῶν στάσεων* in Walz 7.5.1–2: ἀλλὰ τὸν ἐνδιάθετον λόγον ἄλλοι τε κοσμοῦσι καὶ Δολλίανος καὶ Θεόφραστος. ἐνδιάθετος λόγος is here contrasted with *προφορικός λόγος* which is the business of grammar and rhetoric; it would seem to mean that which is in the mind as against that which is expressed, and comes close to meaning "what is implied."

¹⁵ Demetrius 114. The example given, ἀπυνδάκτως οὐ τραπεῖται κύλιξ, for ἀπύθμενος ἐπὶ τραπέζης κύλιξ οὐ τίθεται may well come from Theophrastus. So too the comment that "so small a matter cannot carry such a weight of language." Demetrius goes on to discuss Aristotle's analysis of different kinds of frigidity, with no implication of any difference between the two writers. To Demetrius the vice of frigidity is one to which the grand manner is particularly liable. This does not, of course, commit Theophrastus to the same theory or to the same use of μεγαλοπρεπής.

¹⁶ Berlin ed. (Kalbfleish) 10.20 to 11.2. For the use made of this passage see J. Stroux, *De Theophrasti Virtutibus Dicendi* (Leipzig 1912) 23–26 and Mayer 15 ff.

cus then goes on to say (perhaps still quoting Porphyry) that these writers also discussed such matters as ordinary and metaphorical language and its changes, apostrophe, elision, what are simple or compound words, and things which are generally said *περί ιδεῶν*: lucidity, distinction or grandeur (*τὸ μεγαλοπρεπές*), charm (*τὸ ἡδύ*) and persuasiveness. He then returns to his proper subject, the categories. All this passage tells us, whether it be Simplicius or Porphyry speaking, is that Theophrastus wrote a book on the parts of speech, discussing whether a proposition consists of nouns and verbs alone. Beyond that there is a casual enumeration of some of the questions of style and language which are dealt with by Theophrastus and other writers. The purpose of this enumeration is merely to clarify the original contrast. To use this mention of four qualities to bolster any particular formula of *ἀρεταί* in Theophrastus requires some very special pleading.

2. A passage in a document of uncertain date, the Epitome Laurentiana,¹⁷ states that Theophrastus recognized six kinds of amplification (*αὔξησις*), namely amplifying the circumstances (*ἐκ τῶν πραγμάτων*) or the consequences (*ἐκ τῶν ἀποβαινόντων*), comparisons with other cases generally or with other persons (*ἐξ ἀντιπαραβολῆς καὶ συγκρίσεως*), enlarging on the time or occasion (*ἐκ καιρῶν*) and on the emotions involved (*τοῦ πάθους*).¹⁸ A comparison with the *Rhetoric* will show that the same ideas are developed there in much the same language, though Theophrastus arranged them in a more formal classification.¹⁹

3. In his commentary on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*²⁰ Ammonius quotes Theophrastus as saying that a *λόγος* can be considered

¹⁷ Commonly attributed to Longinus and printed in the Oxford edition of his text, also in Bake, *Apsinis et Longini Rhetorica* (Oxford 1849) 167–172. It is said by Mayer (xxx–xxxvii) to be an epitome from Caecilius of Calacte.

¹⁸ Mayer (141) wants to reduce the list from six to four kinds of *αὔξησις* by combining into one *ἐξ ἀντιπαραβολῆς καὶ συγκρίσεως* (which is reasonable); and then again *ἐκ καιρῶν καὶ πάθους* (which is much less likely). The point is irrelevant for our purpose.

¹⁹ *Rhet.* 1.9.38–39 τὰ ἐκ τῶν χρόνων καὶ τῶν καιρῶν . . . πρὸς ἄλλους ἀντιπαραβάλλειν . . . συγκρίνειν κτλ. There is another reference to amplification in 2.18.4, but it adds nothing.

²⁰ Berlin edition (A. Busse) 1897, 65.22:

διττῆς γὰρ οὐσῃς τῆς τοῦ λόγου σχέσεως, καθὰ διώρισεν ὁ φιλόσοφος Θεόφραστος, τῆς τε πρὸς τοὺς ἀκρωμένους, οἷς καὶ σημαίνει τι, καὶ τῆς πρὸς τὰ πράγματα, ὑπὲρ ὧν ὁ λέγων πείσαι προτίθεται τοὺς ἀκρωμένους, περὶ μὲν τὴν σχέσιν αὐτοῦ τὴν πρὸς ἀκροατὰς καταγίνονται ποιητικὴ καὶ ῥητορικὴ, διόπερ ἔργον αὐταῖς ἐκλέγεσθαι τε τὰ σεμνότερα τῶν ὀνομάτων, ἀλλὰ μὴ τὰ κοινὰ καὶ δεδημευμένα, καὶ ταῦτα ἑναρμονίως συμπλέκειν ἀλλήλοις, ὥστε διὰ τούτων καὶ τῶν τούτοις ἐπομένων, οἷον σαφηνείας γλυκύτητος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ιδεῶν

under two aspects, in relation to the audience and in relation to the subject matter. The philosopher is concerned with the latter, the poet or orator with the former. Poetry and rhetoric thus use distinguished rather than everyday language, fit the words together harmoniously, charm and persuade the hearer by these means as well as by means of "lucidity, sweetness and the other qualities, also length and brevity, using them all appropriately." Ammonius then proceeds to the philosopher's concern to show the truth and to refute untruth.

There is nothing new here. The distinction between *πρὸς τὰ πράγματα* and *πρὸς τοὺς ἀκροατάς* is Aristotelian; indeed it is basic in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, not only where he states in his introduction that proofs are the only true object of the art and all the rest is trimmings, but again where he proceeds to discuss style, reluctantly admits the need of it *πρὸς ἀκροατήν*, and then adds: "no one teaches geometry that way!" Here too we have the same distinction between the philosopher who is concerned with truth (as the orator *ought* to be) on the one hand, and the rhetorician and poet on the other.²¹ We have no notion of the context of our fragment, we cannot even be sure where it ends, but on the face of it it simply repeats what Aristotle said, perhaps not quite so plainly. I can see no justification for hailing this fragment as a great step forward in critical theory because of the contrast it draws between poetry and oratory as opposed to philosophy.²² Nor do I think we can find here the origin of the plain style,²³ for a philosopher is not concerned with style at all. The prototype of the simple style was not

ἔτι τε μακρολογίας καὶ βραχυλογίας, κατὰ καιρὸν πάντων παραλαμβανομένων, ἡσαί τε τὸν ἀκροατὴν καὶ ἐκπλήξαι καὶ πρὸς τὴν πειθῶ χειρωθέντα ἔχειν. τῆς δὲ γε πρὸς τὰ πράγματα τοῦ λόγου σχέσεως ὁ φιλόσοφος προηγουμένως ἐπιμελήσεται . . .

σχέσις is a very vague word, it does not mean *εἶδη* or "types" of language or "divisions" as Hendrickson translates it, *AJP* 26 (1905) 255. The reference is not so much to different speeches as to two aspects or relations of every statement or speech. The passage follows a whole section in Ammonius on the distinction between the *τεχνίτης* of language and the philosopher. We should note *προηγουμένως* in the last sentence: the *main* concern of the philosopher is with truth, the *main* concern of poet or orator with style.

²¹ *Rhet.* 1.1.3: αἱ γὰρ πίστει ἔντεχνόν ἐστι μόνον, τὰ δ' ἄλλα προσθήκαι and the following sections, especially 12. See also 3.1.6.

²² Immisch, "Beiträge zur Chrestomathie des Proclus und zur Poetike des Altertums" in *Festschrift Theodor Gomperz* (Wien 1902) 255 ff. and O. Regenbogen in *RE Suppl.* VII (1950) 1522. Also Mayer p. 14 and Stroux p. 2.

²³ Hendrickson, "The Origin and Meaning of the Ancient Characters of Style," *AJP* 26 (1905) 255-7.

a philosopher, but Lysias. Incidentally, if we are to understand Theophrastus to mean that *all* poets and orators are *exclusively* concerned with style and with τὸ πρὸς ἀκροατὴν, it is curious to find him following Aristotle, as Quintilian says he did (3.7.1), in distinguishing epideictic from practical rhetoric because it is *exclusively* concerned with pleasing the audience!

We must now examine what evidence there is for attributing to Theophrastus any specific list of "virtues" of style and the notorious formula of the "three styles." As both theories became of some importance in later criticism, and neither can be Aristotelian, the point is of interest. However, an unprejudiced reading of the evidence will show that here also Theophrastus was a faithful pupil and that neither formula can belong to him.

The theory of three equally acceptable styles, the plain, the grand and the intermediate or mixed, is, of course, incompatible with the Aristotelian conception of the best style as the mean between two extremes.²⁴ Yet it is nowadays frequently attributed to Theophrastus on the supposed evidence of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. I have argued at length elsewhere²⁵ that the *τρίτη λέξις*, which Theophrastus is quoted (*Demosthenes* c. 3) as saying originated with Thrasymachus of Chalcedon, is a third or mixed kind not of style but of *diction*, as is proved by the whole structure of Dionysius' essay. That Theophrastus would approve of such a middle diction is to be expected, since it conformed with the Aristotelian doctrine, being "neither too lowly nor too grand."²⁶ I have also argued that when Theophrastus is quoted as saying that τὸ μέγα καὶ σεμνὸν καὶ περιττὸν ἐν λέξει is due to three things in a writer, namely his diction, his composition and his use of figures, the words μέγα, σεμνόν and περιττόν are probably used in a quite general sense of greatness and distinction and do not refer to the "grand" style. Even if they did refer to grandeur, however, this does not commit Theophrastus to any theory of three different styles; they might refer only to the well-known quality of grandeur.²⁷ So much for the three styles.

²⁴ *Rhet.* 3.2.1. The incompatibility was pointed out by Hendrickson in *AJP* 25 (1904) 125-146.

²⁵ "Thrasymachus, Theophrastus, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus," *AJP* 73 (1952) 251-267 where see references.

²⁶ *Rhet.* 3.2.1 (note 24 above).

²⁷ Dion. Hal. *Isoc.* c. 3 and see *AJP* 73 (1952) note 20 on p. 266. We saw above that Demetrius (114) quotes a paeon-like clause as a παράδειγμα μεγαλοπρεπείας. The

The case stands no better for the formula of four virtues now commonly attributed to Theophrastus, namely correctness of language, lucidity, appropriateness and elaboration, the last being subdivided into charm and fullness.²⁸ The point is not whether Theophrastus discussed these qualities of style; he can hardly have avoided them, since they are all found in Aristotle.²⁹ The single point at issue is whether he called them ἀρεταὶ λέξεως (whereas Aristotle recognized only one ἀρετή, namely lucidity) and made them exclusive, so that he originated a formula of four "virtues," to which brevity was then added, probably by the Stoics, and which went on developing into the much more elaborate list of virtues we find in Dionysius. Now we have already seen that no confirmation in favour of such a list can be derived from the passage from Simplicius referred to (supra p. 177) and the whole case admittedly rests upon the interpretation of a passage in Cicero where, discussing the plain style, he says:

"... the diction will be pure Latin, the expression will be clear and lucid, and appropriateness will be sought; one thing will be lacking which Theophrastus counts as the fourth in the things he praises (or the virtues?) in a speech, namely, ornament, pleasing and full."³⁰

Is the phrase "quod quantum numerat Theophrastus in orationis laudibus" enough to convince us that Theophrastus deliberately departed from Aristotelian theory here and established

word need not come from Theophrastus, but, if it does, it may be used there also (in Theophrastus) in a general sense, or refer merely to the quality of grandeur. The more general use would admirably suit a statement attributed to him by Dionysius (*Comp.* 16) that the use of beautiful words makes the diction μεγαλοπρεπή. See Hendrickson in *AJP* 25 (1904) 138-141. Cf. also the use of μεγαλοπρεπής, for what it is worth, in the passage from Simplicius on p. 177, above. We might of course argue that Theophrastus recognized only *two* styles, as Cicero does in the *Brut.* 201 ff. (See note 23 above.) He would then have abandoned the Aristotelian mean altogether!! Any formula of specific styles in Theophrastus leads to highly improbable consequences, be it of three styles or two.

²⁸ The case is attractively argued by Stroux in the first three chapters of his *De Theophrasti Virtutibus*. It is accepted by F. Solmsen in "Demetrius περί ἑρμηνείας und sein peripatetisches Quellenmaterial," *Hermes* 66 (1931) 241; also by Kroll, "Rhetorik," *RE* Suppl. VII, 1073.

²⁹ ἐλλογίζειν in *Rhet.* 3.5; σαφήνεια in 3.2.1 (as the one ἀρετή λέξεως); τὸ πρόπον in 3.7; conscious ornament and elaboration is implicitly and explicitly discussed throughout the third book in the discussions of diction, metaphors, etc.

³⁰ *Orat.* 79: sermo purus erit et Latinus, dilucide planeque dicetur, quid deceat circumspecti; unum aberit quod quantum numerat Theophrastus in orationis laudibus; ornatum illud, suave et affluens.

an exclusive list of four *ἀρεταί*, and no more? Cicero is notoriously careless and inexact in his use of technical formulae and terminology, but "virtutes" would surely have been a more natural translation? He does use the word, while the four qualities here listed are called *lumina* elsewhere.³¹ Actually, all that Cicero tells us here is that somewhere, probably in a well-known passage, Theophrastus dealt with *ornatum* (*κόσμος* or *κατασκευή*?) in fourth place. It is possible, but it does not necessarily follow, that the other *laudes* (good qualities, good points, things to be commended) were only three, or indeed the same three which Cicero here mentions; nor does it follow that the subdivision of *ornatum* into *affluens* and *suave* was in Theophrastus.³² Moreover, as a list of four *virtues*, purity of language, lucidity, appropriateness, and ornamentation seem rather a curious selection for a Peripatetic. As a list of good points or qualities that was not exclusive, it derives directly from Aristotle. In truth, this passage contains no evidence whatever for anything more than that. Such a discussion of "qualities" is precisely the kind of thing which all our other evidence leads us to expect from Theophrastus. The above passage from Cicero is admittedly the only important evidence for any Theophrastean list of virtues of style.³³

One more reference should be mentioned which clearly attributes to Theophrastus a statement at variance with Aristotle as we know him. The Latin grammarian Diomedes (4th century A.D.) says that Theophrastus defined tragedy as "a reversal of

³¹ Cicero uses *virtutes dicendi*, e.g. in *Orat.* 139 where, however, the list is quite different. Still another list, then called *lumina*, occurs in *De Partit. Orat.* 19, namely *dilucidum*, *breve*, *probabile*, *illustre*, *suave*. On the other hand in *De Orat.* 1.144 he uses the four qualities listed here but calls them *ornamenta*. For *laudes* in a general sense see *Brut.* 89: *cum duae sint in oratore laudes, una subtiliter disputandi ad docendum, altera graviter agendi ad animos audientium permovendos* (cf. *De Orat.* 1.130), whereas *docere*, *delectare*, *movere*, are called *virtutes* in *Brut.* 185, but *officia oratoris* in *Orat.* 69. Many other passages could be quoted (were it necessary) to show Cicero's vague and loose usage of these technical terms.

³² The purpose of dividing *ornatum* into two parts is that the simple style lacks adornment which in the grand style is *affluens* while in the intermediate style it is *suave*. Now Stroux (pp. 119–120) quite rightly does not attribute the three style formula to Theophrastus. But, if so, this subdivision is quite likely to be Cicero's own.

³³ Stroux himself squarely bases his case on it, though he does attempt to find further confirmation in the passage from Sulpicius noted above (p. 177) and also from Dion. Hal. *Isoc.* 3, for which see above p. 179 and note 27, but all that is even less convincing. I should add, however, that Stroux' discussions of the individual "virtues" contain a great deal that is of interest.

fortune at the heroic level.”³⁴ Such popular definitions of both tragedy and comedy occur elsewhere in our grammarians and scholiasts, but the attribution to Theophrastus is found only in Diomedes, even though other definitions can be found with a much more Aristotelian ring.³⁵ None of them, compared with that of the *Poetics*, seems very complete. If Diomedes is to be trusted, we must suppose that Theophrastus did thus define tragedy in a popular work, probably to distinguish it from comedy. Indeed, it has even been suggested that the definition may ultimately derive from a popular work of Aristotle himself, though this is pure conjecture.³⁶ Un-Aristotelian in its incompleteness, it does not actually contradict the *Poetics* but rather extracts from it two obvious features, but no more.

A few criticisms of particular writers are also attributed to Theophrastus. Dionysius quotes him as praising in Thrasymachus the clear and compact arrangement of his material.³⁷ He seems to have favoured the capacity to speak extempore, for it is in this context that Plutarch quotes his otherwise strange saying that Demosthenes was worthy of his city but that Demades was too good for it; but, on the other hand, he illustrated the danger of relying on this capacity by telling how even Alcibiades, able as he was in this direction, occasionally failed altogether.³⁸

Surprisingly, and to Dionysius' indignation, he condemned Lysias for seeking vulgar elaboration and pursuing the poetic rather than the true, on the strength of Lysias' *On Behalf of Nicias*, which Dionysius considered clearly spurious. He criticized it for the excessive use of antithesis, pariosis, paramoiosis, resulting in monotony of rhythm.³⁹

³⁴ GLK 1.487: τραγωδία ἐστὶν ἡρωϊκῆς τύχης περίστασις. Diomedes goes on to define comedy as ἰδιωτικῶν πραγμάτων ἀκίνδυνος περίοχη, but this is attributed only “apud Graecos.” This difference seems deliberate and we have no right to ignore it.

³⁵ For other such definitions see McMahon in *HSCP* 28 (1917) 1–46.

³⁶ By McMahon, *ibid.* 45.

³⁷ Such I believe to be the meaning of the θαυμαστή ἀρετή which Dionysius, in *Lysias* 6, tells us Theophrastus considered that Thrasymachus had been the first to practice. This Dionysius defines as ἡ (ἀρετή) συστρέφουσα τὰ νοήματα καὶ στρογγύλως ἐκφέρουσα. It is, however, generally taken to refer to the periodic structure, wrongly, as I hope to have proved in *AJP* 73 (1952) 255–261. The word ἀρετή is here almost certainly Dionysius' own, but if Theophrastus did use it in this connection it would (on any interpretation of the passage) argue for a list of ἀρεταί at any rate of more than Stroux' exclusive four, in fact for a very general use of the word in Theophrastus.

³⁸ Plut. *Demosth.* 10 and *Praec. ger. reip.* 8.

³⁹ Dion. Hal. *Lysias* 14. Dionysius then proceeds to quote from Theophrastus a

As for Theophrastus' own style, Cicero calls it pleasant and sweet, of that softer kind which followed the more vigorous period of the great orators.⁴⁰ Theophrastus seems to have been guilty of some affectation if we are to believe the twice-told tale of the old woman who mistook him for a stranger because of his use of a strange word.⁴¹

Such is the incomplete picture available to us of the work of Theophrastus in the field of criticism. It is disappointing as well as fragmentary. We should remember that, in spite of the many books on linguistic and literary subjects credited to him,⁴² his main interests lay in other fields. If he had originated some of the later theories now often credited to him and strayed far from the Aristotelian fold, some definite traces of this would surely have survived among the numerous references to him in our texts nor would his name have been so uniformly linked with that of Aristotle. His critical works were widely read, no doubt deservedly, but in all essentials they seem to have been a restatement, with clarifications and elaborations, of the theories of his master. We should not be led to attribute to him later theories and formulae in the teeth of the evidence; the old tradition was probably right and is well summarized in the words of Quintilian (3.1.15): "Theophrastus quoque, Aristotelis discipulus, de rhetorice diligenter scripsit."

threefold classification of antitheses: (i) where the same predicate is applied to contraries, (ii) where different predicates are given to the same things, and (iii) where contrary predicates are applied to contraries.

⁴⁰ *Brut.* 121: Quis enim uberior in dicendo Platone? . . . quis Aristotle nervosior? Theophrasto dulcior? and *ibid.* 37.

⁴¹ Cic. *Brut.* 172 and Quintilian 8.1.2.

⁴² See the always uncertain list of his works in Diog. Laert. 5.42-50.