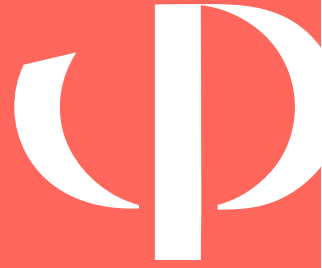


Teaching Philosophy



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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

ARTICLE

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will result in a zero for the assignment. Excused absences, after discussion with and at the discretion of the instructor, may result in alternative assignments.

(3) POSITION PAPER RUBRIC (CONTEMPORARY MORAL ISSUES VERSION)

Assignment: Your paper should be between 4–5 pages (no shorter, no longer), double spaced, 12-point font. It may use any or all sources from the core and supplementary readings for this unit. Reference and/or title pages don't count towards the max/min page count.

Your paper should contain the following:

- (1) An introductory paragraph that summarizes the argument to come in approx. 2–3 sentences. (/2 points)
- (2) A concluding paragraph that summarizes the argument that preceded it in approx. 2–3 sentences. (/2 points)
- (3) An argument for a particular moral thesis related to the course topic (e.g., an argument for a claim of the form 'X is wrong' or 'X is permissible'). This will include (a) a clear conclusion and (b) a line of reasoning in support of that conclusion. (/12 points)
- (4) At least one objection to this argument. (/5 points)
- (5) At least one response to this objection. (/5 points)
- (6) A list of references taken *only* from the core course readings or the supplementary course readings (in Chicago Style: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html) (/4 points)

Total points: /30

BOOK REVIEW

De Caelo

Aristotle. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Co., 2020).

Reviewed by Thomas Moody
HUNTER COLLEGE, THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

De Caelo is a 2020 entry in the New Hackett Aristotle series, translated by C. D. C. Reeve, which aims to enable "Anglophone readers to study Aristotle's work in a way previously not possible" (Hackett Publishing, back cover). On the whole, Reeve achieves this goal in this translation, and the text is a worthy adoption for any reader of *De Caelo*.

Reeve's translation of *De Caelo* comprises an introduction (37 pages); the translation itself (pp. 1–91) with superscript numerals indicating the corresponding notes; a

comprehensive Notes section (pp. 92–242); an appendix with an excerpt of Plato's *Timaeus* (pp. 243–53); and a thorough index (pp. 256–67). The translation includes both traditional sets of divisions of Aristotle: book-chapter divisions on the inside header and Bekker numbers on the outside header. In-line Bekker numbers are printed continuously on the outside of the text. As a minor criticism, the decision to print the letters in Bekker numbers as superscripts, e.g., 268^a1 rather than 268a1, sometimes makes passages rather difficult to locate. Otherwise, all commentary and discussion is limited to the Notes section, which leaves a clean, readable presentation of Aristotle's text in the main body of the work.

In evaluating this edition, it is worth considering who is likely to read this work, and Reeve does so in his Preface. *De Caelo* is an unlikely starting point in the study of Aristotle, and Reeve is right therefore to serve "the resolute reader that Aristotle most repays" (Reeve, xi). At the same time, the book's lucid organization should not scare off any reader and makes the text readily usable. In fact, this translation should increase the appeal of *De Caelo* among Anglophone readers and educators.

Reeve devotes the final six pages of his Introduction to the question of *De Caelo*'s audience. There he opens with the famous passage of *Nicomachean Ethics* which cautions that the inexperienced are not a suitable audience for an investigation of politics (1094b25–1095a4). *Metaphysics*, Reeve points out, offers a similar proviso in the case of science (995a12–16). While Aristotle makes no such comment in *De Caelo*, his reliance on arguments advanced in the *Physics* makes it clear that *De Caelo* is intended for an experienced audience. Reeve therefore acknowledges that he does not intend this translation for readers entirely new to Aristotle, but the New Hackett Aristotle series on the whole aims at a general audience, and Reeve serves such readers well.

The remainder of Reeve's Introduction (pp. xix–l), which explains the subject matter and types of argumentation employed in *De Caelo* and situates the text in the Aristotelian corpus, goes a long way to accommodating a general audience. Reeve includes generous quotations of relevant passages in other treatises and lays out the questions and assumptions that underlie the *De Caelo*. The introduction is no substitute for reading the *Physics* and other texts that come to bear in the *De Caelo*, but Reeve nonetheless acclimates his audience well enough to have a clear understanding of the ground *De Caelo* covers. Reeve's Notes likewise are not specifically aimed at the beginner but succeed in making the text's difficult passages comprehensible and citing key passages elsewhere in Aristotle and beyond.

De Caelo has been translated into English far less often than Aristotle's more popular works. Prior to Reeve's new edition for Hackett, three translations had been produced in the past century. J. L. Stocks's 1922 edition for Oxford has entered the public domain and is therefore freely available online. While scholars of Aristotle may find value in an open-source edition, however, students and readers new to the *De Caelo* will find such resources, which lack

an introduction and commentary, frustrating. The situation demonstrates why modern editions of the classics remain essential. Next came W. K. C. Guthrie's 1939 translation for the Loeb Classical Library. Like all Loeb editions, Guthrie's presents the reader with the Greek text and corresponding English translation on facing pages. Stuart Leggatt's 1995 edition for Aris and Phillips likewise provides the reader with the Greek text and facing translation. Leggatt's edition, meanwhile, contains only the first two of the *De Caelo's* four books. Leggatt justifies this division of the text because Books I and II deal more properly with cosmology while Books III and IV turn to terrestrial matters.

The use of the facing-pages translation format in both Guthrie and Leggatt again raises the question of audience. While students of Greek, or readers of Aristotle with a good command of Greek, will find these editions useful, a general audience will likely find that the Greek text (and, the case of Guthrie, accompanying notes of textual criticism) gets in the way of comprehension. Reeve, by contrast, chooses to restrict discussion of Greek to select technical terms, and even then acknowledges them only in the notes and index. Thus, for example, we read at 292a20 that "we should conceive of [stars] as participating in action and life" and are directed to note 327, which provides a thorough discussion of the Greek term *praxis*, which corresponds to "action." Without referring to the notes continuously, it can easily escape the reader's notice that "action" is a significant term. The use of asterisks could help call attention to these key terms without cluttering the pages.

One rather puzzling element of this book is the awkward way in which it incorporates an excerpt from Plato's *Timaeus* as an appendix. Throughout *De Caelo*, Aristotle refers to the *Timaeus* and offers direct critiques of its cosmology, so including relevant passages of it for comparison is a service to the reader. Reeve also points his reader to the appendix in the relevant notes. However, the omission of any contextualizing comments in the appendix itself may well leave the reader wondering why the particular passages are included and what their relationship to the *De Caelo* is. While this may be obvious to the advanced student the *De Caelo* assumes as its audience, a brief note would be helpful for Reeve's more novice readers.

At \$29 for the paperback, *De Caelo* is consistent with Hackett's affordable offerings in philosophy; Reeve's 2021 translation of *Eudemian Ethics*, for example, is priced at \$23. New copies of Guthrie and Leggatt are widely available at a similar price point and are a worthwhile purchase for those readers who want the Greek text at hand. English readers eager to engage with the entire *De Caelo*—which, I suspect, includes most students—will find the most value in this new offering from Reeve.

POEM

Thinking Time

Rich Eva

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

A question asked in ethics class;
They're champing at the bit.
To slow them down, to be profound,
I tell them, "Think, and sit."

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