

Hipparchus' Commentary on Aratus and Eudoxus: Between Science and Polemics

In this paper I will present a preliminary analysis of the *Exegesis on the Phaenomena of Aratus and Eudoxus*. This is the only remaining work of Hipparchus, the most important Hellenistic astronomer. Yet it still lacks a devoted study, even if modern scholars have studied passages of it to discuss Hipparchus' astronomy (e.g. Neugebauer 1975, 274-343, Nadal and Brunet 1984 and 1989; Duke 2002a and 2002b). In particular, I will focus on a peculiar contradiction in this text: 1) On the one hand, Hipparchus' rather precise astronomical knowledge and tools (e.g. coordinates, equinoctial hours, focus on precise measurements, and also a rigorous technical prose), in full display in the second part of the work containing Hipparchus' own catalogue of 42 constellations; 2) On the other hand, inaccuracies or real errors (some of which already noticed by Feraboli 1990, Bowen and Goldstein 1991, and Mastorakou 2019) present in the first part, the polemical commentary against Eudoxus and Aratus. I will try to offer an explanation why these two, apparently unreconcilable sides, can coexist in this extremely important text.

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