

The first part of the book is devoted to the idea of a sphere as an expression of ἁρμονία and it presents the development of the notion of ἁρμονία from 'infinite' to 'limited'. The basic idea is that in the beginning, ἁρμονία was viewed as the junction of both ends of a circle. A circle was also conceived as 'infinite', because the junction is invisible with the result that one cannot judge where a circle begins and where it ends. In the beginning of the book, the author examines diverse signs of circularity as expressions of ἁρμονία in the works of Homer, Empedocles, Heraclitus and Parmenides.

In the second part, the author shows how the concept of interval was introduced to the notion of ἁρμονία. The author's general aim is to demonstrate that 'infinite' later became a concept that was viewed as an interval between 'more' and 'less', and that, accordingly, ἁρμονία also began to be conceived as an interval. Another essential point is that 'unity', which was earlier viewed as a result of ἁρμονία, later became identified as a commensurable monad. In the latter part of the book, the author examines other manifestations of ἁρμονία by focusing on Anaximander, the Pythagoreans, Philolaus, Archytas and Anaxagoras.

Wersinger's award-winning book (it received the Prix François-Millepierres of the Académie française in 2009) is a fascinating contribution especially to the study of pre-Socratic philosophy, but it is also a convincing account of the ways in which, e.g., the schools of Plato and Aristotle interpreted the doctrines of pre-Socratic philosophers.

*Kimmo Kovanen*

*Greek Magic. Ancient, Medieval and Modern.* Edited by JOHN PETROPOULOS. Routledge, Abingdon – New York 2008. ISBN 978-0-415-28232-1. XI, 196 pp. GBP 65, USD 115.

As the name suggests, this volume edited by Petropoulos, consisting of articles first published in special issues of the journal *Archaiologia kai Technes* between December 1999 and December 2000, attempts to cover Greek magical practices from ancient to modern times. This interdisciplinary approach renders it of interest to a wide audience, but also creates certain problems. The book is divided into four sections: magic in Ancient Greece, magic in Byzantium, magic in Modern Greece and the theory of magic, each of which is provided with a short introduction by the editor. All these four sections are kept short: they all consist of ca. 30–40 pages, which means that the individual articles are rather short. This works well to some extent, but on the other hand the articles only offer a general overview of the matter. Some of them come without any notes, which academic readers may find unsatisfactory. Also, the fact that the articles were originally published over ten years ago is reflected in a certain defensive tone of some of the writers: magic has been studied widely during the past decade, and it is hardly a 'wretched' subject anymore. The importance of magical ritual practices in supplementing public, religious rituals is an admitted fact.

Despite these problems, the book offers a wide spectrum of interesting reading. In the introduction to the first part, the editor briefly defines magic: the origin of the name, and, e.g., its nature as a phenomenon belonging to the private sphere. David Jordan's article in the same part shows that Greek magic indeed has a long tradition, and that modern Mediterranean practices do have ancient roots (see the case of the migraine amulet). Sarah Iles Johnston writes about *goes/goetes* and points out that the essence of ancient Greek magic involved communica-

tion with the dead. This does not only mean solving problems caused by the dead or calming the dead and averting their anger: magic can also be used in rousing them up against people. All in all, this chapter offers interesting details on a subject which has recently been widely studied – details that complement the bigger picture of ancient Greek magic. The most interesting offering of the book, however, is the connection it establishes in the next two chapters between these ancient magical practices and modern Greek beliefs, via Byzantium to the modern world. In the second chapter, Agamemnon Tselikas shows that the magical text (spells, exorcisms, etc.) can be found not only in Antiquity, but in post-Byzantine manuscripts as well, and lived on despite the attempts to modify it by the Church. In the third chapter, Charles Stewart illustrates the relationship of magic and orthodoxy and the often vague boundaries between magic and religion. All in all, the articles in the third chapter provide interesting views of magical beliefs and practices in modern Greek society – or societies, as Vassiliki Chryssantopoulou focuses on the concept of the evil eye among the Greeks living in Australia. In a country with such a long history as Greece it is not surprising that customs live on, develop, disappear and reappear throughout the centuries and millennia. What is common to ancient and modern societies is that 'magical' and 'religious' practices intertwine, as the articles show.

The development of the magical practices could perhaps have been given more space, and the fourth chapter, discussing theories of magic, could have been partly covered in the introduction, partly interwoven into the previous chapters. The reader is in fact often left wishing for more, as the glimpses into the topic the book offers are highly interesting.

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JUDITH M. BARRINGER: *Art, Myth, and Ritual in Classical Greece*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2008. ISBN 978-0-521-64134-0 (hb), 978-0-521-64647-5 (pb). XV, 267 pp. GBP 45, USD 85 (hb), GBP 16.99, USD 27.99 (pb).

For a reader not specialised in Classical Greece, Barringer's book gives a comprehensive introduction to the discourse of myth as it has been seen and understood within the study of Greek art. Any intention of visual interpretation must start from the consideration that the role of myths in the lives of the viewers of the different forms of visual representation cannot be stressed enough. This is why the relation between the visual displays and the physical reception of them becomes a tangible part of understanding the present, the past and the continuity of life.

Barringer shows through five thorough case studies of architectural sculpture how the depicted myths can be found in different variations that depend on the specificity both of a particular site and of the expected ritualistic behaviour. She concentrates on two myths, the Centauromachy and the Amazonomachy. The case studies cover key sites in Olympia, Athens, Delphi, and Trysa and consist mainly of temples and tombs, though Barringer transcends the single focus on religion. This means that the interpretations demand a more complex and diverse understanding of the function of visual representation and its reception.

Using visual semiotics as a method of interpretation, Barringer touches upon questions that connect the study to issues of gender, of cultural diversity and of the understanding of artistic expression as intertwined with site specificity. Her approach combines specific knowl-