

pendant cette période de 1500 ans et transmis dans l'Angleterre de la Renaissance? Là, il y a une vraie lacune dans le livre.

En ce qui concerne le théâtre de l'époque moderne, Macintosh montre ses grandes connaissances des productions théâtrales faites sur le mythe d'Œdipe, surtout à partir du XVIII^e siècle. Les différentes versions basées sur le mythe d'Œdipe, les relations entre le théâtre et les autres formes d'art, aussi bien que les changements dans les conceptions du mythe sont expliqués en grand détail.

Pour ceux qui s'intéressent à l'évolution de la conception du mythe d'Œdipe au cours de l'histoire du théâtre, à partir de l'Antiquité jusqu'à l'époque moderne, *Sophocles: Oedipus Tyrannus* de Macintosh est une lecture intéressante. En revanche, ceux dont le domaine d'intérêt principal est le théâtre grec classique et la littérature de l'Antiquité en profitent moins.

Jari Nummi

FRANCESCO ADEMOLLO: *The Cratylus of Plato: a Commentary*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2011. ISBN 978-0-521-76347-9. XX, 538 pp. GBP 85, USD 140.

Francesco Ademollo's commentary is a very impressive contribution to the study of Plato's *Cratylus*. Firstly, it is the first extensive commentary to appear on this intriguing dialogue on the correctness of names. This is perhaps surprising but indeed, although a number of translations, minor-scale commentaries and studies on the dialogue in different languages do exist, no full-scale commentary has appeared before. Secondly, and more importantly, the commentary exemplifies a very high standard of scholarship in both exegetical and philosophical terms, yielding a consistent and persuasive interpretation of the entire dialogue.

Ademollo's commentary is "running" in that it proceeds by quoting the text passage by passage and explains each passage in detail. The "Contents" in the beginning (pp. vii–xi) gives a useful overview of the dialogue as a whole. It indicates among other things that the dialogue has a clear dialectical structure: the first part (383a–439b) discusses Cratylus' naturalism, and the second (433b–440e) its criticism.

Ademollo makes two very helpful clarifications in the "Introduction". First, contrary to most interpreters, he argues that the dialogue consistently treats the phrases "correct name of *X*" and "name of *X*" as equivalent. This argument, which he refers to as the "Redundancy Conception", has two important implications: (i) there are strictly speaking "*no degrees of correctness*", and (ii) "*no such thing as an incorrect name of something*" (p. 3, Ademollo's italics) exists. As the author fairly acknowledges, these claims may sound startling to some readers, and yet, according to him, a closer study shows that they are not. I find his arguments persuasive and they certainly deserve to be taken in mind by everyone seriously working on this dialogue.

A second helpful remark clarifies what is at issue in the *Cratylus*. According to Ademollo, the dialogue discusses the question whether the link between a name and its referent is natural or conventional. This is to be contrasted with another question about the origin of names: how do people acquire their names? Ademollo (p. 4) shows that the latter question was first discussed by the Epicureans, who proposed that names originate from the nature (φύσις) of human beings rather than a deliberate imposition (θέσει). According to Ademollo, the *Cratylus* does not address this issue, but "[a]ll the speakers in the dialogue appear to assume

that names were set down by someone" (p. 5). This is a fair judgment.

I will not go into Ademollo's detailed exegesis of the text, but will instead make one general observation about his overall interpretation of the dialogue. Ademollo puts great efforts into showing that the etymologies given at 394e–421e are substantially backed up by the Heraclitean flux theory, and in particular by its atomistic version, and that Socrates takes the etymologies seriously (see, e.g., pp. 237–41). Thus, Ademollo further develops arguments given by Grote and Sedley, opposing the other line of interpretation (given by Stallbaum and Baxter) that the section in question is parodic. Ademollo's argument is successful, and it helps to make sense of the etymologies that are otherwise very difficult to comprehend. For example, the derivation of δίκαιον "just" from διαῖον "passing through" (412d2–e3) is unintelligible if we overlook Socrates' explanation that the flux theorists posit two fundamental principles, the quick and the slow, and that δίκαιον refers to the quickness of the flux and thus to its penetrability (p. 215). In line with this, Ademollo is correct to stress (pp. 449–51) that Socrates' subsequent criticism of the flux theory would be pointless unless that theory played a significant role in the etymologies given.

I have no major complaints about this commentary. It is perhaps worth mentioning that the commentary is likely to be too demanding for a beginner, but the intended readers, graduate students and scholars, will benefit from it immensely and take pleasure in its insightful observations, comparisons with other dialogues and well-wrought arguments.

In conclusion, I should like to recommend this commentary as a first choice not only to those who take the etymologies given "seriously", but also to everyone who adopts this attitude towards the dialogue in its entirety. It is not entirely groundless to suggest either that the commentary will constitute the definitive study of the dialogue for many generations to come.

Mika Perälä

Plato's Laws. A Critical Guide. Edited by CHRISTOPHER BOBONICH. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2010. ISBN 978-0-521-88463-1. VIII, 245 pp. GBP 50, USD 80.

Christopher Bobonich has edited an impressive collection of papers on Plato's *Laws*. The subtitle of the collection suggests that the papers are intended to introduce the general reader to the subject, but the editorial introduction reveals that the intentions behind the volume are much more ambitious. Bobonich claims that the volume "offers chapters that are on the cutting edge of current scholarship and that not only contribute to ongoing debates, but also start fresh lines of inquiry" (p. 1). As far as I can tell, this claim is for the most part well grounded, though not all contributions open up new perspectives, but rather elaborate on the contributors' earlier work in this field. In any case, the twelve chapters consist of first-rate scholarship, comprising both detailed textual exegesis and helpful overall interpretations of the *Laws* and its relationship with Plato's other dialogues, and even with Aristotle's *Politics*.

The first two chapters interpret the *Laws* as a whole, each making a rather bold new proposal. Malcolm Schofield argues that although Aristotle has been blamed for not being a very sensitive interpreter of the *Laws*, he was nevertheless correct in identifying two different projects in this treatise: one is the attempt to reconstruct a "second best" political system which is supposed to approximate to the Kallipolis of the *Republic*, and the other is to institute