

idea is that the movements involved in musical harmony are analogous with the circular movements of the soul, and that the two come into contact. Pelosi goes on to argue, not implausibly, that the process described in *Tim.* 47c–e is compatible with the one implied in *Resp.* 401d–402a. Thus understood, the *euschēmosynē* produced by music at *Resp.* 401d8 is comparable to the *katakosmēsis* referred to in *Tim.* 47d6.

The third chapter turns to Plato's treatment of harmonic science in *Resp.* 7. First, Pelosi discusses in which way music serves as a discipline preparatory to dialectic, and he then explores how Plato's understanding of harmonic science differs from both empirical and Pythagorean views. In the course of the discussion, he makes many illuminating observations. He points out, for example, that Plato displays a rather different attitude towards the empiricists and the Pythagoreans: derision regarding the former, and respect in reference to the latter (p. 141).

The fourth and final chapter examines two specific issues: acoustic phenomena and perception, and secondly, the soul and the various theories of harmony. Again, Pelosi's discussion is very detailed and packed with references to parallel passages in the Platonic corpus and even in other relevant sources.

In sum, this book is a significant contribution to the study of Plato's views on music. The book assumes some familiarity with Plato and ancient theories of music. For this reason it is not easy reading for a beginner in classics, musicology or philosophy, but a more advanced reader will enjoy its high-level discussion.

Mika Perälä

DANIEL S. WERNER: *Myth and Philosophy in Plato's Phaedrus*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2012. ISBN 978-1-107-02128-0. 302 pp. GBP 65, USD 99.

Myths are a common target of criticism in the dialogues of Plato, and yet myths are frequently used, even created by Plato himself, as vehicles of his philosophical expression. This paradox is the subject of D. S. Werner's (= W) book in which he thoroughly discusses the myths and their function in the *Phaedrus* and Plato's motives in integrating them in his dialogue style.

In the introductory chapter, W. illustrates the historical and cultural context of Greek myths in general, and the relation of Platonic myths to this wider context. In the difficult task of defining a myth, W. emphasizes the basic inherent elements of myth such as traditionalism, anonymity and variation. The status of myth, W. argues, changed along with the rise of written culture and development of the natural sciences, history and philosophy in the sixth century B.C.: myths in written form are not as flexible as those transmitted orally, and as they were no longer the sole possession of bards, they subsequently became the object of scrutiny and criticism. This does not, as W. emphasizes, mean that myths became any less important or that there was a change in Greek mentality from *μῦθος* to *λόγος*, these terms remaining interchangeable. Instead, W. suggests, we should see Plato's use of myth (both the term and its substance) as an interplay with *logos* and a conscious reflection of "the cultural and linguistic heritage" of these concepts (p. 6): W. aligns with the view that the interplay between myth and *logos* is not so much about *rationality* as *authority*. Different versions of myths competed for

authority, philosophers competed with poets and bards, as well as with each other, for the acceptance of their own versions of myths. Dealing with myths, the main questions W. raises in his discussion are why Plato used myths, why he used particular myths, to whom the myths were aimed and how do they interact with philosophical discourse.

W. classifies the myths used in the dialogues of Plato into three categories: "traditional", "state-regulated" and "Platonic" myths. The *Phaedrus* contains one traditional (Boreas) and three Platonic (the palinode, cicadas and Theuth-Thamus) myths. Each of these is analysed individually from various standpoints: their context, philosophic function in the dialogue, as well as their wider relation to the main themes of the dialogue are thoroughly discussed. Throughout the book, W. makes observations on how the change from oral to written culture was at many levels the focus of Plato's discussion, and he manages to convince the reader that in the *Phaedrus*, it is not only the myths *as such* that matter, but that the discussion *of* the myths is equally important.

The first myth of the *Phaedrus*, in fact quite a brief reference to the story of Boreas abducting Oreithyia, the daughter of Erechtheus, gives us the scenery of the dialogue (outside Athens, a country landscape with heat and hidden threats of *eros* and nature). With the story, Plato sets the signposts for the use of myth, and the story has, W. argues, far-reaching importance in the dialogue. Phaedrus' innocent question, does Socrates believe the story is true or not, opens the way to the discussion of the interpretation of myths. Socrates does not answer directly, but clearly rejects allegorical interpretations, which in his time were obviously fashionable, as a pointless waste of time. According to Socrates, useless rationalizing of myths diverts one's focus away from the truly important endeavour, which is to get to know oneself. Within the chapters on the Boreas-Oreithyia myth W., focuses on analysing Plato's motives for not accepting allegorical interpretation models of the myth (of all myths, possibly). He also offers an interesting analysis (Chapter 2.6) of the meaning of the phrase *χαίρειν ἑάσας ταῦτα* (230a1–2), which, he argues, should be understood as meaning that from this point on, Plato says goodbye to questions concerning the truth status of individual myths or the rationalization of myths and turns to the use of myths of his own creation for his own purposes.

Socrates' third speech in the *Phaedrus*, the so-called palinode (*παλινῳδία*) plays a central part (Chapters 3–5) in this book, and for good reason. The complicated, and at many points confusing, account of *eros* and the soul (depicted as two-winged horses driven by a charioteer), their incarnate and discarnate journey towards the Forms (*ιδέαι*), is one of the most astonishing pieces Plato (or anyone else, for that matter) has written. W. analyses this "cosmic vision" thoroughly and at length, and offers a point by point interpretation of central aspects of myth: he scrutinizes the structure of the palinode as a proof of the immortality of the soul, he looks at the Forms as objects of knowledge, and also takes a "holistic view of the speech, its structure and its stylistic features" (p. 108). In his discussion, W. suggests that the idea of the self-moving nature of the immortal soul is the reason Plato has chosen myth as a vehicle of his argumentation. Like the soul, a myth is also constantly moving and changing. W. also addresses broader questions such as whether we should approach the palinode as representing Plato's own views or rather as a form of intellectual play, and whether Plato's critique of traditional tales also applies to myths he created himself. In Chapter 5.4 ("Myth for Whom"), W. ties the strings together: he aims to show in concrete detail how Platonic myth, and the palinode itself, serves *psychagogia*: their function is to turn an individual towards philosophy. Nevertheless,

the palinode works both for non-philosophers and novices "who waver between two roads" (like Phaedrus and the reader) and for more advanced philosophers, who with the palinode will understand the limits of the myth and its subordinate status to philosophical dialectic.

The myth of the cicadas, placed in the middle of the *Phaedrus*, is discussed in Chapter 6. Socrates pulls the reader back on the stage of the dialogue, in the heat of high noon, outside Athens, a time and place when cicadas are loudly singing. He tells Phaedrus that according to a myth, cicadas were once people and were so mesmerized by the song of the Muses that they forgot to eat and drink, and subsequently died without noticing it themselves. They were later reborn as cicadas, which spend their short life singing and reporting to the Muses who truly honour the Gods and who do not. At the beginning of his discussion of the myth, W. offers an interesting overview of the cultural history of cicadas in ancient Greece (Chapter. 6.3) and argues that the myth of the cicadas is told here because it becomes clear that Phaedrus does not really understand the palinode and that *psychagogia* does not work with him. The cicada myth represents the palinode itself, it warns Phaedrus (and the reader) not to get mesmerized by the palinode and to make the mistake to take it as the "final word". W. convincingly points out how the story of the cicadas is not only a pleasant "intermezzo" after the cosmic heights of the palinode, as sometimes suggested, but forms an important transition between the two parts of the dialogue and urges the "reader" to move beyond the myth.

The latter part of the *Phaedrus* is concerned with rhetoric and dialectic, which for Plato is the true way to practise philosophy and to get as near to the Forms as is humanly possible (p. 153). In Chapter 7, W. represents questions concerning "the nature of rhetoric", "the true art of rhetoric" and "dialectic" and calls attention to Plato's medical approach to rhetoric, which can be noticed throughout the dialogue. W. effectively argues that in Plato's time there was still a tension between the old oral and the recent literary tradition, and that written texts could be seen as a kind of "new technology" in fifth-century Athens (p. 185). W. sees that Plato in his criticism of writing in the latter part of the *Phaedrus* reflects this debate and that his very intention is to deliver a philosophical inquiry on the issue. It is in this context that Socrates tells Phaedrus the myth of Theuth and Thamus (Thoth and Ammon) which is discussed in Chapter 8. The short myth (274c–275b) is set in Egypt; Theuth is introduced as the inventor of several useful skills, among which is writing. He himself claims to have invented a medicine (φάρμακον) for wisdom and memory. When these skills are presented to King Thamus, however, he strongly criticizes writing (letters) and argues that it is by no means a medicine for remembering but rather for reminding, and hence written texts produce students who only *seem* to be wise. Plato's critique of writing, analysed by W., is based on the argument that writing is *not* dialogue: it always remains the same (same to everyone, at every time, in all circumstances), it cannot be questioned and it cannot defend itself, either, which makes written text inferior to dialogue between two persons. W. also discusses several aspects of how this harsh critique affects Plato's own work.

In the last chapters W. takes a look at the *Phaedrus* as a whole and discusses how the myths contribute to the unity of the dialogue. He suggests that the myths tie the text together, if not seamlessly, at least in a noticeable way. Several themes (e.g., eyes, light, blindness; animals, bestiality, monsters; cure, potion, φάρμακον; play, seriousness; an extensive list on pp. 241–2) reoccur both on the structural and vocabulary levels in every myth of the dialogue. He points out that all the myths reflect the central aspects discussed. The Boreas myth marks the general attitude to the approach to traditional stories; Plato uses the tale without taking a stand-

point to its credibility, which is not important: what is important is to get to know one's inner self. The cosmic visions of the palinode show a glimpse of the path where the *psychagogia* might lead a true pursuer of philosophy. The cicadas in the middle of the myth warn both Phaedrus and the reader not to be lulled by a tempting story, the palinode itself, and underline once again the importance of self-knowledge. In the final myth of Theuth and Thamus, W. argues that Plato's critique of writing is, as a matter of fact, also aimed at Plato himself and the palinode especially, its function being to warn of the dangers of blindly trusting written texts. These myths are hence tools for underlining Plato's views of communicational hierarchy: dialogue between two persons, appropriate to the participants' characteristics is the highest, and actually the only way towards true understanding of being. However, this method of discourse can be supplemented with other methods, well-practised rhetoric and myths, but finally all modes of discourse are imperfect. Myths are useful for Plato because of their familiarity, they help a non-philosopher to recognize the right questions, but they also show how inadequate they are in the true practice of philosophy. However, throughout his clear and fluent discussion W. does not make the mistake of taking the dialogue too seriously; he leaves room for the possibility of Plato's self-irony and humour. In sum, the book offers a noteworthy approach to the *Phaedrus*.

Tiina Purola

*Plato's Myths*. Edited by CATALIN PARTENIE. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2009. ISBN 978-0-521-88790-8. XVI, 255 pp. GBP 55, USD 99.

*Plato's Myths* edited by Catalin Partenie consists of ten articles by as many eminent students of Plato and an in-depth introduction by Partenie. The article titles are "Plato's Eschatological Myths" by Michael Inwood; "Myth, Punishment and Politics in the Gorgias" by David Sedley; "Tale, Theology and Teleology in the Phaedo" by Gábor Betegh; "Fraternité, inégalité, la parole de Dieu: Plato's Authoritarian Myth of Political Legitimation" by Malcolm Schofield; "Glaucón's Reward, Philosophy's Debt: The Myth of Er" by G. R. F. Ferrari; "The Charioteer and His Horses: An Example of Platonic Myth-making" by Christopher Rowe; "The Myth of the Statesman" by Charles H. Kahn; "Eikōs muthos" by M. F. Burnyeat; "Myth and Eschatology in the Laws" by Richard Stalley, and "Platonic Myth in Renaissance Iconography" by Elizabeth McGrath.

The problem with a symposium on a given topic is to find a structuring principle that holds contributions of varying content together. The principal idea of *Plato's Myths* seems to be simply the assumed writing order of the dialogues. The volume starts with the articles on the myths presented in the so-called middle dialogues and moves on to the articles dealing with myths in the so-called late dialogues the *Statesman*, *Timaeus* and the *Laws*. The book finishes with the contribution on the Platonic tradition in the Renaissance, which is an interesting addition to the book. Does this order imply that there is in Plato a deepening understanding of the nature of myths in the late dialogues, and as for this volume, does it offer a deeper understanding of the use and meaning of myths in Plato's philosophy?

In the useful introduction, Partenie lists many passages where Plato uses the word *muthos* (pp. 1–2). The list is based on Partenie's categorisation of the origin and use of myths: he categorises them into "identifiable traditional myths", "myths that are Plato's invention but