

fin du XVIII^{ème}, sont des érudits de presque tous les domaines imaginables, comme, par exemple, des humanistes, philosophes et historiens. La controverse entre érudits, initiée dans les commentaires faits par les écrivains de l'Antiquité, est abordée par Jill Kraye, qui résume sommairement le débat et dresse une liste de noms proposés pour la véritable identité de l'auteur du traité. Parmi les noms proposés pour l'auteur de *De Mundo*, citons Théophraste et Posidonios. Bien que le texte soit transmis dans le corpus aristotélicien, il est assez clair que *De Mundo* n'est pas de la main d'Aristote. Pourtant, certains ont suggéré que le traité ait bien été composé par Aristote à la fin de sa vie, et qu'il aurait alors changé ses conceptions philosophiques. Il est cependant généralement admis aujourd'hui que le texte n'est pas d'Aristote, bien que des dissidents existent encore. Il est vraisemblable que le traité vit le jour bien après l'époque d'Aristote, vers le début de notre ère, et qu'il fut écrit par un philosophe éclectique.

L'appendice de l'ouvrage fournit non seulement une bibliographie, mais aussi un recueil de textes en lien avec *De Mundo*. L'appendice est composé par Andrew Smith.

Il nous semble que l'ouvrage *Cosmic Order and Divine Power*, en joignant le travail de huit chercheurs, ne vise pas à répondre à toutes les questions relatives à *De Mundo*, mais plutôt à donner une vue globale des questions relatives au traité dont l'auteur se fait passer pour Aristote. L'ouvrage ne manque pas de qualités. La division des chapitres est claire. Les questions y sont examinées méticuleusement d'un point de vue historique et philosophique, comme par exemple les débats que *De Mundo* a suscités, ainsi que les personnages qui ont été proposés comme étant l'auteur du traité. Les relations du traité avec d'autres doctrines philosophiques, par exemple, les liens entre le traité qualifié de "péripatétique" et le platonisme, sont également examinées ; c'est justement là que nous trouvons la partie la plus intéressante de l'ouvrage –mais nous tenons à souligner qu'il ne s'agit que d'une opinion personnelle. Quoi qu'il en soit, *Cosmic Order and Divine Power : Pseudo-Aristotle, On the Cosmos* est une importante contribution aux recherches sur le corpus aristotélicien.

Jari Nummi

MARIE LOUISE VON GLINSKI: *Simile and Identity in Ovid's Metamorphoses*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2012. ISBN 978-0-521-76096-6. 173 pp. GBP 95, USD 95.

Depicting the ripple of water that charmingly mirrors various colours, the cover picture of this elegant monograph aptly reflects the topic of the book, constant flux in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and especially the protean nature of the similes in his epic language. Metamorphosis, physical transformation, entails a change of identity; a human being turns into or is transformed into an animal or a plant or into something inanimate. How to describe what happens between the states before and after the physical metamorphosis? How to define where and when one ends and the other begins? Marie Louise von Glinski argues that Ovid uses simile, a conventional figure in epic narrative, "to capture states of unresolved identity in the transition between human, animal, and divine identity, as well as in the poem's textual ambivalence between genres and the negotiation of fiction and reality." Von Glinski shows how Ovid's similes mark the most important moments of transition and how they function in different ways in the *Metamorphoses*. Various aspects are organized around four ideas

and treated by chapter. The discourse proceeds as a series of subtle close readings of Ovid's episodes discussing ideas presented in the former research on *Metamorphoses*.

Chapter 1 ("Metamorphosis and simile") traces the fine line that divides human from animal. The seven examples of metamorphosis examined show how the similes seem to create ambivalent states and complicate the process by adding new layers and by introducing new questions, rather than capturing in-between states and explaining the mysterious event for the reader. Chapter 2 ("The gods and the simile") explores the relationship between simile and the gods' temporary (and voluntary) metamorphoses. Unlike other chapters of the book, this one is not divided into sections under sub-headings, which would have been helpful for the reader since it too involves close readings of several episodes and is as long as the other chapters. The chapter offers an interesting interpretation of the difference between mortal and immortal in Ovid's poem. While the human condition is marked by the continuous state of "being" in spite of the change of form, the divine condition seems to elude the essence of "being"; the gods' constant guise, adoption, and borrowing of shapes effectively enhance the mystery of their true identity.

Chapter 3 ("The simile and genre") discusses the poem's textual ambivalence between genres. Several genres (e.g., elegy, tragedy) modify the episodic structure and epic discourse of the poem. The close readings, most notably the story of Apollo and Daphne, Achilles' duel with Cygnus and the battle between the Lapiths and the Centaurs, show that it is not so much a question of epic and un-epic elements opposing each other as a change of parameters of the epic genre. Chapter 4 ("Simile and fictionality") discusses how similes function in defining the boundary between the imaginary and the real. The interpretation of Ovid's similes in the textual fantasy of the House of Sleep is particularly illuminating; marking the transition, the similes cross the line between real and dream worlds and reveal the constraints of categorization. Von Glinski also interestingly shows how Ovid – with the technique of multiple narrators – creates a narrative depth that confuses the reader's sense of temporal orientation.

Besides the indented quotations that are translated, there are many quite long quotations in-line and in footnotes that are not translated and do not necessarily become clear to readers who do not understand Latin. Despite the fact that this refreshing study of the immense adaptability of the figure of simile and Ovid's innovative use of it can be fully appreciated only by Latin scholars, it is still no doubt useful for any reader interested in literary fiction. It offers interesting interpretations and new aspects of familiar stories as well as inspiring ideas about how similes function in the *Metamorphoses*. The destabilizing force of simile is one of the ideas that is convincingly brought forward. On the one hand, the likeness implied in simile connects the *comparans* and the *comparandum*, but on the other, it illustrates the distance between them; simile can fail to help the identification and the whole notion of identity gets expanded as something that is likely to change and not easy to understand.