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, inégalite, la parole de Dieu: Plato's Authoritarian Myth of Political Legitimation" by Malcolm Schofield; "Glaucon'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

which feature various traditional mythical characters and motifs" and "philosophical doctrines (his own or those of others) that he explicitly calls 'myths', or 'mythical'" (pp. 2–3). The categorisation implies that Partenie sees Plato as writing his philosophy in relation to the tradition of poetry; and the difference between *logos* and *muthos*, as it is traditionally put, is an open and debated question within the dialogues – and as such a philosophical problem for Plato, as Partenie rightly shows. In the end, we are faced with the eternal question of Platonic studies: are the myths only an illustration, a teaching device or a persuasive means of philosophical argumentation in each dialogue? Partenie states in the introduction that "the contributors to this volume argue that, in Plato, myth and philosophy are tightly bound together" (p. 20). But how is this relation articulated in the volume? How should the myths be interpreted?

In the contributions by Inwood, Ferrari and Stalley, the interpretation is rather literal. Inwood takes Plato's metempsychosis and eschatological views as such – namely, that the souls are recycled and they forget what they have experienced in their past lives – and ends up with a rather dubious statement: "if, as Socrates implies, the nature of the life determines the nature of the soul, anything the soul does or neglects to do can be blamed on the life, not on the soul itself" (p. 44).

Ferrari's aim is twofold: firstly, he tries to show that the myth of Er "is less a narrative about the reward of justice than it is a narrative about the logic or system of reward for justice"; and secondly, "that not only is the myth addressed to Glaucon, it is adapted to his character and mental horizon" (p. 116). Ferrari does rightly conclude in the style of Plato that "justice is its own reward". However, he also states that "to choose one's next life wisely is not a reward, not for the philosopher; it is a challenge" and "the scene in which souls choose their next lives, the principal scene of the myth, is not a scene of reward or punishment, but one of danger and action" (p. 132), in which Plato's eschatology is taken at face value. That the myth of Er would be adapted to Glaucon's character is not a very convincing statement. Rather the function of the myth might become clearer if one asks the question why is an eschatological myth *placed at the end of a book* that discusses the order of the state and soul?

Stalley's article discusses the claims of impiety in book X of the *Laws*. He highlights the difference between the eschatology of the *Laws* and that of the middle dialogues. According to Stalley, the difference is that in the eschatology of the middle dialogues the importance of becoming a philosopher, in which ultimate salvation lies, is the key issue. Whereas in the *Laws*, Stalley sees that Plato is content with the choice of persuading people (and the young atheist Athenians) to be just in the conventional sense: "it has to convey the message that we will in some way be rewarded or punished after death without relying on the kind of mythical detail which the young atheist would obviously reject" (204–5). Inwood's, Ferrari's and Stalley's articles indicate the difficulty of interpreting the eschatological myths in Plato. However, I am convinced that Plato did not adopt traditional eschatology and metempsychosis into his thinking "as such" and it may not be read "as such".

There are three articles in which Plato's myths are interpreted from a political perspective, those by Sedley, Schofield and Kahn. In "Myth, Punishment and Politics in the Gorgias", Sedley importantly thematises modes of reading myths. I agree with Sedley that the perspective on myths must be that of the present, namely what do they mean in the present life? He states that once we deliteralise the myths, "we are likely to conclude that afterlife punishment, of curable and incurables alike, is at bottom much the same kind of mental torture as vice already causes in this life" (p. 68). The author also reminds us that, in *Gorgias*, Socrates himself

advertises "the idea that myths of afterlife punishment (the alleged Pythagorean myth of leaky jars in Hades) serve as allegories for moral truths about this life" (p. 53). The meaning that Sedley gives to the literal and allegorical reading modes is not explained, but his understanding is implicit in the way he interprets the myth of *Gorgias*. He reads the superiority of Zeus' reign to the reign of Cronus as a parable of political *progress* (p. 56), and by analogy, this "might take Socrates to be sincerely offering his dialectical methodology to the city of Athens as a basis for political, legal and judicial reform" (p. 70). Hence, the relation of Cronus and Zeus, which Sedley applies to the political present of Socrates as a relation of the rhetoric in judicial institutions and dialectical philosophy, is a plausible way to understand how Plato could have seen the myths function as the structuring principles of reality. Sedley reads the myth from the historical present of Plato.

In his contribution Schofield interprets the Cadmean myth and the myth of metals of the *Republic* as a legitimation for the ideal city. It is a literal interpretation of the ideal city which makes Plato look "authoritarian" (p. 112). However, in the *Republic* it is made explicit how people should choose their work according to their natural capacity (455a–456e). This requires a kind of self-knowledge which is in fact one of the main themes in the whole dialogue.

In "The Myth of the Statesman" Kahn highlights the importance of the writing order – the *Republic, Statesman,* the *Laws* – and how Plato shifts from the "messianic politics (of the *Republic*) to a project of legislative reform" (p. 162), where the *Statesman* has the intermediary role. Kahn sees the king of the *Republic* and the divine shepherd in the *Statesman* as to some extent analogical, and remarks how Plato understands this model of ruling as a mistake in the *Statesman*. According to Kahn, in the *Laws* the constitution of laws as the only possible and second best option is acknowledged. To put so much weight on the writing order neglects the different nature of these three books. As Kahn himself also reminds us, the importance of the written law is already there in an early dialogue *Crito* (p. 163).

The other three contributions deal with poetising myths. Rowe opens his article with two claims: firstly, that the myths cannot be treated in isolation from the context, and secondly, that the myth may be used as a substitute for more direct types of discourses. However, what might surprise the reader is that in the case of *Phaedrus*, Rowe simply neglects the context in which the dialogue happens. Socrates and Phaedrus are on the banks of the River Ilissus, which was the cult place of a preparatory cult for the Greater Eleusinian Mysteries. The pattern of the whole dialogue imitates a course of cultic action of an initiation ritual. In *Phaedrus* especially, the myth is not a substitute for any type of discourse, the myth is something that structures the cultic action that *Phaedrus* as a young, enthusiastic literary scholar is unaware of.

Betegh interestingly shows the narrative pattern in Socrates' remark that Aesop would have composed a good tale on the relation of pain and pleasure. The narrative pattern is the following: 1) an initial state of affairs; 2) a divine agent enters; 3) the agent analyses the situation and takes action; 4) a functional description of the current state of affairs. Betegh sees this pattern as that of traditional aetiological fables which can be referred to as "Platonic teleology" (p. 93) which "is then developed into a cosmological narrative in the *Timaeus*" (p. 93). Even though the conclusions are presented without much discussion, Betegh seems to consider cosmology a kind of paradigmatic fable for good fables.

The idea of the paradigmatic status of cosmology is there also in the most challenging article, "Eikōs muthos" by M. F. Burnyeat. This article aims to explain what *eikōs muthos* in the *Timaeus* means and what its relation to *logos* is. He aptly sets *Timaeus* in the context of

Hesiod's *Theogony* and the *peri physeōs* tradition, and in the end shows how *Timaeus* transcends this opposition of religious story and scientific explanation. It is possible to disagree with Burnyeat's thoughts about the reason for and the free choice of the creation of the cosmos. However, the brilliance of the article lies in its understanding of the *eikōn* (image) nature of the cosmos and how this applies to speaking: if speech is speaking according to the subject matter, which is already an image relation, speaking about the cosmos must perform the *eikōn* (image) nature of the cosmos. Hence, the exegesis of the *logoi* of the cosmos is always a likely account. *Timaeus* is a myth but it is also an exegesis of the myth that applies the meaning of the myth.

The role that *Timaeus* has in the introduction and in the articles of Betegh and Burnyeat does imply that, in the volume as a whole, the importance of the myth of the cosmos in the relation of *muthos* and *logos* is recognised. However, in many articles the perspective is still tightly bound to the traditional division of myth and logos which as such was a philosophical question for Plato.

Salla Raunio

CHRISTOPHER P. LONG: *Aristotle on the Nature of Truth*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2011. ISBN 978-0-521-19121-0. XIII, 275 pp. GBP 55, USD 90.

Christopher Long discusses in this monograph Aristotle's conception of truth, which is commonly taken to be a version of the correspondence theory. According to this theory, truth is to be understood in terms of correspondence or agreement between states of affairs in the world, on the one hand, and an assertive or negative sentence or thought, on the other. Long subscribes to this understanding of Aristotle's view, but his attempt is to propose an entirely new interpretation of what Aristotle requires of the implied correspondence.

Long characterizes his approach as "phenomenological legomenology" (p. x), which he takes to be firmly based on Aristotle's own way of doing philosophy. Long claims, "The peripatetic methodology is legomenology." He continues, "The things said, τὰ λεγόμενα, open a way into the nature of things; and it is the nature of things to express themselves" (p. 7). Long emphasizes the idea that it is not only human beings but also things that express themselves. He finds evidence for this even in Aristotle's famous formulation τὸ ὄν λέγεται πολλαχῶς (*Metaphysics* Z 1, 1028a10), in which λέγεται is commonly understood to be in the passive voice, and translated as "Being is said in many ways". According to Long (p. 12), however, λέγεται can also be heard in the middle voice, which results in the translation "Being expresses itself in many ways". In line with this, he introduces his new understanding of truth in Aristotle thus: "...truth belongs neither to thinking nor to things, but to their encounter – an encounter in which truth is always a matter of onto-logical response-ability, that is, of eco-logical justice" (p. 11).

This is a very pregnant account, and needs some explanation. Long divides the terms "onto-logical", "response-ability" and "eco-logical" with a hyphen deliberately, arguing that truth is by no means a one-sided affair, but requires contributions from both parties involved in a social context. It is a matter of justice because cultivation of truth requires "the ability to attend to the ways things speak and to articulate responses that do justice to the saying of things" (p. 14).