

tracé la voie au néoplatonisme dans sa manière d'interpréter la politique platonicienne. Ce volume a le grand mérite de compléter par son approche la liste des études consacrées exclusivement à l'ontologie ou à la théologie médioplatoniciennes et de mettre en lumière les implications pratiques découlant du théocentrisme du platonisme de l'époque impériale. Il constitue une pièce importante dans le dossier de l'éthique platonicienne dans l'Antiquité, tant par la qualité de ses articles que par la variété de ses approches et la longue période historique qu'il couvre.

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Marina BERZINS MCCOY, *Wounded Heroes. Vulnerability as a Virtue in Ancient Greek Literature and Philosophy*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013. 1 vol., 256 p. Prix : 50 £. ISBN 978-0-19-967278-3.

This monograph presents a philosophical analysis of “vulnerability” in ancient Greek literature. Marina Berzins McCoy defines this concept in the broad sense of the word, as both “the capacity to be wounded” and the victim’s ensuing self-awareness of that fact, both individually and on the level of the community. In various case studies taken from Homer, Sophocles, Plato and Aristotle, several kinds of vulnerability are identified and interpreted in relation to personal and political virtue. In this, the crucial role of the narrative medium is recurrently stressed. – Chapter 1, *Woundedness, Narrative, and Community in the Iliad*, focusses on the physical vulnerability of heroes and gods and the understanding of their (im)mortality. The passage about Menelaus’ wounding and his brother’s subsequent reaction in *Iliad* 6 is opposed to the unconvincing complaints of the injured Aphrodite and Ares in book 5. McCoy’s main argument is that death gives meaning to the life of human warriors: how heroes endure their own wounds is an indication of their virtue on the battlefield. Following Nagy, McCoy then turns to the case of Achilles and analyses how he must come to terms with his own vulnerability to eventually fulfill his fate. Chapter 2, *Œdipus and Theseus at the Crossroads*, deals with the Sophoclean tragedies about Œdipus. McCoy argues that both plays present a different view on ignorance and exile, Œdipus’ crucial forms of vulnerability. In *Œdipus Rex*, Œdipus’ harshly polar belief in the just and the unjust fails to understand the imperfections of human life. In *Œdipus Coloneus*, a suffering Œdipus is opposed to the compassionate and hospitable Theseus. His charitable acceptance of the weak exile eventually results in mutual protection for the victim and the city of Athens. The next chapter, *Pity as a Civic Virtue in Sophocles’ Philoctetes*, analyzes the vulnerable position of Philoctetes on the edge of society. His physical wound represents a deeper social trauma he has to overcome before his return to community. Moreover, his only strength, the bow, is of political importance for Odysseus and Neoptolemus. Both heroes react differently to the challenge of obtaining it. Whereas Odysseus excludes all compassion, Neoptolemus struggles to combine pity and piety and eventually develops a real bond of friendship with Philoctetes. This turns out to be a suiting answer to both the political and the personal challenge Philoctetes’ situation poses. After the analysis of three epic and tragic narratives, McCoy turns to philosophical literature. In chapter 4, *Wounding and Wisdom in Plato’s Gorgias*, she broaches the subject of our limited self-knowledge.

In the *Gorgias*, Socrates points out that a soul can only be judged after death, as the living are still unknowing of their just or unjust condition. On the other hand, Socrates is warned that his devotion to virtue during life makes him politically vulnerable. Nonetheless, the philosopher insists on his epistemological vulnerability as an instrument to refute others and attain absolute wisdom. In the *Symposium*, which is the subject of chapter 5, *Eros, Woundedness, and Creativity in Plato's Symposium*, the focus shifts to the vulnerability of Eros. Diotima's opinion that love is a creative evolution towards the ideal "Beauty" is followed by Socrates. He also stresses the importance of relationships to obtain broader self-knowledge through the eyes of the other. This is refuted by a passionate Alcibiades, who realizes his weakness, but refuses to accept it. The topic of knowledge of the other in relationships is further developed in chapter 6, *Friendship and Moral Failure in Aristotle's Ethics*. According to Aristotle, the bond of friendship is crucial to increasing one's self-knowledge. The strong interdependency of friends is both a help to moral development and a vulnerable spot, for the loss of a friend can cause genuine pain. To assist individuals in their ponderous quest, also the community has a role to play in the moral development of its citizens. One of the political institutions to this aim is described in the final chapter, *Tragedy, Katharsis, and Community in Aristotle's Poetics*. As proven above, myth and narrative "mimesis" make individuals responsive to their own vulnerability and that of others. Tragedy, as performed in the heart of political society, can have such an effect on the entire community. McCoy reinterprets Aristotle's concept of *katharsis*, not as a mere purgation of emotions, but as a moral rebalancing of the audience. The experience of pity and fear causes them to be aware of their own weaknesses, which is crucial to the wellbeing of both the individual and the community: a city that does not acknowledge its vulnerability, is doomed, as seems to be the final conclusion of this last chapter. – The monograph shows occasional flaws in spelling (especially of Greek words, such as twice *μῦθος* instead of *μῦθος*, page VIII, and *ἀλεθειά* instead of *ἀλήθεια*, page 101) and grammar, probably due to an inaccurate redaction. The broad definition of vulnerability McCoy proposes results in a similarly general research question. The variety of approaches she uses surely indicates the richness of the concept in ancient literature, but is at the cost of the book's coherence, which subsequently lacks a straightforward conclusion. However, her philosophical perspective presents a refreshing look on some well-known ancient texts. McCoy convincingly indicates the logic of Heracles' appearance in the final of the *Philoctetes* and stresses the importance of his bow, not only as a political object, but also, and mainly, as a symbol of the multifaceted vulnerability of the characters in the play. In the chapter on *Œdipus*, McCoy's understanding of the characters of Creon and Theseus as opposed to two different selves of *Œdipus* is meritorious. On the other hand, her analysis of Achilles' mental process throughout the *Iliad* lacks depth and sometimes seems to overlook the psychological complexity of his character. As the argumentation shifts to the genre of philosophical writing, the second half of the monograph addresses very different questions. The analyses of Plato and Aristotle reveal some new insights, such as the re-interpretation of public *katharsis* in tragedy, but McCoy's reading of the *Gorgias* seems less renewing. From a philological point of view, there is room for more frequent and varied references to secondary sources and longer citations, both in Greek and in translation. This would

help to extend the argumentation that is after all primarily based on the ancient texts. Without a doubt, McCoy has proven that vulnerability is present and often prominent in ancient Greek literature. Her monograph invites a new reading of well-known literary texts, which could be extended beyond the case studies addressed in this book. Also, the reader cannot help but feel personally addressed by a more universal appeal that resounds throughout this book: just as is the case with these wounded heroes, we should be aware of our own vulnerability. In translating this ancient wisdom into a new text interpretation, McCoy places the ancient writings in a modern perspective, which in itself is a creditable aim.

Tine SCHEIJNEN

Claudia HORST, *Marc Aurel, Philosophie und politische Macht zur Zeit der Zweiten Sophistik*. Stuttgart, Franz Steiner, 2013. 1 vol., 232 p., (HISTORIA – EINZELSCHRIFTEN, 225). Prix : 56 €. ISBN 978-3515102803.

La monographie de Claudia Horst propose une nouvelle analyse de l'intégration de la philosophie à la politique au sein de la cour impériale de Marc Aurèle. Partant du modèle dyarchique de Mommsen révisé par Winterling, elle interprète la relation entre l'empereur et l'aristocratie comme une tension réciproque qui consiste en une double ambition : celle de l'empereur souhaitant être accepté par la cour et celle de l'aristocratie visant à accroître son influence et à participer au pouvoir. Aux yeux de l'auteur, le rôle de la philosophie dans cette interaction est crucial, bien que sous-estimé dans les études précédentes, qui sont généralement limitées à une analyse soit de la politique de force, soit de l'histoire des idées. L'étude de Horst conçoit la philosophie stoïcienne comme un moyen d'intégration politique dans le contexte de la seconde sophistique, époque hybride où se rencontrent l'empire romain et la tradition grecque. – L'exposé est composé de six chapitres, dont le premier est une introduction détaillée qui décrit la problématique et la méthodologie mise en œuvre. Le but explicite de cette monographie est d'examiner la signification politique de l'histoire de la culture sous le règne de Marc Aurèle. Dans le deuxième chapitre, intitulé *Forschung*, le rapport de forces à la cour impériale de Marc Aurèle est examiné suivant le modèle de Winterling. Un excursus concernant les rituels d'acceptation qui se déroulaient entre l'empereur et le sénat, par exemple la *recusatio imperii*, mène à la conclusion que la vision bipolaire qui sépare de manière trop rigide la politique de la philosophie doit être nuancée. Ainsi, selon Horst la signification politique de la culture est considérable dans la seconde sophistique. Le troisième chapitre, *Das "Eigene" und das "Fremde" – Lebenskunst und politische Macht* débute par une analyse générale de la vision politique de la philosophie stoïcienne et démontre que cette dernière ne cherche pas toujours à s'en distancier. Loin d'être étranger au monde, le philosophe cherche à s'y intégrer suivant le principe de l'*oikeiosis*, objectif auquel la politique se révèle souvent utile. La métaphore de la philosophie comme médicament pour l'esprit, développée dans la correspondance entre Marc Aurèle et Fronton, illustre bien cette vision. Une analyse profonde de ses *Pensées pour moi-même* prouve que l'*oikeiosis* est la base de la philosophie pragmatique de Marc Aurèle : il cherche à adopter la théorie philosophique de ses maîtres, pour l'appliquer ensuite à sa politique impériale. Ainsi, les *Pensées* sont une œuvre philosophique axée sur la pratique d'un bon mode de vie.