



A PRODUCTIVE TIME CATALIN PARTENIE

Catalin Partenie was born in Pitești, Romania, in 1962. He was educated at the universities of Bucharest, Oxford, and Heidelberg, and holds a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Glasgow. He taught at Concordia University, Montréal and Université du Québec à Montréal. He is Associate Professor at the National School of Political Studies and Public Administration in Bucharest. He also held visiting research positions at the Hastings Center in New York, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies and the British School of Classical Studies, where he was an Onassis Fellow. He has edited the volumes *Plato: Selected Myths* (Oxford University Press, 2004), *Heidegger and Plato* (in collaboration, Northwestern University Press, 2005), and *Plato's Myths* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). He has translated into Romanian (in collaboration) Plato's *Timaeus* and Aristotle's *Protrepticus*. – Address: Strada Garibaldi 2, Sc. A, Ap. 3, Sect. 2, 020 223 Bucharest, Romania.

I am grateful to everyone at Wiko for a wonderful and productive time.

During my stay at Wiko I have worked on various research projects.

1. First of all, I managed to complete a first draft of an article entitled “The Paradigm of Time in Plato’s *Timaeus*”. The Wiko library service was excellent, and I was able to consult almost all the books and articles I needed for my research. In a few months I will submit this article for publication to *Ancient Philosophy*, a peer-reviewed journal (editor: Prof. Ronald Polansky, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, USA).

2. I completed an article on the Romanian philosopher Alexandru Dragomir (1916–2002). Dragomir studied with Heidegger in the early 1940s, before returning to Romania.

My essay about him, “Alexandru Dragomir: Portrait of the Philosopher as a Solitary Man”, will be included in Michael Chase and Michael McGhee, eds., *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Ancients and Moderns* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, forthcoming).

3. I wrote three chapters of a general introduction to Plato that I am currently working on. I showed one chapter to a few Wiko Fellows (Marcia Pally and Fuad Rifka were among them), and they gave me very good feedback on it. This is a book for the non-specialist, and so I was eager to see what a non-specialist would have to say about it.

4. I revised a book that I edited, *Plato's Myths*, to be published by Cambridge University Press in 2008.

5. I partly revised the Romanian translation of Debra Nails, *The People of Plato* (forthcoming at Humanitas Press, Bucharest).

6. At Wiko I met Dr. Freddie Rokem. Dr. Rokem taught a course at the Free University in Berlin on theatre and philosophy. After we spoke about my research interests in ancient Greek theatre and its relation to philosophy, Dr. Rokem invited me to one of his classes to give a lecture on Plato's *Symposium*. I delivered the lecture on 30 June 2007, and the lecture was followed by lively discussion.

7. On 28 June 2007 I delivered a lecture at Wiko entitled *Plato's Myths*. It was based on my introduction to the volume on Plato's myths that I have edited for Cambridge. Plato links all the myths he invents, and many of the traditional myths he uses, to philosophy, thus overcoming the traditional opposition between *muthos* and *logos* (in spite of his occasional claim that they are opposed modes of discourse). Why does he do it? I argued in my talk that there are three main reasons. He (i) thought of myth as an efficient means of persuasion intended to make the less philosophically inclined, as well as children, believe various noble things. He (ii) also thought that the philosopher should make the less philosophically inclined wise, and since these people may sometimes not follow the arguments, he is ready to provide whatever it takes – an image, a simile, or a myth – that will help them grasp what the argument failed to tell them. The myth – just like an image or analogy – may be a good teaching tool. And he (iii) also seems to think that rational argument has certain limits; when reason reaches them, one has to rely on myth to go further.

8. Between 9 and 15 July 2007 Prof. Michael Inwood, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, visited me at Wiko. I have known Prof. Inwood for many years. He read my introduction to the volume on Plato's myths that I have edited for Cambridge, as well as two chapters of my general introduction to Plato. He gave me very good comments on both of them.

9. Kevin McAleer, who style-edits texts written in English by Wiko Fellows, read three texts I wrote and made valuable suggestions for improvement. They were: a) “Alexandru Dragomir: Portrait of the Philosopher as a Solitary Man”; b) part of my introduction to the volume on Plato’s myths that I have edited for Cambridge; and c) about one chapter of my general introduction to Plato.

10. I was very impressed by Tomasz Kizny’s work on the Gulag. When Prof. Andrei Pleșu, Rector of the New Europe College, Bucharest, was at the Wissenschaftskolleg, I introduced Tomasz to him. I am happy to learn that Tomasz was invited to come to Bucharest in April 2008 and present his work on the Gulag at New Europe College.