sense', many have felt that the action—including what is likeliest to be the work of Euripides—is so unheroic at best, and often sordid, that it is hard to find a plain or natural way to understand it. K. reconstructs Euripides' original to remove entirely the inconsistencies about who knows the prophecy demanding Iphigenia's sacrifice, on the grounds that 'prophecies affecting an army are made to the army in epic and tragedy': only by hairsplitting could we see *Phoenissae* as other than an exception to such a rule, and I suspect Euripides, who worried about such matters, would have been concerned that his audience would not believe Clytemnestra could be deceived even briefly if the prophecy was public. K.'s interpretations are always, like even his boldest textual interventions, clearly argued and worthy of thought, but they are not uncontroversial.

The introduction to *Rhesus*, where most would surely agree with K. that the extant play is unlikely to be Euripides', presents no such issues. It would have been helpful if, during his discussion of the Second Hypothesis, he had informed the reader that he prints it after the play. The non-scholarly reader would be grateful also to be told who Dicaearchus was—throughout there are occasional notes about wordplay, mythology, and place-names, though not enough to ease the confusion of the average undergraduate.

With so much to be thankful for, it is ungracious to quibble. This is a fine achievement, and further confirms the high reputation of recent Loebs.

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EURIPIDEAN ANNOTATIONS

D. KOVACS: *Euripidea Tertia*. (*Mnemosyne* Suppl. 240.) Pp. x + 191. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003. Cased, €70/US$82. ISBN: 90-04-12977-4.

David Kovacs's Loeb edition of the plays of Euripides is now complete (six voll., 1994-2002). The monograph under review, like K.'s earlier *Euripidea* (1994) and *Euripidea Altera* (1996), is a companion volume to his Loeb edition designed to explain and justify numerous choices of readings or conjectures, and, on occasion, of translations. In addition, some discussions are more wide-ranging and explore such issues as the use of the *eisodoi* in exits and entrances (pp. 79–82, 95, 108, 124, 163–4) and the meaning of a particular passage for the interpretation of the play as a whole (e.g.pp. 126–30 on *Ba.* 810–19). This third volume is devoted primarily to the plays contained in Loeb Volumes 4–6 (*IT*, *Ion*, *Hel.*, *Ph.*, *Or.*, *Ba.*, *IA*, *Rh.*), but also includes some addenda to *Cyc.*, *Alc.*, *Med.*, *Heracl.*, *Hec.*, *Supp.*, *HF*, and *Tr.* All this is a major achievement and must be recognized as such; K. has established himself as an eminent authority on Euripides. If I express occasional disagreements below, I ask the reader to keep this fact firmly in mind. In textual matters, as every connoisseur will understand, disagreement is not synonymous with disrespect. K.'s discussions always reveal an acute intelligence and his treatments can be quite valuable even where one may not accept his conclusions.

It would not be possible in the space allotted to discuss in detail a number of specific passages so a few brief comments must suffice. In general, K. is a venturesome critic who does not hesitate to propose, and print, numerous new conjectures of his own. He

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dedicates the final volume of his Loeb edition to the memory of his teacher, the much lamented G. P. Goold. I well remember from my own Harvard graduate school days Goold describing himself to me as a 'cut-and-slash' critic and much the same could fairly be said of K. Such critics perform a very useful service, often, for instance, forcing the reader to revisit old problems, but, in the nature of things, they will not always persuade. It is simply not realistic to propose a large number of new conjectures on a much-studied author such as Euripides and expect to be correct all, or even much, of the time. The most brilliant conjectural miscellanea within recent memory is John Jackson's *Marginalia Scaenica* (Oxford, 1955), to which one may add for good measure his textual articles on the Greek Novelists in *CQ* 29 (1935), 52–7, 96–112. These are works of genius but no one would or could accept the majority of his proposals. This hardly detracts in the slightest from his marvelous achievement.

Consider then one typical passage from *Euripidea Tertia*, *Hel.* 322–3: *πρὶν δ' οὐδὲν ὀρθῶς εἰδέναι, τί σοι πλέον/λυπουμένῃ γένοιτ' ἄν; ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ πιθοῦ*. K. states 'The sense we require . . . is "But before you learn what the situation is, what advantage do you get from grieving?" But *πρὶν δ' οὐδὲν ὀρθῶς εἰδέναι* cannot mean "before you learn *anything* for sure": the negative is entirely unwelcome'. He goes on to propose: *πρὶν οὖν τάδ' ὀρθῶς εἰδέναι* ('close to what is transmitted') and concludes by observing 'Corruption, however, could well be deeper'. This is the work of a bold critic practicing his craft. But the negative *οὐδέν* is certainly sound and idiomatic. The passage is cited and clearly explained in Kühner–Gerth II.219, in Kannicht's commentary on the *Helen* (ad loc.), and is even cited in Smyth's *Greek Grammar*, §2753. To condemn it with the bare pronouncement 'the negative is entirely unwelcome', without demonstration, will hardly do. In fact, so far from there being any question of a 'deeper corruption' there is no corruption at all. (K., to be sure, does not print his conjecture in the Loeb.) There are too many passages where K., or so it seems to me, abandons a sound text and introduces unnecessary conjectures. He has a particular penchant both for accepting others' and for positing his own lacunae. There is no doubt that the text of Euripides, like that of most authors, contains lacunae, but K. is inclined to sow with the whole sack, not the hand. For a few representative specimens of doubtful lacunae and other changes see *IT* 77, 113–14, 734; *Hel.* 397, 713; *Phoen.* 1606; *Rh.* 452. What makes this tendency to assume lacunae particularly problematic is K.'s regular practice of composing his own Greek to fill in the lacuna—sometimes several verses worth—instead of merely marking the lacuna and leaving it blank in accordance with the more customary practice. As he often prints his Greek supplements in his edition, there is a clear and present danger that some of his Loeb readership, all innocent of critical marks, in particular angular brackets, will assume that the Greek they see printed, and translated, is Euripides' *ipsissima verba*. The risk is especially great since K.'s practice, when the supplement is his own (as frequently), is to give no attribution of authorship in the apparatus. Even the most experienced scholar can be led astray by unclear supplement annotation. See, for instance, my remarks on Denys Page in *CP* 73 (1978), 53 with n. 4.

But these are minor blemishes in a work that contains a great deal of acute commentary. See, to give merely a couple of examples, the quite excellent discussions of *Ion* 1410–11; *Hel.* 226–8; *Phoen.* 408–21, 438–42; *Tr.* 1055–9. This is a fine piece of scholarship, full of excellent things.

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