recedes from center stage and focus shifts to the sons of Jupiter, and to the beneficence of both gods to Roman heroes.

Part of W.'s clarity in these first chapters stems from his decision to make this study almost exclusively intratextual, focusing on the *Metamorphoses* alone. While the abundant annotation makes reference to intertextual issues, the body of W.'s argument eschews extraneous questions and thus can be followed by any reader with a working knowledge of the *Metamorphoses*. W. also thoroughly situates his argument in the context of earlier scholarship. These features would make the volume particularly useful for undergraduates, were it not for the unfortunate decision (presumably editorial rather than authorial) to provide English translations of neither the Latin nor quotes from modern critics. Several extensive quotes in German (e.g. pp. 117, 147) could present a stumbling block even for an advanced Latin student.

The final chapter of the volume ('Endings') is its weakest point. After so clearly laying out the poem's narrative dynamics in the early chapters, W. purports to explore here the ways in which Ovid modifies the dynamics of continuity to prepare the reader for an ending to the poem. While W. demonstrates nicely that the poem ends (rather than just stopping), the connection between this chapter and those that precede it is often lost in the details. Except in rare instances (e.g. the story of Pomona and Vertumnus repeats the narrative pattern of frustrated desire and transformation, but also concludes it by shifting into marital mode [pp. 110–11]), the items in W.'s catalogue of closural techniques (e.g. ring composition, *sphragis*, the geographical shift west) are not shown to relate to the techniques of continuation discussed in the rest of the volume. Parts of the chapter also suffer from quite unnecessary special pleading: when so much clear evidence of the poem's closure is available (and, indeed, is used in the chapter), why resort, for example, to a shaky argument that many of the place names in Aesculapius' *periplus* evoke Ovid's present (pp. 134–5)? The chapter has some usefulness as a study of the closing of the poem, but it is out of place in this book.

Typographical or editorial errors are infrequent and for the most part harmless, although I noted at least two unfortunate ones in Latin quotation: 'Doridque' for 'Doridaque' (p. 39); 'cupido' for 'cupidine' (p. 120). An index of passages discussed, a general index, and a list of references enhance the usefulness of the book.

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SENECA'S LIFE AND WORKS

G. MAURACH: S*eneca: Leben und Werk*. Pp. x + 234. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000. Cased, DM 68. ISBN: 3-534-15000-7.

This is an expanded version of a book written in 1989 and designed primarily to help students understand the complex structure and philosophical thought of Seneca's prose works. It has clearly fulfilled this aim admirably, for this is its third edition. In the second edition (1996) the original rather short and non-committal section on the tragedies was augmented by an appendix, inserted before the bibliography, devoted to literature on Seneca's later influence. Now there has also been added a brief account of some books on Seneca's works that appeared too late to be used for the first edition. Unfortunately, it is a very restricted list, and excludes important works concerned with matters that particularly interest Maurach: J. Barnes's *Logic & the Imperial Stoa* (Leiden, 1997) would have helped his discussion (p. 172) of the

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syllogisms in Seneca's later *Epistulae Morales*, and H. Hine's *Seneca*, *Natural Questions*, Book 2 (New York, 1981) illuminates a work that is central to what M. regards as Seneca's ultimate aim, the linking of moral freedom and peace to man's understanding of his place in the cosmos.

The first quarter of the book is devoted to Seneca's life, including his physical appearance as preserved on the third-century double herm and as later represented by Rubens. The remainder of the book analyses his prose works individually and the tragedies as a group. The project of explaining Seneca's work in terms of his life has always been as tempting as it is hazardous. Tempting, because we have substantial pieces of biographical information in Suetonius, Cassius Dio, and above all Tacitus' *Annals*, while authors writing not far from Seneca's own time provide many incidental references. Hazardous, because the dating of most of his works is uncertain, except within limits too broad to relate them closely to the attested events of his life. Tempting, because Seneca often speaks in the first person of his family, his friends and his own activities (his self-references fill twenty-five of the sixty pages of references collected from post-classical authors by Trillitzsch in *Seneca im literarischen Urteil der Antike*, vol. II). Hazardous, because these allusions rarely touch his public activities and because the 'I' of Seneca's works is rarely unambiguously autobiographical.

These problems confront both those scholars who are primarily interested in Seneca's biography and those who are primarily interested in his works: the first group may be tempted to use the works regardless of chronology to produce a highly speculative account of Seneca's motives (e.g. Rozelaar, Grimal); the second may try to date and explain the thesis and standpoint of a work or works by adducing known events of his career (e.g. Chaumartin on *De Beneficiis*). As the author of an earlier book analysing with great subtlety and sensitivity the structure of Seneca's *Epistulae Morales*, M. clearly belongs to the latter category, but he is well aware of the snares and carefully avoids a crude biographical analysis. Thus there is no discussion of addressees like Annaeus Serenus, Pompeius Paulinus, or Lucilius, or of the external evidence for their relationship to Seneca. The attack on Seneca's hypocrisy by Suillius Rufus is treated early in the book and is not connected with *De Vita Beata*, which is often regarded as Seneca's reply. In fact, M.'s decision to give students an account of the philosopher's life is initially justified by their need to assess attacks on Seneca by contemporary and later critics, and to evaluate his own claim to lead a life in harmony with his teaching (pp. 3–4, 8–9), not by the belief that any real light will be shed on his works.

Yet M. does mean to connect Seneca's life and work in a more general way. Showing an admirable determination to avoid speculating beyond the evidence, he divides Seneca's life into periods marked off by three crises: his prolonged illness, culminating in a long stay in Egypt with his aunt in the 20s; his exile on Corsica from 41 to 49; and his retirement from politics in 62, completed by his withdrawal from the public in 64. M. correlates (p. 201) these periods of his life with three periods of work: before and during his exile, when he wrote the *Consolations*; his time as a government 'minister', when he wrote works of practical advice showing how to effect compromises between philosophical ideals and life in the real world; and the period of retirement, when he wrote *De Providentia*, *De Otio, Quaestiones Naturales*, and *Epistulae Morales*, and was working on the *Moralis Philosophia* mentioned in the Letters. In the last period, M. thinks that Seneca ceased to compromise. He concentrated on a more systematic philosophical treatment combined with teaching aimed at achieving freedom from the drives of the body and freedom to enjoy the spectacle of the cosmos, with which the human reason has a natural affinity.

However, the underpinnings even of this general scheme are fragile. M. does not

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take any account of Seneca's lost works, which are not dateable. Nor does he do much to defend his chronology. The late dating of *De Providentia* is circular: it rests on just such an assumption about the development of Seneca's thinking. Similarly, the reason for dating *De Otio* so late is precisely that, according to M., it does not compromise (p. 139): M. does not mention the possibility that the addressee is Annaeus Serenus, in which case the work belongs not later than his death in 62; nor does he engage with its incompleteness and the ambiguity of the last surviving passage. He bolsters this chronology by adducing similarities between themes in these works and those of the *Epistulae Morales*. But these are very varied in subject matter and even contain elements of consolation (*Epp.* 91, 99) that could be similarly related to the earliest works, if we did not know better. As for the middle works, we do not know if *De Beneficiis* was finished, or even started, before Seneca's retirement, only that it is mentioned in *Ep.* 81, whose dramatic date is the early summer of 64.

But the fragility of the scheme does not get in the way of the sensitive analysis of the individual works. M. brings out well the deliberate contrast in stylistic levels and modes of exposition with which Seneca imports variety into the repetition so essential to paedagogy. The days when Seneca was thought to be unable to organize a treatise or even an argument are happily gone. In the wake of Abel's work on the dialogues and M.'s own labours on the letters, painstaking analysis reveals the 'inner form'. Just as welcome is the fact that there is no crude attempt to read precise political messages into the tragedies. Instead, M. stresses their vivid exploration of the dangers of the passions displayed in extreme situations. These horrific portrayals are not merely negative versions of Seneca's prose instruction; they are artistic transformations of the cruelty Seneca saw around him into general accounts of the human condition (p. 219).

M.'s book is well organized, and easy to use. Paragraphs are numbered so that cross-references are precise. Errors are few (but p. 37 n. 52 seriously misrepresents Grimal's view by assigning the putative speech on clemency before the Senate to Nero on 1 January 55, rather than to Seneca on 1 January 56). The book manages to achieve a great deal in a relatively concise format, providing an account of Seneca's life and an analysis of all of his extant works, while also giving students a good idea of the different scholarly approaches that have been taken. M. likes reading Seneca and makes the reader feel that he is interesting to read, and, indeed, to read more than once.

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LUCAN RECLAIMED

P. Esposito, L. Nicastri (edd.): *Interpretare Lucano. Miscellanea di Studi.* (Quaderni del Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità 22.) Pp. 504. Naples: Università degli Studi di Salerno, 1999. Paper, L. 70,000.

What to expect from a voluminous collection of nineteen studies (mostly in Italian) under the noncommittal title 'Interpretare Lucano'? Recent years have certainly showed no lack of scholars devoted to the interpretation of the *Bellum Civile*. On the contrary, apart from translations and commentaries, the annual stream of articles and monographs on the hot-blooded, talented young poet from Cordoba is still waxing.

In the preface to this collection readers are given no real clue as to the scope of the

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