even if merely pragmatically. These are minor quibbles about a volume that all students of A. will con and ponder for long to come.

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THE TEXT OF ARISTOTLE'S *DE GEN. ET CORR.*

M. RASHED: *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der aristotelischen Schrift* De generatione et corruptione. (Serta Graeca: Beiträge zur Erforschung griechischer Texte 12.) Pp. xiii + 386, pls. Wiesbaden, Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2001. Cased, €82. ISBN: 3-89500-212-7.

In some quarters—I paraphrase the opening sentence of Marwan Rashed's learned and engrossing volume—in some quarters, the history of textual transmission is deemed to be as mouth-watering as a dinner of chopped hay. And in those quarters the thing seems none the more appetizing when it is served up under a sesquipedalian German name. But in such quarters, R. argues in his fighting preface, they have got things badly awry: *Überlieferungsgeschichte* is not only a necessary ingredient of *Altertumswissenschaft*—it is a nourishing and a piquant ingredient.

If R.'s argument may not persuade every reader, then the substance of his book ought to do so. True, he spends many pages on that puritan activity, the listing of shared faults. True, his chief business is to trek through the desert of dusty manuscripts. But it is a blooming desert: there are flowers in every acre, many of them exotic. For quite apart from the numerous asides on scholarship and its history, both medieval and modern, which might be expected to illustrate and enliven the discussion, there are many unforseeable delights: historians of Aristotelian metaphysics will find a new text on pp. 300–2; aficionados of Empedocles' cosmic cycle should not miss pp. 141–5; if you have a soft spot for Burgundio of Pisa, then turn to pp. 132–6.

The book begins with a brief chapter on the history of the *GC* in antiquity. Then there are some general remarks on the Byzantine tradition and a detailed catalogue of the sixty-seven surviving MSS. The following seven chapters are the meat of the book: they discuss, in turn and according to their family relationships, each of the Greek MSS and also the Arabic and the Latin translations. The discussion is grounded upon fresh collations, complete in the case of some forty MSS and selective in the case of the others. It is primarily concerned to set out the premisses from which stemmatic relationships may be inferred—and to draw the appropriate conclusions. But in addition, most of the chapters contain lengthy remarks about the cultural background against which the various copies were produced; and many of the chapters offer first editions of scholia and other short pieces.

R. presents a complete stemma. It is complex, with numerous lines of contamination. But the fundamental fact about it is simple: the surviving witnesses to Aristotle's text divide, without remainder, into two families; and the division goes back to antiquity—certainly beyond Philoponus and perhaps beyond Alexander. R.'s investigations thus confirm the thesis which Diels advanced in his magisterial essay in the Berlin *Abhandlungen* for 1882.

What do R.'s results mean for an editor of the *GC*? (What have they meant for R., whose Budé is in press?) Joachim's edition, which was published in 1922, was founded on six Greek MSS, together with the commentary of Philoponus and a Latin

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translation. Joachim said nothing about the relations among his eight witnesses beyond indicating that two of the MSS were of especial authority—and one of them 'of very little value'. He was right on the last point, and his Ambrosian MS can be eliminated. He was right, too, to adduce the other five MSS. On the other hand, he was wrong about the Latin translation, which was done from an existing Greek MS—indeed, from one of Joachim's five. As for Philoponus, the matter is unclear; for although R. frequently refers to the commentary, he does not discuss its text (nor its lemmata), nor does he place it in his stemma. However that may be, a conscientious editor who wishes to weigh all the pertinent evidence for the readings of the archetype will have to work harder than Joachim did; for—unless I have miscounted—some twenty-five of the seventy-odd witnesses to the text are ineliminable.

There is a school of textual criticism which is sceptical of stemmatology: as R. demonstrates, here at least scepticism is the first refuge of the idle. But if his ideology is sound, are R.'s particular stemmatic propositions true? Are they solid inferences from firm premisses? Well, the premisses are surely firm enough. If the indolent reviewer who checked a few of R.'s reported readings against the plates at the end of the book could detect no errors, a serious critic will doubtless uncover a mistake or three—no collation is perfect. But that will not cause R.'s arguments to totter, since he almost always provides more premisses than his conclusion requires. As for the inferences, some are probative, some would satisfy any British jury, a few— inevitably—are more contestable. In short, if there may be room for revision at the edges, the central contentions of R.'s book—and the contentions pertinent to the constitution of the text of the *GC*—seem to me to be established.

The book is handsomely produced, and its forty-eight plates are clear and readable. (The stemma, which is crushed onto a single page, is the only blot.) R. is a scholar from the school of Dieter Harlfinger, and he therefore knows how to operate on a MS. His book is a major contribution to Aristotelian studies—and to much else besides. It boils with learning and it bubbles with enthusiasm. What more could you want?

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ESSAYS ON STOICISM

B. INWOOD (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*. Pp. x + 438. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Paper, £19.95, US$26 (Cased, £50, US$70). ISBN: 0-521-77985-5 (0-521-77005-X hbk).

The essays collected in this volume may be divided into four sections: 1, the history of the school (and of the school of thought); 2, the philosophy; 3, relations with medicine, grammar, astronomy and geography; and 4, *capita selectissima* pertaining to the reception of Stoic philosophy in the middle ages and early modern times. For the most part, Stoic philosophy is approached here from a plurality of (often modern) systematic points of view. As is often the case in collections such as these, the excellent keeps company with the less excellent.

D. Sedley covers 'The School from Zeno to Arius Didymus' in an exemplarily clear and attractive way, with some emphasis on the philosophical diaspora with the war years 88–86 B.C.E. as its main cause, though he thinks that Panaetius, Stoic scholarch,

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