This internal inconsistency is symptomatic of the book's approach; M. is a committed and skilled reader of the text who has taken Valerius' work seriously and worked hard to draw out all its implications—including its irony, moral complexity, and authorial creativity. The book is full of interesting readings of and insights into Valerius' work. Yet the courage of his convictions fails him; M. has a nervous eye out for sceptics who might dismiss Valerius as insincere and toadying to the imperial regime (e.g. p. 162), and his book seems hampered by a desire not to alienate such ungenerous readers.

University of Exeter REBECCA LANGLANDS

SENECA'S *TROADES*

A. J. KEULEN: *L. Annaeus Seneca:* Troades. (*Mnemosyne* Suppl. 212.) Pp. x + 573. Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 2001. Cased, US$146. ISBN: 90-04-12004-1.

Aside from *Medea* and *Phaedra*, which exercise a particular attraction for readers with an interest in feministic and gender studies, the *Troades* counts as the most popular play in the corpus of Senecan tragedies. As we continue to be confronted almost daily with appalling reports and pictures of cruel conflicts and wars of conquest in many parts of the world, the fate of the captive Trojan women at the mercy of their Greek conquerors assumes a disturbing relevance for us who cannot but feel compassion for the tragic fate of the old queen Hecuba and the newly widowed Andromache destined to be bereft of her only child. It is not surprising, then, that over the past forty years the *Troades* have been edited, translated, or commented on more than a dozen times, including the publications of F. Caviglia (Rome, 1981), E. Fantham (Princeton, 1982), and A. J. Boyle (Leeds, 1994). The 'long genesis' of the most recent commentary began, as Keulen explains in his preface, at the beginning of the new revival of interest in the tragedy, and passed through several stages including a school edition and a Frisian translation. Well aware of the extensive scholarly tradition that has grown over the years of his preoccupation with the play, the latest commentator has added his own contribution in a more readily accessible form which provides the reader with the most detailed exegesis to date.

After a brief account of Seneca's life and works, the introduction concentrates on questions of dating, literary models, structure, characters, metre, staging, and 'Nachleben'. The most complex characters in the *Troades* are Helena and Agamemnon. Compared with the latter's rôle in later Greek literature, Seneca's portrait of the Achaean leader is distinctly favourable. In fact, the whole scene (vv. 203–359) between Agamemnon, who is depicted as the model king with moderate views, and the impetuous Pyrrhus, who has brutally murdered old Priam and will soon do the same to young innocent Polyxena, is interpreted by K. as serving a pedagogical purpose. Chronologically he links the composition of the scene with the time when Seneca was supervising the education of Nero, i.e. between 51 and 54, and classifies it as a piece of rhetorical training for the classroom. In a similar way, Helena has been assigned a new rôle. Instead of exposing her fickleness and guilt, Seneca has given her part in the myth a psychological dimension by presenting her as a woman who, after having been captive for ten years, now finds herself attacked by both sides and is searching desperately to save herself in a seemingly hopeless situation.

K. takes as a basis for his text Zwierlein's edition in the OCT series (1986, corrected

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reprint 1993), from which he deviates in almost forty passages (listed on p. 36). In most of these cases he follows the unanimous consensus of the 'Etruscus' and the A-class manuscripts. This seems justified in cases where Zwierlein suspected interpolation and needlessly deleted lines, as at 176–7, 990b–991a (so already Leo), 1147; he agrees, however, in removing 1143b–1144a. Similarly, he is reluctant to admit loss of text at 843–4 and 1043–4, but remains undecided at 304–5. In general, K. displays a marked reserve in accepting conjectures which impose themselves, as, for example, Scaliger's *demissa* at 100 (*di-* EA), *dimisit* of the recentiores at 197 (*divisit* EA), and Madvig's *placida* at 246 (*-ta* Eβ), where his arguments to the contrary are scarcely convincing. In disputed passages the editor more often keeps the transmitted text and simply lists all the previous suggestions without reaching a firm decision. It would not be unfair to say that K.'s discussion of textual problems is primarily descriptive and serves to inform the reader rather than representing a wholehearted attempt to improve the text. More than balancing this often too cautious attitude in textual criticism, the commentator happily displays a trained eye for images and motifs, a close observation of the poetic language of Seneca tragicus and a nice sense for the rhetorical dimension of the play.

Whereas E. Fantham and A. J. Boyle were primarily concerned to explain the tragedy as a work of literary art, K. has written a commentary on the *Troades* which continues the tradition of philological exegesis for which The Netherlands has long been known. Much emphasis is laid on elucidating syntax, pointing out figures of style and, above all, clarifying matters of lexicography. Not only has the commentator attempted to collect *all* relevant parallels from the Senecan tragedies along with their poetic models for his illustration of the word or expression discussed, but he often goes on to provide whole 'Wortgeschichten': e.g. for *virgo* and *atque* (245), *patienter* (254), *iubar* (448), *scrutari* (615), and names such as *Titan* (171). K.'s commentary reaps a rich harvest from his long career as a teacher of Latin in school and his patient forty years of work on the *Troades*. At almost every step he shows that he knows his author by heart. This volume is refreshingly free from false pretensions and specious promises to revolutionize insight into the dramatic art of Seneca. It aims at giving the reader the help necessary to follow and comprehend the Latin text of an influential work of classical literature within the cultural context of its origin. With the diminishing linguistic competence too often evident even among professional classicists, no serious student of the *Troades* can in future afford to ignore this storehouse of painstaking philological observation and diligent survey of previous scholarship.

University of Fribourg MARGARETHE BILLERBECK

LUCAN'S TENTH BOOK

E. BERTI (ed.): *M. Annaei Lucani* Bellum civile *Liber X*. (Biblioteca Nazionale, Serie dei Classici Greci e Latini, Testi con Commento Filologico, NS 7.) Pp. 384. Florence: Felice le Monnier, 2000. Paper, L. 70,000. ISBN: 88-00-81295-3.

Emanuele Berti provides the first full-scale, published commentary in any language on the whole of Book Ten of Lucan's *Bellum civile*. This fact alone makes the book an invaluable contribution to the study of this author. Prior to the publication of this

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