of Keegan's argument is clear enough and points are forcefully made, but the phrasing is often delphic (e.g. p. 150 'Tarquin rehearses the constellated matrix of his masculinist cupidity'), mistranslation glaring (e.g. p. 146 on 2.770, 147 on 2.751). By contrast, C. M. C. Green's attempt to reconstruct from Varro's *Antiquitates rerum divinarum* the outlines of a Roman theology that is then traced to the *Fasti* combines lucid argumentation with good textual analysis (pp. 84–98, with the focus on Book 4); in its tactful way (cf. Green's concluding remarks on p. 99), this essay gives the complex Roman 'discourse of religion' (p. 99) a significant representation in this volume. Another important dimension is supplied by T. P. Wiseman's informative discussion of the possible 'direct influence from the Roman theatre' (p. 283) on Ovidian scenes in the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* (pp. 283–99).

Two strong pieces complete the collection, the first M. Pasco-Pranger's investigation of how the holidays that were added to the calendar by the Julio-Claudians interacted with the older layers of the calendrical structure, that 'ancient form . . . open to exegetical expansion and reinterpretation' (p. 255); her contention that the poetic connections between these added days and their surrounding contexts in the *Fasti* are 'mimetic of the associative connections a "reader" of the Julio-Claudian calendar might make' (p. 260) is well supported by her analysis of the later stages of Book 1 (461–724). Finally, R. J. Littlewood adduces iconographic as well as literary evidence in exploring Ovid's contribution to the construction of Numa as a precursor of Augustus. Aeneas is added to the equation by the associations that Littlewood neatly draws between the *ancile* of Numa, the Virgilian shield in *Aeneid* 8 and Augustus' *Clupeus Virtutis*; but perhaps more tenuous is the further link drawn between Augustus, Numa, and Servius Tullius, to the effect that 'the priestly guardian of Vesta's hearth and the champion of Concordia might also appear to be associated with a daughter's treachery' (p. 197, with obvious relevance to the two Julias).

In sum, the volume is of value because of the fresh light that the contributors shed on particular aspects of the *Fasti*, and because of the interim report that they offer on the current state and nature of scholarship on this important poem. There are few misprints, but the errors in the typesetting of the Greek on e.g. pp. 159, 164, 166 n. 25, 170 n. 42 are regrettable.

Columbia University GARETH WILLIAMS

A COMPANION TO *PHAEDRA*

R. MAYER: *Seneca:* Phaedra (Duckworth Companions to Greek and Roman Tragedy). Pp. 142. London: Duckworth, 2002. Paper, £9.99. ISBN: 0-7156-3165-9.

Some 'accessible introductions' to classical literature really are. This one will prove not only accessible, but engaging and stimulating to all readers of Seneca's best-known tragedy, whether in translation or in Latin, whatever their readerly preparation. It belongs in the hands of every student of Senecan drama.

Of nine short chapters, the first five treat the text and its ancient contexts. 'Seneca and Roman Tragedy' offers a thumbnail of Seneca's life and times, a soundbyte on Stoicism, a cogent argument for a longstanding Roman 'tradition of writing [tragedy] for recitation before a select audience' (p. 16), and a refreshingly unapologetic statement of the potential interest and value of recitation drama. Chapter 2, the book's

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https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/54.1.101 Published online by Cambridge University Press

longest at seventeen pages, gives 'The Action of the Play' very effectively: M. first recounts a scene like an opera broadcast announcer and then pauses to 'scroll back' critically over the action transpired, with special attention to the insurmountable embarrassments of staging. M.'s is simply the keenest dramaturgical eye of any Senecan to date; anyone seriously plumping for authorially intended stage performance now faces a steeper uphill battle than ever. M.'s knowledge of the play's entire modern reception helps here. For example, when Phaedra, awakening in Hippolytus' arms, 'utters an extended aside in which she pretty much gives the game away' (p. 24), we are not asked to take it on faith that this bit of business, if staged, would stretch the dramatic illusion to the point of an audible pop. Rather, M. can point out that the two modern playwrights who followed Seneca's scene most closely (Robert Garnier in the French sixteenth-century, Hugo Claus in the Dutch 1990s) both swerve from their model precisely here: their Nurses manage to get Hippolytus away from Phaedra, who can then soliloquize credibly.

Chapters 3–5 discuss 'Major Themes of the Play' (nature, madness, and 'morals'), 'Characterisation' (mostly Phaedra and Hippolytus), and 'Literary Texture' (an admirable short introduction to Roman allusivity). Big ethical questions about the play's two main characters get examined under different lights, and here a note of disappointment at M.'s overall treatment of the character he clearly has loved longest and best. I did come away from this book thinking better of Hippolytus, and having M. to thank for it. Still, at some major points he stops protectively shy of confronting the fiercer aspects of this complex character as Seneca's broad rhetorical brush has drawn it. First, the hunt: M. rightly dismisses modern moral objections to hunting *per se*, yet never takes on the loving details in Hippolytus' description (hounds' muzzles dripping gore, wagons groaning under heaps of kill) that do seem to invite questions about the line between being an avid outdoorsman and getting off on bloodshed. Next, is Hippolytus really just being traditionally misogynistic, on an ordinary understanding of the term, when he says *detestor omnis, horreo fugio execror. sit ratio, sit natura, sit dirus furor: odisse placuit* (566–8), or when he avers that his one consolation for his mother's death is being able to hate all women? Finally, M. refers several times to the moment when Hippolytus draws his sword against his stepmother, yet never mentions that he simultaneously twists back her neck by the hair of her head and announces his intent to sacrifice her to Diana on the spot (only Phaedra's wish to die at his hand stays it). Refusing to link that scene (via the goddess) to the opening hunt, and refusing to implicate Hippolytus' character fully in this tragedy's dark 'moral world', seems strange—almost as though M. were reading the play through Hippolytus' eyes. But then I suppose I tend to read it through Phaedra's, and M.'s bias has helped me better to see my own. When Hippolytus quits the scene, for good, with a cry to his woods and beasts (718), M. finds the moment genuinely, tenderly affecting, and on this point he has persuaded at least one initially sceptical reader.

Chapters 6, 8, and 9, on modern reception, performances, and translations, are a rich treat, something only a scholar who has lived with this tragedy and its fortunes for years could have written. (Chapter 7, on interpretation, depresses, but through no fault of its author: at some point M. had to address the only other existing English-language monograph on the play, that oddly uncharacteristic work of a respected and lamented classicist.) Footnotes are instructive but unobtrusive. There is a guide for further reading, as well as an ample and current bibliography, not limited to works in English.

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https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/54.1.101 Published online by Cambridge University Press