

[Ann Arbor, 1997]). Instead, M. footnotes (p. 195) how *OC* might have been taken, in 401, as an account of ‘civic unity’ produced by a ‘curb on civic memory’. This reading, M. claims, would not have been available to Sophocles in 405. But we could choose to dispense with the ‘commanding intelligence’ of a particular playwright, and understand *OC* instead as a complex, over-determined response to the particular needs of Athens after 411. Its anxiety about telling, retelling, and, especially, not telling, which M.’s fine analyses bring out very clearly, would then emerge as overwhelmingly political.

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MEDEA

D. J. MASTRONARDE (ed.): *Euripides: Medea* (Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics.) Pp. x + 431. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Paper, £17.95/US\$26. ISBN: 0-521-64386-4 (0-521-64365-1 hbk).

This ‘Green and Yellow’ edition of what is probably Euripides’ most-read play makes a worthy sequel to the author’s well-received *Euripides: Phoinissai*, which appeared in the same series in 1994. Donald Mastronarde, who fittingly holds the Melpomene Chair of Greek at Berkeley, bases his text on Diggle’s 1984 OCT edition. Exceptions to Diggle’s readings (listed on p. 73) tend to be conservative: M. retains a number of lines athetized in the OCT, including 43, 355–6, and 1056–80 (except for 1062–3). The latter passage, the most notorious crux in the play, receives extended treatment in a ten-page Appendix. Given his tendency to accept the text as transmitted, it is surprising to see that M. athetizes the formulaic final anapests (1415–19); in this he follows Diggle, but differs from Page, who retains them though ‘they seem a little inapposite’ (D. L. Page [ed.], *Euripides Medea* [Oxford, 1938], p. 181), and especially from David Kovacs, editor of the Loeb Euripides, who soundly defends their retention (*TAPA* 117 [1987], 168–9). Textual polemics are avoided; M. explains his judgements matter-of-factly with varying degrees of certitude, and disagrees courteously with other editors. The apparatus criticus is quite limited, in keeping with the aim of the series: individual manuscripts are not differentiated from one another, nor are papyrus fragments. Readers seeking more information are directed to Diggle or to H. van Looy’s 1992 Teubner edition.

The teacher in M. shows forth in the eclectic wealth of data he stops to provide on every page. Only rarely does this tendency verge on pedantry, as with the prosopographical tidbit (p. 388 n. 3), with reference to T. Bergk’s *Griechische Literaturgeschichte*, Volume III (Berlin, 1884): ‘Bergk died in 1881 and this volume was a posthumous edition.’ Far more often M. reaches his intended audience with a fine combination of clarity, relevance, and respect.

In particular, M.’s introductory material, generous (108 pages: praise to the series editors for permitting so much!) and yet compact, will be a great boon to readers making their first acquaintance with *Medea*, with Euripides, or with Athenian tragedy; to those already familiar with the play/author/genre, there will still be great profit in these pages. Lucid discussion is lightly supplemented with reference to (mostly recent) scholarship. Topics include *inter alia* Euripides’ life and works; the play’s structure, themes, and problems (including a concise discussion of ‘*Medea* and Greek

institutions’); the inevitable debate about Neophon and Euripidean originality; and the influence of the play on later drama and visual arts. In addition, M. provides valuable introductory discussions to several aspects of Greek tragedy in general: its structural elements, language and style, and prosody and meter.

The section on meters is particularly helpful, beginning with very basic information provided clearly and without condescension, and progressing to short standard treatments of the types of lyric meters regularly encountered in tragedy. Anyone who compares M.’s introductory remarks (not to mention his analyses of individual passages within the Commentary) to Page’s nine-page appendix on ‘Metrical Scheme and Notes’ will see how much times have changed in terms of assumptions about the readership’s prior knowledge—but M.’s volume is nothing if not a work for our times. Graceful type-setting makes the metrical analyses all the more useful.

The bulk of the volume (pp. 160–387) is devoted to an even-handed, detailed commentary, featuring philological and interpretive comments on the text and its background. The material is organized so that a reader consulting only a portion of the text would be well-served, as would one reading the play from beginning to end; cross-references provide direction to previous discussion of themes and topics.

The end-matter is nicely organized as well. If indices are the window to the commentator’s soul, M.’s will not be judged narrow. A general index includes items ranging from ‘competition between genders’ to ‘future middle with passive sense’ to ‘entrance ramp’. The somewhat idiosyncratic index of Greek words includes 107 entries, of which the longest are γάρ (with eighteen references), γε (seventeen), and σοφός/σοφία tied with μέν (sixteen each). M. provides a bibliography which, though naturally not comprehensive, is generous in size (sixteen pages) and scope. Predominantly but not exclusively anglophone, this collection will provide a convenient launching pad for student papers and, no doubt, future scholarship. Among works omitted, I missed especially P. Pucci, *The Violence of Pity in Euripides’ Medea* (Ithaca and London, 1980) and E. Schlesinger, ‘Zu Euripides’ *Medea*’, *Hermes* 94 (1966), 26–53.

M. states at the outset that he intends his book ‘both to replace, and not to replace, the famous commentary of Denys Page’, and ‘to make the play available in all its complication and sophistication to present-day students’ (p. vii). On both counts his aim is sure. Since 1938, Page’s edition has been the place to begin in studying *Medea*; among other attributes, his book was influential in setting the parameters of critical discussion. It would be foolish to discount Page’s formidable work on textual matters, and indeed, M. at times prefers Page’s reading over Diggle’s (e.g. in retaining the problematic ll. 1056–80 in *Medea*’s great monologue, though his reasons for doing so differ from Page’s). In matters of interpretation, however, especially concerning the main character, M.’s judicious discussion replaces that of his predecessor as a starting-point for analysis. To take an important example, Page famously argued that *Medea* is portrayed as a typical barbarian and witch; at least since 1977 (articles by E. Bongie in *TAPA* 107 [1977], 27–56 and B. M. W. Knox in *YCS* 25 [1977], 193–225), however, her resemblance to male Greek heroes has been emphasized. M. incorporates this perspective (p. 20) into an impressively balanced discussion of the protagonist’s many motives and attributes (pp. 15–22). M.’s comments also give far more attention to plot structure (*Medea* as revenge-play), issues of gender, and the question of audience reception.

While no commentary could present a masterpiece ‘in all its complication and sophistication’, M. is outstandingly successful in addressing his intended audience. I read *Medea* with a group of undergraduates in the fall of 2002, most of them in their

third year of studying Ancient Greek. When I asked their opinion of M.'s edition, one student remarked, 'Every time I had a question, it was answered in the Commentary.' That is high praise for a 'Green and Yellow', and a judgement with which most readers, most of the time, will surely concur. M.'s well-produced volume will doubtless stand for a generation or more as the best introduction to this tragedy to be found between two covers. Characterized by tact, intelligence, and deep familiarity with Euripides, the volume will be useful to M.'s professional colleagues as well.

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A COMPANION TO *MEDEA*

W. ALLAN: *Euripides: Medea* (Duckworth Companions to Greek and Roman Tragedy). Pp. 143. London: Duckworth, 2002. Paper, £9.99. ISBN: 0-7156-3187-X.

This volume is one of the first in the new series 'Duckworth Companions to Greek and Roman Tragedy'. The series' mission statement claims to provide 'accessible introductions to ancient tragedies', and accessibility is a key feature of Allan's work. Complex issues are confronted, but the material is presented in a clear, direct manner throughout. The essentials are highlighted, and detailed guidance is provided to enable readers to pursue issues in greater depth, with a bibliography and endnotes indicating the extent of scholarship behind the play. The book functions as an excellent introduction to the play itself, and as a useful gateway for readers wishing to explore Greek literature and culture more widely. The main chapters are supplemented by a glossary and a brief timeline giving major dates for the history of Greek drama between 533 and 405 B.C.E.

The opening chapter, 'Festival, Myth and Play', condenses a remarkable amount of material into a highly readable introduction. The nature of Greek tragedy and Euripides' rôle within it is surveyed in a few pages, followed by a succinct, but detailed, account of the myth of Medea before Euripides' version. The chapter concludes with a scene-by-scene summary of the drama which flags the issues to be discussed in later chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 approach the play thematically: 'Husbands and Wives' combines a detailed reading of the play's gender dynamics with a thoughtful survey of the Athenian socio-political climate; 'Greeks and Others' warns us against reducing the play 'to a document of crude ethnic chauvinism', as A. provides a subtle reading of the play's manipulation of identity concepts, and the problematization of the binary opposition Greek versus Barbarian. Chapter 4, 'Medea's Revenge', examines one of the central problems of the play from a number of angles, giving a balanced account of the current academic debate on the status of Medea's action. A. pays particular attention to the details of language on which much interpretation turns, but manages to present the material in a general context so as not to exclude Greekless readers from the debate. As the series' prime audience must be students working in translation, it is heartening to see a sustained effort to explore linguistic matters in a wider forum. The final chapter, 'Multi-Medea', opens with a disclaimer that a full treatment of the post-Euripidean history falls outside the scope of the volume. Nevertheless, the material A. has chosen to present gives the reader a tantalizing glimpse into the reception history, together with a strong sense of the importance of the play to Western culture. The chapter ends with a strong assertion of the value of the drama to