

Flavian poets Valerius Flaccus, Statius and Silius Italicus. Furthermore, in ch. 9 Neil W. Bernstein uses quantitative analysis (by means of the digital *Tesseræ* project) alongside qualitative examination in order to identify the Ovidianism of Silius Italicus; last but not least, in ch. 10, Stephen Hinds revisits the metamorphosis of Persephone through Claudian's receptions of Ovid.

Finally, Ovid's poetry is open not only to the otherness of past and future poetic colleagues, but also to other versions — repetitions, one might say — of his own works and himself as a poet, as demonstrated by Darcy Krasne's 'Succeeding succession: cosmic and earthly succession in the *Fasti* and the *Metamorphoses*' (ch. 5), Sharon James's 'Rape and repetition in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*' (ch. 6) and Peter Knox's 'Metamorphoses in a cold climate' (ch. 7), focusing on the exile poetry, where even female figures such as Niobe and the Heliades may represent the poet (cf. 191, and *Pont.* 1.2.29–32).

A paradoxical effect of this 'key feature of Ovidian poetics, [and] techniques that encompass much of what makes Ovid Ovid' (4) is that what may appear familiar becomes alienating. And at this point the effect becomes doubly paradoxical. For at the same time as Ovid's epic narratives estrange that which is assumedly familiar, these narratives also appear more human, cruel and realistic in a non-romantic sense. This effect is particularly conspicuous in Heslin's 'Ovid's Cycnus and Homer's Achilles heel' (ch. 3), Augoustakis' '*Loca luminis haurit*: Ovid's recycling of Hecuba' (ch. 4) and — perhaps most intensely — James's chapter on the obsessive repetition of rape in the first part of the *Metamorphoses* (ch. 6). Through her sober, acute and accurate analysis, James shows how the Ovidian repetition of rapes puts the cruelty of the act on display in a way that other authors rarely do.

The introduction and chapters are equipped with endnotes, which makes for a somewhat cumbersome read (footnotes would have been easier!), followed by a rich, consolidated bibliography, short biographies of the contributors, and a general index and index locorum (both very helpful). The volume is well edited; no typos were grave enough to mar this reader's experience, and almost all the Greek and Latin has been commendably translated (at 191, there is one line missing in the translation of *Pont.* 1.2.33–4). In sum, this is a page-turner of a contribution to Ovidian scholarship, which will most probably alter any reader's perception of what he/she thought that they knew.

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A. J. BOYLE, *SENECA, THYESTES / EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION, TRANSLATION, AND COMMENTARY*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. cxlv + 561. ISBN 9780198744726. £120.00.

In his new edition of Seneca's *Thyestes*, as in his earlier Oxford editions of Seneca's *Oedipus* (2011) and *Medea* (2014), Anthony Boyle provides a detailed translation and commentary prefaced by a thorough introduction. His introduction explores historical, biographical and performance contexts, whilst outlining key issues in Senecan studies, such as 'The Performance Debate' (xli–ii). The introduction serves as a helpful companion to students and scholars alike by signposting intertexts with other Latin authors, and with other Senecan prose and tragedy, providing English translations of Latin quotes throughout.

'The Myth before Seneca' offers a helpful overview of both Latin and Greek precedents, a topic rarely treated elsewhere (lxxii). B. highlights fragmentary tragedies touching on related episodes from across the family myth, such as the *Oenomaus* tragedies (lxxii–iii), though Sophocles' *Tantalus* is not mentioned. Otherwise, the range of sources is comprehensive, covering tragic fragments, vase-paintings, scholia and testimonia. The list of lesser-known tragedians and their contribution reflects the popularity of the myth before Seneca, though the claim that 'nothing other than the titles' of the fourth-century Thyestes tragedies have survived is too pessimistic: little survives.

B. devotes much of the introduction to ‘The Play’ itself, highlighting key themes and exploring the structure of Senecan drama (lxxxix) to support his commentary on the play as a stage drama. In his analysis, B. focuses on overarching themes, and embeds comments on Seneca’s characterisation of Thyestes and Atreus (xcv). As there is no separate section on characterisation, B.’s parallels between Thyestes as Seneca and Atreus as Nero appear overstated (cxii). That said, the thematic structure provides helpful points for comparison with Seneca’s *Agamemnon* (lxxxvi), *Medea* and *Phaedra* (xcix), giving an overall impression of Seneca’s tragic style.

A section on metre (cxxxix–cxliii) supports the translation. The translation reflects the line quantities of Seneca’s Latin, and so captures the pace of the dialogue in the original language. The line-for-line translation also emphasises Seneca’s rhetorical use of repetition, notably through anaphora (223–4, 613–14, 887) and polyptoton (320). The English elision in the dialogue not only suits the metrical equivalence, but also reflects natural speech for an English reader, in much the same way as Seneca’s iambic trimeters differentiate speech from song in the Latin. B. also marks the shift into song by incorporating archaisms to reflect the formal register of the choral odes (882–4) and Thyestes’ drunken singing (e.g. ‘lofty’ 923, ‘whence’/ ‘whither’ 926), though Christian anachronisms such as ‘sin’ and ‘evil’ distort Seneca’s pagan original (341, 1051–2). In terms of presentation, B. indents in-text evidence for stage directions in both the Latin and English dialogue, providing his stage directions on the English facing page alone. This underscores a variety of possible dramatisations to the reader, rather than B.’s interpretation alone. B.’s stage directions range from describing the use of symbolic props such as the crowning of Thyestes (515–30) to signposting Atreus’ asides to the audience (902–4). Whether the reader agrees that Senecan tragedy was performed or not, B.’s additions enable us to imagine the drama playing out, as a Roman reader/recitation audience might have done.

The commentary (whose lemmata I refer to in bold) highlights B.’s interventions, explaining the choice of stage directions (e.g. 262–5), noting which MS variant the lines reflect (e.g. 48–53) and providing a literal translation of the Latin where necessary (2). These justifications clarify the new edition for a specialist reader, whilst students are made aware of both the historical context and textual challenges presented by Seneca’s Latin original. B.’s commentary indicates a vast range of linguistic and thematic points of intertextuality. The references include core texts such as Seneca’s tragedies (1038–40), Seneca’s prose (107–8), Virgil (685–90), Accius’ *Atreus*, Ennius’ *Thyestes*, Ovid (1030–3), Lucan (696–703) and Plautus (908–12). They also extend to texts that have been compared to Seneca in more recent scholarship, such as satire, pantomime and Laberius’ fragments. B.’s claim that ‘Lucan, Petronius, and the Flavian poets found the word [*planctus*] appealing’ (1047–51) is a rare occasion where specific references are lacking.

Where relevant, B. refers to an unattributed Sophocles fragment and Accius’ unnamed fragments. The *testimonium* for Sophocles’ *Thyestes* plays is considered in the introduction (lxxii), but the fragments of Euripides’ *Thyestes* are not referenced. Indeed, comparisons with extant Greek tragedy are scarce (‘Pietas Ode’, 546–622). The commentary instead focuses on the context of Seneca’s *Thyestes* by concentrating on Roman performance traditions and imperial literature, reflecting a recent shift in studies of Senecan tragedy (cf. *Ramus* 47.1 (2018)). Rather than looking back to Greek examples, B. looks to the future impact of Seneca’s *Thyestes* on European drama throughout his commentary, carefully integrating reception studies in the commentary as well as the introduction.

This edition accommodates students from Classics, theatre and literary studies by exploring historical, biographical and performance contexts that affect the drama, whilst outlining key issues in Senecan studies, such as ‘The Performance Debate’ (xli). The volume will be useful to students of literature and drama, since the play’s reception is emphasised throughout, whilst the translation captures the pace and register of the Latin. For students of Classics, the book provides more literal translations within the commentary, and differentiates Senecan tragedy from Attic tragedy by exploring Roman intertexts. Those researching Seneca will find an outline of textual variants, linguistic parallels in Seneca’s tragic corpus and a discussion of Senecan tragedy that is enhanced by Greek parallels rather than encumbered by them.

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