

and Kant with equal confidence. At the same time, her argument about elegy's reliance on grotesque imagery to undermine and accentuate its idealized portraits emerges organically from within a careful hermeneutics, one as attentive to the blemishes that mark the genre as it is to the elegant surfaces they adorn.

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FABIO TUTRONE, *Healing grief: a commentary on Seneca's Consolatio ad Marciam*, Cicero: studies on Roman thought and its reception 6, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022, x+365 pp., 89,95€, ISBN 978-3-11-100742-7.

Tutrone's commentary on Seneca's *Consolatio ad Marciam* comes at a time in which scholars are increasingly interested in Seneca's consolations and connections between ancient Stoicism and modern therapeutic strategies (such as Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy). T. is sensitive to the value of consolation (both ancient and modern) as well as Stoic practices of self-formation, and he highlights throughout the commentary the concrete ways that Seneca aims to help Marcia conquer her grief. In doing so, however, Seneca also creates a literary and philosophical masterpiece for a more general readership, which transforms "his consolation...into a more complex lesson on the mortal nature of Marcia's own self, the moral vocation of humans, and the physical structure of the world" (16). T.'s monograph consists of a short introduction, the Latin text, and an exhaustive commentary (over 240 pages!). The commentary is less concerned with matters of syntax and grammar than one might expect, but instead concentrates on close explication of the social, philosophical, literary, and rhetorical nuances of the text. In these lemmata, T. displays his characteristic insight, holistic understanding of Seneca's *corpus*, and mastery of the primary and secondary literature; the reader will benefit from his guidance on matters as diverse as the heterodox consolatory tradition to the niceties of Roman funerary law.

The introductory material is competent and concise. T. agrees with most Senecan scholars on an early date for this work (c. 40 AD), before Seneca was exiled and during the reign of Caligula. T. sketches both the historical context and Seneca's own political career up the rungs of the *cursus honorum*. In turning to the *Consolatio ad Marciam* itself, T. comments on the argumentative nature of this text and the manner in which Seneca revs up his rhetoric to try to convince Marcia to master her grief and triumph over her trauma. In doing so, Seneca preserves the primary tenets of Stoic thought, but marshals Stoic themes in a novel manner which "thus transforms the traditional practice of *παραμυθία/consolatio* into a much deeper process of moral growth and psychological renewal" (14). Indeed, the commentary reiterates time and again that Seneca is an orthodox Stoic and not

an “eclectic” philosopher, as earlier commentators and scholars once believed. This identification is not a straitjacket. T. underscores that one can be a Stoic and still an original thinker who adapts to the needs of the addressee. While brevity is a blessing for a writer, I felt that T. could have spent more time in the introduction outlining the specifics of Seneca’s Stoic perspective. He concludes his introductory material with a quick survey of his view of source criticism, an outline of the structure of this treatise, and a brief overview of the textual tradition of *Ad Marciam* (largely following the Oxford Classical Text of Reynolds).

I found much to like throughout the commentary, and T. often spreads his wings to give mini-essays on topics such as Stoic ideas about the natural limits of grief (7.3), the differences between Stoic and Peripatetic ideas of moderation (3.4), and Platonic elements in the soul’s journey after death (23.1). T. breaks the dialogue into six sections, and I provide below a sampling of the interesting findings from each section.

The opening proem allows T. to examine the medical imagery that Seneca draws upon throughout the treatise. While the idea that a philosopher is a doctor of the soul is common in Stoicism, Seneca also revivifies the imagery because of the material nature of the Stoic soul. Therefore, one can find slippage between such terminology as T. points out, “As a Stoic, Seneca holds that the human soul is a blend of different physical elements... Consequently, every emotion has a material existence on which the advisor-healer must try to impact – by mild or harsh means, depending on the case” (1.8). Section two stresses Seneca’s orthodox Stoic thought (a leitmotif in the commentary) even while emphasizing that Stoicism can offer individual treatment for those suffering grief. Because of Marcia’s gender and status, the *exempla* of Livia and Octavia are most fitting, and Seneca believes that presenting the exemplary behavior of these figures would speak to Marcia more immediately than the *praecepta* often found at the start of *consolationes*. T. notes throughout the commentary on the progress that Marcia makes as a Stoic while reading this treatise and how his therapy can change because of her status *qua proficiens* (e.g. 21.6). The third section (“Nature, Time, and the Human Condition”) features the *praecepta* that one may expect in such a text. Themes such as the immutability of fate and the fleeting nature of fortune’s goods appear here, and T. is especially perceptive when tracing intertextual echoes of Lucretius that lurk in the language (7.2) or unpacking Seneca’s application of Delphi’s famous “know thyself” in the context of this consolation (11.3). In the central section on the “bereaved’s self-perception”, T. convincingly shows how even male Republican figures such as Bibulus (cos. 59 BCE) can be effective “for consoling a grieving aristocratic mother who had republished a history of the civil wars” (14.2). T. finds the right middle ground when giving historical information about people and events, and he keeps in mind why exactly Seneca would utilize these events to help Marcia. His notes on the *ecphrasis* of Syracuse and subsequent *prosopopoeia* of *natura* are particularly helpful in detailing the rich intertextual fabric of these sections (17.2-18.8). The penultimate section shows

Seneca encouraging Marcia to embrace a more Stoic understanding of death and the afterlife. T. details how Stoic “indifferents” are rendered meaningless in death and how “most human troubles derive from the formation of the belief that a good or an evil is in prospect, that is, from the formation of desire and fear” (19.6). In the final section on Cremutius Cordus’ *prosopopoeia*, T. handles the Ciceronian material with aplomb and provides fitting *comparanda* for the apocalypse that concludes the consolation.

Because of the lack of guidance on matters grammatical and syntactical, I believe this commentary will not be as useful to introductory or intermediate Latin students. It is clearly an improvement on the previous commentary to *Ad Marciam* (C.E. Manning’s *On Seneca’s Ad Marciam*, Leiden 1981) and it will appeal to graduate students and scholars. The notes, much like Seneca’s text, reward close reading and offer numerous innovative readings of Seneca, Stoicism, and consolatory literature. I can only hope this work will spur others to write scholarly commentaries on Seneca’s *Consolatio ad Helviam* and even *Consolatio ad Polybium*.

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URSULA GÄRTNER, *Phaedrus. Ein Interpretationskommentar zum zweiten und dritten Buch der Fabeln*, Zetemata 157, München: C.H. Beck, 2021, 280 pp., €88,00, ISBN 978-3-406-76669-5.

Ursula Gärtner has written a wonderful book on the second and third book of Phaedrus’ fables, a sequel to her *Phaedrus. Ein Interpretationskommentar zum ersten Buch der Fabeln*, München: Beck 2015 (Zetemata 149). Of course she will publish in the near future *Phaedrus. Ein Interpretationskommentar zum vierten und fünften Buch der Fabeln*, München: Beck (Zetemata).

The second volume is immensely thorough, containing as many footnotes as pages. In fable 1.5 we encounter one note of 31 lines, and the commentary on the Epilogue of Book 3 has 170 notes!

All commentaries to the fables offer (1) a structure of the text, for instance: “Exposition (1) – Actio (2-3) - Reactio (4-6) – Epimythion (7)”, (2 3) and 3.2 “Promythion {1} - Exposition1 {2} – Exposition2 {12-4} – Actio1 (3-8) – Actio2 {15-6} – Reactio1 {9-11} – Reactio2 17-9”.

(2) Grammatical analyses, with termini technici such as “Participium coniunctum, Prädikat im Plusquamperfekt; Ablativus absolutus; Modus und Tempus, and Konditionalsatz.”

(3) Poetic analyses using terms like “Trithemimeres, Penthemimeres; Enjambement; Hebung, Stellung am Versanfang und Versende.”