

Zitierhinweis

Ness, Lester J.: Rezension über: Shannon N. Byrne / Edmund P. Cueva (eds.), *Veritatis amicitiaeque causa. Essays in Honor of Anna Lydia Motto and John R. Clark*, Wauconda, Ill.: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1999, in: *Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 14 (1999), S. 167-169, DOI: 10.21245/rec.ant.341837048



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Shannon N. BYRNE and Edmund P. CUEVA, edds., *Veritatis amicitiaeque causa: Essays in Honor of Anna Lydia Motto and John R. Clark*. Chicago: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc., 1999. ISBN 0-86516-454-1. Pp. xvi + 346.

This volume is a combination *festschrift* and *gedankenschrift* honouring an academic couple. Although Dr. Clark was a professor of English, he often collaborated on articles with his Classicist wife, particularly on Seneca. The sixteen contributions in this volume deal exclusively with Classical studies, half of which are on Seneca *films*, appropriately, as Dr. Motto is a specialist on Seneca. The essays are preceded by a preface, acknowledgements, and a partial bibliography of the classical publications of Motto and Clark. There is no index.

The first article, "Augustus, Rome, and the Romans", by Herbert W. Benario is an overview of the career of the Emperor Augustus, but with no new insights. He concludes that Augustus was the most important man in history.

Shannon Byrne's "Maecenas in Seneca and other Post-Augustan Authors" deals with the reputation of the famous patron of poets and advisor to Augustus. She concentrates on Seneca's strong hostility towards Maecenas' private life. While Maecenas is described by many authors as enjoying exotic food, exotic sex, heated swimming pools, and poetry, most also agree that he was one of Augustus' key advisors. Poets particularly praised his generosity to them. Most do not criticize his private life, and openly praise his public one. But Seneca constantly denigrated Maecenas as effeminate, cowardly, a bad writer, who must have been an ineffective advisor, and so on. Tacitus is the only other surviving author who criticizes Maecenas, and then only as a way of smearing Augustus. Unfortunately, after an interesting discussion of the sources, Byrne declines to speculate on why Seneca was so hostile, save only to say that perhaps "Maecenas" is a code name for someone contemporary to Seneca, whom he did not care to name openly. A footnote does promise a forthcoming work which may be more forthcoming.

John Scott Campbell's article, "Pisspots and Pumpkins: Three Notes on the *Apocolocyntosis*", discusses what kind of gourd the title of the work refers to and concludes that it was a type of gourd commonly used as a chamber pot, making the insult yet stronger than most had realised.

Edmund Cueva's "The Art and Myth of Cupid and Psyche" describes the different forms the story took and the different media in which it was portrayed, including south Italian vase paintings. It contains the one illustration in the book.

"Tiberius' Roman Retirement" by Linda W. Rutland Gillison gives an interesting account of how urban geography signaled a politician's ambition or lack of ambition. Urban gardens, in particular, were used as a discrete way of exiling oneself from political trouble without actually going far away. Tiberius found the Gardens of Maecenas a good way to return from real exile on Rhodes without seeming threatening to Augustus. In this, he followed a habit begun by Lucullus and followed by Pompey.

Linda Jones Hall discusses how regional identities in the Roman Empire might be created and maintained in "*Latinitas* in the Late Antique Greek East". She concentrates on the use of Latin in Beirut as a case-study and shows how it not only distinguished Beirut from other Eastern cities but led, paradoxically, to a Phoenician regional identity which had not existed before. Hall may be going too far, however, in saying that this regional identity led to the Islamic conquest.

George W. Mallory Harrison's "*Claudian Castores: Seneca and Crispus*" takes the group of 72 poems traditionally ascribed to Seneca and argues for the genuineness of five. One beginning *ablatus mihi* (53 in Prato's edition), for example, ought to be considered genuine on the basis of its similarities to others thought to be genuine. Probably it was written while Seneca was exiled to Corsica and was addressed to his friend C. Passienus Sallustius Crispus.

"Wine, Women, and What?" by Alexander MacGregor discusses Seneca's *De ira* ('On Anger') concentrating on the idea that public bathing was a vice and led to other vices. In particular, Seneca coupled bathing with alcohol and sex to coin a phrase equivalent to the modern "wine, women, and song": *vino quidam, alli venere, quidam omni umore*.

"The Dual Citizenship of the Stoics" by Mark Morford is an intriguing discussion of how Zeno's utopian city based upon friendship and liberty developed into a concept of dual citizenship, Roman and human, among Roman Stoics, and particularly Seneca. If a virtuous citizen could not take part in public life in Rome, there always remained the option of service to humanity.

Hans-Friedrich Mueller's "*Imperial Rome and the Habitations of Cruelty*" discusses what constituted cruelty in the thought of Seneca and, as a contrast, in his much older contemporary, Livy. Cruelty is defined as "viciousness and savagery in punishing" (p. 167) and is particularly tempting to those in authority. Livy, Mueller argues, shows similar views in his narrative and both were responding to contemporary politics.

J.D. Noonan's "*M' Cheir'n Patros: The Rising Generation in Euripides' Heracleidae*" is one of the few articles on a Greek theme. It attempts to raise the low critical opinion of the play by showing that it

discusses a question relevant to modern democracies (p. 215): "does the heroic excellence of the few run counter to the success of the city?"

"Concerning Plane Trees in Seneca's *Twelfth Epistle*" by Michele Valerie Ronnick explores Seneca's philosophical attitude toward old age and death.

Jo-Ann Shelton's "Elephants, Pompey, and the reports of popular Displeasure in 55 B.C." explains a notorious incident in Pompey's career. While holding games to celebrate opening his theatre in Rome, crowds cheered a group of elephants and booed the gladiators trying to kill them, when the opposite was expected. It contains a very interesting socio-historical discussion of the purpose of wild animal slaughter in the Roman arena, as well as the arena's place in political life, and concludes that people cheered the elephants because they thought that Pompey had gone too far in celebrating himself with his games. It ends with an unusual dedication to an elephant killed while escaping a circus.

W. Jeffrey Tatum's "Roman Religion: Fragments and further Questions" surveys the current state of the study of Roman religion. He praises recent scholars for getting away from the traditional unconscious pro-Christian rhetoric but calls for new attention to the role of philosophy. If the majority of Romans were not philosophically minded, philosophy remained an important aspect of religion for important people, notably Seneca.

"Seneca and the Empire of Signs" by Daniel R. White, discusses Seneca's views on why bad things happen to good people, particularly in his *De providentia*. Seneca adopted a paradox that evils are good because they are part of a divine experiment on human nature. God, too, was both good and evil at the same time. Suffering produced patience. It ends with a discussion of Maxwell's demon and Derrida's grammatology and how their ideas are related to Seneca's.

Overall, this is a mediocre book. Shelton's article on elephants and the Roman games is quite creative, Benario's article on Augustus says nothing at all. The majority lean more to the Benario end of the spectrum. It certainly confers immortality on Motto and Clark but unless one is deeply interested in Seneca or has a library which aspires to completeness, I would suggest borrowing it, not buying it.

Lester J. Ness