

Gregor Maurach, *Der Bau von Senecas Epistulae Morales* (Bibliothek der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, Neue Folge, 2. Reihe, Band 30). Carl Winter, Heidelberg, 1970, 213 pp.

For some time Seneca used to be regarded as second rate. And since he was one of the most significant representatives of the Julio-Claudian period, this negative judgement affected our appreciation of the period as a whole. A better understanding of Seneca has therefore been a long standing need and this is exactly what Maurach had in mind when he conceived this book. Basically it goes back to his Hamburger Habilitationsschrift, 'Untersuchungen zur Struktur des senecanischen Briefcorpus' (1966–67). In 1967 however, Hildegard Cancik's dissertation appeared, 'Untersuchungen zu Senecas Epistulae Morales', in the light of which Maurach's Habilitationsschrift was shortened and its first part entirely rewritten. Yet much still remained to be done, especially in regard to the structure of individual letters (cf. p. 7); and everybody interested in Seneca and related problems will be grateful for the appearance of this book as a contribution towards a better understanding of this author, and of literary composition in general.

The aim is stated in modest terms: 'Nichts Neues also für den Kenner; neu aber und anregend mag manches für den Studierenden sein und für den Lehrer (p. 8)'. This entailed more attention to structure and to philological aids such as 'Haltezeichen' and 'Gliederungsmarkierungen' – at least to secure a measure of objectivity in Senecan research. These phenomena have up till now been neglected by commentators (cf. p. 13). Maurach insists that the collection should not be read as isolated letters (cf. p. 179 and p. 25), if Seneca's thought is to be fully grasped. We are invited to try and discover 'die verborgene Systematik' (p. 179) and 'die innere Kontinuität des Werkes' (pp. 11, 17, 18, 63, etc.). He aims at showing the structure of the individual letters as well as of the corpus as a whole (cf. p. 7).

All this implies a new approach recently well summarised by W. Trillitzsch: 'Die philologische Bemühung um Seneca hat sich in neuerer Zeit weitgehend von der Quellenanalyse früherer Jahrzehnte abgewandt und sucht heute vielmehr durch eindringende positive Werkinterpretation zu einem besseren und tieferen Senecaverständnis zu gelangen'.¹ Other scholars are in agreement, e.g., W. S. Maguiness, who with Lucretius in mind, rejects 'the heresy of characterising and estimating an author too much in terms of his predecessors . . . and too little in terms of his own objectives and his chosen methods'.² Maurach

1. *Gnomon* 42, 1970, p. 463.

2. In: D. R. Dudley, *Lucretius*, p. 71. Cf. Kenneth Quinn who with reference to Tacitus exclaims: 'let us watch the man using his tools on a particular job' (*Latin Explorations*, pp. 113–114), and who calls for an 'integrated study of a continuous passage' (p. 112) in order to discover the interaction between 'form' and 'content' (ibid.).

distinguishes three major periods in Senecan research (p. 22). It is the third period which interests him, that of the so-called Historicism which 'gab dem Individuum sein Recht und dem Werke seinen Kunstcharakter zurück'. This gives us the background to the approach of Ulrich Knoche and of much of the present day research on Seneca (for details see p. 21 n. 40 and p. 20 n. 32). Fundamental work had already been done on the *Naturales Quaestiones* and the *Dialogi*. Concerning the letters much still remained to be done even after Cancik's study had appeared. This task was undertaken by Maurach (see below).

We are of course basically concerned with the quality of composition (structure), not with the somewhat wider problem of quality of inspiration.³ Maurach by the application of philological aids, such as stops and 'Gliederungsmarkierungen', has first and foremost, demonstrated the value of a structural analysis aimed at discovering both sub-divisions and continuity (cf. pp. 22–23).⁴ It revealed 'etwas von der überragenden Grösse senecanischen Kunstvermögens'. Leaving aside to begin with the problem of 'Gestaltungsprinzipien', two major problems are considered. Other scholars too have noticed the importance of subdivision and continuity but lacked the proper method for a thorough study of them (cf. p. 21). A new method was needed. Of this need Cancik was aware when she said that a method had to be found for correlating themes common to individual letters in order to discover the groups and books as intended by Seneca.⁵ Maurach explains his method (cf. p. 23) including the steps which have to be followed and by means of which he hopes to avoid the dangers of subjective analysis. He constantly emphasises the evidence for both 'die äussere und innere Einheit', e.g., of the first ten letters (cf. p. 60 and also p. 12). Maurach is aware of the difficult nature of his task: 'leichtes Darüberhinaus war nicht im Sinn des Autors (ep. 2)' (p. 178). The reading of Seneca is difficult because 'Seneca verbirgt das Systematische' (p. 177). The reader is expected to discover this hidden system for himself 'wie denn eigenes Erarbeiten die Dinge tiefer dringen lässt als müheloses Unterrichtetwerden' (p. 179). Seneca is in the last resort constantly occupied with persuasion (cf. pp. 178, 179, 205); and his didactic aim underlies the structure of the corpus as a whole (cf., e.g., pp. 56, 61, 179, 205 and below). But at the same time Seneca does not wish to detract from the importance of the content by superimposing the system upon every detail he wrote (cf. pp. 177, 179). He does in the later letters resort to systematic exposition, but always as part of his

3. His research 'wird sich streng auf die kompositorische Eigentümlichkeit . . . des Corpus beschränken' (p. 60). Also cf. Quinn, op. cit., pp. 31–32.

4. Maurach does not deal with all the letters as that would require more than one volume (cf. pp. 23, 25). Towards the end of his book (pp. 202–204) he does give us the gist of the letters omitted in the detailed discussion. This he does in order to prove his view regarding the third problem, that of the 'Gestaltungsprinzipien' (cf. p. 199).

5. Op. cit., pp. 5f.

didactic purpose (cf. 205): an understanding of the Stoic philosophy is not complete without it (cf. p. 205). Two main features of the letters are therefore distinguishable (p. 11 n. 1) in virtue of which his system is not entirely hidden from us: 'Doch er ist da, und Seneca versäumt es nicht, Hinweise auf ihn einzuflechten' (p. 178).

In the major part of the book Maurach demonstrates his method of *proving* his conviction and the conviction of other scholars (e.g., pp. 21, 22) that the letters constitute a corpus with well defined membra (cf. p. 62, etc.), which are indicated by thematic as well as by external or philological aids (e.g., pp. 29, 60, 122, 177ff). These are used by Seneca in no arbitrary fashion (cf. pp. 13, 125, 178). A general impression to this effect obtained from the reading of the letters (p. 7), is put to the test: Maurach's analysis reveals a variety of groups of letters, smaller groups (e.g., letters 60–62, 1–10, 12–15) and also larger ones (16–32 and 63–80). Larger groups are more complicated, and Maurach selected some of them 'um zu zeigen, wie man Grosseinheiten behandeln sollte' (p. 23 and see below). Groups of the latter kind allow more scope for the application of various philological principles (see below).

The question arises as to the significance of letters considered individually, since we are warned that the meaning of letters read thus singly is in part lost despite the importance of their constituent sections (cf. pp. 177, 179); for the meaning depends on more fundamental principles (higher perspectives) of Stoic philosophy to which these letters, or groups of letters, come to be related. This relation to which Maurach has drawn our attention (e.g., pp. 54, 124) is characteristic of Seneca; the 'Rückgriff', i.e., the practice of referring back by repetition (cf. pp. 13, 16, 18, 20, 37–39, 54, 121, 123, 125) is the indispensable means of indicating the outlines of groups (e.g., p. 12) and of clarifying the development in thought, which was a factor of the first importance in determining the structure (cf. pp. 199ff and below). *But it is precisely the individual letter which provides us with the key to Seneca's aims* (cf. p. 18). The relation between letters, and between groups of letters, is disclosed by careful analysis of every paragraph and by the variety of themes distinguishable in one and the same letter, a feature incidentally, which should discourage efforts to give headings to letters (cf. e.g., pp. 14, 16, 20). There are often both main and subordinate themes (cf. p. 178) or a variety of main themes (p. 13) in single letters, and what is even more important – at least in using these themes for discovering groups or connections between groups (cf. e.g., p. 18) – is the fact that 'das Gruppenbildende sind nicht nur die Grundgedanken, es sind auch die Nebenthemen' (p. 14 and cf. p. 18). Often enough main themes in later letters refer back even far back, to subordinate themes in earlier letters. We have a typical example in ep. 4 which continues a subordinate theme of ep. 1 (cf. p. 38), and in ep. 7 a subordinate theme of ep. 5 (pp. 45, 60). The themes, however, within the individual letter are also connected (cf. p. 178). Back references bring about a general continuity of thought, which is a *sine qua non*

for a collection of letters conceived as a corpus (cf. e.g., pp. 13–14, 17, 62). Subordinate themes in later letters must be correlated with themes in earlier letters (p. 15). By discovering these elements of coherence Maurach was enabled to *correct the methodological mistakes of various earlier scholars* (not excluding Cancik at times), who treated letters as wholes only (cf. p. 14). A method has now been discovered of proving the existence of related, yet separate, *membra* (groups) as well as the existence of a corpus (cf. p. 17).

In order to recognise these themes we must be able to identify the beginning and end of each theme within the individual letter (cf. p. 18). It is this task mainly which is conveyed in the word with which the book begins: 'Handwerksarbeit' (p. 7). The identification is carried out 'durch eine Beobachtung der Gliederungsmarkierungen, die von der Hand des Autors selbst stammen' (p. 18). But the reader must be aware of the opposite tendency too: several letters are sometimes needed for handling one theme, letters which are often separated by intervening letters or pairs of letters (e.g., p. 155). In this way fatigue is avoided and details are treated more satisfactorily (cf. p. 172).

But which are the philological aids in dissecting a letter? What is this 'breite Basis einer durch Markierungszeichen gesicherten Paraphrase des Ganzen'? (p. 24). Maurach calls this 'die Eigenart, Gedankeneinheiten auch stilistisch als abgeschlossene Satzgruppen durch besondere Schlussformeln zu bezeichnen' (p. 12). He adds: 'Und dass diese überall vorhanden, mit Absicht gesetzt und zu Typen verfestigt sind, wird sich späterhin mit aller Deutlichkeit zeigen lassen' (p. 13). Unfortunately we cannot review this very interesting and convincing analysis. Seneca gives us these 'Markierungszeichen, um die eigene Arbeit des Mitdenkenden (pp. 178, 179) zu leiten'. What these aids consist in can best be conveyed by Maurach's own words: 'Wenn das Ende des vorausgegangenen Abschnittes deutlich markiert war, bedarf es keines Gliederungszeichens zu Beginn des nächsten. Dennoch liebt es Seneca, hier wie sonst den Beginn eines Absatzes durch Anreden, fingierte Fragen, fingierte Einwände, Rekapitulationen oder wohlbekannte Einleitungsformeln . . . zu verdeutlichen' (p. 177). The result of this approach is important for the next section as well. His technique is applied deliberately: 'Sachlich gesehen, weist diese Technik auf seine Eigenart, Gedankengruppen weitgehend selbständig zu lassen und deutlich voneinander abzutrennen, zumeist ohne die innere Verbindung deutlich anzuzeigen. Dies entspricht seiner Vorliebe, einzelstehende, kurze Sätze zu verwenden. Daher ist es die Aufgabe des Lesers, die gedankliche Verknüpfung sowohl der einzelnen Sätze als der einzelnen Paragraphen selbst zu finden' (p. 177–178). Further help can also be obtained from the index (p. 211 s.v. Gliederung).

Seneca does not only subdivide deliberately, he also helps the reader to discover the groups, the *membra*, and the corpus as an organic whole. In the latter section Maurach has made an outstanding contribution towards a better understanding of Seneca. His method in the preceding section has enabled him

to discover the interrelatedness of the various themes in greater detail and objectivity.

To facilitate the recognition of these units the first letter is analysed but the reader is warned that it does not constitute an independent whole. Despite its inner coherence it stands in need of further explanation (cf. p. 29). There is a hidden system which has to be discovered (cf. pp. 177, 178) for reasons already mentioned (cf. pp. 177, 179), and Seneca provides pointers towards this system (cf. p. 178; see also p. 211 of the index s.v. 'Einheitskriterien'). Two very common techniques require no explanations – 'das Offenlassen' (e.g., p. 178) and 'Rückgriff' or repetition.

We very often have a repetition of themes which occurred in earlier letters (cf. epp. 60–62) (p. 18). Emphasis may be the immediate aim (p. 18). But repetition always means something more: to interpret matter already dealt with in the light of a new or subsequent aspect (p. 124), or to supply a theoretical foundation such as ep. 31 does with reference to epp. 16ff (cf. p. 12). In this way repetition also indicates the end of a group: it often summarises (cf. p. 96, etc.) and unites themes forming a 'Höhepunkt' (cf. ep. 9, p. 54), frequently after a 'kontinuierliche Problemfaltung' (pp. 60, 62) in the preceding letters. (Maurach, e.g., calls ep. 32 'ein Nest von Rückverweisen' (p. 121)). This helps the reader to identify the end of the group concerned, for it (ep. 32) reaches back beyond ep. 16 into the first group of letters. Of course it specifically reminds us of epp. 16–31. Ep. 33 and epp. 34ff contain hardly any references to the earlier letters. Ep. 32 therefore rounds off everything said in epp. 16ff (cf. *ibid.*). 'In derselben Art wie ep. 9 es getan hatte, laufen in ep. 32 die Hauptlinien zusammen' (p. 127).

But pointing forward or anticipation is equally important. Ep. 9 illustrates this technique (cf. p. 54). Seneca points forward either at the end of a group, as here, or at the beginning of another, e.g., ep. 16 (cf. p. 122). Continuity is achieved by a combination of these two techniques. At the same time the idea of development is discernible from the way repeated themes are treated in new groups (see above).

But how do we know that epp. 64–80 form a group? We have already suggested that epp. 33 and 34 constitute a break in the preceding line of thought, introducing a new theme (cf. pp. 129, 136, 202–204). A further theme takes shape with epp. 64ff. (cf. pp. 204, 205). This group (epp. 64–80) presents a development clearly distinguishable from what precedes: ep. 65 indeed confronts the pupil with a new object of thought: 'das All'. This is the 'Höhepunkt' in the entire corpus (cf. p. 136; cf. pp. 137, 144, 152, 156, 172, 174–176, 204–206). One more theme remained: the question, namely, for what purpose has the mind been freed? (cf. p. 204). The answer is that virtue, dealt with in epp. 67ff, is the ultimate aim of Senecan ethics. We are at last being told what is of real value to man (pp. 204–205). The external indications (cf. p. 60) holding this group together can also be traced. The most important one is the way once

again in which themes are rounded off, in this case in a few concluding letters, closely interlinked (cf. pp. 174–175). All these letters moreover have their point of departure in ep. 65, and of these those which are more particularly related follow at regular intervals (cf. p. 176).

Inside groups a variety of architectures prevails. In the first group especially, for example, pairs of letters (cf. pp. 15 n. 21, 33, 38 with their own themes; cf. p. 62) divided by letters on friendship at regular intervals (cf. pp. 34, 33 n. 31), and themselves related (cf. pp. 44, 34), play an important part. Much the same applies to epp. 4–80 (cf. pp. 160, 172–173, 174–175, 176). Epp. 16–32 on the other hand, reveal ‘eine verschränkende Kompositionsweise’ (p. 124).⁶

The groups as such (which do not always coincide with existing divisions into books – cf. pp. 19, 59, 72) are linked up especially by ‘Voraussetzung’, by ‘das Offenlassen’ and by ‘Rückgriff’ back into other groups (cf. ep. 32– p. 121). The development referred to above, serves as a further link; thus basically in each new group we notice some repetition on a new level and ‘unter einem neuen Aspekt’ (p. 124), answering further questions and receiving more comprehensive systematic and fundamental answers (cf. pp. 204–205).⁷

A brief reference now to the third problem, that of the ‘Gestaltungsprinzipien’, must suffice. I believe Maurach is right in accepting a development, as opposed to Cancik (cf. p. 199). But what factors determined this development? (cf. p. 7 n. 1). The excellent summary towards the end of his book (pp. 199–206) makes it sufficiently clear that the phases required in teaching the Stoic philosophy determined the structure.⁸ This is another substantial contribution towards our understanding of Seneca. Of course, no real correspondence is accepted (cf. pp. 17 n. 27, 21 n. 37, 23 n. 48).

At the same time there are stricter demands to meet. Seneca does not start off with cut and dried formulae, but proceeds gradually (cf. p. 29). This fact moreover reveals the pedagogical principle behind the structure.

The second part of the book (pp. 181–199) deals with Seneca’s position in tradition; we are told that the philosopher borrowed from a variety of sources and that we have to be more discerning in determining his dependence on others.

This entire approach must result in a more favourable judgement of Seneca. The author has furthermore proved himself a very careful and reliable guide who has really widened our horizon as regards the application of structural analysis. Points of detail, and remaining uncertainties (cf. epp. 59, 95), including comparisons with views rejected (for good cause, I believe), might require further study. On this foundation however laid by Maurach sound work could be done also in the field of ‘content’ which should not be neglected, otherwise ‘the way the man wrote is allowed to detract attention from what he

6. For *ex intervallo surgere*, cf. pp. 38, 89, 125, 178.

7. For ‘Zwischenbriefe’ cf. pp. 19, 34, 38, 57, 129, 130, 146, 175, 179.

8. Cf. Trillitzsch, *op. cit.*, p. 465.

wrote'.⁹ I can think of hardly anybody better qualified for undertaking this than the author of the book under review, who has combined detailed research with a clear and logical exposition. In this he has certainly adopted something of Seneca's pedagogical approach.

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A. H. M. Jones: *The Criminal Courts of the Roman Republic and Principate*, edited by J. A. Cook. Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1972, pp. vi + 143.

This posthumously published work deals with a subject of major interest and importance, but one that has proved singularly resistant to clarification and stabilisation. The Roman criminal law has attracted a vast and erudite literature since Mommsen's *Strafrecht* at the turn of the century, but on many aspects scholars are further away from a *communis opinio* today than they were then. Three of the most crucial areas have been selected for exposition in this book – the *Iudicia Populi*, the *Iudicia Publica* and the Criminal Courts of the Principate. The author devotes a chapter to each, and there are two appendices.

The first chapter sets out to rescue Mommsen's theory of universal *provocatio* from the virtual exile in which it has languished since Kunkel's *Untersuchungen* and other recent works. The issue is not so much the institution of *provocatio ad populum* as such, for even its most severe critics allow it some sort of shadowy existence in the realm of political prosecutions by the tribunes; the challenge has been to the belief that it applied to ordinary crimes and to the man in the street, that it played a part in the everyday dispensation of justice, and that is where Mommsen stands in urgent need of therapy.

The author's method is 'to proceed from the known to the unknown', to begin with the later Republic and argue back to the origins. The argument opens with what is virtually new evidence, since although often noticed it has not hitherto been put to constructive use. It consists of the passages in Cicero's *De Legibus* in which *provocatio* is allowed against all sentences except those pronounced *militiae*, and in which Cicero advocates the abolition of the *iudicia publica* and their replacement by *iudicia populi* as in 'the good old days'. The argument is that Cicero here reflects the Roman constitution of the early second century BC as he saw it, that he was not mistaken in his view, and that these passages are good evidence for the all-embracing character of the comitial jurisdiction. This postulate is fundamental to the author's position and will be adverted to again, after inspecting the remainder of the first chapter.

9. Quinn, *Latin Explorations*, p. 110.

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