

**S.J.V. Malloch, *The Annals of Tacitus Book 11*.** Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. xxi, 538. ISBN 978-1-107-01110-6. £90.

When Frank Goodyear, Ronald Martin and Tony Woodman made their respective contributions to the Cambridge “Orange” series of classical texts and commentaries they were all scholars with long-established reputations, but now a young Tacitean scholar has established himself firmly on the map with this excellent volume. Goodyear’s first volume displayed all his renowned expertise in the Latin language and a profound understanding of Tacitus’ distinctive style; his second added to that a surer treatment of historical issues; Martin and Woodman enhanced this with a greater interest in the literary aspects of the text, offering more nuanced analyses of Tacitus’ art, and in the practice of ancient historiography. Malloch has learned well from his predecessors and his historical, philological and textual study offers the reader by far the best means to study *Annals* Book XI.

The surviving part of *Annals* XI, a mere 38 chapters covering part of AD 47 and most of AD 48, presents many challenges for the commentator, especially for one who will attempt a wide-ranging, even comprehensive, study: there is much to discuss on the complex internal affairs of Armenia and Parthia (8–10), Tacitus’ arguments around the timing of the Saecular Games (11) need careful unpicking; his excursus on the development of the alphabet (13.2–14.3) requires its own field of expertise; Corbulo and his activities in Germany (18–20.2) take one into issues of geography and military strategy; Tacitus’ digression on the history of the quaestorship (22.3–6) involves fine issues of the historical tradition and constitutional development; Claudius’ speech on the admission of the *primores* of Gaul to the senate (23–25.1) requires intricate discussion of Tacitus’ knowledge of the original (*ILS* 212) and discussion of his wider relationship to archival sources; and the extended, climactic account of the fall of Messalina needs subtle treatment of Tacitus’ narrative technique. Malloch is conscious of the challenges (viii) and rises to them in a way that will make his commentary a useful work of reference on many topics.

In the introduction he sets out the structure of Book XI, discusses Tacitus’ presentation of Claudius and lastly presents a brief study of the history of the manuscripts, the Medicean and the *recentiores*. Malloch illustrates well Tacitus’ deliberate technique of displacing Claudius from the centre of the narrative to demonstrate his passivity, seen most famously in his submission to wives and freedmen. Claudius’ ignorance of what is going on around him, especially in his own household also becomes a key part of his characterisation. Tacitus accepts and remoulds the predominantly negative picture of Claudius from the earlier tradition and skilfully employs chiaroscuro to emphasise the negative. On the history of the second Medicean, the single manuscript on which the text of Book XI depends, and of the *recentiores* Malloch offers a clear account of the former’s rediscovery in the Renaissance and how editors have established a plausible stemma for all thirty-five extant manuscripts of the latter part of the *Annals*.

For all its idiosyncrasies Koestermann's Teubner has been the standard edition of Tacitus used and cited by most scholars. Malloch prefers a much lighter punctuation than Koestermann and his text differs in many places (e.g. 4.2 *cognomentum <er>at* : *cognomentum. At*; 10.1 *avebat* : *in animo habebat*; 18.3 *iacta* : *iactata*; 23.3: *coetu* : *coetus*; 24.7: *plebeii* : *plebei*; 28.1: *dum histrio cubiculum principis insultaverit* : *dum inservit cubiculum principis adulterio*), but does not (I think) feature any new readings, although the commentary contains one suggestion that is very attractive (32.3: Reeve's *eiiciuntur* for M's *eripiuntur* and the *egeruntur* that Malloch prints) and another I rate more highly than Malloch (10.3: Woodman's *seniorum* for M's *se uni* and the *senum* that Malloch prints). His commentary sets out very clearly his reasons for adopting the readings he adopts and his impeccable industry in tracking down the first originator of textual emendations (e.g. pp. 98, 403) occasionally yields new attributions.

Almost every page provides insights, but, as reviewers of commentaries do (especially when over 400 pages of dense comment are at issue), I offer now some miscellaneous observations. Firstly good ideas or arguments made: p. 81: on the sexual connotations of *impudico* ... *ore*; p. 113 on the distancing of Tacitus/Claudius from the speech of Silius' opponents on the *lex Cincia*; pp. 116–30: excellent discussion of Tacitus' treatment of *res externae*, Roman strategy in relation to Armenia and the question of the Parthian succession; pp. 140–2: the implausibility of the speed of Vardanes' journey; p. 199: the depiction of Agrippina the Younger as pitiable to 'amplify the Germanicus motif'; pp. 207–8: the irony of Claudius the conscientious censor blind to the immoral activities within his own house; pp. 262–3: the typically Tacitean gap between image and reality relating to Corbulo's aggressive policies, a republican general out-of-time, and Claudius the new imperial diplomat; pp. 276–7: Tacitus' use of the second person singular potential subjunctive; pp. 294–5 on the different impressions given by Tacitus and Dio on the awarding of triumphal insignia to Corbulo; p. 347: on Tacitus not avoiding any alleged technical term for the imperial *consilium*; p. 380: on Tacitean closures as parts of a narrative strategy; 414-5: clear discussion of *nobilitas* under the principate; p. 434: the connotation of *feminae*; p. 449: on the use of *libertus* rather than the proper noun Narcissus as highlighting the paradoxical presentation of a freedman exercising power.

Secondly some suggestions on useful bibliographical supplements to Malloch and indications of places where different approaches might be taken: p. 79 on dying surrounded by family, see D. Noy, "'Goodbye Livia": Dying in the Roman House', in V.M. Hope and J. Huskinson (edd.), *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death* (Oxford, 2011), 1–20; p. 103: Brunt argued plausibly in his 1980 lecture notes that *qua* ... *teneretur* indicates an extension of the law; p. 173: Augustus' "display" of the Parthian hostages at a *spectaculum* (Suet. *Aug.* 43.4) and their seating in a place of honour, immediately behind the emperor and Senate showed symbolically that they did not belong in the arena with Rome's enemies, but among Rome's friends; p. 174: Malloch seems to date Suetonius' *Nero* after *Annals* 11, but the relative chronology is insecure (see T.J. Power, *JRS* 100 (2010), 140–62 and *JRS* 114 (2014), 205–25); p. 177: on the tradition of the Saecular games in the Republic, see P. Weiss, *MDAI(R)* 80 (1973), 205–

17 and F. Coarelli, ‘Noti sul *ludi saeculares*’, in *Spectacles sportifs et scéniques dans le monde Étrusco-Italique* (Rome, 1993), 211–45; p. 189: can we rule out that Nero did not make an appearance in the lost Gaian books in the episode where Agrippina asked Gaius to name her son (cf. Suet. *N* 6)?; pp. 192–3: on snakes, dreams and prophecies of kingship, see D. Ogden, ‘Alexander, Scipio and Octavian: Serpent-Siring in Macedon and Rome’, *Syllecta Classica* 20 (2009), 31–52 and D. Engels, ‘Prodigies and Religious Propaganda: Seleucus and Augustus’, in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* 15 (Brussels, 2010), 153–77; p. 237: *laeta* may well be a technical term from haruspicy for something auspicious; p. 320 on torture in cases of *maiestas*, see P. A. Brunt, *ZRG* 97 (1981), 256–65; p. 362 Augustus divided Italy into eleven *regiones* not twelve; p. 384: *laeta* may suggest good auspices or sacrificial signs that attended the start of the censors’ office; p. 389: the discussion of Claudius’ criticism of Vipstanus as *nimum adstantem* might include reference to Claudius’ criticism of the senate in general (cf. *BGU* 611); p. 430: *certatim ceteri circumstrepunt* should attract comment as an example of alliteration; p. 436: similarly *circum procaci choro*; p. 467: the inclusion of < ... > at the start of the lemma would clarify the discussion.

While Malloch may have been wary of any Syme-style “Hadrianic thesis”, he could have done well to discuss themes of particular interest to the Hadrianic period that emerge in *Annals* XI, for example the importance of military discipline (pp. 272–3; cf. Plin. *Ep.* 10.29.1 and *HA Hadr.* 10.2 for praise of Trajan and Hadrian) or the potential problems of criticising an *ignavus princeps* who feared the military successes of *virii insignes* (19.3) under Hadrian.

Overall this is an exceptionally well-produced book, as can be expected from this Cambridge series. A few instances where Homer has nodded: xxxi: *Graeci* for *graeci*; xix: Göttingen for Gottingen; 62 *exercitus* for *exercitos*; 88: *adiciendum* for *adiiciendum*; 120 n. 34: *BC* for *BC*; 143: Seleucia for Selecia; 132n. 63 and 161: Dabrową for Dabrowa; 167: Koestermann for Koesterman; 223: *Plut.* for *Plut.*; 246: Marcomanni for Marcomani; 256 and 280: Varian for Varan; 332: Aemilius for Aemelius; 446 n. 315: *pervicit* for *pervincit*.

Malloch is to be congratulated on a splendid achievement that will form the basis for all future discussions of *Annals* XI; the promised edition of Book XII is eagerly awaited.

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