Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics

Miriam T. Griffin

Clarendon Press (1992)

Abstract

For this Clarendon Paperback, Dr Griffin has written a new Postscript to bring the original book fully up to date. She discusses further important and controversial questions of fact or interpretation in the light of the scholarship of the intervening years and provides additional argument where necessary. The connection between Seneca's prose works and his career as a first-century Roman statesman is problematic. Although he writes in the first person, he tells us little of his external life or of the people and events that formed its setting. Miriam Griffin addresses the problem by first reconstructing Seneca's career using only outside sources and his de Clementia and Apocolocyntosis, whose political purposes are undisputed. In the second part of the book she studies Seneca's treatment of subjects of political significance, including his views on slavery, provincial policy, wealth, and suicide. On the whole, the word of the philosopher is found to illuminate the work of the statesman, but notable exceptions emerge, and the links that are revealed vary from theme to theme and rarely accord with traditional autobiographical interpretations of Seneca's works.

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**Stoicism Bibliography.**

**Tacitus, Stoicexempla, and Thepraecipuum Munus Annalium.**

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*Seneca: De Clementia.*

*Dialogues and Essays.*
Seneca - 2008 - Oxford University Press.
Miriam T. Griffin - 1968 - *Classical Quarterly* 18 (02):373-.

*Seneca: Selected Philosophical Letters.*

*Moral and Political Essays.*


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*Letters From a Stoic.*


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Seneca - 2010 - Oxford University Press.

Stoic Laughter: A Reading of Seneca's Apocolocyntosis.

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Griffin makes no concessions for those whose history is better than their philosophy, cheerfully scattering references to the middle stoa or Epictetus. Nor are quotations translated, which is a pain for those of us lacking total fluency in the Latin. On the other hand there is a clear unpicking of what Seneca said on a variety of issues and what he can be known or speculated to have done as amicus of Nero and thoughts on possible connections. There are also useful appendixes on issues such as Seneca's flattery of Polybius and on the dating and meaning of the Quinquennium Neronis. ...more.