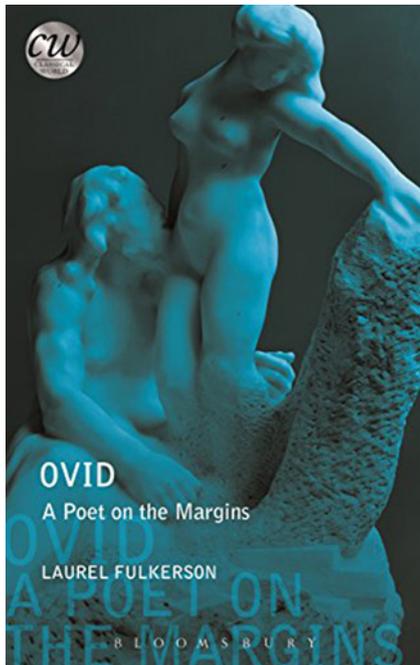


# BOOK REVIEWS

## LITERATURE

Fulkerson, L.

**Ovid: A Poet on the Margins**  
pp. xiii + 104. London: Bloomsbury  
Academic, 2016, Paperback, £14.99  
ISBN: 978-1-4725-3134-6



Ever on the lookout for suitable texts to recommend to students who are seeking to venture out from the confines of public examinations, I jumped at the chance to review Fulkerson's new study of Ovid. Published by Bloomsbury in its *Classical World* series, it is aimed at sixth-formers and undergraduates, and (helpfully) does not require any knowledge of Latin, thus making the book accessible to linguists and Classical Civilisation students alike. Nonetheless, I must also confess to a degree of apprehension: how is a book in a series which rarely runs beyond 100 pages going

to analyse one of the trickiest Augustan poets in a way that is accessible to sixth-formers?

As the title of the book suggests, Fulkerson aims to persuade the reader that in order to appreciate Ovid's extensive corpus, we must come to recognise him as a marginal figure, both literally (in the sense that he found himself exiled from Rome at Augustus' command), but also within the poems themselves, that is to say, Ovid's poetic persona is on the margins of his work looking in, revisiting and revising, worrying about whether a corpus written extensively in the meter of elegy will stand the test against the great hexameter poets like Virgil and Homer.

The book starts at the end, so to speak, with Ovid in exile and literally on the margins of the empire. Fulkerson uses this as an opportunity to appreciate the 'long view' of Ovid's work and to set it in its proper context, both within and outside Rome. There is a helpful chronology of works and other key dates in Ovid's life given in tabular format, though as Fulkerson acknowledges, this in itself is imperfect given Ovid's habits of editing and revising his own work, but nonetheless it gives the new student a broad outline of Ovid's output.

Fulkerson then moves on to explain the historical context framing Ovid's work. While the book claims that no prior knowledge of Ovid is assumed, it may well be that some of the historical context will need a little 'fleshing out'; reduced, quite rightly, to the essentials in order to focus on Ovid and his poetry. Nonetheless, given the *libertatis* of poets of the republican age and Ovid's position on the margin between republic and empire (along with what eventually happened to him being exiled because of *carmen et error*), a student new to the time period may need some additional guidance on the atmosphere, and reaction to perceived opposition, in Augustan Rome.

Although no formal knowledge of Latin is required, the book does go into discussion on Ovid's use of metre, a discussion which may be of more use to the linguist than to those studying Ovid in translation. This gives way to an analysis of Ovidian style and how he presents his poetic persona as being on the margins within his own poems, cf. e.g. the desire to write epic in *Am.* 1.1, only to have Cupid come along and steal a foot, or the

*paraclausithyron* of 1.6, whereby Ovid wants to be a 'proper lover', yet can't even get past the doorkeeper. Fulkerson deftly shows how not only are we to appreciate Ovid as a marginal figure in terms of his exile by Augustus, but as also occupying the status of a marginal figure within his own poetry.

There is also a useful chapter on marginal characters other than the authorial persona within the poems, looking at the Odyssean adventurer-type figures such as Perseus in the *Metamorphoses* (admittedly also an exile), as well as refugees, women and victims turning into villains; Ovid's treatment of Medea in the *Metamorphoses* and the *Heroides*, as well as his now-lost tragedy, combining all three of these liminal states.

Sixth-formers coming to this book may find themselves easily confused by the cross-referencing of different Ovidian works if, for example, they are only studying the *Amores* in Latin. While the book will be useful for them, it would be better if the reader had read more than one or two of Ovid's works, even if only in translation, prior to reading Fulkerson's study, since it does assume knowledge of the entire output and the book is not divided into chapters on each text. Nonetheless, there is a helpful glossary at the back of the book of all proper names and any Latin words that are not immediately translated in the body of the text, though these are few and far between.

Despite not being divided into chapters by Ovidian work, there are helpful suggestions for further reading at the back of the book which are divided in such a manner; thus the student currently studying the *Metamorphoses* will quickly be able to locate further secondary reading relevant to their study. This list has been further edited by the addition of an asterisk next to those items which Fulkerson regards as most accessible by those new to Ovidian scholarship.

Overall, Fulkerson's book prompts insightful thought rather than trying to offer definitive analysis of a poet who can claim to be one thing, appear to be another and then revert to the first appearance, all in the space of a few lines of poetry. Indeed, while reading the book, I smiled as I recalled one of my first introductions to Ovid, reading selections of his *Amores* for Latin A Level. Nearing

the exam season, we were starting to view the work as a whole and one lesson focused on the authorial persona and how hard it was to confine him or pin him down on practically everything.

“So you see how Ovid is as slippery as a snake?”

“But, sir, snakes aren’t slippery...?”

“Exactly.”

*Andrew Lowe*

## Halliwell, S

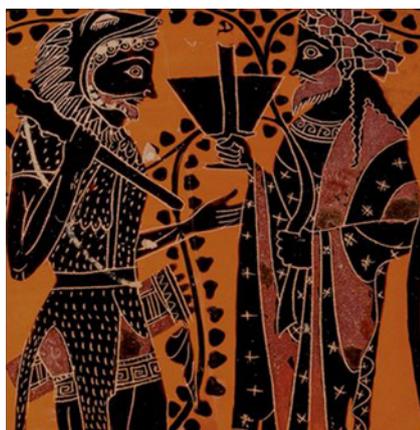
**Aristophanes: Frogs and Other Plays.**

A new verse translation, with introduction and notes

pp. 400. Oxford University Press,

2016, Paperback, £8.99

ISBN 978-0192824097



**Aristophanes  
Frogs**

and Other Plays

A new translation by Stephen Halliwell

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

For the newcomer to Greek Comedy, Halliwell’s introduction to the plays provides an excellent starting point. He does a brilliant job of putting the plays into context both in terms of their place in the development and tradition of Greek Comedy and also within the social, and historical, setting of Greek Dionysiac drama in general. As well as this, his discussion of Aristophanes’ style and form is thorough, and he offers a well-reasoned argument when discussing his approach to translating Aristophanes (he wishes to make the plays accessible whilst ensuring that what his audience is accessing is Aristophanes and not some ‘modern

substitute’). The introduction concludes by looking at how these plays have survived and the differing approaches and views towards them through the centuries since their first performance. The introduction is detailed and well-structured and prepares the reader well for study of the translations (and of Aristophanes in general). It assumes no prior knowledge of the Classical world in its reader and thus serves as a good introduction for the non-Classicist, though the academic style of writing does not lend itself well to a younger, less well-read audience.

The translations themselves are excellent. They fall somewhere between (as the introduction suggested they would) a traditional rendering of the Greek and a ‘For the Stage’ translation. The scripts are easy to follow and read well, yet they still follow the Greek closely, and the endnotes provide clear explanations of the humour and context wherever necessary or beneficial. In terms of layout, I would have preferred footnotes to endnotes as, when reading a text with a class, it is easier if the notes are on the same page.

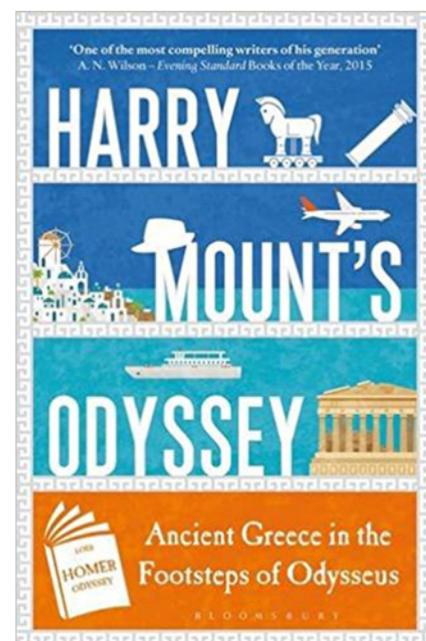
What really sets these translations apart, in my view, however, are the stage directions. H. gives a separate section on *Stage Directions* in the introduction. This brief section encourages readers to visualise the staging as it might have been, whilst acknowledging the lack of stage directions in the Greek text. In his translations, H. uses more stage directions than I have previously seen in a translation and these are effective in explaining and animating the visual aspects of the text which are such a crucial element of Aristophanic comedy. I would suggest that those stage directions which give tone of voice to individual characters, however, possibly go too far. They may help to contextualise for those new to Greek Comedy or to Aristophanes’ style, but at times they do seem to ‘state the obvious’.

Overall, H. has produced an excellent text. The translations are enjoyable to read, making this text well suited to both pleasure and study, and both for those wishing to add to their Aristophanic repertoire and for those looking to study his plays for the first time.

*Gemma Ball, Canon Slade School*

## Mount, H

**Harry Mount’s Odyssey: Ancient Greece in the Footsteps of Odysseus.** pp.xiv + 271, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015. Hardback, £18.99  
ISBN: 978-1-4729-0467-6



This is a book which both does more than it says on the cover and less: whilst it does not focus as much as one might first expect on ‘the footsteps of Odysseus’, it does give generous tidbits spanning across a whole range of the ancient world. In recent years both Marozzi (*The Man Who Invented History*) and Stothard (*On the Spartacus Road*) have written books which are similar in scope to what Mount is attempting in this volume, tracing the footsteps of a character from the ancient world and combining this historical outlook with a very personal journey. This is indeed a very personal journey but this perhaps spills over into being a self-indulgent work, and the reader is continually reminded about the author’s classical education at Westminster, his Oxford degree and an ancestry ‘sprinkled with earls, barons and field marshals’. Arguably Marozzi and Stothard achieve the balance and blend personal journey with historical outlook with more success than Mount manages here.

On the face of it, the author is setting out to follow Odysseus’ travels on his way home from Troy. It is understandable that he fails to do so successfully given the mythological nature of the *Odyssey*’s protagonist. However, in so failing, Mount

actually creates a book which is much wider in scope; his personal Odyssey is not about retracing Odysseus' steps, but encountering the whole of ancient Greece in many guises. That is not to say that Odysseus is not a central focus, but this book is about much more than just Homer's epic and its hero. Once the reader has recognised that this is *Harry Mount's Odyssey* much more than it is *in the footsteps of Odysseus*, the volume is light and readable; each chapter has a clear emphasis and there are a number of interesting and helpful illustrations. The book contains numerous lively encounters along the way, such as an engaging chapter looking at a later hero of the Greek world, Lord Byron, with the author attempting to swim across the Hellespont. This is a typical example of how the book does not trace Odysseus' footsteps – the episode is seemingly included because it is in the vicinity of Troy – but the reader is able to forgive the author as he is drawn in to an agreeable story.

This book therefore forms an anecdotal introduction to the ancient Greek world in its broadest sense. The classic Athens-centred introduction to Greece is given more breadth, even though there are chapters touching on 5<sup>th</sup> Century Athens, Marathon, Plato and so on, and Mount looks towards Sicily and Magna Graecia (home of the Cyclops, Scylla and Charybdis). The breadth means that there are often sweeping statements about the ancient world, which to the informed reader do not do justice to the discipline. Mount might, for example, spend longer teasing out some of the issues of the Homeric Question. This is a book which might be easily read by someone coming to the realm of Ancient Greece for the first time, perhaps someone sitting on a beach by the 'wine dark sea' during a summer holiday, particularly if that were the beach which Odysseus found himself on when he met the princess Nausicaa. It might also make for a light and easy read for pupils who are starting to form an interest in the classical world, though they may not find the scattergun approach so enticing.

As the book comes to a close, Mount entwines Calypso with his ex-girlfriend whose idea his Odyssey was and who pervades his narrative. With that final view, although it has been an enjoyable journey, the reader is left with the author's self-interested 43-year Odyssey through life and reminded that this has not been a book about Odysseus and the ancient world as

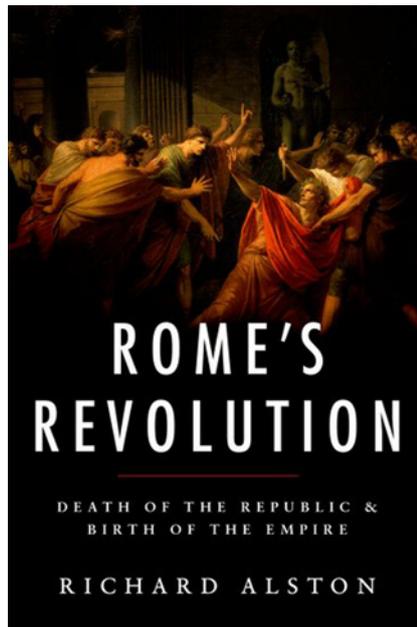
much as the author's autobiographical journey, both physical and emotional.

*Philip Canning, Eastbourne College*

## HISTORY and CIVILISATION

Alston, R

**Rome's Revolution: Death of the Republic and Birth of an Empire**  
pp. 408. Oxford University Press,  
2015, Hardback, £20.00  
ISBN 978-0199739769



Having used Alston's *Aspects of Roman History* for one of my sixth form classes in the past I looked forward to the opportunity of reviewing *Rome's Revolution*. Unlike the former, *Rome's Revolution* as a complete work does not specifically mirror any of the specifications units currently offered at A Level; likewise it breaks no new ground in its content. Having said this, it effectively bridges the gap between the fall of the Republic and the formation of the imperial period in one book. With this in mind, *Rome's Revolution* provides a fine guide to those seeking to make sense of Rome's Republic and gives a background and context for periods such as Cicero's career, Augustus' Principate, and the foundation of the Empire, all of which are current units for A Level students. *Rome's Revolution* begins by stating its argument, that it was Caesar's death that provided the final knife that killed off the Republic. From here A. provides the reader with the reasons for

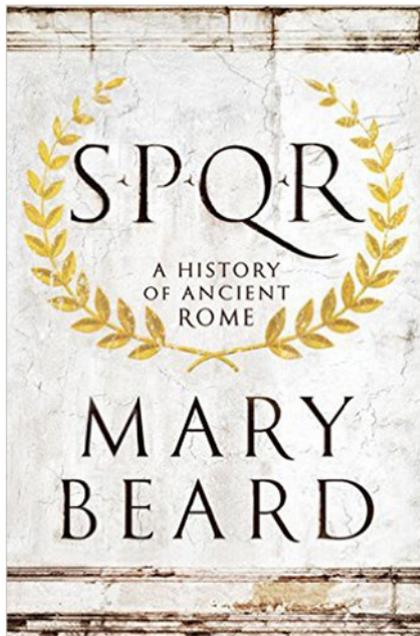
this, beginning with the reforms of the Gracchi before proceeding through the decades to the death of Augustus. As a learning tool for students *Rome's Revolution* provides excellent pre-reading for a number of topics, catering for both beginner and experienced student of Classics. For the beginner, after the initial two chapters, the book follows a chronological, clearly-worded and easy-to-follow structure. Additionally useful indexing, maps and timelines provide brief background information of the key people, places and events for the period. For the more experienced student *Rome's Revolution* pieces together the complexities of the Republic, leaving few stones unturned. Additionally the consistent referencing and detailed notes allow the more curious student to easily locate the original material and further scholarly work regarding it. Although *Rome's Revolution* breaks no new ground regarding the fall of the Republic it would make a fine tool for any teacher looking to equip their students with a sound overview of events between 122BC and 14BC, while exposing them to the kind of reading undertaken by undergraduates.

*Ben Greenley*

Beard, M

**SPQR. A History of Ancient Rome**  
pp. 606. Profile Books, 2015,  
Hardback, £25.00  
ISBN 978-0871404237

As the title suggests, this book is about the power structures within the Roman empire and the experiences of its citizenry. Biography and even narrative history are given a second place, and in its structure the book is more interested in analysis than telling a story in a straightforward way. This means that some people and events are elided, or turn up in different places; Cicero, for example, pops up more than once as Beard re-approaches a period or topic from different directions. But the overall result is a tremendously engaging survey of the history of Rome and the Roman world, giving an account that combines an overarching sweep of a millennium of history with sympathetic enquiry into 'real life', and explanations of how we know what we know (or don't).



The book opens in 63BC, with a chapter on the Catilinarian conspiracy that serves to set up some of the book's animating questions and to lay out B.'s approach: an explanation of what seems to have happened, followed by analysis from different angles (literary, historical, numismatic; the afterlife of the story).

There follow a couple of chapters on the early foundation myths of Rome, and the regal period. Here B. gives a deft summary of the evidence (and its limitations), sketching out what we do know and reminding us of how much we do not understand. By about the 6<sup>th</sup> C BC myth has started to be infused with something approaching tangible historical reality, and we meet with various elements of Roman life – the military and voting census, religion, the calendar – that later ages retrojected into a distant past, and attributed to a series of more or less fictional kings. B. balances archaeological and artistic material with later Roman accounts. Her early Rome is a place of feuds, local raids, and more or less petty chieftains, turned by later ages into founding figures.

The conventional story of the foundation of the Republic – the rape of Lucretia and the expulsion of the kings – is given weight as a story about how later Romans thought of themselves, but then, in a familiar move, probed and questioned, using the archaic laws of the Twelve Tables to portray a 5<sup>th</sup> century Rome that was still in essence a small, agricultural community with an unsophisticated state apparatus. The

evidence for this period, both literary and archaeological, is a complicated and incomplete mess, and B. works hard to create a pathway through it that acknowledges the imperfection of any one account. She sees a 'great leap forward' in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, powered in part by expansionist conquest, and at home by the continued threatened secessions of the plebeian order which won political concessions from the patrician elite, establishing at the heart of Rome's polity an idea of liberty. Rome's military expansion brought a system of alliances with conquered Italians that absorbed them into the growing Roman state, providing manpower for further campaigns and leading to increasingly sophisticated political structures at home.

The book moves into what will be more familiar ground for many with the problems of the middle and late Republic, leading through the reforms of the Gracchi to the Social War, Sulla's regime, and the first triumvirate. B. balances out the inevitable focus on great men and events with chapter 6's brief consideration of what this turmoil might have meant for ordinary people, a thread that runs through the book.

Cicero's *Verrines* return us to the corruption and violence that characterised much of Rome's provincial government, and there is an interesting treatment of the genuine attempts made to curb this. Marius and Pompey (who 'has a good claim to be called Rome's first emperor') lead on to the first triumvirate, Caesar and the Ides of March.

Throughout the book up to this point B.'s interest in the experience and attitude of the ordinary majority of the Roman world has been limited to 'cameo appearances' by the lack of evidence, but chapter 8 turns aside from political narrative to use Cicero's abundant correspondence as a source both for his particular experience of the turbulent events of the previous chapter, and also for social history in the late Republic – questions including when people married, how the aristocracy supported their lifestyles, and the role of slaves.

The book is thus broadly chronologically organised, moving through the foundation and early years of the Roman state in chapters 2 to 4, to the turmoil of its republican constitution and growing Mediterranean empire in 5 to 8. The pace picks up as we get into the

imperial period; Augustus gets a chapter to himself, and then the 'fourteen emperors' who ruled between Tiberius and Commodus are squeezed into another chapter, partly by dint of eliding the year of the four emperors altogether. That takes us to 192, and to reach her goal of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* of AD 212, B. skips another year of multiple emperors and compresses the entire early Severan dynasty (for example) into page 528.

A narrative moving at this pace inevitably has gaps, and readers especially interested in Roman emperors might feel disappointed here; but it is not narrative *per se* that really interests B.: she gives deft summaries of the march of events where they are needed to keep the broad chronological framework in place, but the book's real value is in the way she loops back to examine themes and phenomena across a period or periods. Even within the single chapter covering nearly two centuries of imperial government, for example, she moves thematically rather than giving into the temptation to list events and dates, resisting the allure of scandalous imperial biography and writing that 'it can hardly have made much difference who was on the throne, or what their personal habit or intrigues were'.

Instead of potted accounts of individual reigns, then, she concentrates her material into questions that she finds more interesting: in this case, there are sections on imperial administration, succession problems, relations with the senate, and the deification and worship of emperors.

B.'s interest in the experience of ordinary inhabitants of the empire is given fullest expression in the last two chapters, when the relatively abundant evidence (archaeological and literary) of the imperial period at last offers a better insight into the lives and interests of those outside the literary-political elite that dominate republican accounts. Chapter 11 looks at Rome's 'haves and have-nots', charting the wide spectrum of wealth and 'the world of work, and of leisure, of culture and of anxiety': I suspect that this chapter, with its wealth of captivating individual stories, relatively unknown to non-specialists, will be the one most enjoyed by many readers: the ex-slave whose tomb expresses relief that he can rest his aching legs and now enjoys 'free board and lodging for eternity', the gleeful graffito of a lucky gambler at Pompeii, the baker made good at Rome

whose tomb depicts his bread factory. The final chapter, 'Rome outside Rome', looks at the provincial experience of oppression and opportunity, 'Romanisation' and resistance, and mass movement on an unprecedented scale.

B. ends with a suggestion of how we might engage with the history of the Romans, gaining something for our own times by looking closely at a distant past. She describes herself as 'happily a child of my times', and this is borne out in the book. She is suspicious of claims to greatness in empire, titles the subsections of her account of the origins of Rome 'murder' and 'rape', and reminds us more than once that aspects of the ancient past that seem familiar should not blind us to the enormous differences between our societies and theirs. From her opening chapter onwards she gives time to the modern 'reception' and reuse of Classical antiquity, adapted for the needs of successive ages. The desire to give the analysis of the ancient past a contemporary resonance means that, for example, the phrase 'homeland security' appears twice in the first four pages of the book, and there are plenty of references to contemporary political questions; but by and large this is not overplayed: the tone is nicely judged, witty and questioning rather than heavy-handed.

A particular strength of *SPQR* lies in B.'s explanations of how we know what we know (and where the gaps are). In her opening account of the Catilinarian conspiracy, for example, we have a narrative, followed by a discussion of the date, texture and agenda of the available literary source material, followed in turn by an account of how archaeologists and historians can bring other material to bear, helping us to read Cicero's obviously partisan, and probably embellished, speeches 'against the grain'; in this case dye studies of coins of the area suggest a restriction in the money supply which would have lent weight to Catiline's cause and the desperation of his followers. B. is cautious about what evidence of this type can and can't tell us, but consistently uses it to round out the conventional picture and 'squeeze the material [we] have in ingenious ways'. This attention to detail, weighing and sifting the evidence, runs throughout the book. B. uses such detail illuminatingly, bringing it to bear on the question at hand rather than piling it up for its own sake.

In this sense the book celebrates the range of material and approaches at the disposal of today's Classicists and acts as a survey of current directions in the scholarship of ancient Rome, which are summarised in a useful further reading section at the end of the book.

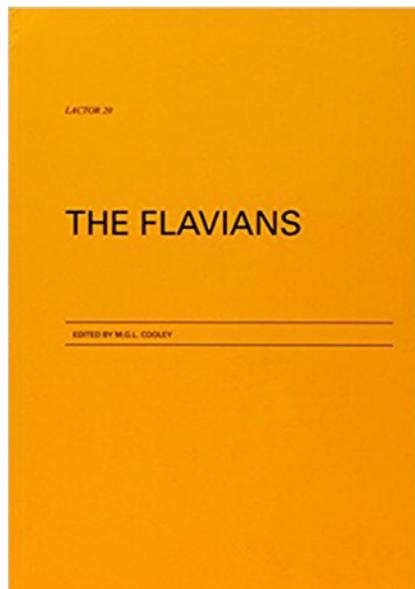
The writing is lucid and lively, accessible without condescending: *SPQR*, though not a straightforward history of Rome, offers an enormous range of material, expertly handled and engagingly presented.

*Matthew Nicholls*

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Cooley, M. (Ed).

**The Flavians (LACTOR 20)**  
pp. 425. London Association of  
Classical Teachers, 2015,  
Paperback, £18  
ISBN 9780903625388



This comprehensive collection of source material on the Flavian dynasty, presented in its perky tangerine cover, is the 20th publication in the LACTOR series. These are designed to be useful compendia of original source material, handily translated into English, to aid the study of Ancient History at A Level and beyond. The focus of this collection is on those sources that are less readily available in translation, from the more unusual Eutropius, Frontinus and Philostratos to the more expected Cassius Dio, the Plinys and Juvenal. In fact, readers will largely have to look elsewhere for the familiar diet of Suetonius and Tacitus that covers this

period. Literary sources are handsomely supplemented with a good range of epigraphic and numismatic material (53 coins are fully illustrated), and there is even the odd bust on display in the section covering the Imperial Family. But make no mistake: this is dense, detailed, text-heavy stuff from over 800 sources, compiled conveniently for the serious scholar.

The first part of the book is organised into seven individual 'Sources', allowing for representation of key material in continuous form. These are usefully prefaced to provide context and information on potential reliability and degree of completeness. The first two sections cover 'The Acts of the Arval Brothers' and the 'List of Consuls' respectively. The former details the Brothers' various acts of worship, effectively an official court record in stone inscription, for the year of the four emperors, 69 AD. The latter compiles sources as varied as original documents from Pompeii and Herculaneum, Statius' and Martial's poetry and *Fasti* from Ostia and Potentia to enable a reconstruction of the lost *Fasti* from Rome during this turbulent period. Then follow two sections of Dio's Roman History, Books 66 and 67, abridged by the 11<sup>th</sup> century monk Xiphilinus, whose way of working involved striking out 'the repetitive or uninteresting' as he copied out the original 80 books. Claudius' invasion of Britain underwent such editing (!) but in these books we are treated to theories on the death of Titus (shut in a chest full of snow by his brother Domitian), an account of Vesuvius' eruption (portended by the appearance of giant-like figures) and Domitian's all-black dinner parties, complete with tombstone name-cards, designed to terrify his unsuspecting guests. Part 1 continues with extracts from Josephus' *Jewish War* and Flavian Municipal Laws in Spain, intended to give an insight into the operation of the Empire in the provinces during this period. It concludes with Juvenal's *Satire IV*, a parody on Statius' epic poem on Domitian's German Wars, exploring the cruelty of Domitian's reign and the arbitrary nature of his killings.

The second part of the book is organised by 12 'Themes' that reflect the tendencies of the A Level Roman History syllabus, for example, 'War and Expansion', 'Popular Entertainment', 'Panegyric and Invective' and the tantalising 'Conspiracies, Revolts and

Scandals'. Further sub-themes are also usefully indexed, as well as places and a succinct one-page family tree. There is also an 'Index of Persons'. As a result, fans of the *Cambridge Latin Course* can track down Rufilla's tombstone or Pliny's description of Salvius as 'plain-speaking, clear, fluent and shrewd'.

If I have any criticism though, it is that such a resource does not currently exist in electronic format. This would enable the student or teacher to search quickly for key information, reproduce and adapt it for worksheets or handouts. It would even allow for the compilation of their own source book of material, relevant to the themes and changing demands of the syllabus, as opposed to the more painstaking process of Xiphilinus-like sifting and copying that is currently required. There is no question that any reader wishing to explore the key source material of the Flavian period will be well catered for here, but work needs to be done to make this material more accessible and usable if it is to get the sort of widespread engagement it truly deserves

*Rebecca Jones, St. Peter's School, York*

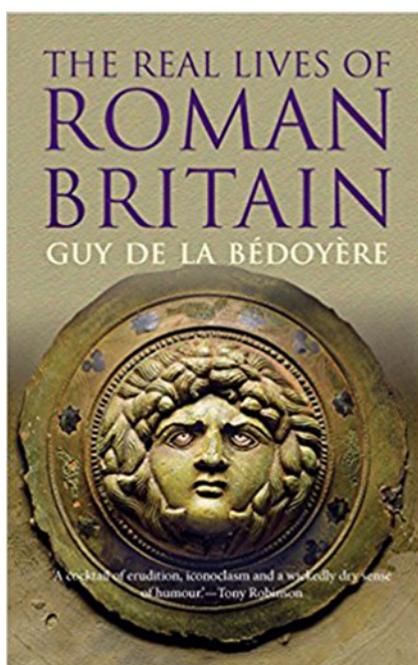
## de la Bédoyère, G

**The Real Lives of Roman Britain**  
pp. xxii + 241. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015, Hardback, £20  
ISBN: 978-0-300-20719-4

*No story should begin quite where the reader expects it to begin.*

So opens Guy de la Bédoyère's splendid and timely new contribution to our understanding of Roman Britain. Traditionally, it has, of course, been the exploits and excesses of the emperors and elites that have dominated public perceptions of Rome (and the bookshop shelves) but now, from Robert Knapp's *Invisible Romans* to Mary Beard's BBC series *Meet the Romans*, there seems to be a growing appetite for a new, complementary focus: the exploration and elucidation of the lives of the Empire's ordinary men and women.

And so there should be. As de la B. is at pains to note on more than one occasion, this really is worth doing, particularly in Britain, as the Roman era represents the very earliest period in our country's history for which such a study is even remotely possible. This is the first opportunity we



have (due primarily to the advent of literacy but also to the Romanised inclination to memorialise oneself) to learn the names, backgrounds, relationships, preoccupations, obsessions, failures and successes of our individual forebears.

Of course, that's not to say there aren't issues with the evidence, and considerable ones at that. The tendency for Romanised natives to rename themselves (or be renamed) repeatedly obscures the ethnic origin of many individuals and, inevitably, the record is dominated by military personnel and also limited in the number of women and children it can offer us. Fragmentary inscriptions and debatable abbreviations add to the difficulties and de la B. is never reluctant to admit as much. Nevertheless, many of the real lives of Roman Britain *can* be uncovered and, in this new volume, de la B. does an extremely impressive and highly commendable job of collating the best of the evidence and presenting us with a broad, varied and fascinating range of personalities.

And so it is that, scattered throughout the pages of his new book, we get to meet such individuals as Marcus Favonius Facilis, centurion of the XX Legion and veteran of the Claudian invasion whose tombstone at Colchester boasts the very earliest dateable face of an individual on these islands; Julia Pacata Indiana, wife of the Procurator Gaius Julius Alpinus Classicianus, the earliest securely-dated non-native woman in our island's history; Verecunda of the Dobunni tribe in the south west who met and married the newly-arrived Gaulish

auxiliary Excingus and moved north with his unit to be buried, at the age of 35, near Templeborough in Yorkshire; Boduac the London tiler; Cabriabanus the Kentish hypocaust specialist; the anonymous Aldgate-Pulborough potter whose works were so 'triumphantly awful' they can only have been bought as curiosities; the list goes on and on.

Of course, a book such as this, focused as it is on the ordinary and the insignificant, might potentially have fallen into the trap of becoming obsessed with the trivial and of ultimately feeling rather insignificant itself. However, de la B. skilfully avoids such potential pitfalls firstly by making sure to provide the broad narrative of the history of the province as a background framework upon which to mount his selected individuals and secondly through repeatedly broadening the reader's horizons with encyclopaedic references to parallels from as far afield as Judea and Mauretania.

With *The Real Lives of Roman Britain*, then, de la B. has made yet another invaluable contribution to our understanding of that long distant time in our island's history.

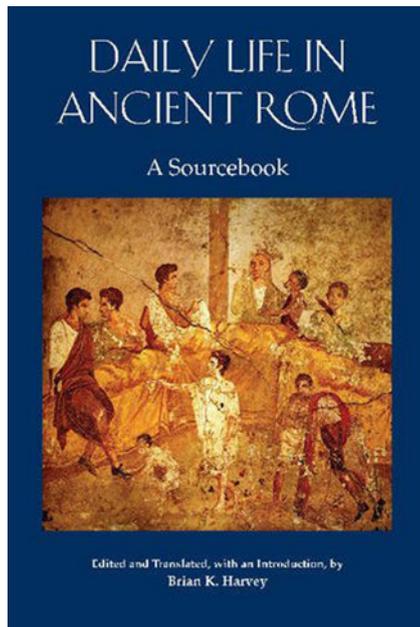
*Ken Pickering, Lancaster Girls' Grammar School*

## Harvey, B (ed., trans.)

**Daily Life in Ancient Rome.**  
A Sourcebook  
pp. xii + 346, Indianapolis, IN:  
Hackett Publishing Company, 2016,  
Paperback, US\$24.95  
ISBN 978-1-58510-795-7

This beautifully produced book is exactly what it claims to be: a sourcebook of daily life but in some ways it is much more than that. The variety of sources is broad and the way it is divided into discrete sections clear and easy to navigate. The author says in the preface that it is aimed 'primarily at the non-specialist and those with a casual interest in learning about the Romans'. He has therefore given a potted history of the Empire in the first chapter and then goes on to divide society and practice into 20 further headings. This makes it easy to find sources for a specific topic and the index is a further help. The sources are broad-ranging and from a variety of authors, not just the usual suspects: we have Cicero, Quintilian, Martial, Justinian,

Vitruvius and of course the ubiquitous Pliny and Juvenal on dinner party *mores* (#295 and #296 p276-7) and much more.



The sections are clearly marked and sensibly divided, starting with the Structure of Society and Roman Values which leads nicely onto the family and views of women with a slightly more obscure, at least to me, passage from Valerius Maximus on Egnatius Mecenius' drunken wife (#73, p68). Each section is given a short introduction which sets the scene for the extracts which follow and there also extracts from CIL (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*) and AE (*L'Année épigraphique*) particularly in the chapters on Slavery, Business and Occupations and Public Entertainment.

As I was reading through this I was trying to work out how I could use this in my teaching; it is certainly too dense for KS2 or 3 but I could easily see how the extracts could be used in a KS4 Classical Civilisation class, or in KS5. Chapter 10, Housing, has some helpful diagrams and contrasts urban and rural housing in a way which we do not often see in books. I was pleased to see three cities focused on in Chapter 8, Rome, Pompeii and Ostia, but I was left wanting more with these, especially on specific buildings in Ostia. Given the scope of the book, which is vast, I should not have been surprised, but I would have liked a greater degree of comparison between these three diverse places: perhaps that is another book!

Actual daily routine in ancient Rome appears in Chapter 12, by which time the scene has been set with social issues, and

living conditions including the water and grain supply. We are given information about Pliny's day (#189, #190 p182-3) and rather more interesting to me, the reference in Martial *Epigrams* 14.223 (#193 p185) of children buying a takeaway en route to school. We have information on Augustus' penchant for multiple layers in the winter (#194 p186) from Suetonius and Aulus Gellius (#194 p186) on why men should not wear long-sleeved tunics. Such tidbits as these along with Martial's *Epigram* 2.17 on a 'shady female barber' (#199 p188) bring the ancient world to life. In the chapters following this we are given glimpses of religious and military life, and the ever-present baths and bars and inns.

There are some pleasing photographs (all black and white), all but one taken by the author and they are well chosen to support the sources, along with helpful diagrams. One definitely gets the impression that this book has been a labour of love. It is full of interesting extracts which tell us of not only the facts surrounding ancient Roman activities and life, but also of the values and attitudes that these people had. The chapter on the Urban Experience has an amusing section on Pompeian graffiti, a subject which has not been ignored by scholars, but nonetheless one which has much amusement to offer. The warnings on tombs against defecators (#160 p149) is particularly illuminating and #288 p271, regarding the unfortunate death of a young boy who drowned in the baths, brings home to us the tragedy that these people suffered much as we do.

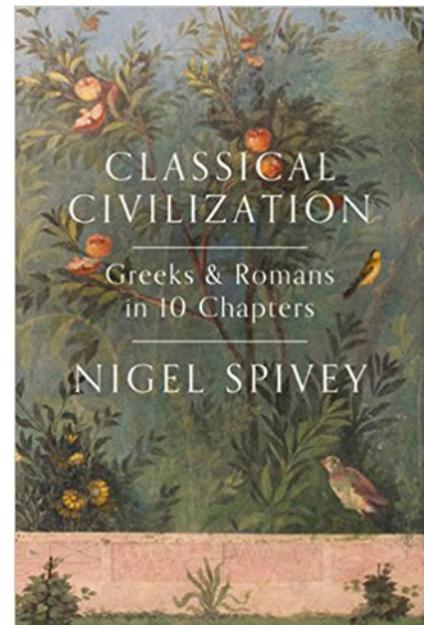
I very much enjoyed reading this book and was sorry when I came to the end. It gives a full and varied account of daily life in ancient Rome (and Ostia and Pompeii) and has clearly been gathered together with great joy by the editor. I have used several of the nuggets I gleaned in my teaching already and fully intend to use more. As I said at the beginning, although this is aimed at the non-specialist but there is much here to inform and educate the specialist too. If using it for teaching, then there are numerous passages which can be cited, and if for pure enjoyment then it is one to dip into. There are, as always in a book, typographical errors, but these are not numerous and references are clear and well-indexed. The glossary of terms is helpful and the index of authors useful. I very much enjoyed reading this book and

will keep it to hand for future teaching purposes.

*JM Lashly, Shrewsbury High School*

## Spivey, N

**Classical Civilization:  
Greeks & Romans in 10 Chapters.**  
pp xiv + 353. London: Head of Zeus  
Ltd, 2015, Hardback, £16.99  
ISBN 978-1-781-855003



*A rather underwhelming ruin on the shores of Asia Minor; a prehistoric stronghold associated with conflict and destruction. Why begin with Troy?*

Thus begins Nigel Spivey's highly readable account of the history of the Greeks and Romans and their cultural, political, intellectual and artistic legacy. And, once he's started, he doesn't hang about. This book sets off at a cracking pace and S.'s extensive expertise and experience in the field ensures that every single page is a thoroughly illuminating read. There's a *lot* to appreciate here.

Of course, many books have tackled such a broad overview before, and done so successfully, but S.'s particular genius in this case lies in his decision to use the development and significance of ten key cities (one of them imaginary) as the framework for his exploration of these ancient cultures. *This* book on Classical Civilisation begins with a chapter called 'Troy' and ends with a chapter called 'Constantinople'. It's simple, innovative, engaging and effective.

Of course, had S. restricted his book simply to recounting the histories of these ten chosen cities then its canvas would have been somewhat limited regardless of how important each site was. Thankfully, however, he doesn't. Instead, each city is deployed as a launch pad of sorts from which S. ventures forth to explore, explain and elucidate all sorts of (frequently tangentially) related topics.

For example, the 'Troy' chapter, of course, affords S. the perfect opportunity to dwell in depth upon the many features of Homer's epic poetry and the seminal impact it had on later literary traditions but it also allows him to head off and explore the Minoan and Mycenaean civilisations. The 'Syracuse' chapter is particularly wide-ranging, starting with the topics of Greek migration, sea-faring and trade ('If Greeks had not migrated during the eighth to sixth centuries BC, there would be very little by way of "classical civilization"', p103) before moving on, via a brief consideration of the Greek concept of *to Hellenikon*, to discuss the Olympic Games, Delphi and more. Time and time again, throughout the entirety of his 300 or more pages, S. transitions effortlessly from topic to topic (and from history to archaeology to art to literature) in an authoritative and yet accessible style that keeps the reader fully engaged.

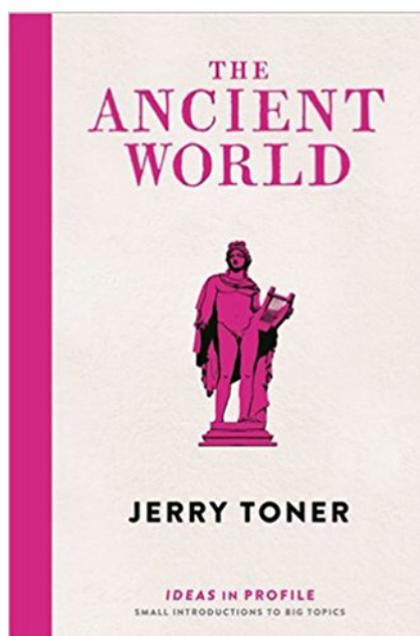
S.'s forthcoming *The Classical World: The Foundations of the West and the Enduring Legacy of Antiquity*, due in July, looks set to explore the topics on offer here in even more lavish depth and detail but, until then, this handsome hardback comes highly recommended.

**Ken Pickering, Lancaster Girls' Grammar School**

## Toner, J.

**The Ancient World: Ideas in Profile**  
pp. 160, Profile Books, 2016,  
Paperback, £8.99  
ISBN-13: 978-1781254202

'Lively, irreverent and expert', as the blurb promises. Indeed, and in words, Jerry Toner's small tome provides just such an introduction to the ancient world. With frenetic pace, the book churns out the fun facts and curiosities of the ancient world, all the while drawing conclusions that are thought-provoking.



Consider the chapter titled 'The Ancient World from Below'. T. considers the idea of the 'ordinary' people of old. Graffiti, city-living, the price of food as a proportion of income – no aspects of the lives of the majority are neglected. This is interspersed with snippets of the daily life of the ordinary, including a joke of a Greek astrologer who promises the mother of a sick boy he will live for long. When the mother promised to pay the astrologer tomorrow, the astrologer replies: 'But what happens if he dies in the night?'

Throughout the book there are plenty of small facts to keep the reader informed: the demographics of the ancient population, Christianity's relationship with Roman emperors, the many ways of finding out about Roman life, amongst many. It is as informative as an introduction-to-Classics book should be, and it attempts to be less trivial by positing observations alongside facts – that life was hard; that 'Athenians and Persians did not hate each other' despite the many wars they fought against each other.

Despite all these facts and ideas, or actually because of them, this can be a hard book to read. The thread that T. weaves ducks and dives. Within the 23-page chapter on 'The Ancient World from Below' it speaks of happiness, food, wealth, drinking, sex, marriage, slavery, childhood, infant mortality in Rome, Pompeii, Cato, Cicero, Roman Bath, Aesop, St. Augustine, Athens, Clement...

Not only is the style effusive, it is often 'down with the kids'. 'The support of the world's most powerful man made

Christianity cool', T. proclaims; later in the same chapter: 'The problem was that it smacked of a return to good old pagan polytheism'. Elsewhere there is reference to a 'Stalinesque programme of mass migration and resettlement' and a joke being like an 'ancient Carry On'. Beyond this there is some sound consideration of new fields of Classics, such as how China and Rome compare and the influence of Latin and Greek on the Empire.

T. has taken on a difficult task here. I cannot help but think that he is a man worth listening to – there are some excellent thoughts on Classical influences and the lives of the ordinary that merits development. The introduction on how we discover Classics is crisp and informative. But somehow it is difficult to understand what the ancient world is through the book. It is difficult to place the ideas of the different chapters in the same world; it is also confusing to just present one view of women in the ancient world without mentioning the difference between, for example, Greek and Roman women. Fundamentally, the liveliness and irreverence of the book, to return to the words of the blurb, make it more difficult to comprehend the expert information on offer within the book. The book is frequently trying too hard to be cool, when the facts are cool enough themselves.

But then, the children of the information-overloaded age may find it a read that suits them. There's certainly plenty of facts for teachers and budding Classicists to bandy about and increase their street cred.

**Henry Lee, Sir John Leman School**

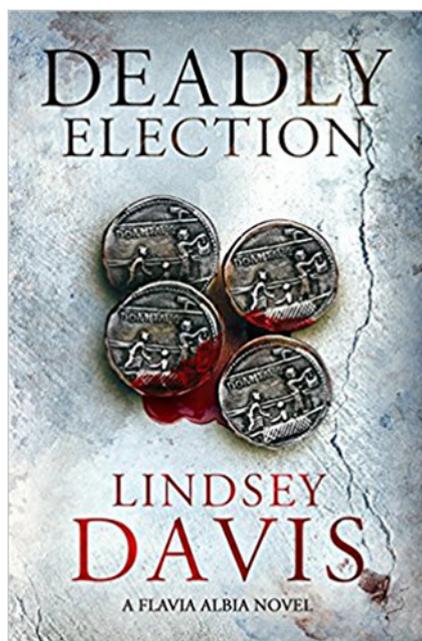
## NOVELS

## Davis, L

**Deadly Election**  
pp. 386. London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, 2015, Paperback,  
£7.99

ISBN 978-1-444-79418-2

This book is the third in a new ancient Rome series by Lindsay Davis. She has retired the private eye Marcus Falco from her first series, although he still gets mentioned within the new series. We are now following the fortunes and misfortunes of his adopted daughter



Flavia Albia. This adds an important element to this new series which was not present in D.'s first: the complicated status of working women in Rome including the problems a young widowed woman may encounter in what is very much a male-dominated society, especially as Flavia is a female with political connections. Flavia is shown to be a feisty, street-wise, fiercely independent and quite attractive female, qualities which for a Roman woman are likely to create problems for her with her male friends, relatives and especially Roman authority as she also lives alone on the Aventine Hill in Rome and makes a good living as a hired investigator. As an outsider in many ways, Flavia has a unique point of view on life in ancient Rome. She puts this viewpoint to good use in her day job as an informer but it also enables her to go places no man could go and to ask questions that no man would or could ask. Moreover, as with D.'s first series, this novel is thoroughly researched. This knowledge is lightly sprinkled and does not overpower the story line, although it is quite interesting to follow the interactions and power struggles between the aedile, tribune and *vigiles*, which although fictional and imagined are probably quite realistic.

As this is a novel, I shall try to avoid giving away too many spoilers, as the point of reading such a book is to appreciate the story as one reads. All the same there are two strands to the plot which start separately but quickly become

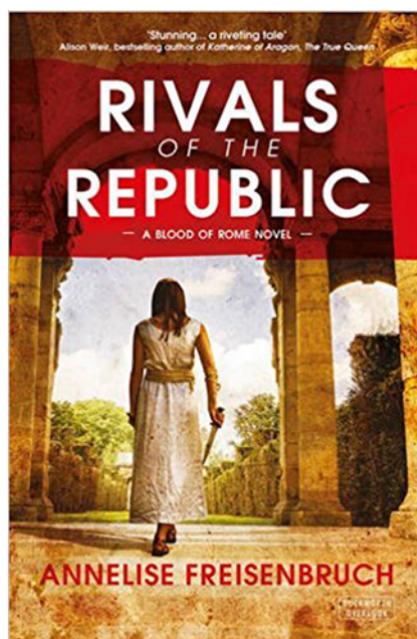
intertwined. The story takes place during the canvassing period of an election, which is relevant from the point of democracy, but not for any other, as the eventual winner will be chosen by Domitian. It is interesting to see more of Flavia Albia, the auctioneer's daughter, and the intricacies involved in organising, running and administering an auction.

Personally, I felt a need to read the first two novels before reviewing this book and was very thankful that I did as it made me appreciate the development of character through the three novels. It is however, quite easy to read as a stand-alone novel and I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone with an interest in historical novels.

*Sally-Ann Edmonds*

## Freisenbruch, A.

**Rivals of the Republic**  
pp. 285. London and New York:  
Duckworth, 2016. Hardback, £18.99  
ISBN 978-0-715-650998



Freisenbruch's title is ambiguous and should, more happily, have been *Rivals in the Republic*. This engaging novel takes Hortensia, the daughter of Q. Hortensius Hortalus (Cicero's forensic rival, for a time), as its protagonist and weaves a story of murder and conspiracy around her, in which she plays accomplished detective.

F. has been careful to base her plot on the very real animosity between Crassus and Pompey, consuls of 70 BC, the year in which the story is set; the Verres trial also features, in the background. She invents a rather too complaisant husband for her heroine and a rather too lucky and bold Lusitanian slave as her trusty helper; the plot, although weaving close to Roman comedy in one or two places, unravels at a cracking pace and gives F. many opportunities to work in oblique references to passages of Juvenal, Horace, Martial *et al.*

Early in the tale, Hortensia, surprisingly, delivers a speech in a Roman court, which marks her out as the bold and precocious teenager; Quintilian writes that the real Hortensia delivered a speech before the Triumvirs, and Valerius Maximus gives us a context. F. thus cleverly suggests a certain gutsy feminism here which prepares the reader for her boldness later in the story.

As with many such novels, one tends to be on the lookout for anachronisms; there are none obvious, but one has a feeling that much of the dialogue and one or two of the events are, even in context, a little far-fetched. Novelisations of the Classical world are a growing and crowded area and good attempts to convey the history and the atmosphere, such as this, are therefore to be welcomed. A minor irritation: a few of the earlier chapters are date-stamped with headings, e.g. *The Temple of Vesta, Rome. July 70 BC*, thus giving a sense of pace. However, F. quickly dispenses with this – why?

*Terry Walsh, Ratcliffe College*

## Sendak, M. (trans. R.A. LaFleur)

**Ubi Fera Sunt**  
pp. 37. Mundelein, IL: Bolchazy-  
Carducci Publishers, Inc., 2016 (first  
published 1963). Hardback, US\$24  
ISBN 978-0-86516-831-2

Opening Richard LaFleur's *Ubi Fera Sunt* was a joy for me. Maurice Sendak's *Where The Wild Things Are* was a favourite from my own childhood, and having the Latin translation allowed me to return to happy memories from a fresh perspective. The book retains the

## UBI FERA SUNT



original illustrations, offering Latin text in place of English. L. has stayed faithful to the language of the original cautionary tale of naughty Max becoming king of the wild things, retaining the simplicity of the story without embellishment. This is not to say that the Latin is childlike or easy – this is not a text for the Latin beginner. However, the beauty of his translation is that he has taken wonderful phrases in English and presented them even more carefully in Latin, for example:

‘They roared their terrible roars and gnashed their terrible teeth

and rolled their terrible eyes and showed their terrible claws.’

*‘terribiles fremitus fremebant et fredebant dentes terribiles*

*et volvebant oculos terribiles terribilisque unguis monstrabant.’*

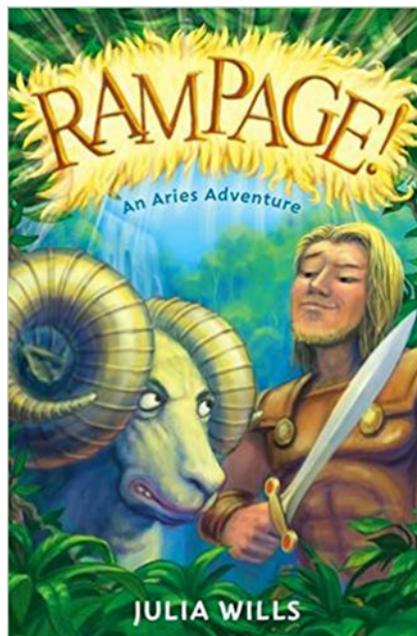
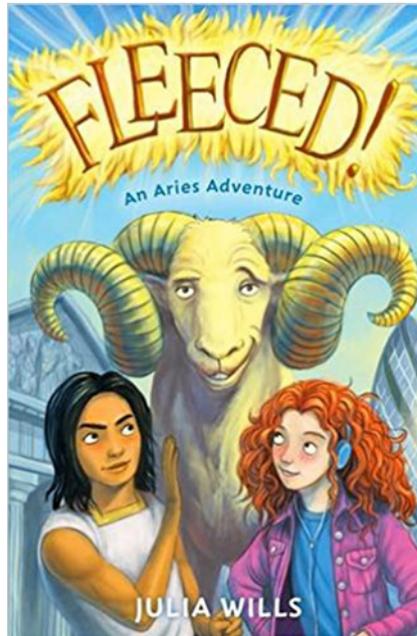
The delightful brevity of *Ubi Fera Sunt* allows us to introduce textual analysis using stories already known to many students, reducing students’ potential difficulty accessing somewhat unfamiliar texts whilst creating a rather more light-hearted discussion of a number of literary features than can be achieved with many examination set texts.

As the number of modern classics available in Latin increases - our library includes *The Hobbit*, *Harry Potter* and even the Latin *Gruffalo* - we are offered the opportunity to add a new dimension to our teaching, should we wish to take it. However, if our intention is simply to curl up with a cup of cocoa and enjoy reading Latin for reading’s sake, then there can be few better bedtime stories.

**Lisa McPherson, Spalding Grammar School**

## Wills, J

**Fleeced and Rampage**  
pp. 400 and 416. Piccadilly Press Ltd,  
2015, Paperback £6.99 each  
ISBN 978-1848124769 and  
978-1848124776



We all think we know the tale of the ram with the golden fleece, we all think we know about Jason and the Argonauts, we all think we know about his heroic quest. But do we? In *Fleeced!* Julia Wills turns our knowledge upside down as we hear how the ram, Aries, is dealing with his new life, bald and big-bottomed in the Greek

underworld. We meet Aries as he is devising a plan to return to earth, to reclaim his fleece. Luckily Athena is holding a competition, the prize being to go back to the living world on a chosen quest. However, having won the competition, instead of arriving in ancient Greece, Aries and his friend Alex, zookeeper of the Underworld, are teleported into the modern day British Museum.

Aries and Alex soon discover that the Golden Fleece is in the clutches of evil, immortal sorceress Medea, who is now a famous fashion designer. Luckily they are not alone in their quest, as they are joined by 12-year-old Rose, who assists with their bizarre adventure despite their peculiar explanation. The three of them have to outwit meddling Medea as they try to reunite the golden fleece with its rightful owner.

From the very start of this story the reader is thrown into the crazy world of Aries the ram. Aries bursts on the scene straight away; there is no way he can be ignored as he rams you constantly for your attention and dives head first into hilarious adventure after adventure. The other characters are also great additions, I really enjoyed the dynamic within Aries’ and Alex’s friendship and how their personalities bounce off each other. The author includes many fantastical classical characters, locations and monsters. Modern Medea is a magnificent interpretation of the one from the original myth. She is sharp and clever, a great enemy for the plucky Rose to face, as we see them try and outwit each other.

The author talks directly to the audience, cracking jokes, making comments and thoroughly involving the audience in the story. I think this very entertaining tale introduces Greek mythological stories in an easily understandable way, and would be perfect for a young audience of 9-12. This book would appeal to both boys and girls, and the ‘educational’ points are woven into the storyline seamlessly so that readers are not faced with any dry explanations. There is a fantastic glossary of characters which provides more information if it is sought and embellishes the wider storylines of many of the characters. I particularly enjoyed the footnotes provided by the author. They added more information when necessary, with comical

interjections from the author fitting with the chatty tone of the book.

Having read *Fleeced!*, I was very keen to see what *Rampage!*, the next book in the series, had to offer. It did not disappoint. In *Rampage!* Aries and Alex are sent back to Earth on a mission: Medea is plotting again, in the rainforests of the fabled land of El Dorado, and goddess Athena wants the best friends to stop her. To add to the drama, Jason, Aries' arch nemesis, is sent with them, making anacondas, giant spiders and caimans the least of their worries. Rose also returns to the scenes as she is searching for her lost father in the Amazon. However, things go from bad to worse as Medea needs Rose's help to restore her powers and get her revenge, not only on Earth but in the Underworld too.

Another excellent story, filled with laugh-out-loud humour, as once again classic Greek myth is placed in the modern world and danger waits around every corner of the deep, dark rainforest. The plot in *Rampage!* is certainly ambitious and requires a leap of faith as we follow the author in to a trail of crazy adventures, but it is a funny and engaging read. Overall I'd highly recommend these books, I'm sure there is something for all to enjoy and they won't fail to make the reader giggle.

*Imogen Taylor*

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## Course books and resources

Ash, R. and Patrick, M.

*Pluto: fabula amoris*

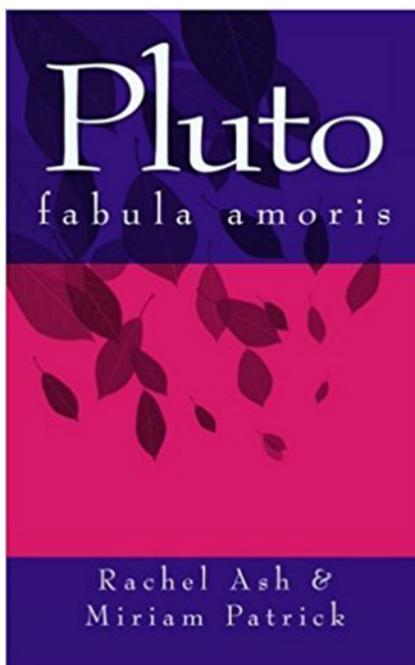
p. 29. Pomegranate Beginnings

Publishing, 2015, Paperback, US \$6

ISBN 9780692530818

*Pluto: fabula amoris* is an endearing re-telling of the Pluto and Proserpina myth as a love story in novella form. It is also meant to be a 'Latin reader' and emerged from the authors' desire to write 'something more meaningful to us' and 'that would fit teachers' many needs'. It is composed of eight short chapters introduced by an illustration. Each chapter ranges from between 65 and 200 words in length, and is accompanied by a 'complete glossary' of just under 150 Latin words, sited at the back of the book. Each chapter is

alternately narrated from the point of view of Pluto and Proserpina, and it is the intriguing characterisation of each which is the driving force of interest here.



Pluto is portrayed as bookish and solitary, a more misunderstood metro-sexual than menacing Lord of the Underworld. Proserpina is a feminist and environmentalist (*'mortales terram necant. terram amo. mortales non amo.'*) who eschews marriage but eventually takes control of her own destiny: think of a cross between Scary Spice, Hippolytus and Al Gore, in a *stola*. If the key purpose of a Latin reader is to make the reader want to find out what happens next and to keep reading, then this clever twist on characterisation goes some considerable way to achieving that.

But, quirky characters aside, on closer examination of the Latin itself, the key question that I am left with is this: who is meant to be the audience for this Latin reader? The complete beginner or the more experienced Latinist? Do the authors intend for it to be read alone, with a teacher or a bit of both?

The first chapter begins with some deceptively simple and short Latin sentences: *'ego sum deus. sum deus mortuorum.'*, but by the end of the first chapter we are required to translate present and imperfect tenses, irregular verbs *nolo* and *volo* in first and third persons plus infinitive, comparative

adjectives with *quam*, prepositions taking the ablative case, correlatives, direct questions and impersonal verbs taking the dative. Chapter Two even incorporates an indirect statement construction: *'matrem intellexi et dixi me coniugem esse nolle'*. But in the preview copy that I reviewed, there is no clear indication of the level of Latin the reader needs to possess to be able to enjoy this story. The introductory page demurely suggests that it is a *'liber parvus pro prima classe latina'*, but this is vague at best and misleading at worst.

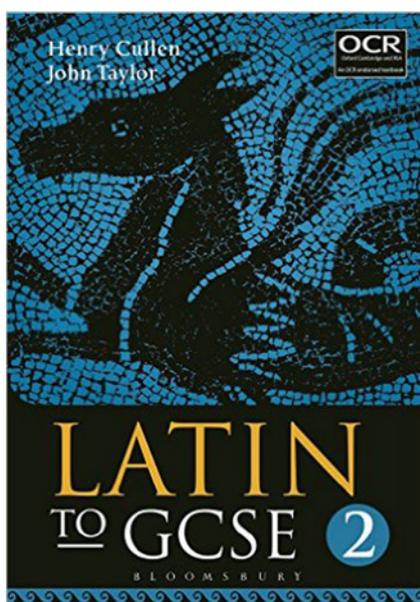
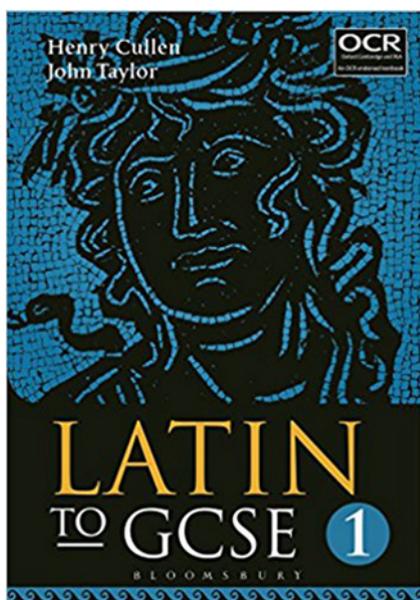
Furthermore, the book contains no help or guidance on any grammatical matter (this is to be supplemented by a teacher presumably). This is perfectly acceptable if the *modus studendi* is made clear by the authors. I might suggest that Latin students who are coming towards the end of Book 2 of the *Cambridge Latin Course*, for example, would be able to cope with the grammatical level and vocabulary here, with some assistance from a teacher regarding the occasional construction that is outside their experience. I also have no doubt that they would enjoy the mythological nature of the story, if for no other reason than that it provides a respite from their usual Latin coursebook.

The presentation of the book itself is also somewhat confusing for the potential purchaser. The A5 size, the tasteful yet cartoonish illustrations that introduce each chapter and the large (24 size?) type-font suggest a basic, step-by-step, easy read akin to a pre-school Ladybird book. This simply does not reflect the actual level of Latin required of the reader. Latin grammar does not become less complex if you put it into a bigger font and stick a picture on the front- if only it did! The logic behind the way words are glossed is also somewhat of a mystery. The occasional word is glossed in footnote form, the majority of words are left to the *Index verborum*, but the footnoted words are included here too, so why bother with these sporadic footnotes? On the face of it this is a minor point, but it reflects a deeper issue here: the lack of a robust thought process and clear communication about how and by whom this little Latin book might be successfully read.

*Rebecca Jones, St. Peter's School, York*

## Cullen, H and Taylor, J

'Latin to GCSE': Parts I & II  
London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016,  
Paperback, £14.99 each  
ISBN 9781780934402 and  
ISBN 9781780934419



These new text books from the Cullen and Taylor stable, and endorsed by OCR, are targeted firmly at those wishing to sit the new OCR specification for GCSE Latin. They aim to take students 'efficiently from scratch to GCSE... without compromising on the fundamentals of grammar'. The authors stress that many of the current alternatives on the market are 'long and unwieldy', 'pay insufficient attention to grammar' or 'cover material outside the

specification that teachers and students do not have time to cover'. We might expect this text book therefore to be quite the opposite: short and manageable, heavy on the details of grammar, narrow and ruthlessly examination-focused. On close inspection however it is actually none of these things, and that is very much a good thing.

Initial impressions of the length of these books (some 650 pages across both volumes in total) suggest a long course time. In actual fact, the accidence and syntax requirements are covered in ten chapters, with a further two chapters at the end dedicated to revision passages, sentences and sample GCSE practice papers. These later chapters, combined with grammar reference and vocabularies, total some 139 pages - virtually half of the second volume. Not only then is this quite a compact course, but the teacher is no longer required to search out and assemble suitable passages for exam-style revision from numerous other sources. It is efficient in conveying the key information with enough opportunity to practise it, whilst also providing plenty of revision material where other texts books tend to be lacking. The length of the 'story' passages for translation has also been designed with a keen eye to the time-constrained (and possibly the concentration span of many students). Volume 1 passages occupy between four and six lines of text, whilst those for the more experienced student, in Volume 2, stretch to 10-12 lines and 16 lines at most.

Grammar is handled in unapologetic fashion; however this time the approach is decidedly conversational in tone. This text book was partly inspired by C.'s tutoring relationships and it shows. The language used to explain grammar is accessible and simple and we are spared detours on 'exceptions to the grammatical rule' seen elsewhere. I particularly enjoyed the respect the authors show for the intelligence of the students. Terminology that describes grammar is explained rather than assuming that students will just accept linguistic labels that are alien to them and get on with it. Grammar formation is also sometimes given a rationale: the authors explain why it is like it is, not just what it is. Care has clearly been taken over setting the scene by explaining the basic fundamentals of Latin first (the alphabet, pronunciation, 'How to tackle a Latin sentence', the absence of the

definite article etc.) before plunging in. These are just the sorts of questions students ask at various points in their Latin career, but that most text books do not tackle directly, if at all. One senses a keen ear to the inquisitive student, as well as a keen eye on the time-constrained teacher. Both of these qualities also make this text book an ideal enabler for self-teaching.

Teachers themselves may appreciate the logic with which grammar and constructions are introduced. Passive participles, for example, are introduced after passive verbs, and perfect active participles after deponent verbs. Indirect statement, a construction that many students really struggle with, is introduced two chapters before revision passages begin, giving them time and practice to master it. The grammar tables, rather than requiring the reader to constantly flip to the back, are presented in full as they are introduced (as well as a grammar reference at the back) and there is a handy revision checklist for the main points covered throughout the chapter and a 'Summary of Grammar' at the end of each. However, the grammar summaries do have a tendency to grow dramatically over the course and by chapter ten the list contains no fewer than 13 elements, ranging from the imperfect subjunctive to verbs of fearing. Presumably by this stage in the course the student can cope with such a large volume of new grammar in one single chapter.

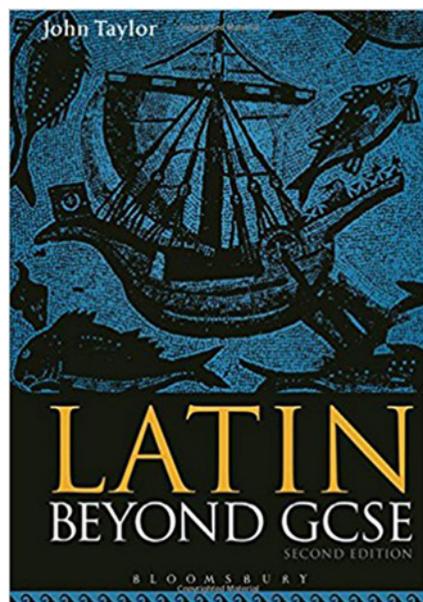
Finally, the book makes no secret of the fact that it is designed to facilitate the shift to the new OCR GCSE specification. The chapter vocabulary lists only cover words from the defined vocabulary list. As new words arise they are colour-coded in blue to signal that they are on the list and need to be learned, but, of course, wider vocabulary is covered. There are five GCSE exam practice papers, 400 practice sentences and 20 practice passages. There is a dedicated section for 'English into Latin sentences', for those selecting this option, listing the restricted vocabulary and grammar as well as 30 additional practice sentences on top of those included within the chapters. There is also an English into Latin vocabulary as well as Latin into English. English into Latin sentences outside the specification are included as 'Stretch & Challenge' opportunities in the second volume. In short, the course makes it clear what you need to know and what you don't to pass the GCSE.

Whilst this text book is a useful and much-needed aid when trying to get one's head around the new specification for the first time, it provides much more than that. I particularly appreciated the choice of paralinguistic material that the Latin 'speaks through'. The reading of Latin should enable us and make us inspired and eager to learn more about the ancient world, its literature, history and culture. The first volume takes us through the stories of the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, the foundation of Rome, Romulus and Remus and the Kings. The second volume continues in chronological fashion, finishing with the Emperor Nero. This is inspiring indeed, and could have been even more so had the publisher invested in better quality print and visual materials to support the content. I imagine there is only so much blue monochrome that even the most dedicated Classicist can take before they crave an ancient world in colour! Something for the second edition, perhaps?

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## Taylor, J

**Latin Beyond GCSE (2nd Edition)**  
pp. 368. Bloomsbury Academic; 2nd Revised edition, 2017, Paperback, £17.09 ISBN 978-1474299831



The author and/or publisher have not taken the opportunity of a revised edition to correct the errors and

shortcomings of the first edition, any more than with the recently revised edition of *Greek to GCSE*. Instead, what we have as far as the content is concerned is the first edition revised only to the extent of certain additions and removals needed to bring it into line with the new OCR specifications (for AS from 2017 (so of limited usefulness for 2017 candidates) and or A Level from 2018). The structure, layout and chapter contents of the book follow closely those of the first edition. The visual presentation of the book, however, has certainly been looked at afresh: the new edition is no longer in monochrome, has illustrations, and is formatted similarly to *Latin to GCSE* and the new edition of *Greek to GCSE*.

This is not to say that the new additions are not welcome, nor that they will not be helpful to users. The first edition already had many useful features tied to the previous OCR specifications (more so than the parallel *Greek Beyond GCSE*), which thankfully have been retained, where appropriate, in this new edition.

Since this review is written principally for readers familiar with the first edition, I shall not rehearse here those of its contents that have been retained; and nothing of consequence has been removed.

As for the additions and changes, these consist of the following:

- Practice passages for AS comprehension questions (comprehension questions were not set in the previous OCR specification for AS).
- Stand-alone practice passages for A Level unseen translation in prose and verse (previously the same passage was set for both comprehension and unseen translation).
- Stand-alone practice passages for A Level comprehension questions (prose only: verse passages also were set previously).
- Tips on translation into Latin of passages (A Level) as opposed to discrete sentences (AS). Candidates (very few of them) can consider themselves fortunate that, on the whole, they no longer have to grapple

with copious differences of idiom in order to translate into Latin - which negates a lot of the value of prose composition, it must be said.

- Practice passages of English for translation into Latin.
  - A guide to the pronunciation of Latin, much fuller than the one in *Latin to GCSE* and linked to the pragmatic guide to scansion.
  - An increase from 250 to 300 words commonly found in verse rather than prose to be learned for help with verse unseen translation.
  - An increase from 1,000 to 1,200 words in the Latin-English vocabulary (about 900 of which are prescribed by OCR for AS, and which are identified in the list by means of asterisks).
  - A section on the potential subjunctive (but see the much fuller and more nuanced account in Woodcock).
  - Short reading passages of AS standard in chapters 1-3 (most of adapted extracts from Latin authors) to illustrate new language material and to revise material already learned. These could be usefully supplemented with groups of revision sentences in Latin arranged by construction, as in *Greek to GCSE*.
  - There is an almost total absence of any kind of background material, not even the kind found in *Latin to GCSE*.
- All of which will be extremely useful both for students and teachers. No other book provides such help.
- What then of the errors and shortcomings mentioned at the beginning of this review? What follows is a selection of ten from those that have gone unaltered from the first edition. (The writer says that he consulted Woodcock's *A New Latin Syntax* (no longer new but still indispensable), but there is little evidence of this. There is certainly evidence that he made use of Morwood's *A Latin Grammar*, which it would have been better for him to have avoided on the whole.)
1. The glossary of grammar terms contains some errors (e.g. 'aspect',

‘agent’, ‘gerundive’, ‘quantity’), omissions (e.g. sentence types, coordinate clause, period, correlative) and terms that could be better explained (e.g. ‘idiom’, ‘mood’, ‘construction’, ‘verb’).

2. There is a confusion between facts and statements or implications of facts in certain constructions, e.g. consecutive, causal and conditional clauses. So, for example, we cannot assume that a result actually occurred simply because the writer uses the perfect subjunctive, or that an indicative entails an actual cause. In all such cases the mood of the verb expresses the writer’s point of view only, his attitude to the facts in question, and the writer may be wrong, inadvertently or deliberately. It must be said though that T. is by no means the only culprit here; we are all guilty. It is a confounding of fact and language that is almost universal, which is odd since there is no obvious connection between facts and language. On the other hand, what do you think that ‘statement of fact’ means? Statement that something is a fact? Statement of something that is a fact? Both (simultaneously)?
3. The present indicative with *dum* (‘while’) is not normally retained in *oratio obliqua* in the earlier part of the Classical period. Lots of other culprits here too.
4. T. seems to think that the primary function of the gerundive is to express obligation or necessity - its main, almost sole, function in Greek. There is no evidence that this was its basic or original function; in fact there is evidence to the contrary. It only indicates such ideas when used with the verb ‘to be’, actually expressed or omitted but to be ‘understood’. T. thinks that it is used to express obligation or necessity when used on its own. It indicates purpose or fitness (the latter was perhaps its original meaning) in certain uses of gerundival attraction, e.g. with verbs of giving and the like. The arrangement of the contents of the sections on the gerund and gerundive give undue prominence to the gerundive of obligation. It would come better last, and after gerundival attraction, which itself seems to follow on naturally from an account of the uses of the gerund - it is used as an alternative to the gerund with transitive verbs and deponent verbs that take the ablative.
5. Again as with *Latin to GCSE*, there is no assistance given with how to answer the types of questions that will be set in the language papers of the exams, except for translation into Latin, which very few candidates attempt. It is possible, I suppose, that such assistance will be given in the form of supplementary online materials.
6. Latin is not an easy language to learn, especially at this level. So it is perfectly understandable that one would want to make it as simple as possible for the learner. But not at the expense of the misrepresentation of actual usage. For one thing, this is not helpful to learners when they have to engage with unadapted texts (but see below my comment on modern editions of texts, many of which are in effect adaptations). The standardisation of the language that resulted in Classical Latin covered a period of some 300 years. Usage was not uniform throughout this period. Grammar books and course books (and certain manuscripts and modern editions of texts) tend to conceal this diversity, a practice that goes back to and is due to the standardisation imposed on the language by the ancient grammarians. To take just a few examples, the subjunctive was used routinely (especially in temporal clauses) instead of and as well as the indicative (and vice versa) in several constructions. The manuscript tradition shows that Cicero used both the subjunctive and indicative, seemingly indiscriminately, in indirect questions; but the grammarians - or some of them: they often could not agree, sometimes with themselves even - knew better than Cicero (how ironic is that?) and prescribed the subjunctive alone. Livy (followed by Augustus) routinely uses a preposition with the name of a town or city. (An OCR candidate who did any of this would be marked down, of course.) But the learner - or teacher - would not be aware of any of this from T.’s book, or from any other course book. It really is time that course books and grammar books told the truth about the reality of Classical Latin and its derivatives - and of their true relationship to non-standard, sub-elite, so-called ‘Vulgar’ Latin. Classical Latin is more of a mosaic than a monolith, and interacting with, not discrete from, other varieties and registers. In the parlance of modern sociolinguistics, it is one of a number of ‘sociolects’ that comprise a single language system.
7. The account of the tenses of the subjunctive used in indirect questions and their correlation with tenses of the indicative in the direct questions is unclear, incomplete and in places incorrect. It also shows a confusion between tense and time. The perfect and pluperfect subjunctive indicate past time but not necessarily the actual past tense used in the direct question, which, if indicative, may be imperfect, perfect or pluperfect. What is needed is a single comprehensive table setting out all the possibilities. This would also be more helpful for English into Latin translation of indirect questions. In fact the tenses used are exactly the same as those for subordinate clauses in indirect speech, which such a table (see point 9) would show at a glance. T.’s account of indirect questions can only confuse and mislead.
8. The sections on concessive clauses and *quin* and *quominus* are much too brief to be of real help. The distinction between factual and imaginary concessive clauses needs to be made more clearly, and *quamvis* does not introduce a type of conditional clause, unlike *et(iam) si* and *tametsi* (the clue is in the *si*). The (many) different uses of *quin* need to be explained; they are not confined to expressions of doubting and preventing. The tenses used need explanation too: they depend on the kind of idea expressed by the *quin* clause (basically, indirect question, purpose, result). Also, there is no section on comparative clauses, though for some reason this may not

be included in the specifications. (Morwood's account of comparative clauses is all at sea.)

9. Subordinate clauses in *oratio obliqua* and conditional sentences in *oratio obliqua* would both benefit from tables showing at a glance the changes, and absence of changes, undergone by the verbs used in *oratio recta*. Showing rather than telling is more useful here.
10. No explanation is given about how the lengthy (32 pages) section of reading passages (all prose) should be used. I think this space would have been better used for a fuller treatment of certain constructions and/or for the groups of revision sentences in Latin mentioned earlier. A teacher could easily provide suitable supplementary reading if wanted.

However, in spite of the imperfections, there is no other book that I know of with the same aims, objectives and (most importantly) examinations-

oriented content as this one. This alone should ensure a ready market for it, as with the first edition.

It should be emphasised that the aims and objectives of the book, though examinations-oriented, are confined to the language requirements of the OCR specifications, i.e. not (directly) to the literature requirements as well, therefore to half of the examinations only. The series of anthologies, also published by Bloomsbury, containing the set texts with accompanying notes and commentaries, is of limited usefulness too in this respect, especially as far as answering the types of questions that will be set on the prescribed texts is concerned. There is no other book either that fills this gap and meets these needs. The only one that came anywhere near this was *Latin as Literature* by Anthony Verity, long out of print and too advanced in any case for present-day A Level students.

To conclude, as I have said, the fact that the book does not have any obvious or natural competitor will in itself ensure healthy sales, if mainly in those parts of the UK and the rest of the

world that use the OCR specifications. It will be less suitable perhaps for students at university doing Latin as beginners or with a GCSE Latin background and aspiring to A Level commensurate with that of A Level at least, and beyond. These would be better served by a fuller, more advanced, sophisticated, nuanced and less error-prone course. Such a course is not generally available as far as I know. As for home learners, these would struggle to prepare themselves for A Level (or AS level) using this course only, even with supplied answer keys to the exercises. And, as I said, this course would not help them directly to prepare for half of the examination requirements; for that a different sort of book would be needed.

It is to be hoped that the forthcoming revision of *Greek Beyond GCSE*, the last of T.'s course books to be revised, will be a proper revision in the full sense of the word. I very much doubt it though.

**Jerome Moran**