Between the introduction and conclusion, the book is divided into eight chapters, each focusing on a period or specific point in Caesar's political career. In chapters two and three, 'The Early Caesar' and 'Caesar's "Entry into History": the Catilinarian Debate and its Aftermath', Morstein-Marx examines Caesar's career before his consulship, which he argues was entirely in keeping with republican tradition: Caesar sought military glory and popularity in the style of Scipionic hero of the past. He revels in dismissing anecdotes which have become embedded in Caesar's story, such as his brief suspension from his praetorship, which Morstein-Marx argues would not have been in the Senate's power (or interests) to enforce, since it would encroach on the right of the People to elect magistrates. As for Caesar's proposal in the Catilinarian debate, Morstein-Marx argues that he was offering the senate a lifeline, anticipating a significant backlash against the condemnation of the conspirators. Chapter four examines Caesar's first consulship, arguing that the optimates' opposition to Caesar's legislation was both short-sighted and far more out of keeping with republican precedent than anything Caesar himself did. Chapter five, 'Caesar in Gaul', discusses the widespread support for and popularity in Rome of Caesar's campaigns, and begins to tackle the thorny subject of the political events leading to the (importantly, not inevitable) outbreak of war in 49, which is continued in the next chapter, 'No Return'. Morstein-Marx's definition of *dignitas* as the prestige and honours given by the People fuels his argument that Caesar was determined not to be cheated of his triumph and upon his return from Gaul by a small clique of indefatigable enemies – in fact, he was upholding the will of the People by defending their 'ancient rights' to bestow upon him his just reward for his outstanding military achievements. Morstein-Marx lays the blame for the outbreak of war squarely at the feet of Marcellus and the small clique of optimates who declared Caesar an enemy of the state in early 49. In the seventh chapter, 'Taking Sides', Morstein-Marx explains that negotiations continued until Pompey left for Greece, undermining the traditional idea that Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon was a decisive moment. He then examines the motives of the men who joined Caesar, concluding that 'Boni aplenty made their way back to Caesar's Rome rather than flocking to Pompey's camp or making their way to the nearest port', demonstrating that Caesar was certainly not seen by many as a rebellious outsider, but as a war hero, who would further their political careers. The title of chapter eight, 'Caesar's Leniency', challenges the typical view of Caesar's *clementia* as an expression of his dominance and tyranny. Morstein-Marx argues that the purpose of Caesar's consistent policy of sparing his captured enemies was to 'win the peace'; he also points out that 'Not a single case is known of a Pompeian rejecting Caesar's offer of leniency when it was given' and that mercy had generally positive connotations. However, most interestingly, Morstein-Marx also explains that this policy created serious problems for Caesar: in sparing and even rewarding his enemies, he left himself fewer ways and means to reward his friends, creating the sort of resentment that contributed to his assassination. The last chapter, 'En-route to the Parthian War', deals with the implosion of the Caesarian party and Caesar's preoccupation with his long-planned Parthian campaign. As works on Caesar's career must eventually do, Morstein-Marx finally turns to the causes of Caesar's assassination, which are explored in satisfying detail. One of the most important, he argues, is that that many of the conspirators resented the offices Caesar allowed them as much as those who missed out, because '*honores* obtained as a personal favour rather than by a judgment of the People were in fact no "*honor*" at all.'

Almost every page of *Julius Caesar and the Roman People* is stuffed full of stimulating arguments, which, when considered together, encourage a thorough rethink of politics in the Late Republic and are likely to spark energetic discussion in the classroom; it is difficult to do its richness justice in a short review. It is a challenging book in many respects, not least its assumption that the reader is intimately familiar with the period. However, Morstein-Marx's thesis is clear from the outset, repeated throughout, and summed up thoroughly in the conclusion, making his arguments accessible to keen sixth formers.

Overall, I would recommend *Julius Caesar and the Roman People* as essential reading for anyone teaching or studying the Late Republic.

doi: 10.1017/S2058631021000830

Horace

Miller (P.A.) Pp. xii + 202. London: I.B. Bloomsbury, 2019. Paper £17.99, Hard £50.00. ISBN: 978-17845 33304

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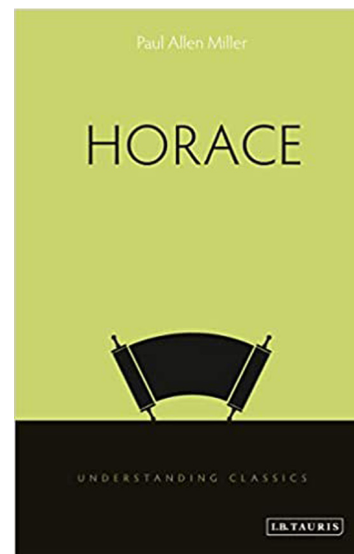

Published as part of the 'Understanding Classics' series, this relatively slim volume at first looks like an introductory work. Indeed, it serves this purpose well, offering a chapter each on the *Satires*, *Epodes*, *Odes* and *Epistles*, but it also seeks to offer 'a fresh reading of these texts' (p. 3).

This fresh reading is evident from the very first page and gives shape to the whole book. Miller sees Horace as having a profound influence on 'our tradition of moral reflection' (p. 3), and a consciousness of what poetry can offer in that moral reflection. Horace is 'the supreme ironist' (p. 1) who, like Socrates, directs our attention to the matters of our lives. Miller takes as a starting point the thesis of Anderson's 1982 essay, 'The Roman Socrates: Horace and his Satires', tracing Horace's irony through the different genres in which he writes and considering the possibilities which are opened up by that irony. In particular, we are invited to see Horace as an ethical poet, whose irony and its attendant dualities create a

https://doi.org/10.1017/S2058631021000842 Published online by Cambridge University Press

space in which the reader is invited to reflect on various questions, from who we are, to how we are to act, to how different spheres of life – the political, the personal, the literary – interrelate. While this main thread of the book comes to a close at the end of Chapter Four, there is also a four-page epilogue which gives a brief sketch of the reception of Horace. The brevity of this history is perhaps explained by Miller's assertion that 'there is no single poet since the ancient world who has captured Horace's unique combination of the pursuit of formal perfection, metrical versatility and a sustained commitment to Socratic inquiry and the care of the self, though many have captured one aspect or another' (p. 183): his focus throughout the work on the idea of Socratic irony means that Horace's successors, who do not generally take up this aspect of his poetry, do not relate much to the central idea around which the book is organised.

One of the delights of this book is the time and attention given to close reading of the poetry. It is through careful reading of the poems that Miller's view of Horace the ironist emerges, but in the course of his analysis many other points relating to genre, theme, literary tradition, and historical context are necessarily introduced and elaborated on, allowing the reader who is new to Horace to gain a sense of the important questions and contexts in Horatian scholarship, and allowing all readers to consider how these points bear on the interpretation of individual poems and Horace's poetry as a whole. For example, in the course of identifying the irreconcilable contradictions and ambiguous nature of *Ode* 1.9 (pp. 88–100) and the structural elements which create the possibility of this ambiguity and irony, Miller also naturally addresses the relationship between Horace's lyric poetry and the Greek tradition. He finds in the phrase *Sabina diota* a metaphor for Horace's poetry: 'old wine (Greek poetry) poured into new Sabine/Italic bottles, or perhaps new wine (Latin poetry) poured into old bottles (Greek lyric metres)' (p. 95). The close reading is also what makes the book a good, if challenging, introduction. Sixth form students in particular might find the discussions of poems provide an insight into what might be taken into consideration when reading Horace's poetry: the flow and structure of the poem; the historical and intellectual context; and attention to verbal detail.

It will be clear from what has been said that Miller does not compromise on the importance of Horace's careful, deliberate choice and placement of words. This is, he argues, poetry which is written rather than oral, having in mind an audience who will read and reread these works attentively, and the verbal structure of these works creates the possibility of the ambiguities which are so fundamental. This means that detailed examination of the Latin text is required. The book is made accessible to a wider audience by the consistent use of translation alongside the original Latin; furthermore, it is written in such a way that a reader who is reading Horace in English can follow details of the arguments about the Latin text, though a handful of more technical explanations of grammar (the discussion of *seria ludo* on p. 35, for example), while helpful to learners of Latin, may be somewhat confusing to those reading only in translation. On the other hand, those who read Horace's poetry in Latin may find it slightly frustrating that a few quotations whose language is not examined in detail are given only in translation. However, these minor points detract little from this volume, which contains much to be recommended to both new and old readers of Horace.

doi: 10.1017/S2058631021000842

The Burning Road

Sidebottom (H.) Pp. 344, maps. London: Zaffre, 2021. Cased, £12.70. ISBN: 978-1-78576-967-2.

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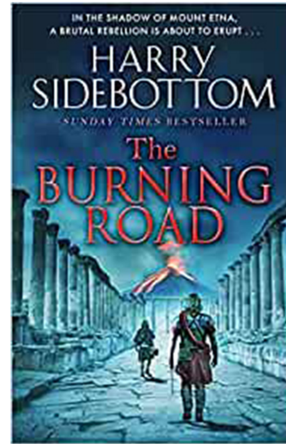

"… a free man … would often think that an Athenian was a slave … for, so far as clothing and general appearance are concerned, the common people here are no better than the slaves …"[1] So said the Old Oligarch about 5th century BC Athens, but the reality of being a slave was not that they were indistinguishable from freemen out and about in the city or countryside. Slaves, for the most part, had no agency and no control over what they wore, ate or did and there were very many of them. One of the reasons the Spartans did not feel comfortable campaigning away from Sparta for extended periods of time was because of the threat from the Helots, the subjugated population of Laconia and Messenia. Slaves might have been useful and responsible for allowing the wealthier classes to pursue activities such as warfare (Sparta) or rhetoric and philosophy (Athens), and we can wonder whether empires such as that of Rome might have been rather different with a non-slave society. In short, slaves were everywhere and the people of an ancient society depended on them for the smooth running of their lives. In *The Burning Road*, Harry Sidebottom tackles the fear of these numerous subjugated people rising up and fighting for freedom, and in *Historia Magazine*, in November 2021, he explained the background to this gripping novel. There were three major slave revolts in the ancient world, two in Sicily in the second century BC and, what is perhaps the most famous of all, Spartacus' revolt in 73-71BC. Sidebottom suggests that the Roman response to Spartacus' revolt was so complete that slaves were wary of reprising the event, but *The Burning Road* is set in Sicily in AD 265 during the reign of the emperor Gallienus, long after this, and the premise is that after the battle of Milan in AD 260, many of the defeated Alamanni tribesmen could have been relocated to Sicily as shepherds. If this were the case then there would be a large groundswell of discontent towards their Roman masters and with the emergence of a charismatic leader (Soter in the novel), the circumstances were right for revolt. Sidebottom knows his history and the detail in this novel is phenomenal. We have clear pictures of seafaring, villa life, the perils of a shepherding life and most of all the dangers of travel in the Roman world. Sicily is a beautiful island, and the people are immensely welcoming, but even now there are moments in the central parts of the island that make you look over your shoulder at the approach of a stranger, and Sidebottom captures these moments in detail. The characters are well drawn – Ballista is a well-known character for those who are familiar with the 'Warrior of Rome' series – but the slaves, townsfolk and shepherds who are met

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