

## BOOK REVIEW

*Tacitus Annals I. A Selection.* By KATHARINE RADICE and ROLAND MAYER.  
London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. Pp. viii+184. Paper,  
\$29.95. ISBN 978-1-4742-6598-0.

A few years ago, the Advanced Placement Latin exam in this country underwent dramatic change. The major effects were that Caesar replaced Cicero as the sole prose author, and there was only one exam rather than the former two. Now the Latin AS and A-level examinations in the United Kingdom are being similarly “brought up to date,” beginning in September 2016, and a special series of texts has been prepared, numbering seven as I write in the month of August. This Tacitus text is one of them. The others are Cicero, *Pro Milone*, Ovid *Heroides*, Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid, Love Poetry, Seneca Letters, and two volumes on Virgil, *Aeneid VIII* and *X*.

The selection mentioned in the book’s title is quite limited, chapters 3–7, 11–14, 16–30, and 46–49. There are some 330 lines of Latin text. The volume is handsome, easy to read, with much white space, but I found that it was not easy to use, and also noted several passages where further commentary and precision could easily have filled some of the available space.

But let me give an outline of what the book does offer. The Introduction is by Roland Mayer, formerly Professor of Classics at Kings College, University of London, who published a splendid text and edition of Tacitus’ *Dialogvs de Oratoribvs* in 2001. His *auctoritas* is constantly revealed in the present introduction, which deals with history, style, grammar, and rhetoric. The commentary and vocabulary are the work of Katharine Radice. Some material has been borrowed from N.P. Miller’s “excellent edition of Tacitus *Annals* 1,” published in 1959, which I reviewed in *CJ* 55 (1959–60) 331–4, my first review for the publication of our Association.

My chief complaint is the absence of line numbers and section divisions, which leads to much wasted time seeking a word or expression in the text. What is needed is what the Teubner texts offer, with the Latin lines of each page numbered

consecutively and each chapter divided into sections. In the present reader, if a word appears at the end of a chapter, one must glance through almost the entire text to find it.

I turn now to specific points. On page 6, there is a very compact family layout of the Julio-Claudians. The linkage of the following four, “M. Agrippa=Julia=Tiberius=Vipsania”, gets very brief mention in the text but needs much discussion to mean anything to a student. On 42, *cassum*, on line 6 of chapter 4, is omitted from the vocabulary; one does find it under *in*. On 47, at the end, *flexo* is missing from the vocabulary. The verb *flecto* is given the participle form *flectum*; the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* has *flexum* as the past participle. On the same page, fourth line from the bottom, *exercitas* is omitted from the vocabulary, nor is mention made of its verb *exerceo* in the note on page 93.

On page 48, at the very bottom, *Nauportus* is not shown on the map. In the commentary, it is placed in modern Slovenia. I suggest a more meaningful location is to state that it is east of modern Trieste. On page 49, near the end of chapter 21, the words *invidiam... iras* beautifully display alliteration and chiasmus, which could have been pointed out in the commentary. On page 51, fourth line from the bottom, appears the word *cum*, which in the commentary appears as *eum*. This is a very difficult passage, beginning with MS problems, but there is no word of this here. Good discussions are in Miller’s text, pp. 148–49, and in F.R.D. Goodyear’s fine edition, *The Annals of Tacitus*, volume I (1972), 227–228.

We move now to the Commentary, which is generally precise and informative, but I often wished that some of the white space of the pages could have been used for more extensive explication. On page 81, late in chapter 12, there is brief mention of Tiberius’ marriage to Vipsania. The entire married life of Julia, leading to her exile and death many years later far from Rome, deserved some considerable treatment. On page 82, mention of M. Lepidus as *capacem* could have invoked the ultimate judgment of Galba in *Hist. I 49, omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset*. On page 107, at the bottom, there is mention of German troops mainly from Batavia, but no hint, and no link, as to location. The Batavi bordered the North Sea.

Despite these notes, I think that the two authors have brought forth a volume which is most attractive, far more pleasing to the eye than many of the texts for the AP program in this country. We have a tendency to pack as much information into a volume which is limited in length by the publisher and therefore many pages appear crammed. I think the book would be improved if Radice added some notes and expanded others, which may involve use of some white space. All in all, a

youngster reading Tacitus for the first time will find time working with this text profitably spent.

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