

his supporter Dolabella, clarifying the Dolabella in question and identifying the specific command and date of the incident. Drawing on other examples of defiance of Sulla by his aristocratic partisans, who had heterogeneous interests and goals, Thein argues that this episode reveals the limits of Sulla's 'power to dictate' and continued political manoeuvring among Sulla's supporters. The section on politics concludes with a chapter by Arthur Keaveney, who focuses on the puzzling remark in Sallust's Speech of Lepidus that Sulla's veteran soldiers, who faced *invidia*, were settled in swamps and forests. Using evidence from Cicero's speeches *De lege agraria* and a comparison with Augustus' veteran settlement, he concludes that a combination of hasty arrangements, fraud on the part of the elite men overseeing the land settlement, and Sulla's waning influence over the later colonies of Volaterrae and Arretium created the scenario described by Sallust. Again, the activities of Sulla's supporters and the practicalities of the Roman system prevented Sulla's plans from unfolding as he anticipated.

The second section shifts its focus from the politics of the late 80s to Sulla's ancient literary reception. In ch. 6, Federico Santangelo undertakes a close reading of Sulla's appearances in Sallust's *Bellum Jugurthinum*. Pairing well with Catherine Steel's earlier chapter on Sullan oratory, Santangelo explores Sallust's portrayal of Sulla's early career and powers of persuasion in the military and diplomatic spheres. Sallust's portrayal of Sulla's talents of dissimulation and trading in favours show him to be of the same cloth as Jugurtha, Rome's wily enemy; it also silently reminds the reader how Sulla will deploy them later against Romans. Ch. 7, by J. Alison Rosenblitt, is an intertextual study of Tacitus' *Annals* and Sallust's *Histories*, focused on her theory of 'hostile politics' (discussed above). She shows convincingly that Tacitus' representation of the relationship between the people and the princeps as one of slaves and conquerors in Book 1 of the *Annals* is indebted to the rhetoric of hostile politics found in Sallust's *Histories*.

The eighth chapter takes Sulla's reception out of a Roman context, as Inger Kuin explores the cultural memory of Sulla's sack of Athens and its relationship with his alleged philhellenism. Using a joke in Aelian about Sulla and philosophers having nothing in common as her jumping-off point, she traces the accounts of Sulla's possession of the library of Apellicon, allegedly looted after the siege. Although Roman sources presented Sulla's philhellenism as appropriate for a late republican elite and saw no contradiction between violence towards Athens and a love of Greek culture, Sulla became known as a rapacious destroyer of Greek culture as Athens grew into a nostalgic cultural symbol for Roman Greeks in the first and second centuries A.D. The final chapter of the volume, by Alexandra Eckert, considers the myth of Sulla as a whole. Eckert looks back at the two formative articles of Umberto Laffi and François Hinard from the 60s and 70s, which argued that Sulla only acquired a negative reputation after Caesar's civil war or the early principate. Eckert shows instead that authors as early as Cicero wrote of Sulla as cruel, tyrannical and unduly violent in the decades after Sulla's death.

Although these two volumes have different aims, they complement one another and point towards new trends in studies of Sulla: a focus on trauma and instability on the one hand, and an interest in a fuller range of consequences of his regime beyond constitutional developments on the other. These books show that the Sullan era and legacy still have room for more work, as scholars continue to think innovatively about his effects on Roman and Mediterranean life. At the same time, many of these papers illustrate the importance of de-centring the 'great man' from the history of his time, as scholars have also begun to do for the Augustan era. Scholars of the early first century B.C. should be capacious when considering not just Sulla's spheres of influence, but also the Sullan era and its politics more broadly.

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SUSAN TREGGIARI, *SERVILIA AND HER FAMILY*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xxi + 378. ISBN 9780198829348. £90.00.

The exercise of biography, with its own inherent difficulties, becomes particularly perilous when the subject is a personality from antiquity, with many essential documents typical of later periods missing. Writing the biography of a Roman woman of the Republic is still more difficult, as

women are only seldom mentioned by male writers and historians. Susan Treggiari nevertheless provides a sound analysis of her chosen subject. Having explored the lives of the women of Cicero's family (*Terentia, Tullia and Publilia*, 2007), she now proposes to dive into a collective biography of Servilia, mistress of Caesar and mother of his murderer Brutus, and her family. This study, relying on a well-known body of literary sources, is not a mere description of the extreme rivalry of the Roman aristocratic clans which turned to be responsible for the collapse of the Republic in the first century B.C. It allows the reader to understand how a woman of high rank like Servilia could not only live as a witness of the events of her time, but also be an actor in events through the influence that a matron born in a senatorial clan could enjoy.

Written in simple, almost conversational language, the book is aimed at non-specialists and specialists alike. It consists of twelve chapters and six appendices, three of which are biographical and prosopographical notes, and a large up-to-date bibliography. The preface and the first chapter present an overview of the mode of government and society of the republican period. This synthesis is designed to provide readers who are not experts with the keys necessary to understand the world in which Servilia lived. The following part consists of eight chronological chapters, beginning with an overview of Servilia's family (ch. 2), then looking at her childhood (ch. 3) and youth, from her adolescence to her marriage and the birth of Brutus (ch. 4).

The next five chapters offer a chronological review of her life, mainly consisting of the marital strategies employed for each of her children; these led to new familial connections, and with them the progressive increase in her clan's power. Here we see that the individual, whether it be Servilia or other women of her family, disappears behind the building of the clan's *gloria*. An exception to this scheme is to be found in her long-lasting extra-marital affair with Caesar, 'the only man with whom she shared a freely chosen relationship of physical passion' (119), which lasted most likely until Caesar's death.

The lack of sources clearly mentioning Servilia before the Ides of March is a problem that T. solves by conveying the wider knowledge available for this period concerning the life of matrons of the aristocracy. Her application of this material to her subject results in a profusion of suppositions: 'She may have ...'; 'There may have been ...'. Trying to reconstitute a person's possible thoughts or actions is undoubtedly risky, as T. is of course well aware. This is where T.'s remarkable labour in searching for possible parallels with women of the English political class and the different treatments of the character of Servilia in English literature (Appendix 5 and 6) comes into play. Bringing to bear undeniable erudition, and never quick to pass off suppositions as facts, T. attempts to compensate for the lack of direct sources by looking for a likely midpoint between what is known of Servilia and what is in general known of matrons of her rank. The result, in some ways reminiscent of the methodology of narrative psychology, is immersive, and undoubtedly constitutes the chief originality and value of this book.

In ch. 10, T. deals with the direct consequences of Caesar's assassination. When the power and the lives of the men of her family, especially of her son, are threatened, Servilia appears in ancient sources showing the ability to take decisions which affect the course of events. Several occasions are mentioned, but T. discusses one of particular interest which shows how much power Servilia could have enjoyed: this is when Cicero reports that Servilia promised to have a senatorial decree altered according to the advantage of her family (Cic., *Att.* 15.11.2; 15.12.1).

The two final chapters develop the reasons why Servilia was able to play such an important role in the social and political life of her time. T. explores how Servilia and matrons in general benefited, like their male counterparts, from the relationships based on influence (*auctoritas*), power (*potentia*) and gratitude (*gratia*) that were characteristic of members of the ruling class. T. reminds us that Servilia was not a woman in the mould of a Clodia or a Fulvia, and while she enjoyed a high degree of influence used with intelligence, she never crossed the line of what was permitted to women, even of her class. In this respect, her actions may find a parallel in those of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, or Iulia, daughter of Caesar (278). For the author, 'the question is not how much *potentia* women could achieve by direct means in public life, but how much *auctoritas* they could enjoy in their lives and in the lives of others' (279). Thus T. succeeds in showing quite how far power and politics were after all a family business, in which women had a profoundly significant role to play.

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