

This book makes an important and welcome addition to the recent tide of Lucretian reception studies, and it will appeal not only to scholars and professional readers, be it of classics or Italian culture. In Italy it will be a resource for all those teaching Lucretius or simply curious about how this poet was and still is relevant and present in our culture.

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CICERO'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY IN ITS REPUBLICAN CONTEXT

SCHOFIELD (M.) *Cicero. Political Philosophy*. Pp. xiv + 285. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. Paper, £19.99, US\$25 (Cased, £65, US \$85). ISBN: 978-0-19-968492-2 (978-0-19-968491-5 hbk).

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Cicero's political philosophy, despite its difficulties, exercises growing fascination. There are several reasons for this: the progress made since the 1970s in our understanding of Hellenistic philosophy; the appeal of neo-Republican thought since the 1990s, associated with Q. Skinner and P. Pettit; the increased awareness that Cicero was, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, the most influential figure of moral and political philosophy in the West; and the gradual realisation that Cicero was, after all, a philosopher (see C. Lévy's *Cicero Academicus* [1992] and R. Woolf's *Cicero: the Philosophy of a Roman Sceptic* [2015]). S. adds further evidence that Cicero deserves the title. The author of the volume on Plato in the same collection, S. is one of the greatest scholars of ancient philosophy alive. Here he does not so much attempt an exhaustive treatment of Cicero's political philosophy as an elaboration of six questions he selects as difficult, debated or understudied, especially in *On the Commonwealth*, *On Laws* and *On Duties*. In dealing with these questions, S. seeks to recover the thought of the historical Cicero from neo-Republican interpretation. Reading S., one is convinced that Cicero was a Republican philosopher, but not quite in the Skinner–Pettit sense; that he was a Roman, not a neo-Roman, thinker. To show this, S. carefully sets Cicero in his Roman context, in terms of ideology, institutions and empire. Much of the book emanates from previous articles, developed in S.'s 2012 Carlyle Lectures; but much is new too.

Chapter 1 sets out S.'s method. The chapter retraces Cicero's life to highlight that he was constantly engaged in philosophy: he kept a Stoic philosopher at home, revered Plato, but was free as an Academic to endorse what seemed most convincing to him. S. stresses the unity of outlook between the various parts of the Ciceronian corpus: there is continuity between speeches, letters and philosophical works. S. makes this point to use speeches and letters as corroborative evidence for the political dialogues he focuses on: but it serves another important purpose. It goes a long way towards explaining the limitations of Cicero's conceptual world, on which S. insists at the end of the chapter. If philosophy influenced the speeches, the ideology that framed the speeches is likely to have functioned as a straitjacket for the dialogues and *On Duties* as well. This notion of limitation is key to understand S.'s project: S. attempts to recover arguments, sometimes

syllogisms, from the dialogues; but he also recognises that Cicero worked from ideological assumptions.

Tensions between argument and ideological limitation appear nowhere better than in Chapter 2 ('Liberty, Equality, and Popular Sovereignty'). Liberty was the cornerstone of Roman Republican discourse, but there was little consensus as to what it concretely meant. S. sides with C. Ando's recent argument that liberty in Rome was undertheorised, in tension with V. Arena's strong thesis (*Libertas and the Practice of Politics in the Late Roman Republic* [2012]) that all Romans shared the same concept of liberty as non-domination, in a sense close to neo-Republican freedom. S. does not give a crisp formulation of Cicero's concept of *libertas* (which is shown, at least, to come in more varieties than non-domination à la Pettit). S. rather demarcates notions Cicero associates *libertas* with, such as *ius* or *iura* (especially provocation and intercession), factions and senatorial participation. As to popular participation, Cicero argues for its restriction. S.'s view of Ciceronian *libertas* ultimately comes close to a view recently espoused by J.W. Atkins ('Non-domination and the *libera res publica* in Cicero's Republicanism', *HEI* 44 [2018]), listing as its three components equal law (to prevent subjection to the arbitrary *libido* of another), a measure of political participation (to ensure good government) and the *dignitas* that both guarantee for each citizen. To his discussion of *libertas* S. adds a compelling treatment of *aequabilitas* (giving everyone their due, not necessarily arithmetic or even geometric equality) and a re-appraisal of his influential 1995 article 'Cicero's Definition of *Res Publica*' (in J.G.F. Powell [ed.], *Cicero the Philosopher*). S. rounds off the chapter by stressing that the definition is based on a legal *metaphor*, although he does not tell us the extent to which the analogy obtains.

Chapter 3 applies the findings of Chapter 2 to institutional matters. According to *Rep.* 1.39, if there is to be a *res publica*, there must be a *consensus iuris*: against the standard interpretation, S. takes the phrase to mean 'a consensus brought about by justice', not 'a consensus about justice'. S.'s main ground for this interpretation is linguistic: the use of the genitive, which he takes to be incompatible with the traditional rendering, 'agreement about law'.

The chapter continues with an analysis of a key Ciceronian concern, the need to foster civic virtue in citizens and leaders. The main texts (*Tusc.* 1.2 and *Rep.* 5.1) are elucidated, but S. does not elaborate on the connection between this and Cicero's focus on institutional arrangements in *On the Commonwealth* 1–3. The question merits discussion: *Rep.* is strikingly bipartite (matters of state in 1–3, civic virtue in 4–6), and B. Straumann (*Crisis and Constitutionalism* [2016]) has made the case that Cicero's well-ordered society owes more to its institutional structure than to any of its members' personal virtue. The chapter concludes by defending the continuity between *On the Commonwealth* and *On Laws*, especially in the place they give to popular freedom (the famous *species libertatis* of *Leg.* 3.39 is interpreted as 'not a mere appearance of freedom, but a symbolic guarantee of true liberty', p. 92). But the tension between Cicero's acceptance of political participation and his commitment to natural law is not dealt with.

Chapter 4 discusses natural law and imperialism. It argues that Cicero's cosmopolitanism is thin: in *On Laws* natural law is limited to the principle of rule by wise *imperium* and the general religious regulations of Book 2, while Book 3 adapts the principle of rule by wise *imperium* to the city of *Rep.* (here S. strikes a middle ground between K.M. Girardet's approach in *Die Ordnung der Welt* [1983], which sees the laws of *Leg.* as natural, and J.W. Atkins's view, which takes them as adaptations of natural law to an imperfect reality). In *On Duties* the extent of cosmopolitan duties is small.

Chapter 5 focuses precisely on *On Duties*. The interpretation it proposes has the merit of reconciling Cicero's Stoic source with his republicanism or cosmopolitanism with

dedication to the city. It argues that the virtues defended in the work are not mere translations of Platonic or Stoic ones; they are those that most securely sustain a Republican civic community. And since it is in such a community that human beings reach their good, these virtues also contribute to the good of humankind at large. Justice, whose foremost place among the virtues S. duly stresses, entails respect for property, because without it the link of *fides* that binds society disappears.

Chapter 6 and the conclusion deal with the place of philosophy in politics. Chapter 6 shows Cicero using the philosophical categories of *On Duties* (44 BCE) to deliberate about events related to the civil war (as soon as 49 BCE), even when these events undermine the basis on which he stands to deliberate (as when the civil war deprives Cicero of his senatorial persona). At the same time Cicero in *On Duties* philosophises in a most contextual way. The conclusion argues that Cicero kept two settings apart: theoretical philosophy on the one hand (including *Rep.* and *Off.*), where Academic *contra omnia dicere* gives itself free rein, and the political arena, where decisions are required (*Leg.* is here the model).

I hope this review makes clear the obvious merits of S.'s contribution. To conclude, I would like to stress the importance of his method. S. uses historical context not only to elucidate Cicero's political philosophy, but also to explain its limits. S. pushes the quest for arguments as far as possible; but he confesses sometimes running into walls. Cicero's political philosophy is that of a Roman Republican, in the sense in which S. convincingly presents it, and this accounts for the limitations noted in the book. But Cicero's embeddedness in the Roman Republic makes his theory not a bit less interesting: after all, as S. stresses, Cicero himself argued for the need for experience to do good political philosophy (*Div.* 2.10).

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LIFE WRITING IN CICERO AND AUGUSTUS

DIEGEL (L.) *Life writing zwischen Republik und Prinzipat. Cicero und Augustus.* (Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 53.) Pp. 379. Basel: Schwabe, 2021. Cased, CHF68. ISBN: 978-3-7965-4229-9.

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The starting point for this slightly reworked dissertation (defended in 2017 in Basel) is the study of autobiographical texts in ancient sources. In Part 1 D. shows how various approaches to autobiography as a genre have led to sociological and literary discussions about the 'origin' of this genre. Her own take is that it is better to avoid the term autobiography altogether for the republican and imperial Roman periods, and she proposes to use *life writing* as a more suitable concept.

D. builds on the work of D.P. McAdams (*The Person. An Introduction to the Science of Personality Psychology* [2009]), C. Ulbrich, H. Medick and A. Schaser (*Selbstzeugnis und Person. Transkulturelle Perspektiven* [2012]) and G.C. Rosenwald and R.L. Ochberg (*Storied Lives. The Cultural Politics of Self-Understanding* [1992]) for her conceptual