



# — Comments and Reviews —

## *Caesar Selections from his* **COMMENTARII DE BELLO GALLICO**

Teachers and students who like the model Clyde Pharr developed in *Vergil's Aeneid: Books I-VI* will be delighted with this excellent textbook following Pharr's format (viii). Mueller's book includes all the Latin and English readings for the Caesar portion of the new AP Latin syllabus effective for the fall of 2012.

Each page with Latin text is divided into three parts: the Latin text at the top, an alphabetically arranged vocabulary below the text, and then running commentary at the bottom. High frequency vocabulary is italicized and can be found on an extensible vocabulary sheet in the back of the book- similar to Pharr's extensible sheet but more useful because of its greater detail and inclusion of idioms. The words not italicized are given in the vocabulary list below the text. When students unfold the extensible sheet and open the book to any passage of Latin text, they will have in front of them all the vocabulary they need to translate the passage. A complete Latin-to-English glossary is also included.

The notes at the bottom of the page mark the greatest improvement over Pharr's work. Mueller has the eye of an experienced and masterful teacher who anticipates where students will run afoul of Caesar's syntax. Intermediate students will learn a great deal of grammar from the notes alone as Mueller carefully leads them, for example, through extended passages of indirect statement. The notes go beyond grammatical explanations to provide a useful commentary on Gallic and Roman customs, people in the story, and elements of Caesar's style and objectives, particularly his tendency to take credit for successes and to assign blame to others for failures. The notes refer the reader to an 84-page grammatical appendix that is not included in the textbook but is available on the publisher's website. Mueller's text also contains a select bibliography, an appendix for figures of speech, and helpful introductory chapters on Julius Caesar (as a politician, general, and author), the organization of Caesar's army, and an overview of the Gallic War.

There are two additional features not found in Pharr. Mueller's book has a clean text of all the Latin readings so that students can test their ability to read Latin without any aids in front of them. All of the English readings for the Caesar portion of the new AP Latin Exam (Books 1, 6, and 7) are conveniently included in Mueller's book, with a short but descriptive title given for each chapter. The translations are from W A. McDevitte and W S. Bohn, *Caesar's Commentaries* (New York: Harper's Classical Library, 1869). The chapters from Books 1 and 6 that have been read in Latin are briefly summarized but not translated in the English section of the textbook; students will not be tempted to use the English translation to help them through the Latin.

A teacher perusing Mueller's text may wonder if Clyde Pharr's model, developed almost a century ago, is the best to follow for a Latin textbook today. Pharr's format does aid the task of translation by alleviating the tedium of looking up words, but is it lively and engaging enough to capture the imagination of today's teenagers reading Caesar? Some recent Latin readers (e.g., *Love and Betrayal: A Catullus Reader*, by Bruce Arnold, Andrew Aronson, and Gilbert Lawall) include questions for class discussions, passages from parallel literature for comparison, key quotations from scholarship, and other aids for teaching.

Mueller's forthcoming *Teacher's Guide* contains teaching aids not found in the student text. The *Teacher's Guide* divides the Latin text into small units (3-8 lines at a time), followed by both Mueller's literal translation and the freer translation of McDevirre. Each unit contains questions for discussion that rest reading comprehension and call for critical thinking. There are questions that relate the Caesar readings to those from Vergil; teachers will find these especially useful. The passage-oriented nature of many of these questions will help prepare students for the passage-based questions on the AP Latin free response section. In addition, the *Teacher's Guide* includes an introduction, a bibliography, and a clean Latin text (without macrons) for classroom projection.

The free response portion of the new AP Latin Exam will include sections on translation and short answers for both Caesar and Vergil. There will also be an essay based on two Latin passages: one passage could be from Caesar and one from Vergil, or both passages could be from the same author. Mueller's text offers outstanding preparation for the translation and for many of the types of short answers that could be asked. The forthcoming *Teacher's Guide* provides excellent questions for class discussion and for preparing students to write the AP Latin essays.

The binding of the hardback textbook is sturdy, and the print is very clear and readable. Macrons are marked throughout. The introduction and notes are at a level appropriate for high school juniors and seniors. Mueller and Bolchazy-Carducci are to be commended for producing such a high quality student textbook and teacher's guide in time for the new AP Latin course.

— Randall Nichols  
Westminster Schools of Augusta, Georgia



The *De Bello Gallico* of Julius Caesar has been a staple of second-year Latin programmes for many centuries. This work, however, is far too long to be covered entirely in one course, and it has always been the task of the professor to determine which books and chapters of the Gallic Wars were to be surveyed. The recent decision to set a syllabus for *De Bello Gallico* in the Advanced Placement Latin literature course has simplified this task immensely. This new students' edition of *De Bello Gallico*, prepared by Hans-Friedrich Mueller, has been issued to address the new AP syllabus.

It is a pleasure to say that Mueller succeeds admirably in this. The presentation of the text has been done according to the pattern of Clyde Pharr's classic edition of the *Aeneid*: the Latin text with vocabulary and notes on each page. Words in the text that the student has met previously are in italic font; the remainder of the words are to be found in the following vocabulary. There are also copious notes on a variety of subjects: linguistic, stylistic, military, and cultural. Furthermore, in addition to a complete glossary of the words found in *De Bello Gallico*, there is also a fold-out vocabulary sheet listing high-frequency vocabulary (which would be those words in italic font). This will prove quite worthwhile for the student who is reading along in the text, so that one will not lose his or her place in the text by having to stop and refer to the glossary or to a dictionary. This work includes, along with the Latin text, English translations of all chapters not presented in the original Latin; this, too, meets the requirements of the new AP Syllabus.

There is a very useful appendix containing the grammatical and rhetorical features used by Caesar in *De Bello Gallico*. This appendix supplements the references to these literary figures that are found in the various footnotes, and helps the student begin to understand the nature of Latin style. Finally, there is a quite complete and highly appropriate introduction containing biographical and literary information about Julius Caesar and his motivations for writing. There is, as well, an informative discussion of the nature and organisation of the Roman army. This helps to clarify for the student the nature and the importance of that institution.

Overall, one cannot recommend this text too highly. It should easily become the essential textbook for second year Latin. It will also be of use at the college level, and be useful for any and all interested amateurs.

— Stephen L. Pearce  
Benjamin Franklin High School, New Orleans



Written by Hans-Friedrich Mueller and edited by Donald Sprague, *Caesar: Selections from his Commentarii De Bello Gallico* is a 414-page compendium presenting unadapted Latin passages from the *Commentarii De Bello Gallico*: Book 1.1 7; Book 4.24 35 and the first sentence of Chapter 36; Book 5.24 48; Book 6.13 20 and the English of Books 1, 6, and 7. *Caesar Selections from his Commentarii De Bello Gallico* includes all the required English and Latin selections from *Caesar's De Bello Gallico* for the 2012-2013 AP\* Curriculum. Features: Introduction includes historical context, an overview of the Roman army, and Caesar as General, Politician, and Writer Latin text accompanied by same-page notes (grammatical, literary, historical, contextual) Of special note is the 'same-page' running vocabulary, the 'pull-out' vocabulary, and the complete Latin-English glossary. Enhanced with the inclusion of an online grammatical appendix, a select bibliography, eight newly-created maps, 19 black-and-white illustrations, and an appendix (Figures of Speech), *Caesar Selections from his Commentarii De Bello Gallico* is an ideal, 'student friendly' text book and curriculum supplement for personal and academic library Latin Language Studies reference collections and instructional reading lists.

— James A. Cox  
Editor-in-Chief  
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