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Romulus and His City: Founding Fathers

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There are a few minor blemishes in the *Classified List* under review. They do not affect its value as a bibliography but it would be well to remove them if a printed edition is planned. In the first place a clear working definition of "Filipiniana" is desirable. The compilers seem to regard as Filipiniana any work about the Philippines, or by a Filipino, or published in the Philippines. This seems too broad a definition for practicality. On the other hand, it does not seem to cover some of the items listed, e. g., n. 926, n. 270.

A table of abbreviations regularly used would also be helpful. There are a number of typographical errors: see for instance nn. 6, 7, 15, 33. There are some incomplete entries, although they are doubtless difficult to complete; thus, n. 15 (publisher), n. 16 (date), n. 39 (date and publisher), n. 143 (prefatory pagination). An explanatory note might make clear certain enigmatic entries, e.g., nn. 201, 2634, 2616.

The entries are arranged by subject under *general* headings but they occur under several alphabets because they are broken down and listed in specific subject order. Moreover specific subject headings are used in the index rather than true subject words. There seem to be no cross references.

But, as said above, these are minor defects in a fine piece of work.

ROBERT J. SUCHAN

ROMULUS AND HIS CITY

FOUNDING FATHERS. By Alfred Duggan. London: Faber and Faber, 1959. 283p.

Rome was not built in a day, as everybody knows. But no one is quite sure when or by whom its first stone was laid. Since the facts were not available even in ancient times, fiction, conjecture, and mythology have had to mingle to fill in the details of the founding of the Eternal City.

Alfred Duggan, no stranger in the art of producing historical novels on ancient Rome (*Winter Quarters, The Little Emperors, Three's Company*), tells anew the story of Rome's birth in his *Founding Fathers*. The kernel of this story is the same as that of Livy's and especially Plutarch's, but the book does more than merely rehash their twice told tale. Rome was originally intended to be a base from which Romulus and his followers could prey on the rich Etruscans across the Tiber River. The little settlement, however, grew by leaps and bounds by opening its stockade to the neighboring Sabines and all the riff-raff and outcasts of the Italian Peninsula. In the

course of the first few years, while preparing for future raids, more farming than pillaging was done, and we witness, under the shrewd and irreligious Romulus, the metamorphosis of this settlement of outcasts from a robber camp into Rome, the future Mistress of the Mediterranean.

Without focusing our attention directly on the legendary King Romulus, the capable Mr. Duggan relates the history of the first forty years of Rome from its founding till the accession to the throne of the second king, Numa Pompilius. He does this by entwining the biographies of four different founding fathers who serve as prototypes of Romans of the future.

First of all, there is Marcus Aemilius who joined the band of Romulus' brigands at the age of seventeen because his father had married a new young wife. Although Marcus was one of the original settlers, he chose an Aemilius as his patron when Romulus divided the settlement into thirty clans. For the next forty years, Marcus Aemilius lived the life of a model client and small farmer in Rome and is an authentic portrayal of the simple Latin peasant so much praised by Horace and the other Augustan writers. Next there is Publius Tatius who came to Rome as a follower of the Sabine King Tatius. The Sabines' influx to Rome was the result of the war fought over the abduction of their daughters by the womenless Romans. Publius having been made a senator upon arrival at Rome took an active part in religious affairs and became a political opponent of Romulus as time went on. The third founding father is an Etruscan exile, Perperna, whose city was destroyed by the Gallic invasion of the eighth century B. C. By a stroke of luck and coolheadedness in the battle for Veii, he turns out to be a hero and is amply rewarded by King Romulus. He thereafter became a senatorial tycoon with his estate and many clients. He will also attempt to use his influence to stabilize the city after the sudden and mysterious demise of Romulus. Macro, the poor Greek from southern Italy, is the final father that is introduced. He turns up late in the story. The furies have given him no peace because he has been polluted by killing his brother. Ironically, Romulus, who was instrumental in the death of his own brother, is the only one who was able to cleanse Macro from his guilt. Perperna takes Macro into his household as a client and henchman in preparation for the struggle that will follow the death of Romulus. In these four founding fathers, Mr. Duggan has combined all the elements that went into the melting pot of early Rome.

Perhaps the details of the evolution of early Roman history were not exactly as Mr. Duggan portrays them, but his story rings true when he describes the factors which were typically Roman and which were largely to account for Rome's role in western civilization. The founding fathers placed great emphasis on the family, and Roman

women, although not emancipated, were treated with much more consideration than ever before. Of special significance too was Romulus' foreign policy which tried to assimilate and content the conquered rather than destroy them. This policy, which with some notable exceptions was to last as long as Rome ruled, is one key which helps to unlock the mystery of Rome's phenomenal expansion.

For the enjoyment of the reader and special interest to the student of classics, Mr. Duggan has given an exceptional authenticity to his novel. Without destroying the charm of the traditional story of Rome's origin, he explains away in a very plausible manner the mythical and preternatural circumstances that surrounded its birth. One, therefore, feels in reading the *Founding Fathers* that he is getting a genuine glimpse into life as it was lived in Italy in the eighth century B. C.

WILLIAM J. MALLEY

HE DIED OLD

KING OF PONTUS: THE LIFE OF MITHRADATES EUPATOR.

By Alfred Duggan. New York: Coward-McCann, 1959.

Most of us who now and then take up a history book to read are already subtly prejudiced in favor of everything Roman, due, no doubt, to the propaganda imbibed by the reading of the classic authors, Caesar, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, etc. At the time of our high school and college studies we tended to take everything at face value. A classic author was to be admired, not criticized; to be revered as an oracle of his age, not to be questioned as to his truth and sincerity. When we campaigned with the mighty Caesar in his conquest of Gaul we cheered at his victories over the Gauls, the Belgians and the Germans and grieved at his reverses. Little did it concern us how the Germans or Belgians felt about the bulldozing Roman general entering their domains, killing their people and destroying their homes and property. So too when Cicero fulminated his curses or lavished his honeyed praise we unquestioningly took sides with his views and forever afterwards branded as villain or hero those whom he had categorized as such. As I said in the beginning: we have been historically biased by our early reading of the classics; biased not only historically but politically, yes, and even in our literary tastes and ideals.

Now here comes a book from the pen of Alfred Duggan, who professes to have a mission to offset a lot of classical prejudices by giving the other side of the picture. In his life of Mithradates he has attempted not only to bring out of historical obscurity a personality truly great, but also to advance some new data concerning what very nearly proved to be a new oriental empire. Before entering upon his