A Different Perspective

The story of popular resistance to wealth and power in ancient Rome. Most historians, both ancient and modern, have viewed the Late Republic of Rome through the eyes of its rich nobility. They regard Roman commoners as a parasitic mob, a rabble interested only in bread and circuses. They cast Caesar, who took up the popular cause, as a despot and demagogue, and treat his murder as the outcome of a personal feud or constitutional struggle, devoid of social content. In The Assassination of Julius Caesar, the distinguished author Michael Parenti subjects these assertions of gentlemen historians to a bracing critique, and presents us with a compelling story of popular resistance against entrenched power and wealth. Parenti shows that Caesar was only the last in a line of reformers, dating back across the better part of a century, who were murdered by opulent conservatives. Caesars assassination set in motion a protracted civil war, the demise of a five-hundred-year republic, and the
emergence of an absolutist rule that would prevail over Western Europe for centuries to come. Parenti reconstructs the social and political context of Caesars murder, offering fascinating details about Roman society. In these pages we encounter money-driven elections, the struggle for economic democracy, the use of religious augury as an instrument of social control, the sexual abuse of slaves, and the political use of homophobic attacks. Here is a story of empire and corruption, patriarchs and subordinated women, self-enriching capitalists and plundered provinces, slumlords and urban rioters, death squads and political witch-hunts. The Assassination of Julius Caesar offers a compelling new perspective on an ancient era, one that contains many intriguing parallels to our own times.

**Personal Review: The Assassination of Julius Caesar: A Peoples History of Ancient Rome by Michael Parenti**

"The Assassination of Julius Caesar: A People's History of Ancient Rome" offers a new, stark interpretation of one of history's most famous events and how history itself is used to cover-up the truth of it. As Parenti has explained it, he isn't simply giving us an account of who did it, but a new explanation of why they did it - and why historians have century after century up to the present day ignored obvious truths surrounding history's most famous assassination. It's a fascinating book. Very entertaining. And Parenti is convincing. I jotted down some notes while listening to a talk by Parenti on his book that should be of interest. Enjoy:

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"I wrote this book about Ancient history and one of the things I discovered is that ancient history is not all that ancient, that it has a currency, that it evokes all sorts of themes. Collingwood once wrote that historians always see history in terms of their own epic, their own time. Now that has a very nice ring to it, that's sort of almost an axiom of historiography that each age redefines the history according to it's own needs. And it's kind of a good anecdote to somebody like Von Ranke who was considered a great historian who said "History is facts" and where do you get these facts from? You get these facts from documents. And where do you get the documents from? You get the documents from the Prussian government. No wonder the Prussian government treated him so handsomely. Gave him a chair at the university. Etc. gave Ranke all sorts of money. He was a total reactionary, hostile to the German parliament. etc. voted an honorary member of the American historical association in the second or third year of it's existence. So- there is that vew- there are those people that are - what's the term? embedded? they insist they are writing totally objective history, what i discovered in my research of the late republic of the roman empire which is roughly say 100 to 40 b.c. what i discovered was that it just wasn't true. they don't all see this differently at all. they all see it exactly the same way. Augustus(?) whenever he opens his mouth about ancient Rome... sounds exactly like Cicero and exactly like Robinson or (?)... they all say the same things about that troubled and incredible struggling period of ancient Rome. He sounds exactly like Gibbon and the same with all the ancients. Plutarch etc. they all same the same. And same with second string despite their differences in time. What
really gets mind blowing is when you read the modern historians -almost all of them say almost the exact same things as the ancients did. So despite the differences in language, despite the differences in culture, in region, in nationality, etc. they all sound the same because _they all share the same class ideology._ They are all gentlemen historians. let me tell you what the issue is, what the problem is -this book "The Assassination of Julius Caesar" is a " *why* done it". It's not a who done it. We know who did it.

Why did a group of Roman Senators assassinate their fellow aristocrats and celebrated ruler. The prevailing view among historians, ancient and modern alike, is that the conspirators the "senatorial assassins were intent upon restoring republican liberties by doing away with a despotic usurper" that is the position taken by almost all historians. Ancient and modern alike. that is ALSO the position of the assassins themselves. I present an alternative explanation. the senate aristocrats killed Caesar because they perceived him to be a popular leader who threatened their privileged interests. By this view, the deed was more an act of treason than tyrannicide. One incident in a line of political murders dating back across the better part of a century, a dramatic manifestation of a long struggle between opulent conservatives and popularly supported reformers. The Roman aristocracy remained forever inhospitable to Roman's democratic element, and Rome' democratic element was the people. that's another issue I'm going to deal with tonight- the way the roman people have been betrayed again and again as "the mob"

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Get the book.

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The Assassination of Julius Caesar: A Peoples History of Ancient Rome by Michael Parenti 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!