

S. HARRISON, *VICTORIAN HORACE: CLASSICS AND CLASS*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. Pp. x+200. ISBN 9781472583918 (bound); 9781472583932 (e-book). £85.00.

In the fourteenth and final book in the Classical Inter/Faces series edited by Paul Cartledge and Susanna Braund, Stephen Harrison examines the nineteenth-century reception of Horace by poets and novelists, classical scholars, commentators and translators. This study of the Victorian reception of Horace builds on previous scholarship such as Norman Vance's *The Victorians and Ancient Rome* (1997), Vance's essay in C. Martindale (ed.), *Horace Made New* (1993), 199–216, and Christopher Stray's *Classics Transformed* (1998), all of which emphasise the prominence of Horace's poetry in the formal education of boys. H. argues that Horace was constructed in the period as an 'honorary Victorian gentleman' (20), and that the use of Horatian allusion in literary texts 'evoke[s] a shared world of masculine elite education and its social prestige' (19). With a few exceptions, some of them fictional (such as the hero of Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*), the appreciators of Horace considered in this volume belong to an influential but relatively narrow spectrum of Victorian society. Apart from the novelist George Eliot and the poet Christina Rossetti, women writers are largely absent, reflecting Horace's relatively limited appeal to readers outside public schools and university by comparison with more widespread responses to Virgil and Homer. While the *Odes*, in particular, were familiar to men who had been educated at public or grammar schools, the association with hours of drilling and construing could stifle the power of the verse, as in Byron's allusion to Horace's *Odes* 1.9 in Canto IV of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. The speaker laments that he takes no pleasure in Horace's poetry, even as the view of Mount Soracte brings the ode forcibly to mind: 'Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so, / Not for thy faults, but mine: it is a curse / To understand, not feel thy lyric flow, / To comprehend, but never love thy verse' (IV.685–8).

The Victorian chapters of this volume are framed by a survey of responses to Horace from the Restoration until 1830 and a concluding section which covers the twentieth century and extends into the present. The timespan of this short volume is ambitious, and the discussion in these sections offers a relatively superficial contextualisation. In the chapters on the Victorian reception of Horace there is more depth, but the number of texts included inevitably renders the space devoted to each one limited. The first of the Victorian chapters is concerned with translations, commentaries and literary criticism, identifying the prudish strategies by which scholars sought to render the misogynistic and homoerotic sections of certain poems suitable for a readership of boys and young men. Criticisms of Horace as lacking in energy and being dependent on Greek literature for inspiration are too easily dismissed here as 'traditional Victorian views' (26). In two chapters on responses to Horace in Victorian poetry and one on the novel, H. usefully enumerates many verbal allusions and thematic parallels. In the first chapter on poetry, H. comments on Alfred Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Arthur Hugh Clough and Edward Fitzgerald. With substantial passages quoted from Horace's text and Victorian translations, there is relatively little space for commentary on the poets' translations and reworkings of Horatian poems. Some interesting observations suggest that a fuller account would be worth pursuing — for example, Tennyson's response to Horace's allusion to a passage in the *Aeneid*, but here the reference is noted in passing as 'a suturing of the two greatest Roman poets' (61). Readers whose interest is captured by this account of Tennyson's allusions to Latin literature can find a more comprehensive treatment in A. A. Markley's *Stateliest Measures: Tennyson and the Literature of Greece and Rome* (2004). Similarly, H.'s commentary on Arnold and Clough usefully supplements recent scholarship published in Volume 4 of the *Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature*, edited by Norman Vance and Jennifer Wallace (2015). H.'s survey of novelists such as Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot and Hardy again offers some telling details which invite more extensive commentary on the significance of Horace for these authors.

There is much to discover in H.'s second chapter on poetry, which engages with a more various collection of poems on Horatian themes, with many of the works discussed written by gentlemen whose pursuit of literary and scholarly endeavours was a recreation from public life. This chapter focuses on humorous modernising reworkings, such as W. M. Thackeray's transformation of the Persian elegance which Horace rejects in *Odes* 1.38 into 'Frenchified fuss' (92). The assumption that Horace's poetry can be easily appropriated to represent the modern world resulted in the creation of such odd parodic hybrids as G. C. Oxenden's *The Railway Horace* and the Anglo-Indian Horace of G. O. Trevelyan's *The Competition Wallah*. This chapter illuminates most

clearly the sophisticated flair with which Horace could be incorporated into the experience of a particular social group, and the extent to which the poetry of Horace was seen to be adaptable to the modern world.

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L. O'HIGGINS, *THE IRISH CLASSICAL SELF. POETS AND POOR SCHOLARS IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. viii + 321, map. ISBN 9780198767107. £65/US\$95.

Discussions of Irish classical learning and hedge schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are, to excuse the pun, a thorny topic. On the one hand, a romanticised image of Irish people learning the classics despite the challenges of penal laws and poverty has emerged, characterised by the historical writings of Daniel Corkery and creative elaborations by Brian Friel. For those seeking a more historical account of this learning, there are challenges arising from a dearth of information based on verifiable sources and the bias of the surviving sources. Add to this mixture issues of class and prestige, and clearly it is a brave scholar who attempts to delve into the entangled world of Irish hedge schools.

This is the task that O'Higgins sets herself in *The Irish Classical Self*, in which she assembles a vast array of sources which provide various angles of investigation into Irish classical learning. Ch. 2, for example, discusses the availability and circulation of Greek and Latin texts in Ireland; ch. 4 considers eighteenth-century institutional reports, mainly from religious sources; ch. 5 addresses accounts by travel writers and other narratives on schools and scholarship, while ch. 6 looks at nineteenth-century educational reform and government reports on education in the early nineteenth century. Other chapters examine poetry in the Irish language and the transmission of classical thought in eighteenth-century Irish manuscripts. The accumulation of individual examples and snapshots from such a variety of sources throughout the seven chapters results in a vast and varied compendium of references to classical learning in Ireland. O'H. has done an admirable job in gathering together an impressive range of clues and hints, approaching the topic using a variety of methodologies in order to obtain a more complete picture of what she terms 'the Irish classical self'.

This book is at its best in presenting Greek and Latin as part of a complex history of linguistic interaction in Ireland, showing how the languages could connect the country with many communities of its past and present. In studying multiple languages and their intertwined expression, the author highlights the importance of moving beyond the Irish/English binary and, for example, seeing how Latin was important for training and links to Europe, and how Irish and Latin could be allies in learning and in national sentiment. The many examples of textual intermingling between Irish, English and Latin (and to a lesser extent Greek) show the interplay and influence between the languages and their co-existence in educational, artistic and historical settings.

The subtitle of the book is 'poets and poor scholars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' and it sets out to examine classical learning amongst 'non-élite individuals'. Given this focus, it might be expected that some time would be spent on defining what is meant by non-élite. Unfortunately this is not the case, and a large semantic range of terms is used for this 'non-élite': at times the author refers to the 'poor' but other terms include 'relatively poor', 'modest ranks', 'lower ranks', 'humble background', 'peasants' and 'the humbler walks of life'. The presence of a Catholic middle class in Ireland (the main recruiting ground for future clerics with a foundation in the classics) must complicate the picture and should warn against using the word 'poor' to encompass all apart from a wealthy elite. When Holmes noted 'good Latin scholars' among Kerry 'peasants' (123), what did he mean by this term? Are these rural labourers? Or land-holding middle classes?

Appendix D provides valuable statistical information derived from the 1834 returns of the Second Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction about schools where the classics were taught. O'H. has placed asterisks beside schools which she has classified as potentially teaching children