

The concluding chapter, 'A Classical "Revival"?', reiterates the highly politicised context against which Heaney's, Longley's, Mahon's and Boland's poems must be read, and highlights synergies and discrepancies between the poets' relationships with and use of the Classics in their work. I. closes by providing a survey of contemporary Irish poets currently producing work that engages with the Classics, including Peter Fallon, Theo Dorgan and Peter McDonald. This volume complements and builds meaningfully on its predecessors, W.B. Stanford's *Ireland and the Classical Tradition* (1976) and B. Arkins's *Hellenising Ireland* (2005). A small portion of the material covered, particularly in the second and third chapters, is necessarily well-trodden ground (an inevitability when dealing with writers like Yeats and Heaney), but the book's detailed critical exegesis and firm grasp of historical, literary and classical contexts will be of great value to scholars of classical reception and contemporary Irish poetry alike, and I.'s perceptive, often original insights into several of the poems and plays make a meaningful contribution to the field.

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## THE SEA AND ITS PERCEPTION

ROVIRA GUARDIOLA (R.) (ed.) *The Ancient Mediterranean Sea in Modern Visual and Performing Arts. Sailing in Troubled Waters*. Pp. xvi+325, ills. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018. Cased, £90, US\$122. ISBN: 978-1-4742-9859-9.  
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With its compelling title and evocative cover image, this volume promises a fresh look at a subject of enduring, and deserving, scholarly fascination. The sea already furnished a language of critical analysis to Hesiod when he lamented his single sailing from Aulis (*WD* 650–1). The archaic poet's famous repudiation of seafaring likely drew on a robust tradition long accustomed to casting poetry and performance in the language of the sea, and the confluence of sea and song continued to be developed in subsequent centuries, resulting in an almost unimaginably variegated and entrancing complex of artistic self-reflection. The volume under review here, unfortunately, conveys little sense either of the richness of our ancient source material or of the potency of the ancient Mediterranean as a vector for modern reception. Far from presenting a vibrant new perspective on this most versatile of topics, the fourteen chapters collected by Rovira Guardiola deliver a hotchpotch of arguments often only loosely connected to the volume's purported theme. The individual chapters raise questions of their own, some worthwhile, others less so, but there is almost no consideration, overt or otherwise, of the significance of the volume's organising theme. I was left with little sense of why these specific pieces should be collected in a single publication or of the various authors' particular interest in the overarching theme of the volume, except in so far as it relates tangentially to research already undertaken.

Although the individual contributions present their own problems, it is the deficiencies of the volume as a whole that I found most striking. Foremost amongst the shortcomings in this regard is the limitation of the volume's range with respect to both ancient and modern materials. One hardly expects exhaustive coverage in an edited collection, but there is some

distance between a comprehensive treatment and myopic provincialism, and this volume unquestionably tends towards the latter. With regard to ancient sources, all but one chapter focus exclusively on Graeco-Roman traditions. Examples of 'modern' reception are similarly narrow, taking up instances of Western-European visual and performing arts in nearly every case (with the exception being twentieth-century Hollywood cinema). Such Euro-centrism might well be unremarkable in a differently themed volume, but it sounds jarringly off-tune in light of the emphasis that the sub-field of Mediterranean studies has consistently placed on the inland sea as a means of cross-cultural contact, a fluid channel for the transfer of goods and knowledge between the many peoples of Europe, Asia and Africa who have been and continue to be linked by this distinctive body of water.

The desire to understand the Mediterranean, ancient or modern, as a space shared by a multitude of peoples is not merely an academic stance. It has political implications which will hardly be lost on those with even a passing understanding of the region's colonial and post-colonial history. Many recent collections in the field of Classics have sought to respond to this desire to better understand the continuities and contacts between peoples of the Graeco-Roman world and those of the many other Mediterranean cultures alongside whom they sailed. Given that Rovira Guardiola's volume is positioned within a scholarly sub-field that is practically synonymous with such an inclusive outlook, it is especially disappointing that no such attempt has been made here. I say this not to impugn the politics of the editor or her contributors. Indeed, many authors express their heartfelt awareness of the thousands of men, women and children who have lost their lives in recent decades attempting the perilous passage across the sea to Europe. But the repeated acknowledgement of how the Mediterranean – even now – stands as an all-too-literal emblem of European indifference to the suffering of those less charmed Mediterranean nations seems to have had little effect on the content of the volume itself.

A second, less acute shortcoming of the volume stems not from its content but from the often superficial treatment of the sea itself, whether ancient or modern. Again, one hardly expects contributors to march in lock-step in a volume of this sort. Nevertheless, there is a marked absence of reflection, overt or otherwise, on the characteristics that might distinguish the reception history of the ancient Mediterranean from, say, that of ancient sport or ancient misogyny. This is not to suggest that any edited collection must be equally and thoroughly theorised. But in light of this volume's indifference to the primary concerns of Mediterranean studies, the lack of any countervailing theoretical framework, however indefinite, is noteworthy. The absence is felt not only within the volume as a whole, but in many of the individual contributions. With a few notable exceptions, such as Q. Broughall's compelling analysis of Lawrence Alma-Tadema's seaside settings or S. di Carvalho, E. Cação and A. Seïça Carvalho's discussion of their therapeutic work with children in Coimbra, Portugal, little attempt is made to consider how the lens of the sea offers a particular perspective on the intersection of ancient and modern. Thus F. Ugolini explores early-modern depictions of the Roman ports of Ravenna and Rimini without any detailed discussion of the maritime history – ancient or modern – of these two cities. F. Salvador Ventura explores the production history and box office success of Manuel Mur Oti's *Fedra* without ever addressing the significance of seafaring in Franco's Spain, exploring Oti's influence on the (similarly?) nautically themed 1962 Jules Dassin adaptation or, for that matter, seeming to distinguish between Euripides and Seneca. In concluding his treatment of the Spanish reception of Phoenicians and Carthaginians, A. Duplá Ansuategui simply notes that, despite the Phoenicians' traditional characterisation as model seafarers, 'if we consider their representation in paintings, drama or music within Spanish cultural history, this maritime aspect fades into the background' (p. 223). Apparently, such a finding merits no further explanation or discussion. Particularly frustrating was the almost complete indifference to either twentieth-

century socio-political history or the technical history of television- and film-making in M.S. Cyrino's treatment of three modern screen depictions (or, in one case, non-depiction) of the battle of Actium.

I will forego a point-by-point discussion of each contribution, many of which will appeal to admirers of the catalogue form. I learned, for instance, that there was a pornographic film adaptation of the *Odyssey* entitled *Ulyses* released directly to the home video market in 1998 (unfortunately no further details are given). The few standouts include M. Benoît Carbone's at times quite personal reflections on the intersection of myth and history along the strait of Reggio and Messina; Broughall's treatment of Alma-Tadema, noted above, which sets the artist's commercial success amongst British Victorians within a well-detailed matrix of Imperial maritime trade (ancient and modern) and the Grand Tour; and S. Fornaro's discussion of the 2010 German theatre experiment 'Odyssee Europa', and in particular the destabilising effect of Emine Sevgi Özdamar's contribution to the multi-authored project.

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## CLASSICS IN NEW ZEALAND

BURTON (D.), PERRIS (S.), TATUM (J.) (edd.) *Athens to Aotearoa. Greece and Rome in New Zealand Literature and Society*. Pp. 361, b/w & colour ill. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2017. Paper, NSD\$40. ISBN: 978-1-77656-176-6.

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Classical Reception Studies are somewhat of a zeitgeist in contemporary media, where discussions on afterlives of Greek and Roman authors and artists have raised issues around cultural elitism and one-to-one equations between 'Classical inheritance' and 'European civilisation'. Explosive reactions to S. Bond's recent article on modern reception and perception of polychrome in ancient Greek and Roman statuary perhaps, more than anything else, highlight these perceived equations between cultural elitism and the Classical world (S. Bond, 'Whitewashing Ancient Statues: Whiteness, Racism and Color in the Ancient World', *Forbes* [April 2017]). Studies in Classical Reception often ask the reader to move away from a fixed, neat and tidy trajectory that traces the lineage of Greece and Rome through Europe and the United States towards a diverse and complex, ever-shifting, interplay of cultures (see e.g. J. Porter, *A Companion to Classical Receptions* [2007], pp. 474–7). Nevertheless, addressing the complex interaction between the Classical world and diverse cultures is not an easy task that, to paraphrase the editors of this volume, is filled with pretensions, impositions and frictions (p. 7).

Stemming from a 2014 conference of the same title, this volume brings together artists, poets and historians with the goal of confronting the relationship between ancient Greek and Roman culture and contemporary New Zealand. Divided into five thematic sections ('Writers and Artists', 'Visual Arts', 'Myths', 'Poets' and 'History & Society'), the volume comprises fourteen essays. At first glance, it can appear as if there is no overarching thesis woven through the essays, that they stand alone as loosely-bound, well-conceived