

The *Aeneid's* palpable relevance to the present day is evident in the chapter 'Empire and Nation', where H. reminds us of the *Aeneid's* crucial rôle in the invention of the European myth of Empire, not least by his reference to Enoch Powell's invocation of the *Aeneid* in his 'rivers of blood' speech in his warnings against immigration. The theme of empire acquires a spiritual dimension in the following chapter, which looks at the way in which the *Aeneid* was, from very early on, appropriated as a Christian work. Such a dimension serves to deepen the melancholy and nostalgia that is so fundamental to Virgil's work: 'His Arcadia is not only a midway-land between myth and reality, but also a midway land between the ages, a here in the beyond, a land of the soul that is longing for its distant home' (145).

A more earthly myth of the ideal home, of a 'new world' is examined in 'The *Aeneid* and New Worlds', a chapter that is again astonishingly broad in its sweep of references — from Camões' Portuguese epic, *The Lusads* (1572) to Girolamo Fracastoro's account of Columbus' voyage, alarmingly entitled *Syphilis* (1530), to Allen Tate's account of 'playing the American abroad' in 'The Mediterranean' (1932). The more playful dimensions of Virgilian reception are also explored in 'Parody and Burlesque', a chapter that begins by looking at Ovid's playful receptions, but also offers colourful accounts of Swift, Scarron and Cotton. This chapter is especially valuable for its reminder of the ludic and scatological writings that have responded to Virgil's work, since it is all too easy to equate Virgil and his afterlife with the melancholy, wistful figure of the Hadrumetum mosaic.

No overview of Virgilian reception would be complete without an account of his importance to visual culture — not just painting and sculpture, but also garden design, as a visit to Stourhead reveals. H. has, necessarily, had to be selective in the artists he mentions, but his comments on Claude and Turner are especially illuminating. The book closes where it began, with an evocation of Ovid in America, as H. discusses the work of Thomas Cole who founded the Hudson River School of painting. It should be noted that the book as a whole is enhanced with lavish illustrations.

One of the many fine qualities of this marvellous book is the light-touched erudition with which H. is able to analyse works from antiquity, from the Renaissance, from the present day. His discussion of Shakespeare is especially fine. My quibble arises from this, and is a churlish one — it is the frustration of ending each chapter and wanting more. H. has achieved a remarkable feat in this survey of Virgilian reception from antiquity to the present day in under 90,000 words, but his readers will wish that he had not been constrained by length.

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R. GASKIN, *HORACE AND HOUSMAN* (The New Antiquity). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. xi + 266. ISBN 9781137366160. £59.00.

Although Horace and Housman share fame primarily for their lyric poetry, they have rarely been discussed as a pair, and naturally so: setting aside the temporal, cultural and linguistic gulfs that stand between them, the Roman has typically been read as a jovial and candid figure, far removed from the morose and reserved Englishman. This study aims 'to bring out unnoticed or underestimated similarities between the two' (ix), a synthetic task that is rendered more feasible by restricting Horace's poetry to his *Odes*; as for A. E. Housman (1857–1936), both collections published in his lifetime — *A Shropshire Lad* (1896) and *Last Poems* (1922) — are analysed alongside his various posthumous works (*More Poems*, *Additional Poems*). Although Gaskin acknowledges previous work on classical echoes and themes in Housman's poems, he seeks to do more: 'we need to graduate from stamp-collecting to physics: we are in search of the spirit, not (merely) the letter' (15). This lofty aim is occasionally realized but predominantly the 'spirits' of the two figures remain more distinct than alike; what common traits are found in the two poets can usually be discerned in a far broader range of ancient and modern writers.

Despite its specific focus, this book introduces 'The New Antiquity' series, whose professed aims encompass *Altertumswissenschaft*, the subsequent two millennia and more besides (iii). It is therefore difficult to categorize this book (and indeed its envisaged readership): fundamentally it is a work of literary criticism rather than a study of reception or the lyric tradition, but G. seeks to correct perceived faults in modern literary scholarship. The introduction (1–16) outlines his particular ambitions: the reconstruction of a poem's biographical context and a positivist belief in its 'real meaning', one fixed at the time of composition and accessible to its contemporary readership.

The subsequent nine chapters are thematic: four treat both poets together (2: ‘Pessimism and Pejorism’; 3: ‘Spring and Death’; 7: ‘Questions of Integrity and Consistency’; 8: ‘Form and Content’), two Horace specifically (3: ‘Horace’s Attitude to Religion’; 6: ‘Horace and Politics’), and three Housman specifically (5: ‘Religion and Politics in Housman’; 9: ‘Housman, Literary Criticism and the Classics’; 10: ‘Housman’s Criticism of Horace’). The author-specific chapters tend to be the most rewarding, since the theoretically attractive unification of the two authors in a single discussion proves practically difficult: although G.’s introductory chapter emphasizes the importance of reading each poetic collection as a whole, the book tends to proceed via close readings of individual poems.

In ch. 2 (17–41), G. demonstrates that melancholy lurks within the traditionally jocund lyrics of Horace, commonly conveyed through natural imagery, which aligns him with the more obviously ‘pejorative’ verse of Housman. Ch. 3 (43–61) tackles a similar strain of poetic expression, the themes of springtime and death, in which *Carm.* 4.7 and 1.4 are especially well handled, although G. implausibly suggests (55–6) that the two poems could have been composed simultaneously.

Ch. 4 (63–75) makes a convincing case for doubting the sincerity — if that is not an anachronism — of Horace’s religious devotion, deflating in particular the theological importance that has often been attributed to his ‘first hymn to Mercury’ (1.10). (Ch. 5 is purely Housmannian.) Ch. 6 (91–115) treats Horace’s politics, although with less satisfactory results: the binary account of the ‘personal’ and ‘political’ (99–100) is laboured and Horace’s self-presentation is not set in sufficient context with the other ‘Augustans’; nevertheless, G. plausibly suggests (101–5) that the last poem of Horace’s *Odes* (4.15) displays ‘double irony’ and a ‘deliberate inconsistency’, a *recusatio* steered by Apollo into panegyric, closing ambiguously with Venus. Such themes lead into ch. 7 (117–45), which tackles poetic integrity. G. claims for Horace political, but not moral, sincerity: that may be, but his arguments (on *Carm.* 2.7, at 121–8) that Horace both had to mention his Republican past and do so light-heartedly fail to convince. More of the Horatian corpus here requires consideration. Ch. 8 (147–72) argues that poetic form and content are not in conflict: here G. is much stronger when treating the verbal arrangement of Horatian lyric rather than its metrical form and inheritance.

The closing section of the book, focused upon Housman, is the least successful. In ch. 9 (173–97), G. is vexed by his (in)famous separation of textual and literary criticism. Housman did indeed profess that true literary critics were vanishingly rare (and that he was not one), yet G. prefers to suppose not that Housman’s conception of ‘literary criticism’ was much more specific and rarefied than the modern term, but that he ‘has not thought’ (177) and is ‘stupid or dishonest’ (189). Yet almost any of Housman’s textual notes reveal that literary criticism (in its usual sense) went hand-in-hand with textual criticism for him as for any competent critic. Ch. 10 (199–222) directly addresses Housman’s treatment of Horace, incorporating his lecture notes preserved in Cambridge. However, the disparaging conclusions drawn are puzzling: few careful readers of Housman’s scholarship could assert that he ‘was less interested in educating his readers than in crushing them’ (203), ‘refuse[d] to have anything to do with literary criticism’ and favoured the much-maligned ‘palaeographical method’ (207).

Certainly, G. does have valuable contributions to make to understanding Horatian and Housmannian lyric (and his detailed interest in textual problems is refreshing): his close readings are often illuminating, if at times dogmatic. One wonders, however, whether a more suitable vehicle for his studies could have been found. The bibliography covers a good range but does not include the collected volume *A.E. Housman: Classical Scholar* (2009). As a note to the series editors, it is regrettable that the longer endnotes could not have been presented as footnotes.

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M. T. DINTER, *ANATOMIZING CIVIL WAR: STUDIES IN LUCAN’S EPIC TECHNIQUE*.  
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9780472028719 (e-book). US\$65.00 (bound).

In his Introduction, Dinter distinguishes himself from previous scholars who have ‘exclusively addressed’ issues of politics and ideology, source criticism and the influence on the poet of