



Traditions and Contexts in the Poetry of Horace, edd. Tony Woodman and Denis Feeney. Cambridge University Press, 2002. ISBN 0-521-64246-9. Pp. x, 272.

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This collection of essays, in the tradition of *Homage to Horace* edited by S.J. Harrison (Oxford, 1995), addresses itself to selections from all of Horace's genres; four of the twelve pieces are concerned with aspects of the *Odes*. Others present comment on an epode, the *Satires* in relation to Augustan poetry, the *Carmen saeculare*, themes in *Epistles I*, and passages in *Epistles II*. An essay on the poet's birth and death dates, and an epilogue round out the collection.

Not only scholars but also upper-level students of Latin are envisioned as its readers. The latter group will find the collection particularly useful as a repertory of questions that can be addressed to Horace's works out of an awareness of current historical, political and literary-critical concerns. Very few translations are offered, so "upper-level" will mean just that.

The editors have done well in incorporating into various essays references to others in the volume, thus highlighting and contrasting overarching themes and approaches. The fourteen page bibliography of works cited is a valuable and up-to-date *accessus ad auctorem* in itself.

Arnold Bradshaw re-addresses the questions of establishing Horace's birth and death days. After a careful survey of the complicated evidence, the year 64 for the birth is upheld, and after much argument in regard to *Carm.* 3.28 concerning the alternative dates for celebrating Neptune, the month of December is arrived at. Suetonius' date of death

for Horace, 27 November 8 BCE, at age 56, is upheld as probable, even if one cannot be as sure of this date as one is of the birth. This summary may seem dry, but the discussions whereby these conclusions are reached shed fresh light on not a few implications of the poems traversed.

Ian M. Le M. Du Quesnay writes on *Epode 1* and *Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur* reveals many of the implications of *amicitia* in general, and Horace's dramatic transaction of it with Maecenas, providing as well an example of what friendship means in the circle of Caesar and Maecenas at a time of uncertainty and danger, together with an exploration of duties and obligations in time of war.

James E.G. Zetzel begins his presentation of Horace's *Satires* in relation to the development of Augustan poetry with the dream of Quirinus in I.10. Horace's aim in the 30's included making sure his generation not appear as pendant to the preceding one; hence his attitudes toward neotericism recognized that Callimachean values brought with them in many cases moral and ideological difficulties. For Zetzel, the *Satires* and their critique of one type of Alexandrianism, the neoteric renegotiating of Callimacheanism, afford the critic the opportunity of constructing a somewhat different background to Augustan poetry. For the *Satires* use Roman poetry in its earlier phases instead of following the Alexandrians in their use of archaic Greek poetry, and otherwise use the Alexandrian oblique to examine issues of contemporary relevance to Rome. Zetzel's contrasting of Horace here with Vergil in the *Eclogues*, his points about Propertius I and Persius' first satire, all make his revisiting the question of Horace's use of Callimachus to deconstruct some of that poet's points a rich experience for the reader.

Tony Woodman likewise confronts the lyric Horace with predecessors, in this case Catullus and Greek lyric. Horace's references to Aeolian (or Lesbian) poetry are to be construed to include Sappho as well as Alcaeus, as many commentators have noted. Catullus' literary gender-change of persona (e.g. 63) entailed directing the Latin literary world to Sappho herself, and Horace's claim to imitate him as well as Alcaeus allows him access to the dual-gender stance, but not in terms of self-portraiture.

Alan Griffiths confronts Eduard Fraenkel's assessment of Book One of the *Odes* as having three poems too many: an "overflow". Griffiths ingeniously slims the book down to 35 poems by making 16 the overture to 17, and sees 26 and 27 as one continuous poem; in this view

of course there remain no adjacent poems in the same meter in the book. This holds true also for the Roman Odes, perceived as one great canto. Thus Book Three has 25 poems, Book One 35 poems, and Book Two keeps its twenty poems: hence the *Odes* like Vergil's *Eclogues*, Tibullus Book One, Ovid's *Amores* Book One in its present form, and that work's third book with fifteen poems, etc., is made up of multiples of five and ten poems. Horace according to this arrangement adheres to the early Augustan principles of book construction. *Epodes* and *Satires* Book Two evidently march to a different drum.

R.G.M. Nisbet addresses detailed and learned criticism to *Odes* 3.21, the wine jar. He moves from a highly nuanced and detailed examination of Messala Corvinus' political circle to showing exactly how Horace tacks around Messala's strong personality with its pronounced tastes, expectations, political and military moves, and his individual quirks. An interesting possibility is that Horace saw in the recent *Panegyricus Messallae* an excellent example of how not to praise the conqueror of Aquitania.

Ellen Oliensis addresses the subject of hair in Horace: knots, hair accompanied with garlands, *nodus* as "the tight coil of the finished poem," tresses in flight as well as bound up, long-haired boys, "feminine" endings (not meaning weak here!), and finally Horace's receding hairline (*Epistles* I.7) with its attendant problem of renegotiating his lost youth in such lyrics as 4.3. Her gathering together the strands of Horace's use of hair as a closural motif opens our eyes to another gendering issue in this poet.

Alessandro Barchiesi in "The Uniqueness of the *Carmen Saeculare* and its Tradition" addresses the reasons for the poem's being condescended to for a long time, and confronts the generic aspects of the text. He sees it against the paean tradition in Greek culture, though Horace of course brings the double chorus of boys and girls out of books (e.g., Catullus 34, Horace's own *Odes* I.21) right into the new Augustan *Ludi*. The Horatian text is read as in dynamic tension with the Greek genre of the paean. "Viewed thus, the poem is a meditation on the unique status of Rome vis-à-vis Greek culture, as well as a self-reflexive utterance about the position of poetry in Roman society." The poem is one of a kind: a Latin paean.

Kirk Freudenburg addresses the first book of *Epistles* seeing it as setting about finding a way not so much to refuse in the *recusatio* mode as to find a way to fulfill Maecenas' and his public's expectations for more lyric poems, and as well a way to negotiate the expectations the

princeps has about being included in a book of letters to this poet's friends and also Augustus' desire to have Horace as a helper in the composition of the imperial correspondence. Horace emerges as a second Pindar having responsibilities for finding favor with the powerful. Much attention is directed to *Epistles* I.19, where Horace emerges, like Augustus himself, as both leader and follower.

This same book of letters is the subject of John Moles' learned presentation of Horace's philosophical poetry and its engagement with the tensions, ambiguities and problems of public life and public friendships with Maecenas and Augustus. Moles sees Horace's first book of letters as not only constituting a coherent if fitful philosophical text but likewise enacting many of the problematics of writing philosophy. Horace's political acumen is seen in his not flinching from allusion to a high cost of the regime of Augustus: the death of men of true *uirtus* (16).

Michele Lowrie continues the confrontation of Horace and Augustus by introducing Cicero into the arena as another poet with a philosophical bent. Her primary area of operation is *Epistles* 2.1. If philosophical activity can remove us from concern with the tension between poetry and politics, republic and principate, then Cicero can function as an exemplum for both poet and *princeps*. Horace is in yet another way tied firmly to the political and social fabric of his age.

Finally Denis Feeney casts welcome light on the Epistle to Augustus, seeing it against a richly articulated background of Horace's poetry, the evolving principate itself, and the traditions of literary history in Greece and Rome. Cicero again is seen as providing a framework for discussing literary history, though here Horace's focus is persuasively presented as his own poetry in Augustus' own Rome. The entire discussion is helpfully nourished by a wide awareness of modern literary and critical writing.

Woodman and Feeney are to be commended for persevering in bringing this collection to fruition under what appear to be difficult circumstances, akin perhaps to herding cats, as they saw contributors switch and veer from assigned subjects, and make late submissions (p. ix). Nevertheless the results are gratifyingly coherent, comprehensive and clearly expressed.