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**Stephen Harrison, Victorian Horace: Classics and Class. New York and London: BloomsburyAcademic, 2017. Pp. 217. Cloth (ISBN 978-1-4725-8391-8) \$114.00.**

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brush aside Livy's comment about human sacrifices "being highly un-Roman" as simply "an embarrassed whitewashing" (170)? Why (and of what) would Livy be embarrassed if human sacrifices were deemed a pious act of devotion in the age of Augustus, as Stahl seems to argue? In sum, I am not entirely persuaded by some of Stahl's readings. This study ultimately rests on a rather narrow political interpretation of the poem as a mere encomium of Augustus and is too quick to dismiss more complex readings of it as modern and unhistorical concoctions. Yet, Stahl's new book still has some very valuable insights and raises some important questions. Every Vergilian scholar should read it.

Chapter Six ("Before Founding Lavinium, Aeneas Inspects the Site of Rome [Aen. 8]"), which applies historical and archaeological data to the narrative of Book 8 and examines the possible political dimension of the tour that King Evander gives Aeneas, is the most successful chapter of the book, in my opinion. Here, Stahl is at his best. His research is meticulous and some of his findings make an important contribution. It is also worth noting that this is the least polemical chapter of the entire book. Here Stahl finally abandons personal attacks and focuses on the text. I wish he had done so all along.

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Stephen Harrison,  
*Victorian Horace: Classics and Class.*

New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. Pp. 217. Cloth  
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"Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so," wrote Byron in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, "not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse / to understand, not feel, thy lyric flow." Byron's weariness and his regret are alike symptoms of the outsized role played by the rote learning of Horace's poetry in elite 18th and 19th century education. And yet saying farewell is not so easy. As this charming new book by the distinguished Latinist Stephen Harrison amply shows, the vogue for Horatian poetry in England

crested not in *aetas Horatiana* of Addison, Pope, and Johnson (cf. pp. 2-3), nor still in the age of Byron, but swelled seemingly unabated through reign of Queen Victoria. It seems quite possible — through Harrison himself is careful to avoid such a strong statement — that no other classical poet so thoroughly symbolized the aspirations and pretensions of the English upper classes in the Victorian age.

Was it that inevitable that knowledge of Horace, an often vocal polytheist, a writer of pederastic poetry, and a committed bachelor, should hold such cachet in a society known to have prized, or at least aspired to uphold, Christian strictures of chastity, sexual propriety, and marriage? From the distance of nearly two centuries, it seems quite remarkable that these pagan poems, through some bewitching combination of epigrammatic moralism and daring lyricism, should persist not as the capstone but as the very foundation of Victorian elite education. Indeed Chapters One and Two of Harrison's book document the process of expurgating or glossing over the less-than-decorous passages of Horace's *oeuvre* (e.g. the graphic sexual insults of *Epodes* 8 and 12, the frank discussion of adultery in *Satire* 1.2, and the homoeroticism of *Odes* 4.1 and 4.10) in translations (pp. 4-9, 37-55), commentaries (pp. 25-32) and literary criticism (pp. 33-37) with the ultimate view of domesticating the ancient poet and recreating him as "the model gentleman" (37). J.W. Mackail describes the process succinctly in his comparison of Horace's *Odes* to the Psalms: "This secular Psalter, like its religious analogue, has to be supplemented, enlarged, re-interpreted, possibly even cut, for application to our daily life" (as quoted by Harrison, 22). A Horace suitably modified and understood, Harrison argues, "represented the values of the male and homosocial Victorian English elite: moderation, sociability, leisured gentility, patriotism and (even) religion" (20).

Harrison presents his dizzying array of Horatian allusions, appropriations, and parodies, drawn primarily from Victorian poetry (Chapters Three and Four) and Victorian fiction (Chapter Five), under a theoretical framework inspired by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Knowledge of Horace in this view represented "cultural capital", built up and spent by "members of the elite and those who aspired to belong to it, ... in claiming and maintaining their elite status" (1). This is indeed a compelling way to frame and understand many of the distinctive passions and compulsions that surrounded the study of Horace's poetry in Victorian society. Worldly men of letters (e.g. Edward Bulwer-Lytton) and eminent statesmen (e.g. William Gladstone) produced complete verse translations of the *Odes*, comic writers published parodies of Horace transposed into contemporary contexts (pp. 89-90), and popular novelists frequently quoted and alluded to the Horatian commonplaces which were woven into the fabric of aristocratic discourse. Harrison's exemplary cases of the lat-

ter range from Dickens, whose knowledge of Horace seems to have been superficial, to Thackeray, whose deep and sophisticated command of Horatian poetry informs the very structure of a number of his works. A common theme, from “The Boarding House” (Dickens) to *The Newcomes* (Thackeray) to *Adam Bede* (Eliot) to *The Duke’s Children* (Trollope) to *Jude the Obscure* (Hardy), is that knowledge of Latin in general, and Horace in particular, is “a social necessity for gentlemanly status” (131). That knowledge maybe rote and shallow, as it is for Arthur Donnithorne in *Adam Bede* (131), or fully internalized and hard-won, as it is for Jude (143-44), but gentlemen and aspiring gentlemen alike acquire, employ, and interrogate it as an essential element of class consciousness.

The theoretical frame of Harrison’s study deserves closer scrutiny where it is applied to authors and works whose affinity for Horace is subtle, disguised or subconscious. In the cases of Alfred, Lord Tennyson and Edward Fitzgerald, Harrison writes of “Horatian overtones” (64) and “Horatian colour” (65). Such tacit allusion (as opposed to direct quotation and reference), Harrison argues, “provides the satisfaction of recognition and builds solidarity between author and audience” (88); thus, implicitly, allusion counts as an expense of “cultural capital”. Yet too-strict adherence to this theoretical construct threatens to flattened all Victorian Horatianism into the reductive category of social and cultural positioning. For his part, Fitzgerald has a particular incentive to disguise rather than display his debt to Horace, since his *Rubaiyat* ostensibly derives from a Persian original. This seems rather a case, as Harrison’s phrasing suggests, of a Victorian so steeped in Horace that his lyric poetry is inescapably tinged in Horatian hues.

Tennyson’s striking teenage translations of *Odes* 1.9 and 3.3 (pp. 58-60), not published until 1982, are remarkable, as Harrison notes, for their “Tennysonian gloom” (58); in *Odes* 1.9, for instance, *alta* (line 2) engenders a “brow and melancholy crags”, *gelu* (line 3) becomes “icy chains”, *cupressi* (line 12) gains a “shadowy form” etc. These adolescent experiments in translation already show a burgeoning and confident poet irreverently overlaying a Horatian frame with the vibrant fabric of his own poetical art. In the same way, sections of *In Memoriam A.H.H.* (pp. 65-71, the third of Harrison’s three Tennysonian examples) borrow elements of *Odes* 1.3, 1.4, and 1.9 while enveloping the language and the tropes of the *propemptikon* and the sympotic poem in a brooding and melancholy atmosphere. Far from being parodied or superficially imitated, Horace is here absorbed and transmogrified.

A second danger of applying Bourdieu’s theory to the Victorians and Horace, carefully avoided by Harrison during the body of his study, but coming distantly into view in the “Epilogue” (145-54) is that Victorian readings of Horace will be

invalidated as *merely* elitist cultural and social posturing, while modern readings not dissimilar in content may be celebrated as “democratized” (145). The mechanism by which Seamus Heaney, for instance, adapts *Odes* 1.34 to commemorate the events of September 11, 2001 (150) does not differ markedly from that employed by many of the Victorian poets studied, except that the latter, products of an age and class thoroughly saturated with Horace, often employ allusion with more subtlety and sensitivity to the original text. Harrison’s careful and restrained argumentation in this chapter and elsewhere may in fact provoke some readers to ponder a complexity not entertained openly by the author: is it inappropriate, in an age where hatred and rational self-interest seem to be ascendent, to feel a twinge of nostalgia for the moderation and “leisured gentility” of Horatian moralism, even as this moralism was imperfectly embodied by elite Victorian white males?

In sum, this is a thorough and thought-provoking study, concise, well-argued, and full of avenues for further inquiry. Harrison has made another valuable contribution to the field of Horatian studies.

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Robert Knapp,  
*The Dawn of Christianity: People and Gods  
in a Time of Magic and Miracles.*

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(ISBN 978-0-674-97646-7) \$29.95.

In *The Dawn of Christianity*, Robert Knapp proffers a simple thesis – namely, that the “experiences of supernatural power that ordinary people shared [monotheists and polytheists alike] are the key to understanding the dawn of Christianity” (xvi). Although differences between monotheists (here, Jews) and polytheists could be substantial, far more significant for an understanding of nascent Christianity’s appeal to both was a commonly felt need to manage relationships with invisible but ever-present powers that could help or harm, destroy or revive one’s life and