consider it choice-worthy to become honoured at the expense of the polity which he ostensibly serves. Helfer argues that, despite some suggestive arguments, Socrates has not even managed to make Alcibiades see that there could be a tension between the good of the ambitious politician and that of the polity. Chapter 2 discusses *Alcibiades* 116–35. Helfer reads the second part of the dialogue as really responding to this tension by asking about corruption, especially corruption of ambition. Socrates tries to stamp out the budding anti-*demos* character of Alcibiades' ambition, while keeping enough anti-*demos* ambition to pursue Socratic education, especially when it comes to conventional ethical norms and piety. Piety is again the theme of Chapter 3, in which Helfer discusses the *Second Alcibiades*: Socrates' warning to the ambitious young man that he had better acquire a proper knowledge of the good and the bad before simply mouthing traditional pieties. Chapter 4 discusses Alcibiades' intervention in Plato's *Symposium*, where Helfer argues that Alcibiades has learned some of the lessons that Socrates had earlier tried to teach him, particularly about the importance of rhetoric. Of course, Socrates rejects Alcibiades erotic advances, just as the Athenians will reject Alcibiades' attempts at seduction. The books ends by piecing together an account of ambition that can be recovered from Platonic portraits of Alcibiades, namely desire for renown, love of power, love of honour, the desire to be a benefactor, and desire for the greatest goods.

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Reception

With *Killing Hercules*, Richard Rowland has produced a wide-ranging trans-historical discussion of re-workings of the relationship between the mythical Hercules and Deinaira, from Sophocles' fifth-century BCE *Trachiniae* to Martin Crimp's 2004 play, *Cruel and Tender*, and a 2014 staging of Handel's operatic *Hercules*.[1] Impressive for the breath-taking variety of receptions of the story of Deianira's killing of her husband, the volume devotes as much attention to medieval, post-Reformation, and eighteenth-century versions as to ancient texts (including, as well as Sophoclean tragedy, receptions in Latin – for example, the pseudo-Senecan *Hercules Oetaeus* and Ovid's *Heroides* – which lie behind many post-classical re-workings of the story) and contemporary retellings; the study touches on several Italian, French, and German versions as well as those in English. As a scholar who has direct experience of theatre practice, Rowland draws on his involvement in staged versions of both *Trachiniae* (his own verse translation, which he includes as an appendix) and *Cruel and Tender* in order to provide fresh insights on both of these texts. The resulting volume, which illustrates the complex and varied reflections on masculinity and sexual identity prompted by the characters of Hercules and Deianira, has at its heart questions relating to the

[1] *Killing Hercules. Deianira and the Politics of Domestic Violence, from Sophocles to the War on Terror*. By Richard Rowland. London and New York, Routledge, 2017. Pp. xiii + 327. Hardback £110, ISBN: 978-1-4724-3402-9.

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gendered role of violence in retellings of the myth both on a domestic level and in relation to international politics. Hercules has been seen as everything from the epitome of masculine virtue and heroic self-sacrifice to abuser and serial adulterer, 'sexual deviant and disastrous husband' (115); in her turn, Deianira – in some versions denied a voice altogether – has been variously portrayed as duplicitous or insane, or as a victim whose killing of her abuser is deserving of sympathy. The chapter on the Middle Ages illustrates well the re-appropriation of the story to serve a range of political, religious, and social agendas – from condemnation of Hercules' lack of self-control by Augustine to valorization of his sexual violence, as well as the misogynist and misogamist interpretations of Deianira which were marshalled in service of debates on the role of marriage. Elsewhere, Rowland shows how the tale could be used simultaneously on both sides of a single political conflict – during the Civil War period, both regicides and royalists used lines from Seneca's *Hercules Furens* to insist on the rectitude of their respective stances (153–4). Even those already familiar with the reception of the figure of Hercules will find something new in this rich exploration of the pliability of one mythical story.

By contrast with the broad chronological and geographical sweep of *Killing Hercules*, Laurie O'Higgins' *The Irish Classical Self* takes as its focus one specific location – Ireland – and its distinctive interactions with the classical world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[2] In particular this volume focuses on the ways in which the poorer classes encountered ancient languages and texts, especially through education – from the unofficial late seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century Irish 'hedge schools', which sprang up in response to legislation prohibiting Catholics from teaching in schools, to the development of more systematized schools' provision following educational reforms in the nineteenth century. The book is therefore a welcome addition to current scholarship which seeks to examine the ways in which non-elites have engaged with the ancient world.[3] O'Higgins' work unearths a wealth of evidence from a range of sources, from poems and manuscripts transmitting classical themes to formal reports commissioned by clerical organizations and governments (detailed appendices collate information from these reports relating to specific schools offering classical instruction). She also examines narrative accounts, including letters, oral history, and the works of travel writers, to build a picture of the networks of association (between scribes and patrons, readers and writers, teachers and learners) through which encounters with classical culture took place. Particularly enlightening are her translations of Irish-language texts which have received little scholarly attention elsewhere. This sifting of the evidence is deftly interwoven with a detailed account of the Irish political, religious, and social history of the period under discussion; within this wider context the author examines the interactions between classical learning, Irish literary heritage, and the use of multiple languages (Irish, English, and Latin) through which Irish linguistic and cultural identity was constructed. The result is an absorbing account of

[2] *The Irish Classical Self. Poets and Poor Scholars in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. By Laurie O'Higgins. Classical Presences. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. 336. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-19-876710-7.

[3] See, for example, E. Hall and H. Stead (eds.), *Greek and Roman Classics in the British Struggle for Social Reform* (London, 2015), and other forthcoming publications stemming from the 'Classics and Class' research project.

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the multiple ways in which, within the unique context of Irish politics and sectarian tensions, ideas and motifs from the ancient world were transmitted during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Despite the overlap in titles, a different angle on 'Classics and Class' is provided by Stephen Harrison's assessment of the *Victorian Horace*.[4] In recent years, scholarship on nineteenth-century receptions of antiquity has become ever more varied and vigorous, with particular highlights including Simon Goldhill's *Victorian Culture and Classical Antiquity. Art, Opera, Fiction, and the Proclamation of Modernity* (2011) and Edmund Richardson's *Classical Victorians. Scholars, Scoundrels and Generals in Pursuit of Antiquity* (2013). But Horace figures in neither of these volumes, nor particularly heavily in other surveys of the era, making Harrison's volume a useful addition to the field. It provides clear and accessible accounts of Victorian commentaries, translations, and scholarship on the Latin poet, before exploring (sometimes quite briefly) the ways in which poets and novelists, including Tennyson, Arnold, Dickens, and Trollope, made use of him. In contrast to our previous title, the focus here is on how the nineteenth-century elite employed Horace – whether through translation or allusion, imitation, or more creative re-working of his oeuvre – as an instrument of 'cultural capital', flaunting detailed knowledge of his poetry (typically acquired through the elite institutions of public schools and universities) as a marker of their status. Even poets such as Byron (included here in a contextualizing chapter that focuses on pre-Victorian receptions), who described him in *Childe Harold* as 'Horace; whom I hated so', were still inclined to sprinkle their own poetry with allusions to the Augustan poet. Through sensitive close readings, Harrison shows us how, for example, Tennyson's translations of Horace shaped his own poems addressed to friends, which resemble Horace's to Maecenas; the Horatian framework thereby becomes a means of 'evoking a shared world of masculine elite education and its social prestige' (19). This tendency to see Horace as 'an honorary English gentlemen' (20) might become wearisome, but fortunately Harrison extends his analysis far enough to take in the Victorian writers who were alert to the ways in which Horace (and other classical authors) could appeal to those without the overwhelming privilege of elite males, most notably in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (treated only briefly here). Jude Fawley's attempt to appropriate some of Horace's cultural capital for himself remains tragically unfulfilled, of course, but Harrison's final chapter on 'Modernizing Horace' outlines ways in which Horace might have become 'democratized' in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries – without *entirely* managing to shake the notion that he remains the darling of a literary elite. *Victorian Horace* in fact marks the end of Bloomsbury's 'Classical Inter/Faces' series of reception titles, which began with a pioneering work by Lorna Hardwick, *Translating Words, Translating Cultures* (2000); readers of this review may find the 'Envoi' (written by the series editors, Susanna Morton Braund and Paul Cartledge), at the end of Harrison's volume, particularly useful.

[4] *Victorian Horace. Classics and Class*. By Stephen Harrison. Classical Inter/Faces. London and New York, Bloomsbury, 2017. Pp. ix + 200. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-4725-8391-8.

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Finally, a title which has come late to this review team: *Twelve Voices from Greece and Rome. Ancient Ideas for Modern Times*,[5] a joint project by Christopher Pelling and Maria Wyke which builds upon the BBC Radio 3 series *The Essay*, has been widely reviewed and praised, but we see no reason not to add our own voices to that throng. Twelve essays, written in an exceptionally accessible, lively, and engaging style, introduce twelve classical authors: six from Greece (Homer, Sappho, Herodotus, Thucydides, Euripides, and Lucian), six from Rome (Caesar, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Tacitus, and Juvenal). These are no dry overviews or potted introductions to the outputs of these writers (though brief introductory paragraphs and detailed further reading suggestions are helpfully provided), nor do they attempt to bust open the canon (yet more elite males, save Sappho) – but each essay succeeds in answering the question of *why* these authors have been read across the centuries, and why we should continue to do so today. Thus does it fall under the purview of our Reception review: modern material is deftly woven into the essays, whether discussing Samuel Johnson's imitations of Juvenal, or the use of lines from Virgil in a September 11 memorial in New York – but most valuably, Pelling and Wyke set out not only to 'explore the modern relevance' (vii) of their chosen subjects but crucially to problematize that relevance, too. There is no sense here that classical authors should be read because they offer refuge from the modern world, easy legitimation for our assumptions about past and present identities, or the empty consolation of the 'eternal truth': instead, we are shown how listening to these voices from the distant past can provoke and challenge as much as comfort and delight. Whether exploring competing readings of Euripides as misogynist or feminist, or assessing the debt that modern political discourse owes to Ciceronian spin, we are encouraged to see our relationship to antiquity as a dynamic and dialogic one. This is a book that will be enjoyed by the general reader (and should be highly recommended to school students and undergraduates), but which will also repay the attentions of scholars too.

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General

I start with two Routledge publications. My general remark has nothing to do with the authors but is directed at the publisher: these books are very expensive as hardbacks, so a paperback, at a third of the cost, might appear to be an attractive alternative. However,

[5] *Twelve Voices from Greece and Rome. Ancient Ideas for Modern Times*. By Christopher Pelling and Maria Wyke. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xiv + 274. Hardback £18.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-959736-9; paperback £12.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-876803-6.

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