

## BOOKREVIEW

*Selections from Horace Satires: An Edition for Intermediate Students*. BY JOHN GODWIN. London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Pp x+ 120. Paperback, \$12.95. ISBN: 9781501349904.

The commentary of John Godwin *Selections from Horace Satires: An Edition for Intermediate Students* focuses on selected lines from three of the most famous Horatian satires: 1.1 (verses 1-12, 28-100), 1.3 (verses 25-75) and 2.2 (verses 1-30, 70-111). It offers a strong introduction, a full Latin text, some useful commentary notes and a vocabulary list not only for simple and commonly used words, but also for some more demanding and ambiguous ones that change their original meaning in the satirical context.

A detailed introduction explains points of historical and stylistic interest. It opens with a reference to Horace and his times, offering some useful biographical information about his work, his life and his relationship with Maecenas. Besides that, a short section on Roman satire before Horace follows, while the next one discusses his originality in relation to his predecessors, such as Lucilius or Ennius, as well as his intertextual dialogue with Epicurean philosophy both in his *Satires* and *Epistles*. The following section has brief coverage on the rigid system of meters that are frequent in Roman poetry. More precisely, John Godwin focuses on Roman prosody, on hexameter and its differences with the Ancient Greek meters. Moreover, the introduction ends up with a bibliographical list of translations, editions and general works on Horace, as well as his *Satires* and the evolution of Roman satire in general. However, I believe that this list is quite brief and should also have included monographs in other languages, such as French or Italian.

Going one step further, the full Latin texts follow *Satires*, 1.1, 1.3 and 2.2 with a short summary in English for all verses, helping the students understand more easily the ambivalent context of the poems. Furthermore, the next chapter includes expansive commentary notes of these three satires. They start with the general

content of each poem, a word-by-word analysis of the Latin fragments, a summary of the conclusions and the poet's deepest goals, in order to make the *Satires* more understandable, as it seems to be one of the most difficult types of poetry in Rome.

The meat of this volume is the vocabulary itself. It lists every word in the text; nouns are listed with their genitive singular, the verbs are accompanied by their four principal tenses, adjectives with the ending of the different genders. I believe that despite the fact that this commentary is addressed to intermediate students who have mastered the basics and intend to start reading some Latin verse in order to develop their skills on language and reading comprehension, the vocabulary should have been more accurate and laborious concerning helpful elements about grammar. For instance, the nouns could also have- apart from the gender and the genitive singular- the number of the declension in parentheses; likewise, the conjugation of each verb is necessary, as it helps the student cope with grammar exercises. In addition to this, the prepositions could have been accompanied with the meaning of the prepositional phrases they introduce in particular contexts. For example, the preposition *ad* might be used for declaring a location or an intention.

Nevertheless, it is a useful tool for the reader, as it is worth consulting this vocabulary in tricky phrases carrying a totally different meaning in these poems from the one someone may find in basic dictionaries. Besides, satire as a literary genre is quite difficult and demanding, as far as the language is concerned.

To sum up, this is the first intermediate-student edition of a selection of Horace's *Satires*. Focusing on a deliberately limited number of poems, this edition is addressed to students who read the text for the first time; it also perfectly encapsulates the interest in Horace's work inspiring its further study. I believe that the commentary of John Godwin in *Selections from Horace Satires: An Edition for Intermediate Students* will be a useful tool for anyone wishing to survey any number of topics about Horatian satire or to join the interpretive fray himself. In spite of some deficiencies concerning the vocabulary, there are numerous virtues: a strong and interesting introduction in combination with the nicely laid-out commentary notes aiming at helping the reader discover more about the characteristics of Horatian poetry. As a result, it is an innovative attempt encouraging new and intriguing approaches for studying Roman satire.

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