



Horace Odes

Ideas for Further Study

Comparison of Translations

Compare and contrast two translations of any of these poems, perhaps taking one from the 19th century and one from more recent times. Many translations are in the public domain on sites such as

www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/HoraceOdesBkIII.htm

or

www.perseus.tufts.edu

or use Google Books to access other translations.

Horace and Military Service

The title of one of the most famous war-poems ('Dulce et Decorum Est' by Wilfred Owen) is taken from Odes 3.2. Compare and contrast the attitude of Horace to military service in the Roman Odes with that of other poets such as (for example)

The Battle of Maldon (Anonymous)

The Charge of the Light Brigade (Tennyson)

Drummer Hodge (Hardy)

The Soldier (Rupert Brooke)

Aristocrats (Keith Douglas)

MCMXIV (Philip Larkin)

Platform One (Ted Hughes)

Horace and the Gods

Examine Horace's treatment and use of the gods in these poems. What view of religion comes out of these odes? To what extent do you think he is writing religious poetry as a sincere believer and to what extent is he writing in a genre which always makes mention of the gods?



Horace and Women

Compare and contrast the treatment of women in the Roman Odes with the way they are depicted in other poems in the books and with other poets such as Catullus, Virgil, and Ovid.

Poetry and Politics

‘Political poetry is a contradiction in terms’. To what extent do you agree with this judgement? Compare Horace’s treatment of political themes with those in Virgil’s *Georgics* and *Aeneid* (e.g. the ‘shield of Aeneas in Book 8) and examine the wider question of whether poetry should be used to further a cause.

A Mosaic of Words

Nietzsche famously described Horace’s poetry as like a ‘mosaic of words’. To what extent does the poet’s clever placing of words make the meaning more or less obscure?