

Horace--Ode to Wine

Post by "Joshua" of April 9, 2020 at 12:17 PM

BkI: XVIII Wine

Cultivate no plant, my Varus, before the rows of sacred vines,
set in Tibur's gentle soil, and by the walls Catilus founded:
because the god decreed all things are hard for those who never drink,
and he gave us no better way to lessen our anxieties.

Deep in wine, who rattles on, about harsh campaigns or poverty?
Who doesn't rather speak of you, Bacchus, and you, lovely Venus?
And lest the gifts of Liber pass the bounds of moderation set,
we've the battle over wine, between the Lapiths and the Centaurs,
as a warning to us all, and the frenzied Thracians, whom Bacchus
hates, when they split right from wrong, by too fine a line of passion.
Lovely Bacchus, I'll not be the one to stir you, against your will,
nor bring to open light of day what's hidden under all those leaves.
Hold back the savagery of drums, and the Berecyntian horns,
and those deeds that, afterwards, are followed by a blind self-love,
by pride that lifts its empty head too high, above itself, once more,
and wasted faith in mysteries much more transparent than the glass.

Post by "Joshua" of April 9, 2020 at 12:24 PM

I found this idly turning through an online collection of Horace's *Odes*. The last section has features of interest; a plea to quiet the tumult of war, an admonishment of false pride and narcissism, and a dismissal of 'wasted faith in mysteries' so transparently fraudulent.

I suspect that there will be many more fruits ripe for the picking! I'll order the Loeb edition for my collection.

Post by "Cassius" of April 9, 2020 at 1:53 PM

Who is the translator, Joshua?

Post by "Joshua" of April 9, 2020 at 2:14 PM

A.S. Kline, copyright 2003. Sorry, I should have included attribution!

Post by "Cassius" of April 9, 2020 at 4:15 PM

A thorough review of all of Horace and Virgil would no doubt produce tremendous numbers of interesting and relevant quotes. Also, I know I have learned so much from reading the full "On Ends" by Cicero that I want to try to read as many of his works as possible. I wish my college reading in classics had been much better or I had a new lifetime to devote to it. Please be sure to post whatever you find.