

Randall J. Pogorzelski. *Virgil and Joyce: Nationalism and Imperialism in the Aeneid and Ulysses*. Wisconsin Studies in Classics. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2016. ISBN: 9780299308001 (hardcover). Pp. x + 178. \$65.

Even though Joyce knew the *Aeneid* well, Virgil remains massively under-represented in the scholarship on *Ulysses*. Until now readers have had to rely mostly on a chapter of R. J. Schork's 1997 monograph, *Latin and Roman Culture in Joyce*, for treatment of Joyce's allusions to Virgil. Schork covers Joyce's entire *oeuvre* in a discursive source-critical survey of Virgilian allusions, wordplay, and, to a lesser extent, structural patterning, rarely spending more than a paragraph on one allusion. Pogorzelski's interpretative aims are more ambitious. He selects a small handful of Joyce's allusions to Virgil in *Ulysses* (with occasional reference to Joyce's other works) and aims to show how they belong to a postcolonial discourse of cultural and political identity.

To my mind, the book's main achievements are three. If the future of Virgil studies depends at least partly on comparative literature and borrowing from disciplines beyond classical philology, a book like this has the potential to light the way. Second, broad-based comparison between the two classic texts has long been overdue. Thirdly, the book brings together the two strands of Joycean studies that have to do with politics on the one hand and with classical intertexts on the other. These are often kept separate for the simple reason that most Joyceans are not classicists and vice versa.

Pogorzelski oscillates between two main lines of inquiry. The first is a traditional allusion-based model that identifies a Virgilian echo in *Ulysses* and interprets it on the basis of different contexts, including relevant interpretations of the Virgilian passage, the Irish political background, and the function of the echo in *Ulysses*. The second involves agnetic comparison which looks back from a postcolonial take on *Ulysses* to an enriched reading of Virgil. "Eyes that have read Joyce's novel pick out aspects of the *Aeneid* that may not otherwise stand out" (p. 16). The critical process, then, is "bidirectional" (3), and the perception of Joycean features in Virgil is valid both as a purely comparative exercise and further justified by Joyce's allusions to Virgil. The book sits at an intersection between the fields of classics/classical reception and comparative literature, which have different vocabularies and rules of engagement; accordingly different readers may find some parts and aspects of the book more satisfying than others, depending on their own proclivities.

An introduction (3–23) sets the scene on various fronts. For theoretical discussion of nationalism as a modern cultural phenomenon, Pogorzelski

draws on Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, before assessing whether it is comparable with ancient Roman political identity. With reference to postcolonial studies (e.g., Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*), the novel is established as the literary form of the modern nation. Joyce's position on nationalism is discussed. Theories of allusion, intertextuality, and reception are rehearsed, and Pogorzelski explains his bidirectional model of interpretation. The introduction summarizes the chapters to follow.

Chapter 1 (24–40) is entitled “Joyce’s ‘Aeolus’ and the Semicolonial Virgil.” In “Aeolus”—chapters of *Ulysses* are conventionally cited by their Homeric titles on the authority of Joyce's letters—Stephen Dedalus composes a story about two Dublin women who ascend to the top of Nelson's Pillar to enjoy the view, but are underwhelmed by the experience. There is an exchange between Stephen and Professor MacHugh, a Latin professor, as to what the title of the story should be. MacHugh suggests *Deus nobis haec otia fecit* while Stephen suggests instead *A Pisgah Sight of Palestine* or *The Parable of the Plums*. Pogorzelski restores two main interpretative contexts: Parnell and the Land War, and the politics of displacement in readings of the first *Eclogue*. This allows him to read Stephen's story as an allegory of the frustrations of Irish land politics in the later stages of Parnell's campaign and after his death.

In a concluding movement of ch. 1, Pogorzelski comes full circle by working backwards from Joyce to Virgil, arguing that by “constructing modern Ireland in relation to ancient Rome through Virgilian poetry, Joyce also constructs a semicolonial Virgil.” And so the first *Eclogue* is reread as if Italy—*tota Italia*—were analogous to a modern nation state. Here, as in much of the book, the correspondences between Virgil and Joyce are general. I quote a typical claim, typical also for the way in which it incorporates scholarly opinion:

The dislocations of geography and identity Meliboeus attributes to discord, alluding to civil war, make it difficult to draw a unified political significance from Virgil's poem, but they are entirely characteristic of the semicolonial condition. Emer Nolan, explaining Joyce's relationship to Irish nationalism, points out that “his writings about Ireland may not provide a coherent critique of either colonized or colonialist; but their very ambiguities and hesitations testify to the uncertain, divided consciousness of the colonial subject, which he is unable to articulate in its full complexity outside his fiction” ... Nolan's analysis of Joyce might, *mutatis mutandis*, apply easily to Virgil. Political analyses of

the first *Eclogue* emphasize the ambiguities, hesitations, and divided consciousness of the poem. (39)

It would be difficult to disagree with this, and a lot happens during the course of the words *mutatis mutandis*—indeed one of the book’s main critical moves is assertive juxtaposition *cum* repetition, but often the argument does not go beyond the level of paratactic assertion.

Chapter 2 (41–67), “Joyce’s Citizen and Virgil’s Cacus,” goes beyond its title. It demonstrates that the citizen of Joyce’s “Cyclops” episode contains intertextual traces of both Hercules *and* Cacus from *Aen.* 8, as well as drawing on Michael Cusack, the founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association, ancient Irish heroes, and different versions of Polyphemus ranging from the brutal to the pastoral. The models in this kaleidoscopic makeup are each examined for their political colors. The main argument is that, by playing the roles of both Hercules and Cacus, the citizen emerges as both a nationalist liberator and more latently a would-be tyrant. A clever second-level argument is that the Virgilian intertextuality in the citizen gives the lie to the Irish revivalist’s insistence on the cultural purity of his Irish origins, denying or resisting the reality of postcolonial cultural hybridity. At the end of the chapter there is some discussion of what the citizen says and does, and of how he spurns Bloom the Jew as an outsider. A more-detailed version of this section at the start of the chapter would have given readers a clearer sense of who the citizen is, and why he and his Virgilian models matter. Additionally, Pogorzelski seems to buy into Joyce’s parody of Irish nationalists/revivalists as if the citizen represented the only kind in existence. At any rate, the slippage inherent in the generalization from “Joyce’s citizen” to “the revivalists” happens all too easily in this chapter and the next, where more weight is rested on it. As well as nativists like the citizen, there were progressivists like Dinneen (mentioned in the “Scylla and Charybdis” episode) who looked to continental Europe for an expansion and renewal of Irish cultural horizons, not to mention Professor MacHugh’s erudite analogies between the Irish and Greeks or Jews in the “Aeolus” episode (these hover behind the discussion of MacHugh at pp. 27–35). There is brief mention of Standish O’Grady and Lady Gregory, but more detailed discussion of the vigorous debates among Irish nationalists themselves would have given nuance to Pogorzelski’s argument. For the all-too-often-neglected Irish-language sources the work of Philip O’Leary, for example, *The Prose Literature of the Gaelic Revival*, is invaluable, and those sources would provide a useful corrective to the casual statement that “the Irish revivalist nationalists, largely Anglo-Irish, were descendants of British

colonists” (80). To be sure, a number of the famous ones whose opinions were discussed in the salons of London were, but countless others were not.

Chapter 3 (68–90), “The Virgilian Past of Nationalism,” is a revised version of the author’s Gildersleeve-prizewinning 2009 *AJP* article, “The ‘Reassurance of Fratricide’ in the *Aeneid*,” now interwoven with Joycean strands. Here Pogorzelski uses modern ideas (e.g., those of Benedict Anderson and Homi Bhabha) about nationalist constructions of ancient roots to argue that the civil-war dynamics in the battle books of the *Aeneid* paradoxically serve to project the Augustan idea of Italian national unity into the mythical past, precisely because civil war is war between people(s) who belong together. “To the extent that *Ulysses* is a text that participates in the construction of modern Irish identity and does so in large part by means of intertextuality with the *Aeneid*, Virgil’s poem forms an important part of modern Irish identity” (68). The connection with Joyce is a little tenuous, and this chapter is at the comparative end of the spectrum; but Pogorzelski still shows how both *Aeneid* and *Ulysses* offer different perspectives on identity politics, especially in relation to cultural origins and hybridity. These pages are fresh and engaging, and while some of the arguments are well known, the Andersonian claim that “fratricide gives nationalist meaning to death” is an arresting insight into the ideological significance of the deaths of the young in the *Aeneid*.

Chapter 4 (91–110), “Joyce’s Rudy and Virgil’s Marcellus,” turns to “Circe,” an episode presented as a playscript with elaborate stage directions and much interior monologue. Pogorzelski finds traces of Virgil’s *katabasis* here and elsewhere in *Ulysses* and argues that the appearance of Rudy (Leopold Bloom’s son who died shortly after birth) at the end of the chapter evokes the young Marcellus at the end of the parade of heroes. On this basis Pogorzelski imports the uncertainty about the Augustan succession into a reading of *Ulysses*, and into a comparative reading of father-son succession in both texts and their other intertexts (these include *Hamlet*, Rudolf, son of Franz Joseph, and Daedalus in Ovid as well as Virgil). “Through his association with Marcellus, Rudy’s ghost haunts the optimism of the revolutionary moment in Ireland with the specter of further violence” (91). While the general drift of the argument is plausible, it is symptomatic of recent trends in scholarship that some of the intertextual connections posited in support of it strain credulity, and so some readers may feel that the discursive conclusions about Irish politics place too much weight on a scattering of random details from what is a phantasmagorically rich chapter. A Joycean might counter that this is simply how the allusive strategies of *Ulysses* operate. After all, Joyce did allegedly say that he had “put in so many

enigmas and puzzles that it [would] keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what [he] meant.” (Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 521)

Leaning on a characterization of the narrative style of “Circe” as “discontinuous,” chapter 5 (111–36), “Virgil’s Joycean Poetics,” suggests that the “discontinuities of *Aeneid* 6 are similar to the formal literary features that characterize Joyce’s modernist poetics” (112). “Similar” is the elastic word here, and the claim inaugurates a jargon-heavy analysis of discontinuity of various kinds in three passages from *Aen.* 6 (Daedalus’ temple doors; the Sibyl’s prophecy; the parade of heroes), interspersed with comparisons from *Ulysses*. “The semicolonial status of *Ulysses* means that it is not only a colonial and modernist novel, but also on the cusp of the postcolonial and postmodern” (113). The novel’s postmodernity involves a “deconstruction of the sign” (Bhabha), which leads us to the discontinuities of *Aen.* 6. There is no mention of Alexandrian poetics or the discontinuities of the Hellenistic aesthetic. Parallel readings align Bloom’s “failure as a father” (111) [ouch!] with the “failure of signification” that results from the death of Icarus (118), and the political discontinuities that threaten the Augustan succession.

The conclusion juxtaposes Auerbach’s comparative approach with the intertextuality of Ovid’s *Aeneid* (recalled here à la Hinds). Pogorzelski suggests that “the intertextual dynamic at play in the relation between Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Joyce’s *Ulysses* is not entirely different from the intertextual dynamic at play between Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*” (139). Even if traditional classicists may disagree, nevertheless, engagement with and interrogation of Pogorzelski’s provocative contribution will advance the comparative study of ancient and modern literature, as indeed of antiquity and modernity.

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Paola Gagliardi. *Commento alla decima ecloga di Virgilio*. Spudasmata 161. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2014. ISBN 978-3-487-15184-7. Pp. 303. €39,80.

The generous sampler of divergent scholarly opinions, the frequent appreciation for refinements of style, yet repetitious and speculative—*a priori* inconclusive—pursuit of suppositious traces of lost elegies by G. Cornelius Gallus (perpetuating the Gallus industry so neatly skewered and demystified by Peter Parsons [1980]), the preoccupation with supposed subjectivity and personal dilemmas of said G. Cornelius, as fabricated from