stessa dell'atto di insegnamento' (p. 172). However, essentially, for C. the *Georgics* constitute an encomium to honour and at the same time offer guidance to Octavian, and in his conclusion he attempts to define the goals set for encomiastic poetry by Virgil's didactic poem.

As is perhaps already clear, this is not a book for the faint-hearted. It is learned and dense, with references and quotations in the original Greek, Latin, French, German, and English (although these are peppered with mistakes, e.g. etimology [p. 160], omniscent [168], shephard [p. 182]), but C.'s tendency to place terms such as *modo* and *discorso* in inverted commas serves to suggest that he himself is often unsure of his footing. His approach is none the less thought-provoking. Ultimately, however, C.'s attempt to find a single 'key' to the interpretation of the *Georgics* raises more questions than it answers.

King's College London YUMNA KHAN

TRANSLATING THE *ODES*

J. D. McClatchy (ed.): *Horace: The* Odes. *New Translations by Contemporary Poets*. Pp. 312. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002. Cased, £17.95. ISBN: 0-691-04919-X.

How would you visualize 'solvitur hiems'? What exactly is dancing 'libero pede'? Does 'visendus ater' contain some notion of trying to see in the dark? Is there something odd and even amateurish about the sequence '[laudate] Tempe et Delon et umerum'? And are these questions that Horace's first readers would have had in their minds as they turned their scrolls, saying the words out loud? Perhaps any new translation of Horace would produce such questions of detailed meaning, but certainly this book of McClatchy's does make one think again about these inexhaustible poems.

Translating a poem, though, is not just a matter of keeping on the slalom course and going through all the gates. The gates are important ('Art and Science cannot exist but in minutely organized Particulars'—Blake) but there is something else: not the points on the route but the point, the sweep, the drift, of the whole trajectory. It is possible, as Anthony Hecht does here with *Odes* I.21, to get the details right and leave one feeling that this not particularly good poem is pointless, whereas Branwell Bronte, infinitely less experienced, made a satisfying patriotic blast of it. On the other hand, a purpose or drift can be forced on a poem, as in Ellen Bryant Voigt's version of I.17, where Horace has an unexplained Cyrus being violent to a girl (and to her garland immeritamque vestem; end of poem), but Voigt turns Cyrus into a 'rash, possessive husband, his hot breath in her hair, his groping hands'. It seems Horace's half-suggestion that Tyndaris might have been more worried about her dress than her body was unacceptable.

What must there be in a translation of Horace? Surely, above all, some sense of his neatness, that phrasing (*credulus aurea, uda/ mobilibus pomaria rivis*), so often combined with those throwaway endings that translators have been struggling with for millennia (*aut Lacedaemonium Tarentum*). In English, neatness has to be represented by rhyme and/or metre. Paul Muldoon (in three poems) translates with his usual masterful rhymes, but here loquacity blurs his neatness. Daryl Hine puts II.1 excellently into Latin metre (Alcaics) and I.3 into English abab quatrains, with a satisfying final click: 'Our folly scales the sky;/ Our naughtiness will not allow/ Jove to

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lay his thunderbolts by'. Best of all is James Lasdun's masterly 'Winter's melting', I.4, with one rhyme per five-line stanza. Without such neatness, too many of these versions are mere inventories (often woefully incomplete) of the contents of their originals, sometimes mere first drafts for proper translations, their screws not tightened. Rachel Hadas's painfully awkward quatrains omit all but the argument of *Odes* II.4, so beautifully 'imitated' by Christopher Smart. But sometimes, perhaps another point is being made: incredibly, the brilliant Richard Wilbur manages to plod through II.10 without a single flash—is he telling us that Horace sometimes plods?

So one's disappointment brings a curious pleasure—the reader is drawn away from the present imperfect version to question Horace's meaning more deeply. The last poem of all (IV.15), translated by the editor himself, contains what seems to be a cliché: Augustus' empire extends 'From where the bright sun first rises/ Even to its westernmost bed'. But what Horace wrote was that it extends 'to the rising of the sun/ from its western bed'—we are going the other way, perhaps like the sun underneath the flat earth. Is there something hidden here? I had not noticed this before, but was reminded of the very clever sequence at the beginning of the book (I.2), where Rosanna Warren's version made me see, again for the first time, the subtle flattery with which Horace wonders which god will come to save Rome: Apollo, Venus, Mars, or 'you, son of Maia' (Mercury): 'go slowly back to heaven, enjoy being called princeps and pater, . . . Caesar'. So Caesar Augustus segues into that sentence as a god. Could it be that the odd phrase there in IV.15 is meant to add the Underworld to Augustus' empire?

To sum up, this book is stimulating but not entirely user-friendly, even to Latinists—no notes or glossary of names, and the looser translations mean using other books to see how, if at all, the facing Latin connects with the English. I found all such questions answered in James Michie's single-handed, meticulously accurate, and often thrilling versions of all the odes. But Michie's book seems to be out of print, like the wonderful Penguin *Horace in English. Progeniem vitiosiorem* indeed.

Newcastle upon Tyne ALISTAIR ELLIOT

LIVIAN PORTRAITS

J.-E. BERNARD: *Le portrait chez Tite-Live. Essai sur une écriture de l'histoire romaine*. (Collection Latomus 253.) Pp. 482. Brussels: Latomus, 2000. Paper. ISBN: 2-87031-194-X.

'Si c'est la rationalité qui est à la base de la prosopographie de Polybe, il faut, pour Tite-Live, mettre en avant sa philosophie morale du devoir et son dessein de prouver la supériorité du peuple romain par les vertus et les *artes* de ses grands hommes . . . La première tâche que Tite-Live se donne est de ressusciter le passé, avant d'en proposer une analyse' (pp. 360, 363). One would like to think that Bernard, who is otherwise a sensitive reader of Livy, would have come to slightly different conclusions had he taken into account any scholarship after 1995, particularly recent anglophone work on the historian. *Le portrait chez Tite-Live* is a doctoral dissertation from 1996, and though B. ranges easily over secondary material in several languages, he ignores crucial scholarship that would have broadened and deepened his systematic treatment of Livy's characters, exempla, and use of rhetoric. His repeated assertions that Livy was following Ciceronian guidelines both in style and in philosophy (e.g. pp. 19, 21, 40, 48, 247); his insistence that Livy was out to create the 'ideal Roman'; and the

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