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PINDAR TRANSLATED

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W. H. RACE (ed., trans.): *Pindar I: Olympian Odes, Pythian Odes; Pindar II: Nemean Odes, Isthmian Odes, Fragments*. (Loeb Classical Library, 56 and 485.) 2 vols. Pp. viii + 385; 486 + 3 maps. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1997. £11.95 each vol. ISBN: vol. I 0-674-99564-3, vol. II 0-674-99534-1.

This excellent Loeb edition of Pindar supersedes the antiquated volume edited by Sandys in 1915. Its most notable feature is clarity: the Greek typeface is a pleasure to read; the translations are crisp and accurate, though so literal that the Theban eagle no longer soars; plentiful notes both explain Pindar's recherché allusions and bring out how more than one interpretation of the text is often possible.

R.'s text, though primarily based on the latest Teubner editions of Pindar by Snell–Maehler and Maehler, differs from theirs in many details and numerous readings, a list of which would have been useful; among the more important are: *O*.2.97, *O*.11.17, *P*.1.77, *P*.5.15–19, *N*.1.66, *N*.4.90, *I*.8.11, *Paeon* 6.74.

In the introduction R. rightly points out that the victory odes are not just poems of praise but 'complex mixtures of praise (and blame) . . . advice' etc.; but it is odd that having said this he should on the adjoining page endorse Bundy's outdated generalization that Pindar's odes are 'dedicated to the single purpose of eulogizing men and communities'. There follows a judicious biographical sketch in which R. stresses the difficulties surrounding interpretation of apparently personal statements in the odes. A synopsis of each poem prefaces each translation, but a bit more in the way of explanation (e.g. of the relevance of the myths in the odes) would have been useful. R. in general adopts a cautious approach to interpretation of the text, and rightly, given how little we know (as opposed to believe) about so many factors. So, on whether or not the *κόρακες* of *O*.2.87 refer to Bacchylides and Simonides, *O*.3 was for a Theoxenia, the odes were performed by a choir, R. gives us the evidence and lets us make up our own minds. And in the footnotes he often suggests alternative possible translations (so e.g. on *P*.1.2, 57, 67–8; *P*.8.94–5; *N*.3.18, 41–2; *N*.7.31, 49–50; *N*.8.46; *N*.9.15, 20). Again, R. draws attention to the problem of reference at *P*.5.72–81, *P*.8.56–60, *N*.7.85 (do the words refer to the poet or to the chorus?), and sensibly evaluates each case on its own merits—Pindar speaks for himself in the first two examples, for the chorus in the last. This seems the right approach to a thorny problem: Pindar is ready to vary his *persona* in order to make it on occasion speak what is true of the chorus rather than of himself, just as he is ready on occasion to introduce into the mythical narratives elements that more properly belong to the victor's circumstances than to the myth. R. also takes a refreshingly realistic approach to instances when Pindar says he is late with a poem (see introductions to *O*.10 and *N*.3), not adopting the unlikely idea that the lateness is purely a rhetorical fiction. He includes in vol. II virtually all the fragments of which significant sense can be made, and in the case of those surviving in ancient quotations regularly provides more of the context than does Maehler in the Teubner edition. R. sows supplements with the hand, not with the sack as Sandys was wont to do, and sometimes reports conjectures not in Maehler's edition (e.g. *Paeon* 8a.20, Grenfell-Hunt's *Ἐρι[γὺν]*).

Some points of detail: *O*.1.26, 'pulled' is too strong for *ἔξελε*: Pelops was only a baby when Klotho 'took him out of' the cauldron; *O*.2.86–7, R. offers an ingenious interpretation: 'If you want the full story (*τὸ πᾶν*) about the afterlife, go to interpreters (not to me, as I must get on with praising Hieron)'; *O*.4.10–11, much as one would

like it, it is not clear that the Greek (*Ψάυμος γὰρ ἔκει δ'χέων*) can mean 'For it [the κῶμος] comes in honor of the chariot of Psaumis'; *O.7.53*, can σοφία ἄδολος mean 'native talent'?; *O.11.10*, the 'very difficult sentence' ἐκ θεοῦ δ' ἀνήρ σοφαῖς ἀνθεὶ πραπίδεςσιν ὁμοίως is unlikely to mean 'with help from a god a man flourishes with a wise mind just as well', as this implies that one can flourish without help from a god; better, 'a man with a poet's wit blossoms with god's help just as much' (sc. as a victorious athlete does), i.e. with divine help both can flourish; *P.2.67*, the interpretation suggested in the note (τόδε μέλος refers to lines 1–67, τὸ Καστορεῖον to 69–96) is unlikely to be right since the whole ode celebrates an equestrian victory (cf. 1–12), i.e. all of it is a *Καστορεῖον*; it is more likely that we have alternative descriptions of the whole ode; *P.8.78*, R. prints μέτρῳ κατάβαν', translating 'Enter the contest in due measure', but would Pindar (or anyone else) recommend this? It is the δαίμων of 76–7 who works μέτρῳ, hence retain καταβαίνει (which has the additional advantage of avoiding the un-Pindaric repetition of ἐν); *N.10.19*, βραχὺ μοι στόμα, 'my mouth is too small', R. following *LSJ* s.v. βραχύς 2; rather, 'my breath is too short' (Bowra), i.e. 'my mouth has not time'; *I.4.47*, R. supplies a useful reference to authenticate Pindar's saying that a fox plays dead and lies on its back when awaiting an eagle's swoop. Only very occasionally is the meaning of R.'s translation unclear: *O.1.111–12*, 'And now for me the Muse tends the strongest weapon in defense'; *O.10.7*, 'For what was then the future has approached from afar'; *P.4.286*, 'opportunity in men's affairs has a brief span' (better, 'the right moment in dealings with people does not last long').

As one can readily see, Pindar's cryptic and enigmatic *gnomai* commonly cause great problems of interpretation. They are a translator's nightmare, and there will not often be unanimity about their meaning. In general, R. has tackled both them and the rest of Pindar with great success, and this edition will be of lasting value.

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