Translations should be shaped by the kind of readership for which they are intended. The back cover of Leary's booklet states that his 'version' (as he prefers to call the work, rather than a 'translation') 'will appeal to current students of Virgil, those seeking to relive their school and undergraduate days and those coming to Virgil for the first time'. I think that of these three kinds of reader, *The Wooden Horse* is most suited to the second. The English and style of Leary's version are reminiscent of rather literal, student renderings and of the summarising translations that one finds in commentaries, intended to help readers with the original Latin.

What are the strong points of this short book? Leary, unlike many who attempt verse translations, has a feel for metre and rhythm. His six-beat lines successfully capture something of the movement of the hexameter, as in the following example (I have marked the stressed vowels in bold):

> When f**i**rst you c**a**me to Tr**o**y. N**o**w th**o**se who would ret**u**rn
> Must **o**ffer **u**p in at**o**nement the l**i**fe and bl**oo**d of a Gr**ee**k. (108-9)[1]

And Leary's translation does sometimes achieve a measure of fluency and assurance that one may admire. Take his rendering of the simile which captures Aeneas' horror at the sight of Troy falling:

> Just as, when a forest fire, whipped by a southerly
> Gale, descends upon a crop, or the sudden spate
> Of a mountain stream lays waste the fields, the smiling crops,
> The hard work of the ox, and tears away the woodland,
> A shepherd surveys the tumult from high up on a boulder,   300
> Dumbfounded, not understanding. (296-301; *Aen.* 2.304-8)

Leary does not translate literally here, but interprets the Latin, giving 'forest fire' for *flamma*; 'whipped by a southerly | Gale' for *furentibus Austris*; and 'tears away the woodland' for *praecipitisque trahit silvas*.

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[1] Unless otherwise indicated, all line numberings are Leary's. His numberings do not coincide with those of the Latin text of *Aeneid* 2, so when I refer to the Latin (of Mynors' 1969 *OCT*) I use the form '*Aen.* 2.117-19'.

He also succeeds elsewhere with his renderings of some sentences and phrases, for example: *stat ferri acies mucrone corusco | stricta, parata neci* (*Aen.* 2.333-34), 'they stand in a rank of steel, of glinting blades | Ready-drawn for slaughter' (327-28); and *Pyrrhus … telis et luce coruscus aena* (*Aen.* 2.469-70), 'Pyrrhus … glinting in the brazen sheen of his armour' (471). Below, I quote passages from the poetic version of the *Aeneid* by Cecil Day Lewis[2] – a fine, deeply considered translation of the epic into poetic, idiomatic English – as a foil for some of Leary's less happy renderings. But in one instance, at least, Leary achieves a neat, epigrammatic turn of phrase – *quondam etiam victis redit in praecordia virtus* (*Aen.* 2.367), 'Valour revives sometimes even in the vanquished' (361) – that is preferable to Day Lewis's flatter, more wordy version of the line: 'There were times when courage returned even though we knew we were beaten' (p. 173).

Far too often, though, Leary seems to lose his nerve and defaults to 'translationese', the sort of received English words and phrases that scholarly cribs and commentaries use to render Latin. Sometimes his English becomes stilted and awkward. On other occasions he follows Latin syntax and word order too closely for my taste. Here are some examples. To translate Latin *vitta*(*e*), Leary repeatedly uses English 'fillet(s)'. But I'm afraid that in the twenty-first century, to students and the general public, the word first and foremost suggests a cut of meat (his translation 'fillets of the gods' [148] rings bizarrely). Why not use 'headband(s)', also a two-syllable word accented on the first syllable that would fit his metrical scheme just as well? Sometimes Leary's English is awkward: '"Did you think," I said to my father, "that I could desert you, | Walking away? Could such an unspeakable hope fall from | Paternal lips?"' (662-64; *Aen.* 2.657-58); 'he bore a profusion of wounds, taken around his native | Walls' (272-73; *Aen.* 2.278-79; contrast Day Lewis: 'He exhibits the many wounds received while defending his country | In combat around the walls' [p. 169]); 'What shameful events have befouled your shining features?' (279; *Aen.* 2.285-6, *quae causa indigna serenos | foedavit vultus*?; Day Lewis: 'But why is your face, serene once, | So shamefully disfigured?' [p. 170]). Leary's literalness sometimes risks misleading the reader: 'the Greeks, growling, enraged at the rescued | Girl [Cassandra]' (411-12; *Aen.* 2.413, *Danai gemitu atque ereptae virginis ira*) is not only unidiomatic but suggests, wrongly, that Cassandra is the object of the Greeks' rage; Day Lewis gets it right: 'the Greeks … shouting with rage at the attempt to | Rescue Cassandra' (p. 175). Some of Leary's phrases, intended to echo Virgilian man-

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[2] Day Lewis, C. (tr.) 1966. *The Eclogues, Georgics and Aeneid of Virgil*. London. I am not, of course, suggesting that Day Lewis's version embodies some sort of ideal standard that Leary should have met; I cite it simply by way of example. Since Day Lewis's translation does not have marginal line numbers, I give page numbers when referring to it.

nerisms, fall flat in English for me: *pedem cum voce repressit* (*Aen.* 2.378), 'he checked his course with his words' (373); *limina portae, | qua gressum extuleram* (*Aen.* 2.752-53), 'The ... gateway through which I'd carried my steps' (761).

I could multiply examples, but one more should suffice. In translating *Aen.* 2.438-40 – *hic vero ingentem pugnam, ceu cetera nusquam | bella forent, nulli tota morerentur in urbe, | sic Martem indomitum ... | cernimus* – Leary's anxiety to stay close to the Latin syntax leads to obscurity:

> Here, in truth, as if nowhere
> Were there other wars, and elsewhere in all the city
> No one was dying, we beheld a battle almighty, to such
> An extent was the God of War untamed ...   (436-39)

Contrast with this rendering, Day Lewis's lucid translation:

> Here we beheld so tremendous a struggle as made it seem that
> Nowhere else in the city could men be fighting and dying –
> A bitter battle ...   (p. 176)

There are also some errors in Leary's version:

- the sea snakes that rear up as they attack Laocoön *superant capite et cervicibus altis* (*Aen.* 2.219). Leary takes *capite* and *cervicibus* to refer to the man rather than his attackers: 'they [the snakes] rose above his [Laocoön's] head | And towering shoulders' (213-14). Day Lewis correctly translates: 'their [the snakes'] heads and throats powerfully poised above him [Laocoön]' (p. 167);
- in the phrase *anguem | pressit humi nitens* (*Aen.* 2.379-80), the last two words must mean something like 'treading heavily on it'; but Leary translates 'While trusting his footing' (375);
- *ecce trahebatur passis ... | crinibus a templo Cassandra ... Minervae* (*Aen.* 2.403-4). Leary's translation of *passis crinibus* is just grammatically possible: 'Cassandra | ... was being dragged along by her hair, | All tumbled down, from the temple ... of Minerva' (401-2); but it seems to me that Day Lewis's version represents more nearly what Virgil meant: 'Cassandra, her hair flying [was] | Being dragged away from Minerva's house' (pp. 174-75);
- *deos in Dardana suscitat arma* (*Aen.* 2.618) is translated by Leary: '[Jupiter] rouses the gods' support | For Grecian arms' (623-24), when it actually means: 'incites the gods against the Dardanian [i.e.Trojan] forces';
- *fatone erepta Creusa | substitit* (*Aen.* 2.738-39); 'my wife, Creusa, stopped | Snatched by ... fate' (Leary 744-45). But the -*ne* here,

attached to *fato*, is picked up by subsequent *-ne* and *seu*. What Leary translates here as a fact is actually the first of three questions;

- *nec te hinc ... asportare Creusam | fas, aut ille sinit superi regnator Olympi* (*Aen.* 2.778-79); 'Nor is it fitting that you should carry | Creusa off from here ... or he | The Ruler of High Olympus, would have allowed it to happen' (Leary 787-89). But the clause introduced by *aut* should be made negative: '[Jupiter] does not allow it' (see Austin[3] on line 779: '*nec ... aut* is equivalent to *neque ... neque*');
- 'Eurypalus' (105) should be 'Eurypylus'.

Anyone who has tried to produce a literary translation of a Greek or Latin text will know how hard it is to withstand the pressure not only of the syntax and word order of the original, but also of received, time-sanctioned English words and phrases used over decades and even centuries in translations of the Classics. In my judgement, Leary's version has sometimes succeeded in resisting these pressures, but has too often succumbed to them.

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[3] Austin, R.G. (ed.) 1964. *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Secundus.* Oxford.