



peror Domitian trying to gain his favor and patronage, more delicate in the funerary epigrams, or very straightforward in the obscene ones. Nisbet's translation reflects the diversity of styles found in Martial, the tone of the English version is in turn solemn, compassionate, mischievous, ironic, impudent or very bold. Nisbet is not mincing his words in the naughty epigrams, but then nor was Martial mincing his. The paradoxes, the puns, the comic timing of the Latin epigrams find their way in this English version in prose. The translation manages to give a faithful impression of Martial's vivid world, where Rome and countryside, rich and poor men, literary friends and enemies collide and coexist.

Although the English version is usually staying close to the parallel text and rendering with fidelity the phrasing of the Latin - so that the readers can use it when they encounter difficulties in translating the Latin of Martial - a few lapses and mistakes have occurred. For instance, the whole verse 1.53.6 (*sic Arrentinae uiolant crystallina testae*) disappears from the English translation. The same problem occurs with verses 3.58.30-31 (*et paedagogo non iubente lasciuu / parere gaudent uilico capillati*) and 10.4.7 (*quid te uana iuuant miserae ludibria chartae?*). In 3.22, *bis trecenties* and *centies* are translated by "twice-three million" and "a million", instead of twice thirty million and ten million. Another number discrepancy is encountered in 6.20.4, where *decem* is translated by thirty instead of ten. These two latter differences between numerals, however, are not so disturbing as 4.26.2-3 (*uis dicam quantum, Postume, perdiderim? / tricenos, puto, bis, uicenos ter, puto, nummos*), where the English rendering ("do you want to know how much it has cost me? Sixty, I guess, or maybe thirty") misses the pun, which consists in the same number sixty expressed in two different forms (twice thirty, respectively thrice twenty).

As for the parallel Latin text, which is based on sources in the public domain, it is generally accurate, but printing mistakes and errors do occur. Some are not very troublesome, such as, to give only some examples, 2.53.5 where *chrydendeta* appears instead of *chrysendeta*, 10.4.12 *sec* instead of *nec*, or 11.2.7 *Iectores* instead of *lectores*. More upsetting and susceptible of causing problems for the reader, due to the confusion with a different case of the same word or with a different Latin word, are 3.82.30 where *non* is printed instead of *nos* (in this instance, *non accubamus* instead of the correct *nos accubamus* shifts the entire meaning of the sentence to the opposite), 4.23.8 *ille* instead of *illi*, 5.78.6 *digitus* instead of *digitis*, 6.2.3 *ultraque* instead of *utraque*, 10.61.4 *annus* instead of *annua*. Also, in order to render the Latin text more easy to use, the numbering of the verses would have been not only convenient, but also helpful.

Despite these few shortcomings, the book is informative and useful to readers seeking an entrance into the work of the most important Latin epigrammatist. This translation is offering not only a reasonably comprehensive view of Martial's literary universe, but also a pleasant experience. Gideon Nisbet's version of Martial's Rome and Martial's world is enjoyable and lively.