political: issues of gender, economy, cultural imperialism, domesticity, religion, etc. At the same time, historians of various sorts have helped us to understand the ways in which official action on the part of Augustus and his circle crystallized developments already underway throughout Roman society, thus making it difficult to specify what 'anti-Augustanism' would actually entail. All of this is missing from D.'s discussion. Instead he sets about showing that Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* — and, to a lesser extent, his other love poems — 'offer mockery and critique ... of essential aspects of the Augustan version of what it was to be Roman' (127) — a point made more incisively by Niall Rudd almost thirty years ago, and to my knowledge, not seriously resisted since by any critic, myself included. That Ovid offered mockery and critique is clear. The validity of his critique, the importance and value of the targets, the relevance of the critique to Ovid's exile, the political implications of mockery, the extent of Ovid's engagement with other political and cultural issues — these are the matters that have rightly preoccupied scholars and critics for many years, and on which D. sheds little or no light. One argument in the book is suggestive, although curiously it has to do with the *Res Gestae* and not with Ovid. D. suggests that the defensive tone of the document implies that there were other ways of interpreting Augustus' accomplishments available to its audience. This seems a reasonable inference, and might have led to a deeper consideration of political rhetoric in the early first century A.D. But as far as I can see it does not tell us much at all about Ovid's opinion of Augustus or the consequences thereof.

University of Southern California THOMAS HABINEK

L. OAKLEY-BROWN, *OVID AND THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF TRANSLATION IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006. Pp. 222. ISBN 0-75465-155-x. £47.50.

Translation studies, once the Cinderella of literary criticism and of reception studies, have in recent years moved to the centre of interest of students both of English literature and of the reception of antiquity. Dryden's translations are now recognized as major works of English poetry in their own right. The multi-volume *Oxford History of Literary Translation in English* is one of the great collaborative projects of the moment. Translations of Ovid, perhaps the single most important ancient author for early modern English literature, have duly received attention in surveys of the reception of Ovid by C. Martindale (ed.), *Ovid Renewed* (1988), and S. A. Brown, *The Metamorphoses of Ovid: Chaucer to Ted Hughes* (1999). Following on dedicated studies of Ovidian translation by L. Pearcy, *The Mediated Muse: English Translations of Ovid, 1560–1700* (1984), and R. Lyne, *Ovid's Changing Worlds: English Metamorphoses 1567–1633* (2001), Liz Oakley-Brown examines a range of translations from Caxton to the 1717 collaborative Garth translation of the *Metamorphoses*. This is not a literary study in the narrower sense (and there is little by way of stylistic or linguistic analysis), but an exercise in cultural studies, in which the meanings of translation and transformation are widened to embrace far-reaching issues of politics, national identity, and gender.

After an 'Introduction' which rather breathlessly reviews a number of theoretical approaches to translation and cultural politics, with a distinct post-structuralist colouring, the first chapter turns not to a translation but to Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, a play that famously brings on stage the text, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, whose violent Tereus episode it reworks yet more violently. The focus is predominantly on the politics of gender in Shakespeare's Ovidian adaptations, a focus that continues in ch. 2, on Abraham Fraunce's retellings of Ovidian tales in *Amintas Dale* (*The Third Part of The Countesse of Pembrokes Yvychurch*), but also with a consideration of the cultural construction of the male author of the work. In the third chapter the scene shifts to national politics, in a reading of George Sandys' 1632 *Ovid's Metamorphosis Englished* as an attempt, comparable to the Jacobean and Caroline masque, to promote an increasingly absolutist royalist ideology, although the disorder of Ovidian metamorphosis threatens to escape from the straitjacket. In ch. 4 Whiggish tendencies are detected in the 1717 collaborative translation of the *Metamorphoses* masterminded by Samuel Garth, a work which, it is also argued, tries to repress the ghost of the Sandys translation by which it is haunted.

Ch. 5 returns to the politics of gender, with case-studies of women who used Ovid as a way to establish their own cultural space: three translators, Elizabeth Singer Rowe, Mary, Lady Chudleigh, and Mary Wortley Montagu, and one very literal Arachne, Elizabeth Talbot (Bess of Hardwick), three embroideries from whose hands (of Phaethon, Europa, and Actaeon) are preserved in Hardwick Hall. The final chapter returns to the very beginning of the story, William

Caxton's English version of a French redaction of the *Ovide moralisé* (*c.* 1480), a work that played a very minor role in the history of English humanist engagement with Ovid. In attempting to compensate for the near-invisibility of this version through a demonstration of the cultural politics that are played out in it, O.-B. seeks to make a wider point about 'the translator's invisibility' (the title of Lawrence Venuti's book (1995)).

The book covers much interesting material, and is widely read in the primary and secondary literature. It is somewhat marred by a loosely associative mode of argumentation, at times hard to follow, and by a tendency to hang portentous quotations from theoretical works on slender points in the text.

Trinity College, Cambridge PHILIP HARDIE

R. MORELLO and A. D. MORRISON (EDS), *ANCIENT LETTERS: CLASSICAL AND LATE ANTIQUE EPISTOLOGRAPHY*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. Pp. xvii + 373. ISBN 878-0-19-920395-6. £60.00.

A. DE PRETIS, *'EPISTOLARITY' IN THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE'S* EPISTLES (Gorgias Dissertations 5, Classics 1). Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2004. Pp. x + 241. ISBN 1-59333-117-7. US$75.00.

Be not deceived by the title *Ancient Letters*: not only does 'ancient' retain its traditional meaning of 'Greek and Roman', but despite a few references to earlier letters, the first author whose correspondence receives serious consideration is Cicero. The crucial word is 'epistolography' in the subtitle, indicating that the centre of concern is not letters but letter-writing, or better perhaps *das Briefwesen*. To be sure the editors' prefatory claim to ask not 'What are letters' but 'Why letters?' (vi) is promptly contradicted by the Introduction, in which one of the editors (Morrison) joins with Roy K. Gibson to ask 'What is a Letter?'; the tense suggests a search for the quiddity, τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι, of a letter in all times and places, but no *differentiae* are found that can exclude certain Pindaric epinicia and Theocritean idylls, though in the end the only Greek verse epistle recognized is *AP* 5.9. Even Cicero's *De officiis* is considered as a possible candidate before being shown the door for no apparent reason but brute common sense; finally Aristotelian definition yields place to Wittgensteinian family resemblances.

Specific studies begin with G. O. Hutchinson, 'Down among the documents: criticism and private letters', a comparative study of *P.Oxy.* 2190 and two other private letters, *P.Oxy.* XLVIII.3396–7, far less prepossessing in spelling and grammar but not without skill in management of language. The conclusion (valid for spoken discourse too) is drawn that between the literary and the unliterary lies not a gulf but a continuum.

By far the longest contribution (49 pages) is John Henderson, '" . . . when who should walk into the room but . . .": epistoliterality in Cicero, *Ad Qfr.* 3.1'; connoisseurs will not be disappointed in this close reading expressed as up-to-the-minute paraphrase, together with such non- or paraverbal signifiers as heart symbols, bold type, and strikethrough. Cicero is also the subject of Stanley E. Hoffer, 'Cicero's "stomach": political indignation and the use of repeated allusive expressions in Cicero's correspondence', associating medical metaphors, particularly *stomachus*, with other 'repeated shorthand or coded expressions' in the intimate letters as a device representing stylized conversation — and also used by Augustus, but not Pliny or Fronto.

A. D. Morrison, 'Didacticism and epistolarity in Horace's *Epistles* 1', interprets the book 'as Socrates to Lucretius' (pre-Socratic) Empedocles', substituting ethics for physics, but also dialogue (letters being notoriously one half thereof) for monologue, fallibility for superiority, many addressees for one, and daily engagement for finite instruction. For a 'more theoretical discussion' he refers to Anna de Pretis' book, reviewed below. Appropriately, his chapter is followed by Brad Inwood, 'The importance of form in Seneca's philosophical letters'. Unlike most other contributors, he tests the letters against rhetorical precepts, which for him explain their ostentatious disdain for logic and physics. He also suggests that the echoes of Epicurus indicate less doctrinal sympathy than a literary challenge to the man who had left so large a corpus of philosophical letters; and that the dialogic qualities of the letters (matching the letter-like quality of *De tranquillitate animi*) characterize the author and not the genre.

Formal questions also concern Roger Rees, 'Letters of recommendation and the rhetoric of praise', a comparative study of Cicero's, Pliny's, and Fronto's *commendaticiae* seeking the differences and resemblances not only amongst them, but also between them and a modern specimen,