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Sourcing *Misfortunes*: Translation and Tragedy

From its first review to recent scholarship, critics have derided and dismissed the use made of translation in The Misfortunes of Arthur *(1588). This essay reconsiders how the play approaches imitation by examining its translations from Senecan tragedy and Lucan's* De Bello Civili *(ca 61–5 CE). With particular emphasis on* Misfortunes*'s ghost sequences and Oedipal echoes, this approach reveals the play's engagement not just with the pedagogy and politics of Elizabethan England but also with innovations in dramatic form.*

The Misfortunes of Arthur is an early Elizabethan revenge tragedy, interested throughout in the nature of its own form. Unlike the analogous and contemporaneous commercial blockbuster by Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Misfortunes* is a largely neglected and widely derided Inns of Court collaboration.[1] Performed early in 1588 by the gentlemen of Gray's Inn for Queen Elizabeth I, no evidence of subsequent performances exists, at least until The Dolphin's Back's revival of June 2019. Primarily composed by Thomas Hughes (and then assembled for performance with seven other members of Gray's Inn, including Christopher Yelverton, William Fulbecke, and Francis Bacon), *Misfortunes* showcases an innovative approach to imitation and translation that speaks to the emergence and impact of Elizabethan England's most popular dramatic genre as well as to contemporary pedagogy and politics.

A brief synopsis will clarify some of the classical influences that *Misfortunes* shares with *The Spanish Tragedy*. *Misfortunes* begins with the return of the ghost of Duke Gorlois from hell. King Uther, having made war on Gorlois to take his wife, killed the duke and fathered Arthur. Having grown to manhood, Arthur inherited Uther's crown and left his own incestuously begotten nephew-slash-son, Mordred, in charge of Britain during his attempt to conquer Rome. Mordred has seized the opportunity provided by Arthur's absence to take both the throne and

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his father's wife, Guenevora, and Arthur, who has heard of this betrayal, is on his way back to Britain at the beginning of the play. Despite this already bleak state of affairs, Gorlois's ghost returns resolved to make further 'mischief' in the house of Pendragon. He succeeds; by the end of act 5 Guenevora has retreated to a nunnery, Mordred is dead, Arthur is dying, and Britain is lost to civil war.[2]

Beyond thematic similarity to *The Spanish Tragedy* — in which the ghost of Don Andrea, accompanied by Revenge, returns from the underworld to bemoan his injustices and oversee the downfall of his enemies — close verbal parallels between the ghosts in both plays suggest direct influence.[3] In which direction that influence operated remains uncertain, but which play was the original and which a response is less significant here than the unusual method of *Misfortunes's* construction and what it reveals about a moment of dramatic history charged with metadramatic excitement and experiment. How does *Misfortunes* innovate within the genre that Kyd makes so popular? How does *Misfortunes* adapt its sources? And what might this methodology reveal about the impetus of early modern drama at a critical point in its development? To answer these questions, this essay considers the classical sources of *Misfortunes*, both direct and indirect. While emphasizing the adaptation of Senecan tragedy in the ghost sequences and the influence of the Oedipus myth, I also consider the translations of Lucan that characterize *Misfortunes*'s central military conflict. Although Lucan was a poet rather than a dramatist, as an anti-Virgilian writer in a perilous political moment — one who embodied a radical tradition of poetry by reimagining a well-known topic, not just from epic but history, declaration, and iambus — aspects of his reception in this period align with that of his uncle.[4] I suggest that *Misfortunes*'s sensational ghosts and its amalgam of translations form the play's central preoccupation: its own imaginative, imitative process.

I am not alone in noting the centrality of imitation and specifically translation to *Misfortunes*, though the earliest extant evaluation of the play was not enthused by Hughes's approach: 'Blush Seneca to see thy feathers loose / Pluck't from a swan & sticked on a goose'.[5] This withering critique, discovered in the papers of Anthony Bacon (brother of the play's best-known lawyer-collaborator), reveals the prominence of the play's performative translations for its contemporaries. More recent critics have also recognized this feature of the play noting its 'procrustean bed of Senecan verse', 'slavish imitations', and 'faithful plagiaris[m]' that render it a '*lusus naturae*'.[6] More pertinent than the play's critical misfortunes, however, are the ways in which the play engages so memorably — if not always palatably — with the practice and performance of translation.[7]

There are many words for translation in English, and metaphors associated with it proliferate. Retaining the literal meaning of the Latin *transferre*, the act of moving something, *translatio* sat at the heart of humanist curricula, encompassing many of the creative and innovative transformations associated with *imitatio*.[8] Of all translation's metaphors, this sense of 'carrying across' is the most persistent, though by no means the only one. Others include translation as interpretation and opening; adhesion, friendship, desire, and passion; taking a view; moving across a landscape; as well as loss, death, resurrection, and metamorphosis.[9] A ghost might operate effectively as a (sort of) embodiment of these various images.

The ghost is, as Colin Burrow observes, an early image of *imitatio*. Ghosts attended the earliest theoretical and practical explorations of mimesis; in the Roman version of Plato's cave, authors like Lucretius and Quintilian contrasted positive images of imitation with ghosts or simulacra.[10] Because of Lucretius's seminal description of the encounter between the first epic poet, Homer, and the first Roman epic poet, Ennius, the figure of the ghost came to haunt the subsequent epic tradition.[11] Virgil's *Aeneid* plays a significant part in this tradition, elaborating the ghost's significance by associating dreams and simulacral resemblances with imitations of earlier authors.[12] Ghosts thus come to work like Alexandrian footnotes, signalling their recollection or carrying across of another text. Hughes, however, carries the most not from Virgil, but from Seneca and Lucan. Why?

In the early modern tradition of translating Seneca, the already imitative ghost becomes refined, I suggest, from a representation of *imitatio* into one that specifically reflects the work of *translatio*.[13] In the first English translation of Senecan tragedy *Troas* (1559), Jasper Heywood translates a demand for retribution by the ghost of Achilles, only indirectly reported in the Latin, into dialogue and action in English. Just as Ennius receives instruction from the ghost of Homer, so too does Heywood — from Seneca himself — in his second Senecan translation, *Thyestes* (1560). This translation's prefatory verse describes the dream visitation of Seneca to the translator as he 'sleapt vppon [his] booke' (Preface, 14).[14] Just as Seneca is 'returned' and 'come agayne' in the dream, so Heywood can 'reuiue' (41) and 'renewe' (42) him by making Seneca 'speake in straunger speech […] and skan my verse in other tongue that I was woont to wright' (44). This beginning makes it hard not to hear the voice of the ambitious translator in the words of Tantalus's ghost that follow: 'now there doth aryse / My broode that shal in mischief farre the grandsyers gilt out goe'.[15] Heywood moved to Gray's Inn the year after he completed his translation of *Thyestes*. Twenty years later *Seneca His Tenne Tragedies, Translated into Englysh* (1581) was published. Alongside

Heywood's translations, this collection included *Oedipus* (1563), translated by Alexander Neville of Gray's Inn, and four plays translated by John Studley of Barnard's Inn.[16] Translation of Seneca thus claims a significant place in the Inns of Court's rhetorical and literary tradition, and we must understand Hughes's ghost of Gorlois within this tradition — one in which reading, performing, and exceeding are inextricably intertwined.

Hughes introduces his pseudo-Senecan ghost as a figure for translation. Both the prologue and dumbshow that precede his appearance set up the reflexive significance of the ghost of Duke Gorlois. The prologue, by Nicholas Trotte, features a dispute between a Muse and a Law Student that examines the composite skill set required by a translator, and concludes that the young lawyers, with 'zeale' and 'penne' (π3v), will bring together both legal rigor and creative innovation for their queen. The dumbshow, meanwhile, is the first of five elaborate spectacles that perform different kinds of reprisal and return while foregrounding the difficulties of interpretation.[17] *Misfortunes*'s first dumbshow achieves this effect by recreating a show from the Inns of Court play *Gorboduc* (1561). *Misfortunes* cites the earlier play by beginning its action with three furies rising 'from vnder the stage' exactly as in *Gorboduc*, wearing the same costumes and carrying the same iconic snake, firebrand, and whip, respectively. In *Misfortunes*, however, each fury holds not just the one emblematic prop but different props in each hand; an additional 'snake athwart a cup', a 'Cupid', and a 'Pegasus' are introduced, as are three nuns to mirror the three furies (A1r).[18] These two interludes — which explore literary process, position the play within an established tradition, and emphasize how meanings multiply, expand, and are repurposed — comprise the introduction given to the ghost. It should be noted that the ghost had different speeches when the play was performed for the queen at Greenwich. Written by Fulbecke, this variant Gorlois is even closer than Hughes's to Kyd's Don Andrea, having been subjected to a similar trial at the court of Pluto and Persephone. Both literary precedents and an alternative self haunt Gorlois's ghost in the printed text of *Misfortunes*.

Hughes's Gorlois then appears, recounts his return from '*Pluto*'s pittes and glowming shades', introduces himself as a ghost 'transported back' (A2r), and explains his desire to avenge himself on Uther's descendants. Hughes's ghost is recognizably an adaptation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Gorlois, duke of Cornwall, from *De Gestis Britonum* (ca 1136), a warlord loyal to Uther until the king seized his wife. This martial and marginal victim whose fate initiates the action of Arthur's story never reappears after his death in earlier Arthurian texts. Providing the audience of *Misfortunes* with the Arthurian context for the play's action, Hughes's Gorlois

acts like a memory or messenger from medieval literature, the ghost of the Arthurian tradition. Although the outline of Gorlois's ghost is Galfridian, his substance is Senecan. The ghost in this respect sets the tone for the whole play, in which more than a quarter of the lines comprise what appear to be Hughes's own translations from the ten plays believed at the time to make up Seneca's tragic oeuvre. (Lucan's *De Bello Civili* [ca 61–5 CE] is the only other source so extensively quoted.[19]) Whereas a fury forces the ghost of Tantalus in Seneca's *Thyestes* to wreak destruction, Gorlois's speech adapts Tantalus's lines to stress his own relish for 'reuenge' (A2r). Gorlois's agency manifested further in The Dolphin's Back revival as he moved silently through scenes of conflict like a spectral goad. If we understand the ghost to be a figure for translation, then in *Misfortunes* translation is explicitly the 'engine' (A2v) that motivates the drama.

The Elizabethan school curricula imbued the appropriation of Seneca's works with a sense of competition. In the universities and Inns of Court, drawing on the self-assertion and literary imitation that characterized Seneca's work, his tragedies became vehicles for demonstrating linguistic and rhetorical skill. When Gorlois's ghost first speaks in lines translated from *Thyestes*, the passages quoted not only explore the action of the plot; they also introduce ideas about repetition and are rendered in a way that encourages reflection on translation itself. Where Seneca's Latin, for example, speaks of '*stirpe*' and '*genus*' (which Heywood's translation, echoed elsewhere by Hughes, renders with words like 'broode' and 'grandsyer'), Hughes speaks of 'increase', of excess, and of 'fresh supplies' (A2r).[20] Hughes translates new versions of old terrors into creative challenges and opportunities. Where his models focus on the ongoing wickedness of the house of Pelops, Hughes concludes this particular passage of translation: 'Goe to: some fact, which no age shall allowe, / Nor yet conceale: some fact must needs be dared' (A2r). The last half line is Hughes's own addition, repeating the word 'fact', which can mean a deed or effect but also the act or process of making.[21] The competitive revenge-as-literary-principle that drives Senecan tragedy (as well as the work of other Imperial Latin poets), was adopted by writers and performers to showcase their skill and express their ambition: 'the Thyestean challenge is rooted in the idea of comparative judgement'.[22] *Misfortunes* knowingly participates in this competitive culture, one that would be adopted by professional playwrights like John Marston, Ben Jonson, and Thomas Middleton.[23]

While Gorlois sets the play's avenging tone, Guenevora swiftly follows with opening speeches that exemplify the creative potential *Misfortunes* finds in reimagining the verbal vehemence of Senecan tragedy. Guenevora's first speech pairs the 'bloody dreadful, irksome fact[s]' of *Thyestes* with the plots of *Agamemnon*: 'Frame

out some trap beyonde all vulgar guile, / Beyond Medea's wiles' (A2v). Her second speech moves seamlessly from the avenging 'excesse' of *Thyestes* through the 'furie' of *Hercules Oetaeus* and back to the 'high revenge' (A3r) of *Agamemnon*. In her third speech, these elements come alongside the 'great harmes' (A3r) of *Medea,* whose vengeful assertion Seneca partially renders as a citational one-upmanship of Euripides. Three of the characters ventriloquized by Guenevora in this scene are wronged wives — Clytemnestra, Deianira, and Medea — each of whom, in the lines chosen, struggles and resolves to accept her role as an avenger; the avenging Atreus of *Thyestes* quoted is less reluctant, but he too is a wronged spouse. Guenevora's translated lines emphasize grief and revenge, but, because of the chorus of voices from whom they are sourced, her betrayal of Arthur with Mordred (and Arthur's original sin in having conceived him) haunt her expressions of pain and rage. Instead of translating a single Senecan tragedy, as others had before him, Hughes translates from them all, dismembering each play by excerpting vicious and violent moments which he then reassembles into a new, extraordinary whole.

The inclusion of translations from Lucan accentuated this inventive ferocity. Where William Fulbecke's Lucanic translations in *An Historicall Collection* (published in 1601, but composed as early as the 1580s) demonstrate a general interest in the poet's colourful anecdotes and high-flown rhetoric, in *Misfortunes* translations from *De Bello Civili* focus on apocalyptic imagery and familial conflict.[24] Using substantial extracts from the account of the battle of Pharsalus to depict Arthur and Mordred's last battle, the play appropriates Lucan's imagery to associate storms of wrath and lust with the external world of war and politics, and to depict the horrors of civil war.[25] Lucanic translations that do not explicitly depict violence in *Misfortunes* explore ideas of destiny. Just as Lucan abandoned the traditional epic device of a hero, he also dispensed with the divine machinery familiar from Homer and Virgil's epics, replacing it with the Stoic concepts of fate and fortune.[26] Where, in *De Bello Civili*, these relatively impersonal forces maintain an emphasis on human responsibility, in *Misfortunes* they position those horrors within a longer chronology (stressed in The Dolphin's Back's revival, as James Wallace notes, by the collaboration of the Chorus and ghost, and the actors' playing up the frequent references to fate).[27] Anticipated in the prologue and recalled by Gorlois's ghost at its end, *Misfortunes* imagines this chronology culminating in the glories of Elizabeth I's reign, specifically in the innovations of the play itself: 'Heere all the Realme and people finde one Fate' (E4r).

So decided and distinct is Hughes's method that there can be little doubt it was perceived by some in the play's first court (not to mention Inns of Court)

audience. The feeling may have been a general sense of familiarity rather than specific recognition, but later, studious readers of the play likely apprehended *Misfortunes*'s patchwork of Latin translation as classical texts 'reduced into Tragicall notes by THOMAS HUGHES […] And here set downe as it past from vnder his handes' (π4v). The pages of *Misfortunes* feature Seneca's plays calling to and answering each other most resonantly, as extracts engage in a dialogue with each other and their new Arthurian context. Mordred's assertion, for example, translated from *Hercules Furens*, that 'Whose rule wants right, his safety's in his Sword', Conan answers with a line translated from *Thyestes*, 'The Kingliest point is to affect but right' (B1v). Translations in *Misfortunes* transform the 'point'.

The play's translations characteristically take the form of several translated passages integrated with one another and interspersed with original lines. Strikingly, *Misfortunes* takes its longest sustained passage of translation from a single Senecan speech from *Oedipus* (ca first century CE), a play defined, perhaps more than any other, by its intertextual dependence on and its divergence from its Greek ancestor, Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex* (ca 492 BCE). In *Misfortunes*, the sixteen translated lines themselves adapt Oedipus's words from an account reported by a messenger in Seneca's play.[28] The lines Hughes uses emphasize legacy, 'What for thy fame'; excess, 'Dye: but no common death: passe Natures boundes', and revenge, 'Not death, nor life alone can giue a full / Reuenge: ioyne both in one' (A4r). A creative approach to assembly is also made explicit. Lines translated elsewhere in *Misfortunes* from *Oedipus* repeatedly question the self-determination available to an avenger: 'Then is your fault from Fate, you rest excusde' (A4r); 'No feare but doth foreiudge, and many fall / Into their Fate, whiles they doe feare their Fate'; 'No Fate / But is foreset, the first daie leades the last' (C1v). So, what is it about *Oedipus* that provokes such self-conscious and self-referential use?

The Oedipus myth haunts *Misfortunes* at every level. The most substantial addition Hughes makes to his primary plot source, Geoffrey's *De Gestis Britonum*, casts an Oedipal shadow over the fall of Arthur. From the central events of the plot to the names of minor characters, Geoffrey's influence on Hughes's adaptation of Arthur's fall is apparent, with one significant exception: Mordred is not just Arthur's treacherous nephew but also his incestuously begotten son.[29] If Geoffrey's is the first great medieval Arthurian text then Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* (1485) is the last; Malory's hugely popular account of Arthur's life and death meant that this conception of Mordred was known in the sixteenth century. Whether or not Hughes was familiar with Malory's text itself, as he clearly was with Geoffrey's, or if his reading of *Morte Darthur* was 'removed', the addition of a

Malorian act of incest reframes Geoffrey's narrative of the superlative British king as a reimagining of the greatest tragic figure from the classical world.[30]

In *Misfortunes*, parallels between the house of Pendragon and the house of Laius are not limited to Arthur's incest. As well as *Gorboduc*, which evidently influenced *Misfortunes*'s act structure and dumbshows, the play repeatedly shows the influence of what was, so far as we know, the last classical tragedy to have been composed and performed by members of Gray's Inn before *Misfortunes*, George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh's *Jocasta*, in 1566. As an Inns of Court play, *Jocasta* formed part of Hughes's literary heritage in a community that was deeply self-conscious about its own literariness. Gascoigne repeatedly reprinted *Jocasta* — first in his *A Hundred Sundry Flowers* (1573), then in *Posies* (1575), and in *Whole Works* (1587) — and it was popular enough to be known to Christopher Marlowe and influence his chariot sequence in *Tamburlaine the Great, Part II* (1587). *Jocasta* was therefore relevant, readily available, and had been recently reprinted at the time of *Misfortunes*'s composition. Both plays also had a common collaborator; Christopher Yelverton, who had composed *Jocasta*'s epilogue, helped devise *Misfortunes*'s dumbshows. *Misfortunes* goes beyond shared themes common to much drama in the period and verbal echoes when it recalls *Jocasta*'s third dumbshow, where there 'appeared in the stage a great Gulfe' into which, after several failed attempts to fill it with clothes and jewels, a knight 'sodeinly lepte in'.[31] In *Misfortunes*, the two legends explicitly align:

> chorvs In Rome the gaping gulfe would not decrease,
> Till Curtius corse had closde her yawning jaws:
> In Theb's the Rotte and Murreine would not cease,
> Till Laius broode had paide for breach of lawes:
> In Brytain warres and discord will not stent,
> Till Vther's line and offspring quite be spent.   (B2r)

As well as nodding to the theatrical daring of its predecessors, this passage from *Misfortunes* makes explicit the parallels between Uther's legacy and Laius's. As the image of the literal and metaphorical 'breach' suggests, echoed by the suggestive reiteration of 'line' and 'offspring', the incest in both these legends disrupts natural or clear teleology. The shadow cast over *Misfortunes* by Oedipus, where incest disrupts traditional relationships of parent and child, enabling offspring to be both product and peer reflects the confusion of life and death represented by the ghost. Oedipal moments in the play thus illuminate Hughes's creative, adaptive process; the text is both old and new, both a copy and an original.

One further influence of *Jocasta* is worth noting. Gascoigne and Kinwelmersh's play, unlike Seneca's *Oedipus*, explores the conflict faced by a father who must choose between the welfare of a beloved child and that of his country. Inns of Court circles showed interest in this type of conflict before *Jocasta,* but it does not appear in either Neville's *Oedipus* or Thomas Newton's *Thebais* (1581). Edmund Plowden, however, had used the dilemma to exemplify his theory of the king's two bodies, albeit by referencing not Oedipus but Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia.[32] Where Agamemnon makes the kingly choice, placing public over private need, *Jocasta* reverses the situation. Here, as in Euripides via Ludovico Dolce, Creon, presented with the opportunity to save Thebes by sacrificing his son, encourages Meneceus to flee. Hughes, clearly departing from both Geoffrey and Malory, not only has Arthur compare himself to Mordred and defend his son's dubious choices but presents his Arthur with this dilemma. Mordred's comparative culpability when contrasted with Iphigenia's innocence or Meneceus's self-sacrifice renders Arthur's indecision all the more poignant; this change further invites comparisons between Arthur and Elizabeth and between Mordred and the recently executed Mary, queen of Scots. The tension in *Misfortunes* between the personal and public resolves not through plot but creative process. The play presents individual acts of translation and composition as valuable to monarch and nation even while it simultaneously, perhaps, suggests something more radical about the political process it reflects.[33]

Hughes's ghost of Gorlois stresses the broader significance of *Misfortunes*'s form when he reiterates an image introduced in the first line of the Prologue: 'the signs & fruits' of 'Conquest' (π2r). Thus, as '*Arthurs* nauies homewards flott / Triumphantly bedeckt with *Romaine* spoyles' (A2r), Hughes aligns *translatio imperii* and *translatio studii*. Hughes continually links Arthur's conquests, through Gorlois and other characters, to the myth of Troynovant. The play repeats imagery of the fall of Troy, the flight of Aeneas, the founding of Rome, the journey of Brutus, the founding of Britain, and the building of new Troy as an image of cultural appropriation and acquisition in ways that connect Arthur's conquests and Hughes's method of translating Latin 'spoyles' to England and into English. This blend of territorial and cultural appropriation has become an image of national and authorial triumph. Britain is:

NUNTIUS Deckt with so many spoyles of conquered Kings […]
          To thee hath long renowmed Rome at last
          Held vp her hands, bereft of former pompe.   (B2v)

Hughes presents Arthur's conquests as translations of an older myth, 't'inlarge the Brvtaines praise' (F3v), as he translates this myth into something of value to early modern England. *Misfortunes*'s translation of the silver age poets not only into English, as others had done, but into Britain's greatest legend, is part, the ghost concludes, of the 'wealth of former world' that makes Elizabethan England a 'golden age againe' (F4r).

   As a product of and participant in the humanist dissemination of classical texts and the 'Englishing' and innovation this project inspired, *Misfortunes*'s meditations on conquest can be understood as part of its discourse on the gains and losses of translation. Explored in fraught images of copies and originals, tree trunks and their branches, and fathers and their (incestuously begotten) sons, translation is never straightforward in *Misfortunes*. The play instead problematizes translation: Arthur's greatest glory creates his greatest challenge, one that will, as Gorlois warns, 'Tourne all the Kings to ghoastes' (A2r). Hughes thus retains both Geoffrey's interest and his ambiguity in presenting conquest and the passing of dominion: translation in *Misfortunes*, like power in *De Gestis Britonum*, is fraught with peril. Yet, like Gorlois's ghost, the play eagerly claims this sometimes 'ghastly charge' for the greater glory of 'A Rule, that else no Realme shall euer finde [a rule as yet] vnheard, vnseéne, vnread' (F4r), a rule in which 'All Tragedies are fled from State, to stadge' (π4r).[34] *Misfortunes* enacts the possibility of the assimilation of a self-conscious translation tradition into metatheatricality. Fulbecke's alternative ghost speeches replace the lines translated by Hughes from *Thyestes* for Gorlois with a more theatrical self-consciousness: Fulbecke's ghost speaks of his own 'entrance' and 'perform[ance]', noting that Arthur 'shall bee welcom'd with a Tragedie' (G1v). In *The Spanish Tragedy* Hieronimo similarly appears on stage, book in hand to declare '*Vindicta mihi*' (3.8.1) before translating his words into acts of revenge.[35]

   Misfortunes invites us to re-examine the ways in which the ghosts of other texts haunt revenge tragedies; in doing so, this play considers revenge, which is by definition a return, an old prompt to new action, as a figure of translation performed. The play's Oedipal shadows, ghost(s), and patchwork of translations go beyond the literal sense of Englishing Latin texts by foregrounding the processes and images that fomented literary dramatic thought around generic experimentation in the period (in and beyond England). Hughes's play innovates by recasting Geoffrey's

de casibus tale of King Arthur as a pseudo-Senecan and Lucanic dramatization of corruption and retribution. In so doing, the play makes legible the wider debt that revenge tragedy owes to translation — like Inns men, playwrights for the popular stage such as Thomas Kyd were, after all, often scholars, travellers, and even translators. Whether we are considering the place of Latin mottos or letters, the performance of plays-within-plays, or the mnemonic figures that populate the Elizabethan stage, we will perhaps find more to say about translation's role both in creating fictions of being and in recreating forms of fiction.

Notes

1   See Gregory M. Colón Semenza, '*The Spanish Tragedy* and Metatheatre', in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Tragedy*, ed. Emma Smith (Cambridge, 2010), 153, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL9780521519373.

2   See Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and Shewes Presented to Her Maieste …* (London, 1587; STC: 13921). All quotations reference this edition, the British Library copy, cited hereafter in the text.

3   See Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. David M. Bevington (Manchester, 1996); quotations in this essay refer to *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. Clara Calvo and Jesús Tronch (London, 2013).

4   Susan H. Braund, 'Introduction', in *Lucan: Civil War* (Oxford, 2008), xix.

5   See Janet Cowen and Joanna Udall, 'The Critical Misfortunes of Arthur', *Notes and Queries* 30 (1983), 402–5, https://doi.org/10.1093/nq/30-5-402.

6   Rob Gossedge and Stephen Knight, 'The Arthur of the Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Arthurian Legend*, ed. Ad Putter and Elizabeth Archibald (Cambridge, 2009), 104, https://doi.org/10.1017/ccol9780521860598; James D. Merriman, *The Flower of Kings: A Study of the Arthurian Legend in England Between 1485–1835* (Kansas, 1973), 31; George M. Logan, 'Hughes's Use of Lucan in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*', *Review of English Studies* 20.77 (1969), 23, https://www.jstor.org/stable/512973; Gordon Braden, *Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition: Anger's Privilege* (London, 1985), 175.

7   See Curtis Perry, 'British Empire on the Eve of the Armada: Revisiting *The Misfortunes of Arthur*', *Studies in Philology*, 108 (2011), 508–37, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23056051; Derrick Spradlin, 'Imperial Anxiety in Thomas Hughes's *The*

Misfortunes of Arthur', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 10 (2005), http://purl.oclc.org/emls/10-3/spramisf.htm.

8 See Lynn Enterline, *Shakespeare's Schoolroom: Rhetoric, Discipline, Emotion* (Philadelphia, 2012), https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812207132; Peter Mack, 'Rhetorical Training in the Elizabethan Grammar School', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Age of Shakespeare*, ed. Malcolm Smuts (Oxford, 2016), 200–12, https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199660841.001.0001.

9 See Matthew Reynolds, *The Poetry of Translation: From Chaucer & Petrarch to Homer & Logue* (Oxford, 2011), https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199605712.003.0001.

10 Colin Burrow, *Imitating Authors: From Plato to Futurity* (Oxford, 2019), 71–105, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198838081.001.0001.

11 Ibid, 120.

12 Ibid, 106–35.

13 Due to space limitations, I focus here almost exclusively on English rather than European translations.

14 Quotations derive from the following edition, which contains Jasper Heywood's *Troas* and *Thyestes* together with John Studley's *Agamemnon*; James Ker and Jessica Winston, ed., *Elizabethan Seneca: Three Tragedies* (London, 2012), Preface, 14.

15 Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Thyestes*, trans. Jasper Heywood (1560), ed. Joost Daalder (London, 1982), 7–11.

16 Elisabeth Leedham-Green, 'Neville, Alexander (1544–1614)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (*ODNB*) (2004); T.P.J. Edlin, 'Studley, John (c. 1545–1590?)', *ODNB* (2004); see also Jessica Winston, *Lawyers at Play: Literature, Law, and Politics at the Early Modern Inns of Court, 1558–1581* (Oxford, 2016).

17 As Romola Nuttall's essay in this collection notes, these difficulties are addressed by the detailed interpretative descriptions of the dumbshows included in the printed *Misfortunes*; Nuttall, 'Publishing *Misfortunes*: Recording Performance at the Inns of Court, 187–200, in this Issues in Review, https://doi.org/10.12745/et.24.2.5025.

18 See Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *The Tragedie of Gobodvc* (London, 1565; STC: 18684), C5r.

19 On translations of Lucan see Edward Paleit, 'Lucan in the Renaissance, pre-1625: An Introduction', *Literature Compass*, 1 (2001), 1–6 and Paulina Kewes, 'Roman History, Essex, and Late Elizabethan Political Culture', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Age of Shakespeare*, 250–68, https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199660841.001.0001.

20 Seneca the Younger, *Thyestes*, in *Tragedies* 2, ed. John G. Fitch (Cambridge MA, 2018), 219–32, 232–4.

21 *OED Online*, s.v. 'fact, n., int., and adv'.

22 I am grateful to Elizabeth Sandis for sharing her article 'The Thyestean Language of English Revenge Tragedy: A Competitive Code Shared by the University and Popular Stages', forthcoming in *Shakespeare Survey*, before its publication.

23 Ibid.

24 William Fulbecke's selections reveal his agenda regarding constitutional continuity and the legal foundations of Rome; see *An Historicall Collection of the Continvall Faction, Tvmvlts, and Massacres of the Romans* (London, 1601; STC: 11412).

25 The playwright reassigns lines taken from both opposing Roman generals to Arthur, conflating Caesarian criminality and Pompeian legitimacy; see Edward Paleit, *War, Liberty, and Caesar: Responses to Lucan's Bellum Ciuile, ca. 1580–1650* (Oxford, 2013), 140, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199602988.001.0001; see also Lorna Wallace, 'Decoding *Misfortunes*: Advice to Elizabeth I and Her Subjects', 171–86, in this Issues in Review, https://doi.org/10.12745/et.24.2.4887.

26 Braund, 'Introduction', xxiii.

27 See James Wallace, 'Staging *Arthur*', 139-56, 143, in this Issues in Review, https://doi.org/10.12745/et.24.2.4891.

28 Seneca the Younger, *Oedipus*, in *Tragedies* 2, ed. John G. Fitch (Cambridge MA, 2018), 102.

29 The name of the Arthur's sister remains Anna, as in *De Gestis Britonum* where no incest is committed, rather than Morgause as in *Morte Darthur*. Aschillius, king of Denmark, is also taken from Geoffrey.

30 Helen Moore, *Amadis in English: A Study in the Reading of Romance* (Oxford, 2020), 30, https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198832423.001.0001.

31 George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh, *Iocasta*, in *A Hundredth Sundrie Flowres Bounde Vp in One Small Poesie* (London, 1573; STC: 11635), 116. Cited hereafter in the text.

32 I am grateful to Lorna Hutson for drawing this point to my attention.

33 See Gertrude Reese, 'The Political Import of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*', *Review of English Studies*, 21 (Oxford, 1945), 81–91, https://www.jstor.org/stable/509654?seq=1.

34 An inversion of the justification given by Vitus Winshemius for the translations of the 'Wittenberg Sophocles'; see Micha Lazarus, 'Tragedy at Wittenberg: Sophocles in Reformation Europe', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 73 (2020), 33–77, https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2019.494.

35 See Emma Smith, 'Introduction', in *Five Revenge Tragedies*, ed. Emma Smith (London, 2012).