Sourcing *Misfortunes*: Translation and Tragedy

The Misfortunes of Arthur, a tragedy that explores ideas of revenge and justice, is interested throughout in the nature of its own form. Unlike the analogous and contemporaneous commercial blockbuster, Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Misfortunes* is a largely neglected and indeed widely derided Inns of Court collaboration.[1] Performed early in 1588 by the gentlemen of Gray's Inn for Queen Elizabeth I, there is no evidence of subsequent performances, at least not 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), the innovative approach to imitation and translation showcased in *Misfortunes* speaks to the emergence and impact of Elizabethan England's most popular dramatic genre in intriguing and unexpected ways.

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. When Gorlois was alive, King Uther made war on the Duke to take his wife, killing Gorlois and fathering Arthur in the process. Arthur, having grown to manhood and inherited Uther's crown, has left his own incestuously begotten nephew-slash-son, Mordred, in charge of Britain while he makes war on the Continent. Mordred has seized the opportunity provided by Arthur's absence to take both the throne and his father's wife, Guenevera. Arthur, who has heard of his betrayal, is on his way home at the beginning of the play. Despite this already bleak state of affairs, Gorlois' ghost returns, resolved to make further 'mischief' in the House of Pendragon, and, in The Dolphin's Back's revival, moving silently through scenes of the play's other characters in conflict, like a spectral goad.[2] He

succeeds: by the end of Act 5 Guenevera has retreated to a nunnery, Mordred is dead, Arthur is dying, and Britain is lost to civil war.

Beyond thematic similarity to *The Spanish Tragedy* – in which the ghost of Andrea, accompanied by Revenge, returns from the underworld to bemoan his injustices and to 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 *Misfortunes*'s unusual method of construction and what it reveals about a moment of dramatic history charged with metadramatic excitement and experiment. I want to ask how *Misfortunes* innovates 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 will consider the classical sources of *Misfortunes*, direct and indirect. My particular emphasis is on the influence of Senecan tragedy, in particular on ghost sequences and the influence of the Oedipus myth, but this essay also considers Hughes' translations of Lucan, whose *De Bello Ciuili* characterises the central military conflict of the play's fourth Act. While Lucan was a poet rather than a dramatist, as an anti-Virgilian writer in a perilous political moment – 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, Seneca.[4] I will argue that *Misfortunes*'s sensational ghosts and its extended passages of translation perform the play's central pre-occupation: 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 to contemporaries. More recent critics have also recognized this feature of the play noting: its 'procrustean bed of Senecan verse', 'slavish imitations', 'faithful plagiaris[m]' and the experimental approach to translation that makes it a '*lusus naturae*' [freak of nature].[6] Instead of dwelling on the play's critical misfortunes, I explore how the play engages in such a memorable (if not always a palatable) way with the practice and performance of translation.[7]

There are many words for translation in English, and its metaphors proliferate. *Translatio* retained the literal meaning of the Latin *transferre*, the act of moving something, while being figuratively understood as the act of moving from one language to another. This process 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 it is 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; loss, death, resurrection, and metamorphosis.[9] It is not difficult to see how a ghost might operate effectively as a (sort of) embodiment of these various images. The ghost is in fact, 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' 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

almost like Alexandrian footnotes, signalling their recollection or carrying across of another text. It is not, however, from Virgil that Hughes carries the most, it is from Seneca and Lucan. Why?

In the early modern tradition of translating Seneca, the already imitative ghost is refined, I suggest, from a representation of *imitatio* to one that specifically reflects the work of *translatio*. In the first translation of Senecan tragedy, *Troas,* into English, 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, then so too does Heywood – from Seneca himself – in his second Senecan translation, *Thyestes*. This translation is prefaced with a verse description of the dream visitation of Seneca to the translator as he 'sleapt vppon [his] booke' (Preface, 14).[13] 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). Following this beginning it is hard not to hear the voice of the ambitious translator in the words of Tantalus' ghost that follow, 'now there doth aryse/ My broode that shal in mischief farre the grandsyers gilt out goe'.[14] 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, including, alongside Heywood's translations, those by Alexander Neville, of Gray's Inn, and John Studley, of Barnard's Inn.[15] Translation of Seneca thus claims a significant place in the Inns of Court's rhetorical and literary tradition, and it is within this tradition – one in which reading, performing, and exceeding are inextricably intertwined – that Hughes's ghost of Gorlois should be understood.

Hughes introduces his pseudo-Senecan ghost as a figure for translation from the outset. The reflexive significance of the ghost of Duke Gorlois is set up by both the prologue

and dumbshow that precede his appearance. The prologue, by Nicholas Trotte, features a dispute between a Muse and a Law Student that examines the composite skills-set required by a translator, and concludes that the young lawyers, with 'zeale' and 'penne' (Prologue, 109–10), will bring together both legal rigour 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.[16] In the case of *Misfortunes*'s first dumbshow, this effect is achieved by recreating an earlier show from the Inns of Court play *Gorboduc* (c. 1562). *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.[17] These two interludes – which explore literary process, position the play within an established tradition, and emphasize the ways in which meanings multiply, expand and are repurposed – are the introduction given to the ghost. It should be noted that when the play was performed for the Queen at Greenwich the ghost was given different speeches, written by Fulbecke, whose 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. Gorlois' ghost is haunted in the printed text of *Misfortunes* both by literary precedents and its alternative self.

Hughes's Gorlois then appears, outlines his return from '*Pluto*'s pittes and glowming shades' (1.1.4), introduces himself as a ghost 'transported back' (1.1.3) and explains his desire to avenge himself on the descendants of Uther. Hughes's ghost is recognisably an adaptation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Gorlois, Duke of Cornwall, from *De gestis Britonum* (c. 1136), a warlord loyal to Uther until the King's seizure of his wife. This martial and

marginal victim whose fate initiates the action of Arthur's story never reappears after 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, if you will, of the Arthurian tradition. Although the outline of Gorlois' ghost is Galfridian, his substance is Senecan. In this respect, the ghost sets the tone for the whole play, in which more than a quarter of the total line count is made up of what appear to be Hughes's own translations from the ten plays believed at the time to comprise Seneca's tragic oeuvre (Lucan's *De Bello Ciuili* is the only other source so extensively quoted).[18] However, where the ghost of Tantalus in Seneca's *Thyestes* is forced to wreak destruction by a Fury, Gorlois' speech adapts his lines to stress his own relish for 'reuenge' (1.1.9). If the ghost can be understood as a figure for translation, then in *Misfortunes*, translation is explicitly the 'engine' (1.1.67) that motivates the drama.

The manner of Seneca's inclusion in Elizabethan school curricula imbued it with a sense of competition. In the universities and Inns of Court, drawing on the self-assertion and literary imitation that characterised Seneca's oeuvre, his tragedies became vehicles for the demonstration of linguistic and rhetorical ability. When Gorlois' ghost first speaks in lines translated from *Thyestes*, the passages quoted explore ideas about repetition and are rendered in a way that encourages reflection on translation itself, as well as the action of the plot. 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' (1.1.12), of excess and of 'fresh supplies' (1.1.25).[19] New versions of old terrors are translated by Hughes 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' (1.1.27–8). 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. The competitive revenge-as-literary principal 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'.[20] *Misfortunes* knowingly participates in this competitive culture, which would be adopted by professional playwrights like John Marston, Ben Jonson and Thomas Middleton.[21]

While Gorlois sets the play's avenging tone, he is swiftly followed on stage by Guenevera, whose opening speeches exemplify the creative potential *Misfortunes* finds in translating the violence of Senecan tragedy. In Guenevera's first speech the 'bloody dreadful, irksome fact[s]' (1.2.8) of *Thyestes* are paired with the plots of *Agamemnon*, 'Frame out some trap beyonde all vulgar guile,/ Beyond Medea's wiles' (1.2.11–12). Her second speech moves seamlessly from the avenging 'excesse' (1.2.47) of *Thyestes*, through the 'furie' (1.2.31) of *Hercules Oetaeus*, and back to the 'high revenge' (1.2.38) of *Agamemnon*. In her third speech, these are placed alongside the 'great harms' (1.2.52) of *Medea* whose vengeful assertion is partially rendered by Seneca as a citational oneupmanship of Euripides. Three of the characters ventriloquized by Guenevera in this scene are wronged wives – Clytemnestra, Deianira, and Medea – each of whom, in the lines chosen, struggles and resolves to accept their role as avenger. The avenging Atreus of *Thyestes* quoted is less reluctant, but he is also a wronged spouse. Guenevera's translated lines are about grief and revenge, but, because of the chorus of voices from whom they are sourced, her expressions of pain and rage are haunted by her betrayal of Arthur with Mordred, and by Arthur's original sin in having conceived him. Instead of translating a single Senecan tragedy, as others had done before him, Hughes translates from them all, dismembering each play by excerpting vicious and violent moments and reassembling them into a new, extraordinary whole.

This violence is accentuated by the inclusion of translations from Lucan. 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 Ciuili* focus on apocalyptic imagery and familial conflict.[22] Using substantial extracts from the Battle of Pharsalus to depict Arthur and Mordred's last battle, the play appropriates Lucan's imagery to associate storms of feeling, of wrath and lust, to the external world of war and politics, and to depict the horrors of civil war.[23] The translations that do not explicitly depict violence, meanwhile, all explore ideas of destiny. Just as Lucan abandoned the traditional epic device of a hero, so too did he dispense with the divine machinery familiar from the epics of Homer and Virgil, replacing it with the Stoic concepts of Fate and Fortune.[24] Where, in *De Bello Ciuili*, these relatively impersonal forces help to maintain an emphasis on human responsibility, in *Misfortunes* they position those horrors within a longer chronology. In The Dolphin's Back's revival this was stressed by the collaboration of the Chorus and ghost and, as Author1 notes, by individual actors, both physically and vocally.[25] Anticipated in the prologue and recalled by Gorlois' 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' (4.3.20).

So decided and distinct is Hughes's method that there can be little doubt it was perceived by some of the play's first courtly (not to mention Inns of Court) audience. The feeling may have been a general sense of familiarity rather than specific recognition, but it seems likely that *Misfortunes*'s patchwork of Latin translation was more fully apprehended by later, studious readers of the play in print, once it was 'reduced into Tragicall notes by Thomas Hughes […] and here set downe as it past from under his hands'.[26] It is on the pages of *Misfortunes* that Seneca's plays call and answer to each other most resonantly, as extracts

are placed 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' (1.4.95), is answered by Conan, in a line translated from *Thyestes*, 'The Kingliest point is to affect but right' (1.4.97). In *Misfortunes*'s new formulation, the "point" is transformed.

The integration of several passages of translation with one another, interspersed with original lines, is the characteristic form taken by translations in *Misfortunes*. Strikingly, the longest sustained passage of translation from a single Senecan speech is taken from *Oedipus*, a play defined, perhaps more so than any other, by its intertextual dependence on and its divergence from its Greek ancestor: Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*. In *Misfortunes*, the sixteen translated lines are themselves a kind of adaptation of Oedipus' words, not performed by Oedipus himself in Seneca's play but reported by a messenger.[27] The emphasis in the lines used are on: legacy, 'What for thy fame' (1.3.47); excess, 'Dye: but no common death: passe Natures boundes' (1.3.54); and revenge, 'Not death, nor life alone can giue a full/ Reuenge: ioyne both in one' (1.3.49–50). 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' (1.3.62), 'No feare but doth foreiudge, and many fall/ Into their Fate, while they doe feare their Fate' (2.3.114), 'No Fate but is foreset, the first daie leades the last' (2.3.128). So, what is it about *Oedipus* that provokes such self-conscious and self-referential use?

Misfortunes is haunted by the Oedipus myth at every level. Even the most substantial addition Hughes makes to his primary plot source, Monmouth'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, he is also

his incestuously begotten son.[28] If Geoffrey's is the first great medieval Arthurian text then Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*, published in 1485, is the last, and it is from Malory's hugely popular account of Arthur's life and death that his 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.[29]

Parallels between the House of Pendragon and the House of Laius are not limited, in *Misfortunes*, to Arthur's incest. As well as the evident influence of *Gorboduc* (1561) in *Misfortunes*'s act structure and dumbshows, the play repeatedly cites the influence of what was, so far as we know, the last classical tragedy to have be composed and performed by members of Gray's Inn before *Misfortunes*: George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh's *Jocasta* (1566). A part of Hughes's literary heritage in a community that was deeply self-conscious about its own literariness, *Jocasta* was repeatedly reprinted by Gascoigne – in his *A Hundred Sundry Flowers* (1573), *Posies* (1575), and *Whole Works* (1587) – and popular enough to be known to Christopher Marlowe and influence his chariot sequence in *Tamburlaine the Great, Part II* (1587). *Jocasta* was thus relevant, readily available, and had been recently reprinted at the time of *Misfortunes*'s composition. It also had a collaborator in common: Christopher Yelverton, who had composed *Jocasta*'s epilogue, helped devise *Misfortunes*'s dumbshows. Beyond the possibility of access and shared themes common to much drama in the period, specific echoes of *Jocasta* can be found in both verbal echoes and the description of *Jocasta*'s third dumbshow, where there 'appeared in the stage a great Gulfe' and, after several failed attempts to fill it with clothes and jewels, a knight 'sodeinly lepte in'.[30] In *Misfortunes*, the two legends are explicitly aligned:

GORLOIS In Rome the gaping gulf would not decrease,
Till Curtius corse had closed her yawning jaws:
In Thebes the rot and murrain would not cease,
Till Laius brood had paid for breach of laws:
In Britain wars and discord will not stent,
Till Uther's line and offspring quite be spent. (1.5.19–24)

As well as a nod to the theatrical daring of their predecessors, the parallels between Uther's legacy and Laius' are explicit. 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 a natural or clear teleology. The confusion of life and death represented by the ghost is thus reflected in the shadow cast over *Misfortunes* by Oedipus, where incest disrupts traditional relationships of parent and child, enabling offspring to be both product and peer. 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. This particular conflict was current in Inns of Court circles before *Jocasta* but does not appear in either Alexander Neville's *Oedipus* or Thomas Newton's *Thebais*. Edmund Plowden, however, had used the dilemma to exemplify his theory of the king's two bodies. His example was not Oedipus but Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia.[31] Where Agamemnon makes the kingly choice, placing public over private need, in *Jocasta* the situation is reversed. Here, as in Euripides via Ludovico Dolce, Creon, presented with the opportunity to save Thebes by sacrificing his son, encourages Meneceus to flee. Creon's hypocrisy is accentuated by his previous declaration of

devotion to the ‘common weale’ at any cost, only then to demand: ‘Shall I be then the murtherer of mine owne?’ (3.1.220).[32] Hughes, in a clear departure 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. Arthur’s indecision is rendered all the more poignant by Mordred’s comparative culpability when contrasted with Iphigenia’s innocence or Meneceus’ self-sacrifice. The motivation for this change may be explained by the comparison it invites between Arthur and Elizabeth and Mordred and Mary, Queen of Scots. The irreconcilable tension, however, between the personal and public is resolved not by plot but process, in which individual acts of translation and composition are presented as valuable to monarch and nation.[33]

The broader significance of the form taken by translation in *Misfortunes* is stressed by Hughes’s ghost of Gorlois, who uses the return of Arthur’s fleet to reiterate an image introduced in the first line of the Prologue: of ‘the signs & fruits’ of ‘Conquest’ (Prologue, 1). In this way, as ‘*Arthurs* nauies homewards flott/ Triumphantly bedect with *Romaine* spoyles’ (1.1.31–2), Hughes aligns *translatio imperii* and *translatio studii*. Arthur’s conquests are continually linked, by Hughes’s Gorlois and other characters, to the myth of Troyneuvant. The 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, is repeated as an image of cultural appropriation and acquisition that links Arthur’s conquests with Hughes’s method, 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, bereaft of former pompe. (2.1.4–6)

Arthur's conquests are presented as translations of an older myth, 't'inlarge the Brvtaines praise' (5.1.126), even as his own myth is translated into something of value to early modern England. *Misfortunes*'s translation of the silver age poets not only into English (as others had) 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' (5.2.23).

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. Translation is never straightforward in *Misfortunes* – something Hughes explores in fraught images of copies and originals, tree trunks and their branches, and fathers and their (incestuously begotten) sons. Instead, it is problematized: Arthur's greatest glory creates his greatest challenge, one that will, as Gorlois warns, 'Tourne all the Kings to ghoastes' (1.1.41). Hughes thus retains both Geoffrey's interest and his ambiguity in presenting conquest and the passage of dominion: translation in *Misfortunes*, like power in *De gestis Britonum*, is fraught with peril. Yet, like Gorlois' ghost, the play eagerly claims this sometimes 'ghastly charge' (5.2.35) for the greater glory of: 'A Rule, that else no Realme shall euer finde [a rule as yet] vnheard, vnseéne, vnread' (5.2.27–8), a rule in which 'All Tragedies are fled from State, to stadge' (Prologue, 133). *Misfortunes* almost seems to enact the possibility of the assimilation of a self-conscious translation tradition into meta-theatricality. In Fulbecke's alternative ghost speeches, the lines translated by Hughes from *Thyestes* for Gorlois are replaced by 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' (1.1.47). In *The Spanish Tragedy*, meanwhile, Hieronimo appears on stage, book in hand to declare: '*Vindicta mihi*' (3.8.1), before translating his words into the actual acts of revenge.[34]

Misfortunes invites us to re-examine the ways in which revenge tragedies are haunted by the ghosts of other texts; to consider revenge, which is by definition a return, an old prompt to new action, as a figure of translation performed. The play's Oedipal shadows and its ghost(s) use translation to recast Geoffrey's *de casibus* tale of King Arthur as a pseudo-Senecan and Lucanic dramatization of corruption, retribution and ultimately innovation. In so doing, the play makes legible a wider debt that revenge tragedy owes to translation, not just in the literal sense of Englishing Latin texts, but in the processes and images that fomented literary dramatic thought around generic experimentation in the period. After all, not only Inn's men but playwrights for the popular stage were often scholars and even translators, like Thomas Kyd. Whether we are considering the place of Latin mottos or letters, the performance of plays-within-plays, or the mnemonic figures that populate the commercial Elizabethan stage, perhaps there is more to say about translation's role in the knowing meditations of revenge tragedy on theatre's power to create fictions of being and to recreate forms of fiction.

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See Gregory M. Colón Semenza, '*The Spanish Tragedy* and Metatheatre', in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Tragedy*, ed. Emma Smith (Cambridge, 2010), 153.

[2] Thomas Hughes, Nicholas Trotte, William Fulbecke et al, *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, in *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition*, ed. Brian Jay Corrigan (New York, 1992), 1.1.15, cited hereafter in the text.

[3] See Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. David M. Bevington (Manchester, 1996); quotations are taken from *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 Cowan and Joanna Udall, 'The Critical Misfortunes of Arthur', *Notes and Queries* 30 (1983), 402–5.

[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; James 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*', *The Review of English Studies* 20 (1969), 22-32 (23); Gordon Braden, *Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition: Anger's Privilege* (London, 1985), 175.

[7] See Curtis Perry, 'British Empire of the Even of the Armada: Revisiting *The Misfortunes of Arthur*', *Studies in Philology* 108 (2011), 508–537; 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); 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.

[9] Matthew Reynolds, *The Poetry of Translation: From Chaucer & Petrarch to Homer & Logue* (Oxford, 2011).

[10] Colin Burrow, *Imitating Authors: From Plato to Futurity* (Oxford, 2019), 71–105.

[11] Ibid, 120.

[12] Ibid, 106–135.

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

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

[15] Elisabeth Leedham-Green 'Neville, Alexander (1544-1614)', (2004) <https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2120/10.1093/ref:odnb/19923>; ODNB, T. P. J. Edlin, 'Studley, John (c. 1545–1590?) (2004) <https://ezproxy-prdbodleian.ox.ac.uk:2120/10.1093/ref:odnb/26742>; see also Jessica Winston, *Lawyers at Play: Literature, Law, and Politics at the Early Modern Inns of Court, 1558–1581* (Oxford, 2016).

[16] As Author4 notes, these difficulties are addressed in print, 8.

[17] See Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *The Tragedie of Gobodvc* (London, 1565); Hughes, *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, 84–85.

[18] 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*, 250–268.

[19] Seneca the Younger, *Thyestes*, in *Tragedies* 2, ed. John G. Fitch (Cambridge, Mass., 2018), 219–232, (232–234).

[20] 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.

[21] Ibid.

[22] 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).

[23] Lines taken from both opposing Roman generals are reassigned 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 University Press, 2013), 140; see also Author3, 13.

[24] Braund, 'Introduction', xxiii.

[25] See Author 1, p.?

[26] Hughes, *Misfortunes*, 82.

[27] Seneca the Younger, *Oedipus*, in *Tragedies* 2, ed. John G. Fitch (Cambridge, Mass., 2018), 3-115, (102).

[28] 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 a name taken from Geoffrey.

[29] Helen Moore, *Amadis in English: A Study in the Reading of Romance* (Oxford, 2020), 30.

[30] George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh, *Iocasta*, in *A hundredth sundrie flowres bounde vp in one small poesie* (London, 1573), 116.

[31] I am grateful to Lorna Hutson for drawing this to my attention.

[32] Gascoigne and Kinwelmersh, 122–3.

[33] See Gertrude Reese, 'The Political Import of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*', *The Review of English Studies* 21 (Oxford, 1945), 81–91.

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