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Sophocles Sublimis

Cressida RYAN

From the publication of the *editio princeps* in 1502 onwards, the plays of Sophocles have regularly been translated into both Latin and various vernaculars. In this article I discuss a range of sixteenth-century Latin translations, some of the texts on which they drew, and some of the texts which in turn followed on from them. I offer a commentary on some of the features which merit greater attention, in understanding the construction and use of these translations. This is by no means a comprehensive study, but suggests avenues to pursue further. Using eighteenth-century material as a more fully formed example of the developing techniques of textual criticism and interpretation, I trace back some of the intellectual and aesthetic decisions which underpin earlier works, and suggest ways in which the text, paratextual features and translation affect our understanding of the play and reflect the background of the scholar producing them. I focus on the *Oedipus at Colonus* (henceforth *OC*), as Sophocles' last play, and one not often considered so carefully. Focussing on a less popular play allows some of the underlying themes and approaches to be seen more clearly. This article is only an introduction to a topic which merits much greater attention.

The texts and translations considered in this paper are a representative sample of what was available. For a list of Latin translations available in the sixteenth century, see BORZA (2007) 116, 120. For 1502-1600 alone he records 30 published Latin translations and 15 in manuscript. I shall discuss the Latin translations of GABIA (Venice, 1543), WINSHEIM (Heidelberg, 1549), LALAMANT (Paris, 1558) and RATALLER (Antwerp, 1570). BORZA (2007) discusses the translations produced in sixteenth-century Italy, with an interest in whether they are *ad verbum* or literary, how they cope with metrical issues and what Greek text they used. I discuss not only the Italian Latin translations, but also some from further afield, in order to place even the *ad verbum* translations in a literary (and politico-aesthetic) context.

Translation is itself a form of interpretation and commentary, and the translations of Sophocles' plays inform subsequent readings of them in various ways. The role of translation as a demonstration of scholarly ability has long been recognised.¹ Translating into a non-native language such as Latin only increases this sense of alienation and learnedness. Lexical accuracy is not the sole issue under discussion in translation studies; nor is it usually sufficient for a fine translation.² A translation style can reveal the agenda of the translator, and the preconceptions and cultural background of the intended audience, and to this extent is a helpful tool in analysing the role of a text within a culture. In this article I begin to illustrate some of the patterns underlying sixteenth-century Latin translations; a full analysis of that context is beyond the scope of such a short article, but I hope to indicate fruitful areas for further research. Much as the Latin translations are a reception of the Sophoclean texts, they also become a received text as generations of readers encounter them.

With this introduction in place, I now turn to consider firstly some formatting issues which affect our reading of the translations, and then thematic concerns to do with the expression of leadership terms and the sublime.

Line attributions

Even Sophoclean line attributions reveal something of textual criticism and cultural prejudices. From around *OC* 1735, for example, the names of speakers have been called into particular question. At *OC* 1751, someone says to Antigone:

παύετε θρήνον, παῖδες ἔν οἷς γὰρ
χάρϊς ἢ χθονία νύξ, ἀπόκειται,
πενθεῖν οὐ χρεὶ νήμεσις γάρ.

BENJAMIN HEATH first attributed lines 1751-3 to Theseus and not the chorus, as in the manuscripts.³ John Burton's 1759 *Pentalogia* brought together the five "Theban" plays for the first time, but was also the first Greek text in England to include an extensive introduction, notes, *apparatus criticus* and glossary (Greek – Latin). It is not generally highly regarded for its level of scholarship, but as volume with interesting aims and approaches it can give us greater insights into Early Modern scholarship. In the 1779 *δεύτεραι φροντίδες* Burton wrote simply "procedit

¹ See L. HARDWICK, *Translating Words, Translating Cultures*, London, 2000, p. 10.

² *Ibid.* 9.

³ B. HEATH, *Notae Sive Lectiones ad tragicorum Graecorum veterum Aeschylī, Sophoclis, Euripidis quae supersunt dramata deperditorumque reliquias* (Oxonii, e typographeo Claredoniano), 1762, 68: "Haec Theseo non Choro tribuendo censeo."

in scenam *Theseus*, alloquitur puellas, consolatur”⁴ Given that these lines echo lines spoken by Theseus earlier in the play (ἄλις λόγων – Burton line 1010) it matters to our interpretation of his character and the play whether he speaks them or not. Theseus has the greatest number of exits and entrances of any character in Greek tragedy.⁵ Given the lack of stage directions, a character’s first lines in any given scene are vital in establishing their presence on stage. The direction to the girls is paternal, and comes better from Theseus, who has promised to care for the girls, than from the chorus. The attribution thus has the potential to colour our perception of both the chorus and Theseus, as well as assisting our understanding of the staging of the scene.

In the Latin translations, these lines are mainly given to the chorus. The reference is clearly to both sisters. In modern editions, Ismene and Antigone have shared the preceding *kommos*; this is the case in LALAMANT and RATALLER’s translations, but not GABIA or WINSHEIM, where it is only Antigone and the Chorus.⁶ This raises the question as to which characters are onstage and interacting at any given time. There is an issue with the *OC* and Greek tragic conventions, because it is impossible to cast it with the usual three actors. Theseus is variously on stage with both Creon and Antigone, who are also onstage together, alongside Oedipus, and so four actors would be needed. The chorus is also more integrated in the action and dialogue than in some plays. This leads to a variety of opinions as to who says any given line in the scene where Antigone is kidnapped onstage (ocr lines 800-886). The eighteenth-century translations of the scene help demonstrate the effect of the different readings.

THOMAS FRANCKLIN rearranged the line attributions, printing a note to his line 875:

“For I am weak with age, and here alone. This line in the original is, I think, very absurdly put into the mouth of Creon; I have taken the liberty to give it to Oedipus, from whom it certainly comes with more propriety.”

⁴ J. BURTON, *Pentalogia, sive, Tragoediarum graecarum delectus: cum adnotatione Johannis Burton* (Oxonii: e typographeo Clarendoniano), 1759, p. 101.

⁵ Clytemnestra in *Agamemnon* may also have had five entrances and exits. This depends on whether she remains onstage for any of the choruses. At most, her itinerancy only matches Theseus for frequency. She also only uses the central door, whereas Theseus crosses the stage frequently, making his entrances and exits more notable. They are discussed further in Chapter 5. For entrances and exits in tragedy see O. TAPLIN, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus: the Dramatic Use of Exits and Entrances in Greek Tragedy*, Oxford, 1977, and *Greek Tragedy in Action [Revised Edition]* London, 1985.

⁶ Although in the Greek accompanying WINSHEIM’s translation Ismene does feature.

The text is shoe-horned into a way of thinking that echoes eighteenth-century characterisations, rather than paying attention to the play itself. The eighteenth-century Greek texts mainly maintain the modern distribution, but all three translations divide up the lines differently. The chorus sometimes sounds forceful, sometimes not, and Oedipus sometimes exclaims his woe, but sometimes it is moved to Antigone. Stereotypical ideas of non-interventionist choruses and strong-willed heroes affect the very setting out of the text. BRUNCK (1786) and ELMSLEY (1823) also differ from the *textus receptus*, assigning the lines to different speakers. This scene contains the greatest onstage violence of any tragedy; the confusion over how to represent it demonstrates how this very unusual scene continued to be problematic into the nineteenth century, in terms of what could be expected of characters and scenes in a Greek tragedy.

Looking back at the sixteenth century editions and translations we see different ways of attributing the lines in this section. LLOYD JONES and WILSON print a range of notes explaining some of the attributions, including:

“833 *Oedipodi tribuit Wunder, Antigonaē codd.*
837: *Creonti tribuit Reisig. Oedipodi codd.*”

Even in the sixteenth-century Latin texts and translations we find a variety of attributions, which do not agree with each other. They are not blindly following a given Greek text, but are beginning to impose their own interpretative framework on the plays, through their choice of line designations, whether *ad verbum* or literary.

Line markings

Another unusual feature in a number of the translations (and texts) is the marking of a number of lines with double dashes.⁷ Putting in the extra symbols is a deliberate decision, leading to further typographical complexity, so it is worth considering the decision making behind the choice of lines. For this point I again work backwards, starting with JOHN BURTON’s 1759 *Pentalogia*.

⁷ “*vel sim.* is printed at the start/end of the lines. In one example, a hand is printed pointing to important lines.

Table 1: lines marked... in BURTON

Play	Total no. lines according to BURTON	Lines marked...	%
<i>OT</i>	1529	26	1.79
<i>OC</i>	1779	41	2.30
<i>Antigone</i>	1353	119	8.80
<i>Phoenissae</i>	1795	94	5.27
<i>Septem</i>	1086	10	0.92

These lines appear to be *sententiae*, perhaps for transcription into commonplace books. Some of the lines are also marked with footnotes, but many are not. For example, *Antigone* 181-189 is marked; this has a footnote: “*Totum hunc locum, usque ad vers. 196. recitat Demosthenes in Orat. Περὶ Παραπρεσβείας p.331. edit. Franc...*”. BURTON noted that this passage was quoted by Demosthenes (and then Stobaeus) but does not quote the whole passage himself. His use of quotation marks thus becomes harder to understand. Most are only short passages; the longest continuous quotation is *Phoenissae* 548-59; the only dialogue is *OC* 800-2. This passage is marked by BURTON as sententious, providing a good example of Sophocles’ philosophical thinking, going some way towards justifying the play’s inclusion in the volume.⁸ The didactic function of the text is further expressed in the opening notes, where BURTON gave a list of sources discussing the play, covering Valerius Maximus viii.c.7 §. 12, Cicero *Cato Maior de Senectute* ch. 7, Macrobius, Apollodorus, Homeric Scholiasts and Pausanias.⁹

⁸ See A. LONG, *Language and Thought in Sophocles: A Study of Abstract Nouns and Poetic Technique* London, 1968 for discussion of how Sophocles’ use of abstract nouns demonstrates his engagement with late fifth-century philosophical thought. J. OPSTELTEN, *Sophocles and Greek Pessimism* trans. J. A. Ross, Amsterdam, 1952, provides a detailed discussion of Sophocles as a supposed pessimist.

⁹ These were common sources for information about the play. See B. KENNETT, *The Lives and Characters of the Ancient Grecian Poets. With their heads curiously engraven on copper-plate. 2nd edition*, London, Printed for B. Motte and C. Bathurst, at the Middle-Temple-Gate, Fleet-Street; and sold by Stephen Austen at the Angel and Bible in St. Paul’s Church-Yard, 1735; A. SIMM, *Miscellaneous Tracts: or, Select Passages, Historical, Moral, &c. Extracted from eminent Authors, ancient and modern. Containing and Abstract of Mr Locke’s Conduct of the Understanding. For the Benefit of younger Scholars*, Edinburgh, 1753; E. HARWOOD, *Biographia Classica: The Lives and Characters of the Greek and Roman Classics. A New Edition, Corrected and Enlarged, with some Additional Lives; and A List of the Best Editions of Each Author*, London, 1778, and J. SEALLY, *The lady’s encyclopedia: or, a concise analysis of the belles lettres, the fine arts, and the sciences, in*

Pentalogia was intended as an educational text, and its lexicon, commentary and marking of sententious lines bear witness to this aim. In the context of this particular volume, the lines make sense, but what about texts and translations before 1758?

The same approach is seen in the Latin translations and other Greek texts.¹⁰ I include just some of the texts under discussion, for the sake of brevity.

Table 2: Greek lines marked in other texts and translations

Play	Greek 8a 169* Art	Gabia	8 S 95 (2) Art Greek	Lalmant 1557**	Lalamant 1558
Ajax	77	57	79	197	84
Electra	35	15	35	3	32
OT	19	6	20	25	19
Antigone	143	70	143	204	140
OC	40	9	40	0	39
Trachiniae	20	7	14	47	12
Philoctetes	37	11	31	22	25

* The two unaccredited Greek texts here are referred to by their Bodleian Library shelfmark.

** E. BORZA, “*Sophocles latinus*. Étude de quelques traductions latines de Sophocles au xvi^e siècle” in *Neulateinisches Jahrbuch*, 3 (2001) p. 29-45 dates Lalamant’s translation to 1557, but the volume marked 8° S 95(2) Art in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, includes a translated attributed to Lalamant and dated 1557, following on from an unattributed Greek text. The number of lines marked in this text is not an accurate record, however, as a number of pages are duplicated.

There is not space to assess the differences between the markings in any detail. A few comments must suffice. *Antigone* has the most lines marked in all cases. Throughout history it has been used to make points about political and religious situations, and this prominence is not exceptional.¹¹ *Trachiniae* remained unperformed until the eighteenth century, not part of the Byzantine canon, and so it makes sense to find it less flagged up. The *OC* was also not performed until the eighteenth century, but has more lines noted, making it more unusual, particu-

three volumes. Illustrated with Fifty Engraved Heads, and Thirty Four map &c. Vol. I, London, 1788.

¹⁰ There is also an edition of Euripides published in Rome, 1545, which includes a short life of Sophocles and collected *sententiae* at the end, with eight pages on *Antigone*, seven on *Ajax*, four on the *OC* and *Philoctetes*, and three on *Electra*, *OT* and *Trachiniae*. Camerarius’ 1603 edition also includes an index of lines and sentiments which might prove interesting to a reader, including 19 examples for the *OC*. Excerpting Sophocles is interesting in ways beyond the scope of this article to discuss.

¹¹ See G. STEINER, *Antigones* (2nd ed.) New Haven, 1996, on the history of *Antigone*.

larly as it is the only play to receive no marked lines at all in one translation. The sections most noted include the “Time” Speech (607-628), which remains one of the most famous passages of the play, dealing with the impermanence of life and instability of relationships. It is also perhaps one of the most overtly political references in the play, hinting at the 411 BC conflict between Thebans and Athenians at Colonus, and the crisis assembly meeting held there.¹²

Kings and leaders

This potential for texts and translations to reveal political stances is also evident in the lexical choices in each case. The translation of individual words can again give us a sense not only of how coherent a translation is, but also of any interpretative framework in which it is being read. For this section I look at the nouns and some associated verbs used to designate rulers in the *OC*, in the translations of GABIA, WINSHEIM, LALAMANT and RATALLER. The words in question are (in alphabetic order) ἄναξ, βασιλεύς, κύριος, κράινων, ἡγεμῶν, τύραννος. I refer to 30 relevant examples in the play:

Table 3: words for rulers and ruling in the *OC*

oct Line	Greek	LALAMANT	GABIA	RATALLER	WINSHEIM
60	ἀρχηγόν	<i>principe</i>	<i>principem</i>	<i>praesidem</i>	<i>praesidem</i>
66	ἄρχει	<i>reguntur</i>	<i>imperat</i>	<i>phrase: princeps'ne, an imperij tenet populus habenas</i>	<i>regnum</i>
67	βασιλέως	<i>regis</i>	<i>rege</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rege</i>
288	κύριος	<i>dux</i>	<i>dominus</i>	<i>sceptra</i>	<i>dominus</i>
295	ἡγεμῶν	-	<i>dux</i>	-	<i>princeps</i>
296	κράινων	<i>rector</i>	<i>imperator</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>
375	ἀρχῆς... κράτους τυραννικοῦ	<i>de regno... potestate regia</i>	<i>imperium... potentiam tyrannicam</i>	<i>tyrannidis atque occupandi regni</i>	<i>de regno & potentia tyrannica</i>

¹² For a summary of the historical references see A. KELLY, *Sophocles: Oedipus at Colonus*, London, 2009, ch. I.

oet Line	Greek	LALAMANT	GABIA	RATALLER	WINSHEIM
449	τυραννεύειν	<i>et sceptrā regere & imperare terrae</i>	<i>et sceptrā regere & imperare terrae</i>	<i>sceptrā duxerunt... regna... occupant</i>	<i>et sceptrā et regnum</i>
451	ἀρχῆς	<i>regni</i>	<i>imperij</i>	<i>sceptrā?</i>	<i>regno</i>
549	ἄναξ	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>
713	ἄναξ Ποσειδῶν	<i>rex Neptune</i>	<i>rex Neptune</i>	<i>Neptune</i>	<i>Neptune</i>
831	ἄνακτες	<i>principes</i>	<i>reges</i>	<i>principes</i>	<i>principes</i>
851	τύραννος	<i>praefectus regni</i>	<i>dominus</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>
862	κράινων	<i>princeps</i>	<i>imperans</i>	<i>sceptrā</i>	<i>rex</i>
926	κράινουτος	<i>principis</i>	<i>sine certe imperante</i>	<i>sine arbitrio nihil</i>	<i>absque regis</i>
1014	ᾧναξ	<i>princeps</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	-
1130	ᾧναξ	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>
1177	ᾧναξ	<i>princeps</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>
1338	τύραννος	<i>regales</i>	<i>tyrannus</i>	<i>regni interim ille sceptrā Thebani occupans</i>	<i>tyrannide</i>
1476	ἄνακτα	<i>regem</i>	<i>regem</i>	<i>Theseo</i>	-
1499	ᾧναξ	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>
1505	ἄναξ	<i>princeps</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>
1542	ἡγεμών	<i>principis</i>	<i>dux</i>	<i>dux</i>	<i>dux</i>
1558	ἄναξ	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	-	<i>rex</i>
1588	ἡγητήρος	-	<i>dux</i>	<i>duce</i>	<i>dux</i>
1630	ἄνακτα	<i>regem</i>	<i>regem</i>	<i>regem</i>	<i>regem</i>
1643	κύριος	<i>principem</i>	<i>dominus</i>	-	<i>dominus Theseus</i>
1650	ἄνακτα	<i>princeps</i>	<i>regem</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>regem</i>
1759	ἄναξ	<i>princeps</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>	<i>rex</i>

In this chart we see that the same Greek words are regularly translated with different Latin terms, such as ἄναξ being translated as *princeps* or *rex*, or even being missed out entirely. The same Latin terms are also used for a variety of Greek ones, e.g. *rex* (and its cognates) is used for ἄναξ, βασιλεὺς, κύριος, κράινων, ἡγεμών, and τύραννος (and its cognates). ELIA BORZA discusses what a “correct”

translation might look like, drawing particularly on the work of Leonardo BRUNI.¹³ He explains the need for a translator to know both languages perfectly, but does not delve further into what knowing a language perfectly might mean, or how that might be interpretatively applied to an understanding of a text as a unified whole.¹⁴ In the comments which follow, therefore, I take up the story with a discussion of the differences between the translations at a literary level. In *ad verbum* translations such as GABIA and WINSHEIM's, one might expect consistency in the approaches to the different terms. GABIA in particular claims to be translating *mot à mot*¹⁵, which would suggest even more strongly that concepts of kingship and leadership would be translated consistently. Instead, τύραννος is translated as both *dominus* and *tyrannos*, the one term carrying a Christian undertone, the other a negative political connotation of despotism. *Dominus* is used by Creon of himself (851). *Tyrannos* is used by Polynices of Eteocles ruling supposedly illegitimately at home. The other cognates used are τυραννικοῦ (375) and τυραννεῖν (449) used of Ismene and Oedipus respectively of the situation in Thebes. GABIA translates the first with *tyrannicam*, but the second with *imperare terrae*. Τύραννος is only used of Thebes and Thebans. A theme throughout the play is the difference in government between Thebes and Athens, with Theseus as a proto-democratic king. When Creon talks about himself we would be less likely to expect a negative reading of the term; although Creon, in the kidnap scene, knows he is acting harshly, he also claims to be acting within his rights, and the term *dominus* makes sense. By using *dominus*, therefore, GABIA has broken the Theban connection, but contributed to the characterisation of Creon. There is not a simple substitution *ad verbum* translation going on. This does not, however, mean that the translation is not carefully constructed to reflect the character of the Greek.

Two contextualised examples help to demonstrate this further.

GABIA:

“Oedipus: Et ubi est, imperator huius regionis, hospites?”

Hospes: Paternam civitate terrae habet. Speculator aut ullum

Qui & me huc accersivit, abit vocaturus.”

¹³ E. BORZA, *Sophocles Redivivus: La survie de Sophocle en Italie en début du xvr^e siècle. Éditions grecques, traductions latines et vernaculaires*, Bari, 2007, p. 118.

¹⁴ E. BORZA, 2001, 27.

¹⁵ E. BORZA, 2007, 121.

LALAMANT:

*“Oedipus: Ecquid unius reguntur imperio,
An vero potestas est penes populum?
Hospes: Rebus sane urbanis regis prudentia
Moderatur.”*

In this example, the repetition of the lexeme “*reg-*” links the two phrases together, demonstrating coherence in the stranger’s reply. Such verbal echoing would be typical of Greek stichomythia, so although it is not evident in the Greek, the translation technique is in keeping with the genre, and imposes coherence on the topic. Theseus is a *rex*, as Oedipus was a *rex* in Thebes. What this might mean is not explored further, but the vocabulary is at least consistent. The vocabulary becomes more varied as the Greek does, so that *κράινων* in 296 becomes *rector*. This does not fit a literal *ad verbum* translation style as the change from participle to agent noun is too great a grammatical shift. It does, however, potentially begin to impose a Christian character on the political terms, not present in the Greek.

In the case of WINSHEIM, things are even more interesting. Although an *ad verbum* translation, in three instances there is no clear representation of the kingship term (713, 1014, 1476), and in a number of others the word is augmented in some way. Around 67 and 1505/1499 there are extra terms *regis* and *regem* put in, which reinforce the theme, but do not represent anything specific in the Greek. At 1542, the translation *dux* for *ἡγεμῶν* is followed up by a description of Hermes as *deductor ducit*. The repetition consolidates the relationship between Oedipus and the gods, and reinforces the sense of movement in the speech, as Oedipus becomes aware of his impending fate. This is as much a literary interpretation of the theme as it is a literal *ad verbum* translation. This becomes increasingly important when we consider that, once we reach the seventeenth and particularly the eighteenth centuries, WINSHEIM’s translation becomes the default, used in editions across England, such as TONSON and WATTS 1747 (London).¹⁶ It may have been written as an *ad verbum* translation particular to its context, but it becomes a universal crib, the Latin shaping the minds of schoolbook readers as much as the Greek does. With the introduction of theatre censorship in England in 1737, Greek tragedy was no longer allowed to be performed on the professional stage. The schools, however, continue to teach it. The Latin and English translations provide boys with their first and often only experience of the plays. For example, Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannos* was performed 14 times in England before 1800, one of which was Stanmore Scho-

¹⁶ Anonymous ΣΟΦΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ αἱ ἐπὶ τὰ τραγῳδαίαι: *Sophoclis Tragoediae septem cum versione Latin & selectis quibusdam variis Lectionibus*, Ex Officina J.&R. TONSON, & J. WATTS, London, 1747.

ol's 1776 inaugural Greek play.¹⁷ The Lord Chamberlain may have decided that the *OT* was not suitable for general consumption (a decision not overturned until 1910), but by learning Latin and (often through Latin) Greek, the students who would go on to be the politicians running England came into close contact with the plays and had their conceptions of leadership shaped by them.

Indeed, such a political purpose is explicitly stated by both Lalamant and Rataller.

RATALLER: "*Neque enim ad ludum iocumque, neque ut multitudinis tantum animos recrearent, aut plausis risusque in theatris excitarent, id genus fabulas sapientissimi hominese scripsisse existimari debent: sed ut maximarum rerum imagines nobis ad oculos proponerent, e quibus cum ad visum recte instituendam, Moresque firmandos, tum ad Republicam bene gubernandam exempla depromant Principes et Magistratus*"¹⁸.

LALAMANT: "[...] *permultum autem intersit reipublicae, ut inscripti hoc genere principes et nobiles adulescentes magistris ad excolendum ingenium traditi, sese velut in speculo contemplentur*"¹⁹.

LALAMANT and RATALLER are both noted for writing literary translations. Given their explicit political statements, one might expect a coherent lexical framework to be imposed on the Sophoclean text. This does not, however, seem to be the case. LALAMANT translates almost every example with a form of either *princeps* or *rex*. The theme is significantly simplified. There are again a number of points where a clear translation is not in evidence (289, 449, 851, 1338, 1588). In this case, the τύραννος words are translated variously as *regia* (375), *imperare* (449), *praefectus regni* (851), and *regales* (1338). The freedom of the translation has lost the force of the theme. RATALLER only once translated the tyrannical theme with *tyrannides* (375), and otherwise uses a great range of terms for leaders and power, particularly introducing the *sceptra* as a metonym for power. The *sceptra*, however, have a particular function in the *OC* which is equally not well-carried through, as where here it stands as a symbol of political power, at 848, Creon uses the term to refer to Antigone and Ismene as Oedipus' source of support. The physical and metaphorical become more overtly conflated than perhaps the Sophoclean text suggests.

One shorter example of how a phenomenon akin to calquing between Latin and Greek will suffice to show the interpretative nature of even the *ad verbum*

¹⁷ For further information on the performance histories of the plays, see <http://www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk/research-collections/performance-database/productions> (last accessed 8th June 2014).

¹⁸ Also quoted at BORZA, 2001, 40. See also E. BORZA, 2007, 133.

¹⁹ Also quoted at BORZA, 2001, 41. See also E. BORZA, 2007, 134-5.

translations. At line 947, Creon refers to the Ἄρεος...πάγον, as a reference to the Areopagus. Without using the name Ares, such a reference becomes impossible. It combines the religious shrine of the Eumenides, with the contemporary legal connotations of the hill, and a reference to the god of war. Looking at the three eighteenth-century English translations again, three different translations are offered. For POTTER, it is the “mount of Mars” (p.102). ADAMS (129) translated this as *Areopagus* and then added a note to explain it as a court, on “the hill of Mars”. For FRANCKLIN (429), there is a passing reference to the “court”. Only ADAMS made any attempt to express the idea of the original. The Latin translations show a similar discrepancy. For LALAMANT (1557) it is the *Areopagum* (p.216). Both WINSHEIM (line 1001) and RATALLER (p.319) translate it as *Areopago*, changing the case. GABIA is the only one to depart from a transliterative approach, and he translates it as *Martis... pagum*, which maintains the literal sense of the Greek, but still loses the political and religious connotations of the site. Each translator had to decide whether to translate the words or concept, and in each case something is lost, whether it be verbal accuracy or cultural understanding.

Sublime Sophocles

Once we reach the eighteenth century in England, new Latin translations of Sophocles stop being produced. It is not that scholars lose interest in Sophocles. On the contrary, as the development of the sublime aesthetic progresses, Sophocles becomes the embodiment of the concept, the most sublime tragedian. The *OC* is the best play to demonstrate this.

I have argued elsewhere that Edmund BURKE’s 1758 treatise on the sublime and the beautiful functions as a close reading and extension of Longinus’ *Peri Hupsous*, and that both texts benefit from being read in a self-conscious, metalinguistic light.²⁰ The *Longinian editio princeps* was Robertello’s 1554 Basel edition, followed swiftly in 1555 by the Aldine Venetian edition. I suggest that as it becomes better known, the ideas it contains become evident in the way people talk about, and then both translate and use Sophocles’ plays. Sophocles is mentioned by a number of Latin authors, such as Virgil, Cicero and Valerius Maximus, particularly with reference to the *OC* being a good example of what can be achieved in old age.²¹ The biography of the author has been conflated with the nature of the work he is writing. This reminds us again to look carefully at the scholars

²⁰ C. RYAN, “Burke’s Classical Heritage: Playing Games with Longinus”, in K. VERMEIR and M. FUNK DECKARD (edd.), *The Science of Sensibility: Reading Burke’s Philosophical Enquiry*, Dordrecht, London, 2013.

²¹ See BORZA, 2007, 129 on Cicero *Tusculanes* II.8.20.

translating these works in the sixteenth centuries. With reference to the translations under consideration, the scholars working on the *OC* are reading it in the light of the Latin literature also available. The *OC*, for example, offers two ways of reading Sophocles as a sublime author within the context of its Latin translations. First, at *Peri Hupsous* XXXIII.5 Longinus cites the merits of the *OC* as a form of visualisation. He also discusses the nature of older, waning geniuses still producing sublime material. Homer is his main example, but Sophocles is also relevant. The *OC* was Sophocles' last play, produced *post mortem* in 406BC. In the Cicero and Valerius Maximus sources already cited above, it is the *OC*'s role as an excellent play by an old man which is important. I have argued elsewhere for further reasons why Sophocles is read as sublime, but in this article now want to explore just one theme which comes out of this discussion.²²

My final case study for this article is a discussion of the Colonus Ode as an example of sublime literature. This stasimon comes just after Theseus has agreed to take in Oedipus, and before Creon arrives. It celebrates the area in real and metaphorical terms. I have argued elsewhere why it is important in the development of the eighteenth-century sublime. In this article I want simply to assess the Latin translations of it, in order to demonstrate not only the variety in interpretations, but some cross-over links with the reception of Latin texts.

The different aspects of the grove reflect different themes that are important in the play. One notable feature is the link with religion. Dionysus is invoked in the first strophe, for the sake of the beauty of the place and his revelling in it.²³ This may remind the audience that they are in an area sacred to Dionysus, the theatre. Mention of the Muses (691) continues the theme of poetic inspiration through the land. The ivy, described as *οἰνωπτόν* evokes another aspect of Dionysus,

²² C. RYAN, *Eighteenth-Century Receptions of Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus*, PhD thesis, Nottingham, 2010, ch.1.

²³ See A. BIERL, *Dionysos und die griechische Tragödie: politische und "metatheatralische" Aspekte im Text*, Tübingen, 1991, p.100-103 for a brief analysis of how Dionysus' presence is felt throughout this ode, particularly the first strophe. For a metatheatrical reading of this, see A. HARALD, *Dionysos und der griechische Tragödie: Politische und "metatheatralische" Aspekte im Text*, Tübingen, 1991. For the other gods: Poseidon is made a local god by means of Colonus' fame for horses. Athene is noted for bestowing the olive on Colonus. See T. STINTON, "The Riddle at Colonus", *Grrek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 17 (1976), p. 323-8 on Poseidon and Athene's gifts in this ode. Aphrodite is also associated with horses, perhaps evoking her role in *Hippolytus*. See also R. BURTON, *The Chorus in Sophocles' Tragedies*, Oxford, 1980, p. 276. The named gods are Dionysus, Aphrodite, Athene and Poseidon, the Muses, Zeus Morios and the Great Goddesses (Demeter and Persephone).

his association with wine.²⁴ Dionysus's affiliation with mystery/death cult is also represented through the natural phenomena mentioned here.²⁵ The nightingale, as the bird of death, marks the grove as sacred to the Eumenides, goddesses associated with death, and also acts as part of the mystery/death cult aetiology for Oedipus established in the play.²⁶ The nightingale's association with the poet unites Dionysus with the Eumenides, and the different aspects of Dionysus' divinity.²⁷ The narcissus (683) is also associated with death, maintaining Dionysus and the Eumenides' presence in this chorus through the first antistrophe.²⁸ The description of the narcissus as καλλιβοτρυς (682) also evokes Dionysus, as an adjective most easily associated with bunches of grapes, the vine.²⁹ One could even interpret the reference to Asia (694) as Dionysiac allusion, strengthened by the presence of the crocus (685), which, through its association with the east, can also be seen as a Dionysiac flower.³⁰ The all-pervasive nature of Dionysus'

²⁴ Its more common use as an Homeric epithet for the sea perhaps helps to integrate Poseidon and Dionysus into the same vision depicted here. See BIERL (1991) p. 101 on the links between plants and gods.

²⁵ See R. SEAFORD, *Dionysos*.

²⁶ On the nightingale as a bird of death, see A. McDEVITT, "The Nightingale and the Olive: Remarks on the First Stasimon of Oedipus Coloneus", *Antidosis: Festschrift für Walther Kraus zum 70. Geburtstag/herausgegeben von Rudolf Hanslik, Albin Lesky, Hans Schwabl* Wien, 1972, p. 227-237, p. 231. See also C. CALAME, "Mort héroïque et culte à mystère dans l'Œdipe à Colone de Sophocle", in F. GRAF (ed.) *Ansichten griechischer Rituale. Geburtstags-Symposium für Walter Burkert*, Stuttgart/Leipzig, 1998, p. 326-356, p. 338.

²⁷ A. SUKSI, "The Poet at Colonus: Nightingales in Sophocles", *Mnemosyne*, vol. LIV Fasc. 6 (2001), p. 246-258, p. 255. CALAME, 1998, p. 338 notes the paradox of this luscious vegetation being linked to death.

²⁸ See McDEVITT, 1972, p. 234. A. HENRICHS, "Anonymity and polarity: unknown gods and nameless altars at the Areopagos", *Illinois Classical Studies* 19 (1994), p. 27-58 notes the links between Demeter and unknown gods, with the presence of a cult to Demeter Erinys (38) for example, and chthonian aspects to both sets of divinities. (KELLY, 2009, 81-82 also discusses the links between the Eumenides and Persephone and Demeter.)

²⁹ This is a Sophoclean *hapax*. It is otherwise an unusual word, found only in later literature: Nonnus, Chrysippus, Gregory of Antioch, Eustathius and the Suda.

³⁰ N. WALLACE, "Oedipus at Colonus: The Hero in his Collective Context", *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 32 (1979), p. 39-52, p. 47-48 interprets this rather differently. For him, Dionysus is linked to wine and the narcissus to grain, which are both community commodities and therefore the Colonus ode refers to the collective life of Athens. Continuing the theme of commodification, he notes that the crocus was economically important as a source of saffron, as was the olive. This adds a further interpretative layer to the ode, but not one on which I focus further. KNOX also notes that the crocus

power continues to be evoked through words ἄβατον (675), not used elsewhere in Sophocles.³¹ A similar idea is conveyed by ἀκήρατος, “involute, untouched”, used just twice by Sophocles, both in the *OC*, here at line 690 and earlier at 471 when Oedipus is preparing his purification ritual. The unusual word has parallels in Euripides, where it is used eleven times, four of which are in *Hippolytus*, another play with a hero cult aetiology.

Dionysus is also associated with light, particularly bright beams of light, again reflected in this ode.³² In 670, Colonus is described as ἀργήτα, “bright, shining,” in contrast to the grove, which remains ἀνήλιον (676), despite Dionysus’ presence.³³ This light imagery continues in the antistrophe when the crocus is described as χρυσανγής (685), uniting themes of death and light. In summary, throughout the Colonus ode, there is a focus on gods who evoke horses, the sea, wisdom and love. Place description is used to evoke themes of luxuriant nature, death, mystery-hero cult, metatheatre and Dionysus as the god uniting all these features. These aspects of Dionysus are not unusual, but are in keeping with the depiction in other tragedies, most notably *Bacchae*. Richard Seaford demonstrates how these representations of Dionysus prefigure Christ, linking pagan and Christian divinities.³⁴ Dionysus, Oedipus and Christ all share attributes and representations.

The ways in which these themes are handled in the translations reveals something of how the translators were reading the play, and how the play resonated with contemporary literary and scholarly culture. Here I discuss just GABIA

was planted on graves and had an Eleusinian connection: B. KNOX, *The Heroic Temper: Studies in Sophoclean tragedy*, Berkley and Los Angeles, 1966, 155. For the crocus as a flower also representing death, see McDEVITT, 1972, 234. See KELLY, 2009, 94 on these flowers’ links to Persephone and Demeter. E. FORSTER, “Trees and Plants in the Greek Tragic Writers”, *Greece & Rome* 21.62 (June) (1952), p. 57-63 offers a brief discussion of the role of plants in tragedy, noting how the *OC* is exceptional in its attention to the botanic background.

³¹ It is also only rarely used in Euripides; one instance is *Bacchae* line 10, where Dionysus praises the land as ἄβατον and says that he has covered it in vines. For further examples of the unusual Sophoclean language in this ode, see BURTON, 1980, 277-278. C. BOWRA *Sophoclean Tragedy* Oxford, 1944, 347-348 also links the olive wood to war, suggesting links between this ode and the battles at Colonus imagined by the play and fought there in reality. M. PARSONS, “Self-Knowledge refused and Accepted: A Psychoanalytic Perspective on the *Bacchae* and the *Oedipus at Colonus*”, *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 35 (1988), p. 1-14, p. 2 suggests that there is a link between *Bacchae* 10 and the ἀστιβές ἄλσος of *OC* 126.

³² See SEAFORD, 2006, p. 52-53 and 124 for example.

³³ On Colonus as ἀργήτα, see McDEVITT, 1972, p. 232.

³⁴ SEAFORD, 2006, p. 126-129.

and LALAMANT's translations as examples of *ad verbum* and literary translations respectively. The translators could have left Dionysus as the Greek name, with or without the Greek termination. LALAMANT's literary translation maintains the reference to Bacchiotes Dionysus, while GABIA's *ad verbum* one marks the link between the Maenads with *Bacchides... Bacchus*. Bacchus, of course, maintains the link between Greece and Rome, but it loses the clear reference to the Dionysia.

The two *ad verbum* translations mark the brightness as *album Colonom* (GABIA) and *splendidum* (WINSHEIM), while RATALLER's literary one uses the far less common *albicantibus*. The golden colour of the crocus varies also, from Winsheim's *aureo colore* to Rataller's *flavi*. Great differences can be seen with some of the more unusual words, notably ἄβατον and ἀκήρατος. For the former, there is no obvious representation in RATALLER, it's simply expressed as *densae* by WINSHEIM. The concept is just too hard to explain. The latter is more interesting, given that it only occurs in one other place. In only one of the four translations is there a clear correlation between lines 690 and 471, losing the link between the Colonus Ode and the religious place description in Ismene's scene. For example, WINSHEIM has *liquidis undarum imbribus* at 690 but *quid postquam eas libationes accepero* at 471. Gabia reads *imbre* at 690, but *fluxum* at 471. In RATALLER's translation the 690 reference is not clearly expressed, and at 471 we read *quid ubi puris sacra erit aqua hausta minibus*. Only in LALAMANT is the same term used, with *pellucidae lymphae* at 690 and *sacras lymphas* at 471, but even here the adjective has changed. In the overtly religious setting, *sacras* is used, mirroring RATALLER's *sacra*, but in the Colonus Ode, which looks superficially less specifically religious, we move to *pellucidae*, focusing on the clear beauty of the water rather than its religious significance. This secularisation of the text is also evident in the ivy; οἰνωπόν in Greek, is *nigram* in LALAMANT and GABIA, but *umbrosa* and *umbrosis* in WINSHEIM and RATALLER. In neither case are the Homeric or religious resonances maintained. There is also no clear pattern between the *ad verbum* and literary translations. Words are being accurately translated, but out of the context of the whole play.

A phrase such as καλλιβοτρυς causes issues for Latin as it is not easily translatable, given Greek's different ways of compounding. For WINSHEIM the narcissus is *pulchros flores gicens*, for LALAMANT *pulcherrimis...uvulis*, GABIA *pulchros habens racemos* (the phrase is not fully discernible in RATALLER). All three use part of *pulcher*, but vary on the case and number, pairing it in each case with a different noun in an attempt to convey the fecundity of the Greek term. In this case there is no easy Latin equivalent, and rather than coin one they find different ways to express the phrase. The nightingales are translated differently in each translation. LALAMANT's *garrula luget* and GABIA's *stridula luget* maintain the mournful

aspect of the bird, but miss the poetic, although perhaps *garrula*, with its connotations of being garrulous, does at least suggest the verbal dexterity.³⁵

A development of this Latin reading of the Colonus Ode and its use in shaping British political ideology can be seen in the eighteenth-century material. WILLIAM MASON's 1759 play *Caractacus* engages with Latin readings of the Colonus Ode. The play is described as "on the model of the antient Greek tragedy", which turns out to be the *OC*, and at the end of the 1796 British Library edition there is a list of useful Classical sources for understanding the play. This includes Ammianus Marcellinus, Strabo, Caesar, Pliny, Tacitus, Lucan and Dio Chrysostom. Neither Sophocles nor any other dramatist is cited in support of the play's prefatory claim to tragic form, since this is not obviously linked to the druidical nature of the work. A more subtle link demonstrating the Sophoclean spirit behind the druidical aspect of the play may, however, be drawn via links to Lucan.³⁶

Lucan's grove at *Pharsalia* III.399-438 presents another grove, which is closely echoed in MASON's play. It is filled with the language of the Gothic sublime, couching Sophoclean ideas in Lucan's verse with a Longinian spirit.³⁷ The Lucanian grove has been described as in keeping with the tradition of the *locus amoenus*.³⁸ The Colonus ode has also been described in such terms, but only Seneca's influence on Lucan is noted by commentators.³⁹ The everlasting shade (402) and

³⁵ RATALLER, by contrast, personifies the nightingale as Philomela, moving away from the Sophoclean semiotics to impose Roman resonances on the text.

³⁶ A. AMBÜHL, "Thebanos imitate rogos (BC. 1,552) – Lucans *Bellum Civile* und die Tragödien aus dem thebanischen Sagenkreis", in C. WALDE (ed.) *Lucan im 21. Jahrhundert* München and Leipzig, 2005, provides a discussion of the Theban tragic legend in Lucan, but does not discuss the *OC*. The links between Lucan and Sophocles deserve closer attention beyond the scope of this thesis and the material presented here is considered only in the context of *Caractacus*. Sophocles is not mentioned by contemporary or subsequent commentaries on the passage (e.g. *Marci Annaei Lucani PHARSALIA cum noto selectis HUG. GROTII, integris et adauctis RICH. BENTLEII, duobus specimen. EZRAE CLERCQUII VON IEUER, duobus epist. ined. FRANC. OUDENDORPII, quibus varias lectiones MSS. nunc primum collatarum, dissertationem de spuris et male suspectis Lucani versibus, scholiastas ineditos, adnotationem suam, nec non indices locupletissimos addidit CAROL. FRED. WEBER. Volumen Primum continens praefationem et Pharsalia Lib. I-III.* (Leipzig: apud Gerhardum Fleischer, 1781) and V. HUNINK(ed.), *M. Annaeus Lucanus Bellum Civile Book III. A commentary*, Amsterdam, 1992).

³⁷ See RYAN, 2010, p. 166-8.

³⁸ HUNINK, 1992, p. 168.

³⁹ On the Colonus ode as a *locus amoenus*, see BIERL, 1991, p. 100. See also CALAME, 1998, p. 337, with reference to a Theocritus. This idea merits closer discussion in terms of fifth-century Athenian literature, but such a study is beyond the scope of this thesis. On Seneca's influence on Lucan's grove, see HUNINK, 1992, p. 169. He also notes (169)

lack of winds (411, 413) pick up the adjectives ἀνῆλιον and ἀνῆνεμον (*OC* 676-677). The feathered songstress (409) recalls the nightingales so prevalent in the *OC*. The hollow depths (426) suggest both the descent to the underworld implied at *OC* 1590-1591, and the underground caverns and passages in *Caractacus*. Explicit references to fear, dread, horror and awe (405, 414, 430, 432, 424, 432, 436, 437) give us immediate access to the sublime in Longinian and Burkean terms. “terrible to sight” does not translate anything literally from the Latin, but recalls *OC* 141: δεινὸς μὲν ὄραϊν, δεινὸς δὲ κλύειν, while line 420 “Strikes the astonished gazer’s soul with dread” summarises *Philosophical Enquiry* II.i in just one line. References to lightning (412, 429) confirm this link. The reference to a demon (436) translates *deis* in the Latin, but may reflect the daimonic undertones of both Gothic literature and the *OC*.

A relationship between Lucan, Sophocles and MASON can be drawn, and it is also telling that Lucan is used in eighteenth-century literature on the sublime. In his notes on Longinus, William SMITH had mentioned Caesar in *Pharsalia* as an example of the vividness which Longinus attributes to Sophocles in the *OC*.⁴⁰ Furthermore, Geoffrey of Monmouth had used Lucan’s description of Caesar fleeing with his back to the Britons in conjunction with his promotion of Caractacus, leading to an established tradition of reading Caractacus with both Lucan and British nationalism in mind.⁴¹ Eighteenth-century scholars were reading both Sophocles and Lucan in the light of Longinus, and to find echoes of both in MASON demonstrates his strategy of literary conflation in action. Given this cross-over in vocabulary and themes, it is unsurprising to find that the same words and ideas are used in the Latin translations of Sophocles. Perhaps the translators also had copies of Lucan to hand, and read their Sophocles in this context. This kind of relationship needs a much closer assessment beyond the scope of this article.

the influence of Lucan on *Thebaid* 2.496-523 and 4.419-442, demonstrating a continued theme of topographical importance in the Theban legend.

⁴⁰ An 1800 edition of DRYDEN with commentary also describes the *Pharsalia* in precisely such Longinian terms: “Strong and glowing colours are the just resemblances of bold metaphors; but both must be judiciously applied; for there is a difference betwixt daring and fool-hardiness. Lucan and Statius often ventured them too far; our Virgil never. But the great defect of the PHARSALIA and the THEBAIS was in the design; if that had been more perfect, we might have forgiven many of their bold strokes in the colouring, or at least excused them: yet some of them are such as Demosthenes or Cicero could not have defended.” (343).

⁴¹ See J. CURRAN (Jr.), *Roman Invasions: The British History, Protestant Anti-Romanism, and the Historical Imagination in England, 1530-1660*, Newark, 2002, p. 149.

Conclusion

In this article I hope to have opened up a range of fertile areas for future research. This has been very much an introduction to some of the ways in which textual criticism and translation relate to each other and form part of a continuum with literary criticism. I have also discussed some of the interactions between Latin, Greek and contemporary literature in the hope of exploring the literary culture informing and informed by the Latin translations of Sophocles. This is something which I hope Sophoclean scholars will continue to pursue. Not only does it enrich our understanding of Sophocles' text, but it provides a model for understanding the processes of the development of human knowledge and thinking, and a way to understand Early Modern Europe in its intellectual, cultural, religious and political context. I have suggested ways in which the translations differ and how those might link to an interpretative framework; it remains for the next phase of this scholarship to relate these various interpretations to their political, religious and aesthetic contexts more directly.⁴²

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⁴² A brief discussion which begins to use such an approach is available in M. LURIE, "Facing up to Tragedy: Toward an intellectual history of Sophocles in Europe from Camerarius to Nietzsche", p.440-461 in K.ORMAND (ed.), *Companion to Sophocles* Malden, Mass, 2012. The same volume contains the most recent survey of Sophoclean textual criticism, contextualising this further textual work, see P. FINGLASS, "The Textual Transmission of Sophocles' Dramas", p.9-24 in K.ORMAND, 2012.