JASPER HEYWOOD’S TRANSLATIONS
OF SENECAN TRAGEDY

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ABSTRACT

Jasper Heywood was the first to translate into English and publish a complete tragedy of Seneca. His first, Troas, was followed by Thyestes and Hercules Furens. All three translations were reprinted in the famous 1581 edition by Thomas Newton of Seneca His Tenne Tragedies. This paper investigates the way in which Heywood dealt with the Latin originals, from the free version of Troas, to the more literal translation of Hercules Furens. The analysis reveals a pioneering translator experimenting with form and language.

The translation of Senecan tragedies into English has a long history. They were among the first Classical works to be taken up by translators during the Elizabethan period, a time when translation flourished. In an influential article on Senecan tragedy, C.J. Herington pointed to 1581 and 1927 as ‘the two most important dates in the long, and for the most part, shadowy afterlife of Senecan tragedy among the English-speaking peoples.’ These dates indicate the publication in 1581 of a collection, edited by Thomas Newton, of English translations of all the plays then regarded as written by Seneca, and their reissue in 1927 with an introductory essay by T.S. Eliot. Herington rightly sees these two events as marking important points in the reception of Senecan drama in English. It is worth noting that Newton’s edition of Seneca His Tenne Tragedies was the first publication of the complete dramatic work of a Classical writer in English translation. The

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1 All references to and quotations from Heywood’s translations are from the edition by H. de Vocht (ed.), Jasper Heywood and his Translations of Seneca’s Troas, Thyestes and Hercules Furens (Louvain 1913).
2 Herington 1966:170. His article was written in reaction to the reprinting of the 1927 edition in 1966.
translators of Newton’s volume were Jasper Heywood (*Troas*, *Thyestes* and *Hercules Furens*), Alexander Nevyle (*Oedipus*), Thomas Nuce (*Octavia*), John Studley (*Agamemnon, Medea, Hercules Oetaeus* and *Hippolytus*) and Thomas Newton (*Thebais*). It is remarkable that these translations have continued to interest scholars and translators for more than four centuries.

Eliot’s essay was important not only because he investigated Seneca’s influence on English drama, but also because it prompted scholars to take a fresh look at the Latin plays themselves. In this article, however, I propose to take a closer look at a problem that is not the main focus of Eliot’s essay, namely, the merit of some of these translations. It seems worthwhile to consider not only the quality of the translations, but their context, their aims and how closely they render the Latin text. Inevitably, each translator has his own way of dealing with the Latin and rendering it into English. It would exceed the scope of this article to attempt this task with regard to all the translations; and therefore I shall confine myself to the work of Jasper Heywood, the author of three translations: *Troas, Thyestes* and *Hercules Furens*. As the first translator into English of a complete Senecan tragedy, he had no model, but made his own decisions on how to deal with both the formal and literary aspects of turning the Latin plays into contemporary English.

Heywood, like all other translators of the period, was constrained by what Herington identifies as the limitations of the English language of the period that he describes as having ‘a rustic tendency to redundance and verbosity.’ Eliot too notes that the language of the time was ‘indeed in some ways a deterioration from the language of Chaucer.’ It should be remembered that during the 16th century the English language was at a relatively early stage of development and had not yet been standardised. ‘One cannot, indeed, help recognizing that as compared with modern English Elizabethan English was weak in resources, limited in vocabulary, and somewhat uncertain in sentence structure.’

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4 Heywood’s title for the tragedy generally known as *Troades* or *The Trojan Women*.
5 A passage translated by both Heywood and Studley demonstrates a remarkable divergence in treatment. The passage is the choral ode, 959-80, from *Phaedra* (called *Hippolytus*) by Studley whose translation of the play is included in the *Tenne Tragedies*. Heywood inserted this ode between the third and fourth acts of *Troas*. For a discussion of the differences in the English rendering, see below.
7 Eliot 1963:54.
8 Amos 1920:93-94.
guishes Heywood as the translator who uses fewer colloquial, dialectic or archaic words, although his English is on the whole that of the ordinary Elizabethan translator. She does indicate some Latinisms in Heywood’s English, notably ‘freate’ or ‘frete’ meaning ‘sea’, translating the Latin *fretum*, as well as ‘roge’ for ‘funeral pyre’ as the translation of *rogus*.10 These Latinisms are indicative of the lack of suitable English terms to fit the metrical requirements. The translators themselves also express, albeit with a touch of feigned modesty, their disclaimers that English could not adequately accommodate the grandeur and subtlety of Seneca’s Latin.11 The practice of the translators of Senecan tragedy at this time was pioneering and experimental and must have contributed to reflection on the use of the vernacular.12

Boutcher warns that ‘translation’ in England in the early 16th century should be judged in the light of the different context in which the work was done: ‘translators in this period actually worked in cultural conditions almost diametrically opposed to modern ones. For virtually nobody outside the British Isles ever dreamt of needing to learn English.’13

C.H. Conley in his study14 of the translation of Classical works into English, in the period in which Heywood was working, emphasises the contribution of these translators to the development of the English language and to making the Classics accessible to members of the population other than the highly educated elite of nobles and scholars. He remarks on patriotic sentiments expressed by the translators in their paratextual15 material: ‘translators … sought to arouse a national self-consciousness

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9 Spearing 1909. See also De Vocht 1913 for further examples of Latinisms.
10 Spearing 1909:453.
11 Thus Heywood: ‘thys our englishe toong (as many thinke and J here fynde) is farre vnable, to compare with the latten’, Preface to *Troas* 7; and Alexander Nevyle, translator of the *Oedipus*, in his Preface asked readers to ‘consider the grosenes of our owne Country language, which can by no means aspire to the high lofty latinists stile’ (Newton 1581:191).
12 For a discussion of translation into English of non-dramatic Latin poetry in this period, see Gillespie 2011:20-32.
14 Conley 1927:15-17.
15 The term ‘paratexte’ was coined by Gérard Genette (1982:10-11) to describe material surrounding the text and providing information about the text. In the case of Heywood’s translations, the paratexts include the title pages, the dedications and prefaces. Genette elaborates the concept of paratextuality further in his work of 1987.
through an increased knowledge of ancient culture and the development of the mother tongue.\textsuperscript{16}

Comparative crudeness of language was matched by the translators' choice of line for the dramatic dialogue. The fourteener, with its rhyming couplets and monotonous rhythm was a clumsy vehicle.\textsuperscript{17} The longer lines encouraged expansion on the Latin original. Criticism by scholars such as Braden\textsuperscript{18} and Herington\textsuperscript{19} that in general the achievements of the translators offer no great aesthetic experience and that their effects are rambling, whimsical and repetitive, should be borne in mind when evaluating the way in which Heywood rendered Seneca's Latin into English.

Evelyn Spearing considers Heywood the most poetic of the translators of the time and picks \textit{Troas} as the 'finest piece of work among the \textit{Tenne Tragedies}.\textsuperscript{20} In spite of this favourable opinion, she surprisingly considers the Elizabethan translations as 'almost worthless intrinsically' from a dramatic point of view.\textsuperscript{21} The reason for this harsh conclusion can be found in Spearing's evaluation of the Latin originals. Her opinion is that Seneca debased the work of the Greek dramatists. This was clearly not the view of the Elizabethan translators who did not compare Seneca's plays to the Greek tragedies, but whose admiration for Seneca's tragedies inspired them to take on the task of translating them.

Heywood's first translation was \textit{Troas}, published in 1559, the next \textit{Thyestes}, published in 1560, and the third, \textit{Hercules Furens}, published in 1560. The young scholar (Heywood was born in 1535), who was a fellow of All Souls College in Oxford at the time, must thus have devoted considerable attention to working on his translations during these years. After this focus on Senecan tragedy, Heywood's life took a new direction and he spent his remaining years mostly in theological studies.\textsuperscript{22} He seemed not to have paid any further attention to his translations and did not revise them when Newton published the collected volume in 1581.

Although these translations were made in such a concentrated period, there are differences in the way Heywood approached the individual plays. An indication of the changes in his method and aims is clear even from the

\textsuperscript{16} Conley 1927:67.
\textsuperscript{17} See Eliot 1963:54-56 for criticism of the 'fourteener'.
\textsuperscript{18} Braden 1985:172 mentions 'the kind of numbing fourteener verse that lines one of the cul-de-sacs of English literary history.'
\textsuperscript{19} Herington 1966:426.
\textsuperscript{20} Spearing 1909:438.
\textsuperscript{21} Spearing 1909:456.
\textsuperscript{22} De Vocht 1913:VII-XIX provides an outline of Heywood's life.
paratextual materials accompanying the individual translations. In his notes to the readers of the Troas Heywood states that his intention was to render the tragedy into English as a private exercise, but that his friends insisted that he should publish it. He excuses weaknesses in his work as the result of his youth, lack of experience and judgement, the inability of the ‘englishe toong’ to match the majesty of Seneca’s style and the difficulty of the text which has been corrupted by printers. In spite of all these disclaimers, his stated aim is to render the work into English poetry. Heywood explains that he tried to observe the sense of the original and did not aim at a ‘woorde for woorde or verse for verse’ version. He mentions (lines 119-45) that he added to and altered the text. These changes will be discussed below, but overall they were made to contribute to the artistic and thematic unity of the play.

The prefatory material of Thyestes has little about his method of translation, but the Preface consists of a long account of a dream in which Seneca appeared to the dazzled Heywood and asked him to translate more of his tragedies into English. Seneca responds to Heywood’s apologies about mistakes in the work caused by careless printers, stating that his own words have often been mangled in this way too. This Preface ends with Heywood calling on the Fury, Megaera (755-74), who drove Tantalus from hell in the Latin drama, to inspire his pen. This indicates vividly that the work required resources of skill and creativity on top of knowledge of the two languages. Heywood indicates some anxiety that his version does not measure up to ‘the royalty of speech meet for a tragedy’. The overall impression from this Preface is thus that Heywood again declares his admiration for Seneca’s tragedy and makes clear that he finds it a challenge to represent Seneca’s work in English. His aspiration to provide the best translation possible is manifest. He does not mention the change he made in adding a final speech of his own composition at the end of the drama.

The paratexts of Hercules Furens reveal a more scholarly goal. In his dedicatory letter to the Earl of Pembroke, Heywood compares his task of rendering Seneca’s play into English to Erasmus’s achievement in translating Euripides’ Hecuba and Iphigenia into Latin. In both cases the translations are intended to provide support to less experienced scholars in reading the original. He therefore undertakes to turn Seneca’s Hercules Furens into English ‘verse for verse’ (as far as the english tongue permits) and ‘word for word with the latyn’ (lines 71-75). It is clear that Heywood here is pursuing a different aim and making use of a different method than in his translation of the Troas. From the prefatory material it seems that the translator had widely divergent purposes in the translations of Troas and Hercules Furens, while there is no such clear cut vision for his version
of *Thyestes*, but a wish to do justice to the Latin poet’s achievement. I propose to examine the three translations and analyse to what extent they meet the criteria Heywood set himself in his paratextual material.

As a starting point to examine how Heywood deals with the Latin texts, let us turn to the opening lines of each of the three tragedies he translated. Seneca’s *Troades* opens with a prologue spoken by Hecuba:

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Quicumque regno fidit et magna potens
   dominatur aula nec leues metuit deos
   animumque rebus credulum laetis dedit,
   me uideat et te, Troia: non umquam tulit
   documenta fors maiora, quam fragili loco
   starent superbi.

Who so in pompe of prowde estate,
   or kingdome sets delight:
Or who that joyes in princes court
   to bear the sway of might.
Ne dredes the fates which from aboue
   the wauering gods downe flinges:
But fast affiaunce fixed hath,
   in fraile and fickle thinges:
Let him in me both see the face,
   of fortunes flattring ioye:
And eke respect the ruthfull ende,
   of the (O ruinous Troye)
For neuer gaue she plainer proofe,
   then thys ye present se:
How fraile and brittle is the state,
   of pride and high degree.
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Heywood renders these iambic trimeters, the usual lines for Senecan dialogue, in fourteeners. They are reproduced here as in De Vocht’s edition with one verse spread over two lines and numbered according to the pattern used in this edition where the numeration of lines starts with the dedication. Although Heywood captures the sense of the Latin, this is clearly no attempt to reproduce it word for word (as he indeed indicates in his Preface):

23 It is not clear which editions of Seneca’s tragedies Heywood used. De Vocht 1913:XXIV-XXVII discusses the question, but comes to the conclusion, ‘Heywood does not follow one edition, but selects his reading from the various editions that were published in his time’ (p. XXV). I have quoted the Latin text of Zwierlein 1986.
Heywood chooses to represent the succinct Latin in a more diffuse way which allows more scope for the rhyme. For instance, *nec leues metuit deos*, for which the more literal English equivalent would be ‘nor fears the changeable/fickle gods’ is rendered: ‘Ne dredes the fates which from aboue the wauering gods down flinges’ (which has ‘flinges’ rhyming with ‘things’). This rather wordy expansion does not alter the basic meaning, but presents it in the translator’s own way which transmits an added element of arbitrary violence on the part of the gods.

The opening lines of *Thyestes* where the shade of Tantalus sets the scene for the atrocities to come are translated much less expansively:

\[
\text{Quis inferorum sede ab infusta extrahit auido fugaces ore captantem cibos? quis male deorum Tantalo uisas domos ostendit iterum? Peius inuentum est siti arente in undis aliquid et peius fame hiante semper?} \]

Whereas Heywood used eight fourteeners for the five and a half lines of *Troas*, he renders the equal number of lines of *Thyestes* in five fourteeners:

\[
\text{What furye fell enforceth me to flee thunhappie seate, That gape and gaspe w}^{24}\text{ greedy iawe, the fleeing foode to eate? What god to Tantalus the bowres where breathing bodies dwell Doth show agayne? Is ought found then burning thurst of hell (worse Jn lakes alowe? or yet worse plague then hunger is there one, Jn vayne that euer gapes for foode?} \]

While this is not a literal translation, it is far more concise than his translation of the lines of *Troades* and yet manages to capture the meaning of the Latin well and even makes use of alliteration, a device very popular with the Elizabethan translators,\(^{25}\) to add to the atmosphere of menace, for instance ‘What furye fell’ for *Quis* gives the necessary information as well

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\(^{24}\) ‘w’ with ‘t’ superscripted to represent ‘with’.

\(^{25}\) Herington 1966:210 n. 3 singles out Heywood as the only one of the Elizabethan translators who resisted the temptation of ‘relentless alliteration’. 
as a sinister touch, while ‘greedy iawe’ for *auido ore* is just as brief and considerably more punchy than the versions of some modern translators, e.g. Fitch’s ‘avid mouth’ (2004) or Watling’s ‘starved mouth’ (1966).

The start of Heywood’s translation of *Hercules Furens* shows that he is indeed attempting, as he promises in the prefatory material, to give in English ‘verse for verse … and word for word’ the meaning of the Latin. Juno speaks the Prologue and indicates that she plans to punish Hercules and through him his father, Jupiter, her philandering husband:

Soror Tonantis (hoc enim solum mihi nomen relictum est) semper alienum Iouem ac templum summi uidua deserui aetheris, locumque caelo pulsa paelicibus dedi; tellus colenda est, paclices caelum tenant. 5

Syster of the thunderer, (for now that name alone remaynes to me) Joue euermore as though deuorste and gone, And temples of the highest ayre as wydowe shunned haue. 170

And beaten out of skyes aboue the place to harlots gaue.

J muste goe dwelle beneathe on grounde, for hoores doo holde the skye. 165

Heywood’s five fourteeners equal the number of verses in the original. He has tried to include every element of Juno’s lament and not to expand unnecessarily, but this results in a rather stilted English construction where ‘Joue euermore as though deuorste and gone’ sits awkwardly and the meaning is not immediately clear to someone who does not have the Latin text alongside. However, it must be remembered that Heywood actually intended that the reader should have the Latin next to his translation of *Hercules Furens* and that was how it was originally published.

The brief comparison of Heywood’s translation of the opening lines of the three plays he translated thus shows that the results correspond to what he promises in his paratextual writings. Next, further examples of

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26 De Vocht 1913:201.
27 Spearing 1909:439-41 has a number of examples where Heywood’s close modelling of his translation on the Latin text results in clumsy and ‘frequently obscure’ English.
28 De Vocht 1913:XXXIV and 309.
his translations will be discussed in order to draw some conclusions about the overall quality of his work.

De Vocht\textsuperscript{29} notes that Heywood studied different editions of the Latin texts of all three tragedies carefully when he translated them. This is particularly evident in the case of \textit{Hercules Furens} where his emendations are incorporated into the Latin text printed with his translation. In spite of Heywood's painstaking study of the Latin, critics have found errors\textsuperscript{30} where it seems that he did not always understand the Latin completely. De Vocht argues that Heywood's translation tends to be freer when he does not understand the Latin perfectly.\textsuperscript{31} Nevertheless, Heywood is often a deft translator who adds information to facilitate the readers' understanding. A good example is his rendering of lines (38-40) of \textit{Troades} where Hecuba claims personal responsibility for the destruction of Troy:

\begin{verbatim}
non cautus ignes Ithacus aut Ithaci comes 
nocturnus in uos sparsit aut fallax Simon:  
meus ignis iste est, facibus ardetis meis.  

Not false Ulysses kindled hath  
these fires, nor none of his:  
Not yet deceitfull Sinons craft, 
That hath byn cause of thys. 

My fire it is wherewith ye burne,  
and Parys is the brande: 
That smoketh in thy towers (O Troy)  
the flowre of Phrygian lande.
\end{verbatim}

This is a neat way of translating the context and the metaphor as well as providing information that enables all readers to understand the reference. The added lines contribute to the pathos of the atmosphere. Heywood here nicely judges the need to explain the reference to Paris, but elsewhere he tends to omit mythological or geographical references, perhaps judging that they do not contribute essential information. For instance \textit{iamdudum sonet | fatalis Ide, iudicis diri domus} (lines 65-66) is rendered:

\begin{verbatim}
let your complaints rebounde  
Jn tops of treese: and cause the hils,  
to ring with terible sound.  
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{29} De Vocht 1913:XXIV-XXVII.  
\textsuperscript{30} Watling 1966:300; in his explanatory notes De Vocht 1913:321-54 points out many mistakes Heywood made in his translations.  
\textsuperscript{31} De Vocht 1913:XXVIII.
All references to Mount Ida and Paris as the harsh judge are smoothed over in favour of a more general picture of distress. Sometimes, however, Heywood’s freer translations are less felicitous and lose some of the point of the original. Hecuba’s terrifying change in circumstances is captured in the double reference to the fear her lot inspires in line 62, near the end of her opening monologue: *mea sors timetur, sola sum Danais metus*. First the passive verb *timetur* implies that the fear that Hecuba’s situation inspires is general; then, by equating Hecuba with fear, the idea is reinforced. Hecuba has become the impersonation of fear and what is to be feared, one moment she was a queen, the next, a captured slave. This capriciousness of Fortune is an important theme in the play and is underlined by Seneca’s depiction of Agamemnon as a cautious conqueror. He is conscious of the uncertainty of life’s circumstances. Heywood’s rendering of line 62 loses most of the reference to the fear that Hecuba’s fall should inspire, but concentrates on her abandonment. She becomes a pitiful figure, rather than an awe-inspiring one:

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But alas most wofull wight, 401
whom no man sekes to chuse,
J am the onely refuge left, 404
and me they cleane refuse.
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This is an example where one may criticise the translator’s interpretation of the text. There are, of course, more such cases, but these may be judged minor defects in comparison to other rather careless oversights. In some cases there is a confusion of names, for example in the scene from Act II where Agamemnon is in dialogue with Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, who is demanding that Polyxena should be sacrificed to his father’s shade. Agamemnon tries to calm him by counselling patience and says that his impetuousness is inherited from his father. Instead of ‘Pyrrhus’, Heywood translates ‘Pryames’. This makes no sense in the context and would confuse readers.

Mistranslation can also lead to a lessening of the impact, especially in fraught scenes, such as that between Andromache and Ulysses where she is desperately trying to bluff that Astyanax, whom she has hidden and who has been condemned to death by the Greeks, is already dead. The cunning Ulysses counterbluffs:

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bene est: tenetur, perge, festina, attraha – 630
quid respicis trepidasque? iam certe perit.
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The first of these lines is addressed to one of his men: ‘Well done! He is caught. Go on, hurry, drag him here.’ Then Ulysses turns to Andromache: ‘Why do you look around and tremble? He is already dead, isn’t he?’ Ulysses is playing a clever game with Andromache, but Heywood’s translation does not catch the tension:

Well done, he will be found at length,  
go to, still seke hym out,  
Now shallhe dye: what dost thou feare?  
why dost thou looke about?

Heywood, by changing the tenses of *tenetur* (present to future) and *perit* (perfect to future), has lost the urgency of the original.

Such misreading does not improve the quality of the work, but pales when compared to a common howler where subject and object are confused. The messenger describes how people crowded around to secure a good vantage point for the execution of Astyanax. Some stood on a hill, others perched on rocks and some even climbed trees:

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Ihunc pinus, illum laurus, hunc fagus gerit  
et tota populo silua suspenso tremit.
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‘A pine tree carries one man, a laurel another, a beech another, the whole wood trembles with people hanging on to it.’ This is Heywood’s version:

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Some on theyr temples weare the Pyne  
some beche, some crownes of baye,  
For garlandes torne is euery tree,  
that standeth in theyr waye.
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This smacks of carelessness and although it does not affect any central theme, the translation loses Seneca’s depiction of the frenzy of the crowd to see the cruel death of the children. The hardhearted mob is depicted as even perching in trees. Heywood’s mistranslation seems to imply some sacrificial purpose in the crowd wearing garlands, but that is not in the Latin.

Heywood’s translations of *Thyestes* and *Hercules Furens* show far fewer careless mistakes and contain passages of fine work. For instance, his rendering of the choral ode after the second act of *Thyestes* is strikingly well expressed. I quote the famous concluding lines (Sen. Thy. 390-403):

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Eche man him selfe this kingdome geeues at hande.  
let who so lyst with myghtie mace to raygne,
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In tyckle toppe of court delight to stande.
let me the sweete and quiet rest obtayne,
So sette in place obscure and lowe degree,
of pleasaunt rest J shall the sweetnes knoe.
My lyfe vnknowne to them that noble be,
shall in the steppe of secret silence goe.
Thus when my daies at length are ouerpast,
and tyme without all troublous tumult spent,
An aged man J shall depart at last,
Jn mean estate, to dye full well content.
But greuous is to him the deathe, that when
so farre abrode the bruyte of him is blowne,
That knowne he is to muche to other men:
Departeth yet vnto him selfe vnknowne.

The clarity and simplicity of Seneca's text seem to have inspired Heywood. He rightly avoids the reference to Rome in *Quiritibus* (Sen. Thy. 396) which is anachronistic in the original as the play is set in Greece, and makes it timeless by his choice of 'them that noble be'. The dialogue scenes in the play, especially the gruesome revelatory episode (Sen. Thy. 970-1112), where Atreus torments his brother, are also well translated.

Although the accuracy of translation in *Hercules Furens* is greater than in *Troas*, Heywood's attempt to preserve the Latin word order is undoubtedly a handicap in transmitting the overall meaning of many passages. For instance, his rendition of Theseus' words (Sen. HF 658-61)

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All right of worlde, and thee likewise
    J pray that bearste the rayne
In kyngdome wyde, and thee, for whome
    All rownde about in vayne
Thy mother throughout Aetna sowght,
    that secret things alowe
And hydde in grownde, it freely may
    bee lawfull for to showe.
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turns a comparatively straightforward utterance hard to understand because the natural word order of English has been disturbed. In passages where there is more exchange of dialogue (as in 2270-575) the last scene of the play, where Hercules comes to terms with his terrible deeds, the translation reads more easily.

Heywood as translator had a complex conception of his task. Some aspects of his paratexts reveal that he saw his translation as much more than a routine labour. His account of his dream of Seneca in the Preface to his translation of *Thyestes* shows his preoccupation with the magnitude of
the demands of presenting Seneca’s masterpiece adequately in English. It is nevertheless remarkable that if one considers the three tragedies that Heywood translated, he moved from much looser translation or adaptation in the *Troas*, to closer translation in *Thyestes* and finally to an attempt to render the Latin word for word and line for line, even attempting to preserve the word order, in *Hercules Furens*. The reason for these different approaches to translation must lie in his purpose with each of the translations. I suggest that the first was aimed at producing a poetic equivalent to the Latin, while the last was targeted at readers who wished to use his translation in conjunction with the Latin text. In other words, it was intended as a crib. It is notable also that Heywood used ten-syllable lines with alternate rhyme (Hecuba – Chorus I. 71-170, Andromache to Astyanax III. 301-37 [and Achilles I. 1-91 in rhyme royal] and the soliloquy of Thyestes V. 35-84), in other words a more poetic verse form, but stuck to fourteeners in all of *Hercules Furens*. The formal features of the translation therefore seem to reflect the tendency to be freer or more poetic in the *Troas* while maintaining a stricter adherence to the Latin in the *Hercules Furens*.

The translations of the three tragedies that Heywood made are versions that represent the originals in different ways. Already in the Preface to the readers of the play he tackled first, *Troas*, Heywood indicated that he had ‘augmented’ and also ‘altered’ Seneca’s text. He does not offer a strong rationale for any of these changes, but the general remark that the work seemed to him ‘in some places vnperfytte’. The augmentations consist of a choral ode of his own composition (515-76); the insertion of the dialogue scene (581-671), where the spirit of Achilles himself utters the demand for retribution that is reported by Talthybius in the Latin play; and three stanzas at the end of the chorus after Act II (1145-65). The supplementary choral ode after the first act deals with the inevitability of death. Mighty mythological heroes are cited. The list culminates in Priam, and then his queen, Hecuba, who is still alive, but has lost all wealth and power. This ode repeats a theme which is already very clear in the tragedy and retards the dramatic action. The addition of the scene with the ghost of Achilles is both augmentation and alteration. Heywood was probably inspired by Seneca’s use of spirits from the underworld in other plays. The ‘sprite’ of Achilles does have the characteristic of the Senecan ghosts in other plays. Like the ghost of Tantalus in *Thyestes* and that of Thyestes in *Agamemnon*, his focus is on revenge. By references to the Underworld and those condemned to punishment, Sisyphus, Tityus and Ixion (623-29),

32 See also Spearin 1909:439 and De Vocht 1913:XXIX.
33 De Vocht 1913:7.
which are strongly reminiscent of the words of the ghost in *Thyestes* 6-12, Heywood tries to harmonise his own character with those of the original.\(^{34}\) However, the words given to Achilles’ ghost do not add substance to the next scene and cause a strong element of repetition. Rees\(^{35}\) refers to ‘this quite superfluous ghost’. The additional scene also slows down the action.

Another substantial alteration is the third chorus (1960-91) where Heywood substituted Seneca’s original composition for the *Troades* (814-60) with a translation of the chorus of Seneca’s *Phaedra* (959-80). The ode discarded by Heywood has the women naming all the different places to which they will be dispersed as booty of their Greek conquerors. It thus emphasises the lot of all the Trojan women, not only the named characters, as a consequence of the defeat in war. Heywood dismisses the ode as containing too many ‘unknowne’ geographical names which would be ‘a strange and unpleasant thing to the readers’\(^{36}\) and remarks that ‘the Corus is no part of the substance of the matter.’ Yet, his choice of the ode dealing with the mutability of Fortune shows that he does take account of the context, as that is one of the main themes of the play. Heywood merely writes that he ‘made a nother’ ode and does not indicate that he has borrowed one from another Senecan tragedy.

When one compares Heywood’s version of this ode to the translation of Studley in his *Hippolytus*, it is immediately apparent that Studley has expanded and Heywood shortened the ode. In place of the thirty-one lines of anapaestic dimeter of the Latin, Studley has thirty-seven lines rhyming in the pattern ababcdcd. While Heywood has chosen the same rhyme scheme, his verses are shorter and the substance of the Latin has been rendered in only twenty lines. One could argue that Heywood does not present this as a translation of *Phaedra* (959-80), but merely as an ode to replace one he judged unsuitable. However, it is precisely this kind of freedom that brings his version of *Troades* closer to the borderline between adaptation and translation. Heywood omits the final lines of the chorus from *Phaedra* (981-88) and replaces them with his own, connecting the general theme of the ode on the randomness of fortune to the lot of the Trojan women. These changes show that Heywood’s aim was not just to produce Seneca in English, but to create what he regarded as a coherent tragedy in English.

One of the factors that must surely influence any translation of a drama is whether the translation is intended as a text to be performed. The question of whether Seneca intended his plays for performance, public

\(^{34}\) Moorman 1906:89 remarks, ‘the Senecan accent is unmistakable throughout.’

\(^{35}\) Rees 1969:126.

\(^{36}\) De Vocht 1913:7-8.
recitation, or as literary exercises is, of course, one of the perpetual themes in modern scholarship on Senecan tragedy. It must be noted that this was not an issue debated during the 16th century. Until the 19th century, Seneca’s tragedies were regarded by modern scholars, translators and stage directors as part of the performance texts from the ancient world that were and could be staged. We know that in Elizabethan England several of Seneca’s tragedies were produced in Latin, but we do not know whether any of the translations in the Tenne Tragedies was staged. It is also not clear from the paratexts of Heywood’s translations whether he intended his translations only to be read by his Latinless contemporaries and studied as exercises in rendering Senecan poetry into English or whether he meant them to be staged. However, the changes and additions Heywood made to the Troas, such as the creation of a scene with the ‘sprite’ of Achilles, seem to be of a kind that would be far more effective when performed than merely read. T.S. Eliot supports this view. He argues that a translator who intended his work for reading only ‘might be expected to stick pretty closely to the text.’ This observation about a translation made for reading being more likely to follow the original text very faithfully, fits both the style of Heywood’s translation of Hercules Furens and the goal he set himself in the Preface. To my mind, it seems that performance was not uppermost in the translator’s mind when he tried to follow the Latin so meticulously. However, the Troas which treats the Latin text far more freely and incorporates Heywood’s additions and alterations, was arguably conceived with performance in mind. The Troas, with its additions, omissions and alterations, is clearly the product of Heywood’s overall conception of the plot and themes of the tragedy. Heywood was a scholar and cleric and not a man of the theatre. If he did intend his translation of Troas for performance, one can only say that his

37 Cf. Fitch 2000:1: ‘The notion that Seneca’s tragedies were not composed for performance was first put forward in the nineteenth century …’
38 Davis 2003:20 asserts, ‘for scholars and dramatists of the Elizabethan age Seneca was an author whose plays were plainly written for the stage.’ See also Cunliffe 1893:13.
40 Cunliffe 1893:3 thought that all the translations were probably intended ‘for dramatic presentation’. He cites Nevyle’s preface to his translation of Oedipus in support as well as the last line of the chorus at the end of Act II of the Troas: ‘And now (good Ladies) heare what shall be done.’ However, that line is arguably addressed to the women of the Chorus themselves, as De Vocht 1913:XXXIII, n. 3 also observes. For further discussion of Nevyle’s aim to provide a script that could be acted, see Smith 1988:205-06.
41 Eliot 1963:52.
augmentations would not have contributed to a successful production. Heywood's translation of *Hercules Furens* accompanied by the Latin text invites close scrutiny of the immediate context, rather than the play as a whole. It is hard to deduce that Heywood had performance in mind with this translation.

An argument which supports the view of ‘adaptation’ or ‘free translation’ is that of Boutcher, who maintains that reading works translated into English in this period will inevitably disappoint ‘because good modern translations will almost always be found to be more faithful, more fluent, more sensitive to literary texture.’ Instead, he argues for considering these translations to be read as “original” works by authors who happen to be translating.’ To my mind this is a plausible suggestion which, as Boutcher argues, is ‘less mindful of the hard-and-fast distinction between original and translated texts.’ In the different styles of translation Heywood adopted in the different plays, it does seem that he was experimenting and did not have a fixed idea of how best to turn Seneca’s tragedies into English.

If a later writer chooses to adapt a previous text, it is usually because he wants to change the theme of the original or perhaps to bring it out more clearly. In this regard it is helpful to consider Lorna Hardwick’s definition of ‘adaptation’ as ‘a version of the source developed for a different purpose or insufficiently close to count as a translation.’ Her remark, ‘Free translations sometimes merge into adaptations or versions’ is also relevant. I would therefore argue that Heywood’s translation of *Troas* may more correctly be regarded as an adaptation rather than a translation.

Heywood’s Christian beliefs explain some of the changes and additions to the originals. This is most evident in his addition of a speech at the end of *Thyestes* in which Thyestes calls for divine punishment for Atreus. The words of Heywood’s ghost of Achilles, who threatens ‘just vengeance’ on ‘the yrefull day’, have been described as ‘a betrayingly Christian turn of phrase.’ Heywood’s translations of *Troades* and *Thyestes*, the works ‘that make the boldest departure from the original’, do so in relation to two essentially theological themes: the mutability of Fortune and the intensi-

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42 Boutcher 2000:46.
43 Boutcher 2000:46.
45 Hardwick 2003:10.
46 Kerrigan 1996:111-12. Compare also Share’s comment (1998:12) that the changes that Heywood made to Seneca’s plays in his translations are ‘clearly more Christian than Stoic in nature’.
ification and broadening of the severity of retributive justice. For example, in the lines Heywood added to the first-act chorus (II. 15: ‘Who weneth here to win … nought to last’) he uses ‘chaunce’ as the equivalent of Seneca’s Fortune, and in the chorus Seneca takes over from Phaedra (978-82) for his third-act chorus in his Troas, Heywood has ‘Chaunce’ for Fortuna (979). Kiefer concedes that the translators’ treatment of Fortune is not ‘foreign to Seneca’s drama’, but argues that by expanding references to it they create a representation of the world even more precarious than the original.

As to the theme of justice, Heywood adds to the original a call by the spirit of Achilles for vengeance in the Troas, and in Thyestes’ final speech he calls on the gods to punish him for the monstrous wickedness of consuming his own children. Although both Nevyle and Heywood expressed their aims as trying to preserve the spirit of the original, their additional emphases on the fluidity of Fortune and the quest for just punishment should be ascribed to their own concept of tragedy shaped by Christian culture. This led to their presentation of a dramatic world that might best be described as a “heightened” version of Seneca’s.

The immediate political background to the translations can also explain Heywood’s decision to translate works which prominently treated themes dealing with the nature of kingship and power. Themes about the policies of a ruler and the nature of rule were particularly relevant in contemporary English society where there had been ‘three changes of monarch in little over a decade.’ It is noteworthy that Heywood dedicated his translation of Troas ‘as a simple new yeres gift’ to the young Queen Elizabeth who had come to the throne the previous year and whose page he had been. He mentions the monarch’s interest in Senecan tragedy and it may be that he had discussed Seneca’s philosophy of the ideal ruler with her.

The impact of Heywood’s translation of Troas may be judged by the fact that it had three editions before being issued in Newton’s compendium of all the tragedies. That volume was also highly successful if account

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51 Kiefer 1928:385.
52 See Winston 2006 for a brief analysis of the theme in Oedipus, Thyestes, Hercules Furens, Agamemnon, Medea and Octavia.
53 Winston 2006:40. Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558 after the rather brief periods of rule of Mary I (1553-58) and Edward VI (1547-1553).
54 De Vocht 1913:VIII.
is taken of its publishing history alone. It may therefore not be too fanciful to agree with Conley\(^{55}\) that at the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign a number of young translators were offered patronage and encouraged to make the Classics available to the reading public. Among them was Jasper Heywood whose pioneering contribution of turning three Senecan tragedies into English inspired others to follow suit. In the process he and his fellow translators helped to develop English literary language. Their work also illustrates the contemporary desire to engage with the best of antiquity in a time when Seneca was at the height of his reputation.

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Acta Classica is published annually by the Classical Association of South Africa. The journal has been in production since 1958. It is listed on both the ISI and the SAPSE list of approved publications.

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