Chapter Eleven

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Translation ad spiritum.

Euripides' Orestes and Nicholas Grimald's Archipropheta (1548)

The focus of this chapter is the way that Greek tragedy could be and was translated in original Latin plays produced in 16th-century Europe. These original Latin dramas were written and performed in astonishing numbers across the continent and constituted a significant part of theatrical culture more generally, interacting with vernacular drama of various kinds. Many, if not most, of the authors who wrote these original dramas, in Latin and in the vernacular, were scholars well-versed in ancient Roman drama. But many also will have known the language and literature of ancient Greece as study and scholarship of the language proliferated across western Europe from the mid-15th century onwards. A central premise in what follows is that this education in Greek literature, including its drama, led to an infusion of elements from Greek plays appearing in those original Latin works.

Greek tragedy was translated in the 15th and 16th century for a variety of reasons, as many of the chapters in this volume make manifest. The kind of translation considered in this chapter is one that this volume has been explicit about including in its capacious definition(s) of the concept i.e. it concerns translating rather than a translation.[1] It is not one bounded by lexical equivalence, verbal echoes, paraphrase, or even explicit allusion. It is, rather, a kind of translation *ad spiritum*. Theatre historian Marvin Carlson uses a metaphor for theatrical allusion that is central for the approach taken in this chapter to translation more generally - that of 'haunting'.[2] This metaphor and its related imagery of ghosts and uncanny (sometimes inexplicable) presences, memories, and fuzzy outlines lies at the root of my discussion of translation *ad spiritum*. In doing so I wish to provoke further thought about the possibilities of recasting the traditional translational dyad of either *ad verbum* or *ad sensum* translation that tends to dominate in early modern European translation theory.[3] I take as a case study the way that the 'ghosts', the translations *ad spiritum*, of Greek drama, haunted one Latin play in particular; Nicholas Grimald's *Archipropheta* (1548). Not only will this explorative study further expand the limits of this volume's discussion of translation more generally, but it will also demonstrate how a broader range of 16th-century playwrights, and not just recognised scholars of Greek and Latin, incorporated and deployed elements from Greek drama in original (although often

[1] See Introduction, pages xxx.
[2] Carlson 2001.
[3] See Di Martino, footnote 22, in this volume.

biblical) contexts, i.e., that Greek drama had a crucial role to play in 16th-century drama more widely and much earlier than is often supposed.[4]

Recognising the place of Greek drama in original Latin dramas has several advantages.[5] First, bringing together pagan Greek and Christian biblical characters and ethical questions gives rise to particularly interesting, complicated, often ambiguous and polyvalent texts. The 'Christianization' of Greek drama was not a straightforward endeavour. As the various Reformations and Counter-Reformations across Europe rumbled on, pagan Greek texts were defended or contested in all confessional quarters. Attention to the different ends to which the ghosts of Greek drama might be used in the context of contemporary religious discourse is a rich but still largely unstudied aspect of Latin drama studies of the 16th century. In looking at the translation *ad spiritum* of Greek drama, we find further ways to appreciate the rich textures of these Latin plays.

But we also gain a key piece in the puzzle of the cross-pollination, or cross-contamination,[6] of different kinds of dramatic texts being read and created. The presence of elements and motifs in Latin plays that resonate strongly with those of Greek tragedy will have, in turn, shaped the reading and reception of those same Greek plays as the 16th century continued. Audiences of these haunted Latin plays would have taken on and become primed with a certain set of associations with the translated elements even *before* they came into contact with the Greek plays themselves. The students who may have seen a performance of Grimald's play at Christ Church College in Oxford in the mid-1550s would, I argue, go on to read and understand Euripides' *Orestes* with a particular set of biblical characters and, in turn, biblical ghosts in mind. First audiences of Latin plays need not recognise the allusions to Greek drama for those allusions still to have a powerful influence on the general understanding of Greek drama throughout their lifetimes. The frame put around certain characters or moral dilemmas by translating them into a biblical context would act powerfully on the 16th-century reception of those same Greek tragedy characters or dilemmas in their original contexts. This anti-chronological mode of reception and translation is something I shall return to in the conclusion.

A final note before we turn to our case study. The haunting of Latin drama by Greek drama's ghosts is something that was potential and in action all over Europe, wherever ancient Greek was being studied and original Latin plays being produced. This may, however, have been a mode of translation and reception that was particularly prevalent in England. Tanya Pollard notes, '[i]n the arena of print, England's engagement with Greek drama lags behind that of the continent, but England's recorded performances of Greek or Greek-inspired plays during the 16th century were considerable, suggesting both that performance was an important medium for English encounters

[4] See Di Martino and Fiore, this volume.
[5] See also Bastin Hammou, this volume, for another important example.
[6] See Martino-Baudou this volume.

with Greek plays, and that education institutions that typically produced them had an especially important shaping role'.[7] This case study will therefore keep prominently in mind potential aspects of performance as integral to the dramatic text as a whole.[8]

Nicholas Grimald's Archipropheta (1548)

The *Archipropheta* is one of two plays by Nicholas Grimald (1519-1562) that are extant. Like a number of other Latin dramas written in Europe in the 1530s and 1540s, it takes the figure of John the Baptist as its central figure and dramatises his last days and eventual demise at the hands of King Herod and his wife Herodias.[9] Grimald probably wrote the play in the 1540s while engaged in teaching and other literary work in Oxford.[10] He dedicated the play to the newly chosen dean of Christ Church, Dr Richard Cox, in 1546. There is no record of a performance in Oxford but it seems highly likely, especially since Grimald writes in that dedicatory letter of the 'greatest consequence' in presenting characters 'as though living and breathing; when time, place, words, and deeds are vividly depicted; when the whole action is brought before your eyes and ears, so that it seems not so much to be told, to be narrated, as to be done, to be enacted'.[11] The play was published in Cologne in 1548 by Martin Gymnicus.

Grimald had, however, been surrounded by dramatic experiments in both Cambridge and Oxford for some years, and this was not his first experience of writing drama. The theatrical experiments in various Oxbridge colleges were profoundly shaped by an intensive focus in the first half of the 16th century on placing classical, and specifically Greek, texts at the heart of education. Cambridge had been a centre of ancient Greek learning since the founding, on the instructions of Lady Margaret Beaufort (1443-1509), of St John's College in 1511. This college was to be the home to such influential teachers and scholars of ancient Greek as Richard Croke, John Cheke,[12] and Roger Ascham. With the foundation in 1517 of Corpus Christi College in Oxford, the centres of Greek learning in England multiplied. By 1518 there was already a backlash *against* Greek learning in

[7] Pollard 2017, 59.

[8] On the importance of thinking about these texts in and as performance, David Greenwood says, '[s]o much of the meaning of several of the Latin plays is conveyed by the significant use of action, costume, *domus*, and stage apparatus, that unless this fact is constantly borne in mind, they cannot be appreciated or even properly understood.' (1964, 311).

[9] John the Baptist seems to have been something of a key figure for the Protestant movement (see Edwards 2004, 9). However, playwrights usually steered clear of direct comment and comparison with contemporary figures or disputes, see Blackburn 1971, 100. For a very positive appraisal of this play in the context of the 'other' Baptist plays being written and performed at the time, see e.g., Edwards 2004, 12 and Norland 1995, 334.

[10] For further details of this phase in Grimald's career, see Merrill 1925, 14-34.

[11] *...cum personae tamquam rediuiuae ac spirantes introducuntur, cum locus, tempus, dicta, facta illustrantur: cum omne negotium ita sub aspectum auditumque subiicitur, ut non tantum dici aut commemorari,* sed fieri iam de geri uideatur; Merrill 1925, 233-5.

[12] 'Nobody did more to develop Greek studies as a humane discipline in the 16th century'; Rhodes 2018, 40. Cheke was appointed a Fellow of St John's in 1529 and was the first Regius Professor of Greek in 1540.

Oxford - a sure sign of the vitality and impact of the subject.[13] 1524 saw new statutes introduced at St John's College Cambridge, based on those already in place at Corpus in Oxford, which required daily lectures on Greek grammar and literature. By 1535 several wealthy colleges at Oxford and Cambridge were required to provide lectures in Greek and attendance by all students, including those from less well-resourced colleges, was mandatory.[14]

This intensive focus has not always been fully recognised by modern scholars of 16th-century classical learning in England, and goes some way to explaining how Greek drama's imprint has gone undetected in much drama written in England in the earlier part of the century. As has been pointed out by Micha Lazarus, there has been an unhelpful conflation between scholarship on ancient Greek texts with *literacy* in ancient Greek; and it would have been the ability to read and engage with Greek texts, and drama particularly, which would have created the conditions for a greater range of nascent and future playwrights to translate aspects of Greek drama into their new and original works.[15] Greek drama had a central place in all this vibrant culture of Greek teaching and learning early in the century. As noted by Pollard, the first editions of Greek tragedy may have been produced in Florence and Venice at the turn of the 16th century, but the broader dissemination of Greek tragedy 'began with Erasmus's Latin *Hecuba*', a work the great humanist translated in London 'with support from English patrons'.[16]

Aside from patrons, Erasmus interacted with a number of scholars of ancient Greek who had been active in England's educational establishments from the end of the 15th century onwards - Thomas Linacre, William Grocyn, William Latimer, and Cuthbert Tunstall.[17] It was from these figures (and the provisions they put in place at Oxford and Cambridge) that many of England's leading literary lights of the 16th century, Nicholas Grimald among them, would have learnt their Greek and been exposed to Greek drama.[18] An often-quoted, and immensely valuable, testimonium to the place of Greek drama amongst the more general Greek learning is found in a letter from Roger Ascham, writing in 1542. He says, 'Aristotle and Plato are read by the young men in the original, but that has been done among us at St John's [Cambridge] for the last five years. Sophocles and Euripides are here better known than Plautus used to be when you were up... Our Cheke's effort and example

[13] Pollard 2017, 47. Lazarus 2015, 442.
[14] Lazarus 2015, 443.
[15] Lazarus 2015, 433-7.
[16] Pollard 2017, 43. On Erasmus's influence on 16th-century translations and translators, see also Dedieu, Di Martino-Baudou, and Vedelago in this volume.
[17] On these early titans of ancient Greek learning and pedagogy in England, see Lazarus 2015, 438-9 and Pollard 2017, 72n.5 for further bibliography.
[18] See Lazarus 2015, 456-8 for a formidable survey of just how many English literary figures would have come into contact with Greek learning in this way.

has lit and fed this flame of literary zeal, for without pay he has publicly lectured on all of Homer, all of Sophocles, and that twice, as well as all of Euripides, and nearly all of Herodotus'.[19]

When Nicholas Grimald arrived in Cambridge in 1535, the stage was set for his immediate attention to and absorption of Greek language, literature, and drama. Hailing from Lincolnshire, his early experiences of drama were likely of mystery plays.[20] When he came to Cambridge, however, he would have found many contemporaries and lecturers not only reading and talking about Greek drama, but also experimenting with new forms of theatre. It seems that in Oxford and Cambridge biblical tragedy especially was becoming highly fashionable.[21] Thomas Watson's Latin play *Absolom* was written sometime between 1535 and 1544, and John Christopherson's *Jephthah*, written in ancient Greek and performed ca.1544 would have been known to Grimald. George Buchanan's immensely popular *Baptistes* may also have been circulating in manuscript and would have been available when Grimald was writing his own Baptist tragedy in the mid-1540s.[22]

So, it is no surprise that, having graduated from Christ's College, Cambridge with a B.A. in 1539-40, and having travelled to Oxford to begin the next phase of his scholarly career, he turned to writing a play himself. He spent his first few months in Oxford at Brasenose College while he was waiting for his books to arrive and in this time was encouraged by his peers to set down a dramatic work that he had already been planning.[23] This was his first drama, his *Christus Redivivus*, a mixture of tragedy and comedy. In the dedicatory epistle appended to the published play he notes that Roman dramatists, particularly Plautus, are a key touchstone for this work; and indeed the motifs of Roman comedy are evident throughout.[24] We know regrettably little about Grimald's many other plays.[25] What is discernible in the *Archipropheta*, however, is a significant shift in tone from his earlier work, a shift that is in part attributable to a deeper engagement with Greek tragedy. Alongside certain recognisable Roman motifs and language, there are also elements that we do not find in the Roman comedians or in Seneca. It is to these elements that have been translated *ad spiritum* that we now turn.

Herod as Orestes furens

One of the remarkable features of Grimald's dramatic telling of the last days of John the Baptist is a lengthy scene of banqueting in Herod's palace, filled with songs, dancing, celebration (pp. 328-

[19] Giles vol.1, 1864, 32; English translation in Williams 1967, 1070-1.
[20] Blackburn 1971, 15.
[21] Blackburn 1971, 77-81.
[22] The *Baptistes*, according to the preface of the published version (1576) Buchanan's first play (...*primus est foetus*..), see Sharratt and Walsh 1983, 97. On the ghosts of Sophocles' *Antigone* in this play, see Jackson 2020.
[23] See the *Epistola Nuncupatoria* (Merrill 1925, 98-101).
[24] Cf. a reference to Plautus *Captivi* in the *Epistola Nuncupatoria* (Merrill 1925, 110-111). See also the allusion to the opening of Plautus' *Amphitryo*, a thoroughly Greek tragedy-inspired comedy, in the Syrian *ancilla*'s use of 'tragoedia' (see Plaut.*Amp.*50-54). The *Archipropheta*, and the figure of the Syrian *ancilla* especially, moves from comedy to tragedy, while the *Amphitryo* begins as a tragedy and ends as a comedy.
[25] For discussion, see Merrill 1925, 24-7.

47) culminating in Herodias' daughter requesting, and getting, the severed head of John the Baptist on a platter (*in patella postulo/ Iohannis à cervice divulsum caput*; 344).[26] After such a lengthy build up to the crucial moment of the Baptist's death, the turn from jubilation to horror at the end of Act four is sudden and jarring. Act five begins with several characters' reactions to the events: Jehovah himself, Herodias, the disciples of John the Baptist, one of the servants of Herodias' house, and the Syrian *ancilla* (on whom, more below). After this, Herod himself appears on stage, in some distress and wracked with guilt.

> *Hui qua irrequietu animu gero? furiis quibus*
> *Incensus agitor? Inire somnos dum uolo,*
> *Qui me tremores? quae auferunt insomnia?*
> *...*
> *Videor mihi interdum partriis e finibus*
> *Exul, inops, cuique contemptus mortalium...*
>
> Alas, what a troubled mind I bear with me! What furies madden and drive me! When I would sleep, what trembling seizes upon me, and what restlessness! ... Sometimes I seem to see myself exiled from my fatherland, needy and despised of all men...
> (Merill 1925, 354-5).

The mention of a troubled mind, of the Furies, a thwarted desire for sleep, seizures and trembling, and an imminent, lonely exile are striking in themselves, but will put many in mind of the Furies' most famous quarry, the matricide Orestes. [27] We should note that by the 16th century, the image of 'Orestes *furens*' was not confined to Greek tragedy. Robert Miola traces the spread of this motif from Virgil's comparison of Dido to Orestes *furens* (*Aen.*4.471-3), to Plutarch and Longinus,[28] as well as a host of references to the moral complexity of Orestes' dilemma in Cicero, Horace, Quintilian, and others - all authors that were read with frequency by early 16th-century students and scholars. It is worth noting as an aside that Orestes is not a figure featured in any Senecan drama.[29] And yet, the details given in Grimald's play resonate with Euripides' presentation of Orestes in his play of that name and suggests a closer relationship. The lines quoted above distil a detailed picture of Orestes' mental torment and the siblings' desperate plight, discussed at some length by Electra and the chorus (Eur.*Or.*34-51, 88-90, 153-210) and depicted by the character of Orestes himself (Eur.*Or.*211-236, 253-315). Equivalence of vocabulary is not in evidence and nor need we seek it out. What we see in the figure of Herod as presented by Grimald at this point in the play is a haunted character - a translation of Euripides' Orestes *ad spiritum*.

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[26] All references to text and translation are from Merrill 1925.

[27] Other subjects of the Furies' relentless pursuit were Alcmaeon (see e.g. Ap. *B.* 3.7.5), and the sons of Oedipus (Pind.*Ol.*2.38-42). Virgil is the first to name the Furies as three figures, Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megaera - *Aen.*6.570-72; 7.324-26; 12.845-48). Grimald invokes Alecto the Fury in *Christus Redivivus* Act 4 scenes 4 and 5.

[28] Plut.*Mor.*465 D (*Tranquility of Mind*) and 501 C (*Affections*), [Longinus], *Subl.*I:8.

[29] See Seneca's *Agamemnon* 1012 for a very light allusion from Cassandra.

We can feel confident in positing a close relationship between the two texts in light of the particularly easy access to Euripides' play which 16th-century students and scholars enjoyed. It was, along with the *Hecuba* and *Phoenician Women*, one of the three plays chosen by Byzantine scholars as exemplars for their students and, as such, these three plays are usually found at the beginning of printed editions of Euripides' works. These same students and scholars would have been encouraged towards the Euripidean play, too, by the fact it was quoted by other popular and often-read works at the time, as noted above. Longinus, as well as discussing the Oresteian dilemma in general terms, quotes two passages from the Euripidean play, both from the scene where Orestes is overtaken with a Fury-inspired frenzy.[30] While scholars have noted these contextual factors in explaining how Orestes was to be a significant figure throughout the theatrical creations of the 16th and 17th centuries, the appearance of an Orestes *furens*, and a thoroughly Euripidean Orestes at that, this early in the 16th century, has not been adequately recognised by modern scholars.[31] The ghost of Euripides' Orestes very clearly haunts Herod's character at this late stage in the *Archipropheta*, an act of translation not *ad verbum*, or *ad sensum*, but *ad spiritum*.

Unexpected messengers

Herod's Orestes-like outburst in Act five, however, is by no means the most significant ghost or moment of translation *ad spiritum* in Grimald's play. In the style of Greek tragedy, the actual act of murder occurs offstage, and the fullest account of the death of John the Baptist is given by a messenger figure.[32] Rather than this report being given by a new character whose express purpose is to communicate the information (as is commonly the case in Greek tragedy) or by an enslaved character in a hurry (a *servus currens*, as is commonly the case in New Comedy), here the report is given by a female attendant of Herodias', a Syrian *ancilla*. This is someone we have seen in many scenes throughout the play, praising Herodias' beauty (pp.261-3), acting as a Senecan-style confidant and moderator of her mistress' fiery passions (pp.290-1), and delivering a quasi-prophetic soliloquy of foreboding (pp.290-1). Just prior to Herod's own entry, discussed above, the Syrian *ancilla* bursts onto the stage to speak to the Chorus of People and to the Baptist's disciples, two groups still unaware of the decapitation that has just occurred at the end of the previous act. She says:

> *Atrocem ô regem: flebile ô spectculum:*
> *O dirum, ô horrendum, ô tyrannicum scelus.*
> *Ferro ablatum insontis est nefario caput.*
>
> O cruel king! O doleful spectacle! O dire, terrible, and tyrannical crime! The head of the innocent man has been cut off by a wicked sword. (pp.350-1)

[30] [Longinus] *Subl.*15.2 and 15.8 cf. Eur.*Or*.255-7, 264-5.
[31] Miola 2017.
[32] We can compare this Greek tragic style of announcement with that found in Buchanan's *Baptistes*, delivered by a 'Nuntius' (1316ff).

In light of her connection as attendant to the queen, it is surprising that she displays such distress at the fate of John the Baptist, a fate desired and all but ordered by her mistress Herodias.[33] Made all the more prominent by the abundance of elision in these lines when spoken aloud,[34] the vocative exclamations not only make for a striking entry speech but also give clear performative cues for the actor to imitate the heaving sobs of fresh distress. Signs of how personally invested the Syrian *ancilla* is in the fate of John the Baptist are clear as her conversation with the disciples continues. She is scarce able to look upon the feasting inside following the presentation of the Baptist's head and, as well as clearly physically leaving the palace, flees 'from body and soul' in horror (*mente quas [sc. epulae,* 'feasts'*], et corpore fugio*). The impact of the murder is, in her eyes, not only an injury (*damnum*) to her alone, but to the people at large (*Haud meu./ Sed publicum est*). She restates for the disbelieving disciples what has just occurred in lines with heavy poetic repetition:

> *Est, est humeris abscissum Baptistae caput,*
> *Caput humeris abscissum, heu, quam crudeliter?*
> The head of the Baptist has been cut from his shoulders! How cruelly, alas, has his head been cut from his shoulders!

After her dialogue with the Baptist's disciples in iambic trimeters, she moves into a longer more formally recognisable 'messenger' speech, but shifting from the expected spoken iambics into a lyric metre; phalaecian hendecasyllables.[35] The use of a variety of lyric metres earlier in the play means that in one sense this is not too surprising. However, within the context of the formal features of both Greek and Roman drama, the use of lyric to report events that have happened offstage *is* unusual, and conspicuous. It does, however, have one famous parallel in Greek tragedy; the sung messenger speech in Euripides' *Orestes*, delivered by an enslaved Phrygian attendant (πρόσπολος) of Helen's. It is here that we find, I argue, Grimald's clearest and boldest moment of translation *ad spiritum* in the *Archipropheta*.

The moment when the enslaved Phrygian appears on stage in Euripides' *Orestes* is entirely unexpected and incongruous, a fact that caused much comment amongst ancient commentators and continues to be a landmark in Euripidean and Greek tragic dramatic technique.[36] In that scene we also

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[33] She has by this point already expressed her immediate horror at the presentation of the head (pp.344-5 *Deum immortalem. Quod peractum nun scelus est?/ Non ista poscit hoc tempus spectacula* - 'Immortal God! What crime has been committed now? the time demands no such sight as this'. Merrill notes that the last line is a close echo of Vir.*Aen.*6.37).

[34] *Atroc' o regem: flebil' o spectculum:/ O dir' o 'rrend' o tyrannicum scelus*.

[35] This metre has already been used once, briefly, earlier in the play (pp. 310-313) by the enslaved Syrian man, perhaps suggesting the metre was reserved for the Syrian figures of the play. It is a common enough metre in 16th and 17th century epigrams, popularised by its familiarity in the works of Catullus, Statius, and Martial.

[36] '...nothing could have prepared us for the bizarre scene that follows. We have been led to expect that the doors will swing open to reveal Helen's corpse on the *ekkyklêma*, but this turns out to have been yet another skilful piece of misdirection. Instead the 'wrong' character appears, from the 'wrong' part of the stage, and behaves in a most unexpected way: it is a Phrygian slave who appears on the roof, descends to the *orchêstra*, and bursts into song.' Wright 2008, 45.

have a lyrical mode deployed to report information and, like the Syrian *ancilla,* by a speaker in some considerable distress. 'Oh the murderous sufferings, the lawless woes I have seen, have seen in the royal palace!'[37] - cries that echo the Syrian ancilla's: 'O cruel king! O doleful spectacle! O dire, terrible, and tyrannical crime!' (pp. 350-1). Like the *ancilla,* the Phrygian is attempting to flee the scene.[38] The identity of this singing figure is markedly 'foreign' or 'other', just as the Syrian (and perhaps the whole Herodian court) would have read as 'foreign' to Grimald's Oxford audience and a broader western European audience too.[39] It is suggestive too that the events being reported - a murder or attempted murder - resonate with intriguing clarity.[40] Aware of the impact of having such an unusual and virtuosic cameo as the Phrygian reporting traumatic and climactic events within the house, Grimald seems to have taken and translated the moment into his original play, and into a character that would be just as surprising a messenger figure and into just as lyrical a mode of performance - the hendecasyllable. Once again Euripides' *Orestes* can be seen as haunting this 16th-century original Latin play.

However, the plot thickens. A second ghost might possibly be haunting this climactic moment in Grimald's tale; that of Cassandra in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. In the Aeschylean play, Cassandra acts as a prophetic messenger, alluding to the acts that are, at that very moment, happening in the house and those that are about to happen.[41] Like the Syrian *ancilla,* she is enslaved, and has an identity marked as 'foreign', and for a great deal of her appearance sings in highly emotional lyric. The images summoned by both the Syrian *ancilla* and Cassandra resonate uncannily. The text in Aeschylus that describes the slaughter of Thyestes children by his brother Atreus is uncertain,[42] but the allusion to the impious feast of those murdered (beheaded?) children in the Greek play coheres with the Syrian *ancilla*'s disgust at 'these feasts' (*istae epulae*, p.350).[43] The waiting chorus of disciples and their initial consternation at what the Syrian *ancilla* is telling them echoes the Aeschylean chorus' initial

[37] φονίων παθέων ἀνόμων τε κακῶν/ ἅπερ ἔδρακον ἔδρακον ἐν δόμοις τυράννων (Eur.*Or.*1455-6).
[38] Cf. Syrian: *fugio* with the Phrygian's πέφευγα...φροῦδα φροῦδα...φύγω, Eur.*Or.*1368-79.
[39] On the connotations of the term 'Syrian' in a 16th-century context, we should consider that 'Syrian' is not a term found in the Hebrew bible and is not a name that was used by the Arab population from the seventh century CE onwards: 'Syria' is used as a term in the Septuagint as a translation for Aram and Aramaeans. (Shehadeh 1994). For Herod being frequently 'identified by contemporary marks of foreignness' in early modern drama, see Bushnell 1990, 86. However, the connotation of Syrian identity may be more complex. In the early 16th century, Lucian, a Syrian writer of the 2nd c. CE was recommended as a good place to start learning Greek, see Rhodes 2018, 36-8.
[40] Eur.*Or.*1107 they are planning to slit Helen's throat. Eur.*Or.*1199 Hermione is threatened with throat-slitting.
[41] 'You wash your husband, who shares your bed, in the bath...Is it, is it, a net of death?...She traps him in the robe, the black-horned contrivance and strikes -- and he falls into the tub full of water.' (Aesch.*Ag.*1107-1128, trans. Sommerstein 2008.)
[42] There seems to be no satisfactory emendation to Triclinius' text in line 1091.
[43] The comparison of the opulent feast in the palace of Herod and the feast of Atreus raises a further resonance between Herodias and Aerope, the wife of Thyestes, then his brother Atreus - both women are, in this sense, incestuous by marrying their brothers. See *Archipropheta* pp.292-3 - 'You, violating honour and your brother's marriage vows, have seized upon his wife, and taken her away while he is still living...'.

confusion ('Why are you wailing like that about Loxias? He is not the sort to come in contact with one who laments' 1074-5): *Quid est, que sic gemitus das post conuiuium...Itane uero? Dic, dic, Syra, facta praedicas?* (p.350). And, specifically, their perception of improper lamentation on the part of the Syrian - *Alacrem epulae debeant reddere* - coheres with the Old Men's confusion at Cassandra's inappropriate invocation of Apollo ('Here she is again, making an ill-omened invocation of a god for whom it is in no way appropriate to be present amid cries of grief' Aesch.*Ag.*1078-9).

What makes this ghost all the more intriguing is the peculiar nature of the textual transmission of Aeschylus *Oresteia* in the 16th century. The Aldine *editio princeps* of the trilogy, produced in 1518, omits lines 311-1066 and 1160-1673, i.e. the majority of the *Agamemnon*, combining that play and *Libation Bearers* and resulting in a drama that promotes Orestes as central and has Agamemnon entirely absent. The first part of Cassandra's scene with the chorus was, therefore, more prominent for readers of this edition.[44] If this was a source of inspiration, and was translated *ad spiritum* by Grimald, this would be a remarkable instance of mid-16th-century reception, and one that was entirely possible in light of Grimald's exposure to the texts of Greek tragedy during his time at Oxford and Cambridge, and his command of the language. Aeschylus was not often looked to or, if Ascham's letter quoted above is to be believed, lectured on. The ghost of Euripides' *Orestes* may be more likely if we take into account what we know of the easier access to and discussion of Sophoclean and Euripidean texts. However, the presence of Cassandra, too, at this point in Grimald's play should give us pause. There is no way that Grimald would not have access to an Aldine edition of the tragedies while at Cambridge or Oxford, and we should not rule out the possibility of independent discovery and absorption of Aeschylean text, along with his Euripides.

Herodias and the dilemma of Orestes

The fuzzy outlines of ghosts from Euripides' *Orestes* allow for multiple characters in Grimald's play to 'host' these spectral, translated, figures. The tormented Orestes appears again when we see the Queen Herodias reacting in private to the murder that she herself so vehemently desired.

Heu quam ingens aestuat in corde intimo pudor?
Furens ut amor? Mens ut facinoris conscia?
Me turbat ut misto dolore insania? ut
Insultat accusatrix cogitatio?
Scio, acerba me multorum circumstant odia.
Quid deinde? Oderint me hercle, dum metuant modo,
Regina si maneo, mea quid interest?

Alas! what great shame wells up from the depths of my heart! How love rages! How conscious the soul is of guilt! How madness mingled with grief confounds me! how accusing thought reviles me! I know

[44] And the subsequent 1552 edition edited by Robortello and published by Turnèbe in Paris, and the Latin translation of the truncated text by Jean Saint-Ravy in 1555. On the early editions of Aeschylus see Mund-Dopchie 1984. The full text was not published until 1557 in Vettori's Latin translation, published in Geneva.

> that the fierce hatred of many surrounds me! What then? By Hercules, let them hate me so long as they fear me! If I remain queen, what care I? (pp. 348-9)

L. Rl. Merrill has highlighted the surface allusion to Virgil here, and the description of an ashamed Turnus in book 12 (*aestuat ingens/ uno in corde pudor mixtoque insania luctu/ et furiis agitatus amor et conscia virtus*, 'within that single heart surges mighty shame, and madness mingled with grief, and love stung by fury, and the consciousness of worth', *Aen.*12.666-8).[45] The proximity to the two ghosts of Euripides' *Orestes* discussed above, however, supports a comparison of Herodias with the figure of Orestes and one of his most famous (certainly to the scholars of 16th-century Europe) and much-discussed lines. In his dialogue with Menelaus, a potential saviour for Orestes and his sister in the hostile environment of Argos, he describes the suffering he currently endures as ἡ σύνεσις, ὅτι σύνοιδα δείν' εἰργασμένος - 'Understanding: the awareness that I have done dreadful things' (Eur.*Or.*396). The ghost of Orestes haunting the figure of Herodias here puts a distinctive spin on the Virgilian elements of shame, madness, and love. What torments Herodias at this point in the play is not just these strong emotions but the *awareness* of them (*Mens ut facinoris* conscia).[46] As Jed Atkins has noted, this line of Euripides *Orestes* 'was the *locus classicus* for medieval treatments of conscience'.[47] The Queen Herodias does move quickly on from this questioning of herself and her deeds, inhabiting the garb now of the stereotypical tyrant (*Oderint ... dum metuant modo*). And yet this brief translation *ad spiritum* of Orestes' dilemma and his consciousness of the crime committed places an extra layer of complexity onto Grimald's guilty queen.

Herodias and the 'Bad Women' of Greek Tragedy

The figure of Herodias in Grimald's play is unusually porous, a ready host for a number of different spirits from Greek tragedy. Her own gender lends itself to comparison with the remarkable women of tragedy - often royal and filled with passion and purpose. In the preface to his Latin translation of Euripides' *Alcestis* (published in 1556), addressed to Marguerite de France (1523-74) daughter of François I, George Buchanan wrote: 'there will be no mention beyond this point of parricide and poisoning and of all the other wickedness with which other tragedies are filled' (*parricidii vero et veneficii et reliquorum quibus aliae tragoediae plenae sunt scelerum nulla prorsus hic mentio,* ll. 10-12),[48] an attempt no doubt to anticipate the common suspicion of Greek tragedy, and in particular those agents of 'poisoning', the women, especially, and contrasting that reputation with the praiseworthy figure of Alcestis - 'the good wife'.[49] The ghosts of these bad women are often

[45] Trans. Fairclough and Goold 1999. Cf. also *Aen.*10.905-6 - *Scio acerba meorum/ Circumstare odis.*
[46] For other comparable uses of *conscius* in the Vulgate, see 1 *Kings* 2.44, *Leviticus* 5.1, and an explicit denial of the ability to be *conscius* in 1 *Corinthians* 4.4.
[47] Atkins 2014, 2.
[48] Sharratt and Walsh 1983, 211.
[49] On the suspicion of Greek tragic women, see e.g. Heavey 2015 and Pollard 2017.

indistinguishable from their articulations in Latin (particularly Senecan) and post-classical texts.[50] Herodias, the luxurious inspirer of uxorial devotion acts as a lightning rod for these ghosts and, in turn, will have shaped later readings of Clytemnestra, Medea, Aerope, and Phaedra. None of these is so clearly translated, however, into Herodias' character as the figure of Helen, someone who, like Orestes, holds nothing like as prominent a place in the Senecan dramatic corpus as she does either in the Greek tragedies available to 16th-century readers, or in the Euripides' *Orestes* itself.[51]

The emphasis on beauty, wealth, and opulence at the court of Herod, and around Herodias especially, is conspicuous in Grimald's play. The enslaved Syrian man and the Syrian *ancilla* early on emphasise Herodias' sumptuous physical beauty - eyes, teeth, nose, hair, snowy neck and trim bosom.

> *Ebori' instar candidi dentes. Labellula/*
> *Suffusa nativo quodam velut minio.*
> *Nasus elegans venusto libratur spatio,*
> *Eöae pulchra par est aurorae coma.*
>
> Her teeth are white as ivory, and her dainty lips, delicately coloured, are parted a little. Her fine nose is well poised amid lovely surroundings. Her hair is as beautiful as the dawn.... (pp.261-3).

Her daughter is named Tryphera,[52] the meaning of the name (drawn from the Greek word τρυφή, luxuriousness) borne out in Act 4.2 when she is dressed by Herodias in an impossibly rich array of jewels and fine clothes:

> *Margaritas idcirco sumes: coloribus*
> *Corpusculum fucabis: torques, et aureos*
> *Geres annuluos, et armullas...*
> *Profer (puella) chirothecas, anulos,*
> *Gemmas, crepidulas, et mundum omenmen relliquum.*
>
> Therefore put on your pearls. Paint your little body with colours, wear your necklaces, your rings of gold, and your bracelets...Quick, girl, my ring-cases, my rings, jewels, sandals, and all the rest of my ornaments. (pp. 312-3).

Herodias then adorns herself in even greater riches (pp.312-3). The same scene takes the opportunity to highlight that Herodias, like Helen, is a woman with two husbands, as the fool (another appropriately Greek-named character) Gelasimus jokes with the Queen:

> Herodias. Now tell whose [wife] I am.
> Gel. The wife of Herod.

[50] For example, I do not discuss the clear echoes between Herodias and Seneca's Medea at, e.g., p.297 where Herodias rails against the prospect of Herod abandoning her - *Haeccine/ Sacra illa est confirmata coniugio fides?...Certe ego famae, pudori, patriae, uiro,/Ac omnibus te rebus unum praetuli...* cf. Sen.*Med.*488 *tibi patria cessit, tibi pater frater pudor*.

[51] She appears in one scene of his *Trojan Women*. Her opening lines, and association of marriages that are 'funeral and joyless' (*funestus, inlaetabilis,* v.861) indicate that this version of her character diverges greatly from Herodias, whose passion for her husband is one of the most remarkable features of this play.

[52] Grimald would have known Josephus' account of this story and also the name of Salome given there, *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.109. See Blackburn 1971, 95 on Grimald's use of multiple sources.

Her. But of which? (pp. 314-5)

The translation of a particularly indulged and luxury-oriented Helen, as is depicted in the Euripides play, into this biblical setting and the figure of Herodias serves Grimald's drama in two ways. First, the crime of incest which the Baptist accuses Herod and Herodias of is given further cultural weight through the comparison with Helen's adultery with Paris. But second, the famed wealth of Troy and Phrygia, noted at several points in Euripides' play and presented as corrupting and negative by a range of characters, is here transmuted in a biblical context into a critique frequently levelled at the Catholic church throughout this stage of the Reformation - a corrupting and negative association with idols, luxury, and wealth.[53] In this brief example, then, we see how translation *ad spiritum*, allows for subtle but utterly contemporary comment on the confessional disputes that were rife still in the 1540s.

Conclusions

Grimald's *Archipropheta* did not leave a hefty footprint in the literary records of English or European drama. His *Christus Redivivus*, published earlier in 1543, went on to be performed in Germany, and it was also produced at Augsburg in 1556, and is one of the plays on which the original Passion Play of Oberammergau was based.[54] Grimald was also a major contributor to Tottel's Miscellany - the first printed anthology of English poetry (1557) and one of the most influential of these kinds of publications during the reign of Elizabeth I in England.[55] And yet, despite his literary reputation at the time and many biblical and classical works (most of which are no longer extant), he is a relatively obscure figure in terms of English literary history. This may well be due to his shadowy dealings as a double agent during the religious conflicts of the mid-16th century, a fact that makes the not-so-veiled critique of Catholic idolatry in the figure of Herodias all the more intriguing.[56] The better play, perhaps, than other Baptist-focused works, it has suffered from relatively little attention. This should be taken into account when looking to the *Archipropheta* as a key text for the shaping of later attitudes towards Greek tragedy. And yet what I hope to have shown here is that the process of translation *ad spiritum* was one that *did* occur, especially once we factor in the certain backdrop of Greek drama being translated and read with renewed intensity, certainly in Oxford and Cambridge, right from the earliest decades of the 16th century. By appreciating this translation *ad spiritum*, we gain a great deal in how we understand Greek drama to have been an active ingredient in all kinds of dramatic production at a much earlier point than is usually posited.

[53] Dutton notes that the jewels worn by Tryphera and Herodias are 'a certain signal to Grimald's audience of [their] doctrinal error', Dutton 2020, 169.
[54] On the huge influence of this play in Germany, see Merrill 1925, 61-89.
[55] On this publication, see, recently, Warner 2013.
[56] Merrill 1925, 36-50.

Plays like *Archipropheta*, however and whenever they were read or seen in performance, would have bolstered motifs, such as Orestes *furens*, in the general literary imagination of the time. In circling back to an ancient Greek articulation of that motif, the image is a new specificity, just as we see in the complication of Herodias' guilt and rejection of the awareness that, in the light of some Christian doctrine, could have been her salvation. The kind of translation of Greek tragedy we see Grimald performing also shows us how playwrights of original Latin plays might take on dramaturgical techniques found in the ancient Greek plays, such as a climactic messenger speech being delivered by a 'foreign', singing, enslaved and othered voice, perhaps prompting rather unsettling feelings of sympathy in the audience. A pagan Greek ghost could also add complexity to traditional representations of certain biblical figures. The casting of Herod, through his association with Orestes overcome with Fury-driven madness, in a more ambivalent, if not exactly sympathetic light, is an interesting counterbalance to the usual presentation of Herod as an outright tyrant, something that would only become more standard as the century continued.[57] If we are to follow my suggestion that, unusually, we might also find a play of Aeschylus' being translated into this biblical drama, we can find new avenues for identifying the presence of less-vaunted, but still available, dramatic texts in the development and proliferation of dramatic experiments in the first half of the 16th century.

The advantages of, with caution, broadening our view of what translation might mean when it comes to Greek drama in this period, are considerable. This chapter has begun to point at these advantages, but much more work and discussion remain, especially regarding the understudied early Latin dramas of the 16th century.

[57] See Bushnell 1990, 84 on Hamlet's comment, to 'out-Herod's Herod'. See also, e.g., Leo 2019 on later entanglements between tragedy, Herod, and the Furies.