Roman Literature: Translation, Metaphor & Empire

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Abstract: The Romans understood that translation entails transformation. The Roman term "translatio" stood not only literally for a carrying-across (as by boat) of material from one country to another, but also (metaphorically) for both linguistic translation and metaphorical transformation. These shared usages provide a lens on Roman anxieties about their relationship to Greece, from which they both transferred and translated a literature to call their own. Despite the problematic association of the Greeks with pleasure, rhetoric, and poetic language, the Roman elite argued for the possibility of translation and transformation of Greek texts into a distinctly Roman and authoritative mode of expression. Cicero's hope was that eventually translated Latin texts would replace the Greek originals altogether. In the end, however, the Romans seem to have felt that effeminacy had the last laugh.

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Recent work on Roman literature has turned to the act of translation as a fundamental and defining feature of the Roman literary corpus. The focus on translation is not new, *per se*; both the Romans and the scholars who have written about them acknowledge that Roman literature originated in the appropriation and translation of Greek texts. Roman literature was thus already "secondary," "belated," "imitative," even as the Romans mused on the paradox of taking to their collective bosom the literature of a conquered empire. What is novel about the current approach is the understanding that Roman discourse on the origins of their literature entailed a complicated ideological battle fraught with implications for their social, cultural, and political thought. Recent scholarship has focused, *inter alia*, on literary production as a tool for elite self-definition; on the creative nature of what the Romans loosely called "translation"; on Roman epigraphy and how Greek source-texts are treated in Roman inscriptions.[1] What is already clear is that the notions of "imitation," "transla-

tion," and "transmittal" that were so basic to the old denigration of Roman literature actually involved creative processes that laid down a challenge to their source-texts, provided grounds for competitive claims within Roman culture, and ultimately fed into a broad nexus of concerns about foreign influence, native character, and the dangers of empire.

In this essay, I offer a specific case study of one feature of Roman translation that has remained unexplored in the flourishing of translation studies. This is the curious overlap of the Roman terminology for *translation* with the Roman terminology for *metaphor*.[2] While we moderns understand that to translate is always to transform, our lexicon does not trace the two processes back to identical literal meanings with different figural extensions. In Latin, however, to translate is to "turn" one text into another or to "transfer" a text from one language to another (*vertere*, *transferre*; the past participle *translatum*). At the same time, to "turn" a phrase or "transfer" a term also means to create a metaphor.[3] In other words, both translation and metaphor developed from the basic language of turning, changing, or transferring. Of course, the Romans understood that signifiers from one language cannot be mapped onto exactly the same meaning in another, and that translation thus involved a transformation of sorts.[4] But unlike contemporary theorists who posit that a translation is itself a metaphorical rendition of an original,[5] the literary and rhetorical writers of the ancient world never compared translation and metaphor – never even put them side by side – as if there was a deep gulf between the ways they could be understood. This was the case even though (as I demonstrate below) the very *metaphors* they used to talk about metaphor and translation were largely the same. In the end, this shared Roman vocabulary of *translatio* as

metaphor and *translatio* as translation sheds light on the connections between metaphor, translation, and Roman anxieties about the influence of a subject empire: the Greeks.[6]

The Romans lacked an indigenous literary and philosophical tradition, and self-consciously inherited the Greek tradition to fill the void. Their direct contact with Greek learning through the conquest and annexation of the Greek mainland in the second century BCE provided the conditions in which *translatio*, the noun meaning "carrying across," came to hold another extended meaning: that of translating. From the conquered territories, the Romans acquired not only booty, but also Greek texts; the latter were "carried across" from abroad and also "translated" from Greek into Latin, hence solving the poverty of native Roman literature, which the Romans themselves figured as a lack (*inopia*) in their culture.[7] Translation and the acquisition of Greek volumes were thus mutually linked; Terence, for example, describes himself as "transferring" materials from Menander's plays, and we know that he physically traveled to Greece to fetch them.[8] All this is unsurprising, but the fact that ancient discussions of metaphor likewise relied on the vocabulary of lack, substitution, and transferal from a foreign venue provides a striking parallel that demands more explanation.[9] The ancients generally took a substitution view of metaphor (the replacement of one word by another),[10] defining the trope as an "ornament" that provides immediacy, clarity, and a foreign quality.[11] Cicero instructs speakers to use metaphor "via similitude" when a proper word is lacking (*inopia*, again) or when they can introduce sweetness (*suavitas*), the latter being a fundamental feature of the trope and one reason why its effect on the reader is pleasurable.[12] As we know, the literal meaning of the verb *transferre* is "to carry across," and

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in Greek and Latin, metaphor is viewed as dependent on the foreign quality of the "new" term. But the Roman treatises emphasize geographical and spatial characteristics in their definitions, as if metaphors were foreign texts. Where Aristotle speaks in terms of a transfer between genus and species (Aristotle *Poetics* 1457b), for Cicero, metaphor's vehicle is seen as specifically fetched or imported from a distant place to carry out a local act of signification.[13] Thus, he notes, "Everyone takes more delight in carried-over [*translatis*] and foreign [*alienis*] words than in the proper ones that belong to them" (Cicero *De Oratore* 3.39.159), and offers as one explanation that "it's a mark of talent to skip over what is at your feet and to seize foreign words sought at a great distance" (3.40.169).[14] With the same idea in mind, he cautions elsewhere that one's source shouldn't be *too* far away (46.163) – and that the metaphorical vehicle should seem to have immigrated to, but not invaded, its new home (Cicero *Brutus* 274).[15] The first-century philosopher and rhetorician Seneca sees the reader as doing the traveling instead : metaphor, on which we lean like a pair of crutches, "brings us to the literal spot" where we can see what we need to (Seneca *Epistles* 59.6). In either case, there is some ground that has to be crossed.

Translation and metaphor shared other basic features. Both, for example, were discussed in terms of the improvements they could bring to a given sentence or passage. Aulus Gellius, the second-century Latin grammarian, notes that Vergil won praise for translating a risqué passage in Homer into tamer Latin ; as Gellius puts it, using "a modest *translatio* of words, even as [Vergil] showed and made clear [the original text], he covered it. He used pure and honorable words." Gellius is referring to Vergil's lines in the *Aeneid* that describe Jupiter seeking the "desired embrace" of Juno's arms ; the Homeric passage from

which Vergil took his model spoke more boldly of "deeds of love," and a bed (Vergil *Aeneid* 8.404 – 406). Vergil, then, is being praised for describing a sex-act in very oblique (read : "pure and honorable") language. But does Gellius mean that Vergil's polite "embrace" is a *metaphor* for sex, or a *translation* of Homer's passage? All we can discern is that it is a *translatio*, a transferal, from the too-frank original.[16] This and similar passages from Gellius are already revelatory in their combination of a number of considerations : the notion of transformation, the use of metaphor to suggest modesty, and the competition between Roman and Greek versions (Vergil improving on Homer, or not). As Vergil's mastery in translation is praised, so is his correct use of metaphor.[17]

In fact, modesty played a role in the evaluation of both successful translations and successful metaphors. Cicero, we saw above, calls for metaphor to be modest, to seem invited into the text rather than to have forced its way in. The author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* also wants metaphor to be modest, lest it seem to have "rashly and libidinously" (!) run across to a dissimilar term (*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34).[18] Such "libidinous" (uncontrolled or far-fetched) metaphors were tied to literally libidinous practices in their creators and were roundly criticized. Seneca condemns eras in which metaphors were used "immodestly" (Seneca *Epistles* 114.1) and then goes on to characterize the frequent or unusual use of metaphor in terms of excessive luxury and deviant sexuality : it springs from the pen of writers that are "effeminate," marked by *mollitia* (softness), full of license (114.3 – 4). Such were Maecenas and others like him, who wore colorful cloaks or transparent togas and who were not considered by Seneca "manly men" in the other realms of life as well.[19]

What is a libidinous metaphor, or a luxurious one? The parallels in Roman treat-

ments of translation help us understand Greek literature – like the culture in which it was embedded – posed the same perceived threats of excess sweetness and effeminacy. Translators into Latin were well aware of the need to make it appropriate for the sturdily no-nonsense Romans, as they thought of themselves. Indeed, Valerius Maximus, the great Roman collector of edifying moral stories, characterizes the Greek language itself as "sweet" (Maximus *Nine Books of Memorable Deeds and Sayings* 2.2.2).[20] As a correlate, we find that translators are praised for modifying or eliminating what is either too sexual or pleasurable in the original; so, for example, Gellius praises Vergil, again, for "prudently omitting what was very sweet in the Greek" when translating Theocritus.[21] An extreme expression of this xenophobia comes courtesy of Cato the Elder, who warned his son not to learn Greek literature too deeply: it would corrupt everything Roman (Greek doctors were banned from his home, too) (Pliny the Elder *Natural History* 29.7.14). And if too much metaphor ran the risk of effeminizing the author, all of Greek culture represented the dangers of unmanly softness for the Roman elite, who repeatedly figured Greece as the source of all things luxurious and unmanning, including statuary, clothing, philosophy, even pederasty.[22]

What are we to make of these alliances between Roman translation and metaphor: the terminology, the idea of transformation, the distance traveled by the text or the metaphorical vehicle, the care taken with sweet or sexual qualities, the potential taint of effeminacy?[23] They tell us much about the Roman view of both Greek literature and rhetorical figure as potential sources of an active and almost contagious anti-Romanness that had to be carefully regulated – or better still,

overcome and made Roman.[24] When Vergil famously contrasted Greek statuary and oratory to the Roman "art" of warfare, the divide between these national qualities was as much prescriptive as descriptive: the Romans wanted to contrast themselves to the conquered Greeks in this particular way. But lest we think metaphor and translation can be lumped together in Roman thought as simple cases of the incorporation of "pleasant but risky things from afar," we should look to their perceived differences to see why the Romans declined to lump them together – to see, that is, how one process was perceived as safe for the Roman character, while the other remained fraught.

To start with, the connotations of effeminacy and excess with which the Romans tarred the Greeks generally did not attach to Greek literature in *translation*. If questions of modesty, self-control, and excess were sources of concern for those writing prescriptions for the use of metaphor, translation, on the other hand, was almost always figured as a successfully accomplished exercise of control and mastery over a foreign text, an operation that "Romanized" it enough to make it all right for consumption. This was possible because the Romans had little interest in producing translations that were identical to their source texts. Instead, from the early days of combining different Greek comedies to produce a single Roman one, to the more sophisticated translations produced by the Roman elite in the late Republic and beyond, the Roman translator not only made available an originally Greek text, but also demonstrated his control over the source material and recontextualized its content, all to show that he was no self-effacing imitator, but a manipulator of Greek originals in his own right.[25] And since most elites tended to know both languages, they did not need a literal crib; no one complained

that Roman texts were too different from the works that inspired their creation.[26]

There are numerous attestations to this way of thinking. The poet Horace's famous lines showering scorn on the servile herd of literary imitators probably refer to his disdain for poets trying to imitate his own accomplishments, not Greek originals, but he himself points out that he treads untrodden turf as he takes on Greek lyric (Horace *Epistles* 1.19). In his programmatic poem, the *Ars Poetica,* he mocks the idea of the faithful translator, and the narrow space in which he works (Horace *Ars Poetica* 133ff). The epistolary writer Pliny the Younger urges us to translate for fun, but also to be ashamed if our versions do not sometimes outdo the original (Pliny the Younger *Epistulae* 7.9). And as Aulus Gellius reminds us, "Whenever we have to translate and imitate famous passages from the Greek poets, people always say we should not try to translate every single word in the original. Many things lose their charm if transferred too violently, as if unwilling and reluctant" (Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 9.9.1–2). Roman authors produced not one but five versions of Aratus's difficult didactic poem on astronomy, the *Phaenomena*; as Glenn Most writes, the fact that it was translated into Latin so often "is a testimony not only to the importance of astronomy in the ancient world, but above all to the necessity Latin poets felt to sharpen their instruments on the most intractable of materials (and, along the way, to display their virtuosity)."[27]

In justifying his decision to translate Greek philosophical works, Cicero claims that the Romans are wiser than the Greeks and had improved upon what they inherited from them; the Greeks surpassed the Romans in literature, to be sure, but "victory was easy where there was no contest" (Cicero *Tusculanae Disputationes* 1.2 and 4.1–2).[28] The term "victory" is no accident. Modifying the source text was a chance to display not only one's virtuosity, but also the general superiority of the Roman version over the Greek original, and indeed, of Romans over Greeks.[29] The relationship between source text and destination text could even descend to metaphors of violence: as Siobhán McElduff put it, "Roman literary translation, as a general rule, dismembered a Greek text and scattered it within a larger work."[30] *Translatio* was the outcome of conquering, of enacting a translation of empire (*translatio imperii*) as well as a translation of literary culture (*translatio studiorum*). Indeed, Cicero's hope was that, eventually, translated Latin texts would replace the Greek originals altogether (2.6) much like a metaphor in which the literal term trumped the imported vehicle, thus turning the whole process of transfer on its head![31]

If literary translation could and should be free, and represented Roman mastery over Greek originals, it in this respect differed greatly from metaphor.[32] Metaphor had to be closely controlled: in the treatises, the need to avoid overstepping certain bounds when creating tropes very much comes to the fore. We have seen the frequent invocation of the language of modesty and restraint.[33] There were injunctions about modest choices, control of the level of dissimilarity, avoidance of base vehicles, avoidance of excess, avoidance of effeminacy. These attempts at control stand in sharp contrast to the confident stance of the translators and their freedom to change the original, to "illuminate" (*inlustrare*, or "light up") the obscurities of the Greeks in the Latin tongue.[34] When these rules were ignored, the results were all but disastrous. Well might Seneca lament Maecenas's cloying metaphors, or Cicero limit their usage, or Quintilian decry metaphors that involved lowly and improper vehicles such as sewers (Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 8.6.15). In the end, of course, the production of metaphors was up to individu-

al authors; neither their production, nor their interpretation, could be controlled.

This must be part of the reason why these two forms of "translation" had little in common in the Roman imagination. Since metaphor by definition "produced pleasure" and risked causing effeminacy, it ran conceptually in parallel to the *other* imports from the empire that the Romans acquired: not the literary texts brought back, but the booty, slaves, wealth, and statuary transferred from the conquered peoples to Rome.[35] A swarm of late Republican and early imperial laments linked the conquest of Greece to the destruction of Roman character. Pliny the Elder felt such extravagances justified calling a man Venus (Pliny the Elder *Natural History* 36.3.7 – 8); Horace's other famous dictum, "Greece, once captured, captured her fierce conqueror and brought the arts into rustic Latium" (Horace *Epistles* 2.1.155 – 156), reminded the Romans that their military success was double-edged; the satirist Juvenal took Horace one further in remarking that "Luxury has settled down on us, avenging the world we've conquered" (Juvenal *Satires* 6.294); Pliny the Younger speaks of Roman zeal for work transformed (*translatum*) to zeal for pleasure (Pliny the Younger *Panegyricus* 13.5).[36]

Translation could be represented as a control exerted over an alien text, but it may ultimately have pointed to the uncontrollability of any "import from afar." In the Roman imagination, at least, the final *translatio* was that of sturdy Romans into luxury-loving slaves to pleasure and foreign importations – and this was no act of mastery in translation, but, metaphorically, of surrender to the joint threats of *translatio* from Greece and *translatio* as metaphor. What metaphor pointed to, in the end, is the instability of the conqueror's position *and* the instability of any text, "conquered" by translation or not.

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ENDNOTES

[1] For examples of these approaches, see Bernard Bertolussi, Madeleine Keller, Sophie Minon, and Lyliane Sznajder, eds., *Traduire, Transposer, Transmettre dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine* (Paris: Éditions Picard, 2009); Maurizio Bettini, *Vertere: un'antropologia della traduzione nella cultura antica* (Turin: Einaudi, 2012); Alessandro Garcea, "Aulu-Gelle, Probus et le problème de la traduction des textes poétiques," in *Traduire, Transposer, Transmettre dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine*, ed. Bertolussi et al., 17 – 26; John Glucker and Charles Burnett, eds., *Greek into Latin from Antiquity Until the Nineteenth Century* (London: The Warburg Institute, 2012); Bernard Kytzler, "*Fidus interpres*: The Theory and Practice of Translation in Classical Antiquity," *Antichthon* 23 (1989): 42 – 50; Siobhán McElduff and Enrica Sciarrino, eds., *Complicating the History of Western Translation: The Ancient Mediterranean in Perspective* (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2011); Siobhán McElduff, *Roman Theories of Translation: Surpassing the Source* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Christian Nicolas, "La note de traducteur antique et le niveau méta de la traduction, ou Quand la patte du traducteur se prend dans le fil du texte," in *Traduire, Transposer, Transmettre dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine*, ed. Bertolussi et al., 61 – 89; Frederick M. Rener, *Interpretatio: Language and Translation from Cicero to Tytler* (Amsterdam: Rodopi,1989); Diana Spencer, "Horace and the Con/straints of Translation," in *Complicating the History of Western Translation*, ed. McElduff and Sciarrino, 101 – 116; Astrid Seele, *Römische Übersetzer, Nöte, Freiheiten, Absichten: Verfahren des literarischen Übersetzens in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995); Anna Svenbro, "Théoriser la traduction à la fin de l'Antiquité et au début du Moyen Âge: Quelques glissements sémantiques," in *Traduire, Transposer, Transmettre dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine*, ed. Bertolussi et al., 9 – 16; Alfonso Traina,"Le traduzioni," in *Lo spazio letter-*

ario di Roma antica, Volume II, La circolazione del testo, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo, Paolo Fedeli, Andrea Giardina (Rome : Salerno Editrice, 1989), 93 – 123 ; Thomas N. Habinek, *The Politics of Latin Literature : Writing, Identity, and Empire in Ancient Rome* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1998) ; and Sophia G. Papaioannou, "The Translation Politics of a Political Translation : The Case of Augustus' Res Gestae," in *Complicating the History of Western Translation*, ed. McElduff and Sciarrino, 62 – 74.

[2] The Roman vocabulary for *metaphor* is derived from that of the Greek, but the parallels between *translation* and *metaphor* are only Roman. (Indeed, the Greeks translated little from other languages into Greek.)

[3] *Translatio* or *tralatio* – though verbal forms – are, in both cases, more common than nominal ones. A rare example of *metapherein*, meaning "change into another language," occurs in Plato's *Critias* 113a ; more common would be *metaphrazein*.

[4] See Clifford Ando, "Interpretatio Romana," *Classical Philology* 100 (1) (2005): 41 – 51. On page 43, Ando discusses several examples of such Roman awareness and relates the famous story of the idiom *dari spondes*, which was said to be untranslatable by Gaius (*Gai Institutiones : or, Institutes of Roman Law* 3.93). On the understanding that translation is always an interpretation, "as shown by the connection of terms with the synonymic values *interpretari*, *vertere*, and *transferre*," see Glenn W. Most, "Violets in Crucibles : Translating, Traducing, Transmuting," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 133 (2) (2003): 381 – 390. See also Douglas Robinson, *The Translator's Turn* (Baltimore, Md. : Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991) ; and Nicholas Round, "Translation and its Metaphors : the (n+1) Wise Men and the Elephant," *Skase Journal of Translation and Interpretation* 1 (2005): 47 – 69.

[5] For discussion, see Alfred J. MacAdam, "Translation as Metaphor : Three Versions of Borges," *Modern Language Notes* 90 (6) (1975): 747 – 754 ; Robinson, *The Translator's Turn*, 127 – 193 ; and Round, "Translation and its Metaphors," which also discusses metaphors *of* translation. The bibliography in Round's article serves as an introduction to the field of translation theory in general, which is not, however, within the scope of these pages.

[6] On the value of the metaphors with which a culture thinks *about* such matters as metaphor and translation, see Bettini, *Vertere : un'antropologia della traduzione nella cultura antica*, xiii. Bettini includes an interesting discussion of the metaphorical implications of *vertere* as transforming the source text.

[7] On the lack of literary or philosophical texts, or even a Latin vocabulary for philosophical terms, see Cicero *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 1.3.80 ; Cicero *De Oratore* 3.24.95 ; Lucretius *De Rerum Natura* 1.832 ; and Seneca *Epistles* 58.1. Cicero disputes the stereotype in *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 1.10. For a full treatment of the theme in Lucretius, Cicero, Quintilian, and Aulus Gellius, see Thorsten Fögen, *Patrii sermonis egestas. Einstellungen lateinischer Autoren zu ihrer Muttersprache (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde Band 150)* (München-Leipzig : K.G. Saur Verlag, 2000).

[8] As Terence writes in *Andria*, lines 13 – 14, "The playwright admits that he transferred what was suitable from the *Perinthia* into the *Andria*." See McElduff, *Roman Translation*, 87ff, for discussion of Terence's practices. Poor Terence died, in fact, while returning to Rome from Greece with 108 new plays – or so his biographer Suetonius tells us, in *Vita Terenti* sec. 5.1.

[9] For more on *translatio* as translation (a less common version than its verbal form, *transferre*), see Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 1.4.18 ; Jerome *Letters* 99 ; and Servius 1.223.7. For material on *translatio* as metaphor, see Cicero *De Oratore* 3.38.156, 3.41.165 ; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34.45 ; and Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 1.5.2, 8.6.4. For material on the verb *transferre,* meaning "to translate," see Cicero *Letters to Atticus* 6.2.3 ; Cicero *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 1.3.7 ; Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 1.6.3, 2.1.4, 2.15.21, 7.4.4, 7.4.7 ; Seneca *Dialogue* 11.11.5 ; Pliny the Elder *Natural History* 6.111 ; Pliny the Younger *Epistulae* 7.9.2 ; and Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 9.9.2. For notes on meaning to create a metaphor, see Cicero *De Oratore* 3.37.149 ; Cicero *Orator* 19.65 ; Cicero *De Optimo Genere Oratorum* 4 ; Cicero *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* 2.10 ; and Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 12.10.34. There is also an appendix containing a list of the verbs for translation in McElduff, *Roman Theories of Translation*.

10 On ancient metaphor, see Andrew Barker, "Shifting Frontiers in Ancient Theories of Meta-phor," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 45 (2000): 1 – 16; G. R. Boys-Stones, ed., *Metaphor, Allegory, and the Classical Tradition: Ancient Thought and Modern Revisions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Doreen Innes, "Cicero on Tropes," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 6 (3) (1988): 307 – 325; Doreen Innes, "Metaphor, Simile, and Allegory as Ornaments of Style," in *Metaphor, Allegory, and the Classical Tradition*, ed. Boys-Stones, 7 – 27; John Thomas Kirby, "Aristotle on Metaphor," *American Journal of Philology* 118 (4) (1997): 517 – 554; G. E. R. Lloyd, "The Metaphors of *metaphora*," in *Aristotelian Explorations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 205 – 222; Stephen Nimis, "Aristotle's Analogical Metaphor," *Arethusa* 21 (2) (1988): 215 – 226; Michael Silk, "Metaphor and Metonymy: Aristotle, Jakobson, Ricouer, and Others," in *Metaphor, Allegory, and the Classical Tradition*, ed. Boys-Stones, 115 – 147; Bruce M. Psaty, "Cicero's Literal Metaphor and Propriety," *Central States Speech Journal* 29 (2) (1978): 107 – 117; and Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-Disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans. Robert Czerny (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977).

11 Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1405a, 1411b; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34; Cicero *Orator* 25, 39; Cicero *De Oratore* 39.157 – 59; and Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 8.6.4.

12 "Translata dico, ut saepe iam, quae per similitudinem ab alia re aut suavitatis aut inopiae causa transferuntur," from Cicero *Orator* 27.92. See also Cicero *De Oratore* 3.38.155 – 156, 3.43.211; and Cicero *Partitiones Oratoriae* 17. For material on metaphor in general, see Cicero *Orator* 27.92; Cicero *De Oratore* 3.29.134, 3.38.155; and Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 8.6.4.

13 For other definitions that emphasize the distance that a metaphoric term must cross, see Cicero *De Oratore* 3.37.149. For definitions that emphasize the vividness a metaphoric term must have, see Cicero *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34; and Cicero *De Oratore* 3.40.161.

14 On why we find metaphor sweet, Cicero offers four reasons in total in *De Oratore* 3.159 – 161: metaphor is a mark of natural talent; it stimulates intellectually; it can embed a comparison in a single word; and it offers both sensual and visual stimulation.

15 One might contrast this form with metonymy, which draws on words that are "nearby" or "bordering" the noun to be replaced. See Cicero *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.43.

16 Another critic, or so Gellius tells us in *Noctes Atticae* 9.10, found this very same *translatio* not, in fact, so pure and honorable. Here we speak of metaphor, since Cornutus criticized the presence of the word "limbs" in the Vergilian *translatio* as "indiscreet" in a work entitled "On Figural Language."

17 Gellius, however, cites other pundits of the age who criticized him as an *immodest* user of metaphor in Vergil's translation of Pindar's passage on Aetna. See Vergil *Aeneid* 3.570ff.

18 The Roman terms are *pudens* or *verecunda*.

19 Similarly, Persius complains about poetry chock-full of luxuriant imagery and Bacchic content and claims these transgressions would not take place if the Romans kept a shred of their ancestral spine. See Persius *Satires* 1.103 – 104. Cicero reminds us that orators have to watch their use of ornament, lest they cross over into Asiatic-style floweriness. See Cicero *De Oratore* 3.52.201; and Cicero *Brutus* 325 – 326.

20 On risks to the translator in navigating all this sweet and sexual material, see Elizabeth M. Young, "Sappho Under My Skin: Catullus and the Translation of Erotic Lyric at Rome," in *Complicating the History of Western Translation*, ed. McElduff and Sciarrino, 25 – 36.

21 Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 9.9.4.

22 Other figures are shared between metaphor and translation. Once rendered into being, both could be characterized as a garb or protective "covering" for the literal or original text. Thus, to use Latin for a Greek original might be called exchanging the *pallium* for the toga. See Seneca the Elder *Controversiae* 9.3.13; and Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus *Divus Augustus* 98 – 99. Overuse of figures, in Quintilian's view, was like wearing over-luxurious clothing. See Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 8 proem 20. Cicero compares the use of metaphor to the human adoption of clothing: just as the former was originally used to repel the cold, but later became decorative,

metaphor also came about originally due to lack, but now is used to create pleasure. See Cicero *De Oratore* 3.38.155.

[23] Few modern authors have commented on this alliance, either. Bettini in *Veretere* devotes one sentence to the correlation ; McElduff does not have an index entry for metaphor in her interesting book on translation ; and MacAdam, who is not writing about antiquity, finds it a "happy coincidence" in "Translation as Metaphor : Three Versions of Borges," 747.

[24] Rhetoric itself was characterized as a Greek art. In 161 BCE and again in 92 BCE, edicts were issued expelling the *rhetores*. See Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus* 25.2.

[25] See discussion in McElduff, *Roman Theories of Translation*, 10ff and passim. See also Hans Baltussen, "Cicero's Translation of Greek Philosophy : Personal Mission or Public Service ?" in *Complicating the History of Western Translation,* ed. McElduff and Sciarrino, 37 – 47 ; on page 46, Baltussen quotes David Sedley on Cicero avoiding transliteration of Greek terms in translations of Greek philosophy as a "rare resort" that "savours of defeat." On the translation of particular Greek terms, see Seele, *Römische Übersetzer, Nöte, Freiheiten, Absichten*, 23 – 50.

[26] See Cicero *Academica* 1.4 – 5 ; and Aulus Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 11.16, with further discussion in chapters 5 and 6 in McElduff, *Roman Theories of Translation*.

[27] See Most, "Violets in Crucibles," 288. Christian Nicolas, in "La note de traducteur antique et le niveau méta de la traduction," is excellent in his discussion of the way Roman translators inserted themselves into the texts they translated.

[28] Baltussen, "Cicero's Translation of Greek Philosophy," 37 – 47.

[29] Quintilian, too, in *Institutio Oratoria* 10.98, thinks in terms of challenge. Cicero is more laudatory of Greek culture in *Tusculanae Disputationes* 2.26 ; he suggests that Greek texts even figure as "ornaments" to the Latin language.

[30] See McElduff, *Roman Theories of Translation*, 10. Conquest literally brought translation in its wake. Even Pompey's defeat of Mithridates resulted in the collection and translation of medical texts Mithridates had compiled (their language is not clear). See Pliny the Elder *Natural History* 25.7. Jennifer Larson points out that the politically dominant language (Latin) precedes the Greek in a majority of private inscriptions, even when it is not the language of the majority or of the inscriber. See Jennifer Larson, "Bilingual Inscriptions and Translation in the Ancient Mediterranean World," in *Complicating the History of Western Translation*, ed. McElduff and Sciarrino, 52. Other political considerations emerge from Papaioannou, "The Translation Politics of a Political Translation."

[31] Even in the early translators' work, "corrections" to the Greek are visible. Plautus changes names to make Latin puns in which *nomen* works as *omen* ; this sort of greater fidelity to reality offers another venue for claims to superiority. Likewise, Gellius uses etymology to defend propriety of a Latin translation in *Noctes Atticae* 2.6.5 – 6. This is a return to closer meaning, not a movement away from it, or a metaphorical change. Failure to make the Latin text "more real" or "better" than the Greek offered an opportunity for criticism ; see Nicolas, "La note de traducteur antique et le niveau méta de la traduction," 71 – 76.

[32] By contrast, from the start of the literary tradition, close translation was largely the province of a few non-Romans and ex-slaves. On their socioeconomic status, see Enrica Sciarrino, "The Introduction of Epic in Rome : Cultural Thefts and Social Contests," *Arethusa* 39 (3) (2006) : 451 – 452. Unfortunately, the fragments of the early Roman writers of Greek-based tragedy and dactylic epic do not offer a lot of further information. We do know that later poet Attius Labeo was lambasted for his crude literal translation of the *Iliad* (compare with the scholia to Persius *Satires* 1.4). Outside the world of letters, the close translator was the *interpres*, the military translator summoned to help at meetings of foreign generals. Cicero claimed precisely to have worked "not as an *interpres* but as an *orator*" – that is, he neither translated literally, nor like one of lower station. See his *De optimo genere oratorum* 4.14. He would only do

so if "he did not want to be himself." See Cicero *De legibus* 2.17. On the *interpres*, see McElduff, *Roman Theories of Translation*, 24 – 30, 144 – 145, and 201 – 202.

[33] Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1405a ; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 34 ; Cicero *De Oratore* 3.41.165 ; Cicero *Epistulae ad Familiares* 16.17 ; Longinus *De Sublimitate* 32.2 ; Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 8.3.37 ; and Seneca *Epistles* 114.10.

[34] See Lucretius's claim in *De Rerum Natura* 1.136 – 140 ; and Cicero's claims in both *Academica* 1.3 and *Tusculanae Disputationes* 1.5. Both are talking about translating Greek philosophy into Latin.

[35] The corrupting effect of such goods was linked by Roman authors to the conquest of Asia and Greece, in particular, and most often dated to 146 BCE, the year in which both Corinth and Carthage were destroyed ; 187 BCE is another candidate. On Hellenism as an agent of moral corruption, see Sallust *Bellum Catilinae* 10.6 ; and Pliny the Younger *Epistulae* 4.22. On luxury and pleasure as imports from Greece, see Cicero *In Verrum* 2.2.7 ; Cicero *Pro Flacco* 71.10 ; Cicero *In Pisonem* 42.6 ; Valerius Maximus *Factorum ac Dictorum Memorabilium Libri IX* 9.1.5 ; Velleius Paterculus *Historiae* 2.1.1 ; Pliny the Elder *Natural History* 33.150, Livy *Ab Urbe Condita* 7.38.5 ; and Lucan *Bellum Civile* 1.16 – 70. Horace suggests that the Romans only valued things that came from faraway lands or had been made extinct by the passage of time, but also corrupted them, like both metaphorical vehicles and luxury items. See Horace *Epistles* 2.1.21 – 22.

[36] For discussion, see Rhiannon Evans, "Learning to be Decadent : Roman Identity and the Luxuries of Others," in *ASCS XXXII Selected Proceedings*, ed. Anne Mackay (Auckland : Australasian Society for Classical Studies, 2011), 1 – 7.