

All the Haints of Hades: The Case for Regionalized Translations of Classical Literature

When we teach Classics in translation, we generally assign traditional literary translations. While these translations may be influential and aesthetically beautiful pieces in their own right, they tend to utilize "higher" registers of communication that can be archaizing and alienating to contemporary students. This effect of foreignization has the potential to present Classics as a lofty and inaccessible discipline, irrelevant to the lives of modern students. I propose in my paper a potential solution to this issue: thoroughly localized translations that take an interdisciplinary approach to the process of interlingual translation. By carefully domesticating ancient texts, we can make them more relatable to modern students, thereby helping to bridge the cultural gap between our classrooms and the ancient world.

As an example of the type of translation I propose, I discuss my forthcoming translation of Seneca's *Oedipus* from Latin into Appalachian English, which refers to a number of Englishes spoken throughout the Appalachian Mountains. I detail the processes of preparing the text, tying it to relevant American artistic traditions (most especially domestic dramas and horror films), and framing the new translation in such a way that it reflects the cultural and linguistic realities of Appalachia, while faithfully conveying the richness of Seneca's tragic work. I describe how my work challenges and dispels popular stereotypes surrounding the Appalachian region (most especially regarding incest, violence, and isolationism) rather than reinforcing them, as so often is the case with media portrayals of the mountains and their residents. I demonstrate that this regionalized translation, when diligently and sensitively applied, can subvert negative tropes and assumptions about the target culture. By crafting specifically regionalized translations of ancient texts, educators can tie the ancient world directly

to the particular circumstances of students' lives, thereby potentially spreading awareness of and interest in Classics as a field, as well as exploring new, intersectional approaches to classical reception. I explore the unique challenges posed by this method of translation, as well as highlight previous, similarly focused translations that have been successful in American classrooms. I conclude with a brief discussion of the project's future, including trials in a classroom environment.