

The standardization of Latin, i.e. its development into a fully elaborate language that can be employed for all kinds of societal needs, including many types of highly specialized and technical communication, occurred primarily in the period between the first century B.C. and the first century A.D. It included the reinforced systematic makeup of technical languages, which emerge in the technical treatises of various disciplines, such as agronomy, geography, architecture, mechanics, medicine and pharmacology, astronomy, music theory, mathematics and military affairs, further in the fields of philosophy, rhetoric, literary criticism and linguistics.

This paper deals with the difficulties and methods attendant upon the transfer of Greek stockpiles of knowledge into the Latin language, as described by Seneca the Younger in his philosophical works. Seneca often discusses not only the language and style of his treatises, but also the problem of translating Greek philosophy into Latin. It must be added that all of these concerns also played a vital role for earlier writers such as Lucretius and Cicero; therefore Seneca is by no means the first Roman author to scrutinise the adequacy of Latin for the description of complex subject matter.

On the whole, Seneca does not have a fully consistent method when it comes to translating philosophical texts from Greek into Latin, and this applies principally to the rendering of more technical terms. Although he tends to prefer the Greek language for the verbalisation of complex phenomena by making use of its wide range of apt terms, he does not in principle deny the suitability of Latin for the same purpose. His evaluation of the lexical and morpho-syntactical possibilities offered by the two languages depends on the individual case, and this is why he comes to different conclusions. For some Greek terms he thinks that there are fully acceptable Latin correspondences which need not be formally precise one-to-one translations, as long as the semantic value of the Greek expression is retained in the Latin rendering. Sometimes he considers a translation to be superfluous when the Greek word has already been sufficiently integrated into the lexical system of Latin and its usage. But in many cases he believes that the translation of Greek technical terms into Latin has its limits, as Latin is supposed to have not only a less elaborate vocabulary, but also less refined morpho-syntactical structures.

The final part of the paper asks why Seneca's attitude towards Latin as a suitable medium for the discussion of philosophical issues differs from that of Cicero, who in his own writings attempted to refute the stereotype of Latin as a poor language (*patrii sermonis egestas*, occurring especially when compared with Greek), and who often referred to the lexical richness of his native tongue.

#### References:

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