TRANSPOSITIONS AND EMENDATIONS
IN SENECA'S TRAGEDIES

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I. TRANSPOSITIONS

THE TEXT OF SENECA'S DRAMAS, like other verse texts from antiquity, has suffered from occasional misplacement of lines. The most common cause of such misplacement is that the scribe's eye skips one or more lines, which are therefore omitted; when the error is noticed the omitted lines are written in the margin, and a subsequent scribe then re-inserts them in the text, but in the wrong place. A sample of corrective transpositions in Seneca which have won widespread acceptance by critics would include the following: *Tro.* 102–103 transposed after 86 (Haase); 877 after 878 (Swoboda); *Med.* 710 after 711 (Gronovius); *Phaed.* 71 after 68 (Leo); *Oed.* 589 after 594 (Leo); ps.-Sen. *Her. O.* 147–150 after 142 (Leo). More recent proposals by Zwierlein which seem to me cogent include transposition of *Her. F.* 146–151 after 136 and *Tro.* 587 after 573.[1]

In most of the passages discussed in this section, previous critics have perceived that the lines in question are misplaced, but have not persuasively identified the lines' original location in my view.

Troades 820

In this choral ode envisaging the places to which the Trojan women may be taken as slaves, how are the place-names ordered in 814–843? The first strophe focuses on Thessaly. The second begins, perhaps, on the principle "places from the west and east coasts of Greece" in 826–828, but then reverts to Thessaly in 829. The third begins with island cities and islands, then modulates into "places variously affected by winds," with Calydnae (839) as the link between islands and winds; then we have two Attic locations (842–843). The ordering then, is in part geographic, in part thematic and associative. Within such a structure one cannot say with confidence that any line is misplaced, nor where it should be replaced. But several modern editors have felt, justifiably, that Crete (820) is misplaced in the otherwise purely Thessalian first strophe.[2]

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[1] These notes explain conjectures which appear in the new Loeb edition of Seneca's tragedies. My thanks to Harry Hine and Richard Tarrant for suggestions and criticisms which have greatly strengthened this paper. I use the following abbreviations: *KK* = Zwierlein 1986 (*Kritischer Kommentar*); STrag = the tragedies of the Senecan corpus excluding *Her. O.* and *Oct.* Zwierlein gives references to his discussions of various transpositions at *KK* 505 under the rubric "Versversetzung."

[2] Its misplacement must be connected with the corruption of *Gyrtone* (*Tro.* 821) to forms of Gortyn, a city of Crete. But one cannot tell which came first. Keulen (2001: *ad loc.*), who retains 820 in situ, suggests "a possible intertextual play" between the description of Iolcos here as *maris vasti domitrix* (*Tro.* 819), and that of Crete as *vasti dominatrix freti* at *Phaed.* 85; the point of the supposed play, however, is unclear.

The line is best replaced among the islands of 836–841, especially as the Homeric catalogue of ships—the basis on which this ode plays variations—has its own "islands" section (*Iliad* 2.645–680) which includes both Crete and Calydnae, the latter named by Seneca at 839: Seneca's *urbibus centum spatiosa Crete* echoes Homer's Κρήτην ἑκατόμπολιν (649). The possibilities are before 836 or before 839. The first is preferable, because elsewhere in this ode lines without *an* such as 820 tend to precede lines with *an* such as 836, and because insertion before 839 would disrupt a possible thematic link between 837–838 and 839–841 on the basis of "powers of nature" (so Zwierlein 1977: 157).

Zwierlein (1977: 156–158 and 1979: 172–173) inserts 820 before 842, but there seems no good reason for linking Crete with the two Attic locations of 842–843.[3] This placement also separates 820 from the lines concerning islands, since Peparethos (842) is not here treated as an island: *Attica pendens Peparethos ora* (842) must mean "P. perched on the Attic coast," with *Attica ... ora* as ablative of place; cf. *Her. F.* 146: (the nightingale) *pendet summo ... ramo*; 155: (the fisherman) *exesis pendens scopulis*; *Oed.* 910.[4] Zwierlein (1977: 158, n. 45), attempting to restore the island status of Peparethos, interprets *Attica ... ora* as an instrumental ablative, viz., "P. perched by means of its Attic coast," but an instrumental ablative here would need to contain some indication of height by which P. is perched (as in Bentley's conjectures *ardua* or *saxea* for *Attica*).

Troades 965–968

Richter's transposition of 967–968 after 978 is correct: see the discussions at Fantham 1982: 349–351 (pro) and Keulen 2001: 464 (con), with further references. I need not rehearse the arguments fully here. In brief, lines 965b–966 describe Hecuba, not Polyxena, for the previous lines 958–965a are concerned throughout with Hecuba's situation and feelings, and there is no indication of a switch of focus to Polyxena in 965b; in any case, tears on Polyxena's part would be quite out of keeping with her attitude in 945–948 and in Act 5. Consequently the encouragement to Polyxena to "rejoice" (967) has no point in the transmitted line-order.

I would add that it is only after we learn in 976–978 which masters will possess Andromache and Cassandra—in a sexual as well as a general sense[5]—that the comparison with Polyxena's *thalami* (967–968) becomes fully meaningful.[6] The

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[3] Zwierlein's suggestion of a south/north polarity between Crete and Peparethos seems more apposite to Delrius's conjecture, *arctica*, than to the generally accepted *Attica* of EA.

[4] Why Seneca thinks of Peparethos as not an island must remain one of the geographical mysteries of Latin poetry. Perhaps, however, the error was not his own: schol. Soph. *Phil.* 548 calls Peparethos "a deme of Attica and one of the Cyclades (sic) islands," as Leo noted (1878: 202, n. 3).

[5] For Cassandra, cf. 61: *nec dest tuos, Cassandra, qui thalamos petat*; for Andromache's *conubium* with Pyrrhus (alluded to in 59) compared unfavourably with Polyxena's fate, cf. Eur. *Tro.* 659–680; Verg. *Aen.* 3.319–324.

[6] Confusion between the sigla HEC. and HEL. in 978–981 could have contributed to the error.

motif of Andromache's envy for Polyxena is traditional, and based on the fact that Polyxena did not endure the lot or a victor's bed, whereas Andromache had to serve Pyrrhus (cf. Eur. *Tro.* 630–631, 659, 679–680; Verg. *Aen.* 3.321–327, especially 323–324, *quae sortitus non pertulit ullos / nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile*): hence 967–968 are better placed in a context where both the lot and Andromache's assignment are at issue.

My chief purpose here, however, is to argue that the words *inrigat fletus genas / imberque victo subitus e vultu cadit* (965b–966), which form part of Hecuba's speech in the MSS, actually belong to Andromache. It is easy to see how the MSS error arose: the words in question were surrounded, because of the displacement of 967–968, by lines belonging to Hecuba, and since the words are colourless in themselves, they were given to Hecuba too. The reasons for re-attributing them to Andromache are as follows:

1. Otherwise, with 967–968 removed, Hecuba's speech closes with these words; but they form an anticlimactic close. After the poignancy of her grief for Polyxena and her own longing for death, so colourless a comment about tears seems flat and trivial.

2. When speakers comment on their own tears elsewhere in STrag, the comments have special point. At *Thy.* 950, 967 the involuntary nature of Thyestes' tears reveals that something is amiss; at *Oed.* 952–954 Oedipus' tears draw his attention to his own eyes; at *Med.* 937 Medea's tears show her the depth of her own emotional conflict. But Hecuba here makes nothing of her tears.

3. The language of 965b–966 is in itself typical of descriptions of concurrent emotional/physical behaviour of a character onstage, and would fit either self-description by Hecuba or description of Hecuba by Andromache. But self-description of this kind is rarely followed immediately by an attempt on someone else's part to change the behaviour described.[7] It is, however, a familiar pattern in Senecan tragedy for a character to describe another's behaviour and then try to alter it.[8] Exactly that sequence occurred just above at 949–951, when Andromache first noted Hecuba's shock and then tried to hearten her. Here similarly, after noting Hecuba's tears, she attempts to assuage her grief by arguing that Polyxena's fate is enviable in comparison with their own.

Phaedra 261

E's *proin* commends itself against A's *pro(h)*, but the line with *proin* is clearly misplaced (so Gronovius, followed by Peiper-Richter, Leo, Zwierlein, Mayer).[9]

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[7] Exceptions belong chiefly to the formulaic situation in which a messenger expresses horror at what he has seen and is then encouraged to overcome his feelings in order to tell his tale: *Her. F.* 651–657, *Phaed.* 994–995, *Ag.* 417–420, *Thy.* 634–640.

[8] Examples include *Her. F.* 1088–93, 1173–75; *Tro.* 63–65, 503–506, 678–680; *Med.* 186–190; *Phaed.* 585–588; *Oed.* 849–850; *Ag.* 126–130, 693–694, 786–790.

[9] A *saut des yeux* from the line-end *manum* (251) to *mali* (253) could be the explanation of the line's displacement. The transmitted line-order is defended by Billerbeck (1988: 125–126), in keeping

However, the line does not fit well after 266 where Gronovius placed it, as his very tentative proposal seems to acknowledge ("Fortasse post [266] non male collocaretur").[10] Line 261 is directed at Phaedra herself,[11] but lines 265–266 are directed at the Nurse in response to 262–263, with *periturum* taking up *perire* and *prohibere* taking up the suggestion of permission in *sinat*. Consequently 261 does not form a natural conclusion to lines 262–263, which in fact are complete in themselves. Furthermore the general reference to violence in 261 should precede the rehearsal of specific means of violence in 259–260.

I suggest that the line should be transposed after 252, where it provides a practical conclusion (*proin*) from the principles stated in 251–252. The phrase *castitatis vindicem* follows well after references to conquering passion and protecting reputation. And the phrase *haec sola ratio est* (253) works better if it looks back to the previous line (i.e., 261) as well as forward to the next. Indeed the proposed placement of 261 is commended by the fact that it does not disrupt this speech's gradual approach to the notion of suicide, but rather enhances it. First it appears that Phaedra is "obeying" the nurse's plea for restraint; then the suggestion of force in *vincatur* is strengthened in *armemus manum*, but without explicit reference to suicide; finally suicide becomes explicit in the last phrase of the speech.

Phaedra 764–770

A's reading *rosae* in 769 is nowadays rightly preferred to E's *comae*: lilies and roses are frequently linked, often as instances of passing beauty,[12] and thinning hair would hardly be mentioned first as a sign of fading youth. E's *ut* in 768 must also be given up, since it contravenes Senecan usage regarding elision in Asclepiads,[13] and none of the various attempts to interpret its construction is convincing.

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with her policy of conservatism in such matters. She argues that the listing of alternative means of suicide (258–260) needs to be followed by a decision (261), as happens at *Oed.* 1036–39. But Jocasta there is actually on the brink of suicide, which is not the case here with Phaedra, to judge by the speed with which she lets herself be overruled.

[10] Gronovius' proposal was perhaps based on the sequence at *Her. O.* 922–923: *frustra tenetur ille qui statuit mori; / proinde lucem fugere decretum est mihi*. But the *Her. O.* author is stealing gems from *Phaedra* in his usual magpie style and rearranging them: *Her. O.* 922 comes from *Phaed.* 265–266; *decretum* in *Her. O.* 923 and 928 comes from *decreta mors est* in *Phaed.* 258; *Her. O.* 925–926 comes from *Phaed.* 246–247. Consequently the *Her. O.* text cannot be used to establish the original sequence of material; *proinde* in *Her. O.* 923 could as well come from a line following *Phaed.* 252 as from elsewhere.

[11] The form *armemus* is simply an instance of plural for singular: it does not include the Nurse in the action, any more than *paremus* (251) or *sequamur* (254) does so.

[12] See Smith 1913: 274 on Tib. 1.4.29 (not 19), cited by Mayer (Coffey and Mayer 1990: 159–160). Leo's preference for *comae* is an instance of his excessive respect for E.

[13] According to the study of Sadej (1951: 121, 124, 134–138), Seneca's Asclepiads contain no example of elision of any kind in this position in the line, nor of elision of a long syllable in any position.

A's text of 768–769, then, is probably correct in itself, as printed by Zwierlein and Mayer: *languescunt folio lilia pallido, / et gratae capiti deficiunt rosae.* We now have three co-ordinate similes introduced by *non sic*: (a) spring meadows, (b) lilies, (c) roses, with the apodosis starting *ut*, "just so," in 770. But (b) and (c) do not fit syntactically with (a), in view of the asyndeton of 768 and the *et* of 769: one would expect a link to the *non sic* of 764 by a *nec* or a repeated *non*, as at *Ag.* 64–71: *non sic . . . non . . . ut.*

It appears, then, that 768–769 are *implicit* comparisons (cf. e.g., 455–458), i.e., comparisons whose relevance to the theme is indicated by juxtaposition rather than by an explicit *qualis, non sic,* etc. As it happens, the lily and rose comparisons are similarly implicit at Ov. *AA* 2.113–116, a passage regularly cited as a precedent for these lines:

> *forma bonum fragile est, quantumque accedit ad annos,*
> *fit minor, et spatio carpitur ipse suo.*
> *nec violae semper nec hiantia lilia florent,*
> *et riget amissa spina relicta rosa.*

Lines 768–769, then, should be placed after 763, so as to follow directly after the statement of beauty's frailty, as in Ovid. Here they provide brief implicit comparisons which look back to 761–763, and which are then reinforced by the much fuller explicit comparison *non sic . . .*, looking forward to 770–772; this fuller comparison intensifies the theme by claiming that natural beauty is *less* fleeting than that of humans. The correctness of the transposition is confirmed by the fact that the violent verbs of the explicit comparison (*despoliat, saevit, praecipitat*) are now answered directly by *rapitur* and *abstulit*, whereas the *languescunt* and *deficiunt* of 768–769 are unrelated to this violent imagery.

The sequence of comparisons (lilies, roses, vernal meadows) is now the same as in Stat. *Silv.* 3.3.128–130, a passage which may derive from the present lines. Lines 768–769 were no doubt moved to their present place by a copyist who thought that, as comparisons, they belonged within the formal framework of comparison introduced by *non sic.*

Against the proposed transposition it might be argued that the simile starting in 764 takes up the theme of transience from 762–763 and should not be separated from it. But the fact that lilies and roses are bywords for the ephemeral nature of beauty means that they can continue the theme of transience by implication, just as their status as similes can also be left implicit. Though the whole passage would function perfectly well with 768–769 deleted, the fact that multiple similes are often used in this context (Smith 1913: 274 on Tib. 1.4.29) argues for their retention.

Phaedra 1022–25

Seneca's messenger-speech is based in part on the corresponding narrative in Euripides' *Hippolytus*, as well as on Ovid's briefer recounting of the events in

Met. 15. For instance, the three places listed by Seneca (1022–24) as hidden from sight by the huge wave are listed in the same context by Euripides (1208–10). But this list has surely been displaced in Seneca. Euripides has the following sequence: (a) thunderous subterranean rumbling and reactions to it; (b) appearance of a towering wave that hid the places listed; (c) movement of the wave towards land. Seneca has the same sequence, with different elaborations: (a) thunderous rumbling, now under the sea (1007); (b) supernatural storm, leading to the swelling of the vast wave (1008–15); (c) movement of this wave towards land, and questions about what it contains (1017–21). The list of places concealed from sight by the wave should clearly illustrate the *height* of the wave, viz. (b) not (c), in Seneca as in Euripides, and lines 1022–24 should therefore be restored to their place after 1015.[14]

E has line 1025 in the form *haec dum stupentes quaerimus, en totum mare*, which is unmetrical. In place of *quaerimus*, A has *querimur*, which restores metre but not sense: one complains, laments etc. after a disaster has occurred, not before one knows what is happening.[15] Once 1022–24 have been relocated, however, E's *quaerimus* gives excellent sense in reference to the questions just raised in 1019b–21. Again reference to Euripides' narrative strengthens this view. Since a first-plural reference is a rarity in Senecan messenger-speeches (elsewhere only *Ag.* 557),[16] this one probably derives from the Euripidean account (1204–05). Euripides' lines have a mixture of fear and *questioning*: παρ' ἡμῖν δ' ἦν φόβος νεανικὸς / πόθεν ποτ' εἴη φθόγγος. E's *stupentes quaerimus* gives a similar mixture, with fear turned to astonishment as the reaction is now to the huge wave rather than the ominous thunder.

The best cure for the metre of 1025 is to write *totum en mare* (Peiper) for *en totum mare*.[17] The objection has been raised that *en* does not appear in the fifth foot elsewhere in STrag.[18] But this is simply a consequence of the fact that clauses usually start at the beginning of the line or after a midline caesura, with *en* therefore falling in the first, third, or fourth foot. Elision before a monosyllable in the second half of the fifth foot is common (Zwierlein [1984: 226] counts ninety examples in STrag), and placement of *en* as second word in its clause is also common (cf. 54, 91, 384, 588, 655, 684, 1252). For a clause starting with *totum* in the fifth foot, cf. *Tro.* 1077.

[14] Leo (1878: 201–205) deleted the lines on unconvincing grounds. With 1002–24 transposed after 1015, *latuere* becomes a vivid instance of the "perfect of instantaneous result" (on which see Tarrant 1976: 341, on *Ag.* 891).

[15] A's *querimur* is the focus of several recent conjectures: *sequimur* (sc. *oculis*) (Axelson in *KK*), *tuimur* (Zwierlein in *KK*), *quatimur* (Watt 1989: 335), *vehimur* (Delz 1989: 505).

[16] Even in messenger-like speeches by named characters such references are only slightly more common: *Her. F.* 821, *Oed.* 595.

[17] An alternative is to remove the *en* with Havet (see Oldfather 1918: s.v. *en*). Havet actually moved the *en* to 1026 between *undique* and *scopuli*, thus eliminating the unusual lengthening of *-que* (parallelled at *Her. F.* 950), but *en* is not postponed to third word elsewhere in STrag.

[18] Perhaps first by Clausen (1949: 313–315), in a note defending A's *querimur*.

Phaedra 1016

This line is out of place in the transmitted order, since it awkwardly anticipates what follows: *in terras ruit* anticipates *terris minatur* (1018); perception that the wave is pregnant with something anticipates 1019–20; perception that it contains a monster anticipates the realization of 1026–34.[19] With Damsté's transposition of the line after 1026 (1918: 184–186), these difficulties disappear. The spectators have already realised that the wave is pregnant with something (1019–20): *immugit* (1026) is the clue leading to the realisation, now expressed in the following line, that what it contains is a living monster; *tumidum* now takes up the pregnancy metaphor, and *monstro* now answers the questions of the onlookers (1025). Finally *in terras ruit* reminds us that the wave is speeding towards land, a fact lost sight of in 1020b–26.

With 1027 following 1026 as in the paradosis, *summum cacumen* is unclear and could be taken erroneously to refer to the peaks of the *scopuli*, as is done, e.g., by Müller (1901: 266–227), Wagenvoort (1919: 366–367), and Miller (1917: 1.403). The phrase must actually refer to the crest of the wave, as it does in its source in Ov. *Met.* 15.508–510: *cumulus ... aquarum ... visus (est) / et dare mugitus summoque cacumine findi.* With 1016 reinstated after 1026, its meaning becomes clear.

The erroneous insertion of this line after 1015 in the paradosis is clearly related somehow to the displacement of 1022–24 from that position (see preceding note).

Oedipus 436–444

Most modern critics have concluded that the transmitted sequence of clauses is defective in some way, as manifested by the difficulty of finding a construction for 441 *thyrsumque ... manu.*[20] Leo's excision of 439–440 (*tibi ... comam*) provided a solution for 441, by attaching it to 438 (*nebride ... latus*) as a second participial phrase. But lines 439–440 are not suspect in themselves; on the contrary, *KK* persuasively defends them on stylistic grounds. Müller (1901: 268) proposed a less drastic version of Leo's solution, viz. transposition of 441 after 438. But it is then odd that the last detail mentioned before Pentheus' murder is the Cadmeids' loosing of their hair.[21]

It is noteworthy that forms of *tu* which begin sentences in this ode also introduce new topics or episodes (412, 429, 432, 449). This consideration makes

[19] On these grounds Leo (1878: 207) deleted the line. But even an inept interpolator could not have failed to perceive that *pelagus in terras ruit* is superfluous immediately before 1017–18. Billerbeck (1988: 113), following Grimal *ad loc.*, retains the line *suo loco* and interprets *monstro* as referring to the prodigy of the wave itself: the latter seems to me a rather desperate expedient.

[20] The traditional interpretation, which attaches 441 syntactically to 442–444, is followed by Töchterle, as his translation shows. But it is clearly improbable that Seneca would ascribe the aggressive act of thyrsus-wielding to the Cadmeids at the very moment when he is denoting their emergence from Bacchic frenzy.

[21] So Zwierlein (1986: 239), who, however, reaches a different conclusion from my own, viz. that there is a lacuna between 441 and 442.

it very probable that *Tibi commotae pectora matres / fudere comam* (439–440) does not belong *within* the Pentheus episode. I believe that these words should stand before 436. *Tibi* now introduces a new category of worshippers, viz., *matres* or matrons (as opposed to Bassarids) in general, as the *mystae* of 431 are initiates in general; the letting-down of their hair (440) is a symptom of their possession by Bacchus. Then *Cadmeas matres* (436) takes up *matres* in order to give a particular instance of the general category. So we focus on Theban women, and then more specifically still on Agave (*impia maenas*, 437), with *nunc* serving to vivify this particular image.

This solution again places 441 after 438, but without the difficulties noted above. The last detail mentioned before the murder is now, with ominous effect, Agave's wielding of the thyrsus. That the murder itself is not described in detail is in keeping with the elliptical style of this ode, which provides images illustrating Bacchus' power, rather than full narratives.

<div align="center">II.   EMENDATIONS</div>

Hercules 634

EA have *hostis* in both 634 and 635, an insipid and pointless duplication. Further, *mactare* is a strong word in STrag, often used in sacrificial contexts (literal or metaphorical), and occasionally employed in other contexts to denote the impropriety of a killing (*Med.* 645, *Oed.* 18). Consequently a more particular subject than *hostis* is needed to justify its use in 634. Accordingly Leo conjectured *mactetur hostia* for *mactetur hostis*, but Zwierlein's data (1984: 216–218) on elision, though incomplete, show that elision of a dactylic word is improbable in this metrical position.[22]

The phrase *hanc ferat virtus notam* calls for some preparation, to explain that the *nota* or stigma lies in slaughtering an inferior. I suggest that the word displaced by *hostis* is *impar*. For *impar* of unevenly matched opponents cf. *Ep.* 83.24: *haec illum res . . . hostibus suis imparem reddidit*; *Phoen.* 630–631: *exaequat duos, / licet impares sint, gladius*; *OLD* s.v. 3–4; and for the "unmatched" quality of Hercules' *virtus*, cf. *Her. F.* 84, 1275. *Hostis* may have been introduced accidentally from 635, or as a gloss providing a noun for the adjective *impar*. With this reading, *mactetur* conveys the impropriety involved in killing an inferior.

This reading yields a pattern characteristic of Seneca's style, in which a new idea is first stated in a compressed way (*mactetur impar*) and then expanded by further (often co-ordinate) clauses: e.g., *Her. F.* 664–667, 816–817: *paene victorem abstulit, / pronumque retro vexit et movit gradu*; *Ag.* 472–473, 497–498.

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[22] The only instance Zwierlein finds of a dactylic word elided at this position is *Ag.* 206 (*captiva Pergama et diu victos Phrygas*), which probably reflects the licence accorded to proper names. For Zwierlein's data on elision in general at this position we have a double-check for one play only, namely *Thyestes*, in Soubiran (1966: 528, 532), who finds an instance apparently missed by Zwierlein at 484: *tantum potest quantum odit.*

Troades 664

The transmitted text *pergam et e summo aggere / traham sepulcra* makes a distinction between *sepulcra* and *agger* which is puzzling and untenable. Miller (1917: 1.181) translates, "from the mound's top I'll drag the sepulchre," but placement of a tomb or burial on *top* of a mound would be eccentric;[23] the fact that Astyanax was able to enter the tumulus (n.b. *succede tumulo*, 503; *subire*, 510; *claustra*, 512) shows that there is a tomb-chamber *within* the mound. In Fantham's version, "I shall ... drag out the burials from the height of its mound" (1982: 166), the word "burials" presumably refers to Hector's remains. True, *sepulcra* is occasionally used by metonymy for "the buried dead" while they are *in* the tomb (*OLD* s.v. c); but could it be so used when they are being removed *from* the tomb? *Sepulcra* seems more likely here to be a virtual synonym for the burial-mound: similarly at Cat. 64.368: *alta Polyxenia madefient caede sepulcra*, it is close to being a synonym for *tumulus*, as *agger* is almost a synonym for *bustum*, ibid. 363: *teres excelso coacervatum aggere bustum*.

This interpretation of *sepulcra* fits with the fact that Ulysses' threat is not just to remove Hector's remains while sparing the tumulus, but rather to level the tumulus completely (638–639). In all probability, then, the present phrase is yet another version of Ulysses' tersely repeated threat: cf. *funditus busta eruam* (663), *tumulus hic campo statim / toto iacebit* (667–668), *funditus cuncta eruam* (685). The required meaning is: "I shall tear apart the burial-place, starting from the top of the mound." Here there is no longer a sharp distinction between *sepulcra* and *agger*: they refer to different aspects of the same thing, viz. the tumulus. For the use of the simple verb *trahere* in the sense of its compound *distrahere*, cf. *Her. F.* 1206 with my commentary (1987: 428). The text, then, must be corrected from *e summo aggere* to *a summo aggere* (for the sense "starting from", see *OLD* s.v. *ab* 12); *e* was perhaps substituted for *a* by a reader who failed to grasp the sense. The unusual phrasing is explained by Seneca's desire to find multiple variations on the theme of "complete demolition."

Phoenissae 112

Hudson-Williams (1991: 428) successfully defends this line against proposals for deletion and against suspicions of the striking phrase *haerebo ad ignes*, "I shall embrace the fires." One must agree, however, with Leo and Zwierlein that the final phrase *funebrem ascendam struem* (*ascendam* A, *esc-* E) is a sad anticlimax,[24] since it adds nothing to *in altos ipse me immittam rogos* (111). What Seneca wrote was surely *funebrem accendam struem*, "I shall make the funeral pile flare up." For *accendo* of making an existing fire, or its already burning materials, blaze up see *OLD* s.v. 1b: examples include Ov. *Met.* 10.279: *flamma ter accensa est*; Plin. *Nat.* 14.62: *(Falerno) solo vinorum flamma accenditur*; Stat. *Theb.* 10.926: *hinc*

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[23] This difficulty was perceived by Karsten (1881: 54), who suggested that *e summo aggere* should be corrected to *ex imo aggere*.

[24] "Müssige und kraftlose" says Zwierlein (1969: 767); cf. Leo (1879: 378), who conjectured *funebri abscondar strue*.

renovare faces lassamque accendere quercum; and the two uses of the verb in STrag, at *Med.* 672 and *Thy.* 165.

Phoenissae 176–178

The paradosis can only be construed as follows, I think: "Even now that spirit of mine falters, it falters, when my face has pressed itself on my unwilling hand." This would presumably mean that his hand is once again less eager to attack than its target is to be attacked, as was the case in his self-blinding (cf. 175–176 and *Oed.* 962–964). But the *cum*-clause is suspect in this interpretation: elsewhere in STrag *cum* is used with a present-perfect verb only in generalisations (e.g., *Her. F.* 409, *Phaed.* 354) or of repeated actions (e.g., *Her. F.* 754, *Med.* 92–93, *Thy.* 170–171); furthermore, the relationship between *haeret* and the *cum*-clause is not purely temporal, so that one would expect a subjunctive. *Cum . . . pressere* cannot be taken as a generalising clause ("my spirit falters whenever . . .") because *etiamnunc* refers *haeret* to the present occasion. Hirschberg and Frank *ad loc.* both understand *vultus* as "eyes" (for the usage, see Fitch 1987: 287 on *Her. F.* 640f.), which means, since Oedipus is now eyeless, that the *cum*-clause must denote his self-blinding; but if the *cum*-clause is historic, how does it cohere with the present *haeret*?[25]

We must therefore restore *haesit* in 177, giving the following: "Even now that spirit of mine falters; it faltered when my eyes pressed themselves on my unwilling hand." For the anaphora of a verb in a different tense indicating a parallel between different occasions, cf. *Her. F.* 116: *me vicit? et se vincat*; 490: *Iovi dedisti coniugem, regi dabis*; *Tro.* 193–194: *non parvo luit / iras Achillis Graecia et magno luet*; for such anaphora indicating a continuity between past and present, cf. Prop. 2.28.7: *hoc perdit miseras, hoc perdidit ante puellas* and Stat. *Silv.* 2.6.30: *vidi et adhuc video*. *Haesit* will have been miswritten *haeret* under the influence of *haeret* directly above. The interpretation of the *cum*-clause as referring to Oedipus' self-blinding is confirmed by the following words *audies . . . praestisti*, which take their cue from the *cum*-clause and clearly refer to the self-blinding.

Phoenissae 358

In the middle of 358 the theme shifts from "Let the worst possible outrage occur in Thebes!" to "I shall hide in this rough country, [not go to help Thebes]." Consequently the clause *nemo . . . silvis* needs a verb in the future indicative (*eruet*), like those of the following clauses with which it belongs, not a jussive subjunctive (EA *eruat*) as if it belonged with 354–358a. Clearly "No-one shall root me out of these woods" is rhetorically superior here to "Let no-one root me out . . .": the future expresses determination as at 52–53: *nemo me comitem tibi / eripiet umquam*. "Let no one root me out" would suggest that there is some intention to remove Oedipus violently, but no such threat exists. "No one shall

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[25] On his lemma *ille animus . . . cum*, Hirschberg (1989: 64) cryptically remarks, "Adnominaler explicativer *cum*-Satz (Kühn.-Stegm. 2,328)." I think this means that he construes "that spirit [which faltered] when . . ."—plainly an impossible interpretation.

root me out," by contrast, is simply a pejorative way of referring to any attempt, such as the messenger has just made, to remove him. *Nemo* is used with a future indicative five times in STrag (*Tro.* 1017; *Phoen.* 52, 277; *Phaed.* 873; *Thy.* 213), but with a jussive subjunctive only in one generalising couplet (*Thy.* 615–616). For corruption of -*et* to -*at* cf. e.g., *Her. F.* 947, 1284, *Phoen.* 424, 593. Here the error no doubt shows assimilation to the preceding subjunctives, especially *ruat* 355, as conversely at *Tro.* 122 subjunctives are assimilated in A to preceding indicatives.

Phoenissae 374–375

Some editors print A's text *mare / quod cingit Isthmon regitur.* E however has *mare / quod cingit isthomos* [sic] *regitur*, which prompted Gronovius to the conjecture *mare / quod scindit* (or *findit*) *Isthmos regitur*, accepted by Leo, Zwierlein, Frank, and others.

But neither A's text nor Gronovius' conjecture is convincing. First, it is strange to see Argos, of all cities, defined as a sea-power (contrast, e.g., Crete at *Phaed.* 85–88). Second, *mare imperio regere* is an unusual phrase, which would be appropriate to Neptune (*Her. F.* 599: *secundo maria qui sceptro regis*), but hardly to a human ruler: *imperio regere* is naturally used in reference to subject lands and peoples (cf. Verg. *Aen.* 6.851: *tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento*; Liv. 8.23.9: *Samnis Romanusne imperio Italiam regat decernamus*; Sen. *Med.* 216; *Phaed.* 621).

It looks, therefore, as if we have an instance of that association or identification of the Isthmus with the territory of Argos, which arises occasionally through poetic vagueness about geography: cf. Eur. *Tro.* 1097–99: δίπορον κορυφὰν / Ἴσθμιον, ἔνθα πύλας / Πέλοπος ἔχουσιν ἕδραι; *trag. inc.* 104–106 R³ (quoted by Seneca at *Ep.* 80.7): *en impero Argis, sceptra mihi liquit Pelops / qua ponto ab Helles atque an Ionio mari / urgetur Isthmos*; Sen. *Her. F.* 1164–65: *gemino mari / pulsata Pelopis regna Dardanii* with Fitch 1987: 418–419; *Med.* 891; *Ag.* 563–564; *Thy.* 627–629. Consequently I would emend *quod* to *qui* and adopt Gronovius' *findit*, writing *mare / qui findit Isthmos regitur.*²⁶ For *Isthmos* as an antecedent attracted into the relative clause cf. Ov. *Her.* 12.104: *quique maris gemini distinet Isthmos aquas*; and Sen. *Thy.* 111–112: *qui fluctibus / illinc propinquis Isthmos atque illinc fremit*; for the Isthmus as a *regnum* cf. (besides *Her. F.* 1165 cited above) *Thy.* 124: *Isthmi . . . regna Corinthii.*

Phoenissae 610–614

Though the whole of 602–613 is concerned with Ionia, lines 610–613 differ from 602–609 in two respects. First, 602–609 advertise the attractions of individual regions in Asia Minor as places where Polynices might carve himself

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²⁶Frank (1995: 181) rightly judges, apropos of Gronovius' conjecture, that "there seems little reason to prefer *scindit* to *findit*." For *findit* Gronovius compared *Her. F.* 336 (an interpolation): *bina findens Isthmos exilis freta.*

out a kingdom, whereas 610–613 summarize by a "polar" generalizing expression, "either at the northern or southern end of the Ionian coast," i.e., "anywhere on that coast."[27] Second, lines 610–613 are not grammatically independent like 602–607 and 608–609 severally, but rather modify *regna quaere* in 614.[28] On both counts the transmitted *hinc* in 610 is unacceptable: coming after *hinc* in 602 and 608, it would inevitably suggest another region whose wealth is to be detailed,[29] which is not what happens in 610–613; and "in another region" would not sit well with "seek a kingdom" at 614, since it would imply that the regions previously mentioned should be dismissed.

Most editors see that *haec* is corrupt at the beginning of 614, and they print either *hic* (Gronovius) or *hac* (Bothe). But clearly, in view of the above, we need the *same* deictic at the beginning of 610: "*Here*, where the Ionian coast begins or where it ends [or anywhere in between], *here* seek a kingdom." Should the form be *hic* or *hac* in both places? Without doubt the latter, since adverbial *hic* is never correlate with *qua* in STrag, whereas *hac* is so used several times (*Med.* 565, 1006; *Phaed.* 9, 83, 334, 702, 1071). Corruption to *hinc* in 610 was influenced by 602–603 (*hinc . . . qua*) and 608 (*hinc*); in 614 corruption to *haec* was triggered by the adjacent *regna* (cf. *Phaed.* 334 and *Thy.* 1084).

Medea 768–769

The awkwardness of these lines is such that I see no alternative to deletion. Critics agree that the catalogue beginning at 752 is of Medea's *past* accomplishments, since most of the actions mentioned would be irrelevant as preparations for her present task. Consequently the present tense of *labant* is out of place after the long sequence of perfects. Zwierlein attempts to solve this problem by ending the catalogue with 767 and making 768–769 a description of the present circumstances, with *stetit* as a present perfect. But this is a difficult case to make. Not only is there no explicit indication of such a shift, but it is gainsaid by the fact that 768–769 are so similar in character to the previous lines: they contain the same kind of absolute reversals (the mover brought to a halt [*stetit*], the fixed made to move and totter [*motae labant*]), and the same coupling of polar oppositions (sun vs stars, movement halted vs stability shifted).

[27] The relationship between 602–609 and 610–613 is understood so by Zwierlein in *KK* and by Frank (1995: 241–242). The most common "polar" expression is "at the sunrise and sunset," implying "and everywhere in between" (Fitch 1987: 133 on *Her. F.* 37): in the same way "at one end or the other" can imply "or anywhere in between," e.g., *Phaed.* 69–70 *sive ferocis iuga Pyrenes, / sive Hyrcani celant saltus.*

[28] Courtney (1985: 298) notes that it would be possible to understand *hinc <est ille locus> qua* in 610 (thus making 610–613 grammatically independent); he rightly dismisses the possibility on the grounds that "this hardly suits *aut*, and we expect *hinc qua* to be related to each other as they are in 602–5."

[29] For threefold *hinc* indicating three directions, cf., e.g., Sen. *Ep.* 88.7: *hinc monstra effera . . ., hinc insidiosa blandimenta aurium, hinc naufragia.* The corrupt *hinc* of 610 misled Wilamowitz into thinking that 610–613 should extol the charms of further regions—and consequently (since no charms are extolled) to postulate a lacuna: see *KK* and Courtney 1985: 298–299.

The very meaning of the lines is unclear. Zwierlein believes that 768 denotes an eclipse or darkening of the sun, as a result of which the stars become visible in 769. But *stetit* does not point to an eclipse, for the locus of eclipse talks of the sun moving, albeit with darkened face (cf. *Her. F.* 940–941: *Phoebus obscuro meat / sine nube vultu*; Luc. 1.540–541: *ipse caput medio Titan cum ferret Olympo / condidit ardentes atra caligine currus*); in addition, mention of darkness, found repeatedly in those passages, is absent here (so Hine 2000: 188). As for *die relicto*, it must mean, as Müller (1898: 24–25) showed, that the sun has "abandoned" his task of leading the day through its regular course (cf. *Ag.* 508–509: *omnis officio stupet / navita relicto*; *Phaed.* 309–310: *arsit obscuri dea clari mundi / nocte deserta*). The phrase *in medio stetit* would therefore most naturally indicate an immobilisation of the sun at high noon,[30] not an onset of darkness—a separate event, then, from that in 769. But the meaning is far from transparent.

In 769 the emphasis is on the Hyades' movement, not on their visibility as Zwierlein would have it. Why are the Hyades mentioned? It has been suggested that they exemplify Medea's power over the constellations in general (Farnaby), which are normally "fixed" in relation to each other (Cic. *Arat.* 235–236: *[sidera] semper certo volvuntur in orbe / fixa*; Manil. 1.256: *ordinibus certis*; 2.515: *has Natura vices tribuit, cum sidera fixit*; *TLL* 6.1.719.54–69). But if that is the point, it is obscure: since the sun is the *mobile* par excellence, we would expect the Hyades to be an egregious example of fixity, which is not the case.

Zwierlein believes that 768–769 explain why it is now "time" (*tempus est*, 770) for Hecate to appear, i.e., because the (alleged) darkness and instability in the heavens provide suitable conditions. But line 770 does not need special preparation. The line is one of a series of references to Hecate, each coming at the end of a metrically discrete portion of Medea's monody: the first summons her (751–752), the second repeats the summons with more insistence (*tempus est*, 770), the third notes signs of her arrival (785–786), the fourth her assent to Medea's appeal (840–842). These references are somewhat independent of the lines immediately preceding them, with none of the others having the kind of preparation that Zwierlein sees in 768–769.

The two lines form a complementary pair, and must fall together. They are good candidates for inclusion in Tarrant's category of "collaborative interpolation," in which the reader "revises, expands or varies the text . . . simply because it allows for further elaboration, because it has not yet exhausted the possibilities of the material" (1989: 137).[31] There is another interpolated reference to the Hyades at Manil. 1.371.

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[30] Hine (2000: 188) compares *Phaed.* 790–794 and Apul. *Met.* 1.3 for the ability of witchcraft to stop the moon and sun respectively.

[31] The motive for interpolation could have been to provide a transition from the perfect tenses ending in 767 to the present tense of 770. The interpolated lines may be based on V.Fl. 6.442 (*sidera fixa pavent et avi stupet orbita Solis*, in a list of Medea's powers), or on some shared source.

Phaedra 558–559

The transmitted text offers the surprising thought *mitius nihil est feris,* "nothing is gentler than wild beasts." Early editors explained that, if you examine the human race (Gronovius) or stepmothers specifically (Bothe), nothing is (i.e., will appear by contrast) gentler than wild beasts. But this is too much to supply. More recent critics following Bannier (bibliography in *KK*) have interpreted *nihil* as *nihil in humano genere,* i.e., no part of the human race as listed in 555–558a. They compare 353, where *nihil* following a list of animals means in effect "no creature." Both the comparison and the interpretation are rightly rejected by Hendry (1998: 579), who points out that *nihil* in 353 "takes up a preceding *omnes,* which makes the shift from the plural beasts to the generalizing neuter singular more explicit and far less ambiguous: *vindicat omnes natura sibi, nihil immune est.*" Clearly, then, our *mitius nihil est feris* is corrupt.[32]

I suggest the correction *mitior nulla est feris,* "not one of them is gentler than wild beasts." For *nullus* taking up a noun in the previous clause (here *novercas*) cf. 817, *Med.* 424, 1010. Corruption of *nulla* to *nihil* would have triggered adjustment of *mitior* to *mitius.*[33]

Phaedra 641–644

E's text is satisfactory except for the second word; *intimis ferit ferus / visceribus ignis mersus et venis latens / ut agilis altas flamma percurrit trabes.* Here *ferit* is plainly corrupt since it constitutes an iambic fifth foot, lacks an object and creates an awkward jingle with *ferus.* What is needed is a verb of motion,[34] to which the simile with its focus on movement (*percurrit*) can apply. One candidate is *errat,* for which cf. Ov. *Met.* 9.201–202: *pulmonibus errat / ignis edax imis;* 14.351: *flammaque per totas visa est errare medullas;* and ps.-Sen. *Her. O.* 1359–60: *errare*

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[32] Hendry (1998: 578) following Hutchinson finds a further difficulty in *sed* (559), believing that it "introduces no sort of contrast with the preceding words." It seems to me that *sed* could be adversative either to Hippolytus' whole account of human degeneration, which did not give a leading role in crime to women—in which case Hippolytus is now correcting himself—or specifically to *taceo* in 558.

[33] Emendations which take *nihil* as an adverb come up against the fact that *nihil (nil)* is rarely used adverbially with a comparative adjective or adverb: I find no example in the whole of Ovid, and none elsewhere in STrag. Leo conjectured *taceo novercam: mitior nil est feris.* This exceptional use of *nil* would be a reminiscence of Eur. *Alc.* 309–310: μητρυιὰ ... ἐχίδνης οὐδὲν ἠπιωτέρα. But I doubt whether Seneca uses overt Grecisms of syntax such as this. In addition, the singular *novercam* (though perhaps intended by Leo as a generalising singular) would inevitably be understood to refer to Phaedra; yet Hippolytus' attitude to her is polite, and he is condemning stepmothers in general, not Phaedra specifically.

[34] The A interpolator perceived this need, and so rewrote *et venis latens* as *atque per venas meat,* which he combined with a rewriting of the first clause, perhaps designed to eliminate the problematic *ferit.* He clearly intended what is now line 642 to replace 643, but 643 somehow survived in the A mss. Zwierlein follows Bothe in making *percurrit* the verb not only of the simile but also of the main clause to which it is attached, by writing *venas* for *venis:* fire "[runs through] the veins, as flames run through timber." This is awkward and unconvincing; contrast *Her. F.* 1046–47: *totus ad terram ruit, / ut caesa silvis ornus,* where the verb *ruit* belongs to the main clause and can easily be supplied in the simile.

mediis crede visceribus meis, / o mater, hydram et mille cum Lerna feris. Corruption of *errat* to *ferit* is not particularly likely *per se*, but there has been interference here from the following word *ferus.* For the pleonasm of *visceribus ignis mersus et venis latens,* Carlsson (1926: 63) compares 625: *regni tenacis dominus et tacitae Stygis; Med.* 226: *decus illud ingens Graeciae et florem inclitum; Ag.* 724: *cui nunc vagor vesana, cui bacchor furens.*

Phaedra 831

Most editors agree rightly that the transmitted comparison of the newly-arriving traveller to Pirithous is pointless here. But how did it arise in the MSS?

The resemblance seen by the Chorus must be either to Hippolytus (so already Delrius) or to Theseus himself. *Iuveni* points strongly to Hippolytus, since the word is frequently used of him (272, 447, 453, 807, 825, 947, 1195, cf. *iuventa* 449, 462, 620) and nowhere of Theseus; indeed the Theseus of this play is no longer young (*fractis... annis,* 1253). Furthermore the facial resemblance of father and son has already been detailed by Phaedra (646–660) and noted implicitly by the Chorus (759–760). I would therefore write *iuveni... Theseo,* where *Theseo* is an adjective. Hippolytus is similarly called *Theseius heros* at Ov. *Met.* 15.492 and *Thesides* at *Her.* 4.65; the adjective *Theseus* is used at 129 (*Thesea coniunx*). The proposed reading offers an explanation of the puzzling paradosis: Pirithous' name was placed in the margin as an erroneous gloss on *iuveni... Theseo,* and later intruded into the text.

The pattern seen at *Oed.* 202–205 and *Her. F.* 618–625 of a tentative identification later confirmed might be thought to favour a reference to Theseus himself here. But there is no reason why that pattern should not be varied when appropriate, as here where Hippolytus has been the subject of the whole preceding ode.[35]

Phaedra 900

A has *gentis actee,* E *generis acteae.* These phrases could not carry the required meaning "of the *royal* family of Athens." Here they could mean only "of the Athenian nation," which is not germane to the context: the sword-hilt must demonstrate to Theseus not simply that Phaedra's alleged attacker was an Athenian, but specifically that he was of the royal lineage. Axelson's correction to *gentis Aegaeae,* viz., "of the house of Aegeus," is therefore cogent.[36] A reference to Aegeus is particularly apposite here, since Aegeus left a sword at Troezen in token

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[35] If the reference is to Theseus, a satisfactory correction of the text has yet to be found. Damsté's *iuveni ... Pittheo* (1918: 199) is ambiguous since it could refer to either man (note Eur. *Hipp.* 11: Πιτθέως παιδεύματα of Hippolytus). Gronovius proposed *comiti ... Pirithoi,* which disposes of the difficult *iuveni;* but this form of identification seems irrelevant here, nor does corruption of *comiti* to *iuveni* seem likely.

[36] For the correction, see *KK* 205–206. E's *generis* might be thought preferable in sense, since its connotations of "lineage" are stronger. But the fact that E has the feminine *acteae* suggests that the original was *gentis,* which suffered mechanical corruption to *generis* (so Carlsson 1926: 31).

of his fatherhood of Aethra's child, and later recognised Theseus as his son by that token at a critical moment (Apollod. 3.15.7; *Epit.* 1.6; Ov. *Met.* 7.421–423), just as Theseus is now "recognising" Hippolytus' identity. For a token of lineage as the *decus* of a royal house cf. *Med.* 57–72: *est palla nobis, munus aetheriae domus / decusque regni, pignus Aeetae datum / a Sole generis* (where *regni* clearly means "throne, kingship").

But a question remains concerning the form of the adjective. It is true that one of the etymologies offered in antiquity for the adjective *Aegaeus* was from the name Aegeus (e.g., Hyg. *Fab.* 43, 242; see *TLL* 1.945.7–15). But the adjective is regularly used in reference to the Aegean Sea, and nowhere, so far as I know, in reference to Aegeus (except, of course, in contexts offering an etymology). The adjectival form of Aegeus' name should be Αἰγεῖος/*Aegēus*, as in τὸ Αἰγεῖον, "the shrine of Aegeus" (Din. fr. 3.1): comparable adjectives formed from names in -eus are *Orpheus*, *Perseus*, *Prometheus* (*Her. F.* 1207), *Theseus* (*Phaed.* 129, 831 [see above]), and *Zmintheus* (*Ag.* 176). The adjectival form *Aegeus* is not attested elsewhere, but *Zmintheus* is also "extremely rare" (Tarrant 1976: 208 on *Ag.* 176).

Phaedra 1103

Editors by their punctuation construe *vepres* as a first subject of *tulit* (1104), but this is unpersuasive. Rhetorically line 1104 has a clausular function like other lines beginning *omnisque* (*Tro.* 17; *Ag.* 426), and like them should constitute a separate clause. In sense, *omnis truncus* correlates with *partem* in a way that *vepres* could not. Very rarely, in fact, does a singular subject qualified by *omnis/omne* share a verb with a different subject which is plural: the only instance, among 52 uses of nominative singular *omnis/omne* in STrag, is *Thy.* 662, which gives no support to the paradosis here (*inter alia* the verb is plural).

Vepres can only be construed, then, as Ahl rightly sees in his translation (1986: 232), as an apposition to *virgulta*. The apposition seems un-Senecan and unstylish, but to write *acutisque* would result in an awkward elision over the caesura, such as one is reluctant to introduce by conjecture.[37]

Rhetorically the sentence 1102b–04 sounds as if it should be a tricolon in which each member has its own verb and the members increase in length. This rhetorical need for a verb with *vepres* is so strong that some translators supply one, e.g., Miller (1917: 1.409) "the rough brambles with their sharp thorns *tear* him." The needed verb probably lies behind the transmitted *asperi*. The context, with its theme of dismemberment, suggests that it was something like *lancinant* or *dissipant*. *Asperant* would be attractive paleographically, but is insufficiently violent

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[37] Zwierlein (1984: 217) finds only thirteen instances of elision over the third-foot caesura in STrag, two involving -*que* (*Med.* 545, *Phaed.* 1084). It would be inadvisable to write *acutis asperi <et> vepres rubis*, since postponement of *et* by even one position is unusual in Senecan trimeters (Zwierlein 1984: 231–232). Heinsius's conjecture *virgulta <et> acutis* is unmetrical, but it shows that he perceived the awkwardness of the apposition.

for the context ("roughen, scrape"). *Asperi* may have originated as explanation of
the unusual *vepres* (only here in STrag).

Phaedra 1106–07

These lines have the air of a pedantic interpolation. After the messenger's
narrative we scarcely need to be told *which* fields are meant; in fact 1107 is just
a ponderous restatement of 1093 *late cruentat arva*. (The phrase "through the
fields" at 1105 sufficiently indicates the area where Hippolytus' body is scattered;
cf. 1209: *segregem sparsi per agros*; 1278: *per agros corporis partes vagas*.) Nor do
we need the name *Hippolytus* to identify the person who has been the focus of
the preceding narrative; elsewhere in the play the proper name regularly has a
rhetorical and/or affective significance, which it lacks here.

Paschalis (1994: 119) notes that these lines contain an etymological play on
Hippolytus' name. As he points out, both Vergil and Ovid suggest that by name
Hippo-lytus is "the man rent by horses": cf. Verg. *Aen.* 7.767: *turbatis distractus
equis*; Ov. *Fasti* 3.265: *loris direptus equorum*; *Met.* 15.542–543. The present lines
recall that etymology by quoting Vergil's word *distractus*. Does that guarantee
their authenticity? I think not. Though Seneca enjoys etymological play on Greek
names (e.g., *Tro.* 818: *lapidosa Trachin*; *Med.* 312: *pluvias Hyadas*), he does not
compose intrusive material in order to include such play.

The lines, then, look like another instance of "collaborative interpolation."
Their overt purpose is to expand and explain; another explanatory interpolation
which pedantically adds a proper name is *Med.* 666: *ustus accenso Pelias aeno*. But
the interpolator was also eager to display his *doctrina* by inserting the etymological
play at the first possible opportunity, i.e., immediately after Hippolytus has been
"rent by horses."[38]

Oedipus 1052–53

In these and the following lines Oedipus mentions three categories of invalids,
in increasing order of weakness. First, those who are sick and only half alive,
but can still drag themselves about (*trahitis*): the more healthy climate following
Oedipus' departure will restore them (1054b–55a). Next, those who can no longer
move (*iacens* 1055) and whose life-breath is shallow: they will be able to draw
revivifying draughts of air. Finally, those abandoned to die (*depositis* at 1057; see
OLD s.v.): they should now be tended once again, since death-bringing influences
are being removed from the land (1058).

Forms of *corpus* and *pectus* are frequently confused in the MSS, e.g., at *Her.
F.* 1299 where Gronovius' *pectus* is a certain correction for EA *corpus*: see *TLL*
4.999.63–66. Such confusion is particularly common in dactylic forms of these
and other words, as Housman notes on Manil. 1.416. So in 1053 A offers *corpora*
but E *pectora*. Editors from Gronovius on have printed *corpore* (EA) in 1052

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[38] The phrasing of 1107 with its present tense *signat* may show the influence of *Phoen.* 20–21: *per
horrentes rubos / tauri ferocis sanguis ostentat fugas.*

and E's *pectora* in 1053, but the latter yields no sense. The plain meaning of *trahitis pectora*, "drag breasts about," would be as odd in Latin as in English: one drags one's *body* (so A here) or one's limbs, not one's breast (*OLD* s.v. *traho* 1c). A metaphorical meaning for *pectora*, "hearts, spirits," is ruled out here by the physicality of *semianima* and *trahitis*. Gronovius tried to justify *pectora* by interpreting *semianima trahitis pectora* as referring to breathing, with the gloss *semivivo pectore aegrum spiritum ducitis*, but this use of *traho* is not convincing: *traho* in the sense "to breathe" naturally has objects such as *auras*, *aëra*, etc., not *pectora* (*OLD* s.v. *traho* 7b). Furthermore, laboured breathing characterises the second group of invalids (1055b–57a), not the first.

The correct reading in 1053, then, is *corpora*. For the phrase *semianima corpora*, cf. Sall. *Hist.* 3.98c: *et interdum lacerum corpus semianimum omittentes*; Livy 3.57.4: *corpus semianime virginis*; 28.23.2: *in succensum rogum semianima plerumque inicerent corpora*; Ov. *Fasti* 2.838: *fixaque semianimi corpore tela rapit.* Consequently *pectore* is very probably the original reading in 1052; it was corrupted to *corpore* early in the transmission as a result of the close proximity of *corpora* in 1053. The phrase *fessi pectore* will indicate a general weariness of body and mind (cf., e.g., Ov. *Met.* 8.83–84; Sen. *Phaed.* 247), while *morbo graves* specifically indicates physical sickness.

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