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ILIOU PERSIS: THE GROWTH OF THE TRADITION

1. THE EPIC TRADITION

This attempt to trace the evolution of the legends associated with the fall of Troy will initially report the different versions of each myth as they arise, without any special concern for Seneca's sources. For although it is valuable to know the range of accounts available to an author in order to appreciate his selection of detail, the existence of an early account is no guarantee of its influence. Similarity between an older and a newer version of the same myth is neither a necessary condition for localized imitation of detail in language or characterization, nor a sufficient condition to imply adaptation on a larger scale.

The two plays of Euripides, *Hecuba*, and *Troades*, which contain the first surviving full-scale treatments of the deaths of Priam, Polyxena, and Astyanax, may be taken as presenting the myths in their mature form, evolved from the conflicting variants of post-Homeric epic, the continuing pictorial tradition, and the early lyric poets, especially Stesichorus. The cyclic epics that took up the tale of Troy after the death of Hector, drawing on brief allusions in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and adapting their stories to local hero cults and communal feuds, have survived only in the abridgments of Proclus and of Apollodorus' *Bibliotheke* (both influenced by later tragic reworkings) and in odd fragments and testimonia from scholiasts and antiquarians.

Zielinski[1] has shown how the post-Homeric poets used for their continuation of Andromache's tale the fears expressed by Hector in his leave-taking from her in *Il.* 6; he foresees the day "when perhaps one of the bronze-clad Achaeans will take you away weeping, cutting off your life of freedom, and in Argos you will weave at another woman's loom, or perhaps carry water from the springs of Messeis or Hypereia suffering much ill-treatment, and dire necessity will weigh upon you."[2] They also knew the forebodings of Andromache herself

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[1] Zielinski, "De Andromacha Posthomerica," *Eos* 31 (1928):1-39. On the Cyclic poets see G. L. Huxley, *Greek Epic Poetry* (London, 1969) chap. 11 (including a translation of Proclus), and J. Griffin "The epic cycle and the uniqueness of Homer," *JRS* 57 (1977):39-53.

[2] *Il.* 6.454-58:

ὅσσον σεῦ, ὅτε κέν τις Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων
δακρυόεσσαν ἄγηται, ἐλεύθερον ἦμαρ ἀπούρας.
καί κεν ἐν Ἄργει ἐοῦσα πρὸς ἄλλης ἱστὸν ὑφαίνοις,

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after Hector's death, "as for you, my child, either you will go with me, where you may do loathsome chores, toiling for a ruthless lord, or some Achaean will take you by the hand, and hurl you from the battlements—a dreadful death—in his anger because Hector killed his brother or father or son."[3]

From this kind of material Arctinus of Miletus built up in the late eighth or early seventh century his two books *Iliou Persis* on the sack of Troy, starting from the device of the Wooden Horse, while Lesches of Pyrrha composed an *Ilias Mikra*, in four books—at least these were the ascriptions commonly if not universally accepted in our Greek sources. But by the fourth century the name *Little Iliad* seems to have been used comprehensively for the *Ilias Mikra* and *Iliou Persis*, and most probably for the five books of the *Aethiopis* too; these contained the events from the death of Hector to that of Achilles. This collective title inevitably causes some confusion in later reports of the contents of the separate epics, and hampers our understanding of the relationship between, say, the four-book *Ilias Mikra* and the *Iliou Persis*. Further, although we can trust Proclus' positive statements of the contents of these narratives, chance evidence for myths alludes to material omitted from his account, suggesting that he has less value as proof of what was *not* contained in the poems.

His account of the *Iliou Persis* ends, "then having set fire to the city they sacrificed Polyxena at the tomb of Achilles. And when Odysseus had disposed of Astyanax, Neoptolemus took Andromache as his prize. And the rest of the spoils were distributed. Demophon and Athamas found Aethra and took her away with them. Then the Greeks sailed away and Athena brought destruction upon them by sea."[4] Thus Arctinus seems to have placed the sacrifice of Polyxena after the firing of the city and subordinated the murder of Astyanax to Neoptolemus' claim to Andromache, mentioning no obstacle to the Greek departure. Proclus reports nothing from Lesches'

καί κεν ὕδωρ φορέοις Μεσσηίδος ἢ Ὑπερείης
πόλλ' ἀεκαζομένη, κρατερὴ δ' ἐπικείσετ' ἀνάγκη.

[3] *Il.* 24.732-37:

σὺ δ' αὖ τέκος ἢ ἐμοὶ αὐτῇ
ἕψεαι, ἔνθα κεν ἔργα ἀεικέα ἐργάζοιο,
ἀθλεύων πρὸ ἄνακτος ἀμειλίχου, ἤ τις Ἀχαιῶν
ῥίψει χειρὸς ἑλὼν ἀπὸ πύργου λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον,
χωόμενος, ᾧ δή που ἀδελφεὸν ἔκτανεν Ἕκτωρ
ἢ πατέρ', ἠὲ καὶ υἱόν, ἐπεὶ μάλα πολλοὶ Ἀχαιῶν
Ἕκτορος ἐν παλάμῃσιν ὀδὰξ ἕλον ἄσπετον οὖδας.

[4] Proclus, *Chrestomathia: Iliou Persis*, ap. Homer O.C.T.5, ed. T. W. Allen (Oxford, 1912), p. 108. "Ἔπειτα ἐμπρήσαντες τὴν πόλιν Πολυξένην σφαγιάζουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως τάφον. καὶ Ὀδυσσέως Ἀστυάνακτα ἀνελόντος Νεοπτόλεμος Ἀνδρομάχην γέρας λαμβάνει. καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ λάφυρα διανέμονται."

Ilias Mikra that is associated with these events, but in the *Nostoi* of Agias, after the departure of Menelaus for Tenedos, the ghost of Achilles appears to Agamemnon and his contingent on the point of departure, to dissuade them by foretelling their future sufferings[5]—a feature that became incorporated into later versions of the Polyxena myth.

There is further evidence that the *Little Iliad* was more comprehensive than Proclus' report implies. According to Aristotle *Poetics* 1459b this epic contained the material for the plots of eight tragedies: "The Award of Achilles' Armor," "Philoctetes," "Neoptolemus," "Eurypylus," "Odysseus as a Beggar," "The Spartan Women," "The Sack of Troy," and "The Sailing of the Fleet," to which two other titles, "Sinon" and "The Trojan Women," have been added in the text. Even without considering the interpolated names, the references to "The Sack of Troy" and "The Sailing" show that this epic will have dealt with the sacrifice of Polyxena. Again while Proclus subordinates the death of Astyanax, eleven lines of Lesches have been preserved by Tzetzes' Scholion on Lycophron *Alexandra* 1268 (= *Ilias Parva* fr. xix, Homer O.C.T. 5) from which I quote the description of his murder. "The glorious son of the proud-hearted Achilles . . . took the child from the arm of his nurse with the flowing hair, and hurled him by the foot from the tower, and as he fell blood-red death overtook him, and violent doom."[6] This gains confirmation from an unexpected source—Pausanias. In his traveler's guide to Delphi, Pausanias stops to describe in detail the (now lost) painting of the Sack of Troy by Polygnotus, which adorned the Lesche or club-room of the Cnidians. He records many details with their literary sources, showing that Polygnotus has included episodes and names not found in Homer, and specifically has made use of Lesches' *Little Iliad*. This is how Pausanias describes the scene of the captive women and children. "The Trojan women are represented as already captives and lamenting. Andromache is in the painting and near her stands her boy grasping her breast; this child, Lesches says, was put to death by being flung from the tower, not that the Greeks had so decreed, but

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[5] Ibid., *Nostoi*, p. 108: "τῶν δὲ περὶ τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα ἀποπλεόντων Ἀχιλλέως εἴδωλον ἐπιφανὲν πειρᾶται διακωλύειν προλέγον τὰ συμβησόμενα."

[6] cf. *Ilias Mikra* fr. xix, O.C.T.5: 135.
  αὐτάρ Ἀχιλλῆος μεγαθύμου φαίδιμος υἱός
  Ἐκτορέην ἄλοχον κάταγεν κοίλας ἐπὶ νῆας.
  παῖδα δ' ἑλὼν ἐκ κόλπου εὐπλοκάμοιο τιθήνης
  ῥῖψε ποδὸς τεταγὼν ἀπὸ πύργου, τὸν δὲ πεσόντα
  ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή.

Neoptolemus of his own accord was minded to murder him. . . . Andromache and Medesicaste are wearing hoods, but the hair of Polyxena is braided after the custom of maidens. Poets sing of her death at the tomb of Achilles."[7] So in Polygnotus' painting both royal children are shown unharmed, before the Greek emissaries arrive to take them away. The painting seems to be synchronic, representing each character only once, and depicting a single moment after the death of Priam, for his corpse is at the gate with those of his sons Axion and Agenor. Although Polygnotus' depiction is compatible with Lesches' narrative, in which Neoptolemus killed Priam and Agenor, Neoptolemus himself is shown elsewhere, "the only one of the Greek army represented by Polygnotus as still killing the Trojans."[8] The painter has thus avoided associating him visually with either his murder of Priam or his role in the deaths of Polyxena and Astyanax. What is the reason for, and source of, this conception? Pausanias explains (27.2) that the whole work was to be placed above the tomb of Neoptolemus; so by choosing the moment depicted and adopting details from Stesichorus and other rival versions of his main source, Lesches, the artist has shown tact toward the local shrine. One last oddity; Polygnotus nowhere depicts Hecuba.

Pausanias mentions an alternative version of Astyanax's death, attributing it to the Greek assembly. Welcker believed (*Kl. Schr.* 1.357-358; cf. E. Bethe, *Homer Dichtung und Sage, II. 2* [Leipzig/Berlin, 1929] pp. 221-23) that both this and Proclus' summary allusion to Odysseus went back to Arctinus, who would thus be the source of the version in Eur. *Tro.* 721f. that Odysseus persuaded the Greek assembly to decree the child's death, lest he should grow up to avenge his father. There may be a blurred reflection of this in the Scholion on Eur. *Andr.* 8-10. Andromache cries out, "I saw the child I bore my husband, Astyanax, hurled from the tall towers when the Greeks took the plain of Troy." "But," says the scholiast, "Stesichorus reported that he was dead, while the compiler of *The Sack*, the cyclic

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[7] Pausanias, 10.25.9 and 10 = *Pausanias' Description of Greece* (LCL, London, 1898), trans. Jones, 517-19 (partly included in fr. xix, above): γυναῖκες δὲ αἱ Τρῳάδες αἰχμαλώτοις τε ἤδη καὶ ὀδυρομέναις ἐοίκασι. γέγραπται μέν Ἀνδρομάχη, καὶ ὁ παῖς οἱ προσέστηκεν ἑλόμενος τοῦ μαστοῦ—τούτῳ Λέσχεως ῥιφθέντι ἀπὸ τοῦ πύργου συμβῆναι λέγει τὴν τελευτήν· οὐ μὴν ὑπὸ δόγματός γε Ἑλλήνων, ἀλλ' ἰδίᾳ Νεοπτόλεμον αὐτόχειρα ἐθελῆσαι γενέσθαι— . . . ἡ μὲν δὴ Ἀνδρομάχη καὶ ἡ Μηδεσικάστη καλύμματά εἰσιν ἐπικείμεναι, Πολυξένη δὲ κατὰ τὰ εἰθισμένα παρθένοις ἀναπέπλεκται τὰς ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ τρίχας· ἀποθανεῖν δὲ αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τῷ Ἀχιλλέως μνήματι ποιηταί τε ᾄδουσι
[8] Ibid., 26.4 (p. 521). On Polygnotus' representation, see Huxley, (n. 1, above), p. 155f., and Robertson, "Conjectures in Polygnotus' Troy," *BSA* 62 (1967):5-12.

poet (sc. Arctinus) says that he was also thrown from the battlements, and Euripides followed him.'"[9] It is better to infer, with Bethe,[10] that there was only one cyclic account of Astyanax's death, which in fact attributed the deed to Neoptolemus. The implication of Odysseus in Proclus derives from the Euripidean account, which is either original to Euripides, or adopted from a postcyclic source such as Stesichorus.

Little is known of Stesichorus' lyric poem *Iliou Persis*, but there is graphic evidence from Seneca's own lifetime for its contents. This is the *Tabula Iliaca Capitolina*, a relief of Palombino marble of the first century A.D. found at Bovillae near Rome.[11] Tiberius had built on this site a Sacrarium of the Gens Claudia (Suet. *Tib.* 70), and scholars are divided between associating the tablet with this emperor, or with the interest in Troy of Claudius, or with Nero (who composed his own *Troica*). The tablet was probably executed in Italy but is from a Greek design, attributed to Theodorus by an inscription on the reverse. It is the best preserved of several similar reliefs illustrating the fall of Troy and its separate episodes, according to their sequence in Homer and the cyclic poets. Our copy contains labeled illustrations for each book of the Iliad, the *Aethiopis* of Arctinus, the *Little Iliad* of Lesches, and the *Iliou Persis* of Stesichorus. These epics are presented in five horizontal sequences, three within and two outside the city wall. The vignette depicting the death of Priam is at the very center (see frontispiece). We see him spread across the altar of Zeus Herkeios, straining away from Neoptolemus who has pushed him down, pressing his foot on Priam's knee and leaning back to pull the old man toward him: with his left, shield-bearing arm, he grasps Priam by the hair; in his right a sword is raised ready for the blow, while Hecuba thrusts her head and shoulders toward Priam, trying to embrace his neck, as a soldier pulls her away. A fallen young man, unarmed, tries helplessly to raise himself on his arms. There is little variation within the tradition of Priam's death, but in at least two

[9] Eur. *Andr.* 8-10. ἥτις πόσιν μὲν Ἕκτορ' ἐξ Ἀχιλλέως/θανόντ' ἐσεῖδον, παῖδά θ' ὃν τίκτω πόσευ/ῥιφθέντα πύργων Ἀστυάνακτ' ἀπ' ὀρθίων. The scholion is *Iliou Persis* fr. ii, O.C.T. 5:138.
[10] E. Bethe. *Homer, Dichtung und Sage, II, ii Kyklos, Zeitbestimmung* (Leipzig/Berlin, 1929). pp. 221-24.
[11] See Umberto Mancuso, *La Tabula Iliaca del Museo Capitolino* (Rome, 1911); K. Weitzmann, *Ancient Book Illumination* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), chap. 2; and Anna Sadurska, *Les Tables Iliaques* (Warsaw, 1964). For the relief the clearest picture is the line drawing published in Jahn-Michaelis, *Griechische Bilderchroniken* (Bonn, 1873), plate 1. For the inscriptions only, see *C.I.L.* 14:1284.

details, the presence of the helpless young man (in Virgil Priam's son Polites, but identified by Stesichorus as Agenor) and the gesture of grasping Priam by the head or hair with the left hand, this tableau anticipates the Roman tradition.[12]

In Seneca, Priam's death is told in retrospect, and forms a section of Hecuba's opening prologue speech. But Seneca's two central episodes, the death of Astyanax and the sacrifice of Polyxena, are shown in the fourth zone of the tabula Capitolina in the closest association with each other. On the left is a Temenos, containing a stele against which leans a shield—it must be Hector's shield, for the temenos is labeled ΕΚΤΟΡΟΣ ΤΑΦΟΣ": this is balanced by the group around Achilles' tomb (ΑΧΙΛΛΕΩΣ ΣΗΜΑ) on the right. Grouped along the walls of the temenos enclosure are the Trojan captives. From the left Talthybius approaches Andromache to take away the child just discernible in her arms. Cassandra and an unknown, perhaps Helenus, look on. Around the corner, on the long side of the precinct, is shown the next phase: Hecuba looks down at Polyxena, who stretches out her hand to her. Andromache, now childless, sits head in hands, while Helenus sits with raised hand listening to an interlocutor wearing the *pilos* (cap) and cloak of a sea captain. This is Odysseus, come to claim Polyxena.[13] On the right the tableau at Achilles' monument shows Neoptolemus, flanked by an attendant, raising his sword to cut the throat of Polyxena, who is naked from the waist and bent

[12] The inscription of the Veronese fragment (*C.I.L.* 1285, side 2) reads ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ ΑΠΟΚΤΕΙΝΕΙ ΠΡΙΑΜΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΓΗΝΟΡΑ. The illustration of the tabula does not permit us to argue whether Stesichorus made Neoptolemus slay the King upon the altar (the tradition hostile to Neoptolemus represented in Eur. *Hec.* 23 and *Tro.* 16-17, πρὸς δὲ κρηπίδων βάθροις/ πέπτωκε Πρίαμος Ζηνὸς ἑρκείου θανών), or reported that he dragged Priam away to kill him, thus avoiding pollution, as is expressly attested from Lesches by Pausanias (10.27.2 = *Ilias Parva* fr. xvi, O.C.T. 5:134) and the inscription of the Homeric cup. The testimonia for this episode in *Iliou Persis* (Proclus, O.C.T.5:107, Apollodorus, 5.21) are too summary to show whether Neoptolemus polluted the altars.
  A series of vase paintings represent Neoptolemus killing Priam at the altar, while brandishing with his left arm the inverted body of a child (labeled Astyanax) grasped by the foot. This has been convincingly explained by Dugas (*AntCl* 6 [1937]:1-26), but see also Wiencke (*AJA* 58 [1954]: 285f.) as an artist's construction based on misinterpretation of the death scene of Troilus, killed by Achilles at the altar of Apollo Thymbraeus before a cowering Priam. A trace of the original can be seen in the fact that the boy's corpse in several representations is that of an adolescent rather than the infant Astyanax. This version contradicts outright the epic sequence, in which the death of Priam precedes at least by a night that of Astyanax. There is no trace of this combination of the deaths of grandfather and child in any literary source.
[13] The separate inscriptions on this double-tableau read: Hektoros Taphos, Talthybios kai Troiades, Andromache Kassandra Helenos [this is damaged and conjectural] and Hekabe Polyxene Andromache Helenos Odysseus.

back against the stele. Facing him are Calchas and Odysseus, but Odysseus is covering his eyes in distaste.[14]

Looking ahead to Seneca, we acknowledge the differences of roles and detailed action—the tableaux are far closer to Euripides. But two features, the balancing of Hector's tomb with Achilles' monument, and the absorption of the two victims into the one linked grouping, suggest how important was this tradition, Stesichorean but realized in a visual form going beyond the narrative detail of lyric poetry, in contributing to Roman images of the fall of Troy. If this and its sister tablets were indeed common, either as domestic decoration or educational aids, their version of the myths could influence a generation or more of writers.

As Bowra has shown,[15] some narrative features in the Tabula diverge from known details of Stesichorus' Iliou Persis, but there is no need to suspect the tableau in which Talthybius comes for Astyanax. The evidence of the scholiast on Eur. Andr. 8-10 (note 9 above) that Stesichorus said the child "was dead," means simply that Stesichorus had the Greeks put the boy to the sword before he was hurled from the walls, in contrast to Euripides' Troades in which the living child was thrown down. "Odysseus prevailed with his speech upon the Greek assembly . . . saying that one should not rear the child of a noble father . . . and that he must be hurled from the battlements of Troy."[16]

It would seem that, influenced by Stesichorus, Euripides replaced the early account of Lesches, which held Neoptolemus responsible, with a new version attributing the decision to Odysseus. Both Euripides and the Tabula interpose the agency of Talthybius, but their version is essentially the canonical form that has reached Apollodorus.

"They burned the city and shared out the spoils. And they sacri-

[14] The inscriptions read: Neoptolemos Polyxene, Achilleos Sema, Odysseus Kalchas. The iconographic source of these scenes is disputed. Weitzmann, *Ancient Book Illumination*, argues for derivation from an Alexandrian tradition of book miniatures in papyrus rolls of the Iliad and post-Homerica; he notes that illuminations to Virgil's *Aeneid* 2 have survived which echo the "Alexandrian recension"—that is, the representational types of the pre-Virgilian Homer illustrations. Sadurska *Les Tables Iliaques*, disputes the suggestion of book illustrations, but argues for a Greek prototype in monumental form, from which the first Roman copies were made for the imperial family, perhaps as wall decoration for a temple or library. The survival of both relief and illuminated vignettes from this tradition shows that these narrative scenes were cherished at Rome even when Virgil had come to dominate the literary tradition, and so preserved the Greek tradition, at least in visual form, for Seneca's contemporaries.

[15] *Greek Lyric Poetry* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 104-6.

[16] Eur. *Tro.* 721, 723, 725, νικᾷ δ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐν Πανέλλησιν λέγων . . . λέξας ἀρίστου παῖδα μὴ τρέφειν πατρὸς . . . ῥῖψαι δὲ πύργων δεῖν σφε Τρωικῶν ἄπο.

ficed to all the gods and hurled Astyanax from the battlements. And they slew Polyxena on the tomb of Achilles. Agamemnon took as his preempted prize Cassandra, Neoptolemus took Andromache, and Odysseus received Hecuba."[17]

II. POLYXENA IN GREEK TRAGEDY

In Apollodorus, as in Arctinus and Stesichorus, the deaths of the child and virgin are associated, but Euripides chose to treat the episodes in separate plays. Whereas Polyxena's fate is interwoven with that of her brother Polydorus in the *Hecuba*, in the later *Troades* Euripides makes Astyanax's death the central episode, flanked by episodes treating the fates of Cassandra and Helen, and the sacrifice of Polyxena is kept subordinate, outside, indeed before, the action proper. This was natural, since Euripides had already treated her death fully in the earlier play, and other material claimed his attention for the second drama, but it almost certainly reflects not only Euripides' development of his own dramaturgy but also his reaction to Sophocles' *Polyxena*. Our sheer ignorance about this play requires that we be cautious in assessing the subject matter, which, however, may well have been decisive in coloring all subsequent treatments of the myth from Euripides to Ovid and Seneca. Therefore, it will be helpful to consider not only the form of the myth used by Sophocles but also the detailed dramatic structure.

SOPHOCLES' POLYXENA

Only a few testimonia and five of the play's fragments have any bearing on its contents. Hence reconstructions, from Pearson to Friedrich, and most recently Calder,[18] must make what they can of these remains and try to use the evidence of later plays on the same theme—whether of Euripides, Seneca, or earlier Roman tragedy—without imposing on the lost play features that may well have been innovations of the later works.

Both Apollodorus and Longinus attest the appearance of Achilles' ghost in Sophocles' play, but the details of their allusions are contradictory, so it was left to Friedrich to realize that these sources were in fact describing two separate manifestations of the ghost; while

[17] Apollodorus *Epit.* 5.23.

[18] Pearson, *The Fragments of Sophocles* (Cambridge, 1917), 2: 161-68; Friedrich, *Untersuchungen zu Senecas dramatischer Technik* (Leipzig, 1933), pp. 99-122 (Friedrich's reconstruction is, however, incidental to his attempts to recover the form of Seneca's assumed model for the *Troades*); Calder, "A Reconstruction of Sophocles' *Polyxena*," *GRBS* 7 (1966): 31-56.

Apollodorus quotes three lines spoken by the ghost, showing that it appeared on stage to demand the sacrifice of Polyxena,[19] Longinus' praise of "the vividness with which Sophocles portrays the ghost appearing over its tomb"[20] cannot refer to stage action at all, since the tomb at which Polyxena was slaughtered would have to be off-stage. Instead his comments imply that the messenger-narrative of her death included a description of the return of Achilles' ghost to express forgiveness and advise the now departing Greeks. This provides the framework of Calder's reconstruction,[21] which sets the play before Agamemnon's tent, and proposes the following synopsis:

Prologue. The ghost appears to the sleeping Agamemnon before his tent and makes its demands (cf. Apollodorus, fr. 523).

Entry of the chorus of Achaean soldiers

Episode 1. Agamemnon quarrels with Menelaus, who wishes to leave the Troad, and presumably tells him of his vision. (Compare the quarrel reported in the *Nostoi*[22] and perhaps fr. 524 in which Agamemnon defends a decision against an objector.)

Chorus

Episode 2. A Greek leader urges Agamemnon to sacrifice Polyxena, but he refuses to allow it. Calder argues that Polyxena is quartered in Agamemnon's tent and is brought out to hear the dispute. He notes that the scholiast on Eur. *Hec.* 41 seems to imply that she was not slaughtered by Neoptolemus in Sophocles' play. Thus the adversary figure may be Odysseus, who is chosen by Euripides to take her from her mother in *Hecuba*. Calder also assumes that the second act of Seneca's *Troades* is derived from this episode and deduces that the scene closes without Agamemnon being swayed. (Fr. 524 may in fact belong to this episode.)

Chorus

Episode 3. Again arguing from the Senecan play, Calder fills this ep-

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[19] Apollodorus, *FGrHist* 244 F 102 A = Sophocles fr. 523P. Noack, *Iliou-Persis. De Euripidis et Polygnoti quae ad Troiam spectant fabulis* (Darmstadt, 1890), p. 11, believed that since the appearance of the ghost in the *Nostoi* was not associated with the sacrifice of Polyxena, it was Sophocles' innovation to motivate the sacrifice by a stage appearance of Achilles' ghost. Note that Pearson follows Welcker in opening the play not with the ghost but with the quarrel of the Greek leaders.

[20] Longinus 15.7 praises the vividness of Sophocles' account of the appearance of Achilles over his tomb at the departure of the Greek fleet: the verb πεφάνtασται would normally denote a vivid presentation in words of something unseen.

[21] Calder, *GRBS* 7 (1966): 45f.

[22] See Proclus, Homer O.C.T.5:108, Ἀθηνᾶ Ἀγαμέμνονα καὶ Μενέλαον εἰς ἔριν καθίστησι περὶ τοῦ ἔκπλου. Ἀγαμέμνων μὲν οὖν τὸν τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἐξιλασόμενος χόλον, ἐπιμένει . . . and note 5 above.

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isode with the arrival of Calchas and his report of the will of fate, so that Agamemnon must consent.

Chorus

Episode 4. Calder occupies this episode with the departure of Polyxena, clad in bridal clothes, to meet her death offstage.

Chorus

Exodos. The messenger reports the rite of sacrifice, Polyxena's noble behavior (as reflected in Eur. *Hec.* 518-82 and Sen. *Tro.* 1118-64) and the apparition of Achilles over the tomb. As in Agias' *Nostoi* he will warn the Greeks of the dangers they meet on the voyage (fr. 525) and perhaps the awful net-entangled doom of Agamemnon (fr. 526).

There are considerable difficulties in accepting this reconstruction. If Achilles' demands to Agamemnon were adopted by Sophocles as the motivation for the delay to the fleet, he must be using Achilles to replace the wrath of Athena, which is the cause specified in the *Nostoi*; there is no great difficulty in this, but how then can Sophocles include the quarrel with Menelaus, which culminated in Menelaus' sailing away to Tenedos? If he was able to sail, what is the issue of conflict reserved for the next episode between Agamemnon and the unidentified leader? Even if, like Calder, we assume the direct dependence of Seneca *Tro.* 202-349 on Sophocles' play, this gives no compelling reason to involve Agamemnon in two episodes of conflict before Calchas is summoned.

Calder has made a good case for the importance of Calchas, which will be parallel to the role played by Teiresias in the *Oedipus* and *Antigone*; indeed Agamemnon's capitulation will be the counterpart of the submission of Creon to Teiresias in the *Antigone*. But in keeping the decision of Calchas distinct from the scene in which Polyxena is led from the tent to her death, he spreads his action too thinly over the dramatic frame. Even his extended version of the preliminary disputes is insufficient to fill the drama, chiefly because he will not admit any Trojan participant in the action. Although there are no *testimonia* to prove the inclusion of a part for Hecuba, or of a Trojan chorus, it would be extraordinary if this play of sacrifice represented its victim in isolation without illustrating the grief of her family or countrymen. Calder has turned the play into a mere political dispute among the Greeks and reduced Polyxena to a pawn; without a Trojan participant his third episode would be inadequate for the central phase of any tragedy. The Achaean chorus will create a different kind of problem in the *exodos*. For if the ghost in the messenger-report is

addressing Agamemnon and the Greek army, this should include the Achaeans of the chorus. Who then will be on stage to hear the messenger, unless either Hecuba or the Trojan captives are introduced as an audience?

For these reasons I believe that, although we may retain the events and sequences of the action as outlined by Calder, the play almost certainly had a Trojan chorus, and will have required the presence of Hecuba in at least two episodes, when Polyxena is led away and in the *exodos* reporting her death scene. Calder has relied heavily on Seneca's portrayal of the silent Polyxena to define his own interpretation of the Sophoclean role, producing some inconsistencies.[23] Here the close dependence of Seneca's narrative on Ovid's version of the Euripidean narrative (*Hec.* 518f.) is a strong argument against attributing to the lost heroine the distinctive behavior of her Senecan counterpart.

EURIPIDES' HECUBA

Can we assume that Sophocles' play preceded Euripides' *Hecuba*?[24] Calder sees the ghost of Polydorus as a Euripidean invention on the model of the Sophoclean Achilles and supports this by an examination of the language of fr. 523 P and Eur. *Hec.* 1–3. We may perhaps add his evidence for early "Aeschylean" features in the diction of the plays' fragments. Certainly, as Calder declares, the most striking innovation of Sophocles' play—its coup de théâtre—must have been the dominant role played by Achilles' ghost. He might also have recalled here the subtle arguments of Zielinski[25] for the priority of the *Polyxena*. Zielinski points to the variant versions in the Hecuba, whereby at *Hec.* 95f. (cf. 251f.) Achilles' claim is treated as a general demand for a noble Trojan maiden, but at 107f. the chorus speak of Achilles' demanding Polyxena by name.[26] This inconsistency, he argued, reflects Euripides' attempt to supersede the version of a previous play. Zielinski shows how the argument between Hecuba and

[23] Calder, *GRBS* 7 (1966): 52–53. He sees the Sophoclean Polyxena as an unwilling, perhaps silent, victim. But if Calder is inferring Polyxena's reluctance to die from Sen. *Tro.* 1157, he is missing the purpose of Seneca's account. Seneca is not depicting reluctance to die (all his characters savor their own deaths) but a dynamic hatred and will to harm Achilles. The greatness of Sophocles' Antigone should not lead us to reconstruct his lesser heroines on the same model, when the entire literary tradition cherishes a Polyxena of dignity and gentle modesty.

[24] On the chronology see Calder, ibid., pp. 54–56.

[25] In his study of methodology in Quellen-Forschung, *Tragodoumenon libri tres* (Kraków, 1925), pp. 18–22.

[26] *Hec.* 96 speaks only of τῶν πολυμόχθων τινα Τρωιάδων. At 259 Hecuba attributes the choice of Polyxena to Greek vote.

Odysseus requires that Euripides treat the choice of Polyxena as a secondary, human specification of the superhuman demand for a Trojan maiden; hence the naming of Polyxena by the ghost was an inherited motif and can only have derived from Sophocles' version of the story.[27] In Euripides' *Hecuba*, Polyxena's fate is interlaced with the doom of Polydorus: it is he whose ghost dominates the prologue, and only the second and third episode deal with the death of his sister. After the chorus bring the news of a Greek decree for her sacrifice to Achilles (107–9) and a lyric exchange with her mother, in which Polyxena grieves for Hecuba but not for herself (213–15), they receive the news from Odysseus. Hecuba appeals for an alternative victim, and it is Polyxena who disdains to supplicate (344) and chooses death to avoid a shameful future. She leaves with a farewell to the light (435), and we next hear of her in Talthybius' sympathetic narrative, which reports her last words (547–52 and 563–65, proclaiming her free choice of death) and her modest fall to the ground amid the reverence and funeral homage of the Greek crowd. The scene ends with Hecuba's address to her dead daughter and the preparation for the burial, which will lead to the discovery of Polydorus' corpse and her final loss.

III. THE ROMAN TRADITION

POLYXENA

From the beginning, Roman dramatists loved to adapt plays derived from the Trojan cycle; both Livius Andronicus and Naevius wrote an *Equos Troianus* and Naevius a *Hector Proficiscens* and an *Andromacha*, but only isolated fragments of these plays survive, giving us no hint of the argument. However, Ennius gave the Romans a Latin *Hecuba*: Gellius 2.4 compares three lines with their original in Euripides as an illustration of Ennius' fidelity in adaptation, which is borne out by other surviving fragments. It is not unlikely that his *Andromacha Aechmalotis*, apparently set in Troy at the time of Astyanax's death, reported the sacrifice of Polyxena briefly in solo or choral lyric, but since he also adapted *Hecuba*, it would seem less likely that Polyxena's fate was part of the dramatic action.[28] There was in the

[27] This motif was probably grounded in one or other of the legends that reported a betrothal between Polyxena and Achilles, either on the occasion of Priam's ransom of Hector's corpse, or as a part of the Troilus narrative. There is, however, no evidence for any specific betrothal myth in Sophocles or Seneca, despite the bridal motif. (See 202 commentary, 289, 364, 942, 1001f.) See Wust, *RE* 11: 1840ff., for the myths associating Polyxena and Achilles.

[28] On Ennius' *Hecuba* and *Andromache*, see Jocelyn, *The Tragedies of Ennius* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 303–6 and 234–38, and Mette *Lustrum* 9 (1964): 68, for line-by-line correspondences in the *Hecuba*.

nineteenth century a tendency to hypothesize too many ingredients in a tragedy, using arguments from Greek tragedy or Seneca to infer the presence of as many features as possible in the lost works; thus scholars attempted to fill out the *Andromacha*, like Accius' *Astyanax*,[29] by including both death myths in the action. Yet even skeptics will find that the fragments of these plays favor such claims.

In Virgil's *Aeneid* Polyxena, like Astyanax, only occurs as a sad memory of Andromache in 3.321f.: O felix una ante alias Priameia virgo/hostilem ad tumulum Troiae sub moenibus altis/iussa mori, quae sortitus non pertulit ullos/nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile.[30] The apparent modification of the geography—in placing her death not at Achilles' tomb at Sigeum but beneath the city walls—is purely an emotional simplification; to be envied, she is seen as dying in her own land (cf. *Aen.* 1.95-96: quis ante ora patrum, Troiae sub moenibus altis/contigit oppetere). Servius, however, reports in his commentary on *Aen.* 3.321f. the orthodox tradition of Polyxena's death, with variant reasons for Achilles' demand: the first based on the Hellenistic love story of her assignation with Achilles, which led to the death of Troilus; the second simply implying love between Achilles and Polyxena.

Et alius ordo fabulae huius. cum Graeci victores in patriam vellent reverti, e tumulo Achillis vox dicitur audita querentis quod sibi soli de praeda nihil impertivissent. de qua re consultus Calchas cecinit Polyxenam Priami filiam, quam vivus Achilles dilexerat, eius deberi manibus immolari, quae cum admota tumulo Achillis occidenda esset, manu Pyrrhi aequanimiter mortem dicitur suscepisse.[31]

It could be argued that Servius was drawing on Seneca's *Troades*, were it not for the voice instead of a vision, and the phrase "whom

[29] Besides the *Astyanax*, related titles attributed to Accius are *Troades*, generally identified with *Astyanax* (see Ribbeck, *Römische Tragödie*, p. 416) and *Hecuba*, the one fragment of which permits no conjectures. In discussing *Andromacha*, both Welcker (*Griechische Tragödie*) and Zielinski ("De Andromacha Posthomerica," *Eos* 31) are influenced by speculation about Sophocles' *Aechmalotides* (Pearson, *Fragments*, 1: 25-26). But despite the allusion in fr.34 to purification, there is nothing more precise in the vestiges of the play to tie it specifically to any one of the Trojan captive women, or associate it with Andromache and Astyanax.

[30] "O happy beyond all other maidens is Priam's daughter, ordered to die upon her enemy's tomb, beneath the walls of Troy: she did not have to undergo the lot nor to approach the victor's bed as his captive."

[31] "There is another version of this story. When the victorious Greeks wished to return to their homeland, a voice is said to have been heard coming from the tomb of Achilles, complaining that the Greeks had given to him alone no share of the spoils. When Calchas was consulted about this event, he declared that Polyxena, daughter of Priam, whom Achilles had loved when he was alive, must be sacrificed to his ghost. And when she was about to be killed on Achilles' tomb, she is said to have accepted death calmly at Pyrrhus' hand."

Achilles had loved," which could, however, derive from the same source as the motif of bridal clothing to be worn by Polyxena in Seneca's play. In Seneca the love relationship is in no way indicated. Since Servius did not get this detail from either Virgil or Ovid's account in *Met.* 13.441f., it is perhaps from a lost Roman tragedy.

Ovid's narrative of the death of Polyxena is the fullest account in Latin before Seneca, and interesting to the literary historian both for its deliberate echo of details from Euripides' *Hecuba* and for the influence of the Ovidian speeches, especially Hecuba's grieving monologue (494-533) on Seneca's language and figures of thought in the fourth act of *Troades*.[32] But Ovid's ostensible purpose is to lead up to Hecuba's metamorphosis in 565-75: he follows Euripides in enclosing Polyxena's story between the beginning (429-38) and the completion (525-65) of the Polydorus-myth. Like Euripides, Ovid assumes a setting in Thrace for the sake of Hecuba's vengeance on Polymestor, so he must make the Greeks cross to Thrace (439) before Achilles' shade demands his reward and names Polyxena as his prize (445-48). Thus Achilles' tomb and Polyxena's sacrifice are implicitly transferred across the Hellespont. It is a further consequence of this setting that Polyxena's death is made to occur considerably after that of Astyanax, briefly alluded to at 415 (*mittitur Astyanax illis de turribus . . .*) in its traditional mythical context before the departure. Arctinus and Euripides' *Troades*, but not (it would seem from the *Tabula*) Stesichorus, had narrated or referred to the death of Polyxena as preceding that of Astyanax.

ASTYANAX

The further development of the Astyanax myth after Euripides' *Troades* is obscured by the difficulty of estimating the plot material of fragmentary plays. If we accept the arguments of Welcker on Ennius' *Andromacha*, and Zielinski about Accius' *Astyanax*, we would believe that despite the name of Accius' play, neither tragedy took his death as the sole theme, but both supported the plot by Polyxena's story, told wholly or in part. Jocelyn (*The Tragedies of Ennius*, pp. 235f.) interprets Ennius' *Andromacha Aechmalotis* as a double play using the two sacrifice myths found separately in Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Troades*, but doubts whether the episodes were actually adapted from Euripides. Fr. vii: nam ubi introducta est, puerumque ut laverent locant in clipeo,[33] clearly refers to the details of Astyanax's burial, and there is

[32] See above, chap. 2, sec. 3, for the influence of Ovid's narrative on the diction of *Troades*.

[33] "For when she was brought in, they placed the boy on the shield in order to wash him."

another more ambiguous allusion to his death. Ribbeck followed Scaliger in attaching the infinitive phrase, *Hectoris natum de Troiano muro iactari*,[34] quoted from this play by Varro *Ling.* 10.70, to the parallel infinitive phrase of Andromache's lament, quoted from Ennius by Cicero *Tusc.* 1.105: vidi, videre quod me passa aegerrume/ Hectorem curru quadriiugo raptarier/Hectoris natum de [Troiano] muro iactari ⟨er⟩;[35] this would translate Andromache's outcry at Eur. *Andr.* 8-10. But Ennius' play can only be set at Troy, as the allusion to the dispute of the Greeks (fr. iv R = xxxviii J) shows. Vahlen suggested that the Varronian excerpt was an iambic octonarius, to be completed by a jussive verb like *iubent*; the line would then correspond to Eur. *Tro.* 725 "they decreed he must be hurled from the walls of Troy," and imply a scene in Ennius corresponding to Eur. *Tro.* 709f., announcing the Greek decision to Andromache. The play may have extended further into Andromache's experience, confronting her with Pyrrhus and depicting her sufferings as central, where Euripides' play gave episodes to the fates of Cassandra and Helen. Thus it is possible that Ennius used the Astyanax episode of *Troades*, amplified by material from *Hecuba* and the *Andromache*. Although no extant play of Euripides contains the original of fr. xxxv J (*Andromachae nomen qui indidit, recte ei indidit*)[36] attributed by Varro to Ennius as a translator of Euripides, this hardly justifies Jocelyn's refusal (p. 238) to relate the play to any of the Euripidean dramas on this myth.[37]

But one fragment suggests that Ennius also featured the death of Polyxena in this play, and gave her death full treatment implied by a messenger-narrative quoting her last words; this is xxxiv J: Acherusia templa alta Orci, salvete infera.[38] Here then, as in his *Medea*, Ennius may have enriched his action by contamination from a second play or by his own independent addition of plot material, and may thus offer a precedent for Seneca's play, if he has indeed united the two sacrificial themes on equal terms within one drama.

The fragments of Accius' *Astyanax* offer more justification for con-

[34] "That Hector's son be cast down from the walls of Troy." Apart from the metrical awkwardness of *Troianus*, the form is not found elsewhere in Ennian tragedy, and may have been added by Varro in explanation.
[35] "I saw what I endured most bitterly, Hector, dragged by the four-horse chariot, and Hector's son cast down from the walls of Troy." This is quoted in Vahlen's version, as found in Cic. *Tusc.* 1.48.
[36] "Whoever imposed her name on Andromache, imposed it well." The Greek roots of her name mean "fighting with men," or "with her mate," a most inappropriate name for the devoted Homeric wife, but one well-fitted to Andromache's role in opposing the Greeks, and perhaps her enforced bedfellow Pyrrhus.
[37] Compare Mette, *Lustrum* 9 (1964): 77, "und doch klingt alles sehr Euripideisch."
[38] "Hail, deep Acherusian regions of Orcus, you realms below."

fident claims about the play's contents, and Ribbeck's reconstruction (*Römische Tragödie* 412f.) has been little modified by Mette's recent analysis; nor has Klotz found occasion to change the order or text of the fragments significantly.[39] There are clear references to (Greek) dissension, and a speaker expresses distrust of Augurs (iv R) in iambic dialogue, while in a different meter, and presumably a further scene, Calchas is accused of obstructing the Greek fleet from departure (fr. v, in iambic octonarii). Other excerpts in the same meter suggest the dispute of the Greek princes, and it is possible that fr. vi, *ferum feroci contundendum imperiost . . .*, is an assertion of authority by Agamemnon (if we take *imperium* literally) over Pyrrhus, the archetypal *ferox*. Again fr. vii, *te propter tot tantasque habemus vastitates funerum*, could be a reproach against Agamemnon as leader (rather than Helen, as Ribbeck suggested). One fragment must be spoken by a Trojan, fr. i R, *qui nostra per vim patria populavit bona*, and fr. iii, *utinam unicam mi antistitam arquitenens suam tuetur*,[40] is surely Hecuba, fearing for Cassandra's safety. Does *unicam* imply that the loss of her sister Polyxena is freshly known?

Most interesting is the group of fragments ix, x, and xi, implying that Astyanax had been hidden in the hills by Andromache and was tracked down and brought back to the Greeks. Frs. x and xi seem to leave no doubt that the capture of the child was reported in a messenger-type speech, probably by a shepherd (compare the guard's speech in *Antigone* for the general form). But who is the interlocutor? It should be Odysseus, but we might not expect him to speak in lyric anapaests—the emotional tone and meter are more attuned to love than political purpose.[41] The motif of hiding is known to us from the hiding of the child Molossus in Euripides' *Andromache*. We might suppose that Accius has borrowed from Euripides to enrich his plot. Zielinski, who believed Accius had drawn his play from Sophocles' *Polyxena*,[42] argued instead that both Euripides and Accius depended on the lost play for the hiding motif,[43] but that Accius had eliminated

[39] Klotz, *Scaen. Rom. Frag.*, pp. 171-72 = fr. v R reads *nec me* for *meque*, 179-82 reads *fortunam* for *fortunane* in R, and 182 reads *prorepens* (with Bothe) for *procedens*, R.
[40] Fr. vi, "A brute must be suppressed by brutal authority"; fr. vii, "it is on your account we suffer such great desolations of slaughter"; fr. i, "he who ravaged our property by violence"; fr. iii, "Would that the archer-god may protect my one daughter, his own priestess."
[41] Mette gives these anapaests to the chorus, as the lyric meter might suggest. But is it Greek or Trojan? Even if the Greeks wish the child to be caught, *exopto* is a surprisingly passionate word, which might better suit Odysseus' determination. Mette also combines ix and xi in one speech.
[42] "De Andromacha Posthomerica," pp. 2-5.
[43] There is risk of a vicious circle here, exemplified by the theories quoted in Moricca's

the main (Polyxena) plot from his Sophoclean model, when using it as the basis for his own *Astyanax*. His chief argument for this perverse derivation of the half-known from the virtually unknown is the Servian comment on *Aen.* 3.489: fabula autem de Astyanacte ista est. Superato Ilio, cum Graeci ad patriam redituri contrariis flatibus prohiberentur, Calchas cecinit deiciendum ex muris Astyanacta, Hectoris et Andromachae filium, eo quod, si adolevisset, fortior patre futurus vindicaturus esset eius interitum. Hunc Ulixes occultatum a matre, cum invenisset, praecipitavit de muro, et ita Graeci Troia profecti sunt.[44]

Although Servius' report is so close to *Troades* in narrative outline, it cannot derive from Seneca, who says nothing of the Homeric detail, *fortior patre futurus*.[45] It seems most likely, then, that this is a description of Accius' play. But in the Greek myth the staying of the winds and the pronouncement of Calchas were, from Sophocles on, associated with the ghost of Achilles and the Polyxena legend, whereas Astyanax's death was the political decision of the Greeks, or Odysseus, or the personal revenge of Neoptolemus.

If this *argumentum* is Accian, it is surely simpler to assume he transferred the motif of adverse winds from the myth of Polyxena to that of Astyanax, than to believe that he took as his model for a tragedy about Astyanax a play written to glorify Polyxena. He would have had to write out the heroine: would this require the substitution of additional episodes? Or was Sophocles' play, as Zielinski suggests, to contain also the story of the hiding of Astyanax? Euripides' *Troades* and *Andromache* alone offered enough plot material to supply the invention of Accius' drama of hiding and detection; the Greek council, Calchas' decision, the preventive concealment of the boy, his discovery, ritual death, and the Greek departure are all in Servius' account.

But in Accius' tragedy the child was sent away to hide, and was

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preface to his second edition of 1946; p. 15 quotes Braun's argument for the dependence of Seneca's third act on Euripides' *Andromache* in the hiding motif. On p. 24 he makes his own case for Seneca's derivation of this motif from Accius' *Astyanax*. We could add Zielinski's claim ("De Andromacha Posthomerica") that this hiding-motif must have been taken by both Accius and Euripides from Sophocles. No scholar has yet managed to believe simultaneously in all these imitations, but they show the futility of insisting that Seneca relied on a single model.

[44] "Now this is the story about Astyanax. When Troy had been defeated and the Greeks were about to return to their country but were prevented by adverse gales, Calchas declared that Astyanax, son of Hector and Andromache, must be cast down from the walls, because if he grew up he would become stronger than his father and avenge his father's death. He was hidden by his mother, but Ulysses found him and hurled him headlong from the wall and thus they set out from Troy."

[45] As prophesied by Hector, *Il.* 6.479-81.

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brought on stage, if at all, only after recapture: thus any confrontation between his mother and the Greek leader (Odysseus? or perhaps Agamemnon?) must have been limited to denials before his capture and supplication when he is in Greek hands. There can have been no duel of wits centered around the stage tomb. Again, the wording of fr. xii, *Troia est testis, quaere ex aliis, qui illius miseritudine/nomen clarum in humili saxo multis memorant vocibus*, suggests Andromache replying to a Greek; it may be in answer to one seeking her son, but is more likely to be a reference to Hector's pitiable treatment after death, and the graffiti of Trojans appealing to their dead champion. If it does not come from a scene before the capture of the little boy, we can probably assign it to the same confrontation as the last fragment, xiii R: *abducite intro: nam mihi miseritudine/commovit animum excelsa aspecti dignitas*.[46] Either Andromache has said her last farewell, or she has heard of his death scene. In respect for her grief the Greek leader has her escorted away to the tent of the captives, and brings the scene to a close.

Astyanax is barely mentioned by the Augustans, who had reason to pass over his martyrdom. When Aeneas and the young Ascanius visit Andromache in Epirus, she is painfully reminded of Astyanax, who would have been the same age: O mihi sola mei super Astyanactis imago,/sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat/et nunc aequali tecum pubesceret aevo (*Aen.* 3.489-91).[47] Seneca did not forget these lines but transferred them to Astyanax himself, seen by his mother as the living likeness of his dead father (*Tro.* 483-86). Earlier versions of the mythical escape from Troy had made Astyanax-Scamander joint founder of Scepsis in the Troad with Aeneas' son (Strabo 13.1.52, and cf. Servius on *Aen.* 9.264). But for the Augustan poets the *Aeneadae* were paramount, and Ascanius, carefully identified with the Alban Iulus (whom both Cato and Varro had known as Aeneas' later child by the Latin princess Lavinia) symbolized the claim of the Julian family to Trojan heroic origin; there was no room for another Trojan prince, of more royal lineage, and the memory of the martyred child would merely have diminished the glamor of the survivor.

When Virgil came to depict the fall of Troy in *Aeneid* 2 he had already a crowd of literary and artistic predecessors. Austin, in the introduction to his separate edition of book 2, speaks of "the mass

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[46] Fr. xii R: "Troy is witness, enquire of others who for pity of him record his glorious name with many invocations on humble rocks." Fr. xiii R: "Take (her?) inside; for the lofty dignity of (her?) demeanor has moved my heart with compassion."

[47] "O sole surviving likeness of my Astyanax. That is how he held his gaze, his arms, his expression, and now he would be reaching manhood, and the same age as yourself."

of tradition on which he could draw and the variety of treatment that this theme had received. For apart altogether from the Epic Cycle and Stesichorus and the Greek Tragedians, there were historians such as Timaeus and Hellanicus, there were Hellenistic poets such as Euphorion, there were the Roman dramatists and there was Varro." I do not imagine that Virgil himself used Timaeus or Hellanicus often; certainly in Seneca's case we can eliminate some of the Greek sources. There is no trace of his reading any Greek historians, and he had no known interest in Alexandrian elegy or lyric.[48] But for Seneca we must add to Virgil's raw material Virgil himself; the influence of *Aeneid* 2 is diffused throughout *Troades*, especially in Hecuba's prologue, reporting Priam's death, and Andromache's narrative of her dream vision of Hector. Ovid too was both a general influence and gave Seneca specific inspiration by his account in *Metamorphoses* 13 of Polyxena's death, and by the pathetic monody he composed for Hecuba. Were it not for the epic meter we could easily accept this lament as a composition of Seneca *tragoedus*. Of all his predecessors Ovid was surely the greatest influence on Seneca as a speech writer. While Senecan narrative may reflect both Virgilian and Ovidian techniques, in dialogue the element of contention and display went far beyond Virgil's *ethos* and finds its nearest precedent in Ovid's *Heroides* and the longer declamatory speeches of *Metamorphoses*.

IV. DID SENECA COMPOSE FROM A DRAMATIC MODEL?

In investigating Seneca's relationship with earlier drama, we are faced with two handicaps. The first is that even where fragmentary plays such as Sophocles' *Polyxena* allow scholars to discern their action, revealing some similarity of dramatic structure with an extant play, this is no guarantee of direct imitation. Similarity of plot could be mediated through mythographers and epitomes like the later synopses of Hyginus and Apollodorus: it could equally result from long memory of a play once seen or read. Even when we are considering extant Greek tragedies, unless they show continuous and detailed similarity of phrasing, or consecutive argumentation, there is no plausible case for claiming direct adaptation. Seneca's tragedies certainly reveal his familiarity with Euripides' well-known plays and Sophocles too: but there is no evidence in his prose works for direct acquaintance with early Roman drama, and the odd adornments of

[48] Compare the *index locorum* to Haase's volumes of Seneca's prose (Leipzig, 1887) with that of the 1965 O.C.T. of the *Epistulae Morales*, which has no listing for Herodotus, Thucydides, or Xenophon.

archaizing diction are more probably derived from Varius or Ovid.[49] The second handicap is harder to formulate. In discussing the tragedies of Ennius and Accius, we had no hesitation in asking *which* Greek drama they were adapting: there were parallel passages showing Ennius' use of Euripidean tragedy in *Medea*, *Hecuba*, and *Iphigenia at Aulis*, and evidence for Accius' adaptation of Sophocles' *Ajax* and *Philoctetes*. These dramatists were expected to be adapters, and where no fifth-century model is known for an early Roman tragedy, there is some justification for assuming use of a later, post-Euripidean drama. But why presume that Seneca set out to adapt one particular treatment of a myth, or suggest as a compromise that he enriched a primary model with subsidiary actions from other plays? Even those scholars who give him least credit for power to sustain a consistent action allow that the *Troades* cannot have been modeled on one or even two originals without considerable innovation in linking material.[50] His weaknesses of construction in transition from one scene to another, or in bringing a stage dispute to a satisfactory close, are precisely what might be expected from an orator trying to cast his powers of characterization and argument into dramatic form without a Greek or Roman model to guide him. To borrow the eloquent arguments of a scholar of Greek tragedy, who is also an advocate of Seneca,

his prose works indicate even more clearly than do his tragedies that his method was rather that of free modelling in his own manner around some relatively simple armature provided by tradition; that he worked *currente calamo* with no other man's book open before him continually, but with a thousand literary memories swarming in his brain. An architectonic talent appears no more in his prose works than it does in the *Agamemnon*: incoherences and discrepancies between one dazzling passage and another are freely tolerated.[51]

Herington is arguing here against the implications, rather than the direct claims, advanced by Richard Tarrant in his investigation of the possible sources of Seneca's *Agamemnon*. Despite his caution, Tar-

[49] See now Tarrant, "Senecan Drama and Its Antecedents," *HSCP* 82 (1978): 259-60.
[50] Moricca (n. 43 above) derives parts of the *Troades* from Eur. *Hecuba* and *Troades*, Ennius' *Andromacha*, and Accius' *Astyanax*; Calder, *CP* 65 (1970), has now reduced his original estimate from four to three source plays, by excluding the influence of *Hecuba*. But even relying on Sophocles' *Polyxena*, Euripides' *Troades*, and the post-Euripidean *Intriguenstuck* (sic), he must credit Seneca with invention of the prologue, the Talthybius scene, and the chorus of 814f. (and 371f., which he has not mentioned) in his final summary (p. 82). It would certainly have required less skill to compose a new drama.
[51] John Herington, reviewing Tarrant, *Agamemnon*, in *Phoenix* 32 (1978): 274.

rant's approach to Senecan tragedy seems to have disposed of one theory of dependence—that Seneca copied with willful infidelity the classic Greek dramatizations of his chosen themes—only to impose another—that he imitated Augustan tragedy. In his recent article "The Antecedents of Senecan Drama" Tarrant has given a masterly account of the evolution of late Euripidean and Hellenistic stage techniques through Roman republican drama (both comic and tragic) to Seneca; he has shown how Seneca's standards of versification look back to a more sophisticated model than the trimeter of even Accius, latest of the professional Republican dramatists, and argued from the indifference of Seneca's generation to the old tragedians, that the archaizing vocabulary of his drama must derive from an intermediary, most probably Augustan, tragedy. He has every justification for seeing Augustan tragedy as the missing link, accounting for much in Senecan versification, diction, and use of dramatic devices (such as the frozen entry of Helen at *Tro.* 861-70), which must have entered Seneca's writing through imitation of a form of tragedy that was itself staged. But there is no basis for discussion of the *diathesis*, the distribution of action between roles and scenes, of these lost tragedies. Herington has reason to raise the alarm when Tarrant withdraws from the implications of his own premises in the preface of *Agamemnon* (p. 14). Even in the careful account of Augustan tragedy that ends the separate study of Senecan antecedents, Tarrant's formulation seems to go too far: "his *Medea* and *Thyestes* . . . however, were undoubtedly shaped by the corresponding plays by Ovid and Varius: *Agamemnon*, *Troades* and *Hercules Furens* may well have been based on Augustan versions of material which had been handled by Accius." A note adds that "the action of Accius' *Amphitryo* and *Troades* parallels at least in part that of Seneca's *HF* and *Troades*."[52] But the plot of Accius' *Astyanax*, in which the child is sent away to the hills and his capture reported in a messenger-speech, excludes the possibility that Accius wrote anything like the Senecan third act, in which the decision to hide the child and the detection of his hiding place by Ulysses take place in front of the audience; at the most Accius' action would have allowed for a scene of supplication and preparation for burial, *if*, that is, there were any evidence that Andromache took part in a scene presenting the captured child. A critic needs to consider the full spectrum of local and general imitation.

A secondary writer may imitate a figure of thought or a repartee from a predecessor, or copy a plot motif, such as the hiding of a

[52] Tarrant, *HSCP* 82(1978): 261.

child, without following the dramatic form in which the motif was presented. Indeed such motifs may as easily be borrowed from a play centered on a different protagonist; as we have seen, it would demand no more enterprise for Seneca to have derived the hiding of his Astyanax from Euripides' story of young Molossus than from Accius' tragedy of Astyanax himself. The dramatist in an imitative age may even copy in a spirit of *aemulatio* the blend of characters and situation which are the basis of a particular episode. But if he goes beyond such partial imitation and shapes his play to follow in all essentials the action of a single model in his own language, what scope is left for his personal contribution? We may well feel that "the greatest literary egotist in the history of Rome, *diversi sibi conscius generis, omnia sua amans*[53] (cf. Quint. 10.1.126, 130) is scarcely the man to sit down with a single 'source' and methodically operate on it in the manner suggested." Seneca knew too many literary versions of the fall of Troy to adhere to any one of them. But there is no need to argue from probability; it is apparent from the previous analysis of so many plays in either language which share some element of plot with *Troades*, how small a part of Seneca's tragedy any one of them could have supplied.

V. SENECA AND EURIPIDES

Seneca is a highly imitative artist, but this imitation is manifested not in consecutive adaptation of action or argument, but in reutilization of the emotional and descriptive highlights of writers he admired. This can be shown for *Troades* by an outline of the affinities and differences between Seneca's play and the two Euripidean tragedies that are closest to it in subject matter and formal features. We will see his independence in material organization, in narrative sequence, in balance of elements within the plot, and in the stress or deemphasizing of roles.

Euripides' *Hecuba* is a diptych in which the two deaths of her son and daughter are presented *as they affect Hecuba*. Whereas Polyxena is given a positive role, taking control of her fate even before she leaves the stage, and her martyrdom receives the conventional honor of a full report,[54] Polydorus, probably conceived as a child too young for moral stature, is merely the occasion of grief and of a fully developed

[53] "Proud of his own individual style, and loving all he composed." I again quote Herington, *Phoenix* 32(1978): 274.
[54] Compare *Iphigenia at Aulis* 1540f.: but there is no comparable report of Makaria's self-sacrifice in *Heracleidae*.

action of vengeance by his mother: her defeat in the first action is contrasted with Polyxena's moral victory, then converted into a cruder victory over Polymestor and his children, which makes her the immoral aggressor. The *Trojan Women* of Euripides is much more curiously constructed, as the three central episodes contain three different dooms, each carried from the decision of the Greeks to a point where the outcome of the decision has taken shape. In the two outer episodes affecting the sexual relations of the Atridae, Cassandra's prophecy enables the audience to experience the victory for Troy that she will win by her instrumentality in Agamemnon's death, and Helen is pitted against Hecuba in a contest for her life to be decided by the unstable Menelaus. The doom of Astyanax is announced by Talthybius in the central episode and accomplished; his fate then returns, with Talthybius, who brings the corpse and helps to bury it in the last episode of the play.

Thus the twin themes of Seneca's play are drawn from the first half of the *Hecuba* and two separated episodes of the *Trojan Women*. But where Polyxena was an impressive and vivid speaking role, both in action and in the report of her death, she is now silent and a mere victim. She was probably silent in Sophocles' play, but Seneca has an independent motive for keeping her so. Whereas in Euripides, Astyanax was a helpless infant whose death was an instant brutality, beyond humanizing by any act of heroism on his part, Seneca has put years on the child; silent he remains, but the resistance of his mother in the longest episode of the play, and the Stoic purpose that Seneca reads into his march to death, give the boy's fate a dramatic importance that balances the diminished role of Polyxena.

Where Euripides presented both tragedies through Trojan eyes, introducing Greeks only as emissaries to them (Talthybius in both plays; Odysseus in *Hecuba*) or arbiters of the prisoners' fate (Agamemnon in *Hecuba*, Menelaus over Helen in *Troades*), Seneca imported an additional element, the study of conflict and decision on the Greek side. We have seen evidence that these scenes occurred in Accius' *Astyanax* and Sophocles' *Polyxena*, but conflict over sacrifice was already a traditional theme of the Aulis story, and conflict between Agamemnon and Menelaus was known from the *Odyssey* and the *Nostoi*. We cannot say what versions Seneca knew or whether he resorted to any one model for the structure of his second act; its irregularity of structure should dissuade us, if anything, from fathering it on a Greek tragedian of professional stage experience.

Analysis of Euripides' plays by formal units—prologue, episodes, choral odes, and *exodos*—shows that Euripides' *Hecuba* offered Seneca

a model in its lyric complex grouped around the *parodos*, its first episode, first *stasimon*, and second episode. The divine prologue, registering the compromise of Athene and Poseidon, could have been adopted by Seneca also; Poseidon's forecast of the storm offers a motif that in Seneca instead is developed in the prophecy of Hecuba during the penultimate act (994f., 1005-9). Seneca used a divine prologue to introduce *Hercules Furens*, but here as elsewhere (except *Thyestes*) he has preferred a single speaker to dialogue. Instead *Troades* is opened by a protagonist, as in *Medea*, and Hecuba's speech is recapitulatory, with little expository function save in the allusion to the forthcoming allotment of the women. It leads easily into the lament, first for Hector then Priam, which is inverted by Hecuba in the last section to form a *makarismos*, a blessing on the departed. Both plays of Euripides follow their prologues with similar interchanges between Hecuba and the chorus, but the form is quite different, as is the thematic material. The *parodos* of *Hecuba* is actually a report of the demand for Polyxena's death, and the *kommos* which follows is shared between Hecuba and Polyxena. Seneca is closer to the pattern in *Troades*, where Hecuba's anapaestic monody moves from despair to invoke the chorus in lamenting antiphony (145f.). But the lyrics that follow in Euripides do not, as in Seneca, speak of Priam and Hector, but concern themselves with the women's present situation and with Cassandra, who will dominate the approaching first episode (168-72) and the forthcoming allocation (184f.), while the second set of strophes (197-229) considers their future homes in Greece. This chorus echoes a similar one in *Hecuba* 444-83, and it is needed to introduce Talthybius and the allocation—the minor theme of the first episode.

Seneca too precedes the actual distribution of captives in his fourth act with such a chorus, and he adopts from Euripides (*Tro.* 210-14) the repudiation of Sparta, which he makes into the climax of his choral sequence (*Tro.* 851); but there is no adaptation of detail, and where Euripides had used anapaests, Seneca, familiar as he is with anapaests, has used the Sapphic line.

It is clear that Seneca's treatment of the Polyxena plot has not adhered to the form of Euripides' introduction. Neither does it in any way resemble his first episode of *Hecuba*. Where Odysseus came to claim her from her mother, and Hecuba's attempt to win her daughter's life yielded to Polyxena's own resolve to die, Seneca will tell the story of Polyxena in two phases; his second act set among the Greeks, presents their resistance to Achilles' demand for her life; in his fourth act comes the claiming of Polyxena not by Odysseus

but the antithetical figure of Helen, guilty as Polyxena is innocent, impure where she is chaste, and destined to live as Polyxena is doomed to die without protest. This news is given in Seneca's *Troades*, after the chorus of anticipation, and as part of the expected allocation; here the only Euripidean element is the challenge thrown out to Helen to justify herself (related to episode 3 of *Troades*). The second episode of Euripides' *Hecuba* must wait for a parallel in Seneca's action until the fifth act, where the Messenger narrates Polyxena's death after that of Astyanax, reducing the scale of the narrative to encompass the double presentation. Thus in a sense Polyxena is used to frame the Astyanax story, as Euripides in the *Hecuba* used the two phases of Polydorus' murder-narrative to frame the sacrifice of Polyxena.

In Seneca there is no burial, but one other element of *Hecuba* is used: the ten lines in which Hecuba acknowledges the destruction of her husband and his royal family (619-28) seem to be the model for the opening lines of Seneca's prologue.

Just as Seneca's second act has no Euripidean precedent, so the claiming of Astyanax, which he makes into a whole action of warning, defense, verbal *agon*, detection, supplication and farewell, has nothing in common with Euripides. Hecuba is absent, Andromache is in dialogue with an old man (an innovation, unless he has crept in from another Astyanax drama); alone, she has to fight Ulysses and his men by every means in her power. If the hiding and then surrender of the little boy and the vain appeals recall Euripides' *Andromache*, that play has none of the guile and dramatic irony that articulate the first phase of the *agon* here. Since Andromache is to be taken from Troy, the rites and words of burial have to be performed on the living child. Instead of a funeral, the child experiences the obsequies as his mother closes his eyes (788), offers a lock of her hair (800), and utters a formal lament (776-83, cf. Eur. *Tro.* 1209-20) commending him to his father in the other world (801-9; cf. Eur. *Tro.* 1234). It is painful, intolerable, one may think, to inflict this awareness of doom on the living child; yet Seneca has preferred this emotional effect, leaving the child unburied where his action would have permitted an act of burial after death by Hecuba. Why did he do this?

In the dialogues Seneca claims that burial means nothing to the dead.[55] Indeed Euripides' Hecuba says something similar—rich shrouds are an empty boast of the living (1250). But burial was essential to the Greek audience, both to fulfil duty to the dead and to complete

[55] Compare the philosopher's reply to the tyrant at *Tranqu.* 14.3: "You have got something to congratulate yourself upon, a pint of my blood: as for burial you are a fool if you think I care whether I rot above or below ground."

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the dramatic action. Perhaps to understand this we should look instead at Seneca's last act. Here the death of Astyanax is his invention. When Andromache asks who will bury him, she is told that the body is past recognition; after her last outcry "in this too he is like his father," the subject is changed to Polyxena, whose death is seen through the eyes and wills of opposing groups of spectators. The approval of the crowd, the hesitation of Pyrrhus, echo Euripides' portrayal, but as she falls, Seneca adds that the thirsty tomb swallows her blood utterly. Like the shattering of Astyanax's body, this detail serves to set aside the question of burial. It is not that he wishes to stress the unburied bodies as a symbol of Greek brutality, or to point to the loss of all rights by the defeated: there is no such comment. Burial is simply not morally significant. Instead of the Greek reverence for the dead, he offers us admiration for the dying; it is the proud integrity of the human will, not the simple satisfaction of ritual, that he sees as a source of exaltation in the beholder.

In some points these divergences by Seneca from the well-known presentation of the myths are a homage to Euripides; reaction and innovation, such as the change of Sapphics for anapaests, or the exchange of the roles performed by Talthybius and Odysseus, or the different arguments used by Helen in her self-defense, show that Seneca knew and respected the achievement of Euripides. But the relationship is perhaps more like that of a baroque opera librettist to ancient tragedy; imagine him as a Metastasio or Calzabigi arranging *Iphigénie en Aulide* or *Alceste* for Gluck, or Berlioz shaping the libretto of his *Prise de Troie*.[56] As eighteenth-century tastes were more self-conscious, with the capacity for boredom and demand for novelty bred from overfamiliarity with the mythical basis of opera,[57] so the medium of tragic drama had changed before Seneca, in order to remain acceptable in a world dominated by great epics—unsung poetry—and coruscating displays of eloquence couched in poetic prose. It was Seneca's talent to dress sedate, established myths in a style both novel and allusive, devising a rich new fabric, woven from many threads of epic and dramatic reminiscence and Greek and Roman allusion into a glittering brocade of Senecan invention.

[56] For Metastasio's principles of composition see now *New Oxford History of Music* (1973), 7: 8-12.
[57] See G. K. Galinsky, *Perspectives of Latin Poetry* (Austin, Texas, 1972), p. 105; he makes this analogy between the Augustan audience of Ovid and Dr. Johnson's appraisal of his contemporaries: "We have been too early acquainted with the poetical heroes to expect any pleasure from their revival; to show them as they have already been shown is to disgust by repetition; to give them new qualities or new adventures, is to offend by violating received notions" (*Lives of the English Poets*, ed. G. B. Hill [Oxford, 1935], 2:58).

Appendix to Chapter 4

THE HISTORY OF THE HOUSE OF PRIAM

A complete genealogy of the house of Priam and that of Anchises, is given by the Homeric Aeneas in book twenty of the *Iliad* and, with only minor variations, passes down unchanged through Greek and Roman literature. Dardanus, ruler of the land of Dardania before Ilium was founded, when men lived in the foothills of Ida, was son of Zeus (20.215). Erichthonius, son of Dardanus, was famed for his herd of mares, whose magic foals were begotten by the wind (219-29). But it was Tros, son of Erichthonius and grandson of Dardanus, who founded the city of Troy and was king of the Trojans. Tros had three sons, Ilus, Assaracus, and Ganymedes. The story of Zeus' infatuation with Ganymedes, so that he sent his eagle to convey the boy to Olympus and made him cupbearer, is already reported in Homer. From *Il.* 5.265f. we know that Zeus rewarded Tros for his son's services with a gift of sacred horses. But although Euripides makes moving use of the story of Ganymedes in the third choral ode of his *Troades* (820-38), Seneca ignores this aspect of the family history. Assaracus was father of Capys, grandfather of Anchises, and so great-grandfather of Aeneas; hence Virgil's Aeneas and the poet himself naturally speak of the *gens Assaraci* (9.643) and *domus Assaraci* (1.284), a phrase used less pertinently at *Tro.* 17 for the actual palace of Assaracus. Ilus was father of Laomedon (*Il.* 20.236), whose perjuries were the source of all divine resentment against Troy. The first of the *Laomedonteae periuria Troiae* (Vir. *G.* 1.502) occurred when the king used Apollo and Poseidon to build the city fortifications (*Il.* 7.452) but refused them the promised yet unspecified reward. Apollo sent a plague, and Poseidon a sea monster to whom Laomedon's daughter Hesione was to be sacrificed. This was the moment of Heracles' appearance. According to *Il.* 5.638-51, Laomedon promised him the sacred horses received by Tros from Zeus, as a reward for rescuing Hesione, but again broke his word. Heracles then returned with his ships and soldiers and destroyed Troy, killing the king and his sons and taking Hesione captive. But at her request he spared her lame brother, young Priam or Podarkes (cf. Apollodorus 2.5.9; 2.6.4). Thus both Euripides (*Tro.* 817) and Seneca can speak of Troy as twice-stormed by the arrows of Heracles—during Heracles' life, when he spared the child Priam, and after his death, through the bow that he gave to Philoctetes. For as a result of Calchas' prophesy that Troy would only fall if the bow of Heracles was brought to Troy, Philoctetes was rescued from Lemnos, cured, and enabled to fire the arrow that killed Paris (Apollodorus 5.8-10). Proclus' version based on Lesches' *Ilias Mikra* (See Homer O.C.T. 5: 106) attributes the decision to recover the bow to the prophecy of Helenus, captured by Odysseus, but is substantially the same. But whereas the choral allusion to Priam as *bis capte senex* (133) is mere ornament, Seneca makes a moving and independent use of the story of Heracles' clemency toward Priam when Andromache appeals to Ulysses for Priam's grandson, Astyanax (718-36).

But although Laomedon's sons (listed at *Il.* 20.237-38) are supposed to have been killed, Tithonus also survived, and was beloved by the dawn goddess (Aurora/Eos), who obtained for him the gift of immortality but, by an oversight, not eternal youth. Their son, Memnon, first mentioned in *Od.* 11.522 (cf. 4.187), came to help Troy after Hector's death, and his exploits were a principal theme of the *Aethiopis* (for which see Proclus, *Chrestomathia*, pp. 104-5). Seneca refers to him twice: in 10-11 as an instance of Troy's far-flung empire, and in 238-42 as a victim of Achilles and, like him, the child of a goddess, himself mortal.

A variant of this myth makes Ganymedes the son, not the uncle, of Laomedon; thus Eur. *Tro.* 822 associates Laomedon more closely with the link between the house of Dardanus and the gods. Tithonus too is given a different generation in the Latin tradition, for Servius on *Aen.* 1.489 calls him Laomedon's brother: quia Tithonus, frater Laomedontis, raptus ab aurora filium suum Memnonem ex ipsa progenitum . . . Priamo ad Troiam misit auxilium.[1]

In Homer, Priam has nineteen sons by Hecuba (*Il.* 24.496) and many more by lesser wives and concubines. Those that feature in the Latin tradition besides Hector and Paris are Deiphobus, second husband to Helen after Paris' death (Virgil matches Agamemnon's narrative in the Nekuia, *Od.* 11.405 with Deiphobus' report to Aeneas in the underworld of his betrayal by Helen, *Aen.* 6.494-545) and Helenus the prophet, later associated with Andromache after the death of her master Pyrrhus (cf. *Aen.* 3.329f.). For Virgil, Helenus and Andromache in Epirus represent the terminal backward-looking survivors of Troy. Virgil gives to Polites a special role in Priam's death scene at *Aen.* 2.526f., though Greek tradition names Agenor as the son killed before his father's eyes. Virgil, and Seneca, say nothing of Troilus in the narrative of the fall, for he is already dead (cf. *Aen.* 1.474f.), nor of Polydorus, who in the Iliad is an illegitimate son, but who was made by Euripides into Hecuba's youngest child and given a tragic death. This subplot of Euripides's Hecuba is used by Ovid in his narrative of Hecuba's metamorphosis (*Met.* 13.536f.) but not by Seneca.

We might add a note on *Tro.* 60; there is no other evidence that Helenus was married, while Antenor—not a member of the house of Priam—was married to Theano, a priestess of Athena (*Il.* 6.298), but in the most explicit account of his escape (Servius on *Aen.* 1.242) she escaped with Antenor and his sons to found Patavium.

Of Priam and Hecuba's daughters only Cassandra and Polyxena are prominent (though Pacuvius wrote a tragedy named after Ilione). Cassandra cheated her lover Apollo and was punished for her frigidity by the curse that her gift of prophecy would go unbelieved (cf. *Tro.* 37, *vana vates ante Cassandram fui*). She was ravished by Ajax, son of Oileus, from the temple of Athena (Proclus, *Iliou Persis*, Homer, O.C.T.5:108; cf. Eur. *Tro.* 70-71, *Aen.* 2.403-

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[1] "Because Tithonus, brother of Laomedon, was ravished by Dawn, and sent his son by her, Memnon, to Troy to give aid to Priam."

6). This sacrilege is also implied by the scene of Ajax's oath in Polygnotus' *Iliou Persis*, and is depicted as an excerpt from the *Ilias Mikra*, in the *Tabula Iliaca*. Although she was a priestess, she fell to the portion of Agamemnon by his choice, confirmed (as in Eur. *Tro.* 248) by the decision of the Greeks, and with Agamemnon she was murdered by Clytemnestra on her arrival at Mycenae. The myth of Polyxena existed before Sophocles (see chapter 4, section 2, above) and is substantially unchanged in Euripides, probably also in Ennius' *Hecuba*, as in Ovid and Seneca. Of the daughters-in-law, only the polar figures of the good and bad wife, Andromache and Helen, are prominent in every treatment of the Trojan cycle; Andromache does not vary in character, and the tradition unanimously gave her as handmaid to Pyrrhus, whereas one branch allowed her a twilight happiness with Helenus. Helen, treated with surprising sympathy by Homer (*Il.* 3.164f.), is various persons in Euripides, from the injured innocent of the *Helen* to the aging harlot of *Orestes*. Interestingly, Seneca's Helen, though she is given the arguments used by Helen in Euripides' *Troades*, is a more decent character, chastened by experience. There is but one member of the next generation recorded for the house of Priam—the helpless young Astyanax; in *Il.* 6.400 and 466f. he is a baby in his nurse's arms and easily frightened, so that he hides his face in her bosom. Roman tradition seems to have aged the little boy slightly, but like the Greek epics, it terminated his life and his family with the sack of Priam's city.

D
Five
EATH AND THE DEAD IN
SENECA'S *TROADES*

More than any other of Seneca's tragedies, the *Troades* is dominated by contemplation of death and by the dead, not only as objects of mourning and glorification, but paradoxically as agents and motivators of the dramatic action. It is important, then, to approach the play with some knowledge of Seneca's personal statements about death, as expressed in the dialogues and letters.[1]

Two dialogues have death as their subject: the works of consolation *ad Marciam* (dialogue 6) and *ad Polybium* (dialogue 11). Marcia is

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[1] A good English summary of Seneca's eclectic and conflicting statements about death in the prose works is given by A. L. Motto, *Seneca* (New York, 1973), pp. 68-79; see also her *Seneca, a Sourcebook* (Amsterdam, 1970), "Death," pp. 27-31, and "The Soul after Death," pp. 32-33, 61-62. For the full range of contemporary views, see F. Cumont, *The After-Life in Roman Paganism* (New Haven, 1959), esp. chaps. 2 and 3. On Seneca's use of death as a source of *pathos* in the tragedies, see Regenbogen, *Schmerz und Tod in Senecas Tragödien* (reprint, Darmstadt, 1963), pp. 26-56.

consoled for the loss of a son, and Polybius had lost a dear brother. As consolations these works repeat the *topoi* of their genre: that death has come opportunely, saving the defunct from future shame or grief (*opportuna mors*, *Marc.* 20-22); that in view of the brevity of a human life span it matters little whether a man dies young or in old age (21); and that, fortune being uncertain, continued life might have been no boon (22-23). About the nature of death itself Seneca is explicit in promising immortality as the reward of virtue:

integer ille nihilque in terris relinquens sui fugit et totus excessit: paulumque supra nos commoratus, dum expurgatur et inhaerentia vitia situmque omnem mortalis aevi excutit, deinde ad excelsa sublatus inter felices currit animas. excepit illum coetus sacer, Scipiones Catonesque . . . (Marc. 25.1)[2]

In a fashion that is both Stoic in its emphasis on purification and on a heavenly abode among the stars (25.2), and Roman in its recall of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, Seneca paints a positive future of happy consciousness for the dead, extended into the time of Stoic cosmology when the periodic cataclysm brings transformation and renewal,

nos quoque felices animae et aeterna sortitae, cum deo visum erit iterum ista moliri, labentibus cunctis et ipsae parva ruinae ingentis accessio in antiqua elementa vertemur. (Marc. 27.7)[3]

But Seneca's purpose in this dialogue gives him a motive for persuasive optimism. Even in other consolations he can be less confident. Contrast *Polyb.* 9.3,

si est aliquis defunctis sensus, nunc animus fratris mei velut ex diutino carcere emissus, tandem sui iuris et arbitrii, gestit et rerum naturae spectaculo fruitur et humana omnia ex loco superiore despicit, divina vero . . . propius intuitur. quid itaque eius desiderio maceror, qui aut beatus aut nullus est?[4]

In the letters Seneca cannot be called consistent: in some letters, like 24 and 93, he considers death either as survival in a celestial existence or as annihilation—alternatives compatible in themselves,

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[2] "He has escaped and completely fled, unharmed and leaving nothing on earth behind him: after lingering a little overhead while he is purified and casts off the clinging faults and all the dirt of human life, he is then uplifted to the heavens and moves among the blessed souls. That holy band of Scipios and Catos has made him welcome . . ."

[3] "We too, as blessed souls who have won an eternal lot, when God shall decide to refashion it all, and everything is dissolved, shall be just a small increment in the vast collapse as we return to our original elements."

[4] "If there is any sensation in the dead, my brother's soul is now, as if released from its long confinement, independent at last and under his own control. He is excited and delights in the contemplation of the universe and looks down on all human affairs from on high, but looks closer at hand upon the divine world. Why then should I grieve from longing for him, when he is either in bliss or without existence?"

Seneca's

TROADES

A Literary Introduction with

TEXT, TRANSLATION,

and COMMENTARY

Elaine Fantham

(1982)

1982