erhalten haben, das Wort zweimal vorkommt, nämlich in Hyp. Soph. *Ant.*[59] und Hyp. Eur. *Or.*

Wenn also zu Eur. *Hipp.* 171 eine ausdrücklich dem Aristophanes zugeschriebene Bemerkung in zwei Fassungen vorliegt, deren eine (B) sowohl das Substantiv ὑπόθεσις als das Verbum ὑποτίθεται in szenisch-technischer Bedeutung enthält, während beide Wörter in der anderen (MA) fehlen, so wird wohl niemand mehr zögern den Wortlaut der ersteren Fassung für reiner aristophaneisch zu halten als den der zweiten.

2. Nebenbei hat diese Untersuchung noch eine weitere Frucht abgeworfen. In dem Gebrauch des Wortes ὑπόθεσις unterscheiden die Scholien zu Sophokles sich unverkennbar von denen zu Euripides. Es würde vielleicht die Mühe lohnen den Sprachgebrauch beider Scholien-corpora genauer zu untersuchen und nachzuprüfen, ob noch in anderen Hinsichten der aristophaneische Einfluss in den Euripides-Scholien stärker zu Tage tritt als in den Scholien zu Sophokles.

59. Das ausser dieser Stelle nur sch. Ar. *Ran.* 1028 (s. oben, S. 187) belegte ὑπόκειται τὰ πράγματα deutet für letztgenannte Stelle schon auf die Autorschaft des Aristophanes von Byzanz hin. Weiter ist zu beachten, dass die dort folgende Mitteilung über den Chor (χορὸς δὲ Περσῶν γερόντων διαλεγόμενος πρὸς αὐτήν) inhaltlich der Gewohnheit des Aristophanes entspricht. Schon Trendelenburg stellte ja mit Recht fest (a.a.O., S. 21): "sequitur ex his, ut Aristophanes non solum indicaverit, chorum constare ex his illisve personis, sed, quales illae essent, paucis etiam addiderit. neque his additis substitisse sed longius processisse Aristophanem, ita ut adumbraret etiam, qua ratione dramatis actioni interessent chori personae, ex his duobus exemplis et re et verbis plane gemellis licet concludere ...". Was aber den Stil dieser Bemerkung betrifft – Partizip (διαλεγόμενος) ohne verb. fin. – und die Anknüpfung der Schlussnotiz (εἶτα ἄγγελος ἀπαγγέλλων τὴν περὶ Σαλαμῖνα ναυμαχίαν καὶ τὴν Ξέρξου φυγήν) mit εἶτα, diese beiden Züge erinnern an die unter dem Namen des Aristophanes gehende metrische Hypothesis zu Ar. *Nub.* (A4 = IVDb): χορὸς δὲ Νεφελῶν ὡς ἐπωφελῆ λέγων / καὶ τὴν ἀσέβειαν Σωκράτους διεξιών (4/5) ... εἶτ' ἐμπυρισμὸς τῆς σχολῆς τοῦ Σωκράτους (8). (Das εἶτα noch in zwei weiteren metrischen Hypotheseis: zu Ar. *Pax.* IV 4 und zu Ar. *Plut.* VI 6.) Nach der Entdeckung des menandreischen *Dyskolos* hat Koster erneut die aristophaneische Autorschaft solcher metrischen Hypotheseis verfochten (W.J.W. Koster, *De Aristophane Byzantio argumentorum metricorum auctore*, Charist. Novotný 1961, S. 43-50), aber die gelehrte Welt hat sich offenbar nicht ausnahmslos durch die von ihm – zum Teil in Anschluss an J. Wagner, *Die metrischen Hypotheseis zu Aristophanes* (Progr. Berlin 1908) – angeführten Gründe überzeugen lassen. Pfeiffer z.B. (a.a.O., S. 191 u. 195) beharrt noch immer in dem herkömmlichen Misstrauen gegen die Überlieferung. Für die Stellungnahme zu diesem Problem wäre nunmehr vielleicht auch das Ergebnis meines vorliegenden Aufsatzes in Betracht zu ziehen.

SENECA'S *PHAEDRA* AS A STOIC TRAGEDY[1]

A.D. Leeman

After a long period of neglect and contempt, modern studies of Seneca's tragedies have endeavoured to understand them as works of literature in their own right. But scholars still seem to have difficulty in freeing themselves entirely from the old verdicts such as that of A.W. Schlegel (1809): 'In einer Geschichte der dramatischen Kunst hätte ich die Tragödien des Senecas also ganz übergehen dürfen, wenn sie nicht bei dem blinden Vorurteil für alles, was wir aus dem Altertum überkommen haben, manche Nachahmungen nach sich gezogen hätten'.[2] For example in Cl. Mendell's unsatisfactory book on Seneca's tragedies, *Our Seneca* (1968[2]), we still find the thesis that they owed their success in the 16th and 17th centuries mainly to their very mediocrity, which brought them within the mental reach of those times. And Ribbeck's opinion (1892) that 'Die Tragödien des Seneca sind eben Deklamationen in dramatischer Form, Erzeugnisse einer auf die Spitze getriebenen, überreizten Rhetorik',[3] seems to find an echo even in T.S. Eliot's famous attempt at a partial rehabilitation in 1934: 'In the plays of Seneca, the drama is all in the word, and the word has no further reality behind it. His characters all seem to speak with the same voice, and at the top of it; they recite in turn'.[4] There still is a wide-spread opinion that while these tragedies may indeed be interesting and intriguing, even, by their presentation of man in monstrous hyperbole, appealing to the modern mind, their plethora of dramatic vices and strange aberrations make it impossible to take them seriously as drama in the usual meaning of that

1. This paper could hardly have been written without the stimulus and suggestions of my students during a seminar in 1973.

2. *Seneca's Tragödien*, herausgeg. v. E. Lefèvre, Wege der Forschung, Bnd. 310, Wiss. Buchges. (Darmstadt 1972) – henceforth quoted as *ST* –, 14.

3. *Geschichte der römischen Dichtung* III, 72.

4. *'Seneca in Elisabethan translation'*, in *Selected Essays* (London 1932), 65 ff.

term. It still often seems inconceivable that they could ever have been performed on stage.[5]

I would argue that the correct starting point for the interpretation of literature – especially of literature from the remote past written for a remote public – is a 'maximalist' hypothesis. Not only should we assume that there is an intention which is successfully realised, but also that every part and every aspect of it has a purpose in harmony with, or contributing to, the realisation of this intention. The critic has to suppress any tendency to negative criticism so long as the case is still *sub judice*, – which may be a very long time. In my experience this is heuristically the most rewarding working hypothesis. If in the end it leads nowhere the fault may still be the critic's rather than the author's, but at least he is now morally entitled to negative criticism. I stress that this is merely a working assumption – I do not wish to be accused of simply idealising classical literature like the humanists of the Renaissance.[6]

In the case of Seneca's tragedies, this approach implies that we must first of all accept their claim to be dramas. Now what kind of drama? An answer to this question presupposes a recognition and understanding of their distance in time and spirit from classical Greek tragedy – their obvious but deceptive point of reference. The world of Greek tragedy was one in which myth could still be a vital expression of religious faith concerning life and death, man and god, but also a means of conveying the essence of that belief to the public by awaking the πάθη of ἔλεος and φόβος (through a partial identification of the spectator with what happens to the characters on stage) so bringing about κάθαρσις – whatever may be the exact meaning of Aristotle's formula, though it surely does imply in some sense the idea of acceptance, peace of mind, humility. Seneca wrote his tragedies almost half a millennium later, and his spiritual world had little in common with that of classical Greek tragedy. It is of course

5. I acknowledge, of course, the great merits of studies like O. Regenbogen, *Schmerz und Tod in den Tragödien Senecas*, 1930, repr. Wiss. Buchges. (1963), and also of W.H. Friedrich, *Untersuchungen zu Senecas dramatischer Technik* (Leipzig 1933) and some others, who have contributed to a more positive view.

6. In more than one respect I feel myself in sympathy with H.D.F. Kitto, *Form and meaning in drama* (London 1956); see e.g. the preface 'If the interpretation that we advance implies that the play is imperfectly designed, then either the dramatist has not done his job very well, or the critic has failed in his. The presumption with Aeschylus, Sophocles and Shakespeare when he wrote Hamlet, is that the dramatist was competent'.

conceivable that a Roman with some gift and taste for literature could have written purely imitative or derivative tragedies to amuse or impress his friends; indeed the four tragedies which Quintus Cicero wrote in a fortnight during the campaign in Gaul probably were of that kind:[7] but nobody took the trouble to copy them and to preserve them for posterity. They were hardly serious literary efforts, and were hardly intended to be. Varius' *Thyestes* and Ovid's *Medea* were still read and admired by Quintilian,[8] but we cannot judge their merit as dramas. But we do possess Seneca's tragedies, and we must make the effort to judge them justly and adequately, that is to say in terms of their own spiritual world. (I am not concerned here with the 'eternal value' of literature, or with the 'meaning' of Seneca's dramas for the world of today, which may have little in common with their original intention).

To a very large extent the spiritual world of Seneca and his time was dominated by Stoic philosophy, which may be considered the 'faith' of the age. The Stoic teachers preached a certain attitude towards the problems of life and death, and of man and god, and they claimed to have answers to all the fundamental questions of human existence. My 'maximalist' hypothesis rules out from the start the assumption that Senecan drama, in its conception of men and gods, greatness and fall, life and death, merely reproduced traditional literary forms, without any attempt to inform them with the new concepts and the Stoic answers.

If this had not been possible, Seneca would surely not have wanted to write tragedies at all, because they would have been useless, and what is worse, misleading to his audience. At the same time, however, we should understand the problems involved in choosing the tragic form as the vehicle of a Stoic message. The Stoic view of the world was essentially monist and harmonic: the world is ordered by an all-pervading *logos*. The moral ideal was submission to this *logos*, the 'god within', and consequent freedom from all disturbing πάθη. All other things, including power, even life and death themselves, were ἀδιάφορα. No view of life could be less 'tragic', if tragedy is taken to involve conflict springing from man's ignorance of the divine will, conflict not so much between good

7. Cic., *Ad Q. fr.* 3, 5, 7.

8. *I.O.* 10, 1, 98.

and bad, but between good and good, between lower and higher duties; and if it obtains its effect by arousing πάθη, not suppressing them.[9]

Our problem is this. Did Seneca manage to write Stoic tragedies in spite of this contradiction, and if so, how did he reconcile the conflicting demands of tragedy and philosophy? It is obvious even to the most casual reader that there are indeed Stoic elements – ideas and aphorisms – in the tragedies: the question is whether these elements are merely superficial adornment, or part of the dramatic structure itself. In attempting an answer we can avail ourselves of the work done by a number of scholars including F. Egermann, U. Knoche, and especially E. Lefèvre's study of the *Phaedra* as a Stoic drama.[10] In a sense, my remarks here constitute an indirect comment on Lefèvre's paper.

In the Aristotelian view of tragedy action is the principal element,[11] and character, however important, is ultimately subsidiary to action. The Roman view, as voiced in Horace's *Ars poetica*, is that character is more important than action.[12] Accordingly I shall consider Seneca's *Phaedra* as a character drama without, however, neglecting the element of action, or the overall structure of the play which I hope to show is controlled by certain themes and images.[13]

First we shall consider Hippolytus, whose chastity could not have a religious background in the Roman play. Lefèvre is quite right in making

9. The latter point is properly made by U. Knoche, *Senecas Atreus, Ein Beispiel*, Die Antike 17 (1941), 60 ff., also printed in *ST*.

10. F. Egermann, *Seneca als Dichterphilosoph*, Neue Jahrb. 3, 115 (1940), 18-36 = ST 33-57; U. Knoche, *op. cit.*; E. Lefèvre, *Quid ratio possit? Senecas Phaedra als Stoisches Drama*, W.St. N.F. 3 (1969), 131-160 = *ST* 342-375; less helpful are N.T. Pratt, *The Stoic Base of Senecan Drama*, T.A.P.A. (1948), 1-11; E.C. Evans, *A Stoic aspect of Senecan Drama: Portraiture*, T.A.P.A. (1950), 169 ff.

11. *Poet.*, ch. 6.

12. Hor., *A.p.* 153 ff. does not state this view, but implies it, which may be even more significant.

13. I shall not directly discuss the complex question of the relation between Seneca's *Phaedra* and Euripides' *Hippolytus* plays, particularly the lost *Hippolutos Kaluptomenos*. I accept much of C. Zintzen's position in his *Analytisches Hypomnema zu Senecas Phaedra* (Meisenheim/Glan 1960), though sometimes I prefer Grimal's more eclectic views in *L'originalité de Sénèque dans la tragédie de Phèdre*, R.E.L. 41 (1963), 297-304; but for my purpose it is not essential to know how far Seneca followed Euripides. I start from the 'maximalist' hypothesis that Seneca took from Euripides only what he could use for his own very different play; the striking differences between them do, however, give extra weight to my points.

his fierce words in 566 ff. the starting point for his interpretation: *detestor omnes (feminas), horreo, fugio, exsecror; sit ratio, sit natura, sit durus furor: odisse placuit*. It is *furor* indeed, but it is significant that Hippolytus presents (Stoic) *ratio* and *natura* as alternative explanations. He hopes it is the voice of *logos*, but is afraid it may be *pathos*. *Decipimur specie recti*, says Horace.[14]

Seneca agreed: *mala interdum speciem honesti obtulere ... sunt enim, ut scis, virtutibus vitia confinia.*[15] In Hippolytus the vice of misogyny assumes the appearance of chastity, and this causes his tragic ἄτη. He flees mankind and its vices, and leads the life of a hunter, a fierce hunter of wild animals, *ferae*, ἄλογα, – symbols, we suspect, of human *ferus furor*. Seneca begins his play with a hunting song which even Zintzen does not consider to be derived from the first Euripidean *Hippolytus*. This remarkable monody is by no means a mere rhetorical display, but elaborately presents the basic theme of the whole play. Hippolytus later describes his hunting life in positive terms as a life of purity, free from the πάθη of *avaritia* and *ambitio*, and all kinds of *furor*, and their principal source: *feminas, dirum genus* (564); *taceo novercas: mitius nil est feris* (557). But in his fanatical self-deception he develops into an ἄλογον himself, *inmitis, ferus*, and *intractabilis* (229, 231, 271-3).[16] And when in the end the hunter is himself hunted and killed by a monstrous animal, we feel that he falls victim to his own great and overpowering *furor*. But even then he attempts to adopt the Stoic attitude: he is not afraid of this *vanus terror* (1066).

The hunting-theme is by no means confined to Hippolytus. Phaedra, in her passionate dialogue with the *nutrix* declares *iuvat excitatas consequi cursu feras ... quo tendis anime, quid furens saltus amas?* (110, 112), and answers her *'inmitis, intractabilis'* as follows: *hunc in nivosi collis haerentem iugis / et aspera agili saxa calcantem pede / sequi per alta nemora, per montes placet: / resistet ille seque mulcendum (!) dabit ...* (233-236). She wants to become a huntress herself, to capture and tame the wild (*ferus* 240) Hippolytus, In 403 her words *talis in silvas ferar* echo his *vocor in silvas* (82). In her direct confrontation with her stepson

14. Hor., *A.p.* 25; compare Quint., *I.O.* 8, 3, 56.

15. Sen., *Ep. mor.* 120, 8.

16. For the connotations of these words compare *De ira*, 2, 15, 4 (about men who are like lions and wolves) *non enim humani vim ingenii, sed feri et intractabilis habent.*

the same theme appears in a modified form: *omne servitium feram: / non me per altas ire si iubeas nives, / pigeat gelatis ingredi Pindi iugis* ... (613-614). After his fierce rebuke, this version – the well-known *comes*-theme returns in a intensified form: *te vel per ignes, per mare insanum sequar / rupesque et amnes, unda quos torrens rapit; / quacumque gressus tuleris, hac amens agar* (700-702). Phaedra has herself become a victim of the man she hunts, of her own *furor*; and at the side of his dead, mutilated body she exclaims: *te per undas perque Tartareos lacus, / per Styga, per amnes igneos amens sequar* (1179-1180). Lefèvre mentions this striking echo of 700-702, but does not recognize the thematic and structural importance of the hunting-theme.

The fate of her *furor* parallels that of Hippolytus, and her desperate cry *me, me, profundi saeve dominator freti, / invade et in me monstra caerulei maris / emitte* ... (1159-1161) confirms this impression.

The obvious parallel for this stress on the hunting-theme is Euripides' *Bacchae*: "the *Bacchae* is dominated by a key metaphor – the image of the hunt which turns into dreadful reality" (R.P. Winnington-Ingram, *Euripides and Dionysus*, Cambridge 1948, 12). Just as in the *Phaedra*, there is an inversion whereby the hunter becomes the hunted: "Pentheus hatte selbst gejagt, bevor er gejagt wird" (C.J. Classen, *Untersuchungen zu Platons Jagdbildern*, Berlin 1960, 9, with special reference to *Bacch.* 228, 352, 434 ff., 451 f., 719-732, 985 ff.). In the extant *Hippolytus* of Euripides Phaedra also expresses her wish to go hunting with Hippolytus (208 ff., 215 ff., 228 ff., imitated by Ovid. *Her.* 4, 38 ff.), and indeed the theme of the common hunt was popular in erotic poetry (see G. Kölblinger, *Einige Topoi bei den lateinischen Liebesdichtern*, Wien 1971, 87 ff.). But this does not exhaust the significance of the theme – half metaphor, half reality – for Seneca, who turns it into a true 'Leitmotiv' in the sense of Ole Smith, *Some observations on the structure of imagery in Aeschylus* (Cl. and Med. 26, 1965, 10 ff.): "these recurrent patterns of imagery stretching throughout a whole play as we find it in the *Septem* are synchronic with the dramatic structure in such a way that they deepen our understanding of the play and emphasize particular points" (he alludes to the well-known maritime metaphors).[17] In the case

17. I refer my Dutch readers to the cautious remarks on the problems of 'dramatic' imagery in D. van Nes' *Imagery en de structuur van de Griekse tragedie*, Lampas 6, 2 (1973), 98 ff.

of Seneca's *Phaedra* the theme has a specifically Stoic function.[18]

Whereas the Stoic diagnosis of Hippolytus' state of mind was that, deceived by the *species recti*, he was in a state of πάθος, leading to ἄτη, and that he pursued a *vitium vicinum virtuti*, the case of Phaedra is very different. She is only too conscious of her πάθος: *fugienda petimus, sed mei non sum potens* (699); she tells Hippolytus, just as she had acknowledged to the *nutrix*: *furor cogit sequi / peiora. vadit animus in praeceps sciens* ... *quid ratio possit? vicit ac regnat furor* (178-179, 184). This reflects a state of mind which Seneca analysed in his 85th epistle, as Lefèvre has shown very convincingly. The essential texts are *ep.* 85, 8 *adfectus ... parere nescit, consilium non accipit* (compare *Ph.* 177-178) ... (9) *si ratio proficit, ne incipient quidem adfectus ... facilius est ... initia illorum prohibere quam impetum regere.*[19]

In Phaedra's case, her *ratio* is powerless against an *adfectus* which she should have suppressed from the very beginning. Her own consciousness of this state makes her a tragic heroine. When she fully realizes it, she exclaims *haec sola ratio est, unicum effugium mali: virum sequamur* – the 'dead' Theseus, not Hippolytus – *morte praevertam nefas* (253-254)! This is the Stoic solution in a situation where the practice of virtue has become impossible, – the so-called εὔλογος ἐξαγωγή. The ambiguity of *ratio* in this passage stresses the ambiguity of her situation: *etiam cum ratio suadet finire se, non temere nec cum procursu capiendus est impetus,*[20] and accordingly the *nutrix* warns her *moderare, alumna, mentis effrenae impetus* (255) ... *siste furibundum impetum* (263), to which Phaedra answers: *prohibere nulla ratio (!) periturum potest, / ubi qui mori constituit et debet mori* (265-266). The *nutrix* thinks this new *furor* (268) worse even than her love, and now promises to approach the *iuvenis ferus*. Here the scene – the last of act I – ends, without it being made

18. I find it strange that N.T. Pratt in his *Major systems of figurative language in Senecan Melodrama*, T.A.P.A. 94 (1963), 199 ff. has not noticed the importance of the hunting-theme in the *Phaedra*, though he does remark 'the dramatic scene is viewed generally as a battle-ground where non-reason prevails over reason, because for the Stoic Seneca perversion of reason is the only possible explanation of the kind of catastrophe found in the established dramatic legends. The imagery, in serving this design, is a constant feature highlighting the destructive forces at work' (218).

19. Compare *Ep.* 50, 4; 85, 9; 104, 1; 116, 3; 125, 11; *Ad Marc.* 1, 7; *De ira* 2, 4, 1; 3, 10, 1-3.

20. Sen., *Ep.* 24, 24.

immediately clear whether Phaedra agrees with the plan of the *nutrix*. This is in accordance with Seneca's device of ending his acts in an atmosphere of suspense and ambiguity.[21] We should not consider her attitude in 250 ff. as a trick to win the support of the *nutrix* for her plans,[22] nor as an indication that Seneca is here shifting from Euripides' *Hippolytus* I to II. Her sudden change of attitude has been prepared by the fierce debate in 240 ff.: as so often, the whole scene is a little drama itself. After the paroxysm of feeling she suddenly recognizes her true state of mind, and clings to the *sola ratio* paradoxically and tragically in a new *furor*.

At the beginning of act II we see her in a more advanced, more 'morbid' stage of πάθος for which we have been prepared by the chorus in 279-282. This has led some scholars to rash conclusions about a 'contamination' of Euripides' *Hippolytus* I and II.[23] In her fate, love and death are inseparable from the beginning, but they gradually fuse into a single passion. The great scene of her confession to Hippolytus (act II, scene 5) begins with the words of the *nutrix*: *quo vergit furor? terrae repente corpus exanimum accidit / et ora morti similis obducit color* (584-6). It ends with Hippolytus drawing his sword, and Phaedra pitifully answering: *sanas furentem. maius hoc voto meo est, / salvo ut pudore manibus immoriar tuis* (711-2). And her blind denunciation of Hippolytus to Theseus (act III) begins with a threat to kill herself: *labem hanc pudoris eluet noster cruor* (893).

Just as act II begins with the vivid scene of Phaedra's psychosomatic illness, act III, after her total humiliation before Hippolytus, is preceded by the vivid image of Phaedra 'raped'; *quaerit crine lacerato fidem, / decus omne turbat capitis, umectat genas* (826-7). Thus she is confronted by Theseus returning from the realm of death, *regium in vultu decus / gerens ... / ni languido pallore canderent genae / staretque recta squalor incultus coma* (829-33). Their striking similarity lends a symbolic meaning to her dishevelment, and marks the final, fatal stage of her πάθος: she now embodies a demon of death and destruction, as different from the Phaedra of the scene with Hippolytus as that Phaedra had differed from the con-

21. At the end of II we are not told that Phaedra gives her assent to the plan of the *nutrix* to accuse Hippolytus, and at the end of III Phaedra does not react to Theseus' curse.

22. Thus Zintzen, *op. cit.*, 34.

23. E.g. Grimal *ad loc.* and *ST* 329.

fused woman of the *nutrix* scene. After the disaster, she cries in her hour of death, foreshadowed right from the end of act I: *o mors amoris una sedamen mali* (1188). Now her suicide cannot even be hoped to be the Stoic *effugium mali*, but only a cruel palliative of her sin. Seneca stresses that her ἀναγνώρισις is not a return to reason, but only adds to her *furor*;[24] yet she has regained insight into the real situation and into the wrong she has done to Hippolytus, and she dies in the grand, tragic manner, an example of the demonic power of fully-developed πάθος, in the face of which λόγος, not only in blindness as in the case of Hippolytus, but even in lucid consciousness, is powerless.

The part of the nurse can be viewed as another Stoic case-history. In fact no person in the play more often expresses Stoic ideas. After Phaedra's confession of her forbidden love she warns her *quisquis in primo obstitit / pepulitque amorem, tutus ac victor fuit* (132-133). Then she launches into a full-blown rhetorical *dissuasio* according to the rules of the *genus deliberativum*, adopting an utilitarian rather than a moral point of view. In 195 ff. she presents the Stoic allegorical interpretation of the 'god Cupido': *deum esse amorem turpis et vitio furens finxit libido.* After a fruitless renewal of her endeavour to cure Phaedra, she announces that she will now try to win Hippolytus. In executing this project, she appeals to divine providence – *providit ille maximus mundi parens ... ut damna semper subole repararet nova* (466, 478), *proinde vitae sequere naturam ducem, / urbem frequenta, civium coetum cole* (481-482). Thus she advocates Stoic principles in the service of a wrong cause. The principles are moral, but their application merely utilitarian. She is, however, partly redeemed by her devotion to her mistress, and, with all her limited outlook, she means well. We all know persons like her – but now their stock-phrases are usually Christian.

In a 'Stoic' *Phaedra*, the role of Theseus, to a large extent determined by tradition, was difficult to handle satisfactorily. Dramatically, he is only an instrument of fate: his defects as a husband, his absence and return, and finally his wrath are all crucial to the shape and course of the drama. It is worth stressing that Seneca took the reason for Theseus' absence – his expedition to the Underworld with Perithous – from Sophocles' *Phaedra* and not from either of the two Euripidean *Hippolytus*-plays. Apparently he wanted to blacken him as much as possible by representing him as a sinner against god and man, a "cosmic" sinner

24. 1155 *vecors*, 1156 *furor*, 1180 *amens*.

(1211 *sidera et manes et undas scelere complevi meo*), as a man of Death, who leaves the realm of Death only to bring about death in the world of life.[25] He makes his appearance in 829 ff., accompanied, I believe, by Perithous, whose sinister presence as a κωφὸν πρόσωπον would be very effective as a dramatic symbol. This solves an odd difficulty in 829-834; the chorus remarks *sed iste quisnam est ... ut ora iuveni paria Perithoo gerit, ni languido pallore canderent genae / staretque recta squalor incultus coma. En ipse Theseus! redditus terris adest*! The usual interpretation is that the chorus first mistakes Theseus for Perithous, – but why? Grimal *ad loc.* remarks 'il est possible que la bizarrerie soit une négligence de Sénèque lui-meme, un simple lapsus', which I find impossible to believe. Gronovius restored logic by reading *comiti ... Perithoi* instead of *iuveni ... Perithoo*, Damsté, followed by Moricca, by reading *Pittheo*, – the *iuvenis Pittheus* being Theseus. In my opinion the transmitted text can be maintained: first Perithous makes his appearance, which had been prepared by repeated references to their expedition, and to Theseus' return in his company: 244 (Nutrix:) *Aderit maritus*! (Phaedra:) *Nempe Perithoi comes*! After its doubtful identification of Perithous, the chorus recognizes his *comes* Theseus: *en ipse Theseus redditus terris adest. En*, not *immo; adest*, not *est*! Perithous, whose presence also seems to be alluded to in 853, *hospitia digna prorsus inferno hospite* (Theseus can scarcely call himself a *hospes* in his own palace), remains strictly mute, just like Pylades in the *Electra* plays of Sophocles and Euripides. He is not mentioned in the sigla, but sigla are notoriously unreliable in the ms. tradition of ancient plays. Indeed there are a number of omissions and divergences in the sigla of the *Phaedra* itself. The grim silent presence of the *infernus hospes*, Theseus' evil genius would greatly enhance the symbolic significance of Theseus' reappearance from the Underworld.

Theseus' sin is, again, a sin of *furor* (96). He has been *immitis* and *saevus* as the murderer of his guiltless former wife Antiope. His *ira* has led him to rash conclusions and to the curse against Hippolytus (1207). From that point of view he is simply another instance of the tyrant unable to govern his passions, so frequent in Senecan drama.[26] His rôle in the episodes after the catastrophe has been criticised and Lefèvre goes so far as to excuse his rather abrupt disappearance by assuming that the *Phaedra*

25. See the beginning of his curse in 955 *nunc atra ventis nubila impellentibus / subtexe noctem* ..., and compare 835 ff.

26. Grimal comm. 2; comp. Lefèvre, *ST* 357.

was an early play. There were indeed only two possible ways of dealing convincingly with Theseus so as to satisfy both dramatic and Stoic demands. He could either succumb beneath the weight of his guilt, and commit suicide like Phaedra, which would surely have involved too radical a departure from the myth; or he could decide to live with his guilt, for the sake of his family and relatives, like Oedipus in the *Phoenissae* and Hercules in the *Hercules Furens*.[27] Yet this seems inconceivable in the case of the 'total sinner' Theseus. In my view, Seneca has found an excellent solution to the problem. After Phaedra's lament and suicide, Theseus declares himself prepared to follow her example: *quid facere rapto debeas gnato parens / disce a noverca: condere Acherontis plagis* (1199-1200). He too invokes the *ponti monstra*, as Phaedra had done earlier, and apparently we are to compare his behaviour with that of the dying heroine, an assumption confirmed by his *gnatum sequor* (1240). But nothing of the sort actually happens, and the words of the chorus *Theseu, querelis tempus aeternum (!) manet; / nunc iusta gnato solve* (1244-5) contain a bitter suggestion of his lack of sincerity,[28] stressed by his 'confession' *crimen agnosco meum* (1249), and especially by his last words, concerning Phaedra who in act V has morally far surpassed him: *istam terra defossam premat, gravisque tellus impio capiti incubet* (1279-80). The man of Death will go on living, unredeemed and utterly despicable – a figure to be compared only with Atreus in the *Thyestes*.

Thus the characters of the drama each embody a typical species of human evil. Seneca succeeds in conveying an account of their relationships which is satisfactory from both a dramatic and a Stoic point of view. Hippolytus, in his blind adherence to the *honestum*, is an implacable 'hunter' of πάθη, but his inhuman fierceness is itself a πάθος, and the hunter falls victim to a grotesque version of what he most seeks to destroy. He has some inkling of his wrong-doing, but suppresses it. Phaedra is the victim of her overpowering πάθος, which has grown beyond control, but she is fully conscious of her situation, and her *ratio*, if powerless, remains lucid. Her false accusation causes Hippolytus' destruction, but also her own, and no one can doubt the sincerity and magnificence of her repentance and suicide. Ultimately she too is a victim of the terrible power

27. Lefèvre quotes these two instances, and refers to Sen. *ep.* 78, 2: one should not commit suicide if this would harm one's dearest relatives.

28. Compare the sceptical attitude of the *nuntius* with regard to Theseus' tears after the story of Hippolytus' end.

of πάϑος, and she possesses the human qualities which Hippolytus in his self-righteousness lacks so completely. There is no πάϑος in the nurse – unless her blind devotion to Phaedra could be called a πάϑος – but her lack of insight, the primary Stoic virtue, leads her to apply Stoic principles in the wrong cause, and always *ad hoc*. But the *honestum* can never serve the *utile*, because it is *utile* itself. If the *nutrix* sins through ignorance, Theseus does so through wilful deceit. After violating the divine order by his expedition as *furoris socius* to the realm of Death, he invokes the help of the divine order in the hour of his wrath; and is punished for it. He is guilty of the worst crime of all, hypocrisy. He is, like Phaedra, conscious of the moral order he is violating, but to him that means nothing (Grimal's judgment 'une figure sans profondeur véritable'[29] is much too kind). I shall refrain here from dealing with the role of the chorus to which Lefèvre has devoted some interesting pages showing that its function is to comment 'from above' on what happens on stage, and to voice the principles of Stoic philosophy.[30]

The reader of Seneca's plays easily gets an impression of sameness, lack of subtle character-differentiation, uniformity of style. I hope to have shown that this impression is not in itself unfounded, but that it is to be viewed as the consequence of Seneca's endeavour not to present individual persons, but attitudes and mental states.[31] The drama develops as a result of interaction and conflict between these attitudes, and of self-consciousness or self-ignorance on the part of the characters. This procedure involves an enormous concentration on the drama as drama, in spite of an apparent verbal exuberance. The unity of the drama is further strengthened by the themes – themselves constantly interrelated – of the hunt and the beast, of love and death, of fanaticism and wrath, of utilitarianism and hypocrisy. In all this, *furor*, that is πάϑος in an advanced stage, is the central concept; the term occurs no less than 22 times in the *Phaedra* (if we include *furere*, and *furibundus*). The consequence of

29. [illegible]

30. Lefèvre, *ST* 370-5; see also W. Marx, *Funktion und Form der Chorlieder in den Seneca-Tragödien* (Köln 1932), 5-8.

31. Compare Egermann, *ST* 48 'Seneca interessieren Person und Geschehen nur als Träger des Problems!'

furor is *nefas*, violation of the divine order, *fas* being in the Stoic view identical with λόγος.[32]

I have kept until last another formidable problem of the Stoic interpretation of Senecan drama. Classical Greek tragedy aroused emotions in the spectators, and by moving them to ἔλεος καὶ φόβος brought about a κάϑαρσις. This formula will not do for a Stoic drama. By contrast, Zeno's teacher, the Academic philosopher Polemon, considered a visit to the theatre useful only as a test of his degree of ἀπάϑεια.[33] Knoche offers the following solution: 'Nur in diesem Sinne will Senecas Tragödie den Hörer 'erregen': sie wendet sich nicht an seinen Affekt oder an seine Leidenschaften, sondern sie spricht zu einem besseren emotionalen Teil,[34] der als heilsame Kraft den Geist auf ein gutes Ziel zu richten vermag'.[35] This does not convince me and the quotations do not support Knoche's thesis.[36] One might rather ask how 'moving' *are* Seneca's tragedies? The usual verdict is that their pathos is so artificial, their rhetoric so overloaded, that the reader is chilled rather than moved.[37] I wonder whether this is not in accordance with Seneca's own desire. In the 100th epistle he makes his young friend Lucilius say what he expects from a moralist: *sit aliquid oratorie acre, tragice grande, comice exile.*[38] Seneca does not agree, and he thinks that a philosopher should have only one goal, *mentem componere*, to put the mind in order. This provides perhaps a clue to a better understanding of Seneca's style, in both the prose works and the tragedies (and, in general, of the modern style of his age) which intentionally appeals to the intellect rather than to the emotions. I am sure nobody

32. Henry and Walker, *The futility of action*, C.Ph. 60 (1965), 11-32, and Opelt, *Senecas Konzeption des Tragischen*, *ST* 92-128 find *nefas* to be the central notion of Seneca's plays; but I believe the cause, which lies in the attitude, to be more fundamental than the effect, which appears in the action.

33. Diog. L., 4, 3, 17-18, quoted by K. von Fritz, *Tragische Schuld in Senecas Tragödien* (1955), *ST* 68.

34. [illegible]

35. [illegible]

36. [illegible]

37. E.g. L. Herrmann, *Le théâtre de Sénèque* (Paris 1924), 389: 'Tout ce que l'on peut déplorer, c'est que Sénèque dépasse parfois (?) la mesure et arrive à la froideur à force d'horreur'.

38. *Ep.* 100, 10.

ever shed a tear on the pages of Seneca, Lucan or Persius, as he might very well on those of Vergil. The modernism of that age was not emotional; it is related to artistic movements like late Renaissance, Mannerism and early Baroque in the 15th and 16th centuries, – the period in which Seneca's tragedies were valued as never before or afterwards. The spirit of Mannerism could be defined as an intellectual transposition of pathos, the paradoxical effect being that of a cool, emotionless hypertrophy of pathos. This may easily lead a non-contemporary reader to a totally wrong notion of its intention, and to a misconception of 'bombast' – that it is a paroxysm of emotion gone astray. The study of the rôle of mannerism in Latin literature of the 1st century A.D. has only just begun.[39] It may provide a key to our problem, and enable us to reach an adequate conception of the style of Seneca's tragedies and their intended effect on the reader or spectator: an attitude of intense but cool perception of the *exempla* of pathos represented on stage.[40]

Looking back upon the course of my argument, I feel encouraged to conclude that my 'maximalist' hypothesis has served its purpose well. Seneca is no mean author of tragedies; and he deserves his place in this collection of papers dedicated to a man who is himself *tragoediarum candidissimus iudex*.

39. See E. Burck, *Vom römischen Manierismus; von der Dichtung der frühen römischen Kaiserzeit* (Darmstadt 1971).

40. Burck *o.c.*, 80 e.g. discusses the 'Intellektualisierung der Affekte' in characters like Clytaemnestra, Phaedra and Medea. He notes the modernist rhetoric in the service of mannerism, but without elaboration, 93.

ALKESTIS UND DEIANEIRA

A. Lesky

Die folgenden Überlegungen bedürfen eines Wortes der Rechtfertigung. Sie sind einem Manne – er erlaube mir zu sagen: einem Freunde – gewidmet, dem wir für das Verständnis der griechischen Tragödie Außerordentliches verdanken. Damit sind ebenso zahlreiche Einzeluntersuchungen wie seine Sophokleskommentare gemeint. Kaum in einem anderen Lande wurden soviel Dramenkommentare von bleibendem Wert geschrieben wie in Holland. Sind für Aischylos Groeneboonis erklärende Ausgaben eine virtus Batava, so bleibt die Sophoklesdeutung mit Kamerbeeks Namen verbunden, solange das Erbe der Antike lebt. Zum Lobe seiner Kommentare läßt sich sehr viel sagen, mir erscheint es als besonders wesentlich, daß in ihnen die Probleme stets in voller Klarheit dargestellt und, wo dies nötig ist, auch offen gehalten werden. Gerade darin liegt aber die wissenschaftliche Fruchtbarkeit dieser Werke, und so möge es unser Jubilar auch verstehen, wenn im folgenden eine Frage aufgenommen und Lösungsversuchen zugeführt wird, die von seiner einst geäußerten Auffassung teilweise abweichen.

In den *Trachinierinnen* (899 ff.) berichtet die Amme über Deianeiras Verhalten vor dem Selbstmord im *θάλαμος* des Herakles; in der *Alkestis* (152 ff.) erzählt die Dienerin, wie die dem Tod Geweihte Abschied von ihrem Hause und dem ehelichen Schlafgemache nahm. Die erste Frage ist die, ob zwischen den beiden Berichten überhaupt Beziehungen bestehen, erst in dem Falle ihrer bejahenden Beantwortung stellt sich die weitere, welcher Art diese Beziehungen sind, und ob sich aus ihnen chronologische Schlüsse ergeben.

Kamerbeek hat in seinem Kommentar einer breiten Front von Interpreten gegenüber, die uns bei der Frage der relativen Chronologie beschäftigen werden, einen Zusammenhang zwischen den beiden Szenen geleugnet: "it cannot be proved and is in fact improbable that Deianeira's leavetaking scene owes anything to that of Alcestis'." Aus seinen Erläuterungen zu vv. 896-946 geht hervor, daß er auch ein umgekehrtes Abhängigkeitsverhältnis nicht in Rechnung zieht. Unbestreitbar hat Kamerbeek das Verdienst, die Eigenständigkeit des Berichtes in den