

(Wiedergabe der „zwitschernden“ Kinderstimme) deutet darauf, daß der Knabe im Stadium des Spracherwerbs steht, wahrscheinlicher unter als über sieben Jahre ist. Damit ist – immer unter der Voraussetzung von Senecas Verfasserschaft – ein Anhaltspunkt für die Datierung gewonnen. Das Epigramm ist kaum in die Zeit nach dem Exil zu setzen. Die Überschrift freilich *De fratris filio parvulo* scheint eine Beziehung auf Senecas Sohn auszuschließen. Doch mag sie das Erzeugnis unzulänglicher Deutung sein. Sie erweist sich ja auch in anderer Beziehung als eine sehr unzureichende Kennzeichnung des Gedichts, in dem es nicht primär um den kleinen Marcus geht. Angesichts der Unsicherheit des Ausgangspunkts ist es das beste, darauf zu verzichten, das Epigramm als Bestätigung für die Deutung des Marcus in der Trostschrift an Helvia zu benutzen.

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### SENECA'S *TROADES*: DISSOLUTION OF A WAY OF LIFE

The enormous brutality of Seneca's *Troades* features the bruising encounter of two wills when in Act 3 Ulysses batters down Andromache's will to preserve Astyanax and her dream of a continuing Troy<sup>1</sup>). He forces her to recall her son from the protection of the Other World; he forces her to surrender him voluntarily and thus voluntarily to give up her idea of a renewed Troy. He returns the boy to her so that she may plead for his life and Troy's return. When he refuses her request, she mourns for the boy's coming death; but Ulysses cuts that short and takes the boy away: there is to be no phoenix-like resurrection for Troy. Thus the backbone of the play is the attempt to keep alive the concept of a still-living Troy, the concept of Trojanism, a concept which was canonical at least from the time of Vergil's *Aeneid* (cf. 2.703, 3.85 ff., 3.132 ff., 3.349 ff., and elsewhere, but especially 3.482–505). The tragedy, as tragedy, then examines the possibility of transfer from one manner of existence to another,

1) This discussion presents some preliminary results for a larger study of Senecan tragedy. Other studies in this series include *CJ* 60. 1964–65. 313–316, *RbM* 111. 1968. 197–219, *C & M* 27. 1966 (1968). 216–224.

one organization of life to another. The examination is carried on at the theoretical level by the choral odes; the theory is then followed by the practical illustration acted out from the story of Troy: Andromache's attempt to preserve the key person Astyanax. Thus, Ode II proclaims death as dissolution, not as transferral, just before Act 3 shows Ulysses as the corroder, the dissolver of the idea that Troy can be transferred to a new cycle of existence, a new round of temporal life for the *res publica Troiana*.

In Act 1 Hecuba declaims her version of an expository prologue. In the *Hercules Furens* Juno can tell us exactly what will happen, for as the agent deity who will punish Hercules she states what she is going to do. But Hecuba is no agent deity; she is the sufferer, just like Oedipus in his play. Hence her expository prologue reports the present state of affairs, immediate past history, and the known plans of the Greeks for the remnant; nor does the play go farther into the future. She need not indulge in any foreboding feelings, as Oedipus must do, for she knows what happens to captives. The burden of her speech is that Troy has fallen and is collapsed; she concentrates on its destruction; not a word about its being merely a sack from which the city will recover; all is death, destruction, a rending apart; and the play barely goes beyond that. The living remnants of Troy are referred to by their former function: wife of Hector, of Helenus, of Antenor, and Cassandra. When she addresses them to begin Ode I, she calls them *captivae*, not the metrically admissible *Troianae*. Thus even their queen acknowledges that Troy is dead. Ode I then constitutes the funeral wailing for Troy, that wailing which sends the spirit of the dead on its way to the Underworld. Hence Hecuba bids her group: *iusta Troiae facite* 65; and the chorus responds with Ode I.

Under Hecuba's directions they array themselves properly, dishevelled, covered with Troy's hot dust, bared to the waist, modesty laid aside – for modesty presupposes a stabilized society in which modesty has value. They are to weep for Hector. The chorus liberally besprinkles itself with the ashes of Troy. Dust – *pulvis* – for Hecuba, because she is queen over nothing; ashes – *cinis* – for the chorus, because they are the sad, shattered leavings of the destruction: thus they literally take on themselves the symbolic role of being the dust and ashes of destroyed Troy. Over their moans for Hector rise Hecuba's strident screams of grief as she recalls how she had grieved at Hector's funeral. She calls Hector *columen patriae* (prop of the nation), *mora fatorum*

(delayer of the fates), *praesidium Phrygibus* (bulwark for the Trojans), *murus* (defensive wall of the city). Propped on his shoulders the city stood for ten years, but ... *tecum cecidit summusque dies Hectoris idem patriaeque fuit* 128f.: Hector and his country fell together. Then Hecuba bids them mourn for Priam, for Hector has his due. The chorus does so. They – chorus and Hecuba – have mourned the lost strength of the city, for Hector was its men and power. They turn therefore beyond Hector to Priam, beyond the power of the *polis* to its governance, its laws and justice, to the fly-wheel, so to speak, of the engine of state. They recount his sorrows, cycling from sack to sack; if Troy fell with Hector, it died with Priam. His final resting-place is the Sigean Strand where he lies the headless head of a headless state, his headless body disintegrating just as truncated Troy disintegrates.

But Hecuba intervenes: “Turn your tears elsewhere!” she cries; *non est Priami miseranda mors* 143 f. He is not to be pitied; he is happy, fortunate: *felix Priamus!* 145 she intones. Happy because he has escaped the power of the Greeks. The chorus rings it forth: *felix Priamus dicimus omnes* 157. But their reasons are different: not just escape from the present hard lot, but a total transference of the kingdom of Troy, for in dying he took his kingdom with him: *secum excedens sua regna tulit* 158. In the Elysian Fields he, the governor and axis of the social structure of Troy, searches for Hector, the energetic doer and defender. They end the ode proclaiming this total felicity not just for Priam alone but for every dead Trojan:

Felix Priamus! felix quisquis      161 bis  
bello moriens omnia secum  
consumpta tulit.

“Happy Priam”, they cry; “happy whatever man, dying in the war, who thus has taken with him all things destroyed.” *Consumpta*, used by Lucretius for the disintegration from natural processes or as a result of disasters such as earthquakes or volcanic eruptions. Thus Troy is gone; it is no longer here but is in the Elysian Fields; and the remnant are truly not *Troianae* but *captivae*. But what of them? What does become of the survivors? What happens to those who live through the end of one cycle and into the beginning of the next?

Now it is characteristic of Senecan tragedy that the philosophy of the tragedy is presented by the choral odes, whereas the acts merely act out the principles laid down by the preceding odes.

I call the one feature the odic line, the other the dramatic line. Thus it is that Ode I can tell us that Troy cannot be revived, for it lives now beyond the Styx. But in Act 2 Agamemnon is ready to let what can of Troy survive: *quidquid eversae potest superesse Troiae, maneat* 285 f. Calchas settles the debate between Pyrrhus and Agamemnon over the bridal sacrifice of Polyxena: Polyxena must be given to Achilles; but also Astyanax must be killed, *Astyanax quem fata quaerunt* 368. These two deaths are to be symbolic of the change which the captives are undergoing. But it is also characteristic of Senecan tragedy that the main events in the action have a precedent. In the *Medea* the precedents for the sequence of disasters about to strike Jason are the deaths of selected Argonauts as quoted in Ode III. In the *Hercules Furens* the precedent for Juno's violent punishment of Hercules is his punishment of Lycus, violent because he misuses Cerberus who is after all Hades's cult animal. The precedent in the *Troades* is the deaths of Hector and Priam, though the parallel functions a bit differently from in the *Medea* and the *Furens*.

Astyanax is described by Calchas as *Priamo nepos Hectoreus* 369. As grandson he is properly named Citylord, for he is the new, young Priam who in turn will become a shapeless mass, as Nuntius reports to us in Act 5: *deforme corpus* 1117. In Act 3 Andromache pleads with Ulysses, thinking that the boy Priam in Laomedon's time might be a precedent; but he forces her to think of him as dead and Troy then as disintegrated. The son of Hector is sought by Ulysses just because he is a potential vindicator; Ulysses's words are *sollicita fides pacis incertae* 529; *futurus Hector* 551; he tells her *bella Telemacho paras* 593 – "you are preparing war against Telemachus!" Thus Astyanax must die in the dramatic line in order to fulfill in the action the statement from the odic line in Ode I.

Polyxena's death carries a symbolism which goes beyond the precedent. As a young woman, she is capable of bearing the new generation of Trojans; thus one can see her as the regenerative power of Troy. But she is to be sacrificed to Achilles as *his* bride – *coniugem* 364. That is, her power to create a new generation of Trojans will be taken from her; she will be joined to a dead Greek as his; and thus she becomes the precedent for all the other Trojan women: they too will no longer be able to raise another generation of Trojans, but instead will be given to Greek masters; they will no longer continue the life cycle of Troy. Thus the two deaths act out the principles from the odic

line; thus the remnant live through the sequence which proves to them finally and utterly that the very concept of Troy and Trojanism has disintegrated.

Ode II raises the question whether there is a life after death or not. The ode presents the idea of cycle – the daily sun, diurnal tides, the annual zodiac, the lunar month; all things begin a cycle only to progress relentlessly toward ending it. The ended cycle never hangs on; it is replaced by another cycle; yesterday's sun, yesterday's tides are completely gone. Just so the dead; just so Troy. What happens to the *spiritus* 395? This Epicurean ode produces two figures: smoke and clouds, *fumus* and *nubes* 392 ff., those magnificent Lucretian means for explaining his atomic theory (3.434 ff., 455 f., 582; 5.253 f.; 6.513 f.), dissipated of course by normal convection currents and the blasts of the cold wind; so it is with the spirit which rules us: *sic hic, quo regimur, spiritus effluat* 396. The *corpus* of Troy is the city which is now burning; the *umbrae*, the *spiritus*, the *anima* are the remnant. But the cold blasts of adversity – their slavery and the allotment – will scatter them.

The smoke and cloud metaphors are summarized in a simple declaration: *post mortem nihil est ipsaque Mors nihil* 397. But if there is no Grim Reaper, what then is death? *Velocis spatii meta novissima* 398; the last, the most radical turning point in one's swift inch of time. The life cycle begins from nothing; it proceeds along its proper path; it arrives at the end; it is gone. Life then is just part of the flux of nature. The doctrinal portion of the ode ends here; but the ode applies the doctrine to the case at hand. One should be quietist. The eager – *avidi* 399 – should put aside their hopes, the anxious – *solliciti* – their fears. The *avidi* are Andromache, hopeful of saving her son, and the Greeks who hope to forestall future disaster by the death of Astyanax; but they should have put aside their *spem*, for neither saw success; the *solliciti* are again Andromache and the Greeks: *aviditas* and *sollicitudo* are often obverse and reverse of the same frame of mind. What is the reason for quietism as a life-pattern? The end; for *tempus* and *chaos* gobble us down 400. *Tempus* is the *aetas* of 385; term, end-of-cycle, the *velocis spatii* of 398; *chaos* is the random dissipation into unorganized nothingness, shown by evanescent smoke 392 f. and wind-disintegrated clouds 394 f. Death then is *individua*, a single process, embracing *corpus* 401 and *anima* 402. What existence is there after death – *post obitum* 407? The same as before the cycle started. Seneca avoids saying that as Troy dies

the material remains break up into their constituent atoms which then, in Lucretian terms, resume their downward progress in order to swerve at some unstated and random time and thus recombine into other material organizations which will in turn have their cycles and their dissolution. But if Troy is not only the material city, pried apart and set afire by the Greeks, but also the *polis* of men, the *civitas* of citizens, then the constituent atoms of the *civitas* are the captive remnant whose belief that there still is a *civitas Troiana*, even if *sine suffragio* – if one may pun –, must be destroyed. This is done in Act 3 by Ulysses when he compels Andromache voluntarily to surrender the figurehead of state Astyanax, the embodiment of Priam and Hector and the future rallying-point of Troy.

Ode III continues the Epicurean indoctrination. Here the captives ask about their new abodes. Since they are slaves and will be allotted to masters, the question whether their atomic downrush will have its swerve has already been answered: at the time of the allotment. Hence the question: which new material organization: *quae sedes habitanda* 814? There follows a long list of places to which they might be assigned.

The catalogue of potential homes reaches its climax with a disclaimer of interest coupled with a negative proviso which eliminates Sparta, Argos, Mycenae, and the Ithaca triad. These places gloss masters: Helen, Menelaus, Agamemnon, Ulysses. This priamel of rejected masters rises from the original cause (Helen) to the avenger (Menelaus) to the enemy leader (Agamemnon) to the greatest danger; for Ulysses contrived the betrayal of Iphigenia, the enlistment of Achilles, the importation of Philoctetes and his arrows, the death of Rhesus, the construction of the Wooden Horse, and has just contrived the capture of Astyanax; this typing of Ulysses is well known in rhetorical poetry (e.g. Verg. *Aen.* 2.44, 90, 97ff., 128f.). He is indeed the least desirable, the most dangerous. Helen, once guest and equal, would hardly be a welcome mistress; but she and Menelaus and Agamemnon would hardly let them forget that they were Trojans. It was Ulysses who broke down all of Andromache's resistance, nullified her Trojan-ness, so that she compliantly did his Greek will. This climactic allotment to Ulysses which no one wants is foil for the final barrage of questions shot at Hecuba, that aged queen, the one leader surviving from dead Troy. The series rises from *quod fatum* 858 to *in cuius regno moriere* 860: *fatum*, of course, for the end of term has arrived; *moriere*,

certainly, for Hecuba alive is the nucleus holding together the soul of Troy, the idea that there is a Troy. The questions are vague, for no one will have the answer until the allotment is announced in Act 4; but this is tragedy; therefore not the best but the worst will happen; and therefore Hecuba will be assigned to the worst of the rejected masters; her death does not occur in this play, but otherwise is well known.

Thus we can see that Ode III focusses the odic line, developed by Odes I and II, on the dramatic line and carries its own theme through to the end of Act 5, thus completing the play. Ode I declared that Troy was dead and buried it; Ode II said that the demise was final and that the survivors like Epicurean atoms would dissociate and recombine with new groups; Ode III sets the time of this dissipation and recombination as the dispersion of the captives.

In Act 4 Helen comes to prepare Polyxena for the false wedding, is exposed by Andromache, and reports the assignments of the principal captives. As Hecuba fulminates, Pyrrhus arrives and wordlessly drags Polyxena off to sacrifice.

In Ode IV we hear that misery loves company 1009; grief grows lighter through sharing 1011 f.; yet no one really believes he is *miser* 1018 b: take away the basis for comparison, and a man's spirits soon rise 1019a-1023. If a man is shipwrecked by himself, loses all, but is cast ashore; even if it is in the harbor he sought, still the uniqueness of his experience hurts 1025 ff. On the other hand, to one who is in the midst of a thousand shipwrecks, his own is just another shipwreck 1029-1033. Two parallel myths are adduced. Phrixus is the example of the single disaster, for he saw only Helle perish 1034 ff.; and he is foil for Pyrrha and her unnamed husband, who check their complaints when they see in the midst of the sea that only they are left 1038 ff. Thus the captives. For at the moment of separation, as their Trojan unity is shipwrecked, they will experience the Phrixus-type bereavement even though they are individually the prized possessions of the great Greek houses. But in the midst of the general disaster each will see that she really is surviving and like Pyrrha will take up the business of living again in a different world.

The ode closes with a question-answer sequence: what will be their thoughts as they sail away? They will point out the smoky pall and say: *Ilium est illic ubi fumus* 1053. Troy is not with them; Troy is where the symbolic column of smoke climbs to

the sky and dissipates, just as they are ascending the sea and scattering abroad.

Act 5 brings us the horror of the destruction of Astyanax and of Polyxena; that and nothing more. The closing lines of the play send the captives down to the boats for transshipment to their new abodes. Most of the teaching therefore in Ode IV finds no expression in the dramatic line. At present it seems best to think of this as special preaching.

The preaching of the odes is that socio-political organizations do come to an end (Ode I), that this end is recognizable as a *terminus non post quem* (II), that the survivors do drift apart and join other organizations (III), that the parting is painful but man's natural optimism and will to live find for him a new *ratio vivendi*, and that therefore the normal survivor can acknowledge that what is past and gone is indeed past and gone (IV). The dramatic line begins in the midst of the dissolution, concentrates on the inevitability of its violence and the high degree of its pain by emphasizing the pursuit of Astyanax and Polyxena and their destruction; it states openly the necessity of joining the next socio-political organization – the allotment imposes the necessity; and it produces the moment of dissolution as the captives file to the ships of their respective masters. The past thus cannot be saved or recovered; the transition is accomplished with much destruction, disorder, pain, grief; and the survivors of the wreck no longer have their desirable position.

What does all this mean? It is customary to think that the highly political Greeks aimed their tragedies at something in their state; and there are at times reasonable grounds for this view. But for the Roman the range of tragedy was immensely wider, just as also in Stoicism the range had broadened to deal with the day-to-day problems of living the wise man's life. Hence the *Troades* applies to both micro-social and macro-social problems. At the micro-social level it speaks to one who, for example, has seen his family break up through divorce or through the irrational evil of cancer or through the death of his son on a battlefield; to him it says that the grief of the breakup is bitter, deep, pervasive, percussive of the whole being; but yet there can be no clinging to the past, for it is gone: one must pass from that social organization to another – either a new circle or a new marriage or some other group. At the macro-social level it speaks to those who lost a leader through assassination or exile or some other means; for them, whether in Memphis or Los



Angeles or Czechoslovakia, the past cannot return; and they are forced to join other groups and accept other leaders. Change and re-orientation of course are always taking place, most of it peaceably and evenly; but that is not tragedy. The tragedy comes in the total evil of the breakup and in the compelled joining to a new group which grants only a lessened role. In Seneca's day he spoke to the die-hard Republicans, perhaps even to those who later were to concoct the conspiracy against Nero; and he advocated submitting to the new masters – as he had – and finding ones own niche in the new order – as he had, and as Agricola was beginning to do.

The *Troades* then, a genuine tragedy, for all walks of life, for all seasons in life, at a personal level rarely attained by Greek tragedy.

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## THELYPHRON.

### ZU APULEIUS, METAMORPHOSEN II 20ff.

Im zweiten Buch der Metamorphosen soll ein gewisser Thelyphron erzählen, welche Ereignisse zum Verlust seiner Nase und seiner Ohren geführt haben. Er berichtet, daß Hexen ihn verstümmelt hätten, als er Totenwache gehalten habe.

Den Namen „Thelyphron“ dürfte kein antiker Mann getragen haben<sup>1)</sup>. Hier muß man also besonders fragen, warum Apuleius, dessen Neigung zu charakterisierender Namengebung bekannt ist<sup>2)</sup>, seiner Person gerade diesen Namen gegeben hat<sup>3)</sup>. Man hat bisher den Grund dafür in dem Bericht Thelyphrons selbst gesehen. Helm gibt der Auffassung Ausdruck, Thelyphrons

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1) Vgl. Blanche Brotherton, *The Introduction of Characters by Name in the Metamorphoses of Apuleius*, *Class. Philol.* XXIX 1934, 36ff. (p. 49) und die Namenslexika.

2) Rudolf Helm, *Apulei Platonici Madaurensis opera quae supersunt*, vol. 2 fasc. 2, Florida, Leipzig 1959, XXXII sq. und B. Brotherton, a. a. O.

3) Die Frage nach der Originalität des Apuleius sei hier ausgeschlossen. Für uns ist ausreichend, daß er die Geschichte für seine Metamorphosen passend fand.