

A CRITICAL NOTE ON SEN. AD MARC. 3,4¹)

Si ad hoc maximae feminae te exemplum adplicueris moderatius, mitius, non eris in aerumnis nec te tormentis macerabis: quae enim, malum, amentia est poenas a se infelicitatis exigere et mala sua † non † augere!

malum A : maior γ non A : om. γ : uno Gertz : nouo (nouis *Hauler*) *Madvig* : ultro *P. Thomas* : non (minuere sed) *Koch*

In his commentary Manning²) reads *mala sua augere* and states: "The reading of the γ tradition makes perfect sense, and though it is difficult to explain the introduction of *non* into A and those manuscripts dependent upon it, it seems needless to make further conjectures."

Nevertheless I venture upon another conjecture and will try to explain the corrupt reading *non* in (the tradition down to) A, that codex which "longe optimum esse inter omnes constat"³).

In holding before Marcia the examples of Octavia and Livia as mothers afflicted by the death of a beloved son Seneca heavily castigates Octavia's self-torment (2,4-5; 3,3) as being an inclination testifying to δυσπάθεια which results largely from the *opinio officiosi doloris*⁴). Self-torment (being an instance of a voluntarily chosen evil)⁵) is a part of such attitudes as are described by e.g. *adesse dolori* (ad Polyb. 18,4; ad Marc. 7,2), *libido dolendi* (ad Polyb. 4,1); cf. also Sen. Ep. 99,2 *hi qui sibi lugere sumpserunt*; ibid. 16 *nihil vero maerori adiciamus nec illum ... augeamus*; Ps. Plut. Cons. ad Apoll. 3,102C τὸ δὲ πέρα τοῦ μέτρου παρεκφέρεσθαι καὶ συναύξειν τὰ πένθη παρὰ φύσιν εἶναι φημι καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν φαύλης γίγνεσθαι δόξης. Quint. Inst. 6 prooem. 7 *non sum ambitiosus in malis nec augere lacrimarum causas volo* (cf. Sen. Ep. 63,2 *est aliqua et doloris ambitio*).

Against the background of these ideas, the denunciation of αὐθαίρετα πῆματα and the consolatory admonition τὸ ... μὴ δι' αὐτὸν κακῶς πράττειν ... οὐ μικρὸν ... κούφισμα πρὸς τὰς τύχας⁶) the passage of ad Marc. in question might be read as follows: *quae enim, malum, amentia est poenas a se infelicitatis exigere et mala suo nomine augere!* 'To aggravate sorrow on one's own account': for this we find a parallel in e.g. Cic. Tusc. 3,71 *quis tam demens, ut sua voluntate*

1) I give the text and app. crit. of L. D. Reynolds' edition (L. Annaei Senecae Dialogorum Libri Duodecim, Oxford 1977, 133.27-134.3).

2) C. E. Manning, On Seneca's "Ad Marciam", Leiden 1981, p. 43.

3) Vid. Reynolds, op. cit., praef. p. VIII. For *malum* (an impressive testimony to A's fidelity) cf. Manning, op. cit. ad loc. and e.g. H. A. Holden ad Cic. Off. 2,53.

4) Cf. Horst-Theodor Johann, Trauer und Trost. Eine quellen- und strukturanalytische Untersuchung der philosophischen Trostschriften über den Tod, München 1968 (= Studia et Testimonia Antiqua 5), indices s.v. Schuldgefühl; *culpa*; *Meinung* (falsche) bezüglich ... der Pflicht zu trauern.

5) Cf. Johann, op. cit., index s.v. Übel (selbstverschuldete) and s.v. *voluntas*.

6) Cf. Johann, op. cit., pp. 32-35.

maereat? ... et tamen fatentur graviores aegritudines suscipi quam natura cogat. Quae est igitur amentia?

For *suo nomine* cf. e.g. Cic. Verr. 1,80 *suo nomine ac non impulsu tuo*; 4,72 *suo nomine ac sua sponte* (Scaur. 41 *si sua sponte, si non alicuius impulsu*); for the thought cf. also Quint. Inst. 1 prooem. 3 *plus quam imponebatur oneris sponte suscepti*.

The corruption could have arisen from a misinterpreted (or rather, perhaps, a corrupted) abbreviation⁷), cf. e.g. Cappelli, Lex. Abbrev. (1961) p.229: *N* = *nomine* (saec. IX f.), and Lindsay, Notae Lat. p.142: 181 (7) *n̄* = *nomine*. Once *non* had been written the 'correction' *sua* for *suo* was ready at hand.

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7) Abbreviation might also account for the omission of *nomen ad Marc.* 10,1: *clarum* (<*nomen* Madvig), *nobilis aut formosa coniux ...* (*clarum* A¹: *clara* A² γ).