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SENECA'S *MEDEA* IN EGYPT (663–704)

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SENECA'S *MEDEA* IN EGYPT (663-704)*

P.Mich. inv. no 4969. fr 36

12x18 cm.

Egypt

This is a page from a vellum codex of Seneca, *Medea*. It contains continuous 41 verses (21 on the front and 20 on the back), according to the modern arrangement of the lines. The front has 23 and the back 22 lines. This page has been assembled from three fragments (3.9 x 7.4 cm, 7.5 x 3.7 cm., 7.5 x 4.2 cm); one fragment (about 4 x 7.5 cm.) is missing from the page. Together with other fragments, the pieces from the *Medea* were recycled in the binding of a Coptic vellum ms. (inv. 4972), purchased in 1928. The other texts are: inv. 4969 (Coptic), 4969 (Latin), 4970-71, two Coptic magic charms of the right size to have been used as end papers of the binding, and the remains of the leather binding itself, inv. 4972. The dimensions of the binding are 12 x 18.5. Two sets of holes for binding cords are visible on the fragment, 1.5 cm from the top, and another 9.6 cm from the top. The Seneca folio was cut into four oblong pieces roughly of equal size (three extant, as said) and was then folded. There are two sets of holes on either side of the fold, giving the impression that the folio was reused as a stay, protecting the leaves of the new codex from being damaged by the binding cord. Such stays were commonly used in papyri, for example, in the binding of the codices of Didymos the Blind (e.g. Didyme l'Aveugle, *Sur la Genèse*, ed. P. Nautin [Paris 1976], 12) and Nag Hammadi (J. Robinson et al. *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices, Introduction* [Leiden 1984], 79 and plate 2). In the binding of the vellum Coptic codex, the cords that connected the quires to the spine are still visible in two places. At the top, the cord (still attached) was stitched through the spine in two places, 2.8 cm. apart. Lower down, the cord was also stitched through the spine twice, leaving holes of 3 cm. apart. This distance corresponds exactly to the interval separating the two sets of binding holes that are visible on all three pieces of our Seneca fragment.

The size of a full page of the Michigan Seneca was c. 12 x 18 cm with 22-24 lines. This size fits exactly the dimensions of the leather binding, 12 x 18.5 cm, whereas most of the other 35 fr. from the same inv. are too large. A codex of Seneca's dramas in this format would have occupied about 214 ff. (428 pp.). E.G. Turner (*The Typology of the Early Codex*, [Univ. of Pennsylvania 1977] 29) lists 10 examples of parchment pages of this size, most of the IV-V AD, among them an Isocrates, *P. Ant.* II, 83 of the the IVth century. The typological date for the codex format is consistent with the paleographical date of IV AD that we propose (see "Date and Paleography", below). The Coptic codex in the binding of which the Seneca fragment was used must have contained more than 135 pp., since inv. 4969 fr. 21.3 has the pagination 134-135. All fr. that obviously match the dimensions of the binding (4969 fr. 20-22) are from the New Testament (fr. 20 Luke 21.36 - 22.10, fr. 21.1: 2 Cor. 1.9-19; fr. 21.2; 2 Cor. 1.19-2.8; fr.21.3: 2 Cor. 3.5-17, and fr. 25: 2 Tim. 1.11-2.2).

Of the fragments from the same binding that have already been published, one is significant: inv. 4969.25 (Coptic), 2 Timothy 1.11-15, and 1.16 - 2.2 (R. Stewart, *Studia Papyrologica* 21 [1982] 7-10). It is dated by its editor to the 10th cent. AD. The re-use of mss. after a considerable life-span has parallels: cf. E.A. Lowe, *Codices Antiquiores* III n. 306, a V-VI AD *Aeneid* with a Greek translation that was re-used in the early 12. cent. AD for a Christian work in Arabic.

The color of the vellum is light yellow on the hair side and darker on the flesh side. The writing is in black ink (m₁), there is a rubric in bright red, and the corrections are entered in a darker brown-red ink (m₂). The continuity from one side to the other establishes the hair side as recto, and the flesh side as verso.

This new text fragment of Seneca's *Medea* (663-704)¹ deserves close scrutiny. It is the first fragment of Seneca found in Egypt. It has at least one archetypal error (666), but also confirms an emendation of an archetypal mistake (N. Heinsius' *effudit* for *effudit* in line 677). The main corrector adopted this same archetypal error (*effudit*). There is also another passage that most editors regard as corrupt in the archetype (680). Here, the new text sides with the manuscript branch E (*conprecons*, 680),² and this reading now needs reconsideration. In general, the new text is related to the archetype, but has preserved one or possibly two correct readings that are corrupt in the archetype.³ In addition, the Michigan fragment provides new evidence that Seneca's tragedies were read in the East in the fourth century.

* Found and identified by G. Schwendner.

¹ We use mainly O. Zwierlein's edition of the text, L. Annaei Seneca, *Tragoediae* (Oxford 1986), referring to it as Zwierlein, OCT; similarly, we refer to the same author's *Prolegomena zu einer kritischen Ausgabe der Tragödien Senecas* (Abh. Akad. Mainz, Geistes- und Sozialwiss. Klasse, Jg. 1983, Nr.3, 1984) as Zwierlein, *Prolegomena*.

² For another significant connection with the E branch see below, "Rubrics". For an early date of the split of the manuscript tradition (before the date of the new parchment) see n. 11. The extant text section of the new fragment is too short for a definition of its place in the manuscript tradition. There is, however, a conjunctive error that connects the new text with A (see below, "Errors and Corrections").

³ For further discussion see below ("Errors and Corrections") and the commentary on these lines.

Date and Paleography. The script can be identified as older (eastern) half-uncial usually dated to III-V AD⁴ The closest comparable script is the Epitome of Livy (CLA II 208 = *P. Oxy.* IV 668 + *PSI* XII. 1201) which has been dated to the third century for two external reasons. On the back of the roll there is a copy of the *Letter to the Hebrews* in Greek, dated to the early fourth century.⁵ In addition, the *Epitome of Livy* was patched with pieces of discarded documents on papyri, which Grenfell and Hunt dated to the third rather than the fourth century.

The shape of *e, g, l, s, t, y* clearly distinguishes this script from the later half-uncial which started spreading at the end of the 5th century. *b, d, f, r, m* are also distinctly half-uncial and the *n* which has its left shaft coming down below the line and the bows of *p* and *q* which are small and high above the base line are the same as on the script of the *Epitome of Livy*. *a*, which has a small loop rather than a sharp angle as does the *Epitome of Livy* and the majority of the witnesses to the older half-uncial,⁶ is an exception and so is the *u*, which in the Epitome is formed of two strokes while in this script it is cup-shaped. For a parallel of an *a* with a rounded loop see CLA X 1537 (IV-V AD), and VIII 1042 (early IV AD), and for the cup-shaped *u* see CLA X 1577 (IV AD); and *Suppl.* 1677 (III-IV AD), 1720 (IV AD).

A fourth century date for the Michigan Seneca is consonant with our previous considerations about the dimensions of the codex.

Latin in Late Antique Egypt. Only a small number of Latin authors were read in Egypt at any time, but in the fourth century AD. there seems to have been a growing interest in learning Latin among Greek speakers in Egypt. This interest is probably attributable to the expanded use of Latin in law courts in the East during and after the reign of Diocletian.⁷ The most important texts in the curriculum, to judge from the extant literary papyri, were Vergil and Cicero, both of whom were read with the aid of facing translations in Greek.⁸ Texts concerning Roman Law are by far the most common non-documentary texts found in Egypt, frequently with Greek translations or annotations,⁹ but literary authors were also read in Egypt: Sallust, Terence, Aesop, Juvenal, Livy, Lucan (Pack-Mertens, 2917-2952). The small range of Latin literature found in Egypt has in part contributed to a reasonable scepticism as to whether Greek speakers in the East read authors like Seneca at all in the fourth century.¹⁰ The marginalia of the new parchment to be discussed below indicate now that in the fourth century at least some Greek-speaking people in Egypt did try to understand Seneca's Latin verse.

A direct evidence of an individual reader of Seneca comes in the person of Claudius Claudianus, a native speaker of Greek from Alexandria who came to Rome before 395 and wrote Latin poetry. He makes frequent references to Seneca's tragedies in his *Fescenninus in honor of Honorius*.¹¹ An indirect

⁴ B. Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography* (Cambridge Univ. Press 1990) 72 ff. For more parallels, see B. Bischoff, *Paleografia Latina* (Padova 1992) 101ff and E.M. Thompson, *Greek and Latin Palaeography* (Oxford 1912) 305 ff.

⁵ *P. Oxy.* IV 657+ *PSI* 1292, New Testament Papyrus 13. There is a small facsimile by J. Mallon, *Paléographie Romaine in Scripturae: Monumenta et Studia* III (Madrid 1952) pl. XVII, 2.

⁶ CLA I 57; II 247; VIII 1033; X 1577; X 227 (p. 38); *Suppl.* 1677; 208 (p. 8).

⁷ See the summary in A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Baltimore 1964) II 989-991, 242-255; E.G. Turner, in *Language and Culture: Essays Presented to A.M. Jensen* (Copenhagen 1961), 165-68; J. Kaimio, "Latin in Roman Egypt" in *Actes XV Congrès International Papyrologique* (Bruxelles 1979) III, 27-33, and R. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton 1993) 231-32. The requirement that legal proceedings be conducted in Latin was lifted in 397 AD — see A.H.M. Jones, II 989, with 1401 n. 7.

⁸ The following papyri of Cicero and Vergil have Greek translations, cited here by Pack-Mertens number, as given in *Miscellanea Papirologica Ramon Roca-Puig* (Barcelona 1987), 819-204.

Vergil, *Georgics*: Pack-Mertens 2936 (V AD, with a Coptic palimpsest); *Aeneid*: 2939 (Nessana, V AD), 2939.1 (IV AD), 2940 (III-IV AD) in the re-edition by L. Koenen, *ZPE* 11 (1973) 219-230, 2943 (IV-V AD), now re-edited by J. Kramer, *ZPE* 111 (1996) 1-20, 2946 (IV-V AD ?), 2948 (IV-V AD), 2950 (IV-V AD), 2951 (V AD), Cicero 2922 (IV-V AD), with the re-edition and discussion by J. Axer, *P. Rain. Cent.* 163, 2922.1 (V AD), and 2923 (V AD). For the translation of other authors see E.A. Fischer, *Yale Classical Studies* 27 (1982) 173-215.

⁹ Pack² 2953 - 2993, almost as many fragments as all Latin literary papyri combined.

¹⁰ R. Tarrant, commenting on whether the echoes of Seneca evident in Quintus Smyrnaeus are attributable to direct or indirect contact by the author: "Knowledge of Seneca's tragedies by a fourth-century Greek, however, remain hard to credit" (*Seneca, Agamemnon* [Cambridge 1976] 22).

¹¹ In fact, Claudianus' *Fescenninus* (398 AD) contains enough conjunctive errors with the E branch of Seneca's manuscript tradition to allow O. Zwierlein to date the splitting of the manuscript tradition to the end of the fourth century (*Prolegomena* [n. 1 above], 34). If Zwierlein is right, then the Michigan fragment has originated after the formation of the archetype (III/IV AD) in the period of its splitting into branches ϵ and α .

evidence of familiarity with Seneca's moral writings in Christian circles is the spurious *Correspondence of Seneca and Paul* (ed. B. Palagi [Florence 1978]) which originated in a fourth century school of rhetoric and according to Jerome was read by many (*De uiris illustribus* 12).

Punctuation. The fragment uses two marks of punctuation, a high point (*distinctio*) and middle point (*media distinctio*), which, according to the grammarians, were meant to indicate how to phrase the text when reading aloud.¹² The punctuation indicates that the vellum fragment belonged to a *codex distinctus*.¹³ Three of these marks are entered by the scribe's hand (700, 702 and 703), the rest are in the dark brown ink used by the corrector, m₂ (675, 677, 678, 684, 701), but in 677 & 678 the scribe also left space between the letters. There are two high stops (*distinctiones*) in our text: in 675 after *monstrum*, where O. Zwierlein (OCT) has a full stop, and after *apta* in 697, where there is no sentence end, but a metrical and a logical pause between two antithetical cola marked with a comma in OCT.¹⁴ Middle stops (*mediae distinctiones*) occur in 677 after *effundit*, in 678 after *timuit*, in 684 marking verse-end, in 700 after *gemina [t]*, in 702 after *serpens*, in 703 between *peruigil* and *Colchis*. The punctuation of the fragment seems to conform to contemporary practices (e.g. the use of *media distinctio* before *et* in 16 and 42, cf. H.R. Pontes [n. 16 below] 108). No Latin manuscript embodies fully the system of punctuation described by the grammarians.¹⁵ Examples of manuscripts which use at least two marks of punctuation (like the Michigan Seneca) are Terence, *Andria*, P. Oxy. XXIV 2401 of the IV AD (middle and low points) and Juvenal, *JEA*, XXI (1935) 199-209 of the V AD (middle and low points); Vaticanus Palatinus Lat. 1631 (P) of Vergil, IV/V AD (high and middle points); Vaticanus Lat. 3225 (F) of Vergil (IV AD) and Codex Mediceus, V AD (*CLA* iii, 296) contain all three marks of punctuation often accompanied by space.¹⁶

Rubrics. A rubric after line 669 announces a change of speaker in capitals: NUT[RIX]. O. Zwierlein (*Prolegomena*, [n. 1 above] 27 & 250 ff.) notes that the rubrics were well preserved in the E tradition and go back as far as the III AD (see comm. to line 8 [670] below). The rubric on our fragment is written in a different ink than the dark brown-red of the corrections and the style is also different. The red of the rubric is considerably faded.

Marginalia. Written by more than one hand, the following marginalia are visible on the fragment:

1) In the margin on the hair side (recto) next to line 6 (668) there are traces of a word in Greek letters of which only four are clearly legible:]θην and]α in the following line (see comm. to 6). Traces of a different word are scribbled over and are in part obscuring the underlying traces of the Latin rubric NUT[RIX] written by m₃. These traces could be read as νοῦτρ[ι]ξ. The spelling of Latin words with Greek letters was often practiced in textbooks and glossaries from this period (see comm. to line 8 [670]).

2) At the bottom of the flesh side (verso) the same hand spelled in large Greek letters over *serpens* the word δρᾶκω and below *serpens*, κατ[ι]. Examples of Latin texts with Greek marginalia include Sallust (Pack-Mertens 2932 IV AD), Terence (2934 IV AD) and Juvenal (2925, ca. 500 AD).

¹² As explained by Quintilian XI 3. 35-39; for the meaning of the graded pointing system cf. Donatus (Keil, *Gram. Lat.* IV, 372). For a general discussion of punctuation by IV-V AD grammarians see E.O. Wingo, *Latin Punctuation in the Classical Age* [The Hague 1972] 21-28 and M.B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect* [Scholars Press 1992] 9-19; 65-76. On the limitations of modern colometric studies and on the problems in interpreting ancient punctuation which should not always be identified with a pause, see H.R. Pontes, *Callida Iunctura: The Divided Heroic Clausula in Vergil* (Diss. Cincinnati 1995) 92ff.

¹³ The phrase is first attested in the IV AD commentary on Donatus by Servius: "When a codex is emended by *distinctio*, *media distinctio* and *subdistinctio* [i.e. by graded pauses] the codex is said to be *distinctus*." (H. Keil, *Gram. Lat.* [Lipsiae 1855-1880] IV, 484). Cf. M.B. Parkes [1992] 13 & 119. A manuscript that applies punctuation is called *codex emendatus distinctus* or *codex distinctus* (Sergii *De accentibus*, H. Keil, *Gram. Lat.* IV, 482; cf. E.O. Wingo [1972] 23).

¹⁴ E.G. Turner, *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World*, BICS Suppl. 46 [1987] 9, writes that high stops are very common in Greek literary texts and are often made to do duty for both the modern comma and the full stop. As E.M. Thompson (*Introduction to Greek and Latin Palaeography* [Oxford 1912] 69) states, "the punctuation of the Latin manuscripts followed in some respects the systems of the Greeks."

¹⁵ See Dosithei *Ars Grammatica*, H. Keil, *Gram. Lat.* VII, 428 and Donatus in H. Keil, IV.372. Cf. Wingo (1972) 24ff.

¹⁶ Cf. Parkes (1992) 14 and 163. For a detailed discussion of the function of punctuation in Vergil's early codices, see H.R. Pontes (Diss. Cincinnati [1995]) 82-155.

3) On the bottom of the hair side (recto) there are traces of letters that seem to have been written more carefully in a different hand (m₄).

4) In the margin on top of the flesh side (verso) there is a sign (a circle with some letter or number inside) which may be pagination.

The hands of the marginalia are very informal and inexperienced, the letters are those of the Greek alphabet and a little larger than the script on the page.

Errors and Corrections. Careful corrections in dark brown-red ink are made by a hand (m₂) different from the one that wrote the main text. The corrections are entered by crossing the letter or word out and putting a dot above it. Among the corrections entered by m₂, *effu[n]dit* in 677 is an archetypal error (Zwierlein, OCT) which appears in all manuscripts.¹⁷ The scribe entered the correct form *effundit*, but the corrector replaced it with the archetypal error *effudit*, which makes little grammatical sense due to the present tense of *promit* in the following line (N. Heinsius, cf. comm. to 16 [677] below). The occurrence of an archetypal error in the fragment corroborates the findings of O. Zwierlein about the archetype being flawed as early as the time of its formation in the third-fourth century (*Prolegomena*, [n. 1 above] 52 ff). In another case, our parchment joins an archetypal error (see above, and n. on line 4 [666]).

A conjunctive error links the Michigan parchment to the A branches of the manuscript tradition. In line 687, *Jerit* must be the end of *exterit* or *exerit*, erroneous variants attested in the P and T branches respectively of the A tradition (see comm. to 28 [687]). A connection with the E tradition remains plausible, but uncertain (see above, "Rubrics"). In 680 the Michigan Seneca reads *conpre[ca]ns*, attested in E. Textual critics tend to consider this reading an error and the archetype here corrupt. However, we shall advance some considerations for the plausibility of *comprecans* (see comm. to 20 [680] below). Hence we do not regard this as a conjunctive error with E (see also n. 2).

Two unique errors, not attested in any of the manuscripts of the two main branches, are corrected by m₂. These are: *manibus*, corrected to *maius* in 674 and *in infernis* corrected to *desertis* in 685.

Colometry is carefully adhered to and the lyric song of the chorus (663-69) is indented. This careful colometry reflects the effort of late antique philology, as the frequent citations of Seneca in fourth century metrical treatises show (O. Zwierlein, *Prolegomena* [n. 1 above] 27). In 669 the correction by m₂ may be governed by colometry (see comm. to 7 [669]; cf. to 18 [678]). The only deviation from correct colometry, left uncorrected by m₂, is in line 25.

The scribe's spelling shows the usual phonetic confusion between *d/t* (677, 699, 675) and *m/n* (681) in final or quasi-final position (see comm. *ad locc*). The corrector (m₂) consistently corrects these spellings, except in 691 *quot tellus* and in the etymological spellings *inpendes* (663) and *comprecans* (680). Assimilation and dissimilation of consonants in compound verbs is a standard orthographic deviation in Seneca's manuscripts (O. Zwierlein, *Prolegomena* [n. 1 above] 258).

	<i>Diplomatic text</i>		<i>Reconstructed text</i>	Plate XIII
Hair side (Recto)				
	uxorinp[	663	uxor inp[endes animam marito]	
1	ipsequip[		ipse qui p[raedam spoliūque iussit]	
	aureum[	665	aureum [prima reuehi carina]	
	ustusac[		ustus ac[censo Pelias aeno]	
4	arsita[		arsit a[ngustas uagus inter undas.]	
	θην iam satis[		iam satis [diui, mare uindicastis:]	
	parciteiusso [		parcite iusso.	
	]α νουτρι[ξ			
	NUT[RIX			
	]επ		NUT[RIX	
8	[.]auetanimush[	670	[p]auet animus, h[orret: magna perniciēs adest.]	

¹⁷ See already above. F.-R. Chaumartin in his recent edition Sénèque, *Tragédies* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 1996) adopts *effudit* with all mss.

	[.]m̄manequant[		[i]m̄mane quant[um augescit et semet dolor]
	[.]ccenditipseu[.]rae[		[a]ccendit ipse u[imque p]rae[teritam integrat]
12	[		[vidi furem saepe et aggressam deos]
	[. . . .]m̄trahentemma[n]i[b]ushism[		[caelu]m̄ trahentem: ma[n]i[b]us his, maius parat]
	[.]deamonstrum· namqueu[d] att[	675	[Me]dea monstrum. namque ut[d] att[onito gradu]
	[.]uasitetpenetralfunestum[_d		[e]uasit et penetrale funestum [attigit,]
16	[.]tasopeseffu[n]dit·etqui[t]qui[		[to]tas opes effu[n]dit, et quid[t]qui[d diu]
	[. . .]amipsatimuit· proemitatque[		[eti]am ipsa timuit, proemit atque [omnem `explicat`]
	[explicat]		[explicat]
	[m		[turba]`m` [malorum, arcana, secreta, abdita,]
20	[. . . .]stelaeuāconpre[.]nss[	680	[et tri]ste laeua cōpre[ca]ns s[acrum manu]
	[. . .]tesuocatquascu[m]que [		[pes]tes uocat quascum[m]que feruentis creat]
	[. . .]enaliby[c]a[.]uasquepe[.]pet[		[har]ena Liby[c]ae, [q]uasque pe[r]pet[ua niue]
	[.]uruscoerce[.]frigorearct[		[Ta]urus coerce[t] frigore Arct[oo rigens]

Illegible marginalia (m₃ and m₄)

Flesh side (Verso)

24	[ca. 14] tracta[t]		[et omne monstrum.] tracta[t] [magicis cant]ibus
	[ca. 11]ibus·		
	[ca.22]a[^{desertis} in infernis]a[	685	[squamifera latebris turb]a desertis [in infernis] a[dest.]
	[ca.21]mmensumt[		[hic saeva serpens corpus i]mmensum t[rahit]
28	[ca.21]eritetquaerit[		[trifidamque linguam . . .]erit et quaerit [quibus]
	[ca.18]ineauditostu[		[mortifera ueniat: car]m[ine audito stu]pet]
	[ca.19]usag[^g r]estispli[		[tumidumque nodis corp]us agg[r]estis pli[cat]
	[ca.19]asuntinquitm[	690	[cogitque in orbis. 'paru]a sunt' inquit 'm[ala]
32	[ca.19]ottelluscre[		[et uile telum est, ima qu]o[t tellus cre]at:]
	[ca.20]amtempus[		[caelo petam uenena. iam i]am tempus [est]
	[		[aliquid mouere fraude uulgari altius.]
	[		[huc ille uasti more torrentis patens]
36	[. . . .]ndatanguiscuiusimm[.]nsas[	695	[desce]ndat anguis, cuius imm[e]nsas [duae]
	[. . .]rminorquesentiun[.]nodosf[		[maio]r minorque sentiun[t] nodos f[erae]
	[. . . .]pelasgisapta' [. . . .]isminor		[maior] Pelasgis apta, [Sidoni]is minor
	[. . . .]squetandem[.]ol[.]atofiuc[		[pressa]sque tandem [s]ol[u]at Ofiuc[hus manus]
40	[. . . .]quef[.]data[.]sita[^d t]cantu[		[uirus]que f[un]dat a[d]sit ad[t] cantu[s meos]
	[.]reaususgemina[t]·typhonn[	700	[lacsse]re ausus gemina[t] typhon n[umina]
	[. . . .]drae· etomnisredeatherculea[		[et Hy]dra{e}, et omnis redeat Herculea [manu]
	[. . . .]saserpens· caedesereparans[		[succ]isa serpens, caede se reparans s[ua]
44	[. . . .]querelictisperuigil· colchi[		[tu quo]que relictis peruigil, Colchi[s ades,]
	[.]primuncantibusser[^{δρακω} pens		[sopite] p[ri]mum cantibus, ser[pens, meis.]
	κκ[

Hair Side (Verso)

1 (663) uxorin[endes: a standard etymological spelling which the corrector did not change. See above, "Errors and Corrections".

4 (666): R. Peiper (Lipsiae 1867 & 1902) deleted this line on metrical grounds for it disrupts the 9-line Sapphic strophe sequence of the choral ode. O. Zwierlein (OCT) considers the line spurious because the strophical break up of the choral songs in Seneca's tragedies was developed to perfection in the *Medea* where from 577ff. one sees a system of 11 syllable lines ending with an adonean (O. Zwierlein, *Prolegomena* [see n. 1] 238). Although the line disrupts this symmetrical

sequence, based on imitations of Seneca in Hosidius Geta, O. Zwielerin (*Prolegomena* 50-52) assumes its presence in the archetype ω . The fragment corroborates Zwielerin's conjecture. For another archetypal error in this fragment, see above introduction and comm. to line 16 [677].

6 (668): In the left margin next to this line one can clearly read] $\theta\eta\nu$, followed by] α in the following line. If, as seems likely, these letters form part of a gloss on NUTRIX, it could be supplemented as $\tau\iota\theta\eta\nu\iota[\omicron\upsilon\varsigma]\alpha$. The verb is common in Koine (as a doublet of $\gamma\alpha\lambda\alpha\kappa\tau\omicron\tau\rho\phi\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ e.g. in wet-nurse contracts *CPG* I 3.2, 23.17, 24.4, 28.10, 33.10, 34.4, 37.5). $\tau\iota\theta\eta\nu\iota\alpha$ would be less likely. The Doric form would be hard to explain, and *Nutrix* is usually glossed by the more common $\tau\rho\phi\omicron\varsigma$. But $\tau\rho\phi\omicron\varsigma$, $\tau\iota\theta\eta\eta$ are several times found in Hesychius (α 4325, glossing $\acute{\alpha}\nu\acute{\alpha}\eta\eta$; ς 170, glossing $\varsigma\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\iota\rho\alpha$; also as a verb, α 8002, glossing $\acute{\alpha}\tau\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\epsilon\iota$).

7 (669) *parcite iusso*: the adonean is squeezed in by the corrector between line 6 and the rubric. The original scribe either omitted the two words or wrote them at the end of the previous line (6). In the latter case, the corrector presumably crossed them out, when he entered them as a separate line in observance of correct colometry. For an opposite situation see comm. to 18 (678).

8 (670): The choral part is followed by a rubric indicating change of speaker, i.e. NUT[R]IX. The rubric is considerably faded and its red is different from the corrector's dark brown. The fact that the rubrics have been consistently transmitted in the E tradition and the fact that introductions of speakers in Hosidius Geta's imitation of Seneca's *Medea* are of the type we find in E, leads O. Zwielerin (*Prolegomena* [see n. 1], 250-1) to trace the rubrics back to the III AD. The presence of a rubric in our fragment corroborates this conclusion.

$\nu\omicron\upsilon\tau\rho\iota[\xi]$: The letters are large and crude, the ρ and ι cover the rubric NUT[the red of which is faded. In our transcript, the representation of the overlapping writing was technically not viable. For Latin words written in Greek letters, see J. Kramer (ed.), *Glossaria Bilingua in Papyris et membranis Reperta* (Bonn 1983) 12 (P. Mich. 2458,II/III AD), 13 (P. Lond. II 481, IV A.D), 15 (P. Berol. 10582, V/VI AD); M.R.M. Hasitzka, *Neue Texte und Documentation zum Koptisch-Unterricht*, (Wien 1990) index, 335-37. We thank Ann Ellis Hanson for these references.

$\epsilon\pi$: Although the letters are visible, they are followed by faded traces which do not permit a plausible conjecture.

13 (674) $ma[n]i[b]us$: *maius* corrected from *manibus* by m_2 . The reading of the scribe, *manibus*, is not defensible, whether it is a form of *manibus his*, "with these hands" which makes no sense, or *manibus his* "to these spirits of the dead" which would introduce an anapest at a point in the line where Seneca avoids anapests.

14 (675) $u[d]$: The graphic substitution of <d> for <t> probably represents a phonetic spelling, as the position indicates (vocalization of a voiceless stop at word-end where the next word begins with a vowel). Monosyllabic words were particularly prone to this (cf. J.N.Adams, *The Vulgar Latin of the Letters of Claudius Claudianus*: P. Mich. VIII, 467-72 [Manchester 1977] 26ff; V. Väänänen, *Introduction au Latin Vulgaire* [Paris 1981] 69). This is also one of the regular orthographic deviations in the manuscripts of Seneca's tragedies, listed by O. Zwielerin, *Prolegomena* (n. 1 above) 258.

monstrum: The position of the high stop, entered in the corrector's dark brown, coincides with the full stop in O. Zwielerin's OCT. Cf. line 697 and above, Punctuation in Introduction.

16 (677) $effu[n]dit$: *et effundit* is an archetypal error (Zwielerin, OCT), rejected on grammatical grounds by N. Heinsius (*quia sequitur "promit"*). This emendation (as it then was) is accepted in Leo's edition (Berlin 1878), who attributed the correction to himself. He is followed by most other editors, including O. Zwielerin, OCT and *Kritischer Kommentar zu den Tragödien Senecas* (Abh. Akad. Mainz, Geistes- und Sozialwiss. Klasse, Einzelveröffentlichung 6, 1986), 151: "Mit Heinsius lese ich *ut... evasit et... attigit, ... effundit et... promit*, vgl. Phae. 1000/1002f. ..." The fact that the scribe initially copied the correct form, suggests that he might have had access to a (at least partially) purer manuscript.

The *media distinctio*, entered in the corrector's dark brown, is accompanied by space left by the first hand. Division before *et* and *-que* in the coordination of clause or phrase is *de rigueur* in all punctuated capital manuscripts (H.R. Pontes [diss. Cincinnati 1995] 1-11; 108). Cf. also comm. on line 42 (701).

$qui[t]qui[d]$: the spelling can be explained as assimilation of a voiced consonant to a following voiceless stop.

17 (678): There is a high stop (*distinctio*) after *timuit* written in the dark brown ink of the corrector in the little space left by the original scribe. Space and punctuation facilitate the grasp of the syntactical structure by placing a *distinctio* between the verb of the main clause and the verb in the relative clause: *totas opes effundit, et quidquid diu / etiam ipsa timuit, proemit* (677-8, thus punctuated in the edition by the Academy of Paris [*L. Annaei Senecae Pars Tertia sive Tragica*, Studiosa Professorum Societas, 1832]). For a similar marking of subordinate/parenthetical clauses in the Mediceus manuscript of Vergil (V AD), cf. H.R. Pontes [diss. 1995] 118ff.

proemit: the form is merely an etymological spelling of *promit* (so E, *premit* A).

18 (678) [*explicat*]: Since the scribe seems to have run out of space (as in 684), he wrote the final word *explicat* in the next line but indented it. The corrector apparently wanted to keep the verse together: he deleted the *explicat* and probably squeezed it in at, or above, the end of line 17.

19 (679) [*turba*]'m' [*malorum*]: The line is not extant, but a letter 'm' is visible. This appears to be a correction of presumed haplography *turba malorum* to *turbam malorum*.

20 (680) conpre[ca]ns : The crucial letters that distinguish this verb from A's *complicans* and Buecheler's conjecture *comparans* (Zwielerin, OCT; F.-R. Chaumartin [1996]) are clearly legible. Thus the parchment's reading agrees with E's *compre-cans* (for the absence of assimilation see above, "Errors and Corrections").

complicans, "roll together" seems to jar with *explicat* 678 (C.D.N. Costa, [Oxford 1980]). The reading of E and of our parchment is also considered corrupt because "of the uncertainty in the reading *comprecans* and in the meaning of *sacrum* which may be Medea's altar (578, 785), or possibly the assembled ingredients of her witches' brew, the central figure of her rites, but it is less natural to say that she supplicates these" (C.D.N. Costa [Oxford 1980]). O. Zwierlein (OCT) adopts Bücheler's *comparans* as an emendation that resolves most of the difficulties (O. Zwierlein, *Wüzb. Jahrb.* 2 [1976] 205 ff.). He refers to the fact that the left hand is used in the preparation of awkward sacrifices. To his evidence we may add *Suppl. Mag.* II.78.6 ἄπτε ἄριτ[ερ] (e.g. ἄριτ[ερ]ᾶ χειρ[ί]) and an instruction in Alexander of Tralles, *Therap.* II 583, saying that the eradication of the henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) for pharmaceutical use should be done with the left hand (see Th. Hopfner, *Griechisch- Ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber* I, 485). Since the sentence refers to the use of the left hand, *comparans* seems to fit the context better, and *comprecans* in 680 is out of place.

The presence of the reading *comprecans* in our 4th century manuscript, however, calls for a reconsideration of the case. Gronovius printed *comprecans* and explained *laeva manu* as Medea touching the altar (*sacrum*) with a left hand during prayer (Paris 1832). There is, indeed a mention of an altar in Medea's speech (*arae*, 785 [above], *caespit*, 797), but this hardly leads to a satisfying explanation of the phrase. The textual problem is compounded by the fact that the meaning of *sacrum* is deliberately left vague in 680 (as in Val. Flaccus, *Argon.* VII.165: *quis illa sacris, quo freta veneno*). In the broader context of the passage *sacrum* refers variously to magical apparatus and stuff (677), the rite (750 and 770), the sacrifice (797). So, at the beginning of her magical action, Medea may be praying for (rather than "supplicating" [see above]) an effective rite with her left hand and invoking the magical powers to appear (*et triste laeva comprecans sacrum manu | pestes vocat quascumque...*). It is the presence of these powers that make her action a *sacrum*, producing an effective brew of poison; or the *sacrum* is the resulting brew itself. *Comprecans* in line 680 stands in the beginning of the nurse's account of Medea's rite. The nurse demarcates the invocation from the preparation of the ingredients (706ff) by summarizing the previous action with the use of *uoco*: *postquam euocauit omne serpentum genus* (705). She starts describing the preparation of the ingredients (... *congerit... attrahat manu*, 705-19, *exprimit miscetque*, 732) after she has described the prayer/invocation. In this reading, Medea is not "preparing" the brew with her "left hand", but she turns her action into a rite by praying for its magic result, i.e. *sacrum*. Medea herself begins her speech with *comprecator* and invocation (*comprecator vulgus silentum vosque ferales deos...* 740) and denotes her action as *vocare* (*nunc meis uocata sacris, noctiam sidus, veni*, 750). The spells and the prayers to the infernal deities (*comprecatio*) are closely linked to the process of *evocatio* and the two complement each other. In line 680 *comprecans* provides a general description and, with its object *sacrum*, hints at the goal of Medea's prayer, while *uocat* introduces a crucial detail: the invocation of the powers of evil (681).

Seneca describes Medea's magic rite by implanting noticeable echoes between the nurses' report and Medea's verbal performance of it. E.g. in 737 the nurse reports: *addit uenenis uerba* and in 833 Medea prays: *adde uenenis stimulos, Hecate*. Similarly, *comprecans* is part of another set of echoes. As the general mention of *comprecans* in the speech of the nurse is taken up for specific detail with the use of *voco*: *pestes uocat* etc. (681) and then summed up in 705 through *postquam euocauit* etc, in the same way, in Medea's speech *comprecator* (740) is referred to through *nunc mea uocata sacris, ueni* (750). In short, *comprecans* in 680 seems to be part of a tendency to create verbal echoes and to prepare the audience through the nurse's speech for the first word that Medea will utter upon entering the stage, i.e. *comprecator* (740).

The evil sacrifice of magic has no power without the magical words (*comprecatio*). It is accompanied by prayer for the effectiveness of the poison (cf. *addit uenenis uerba non illis minus metuenda*, 736-7). The prayer for the effectiveness of the concoction is more strongly emphasized than the preparation itself: after the ingredients are together, Medea prepares an offering to Hecate including shedding her own blood (771ff) in order to make her brew work (*adesse sacris tempus est Phoebe, tuis*, 770). Only after she receives a sign from Hecate, does Medea proclaim the product of her evil magic, the poisoned dress of Creusa, ready for delivery (840 ff). Her *comprecatio* has been successful. *Comparans*, although more straightforward, covers only part of the action that results in Medea's evil gift. What made this gift effective is both the *triste sacrum*, i.e. the sacred action or the brew itself that provided the poison, and the long *comprecatio* for the effectiveness of its application (740ff.).

There remains the seemingly awkward collocation of having Medea praying with the left hand (*laeva comprecans sacrum manu*). The Romans prayed by extending both hands or the right hand towards the deity. Nothing is known about praying with "left hand". But, daring as it was, it is hardly unthinkable that a poet engaged Medea's left hand in sinister prayers in analogy to the magician's use of the left hand in the preparation of magical sacrifices and in collecting especially effective plants (see above). If so, then it should have been Seneca rather than a later hand that wrote *triste laeva comprecans sacrum manu*.

21 (681) *quascu[m]que*: Corrected by m₂ to *quascumque*. For parallels to substituting m with n cf. V. Väänänen, *Introduction au Latin Vulgaire* (Paris 1981) 66, who, among other examples, refers to *quen quisque* in a tablet from Pompeii.

22 (682) *liby[c]a*: The traces are faded, but one can still clearly see that m₂ has corrected the scribe's unattested *Libyca* to the standard *Libyae* by crossing out the "c" and writing an "e" above and a little to the right from the "a".

Flesh Side (Verso)

25 (684) *jibus*·: The verse-end is marked with a *media distinctio*. When the scribe saw that he was running out of space, he wrote the last two words in the next line without indentation (with indentation in 678). The corrector did not correct this arrangement (as he did it in 678).

26 (685) [*in infernis*]: instead of *desertis* is unattested. It is metrically possible, but makes little sense in the context.

28 (687) *jerit*: this ending suggests two possibilities for the restoration of the lacuna. P (i.e. Parisinus Lat. 8260 [saec. XIII] has *exterit* and T (Parisinus Lat. 8031 [saec. XV]) has *exerit*. P and T are branches of the A tradition within which, in fact, P is considered to be the purest witness. *exterit* and *exerit* are metrically impossible in Seneca, and *exterit linguam* (the snake rubbing or wearing out a tongue) carries in addition semantic difficulties. The parchment indicates that the mistake is old, possibly a copying error due to the identical ending of the following verb *quaerit*. The correct form, recorded in the E tradition, is *exertat*. If Zwierlein's date for the split of the archetype into hyparchtypes ϵ and α (the predecessors of the E and the A tradition respectively), i.e. IV/V AD is correct, this can be considered a conjunctive error linking the fragment to the A tradition.

32 (691) *qu]ot tellus*: a typical case of sandhi, in this case left uncorrected by m_2 . See for parallels V. Väänänen (above, comm. on 21 [681]), 69. Cf. 675 where a similar spelling error is corrected by m_2 .

36 (695) *imm[e]nsas*: An error for *immensos*, again left uncorrected by m_2 .

38 (697) *apta* [: The high stop (*distinctio*) separates two antithetical cola (*maior Pelasgis apta, Sidoniis minor*) and coincides with the comma in O. Zwierlein's OCT.

39 (698) *Ofiuc[hus]*: for this transliteration of the Greek Ὀφιοῦχος, cf. C.D. Buck, *Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin* (Univ. of Chicago 1969) 119: "The significant transcription of *f* by Latin *f*, instead of *ph*, is not found till the first AD, and is not usual till the IVth cent. AD." This is also a standard orthographical deviation in the manuscripts of Seneca's tragedies (O. Zwierlein, *Prolegomena* [see n. 2] 258).

40 (699) *a[^dt]cantu[s]*: There are traces of deletion on the right side of 't' which indicates that m_2 corrected the error. . For confusion in the spelling of d and t in final position see V. Väänänen (above, comm. on 21 [681]), 69. See also 14 (675), 16 (677), and 32 (691) and the comm. ad locc.

41 (700) *gemina[^dt]*: typhon: The mss. read *Python* (R), as in Zwierlein's OCT, or *Phyton* (EA). The metathesis of the consonants (p and t) as well as the dittography are common copying errors. *Typhon* instead of *Python* makes no sense in the context. The error is left uncorrected by m_2 . The *media distinctio* is entered in the dark brown ink of the corrector, perhaps marking the two identical letters as belonging to two different words, even though he correctly eliminates the first 't'.

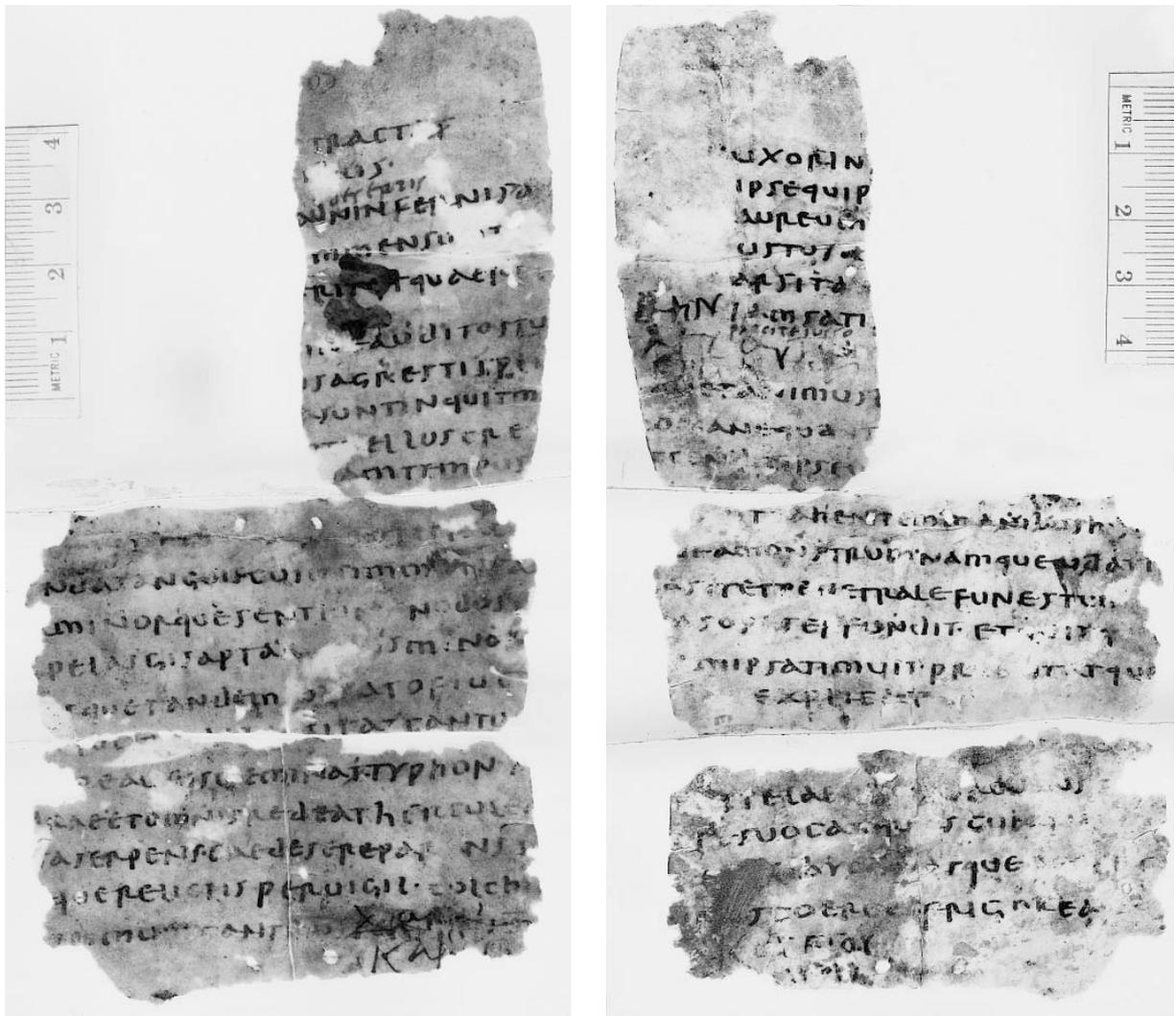
42 (701) *Hy]dra{e}* : *et*: Instead of *Hydra et*, another case of dittography, as in the previous line, but this time left uncorrected by m_2 . The *distinctio* (high stop) in the dark brown ink of the corrector, squeezed in between the letters, distinguishes parallel phrases marked by *et - et*, and stands where the Paris 1832 edition (full reference in comm. on line 17 [678] above) places a comma. Cf. the same phrasing marked in an identical way in the Oxyrhynchite Terence, *P. Oxy.* XXIV 2401 (IV AD): *et timent · et tamen res eos premit* (Ter. *Andria* 632). Cf. also comm. to 16 (677).

43 (702) *serpens*·: The *media distinctio* marks off the participial colon in apposition to *serpens*. It corresponds to commas in the Paris 1832, Leo (Berlin 1878), and the Loeb (F.J. Miller [London 1927]). For the habit of the scribes to mark present participial constructions in Vergil, Vaticanus lat. 3225 (IV AD) and in the Mediceus (V AD), cf. H.R. Pontes [diss.1995] 116.

44 (703) *peruigil*·: The *media distinctio*, entered in the dark ink of the scribe, is accompanied by space left by the original scribe. The pause after *peruigil* marks an apposition to the subject and distinguishes it from the ablative absolute: *tu quoque ..., peruigil, ...*

45 (704) *ser[^{δράκω}pens]*: *δράκω* covers the traces of *serpens* and seems to be meant to replace it. Presumably a Greek speaker wants to replace *serpens* with a word more familiar to him. *δράκων* is often used in Hesychius as a gloss (e.g. d 492, d 605). It remains open to interpretation whether this is a Greek translation with the ending of *δράκων* dropped, or a Greek transcription of the Latin word *draco*, as in the case of *νοῦτρα[ξ]* (cf. comm. to 8 [670]). The writing is very informal and belongs to the same hand that wrote the marginalia in line 6 (see comm. above).

κα[]: The sense of this marginalia written below the line, is unclear.



P. Mich. inv. # 4969. fr. 36 flesh side (left) and hair side (right)