SEMPER EGO AUDITOR TANTUM?[1]
Performance and Physical Setting
of Seneca's Plays

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Μα ο παλαιος καθρέπτης πού είχε δεί και δεί,
κατα την υπαρξίν του την πολυετή,
χιλιάδες πράγματα και πρόσωπα·
μα ο παλαιος καθρέπτης τώρα χαίρονταν,
κ' επαίρονταν πού είχε δεχθεί επάνω του
την άρτιαν εμορφιά γιά μερικά λεπτά.
             Ο καθρέπτης στην είσοδο, 13–18

But the antique mirror has seen over and over again
throughout its long existence
thousands of packages and faces:
But the antique mirror now rejoices,
and puffs itself up that it has shown on itself
if only for a moment an image of perfect beauty.
             Cavafy, 'The Mirror in the Vestibule', lines 13–18

The case for the production of Seneca's plays within his lifetime is entirely circumstantial but the weight of the evidence of two categories, that is, literary notices or imitations and archaeological remains, makes it almost certain that his plays were given full formal production. The literary evidence and internal indications from the plays themselves beg the fundamental question of what constituted performance in antiquity. Just as important is consideration of where the plays might have been performed. The problems with placing Seneca's plays on the Euripidean stage have long been noted but disappear if they were performed in a structure of a different kind.

I. Performance

First things first: every play is produced and receives full staging if only in

the mind's eye of the poet. There are two necessary extrapolations from this common-sense statement to which I would draw attention. First, plays are conceived as dramas, not as *recitationes*. As such, a performance text must receive priority over one for a lector, which must be considered as derivative, and thus the burden of proof should and must lie with those who would allege recitation rather than performance. Second, all acts and scenes within the text must be accepted *a priori* as capable of performance within the physical possibilities of the stage at that time so long as such staging is consonant with contemporary cultural norms and audience expectations. Otherwise, the play, regardless of which form or forms its performance takes, would quickly have been relegated to oblivion. Related to these two points must be our recognition that experience of ancient plays since the success of the printing press has been mainly the private, silent reading of a written text. The ancient contact with tragedy would have been oral. The distance between recitation and performance is considerably narrower than one might presume: it is limited to the presence or absence of physical action guiding the reception by the audience, and to some degree coloring interpretation through nuance and gesture of oral delivery.[2]

What happens subsequent to the poet's internal full dress performance is merely the mirror image, either faithful or distorted, of the performance that has already been mounted. Once the play leaves the nurturing preserve of the poet's mind, it enters the public domain whence the integrity of the poet's vision can never be guarded or rescued. It is worth reminding ourselves that copyright and other anti-infringement legislation, which hardly provides any protection or remedy now, did not exist in antiquity. If the rantings of Catullus and Martial about their imitators and plagiarists have any credibility, we should be willing to assign a similar fate to pre-eminent practitioners in other literary genres, and thus consider the possibility that a play once before the public quickly mutated into several new strains.[3] That is to say, performance and recitation need not exclude one another, they might in fact imply each other. I will not go over ground covered admirably by Fitch in the first essay of this collection. His surmise that there is evidence that at least some of the plays of Seneca were modular, in that some scenes could be removed if recited and restored for performance, seems compelling not the least because it seems logical that a formal stage performance would encourage enactments in other forms, whose popularity and frequency would in turn contribute to decisions to revive on the formal stage.[4]

The quality and kind of imitation might possibly yield evidence

of performance. This forces us to confront immediately what to do with the *Hercules Oetaeus*. There has been a recent attempt to reassert its authenticity,[5] and it would be attractive to restore the play to the Senecan canon, since it shares many features with the middle group of plays, that is, *Hercules Furens*, *Medea*, and *Troas*. Those same similarities and distinctions in diction and style, however, would make the play even more telling and valuable to Senecan scholarship if it remained among his *spuria*.[6] If the author of the *Hercules Oetaeus* was not Seneca, he had a very detailed knowledge of the first six plays, and if Fitch's surmise in this volume is correct, as I think it must be, then it follows that the author of the *Hercules Oetaeus* saw the plays of Seneca in production, rather than being exposed to different versions in other formats. Similarly, the *Octavia* is more parody of his literary style than compliment to Seneca, and the success of this parody, or any parody, is directly proportional to its familiarity with and closeness to the material it lampoons. The astuteness of the imitation in the *Octavia* speaks to the availability of Seneca's plays, and I would argue a knowledge more likely to have come from performance.[7]

But one should perhaps start by asking what Seneca and his contemporaries would have considered to be 'production' and 'recitation' since it may be that the ancient experience is clouded by our very different understanding of what these terms mean and imply. Further, the ancients themselves were not consistent in their usage of terms. The quotation from Juvenal in the title to this paper suggests that he was complaining about being a constant listener at recitations, to which *recitaverit* would lend further support, and it is not without interest that what was being recited was *togatas*, that is, *fabulae praetextae*, of which the *Octavia* is the only surviving example. The literary record upon examination is not as decisive as one might wish, as Donka Markus has demonstrated in an exhaustive survey of literary references to performance in the first century AD.[8]

If Shelton is correct, in her contribution to this volume, the Julio-Claudian period was perhaps the time at which the legitimate stage[9] came to be marginalized and 'high brow' in face of competition from the growing popularity of forms of vernacular entertainment, most particularly mime, a street theater for the masses, featuring bestiality and execution as appropriate to the plot scenario, and to the place and occasion of performance. Her view, which is very attractive, is that brutality in Seneca is a sop to what he perceived was a shrinking audience which he tried to win back. One might, however, entertain doubts that tragedy, as opposed to comedy, was ever a popular entertainment

among the Romans. I lean not just on Beacham's[10] authoritative exploration of the early history of tragedy and performance and on Segal's examination of how Seneca 'inherited a rich vocabulary for exploring morbid states of mind, the dark world of family jealousy, the corrosive effects of anger, fear, resentment, the lust for power'.[11] Ovid's elegiac recitation of the religious calendar includes the various rites and elements of celebration for festivals. Only once is drama mentioned, the plays put on as part of the festival of the Magna Mater (*Fasti* 4. 187 and 326), even though it is known that the *Floralia* included attendance at the theater.[12] The far more numerous mentions of games make it clear that theater had a limited role in the traditional Roman calendar, and that the audience for tragedy was always a select one. Ratios of graffiti at Pompeii[13] would tend to confirm a view of theater as acquired taste, and anecdotes about drama in the Republican era center almost exclusively on aristocratic circles; the popular imagination does not seem to have felt ownership of drama such as is indicated by theater riots in Elizabethan England and nineteenth-century America.

The same can probably be said for recitation. Cornell's assumption of low literacy rates for Etruria and Latium in the archaic age accords well with Harris' surmise of 5%–10% throughout antiquity.[14] Even though reading is not writing, the writing tablets offered as gifts in Martial's *Apophoreta* (14, 4–9) are indisputably for the educated. Martial's normal working method is to pair one less expensive version of a commodity with one more costly. The tablets, however, for which he wrote accompanying couplets are made from expensive materials, or are associated with official business, or are convenient for conducting romantic assignations. Hopkins, in essential agreement with Bowman,[15] both of whom relied on Egyptian evidence, would place literacy at about 65%. Perhaps the figures can be reconciled if we consider the high figure to be of those who could read and the lower one of those who read literature since the ability to read does not automatically ignite a desire to read literature.

The date of composition of the plays bears on the issue of perform-ance.[16] I had long held that the six early plays were written as a way to pass the time during Seneca's exile and that any performance they received would have been recitation among those who accompanied him to Corsica or were similarly sent there because of imperial displeasure. Since no Roman theater has been found on Corsica, in either of the two major towns, Aleria and Mariana, it seems impossible that Seneca's plays, if written during the 40s, could have received full staging then, either in Corsica for physical reasons or in Rome for political ones. If

the early plays were composed during years immediately after Seneca's return,[17] one would presume that they would have received some kind of performance. Regardless of whether the early plays belong to the 40s or the early 50s, there was a period of inactivity in composition in the late 50s, that is, the period in which Seneca served as co-regent for the young emperor. Given human nature, one might expect that during the years AD 54–AD 62 Seneca remained in the public eye through recitation, or perhaps even production by a fawning, would-be courtier, but not by Seneca himself.

II. Physical setting

In the debate about production, rarely, if ever, have performance venues been adduced. Some such term as 'performance venues' is needed since 'theater' is misleading. The history of Roman theaters is too well known to be worth repeating. The size, configuration of seats, and low stage stand in sharp distinction to theaters on the Greek mainland. Although the acoustics would have been comparable, the wings allowed for exits and entrances not possible in Euripides, the stage building was less conducive to *deus ex machina* and other conventions of the Greek stage, and the low stage altered the relationship between chorus and actors.

The view of the decline of the theater is unconsciously colored by implicit comparison of capacity between, on the one hand, the Theater of Pompey and the Theater of Marcellus and, on the other hand, the Flavian amphitheater. Such comparison is seemingly reinforced by the observation that there was no new theater construction after the dedication of the Theater of Marcellus until the building of an *odeum* in the reign of Domitian. Amphitheaters in cities outside of Rome are in fact larger than theaters but the difference in capacity is much smaller; Orange in France with 20,000 for the amphitheater and 12,000 for the theater is much more typical. At some sites, such as Assisi or Alba Fucens, where amphitheaters are known but not theaters, it would seem more probable that the theater has not been found or that the amphitheater was used for multiple kinds of performance, rather than that comedy and tragedy were not put on stage. New theater construction throughout the empire as a whole during the first century AD seems to have increased greatly (Beacham 1993, 154) and some inscriptions remain which indicate pay for traveling Dionysiac Artists, the official title for Actors' Equity under Hadrian (Harrison 1994, 248–50).

Aside from theaters, there is evidence that the steps of the high podium of a Roman temple were used for audience seating since Roman

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temples, as opposed to Greek ones, did not have long altars in front of temples thereby limiting the potential use of that space. The steps of the temples of the Roman forum, like the steps of the basilicas, were used for viewing Roman triumphs and for viewing gladiatorial combats[18] before the construction of the Flavian amphitheater. The steps of the Temple to the Magna Mater were used similarly and one feels safe in conjecturing such religious theatricals for cults, such as Isis and Serapis, which were revelatory or had an epiphany. Cults such as Mithras and Demeter which had stages of initiation often had stories, or cult plays, which encapsulated the *muthos* of the worshiped deity.[19]

The *theatrum tectum*, or *odeon/odeum* had a variety of uses and designs, which would have greatly influenced staging. Not every covered theatrical building was constructed primarily for performance; according to Izenour, the basic plans could have served for *bouleuteria or prytania* and for oratorical or political arenas.[20] Seating, entrances/exits, and stage/*bema* would have been configured for primary use and therefore would have been a given in secondary and other functions. That council houses could be used for the production of drama is proven by the *Thersilion* at Megalopolis (Izenour 1992, 36), although such double use in my opinion might have been a consideration in the development of the U-shaped *bouleuterion* seen as early as late classical Priene. *Odea* of this type, which includes the *Odeon* of Pericles and *Telesterion*, because of the number and configuration of columns, would have required a staging of Marshall's four-sided schema which Ubersfeld, quoted by Marshall in this volume, would consider best suited to light entertainment and mimes.[21] Form, however, cannot always follow function, to paraphrase the dictum of Frank Lloyd Wright; rather, to infer function always from form would be a mistake, since the ancient director and producer was sometimes compelled by necessity to adapt.

Recitation must not be assumed to imply a booked hall as in the anecdote of Vergil's reading advance copy of the *Aeneid* or the pathic poetasters of Persius and Juvenal. Central to Katherine Dunbabin's thesis of the 'privatization of culture' was that the wealthy increasingly put on performances even of drama at their own homes.[22] For antiquity, however, we should not imagine diners apportioning parts to be read aloud, like the lectors in Dylan Thomas' *Under Milk Wood*, or a small troupe, like the tragedians in Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guilderstern are Dead*.[23] Only one person needed to be literate, and only one person needed to be 'on stage' and that person might even be the slave trained to recite plays from memory. The Menander mosaic in the *triclinium* at Mitylene would seem to indicate that the guest of honor at dinner

could choose from among the eight comedies represented, each in a panel illustrating a well-known scene, and then a servant would recite the play. A row of four squares by the door, each representing two plays, plus the *dominus* and *domina* of the household, would have been adequate impromptu performing space.[24] Dumont (1997, 48) is certainly correct that Roman tragedy was greatly indebted to Roman comedy. Specifically, the adoption of minimalist props, well known from comedy,[25] could have allowed the tragic artist to use props to suggest a scene, freeing him from the large stage building.

So far, the discussion of performance space and venue has been largely separate from that of plays themselves. In order to visualize and gauge the impact, I should like to take a specific example and consider how changes in theater arrangement could have been exploited by an ingenious and resourceful playwright. I propose to examine the chorus since it is the focus of so much continuing discussion, including by Fantham, Marshall, and Raby in this volume, and I propose to reconstruct how I think Seneca himself staged the *Troas*, as I have now come to believe he did. Katherine Welch has argued conclusively[26] that Roman spectacles made their first appearance in Greece not in theaters, as had been the common belief, but in the apse end of *stadia*. She would assign (122) the first conversions of spaces in theaters and *stadia* in the Greek East to the middle of the first century AD, that is, the very time when Seneca was writing his plays. For the Empire, most evidence suggests that trends started in central Italy and rippled out. Different venues not only competed to put on popular forms of entertainment, such as mimes, but tried equally to maintain a distinctive identity. Thus, if renovations for combat, executions through animal baiting, and *venationes* (Welch 128) should be assigned first to *stadia*, one might wish to consider that the response of theater managers was to modify the orchestra since the smaller orchestra inherited by the Romans from Hellenistic theaters had long made choral dances unappealing to choreograph.[27]

One modification known from theaters but not from other civic structures is the laying of water pipes and drains so that the orchestra could be flooded for naked water ballet, which is attested in literary sources and confirmed by excavation. The tempting idea that Seneca's *Troas* was the first play to incorporate a flooded orchestra into the action of a play must be abandoned since the earliest flooded orchestras begin much later and seem a phenomenon of the Greek East.[28] It is still possible, however, that the orchestra was used by Seneca as a third exit at the play's conclusion.

The relevance for the staging of Seneca's plays is immediate. Many authors, including Marshall in this volume, have lavished considerable ingenuity on staging. The fifth actor in the *Agamemnon*, for example, is one well known puzzle, while the location of the chorus in the *Troas* is another. I do not think that any commentator places the chorus of Trojan Women in the orchestra and equally no one would choreograph a dance for women in mourning. The question is one of choral absence and choral presence: that is, whether the chorus was placed on stage left or stage right, which in turn begs the question of what stage left and stage right were supposed to represent. The problem is that three locations are needed: the tomb of Hector with burning Troy as its backdrop, the Greek camp, and the harbor. If the orchestra was flooded, or rather if it can be imagined as flooded, the difficulty resolves itself. Stage right is Hector's Tomb, back center is burning Troy[29] with the tower from which Astyanax will leap, stage left is the Greek camp, and for the finale, the Trojan women can be loaded into boats 'floating' in the orchestra. Such an arrangement adds to the poignancy of the final choral ode, in which the Trojan women wonder to which Greek city each is headed, since it could be staged in imagined skiffs.

Such placement works only if the venue for which the play was initially composed was a small outdoor theater or an *odeum*. On a large stage, as in the Theater of Pompey or Theater of Marcellus or the theaters of Greece, such a four-point focus to the action would not be convincing since the spatial relationship of the stage to the orchestra is too strongly divided by the difference in height and the orchestra is too large to be credible as a small beach. In the recitation hall or in a private garden or *cenaculum*, it would be difficult to give the sense of spatial, never mind psychological, separateness of the different characters and sites of the action. Although possible to put on in this way, it is hard to envision such a setting as the intended place of its debut performance. The small stage and small orchestra of the *odeum*, however, invite the juxtaposition of characters, or groups of characters, in close proximity yet bounded from one another. Senecan choral semi-omniscience, that is the chorus simultaneously seeming to know more than it is entitled to, yet less than it ought, is explicable in such a compact setting. At an earlier time and in comedy, Pseudolus would have had to tip-toe to eavesdrop; here, the chorus cheek by jowl with the Greeks cannot help but gain a whisper of what is going to happen to Polyxena, to Astyanax, and ultimately to themselves. With the orchestra so near, it would seem inevitable that some playwright would find a way to use it.

III. Conclusion

This reconstruction of how Seneca could have staged his plays, and of how he met the challenges of changing tastes and of changes in performance space, proceeds from my view that Seneca was one of the great innovators of the stage and that the boldness of his innovations has contributed greatly to the survival of his plays. The plays indicate that Seneca was the first playwright, or among the first, to compose with an enclosed *odeum* or small theater in mind. If this proposal has any merit, he might also have been the first dramatist, or among the first, to take advantage of changes in the physical setting of the stage wrought by Roman tastes in popular entertainment.

My view of how Seneca staged his plays is in part a product of who I think Seneca was. I have never been satisfied that Seneca was a 'philosopher in politics' and I have become increasingly dissatisfied that he was a 'politician in philosophy', even though both these views hold some truth. The thread that ties together all facets of the incredible variety of his life is education. Often in the scramble to understand why certain figures were exiled little attention is paid to the probably more important saga of their returns. So, for example, I think every student knows why Cicero was exiled yet few if any know what political calculations brought about his recall. Agrippina brought Seneca back to be a teacher.[30] This does not deny or overlook that there were doubtless many other considerations, but the pretext was that he was an educator, and even if no one believed the reason it had to be plausible.

No one, ancient or modern, has denied the essentially pedagogical role of the theater. Much thought has been given to the relationship between the dialogues and the plays, but regardless of whether one sees their composition as parallel, disjunctive, or cross-supportive, it is beyond doubt that they are instructional, often looking at the same moral material from different perspectives.[31] Joanne Martin[32] in two articles about violent leaders of twentieth-century revolutions has coined the term 'distributive injustice' to describe 'the injustice of a *status quo* system of reward distribution' (1990, 281). Regardless of what work of Seneca's one reads, exploration of the moral implications and societal ramifications of distributive injustice is central to the essay or epistle or dramatic action. It permeates all of the characters and their motives in the *Troas*, from the demand of the dead Achilles, to the guile of Helen, to the pusillanimity of Odysseus, and even to the recriminations between Hecuba and the chorus over who has the greater right to mourn and has mourned better.[33]

In sum, one might ask where this leaves us, the observer looking

through field glasses with cataracts of near two millennia clouding the lenses. I think it leaves us with Cavafy. His antique mirror in the vestibule had seen thousands of faces[34] and packages[35] during its long use, and yet could recognize and take delight in having reflected an image of pure beauty. However we reflect Seneca's plays or consider they gave off their own light refracted from the poet's mind, it is clear and uncontroversial that we are the ones privileged to be in the presence of pure beauty.

Notes

[1] Juvenal, *Satire I.1*. His *reponam* at the end of the same line, particularly when paired with the volitive subjunctive *edam*, strengthens the point.

All translations of Latin and modern Greek are those of the author. I should also wish to thank my assistants, Steve Noga, Jean Olenhouse, and Carrie Werner, for their help in the writing and research of this paper and also in the conference.

[2] I would argue that the final proof of this corollary is that ancient sources quote tragedy; they do not, with a few very limited exceptions, discuss it. Plutarch is far and away the greatest source for Nauck's Tragic Fragments, yet he did not in his voluminous writings dissect drama in anything like the style of modern critics. Even the few handbooks about authors, such as *ps.*-Plutarch, *Essay on the Life and Poetry of Homer*, turn out to be mainly *thesauri* of quotable quotes arranged by topic; cf. J.J. Keaney and Robert Lamberton 1994, 10.

[3] It is dangerous to consider the literary text as somehow static and immutable. Poe, for example, within his lifetime published several different versions of *The Raven*, and the existence of multiple versions of poems in antiquity is known from Martial. Connoisseurs of art and architecture, such as Varner in this volume, trace frequent and predictable changes in artistic motif. It is hard to believe that the literary arts were not subject to the same forces as the plastic arts.

[4] Similarly, it is impossible to calculate the possible influence of the mainly secular nature of occasions for performance of Roman drama as compared to Greek drama, which seems to have been much more closely tied to their religious and festal calendar. Seneca's plays might have had more days on which they could be staged, yet fewer occasions on which performance was expected.

[5] George W.M. Harrison, 'Claudian Castores: Seneca and Crispus', in S. Byrne and E. Cueva, *Studies in Honor of Anna Lydia Motto*, 1999, 19–31.

[6] For the case against authenticity, see Wolf-Harmuth Friedrich, 'Sprache und Stil des *Hercules Oetaeus*', *Hermes* 82 (1954) 51–84.

[7] That the *Octavia* was probably composed and performed during the reign of Vespasian should not be taken as final proof that Seneca's plays were performed then, although it cannot be dismissed. Cf. Patrick Krageland, 'The Prefect's Dilemma and the date of the *Octavia*', *Classical Quarterly* 38 (1988) 492–508.

The bi-partite structure and close correspondences between characters in the two halves of the *Octavia* are meant to recall Seneca's handling of the *Troas*, the play in which he most differs from Euripides' handling of the same material; cf. George W.M. Harrison, *Fortunate for Two Senecas and Lucan*, ch. 4, forthcoming.

[8] 'The performance of poetry in 1st CE Rome: between public success and social infamy', forthcoming in *Classical Antiquity*. I am extremely grateful to Donka for allowing me to read a pre-publication copy of her article and also for her comments on the manuscript to this article and another on Seneca's plays which will appear in *Humanitas*; cf. George W.M. Harrison, 'All the Muses', *Humanitas* 1999.

[9] I would assume the term 'legitimate' to mean full scale productions in a facility built for that purpose.

[10] Richard Beacham, *The Roman Theatre and its Audience* 117–53. My criticism of his book – that he wrote about the Roman theater without once mentioning Seneca – remains valid; *Classical World* 86 (1992) 364.

[11] Charles Segal, *Language and Desire in Seneca's 'Phaedra'*, 1. The central thesis of his book makes the argument that Seneca's language is traditional and formal.

[12] Book 4 of the *Fasti* concludes with eleven lines on the *Floralia*. The one other mention of plays in the *Fasti* (3. 535–8 and 675–6) comes as part of the rites to Anna Perenna, sister of Dido. The salacious songs from plays, however, cannot derive from tragedy.

[13] See James L. Franklin, 'Literacy and the parietal inscriptions of Pompeii', in *Journal of Roman Archaeology, suppl.* 3 (1991) 77–98.

[14] Tim Cornell, 'Literacy in Etruria and Latium in the archaic age', in *Literacy in the Roman World, Journal of Roman Archaeology*, suppl. 3 (1991) 7–34 and William Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989) 272.

[15] Both are in the collection of eight essays, *Literacy in the Roman World*, which react to Harris' 1989 book.

[16] All of the various schemes inevitably take as their starting point Fitch's 'Sense-Pause and Relative Dating in Seneca, Sophocles, and Shakespeare' (*American Journal of Philology* 102 [1981] 289–307). The three groups are I. *Agamemnon, Oedipus, Phaedra*; II. *Hercules Furens, Medea, Troas*; III. *Phoenissae, Thyestes*.

[17] This is the view taken by Coffey and Mayer in the introduction to their commentary on *Seneca's Phaedra* (1990, 3). In support of their date is the debate between Pomponius and Seneca on tragedy which probably took place in AD 52 (Quintilian 8.3.31). The probable date of the attacks on Seneca's prosody (Tacitus *Annales* 14. 52) correlates closely with the date of composition of his last plays.

[18] See Katherine Welch, 'The Arena in Late Republican Italy: a new interpretation', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 7 (1994) 69–80.

[19] The best known, of course, is not Roman at all: the *Telesterion* of Demeter at Eleusis which, however, continued in use past the reign of Marcus Aurelius; cf. George C. Izenour, *Roofed Theaters of Classical Antiquity*, New Haven, Conn., 1992, 22–9.

[20] For the distinctions among civic structures which could be used for performances, see George W.M. Harrison, *The Romans and Crete*, 1994, 140–56. One should not overlook either public or semi-public areas such as *exedra* or private dining rooms in Roman baths; cf. Fikret Yegül on *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge, Mass., 1992.

[21] It is interesting that Marshall's first typology of ancient outdoor performance space, that of the Hellenistic/Roman stage, precisely parallels the use of space in Roman courts placed inside basilicas, and that his second typology, that of the classical Greek stage, is strongly suggestive of Hellenistic clear-spanned *bouleuterion* or *prytaneion*; for the latter see Izenour 1992, 42–62.

[22] Katherine M.D. Dunbabin, 'Convivial spaces: dining and entertainment in the Roman villa', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9 (1996) 67, 78–9.

[23] In the play, it is the player who pronounces the lines about tragedy, which apply to Seneca, most particularly the passage on rhetoric and tragedy near the middle of act 1. Troupes of comic actors are known from Martial (14.214 and 215) who could have given private performances.

[24] The best discussion of this mosaic is by Eric Csapo, 'Mise en scène théâtrale, scène de théâtre artisanale', *Pallas* 47 (1997) 165–82.

[25] The Roman use of props in comedy has been thoroughly and convincingly discussed by Ketterer in three articles in *Semiotica*. The use of comic style props made recitation possible without ending the attractiveness of formal staging.

[26] 'Greek *stadia* and Roman spectacles: Asia, Athens, and the tomb of Herodes Atticus', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 11 (1998) 117–45.

[27] In this I follow Jean Christian Dumont's view of the Roman stage in '*Cantica* et espace de représentation dans le théâtre latin', *Pallas* 47 (1997) 43.

[28] Information courtesy of correspondence with Andrew Wilson of Magdalen College (Oxford). Although he considers such construction to begin in the fourth century, the conversion of the Odeon of Trajan at Gortyn (Crete) is much earlier.

[29] Oversize tripods with burning olive oil would in fact double as representing the smoldering Troy and illuminating the action on stage.

[30] This does not make Seneca an intellectual in the strict sense used by Mayer in his article 'Doctus Seneca' or in the notorious *mot* of Henry Hyde, Chief Manager in the Clinton impeachment, that 'an academic is someone educated beyond his intelligence'.

[31] This does not make Seneca a revolutionary or subversive. He does not fit Scott's profile of a writer using a 'hidden transcript'; further, it is not accidental that Francis started his book on *Subversive Virtue* with the generation of Stoics after Seneca.

[32] Joanne Martin, Maureen Scully, and Barbara Levitt, 'Injustice and the legitimation of revolution: damning the past, excusing the present, and neglecting the future', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59 (1990) 281–90 and Joanne Martin, 'Inequality, distributive injustice, and organizational illegitimacy', in J. K. Murnighan (ed.) *Social Psychology in Organizations: Advances in Theory and Research*, 1993, 296–321.

[33] One could not find a more perfect example for the difference between

Seneca's viewpoint and Euripides' than the character of Hecuba in Seneca's *Troas* and Euripides' *Hecuba*; cf. Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, Cambridge 1986, 397–422.

[34] It is not unintentional, I think, that he chose 'πρόσωπα' , the normal word in both ancient and modern Greek for masks. For this poem see the standard edition of G.P. Savide, *Cavafy, Collected poems*, Athens, 1933.

[35] His 'πράγματα' is at once ambiguous and all-embracing since the term can be used to describe just about anything, including stage scenery, stage action, and even the plays themselves. His love for the theater is indicated by several poems on the stage, including one of his earliest titled 'Ancient Tragedy'; see the appendix to *The Complete Poems of Cavafy*, translated with notes by Rae Dalven.