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## TORTURE, TRUTH AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN SENECA'S *TROADES*\*

### ABSTRACT

This article argues that the encounter between Andromache and Ulysses in Seneca's *Troades* engages with the genre of declamation to juxtapose two different discourses surrounding torture: one focussed on torture's connection to truth, the other on its connection to tyranny. It describes how the Greek general Ulysses, convinced of the danger of letting the Trojan prince Astyanax live, threatens his mother Andromache with physical torture in order to ascertain the truth of Astyanax's whereabouts. However, Ulysses is countered by Andromache's rhetoric, through which, the article shows, she depicts herself as the archetypal heroic victim of a tyrant. It discusses how Ulysses innovates with an effective psychological torture in response. The article sets the scenario within the broader rhetorical context and demonstrates how it reflects debate among the contemporary elite about the necessity of, and the risks from, the rising use of torture by the Julio-Claudian emperors, a debate which resonates in the modern era.

**Keywords:** Seneca; *Troades*; tragedy; declamation; torture; security; *maiestas*

### THE DISCOURSES OF TORTURE

In the third act of his tragedy *Troades*, Seneca the Younger departs significantly from Euripides' version of the myth to stage a gripping clash between Ulysses and Andromache over the fate of Andromache's son, Astyanax. He has been sentenced to death by the Greeks: fearing this outcome Andromache has already hidden him in the tomb of her dead husband, Hector. To discover Astyanax's whereabouts, Ulysses threatens Andromache with physical torture, before subjecting her to psychological torture as he plots the destruction of her dead husband Hector's tomb. In this paper, I will discuss how this scene reflects long-standing traditions in rhetoric surrounding torture, each character advancing a position that would be very familiar to a contemporary Roman audience, and that moreover through the war of wills and words Seneca raises profound questions about the role of torture in his society.

Each character plays opposing roles, and channels opposing narratives: Ulysses finds his behaviour on the belief that torture necessarily reveals the truth, while Andromache strives to define herself as the persevering victim of tyrannical torture. I argue that the *Troades* channels the form of a *controuersia* to explicitly set these distinct rhetorical discourses in opposition. Although opposing viewpoints are a common feature of the rhetorical *controuersiae* recorded by Seneca's father, the other Lucius Annaeus Seneca, he includes no declamations that directly address the ambiguities around torture.<sup>1</sup> In the *Troades*, these perspectives on torture are closely probed.

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<sup>1</sup> See V.E. Pagán, 'Teaching torture in Seneca *Controuersiae* 2.5', *CJ* 103 (2008), 165–82, at 169: 'In Seneca's collection of declamations, torture is not treated as a specific topic of debate.' Torture,

We find each of these discourses, on torture's truth and on tyrannical torture, within Seneca's own prose works and other texts of the Early Imperial period, where they form part of wider considerations on the nature of power. However, in these texts the juxtaposition or interaction of the discourses is carefully avoided, if both are featured; for instance, Valerius Maximus introduces them at separate points whole books apart.<sup>2</sup> In the *Troades*, these two discourses clash, as Ulysses and Andromache confront each other. The *Troades* may thus suggest a more nuanced response among the Roman elite to the changing dynamics of state power than other contemporary texts, a response that takes advantage of the distancing effect of the setting of the Trojan War to pose difficult questions about torture.<sup>3</sup> In Ulysses' recourse to psychological duress, which evolves out of the failure of his threats of physical torture to overcome Andromache's resistance, we are offered a broader definition of torture than we might expect from an ancient text.<sup>4</sup> Seneca poses questions about the efficacy, motivation and justification of torture that resonate with us today.

Scholarship on this scene has followed broader patterns of research on Seneca's *Troades* to focus on Seneca's continuity and breaks with the earlier literary tradition. Sabine Föllinger has shown how Seneca's Ulysses develops and surpasses the Euripidean Odysseus in cruelty and deviousness, while Ulrich Schmitzer presented Seneca's Ulysses as the culmination of negative Roman literary treatments of the character.<sup>5</sup> For Anthony Boyle, Seneca's Ulysses at first defies mythic expectation,

however, as Pagán points out, appears occasionally in the *Controversiae*, e.g. in 10.5, a hypothetical scenario where the fifth-century B.C. painter Parrhasius is accused of causing harm to the state (*laesae rei publicae sit actio*) by torturing an elderly slave to death to produce a painting of Prometheus: on *Controu.* 10.5, see H. Morales, 'The torturer's apprentice: Parrhasius and the limits of art', in J. Elsner (ed.), *Art and Text in Roman Culture* (Cambridge and New York, 1996), 182–209.

<sup>2</sup> Tyrannical torture in Val. Max. 3.3 *De patientia*; torture's truth in Val. Max. 6.8 *De fide seruorum*, 8.4 *De quaestionibus*: see S.J. Lawrence, 'Putting torture (and Valerius Maximus) to the test', *CQ* 66 (2016), 245–60.

<sup>3</sup> Scholarship on early imperial declamation and authors such as Valerius Maximus and Seneca the Elder has drawn attention to how topical discussion of torture was becoming: cf. Pagán (n. 1); Lawrence (n. 2); N.W. Bernstein, "'Torture her until she lies': torture, testimony, and social status in Roman rhetorical education", *G&R* 59 (2012), 165–77; T. Zinsmaier, 'Truth by force? torture as evidence in ancient rhetoric and Roman law', in E. Amato, F. Citti and B. Huelsenbeck (edd.), *Law and Ethics in Greek and Roman Declamation* (Berlin / Munich / Boston, 2015), 201–18. Later historians recount pressure on the long-standing principles around the use of torture during the reigns of both Nero and earlier emperors: Tacitus describes the freedwoman Epicharis' heroic resistance to torture in the wake of the Pisonian conspiracy (*Ann.* 15.57), and Cassius Dio recounts Tiberius' use of torture not just on slaves but also on free persons (*Cass. Dio* 57.19.2).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. G. Raby, 'Seneca's *Trojan Women*: identity and survival in the aftermath of war', in G.W.M. Harrison (ed.), *Seneca in Performance* (London, 2001), 173–95, at 183: 'the depiction of Ulysses is very modern ... Ulysses is genuinely moved by Andromache's bravery and tears—but he understands the potent force Astyanax represents.' Raby's insights are based on her experiences directing a 1998 production of the *Trojan Women*, and her comments on Ulysses are influenced particularly by the work of Elaine Scarry. For E. Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York, 1985), especially 27–59, torture is about the undoing of a person and their world. The justification of interrogation, of finding a crucial piece of information, is a fiction: 'It is crucial to see that the interrogation does not stand outside an episode of torture as its motive or justification: it is internal to the structure of torture, exists there because of its intimate connections to and interactions with the physical pain.' (29)

<sup>5</sup> See U. Schmitzer, 'Odysseus – ein griechischer Held im kaiserzeitlichen Rom', in A. Luther (ed.), *Odyssee-Rezeptionen* (Frankfurt, 2005), 33–53; S. Föllinger, 'Die Gestalt des Odysseus in Senecas *Troades*', in T. Baier, G. Manuwald and B. Zimmermann (edd.), *Seneca: philosophus et magister* (Freiburg, 2005), 105–15.

only to acknowledge it and conform to his 'inscribed' self.<sup>6</sup> George Harrison has argued that criticism of a duplicitous Ulysses in the fragmentary Roman tragedians, alongside the incarnations in Greek tragedy and Augustan epic to which Boyle refers, shapes Seneca's depiction.<sup>7</sup> The debts Seneca's Andromache owes to Ovid and Virgil have been stressed by Elaine Fantham and Andrew Zissos, both of them emphasizing that this intertextuality informs a psychologically complex picture.<sup>8</sup> Such readings, dependent on these characters' earlier appearances in tragedy and epic, have the side-effect of limiting the horizons of the questions the *Troades* tackles to the boundaries of these genres. But I will show that both Andromache's and Ulysses' speeches engage closely with declamation, a genre prevalent in Seneca's day and influential upon his writings and a genre which repeatedly touches on the issue of torture.<sup>9</sup> Seneca's own prose texts also often invoke torture, but only torture for punishment.<sup>10</sup> Acknowledging the role that the dialogue between torture and declamation plays in the scene means that both Ulysses and Andromache emerge as far more sophisticated characters than previously recognized.

One question that should be discussed is whether a Roman audience would accept the scene as accurately depicting the contemporary realities of the military interrogation of a prisoner. Comparing Ulysses' behaviour with references to military interrogation by writers such as Josephus, Frontinus, Livy and Caesar would suggest that the scene does not. Andromache is a *captiua*, as she states in the preceding scene (508): she is not yet a slave belonging to the personal property of any of the Greek generals, but rather part of the unallotted *praeda*.<sup>11</sup> Yet Ulysses first starts by treating this captive with relative politeness (addressing her by name, 533) as he requests her to hand over Astyanax, and tries to convince her of the justice of his cause, including begging her pardon (*ueniam dabis*, 546) for thinking it necessary. Within Seneca's contemporary Roman setting, it would have been typical to question enemy captives who were believed to have pertinent military intelligence under physical torture.<sup>12</sup> Torture of captives for

<sup>6</sup> A.J. Boyle, *Tragic Seneca: An Essay in the Theatrical Tradition* (London, 1997), 90.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. G.W.M. Harrison, 'Seneca on the fall of Troy', in G.W.M. Harrison (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Roman Tragedy* (Leiden and Boston, 2015), 118–50, especially 121–2.

<sup>8</sup> See E. Fantham, *Seneca's Troades: A Literary Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary* (Princeton, 1982), 21–2, 67–8; A. Zissos, 'Shades of Virgil: Seneca's *Troades*', *MD* 61 (2008), 191–210.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. M. Wilson, 'Rhetoric and the younger Seneca', in W. Dominik and J. Hall (edd.), *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric* (London, 2007), 425–38; S.F. Bonner, *Roman Declamation in the Late Republic and Early Empire* (Liverpool, 1949), 160–70; H.V. Canter, *The Rhetorical Elements in the Tragedies of Seneca* (Urbana, 1925); S.M. Goldberg, 'Melpomene's declamation (rhetoric and tragedy)', in W. Dominik (ed.), *Roman Eloquence: Rhetoric in Society and Literature* (London and New York, 1997), 136–49.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. J.-C. Courtil, 'Torture in Seneca's philosophical works', in J. Wildberger and M.L. Colish (edd.), *Seneca Philosophus* (Berlin and Boston, 2014), 189–208. Courtil (this note), 189 counts two hundred and fifty-nine references to torture in the prose texts, but only as a punishment following condemnation, or as a symbol of tyranny.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Hecuba's earlier words: *dominum ecce Priami nuribus et natis legens | sortitur urna, praedaque en uilis sequar, Tro.* 57–8. Andromache will become Pyrrhus' property, not Ulysses', through the lottery (*Tro.* 976). On the definition of *praeda* and a general's rights to it, see J. Bradford Churchill, 'Ex qua quod uellent facerent: Roman magistrates' authority over *praeda* and *manubiae*', *TAPhA* 129 (1999), 85–116, who argues that *manubiae*, a subset of the *praeda*, remained in the custody of generals, against the earlier view of I. Shatzman, 'The Roman general's authority over booty', *Historia* 21 (1972), 177–205 that *manubiae* referred to the general's property.

<sup>12</sup> Torture is explicitly mentioned by Josephus of Vespasian's treatment of a Jewish prisoner of war (*BJ* 3.321): ἐπειδὴ καὶ πρότερον ληφθεὶς τις τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰωσασπάτης πρὸς πᾶσαν αἰκίαν βασάνων

intelligence, then, was somewhat analogous to torture of slaves in law-courts, where concerns about their fidelity were allayed by the power of physical torture to produce truth.<sup>13</sup> But Ulysses is both initially respectful towards Andromache and backs away from physical torture.<sup>14</sup>

There is a disjunction between the dramatic situation, a general interrogating a captive, and the tone struck by both Ulysses and Andromache in their discourse. The rhetoric they each channel, and their manner of confrontation, is suggestive of a *controuersia*, even if they are meeting in a fictional extra-legal military interrogation, not within an imaginary courtroom.<sup>15</sup> Even if we are not in ‘Sophistopolis’ during this scene, the arguments offered by Andromache and Ulysses, through intertextual resonances, resemble different *colores* inspired by those of declamatory scenarios, justifying their behaviour.<sup>16</sup> Andromache presents herself as *torta a tyranno pro filio*

ἀντίσχευεν καὶ μηδὲν διὰ πυρὸς ἐξερευνῶσι τοῖς πολεμίοις περὶ τῶν ἔνδον εἰπὼν ἀνεσταυρώθη τοῦ θανάτου καταμειδιῶν, the captive ‘... held out against every sort of torture ... saying nothing ...’. Frontinus recounts how Cato ordered the capture and torture of an enemy soldier for intelligence (*Str.* 1.2.5). In Roman declamation, torture of captives also seems to be expected: cf. Calpurnius Flaccus, *Declamationes* 7.17 *nullos sic ab isto esse tortos nisi captiuos putarent*. The issue is complicated because the most common terms for interrogation in this context are ambiguous as to whether torture was applied or not. For instance, Livy recounts how a detachment of Carthaginian messengers, captured by the *propraetor* Q. Claudius, were threatened with torture: *eum primo incertis implicantes responsis, ut metus tormentorum admotus fateri uera coegit, edocuerunt ...* (27.43.3). They were handed over to the consul C. Claudius Nero for ‘intense questioning’ (*ex captiuis percontatio facta*, 27.43.6). It is unclear whether this second questioning involved torture: Cicero in the *Pro Cluentio* contrasts *percontatio* with questioning under torture (*post aliquod dictum adiungere de ueneno quod non percontatione quaesitum sed per dolorem expressum uideretur*, *Cic. Clu.* 184; but Tacitus refers to *saeuas percontationes* (*Ann.* 15.58) carried out in pursuit of the Pisonian conspirators, having just recounted how the freedwoman Epicharis was tortured (15.57) and the equestrian Antonius Natalis and the senator Flavius Scaevinus were threatened with torture (15.56). The ambiguity is found throughout historical narratives: for example, Caesar in the *Bellum Gallicum* uses phrases such as *ex captiuis cognoscere/quaerere/comperire* (e.g. 1.22.1, 1.50.4, 2.16, 2.17, 5.8.6, 5.9.1, 5.48.2, 5.52.4, 6.35.7, 6.39.4, 7.18; Aulus Hirtius’ supplement features similar phrases, 8.17, 8.26). On Caesar’s use of interrogation, see R.M. Sheldon, *Intelligence Activities in Ancient Rome* (London, 2005), 123–5.

<sup>13</sup> The fate of most captives was to become slaves. Plautus’ *Captiui* in particular focusses on this issue: for A. Richlin, ‘The ones who paid the butcher’s bill: soldiers and war captives in Roman comedy’, in J.H. Clark and B. Turner (edd.), *Brill’s Companion to Military Defeat in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Leiden and Boston, 2018), 213–39, at 227, Plautus makes it ‘clear to the audience that there is no difference between a slave of unknown origin and a free man captured in war’. Slaves in both Greece and Rome lacked the honour (τιμή/*dignitas*) naturally possessed by citizens which gave authority to their testimony. For testimony of a slave to be comparable with that of a citizen, it had to be obtained via torture (cf. Antiph. 6.25 for Athenian courts; *Dig.* 22.5.2 with 22.5.21.2 for the importance of *dignitas* in Roman courts). See further E. Peters, *Torture* (Philadelphia, 1996<sup>2</sup>), 11–19, 30–1; P. du Bois, *Torture and Truth* (New York and London, 1991), 35–46; P. Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1970), 213–16.

<sup>14</sup> Ulysses begins with a *captatio beneuolentiae*, as pointed out by T. Dänzer, ‘Rhetoric on rhetoric: criticism of oratory in Seneca’s *Troades*’, in J. Nagyillés et al. (edd.), *Sapiens ubique ciuis: Proceedings of International Conference on Classical Studies (Szeged, Hungary, 2013)* (Budapest, 2015), 93–106, at 96. Dänzer believes that the whole scene is a ‘multifaceted criticism of contemporary rhetoric’ ([this note], 101).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. N.W. Bernstein, ‘*Distat opus nostrum, sed fontibus exit ab isdem*: declamation and Flavian epic’, in G. Manuwald and A. Voight (edd.), *Flavian Epic Interactions* (Berlin and Boston, 2013), 139–56 on scenarios from *controuersiae* in Statius, Valerius Flaccus and Silius Italicus.

<sup>16</sup> The imaginary city of ‘Sophistopolis’ is a democracy, it is not the aggressor in war, and tyranny belongs to its past, even if would-be tyrants lurk everywhere. See further D.A. Russell, *Greek Declamation* (Cambridge, 1983), 21–33. Bonner (n. 9), 55 defines *color* as a ‘twist of argument’, ‘plea’, or ‘excuse’. See also J. Fairweather, *Seneca the Elder* (Cambridge, 1981), 166–78.

(‘a woman tortured by a tyrant for her son’s sake’), while Ulysses is describing her as though she were *hostis rei publicae quae torquenda est donec conscium indicet* (‘an enemy of the state who must be tortured until she gives up her conspirator’).<sup>17</sup>

### ULYSSES’ THREATS OF PHYSICAL TORTURE

After Ulysses makes his extensive opening case emphasizing the importance of finding Astyanax, outlining the nascent threat to Greek security posed by the Trojan prince as well as the religious pronouncements of Calchas concerning the decrees of Fate, Andromache responds by feigning ignorance of where Astyanax is. Ulysses then decries Andromache’s trust in her ability to hide the truth, *coacta dices sponte quod fari abnuis | stulta est fides celare quod prodas statim* (586–7), and he threatens physical torture. He is adamant that pain (*dolor*) will unearth the truth of Astyanax’s whereabouts:<sup>18</sup>

uerberibus igni omnique cruciatu eloqui  
quodcumque celas adiget inuitam dolor  
et pectore imo condita arcana eruet:  
necessitas plus posse quam pietas solet. (Tro. 578–81)<sup>19</sup>

Through beatings, fire, and every torture, pain will force you to unwillingly divulge whatever you are hiding and will tear the secrets buried deep within your heart: compulsion usually is stronger than loyalty.

The mention of *necessitas* here has been connected by Caviglia and Boyle to the concept of Ἀνάγκη, or Fate, in Greek tragedy, but Keulen seems to come closer when he gives the gloss ‘constraint imposed by external circumstances’ (*OLD* s.v. 3).<sup>20</sup> However, what has been overlooked is that the word frequently occurs within

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Sen. *Controu.* 2.5 *TORTA A TYRANNO PRO MARITO* (on the intertextual links between Andromache’s speech and this *controversia*, cf. nn. 32–4 below with accompanying text) and the law cited in the *thema* in [Quintilian], *Declamationes minores* 307: *proditor torqueatur donec conscios indicet*. See also Calpurnius Flaccus, *Declamationes* 7, where a rich man, having been made *imperator*, tortures the children of his personal enemy when it is rumoured that they are betraying the state.

<sup>18</sup> Declamation frequently entertains scenarios where a protagonist struggles to maintain *pietas*: see B. Breyj, ‘Dilemmas of *pietas* in Roman declamation’, in A.P.M.H. Lardinois, J.H. Blok and M.G.M. van der Poel (edd.), *Sacred Words: Orality, Literacy and Religion* (Leiden and Boston, 2011), 329–50.

<sup>19</sup> I adopt Leo’s suggested emendation of *omnique* for *morte*. The manuscript reading *morte* was obelized by Leo and Giardini; Fantham understands it as *morte proposita*, ‘death threats’, Fitch emends to *cruce*. See J.G. Fitch, *Annaeana Tragica: Notes on the Text of Seneca’s Tragedies* (Leiden and Boston, 2004), 46–7; Fantham (n. 8), 296. All translations are my own.

<sup>20</sup> F. Caviglia, *Le Troiane* (Rome, 1981), 264; A.J. Boyle, *Seneca’s Troades: Introduction, Text, Translation and Commentary* (Leeds, 1994), 188–9; A.J. Keulen, *L. Annaeus Seneca Troades. Introduction, Text & Commentary* (Leiden / Boston / Cologne, 2001), 354. M. Vielberg, ‘*Necessitas* in Seneca’s *Troades*’, *Philologus* 94 (1994), 315–34, at 319 comments: ‘Seneca mit geradezu klinischer Präzision eine Phänomenologie des Zwangs, der *necessitas* entwickelt – Zwang primär verstanden nicht als psychologische, psychopathologische oder kulturelle Erscheinung, sondern als Modus des Politischen, insofern sich aus dem Umgang mit Macht und den Reaktionen auf Machtausübung und –anspruch ein ganzes Spektrum von Verhaltensformen ergibt.’ But the more immediate context into which Ulysses speaks befits a more precise definition of *necessitas* as torture, and only by understanding this specific dimension can we see how it coheres with the broader political *necessitas* which Vielberg describes.

discussions of torture's link to truth in rhetorical handbooks.<sup>21</sup> Ulysses' espousal of physical torture should be set against a backdrop of a rhetorical tradition of discussions about the connection between torture and truth, but the rhetorical texts which contain such arguments either imply or explicitly offer counterarguments denying any such connection.<sup>22</sup> These rhetorical texts are not supporting one side of the debate, but are instead suggesting prepared lines of argument which the orator can flesh out with further details according to whether they are supporting or attacking the evidence from torture.<sup>23</sup> Using an argument from one side of the debate, Ulysses endorses the connection of physical torture with truth, leaving the counterarguments unmentioned.

Yet Ulysses does not act on his threats of physical torture. Before discussing how Ulysses switches to a sophisticated psychological torture, we should assess what in Andromache's words and behaviour causes him to avoid following through on his threats.

### ANDROMACHE AND TORTURING TYRANTS

Though she is now a *captiua*, Seneca retains the traits that feature so prominently in Andromache's Iliadic incarnation, her dignity and her devotion to husband and son. Seneca makes it difficult to see how Andromache the princess and Andromache the captive are qualitatively different, aside from her misfortune.<sup>24</sup> This continuity works in tandem with Andromache's own presentation of her situation through her interrogation by Ulysses, for the language of Andromache's determination to endure the threatened tortures engages with a very different rhetorical tradition from Ulysses' rhetoric. Andromache draws on the narrative that torture is the hallmark of the tyrant:

propono flammas, uulnera et diras mali  
doloris artes et famem et saeuam sitim  
uariasque pestes undique, et ferrum inditum  
uisceribus ustis carceris caeci luem,  
et quidquid audet uictor iratus timens.  
animosa nullos mater admittit metus. (Tro. 578–87)<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> For *necessitas* used specifically in connection with physical torture, see Cic. *Top.* 74, in a discussion on proofs in law-court speeches: *facit etiam necessitas fidem, quae tum a corporibus tum ab animis nascitur. nam et uerberibus, tormentis, igni fatigati quae dicunt ea uidetur ueritas ipsa dicere, et quae perturbationibus animi, dolore, cupiditate, iracundia, metu, qui necessitatis uim habent, afferunt auctoritatem et fidem.* Quintilian also uses the word *necessitas* to express the argument that torture has an intrinsic connection to truth (*Inst.* 5.4.1).

<sup>22</sup> The arguments for and against torture in Aristotle's *Rhetorica* (1376b) are echoed by the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (2.10) in the same neutral fashion (although without mentioning *necessitas*) and by Quintilian: *cum pars altera quaestionem uera fatendi necessitatem uocet, altera saepe etiam causam falsa dicendi, quod aliis patientia facile mendacium faciat, aliis infirmitas necessarium* (*Inst.* 5.4.1). Cf. Zinsmaier (n. 3), 203–8.

<sup>23</sup> This is particularly clear from Cic. *Part. or.* 117–18. Cf. Cic. *De or.* 2.118 on *loci communes*, with S. Rubinelli, *Ars topica* (Dordrecht, 2009), 101–13.

<sup>24</sup> Euripides' *Troades* achieves a similar effect: see N.T. Croally, *Euripidean Polemic: The Trojan Women and the Function of Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1994), 98–104; N.S. Rabinowitz, 'Slaves with slaves: women and class in Euripidean tragedy', in S. Murnaghan and S. Joshel (edd.), *Women and Slaves in Greco-Roman Culture* (London and New York, 1998), 57–69; and K.L. Wrenhaven, *Reconstructing the Slave: The Image of the Slave in Ancient Greece* (London, 2012), 135–9. For instances from Roman literature, see W. Fitzgerald, *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination* (Cambridge and New York, 2000), 88–92.

<sup>25</sup> I follow Mayer's suggestion that *ferrum inditum* refers to heated plates. Cf. R. Mayer, 'Notes on Seneca *tragicus*', *CQ* 41 (1991), 267–9, at 267–8. It is possible that Fantham's reading of *ferrum* as



Set forth the flames, the wounds and the terrible techniques of evil pain, hunger and thirst and every kind of scourge, and the hot iron thrust onto burning flesh, the blight of the dark prison, and whatever the angry conqueror dares in his fear. A courageous mother does not give way to fear.

Both Ulysses and Andromache describe methods of torture but, while the former concerns himself with torture as a means of extracting truth, the latter views it as a method of exerting power (586). Andromache's words focus on the bodily effects of the tortures (*uulnera, uisceribus ustis, caeci carceris, luem*) rather than on the instruments of torture as Ulysses does. She recasts the issue of torture from a search for the truth to an outrageous expression of dominance, and Ulysses as the realization of a tyrant acting with *uis, superbia, libido* and *crudelitas*, the hallmarks of the stock figure of the tyrant developed in the rhetoric and historiography of the Late Republic.<sup>26</sup>

In his prose works, Seneca repeatedly makes this link between tyrants and torture. In the *De ira*, Seneca compares the cruel behaviour of the Persian kings with Caligula. Seneca stresses the status of Caligula's victims. The tyrant refuses to acknowledge that anybody should be exempted from torture (Sen. *Dial.* 5.19.1):

ceciderat flagellis senatores: ipse effecit ut dici posset 'solet fieri'. torserat per omnia quae in rerum natura tristissima sunt, fiduculis, talaribus, eculeo, igne, uultu suo.

He flogged senators: he made it so that it could be said that it was normal. He tortured using the most wretched tools in existence: with 'the strings', 'the sandals', the rack, fire, with his own gaze.

As he personifies *Ira* surrounded by torture devices, Seneca argues that torture is the ultimate expression of anger.<sup>27</sup>

The dating of both the *De ira* and the *Troades* is uncertain—a date in the 40s or early 50s could be given to either—and therefore we cannot know which came first.<sup>28</sup> However, regardless of priority, Andromache's words *quidquid audet uictor iratus timens* (586) channels the connection between *audacia*, torture and the rhetorical figure

'shackles' is correct: see Fantham (n. 8), 296–7. What matters is that Andromache is describing non-fatal torture, not execution. The understanding of O. Zwierlein, 'Versinterpolation und Korruptelen in den Tragödien Senecas', *WJA* 2 (1976), 203–4 and M. Billerbeck, *Senecas Tragödien: Sprachliche und Stilistische Untersuchungen* (Leiden and New York, 1988), 30–1 that *ferrum* refers to a sword cannot be right. On reasons to dismiss the variant manuscript reading *tumens* for *timens*, see J. Fitch, 'Zwierlein's Seneca and the editor's task', *CPh* 84 (1989), 236–51, at 242; Keulen (n. 20), 357.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. J.R. Dunkle, 'The Greek tyrant and Roman political invective of the Late Republic', *TAPhA* 98 (1967), 151–71; J.R. Dunkle, 'The rhetorical tyrant in Roman historiography: Sallust, Livy and Tacitus', *CW* 65 (1971), 12–20. In one of the most prominent examples, Cicero's prosecution of Verres, Cicero reveals the tortures Verres had used as the finale of his (undelivered) second speech. The accusations of torture will show Verres to be a *nefarious tyrannus* (*Verr.* 2.5.117). Cicero compares Verres to paradigmatically cruel tyrants (2.5.145), and depicts Verres' torture of Publius Gavius as indicative of Verres' *audacia* (2.5.170).

<sup>27</sup> Sen. *Dial.* 5.3.6 *ostendenda est rabies eius effrenata et attonita apparatusque illi reddendus est suae, eculei et fiduculae et ergastula ...*

<sup>28</sup> On dating *De ira*, see M. Monteleone, 'De ira', in G. Damschen and A. Heil (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Seneca* (Leiden and Boston, 2014), 127–34, at 127. For *Troades*, see J.G. Fitch, 'Sense-pauses and relative dating in Seneca, Sophocles and Shakespeare', *AJPh* 102 (1981), 289–307. According to Fitch, Seneca's plays fall into three chronologically distinct groups: the *Troades* belongs to a middle period of composition. R.G.M. Nisbet, 'The dating of Seneca's tragedies, with special reference to *Thyestes*', *PLLS* 6 (1990), 95–114, developing Fitch's idea, argues for a *terminus post quem* of A.D. 47 and a *terminus ante quem* of A.D. 54 for the *Troades*.



of the tyrant, with the Senecan twist, thematized in the *De ira*, that all of these are linked to anger. Rather than *uictor iratus* referring to a Ulysses frustrated at the difficulty of his task, as Kingery suggests, or, as Keulen argues, to the Greeks angered at their delay, the term reflects how Andromache and Ulysses are speaking at cross-purposes.<sup>29</sup> Since Ulysses pointedly stated that he was a representative of all the Greeks (525–6), Andromache's singular *uictor* corresponds poorly with either Ulysses or the Greeks but almost exactly with the abstracted tyrant of the rhetorical tradition.

Since she recasts Ulysses as a tyrannical torturer, by analogy Andromache transforms her own role from a captive hiding information to the heroic resister of a tyrant.<sup>30</sup> The victims of tyrannical torture are a particular interest of early imperial declamation.<sup>31</sup> The situation that Andromache seeks to create, of a woman defying a tyrannical torturer, has striking parallels with a *controuersia* (*Controu.* 2.5) from the collection of Seneca's father. The fictional case debated is of a woman who was once tortured by a tyrant in order to force her to divulge the truth about the plot her husband was planning. She did not break, but the ordeal left her barren. After five years her husband divorces her for her failure to have children; she sues him for ingratitude. Many of the declaimers describe the tortures in graphic detail, emphasizing the woman's *mira patientia* (2.5.6), including Arellius Fuscus (Sen. *Controu.* 2.5.4):

explicatur crudelitatis aduersus infelicem feminam adparatus et illa instrumenta uirorum quoque animos ipso uisu frangentia ad excutiendam muliebris pectoris conscientiam **proponuntur**.

The equipment of cruelty is arrayed against the unlucky woman, and those tools, the mere sight of which breaks the spirits even of men, are set out to pluck the secret from the woman's breast.

As Caviglia notes, the usage of *propono* by Andromache to introduce her list of tortures chimes with its use in this passage for the *instrumenta* of torture.<sup>32</sup> There is also considerable overlap between the *instrumenta* of torture referred to by each text.<sup>33</sup> However, such correlation should be treated with caution, since Ulysses' and Andromache's lists of tortures are commonplace throughout Roman literature.<sup>34</sup> Yet the structural parallels between *Controu.* 2.5 and the situation in the *Troades*, as Andromache presents it, are compelling. In both, practising torture is firmly aligned

<sup>29</sup> Cf. H.M. Kingery, *Three Tragedies of Seneca: Hercules Furens, Troades, Medea* (New York, 1908), 24; Keulen (n. 20), 357.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Cic. *Part. or.* 50, with Zinsmaier (n. 3), 206, on the 'heroic' argument against the reliability of torture.

<sup>31</sup> See Bernstein (n. 3), 171–3.

<sup>32</sup> Caviglia (n. 20), 264, commenting on *Tro.* 582, cites the usages of *propono* in *Controu.* 2.5.4 and 7.8.1 as parallels.

<sup>33</sup> Andromache and Ulysses mention fire (*igni*, 578; *flammas*, 582), floggings (*uerberibus*, 578) and heated plates (*ferrum inditum*, 584), all of which feature in the speeches made by declaimers in *Controu.* 2.5: Romanus Hispo (*igne exustum*, 2.5.5), Cornelius Hispanus (*ignes*, 2.5.5), Junius Gallio (2.5.6) and Papirius Fabianus (2.5.6) describe torture using fire; flogging is described by Arellius Fuscus (2.5.4), Romanus Hispo (*flagellis*, 2.5.5), Junius Gallio (*uerbera*, 2.5.6) and Papirius Fabianus (*uerbera*, 2.5.6); the last also speaks of *laminae*, heated metal plates. The variety of the tortures to be arrayed against Andromache (*uariasque pestes undique*) is paralleled in *Controu.* 2.5.5 *adsidue tormenta uariantur*.

<sup>34</sup> e.g. Lucr. 3.1017 *uerbera carnifices robur pix lamina taedae*; see T.P. Wiseman, *Catullus and his World: A Reappraisal* (Cambridge and New York, 1985), 5–6 and B. Breij, 'Inter ignes et flagella: uses of torture in the *Major Declamations*', in A. Lovato, A. Stramaglia and G. Traina (edd.), *Le Declamazioni maggiori pseudo-quintiliane nella Roma imperiale* (Berlin and Boston, 2021), 1–32, at 5–7 on rhetorical lists of tortures.

with masculinity and suffering it with femininity, but multiple declaimers in *Controu.* 2.5 state that such feminine endurance of torture is unexpected.<sup>35</sup> Each of them too tests loyalty to spouse and womb: Andromache's defiance under threat of torture is aimed at protecting her child, but then saves her husband's memory at the cost of Astyanax's life; the nameless woman saves her husband through her silence under torture, but in doing so loses any chance of a child.

There are some noticeable differences. Andromache does not suffer physical torture. Andromache's volubility contrasts with the woman's lack of speech: none of the declaimers gives the woman words during the torture. Triarius stresses her silence: *aiebat tyrannus: 'indica; nulla tua culpa est': <tacet.> caeditur: tacet; uritur: tacet*, 'The tyrant spoke: "Reveal him; there's no blame for you": <she's silent.> She's beaten: she's silent. She's burnt: she's silent' (*Controu.* 2.5.8). The declaimers explicitly gender this: Cestius Pius, addressing her husband, remarks that one thing he will not be able to criticize in his wife is chattiness.<sup>36</sup> Instead, Andromache's exclamations find an analogue with the series of male philosophers who confront Greek tyrants in Valerius Maximus' *exempla* of *patientia* (3.3.ext.2–5). Unlike the *uxor* of *Controu.* 2.5, these philosophers do speak, but their words turn the tables on their torturers, such as by falsely naming close allies of the tyrant's friends as their accomplices. In the confrontation between Anaxarchus and the tyrant Nicocreon, there is a reciprocity between the tortures and the fierce words of the tortured Anaxarchus (Val. Max. 3.3.ext.4):

*talis patientiae aemulus Anaxarchus, cum a tyranno Cypriorum Nicocreonte torqueretur, nec ulla ui inhiberi posset quo minus eum amarissimorum maledictorum uerberibus inuicem ipse torqueret ...*

Anaxarchus rivalled such endurance. When he was being tortured by the Cypriot tyrant Nicocreon, he could not be prevented by any violence from lashing Nicocreon back with blows from the bitterest curses ...

Unlike these *exempla*, the threatened physical torture is not realized in the *Troades*. This somewhat resembles Valerius Maximus' Roman examples of *patientia* (3.3.1–2), where Mucius Scaevola and Pompeius subject themselves to physical pain, demonstrating their powers of endurance and thus the pointlessness of subjecting them to torture. Andromache's words before torture strive to place her within the tradition of *patientia* under torture exemplified by *Controu.* 2.5 and Valerius Maximus. Andromache seeks to show, by anticipatory words rather than by the anticipatory action of Scaevola or

<sup>35</sup> Arellius Fuscus at 2.5.4; Cornelius Hispanus at 2.5.5. Cf. J. Henderson, 'Tales of the unexpurgated (Cert PG)', in M.R. Gale and J.H.D. Scourfield (edd.), *Texts and Violence in the Roman World* (Cambridge and New York, 2018), 179–215 on the voyeuristic 'visceral sexual sadism' (192) of the declaimers' words.

<sup>36</sup> *Controu.* 2.5.2 *utique de uxoris garrulitate queri non potes, cum scias quemadmodum taceat*. Pagán (n. 1), 172 points out that gender norms are being inverted throughout the *controuersia*: 'the wife is portrayed as noble and strong for having endured torture to protect her husband, but is simultaneously portrayed as weak and deficient for her inability to fulfil the primary duty of a wife.' See also D. van Mal-Maeder, *La fiction des declamations* (Leiden and Boston, 2007), 99–101. This contrasts with Andromache: J. Fabre-Serris, 'Women after war in Seneca's *Troades*', in J. Fabre-Serris and A. Keith (edd.), *Women and War in Antiquity* (Baltimore, 2015), 100–18 compares the *Troades* with the *Consolationes ad Marciam* and the *ad Heluiam*, and observes how significant gender is to Seneca in explaining Andromache's inability to control her emotions (108–12). As A. Wilcox, 'Exemplary grief: gender and virtue in Seneca's consolations to women', *Helios* 33 (2006), 73–100 shows, Seneca systematically aligns his definition of *uirtus* with masculinity.

Pompeius, that she has the ability to resist torture. For Kaster, the *patientia* which Valerius Maximus praises is a form of *potestas*, which shows a paradoxical control of the situation.<sup>37</sup> In *Controu.* 2.5, the woman's endurance is described as a victory by Albius Silius, *uicerat saeuitiam patientia* (2.5.9). Andromache's speech channels this tradition to achieve effects both on herself and on Ulysses. Her focus on the effects of torture is a kind of *praemeditatio malorum futurorum*: by imagining the tortures she steels herself for them.<sup>38</sup> Assuming the role of the tortured *exemplum* of *patientia*, Andromache strives to strip Ulysses of his confidence in physical torture.

#### ULYSSES, TORTURE AND THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

Andromache's heroic words seem to overcome Ulysses' threats and his faith in the ability of physical torture to break her. Ulysses brands her *contumax*.<sup>39</sup> Yet Ulysses does not abandon his underlying faith in a truth to be uncovered from within Andromache. Just as an unusual Andromache arises from their confrontation, so Ulysses defies expectations:

[*aside*] nunc aduoca astus, anime, nunc fraudes, dolos,  
nunc totum Vlixem; ueritas numquam perit. (Tro. 613–14)

Now summon up your craftiness, my mind, your lies, your tricks, now be wholly Ulysses: the truth is never lost.

This Ulysses displays an unwavering commitment to the discovery of the truth even as he resorts to 'craftiness, lies and tricks'. Many commentators focus on the intertextual and metatextual self-identification *totum Vlixem*, and ignore the second colon, but the statement *ueritas numquam perit* is hardly what we expect from Ulysses, and is a dramatic break from the character's incarnation in previous texts.<sup>40</sup> At this hinge in the Ulysses–Andromache exchange, after which Ulysses will have the upper hand, Ulysses self-identifies as the master of lies familiar from the Odyssean tradition. The

<sup>37</sup> Cf. R.A. Kaster, 'The taxonomy of patience, or when is *patientia* not a virtue?', *CPh* 97 (2002), 133–44, at 137.

<sup>38</sup> Fantham (n. 8), 297 explains the equivalency of *propone* with *si proposueris*. But it can also be taken as a self-instruction: 'Imagine!' Both meanings operate as Andromache constructs herself and her situation. On *praemeditatio* in Seneca's prose works, see M. Armisen Marchetti, 'Imagination et meditation chez Sénèque: l'exemple de la *praemeditatio*', *REL* 64 (1986), 185–95. C. Star, *The Empire of the Self: Self-Command and Political Speech in Seneca and Petronius* (Baltimore, 2012), 62–83 examines imperatival self-address for self-construction in Seneca's tragedies.

<sup>39</sup> *contumax* is reminiscent of the topos of Plautine slaves showing an insolent unwillingness to divulge the truth when threatened with physical violence. See R. Stewart, *Plautus and Roman Slavery* (Malden, MA / Oxford / Chichester, 2012), 76–8. Plautus puns (*Poen.* 574, *Persa* 305) on *calleo* meaning both 'to be thick-skinned' and 'to be skilful': *callidus*, 'clever', often applied to Plautine slaves, derives from *calleo*. See Fitzgerald (n. 24), 41 and A. Richlin, *Slave Theatre in the Roman Republic* (Cambridge, 2017), 227–8, 393. Aristotle included among the arguments against torture that πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ παχύφρονες [οἱ] καὶ λιθόδερμοι καὶ ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὄντες δυνατοὶ γενναίως ἐγκαρτεροῦσι ταῖς ἀνάγκαις (Arist. *Rh.* 1376b), a claim echoed in Roman declamation with specific application to slaves ([Quintilian], *Declamationes Miores* 7.7): *sed etsi fas est, iudices, dubitare de fide quaestionum, alius debet esse suspectus, ille scilicet, in quo seruilium pectorum recessus, in quo uerniles excutuntur artes.*

<sup>40</sup> Fantham (n. 8) and Boyle (n. 20) offer no comment on line 614b. Keulen (n. 20), 364 and Caviglia (n. 20), 266 discuss the variant manuscript readings *petit* (E) and *latet* (A).

characteristic versatility of πολύτροπος Odysseus facilitates different presentations of his association with trickery in subsequent incarnations in the tradition.<sup>41</sup> There is a distinct shift from the largely neutral, even positive, evaluations of Odysseus' dishonesty found in epic to far more negative appraisals in Greek tragedy.<sup>42</sup> In Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, Odysseus impresses upon Neoptolemus the need for deception as they attempt to bear off Philoctetes' bow and quiver (Soph. *Phil.* 79–82). For the Sophoclean Odysseus, the ends of victory justify the means of lies.<sup>43</sup> Odysseus also abrogates responsibility for his task, both to the army and the sons of Atreus (*Phil.* 1293–4) and to the gods (*Phil.* 989–90). This shows similarities with the Senecan Ulysses, who justifies his demand for Astyanax both as an order from the Greek army and as a divine command from the *fata* (524–8).<sup>44</sup> But in a new twist on this character, by having the archetype of deception in tragedy charged with eliciting information from a lying Andromache, Seneca creates the paradox of a Ulysses so devoted to the unearthing of the truth that he requires his greatest faculties of falsehood for his task.<sup>45</sup>

Thus we move to the second stage of Ulysses' interrogation, in which he uses psychological rather than physical torture.<sup>46</sup> Andromache continues to maintain the pretence that Astyanax is dead (594–604), but her body betrays her: not through the physical torture that Ulysses has threatened but rather through her anxious body language.<sup>47</sup> Ulysses spots that it is at odds with Andromache's claims of having nothing

<sup>41</sup> Cf. W.B. Stanford, *The Ulysses Theme: A Study in the Adaptability of a Traditional Hero* (Oxford, 1963<sup>2</sup>), 8–24.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Stanford (n. 41), 103; N. Worman, *The Cast of Character: Style in Greek Literature* (Austin, 2002), 135–48. E.M. Craik, 'Sophokles and the sophists', *AC* 49 (1980), 247–54 has argued for Sophocles' presentation of Odysseus as a sophist in the *Philoctetes* with accompanying negative overtones: see also P.W. Rose, 'Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and the teachings of the sophists', *HSPH* 80 (1976), 49–105, especially 80–5. However, N. Worman, 'Oedipus, Odysseus, and the failure of rhetoric', in A. Markantonatos (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Philoctetes* (Leiden and Boston, 2012), 325–47 shows that there is diversity between individual treatments (e.g. *Ajax*) amidst the general trend. For Euripides' *Troades* and *Hekabe*, see Föllinger (n. 5), 106–9.

<sup>43</sup> A. Taousiani, 'οὐ μὴ πίθηται: persuasion versus deception in the prologue of Sophocles' *Philoctetes*', *CQ* 61 (2011), 426–44 has explored why the Odysseus of the *Philoctetes* closes off the possibility of using *peithō* and devotes himself to *dolos*, even though the former characterizes many of his successful speech acts in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Whether the Sophoclean Odysseus is more concerned for the victory of the Greeks over Troy or for his own interests is ambiguous: M.W. Blundell, 'The moral character of Odysseus in *Philoctetes*', *GRBS* 28 (1987), 307–29 rejects the reading of M. Nussbaum, 'Consequences and character in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*', *Philosophy and Literature* 1 (1976), 25–53, especially 29–39, of a utilitarian Odysseus.

<sup>44</sup> L. Fantham (n. 8), 292 finds the double motivation an awkward change from Euripides' *Troades*, where Talthybius squarely lays the blame on Ulysses and his anxieties over potential revenge from Astyanax, but Keulen (n. 20), 336 points out the parallel between *minister* (Sen. *Tro.* 524) and ὑπηρετῶ δ' ἐγώ (Soph. *Phil.* 990).

<sup>45</sup> L. Scolari, 'Pragmatics of *fraus*: encoding and decoding of deceit in Seneca's *Troades* and *Thyestes*', in G. Martin, F. Iurescia, S. Hof and G. Sorrentino (edd.), *Pragmatic Approaches to Drama* (Leiden and Boston, 2020), 421–44 shows how both Andromache and Ulysses use deception in this scene.

<sup>46</sup> For a description of psychological torture, see N. Sveass, 'Destroying minds: psychological pain and the crime of torture', *New York City Law Review* 11 (2008), 303–24, particularly at 317: 'Psychological torture is deliberate and targeted attacks on the mind and dignity of the person through humiliation, through degrading mocking, through forcing people into shameful actions and positions and impossible choices.'

<sup>47</sup> C. Benton, 'Split vision: the politics of the gaze in Seneca's *Troades*', in D. Frederick (ed.), *The Roman Gaze: Vision, Power and the Body* (Baltimore, 2002), 31–56 connects Ulysses' gaze to the wider theme of male spectatorial violence against the female characters of the *Troades*.

left to fear.<sup>48</sup> He acts to confirm his suspicions by discussing the fate that awaited Astyanax and by sending out his soldiers to search for the boy, and so deliberately stoking Andromache's fears, *iterabo metum* (626). I find unconvincing the interpretation that *bene est, tenetur* (630) is a pretence by Ulysses that Astyanax has been found alive.<sup>49</sup> It seems more likely to be referring to Andromache in soliloquy: 'all's well, I've got **her** now'.<sup>50</sup> What we see from Ulysses' avowal to be *totum Vlixem* onwards is a Ulysses who takes total control of the situation.

### BREAKING ANDROMACHE

Ulysses' stratagem for coercing Andromache consists of playing Andromache's devotion to her deceased husband Hector against her love for her son. Ulysses threatens, since the boy is apparently dead according to Andromache, to pull down Hector's tomb, claiming that Calchas offered this as an alternative satisfaction for the *fata* (634–41). The audience know this to be a fabrication, as Calchas' speech earlier made no mention of this. But given that Andromache lacks this knowledge, Ulysses knows that he has crafted a dilemma for her of choosing between preserving her husband's memory and saving her child's life. What Ulysses does not know, and Andromache does, is that if the tomb is levelled Astyanax will perish as it collapses on top of him. But rather than decrying the false dilemma or using it to read Andromache as a good or bad mother, what needs reiterating is that Ulysses inflicts extreme mental duress on her during his interrogation.<sup>51</sup>

Ulysses intensifies two fears in Andromache (*animum distrahit geminus timor*, 'a two-fold fear tears my mind apart', 642): rather than a physical *eculeus*, Ulysses subjects Andromache to a rack that her own emotions create.<sup>52</sup> Earlier in her confrontation with

<sup>48</sup> E. Calabrese, 'Lacrimae and uultus: pragmatic considerations on gestures in Seneca's tragedies', in G. Martin, F. Iurescia, S. Hof and G. Sorrentino (edd.), *Pragmatic Approaches to Drama* (Leiden and Boston, 2020), 403–20, at 406–7 demonstrates how Andromache's *uultus*, *gestus* and *incessus* are inconsistent.

<sup>49</sup> Only Kingery (n. 29), 241 translates *tenetur* as referring to Andromache, by analogy with *Med.* 550. Against his forgotten view, Caviglia (n. 20), 71, Fantham (n. 8), 301, Keulen (n. 20), 369, Boyle (n. 20), 191 and J.G. Fitch, *Seneca: Hercules, Trojan Women, Phoenician Women, Medea, Phaedra* (Cambridge, MA, 2002), 227 are in harmony.

<sup>50</sup> Interpreting *tenetur* as a ruse results in some bizarre *non sequitur*. Andromache continues her pretence at lines 632–3 and Ulysses must switch from pretending that Astyanax is alive and caught to elaborating the consequences given that he has already apparently died at lines 634–41. Both Keulen (n. 20), 369 and Boyle (n. 20), 191 observe the parallels with *Med.* 550 and *Thy.* 491, where Medea and Atreus, respectively, are speaking in asides and refer to their successful deceptions and to their probability of entrapping their interlocutors Jason and Thyestes, respectively. The Senecan parallels suggest that Ulysses is speaking in an aside about the success of his plot against Andromache.

<sup>51</sup> M. McAuley, *Reproducing Rome* (Oxford, 2016), 266–72, highlighting Andromache's traumatic experiences, establishes grounds for her ambivalence. T.D. Kohn, 'Combat trauma and Seneca's *Troades*', in F. Citti, A. Iannucci and A. Ziosi (edd.), *Troiane classiche e contemporanee* (Hildesheim, 2017), 131–50 diagnoses the Trojan women collectively, including Andromache, with PTSD. However, A.M. Greaves, "'Post Traumatic Stress Disorder' (PTSD) in ancient Greece: a methodological review', in D. Boatright and S. O'Brien (edd.), *Warfare and Society in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean* (Oxford, 2013), 89–100 points out the methodological difficulties in diagnosing characters in ancient texts, concluding that '[i]t is neither possible nor appropriate to try and retrospectively "diagnose" a historical or literary character with PTSD.'

<sup>52</sup> Seneca uses *distraho* with *eculeus* at *Ep.* 78.14.

Ulysses, Andromache only needed to maintain her composure in the face of Ulysses' threatened harm to herself.<sup>53</sup> She already stated to the chorus prior to the encounter with Ulysses that it was only Astyanax's continued existence that kept her from suicide; she said she feared for her son, not for herself (418–23). By adding another threat to something sacred (*sacer*, 483) to Andromache, her husband's tomb, Ulysses forces Andromache, in deciding whom to save (*statue quem poenae extrahas*, 657), to choose who will suffer. This makes Andromache feel culpable: she becomes angry and frustrated at herself (*ingrata*, 658; *erras*, 659). She rages at Ulysses and the Greeks, which influences the soldiers (668–78), but Ulysses correctly interprets this as indicative of the powerlessness she feels (*furorque cassus feminae*, 679). He repeats his earlier orders to tear down the tomb (679–80). Andromache implores Ulysses to kill her instead (680) and believes that she sees Hector arriving to attack the Greeks (681–4).<sup>54</sup> Ulysses' only response is to reissue his order (685).

Finally, Andromache asks herself if she will be the cause of the destruction of herself, her son and her husband (*quid agis? ruina mater et gnatum et uirum | prosternis una?* 686–7). Andromache wonders if she can appease the Greeks (*forsitan Danaos | prece placare poteris* (687–8): she supplicates Ulysses (691–2), begging for pity (*miserere matris*, 694, repeated at 703) and praying for the future happiness of Ulysses' wife, father and son (698–702). In this last speech, something in Andromache breaks: when Ulysses orders her again to produce Astyanax, she acquiesces. Insidiously, Ulysses' psychological coercion not only exacerbates Andromache's mental turmoil but deprives her of her dignity.<sup>55</sup> And Andromache changes from recognizing Ulysses as the sole agent of her suffering to holding herself to be complicit in her own torture, through her forced participation in an impossible choice.<sup>56</sup> The coercion destroys her last semblance of pride, as she instructs Astyanax to beg for mercy (708–17), which she pretends is no humiliation (*nec turpe puta quidquid miseros Fortuna iubet*, 710–11).<sup>57</sup> She herself pleads with Ulysses (760–2) for some last moments of grieving with Astyanax (766–85, 787–812), before Ulysses brings them, and the scene, to an end (812–13).

Although earlier in the scene threats of physical torture proved ineffective against Andromache whilst they were targeted at her, Ulysses' psychological torture succeeds

<sup>53</sup> In Henri Alleg's account of his torture in Algeria, it was threats to his family that most challenged his resolve: see H. Alleg, *The Question* (New York, 1958), 73–4.

<sup>54</sup> For Fantham (n. 8), 306 a 'moment of delusion'; for Boyle (n. 20), 194 a 'hallucination'. Cf. United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (New York, 2001), 46–7, which mentions hallucinations as a possible sequela of torture, but stresses, both in general and particularly for psychosis, that symptoms must be assessed with regard to cultural context.

<sup>55</sup> D. Laban, *Torture, Power, and Law* (Cambridge and New York, 2014), 150–1 explains how humiliation assaults the torture victim's sense of dignity. See also M. Verbrüggen and H.U. Baer, 'Humiliation: the lasting effect of torture', *Military Medicine* 172 Suppl. 2 (2007), 29–33.

<sup>56</sup> On this paradox of the torture victim's feelings of both powerlessness and complicity, cf. N. Sherman, 'Stoic equanimity in the face of torture', in S.A. Anderson and M.C. Nussbaum (edd.), *Confronting Torture* (Chicago, 2018), 70–87.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Raby (n. 4), 181: 'when she allows her son to see her beg shamefully before an enemy, Andromache shows that she has no pride left.' See further D. Silove, R. Tam, R. Bowles and J. Reid, 'Psychosocial needs of torture survivors', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 25 (1991), 481–90, at 482 on 'the devastating loss of control over [the torture victim's] inner emotional, moral and psychic worlds which is often attended by dehumanized pleading, regression, and an inability to contain primitive emotions' caused by impossible choices such as threats to family.



because it imperils those for whom she is resisting, makes her feel simultaneously complicit and powerless, and humiliates her. The same verb, *eruerē*, is used by Ulysses of his threat to extract the truth from Andromache's body (580), in his orders to the soldiers to seize Astyanax (629), and in his intention to level Hector's tomb (685).<sup>58</sup> *dolor* does tear out the *arcana* from Andromache's heart, as Ulysses predicted earlier (579), even if this *dolor* is the psychological trauma of choosing between betraying husband or son and, in the process, losing her own sense of self, rather than the physical pain Ulysses envisioned at the start of his interrogation.<sup>59</sup>

### JUSTIFYING TORTURE

We have seen that Ulysses is a skilled and adaptable torturer. What I will turn to now are the justifications Ulysses uses for pursuing Astyanax's whereabouts. Ulysses initially uses two justifications, the political, ensuring peace (529) by preventing a future war with a resurgent Troy led by Astyanax, and the religious, claiming that the Fates demand it (528).<sup>60</sup> Commentators tend to privilege the former and ignore the latter: Fantham remarks 'so it is political after all'; for Caviglia, 'a queste argomentazioni "ufficiali" Ulisse ne fa seguire un'altra, quelle che più gli si addice, la necessità politica'.<sup>61</sup> In this they echo Andromache's own opinion (*uatem et insontes deos | praetendis? hoc est pectoris facinus tui*, 'Do you hide behind the prophet and the guiltless gods? This crime is the product of your mind', 753–4).<sup>62</sup> The text does not give us enough to tell whether Ulysses' religious conviction is genuine.<sup>63</sup> But it is worth considering whether a Senecan audience would have found it as rhetorically implausible as some modern literary critics do.<sup>64</sup> Ulysses' words, at least, suggest that he sees the gods' will and Greek interests as aligned, since he elaborates on Calchas' prophecy.

<sup>58</sup> The repetition is noted by Caviglia (n. 20), 262.

<sup>59</sup> See D. Ortiz, *The Blindfold's Eyes* (New York, 2002) for a disturbing memoir about the psychological trauma caused by torture.

<sup>60</sup> The use of *pax* for a profoundly unequal political settlement would be expected by a contemporary Roman audience. Cf. S. Weinstock, 'Pax and the "Ara Pacis"', *JRS* 50 (1960), 44–58, especially 45–6; G. Woolf, 'Roman peace', in J. Rich and G. Shipley (edd.), *War and Society in the Roman World* (London and New York, 1993), 171–94.

<sup>61</sup> Fantham (n. 8), 292; Caviglia (n. 20), 61. W. Schetter, 'Sulla struttura delle *Troiane* di Seneca', *Maia* 93 (1965), 396–429, at 412 n. 1 describes 'l'incongruenza' in detail, but considers it due to an inelegant compositional decision by Seneca.

<sup>62</sup> Vielberg (n. 20), 323–5 highlights Andromache's words here as well as Ulysses' personal investment and the motivations of the Euripidean Odysseus to argue for a politically cynical Ulysses.

<sup>63</sup> Boyle (n. 6), 72 argues that Ulysses acts because he understands the *fata* as the cycle of history: Ulysses attempts on behalf of the Greeks 'to stop the cycle of history by preventing ... Astyanax from becoming another Hector', although the storm will still scatter the fleet, '[t]he fulfilment of fate's demands revealed by Calchas ensures history's cycle'. Cf. A. Schiesaro, *The Passions in Play* (Cambridge and New York, 2003), 199: 'Pyrrhus, Calchas and Ulixes ... advocate an apparent progression which ultimately results in the denial of meaningful change.' The *Troades* on the whole resists any simple equivalence between the political and the religious: Agamemnon, Greek commander-in-chief, suggests consulting Calchas to resolve his dispute with Pyrrhus, but Calchas' response not only undercuts Agamemnon's plea for mercy for Polyxena but also decrees death for Astyanax too.

<sup>64</sup> Among scholars of Roman religion, attitudes are changing regarding elite Roman religious conviction. C.B. Champion, *Peace of the Gods: Elite Religious Practices in the Middle Roman Republic* (Princeton, 2017) holds (of the Republic) that there was 'a genuine, collective conviction on the part of governing elites that Roman success, and indeed the city's very existence, depended on maintaining correct relations with the gods through orthopraxy' (xv). D. Feeney, *Literature and*

Although Calchas said that the fates demanded Astyanax's death because Polyxena's blood was not noble enough (366–7), Ulysses states that the threat to Greek peace (529–33) was referred to by Calchas: *augur haec Calchas canit* (533). Ulysses seems to read between the lines of Calchas' prophecy to imbue it with political meaning: significant, perhaps, is that Ulysses refers to Calchas as an *augur*, and again in the next line.<sup>65</sup> Augury was at the heart of the intersection of Roman religion and politics, and one of the key elements of the Roman religious apparatus that was co-opted by Augustus.<sup>66</sup> Ulysses voices an identification of religious and political concerns in ideological terms that resemble those of the Republic and the Early Empire.<sup>67</sup>

The view that the state's interests align with those of the gods is also found throughout Seneca's *De clementia*. Early in the dialogue, Seneca imagines the declaration Nero can make (*Clem.* 1.1.2):

'egone ex omnibus mortalibus placui electusque sum, qui in terris deorum uice fungerer? ego uitae necisque gentibus arbiter ... haec tot milia gladiatorum, quae pax mea comprimit, ad nutum meum stringentur ...'

'Have I not out of all mortals pleased the gods and been chosen by them to act in their stead on earth? I hold the power of life and death over nations ... at my nod all these thousands of swords, which my peace restrains, will be unsheathed ...'

Divine will and destiny are responsible for Nero as emperor.<sup>68</sup> At the same time, his person ensures the security and safety of his subjects (*pax mea*). The emperor's security

*Religion at Rome* (Cambridge, 1998), 12–46 considers the relevance of Roman religious belief to their literature.

<sup>65</sup> Calchas is also called an *augur* in Cicero's *De diuinatione* (1.87). The only other usage of the term in Senecan tragedy is by Clytemnestra in the *Agamemnon*, when she remarks on how seriously Agamemnon took Calchas' prophecy to sacrifice Iphigenia, compared to his prophecy to return Briseis: *in nos fidelis augur, in captas leuis* (*Ag.* 180). In the *Troades* Agamemnon addresses Calchas as *interpres deum* (351), while both Andromache and the anonymous (Trojan) *nuntius* refer to him as a *uates* (753, 1101), as does Ulysses later when using the fabrication that Calchas offered the alternative of destroying Hector's tomb (634). *uates* was an ambiguous word which could be associated with deceptive prophecy, though so could *augur*: the perceived danger seems to come from individuals outside public religion (see Cato, *Agr.* 7.4, Livy 25.1.8, Cic. *Diu.* 1.132 with F. Santangelo, *Divination, Prediction and the End of the Roman Republic* [Cambridge and New York, 2013], 149–73; cf. J.J. O'Hara, *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy in Vergil's Aeneid* [Princeton, 1993], 176–84). Marcus in the *De diuinatione*, contradicting Quintus, criticizes divination, including that by *augures*, but he also notes that augury is *ad magnas utilitates rei publicae* (*Diu.* 2.70): see further Santangelo (this note), 23–32. If Ulysses' reference to Calchas as *uates* (not *augur*) at 634 is making a distinction, it could be reflecting cynicism (cf. Raby [n. 4], 184–5), or it could be the separation of falsehood from the actual pronouncements of Calchas. But this does not alter the emphasis on Calchas as *augur* at lines 533–4 being seemingly ideological.

<sup>66</sup> See J. Linderski, 'The augural law', *ANRW* 2.16.3 (1986), 2146–312 on the *ius augurium*. L.G. Driediger-Murphy, *Roman Republican Augury* (Oxford, 2019), reassessing, in light of the last thirty years of research on Roman religion, the position that in augury the religious dimension was always subordinate to the political, has argued that augury forms 'some of the best evidence we have for Rome as a deeply, consistently, passionately religious society' (9). On Augustus and augury, see R. Kearsley, 'Octavian and augury: the years 30–27 B.C.', *CQ* 59 (2009), 147–66.

<sup>67</sup> Compare the correlation of *fata* with Roman *imperium* in the *Aeneid*: J. Hedjuk, 'Jupiter's Aeneid: *fama* and *imperium*', *CLAnt* 28 (2009), 279–327.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. J.R. Fears, 'Nero as the viceregent of the gods in Seneca's *De clementia*', *Hermes* 103 (1975), 486–96 for arguments for *diis* as the understood agent of *electus sum*. See also M. Griffin, *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics* (Oxford, 1976), 207, 221–2. However, E.W. Leach, 'The implied reader and the political argument in Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis* and *De clementia*', *Arethusa* 22 (1989), 225 points out that the ambiguity leaves space for the audience to draw their own conclusions.

is identified with the state's security: if Nero should die, 'this calamity would mean the destruction of Roman peace, this would leave the success of such a great people in ruins', *hic casus Romanae pacis exitium erit, hic tanti fortunam populi in ruinas aget* (*Clem.* 1.4.2).<sup>69</sup> In the figure of the emperor, then, Seneca aligns the divine will and national security.<sup>70</sup> Within the rhetorical climate inhabited by the contemporary Senecan audience, Ulysses' double justification of *fata* and *pax* could not just be compatible but inextricably linked.

Ulysses also offers another justification: parenthood. Ulysses describes his fears for the future of his son and for other Greek children when he is confronted with Andromache's stubborn refusal to give up her child, even under threat of physical torture:

hic ipse, quo nunc contumax perstas, amor  
 consulere paruis liberis Danaos monet.  
 post arma tam longinqua, post annos decem  
 minus timerem quos facit Calchas metus,  
 si mihi timerem: bella Telemacho paras. (Tro. 592–3)

This same affection, in which you stubbornly continue, cautions the Greeks to think of their own little children. After such a long war, after ten years, I would be less afraid of the anxieties that Calchas evokes, if I feared for myself: but you prepare war for Telemachus.

Here Ulysses seems to offer a consequentialist position, which differs from his earlier justifications of political and religious necessity: the suffering of Andromache and Astyanax counts for less than the future suffering of all the Greek mothers and children who would be involved in a future war.<sup>71</sup> And, as Fantham points out, Ulysses' love and concern for his own son parallels Andromache's for hers.<sup>72</sup> Ulysses suggests that he has endured the suffering of one Trojan War so that his son may not have to face another; Andromache is prepared to undergo torture to keep her child from harm. His understanding of the desperate lengths to which a parent would go helps him see through Andromache's deception:

[aside] quid agis, Vlixee? Danaidae credent tibi:  
 tu cui? parenti: fingit an quisquam hoc parens,  
 nec abominandae mortis auspicium pauet? (Tro. 607–9)

<sup>69</sup> On the interpretation of *Romana pax*, see S. Braund, *Seneca, De clementia* (Oxford, 2009), 215–16 and, more broadly, H. Cornwell, *Pax and the Politics of Peace: From Republic to Principate* (Oxford and New York, 2017), 195–200.

<sup>70</sup> The phrase 'national security' in the modern era is, of course, particularly associated with the discourse around the United States' foreign policy since the Second World War. Cf. A. Preston, 'Monsters everywhere: a genealogy of national security', *Diplomatic History* 38.3 (2014), 477–500; M. Neocleous, 'From social to national security: on the fabrication of economic order', *Security Dialogue* 37 (2006), 363–84; M.J. Hagan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State 1945–54* (Cambridge and New York, 1998), 1–22. However, the term 'security' is not anachronistic for the arguments of the *De clementia*: Seneca repeatedly uses *securitas* of the state (1.1.8, 1.13.1, 1.19.8, 1.21.1). *securitas* comes to dominate discourse under the Imperial system, and particularly in the Neronian period: the term appears on Roman coinage only from Nero onwards (cf. H.U. Instinsky, *Sicherheit als politisches Problem des römischen Kaisertums* [Baden-Baden, 1952], 21–2). During the Republic, *salus* was the buzzword: e.g. Cic. *Leg.* 3.3.8; Sall. *Cat.* 51.43. See also J.T. Hamilton, *Security: Politics, Humanity and the Philology of Care* (Princeton, 2013), 58–9.

<sup>71</sup> For an influential modern utilitarian defence of torture, see A. Dershowitz, *Why Terrorism Works* (New Haven and London, 2003); B. Brecher, *Torture and the Ticking Bomb* (Malden, MA and Oxford, 2007) offers a utilitarian refutation of Dershowitz.

<sup>72</sup> Fantham (n. 8), 297–8.

What are you doing, Ulysses? The Greeks will trust you, but whom are you trusting? A parent. Would any parent feign such a thing and not shudder at the omen of a hateful death?

Ulysses does not speak of the *mater* but he speaks twice of the *parens*, which embraces his own experience of fatherhood.<sup>73</sup> Ulysses' parenthood acts as motivation for his psychological torture of another parent: he uses Andromache's love for Astyanax against her, out of his own love for his son; his identity as parent enables him to exploit Andromache's maternal identity.<sup>74</sup> However, knowing that parenthood can be a tool in the torture of another because of one's own experience of parenthood conflicts with Scarry's argument that 'in converting the other person's pain into his own power, the torturer experiences the entire occurrence from the nonvulnerable end of the weapon'.<sup>75</sup> Scarry's position that '[f]or the torturers, the sheer and simple fact of human agony is made invisible, and the moral fact of inflicting that agony is made neutral by the feigned urgency and significance of the question' is not wholly wrong when applied to Ulysses: he is not directly able to feel the pain which he puts Andromache through as he threatens the tomb.<sup>76</sup> But it is his recognition of the pain she would be prepared to endure as a parent that enables him to break Andromache. Seneca's Ulysses suggests that torturers are capable of empathy with the victims they torture. In fact, their degree of success may be predicated on the degree to which they can identify with the tortured.

In the *De clementia*, Seneca contends that using excessive torture to punish dehumanizes torturers.<sup>77</sup> So it is striking that, in order to craft an effective torture against Andromache, Ulysses relies on his empathy with her, on his recognition of her as a fellow human being with a rich inner life, and on the emotional vulnerabilities that he shares with her. Ulysses presents a far more nuanced picture of a torturer than we see in the *De clementia* or the *De ira*.

### WHAT TORTURE REVEALS

Both Pagán and Lawrence, in their work on *Controu. 2.5* and Valerius Maximus respectively, have shown that rhetoric in the Early Imperial period was articulating concerns about torture.<sup>78</sup> Long-standing principles surrounding torture were being undermined by the growing number of *maiestas* trials, and it is against the backdrop of rising anxieties among the aristocratic class under Tiberius that we need to read discussions of torture in Seneca the Elder and Valerius Maximus, anxieties which continued under Caligula and Claudius, and were thus relevant for the *Troades* too.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>73</sup> J. Farrell, *Latin Language and Latin Culture: From Ancient to Modern Times* (Cambridge and New York, 2001), 62: 'a woman is seldom called *parens*'.

<sup>74</sup> For other instances of psychological harm in Seneca's tragedies, see A. Wessels, *Ästhetisierung und ästhetische Erfahrung von Gewalt* (Heidelberg, 2014), 110–27.

<sup>75</sup> Scarry (n. 4), 59.

<sup>76</sup> Scarry (n. 4), 29. It is important to note that Scarry focusses primarily on physical pain. However, J. Conroy, *Unspeakable Acts, Ordinary People: The Dynamics of Torture* (New York, 2000), 89–96 describes examples from Greece and South Africa where torturers were selected by undergoing programmes of extreme extended abuse. *Pace* Scarry, it seems that often torturers do indeed have personal experience of the kind of pain that they are inflicting.

<sup>77</sup> Sen. *Clem.* 1.25.2.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Pagán (n. 1), 178–80. Lawrence (n. 2) argues that Valerius systematically presents torture, even torture of slaves, as unsuccessful at producing the truth.

<sup>79</sup> *Pace* Dänzer (n. 14), 96, who thinks the scene 'too grotesque ... to be true'.

*Maiestas* trials were exceptional in that they allowed for torture to be used on free men, apart from senators, even though Roman citizens had legal immunity to torture in the Republic and the Early Principate, and also for slaves to be tortured to produce evidence against their masters.<sup>80</sup> The crime of *perduellio*, or treason, had gradually merged over time with that of *maiestas*, the offence of diminishing ‘the majesty of the Roman people’.<sup>81</sup> Ulpian’s account of the *lex Iulia maiestatis* authored by Julius Caesar retains both of these elements: *quod aduersus populum Romanum uel aduersus securitatem eius committitur*, ‘that which is committed against the Roman people or against their security’, *Dig.* 48.4.1. National security had been a plausible principle for suspension of normal legal procedure since the Republic: Sallust’s Cato argues (*Cat.* 52.2–4) that, since Rome’s safety is in danger, the Catilinarian conspirators already captured must be executed rather than given the option of exile under the Porcian law. During the Principate, along with the identification of emperor and state, instances of torture became increasingly institutionalized within law. In the context of *maiestas* trials, the torturers would not be interrogating slaves but Roman citizens like themselves: inflicting pain not upon property but upon persons. An ideology instantiating their actions as totally justified and necessary would be important. Rather than slaves who were defined on ideological lines as unlike them, their victims would be uncannily similar to themselves: Romans, citizens, freeborn, elite, masters, sons, fathers. It would be far easier for interrogators to empathize with such interrogatees. Such empathy might have been unsettling, but it might also have been a powerful tool for the torturer to use against the tortured.

In the *Troades*, the anxieties that *Controu.* 2.5 and Valerius Maximus imply about torture become explicit. If *Controu.* 2.5 and Valerius Maximus perhaps suggest one response of the contemporary elite, namely that of suggesting torture’s inefficacy to reduce its growing use against them, in the *Troades* we have a different and more nuanced response. Two separate rhetorical traditions have been juxtaposed by Seneca, voiced by two exceptional figures, the tortured Andromache who can transform her position of powerlessness owing to gender, status and trauma into a heroic resistance that almost succeeds, and the torturing Ulysses, who can justify the righteousness of his actions as a search for truth and whose eventual success relies on empathy with the woman he tortures. Tragedy is under no obligation to provide a resolution, nor to harmonize discordant notes into a unity: Andromache’s and Ulysses’ views on torture can be held in suspense.<sup>82</sup>

Even though Ulysses is successful, Seneca is not necessarily supporting the position that torture works. First, there is no vindication of the argument debated by rhetoricians that the application of physical pain must inevitably result in the truth. Instead, Ulysses

<sup>80</sup> P. Brunt, ‘Evidence given under torture in the Principate’, *ZRG* 97 (1981), 256–65.

<sup>81</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.72 *nam legem maiestatis reduxerat, cui nomen apud ueteres idem, sed alia in iudicium ueniebant, si quis proditione exercitum aut plebem seditionibus, denique male gesta re publica maiestatem populi Romani minuisset*. J. Harries, *Law and Crime in the Roman World* (Cambridge and New York, 2007), 72–7 provides an overview of these developments. See also J. Harries, ‘Contextualising torture: rules and conventions in the Roman *Digest*’, in A.F. Lang, Jr. and A. Beattie (edd.), *War, Torture and Terrorism: Rethinking the Rules of International Security* (London and New York, 2009), 39–53.

<sup>82</sup> A trait the *controuersia* might share: M. Mendelson, ‘Declamation, context and controversiality’, *Rhetoric Review* 13 (1994), 92–107, at 98 argues that ‘controversial thinking is double-voiced’, although E. Gunderson, *Declamation, paternity and Roman identity: authority and the rhetorical self* (Cambridge and New York, 2003), 228–30 suggests that authority must eventually re-establish itself.

succeeds through psychological hurt, an approach which falls outside of the contemporary discourse around torture.<sup>83</sup> However, the power that fictional enactments of torture possess is in the mirror they hold up to the prevailing culture, and in the tensions that the self-reflection exposes between ideological illusions and the nature of reality. In our own time, a majority of story-telling media endorse a connection between torture and truth.<sup>84</sup> Yet the documented evidence points to this being a myth. Torture may perhaps result in some truth that is of use, but we know often it does not, and there is typically no way to distinguish fact from falsehood.<sup>85</sup> Don Dzagulones, a US army interrogator in the Vietnam War, 'could not recall a single incident in which torture was used to a positive end'.<sup>86</sup> John W. Schiemann uses game theory to show that the circumstances in which torture could produce something of value are almost impossibly unlikely.<sup>87</sup> Only in a culture in which the use of torture is rising can such a myth have potency.

Both the *Troades* and our contemporary media feature torturers as 'administ[er]ing ... pain [that] is righteous and even necessary ... intrinsic to the restoration of social and political order, the saving of "innocent" lives'.<sup>88</sup> The circumstances in which Jack Bauer tortures in *24* have, in fact, caused many to think that the ticking time-bomb situation is typical enough to justify the sanctioning of torture, whereas it is actually a fantastic and almost impossible occurrence.<sup>89</sup> So too Astyanax is the 'ticking bomb' of the *Troades*: Ulysses presents it as a certainty that the man he will grow into not only will be devoted to revenging Troy but also will be able to rebuild Troy into an existential threat to all the Greeks. Ulysses makes this claim surrounded by Troy's ashes, to a small child desperately clinging to his mother.

Perhaps what is most to be gained by focussing on the role of torture in this scene is that it points us to a deeper question. Rather than merely adding to the debate around whether torture works or whether torture is ever morally justifiable, the text tests the assumption that we can entertain either of these questions separately. The simultaneous presentation by two different voices of the same torture as, on the one hand, justifiable and, on the other, evil highlights the cognitive dissonance required for the Roman citizen. In the *Troades*, Seneca suggests that one way in which this dissonance is accomplished, namely this effective separation of the efficacy and of the morality of torture, is by thinking solely about efficacy in relation to the Other and solely about morality in relation to the Self. Ulysses assesses at first whether torture, and then

<sup>83</sup> Psychological torture can also be a modern blind-spot. See D. Luban and H. Shue, 'Mental torture: a critique of erasures in U.S. law', *Georgetown Law Journal* 100 (2012), 823–63.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. M. Flynn and F.F. Salek, 'Introduction', in M. Flynn and F.F. Salek (edd.), *Screening Torture: Media Representations of State Terror and Political Domination* (New York, 2012), 1–18, at 10 and D. Rejali, 'Movies of modern torture as convenient truths', in M. Flynn and F.F. Salek (edd.), *Screening Torture: Media Representations of State Terror and Political Domination* (New York, 2012), 219–38.

<sup>85</sup> R. Dejali, *Torture and Democracy* (Princeton, 2009), 480–518 picks apart supposedly successful examples of interrogational torture.

<sup>86</sup> Conroy (n. 76), 113.

<sup>87</sup> J.W. Schiemann, *Does Torture Work?* (Oxford and New York, 2016), 211 concludes: 'Interrogational torture does not work ... [it] generates bad information'.

<sup>88</sup> Flynn and Salek (n. 84), 11.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. H. Shue, 'Torture in dreamland: disposing of the ticking bomb', *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law* 37 (2005), 231–9; K. Kovarovic, 'Our "Jack Bauer" culture: eliminating the ticking time bomb exception to torture', *Florida Journal of International Law* 22 (2010), 251–84; J.P. Piffner, 'The efficacy of coercive interrogation', in T. Lightcap and J. Piffner (edd.), *Examining Torture: Empirical Studies of State Repression* (Basingstoke and New York, 2014), 127–58.



what kind of torture, will effectively deliver results when used against Andromache, a paradigmatic figure of the Other, as a foreign female captive enemy, a conspirator against Greek interests and security. Yet Ulysses' empathy with Andromache, which is what enables him to devise his successful torture, shows how fragile this separation is. As soon as the tortured subject becomes someone with whom the torturer can empathize, the harder it becomes to abstract and separate the questions of efficacy and morality. Such brittleness shows in Ulysses' conflicted responses to Andromache's desire to grieve for her son (762–5, 785–6). Ulysses' wish *misereri tui | utinam liceret* (762–3) captures the torturer's bind between the dehumanizing effects of his actions and the empathetic instincts of his humanity.

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