SENECAN SIGNIFICATION. *TROADES* 1055

The fourth choral ode in Seneca's tragedy *Troades* ends thus (1050–5):

> tum puer matri genetrixque nato
> Troia qua iaceat regione monstrans
> dicet et longe digito notabit:
> 'Ilium est illic, ubi fumus alte
> serpit in caelum nebulaeque turpes.'
> Troes hoc signo patriam uidebunt.[1]

This ending provides a powerful conclusion to the Chorus' Epicurean-inspired philosophizing in the ode.[2] The image of the Trojan women 'seeing' (*uidebunt*)[3] the 'smoke and squalid clouds creep[ing] high into the heavens' (1053–4) recalls the Lucretian description of the soul, atomic in nature, leaving the dead body: compare especially *et nebula ac fumus quoniam discedit in auras, | crede animam quoque diffundi* … (Lucr. 3.436–7) and *ergo dissolui quoque conuenit omnem animai | naturam, ceu fumus, in altas aeris auras* (Lucr. 3.455–6).[4] The image and the Lucretian resonance also create an intratextual link with the second ode of *Troades* (371–408). In that ode, the Chorus set out to develop a philosophical position about the question of death and the possibility of an afterlife. Their philosophizing is aided by Lucretian language and imagery,[5] and the clear verbal echoes of Lucretius include the soul escaping into air like vapour: 'the spirit, with fleeing breath, has mingled with the clouds and passed away into air' (… *profugo spiritus halitu | immixtus nebulis cessit in aera*, 379–80), which recalls the Lucretian lines above. At the end of the fourth ode, the Lucretian intertext of the smoke image is linked to another startling element that may point to (Epicurean) philosophizing: Seneca's use of *signum* (1055).

The meaning of *signum* here has not been fully understood. This is evident from Fantham's comments: she identifies this use of *signum* as 'unconventional', then cites four possible meanings,[6] 'a sign sent by the gods […] or weather portent […] or a conventional signal or indicator established by men, the standard of the legion, the battle trumpet […]; it can also stand for physical or psychological symptoms', before deciding that 'here it must be a marker, pointing the way'.[7] But pinpointing the denotation of *signum* here as 'marker' may obfuscate one strong connotation of the word. While Fantham's reasoning for arriving at her preferred translation is perfectly acceptable

[1] Unless noted otherwise, the Greek and the Latin texts cited follow the respective Oxford Classical Texts.

[2] Lucretian echoes are noted by A.J. Boyle, *Seneca's Troades* (Leeds, 1994), 220, *ad* 1009–12, and A.J. Keulen, *L. Annaeus Seneca* Troades – *Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Leiden, 2001), 475.

[3] See below, n. 18.

[4] See E. Fantham, *Seneca's* Troades. *A Literary Introduction with Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Princeton, 1982), 364–5 for the tradition of the image 'smoke of Troy', which goes back to Hom. *Il.* 21.522–3.

[5] See e.g. the parallels noted by Fantham (n. 4), 262–71, and Boyle (n. 2), 172 ('[t]his ode's view and imaging of death are decidedly Epicurean'). I will provide a fuller discussion of this ode's Lucretian presences elsewhere.

[6] The *OLD* s.v. divides the lemma into thirteen subdivisions.

[7] Fantham (n. 4), 365, ad loc.; Keulen (n. 2), 490, ad loc. understands 'distinguishing mark or feature'.

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and accords well with the spatial deixis of the lines (cf. *monstrans*, 1051; *digito notabit*, 1052; *illic*, 1053; and ***hoc*** *signo*, 1055), there is another explanation, not posited before, that accounts for Seneca's use of *signum* in the context of this Chorus.

An important resonance of *signum* at this point—in an ode, which, as I have noted, also otherwise engages with Lucretian-Epicurean elements—is as part of another of the Chorus' attempts at philosophical reasoning. The Latin *signum*, I suggest, translates the Greek σημεῖον and carries with it the trace of its pervasive uses in philosophical debates about inference and the nature of evidence.[8] This discourse was a key issue of debate between Academics, Epicureans, Stoics and Sceptics.[9] The Epicureans were the only ones to hold on to an approach to signification that, essentially, relied on analogy,[10] a technique that, I shall suggest below, Seneca criticizes in this Chorus. Seneca, moreover, is also likely to have been aware of the proto-philosophical uses of the term σημεῖον in Greek tragedy.[11] At the end of the fourth Chorus in *Troades*, Seneca would thus restore the term from philosophical discourse to the tragic realm. That such a use of *signum* is significant in the context of our choral ode can be corroborated further: in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, smoke is already given as the characteristic of the conquered city Troy (καπνῷ δ' ἁλοῦσα νῦν ἔτ' εὔσημος πόλις, 818),[12] and such usage may be echoed in Seneca's *nota* at *Ag*. 459, *Iliacus atra fumus apparet nota*.[13] In the Epicurean-tinged ode in *Troades*, Seneca describes the same situation not with *nota* but with *signum*. It is worthy of note that Cicero had also used both *nota* and *signum* as translations of the

[8] See *OLD* s.v. *signum* 4, and LSJ s.v. σημεῖον 3, esp. 3b. I. Hacking, *The Emergence of Probability. A Philosophical Study of Early Ideas about Probability, Induction and Statistical Inference* (Cambridge, 2006[2]), 31–48 argues that the sign was transformed into the concept of (inductive) evidence in the late Renaissance.

[9] See J. Allen, *Inference from Signs. Ancient Debates about the Nature of Evidence* (Oxford, 2001), with M.F. Burnyeat, 'The origins of non-deductive inference', in J. Barnes et al. (edd.), *Science and Speculation. Studies in Hellenistic Theory and Practice* (Cambridge, 1982), 193–238 (esp. on the origins of the debate) and D. Sedley, 'On signs', in J. Barnes et al. (this note), 239–72 (on the Epicurean treatise *De Signis* by Philodemus).

[10] Allen (n. 9), 10–11. See also his chapter on 'Epicurean sign-inference in Philodemus', 194–241, esp. 234–41. On the (primitive) mode of analogy and its role in early Greek intellectual enquiry, see G.E.R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy. Two Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought* (Cambridge, 1966). A famous example is the Epicurean belief that the size of the sun, moon and stars is no greater than we see it: see Lucr. 5.564–91, with C. Bailey, *Titi Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex. Edited with Prolegomena, Critical Apparatus, Translation, and Commentary* (Oxford, 1947), 1406–10, and A. Schiesaro, *Simulacrum et imago. Gli argomenti analogici nel De rerum natura* (Pisa, 1990), 67–8.

[11] See Soph. *OT* 916 and frr. 574 and 811 Nauck[2] (passages noted by Allen [n. 9], 1–2 with n. 2).

[12] E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus Agamemnon* (Oxford, 1950), 377, ad loc. notes that 'it is by the smoke (and by that alone) that the conquered city is even now *discernible*' (my emphasis).

[13] Despite R.J. Tarrant, *Seneca Agamemnon* (Cambridge, 1976), 10 and R.J. Tarrant, 'Senecan drama and its antecedents', *HSPh* 82 (1978), 213–63, at 215, it is not impossible that Seneca knew Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*: cf. already C.J. Herington's observations in his review of Tarrant's commentary in *Phoenix* 32 (1978), 270–5, at 273–4, and see also L. Degiovanni, 'Sui modelli nell'*Agamemnon* di Seneca: tre note testuali e interpretative', *SCO* 50 (2004), 373–95, J. Lavery, 'Some Aeschylean influences on Seneca's *Agamemnon*', *MD* 53 (2004), 183–94, and G.O. Hutchinson, *Greek to Latin. Frameworks and Contexts for Intertextuality* (Oxford, 2013), 21–2, esp. n. 28. My pointing to the Aeschylean instance of εὔσημος as a precursor of the Senecan use of *signum* does of course not necessarily require direct use of Aeschylus' play as a source. Note that wording and emphasis are very different in Virgil's use of the commonplace of smoke rising from captured Troy: *saxa uides, mixtoque undantem puluere fumum* (*Aen*. 2.609) and *Ilium et omnis humo fumat Neptunia Troia* (*Aen*. 3.3).

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Greek σημεῖον.[14] Seneca's use of the philosophically loaded terms, disambiguating the Aeschylean εὔσημος as σημεῖον, is not coincidental.[15]

At Seneca's stage of intervention, the term *signum* is loaded with the preceding philosophical debates in epistemology, surrounding the nature of signs and evidence: as a key word among the Epicureans and the Stoics, *signum*/σημεῖον has special currency.[16] I suggest that Seneca, using this utterance, shows the Chorus of Trojan women to be mis-readers of philosophy: the Trojan women's attempt at making use of Stoic or Epicurean techniques of inference in their use of *signum* (by seeing the smoke, the Trojans will know where the home is) would be bound to fail as philosophical argument—but it works in their tragic world.

An example used in philosophical debates about inference that is very similar to the utterance of the Trojan women occurs in Stoic logic: for the Stoics, smoke is observed in conjunction with fire, so that smoke is a sign that is observed together with what it signifies. Such a sign is recognized by the Stoics as a so-called 'commemorative' sign.[17] The Senecan version, however, is not a Stoic 'commemorative' sign. Rather, it shows people, here the Trojan women, attempting to use philosophical logic—but their way of reasoning is neither tenable from a Stoic point of view nor as an Epicurean-inspired inference relying on analogues. Their sign has no referent: what it is a sign of is lost.

This is a further Senecan moment of expressing the failure of the Chorus' philosophizing. More precisely, the Senecan use of *signum* concludes the allusions to Lucretius and Epicurean thought throughout the ode: one of the points of the Senecan example is as criticism of the Epicurean analogic method of inference. According to this Epicurean method, one can draw inferences from one's observations in the spatio-temporal world to the world of atoms.[18] Seneca's use of *signum* in the mouth of the Trojan women, then, may suggest that the Trojans' homeland, marked by the *signum*, exists as little

[14] See G. Striker, 'Academics fighting Academics', in B. Inwood, J. Mansfeld (edd.), *Assent and Argument. Studies in Cicero's Academic Books* (Leiden, 1997), 257–76, at 262 n. 7, with Cicero's free switching between *nota* and *signum* in *Luc*. 33–6.

[15] See also G.A. Staley, *Seneca and the Idea of Tragedy* (Oxford, 2010), 134–6, who regards 'signification' as one of the key components of Stoic poetics and Seneca's idea of tragedy in particular.

[16] Relevant occurrences of the term include its use in Aristotelian logic, and then Stoic and Epicurean philosophy as the basis of inference: cf. e.g. Epicurus, *Ep. Pyth*. 97 (p. 43 Usener), τὰ φαινόμενα, ἃ δεῖ σημεῖα ἀποδέχεσθαι (on this passage, see further Allen [n. 9], 201–2), and Phld. *Sign*. 27 (p. 68 De Lacy), τὸ κοινόν, ὅτι τὰ φανερὰ τῶν ἀδήλων ἐστὶ σημεῖα.

[17] On this, see Burnyeat (n. 9), 211.

[18] The close proximity of *signum* and *uidere* in the Senecan line (*hoc signo … uidebunt*, 1055) is important: on the role of visual perception in the process of σημείωσις, see D.P. Fowler, *Lucretius on Atomic Motion. A Commentary on* De Rerum Natura, *Book Two, Lines 1–332* (Oxford, 2002), 186–95 (on Lucr. 2.112–41). Cf. esp. Lucr. 2.125–8, where the motion of dust particles is a visible *signum* for the motion of atoms: *hoc etiam magis haec animum te aduertere par est | corpora quae in solis radiis turbare uidentur, | quod tales turbae motus quoque materiai | significant clandestinos caecosque subesse*. Cf. also Seneca's own description of the dust particles at *QNat*. 5.1.2 (cited by Fowler [this note], 195), retaining the element of visual perception: *quod ex hoc intellegas licet: cum sol in aliquem clausum locum infusus est, uidemus corpuscula minima in aduersum ferri, alia sursum, alia deorsum, uarie concursantia*. Note, however, that Seneca uses the phenomenon for different ends: unlike the Epicurean Lucretius, he does not want to prove the motion of atoms; rather, he uses it as evidence of the air never being motionless even if it is 'still'.

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as the atomic world the Epicureans believe in based on their naïve—the Stoic voice of Seneca suggests—way of inference.*

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A NOTE ON TRIMALCHIO'S THREE (EQUALS TWO) LIBRARIES[1]

At Petron. *Sat.* 48.4 Trimalchio makes a famous boast about owning three libraries:

tres bibliothecas habeo, unam Graecam, alteram Latinam.

I have three libraries: one Greek, another Latin.

Because 'one' plus 'another (of two)' cannot equal three, editors since Tilebomenus (Jacques Mentel or 'Mentelius', in his edition published in Paris in 1664)[2] have helped the numbers add up by supplying *II* where the MSS have *tres*. Thus one sees a fairly even split in the major recent editions of the 'Cena Trimalchionis' of the *Satyrica* between those who have made the maths work by way of emendation (Bücheler, Smith, Müller, Öberg) and those who have stuck with what is quite obviously the *lectio difficilior* (Ernout, Sage & Gilleland, Schönberger, Schmeling).[3]

Those advocating *tres* have the MSS solidly on their side. But the stronger reading leaves them to make sense of a nonsensical assertion. It has been explained as 'dumme Angeberei' ['stupid bravado'] on Trimalchio's part;[4] as a joke that we can no longer get;[5] 'comic aposiopesis;'[6] an absurd assertion highlighting Trimalchio's stupidity and confusion about libraries coming only in pairs;[7] and as a reference to an actual

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[2] Jo. Caius Tilebomenus [Jacques Mentel] (ed.), *Anekdoton ex Petronii Arbitri Satirico* (Paris, 1664).
[3] F. Bücheler (ed.), *Petronii Arbitri Satirarum Reliquiae* (Berlin, 1862); K. Müller (ed.), *Petronius Satyricon Reliquiae* (Munich and Leipzig, 2003[4]); M. Smith (ed.), *Petronii Arbitri Cena Trimalchionis* (Oxford, 1975); J. Öberg (ed.), *Petronius Cena Trimalchionis. A New Critical Edition* (Stockholm, 1999); A. Ernout (ed.), *Pétrone: Le Satiricon* (Paris, 1958[4]); E. Sage and B. Gilleland (edd.), *Petronius: The Satiricon* (New York, 1969[2]); O. Schönberger (ed. and trans.), *Petron Satyrgeschichten* (Berlin, 1992). Schmeling's text of Petronius is forthcoming. His case for *tres* appears in G. Schmeling, *A Commentary on the* Satyrica *of Petronius* (Oxford, 2011), ad loc.
[4] Schönberger (n. 3), 283.
[5] H. Schnur (ed. and trans.), *Satyricon. Ein römischer Schelmenroman* (Stuttgart, 1968), 211: 'Welcher Witz hier beabsichtigt ist, ist unklar.'
[6] B. Baldwin, 'Editing Petronius: methods and examples,' *AClass* 31 (1988), 37–50, at 45.
[7] As an 'absurd reading, and so probably correct', see W. Sedgwick, *The Cena Trimalchionis of Petronius* (Oxford, 1950), ad loc. Fuller elaborations of Sedgwick's 'absurdist' interpretation have

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