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Stoic Representation of *insania* in Seneca's *Phaedra*

Phaedra *is a drama of the presentation of human passion, with a focus on depicting how the heroine is unable to control the destructive forces of the soul. The study reveals that despite being aware of and expressing the destructive nature of her madness, she does not exercise self-control, but increasingly succumbs to the power of the passion for her stepson. After being rejected, in her insane state of mind, she accuses the young man, which has fatal consequences. Seneca often expresses Phaedra's insanity with the use of pictorial representations and compares them to the destructive forces of nature. These metaphors inspired by nature highlight an important point in Seneca's philosophy: the linkage of the cosmic and the individual. My aim is to emphasize Seneca's Stoic interpretation of virtuous life and* insania.

Keywords: Seneca, Phaedra, passion, *insania*, metaphors

Phaidra/Phaedra in dramatic literature

The tragedy of Phaidra's unhappy love has inspired many authors from antiquity to the present day. It was staged twice by Euripides, but since the first version of the drama failed, he changed it, so as not to offend the moral sense of the Athenian audience.[1] The second version of the two tragedies is left to us. Sophocles also wrote about the queen's story, but we just have a few fragments from the work, making it very difficult to compare it to Seneca's *Phaedra*. Phaedra's passion for her stepson has been mentioned or explained by several authors in Roman literature, but not in the genre of drama.[2]

[1] In the first version, Phaidra personally reveals her love for her stepson.

[2] BRADY (2014: 12). See Cic. *N.D.* 3, 76; *Off*. 1, 32; Verg. *A*. 6, 437–458; Ov. *Her*. 4; Prop. 2, 50. It is first mentioned in Greek poetry by Homer in the history of Bellerophontes (Hom. *Il*. 6.).

The tragedy of Euripides begins with the monologue of Aphrodite, in which the goddess swears revenge against the young man because he worships only the virgin Artemis. The plot is clear from the beginning of the drama, as Aphrodite comes up with her plan to catch up with his father's curse on Hippolytus.[3] The young man is just returning home in glory to Artemis, mocking Aphrodite in spite of his servant's warning. Haughty, aristocratic, and masculine traits blend into his identity, and all this is intertwined into a kind of cold, rational denial of love. Phaidra, as a helpless victim of passion, wants to follow the rational advice of the nurse, but she does not have the strength to obey the word of common sense. She is aware of the insoluble contrast between morality and passion, which is why she decides to flee to suicide, but is persuaded by the nurse's plan to seduce. The nurse confesses her mistress's fatal love for the young man, but receives a cold rejection. In order to save the appearance of her honour and reputation, and to take revenge on the young man who refuses her love, the Queen leaves a letter to her husband falsely accusing Hippolytus, and she commits suicide. The second part of the drama depicts the clash of Theseus and Hippolytos, who believes in the calumny of Phaidra. After the father curses his son, Hippolytos is dragged to death by his horses. At the end of the drama, Artemis sheds light on the terrible reality.[4]

Seneca's *Phaedra*

Phaedra is one of Seneca's most successful tragedies. It was the first antique drama to be performed during the Renaissance. Seneca reworked the myth based on Euripides, enriching it with new power, and Phaedra's characterization was also given a stronger image, especially in describing her open longing for Hippolytus. Seneca's *Phaedra* also captured the imagination of later tragic poets, especially Racine's.[5]

Comparing the Greek and Roman works, Euripides accepts more the heroine's character flaws as inherent traits, while Seneca explores the destructive power of passion, reveals the turning of rejected love

[3] E. *Hipp*. 217–222.
[4] GOFF (1990: 106).
[5] MAYER (2014).

into anger and then revenge and destructiveness, thus focusing on the deep soul representation.[6] Seneca brings up Theseus's affairs at the beginning of the drama, prompting his audience to ask if Phaedra would be less attracted to her stepson if he had been more loyal to her.[7] Euripides explicitly emphasizes the inadequacy of Phaidra's love, without giving any reason for its potential background. There are also differences in the role of the nurse. While in the Greek play the nurse, seeing the Queen's suffering, goes on to intercede herself, in the Roman work she vigorously tries to dissuade her mistress from the sinful path of passion. She only begins to support the revelation of Phaedra's love when sees that her mistress wants to commit suicide.[8] In Euripides' drama, everything is done by the nurse, there is no communication between Phaidra and the young man, but in the Latin tragedy we can read about Phaedra's heartbreaking confession and then cold rejection.[9] While in the Greek work the Queen commits suicide due to the shame, Seneca's Phaedra only decides this when she finds out that Hippolytus is dead. Unlike Seneca's heroine, Euripides' Phaidra takes no responsibility, accusing the young man in a letter before her suicide, which her husband finds in the hands of the dead woman. Then Artemis appears and sheds light on the truth. In the Senecan play, on the other hand, Phaedra herself confesses her sin to Theseus.[10] In my view, these differences show that Seneca, as a Stoic philosopher, places more emphasis on portraying Phaedra's soul than Euripides. The development and driving forces of the madness of passion come to the fore more than in the work of his Greek predecessor, so the audience can understand the formation and destructive power of *insania*. Phaedra represents the developing human being at the end of the play as she takes responsibility for her lies, reflecting the importance of stoic self-examination.

For Seneca, the figure of Phaedra is a kind of "mirror" that presents the destructive and invincible madness of lust in line with Stoic tradi-

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[6] ROISMAN (2005).

[7] Sen. *Phaedr.* 96–97.

[8] Sen. *Phaedr.* 277.

[9] Sen. *Phaedr.* 600–718.

[10] See ROISMAN (2005: 72–88) for more details.

tions. Phaedra calls her madness with the term *furor*, which pushes her into sin.[11] The heroine is aware of the guilt of the passions in her soul, which she expresses.[12] In her speech, the Stoic theses are presented, that is, in the full state of passion, man causes the loss of himself (and his environment), and in this case he no longer listens to common sense, as the power of madness will dominate the ration.[13] Despite being aware of and expressing the destructive nature of her state of mind, the heroine does not exercise self-control, but increasingly allows herself to fall into the power of passion.

The nurse's speech reflects important views of Stoic philosophy, the emphasis on self-control, and the importance of a person captive to passion "wanting to be healed".[14] If we recognize the passions in our soul in time, we can stifle the full manifestation of the „disease", but self-knowledge and willpower are essential for this. So the existence of the will, in Seneca's words, is "already half healing," as it attracts the existence of self-control, that is, a kind of higher level of personality development through which *ratio* provides harmonious, moderate conditions in the human soul. The nurse's speech is thus an example of how Seneca's prose and tragic works can be linked, and theses of Stoic philosophy can be found in both genres. The thesis found in the prose works that the first "blows" of the manifestation of passions (*primus motus*)[15] must be recognized and must be done against them is reflected back in the words of the nurse.

Therefore discipline, will, self-control (*obseruatio*) is essential, by which our life can be balanced, free from the negative effects of emotions. While the first "motion" (*primus motus*) is not intentional, in the second stage the person surrenders to the emotions in the soul, and in the third phase it is completely impossible to reverse the process.[16] The nurse conveys this view: if we suppress the passion at the beginning, we

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[11] Sen. *Phaedr*. 178–179: *sed furor cogit sequi peiora.*

[12] Sen. *Phaedr*. 179–180: *uadit animus in praeceps sciens / remeatque frustra sana consilia appetens*.

[13] Sen. *Phaedr*. 184: *uicit ac regnat furor.* Cf. E. *Med.* 1078–1079.

[14] Sen. *Phaedr*. 249: *pars sanitatis uelle sanari fuit.*

[15] Sen. *Ir*. 2, 4, 1.

[16] Sen. *Ir*. 2, 4, 1.

can triumph over it, while if not, we cannot prevent the development of *insania* later on.

Phaedra is aware of the destructive power of her passion, but since she feels unable to restrain herself, there is only one path assigned to her: suicide.[17] Instead of fighting against herself, Phaedra intends to flee to suicide, which she marks as a victory. At the same time, the nurse, worried about her mistress' life, convinces her that she could rather try to conquer Hippolytus' heart. The nurse uses the term *mente non sana* for Phaedra's mental state and describes at length how the heroine behaves due to her insane mind: she is death pale,[18] cannot sleep,[19] insecure, and nothing distracts her.

The nurse also brings up the tendency of the upper social class to be immoderate in order to reflect Phaedra's state of mind.[20] According to the nurse, the main cause of *insania* is the immodesty, the hedonistic way of life, the possibility of which is given to the higher social class, and of which Seneca himself was a part. The philosopher carries the same message in this passage as in *De providentia*. According to him, people from lower social class tend to keep moderation, while the rich always crave for new stimuli and lust, do not respect the law and traditions.[21] We can see that Seneca takes a kind of holistic approach, since, as we have observed in the prose writings,[22] he thinks that there is a reason, a trigger for every manifestation of madness. By highlighting the greater propensity of the upper classes to insanity and the family inheritance of passion, he emphasizes that the stimuli of the environment in

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[17] Sen. *Phaedr.* 250–254*: Non omnis animo cessit ingenuo pudor. / paremus, altrix. qui regi non uult amor, / uincatur. haud te, fama, maculari sinam. / haec sola ratio est, unicum effugium mali: /uirum sequamur, morte praeuertam nefas.*

[18] Sen. *Phaedr.* 586: *ora morti similis obduxit color*.

[19] Sen. *Phaedr.* 369: *somni immemor.*

[20] Sen. *Phaedr.* 208–214: *cur in penates rarius tenues subit / haec delicatas eligens pestis domos? / cur sancta paruis habitat in tectis Venus / mediumque sanos uulgus affectus tenet / et se coercent modica, contra diuites / regnoque fulti plura quam fas est petunt?*

[21] Cf. Sen. *Prov.* 4, 10: *cum omnia quae excesserunt modum noceant, periculosissima felicitatis intemperantia est: mouet cerebrum, in uanas mentem imagines euocat, multum inter falsum ac uerum mediae caliginis fundit.*

[22] See, e.g., Sen. *Ep.* 95, 16–17; Sen. *Q. N.* 6, 2, 3; Sen. *Ep*. 88, 19.

which we grow up determine our mental health.[23] If a person is not at a high level of self-awareness and cannot control his/her passion, madness will control his/her actions, leading to destruction. This fact, therefore, again supports the theory that tragedies (in this case, *Phaedra*) carry a Stoic philosophical message like prose works.

In the tragedy, the heroine identifies herself in terms of fate and family history. In her confessions she seeks her destiny, which, although she tries to avoid it, finally submits herself to it.[24] As a Cretan woman, she sees herself destined to repeat Pasiphae's[25] self-destructive behaviour, regardless of the nurse's strong claim that willpower can provide complete freedom from the captivity of the past.[26] It is also worth highlighting the tradition of her family roots deriving from her grandmother: she is Europe, with whom Zeus slept in the form of a bull, from which Minos, the father of Phaedra, was born.[27] Phaedra refers to the minotaur as *nostra monstra*,[28] emphasizing the family heritage of savagery, "monsterism". Phaedra is aware of this "hereditary tradition," as she reveals in her first speech that she recognizes the same forbidden desire in herself that Pasiphae has experienced. The use of *noster amor* points out that the unnatural female desire (*furor*) flows through the female members of the family as a stamp of common destiny.[29] According to her, there is no „Minos girl" who can live in fulfilled love, because family heritage, curse, sin are inherited.[30] When Phaedra reveals her love to Hippolytus, she recognizes and declares that she carries the curse of the

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[23] Sen. *Ir.* 2, 20, 1.

[24] Euripides mentions the family tradition only once.

[25] Sen *Phaedr.* 242: *meminimus matris.*

[26] ELIOPOULOS (2016: 94–110): In the author's interpretation, the path of passion in the *Phaedra* consists of the following characteristics: identity disorientation; weak will; the idea that death is the only solution; elimination of the ration; two interpretations of nature; acceptance of subordination to destiny; appearance of physical symptoms.

[27] Sen *Phaedr.* 303–304: *fronte nunc torva petulans iuvencus / virginum stravit sua terga ludo.* Here, the expression *virginum ... ludo* may refer to the wording of Ovidius *ludere virginibus* when he talks about the abduction of Europe. (Ov. *Met*. 2, 845).

[28] Sen. *Phaedr.* 122.

[29] Sen. *Phaedr*. 112–114: *Quo tendis, anime? quid furens saltus amas? / fatale miserae matris agnosco malum: / peccare noster nouit in siluis amor* .

[30] Sen. *Phaedr*. 127–128: *ulla Minois leui / defuncta amore est, iungitur semper nefas*.

family, that is, she finally comes to know the "destiny of their house": the female members of the family rush into their loss and are aware of it but they cannot oppose it. She declares that she will pursue her love wherever, overcoming all obstacles, through fire and water,[31] as she is driven by her madness.[32]

The nurse and Hippolytus also emphasize and compare Phaedra's love with that of her mother.[33]According to Hippolytus Phaedra even transcends the guilt of her "monster-conceiving" mother, and considers a direct connection to be discovered between the mother and Phaedra, meaning she was already surrounded by a kind of "monstrosity" in Pasiphae's uterus. In the drama, the womb is not only a symbolic life-blood of this "monstrosity" but also a symbol of excessive desire and deception.[34] We can see this in Phaedra's attempt to manipulate when, knowing the sinful nature of her desire, she tries to transform it into a legitimate form and legitimize it.[35] If she can convince Hippolytus to marry her, her desire will not be a sin. She hopes to do so by bringing Hippolytus to the throne.[36] When Hippolytus appears, she confesses her love to the young man.[37] She is burned by a desire that pervades her body, all the way to her viscera.[38] She takes responsibility for her emotions and, unlike the heroine of Euripides, personally confesses her passion.

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[31] Sen. *Phaedr*. 700–701*: te uel per ignes, per mare insanum sequar* / *rupesque et amnes, unda quos torrens rapit.*

[32] Sen. *Phaedr*. 702–703: *quacumque gressus tuleris hac amens agar--* / *iterum, superbe, genibus aduoluor tuis.* She makes a similar statement when she learns of the death of her love: 1179–1180: *et te per undas perque Tartareos lacus,* / *per Styga, per amnes igneos amens sequar.*

[33] *Phaedr.* 169–172; Sen. *Phaedr.* 688–693.

[34] BENTON (2003: 107–108).

[35] Sen. *Phaedr.* 596–598: *admouimus nefanda. si coepta exequor,* / *forsan iugali crimen abscondam face:* / *honesta quaedam scelera successus facit.*

[36] Sen. *Phaedr.* 618–623: *te imperia regere, me decet iussa exequi* / *muliebre non est regna tutari urbium.* / *tu qui iuuentae flore primaeuo uiges,* / *ciues paterno fortis imperio rege;* / *sinu receptam supplicem ac seruam tege:* / *miserere uiduae.*

[37] Sen. *Phaedr.* 640–641: *Pectus insanum uapor* / *amorque torret.*

[38] Sen. *Phaedr.* 41–643.

When Phaedra's proposal to Hippolytus fails and Theseus returns, her revenge and anger rises due to the disappointment, and, concealing her own sin, accuses the young man for his father. Women emerge as masters of betrayal and manipulation as the nurse comes up with her plan.[39] At the same time, Phaedra goes even further: she hides her true sin as if she was hiding another. The returning Theseus is informed by the nurse that her mistress is in no way willing to reveal her grief, taking it with her to the grave. When Phaedra sees the time has come to attack Hippolytus, her strategically structured speech reflects consciousness: in her first words to Theseus, she highlights his royalism and, as soon as she begins to talk about what happened, mentions herself as queen and wife to strengthen her position.[40] Phaedra consciously lies, which she does because of her madness (*dementia*) caused by her love, but at the end of the drama (unlike Euripides' Phaidra) she takes responsibility and confesses everything.[41] According to Gill, Seneca is considered innovative in his tragedies due to his interest in self-examination and self-awareness.[42] Phaedra's responsibility can be interpreted as the result of this process of self-examination, as she confesses her sin – unlike the Greek predecessor – and commits suicide as self-punishment. The chorus refers to the heroine with the term *uecors*[43] when sees Phaedra with a sword in her hand, who shows the symptoms of *dementia*. She sees no other way out to endure her pain, she chooses death.

Seneca's heroine identifies herself with her raging desire throughout the drama, but she does nothing against it.[44] In line with Stoic theses, she portrays a person who recognizes her passion and the fact that she should stifle herself, but finally let her madness unfold.[45] *Phaedra* is a drama of the presentation of human passion, which presents the destructive forces of the soul. The wise man is the one who succeeds in

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[39] Sen. *Phaedr.* 719–721: *Deprensa culpa est. anime, quid segnis stupes? / regeramus ipsi crimen atque ultro impiam / Venerem arguamus: scelere uelandum est scelus*.

[40] BENTON (2003: 109).

[41] Sen. *Phaedr.* 1193: *quod ipsa demens pectore insano hauseram*.

[42] GILL (2009).

[43] Sen. *Phaedr.* 1155: *strictoque uecors Phaedra quid ferro parat?*

[44] GILL (2009: 65–84).

[45] MAYER (2014: 475–482).

this, who is competent in weighing his judgments, who "cures" himself from the disease of passion, who can change his destiny by will, listens fully to his rational thinking and trusts that his emotions cannot influence him.[46]

Metaphors of *insania* in Seneca's *Phaedra*

Since *Phaedra* is first and foremost a drama of passion, the most common metaphors are related to erotic desire. Fire as passion (*amor* / *furor*) is one of the most common symbols that devours the heroine both mentally and physically.[47] In the wording of the chorus, the desire of love is a disease that spreads through the channels of the body containing vital fluids.[48] The fire of passion destroys everything, penetrates through the blood vessels all the way to the marrow, and consumes our insides. Phaedra herself uses it to visualize her insane love.[49] The flame of the sinful passion in Phaedra's soul matures and grows like the steam emanating from Mount Etna. Her desire is not only an inner fire, but also a disease (*malum*) that burns and completely destroys the woman. The chorus also emphasizes Cupid's power, as the warmth of the flames of his arrows is known all over the world.[50] According to the nurse, the insane flame of passion can no longer be silenced,[51] and gives a long description of the physical manifestations of her mistress' *furor*.[52] Describing Phaedra's passion as a disease, while focusing on physical symptoms, reveals the physical and mental changes of the heroine at the same time. The hopeless passion devours the queen both externally and internally: she is sleepless, reluctant, weak, lifeless, pale, and thinks of suicide.

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[46] See e.g., DL 7, 101–103, Gal. PHP. 5, 2, 49; 5, 3,1.

[47] In the drama of Euripides, the metaphor of fire does not occur often.

[48] Sen. *Phaedr*. 279–282: *labitur totas furor in medullas / igne furtivo populante venas. / non habet latam data plaga frontem, / sed vorat tectas penitus medullas*.

[49] Sen. *Phaedr.* 101–102: *alitur et crescit malum / et ardet intus qualis Aetnaeo vapor / exundat antro*.

[50] Sen. *Phaedr.* 290–295: *iuvenum feroces / concitat flammas senibusque fessis/rursus extinctos revocat calores, / virginum ignoto ferit igne pectus / et iubet caelo superos relicto / vultibus falsis habitare terras.*

[51] Sen. *Phaedr.* 360: *finisque flammis nullus insanis erit.*

[52] Sen. *Phaedr.* 360–380.

The storm is also a common metaphor in the drama. Seneca contrasts *furor* as a storm with the "ship" of *ratio*.[53] When the barge is already filled with water (that is to say, passion has largely triumphed), the ship runs aground, and the waves of sea storm triumph over the ship's passengers (i.e. passion takes over control and *insania* manifests itself). Phaedra, when she learns of Hippolytus' death, asks Poseidon to strike her with all his might, to send against her the "monsters" of the sea, for she lied falsely, and for this reason the young man was sentenced to death.[54] Hippolytus also prays for the destruction of the storm when Phaedra confesses her love to him: he asks Zeus to strike him with his fiery lightning bolt.[55] A similar phenomenon can be observed in Theseus' speech when the truth is revealed and he realizes that he has innocently punished his son.[56] This cosmic projection[57] and the internal monologues and struggles arising from individual suffering shed light on an important theory of Stoic philosophy. The control of the human soul is not influenced by external forces, but by man himself, the power of passions characterizes the wise man. Seneca extends human behaviour, inner spiritual conflicts, and passion into the cosmos by displaying insecurity and unbridledness in nature. Pictorial images of the individual psychological state and nature, the state of the world, are simultaneously in

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[53] Sen. *Phaedr.* 181–185: *sic cum gravatam navita adversa ratem / propellit unda, cedit in vanum labor / et victa prono puppis aufertur vado. / quid ratio possit? vicit ac regnat furor / potensque tota mente dominatur deus.*

[54] Sen. *Phaedr.* 1159–1163: *Me me, profundi saeue dominator freti, / inuade et in me monstra caerulei maris / emitte, quidquid intimo Tethys sinu / extrema gestat, quidquid Oceanus uagis / complexus undis ultimo fluctu tegit.*

[55] Sen. *Phaedr.* 682–684: *in me tona, me fige, me uelox cremet / transactus ignis: sum nocens, merui mori:/ placui nouercae*. See SEGAL (2008: 136–156): According to Segal, there are two important elements in Seneca's dramatic assertation: self-revelation and the frequent connection of nature and the individual when the protagonist places herself in the center of the world and declares: the whole cosmos contributes and is involved, which also functions as a kind of punishment. This poetic technique is nicely observed in these passages.

[56] Sen. *Phaedr.* 1238: *Dehisce tellus, recipe me dirum chaos*.

[57] In *Oedipus*, for example, a recurring motif is the relationship between the microcosm and the macrocosm, the upheaval of nature indicates an individual's mental turmoil, e.g., *Oed*. 371: *natura versa est*.

line with the Stoic concept of the unified cosmos.[58] This can also be seen in the following passages: the sea floods and threatens the land,[59] the earth trembles,[60] like the messenger's lips when reporting the events.[61]

The assignment of the human soul's turmoil to the sea plays a significant role throughout the messenger's speech, but most importantly in the passage below:

> tantus Auster Sicula disturbat freta
> nec tam furens Ionius exsurgit sinus
> regnante Coro, saxa cum fluctu tremunt
> et cana summum spuma Leucaten ferit.[62]

The use of the term *furens* (1012) links the storm in particular to Phaedra's passion, and *regnante Coro* (1013) not only presents the natural world in terms of human social and political forms, but also symbolizes that the passion has taken control and rationality can no longer prevail in either the human soul or nature. The term *tremunt* in the same line conveys a connection to line 1034, where the mouth of the messenger trembles (1050), just as the earth.[63] This world inspired by Stoic philosophy[64]: spiritual turmoil causes sympathetic chain reactions in the envi-

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[58] SEGAL (2008: 136–156).

[59] Sen. *Phaedr.* 1015–1016: *consurgit ingens pontus in vastum aggerem / tumidumque monstro pelagus in terras ruit*.

[60] Sen. *Phaedr.* 1050: *tremuere terrae.*

[61] Sen. *Phaedr.* 1034: *os quassat tremor.*

[62] Sen. *Phaedr*. 1008–1014.

[63] The notion of Aphrodite's or Eros' immanent, nature-depicting power is not new: in Hesiod's *Theogonia* (120–122) he triumphs over strong men and gods and he is one of the earliest indigenous gods. Similar thoughts can be found in Seneca's works, where Cupid, the son of Venus, dominates not only humans and gods (283–324), but all creatures of earth, air, and sea (325–351), which theory culminates in the following passage: Sen. *Phaedr*. 352–353: *vindicat omnes / natura sibi. Nihil immune est.*

[64] SEGAL (2008: 136). According to Stoic philosophy, human beings must live according to their personal nature, with a full understanding of the universe's system and must utilise this knowledge to inform their actions. This can be put down to the fact that Stoic philosophy is: *divinorum et humanorum scientiam* (Sen. *epist*. 89,5). Seneca dramatizes the protagonist's suffering with a wide range of pictorial representations that connect man and nature, and projects the "personal emotion into a cosmic frame."

ronment: this can be seen primarily Phaedra's "unnatural" passion for Hippolytus, and Pasiphae's insane love for the Cretan bull, which eventually leads to the terrible cataclysm,[65] and to the death of the young man.

For Phaedra, one of the most common metaphors of her and Pasiphae's insane passion is the wilderness, the world of nature, the scene of the passion that created a monster like the minotaur, where the mad deeds are acceptable. In this interpretation, nature symbolizes for Phaedra the place where she can treat Hippolytus as a potential prey, i.e. she lives with the boundless impulses of the hunter, so that the young man symbolically plays the role of a prey.[66] From the beginning of the drama, the Phaedra uses the metaphor of nature, the wild world, which depicts her insane love.[67] Calling herself as mad (*furens*), she admits that her guilty love is born in the woods, and the term *noster amor* also sheds light on the family heritage, the attitude of passion for nature, the guilty love that arises in the wild.

Phaedra, identifying her love and herself with the world of nature, discards her richly decorated clothes and desires clothes that match the wild. Her garment symbolizes the sinful desire, rooted in the depths of nature, and at the same time her new identity, which is entirely subordinate to Hippolytus.[68] Giving up her queen identity, she puts on the hunter's attire, enjoying the freedom of her new role and identity, wants to go into the woods and set out in search of Hippolytus. She adapts her appearance to that of the Amazon, which requires simple clothing and weapons.

The womb is also a dominant metaphor in the drama: both Hippolytus and the nurse refer to the fact that the sinful family heritage is matur-

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ROSENMEYER (1989: 124) claims that the play emphasizes the integration of the human and the cosmic. In this mosaic of *sympatheia* and *contagio*, the ostensible theme of divine punishment is neglected. For more details, see e.g. Sen. *epist*. 90,3; INWOOD (2008: 167–168); SETAIOLI (2007: 334).

[65] Sen. *Phaedr*. 1081: *incurrit ore corniger ponti horridus.*

[66] See PRATT (2009: 46–48; 50–51); ROSENMEYER (1993: 107–112; 149–159).

[67] Sen. *Phaedr*. 112–114: *quid furens saltus amas?* (…) *peccare noster nouit in siluis amor*.

[68] Sen. *Phaedr*. 397–403: *[talis seueri mater Hippolyti fuit.] / qualis relictis frigidi Ponti plagis / egit cateruas Atticum pulsans solum / Tanaitis aut Maeotis et nodo comas / coegit emisitque, lunata latus / protecta pelta, talis in siluas ferar* .

ing in the womb. When Phaedra confesses her love to Hippolytus, the young man brands her worse than Phaedra's monster-bearing mother.[69] Hippolytus discovers a clear connection between the womb that gave birth to the minotaur and Phaedra, i.e., since Phaedra was also carried by the same uterus, the "monstrosity," the sinful family legacy already surrounded her in Pasiphae's womb and she absorbed it. The nurse also alludes to the insane passion in the family at the beginning of the tragedy, and in her speech the womb is a symbol of the inheritance of *insania* rooted in the family.[70] So the "monster-like" psychic retaliation of the family begins in the infected uterus, i.e., the uterus is a metaphor for the inheritance of insanity. Seneca also presents this phenomenon with the overthrow of the order of nature, since, as explained above, he extends *insania* into the cosmos, i.e., the images of the individual psychological state and nature are simultaneously in harmony. Due to the fact that Phaedra's passion is *insania*, the order of the world collapses. Seneca interprets this phenomenon in the web of family inheritance, i.e. the love of the female members is in all cases destructive, like the fire and the sea storm, like the womb which carries "monstrosity" or like the lush and wild nature.

We can see, that *Phaedra* is a drama of human passion, the representation of the destructive forces in the soul. I agree with Eliopoulos' view that Seneca presents the peculiarities of passion in the tragedy in accordance with Stoic traditions.[71] Such a peculiarity in my research is that we must recognize the first "blows" of passions in order to stop their formation; or the tendency of the upper social class to be immoderate, their greater propensity for insanity and the family inheritance of the madness of passion. Seneca emphasizes these phenomena in his prose works[72] as well as in the tragedy. We can also mention the cosmic pro-

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[69] Sen. *Phaedr.* 688–693*: o maius ausa matre monstrifera malum / genetrice peior! illa se tantum stupro / contaminavit, et tamen tacitum diu / crimen biformi partus exhibuit nota, / scelusque matris arguit vultu truci / ambiguus infans. ille te venter tulit!*

[70] Sen. *Phaedr.* 170–176*: memorque matris metue concubitus nouos. / miscere thalamos patris et gnati apparas / uteroque prolem capere confusam impio? / perge et nefandis uerte naturam ignibus. / cur monstra cessant? Aula cur fratris uacat? / prodigia totiens orbis insueta audiet, / natura totiens legibus cedet suis, / quotiens amabit Cressa?*

[71] ELIOPOULUS (2016: 94–117).

[72] E.g. Sen. *Prov*. 4, 10.

jection and the internal monologues that result from individual suffering. In Segal's view, in the tragedy, the visual images of the tragic psychological state and nature are simultaneously in line with the Stoic concept of the unified cosmos.[73] I agree with his observation: we have seen that Seneca dramatizes the protagonist's suffering with a wide range of pictorial representations that connect man and nature. This dual rhetorical representation sheds light on the author's relationship to Stoic philosophy.

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[73] SEGAL (2008: 136–156).