

STAVROS FRANGOULIDIS : **From Victor to Victim: Metadrama and Movement of Plot in Seneca's *Hercules Furens*.**

In Seneca's *Hercules Furens* there are two distinct narratives with opposing objectives, one authored by Juno, the other by Hercules. The former seeks to prevent the hero from becoming a god, by directing him to carry out an assault on heaven and eliminate his family, and the latter seeks to implement his vision of the new Golden Age by purging the world of remaining evils. As the two plans collide, they generate confusion in the minds of both Hercules and Amphitryon, in part because Juno is able to exploit Hercules' own overweening ambition. The play associates this kind of ambition with tyrannical behavior. When Hercules' Juno-sent frenzy results in the slaughter of his family, the tragic hero is rendered an intratextual double of the tyrant Lycus, fulfilling the tyrant's goal of eliminating the Theban royal line. This constitutes an attack on Thebes itself, the earthly analogue of heaven. This poetological dimension – in which Hercules' acts follow his own scripted vision set beside that devised by Juno – constitutes a significant Senecan innovation vis-a-vis the Euripidean *Ἡρακλῆς Μαινόμενος* in its treatment of the mythic plot. The dual authorship and ultimate overlap of the two previously opposed plotlines highlight the complex nature and meaning of Hercules' responsibility.

Mots-clés :

Seneca – *Hercules Furens* – Juno – Hercules – Lycus – Metadrama – Intratextuality