

13th Conference of the FIEC (Fédération Internationale des Associations d'Études Classiques)

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1. Images, Texts, Reality

c) Title of the paper

Roman Tiresias: Image of the Seer in Seneca's *Oedipus*

d) Outline of the content, max. 300 words

The amplification of Tiresias in Seneca's tragedy, by development of his scenic presence in the dialogue with Edipo and by his leading role in the parliament of the messenger, who reports the necromancy's ritual, marks the deep differences that separate this new version from the Greek well-known precedents (Boyle 1997).

After a brief mention about the previous versions of the myth, three aspects are considered in this study:

1) The impact of the scenic deployment, supported by stage machinery, and the new plot course that enables the second instance of *diuinatio*.

2) The representation of the Tiresias' character as *haruspex*, with ritual actions of italic tradition (Töchterle 1994), and the reasons for this Romanization.

3) The philosophical conception: the stoic *sympatheia* and fatalism are favorable to all kind of divination (Rosenmeyer 1989). Cosmic *sympatheia* connects all the beings of the universe, which league together to each other by necessary relations that include present, past and future.

The Roman Tiresias that Seneca represents is an *haruspex* who can interpret the signs only by his daughter's intermediation through divinatory italic actions (Flacelière 1961). The rites of pyromancy and *extispicium* (divination for the guts of animals), and the necromancy's ritual are analyzed in particular as forms of *diuinatio* characterized by Cicero (*De Diuinatione*) and supported by Etruscan archaeological testimonies, in special the Liver of Piacenza (Bouché-Leclercq <1882> 2003). This deployment and enlargement of Tiresias does not represent merely a decorative change, as the criticism has thought generally, but it possesses a fundamental meaning in Senecan tragedy.