

GRST 357 – Report 2

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What are the plot similarities between the two versions?

- Destruction of the family as a driving force.
- Theseus, Thanos, and Phaedra are wealthy and important.
- Profane love between Phaedra and her stepson.
- Theseus and Thanos drive Hippolytus and Alexis away to their death.
- Phaedra ends in suicide, renounced by both Thanos (ordered to leave his sight forever) and Theseus ("heavy let the soil lie on her unholy head")

What are the plot dissimilarities between the two versions?

- Alexis reciprocates the feelings of Phaedra as he asks her to declare her love openly. Hippolytus wants nothing to do with her love.
- The second cousin to Alexis is in love with him, a potential normal marriage with financial gain for his father's shipping company. Hippolytus does not have the conflict between women
- Thanos begins Dassin's film by giving Phaedra expensive gifts and naming his new trade ship after her. Theseus has been gone for years, leaving Phaedra alone to care for the palace and lament his absence.
- Phaedra tells Theseus that Hippolytus raped her, while she tells Thanos of her love for his son instead.

What are the main themes of Seneca's version?

- Freedom of Hippolytus' hunting and young age.
- Laws of nature and stoicism, Phaedra's lust and Hippolytus' indifference cause both of their deaths.
- Inner conflict and turmoil within Phaedra, as discussed with her nurse at several points.

What are the main themes of Dassin's version?

- Marriage, Alexis initially wants Phaedra to return with him to London but eventually has the option for marrying his second cousin who is in love with him.
- Freedom of Alexis displayed by his love for his car, a repeated motif representing his life before Phaedra, his death is closely linked with his car as he dramatically drives it over a cliff.
- Wealth representative of family, Thanos' ship named Phaedra serves to display their relationship and the wealth of the family, while it sinking it the end shows the downfall of the family and the beginning of the end for Phaedra.
 - Alexis marrying his second cousin would unite the shipping families for greater wealth. Pursuing Phaedra abandons this opportunity.

Which version conveys their themes most effectively?

- I think that Dassin's version conveys the themes within it more effectively and obviously. There are many repeated motifs that represent different themes that tie different things together (his car, destruction of the family, the Phaedra trade ship) that Seneca doesn't really have.

Which version do you like best?

- I still prefer Seneca's version. I enjoy reading more than watching and the mythology present is fun and more interesting to me.