

## SENECA, *QVAESTIONES NATVRALES* 4B.4.2: *AERIS* OR *TEMPORIS*? REMARKS ON THE MEANING OF *TEMPVS*\*

### ABSTRACT

In *Quaestiones naturales* 4b.4.2 Seneca states that in early spring the weather drastically changes: in the warmer sky larger water droplets are formed and cause rain. The description of this ‘greater change’ (*maior inclinatio*) is linked in the manuscript tradition to two different controversial readings, *temporis* and *aeris*, which are irregularly distributed. Most recent editors have printed the first reading, but H.M. Hine is probably right to accept *aeris*. A careful linguistic, stemmatic and stylistic examination shows that *temporis* is likely to be a Medieval Latin gloss of *aeris*: the equivalence of both words would be difficult to justify in Classical Latin, but in Late Latin and in Medieval Latin *tempus* developed a climatological meaning which is explicitly found in medieval writers and glossaries and is also very widespread in Romance languages. The presence of this gloss in the hyparchetype  $\Psi$ , which is ultimately the source for most medieval copies, accounts for the irregular distribution of both readings in the manuscript tradition; this hypothesis is particularly consistent with Hine’s suggestion that  $\Psi$  probably had interlinear or marginal readings. This historical investigation on the meaning of *tempus* is also relevant to the end of the same passage, where stylistic and linguistic evidence supports the reading *tepure* rather than *tempore*.

**Keywords:** Seneca; *Quaestiones naturales*; *tempus*; *aer*; stemmatics; medieval glosses; historical semantics; weather Latin vocabulary

In his Teubner edition of Seneca’s *Quaestiones naturales*, Harry M. Hine adopts a different solution from most modern editors at 4b.4.2:<sup>1</sup>

hieme aer riget et ideo nondum in aquam uertitur sed in niuem, cui propior aer est. cum uer coepit, maior inclinatio *aeris* sequitur, et calidior caelo maiora fiunt stillicidia. ideo, ut ait Vergilius noster, ‘cum ruit imbriferum uer’ uehementior mutatio est aeris undique patefacti et soluentis se ipso *tepure* adiuuante.

cum – uer] Verg. *G.* 1.313

*aeris* (*ante sequitur*)  $Z \pi$  : *temporis*  $\delta \theta W^2$  : *om.*  $W^1$  : *temporis* uel *aeris*  $\lambda$  : *teporis* *Gruterus* || *tepure*  $P^c$  *cod. Nicotianus* : *tempore*  $\Omega$

In winter the air is cold and so does not yet turn to water, but to snow, which is closer to air. When spring begins, a greater change in the air ensues, and in the warmer sky larger drops are

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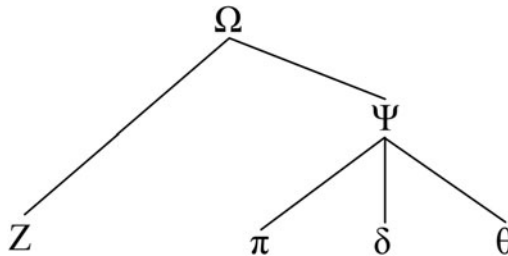
<sup>1</sup> *Lucii Annaei Senecae Naturalium quaestionum libros recognouit* H.M. Hine (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1996), 192–3.

formed. So, as our Virgil says, ‘when showery spring pours down’, there is a more vigorous transformation of the air, which spreads and expands in all directions, helped by the warmth.<sup>2</sup>

The text describes the coming of spring and the climatological changes which take place at this time of the year, notably frequent rainfall. As transmitted in the manuscript tradition, these lines present two textual problems: (i) a matter of difficult choice (*aeris* vs *temporis*); (ii) a possible archetypal corruption (*tepore* vs *tempore*). Both issues involve the same term, *tempus*, and its interpretation, and they should be analysed together. I will begin with the first textual problem and will, in the light of its results, briefly examine the second problem at the end.

After *maior inclinatio* (here a synonym for *mutatio*), two variants are attested in the manuscript tradition: *aeris* is transmitted in MS Z (Geneva, lat. 77, mid twelfth century), which constitutes one of the two branches of Hine’s bipartite stemma; within the second branch ( $\Psi$ ), *aeris* is transmitted in  $\pi$ , which is one of the three descendants of  $\Psi$ .<sup>3</sup> The reading *temporis* can be restored for  $\delta$  and  $\theta$ , the sources of the two other branches that issued from  $\Psi$ .<sup>4</sup> As a consequence of contamination, both variants, *temporis uel aeris*, were combined in a group of *deteriores* ( $\lambda$ ), where *uel aeris* is likely to have arisen from a marginal or supralinear alternative to *temporis*.<sup>5</sup>

As Hine notes, this distribution of variants is remarkably problematic in the *stemma codicum* of the work.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>2</sup> H.M. Hine (transl.), *Lucius Annaeus Seneca Natural Questions* (Chicago, 2010), 66.

<sup>3</sup> An outline of the textual tradition has been provided by H.M. Hine himself in ‘The manuscript tradition of Seneca’s *Natural Questions*’, *CQ* 30 (1980), 183–217; he has also offered briefer descriptions in L.D. Reynolds (ed.), *Text and Transmission. A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford, 1983), 376–8 and in the preface to the Teubner edition (Hine [n. 1], V–XXI). At this point the readings of  $\pi$  can be restored from its descendants  $\rho$  (P = Par. lat. 6628, twelfth/thirteenth century; and R = El Escorial O.III.2, thirteenth century) and U (Munich Clm 11049, fifteenth century). The word was omitted by the scribe of W (Venice, Lat. Z.268 [1548], fourteenth century), a sister manuscript to U (a subsequent hand inserted *temporis*).

<sup>4</sup> Three independent descendants of  $\delta$  are identified by Hine: A = Leiden Voss. Lat. O.55, twelfth century; B = Bamberg Class. 1 (M.IV.16), twelfth century (second half); and V = Vat. Pal. lat. 1579, thirteenth/fourteenth century. Between  $\delta$  and  $\Psi$  there was an intermediate  $\alpha$ , but it is not relevant in this passage. The text of  $\theta$  can be restored through the agreement of F = Oxford, Merton College, 250, twelfth century (second half) and H = Par. lat. 8624-I, twelfth century (second half).

<sup>5</sup> This hyparchetype  $\lambda$  is the source of Oxford, St. John’s College, 36, twelfth/thirteenth century; Cambrai 555 (513)-I, twelfth century (second half); Trier, Priesterseminar 66 (R.IV.2), twelfth/thirteenth century; Leiden Voss. Lat. F.69, twelfth century (second half); Leiden, B. P. L. 199, thirteenth century (second half). The *excerpta* transmitted in the twelfth-century *Florilegium Gallicum* also derive from  $\lambda$ ; see Hine (n. 1), XX. The  $\lambda$  family was already identified by A. Gercke in *L. Annaei Senecae Naturalium quaestionum libros VIII edidit A. Gercke* (Leipzig, 1907), XXVIII–XXIX.

<sup>6</sup> This is the *stemma codicum* for this part of the work. The reconstruction of an ancestor of Z ( $\zeta$ ) in other sections of the *Quaestiones naturales* was criticized by M.D. Reeve, ‘*Cuius in usum?* Recent

Z and  $\Psi$  arise independently from the archetype  $\Omega$ . Since  $\pi$   $\delta$   $\theta$  derive independently from  $\Psi$ , the agreement of  $\delta$  and  $\theta$  would imply that  $\Psi$  read *temporis*, which makes *aeris* in  $\pi$  the more surprising. An obvious solution would point to the existence of a common ancestor of  $\delta$  and  $\theta$ , but they do not share a significant number of conjunctive errors.<sup>7</sup> A second solution would entail supposing that  $\pi$  was contaminated with the branch of Z, but there are no other readings that would support this hypothesis of contamination. Hine therefore concludes that  $\Psi$  probably contained glosses or variant readings.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the vast majority of Seneca's editors have chosen *temporis*: it has been printed by Haase, Gercke, Oltramare, Cardó, Corcoran, Codoñer, Vottero and Brok.<sup>9</sup> This variant also inspired Gruter's *teporis*, which has been accepted only by Fickert;<sup>10</sup> no other corrections have been proposed.<sup>11</sup> In view of this, Hine was very innovative: while older editions of Seneca<sup>12</sup> read *aeris*, after 1800 it was printed only by Richard;<sup>13</sup> after Hine, it has been adopted by Parroni.<sup>14</sup>

In order to defend *aeris* Hine argues that it perfectly fits into the text:<sup>15</sup> Seneca states that the winter air is stiff and colder (*riget*) and closer to snow (*niuem, cui propior aer est*); consequently, the air becomes snow. On the contrary, in spring the weather is warmer (*calidiorae caelo*) and air changes into rain. Within this framework, a reference to a natural element (*aer*) is perfectly suitable. In contrast, Hine rightly points out that *tempus* is highly problematic here: *maior inclinatio temporis* would mean 'a greater change of the season' or perhaps 'of the time', but the use of *maior* is problematic and this expression cannot mean 'the weather/air becoming warmer', which is what Seneca states. In this respect Hine accurately stresses that *tempus* cannot be taken as 'climate', which is how Corcoran translates it in his Loeb edition.<sup>16</sup> This short observation on the meaning of *tempus* provides, in my opinion, the key to understanding why the

and future editing', *JRS* 90 (2000), 196–206, at 201; Reeve's observation was accepted by H.M. Hine, 'Seneca's *Naturales Quaestiones* 1960–2005 (Part 1)', *Lustrum* 51 (2009), 253–329, at 274.

<sup>7</sup> Hine (n. 3 [1980]), 196–8.

<sup>8</sup> Hine (n. 3 [1980]), 200–1.

<sup>9</sup> F. Haase (ed.), *L. Annaei Senecae opera quae supersunt*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1884), 2.155–318; Gercke (n. 5); P. Oltramare (ed.), *Sénèque. Questions naturelles*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1929, 1961<sup>2</sup>); C. Cardó (ed.), *L.A. Séneca. Qüestions naturals*, 3 vols. (Barcelona, 1956–9); T.H. Corcoran (ed.), *Seneca. Naturales quaestiones*, 2 vols. (London and Cambridge, MA, 1971–2); C. Codoñer (ed.), *Séneca. Cuestiones naturales*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1979); D. Vottero (ed.), *Questioni naturali di Lucio Annaeo Seneca* (Turin, 1989); M.F.A. Brok (ed.), *L. Annaeus Seneca. Naturales quaestiones* (Darmstadt, 1995); Brok follows Oltramare's Latin text.

<sup>10</sup> K.R. Fickert (ed.), *L. Annaei Senecae Dialogi IX, Naturalium quaestionum libri VII, Ludus de morte Claudii* (Leipzig, 1845). However, as is noted by Hine (n. 3), 197, in that case one would rather expect *in teporem*.

<sup>11</sup> However, Professor C. Codoñer (personal communication) now finds both variants unsatisfactory and suggests to me the possibility of reading *caeli* instead of *aeris* (for the use of *inclinatio caeli*, see Gell. *NA* 14.1.8, Hyg. *Poet. astr.* 4.11, Vitruv. *De arch.* 1.1.10, 1.6.9, 6.1.12). Note that in *QNat.* 1.1.5 (*interim illud existimo, eiusmodi ignes existere aere uehementius trito, cum inclinatio eius in alteram partem facta est*) Gercke (n. 5) in the apparatus criticus suggested *caeli* (as well as *celerius* and *citius*) instead of *eius*, referring to *aere*, but *aere* is probably right. Hine (n. 3 [1980]), 197 rightly emphasizes that *inclinatio aeris* here refers to spatial motion, not to change. I would like to point out the parallel of the comparative of *uehemens* in both texts (*uehementius aere trito* and *uehementior mutatio ... aeris*).

<sup>12</sup> From Muret (Rome, 1593) to Koeler (Göttingen, 1819). See Hine (n. 3 [1980]), 197.

<sup>13</sup> F. Richard and P. Richard (edd.), *Recherches sur la nature (Questions naturelles)* (Paris, 1935).

<sup>14</sup> P. Parroni (ed.), *Seneca. Ricerche sulla natura* (Milan, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> Hine (n. 3 [1980]), 197.

<sup>16</sup> Corcoran (n. 9), 2.51; see Hine (n. 3 [1980]), 197.

reading *temporis* appeared as an alternative to *aeris*, how *temporis* was understood here in the Middle Ages, and why Hine is here right to banish it from Seneca's text.

Like the Germanic languages, Classical Latin usually distinguishes between 'chronological period' (*time*) and 'climate' (*weather*), employing different words for each notion. The first meaning typically corresponds to *tempus* ('time', 'period', 'season', 'era', etc. and, particularly in the plural, generic 'conditions' or 'circumstances'). For its part, the climatological meaning was expressed by *caelum* (so, above, Seneca: *calidior caelo*), *tempestas* (also 'time'), *serenitas* or *sudum* (for a particular state), *dies* (also 'day') or *aer* (borrowed from Greek ἀήρ), but not by *tempus*.<sup>17</sup> This lexical opposition is not typologically isolated: it also appears in English and German, with *time* and *Zeit* used in the first sense and *weather* and *Wetter* in the second.<sup>18</sup> In a very few passages of Classical Latin literature the distinction apparently fades and *tempus* seems to refer to 'conditions of the moment (relating to weather)'.<sup>19</sup> However, in these cases *tempus* or *tempora* does not appear alone: it is systematically combined with *caeli*, which does have a climatological meaning; they together mean 'state/conditions of the sky' (Prop. 2.4.12, Lucr. 5.231) or 'time of the year', 'season' (Lucr. 1.1066, 6.362; Verg. *G.* 4.100).<sup>20</sup>

As is well known, this situation is quite different in the Romance languages, in which this lexical opposition does not exist: the descendants of *tempus*—French *temps*, Italian *tempo*, Spanish *tiempo*, Portuguese *tempo*, Galician *tempo*, Catalan *temps*, Sardinian *tempus* and Romanian  *timp*—simultaneously mean 'time' and 'weather'; the distinction between both meanings essentially depends on the syntactic or semantic context.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> On *aer* and *caelum* particularly in Seneca's *Quaestiones naturales*, see R. Bravo Díaz, 'Aer, aether, caelum, sublimis: estudio del vocabulario técnico utilizado para designar el "cielo" en las *Naturales quaestiones* de Séneca y otros escritores científicos', *Voces* 6 (1995), 9–39. I have checked all the occurrences of *tempus* in Seneca's *Quaestiones naturales*. Of course, *tempus* can be used with *aestiuus* (*QNat.* 1.8.7 *temporibus aestiuus*, 3.26.1 *tempore aestiuo*), *uernus* (*QNat.* 4a.2.19 *uernis temporibus*) or *hibernus* (*QNat.* 6.12.2 or 6.13.3 *hiberno tempore*), but in these cases it means 'summer time', 'spring time' or 'winter time' (rather than 'summer weather', etc.). These cases are parallel to *matutino tempore* (*QNat.* 1.8.6), meaning 'early morning', not 'morning weather'. A tricky passage on this topic is *QNat.* 5.3.2 *atqui nullum tempus magis quam nebulosum caret uento*. Here *tempus* does not mean 'weather' but 'period' or generically 'conditions'. It refers to the period described by Seneca at the beginning of this chapter (5.3.1 *tunc minime uentus est cum aer nubilo grauis est*); *tempus ... nubilum* takes up *cum aer nubilo grauis est*. Hine (n. 2), 74 rightly translates it as 'conditions'. See also the difference at *QNat.* 3.16.3 *hiems numquam aberrauit; aestas suo tempore incaluit* ('Winter never goes astray; summer heats up at the right time', as translated by Hine [n. 2], 35).

<sup>18</sup> See also Norwegian and Swedish *tid* ('time') vs Norwegian *vær* and Swedish *väder* ('weather').

<sup>19</sup> See *OLD* s.v. *tempus* 11b.

<sup>20</sup> Apart from the combination with *caeli*, *OLD* lists only one Classical example of this meaning related to weather: Ov. *Tr.* 1.9a.6 (*tempora si fuerint nubila*). However, this is a metaphorical expression: *tempora* does not refer to 'climate' or 'weather' but to 'situation', 'circumstances'—indeed, it constitutes the opposite of *donec eris sospes* in the previous line—and *nubila* figuratively means 'gloomy', 'sad', 'adverse'. These metaphorical *tempora nubila* are parallel to the more common *tempora dura* (Prop. 1.7.8; Hor. *Epist.* 2.2.46; Ov. *Tr.* 5.10.12). Indeed, this climatological meaning is not recorded by Lewis and Short nor by Gaffiot.

<sup>21</sup> On this well-known polysemy in Romance, see M. Wandruszka, *Sprachen, vergleichbar und unvergleichlich* (Munich, 1969), 42–5. Wandruszka rightly indicates that lexical ambiguity exists only in the singular; plural forms (Sp. *tiempos*, It. *tempi*, etc.) always mean 'time', not 'weather'. This topic still lacks a comprehensive study; interesting remarks are found in W. von Wartburg, *Französisches etymologisches Wörterbuch. Eine Darstellung des galloromanischen Sprachschatzes*, 25 vols. (Basel, 1966–7), 13.185–91; M. Cortelazzo and P. Zolli, *Dizionario etimologico della lingua italiana*, 5 vols. (Bologna, 1979–88), 5.1325; J. Coromines and J.A. Pascual, *Diccionario crítico etimológico castellano e hispánico*, 6 vols. (Madrid, 1980–91), 5.486–7; J. Coromines, *Diccionari etimològic i complementari de la llengua catalana*, 9 vols. (Barcelona, 1980–91), 8.390–4;

Since this well-known evolution—which has been considered as ‘a capital fact in comparative semantics’<sup>22</sup>—is common to every Romance language, it is not likely to have been produced in an independent way. It must have occurred in Vulgar or Late Latin, at a time of linguistic cohesion among the proto-Romance dialects: the Classical semantic opposition between *tempus* and *aer* disappeared gradually when the former expanded its use and developed a meteorological sense; the use of *aer* was reduced stepwise to designate the ‘air’ as a physical element (so its Romance derivatives: French *air*, Italian *aria*, Spanish, Galician and Catalan *aire*, Portuguese *ar*, Sardinian *era*, Romanian *aer*).<sup>23</sup> Significantly, the same semantic change took place in Greek: starting from a chronological meaning (‘occasion’), Modern Greek *καρός* means both ‘weather’ and ‘time’.<sup>24</sup>

These observations provide, in my view, a suitable framework for understanding the emergence of *temporis* in  $\Psi$  and its true nature, as well as a plausible explanation for the stemmatic problem involving the coexistence of both readings in the descendants of  $\Psi$ : while in Classical Latin *temporis* would be meaningless in this passage, in Medieval Latin it can be understood very well as a gloss on *aeris*, interpreted as ‘weather’ or ‘climate’.<sup>25</sup> In effect, the development of a climatological meaning of *tempus* in Late Latin is demonstrated not only by the evidence of the Romance languages; it is very widespread in Medieval Latin texts, in which *tempus* is attested explicitly with the meaning of ‘weather’. An early example of this use comes from a passage of the *Digest* (published by Justinian I in the sixth century); it includes a quotation from Ulpian († c.223/8) in which *condicio temporis* seems to mean ‘an eventuality owing to weather’:

(1) *Dig.* 12.4.5: *si pecuniam ideo acceperis, ut Capuam eas, deinde parato tibi ad proficiscendum condicio temporis uel ualetudinis impedimento fuerit.*<sup>26</sup>

This kind of early example is in line with the fact that the climatological meaning is common to all the Romance languages: it must have developed when Vulgar/Late Latin was still cohesive.<sup>27</sup> This meaning was already noted in 1678 by Du Cange, whose

B. Bon, ‘De nouvelles (co)occurrences pour le *Nouum Glossarium Mediae Latinitatis*. Le traitement d’un mot fréquent : l’exemple de *tempus*’, in C. Giraud and D. Poirel (edd.), *La rigueur et la passion. Mélanges en l’honneur de Pascale Bourgain* (Turnhout, 2016), 909–20.

<sup>22</sup> So Coromines (n. 21), 8.390.

<sup>23</sup> The origin of this semantic shift has not been elucidated and many factors could be involved. The use of *tempora* as generic ‘conditions’ could have left room for it. Some contexts and sequences, such as *tempus aestiuum*, are potentially ambiguous: it could be reinterpreted as ‘summer weather’, not as ‘summer time’. Together with the restriction of *aer* as ‘air’, *tempestas* was progressively specialized as ‘storm’ (Fr. *tempête*, Sp. *tempestad*, Port. *tempestade*) and not as ‘weather’, and *tempus* could assume this sense. Besides, some aspects of the evolution of *aer* in Romance are very complex. The origin of the phraseological meaning ‘facial expression’ in Romance (cf. Fr. ‘avoir l’air d’être ...’, Sp. ‘darse un aire a ...’, etc.) is particularly controversial; see Cortelazzo and Zolli (n. 21), 1.72; Coromines and Pascual (n. 21), 1.90–1; Coromines (n. 21), 1.101–4.

<sup>24</sup> Coromines and Pascual (n. 21), 5.487; Coromines (n. 21), 8.390.

<sup>25</sup> This is, for example, the interpretation of *maior inclinatio aeris* in Parroni (n. 14), 285: ‘il tempo [= weather] cambia più facilmente’.

<sup>26</sup> T. Mommsen and P. Krueger (edd.), *Digesta Iustiniani Augusti*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1870), 1.375, lines 7–9.

<sup>27</sup> Another interesting example appears in a letter written by the Gallo-Roman writer Ruricius, bishop of Limoges († 507/10): *sed quid illic primum laudandum sit aut mirandum, ubi etiam temporis intemperies temperatur? siquidem inibi torridae feruor aestatis tam umbrarum quam undarum rigore depellitur, hiemis uero in tantum non sentitur asperitas, ut intra eadem positus tepor aeris et cantus auium ueris reddat effigiem* (*Ep.* 1.11, in R. Demeulenaere [ed.], *Ruricii Lemouicensis Epistolarum libri duo* [Turnhout, 1985], 325, lines 17–21). However, *temporis intemperies* is ambiguous: it can

famous *Glossarium* lists a number of medieval texts in which *tempus* is equivalent to French *temps*:<sup>28</sup>

(2) *TEMPUS aer, caelum*, Gallice *Temps*: Annales Genuens. ad ann. 1227. apud Murator. tom. 6. col. 446: *ubi per plures dies moram fecit, quia procedere non poterant, nouercante maris et temporis qualitate; exinde uero nondum tempore tranquillo*, etc. Et col. 509: *circa mediam noctem ualidissima fortuna maris et temporis fuit in portu Ianuae*, etc. Chronicon Parm. ad ann. 1296. apud eumd. Murator. tom. 9. col. 836: *semper die noctuque cecidit pluuia ... nullo modo exire uoluerunt propter dictum malum tempus*. Nostris *Mauvais temps*, *Caelum nubilum et pluuiosum dicitur*.

This meaning is also listed in the excellent *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, which provides some clear examples of its use:<sup>29</sup>

(3) Henry de Bracton († 1268), *Note Book*: non potuerunt uenire **propter tempestatem et malum tempus**.

(4) *Pipe Rolls of the Bishopric of Winchester*, 1208–1454 (text dated to the year 1255): propter duritiam **temporis** in hieme.

(5) *Annals of the monastery of Winchester* (the event took place in 1277): audita sunt primo tonitrua ... cum inundacione pluuiie subsequente, licet clarum fuerit **tempus** in die.

Since no specific study has been devoted to this semantic change in Late or Medieval Latin, I shall set out some more examples of this usage in some major Latin authors of the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, who were contemporaries of the oldest surviving manuscripts of Seneca's *Quaestiones naturales*:

(6) Hildebert of Lavardin († 1133), *Vita S. Radegundis* 2.13: non prius ad palatium reuertebatur, quam pia curiositate circumcirca iacentes infirmos, paucis comitata, uisitaret. illa non **temporis importunitatem** causari nouerat, non pluuiis aut niuibus detineri.<sup>30</sup>

(7) Ordericus Vitalis († c.1142), *Historia ecclesiastica* 12.17: Radulfus igitur de Guader a parte aquilonali primus ignem iniecit, et effrenis flamma per urbem statim uolauit, et omnia (**tempus enim autumnii siccum erat**) corripuit.<sup>31</sup>

(8) Thomas Aquinas († 1274), *Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, *quaestio* 70 art. 2: si uero sit discordia testimonii in aliquibus circumstantiis non pertinentibus ad substantiam facti, puta si **tempus fuerit nubilosum uel serenum**, ... talis discordia non praeiudicat testimonio.<sup>32</sup>

refer to weather (see below, *feruor, rigore, asperitas, tepor*, etc.), but it could also be taken as the classical meaning 'season', with reference to *aestas, hiems* or *uer*, in the texts that follow. This kind of example shows the ambiguous contexts in which the semantic shift could take place.

<sup>28</sup> C. du Fresne du Cange et al., *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*, augmented edition by L. Favre, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–7), 8.54a. Digital version at <<http://ducange.enc.sorbonne.fr/TEMPUS>> (checked 19/12/2020).

<sup>29</sup> R.K. Ashdowne, *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, fasc. 17 (Oxford, 2013), 3393. The climatological meaning is also recorded by A. Blaise, *Lexicon Latinitatis Medii Aeu* (Turnhout, 1975), 906 and M. Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus* (Leiden, 1976), 1016.

<sup>30</sup> J.P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina*, 217 vols. (Paris, 1844–55), 171.972B.

<sup>31</sup> M. Chibnall (ed.), *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1969–80), 6.228.

<sup>32</sup> M. Lefébure (ed.), *St Thomas Aquinas. Summa Theologiae, Volume 38 (2a2ae. 63–79): Injustice* (Cambridge, 2006), 134. Note that here *tempus nubilosum* refers to weather and has to be taken

(9) Petrus Cantinellus († after 1306), *Chronicon* 1.1190: item, eodem anno, die ueneris XXIV octubris, uenit nix magna, et congelauit fortiter, et glacies magna fuit, et durauit **malum tempus** multis diebus.<sup>33</sup>

Further examples could be pointed out.<sup>34</sup>

As far as Seneca's passage is concerned, some medieval texts explicitly show that, for a medieval scholar, *tempus* was equivalent to *aer*. Two excellent instances of this correspondence are provided by Alain de Lille and Firmin Le Ver. In his *Distinctiones dictionum theologialium*, Alain de Lille states that *tempus*, as a polysemic word (*tempus dicitur uarietas rerum*), can be equivalent to *aer*; consequently, it can be used for calm or cloudy weather:

(10) Alanus de Insulis († 1202/3), *Distinctiones dictionum theologialium*, Littera 'T', s.v. *tempus*: **tempus ... dicitur aer**, quia secundum qualitates aeris distinguntur tempora anni; unde dicitur tempus esse serenum uel nubilum.<sup>35</sup>

On the other hand, the late medieval Carthusian Firmin Le Ver is the first individual we can identify to have written a Latin-French dictionary. Facing the polysemy of *tempus*, Le Ver remarks that, alongside other things, it also means *aer*, when it refers to nice or cloudy weather:

(11) Firminus Verris († 1444), *Dictionarius*, s.v. *tempus*: **tempus eciam dicitur aer** secundum quod pulcrum est tempus uel nubilum.<sup>36</sup>

This medieval equivalence of *aer* and *tempus* probably underlies the co-occurrence of both words in this passage of Seneca: otherwise its coexistence in the descendants of Ψ would have been difficult to justify in Classical Latin. Even though this semantic development could have started in the popular language, it appears in some of the most cultivated authors during the Middle Ages. These instances conclusively show that a learned medieval scholar could perfectly use *tempus* to explain the meaning of *aer*, which is why the gloss could even substitute for the original reading, which made this innovation almost impossible to detect for most scribes.

The historical explanation of the meaning of *tempus* is probably also relevant to the second textual issue of Seneca's text:

ideo, ut ait Vergilius noster, 'cum ruit imbriferum uer' uehementior mutatio est aeris undique patefacti et soluentis se ipso *tepore* adiuuante.

*tepore* P<sup>c</sup> *cod. Nicotianus* : *tempore* Ω

literally, whereas Ovid's *tempora nubila*, discussed above, did not refer to weather but to times of adversity.

<sup>33</sup> F. Torraca (ed.), *Petri Cantinelli Chronicon* (Città del Castello, 1902), 90.

<sup>34</sup> The search is not always easy, because some of the examples can be ambiguous or very subtle. Such could be the case of a passage in Hugo de Folieto's *De medicina animae* (twelfth century), chapter 4: *solet autem hoc tempus inconstans esse, modo pluuiosum ex uicinitate hiemis, modo siccum ex uicinitate aestatis, modo eadem ratione frigidum, modo calidum* (Migne [n. 30], 176.1188B). At this point the author describes the characteristics of the spring and *hoc tempus* could be then understood as 'this season'. However, what constantly changes (*inconstans*) is not the season but its climate, and consequently *hoc tempus* should be better taken as 'this weather' (rainy or dry).

<sup>35</sup> Migne (n. 30), 210.968A.

<sup>36</sup> B. Merrilees and W. Edwards (edd.), *Firmini Verris dictionarius. Dictionnaire latin-français de Firmin Le Ver* (Turnhout, 1994), 494, lines 73–7.

The general meaning is straightforward, but in the end editors are divided. The reading of the archetype, *tempore adiuuante*, has been accepted by Gercke, Oltramare, Cardó, Corcoran and Parroni in the most recent critical edition. However, it is unsatisfactory, and almost tautological, to state that, ‘when the spring arrives, changes take place thanks to the time(?) / season itself’—that is to say, thanks to the spring itself. In my view, editors such as Haase, Codoñer and Hine are probably right to print *tepore adiuuante* (‘helped by the warmth’), a medieval emendation found in P<sup>c</sup> and the lost *codex Nicotianus*, quoted by Opsopoeus.<sup>37</sup> On the one hand, in the previous lines Seneca had specified the circumstances in which these changes of the air occur: they take place when the sky is warmer (*calidiorae caelo*). Since a higher temperature is presented as the key factor for the climatological change, *tepore adiuuante* clearly gives the required meaning. Furthermore, *tepore* is stylistically perfect. Seneca deliberately structured this passage as a parallel reformulation of the previous statement. Both sentences consist of three matching synonymic phrases: (a) *cum uer coepit* corresponds to *cum ruit imbriferum uer*; (b) *maior inclinatio aeris* is correlated with *uehementior mutatio est aeris*; (c) consequently, *calidiorae caelo* matches *tepore adiuuante*, not *tempore*.<sup>38</sup> The corruption of *tepore* into *tempore* is palaeographically very easy, but it is almost invisible for most medieval readers: since the climatological sense of the word was very widespread, medieval copyists and readers could understand that the state of the air changes *tempore adiuuante*, ‘helped by the weather/climate’, which provides an apparently sound text. This anachronistic interpretation, which is found also in certain modern translations, probably contributed to the preservation of the corruption over centuries; its emendation deserved the noteworthy analytical skills shown by the corrector of P and the *codex Nicotianus*.<sup>39</sup>

To sum up, linguistic analysis provides strong support for reading *aeris* and *tepore*. Evidence from Romance languages and Medieval Latin indicates that in the first passage *temporis* is probably a Medieval Latin gloss of *aeris*. Such marginal or interlinear explanations fit perfectly into the late and corrupt transmission of a technical text, which will have been of interest mainly to erudite readers who will have annotated, corrected and, if possible, collated their manuscripts.<sup>40</sup> This hypothesis is consistent with Hine’s view that Ψ had interlinear or marginal variants and corrections.<sup>41</sup> The presence of alternative readings often leads to the stemmatic inconsistencies shown

<sup>37</sup> The *codex Nicotianus* was very similar to A, belonging to the δ group (see n. 4 above and Hine [n. 3 (1980)], 217 n. 78). Both are in all likelihood medieval emendations, independently made by P<sup>c</sup> and the *codex Nicotianus*.

<sup>38</sup> This intentional synonymic structure continues: the next sentence, *ob hoc nimbi graues magis uastique quam pertinaces deferuntur* (in particular, *nimbi graues magis ... deferuntur*) is obviously parallel to *maiora fiunt stillicidia* in the quoted passage here.

<sup>39</sup> As Hine noted, Corcoran wrongly translated *tempore* as ‘climate’. Some Romance translators are probably misguided by the climatological meaning found in Romance languages. Oltramare’s translation is only partially consistent with Classical Latin (Oltramare [n. 9], 198): ‘secondée par la chaleur même de la saison’ (‘helped by the warmth of the season’). He edits *tempore* (French *saison*), but *la chaleur même* (?) corresponds to *ipso tepore* as well. The same false friend has affected the Catalan version by Cardó (n. 9), 2.82, who renders *tempore adiuuante* as ‘ajudat per la mateixa calor del temps’ (‘helped by the warmth of the weather’); this translation is suspiciously similar to Oltramare’s. Parroni (n. 14), 285 is consistent with Classical Latin: ‘col favore della stagione’.

<sup>40</sup> Indeed, *temporis uel aeris* in λ could arise from a mechanical collation of two manuscripts, but it could also suggest that this use of *temporis* surprised a clever medieval scholar, who wisely looked for an alternative, better reading: ‘Studii et diligentiae philologorum saeculorum fere X/XI–XII/XIII testimonia haec sunt pulchra neque satis hodie aestimanda’ (Gercke [n. 5], XLII).

<sup>41</sup> Hine (n. 3 [1980]), 200.



by the  $\Psi$ -tradition; in particular, it would explain why  $\delta$  and  $\theta$  share an apparent conjunctive error which is absent from  $\pi$ . If this exemplar was annotated at an early date,  $\pi$  chose the older reading, while  $\delta$  and  $\theta$  preferred the gloss. Alternatively, the gloss could have been added to  $\Psi$  after  $\pi$  had been already copied from it. As for the second passage, internal and stylistic reasons—in particular, the parallelism with *calidiorae caelo*—confirm *tepore*, a brilliant medieval emendation. The archetypal error *tempore* probably remained hidden, at least partly, under its medieval interpretation as ‘weather’.

This brief examination of a disputed passage draws attention to a methodological point that is always worth remembering. Manuscript traditions are not coherent systems; instead, they constitute historical stratifications or, to put it in Cesare Segre’s words, ‘diasystems’.<sup>42</sup> They represent a textual, linguistic and stylistic compromise between the (lost) text of the author and the text of the set of copyists and scholars who read, transcribed and modified it for centuries through their own linguistic codes.

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<sup>42</sup> C. Segre, ‘Critique textuelle, théorie des ensembles et diasystèmes’, *BAB* 62 (1976), 279–92, at 285–6.