

SENECA, *MEDEA* 987

...perage, dum faciunt manus.

“*perage*...: ‘finish off (your revenge) while your hands are at it.’ But *faciunt* seems flat, and *fervent* is strongly suggested by *HO* 435 ‘scelus occupandum est: perage dum fervet manus’ (Cornelissen, *Mnemos.* ii. 5 (1877), 187).” – C.D.N. Costa, *Seneca, Medea* (Oxford 1973), p. 158.

This is quite wrong. As Costa himself notes earlier, at line 978 Jason appears and summons his armed followers to assemble. Medea realizes she has to finish her revenge (*perage*) while these armed followers are gathering. For the idiomatic *manum facere* see Cicero, *Pro Caecina* 12. 33: *cum manum fecerit, copias pararit...* and *Verrine* 5. 30. 77: *si aliquam manum contra rem publicam facere potuisset...*

The sentence means therefore: “Get the task over with, while they are gathering their forces.” *Manus* is the object (not subject) of *faciunt*, and *manus facere* is a poetic variant of the prose usage *manum facere*. Compare Medea’s own *parantur arma* at 972.