

**STAGING THE FEMALE**  
**STUDIES IN FEMALE SPACE IN EURIPIDES**

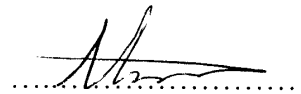
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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF  
PHD IN CLASSICS

*For my family*

I, *Aspasia Skouroumouni*, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aspasia', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

## ABSTRACT

The words of Medea or Alcestis may be the only thing we are left with. Yet it was not the only means Euripides had at his disposal to render them onstage; his dramatic toolkit included spatial staging. This aspect of his dramaturgy provides the lens through which I explore Euripidean tragedy and Euripidean females. The tragic female has been studied in depth in past and more recent scholarship, with vital insights gained. Nevertheless, what previous scholarship has rarely considered in any detail is the physical representation of the female (the particularities of her postures, movement, physical action and interaction) in physical and imagined dramatic space (what I term ‘female space’). My focus, both performative and gendered, falls on the staging techniques defining the female, explored against the background of fifth-century cultural values of original spectators. By combining analysis of theatrical features with readings of Euripidean females and plays, the thesis engages in a process of visualising female physicality in interactive theatrical space and exploring its thematic significance in the construction of character, theme, and action.

An introductory chapter delineates my conceptual and methodological framework (theoretical background, approach, terms). Three case studies constitute the three main chapters: *Helen*, *Iphigenia Taurica*, and *Andromache*. In each of the chosen dramas, the female is placed away from home and homeland: in *Helen* and *IT* the Greek woman is displaced in foreign lands, in *Andromache* the non-Greek is transported into Greece. Dislocation to alien environments is the extreme form of the theatrical challenge to the female spatial experience; hence the need (and the choice) for special investigation. The examination of the different ways in which aspects of female experience are (literally) played out allows us to evaluate Euripides’ skill as writer and director from a new perspective.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I welcome this opportunity to acknowledge at least some of the many debts of gratitude, which I have accumulated over the years of my doctoral research.

My first and heartleaf thanks go to my principal supervisor Chris Carey. His rigorous criticism and generosity with his time and advice have been an indispensable source of motivation, guidance, and support throughout. Special thanks are also due to my secondary supervisor Stephen Colvin for reading the thesis at different stages, and offering constructive suggestions on ideas and the style of their formulation. I am also particularly indebted to the following people, for reading sections of my work and enriching my arguments with their thought-provoking comments and suggestions: Martin Revermann, Pat Easterling, and Simon Hornblower. Thanks are also due to Vassiliki Kampourelli for her helpful advice on bibliography on the theory of semiotics, at the early beginnings of my research. To my colleagues and friends, Styliani Papastamati and Panayiotis Tofis, I owe gratitude for their providing of various bibliographical items to the aid of my work. This doctoral research has been financially supported by the Alexandrer S. Onassis Foundation, which I am delighted to acknowledge.

Finally, my largest debt is to my family: to my parents Michalis and Elena, for their many years of sacrifices and unstinting devotion to the service of my needs and goals; to my brother Demetris for his love, inspiring sense of humour, and support; and last but not least, to my husband Leontios, to whom I owe more than I could ever hope to acknowledge. With deep gratitude, this thesis is dedicated to all four of them.

A.S.

December, 2010

## ABBREVIATIONS

Transliteration of all names (of people, places, literary works etc) and abbreviations of the names of ancient authors and their works follow those in *OCD*<sup>3</sup>. Abbreviations of journals are cited after *L'Année Philologique*.

Collard & Cropp <i>LCL</i>	C. Collard and M. Cropp, <i>Euripides: fragments</i> , 2 vols. (Cambridge Mass. and London 2008)
Erbse	H. Erbse, ed. <i>Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem: scholia vetera</i> , vol. 5 (Berlin 1977)
<i>FGrH</i>	F. Jacoby, ed. <i>Die fragmente der Griechischen Historiker</i> (Leiden 1923- )
Henderson <i>LCL</i>	J. Henderson, <i>Aristophanes</i> , 4 vols. (Cambridge Mass. and London 1998-2002)
Kovacs <i>LCL</i>	D. Kovacs, <i>Euripides</i> , 6 vols. (Cambridge Mass. and London 1994-2002)
Lloyd-Jones <i>LCL</i>	H. Lloyd-Jones, <i>Sophocles</i> , 3 vols. (Cambridge Mass. and London 1994-1996)
LSJ <sup>9</sup>	H. G. Liddell, R. Scott and H. Stuart Jones, <i>A Greek English Lexicon</i> (9 <sup>th</sup> edn., Oxford 1940)
Most <i>LCL</i>	G. M. Most, <i>Hesiod</i> , vol. 2 (Cambridge Mass. and London 2007)
M-W	R. Merkelbach and M.L. West, eds. <i>Fragmenta Hesiodica</i> (Oxford 1967)
<i>OCD</i> <sup>3</sup>	S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth, eds. <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> rev. edn., Oxford 2003)
<i>PMG</i>	D. L. Page, ed. <i>Poetae melici Graeci</i> (Oxford 1962)
<i>PMGF</i>	M. Davies, ed. <i>Poetarum melicorum Graecorum fragmenta</i> , vol. 1 (Oxford 1991)
Sommerstein <i>LCL</i>	A. H. Sommerstein, <i>Aeschylus</i> , 3 vols. (Cambridge Mass. and London 2008)
<i>TrGF</i>	B. Snell, R. Kannicht and S. L. Radt, eds. <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> (Göttingen 1971-2004)

- Voigt E. -M. Voigt, ed. *Sappho et Alcaeus: fragmenta*  
(Amsterdam 1971)
- West M. L. West, ed. *Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum  
cantati*, vol. 2 (rev. edn., Oxford 1992)



## NOTE ON EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

Extant Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides are cited from Sommerstein, Lloyd-Jones, and Kovacs *LCL* respectively. Tragic fragments, except those of Euripides, refer to *TrGF*. Euripidean fragments are cited after Collard & Cropp *LCL*. Extant Aristophanic plays follow Henderson *LCL*. Fragmentary lyric texts refer to *PMG* and *PMGF*.

Unless otherwise stated, translations of ancient texts follow *LCL* editions and translations of the cited texts with occasional adaptations and additions.

## INTRODUCTION

“...the meaning of the play, what it is about, *is heard and seen*...When we read a play, what we are doing—or what we should be doing—is hearing and seeing the play in the theatre of the mind.”

Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 3

“Of all questions to be put to a drama, the problem of *space is an excellent gateway* to how theatre conveys meaning.”

Revermann 2006: 110

“The history of Greek theatre must be understood as *the history of bodies*, not as the history of words emanating from great disembodied minds.”

Wiles 1997: 148<sup>1</sup>

Acting bodies, space, images and sounds: the key ingredients in any theatrical production. Recent research in the field of classical studies has highlighted the importance of attempting to reconstruct ancient performance, and has established the key role of the study of space and of the handling of actors' bodies within its range for the understanding of its staging practices. It is against this background that the present thesis should be read. This study is an attempt to work at the point of convergence between two highly successful methods of interpreting Greek drama: gender studies and performance analysis. Both modes of study, each in its own way, have informed the reading of ancient Greek tragedy in the recent past. I believe that an approach which draws on the knowledge and techniques of both lines of research in combination can offer fresh insights into the study of Greek tragedy in general and Euripides, the focus of my current project, in particular. I hope that this dissertation, as well as making a contribution to Euripidean studies, may also provide a stimulus for further comparative studies on this and other Greek playwrights, and/or theatrical genres. The words of Helen, Medea, Electra, Iphigenia, or Andromache may be the only thing we are left with. Words,

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<sup>1</sup> Italics are mine.

however, were not the only means Euripides had at his disposal to render these characters on his stage. Also in his toolkit was spatial staging; this aspect of his dramaturgy provides the lens through which I shall study the selected plays. I use this short introductory chapter to delineate my conceptual and methodological framework.

Emphasis on the performative context and nature of ancient drama became more and more embedded in scholarship on Greek theatre in the late twentieth century. Ever since Taplin's pioneering work on Aeschylean stagecraft (1977) reminded us of the simple yet easily forgotten fact that ancient dramatic texts are written primarily for theatrical production, performance-based approaches to ancient plays have formed an evolving and successful trend in classical scholarship.<sup>2</sup> Studies on aspects of stagecraft of both extant and, most recently, of fragmentary drama, both in the context of original performance(s) and modern re-performances (in the field of reception studies) are the fruit of a tradition of scholarship that has internalized the significance of the ancient dramatic text as poetry for performance.<sup>3</sup> The present work is located within this critical trend. I study the female as physically presented and performed, with a particular focus on considerations of female space. Though other aspects of female physicality and more generally of performance have a crucial role to play (for example costume, mask, props, acting style, interaction with the audience, to name but some), I

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<sup>2</sup> O. Taplin, *The stagecraft of Aeschylus: the dramatic use of exits and entrances in Greek tragedy* (Oxford 1977). See also Taplin 1995, 2003<sup>2</sup>. Taplin has been characterized as “the father of performance studies in Classics”, most recently by Revermann & Wilson 2008: 1 in a volume dedicated to him as a gift for his seminal contribution to the study of ancient performance. Certainly, there were precursors to Taplin's approach; most notably Webster 1956a, 1960, 1973 and also scholars like Arnott 1962, Hourmouziades 1965, who had already successfully studied aspects of the performative context of ancient drama. Taplin's work put this growing interest on the ancient theatre on a more exciting level, by drawing on comparative work done on Shakespearean theatre and by combining knowledge on the *Realien* of the ancient Greek theatrical tradition with a consistent concern for actual interpretation of the dramatic plays. For a brief historical overview of the appearance and development of performance criticism in the field of classics, see Revermann 2006: 9-11. Cf. Wiles 1997: 4-5. For historical overviews on the evolution of theatre studies (outside classics), see Fischer-Lichte 2008: 30-7; McAuley 1999: 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> For key studies forming part of the performance criticism trend developing the insights of Taplin's approach in tragedy, see e.g. Wiles 1991, 1997, 2000, 2003; Ringer 1998; Kaimio 1988; Halleran 1985; Seale 1982. Comic performance criticism has been evolving more slowly in relation to its tragic counterpart (see Slater 1993: 1-5), most recently though receiving increasing attention in studies like Bakola 2010 (ch.5 devoted to questions of Cratinus' dramaturgy); Lowe 2006; Revermann 2006. For performance-centred approaches to fragmentary drama, see e.g. Bakola 2010: 230-96; Wiles 2005.

focus on the spatial dimension as my principal gateway to approach larger questions concerning the Euripidean female and Euripidean drama.<sup>4</sup>

The attention to the spatial parameter is not in itself new. The value of space as a generator of social, religious and political meaning and ideology in the Greek society of the fifth century has long been acknowledged by scholarship. Historical and sociological studies have revealed space as being at the heart of ancient Greek thinking. Though the over rigid conceptualizations of gender division in past scholarship (envisaging the ancient Greek female in a kind of ‘oriental’ seclusion) have gradually given way to more recent approaches stressing the unavoidable gap between cultural ideals and social reality, its importance, especially for the mapping of gender roles, remains uncontested.<sup>5</sup> The acknowledgement of the critical value of space in the study of ancient Greek performance has been a rather slower process. Conspicuously ignored by Aristotle, space as a crucial factor in articulating dramatic meaning has been gaining increasing attention and appreciation only in the recent past.<sup>6</sup> In performance analysis of ancient drama space is now often at the top of the agenda. The scope ranges from studies focussing mainly on the inside-out polarity, to a number of more or less theoretical approaches on the relation between physical reality and the fictional world created in it and by it, and on the characteristics of the dramatic space (both the tragic and the comic).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> However, since no aspect of the complex phenomenon of theatrical performance can be studied entirely in isolation, these issues are not neglected and will be addressed in the study at points where explication is deemed necessary for the argument at hand. See in e.g. ch.3, pp.178-80, 191-4 (Hermione’s veil and dress).

<sup>5</sup> On the spatial construction of the *polis* as replicating ideology, social, civic and religious identities, see e.g. Rosen & Sluiter 2006 (focussing on the city-countryside dialectic); Croally 1994: 163ff. On the spatial polarity (inside-out) governing the conception of gender roles in particular, see e.g. Vernant 1983. The notion of ‘oriental’ seclusion of the fifth-century female has been nuanced by later studies showing that women did participate in social, economic and religious spheres of their own outside the *oikos*. See e.g. Kitto 2003; Rehm 2002: 55-7; Cohen 1991: 149-70; Just 1989: 105-24.

<sup>6</sup> For the absence of reference to space in Arist. *Poet.* (something very much in line with Aristotle’s general lack of interest in performance), and the way space has increasingly been gaining attention by later theoreticians and practitioners of drama, see Taplin 1995: 94-6. For space as a crucial shaper of meaning in performance, see e.g. Revermann 2006: 107; McAuley 1999: 278; Edmunds 1996: 23-4; Issacharoff 1981: 211.

<sup>7</sup> For key studies on comic space (old and new comedy), see e.g. Revermann 2006: 107-29; Lowe 1987, 2006; Arnott 2000; Wiles 1991; Issacharoff 1989. For key studies on tragic space (the genre receiving the lion’s share of attention), see e.g. Kampourelli 2009, 2002; Abbott 2005; Hourmouziades 2003<sup>3</sup>: 31-77; Rehm 2002; Lowe 2000: 169-75; Wiles 1997; Edmunds 1996; Kuntz 1993; Padel 1990; Pittas-Herschbach 1990; Zeitlin 1990a; Geldard 1972.

I hope to contribute towards this rewarding tradition of performative analysis of ancient drama by focusing very specifically on an as yet under-researched area of spatial-dramaturgic analysis: my spotlight falls specifically on the female and the staging techniques that defined her dramatic physicality. The distinctiveness of the approach lies exactly in this double focus, a focus which is both performative and gendered. The tragic female has already been studied in depth in the past and in more recent scholarship, with a wide range of published works (articles, chapters in books, whole monographs) shedding vital light on our understanding of the female in drama. The aspects studied include: the tragic female's relation to her real-life counterpart (the dominant concern in earliest studies); her psychology and character as manifested through the words of the text, through types of her dramatic roles and functions (most common ways of analysis); her actions (Foley's "female acts"); her language (the focus of most recent studies).<sup>8</sup> The insights gained by this largely text-based research on the female in tragedy have been many. Yet what previous literary criticism has rarely considered in any detail is the physical representation of the female in dramatic space: the particularities of her positioning, postures, movement, physical action and interaction within its range. There are of course notable exceptions: Williamson's analysis of "A woman's place in Euripides' *Medea*", and most importantly (because of their greater scope and wider material) Easterling's short essay on "Women in tragic space", and Mastronarde's brief study on Euripidean females indoors and outdoors.<sup>9</sup> Their insights open up the way to an appreciation of the tragic female through an understanding of the semantic implications of her space. But this widening of the critical spectrum was simultaneously subject to a limitation. Their decision to focus only on the distinctions inside and outside leaves out of consideration the wider field of spatial distinctions, relationships and polarities demonstrably operative onstage, and hence important for a more complete

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<sup>8</sup> For the historical approach, see especially Seidensticker 1995; Pomeroy 1994; Just 1989; Gould 1980. For studies on types of dramatic roles usually associated with women in tragedies, see e.g. McHardy 2005 (female murderers of children); Kuntz 1993: 104-26 (females in exile plays); Foley 1992 (female spouses), 1982 (female intruders); Rabinowitz 1992 (female predators or victims); Seaford 1990 (females imprisoned). For emphasis on female actions, see especially Foley 2001 (a historical and anthropological analysis of female acts in the areas of death, marriage and ethical choice). For work on female speech, see Chong-Gossard 2008 (female song and silence); Murnaghan 2005 (lamentation); Mossman 2001 (typology and structure of female argumentation); McLure 1999 (female verbal genres).

<sup>9</sup> Mastronarde 2010: 248-54; Williamson 1990; Easterling 1987

understanding of the female and of her space.<sup>10</sup> To widen the scope of their approach and explore the different sorts of binary and non-binary spatial dynamics related to the female is the key aim of this thesis, which has been designed as a sustained investigation of the tragic woman as performed character in theatrical space. The approach, though in principle a move away from the traditional analyses in terms of plot, character and themes, nonetheless attempts to elucidate further all the above constituents of a play by investigating its space and the spatial mappings of its females.

The term ‘female space’ is the shorthand term which I use throughout to delineate the object of study: the blocking of female characters in theatrical space.<sup>11</sup> To define it in more detail, seen and narrated female physical movement, action and interaction with animate and inanimate elements (bodies, props, buildings) are the focal elements under exploration.<sup>12</sup> These in turn are to be seen in the light of their contribution to the creation of character, plot, themes of the play, and ultimately to the alignment of audience reaction to all the above in the context of the original performance. In order to avoid confusion, I set out here the mode of reference to the various notions of space involved in my analysis.<sup>13</sup> The term ‘theatrical space’

OBJECT OF  
STUDY: KEY  
DEFINITIONS  
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<sup>10</sup> See Mastrorade 2010: 248-54 (his subtitle on the piece “Indoors and outdoors” indicates from the outset the focus only on this polarity); Easterling 1987: 16; Williamson 1990: 16: “The main stimulus for this treatment...was a distinction which has recently been gaining currency in the study of the Athens of the fifth century BC- namely that between public and private”. Throughout the article, the inside-outside spatial polarity is seen as primarily expressing this semantic opposition, a weakness of the approach decisively addressed by Easterling’s discussion of how the chorus’ identity (male or female) defines each time the nature of the outside space of a play. Scolnicov’s (1994) historical, comparative and fundamentally feminist approach, studying the relation between space and the female in various theatrical traditions from classic to modern drama, again focuses only on the inside-outside spatial distinction. She devotes two chapters to classical drama: ch.2 on tragedy (Aesch. *Ag.*), ch.3 on comedy (Ar.).

<sup>11</sup> The term ‘blocking’ is common in theatre language to denote “the act of planning the stage action of a play” (*Oxford English Dictionary* [from now on abbreviated as *OED*] s.v. *blocking*, [http://dictionary.oed.com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/cgi/entry/50023750?query\\_type=word&queryword=blocking&first=1&max\\_to\\_show=10&sort\\_type=alpha&result\\_place=1&search\\_id=EX7w-ijwIW5E-74&hilite=50023750](http://dictionary.oed.com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/cgi/entry/50023750?query_type=word&queryword=blocking&first=1&max_to_show=10&sort_type=alpha&result_place=1&search_id=EX7w-ijwIW5E-74&hilite=50023750) [accessed 2 August 2010]).

<sup>12</sup> Offstage action is an important part of the action of dramatic plays; the messenger speech narrating offstage events onstage is one of the key dramatic devices. Like onstage (seen) action, it contributes to our understanding of character, themes, plot, and in my case female space (e.g. for the way reversal of pattern of movement and action offstage in Eur. *IT* contributes to our understanding of the female’s role and the play’s themes, see ch.2, pp.100-2, 124-6). What is more, given that the culture under study was a narrative culture, this significant meaning of narrated events must have been readily grasped. The study of actors’ movements is what theatre-theoreticians label ‘proxemics’. For attention to proxemics in studies of drama, see Revermann 2006: 129-45 (study of genre-specific proxemics, comparison between tragedy and comedy); Kampourelli 2002: 71-3 (her category of “proxemic space”); McAuley 1999: 103-12; Fischer-Lichte 1992: 13-14 (her category of “proxemic signs”).

<sup>13</sup> There exists no single unified way of conceptualizing space in performance; the taxonomies and terminologies of space in theoretical studies on the subject matter abound. For the different

will be used as my default term for denoting theatre space, architectural and/or dramatic (where necessary subdivided into onstage and offstage). The term ‘extra-theatrical space’ will serve as my shorthand term for the space (physical and conceptual) extending outside it, i.e. the cluster of social, religious, ethical and political values and associations attached to physical location, movement and interaction in the daily conceptualization of the world and in the daily business of the Greeks of the fifth century (these females’ original spectators).<sup>14</sup> Like all polarities, this is a relative one, a convenience of notation. It serves principally to differentiate between the constructed space of the theatre and the society from which it acquires its significations, between the onstage fiction and the reality it represents (modified, distorted, subverted, objectively verifiable or subjectively experienced). In the effect of their interaction for the staging of female characters, in Euripidean practice in particular, lies my primary concern.

Why the female, why tragedy, why Euripides? These questions sum up the triple problematization lurking behind my choice of material to work on. I consider female space more interesting than its male counterpart. It is not that male space is of no interest, but that female space is more complex. Male position in drama never excites the kind of comment which female position receives; it passes by unmarked in contexts where the female location is often (re)marked. Because in real space the association between the woman’s physical location, ideal role, propriety and control is strong and the stakes involved in the deviation are so high (as noted in previous discussion), female space becomes subject to more frequent and more remarkable uses in drama. Hence, the obvious advantage of the female over the male for the student of gender-specific spatial analysis. Here a caveat is necessary: to say that the greater amount of social anxieties focused on the position of the female in extra-theatrical space maximizes the scope for exploitation and effect of its playing out in the theatre is not to imply that there is any kind of straightforward and transparent translation of social norms into

CHOICE OF  
MATERIAL

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terminologies of space, see e.g. Revermann 2006: 108-10; Hourmouziades 2003<sup>3</sup>: 34-8; Wiles 2003: 19-22; Rehm 2002: 2-6; Edmunds 1996: 23-38; Fischer-Lichte 1992: 93-114; Ronen 1986: 421-37; Issacharoff 1981. For critical overviews of terminologies adopted in scholarship, see Kampourelli 2002: 6-8; McAuley 1999: 17-25; Wiles 1997: 15-22.

<sup>14</sup> The influence of real-life practices on the configuration of theatrical space is invariably acknowledged in studies on theatrical space. See especially Revermann 2006: 109 (placing this same spatial polarity at the heart of his own conceptualization of performance space); Wiles 1997: 3-4 (defining as his focus the sense of theatre as a “heterotopia” responding to pre-existing spatial relationships).

theatrical space. I see the dialogue between theatre and life being flexible and elusive in dramaturgy, as in text.<sup>15</sup> Take for instance the antithesis between inside and out. The female outside the household on a theatrical stage is not by definition transgressive, in the way she *might* have been conceived in real-life circumstances.<sup>16</sup> The fallacy of any kind of neat and rigid polarizations (woman inside/man outside) functioning in the dramatic world has been decisively addressed by scholars like Easterling and Foley.<sup>17</sup> Unquestionably, the cultural ideals of the audience set the context for any theatrical instantiation operating within it, but this context conditions rather than rigidly confines the artistic creation.<sup>18</sup> In the same way, drama should be seen as reacting in a very flexible way to the constraints of extra-theatrical space. This is registered in differentiation in the dynamics of theatrical space not merely between individual playwrights, but also at the level of each individual drama, even at the level of individual scenes.<sup>19</sup>

Why female space in tragedy particularly? Because of the greater number of surviving playwrights and plays, the greater number of prominent women, and the greater complexity of tragic female space. Tragedy foregrounds the female earlier, more frequently, and more prominently than comedy.<sup>20</sup> Unbounded by the “conceptual Athenocentrism” of comedy (at least extant comedy), tragedy is free to set up more perplexed and interesting shifts and games with space.<sup>21</sup> These factors make tragedy a more fecund field—in relation, that is, to the other two

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<sup>15</sup> For the elusiveness of the dialogue between theatre and social ideology, see e.g. Foley 2001: especially 7-18, 1995: especially 137-8, 142-5; Easterling 1987: 17, 24, 26.

<sup>16</sup> On the constraints on female movement and action outside the *oikos* and on how the reaction to the female outdoors in real life of the fifth century is again conditioned, see p.12n.5.

<sup>17</sup> Certainly, as will be mentioned later on, the tragedian, if he wishes, can mark the positioning of a woman outside as alarming in the words of the play. But there is no fixed dramatic effect attached to the female outside in drama. A rigid dramatic polarity of woman-inside/house, male-outside/city suggested by Shaw 1975 has been decisively challenged by scholars like e.g. Foley 2001: 7-10 (making the point for the non-seclusion of women in real life being accordingly acknowledged in her dramatic representations); Easterling 1987 (stressing the role of the chorus in the shaping and ethicizing of outside space in each play).

<sup>18</sup> An important issue which must be addressed is the composition of the audience of this specific theatrical tradition under exploration. For it is impossible to hypothesize the reactions of this ancient audience without at least some attempt to (re)construct it. On this matter, see pp.27-8.

<sup>19</sup> I see this flexibility of the dialogue between extra-theatrical and theatrical world applying also to the way tragedy responds to ideology of ethnicity (see Appendix).

<sup>20</sup> That Ar. *Lys.* is the landmark for the commencement of comedy’s more extensive engagement with women, is a common view among critics (see Storey 2003: 315ff). Before 411 B.C., women in Aristophanes appear as either minor speaking characters or personifications. As Storey argues, this is the same way that women appear in Eupolis’ comedies as well, where as succinctly put, “no Lysistrate or even her antecedent” is to be detected (p.320).

<sup>21</sup> Revermann 2006: 125. Of the extant comedies with non-utopian settings, none is set outside of Attica or in a different *polis*. This may have differed for comedies parodying myth or tragic plots. See Revermann 2006: 123-5.



concurrent dramatic genres, comedy and satyr play—for wider material, scope and reflection. And finally, why Euripides? Partly because in his works, produced at an advanced stage in the evolution of the genre, we get both the frame of the conventions operating in the ancient dramatic tradition and some of the most playful experiments with its elements, which the commensurate maturity of audience and genre both foster and entail. Partly as well because more of his plays survive to allow a more confident detection of patterns in staging and their variations. But mainly, because the female on his stage is frequently at the centre of the action and invariably interesting and provoking, ever since Aristophanes' time, in terms of her unusual position and situation.<sup>22</sup> Hence, his plays and his females respond most rewardingly to my approach. All these considerations are not to deny the value of its application to the alternatives: the male, other playwrights, and indeed other genres. Beyond doubt, a comparative (in terms both of genre and gender) reading would be revealing. But this is beyond the scope of this study. Male movement is not ignored; it will be considered, where it is deemed necessary, as a way of testing my findings and thus enriching my understanding of the female.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, I will be drawing on Aeschylus and Sophocles for issues under scrutiny, while comparison with comedy, an area where stagecraft is relatively under-explored, will provide useful insights at points.<sup>24</sup>

Deviations always attract attention; my choice of individual plays for analysis includes dramas where the female is interesting and provoking exactly in terms of her deviant position in space, where consequently the question of female space seems to be at the heart of the spatial pattern of the drama. They consist of *Andromache*, *Iphigenia Taurica*, and *Helen*.<sup>25</sup> In each, the female, abruptly

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. e.g. Ar. *Thesm.* 335-50, 372-9. See comments in e.g. Murnaghan 2005: 245; Allan 2000: 161-4, 194; Croally 1994: 191-2.

<sup>23</sup> References to male movement will be made, where these can illuminate elements and effects of female movement and action in particular contexts. For reference to the spatial pattern of male dislocation in particular, see under *Conclusion*, where I include some brief observations on the dramatization of male dislocation in tragedy (p.205). I explain the notion of dislocation and my interest in the phenomenon in the following paragraph.

<sup>24</sup> Cases in point are e.g. the changing identity of the house in Eur. *Hel.* (see ch.1, pp.53-4), the similarities and differences between Euripides' Hermione (in Eur. *Andr.*) and Aeschylus' Clytemnestra (in Aesch. *Ag.*) in terms of their relation to the house (see ch.3, pp. 162-3). A brief overview of the spread of the phenomenon of female dislocation in extant comedy and tragedy can be found in the *Conclusion*, pp.204-6.

<sup>25</sup> Referred to in their probable chronological order: *Andr.* (around 425 B.C.), *Iphigenia Taurica*, from now on abbreviated as *IT* both in main text and footnotes (conjectured dates ranging from 419-412 B.C.), *Hel.* (412 B.C., among the 9 surviving plays which are dated). The issue of the

wrenched from her former location, is found far away from home (natal or marital) and homeland (home-city and/or country). Geographical distance and placement in alien context combines with (and is expressive of) major upheaval in the female's normal itinerary and conditions. It is this pattern, partly spatial, partly thematic, that I describe with the useful (if slightly anodyne) term of 'female dislocation'. I choose the word dislocation, mainly because of the emphasis it puts on the elements of disorder and abnormality.<sup>26</sup> These are not the simple transfers of the woman from one place into another which obtain in normal circumstances (for marriage, religious duties, other culturally and/or dramatically normalized relocations). Major disruption, both geographical and conceptual, is dramatized as inherent in their situation.<sup>27</sup> In each of the three chosen dramas, dislocations of the most extreme kind are at play: in *Helen* and *IT* the Greek woman is displaced in a distant barbarous land, in *Andromache* the non-Greek is transported into Hellas; the dislocation image turns round. Each time the *McGuffin*<sup>28</sup> of female dislocation sets off the variant stories of the wife still chaste in Egypt, the eternal maiden in Tauris, the ideal wife turned into concubine in Thessaly. Tragedy, if it chooses, can easily raise anxiety about the positioning of a woman unsupervised outside the house door: Electra standing outside in the company of strange men is rebuked by her returning husband (Eur. *El.* 341-4); Hermione's Nurse anxiously prompts

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chronological relationship between the latter two plays is widely debated. See e.g. Podlecki 1970: 418; Dale 1967: xxivff; Griffith 1953: 36n.9; Solmsen 1934: 120. Most scholars favour an *IT* which precedes *Hel.* Further details regarding dating of each play are noted in each chapter respectively.

<sup>26</sup> Dislocation= "displacement; removal from its proper (or former) place or location", "setting out of right place", "disarrangement (of something immaterial); a confused or disordered state" (*OED* s.v. *dislocation*, <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/display/50066277?keytype=ref&ijkey=Px8E.Kgs/40ZA> [accessed 15 April 2009]).

<sup>27</sup> My operational definition of dislocation may appear too narrow. Inevitably, as in any attempt at taxonomy, there are grey areas: women exiled or marginalized from homeland with their exiled husband (e.g. Euripides' *Medea* in exile with Jason in Corinth, Sophocles' *Deianira* in exile in Trachis with Heracles). It has to be stressed from the outset that I do not in any way see the sense of dislocation in a woman's position being limited only to cases where women are found away from home (natal or marital) and homeland (city or country); in other words limited only to what is here defined as dislocation. The dramatist can present any positioning (even mere coming out from the house door as noted below in the paragraph) as an abnormal placement. But for my purposes, it is only cases of such maximized sense of distance from any familiar or normal context of a woman that are set as focal for exploration. The limitation is useful for hermeneutic purposes not merely, because it narrows the focus down to cases of extreme dramatic challenge to the audience's cultural expectations. But also because it gives us a clear criterion for pursuing comparison of the spread and use of the phenomenon in different dramatists, in different genres (for a brief overview of this spread and divergent characteristics of the pattern, see *Conclusion*).

<sup>28</sup> A term used by Alfred Hitchcock (1939): a plot device that motivates the characters and/or advances the story, an element around which the plot revolves, e.g. the necklace in crook stories, the papers in spy stories (*OED* s.v. *McGuffin*, [http://0dictionary.oed.com/catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/cgi/entry/00303921?single=1&query\\_type=word&queryword=McGuffin&first=1&max\\_to\\_show=10](http://0dictionary.oed.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/cgi/entry/00303921?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=McGuffin&first=1&max_to_show=10) [accessed 29 September 2007]).

her to return inside the house in order not to be seen outside in her distress (Eur. *Andr.* 876-7).<sup>29</sup> Minor spatial discrepancies of this sort often provide material for lively plot moments or scenes in plays. If location can become the focus of disquiet, when displacement is so limited, the implication then is that the potential frisson is increased significantly when the female is taken far away from her normal sphere of operation. Dislocation to alien environments, where deviations are set against a background which accentuates their peculiarity, is the extreme form of the theatrical challenge to the female spatial experience; hence the need for special investigation. The spatial device allows the dramatist to explore gender relations and particularly their dynamics and tensions in the *oikos* re-created outside of its physical defining shape and space; sometimes to test those roles and relationships and to innovate in re-creating the potentials of theatrical space, in order to give expression to the unusual dynamics of resulting dramatic settings.<sup>30</sup> And I hope that it will allow us, in turn, to shed light on these and other related questions by looking into them from a dramaturgical perspective, which has not been acknowledged or systematically studied in previous scholarly treatments.<sup>31</sup>

Females in performance it is, then; Euripidean women envisaged in their dramatic space. After the question on the ‘what’ of the study has been answered, the follow up question turns attention to method: how is female space to be analyzed? My approach, which is designedly experimental, is twofold. I divide the discussion of each play into a ‘thematic’ and a ‘scenic’ analysis. The thematic part looks into the imaginative processes at work in the overall creation, presentation and thematization of female space in every play under consideration: how women

METHODOLOGY:  
APPROACH  
AND  
CONCEPTUAL  
BACKGROUND

<sup>29</sup> I am not suggesting that the woman outside in drama is by definition meant to appear transgressive (see pp.15-6 on the relation of theatrical and extra-theatrical space). See Mastrorarde 2010: 248-54 for a succinct analysis of prominent ways in which Euripidean tragedy sometimes chooses to exploit the potential frisson of outside appearances of its females in the different plays.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. e.g. how the usual staging convention of an antithetical (symbolic) polarity between altar and hostile scene-building is nuanced to render the dynamically shifting relationship between the different spaces in his *Hel.*, where the house is both hostile and friendly towards the suppliant (see ch.1, pp.53-4).

<sup>31</sup> The female far away from home has however been studied from other perspectives. For recent substantial contributions, see Wright 2005: study on *Hel.*, *IT*, *Andromeda* as escape tragedies (for a convincing critique of his category of ‘escape’ plays see Allan 2008: 36-8); Kuntz 1993: 104-26: study on the female exile linking her representation to her position in heroic folklore and Athenian marriage, defined by Kuntz as a position of alienation, the woman being caught in between marital and natal *oikos* (as the following study will suggest at different points, this is not obviously right as an account of the position of the woman in marriage either in the socio-historical reality or in the literature of ancient Greece, see especially ch.3, p.167n.107).

perceive space, how they are perceived within it, how the physical attributes of their presence articulate character, plot and themes. Though my interest is specifically in female space, female action does not take place in a geographical or cultural vacuum. There is always a larger topography, physical, political and social. And this is never neutral space; every setting (absolute fantasies excluded – and even this may be questionable) comes along with its associations for its audience.<sup>32</sup> For each play, I start with an exploration of the way the playwright creates this dramatic topography, each time working with (adhering, adjusting, or diverging from) the pre-existing nexus of associations attached (generally or intermittently) to his fictive locales in the minds of his contemporaries.<sup>33</sup> Determining the associations of larger conceptual space is of critical importance in order to evaluate the significance and meaning of the female's interaction with her new location and its inhabitants. After this consideration of the surrounding space of the female, I move on to examine the particularities of Euripides' gendered staging in each case. The scenic analysis, in the form of a scene-by-scene commentary, dwells on a close study of entrances and exits of females.<sup>34</sup> The fundamental importance of these movements (entries and exits) as the key, most safely recoverable actions in ancient Greek plays has long been established by Taplin, whose case has also more recently been reiterated in Revermann.<sup>35</sup> The combination of the two parts (the summative and the discursive) is useful in giving due emphasis both to the synthetic, holistic meaning and staging motifs of each play, and the density and impact of the individual, uniquely contextualized movements it contains. It allows us both to perceive the larger themes, and at the same time illuminates the communicative mode of their transmission from the

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<sup>32</sup> Studies on settings of individual dramas or the uses of a specific locale in the genre as a whole acknowledge the role of these associations in the creation and communication of the meanings and themes of the play. See e.g. Said 2002 (on the sites forming the topography of Eur. *IT*); Dunn 1996: 190-6 (on what he calls the "ethical framework" of the setting in Soph. *El*); Edmunds 1996: 87-148 (on the site of Colonus in Soph. *OC*); Kuntz 1993 (the study as a whole focussing on the associations and functions of dramatic setting in tragedy); Zeitlin 1990a (on the *topos* of Thebe in drama).

<sup>33</sup> In formalist terms this dramatic topography could be labelled with the Bakhtinian term of the "chronotope": a unit of analysis that combines spatial and temporal categories operative in a literary text for the construction of fictive space and time (for the term and its use by Bakhtin, see Vice 1997: 200-24). For a recent use of the concept as a methodological tool for constructing a poetics of space and time of tragedy, see Revermann 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. e.g. Taplin 1977 (study of entrances and exits of all extant Aeschylean plays), whose format as Revermann 2006: 132n.48 notes (also giving examples of its reuse by other scholars) has set the terms for subsequent discussion; also adopted by Revermann himself. For other recent examples of its use (both for analysis of modern and ancient drama), see e.g. McAuley 1999: 96-103; Pittas-Herschbach 1990: 143-75.

<sup>35</sup> Taplin 1977: 2-9. Cf. Revermann 2006: 132-3.

theatrical stage.<sup>36</sup> Regarding the discursive analysis more specifically, I wish to stress that the linear commentary-based approach is conceived as required by the linearity of the theatrical plays themselves, both as performance and as experience in the theatre. For, if it is true, as Revermann says, that “if a playwright ever wants to get something across”, he or she will have to take the “sequentiality and ephemerality” of the theatrical communication “into account”, then the principle cannot differ, or at least differ much, for the scholar wishing to analyze and decode what actually comes across as a result of this same process.<sup>37</sup>

Throughout, no elaborate set of modern theoretical concepts or technical taxonomies will be used for the actual exploration. No single theory will be applied mechanically to the reading of female space, nor will the spatial mapping of different plays be made to fit rigidly into any one theoretical model. The complexity of tragic space and the individuality of each play make any such enterprise unfitting. Furthermore, my aim is not to shape new, or reshape old abstract theoretical categories and technical vocabulary of space, although I do not wish to underestimate the critical value of such approaches.<sup>38</sup> Instead, female staging will be explored in the frame of narrative and plot, and set against the background of fifth-century cultural values, preconceptions and anxieties of first audience and playwright, inextricably related to its creation and interpretation (what I have previously termed as extra-theatrical space).<sup>39</sup>

This is not to say that I have no debts to theory. In accepting space as a system of signs, and in stressing the role of socio-historical context as a chief signifier, the

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<sup>36</sup> For the importance of approaching each movement as an individual stage action with a unique context at the moment of its occurrence in a play, cf. e.g. Allan 2000: 50; Taplin 1977: 3.

<sup>37</sup> Revermann 2006: 38

<sup>38</sup> For such theory-driven approaches to space, see p.12. The abstract approach to ancient drama from a modern theoretical perspective certainly has its own critical value. As Revermann’s reviewer Rosen 2007 nicely puts it: “If nothing else, this offers a shared theoretical framework and technical vocabulary, and a potential for productive comparative work...” (*Bryan Mawr Classical Review* [from now on abbreviated as *BMCR*], <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2007/2007-04-69.html> [last accessed December 2010]). Regarding female stagecraft and space in particular, no antecedent exists for terminology or concepts to draw upon.

<sup>39</sup> The need to contextualise ancient drama, to acknowledge that the intra-theatrical event can only be better understood in the light of its relation to the cultural norms and preoccupations of the society of which it formed part, is an insight shared by most scholars working on ancient Greek drama. See e.g. Revermann 2006: 42-5; Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 5; Fischer-Lichte 1992: 10. N.B. that this is also an insight invariably shared among scholars working specifically on theatrical space (see p.15n.14 for bibliography), and on the tragic female in the past decades (see e.g. Mastronarde 2010; Murnaghan 2005; Foley 1995, 2001; Allan 2000, 2008; McClure 1999; Zeitlin 1990; Williamson 1990; Sourvinou-Inwood 1989).

approach is semiotic, if only in principle.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the hermeneutic model underlying my methodological choices of analysis described above owes much to the conceptual framework of pragmatic linguistic theory. Following the cue from evolutions in the field of genre studies, I treat theatrical convention, in this case, as something that (like genre) could be best understood not as a strict grammar of rules but as discourse, i.e. a communicative shared mode of thinking with an underlying structure reconstituted from occasion to occasion.<sup>41</sup> I do not suggest that space is a language sufficient to itself. It is merely one of a number of communicative systems which converge to create the play as a three-dimensional experience. The concept of space as ‘language’ is not meant to imply autonomy. But the notion of discourse is important for my purposes, as it brings out a key double axis: on the one hand, the localization within a pre-existent system, the presence of agreement and degree of stability in the conceptualization of space; on the other hand, the constant flexibility and evolution in each instance of communication (performance), where meaning is negotiated within this balance between fixity and fluidity. I distinguish between these mutually interactive determinants of space construction in drama with the use of two linguistic terms. ‘Semantics’, where used in the study, denotes the focus on the associations attached, or likely to be attached, to space in the mind of dramatist and original

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<sup>40</sup> The facilitation of a contextual reading that connects theatre and culture is indeed one of the strengths of semiotic analysis (see Revermann 2006: 44; Fischer-Lichte 1992: 1-10). There are significant weaknesses however: the potential staticness of semiotic readings, reducing the complex communicative process of performance into categories of codes and signs. See e.g. critiques by Rehm 2002: 1-2; Kampourelli 2002: 6-7; Melrose 1994: 4-6 (arguing for a “new semiotics”). Yet semiotics remains the most widespread theoretical base for the analysis of performance and/or space. See e.g. Revermann 2006 (theatre semiotics redefined and used to describe performance as communication process and space as a system); Kampourelli 2002: 6-27 (a systematic examination and refinement of semiotic categories for the study of Greek tragic space); McAuley 1999 (semiotic, phenomenological, and ethnographic approach); Edmunds 1996 (semiotic and historical approach to space in Sophocles); Fischer-Lichte 1992 (a semiotic theory of analysis of drama); Wiles 1991 (semiotics and structuralism for the study of Menander’s use of space); Issacharoff 1981 (space studied as semiotic system). Contrast e.g. Abbott 2005: vi-vii (phenomenology and modern philosophical ideas on space, especially by Lefebvre); Rehm 2002: 1-20 (semiotics and phenomenology rejected in favour of a theoretical reading that draws on J.Gibson’s version of perceptual realism, K.Lewin’s notion of “hodological” space, M.Foucault’s notion of “heterotopia”); Scolnicov 1994: 5-6 (semiotics rejected in favour of phaenomenology).

<sup>41</sup> See Depew & Obbink 2000; the whole collection of papers, each with its different focus, considers the way the discussion of genre has moved forward with the useful application of methods and concepts from linguistics, social theory and anthropology in the study of genre. For some creative uses of pragmatic linguistic theory in the field of classical scholarship, see e.g. Uria 2007 (on Ciceronian invective); De Jong & Rijksbaron 2006 (on Sophocles’ language); Tsagalis 2005 (on Homer); Bonifazi 2001, 2004 (on Pindar). The suitability of the term ‘grammar’ to describe the goal in the search of dramatic technique in general has been the object of a large debate (chiefly between Taplin, Goldhill, and Wiles) on the limits and problems of performance criticism. For the arguments laid out, see especially Altena 1999-2000: 304-8; Taplin 1995; Slater 1993: 5-10; Goldhill 1989; Wiles 1987.

spectators (the signs preceding the play). ‘Pragmatics’, where used, denotes the focus on the dynamic renegotiation of this semantic network for specific communicative events and in particular contexts (signs in operation).<sup>42</sup>

RECONSTRUCTING  
PERFORMANCE

In the absence of pictorial evidence from actual ancient performances, subjectivity will always remain an unavoidable weakness in performance criticism on ancient drama.<sup>43</sup> Possibilities, or at best probabilities, are what I will be arguing for. This limitation does not invalidate the quest; though inevitably subjective and to some degree conjectural, the reconstruction is not arbitrary. The surviving ancient texts remain rich sources for recovering ancient performance practice. Their actual value as a source of evidence in performance criticism has been widely debated. Taplin’s hypothesis for the significant action as always implied in the words opened up the way for grasping how performance contributes to the meaning of a play and of a given scene or moment in the action, for reconstructing what he succinctly called “visual meaning”.<sup>44</sup> Since then, his assumptions have received diverse criticisms.<sup>45</sup> Revermann most recently has questioned the principles of his hypothesis, arguing for the existence of “vital stage action” not referred to in the text “in the way required by the significant action hypothesis”, i.e. indicated in

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<sup>42</sup> I am aware that in using these terms I am entering into a highly controversial area in linguistic studies. The exact limits and nuances of each of the terms and the corresponding linguistic fields denoted (semantics and pragmatics) continue to generate debate in linguistic treatises. For the history of the controversy and ways the two fields have been distinguished, see e.g. Laurence & Gregory 2004: especially ch.20 (“Pragmatics and Semantics”); Lyons 1995: xi-xiii; Levinson 1983: 1-53. There are however some constants; I quote from the introduction to Cruse’s (2006) linguistic dictionary, p.2: “Unfortunately, there are no fully agreed definitions of the two fields. But there are conventions about what semantic books usually contain and what pragmatic books usually contain...A very rough working distinction is that semantics is concerned with the stable meaning resources of language-as-system and pragmatics with the use of that system of communicating, on particular occasions and in particular contexts.” Semantics focuses on the conventional aspects of meaning; pragmatics focuses on uses in context. It is in this fundamental differentiation that the terms have been deemed useful in order to form my metaphor of the two spatial parameters.

<sup>43</sup> The difficulties of assessing vase paintings as evidence for performance are many. To name but some: pictorial representations may be guided by the painter’s own sense of the story rather than the performance or by the painter’s own pictorial tradition; what is represented may be what was only verbal in a performance or an altered and more elaborated version of a stage event. On this much debated issue, see e.g. Revermann 2006: 46; Valakas 2002: 73-4; Wiles 1997: 188-9; Taplin 1977: 435; Webster 1956: 274-5. Taplin’s (2007) publication “Pots and plays” is the most recent thorough examination of the critical issue of the relation between iconographic data and performance tradition.

<sup>44</sup> Taplin 1977: 12 (for the complete hypothesis, see pp.28-39). See also Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 1-8, 16-18, 1995: 93-115.

<sup>45</sup> For objections to Taplin’s hypothesis, see e.g. Revermann 2006: 11-12, 46-63; Altena 1999-2000: 304-8; Marshall 1999-2000: 331-5; Wiles 1997: 5-14, 1987: 136-51; Slater 1993: 5-11; Goldhill 1989: 172-82.

“different scenes and in a different context”.<sup>46</sup> Arguing that the significant action hypothesis is untenable, Revermann sets three methodological principles as key tools for performance criticism. He suggests that the text still has a key value as our “prime means of falsifiability”; in other words, what the text says or implies is the key criterion for accepting or rejecting any alleged solution for theatrical problems. The probability in turn of any scenario not falsified by the text must then be examined against the background of the codes, conventions and contexts of ancient theatrical practice, as these can be reconstructed from archaeological and textual remains. Finally, he stresses the need for “transparency” in our attempts for reconstruction; options available and principles guiding our choices should be clearly outlined throughout.<sup>47</sup>

Revermann’s discussion draws crucial attention to the extent to which performance criticism must move beyond the text in order to solve production problems, to the principles necessary to recover more, dramatically effective stage action with some degree of plausibility.<sup>48</sup> It is an important and elegant refinement of Taplin’s approach. But the core feature of Taplin’s approach is unaffected: the centrality of the text for indicating and signifying stage action is the key tool in any effort at performance reconstruction.<sup>49</sup> Certainly, as experience of the evolutionary and interactive nature of rehearsal and performance shows, there are always actions in the theatre which are beyond demonstration from the text (though not beyond conjecture), even in a theatrical tradition underpinned by explicit authorial stage directions, which the Athenian theatre did not have. Green’s attempt to reconstruct ancient artistic conventions relating to the use of costume and gesture through study of material evidence from the period in

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<sup>46</sup> Revermann 2006: 53-4

<sup>47</sup> Revermann 2006: 63-5

<sup>48</sup> To a large extent, I think that it could be said that it is a different question these assumptions serve (how do you produce a play), and a different question Taplin is posing (how does performance contribute to meaning). Taplin himself repeatedly in his writings seems to be acknowledging the limits of his hypothesis from a purely theatrical perspective: not all possible stage action but only the one which is obviously thematically important for the dramatist’s meaning, the one which the words endow with dramatic meaning (see e.g. Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 17, 1977: 30, 75-9).

<sup>49</sup> See Rosen 2007 (*BMCR*, <http://bmc.brynmawr.edu/2007/2007-04-69.html> [last accessed December 2010]): “an updated, more refined version of his predecessor’s basic assumption”. For the value of the text as containing and clarifying stage action in ancient drama, see e.g. Hourmouziades 2003<sup>3</sup>: 13; Kampourelli 2002: 15-7, 83-4; Easterling 1997: 157; Aston & Savona 1991: 94. Cf. Orgel 2003: especially xiv-xv, 163 (the history of Shakespearean performance seen as fundamentally a history of texts). That this surviving text can be safely conjectured to reflect the stage of an original performance is a point elaborately made in Revermann 2006: 66-95.



question (vase paintings, terracotta figurines), succinctly demonstrates the degree to which character, status and mode of behaviour could be indicated without any use of words in actual ancient (tragic or comic) stage action.<sup>50</sup> Beyond doubt, additional actions not embedded in the text are, to use Revermann's epithet, "vital"<sup>51</sup>; the alternative would be a very static theatre. And this *is* live theatre, not tableau or narrative. Yet action which is thematically significant should collaborate with the text and, in this respect, the central (if not exclusive) role of the text can still be maintained.<sup>52</sup>

Endorsing the insights of both key discussions, I draw on textual cues and on extra-textual codes and contexts (what Revermann calls "the theatrical imaginary of fifth-century drama"<sup>53</sup>), and particularly on knowledge of the spatial techniques of the genre and the trends of Euripidean dramaturgy, in order to reconstruct aspects of his females' physicality. Regarding the question of how I understand this verbally indicated action being translated into visible action in the ancient theatre, I draw the line somewhere between the two ends of the spectrum envisaged by scholars on the matter: extreme naturalism versus extreme stylization. Following Taplin's division between active ("aspects handled by the *hypokritai*") and passive ("all impersonal aspects of stage management") staging, I accept the first as being relatively realistic and the latter as being frequently left to the imagination of the audience.<sup>54</sup> In other words, I assume physical movement and action (the major focus of this study) to have been represented in a fairly realistic way.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Green 2002: 105-21

<sup>51</sup> Revermann 2006: 53

<sup>52</sup> Revermann's (2006) examples of vital stage action not supported by Taplin's significant action hypothesis include the question of the use of Phocian dialect in Aesch. *Cho.*, of a possible dumb show of Orestes' purification in Aesch. *Eum.*, of Ajax's laughter in Soph. *Aj.*, of Pheidippides' speech impediment in Ar. *Nub.* (pp.54-63). Though these are all possible actions which enhance the visual impact of performance, none can be said to critically reinforce central themes or concepts of the plays in question. Like (for instance) gesture accompanying speech (object of Green's mentioned study), they can have a reinforcing effect but they are in a sense optional. Their absence does not have a momentous effect on the play, unlike for instance the Persian queen's contrasting entrances in Aesch. *Pers.*, the trampling on the carpet in his *Ag.*, the undress of Hermione in Eur. *Andr.* (on the last instance, see ch.3, pp.191-5).

<sup>53</sup> Revermann 2006: 64

<sup>54</sup> Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 16-19, 1977: 38. For the debate on the degree of representational realism or stylization of the ancient Greek theatrical tradition, see Taplin 1977: 31-9. Cf. Csapo 2010: 1-139, 2002: 127-47 (on degree of realism in ancient acting style).

<sup>55</sup> This is particularly important for my project, if one bears in mind that all these female characters were impersonated by male actors (for a recent study on the implications of use of male actors for representing females, see Cawthorn 2008; cf. Rabinowitz 1998). If one accepts the case for a strong tendency toward naturalism in active staging, the scope for too overt a disjunction between

I have left until the very end the question of the physical attributes of the theatre of Dionysus, the theatre where Euripidean females were originally presented. This ancient theatrical structure has been a battlefield of scholarly controversy, ever since the scarce archaeological remains of the theatre of Dionysus saw the light of the day.<sup>56</sup> Not all archaeological problems are of direct relevance for my purposes, nor could all be addressed in the present context. Of course, physicality of the ancient theatre matters in any attempt to conceptualize these performances. Yet there is a point beyond which archaeological data and the scholarly controversies gathered round them do not have an important impact on what I argue. Hence, suffice it here to say that I visualize a theatre that comprises a circular orchestra, a scene-building, and a low raised stage in front of it with stairs connecting it with the orchestra.<sup>57</sup> Four focal points are available for the entering of actors in the

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part and player is limited. From my perspective, the dichotomy (male performer-female character) is perhaps best thought of as a generic convention, impinging on the consciousness of the audience as such. As with all convention, there is room for an overtly collusive performance, in this case one which flags the gender gap. The potential element of irony has implications for the interpretation of an act, scene, character, play, or in my case female space. This is however a matter of the individual performance. At this point the text ceases to help us, since we can only identify passages where performance might exploit potential frisson. But since we usually lack evidence for specific ancient performances, we cannot determine when and/or how this potential might have been exploited. As a general rule, however, if *all* female parts are played by males in the theatrical tradition, it becomes difficult to argue for a particular effect in any given dramatic context.

<sup>56</sup> Remarkably enough, the very few stretches of stone-wall found at the archaeological site of the theatre of Dionysus have provoked a vast amount of scholarly works and discussion, since they were first described by Dorpfeld in 1886. For detailed descriptions of the stone remains, see e.g. Moretti 1999-2000: 389-92; Scullion 1994: 17-21. For key surveys on the archaeology of the theatre of Dionysus, see e.g. Csapo & Goette 2007: 116-21; Wiles 1997; Scullion 1994; Hourmouziades 1965. What has become clear in the light of recent discoveries is that the traditional estimations on the capacity for seats of the classical theatre need to be revised (from ca.17,000 to ca.7,000-4,000). On this, see Csapo & Goette 2007: 96-103, 120.

<sup>57</sup> The circular shape of the orchestra remains the majority view (see e.g. Wiles 1997: 44-52; Scullion 1994: 38-41). Yet even this is contentious. For the debate and the arguments for a rectilinear instead of a circular orchestra, see e.g. Csapo & Goette 2007: 116-21; Ashby 1988: 1-18. Concerning the date of the introduction of a scene-building, no conclusive answer can be alleged given the lack of any archaeological remains. One school of thought sees its existence as early as the beginning of dramatic performances (Kampourelli 2002; Arnott 1962; Webster 1956a, 1960; Pickard-Cambridge 1946). Others argue for its introduction shortly before 458 B.C. and Aeschylus' *Oresteia* (Taplin 1977, 2003<sup>2</sup>; Wiles 1997, 2000; Csapo & Slater 1994; Bieber 1961<sup>2</sup>). I incline towards the first opinion, with all the arguments made in its favour. Just a brief note on the argument from dramatic grounds for a late introduction of the scene-building (strongly made by Taplin 1977: 452-9): it would perhaps remove some of the confusion created, if we distinguished between the question of when a structure appears physically in the theatre (which is an archaeological problem), from the very different question of when a structure starts to receive attention from the poets and exist dramatically apart from just physically in performance space (which may of course be an incremental process and not a single leap). The existence of the low raised stage is again under debate. I follow scholars like Taplin 1977: 441-2; Hourmouziades 1965: 58-74; Arnott 1962: 1-42, in accepting the existence of a low raised stage which does not hinder intercommunication and use of both orchestra and stage by actors and chorus (it may have been no more than a low flight of steps). For the opposite view and for focus being on the centre (the orchestra), see e.g. Ley 2007; Wiles 2000: 104-09, 1997: 63-83; Ley & Ewans 1985: 78, 82; Bieber 1961<sup>2</sup>: 60.

playing zone: the two side entrances (*eisodoi*), the door or the roof of the scene-building, the last usually reserved for divine epiphanies.<sup>58</sup> There are two key theatrical mechanisms most probably in use in Euripides' time: the *ekkyklema* and the crane, used for the revelation of tableaux that were supposed to have taken place indoors and for divine epiphanies respectively.<sup>59</sup> Further details on the physical attributes of the ancient theatre will need to be clarified in the course of the analysis (for example the use of the stage altar); these will be addressed individually when they become relevant.

There is one final feature of the performance environment which needs to be addressed in a thesis which focuses on the female: that is the composition of the original audience. This (like most archaeological questions related to this theatre) remains an inconclusive matter. The question of female presence within the auditorium is one of the most convoluted problems in scholarly debates and given the existing evidence no decisive claim can be made.<sup>60</sup> We have no evidence for a rule banning females from the theatre. I therefore incline towards a view which envisions the possibility of some female presence within the audience, though even if this view is correct, cultural pressures would inevitably have made the female a minority presence. Certainly, as is unanimously acknowledged by scholars, the collective consciousness of this audience (the one which plays construct and appeal to in their meanings) remains predominantly male.<sup>61</sup> On this

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<sup>58</sup> For the two *eisodoi*, see Hourmouziades 1965: 128-36. It makes the most economical use of the existing evidence, if we accept that one double-leaved door suffices for the reconstruction of the staging of all extant plays. For those in favour of one door, see e.g. Kampourelli 2002: 50; Wiles 2000: 118, 1997: 161; Taplin 1977: 439-40; Arnott 1962: 43, Webster 1956a: 10. Contrast Bieber 1961<sup>2</sup>: 69, 74. For the roof as a usable level of the scene-building, see e.g. Moretti 1999-2000: 396; Taplin 1977: 440-1; Webster 1960: 499. Whether the roof was the same as the *theologeion* on which Pollux places Zeus in the *Psychostasia* or a special high platform erected above it (as supported by e.g. Hourmouziades 1965: 33-4; Webster 1956a: 11-12), is not certain. Following Taplin 1977: 441, I think that it seems pointless to envisage such a device for the classical period, since the roof would serve perfectly well for all purposes where the *theologeion* might be needed.

<sup>59</sup> Euripides' dramatic career extends from 455 B.C. up to approximately 406 B.C. For 455 B.C. as marking the beginning of Euripides' dramatic career, see Kovacs *LCL* 1: 5, 16. 408 B.C. is the date of the production of *Or.*, the last (surviving at least) play produced during his lifetime (see Kovacs *LCL* 5: 400). *Bacch.* and *IA* were produced posthumously. For the dating of his death to either 407/406 or 406/405 B.C., see Kovacs *LCL* 1: 4-6. For brief overviews on the chronology, characteristics and use of the *ekkyklema* and the crane, see Mastronarde 1990; Taplin 1977: 442-7. Between the two varieties of the *ekkyklema* (platform wheeled straightforward and platform revolved into position turning on a pivot or circular track), modern scholars favour the simplest, less time-consuming solution of a wheeled platform. See e.g. Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 12; Wiles 1997: 162; Webster 1956a: 8.

<sup>60</sup> For the evidence, see Csapo & Slater 1994: 290-3. For the arguments in favour of some female presence, see Mastronarde 2010: 16; Csapo & Slater 1994: 286-7; Henderson 1991: 133-47. For the opposite view, see Goldhill 1994: 347-69.

<sup>61</sup> See Wiles 2000: 67; Csapo & Slater 1994: 286; Goldhill 1994: 368.

plausible if hypothetical reconstruction, the ideology to which gendered play space appeals is essentially that of the adult, free, citizen male; and this forms the basis of my analysis of the pragmatic relationship between play and audience.

All in all, by combining analysis of theatrical features (primarily space and movement) with readings of Euripidean females and plays, this thesis engages—and I hope that it will also engage its readers—in a process of envisioning physical female presence in the interactive theatrical space, and in a process of grasping its thematic significance in the construction of character, theme and action. The outlook is new and the insights to be gained are many: for reading characters and plays, for grasping the significance of dramaturgy and the dramaturgical skill of the playwright in setting up his performances, for complementing our view of the way in which female roles and experience were played out on the tragic stages. To put it in a nutshell: women onstage speak and act; they also stand, sit, lie down, move, follow others, depart from others, come and go. And it is this third under-explored facet of their presence and its exceedingly interesting implications that this thesis will aim to investigate.

## CHAPTER I:

### *HELEN*

#### THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Euripides transfers Helen to distant Egypt and places her outside a foreign *oikos*; the Greek woman is dislocated in barbarian land.<sup>1</sup> He rewrites her story in a play which not only inverts traditional mythic associations but also in the process inverts all sorts of gender stereotypes and social norms. The dramatist's playful take on the varied tradition of this celebrated mythical figure, and the themes developed in the *Helen* have long fascinated readers and scholars. My focus here is his equally fascinating play with female space, which has attracted far less scholarly interest. In what follows, I engage in a close analysis of the physical aspects of female space: the larger topography, the specifics of female movement, action and interaction within it. Their formulation is an integral part of the creation of Euripides' new Helen. The exploration of this spatial game against the background of the theatrical, sociological and ideological contexts of his age offers important insights: for grasping the tensions in characterization and action, for appreciating Euripides' dramaturgical skill in figuring the complexities of his novel plot, for understanding key themes and meanings. And most importantly, a performance-based reading has a strong bearing on one of the critical (in both senses) questions for the reading of this tragedy: ironic or not.

The play opens. A voice comes from the stage. It is a figure well known, indeed notorious, from the mythic-poetic tradition: Helen. The audience's expectations are on one level fulfilled. The play's title is *Helen*; Helen is the one they first encounter onstage. Yet the very first word she utters instantly reveals the unexpected setting: Νείλου μὲν αἶδε καλλιπάρθενοι ῥοαί, "Here flows the

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<sup>1</sup> In the *IT*, the female undergoes the same dislocating experience: from Greece to distant foreign land (ch.2 devoted to the play). In *Andr.*, the dynamics reverse: foreign woman transfers to Greece (ch.3 devoted to the play).

Nile with its fair nymphs!” (1); this is neither Sparta, nor Troy.<sup>2</sup> It turns out that Euripides’ Helen (like the Helen of Stesichorus and Herodotus) never went to Troy. Paris only carried her image (34: εἶδωλον) in his arms, while the real Helen was sent to Egypt (33-46).<sup>3</sup> Euripides was not the first to bring Helen to Egypt. Already in Homer, it is in Egypt that she receives the κάλλιμα δῶρα from Polybus’ wife and the φάρμακα from the wife of Thon (*Od.* 4.130-2, 228-31); in Egypt she stays π[αρά] τῶι Πρωτέϊ in Stesichorus (fr.193 *PMG*=193 *PMGF*) and accordingly παρὰ Πρωτέϊ we find her dwelling in Herodotus (*Hdt.* 2.112.2).<sup>4</sup> Following this strand in the tradition, Euripides removes Helen from her Spartan *oikos* and homeland and places her outside the same Protean *oikos* on his theatrical stage, as we find out at line 46: ἐς οἶκον Πρωτέως.

Female space in this plot is marked with a double abnormality. Helen is a female dislocated: far away from the defining space of homeland and home.<sup>5</sup> She is also a wife found alone outside in public space. In the sense that the ideal location of the wife is within the house, this second spatial divergence maximizes the potential unease of the original audience.<sup>6</sup> And there is a further complicating factor: the identity of the female. This is not just any woman. This is a woman with a long literary career of malign fame at her back: the archetypical adulteress, the renowned bad woman of antiquity.<sup>7</sup> Spatial distance from marital home is strongly

<sup>2</sup> Arnott 1990: 2-4 and Zuntz 1960: 223-4 nicely document the possible nature and degree of the audience’s surprise.

<sup>3</sup> For the Stesichorean and Herodotean versions of the story of Helen and their relation to Euripides’ recreation of the myth, see most recently Allan 2008: 18-26. Specifically for the introduction of the *eidolon* into Helen’s myth, see e.g. Allan 2008: 20-1; Wright 2005: 84-113 (raising doubts for the Stesichorean tradition of the *eidolon*); Dale 1967: xxiii-xxiv.

<sup>4</sup> For the connection of Helen and Menelaus with Egypt in previous tradition, see further in e.g. Allan 2008: 21; Burian 2007: 9n.22; Wright 2005: 83.

<sup>5</sup> For distance from homeland and/or home as the key spatial correlate in my definition of female dislocation, see *Introduction*, pp.17-8.

<sup>6</sup> The dislocated female also appears alone in public space in the other two plays. Yet in the *IT* the role of the female as temple priestess normalizes position in public space (see ch.2, p.99). Similarly in the *Andr.*, the role of Andromache as concubine of Neoptolemus normalizes position outside the house (see ch.3, pp.153-4). In Helen’s case, danger and temporary upheaval in the house that used to protect brings her outside (partly justifying her placement). But unlike the two other dislocated females, her position outdoors is not in any sense normalized by her role; Helen as wife should not be seen in public space alone. In this case, the sense of the distance from ideal location of the woman is maximized. For the way the inside-out polarity functioned as a key gender distinction at the level of ancient Greek ideology, and for the potential for challenge on audience ideology when females appear in deviant positions on dramatic stages, see *Introduction*, pp.15-6, 17-9.

<sup>7</sup> In a passing remark, Allan 2008: 55 notes: “Despite her sympathetic portrayal, the mythical associations triggered by H. will influence how the Athenian audience respond to her in the play.”

associated with transgression of norms of female propriety in her traditional story. The spatial parameter interacts with Helen's complex inter-textual history and threatens to deprive her of the sympathy of her original spectators. To put it differently, if women displaced are potentially problematic, the minute you take the ex-adulteress and let her loose in the outside-space of a distant foreign country, the potential for disquieting effects immediately multiplies. This is arguably the most contentious of all three dislocated females under consideration, since Iphigenia and Andromache come to the theatre unburdened by Helen's past. Yet Euripides downplays the potential frisson. Both his choices in defining larger topography and the nature of Helen's movement and action within it will be found to function as means of reclaiming some of the semantic value of internal space, from which physical position (reinforced by background story) unavoidably deprives her.

I start with the larger space surrounding the female. Egypt, chosen as the setting of the play, is a country which had been in the collective Greek consciousness for centuries: known through direct contact, through literature and myth. There is evidence for substantial (commercial and cultural) relations with Egypt already in the second millennium B.C., intensified further from the seventh century onwards, when Greek mercenaries penetrate Egypt.<sup>8</sup> Medical, sophistic, historical and literary works of the classical era show a continuous fascination with the locale. The idiosyncrasies of both land and people, thought of as opposite and in many respects superior to the rest of the world, prevail in an extensive Herodotean account on the country: uniqueness in climate, geography (river system in particular), customs, profound religious wisdom and long established practices are all elaborately presented in his second book of the *Histories*.<sup>9</sup> Egyptian fecundity in natural resources (fertility of land, abundance of water) and in material culture

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For the predominantly negative portrayal of Helen in ancient literature, and tragedy in particular, see accounts in e.g. Allan 2008: 10-13, 16-18; Wright 2005: 116-8.

<sup>8</sup> See Allan 2008: 55-6; Boardman 1999<sup>4</sup>: 111-7; Hornblower 1991: 63-5.

<sup>9</sup> For the way Herodotus' account on Egypt stresses Egyptian antiquity, piety, wisdom, Greek indebtedness to Egyptian religious and cultural practices, see e.g. Allan 2008: 57-8; Bowman 2002: 204-6; Munson 2001: 92. This model of Egypt as the land of reverse customs is also adopted by Sophocles (*OC* 337-41). For the extensive influence of Herodotus' Egyptian *logos* in all literary genres, see Hall 1989: 134. It is probable that Euripides was familiar with Herodotus. Date of the *Histories* is uncertain, but most projections have it predating 425 B.C. Even if the publication date proves inaccurate, it has been plausibly suggested that pre-publication versions of Herodotus' work were widely known from oral performances in Athens and other Greek cities (see e.g. Dewald 1998: x-xi; Hornblower 1996: 25-38). For Herodotus as potentially an important source in Euripides' creation of Tauris in the *IT*, see ch.2, p.96.

(impressive buildings and monuments) is a recurrent feature in most literary representations of the land.<sup>10</sup> Hospitable and pious Egyptian kings protect Greeks landing on their shores in Homer and Herodotus: Odysseus helped by the Egyptian king in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 14.278-86); Menelaus helped by the Homeric Eidothea and Proteus (*Od.* 4.365-592); Helen protected by Proteus in Herodotus (*Hdt.* 2.112-5).<sup>11</sup> But Egypt also appears as a distant, confining, and dangerous place in these and other accounts: Egypt confines Odysseus and Menelaus at its shores for some time, with danger for them and their crew (*Hom. Od.* 4.360-2, 14.285, 17.426-44), the Egyptian king Busiris habitually kills strangers arriving in his land, the aggressive and impious Egyptian males chase their cousins trying to force them to marriage in Aeschylus' *Supplikes*.<sup>12</sup> Egypt has multiple and diverse images, with both negative and positive associations, in Greek myth and literature.

Historical reality of the fifth century, in which Egypt is both a major source of food and support but also a realm of loss and death, corroborates the ambiguity of the mythical picture. Along with the Black Sea and Thrace, Egypt is one of the key suppliers of grain for Athens in the fifth century.<sup>13</sup> But in the mid fifth century Egypt turns also to a site of a major loss for the Athenians. Two hundred Athenian triremes and crews are lost there in the 450s B.C., when Persians subdue the Egyptian revolt in which Athenians were involved from perhaps 459 B.C. As Hornblower notes, Thucydides' account of the event is expressed in terms of a major catastrophe comparable to the Sicilian one: ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐσώθησαν, οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι ἀπώλοντο... (*Thuc.* 1.110.1).<sup>14</sup> Among the original audience of Euripides' production of *Helen*, some must have experienced family losses in the Egyptian disaster.<sup>15</sup> This abundance and divergence of Egyptian

<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g. *Hom. Il.* 9.381-2, *Od.* 4.127; *Hdt.* 1.93, 2.14, 2.35. Egyptian wealth is a major resource of Menelaus and Odysseus' riches in Homer (*Od.* 3.301, 4.90, 14.285-6). For Egyptian wealth as proverbial, see also Allan 2008: 56; Bowman 2002: 207-8.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Hom. Od.* 4.125-35: Helen's hospitality in Egypt and the gifts she received.

<sup>12</sup> For the Busiris myth, see e.g. Munson 2001: 141-4. Based solely on this myth and ignoring for instance Homer or Euripides, Munson rather wrongly assumes a picture of Egypt as threatening and impious in the Greek tradition, which Herodotus corrects with his account of Heracles and Helen's hospitality in Egypt (*Hdt.* 2.45, 2.112-5 respectively). For the image of a hubristic and impious Egypt in Aesch. *Supp.*, see especially lines 9, 30, 741-2, 817-8. Cf. *Ar. Thesm.* 920-2: "Oh my, you strike me as being a villain yourself, and some kind of ally of this other one. No wonder you kept acting like Egyptians (ἡγυπτιάζετ' (ε), 921)!".

<sup>13</sup> See Hornblower 1991: 40-1.

<sup>14</sup> Hornblower 1991a: 176-7

<sup>15</sup> For the dating of *Hel.* in 412 B.C. (one of the nine surviving plays which are dated), see also in *Introduction*, pp.17-8n.25. For the hypothesis for a different dating (411 B.C.), see Vickers 1989: 53. We have no way of knowing with certainty the other plays performed as part of the *tetralogy* in



associations provide Euripides with a wide spectrum of choices between the components in the tradition for his dramatic recreation of the locale in the *Helen*. With Tauris, the environment of Iphigenia (to be considered next), Euripides gets a place with few marked associations; no precise antecedents confine his fictional version of his onstage setting. Egypt has an important presence in previous literature (though probably not in the tragic theatre, where it does not appear elsewhere as setting in extant tragedy), with lots of associations but also with important deviation within them.<sup>16</sup> Flexibility of a different sort is involved in the creation of Egypt. To Euripides' reworking with this network of Egyptian semantics, and the pragmatic value he extracts from the dramatic topography I now turn in my discussion.

The Egyptian topography we meet in the play is (in purely physical terms) strikingly unspecific; it is however strong on associations. The prologue opens with a reference to the river of the Nile: Νείλου μὲν αἶδε καλλιπάρθενοι ῥοαί/ ὃς ἀντὶ δίας ψακάδος Αἰγύπτου γύας/ λευκῆς τακείσης χιόνος ὑγραίνει δρόσω (1-3); instead of rain from Zeus, the flood of the Nile waters the Egyptian land. This is the only descriptive detail of the landscape that we get in the whole play.<sup>17</sup> The sense of the exotic, fabulous locale with marked elements of a *locus amoenus* (notions of abundance, growth, wealth) introduced in this first reference to the Nile continues in the picturesque description of the chorus' laundry by the deep-blue river and the green plants (179-83), to the bright water of the Nile (462), the references to the impressive palace (68-70, 430-2) and its abundant supplies (295-6: the rich table, 1260: the rich herds).<sup>18</sup> Evocations of the distant journey to Egypt (e.g. 83, 459-61, 694-5) and references to the βάρβαρον χθόνα (598; cf. 863, 1042) further contribute to setting the foreignness of the

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which *Hel.* appeared. Several hypotheses have been made: see e.g. Allan 2008: 4 (*Hel.*, *Andromeda*); Wright 2006: 23-7, 2005: 3 (*Hel.*, *IT*, *Andromeda*, *Cyc.*); Zacharia 2003: 3-4 (*Hel.*, *IT*, *Ion*).

<sup>16</sup> Egypt is likely to have been the setting of the satyr plays *Proteus* by Aeschylus, and *Busiris* by Euripides. But it does not appear elsewhere in extant at least tragedy (see Allan 2008: 29; Hall 1989: 112). For Tauris as a blank sheet in terms of its semantics in relation to the loaded semantic value of *Helen's* Egypt and *Andromache's* Thessaly, see ch.2, pp.87-8.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Wright 2005: 166.

<sup>18</sup> For the opening lines (1-3) as introducing Egypt as an exotic, fabulous land, see e.g. Allan 2008: 144-5; Wright 2005: 166; Segal 1971a: 571-2; Zuntz 1960: 202. For the words of the chorus as contributing to the impression of the *locus amoenus*, cf. Willink 1990: 91; Kannicht 1969: 71. For notion of abundance and growth as typical features of the *locus amoenus*, see e.g. Karamanou 2006: 64-5; Heubeck, West & Hainsworth 1988: 342. Segal 1971a: 572-3 sees both Egypt and Sparta as exemplifying *loci amoeni* in the play.

locale. Yet further detail in description is totally lacking. Only details relevant to the dramatic action are given (location of the palace near the sea and royal dockyards, 425-9, 739, 1530; location of tomb near the palace). There is enough geographical and ethnological detail to establish distance, but no local ethnographical material is used to further specify surroundings.<sup>19</sup>

Egyptian culture is similarly unmarked. Euripides does not exploit references to Egyptian religious or social custom to produce exotic effect. The Egyptians' divine world is distinctively Greek; Zeus (879), Hera (880, 1005, 1026), Aphrodite (884, 1007, 1025), Apollo (1204) are the gods evoked by Theonoe and Theoclymenus.<sup>20</sup> At the moment of Theonoe's entry we get the description of a purification process, which has been seen as a representation of Egyptian practice by some scholars: two servants accompany her, one cleansing the sky (865-7), the other purifying the earth before her way (868-70). The rite has no close Greek parallel, but still the idea of use of sulphur for cleansing appears also in Greek religion.<sup>21</sup> Outside this brief moment, we get no allusions to any of the religious curiosities (the theriomorphic gods, the sacred animals, the strange rituals, burial practices) or the paradoxical social practices which fascinated Herodotus or Sophocles.<sup>22</sup> Egyptian slaves of the royal household appear onstage: the Old

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Allan 2008: 29-30; Wright 2005: 166-8. The latter, similarly noting the absence of ethnographical detail in features of landscape goes further to argue that "Egypt is scarcely more Egyptian than Athens" (p.168). However, downplaying of features of Egyptian otherness is different from assimilation of Egyptian to Greek landscape. As argued, Egypt possesses features that set it as a foreign and distant land. What is more, the way Euripides renders Egypt conforms to his general trend of use of limited ethnographic detail in rendering foreign lands (on these tendencies of Euripidean technique, see Said 2002a: 64-7; Bacon 1961:139-40, 155-67). This is the same technique that we will detect in his rendering of Tauris in *IT* (see ch.2, pp.94-5), in the rendering of Trojan foreignness in *Andr.* (see ch.3, pp.152-3). For detailed discussion on the possible location of the tomb, see pp.50-1.

<sup>20</sup> For the point cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 286; Wright 2005: 184.

<sup>21</sup> The scenic moment has been seen as a possible allusion to Egyptian practice, as attested in Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 79. See e.g. Chong-Gossard 2008: 18-19; Burian 2007: 244; Hall 1989: 146. Contrast Allan 2008: 243; Kannicht 1969: 232n.9 convincingly shedding doubt on explicit connection with Egyptian customs. The Herodotean idea of Egyptian obsession with cleanness could be lurking behind this (cf. Allan 2008: 243). But again, Euripides avoids reference to the peculiar purification customs that fascinate the historian (Hdt. 2.37). For Theonoe's entry, see further in pp.71-3.

<sup>22</sup> Burial practices could easily be treated in this play: in relation to Proteus' tomb, in relation to the Greek funeral customs described to Theoclymenus in the end (1235-77). Yet Euripides exploits neither element to draw on Egyptian customs with ethnographic realism (see comment in Burian 2007: 266, on how this Egyptian who regards Greek funerary rites as superior would amuse spectators familiar with Herodotus' descriptions of the elaborate Egyptian burial customs). The Herodotean element of Egypt as land of inversion of social norms could be seen in Euripides' Egypt only in a metaphorical and implicit way: in the marked way female skill and control are rendered as superior than male valour. Cf. Segal 1971a: 575: "In Euripides' fictional Egypt – as in Herodotus' 'real' Egypt—the situation is just the reverse". For the way gender staging contributes to the emphasis on unusual female power in the play, see pp.54-5, 68-70, 77-9.

Woman porter (437-82), servants accompanying Theoclymenus at his entry (1165), servants ordered to follow Menelaus and Helen to the shore for the fake funeral (1390-1, 1412-3), the servant going to announce Theoclymenus' supposed marriage with Helen (1431-5), the servant appearing in the role of the Messenger near the end of the play (1512-618). But unlike the Taurian herdsmen, whose means (corn shells, stones for defence) and beliefs (their naïve superstitions, their man-killing customs) are rendered with relative detail, these foreigners are not endowed with a distinctive personality as Egyptians.<sup>23</sup> We do get references to the larger Egyptian population: the throng Menelaus avoids (414-6), the other houses of Egypt to which Menelaus could seek help (450), Theoclymenus' subjects ordered to join in his supposed wedding celebrations (1341-4). But outside these passing allusions to the wider landscape, in *Helen* the body of Egyptians dwelling in the foreign land is less a strong presence than the Taurian *polis*, repeatedly evoked in terms of its laws in the *IT*.<sup>24</sup> No sense of the Egyptian collective identity is created. Egypt is filtered only through the character of the members of its royal family. Proteus, Theonoe and Theoclymenus are strong presences in the play; their characterization and actions play a significant role in the plot, both for good and for ill. But again, as will be seen, in neither case is character or conduct marked as distinctively Egyptian in any way.

I begin with Proteus and Theonoe. Egyptian deceased king and princess are presented in morally positive and ethnically neutral terms.<sup>25</sup> Strong sense of justice, piety to the gods, and respect of the laws of *xenia* are key markers of both figures. Proteus is the σωφρονέστατος βροτῶν to whom Zeus entrusts the protection of his daughter (47); an assignment for which the Egyptian ruler certainly proves trustworthy. While alive he acts as her protector (ἕως μὲν οὖν

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<sup>23</sup> In both cases (Taurians and Egyptians) language, costume and physical appearance are not verbally marked as exotic, hence not used to render diverse ethnicity. This, as argued (p.34n.19) falls within the larger Euripidean tendency of avoidance of exploitation of diverse language or appearance for depicting his barbarian characters. For tendencies in representation of barbarian language and appearance in tragedy in general, see Hall 1989: 117-21, 136-7, 139-40. But in other terms, the characterization of the barbarians of this play differs significantly from that of the Taurians (emphatically marked as alien and barbaric through reference to their culture and ways). For the Taurians and for my disagreement with readings that assimilate the two in terms of their rhetorical use (as stereotypical other, or as Hellenized barbarians), see further in ch.2, pp.94-5.

<sup>24</sup> For the characterization of Taurians and importance of the *polis* in creating the sense of that barbarian topography, see ch.2, pp.90-4. Cf. how the sense of the larger Phthian society (its mythic identity, its customs) is important in Eur. *Andr.* (also physically represented via the Phthian choral women on that stage); see further in ch.3, pp.143-5, 148-9.

<sup>25</sup> For Theonoe and Proteus as positive figures, cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 59-60; Wright 2005: 194.

φῶς ἡλίου τὸδ' ἔβλεπεν/ Πρωτεύς, ἄσυλος ἢ γάμων, 61-2), in his death he continues his role through the protective power of his tomb (Helen clings on it for most of the play).<sup>26</sup> Thus, Euripides' Proteus takes up the role of the just king and strenuous guardian of Helen in the absence of her husband, also assumed by his Herodotean predecessor (Hdt. 2.114-5). Furthermore, his presentation as a figure with extraordinary power (his tomb functioning as altar, a point to which I will return), and most importantly the strong connection of whole family line (at least from Nereus onwards, 15) and especially Theonoe with divination also continue elements of his Homeric portrait. There Proteus appears as a divinity of the sea to which Menelaus has to resort, in order to learn the reason he is being kept from his homeland and the way of his rescue from toils and wandering (Hom. *Od.* 4.351-592). In Euripides' story, Proteus' Homeric mantic powers and his key role (both Homeric and Herodotean) in securing Menelaus' salvation, are both bestowed on Theonoe.<sup>27</sup> Theonoe is presented as Proteus' εὐγενῆς daughter (10), the one who knows τὰ θεῖα.../ τὰ τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα (13-4), the "chanter of the gods' will" (145; cf. 515, 859), a ξύμμαχος θεοῖς ἴση (819), the voice dwelling "in the house's inmost recesses" (ἐν μυχοῖς, 820) without the consent of which an escape could never be accomplished (829).<sup>28</sup> Her close relation with the divine and the sense of her as a wise clairvoyant figure is a multiple given in the drama (in words, staging of her entry, her actions and decisions in the play).<sup>29</sup> Concern for, and wish to measure up to the paradigm of her father largely ensure her siding for Helen and Menelaus' salvation, despite the wishes of her brother (e.g. 998-1000, 1010-2, 1028-9).<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> His tomb functions as a surrogate altar for Helen (see further in pp.51-2).

<sup>27</sup> Her prophetic power and sense of justice are however indicated as inheritance from maternal grandfather Nereus (15, 1002-4). Cf. Burian 2007: 191.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. 318-9, 325-9. For Theonoe's omniscience and its function in the play, cf. e.g. Hanson 1973: 12-13; Burnett 1960: 152 (talks about Theonoe's "special understanding"); Zuntz 1960: 209. Contrast Verall 1905: 59-60, 84, 99-102, who argues that her supernatural knowledge is not to be taken seriously in the play (this is part of a thoroughgoing, often mechanistic, rationalism in Verall's reading of Euripides). Cf. Wright 2005: 196-7 (talking of her omniscience as a disappointing illusion); Grube 1941: 344 (seeing her as an example of "the excessive pretensions of soothsayers" Menelaus' servant had criticised before in the play). For the invective against soothsayers, see p.72.

<sup>29</sup> See pp.71-3.

<sup>30</sup> In this choice to put justice and help towards Greeks in need above family relations, she also shares a characteristic of the Homeric Eidothea (Proteus' Homeric daughter), who advises and helps Menelaus to capture her father and secure his advice. For the name Eido (11) as potential allusion to the Homeric Eidothea, see Burian 2007: 191.

In other words, the traditions of the Egyptian ruling family, the key ethical framework against which the characterization of principal Egyptian figures is evaluated, are markedly presented as adhering to values admirable by Greek standards (hospitality, piety and justice). Only the son, Theoclymenus, new ruler of the land after the death of the father, threatens to violate this inheritance. His lust for Helen turns him against the will of the father, and makes him hostile to Greeks arriving in Egypt: κτείνει γὰρ Ἑλληνας ὄντιν' ἄν λάβῃ ξένον (155; cf. e.g. 439-40, 443-4, 468, 479-80, 803, 833, 863-4, 1176). Nevertheless, like Theonoe and Proteus, he is deprived of exotic effect.<sup>31</sup> His behaviour is not marked as utterly barbaric; one merely has to turn to the example of Thoas (the barbarian despot appearing in the *IT*) to catch a glimpse of the volume of the exotic effect of which this barbarian king has been stripped in this play. Indeed, many of the attributes of his behaviour do not differ from those of Greek characters put in the same position of the villain in other tragic suppliant plots. Hermione and Menelaus blackmail and try to kill a defenceless woman and her child, rejecting with cruelty their supplications in Euripides' *Andromache* (*Andr.* 155-80, 425-34, 515-22, 537-44). Lycus in *Hercules furens* orders his slaves to pile wood close to the altar, set it on fire and burn the bodies of the suppliants (adults and children) clustering around it (*HF* 240-6; cf. 334-5). Theoclymenus actually comes across as considerably more attractive than these figures. He is charged with cruelty against Helen (e.g. 62-3, 785), impiety towards Proteus and potential disrespect to the suppliant (e.g. 980-7), but never shows the readiness to enact it on this stage. He salutes the father's tomb when entering (1165-6), he responds positively to the requests of Helen's supplication (1237ff), he shows true compassion and concern for Helen's loss (e.g. 1186-92, 1392-8), and rather easily and magnanimously accepts his defeat at the end (1680-7).<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Contrast e.g. Hall 1989: 112-3; Podlecki 1970: 413-4, arguing for Theoclymenus as typical barbarian. Allan 2008: 58-9 also argues for Theoclymenus behaving in "a typically 'barbarian' manner" (p.58), but notes his affinities with types of tragic tyrants (p.59). He argues that both (his being a barbarian, his acting as autocrat) play a role in the way he is perceived. I am more sympathetic to Wright's (2005: 194) reading of the character: "Even Theoclymenus is not as barbaric as he might have been". He makes the case for Theoclymenus' alienness downplayed, using similar arguments. But he overstates when applying the same argument to Thoas (see my discussion, ch.2, pp.92-3).

<sup>32</sup> Contrast e.g. Burnett 1960: 157 (seeing him as an absolute villain). His evocation to the father's tomb, the first stage action he performs, could be seen as giving a psychological explanation for his later actions; Theoclymenus is not readily prepared to sin against this tomb and against the will of its occupant. In the end he even expresses admiration for Helen (1684-7).

What is more, his negative traits (his inhospitality, his potential cruelty and impiety) are not presented in terms of barbaric alienness, i.e. not presented as ethno-cultural characteristics but as features of the specific character. Not only his close family (Theonoe, Proteus) but also his people do not share his unlawful and violent aspirations. Note how the slaves of his household are all sympathetic to strangers and to Helen's situation: 477-82: Old Woman, porter of the house trying to ward off Menelaus from potential death in the hands of her master; 1035-42: chariot keepers who would easily give Helen and her husband a chariot to escape, if asked. The sense is strong that Theoclymenus is aberrant from both royal family and whole Egyptian land. What is more, cruelty to strangers is not attributed to Egyptian *xenophobia* (the mythic Busiris has little connection with this Egyptian despot), but to his personal passion for Helen.<sup>33</sup> As for the erotic desire and pursuit of females by males in position of power denoting a barbaric generic trait, myth (and actually mythic tales invoked in the course of this same play) and, more significantly for our purposes, other Euripidean plays seem to imply otherwise.<sup>34</sup> Sexual intemperance is also a characteristic of Euripides' Greek Polydectes, the amorous king trying to impose his will on the helpless Danae in the fragmentary *Dictys*.<sup>35</sup> However, some caution is needed here: to say that Theoclymenus' characterisation downplays typical features of oriental despotism is not to accept the view that this ruler poses no real danger, which might imply that, his characterisation ironically subverts Helen and Menelaus' own positive presentation.<sup>36</sup> Although he lacks the melodramatic violence of a Lycus or a Menelaus, not only Helen but also the Old Woman and Theonoe note the danger awaiting those who oppose his will (e.g. 63, 151-2, 778-81, 815-7, 437-40, 468, 479-80, 888-93). Theoclymenus threatens violence (even against his sister).<sup>37</sup> He is repeatedly associated with imagery of hunting (e.g. 51, 64, 314, 545, 981, 1175,

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. Wright 2005: 196, noting how the impression created is that his desire to kill Greeks comes only after his decision to marry Helen.

<sup>34</sup> For lust after Greek females as a barbaric generic trait, see Hall 1989: 113. All mythical parallelisms evoked in the play involve the abduction of females forced to yield to the lust of their divine abductor. Juffras 1993: 45 speaks of "a motif of abduction and rape" (cf. Segal 1971a: 569-70). Hence, the idea of a female placed in danger because facing the desire of a male in power (divine or mortal) is recurrent in Greek myth. Cf. Arnott 1990: 7-8.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Karamanou 2006: 223.

<sup>36</sup> For this view, cf. e.g. Lee 1986: 313; Schmiel 1972: 290-1; Burnett 1971: 79, 96-7; Blaiklock 1952: 92-3; Grube 1941: 336-7, 348-9; Verall 1905: 51-3.

<sup>37</sup> See 1176, 1180-3, 1624-6.

1238).<sup>38</sup> All, the different narrative voices, imagery, and plot converge to create the impression of a violent temperament and a genuine source of danger.

Theoclymenus' characteristic attributes are often seen as extended to the picture of Egypt as a whole in this play. This is particularly persistent in the way Egypt is envisaged as a place with a Hades-like quality, a place of death and danger. An Egypt identified with the underworld is invariably seen as a kind of prerequisite for the establishment of the connection (in itself plausible) between Helen and the mythic parallel often invoked, Persephone.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, some of the elements offered as pointers of the Egypt-Hades association are rather forced, and often subject to alternative interpretation.<sup>40</sup> Teucer and Menelaus' reaction at the sight of the palace (68-70, 430), Helen's reference to the *πλουσίαν τροάπεζαν* (295-6), and finally the etymological connection of Theoclymenus' name with the epithets of Hades *Klymenos* and *Periklymenos* are usually employed as the strong hints for identifying the mortal king Theoclymenus with the divine king of the underworld, Pluto.<sup>41</sup> Starting from the latter, proponents of this reading themselves note that these epithets are only rarely attributed to the god of the underworld, at least in the extant corpus.<sup>42</sup> And, though the etymological connection between the name *Plouton* and *ploutos* is inescapable, the capitalized word *Πλούτος* of line 68 is invariably used to denote not the god of the underworld (*Πλούτων*), but the personified god of material wealth in earlier Greek literature.<sup>43</sup> The rarely invoked etymological connections seem rather a flimsy

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<sup>38</sup> For the hunting image as the visual metaphor of Theoclymenus' sexual desire and pursuit, see e.g. Hall 1989: 113; Arnott 1990: 7n.28, 16; Podlecki 1970: 409.

<sup>39</sup> See e.g. Allan 2008: 158; Burian 2007: 13; Friedman 2007: 201, 204; Juffras 1993: 46-7; Foley 1992: 136; Robinson 1979: 165; Wolff 1973: 64-8 (seeing an *eros*-death motif in the play); Segal 1971a: 597-8; Guépin 1968:128.

<sup>40</sup> Neither compelling, nor straightforwardly functioning in the text as associations of death (in my opinion) are for example the following elements: the similarity of the geographical situation of Egypt with the underworld (argued by Guépin 1968: 128-9; followed by e.g. Burian 2007: 13); elements of the setting (the tomb) or elements of plot (Teucer reporting deaths at Troy, Helen singing a dirge) seen as echoes of death by e.g. Allan 2008: 158; Burian 2007: 13; Friedman 2007: 204; Juffras 1993: 46; Foley 1992: 136; Wolff 1973: 64; Robinson 1979: 165; Proteus as possibly invoking an underworld deity (argued by Guépin 1968: 130); Theoclymenus and Proteus' characterization as reflecting the ambiguity of Hades' hospitality (argued by Guépin 1968:132).

<sup>41</sup> For the first point, cf. e.g. Burian 2007: 13n.36; Foley 1992: 136; Wolff 1973: 64; Guépin 1968: 130. For the second, cf. e.g. Juffras 1993: 47. For the third, cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 158; Friedman 2007: 204; Foley 1992: 136; Robinson 1979: 166; Wolff 1973: 64n.11; Guépin 1968: 131.

<sup>42</sup> See Wolff 1973: 64n.11. See also LSJ<sup>9</sup>, s.v. κλύμενος, περικλύμενον.

<sup>43</sup> See LSJ<sup>9</sup>, s.v. πλούτος. Cf. Kannicht 1969: 38. The opposite case, i.e. *Πλούτων* used to denote the god of riches does occur in two extant instances: Ar. *Plut.* 727; Soph. fr.273 *TrGF*. Yet in the fifth century, which is the period of our immediate interest, the epithet *Πλούτων* became Hades' most common name (see Henrichs *OCD*<sup>3</sup>, s.v. *Hades*).

basis on which to build the idea of Theoclymenus as Pluto, and consequently of Egypt as his kingdom of death. Furthermore, Teucer's βασιλεία τ' ἀμφιβλήματ' εὐθριγκοί θ' ἔδραι (70), along with the reference to the δῶμα περιφερὲς θριγκοῖς (430) uttered by Menelaus, instead of indirectly reinforcing the notion of the palace of death, could be said to rather more directly serve to note the fine architecture and the impressing effect of a *human*, if exotic, location. Alcinous' palace in Phaeacia (*Od.* 7.46, 81-7) and the house receiving Odysseus in Ithaca (*Od.* 14.5-10) are similarly described in the Homeric text.<sup>44</sup> There is no obvious reason to privilege Hades as a model for the Egyptian palace, given the existence of alternative models that could also be in play. Likewise, Menelaus' journey to Egypt could only in a rather vague way be associated with a Hades descent.<sup>45</sup> His transforming experience does not necessarily depend on a correlation with death and the underworld. Another possible archetype for his situation can already be traced in the Homeric narration of Phaeacia, which indeed is marked as an Odyssean episode with which *Helen* shares many narrative and thematic links.<sup>46</sup> Menelaus' transformation could be seen as a reminiscence of Odysseus' own rising from beggar to hero, "the essence of Phaiakis", as it has been characterised.<sup>47</sup> And behind this in turn we can see ultimately the folktale motif of the landing of the wrecked hero in a distant land and his rehabilitation and marriage with the foreign princess.<sup>48</sup> Death associations lacking in the Homeric inter-text, are similarly only a vaguely suggested metaphor in Euripides' own plot-situation and its verbal presentation.

To shed doubt on the force or the implicitness of some of the associations is not of course to dismiss the parallelism between this Helen and Persephone. Formal and thematic links between the stories of the two abducted females can be detected in the play, and are accordingly widely noted in its scholarly analyses.<sup>49</sup> Yet a

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. Allan 2008: 198; Dale 1967: 72. As Kannicht 1969: 38-9 notes, also providing parallel examples: "Eur. lässt seine Personen häufig die architektonischen Details...beschreiben" (cf. Bacon 1961: 129).

<sup>45</sup> For Menelaus' journey as associated with descent to Hades, cf. e.g. Foley 1992: 140-1; Segal 1971a: 598.

<sup>46</sup> For the play's affinities with this Homeric episode, see e.g. Burian 2007:11; discussion pp.77-8.

<sup>47</sup> Heubeck, West & Hainsworth 1988: 289

<sup>48</sup> For the Phaeacian episode as a variant of this folktale motif, see e.g. Heubeck, West & Hainsworth 1988: 290-1; Woodhouse 1930: 54.

<sup>49</sup> See e.g. 175-8 (invocation of Persephone), 241-9 (abduction while picking flowers; note however how Euripides refuses to make the association when choosing to present a Persephone abducted among a chorus of females in 1312-3; see Juffras 1993: 47), 1301-68 (the Mother Ode).



number of shared points does not and need not make the whole model; Euripides, unlike his modern commentators, may not have felt the same compulsion to follow the archetypal pattern in all its elements. Furthermore, Persephone is not the only abducted mythic maiden invoked in the play; the chorus compares Helen with a Naiad fleeing from abduction (185-90); Helen herself invokes Callisto and Cos (375-85), explicitly drawing a comparison between her and their own situation.<sup>50</sup> Accordingly, to privilege the Persephone paradigm as the exclusive parallel narrative to Helen's experience, and to read the play solely in terms of this pattern is to introduce a degree of rigidity which the text does not invite.<sup>51</sup> On the contrary, focussing on the affinities of play with pattern may actually blur one's vision of the actual situation in the play, where Helen breaks the mould by escaping, not partially (like Persephone) but totally, and where abduction itself to begin with functions in the plot as a mechanism of salvation.<sup>52</sup> Euripides was creating a new plot and he needed a pattern on which to base himself, and in this case a pattern of abduction. One cannot exclude abduction by death as one (though not the only) prototype for the mythic abduction in this play.<sup>53</sup> Even so, the pattern has been transformed so far beyond the simple archetype that the

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For the Persephone myth as a key mythical model for the *Hel.*, see e.g. Burian 2007: 12-14; Juffras 1993: 46-7; Foley 1992: 136; Segal 1971a: 569-70, 593; Burnett 1960: 156. The relevance and function of the second *stasimon* (the Mother Ode) are widely debated. In the corrupted lines 1354-6, Helen is accused of neglect of the rites of the Mother. Her crime is lost beyond restoration and the exact reference cannot be determined. For recent discussions, see e.g. Allan 2008: 292-6; Burian 2007: 270-5.

<sup>50</sup> See e.g. Juffras 1993: 46-8, Segal 1971a: 569-71, who talk about a motif of abduction and rape of a whole class of innocent victims being formed in the first part of the play. I adopt the reading of the Kovacs' (*LCL* 5: 52) for these lines. Robinson 2006: 151-69 adopting the reading *matros* (instead of *keros*) at line 377 argues for Callisto and Taygeta being invoked in these lines, in order to be compared not with Helen but with Leda as maidens who came in intercourse with Zeus in metamorphosis. In this interpretation the point of the comparison is to induce pathos for her mother and to hint at Helen's ending as a constellation (like their own).

<sup>51</sup> For examples of such use of the pattern, cf. e.g. Foley 1992, who engages in a thorough analysis of two plays (*Alc.*, *Hel.*) as modelled on the myth of Kore. Her insights are many and suggestive. Nevertheless, such a reading of the plays as rigidly formulated on the model, tends both to blur the differences between them, and also to present Euripides as rigidly formulaic rather than formalist.

<sup>52</sup> For the device of substitution by an *eidolon* as a device of salvation already found in Homer, see comment in Burian 2007: 9n.23. Juffras 1993: 51-7 spots Helen and Persephone's closer affinity in the fact that they are both saved. Yet it is important to keep in mind that Helen's salvation is not compromised, as was Persephone's in the traditional myth, also re-evoked indirectly in the second *stasimon* of the play (on this see Robinson 1979: 172). Contrast Friedman 2007: 204-10, who argues for the Persephone parallelism underlying lack of restoration in both cases. For abduction as the benevolent act of salvation of Zeus, see 44-8. Later on (241-51), Hera will be said to have sent Hermes in her wish for revenge. On this double presentation of abduction as both benevolent protection and vicious act and its effect on marking the dual morality of the gods in this play, see Segal 1971a: 564-5, 569.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. the paradigms mentioned in this play (375-85). For other mythic paradigms, cf. e.g. the story of Zeus and Io (see e.g. Apollod. 2.1.3-4; Aesch. *PV* 561-886; Ov. *Met.* 1.583-750; Plin. *HN* 16.239); Zeus and Europa (see e.g. Ap. Rhod. 4.1643ff; Ov. *Met.* 7. 681ff; Apollod. 3.1.1); Helen's own (usual) myth.

underworld motif offers little help for an understanding of the play. Egypt as space, to return also to our initial point, begins as a place of safety (45-9). Its status is contested by Theoclymenus, only after Proteus stops glancing “on the light of the sun” (60). It does develop elements of menace: it confines Greeks, it poses danger to their life, it becomes the site of strife and death near the end (1589-617). Consequently Hades is not entirely irrelevant; it may be one (but only one) of Euripides’ models for generating his fictive Egypt.<sup>54</sup> This haziness in the representation of Euripides’ Egypt perhaps maps onto the larger ambiguity argued as inherent in the historical and mythical picture of Egypt in the fifth century.<sup>55</sup> But the status of the dramatic Egypt is ultimately defined by the plot as a place of safety rather than danger and death. It may be that Euripides teases with the potential of Egypt turned into the deadly imprisonment Hades was for Persephone, managing, among other things, to sustain the suspense of his spectators until the very end of his play. But if he toys with the association, ultimately he rejects it.

All in all, depiction of larger topography (landscape, people and rulers) clearly does not put emphasis on the negative aspects of Egypt, or draw on the curious traits of the land as a repository of diversity and inversion. From the rich stock of Egyptian curiosities and spectacular aspects available to Euripides from the traditional image of the locale, the dramatist chooses to put emphasis only on elements of convergence with Greek culture (piety, *xenia*, justice). The minimum presence of features of geography and landscape (set early on and sparingly), the absence of exploitation of ethnographical detail, both in the rendering of land and people (in terms of appearance and character), reduce the potential strangeness of Egypt.<sup>56</sup> In comparison with more outlandish locales, like the Tauric Chersonese in Euripides’ *IT*, *Helen*’s Egypt appears as somewhat exotic and distant (note the

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<sup>54</sup> Allan 2008: 29 wrongly I think assumes an assimilation of the presentation of Egypt “through the terrified eyes of the Danaids” of Aeschylus (*Aesch. Supp.*) and Egypt in this play. Confinement and danger are recurrent associations of Egypt in other myths, e.g. for the Homeric Odysseus and Menelaus see p.32. Sense of danger and entrapment is at play here as well, but it derives rather from Theoclymenus’ characterization as a menacing force rather than a depiction of whole land as a place of danger. Readings of e.g. Segal 1971a: 559, 573, 607-8 and Eisner 1979: 168 speaking of Egypt as a dualistic world (both serene and threatening, ideal and real) are, I think, closer to the Egyptian ethos as presented in this play.

<sup>55</sup> See previous discussion, pp.31-3.

<sup>56</sup> For a familiarized Egypt, cf. e.g. Wright 2006: 31-2, 2005: 176-7, 200 (see also p.34n.19, on my disagreement with his assimilation of Egypt to Athens). Contrast e.g. Friedman 2007: 199-201; Juffras 1993: 46; Guépin 1968: 128 (all, based solely on the traditional image of Egypt as place of diversity, assume Euripides’ total alignment with that image in the creation of *Helen*’s Egypt).

elements of *locus amoenus*, the stress on the distant journey discussed before), but still it does not figure as an alien location. Egypt, like Tauris, is again foreign place but not inherently barbaric. It is not perhaps a coincidence that at the end of this play, the chorus of Greek women are left behind in this foreign place (no reference to their relocation by the *deus ex machina*). Throughout the play they share Helen's sorrow for her suffering and exile in the foreign land. But unlike their counterparts in the *IT*, they do not identify Helen's situation with their own. These Greek women are not longing for escape.<sup>57</sup> The only passing reference we get to the possibility of their relocation comes from Helen: when asking for their silent complicity to her plans she notes that their future rescue will be her concern (σωθέντες αὐτοὶ καὶ σὲ συσσωσάκι ποτε, 1389). The chorus is given no space to reply.<sup>58</sup> The chance to express a response for the hope for escape just raised is not exploited in the following *stasimon* (1451-511) either. At lines 1478 to 1486 we do hear the chorus wishing to join migrating cranes and reaching Sparta to speak out the good news of Menelaus' return (καρούξατ' ἀγγελίαν, 1491). The emphasis is on the joy of Helen's rescue, not on any sense of their own return to Greece.<sup>59</sup> Clearly in this play, there is not the compelling sense of the chorus' alienation from surroundings, which would tend to maximize the distance between the foreign land and Greece, operative in the *IT*.<sup>60</sup> Unlike the situation in Tauris, there is not the same kind of imperative to move all Greeks out of Egypt.

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<sup>57</sup> Their responses to Helen and their comments throughout scenes do not include any reference to their situation or any hint that they imagine themselves as in need of rescue. Cf. e.g. 211-28, 253-4, 306-61, 698-9, 855-6 (their prayer for escape from miseries focuses only on Helen and Menelaus), 1107-64 (in this and all *stasima* [1301-69, 1451-511] focus is only on Helen's troubles and on the war more generally, with no reference to personal misfortunes), 1627-41 (if my hypothesis for the chorus leader as the one blocking Theoclymenus' way is correct [on this see pp.81-3] their loyalty and willingness to sacrifice for the Egyptian princess is another hint of how these women are familiarized within the foreign place).

<sup>58</sup> Combination of request for silence with promise of eventual homecoming is not unusual, cf. e.g. Eur. *IT*, 1067-8. For the motif with parallels, see Burian 2007: 276. As he notes, "...in comparison with the elaborate development of these motifs in *IT*, the treatment in *Hel.* is perfunctory". Both Allan 2008: 312 and Burian 2007: 277 attribute lack of focus to the chorus' reply and salvation to the need for the focus to turn to the salvation of Theonoe, whose silence is the most important one for the success of the escape. I agree with the emphasis on the double use of the motif of silent complicity and the obvious centrality of Theonoe. My suggestion is that the non-rescue of the chorus perhaps has an important impact as well on our sense of the wider topography.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Allan 2008: 317, 326; Burian 2007: 282, both noting how the focus is only on Helen and Menelaus' return; the chorus do not suggest their own return to Greece in these lines.

<sup>60</sup> Contrast Wright 2005: 175-6, who sees the physical presence of a chorus of Greek women (both in *Hel.* and *IT*) as a vehicle of familiarization of foreign place. However, outside physical presence the way the chorus' story is presented in the play should also be taken into account in the evaluation of its role in creating the sense of surroundings. In the *IT*, the chorus' sense of alienation is strong and increasing in the play. Through their nostalgia the volume of danger and need to relocate from Tauris are further emphasized (see ch.2, pp.103-4). In *Hel.* such choral

Surroundings of this dislocated female are familiarized and distances are significantly elided with Euripides' handling of this foreign place. Nothing distinctively strange by Greek standards marks land or people. Unlike Iphigenia's hosts, these people do not kill strangers by habit, covering their altars with human blood and decorating their shrines with their skulls and spoils.<sup>61</sup> Rather they fervently adhere to admirable Greek standards, in ways Greeks of the play deluded by their passions do not (Menelaus and the Greek warriors' illogical insistence on violence and pride).<sup>62</sup> This is not to say that the polarity Greek-barbarians is in any sense demolished in the *Helen*. It is difficult to argue for Greeks assimilated to barbarians or vice-versa, in this or in any other Euripidean tragedy for that matter.<sup>63</sup> The *Helen* does not subvert stereotypes. Greek guile as always outwits the dupe barbarian. Greek *nomoi* (of ruling, of burial customs), Greek valour in fighting are superior to Egyptian ones (cf. e.g. 274-6, 393-6, 800, 1241-2, 1264, 1379-81, 1560-2, 1593-4). The remarkable nobility of some of these Egyptians (Theonoe, Proteus) is not attributed by the text to superior Egyptian *nomoi* or national character.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, as I have been arguing, any impression of a wider community or political system is consistently thwarted by the way Egypt is presented in this play. But the play does suggest that barbaric or Greek qualities can be qualities of character rather than inherent biological attributes. Certain aspects of Greek pride in their own superiority are reinforced. But this play is not complacently based on an assumption of Greek superiority.

This familiarized, just, hospitable, pious Egypt has implications for the associations of dislocation in this play. Euripides' reworking of Egyptian

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nostalgia is missing. What is more, the chorus' story receives much less direct attention (on this aspect of their presentation, see p.61).

<sup>61</sup> For the way Euripides emphasizes the ingrained perversion of Taurian cultic practices through staging in the *IT*, see ch.2, pp.95-6.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. e.g. Ajax committing suicide because of his anger for not securing Achilles' arms (98-102); Menelaus' insistency on the fallacy of his warlike superiority (on this aspect of his character, see p.47n.80); his threatening to violate the sanctity of Proteus' tomb (975-95).

<sup>63</sup> Contrast Wright 2005: 177-202, who argues for total assimilation of Greek to barbarian in the play. In this sense, I agree with Allan's (2008: 57-61) emphasis on how the ideological context of the time (assuming Greek as superior to non-Greek) does not foster or allow any such total deconstruction of the ideological dichotomy. But we differ in that I do not see the play as an illustration of Greek superiority (as Allan 2008: 61; cf. e.g. Jordan 2006: 21-2; Austin 1994: 139-40). The audience is at many points invited to contemplate on the way the Graeco-barbarian divide is rather schematic than biologically absolute. Cf. my reading of the theme in Euripides' *IT* (ch.2, pp.128-9). For my understanding on the treatment of the Graeco-barbarian theme in tragedy more generally, see Appendix.

<sup>64</sup> Their virtue also shows, as Allan 2008: 59-60, 61 notes, how more than one response to barbarians was possible by the Greeks.

semantics critically enhances the feasibility of his new noble and chaste Helen. Within Aeschylus' aggressive and hubristic Egypt, for instance, a Helen kept inviolate and noble for seventeen years would be much less plausible.<sup>65</sup> But Euripides' Helen is not alienated from her surroundings. However, she remains a woman alone, with a record of alleged transgressive behaviour, set outside in public space, without a male protector, and facing the threat of a suitor (Theoclymenus); an accumulation of disquieting elements. Euripides rewrites her myth in order to reverse the disturbing associations of her past. He retains the traditional element of her dislocation from home and homeland. Nevertheless, he removes the web of personal guilt traditionally woven around it. Her voluntary abandonment of Sparta is effaced in the context of the forced dislocation. Not Helen but her *eidolon* goes to Troy, and not her free will but the divine one of Hera and Zeus enforces her flight.<sup>66</sup> Sparta, detested in *Troades* (Eur. *Tro.* 895ff), turns here to the home Helen desires (e.g. 56-8, 273-5, 1091-2, 1101-2). Not all readers are convinced by Euripides' new innocent and chaste wife Helen. To their eyes, ambiguous hints associate the new with the bad old Helen in a way that undermines the plausibility of her new persona.<sup>67</sup> Affinities and most importantly differences of incident and characterization with Penelope and the *Odyssey* ironically challenge the positive presentation of Helen.<sup>68</sup> However, old qualities serve new purposes on this stage: beauty is purged of the charge of adultery, Helen's *dolos* and cunning ways work for the just cause of securing her marriage with Menelaus (just as Penelope's tricks supplement Odysseus' actions in the *Odyssey* for the same cause of saving the marital *oikos*).<sup>69</sup> Without elements of the old Helen, her new Euripidean variation would not be believable, nor the

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<sup>65</sup> Time of Helen's stay in Egypt is defined at 111-4 as seventeen years (the ten years of the war, seven years which have passed after its ending).

<sup>66</sup> Cf. e.g. 31-55, 66-7, 261-6. For the *eidolon* as separating Helen from her traditional guilt, see e.g. Allan 2008: 17; Holmberg 1995: 36; Austin 1994: 192.

<sup>67</sup> See e.g. Meltzer 1994: 237-8, 241, 254; Kuntz 1993: 115-9; Papi 1987: 34; Schmiel 1972: 283, all associating the new with the old Helen. See e.g. Juffras 1993: 55-7; Papi 1987: 36-7; Hartigan 1981: 30; Schmiel 1972: 290, all arguing for the use of deceit in the second part of the play as subversive of her presentation as a victim in distress in the first.

<sup>68</sup> See e.g. Papi 1987: 40.

<sup>69</sup> For the new function of beauty in the play, cf. Allan 2008: 150. For the justice of her *dolos*, see e.g. Hanson 1973: 12; Podlecki 1970: 415; Burnett 1960: 157; Dale 1967: xiv. All stress that justice is on the side of Helen and Menelaus; Theoclymenus' rather than their actions evoke condemnation. Cf. Downing 1990: 8-13, who goes further to argue for the positive evaluation of the notions of *dolos* and *agon* in the play, which reduces the moral burden of its second part. Cf. Holmberg 1995: 36-7; Whitman 1974: 66-8; Segal 1971a: 602, who also talk about *dolos* set in the service of truth in *Hel.* Contrast Zuntz 1960: 232-3, who prefers to see moral considerations as set aside "by the delight in this battle between wit and dumb force".

restoration of her fame complete.<sup>70</sup> The play appropriately shows a sense of continuity with Helen's related mythic background and tradition, irrespective of the change of her situation in its plot. On the other hand, a large number of the words at the opening of the play are devoted to the presentation of Helen's distressing situation.<sup>71</sup> If in the second part, victim is turned into active initiator of deception, this does not necessarily entail an ironic subversion of initial, elaborately created impressions. Persuasion and deceit are invariably the stuff of women in Euripides.<sup>72</sup> Certainly, a sense of irony and amusement must have been felt when watching the two figures which were juxtaposed in Homer for the purpose of contrast, implicitly juxtaposed as parallels in Euripides.<sup>73</sup> The complexities of this novel plot and characterization are many. Yet not all complexity is irony; not all irony is subversive. Irony may also enhance other effects instead of exclusively and necessarily stripping them of their meanings. And as the following analysis will try to suggest, a consideration of the particularities of gendered staging, similarly to previous consideration of the dynamics of construction of larger topography, may add further arguments and further weight to those arguing against a play that subverts its female protagonist.

Understanding the dynamics of the staging of the opening tableau, that is Helen's supplication, has important implications for this vexed question of whether or not we are meant to read Euripides' presentation of Helen's character and situation as ironic. First stage image is of Helen as a suppliant on this stage. When we look down, we see her body cowering on a structure (Proteus' tomb) in suppliant posture (64-5: Πρωτέως μνημα προσπίτνω τόδε/ ικέτις...: I fall in supplication upon this tomb of Proteus<sup>74</sup>). Opening suppliant tableaux in tragic

<sup>70</sup> For this line of argument, cf. e.g. Austin 1994:142, 153, 169, 193; Whitman 1974: 66-8; Zuntz 1960: 224-5.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. e.g. 53-66, 125-57 (her reaction to Teucer's news), 164-78, 195-210, 229-51, 255-303 (her laments for her distressful situation). For the motif of abduction (also discussed, pp.40-2) as reinforcing Helen's claims on victimhood, see e.g. Juffras 1993: 46-7, Arnott 1990: 6; Hanson 1973: 18; Campbell 1950: 168. As Taplin 1977: 246-9 also shows, the theatrical technique used at this point (monologue and lack of entry after the *parodos* and the whole ensuing act) "accentuates Helen's isolation and her despair of any hope of rescue". Contrast e.g. Burnett 1960: 154; Blaiklock 1952: 87, who see touches of irony in these lines.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. e.g. Medea in Eur. *Med.*; Electra in *Or.*; Iphigenia in *IT*; Hecuba in *Hec.* For this feature as common trait of Euripidean females, see e.g. Allan 2008: 259; Holmberg 1995: 36; Arnott 1990: 15; Dale 1967: xii.

<sup>73</sup> Eisner's (1980: 37) line of thought, who argues for *Hel.* as a parody of the *Od.* but a "parody as a tribute" with Odyssean associations adding to (rather than undermining) the richness and resonance of the theme of the play, is I think revealing.

<sup>74</sup> Translation is mine.

drama carry certain specific religious and emotional associations: helplessness, weakness, victimization, isolation.<sup>75</sup> Supplication in the discourse of ancient Greek drama more generally is invariably used as a device of both dramaturgy and characterization. Specifically regarding females, it is an effective justification for setting them outside in the open.<sup>76</sup> In general, it defines the plot pattern of a large number of plays.<sup>77</sup> Finally, it also functions as a strong dramaturgical marker of its characters' (both suppliant and supplicandus) morality and characterization.<sup>78</sup> The elevated moral status of the tragic suppliant is rarely complicated or undermined. Where this happens, it is effected by aspects of the suppliant's behaviour or the play's plot. For example, in Aeschylus' *Supplices* (Aesch. *Supp.* 461-5), the chorus of the Danaids threaten to hang themselves from the statues of the gods, their potential aggressiveness in this play perhaps prefiguring the exteriorised and realised aggression present in the *Egyptians*, the next play of Aeschylus' trilogy, where these maidens will slaughter their suitors.<sup>79</sup> There is nothing in Helen to complicate the moral stature of the suppliant in this way.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Cf. e.g. the opening suppliant tableaux in Eur. *Heracl.* (Iolaus and children), *Andr.* (Andromache; see ch.3, pp.169-71), *HF* (Megara, Amphitryon, sons), *Supp.* (Adrastus, Aethra, grandchildren, silent chorus of mothers). Interestingly enough, suppliance is avoided in the opening image of his *Or.* Weakness and isolation are emphasized, elements of the suppliant plot are there in the play (danger, pursuer, potential rescuer), but suppliance is absent from the opening tableau (comes later at Eur. *Or.* 380); a reflection perhaps, of the later transformation of the siblings into violent criminals (cf. 1618-20, threatening to set the house on fire; see Rawson 1972: 165 on the sinister hints of the image of the fire). For the suppliant opening in *Hel.*, see also pp.57-9.

<sup>76</sup> As noted by Mastrorarde 2010: 250.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. e.g. Aesch. *Supp.*, *Eum.*; Soph. *OC*; Eur. *Dictys*, *Heracl.*, *Andr.*, *Supp.*, *HF*.

<sup>78</sup> Suppliance is seen as a tool for marking the suppliant as innocent and respectful and the supplicandus (depending on the nature of the act) as sacred and blessed. See e.g. Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 88-9 commenting on the use of the paraphernalia of suppliance to present, on the one hand, the picture of Oedipus as blessed and Jocasta's "contradictory ritual" on the other; Henrichs 1993: 166-8 arguing for suppliance used to ratify the heroization of Ajax's corpse. Cf. also Ferrari 1997: 8, 39; Burnett 1962: 103n.38: the discussions of both directly or indirectly imply the acceptance of an innocent and respectful status as invariably marking suppliants in tragedy. In Homer as well, as Lateiner 1995 shows, suppliance can be seen to function as "a thematic key" (p.11; cf. pp.35-6, 52), its honouring indexing the social order of the Homeric world and marking the morality of Homeric heroes (pp.191, 282-3).

<sup>79</sup> Winnington-Ingram 1961: 142 notes this moment as revealing of the Danaids' "potentiality of violence", and in turn of the "themes of βία and ὕβρις prominent in the *Supplices*", which, according to his own reconstruction of the trilogy, are hinting at the themes of the violence and *hybris* that carry on to the later plays. For the ambiguous moral status of the Danaids and the aggression inherent in their character as presented in the *Supp.*, cf. e.g. Garvie 1969: 171, 213-5. For the reconstruction of the plot of the *Egyptians* as leading to the act of murder, cf. e.g. Garvie 1969: 180-2; Winnington-Ingram 1961: 145-7. Contrast Sommerstein 1996: 145-51. For *Egyptians* as the play's most probable title, see e.g. Garvie 1969: 187-9; Winnington-Ingram 1961: 141.

<sup>80</sup> Menelaus will threaten suicide on the tomb, if Theoclymenus tries to starve them out (975-87). His propensity to violence and threats is part of his overall characterization as a male obsessed with his martial valour (cf. e.g. 393-6, 453, 500-5, 593, 806-14, 947-58, 1043-4). Helen uses no such threats in her own supplication to Theonoe (894-943). Note also how suicide on the top of the tomb is Menelaus' idea (842-4). Helen is given no time to reply (their conversation interrupted by

Nonetheless, some scholars have viewed the heroine's supplication with great suspicion. To their eyes, real danger, uncertainty, enforced immobility and isolation are all lacking from this suppliant figure and her situation.<sup>81</sup> However, the seriousness of her plight and the reality of the danger in which she is placed by Theoclymenus' unlawful intentions to marry her are both multiple givens in words and imagery of the play.<sup>82</sup> Her abandonment of sanctuary in mid play (at 385, going inside the palace to consult the prophetic figure Theonoe), often cited in support of irony, does not deflate the seriousness of her circumstances. The heightened sense of crisis, injected by Teucer's grim news on Menelaus' supposed death (124-32), justifies the drastic reaction; Helen needs to find the truth (πρὸν δ' οὐδὲν ὀρθῶς εἰδέναι, τί σοι πλέον/ λυπουμένη γένοιτ' ἄν; 322-3). With the prospect of the husband's return shaken, a hope Helen had sustained up to this moment (56-9: Hermes' prophecy on their return to Sparta), the already difficult situation seems hopeless.<sup>83</sup> What is more, both moments of departure and return to sanctuary, rendered via words and stage action as moments of high fear and tension, intensify the effect.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, her removal from the stage along with the chorus at this moment in the plot serves a specific dramatic necessity: space is emptied so that Menelaus can enter and deliver the second prologue in solo occupation of the stage.<sup>85</sup> There is no good reason to reject the generic implications of the suppliant motif, or to doubt the genuineness of its effects on the presentation of both female and situation, as a serious dramatic gesture on Euripides' part in this play. Generic tendencies such as the dynamics of supplication noted above are never of course fixed and inflexible constraints on poetic creation. The poet is not absolutely tied. But one cannot ignore generic conventions and cumulative effects of generic parallels. And, though we should not seek to create a rigid grammar of generic characteristics for a genre which was constantly reshaped by performances in the theatre of Dionysus, it remains the

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Theonoe's imminent entry). Neither her agreement, nor her condemnation of the suggestion is made explicit. But the point remains that it is Menelaus and not Helen who invents and utters the threat.

<sup>81</sup> See Papi 1987: 34; Burnett 1971: 78-80; Verall 1905: 57-9.

<sup>82</sup> For the way her distress is a multiple given in the narrative of the opening, see p.46. That Theoclymenus is a real source of danger in the play is also a multiple given, see pp.38-9.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. the similar dramatic function of the dream in maximizing the tensions inherent in Iphigenia's dislocation in Eur. *IT* (ch.2, pp.102-3).

<sup>84</sup> See pp.70-1.

<sup>85</sup> See Dale 1967: 93. Cf. Karamanou 2006: 190-1, where she lists instances of abandonment of the sanctuary by suppliants for dramatic purposes (in which she includes the departure under consideration here), or so that the actor playing the suppliant may re-enter in the guise and role of another character.



case that an audience in that theatre came with an experience of a substantial number of opening supplication scenes and a set of expectations created by that experience.<sup>86</sup> Papi, even though she herself refused to give an affirmative answer, set the question crisply: “What better means of gaining the audience’s sympathy than a suppliant opening?”<sup>87</sup>

The suppliant posture of the heroine is furthermore significant in one most important sense: supplication fixes Helen in space; the woman notoriously associated with movement becomes very firmly tied on Euripides’ stage. For the biggest part of the play, her action is restricted to the vicinity of the tomb. Her fixity is offset, defined as well as contrasted, by the movement of the males: Teucer, Menelaus, Menelaus’ servant, Theoclymenus will come and go. Helen fixed in space will receive the male incomers, and most importantly her husband returning. This pattern of movement firmly associates Helen with the immobility and fixity traditionally expected from the female in the ideological conceptions of gender relations in the fifth-century world.<sup>88</sup> Consequently, staging helps Euripides reinforce the impression of Helen as the noble, chaste wife whom his mythic choices and words opt for in this play. Her reception of men in movement and particularly of her wandering husband further recreates the spatial dynamics of a *nostos*; of the archetype Odyssean return and any later *nostos*-play.<sup>89</sup> Helen, even if she herself does not know it, becomes the woman waiting for her husband. Menelaus, even if he himself is not looking for a wife, turns into the wandering male returning to his spouse. Euripides’ staging choices, mapping onto notions of female fixity versus male movement and the notion of return, achieve a double effect: assimilating the notoriously anomalous Helen to the perceptions of the

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<sup>86</sup> For my understanding of theatrical convention (and particularly space) as discourse, see *Introduction*, pp.21-3.

<sup>87</sup> Papi 1987: 34

<sup>88</sup> Vernant’s (1983) chapter, exploring the relation between Hermes and Hestia, is an elaborate exploration of the spatial polarity between static and mobile, fixity and mutation governing the ideological conceptions of gender relations in the fifth century. Of course, one does need to bear in mind that the reality behind the blunt conceptions on gender relations is much more nuanced. On the social ideology of female space in antiquity, see further in *Introduction*, p.12.

<sup>89</sup> Menelaus’ journey to Egypt has been seen to replicate Odysseus’ journey of return. See e.g. Allan 2008: 27; Friedman 2007: 198; Eisner 1980: 32-4. Cf. Lattimore 1958: 122, 123, who twice talks about the play as the “romance of the lost one found”. For the pattern of *nostos*-plays, see e.g. Karamanou 2006: 137-9; Rehm 2002: 271; Burnett 1971: 9-10. For possible affinities with the Homeric inter-text of the *Od.* in construction of plot, theme and characterization more generally, see e.g. Allan 2008: 26-8; Burian 2007: 9-11; Friedman 2007: 198-203; Ypsilanti 2006: 59-61; Kaimio 2002: 110; Eisner 1980: 32-7.

normal position of the female, and wittily transferring the spatial pattern of the *Odyssey* into a bizarre faraway location.<sup>90</sup>

Place of supplication, Proteus *mnema*, is also important. Though scholars rarely note it, perhaps because of the sheer familiarity of the suppliant motif, suppliance at a tomb is (as far as we know) an uncommon sight on a tragic stage.<sup>91</sup> Extant tragedy usually places its tombs offstage. Altars, not tombs, are invariably the tragic loci of supplication.<sup>92</sup> Euripides puts Proteus' tomb ἐπ' ἑξόδοισι (near the gates of the scene-building, 1165) and sets Helen (and later on Menelaus) as suppliant crouching at it.<sup>93</sup> Both positioning of tomb and nature of supplication (tomb not altar) are unusual. Though dramaturgic convenience must be a factor, Euripides may also be drawing on spatial practices of his age. From the sixth century B.C. onwards, burial within the city gates marks the deceased as heroized and his/her tomb as a *heroon*, i.e. a burial monument accorded with the status of a sanctioned space functioning at various instances as an alternative to altars and shrines (like for example the Ἀμύντιον ἱερόν or Theseus' tomb in Athens).<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> It should be clear from previous discussion (pp.38-44), that unlike Friedman 2007: 199-201 I do not see the transfer of Odyssean events of reunion and *nostos* to the Egyptian setting as undermining the positive associations of closure and restoration of the play, as I do not agree with his reading of Egypt as a problematized, or Hades-like location.

<sup>91</sup> For an exception, see Allan 2008: 156, 237. Allan locates the effect in Euripides' wish to keep "Proteus' conduct towards H." to the foreground, turning the dead Proteus "into almost another dramatic figure" (p.156); this is important due to the way Proteus' paradigm influences Theonoe's decision later on, and thus the outcome of the play (p.237). Yet there is also a marked effect of this staging choice on Helen's presentation onstage, to which following discussion will turn.

<sup>92</sup> Tombs onstage are not often represented in extant tragedy (cf. e.g. Aesch. *Cho.*, *Pers.*; Eur. *Hel.*, *Bacch.*; not in extant Sophocles). On the staging issues related to the positioning and nature of the scenic objects used as tombs or altars in the ancient theatre, see e.g. discussions in Karamanou 2006: 140; Wiles 1997: 191; Taplin 1977: 36, 38; Arnott 1962: 57-65. Suppliant scenes are invariably set around altars in extant tragedy (cf. e.g. Aesch. *Supp.*; Eur. *Andr.*, *HF*, *Supp.*; see also Allan 2008: 156, 237), or in the case of Soph. *OC*, at a sacred grove.

<sup>93</sup> Like Allan 2008: 30-1; Ley 1991: 27, 30; Poe 1989: 125-6; Dale 1967: 69, I locate the tomb at a distance from the palace door. Lines 315 (chorus' admonition to Helen to leave the sanctuary, and her reluctance), 528ff (Helen's exit from the palace and movement towards the tomb) seem to suggest that some distance separates the two points, while Theoclymenus' statement that he built the memorial "ἐπ' ἑξόδοισι" (1165) is not sufficient indication that the tomb is contiguous to the door (see Ley 1991: 30; Dale 1967: 143). For its description cf. 961, 986; see also Ley 1991: 29, 33; Willink 1990: 86.

<sup>94</sup> Contrast Winnington-Ingram 1969: 131, arguing for the position of tomb near scene-building being a "hit" at the treatment of locality in Aesch. *Cho.* For the connection of position to heroic status of Proteus, cf. Allan 2008: 209: "...although the tomb is not explicitly called a *heroon*, its location apart from other graves, the offering of sacrifices, together with its size, decoration, and ability to function as a place of asylum all suggest that the audience would take Proteus as a hero, not simply one of the ordinary dead". The argument for position could be made stronger. Burials within the city are banned probably from around 500 B.C. (see Boardman & Kurtz 1971: 70, 92-3, 108-9, 188-9, on archaeological findings revealing cemeteries and graves outside areas of habitation or beyond the city walls and only very few examples of intra-mural burials). Burial within the city occurred only in exceptional cases and was invariably equated with attribution of

Proteus' tomb "protected me just like a temple" will be Helen's own words at line 801 (ἐρρῦεθ' ἡμᾶς τοῦτ' ἴσον ναοῖς θεῶν). Position justifies dramatic function and vice-versa. But, while the argued association with real life practices can only remain a matter of speculation, there is a marked and unambiguous dramatic effect in attaching Helen to this tomb in the theatre to which I now wish to draw attention.

Euripides' staging choice leaves us with a Helen clinging onto the tomb of the founder of the Egyptian palace. For the major part of the play, Proteus' tomb is to her a resort of unconditional safety and protection; acting in life as her *kyrios*, in death he continues to be her unstinting protector. His tomb, a symbol of his silent presence, reifies onstage the past tradition of the Egyptian household.<sup>95</sup> As Agamemnon's tomb in the *Choephoroe* (124-509), or Darius' tomb in the *Persae* (628-80), the *mnema* turns into the pivotal place where the generational line of the family is vertically recreated, where underworld and upper-world, past and present of the household evoke and confront one another. While alive, Proteus' protective care has sheltered Helen inside his household. Upon his death and despite the temporary rupture of the house (a point to which I shall return), the house itself is not alien to Helen. She has relatively free access and use of the household's content. She receives its guests (Teucer, Menelaus for whom she will also perform the house-guest bathing, 1294-300).<sup>96</sup> She enters the house freely (to inquire on her husband's future from Theonoe, 385). She uses the household's property to acquire the means for escape (1085ff). She directs male movement, including Theoclymenus' own whereabouts, in and out of its gate. The latter is

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heroic status to the deceased person (the so-called *heroa*). On this cf. e.g. Pind. *Pyth.* 5.85-103; see Boardman & Kurtz 1971: 183, 283, 297-9. Vice-versa, deprivation of the right of burial in Attica was one of the penalties imposed for offences like for example betrayal, as was the case of e.g. Themistocles or Phrynichus (see MacDowell 1978: 176-7, 255-6). For heroic tombs and bodies as attached with symbolic power, cf. Larson 2007: 11; Kearns 1989: 3, 54. For historical examples, cf. the Ἀμύντιον ἱερόν (see Naiden 2006: 36n.43), Theseus' tomb, the Theseion in Athens (see e.g. Ar. *Eq.* 1312-3; cf. Naiden 2006: 373-4; MacDowell 1978: 80). For other instances in tragedy where a tomb is equated with an altar, cf. e.g. Eur. *Alc.* 995-9; Soph. *Aj.* 1171-81 (see also Burian 2007: 240-1; Pearson 1903: 108-9).

<sup>95</sup> For the tomb as symbol of Proteus's presence, see e.g. Downing 1990: 4; Wolff 1973: 80-1. Invocations to his name (cf. e.g. 960-95, 1010-22, 1165-8) further mark the effect.

<sup>96</sup> In the shared world of Homer and tragedy, the activity of the bath was performed by a female slave, or the mistress, or the daughters of a household (cf. e.g. Agamemnon's notorious bath in Aesch. *Ag.*; or Homer, see Heubeck, West & Hainsworth 1988: 189). In a society in which control of an *oikos* denoted "ownership of the family property and the responsibility for the family religious ceremonies" (MacDowell 1978: 85), it is I think plausible that Helen's relation to this *oikos* would mark such an effect. For the possibility of erotic undertones in the reference to the action of the bath, see Jordan 2006: 17; Kaimio 2002: 111.

actually part of a larger scenic pattern which extends beyond the ‘elite’ females at the heart of the plot: females directing, blocking, and escorting men; I return to this with comment on its different instantiations throughout the play in the scenic analysis.<sup>97</sup> This familiarity of female with the Egyptian *oikos*, her actual physical attachment to this tomb for the greater part of the play gives concrete shape to her strong figurative attachment to Proteus and Proteus’ household.<sup>98</sup> Positioning and action gives her a strong sense of belonging and even a degree of control, and invests the dislocated female with a certain degree of domesticity in the foreign space. In this way, on Euripides’ stage this tomb almost acquires the emblematic significance of a surrogate hearth (*hestia*) for his Helen. Although taking her so far away from her traditional environment, the poet recreates for her the trappings of a home in her new location.

All in all, Euripides’ staging of *Helen* is a tour de force. By fixing Helen onstage, and associating her with an *oikos*, Euripides quasi-normalizes her status in the eyes of his original spectators. By incorporating the dynamics of return (*nostos*) in the scenic pattern of his stage while having everyone (both wife and returning husband) off-base, cleverly and wittily, he maps the *Odyssey* onto what is (seemingly at least) a most incompatible spatial construction. Certainly, Euripides, even if he wished to, could not stage the *Odyssey* in anything like its Homeric setting. In the tragic theatre the wife had to come outside; otherwise, all major encounters and events would have to be narrated. Exterior however can be given some of the attributes of interior space. Euripides attaches his female to a protecting household and confines her in that space. Action, interaction and pattern of movement become means of compensating the woman outside for the loss of the domestic inside. Euripides’ clever spatial devices turn Helen into the *Hausfrau* proper and markedly associate her spatially and hence visually (beyond the widely admitted thematic and textual associations) with the archetypal wife exemplar, the Odyssean Penelope.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Helen, Theonoe, Old Woman, female Coryphaeus, all direct male movement in the play. For the pattern of movement, the signification of scene-building as a realm of women, and the similarities of both with the configuration of movement and scene-building in Ar. *Lys.*, see pp.54-5, 68-70.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Allan 2008: 156, 237 (see previous comment, p.50n.91).

<sup>99</sup> For the (often noted) similarities in incident and characterization with Penelope in this play, see e.g. Jordan 2006: 15-16; Davidson 1999-2000: 123; Holmberg 1995: 33ff; Austin 1994: 140,148,189; Foley 1992: 133; Papi 1987: 40; Eisner 1980: 31-5; Segal 1971a: 579.

However, as already hinted above, the situation on Euripides' stage is rather more complicated. Despite the definitive role of semantic associations of *oikos* and tomb in achieving the quasi-domestication of Helen, the relation of scene-building to tomb is made a matter of question in the play. Within dramatic time, the Egyptian family is fragmented. Theoclymenus' wish to marry Helen after the death of Proteus goes against the will and stance of his father and puts the household under hostile authority. The sister Theonoe is left to decide between the conflicting wishes of brother and father, siding in the end with the latter (κλέος τοῦμοῦ πατρὸς/ οὐκ ἄν μιάναίμ' ..., 999-1000). The current crisis of the house turns the building (like the surviving family) into something ambiguous for Helen during the play. Her previous relationship with the household (while Proteus was alive) is interrupted. Gradually, as the plot progresses and Theonoe's decision to help Helen and Menelaus is made the house begins increasingly to reacquire the unambiguous protecting qualities of tomb. After Theonoe's decision is spelled out, Helen and Menelaus start entertaining the idea of using domestic property to achieve their escape (1039-41). They are still not quite sure of the unconditional support of the house; to Menelaus' suggestion to kill Theoclymenus (1143-4), Helen will reply: "His sister would never allow you: she would tell him that you intended to kill him" (1045-6). Enough tension is there until the end to keep the momentum of the play. But gradually it becomes clear that the scene-building shares more and more of the qualities of the tomb. This makes for a more complex relationship between house and place of supplication than is usual in tragedy. In this play, we do not have the clear cut contrast between a hostile façade versus safe suppliant refuge which we find in other plays, for example *Andromache* or the lost *Dictys*.<sup>100</sup> Rather in *Helen*, scene-building and tomb (and therefore Proteus' offspring and paternal legacy) are first set apart and then gradually reunited. The difference in this play is rather one of accessibility: the scene-building is βέβηλος, hence accessible and thus never fully safe; the tomb is sacred, inaccessible, and hence unconditionally safe.<sup>101</sup> The dynamic fluidity in the associations of this tragic scene-building is to some extent comparable to the

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<sup>100</sup> For the danger-safety polarity created via suppliance in Eur. *Andr.*, see ch.3, pp.170-1. For the lack of such a polarity in the *IT*, and the different, more sophisticated nature of danger operative on that stage, see ch.2 pp.97-8, 203.

<sup>101</sup> Polarity between sacred and non-sacred space is, as Wiles 1997: 187-206 argues, the most important polarity in Greek spatial practice.

flexibility of comic space.<sup>102</sup> It does not change its denotative identity, unlike for example the metamorphosis of the scene-building in Aristophanes' *Peace* from the house of Trygaeus to the palace of Zeus. It is in semiotic terms that it fluctuates in its symbolic identification. Euripides nuances conventional tragic spatial techniques (and perhaps points towards comic ones?) to render the complex dynamics of his new plot: the problem of the interfamilial relations of the Egyptian household, the question of conflicting loyalties among its members, the crucial question of the siblings' relation to the legacy of their father Proteus.<sup>103</sup>

Helen is, as she always was in Greek mythology, a unique being. Yet all tragic figures are more than the details of their myths; and the story of Helen has broader implications. Overall, female space as constructed in this play exposes the female alone in a world where men, both literally and metaphorically, are lacking. Young men (Teucer, Theoclymenus, Menelaus) are away in chase of booty, either real (Teucer's search of a new country, Theoclymenus' wild beasts), or imaginary (Menelaus' disillusioned quest of his wife). Old men at home are unable (in this case Proteus is dead) to take initiative and drastic action. Euripides' Egypt turns into a realm left to the control of the women, while its men are engaged in their campaigns and other military endeavours. Scenic pattern of movement and action, which sets male motion and action under the control of the female, concretizes physically the theme of female power and its superior authority. Scene-building and stage, both are for the largest part of the play populated by women, and under their total control. Women direct men throughout, with the scenic pattern reversing only when the movement towards Sparta is enunciated (the first and only time the male directs the female in the play).<sup>104</sup> The resemblances in dynamics with *Lysistrata's* female space, presented in the following year on the same stage, are striking (I return to the point with detail in the scenic analysis).<sup>105</sup> More generally in the way dislocation in this play also figures as a fantastic distortion of social structures (female controlling male designated areas), the spatial game shares elements with female dislocations that are akin to the comic

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<sup>102</sup> For the flexible mapping of space in comedy, see Lowe 2006: 48-64; cf. e.g. Revermann 2006: 108-129 (for studies on comic space, see *Introduction*, p.12n.7). For the shifting of space in Aesch. *Pers.* and *Cho.* as indication of comic influence on the tragedies, see Taplin 1986: 165, 172.

<sup>103</sup> The play has other comic elements in terms of staging. I discuss the question of inter-generic experimentation at the level of spatial technique in pp.65-7.

<sup>104</sup> For the pattern see pp.51-2, 68-70, 77-9. For the reversal of the pattern at exit towards Sparta, figuring return home as return to normal gender structures, see p.79.

<sup>105</sup> See n.104 above.

rather than the tragic genre.<sup>106</sup> From this perspective, *Helen* like *Lysistrata* could be seen as a comment on the women's heightened importance in situations of prolonged warfare in the cities where these women are left behind.<sup>107</sup> And accordingly Helen, the wife notoriously abandoning her husband, is seen functioning here as a paradigm for the condition of the abandoned wives in periods of prolonged warfare.<sup>108</sup> Ideology aside, in men's absence women must fill the gap. If with his *Troades* Euripides engages in the current debate over the corrupting and destructive effects of war on the male and female conditions by offering a grim reflection of women's victimhood and suffering, with his *Helen* he could perhaps be seen to be offering a different yet complementary perspective; offered in a more light-hearted way, but one which does not nullify the accuracy of the social comment.<sup>109</sup>

To conclude, a totally innocent Helen was the ideal choice for a writer seeking a great challenge. It is no coincidence that she had been a favourite of encomiastic epideictic oratory; both Gorgias and Isocrates wrote encomia in her defence.<sup>110</sup> In a marked sense, Euripides' Penelope-like Helen expands this female's encomiastic tradition in, and via, a new medium. Euripides calculatedly chooses the wrong woman and places her in the wrong place. The challenge is fascinating; its implications faced in an equally fascinating way. Euripides rewrites myth and twists associations of female space: foreign land turned familiar, doubly dislocated woman turned domesticated. The celebrated adulteress comes across as a paradigm of wifely virtue; both an unusual theme for tragedy (bad tragic wives

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<sup>106</sup> For a brief syncretism of comic and tragic types of dislocation, see *Conclusion*, pp.205-6.

<sup>107</sup> For this as a theme in Ar. *Lys.*, cf.e.g. Henderson 1987: xxxiii, xxx, xxxii-xxxiii; Dover 1972: 168-71. Segal 1971a: 575 notices the affinities between the two dramatizations, but points to a different problem: the plays cast doubt on the appeal of the standard concepts of heroic *kleos*. For the questioning of heroic values as an important notion of the play, see pp.77-8.

<sup>108</sup> Cohen 1991: 150-1 compares the Athenian society in which men were often away on campaigns for months, with contemporary societies where men work as migrant workers for part of the year.

<sup>109</sup> For the period after the Peloponnesian War as one of greater concern for the female social and political role, see e.g. Hall 2000: ix-xi; Pomeroy 1994:115; Cohen 1991: 151n.78. For the affinities of dramatic theme with mood of the age, see p.67. For Eur. *Tro.* as a play dealing with the effects of war as exemplified in female suffering, cf. e.g. Croally 1994: 85-7,252-3 (adding the parameter of the questioning of Athenian ideology as element of the play); Dué 2006: 136-50 (seeing a fundamental challenging of Athenian imperialism in the play).

<sup>110</sup> For the encomium and its characteristic engagement with overturning common evaluations of mythical figures, see Carey 2007: 246-8. Carey notes the great appeal of Helen as a theme for the epideictic orators. For the dating of Gorgias and Isocrates' encomia, see Allan 2008: 28n.13. Features of these works in the play are noted, in e.g. Allan 2008: 28; Wright 2005: 270-8 (arguing for Gorgias work *On What is Not* as the principal inspiration of the escape tragedies, and of his *Encomium of Helen* as the key influence on Eur. *Hel.*). See also Spatharas 2002: 166-74 (on the relation of Gorg. *Hel.* with Eur. *Tro.*).

greatly outnumber noble ones), and a surprising choice of character for exemplifying it.<sup>111</sup> Wit, irony, a sense of amusement are inherent in the multiple paradoxes Euripides' complex plot had to countenance. Yet if it is true, or at least partly true, that familiarity and domestication make for the pragmatic value of *Helen's* female space, an undermining irony seems an even less appropriate mirror through which to gaze at this Helen, and at this play.

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<sup>111</sup> Cf. Foley 1992: 133: "Attic tragedy, apparently preferring to dramatize the Clytemnestras over the Penelopes, rarely pronounces women worthy of an eternal reputation for *arête*...Considerably rarer in drama is the adult woman who, like Penelope, acts to secure her husband's survival and wins glorious reputation in her capacity as wife. Alcestis and Helen are in fact our only extant examples...". For a study of the good wives of tragedy, in terms of how erotic conjugal desire is described and thematized in plays, see Kaimio 2002 (Helen of this play is included in her examples).



## *HELEN*

### SCENIC ANALYSIS

#### *Cancelled Entry, I*<sup>112</sup>

In what seems to be one of his favourite techniques, Euripides rivets his audience's attention by opening his *Helen* with a suppliant tableau which is to be identified as his drama unfolds.<sup>113</sup> The prologue begins with a wider narrative perspective and gradually allows vision to focus on the specific opening image onstage. The tragic text, constantly (re)directing vision through hearing, opens up the stage image to include narrative and distant spaces, while it slowly narrows visual focus on the tableau in actual visible space.<sup>114</sup> The volume and distribution of deictic expressions in Helen's words create the developing sense of topography, as demonstrative and personal pronouns constantly draw attention to where vision (in part of course inner vision, creating the particulars we are to imagine) should converge: αἶδε..ῥοαί (1), τῆσδε γῆς (4), τοῖσδ' ἐν δώμασιν (8), τόνδ' ἐς οἶκον (46), καὶ γὼ μὲν ἐνθάδ'(ε) (49), ἡ δέ...ἐγὼ (53), φῶς ἡλίου τὸδ'(ε) (60), μνημα...τόδε (64), τὸ σῶμα γ' ἐνθάδ'(ε) (67). Space takes some time to focus for the audience. From general references to the land and ruling *oikos* in the first fifteen opening lines, Helen returns to the stage image at line 46 to give the particulars of her position in relation to the *oikos* (identified as the stage building) and the stage object placed nearby (Proteus' tomb).<sup>115</sup> Euripides needs to provide the details of his innovative story line and spaces: the Egyptian *oikos* and its members (1-15), Helen's past and transfer to Egypt (16-

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<sup>112</sup> There was no curtain in the ancient Greek theatre. Characters discovered in tableau at openings of plays would have been seen by the spectators while entering onstage. These initial movements, supposed to have happened outside dramatic time and giving a semblance of duration, are invariably termed as 'cancelled entries'. For the technique (with explanation and parallels), see e.g. Halleran 1985: 80; Taplin 1977: 134-6; Arnott 1962: 129-30.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Eur. *Andr.*, also opening with a suppliant tableau (see ch.3, pp.169-71). For this as being one of Euripides' usual techniques, see e.g. Karamanou 2006: 140; Ley 1991: 26; Taplin 1977: 136; Hourmouziades 1965: 49.

<sup>114</sup> As D'Alessio's (2007) statistical analysis shows, deictic expressions are far more numerous and more specific in tragedy in relation to comedy and lyric poetry. The tragic text, in contrast to the lyric one, seems to be constantly attracting attention on its contextual elements and on where the spectator should direct his vision. For the nature and function of demonstrative pronouns as indicators of time and space in discourse, see Benveniste 1971: 218ff.

<sup>115</sup> Vision is similarly directed to converge on the stage image after context is set, in e.g. prologues of Eur. *Med.*, *Tro.*, *IT.*, *HF*. For the location of the scenic object representing the tomb and a possible explanation of its proximity to the *oikos*, see pp.50-1.

43), her present situation and position as suppliant (44-67).<sup>116</sup> After the mythical, chronological and topographical context has been created, the spotlight (to use a convention of the modern theatrical world) can finally fall on the figure and the object onstage. This is Helen, as we find out only after twenty-two lines, and it is Proteus' μνημα on which she clusters as *hiketis* (64-5).<sup>117</sup>

By recourse to the suppliant tableau, Euripides immediately renders key tensions of his plot and characterization visual: the threat of danger, the victimhood and helplessness of the figure in supplication (conveyed by suppliant posture, immobility, isolation onstage), the need for a rescue to be played out by the end of the play.<sup>118</sup> Visual impressions are further reinforced by words. τί οὖν ἔτι ζῶ;, we hear Helen exclaim at line 56. Death of her protector Proteus has left her defenceless to the threats of an unlawful marriage advanced by his wicked son (60-3), while her “poor husband” wrongly searches for her in Troy (49-51).<sup>119</sup> The key thematic polarities of the play, between illusion and reality, name and body, divine omniscience and limited human knowledge are also introduced from the outset: the real Helen is separated from her phantom image (22-36), her body from her reputation (66-7); Egypt is defined as a space and a time apart from Greece (Sparta) and Troy (44-55). Helen’s new story is effectively introduced and set against a background of composite and perplexed reality, mingled with

<sup>116</sup> Euripidean prologue speakers invariably begin by narrating their personal genealogy and story (cf. e.g. Eur. *IT* 1-33, *Andr.* 1-15, *Or.* 1-33). Here, Helen first narrates the story of the Egyptian *oikos* (of the father Proteus, the mother Psamathe, the two children). The innovative use of the story (contrary to previous versions, Proteus is now dead; for Euripides’ use of the Helen myth, see pp.29-30) creates the need for detail (as noted by Allan 2008: 145). In another sense, the play hints from the outset the critical role of the Egyptian family and its personal story for the outcome of Helen’s adventures. For the point on the importance of its story, running parallel to Helen and Menelaus’ one, see also pp.53-4, 74-5.

<sup>117</sup> Note how the self-identification of the prologue speaker is delayed (cf. e.g. Eur. *El.*: Electra named at line 23). We do not know how much the audience knew from the *proagon*, and certainly the title *Helen* is suggestive. But as the play begins to take shape for its first spectators, anticipation is increased by the delay, while they are also given the satisfaction to draw necessary conclusions for themselves. In Eur. *IT*, it is not identity of speaker (Iphigenia named at line 5), but of location that is delayed (the name Tauris given only at line 30); see ch.2, p.112.

<sup>118</sup> Her initial status forms one pole of the drama which will see her turn from victim to agent, in a play which in theme and action ultimately empowers women. For passivity/victimhood as conveyed by immobility, see e.g. Halleran 1985: 80. For the expectations created for the type of plot of the play (supplication, rescue), see Juffras 1993: 45; Burnett 1971: 17. For the emotional associations, see good discussions in e.g. Karamanou 2006: 140; Halleran 1985: 80-1. On the suppliant opening as a tool of dramaturgy and characterisation, as relating specifically to the overall reading of *Hel.*, see discussion in pp.46-52. As argued there, objections raised by ironic readings concerning the semantic effects of the specific scene are largely unconvincing.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. the way notions suggested visually in the opening tableaux are reinforced verbally in e.g. Amphitryon’s opening speech in Eur. *HF*; Electra’s opening speech in Eur. *Or.* (helplessness and isolation, suffering and disease, fraternal loyalty and affection suggested by the opening tableau of Orestes lying sick onstage, all are verbally confirmed and intensified).

multiple illusions and suffering. These notions pervade the play throughout, significantly deepening its intellectual bravura.<sup>120</sup> All in all, opening image and words not only make for a succinct introduction to the tensions inherent in this female dislocation, but also hint at the way its resolution needs to come out of a process of recognition and reconciliation of multiple and convoluted dualities. As often with tragic openings, the function of the prologue goes far beyond mere offering of factual information. And this is achieved not only by the spoken words but reinforced also by the dramaturgy; opening action (in this case suppliancy) and speech encapsulate key themes, values and plot dynamics of the whole play.<sup>121</sup>

***Enter chorus, 179***<sup>122</sup>

ὦ θήραμα βαρβάρου πλάτας,

Ἑλλανίδες κόραι

(191-2)

Helen calls for a chorus of Sirens to join in her lamentations (168-74). Instead, as an answer to her evocation, a chorus of Greek maidens appears onstage a few lines later (179).<sup>123</sup> They have heard her lament, while washing garments by the river (179-85). It is for the same reason (hearing of an outcry) that the Corinthian women in *Medea* (131-8), the captive women in *Troades* (153-8), or the male

<sup>120</sup> For emphasis on the philosophizing questioning of this play on the notions of illusion and reality, fame and actuality, see e.g. Hall 2010: 177-8; Allan 2008: 47-9; Wright 2005: 278-337 (on the theme of illusion in *Hel.*, *IT*, *Andromeda*); Arnott 1990: 4-5; Segal 1971a (his reading exploring the multiple ways the theme of illusion and reality is enunciated in the play, via the image of the phantom, the contrast between Egypt and Troy and so on); Solmsen 1934: 119-21.

<sup>121</sup> For staging as an integral part of the function of tragic openings, cf. also (to draw from my three case studies alone) the way opening movement of female out of the temple and words introduce key themes and tensions of the *IT* (see ch.2, pp.112-4); the way suppliant tableau and speech of the female introduce emotional and thematic dynamics of the *Andr.* (see ch.3, pp.169-71). For other instances outside my case studies, cf. e.g. the way dramaturgy plays a key role in introducing major themes of play and whole trilogy in the opening act of Aesch. *Ag.*: position of watchman on the roof of the Atreid *oikos* (staging supported by e.g. Taplin 1977: 277; Denniston & Page 1957: 66) introduces the central role of the house in the trilogy; wish from release from the physical *ponoi* related to his task as watchman (ἀπαλλαγή πόνων, 1, 20) sums up much of the movement (actual and abortive) not just in the play but in the trilogy.

<sup>122</sup> Like Taplin 1977: 9, I mark entries after an entry announcement but before a greeting, and exits after a character's last lines but before lines uttered simultaneously to his/her departing (in Taplin's words: "lines cast after a departing back").

<sup>123</sup> I follow Taplin 1977: 64 in locating the chorus' entering movement at 179, i.e. at the beginning of the *antistrophe* and not during Helen's *strophe*. For a different staging, see e.g. Burian 2007: 200; Willink 1990: 77n.4, 78n.7.

citizens in the *Heraclidae* (73-5) enter onstage.<sup>124</sup> Hearing the cry, their hearts are stirred by pity (οἰκτρὸν ὄμαδον ἔκλυον,/ ἄλυρον ἔλεγον..., 184-5); compassion for the woman in distress leads their steps onstage.<sup>125</sup> Their sense of justice and duty towards those wronged, indicated by the motivation of first entry, will figure again as an important feature near the end of the play, when the Coryphaeus intervenes to prevent Theoclymenus from killing Theonoe with the risk of their own death. I quote in translation: “Kill me! I will not allow you to kill your sister but only me...” (1639-40).<sup>126</sup> Their *parodos* dramatized as a reaction of concern towards Helen also prepares for the strong bond of *philia* between female protagonist and her choral maidens.<sup>127</sup> This is a multiple given thereafter in words and action. Together they are heard to sing the choral entry song (179ff); a musical dramatic technique accentuating the strong relation between actors and chorus.<sup>128</sup> The women repeatedly provide Helen with friendly advice (e.g. 253-4, 306-29), and active support (even abandoning their conventional place by the orchestra to accompany her inside at 385). φίλαι Helen repeatedly addresses them (e.g. 255, 330, 627, 648, 1369), likewise, the chorus will address her as φίλα at 339. In them, as seems to be the norm in all cases of female dislocation, Helen finds a constant and fervent ally for her plans of escape.<sup>129</sup> In this play, their role is shared by the Egyptian princess, whose compliance with Helen’s plans is necessary. But again the double focus does not compromise the significance and depth of this protagonist-chorus bond of friendship.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>124</sup> For the motif with parallels, see further in Burian 2007: 201-2. For the wide range of choral entry motivations in drama, see Taplin 1977: 65-70. For motivations of female choral entries in particular, see Easterling 1987: 23-4.

<sup>125</sup> Their entry is explained as an unprompted response to a woman’s cry. Cf. the unprompted entry of the chorus of Phthian women arriving onstage out of concern for the Trojan woman in Eur. *Andr.* 117-25 (see ch.3, pp.175-7). They are not summoned onstage by Helen, as is the case in e.g. Eur. *IT* 61-5: Iphigenia calls the chorus in order to perform libations to her brother.

<sup>126</sup> For my hypothesis on the Coryphaeus as blocking Theoclymenus’ way, see pp.81-3. If this is right, female devotion transgresses ethnicity and status in this play as well, as it does in Eur. *Andr.* (see ch.3, pp.175-7).

<sup>127</sup> Like Taplin 1977: 449, I reserve the term *parodos* only for the choral entry song and the term *eisodos* to refer to the side entrances leading to the stage in the ancient theatre.

<sup>128</sup> On the way in which the dialogue-form *parodos* accentuates the strong relation of chorus-actor, see Taplin 1977: 247, 282 (cf. the entry song in Eur. *IT*).

<sup>129</sup> This strong bond between dislocated female and chorus is the norm in all cases of dislocation. For *IT*, see ch.2, pp.118-9, 120-1; for *Andr.*, see ch.3, pp.175-7.

<sup>130</sup> For the doubling of the convention of the choral silence with Theonoe’s silence, see pp.43n.58, 73-4.

This chorus neglects to introduce itself. It is left to Helen to establish their identity, which she does briefly in the span of only six words (quoted above).<sup>131</sup> Helen defines them as Greek women; victims (like her) of a barbarian ship (note the echo with βαρβάρω πλάτα at 234). Another hint as to their status is given in their own words, when describing their laundry by the river. The reference to the “deep-dyed dresses” (φοίνικας.../ πέπλους, 181-2), suggesting royal garments, indicates their status as slaves of the royal household performing the palace laundry.<sup>132</sup> No other detail is given regarding this chorus. Unlike Aeschylus in his *Agamemnon*, Euripides does not return to the matter of the chorus’ identity at a later stage in order to give the details held back at the moment of entry.<sup>133</sup> There is something almost perfunctory in the way this chorus is treated. The almost casual introduction, in taking the presence of the chorus for granted, amounts to an overtly formalist gesture, which tacitly acknowledges the element of convention in their presence.<sup>134</sup> As discussed in the thematic analysis, in their ensuing songs and dialogic interventions, again, there is no reference to their own story and situation. There is no clear sense of their alienation in the foreign locale. The alienness of locale, in turn, is not accentuated by their evocations. These women are Greek and Helen can count on their sympathy and support. Beyond this function, what is at stake for them is less an issue in the *Helen* than it is for the Greek women confined in Tauris along with Iphigenia in the *IT*.<sup>135</sup>

### ***Exit Helen and chorus, 385***

Two unconventional events occur at one theatrical moment: unusual departure of chorus from the orchestra and of suppliant from resort of safety while still in

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<sup>131</sup> Dale 1967: 80 puts it nicely: “This serves as the introduction to the audience which the chorus has failed to give of itself”.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 173; Burian 2007: 202.

<sup>133</sup> For the brevity and informality of their identification, cf. comment in e.g. Allan 2008: 174; Burian 2007: 202. The chorus of elders in Aesch. *Ag.* enter at line 40 but do not identify themselves (with details on their status and age) until line 71-82. For the motivation and identity of the chorus in Aesch. *Ag.*, see Taplin 1977: 69-70.

<sup>134</sup> There is imprecision on their prehistory and present status and little attempt to provide a rational explanation for the presence of this chorus. Contrast the more detailed introductions to choruses in e.g. Eur. *Phoen.* 202-25, *Hipp.* 121-60, *El.* 167-74, *IA* 165-302. For other instances where awareness of the theatrical convention is raised in the play, see p.66n.161.

<sup>135</sup> For the lack of references to the personal story of the chorus in *Hel.* and their non-rescue as ways of contributing to the process of downplaying Egyptian alienness, and finally the way this use of the chorus contrasts with the treatment of the Greek choral women in the *IT*, see pp.42-3 (on the chorus in *IT*, see ch.2, pp.103-4).

danger.<sup>136</sup> Onstage is emptied for the arrival of the new character, Menelaus, and his opening *rhesis*, the so called “second prologue” of the play.<sup>137</sup> Menelaus is given the chance to narrate his adventures and embarrassing misfortunes without the shame of mingling with the throng (415). At the same time, Euripides is able to give the background information needed for the plot to move forward, without the risk of spoiling the moment of Helen and Menelaus’ recognition by previous interaction of either with a cognisant chorus.<sup>138</sup>

As already argued in the thematic analysis, Helen’s withdrawal from the tomb does not undermine the seriousness of her suppliant status but is rather presented as a necessity of the plot and her situation.<sup>139</sup> This female chorus expresses the wish to go inside the house with Helen (συνεισελθεῖν δόμους, 327), and listen to Theonoe’s prophecy with her (328). The decision to consult the maiden in the first place is actually the result of their strong admonition to Helen (306-26).<sup>140</sup> This is one of only five instances in extant tragedy where a chorus is seen to abandon its place in the orchestra in mid play.<sup>141</sup> The invisible barrier between tragic chorus and scene-building and even between chorus and actors (in the sense that literal physical contact is usually avoided) dissolves.<sup>142</sup> The Protean *oikos* is populated with women, who easily cross its threshold in mass and at will; what single males, and in one case the *kyrios* of this house (and king), will fail to do.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, the strong solidarity between female protagonist and the women of

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<sup>136</sup> The chorus is last heard at 361. I follow Allan 2008: 192 in seeing them departing after Helen rounds off her lament (385); a different staging would, as he notes, distract attention from her words. For a different staging (chorus departing before Helen), see e.g. Burian 2007: 212; Dale 1967: 91; Kannicht 1969: 121; Pearson 1903: 96.

<sup>137</sup> For this doubling of prologue scenes in the play, see Burian 2007: 212; Taplin 1977: 385; Kannicht 1969: 122. For the *epiprologos* as an innovative Euripidean narrative technique, see Goward 1999: 124.

<sup>138</sup> Euripides needed a chorus ignorant of Menelaus’ identity and non-engaging in dialogue with him or Helen prior to their encounter. For this function of choral absence at this moment, cf. comments in e.g. Allan 2008: 185; Burian 2007: 212.

<sup>139</sup> See p.48. I return to the point with emphasis on the way movement of abandonment and return to the tomb is staged in pp.70-1.

<sup>140</sup> One of the rare instances, where the chorus actually affects the course of the action, not merely by its silence; for parallels from extant tragedy, see Burian 2007: 208.

<sup>141</sup> For the bar on action and movement inside invariably imposed on a tragic chorus, see e.g. Goward 1999: 32; Taplin 1986: 173. For other instances of a chorus leaving the orchestra in mid-play, cf. e.g. Aesch. *Eum.* 231-44; Soph. *Aj.* 814-66; *Eur. Alc.* 746-861, *Rhes.* 564-674.

<sup>142</sup> Instances of possible physical contact between chorus and actors are few and disputed in scholarly analyses. See e.g. 1627 in this play (Coryphaeus-actor; see pp.82-3); Soph. *OC* 856ff (chorus-actor; see Kaimio 1988: 77; contrast Stanley-Porter 1977: 46n.4). For physical touching in this play, see also p.66.

<sup>143</sup> For the Egyptian house marked as a realm controlled and populated by females, see further in pp.68-70.

the chorus, already variously indicated, is now visually enacted onstage in a movement signified in the words of the chorus itself as an act of the kind of compassion a woman should offer another woman (329: γυναικα γὰρ δὴ συμπονεῖν γυναικὶ χορή).<sup>144</sup> Thus, the unconventional dramatic gesture functions simultaneously as a meaningful structural and thematic device.

The narrative situation created is unusual for tragedy: two different scenes are running in parallel. Onstage Menelaus is delivering the second prologue (386-433), meeting and interacting with the Old Woman porter of the house (435-514). Offstage, the chorus and Helen are consulting Theonoe. Parallel developments are a trademark of the epic rather than drama (though we find a similar gesture in at least one contemporary comedy).<sup>145</sup> In a play already rich in inter-textual dialogue with the Homeric epic, the inter-generic gesture counts as another key way in which the play engages with the Homeric prototype.<sup>146</sup> At line 515, the chorus re-enter for their *epiparodos*.<sup>147</sup> They have heard what they were in need to learn (ἄ χορήζουσ' (α), 516), and now they inform us as well about Theonoe's prophetic information. Instead of narrators of past events, predictors of the future, or evokers of parallel mythic worlds outside the basic story of a play (i.e. the three narrative roles tragedy invariably assigns to its choruses<sup>148</sup>), here they become reporters of the offstage event. They function in the place of an *exangelos*.<sup>149</sup> Once more, as was the case with their unconventional exit, a formal convention related to the chorus is varied to serve the purposes of Euripides' complex, Homeric narrative mode. Now both audience and Menelaus are given the

<sup>144</sup> For the strong bond of *philia* between chorus and Helen, see p.60.

<sup>145</sup> It does appear as key feature of the plot structure of one extant comedy: Ar. *Lys.* (a comedy with which *Hel.* shares other affinities, as argued in pp.53-4, 68-70). There plot revolves around the parallel development of two separate actions: the occupation plan and the strike plan. For analyses focussing on this complexity of double plot-line in *Lys.*, see e.g. Henderson 1987: xxv-xxviii; Vaio 1973: 369-80.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Burian 2007: 10: "The 'double prologue'...seems to have been inspired, perhaps unconsciously, by the dual beginnings of the *Odyssey*...". The mode of the narrative progression of Homeric parallel plots differs of course: simultaneous events are always narrated and presented only as occurring sequentially (Zielinski's law). On this see Jones 1991: 145; Heubeck, West & Hainsworth 1988: 252. For the close engagement with the epic in other terms (characterization, incident, motifs), see pp.40, 49-50, 52, 64-5, 77-8.

<sup>147</sup> Pollux's term for choral re-entry during play.

<sup>148</sup> On this, see Goward 1999: 22-4. In her insightful analysis of the relation of the chorus with narrative time in drama, she mentions the probability of a chorus used "to narrate recent off-stage events". Yet only Soph. *OC* 1044ff, *OT* 463-82; Eur. *Hipp.* 764-75, *Hec.* 98-152 are given as instances (pp.23-4).

<sup>149</sup> For the term and its difference from the term *angelos*, see Padel 1990: 363.

necessary information; the two narrative strands are united, and the play is finally ready to take off in its new direction.

*Enter Old Woman, 437*

ὦή' τίς ἄν πυλωρὸς ἐκ δόμων μόλοι,  
ὄστις διαγγεῖλειε τᾶμ' ἔσω κακά;

(435-6)

Menelaus arrives on Euripides' stage (386), sees the rich house, and decides to approach it in hope of obtaining something for his sailors (430-3). To his call for a porter (lines quoted above), an Egyptian old woman appears at the threshold. This is a first, at least in extant drama; a woman porter occurs nowhere else.<sup>150</sup> Various reasons have been alleged for the gender choice: psychological factors make it more plausible that a woman would refrain from reporting or arresting Menelaus<sup>151</sup>; the scene gains thus in amusement and irony as the valiant hero is shown outwitted by an old female slave.<sup>152</sup> But there is more at work here than humour. Significantly, the choice of a female porter locates the encounter within a general staging pattern of movement and action of this play: females blocking, directing, and escorting men (I return to the point in more detail in subsequent discussion). The confrontation also enhances ideas foregrounded throughout the play. Menelaus, despite his fervent wish (c.f. e.g. 501-9, 809-16, 1043-4), misses his chance for a direct male to male confrontation; he will not get another one with Theoclymenus either. His male skills of fighting are of no use for him or his wife, until women (Theonoe and Helen) have contrived to get him to the shore and on his way back to Sparta. Male warlike valour has little value in Euripides' Egypt and Menelaus needs to adapt his ways in order to escape from the impasse in which he finds himself. This is again an Odyssean feature. Unlike the simple martial world of the *Iliad*, in the post-war world of the *Odyssey* the hero has to operate with indirect means. So too here, even though Menelaus does not emerge as the clever hero surviving by his wit and guile in unheroic contexts as Odysseus does. In the case of Menelaus, the male hero constantly needs to be directed and

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<sup>150</sup> As Burian 2007: 217 notes, only in Eur. *Tro.* 492-3, do we hear of a woman performing the task of the porter in extant tragedy (in Hecuba's projected imagination of turning into such a slave doorkeeper in Greece).

<sup>151</sup> As argued by e.g. Kannicht 1969: 130; Dale 1967: 96.

<sup>152</sup> For this as being one of the marked effects of this scene, cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 198-9; Burian 2007: 217; Wright 2005: 28, 283; Whitman 1974: 46.



restrained by the woman; initiative of action significantly passes onto the female.<sup>153</sup>

The scene that follows has been widely commented on for its light tone and comicality. The door-business (knocking and shouting at the doorstep) is more at home in comedy, though not unfamiliar to tragedy (cf. e.g. Aesch. *Cho.* 652-7; Eur. *IT* 1304-8). Context (ragged king reduced to begging) and characterization (the rude doorkeeper, the self-pitying Menelaus) underline the undercurrent of humour and absurdity in the situation.<sup>154</sup> Old Woman and Menelaus engage in a lively and playful exchange; words of *χόλος* (442) and threats of physical violence (445, 452) are heard in a scene that (to use Blaiklock's exaggerated, yet revealing remark) "might have been written by Aristophanes".<sup>155</sup> Throughout the play, comic and satyr elements have been detected at work at the level of plot, individual scenes, characters and use of motifs.<sup>156</sup> In any reading, the wit and playfulness of this play perhaps above all cannot be dismissed. What has not received sufficient emphasis in previous analyses is the profound extent to which this inter-generic give-and-take in construction of plot and theme is strikingly replicated in the granularity of staging and spatial technique. The interaction operates at several levels. It is visible in the use of space. By this I mean the fluidity and elusiveness of space exemplified in the continuous shifts of semantic

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<sup>153</sup> In the Homeric antecedent the male manages to plot his way out by successfully adapting his ways. Note e.g. *Od.* 9.299-302 (Odysseus checking himself for his anger and deciding to resort to guile in the Cyclops episode), 12.111-41 (Circe checking Odysseus for his stubborn clinging onto warlike deeds- the Scylla and Charybdis episode). In Euripides, that needs to be done by the woman. For the argued scenic pattern (female directing male) and its thematic significance in concretizing the theme of female control and male vulnerability, the questioning of heroic *kleos* and valour, see pp.68-70, 77-9.

<sup>154</sup> For the door-knocking scene as a device more common in comedy, see e.g. Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 105, 1977: 340-1. I agree with those scholars (e.g. Allan 2008: 198-9; Ypsilanti 2006: 57-8), who stress that it is context and way of handling of the motif in the specific tragedy (contrary to e.g. the Aeschylean parallel) that chiefly generates humour rather than the simple presence of the motif. Trail 2001 argues for Euripides' adaptation of the old comic motif of the hostile doorkeeper in *Hel.* as anticipating its use in Menandrian drama.

<sup>155</sup> Blaiklock 1952: 89. For the humorous tone of this scene, cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 198-9; Burian 2007: 216-7; Ypsilanti 2006: 57-8; Ley 1991: 28; Arnott 1990: 14; Whitman 1974: 46-7.

<sup>156</sup> For comedy in scenes: cf. e.g. 435-82 (scene with Menelaus and portress; see n.154 above), 528ff (recognition scene; see p.70), 1184ff (Helen and Theoclymenus; cf. e.g. Burian 2007: 3; Arnott 1990: 14ff; Segal 1971a: 612). For comedy in characters, especially Menelaus' characterization as an amusing replica of Odysseus, see e.g. Allan 2008: 27 (seen in the larger context of Euripides' playful reversal of the Odyssean pattern of rescue), 258-9; Burian 2007: 215, 254. Podlecki 1970: 402-5 objects to the humorous qualities of Menelaus. But I think scholars are right in stressing that aspects of his characterization would figure out as amusing. This does not object to him being a serious character, and his plight a serious matter. For comedy in use of motifs, see e.g. Arnott 1990: 13; Whitman 1974: 46; Segal 1971a: 612. Specifically for the connection of motifs pointing to modes of New Comedy, see e.g. Austin 1994: 139,183,188; Arnott 1990: 13; Kannicht 1969: 81; Pearson 1903: 100. For potential affinities with satyr dramas, see e.g. Hall 2010: 279-80; Burnett 1971: 81; Grube 1941: 334.

identity of the house.<sup>157</sup> It can be traced in the frequent hints of physical interaction (the stuff of comic business) between actors: Menelaus-Old Woman, Coryphaeus-Theoclymenus.<sup>158</sup> The increased amount of ‘business’ at the door created via the series of blocked entries of unwelcome intruders (Teucer, Menelaus, Theoclymenus) is also reminiscent of comic spatial technique. And in one of the cases at least (the one under discussion here, Menelaus’ attempted entrance), tone of scene reinforces the association with comic technique.<sup>159</sup> Finally, comedy is at play also in the way gender spatial dynamics are shaped: women controlling male designated spaces, women as positive female intruders.<sup>160</sup> There is a pleasing, insufficiently noticed, synergy between what is happening at the level of plot, themes, character with the experimentation at work at the level of spatial staging.

Inevitably, the comic element in *Helen* has raised questions about its generic status. Euripides is playing at so many levels in this play: inter-generic, inter-textual (primarily the engagement with the epic), dramaturgic.<sup>161</sup> The tone of the play varies and at points approaches farce. As a consequence, various generic labels have been attached to the *Helen*.<sup>162</sup> The mischief in labelling a tragedy with

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<sup>157</sup> On this point, see pp.53-4.

<sup>158</sup> Unlike in comedy, physical contact in general in tragedy is, as Revermann 2006: 132 puts it, “the significant exception, adding *pathos* and a sense of crisis in an environment of detachment and isolation”. Contact with statues of god, children, contact mediated via props are the basic characteristics of the tragic mode (see Revermann 2006: 132n.47). For a comprehensive study of the phenomenon of physical contact in tragedy, see e.g. Kaimio 1988.

<sup>159</sup> Configuration of space and action around the door as boundary to unwelcome intruders is a familiar pattern in most Aristophanic comedies (see Lowe 2006: 51-64). There is not something comic in itself about Helen saying to Teucer to leave to avoid danger of death (151-7), or in the scene of a brother being averted from killing his sister (1627-41). These are serious moments. But staging technique is reminiscent of comedy, and in one instance the tone reinforces that sense. For this pattern (female blocking male), see further in pp.68-70.

<sup>160</sup> For these elements, see pp.54-5, 68-70, 77-9.

<sup>161</sup> For potential allusions to conventions, see e.g. 290-1 (Helen referring to the process of recognition by tokens, as if she knows she is in a tragedy); 262-3 (Helen’s unmasking; see comments in e.g. Hall 2010: 281; Wright 2005: 327; Downing 1990: 9); 385 (abnormal removal of suppliant from safety resort, of chorus from orchestra, see pp.61-4); 1087-9 (Helen’s reference to change of costume and mask); 1056 (Menelaus’ reference to the oldness of Helen’s death-faking device; see comments in e.g. Segal 1971a: 611; Burnett 1960: 154). See also p.61 (on the mode of identification of the chorus at entry). Scholars note this dimension of the play, i.e. its self-conscious theatricality (see e.g. Hall 2010: 281; Downing 1990: 8-9; Burnett 1971: 77-8, 1960: 154; Segal 1971a: 612). Like with inter-generic and inter-textual allusion, this element adds to the appeal of the play as theatre.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. e.g. Austin 1994: 188 (“first New Comedy”); Whitman 1974: 68 (“half-lyrical, half-philosophical romance”); Conacher 1967, Grube 1941 (for tragicomedy); Burnett 1960 (new sort of comedy, comedy of ideas; Wright 2005: 226-35 engages in an exclusive critique of her arguments).

anachronistic titles has been well illustrated in modern discussions.<sup>163</sup> Wit and humour neither turn it into less of a tragedy, nor diminish the seriousness of its themes and ideas.<sup>164</sup> The *Helen* is not unique in its degree of experimentation with generic boundaries, technique, overt inter-textuality. These interplays are inherent in the concept of genre, of creative literature more generally. What is more, experimentation is encouraged by the maturity of both genre and dramatist, and indeed audience, at this stage of Euripides' career.<sup>165</sup> Polytonality reinforces themes, stimulates active engagement of the audience, elicits a more reflective response to what is taking place before their eyes; it is (to use Zacharia's phrase on the polytonality of Euripides' *Ion*) "an enriching device".<sup>166</sup> The messages the *Helen* had to transmit, on the fallibility of human knowledge, human vulnerability, the fallacies of choosing appearance over reality, the mischief in illogical persistence in unnecessary violence and bloodshed, were indeed grim.<sup>167</sup> The twists in mood and tone of the play do not reduce their seriousness. But for an audience which has experienced the grimness of these realities in the recent past, one strategic effect is to make these messages more easily digestible. They were already alert; this is deftly triggering that knowledge.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> For the most recent and thorough discussion on the generic status of *Hel.* as tragedy, see Allan 2008: 66-72. For a lucid discussion on the history of the semantic value of the 'tragic', and on how modern misconceptions distort our reading of the genre of tragedy, see Most 2000: 15-36.

<sup>164</sup> Readings that allow both humour and serious thematic input include e.g. Allan 2008: 9, 49; Burian 2007: 30-5; Robinson 2006: 152-3, 169; Downing 1990: 8-9; Segal 1971a: 612-3; Zuntz 1960: 227.

<sup>165</sup> Mixing of genres as a characteristic of the last phase of tragedy (for the point cf. e.g. Austin 1994: 188; Arnott 1990: 13; Taplin 1986: 165-6), and of the last phase of Euripides' career (for the point cf. e.g. Arnott 1990: 13; Segal 1971a: 613) are widely acknowledged. Hints of contraventions of generic boundaries are traced much earlier of course. For example, the knocking of the door business or the figure of the Nurse in *Cho.*, the shifting of space in *Pers.* or *Cho.* are some of the characteristics of later comedy already found in Aeschylus (on this period see Taplin 1986: 165, 172). For inter-generic experimentation as a key feature of all tragedians, see Allan 2008: 69-72.

<sup>166</sup> Zacharia 2003: 152. Cf. Easterling 1991 on how the interplay between the "world of the theatre" and the "world of drama" (her terms) enriches plays and stimulates active audience response. For the way humour helps articulate the theme of female control in the play in particular, see pp.78-9.

<sup>167</sup> Wright's (2005: especially 226ff) is a reading that dwells (perhaps rather too) insistently on the grimness of themes in the play. For these as key themes of the play, cf. also Burian 2007: 35; Segal 1971a: 612-3.

<sup>168</sup> For the appeal of the ideas of the play as potentially enhanced by the mood of its age (recent experience of the Sicilian disaster), see e.g. Hall 2010: 281-2; Zacharia 2003: 187-8; Podlecki 1970: 416-8; Blaiklock 1952: 90-3. I would not dismiss outright the possibility of a contemporary resonance but this attempt to tie play and historical context can be overdone. See e.g. Vickers 1989, Drew 1930 (for readings of the play as a sustained political allegory); e.g. Friedman 2007: 196-8, 209-10; Jordan 2006: 19-23; Hanson 1973: 21-2 (for the play as a direct and intended comment on causes, or result of the Sicilian disaster); e.g. Campbell 1950: 162-6, Lattimore 1958: 110ff (for the play as 'escapist' literature). For a critique on such a rather mechanistic form of historicism and for *Hel.* as not an antiwar play, see Allan 2008: 4-9.

The Old Woman exits and the palace door shuts against Menelaus who is left outside its gates. Menelaus' request for communicating his needs to the household is rejected, and the male is blocked by the female. This is a stage action and a stage image repeated and of fundamental significance in both the dramatic and scenic fabric of this play. For, throughout, the door of this scene-building constitutes a borderline impassable not only to Menelaus, but to all male characters appearing on *Helen's* stage. Teucer is dismissed from the stage by Helen (151-7), without entering the palace and consulting Theonoe as he intended (144-5). Theoclymenus' order to unbar the gates is cancelled by Helen's sudden appearance (1180-4). His later effort to enter into the palace at will again meets resistance from the female Coryphaeus who blocks his way at 1627, in what becomes a mirror scene to Menelaus' own confrontation and failure to gain access to the palace at this stage.<sup>169</sup> Menelaus does finally enter into the scene interior, but only after Theonoe's consent, and with Helen's own accompaniment and directions (1300).<sup>170</sup> It is in the same way that Theoclymenus will enter, accompanied and following Helen's directions, at line 1300. On the other hand, a female, Theonoe, is the dominant resident of this *oikos* and the one making the first important entry at line 865 from its gates.<sup>171</sup> Helen accompanied by the female chorus freely enters inside at line 385; both a rare and semantically significant dramatic gesture.<sup>172</sup> Finally, two female minor characters, the porter (437ff) and the female Coryphaeus (1627ff), are both revealed to possess and exercise control of the palace threshold.

On close examination, a spatial pattern starts to take shape: women blocking, directing, escorting men. The males prove unable to take initiative in their action; the females function, repeatedly and overtly, as directors of male movement.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> For this configuration of space and action around a series of blocked attempts to cross the boundary of the door as a staging technique reminiscent of comic stagecraft, see p.66.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. 815-21: Theonoe's consent is the necessary element for Menelaus' chance to escape the king's attention and achieve their salvation (see also p.43n.58). Cf. also the characteristic lines 1083-4, where Menelaus virtually asks Helen to 'direct' his movement. I return to these lines with comment in pp.76-8.

<sup>171</sup> For the bond between interior and dominant resident character and for the importance of the first usually delayed entry from it, see Kampourelli 2002: 70, 85.

<sup>172</sup> For the unconventional double exit into the scene-building, see pp.61-4.

<sup>173</sup> See also previous discussion, pp.54-5, 66. The spatial pattern (female directing males) occurs also in Eur. *IT* and *Andr.* In the first, Iphigenia's power to direct movement derives purely from

Through this mapping of stage action, the scene-door is invested with a rich symbolic value as boundary between male and female, and if one were to take it even further, of the penetrating-penetrated opposition of the kind we encounter in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*. On the comic stage, the females' refusal to allow male access to their interior spaces is the focus of both the literal and figurative world of the play (the Acropolis turned there into an exclusively female domain).<sup>174</sup> Even if it lacks the directness and intensity of the physical and thematic gender conflict of the Aristophanic play, the spatial configuration of the *Helen* revolves around a similar axis of male-female opposition. *Helen's* Egyptian palace is established in space (both the dramatic and the physical) as the realm of women, the domain of female control. As in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, or Euripides' *Medea*, the dramatic use of the scene-building turns basic gender polarities into physical antitheses.<sup>175</sup> Yet unlike the female usurpers in those plays, the female usurpers of this household (more closely reminiscent of comic rather tragic heroines again) do not effect its destruction.<sup>176</sup> On *Helen's* stage women try to secure justice and restore normality. They are the ones who ensure the continuation of the onstage Egyptian household and its Protean legacy, and the salvation of Menelaus' Spartan *oikos* offstage. Men may ideologically control everything in the *oikos*, but in this play it is clear that that they are totally dependent on the women for its functioning. This is, as has been argued, a play where female *arête*, as rarely in tragedy, finds a place for its enunciation on the Attic tragic stage.<sup>177</sup> For all its exaggeration (all art, after all, takes liberties with facts of real life), this female-dominated Egyptian household reflects the experience of the centrality of the female in the Greek *oikos* in lived reality: women as attached to the domestic inside, women as controllers and retainers of its practical survival. And, as argued in the thematic analysis, it may be also a

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her cultic authority as priestess (see ch.2, pp.99-100, 124). In the latter play, female influence on male decisions to act and move is only an indirect element; there is not the element of female control so overtly presented in this play (see ch.3, pp.180-1).

<sup>174</sup> For the spatial pattern and the penetration metaphor in Ar. *Lys.*, see Revermann 2006: 246-53; Lowe 2006: 55.

<sup>175</sup> Aeschylus' *Oresteia* marks the beginning of a process through which visible dramatic space started receiving progressively greater attention (see Kampourelli 2002: 99, 196), and of a trend of gendering and using the scene-building to thematize notions and conflicts a fifth-century Greek would naturally link to the household. For this trend, see e.g. Scolnicov 1994: 26-8.

<sup>176</sup> This is a tragic example of Foley's (1982: 4-5) second kind of "female intrusion", more common in the comic rather than the tragic world as she shows.

<sup>177</sup> See pp.54-6.

comment on the heightened importance of the female at periods of prolonged male absence.<sup>178</sup>

*Enter chorus, 515*<sup>179</sup>

*Enter Helen, 528*

Abandoning the position at the tomb was rendered as a moment of tension; requiring persistent admonition by the women of the chorus (315ff) and their actual accompanying of the woman into the scene-building (385). When chorus and woman come out of the scene-building, Menelaus is hiding by the tomb (κρύψας ἑμαυτόν, 507).<sup>180</sup> Helen starts moving back to her seat upon the tomb (στείχω, 529). At line 541 she catches sight of the male. The small scene that follows, with Menelaus trying to block Helen's way to her resort to suppliance and Helen trying to flee from him is a playful blending of some conventional elements of recognition scenes (stichomythia, speechlessness) and comic distortions of others (the person waiting instead of the newcomer needs to be convinced of her identity).<sup>181</sup> Euripides reworks the recognition type scene and more largely the *nostos* motif. Husband and wife reunite after so long not before the background of their home, but in a far away foreign place.<sup>182</sup>

Stage action plays a significant role in keeping the tension of the moment.<sup>183</sup> Repeated attention to Helen's rapid and agitated movement (543-4, 546-7, 555) renders fear and anxiety of the suppliant to return to the place of safety.<sup>184</sup> We have just seen her entering from the house, reporting (both she and the chorus) on the helpful information given to her by its Egyptian princess (517-39). We have also heard of Helen's *philia* with all from the household, Theoclymenus excluded

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<sup>178</sup> See pp.54-5. On the *oikos* as a realm of both female confinement and female control in the lived reality of classical Athens, see Cohen 1991: 159.

<sup>179</sup> On this movement (the *epiparodos*), see pp.61-4.

<sup>180</sup> For this as the most probable staging of 515-41, see comments in e.g. Allan 2008: 204; Dale 1967: 99.

<sup>181</sup> For the conventional elements and for the innovations of this recognition scene, see e.g. Allan 2008: 209-10; Burian 2007: 223-4.

<sup>182</sup> For this reworking of the *nostos* pattern, see p.52.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. Burian 2007: 223-4.

<sup>184</sup> Cf. especially 543-4: [Helen] "Quick to the tomb, run like a galloping colt or one of the god's bacchants!"; 546-7: [Menelaus] "You, the one trying so desperately (ὄρεγμα δεινόν) to get to the steps of the tomb...".

(314-5). It is on the basis of this friendly relationship with the house that the chorus had dared suggest an initial removal from the tomb (313-5). As noted in the thematic analysis, this is not a clear-cut case of threatening façade versus place of supplication; the antithesis is rather one of accessibility.<sup>185</sup> Safety, at this stage at least, can only be secured by the tomb. Both tomb and *oikos* link the present to the past (the legacy of Proteus). But the house is still ambiguous and consequently its role remains fluid. Theonoe still needs to appear and decide. Only when Helen finally has her hands on the tomb again is her feeling of comfort once more restored: ἴστημ', ἐπεὶ γε τοῦδ' ἐφάπτομαι τάφου (556). This short transition from one scenic object to another takes approximately twenty lines. Euripides focuses on rapid movement but slows down the tempo of stage action in order to render the moment of return to the tomb, as the moment of removal from it, as a moment of great anxiety and tension.<sup>186</sup> I have argued that the staging choice, removal of suppliant from safety resort, does not (ironically) perplex Helen's innocence or victimhood.<sup>187</sup> The way Euripides' text is at pains to underline the anxiety and risk of the transition to and from this resort is a further argument for the seriousness of Helen's plight, and in turn the absolute (if playful) solemnity with which the dramatist treats the suppliant motif in this play.

***Enter Theonoe, 865***

οἷ γὰρ τάλαινα· τῆς τύχης γὰρ ᾧδ' ἔχω·  
 Μενέλαε, διαπεπράγμεθ'· ἐκβαίνει δόμων  
 ἢ θεσπιωδὸς Θεονόη· κτυπεῖ δόμος  
 κλήθρων λυθέντων. φεῦγ'· ἀτὰρ τί φευκτέον;  
 ἀποῦσα γὰρ σε καὶ παροῦσ' ἀφιγμένον  
 δεῦρ' οἶδεν· ᾧ δύστηνος, ὡς ἀπωλόμην.  
 Τροίας δὲ σωθεὶς κατὰ βαρβάρου χθονὸς  
 ἐς βάρβαρ' ἐλθὼν φάσγαν' αὖθις ἐμπεσεῖ.  
 (856-64)

<sup>185</sup> See pp.53-4.

<sup>186</sup> For the technique of slowing down the tempo of stage action in order to built up tension and put emphasis on the stage moment, see Halleran 1985: 108, 116n.92 (this scene is also used as an example).

<sup>187</sup> See p.48.

Suspense, both Helen's and ours, reaches a peak. There is reasonable fear that Theonoe, about to appear onstage, will not side with their cause and that this entry could be marking the end of Helen and Menelaus' hopes for an escape. The strong invective against worthless and lying prophets heard from the mouth of the Old Servant of Menelaus a few lines before (744-57), redoubled by the choral comment (758-60), raise anxiety for the possible ethos and attitude of this prophetic maiden.<sup>188</sup> The long entry announcement, Helen's agitated words, take up and enlarge associations of fear and danger.<sup>189</sup> Sound effect reinforces the impact of the stage moment; the noise of the opening gates makes the house resound: κτυπεῖ δόμος (859).<sup>190</sup> This could have been another interior scene: Helen going inside for the second time to supplicate Theonoe for her help. This is Helen's duty, as Menelaus says: "This is your task: nothing like a woman to deal with a woman" (830). And Helen accepts it: "I will surely grasp her knees in supplication" (831). Menelaus would have stayed outside waiting, the time lapse covered by a choral lyric, the outcome of the confrontation narrated by Helen herself at her re-entry. But Euripides brings the prophetess outside. Both Helen and Menelaus will face her and fall as suppliants before her. Theonoe becomes a *dramatis persona* rather than a narrated figure.

The manner of her entry is significant. Her coming onstage is actually staged as a ritual of purification: one servant is cleansing the sky with sulphur (865-7), another is purifying the ground with the flame of the torch (868-70).<sup>191</sup> Purity of earth and air is a necessary service to the gods (871), as Theonoe says. Her close relation with the divine has already been a multiple given in the play: on the basis of her name (Εἰδῶ changed to Θεονόη, 11-14), her family heritage (10-15, 1002-4), the multiple references to her wisdom by other characters (Teucer, chorus,

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<sup>188</sup> Scholars have seen an allusion to the recent disaster in the Sicilian expedition in this strong invective against soothsayers. I agree with Allan 2008: 231-2, that the lines should be seen primarily within dramatic context and in relation to the play (having a bearing on how anxiety is raised for Theonoe's role in the escape). For the various ways different readings connect the play with the political situation of its age, see p.67n.168.

<sup>189</sup> For long entry announcements as generating suspense, see Taplin 1977: 297. As Burian 2007: 244 comments, this "agitated" announcement leads us to expect "a decisive turn of events".

<sup>190</sup> Cf. e.g. Eur. *Or.* 1366. For the noise convention before an entry from the scene-building, see Poe 1992: 134-5; Taplin 1977: 71n.3.

<sup>191</sup> For the rite as a possible allusion to Egyptian practice, see p.34.



Helen).<sup>192</sup> Ritualistic mode of entry, with marked emphasis on purity as proper service to the gods, reinforces the impression of Theonoe as a clairvoyant figure.<sup>193</sup> The point is emphatically made that this prophetic maiden makes purity, propriety, and piety to the gods her priority.<sup>194</sup> Between her brother's orders (890-1) and the pleas of Helen and Menelaus for justice and salvation, Theonoe chooses the latter. She cannot be made to betray the strong inclinations of her nature towards justice and piety for the sake of her brother's wishes (998-1004). Helen's expressions of fear in the entry announcement set up all anxieties of the situation and alert the audience to the crisis at hand. Manner of entry is a very important means of further signalling what is at stake. Ritual movement stresses Theonoe's power and betrays aspects of her character. It foregrounds her pivotal importance to the plot, while tacitly also anticipating her decision.

### *Exit Theonoe, 1029*

αὐτοὶ μὲν οὖν εὕρισκετ' ἔξοδόν τινα,  
ἐγὼ δ' ἀποστᾶσ' ἐκποδῶν σιγήσομαι.

(1022-3)

Theonoe has opted for piety, to honour her father's good reputation (999-1000, 1028-9), to sustain her own good name (1001), and keep intact the "temple of justice" inherited in her nature (1002-3). Initial anxieties concerning her potential role fade away; she decides to cast her vote for justice. She will carry on the job of the father Proteus; she will secure Helen and Menelaus' marriage bed. Through her, his role will be continued by the current generation.<sup>195</sup> The ambiguities concerning the signification and role of the house in the scenic and dramatic space of the play simultaneously begin to dissolve for Helen.<sup>196</sup> Theonoe's silence (in itself a motif more usually associated with a chorus) opens up the way for Helen

<sup>192</sup> Cf. e.g. 13-5 (Helen on Theonoe), 145-50 (Teucer arriving in Egypt to hear her prophecy), 318-29 (chorus prompting Helen to take Theonoe's advice). For Theonoe's characterization and role, see also pp.35-6.

<sup>193</sup> For the mode of entry as reinforcing notions of her purity, her special relation to the divine, the mysticism of her presence, cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 242; Burian 2007: 245; Zuntz 1960: 204.

<sup>194</sup> For emphasis on Theonoe's sense of justice, cf. e.g. Burian 2007: 244; Burnett 1960: 152; Hanson 1973: 17; Hamilton 1985: 62-4. For her paternal piety and purity, cf. e.g. Conacher 1967: 296; Burnett 1960:158; Papi 1987: 32-3.

<sup>195</sup> Cf. Segal 1971a: 589; Downing 1990: 13-4. In a rather forced analogy, Austin 1994: 171-2 and Sansone 1985: 18ff see her as replacing and filling in for Athena's role in the judgement of Paris. Cf. also Drew 1930: 189, who sees Theonoe as alluding to Athens' Ionian allies.

<sup>196</sup> For the shifting identity of the house in terms of its signification, see pp.53-4.

and Menelaus' escape.<sup>197</sup> As in Euripides' *Phoenissae* or *Iphigenia Aulidensis* "eris is partially at least resolved by the altruism of a noble nature".<sup>198</sup> Theonoe's movement inside marks her conscious movement into silence and sounds the tragic note of her personal story, her dilemma and her decision to jeopardise her life in this play. Burnett talks of two plots of "positive overturn": Theonoe's miniature Antigone-like drama and Helen's rescue drama, simultaneously at work on *Helen's* stage. Like Antigone, as Burnett observes, Theonoe is forced to choose between her welfare and risking her life for a principle.<sup>199</sup> Theonoe chooses to espouse commitment to the household (Proteus' stance, the powers inherited by Nereus) over personal interest. This is physically enacted in the fact that she remains inside the house for the rest of the play.

The anticipated rage of the brother (1020) bursts out at line 1624 (τεισόμεθα σύγγονον). After Helen and Menelaus have set off, the focus falls on the Egyptian *oikos*. The upheavals that have thrown the house into confusion (the Old Woman's words: ἔστι γάρ τις ἐν δόμοις/ τύχη, τύραννος ἧ ταράσσεται δόμος, 477-8) now reach a climax. Brother threatens sister; the dark swords turn against Theonoe, instead of Menelaus.<sup>200</sup> When the mortal intervention fails to reconcile him (1627-41), a divine one proves necessary. Helen's twin brothers appear from above (1642).<sup>201</sup> The marriage he wished for was not one destined by divine plan; Theonoe's treachery towards him was just and in harmony both with divine laws and the piety owed to her father (1646-57). Helen is to return to the marital *oikos* in Sparta, and to her proper domestic roles (of the mother, of the

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<sup>197</sup> For the double silence, see also comments in pp.43n.58, 73-4. For Theonoe's decision as opening up the road to their escape but not in any way determining its outcome (which relies on the gods', still unknown, decision), see e.g. Burian 2007: 245; Dale 1967: xiii, Zuntz 1960: 204-6 (for their comments on the much discussed line 887: τέλος δ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν).

<sup>198</sup> Wilson 1979: 19

<sup>199</sup> Burnett 1971: 94-5, 100

<sup>200</sup> Cf. 863-4: [Helen]: "And you, having escaped the barbarian land of Troy, shall now run once more into barbarian swords". 1656: [Castor]: "So take your dark sword away from your sister...". Various effects and functions have been attributed to the scene in scholarly discussions: bringing out a contrast between "human and divine power" (Halleran 1985: 24-5, 49); emphasising the true nobility the protagonists lack (Wolff 1973: 83-4; Papi 1987: 40); exemplifying, through the behaviour of slaves, the contrast between slave and master, free citizen and tyrant (Podlecki 1970: 414-5); highlighting Theonoe's tragedy and the notion of justice (Burnett 1971: 97-8; Hanson 1973: 20-1).

<sup>201</sup> For the scene of Theoclymenus' confrontation with the mortal blocking figure, see pp.81-3. For the possible stagings of the entrance of the Dioscuri, see Allan 2008: 340, Burian 2007: 290.

wife).<sup>202</sup> She is to be rewarded for her suffering and malice from both mortals and the divine by deification and eternal fame: after death she will be called a goddess like the Dioscuri (1666-9) and the island that lies off Akte, where Hermes first took her, will be called Ἐλένη after her name (1670-5).<sup>203</sup> This holds also for Menelaus: he is to live in the Island of the Blest (1676-7); the ending Homer also prescribes him in book 4 of his *Odyssey* (*Od.* 4.561-9). This is what fate and the other gods decided (1657-8), this is what Zeus wishes (1669). The divine finally intervenes for the benefit of those trying to secure justice (Theonoe). The noble ones suffering receive a fame that counterbalances their misfortunes (Helen, Menelaus). We remember the words of the chorus to the couple, “If you get good fortune in the future, it will be sufficient solace for all that is past” (698-9), or their comment after Theonoe’s exit at 1030-1: “No unjust man has ever enjoyed good fortune. But in righteousness there is hope of rescue”. Both significant *oikoi*, the one onstage, the other one already on the way to its physical Spartan dwelling, are restored. The resolution is a double restoration: the Egyptian *oikos* is reconciled, with its lawful king now physically entering the house for the first time unaccompanied and willing to come to terms with its legacy and members; Spartan *oikos* receives absent husband and wife.

Nevertheless, as in *IT* and *Andromache*, the happy resolution does not answer all our questions.<sup>204</sup> The past suffering resented by Helen, Menelaus, his Servant, and the chorus receive no explanation outside a declaration that it was all the will of the gods. The gap between mortal world (the limitations in power, in knowledge) and divine world is not bridged or explained in the end. The disjunction between body and name, the mismatch between mortal and divine conception of events are major sources of the tension and complexity of the action. More than either of the

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<sup>202</sup> Concern for the daughter Hermione is noted in the play: 282-3, 688-91, 933, 1476-7. Helen’s relocation will revive the daughter’s chances of marriage.

<sup>203</sup> Cf. Iphigenia’s receiving of heroic cult in the end of the *IT* (see ch.2, pp.106-7), Peleus’ deification at the end of the *Andr.* (see ch.3, pp.198-9). Helen’s *apotheosis* is also attested in Eur. *Or.* 1635-7; Pind. *Ol.* 3.1-2. For more on the traditions of her deification and of the island in her name, see e.g. Allan 2008: 342-4; Burian 2007: 291-2. For the possibility that the mode of oath taking (by the head) prefigures her ending as deified, see Torrance 2009a. For stress on the positive outcome for Menelaus and Helen, cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 64-5. Contrast Friedman 2007: 202-3: lack of information for their immediate future in Sparta, unnecessarily read as problematizing their ending. This is part of Friedman’s general tendency to read the play as stressing incompleteness and loss. For my disagreement with other points of his reading, see pp.41n.52, 50n.90, 67n.168.

<sup>204</sup> For the ending of Eur. *IT*, see ch.2, pp.131-3. For the ending of Eur. *Andr.*, see ch.3, pp.198-200.

other two cases of dislocation, Helen's one brings out human vulnerability and limited understanding to the fore.<sup>205</sup> Euripides does not develop the theme to the same extent in the case of Iphigenia's dislocation in the *IT*. There, the dislocated female in Tauris is thought of as dead in Greece, the brother Orestes is almost believed dead by the female in Tauris.<sup>206</sup> There is a similar tension between human misconception of events and reality concealed from them by the divine. But on that stage, this notion does not develop into a dominant theme as in the *Helen*. The paradox between reality and illusion has more fascinating aspects to be explored in the case of Helen: the striking complexities in Helen's novel characterization as chaste, the total reversal of the mythical story of the Trojan war.<sup>207</sup> Dislocation in the *IT* triggers different tensions and turns into a metaphor for other kind of problematizations; I turn to their discussion in the following chapter.

### ***Exit Helen, 1106***

Helen is to move inside the palace, in order to change into her false mourning appearance; to cut her hair, change her clothes, and bloody her cheeks with her nails (1087-9; cf. 1186-92, 1224). Menelaus, following her direction, is to stay by the tomb; in case of danger, this tomb and his sword will protect him (1085-6).<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Mortals on this stage are repeatedly victims of their ignorance, of delusions of their minds (misapprehending facts), eyes, and passions (Helen's fear guiding her reactions, Menelaus' violent temperament and Theoclymenus' lust guiding theirs). See also p.44. For the notion, as stressed in the words of the play, cf. e.g. 49-55, 72-82, 116-20, 270-89. For recent readings that stress how the presentations of the divine-mortal dealings in this play emphasize the problem of human vulnerability and lack of understanding, see e.g. Allan 2008: 61-6; Wright 2005: 383-4. Professor Revermann has usefully suggested to me that this could be described in the language of chronotopes (for the term see *Introduction*, p.20n.33): the kind of parallel temporality, in which Helen's spatial displacement occurs, articulates clearly the unmatched power of the divine to control space and time, to create such dual realities.

<sup>206</sup> For the dream and its false interpretation by Iphigenia, believing her brother dead, see Eur. *IT* 44-56 (see ch.2, pp.102-3). The discrepancy between Greek belief of her death in Aulis, and her actual living in Tauris is a slight motif in that play (see Eur. *IT* 9-10, 28-30, 175-7, 563-5, 770-3, 784-6, 831). But the theme is not developed further than these references. The sustained and emphatic way that Euripides teases with gaps of reality and illusion in the *Hel.* is not at play in the *IT*. The gap of divine world and mortal inability to grasp it is still a theme (see ch.2, pp. 113-4, 121-2), but not as dominant as in this play.

<sup>207</sup> For the greater complexities of Helen's traditional persona and story in relation to the unmarked mythical figure of Iphigenia, see ch.2, pp.85-7. For the challenge to traditional stories of mythical figures and events as the jest of this play, see pp.55-6, ch.3, pp.154-5.

<sup>208</sup> Menelaus has been associated with the tomb before. On the most likely staging of Helen's re-entry (528) he hides behind it, until discovered at 541 (see p.70). In the scene of the supplication of Theonoe, he expresses an intention to fall as suppliant at it (μνημα σου πατρός πεσών, 961). For possible staging of the line, see e.g. Allan 2008: 250; Burian 2007: 250. His relation with the scenic object of the tomb is almost as extensive as Helen's.

The self-conscious role-playing within dramatic context, with Helen uttering directions to her slow-witted husband, is a metaphor of significance.<sup>209</sup> As with signification of the scene-building as female domain and with general pattern of movement, it points us poignantly, both at the level of words and staging, to female control and its superior authority on *Helen's* stage.

When recognition and reunification with the lost spouse is achieved (622ff), and Theonoe indicates her silent complicity in Helen and Menelaus' rescue (998-1029), the escape plan is set. Helen devises it (813-29, 1035-78) and takes the lead in its execution, uttering the prayer for its successful realisation before her exit (1093-106).<sup>210</sup> Menelaus explicitly asks for Helen's directions: "Shall I go into the house with you or sit quietly here near the tomb?" (1083-4). Helen instructs him to do the latter (1085-6). Physical positions are reversed: Helen instructs movements and acts, while Menelaus sits and waits.<sup>211</sup> Significantly, the man of military age is reduced to the status of a suppliant clutching the tomb; its protective power and his sword will shelter him (τάφος σ' ὄδ' ἂν ῥύσαιτο φάσγανόν τε σόν, 1086).<sup>212</sup> The staging choice is highly unusual in the context of Euripidean (and more generally tragic) dramaturgy, in the sense that supplication at a sacred object is usually reserved for women, children, and old men in tragic drama.<sup>213</sup> Reference to the sword (φάσγανον, 1086) along with

<sup>209</sup> Burian 2007: 263 notes the self-conscious role playing (labelled as "play within the play") in the scenes of the escape ruse.

<sup>210</sup> Iphigenia also takes charge in the escape in the *IT*. But there her role derives from the cultic authority of the female as priestess of the shrine; she is literally the gatekeeper of the temple and the one responsible for directing movement and action within the shrine. Outside it (at shore), her role turns passive. See previous note at p.68-9n.173; ch.2, pp.99-100, 124. Given the difference in context and role, I disagree with Torrance's (2009a: 6-7) effort to present Menelaus as more active in his role in the escape on the basis of a comparison with Orestes' role in the *IT*.

<sup>211</sup> Scholars note the reversal of physical positions. Cf. e.g. Allan 2008: 262; Burian 2007: 257. Menelaus' intellectual inferiority in comparison to Helen and the diminution of his role in the escape is variously commented by scholars. See e.g. Allan 2008: 27, 258-9; Burian 2007: 215, 254; Wright 2005: 198 (seen as making him comparable to the barbarian Theoclymenus; a rather forced point). Contrast e.g. Torrance 2009a: 5-7 (arguing for him as a nobler and more efficient figure than usually accepted; for my disagreement with her argument see n.210 above). Here, as in Eur. *Andr.*, it is his relations with his women that define him (see ch.3, p.181n.154). For Menelaus' parallelism with Odysseus in particular, see e.g. Allan 2008: 27; Davidson 1999-2000: 123; Austin 1994: 156-7; Foley 1992:136,140,145; Arnott 1990: 13; Eisner 1980: 32-33; Blailock 1952: 88.

<sup>212</sup> The reference to the tomb functioning as shelter points to the gesture as supplication.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. e.g. Dictys, Adrastus, Amphiaras, all old men, in Eur. *Dictys*, *Supp.*, and *HF* respectively. For the concept of supplication as more akin to the female nature, see e.g. Naiden 2006: 41-3. Cf. Menelaus' comment at lines 947-9 in this play (in translation): "For my part, I could not bring myself to fall at your knees or shed tears. Such cowardly behaviour would bring the greatest disrepute on what befell at Troy...". This is not unique (cf. e.g. Orestes' clutching at the statue of Athena in Aesch. *Eum.* 39-45), but it is unusual.

the tomb as means of protection is significant detail. Supplication gesture flags unusual male weakness, but again this is not complete emasculation. The scene is deliberately ambiguous in presenting us a suppliant with a sword. It flags as clearly as can be the distinctiveness of Menelaus' situation for a male in his prime. Again we are reminded of Odysseus, who is reduced to suppliant twice in the Phaeacian narrative before women, Nausicaa and her mother Arete (6.110ff, 7.142-52). In both worlds, the Homeric and the Euripidean one, male prowess is not sufficient means for the male's salvation from his toils.<sup>214</sup>

Helen has been awaiting the male rescuer for so long (44-59). Ironically, when he is found it is she that takes the charge in devising and executing the escape. In part this is not unusual; female wit is the key ingredient in all Euripidean schemes.<sup>215</sup> But there is something slightly exaggerated about the way the male role is curtailed in this escape, and male heroism rendered to hold little value in the Egyptian realm in general. Note the words of the Old Woman at line 454: the manliness which won the Trojan War has no application ἐνθάδε.<sup>216</sup> Note as well how on this stage we encounter an Old Woman violently pushing the mighty general of the Trojan War (445), mocking him (454, 458), reducing him to tears (456), a female slave holding back her king from entering in his own palace (1627ff), two principal women surpassing all men in skill and cleverness (Theonoe, Helen). This play empowers females and diminishes males to an extent that removes it far from what evidence would suggest as normal in fifth-century Athens.<sup>217</sup> If it does not turn them into threatening and subverting female figures (these women hardly recall a Clytemnestra or Medea), this has of course to do with their positive role, marked previously in discussion.<sup>218</sup> But there is perhaps a further factor contributing to this effect. If female control does not figure as ominous, the humorous flavour of scenes, characters, and motifs (in this scene the slow-witted, comic replica of Odysseus, Menelaus) plays a major role. Humour

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<sup>214</sup> Like Menelaus, Odysseus cannot depend on his heroic valour; he is in need of female assistance. There are however differences in the balance between male and female power and the way each hero figures (see pp.64-5). For other thematic and narrative links with this Homeric episode, see also p.40.

<sup>215</sup> Superior female guile is a common Euripidean trait. See previous discussion, p.46.

<sup>216</sup> Cf. e.g. 805-17, 1043-6. For the play as questioning Homeric heroic values (an implicit opposition between Egypt-Troy is at play), see e.g. Ypsilanti 2006: 60-1; Wright 2005: 282-3; Meltzer 1994: 235-55; Wolff 1973: 79-84; Segal 1971a: 574-7.

<sup>217</sup> For scholars noting this dominance of female control and wit in this play, see e.g. Allan 2008: 53-4; Segal 1971a: 575; Taxidou 2004: 154.

<sup>218</sup> See pp.69-70 (again potentially an element more akin to comedy than tragedy).

downplays potential disquiet and anxiety at the sight of a Menelaus being outwitted by an Old Woman in the previous scene, or of the male warrior cowering by the tomb in the exact position where his helpless and weak wife had been sitting all this time. This is perhaps Euripides' witty way of making a serious point on the fallacy of neat ideological gender polarities. Beyond his Egyptian realm, "this utopian vision" of gender relations (as Foley characterized it) does not hold.<sup>219</sup> Balance is re-established and roles are restored, that of the hero for Menelaus and that of the supporting wife for Helen, towards the end.<sup>220</sup> Stage action is accordingly reshaped: Menelaus is the one now uttering the prayer for success at lines 1441-50, and the one taking the lead in directing the final movements for the completion of the escape; the first time the male is given control over female movement in the course of this play.<sup>221</sup> Relocation is significantly staged as a return to normal power ratios between male and female.<sup>222</sup> In the world of Sparta, towards which Helen and Menelaus head, Egypt's fantastic and playful construction of gender relationships (overempowering the female, reducing the male to dependence) gives way to social and political restrictions of the real world. Yet there remains a strong implicit recognition that life is often more complicated than these social and political restrictions recognize.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Foley 1992: 151. For a similar point on how ending rebalances gender power ratios, cf. Segal 1971a: 608-9.

<sup>220</sup> The act of bathing and changing of clothes, as in Homer (cf. e.g. *Od.* 3.464-9, 6.217-37; see Heubeck, West & Hainsworth 1988: 189, 376), marks the restoration of Menelaus' male virtues, in the same way that Helen is seen as restored to the role of the virtuous wife in her active effort to save her spouse. The effect of Menelaus' new clothes is noted in the words (1374-84). Cf. e.g. Segal 1971a: 582. For Menelaus' costume and its dramatic effectiveness more generally, see Allan 2008: 197.

<sup>221</sup> For Menelaus as initiator and commander of movement and action when at shore, cf. e.g. 1552-3, 1559-66, 1579-80.

<sup>222</sup> For their final exit seen also as a repetition of their nuptial procession, see Allan 2008: 222, 342; Foley 1992: 140; Burnett 1960: 155. Their torch-lit wedding procession has already been recalled twice in the play (638-40, 722-5). For a recent reading of Helen as a parthenaic figure (at the allegorical level) and of the play as a metaphor of the female transition to sexual maturity, see Swift 2009.

<sup>223</sup> For my reading of the play as a comment on the heightened importance of women in periods of prolonged warfare, see pp.54-5, 68-70. This is not to suggest that Euripides subverts conventional ideology of his original audience, if by subversion we mean an activist argument against the status quo. The play recognizes insuperable realities in the real world. But Euripides does question and probe, and in the process ask us to recognize the gap between ideology and lived experience. In this understanding of the response of tragedy to dominant gender ideology, I find myself closer to Hall 2010: 126-37, 151-5, than Allan 2008: 49-54. The latter, taking a rather more conservative stand, argues for tragedy as always affirming audience gender ideology setting it in a favourable contrast with the malfunctioning heroic world (what he calls "heroic inversion", pp.53-4).

## *Enter Helen, 1184*<sup>224</sup>

### *Exit Helen, Menelaus, Theoclymenus, 1300*

Helen's false words, a perfect match to her fake costume (1186-90), have deceived the Egyptian ruler. Theoclymenus along with Menelaus move inside the palace gates, following her directions and accompanied by her; a victim lured inside by his cunning predators.<sup>225</sup> Again male movement is directed by a female, and most importantly at this instance first movement of the king inside his palace is determined and guided by one of his subordinates.

Theoclymenus' relation with his *oikos* has been problematized from the very beginning of the play. The palace, which is under his ruling since his father's death (466), is not only introduced but also repeatedly referred to as the house of Proteus (cf. e.g. 46, 460). His sister is firmly associated with it; she resides in its "inmost recesses" (820), she is the true inheritor of the family's prophetic legacy, she is closely connected with the father Proteus.<sup>226</sup> Theoclymenus, on the other hand, ἄπεστι ("is away", 153), "he is out" (οὐκ ἔνδον, 468). 'Removed' from Proteus' will (it is his protégée that he tries to pull into a forced wedding), he is also, quite fittingly, removed from his *oikos* from the very start of the play (154). We finally see him enter at a very late stage of the play (1165) from the *eisodos* with Egypt at its imaginary end, i.e. from one of the side entrances of Euripides' stage.<sup>227</sup> Timing and mode of entry both contribute to the effect of his overall presentation (through characterization and plot) as an outsider to his own house and the situation.<sup>228</sup> Theonoe's decision already has set the course of the palace

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<sup>224</sup> For this entry and ensuing scene of deception, see comment in pp.68, 77-9.

<sup>225</sup> For these kind of deceptive exits (a deceptive captor luring his victim inside to danger, usually anticipated murder), see Taplin 1977: 308-10. Helen has the last word before the exit (1294-300). This again marks her control of the movement. See Taplin 1977: 310: "...and if two important characters go together, then the dramatically dominant tends to speak last".

<sup>226</sup> Theonoe's close connection to the house rendered via staging and characterization is also discussed in pp.68, 73-4.

<sup>227</sup> Cf. Aegisthus' late and side entry in Aesch. *Ag.* (on this entry exposing Aegisthus as outsider, see Taplin 1977: 329). Adopting Kovacs' (*LCL* 5: 11) reconstruction, I locate Egypt at the imaginary end of one of the *eisodoi* and the seashore to the other (cf. Hourmouziades 1965:130). Contrast Ley 1991: 30, who trying to interpret the stage action with unfitting realism, does not define the destination of the two *eisodoi*. Theoclymenus' arriving already aware of the Greek intruder, according to him, "confuses the picture".

<sup>228</sup> Markedly enough, πάντα διαπεπραγμένα/ ἤρσηκα, we hear him crying out a few lines later (1177-8). For the way his characterization marks him as the aberrant from royal household and whole Egyptian land, see pp.37-9.



against his own will before his entry (οὐδὲ συγγόνῳ χάριν/ δοίην, 1000-1). His comings and goings in and out of the palace thereafter are directed by Helen's own deceitful indications.<sup>229</sup> The chorus leader (again a female and one of his subordinates<sup>230</sup>) stands to bar his way, when he tries to enter at will at line 1627. Both words and stage action reveal a ruler, who although bound by the palace and its legacy, is yet alienated from its values and unable to control it. Agamemnon entering his house only under Clytemnestra's own terms in *Agamemnon*, Orestes' inability to control his house and its property in Euripides' *Orestes*, Jason's and Heracles' inability to enter their *oikos* in the *Medea* and the *Trachiniae* respectively are some key parallels. Staging of Theoclymenus' movements and actions complements characterization and plot that multiply reveal him as aberrant from the values of Egyptian royal household and Egyptian land. At lines 1432-5, we will hear him ordering the servant to bring γάμων ἀγάλαματ' (α) in order for the *oikos* to get prepared for his wedding with Helen. He does not know, what all other Egyptian characters and the external audience know perfectly well, that it is his same *oikos* which is actually (beyond his knowledge and control) already involved in the process of helping his bride to escape; the irony of his situation is poignant.

***Enter Helen, 1369***

***Exit Menelaus, Helen, servants, 1450***<sup>231</sup>

***Enter 'blocker', 1627***

The messenger has narrated the events on the shore (1512-8). The trick of escape is now revealed to the surprised Theoclymenus. His potential wife has left beyond possibility of recovery (1622-3). Given the circumstances, all he can do is turn his rage to the sister who has obviously deceived him. I quote in translation: "But as things are, I will punish the sister who has betrayed me. She saw that Menelaus was in the house but did not tell me. Never will she dupe another man with her prophecies!" (1624-6). But as Theoclymenus starts heading towards the palace door, somebody tries to bar his way.

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<sup>229</sup> For Helen as director of his movements, see p.68.

<sup>230</sup> On the issue of the disputed identity of the 'blocker', see pp.81-3.

<sup>231</sup> For the staging of entry and signification, see pp.54, 79.

The identity of the character, this ‘blocker’ of Theoclymenus, has been disputed. Three solutions have been suggested: the messenger, a male servant, or the Coryphaeus.<sup>232</sup> The masculine singular δοῦλος ὧν of line 1630 has been the strongest argument for the attribution of the following lines to a male blocker. Nevertheless, it has been plausibly argued that the use of the singular form with a generalizing sense is neither unparalleled, nor inappropriate at this instance as Theoclymenus’ referring to the generalizing status of the chorus as slaves.<sup>233</sup> Once the linguistic objection for a female blocker is removed, no further reasons conclusively favour the case of the messenger or a male servant as better solutions to the problem of this blocker’s identity. Rather, both practical and dramatic considerations seem to favour the identification with the Coryphaeus. Starting from the latter, the absolute respect of this chorus towards the Egyptian princess is established early in the play in the way these women fervently try to convince Helen to resort to her wisdom and advice at lines 315-29 (with the unconventional double entry of chorus and protagonist into the palace following, 385).<sup>234</sup> Concerning the practicalities of staging, firstly the Coryphaeus is the only character already onstage and aware of Theoclymenus’ intentions of murder and of the motive of justice for Theonoe’s decision to side with Helen (mentioned at 1633-4). What is more, the stage action indicated in lines 1628-9, pulling Theoclymenus’ garments (οὐκ ἀφήσομαι πέπλων σῶν, 1629), suits a female; as Kaimio notes, “resistance by clinging to the clothes of the king is more suitable to female opposers”.<sup>235</sup> Finally, the attempt of a female slave to intervene physically against a male superior is not unparalleled in this play; note the Old Woman threatening to push Menelaus out of the palace gates (cf. 445, 452).<sup>236</sup> This moment in which the chorus, a conventionally non-interventionist party in drama, blocks the movement of the male comes as the last and possibly most

<sup>232</sup> For the messenger, see e.g. Hourmouziades 1965: 167; Campbell 1950: 153. For an unidentified male servant of the house, see e.g. Burian 2007: 288-9; Papi 1987: 40; Stanley-Porter 1977: 46-8; Hanson 1973: 20; Podlecki 1970: 415n.39; Burnett 1971: 98n.17. For the Coryphaeus, see e.g. Allan 2008: 338; Wolff 1973: 83; Kannicht 1969: 424-5; Dale 1967: 166; Pearson 1903: xxv. Gregory 2002: 159n.44 leaves the question of the actual identity of this slave open.

<sup>233</sup> This is the view held in e.g. Allan 2008: 339; Kaimio 1988: 74; Kannicht 1969: 425; Dale 1967: 166.

<sup>234</sup> Cf. also how their devotion to justice and at the side of those wronged is an implicit element in the way their *parodos* had been motivated (see pp.59-60). In general, the way the play does not use the chorus’ dislocation to evoke any sense of their own alienation from Egypt (see pp.43-4, 61), again confirms the suitability of the Coryphaeus for the role of the defender of the Egyptian Theonoe at this moment.

<sup>235</sup> Kaimio 1988: 74

<sup>236</sup> For the frequency of touching between actors in this play as an element reminiscent of comic stagecraft, see p.66.

striking instance of what I have been arguing as prominent pattern at work throughout the play: females controlling the actions of males. In this final and climactic instantiation of the staging motif, not only is the female given power to control male action, but also the slave exercises restricting power over the king. In the light of this larger scenic and dramatic pattern, the female gender of the character blocking Theoclymenus at this moment is not only plausible, but also exceedingly pertinent.<sup>237</sup>

*Exit chorus, 1690*

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<sup>237</sup> For the pattern and its significance, see pp.54-5, 68-70, 77-9. A “close similarity” with the previous porter scene, not only “in staging and in status of the opposer” (as argued by Stanley-Porter 1977: 46, arguing in favour of the male servant), but also in terms of the opposer’s gender is achieved. The mirror effect would be marked.

## CHAPTER II:

### *IPHIGENIA TAURICA*

#### THEMATIC ANALYSIS

νῦν δ' ἄξεινους πόντου ξείνα

συγχόρτους οἴκους ναίω

(218-9)

Female space as shaped in this play is a paradox: the paradox of a woman who finds herself accommodated in a society which detests, even kills strangers. Iphigenia is ξείνα in an ἄξεινος πόντος; a guest in a guest-killing place, a place with a natural incapacity to hospitality. This is about an ambiguous female space that takes shape amidst an alien, threatening world. I will explore the spatial aspects of her presence and the way these tell the story of a female virginity and marginality which has more than one level. Euripides' language marks the paradox of his female's situation at the beginning of his text. His play, and more particularly his play with the dynamics of female space, as it unfolds, implies a serious concern to explore the ambiguities inherent in this paradox from the perspective of his female 'guest' and the implications of that paradox both for conceptions of ethnicity, and for the nature of female experience in the reality of fifth-century Athens.

The Iphigenia of the tragic stage usually makes it to Aulis. There, at the sacrificial altar the blow of Agamemnon's knife cuts the line of her story and her life.<sup>1</sup> From the mythic stock available, Euripides in this play chooses salvation via animal

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<sup>1</sup> Aesch. *Oresteia*; Soph. *El.* (530-76); Eur. *El.* (1018-9), *Andr.* (624-5), *Tro.* (370-2), *Or.* (658-9), all rely on the assumption that she dies at Aulis. Aeschylus' lost *Iphigenia* or Sophocles' fragmented *Iphigenia* probably told the story of her sacrifice in similar terms (cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 11.22-4). With the original ending of Eur. *IA* lost, we cannot be certain of the way Euripides ends her story in that play. For the Iphigenia story in tragedy, cf. e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 21; Wright 2005: 119; Cropp 2000: 45; Platnauer 1938: xii-iii.

substitution and transference to a distant space. The association of Iphigenia with Tauris is not in itself new.<sup>2</sup> In Herodotus (4.103), and the *Cypria* (according to Proclus' *Chrestomathia*) Iphigenia is immortalized in the Taurian Chersonese.<sup>3</sup> Euripides' transfer and Taurian placement is made on different terms: she remains mortal, a priestess presiding over the violent rites of a barbarous people; the victim turned into agent of sacrifices of Greeks, unfortunate enough to land on the Taurian shores. Her story on this tragic stage extends, probably for the first time in the theatre, even further: she is to be rescued by Orestes and returned to Greek space.<sup>4</sup> Euripides enriches Orestes' own story and the course towards the final resolution of the Atreid *oikos* with new twists and turns.

Her case as a woman placed far away from homeland and home fits the spatial pattern under consideration; Iphigenia is a female dislocated. Her new role in her land of dislocation endows her with a degree of resentment towards Greece. Her background story as a near victim at the hands of Greek men at Aulis (5-27) potentially magnifies the effect.<sup>5</sup> As with Helen and Andromache, the background story of the woman maximizes tensions inherent in her dislocation and complicates our response to the female.<sup>6</sup> Euripides has less to neutralize in the case of Iphigenia compared to the case of the adulteress Helen turned paradigm of loyalty, or the wife exemplar Andromache turned concubine, as we will see in the

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<sup>2</sup> The name 'Tauris', although not attested in ancient sources, has turned into a geographical term in modern usage (see Cropp 2000: 31n.1). I use it to designate the topography of the play.

<sup>3</sup> On relevant fragments from Proclus' *Chrestomathia*, see Davies 2003<sup>2</sup>: 44. Burnett 1971: 73-4 sheds doubt on the inclusion of the Taurian transportation in the *Cypria* (as stated in Proclus' summary); a doubt refuted convincingly by Cropp 2000: 44n.48. Iphigenia is saved and immortalized in Greece (and not Tauris) in Hesiod (*Cat.* fr.23a, 23b M-W= 19, 20a Most *LCL*) and Stesichorus (*Oresteia* fr.215 *PMG*= 215 *PMGF*). For the most detailed accounts on all the mythic variants of Iphigenia's story, see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 19-24; Cropp 2000: 43-6; Burnett 1971: 73-5. Wright 2005: 113-5, 154-5 argues for Euripides' blending of myth as targeting to undermine the certainty of his audience for the knowledge of myth and reality (this he notes as a general common feature of all escape tragedies).

<sup>4</sup> The plot of Sophocles' *Chryses*, if Hyginus' summary reflects the plot of the lost play (Hyg. *Fab* 120, 121), may be a previous dramatization including her survival in Tauris and rescue by her brother Orestes. But as scholars argue both the unreliability of the identification with Sophocles' play and the insecurity of the dating of *IT and Chryses* make the case unprovable. On this and the connection with the story of Orestes as Euripides' own invention, see e.g. Marshall 2009: 149-54 (most recently arguing for a new dating of Euripides and Sophocles' play that makes the first predate the latter); Kyriakou 2006: 19; Cropp 2000: 45-6; Burnett 1971: 75; Conacher 1967: 304-5; Platnauer 1938: xiii; England 1883: xx-xi. Contrast Lattimore 1974: 8, who seems to be suggesting otherwise.

<sup>5</sup> The story of Aulis will be heard, referred to, or alluded to approximately ten times until she finally exits; cf. 175-7, 203-17, 358-60, 539, 565-6, 770-1, 783-7, 860-1, 1082-3, 1418-9. The frustrated marriage to Achilles also recurs as a minor motif throughout the play: e.g. 216-7 (νύμφαν...δύσνυμφον), 364-9 (νυμφεύματ' αἰσχρά), 375-6, 537-9, 663.

<sup>6</sup> On the danger that a dislocated female may be apprehended as transgressive by her original audience, see *Introduction*, pp.18-9.

next chapter. Iphigenia relative to the two other dislocated females is a character with a blank sheet; she is a mythic character whose traits are not as strongly marked as the fully developed characters of Andromache and Helen.<sup>7</sup> She is just the unfortunate daughter of Agamemnon, the innocent victim of her father's deceit and near sacrifice at Aulis. Still, her past provides her with a strong and clear personal motive for revenge and a justification for cruel action. This woman has suffered brutalism that surprises even a barbarian (note Thoas' shock at the thought of interfamilial violence among the Greeks, 1173-4). Her family records a long history of horrifying violence among its members (mother killing husband, brother killing mother).<sup>8</sup> Euripides is at pains to unburden Iphigenia from the charge of the destructive interiority haunting her family, and from a generalized desire for revenge. Early on it is made clear that her bitterness for the events at Aulis is directed only to certain individuals: Calchas (16), Odysseus (24-5). She forgives her father and pities his death (543-59).<sup>9</sup> She refuses to kill her barbarian host (1020-1). She feels compassion for the victims, in the past (224-7, 344-7) and now. She asks for their bonds to be released (μέθετε τῶν ξένων χέρας, 468), she feels pity for the parents that bore them to such a fate (472-5), she wants to know more about their story (479-81).<sup>10</sup> In turn, her own victims feel compassion towards her for her own situation (οἰκτίρας ἐμέ.../ αἰχμάλωτος..., 584-6).<sup>11</sup> In her unrelenting adherence to the Greek law of *xenia*, in her resentment towards violence, in her sympathy towards the victims Iphigenia is consistently and emphatically presented as untouched by the cruelty of her pre-history. She will also be found untouched (metaphorically and literally) by the brutal and

<sup>7</sup> For Helen and Andromache's background history and the ways it impacts on the challenges and characteristics of their dislocation, see ch.1, pp.30-1, 44-6; ch.3 pp.152-3 respectively.

<sup>8</sup> For the way Greek brutality is problematized in the play and the Greek-barbarian polarity rendered a cultural rather than a natural division, see pp.128-9.

<sup>9</sup> On this see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 10; Stern-Gillet 2001: 13; Strachan 1976: 135-6. For an ambiguous, cruel (in the beginning or throughout) Iphigenia, see e.g. Wright 2005: 190-200, 295; Kuntz 1993: 112-5; Hall 1914: 381; Hamilton 1985: 61; Platnauer 1938: 6-7. For a kind Iphigenia, see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 10-11, 31-3; Burnett 1991: 298-300, 1971: 52-5; Lattimore 1974: 5; Conacher 1967: 312, 319, 330.

<sup>10</sup> As Kaimio 1988: 71 says, the image of the realising of the bonds can be explained as a part of the sacrificial ritual but also shows her kindness and interest for the strangers. Contrast how the image of the bound Andromache in the homonymous Euripidean play emphasizes the cruelty of her captors (ch.3, p.184). Her change of heart after the dream (on this see pp.102-3) is only temporal and does not alter her natural sympathy to the victims. Cf. e.g. Trieschnigg 2008: 468; Kyriakou 2006: 32; Burnett 1991: 297-8; Lattimore 1974: 74; Conacher 1967: 307. Contrast e.g. Stern-Gillet 2001: 12; Jacobson 2000: 296-7. For her kind nature and natural sympathy for Greece and Greeks as shown also via the dream and the letter, see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 63; Grube 1941: 316 (for the dream); Kyriakou 2006: 32; Cropp 2000: 213-24; Strachan 1976: 36; Burnett 1971: 54-5 (for the letter).

<sup>11</sup> The italics are mine.

brutalizing impact of her current location. Euripides' dramatic choices in defining larger topography and in configuring the dynamics of the female's action and interaction within it, will be found to contribute in amplifying both this sense of a woman uncontaminated by her experiences and, in turn, the sense of alienness of her surrounding space.

It is to this larger topography that we now turn. We are in Tauris; this is the topography of the play, the environment of this dislocated female. In the ancient Greek world, Tauris is an area occupying the south east coast of Crimea in the north part of the Black Sea.<sup>12</sup> The specific peninsula had no strong presence in ancient Greek myth; Tauris was almost a *terra incognita* not only to previous theatre, but to literature in general.<sup>13</sup> A possible reference to Tauris is found in the *Cypria* (Proclus' *Chrestomathia*), some references to Taurians can be found in the Argonautic saga.<sup>14</sup> The only extant description of land and people comes from Herodotus.<sup>15</sup> In his Scythian *logos* (book 4 of the *Histories*) Tauris is given attention in terms of its mountainous landscape (4.3, 20, 99), its geographical location (along the coast of Scythian land, 4.99), and in terms of its savage custom of human sacrifices of shipwrecked Greeks offered to the Virgin goddess, identified with Iphigenia in Herodotus' version of the cult (4.103). Though there are general associations attached to this space, which I discuss below, no precise antecedents confine Euripides' fictional version of his onstage setting. Tauris is (in theatrical terms) new and concomitantly indeterminate space. In this sense, the

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<sup>12</sup> For a map of the area as shaped in antiquity, see Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella 2007: 546-7. As Hall 2010: 272 notes, this is the remotest setting of extant Greek tragedy outside Aesch. *PV*.

<sup>13</sup> Contrast the loaded cultural associations and mythic importance of the other two chosen dislocation locales (Egypt, Thessaly). For Egypt, see ch.1, pp.31-3. For Thessaly, see ch.3, pp.137-42. Tauris is not used as dramatic setting in any other known tragedy. Cf. Wright 2005: 129 who notes that: "...no other Greek myth seems to have been connected with the Tauric land". Wide familiarity with, and mythic importance of the wider area, Black Sea and region (on which see discussion in following paragraph), differs from knowledge of the specific promontory within the vast area. I think it is rather arbitrarily that Wright 2005: 166 assimilates the two in terms of their historical reality, in trying to refute Hall's (1989: 111-2) arguments on Euripides' influence from Herodotus. I quote: "It is almost certain, then, that Euripides and his audience were familiar with the geography and culture of Egypt and the Black Sea. Therefore- had Euripides wished- *Helen* and *Iphigenia* could easily have been colourful, recognizable portrayals of Egyptian and Tauric antiquities...".

<sup>14</sup> For archeological evidence on historical Taurians, see Cropp 2000: 47-8. For the presence of Tauris in the *Cypria*, see p.85n.3 above. On the references to Taurians in the Argonautic saga, see Cropp 2000: 48; Braund 1994: 23, 33. As Cropp 2000: 48 notes, the Argonautic material deriving from Hellenistic sources may of course have been based on post-Euripidean inventions.

<sup>15</sup> Herodotus is the only, extant at least, source on Tauris before Euripides (see Braund 2004: 28; Cropp 2000: 47). For the question of Herodotus' date, see ch.1, p.31n.9. On Hecataeus and other earlier logographers as possible sources for Herodotus' Scythian material (including the excursion on Tauris in book 4), see Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella 2007: 553-9.

Taurian native and his/her environment is at his hands a blank sheet, just like Iphigenia relative to Helen and Andromache.<sup>16</sup>

The wider area, Black Sea and region, surrounding Tauris (both the real and the dramatic) was extensively known to Greeks of the fifth century. Military expeditions took the Greeks as far as its coasts: Miltiades' conquest in mid sixth century (Hdt. 2.154), Pericles' expedition to the Black Sea in the 430s B.C. (Plut. *Vit. Per.* 20). What is more, from around the seventh century onwards (almost two centuries before the production of Euripides' play) this was an area of major Greek expansion, a vital source of food and wealth. Greek settlers, primarily the Milesians and Megarians, were involved in a successful process of colonization and Hellenization of the locales.<sup>17</sup> Greek merchants imported grain, fish, timber and salt from its lands and sea. The Black Sea was a renowned source of grain (one of the most important ingredients of the ancient Greek diet) especially in the fourth century.<sup>18</sup> The mythic picture is darker than historical reality of the fifth century. In myth, the Black Sea is primarily the 'inhospitable sea' (ἄξεινος πόντος).<sup>19</sup> It is originally impenetrable; rocks that clashed (until the moment of the passing of Jason's Argo), threatening to crush any passing ship, stand at its entry.<sup>20</sup> Bad weather, storms, wild winds and waves make the long sailing journey extremely dangerous.<sup>21</sup> Inhospitable, savage, and primitive peoples dwell along its coast: Herodotus and Thucydides' savage Scythian groups and wild Thracians, the brutal peoples figuring in the Argonautic myth, the wild Amazons.<sup>22</sup> The Greek

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<sup>16</sup> For the point of comparison between the three female characters in terms of the complexities of their background stories, see pp.85-7.

<sup>17</sup> For the process of Greek colonization of the Black Sea (chronology, primary colonies etc), see Boardman 1999<sup>4</sup>: 238-55; Huxley 1969: 63-4. For the dating of the production of the *IT* in the fifth century (assigned dates ranging between 419 to 412 B.C.), see e.g. Marshall 2009: 141-56 (419-413 B.C.); Kyriakou 2006: 39-41 (414-412 B.C.); Wright 2005: 3 (412 B.C., a trilogy with *Hel.* and *Andromeda*; cf. Jordan 2006: 19-20); Cropp 2000: 60-2 (417-412 B.C.). See also *Introduction*, pp.17-8n.25.

<sup>18</sup> For Greek trade in the Black Sea and its value as a vital source of grain, see e.g. Moreno 2007: 144-208; Boardman 1999<sup>4</sup>: 244; Hornblower 1991: 12, 41, 172.

<sup>19</sup> For the etymology and use of the names *axeinos* and *euxeinos* as toponyms and evaluative epithets of the Black Sea area, see Kyriakou 2006: 84; Wright 2005: 169n.42; Stern-Gillet 2001: 11.

<sup>20</sup> For the sea and Clashing Rocks as threatening elements in the Greek tradition, see e.g. Hom. *Od.* 12.69-72; Hdt. 4.85; Soph. *Ant.* 966-70; Pind. *Pyth.* 4.207-10; Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 2.549-610.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. e.g. Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 2.570: λευκή καχλάζοντος ἀνέπτυε κύματος ἄχνη.

<sup>22</sup> Extreme brutality is attributed at points to the peoples of the north in Hdt. book 4 (on Scythia), and 5 (on Thrace). See e.g. 4.64-70 (his references to the Scythian customs of war: drinking enemy blood, cutting heads), 4.106 (a Scythian group practising cannibalism), 5.1-10, 8.116 (Thracian father gauges out the eyes of his sons). Cf. e.g. Thuc. 2.96, 7.29. For Herodotus' Scythians as presented as a barbaric other, the classic statement is made in Hartog 1988: 3-206 (Part 1). More



tendency is one that sets the northern barbarian in general as the vehicle of savageness and wilderness, a most obscure, and primitive barbaric ‘other’. The tradition has its complexities and nuances (Herodotus’ Scythians are treated more sympathetically than Thucydides’ ones), but the overall picture of the Black Sea region and its dwellers remains strongly negative.<sup>23</sup> In the Greek consciousness, to go into the Black Sea is to enter a world of danger, a dark space, a realm of savageness and hostility to strangers. Euripides’ image of his dramatic Tauris and Black Sea largely absorbs the negative associations. I move onto an exploration of his presentation of inanimate (landscape) and animate (people, ruler) Tauris, in order to reach conclusions regarding the pragmatic force he extracts from larger geographical and conceptual framework of the dislocated Iphigenia.

Euripides’ description of the Taurian landscape maximizes associations of hostility and primitiveness. The land is repeatedly characterized as savage (ἄμεικτον αἶαν, 401), barbarian (βαρβάρου...χθονός, 629; cf. 739, 775, 906, 1086, 1400, 1422), inhospitable (γῆν ἄξενον, 94). Its shore has caves, rocks and cliffs (cf. 107, 262-3, 281, 324, 1373-5). Both inland and shore are marked as repulsive to the Greek strangers: Iphigenia wishes to be rid of this land (τῆσδ’ ἀπαλαχθεῖσα γῆς, 44), the chorus longs for the “well wooded fields” of Europe (134-5),<sup>24</sup> Orestes and Pylades court death at any road they take through the barbarous tribes (θανάτῳ πελάσεις ἄρα, βάρβαρα φύλα/ καὶ δίοδους ἀνόδους στείχων, 887-8). All references evoke the alienness and hostility of a raw, unattractive and savage site in which Greek characters feel isolated and entrapped. The effects are compounded by the description of the sea that

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recent analyses have moved from his rather schematic approach. Braund 2004: 25-40 has drawn attention to the complexity and nuance of Herodotus’ Scythians (their positive attributes, their similarities to his Spartans). Cf. Irwin & Greenwood 2007: 24-5; Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella 2007: 560-4. For the savage Colchians of the Argonautic story in Ap. Rhod. *Argon.*, cf. e.g. the savage Amycus, the man eating Phineus, the brutal Aeetes and his kingdom Colchis with its dragons and fire-breathing bulls (for the Argonauts in other pre- and post- Homeric sources on the saga, see Huxley 1969: 60ff). For the *Euxine* as a usual homeland of the Amazons, see Dowden, *OCD*<sup>3</sup> s.v. *Amazons*.

<sup>23</sup> The point on the difference between Thucydides and Herodotus’ Scythia is made in Braund 2004: 39. Herodotus’ nuanced Scythia is not however the norm in classical literature. “Silence”, “imprecision”, “contempt, or at least a lofty disregard” for the barbarians of the Black Sea coast compounded by a “negative conception of local cultures” are, as Braund 1994: 75-6 argues, the norm in our literary sources from antiquity. For exploitation of negative aspects of the associations of the northern barbarian in drama, see e.g. Hall 2006: 225-54 (for Scythian characters in Aristophanic comedy), 1989: 103-19 (for cases of Thracians in tragedy and the way their characterization is effected by their Thracian origin).

<sup>24</sup> For adopting Εὐρώπαν as the variant of the text at this line, see p.134n.185.

surrounds the land: an ἄξεινος sea (124-5, 218, 253, 341, 395, 438, 1388), a dark sea (κυανέας...θάλασσας, 393; πόντος μέλας, 107).<sup>25</sup> To enter it is to embark on a most dangerous adventure: you have to face wild winds and waves (cf. 262, 395, 423-4, 1379-80), endure a long, troublesome journey (οὐ γὰρ ἀγχίπλουv πόρον, 1325; cf. 393-48, 480-1, 629, 890, 936), pass through the dangerous “dark Symplegades” (κυανέας Συμπληγάδας, 241; cf. 260, 355, 422, 746, 889-90, 1389, 1406). For Euripides’ Clashing Rocks have not ceased clashing, but are still, to use Pindar’s words, the δίδυμαι ζωαί rolling “more swiftly than the ranks of loudly roaring winds” (Pind. *Pyth.* 4.208-10); we are still at a pre-Argo age. The active rocks, repeatedly mentioned, make the sea aggressively hostile. They maximize effects of danger, inaccessibility, isolation.<sup>26</sup> Both the manner of description and the attributes of the landscape (the emphatic stress on the long trip, the danger of the passage, the fiercely bad weather, the roughness of terrain) mark Tauris as an utterly distant, inviolable, dangerous and inhospitable world.

The nature of the environment reflects accurately that of the inhabitants: rough, primitive, inhospitable and dangerous.<sup>27</sup> The sense of the Taurians as uncivilized is reflected at the level of detail in the person who announces the capture of the two foreigners: a herdsman (βουφορβός, 237) coming from the shore. The choice of occupation for the captor, a herdsman instead of, for instance, a guard (as in Soph. *Ant.* 223) adds to our impression of a primitive culture.<sup>28</sup> This

<sup>25</sup> For the alienating effects of the geography of inland/shore and the description of the Black Sea trip, see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 9-10; Said 2002: 50-2; Cropp 2000: 58. Specifically on the symbolic value of the sea as a site of otherness, restraint, captivity, danger, isolation, cf. e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 10; Wright 2005: 207-25 (on imagery and symbolism of the sea in general in the escape-tragedies); Cropp 2000: 49; Barlow 1986<sup>2</sup>: 25-8.

<sup>26</sup> For the symbolic value of the Clashing Rocks in maximizing effects of inaccessibility and danger, see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 84; Said 2002: 51; Bacon 1961: 156-7. Guépin 1968: 132 takes them as the symbol of the gate of the Underworld, which is in the case of *IT* the land of Tauris (as in *Hel.* it was Egypt). For Guépin’s analogy of these locales with Hades as unnecessarily one-dimensional, see ch.1, pp.39-42.

<sup>27</sup> Linking of landscape and psychology appears elsewhere in tragedy. Wright 2005: 215n.205 when referring to the signification of the shore in *Hel.*, *Andromeda*, and the *IT*, notes examples where the reflection is most effective. It also has affinities with Ionian thinking, including Herodotus, in which geography, climate and human character are understood as interconnected (see Thomas 2000: especially 42-77, 86-98).

<sup>28</sup> Later on (1284ff) we get a guard, a member from Thoas’ retinue. As Kyriakou 2006: 112 notes: “Cowherds are not the most natural choice for the Greeks’ captors...”. The awkwardness is also marked in the words (254-5: Iphigenia expressing her surprise for the presence of the cowherds at the shore). Kyriakou attributes the choice to Euripides’ wish to have Orestes attack the cattle (p.112). But this in itself, even in the case that we accept it as a possible dramatic need for

impression of Taurian primitiveness is enhanced by the way the Taurian herdsmen are presented in relation to the Greek men, both in their technology and in their behaviour. They use conch shells to summon each other (κόχλους τε φυσῶν συλλέγων τ' ἐγχωρίους, 303), and stones to defend themselves from danger (πέτροις/ βάλλοντες, 318-9; cf. 326-7, 332). They are fearful, ignorant and superstitious: two of them take the Greek men as δαίμονες and resort to prayers (264-74), they all shrink back at the sight of the frenzied Orestes (συσταλέντες.../ σιγῇ καθήμεθ'(α), 295-6), and finally overcome the two men not because of their bravery (τόλμη...οὐ, 330), but because of their numbers and by hurling stones.<sup>29</sup> On their second confrontation (this time Thoas' men against the Greeks on the shore), short resistance and fighting with blows and kicks (1365-72) precedes their retreat and resort to stone pelting from a distance of safety (ἐφεύγομεν..., 1373).

Just like their land, they are hostile and dangerous to the incoming stranger: in their eyes *xenoi* are nothing but θεᾶ φίλον πρόσφαγμα καὶ θυτήριον (243; cf. 280, 329, 337). This is their culture, the custom of their city (ἐπέπερ πόλις ἀναγκάζει τάδε, 595; cf. 456-66, 877: πόλεως ἀνδροφόνου).<sup>30</sup> Throughout the custom is presented as a projection of the inherent cruelty of their nature, which they project on that of their goddess. "...people here, themselves murderous, ascribe their own fault to the goddess", Iphigenia says at lines 389-90 (αὐτοὺς ὄντας ἀνθρωποκτόνους,/ ἐς τὴν θεὸν τὸ φαῦλον ἀναφέρειν δοκῶ). Action and narrative will confirm her perspective. Artemis will move away from the Taurian sanctuary and its abhorrent rituals with the sanction of Athena by the end of the play (1446-60).<sup>31</sup> The Greek standpoint, which presents

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Euripides' depiction of Orestes' fit of madness at shore, does not explain the choice of the occupation of the person announcing their capture onstage (which could, as I argue, be seen as part of Euripides' larger conception of the Taurian society).

<sup>29</sup> For narrative techniques at work in the first messenger speech (260-339) accentuating the sense of excellence of the Greeks next to the barbarians, see De Jong 1991: 6-7.

<sup>30</sup> For the use of the term *polis* for the Taurian settlement, see pp.93-4.

<sup>31</sup> For the same view for a pure Artemis, c.f. e.g. Cropp 2000: 39-40; Burnett 1971: 58-9; Grube 1941: 330. Contrast e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 451-2; Said 2002a: 86; Kuntz 1993: 109-12; Hamilton 1985: 61 (all arguing for Artemis' role in the sacrifices and her nature in the play as ambiguous). For further on Artemis and the way the attributes of props and objects (the untouched statue, the bloodstained altar, the grim temple which is also a house) figure the exclusive relationship between Artemis and her Greek priestess, and vice-versa her incompatibility and alienation from the Taurian environment, see pp. 114-7, 126-30.

the sacrifices as a barbaric act, is repeatedly given prominence in the words of the play: reference is made to the victims that wail in tears as they fall on the altars awaiting for their death (226-8); Orestes is shown to shrink from fear and despair at the sight of the blood and trophies of the killed men (72-103). He pities Iphigenia for her unenviable man-killing duty (619: ἄζηλον, ᾧ νεᾶνι, κούκ εὐδαίμονα); the women of the chorus pity him in turn, for his fate to die on the blood-stained altar (καταλοφύρομαι σὲ τὸν χερνίβων/ ῥάνισι μελόμενον...αἰμακταῖς, 644-5). The Taurians are denied speech to justify their own perspective. The rite is focalized solely through the perspective of potential victims, of the Greek priestess and of the Greek women who loathe the savageness of the cult in which they have found themselves.<sup>32</sup>

Their ruler does not differ; he encapsulates all his people's characteristics to the extreme, presents the people in a microcosm.<sup>33</sup> He is inhospitable and savage, keen on human sacrifices and eager to keep the custom and his victims. He quickly sends the two new victims to the priestess for sacrifice when presented to him at his palace (334-5), he is eager to see their sacrifice completed (1154, cf. 1190), he is ready to fight to cut off the victims' escape and punish the Greek women harshly for their possible involvement in this enterprise (1422-34). He is the one who has the absolute power over life and death in his kingdom: he is the one to decide on the sacrifice of the Greek strangers (πρὸς δ' ἄνακτα τῆσδε γῆς/ κομίζομέν νιν..., 333-4), to him Iphigenia knows she would have to report on the progress of the sacrifice (ὡς αὐτίχ' ἤξει τῆσδε κοίρανος χθονός,/ θυσίαν ἐλέγξων εἰ κατείργασται ξένων, 1080-1). In the end, as is typical for barbarian despots in the theatre, he is outwitted by Greek cleverness and *dolos*.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> For Iphigenia, cf. 34-41, 221-8, 380-91, 595-6, 617-26, 775-6, 871-2, 877. For the chorus, cf. 405-6, 456-67, 644-5. From approximately twenty five references or allusions to the sacrifices only few have Taurians as focalizers (243-5, 277-80, 329, 334-9). The Taurian perspective which requires an Artemis who sanctions this cult is withheld until after approximately two hundred lines of the play (243ff), and is restricted in frequency. Priority and frequency are on the side of the Greek focalization. For focalization and how it affects our understanding of a piece of literature, see De Jong 2004<sup>2</sup>: 31-6, 227-8; applied to tragic narrative in particular in e.g. Lamari 2007: 14-17; Markantonatos 2002: 14.

<sup>33</sup> Like Peleus and his Phthian people in Eur. *Andr.* (see ch.3, p.148). Contrast the case of Theoclymenus whose character is marked as divergent from that of Egyptian people in Eur. *Hel.* (see ch.1, pp.37-9).

<sup>34</sup> Lattimore 1974: 74. For the same view, cf. e.g. Cropp 2000: 244; Hall 1989: 124; Hamilton 1978: 286; Grube 1941: 330; Platnauer 1938: 6. Contrast Stern-Gillet 2001: 20-1; Kyriakou 2006: 347 (according to her Thoas' deception succeeds mostly because Iphigenia is the cleverest

But in the process, it is made clear that all Greeks hold in dread his propensity to cruelty: Orestes and Pylades contemplate with horror the danger of the authorities discovering their presence (108-9), Iphigenia fears death in his hands if he finds out of her involvement in the Greeks' escape (995-8). *Helen's* Theoclymenus is, despite his lustful desires, a shadow of the barbarian ruler this Taurian is made to be. Proteus, the prior Egyptian authority in the same play, kind and persistently adhering to the protection of *xenia* even after his death (his tomb is Helen's resort of safety in Egypt) has nothing in common with this barbarian land's bloodthirsty tyrant.<sup>35</sup>

The fact that the Taurian population forms a *polis* does not alleviate the intensity of any of the effects of this fierce portrait. Reference to their *polis*-structure is made approximately ten times in the play ([38], 416, 595, 877, 1214, 1209, 1212, 1226, 1422). This makes their country more Greek-like according to Wright: "...such political structures were supposed to be characteristically Greek", as he says.<sup>36</sup> But neither in real life nor, more importantly for our purposes, in the discourse of tragedy does this statement reflect reality. On the one hand, the *polis* was not felt by the Greeks as an exclusively Hellenic institution; the values of the Greek *politeia* distinguished them from the barbarians, but not the *polis* as such.<sup>37</sup> On the other, *polis* (and political terms in general) is used with suppleness in the tragic vocabulary. The heroic background of mythic plots leads to the adoption of a flexible *polis* model (with kings and citizens) which gave tragedians elasticity and a great scope. *Poleis* are often given to non-Greek settings in tragedy: Aeschylus' *Persians* in the homonymous play (118, 249, 556), Euripides' *Colchians* in *Medea* (166), Euripides' *Sidonians* in *Bacchae* (171), to name

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character of the play). The sense of Thoas' responsibility for creating their chance for escape is stressed in the second messenger speech narrating the events at shore (1327-419). On the narrative techniques at work in the messenger speech creating this effect, see De Jong 1991: 54-5, 106-7.

<sup>35</sup> For the portrayal of Theoclymenus and Proteus in Eur. *Hel.* as downplaying barbaric effects, see ch.1, pp.35-9. Thoas' cruelty is invariably commented by scholars. Cf. e.g. Said 2002: 53; Cropp 2000: 260; Guépin 1968: 132 (parallels him with the king of the Underworld). Contrast e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 140-1; Wright 2005: 198; Burnett 1971: 61; Grube 1941: 330; all argue for him as pious and courteous. For these readers fear of the divine and respect to the priestess of the established cult differentiate him from hubristic figures like Menelaus and Hermione, disrespectful of the divine in Eur. *Andr.* (blackmailing and threatening to kill suppliants, see ch.3, pp.160-1). This is to ignore the fact that Thoas' piety includes human sacrifice; this also undermines the suggestion that his piety makes him "Greek in his behaviour" (Wright's [2005: 198] claim).

<sup>36</sup> Wright 2005: 191. Cf. Kyriakou 2006: 35.

<sup>37</sup> See Hansen 2000: 144: freedom and autonomy were the values that distinguished them, but not the *polis* as such. Cf. Hall 1989: 190-1.

some.<sup>38</sup> Rather than showing them more Greek and civilized, one could even argue for the contrary. The use of the language of the *polis* especially in connection with their rites of human sacrifice (apart from conforming to the usual norm of tragic practice) rather attributes to making their depiction as a collectively barbarian and brutal people more emphatic. Human sacrifices are the custom of this “murderous” (ἀνδροφόνου, 878) city, it is the πόλις that “requires” (ἀναγκάζει, 595) them. This is not about a random activity of some Taurians; but a custom fashioned thus and supported by the whole Taurian community.<sup>39</sup>

In the cruelty of their customs and in its presentation as a communal characteristic of their society as a whole, Iphigenia’s barbarian hosts significantly differ from Helen’s.<sup>40</sup> Their depictions resemble each other in the sense that no authentic ethnographical details are used in either case to represent foreignness. This conforms to the general tendency in Euripidean tragedy. Euripides does not usually exploit accurate ethnographical information to differentiate foreign geography and people. Apart from a reference to Ἀσιητᾶν...βάρβαρον ἄχάν (180) and to βάρβαρα/ μέλη (1337-8), language, naming, physical appearance, costumes are not marked (in words at least) as specifically barbarian or specifically Taurian.<sup>41</sup> Yet, differentiated they are. *Helen’s* Egyptians are predominantly just, hospitable and kind. One only has to think of the Old Woman, servant of Theoclymenus, trying to warn Menelaus of the danger he is in (477-82); or again, Proteus and Theonoe unstintingly upholding the Greek values of *xenia* and justice (the latter with the danger of her own death). The only source of barbaric menace on that stage is Theoclymenus. Motivated by his lust for Helen, he threatens with death any Greek arriving in his kingdom (1171-83). But in his

<sup>38</sup> For *polis* in tragedy and more examples of tragic barbaric *poleis*, see Easterling 2005: 52-3, 70n.21. Cf. Hall 1989: 192.

<sup>39</sup> The use of the language of *nomos* draws attention to ways in which the Graeco-barbarian division is schematic in the play. See discussion in pp.128-9.

<sup>40</sup> See also discussion on Eur. *Hel.* (ch.1, pp.42-4). The opposite view is held by both Wright 2005 and Hall 1989. Both starting from the same premise (absence of ethnographic detail in the representations) reach diametrically different opinions: Hall arguing for Euripides’ Taurians and Egyptians as conforming alike to the Greek stereotypical barbarian, Wright arguing for these and *Andromeda’s* Ethiopians, as being distinctively different from these stereotypes. See especially Wright 2005: 178-202, where he discusses his differences from Hall’s approach on the matter.

<sup>41</sup> For the absence of local colour in the sense of authentic ethnographical differentiation in the presentation of Taurian geography and people, cf. e.g. Wright 2005: 169-202; Wolff 1992: 329n.60; Bacon 1961: 149-50. For the same technique followed in representing Andromache’s Asiatic origin in Eur. *Andr.*, see ch.3, pp.152-3. For the general Euripidean trends in representing foreignness, see ch.1, p.34n.19.

violent temperament neither his people, nor his closest family (Theonoe, Proteus) have a share. In Tauris on the contrary, cruelty, the totally un-Greek thirst for human sacrifices, is made the quintessential characteristic of a whole community. These people are cruel, they kill *xenoi*; this is their culture, their law.

The comprehensive presentation of structures in their Taurian shrine as utterly and permanently perverted makes this horror of their culture the predominant characteristic of their stage image. This sense of ingrained perversion is unusual in the tragic theatre. Both βωμοί and ναοί are described as drenched in αἷμα βρότειον (405-6). Though the bloodstains (mentioned already at lines 72-3) are probably verbal, or, if represented, visible to only a small portion of the audience and therefore verbal for the rest, they are an important aspect of the scene-setting. The physical appearance of the shrine (in stains of blood, decorated with the spoils of human victims) attests to the horror of the rituals enacted within it.<sup>42</sup> In other dramas, temples are places of refuge, divine advice, and oracles.<sup>43</sup> Other tragic altars are places of animal sacrifices and offerings, loci of asylum, supplication and protection.<sup>44</sup> We get acts of perversion complicating or undermining the moral stature of their users: e.g. Aeschylus' Danaids threatening to hang themselves from the statues of the gods in *Supplices* (Aesch. *Supp.* 455ff), Euripides' sister of Macareus giving birth in a sanctuary in the fragmentary play *Aeolus* (Ar. *Ran.* 1081; cf. *Nub.* 1371-2), or Euripides' perverted Taurians offering foreigners as victims for the goddess in this play.<sup>45</sup> Still, the nature of the objects themselves although temporarily subject to abuse, is never permanently perverted in other plays. On this stage, their permanently perverted nature is physically evident: travellers feel fear at the appalling sight of the altar and temple (we remember Orestes and Pylades' reaction, 72ff). The temple does not offer

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<sup>42</sup> Torrance 2009: 26n.26 argues for red paint used to convey blood on temple and altar. On the probable physical appearance of altar and temple (especially the debate on whether line 74 and the mentioned σκῦλα [weapons or human skulls] hang from the temple or altar), see Torrance 2009: 21-7; Kyriakou 2006: 70-1; Wright 2005: 185-6; Cropp 2000: 179; Hourmouziades 1965: 52-3. Whether line 74 refers to temple or altar (I find the latter more probable than the first), the text is I think inconclusive for deciding the practicalities of representation. For the way the nature of the statue of Artemis is differentiated from that of her perverted cultic environment, see pp.126-30.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. the temple of Apollo and Athena in Aesch. *Eum.*; temple of Zeus in Eur. *Heracl.*; temple of Demeter and Persephone in Eur. *Supp.*; temple of Apollo in Eur. *Ion*; the temple of Apollo in Delphi in this same play (cf. 927, 1234), all used as places of refuge from danger, sources of divine advice and oracles.

<sup>44</sup> Thus function the altars in: Aesch. *Supp.*, *Sept.*; Soph. *OT*; Eur. *Heracl.*, *Andr.*, *Supp.*, *El.*, *HF*, *Ion*, *Hel.* (in the last we get a tomb which functions as a sacred asylum; see ch.1, pp.50-1). For altars in real life as places of refuge, see Marinatos & Hägg 1993: 10-11; Tomlinson 1976: 3-9.

<sup>45</sup> On this aspect of supplication in Aesch. *Supp.*, see ch.1, p.47.

consultation or protection (not even as a temporary hiding place for the travellers, 1024-8), but threatens them with death. The altar, introduced only to remain unutilized, is not an asylum of sacred protection and supplication; on it, mortals do not find refuge and salvation, but savage death.<sup>46</sup>

To recapitulate: this is a raw, inhospitable landscape; raw, inhospitable people. Euripides' version of the man-killing cult differs in detail from the Herodotean version (the identity of the divinity, the details of execution of the sacrifices, on which Herodotus himself does not claim certainty, Hdt. 4.103). Herodotus may not have been Euripides' only source for rendering Taurian land and customs<sup>47</sup>; still Herodotean influence on the playwright's version of the myth and setting cannot be dismissed. His version of the rocky Tauris and his bloodthirsty Taurians has strong affinities with that of the τρηχέη χερσόνησος ("hilly country", Hdt. 4.99) and the man-killing people of his historian predecessor.<sup>48</sup> His dramatization of Tauris also shares something of the flavour of the wilder stories of the ethnographers on the barbarian tribes of the north. In his rendering of the Taurians' barbaric character, there is something hyperbolic; with their primitive means and their barbaric deficiencies, they are comparable to Homer's mythical sub-humans (the Laestrygones, the Cyclopes).<sup>49</sup> Euripides adopts all the negative semantics of Black Sea and its northern barbarian. He reshapes mythic chronology (going as far back as the pre-Argo age and its active rocks) to keep the sea alien and hostile. In a lyric song of the chorus we do hear of Greeks travelling, wandering "over barbarian cities" in search of wealth: ἦ ῥοθίοις...κώπας/ ἔπλευσαν ἐπὶ πόντια κύματα/ ...φιλόπλουτον ἄμιλλαν αὔξοντες μελάθροισιν;/ φίλα γὰρ ἐλπίς.../ ἄπληστος ἀνθρώποις, ὄλβου βάρος οἱ φέρονται/ πλάνητες ἐπ' οἶδμα πόλεις τε βαρβάρους περῶντες/ κοινᾶ

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<sup>46</sup> It is symbolically appropriate (reifying the horror of the Taurian cult), but stays purely a decorative element throughout. For the altar as a symbol of the horror of the cult, cf. Torrance 2009: 22; Said 2002: 50-1; Cropp 2000: 57.

<sup>47</sup> For the possibility of influence from Greek perceptions of the Phoenician rite of human sacrifices, see O'Bryhim 2000: 29-37.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Kyriakou 2006: 21n.14: "It is likely that Euripides was familiar with Herodotus' account, but it is improbable that the historian was his only or even a primary source." For the argument of Herodotean influence on Euripides, see Hall 1989: 111-2, 1987: 430n.7, followed by e.g. Torrance 2009: 25n.22; O'Bryhim 2000: 31. Contrast Wright 2005: 163-75. None of Wright's arguments (denying authoritative value of Herodotus, shedding doubt on Tauris as location of the temple, stressing dissimilarities with Herodotus) is compelling (see also p.97n.54). For the date of Herodotus' *Histories*, see ch.1, p.31n.9.

<sup>49</sup> For affinities with Homer's mythical barbarians, see e.g. Cropp 2000: 49n.67; Hall 1989: 122; Bacon 1961: 150.



δόξα... (408-19). The stress is on greed, untimely hope (γνώμα ἄκαιρος, 420) and the impossibility of that hope being met. The obvious inter-text is Solon (fr. 13.43-76 West).<sup>50</sup> But still we cannot exclude a vague glimpse of the contemporary fifth-century ‘hospitable’ and navigable sea (by colonizers, merchants, sailors). This dimension is not, however, expanded in the rest of the text. The arrival of Greeks in the land is not frequent (the chorus repeatedly express their *aporia* at their arrival, 340-1, 422-38; there is a suggestion at [258-9] of not many of them sacrificed at least recently)<sup>51</sup>; in other words, this is not the Hellenized, colonized Black Sea coast trading and communing with the Greek world. Euripides’ artefact is a proto-Taurian state.<sup>52</sup> If in *Helen* familiarity was the pragmatic keyword in terms of how foreign topography is rendered, here the result of Euripides’ renegotiation of the semantic value of his topography fosters the opposite effect: alienation. Tauris remains something alien and distant to this female. In turn, she will be found alienated and distant from its society by her positioning. Whereas Helen and Andromache are placed in front of, and communing with ruling *oikoi* of their dislocated locales, Iphigenia dwells far away from the *polis* and its palace.<sup>53</sup> She is placed at the margins of the community both literally (the temple is at the borders of their land), as metaphorically.<sup>54</sup> With Iphigenia’s Tauris we are far away from homeland and Euripides will not try to reduce that distance either for his audience, or for his female.

Spatial staging sets the female in front of the horrific temple, acting as a priestess of a brutal, man-killing cultic tradition: ναοῖσι δ’ ἐν τοῖσδ’ ἱερέων τίθησί με (34).<sup>55</sup> In the other two cases of dislocation the female appears as a suppliant onstage (Helen by Proteus’ tomb, Andromache by Thetis’ altar), in an effort to

<sup>50</sup> On this inter-textual allusion, see comment in Kyriakou 2006: 151; Cropp 2000: 205.

<sup>51</sup> Note also how the Greek chorus arrives and is sold here after the destruction of their city by an enemy (hence no reference to connections of trade or colonization).

<sup>52</sup> Cropp 2000: 47-8 makes a similar point: Euripides’ Tauris is the site of the Crimean Chersonesos “loosely imagined in its pre-Greek condition”, which he defines as the time before the foundation of the Megarian settlement in the area.

<sup>53</sup> We have only two references to Thoas’ palace: 333-5, 1300-1.

<sup>54</sup> For the position of the temple on a kind of promontory washed by the sea at the borders of Tauris see 1196, Thoas’ question to Iphigenia: “Doesn’t the sea wave wash up against the very temple?”. Cf. Hdt. 4.103: ἐπὶ γὰρ κρημνοῦ ἴδρται τὸ ἱερόν. Wright 2005: 170-4 in his effort to deny Herodotean influence on Euripides sheds doubt on the Tauric Chersonese as the location of the temple (cf. Bacon 1961: 158 wrongly arguing for Leuke; decisively refuted by Hall 1987: 427-8). For the larger question of the relation between Herodotus and Euripides’ Tauris, see previous discussion p.96.

<sup>55</sup> Following Wright 2005: 187, I take Thoas as the subject of the verb τίθησι.

ward off sudden danger: after the death of her kind host Proteus, Helen faces the threat of forced marriage by his unlawful son Theoclymenus; in the absence of Neoptolemus gone as a pilgrim to Delphi, Andromache faces the threat of death to her child and herself at the hands of Menelaus and his daughter Hermione. Shelter of dislocated woman and surroundings (royal palace in both cases) are set in opposition; spatial staging immediately renders visual the dynamics of a key conflict between danger and (need for) safety.<sup>56</sup> In the *IT* we only get the *mis-en-scène* of the temple. This is the house she and her goddess share together, for her a place of refuge in the past (29-30: she and her goddess arrive here from Aulis), her place of dwelling in the present. Seemingly at least, everywhere is safe. Contrast how the danger of the Greek males' position is paramount. The need for them to leave this land as soon as possible is immediately clear upon their first entry onstage (cf. e.g. 102-3, Orestes to Pylades in agitation: θανούμεθ' ἀλλὰ πρὶν θανεῖν νεὼς ἔπι/ φεύγωμεν...). Iphigenia could live here indefinitely; no violence is brought to bear on her by figures of authority in Tauris.<sup>57</sup> But the lack of a clear cut spatial contrast between resort of safety and dangerous surroundings actually betrays something quite different: for this displaced woman there is no place of resort. For Iphigenia, in Tauris all is dangerous and threatening. The danger is however not physical. The nature of her peril and the dynamics (both spatial and figurative) of her dislocation differ significantly from the other two cases. Whereas sudden crisis from threat of external danger shapes spatial dynamics and action in *Helen* and *Andromache*, the dangers at stake in Iphigenia's position are more subtle. In Iphigenia's case there is no sudden threat of violence against her. Danger for her comes from the continuous subjection to corrupting surroundings that arouse abomination and distaste. The journey is inner and emotional, and spatial staging of the female again becomes an effective way by which Euripides renders these complex dynamics real on his stage.

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<sup>56</sup> In *Hel.* and *Andr.* scene-building and female space are staged as opposing poles onstage (in both plays the action revolves around the axis of an *oikos* and a place of supplication). For Euripides' innovative use of the polarity in *Hel.*, see ch.1, pp.53-4.

<sup>57</sup> For his sister it is a second *oikos*, for him and his friend Pylades, it is danger and possible death. In a striking sense, the whole of Tauris is reified in this architectural structure; Iphigenia, with relative safety, can move and act around it, Orestes and Pylades face danger to whatever path they turn (θανάτω πελάσεις ἄρα, βάρβαρα φύλα/ καὶ δι' ὁδοῦς ἀνόδους στείχων, 887-8).

The key physical attribute of Iphigenia's position on this stage is her role as gatekeeper of the temple. She moves and acts in the vicinity of the Taurian temple, in front of which she first appears (34: ναοῖσι...τοῖσδ'(ε)), for the biggest part (approximately one thousand lines) of the play.<sup>58</sup> She literally holds the key to its entry: ὀσίας.../ κληδούχου (130-1). The detail of the key adds to the importance and authority of her role.<sup>59</sup> Her religious office endows her with great power. Being the one who actually sees to the realization of their worship, she has a fully functioning and centrally important role in the Taurian cultic domain. Taurian citizens and king visit the temple (1080-1, 1153, 1210, 1226-8), Taurian πρόσπολοι are in charge of the sacrifices inside the temple (41-2, 624), she performs her duties with their help and in their continuous presence.<sup>60</sup> She enjoys status and respect from the whole community. Their king is proud to have her friendship (or at least he thinks he does, 1213-4), he assigns a chorus of Greek women as her helpers (63), he congratulates her on her piety and forethought (δίκαιος ἠύσέβεια καὶ προμηθία, 1202), the whole town thinks of her with admiration (πᾶσα θαυμάζει πόλις, 1214). The scenic pattern of action and movement as it develops within onstage space markedly reflects the dynamics of this strange power relation in which dislocated woman has authoritative control over the society in which she is displaced.<sup>61</sup> Only the female can touch the goddess' statue (1044-5: θιγεῖν γὰρ ὄσιόν ἐστ' ἐμοὶ μόνῃ, note how Thoas does not question her right to do so in this instance, 1157-8).<sup>62</sup> The female is

<sup>58</sup> For temple settings as places where women can properly appear before men, see Mastronarde 2010: 250.

<sup>59</sup> The key is an important honorary attributive of a priestess in real life religion. See e.g. Parker 2005: 93-4; Burkert 1985: 97. For other tragic priestesses retaining the characteristic, see Hamilton 1985: 55-6. It is noticeable that Iphigenia is often depicted on antique vases in her capacity as *kleidouchos* (see Taplin 2007: 150ff; Kyriakou 2006: 86). In the play, as Kyriakou 2006: 372 notes in passing, Iphigenia, in her capacity as key-holder, becomes "not only the keeper of the gates but also its guardian in a more general sense". The detail adds authority and prestige to her role in Tauris, which will later on be reprised in Athens (1463; on her relocation in Greek space, see pp.106-7).

<sup>60</sup> For the confusion regarding the place of the execution of the sacrifices (inside or outside the temple), see p.113n.109.

<sup>61</sup> For her ritual service as a source of authority over Taurians, cf. Goff 1999: 112-3. This same authority finally becomes the means of her salvation from their society. As Goff 1999: 113 nicely puts it: "In the scene of deception Iphigeneia is no longer constrained by her enforced ritual practice but is enabled by it...It is the conditions of her life among the Taurians that allow her to escape from it." For her paradoxical position as both "captive" and "captor", cf. Wolff 1992: 323-4. A reflection of this strange power-relation between woman and barbarians can be found in the later fragmentary play modelled on the *IT*, the *Charition mime*. There, Charition (the female protagonist) is also able to somewhat control her barbarian captors.

<sup>62</sup> Her close relationship with Artemis made tangible in the image of Iphigenia holding the statue of the goddess (1156ff) is discussed in pp.126-30.

consistently the initiator and director of all action (male and female) within the precinct of the sanctuary. She directs the women of the chorus (e.g. 61-6, 123-5), the Taurian temple-servants (e.g. 468-71, 725-6), the Taurian herdsman arriving from the shore (342-3), Orestes and Pylades' entry and exit out of the temple (1088, 1233), and finally Thoas' movement and actions (1215-21).<sup>63</sup>

Beyond the temple (and outside her cultic office), the onstage scenic pattern does not hold. Once on the shore, where she finds herself with Orestes and Pylades on their way to escape, Iphigenia no longer holds any power to direct movement and action; the female turns passive and subject to the action of the males (1327-419).<sup>64</sup> She is free to direct movement and action only within the limits of her cultic authority. Extraction from the cult leaves her powerless. Her power is thus exposed as strictly circumscribed within the temple. What is more, this loss of any sense of authority when on the shore underlines, in turn, the precarious nature of this power. It stresses how it is all external; derived from an authority outside herself rather than innate impulse. Iphigenia is the author of movement of others within the sanctuary, but not of her own. Contrary to her will, though she is a Greek the rites she is involved in force her to turn against Greeks. Her hands are the ones that prepare Greek men for their sacrifice.<sup>65</sup> Though the Taurians respect her, she detests both her actions and this people for imposing such an abhorrent duty on her. She cannot bear to speak of the horror of the rituals taking place inside the temple (35-41), she mourns for her fate and for the fate of her victims (215-28), and she detests the murderous instinct of the people who enjoy such

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<sup>63</sup> To the extent that the temple is also to be seen as an *oikos* (on this see pp.114-7), Iphigenia's fixity and her function as receiver of males in motion has affinities with Helen's own position in Eur. *Hel.* On Helen, see ch.1, pp.49-50. For female directing males as the pattern of movements in the play, see pp.117n.125, 124. This same pattern holds with differentiations in all three plays: for *Hel.*, see ch.1, pp.54-5, 68-70, 77-9; for *Andr.*, see ch.3, pp.180-1.

<sup>64</sup> I discuss in detail reversal of the scenic pattern of movement when the protagonists reach the shore (exemplified via the syntax and details of the narrative speech of the messenger) in pp.124-6.

<sup>65</sup> There are two uncertainties regarding practicalities of Taurian sacrifices. Firstly, the question whether sacrifices of Greeks had been performed before the play. The relevant lines are: 38-41, 72-6, 278, 344-7, 585-7. See discussion in e.g. Cropp 2000: 177; Strachan 1976: 131-40; Lattimore 1974: 73-4. Secondly, the question of the exact role of Iphigenia in the sacrifices: merely consecration of the victims (as suggested by e.g. 40-[41], 54-5, 244-5, 621-4, 725-6), or their execution (as suggested by e.g. 225-8, 445-6, 585-6, 871-2, 1190). See discussions in e.g. Cropp 2000: 175; Lattimore 1974: 74. As line 335 I think suggests, Iphigenia was in charge of both parts of the ritual: ἐς χέρονιβάς τε καὶ σφαγεῖ' ἐπεμπέ σοι (Thoas is said to have sent Orestes and Pylades to her in order to be consecrated and slaughtered), but the text is inconclusive as to what she actually performs.

rituals (380-91).<sup>66</sup> Only ἀνάγκη forces her to go along with the sacrifices, an ἄζηλον service (619), but still one she has to perform (ἐς ἀνάγκην κείμεθ', ἦν φυλακτέον, 620).<sup>67</sup> Her ritual practice is, as Goff puts it, “a double sign”: it gives her the means for agency and authority, but at the same time it subjects her to “an abhorrent life”.<sup>68</sup> The restraint on her actions contrasted to her authority to direct those of others, and in turn the strict limits to her power to direct, both emphasize her paradoxical position as both potent and impotent. Her tantalizing paradoxical position as an outsider forced to act as insider in a cult she finds appalling emphasizes, in turn, the repugnance of the ritual more poignantly.

Beyond the promontory of the temple, the female has no place of her own. Her *oikos* is the temple (ἐν οἷσι ναίω τῶνδ', ἀνακτόρων θεᾶς, 66). She is domesticated inside it, the priestess is made part of the goddess' household; an unusual attribute both in terms of theatrical and extra-theatrical spatial practices (a point to be made in detail in the scenic analysis of the play).<sup>69</sup> The horrific quality of this precinct further marks her alienation; this utterly perverted place is her home. This sense of the female's marginalization from Taurian society in terms of her dwelling location is mapped onto the way Iphigenia's body and clothing are also presented as isolated and marginal. Iphigenia is bound to purity. Her body is inviolable in the same way that her surroundings are inviolable by strangers, in the way her goddess is pure in her nature.<sup>70</sup> Her clothes are untouched (ἀθίκτοις...πέπλοις, 799), until the moment she embraces her brother Orestes. This embrace is markedly presented as interrupting a long and total immunity of

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<sup>66</sup> In this, she shares the general Greek distaste for the sacrifices (see previous discussion, pp.91-2). For a different view, see Stern-Gillet 2001: 13-16, who finds inconsistencies in her moral stance towards the rites. On risk of resentment, inherent in her function as priestess of a Greek-killing rite, not developed in the play, see pp.85-7.

<sup>67</sup> Forms of the verb and noun (ἀναγκάζω, ἀνάγκη) occur four times in the play always in connection with Iphigenia's enforced participation in the Taurian cult: 595: πόλις ἀναγκάζει τᾶδε; 620: εἰς ἀνάγκην κείμεθ'(α)...; 1118-9: ἐν γὰρ ἀνάγκαις οὐ κάμνει...; 1189: τὸν νόμον ἀνάγκη τὸν προκείμενον σέβειν.

<sup>68</sup> Goff 1999: 114. For her duties as a constraining force on Iphigenia, cf. e.g. Stern-Gillet 2001: 10-11.

<sup>69</sup> See pp.114-7.

<sup>70</sup> A normal priestess was not bound to purity. To our knowledge there were no virgin priestesses in Athens, not even the priestess of Artemis at Brauron says Parker 2005: 218n.2. Virginity and abrogation of marriage is not a norm in the historical reality of ancient priesthood. Cf. Hamilton 1985: 53n.1 for further bibliography on the matter. In all Euripidean priest plays (Eur. *Tro.*, *Ion*, *IT*, *Hel.*, *Bacch.*) purity is nevertheless an important theme (see Hamilton 1985: 70).

Iphigenia from any touch.<sup>71</sup> Her dwelling at the margins, her untouched clothes, and the way Iphigenia is construed as assimilated in nature with Artemis via her unrelenting virginity function as emblematic of the female's larger marginalization in terms of the way she relates with her surroundings. Iphigenia is absorbed by her cultic role, but lacks any sense of identity in Tauris. She is never integrated into Taurian society, never absorbed in its culture and its prerogatives. Untouchable, at the margins, alienated; this woman who arrives in Tauris as a virgin stays a virgin on multiple levels: sexually, socially, and emotionally.<sup>72</sup> To use the words of the play itself, this woman is ἄγαμος ἄτεκνος ἄπολις and ἄφιλος in this place (220).

Hence, in a marked sense, aspects of her space outline aspects of her role: she experiences confinement physically, she is confined by her duties which involve her in repulsive actions; she experiences isolation and alienation in real space, she is exile, isolated, without friends and mortal relationships in this barbaric plain. To return to my initial reference, Iphigenia never evolves from the status of a stranger (ξείνα, 218) to the status of a native in the Taurian society. Female space as shaped foregrounds the woman's alienation, seclusion and emotional hostility to the environment, her repugnance for her role, in the way in which in other plays external danger is emphasized through words and staging. In both *Helen* and *Andromache* the emotions of the primary character bring out the females' victimhood and evoke empathy for their situation. In this play, where no direct danger presses for the female's relocation, her emotional journey has an added pragmatic effect: emotional reaction to location and action brings out the sense of dislocation and the urgency of the need for her transfer to a humane place.

In this sense, it is important that the play opens with a dream of Iphigenia's lost *oikos* and brother. The way Iphigenia interprets the dream as signalling the death of her brother Orestes shakes her hope for reconnection with her past and all that

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<sup>71</sup> For touching and the moment of the embrace, see pp.122-3.

<sup>72</sup> The root παρθεν- occurs seven times in the play: in relation to Iphigenia (45), to Electra (562), Hippodamia (824, 826), the chorus (1144), Artemis (1230). Tzanetou 1999-2000: 204-8 argues that Iphigenia's exile is depicted as "the antithesis of marriage" (p.205) and of this in turn being an allusion to the status of the failed initiand in the ritual of the Arkteia, on which she sees Iphigenia and Orestes' journey modelled on an allegorical level. For other readings that argue for Iphigenia and Orestes' *peripeteia* as dramatic versions of certain rites of passage to female and male adulthood, cf. e.g. Cropp 2000: 55-6. For the serious problems of this kind of approach (and critiques on Tzanetou's reading), see Kyriakou 2006: 27-8; Wright 2005: 352-6.

she loves (the Argive *oikos*, Greece in a larger sense).<sup>73</sup> The dream brings to a head the sense of a long unhappiness and alienation. These feelings of the female find repeated expression in the narrative of the opening: the prologue, her passionate lyrics in exchange with the chorus (cf. especially 34-7, 144-59, 203-35). They are also evident in the switches in tone and syntax Iphigenia makes in her dealings with the herdsman, the temple slaves, and the two newly arrived victims of sacrifice, shifting neatly between authority and distress as she tries to tackle her cultic duties.<sup>74</sup> The growing disjunction between outer (her duties) and inner (her emotions) comes to a personal crisis with the frustration of hope inherent in her interpretation of the dream: *νῦν δ' ἐξ ὀνειρώτων οἴσιν ἠγγριώμεθα* (348).<sup>75</sup> The prospect of a lifelong imprisonment in Tauris presses hard on her emotions. The sense of hopelessness, injected by the dream, accentuates her misery and gives us early on a strong sense of the intolerableness in her situation.<sup>76</sup> Her repeated expression of nostalgic longing and inner need to reconnect with the past and the defining domestic space multiply the intensity of these effects (e.g. 44, 144-77, 221-35, 774-5). The feeling of nostalgia is a strong notion throughout the play, expressed not only by Iphigenia but also by the women of the chorus. Through expressions of longing, wishes for escape and return and detailed evocations of the Greek landscape (132-6, 447-55, 1089-152), the chorus increasingly raises the volume of alienness from their physical background and poignancy to the need (of Iphigenia, her goddess, themselves) to relocate.<sup>77</sup> Iphigenia's and their sense of alienation impacts on our (the

<sup>73</sup> Iphigenia interprets the dream as entirely imagistic and historical. But it is partly literal and predictive. It will be realized and revealed in its true meaning later on in the play. The ambiguity of the dream and Iphigenia's misunderstanding of it enhances irony and increases risk (and hence audience's tension) of the siblings not achieving recognition and salvation. For the dream as a dramatic and thematic device, see Trieschnigg 2008: 461-78. Cf. Cropp 2000: 176.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. especially 342-91, 467-78, where we get abrupt transitions between strict, authoritative tone (expressed with imperatives at e.g. 342-3, 467-70) and deeply emotional tone (expressed with evocations to the heart [344], exclamations of distress [361, 364, 472]). Syntax plays a distinctive role in marking the complexities of this female's situation in this play. On this aspect, see further in pp.124-5.

<sup>75</sup> The aggression is only temporary and only ever relates to her inner emotional situation. It is not exteriorized in any sense; Iphigenia never turns savage towards potential victims of the Taurian cult (see pp.86-7). Note as well that she never loses all hope; there is still the thought that the brother might be living, since she decides to use one of the captured victims as messengers to him: 580-94, 769 (*ἄγγελλ' Ὀρέστη...*).

<sup>76</sup> As Hall 2010: 193 notes: "Intimacy with a character's repressed memories, fear, or inner thought-world, is sometimes achieved in tragedy by the report of a dream." Cf. the way Teucer's (false again) news on Menelaus' death accentuate hopelessness in Eur. *Hel.*, not however from the opening of the play, as here, but later (124-32). See ch.1, p.48.

<sup>77</sup> For the cumulative force of the chorus' nostalgic evocations, see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 36, 86; Barlow 1986<sup>2</sup>: 28; Conacher 1967: 307; England 1883: 216-17. As Hall 1987: 430 mentions,

audience's) sense of space.<sup>78</sup> As their longing for home, only hinted at upon their entry (132-6), becomes abundantly clear, the females' alienation from the surrounding environment, the sense of their belonging in Greek space, and hence the urgency for their escape and relocation increase in volume. The distance between Tauris and Greece grows bigger and bigger. By the end of the play, it is absolutely clear: Iphigenia must return. She may not be in physical danger, but she is out of her proper place.

Return, relocation, or to use Euripides' vocabulary, νόστος will indeed be the end result of the play.<sup>79</sup> All Greek dislocated characters will return to Greek space. Nobody will stay behind in Tauris (contrast the fate of the chorus in *Helen*). Artemis will find restoration in a new καθαρόν.../ δόμον ("pure house", 1231-2) and the cultic festivals (at Halae and Brauron, 1447-67) of a πόλιν...εὐδαίμονα ("a blessed city", 1088).<sup>80</sup> The chorus will rejoice in their return to (unspecified) Greek space.<sup>81</sup> Pylades will most probably return to live and have children with his wife Electra in his ancestral home (παῖδας ἐξ ἑμῆς ὁμοσπόρου/ κτησάμενος..., 695-6).<sup>82</sup> For each one *nostos* differs. Orestes and Iphigenia's *nostos* and future fate I will treat in a little more detail.

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Euripidean choruses in exile are often assigned the role of reflecting the yearning for home (e.g. in Eur. *Hec.* 475-83). For the importance of nostalgia as a theme and feeling in this play, cf. e.g. Lattimore 1974: 7; Grube 1941: 383; Hall 1914: 383. Murray 1965: 73 characteristically calls the *IT* a play "haunted by the shadow of homesickness".

<sup>78</sup> Contrast the way the chorus functions as a vehicle of familiarization in Eur. *Hel.* (see ch.1, pp.42-3, 61).

<sup>79</sup> Forms of the word (νόστος) appear 12 times in the play: 117, 527, 534, 535, 662, 731, 751, 1003, 1016, 1019, 1066, 1112. It is both the males (e.g. 117, 751, 1016) and the females' (e.g. 1019, 1066) main target and concern. And characteristically enough, not achieving νόστος, not reaching home is what both Pylades and Iphigenia set (and consider) as their punishment if they happen to break their oaths (750-2).

<sup>80</sup> As argued above, the need for Artemis' relocation (as Iphigenia and the chorus') is increasingly made poignant. For Artemis in particular, see 69-70, 86-92, 111-7, 380-91 (according to Wolff 1992: 309ff, a failed though attempt of Iphigenia to regenerate Artemis' pure nature), 463-6, 977-82, 1012-6, 1082-8, 1096-105, 1230-3, 1438-61, 1480-1, 1488-9. Some readings deny the restorative and salutary value of this movement and of the new cults for Artemis. See e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 29; Goff 1999: 121-3; Wolff 1992: 318, 329. Contrast e.g. Wright 2005: 353; Cropp 2000: 39-40; Hamilton 1985: 59-60; Burnett 1971: 75; Conacher 1967: 311-2. See also discussion in pp.127-30.

<sup>81</sup> For the question of the destination of the chorus at the closure of the play, see pp.133-5.

<sup>82</sup> The only one of the Greek characters who has "a happy ending", according to Said 2002: 50. Athena will say nothing of Pylades' relocation. We only have Orestes' words (695-8, 915-22) from which we can conjecture his future in Greece.



Orestes is to go to Athens. About his further movements neither he (τὸ δ' ἐνθ' ἐνδ' οὐδὲν ἐρρήθη πέρα, 91), nor we will be informed. All Athena will tell us is that at Halae Orestes will build a new temple for Artemis (ναὸν ἰδρυσαι, 1453) and establish a new custom for her worship (1458).<sup>83</sup> From his first visit to the city, spatially he has gone a long way: from Athens, to Delphi, and through the Black Sea to reach Tauris, its shore and then its temple (cf. 77-122, 939-86). Emotionally, he has passed through madness and suffering at the horrifying visions of the Erinyes (cf. 79-84, 285-314, 931-5, 980-2), from cowardice, indecision (95-103), despair and disbelief (722-3), to courage, bravery (he is ready to die for his friend and his sister, 597-608, 1007-11), hope and trust in divine provision (1016), and finally release from the anger of the Erinyes (1439-40: τὸν τ' Ἐρινύων χόλον/ φεύγων).<sup>84</sup> The Orestes of the prologue differs markedly from the man of admirable virtues Iphigenia will later wish her missing brother to be: ὦ λῆμ' ἄριστον, ὡς ἀπ' εὐγενοῦς τινος/ ῥίζης πέφυκας τοῖς φίλοις τ' ὀρθῶς φίλος./ τοιοῦτος εἴη τῶν ἐμῶν ὁμοσπόρων/ ὅσπερ λέλειπται... (609-12). The man who first arrived at the shore “shaking his head this way and that” (282), groaning aloud and trembling (283-94), dripping foam from his mouth (308), in need of care to recover from his horrifying visions (310-14), reappears on the shore near the end of the play (1345ff). Now he is standing at the stern of his ship (1349), a captain to a crew of fifty sailors (1347), strongly and fearlessly defending his sister, answering the Taurians' questions and speaking on her behalf (1358-63), fighting with them to recover her body (1365-89). Likewise, with his return to Athens his previous status in that space reverses: the man who was before an outcast (568: ἄθλιός γε, κοῦδαμοῦ καὶ πανταχοῦ), eating alone and silent in Athenian homes (949ff), hunted out of their city by the menace of the Erinyes who stayed unconvinced by

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<sup>83</sup> We do not know whether he is to return to Argos or not again. According to Said 2002: 48-9, this inconclusiveness casts serious doubts on the true regeneration of Orestes in the play. For Orestes not truly regenerated, cf. Tzanetou 1999-2000: 201. I agree with those (e.g. Wolf 1992: 312, 320; Conacher 1967: 313), who see an Orestes truly regenerated in the ending of the *IT*. As Said herself notes (p.48), release from the Furies is the only thing the play promises him from the beginning (see 90-2, 977-9, 1438-41a). Apart from a wish of Orestes to take his sister home and live with her (a strong feeling naturally in a sense created after their reunion after so long, see 700ff, 840, 980-2, 1007ff), the text never invites us to see return to Argos as a criterion or prerequisite for his successful restoration. The same goes for Iphigenia (see following paragraph).

<sup>84</sup> For the development in Orestes' mental state, cf. e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 221; Cropp 2000: 38; England 1883: xxiii.

the decision of the trial (970-5), achieves the long-awaited ἀμνοῶς πόνων (92, rest from his labours) and acquires the position of a founder of a temple and an important cult in their religious life.<sup>85</sup>

Iphigenia is to go to Brauron. There she will continue serving her goddess as a temple warder (1463, Βραυρωνίας δεῖ τῆδε κληδοῦχεῖν θεᾶ). After death, she will be buried in the same place. A statue of hers will receive woven garments (πέπλων/ ...εὐπήνους ὑφάς, 1464-5) as offerings for women who die in childbirth (1464-7). Her prestigious role as key-holder will persist in her new location. True, she does not go to Argos in the end. Negation of this narrower *nostos* to Argos may seem a punishment to the modern reader, and indeed to Iphigenia herself at a point (752, this is what she sets for herself as punishment if she fails in her promise to help Pylades). We remember her repeated yearnings for a return: “I do not sing in honor of Hera at Argos...”, she complains (221-4); “Before you die, fetch me home to Argos from this barbarian land...”, she writes in the letter to her brother Orestes (774-5); “even before you came here, brother, I was eager to be in Argos and to see you”, she says to Orestes when she recognizes him (989-90).<sup>86</sup> Iphigenia remains unmarried, separated from paternal house and city, and from beloved brother (there is no suggestion that they will be in contact in Greece). Still, there is no emphasis on separation in Athena’s speech, or in anything the chorus says afterwards (1492-9). Contrast how in Euripides’ *Electra* Euripides’ text puts pronounced emphasis on the temporary nature of brother-sister reunion (Orestes and Electra in this case) and on the pain of separation from each other (e.g. 1308-10, 1331-3), from paternal house (e.g. 1316, 1320-4), from native city (1314-5, 1334-5). Here, the emphasis is solely on gain. In the text, unlike in its scholarly analyses,<sup>87</sup> her future fate is presented not in terms of negation but in terms of an honour which will persevere, even after death. Iphigenia will receive honours in Athens. Her religious office will secure her a

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<sup>85</sup> The Athenians had also connected with him the ritual of *choes* after his first visit in Athens (947-60).

<sup>86</sup> For Iphigenia’s yearnings for Argos, cf. 44-5, 376-7 (she departs expecting to return after the supposed wedding), 515, 582-94, 732-6 (she writes a letter for her loved ones in Argos), 752, 1058-9.

<sup>87</sup> Most scholars (like e.g. Wright 2005: 224; Said 2002: 48; Tzanetou 1999-2000: 201) talk of her relocation in negative terms: she remains unmarried, isolated, connected with death. Kyriakou 2006: 29, 458 notes the problem of the non-return to Argos, but leaves it open as to whether this means her relocation is defective. Rather for her it stresses the uncertainty of mortals’ knowledge of divine will which is exhibited in the play. For the opposite view, i.e. of a successful restoration of Iphigenia, cf. Cropp 2000: 31.

never-ending commemoration and a constructive role in a cult associated with transition of marriage and childbirth.<sup>88</sup> She is now given a function which embraces her Greek identity, a role which is socialized and not marginal as before. The rites with which she is to be associated in life and the ritual role allotted to her after death are Greek and (by implication) civilized and not abhorrent to her (as had been her role and tasks among the Taurians). In a play celebrating the salutary role of Athens using elements of the suppliant plays, in the context of a speech delivered by the patron goddess of Athens, and in the general tone of uplift and rescue that make for *IT's* ending, the substitution of Athens for Argos would hardly be perceived as a negation, though it might well be for a real Argive in the extra-theatrical world. What is more, our text, if again we choose to follow it, has been preparing us for this substitution (of Argos to Athens) and its true restorative value.

The protagonists may wish for return to Argos. But the imagery of narrative space, running parallel to their aspirations throughout the play, indirectly creates a different expectation and perception of what form a happy ending to their adventures could take. An image of an Argive house in ruins opens the play (δόμων πίτνοντα, πᾶν δ' ἐρείψιμον στέγος/ βεβλημένον πρὸς οὔδας ἐξ ἄκρων σταθμῶν, 48-9). Repeated references to the same household as an *oikos* filled with misery and disease (cf. e.g. 693-4: νοσοῦντ' / ...μέλαθρα δυσσεβῆ καὶ δυστυχῆ, 930: νοσοῦντας...δόμους, 992: νοσοῦντά τ' οἶκον) increasingly affirm the initial impression: the Argive structure so destroyed and ailing cannot be restored, and consequently cannot restore its remaining members. In this sense, there is a pleasing symmetry between her pre-history and her current location (the distorted Taurian altar and temple).<sup>89</sup> Athens on the contrary is

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<sup>88</sup> For historical information on Brauron and Halae (the site, its cult activities) cf. e.g. Parker 2005: 228-49; Tomlinson 1976: 110-1. The issue of the historicity of the cults Euripides refers to in the ending of the *IT* (both Halae and Brauron) is open to various interpretations due to lack of definitive evidence. See e.g. Wright 2005: 357ff; Parker 2005: 142n.28; Cropp 2000: 262-3; Goff 1999: 121. Scullion 1999-2000 argues for fictive cultic *aetia* in Euripidean tragedies (followed for the *IT* by e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 24-6). Seaford 2009: 221-34 answers to Scullion's arguments arguing for real cults evoked by dramatic *aetia*.

<sup>89</sup> References to the sinister past of the Atreid family, however downplayed, contribute to presenting this household as an *oikos* in sickness and fragmentation. As Said 2002: 58 puts it, they reveal an Argive palace which is "at least as polluted as the Taurian temple". On the mild treatment of the guilty past of the Atreids in this play, cf. e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 9-13, 53, 59, 82; Cropp 2000: 171-2; Wolff 1992: 310-11; Lattimore 1974: 70, 72-3; Burnett 1971: 59-60, 63-5; England 1883: 124. Contrast Wright 2005: 283-4, who sees the silencing of the previous crimes of Orestes as indicating their futile nature; Hartigan 1986: 120, 123, who sees an emphasis on the

reified in the structure of a καθαρὸν.../ δόμον (1231-2), in which Artemis will enjoy restoration (as Apollo in the story of the Delphic temple in the third *stasimon*). The two contrasted images (infected house in Argos, infected temple in Tauris versus the pure house in Athens) increasingly enforce the feeling that Argos cannot reestablish the protagonists; the possibility of true regeneration belongs to Athens alone. Furthermore, the more the plot progresses, the less we hear of Argos as their specific destination. Relocation to Greece and more specifically Athens is presented as the only salutary move to make: Athens is where Apollo is repeatedly said to direct his protégé (89-90, 977-9); Athens is where the chorus say the ship with their lady is heading (1130-1: ἄξει λιπαρῶν/ εὖ σ' Αθηναίων ἐπὶ γᾶν); for a return πρὸς Ἑλλάδα ἐκ βαρβάρου γῆς Iphigenia prays to her goddess on board the ship for escape (1399-400; cf. Pylades' words, 905-6); this is what Athena proclaims was only destined for her and Orestes (1446-52, 1487-8).<sup>90</sup> Return to Argos is never presented as a goal sanctioned by divine will in the play, or a criterion, or prerequisite, or even a possible alternative (the Argive *oikos* literally and figuratively is in ruins, 45-52) for a successful restoration.<sup>91</sup>

This could have been a play about war. Iphigenia's story was perfectly suited for such a theme: a woman victim of the great Trojan expedition, her life and happiness cancelled in the name of that war. Euripides' Helen, transformed in his hands into an innocent woman suffering herself the consequences of the war, fulfilled in a sense this agenda. In the homonymous play, the narrative space of Troy, and through it the grim image of destruction and death, is a constant presence.<sup>92</sup> In the *IT* presence is replaced by absence and the Trojan plain is, to use Said's wording, "nearly forgotten".<sup>93</sup> Iphigenia of course, unlike Helen, was never meant to go to Troy; the spatial axis differs: from Argos to Aulis, and back

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Atreid practice of deceit as playing a dramatic role in the play. For the way Iphigenia is distanced from the destructive interiority of her family in her characterization, see pp.85-7.

<sup>90</sup> See also in pp.133-5. As argued there, the chorus' destination is left unspecified. This could be seen to contribute to maintaining the focus turned on Greece as a generic space with emphasis on Athens until the end of the play.

<sup>91</sup> For the use of the suppliant ideology that celebrates Athens as saviour city followed in this play, see pp.132-3.

<sup>92</sup> For the prominence of the image of Troy in *Hel.* and the play as a possible comment on the effects of war on the abandoned females, see ch.1, pp.54-5, 68-70. For the way Troy and its suffering at the Trojan War are evoked in Eur. *Andr.*, see ch.3, pp.152-3.

<sup>93</sup> Said 2002: 54. We only get seven references to the name of the city (Τροία, Ἴλιον): 12, 139, 442, 517, 531, 661, 1414.

to Athens via Tauris.<sup>94</sup> But while the story of Troy and its war was certainly the backdrop of Iphigenia's journey, in the *IT* it serves only as the trigger that sets off her theatrical adventure (the events at Aulis, 5-30). And in the whole play the story of the war is reduced only to the story of the individuals playing a role in the events of her family's misfortune in Aulis: Calchas (16-24, 531-2), Agamemnon (in relation to the events of war: 4-27, 139-43, 541-59), Odysseus (24-5, 533-6), Achilles (537-9), Menelaus and Helen (13-4, 355-60, 440-6, 521-6). Iphigenia will not ask details of the great war from the Greek stranger (see 517-539). Troy, "talked of everywhere" (Τροίαν...ἤς ἀπανταχοῦ λόγος, 517), is kept almost as an afterthought in this play. The focus (spatial and thematic) shifts inwardly to the individual space of the female and her male rescuers, and the dynamics and tensions of their relation, not with the past but with the present situation.<sup>95</sup>

Leaving Troy behind, the play covers an enormous landscape: the journey of the female from her ancestral home outwards in a forward movement (the female does not go back to the ancestral home again) to a new *oikos*: a place in the cultic realm for the perpetual virgin Iphigenia, a marital *oikos* for Electra.<sup>96</sup> The journey and position of the tragic female resembles the real life journey and position of the females in the society to which the *IT* was originally presented.<sup>97</sup> The woman moves from one *oikos* to another, acquiring civic meaning only in her capacity as wife/mother or participant in religious civic space. The ritual-related longings of Iphigenia and the chorus intensify this association in the play (e.g. 221-4, 1096-105, 1140-52). Outside the *oikos*, these women enjoyed prestige only in the realm of religion. In both positions, the female's civic authority and power is largely confined: in the limits of the household in the first, in the limits of the cultic space in the latter case; their power and freedom is always effectively directed and

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<sup>94</sup> The male characters (Orestes and Pylades) do not go to Troy either (contrast Menelaus and Teucer arriving from the city in *Hel.*). Troy is equally remote for all (the Greek) characters.

<sup>95</sup> The absence of considerations on the Trojan War might also be seen interrelated with another aspect of the play: the *IT* is interested in Athenian traditions. The Athenocentric standpoint of the play and absence of Troy might also be connected. The two same characteristics (interest in flagging Athens-omission of Troy) are arguably connected in the genre of the *epitaphios logos*. On this feature of the funeral orations, see Loraux 2006: 109-17.

<sup>96</sup> Electra's story and itinerary figures as well in the play even though indirectly (cf. 374, 562, 695-9, 811, 913; for Electra, see also p.123n.145). Electra's fate in Euripides is always connected with marriage (cf. e.g. Eur. *Andr.*, *El.*, *Or.*). For the chorus' fate in Greece we cannot be certain. The question of their relocation stays open. On this, see pp.133-5.

<sup>97</sup> Yet not in the way Kuntz's (1993: 104-26) analysis of female exiles (Helen, Medea, Iphigenia) argues (reflecting the ever transitional state of the female in marriage). For my disagreement with her reading, see *Introduction*, p.19n.31; ch.3, p.167n.107.

circumscribed. Beyond the assigned realms, as Iphigenia in the play, she is in danger of abuse, or in need of male protection. The outside world is the realm of the male. The men (Orestes and Pylades, the Greek captives arriving in Tauris before them, the Trojan warriors) can move freely in the outer world in search of their personal goals (69-70, 85-92, 116-17, 1040), for war (10-14, 139-43), for adventure, for trade (408-21). The male in the play, as in the Greek stereotypical thinking, is associated with movement, while the female is bound in her roles and in her space.<sup>98</sup> In this sense, Iphigenia's itinerary and space reflect aspects of the experience of her real-life counterparts. In empowering his female in the realm of religion and exposing her frailty outside it, Euripides' play invites reflection on real contemporary female experience. Like Iphigenia, the woman in the social context holds the same paradoxical position: highly influential in religion, vulnerable and of little influence outside it; both in the *polis* and outside it; both of and not of the community in which her roles and space are strictly circumscribed. This focus on the relation of community and individual was already there in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, the earlier dramatization of Orestes' return from exile and reintegration of the Atreid household.<sup>99</sup> The primal focus in Aeschylus is on the male and on political civic institutions (Orestes, the foundation of a new court, new laws). Euripides turns the spotlight on the female and the sphere of religion. Through them, both males and females are regenerated in his version of the resolution of the Atreid curse. While in the *Eumenides* the guilt of the protagonists is resolved through the creation (and decision) of a political institution (the trial at the Areopagus), in Euripides' version of the story their innocence is kept and rewarded via their efforts for deeper connection and reciprocity with their gods in the realm of religion.<sup>100</sup>

To conclude, beyond gender-specific themes, the position of this tragic female raises other interesting questions. Iphigenia in this distant land is positioned in a foreign society and is faced with its abhorrent (for her tastes) prerogatives. Her ethnicity, her personality, her emotions and ideals clash with the actions she is

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<sup>98</sup> For the social dynamics of female and male extra-theatrical space, see *Introduction*, p.12.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. e.g. Macleod 1982. In his analysis, he defines *Eum.* and the *Oresteia* as a whole as a "political" drama, in the sense that it markedly shows "a concern with human beings as part of a community" (p.132).

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Tzanetou 1999-2000: 209-10, again stressing the transfer from political institutions in Aeschylus to ritual in Euripides' version of the resolution of the Atreid curse. For the *IT* as a play flagging restoration through ritual and a deeper reciprocity between mortal and divinities, see pp.126-30. For the role of Athens as saviour and the differences with Aeschylus, see pp.132-3.

forced to perform. The conflict (function versus identity, duty versus values) and its emotional restraint on the protagonist is, as I have been arguing, a key element (both thematic and spatial) in the play. Duty can be abhorrent, abhorrent acts can occur not because of corrupted natures, but due to the pressure of corrupted circumstances (the case of Orestes' matricide as presented in this play does not differ). Female dislocation in this play functions as an effective and imaginative way to foreground the sense of being at odds with one's circumstances and environment. Iphigenia's original audience had been experiencing the Peloponnesian war since 431 B.C.<sup>101</sup> Particularly (not though exclusively) in the context of a civil war, citizens can be called to carry out things they consider *πρᾶγμα ἀλλόκοτον* (Thuc. 3.49.4, on the Mytilene event). In this sense Iphigenia's experience could also be relevant to the more general experience of her original audience. Euripides' female could be said to transcend the boundaries of gender and mirror the civic experience of many of the people of her fifth-century audience, and (because history tends to repeat itself) of too many of the people in her audiences today.

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<sup>101</sup>Based on their conjectured chronologies (on possible dates, see p.88n.17), scholars have argued for various kind of connections between the mood of the era and the meaning of the play (e.g. Wright 2005: 47, Goff 1999: 122, 125n.28, arguing for the play as a reflection of the general Athenian impetus for escape out of their difficult situation in late fifth century).

## *IPHIGENIA TAURICA*

### SCENIC ANALYSIS

#### *Enter Iphigenia, 1*

A female comes out of the scene-building. She moves onstage and begins the recitation of the first words of Euripides' play. After line 5, we can with certainty and satisfaction confirm that our guess was correct: this is Ἰφιγένεια (5), daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra.<sup>102</sup> Identification of location is postponed until line 30. We cannot be sure how far back the title Ἰφιγένεια ἢ ἐν Ταύροις goes. It could simply have been called Ἰφιγένεια. As Taplin argues, original titles were invariably in the form of a single word (name of principal character or collective plural denoting the chorus); additional subtitles most probably are Alexandrian additions.<sup>103</sup> If so, the audience would be more likely to associate it in their minds with the usual version of her story (Euripides' *Iphigenia Aulidensis* comes much later, produced after his death) and, unless they were at the *Proagon*, assume that this is going to be about Aulis. Delay in revelation of setting teases the audience's expectations and flags Euripides' innovative choice of both the location and the part of Iphigenia's story that is to be dramatized.<sup>104</sup> After introduction of location, through narration and *deixis* Iphigenia elaborates on the details of the immediate visible setting: behind her is the temple of Artemis (ναοῖσι...τοῖσδ'(ε).., 34-6); she is its priestess (34); a chorus of women are her slaves (63); Thoas, a "barbarian king of a barbarian folk" (31-2), is her ruler. Her words also establish some of the most important thematic and emotional associations to be exploited in the *IT*: the story of the Atreid family and its implications (1-30, 45-60); the tension between the double role of Iphigenia as both victim of a sacrifice at Aulis (6-27) and agent of it in Tauris (39-40); the concern with piety and proper ritual (36-41); the problem of interpreting divine

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<sup>102</sup>For the effects of Euripides' usual technique to postpone self-identification of the prologue speaker (cf. e.g. Eur. *Hel.* 22, *Or.* 23), see ch.1, p.58n.117.

<sup>103</sup> Taplin 1975: 185. On the possible date range for the introduction of these subtitles, cf. Sommerstein 2002: 3-4.

<sup>104</sup> For Euripides' mythic choices in developing the plot of the *IT* as innovative, see pp.84-5. Wright 2005: 129 notes the unusual postponement of announcement of setting (other Euripidean prologues invariably reveal location sooner). He attributes delay to wish to emphasize the idea of what he calls "weird geography" (p.127) of all escape plays.



signs (the dream, 42); the siblings' devotion<sup>105</sup>; the distance and nostalgia for Greece<sup>106</sup>; the tension between barbarians and Greeks (31).

But what has brought her outside? Her need to air away her nightly visions, to find a cure for her sorrowful dream: the family of the Atreids, reified in her dream in an architectural structure,<sup>107</sup> is gone! An earthquake has brought the palace to the ground and left nothing but one pillar standing still. This pillar partially becomes human, a male whom Iphigenia prepares for death. Orestes, according to her interpretation at least, is dead!<sup>108</sup> She has called on the chorus to pour libations for him. Thus, she leaves the inside, the place of the *καινὰ φάσματα* of the night in order to 'talk them away' to the upper air (42-3). Of these she can speak. Of the other appalling deeds prepared for inside, she cannot (*τὰ δ' ἄλλα σιγῶν, τὴν θεὸν φοβουμένη*, 37). She will only hint at the ambiguous ritual feast, *τοῦνομ' ἧς καλὸν μόνον* ("whose name alone is fair", 36). Inside this scene-building, the temple officials in charge of the sacrifices will be busy preparing for the new slaughter for the greater part of the play (40-[41], 470-1, 623-4, 725-6); inside, the body of Orestes will be cremated after his death (625-6, 1154-[1155]).<sup>109</sup> The temple is unmistakably associated with unspeakable deeds (*ἄρρητ' (α)*, [41]). Throughout, it will stand at the backdrop as a place of menace for the male newcomers, a brooding presence for all Greek characters onstage. Our first image of it is of a space of horrific night visions and horrific ritual deeds. Orestes and Pylades' reaction when they first lay eyes on it (67-103) will continue

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<sup>105</sup> Evident in her sorrow at the thought of Orestes' death and her wish to offer him libations, as Kyriakou 2006: 67, 83 observes.

<sup>106</sup> Implied in lines 44-5. The volume of this longing for return (*nostos*) will gradually increase. For nostalgia and the chorus, see pp.103-4.

<sup>107</sup> Architectural metaphors are of importance in the *IT*. For the architectural structures of the Atreid *oikos* and Athenian temple, see pp.107-8.

<sup>108</sup> For the dream, see pp.102-3.

<sup>109</sup> Lines 40-1, subject to various deletions and emendations (on this see Cropp 2000: 175; Diggle 1981: 75-6), imply that the sacrifices take place inside. This is contradicted by lines 72-3, where the outside altar is specifically described covered by the blood of the sacrifices, while other references to the sacrifices leave the altar of their supposed execution unspecified (cf. 225-8, 258-9, 705, 1320). Kyriakou 2006: 62 suggests that if we take the specification *ἔσωθεν* to qualify *ἄλλοισιν*, lines 40-1 may simply allocate attendants charged with the sacrifices and not the actual sacrifices inside the temple, which would erase the seeming contradiction. As she admits, I quote: "This is not the most natural construal of the phrase..." (p.62). Indeed, if line 41 is genuine, the words (*ἄλλοισιν-ἔσωθεν*) are too far apart for this connection to be made. Unless *ἀνακτόρων* can be the precinct (which is difficult in view of 65-6), the contradiction is a real problem and one has to be suspicious.

and contribute to its initially attributed horrific quality.<sup>110</sup> This temple is introduced and remains a horrendous space, whose inner segments are connected with sinister acts. A female comes out of it in search of a cure (ἄκος, 43) to her despair; she resorts to ritual (χράς, 61) in order to honour her absent brother, to ease the pain of his (supposed) death. This first isolated female movement of the plot could be said to encapsulate its whole drive and direction: a movement (significantly again in terms of the whole plot initiated by the female) from darkness to light, from *nosos* to cure, a search for a way out from despairing human anxieties to relief and sanctioned restoration; a search which will be variously interwoven with questions of religion and rituals.<sup>111</sup> Once more, as we saw in *Helen* and as we shall see yet again in *Andromache*, not only words but also staging of opening is critically important.<sup>112</sup>

### ***Exit Iphigenia, 66***

...εἴμ' ἔσω δόμων

ἐν οἴσι ναίω τῶνδ', ἀνακτόρων θεᾶς.

“I will go back into this house in which I dwell, the goddess’ temple”

(65-6)

Iphigenia and her goddess live together behind this scene-façade. The text is at pains to emphasize this fact. The strong bond between first incomer and origin of his/her coming, already hinted by Iphigenia’s entering from the temple (1), is here in a way further elucidated: she is both its priestess and its dweller.<sup>113</sup> The

<sup>110</sup> For these lines as encapsulating the horror of the Taurian cult for the Greek males, see Hourmouziades 1965: 52-3. Cropp 2000: 57 defines the temple as both a source of destruction and salvation for Orestes, in the sense that it contains the statue necessary for his salvation. I see no reason to attribute the function of the statue to the temple as a whole. For the savagery of the Taurian cult, see pp.95-6, 127-9.

<sup>111</sup> Light and dark, *nosos* and (need for) cure are both leitmotifs of the play. For light and dark cf. e.g. 42-3, 150-1, 185 and 845 (Orestes “light of the house of the Atreidai”), 205, 1025 (where the temple is explicitly assimilated with darkness). That the first scene of her entry must be envisioned as occurring in the morning (and thus her movement as one from darkness to light) can be conjectured from 151: “...in the night whose darkness has just departed”. For disease and cure/purification, cf. e.g. 930, 992, 1018-9, 1215-6. See also pp.107-8, for the image of the diseased house of Atreus. For the play as a movement from despair to joy, cf. e.g. Cropp 2000: 31; Wolff 1992: 326; Hamilton 1978: 286-7.

<sup>112</sup> See ch.1, pp.57-9; ch.3, pp.169-71.

<sup>113</sup> For the bond between interior and dominant resident character and for the importance of the first, usually delayed, entry from it, see ch.1, p.68n.171. I note here England’s (1883: xxx) different suggestion for the scenic arrangement: *periactoi* represented “out-buildings”, where Iphigenia must have lived and from where she would be seen to enter at 66. The use of movable screens is not archaeologically attested for the fifth-century theatre, nor given the material used

priestess is part of the goddess' household, their cohabitation expressing in physical terms their figurative close association in the dramatic architecture of the play.<sup>114</sup> I have talked elsewhere about the domestication of the protagonist in this sanctuary and its implications for a reading of the play.<sup>115</sup> Here, I wish to focus on another aspect: the double identity of this temple, as it is first spelled out at this exact theatrical moment in the words of the departing female: “this is the *house* in which I dwell, the goddess' *temple*”.<sup>116</sup> This scene-building is both a temple and a house. We will hear characters calling it one or the other many times in the course of the play.<sup>117</sup> When it stops being an *oikos* for the mortal priestess it simultaneously stops being the *hieron* of her divine patroness, whose statue the priestess will carry away from the temple as she departs near the end of the play (1156).<sup>118</sup> Two questions: firstly, how common is this spatial arrangement of a temple in the tragic gamut of spatial practices? And secondly, how common is it for real-life sanctuaries of the age? Of course, theatrical space is a stylized medium with its own rules and phenomena; convergence of creative literature, in any culture, with all details of historical reality is not needed or expected. Convergence or divergence from the norm of tragedy is more important. Yet the extent of divergence from life is also interesting in this instance; it helps to make the point of the extraordinary nature of this mortal-goddess cohabitation more emphatic.

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(fabric) could it be. Furthermore, as Kampourelli 2002: 64 shows, the arguments for the use of the *periactoi* as early as the fifth century, or in the Hellenistic theatre as a development of the supposed panels of the fifth century are not so convincing. For partisans of that view, cf. e.g. Bieber 1961<sup>2</sup>: 79; Gardner 1899: 260-2.

<sup>114</sup>The strong bond between this priestess and her goddess is variously indicated in the course of the play: she has been fatally connected to her even before birth (20-4), she has been saved by her in the past (28-30), both priestess and goddess avoid the touch of any other character in the play (799: ἀθίκτοις...πέπλοις: Iphigenia has not been touched by mortal hand in Tauris; 1044-5: θιγείν γὰρ ὄσιόν ἐστ' ἐμοὶ μόνῃ: the statue of the goddess can only be touched by Iphigenia; see also pp.99-100). Their tight association turns into a strong visual image, when later Iphigenia appears holding the βρέτας of her goddess in her arms (ἐν ὠλέναις, 1158); see pp.126-7. For their close connection in the play, cf. comment in e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 460; Hamilton 1985: 59-61; Lattimore 1974: 80. For their close association in cult, see detailed comments in e.g. Parker 2005: 240; Cropp 2000: 51; Tomlinson 1976: 110-1.

<sup>115</sup> For the way Iphigenia's domestication within the temple marks her alienation and isolation from surroundings, see pp.101-2.

<sup>116</sup> The italics are mine.

<sup>117</sup> Referred to explicitly as house of Iphigenia in e.g. 65-6, 219. Referred to as the temple of the goddess in e.g. 34, 66, 69, 88, 100, 106, 111, 129, 138, 406, 460, 470, 624, 636, 748, 1024, 1153, 1307, 1309.

<sup>118</sup> For this movement, see pp.126-30.

Starting from the latter question, a temple in a real-life sanctuary was a house for the god in the form of an image/statue (and no distinction is necessarily made between the god and the statue), a repository for his/her property, and a centre of religious activity and worship. Up to this point, there seems to be no divergence between theatrical and extra-theatrical space: Artemis' Euripidean temple houses the goddess (her statue resides inside) and is the centre of her worship in the Taurian land.<sup>119</sup> In real life though, it is most unlikely that Iphigenia as priestess of this (or any other temple for that matter) would also dwell inside it along with her goddess. Ancient Greek religion normally assigned priesthood to prominent citizens, who continued to live in their own houses. We know of some cults that did have full time priests, as e.g. the temple of Athena Nike in the Acropolis. But even here, there is no evidence that the priest also lived in the Acropolis.<sup>120</sup>

In the theatre, we meet temples standing as the backdrop of other extant tragic plays: the temples of Apollo and Athena in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, the temple of Zeus Agoraios in Euripides' *Heraclidae*, the temple of Demeter and Persephone in Euripides' *Supplikes*, and finally the temple of Apollo in Euripides' *Ion*. Only in the last is the mortal protagonist marked clearly as both the attendant and dweller of the temple: "Do you live in this temple or in a house?", Creusa will ask. "All the god's precinct, wherever I fall asleep, is home to me", Ion will reply (314-5).<sup>121</sup> This physical cohabitation is clearly of a more casual and less stable character than Iphigenia's living arrangement with Artemis. Less stable also will prove the figurative association between god and worshipper; Ion will break the bond with Apollo by the end of the play to return to Athens and his ancestral

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<sup>119</sup> On sanctuaries and temples in the ancient Greek world, see Marinatos & Hägg 1993: 228-33; Yavis 1949. For a synopsis of the architectural development of sanctuaries up to their closure (mid fourth century A.D.), see Tomlinson 1976:16-26. For sanctuaries positioned in marginal locations (as the temple of Artemis by the margins of Tauris in this play) and their religious and possible political significance, see e.g. Parker 2005: 57; Marinatos & Hägg 1993: 31-2, 229-32.

<sup>120</sup> See e.g. Burkert 1985: 95-6; Tomlinson 1976: 18-9, 52. Buildings with dining arrangements found in sanctuaries cannot be taken to have been priest houses with any certainty, says Tomlinson. Most likely they were used by political leaders for dining purposes.

<sup>121</sup> For the relation of Ion and the temple as given in the words of that play, see e.g. 34-40 (Ion is put at its steps as a baby by Hermes), 52-6 (Ion living in the precinct of the god as ταμίας and χρυσοφύλακας of the temple), 78-80 (Ion comes out of the temple with a broom and water to clean), 102-11 (further description of his tasks: purifies the entrance of Phoebus' house, shoots away the birds with his bow), 110-1 (the temple of Apollo has nurtured him, cf. 182-3). Note that both in Eur. *Ion* and Aesch. *Eum.* two female prophetesses are also located at the interior of the temples: Pythia sits at the tripod of the god and prophesies in the first (Eur. *Ion* 90-3), while Aeschylus' Pythia is also said to sit inside at the throne and prophesy in the temple of Apollo (Aesch. *Eum.* 35). Nothing in these texts suggests that these temples are their permanent dwelling, while both figures occupy the stage and dramatic interest of the plays only for a brief time.

palace. Iphigenia and Artemis remain closely aligned even outside the dramatic time of the play; their cohabitation becomes permanent, as Iphigenia is promised a hero cult adjacent to Artemis' new temple in Brauron by the *dea ex machina* at the end of the play (1464-5).<sup>122</sup> In both plays Euripides uses space creatively and imaginatively (diverging both from common real-life and theatrical practices) to give tangible dimensions to thematic aspects of his plots. This Taurian temple with its double function marks spatially the unusual connection (for a fifth-century audience) between mortal and divinity. This very close association is also, as has been seen, one of exclusiveness; both in real and figurative space priestess and goddess in Tauris are related only to each other.<sup>123</sup>

### ***Enter Iphigenia-Enter chorus, 123***

The chorus do not turn up when they were expected (οὐπω...πάρεισιν, 65). Iphigenia goes back to the house to wait for them at line 66. Orestes and Pylades arrive onstage at line 67. We, the audience, get to hear their dialogue and see Euripides' story from the male protagonist's important second perspective.<sup>124</sup> Line 122 is the last uttered by Orestes, as he moves towards the *eisodos* to exit. At line 123, Iphigenia enters again to receive the chorus. Together they will offer libations for her dead brother Orestes (βούλομαι δοῦναι χοῶς.../ σὺν προσπόλοισιν..., 61-3).<sup>125</sup> We have just seen her brother, still very much alive, departing from the stage. Twice, brother and sister are so close together. Yet they are kept apart. The chorus' delay allows Euripides to juxtapose Iphigenia and Orestes in sequential scenes and mark out ironically the distance separating them because of their limited knowledge and situation. Now, the play can begin; the

<sup>122</sup> For the possibility that there is a chronological development in the closeness of the priest-god relation in Euripides, see Hamilton 1985: 55. For his comments on *Ion* and *Iphigenia* in particular, see pp.57-61.

<sup>123</sup> See pp.99-100, 126-30.

<sup>124</sup> This is a surprise entry; anticipation was specifically raised for a choral entry only to be frustrated (see Kyriakou 2006: 67).

<sup>125</sup> For the timing of Iphigenia and the chorus' entries I follow Kyriakou 2006: 83 and Taplin 1977: 194n.3 in assigning lines 123-5 to Iphigenia. Parallel instances, which Taplin and Kyriakou note, plus that, as they point out, it is appropriate for Iphigenia's status as priestess that she be the one to give the call for ritual silence to the chorus are arguments for this staging choice. This adds to her portrayal as authoritative figure, argued as inherent in the scenic pattern of the play (see pp.99-100). Contrast Cropp 2000: 182. Further to the above, I think it makes nice stagecraft to bring the siblings so close, yet kept apart by having the one entering when the other has just exited, and vice-versa. Cf. the similar way stage action is configured (with one sibling departing just before the entry of the other) in *Soph. El.* 77-86, *Eur. El.* 77-82.

Ἑλληνίδαι γυναῖκες (64), already awaited for around 60 lines, can finally enter.

They approach the temple in lyric anapaests. The solemn tone and rhythm of the mode of entry (ὀσίᾳς ὄσιον πόδα παρθένιον.../ πέμπω, 130-1) create the sense of a ritual procession (*pompe*); this choral song has marked elements of a *prosodion*.<sup>126</sup> Both opening ritual cry of Iphigenia (123-5) and solemnity of processional song effectively introduce the ritual atmosphere necessary for the upcoming scene of the libation for Orestes and firmly establish their religious status as temple servants. These women are Artemis' devotees, the δμωαί (servants, 144) of her priestess assigned to the role by the Taurian king Thoas. They have come from Greece, well-born women turned into exiles, slaves "brought on a ship by the oars and spears of the enemy" (1109-12).<sup>127</sup> Their presence is more clearly motivated than that of the chorus in *Helen's* Egypt, there addressed briefly in the span of only six words: ὦ θήραμα βαρβάρου πλάτας/ Ἑλλανίδες κόραι... (Eur. *Hel.* 192-3). In the *IT* the chorus' own story of dislocation is given more space. This is not incidental, as their sense of displacement will play an important role in the turning up of the volume of alienness of Taurian space throughout the play.<sup>128</sup> These women's fate and route in space resembles Iphigenia's own journey. Their bond is well justified and prepared for in dramatic terms.<sup>129</sup> It is furthermore skilfully accentuated by Euripides' choices of theatrical techniques employed in the staging of their first entry: Iphigenia is brought on and given a solo aria before the choral entry and will remain present through the *parodos*, which turns into a shared song of antiphonal lamentations. As Taplin has shown, both these practices are typical

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<sup>126</sup> For the metre, see Cropp 2000: 182; England 1883: 134-5. Kyriakou 2006: 83-4 rejects the possibility of the chorus arriving in ritual procession; "the chorus do not arrive expecting to take part in cultic action", she says (p.84). Yet we (the audience) know the context in which they are expected and they are welcomed onstage with a ritual cry (123-5). For a recent reassessment of the elements and nature of the *prosodion*, see Rutherford 2003: 713-24.

<sup>127</sup> Cf. 132-6. As war captives they resemble the choruses of Aesch. *Cho.*; Eur. *Hec.*, *Tro.* See Cropp 2000: 59n.121; Grube 1941: 317. Their noble social status can be deduced from details of their recollections of their past life: e.g. 1143-52, see also Kyriakou 2006: 36; Cropp 2000: 59. As for their place of origin and final destination, see pp.133-5.

<sup>128</sup> For the question of the presentation of the identity of the chorus in *Hel.*, see ch.1, p.61. For the dramatic significance of the chorus' nostalgia in altering the dynamics of space of the *IT*, see pp.103-4.

<sup>129</sup> The resemblance is noted by scholars: Kyriakou 2006: 36, 82; Stern-Gillet 2001: 12n.24. Common ethnicity of female and friendly chorus is the norm in extant tragedy. For the tendencies and the way the relationship of chorus-protagonist is complicated in the case of Eur. *Andr.*, see ch.3, pp.175-6.

Euripidean ways of indicating the strong bond between the actor and his/her chorus.<sup>130</sup> They arrive in agitation (note the anadiplosis of 138: ἄγαγες ἄγαγες) to find out the reason of their priestess' call (ἔμολον· τί νέον; τίνα φροντίδ' ἔχεις;, 137).<sup>131</sup> They join her in her laments (ἀντιψάλμους ᾠδὰς ὕμνων τ' / Ἀσιητᾶν σοι... / δέσποιν', ἐξαυδάσω..., 179-81), and assist her in her ritual deeds (*choes*) for her brother. Their genuine will to share in her anxiety and assist her in her deeds (both for and with her brother later in the play) will prove active and unaltered, reaching the point of selfless sacrifice and devotion, until the very end of the play.<sup>132</sup> What motivated their first entering movement in the scenic space of this play (Iphigenia's summons and concerns), will be throughout the motivation of their acts and movements on *IT's* stage. This emphasis on female friendship and loyalty anticipates the emphasis in what follows on the *philia* between Orestes and Pylades. Female *philia*, and unusually the *philia* between the chorus and the character, is later counterbalanced by and mirrored in the male equivalent.

### ***Exit Iphigenia, 642***

Iphigenia goes inside to fetch the letter she wishes to send to Argos (637-8). Since her last entry onstage,<sup>133</sup> a lot has occurred: a Taurian herdsman has come to bring her the news of the new “sacrifice and offering” to Artemis (πρόσφαγμα καὶ θυτήριον / Ἀρτέμιδι, 243-4); the chorus has sung their first *stasimon* (393-466); the two young men have been brought with their hands bound (χέρας δεσμοῖς, 456) to a location near the temple. Iphigenia has been engaged in a long dialogue with one of them (still a stranger to her), eagerly asking him about the ἐν Ἰλίῳ πόνους / νόστον τ' Ἀχαιῶν τόν τ' ἐν οἰωνοῖς σοφὸν / Κάλχαντ' Ἀχιλλέως τ' ὄνομα, καὶ τὸν ἄθλιον / Ἀγαμέμνον'(α)... γυναῖκα παιδᾶς τ'

<sup>130</sup> See Taplin 1977: 194, 283. Cf. the choral entry song in Eur. *Helen* (ch.1, p.60).

<sup>131</sup> On the anadiplosis as a way of expressing agitation, see Cropp 2000: 184.

<sup>132</sup> For the selfless devotion of chorus to Iphigenia, see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 36, 373, 446; Wright 2005: 289; Cropp 2000: 59; Kaimio 1988: 74n.77. For more on friendship as an important theme of the play, see pp.120-1.

<sup>133</sup> As Taplin 1977: 110n.1, I do not envisage an exit of Iphigenia at 391. For this view, see Platnauer 1938: 93.

(661-5).<sup>134</sup> As she has found out, this stranger comes from Argos (508). Her thoughts have now led her to a new plan (578-96): in the temple, she keeps a letter a former victim of Artemis had written down for her; if Orestes will take it to Argos, in return she will spare his life. Orestes rejects the offer; Pylades should be saved (596-608). Iphigenia, still ignorant of his identity, goes along without any objections. She will fetch the letter, so that her plan can move on. Our anxiety rises; the long-delayed recognition will have to wait a bit longer. The forward movement of the plot pauses for a while. Given immediate attention as a pair on this stage for the final time, Orestes and Pylades engage in an emotional scene, in the face of death and separation that seems (to them at least) imminent.

The scene makes a great deal of their mutual male loyalty. The readiness of the two friends to die for each other is one of the high moments of the play. Orestes and Pylades' friendship is in the limelight for around eighty lines of the play.<sup>135</sup> "It is disgraceful for me to look on the light with you dead", says Pylades (674). "When I can bear one set of griefs, I will not bear two", will be Orestes' reply (688). The chorus is in *aporia* as to whom to lament for (651-6). Like the men, these choral women themselves prove models of an exemplary devotion; intense friendship between the males is mirrored among the females of the play. Friendship as a notion is an important theme in the whole of the *IT* (strong friendship between chorus and female protagonist seems to be the norm in all cases of dislocation).<sup>136</sup> Its significance is emphasized not only on the male side (between Orestes and Pylades), but also on the female (Iphigenia and the chorus). From the beginning, it is made explicit that choral women and protagonist are tightly connected. They have a common fate and a strong bond of loyalty, which persists through the play; it includes conventional features (choral promise of silence for the conspiracy of the protagonists, 1075-7) but goes beyond

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<sup>134</sup> This is the summary Orestes himself will give for the intriguing and strangely too 'Greek' (Ἑλληνικῶς, 660) questions of Iphigenia. These lines function nicely as a preparation for the imminent recognition (see Kyriakou 2006: 220; England 1833: xxvi).

<sup>135</sup> We have been given indications of their strong *philia* earlier in the play. Cf. 310-4, where Pylades is described "helping his friend (*philon*, 314) with loving attentions"; 497-8: [Iphigenia] "Are you brothers from a single mother?/[Orestes] "Yes, in affection...". For Pylades in this play as retaining traces of his traditional role as the sensible and encouraging partner to Orestes, see e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 34-5; Cropp 2000: 38; Taplin 1977: 334; Grube 1941: 317, 324-5, 330; Platnauer 1938: vi.

<sup>136</sup> For the dominance of the theme of *philia* in *IT*, see e.g. Cropp 2000: 38-9; Burnett 1971: 56-7. For sibling affection, see pp.113, 122-3. In all cases of dislocation, the chorus is always one of the female's closest allies and friends. For the chorus-female bond in other two cases of dislocation, see ch.1, pp.59-60, ch.3, pp.175-7.



convention to reach a climax near the end of the play, when the Greek women will not hesitate to risk their own life and their longed for *nostos* in order to actively facilitate their friend's escape (1284-301: telling lies they try to inhibit the Messenger from speaking to Thoas).<sup>137</sup> Euripides will not give another scene celebrating female friendship. This would be perhaps redundant; the play needs to move on. These women, nevertheless, will also be highly rewarded in the end: "because of the uprightness of their hearts" (1468), Athena will order Thoas to send them back to Greece. Mortal friendship and self-sacrifice is highly valued in this play both among mortals, as this beautiful scene of *philia* emphasizes, but also among the gods as we find out with relief and satisfaction in the end.

### ***Enter Iphigenia, 725***

σίγα· τὰ Φοίβου δ' οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ μ' ἔπη·  
 γυνὴ γὰρ ἦδε δωμάτων ἔξω περᾶ.

"Enough! Phoebus' words do me no good: here comes the woman out of the house."

(723-4)

Orestes and the audience's feelings and interpretation of Iphigenia's entry at this exact moment could not have been more different. "Enough! Phoebus words do me no good...", exclaims Orestes in words that manifest his almost complete despair. He is near death now more than ever (κάγγυς ἔστηκας φόνου, 720); or so he thinks. We, the audience, far from despairing, can grasp Iphigenia's steps out of the temple-door as the first firm action leading towards the reverse; recognition (and hence salvation) cannot be far away anymore.<sup>138</sup> The prop that will trigger the recognition (the letter) is carried out in the hands of the entering female. But just before we start moving from despair to joy, the irony and the extent of the human inability to grasp the workings of the divine is brought to the fore. The ἀπίστους ἠδονάς (642) of recognition and embrace that follow will renew Orestes' faith in his patron's words. After approximately 300 lines, we will

<sup>137</sup> See previous discussion, pp.118-9. Chong-Gossard 2008: 155-203, discusses instances of 'silent' female choruses in all extant Euripidean plays of intrigue. The kind of active involvement of the chorus in the conspiracy in the *IT* (telling lies to deceive) is not a common phenomenon, occurring elsewhere only in Eur. *Hipp.* (Chong-Gossard 2008: 156).

<sup>138</sup> For the high tension of this moment in the play, cf. e.g. comments in Kyriakou 2006: 244-5; Cropp 2000: 220; Hamilton 1978: 284-5.

hear the previously desperate Orestes talk of confident hope (ἐλπίζω, 1016) for their return.<sup>139</sup>

Up to this moment the fragmentation of the Atreid family, the long distance dividing brother and sister has been kept constantly to the fore through words (e.g. 42-60: the dream of the destroyed household, 62: ἀποῦσ' ἀπόντι, 175: τηλόσε γὰρ δὴ σᾶς ἀπενάσθην..., 629: μακράν...ναίει..., 755-65: emphasis on the long, dangerous journey which separates the letter from its recipient), and actions (Iphigenia pours the *choes* for her dead brother who has just left the stage, Iphigenia and Orestes are so close yet kept apart up to this moment on the stage). The prop of the letter itself has functioned as a metaphor further intensifying the notion of the fragmentation and distance separating the family (in the sense that letters are invariably predicated on long distances). References to it started already 200 lines before (e.g. 584, 594, 603-4, 615). Now it is finally brought out. Dramatically it is not indispensable. Euripides could do without it; and in a sense he will. In an unparalleled *coup de theatre* (which since Aristotle onwards has brought him nothing but praise), the prop is dashed away, as the recognition has already occurred (at least for the male side) before its destined delivery to Orestes.<sup>140</sup> Fictive distance symbolized via the letter has the effect of emphasizing the actuality of physical proximity, when Iphigenia starts narrating its content to her interlocutors onstage (769ff). The letter as text rests on authorial absence while here writer and recipient face each other.

As the process of recognition evolves, the function of the letter transforms: it turns into the mechanism that bridges distance, the physical token that affects the recognition and reintegration of the scattered Atreids.<sup>141</sup> Its anticipated long journey is accomplished in few seconds, and release from their suffering proves just few feet away (791-4). The letter is dashed to the ground and the long

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<sup>139</sup> For the plot as moving from despair to joy, see p.114n.111. For Orestes' criticism of Apollo before, cf. e.g. 77-103, 570-5, 711-5. On delusion and human inability to grasp the divine as an important motif in the play, see Trieschnigg 2008: 476-8; Kyriakou 2006: 15-19, 452; Cropp 2000: 38-9. For the theme in *Hel.*, see ch.1, pp.75-6.

<sup>140</sup> See Arist. *Poet.* 1454b-1455a. For the dramatic effectiveness of the letter as a tool of unparalleled staging, see comments in e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 247-8; Wright 2005: 305; Cropp 2000: 213-4, 221; Burnett 1971: 53-4. For the letter as a tool of characterization, see Kyriakou 2006: 32; Cropp 2000: 213-4; Strachan 1976: 136; Burnett 1971: 54-5; see previous discussion, p.86n.10.

<sup>141</sup> Physical tokens are established as elements in recognitions since Homer. Cf. e.g. the scar of Odysseus in *Od.* 19 386-96, the lock of hair in Aesch. *Cho.* 225-34, the scar on Orestes' eyebrow in Eur. *El.* 571-9.

untouched clothes of the female (ἀθίκτοις...πέπλοις, 799) are finally touched in the succeeding brother-sister embrace.<sup>142</sup> The rupture of the female's isolation, total up to this moment, is emphatically marked by the two compounded physical actions succeeding one another onstage.<sup>143</sup> The embrace with the brother compensates Iphigenia for the ἀσπάσματα (376) she had not the chance to give and take when she left him. Brother and sister, kept apart for so long, are emotionally reunified. The threat to the brother by the ignorant sister, presented in the prologue (the dream), is averted. Their affection overturns the long line of interfamilial killing that has haunted their family's previous generations.<sup>144</sup> Their embrace becomes the visual image of this implicit reversal. For, when the two remaining members of the Atreid *oikos* embrace, in a striking sense, their *oikos* is figuratively recreated onstage.<sup>145</sup> This restoration is the necessary first move toward the more fundamental eradication of distance in their return to Greece. The first important steps (exit from localized isolation, reconnection with the brother) towards escape from both past and present are decisively made.

### ***Exit Iphigenia, Orestes, Pylades 1088***

The escape plan is set and already in motion. Iphigenia prays to Artemis to secure her benevolence for what is underway (1082-8). Orestes and Pylades move towards the temple and cross its door following her admonition: σὸν ἔργον ἦδη καὶ σὸν ἐσβαίνειν δόμους (1079). Following them she exits as well into the scene-building, while the chorus is left alone to sing their second *stasimon* (1089-152).

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<sup>142</sup> For recognition-scenes culminating in an embrace, cf. e.g. Eur. *Hel.* 622, *Ion* 1435, *El.* 577; Soph. *El.* 1226. Orestes' attempt to embrace her before she has recognized him as her brother is translated in her mind in an offensive attempt to touch the untouchable: ξέν', οὐ δικάίως τῆς θεοῦ τὴν πρόσπολον/ χραίνεις ἀθίκτοις περιβαλὼν πέπλοις χέρα, 798-9. Cf. in Eur. *Hel.*, where the female's attempted embrace becomes potentially sexually offensive to the still ignorant Menelaus (Eur. *Hel.* 567: μὴ θίγης ἐμῶν πέπλων).

<sup>143</sup> For the inviolate female body as symbol of Iphigenia's multileveled virginity within Taurian space, see pp.101-2.

<sup>144</sup> On this notion, see e.g. Hall 2010: 275; Kyriakou 2006: 10; Cropp 2000: 38-9. For the early expressions of the sibling affection, cf. e.g. 61-2, 144-74, 230-5, 372-9.

<sup>145</sup> Electra is the third living member of the family. Yet mentions of her are few (42-60: excluded from the dream, 374, 562, 811, 913), while it is made clear that she is to be understood as member of a new household from now on: the household of Pylades to whom she is married (915).

As in *Helen*, female directing males is a recurrent motif in the pattern of movements of *IT*'s stage. This is the sanctuary of a female goddess, with a female as its temple  $\pi\upsilon\lambda\omega\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$  (1153). Iphigenia instructs all male movement while onstage (the Taurian temple-servants, the Taurian herdsman arriving from the shore, Orestes and Pylades, Thoas).<sup>146</sup> Indeed she utters a large number of imperatives: directed to the Taurian citizens at large (123, 1229), to the Herdsman (256, 324), to the temple servants (468, 470, 725), to Orestes and/or Pylades (501, 578, 593, 735, 769, 773, 775, 783), to Thoas (1204, 1209, 1216). It is quite remarkable how syntax affirms, at the level of textual detail, the impression of Iphigenia as a figure of authority also created in spatial terms.<sup>147</sup> Athena also steers male action: she directs Thoas and the Taurians' movements at the end of the play (1435-74), and instructs Poseidon to calm the rowdy sea for Orestes' sake (1444-5).<sup>148</sup> When they start moving outside the Taurian sanctuary, Iphigenia as priestess will again lead the way, instructing the movements of all males onstage: Orestes and Pylades will be brought in with their heads covered (1207), some of Thoas' servants are to follow her (1208), Thoas is to cover his eyes with his cloak (1217-8) and perform the temple's purification while he awaits for her supposed return (1216).<sup>149</sup> But when they reach the shore the pattern (female directing males) soon reverses. There, Iphigenia does not act, speak, or direct male movement any more. On the shore, she is in danger of their physical aggression (in the case of the Taurians), and in need of male care and protection (in the case of Orestes). As a close reading of the messenger's narration of offstage events (1327-419) will demonstrate, the way the narrative is constructed (in content, detail of description, and syntax) draws close attention to this reversal of onstage scenic pattern and power ratios, when Iphigenia finds herself in the threatening region of the shore.

Iphigenia, attendants and potential victims reach the shore. Iphigenia, says the messenger, starts performing the false ritual: she orders them (Thoas' servants) to stand at a distance, she walks behind the strangers, she raises the sacrificial shout

<sup>146</sup> This derives from her role as *kleidouchos* (see p.99).

<sup>147</sup> For the way the pattern of her movement and action affirms her authoritative role in Tauris, see further in pp.99-100, 117n.125. The point from the perspective of syntactic structure is also particularly interesting in the light of the way syntax is similarly used to reflect the reversal of her role when at shore (see following paragraph). For the way shifts in tone and syntax betray her inner conflict between her emotions and her duties, see p.103.

<sup>148</sup> Athena instructing Poseidon is a recurrent motif in Homer and tragedy (see Cropp 2000: 261).

<sup>149</sup> Contrast how when leaving Argos, it was her own eyes that were veiled (372).

and sings barbaric songs “as if she were cleansing blood guilt” (ὡς φόνον νίζουσα δῆ, 1338). She moves (ἔστειχε, 1334), acts (θύουσα, ἀνωλόλυξε, κατῆδε, 1332-7), instructs (ἐξένευσ’(ε), 1330), while the males, both the Greeks and the Taurians, obey and stay silent (offstage as they have done up to now onstage). After some time, the Taurian men get suspicious; the strangers may have killed her (οἱ ξένοι/ κτάνοιεν αὐτήν, 1340-1). They decide to go and find out. There they see a Greek ship with fifty sailors, the two Greek male victims standing on its stern (1345-9). The male sailors are moving and acting (1350-3): some of them holding the prow with poles, others trying to anchor to the catheads, others carrying in haste a ladder down from the stern into the sea for the “foreign girl” (τῆ ξένη, 1353). The priestess (not mentioned by name anymore) does not speak.<sup>150</sup> Men speak and shout (1358-63: the Taurians address Orestes and not the female; 1385-9).<sup>151</sup> In turn, she is not heard until near the end of the narration and then only to utter a prayer to her goddess (1397-402). Her untouched sacred body (ἀθίκτοις...πέπλοις, 799), touched only by the brother Orestes in their embrace, is now repeatedly touched: the Taurians take a hold of her (εἰχόμεσθα τῆς ξένης, 1355, 1364) and try to drag her with them (ἔπεσθαι διεβιαζόμεσθάνιν, 1365); Orestes puts her on his shoulder and carries her on the ladder she cannot ascend by herself (1381-5).<sup>152</sup> Before, she was the author of action, now she is acted upon; very literally in the syntax of the words, Iphigenia before the subject of verbs now turns into the object of verbs denoting male(s) acting and the female accepting the effect of their actions.<sup>153</sup> Now we are in the male world of

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<sup>150</sup> Iphigenia is referred to as: Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖς (1331, 1398), αὐτή (1333, 1341), ξένη (1353, 1355, 1364), ἡδε (1360-2), ἀδελφή (1363, 1383, 1418), νιν (1365), κόρη (1403). The Taurian man does not refer to her name or her priestly role, in which she has failed in his eyes by taking the side of her brother, forgetting her sacrifice at Aulis, and betraying the goddess (1418-9). Furthermore, in insisting on her connection with Orestes (sister), his obvious aim to arouse Thoas’ anger against her (1411-9) is facilitated. For denomination in Euripidean messenger speeches in general and its important effects, see De Jong 1991: 94-103.

<sup>151</sup> For the use of direct speech in Euripidean messenger speeches and possible dramatic effects, see De Jong 1991: 131-9.

<sup>152</sup> For touching, see also 1068-74: possible physical touching between Iphigenia and chorus, when she supplicates them (for the debated issue of physical interaction between actors and chorus see ch.1, p.62n.142); 1464-7: her statue will be touched by the women offering their garments as dedications.

<sup>153</sup> Note how in 1330-8 Iphigenia is the subject of main verbs: Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖς (1331), αὐτή (1333). From 1339-96, the power ratio between male and female reverses. This is reflected in the reversal of the syntax of the narrative, in which Iphigenia turns from now on into the object of verbs that have male agents as their subjects: κτάνοιεν αὐτήν (1341), τῆ ξένη καθίεσαν (1353), εἰχόμεσθα τῆς ξένης (1355, 1364), τήνδ’ ἀπέμπολας (1360), τήνδ’ ἐμήν

seas and ships, of male prowess and fighting: the setting of the offstage drama is actually Orestes' ship and its vicinity (1043, 1345)<sup>154</sup>; description of male fighting (1358-78: against each other, 1390-408: against the waves) occupies approximately half of the narrative speech (38 lines out of a total of 92). Inside the sanctuary the vulnerable woman is made powerful by her role as priestess. Outside it, she turns passive and dependent on the male. The words and action on the stage up to this moment and the detailed narrative presentation of gestures and male-female interaction in the offstage events allow us, or rather prompt us to follow the scenic pattern and its reversal very closely.<sup>155</sup> I have argued elsewhere that this is a play with central considerations on the value of the individual in the civic context, on the civic meaning attached to the female only through her role either in cult or the *oikos*.<sup>156</sup> A close up on the pattern of movement, physical interaction and touching of the female protagonist in the different spaces to which Euripides directs her, gives concrete shape to what I have there explored more as abstract thematic associations.

### ***Enter Iphigenia, 1156***

Artemis finally appears onstage. Not in flesh, but in the figure of a small, wooden statue.<sup>157</sup> In the form of this statue, she had landed in the Taurian temple coming from the sky (87-8, 977: διοπετέες, 986: οὐράνιον, 1384: τό τ' οὐρανοῦ πέσημα), outside the dramatic time of the play. It has been housed in the inner room of the Taurian temple on a stone pedestal (κρηπίδας...λαῖνας, 997) since then. Our play started when Orestes and Pylades reached Tauris aiming to snatch it away, as Apollo has instructed them. The idea of the statue whose divine power assists in the protagonist's salvation is already there in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*: the Aeschylean Apollo sends Orestes to clasp the statue of Athena (Aesch. *Eum.* 235-43). Here the statue changes identity, Artemis rather than Athena, and function,

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κομίζομαι (1362), λαβῶν ἀδελφὴν, ἣν ἀπώλεσ' (α) (1363), διεβιαζόμεσθ' αὖτις (1365), λαβῶν Ὀρέστης.../ ἔθηκ' ἀδελφὴν (1381-3).

<sup>154</sup> For scenery in Euripidean messenger speeches, see De Jong 1991: 148-60.

<sup>155</sup> De Jong 1991: 141-4 refers to the importance of gestures and *miens* described in a narrative to intensify notions in a play (e.g. the estrangement of Eteocles and Polynices in Eur. *Phoen.*), or to reveal emotions of characters (e.g. Polyxena's readiness to die in Eur. *Hec.*) etc.

<sup>156</sup> For the play as problematizing the role of the female in cult and *oikos*, see pp.109-10.

<sup>157</sup> For the presentation and use of portable props in the ancient theatre, see Taplin 1977: 36-8. It is interesting to note that among the vase paintings related to the play, this statue and the letter are the two most prominent props represented (see Taplin 2007: 150).

object of theft rather than supplication. The need to take hold of the statue is a repeated notion in the words of the play (85-92, 111-2, 976-86, 1000-1, 1012-5, 1040, 1440-1). Finally, near its ending, Iphigenia lifts it from its base (1201: ἠράμην βάθρων ἄπο) just before she enters, in order to initiate its destined journey towards a πόλιν εὐδαίμονα (1087; cf. 1038-45). Artemis had once carried Iphigenia away from the horror of the sacrificial knife of her father. Now, Iphigenia helps rescue Artemis from the horror of the ritual perversion of Tauris. The one carried turns into the carrier; the images mirror each other in reverse form.<sup>158</sup> Iphigenia returns her goddess the favour, and both statue and carrier are restored to proper sanctuaries and cults in Greek space.

The image is exceptional in many ways. Exceptionally, along with the mortals this goddess herself is now in the process of being saved. Iphigenia while being rescued by her brother acts simultaneously as the rescuer of her goddess. On other tragic stages, mortals cling onto divine statues to secure help, benevolence, protection, salvation. This tragic statue differs in the level of its reciprocity with its mortal users. The statue is itself in need of protection and salvation. Other (extant) tragic statues, Aeschylean (in *Supplices*, *Septem contra Thebas*, *Eumenides*), Sophoclean (in *Oedipus Coloneus*), or Euripidean (in *Hippolytus*, *Electra*) receive supplications, dedications and prayers.<sup>159</sup> This statue is involved in human sacrifice and becomes the object of theft. In its capacity to move and be carried around it is again unique in relation to other tragic statues. Elsewhere, statues are always static, marking on stage (as in real life) the boundaries of a sacred precinct.<sup>160</sup> This prop is portable and mobile: it lands here from the sky (87-8), and moves out of the precinct by the end of the play. There is in this case no defining connection between image of god and cultic surrounding. The statue is no integral part of this shrine; the goddess too is an alien in a strange land. Its origin differs from its surroundings. Hence, importantly, so does its nature: being heaven-sent, this religious object is sacred; neither made by barbarians, nor as we

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<sup>158</sup> On the image as visualizing their close association, see p.115n.114.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. this use of statues (i.e. supplication, prayer, dedications) in Aesch *Supp.*, *Sept.*, *Eum.*; Eur *Hipp.*, *El.* Only in this tragedy is the statue carried around and involved in perverted rituals instead of being supplicated or adorned.

<sup>160</sup> For the staging of Soph. *OC*, I follow Jebb 2004: xxxvii, who sees a statue of the hero Colonus onstage marking the sacred precinct. For statues of gods as parts of sanctuaries in real-life temples and their cultic use and value, see e.g. Marinatos & Hägg 1993: 229; Tomlinson 1976: 17-18.

have noted touched by their hand in the sequence (contrast its near assimilation to Iphigenia's own nature).<sup>161</sup>

Both spatially and figuratively (note our discussion on how the text denies justification or vindication to the Taurians for their cult in this play), Artemis, like Iphigenia, dwells inside Tauris, but is untouched by it; is both in and not of, or from this space.<sup>162</sup> Like her priestess again, she is vulnerable to the appetites and laws of her hosts and in urgent need of salvation and restoration. In marking the contrast and in making the goddess herself a victim of human abuse, Euripides' play raises important questions about the abuse/misuse of the divine, the extent to which religion can be subject to mortal understanding and mortal laws. This is important as it also has implications for the nature of the Graeco-barbarian binarism, which is revealed here as to a large extent cultural and schematic rather than natural. The word νόμος occurs many times in the play: five times in relation to Taurian customs (35, [38], 277, 586, 1189), four times in relation to Greek *nomoi* regarding ritual (465-6, 959, 970, 1458). Mortal characters in tragedy often impose their own understanding on gods: for example, Pentheus in Euripides' *Bacchae*, Creon in Sophocles' *Antigone*, the defeated Trojans in Euripides' *Troades*, Orestes and Iphigenia in this same play. In Tauris, abuse and perversion is made systemic in the sense that it involves a whole community whose laws and customs sanction and perpetuate it. Greek laws of religion differ (cf. e.g. 465, 1458). The Greeks are horrified by this barbaric savageness. But the barbarians themselves are horrified by the doings of the Greeks; Thoas is struck by Orestes' act of matricide: Ἀπολλων, οὐδ' ἐν βαρβάρους ἔτλη τις ἄν (1174). Nothing in the plot demands his outburst. Its inclusion along with the use of the language of *nomos* in defining religious customs, both imply a concern to note the fallacy of a Greek complacency in religious or other practices. Rather than showing Greek superiority and civilization as an invariable given, Euripides'

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<sup>161</sup> For the statue as only touched by Iphigenia, see pp.99-100. For the way other cultic structures (temple and altar) are presented as perverted in their nature, see pp.95-6. The statue of Artemis is heaven-sent. This detail is repeatedly mentioned. This mysterious quality adds to the sanctity of the image and ultimately to the higher sanctity of the Athenian cult in which it will be established. It also makes it easier to associate the image closely with the goddess, so that its rescue approximates to the rescue of the goddess and her worship. Heaven-sent statues appear again in ancient literature. Cf. e.g. the statue of Athena (Palladium), which Diomedes and Odysseus steal in order for Troy to fall in the *Little Iliad*; see also Wolff 1992: 313n.12. As the ending will show, the sky is the only real exit from this confined Taurian space (see p.131).

<sup>162</sup> For the presentation of the Taurian cult in the words of the play as a projection of mortal cruelty, see pp.91-2. For these parameters of Iphigenia's position in Tauris, see also in pp.97-102.



play reveals its vulnerability and its dangers.<sup>163</sup> Subject to the nature of their circumstances, Greeks may kill their own relatives (Orestes' matricide), they may consider violating the most important law of *xenia* (Orestes at 1020-2), and they may be misguided regarding the true demands of divine will. They do not display anything of the systematic brutality represented by the Taurian sacrifices; their laws and customs are superior. But brutality, which can even surprise a barbarian, is not inconceivable in them. This is not to say that barbarians are Greeks in exotic clothing or vice-versa. But rather that the text is minded at points to ask whether both the attitude towards religion and the Graeco-barbarian binarism are cultural rather than biologically determined.<sup>164</sup>

Artemis will relocate by the end of the play. In the movement of the statue away from the perverted environment (altar and temple) and the perverted ritual (human sacrifices), the play also shifts consideration to positive values: from abuse and perversion (reflected in the empty Taurian temple) to restoration and regeneration (reflected in the clean and honoured temples of Athens). Thoas in his ignorance starts cleansing the temple, waiting for the statue's return (καθαρόν ὡς μόλης πάλιν, 1216). But the "clean temple" Iphigenia refers to (καθαρόν.../ δόμον, 1231-2) is far away. The Taurian one will remain forever bereft of the image of the goddess. When Iphigenia leaves, Artemis (identified with her statue) also abandons the place. Thoas is left behind, a guard of an empty temple (perhaps an indication of the 'empty' rituals he has been presiding over all this time?). Perverted environment and rituals are left behind. In Halae Orestes will build a new temple, the statue will be set up inside it and proper sacrificial rites will be performed at its altar (1448-61). In Brauron, in another new temple in honour of the goddess, Iphigenia will serve again as the temple guard (κληδουχεῖν θεᾶ,

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<sup>163</sup> The references to the events at Aulis (noted in p.85n.5) and the implicit parallelism between the fates of the two siblings are invariably used as a strong argument for those who see the play challenging ideas of Greek superiority. See e.g. Hall 2010: 273-4, 1989: 211; Wright 2005: 190; Said 2002: 51ff; Wolff 1992: 313, 322; Hartigan 1986: 120-4. To my reading of the Graeco-barbarian theme, contrast e.g. Jordan 2006: 22 (*IT* a play about Greeks outwitting barbarians); Cropp 2000: 49-50, who prefers to leave the question of a criticism of Greek complacency open. In rejecting a simple story of Greek superiority I also distance myself from readings that argue for a total deconstruction of the Graeco-barbarian divide in the play (Greeks presented as barbarians and vice-versa), as e.g. Wright 2005: 190, 200-2; Said 2002: 53-5 (Tauris as Greece). For my view on the ways tragedy treats the Graeco-barbarian ideological polarity more generally, see Appendix.

<sup>164</sup> Thus, Euripides is picking up on the *nomos-physis* sophistic question of his era. On the sophistic influences detected in Euripides, see Wright 2005: 201-2; Said 2002a: 99-100 (for the specific play). On the nature and extent of the *nomos-physis* debate among the sophists, see Guthrie 1971: 55ff.

1463) and after her death a new statue, of the priestess this time, will receive the prayers and dedications of Artemis' female worshippers (1465-7). The *IT* has emphasized ritual perversion up to this moment.<sup>165</sup> Its ending is one of positive restoration of ritual achieved among other things through the restoration of the mortal-divine relationship. The question of proper reciprocity between mortals and divinities was central in practical religion of the time (of all times). The belief in the reciprocal character of the relation between god and worshipper was a foundation of ancient Greek religion. All cult practice was based on this principle, on the belief that the gods react to mortals on the basis of some form of a reciprocal (*do ut des*) liaison. Gift offerings, dedications, sacrifices and prayers, i.e. all basic enunciations of religious worship of the ancient Greek world both presume and simultaneously testify to the persisting existence of this mentality.<sup>166</sup> Tragedy repeatedly returns to this concern for proper reciprocity between man and god. One strand of this, prominent in this play, occurring elsewhere as a major or minor motif, is the theme of mortal-divine *philia*.<sup>167</sup> On *IT*'s stage, the final image of mortal-divinity in close proximity (the first carrying the latter) visually reflects a deeper reciprocity that has been achieved between mortal and divine.<sup>168</sup> A reciprocity that has kept the mortal apart from her ritually perverse environment, and that finally becomes a key for the transfer of both into a sanctioned religious space.

### ***Exit Iphigenia, Orestes, Pylades, 1233***<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> The last ritual perversion is executed by Greeks: Iphigenia's alleged cleansing of the statue at the sea (1041, 1199). That this false ritual has as its goal and actually leads to a true purification (of Orestes and goddess) is a point invariably made, cf. e.g. Said 2002: 54; Conacher 1967: 306; Hamilton 1985: 60-1. The morality of the characters and their escape plan is not compromised (contrast e.g. Said 2002: 56; Hartigan 1986: 119). Ritual abuse is their last resort for a way out of an already ritually perverse situation, a sort of counter abuse as the only means to restoration. Ritual abuse is devised for, and leads to the salvation of the weak from the strong and not vice-versa (as in the case of the Taurians' perversions). For the act of theft as justified in the play, see comments in Wolff 1992: 314.

<sup>166</sup> For reciprocity as a fundamental belief of Greek religion, see Parker 1998: 106ff; Yunis 1988: 50-6, 101-11.

<sup>167</sup> Cf. e.g. Eur. *Ion* (the relation of Creusa-Apollo, Ion-Apollo), *Hipp.* (Hippolytus-Artemis, Hippolytus-Aphrodite). For tragedy's active concern on the reciprocal relationship between man and god, see discussion in e.g. Parker 2005: 143-5, 1998: 115; Yunis 1988: 100ff (particularly for Euripides).

<sup>168</sup> For physical proximity as indicating closeness in the theatre, see e.g. Kampourelli 2002: 71-2; ch.3, pp.173-4, 187-8.

<sup>169</sup> For staging and thematic associations of this movement, passing references are made under the discussion of previous and following entries and exits (pp.124-6, 131).

### *Enter Athena, 1435*

A female goddess (the patron goddess of Athens) suddenly appears on the roof. Thoas and mutes rushing to the shore towards the *eisodos* stop.<sup>170</sup> Thoas' pursuit of the fugitives has to be frustrated. Orestes was destined (*πεπρωμένον*, 1438) to come to Tauris, Iphigenia and Artemis' statue are destined to return to Greece, the Greek women of the chorus deserve to go back with them (1440-68). Thoas should just calm his anger and comply (*καὶ σὺ μὴ θυμοῦ, Θόας* 1474). And he does: *ἐγὼ δ' Ὀρέστη τ', εἰ φέρων βρέτας θεᾶς/ βέβηκ', ἀδελφῆ τ' οὐχὶ θυμοῦμαι...* (1477-8).

Up to this moment, the mortal protagonists on this stage have gone a long way: to overcome their destructive hereditary drives, to overcome the earthly obstacles to their escape. Their efforts for escape fall short when violent waves (*λάβρω κλύδωνι*, 1393) and terrible winds (*δεινός...ἄνεμος*, 1394) push their ship back to the shore. The unexpected reversal leaves them capable only of prayers (1397-405) and futile "kicking against the wave" (1396). Only a god will now appear strong enough to counteract the waves and winds brought onto them. The pattern of movement and action is clear: with all earthly roads transformed to dead ends, a god is necessary to open up the enclosure of the mortals in the cruelty, the misunderstanding and calamities of this entrapped space. Even if not completely understandable, or explained (true, as some note, there is a lot this goddess fails to explain<sup>171</sup>), divine solutions are part of a world we would like to grasp but do not. Athena's appearance on high at this point, proves human efforts in this instance to be divinely sanctioned and sets a divinely ordered outcome for them.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> See 1422-30: Thoas orders all citizens to run after the fugitives. The question of the mode of her entry (use of crane or not) remains inconclusive and is immaterial to my discussion. On the one hand, use of the crane would compromise the effect of suddenness of this unannounced entry (see Kyriakou 2006: 450; Taplin 1977: 444-5; Hourmouziades 1965: 166-7). On the other hand, 1487-9 would perhaps make better sense with an Athena suspended, as Stinton 1986: 260-1, 266 supports. I prefer an Athena appearing on the roof of the scene-building. For the roof of the scene-building as usually reserved for divine epiphanies, see *Introduction*, p.27.

<sup>171</sup> See e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 450-2.

<sup>172</sup> For the combination of human and divine *techne* as the key to this escape, see e.g. views in Cropp 2000: 37-9; Wolff 1992: 330; Burnett 1991: 299; England 1883: xxv-vi.

A *dea ex machina* at this point may give a feeling of arbitrariness, even of grim frustration for some, since this is not the divine figure they would expect; where are the principals' protectors?<sup>173</sup> But Athena's presence here is dramatically justified. Artemis can easily be excused for not showing up, since she herself is in the process of being rescued.<sup>174</sup> As for Apollo, he was Orestes' protector throughout the play. A closing of the play with his epiphany would, I think, shift the focus of the ending more on the male's (individual) side of the story. Athena's appearance secures balance of focus on the future of both Orestes and Iphigenia. What is more, it is worth bearing in mind that Euripides knows how to use presentation by negation to draw attention to the absence of an expected figure, when he wishes (note for instance the remark on non-arrival of the chorus on time in this play, 65). Athena apologizes to and for nobody, does not explain her presence.<sup>175</sup> She assumes automatic authority, resolves and saves. Appearing through her capacity as divine patroness of Athens (ἐμήν...χθόνα, 1441; cf. 1480-1), she is presented as the most appropriate figure to announce the aetiologies connected to Athenian cult and bring about religious restoration.<sup>176</sup>

The salutary role of Athens is given unmistakable emphasis. The ending draws on the suppliant ideology that perceives Athens as the champion of the weak. As in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*, Euripides' *Supplikes*, *Heraclidae*, *Medea or Hercules furens*, Athens is the destination that saves.<sup>177</sup> Orestes and Iphigenia are to be restored in the new ritual cults of Athens (1446-66), the women of the chorus will be rewarded with return to Greece (1466-9). This is a positive ending: here at least the mortals close to the divine are rescued and renewed through proper ritual. An exit was what was missing all along from the scenic arrangement of this enclosed Taurian space: both sea and land were dangerous for Iphigenia and Orestes.<sup>178</sup> Their movement through the *eisodos* at

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<sup>173</sup> The failure of Artemis or Apollo to appear has led scholars like e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 450-1, Hartigan 1986: 122-5 to negative readings of the gods in the play as deceitful (Hartigan), or remote and indifferent for the mortals (Kyriakou).

<sup>174</sup> Kyriakou 2006: 450 also admits how this would explain Artemis' non-appearance at this stage.

<sup>175</sup> Contrast e.g. Eur. *Ion*, 1557-9 (Athena apologizing for Apollo's absence).

<sup>176</sup> On this see e.g. Cropp 2000: 40; Grube 1941: 329; England 1883: xxiv-xxv.

<sup>177</sup> Contrast e.g. Said 2002: 59-60 and Goff 1999: 121-3, who argue for a negative presentation of Athens (as they reconstruct it through the *aetia*) as unable to save in this play. I tend to agree with scholars like Cropp 2000: 40, who acknowledge the positive outcome and the positive picture of the Euripidean Athens as saviour city in the play. For the salutary role of Athens in the play and the successful restoration of the siblings, see further in pp.106-8.

<sup>178</sup> Both land and sea are marked as inhospitable and dangerous for the protagonists throughout (see pp.89-90).

line 1233 appeared at the time as their exit towards happiness, their way towards resolution and escape. But in the end, it proves to have been a blocked way. The resolution arrives from above; the sky opens once more (as it had when Artemis first landed on Tauris with Iphigenia), and divine agency intervenes to bring calamities to a closure. Athena proclaims it to Thoas (and perhaps also to us) in the end: τὸ γὰρ χρεῶν σοῦ τε καὶ θεῶν κρατεῖ (1486); “what is fated” has power over gods and *tyche*,<sup>179</sup> over the desires of the mortals (Thoas’ wish to captivate them, Iphigenia’s wish to return to Argos, Orestes’ wish to bring his sister back home). Euripides does not return to Aeschylus, though he keeps the inter-textual dialogue with his predecessor open up to the last minute (reference to the trial at Athens at lines 1471-2).<sup>180</sup> But he seems to suggest that amidst the ruins of social and political structures (the ruined Argive palace, the unsuccessful trial) proper ritual and true mortal-divine reciprocity can function as a stabilizing and restorative power and can lead to an exit out from an otherwise entrapped world.<sup>181</sup>

### ***Exit Athena, 1491***

### ***Exit chorus, 1499***

“As for these Greek women my orders are to escort them from the country because of the uprightness of their hearts”, says Athena (1467-9). “And I will send these women off to the blessed land of Greece, as you have commanded

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<sup>179</sup> Most scholars accept Poseidon as the author of the wave: e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 447; Cropp 2000: 259; Lattimore 1974: 83. I prefer Burnett’s (1971: 65-7) reading, which retains the inconclusiveness of the text as to whether Poseidon is really the one causing the wave and not *tyche*. If the text wished us to place great emphasis on the source of the wave, we would be told one way or another. The power of *tyche* is mentioned elsewhere in the words (cf. e.g. 89, 475-8, 865-6). For the workings of *tyche* as an important theme of the play, see e.g. Cropp 2000: 37; Burnett 1971: 67-9; Conacher 1967: 309.

<sup>180</sup> Note that Athena is the goddess enforcing the resolution in Aeschylus’ version of the story as well. The inter-textual connections and differences between Aeschylus and Euripides on a more general basis are variously discussed in e.g. Kyriakou 2006: 22-3, 462-3; Cropp 2000: 36-8; Goff 1999: 112; Wolff 1992: 328-9; Hamilton 1978: 283-6; Burnett 1971: 71-2.

<sup>181</sup> The emphasis and importance of religious reciprocity for rescue in this play has been already discussed; see pp.129-30. For the shift of Euripides from the sphere of political institutions (Aeschylus’ focus) to the sphere of religion, see further in pp.109-10. No indication of a breakdown of social structures in Athens (as for Argos) is given. Said 2002: 59-60 talks of unsuccessful Athenian *xenia* as shown in the *aetion* of *choes*, and sees Athens’ picture blackened and the Greeks as assimilated to the inhospitable Taurians through their behaviour. Nevertheless, in Euripides’ text the Athenian *xenia* is not presented as a failure in any way. Euripides’ Athenians do not kill the stranger. On the contrary, feeling αἰδῶς (949) they try to adjust their customs in order to be able to accept him without breaking their religious laws regarding homicides.

me”, says Thoas in reply (1482-3). Euripides could have forgotten the chorus; he has no problem in leaving the Greek women of the chorus behind in *Helen’s* Egypt. But his image of the Tauric Chersonese is perhaps too grim for this.<sup>182</sup> And he has stressed the loyalty of the women, which justifies their securing of a rescue by the gods at this moment (γνώμης δικάιας οὐνεκ’(α), 1468).<sup>183</sup> This reciprocity too is important. Though this does not receive the sustained emphasis as the Iphigenia-Artemis reciprocal bond, the chorus does emerge as more of a character than Aristotle allows for Euripides (Arist. *Poet.* 1456a).<sup>184</sup>

As with their origin, the final destination of this chorus is also left unspecified.<sup>185</sup> Scholars ponder two solutions: the chorus return to their home so much evoked throughout the play, or the chorus follow Iphigenia to Brauron to serve under the new temple of Artemis.<sup>186</sup> The text (as quoted above in translation) is inconclusive. If Athens were their destination, we should expect to hear; the same applies to the possibility that they might be Iphigenia’s attendants at Brauron. But Euripides is happy to leave it at that. His point is rescue and restoration. Throughout, these women seem to come across as generically Greek rather than specific to any region or state.<sup>187</sup> The increasing emphasis on Athens and on generic Greek space (argued also in the thematic analysis) is not weakened at closure by reference to any other specific Greek location.<sup>188</sup> The fate that counts is Orestes and Iphigenia’s, and for these enough space is left for detail (1446-67). As

<sup>182</sup> For the way the non-rescue of the chorus and the treatment of their dislocation as a whole in the play downplays alienness in the case of Egypt in Eur. *Hel.*, see ch.1, pp.42-3, 61.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. how Theonoe’s defence by the Choryphaeus at the end of *Hel.*, is similarly based on a strong claim for the justice in her behaviour (1633-9).

<sup>184</sup> For the active engagement of this chorus in the escape as an unusual element and for their strong bond with Iphigenia more generally, see previous discussion pp.118-9, 121n.137.

<sup>185</sup> Hall 1987: 432, accepting the change of the Εὐρώπᾱν of line 135 to Εὐρώταν, argues that these women came from near the Eurotas. For Lattimore 1974: 75, the question (Sparta or Delos, which appears later in the *stasima*) can remain unanswered. Following Kyriakou 2006: 87, Cropp 2000: 184, Platnauer 1938: 72, I consider Sparta to be out of the question. Keeping the MSS Εὐρώπᾱν, both Cropp and Kyriakou argue for the dramatic relevance of a contrast between Europe and Tauris arousing pathos, and stressing the alienness of the goddess and her attendants from the latter. Sparta is not mentioned as the origin of the chorus anywhere again in the play, while Delos prominent in the second and third *stasima* is there “for thematic purposes”, as Cropp 2000: 60n.125 says. Finally, Kyriakou’s (2006: 87) point is strong: if Sparta were their home, they would be “compatriots to Helen and Menelaus, an association bound to draw some comment in this play”.

<sup>186</sup> For the first view see: Kyriakou 2006: 461-2; Wolff 1992: 322-3; Hamilton 1985: 71; Lattimore 1974: 7; Burnett 1971: 71. For the second, see: Cropp 2000: 60. For the chorus and nostalgia, see pp.103-4.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. e.g. 132-6, 448-55, 1096-152. See also Kyriakou 2006: 87, who suggests that the references in the text “do not rule out origin from different cities”.

<sup>188</sup> For the shift of focus from Argos to Athens as the siblings’ destination as the play progresses and the argued effect on our sense of Iphigenia’s true or not restoration, see pp.106-8.

for the chorus, they are rewarded with return to Greek space but their exact destination is left vague. The play has used the chorus as focalizers when it wanted to raise the issue of yearning for home, but the focalization is discarded, as at closure the focus shifts mainly to Athens and the protagonists; this is the itinerary that counts. This is not real life, nor the neat ending of Menandrian drama; the dramatist is not forced to tie all ends.<sup>189</sup> The chorus is relocated, and for that, they rejoice: “Pallas Athena... we shall do as you command! The words my ears have heard are a great and unexpected blessing!” (1492-6). Where exactly their new σωζομένη μοίρα (1490-1) will lead them has to remain a matter of speculation for us, as it must have been for Euripides’ audience.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Cf. the ending of Eur. *Andr.* (ch.3, pp.196-7), where the fate of Hermione and Orestes is similarly left unspecified at the end of the play.

<sup>190</sup> I take lines 1490-1 to be Athena’s words addressed to the chorus, as in Kovac’s (*LCL* 5) edition. Cf. Cropp 2000: 265. Contrast Kyriakou 2006: 467, who follows Seidler in assigning them to the chorus.

## CHAPTER III:

### *ANDROMACHE*

#### THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Once more, the female in Euripides is away; far away from homeland, from *oikos* (natal and marital). Female dislocation is again the *McGuffin* that triggers the plot and generates conflicts, tensions and themes in this play. This dislocation differs from the previous two studied: Helen and Iphigenia's adventures into far-away barbarian spaces. The polarity Greek female-foreign topography operating in the previous plays is here reversed; this time the barbarian woman is found in Greek space. The focus is new: that of the foreign woman in Greece, instead of the Greek woman in barbarian worlds. Furthermore, dramatic interest is here enriched by the prominent presence of another female character (the Spartan Hermione) whose behaviour and movement contrast with, and comment on the principal dislocated female. Gendered staging and the complex thematic play with space in *Andromache* has not received the sustained attention it merits. I hope to show that an examination of the physical aspects of the representation of the female characters within *Andromache's* topography in their broader theatrical, sociological and ideological contexts not only enriches our understanding of Euripides' play as theatre, but also underscores the themes which Euripides explores. As with previous case studies, a performative approach proves to be a useful means of opening up larger questions of characterization, themes and meanings of the Euripidean play.

Following her itinerary in space and time from Thebe (1) to Troy (Πριάμου τύραννον ἐστίαν, 3) and finally to Greece after Troy's fall at Greek hands (11), Euripides settles his *Andromache* in Phthia. Attached now to a Greek household as concubine and slave, she has given birth to one son to her new master



Neoptolemus (24-5).<sup>1</sup> Her situation at the opening of the play inevitably takes us back to Homer. The misfortunes passionately predicted in Andromache's Iliadic laments shape the basis of Euripides' plot: the killing of her husband Hector (Hom. *Il.* 6.495-502), the death of her child Astyanax (*Il.* 24.725-39), and her enslavement at the hands of the enemy (*Il.* 24.731-3). Euripides takes over the mythic tradition, which attaches her to Neoptolemus as his concubine and mother of his offspring. But he innovates in combining her own personal post-Trojan story with the story of another woman: the daughter of the principal sacker of her city (Menelaus), Hermione.<sup>2</sup> Andromache is set to share the same stage with another key female character and Peleus is given a role (again a Euripidean innovation) in the resolution of this newly invented conflict.

The place of dislocation, Thessaly, is introduced as the land of Achilles' family (16-23). This placing of the Aeacidae in Thessalian territory comes as a rupture with contemporary trends in the mythographic tradition. By the end of the sixth century, it is Aegina and not Phthia where you expect to find the family of Achilles: ἐπὶ δὲ Αἰακὸν καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους Αἰακίδας νέα ἀπέστελλον ἐς Αἴγινα (Hdt. 8.64).<sup>3</sup> Despite the absence of connection between the Aeacidae and Aegina in Homer, in the late archaic period Aegina had successfully staked a permanent claim to Achilles and his people as its mythological ancestors, to the point where even the Myrmidons could by a stretch be located there (Pind. *Nem.* 3.13-14). Euripides in a typically bold gesture breaks the mould of tradition,

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<sup>1</sup> The child remains unnamed in the play. Manuscripts give the name Molossus for the child in the list of characters and in the speaker annotations. Stevens 1971: 94 argues for the name Molossus as perhaps a later invention. It is difficult to evaluate the significance of this silence with any degree of confidence. The ultimate connection of Neoptolemus with Molossian kingship at the end of the play is not Euripides' invention. In Pindar (*Pae.* 6; *Nem.* 4, 7) Neoptolemus personally founds the dynasty at Molossia (see Allan 2000: 32-3). Given the mythic association and the ancient audience's familiarity with *eponymic* practice (i.e. the practice to name places after an *eponymous* hero; see Kearns, *OCD*<sup>3</sup> s.v. *eponymoi*), the boy's name, (to whom the responsibility for the founding of the kingship is transferred in this play) would early on forecast a positive ending. The absence of the name even after the positive ending is announced (1243) may, as Stevens 1971: 94 comments, indicate that it is not of great significance (as e.g. the genealogical connection of Ion's name in the homonymous play). In my view it is more likely that the audience, again given the *eponymic* practice, could easily supply the name. However, given the uncertainty, use of the name Molossus will be avoided in the following analysis.

<sup>2</sup> For the mythic tradition of Andromache's role as Neoptolemus' Trojan spoil and the bearing of children to him, see e.g. Davies 2003<sup>2</sup>: 69-70, 72; Allan 2000: 14-6; Stevens 1971: 2-3. For the combination of her story with Hermione's story as a Euripidean innovation, see e.g. Allan 2000: 17-18.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hdt. 5.80, 5.89, 8.83; Pind. *Nem.* 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, *Isthm.* 5, 6, *Pyth.* 8, *Ol.* 8; Bacchyl. 13. For recent individual studies on the Aeginetan odes of Pindar, see Burnett 2005. For a recent analysis of Bacchyl. 13 with a particular emphasis on the connection of Aeacid myth and Aeginetan tradition, see Fearn 2007: 87-160.

turning us back to the Homeric source; his theatre gives the Aeacidae back to Phthia, back to Homer.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the Homeric inter-text is placed at the heart of the semantic value of his topography. But the range of semantic associations is not limited to the Homeric locale. When setting the dramatic map, Euripides updates the Thessalian geography: Φθίας δὲ τῆσδε καὶ πόλεως Φαρσαλίας (16); Θεσσαλὸς δὲ νιν λεῶς/ Θετίδειον αὐδᾶ (19-20); ὦ πόλι Θεσσαλίας (1176). Thetideion, Pharsalus and Thessaly are geographical names not to be found anywhere in the Homeric text.<sup>5</sup> This updating is part of the Euripidean and indeed generic tragic tendency to update (though this is by no means inevitable) the ethnicity and space of a locale associated with heroic myth, creating a topography which takes account of subsequent site-developments and terminology.<sup>6</sup> In this case, the dramatic configuration is, as Lloyd succinctly puts it, a “learned compromise” reflecting ancient debates over the exact localization of Achilles’ homeland in later antiquity.<sup>7</sup> Yet the modern geographical terms inevitably carry their associations. Together with and beside the Homeric inter-text, the use of the modern nomenclature brings into play values and/or reactions associated with the contemporary Thessaly. This could generate conflict between the two sets of associations, if Euripides mishandles it, or of course if he wishes to explore the resultant conflict. In order to appreciate the effects and complexities involved in the dramatic recreation of the play’s topography, this network of

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<sup>4</sup> Given that the Aeacid connection had dominated the lyric tradition, the effect is tacitly to accentuate the convergence with Homer. For the appropriation of the Aeacid genealogy for the definition of Aeginetan identity and mythology, see e.g. Fearn 2007: 88-105; Burnett 2005: 13-28; Michelakis 2002: 4-5. The Aeginetan claim was important to relations between Aegina and Athens for political purposes (see e.g. Hdt. 5.89; Fearn 2007: 90-5). From this perspective, Euripides’ reopening of the discussion and his reversing of the associations of Aegina in favour of Thessaly (a regular ally of Athens as noted in discussion, p.140) could be seen as a politically sensitive and even populist gesture. As with the presentation of Sparta (see p.150n.53), Euripides may be appealing to views and emotions of his original audience in order to align reaction to characters and spaces as is expedient for the play.

<sup>5</sup> For the absence of the term Thessaly in Homer, see Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 677. Note as well that the name Phthia (later Phthiotis) in classical antiquity was used to denote three distinct geographical and political entities: the territory of Homeric Phthia, the tetrad of Thessaly, Achaea Phiotis at the periphery of ancient Thessaly (see Helly, *OCD*<sup>3</sup> s.v. *Phthiotis*; Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 682).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Aesch. *Ag.*, where Agamemnon’s palace is transferred from Mycenae (as in Hom. *Od.* 3.304-5) to Argos, the switch reflecting later political developments in the relations between Argos-Mycenae, and later in the trilogy between Argos-Athens (see Said 1993: 169-70). For updating the mythical world through geographical detail as a particularly Euripidean tendency, see Said 1993: 172.

<sup>7</sup> Dark Age migrations lead to an uncertainty regarding the geographical location of Homer’s Phthia (see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 10). For the hypothesis of Pharsalus’ identification with the Homeric Phthia, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 11; Westlake 1935: 11. Pharsalus and Phthia are similarly both connected to Achilles’ place of origin in Eur. *IA* 103, 237, 713, 812, 954.

semantics which Euripides' mapping evokes in the minds of his spectators needs to be briefly discussed.

I begin with the Homeric inter-text. Homer's Phthia is a fertile land (ἐρίβωλος, *Il.* 1.155, 9.363, 9.479), rich in cattle (βοῦς, *Il.* 1.154) and horses (ἵππους, *Il.* 1.154; ἵππηλάτα Πηλεύς, 7.125, 9.438, 11.772), homeland of Achilles and his Myrmidons. On the Iliadic map Phthia is marked as the land of the great warriors and the great leaders (Achilles, Peleus), exceedingly honoured by both gods and men.<sup>8</sup> It is less a specific geographical location (Homer does not offer any further details on its geography and physiology), than a set of qualities represented in its people. The status of Achilles as the best of the Achaeans is uncontested and repeatedly evoked in the *Iliad* (e.g. *Il.* 2.769-70, 16.21). Devoted to him, his Myrmidons are unwillingly forced to stay out of the fighting for the long period of his wrath (*Il.* 16.200-9).<sup>9</sup> Their own supreme martial excellence is an emphatic notion in the epic. Mirror images of their leader, the Myrmidons are presented as the best fighters of the Greek army, the faction whose absence from the fighting, like that of Achilles, causes great hardship to the Greeks.<sup>10</sup> The impact of their re-entry into the battle is forcefully rendered in vivid metaphors: first, paralleled to "ravens wolves" (λύκοι ὡς/ ὠμοφάγοι, *Il.* 16.156-7) they are described speeding out of their tents to gather around their leader; then, like wasps roused in anger by the stirring of men, they are said to fly out and attack the enemy (*Il.* 16.259-67).<sup>11</sup> At the sight of them the Trojans previously unrelenting in their effort are dismayed and their hearts, shaken by fear, turn to thoughts of escape (*Il.* 16.275-83). Throughout, a strong impression of Achilles and his men as the heart of the Greek war effort is sustained. Via the status given to its warriors, Phthia enjoys a renown and importance unparalleled by that of any other group of Greek fighters in the epic.

That is as far as Homer is concerned. In the contemporary world, that of dramatist and original spectator, modern Thessaly (evoked here by reference to Thetideion,

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<sup>8</sup> For Peleus' elevated status in the epic, see pp.146-7.

<sup>9</sup> For the level of their devotion and attention to their commander, cf. e.g. *Il.* 24.448-56 (the Myrmidons described to build their king's hut).

<sup>10</sup> For the extraordinary prowess of both Achilles and the Myrmidons in war, see e.g. *Il.* 9.253-60, 19.278, 23.5 (ἑταίριοι φιλοπτολέμοισι), 23.129.

<sup>11</sup> For the similes, see Janko 1994: 338, 352.

Pharsalus, and Thessaly) no longer enjoys such pre-eminence. The state is known and indeed important strategically for the Greek world (with Athenians and Spartans each trying to secure hegemony over the plain), but with nothing like its Homeric glamour.<sup>12</sup> To start from the Thetideion used as the immediate setting, this was a real cult site on the historical map of ancient Thessaly, dedicated and named after the goddess Thetis (ἐν Θετιδείῳ, ὃ καλεῖται ἀπὸ τῆς Θέτιδος, Pherec. fr. 1a *FGrH*) and positioned at the eastern border of Pharsalus.<sup>13</sup> Its actual political status in the classical period (*polis* or precinct) is a matter of debate in ancient writers. Both classifications are attested in different sources, with modern scholars having argued plausibly that the term *polis* in relation to the Thetideion in writers like Phylarchos and Pherecydes carries only mythological weight (with no bearing on the actual nature of the site).<sup>14</sup> The extent of actual familiarity (if any) of Euripides' audience with this site, similarly, can only remain a matter of speculation given the lack of substantive evidence. But knowledge and/or familiarity with its environs (Pharsalus, Phthia, Thessaly) is well documented in extant sources. Pharsalus, placed in the district of Phthiotis (the south eastern tetrad of Thessaly), was from the sixth century onwards one of the most important cities dominating the tetrad and upholding a key role in the whole of Thessaly (for most of the fifth century the Thessalian *tagos* based in Pharsalus).<sup>15</sup> The people of Pharsalus, allied with the Athenians from 462 B.C., had fought on their side in 457 B.C. at the battle of Tanagra (Thuc. 1.107), siding with the Athenian camp during the civic conflict of the Peloponnesian war (Thuc. 2.22). The Athenians had joined the son of Echekratidas, Orestes, after his expulsion by 454 B.C. in an expedition to Pharsalus, in his effort to regain power over the city (Thuc. 1.111).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> For the reasons of the locale's strategic importance for other Greek states trying to gain control of Thessaly in the fifth and fourth centuries, see Hornblower 1991: 80-1.

<sup>13</sup> For other ancient references to the etymology from Thetis' name and all extant references to the toponym (Thetideion), see Decourt 1990: 205-8. References in ancient sources (Pherec. fr. 1a *FGrH*; Plut. Vit. *Pel.* 32; Polyb. 18.20.2-8) attest to this geographical position for the Thetideion. See also e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 11; Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 702.

<sup>14</sup> For the debate over the site classification, see e.g. Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 703; Hansen 2000: 148-9; Decourt 1990: 206. Euripides' dramatic recreation of locale does not shed light on the problem in any decisive way. The play too is imprecise on the political status of the Thetideion. For the vagueness in demarcating the geographical and political limits of Thetideion, Pharsalus and Phthia in Euripides' dramatic map, see pp. 143-4.

<sup>15</sup> For the location of Pharsalus, see Helly, *OCD*<sup>3</sup> s.v. *Phthiotis*. For the political importance of Pharsalus in the Phthiotic tetrad and the whole of Thessaly from the sixth century onwards, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 10; Westlake 1935: 11-13. For Pharsalian rulers as the holders of *tageia* in the fifth century, see Hornblower 1991: 82.

<sup>16</sup> In contrast, Spartan attempts for intervention in Thessaly met Thessalian hostility and protest (Leotychidas' expedition to Thessaly in the 470s B.C., the foundation of the Spartan colony of Heracles in 426 B.C., Brasidas' attempt to pass through Thessalian land during the Peloponnesian

Thus, via direct contacts, but also via literature and myth, Thessaly as a whole was not a *terra incognita* to the rest of the Greek world in the fifth century.<sup>17</sup> Ethnically, ever since the Homeric epic (*Il.* 2.681-5), Thessalians were unambiguously classified as Hellenes; unlike the Macedonians, this was never contested.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, their Homeric prestige as supreme among the Greeks had been seriously challenged. For reasons to which I shall now turn, there is the sense that in the classical period Thessaly is marginalized, contrary to its centrality in the Homeric world.

Thessaly is a large flat plane surrounded by mountains. By virtue of the idiosyncratic nature of the landscape and its isolated geographical position, Thessaly develops into a region noticeably different from the most of the rest of the Greek peninsula.<sup>19</sup> Politically, using *δυναστεία μᾶλλον ἢ ἰσονομία* (to use Thucydides' own words, Thuc. 4.78), the Thessalians, with their system of *tetrads* and *tagoi* (and the concentration of power which it fostered in the hands of the aristocrats), only rather late and after a long and slow process of urbanization (dating from the second half of the fifth century down to the fourth century) reached a political system akin to the *polis*-system widely established in the rest of the Greek world.<sup>20</sup> In this they resemble other backward parts like Epirus.<sup>21</sup> Likewise the tempo of their cultural development was slower and more archaizing, a fact which gained them a name for intellectual sterility among the rest of the Greeks.<sup>22</sup> Aspects of their way of life and preoccupation had become

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war). For Pharsalus' interrelations with Athens and Sparta (sympathetic to the first, hostile to the latter), see e.g. Hdt. 6.72; Thuc. 4.78-9, 8.3; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 11; Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 703; Hornblower 1991: 80-3; Westlake 1935: 31-9.

<sup>17</sup> For an extensive list of all ancient descriptions of Thessaly, see Westlake 1935: 237-9. References to Thessalian locales, features, myth and customs abound in extant tragic drama. For extant Euripides, see e.g. *HF* 374-6; *Alc.* 285, 331, 425, 479, 510, 677, 858, 951, 1044 (Pherae, a Thessalian city, is the setting of this play: 235, 476, 479-80, 606, 835-6); *Hipp.* 221; *Hec.* 451-4; *El.* 815, 836-7, 781; *Tro.* 30, 187, 214-9, 242; *Phoen.* 1407; *Bacch.* 410, 565-75, 1205; *IA* 103, 235-41, 713, 812-4, 954, 1036-79; the disputed *Rhes.* 237-41, 699. See also Taplin 1999: 44-8, where Thessalian localization in the whole of extant tragedy is extensively analysed.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Hdt. 7.132, 196; Thuc. 1.3, both referring to and classifying Thessalians among the Greeks. See also Westlake 1935: 39-40. For the origins of the Aeolian identity as firmly connected with Thessaly (Aeolis reported as the former name of Thessaly in Hdt. 7.176), see Hall 2002: 71-3.

<sup>19</sup> For the geographical landscape of Thessaly (large plane surrounded by mountains), see e.g. Hdt. 7.129. For its different features of landscape as a reason of its isolation and demarcation from the rest of the Greek world, see Thuc. 1.2; Helly, *OCD*<sup>3</sup> s.v. *Thessaly*; Westlake 1935: 2-7, 17-20.

<sup>20</sup> For the political system of Thessaly and its development from the fifth century onwards (the cities gradually supplanting the *tetrads* as units of local authority), see e.g. Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 680-2; Hornblower 1991: 82-3; Westlake 1935: 32-9.

<sup>21</sup> For the similarly idiosyncratic nature of Epirote political organization (based on a division into tribal units), see Hammond 1967: 8, 18-33.

<sup>22</sup> Westlake 1935: 45-6

proverbial: Thessalian wealth; Thessalian witchcraft; Thessalian athletic pursuits like horsemanship (Thessaly was famous for its rearing of horses, for the highest quality of its cavalry, for its equestrian aristocracy); the local sport of bull throwing (men on horses wrestling with bulls); Thessalian appetite for orgies of food and drink; Thessalian lawlessness and treachery.<sup>23</sup> These idiosyncrasies of their culture along with the actual survival of customs that recalled Homer (like dragging the corpse behind the horse) lead Lendon to conclude that the Thesalians “behaved more like the wilful heroes of the *Iliad* than the circumspect citizens of the Classical Greek city-state”.<sup>24</sup> Old fashioned, even gauche in certain ways, Thessaly certainly had its odd side for the fifth-century Greek of the mainland. From a central place in Greek history, Thessaly turns into a place rather alienated politically, socially and culturally in the classical age. The fifth century is an era in which progress, novelty and intellectualism caused as much anxiety and reaction as it received approval and enthusiasm among the Greeks.<sup>25</sup> Accordingly, this Thessalian detachment from the stream of the intellectual progress and the mechanisms of enlightenment operative in the Greek heartland could potentially both attract and repel. Euripides’ Thessalian dweller could come across either way: as an uncultured outmoded figure worthy of contempt, or a more simple and honourable figure attracting the audience’s admiration. To discover which of these images is more applicable to the Thessaly of Euripides’ play, among other things, I now turn to an exploration of the ways Euripides reworks the semantics (the real and the mythical, the Homeric, and the contemporary) of his Thessalian topography, in order to define the larger geographic and conceptual framework of the female.<sup>26</sup> According to the ethical associations of Andromache’s new locale, the significance of her relationship with her new realm and its inhabitants, both indigenous and (like her) immigrant, can then be evaluated.

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<sup>23</sup> For the proverbial wealth of Thessalian aristocracy (declining in the early years of the fourth century), see Thuc. 1.2; Lendon 2005: 102; Hornblower 1991: 80; Westlake 1935: 40-2. For Thessaly as a renowned home of witchcraft, see Versnel, *OCD*<sup>3</sup> s.v. *magic*; Westlake 1935: 43. For Thessalian horses and their ongoing reputation for excellence in the ancient world, see e.g. Lendon 2005: 98; Hansen & Nielsen 2004: 703; Westlake 1935: 4, 41-2. For the local sport of bull wrestling, see Lendon 2005: 98. For the stigma of lawlessness, treachery and orgiastic Thessalian appetite, see Lendon 2005: 102; Westlake 1935: 41-5.

<sup>24</sup> Lendon 2005: 102

<sup>25</sup> Dodds 1951: 179-206 in a thorough account of the characteristics of the movement of Enlightenment in classical Greece (which he puts long before the actual flourishing of the Sophistic teachings) stresses the reaction and potential recession to previous modes of thinking this intellectualism caused. Cf. e.g. Guthrie 1971: 49-50.

<sup>26</sup> For the hermeneutic value of exploring larger conceptual topography of the dislocated female, see also in *Introduction*, pp.19-20.

I begin with space in the geographical sense, as a *chora* with its own scale, position, names, topography. Tragic plays differ to the extent in which they exploit the physicality of their settings.<sup>27</sup> The dramatist may be precise and descriptive (evoking specific topographical markers of the landscape) in his presentation. For example, Sophocles' deme of Colonus in his *Oedipus Coloneus*, Euripides' Thebe in the *Phoenissae*, or his Argos in the *Electra*, all have strong physical presences in these plays.<sup>28</sup> But specificity and detail may recede to the background in other plays, creating a less particular sense of the landscape; Aeschylus' Argos in the *Agamemnon*, or Euripides' Egypt in the *Helen* are two such examples.<sup>29</sup> In *Andromache* concern for detail and precision is evident neither in drawing out the map, nor in describing the locale. Sites (Thetideion, Pharsalus, and Phthia) are located on the dramatic map vaguely. I quote the relevant text (16-22): Φθίας δὲ τῆσδε καὶ πόλεως Φαρσαλίας/ σύγχορτα ναίω πεδί', ἴν' ἢ θαλασσία/ Πηλεῖ ξυνώκει χωρὶς ἀνθρώπων Θέτις/ φεύγουσ' ὄμιλον· Θεσσαλὸς δὲ νιν λεῶς/ Θετίδειον αὐδᾶ θεᾶς χάριν νυμφευμάτων./ ἔνθ' οἶκον ἔσχε τόνδε παῖς Ἀχιλλέως,/ Πηλέα δ' ἀνάσσειν γῆς ἐᾶ Φαρσαλίας ("I live now in these lands that border on Phthia and the city of Pharsalus, lands where the sea goddess Thetis, far from the haunts of men and fleeing their company, lived as wife with Peleus. The people of Thessaly call the place Thetideion in honor of the goddess' marriage. Here Achilles' son made his home, allowing Peleus to rule over the land of Pharsalus..."). Before our eyes is the Thetideion (the σύγχορτα πεδία), somewhere not far away lies the city Pharsalus and Phthia. The exact limits of the Thetideion, within and/or beyond the scenic space, are not defined with any precision.<sup>30</sup> Neither our sense of the distance between Thetideion-Pharsalus, nor

<sup>27</sup> See Hourmouziades 2003<sup>3</sup>: 41-53, for an overview of the trends and variety in the degree of precision of definitions of onstage and offstage space in extant tragedy. Cf. Carey 2009: 130-1.

<sup>28</sup> For the way Soph. *OC* shows a profound interest in creating a sense of the physical topography, see Carey 2009: 130-2; Easterling 2006: 134, 140-4. Cf. Budelmann 2000 on the symbolic value of the rock and its relation with other physical spaces of the play's topography (<http://www2.open.ac.uk/ClassicalStudies/GreekPlays/Conf99/budel.htm> [last accessed September 2010]). For the accumulation of details (buildings, landmarks, the walls and gates, other natural features of the terrain) in Eur. *Phoen.*, see Mastronarde 1994: 647; Craik 1988: 163. For the strong physicality of Argos in Eur. *El.*, see Said 1993: 180-2.

<sup>29</sup> For Argos in the *Oresteia*, see Said 1993: 176-8. For the minimum presence of features of landscape in Eur. *Hel.* see ch.1, pp.33-4.

<sup>30</sup> Euripides' text is imprecise on the exact limits of the Thetideion. For the imprecision on its political status in historical reality as well, see p.140. Allan 2000: 49 and Stevens 1971: 90 argue plausibly for the Thetideion including both shrine of Thetis and house of Neoptolemus. This would mark the whole onstage area as sacred. The fact that Andromache can only be safe when

the relation of Pharsalus-Phthia become more obvious or specific as the play progresses.<sup>31</sup> Phthia referred to fourteen times (16, 119, 202, 403, 507, 664, 723, 730, 760, 861, 887, 925, 1047, 1230), next to only two references to Pharsalus (16, 22) and two references to Thessaly (1176) and its people (19), is obviously the focal point on Euripides' map. Yet no firm boundaries, no sense of physical or political interrelation between adjacent areas is clearly specified. Peleus' ruling power over Pharsalus at line 22 seems to extend to the whole of Phthia at lines 202, 506-7, 664-5, 723, 760, to the whole of Thessaly at lines 1176, 1187, 1211, 1222.<sup>32</sup> A reflection of the real geographical distance and isolation (though not exoticness, as has been sometimes argued) of Thessaly in relation to the rest of the Greek world in the classical age could be detected in the chorus' talking of an ἀλλόχρωσ τις ἔκδημος ξένος at the sight of Orestes (879), in Orestes' evocation of the choral women as ξέναι γυναῖκες (881), in Orestes' reference to the distant land (τηλουρά.../ πεδί(α), 889-90), where his friend Hermione dwells. But isolation is emphasized more in the way the Thetideion (χωρὶς ἀνθρώπων, 18) is described in relation to surroundings, rather than Thessaly in relation to the rest of the world.<sup>33</sup>

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clinging at Thetis' altar and statue does not contradict the assumption. Similar dynamics between sacred space and suppliant's safety are operative in e.g. the case of Creusa's supplication in Eur. *Ion*. Wiles' (1997: 188) remark sets the trends in dramatic recreation of sacred space succinctly: "Although suppliants in normal historical practice might take refuge anywhere within the bounds of a shrine, in the schematic and simplified world of the play the suppliant must cling to the stage object that represents the altar or statue of the god."

<sup>31</sup> The vagueness has left scholars pondering over the exact status of Phthia in the play (*polis* or district). Stevens 1971: 90-1 leaves the question open. Following Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 10 and Allan 2000: 49, I am inclined to see Phthia as a region rather than a *polis* in Euripides' articulation of space. It is always referred to either only by name, or as χθών (507), γῆ (664, 861, 925), πεδία (1230).

<sup>32</sup> For the inexplicit orientation of the limits of Peleus' ruling power, cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 10. I follow Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 172 in taking the references to πόλις Θεσσαλίας (1176; cf. 1187, 1211, 1222) to denote Thessaly as a whole and not Phthia. Cf. Taplin 1999: 45. Contrast Stevens 1971: 238, 240 arguing for Phthia instead of Thessaly. The way political power is distributed in the play, referring at points to a demarcated Thessaly and at points to a unified whole, could be seen to reflect the contemporary political reality of fifth-century Thessaly: the federal system of Thessaly which demarcated the country in *tetrads*, unified at periods of time under the ruling of one central authority, the *tagos*; the importance and central role of the city of Pharsalus in the *tetrad* Phthiotis and whole of Thessaly (through the *tageia*) during the fifth century. For this political system of contemporary Thessaly, see p.141.

<sup>33</sup> Contrary to Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 157 and Allan 2000: 222, I do not see an allusion to exoticness of topography in the reference to the different appearance of Orestes (879), in Allan's words, a reminder that we are set in "a remote Thessaly where even other Greeks look foreign" (p.222). Comparison with other tragic instances where exoticness of appearance is marked (e.g. Aesch. *Supp.* 234-7) casts doubt on this interpretation. For the name *xenos* (used here by the women for Orestes, 879; by Orestes for the women, 881) as often used in tragic drama in the mouth of Greeks referring to other Greeks from a different *polis* (i.e. as opposing citizen/non-citizen rather than normal/exotic), cf. e.g. Soph. *OC* 17, 123-5 (Theban Oedipus and Antigone as *xenoi* to the Athenians); Soph. *El.* 660 (Argive women addressed as *xenai*); Eur. *IA* 542, 629, 1276 (Euboean



Descriptive detail is similarly lacking; little of the ethnographical (contemporary or Homeric) material is used to render the land. Two references to a Thessalian locality (cave Sepias at Pelion: 1265-6, 1277-8); three allusions to the proverbial association of Thessaly and horsemanship (759: ἵππικοῦ τ' ὄχλου, 992: πωλικοῖς διώγμασιν, 1229-30: τῶν ἵπποβότων/ Φθίας πεδίων); no allusion to the Φθίη ἐρίβωλος, repeatedly mentioned by Homer.<sup>34</sup> Vagueness in map drawing is matched with the rather vague rendering of immediate site and its environs, which lacks any descriptive specificity. Emphasis in detail is only evident when Euripides weaves a net of connections of locale to myth (the wedding of Peleus-Thetis, 16-21), of myth to people (the tradition of respect Phthia holds for the mythic significance of the Thetideion, 45-6).<sup>35</sup> The lack of specificity (which would otherwise lock Euripides' landscape into contemporary knowledge) allows values and mythic traditions to come to the foreground. Rather than a geographically set place, Euripides' Phthia comes across as more important in terms of its connection to myth, and more particularly to the Homeric story of the land as the previous dwelling of Achilles' relatives.

Turning now to animate topography, the residents, as noted above, are the Homeric ones; Euripides' Phthia, as in Homer (and contrary to later lyric tradition), becomes the land of Achilles.<sup>36</sup> The characterization of rulers (Neoptolemus, Peleus) and people (represented though here by a group of Phthian women) again draws from the Homeric inter-text; Euripides' Phthian society is the product of a close dialogue with their Homeric prototypes and compatriots (Achilles and his Myrmidons). Starting from Neoptolemus, his household shared with Menelaus' daughter Hermione, his legal wife in the play, is the one physically represented onstage via the scene-building (21). The play starts with

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women of the chorus called *xenai* by Argive characters). In contrast to the marked absence of features which mark Thessaly as exotic, it is also repeatedly said that in Thessaly we are in the Greek realm: 13, 169, 243, 665-6. Rather than exoticness of place, the references could be argued to remind us of the incompatibility of Orestes and Hermione, their function as outsiders among the Phthian people. On Hermione's appearance used to distance her from the Phthian world, see pp.178-80.

<sup>34</sup> Contrast how this is actually a *topos* for the Thessalian landscape elsewhere in Euripidean tragedy; see references to the wooded and/or fertile land of Thessaly in other plays like e.g. *Hipp.* 221; *Hec.* 451-4; *Bacch.* 565-76; *IA* 1046-7. Similarly, wealth of its people, both a Homeric and a contemporary association, is not emphasized in this play (on this see p.147).

<sup>35</sup> The mythical connection of the locale is again the key emphasis in the reference to the Cape Sepias near the end of the play (1265-9, 1277-8).

<sup>36</sup> For discontinuity with the Pindaric and more generally the lyric tradition in the choice of the Aeacids' homeland, see pp.137-8.

him away at Delphi to atone for his previous invective against Apollo for the death of his father Achilles (49-55). Patterns of behaviour and overall characterization of the absent adult king manifestly evoke the behaviour and character of the Homeric hero. As invariably noted, the Homeric Achilles is obviously the model on which the Euripidean son is shaped: proud (in his dealings with god [52-3, 1107-8] and man [977-81]), heroic and valiant warrior (341: οὐχ ᾧδ' ἀνανδρον αὐτὸν ἢ Τροία καλεῖ; cf. 1121-57). The text itself betrays its emphasis as regards Neoptolemus' presentation by the repeated use of the patronymic (Ἀχιλλέως παῖς), mentioned thirteen times in the play next to a unique reference to his actual name in order to introduce him at the outset (14).<sup>37</sup>

Euripides' Peleus similarly looks back to Homeric characterization; in this case the picture of the Homeric Peleus in the *Iliad*.<sup>38</sup> Seen only in distance in the epic, Peleus is still a vivid presence in absence in the Homeric world. He is to be imagined alone in Phthia, growing old as he anxiously waits for the return of Achilles (e.g. *Il.* 19.322-37, 24.540-2). His only son's untimely fate turns him into a figure of exceptional loss and suffering (*Il.* 24.538-9: "but even on him a god has brought evil, in that...he begot only one son, doomed to an untimely fate"). But it is a suffering matched with an equally exceptional fortune and honour enjoyed among both gods and men in the world of the *Iliad*. Glorious gifts (ἀγλαὰ δῶρα, *Il.* 24.534) are given to him by the gods: his immortal horses (*Il.* 16.866-7, 17.443-4, 23.276-8), his unparalleled wealth (ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο/ ὄλβω τε πλούτῳ τε, *Il.* 24.535-6), the exceptional honour to be wedded to a goddess (*Il.* 24.537).<sup>39</sup> To his people he is an honoured king and noble advisor (*Il.* 7.126, 21.188). To all of the Achaeans he stands as a heroic paradigm (Nestor asks the army to bear in mind Peleus' reaction to their cowardice at *Il.* 7.120-31). Exceptional strength, a long tradition of heroic excellence which he hands down to Achilles (tellingly he gives Achilles his

<sup>37</sup> For Neoptolemus' characterization as modelled on patterns of behaviour and character of the Homeric Achilles, cf. e.g. Michelakis 2002: 152-3; Allan 2000: 110-1; Mossman 1996: 152; Phillippo 1995: 363-5; Kuntz 1993: 75; Aldrich 1961: 74-5. Especially for the frequency and dramatic use of the patronymic (son of Achilles), see Phillippo 1995: 367. For the Iliadic quarrel Agamemnon-Achilles used as a source for patterns of behaviour, see e.g. Kyriakou 1997: 17-18; Sorum 1995: 383.

<sup>38</sup> Allan 2000: 22 notes the continuity, but limiting it only to the theme of suffering and old age of Peleus in the epic.

<sup>39</sup> For references to his riches, cf. also e.g. *Il.* 9.364 (μάλα πολλά, τὰ κάλλιπον ἐνθάδε), 9.400, 9.481-2, 11.769 (δόμους ἐὺ ναιετάοντας).

mighty spear, he is repeatedly imagined urging him to heroic excellence) mark him as an important heroic figure in the epic world.<sup>40</sup> As king, he is emphatically presented as a just and generous host and protector of exiles seeking for shelter (Phoenix, Epeigeus, Patroclus).<sup>41</sup>

Many of these aspects of the character of the Homeric Peleus seem to be at work in Euripides' new version of the Phthian nobleman. Euripides' Phthian old man is still the Homeric figure of the king revered by his people (22-3, 790-801), and of the mortal exceedingly honoured by gods. Not only his wedding to Thetis (e.g. 1218), but also his new ending as ἀθάνατος ἄφθιτος θεός (1256) continue and develop the Homeric motif of his extreme favour from the divine. The continuity is not complete, however. The Homeric notion of Peleus as excelling all men in wealth is not marked in this case. Here there is no emphasis on the richness of Phthian rulers (both a Homeric and also a contemporary association of Thessalian nobles), as there was no reference to the proverbial richness and fertility of Phthia's land.<sup>42</sup> Instead, it is twice suggested that Phthia's status in terms of wealth is more modest next to an abundantly rich Spartan state. Lines 149-50: Hermione's rich garments said to be a gift neither of the house of Achilles nor of Peleus (οὐ τῶν Ἀχιλλέως οὐδὲ Πηλέως ἀπὸ/ δόμων); line 211: Hermione said to be "a rich woman living in the midst of the poor" (πλουτεῖς δ' ἐν οὐ πλουτοῦσι). But outside this slight divergence, the strong connection with the Homeric portrayal of Peleus' exceptional status is kept. Additionally, as in Homer, Peleus again assumes the role of the just and generous host supporting those in need of his help (in this case Andromache and her offspring). His admirable heroism, his Homeric role as upholder of a tradition of exceptional valour and strength are also vividly present in this play: his courage a repeated notion in the words and action of the play (e.g. 551-8, 588, 757-65); his heroic

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<sup>40</sup> For Peleus' βριθὸν μέγα στιβαρόν spear (which nobody else could yield outside Achilles and himself) given to Peleus by Chiron for his heroic deeds at Mount Pelion, see *Il.* 16.140-4. For Peleus as trying to set Achilles' heart to desiring heroic excellence, see e.g. *Il.* 11.783-4.

<sup>41</sup> See *Il.* 9.447-84, 16.570-6, 23.85-90. Richardson 1993: 175 notes how Peleus is particularly associated with the theme "of giving new house to exiles" in the epic.

<sup>42</sup> For wealth of Thessalian nobles as part of the contemporary semantics of Thessaly as well, see p.142. Euripides diverges from both the real and epic image of Thessaly in this respect. The way wealth is thematized in the play as a source of corruption and false pride (e.g. 147-54, 207-14, 319-32) hint at a possible reason why Euripides avoids any of the references, common in others of his plays, on the wealthy land of Thessaly. Euripides creates a contrast in his topographical map between Sparta and Phthia; their difference in terms of wealth forms a strong element of the opposition. On this contrast and its potential meaning, see pp.150-1.

paradigm made the subject of the chorus' lyric song evoking his past heroic deeds in the trope of the epinician (766-801).<sup>43</sup> Here not only in the position of the father but also the grandfather of an absent warrior, Peleus stands again as the caring paternal figure as focus of love and respect (Neoptolemus refuses to take kingship from him while alive, 22-3), as a focus of loss and suffering (in this case a suffering expanded beyond the loss of the son, as Peleus now faces the loss of the grandchild). Now the perspective changes; instead of our being asked to imagine Peleus ageing in sorrow and loneliness in a distant Phthia (the Iliadic perspective), Phthia and Peleus are live presences on Euripides' stage. The Homeric inter-text closely alluded to throughout, goes through a radical change in its focalization. In line with the norms of the *nostos* play, focalization shifts from the warrior away from homeland to the family members awaiting him in the homeland left behind, almost from an Iliadic to an Odyssean perspective.<sup>44</sup>

The Phthian people are not represented by a group of mighty warriors as in the Iliadic world. Instead of the Myrmidons, on Euripides' stage we get a group of noble Phthian women arriving onstage to sympathize with Andromache's misfortunes (116-21). In their sense of justice and protective attitude towards the weak, they resemble their rulers' characterization (people reflect character of rulers in the way Homer uses his Myrmidons as a kind of mirror of Achilles).<sup>45</sup> Though indirectly, the Iliadic attribution of martial power and valour to Phthian society is still at play in Euripides' configuration. References to Peleus' strong army which causes Menelaus to shrink from his evil purposes (760: πολλῶν θ'

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<sup>43</sup>For elements of form and content which allude to the Pindaric trope in this *stasimon*, see Allan 2000: 217-21. Cf. Carey (forthcoming), who refers to the way the victory ode is invoked to create mood and expectations in the tragic play and tragedy more generally. For the more general association of Peleus' presentation as vigorous hero with his persona in the lyric tradition, see Allan 2000: 22. Scholars invariably agree for Peleus as a positive figure in Euripides' play; see e.g. Allan 2000: 22-3, 146-7; Anderson 1997: 145; Mossman 1996: 150-1; Golder 1983: 130-1; Kovacs 1980: 46-7; Boutler 1966: 53. Contrast Kyriakou 1997: 23-4 (arguing for Peleus receiving no illumination or grandeur due to, what she sees, as his inability to understand the situation). For a similarly sceptical view of Peleus and his role as saviour of the suppliant drama, see Burnett 1971: 132, 141-3, 153.

<sup>44</sup> The presence of grandfather and child as representative males of the family, with the adult male king absent is also reminiscent of the Odyssean situation (Telemachus and Laertes residing in Ithaca with Odysseus away). Cf. Eur. *HF* (Amphitryon and Heracles' children).

<sup>45</sup> This is marked also by movement: entries of both chorus and Peleus are configured as movements prompted by pity towards the suppliant Andromache. See further for the chorus' relation of sympathy with the foreigner Andromache and the way it is translated into physical action in their choral entry in pp.175-7. For Myrmidons in the *Iliad*, see p.139. The same analogy (similar characterization of rulers-people) holds in the *IT* (see ch.2, pp.92-3). Contrast how Egyptian people differ in characterization from their king Theoclymenus in *Hel.* (see ch.1, pp.37-9).

ὄπλιτῶν), and his daughter to fear the prevention of her escape from Phthia (992: Πηλεὺς μετέλθη πωλικοῖς διώγμασιν) are somewhat reminiscent of the strong emphasis on the pre-eminent Myrmidonic martial valour of the epic.<sup>46</sup> Phthian society is not otherwise rendered in any detail. Contemporary Thessalian culture and its peculiar associations are nowhere in sight in Euripides' text; no references or hints to idiosyncratic Thessalian athletic pursuits, to Thessalian orgies of food and drink (Thessalian *topoi* used with descriptive detail elsewhere in extant Euripides).<sup>47</sup> We do hear of magic drugs supposed to inflict husband hatred and female bareness. Hermione accuses Andromache of using such φάρμακα in order to destroy her wedding (32-3, 157-60). Witchcraft is in play, but conspicuously not associated with the local women of Thessaly.<sup>48</sup> The stigma marks instead only the woman of Asia (159-60: δεινὴ γὰρ ἠπειρωτὶς ἐς τὰ τοιάδε/ ψυχὴ γυναικῶν); a prejudice about Asia which both Menelaus and his daughter unsuccessfully try to rehearse on Andromache.<sup>49</sup> Only the strong devotion of both rulers and people to the tradition of honouring Thetis receives emphasis as a collective Thessalian characteristic (19-20: Θεσσαλὸς δέ νιν λεῶς/ Θετίδειον αὐδᾶ θεᾶς χάριν νυμφευμάτων).<sup>50</sup> Any oddness is removed; any old fashioned aspect is absorbed into the Myrmidon tradition.

<sup>46</sup> The proverbial Phthian martial valour is alluded to also in references to the martial prowess of Neoptolemus and Peleus; see previous discussion on Neoptolemus and Peleus, pp.146-8.

<sup>47</sup> See in e.g. Eur. *Heracl.* 376-84, *Bacch.* 565-76, *Rhes.* 237-41 (Thessalian horsemanship); *Hipp.* 221, *Bacch.* 1205, *El.* 836-7, *Phoen.* 1407 (references to Thessalian martial weapons [javelins, cleaver] and tricks); *El.* 815 (reference to the Thessalian habit of bull butchering and horse breaking).

<sup>48</sup> For the renowned association of Thessaly and witchcraft, see p.142.

<sup>49</sup> The word ἠπειρωτὶς is clearly used later in the play to denote Andromache's Asiatic origin in the mouth of Menelaus (652-3). The meaning 'Asiatic' at 159, as at 652, is attested elsewhere; see e.g. LSJ<sup>9</sup> s.v. ἠπειρος; Stevens 1971: 116. The Asiatic woman is elsewhere associated with drugs related with childbearing in Euripides (Medea in the homonymous play, 718); see also Papadodima 2010: 18n.30. In *Andr.* the Spartans' play with the stereotype does not work for them. Their accusations receive no validation in the play: decisively refuted by Andromache early on (205-8, 355-60); mentioned only in the beginning (32-5, 157-60, 205-8, 355-60), not to be heard again in the rest of the play (neither Andromache when she reports the situation to Peleus, 567-70, nor Hermione when she reports her story to Orestes, 930-53, refer to it again, while the latter envisages the bearing of children at 941-2). Cf. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 110. In general, attempts of Hermione (159-60, 170-80, 261) and Menelaus (515-6, 520, 649-71) to use the foreign origin of Andromache in order to distance her as an exotic barbarian are shown false in the play. Both plot (Spartan actions, Phthian support of the Trojan) and characterization, deny any prominence to their kind of rhetoric. For similar views on the ineffectiveness of Spartan invectives against the Trojan, cf e.g. Papadodima 2010: 18-25; Dué 2006: 162; Kuntz 1993: 75-6; Hall 1989: 213. Contrast Belfiore 2000: 87 (using Menelaus' comments on Andromache's foreign origin to argue for Andromache presented as "enemy of all the Greeks" in the play; an effect which I see transferred, via both staging and words, on the Spartan woman instead of the foreigner, see pp.160-1, 178-80).

<sup>50</sup> For the emphasis on the mythic associations of the topography with Thetis, see also p.145.

Nevertheless, there is a sense in which Euripides' Phthia reflects aspects of its contemporary image in a way that marks its oddness in fifth-century consciousness. More particularly, in the way Phthia interrelates with Sparta in the dramatic map of the play one could detect a reflection of the contemporary treatment of Thessaly as a backwater (referred to earlier as part of its contemporary semantic associations).<sup>51</sup> Between the two Greek locales a strong opposition is created.<sup>52</sup> Sparta, updated (contrary to Phthia) in its semantics with associative precision and portrayed with strokes of contemporary negative Athenian prejudice, comes across as a repository of perverted values and ways: excessive wealth (147-52, [194], 209-12, 461, 873), treachery and lies (445-7), unjust prosperity (448-9), arrogance (461), undue greed (451, 579-86, 725, 733-4), uxorious men (Menelaus being the example par excellence, e.g. 361-3, 605-35), and licentious women wandering in public *γυμνοῖσι μηροῖς καὶ πέπλοις ἀνειμένους* (598-9).<sup>53</sup> These arrogant and affluent Spartans look down onto the Phthians (e.g. 147-52, 209-12).<sup>54</sup> The Phthians in turn utterly reject their corrupted ethics (e.g. 590-641, 724-6).<sup>55</sup> Both in the marked Spartan-Phthian contrast and in the Spartan attitude towards Phthians, the dramatist could be picking up on central Greek views about contemporary Thessaly as an isolated, backward place.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. how in previous discussion references to Orestes' appearance and to Phthia as distant land have also been argued as a possible reflection on the isolated geographical position forming part of the semantics of modern Thessaly, p.144.

<sup>52</sup> Contrast how Phthia and Troy are brought closer in the play in terms of common suffering, values and compassion (see pp.152-3). For the paradoxical polarity that sets Spartans (instead of Trojans) against Phthians discussed in the light of its strong effect of blurring Graeco-barbarian boundaries and raising questions on the role of ethnicity-identity in defining status and relationships in the play, see e.g. Papadodima 2010: 24; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 5-6; Hall 2000: xxx, 1989: 213-5; Allan 2000: 270-1; Kuntz 1993: 73-5; Bacon 1961: 171-2.

<sup>53</sup> For Menelaus' as driven by his women, see p.181n.154. The females exercising at the *gymnasia* (597-60) are an anachronistic addition to the Sparta of the heroic times; according to Stewart & Smith 2001: 7, "the play's greatest anachronism" (cf. Stevens 1971: 169). For female athleticism as part of the Lycurgan institutions, see e.g. Cartledge 2001: 113-4. For Euripides' use of Athenian prejudices in the representation of Spartan women, see e.g. Caltredge 2001: 114; Allan 2000: 186; McClure 1999: 164-8. Kitto's (1961<sup>3</sup>: 233-5) view for the play as a deliberate anti-Spartan propaganda has been received with justified scepticism by later scholarship. See e.g. Dué 2006: 63; Kyriakou 1997: 10n.7; Kovacs 1980: 63; Conacher 1967: 172; Aldrich 1961: 58-9. Yet scholars still invariably argue for the political reality of the Athenian-Spartan conflict increasing the dramatic effect of Euripides' play. See e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 134; Stewart & Smith 2001: 6-8; Allan 2000: 159-60; Stevens 1971: 11-12. This is a play which seems to be extensively manipulating contemporary feelings in order to achieve its dramatic ends. In p.138n.4, I discuss the case of another state (Aegina) whose contemporary politics could be seen as manipulated to align sympathies in the play.

<sup>54</sup> Note how the association of wealth of Phthian land and people, a strong element of its Homeric and modern representation not used in this play (see p.142, 147) emphatically marks Sparta's presentation. For Spartan contempt as expressed by Hermione, see also p.158n.82, 178-9.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. e.g. 445-52 (Andromache's invective on Spartan mores). Trojans and Phthians are not only aligned in terms of mutual suffering and sympathy (see n.52 above, pp.152-3), but also in terms of their mutual hostility to the Spartan ethics.

However, with a marked difference: the Phthian-Spartan opposition, formed as a conflict between a simpler, just, heroic world and a post-war wicked realm where nobility is lacking, brings out backwardness (which in the real world could be interpreted as an ambiguous element) as an unambiguously positive attribute, adherence to sound tradition rather than resistance to desirable change. Quite fittingly, this Phthia is never restored to its prelapsarian era in the end. Peleus is to live in Nereus' house as god, from where he can also see his deified son Achilles at Leuke (1257-62); Andromache and Molossus "must migrate to the land of the Molossians" (1244). The future of both Trojan and Phthian line is to continue, but somewhere else.<sup>56</sup> Troy is long destroyed. Phthia is left without a future, at least not one we can trace in anything the play says. This ending seems quite appropriate seen from this perspective. The stories and names of heroic individuals carry on, but the society which produced them cannot survive in the post-war world and its morality (in the same way that it could not be accepted by the Spartans of this stage). The heroic past is rendered a distant land. The world of heroes is a world always (already) lost, a world endlessly receding. The theme of the contrast between heroes of the past and the wicked figures of the post-war world (a theme often detected as an important element in the play) is found also at the heart of its spatial configuration.<sup>57</sup>

Thus, with minor changes Euripides' Phthia follows closely its Homeric prototype. The absence of strong elements of modern Thessaly combined with the positive presence of elements and figures directly connected to the Homeric Phthian land set the emphasis on the Homeric associations of the place. It is within this strongly Homeric realm that *Andromache* is set. As already noted, in contrast to the other two cases of dislocation, this play brings the barbarian into Greece. Outside the slight associations of awkwardness Thessaly could (but does

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<sup>56</sup> Belfiore 2000: 99-100 similarly notes the lack of restoration for Phthia in the ending of the play, though she reaches a different conclusion on its thematic significance. For Belfiore, through Phthia's ending Euripides wishes to show "the failure of the Greek society" to create a civilized world, a world where relations of *philia* and enmity are not confused or mishandled. I distance myself from Belfiore's reading of the theme of *philia* and of the play in general in many respects (specific points of disagreement noted as they become relevant). The argued positive ethical associations of Phthia, presented as a society adhering to acceptable Greek values (respect for cult, mercy towards the suppliant, resistance to aggression and injustice), do not, in my view, support this negative reading of its ending.

<sup>57</sup> For the theme of conflict between the heroic morality of the past world and the wicked morality of the post-war world, see e.g. Allan 2000: 93; Mossman 1996: 144, 152-3; Kuntz 1993: 76; Aldrich 1961: 69-70, 73-4. Michelakis 2002: 184-5 discusses how the theme of Achilles' death or youth in fifth-century drama as a whole could be seen as directing attention to heroism as absence.

not in the end) invoke as a Greek place, in this case there is no fundamental alienating distance between stage and auditorium to maximize (as was the case in *IT*) or to bridge (as was the case in *Helen*).<sup>58</sup> Space is unfamiliar only to the female. In the case of a foreigner, relationship with the physical topography is a graphic way of expressing the degree to which they are integrated into, and accepted by the society and its values; this key interrelation is, in turn, highly significant for audience response to the dislocated female: sympathy or antipathy.

In Andromache's case background history complicates reception in her new place. Her personal story (wife of Hector, the killer of Patroclus and key enemy of Achilles) and the larger Phthian-Trojan literary background (in terms of the epic past in which Achilles is the major force which destroys Troy, and Troy in turn is the place of Achilles' death) offer the potential for a hostile response to Andromache. Her present status as slave, hence a person with no civic persona in her new society, allows little claim for acceptance by the Phthian world. The strong Homeric colour of depiction of topography, in a sense keeping to the fore the Trojan War associations, potentially further maximizes tensions.<sup>59</sup> Yet Euripides' paradoxical treatment of the mythic material makes Helen and the Spartans instead of Paris and the Trojans liable to the larger blame for the Trojan War and Achilles' death.<sup>60</sup> The Trojan-Greek war is repeatedly mentioned in the words; yet it is not associations of enmity but expressions of Phthian sympathy towards the Trojans in their great plight which are the key points of reference.<sup>61</sup> What is more, potential exoticness in the presentation of Troy and Trojans is also consistently downplayed. No descriptive detail or exotic effect is produced from the references to the offstage space of Troy: Troy's high walls (πύργων...ὄρθίων, 10; cf. 107, 515-6, 1010), Helen and Andromache's θαλάμοι (104, 112), the bank of Simois (1019, 1183), the now unused altars of

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<sup>58</sup> See ch.1 pp.42-4, ch.2 pp.96-7.

<sup>59</sup> Allusions to the role of these Phthians in the sack of Troy exist in the play: e.g. 106-7, 170-2, 403 (for Achilles); 14, 341-2, 970-1 (for Neoptolemus); 797-801 (for Peleus).

<sup>60</sup> See e.g. 246-50, 324-9, 361-3, 445-57 (Andromache), 605-31, 693-712 (Peleus), 1249-52 (Thetis expressing the divine concern for the future prosperity only of Phthia and Troy). Cf. Papadodima 2010: 22-4, stressing how Peleus puts the guilt for his misfortunes solely on the Spartans considering the Asian as friend and the Greeks as enemies; Kuntz 1993: 71 seeing a consistent attempt of reconstructing the dynamics of the conflict of the Trojan war between defeated and victors in the play.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. e.g. 10-11, 103-12, [194-5], 292-308, 325-9, 341, 362-3, 399-403, 454-7, 515-6, 541-2, 583, 606-18, 627, 797 (reference to Heracles' earlier expedition against Troy), 968- 70, 1010-46, 1182-3.



the gods of Troy (1025-6) are the only more specific glimpses that we get. Similarly onstage Trojans (Maid-servant, Andromache) are not, in any way, played out as exotic barbarians (via appearance or characterization).<sup>62</sup> Their Homeric nobility is retained.<sup>63</sup> Andromache's reception into Phthian society is thus set against a background which effectively addresses potentially negative associations of her Trojan connections; the dynamics of conflict and tension are realigned to a paradoxical barbarian-Greek unison and a parallel realignment of both against Spartan ways.<sup>64</sup> Emphasis on common values, common suffering and compassion consistently minimize distance between Phthia and Troy, and hence between Andromache and Phthian world.

Euripides' spatial staging introduces her within his Phthia in the position of the suppliant at Thetis' shrine.<sup>65</sup> The stage image opening and dominating the theatre for approximately the first 400 lines, around one third of the play, is a woman clutching the monument commemorating the mythic history of Phthian people, the token of their highest respect (19-20, 45-6; as noted, the only collective Phthian characteristic receiving emphasis in the play).<sup>66</sup> Movement, action and interaction beyond it later in the play reinforce what this spatial configuration implicitly suggests: in Euripides' Phthia the Trojan woman, former enemy and slave, is to be the focus of Phthian concern. It also prefigures the ending, in which she will ultimately become the means by which the Aeacid royal family is to be perpetuated. The effect is further accentuated by the way the other key female figure, Hermione, is distanced and finally expelled from Phthian sanctuary, household and entire Thessalian world. The Greek, former ally, queen and legal

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<sup>62</sup> Only the reference to Andromache's large dowry (2, on this see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 109) and the views she expresses on marriage (215-30, on this see Burnett 1971: 136; Bacon 1961: 154) could be detected as hints of the fifth-century oriental barbarian in Andromache's depiction. For the trait of barbarian luxury in terms of the presentation of their dowries transferred successfully from the Trojan to the Greek, see p.179. For lines 215ff as rather undermining Hermione's accusations of barbarian conduct, than distancing Andromache as barbaric, see e.g. Stewart & Smith 2001: 7, 13; Bacon 1961: 145-6. On the way effect from diverse appearance is used solely to mark the Spartans as outsiders in the Phthian world, see pp.178-80.

<sup>63</sup> Trojans in extant Euripides are not generally marked as exotic barbarians (the Phrygian in *Or.* being a remarkable exception). On the tendency see Papadodima 2010: 41; Bacon 1961: 101, 153-4. As Hall 1989: 212 notes, "Most of the noble barbarians of tragedy are Trojan", retaining their epic "heroic characterization" (cf. Hall 2010: 149-50). On Trojans as not markedly differentiated from Greeks in Homer, see Hall 1989: 19-47; Richardson 1993: 16.

<sup>64</sup> On the negative presentation of Sparta, see pp.150-1.

<sup>65</sup> We don't know whence Andromache enters the theatre space (scene-building or one of the side entrances). But this is irrelevant for the audience, who 'see' only from the first formal action/tableau of this or any play. For the technique of the cancelled entry, see also ch.1, p.57n.112.

<sup>66</sup> For emphasis on the mythic connections of Phthia with the Aeacids, see pp.145, 149.

wife in the royal *oikos* feels driven forth by the hostile voice of the house and the hatred of the whole land towards her: ὡς δοκοῦσί γε/ δόμοι τ' ἐλαύνειν φθέγμ' ἔχοντες οἶδε με,/ μισεῖ τε γαῖα Φθίας (923-5). In putting the concubine outside the scene-building and setting the wife dominating the inside, staging seemingly maps onto the implications of the females' status and relations (between the two women, and between them and Neoptolemus' family), as they might play in Euripides' contemporary world, with accuracy.<sup>67</sup> Yet despite this superficial neatness, Euripides' handling of aspects of his females' space (movement, action, and interaction) overturns associations of his spatial pattern. The semantic implications of positioning are rendered ambiguous, the roles concubine-wife, queen-slave are reversed not merely in the words of the play but also spatially.<sup>68</sup>

In his *Helen*, Euripides puts the famous adulteress outside a foreign house in Egypt but reverses seeming associations of dislocation in her placement, crafting a new Helen out of the woman of the tradition. Here he brings the figure of the traditional wife exemplar into the place of the second woman in a marital liaison, again aligning on her side all traditional Andromachean associations. Euripides retains Andromache's core Iliadic characteristics. Not only in terms of external indicators (age, ethnicity, biography of past and present), but also in terms of internal characteristics (the attributes of loving mother of her son, loyal partner) this is the same woman we are dealing with on his stage.<sup>69</sup> In the guise of the *pallake* this woman is still the one marked as exemplary for her adherence to absolute standards of female propriety, the woman actually playing the wife in the

<sup>67</sup> For concubines and their status excluding them from the household in fifth-century reality, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 8; Allan 2000: 168-9; Just 1989: 52; MacDowell 1978: 89-90.

<sup>68</sup> For Hermione's failures as wife, see e.g. 33, 157, 205 (failure to win her husband's affections); 24-5, 32 (failure to procreate for his household), 149-54, 209-14 (failure to discipline in her role as loyal and submissive wife); 1008 (failure to preserve the household in his absence which she actually abandons), 924-5 (failure to integrate in her new house and country). Hermione's conspicuous lack of wifely virtues and Andromache's paradoxical upholding of the characteristics proper of a wife is invariably noted and variously read as Euripides' way to raise problematization on the values attached to the female and the marital system. Cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 9-10; Torrance 2005: 54-5, 64; Stewart & Smith 2001: 11-14; Allan 2000: 172, 269-70; Rabinowitz 1984: 113-4; Lee 1975: 10-11 (connecting it to the *nomos-physis* question). Contrast Burnett 1971: 136, who notes Hermione's inappropriateness as wife but sees Andromache's qualities as marking her more strongly as concubine and slave, rather than assimilating her to the role of the wife.

<sup>69</sup> For her Homeric laments shaping key parameters of her Euripidean story, see pp.136-7. For her attributes of loving mother and loyal partner as figuring through staging, see further discussion pp.163-4, 184-5. For the drawing on the roles and ethical values of the Iliadic Andromache for the shaping of her Euripidean replica, cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 9; Torrance 2005: 62; Allan 2000: 14; Anderson 1997: 137-42; Sorum 1995: 382.

foreign land and *oikos* in this play. In both plays, Euripides engages with a paradox: the paradox of the wanton woman turned loyal in *Helen*, the paradox of the wife par excellence turned concubine in *Andromache*. The paradox may be more salient in the first case, and the effect consequently more ostentatious. But in this case as well, the task is one involving a kind of epideictic ingenuity: the dramatist needs to take up the ethical values of Andromache's relationship as wife and princess in the Trojan world, employ them in the creation of a new sexual liaison with the Homeric husband's deadly enemy (Achilles' son of all people!) without losing the sympathetic impact for his female.<sup>70</sup> In terms of engagement with previous tradition, the trick may be less flamboyant than the making of an honourable Helen but not less remarkable and complex as, I hope, will become obvious.

Before focussing on how presences are configured onstage, I wish to draw attention to a key absence and its vital effect on the representation of Andromache. As a *nostos* play *Andromache's* plot, unsurprisingly, turns on an absence: Neoptolemus is gone; he is in Delphi, from beginning to end (50).<sup>71</sup> This non-appearance is crucially important not just as the plot element that triggers the wife's scheme against the concubine, but as in itself a staging choice that affects the conception of these women.<sup>72</sup> In Andromache's case, absence is decisive in allowing Euripides to downplay tensions inherent in his treatment. The noted extensive reuse of the Homeric characterization is essential as it allows Euripides to create a consistently loyal Andromache, i.e. a female loyal to her relationships out of principle and not one yielding to her circumstances in order to secure benefits. The latter, though psychologically intelligible, especially in a world where women depend on men, would not make her particularly admirable. But to make so much use of the old Andromache in terms of character and background history is a risky strategy. The Homeric inter-text brings with it certain dangers; the Iliadic Andromache is the most devoted wife of a different man, the Trojan Hector. Here, she is attached to the enemy of Hector and Troy, and the child to whom she is devoted is her bastard son from him, not the doomed prince of Troy. She never expresses for Neoptolemus the kind of affection she repeatedly

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<sup>70</sup> For the element of *epideixis* in the dislocation game in Eur. *Hel.*, see ch.1, pp.55-6.

<sup>71</sup> For the *nostos* pattern as treated in this play, see pp.182-4.

<sup>72</sup> As Hall 2010: 128 puts it: "...every single transgressive woman in tragedy is temporarily or permanently husbandless". For her discussion on how tragedy repeatedly portrays the disastrous consequences of leaving women unattended by their husbands, see pp.126-37.

expresses for Hector in her loving evocations and laments in this play (e.g. 2-11, 96-110, 203-4, 222-5, 399-405, 454-7, 523-5). Her Phthian relationship is the result of coercion (she is Neoptolemus' slave) and a source of pain for Andromache.<sup>73</sup> But her loyalty to her new role as his slave and mother of his child is manifest in her determination to defend his trustworthiness and valour to Menelaus and Hermione (205-14, 268, 339-43, 358-60); in her determination to risk her life in order to rescue their child (406-14).<sup>74</sup> Andromache is shown to maintain two loyalties: the old Iliadic loyalty to the Trojan Hector, the new post-Iliadic one to the Phthian Neoptolemus. In the eyes of another Euripidean character, the Andromache of his *Troades*, faced with the same situation on that stage (as she finds out she is to be bed-partner of Neoptolemus), such reconciliation of loyalties is absurd. I quote her words in translation: 'If I put my love for Hector out of my mind and open my heart to my present husband, I shall appear disloyal to him who has died. But if I loathe my present husband, I shall incur the hatred of my own master...' (*Tro.* 661-8).<sup>75</sup> In *Troades*, being in bed with the killer of her husband and simultaneously keeping loyal to the old marital relationship is impossible.<sup>76</sup>

Nevertheless, Euripides manages to pull this off in the *Andromache*. His choice to keep Neoptolemus away throughout allows him to bring Hector positively into the

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<sup>73</sup> See e.g. 26 (ἐν κακοῖσι κειμένην), 36 (οὐχ ἔκοῦσ' ἔδεξάμην), 390-1 (ἐκοιμήθη βία/ σὺν δεσπότησι).

<sup>74</sup> For references to the Andromache-Neoptolemus relation in the play, see e.g. 13-15, 24-38, 77-8, 122-5, 170-80. For similar views on the relation of Andromache-Neoptolemus, cf. e.g. Torrance 2005: 52-3 (Andromache treated as Neoptolemus' wife, a point used in Torrance as argument for non-sympathy to the female); Phillippo 1995: 368-70 (giving rather more emphasis on the tension of their union, Andromache's pain in it). Contrast e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 150-1; Storey 1989: 18. Both stress Andromache's contempt for Neoptolemus (what in the play Andromache actually reproaches Hermione for at 205-14).

<sup>75</sup> Eur. *Tro.* is later than *Andr.* in time: 415 B.C. next to 425 B.C. around which *Andr.* is invariably dated. On the dating of *Andr.* around 425 B.C., see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 12-13; Allan 2000: 149-50. For an earlier dating, see e.g. Cox 2000: 204 (between 428-421 B.C.); Storey 1989: 24-6 (427/426 B.C.). Both plays put Andromache in the same situation (one play as her present, the other as her grim future); thus, one play turns into key parallel text for unlocking tensions of the other. For *Hec.* (circa 424 B.C.) and *Tro.*, as key parallel texts to *Andr.*, in terms of offering "valuable insights into the psychological effects of defeat and degradation" more generally, see Allan 2000: 166-7.

<sup>76</sup> The paradox of Andromache's double loyalty (both to Hector and Neoptolemus) has been noticed by scholars like e.g. Allan 2000: 174 ("The contradiction at the centre of Andromache's situation is how to remain both loyal to the memory of her dead husband and true to the new family ties..."); Phillippo 1995: 368-70 (seen as marking the irony and paradox of the Trojan-Phthian assimilation, increasing the fervor of Andromache's situation); Torrance 2005: 50-66 (seen as making Andromache an unsettling character to deal with); Belfiore 2000: 87 (seeing Andromache presented as in error in her attempt to be loyal to both men). As following analysis will indicate, I find both latter views unconvincing.

discourse of the play.<sup>77</sup> With a Neoptolemus part of the physical dimension of the play, the laments and affectionate evocations to Hector, invoked as ‘husband’ repeatedly in the play (e.g. 456, 523), would have been unsettling. The fact that we never see Neoptolemus and Andromache, or Neoptolemus, Andromache and their son together onstage effectively downplays any potential contradictions. Instead of the sexual element, focus falls mainly on the familial or quasi-familial relationship involving a beloved and threatened child. We are never led to reflect on the inconsistencies we are made to swallow. By locating Andromache in a situation where the new δεσπότης is away, Euripides is able to exploit her previous loyalty as a positive element in her continuing characterization.<sup>78</sup> Andromache is shown loyal to her new attachments (master and child), as would be expected from a perfect concubine slave; presented simultaneously loyal to her previous marital relations even in death, as would be expected from a perfect wife. Hermione’s inability to retain loyalty to her own marital *oikos* (a point to which I will turn) is in turn further condemned.

Euripides’ clever spatial trick successfully negotiates the risks brought by his Homeric inter-text. But the plot of the absent Neoptolemus works extremely well with Euripides’ pragmatics in one more sense. His absence from stage is exploited in Hermione’s case to make manifest the unresolved tension of her own problematic attachment to two males: husband and father.<sup>79</sup> When Neoptolemus leaves, Hermione calls on her father for help (39-42). Instead of the husband, the

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<sup>77</sup> Neoptolemus’ absence and its value as a dramatic device have been variously commented. See e.g. Allan 2000: 17-18, 47, 191 (as foregrounding the female conflict, emphasizing dislocation of *oikos*, stressing Andromache’s role as protector of the child); Cox 2000: 198 (as a unifying element of the play, stressing *oikos*-disruption); Mossman 1996: 153 (as a tool to manipulate audience feeling); Aldrich 1961: 67-8 (as failure on Euripides’ part in the sense that in this way the marriage of Neoptolemus-Hermione does not receive its due, according to Aldrich, attention); Michelakis 2002: 18-19 (seeing the absence of Achilles and Neoptolemus as part of a larger pattern of absent male heroes from dramas of the latter part of the fifth century); Conacher 1967: 177, 179 (absence seen as retaining the integrity of Andromache’s Trojan identity, as serving a need for Neoptolemus’ death not to be mistaken as tragic event).

<sup>78</sup> Contrast Torrance 2005: 66, who sees audience sympathy affected by the presentation of Andromache as wife to Neoptolemus and as mourning wife of Hector; Belfiore 2000: 87, who sees the double attachment as problematized in the play (in terms of Andromache’s confusion in her treatment of friends and enemies). Yet precisely because, as argued, the two relationships are treated sequentially and separately and in addition because the issue is never simply the sexual relationship, the confusion proposed by these scholars never emerges in the text (though it might of course present itself in real life, which is a different thing).

<sup>79</sup> For Hermione’s attachment to her father as an anomaly and hindrance to her marriage with Neoptolemus, cf. e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 151; Allan 2000: 172, 178; Kyriakou 1997: 11-12; Mossman 1996: 150; Phillippo 1995: 361-2; Seaford 1990a: 151-76, 167-8; Storey 1989: 19, 26n.7.

father-in-law is to be found inside this marital *oikos* (καὶ νῦν κατ' οἴκουσ ἔστ'(ι), 41). The spatial arrangement is unsettling, all the more for a society in which the structure of marriage ordained the full transition of the bride from natal to marital *oikos* and integration in the latter.<sup>80</sup> The concern of the father for his daughter's welfare in marriage is not in itself unnatural (a point Menelaus will repeatedly make, 370-9, 668-70); indeed, the modern reader may remember Smikrines in Menander's *Epitrepontes* intervening to resolve the conflict between his daughter Pamphile and Charisius (though there too the audience is invited to distance itself from the interfering father figure). But the substitution of father for husband in this play is emphatically marked as problematic.<sup>81</sup> The spatial pattern indicates this, and characterization and plot of the play elaborate on the point. The double loyalties of Hermione are repeatedly exposed as deviant via both image (Hermione's appearance dressed with an attire proudly presented as dowry from the father, 147-53), and words (her condescending attitude toward her husband's family and evident preference for her natal home and father).<sup>82</sup> Neoptolemus' absence which theatrically secures the balance between both roles (widow and concubine) which one female successfully (however paradoxically) is made to maintain, allows, in turn, the incomplete assimilation to new role and household of the other female to take concrete shape.

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<sup>80</sup> For Euripides' theatre as interested in dramatizing the failure of the bridal transfer to the new *oikos*, see Seaford 1990a: 152-76. Contrast how, in Andromache's case, her successful transition from the natal (Thebe) to the marital *oikos* (Troy) is flagged in the play: the description of the transition from Thebe to Troy and the successful assimilation in the latter (δάμαρ...παιδοποιός Ἐκτορῶ) opening the play (1-4); the devotion to the marital *oikos* even beyond death exemplified via laments and words (a point made in the previous paragraph); the complete assimilation to her Trojan identity marked as well via the complete absence of any reference to her family past before Hector. The last point on absence of reference to Thebe and the argued effect is emphatically made by Kyriakou 1997: 9.

<sup>81</sup> In real life we have reason to suppose that in cases of failed marriages, the father of the bride, acting as her *kyrios*, has the right (either *de facto* or *de iure*) to take the bride back to the natal *oikos* and claim the dowry. On this reality of fifth-century practices of marriage, see e.g. Just 1989: 27; MacDowell 1978: 87-9. But in this play, Menelaus is not here to take Hermione back home with him (indeed he leaves without her in the end). His readiness to intervene in Neoptolemus' household and the way his intervention is described in the play indicate that his presence in Phthia goes beyond his concern for what would be expected by a father in law. For the problematic nature of Menelaus' intervention in Neoptolemus' household and the doubtful quality of his motives, cf. comment in e.g. Kyriakou 1997: 12-13; Mossman 1996: 150; Phillippo 1995: 360-1.

<sup>82</sup> For the symbolism of her costume at moment of entry, see pp.178-80. Cf. especially 149-52:...οὐ τῶν Ἀχιλλέως οὐδὲ Πηλέως ἀπὸ/ δόμων.../ ἀλλ' ἐκ Λακαίνης...; the husband is considered lesser to the father. That this is the implied meaning of these words is further confirmed (as it simultaneously confirms the truth of the accusation) by 209-12, where Andromache will accuse Hermione: σὺ δ' ἦν τι κνισθῆς, ἢ Λάκαινα μὲν πόλις/ μέγ' ἐστί, τὴν δὲ Σκυῶνον οὐδαμοῦ τίθης,/ πλουτεῖς δ' ἐν οὐ πλουτοῦσι...

Let us now turn from absence to presence. With the male head of the *oikos* absent, his females are left alone onstage. Hermione decides to attack Andromache. The latter, realizing the danger, takes refuge at the shrine of Thetis: “I in fear have come and taken my seat at this shrine of Thetis...” (42-4). As already noted, the resulting stage image will occupy the stage for around 400 lines. Andromache is set at the position of the suppliant; Hermione represents the source of danger. Within the conventions of the tragic theatre, this staging choice to set Andromache as a suppliant unambiguously aligns audience-sympathy on her side. For, as I have discussed in chapter one, in extant drama the tragic suppliant is invariably marked as innocent and sympathetic, unless plot or characterization complicates his/her morality.<sup>83</sup> Neither of these is the case in Andromache’s supplication.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, in this instance, the sympathetic response invited from the extra-dramatic audience is further shaped by the way the intra-dramatic response to the suppliant and her plight is consistently presented as a holistic Phthian gesture towards the barbarian woman. Both rulers and people (the chorus of Phthian women) are presented totally sympathetic to the barbarian prior enemy and slave Andromache, instead of the Greek princess Hermione; a paradox which further accentuates their role reversal. The chorus’ first entry is explicitly marked as a movement of compassion towards the foreigner (“...though I am a Phthian, I have come to you, child of Asia, in the hope that I might be able to find a remedy to your troubles so hard to cure...”, 119-21). Their gesture of sympathy is later on replicated in the movement of Peleus, entering onstage in order to fight for the rescue of Andromache and her son (546-50); implicitly also to be replicated in the (ultimately frustrated) entry of Neoptolemus, anticipated as a movement of salvation for his concubine and child.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> The elevated moral status of the tragic suppliant is rarely undermined, see further in ch.1, pp.46-7.

<sup>84</sup> Contrast how in Hermione’s supplication later on (891-5), characterization of both supplicandus (Orestes) and suppliant (Hermione) complicates the morality of the action turning it into a mere sham and a parody of Andromache’s previous suppliant posture before Peleus (572-6), or Andromache’s child supplication before Menelaus (528-31). For the parodic nature of Hermione’s supplication, cf. e.g. Allan 2000: 64-5, 70, 73; Lee 1975: 7.

<sup>85</sup> For the abnormal emotional alignment of Phthian society (sympathy towards the foreigner instead of the Greek woman), as marked by entering movement of chorus and Peleus, see pp.175-7. For the expectation that Neoptolemus will side with Andromache’s cause, cf. e.g. 50, 74-6, 268-9, 338-43 (Andromache), 77-8 (Maid-servant), 508-9 (Boy), 709-12 (Peleus). Cf. 808-9, 920-8 (Hermione seeing him returning as her own punisher). Contrast 738-44 (Menelaus expecting to find in Neoptolemus a better negotiator than Peleus); 869-75 (Hermione’s Nurse trying to assure her that Neoptolemus will not punish her). The anticipation is further reinforced by the frequency of references in the play, which note the sympathy and support of Neoptolemus to Andromache (at the expense of Hermione), cf. e.g. 77-8, 155-8, 205-14.

Hermione by contrast throws at Andromache only accusations and threats. At line 245 she warns Andromache that she must be killed, later on (257-9) she threatens to set the altar on fire, and she ends her threats (261-8) promising to force the suppliant soon to abandon her position. This stage image is unusual in one very important sense: the explosion of female brutality in civic space is a rare sight on the tragic stage. We do of course get domestic female violence: women like Clytemnestra or Medea killing children or husband in the *oikos*, women turning against their mother like Electra, women committing suicide like Deianira or Jocasta. But normally it is male representatives of civic power that threaten altars and suppliants. Indeed, Hermione is the only female occupying the role of the villain in a suppliant situation in extant tragedy. By her unusual position, Hermione's affinities are with the hyperbolic cruelty and irreligion of the stage tyrant (like Lycus in *Hercules furens*, Polydektes in *Dictys*, Creon in Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*). Eventually, of course, Hermione uses her father, as she must. For in a very literal sense, being a woman, she has to rely on male action for the enactment of her threats. This splitting of the role of the villain does not exculpate Hermione in any way.<sup>86</sup> That her father's brutality is shared by and indeed closely connected with her own violence is a point emphatically made in the play.<sup>87</sup> Menelaus' action takes up and enlarges the impact of the violence his daughter has started. In the eyes of all Phthian people and ruler, the actions of Hermione and her father are seen as creating a threat of subjugation directed far more widely than just at the easily disposable foreigner and her *nothos* son; the circle of anxiety and danger encompasses both Trojan and Phthians alike.<sup>88</sup> The

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Burnett 1971: 133-4, 139, who notes the existence of two villains, though she reaches to a completely different reading. In Burnett's analysis, Hermione is introduced in the suppliant drama, so that her scene of confrontation with Andromache can take place. The main function of the scene is in turn to present Hermione as a weak and indecisive villain (she has not yet decided to kill Andromache at this stage according to Burnett) marking her thus as sympathetic and preparing for the mutation of her role in the latter part of the trilogy (pp.134-8). But indecision and inadequacy, while they might make Hermione ineffective as villain, do not offset the fact of attempted murder and brutal oppression of the weak. I see no sympathy spared for Hermione in this play. Indeed the sustained way in which both staging and words evoke antipathy for the wife instead of the concubine is remarkable. Cf. e.g. 141-5, 229-31, 619-23 (prejudice expressed against her for her bad parentage); 29-44, 61, 142-6 (words identifying her with fear and danger); 75, 269-72 (animal imagery negatively used in relation to her). See further in pp.176-7, 178-80, 196.

<sup>87</sup> Menelaus is explicitly said to come into the drama in order to help Hermione enact her wishes (40: πατήρ τε θυγατρὶ Μενέλεως συνδοῶ τάδε; cf. 370-1: θυγατρὶ.../ σύμμαχος καθίσταμαι); together they plan Andromache's δεινὰ (62-3); Menelaus directly involves his daughter in the course of his actions (431-4, they have to move inside in order for his daughter to decide on further action regarding the child; cf. 441, 517-9).

<sup>88</sup> See e.g. 142-6, 581-2, 633 (πορθεῖς ἀπόντων). As in the Homeric realm of the *Od.*, royal house and country are continuous; invasion of governing family is simultaneously invasion of the city. Cf. comment in Allan 2000: 214, on the "inextricable" connection of state and family in the



involvement of Menelaus creates a massive imbalance, with a foreign slave woman pitched not just against a free woman with all the resources of the household but also against a king with an army. This is further accentuated by Andromache's position alone in supplication onstage, which marks her as totally isolated and fragile.<sup>89</sup> Thus, although the emotional roles of wife and concubine in the Phthian society are reversed, the power ratio between them is retained and even increased. The unscrupulous use of disproportionate force, the total isolation and helplessness of the victim further enhance sympathy for the suppliant (Andromache) and antipathy for the aggressor (Hermione). Here, as is usual with the suppliant motif, the staging proves to be an effective way both to juxtapose extreme power and extreme vulnerability, and also (and in consequence) to align audience responses.

The choice of the place of supplication is again not accidental. In terms of plot, the choice is justified by the cultic significance of the shrine in the Phthian world. In terms of visual effect, each female's relation to it translates into spatial terms their connection or disconnection with the traditions of the family and society, in which divine Thetis is an honoured member.<sup>90</sup> The familial connection is especially stressed. Andromache declares it as her motive for turning to the shrine in her opening words: "...in the hope that it may save me from death. For Peleus and Peleus' offspring honor it as a monument to their marriage tie with the Nereid" (44-6).<sup>91</sup> By physically clinging onto the shrine Andromache figuratively attaches herself both to the divine and mortal line of the ruling family of Phthia;

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heroic world. Allan notes the political dimension of Menelaus' presence in the play (p.214). It is to this dimension that 471-85 of the choral song refer to according to his analysis. Cf. also 785-7 of the choral song, as a possible allusion to the same practice of Menelaus, who has just been seen exiting the stage few lines before the song. Also elsewhere in tragedy, the notion of larger political threat and supplication are not exclusive, cf. e.g. Aesch. *Supp.* (Argos threatened with war); Soph. *OC*; Eur. *Supp.*, *Heracl.* (Athens threatened with war).

<sup>89</sup> Tragic supplication can be single or multiple. The latter pattern is the commoner one in extant Euripides. Cf. e.g. *Supp.*, *HF*, *Heracl.*, *Dictys*. Andromache's case, similar to Helen's in the homonymous play, brings the woman alone in single occupation of the sacred space; total isolation and frailness are strongly marked.

<sup>90</sup> See previous reference of the effect, pp.153-4.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. 19-20 (another reference to Thetis-Peleus family connection). On the way the family connection of the cultic place is stressed in the introductory monologue of the play, see Kuntz 1993: 66. When Peleus comes in (545), Andromache will again explicitly allude to the family importance of the shrine: καὶ νῦν με βωμοῦ Θετίδος, ἢ τὸν εὐγενῆ/ ἔτικτέ σοι παῖδ', ἦν σὺ θαυμαστὴν σέβεις,/ ἄγουσ' ἀποσπᾶσαντες... (565-7). The way the supplication at Thetis' statue associates her visibly with the tradition of the household has close affinities with the way Helen's supplication at Proteus' tomb in Eur. *Hel.* has also been argued to closely tie female and household (see ch.1, pp.51-2).

words ensure that the symbolism of her act is stressed.<sup>92</sup> This is made amply clear later, when Peleus arrives (545) in order to rescue Andromache and her son (only contempt characterizes the few words he has to spare for Hermione). His exit is a movement in close proximity with the Trojan woman and her child walking together in embrace (747-65).<sup>93</sup> He neither touches nor even meets Hermione onstage. While Andromache is throughout physically connected with both the divine and the mortal side of the Phthian family (placed by Thetis' statue for approximately 400 lines, heading to Peleus' household on his arm), Hermione never onstage achieves contact (physical or metaphorical) with Peleus and Thetis. She stands opposite Thetis' shrine (with Thetis' statue staring at her, 246); she actively turns against the shrine of the goddess when she threatens to set it on fire along with Andromache (257); she rejects it as a place of rescue at the moment of her own misfortune later on in the play (859); she abandons the site in the company of her husband's killer by the end (1008). The woman outside, the slave, former enemy and concubine is brought closer to Neoptolemus' family, while the woman inside is increasingly exposed (both literally and metaphorically) as dissociated and alienated from this same family. The associations of physical-theatrical proximity to, and distance from the *oikos*, which elsewhere in extant tragedy are used to mark figurative attachment and detachment between characters and their *oikoi* (note for example the case of Theoclymenus and household in *Helen*, Jason and his palace in *Medea*), are here reversed. The pivotal role of the relation of shrine and household, of household and Phthia, of women and these spaces clearly complicates the effect. The spatial arrangement creates an ambiguous relationship between Hermione and the *oikos*, which markedly reflects the larger ambiguities and reversals in her role in the play. As the wife of the absent master, she is physically in absolute control of the house, the one having the freedom to come and go through its door at will. But simultaneously she is a source of threat to its traditions and its continuity. Both dramaturgically (the pattern physically attaching woman to scene-building) and

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<sup>92</sup> The paradox of the Trojan sufferer seeking the protection from the family of her husband's killer is raised at points in the text: for Andromache a painful contradiction (e.g. 106-16, 403), for her enemies a total outrage (e.g. 170-3, 247, 654-9). The element of the prior Phthian-Trojan enmity as stressing the paradoxical irony of the present situation has been variously noticed in scholarly discussions. See e.g. Belfiore 2000: 82-5; Phillippo 1995: 368-9; Kuntz 1993: 71-2. Yet as argued potential tension is significantly downplayed by the way Euripides treats presentation of Troy and Trojans in the play; see pp.152-3.

<sup>93</sup> For his objections to the wedding of Neoptolemus to Hermione, cf. e.g. 619-23, 1186-96, 1281-2. For the complementary roles of Thetis, Peleus in Andromache's salvation, see pp.198n.217. For the tableau of the simultaneous exit, see pp.186-8.

thematically (woman and marital house connected both in terms of control and destruction), her relationship with the *oikos* resembles that of her aunt Clytemnestra and her own marital *oikos* in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*.<sup>94</sup>

Proximity and distance from Thetis' shrine is an important staging device in one further sense: through it the females' contrasting and contradictory roles (of errant wife, loyal concubine) are visually mapped onto scenic space. Euripides' Thetis is Achilles' mother and Peleus' wife. As in tradition, she is presented as the worthy and pitiful mother.<sup>95</sup> But quite contrary to tradition, as wife, she is presented here as a paradigm of wifely virtue, her marriage a blessed union securing her husband's glorious ending.<sup>96</sup> Andromache's continuous physical attachment to the image of this paradoxically virtuous wife Thetis concretizes her own characterization as loyal concubine and worthy mother.<sup>97</sup> And when Andromache abandons Thetis' shrine, her movement away dramatized as a moment of self-sacrifice for the love of her child (406-20) and the tableau of mother and child visible onstage in close unity thereafter further reinforce this nexus of

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<sup>94</sup> As characters, Hermione and Clytemnestra differ however in a marked sense. This Spartan girl on Euripides' stage is not the ἀνδρόβουλος γυνή (Aesch. *Ag.* 11), overshadowing all other characters (Cassandra being the only meaningful exception) on Aeschylus' stage by her almost continuous physical presence, by her actions and words. This wife stays mostly inside the household for the major part of the play (only to appear again after line 825), having her father speaking and acting out in her place (for female dependence on and simultaneous female capacity to manipulate male action as a feature of this play, see pp.180-1). They do resemble in their roles as dominant residents of scene-buildings, as menacing gatekeepers leading to the destruction of the households put under their protection in the absence of the male. But the οὐ μικρὸν φύλαξ (86) of this Phthian household is not presented as strong enough to act by herself. Menelaus' active role differs greatly from the almost passive presence of Clytemnestra's male supporter (Aegisthus) arriving onstage only at the very end, after all is said and done (Aesch. *Ag.* 1577). For Hermione as weak, cf. comments in e.g. Allan 2000: 104-6; Sommerstein 1988: 244. For weakness however as not downplaying Hermione's brutality and guilt, see pp.159-60. McClure 1999: 201 also connects Hermione-Clytemnestra on other grounds: "...converts Hermione into a kind of Clytemnestra who has killed her husband, metaphorically cloaking him with death...while casting Orestes in the role of the corrupt seducer, Aegisthus, a cowardly stitcher of plots who kills his man unarmed."

<sup>95</sup> For the notion of Thetis as mother in the play, see 108, 247, 565-6, 1235-7, 1260, 1275.

<sup>96</sup> For Thetis as devoted wife in the play, see 1231-2, 1253-8, 1273-5. For the different presentation (stressing Thetis' unwillingness and the incompatibility of the spouses) of the Thetis-Peleus marriage in other sources of the myth, see detailed accounts in e.g. March 1987: 7-12; Stevens 1971: 245. For the different presentation of the Thetis-Peleus marriage (as a happy blessed union), see pp.198-9.

<sup>97</sup> The thematic relevance of Thetis' figure and experience in relation to the females of the play has been variously discussed. See e.g. Allan 2000: 30-5; Rabinowitz 1984: 121; Golder 1983: 130-1, all noting the association of Thetis-Andromache as motherly figures. Regarding their associations as wives, Allan 2000: 31, 35, 190, 258 connects Andromache and Peleus with the strand of faithful spouses Thetis represents in the play, and Andromache with Thetis as a spouse in enforced wedding (the second rather an arbitrary association since enforcement is not, unambiguously at least, an element at play in the way the Thetis-Peleus liaison is shaped in the play; on this see pp.199n.220). Wiles 1997: 201 associates Thetis-Andromache as exotic non-Grecian spouses of high status.

associations.<sup>98</sup> In contrast the errant and barren wife Hermione stays always distant from Thetis.<sup>99</sup> The legal wife's failure to adhere to either of her proper functions is further reinforced by her inability to achieve contact with the goddess. Hence staging effectively validates the ethical values/roles each female upholds in the play.

These associations and dissociations of female positioning are reinforced by developments later in the play. At line 765, under Peleus' arms, Andromache and her child start walking away from the Thetideion; Peleus intends to accommodate them in his palace.<sup>100</sup> The emotional relationship of Andromache and the Phthian royal house, her adherence to (in Greek terms) absolute standards of female propriety are validated. Her marital status within the house is not transformed. But the movement is a quasi-formal confirmation of the moral stature and the value which the house places on her and vice-versa. By contrast, by the end of the play, the house is imagined, by Hermione herself, as taking on a voice and driving her away: ὡς δοκοῦσι γε/ δόμοι τ' ἐλάυνειν φθέγμ' ἔχοντες οἶδε με... (923-4). Her flight, dramatized as an elopement with a new boyfriend (abandoning a husband who at that stage is still not reported as dead), seals her failure to measure up to the values and attributes which her position inside the Phthian *oikos* had bestowed on her. With Neoptolemus' death affirmed (1073), Andromache also moves out of Phthian *oikos* and land in the end; Thetis announces her new role as the wife inside the royal palace of Helenus. The female is restored as wife and, what is more, rewarded with a harmonious marriage with a Trojan (εὐναίως γάμοις, 1245; εὐδαιμονοῦντας, 1249).<sup>101</sup> But even in her withdrawal, her link

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<sup>98</sup> For the emotional tension of this moment as exemplifying Andromache's selfless heroism and motherly devotion, see e.g. Allan 2000: 62; Lee 1975: 7-8. For the dramatic importance of the mother-child tableau and its associations, see pp.184-5. The notion of loyalty to marital *oikos* is rendered particularly important in the play: in the way Andromache-Hector liaison is presented, in the way Hermione's failure to transfer loyalties from father to husband is problematized, in the way Thetis' salutary entry is dramatized as motivated by her devotion to her old marital liaison with Peleus (on this see pp.165n.103, 157-8, 198-9).

<sup>99</sup> For Hermione's barrenness, cf. e.g. 33, 158, 201-2, 360. See discussion in pp.185, 191-4 for other ways, in which the reversal of roles (concubine-wife) is dramatized (via plot, characterization, use of costumes).

<sup>100</sup> I do not think it necessary to assume (as do scholars like e.g. Allan 2000: 74-5; Anderson 1997: 146-7; Golder 1983: 123-33) a re-entry and presence of Andromache and son onstage during the last part of the play. For arguments for this staging suggestion, see e.g. Lloyd 2005: 175-6.

<sup>101</sup> For the marriage with Helenus as part of Andromache's previous tradition, see e.g. Anderson 1997: 136n.6. For the possible political significance of the wedding, see Allan 2000: 155n.29. For the play as possible a compliment to the Molossi and/or particularly to the Molossian king Tharpys, see e.g. Hall 2010: 254, 2000: xxx, 1989: 180-1; Allan 2000: 151-5.

with the Phthian family remains strong; with the Phthian *oikos* lost beyond restoration, concubine and *nothos* son will perpetuate the Aeacid line in Molossia (1243-9).<sup>102</sup> Contrary to Hermione's exit which seals her loss of any wifely credentials, Andromache's exodus comes as the decisive movement which establishes her key role in the Phthian family and marks her return to her true status. At long last, the conflict between thematic associations of domestic space and position of females is resolved. The unworthy wife and queen is seen running out of domestic space, the woman worthy for the role is restored inside; positions are reversed.

All in all, the theatrical configuration of domestic space in this play simultaneously confirms and challenges its social dynamics in the extra-theatrical world of its first audience. Throughout, inside and out retain their formal meanings (the wife dominating the inside-the concubine excluded outside); position reinforces relationships in a very concrete way. At the same time, mobility and (inter)action of characters blurs boundaries, shaping relationships and roles within the *oikos* independently of, and/or even contrary to formal spatial conventions. The wife turns into quasi-concubine and the concubine into quasi-wife. Despite the hyperbole of invasion of sacred space, homicide and elopement in this play this central paradox reflects perhaps a reality of the Greek marital life for the male: the reality that Odysseus' vision of marital *ὁμοφροσύνην ὀπασείαν/ ἐσθλήν* (the absolute oneness of heart in marriage) in the *Odyssey* (6.181-2), or Hector's ideal marriage in the *Iliad* (the marriage implicitly set as paradigm in this play) is one which the Greek society of fixed marriages cannot often achieve.<sup>103</sup> The centre of the male's official familial being may differ from

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<sup>102</sup> Concubines are not meant for reproduction in fifth-century civic ideology (see e.g. MacDowell 1978: 85, 89). Here however the role of the *nothos* child reflects the socio-political dynamics of the Homeric world. See e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 7; Allan 2000: 167-9. Cf. Belfiore 2000: 88-9 (accepting the Homeric association, but arguing for his status as not adhering to any demonstrable period). For a different view (the continuation of the line through the *nothos* child as an allusion to fifth-century historical decrees regarding legitimacy of heirs), see e.g. Cox 2000: 203-4. For the flimsy base of this topical allusion, see e.g. Storey 1989: 19-20. The flexibility of Euripides' fusion of Homeric and contemporary fifth-century model is noted e.g. by Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 7-10; Allan 2000: 169-71. The play thus engages interestingly not only with spatial, but also with chronological and cultural boundaries. In view of the way topography in general is shaped to recreate the Homeric realm, the strong Homeric associations of the ethical values of this society in terms of the fluidity of the status of *nothoi* and concubines further reinforces the argued Homerizing depiction.

<sup>103</sup> For references to the Hector-Andromache liaison as serving to set that marriage as the ideal against which the other marriages dramatized or referred to in the *Andr.* are to be measured, see e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 149-50; Allan 2000: 172; Storey 1989: 18. For the Greek society as a world of arranged marriages, see e.g. Just 1989: 40; Schaps 1979: 74.

the centre of his emotional one and this, in turn, can create real tensions. The play more generally exposes multiple mismatches between formality of roles in relationships and actuality of emotions: the father (Menelaus) abandoning the daughter (Hermione) before the end of the play (730-3); Phthian society sympathizing with the barbarian instead of the Greek woman.<sup>104</sup> There is a clear thematic pattern of elisions of boundaries between formality of roles and emotion of relationships. This is also reinforced by this scenic pattern which likewise recognizes no firm mapping between formal spatial boundaries (inside-out) or their value in designating the status of characters occupying them in relation to the onstage *oikos* of Neoptolemus.

Specifically regarding the females, female space as shaped juxtaposes two females, their different positions and itineraries. One is moving from the natal house to the marital and backwards, the other is always in a movement forward from natal to marital *oikos*, reduced by circumstance (war) to the role of the concubine in a new marital liaison, transferred to a new land as wife of a new man in the end. Unlike Helen, Andromache has no place to return. More like Iphigenia in *IT*, she has to settle with relocation and restitution of status as substitute for a *nostos* which cannot anymore be claimed.<sup>105</sup> Again, here there is a difference: the Greek woman in Tauris returns to her homeland in the larger sense (Greece), even if not to Argos (Athens is instead her new location). Here, the female's homeland is in ruins. Return is never part of either the verbal or the scenic pattern of the play: the word *nostos* never heard onstage, the route back to the Trojan homeland not on the other end of either *eisodos*.<sup>106</sup> Andromache's case as dislocated woman is not only reversed (the barbarian into Greece, instead of the Greek into barbarian land), but also now irreversible. The failure of one woman to fit into her new role and space, the success of the other in being absorbed into any context she is placed are evidently set in contrast in this play. Beneath and beyond the hyperbolic plot specifics of suspicion and attempted murder, Euripides' theatrical configuration touches something of the real experience of the fifth-century female: the woman's itinerary can only be a movement forward. The woman

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<sup>104</sup> For the theme of *philia* in the play, see pp.173-5.

<sup>105</sup> For the dislocated females' relocation in those plays, see ch.1, pp.74-5; ch.2, pp.106-8.

<sup>106</sup> The configuration of the *eisodoi* in the three plays is telling of the point: inland- seashore in *IT* and *Hel.*; road to Pharsalia and route to Sparta-route to Delphi in *Andr.* I adopt Kovacs' (*LCL* 2: 273) configuration of the *eisodoi* in *Andr.* No route to previous homeland is there for the female in this play.

needs to adapt and be absorbed in the new roles ascribed to her; otherwise, the result is alienation from her space.<sup>107</sup> Female space in the *IT* dramatized the vulnerability of the female when taken out of her defining space of cult or *oikos*. The double focus on two women approaching their role in very different ways along with the marked emphasis on female interaction in this play (dominating the first part of the action in the absence of any male), both imply a serious concern to focus on these demands on, and risks for, the female functioning inside her circumscribed roles.<sup>108</sup> The risks of the journey, the vulnerability of the female who fails to function within the realm of the roles society assigns to her are all at play in Hermione's (very similar to Hippolytus') case.<sup>109</sup> Female space in the *Andromache* tells the drama of the female who fails to adapt, and the drama of the female who is absorbed in new contexts, as she moves from dislocation to dislocation.

To conclude, as has been noted, for his play Euripides relies heavily on Homer for his portrayal of topography and for the background story and characterization of his female character. There is however a larger sense in which he draws on Homer's narrative. Homer, long before Euripides, had played with the anomalies of Andromache's narrative (in the epic) space within Hector's household, using her story and role to reflect the impact of war on stable human structures, to explore domestic norms and their tribulations by circumstance. His *Iliad* pointedly has Hector not finding his wife at home but on the walls, where she has rushed in anxiety for her warrior husband in book 6 (6.374-89). The same obtrusion of spatial norms ascribing the wife to the inside is replicated in *Iliad* book 22, where

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<sup>107</sup> Kuntz 1993 in her analysis of female exiles (pp.104-26) argues for their situation as expressive of "the ambiguous spatial identity" of the female in marriage, always in a state of alienation in between natal and marital *oikos* (p.108). Yet neither in the historical reality of marriage nor in literature, does female liminality reflect the normal pattern of marriage. Eur. *Andr.* markedly juxtaposing (via words, characterization and staging) the failure of the wife who resists assimilation to marital house with the success of the woman who is absorbed into marital family (Hermione-Andromache) attests to the case of bridal alienation as the condemnable exception rather than the pattern.

<sup>108</sup> As McClure 1999: 171 notes, the *agon* of Hermione-Andromache is one of only three staged between women in the whole of extant Euripidean drama.

<sup>109</sup> Eur. *Hipp.* is parallel and complementary to this play in the sense that *Hipp.* dramatizes the risks and implications of the failure of the male (instead of the female) to make the transition demanded by his social status (marriage, procreation). Other scholars have seen connections of this play with Eur. *Hipp.* in other respects. See e.g. Stewart and Smith 2001: 3 (the common tendency of subversion of heroic conventions of Hom. *Il.*); Belfiore 2000: 88 (status of *nothos* child here reflecting the status of Hippolytus in Theseus' house); McClure 1999: 158-204 (throughout her analysis advancing interesting parallels with Eur. *Hipp.*); Storey 1989: 24-6 (the common emphasis on notion of *sophrosyne*).

the wife is seen rushing out of the house in fear for her husband's death (22.450-65). Euripides seems to be expanding on this. By transporting Andromache through space and dexterously manipulating the dynamics of female space in her new environment of dislocation, our dramatist replays similar and similarly central domestic and civic issues in the theatre of his *Andromache*.



## *ANDROMACHE*

### SCENIC ANALYSIS

#### *Cancelled entry, 1*

*Andromache*, opening scene: a scene-building at the back; a shrine perhaps represented by a panel set in the back wall at the side, or a free-standing structure, or merely by the statue of a female goddess and an altar;<sup>110</sup> a body placed in suppliant posture on it. The figure in supplication posture is Andromache (5). Her first words allude to past memory: “Glory of Asia, city of Thebe! It was from you that I once came, dowered with golden luxury to the royal house of Priam, given to Hector as lawful wife for the bearing of his children- I, Andromache in days gone by a woman to be envied...” (1-5).<sup>111</sup> Present image and state of misfortune are directly set in juxtaposition with a past prosperity. Now, uprooted from marital *oikos*, bereft of husband and child, she explains how she has journeyed to another *oikos* after the war that captured Troy: Andromache travels from Troy to Greece (no adornment of “gold luxury” involved in this journey) to be given as *δορὸς γέρας* to the islander Neoptolemus (14-5). Her new transfer brings her as slave and concubine in a new dwelling. Idealized movement in the past (glorious bridal journey from Thebe to Troy) is cancelled, as abnormal circumstances of war disrupt the normal itinerary of the female forcing her to a new, unexpected and

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<sup>110</sup> The representation of the shrine by the use of a panel is supported by e.g. Stevens 1971: 83; Hourmouziades 1965: 49-50; Poe 1989: 125-6. Contrast Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 11, who envisions the possibility of a free standing structure on the side of the scene-building. Either suggestion remains hypothetical. The structure and its parts are referred to (in the order of the play) as: ἀνάκτορον (43, 117, 380), ἄγαλμα (115, 246), δάπεδον (117), δόμον (130), ἔδραν (135, 262, 266), δῶμα (161), βωμός (162, 260, 411, 427, 565), ναός (162), τέμενος (253), βρέτας (311), πέδον (314). For Hourmouziades the various references to the structure in the play only suggest its visible presence. In his words: “...why would the poet have been so informative in this particular play unless he had been sure that much of what he was referring to would, in some way be represented at the performance?” (p.50). Yet the references could be just verbal painting, while the shrine is represented merely by an altar and statue. Cf. Eur. *Ion* 184-218, where described elaborate decoration of represented temple should not be taken to correspond to its actual appearance onstage (on this see e.g. Lee 1997: 177-8). As noted in the *Introduction*, p.25, I see passive staging in tragedy as mostly relying on the imaginative response of the audience.

<sup>111</sup> The Sapphic description (fr.44v Voigt) of the moment of Andromache’s coming to Troy is lurking behind the text (see Stevens 1971: 87). The evocation of the Sapphic wedding song bringing into play associations of celebration and grandeur, projects the moment of Andromache’s entering into Hector’s household as a sort of elevated moment, heightens in turn one’s sense of the reversal between previous splendour and contrasting present circumstances. For the capacity of the tragic genre to absorb other literary genres and put their associations to desired effects, see Carey (forthcoming); Swift 2010 (a study on the ways in which lyric genres are used in tragedy).

unfortunate relocation.<sup>112</sup> From wife to widow, from spouse matched with a glorious husband (Hector) to concubine of a poor islander (Neoptolemus), from mother of a legitimate royal heir (Astyanax) to mother of a *nothos* son, from rich queen to poor slave; her present is forcefully sketched out as a series of unfortunate reversals of her happy and prosperous past.<sup>113</sup> Emphasis on her present reduced status and/or the glory of her past in her following laments (96-116, 196-204, 222-31, 394-410, 453-64, 523-5), as well as in the words of chorus and other characters will re-echo the tragic tone of these opening words and the image of contrasting fates that they create.<sup>114</sup>

Opening image illuminates her present situation in a further sense; the supplication tableau (a tableau particularly familiar to the Euripidean spectator) immediately renders visual the pressures she faces in Euripides' Thetideion: danger lurks; the suppliant has found herself helpless and isolated; a plea for divine intervention and rescue is at stake.<sup>115</sup> Words build on the already created impressions and emotional tension of the scene: a change in the household, Neoptolemus' new marriage with the Spartan Hermione, has robbed all hope from Andromache (26-31). Hermione throws at her accusations that are not true: using secret drugs, she makes her childless and hated by her husband (32-5). Andromache's denials do not convince her. Hermione wishes to kill her (βούλεται...κτανεῖν, 39). And now, with Neoptolemus away (ἀπών, 50), an accomplice has come to her aid: Menelaus coming all the way from Sparta (ἀπὸ Σπάρτης μολών, 41) is now in the house for this very purpose.<sup>116</sup> The situation

<sup>112</sup> Abnormal geographical relocation as expressive of conceptual disorder in the female's experience is key characteristic of what I define as female dislocation; see *Introduction*, pp.17-8.

<sup>113</sup> Islanders were often considered to be of lower status by mainlanders presumably because of the limited sources and power of islands. For the use of the word as containing an amount of contempt (with parallel texts), see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 109; Stevens 1971: 90.

<sup>114</sup> For other instances of reference or allusion to Andromache's past prosperity or present state of slavery and misfortune in the play, cf. e.g. 139-40 (δυστυχεστάτα/...παντάλαινα νύμφα), 141-6, 301-8, 489, 497, 1059 (chorus); 68 (Maid servant); 155, 164-8, 908, 932-3 (Hermione); 433-4, 583-5, 649-59, 670-1 (Menelaus); 633 (Peleus); 960-3 (Orestes); 1243 (Thetis). For the contrast between Andromache's past and present as a source of pathos in the play, see e.g. Dué 2006: 157-8; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 111; Stewart & Smith 2001: 4; Kuntz 1993: 68-70; Lee 1975: 10-12.

<sup>115</sup> Opening suppliant tableaux, a favourite Euripidean technique, evoke specific associations: helplessness, weakness, isolation, elevated status of suppliant etc (see ch.1, pp.46-7). For the effect of the suppliant staging on the characterization of Andromache and Hermione, see pp.159-61. The pathos of her isolation is also emphasized by the dramatic technique: monody of heroine (91-116) before the entry of the chorus. For the technique as a usual Euripidean way of stressing isolation of prologue speaker, cf. e.g. Eur. *Hel.* (see ch.1 p.46n.71)

<sup>116</sup> For Menelaus' presence in household and country as a marked anomaly with effects both on the presentation of Hermione (rendering the problematics of her continuous attachment to the father

reflects a familiar motif of the tragic world: dangers aroused for the *oikos* in the absence of its male head (for example Agamemnon in the *Oresteia*, Theseus in *Hippolytus*).<sup>117</sup> The trouble at hand resembles particularly the reversal inflicted on Heracles' household in Euripides' *Hercules furens*: children and relatives of the absent male threatened with death by an illicit usurper (Lycus), who takes advantage of the power vacuum created by Heracles' absence and presumed death. Here, Hermione and her father Menelaus similarly exploit absence, in order to exert their power.

Spatial mapping reflects the anomalous reversal and suggests the multiple ruptures created: instead of the husband, the father-in-law dwells in the marital *oikos* (καὶ νῦν κατ' οἴκου ἔστ'(ι), 41); previous residents (Andromache and boy) are turned into unwanted outsiders; previous harmonious relationships between house and nearby shrine, and house and Phthia are upset. As Andromache notes, Peleus and his offspring uphold a tradition of respect to the memorial of Thetis' wedding (45-6). In dramatic time, respect of this tradition will become a matter of uncertainty. In spatial terms, shrine and house previously united are now set apart; the first turned into Andromache's refuge, the latter turned into the realm of Spartan usurpers and her deadly enemies. Onstage is divided in two (house versus shrine), onstage and offstage are potentially in conflict (house versus Phthia) depending on the reaction of Spartans to Andromache's suppliant state. The tension, as often in suppliant situations, is one of safety versus danger, one of rescue versus death.<sup>118</sup> Thus, opening image and words set the scene in two senses: they provide the background story of the female and succinctly introduce the key reversals and tensions at work in her dramatic present.<sup>119</sup>

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while in her marital household) and on Andromache (Phthia and Andromache assimilated in their common reaction of fear towards the Spartans), see pp.157-8, 160-1.

<sup>117</sup> A motif operative already in Hom. *Od.* (see Mossman 1996: 153, 156n.45).

<sup>118</sup> Cf. e.g. Euripides' lost *Dictys*. Contrast the nuanced presentation of this convention in Eur. *Hel.* (see ch.1, pp.53-4).

<sup>119</sup> For staging of tragic openings as thematically significant, cf. opening of *Hel.* (ch.1, pp.57-9), opening of *IT* (ch.2, pp.112-4). For Euripides' interest in the aftermath of war on women, see e.g. Hall 2000: ix-x, xvii; Kyriakou 1997: 17. For *Hec.*, *Tro.*, and *Andr.* as sharing an interest in the female captive of war, see e.g. Stewart & Smith 2001: 3; Allan 2000: 16-17; Conacher 1967: 166. A Euripidean interest in the female on the victorious side and her own reversals in war situations has also been detected in this play by scholars arguing for Hermione presented as a female victim of war (see p.180). See also ch.1, pp.54-5, 68-70 for Eur. *Hel.* showing an interest in the females left behind without their male protectors in cities and *oikoi* during war.

### *Enter Maidservant, 56*

Maidservant, opening address: δέσποιν'(α), “I do not shrink from calling you this name since it was the name I thought it right to use in your house when we lived in the land of Troy” (56-8). The Maidservant’s opening address and words, recall her and Andromache’s former relationship in Troy, further marking the unfortunate circumstances of their present encounter in their post-war Greek setting. The narrative of reversal opening the play is reinforced.<sup>120</sup> ὦ φιλάτη σύνδουλε (σύνδουλος γὰρ εἶ/ τῆ πρόσθ' ἀνάσση τῆδε, νῦν δὲ δυστυχεῖ) is Andromache’s reply to the Maidservant’s address (64-5). Formerly mistress and slave, now they meet as σύνδουλοι in their new lives with their new assimilated status as slaves most probably also rendered visual in performance via similar servile clothing.<sup>121</sup> The previous titles become empty shells, purely decorative. Both via image and via words, the whole ensuing dialogue between Andromache and one of her former Trojan slaves increases the pathos of the figure by the shrine in a most effective way.<sup>122</sup>

The slave comes out of the scene-building in fear and out of pity (φόβω...οἴκτω, 61-2) to inform Andromache of the new danger: Menelaus has gone out in search of Andromache’s hidden son.<sup>123</sup> Andromache is now more than ever in need of help. Being a slave woman, the Maidservant shares Andromache’s double disadvantage of gender and status, rendering her no more able than her to affect the situation. A stronger ally needs to be fetched; Peleus’ delay in responding to Andromache’s messages for help needs to be urgently addressed. She had sent a message to him “more than once” (οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον, 81). She needs to be reminded by her former slave that her words cannot anymore direct the actions of others in the new setting (μῶν οὖν δοκεῖς σου φροντίσαι τιν' ἀγγέλων; 82). Her inability to control events and communications any more maximizes the sense of her isolation and poignantly reminds both Andromache and audience of the

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<sup>120</sup> On how prologue and opening image emphatically introduce the contrast between happy past-unhappy present in Andromache’s situation, see pp.169-70.

<sup>121</sup> Andromache is presumably in servile clothing. Cf. Stewart & Smith 2001: 8; Allan 2000: 53.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. e.g. Allan 2000: 52; Stevens 1971: 100; Aldrich 1961: 25, all commenting on the pathetic undertones of the exchange between Maidservant and former mistress stressing the pathos of her new reduced status.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. how the chorus experiences the same feelings of fear towards the Spartans and pity towards the Trojan (141-6). For the imprint of fear extending on the whole Phthian society, see pp.160-1.

*peripeteia* which has left her with none of the authority and power once enjoyed in her Trojan dwelling.<sup>124</sup> Andromache decides to ask the Maidservant for help: θέλεις οὖν ἄγγελος σύ μοι μολεῖν; (83). What in Troy would be a matter of proclaiming an order and demanding its execution by the slave, has to be communicated on this stage as a desperate plea for friendship which the former slave can accept or decline at will (θέλεις, 83). Thus, the scene finishes off as it had started: poignantly alluding to the harsh reversal in Andromache's new situation.

***Exit Maidservant, 90***

Θεράπαινα: κίνδυνος Ἑρμιόνη γὰρ οὐ σμικρὸν φύλαξ.

Ἀνδρομάχη: ὄρα; ἀπαυδᾶς ἐν κακοῖς φίλοισι σοῖς.

Θεράπαινα: οὐ δῆτα ἄμῃδέν τοῦτ' ὄνειδίσῃς ἐμοί.

ἀλλ' εἴμ', ἐπεὶ τοι κοῦ περιβλεπτος βίος

δούλης γυναικός, ἦν τι καὶ πάθω κακόν.

(86-90)

“Not at all: don't reproach me with that! I will go, since in any case if something happens to me the life of a slave is not much to envy” (88-90). The Maidservant, who had come through the scene-door in fear for her safety and in pity for her former mistress (φόβῳ...οἴκτῳ, 61-2), is to exit towards Pharsalus, risking further danger for the sake of her friend. Physical proximity is the commonest way to express support and affection on the tragic stage.<sup>125</sup> Here, movement motivated by a strong sense of obligation of loyalty towards one's friend even in the face of danger achieves the same effect. Agitated movement of a character in aid of a friend is similarly used to stage the theme of *philia* in Euripides' *Orestes*:

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 111; Stevens 1971: 104, both commending on Andromache's false hope and bitter realization that her messages would not reach Peleus. Cf. also Torrance 2005: 44-5, who argues unconvincingly for Andromache manipulating the Maidservant in a way that makes her unsympathetic. There is however no indication in the text for irony in Andromache's addressing of the Maidservant as friend (87) and fellow-slave (64). On the contrary, while the Maidservant insists on addressing her as mistress, Andromache does not exploit the Maidservant's eager compliance by ordering her to the errand.

<sup>125</sup> For physical proximity as expressive of support, friendliness, see ch.2, p.130n.168. Cf. e.g. Eur. *Or.*: Electra in proximity to her brother (συγγόνου προσεδρία, 93) nursing him in his sickness, Pylades supporting his friend Orestes in embrace (879-83, 1013-7); this same play (*Andr.*) later on, when Peleus calls Andromache and Boy to approach him in embrace (747-9; for their simultaneous exit, see pp.186-8).

the true friend Pylades running onstage to support Orestes (726) is there contrasted to the false friend Menelaus, who has just reluctantly headed off (717), supposedly to promote Orestes' interests to the Argive assembly (a motivation that proves a mere pretext for the exit).<sup>126</sup>

The Maidservant's exit figures what will become an important theme in the play: friendship. This question of *philia* in times of need, the question of its nature and furthermore of its mapping onto any kind of formal relationships (family or ethnicity and status) will be one repeatedly raised (in different ways, and addressed to different characters) in the course of this play. Unlike this slave woman, not all characters prove true to their *philoï*. Menelaus tries to manipulate his *philia* with Neoptolemus, attempting to trespass on his *oikos* in his absence (cf. especially 376-7, 641, 676) and abandons his daughter and protégée in mid play (746). In a repetition of her mother's betrayal of Zeus *Philiôs* (603), Hermione leaves husband and household she was supposed to preserve to run away with her new boyfriend (1008). Contrast how Peleus and Andromache fight and stand by their protégées until the end: Peleus coming to the side of the barbarian woman and the *nothos* boy (545), Andromache offering her life for the salvation of her son (411).<sup>127</sup> Absent friends when they are most needed (Neoptolemus: 78, 508, 1179, 1205), present friends who abandon and betray (Menelaus, Hermione, Helen in the past), friends who misuse *philia* as a pretext for their unjust plans (Menelaus, Orestes), unstable friends (Sparta's former friendly city: 734), all make their appearance (verbal or physical) in the course of the play. That Euripides has a strong interest in the nature of *philia* is also evident in his *Hecuba*, where in times of crisis the former friend Polymestor turns into enemy, or his *Orestes* mentioned earlier, where these themes appear with some of the same characters.<sup>128</sup> As in those plays, true and false *philia* is put to the test in the *Andromache*. It is shown to be unbounded by family, ethnicity, or status; conditioned rather on circumstance and character of one's *philoï*, subject to

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<sup>126</sup> Menelaus' utter betrayal of his cousins (Electra and Orestes) is a fundamental part of the plot in Eur. *Or.* The visual contrast between the two movements juxtaposes true and false friend. Particularly Pylades' mode of entry (running, δρόμῳ 726) carries strong undertones of passion and deep concern, thus visually enacting the high level of his commitment to his friend. For the contrast of true and false *philia* in the play, see e.g. Cilliers 1991: 23; Burnett 1971: 186; Willink 1986: xxxiii, xliv.

<sup>127</sup> For Peleus' entry, see further p.177. For Andromache's movement of self-sacrifice, see pp.163-4.

<sup>128</sup> For the theme of *philia* in *Hec.*, see e.g. Hall 2000: xx.

instability, and prone to misuse and abuse by friends like Menelaus and Orestes in whose hands support for a friend leads to a series of offences against others.<sup>129</sup>

The last stage action of the play will again be a movement marked as motivated by a strong sense of obligation of loyalty (this time marital) to one's *philoï* in times of need: the goddess Thetis leaves the divine realm and arrives to save Peleus from his misfortunes χάριν σοι τῶν πάρος νυμφευμάτων (“because of the marriage bed we once shared”, 1231). The failure of false *philoï* in this play is repeatedly underscored by the words and action of true *philoï*, who recognize no danger or boundaries when resolved to help their friends.<sup>130</sup>

***Enter chorus, 117***

ὦ γυναῖ, ἃ Θέτιδος δάπεδον καὶ ἀνάκτορα θάσσεις  
δαρὸν οὐδὲ λείπεις,  
Φθιάς ὅμως ἔμολον ποτὶ σὰν Ἀσιήτιδα γένναν,  
εἴ τί σοι δυναίμαν  
ἄκος τῶν δυσλύτων πόνων τεμεῖν...

(117-21)

Common ethnicity of choral women and a sympathetic protagonist is the norm in extant Euripides.<sup>131</sup> Matching ethnicity, background story, and roles in a new dislocated land firmly connect chorus and women in the other two examined cases of dislocation (*Helen, IT*).<sup>132</sup> Here the chorus are Phthian native women

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<sup>129</sup> For the bond of Trojan-Phthian, instead of Spartan-Phthian in the play, see pp.150-2. The question of *philia* in *Andr.* has been explored by Belfiore from a different perspective (ch.5 devoted to the play, pp.81-100). Belfiore explores the ambiguity of relations of enmity and friendship between Neoptolemus and the members of his family (by blood, and by marriage) stressing that treating enemies as friends and the destructive results of such practice is the main message of the play (pp.82, 100). Both the conclusion and aspects of Belfiore's reading of play and characters significantly differ from my analysis (specific points are noted where relevant, see e.g. pp.149n.49, 151n.56, 157n.78). For the theme cf. e.g. Allan 2000: 55 (noting the paradigm of true friend in the Maidservant's reply), 270 (noting in passing that “the nature of *philia* is at the heart of the play's exploration of human relationships”); Golder 1983: 130-1 (noting on Peleus as a paradigm of true friend to Andromache and her son).

<sup>130</sup> For Thetis as a loyal wife, see p163n.96. For Thetis' entry, see further in pp.197-200.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. e.g. Eur. *Ion* (Creusa and the chorus of her maidservants); *El.* (Electra and the chorus of Argive women); *Tro.* (Hecuba and chorus of Trojan women); *Hec.* (Hecuba and chorus of Trojan women).

<sup>132</sup> See ch.1, p.60; ch.2, p.118.

(Φθιάς).<sup>133</sup> In this case, both diverse ethnicity (Greek/barbarian) and status (free/slave) separate Trojan slave and citizen women of Phthia.<sup>134</sup> In *Medea* the chorus of Corinthian women is faced with a simpler choice between gender (bond of womanhood with Medea) and ethnicity (the bond of Greekness with Jason, Creon, his daughter). Here the chorus is positioned between two women.<sup>135</sup> Bond of status and ethnicity might naturally incline them towards the Greek woman of free status (Hermione). Yet a strong emotional bond is consistently created between the barbarian slave woman and chorus via both words and stage action. The racial and social divide is paradoxically elided. The non-native incomer is absorbed into an alien community (the case of Hypsipyle in Argos being potentially a close parallel) through the sympathetic response of a native chorus.<sup>136</sup>

Movement of entry is emphatically marked as a gesture of compassion which transcends racial boundaries: “though I am a Phthian, I have come to you, child of Asia...” (119). If they can (εἴ τί σοι δυνάμειν), they wish to help find a remedy for her troubles. They have been feeling pity for Andromache ever since she came to this house (141-2). Fear of Hermione confines them though to silence (φόβω δ’ ἡσυχίαν ἄγομεν, 142-3), and it is the same silent endurance of troubles that they advise Andromache to adopt in the face of her harsh constraints (126-38).<sup>137</sup> Sympathy and support towards the foreigner incomer instead of the Greek queen

<sup>133</sup> As in e.g. Eur. *Med., El., IA, Hipp., Or.*, the chorus consists of local women. Stevens 1971: 110 also considers the possibility of these women being members of Hermione’s household because of the reference δεσποτᾶν ἐμῶν at 142. Nothing elsewhere in the text supports this suggestion and, as Stevens himself notes, the reference of 142 “might merely refer to the authority of the ruling house”.

<sup>134</sup> In a sense this underlines Andromache’s isolation in the foreign land, as Allan 2000:199-200 notes.

<sup>135</sup> Allan 2000:199-200, comparing the two plays (*Andr., Med.*), notes how in both “the bond of womanhood partially bridges the racial divide”, with Andromache’s case being “more surprising” since in this case the woman is of hostile race (Trojan). It has to be taken into account, however, that in this play the choral women need to choose in between two opponents of the same gender (female); the situation further complicates their choice and its effects in this play.

<sup>136</sup> In the fragmentary play, the chorus consists of local women of Argos (Hypsipyle dislocated in this play from Lemnos) totally sympathetic to the *metoikos* female slave, instead of their queen Eurydice. Cf. especially *Hyps.* fr.752f, 753d-e, 754a-b Collard & Cropp *LCL*.

<sup>137</sup> Ignorance (as Kovacs 1980: 56), misunderstanding of the situation (as Aldrich 1961: 28), a common sense realism (as e.g. Allan 2000: 203; Lee 1975: 13), and/or the conventional characteristic of the chorus’ opposition to excessive behaviour (as e.g. Allan 2000: 201n.30, 202n.33; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 148) have been detected behind the chorus’ admonitions of submission. N.B. that choral reproaches against excessive words and actions will be directed to other characters as well through the play (e.g. 363-5, 642-4, 727-8, 954-6). For the dramatic function of the chorus’ reproaches, setting emphasis on the heroine’s isolation and solitary heroism, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 115; Allan 2000: 200-4; Stevens 1971: 110.



will mark all their ensuing words and action. In their songs and words they repeatedly respond with compassion to Andromache's painful state: their lyric musings continue and enhance the impact of themes of her laments, their verbal interventions during scenes betray their support for her case (e.g. 232-3, 421-4).<sup>138</sup> The effect is further marked via the juxtaposition of their reactions to Hermione: to her own reversal and plight they respond with immobility and silence. Here they demonstrate their sympathy to Andromache by eliding ethnic boundaries and coming to the support of the alien woman. Later, when the nurse urges them to go inside the house to the aid of her distressed mistress (815-9), it is Hermione who comes outside to meet the chorus (820).<sup>139</sup> They do not utter a single comment during the scene of her emotional reversal (825-79).<sup>140</sup> As noted, of the two women both status and ethnicity might naturally incline them towards Hermione. Yet these choral women cast their lot against their own ethnicity and rank, their paradoxical choice underlining the scale of their support of Andromache and disapproval of her opponent.

At a later point in the plot, the same motivation (wish to support the Trojan woman) will bring their ruler, Peleus, onstage ("...first I shall blow a favouring breeze on this woman's sails...", 544-5). Entering movement (itinerary and motivation) of Phthian characters is effectively used to underline the dynamics of relations between principal women and Phthian society, and to enhance thematic patterns of a play which otherwise renders ethnicity and status as ineffective determiners of emotions and relationships.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>138</sup> For the chorus' sympathy to Andromache as seen by scholars, cf. remarks in e.g. Dué 2006: 156, 162; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 115; Stewart & Smith 2001: 13-14; Allan 2000: 199-232; Lee 1975: 13.

<sup>139</sup> Arguably, of course, the chorus cannot enter the house. Choral movement into the scene-building is almost unheard of in extant tragedy (not however unparalleled, for Eur. *Hel.*, see ch.1, pp.61-3). Nevertheless, the point is not invalidated, as this does not prevent the poet from making thematic use of the chorus' immobility in this instance.

<sup>140</sup> As Allan 2000: 222 nicely notes: "Significantly, the chorus remain silent during the amoebian between Hermione and the Nurse: their lack of sympathy is evident". Their only comment to Hermione will be a criticism of her excessive words (954-56). Later on and only when asked by Peleus, they will comment on Hermione's reaction (1053-65). Their referring to her simply as πόσιν τρέμουσα (1057) because of her terrible actions, betrays no sympathy or emotional involvement of these women to Hermione's reversal. Contrast some of the characterizations they have been using, when referring to Andromache and her own experiences: τλάμων (123), δυστυχεστάτα/...παντάλαινα νύμφα (139-40). For the chorus' unsympathetic attitude to Hermione, cf. comments in e.g. Stewart & Smith 2001: 14; Allan 2000: 204-5; Phillippo 1995: 365; Stevens 1971: 220; Aldrich 1961: 28. For different views, cf. e.g. Rabinowitz 1984: 114; Kovacs 1980: 43, 47, 64-5 (see pp.160n.86, 193-4n.201 below for my argument for non-sympathy towards Hermione in this play).

<sup>141</sup> For this theme of the play see pp.165-6, 173-5. For Peleus' relation with the two women, see also comments in pp. 161-3, 186-7.

### *Enter Hermione, 147*

The words of Andromache, Maidservant, and chorus have long been raising anticipation of this entry. The woman behind the scene-façade now coming into sight is the Λάκαινα (29) Hermione, the second important female figure of the play.<sup>142</sup> This is the woman whose initial entry into this household slowly expelled Andromache and her son from its recesses (29-37); the δέσποινα whom the Maidservant holds in dread (61-3, 86); the woman-vulture ready to attack Andromache's boy (75: δισσοὶ γῦπες, cf. 68-9);<sup>143</sup> the woman before whom the chorus stands in silence (ἠσυχίαν, 143) and fear (φόβῳ, 142). The way this play evokes sympathy for the *pallake* and antipathy for the wife is quite remarkable. Words preceding and referring to Hermione repeatedly identify her with fear and danger, turning her and the inside space of the house where she dwells into brooding presences. Her grand entry outdoors at this moment fits the image created in its anticipation.<sup>144</sup> What is more, it serves as a brilliant introduction to the scene that follows. For in the following lines, the contrast visually created between the grand Spartan queen and the women onstage (both the poor Trojan slave and the Phthian women of the chorus) will also be aurally explored and presented in its various aspects and manifestations.<sup>145</sup>

Hermione's costume is obviously the most important visual aspect of her first appearance onstage; her opening words focus on its richness and background story: "The luxurious gold that adorns my head and neck and the spangled gown that graces my body- I did not bring these here as the first fruits of the house of Achilles or of Peleus: my father Menelaus gave them to me from the city of

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<sup>142</sup> The double focus on two key female figures in this play is quite remarkable. On this aspect, see comments also in pp.136, 166-7.

<sup>143</sup> Animal imagery in relation to Hermione is used once more in the play: 269-72, comparing her with ἄγρια ἐρπετά and the ἔχιδνα, a reference as Stevens 1971: 127 puts it, "to the venomous nature of Hermione".

<sup>144</sup> Cf. the similar technique used (i.e. anticipation created followed by a grand entry from the scene-building) for the entries of dominant similarly ominous women in Eur. *Or.* (for Helen), *Hipp.* (for Phaedra), or *Med.* (for Medea); in Aesch. *Ag.* (for Clytemnestra). There are no textual hints for the presence of a retinue accompanying Hermione at this exit. Nevertheless, taking into account the common tendency of characters of high status to enter accompanied by attendants in drama (on this, see Taplin 2003<sup>2</sup>: 13), we are allowed to envision Hermione entering in the company of at least one or more slaves. The spectacle would increase the grandeur of her entry and the contrast of her pompous style with the humble slave woman by the altar onstage.

<sup>145</sup> For the visual contrast between the two female protagonists, cf. comment in e.g. Allan 2000: 58; Anderson 1997: 140-1; Taplin 1977: 36.

Sparta together with a large dowry...” (147-53). Andromache (1-2) had referred to her own bridal journey and the similarly grand golden luxury accompanying her all the way from Thebe to her new household at Troy, as a measure and proof of the past prosperity that made her “a woman to be envied” (ζηλωτός, 5).<sup>146</sup> Hermione sees her luxurious gold as a source of power and pride; the power to speak her mind (ἐλευθεροστομεῖν, 153), a pride that makes her speak with contempt not only for the δούλη and δορίκτητος γυνή Andromache (155), but also for her own husband whom she finds inferior to her father.<sup>147</sup> Hermione appears onstage in a dress probably looking like the Dorian *peplos*. The wording of her description creates the impression of an extravagant, richly decorated costume (κόσμον...χρυσέας χλιδῆς, 147; ποικίλων πέπλων, 148).<sup>148</sup> Euripides, it seems, is at pains to distinguish Hermione in terms of her rich ποικίλα πέπλα (147-8). The absolute (yet not unusual in terms of his prevailing practice) silence of the text in relation to the barbarian woman’s costume or appearance gains in effect by the juxtaposition.<sup>149</sup> The emphasis on the richness of her outfit associates Hermione with the (usually barbarian) characteristic of proneness to luxury and wealth.<sup>150</sup> Its marked Spartan (instead of Phthian) origin differentiates her from the Phthian women in visual terms (note how difference in terms of appearance will also be used to mark Orestes as outsider, 879-80). Just as the absence of exploitation of effect from costume serves to turn the metaphorical absorption of Andromache into the Phthian world into physical absorption, so in contrast exploitation of effect from visual presentation helps to associate Hermione with barbarian customs, and more extensively with the ethics of Spartan society (different from and rejected by the Phthians). The costume is

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<sup>146</sup> The echo is marked: πολυχρόσω χλιδῆ (2)-χρυσέας χλιδῆς (147); cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 18; Allan 2000: 59; Kyriakou 1997: 11-12; Aldrich 1961: 29.

<sup>147</sup> For Hermione’s contempt for her husband and her attachment to her father marked, via both words and staging, as problematic, see pp.157-8.

<sup>148</sup> I follow Battezzato 1999-2000: 356 in his assumption of the probable appearance of Dorian costumes in the ancient theatre as “perceptibly different from the standard theatrical costume”, with “foreign connotations (Dorian and/or oriental)”, on which, as his survey in extant tragedy reveals, the text invariably draws attention. Battezzato suggests that Dorian females like Hermione in this play, “probably wore an exceptionally luxurious dress...They might have looked like Dorian *peploi*, with added extra decorations and jewellery, such as fancy pins”. Any suggestion can only remain at the level of conjecture, but given that many in the audience would struggle to see a pin in a theatre of this scale, it is the wording and the general visual impression more than any specific details which matter. For the point, cf. also the discussion on the realistic or not representation of Hermione’s nudity onstage in pp.191-2n.195.

<sup>149</sup> For Andromache’s servile costume, see p.172n.121. In the play we get no reference to her (or the Trojan Maidservant’s) foreign costume or appearance.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 118; Battezzato 1999-2000: 358.

succinctly introduced as a powerful symbol of Hermione's character and status (emotional and social) and of the multiple contrasts (of power, material prosperity, morality) separating her and the Phthian world in which she now finds herself. Euripides will return to the symbol again in the course of the plot: Hermione's tearing of the dress near the end of the play (829) is exploited to render visually reversals and complications in her story and status in a striking way. But that is a discussion for which the time (both in play and in analysis) has not yet come.<sup>151</sup>

### ***Exit Hermione, 268***

Hermione throws out her final threat to Andromache: 'Sit on! For even if molten lead all about you should hold fast, I shall make you get up before Achilles' son comes, in whom you trust' (266-8). Then she goes inside. As Andromache, all she can do is sit (rather more comfortably of course in the interior of her palace) and wait for the action of the male. She is waiting for Menelaus; Andromache is secretly hoping for the arrival of Peleus. Up to now, we have watched their battle of words. In order for the struggle of actions to take place, the males have to enter the stage. Hermione, exiting at this moment, will not re-enter until after Andromache's narrow escape from death.

The play has been widely interpreted as raising concern for the position of women, their victimization and helplessness, their dependency on the males. More than once, Andromache and Hermione have been seen as both the undefended victims of male ambition, both booty of war, both objects in the games of male power and glory.<sup>152</sup> It is indeed ironic that this is a feature which unites slave and free in this play. It is true that female vulnerability (which makes action the privilege of the male) is an element stressed in the play, in both action and characterization (of Hermione as weak, of Andromache as helpless suppliant).<sup>153</sup> It is equally true that male action and wishes are shown determining the fate and

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<sup>151</sup> For Hermione's disrobing, see pp.191-4.

<sup>152</sup> For Andromache and Hermione as assimilated in their status as victims of war and male action, see e.g. Kyriakou 1997: 17; Burnett 1971: 133-4; Stevens 1971: 9. For the play as problematizing gender roles and tensions of the *oikos* in a more wide sense, see e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 149; Stewart & Smith 2001: 5, 11-14; Allan 2000: 161-96; Hall 2000: xxvii; Kyriakou 1997: 17; Anderson 1997: 148-51; Mossman 1996: 153; Phillippos 1995: 370-1; Rabinowitz 1984: 112-22.

<sup>153</sup> For Hermione as weak villain, see pp.160-1.

the routes that bring both women onto the stage: one as concubine arriving in Phthia from Troy, the other as wife coming from Sparta to Phthia outside and before the dramatic time of the play. But, for all their powerlessness, in the dramatic present it is not the women but the men who move and act because of, and in the directions prescribed by the needs and wishes of the females: Menelaus summoned to come from Sparta to Thetideion, to help in his daughter's distress (40-2, 730)<sup>154</sup>; Peleus summoned to come from Phthia to Thetideion, because of Andromache's call for help (79-83). The two women turn to their male *kyrioi*, one in order to attack, the other in order to defend herself. Beyond the restrictions on the position of women that keep Andromache immobile by the altar, and Hermione hiding inside the palace for the major part of the action, the play seems also to comment (and not necessarily favourably in Hermione's case) on the female capacity to impact on male action, on the complex relationship between informal female influence and formal male authority that is shown liable both to use and abuse in this play.

***Exit Andromache, Boy, and Menelaus with retinue, 464***

ἔχω σ' ἴν' ἀγνὸν βωμὸν ἐκλίποις θεᾶς,  
 πρῶτευνα παιδὸς θάνατον, ᾧ σ' ὑπήγαγον  
 ἐς χειῖρας ἐλθεῖν τὰς ἐμὰς ἐπὶ σφαγῆν.

(427-9)

ἀλλ' ἔρπ' ἐς οἴκους τούσδ', ἴν' εἰς ἐλευθέρους  
 δούλη γεγῶσα μηκέθ' ὑβρίζειν μάθης.

(433-4)

ὄλοισθ'. ἐμοὶ μὲν θάνατος οὐχ οὕτω βαρὺς

(453)

κτείνει δὲ τὰν τάλαιναν Ἰλιάδα κόραν

<sup>154</sup> It is an important part of Menelaus' overall characterization in the play that it is his relations with his women, and especially his weakness in dealing with them, which define him. Cf. McClure 1999: 183-6. See e.g. 326-9 ("at the word of your daughter, a mere child, you come in great pride..."); 362-3 ("it was in a quarrel about a woman that you also destroyed unhappy Troy"); 387-8 ("Mover of mountains because of trifles..."); 590-5, 602-13 (accused by Peleus for raising a war for the sake of a base woman); 628-31 (accused for yielding to the sight of Helen's breast). For Menelaus' role in the play as building on his role and actions in the Trojan story, see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 6-7.

παῖδά τε δύσφρονος ἀμφ' ἔριδος.

ἄθεος ἄνομος ἄχαρις ὁ φόνος·

(489-91)

A lot has occurred since Hermione's exit. Menelaus has found the hiding place of Andromache's boy. He has come onstage with his retinue, boy in his arms (309).<sup>155</sup> Using him as bait, he has forced Andromache from the altar of Thetis (381-3), and now holds the mother in his power as well (427). Now they should move, he says, inside the palace (433). He has cast his vote for Andromache's death (429-30). As for the boy, Hermione needs to decide whether to kill him or not (431-2). We of course already know what is prescribed by her plans: τὸν παῖδά σου μέλλουσιν.../ κτείνειν... (68-9, the warning of the Maidservant).

This unmotivated (in narrative terms) exit could as well be the last we see of Andromache and her child in Thetideion.<sup>156</sup> The tragic convention rendering deaths or murders as actions of the offstage space invites the assumption that this might be the concealed reason behind Menelaus' directions (elsewhere shown to be a liar). The words of Menelaus, Andromache, the chorus (all quoted above) further reinforce the false impression of death as imminent for Andromache at this grim moment. But a few lines later, Andromache, boy and Menelaus come out again. This was a false alarm. The play will go on with Andromache and the chance for salvation still alive. *Suggestiones falsi* abound in this plot. Actually, the whole plot could be characterized as an extended *suggestio falsi* of a *nostos* that never fulfils its direction (the absent hero arrives dead). Anticipation is repeatedly raised for his homecoming. His possible reaction to the situation is always floating in the air of discussions and speculations: Andromache and the boy expecting him to arrive as their defender (49-50, 74-6, 268, 508-9); Menelaus expecting to find in him a better negotiator than the angry unreasonable Peleus (738-9); Hermione seeing him returning as her angry punisher (808-9, 920-9); her Nurse trying to convince her for the contrary (869: οὐχ ὧδε κῆδος σὸν

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<sup>155</sup> For Menelaus as accompanied by a retinue, see e.g. Kovacs *LCL* 2: 303.

<sup>156</sup> As Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 133 notes, unlike the situation in *HF* 329-38, "Menelaus has no motive for ordering An. and her child into the palace...". For Lloyd, the dramatic value of the exit is that it allows for their dramatic re-entry at the beginning of the next act.

διώσεται πόσις).<sup>157</sup> Up to line 995, when Orestes spells out his dark plan, Euripides had us hoping and waiting for his return. The *nostos* pattern is stretched to its limit when not he, but his corpse is finally carried before us (1166).<sup>158</sup>

Playing with the pattern, frustrating the expectations raised by the notion of return of the absent hero is not a phenomenon restricted to this play. Aspects of the homecoming pattern are similarly reversed (totally or in some respects) in other *nostos*-plays. Instead of triumph and restoration, destruction marks the return of the absent hero Xerxes in Aeschylus' *Persae* (the scene of return is a prolonged *kommos* of wrecked king and chorus, *Pers.* 909-1076), the king Agamemnon in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (disgraceful murder following the return), Heracles in Sophocles' *Trachiniae* (Heracles being carried in a litter onstage, *Trach.* 968), or Euripides' own Heracles in *Hercules furens* (madness and unlawful murders of his family following his arrival). Disaster which has occurred (as in the *Persae*, *Trachiniae*, and this play), or about to occur (as in *Agamemnon*, *Hercules furens*) cancel anticipated effects of the *nostos* entry: in plays like this one or Euripides' *Hercules furens*, the anticipated rescue of loved ones in danger; in plays like *Agamemnon* or *Trachiniae* any sense of restoration of the *oikos*.<sup>159</sup> In *Andromache* anticipation is totally overturned and expectation is raised only to be frustrated. A number of alternative endings played with during the dramatic action are replaced with an end which comes as a total surprise.<sup>160</sup> Andromache and her child could

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<sup>157</sup> For the possible reaction of Neoptolemus as a constant matter of speculation, cf. Cox 2000: 200; Mossman 1996: 149-53, who arguing for Neoptolemus as the central figure of the play, refers in detail to all moments in the play raising anticipation of his entry.

<sup>158</sup> Cf. Hall's (2000: xxvii, 2010: 251-2) passing remark: "Euripides stretches to extremes this familiar plot-type by making his audience wait for the hero...until three-quarters of the play have passed. Moreover, when Neoptolemus makes his long-awaited entrance, it is on a funeral bier (1166)." The importance of the *nostos* pattern for the plot of the play has been argued by Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 3-6; Allan 2000: 47. For the dramatic device of 'counter-preparation' and its use to heighten suspense in drama, see Taplin 1977: 94-5. The ultimate archetype behind this pattern is Hom. *Od.* (see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 3). For tragedy's creative reworking of epic patterns more generally, see Lowe 2000: 157-87 (an analysis with a specific focus on the ways the restrictions of the theatre affect the reshaping of these patterns ultimately playing a role in defining the values and nature of the tragic world). For characteristics of story-telling in tragedy, cf. also the older study of Lattimore 1964: 1-17.

<sup>159</sup> In Eur. *Hel.*, the *nostos* pattern is again creatively reworked but in a different sense. The *nostos* occurs while everyone (both returning husband and wife) are off-base (see further in ch.1, pp.49-50, 52).

<sup>160</sup> In Neoptolemus' traditional myth, death at Delphi was the norm. For his death at Delphi in previous tradition, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 1-2. But in a play innovative of mythic traditions of Neoptolemus and others (for a thorough account of Euripides' mythic innovations in the play see e.g. Allan 2000: 4-39; Stevens 1971: 1-5), the anticipation of the traditional ending for Neoptolemus could neither be escaped on the one hand (Euripidean tragic closures invariably tend to refigure characters back into traditional myth), nor on the other hand is it an outcome for which

be walking to their death never to return at this moment. At least this is how their steps towards the palace door are signified in the words.

***Enter Andromache, Boy, Menelaus, 494***

Line 413: Andromache leaves the altar and puts her arms around her child (ὦ τέκνον...). Line 425: slaves, ordered by Menelaus, seize her and bind her hands (ἀμφελίξαντες χέρσας). Line 494: Boy and Andromache with hands “bloodied with the tight bonds” (501-2) are seen coming out of the scene-door, a σύγκρατον/ ζευγος πρὸ δόμων ψήφω θανάτου/ κατακεκκριμένον (“pair close joined before the palace under sentence of death”, 494-6).<sup>161</sup> Their touching duet (unlike Astyanax, this son of Andromache is given a voice to lament his plight) fills the space up to line 530.<sup>162</sup> Line 530: the boy encouraged by his mother falls down on his knees to supplicate Menelaus for his life (ὦ φίλος/ φίλος, ἄνες θάνατόν μοι, 530-1). But in Menelaus’ unmoved soul (hard like a stone, πέτραν, 537), there is no compassion; to him these are enemies and they must die (539-44, cf. 515-22). Most likely no physical contact between boy and Menelaus is made; his inflexibility would be further reinforced by spatial distance.<sup>163</sup>

Composition of entry and of ensuing scene draws attention to the touching tableau of mother and child in bonds, which will occupy the stage for the next approximately 250 lines. The mother-child image repeatedly receives attention in

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anticipation is created by anything said in the first thousand lines of the play. For the element of surprise as a quintessential characteristic of this play, see Allan 2000: 82-5.

<sup>161</sup> For the image of the tightly bound hands, cf. 555-6, 577-8, 717-23. See also Allan 2000: 245; Anderson 1997: 140-1; Kaimio 1988: 71. For anapaestic entry announcements introducing slow or processional entries, see e.g. Halleran 1985: 16-8; Taplin 1977: 73. For mute attendants usually accompanying captives under arrest, see Kaimio 1988: 62. The argued appearance of Hermione at this moment, either by the door (as Burnett 1971: 141n.11), or coming out as a mute (as Golder 1983: 126) is, I think, rather unlikely.

<sup>162</sup> The capacity to speak is exceptional not merely as contrasting him with the babe Astyanax. Children as speaking characters appear only three more times in extant tragedy, all in Euripidean plays: *Alc.* 393ff, *Med.* 1271ff, *Supp.* 1123ff. For the relation with Astyanax, see also pp.187-8.

<sup>163</sup> As Kaimio 1988: 54n.27 notes: “...it is not likely that Menelaus would allow him to touch him, as he has no intention of yielding”. Menelaus’ coolness to their suffering is indicated also by use of metre: Andromache and child singing in lyric metre, Menelaus responding in anapaests. On the significance of the metrical contrast, cf. e.g. Fantham 1986: 270; Kovacs 1980: 65. The innocence of the child for any offence against Menelaus or his daughter, repeatedly stressed in this scene (e.g. 497-500, 506, 570), paints with even grimmer colors Menelaus’ portrayal of cruelty. For Menelaus as a bad character in this play, cf. e.g. Allan 2000: 20-1, 100-1; Kyriakou 1997: 12-13; Lee 1975: 11-12; Burnett 1971: 139-42; Kitto 1961<sup>3</sup>: 233-5; Boutler 1966: 53-5.



the words: the son under his mother's wing (504-5); the son lying dead next to the mother's breast in Hades (511-2);<sup>164</sup> mother and child "like some ewe with her lamb" being dragged to death (557-8);<sup>165</sup> mother and guiltless child both under attack (570-1). Via the stage image, a series of themes and polar oppositions find an effective visual focus: the concern for childbirth and continuity, an important theme of the play;<sup>166</sup> the contrast between the fecund concubine and the infertile wife;<sup>167</sup> the contrast between the cruel Menelaus, who has Andromache bound so tightly (720-1), and the kind Peleus, who touched by the pitiful spectacle hurries his steps (551-3), fights and finally succeeds in untying the bound hands (715-6). The injection of the child into the tableau, in particular, foregrounds the notion that the threat posed at this moment puts at stake the continuity of a whole bloodline, for which this boy is currently the only male offspring. Characteristically, in Peleus' words, his defence of child and mother is repeatedly signified as a defence of a whole household (its traditions, its continuity) now under attack (548-9, 581-2, 632-8, 713-4).

In Euripides' *Hercules furens* the image of mother and children united under threat opens the play. Their silent presence turns into a powerful generator of pity and compassion; maximizing the *peitho* of the supplication, maximizing their, their mother's (Megara) and grandfather's (Amphitryon) agony in the face of an unjust death.<sup>168</sup> In *Andromache*, the image of mother-child is carefully saved until a later point in the play. The postponement has a practical value, since otherwise Euripides would have to find another way to pull Andromache away from the altar. But he could have brought the family tableau on from the outset, as in *Hercules furens*, with both parent and child clutching as suppliants at the altar in the mode of a cancelled entry. The archetypal image, behind the theatrical one of Andromache and child brought together under dire circumstances, is the scene on the great walls of Troy in *Iliad* 6 (6.390-529). Euripides spares the image until the

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<sup>164</sup> Three more images of female breast occur in the play, on this see further pp.192-3.

<sup>165</sup> Animal imagery is used in the case of Andromache and child in order to stress innocence. Contrast how animal imagery is used elsewhere to stress Hermione's guilt and bad nature, pp.160n.86, 178n.143.

<sup>166</sup> For the importance of childbearing as a theme of the play, see comments in e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 138; Allan 2000: 80; Anderson 1997: 148-50; Fantham 1986: 269; Kovacs 1980: 11-13.

<sup>167</sup> For the image of Andromache as mother (and Hermione as barren) and their reversals of roles in the Phthian *oikos* more generally, see pp.163-4, 191-4.

<sup>168</sup> In the prologue, introducing the tableau in Eur. *HF*, particular concern for the children is expressed at lines 38-50. For children in tragedy, their mode of presentation and their contribution to the enhancement of passion of scenes and plays, see Hall 2010: 141-2; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 138-9; Allan 2000: 68, 184; Fantham 1986: 267-8; Stevens 1971: 159.

climactic moment (Andromache and child now facing immediate death) enhancing its emotional effect via the inter-textual relationship. The Iliadic context of the moment increases pity and fear for mother and child, who have been brought once more into pitiful close proximity.

### ***Exit Peleus, Boy, Andromache, 765***

Simultaneous exits are not a usual dramatic technique.<sup>169</sup> In this case the choice of physical action successfully figures the dynamics of relationships between characters and generates a variety of effects.

Peleus calls on the child and Andromache: “My son, take your place below my arm and lead me, and you likewise, poor woman” (747-8). The blast of the winds of the “fierce storm” (χείματος...ἀγροῖου, 748) has stopped. We have entered “a harbour sheltered from the wind” (λιμένας ἤλθεσ εἰς εὐήνεμους, 749).<sup>170</sup> The succour is made physical through the stage action that puts Andromache and son under Peleus’ arms. Now there is no need for fear. Nobody can touch them anymore (τίς ὑμῶν ἄψεται; 758). The stress lies on notions of relief and new found safety, and not on old age and physical weakness.<sup>171</sup> In other words, this is a reversal of the tableau of Peleus’ entry: Peleus entering supported by an attendant in order to be able to walk (551).<sup>172</sup> I “stand erect and I am no greybeard, as you suppose”, he will say in reply to Andromache’s fears (761). And he goes on: for, “even a greybeard, if he be brave, is more than a match for

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<sup>169</sup> For the relevant rarity of the technique of simultaneous entry or exit in extant drama, see Taplin 1977: 240-1. I do not see the Maidservant exiting with them at the moment at hand, as I do not support her re-entry along with Peleus at 545. Cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 59; Lee 1975: 15, neither necessarily identifying the mute attendant supporting Peleus as he enters with the Maidservant. For an opposite view, see e.g. Allan 2000: 66; Kovacs 1980: 46. For this exit and its signification, see also pp.164-5.

<sup>170</sup> For the image of a deliverer from destruction as a harbour in ancient literature, see Wright 2005: 207. For the use of nautical imagery elsewhere in the play, cf. 537-8, 554-5, 854-5, 891-3. For its use to compare and contrast the situations of Andromache and Hermione and their potential rescuers (Peleus and Orestes respectively), see e.g. Allan 2000: 69; Boutler 1966: 52n.10; Lee 1975: 8, the last rather arbitrarily arguing for the implied use of the imagery to parallel Peleus’ situation and his rescue by the sea-goddess Thetis with those of the females. For a similar use of nautical imagery to contrast Menelaus and Pylades (Orestes’ two potential friends), see Eur. *Or.* 706-10 (for Menelaus), 727-8 (for Pylades).

<sup>171</sup> Contrast references to old age at the moment of his first entry: 545: γηραιὸν πόδα, 551-3: ἦγοῦ σὺ θᾶσσον.../ ἀλλ’ ἀνηβητηρίαν/ ὥμην με καιρὸς λαμβάνειν, εἴπερ ποτέ. For physical contact and proximity generating effects of support and friendship, see also pp.173-5.

<sup>172</sup> For the staging of Peleus’ entry, see n.169 above. For the non-emphasis on old age at this moment, cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 149; Lee 1975: 15.

many young men” (764). Menelaus, the Spartan general, has just left “with his tail between his legs”, as Lee nicely puts it, his own action severely undermining the force of his parting remark about Peleus’ powerlessness: οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν λέγειν μόνον (746). Ironically, this is truer of Menelaus.<sup>173</sup> Bodily vigour has been defeated by bravery of the soul. Peleus’ victory over Menelaus has rejuvenated his spirit and this is reflected in the stage action; it is described in the accompanying words, so that the difference does not go unnoticed.<sup>174</sup> The movement of Peleus’ exit, seen in mirroring reflection of his moment of entry (before the man in need of support, now supporting and protecting others under his arms), puts into visible terms (and hence emphasizes) the victory of Peleus’ morality over Menelaus’ baseness, the defeat of seeming glory and power to true nobility of the heart.<sup>175</sup> The choral song immediately following, an encomium for Peleus, will continue and expand the notion via words (766-801).

The moving tableau does not only look backwards. With reference to the close proximity which this staging assumes between Andromache, child and Peleus, there is another aspect to the visual picture: that of turning into action the plot movement of the convergence of Phthian and Trojan elements, an image which

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<sup>173</sup> Lee 1975: 15. Cowardice is after all what is stressed in the words at this moment; the word for ‘coward’ occurring twice (δειλόν, 757; δειλόν, 765). For similar interpretations of this exit, see e.g. Allan 2000: 71; Kyriakou 1997: 12n.12; Burnett 1971: 142; Stevens 1971: 183. Cf. Lee 1975: 12, accepting the point of Menelaus’ insincerity, but attributing it to his indifference to the troubles of his daughter; Boutler 1966: 57, arguing for calculative thinking as his motive. For the view that Menelaus is sincere in his intent to return, see Kovacs 1980: 47-8, 70. Yet, as noted, the words explicitly interpret his exit as a cowardly retreat. Subsequent comment significantly made by his daughter (854-65, 918-9) treats retreat as permanent abandonment. Only lines 874-5 of the Nurse, when trying to calm down Hermione, are heard in his defence: “Your father will not, as you fear, abandon you...”. Note how this remark of the Nurse differs from her previous comment on Menelaus’ leaving (made in the absence of Hermione, when Nurse is narrating inside events to the chorus): πατρός τ’ ἐρημωθεῖσα (805). What is more, Menelaus’ characterization throughout, presents him as a man that should not be trusted. For the arbitrary detection of a topical allusion to the events of Mantinea at 733-6, see e.g. Stewart & Smith 2001: 6-7; Storey 1989: 25.

<sup>174</sup> References to Peleus’ old age abound in the text: 23, 80, 546, 551-3, 613-14, 645-6, 660, 678, 727, 745-6, 750, 754, 761, 763, 790, 914, 917, 991, 993, 1071, 1073, 1076, 1168, 1184, 1201, 1207, 1214, 1244, 1250. His rejuvenation of spirit and body at this moment is noted by e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 149; Burnett 1971: 141; Lee 1975: 15. Contrast Golder 1983: 130-1, seeing him rejuvenated at 1225. The contrast between old and young also forms part in the contrast between Hermione-Andromache. For the motif and for Hermione’s young age as an important element of her characterization see e.g. 184, 192, 196, 238, 326. See also e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 155; Stewart & Smith 2001: 13; Allan 2000: 98-9; Boutler 1966: 52.

<sup>175</sup> It has been argued that Peleus’ old age adds emphasis to his vigour and the Spartan defeat. See e.g. Allan 2000: 66; Lee 1975: 15 (also attaching the philosophical meaning of the inability to understand reality to his unexpected victory). Contrast Burnett 1971: 143, who although accepting that the weakness of Peleus stresses Spartan cowardice, argues for this as diminishing the value of Peleus’ victory in favour of the suppliant in this rescue drama. For my disagreement with other aspects of her reading of the suppliant situation in the play (Hermione and Menelaus’ role), see p160n.86.

prefigures the play's ending and the unified future of the two generations via the survival of the child.<sup>176</sup> The Iliadic fate of Andromache's child is overturned. The enmity and hatred between Greek and enemy that led Astyanax to his death in the epic saga, and which are represented by Menelaus on Euripides' stage (cf. especially 515-22), fail to succeed. Astyanax's route to catastrophe is averted for his Euripidean successor.<sup>177</sup> This child does fulfil his parent's hopes (in this case Andromache's, 411-3) for a future survival. Contrast how Hector's prayer to Zeus for the survival and future prosperity of his boy remains unanswered in the *Iliad* (6.476-82). But there is a way in which the *Iliad* is implicitly juxtaposed at this moment, not only in terms of contrast but also in terms of similarity. For long before Euripides, Homer had put the Trojan sufferer (in that case Priam) under the compassionate protection of his former Phthian enemy (Achilles) in the twenty-fourth book of his *Iliad*. Allan nicely notes the connection between the generosity of the Euripidean father with that of the epic son of *Iliad* 24, the dramatic reduplication of the same, successful again, plea of "suffering Trojan to powerful Greek" (only the generations are reversed).<sup>178</sup> Once more, the Iliadic context enlarges the effect of Euripides' stage action.<sup>179</sup>

### ***Enter Nurse, 802***

Andromache and her child have been rescued. Peleus has just departed to his palace with them. Menelaus has abandoned the scene in the meantime. So what about Hermione?

We are not left much time to ponder on the question as right after the choral song Hermione's Nurse (just like Andromache's Maidservant did before, 56) appears

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<sup>176</sup> Cf. Anderson 1997: 141-2 attaching the symbolic significance of "the new found unity" of the family not to this tableau but to a previous moment, when Peleus and child together unbind Andromache's bonds.

<sup>177</sup> Contrast Astyanax's death at the hands of his enemies, referred to also in this play, 10-11. For their parallelism (in terms of danger of their life), and contrast (in terms of its outcome), cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 7; Torrance 2005: 57-8; Allan 2000: 209; Anderson 1997: 135-42; Sorum 1995: 379-81 (extending the parallelism with other doomed children of war: Iphigenia, Polyxena, Paris); Storey 1989: 23 (their contrast also an element stressing the disharmony of Andromache's new *oikos* in his analysis).

<sup>178</sup> See Allan 2000: 246, 103 (for the point of Achilles' generosity as model for the father), 147n.117. Allan sees allusions to the touching scene of *Iliad* 24 especially at 565ff (Andromache's supplication replicating Priam's, p.246); 658 (the word ξυντράπεζον recalling the shared meal of Achilles-Priam, p.103).

<sup>179</sup> As it does with the tableau of mother-child together under threat (see pp.185-6), with the image of Hermione's disrobing (see p.194), with the act of the throwing of the sceptre (see pp.197-8).

from the scene-door to inform us of the new twists and turns in her mistress' situation.<sup>180</sup> She will describe vividly and in detail all that has been going on inside the scene-building, while we have been busy watching the action of the outside. Hermione, "deserted by her father and at the same time aware of what a dreadful thing she has done in plotting..." is in dread that her husband may punish her, says the Nurse (804-9). She has been trying to hang herself (811), the slaves running to her rescue taking the sword out of her right hand (812-3), the Nurse herself trying along with them to dissuade her from her suicidal mania (815-6). Again one is reminded of Clytemnestra in *Agamemnon*: πολλὰς ἄνωθεν ἀρτάννας ἐμῆς δέρης/ ἔλυσαν ἄλλοι πρὸς βίαν λελημμένης (Aesch. *Ag.* 875-6); the same histrionic gestures of suicide, the same melodramatic quality of aunt and niece's suicide attempts.<sup>181</sup>

Fear, despair, self-destructive behaviour, all in hyperbolic proportions; this is the melodramatic Hermione the ensuing scene will bring before us onstage (crying loudly mostly in dochmiacs: 825ff, tearing hair and clothes: 825-31).<sup>182</sup> The nurse weary of her mistress' excess (κάμνω, 816), has come out to ask for the chorus' intervention; perhaps "newcomers are more persuasive than old friends" (818-9).<sup>183</sup> A Nurse affected by her mistress' distress but somewhat reproachful of its excess; this will be the thrust of all her answers and appeals to Hermione in their ensuing dialogue.<sup>184</sup> All in all, in the brief report the tone of the ensuing action is set, the relevant background is given, and the principal characters (in this case Hermione and her Nurse) are roughly sketched out. In other words, the Nurse's piece has all the qualifications of a second prologue, an effective introduction for

<sup>180</sup> For the Maidservant's entry, see pp.172-3. Contrast how report of real danger for Andromache and her son at that point is replaced by report of imaginary danger for Hermione.

<sup>181</sup> For the way their scenic and thematic relation with house also has close affinities, see pp.162-3.

<sup>182</sup> For the dochmiac metre as associated with strong emotion, see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 155; Stevens 1971: 194. Chong-Gossard 2008: 83-90 regards this as one example of the use of female lyric as an expression of resistance. For Hermione's disrobing, see pp.191-4. The melodramatic element in Hermione's excessive behaviour throughout and/or particularly in her presentation of 802ff is variously noted. See e.g. Hall 2010: 253-4, 2000: xxix; Papadimitropoulos 2006: 151; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 154-5; Stewart & Smith 2001: 5-6; Allan 2000: 70-1. See also pp.192-4.

<sup>183</sup> For the teasing of Euripides with the convention of non-exits of the chorus in mid play at this moment, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 155; Allan 2000: 68. The chorus will keep its place and its silence to Hermione's distress for the ensuing scene. For the contrast in their reaction (both physical and verbal) to the two females, see pp.176-7.

<sup>184</sup> Cf. especially 840, 845, 853-4, 866-8, and 875-6 where she asks her to go inside. At this point, i.e. at 877, I put the Nurse's exit following Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 157; Allan 2000: 72n.122. For the alternative option, i.e. having her go inside at 1008, see e.g. Kovacs *LCL* 2: 365.

the play's new direction.<sup>185</sup> At any moment, the frenzied woman the nurse has come out to announce (ἀγγέλλουσα, 821) will appear. We, the audience, are prepared and engaged. All minds, eyes and ears, now fixed on the palace door, are ready to catch full sight (and full meaning) of her explosive entrance.<sup>186</sup>

### ***Enter Hermione, 825***

Hermione enters from the scene-door “fleeing the hands of her servants” (824).<sup>187</sup> The Queen that had entered pompously at line 147 displaying her golden jewellery and spangled gowns bursts out running, her eyes and head covered with a λεπτόμιτον φάρος (“a veil of fine-spun threads”, 831).<sup>188</sup> Her state is one of frenzy. Her mode of entry, her appearance resembles nothing of her previous grand entry. An interesting antecedent (in terms of successive opposed entries) is found in the *Persae*: the queen Atossa is explicitly reported in the Aeschylean text to make her second entry on that stage without chariot and previous pomp: ἄνευ τ' ὀχημάτων/ χλιδῆς τε τῆς πάροιθεν (Aesch. *Pers.* 607-8). The different nature of the second entry effectively embodies the alteration of circumstance and attitude of the Aeschylean female.<sup>189</sup> In Hermione's case, at second entry pride and ἐλευθεροστομία (153) arrogantly declared at first entry give way to despair and laments (ὠ μοί μοι, 825).<sup>190</sup> Contempt for the slave woman (164-5) is replaced by terror of finding herself in the same or even lower position (ἦ δούλα δούλας γόνασι προσπέσω; 860). Desire to kill (πόθος κτείνειν, 69; cf. 162,

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<sup>185</sup> For the brief speech as functioning as a new prologue, cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 154; Halleran 1985: 39. Contrast Allan 2000: 68n.108. For the problem of plot-unity in the play dominating discussion mostly in early scholarship on the play, and the various attempts to solve it (searches for thematic unity, character unity, philosophical unity, structural unity, or acceptance of discontinuity as a non-problematic marked choice), see the summarizing accounts of e.g. Allan 2000: 40-6; Kyriakou 1997: 7-8; Mossman 1996: 143-4; Stevens 1971: 6-15.

<sup>186</sup> Note how the words direct vision and hearing near the ending of the Nurse's words and the chorus' reply: τῶνδε δωμάτων, 817; βοήν heard from within, 821; δωμάτων, 823.

<sup>187</sup> Lines 841-3 must be addressed to the servants, who had taken the sword from her hands at 812-3. In this staging proposition, I follow scholars like e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 156; Willink 2005: 195; Stevens 1971: 196. For the possible number of these attendants, see Taplin 1977: 80. It would make nice stagecraft if sword and noose were still in their hands, as Willink 2005: 195 suggests. By the mode of Hermione's running entry and the sight of the slaves holding these props, both the tokens and the tension of the inside action the Nurse has been describing (804-18) would be brought outside for us to get an actual glimpse.

<sup>188</sup> Hermione appears at this moment probably with a mantle covering head and shoulders. On the appearance of the mantle, see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 154; Stevens 1971: 195.

<sup>189</sup> For Atossa's two entries (Aesch. *Pers.* 150, 598) and their mirror effect in Aesch. *Pers.*, see detailed analysis in Taplin 1977: 75-9, 98-103.

<sup>190</sup> For the dochmiac metre of her song as indicating strong emotion and tension, see p.189n.182.

245) turns into desire to die (πόθῳ θανεῖν, 824, cf. 841-3, 846-50). Delight over the beautifully attired body (στολμόν τε χρωτός, 148) reverses to desperate desire to tear hair and furrow cheeks with the nails (σπάραγμα κόμας ὀνύχων τε/ δάι' ἀμύγματα θήσομαι, 826-7). For anyone familiar with the Aeschylean inter-text, the sense of pride humbled would have been enhanced by the echo. The mirror (but inverted) reflection of Hermione's entries points to utter reversal.<sup>191</sup>

Immediate subsequent gestures further magnify the undertones of tension and notion of reversal in Hermione's state. At 829 addressing her φάρος, she throws it onto the ground: αἰαῖ αἰαῖ/ ἔρρ' αἰθέριον πλοκάμων ἐ-/ μῶν ἄπο, λεπτόμιτον φάρος (829-30).<sup>192</sup> The veil in ancient culture was closely connected to issues of modesty, sexuality, honour and shame.<sup>193</sup> Its casting off by Hermione against this background is a profound gesture of indecency and loss of shame.<sup>194</sup> The subsequent gesture of loosening the gown magnifies the associations of the thrown veil. The text strips Hermione of her dress and the immodesty of her half-naked state is stressed in the agitated admonition of her Nurse: "Child, cover your breasts, fasten your gown together!" (832). And again a few lines later: "But go inside and do not show yourself in front of the house lest you disgrace yourself [being seen in front of these halls, my daughter]" (876-8).<sup>195</sup>

<sup>191</sup> Note how the words have been indirectly preparing us for the reversal of her previous prosperity: 491-3. Cf. Allan 2000: 215: "the closing verses of the ode foreshadow the reverse that will overcome her".

<sup>192</sup> Note how Peleus at 1223-4 will address his sceptre as he throws it onto the ground. Cf. as well, Cassandra's own addressing of her garments in second person (σε, Aesch. *Ag.* 1266), as she casts them away in Aesch. *Ag.* In all three cases, the prop is personified, the act of its destruction gaining in force and pathos. It is indeed a nice irony if some from the audience pick up the Cassandra parallel (this plays recalls the Aeschylean one at other moments, see pp.162-3, 189, 192n.196) in the way Hermione presents herself as victim when in fact she is the villain of the matter.

<sup>193</sup> See Lloyd 2003: especially pp.155-88.

<sup>194</sup> Cf. Lloyd 2003: 161-2. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 155 seeing the covering of the head as an expression of grief, he associates the gesture of its casting aside with expression of "extreme distress". Yet in this case, unlike e.g. the thrown veil of Antigone in Eur. *Pho.* 1485-90 (the tragic instance noted by Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 155 as a parallel to Hermione's action), the emphasis is not only on distress, but on the notion of sexual indignity which is further marked via immediate subsequent gesture of loosening the gown. For how the Homeric instance of Andromache's loosing the *kredemnon* markedly differs in its associations and the effect of the inter-textual echo, see p.194.

<sup>195</sup> Mastronarde 2010: 251-2 notes this scene as one of the examples in Euripidean tragedy, where the "inside/outside contrast underlines other situations featuring a typically Euripidean reversal of attitude and behaviour" (p.251). On comic stages female nudity is represented via the use of tights and padded costumes (see e.g. Revermann 2006: 155-7; Battezzato 1999-2000: 356n.54). Given that the role was played by a male actor, nudity must not have been realistically rendered in this case however, as it was not in the similar case of exposure of breast in Aesch. *Cho.* 896-8 (cf. Stevens 1971: 195). On the Aeschylean moment of Clytemnestra's exposure of breast, see Taplin

The female nude is not uncommon in comedy. But the exposure of the female breast onstage as here is a very unusual event in extant tragedy.<sup>196</sup> It is interesting and revealing here to contrast the reference to Andromache's breast earlier in the play. Andromache's breast was evoked in connection with children and breast-feeding: μάστον ἤδη πολλάκις νόθοισι σοῖς/ ἐπέσχον (224-5); τέκνον.../ μαστοῖς ματέρος ἀμφὶ σᾶς/ νεκρός ὑπὸ χθονὶ σὺν νεκρῶ (510-2). The breasts now exposed onstage are not marked as maternal. Hermione's breast is emphatically marked as sexual rather than maternal. While Andromache uses her breast to fulfil the woman's honoured duty of breast-feeding, the young woman exposes hers into common view as an object of vanity and display (as did her mother to soothe Menelaus' anger; an image also mentioned in the play, 629-31).<sup>197</sup> The difference encapsulates the antithesis between the two women in character and invests the seemingly melodramatic detail with thematic significance. In social terms the handling of the scene draws on a very strong sense of impropriety of exposing the female body in public in the classical period. In the eyes of the fifth-century spectator, Hermione's state of public undress tacitly but suggestively aligns her with not with the ideal of the citizen female but with the courtesan, with whom female nudity is associated in the norms of their society and art.<sup>198</sup> Her Nurse's comments on propriety stress the sexual element.

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2003<sup>2</sup>: 61 (arguing for non-realistic exposure but presumably "some expressive gesture...laying her hand on her breast"). Contrast Griffith 1988: 553n.10, who argues for both moments (Aesch. *Cho.*, Eur. *Andr.*) as realistically staged. Perhaps we have an adjustment to the costume (a small fissure revealing part of the neck and shoulders) but the idea of real exposure is unlikely. To this perhaps corroborates the fact that the word στέρνα (832, 833-chest) is less precise than μαστοί (breasts) would have been (on this difference of the words see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 155). It is rather verbal nudity than realistic one. The important thing is that the text strips her and that is enough to make it improper.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. e.g. Ar. *Lys.* 1115: Reconciliation enters costumed as a naked girl. Euripides here may be pushing the envelope of tragic decency. In tragedy exposure of the female body is rare. We do get references to uncovered female breasts in tragedy, e.g.: Soph. *Trach.* 924-6; Eur. *El.* 1206-9, *Or.* 526-9, 839-43, *Phoen.* 1567-9, *Hec.* 557-62. But these are narrated breasts. For another instance of exposure onstage cf. Aesch. *Cho.* 896-8 (Clytemnestra's breasts). The fact that the antecedent for Hermione is once again Clytemnestra is perhaps suggestive (for other argued affinities between these two characters, see p.162-3, 189).

<sup>197</sup> McClure 1999: 180 notes in passing the three images of breasts (Andromache, Hermione, Helen) and the contrast created between maternal figure and promiscuous mother and daughter. For breast-feeding as a proof of maternal devotion and an honourable duty for the woman in antiquity, see Clark, *OCD*<sup>3</sup> s.v. *breast-feeding*.

<sup>198</sup> Visibility of the female body plays to issues of modesty and immodesty in the classical period. For exposure of the body associated with indecent women in the social context, see Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 155; Davidson 1997: 127-34. On the avoidance of female nudity in the art of the classical period, see Boardman 1985: 238-9. The female nude becomes popular only in the fourth century with Praxiteles and his Aphrodite of Knidus (the first true female nude statue); up to that time, playing only a minimal role in art and associated mostly with representations of courtesans. On this, see Pollitt 1990<sup>2</sup>: 84-5, 1972: 157-9; Boardman 1985: 238. For scholars stressing the impropriety of her gesture, cf. e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 155, talking of her "lack of shame"; Battezzato 1999-2000: 359,



The implied juxtaposition created between maternal and sexual breast further accentuate our sense of the vice in Hermione's reactions. Hermione's disrobing points up the contrast between the woman as sexual object and the woman as nurturer, between the fertile concubine and the wife proven utterly unworthy of her role in this play.<sup>199</sup>

The symbolism of the act is rich, and yet not exhausted only on this level. Hermione's words encourage us to see beyond the impropriety of the physical exposure: τί δέ με δεῖ στέρνοις καλύπτειν πέπλους;/ δῆλα καὶ ἀμφιφανῆ καὶ ἄκρυπτα δε-/ δράκαμεν πόσιν (833-5). The gesture is marked as a revelation of wickedness; of the wickedness of her character, of the wicked acts she has committed: the φόνον (836), the τόλμας...δαΐας (837), the ἁμαρτίαν (840). Hermione is exposed as unfit for the status of the wife in Neoptolemus' house, exposed for her acts that were inappropriate for her role as his spouse ("never to be hid are the deeds I have done to my husband!", 834-5). Nothing, neither her wealthy dowry and nice gowns nor the support of her mighty father (now far away), can protect her anymore (cf. 854-65). Her tearing off the dress figures the casting off of her previous sense of status and all her pretensions.<sup>200</sup> Her resulting image (with the breasts displayed) replicates that of her mother exposing her own breasts before Menelaus (627-31), replicates more widely the "loosened tunics" of the Spartan girls (598).<sup>201</sup> The effect is striking; not only is physical revelation invested with the meaning of a disclosure of false character,

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seeing Hermione presented as "the opposite of the proper woman"; Wiles 1997: 201, talking of Hermione as "erotically undressed" like a whore in the second part of the play; Burnett 1971: 146, characterizing her as "overtly shameless".

<sup>199</sup> For the ultimate reversal of roles concubine-wife in the play, see pp.164-5.

<sup>200</sup> Now all previous symbolisms of the rich costume break (for the symbolic value endowed on the costume at her moment of entry, see pp.178-80). For the action as a rejection of her previous sense of status, cf. comments in e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 156; Kovacs 1980: 75; Lee 1975: 7-8. For the use of the coastal setting to reflect abandonment and isolation of the heroine in 854-65, see Wright 2005: 215n.205.

<sup>201</sup> Cf. Kovacs 1980: 69-70. For Hermione's uncovered breasts as recalling her mother's μαστός (629), cf. e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 151-2; Battezzato 1999-2000: 358-9; Kovacs 1980: 69. Scholars are divided concerning whether and to what extent Hermione's collapse is meant to complicate our sympathy to her in the second part of the play. For a Hermione we are meant to sympathize with, cf. e.g. Torrance 2005: 47-8; Rabinowitz 1984: 114-5; Lee 1975: 10-11; Aldrich 1961: 58-9, 72-3. For a Hermione to whom no sympathy is spared in the play, cf. e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 151-2; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 9; Stewart & Smith 2001: 5-6, 12-13; Hall 2000: xxix; Kyriakou 1997: 11-12; Stevens 1971: 9; Kitto 1961<sup>3</sup>: 233-5. The chorus' detachment from Hermione at her moment of despair (on which see pp.176-7), the use of the melodramatic element in her presentation throughout and mostly in these lines (see p.189), and the reaction of her Nurse to her agitation (cf. especially 866-78), plus Hermione's readiness to leave with Orestes few moments later in the play (cf. especially 891-5, 987-92, see pp.195-6), all suggest to me that the latter view is more close to the impression aimed in the play.

but also with the visual revelation-confirmation of the larger context with which her conduct has repeatedly been associated in the play: the influence of her false mother, the improper education of the Spartan world.<sup>202</sup>

Torn gown and thrown veil: the double gesture of exposure visualizes so tellingly, as an apt gesture can, the tensions in Hermione's present state and her overall characterization. And there is a further final dimension to this rich stage action: the Homeric inter-textual echo. For, in a play with Andromache as a key figure, which has another woman loosing her κρήδεμνον, the Iliadic moment when Andromache let her headdress fall by the Homeric walls of Troy (*Il.* 22.460-70) would not be far away from the thoughts of at least some of the spectators. Running in maenadic frenzy, being followed by running attendants, loosing a κρήδεμνον at a moment of despair, a cloth in both cases associated with the woman's wedding (for one woman her dowry, for the other a gift at her wedding): these are striking similarities between the two moments. The symbolism differs markedly: the Iliadic woman rendered paradigmatic wife in the depth of her lament; the other conspicuously revealed as the opposite.<sup>203</sup> The inter-textual allusion intensifies the effects noted above as clustered at the moment of Hermione's double gesture. The falsity of Hermione's victimhood, the width of the gap separating her from the traditional model of the wife is magnified. Through a narrative that focuses on the impropriety of nude body and wicked character, Euripides re-employs the mechanics of the Homeric gesture but does so in a new and unexpected way, which reverses the significance of the original.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> For the theme of Helen's inheritance to Hermione as problematized by chorus, Andromache, and Peleus in the play see p.196. For the historicity and literary use of the theme of the association of Spartan women with impropriety of dress and licentious ways, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 143; Cartledge 2001: 112-8; Stewart & Smith 2001: 7; Allan 2000: 178-9, 186; Battezzato 1999-2000: 353-6; Hall 1989: 214. For the way the play more generally presents Spartan mores from the distorting perspective of Athenian rhetoric on Sparta, see p.150.

<sup>203</sup> Schol. *Il.* 22.470 p.351 Erbse picks up the symbolic value of Andromache's Homeric veil as follows: εἰς μνήμην ἄγει τῆς παλαιᾶς εὐδαιμονίας, ὅπως τῇ μεταβολῇ αὐξήσῃ τὸν οἶκτον. For the symbolism of this Iliadic moment, see also in e.g. Richardson 1993: 154; Segal 1971: 49-55.

<sup>204</sup> For Homeric allusions and effects, see also pp.185-6, 197-8.

*Exit Orestes, Hermione, 1008*

...τῶν κακῶν γὰρ μητέρων

φεύγειν τρόπους χρῆ τέκν' ὅσοις ἔνεστι νοῦς

“...all children who have sense must avoid the paths their wayward mothers went”

(230-1)

At line 878 Hermione was ready to go back inside the house. But, surprise! Orestes appears by one of the side entries: “Look, here comes a foreigner, a man of different hue from ourselves, hastening toward us with speedy step” (879-80).<sup>205</sup> Not catching sight of her, he turns to the chorus: “Ladies who dwell in this foreign land, is this the house of Achilles’ son and his royal residence?” (881-2). Hermione does not miss a second; running back she falls and grasps his knees addressing him thus: “O haven from storm appearing to sailors, son of Agamemnon, I beg you by your knees, have pity on me for the plight you see me in...” (891-4).<sup>206</sup> At this moment of her crisis (fear is at its peak) anything would do: from traveling to any far away land (ὅποι προσωτάτω, 922), or going back to Sparta (ἢ πρὸς πατρῶον μέλαθρον, 923). Orestes offers her release from (imagined) danger by agreeing to act as her rescuer; this is, after all, what he has always desired (965-86), and as he will soon reveal, what he has carefully planned for (993-1006). Of Hermione’s feelings towards him (if any) we are simply not told. To his talk of wedding she will merely reply: “my father shall take care of my marriage: it is not for me to decide this” (987-8).<sup>207</sup> Hermione’s extreme behaviour (τὸ λίσσιν, 866) leaves her little time to consider her actions with any rationality (in this there is no difference with her actions against Andromache in

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<sup>205</sup> For appearance used to mark Hermione as outsider, see pp.178-80. For Orestes’ entry as a surprise entry, see e.g. Allan 2000: 72; Halleran 1985: 39; Taplin 1977: 11. References to his father Agamemnon before (624-6, 703-4) bring the Atreid story into the play before he appears but are far from suggesting his entry in any way.

<sup>206</sup> Again note the combination of female dependency and manipulation of the male (for the theme see pp.180-1). For this staging of Orestes’ moment of entry, cf. e.g. Allan 2000: 73; Halleran 1985: 57; Stevens 1971: 199. For Hermione’s supplication as a parodic replica of the previous supplication scenes in the play, see p.159n.84. For Hermione’s rescue piece as a parody of Andromache’s rescue by Peleus, see e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 152; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 5; Allan 2000: 72, 110. Contrast Burnett 1971: 155. It is indeed possible to assume that Orestes after leaving Phthia at 1008 returns back to Delphi, like e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 162-3; Allan 2000:76-8 have done. Yet like e.g. Taplin 1977: 293n.1; Stevens 1971: 211-3, I do not consider this assumption as necessary, given that textual clues of Orestes’ participation in the act of Neoptolemus’ killings (1061-5, 1074-5, 1115-6, 1242) can also be otherwise interpreted (on this see Stevens 1971: 212).

<sup>207</sup> A strikingly demur comment at the moment of her elopement with another man; heavily though appropriate in the light of the way the play throughout flags her attachment to the natal *oikos* as an important aspect of her characterization.

the first part, to remember her Nurse's words, 866-8). In this sense, her own flight from the marital *oikos* differs from her mother's fleeing with her lover Paris from the Spartan household.<sup>208</sup> But the dramatic act, Hermione's last in the play, firmly aligns the two women in terms of their unlawful paths. Even though the daughter has had the encouragement of Andromache (229-31) and the Nurse (866-8) to follow a different path than that of her wanton mother (despite what she would like Orestes to believe at 930-53), she was not able to show good sense. Prejudice against her because of her descent from Helen has been heard more than once in the course of the play (141-6, 229-31, 248-50, 602-9, 619-23, 1189-92). Her running off from the bridal house with another man at line 1008 proves all their fears justified; this Spartan girl proved no better than her compatriots (595-96), no better than her errant mother.<sup>209</sup>

This is the last we hear of Orestes and Hermione in the play.<sup>210</sup> The text will offer no glimpse into their future together. Neither their new life, nor their future reception is made a concern of Thetis, or the play. Thetis will not say a word about Hermione when the time comes for Euripides' *dea ex machina* to designate the future of his characters: Neoptolemus is to be buried at Delphi (1239-40), Andromache is to migrate to Molossia with Helenus and her son, where in unbroken succession they will rule over the land "in blessedness" (1244-9), Peleus is to be deified and see his lost beloved Achilles on Leuke's strand (1253-62). The future of the Trojan (Andromache) and the Phthian line (Neoptolemus, Achilles, Peleus), she says, was a concern of the gods (1249-52). For Hermione or her

<sup>208</sup> See Kyriakou 1997: 14; Aldrich 1961: 72, both noting the different nature of Hermione's relationship to Orestes in relation to the passionate relationship of her mother with her own abductor.

<sup>209</sup> For the theme of Hermione's bad parentage and the possible inheritance of the bad traits of her mother as a concern of characters in the play, see e.g. Allan 2000: 99-100, 167, 179; Battezzato 1999-2000: 358-9; Anderson 1997: 151-4; Sorum 1995: 377; Phillippo 1995: 362; Sommerstein 1988: 244. Kyriakou 1997: 13-17 notes that her last act is a replica of her mother's leaving from Sparta. But seeking for a rather too narrow kind of correspondence between circumstances and attitudes between mother and daughter, she interprets other characters' remarks on her mother as the proof of their inability to understand their and others' past. Contrast Rabinowitz 1984: 114-5, who sees Hermione's reactions in the second part as advancing Andromache's paradigm of submissiveness in rejection of the paradigm of her mother. For scholars stressing also the inheritance of traits of the father Menelaus as a motif in the play, see e.g. Allan 2000: 100-1; Kyriakou 1997: 13-17; Phillippo 1995: 361-2. For the theme of her unbalanced attachment to the father as evident through staging, see pp.157-8.

<sup>210</sup> Orestes' blackened family past and criminal record (a matricide) is referred to and/or alluded to at 624-6, 703-5, 884, 976-81, 1028-36, 1090, 1115-6. Scholars commenting on Orestes' characterization and his role (in the current plot and/or his family story as presented in the play), invariably agree on his unfavourable presentation in the *Andr.* Cf. e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 158; Allan 2000: 24-5, 107-9; Mossman 1996: 152-3; Sorum 1995: 385-7; Kovacs 1980: 75; Burnett 1971: 145-8, 154-5; Conacher 1967: 164.

father's outcome, Thetis simply has no words to spare. In a context in which we have seen Menelaus usurping power in Phthia, and Hermione attempting homicide and running off with her husband's killer, this silence is remarkable. The absence of any kind of punishment might well strike an Athenian audience as profoundly unsatisfactory in the light of Athenian prejudices about female chastity and the strictness of laws governing adultery.<sup>211</sup> Hermione and her new lover are just seen running off at line 1008, both escaping the consequences of their criminality (attempted murders, one successful; adultery).<sup>212</sup> Hermione's plot to kill Andromache is indeed thwarted. But the play falls short of offering any punishment for the adulteress or interpreting her elopement with Orestes as a kind of punishment. Euripides, it seems, deliberately denies his audience the comfort and reassurance the punishment of the guilty would provide. The problem of evil, so much embedded in Greek thinking on justice, is not solved on his stage.<sup>213</sup> The faults of reality are not made right in his theatre. To use the words of the play itself, coming as a coda to the last choral exit (and to the play as a whole), once more τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη, "what the men look for is not brought to pass" (1286).

### *Enter Thetis, 1226*

Misery, πόνους until his death (1217); this is what Peleus thinks awaits him. All his past blessedness has flown away (1219-20). Μόνος μόνοισιν ἐν δόμοις he will dwell (1221), until he is off for Hades. Grief and lament, accompanied by the chorus' voices fills the stage (1173-225). οὐκέτ' εἴμ', οἴμοι, πόλις,/ σκῆπτρά τ' ἐρρέτω τάδε (1222-3): Peleus throws his sceptre to the ground; another nice

<sup>211</sup> See MacDowell 1978: 88, 114, 124-5. By law, the seduced woman had to be divorced, forbidden to attend public religious ceremonies and to wear any kind of ornament, while the husband was in certain circumstances allowed to kill the seducer, hold him to ransom or subject him to physical abuse.

<sup>212</sup> The happy ending of the bad ones is invariably noted. See e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 158; Stewart & Smith 2001: 14-15; Kyriakou 1997: 25; Kovacs *LCL* 2: 270-1. Contrast e.g. Papadodima 2010: 26, who sees fleeing as some kind of frustration for Hermione who loses her status (this is however a status which Hermione has viewed with contempt in the first place, see pp.178-80); Kovacs 1980: 80: assumed lack of commerce of the wicked with the divine taken as a kind of punishment (a rather distorting reading of the way divine-human relations are shaped in the play); Burnett 1971: 144-5: stressing the way Hermione's rescue is stripped off any tragic dignity in its handling.

<sup>213</sup> For the importance of the problematization of guilt and its punishment in Greek thought from the Archaic age onwards, see Dodds 1951: 31-5, 150-1. The question of the value of the ending as restoration and closure more generally, see further pp.199-200.

Iliadic moment.<sup>214</sup> He has come to total dissolution; both he and his kingdom have reached utter disaster.<sup>215</sup> Sunk in his misery, he falls onto the ground. But from above a sound is heard (τί κεκίνηται, τίνος αἰσθάνομαι/ θείου; 1227-8). The chorus sees a god approaching our scene of the drama; Thetis has come.<sup>216</sup>

Her statue has stood in front of us for the past one thousand and more lines. The sacred aura of her shrine has kept Andromache safe while she was suppliant at the altar (1-411), her husband's active intervention succeeded in rescuing her from the danger of Menelaus and his daughter.<sup>217</sup> She stared at Hermione's actions (246, Andromache to Hermione: ὄραξ ἄγαλμα Θέτιδος ἐς σ' ἀποβλέπον;), witnessed every single act, constantly present via the physical token of her statue.<sup>218</sup> Peleus' marriage to her was not in vain (μάτην, 1218). She will twice refer specifically to their shared married past as motivating her entry and the glorious deified future she has in stall for him (1231: χάριν σοι τῶν πάρος νυμφευμάτων/ ἦκω; 1253-5: ὡς ἂν εἰδῆς τῆς ἐμῆς εὐνῆς χάριν,/ κακῶν ἀπαλλάξασα τῶν βροτησίων/ ἀθάνατον ἄφθιτον τε ποιήσω θεόν).<sup>219</sup> Peleus, one moment ago reduced to the nadir of his misfortune, now exclaims in joy how his noble wife, in a manner worthy of herself, has saved him (1274-5). His marriage to Thetis, untraditionally presented as an example of a happy union, is a recurrent motif in the play: the gods had blessed him with this marriage in the

<sup>214</sup> Cf. Hom. *Il.* 1.234-46 (Achilles' dashing of the σκῆπτρον). Cf. Torrance 2005: 59n.62.

<sup>215</sup> For the sceptre as a symbol of his ruling power, see 22-3 (Πηλέα δ' ἀνάσσειν γῆς ἐξ Ἐφρασαλίας,/ ζῶντος γέροντος σκῆπτρον οὐ θέλων λαβεῖν). Cf. comments in e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 156; Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 173; Torrance 2005: 59n.62; Anderson 1997: 144-5; Lee 1975: 8n.26. Contrast Golder 1983: 131, arguing also for the sceptre as a symbol of his infirmity. Although visually the sceptre would perhaps also have the use of a supporting stick, the stress on infirmity is not supported by anything mentioned in the text (cf. Lee 1975: 8n.26). For the action of throwing the sceptre as a visual symbol of his utter destruction, cf. e.g. Allan 2000: 80-1; Lee 1975: 7-8.

<sup>216</sup> For an entry by the use of the crane, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 174; Halleran 1985: 25; Stevens 1971: 241-2; Hourmouziades 1965: 164-5. Contrast Taplin 1977: 444-5.

<sup>217</sup> Andromache's choice of sanctuary associates her with the Phthian family, see pp.161-4. Thetis provides her physical location for protection. Peleus' active intervention complements Thetis' contribution by rounding off Andromache's drama with a salvation from danger. In this sense, the roles of Peleus and Thetis could be seen as complementary. Cf. e.g. Golder 1983: 130-1 who sees Peleus as embodying Thetis' values of support of *philia* and marriage.

<sup>218</sup> For the question of the staging of shrine and statue, see p.169n.110. For the statue as a symbol of the goddess' presence, cf. e.g. Allan 2000: 60, 242-3; Anderson 1997: 150n.27; Wiles 1997: 200-1.

<sup>219</sup> For the theme of loyalty towards friends, see pp.173-5. Halleran 1985: 69 describing Thetis' entry just after Peleus' cry to his wife (1224-5), notes: "Thetis does not say that she comes in response to Peleus, but that is the effect of the juxtaposition." I think in performance this effect would be more marked.

past (ὠλβισαν θεοί, 1218); the mortals have honoured the memory of his blessed wedding in past and present (e.g. 17-20, 43-6); this is the marriage that brings a blessed future and ending to his adventures now (1231-2, 1253-8, 1273-8).<sup>220</sup>

Total catastrophe turns with Thetis' entry into future happiness and glory for the noble ones (they do receive the τιμὰ and κλέος the chorus values so highly, 773). The suppliant of the onstage altar Andromache finds an answer to her prayers in the end; both she and her child are saved (1243-52). By contrast, the offstage suppliant at Apollo's Delphic shrine meets death and disfigurement in the hands of his enemies (1128-31).<sup>221</sup> Striving to make amends with the god Apollo, he meets rejection and destruction, arriving on the stage as a corpse (1166), while his rival, Orestes, striving to kill and steal a wife, with the blessing of the same god, has just been seen running away with the woman his heart always desired (1008).<sup>222</sup> Thetis will not refer to Apollo or his acts in her speech. To Neoptolemus' desperate cry ("why do you try to kill me on an errand of piety? For what reason am I being done to death?", 1125-6), no answer is attempted (and the same goes for the *aporia* and indictment of chorus, Messenger and Peleus).<sup>223</sup> Similarly, the great suffering and wrongs brought on by the Trojan war, a cause of continuous distress for both Greeks and Phrygians alike in the play (e.g. 274-308, 319-29, 445-58, 610-8, 693-705, 1010-46), are brushed aside in the space of two

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<sup>220</sup> The marriage is referred to in: 17-20, 43-6, 1218-20, 1224-5, 1231-2, 1253-8, 1266, 1273-5. For the school of thought that sees the Peleus-Thetis marriage as an example of a fractured marriage in the play, see e.g. Belfiore 2000: 92-7; Hall 2000: xxviii-ix; Storey 1989: 20-1; Rabinowitz 1984: 111-23, 121-2. Contrast Papadimitropoulos 2006: 153. That this is the more usual version of the myth is irrelevant. As Taplin 1977: 27 aptly notes, "...in the handling of myth in Greek tragedy, it is not even true that the immutably fixed elements in the story put any significant constraint on the dramatist's invention". The references in the play do not stress rupture. Lines 17-20 just state the fact of the ending of their house-sharing, to put it crudely. References to the cave Sepias and their union there have no allusion to the forced element of the coupling, as in the most popular version of the myth (1277-8: "I shall go to the glens of Pelion where I took your fair form in my arms"); on this, see also Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 173; Allan 2000: 35. The play ends with Thetis offering her husband an eternal place by her side (as god with goddess) in the house of Nereus (1253-8). For the thematic significance of the rather untraditional presentation of Thetis as a paradigm of wifely devotion, see p.163-4.

<sup>221</sup> For the implicit juxtaposition between the suppliant at the shrine at Thetideion and the shrine at Delphi, between Thetis and Apollo, cf. Allan 2000: 259-60; Golder 1983: 126n.13.

<sup>222</sup> The monument of Neoptolemus' tomb will be a reminder of the Delphians and Orestes' disgrace for eternity (1241-2). But as noted in previous discussion (pp.196-7), we are not encouraged by the text to see Orestes' ending as unfortunate (even if truly undignified) in this play.

<sup>223</sup> For the chorus, see 1010-8, 1170-2, 1202. For the messenger, see the speech 1085-165, especially 1124-31, 1161-5. For Peleus, see 1212.

mere words: Παλλάδος προθυμία (it was Pallas' wish, 1252).<sup>224</sup> A few lines later, Peleus will start walking towards one of the side entries in the road towards his future deification and accommodation in the house of Nereus. Along with him (in front or following) the servants will also be walking, the disfigured body of his grandson in their hands, as is carried off on the road to its burial (1263-5). The exit to immortality is, at the same time, a funeral procession. The happy ending does not eradicate the past plight and suffering, still visually exposed in the spectacle of the disfigured body of Neoptolemus.<sup>225</sup> This final image, along with the disquieting sight of Hermione and Orestes happily exiting few moments before, deny us any sense of reassurance even in the face of such a glorious blessed ending.<sup>226</sup> The distance between mortal feeling and sense of justice and divine understanding and their way of settling the matters of the mortal world is not annihilated. Or as Allan nicely puts it, "a benign deity set against a malign one does not remove our questions".<sup>227</sup> The play satisfies our desire to see Andromache and Peleus survive and ultimately prosper but avoids the level of satisfaction (normal in comedy, especially in the late fourth century) in which the world is made right at the end. The play resists any attempt to confine all its plot strands within a single firm frame. In the Euripidean world of the stage as in the real world beyond it, to which we are also asked now to re-emerge as the play reaches its ending, neat closure and answers are similarly seldom clear cut, if ever given.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> The prevalence of the theme of Troy's disaster in the choral songs is commented by e.g. Stewart & Smith 2001: 14; Allan 2000: 225, 228, 230-2.

<sup>225</sup> Golder 1983: 126n.13 actually comments on the "bier-borne body of Neoptolemus" being "what can be construed as Apollo's response" to the suppliance at his Delphic altar. For the corpse as an important prop and other symbolisms attached to it, see e.g. Lloyd 2005<sup>2</sup>: 12; Allan 2000: 255; Lee 1975: 14.

<sup>226</sup> Specifically for the disturbing connotations of Hermione's ending, see pp.196-7.

<sup>227</sup> Allan 2000: 264. Cf. e.g. Stewart & Smith 2001: 9-10, 15; Anderson 1997: 147-8; Kyriakou 1997: 19n.23; Phillippo 1995: 364; Golder 1983: 126n.13; Stevens 1971: 14; Boutler 1966: 57-8; Aldrich 1961: 76-7, all variously seeing the harsh criticism on Apollo not finding a satisfactory explanation or answer in the play. For tragedy's general tendency to criticize the cruelty of gods, as opposed to their positive treatment in civic oratory, see Parker 1997: 143-60 (as in his title: "Gods cruel and kind..."). For an opposite view on the play, i.e. of a benign Apollo who brings blessing in disguise and for ending as true restoration, see e.g. Papadimitropoulos 2006: 158; Kovacs 1980: 78-80; Burnett 1971: 154-6; Conacher 1967: 173-4. This line of reading that sees his death mainly as a benign solution to problems is too dismissive of the emotional dynamics of the play, i.e. of the emphasis on the reactions of Messenger, Peleus, chorus to Neoptolemus' death and the harsh criticism on the injustice and brutality of his death, which goes completely unanswered in the play. Furthermore, Kovacs' (1980: 78-80) observation, that a fifth-century audience would not expect forgiveness from Apollo, is arguably to confuse life with art.

<sup>228</sup> The realism of Euripides' vision of the tragic world in *Andr.* is stressed by Stewart & Smith 2001: 15.



*Exit Thetis, 1272*

*Exit chorus, 1288*

## CONCLUSION

When poetry is performed we can no longer talk simply of narrative but of action. It has been the aim of this thesis to add something to our understanding of the tragic female as performed character in the event of Euripidean performances in the ancient Greek theatre of Dionysus. The study has focussed on the spatial mapping of female characters within the physical and conceptual topographies of dramas, and the thematic implications for understanding character, plot and general meaning of specific dramas, seen from a new angle. The approach has helped us give tangible dimensions to female presence in plays, to grasp the connection of words and space and their value in forging female roles in each play, and in Euripidean tragedy more generally. The focus on female space and in particular on the pattern of female dislocation has rendered important insights. I offer this short concluding note as a brief restatement of key findings, but mostly as a series of reflections for the potential expansion of the scope of my approach: a quick survey of material for the specific spatial pattern in other dramas; some thoughts on the value of an application of a gendered performative analysis for the study of other playwrights, of other genres.

The shared *McGuffin* of female dislocation triggers the drama in the three plays chosen for analysis: *Helen*, *IT*, *Andromache*. Action revolves around the woman abruptly removed from her defining space, her experiences in the foreign locale, her dangers, her rescue. Key features have been found to recur in each play: unwilling removal from home and homeland; transfer to distant lands; conflict of past status and experience with the new roles of the females (chaste wife in Egypt, Greek maiden killing Greeks in Tauris, ideal wife reduced to concubine in Thessaly); dangers threatening the female in the new locale; lack of relative as supporter, with the lacuna now mainly filled by the presence of a friendly female chorus; ultimate rescue of the woman and relocation to honoured roles (of wife for Helen and Andromache, of priestess of a civilized cult for Iphigenia) with the help of a mortal male protector and the intervention of a *deus ex machina*. Female space in all three plays has been seen to function as an eloquent means of articulating the dynamics of the female's interaction with surroundings, an

effective dramatic tool for flagging central tensions in her new situation, for rendering characterization and themes. Dynamics differ in each play. In *Helen* and *IT*, the Greek woman transfers from Greece to barbarian countries, in the *Andromache* the Trojan woman is brought into Greece. Different kinds of dangers have been found at play for each woman: external danger to physical integrity, status, even life is at stake in the *Helen* and *Andromache*; internal conflict between personal values and abhorrent duties (a more sophisticated kind of danger) dramatized in the *IT*. Tensions and questions revolving around the female and male roles in the realm of religion dominate in the latter case, questions of power ratios and roles in the realm of the *oikos* are central themes in the previous two. Euripides keeps returning to the same spatial pattern, endlessly shuffling the individual elements to make each of the stories distinctive, to raise cognate questions with different emphases.

The performative outlook has enriched our understanding of these Euripidean females and plays. In all three cases, consideration of gendered staging has functioned as a new additional parameter in our evaluation of characterization, plot, and meaning. Old questions (for example the irony problem in *Helen*, the question of Iphigenia's ending in the *IT*, the characterization of Hermione in the *Andromache*) have been seen through a different lens. The consistent focus on aspects of the female's physicality has also raised awareness and appreciation of the dramaturgical skill involved in the creation and presentation of Euripides' characters and action. His nuanced use of the safety-danger polarity between place of supplication and scene-building in the *Helen*, the unique double identity of the sanctuary as both *oikos* and temple in the *IT*, the unusual positioning of a female as villain in the suppliant drama of the *Andromache*, these are only some of the insights gained regarding the role of dramaturgy in sustaining Euripides' innovative plots. Euripides' use of theatre has also been illuminated in another sense. In a society in which space plays a determining role in articulating ideologies of status and gender, the spatial dynamics of all three plays are important for determining the way these females and their stories map onto the experience of the fifth-century female (and male). The study of the plays from this perspective leads thus to a deeper understanding of the dramatist's creative response to social norms (regarding gender, ethnicity, social roles) as reflected in the ways he plays with spatial configurations in each drama.

My three case studies do not constitute the only tragic instances of the pattern. The scope could be opened up; Euripides and indeed other tragedians stage dislocated females. Alcmene and the daughters of Heracles in the *Heraclidae*, the Argive mothers in the *Supplices*, the chorus of Phoenician women in the *Phoenissae*, Agave and the Theban women in *Bacchae*, Helen in the *Troades* are females dislocated from home and homeland (city or country) in the other extant Euripidean plays. Some of his fragmentary plays exemplify the same pattern: *Captive Melanippe*, *Hypsipyle*, *Dictys*, all revolving around the adventures of a woman found far away from her domestic space (Melanippe, Hypsipyle, and Danae respectively).<sup>1</sup> We have enough instances (both from extant and fragmentary plays) to allow us to argue for a consistent Euripidean pattern; the figure of the woman displaced seems to have exerted a fascination for the dramatist. Instances found also in the extant dramas of Aeschylus and Sophocles allow us to talk, more generally, of a shared tragic pattern. Its treatment differs in the other two playwrights. Unlike some Euripidean dislocated women, Aeschylean and Sophoclean ones tend to be dramatically ancillary. They are accompanied by, or accompany a key male figure: Aeschylus' Danaids escorted by their father Danaus in the *Supplices*, Sophocles' Antigone and Ismene accompanying Oedipus in the *Oedipus Coloneus*. Often they are women in mass and not individual females: Sophocles' Iole and captive maidens in the *Trachiniae*, Aeschylus' Danaids in the *Supplices* or his chorus of slave women in the *Choephoroe*. Individual dislocated women also appear, but provide material for scenes and not for whole plots: the captive Cassandra walking to her death inside the palace in the *Agamemnon*, the wandering Io reaching Scythia in *Prometheus Vincetus*.<sup>2</sup> Euripides is distinctive in the way he repeatedly gives dislocated females a starring role in his plays. The question of deviant female positioning and its implications is put to the fore in his drama. His thematic use of women, already recognized as unique and intriguing in the fifth century, finds expression also in the way he treats female space. His use of gendered staging, in

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<sup>1</sup> The limited remains make it difficult to determine how the *topos* was played out in fragmentary plays. Yet from what we have, we can deduce that female dislocations (dramatized or narrated) probably figure also in the lost e.g. *Antiope* (Antiope's exile as punishment for illicit pregnancy), *Peliades* (Peliades possibly ending in exile as punishment for killing their father), *Danae* (Danae's exile after illicit pregnancy), *Aegeus* (Medea's exile and staying in Athens).

<sup>2</sup> The question of the disputed authenticity of *PV* remains unanswered (see e.g. Hall 2010: 230; Griffith 1983: 31-5; Taplin 1975: 184-6). This is not the place to debate this question. I pause only to note that if, as seems very likely, this play is not Aeschylean, we have further evidence for dislocated female as a tragic pattern beyond the three authors of the tragic canon.

turn, is embedded in his wider tendency to play with social and gender boundaries in his plays. A comparative study of tragic female dislocations could be a rewarding project for the student of gendered theatrical space.

The same goes for a comparative outlook in terms of gender and genre. It would be interesting to see the spread of dramatization of male dislocation in tragedy and what findings can reveal for the ways gender is constructed in tragedy at large and in each dramatist in particular. Displaced men in the environment and the conditions of their exile are not often brought onstage in extant tragedy. Plays often dramatize the disruption and process that leads a male to exile, or the process of reestablishment of the male in the proper *oikos* (male *nostoi*).<sup>3</sup> But focus on the male in exile is rare. Prometheus, Oedipus, Philoctetes are the key examples where male dislocation is at the heart of the drama.<sup>4</sup> The male is not interesting in the same ways, and this carries through to the ways in which male space is constructed. Comic gendered dislocations are of a rather different kind. Women in extant comedy move out of their houses (in *Lysistrata*, *Ecclesiazusae*, *Thesmophoriazusae*), and only in one instance (*Lysistrata*) out of their homeland (women, minor characters in the play, arriving from different cities to join Lysistrata in Athens). Lysistrata, with the help of old and young women of the Greek cities, devises and sets forth a double plan (sex-strike, occupation of the state fund) in order to bring the war to an end. Critylla and the women participating at the Thesmophoria assemble to convict Euripides for his treatment of women. Praxagora and her women allies decide to pack the assembly and vote for a new system of governance of the state. Comedy (extant at least), being Athenocentric, operates with a different spatial model than tragedy.<sup>5</sup> With far-flung journeys of women to distant lands avoided, the indoors-outdoors distinction becomes more pointed on the comic stage. As in tragedy, so in comedy the spatial device of displacement functions as an eloquent way to indicate ruptures and abnormalities. But dynamics differ in the comic genre. Comic female

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<sup>3</sup> For the first case, cf. e.g. Soph. *OT* (events that lead to Oedipus' exile); Aesch. *Cho.* and Eur. *Or.* (events leading to Orestes' exile). For the second case, cf. e.g. Aesch. *Sept.* (Polynices' effort to re-establish his position in Thebe), *Ag.* (Agamemnon's return to Argos); Eur. *El.* (Orestes' return to the paternal house), *Bacch.* (Dionysus' return to the maternal city).

<sup>4</sup> Contrast how e.g. Jason, Heracles and Theseus' being in exile in Corinth, Trachis, and Trozen respectively is not turned into an element of plot or theme in the relative plays (Eur. *Med.*, Soph. *Trach.*, Eur. *Hipp.*).

<sup>5</sup> For the point on the more restricted potential of comic games with female space, given the tendency of extant comedy to locate itself within Athens, see *Introduction*, pp.16-7.

dislocations come across as fantastic redefinitions of the gendered civic landscape: women physically occupying male designated areas (women outside, in the Parthenon, in the assembly) and vice-versa (men entering female designated ground at the Thesmophorium assembly); metaphorically trying to control public discourse and usurp roles normally assigned to males.<sup>6</sup> Comic female heroines take the initiative in dislocating, though they are usually forced into action by male inadequacies, and their gesture is generally presented as something positive for the wider socio-political world of the play (women ending war in *Lysistrata*, women reshaping a rotten ruling system in *Ecclesiazusae*). The enunciations of the pattern in comedy, if explored, could offer new insights on the different nature of comic and tragic poetics: on the role of women in each genre, on the modes of engagement of comic and tragic plots with their socio-political context, on the way all the above features of each genre are significantly articulated in and through gendered staging.

To conclude, women onstage speak, act, stand, sit, lie down, move, follow others, depart from others, come and go; *all* elements work in tandem to shape female dramatic character. To explore the relation between them has been my key interest throughout this study. Sustained focus on the positioning and physical whereabouts and action of Helen, Iphigenia, and Andromache has, I hope, elucidated further these Euripidean protagonists, their dramatic creator, and his dramas more generally. As the present survey has tried to indicate, there is more work to be done and interesting questions to be asked, which could fruitfully yield new answers if explored from the spatial angle. Beyond the limits and limitations of the present thesis, staging gender is, as I hope I have demonstrated, a rewarding subject for study. Working at the point of convergence between gender and performance studies as a methodological approach more generally has promising potential for shedding new light on dramatic gender, on dramatic genre.

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<sup>6</sup> Eur. *Hel.*, to the extent that it presents women controlling men, shares elements of the comic type of dislocation (see ch.1, pp.54-5, 66, 68-70, 77-9).

## APPENDIX:

### STAGING THE BARBARIAN<sup>1</sup>

Foreign lands (Egypt, Tauris), foreign figures (Egyptians, Taurians, Trojans); in one way or another, *Helen*, *IT*, *Andromache*, all juxtapose Greek and non-Greek in theatrical space. Individual chapters of this dissertation discuss the characterization and potential functions of each type of barbarian in each play, as relevant to my theme. The purpose of this appendix is to address the larger question of the way tragedy plays to the ideology of ethnicity. The subject is a large one, and scholarly controversy continues to rage. Neither the scope of my theme, nor considerations of length allow me to dwell on this in depth. This short appendix is meant merely as a brief overview of my broad perspective on this ongoing debate, as a supplement and underpinning to the specific discussions.

It is an inescapable fact that the Greeks became more explicitly conscious of their difference from their non-Greek neighbours during the fifth century. The external conflict with the great Persian Empire and its ultimate defeat by Greece accentuated the sense of opposition between Greek and non-Greek, and the notion of superiority of the former to the latter. This sharper sense of the nature and boundaries of Greekness was enhanced by the continued hostilities under Athenian leadership (complicated as this was by the evolution into empire), which saw the liberation of the Greek cities of Asia from Persian domination.<sup>2</sup> But along with the firmer awareness of Greek distinctiveness, an increasing comprehension of the complexities of any notion of neat juxtapositions with the non-Greek was triggered by other fifth-century political and ideological developments. The Peloponnesian war heightened internal (Greek to Greek) enmities, contesting ideas of Greek unity. The rise of the logographers, predecessors and contemporaries of Herodotus who provided accounts of the geography and history of non-Greek peoples, promoted knowledge and a more nuanced understanding of

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<sup>1</sup> The debt to the title of Hall's (1989) seminal monograph on the barbarian in tragedy, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*, will be obvious to the reader.

<sup>2</sup> Scholars invariably recognize the decisive contribution of these historical events in the way Greeks conceived their ethnicity in the fifth century. See e.g. Wright 2005: 177-8; Hall 2006: 186-7, 1989: 59-62; Harrison 2002: 2-6; Hall 2002: 175-89.

the neighbouring others, along with a comprehension of the cultural specificity of many Greek values. The current theories of the sophists, with their rationalistic outlook on morality, identity, religion, custom and law raised disturbing questions for a complacent notion of Greek superiority.<sup>3</sup> Briefly laid out, this complex amalgam is the context within which ideology of ethnicity and its creative enunciations in art and literature of the fifth century developed.

Tragedy showed a particular fascination with the figure of the barbarian.<sup>4</sup> In a context in which tragedy has been seen in recent decades as a challenge to or a support for ideologies current in Athens, there is unsurprisingly a temptation to look to tragedy either for a simple reinforcement or for a contestation of ethnic stereotypes.<sup>5</sup> But as with tragic representations of gender structures (a topic discussed at the outset of this thesis), I see no simple correlation between extra-theatrical ideology of ethnicity and its creative reworking by Athenian dramatists.<sup>6</sup> On any reconfiguration of a barbarian figure for the tragic (or comic) stage, both playwright and audience respond imaginatively to the structures of reality, rather than simply affirming or rejecting them. Any attempt to assign one single function to drama and its barbarians in relation to ideology of ethnicity founders on the variety and multiplicity of dramatic barbarian figures.<sup>7</sup> It is difficult, for example, to subsume under a single prototype the bloodthirsty king Thoas in the *IT*, the pious Egyptian Theonoe in the *Helen*, and the admirable

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<sup>3</sup> This more intricate awareness of Greekness and of the Greek-barbarian antithesis is visible in particular in Herodotus' *Histories*, whose work is increasingly recognized by scholarship as addressing issues of ethnicity in a subtle way (see e.g. Bowie 2007: 6-8; Hall 2002: 181-2; Thomas 2000: especially ch.4, pp.102-34).

<sup>4</sup> For the fascination of tragedy with the barbarian, evident in the number of barbarian characters, the use of barbarian lands as settings, the invention of new barbarians for tragic plots (Thoas in the *IT* being such an example), or the barbarizing of Greek mythic figures (e.g. Tereus), see e.g. Hall 1989: 102-13.

<sup>5</sup> For tragedy as reinforcing ethnic ideology, see e.g. Hall 2010: 110-2, 1989 (allowing however for exceptions, see her ch.5, pp.201-23); Allan 2008: 58-61 (for my differentiation from his reading of *Hel.* as a play reinforcing Greek superiority, see ch.1, p.44). For the opposite view (tragedy as challenge to ideology), see e.g. Wright 2005: especially 177-202 (for my rejection of his argument for deconstruction as total demolition of ethnic distinctions, see ch.1, p.44n.63). The bibliography of the debate is too large to do justice to it here. For a recent overview of the debate on Greek representations of non-Greeks (with readings of tragedies and extensive bibliography), see Harrison 2002.

<sup>6</sup> See *Introduction*, pp.15-6.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Papadodima 2010, who rightly stresses the variety of dramatic barbarians and the flexibility of barbarism's function in tragedy, putting due emphasis on the key variables of context (identity of speaker referring to ethnic stereotypes, plot, wider frame of Greek-barbarian interaction of the different plays, different types of barbarian characters), to differentiations in treatment of ethnic comparison in the different spheres of stereotypes (political, moral, religious), to mechanisms which may complicate these comparisons in plays (e.g. irony, emphasis on intra-Greek disputes etc).



female protagonist in the *Andromache* (to draw from my main case studies alone). Dramatic barbarians, like real ones (in the sense that different stereotypes were associated with different foreigners in the extra-theatrical world), come in different shapes and sizes.<sup>8</sup>

Hence, to try to pin down the reaction of creative literature to one single response is to attempt to straitjacket diverse material into a single model, and, in our case, to try to turn the whole dramatic genre into a single text. Instead of looking for norms in tragedy and its barbarians, it is perhaps wiser to think in terms of a continuum or a spectrum of possible responses, if we wish to register the subtlety, flexibility and variation in characterization and rhetorical use of the barbarian amongst the different playwrights, different plays by a single playwright, even the different scenes of individual plays.<sup>9</sup> A playwright can position his figures anywhere along the scale. His barbarians may differ from play to play. The effeminate and cowardly Phrygian slave in Euripides' *Orestes*, for instance, has nothing in common with the courageous and noble Trojan woman slave of *Andromache* in the homonymous play.<sup>10</sup> Barbarians may differ within plays as well. Note for example the discrepancy between former (Proteus) and current (Theoclymenus) barbarian king of *Helen's* Egypt. A play can both affirm and challenge different tokens of Greek ethnic ideology at the same time.<sup>11</sup> A good instance is Euripides' *IT*, where the strong notion of a meaningful contrast

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<sup>8</sup> Semantics of Egypt (ch.1, pp.31-3) differ from semantics of Tauris (ch.2, pp.87-9). Semantics of different Greek areas (in our case of Thessaly in relation to rest of Greece in ch.3, pp.137-42) differ as well. Neither the Greeks, nor the barbarians are homogeneous groups of people. Differentiation of stereotypes between different barbarian sub-groups is invariably noted by scholars. See e.g. Hall 2002: 180-1; Harrison 2002: 7; Hall 1989: 160. To complicate things further, we find diversity, contrast and even paradox in the associations assigned to a single foreign people as well. Note for example the varying views on Egypt (ch.1, pp.31-3), the difference between the Herodotean and Thucydidean image of the Scythian (ch.2, p.89).

<sup>9</sup> Allan 2008: 58 uses the language of the spectrum; he applies it however not to genre, playwright, and play, but to the ideological construction of Greek ethnicity. He argues that a simple polarity of Greek-barbarian is "a mirage". The historical record, he suggests, points not to a polarity but a spectrum, which permits category crossing and exemplifies the consequences of different degrees of autocracy and freedom. Though ideology is indeed more flexible than neat schematizations and the ideological distinction could be understood with different degrees of absoluteness in Greek thinking, I would not abolish the notion of polarity. Though not absolute, the distinction between Greek and non-Greek was firm enough to constitute a key polarity in the way Greeks mentally organized their world.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the difference between the barbarian ruler in *Hel.* (Theoclymenus) and *IT* (Thoas). See ch.1, pp.37-8, ch.2, pp.92-3.

<sup>11</sup> Greekness was conceived not as a single entity but as an amalgam of shared tokens, defined by the Athenians in the (much quoted in discussions of Greek ethnicity) Herodotean passage as "...the kinship of all Greeks in blood and speech, and the shrines of gods and the sacrifices that we have in common, and the likeness of our way of life..." (Hdt. 8.144). This further justifies arguing for the possibility of different attitudes to ethnicity being projected in single plays.

between Greek cultic propriety and pollution of Taurian religious custom coexists with a strong sense of these barbarians' horror for the impropriety of certain aberrant Greek actions (interfamilial killings). Likewise in the *Helen*, Greeks emerge as politically superior, superior in guile and skill, but definitely not ethically superior to the admirably just and noble Egyptian Theonoe and her father. Different plots and contexts produce different dramatic foreigners. Different dramatic foreigners, in turn, project different aspects, and bestow diverse responses to the question of barbarism and Greekness.

To conclude, my theme is gender; but in my three plays female dislocation triggers exploration of ethnic as well as gender boundaries. Play with ethnic stereotypes takes on different shapes and barbarians assume different and multiple functions in each play. Implicit in all is a strong recognition that the divide between Greek and barbarian, though fundamental to Greek sense of self and not without meaning, is schematic rather than natural and conceals beneath the neat polarity a whole range of complexities and nuances.<sup>12</sup> Dislocation, in its metaphoric sense of disruption and disarrangement, seems to be a pattern permeating other aspects of Euripides' dramatic oeuvre outside his exploration of gender.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See ch.1, pp.43-4; ch.2, pp.128-9; ch.3, pp.150-3, 165-6. Euripides' more extensive (in relation to Aeschylus and Sophocles) interest in the theme of barbarism is widely acknowledged. See e.g. Papadodima 2010: 11-12; Bacon 1961: 9-14.

<sup>13</sup> Most scholars recognize his tendency to challenge assumptions of Greek superiority especially in his late plays. See e.g. Hall 2010: 111-2, 1989: 201-23; Papadodima 2010: 39-44; Harrison 2002: 7-8; Said 2002a: 64-100; Thomas 2000: 133-4. For brief overviews of scholarly readings of his treatment of the barbarian, see Papadodima 2010: 12-14; Said 2002a: 63-4.

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