

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

POLITICS AND POETICS:  
TRADITION, GENRE, AND POETIC INNOVATION IN EURIPIDEAN TRAGEDY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS: CLASSICAL LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MARCH 2016

To Ashley,

forever my sweeter half,

ἀστέρων πάντων ὁ κάλλιστος

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# Acknowledgments

The completion of this dissertation represents the culmination of a process I began more than six years ago, and it is only natural to acknowledge the support and inspiration that so many friends, colleagues, and mentors have provided. My deepest gratitude goes, first and foremost, to my adviser Sarah Nooter, who has worked with me since the very beginning of my time at the University of Chicago, and whose advice, on matters both big and small, has proven to be not simply sage but unerring. I would like to thank her for her unwavering encouragement of my project, for the patience with which she read (and re-read) my many drafts, for the kindness with which she pointed out my errors, and perhaps most of all, for the renewed sense of optimism and enthusiasm I felt each and every time we met.

I am sincerely grateful to the other members of my committee, Jonathan Hall, Mark Payne, and Shadi Bartsch-Zimmer, for the comments, suggestions, and guidance they have provided throughout. Their dedication to my project has been constant, their expertise has been an invaluable resource on which I have been fortunate to draw, and the quality of this dissertation is far greater for their involvement. I would also like to thank Helma Dik, Chris Faraone, David Wray, and Michèle Lowrie for their feedback and insight on a number of matters. I would be remiss if I did not mention my first Greek teachers, Bill Tyrrell, Antonio Martina, and Adele Cozzoli, who started me on this path and gave me the tools to succeed. The

colleagues whose companionship I've enjoyed and of whose advice and encouragement I have been the constant beneficiary are too numerous to mention, but a particular thanks in this regard must go to Erika Jeck, Kassi Jackson, Lakshmi Ramgopal, Jeremy Brightbill, Marcos Gouvea, and Paul Vadan. A special note of thanks is due to Kathy Fox, the department administrator, who has by now surely set new standards for the words "savior" and "legend."

My heartfelt thanks go to my family and the many friends who have shared with me the joys and sorrows of these last several years, and made each moment immeasurably better. I will be forever grateful to my parents, Chip and Maureen, for their love, support, patience, advice, and (when needed) home-cooked meals over the last several years. My father has managed to exceed all imaginable measures for parental responsibility by reading every word that is in this dissertation, and many that are not, and providing comments and suggestions on style and structure. Without his help this dissertation would be but a poor imitation of itself. My mother, for her part, and on top of everything else she has done for me, took on the drudgery of helping proofread my bibliography. I count myself truly fortunate to have parents such as these. Thanks also to Antonio Ciaralli, whose first contribution to this project was to tell me to study Greek fifteen years ago, and whose most recent was as a font-consultant. A small note of thanks to my baby daughter Gaia, who "helped" me work into the wee hours of the night on my final drafts by sleeping peacefully on my knees (and nowhere else). And last, but certainly not least, my eternal gratitude goes to Ashley, my greatest love, without whom nothing would be possible.

# Abstract

Critical interpretations of Euripidean tragedy have often focused on political issues that are central to these plays, or on the poetic innovations that are present throughout Euripides' oeuvre. Only rarely have these two subjects been broached simultaneously. This divide, however, is unnecessary and unfortunate, as many forms of Greek poetry regularly addressed ideas of a political nature—which is to say of import to the *polis*—and often took their meaning from the specific civic contexts in which they were performed. As such, tragedy's ability to refer to or employ external poetic forms has the potential to acquire a political dimension, illuminating or even problematizing the civic and political issues central to the dramas. It is thus a mistake to divorce the study of Euripides' poetic pursuits and innovations from that of his investigation and critique of contemporary Athenian society and politics: these aspects inform each other, and should together inform our understanding of Euripidean tragedy.

It is this intersection of politics and poetics that I set out to examine in this dissertation. In it, I argue that Euripides' engagement with different poetic works and genres is not simply a product of his interest in the literary tradition, but that it is closely related to his exploration of political questions that were relevant to the world of his audience. As I demonstrate, Euripides refashions these various poetic forms as part of a process of challenging and critiquing

Athenian cultural and political values, and in so doing he also questions and redefines the place and purpose of these poetic forms within contemporary Athenian society.

Over the course of four chapters, I look at three different tragedies and four different poetic works and genres that form the (sub)textual backbones of these dramas. In chapter one, I examine the echoes of the *Iliad* in Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*. Here I argue that the presence of the Homeric text in the *IA* forms a critique of the dynamics of authority in democratic Athens, while the vast differences between the Homeric and Euripidean armies serve to undermine the common notion that the Homeric epics contained lessons on leadership. In the second chapter, I turn to the epinician language and themes that run throughout the *Heracles*, and contend that the tragedy exalts epinician poetry and values, a stance that is at odds with the reception of the genre in classical Athens. In chapter three, I analyze the presence of the paeon in the *Ion*, and assert that Euripides' use of the genre problematizes the fusion of mythical identities that the drama enacts, and raises doubts about the use of paeans as a means to propagate local and colonial identities. In the fourth and final chapter, I return to the *Iphigenia at Aulis* to explore its allusions to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, and show that the *IA* overturns the Aeschylean depiction of Clytemnestra as a threat to male society because of her ability to so easily deceive Agamemnon. By inverting these roles—making Agamemnon the deceiver and Clytemnestra the deceived—the *IA* rejects the Aeschylean notion that deceptive speech was a specifically feminine attribute, and suggests that it is the duplicity of male leaders that represents the true threat to Athenian society. Each of these chapters examines an issue that lies at a juncture of the poetic and the political, and demonstrates that these aspects of Euripidean tragedy are fully intertwined. My

analyses are informed by readings of Thucydides, Xenophon, and other contemporary sources, all of which serve to show that the problems with which Euripides is engaged—both the poetic and the political ones—were of particular relevance to the world of his Athenian audience.

# Introduction

Scholars of Euripides have generally focused either on social and political aspects of his tragedies, or on literary and aesthetic questions.<sup>1</sup> Titles alone tend to reveal this variance: Daniel Mendelsohn's *Gender and the City in Euripides' Political Plays* clearly falls into the political category, while Shirley A. Barlow's *The Imagery of Euripides: A Study in the Dramatic Use of Pictorial Language* obviously focuses on literary questions.<sup>2</sup> To some extent, this subdivision of scholarship may be an oversimplification, but it is nevertheless useful insofar as it effectively illustrates the fact that scholars have rarely attempted to simultaneously approach both the socio-political and the literary aspects of Euripides' work.<sup>3</sup>

This divide, however, belies the fact that it is often difficult to disentangle the poetic and the political within the context of Greek poetry. In order to understand this point more fully, it may be useful to first define what is meant by "political." Generally speaking, I define as

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<sup>1</sup> As Donald Mastronarde said in 2000, something which by and large still holds true today, "[i]f some in a previous generation made the error of seeing only the 'literary' side of Greek tragedy, this does not justify falling into the opposite extreme of recognizing only a 'non-literary' side." (Donald J. Mastronarde, "Euripidean Tragedy and Genre: The Terminology and its Problems," in *Illinois Classical Studies* 24/25 [1999/2000]: pp. 23-39.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Mendelsohn, *Gender and the City in Euripides' Political Plays* (Oxford, 2002); Shirley A. Barlow, *The Imagery of Euripides: A Study in the Dramatic Use of Pictorial Language* (London, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> There are, of course, exceptions to this rule (e.g. the work of Charles Segal and Simon Goldhill), but Euripidean scholarship generally falls into one of the two categories mentioned above. One recent book that does examine precisely this intersection in Euripides, but which was published too late to be included in this dissertation, is Victoria Wohl, *Euripides and the Politics of Form* (Princeton, 2015).

“political” those values, ideologies, and beliefs that were widely seen as intrinsic or directly related to the *polis*, its institutions and processes (the *politeia*), and its members *qua* members of the community (the *politai*). Some concrete examples of such political values and beliefs would include conceptions of leadership, definitions of citizens and citizenship, the roles, responsibilities, and privileges these citizens had within the *polis*, and the ethical or moral principals that governed social and political relationships within the *polis*.

Greek tragedy constantly explored these types of issues, and often in a manner that was especially relevant to the Athenian *polis*. This is apparent in the plays I examine in this dissertation. The *Iphigenia at Aulis*, for example, tackles questions of leadership within a “democratic” army, and the types of speech that these leaders would use to persuade their audiences. The *Ion*, on the other hand, examines and redefines notions of Athenian mythical and civic identities. And the *Heracles* focuses on the peculiar relationship that develops between a heroic individual (Heracles) and the *poleis* of the tragedy. All of these topics are political insofar as they concern the values of the tragic communities, and as we shall see they were also of particular interest to the Athenian *polis* at the time that the tragedies were produced. In short, there is little question that these plays in particular, and Greek tragedy more generally, addressed political issues that were relevant to the audiences before which they were performed.

Nor was Attic tragedy a unique form of poetry in this respect. Throughout the canon of archaic and classical Greek poetry, we regularly see the articulation of political values that were

specifically related to the communities by whom and before whom they were performed. For instance, epinician odes in honor of Olympic victories were generally performed at the victor's home *polis* upon his return, and frequently addressed the tensions surrounding the victor's relationship with his fellow citizens. Paeans, on the other hand, often focused on the dissemination of a specific ethnic or civic identity to which all members of a *polis* (or a group of *poleis*) could subscribe and relate. The Homeric epics do not perhaps express the same overt interest in inculcating specific political values,<sup>4</sup> but much of the action takes place within "political fields"<sup>5</sup> and focuses on the social relations between different individuals and groups. Furthermore, the "Homeric narrative seeks to guide the audience's judgment about central moral concerns...[which] have political implications."<sup>6</sup> This fact was not lost on the Greeks, many of whom believed that Homer's texts were a repository of knowledge concerning, among other things, "the administration of cities."<sup>7</sup> Much like tragedy, each of these poetic forms shares a persistent ability to explore values that were essential to political communities.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Though some scholars have taken the stance that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* attempt to instill in their audiences a specifically elite ideology. See Ian Morris, "The Use and Abuse of Homer," *Classical Antiquity* 5 (1986): pp. 123-25, for a summary of these viewpoints; and Ruth Scodel, *Listening to Homer: Tradition, Narrative, and Audience* (Ann Arbor, 2002), pp. 173-212. Scodel argues that while "the poems support an aristocratic order" (p. 188), their "political implications are easily forgotten in its humanistic and inclusive appeal" (p. 212).

<sup>5</sup> I borrow the term from Dean Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics: The Performance of Political Thought* (Norman, OK, 2002), p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> Scodel, 2002, p. 181.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. e.g. Plato, *Rep.* 599c: διοικήσεων πόλεων. This view was by no means universal—indeed Plato himself seems to reject it—but it was clearly a common one in classical Greece. For more on the subject, see below in Chapter One, pp. 104-109.

<sup>8</sup> I will address the political dimensions of epic, epinician, and paean in greater depth in the chapters which are dedicated to their re-use by Euripides, but a representative sample of scholars who have discussed these issues

Where Attic drama *was* unique, however, was in its capacity, due to its length and structure, to incorporate different poetic genres and forms within it. As a tragedian, Euripides was able to employ and allude to different poetic modes, and to do so before an audience that could identify (and identify with) these forms of poetry. On the one hand, this is obvious, as tragic choral odes and monodies often present themselves as versions of particular types of lyric songs.<sup>9</sup> Less obviously, these distinct poetic forms can be crucial drivers of the action that we see on-stage, and the filter through which the audience may better understand the various extra-theatrical questions that the Greek tragedians were constantly posing.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, among the tragedians, Euripides is notable—especially in his later plays—for his use of and experimentation with different poetic genres.<sup>11</sup> Yet despite the interest in both the “poetics” and the “politics” of Euripides’ plays, and despite the potential for a tragic poet to explore civic

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would include, for Homer: Gregory Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry* (Baltimore, 1979); James Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: The Tragedy of Hector* (Durham NC, 1994); Hammer, 2002; Elton Barker, *Entering the Agon: Dissent and Authority in Homer, Historiography, and Tragedy* (Oxford, 2009). For Pindar’s epinicians: Kevin Crotty, *Song and Action: The Victory Odes of Pindar* (Baltimore, 1982); Leslie Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise: Pindar and the Poetics of Social Economy* (Ithaca, 1991); Bruno Currie, *Pindar and the Cult of Heroes* (Oxford, 2005). And on Pindar’s paeans: Ian Rutherford, *Pindar’s Paeans: A Reading of the Fragments with a Survey of the Genre* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 83-90; William D. Furley and Jan Maarten Bremer, *Greek Hymns: Selected Cult Songs from the Archaic to the Hellenistic Period* vol. 1 (Tübingen, 2001), pp. 88-91; and Barbara Kowalzig, *Singing for the Gods: Performance of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Oxford, 2007), *passim*.

<sup>9</sup> Examples include the choral paeon in *S. OT* 151-215, or the *thrēnos* that Electra sings in *S. El.* 86-120.

<sup>10</sup> For more on this vast subject, cf.: Eric Csapo, “Later Euripidean Music,” *Illinois Classical Studies* 24/25 (1999/2000): pp. 399-426; L.A. Swift, *The Hidden Chorus: Echoes of Genre in Tragic Lyric* (Oxford, 2010); Swift, “Genre and Performance: Paeanic and Epinician Healing in Euripides’ *Alcestis*,” in *Greek Drama IV: Texts, Contexts, Performances*, eds. David Rosenbloom and John Davidson (Oxford, 2012), pp. 149-68; Sarah Nooter, *When Heroes Sing: Sophocles and the Shifting Soundscape of Tragedy* (Cambridge, 2012).

<sup>11</sup> See for example, William Furley, “Hymns in Euripidean Tragedy,” in *Illinois Classical Studies* 24/25 (1999/2000): pp. 183-97; Swift, 2010. Of the eleven tragedies Swift examines, seven are Euripidean, and five of them from the second half of his career.

ideologies through various forms of poetry, little work has been done to see if Euripides' poetic innovation is consistently connected to the political and civic dimensions of his plays.

The example of the *Ion* shows how difficult it is to disentangle poetic experimentation and political considerations in Euripidean tragedy, and it also suggests the potential benefits of trying to understand both aspects at once. On the one hand, it is obvious that the incorporation of paeans in the *Ion* is a poetic endeavor that Euripides undertakes, not least because he takes great liberties with the form and substance of these songs. At the same time, insofar as paeans had their own political dimensions, Euripides' experimentation with the genre has the potential to recall this political dimension and to thus take on one of its own. This is especially true since the political values that were regularly asserted by Greek paeans are the same ones that are explored in the *Ion*, namely the propagation of a civic identity that relates to the audience of the tragic (and by extension paeanic) performance. As such, Euripides' paeanic innovations in the *Ion* cannot be understood simply as a poetic problem, nor yet can his consideration of Athenian civic identities be seen simply as a political problem: these two aspects are fully entwined.

With this dissertation, I seek to set forth an interpretation of Euripidean tragedy that simultaneously takes into account these two facets of his poetic production. I argue that his poetic experimentation is not merely a product of his interest in the literary tradition, but that it is also closely related to the social and political questions he explores within his plays. In order to do so, I examine Euripides' engagement with different poetic forms and show that it works in conjunction with his constant questioning of Athenian political values. As I demonstrate, such a

process was feasible because when Euripides cited and reworked the language, tones, and myths of established poetic works and genres within his tragedies, he also evoked the ideals they represented. The audience, which was intimately familiar with these poems and genres,<sup>12</sup> would naturally make the associations between genres and values, especially since these values were also pertinent to the central themes of the tragedy within which they were cited. Moreover, the questions Euripides raises through his engagement with the poetic tradition were also pertinent to the world of his audience: both the tragedies themselves and the genres explored within them directly addressed issues that were relevant to Athens in the late fifth century. Thus it is a mistake to divorce the study of Euripides' poetic pursuits and innovations from that of his investigation and critique of contemporary Athenian society and politics. These aspects inform each other, and should together inform our understanding of Euripidean tragedy.

The poetic forms I examine are epic (specifically the *Iliad*), epinician poetry, the Apolline paeon, and Aeschylean tragedy (specifically the *Agamemnon*). These were all well-known by both Euripides and his audience, and Euripides' employment of them would naturally recall or evoke a variety of political considerations. The effect of Euripides' engagement with these different poetic works and genres is two-fold: on the one hand, he questions the manner in which poetry and the poetic tradition was used—or, in the case of epinician, ignored—in order

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<sup>12</sup> I return to this question in much greater depth later in this Introduction; please see Section Two below on pp. 14-34.

to promote certain values and ideologies in Athens; on the other hand, he is able to focus on specific political issues through the lens of these poetic traditions. In other words, by inserting traditional poetic genres and works into a contemporary context, Euripides is able to challenge both the functions of these poetic forms themselves, as well as the values of contemporary Athens. As such, we see that for Euripides, poetic innovation and social critique are not two separate and distinct elements, nor is one subordinate to the other: instead, the poetic and political elements of his tragedies consistently work together to interrogate each other and Athenian society.

Each chapter focuses on one of Euripides' tragedies and on his engagement with a specific poetic genre or work within that play. In the first chapter I discuss the presence of the *Iliad* in the *Iphigenia at Aulis (IA)*; in the second, epinician in the *Heracles*; in the third, paeon in the *Ion*; and in the fourth, I return to the *IA* to explore its reworking of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. Though poetic experimentation is evident in nearly all of Euripides' extant tragedies, these three plays are notable for the length and centrality of this experimentation. Each of them openly engages with the genre or work in question and does so in such a way as to challenge both Athenian values and ideologies and poetry's role in propagating them. The *IA* in particular embodies the issues I wish to address, for it is one of Euripides' final plays and represents the culmination of years of poetic exploration. It is extremely rich in poetic allusions and reconstructions, and opening and closing this study of Euripidean tragedy with discussions of the *IA* highlights most distinctly the complexity of Euripides' poetic explorations.

## *1. Methodological Considerations*

At its most basic level, each chapter will undertake an examination of at least three dimensions of a single Euripidean tragedy. These will be: 1) the political, cultural, or civic values that are challenged or questioned in the tragedy; 2) the poetic elements of the tragedy that are not simply intrinsic to tragedy itself, but which serve to call attention to another poetic work or genre with which the audience is familiar; and 3) the complex relationship that Euripides develops within each tragedy between these poetic and political elements. Given the multiplicity and complexity of the arguments that I will be developing in each chapter, a certain uniformity of approach has been applied throughout.

My primary mode of approach is through close readings of the tragedies I am discussing and of the poetic works and genres that Euripides employs within these tragedies. Naturally, I do not rely on my analyses alone. For nearly every passage or section I examine, numerous critics have already provided interpretations and commentaries. As such, every chapter includes an overview of the scholarship regarding the Euripidean tragedy in question. The focus of these reviews is three-fold: to outline the critical consensus regarding the central themes of these tragedies; to show that scholars have already observed Euripides' engagement, within these tragedies, with the poetic forms with which I deal; and to summarize previous interpretations of the very intertextual activities in which Euripides is engaged. Above all, these

surveys show that while the significance of the political and poetic themes that I discuss has been identified, considerable work remains to be done in order to fully understand these aspects, both on their own and in relation to one another. The scholarship on Euripides' *Heracles* illustrates this state of affairs. Numerous critics have identified Heracles' struggle for civic integration as one of the play's central problems,<sup>13</sup> while others have analyzed at length the epinician odes in the play.<sup>14</sup> But despite the deep connections between epinician poetry and the relations between elite individuals and their respective communities, few scholars have discussed the entanglement of these two aspects of the *Heracles*.<sup>15</sup> In my discussion of the tragedy, and in my dissertation as a whole, I seek to fuse and expand these two avenues of inquiry, and in so doing to illuminate the complex relationship between the poetic and political themes of Euripides' work.

Regarding the external poetic forms that comprise the textual backbone of the Euripidean tragedies I analyze, the work of other critics is once again central to my project. In each chapter, I summarize the scholarly appraisals of the work or genre that is embedded in the Euripidean text, with a particular emphasis on their political and civic dimensions. In

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<sup>13</sup> E.g. T.A. Tarkow, "The Glorification of Athens in Euripides' *Heracles*," *Helios* 5 (1977): pp. 27-33; Helene Foley, *Ritual Irony: Poetry and Sacrifice in Euripides* (Ithaca, 1985), pp. 147-204.

<sup>14</sup> Once again Foley, 1985, though she does not connect Heracles' alienation to the epinician tones of the play. But see also Hugh Parry, "The Second Stasimon of Euripides' *Heracles* (637-700)," *The American Journal of Philology* 86 (1965): pp. 363-74; Christopher Carey, "The Victory Ode in the Theatre," in *Receiving the Komos: Ancient and Modern Receptions of the Victory Ode*, eds. Peter Agócs, Carey, and Richard Rawles (London, 2012), pp. 15-18.

<sup>15</sup> Swift, 2010, pp. 155-56 is an exception here, but as I shall demonstrate in Chapter Two, her stance on the political implications of Euripides' use of epinician differs substantially from my own.

conjunction with this survey of scholarship, I also provide numerous close readings of these texts in order to demonstrate more clearly the various values and ideologies that are embedded in these poetic forms. At times, these close readings are extensive. It would be all too easy, for example, to select a passage from Pindar's paeans and compare it with the paeans sung in Euripides' *Ion*. But I am not simply looking for similarities and differences between traditional and Euripidean versions of these poetic forms. I am interested in identifying the common themes of these poems and genres in order to understand what sort of social and cultural associations Euripides' audience would make with them, and from there examining the manner in which the tragedian meets, manipulates, or subverts these expectations. Insofar as having a precise understanding of the former is crucial to the latter, it is only natural that my examinations of these different poetic works and genres are lengthy.

My analyses of the tragic texts themselves takes up the bulk of each chapter. In these sections, I focus on elements of the play that are pertinent to both the principal socio-political themes of the tragedy and the poetic interplay in which Euripides is engaged. In each chapter, I demonstrate first of all that these two aspects of the tragedies are inextricably and overtly connected. Second, I study the manner in which Euripides subverts or upholds poetic conventions in his engagement with the canon. And finally, I discuss how this poetic engagement should affect our interpretation of the tragedy's main themes. Naturally, all this varies from play to play, but in each case my analysis of the poetic apparatus of the tragedy aims to provide a greater understanding of the manner in which Euripides uses the poetic tradition to deal with the socio-political questions at hand, and vice-versa. For example, the

many Iliadic themes of the *IA* serve as a window through which to gaze at the vast differences in the exercise of military authority that are depicted in Homer and in contemporary Athens. At the same time, Euripides' contemporization of the power structures within the Achaean army clarifies the importance of the Homeric subtext in the *IA*, and prompts critical reflection on the relevance of the Homeric epic to Athenian society. In other words, each chapter shows that the poetic and political are inextricably entwined in the tragedy in question, and that Euripides simultaneously challenges both Athenian civic or political values and the manner in which various poetic forms are exploited to propagate these values.

Finally, in each chapter I demonstrate that the political themes that are so central to each play, and which are so closely related to the poetic themes that Euripides explores, were of special interest to the Athenian audience at the time of the play's original production. In order to do so, I rely on a number of historical sources and on historians' analyses of these sources. These primary sources range from Athenian inscriptions that date to the same time period as the tragedies in question, to historiographical accounts of events in late fifth-century Athens. Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* is of particular importance in this endeavor, not only because he provides what is by far the most extensive commentary on Athenian society and affairs during Euripides' time, but especially because there is a remarkable confluence

between his and Euripides' depictions of the social forces at play in this period.<sup>16</sup> By highlighting the similarities between the central questions of each tragedy and the problems described by Euripides' contemporaries, each chapter shows that both the political and the poetic aspects of the plays were relevant to the world of the Athenian audience.

### *The "authenticity" of the Iphigenia at Aulis*

A special note regarding my approach to the text of the *IA* is necessary. It has long been recognized that the manuscript tradition of the tragedy is seriously flawed.<sup>17</sup> Among other problems, the tradition presents two different prologues—one iambic and one anapaestic—which are difficult to reconcile, and the final fifty lines of the play (*IA* 1578-1629) violate Porson's law and are certainly interpolated. Some scholars have been particularly aggressive in their deletions, while others have argued in favor of the authenticity of much of the text.<sup>18</sup> At this point, however, the only thing of which we can be certain is that there can be no certainty regarding the provenance of much of the text. Nevertheless, insofar as my analysis is geared

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<sup>16</sup> Indeed, an unintended by-product of this dissertation may be to show how similar the two writers are with respect to their interpretations and criticism of Athenian society, a question which certainly merits further attention.

<sup>17</sup> For the most complete discussion of the various deletions and modifications to which the text of the *IA* has been subject, see Sean Alexander Gurd, *Iphigenias at Aulis: Textual Multiplicity, Radical Philology* (Ithaca, 2005).

<sup>18</sup> Especially skeptical of the text's authenticity have been Denys Page, *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 1934); and David Kovacs, "Towards a Reconstruction of *Iphigenia Aulidensis*," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 123 (2003): pp. 77-103. Attempts to restore or reconcile various passages have been made by, among others, Bernard Knox, "Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulide* 1-163 (in that order)," *Yale Classical Studies* 22 (1972): pp. 239-61; W. Ritchie, "Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis* 919-974," in *Dionysiaca*, eds. R.D. Dawe, J. Diggle, and P.E. Easterling (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 179-203; Helene P. Foley, *Ritual Irony: Poetry and Sacrifice in Euripides* (Ithaca, 1985), pp. 102-05.

towards understanding how the original Athenian audience might have reacted to the *IA*, it is essential that I select passages which it is likely to have witnessed. As such, I propose a hybrid approach, using as a guideline Diggle's subdivision of the text into four categories according to his estimation of their probabilities of authenticity.<sup>19</sup> Specifically, unless otherwise noted, all the passages discussed in this dissertation will belong to the two categories Diggle believes most likely to be authentic ("fortasse Euripidei" and "fortasse non Euripidei"). For those few passages which I present that do not fall into these two categories, I will provide a justification of their usage in a footnote. This should have the twin benefit of using passages of the tragedy that are most likely to be authentic, as well as avoiding needlessly lengthy discussions of the text's authenticity within the main body of the chapters' themselves.

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. J. Diggle, ed., *Euripidis Fabulae* vol. 3 (Oxford, 1994), p. 358.

## 2. *Genre, Tradition, and the “Competence” of Euripides’ Audience*

One topic that, on account of its ancillary yet complex nature, I will discuss here, rather than in the individual chapters, is the question of the ability of Euripides’ audiences to recognize his use of and allusions to different poetic forms, and to appreciate their relevance to the political aspects of his tragedies. To a certain extent, this process is simplified by the fact that in each case, I will be dealing with what Laura Swift has termed “high-level interaction.”<sup>20</sup> While Swift has formulated this classification strictly with regard to tragedy’s reclamation of various choral genres, her definition of “generic interaction” is such that it can be applied to each type of poetic interaction that I discuss in this dissertation:

The most sophisticated level of generic interaction is where the reference works in two ways. Firstly, the play evokes a particular lyric genre by alluding to the motifs, *topoi*, or stylistic features of the genre. Secondly, the evocation of a particular genre is connected to the play in wider terms. It is thematically relevant that we are made to think of the genre: doing so develops our understanding of the purpose of the ode, or brings out a theme in the play. Furthermore, the reference to the genre may not be limited to one particular ode, but can be spread throughout the play.<sup>21</sup>

This definition is undeniably suitable for the two instances of “lyric interaction” that I discuss in this tragedy—epinician poetry in the *Heracles* and the paeon in the *Ion*.<sup>22</sup> But it is equally valid

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<sup>20</sup> On this type of interaction, cf. Swift, 2010, pp. 30-31.

<sup>21</sup> Eadem, p. 30.

<sup>22</sup> To wit, Swift herself classifies these as instances of “high-level interaction” and deals with them at some length. Cf. eadem, pp. 90-101 (*Ion*) and 121-56 (*HF*).

with regard to the *IA*'s interactions with the *Agamemnon* and the *Iliad*: in each case, Euripides goes to great lengths to "allud[e] to the motifs, *topoi*, or stylistic features" of these two canonical works, and there is a remarkable confluence of themes and subject matter that exists between the *IA* and both the *Iliad* and the *Agamemnon*. As such, we may conclude that if Euripides had an audience that was capable of comprehending this sort of poetic interplay, they would have had every opportunity to do so.

Regarding the audiences at the City Dionysia and their ability to grasp allusions to other poetic works within a particular drama, Martin Revermann has called this a question of "theatrical competence."<sup>23</sup> Although Revermann's study is exclusively concerned with Aristophanes' parodies of tragic poetry, much of what he says is germane to the present study. He correctly argues that we must suppose that there was some variability in the degree to which Aristophanes' audiences would have been able to "decode" the many layers of his comedies, especially the intertextual ones.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, given the substantial amount of experience that the Athenian audiences had in not only watching dramatic (and dithyrambic) productions at the City Dionysia, but indeed in actually performing in them, we may assume that the baseline of theatrical competence was reasonably high.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, there are a number of Aristophanic allusions to tragedy in which "the humour can only be fully enjoyed by the

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<sup>23</sup> Martin Revermann, "The Competence of Theatre Audiences in Fifth- and Fourth-Century Athens," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 126 (2006b): pp. 99-124.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Idem, pp. 107-15.

spectator who knows both the exact words of the original and its context.”<sup>26</sup> All this suggests that the Attic dramatists could expect: 1) that at least some members of their audience would be able to perceive and understand very subtle allusions to, or even quotations of, other dramatic texts; and 2) that a large portion of their audiences could appreciate the more obvious references to earlier tragedies.

Insofar as the composition of Euripides’ audiences was substantially the same as that of Aristophanes’, it is reasonable to expect that they possessed a similar degree of competence. Looked at in this light, it follows naturally that, on a general level, Euripides’ allusions to other tragedies would have been perceptible to at least part of his audience. Even beyond that, however, I wish to show first of all, that a sizable portion of his audience was familiar enough with the *Agamemnon* to recognize Euripides’ engagement with that specific tragedy; second of all, that Euripides’ public would have been similarly “competent” with regard to epinician poetry, paeans, and the *Iliad*; and finally, that many spectators would have understood the political, social, or civic dimensions of the various poetic forms that Euripides repurposes.

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<sup>26</sup> Rosemary Harriott, “Aristophanes’ Audience and the Plays of Euripides,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 9 (1962): pp. 2-3, cites fifteen such cases in Aristophanes’ nine complete comedies. This definition is of course subjective, but Harriott is by and large correct that detailed knowledge of the source-texts would have been necessary for an individual to derive any meaning or enjoyment from Aristophanes’ citations.

## *Euripides' audience and the Agamemnon*

On the surface, it may seem incredible that Euripides could count on the audience of the *IA* to recall not only the plot, but even specific lines, of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. After all, more than fifty years separated the original productions of these two plays. Nevertheless, there is ample reason to believe that Euripides' audience was not only familiar with the *Agamemnon*,<sup>27</sup> but that they had many opportunities to see it (re)performed on Athenian stages. Two sources mention a decree that, after Aeschylus' death, anyone who wished to stage a production of his plays would be granted a chorus,<sup>28</sup> and Aristophanes also hints at the possibility of seeing reproductions of Aeschylus' plays.<sup>29</sup> On the basis of this evidence, some scholars believe that the City Dionysia continued to host reperformances of Aeschylus' plays throughout the second half of the fifth century.<sup>30</sup> Other scholars are even more sanguine regarding this possibility and date

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<sup>27</sup> William G. Thalmann, "Euripides and Aeschylus: The Case of *Hekabe*," *Classical Antiquity* 12 (1993): p. 130, argues that "conventions have a way of being realized in particularly memorable form in certain texts, and their use later will inevitably evoke those texts...[F]or Euripides and his audience, as well as for us, the *Oresteia* was such a text because of its historical significance as a major summing-up of Athenian culture."

<sup>28</sup> *Vita Aeschyli* 1.54; Σ Aristoph. *Ach.* 10.

<sup>29</sup> On at least two occasions: 1) *Acharnians*, 9-11: ἀλλ' ὠδυνήθην ἔτερον αὖ τραγωδικόν,/ὅτε δὴ 'κεχήνη προσδοκῶν τὸν Αἰσχύλον,/ὁ δ' ἀνείπεν, εἴσαγ' ὦ Θεόγνι τὸν χορόν. ("But I suffered even more tragically/when I was hungrily expecting Aeschylus [i.e. a play by Aeschylus]/but heard instead: "Theognis, bring out your choir!"). The *Acharnians* was written some thirty years after Aeschylus' death, so it is safe to say that Dikaiopolis, who speaks these lines, is not referring to an original Aeschylean production. 2) *Frogs*, 868-69: ὅτι ἡ ποίησις οὐχὶ συντέθνηκέ μοι, τούτῳ δὲ συντέθνηκεν, ὥσθ' ἔξει λέγειν. ("Because my poetry did not die with me/as his died with him.) In all likelihood Aeschylus is boasting that his tragedies are still performed.

<sup>30</sup> G.B. Donzelli, "Euripide, *Elettra* 518-44," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 27 (1980): pp. 115-16; Martin Revermann, *Comic Business: Theatricality, Dramatic Technique, and Performance Contexts of Aristophanic Comedy* (Oxford, 2006a), pp. 72-73; Kenneth Dover, ed., *Aristophanes: Frogs* (Oxford, 1993), p. 23; and N.W. Slater, "The Idea of the Actor," in *Nothing to Do with Dionysos? Athenian Drama in Its Social Context*, eds. J.J. Winkler and F.I. Zeitlin, (Princeton, 1990), p. 394. Contra see David Bain, "[Euripides], *Electra* 518-44," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*

a revival of the *Oresteia* to the mid 420s—mostly on account of the lengthy allusions to the *Choephoroi* in Aristophanes' *Clouds* and Euripides' *Electra*.<sup>31</sup>

Obviously, revivals at the City Dionysia were occasions in which a huge number of Euripides' audience, too young to have seen the original, could have become acquainted with Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. But this hypothesis does not represent the only chance for them to have done so. Other dramatic festivals existed in Attica throughout the year, and many of them—specifically the various Rural Dionysia—almost certainly featured theatrical productions of plays that had been previously performed at the City Dionysia.<sup>32</sup> If reperformances were the

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24 (1977b): pp. 111-12; and Zachary P. Biles, "Aeschylus' Afterlife Reperformance by Decree in 5<sup>th</sup> C. Athens?" *Illinois Classical Studies* 24/25 (1999/2000): pp. 206-42.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Ar. *Clouds*, 534-36; E. *Electra*, 518-44. The canonical position was staked by Hans-Joachim Newiger, "Elektra in Aristophanes' *Wolken*," *Hermes* 89 (1961): pp. 422-30. Newiger argues for the reperformance primarily on the basis of the references in Aristophanes' *Clouds* to the *Oresteia* (and secondarily on the basis of the critique of Aeschylus' "recognition scene" in Euripides' *Electra*.) Following Newiger are T.B.L. Webster, *The Tragedies of Euripides* (London, 1967), p. 13 and p. 143; Robert Eisner, "Euripides' Use of Myth," *Arethusa* 12 (1979): p. 161; M.L. West, "Tragica IV," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 27 (1980): p. 20; Alan H. Sommerstein, ed., *Aristophanes: Frogs* (Warminster, 1996), p. 232; M. Davies, "Euripides' *Electra*: The Recognition Scene Again," *Classical Quarterly* 48 (1998): pp. 392-93. *Contra* see Bain, 1977b, p. 112. Though Bain does not dispute the existence of Aeschylean revivals shortly after Aeschylus' death, he argues that nothing "excludes the possibility that revivals became more sporadic as the [fifth] century progressed," and is generally skeptical of the notion that one occurred in the 420s; see also Biles, 2006.

<sup>32</sup> On the Rural Dionysia, see Eric Csapo and William J. Slater, *The Context of Athenian Drama* (Ann Arbor, 1995), pp. 121-132; Martha Habash, "Two Complementary Festivals in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*," *American Journal of Philology* 116 (1995): pp. 560-67. On the existence of theatrical productions at the various Rural Dionysia, cf. Plato, *Republic*, 475d; David Whitehead, *The Demes of Attica: 508/7—CA. 250 B.C.* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 212-22. Whitehead notes that at least fourteen demes appear to have had their own theaters, and that by the mid-fifth century the deme of Ikarion already had "regularly organized dramatic festivals in honor of Dionysos" (p. 215); see also Csapo and Slater, 1995, pp. 121-22. On the probability that the plays performed at the Rural Dionysia had already been put on at the City Dionysia or Lenaia, see A.E. Haigh, *The Attic Theatre* (Oxford, 1907), p. 71, who claims that "reproductions were the rule"; and Csapo and Slater, 1995, p. 3, who note that "we hear, by the early 5<sup>th</sup> c. B.C., of the reperformance of plays at the smaller festivals of the Rural Dionysia." Csapo and Slater infer this from the famous passage in Herodotus in which we hear that after the first production of Phrynichus' *The Capture of Miletus*, nobody was ever allowed to produce the play again (Hdt. 6.21.2: ἐπέταξαν μηδένα χρᾶσθαι τούτῳ τῷ δράματι). See also Biles, 2006, p. 211. Though Biles argues against the existence of Aeschylean revivals at the City Dionysia, he agrees that the Rural Dionysias' "potential role in keeping Aeschylus alive during the fifth century is a point that should be kept in mind."

norm at the Rural Dionysia, it stands to reason that Aeschylus' plays would have been a popular choice for these.

Furthermore, it appears that festivals and dramatic performances were not the only medium through which Aeschylus' poetry may have been disseminated. A few (undoubtedly elite) individuals probably had access to written texts of Aeschylus' tragedies,<sup>33</sup> and it is possible that readings of the tragic poets were part of the educational "curriculum" in fifth-century Athens.<sup>34</sup> Symposia represent an even more likely setting where Athenians might get to know Aeschylus' works. Once again, it is Aristophanes who allows us to imagine this other venue for tragic "recitations" when he describes the origin of a violent father-son skirmish in the *Clouds*: a disagreement about whether Aeschylus or Euripides ought to be recited at a symposium.<sup>35</sup> As in the other cases, this episode does not provide positive proof that recitations of Aeschylus' poetry regularly took place during symposiastic festivities. But it is hard to

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 52-54: Dionysus speaks of "reading [Euripides'] *Andromeda*" (ἀναγιγνώσκοντί μοι/τὴν Ἀνδρομέδαν) on board a war vessel, a notion that was undoubtedly "ridiculous" but which at least "shows that it was possible to obtain a book containing a popular Euripidean tragedy," as is pointed out by Leonard Woodbury, "Aristophanes' *Frogs* and Athenian Literacy: *Ran.* 52-53, 1114," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 106 (1976): p. 357. Cf. Dover, ed., 1993, pp. 34-35 for a brief yet astute analysis of what these lines can tell us about "Athenian book culture." For a variety of views on the question of Athenian literacy, and how widespread it was (a topic that is still being debated), cf. Eric A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, MA, 1963), pp. 39-40; Alfred Burns, "Athenian Literacy in the Fifth Century B.C.," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 42 (1981): pp. 371-87; Kevin Robb, *Literacy and Paideia in Ancient Greece* (Oxford, 1994), esp. pp. 183-97; Andrew Ford, "From Letters to Literature," in *Written Texts and the Rise of Literate Culture in Ancient Greece*, ed. Harvey Yunis, (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 15-37. While Havelock and Burns are both optimistic concerning the state of literacy in Athens, the current trend appears to be skeptical regarding this supposed "achievement of general literacy toward the end of the [Peloponnesian] war," (Havelock, 1963, p. 40).

<sup>34</sup> Though again, only children of the wealthiest Athenians would receive such an advanced education in letters. Cf. Robb, 1994, pp. 183-97; Sommerstein, ed., 1996, p. 233; Ford, 2003, pp. 24-30. For a fourth-century discussion of literary curricula, see Plato, *Laws*, 811a.

<sup>35</sup> Ar. *Clouds*, 1353-79.

imagine that Aeschylus and Euripides would have been catalysts for this comic fracas if such recitations were unheard of. It is far more likely that they were commonplace and, as a result, another source of public knowledge of Aeschylus' works.<sup>36</sup>

In summary, there is evidence that the members of the audience of the *IA* had ample opportunity to familiarize themselves with the language, plot, and themes of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. These included revivals at the City Dionysia; reperformances at other festivals; recitations at symposia; and private reading or schooling. While the nature of the evidence, coming as it does from comedy and later sources, is such that the scenes described cannot necessarily be taken too literally, the quantity of the evidence suggests that Aeschylus' poetry could be—and indeed frequently was—enjoyed well after his death. Thus it is extremely likely that a sizeable portion of Euripides' audience had the wherewithal to recognize references to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*.

Moreover, the likelihood that the audience of the *IA* could have recognized these allusions would have been greatly enhanced by the fact that this was not the first time Euripides had played this game. In fact, Euripides seems to have made a habit of toying with Aeschylus'

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<sup>36</sup> For more on this topic, see Alberta Lai, "La circolazione delle tragedie eschilee in ambito simposiale," *Lexis* 15 (1997): pp. 143-48; R.M. Rosen, "Aristophanes, Fandom, and the Classicizing of Greek Tragedy," in *Playing Around Aristophanes*, eds. L. Kozak and J. Rich, (Oxford, 2006), pp. 30-33; Biles, 2006, p. 229, goes even further, noting that symposia may not have been the only informal public venue at which Aeschylus' poetry was present, but that quite simply "reciting Aeschylus was a natural and even socially acceptable thing to do." Contra see Bain, 1977b, p. 110. For other ancient evidence on the recitation of dramatic poets at symposia, see Ar. *Knights*, 526-30 (in which Cratinus' comic odes are mentioned as banquet singing material); Ar. fr. 161 (= Athenaeus 8.365b): τοῖσ<ι> συνδείπνοις ἐπαινῶν Αἰσχύλου. For analyses of these two passages, see again Lai, 1997.

tragedies.<sup>37</sup> The most famous (and disputed) example is the recognition scene in Euripides' *Electra* (vv. 518-44).<sup>38</sup> Euripides' *Electra* scoffs at the idea that she could identify her brother Orestes by comparing his hair and footprints to hers—men and women have little in common in this regard, she argues—and that he might still be wearing a robe she had given him as a child. The hair, footprints, and robe are, of course, the same signs by which Aeschylus' *Electra* recognizes Orestes, and barring an interpolation, it is nigh on impossible to ignore the allusive nature of *Electra*'s remarks. In fact, these lines serve no discernible purpose *except* to recall Aeschylus' play.

Some scholars have taken this to be a matter of Euripides simply poking fun at his stuffy predecessor, a parody.<sup>39</sup> But it seems likely that there is also a serious dimension to this interplay; that he is “criticizing Aeschylus in order to draw attention to his own novel treatment,”<sup>40</sup> or more specifically, that he is using Aeschylus “as a backdrop against which to display the concrete, almost pedantic cast of *Electra*'s thinking and of his play's approach to the

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<sup>37</sup> For more on this, cf. Rachel Aélion, *Euripide Héritier d'Eschyle* vols. 1 and 2 (Paris, 1983); Richard Garner, *From Homer to Tragedy: The Art of Allusion in Greek Poetry* (London, 1990); Thalmann, 1993.

<sup>38</sup> Some scholars have argued that this is an interpolation, though the consensus seems to be edging toward authenticity. Scholars who have argued that these lines are genuine include: Hugh Lloyd-Jones, “Some Alleged Interpolations in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* and Euripides' *Electra*,” *Classical Quarterly* 11 (1961): pp. 171-84; Godfrey W. Bond, “Euripides' Parody of Aeschylus,” *Hermathena* 118 (1974): pp. 1-14; Donzelli, 1980; Davies, 1998; Robert L. Gallagher, “Making the Stronger Argument Against the Weaker: Euripides, *Electra* 518-44,” *The Classical Quarterly* 53: pp. 401-15. Those who have argued against its authenticity include: Bain, 1977b; West, 1980 (West argues that these lines were a later addition by Euripides himself); and David Kovacs, “Euripides, *Electra* 518-44: Further Doubts about Genuineness,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 36 (1989): pp. 67-78.

<sup>39</sup> E.g. Bond, 1974.

<sup>40</sup> Davies, 1998, p. 402.

search for truth."<sup>41</sup> This is analogous to Euripides' treatment of the *Oresteia* in his *Iphigenia at Tauris*, a play so laden with references to Aeschylus' trilogy that it has been called "a sequel to the *Eumenides*."<sup>42</sup> As in the *Electra*, the means by which brother and sister (this time Orestes and Iphigenia) recognize each other are highly reminiscent of the *Choephoroi*.<sup>43</sup> But the play is also closely related to the *Agamemnon*, most obviously in the parallels between Euripides' Orestes and Aeschylus' Agamemnon, and between Euripides' Iphigenia and Aeschylus' Clytemnestra: Agamemnon arrives at Argos to "a wife who is planning on killing him," while Orestes is "received [in Tauris] by a sister who is planning to kill him."<sup>44</sup> Orestes avoids his father's grisly fate thanks to the very recognition mentioned above, at which point the *IT* ceases to mirror the *Agamemnon* and turns its attention to the *Choephoroi*.<sup>45</sup> Scholars have taken the *IT*'s engagement with Aeschylus more and less seriously. Caldwell, for example, argues that Euripides reenacts the *Oresteia* merely to highlight the romantic and playful nature of his tragedy. David Sansone and Froma Zeitlin, on the other hand, see Euripides' engagement with the *Oresteia* as taking on

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<sup>41</sup> George Gellie, "Tragedy and Euripides' *Electra*," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 28 (1981): p. 4.

<sup>42</sup> Anne Pippin Burnett, *Catastrophe Survived: Euripides' Plays of Mixed Reversal* (Oxford, 1971), p. 71.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Isabelle Torrance, "In the Footprints of Aeschylus: Recognition, Allusion, and Metapoetics in Euripides," *American Journal of Philology* 132 (2011): p. 193: "The verbal proofs in *Iphigenia among the Taurians* are 1) reference to a piece of weaving (like Aeschylus), (2) reference to an offering of lustral water sent by Clytemnestra (also a feature in Aeschylus), (3) reference to the cutting of a lock of hair (like Aeschylus)."

<sup>44</sup> R. Caldwell, "Tragedy Romanticized: The *Iphigenia Taurica*," *The Classical Journal* 70 (1974): p. 24.

<sup>45</sup> Caldwell, 1974, p. 26. Torrance, 2011, pp. 195-96, notes that this "reversal" is foreshadowed by another allusion to the *Agamemnon*: "[a]nticipating his imminent death, Orestes ask Iphigenia, 'Will you [kill me] yourself with a sword, female sacrificing male?' (αὐτὴ ξίφει θύουσα θῆλυς ἄρσενας, *IT* 621)...Th[is] phrasing strongly recalls *Agamemnon* 1231 where the horrified chorus had described Clytemnestra as 'female murderer of the male' (θῆλυς ἄρσενος φονεὺς), with Agamemnon's death presented as a sacrifice."

a deeper meaning.<sup>46</sup> For them, the *IT* is either “an answer to, or rejection of, the theology of the *Oresteia*,”<sup>47</sup> or a rejection of Aeschylus’ “radical solution” to the problem of matricide.<sup>48</sup>

Given this pattern of using the *Oresteia* as a loom upon which to weave retellings of the House of Atreus, it is clear that the Athenian public was familiar not only with Aeschylus’ tragedies, but also with Euripides’ tendency to rework them. (It seems highly unlikely that Euripides would continue making such overwrought allusions to Aeschylus’ tragedies if nobody in the audience “got it.”) Many spectators then, though of course not all, would easily recognize that this was happening in the *IA*; a few might even have hoped for it.<sup>49</sup> But what matters here is that Euripides had already proven himself to be willing and able to make intertextual fodder of Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*, and that he did so not only for the purpose of entertainment but also in order to critique ideas or ideologies that were inherent in these earlier plays. There is every reason to expect that his constant allusions to the *Oresteia* in the *IA* serve the same dual purpose, and that his audience, seasoned by years of Euripidean spectatorship, would have been able to grasp the *IA*’s complex relationship to the *Agamemnon*. Moreover, the specific question that the *IA* addresses through its meditation on the *Agamemnon*—the dishonest

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<sup>46</sup> As does Torrance, 2011, though her interests have more to do with the “metapoetic reflections” (p. 178) of the text.

<sup>47</sup> David Sansone, “The Sacrifice-Motif in Euripides’ *IT*,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 105 (1975): p. 292.

<sup>48</sup> Froma I. Zeitlin, “Redeeming Matricide? Euripides Rereads the *Oresteia*,” in *The Soul of Tragedy: Essays on Athenian Drama*, eds. Victoria Pedrick and Steven M. Oberhelman, (Chicago, 2005), p. 218.

<sup>49</sup> As R.P. Winnington-Ingram, “Euripides: *Poiētēs Sophos*,” *Arethusa* 2 (1969): p. 136 notes, “[t]he number of people in the audience who enjoyed a hit at Aeschylus may not have been large, but need not have been small.”

speech of male leaders—was of great concern in late fifth-century Athens, so the relationship between these two plays would have stood out all the more to the audience.

### *Euripides' audience and the Iliad*

The matter of Athenians' familiarity with the *Iliad* is reasonably straightforward. Setting aside the more general problem of Homeric performance and reception in classical Greece,<sup>50</sup> it is certain that Athenians in the fifth century BCE had regular opportunities to become acquainted with the great epic poems. For those few who had received some type of formal education, the Homeric epics had served as a foundation of this *paideia*.<sup>51</sup> More universal access to Homer was provided at the Greater Panathenaia,<sup>52</sup> a quadrennial festival that included rhapsodic recitations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.<sup>53</sup> And in fact, it may not have been necessary for Athenians to wait for

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<sup>50</sup> Regarding which there is little consensus. For an overview, see for example: Robert Lamberton, "Homer in Antiquity," in *A New Companion to Homer*, eds. Ian Morris and Barry Powell (Leiden, 1997), pp. 33-54; Andrew Ford, "The Inland Ship: Problems of Performance and Reception of Homeric Epic," in *Written Voices, Spoken Signs: Tradition, Performance, and the Epic Text*, eds. Egbert Bakker and Ahuvia Kahane (Cambridge, MA, 1997), pp. 83-109; Barbara Graziosi, *Inventing Homer: The Early Reception of Epic* (Cambridge, 2002).

<sup>51</sup> The extent and nature of Homer's role in classical *paideia* is still debated. For different takes on the matter, cf. Havelock, 1963, pp. 61-86; W.J. Verdenius, *Homer, the Educator of the Greeks* (Amsterdam, 1970); Robb, 1994, pp. 159-213; Andrew Ford, *Origins of Criticism: Literary Culture and Poetic Theory in Classical Theory* (Princeton, 2002), pp. 188-213.

<sup>52</sup> For an overview of the Greater Panathenaia, cf. Jenifer Neils, "The Panathenaia: An Introduction," in *Goddess and Polis: The Panathenaic Festival in Ancient Athens*, ed. Neils (Princeton, 1992), pp. 13-27.

<sup>53</sup> Once again, our sources are rather vague concerning nearly every aspect of these competitions. For example, "the songs of Homer," as Plato refers to them (*Hipparchus* 228b: τὰ Ὀμήρου ἔπη), could theoretically refer to all the poems in the epic cycle attributed to Homer. But the prevailing scholarly consensus is that by the fifth century, recitations at the Panathenaia were restricted to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. For a full discussion of the problem, see Jonathan S. Burgess, "Performance and the Epic Cycle," *The Classical Journal* 100 (2004b): pp. 1-23.

the Panathenaic festival to appreciate Homer's poetry in public: in Xenophon's *Symposium*, a dialogue written in the mid-fourth century but set in the late fifth, one of the interlocutors (Niceratus) claims that he listens to rhapsodes reciting Homer "nearly every day."<sup>54</sup> Even though Niceratus himself is clearly a special case—his father had forced him to learn the entirety of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* by heart (X. *Symp.* 3.5)—his unfettered access to the rhapsodes strongly suggests that there was an abundance of public recitations of Homer in classical Athens. As a result, there is every reason to believe that the vast majority of the audience for the *IA* would have been able to recognize the many thematic and textual allusions to the *Iliad*.

Regarding the audience's ability to connect this Homeric material to the political apparatus of the *IA*, we may feel secure of their competence on two grounds: first and foremost, the epic material that is embedded in the *IA* is overtly political, insofar as the Iliadic conflicts that Euripides reclaims are the very same ones that Homer uses to illustrate the hierarchies and political organization of the Achaeans; and second, it is likely that Euripides' audience was accustomed to seeing the exploitation of these same Homeric episodes for political purposes even outside the tragic stage.<sup>55</sup> In a sense then, Euripides' intertextual excavation of the *Iliad* in the *IA* is the most blatantly political case that will be discussed in this dissertation.

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<sup>54</sup> X. *Symp.* 3.6 (ὀλίγου ἀν' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν), cited by Robb, 1994, p. 196.

<sup>55</sup> Another complex issue that I will address in the chapter itself, see below pp. 104-109.

## *Paeans in classical Athens*

The problem of the Athenian audience's understanding of paeans is an entirely different question, for it presupposes not the knowledge of a specific text, but a general awareness of whole bodies of work—what we call genres. With this, I do not mean to suggest that Euripides' audience had conceived of formal definitions for different poetic genres; numerous scholars have demonstrated that this process of classification did not truly begin until several decades after Euripides' death.<sup>56</sup> Nor is it my intention to articulate a theory of genre, or of this genre in particular, that might easily explain how Athenians could connect paeanic poetry to the political and social themes of the *Ion*. Instead, I shall seek to show first of all that Euripides' audiences were familiar with these types of odes, and that they would be able to recognize them in a tragic setting. And second, that they were able to connect these songs to specific occasions and experiences, which in turn would lead to an implicit recognition of their social and political functions.

The strongest evidence, I believe, that classical Athenians and Greeks were capable of imagining or recognizing a paeon is provided by the fact that time and again in archaic and classical poetry, we see references to paeans or the performance of paeans with little or no

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<sup>56</sup> See A.E. Harvey, "The Classification of Greek Lyric Poetry," *The Classical Quarterly* 5 (1955): pp. 157-75; Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, "Ancient Literary Genres: A Mirage?" *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 34 (1985): pp. 74-84; and Ford, 2002, pp. 250-71. Ford, 2002, pp. 10-21, also provides a nuanced analysis of how different poetic forms may have been understood and differentiated in the archaic and classical eras, based primarily on generic connections to specific performative contexts and occasions.

description of the songs beyond the name itself. Even the earliest references to paeans consist of declarations such as “they sung the noble paean” (Hom. *Il.* 1.473: καλὸν αἰδοῦντες παιήονα),<sup>57</sup> a bare utterance that suggests that nothing more was needed to transmit the generic notion. This trend continues in the classical era. The tragedians, for example, do this repeatedly: in Aeschylus’ *Persians*, a messenger narrating the events of the battle is able to refer to this type of song simply by noting that “the Greeks sang the holy paean” before starting their attack;<sup>58</sup> in Sophocles *OT*, Oedipus says that his plague-ridden city “is full of...paeans and groans”;<sup>59</sup> and in Euripides’ *Heracles*, the chorus compares itself to “the Delian maidens [who] sing paeans before the temple [of Apollo].”<sup>60</sup> Each of these passages is marked by two features: the simple mention of a “paean”; and a reference to the context in which the paean is performed. Insofar as none of these authors provides any other information, it is obvious that these two features are on their own sufficient to give a clear impression of the song that is being performed.<sup>61</sup>

To be sure, the mention of the performative contexts conveyed a substantial amount of information to fifth-century Athenians. Scholars have for some time now realized that to the extent that classical Greek notions of “genre” existed, they were tied to the function and

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<sup>57</sup> See also Hom. *Il.* 22.391; *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 518 (though here they are modified as “Cretan”); Arch. fr. 121 West (a “Lesbian paean”).

<sup>58</sup> A. *Pers.* 393: παιᾶν’ ἐφυμνοῦν σεμνὸν Ἕλληνας.

<sup>59</sup> S. *OT* 4-5: γέμει...παιάνων τε καὶ στεναγμάτων.

<sup>60</sup> E. *HF* 687-88: παιᾶνα μὲν Δηλιάδες/ <ναῶν> ὕμνουσ’ ἀμφὶ πύλας.

<sup>61</sup> Looking beyond tragedy, we see that even Thucydides trusts in his readers’ implicit understanding of the genre when he refers to the “prayer and paeans” that accompanied the departure of the Sicilian Expedition. Th. 7.75.7: εὐχῆς τε καὶ παιάνων.

occasions of a song's performance.<sup>62</sup> In each of the passages above, the singing of the paeon is directly connected to contexts in which we know that the performance of paeon-songs was common: as a prelude to battle (Aeschylus and Thucydides); in times of sickness and plague (Sophocles); and at the festivals for Apollo on Delos (Euripides).<sup>63</sup> The respective (Athenian) audiences of these passages would surely have understood the authors' references to paeans in the light of their own experiences with these specific occasions and with the songs that were performed during them.<sup>64</sup>

At the same time, there is also evidence that classical Athenians could conceive of paeans even beyond the confines of familiar contexts. This is again visible in tragedy, especially in those moments when references are made to the singing of paeans in contexts and occasions that were decidedly unfamiliar, perhaps even perverse. One clear example of this occurs in Euripides' *Alcestis*, when Admetus asks the chorus to "cry out the libation-less paeon for the

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<sup>62</sup> See especially Claude Calame, "Réflexions sur les genres littéraires en Grèce archaïque," *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 17 (1974): pp. 113-28; and more recently, Lutz Käppel, *Paian: Studien zur Geschichte einer Gattung* (Berlin, 1992), pp. 3-7; and Ford, 2002, pp. 10-22.

<sup>63</sup> Regarding the "generic" connection between paeans and these occasions, see Rutherford, 2001, pp. 29, 35-36 (paeans at Delos), 36-42 (sickness), 42-45 (war).

<sup>64</sup> These experiences could have been direct or indirect. For example, by the end of the fifth century, Athens sent "theoric" choruses to Delos each year, and these choruses would have almost certainly sung paeans. (I discuss the evidence for regular Athenian performances of paeans at Delos in Chapter Three: see below pp. 218-220.) Any member of the audience for Euripides' *Heracles* who had participated in such a theoric expedition would surely be able to relate the mention of the "Delian maidens sing[ing] paeans" to their own paeanic experiences. Of course, much of the audience would presumably not have had this direct experience, but given the fame and importance of these expeditions (cf. e.g. Pl. *Phaedo* 58a-c; Plut. *Nicias* 3.4-6), it is reasonable too conclude that many of them would nevertheless understand the type of performance and song to which Euripides is alluding.

god below.”<sup>65</sup> To our knowledge, no such thing as a “paeon for the god below” existed beyond the tragic stage. As in the passages above, Euripides provides no details as to what such a paeon would look or sound like. As such, for this line to have any meaning whatsoever it is necessary that the tragic audience be able to grasp some notion of a paeon that is entirely divorced from, perhaps even opposed to, any normal performative context or occasion. In other words, the audience must have been able to understand this paeon as a type of song *on its own*, even if its performative context contrasted with their own experiences regarding paeanic occasions and functions.

All of this is not to suggest that a formal definition of the paeon as a genre existed in the late fifth century. Indeed, the fact that tragic references to paeans in the fifth century were consistently devoid of any descriptions of the song, save that of context or occasion, may suggest that classical Greeks had not yet even determined the formal features of the genre. But the very fact that no such definition had been developed implies that it was not necessary; that the term “paeon” was sufficiently descriptive. As such, when Creousa portrays Apollo singing a paeon in the *Ion*, Euripides’ audience would have some notion of what this song was. The spectators would also be able to compare their abstract notions of this particular tragic paeon to their own experiences in both observing and participating in the performance of actual paeans,

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<sup>65</sup> E. *Alc.* 423-24: ἀντηχήσατε/παιᾶνα τῷ κάτωθεν ἄσπονδον θεῷ. See also A. *Ch.* 151: παιᾶνα τοῦ θανόντος.

and understand how Creousa's conception of the paeon was similar to or different from these experiences.

This same familiarity with paeans and paeanic performances would naturally help them interpret not only references to paeans in tragedy, but also tragic paeans themselves. For example, when Ion introduces himself with a monody that is twice marked by "the only true *παιάν*-refrain in extant tragedy,"<sup>66</sup> Euripides' audience, either consciously or sub-consciously, would recognize this song as a paeon, and they would again be able to relate it to their own experiences. Undoubtedly, both the similarities and differences would stand out, and by no means would this process play out in the same way among every member of the audience. Nevertheless, we can reasonably conclude that the audience of the *Ion* was adequately equipped to understand Euripides' manipulation of (or conformance to) their own expectations for a paeon. And given that the occasions and contexts of (non-tragic) Athenian paeans were closely related to the questions of Athenian and Ionian identity that the tragedy poses,<sup>67</sup> we can suppose that the *Ion*'s tragic paeans might inspire a certain amount of reflection on these political and civic themes.

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<sup>66</sup> Rutherford, 2001, p. 111.

<sup>67</sup> An issue I discuss at length throughout Chapter Three.

## *Epinician poetry in classical Athens*

While epinician poetry has, in a sense, much in common with the paeon—both were forms of choral lyric, and both have since been classified as genres—the approach one must take to understand Athenian perceptions of epinicians is entirely different. Indeed, when one seeks to conceptualize the audience’s ability to associate the odes of the *Heracles* to the broader corpus of epinician odes, two large problems manifest themselves: the first has to do with the dearth of performances of epinician poetry in Athens in the late fifth century; and the second has to do with the name “epinician” itself.

In a way, our designation of a specific body of work as “epinician” perfectly encapsulates the difficulties inherent in talking about ancient Greek genres. On the one hand, of all forms of ancient lyric, epinician seem to be the most well-suited for classification, for these odes were all composed with the same occasion in mind, namely the celebration of an Olympic victor.<sup>68</sup> In other words, they meet the most basic and consistent criterion for the classification of ancient Greek genres.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, despite the fact that epinician odes were typically performed under a specific set of circumstances, they are not consistently called “*epinikia*” until

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<sup>68</sup> A few exceptions to this rule may be seen in Pindar’s *Pythian* Three and Four, which Harvey, 1955, p. 160, defines as “poetic epistle[s].” But by and large we see in the epinician odes of Pindar and Bacchylides a remarkable confluence of occasion and function.

<sup>69</sup> Compare to the paeon, for example, for which Rutherford, 2001, pp. 36-58, identifies some ten types of performance-functions.

the third century BCE.<sup>70</sup> Pindar himself refers to them far more often as *kōmoi* (“songs for celebration”)<sup>71</sup> or as *enkōmia* (“encomiastic songs”),<sup>72</sup> something that has led scholars to believe that epinician was considered a sub-genre of encomiastic poetry in classical Greece.<sup>73</sup> But such a rigid hierarchy of classification obscures the fact that the ancient Greeks used a number of terms—including “*epinikia*”—nearly interchangeably when talking about the various aspects (both poetic and non-poetic) of victory celebrations.<sup>74</sup> The best approach to this problem, in my view, is to set aside concerns about distinctions that the Greeks themselves did not make, and to focus on the convergence of occasion, function, and poetic *topoi* that would lead a tragic audience to recall the epinician (or encomiastic) canon.

With such a premise, it is of course important to show that Athenians were familiar with the poetry of Pindar, Bacchylides, and the other epinician poets. Here we find some difficulties. One problem is that the production of epinician poetry seems to have essentially halted with Pindar’s death shortly after 450 BCE; as Swift notes, “the genre as a whole...seems to go out of

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<sup>70</sup> Harvey, 1955, pp. 159-64.

<sup>71</sup> E.g. *Ol.* 4.9, *Ol.* 8.10, *Pyth.* 5.22, etc.

<sup>72</sup> E.g. *Pyth.* 10.53, *Nem.* 1.7.

<sup>73</sup> Harvey, 1955, pp. 163-64; Hugh M. Lee, “The ‘Historical’ Bundy and Encomiastic Relevance in Pindar,” *The Classical World* 72 (1978): pp. 65-70; N.J. Lowe, “Epinikian Eidography,” in *Pindar’s Poetry, Patrons, and Festivals: From Archaic Greece to the Roman Empire*, eds. Simon Hornblower and Catherine Morgan (Oxford, 2007), pp. 167-68. I agree with these scholars, with the (rather substantial) caveat that it is difficult to rely on the existence of any fixed generic classifications within classical and archaic Greek lyric poetry.

<sup>74</sup> Both Pindar and Bacchylides do refer to their poems as epinicians: Pi. *Nem.* 4.78: ἐπινικίοισιν ἀοιδαῖς; Bacch. 2.13: ἐπινικίοις. But Aristophanes (fr. 448 [= Athenaeus 9.387f]: Ἀτταγᾶς ἡδιστον ἔψειν ἐν ἐπινικίοις κρέας) seems to be referring to the celebration meal (or meals) with which Olympic victors were often honored; and Plato certainly uses “*ta epinikia*” to refer to a celebratory banquet (Pl. *Symp.* 173a). Furthermore, in this latter case it is not even an athletic victory that is being honored, but a poetic one. In short, not only was the term *epinikia* simply one of many ways to refer to poems in honor of Olympic victors, but it could also refer to non-poetic forms of compensation for non-athletic victors as well.

fashion."<sup>75</sup> A second problem is represented by the fact that the aristocratic tone and milieu of epinician poetry appears fundamentally antithetical to the ideology of democratic Athens, and so it has been presumed that such performances were discouraged in Athens.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, citations by Aristophanes (among others) of specific odes of Pindar and Simonides suggests that their epinicians remained well-known in Athens in the late fifth and early fourth centuries.<sup>77</sup>

More compelling in this regard is the fact that around the same time as the production of the *Heracles*, Euripides had composed an epinician in honor of Alcibiades' Olympic victory in the chariot race.<sup>78</sup> If we presume, as seems reasonable, that this ode was performed in Athens, then we have evidence that a substantial portion of the audience of the *Heracles* would have witnessed—or at least known of—a specific epinician performance and all that it entailed. The combination of these experiences suggests that much of Euripides' audience would have had no difficulty in recognizing the strong epinician tones that run throughout the *Heracles*. And insofar as epinician poetry regularly and overtly broadcasts its "intrinsic political loading,"<sup>79</sup> we

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<sup>75</sup> Swift, 2010, p. 108.

<sup>76</sup> C.M. Bowra, "Xenophanes and the Olympic Games," *The American Journal of Philology* 59 (1938): pp. 267-68; H.T. Wade-Gery, *Essays in Greek History* (Oxford, 1958), pp. 247-52. I discuss this question in greater detail in Chapter Two, but *contra* Bowra and Wade-Gery, see Simon Hornblower, *Thucydides and Pindar: Historical Narrative and the World of Epinician Poetry* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 247-61; and Swift, 2010, pp. 106-15.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Ar. *Clouds*, 1354-58, *Birds* 924-30, discussed by Swift, 2010, pp. 112-14. Swift's points are generally correct, though it is worth noting that since the comedy itself was not destined for theatrical production, the audience of the *Clouds* was limited, so it is less significant than it might otherwise be that Aristophanes expected them to "recogniz[e] a particular epinician ode."

<sup>78</sup> This is also treated in far greater detail in Chapter Three, but on Euripides' epinician see esp. C.M. Bowra, "Euripides' Epinician for Alcibiades," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 9 (1960): pp. 68-79; and Swift, 2010, 115-18 (though Swift is reluctant to attribute the ode to Euripides).

<sup>79</sup> Swift, 2010, p. 106.

may deduce that the recognition of the poetic form would on its own recall the ideology and values espoused by Pindar and others.

### 3. *Summary of Chapters*

In my first chapter, I examine the echoes of the *Iliad* in the *Iphigenia at Aulis*. Of primary interest to me in this light are two Iliadic conflicts that Euripides recasts in the world of Aulis: a dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles over the possession of a woman; and the difficult decision about whether to undertake the war against Troy. In Homer, the same two issues<sup>80</sup> serve to illustrate the power structures that exist within the Achaean army. In the *IA*, Euripides also uses these problems to (re)frame the exercise of military authority, and he does so with many overt references to Homer's treatment of the same. In the end, however, Euripides resolves the disputes in a manner that would have been unthinkable in the world of Homer, but typical in democratic Athens: through the direct intervention of the Achaean army. I will argue first of all that these Homeric echoes serve to emphasize the vast gulf that lay between the world of the *Iliad* and the world of the *IA*—and by extension that of fifth-century Athens—particularly regarding the manner in which political and military authority were exercised;

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<sup>80</sup> In the *Iliad* the debate is whether or not to continue the war against Troy, but this is roughly equivalent to the question of whether or not to begin the same war.

second, that by emphasizing these differences the tragedy forms an implicit critique of the dynamics of power in democratic Athens; and third, that the play should be read in the light of contemporary debates concerning Homer's educational role in the matters of leadership and authority.

In my second chapter, I discuss the role of epinician poetry in the *Heracles*, and argue that the values of this genre are portrayed as vital to the contemporary *polis*. As Leslie Kurke has argued at length, one of the main purposes of epinician poetry was to ease its dedicatees' return from the games and to facilitate their re-integration into their communities.<sup>81</sup> The function of epinician poetry is thus overtly political, in that the genre seeks to redress the potential alienation of an elite victor within his own *polis* due to resentment felt by his fellow citizens. In the *Heracles*, this "epinician" problem is addressed at length, for we see Heracles first struggle to find a place in his adopted home of Thebes, and later be forced to settle in Athens. For not the first time in Greek tragedy, Thebes and Athens are set against each other as political antitheses,<sup>82</sup> but here the principle way in which they manifest this opposition is through their treatment of Heracles. Heracles himself is repeatedly portrayed as an ideal epinician hero, and epinician odes dominate the lyric apparatus of the tragedy. Nevertheless, Thebes refuses to accept Heracles upon his return from his labors, and it is ultimately up to Athens to

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<sup>81</sup> Kurke, 1991.

<sup>82</sup> For other instances, see the seminal paper by Froma Zeitlin, "Thebes: Theater of Self and Society in Athenian Drama," in *Nothing to Do with Dionysus? Athenian Drama in Its Social Context*, eds. John J. Winkler and Zeitlin (Princeton, 1990), pp. 130-67.

accommodate the hero. As I argue, Athens does so through an explicit subscription to the values of epinician poetry. As such, the play suggests that it is necessary for a contemporary *polis* to provide some degree of recognition to outstanding individuals, and that adhering to the principles of epinician poetry is an effective means of doing so. Moreover, this issue was especially relevant in the period in which the *Heracles* was produced,<sup>83</sup> when Athens was struggling to come to terms with a prodigal son—Alcibiades—who was not only an Olympic victor, but also the commissioner of an epinician poem from Euripides.

In my third chapter, I analyze the role of the paeans in Euripides' *Ion*, and I demonstrate that the presence of the genre is at once unifying and problematic. On the one hand, the paeon fits perfectly with the central themes of the play, which concern the fusion of Athens' autochthonous civic identity with a collective Athenian-Ionian identity that was based on common descent from Ion, the protagonist of the tragedy. Insofar as paeans, as a genre, expressed and encouraged the unity of a group or *polis*, often with "the integrative function of articulating a sense of community among the members,"<sup>84</sup> the presence of paeon-songs in the tragedy seems most fitting. At the same time, the paeanic songs of the *Ion* are highly unorthodox and seem to undermine any sense of community by focusing not on solidarity, but on the isolation of the singers. This subversion of theme and genre is especially important since

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<sup>83</sup> Godfrey W. Bond, ed., *Euripides: Heracles* (Oxford, 1981), p. xxxi, suggests that "metrical features" allow us to tentatively date the *Heracles* to a period "within (or just before) the last decade of Euripides' work."

<sup>84</sup> Ian Rutherford, "Apollo in Ivy: The Tragic Paeon," *Arion* 3 (1995a): p. 115.

the *Ion* was produced at a time in which Athens was struggling with and recalibrating its attitudes regarding the purity of Athenian citizens and the city's relations with its (non-Athenian) Ionian allies. As such, it appears that Euripides uses these songs to challenge contemporary notions of Athenian and Ionian identities, and to question the paeon's role in consolidating and projecting these identities.

In the fourth chapter, I return to the *Iphigenia at Aulis* in order to examine the play's many allusions to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. In this chapter, rather than focusing on the power-struggle between Agamemnon and Achilles, I will analyze the speech and actions of Agamemnon and his wife Clytemnestra. I will argue that Euripides has deliberately inverted each character's role as compared with their appearances in Aeschylus' play. In the *Agamemnon*, one of the main themes is Clytemnestra's use of deception in order to kill her husband. In the *IA*, conversely, it is Agamemnon who attempts to exploit deceitful speech in order to effect a murderous plot of his own, and the scenes in which he does so are laden with imagery from and references to Aeschylus' play. A contemporary concern is once again evident in this shift, insofar as we can trace a growing concern about dishonest *male* speech in late-fifth-century Athens, particularly in the political sphere. I thus argue that the *IA* rejects the *Agamemnon's* portrayal of deceptive speech as a peculiarly "female" method of communication, and instead suggests that male figures have become the main culprits of such deviant behavior.

# Chapter One

## Echoes of the *Iliad* at Aulis: Agamemnon, Achilles, and the Reconsideration of Homeric Authority

Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis* shares an intimate and peculiar relationship with Homer's *Iliad*. The setting of the tragedy is the encampment at Aulis where the Achaean army awaits a favorable wind for Troy, and the question at hand is whether or not Agamemnon will sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia to Artemis. This is the condition upon which the army's departure for Troy rests, so we may see the *IA* as a sort of prequel to the *Iliad*, its outcome predetermined by the very existence of Homer's epic. Even beyond that, the high volume of allusions to the *Iliad*, some as obvious as the choral "Catalogue of Ships" found in the *parodos*,<sup>1</sup> suggests that Euripides is deeply engaged with the Homeric tradition. In short, the *Iliad* is embedded in the

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<sup>1</sup> The second half of the *parodos* is of dubious authenticity, but the first half (vv. 164-230) is certainly adequate evidence of the song's Homeric heritage. On the probable authenticity of the first part of the *parodos*, cf. Denys Page, *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 1934), p. 142; J. Diggle, ed., *Euripidis Fabulae* vol. 3 (Oxford, 1994), *ad loc.*; David Kovacs, "Towards a Reconstruction of *Iphigenia Aulidensis*," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 123 (2003): p. 83. For a broader discussion of the problems inherent to the text of the *IA*, as well as my approach to these problems, see the Introduction to this dissertation, on pp. 12-13. In general, I will avoid bringing up questions of "authenticity" unless serious doubts have been raised about a particular passage I am discussing.

very fiber of Euripides' text. Moreover, this intertextual relationship is dramatized before spectators that were fully capable of recognizing the existence and importance of the Homeric subtext, not least due to their similar and recent experience with Euripides' *Helen*.<sup>2</sup> As such, there is every reason to believe that the *Iliad*'s presence would have a palpable influence on the audience's perception of the *IA*.

Among the many echoes of the *Iliad* at Aulis, two specific issues stand out for the attention which Euripides gives them: the conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles, which is central to the *Iliad* and ever-simmering in the *IA*; and the decision about whether to fight the Trojans, which hovers over the *IA* and is the subject of numerous debates in the *Iliad*. In Homer, these two issues are the clearest windows through which we may observe the structures of power and authority among the Achaeans. To wit, the Homeric debates about whether to remain at Troy demonstrate that the *basileis* of the *Iliad* retain a monopoly of authority at Troy, insofar as their decisions cannot be challenged by the common soldiers of the army. The Iliadic dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles, on the other hand, results in an irresolvable "crisis

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<sup>2</sup> In the *Helen* it is the *Odyssey* rather than the *Iliad* that provides a traditional model through which to understand the events of the play. On this vast subject, cf. Charles Segal, "The Two Worlds of Euripides' *Helen*," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 102 (1971): pp. 553-614; Robert Eisner, "Echoes of the *Odyssey* in Euripides' *Helen*," *Maia* 32 (1980): pp. 31-37; Karelisa V. Hartigan, "Myth and the *Helen*," *Eranos* 79 (1981): pp. 23-31; Helene P. Foley, "Anodos Drama: Euripides' *Alcestis* and *Helen*," in *Innovations of Antiquity*, eds. Ralph Hexter and Daniel Selden (New York, 1992), pp. 133-60; Diane M. Juffras, "Helen and Other Victims in Euripides' *Helen*," *Hermes* 121 (1993): pp. 45-57; Ingrid E. Holmberg, "Euripides' *Helen*: Most Noble and Most Chaste," *The American Journal of Philology* 116 (1995): pp. 19-42; Rachel D. Friedman, "Old Stories in Euripides' New *Helen*: ΠΑΛΑΙΟΤΗΣ ΓΑΡ ΤΩΙ ΛΟΓΩΙ Γ' ΕΝΕΣΤΙ ΤΙΣ (*Hel.* 1056)," *Phoenix* 61 (2007): pp. 195-211; Aspasia S. Stavrinou, "The *Opsis* of *Helen*: Performative Intertextuality in Euripides," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 55 (2015): pp. 104-32.

of leadership,"<sup>3</sup> and shows that the relations between different *basileis* cannot be defined or resolved by a strict or simple hierarchy. In Homer, then, these issues are closely bound to questions of authority and leadership, and it is perhaps no surprise that the *IA* uses them to shed light upon the same subjects.

In the *IA*, the question of Iphigenia's sacrifice sets in motion both a debate about whether to bring war to Troy and a dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles over the girl's fate. Just as in Homer, these questions are the prisms through which we understand the leadership of the Achaeans at Aulis. But even though the outcome of the *IA* is superficially the same as that of the *Iliad*—the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles is resolved, and the war will go on—the manner in which Euripides' Achaeans reach these conclusions is decidedly un-Homeric: the army as a whole takes control of the situation and forces the *basileis* to follow their lead. Such a dynamic is on the one hand inconceivable within the world of the *Iliad*, but it is strikingly similar to the way in which similar conflicts unfolded in the contemporary Greek world.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate that the *IA* consistently uses its Iliadic backdrop to re-evaluate questions of authority among the Achaeans within an overtly contemporary, one might even say democratic, context. As I will show, this process has two principal effects. On the one hand, the *IA* illustrates the difficulties of leadership in the world of his audience, for the

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<sup>3</sup> As it is called by Walter Donlan, "Reciprocities in Homer," *The Classical World* 75 (1982): p. 161.

Achaean army's expropriation of power mirrors circumstances, described by Thucydides and others, in which masses of citizens or soldiers used violent coercion to take control of the decision-making process. At the same time, the tragedy challenges the canonical status of the Homeric epics in classical Athens. In fact, we shall see that this too is a theme to which the audience could relate, for it reflects a hotly contested contemporary debate about the usefulness of Homeric poetry as "educational" texts in the classical Greek world.

The originality of this study lies more in its conclusions than in its focus. Indeed, critics have long noted the many echoes of the *Iliad* that resound at Aulis. The *parodos*, for example, practically spells out its Homeric lineage over 140 lines, and scholars have handled this particular allusion most deftly, arguing that Euripides uses it to initiate a sort of "poetic *agōn*" with Homer.<sup>4</sup> The dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles, kept at a constant simmer throughout the *IA*, has also been seen as a clear allusion to the two heroes' quarrel over Briseis in the *Iliad*. Just as in Homer's poem, in the *IA* the crux of the disagreement is a girl over whom both the heroes feel they have some claim. The situation in the *IA* is somewhat more

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<sup>4</sup> The term belongs to Andrew Ford, "Being There: Poetics of Earliness in the Parodos of the *Iphigeneia at Aulis*," (forthcoming). Ford looks at the competition that Euripides initiates from the perspective of what he calls the "poetics of earliness" (ibid.), which has the effect of "tak[ing] the oldest parts of the oldest story and present[ing] them with such freshness and spontaneity that it must excite anyone who is there to see." Froma Zeitlin, "The Artful Eye: Vision, Ekphrasis, and Spectacle in Euripidean Theatre," in *Art and Text in Ancient Greek Culture*, eds. Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 138-96, also examines the "possible contest between verbal and visual means, between epic narrative and theatrical vista," (p. 164), but her interest lies mainly in the way that Euripides' proposes a new means for establishing memory and *kleos*. (See also Zeitlin, "Art, Memory, and *Kleos* in Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Aulis*," in *History, Tragedy, Theory: Dialogues on Athenian Drama*, ed. Barbara Goff [Austin, 1995], pp. 174-201.)

complicated than it is in the *Iliad*,<sup>5</sup> but in the end, as Luschnig points out, we are led to “understand that Briseis is not the first bride stolen from Achilles by his commander-in-chief.”<sup>6</sup>

But while scholars have long noted these similarities, they have yet to examine the manner in which the echoes of the *Iliad* are woven into the *IA*'s exploration of the structures of power and authority among the Achaean army. Indeed, the inevitability of Iphigenia's eventual sacrifice, Achilles' efforts notwithstanding, has suggested to many that the *Iliad*'s authority on the *IA* is “suffocating”;<sup>7</sup> that “Agamemnon's and Iphigenia's choices cannot bear the significance necessary to tragedy because they are limited by the imposition of the myth”;<sup>8</sup> or even that “tradition has worked to close down choices and alternatives in political, social, and artistic terms.”<sup>9</sup> But such an enlarged focus on the *Iliad*'s “influence” on the *IA* has come at the cost of understanding the tragedy's consistent impulse to reconsider and revise the dynamics of Homeric society. Insofar as I argue here that the *IA*'s Iliadic backdrop serves primarily to

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<sup>5</sup> In the *IA*, Achilles only becomes aware of his “claim” as the tragedy progresses. As we learn in the prologue, Agamemnon had used the prospect of a marriage to Achilles to lure Iphigenia to Aulis, but once Achilles learns of this ruse, Achilles boldly claims that now that Iphigenia “has been promised to me, she will never be sacrificed by her father” (*IA* 935-36: κούποτε κόρη σὴ πρὸς πατρός σφαγήσεται, ἐμὴ φατισθεῖς·). On the nature of Achilles' commitment, see esp. Helene P. Foley, “Marriage and Sacrifice in Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Aulis*,” *Arethusa* 15 (1982): pp. 159-80. Foley argues—correctly, in my view—that “Achilles...agree[s] to act as Iphigeneia's bridegroom...[and] the fictional marriage between Achilles and Iphigeneia takes on an ever-increasing reality” (pp. 162-63).

<sup>6</sup> C.A.E. Luschnig, *Tragic Aporia: A Study of Euripides' Iphigenia at Aulis* (Berwick, Australia, 1988), p. 67. The connection has also been noted by Christina Elliot Sorum, “Myth, Choice, and Meaning in Euripides *Iphigenia at Aulis*,” *The American Journal of Philology* 113 (1992): p. 532; and Ann Norris Michelini, “The Expansion of Myth in Late Euripides: *Iphigenia at Aulis*,” *Illinois Classical Studies* 24/25 (1999/2000): p. 48 fn 38.

<sup>7</sup> Luschnig, 1988, p. 78.

<sup>8</sup> Sorum, 1992, p. 542.

<sup>9</sup> Mary-Kay Gamel, “Introduction: *Iphigenia at Aulis*” in *Women on the Edge: Four Plays by Euripides*, eds. Ruby Blondell, Gamel, Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, and Bella Zweig (New York, 1999), p. 320.

subvert the political structures of Homer's epic, this chapter represents a sharp divergence from what has heretofore been the critical consensus.

## 1. *Authority, Conflict, and Structures of Power in the Iliad*

Euripides' revolutionary use of Homeric story lines will be readily apparent only if we first see how Homer uses the same episode-types to depict the nature of power and authority in the *Iliad*. It is in that light that I shall provide a brief overview of the "politics" of the *Iliad*,<sup>10</sup> as well as a more thorough examination of the picture of elite authority that is developed through the Agamemnon/Achilles conflict and the debate about whether to continue the war in Troy. These questions have been the subject of endless discussions among scholars, and it is fair to say that no true consensus has been found. Nevertheless, we may at least say that Moses Finley's famous statement that "neither [Homeric] poem has any trace of a *polis* in its political sense,"<sup>11</sup> a view once so *en vogue*,<sup>12</sup> is no longer a commonly held opinion. Indeed, the very existence of a

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<sup>10</sup> I will restrict myself here to a discussion of the *Iliad* (rather than including episodes from the *Odyssey*) primarily because it is with the *Iliad* that Euripides engages in the *IA*.

<sup>11</sup> M.I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (New York, 1979), p. 34.

<sup>12</sup> Among many others and to varying degrees, Finley is followed by: A.W.H. Adkins, *Moral Values and Political Behaviour in Ancient Greece: From Homer to the End of the Fifth Century* (New York, 1972), pp. 11-12, 17; Richard Posner, "The Homeric Version of the Minimalist State," *Ethics* 90 (1979): pp. 27-46; John Halverson, "Social Order in the *Odyssey*," *Hermes* 113 (1985): pp. 129-45; Halverson, "The Succession Issue in the *Odyssey*," *Greece & Rome* 33 (1986): pp. 119-28; Lowell Edmunds, "Commentary on Raaflaub," *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium on Ancient*

book entitled *The Iliad as Politics* suggests that the premise of such “politics” is at least permissible.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, a number of scholars have either argued explicitly that the *Iliad* includes a political dimension,<sup>14</sup> or have done so implicitly by attempting to describe and analyze the political world of Homer’s epics.<sup>15</sup>

The results of these studies have been varied, but the most successful interpretations of Homer’s politics have not failed to stress the participation of a broad group of people throughout the decision-making process. As Raaflaub points out:

The fact is...that the Homeric assembly plays a crucial role. Every action and decision with importance to the community takes place in an assembly, whether at war, on an expedition, or in the peaceful *polis*. The people witness such

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*Philosophy* 4 (1988): pp. 27-33; and to a lesser extent, Stephen Scully, *Homer and the Sacred City* (Ithaca, 1990), pp. 101-14.

<sup>13</sup> Dean Hammer, *The Iliad as Politics: The Performance of Political Thought* (Norman, OK, 2002).

<sup>14</sup> On this subject, see esp. Hammer, 2002, pp. 20-29. Hammer, a professor of political science, astutely applies the notion that a “political field is not defined by institutional and territorial boundaries but rather is constituted by groups who are engaged in a political activity” (p. 26). But see also Kurt A. Raaflaub, “Homer and the Beginnings of Greek Political Thought,” in *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium on Ancient Philosophy* 4 (1988): pp. 1-25; Raaflaub, “Homeric Society,” in *A New Companion to Homer*, eds. Ian Morris and Barry Powell (Leiden, 1997a), pp. 624-48; Raaflaub, “Soldiers, Citizens, and the Evolution of the Early Greek Polis,” in *The Development of the Polis in Ancient Greece*, eds. Lynette G. Mitchell and P.J. Rhodes (London, 1997b), pp. 49-59; “Politics and Interstate Relations in the World of Early Greek *Poleis*: Homer and Beyond,” *Antichthon* 31 (1997c): pp. 1-27; Peter W. Rose, “Ideology in the *Iliad*: Polis, *Basileus*, *Theoi*,” *Arethusa* 30 (1997): pp. 151-99; William Allan and Douglas Cairns, “Conflict and Community in the *Iliad*,” in *Competition in the Ancient World*, eds. Nick Fisher and Hans van Wees (Swansea, 2011), pp. 113-46.

<sup>15</sup> These are too numerous to mention (though many will be discussed below), but a brief sample may include: Ian Morris, “The Use and Abuse of Homer,” *Classical Antiquity* 5 (1986): pp. 81-138; William Merritt Sale, “The Government of Troy: Politics in the *Iliad*,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 35 (1994): pp. 5-102; Ruth Scodel, *Listening to Homer: Tradition, Narrative, and Audience* (Ann Arbor, 2002), esp. pp. 173-212; Joel P. Christensen, *The Failure of Speech: Rhetoric and Politics in the Iliad* (PhD diss. at New York University, 2007); Elton Barker, *Entering the Agon: Dissent and Authority in Homer, Historiography, and Tragedy* (Oxford, 2009). *Contra* (to a certain extent), see Paul Cartledge, *Ancient Greek Political Thought in Practice* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 29-40. While Cartledge admits that “there [is] evidence of political thought in Homer” (p. 39), elsewhere he stresses the lack of any political institutions and asserts that “the world of the *Iliad* is pre-political” (p. 33).

actions, listen to the debate, express their approval or dissent collectively...and share the responsibility for the outcome.<sup>16</sup>

In other words, even though the elite *basileis*<sup>17</sup> dominate the political landscape at Troy, Homer's world is still one in which everyone witnesses and appraises the deliberations of the assembly.<sup>18</sup>

And although the will of the *dēmos* has little effect on the outcomes of the deliberations,<sup>19</sup> it is still desirable, perhaps even necessary, for the *basileis* to establish consensus among them.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Raaflaub, 1997b, p. 55.

<sup>17</sup> The term *basileus* may be translated as "king" or perhaps "chieftain," but insofar as there is no true consensus on the status of these *basileis*, I will simply use the Greek term throughout this chapter. For different takes on the precise status of Homer's *basileis*, see Robert Mondi, "ΣΚΗΠΤΟΥΧΟΙ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΣ: An Argument for Divine Kingship in Early Greece," *Arethusa* 13 (1980): pp. 203-16; Bjørn Qviller, "The Dynamics of the Homeric Society," *Symbolae Osloenses* 56 (1981): pp. 109-55; Robert Drews, *Basileus: The Evidence for Kingship in Geometric Greece* (New Haven, 1983), pp. 99-104; A.G. Geddes, "Who's Who in Homeric Society?" *The Classical Quarterly* 34 (1984): pp. 17-36; Walter Donlan, "The Social Groups of Dark Age Greece," *Classical Philology* 80 (1985): pp. 304-05; Hans van Wees, *Status Warriors: War, Violence, and Society in Homer* (Amsterdam, 1992), pp. 281-98; Raaflaub, 1997a, pp. 633-34; Naoko Yamagata, "ἄναξ and βασιλεύς in Homer," *The Classical Quarterly* 47 (1997): pp. 1-14; Sarah Hitch, *King of Sacrifice: Ritual and Royal Authority in the Iliad* (Washington, D.C., 2009).

<sup>18</sup> Raaflaub, 1997a, p. 632.

<sup>19</sup> Van Wees, 1992, p. 33: "[t]he people at large thus play no active part in decision-making, but are passively involved in it...[they] may shout in agreement or silently disapprove, but they have no vote or any say in the matter."

<sup>20</sup> Along these lines, and to varying degrees, cf. Walter Donlan, "The Structure of Authority in the *Iliad*," *Arethusa* 12 (1979): pp. 51-70; Donlan, "Chiefs and Followers in Pre-State Greece," in *From Political Economy to Anthropology: Situating Economic Life in Past Societies*, eds. Colin A.M. Duncan and David W. Tandy (Montreal, 1994), pp. 34-51; Donlan, "The Relations of Power in the Pre-State and Early State Polities," in *The Development of the Polis in Archaic Greece*, eds. Lynette G. Mitchell and P.J. Rhodes (London, 1997), pp. 39-48; Peter W. Rose, "Thersites and the Plural Voice of Homer," *Arethusa* 21 (1988): pp. 5-25; Rose, 1997; Rose, *Class in Archaic Greece* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 93-133; W.G. Thalmann, "Thersites: Comedy, Scapegoats, and Heroic Ideology in the *Iliad*," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 118 (1988): pp. 1-28; Hammer, 2002; Bruce Heiden, "Common People and Leaders in *Iliad* Book 2: The Invocation of the Muses and the Catalogue of Ships," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 138 (2008): pp. 127-54; Allan and Cairns, 2011; and David F. Elmer, *The Poetics of Consent: Collective Decision Making in the Iliad* (Baltimore, 2013). Scodel, 2002, p. 182, provides a particularly nuanced example of this view: "Homeric epic is the genre of social cohesion. This cohesion requires the people to accept elite dominance but simultaneously allows them to view individual aristocrats with a critical gaze. It celebrates a shared moral perspective that gives the common people a decisive voice, even as it defines their opinions as based on...those of the elite." *Contra* see Morris, 1986, David W. Tandy, *Warriors into Traders: The Power of the Market in Early Greece* (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 142-44, 149-52, who insist that the *Iliad* portrays a purely "oligarchical" political landscape.

Nevertheless, beyond the need for the *basileis* to appeal to the wishes of the *dēmos* (“people”), the authority of the *basileis* at Troy remains nearly absolute.<sup>21</sup> On a general level, numerous aspects of the assemblies make this readily apparent: a *basileus* such as Agamemnon may feel free to ignore the wishes of the *dēmos*;<sup>22</sup> only the *basileis* are allowed to hold the floor at the assemblies;<sup>23</sup> at no point do the common soldiers disobey the commands of their leaders;<sup>24</sup> the soldiery’s only means of expressing dissent is by refusing to applaud the suggestion of a *basileus*, a silence that does not have any persuasive power; and the only common soldier who attempts to speak out against an Achaean *basileus*—Thersites—receives a severe beating for his temerity.<sup>25</sup> Once a *basileus* decides on a particular course of action, there is nothing the *dēmos* can do to influence proceedings.

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<sup>21</sup> Donlan, 1997, pp. 40-41, considers this the distinction between “power” and “authority.” He argues that while power suggests the ability to “[rule] by compulsion,” authority “rules mainly through persuasion and example, and tradition.”

<sup>22</sup> For example in Book One, when all the other Achaeans (*Il.* 1.22: ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες...Ἀχαιοί) are in favor of returning Chryses’ daughter to the priest, an idea that Agamemnon decisively rejects. For a Trojan example, see *Il.* 7.345-97, in which Antenor proposes that they bring the war to an end by forcing Paris to give back Helen. Paris roundly refuses to do anything of the sort, though we learn that “the Trojans would have him do it” (*Il.* 7.393: ἢ μὴν Τρῳέες γε κέλονται). On this episode, cf. Raaflaub, 1988, esp. pp. 1-5.

<sup>23</sup> Van Wees, 1992, p. 33; Hermann Strasburger, “The Sociology of the Homeric Epics,” in *Homer: German Scholarship in Translation*, eds. and tr. G.M. Wright and P.V. Jones (Oxford, 1997), p. 50: “[t]he assembly of the army in the *Iliad* and the peaceful assembly of the people in the *Odyssey* are mute assemblies, in which the crowd receives announcements and instructions.” This latter interpretation is perhaps an exaggeration, but a large kernel of truth lies within it.

<sup>24</sup> Donlan, 1979, identifies forty instances in which an individual’s “Leadership Authority” (i.e. command) is rejected, but none of these instances of disobedience belongs to the common soldiers.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Il.* 2.211-75. This episode is by no means irrelevant to the discussion at hand, but in the interest of space it will be elided. For more, cf. esp. N. Postlethwaite, “Thersites in the *Iliad*,” *Greece & Rome* 35 (1988): pp. 123-36; Rose, 1988; Thalmann, 1988. For the view that Thersites is not actually a common soldier, but instead a member of the elite, cf. G.S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary* vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1985), p. 139; and J. Marks, “The Ongoing *Neikos*: Thersites, Odysseus, and Achilleus,” *The American Journal of Philology* 126 (2005): pp. 1-31.

The hierarchy among the *basileis* themselves is somewhat more complicated. Even though Homer makes it clear that “Agamemnon is accepted by the other βασιλῆες as overall leader,”<sup>26</sup> this does not give him unlimited power over the other Greek leaders, nor indeed over the Greek army as a whole. As Raaflaub affirms, Agamemnon is more of a “*primus inter pares*” within a “fiercely competitive group of equals.”<sup>27</sup> His authority is subject to challenges throughout the *Iliad*, and he has essentially no power over the troops brought to Troy by his fellow *basileis*. In short, his position is unstable and ambiguous,<sup>28</sup> but the debate about whether to remain at Troy, and the conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles, are episodes through which we may better understand the complex dynamics that exist within the Achaean army.

#### *The authority of the basileis and the “fight or go home” question*

In the *Iliad*, the debate about whether or not to remain at Troy arises at three separate points in the *Iliad*. In each case, Homer makes it clear, albeit in different ways, that the decision of whether “to fight or go home” lies with the *basileis*, but not with Agamemnon alone. The first instance arises in Book Two, where Agamemnon devises a poorly conceived plan to test his army with a disingenuous suggestion that they should flee Troy (*Il.* 2.100-41). Agamemnon’s

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<sup>26</sup> Kirk, 1985, p. 81.

<sup>27</sup> Raaflaub, 1997a, p. 634. The definition of Agamemnon as *primus inter pares* goes back at least a hundred years: cf. Carl Friedrich Lehmann-Haupt, “Griechische Geschichte bis zur Schlacht bei Chaironeia,” in *Einleitung in die Altertumswissenschaft* vol. 3, eds. A. Gercke and E. Norden (Leipzig, 1914), p. 105.

<sup>28</sup> An argument that is presented in great detail by Donlan, 1982.

design is to have the other *basileis* restrain the soldiers (*Il.* 2.75) but his proposal to flee is taken up with rather too much zest by the army, and a mad rush to the ships ensues (*Il.* 2.142-54). During the tumult, we see Odysseus corral the troops and urge them to stay and fight. In doing so, he provides a reasonably coherent picture of the Achaean hierarchy (*Il.* 2.188-91; 198-206):

ὄν τινα μὲν βασιλῆα καὶ ἔξοχον ἄνδρα κιχέει  
τὸν δ' ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἐρητύσασκε παραστάς·  
δαιμόνι' οὐ σε ἔοικε κακὸν ὡς δειδίσσεσθαι,  
ἀλλ' αὐτὸς τε κάθησο καὶ ἄλλους ἴδρουε λαούς·

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ὄν δ' αὖ δήμου τ' ἄνδρα ἴδοι βοόωντά τ' ἐφεύροι,  
τὸν σκήπτρῳ ἐλάσασκεν ὁμοκλήσασκέ τε μύθῳ·  
δαιμόνι' ἀτρέμας ἦσο καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἄκουε,  
οἱ σέο φέρτεροί εἰσι, σὺ δ' ἀπτόλεμος καὶ ἀναλκις  
οὔτε ποτ' ἐν πολέμῳ ἐναρίθμιος οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλῇ·  
οὐ μὲν πῶς πάντες βασιλεύσομεν ἐνθάδ' Ἀχαιοί·  
οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη· εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω,  
εἷς βασιλεύς, ᾧ δῶκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω  
σκήπτρόν τ' ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνά σφισι βουλεύησι.

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Whenever he encountered some *basileus*, or man of influence,  
he would stand beside him and with soft words try to restrain him:  
'Excellency! It does not become you to be frightened like any  
coward. Rather hold fast and check the rest of the people.'

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When he saw some man of the people who was shouting  
he would strike at him with his staff, and reprove him also:  
'Excellency! Sit still and listen to what others tell you,  
to those who are better men than you, you skulker and coward  
and thing of no account whatever in battle or council.  
Surely not all of us Achaeans can be as kings here.  
Lordship for many is no good thing. Let there be one ruler,  
one *basileus*, to whom the son of devious-devising Kronos  
gives the scepter and right of judgment, to watch over his people.'<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> All translations of the *Iliad* from Richmond Lattimore, *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago, 1962), unless otherwise noted.

Naturally, we cannot take Odysseus' words as a precise description of power-relations among the Achaeans; they are, after all, designed to persuade his audience. But as Scodel argues, the hierarchy he describes is not so much an invention as an exaggeration,<sup>30</sup> and the efficacy of his speech attests to its verisimilitude. As such, we may take as meaningful Odysseus' division of the army into two distinct groups: the *basileis* and the common soldiers (*laos* or *dēmos*). It is also telling that he treats these two groups so differently. "Soft words" and an encouragement to restrain the army are reserved for the *basileis*, while the troops receive blows from the scepter and a command to follow their *basileis*. A very clear dynamic thus emerges: the *basileis* are to lead, the common soldiers to obey. Of particular interest here is Odysseus' claim that the *dēmos* is "a thing of no account...[in] council." While this does not precisely match what we see throughout the *Iliad* as a whole,<sup>31</sup> it nevertheless shows that Odysseus has little regard for the soldiery's input in the "fight or go home" decision.

Of more difficult interpretation are the final lines of the passage, where Odysseus claims there should be "one ruler, one *basileus*" for all the Achaeans. Were we to take Odysseus at his word, we would understand that a strict hierarchy exists among the Greeks, with Agamemnon (presumably) at the top and all the other Achaeans subject to him. Put quite simply, this in no way conforms to what we see enacted throughout the rest of the *Iliad*.<sup>32</sup> A less literal more

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<sup>30</sup> Scodel, 2002, p. 210.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. esp. Raaflaub, 1997a, pp. 634-36.

<sup>32</sup> As for example in the other debates about whether to stay at Troy, on which see more below.



ἀλλ' ἄλλοι μενέουσι κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ 45  
 εἰς ὃ κέ περ Τροίην διαπέρομεν. εἰ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ  
 φευγόντων σὺν νηυσὶ φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν·  
 νῶϊ δ' ἐγὼ Σθέnelός τε μαχησόμεθ' εἰς ὃ κε τέκμωρ  
 Ἰλίου εὕρωμεν· σὺν γὰρ θεῶ ἐιλήλουθμεν.

Son of Atreus, I will be first to fight with your folly, 32  
 as is my right, lord, in this assembly; then do not be angered.

But if in truth your own heart is so set upon going, 42  
 go. The way is there, and next to the water are standing  
 your ships that came—so many of them!—with you from Mykenai,  
 And yet the rest of the flowing-haired Achaians will stay here 45  
 until we have sacked the city of Troy; let even these also  
 run away with their ships to the beloved land of their fathers,  
 still we two, Sthenelos and I, will fight till we witness  
 the end of Ilion; for it was with God that we made our way thither.”

Here, Diomedes insists upon his right to speak in the assembly of the Achaians,<sup>36</sup> and in order to do so, he invokes *themis* (9.33)—the “law.” Whether we are to understand this *themis* as a “divine sanction” of authority<sup>37</sup> or simply as the “social rules...within which the individual works,”<sup>38</sup> it is clear that Diomedes appeals to a widely accepted concept of his rights.<sup>39</sup>

Given the opportunity to speak, Diomedes openly questions Agamemnon’s judgment, and he does so in a manner that verges on hostility, calling Agamemnon *aphradeonti*

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<sup>36</sup> While it is true that he sets a conciliatory tone by asking Agamemnon not to become angry, as Bryan Hainsworth, *The Iliad: A Commentary* vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1993), p. 64 notes, “his words are easily referred to the events of book I where Agamemnon, θέμις...ἀγορῆ or no, could not abide the παρρησία of Achilles.” Similarly, Jasper Griffin, ed., *Homer: Iliad IX* (Oxford, 1995), p. 78.

<sup>37</sup> Mondy, 1980, p. 207. And similarly, T.A. Sinclair, *A History of Greek Political Thought* (Cleveland, 1967), pp.16-17.

<sup>38</sup> Charles Fuqua, “Proper Behavior in the *Odyssey*,” *Illinois Classical Studies* 16 (1991): p. 53.

<sup>39</sup> In fact, as is noted by Emma J. Stafford, “*Themis*: Religion and Order in the Archaic Polis,” in *The Development of the Polis in Ancient Greece*, eds. Lynette G. Mitchell and P.J. Rhodes (London, 1997), p. 158, there is some evidence that “*themis* initially signified the right that every man has to speak freely in the assembly.” In other words, Diomedes invokes a right that is virtually indisputable.

("senseless") and declaring that he will "fight" against him. In short, on the subject of whether to "fight or go home," Agamemnon's word is not final, and the other *basileis* have the ability, perhaps even the "duty,"<sup>40</sup> to challenge his authority. At the same time, by expressing his willingness to fight on his own, Diomedes concedes that he cannot force Agamemnon or the other *basileis* to stay at Troy. It is clear at this moment that while the *basileis* collectively make the decision about whether to fight or go home, no single *basileus* can make that decision for all the Achaeans.

This same dynamic is even more obvious on the next occasion in which the question is debated. In Book Fourteen, Agamemnon once again proposes to throw in the towel (*Il.* 14.64-81). This time it is Odysseus who upbraids Agamemnon for his cowardice, going so far as to say he wished that Agamemnon "directed some other unworthy army, and were not lord over us."<sup>41</sup> Odysseus' words obviously suggest that Agamemnon holds a special position among the Achaeans, but they just as obviously indicate that the rest of the *basileis* have considerable leeway when it comes to challenging Agamemnon's authority. Much like Diomedes, Odysseus shows little compunction in not only rejecting Agamemnon's proposal, but in doing so in an aggressive and even disrespectful manner. As for any input from the soldiery, this discussion

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<sup>40</sup> As Raaflaub, 1997a, p. 643, argues.

<sup>41</sup> *Il.* 14.84-85: ὠφέλλες ἀεικελίου στρατοῦ ἄλλου/σημαίνειν, μὴ δ' ἄμμιν ἀνασσέμεν. In fact, Odysseus' tone is so harsh that I.M. Hohendahl-Zoetelief, *Manners in the Homeric Epic* (Brill, 1980), p. 43 calls his speech "mutinous," and compares it to *Odyssey* 10.429-37, in which one of Odysseus' men attempts to foment a revolt by recalling Odysseus' foolish behavior in Polyphemus' cave. This comparison, however, is unwarranted, since as we have seen it is one thing for a *basileus* to challenge the judgment of another *basileus*, and another thing altogether for a common soldier to do so.

takes place in a *boulē* at which only a select few *basileis* are present. In other words, in this last instance in which the “fight or go home” question arises, the common soldiers have no voice at all.

### *The authority of the basileis and the conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles*

The authority of Homer’s *basileis* acquires further nuance in the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles that begins in Book One. Superficially at least, the possession of a woman is at the heart of their disagreement, as it is Agamemnon’s threat to “take” Briseis from Achilles that ignites the quarrel. But the words of the two heroes show that a disagreement about authority is central to the rift. Agamemnon and Achilles both describe their conflict as a sort of power-struggle, beginning with Agamemnon’s statement of intent regarding Briseis (*Il.* 1.184-87):

ἐγὼ δέ κ’ ἄγω Βρισηΐδα καλλιπάρηον  
αὐτὸς ἰὼν κλισίηνδε τὸ σὸν γέρας ὄφρ’ εὔειδης 185  
ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν, στυγέη δὲ καὶ ἄλλος  
ἴσον ἐμοὶ φάσθαι καὶ ὁμοιωθήμεναι ἄντην.

But I shall take the fair-cheeked Briseis,  
your prize, I myself going to your shelter, that you may learn well 185  
how much greater I am than you, and another man may shrink back  
from likening himself to me and contending against me.

Here, Agamemnon explicitly states that the primary reason for which he is taking Briseis is to demonstrate his superiority to Achilles and indeed the army as a whole. The term *pherteros* is a general one, and may simply denote that Agamemnon is “better” than Achilles, but the

connotation here is that Agamemnon demands the “validation of his rank and of his authority as leader.”<sup>42</sup> He explicitly states he will take Briseis in order to assert his power. Equally important is the fact that Agamemnon conceives of it not only as a punishment for Achilles’ impudence, but also as a lesson to the rest of the army, lest anyone else be similarly inclined to disrespect his authority. At the very beginning of the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon, it is already clear that a question of rank and power lies at the heart of it.

This emerges even more precisely as the quarrel reaches its climax. After Achilles responds with an angry outburst and Nestor attempts to soothe the spirits of the two heroes, both *basileis* take an unequivocal and intractable stance on the matter. Agamemnon speaks first (*Il.* 1.287-89):

ἀλλ’ ὄδ’ ἀνήρ ἐθέλει περὶ πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων,  
πάντων μὲν κρατέειν ἐθέλει, πάντεσσι δ’ ἀνάσσειν,  
πᾶσι δὲ σημαίνειν, ἅ τιν’ οὐ πείσεσθαι ὄϊω·

Yet here is a man who wishes to be above all others,  
who wishes to hold power over all, and to be lord of  
all, and give them [all] their orders, yet I think one will not obey him.

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<sup>42</sup> Donlan, 1982, p. 162; similarly, Joseph A. Russo, “Homer against His Tradition,” *Arion* 7 (1968): p. 284, suggests that *pherteros* here should be translated as “more powerful.” *Contra* see Kirk, 1985, p. 72, who states that “[a]ttempts to give φέρτερος a more specific meaning...are misguided.” But as Simon Pulleyn, ed., *Homer: Iliad I* (Oxford, 2000), p. 174 correctly points out, “Nestor expands on [Agamemnon’s comment] at 281 saying of Agamemnon ὁ γε φέρτερος ἐστίν, ἐπεὶ πλεόνεσσιν ἀνάσσει.” Later on, the “political” basis of Agamemnon’s point of view emerges more clearly in an analogous declaration of his in *Il.* 9.160: καὶ μοι ὑποστήτω ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι (“and let him yield place to me, inasmuch as I am the kinglier”). Here, Agamemnon restates his intention of showing himself to be superior to Achilles, but with an important change in the formulation: he is not simply *pherteros*, but indeed “*basileuteros*.” His aim here is fundamentally the same as it is in Book One—to prove his superiority—but the language in this instance confirms that he is specifically concerned with the matter of his authority and Achilles’ obedience. (It is a small point, but perhaps worth noting, that these two lines are the only instances in which we find the combination ὅσσον + comparative adjective + εἰμι in all of the *Iliad*.)

Agamemnon clearly interprets Achilles' behavior as a challenge to his authority, and believes that Achilles wishes to usurp his position and "to be above all others." In fact, he is so concerned with this prospect that he repeats the sentiment a full four times. The source of Agamemnon's fear could hardly be clearer, and he caps off this eloquent statement by proclaiming his remedy for the situation, namely his own refusal to yield to Achilles in this matter.<sup>43</sup>

Achilles' sentiments are remarkably similar (*Il.* 1.293-96):

ἦ γὰρ κεν δειλός τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς καλεοίμην  
εἰ δὴ σοὶ πᾶν ἔργον ὑπεῖξομαι ὅττι κεν εἴπῃς·  
ἄλλοισιν δὴ ταῦτ' ἐπιτέλλεο, μὴ γὰρ ἔμοιγε  
σήμαιν'· οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγ' ἔτι σοὶ πείσεσθαι οἴω. 295

So must I be called of no account and a coward  
If I must carry out every order you may happen to give me.  
Tell other men to do these things, but give me no more 295  
commands, since I for my part have no intention to obey you.

Achilles actually reclaims two of Agamemnon's expressions from the preceding passage (vv. 289 and 296: σημαίνειν and πείσεσθαι οἴω), so it is obvious that Achilles sees the quarrel revolving around the same questions. Naturally, his own perspective is diametrically opposed to Agamemnon's: rather than seeing himself as a threat to Agamemnon's authority, he looks at Agamemnon's abuse of authority as a threat to him. More specifically, he fears he may lose his

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<sup>43</sup> Agamemnon rather coyly suggests that someone else will refuse to obey Achilles, but it is fairly obvious he is actually talking about himself. Cf. Pulleyn, ed., 2000, p. 202.

status among the Achaeans: if he simply backs down to Agamemnon here, he will become a nobody, akin to a common soldier.

The words of the two principle actors here demonstrate that the quarrel between them is a veritable power-struggle, with neither Agamemnon nor Achilles capable of yielding without losing face. Agamemnon prevails, at least in the sense that he can claim Briseis as his own,<sup>44</sup> but we should note that every other element of the episode points to the limits of Agamemnon's authority. Achilles does in fact have a choice in the matter, for he can choose to either surrender Briseis or kill Agamemnon,<sup>45</sup> and it is only thanks to Athena's intervention that Agamemnon survives the quarrel.<sup>46</sup> When Achilles publicly states his intention to let Briseis go, he qualifies it by saying that he does so only because "you [plural] who gave her take her away."<sup>47</sup> He thus implicates the entire army in the decision to seize Briseis, but this is less an affirmation of the army's authority<sup>48</sup> than a refusal to cede openly to Agamemnon.<sup>49</sup> In reality, Achilles yields

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<sup>44</sup> For Donlan, 1982, p. 162, this is evidence that "Agamemnon can coerce, of course, because he is politically more powerful than Achilles." Similarly, see Pietro Pucci, *The Song of the Sirens: Essays on Homer* (Lanham MD, 1998), p. 183.

<sup>45</sup> Donlan, 1982, p. 162, doubts that killing Agamemnon represents a "realistic" choice, but the possibility is realistic enough that Athena steps in to prevent Achilles from doing so (*Il.* 1.188-222).

<sup>46</sup> E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Boston, 1951), p. 14, has argued that Athena does not actually appear in person, but that she is rather a "projection...of an inward monition." *Contra*, see esp. J.T. Hooker, "The Visit of Athena to Achilles in *Iliad I*," *Emerita* 58 (1990): pp. 21-32. Hooker argues that, insofar as Homer frequently shows his heroes coming to decisions on their own, there is no real reason why Homer should have included the visitation unless we are to understand it as real.

<sup>47</sup> *Il.* 1.299: ἐπεὶ μὲν ἀφέλεσθ' ἔγε δόντες. I have modified the word order in Lattimore's translation here.

<sup>48</sup> Few commentators have taken seriously Achilles' claim that the army is fully responsible for the distribution of war booty. A.W.H. Adkins, "Values, Goals, and Emotions in the *Iliad*," *Classical Philology* 77 (1982): p. 300, calls this a "convenient fiction," made necessary by the fact that although "[w]e know...that Achilles has yielded to the two goddesses...to the others present it must appear that Achilles has backed down before Agamemnon" (p. 297). On a similar note, see Taplin, 1992, p. 65. Kirk, 1985, p. 83, is less sanguine about Achilles' reasoning here, but agrees that

neither to the army nor to Agamemnon but instead to the authority of Athena and Hera (whom Athena represents), since “it is necessary that [he] obey” the goddesses (*Il.* 1.216: *χωρὴ μὲν...εἰζύσασθαι*). Finally, Achilles ends his short speech by threatening to kill Agamemnon should he try to seize anything else (*Il.* 1.297-303)<sup>50</sup>—a clear sign of insubordination if ever there was one—and withdraws with his Myrmidons until Book Nineteen. Once Achilles has declared that he will no longer “obey” Agamemnon, Agamemnon has no ability to command either him or his Myrmidon army. What emerges from this quarrel, then, is that Agamemnon has little or no direct power over Achilles, and none over the Myrmidons.<sup>51</sup>

No other party, neither the *basileis* nor the common soldiers, can either compel one of the two heroes to yield or force a reconciliation between them. Nestor’s attempt to do so is an unmitigated failure (*Il.* 1.247-84),<sup>52</sup> and no other *basileus* tries to intervene in Book One—not

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his implication of the Achaeans is “contrive[d].” Indeed, there is every indication that the decision to take Briseis is Agamemnon’s and Agamemnon’s alone, and it seems as if the army’s involvement in the distribution of war booty is symbolic at most: cf. Van Wees, 1992, pp. 299-310; and Donlan, 1992. *Contra*, to a certain extent, see Allan and Cairns, 2011, p. 115: “[e]ven if *de facto* Agamemnon wields considerable influence over the distribution (9.328-34), it is stressed repeatedly in Book 1 that *de iure* distribution is not the king’s prerogative, but something that he does on behalf of the community.”

<sup>49</sup> Adkins, 1982, pp. 300-01; Taplin, 1992, p. 58; Donna F. Wilson, *Ransom, Revenge, and Heroic Identity in the Iliad* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 64.

<sup>50</sup> Kirk, 1985, p. 83, argues that this is an “imagined case” and thus doubt the seriousness of the threat, but I see no evidence within the text itself that we should not take Achilles’ words at face-value.

<sup>51</sup> Generally speaking, I follow the scholarly consensus in this regard. Cf. Donlan, 1982, p. 162; James F. McGlew, “Royal Power and the Achaean Assembly at *Iliad* 2.84-393” *Classical Antiquity* 8 (1989): pp. 283-95; Hammer, 2002, pp. 85-86. Raaflaub, 1988, astutely points out that the delicacy of the situation, in which “the stronger has to subordinate himself to the more powerful...require[s] tact and mutual respect.” Lacking both these qualities, Agamemnon has no means to convince Achilles.

<sup>52</sup> On which see esp. Christensen, 2007, pp. 180-97.

even as Achilles begins to draw his sword in order to kill Agamemnon (*Il.* 1.194).<sup>53</sup> The *dēmos*, for their part, make no attempt whatsoever to interfere. Donlan argues that their passivity is due to the fact that they do not have a stake in the argument. But while “their individual shares of the spoils are unaffected,”<sup>54</sup> the dispute is of grave concern for them. Achilles is explicit about this when he says that “the sons of the Achaians, all of them,” will come to rue his absence, “when in their number before man-slaughtering Hektor they drop and die.”<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, once the power-struggle between Agamemnon and Achilles has broken out, no other can intercede.

All this is confirmed in Book Nine, shortly after the Greek *basileis* have persuaded Agamemnon to remain at Troy to fight. In light of the heavy losses that the Greek forces have taken, Nestor now suggests that Agamemnon attempt to pacify Achilles by plying him “with kind gifts and soothing words.”<sup>56</sup> Agamemnon agrees to follow Nestor’s advice and to send an “embassy” consisting of Odysseus, Phoenix, and Ajax to convey a peace offering. For the first time it appears that other *basileis* may be able to bring about a reconciliation between the feuding heroes, and indeed the gifts with which Agamemnon would lavish Achilles are

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<sup>53</sup> Hartmut Erbse, *Untersuchungen zur Funktion der Götter im homerischen Epos* (Berlin, 1986), p. 139, argues that Athena intervenes at that moment precisely because none of the other *basileis* can.

<sup>54</sup> Donlan, 1982, p. 162.

<sup>55</sup> *Il.* 1.240-43: ἦ ποτ’ Ἀχιλλῆος ποθὴ ἴξεται υἷας Ἀχαιῶν/σύμπαντας...εὔτ’ ἂν πολλοὶ ὑφ’ Ἑκτορος ἀνδροφόνιοι/ θνήσκοντες πίπτωσι. Achilles’ prediction is not inaccurate.

<sup>56</sup> *Il.* 9.113: δῶροισὶν τ’ ἀγανοῖσιν ἔπεσσί τε μελιχίοισι. Translation by author.

abundant: tripods, gold, captive women, seven citadels over which to rule,<sup>57</sup> a daughter's hand in marriage, and even Achilles' prized Briseis, untouched, as Agamemnon swears (cf. *Il.* 9.121-56). Instead of soothing words, however, Agamemnon ends his message on a familiar note (*Il.* 9.160-61):

καί μοι ὑποστήτω ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι  
ἢδ' ὅσσον γενεῇ προγενέστερος εὐχομαι εἶναι.

And let him yield place to me, inasmuch as I am the kinglier  
and inasmuch as I can call myself born the elder.

Agamemnon's feelings have changed very little with respect to his stance in Book One. Just as it had at the beginning, the question of his authority—his “kingliness”—takes pride of place in his understanding of the quarrel. And despite Nestor's sage advice, Agamemnon is still intent on demonstrating his superiority to Achilles.

In truth, Agamemnon's words simply anticipate the message his gifts will convey. As numerous scholars have noted, if Achilles accepts this “generosity,” he will essentially become Agamemnon's “dependent.”<sup>58</sup> In both word and deed Agamemnon eschews Nestor's advice

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<sup>57</sup> As is noted by Jonathan M. Hall, “Politics and Greek Myth,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology*, ed. Roger D. Woodard (Cambridge, 2007), p. 335, these citadels do not seem to be Agamemnon's to give, seeing as he is the king of Mycenae and not Sparta. It is likely that these lines reflect a separate tradition according to which Agamemnon was in fact a Spartan king.

<sup>58</sup> James Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: The Tragedy of Hector* (Durham NC, 1994), p. 16; T.O. Beidelman, “Agonistic Exchange: Homeric Reciprocity and the Heritage of Simmel and Mauss,” *Cultural Anthropology* 4 (1989): pp. 237-38; Walter Donlan, “Duelling with Gifts in the *Iliad*: As the Audience Saw It,” *Colby Quarterly* 29 (1993): pp. 155-72; Wilson, 2002, pp. 71-96. Beidelman perhaps puts it best (p. 238): “[t]he lands would possibly place Achilleus in subservience to Agamemnon; the [marriage to his] daughter would certainly do so. This is underscored by Agamemnon remarking that no payments of *hedna* [“bride-price”] need to be paid...such payments were vital in establishing the parity of affines, so that Achilleus would be receiving a binding, demeaning favor.”

and reveals that his true priority is still imposing his authority. Nor is this lost on Achilles. Despite Odysseus' elision of Agamemnon's parting words—itsself an implicit recognition that the power-struggle is the locus of the dispute—Achilles rejects Agamemnon's offer out of hand (*Il.* 9.307-97). Phoenix and Ajax also try to persuade Achilles to return to the fold,<sup>59</sup> but with no success. Their failure again shows that the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon is immune to the intervention of other *basileis*. Such is the diagnosis, at any rate, offered by Diomedes when he hears of the embassy's outcome: “[h]e will fight again, whenever the time comes/that the heart in his body urges him to, and the god drives him.”<sup>60</sup> (*Il.* 9.702-03). In the meantime, the rest of the Achaeans can only stand by.

Achilles' eventual conciliation with Agamemnon proves Diomedes' point.<sup>61</sup> Ultimately, it is only through the death of Patroclus, and the consequent transferal of Achilles' anger from

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<sup>59</sup> Phoenix by arguing that Achilles stands to lose a great deal of *kleos* and *timē* for refusing to fight (*Il.* 9.434-605), and Ajax on the basis of friendship (*philotēs*; *Il.* 9.624-42). Achilles modifies his position ever so slightly (he will no longer set sail in the morning, as he first threatened), but he still rejects any possibility of returning to fight before Hector reaches his ships (*Il.* 9.650-52). On these exchanges, see esp. Adkins, 1982; and Wilson, 2002, pp. 96-108.

<sup>60</sup> *Il.* 9.702-03: τότε δ' αὐτε μαχήσεται ὅπποτε κέν μιν/θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἀνώγη καὶ θεὸς ὄρησῃ.

<sup>61</sup> For the sake of brevity, I will pass over all too cursorily the so-called reconciliation between Achilles and Agamemnon, a fascinating episode which can be rightly said to take place between Books Nineteen and Twenty-Three. For more on this, see Leslie Collins, *Studies in Characterization in the Iliad* (Frankfurt, 1989), pp. 103-05; J.T. Hooker, “Gifts in Homer,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 36 (1989): pp. 85-86 (though Hooker insists—justifiably I believe—that there is no true “reconciliation” between Agamemnon and Achilles); Taplin, 1990, pp. 75-79; Mark W. Edwards, *The Iliad: A Commentary* vol. 5 (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 234-35 and ff.; Taplin, 1992, pp. 203-12; Donlan, 1993, pp. 168-73; Richard Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual: Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City-State* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 159-64; N. Postlethwaite, “Agamemnon Best of Spearmen,” *Phoenix* 49 (1995): pp. 95-103; Deborah Beck, *Homeric Conversation* (Washington, D.C., 2005), pp. 221-28; Christensen, 2007, pp. 466-511; Barker, 2009, pp. 78-88.

Agamemnon to Hector,<sup>62</sup> that the two *basileis* find a way to set aside their differences. Even then, Homer emphasizes the Achaeans' inability to force the issue, for it is Achilles' mother Thetis, rather than any mortal, who urges Achilles to make peace (*Il.* 19.34-36). At this point in the epic, it is already a foregone conclusion that Achilles will rejoin the fold. Nevertheless, it is significant that, as Athena had done in Book One, it is once again a goddess who is able to sway Achilles' heart: even though, as Achilles points out, many Achaeans have died and the rest will "too long remember this quarrel" (*Il.* 19.64: δηρὸν ἐμῆς καὶ σῆς ἔριδος μνήσεσθαι), it is only the intervention of Achilles' divine mother that persuades him to put an end to the conflict.<sup>63</sup> The reconciliation, like the conflict itself, shows that the Achaean army and the other *basileis* are passive spectators in the Achilles/Agamemnon crisis.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. Achilles speaking of Hector in *Il.* 20.425-26: ἐγγύς ἀνήρ ὃς ἐμόν γε μάλιστ' ἔσεμάσσατο θυμόν,/ὄς μοι ἑταῖρον ἔπεφνε τετιμένον ("Here is the man who beyond all others has troubled my anger,/who slaughtered my beloved companion.").

<sup>63</sup> This point is often overlooked, but see Hooker, 1989, p. 85. *Contra* see Edwards, 1991, p. 238: "Thetis is made to propose the assembly and public renunciation of Akhilleus' μῆνις because...it would be implausible to have the idea enter the hero's mind in any other way."

<sup>64</sup> Odysseus is at least able to overcome Achilles' indifference and insist that Agamemnon's gifts be presented in public, and that the Achaeans take a meal together (*Il.* 19.154-237), but this is simply a matter of ensuring that the proper rituals be carried out in the matter of the (already decided) reconciliation (cf. Postlethwaite, 1995, pp. 100-01).

## 2. *Conflict and Authority in the IA: (Distorted) Echoes of Homer*

As we have seen, the structures of power and authority in the *Iliad* are revealed most prominently and extensively through the debate over whether to continue the war and by the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles. In the *IA*, the question of Iphigenia's sacrifice leads directly to analogous controversies, and like Homer before him, Euripides uses these issues to provide a sense of the political landscape at Aulis. What's more, in reworking this Homeric material as a means to approach contemporary political questions, Euripides actually follows a tragic predecessor. In his *Myrmidons*, Aeschylus had also taken up the theme of Achilles' contentious withdrawal from the army at Troy in order to examine the potential of contemporary "social and political practices" to resolve conflicts between aristocratic individuals and the collective.<sup>65</sup> As such, his audience was in all likelihood well-versed not only in the *Iliad*, but indeed in tragedy's ability to reconsider Iliadic questions in a different, more contemporary light.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Pantelis Michelakis, *Achilles in Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 22-57 (quote on p. 24).

<sup>66</sup> For the audience's familiarity with the *Iliad*, see the Introduction, pp. 24-25. On the possibility that late fifth-century audiences had the opportunity to see reperformances of Aeschylus' plays, see the Introduction, pp. 16-24.

*Echoes of Homer amidst the suggestion of change*

As Agamemnon explains the tragic dilemma he faces in the prologue, Euripides wastes little time in alerting his audience to the fact that he too will take up the question of power and authority among the Achaeans at Aulis (IA 87-100):

ἤθροισμένου δὲ καὶ ξυνεστῶτος στρατοῦ  
ἤμεσθ' ἀπλοῖα χρώμενοι κατ' Αὐλίδα.  
Κάλχας δ' ὁ μάντις ἀπορία κεχρημένοις

ἀνεῖλεν Ἰφιγένειαν ἦν ἔσπειρ' ἐγὼ 90  
Ἀρτέμιδι θῦσαι τῇ τόδ' οἰκούση πέδον,  
καὶ πλοῦν τ' ἔσεσθαι καὶ κατασκαφὰς  
Φρυγῶν

θύσασι, μὴ θύσασι δ' οὐκ εἶναι τάδε.  
κλύων δ' ἐγὼ ταῦτ', ὀρθίω κηρύγματι  
Ταλθύβιον εἶπον πάντ' ἀφιέναι στρατόν, 95

ὡς οὐποτ' ἂν τλὰς θυγατέρα κτανεῖν ἐμήν.

οὐδὲ μ' ἀδελφὸς πάντα προσφέρων λόγον  
ἔπεισε τλῆναι δεινά. κὰν δέλτου πτυχαῖς  
γράψας ἔπεμψα πρὸς δάμαρτα τὴν ἐμήν  
πέμπειν Ἀχιλλεῖ θυγατέρ' ὡς γαμουμένην 100

Now that the army is mustered and arranged  
we sit idle at Aulis, suffering for a lack of winds.  
The prophet Calchas told us, in our  
consternation,

that if we sacrificed my daughter Iphigenia  
to Artemis who dwells upon this plain,  
we would attain our journey and the destruction  
of Phrygia;

but if we did not sacrifice her, those things  
would not come to be. When I heard this,  
straightaway I told Talthybius to send home the  
army,  
as I could never bring myself to kill my  
daughter.

But my brother brought forth every argument,  
and persuaded me to dare terribly: so I wrote a  
letter and sent it to my wife, asking her to send  
our daughter here to wed Achilles.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> It must be noted that the *IA*'s prologue, as it is transmitted by the manuscript tradition, is perhaps the most problematic passage of a text that is full of difficulties. Its format is odd, to say the least: the play begins with a dialogue in anapaests between Agamemnon and an old slave (1-48); continues with a monologue in trimeters spoken by Agamemnon (49-114); and then returns to anapaestic dialogue in the final lines (115-63). Beyond that, it presents numerous inconsistencies and occasionally awkward diction. For all these reasons, the authenticity of the prologue has been the subject of endless discussions that have, alas, provided no perfect solution to the many questions raised by the text. Despite these uncertainties, I have chosen to discuss these lines here because we may at least be sure that the original production of the *IA* contained a prologue, and that this prologue would have served to introduce the audience to the main themes and problems of the tragedy. Based on this, we may assume that the "original" prologue included something like these lines, insofar as they are compatible with what we see in the rest of the tragedy. (The picture they present is maintained until the middle of the first episode, at which point there is an abrupt reversal that is best explained if the tragedy had thus far presented the situation as Agamemnon does here.) For more on the "authenticity" of the prologue, see esp.: Page, 1934, pp. 131-40; C.W. Willink, "The Prologue of *Iphigenia at Aulis*," *The Classical Quarterly* 21 (1971): pp. 343-64; Bernard Knox, "Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulide* 1-163 (in that order)," *Yale Classical Studies* 22 (1972): pp. 239-61; David Bain, "The Prologues of Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Aulis*,"

It is immediately clear what the stakes are for Agamemnon's choice: the Greek expedition to Troy, and thus the Trojan War itself, requires that he sacrifice Iphigenia; if he does not, the Achaeans will return home. Already in the prologue, then, Euripides poses a question similar to that which Homer raises in Books One, Nine, and Fourteen of the *Iliad*: will the Greeks bring war to the Trojans? The Homeric background of the issue is further emphasized by the characters whom Agamemnon mentions: Talthybius and Calchas have only minor roles in the *Iliad*,<sup>68</sup> but Menelaus is a major character, and Agamemnon and Odysseus are central players in the debate over whether to remain at Troy. Just as intriguingly, the dynamic of the decision-making process is evocative of Books Nine and Fourteen in the *Iliad*, in which Agamemnon first suggests disbanding the army only to be dissuaded by a fellow *basileus*.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, there is no mention whatsoever of the Achaean army as a whole, which suggests that the soldiers at Aulis have no say in the matter. Superficially, at least, this passage suggests a situation and a hierarchy at Aulis that is similar to the one we see in the *Iliad*.

As Agamemnon continues, however, cracks appear in the Homeric façade (IA 106-07):

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*The Classical Quarterly* 27 (1977a): pp. 10-26; Helene P. Foley, *Ritual Irony: Poetry and Sacrifice in Euripides* (Ithaca, 1985), pp. 102-105; Walter Stockert, *Euripides: Iphigenie in Aulis* vol. 1 (Vienna, 1992), pp. 66-79; Kovacs, 2003, pp. 80-83.

<sup>68</sup> Though both are involved in the beginning of the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles: Calchas is the prophet who tells Agamemnon he must give back Chryses' daughter in order to end the plague that Apollo has set upon the Greeks (*Il.* 1.92-100), and it is the loss of this war-prize that prompts Agamemnon to take Briseis from Achilles. Talthybius, conversely, is the herald whom Agamemnon sends to collect Briseis (*Il.* 1.320-56).

<sup>69</sup> Here it is Menelaus, whereas in Homer it is Diomedes (Book Nine) and Odysseus (Book Fourteen).

μόνοι δ' Ἀχαιῶν ἴσμεν ὡς ἔχει τάδε  
Κάλχας Ὀδυσσεὺς Μενέλεώς θ'...

We alone of the Achaeans know how things  
stand, Calchas, Odysseus, Menelaus, [and I].<sup>70</sup>

These lines represent a substantial innovation to the picture of decision-making that Homer provides: according to Agamemnon, not only have the common soldiers been excluded from the debate about whether to “fight or go home,” so too have the majority of the *basileis*. Perhaps most surprisingly, neither Achilles, who would seem to have a significant stake in the affair, nor Nestor, whose voice is always heard in the Homeric councils, has been apprised of the situation. Instead, the Achaean leadership board has dwindled to a paltry four members. Calchas’ role here is particular notable: in the *Iliad*, Calchas had needed to ask Achilles for protection before delivering the bad news to Agamemnon about Chryses’ daughter (*Il.* 1.74-83); at Aulis, however, he seems to have received a substantial promotion, and is a virtual peer of Agamemnon and Odysseus. Even more intriguingly, his prophecy is known only by this restricted group of *basileis*, a fact which leaves the decision entirely in their hands.<sup>71</sup> Given what

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<sup>70</sup> These lines are almost certainly corrupted, and possibly interpolated (cf. esp. Bain, 1977a, pp. 23-24; the “impossible omission of ἐγώ as part subject of ἴσμεν in 106” is especially disturbing). Nevertheless, the other episodes of the tragedy present the situation in this very light, so unless we are to delete virtually the entirety of the first episode, as well as a good portion of the third (as does Kovacs, 2003), we must admit that the information given here is accurate, and it thus very likely that it was presented to the audience in the prologue.

<sup>71</sup> Willink, 1971, and Kovacs, 2003, have both insisted that the “secret prophecy” motif is an invention by a later (probably 4<sup>th</sup>-century) “reviser” of the *IA*. While it is impossible to rule out this possibility, the argumentation developed by Willink and Kovacs is almost as problematic as the text of the *IA* itself. Willink, for example, contends that the prophecy was public on the grounds that “[f]or the story, a public oracle is clearly more portent than a confidential one, as intensifying Agamemnon’s predicament (especially in this democratic army)” (p. 362). Setting aside the fact that this a subjective interpretation of the drama’s aesthetics, it is hard to see why Agamemnon’s predicament is more “intense” if the “democratic army,” which at the end of the play will force Agamemnon to sacrifice Iphigenia, knows about the prophecy from the get-go. After all, if such a powerful army knew of the prophecy from the beginning, wherein would Agamemnon’s predicament lie? Kovacs, for his part, argues that “neither in Homer nor elsewhere in tragedy are important prophecies...delivered, as it were, behind closed doors, and one would not expect them to be in our play either” (p. 78). This line of reasoning underestimates the originality

we see here, it appears that the make-up of Achaean leadership at Aulis is substantially more exclusive than in Homer's epic, and the decision-making process seems to have been radically altered.

Moreover, we soon learn that Agamemnon intends to send a slave to Clytemnestra with a second letter, this time advising her to stay at home (*IA* 107-23). Such an act would constitute a massive innovation in both literary and political terms: on the one hand, by writing this letter Agamemnon is attempting to render the Trojan War impossible, and to create a world in which the *Iliad* does not exist; at the same time, he would appropriate the power of judgment exclusively for himself, determining on his own whether Iphigenia will die and the Trojan War will occur. As such, the secret letter constitutes a significant adjustment to the dynamics of decision-making among the Achaeans.

Shortly thereafter, Menelaus arrives and seizes the letter from Agamemnon's slave.<sup>72</sup> As one might expect, he is rather displeased to discover that Agamemnon has gone behind his back. Menelaus takes the issue up with Agamemnon, and in the debate which ensues questions

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of Euripides' approach to prophecy in his tragedies (a disappointingly under-discussed topic, but cf. esp. *IT* 15-24, and *Hel.* 744-51, both of which deal specifically with Calchas). In short, neither of these arguments is unassailable, and they are certainly not convincing enough to call for the excision of two lines, the authenticity of which is otherwise unquestioned (i.e. *IA* 518-19, which I will discuss in some detail below). For more on the subject, and in particular Kovacs' approach to it, see Sean Alexander Gurd, *Iphigenias at Aulis: Textual Multiplicity, Radical Philology* (Ithaca, 2005), pp. 139-45.

<sup>72</sup> Here too Euripides does not miss a chance to emulate Homer: in a move reminiscent of Odysseus' assault on Thersites in Book Two of the *Iliad*, Menelaus threatens to "bloody" the old slave's head with his scepter. Cf. *IA* 311: σκήπτρω τάχ' ἄρα σὸν καθαμάξω κάρα (*I'll bloody your head with my scepter*) and *Il.* 2.265-66: ὦς ἄρ' ἔφη, σκήπτρω δὲ μετάρφενον ἠδὲ καὶ ὤμω/πλήξεν (*"So [Odysseus] spoke and dashed the scepter against [Thersites'] back and shoulder"*). Luschnig, 1988, p. 88, also notes this allusion.

of power and authority come fully to the foreground. Menelaus is the first to speak, and he delivers a harsh appraisal of Agamemnon's poor leadership. He begins with a general critique of "inconsistent minds,"<sup>73</sup> and then uses Agamemnon's behavior as an example (IA 337-44):

οἷσθ', ὅτ' ἐσπούδαζες ἄρχειν Δαναΐδαις πρὸς Ἴλιον,  
τῶ δοκεῖν μὲν οὐχὶ χρήζων, τῶ δὲ βούλεσθαι θέλων,  
ὡς ταπεινὸς ἦσθα, πάσης δεξιᾶς προσθιγγάνων  
καὶ θύρας ἔχων ἀκλήστους τῶ θέλοντι δημοτῶν  
καὶ διδοῦς πρόσρησιν ἐξῆς πᾶσι — κεῖ μὴ τις θέλοι —  
τοῖς τρόποις ζητῶν πρίασθαι τὸ φιλότιμον ἐκ μέσου;  
καῖτ', ἐπεὶ κατέσχεσ ἀρχάς, μεταβαλὼν ἄλλους τρόπους  
τοῖς φίλοισιν οὐκέτ' ἦσθα τοῖς πρὶν ὡς πρόσθεν φίλος,

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You remember when you were eager to lead the Danaans to Ilium,  
wishing at once to seem willing yet not covetous—  
how humble you were! Taking each man's hand,  
leaving your door open to any common man who wished, 340  
and time again giving all a chance to speak—even those who did not wish to—  
striving in this way to buy the office<sup>74</sup> from the middle class?<sup>75</sup>  
But when you'd won the command, you changed your ways  
and were no longer friendly as before to your friends.

Menelaus' point is that Agamemnon is an inconsistent leader, but he could have made this argument more easily by simply pointing out his brother's change of mind concerning Iphigenia. Instead, Menelaus embarks on a digression about Agamemnon's actions before the

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<sup>73</sup> IA 334: νοῦς δέ γ' οὐ βέβαιος ἄδικον κτήμα ("an inconsistent mind is an unjust possession").

<sup>74</sup> Walter Stockert, *Euripide: Iphigenie in Aulis* vol. 2 (Vienna, 1992), p. 294, suggests that the best way to translate *philotimon* here is as "office" or "position" (in the German: "Ehrenstellung" or "Amt").

<sup>75</sup> While this translation may seem anachronistic, the idea conveyed is that Agamemnon wishes to buy his office by winning over the "middle," and the term used (*mesos*) is the same one that Euripides gives Theseus in his famous discussion of the three "classes" of citizens (E. *Supp.* 238-49; v. 244: ἡ'ν μέσῳ). Ann N. Michelini, "Political Themes in Euripides' *Suppliants*," *American Journal of Philology* 115 (1994): p. 226, describes this group as "a class that ideally would intervene between the quarrelling ranks of the wealthy and the poor as a stabilizing 'middle.'"

tragedy. We may conclude that this account is included not for its rhetorical effect, but rather for the other information it conveys.

The crux of Menelaus' report is that Agamemnon has conducted a campaign to be chosen as the leader of the Achaean army. Such an event appears nowhere in the *Iliad*, and shows that the situation at Aulis is at least in some ways similar to that of fifth-century Athens.<sup>76</sup> The target demographic of Agamemnon's campaign confirms this. According to Menelaus, Agamemnon has relied on the support of the common soldiers—the *mesos*—in order to win the generalship. This last notion is particularly inconceivable in the world of Homer, where Agamemnon is granted his privileged position simply because "he rules over more men."<sup>77</sup> But it would have been familiar to much of Euripides' audience, for the Athenian *dēmos* elected ten *stratēgoi* annually, and at times may even have chosen specific generals for specific expeditions.<sup>78</sup> As Menelaus describes the proceedings at Aulis, the world of the tragedy begins to sharply resemble that of Euripides' audience.

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<sup>76</sup> François Jouan, ed., *Euripide: Iphigénie à Aulis* (Paris, 1983), p. 131.

<sup>77</sup> As Nestor reminds Achilles at *Il.* 1.281: ὁ γε φέρετός ἐστιν ἐπεὶ πλεόνεσσιν ἀνάσσει.

<sup>78</sup> We know all too little about how Athenian *stratēgoi* were chosen, and hear nothing, to my knowledge, of candidates campaigning (though we do hear of candidates: cf. Dem. 18.285). On the question in general, cf. Marcel Piérart, "À propos de l'élection des stratèges athéniennes," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 98 (1974): pp. 125-46; P.J. Rhodes, "Notes on Voting in Athens," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 22 (1981): pp. 125-32; and Debra Hamel, *Athenian Generals: Military Authority in the Classical Period* (Leiden, 1998), pp. 14-23. Regarding the possibility that Athenians held special elections in which they would choose one or more generals for specific expeditions, cf. *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 93b 2-3 (= Meiggs/Lewis 78b; cited by Rhodes, 1981, p. 130); and Hamel, pp. 15-19.

This is confirmed by the term with which Menelaus describes Agamemnon's objective: *to philotimon* (IA 342). Most literally, *philotimia*<sup>79</sup> means a "love of honor," but it was often used to denote individual ambition or even political office more generally. Even though Homer's heroes were quite fond of *timē* and, as we have seen, were not averse to exercising power, the term *philotimia* appears nowhere in Homer's epics. By the end of the fifth-century, on the other hand, it was commonly used in the context of the social and political arena of democratic Athens, and it was laden with both positive and negative connotations. Thucydides' Pericles, for example, comforts the parents of the fallen Athenian soldiers by reminding them that *philotimia* alone is "ageless" (ἀγήρων), and that "to be honored" (το τιμᾶσθαι) is that which renders old age most enjoyable (2.44.4). A short time later, however, Thucydides laments that Pericles' successors were guilty of following their "personal *philotimia*" (2.65.7: τὰς ἰδίας φιλοτιμίας), which caused them to adopt policies that were ruinous for the city. What emerges from these (and other) analyses is that *philotimia* could be useful when applied to the public good, harmful when it was limited to the realm of personal ambition, and above all that it was a topic of great interest and relevance to fifth-century Athenians.<sup>80</sup> The portrait of Agamemnon

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<sup>79</sup> *Philotimia* and *to philotimon* are fundamentally equivalent. Cf. Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* vol. 1 (Oxford, 1991), p. 313.

<sup>80</sup> The subject of *philotimia* warrants more attention than I can provide it here, but cf. David Whitehead, "Competitive Outlay and Community Profit: Φιλοτιμία in Democratic Athens," *Classica et Mediaevalia* 34 (1983): p. 59, who goes so far as to say that *philotimia* was "a basic feature of the society and economy of democratic Athens." Similarly, Ricky K. Green, *Democratic Virtue in the Trial and Death of Socrates: Resistance to Imperialism in Classical Athens* (New York, 2001), p. 42, argues that "[p]hilotimia in fifth century Athens was nothing less than intense contest for leadership of the polis." This competition had both positive and negative connotations. By the mid-fourth century, it seems to have become a less controversial topic, as it most often referred to the private outlay of expenditures that were crucial to

seeking to “buy” *philotimia* raises grave doubts about the quality of his leadership, and it leaves no question that he is more akin to a contemporary Athenian politician rather than a Homeric general.

Nevertheless, the question of Iphigenia’s sacrifice seems as if it will be decided by the two men on-stage, with the army and the rest of the *basileis* as passive as they were in Homer. Menelaus’ arguments are met by a strong response from Agamemnon, who points out that it is hardly fair that he should have to kill his daughter in order for Menelaus to salvage his “bad marriage” (*IA* 389: κακὸν λέχος). Neither man is willing to budge, and we find ourselves at an impasse. Indeed, if one looks past the brief reference to Agamemnon’s political campaign, the tragic *agōn* is in many ways analogous to the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon in Book One of the *Iliad*: both debates revolves around a woman’s fate; in each case, one *basileus* sees himself forced to give up *his* woman (i.e. Briseis/Iphigenia) to make up for the woman that a rival has lost (Chryseis/Helen); both Agamemnon (*IA* 396-99) and Achilles (*Il.* 1.152-60) justifiably protest that the whole reason for the war—the recovery of Helen—is one that doesn’t truly concern them; and above all, just as in the *Iliad*, the quarrel between Menelaus and

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the functioning of the *polis* (e.g. covering military expenses; for a list of examples, cf. K.J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* [Oxford, 1974], pp. 230-33; for the fourth-century flowering of the rhetoric of *philotimia*, cf. Whitehead, pp. 59-62). In the fifth century, however, it appears that feelings about *philotimia* were more fraught. Pindar, in perhaps the earliest known use of the term, says that “in *poleis* men are all too interested in *philotimia*, [and] they cause obvious suffering” (fr. 210: ἄγαν φιλοτιμίαν μνώμενοι ἐν πόλεσιν ἄνδρες· ἰστᾶσιν ἄλγος ἐμφανές). Euripides calls it “the worst of *daimones*” (*Ph.* 532: τῆς κακίστης δαμόνων). And the subject of *philotimia* was controversial enough that Protagoras dedicated an entire treatise to it (*Περί φιλοτιμίας*, mentioned in Diog. Laert. 9.55, cited by Whitehead, p. 57).

Agamemnon appears to be an irresolvable conflict. For all intents and purposes, the situation, the hierarchy of decision-making, and the relations between individual *basileis* seem to be fundamentally the same at Euripides' Aulis and at Homer's Troy.

This sensation lasts only a short time, as the parallels between the power structures of the *Iliad* and *IA* begin to break down when a messenger enters to announce the arrival of Clytemnestra and Iphigenia at Aulis (*IA* 414-39). Agamemnon weeps with despair at the knowledge that Iphigenia's death is imminent, and wonders how he will break the news to his wife. In truth, he finds no shortage of reasons to feel sorry for himself, and he suggests that such suffering is the fate of leaders such as him (*IA* 446-50):

ἡ δυσγένεια δ' ὡς ἔχει τι χρήσιμον.  
καὶ γὰρ δακρῦσαι ῥαδίως αὐτοῖς ἔχει,  
ἅπαντά τ' εἰπεῖν. τῷ δὲ γενναίῳ φύσιν  
ἄνολβα ταῦτα. προστάτην δὲ τοῦ βίου  
τὸν ὄγκον ἔχομεν τῷ τ' ὄχλῳ δουλεύομεν. 450

Low birth does possess some advantages.  
For it is easier for them to cry and to speak  
of their sorrows, while to the high-born man  
these same sorrows come, but we are beholden  
to the dignity of life, and are slaves to the mob.

While Agamemnon's plaint is by no means unique within the Euripidean corpus,<sup>81</sup> it certainly signals a radical departure from the image of authority that had thus far been projected in the play. Up until now, every indication has been that the choice to sacrifice Iphigenia would lie with Agamemnon and his fellow *basileis*, if not with Agamemnon alone. Here, however, the Achaean leader suggests that he may have to reckon with the mass of the army as well.

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<sup>81</sup> For the complaint that it is better to be "low-born," cf. E. fr. 285; on "enslavement to the mob" cf. E. *Hec.* 868 (also noted by Stockert, 1992 vol. 2, p. 331).

Furthermore, Euripides' choice of the term *ochlos* ("crowd," "mob," or "mass") is a loaded one. The term *ochlos* was unknown to Homer,<sup>82</sup> but by the fifth century it was quite common. Thucydides, for example, uses it 27 times in his *History*, either in a neutral manner (i.e. "mass") or with negative connotations (i.e. "mob").<sup>83</sup> Given the sentiment expressed here—that Agamemnon is a "slave" to the *ochlos*—it is proper to translate the word as "mob," and reasonable to suppose that Euripides' audience would have understood it as such. This is another subtle erosion of our initial impression that the soldiery at Aulis is passive and essentially akin to Homer's Achaean army. It is a small moment, an almost imperceptible contemporization of the Achaean army, and one that would be unremarkable were it to occur in isolation. As it happens, however, it is the beginning of a larger paradigm shift.

This shift becomes much more obvious as the debate between the two Atreids reaches its climax. Agamemnon's tears inspire pity in Menelaus, and in a surprising reversal he urges Agamemnon not to kill Iphigenia (*IA* 473-503). Even more astonishing, however, is Agamemnon's own change of mind (*IA* 511-19,<sup>84</sup> 522-35):

<p>Ag: ἀλλ' ἤκομεν γὰρ εἰς ἀναγκαΐας τύχας,          θυγατρὸς αἵματηρὸν ἐκπρᾶξαι φόνον.</p>	<p>511</p>	<p>A: We have reached a point where fortune          requires me to carry out the bloody murder of          my daughter.</p>
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<sup>82</sup> Homer used a great variety of terms to describe the soldiery, ranging from *laos* and *dēmos* to *homilos* or *stratos*, but never *ochlos*. For more on the Homeric terminology, see E.C. Welskopf, "Die Bezeichnungen λαός, δῆμος, ὄμιλος, πληθύς, ἔθνος in den homerischen Epen," in *Untersuchungen ausgewählter altgriechischer sozialer Typenbegriffe* vol. 3, ed. Welskopf (Berlin, 1981), pp. 163-92.

<sup>83</sup> Virginia Hunter, "Thucydides and the Sociology of the Crowd," *The Classical Journal* 84 (1988): pp. 17-30. I discuss Thucydides' "negative" uses of the term in greater detail below.

<sup>84</sup> Lines 520-21—a critique of the "race" (σπέρμα) of prophets—are not without interest but are generally considered spurious and, above all, are not germane to the argument at hand.

Men.: πῶς; τίς δ' ἀναγκάσει σε τὴν γε σὴν κτανεῖν;		M: What? Who will force you to kill her?
A: ἅπας Ἀχαιῶν σύλλογος στρατεύματος.		A: The whole assembly of the Achaean army
M: οὐκ, ἦν νιν εἰς Ἄργος γ' ἀποστείλης πάλιν	515	M: Not if you send her back to Argos.
A: λάθοιμι τοῦτ' ἄν. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖν' οὐ λήσομεν.		A: I might get away with that, but not this...
M: τὸ ποῖον; οὐτοὶ χρὴ λίαν ταρβεῖν ὄχλον.		M: What? One must not fear the mob too much.
A: Κάλχας ἐρεῖ μαντεύματ' Ἀργείων στρατῶ.		A: Calchas will tell his prophecies to the Achaean army.
M: οὐκ, ἦν θάνη γε πρόσθε· τοῦτο δ' εὐμαρές.	519	M: Not if he dies first. An easy thing to manage.
A: ἐκεῖνο δ' οὐ δέδοικας ὃ ἔμ' ἐσέρχεται;	522	A: But do you not fear the thought that creeps upon me?
M: ὄν μὴ σὺ φράζεις, πῶς ὑπολάβοιμ' ἄν λόγον;		M: How can I understand the word you do not say?
A: τὸ Σισύφειον σπέρμα πάντ' οἶδεν τάδε.		A: The child of Sisyphus knows all these things.
M: οὐκ ἔστ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ὃ τι σὲ κάμῃ πημανεῖ.	525	M: It is not possible for Odysseus to hurt us.
A: ποικίλος ἀεὶ πέφυκε τοῦ τ' ὄχλου μέτα.		A: He's always been most cunning with the mob.
Men: φιλοτιμία μὲν ἐνέχεται, δεινῶ κακῶ.		M: He <i>is</i> obsessed with honor, a terrible evil.
Ag: οὐκ οὖν δοκεῖς νιν στάντ' ἐν Ἀργείοις μέσοις		A: Then don't you think he'll stand amidst the Argives
λέξειν ἃ Κάλχας θέσφατ' ἐξηγήσατο, κάμ' ὡς ὑπέστην θῦμα, κατ' ἐψευδόμην, Ἀρτέμιδι θύσειν; οὐ ξυναρπάσας στρατόν, σὲ κάμ' ἀποκτείναντας Ἀργείους κόρη σφάξαι κελεύσει; κὰν πρὸς Ἄργος ἐκφύγω, ἐλθόντες αὐτοῖς τείχεσιν Κυκλωπίοις συναρπάσουσι καὶ κατασκάψουσι γῆν.	530     535	to tell them the prophecies Calchas enjoined, and that I lied and promised to sacrifice a victim to Artemis? That he'll seize the army, and order the Argives to kill you and me and to slaughter the girl? And then, even if I flee to Argos, they'll come as far as the Cyclopean walls to carry off [Iphigenia] and destroy the land.

The picture that Agamemnon paints is undeniably violent and disturbing, but above all it suggests that the power structures at Aulis have been radically updated. Unlike with his earlier ruminations about the *ochlos*, Agamemnon explicitly states that it will be the army that will force him to sacrifice Iphigenia (IA 514). According to him, if the soldiers catch wind of the prophecy concerning Iphigenia, they will insist that Agamemnon sacrifice her. More to the point, he will be forced to obey them. In other words, once they are informed of the situation, the common soldiers will decide for themselves (and everybody else) that the war must go on.

Under these circumstances, it is easy to see why the army would be characterized as a “mob,” and indeed twice here they are referred to as an *ochlos*.

This is, of course, very different from the hierarchy that is depicted in the *Iliad*. A neat frame through which to view this evolution of authority is the manner in which Calchas and Odysseus operate. As mentioned above, in order to even speak in the *Iliad*, Calchas had to beg for protection from Achilles for fear of (presumably violent) retribution from Agamemnon.<sup>85</sup> And there, his prophecy is pivotal not because he wins over the common soldiers<sup>86</sup> but because Agamemnon sees that it is better to return Chryses’ daughter than to allow his whole army to die (cf. *Il.* 1.68-116). Here at Aulis, however, Calchas’ prognostication has not convinced Agamemnon to sacrifice Iphigenia,<sup>87</sup> but his ability to speak to and move the Achaean *ochlos* looks to be a potentially decisive factor. The dynamics of Calchas’ intervention are thus entirely upended, and the fact that he will speak not to Agamemnon but to the *ochlos* suggests a substantial modification of Homeric authority.

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. *Il.* 1.80-82: κρείσσων γὰρ βασιλεὺς ὅτε χῶσεται ἀνδρὶ χέρη·/εἴ περ γὰρ τε χόλον γε καὶ αὐτῆμαρ καταπέψῃ,/ἀλλὰ τε καὶ μετόπισθεν ἔχει κότον, ὄφρα τελέσση (“a *basileus*, when he is angry with a lesser man, is far more powerful;/and even if he swallows his anger for one day/he will hold onto his wrath until he fulfills it”). Hammer, 2002, p. 83, argues that Calchas’ reticence illustrates the fact that “Agamemnon’s ability to command obedience rests on a fear of retribution.” Menelaus actually seems to allude to this episode by suggesting that it would be easy to kill the prophet (*IA* 519); to provide the retribution Calchas feared in the *Iliad*. Homer’s epic is ever-present, even, or perhaps especially, when Euripides deviates from that model.

<sup>86</sup> The soldiers here are present as silent and passive spectators, and had in fact urged Agamemnon to ransom the girl a full ten days earlier (cf. *Il.* 1.22-23)—a recommendation that Agamemnon had roundly and rashly ignored.

<sup>87</sup> At least not on second thought: as Menelaus (*IA* 358-63) tells us, Agamemnon had first agreed whole-heartedly to sacrifice Iphigenia, only to later change his mind. On this change of mind, cf. John Gibert, *Change of Mind in Greek Tragedy* (Göttingen, 1995), pp. 210-17.

Odysseus' role also speaks to this transition. As in Book Fourteen of the *Iliad* (cf. 14.82-102), Odysseus looks set to stand up to Agamemnon and force the war to continue. But whereas at Troy he had intervened by directly rebuking Agamemnon, here we learn that he is essentially powerless on his own (IA 525). Instead, just like Calchas he represents a threat because he is able to appeal directly to the army. The results envisioned by Agamemnon—the murder of Iphigenia, his own assassination, the sack of Argos—amount to a violent military coup, a disintegration of the military hierarchy that is never imagined in the *Iliad*. It is a striking image of a different type of Achaean army, one whose consensus is not only necessary, but whose voice is actually decisive in the debate about whether or not to sacrifice Iphigenia and thus bring war to Troy.

Equally striking is the fact that Odysseus will be able to mobilize the army not through threats and violence, as he does in *Iliad* Two, but because he is *poikilos* with the *ochlos*—“cunning with the mob” (IA 526). This implies that his power comes from rhetorical and persuasive excellence<sup>88</sup> rather than physical prowess or his status as a *basileus*. While the ability to persuade was certainly desirable for Homeric *basileis*, it was absolutely necessary for leaders in democratic Athens,<sup>89</sup> so Odysseus appears to be a leader more in the mold of Euripides'

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<sup>88</sup> Isocrates, for example, implies that *poikilia* is an integral part of rhetorical persuasiveness: cf. Isoc. 5.27; 12.4; 15.47. For the overtly negative connotations of Odysseus' *poikilia*, cf. my discussion in Chapter Four, pp. 302-304.

<sup>89</sup> Among many others, see for example Josiah Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People* (Princeton, 1989), p. 113: “[s]kill in public address was sine qua non for the [Athenian] politician”; Harvey Yunis, *Taming Democracy: Models of Political Rhetoric in Classical Athens* (Ithaca, 1996), *passim* but esp. pp. 11-12;

contemporaries than his Homeric antecedents. This modernity is further confirmed by the description of him “standing amidst the Argives” to incite them, as well as the fact that just like Agamemnon, he too is obsessed with *philotimia*.

The end result of these circumstances—that Agamemnon feels obliged to sacrifice Iphigenia—represents a decisive step away from the world of the *Iliad* and towards that of the Athenian audience. Strange as it might appear within the context of the Achaean army, the idea that a general such as Agamemnon could be forced to lead an expedition against his will would not have been out of place in classical Athens. An intriguing (if inadequately attested) parallel to the situation at Aulis seems to have occurred in 433 BCE, two years before the onset of the Peloponnesian War. As Plutarch tells us, after the Athenians had decided to enter into an alliance with Corcyra, Pericles “persuaded the *dēmos*” (ἔπεισε τὸν δῆμον) to send Lacedaimonius “against his will” (μὴ βουλόμενον) with ten ships to their new allies.<sup>90</sup> If what Plutarch tells us is true,<sup>91</sup> we may see this as an analogous case in which one leader uses the “people” as a sort of wedge to force a colleague to take on a military commission.

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and Yunis, “The Constraints of Democracy and the Rise of the Art of Rhetoric,” in *Democracy, Empire, and the Arts in Fifth-Century Athens*, eds. Deborah Boedeker and Kurt A. Raaflaub (Cambridge, MA, 1998), pp. 223-40.

<sup>90</sup> Plut. *Pericles* 29.1-2. Thucydides discusses the episode (1.44) but says nothing about Lacedaimonius being forced to lead the campaign.

<sup>91</sup> Rarely has the episode been discussed by scholars at any length. Hamel, 1998, p. 20, is non-committal regarding the potential veracity of Lacedaimonius’ lack of enthusiasm for this commission (“[he] was allegedly sent to Corcyra...against his will”); Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca, 1969), p. 244, dismisses it out of hand as “the charges of an outwitted and outraged faction”; but as is pointed out by G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca, 1972), pp. 76-77, the element of Plutarch’s narration that is most likely to be invented is that Pericles put Lacedaimonius in charge in order to “insult” him (*ephubrizōn*) and to be able to accuse

A few years later, the Athenian “demagogue”<sup>92</sup> Cleon found himself in similar circumstances when he was forced to lead an expedition at Pylos. As the summer of 425 came to a close, the Athenians were occupying Pylos and had trapped a number of Spartan soldiers on the nearby island of Sphacteria. The situation was troubling enough for Sparta that they sent envoys to Athens with the offer of a peace treaty (Th. 4.17-20). Cleon, even though he was not a general at the time, encouraged the Athenians to reject the offer in the hopes of extracting greater concessions from the Spartans (Th. 4.21.2-3). As the blockade dragged on, the Athenians became impatient and began to resent Cleon for his earlier, hawkish stance (Th. 4.27.1-3). In response, Cleon raised the stakes by proposing to attack the Spartans on Sphacteria, even suggesting that “it would be easy [to do], if the generals were men...and that if he himself had been in charge, he would have done so.”<sup>93</sup> Nicias, the general at whom this snide comment had been directed, responded by resigning his command and telling Cleon to take whatever force he wanted to attack Sphacteria.<sup>94</sup>

This caught Cleon off guard. According to Thucydides, Cleon had never actually wanted the command, and he now attempted to get out of it by reminding everyone that Nicias

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him of “λακόνισμος” in the event that should somehow fail. Indeed, Lacedaimonius was a son of Cimon and a Spartan *proxenos* (de Ste. Croix, p. 76), and it is in my view eminently believable that he should have been reluctant to take on a position that could have put him in direct conflict with the Spartans.

<sup>92</sup> As Thucydides calls him in introducing this very episode (Th. 4.21.3: ἀνήρ δημαγωγός). A number of scholars have noted the extreme bias Thucydides seems to show against Cleon, both in general but especially when describing his role in the Pylos affair: cf. H.D. Westlake, *Individuals in Thucydides* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 60-61, 69-71; Hunter, 1988; Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* vol. 2 (Oxford, 1996), p. 175. Nevertheless, my interest in the episode centers on the behavior of the *ochlos*, a dynamic that must, at the very least, have been credible.

<sup>93</sup> Th. 4.27.5: ῥάδιον εἶναι παρασκευῆ, εἰ ἄνδρες εἶεν οἱ στρατηγοί...καὶ αὐτός γ’ ἄν, εἰ ἦρχε, ποιῆσαι τοῦτο.

<sup>94</sup> Th. 4.28.1: ἦντινα βούλεται δύναμιν λαβόντα τὸ ἐπὶ σφᾶς εἶναι ἐπιχειρεῖν.

was the real general (Th. 4.28.2). When Nicias reiterated his resignation and indifference, Cleon found himself backed into a corner. At this point, the Athenian crowd began to make its voice heard: (Th. 4.28.3-4):

οἱ δέ, οἷον ὄχλος φιλεῖ ποιεῖν, ὅσω μᾶλλον ὁ Κλέων ὑπέφευγε τὸν πλοῦν καὶ ἐξανεχώρει τὰ εἰρημένα, τόσω ἐπεκελεύοντο τῷ Νικίᾳ παραδιδόναι τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ ἐκείνῳ ἐπεβόων πλεῖν. ὥστε οὐκ ἔχων ὅπως τῶν εἰρημένων ἔτι ἐξαπαλλαγῆ, ὑφίσταται τὸν πλοῦν...

And as the mob is wont to do, the more that Cleon tried to withdraw from the expedition and back away from his earlier words, the more they demanded that Nicias resign his command and shouted at Cleon to lead it. So that, having no way to escape his own words, Cleon undertook the expedition...

While we must be cautious when it comes to Thucydides' portrayal of Cleon's thoughts,<sup>95</sup> there is no reason to believe he is distorting the basic dynamics of the scene.<sup>96</sup> In that light, we can note a number of remarkable similarities between Thucydides' narration and the situation at Aulis: in each case, we see a divergence of interests among leaders; at both Athens and Aulis it is evident that a certain amount of gamesmanship takes place between Nicias and Cleon on the one hand, and Agamemnon and Odysseus on the other; and most obviously, both Cleon and Agamemnon find themselves trapped by earlier promises and compelled to follow through with them by their constituent *ochloi*, even though neither one actually wants to lead the campaign in question.

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. esp. Westlake, 1968, p. 71-72, who points out the ways in which Thucydides' account here diverges from the norm in the way that he attributes specific thoughts and fears to Cleon. But it is reasonable to assume that Thucydides' description of Cleon's mindset would have at least have appeared credible to his intended audience, in which case it is interesting to note that Thucydides and Euripides both describe their presumptive leaders as fearful (Th. 4.28.2: δεδιώς; IA 522: οὐ δέδοικας).

<sup>96</sup> Especially since, as H.D. Westlake, "The Naval Battle at Pylos and Its Consequences," *The Classical Quarterly* 24 (1974): p. 225, points out, Thucydides may well have witnessed this particular debate.

Perhaps most importantly, Thucydides claims that this sort of behavior was typical of *ochloi*, that mobs were wont to apply this very type of pressure on its leaders when they wanted to go to war.<sup>97</sup> In other words, Thucydides claims that *ochloi* tended to behave in the exact same way that Euripides shows them behaving in in the *IA*. Moreover, if we dig a little deeper we may note that Euripides ascribes to Agamemnon and Odysseus the same motivations and tendencies that Thucydides sees in Athenian leaders after Pericles. Like Euripides' *basileis*, Thucydides sees Pericles' successors (particularly Cleon) as overly interested in their own *philotimia* (Th. 2.65.7). And among other disastrous consequences, this obsession with their own *philotimia* causes the leaders to be led by the masses (Th.2.65.8), just as we see occurring at Aulis. In the first episode of the *IA* then, we observe a series of circumstances, agents, motivations, and results that are strikingly reminiscent of the debate about Pylos and which seem to mirror Thucydides' perception of Athenian politics after Pericles. This is not to say that Euripides is looking back to Thucydides' work in particular or to the Pylos episode itself, but it suggests that at the very least, Euripides and Thucydides are drawing upon a set of shared contemporary concepts of how leaders and masses tend to interact.

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<sup>97</sup> On this point, it is notable that the only other time Thucydides makes a generalizing statement about *ochloi*, it is to describe this very type of behavior. Th. 6.63.2: ἠξίουσαν τοὺς στρατηγούς, οἷον δὴ ὄχλος φιλεῖ θαρσύνεσθαι ποιεῖν, ἄγειν σφᾶς ἐπὶ Κατάνην ("they called upon their generals, just as an *ochlos* is wont to do when it is feeling bold, to lead them to Catana").

*Achilles' entrance and the recalibration of Homeric power structures*

Far from being the climax of the tragedy's meditation on the nature of authority at Aulis, Agamemnon's submission to the (presumed) will of the army is only the beginning of a lengthy process. Agamemnon's goal at this point is to effect the sacrifice of his daughter before his wife discovers his intentions, but the arrival on-stage of his erstwhile rival Achilles complicates matters. Achilles is greeted as a son-in-law by Clytemnestra (*IA* 835-36), and the confusion that this meeting engenders leads directly to Clytemnestra's discovery of Agamemnon's plot. Her only recourse is to call on Achilles to protect Iphigenia, an appeal to which Achilles accedes (*IA* 900-74). The prospect of another Agamemnon-Achilles dispute now looms large.

Just as importantly, the terms of the dispute fall along the same lines as in the *Iliad*, as Achilles' grounds for accepting Clytemnestra's appeal explicitly recall the reasons behind the Homeric conflict and his own stance in the *Iliad* (*IA* 928-31):<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> It must be noted that virtually the entirety of Achilles' monologue (*IA* 919-74), a section upon which I will be drawing heavily, is of disputed authenticity. Diggle, 1994, *ad loc.*, gives it his second-lowest authenticity-ranking ("vix Euripidei"); Page, 1934, pp. 175-79, deletes almost the entirety of Achilles' speech (919-1035) on grounds of language and style; while Kovacs, 2003, pp. 91-93 excises large swaths because they lack any "relevant point" (919-31), on account of "oddities" (932-43), or because of repetitions and irrelevance (955-69). *Contra*, see esp. W. Ritchie, "Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis* 919-974," in *Dionysiaca*, eds. R.D. Dawe, J. Diggle, and P.E. Easterling (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 179-203 (Ritchie also provides a fine synthesis of the history of editorial deletions of those lines); as well as Jouan, ed., 1983, p. 141, and Stockert, 1992 vol. 2, p. 463, who follow Ritchie. In general, it will suffice to note that the deletions of Achilles' speech are generally based on questions of style and aesthetics. Given the relative weakness of such evidence, and insofar as the plot of the tragedy requires that Achilles explain his decision to intervene on behalf of Iphigenia, by far the best option seems to me to work with the text we possess. Regarding more specifically the lines I have cited above, Ritchie, p. 186, points out that 928-31 were "the only part of the speech which no one has yet held to be spurious," though Kovacs has since corrected this oversight by arguing that Achilles' "exordium [i.e. 919-31]...makes no recognizably relevant point" and labelling his statements "abstractions" that are "[not] tied to any concrete action or decision" (p. 91). At the risk of needlessly extending this discussion, I would simply point out that,

καὶ τοῖς Ἀτρεΐδαῖς, ἣν μὲν ἡγῶνται καλῶς,  
 πεισόμεθ', ὅταν δὲ μὴ καλῶς, οὐ πείσομαι.  
 ἀλλ' ἐνθάδ' ἐν Τροίᾳ τ' ἐλευθέραν φύσιν  
 παρῆχων...

930 When they lead well, I will obey the Atreides,  
 but when they lead poorly I will not.  
 Instead, I will maintain my free nature both here  
 and in Troy...

Achilles here provides a perspective on Agamemnon's authority that is similar to his attitude in the *Iliad*, when he boldly proclaims he will not simply "yield to every order" Agamemnon gives him (*Il.* 1.294: πᾶν ἔργον ὑπέιξομαι).<sup>99</sup> His submission to Agamemnon, both here and in the *Iliad*, is conditional, and will depend on the manner in which Agamemnon uses his authority. Moreover, Achilles mentions he will maintain this attitude in Troy as well—an obvious allusion to the "Homeric Achilles"<sup>100</sup>—and he even directly recalls his words in the *Iliad* with a double-use of the future-middle of *peitho*.<sup>101</sup>

As Achilles elaborates on his reasons for standing against Agamemnon, he continues to describe the brewing conflict in a manner reminiscent of the *Iliad* (*IA* 959-61, 968-69):<sup>102</sup>

οὐ τῶν γάμων ἕκατι — μυρίαὶ κόραι  
 θηρῶσι λέκτρον τοῦμόν — εἴρηται τόδε·  
 ἀλλ' ὕβριν ἐς ἡμᾶς ὕβρισ' Ἀγαμέμνων ἄναξ.

960 I have said these things not on account of my  
 marriage—countless maidens seek my hand—  
 but because lord Agamemnon has committed  
 an outrage against me!

νῦν δ' οὐδέν εἰμι, παρὰ δὲ τοῖς στρατηλάταις  
 ἐν εὐμαρεῖ με δρᾶν τε καὶ μὴ δρᾶν κακῶς.

968 And now I am nothing, and for the generals it is  
 a small matter to treat me well or to treat me ill.

were we to eliminate all the "abstractions" from Euripidean speeches, we would find ourselves committed to the excision of a number of passages that would be sorely missed.

<sup>99</sup> On which, see above, p. 55.

<sup>100</sup> Ritchie, 1978, p. 186.

<sup>101</sup> See again *Il.* 1.296: οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγ' ἔτι σοὶ πείσεσθαι οἶω.

<sup>102</sup> Kovacs, 2003, p. 92, deletes the entirety of 953-69 on the grounds that they are "irrelevant" (959-61) or because they repeat Achilles' comments in vv. 944-47. The relevance of the first three lines is adequately attested by the fact they are an overt reference to the Homeric quarrel. Kovacs' deletion of 968-69 makes little difference to my argument, since what I say of them is equally true of lines 944-45, which Kovacs upholds. Regarding 962-67, Kovacs (and the vast majority of commentators) are probably correct that these lines have been subject to some form of interpolation. Ritchie, 1978, pp. 193-95, gamely tries to salvage them, but his attempt is less than convincing.

The first two lines of this passage are a direct allusion to Achilles' rejection of Agamemnon's offer of a daughter in marriage on the grounds that he could have his pick of "many maidens" (*pollai kourai*).<sup>103</sup> They serve to both recall the dispute in Homer while at the same time emphasizing the fact that, just as in Homer, the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles relates only superficially to the woman in question. The accusation of hubris is also the same term with which Achilles describes Agamemnon's actions in the *Iliad*, so we are further reminded of the epic.<sup>104</sup> Finally, we come to the real reason Achilles has decided to come to Iphigenia's defense: to protect his reputation. Just like in the *Iliad*, Achilles fears that he will be seen as a "nobody" (here: *ouden*; at *Il.* 1.293: *outidanos*).<sup>105</sup> And once again, it is Agamemnon's (or more accurately, the two Atreids') disregard for him that diminishes his reputation and thus arouses his anger. In short, as Euripides concocts the dispute between his two heroes amidst a rapid fire of allusions to the *Iliad*. The audience is thus primed to expect a retelling of the intractable conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon in the *Iliad*, and once again, the twin problems of authority and status appear central to a conflict between two *basileis*.

Having made his decision to take a stand against the tyranny of the Atreids, Achilles must now formulate a plan. It turns out to be rather unorthodox: he suggests that Clytemnestra should attempt to persuade Agamemnon to spare Iphigenia, with his own intervention only

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<sup>103</sup> Noted by, among others, Ritchie, 1978, p. 192; and Jouan, ed., 1983, p. 142.

<sup>104</sup> *Il.* 1.203: ὕβρις; repeated by Athena in *Il.* 1.214: ὕβριος. Luschig, 1988 p. 67, and Ritchie, 1978, p. 193, also note this allusion. These are in fact the only two instances in which the noun *hubris* appears in the *Iliad*, so the reference is perhaps more obvious than one might initially expect.

<sup>105</sup> Ritchie, 1978, p. 195, also points out this allusion.

serving as back-up in the event that she fails. The following episode shows Clytemnestra gamely following Achilles' advice as she attempts to change her husband's mind. Agamemnon is not without pity, but as he regrets to inform his wife, his hands are tied (IA 1259-68):

<p>ὄρᾱθ' ὅσον στράτευμα ναύφρακτον τόδε,  χαλκέων θ' ὄπλων ἀνακτες Ἑλλήνων ὅσοι,  οἷς νόστος οὐκ ἔστ' Ἰλίου πύργους ἔπι,  εἰ μὴ σε θύσω, μάντις ὡς Κάλχας λέγει,  οὐδ' ἔστι Τροίας ἐξελεῖν κλεινὸν βᾶθρον.</p>	<p>1260</p>	<p>You see how great this ship-fenced army is,  and the many masters of the bronze-clad Greeks  who, unless I sacrifice you as the prophet  Calchas says, will never make the journey  to the towers of Ilium, nor sack the famous seat  of Troy.</p>
<p>μέμνηνε δ' Ἀφροδίτη τις Ἑλλήνων στρατῶ  πλεῖν ὡς τάχιστα βαρβάρων ἐπὶ χθόνα,  παῦσαί τε λέκτρων ἀρπαγὰς Ἑλληνικῶν·  οἱ τὰς ἐν Ἄργει παρθένους κτενοῦσί μου  ὑμᾶς τε καὶ μέ, θέσφατ' εἰ λύσω θεᾶς.</p>	<p>1265</p>	<p>Some Aphrodite is inciting the Greek army  to sail as soon as possible to that barbarian land,  and to stop the abductions of Greek brides.  And if I defy the decree of Artemis, they will kill  our daughters in Argos, as well as you and me.</p>

The scene that Agamemnon imagines here very closely resembles his closing statement in his debate with Menelaus (see above, p. 73). In both cases, Agamemnon predicts that a violent rebellion by his troops will lead directly to the deaths of his daughter(s), himself, and his interlocutor (here Clytemnestra; before Menelaus). Here too it seems that if need be, the Achaean army will travel to Argos to effect Iphigenia's sacrifice. And as in the first episode, Agamemnon believes that resistance is futile.

These similarities between the two episodes are obvious, but the differences between the accounts are also glaring. Perhaps most notably, Calchas and Odysseus, the two individuals whom Agamemnon initially feared most, have been stripped of any agency. In Agamemnon's new assessment of the situation, the mutinous army will not even require the guidance of a *basileus*. Instead, the leaders are so peripheral to the affair that even though both *basileis* and the common soldiers—the *anaktēs* and the *strateuma*—would be deprived of the glory of the Trojan

expedition, only the army (*stratos*) would rise up against Agamemnon. In this new conception, the army's voice is not simply a decisive one in the debate; it is the only one that counts. Where Homer's *basileis* had once made such decisions for their armies, Euripides' army now does so for their *basileis*.

The Achaean army not only expropriates all decision-making power, it also acquires, for the first time, a good deal of characterization. To begin, Euripides uses the rare term *nauphraktos* to emphasize the fact that this army is specifically a naval one. More poignantly, we find out their motivation for rebelling: "some Aphrodite" has fallen upon the Argives and impels them to sail for Troy. The peculiarity of this formulation recalls Thucydides' similar evaluation of the Athenian *dēmos* as they voted, imprudently, to set sail for Sicily in 416 BCE (Th. 6.24.3-4):<sup>106</sup>

καὶ ἔρωσ ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι, τοῖς μὲν γὰρ πρεσβυτέροις ὡς ἢ καταστρεψομένοις ἐφ' ἃ ἔπλεον ἢ οὐδὲν ἂν σφαιλίσαν μεγάλην δύναμιν, τοῖς δ' ἐν τῇ ἡλικίᾳ τῆς τε ἀπούσης πόθῳ ὄψεως καὶ θεωρίας, καὶ εὐέλπιδες ὄντες σωθήσεσθαι· ὁ δὲ πολὺς ὄμιλος καὶ στρατιώτης ἔν τε τῷ παρόντι ἀργύριον οἴσειν καὶ προσκτήσεσθαι δύναμιν ὅθεν ἀίδιον μισθοφορὰν ὑπάρξειν. ὥστε διὰ τὴν ἄγαν τῶν πλεόνων ἐπιθυμίαν, εἴ τῳ ἄρα καὶ μὴ ἤρεσκε, δεδιῶς μὴ ἀντιχειροτονῶν κακόνους δόξειεν εἶναι τῇ πόλει ἡσυχίαν ἦγεν.

And an *erōs* fell equally upon everyone to set sail. For the older men [were convinced] they would either overrun the lands to which they were sailing, or that at the very least a force of this size could not be defeated. The men of fighting age<sup>107</sup> [were seized] by a desire for distant sights and spectacles, and had great faith that they would survive. And the main body of the troops [yearned] to bring home money in the present and besides that to gain the potential for unlimited income in the future.<sup>108</sup> So that due to the

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<sup>106</sup> Stockert, 1992 vol. 2, p. 554, also notes this similarity.

<sup>107</sup> Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* vol. 3 (Oxford, 2008), p. 362, believes Thucydides is referring here to the "officer class."

<sup>108</sup> Following Hornblower, 2008, p. 362.

excessive desire for the expedition, if there was anyone to whom it did not appeal, fearing that by voting against it they might seem unpatriotic, they remained silent.

The proceedings described by Thucydides here are strikingly similar to the situation in the *IA*: in each case, a crucial decision must be about made whether or not to embark on a long and costly military expedition; at both Aulis and Athens, the overriding motivation for the expedition turns out to be an irrational lust for war;<sup>109</sup> in both cases, this passion acts upon the soldiers, whose will turns out to be the decisive—perhaps even only—factor in the decision-making process; and finally, Agamemnon’s reaction may be compared to those few who opposed the Sicilian expedition, for just as the dissenting Athenians maintain their silence, Agamemnon is too intimidated by the army’s excessive passion to speak out against the sacrifice of his daughter. In summary, Euripides’ image of a passionate soldiery that is in full command of the situation suggests that a metaphorical gulf lies between his Aulis and Homer’s Troy, and that the *IA* hews much closer instead to the world of fifth-century Athens.

As a result of this new vision of Achaean power-structures, the only thing that stands between Iphigenia and the altar is Achilles. Given the hero’s incomparable prowess, one might find some comfort in knowing that he is Iphigenia’s last line of defense. But as the final episode of the tragedy opens, Iphigenia catches hold of an inauspicious sight (*IA* 1338-39):

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<sup>109</sup> *Erōs* for Thucydides, “some Aphrodite” for Euripides, though in fact earlier in the play, at a less suspect moment (*IA* 808-09) Achilles had used Thucydides’ formulation: οὕτω δεινὸς ἐμπέπτωκ’ ἔρωσ/τῆσδε στρατείας. The secondary goals here are different—Thucydides’ troops want money while Euripides’ seek to “stop the abductions of Greek brides”—though of course it would hardly be appropriate for Agamemnon to convince Clytemnestra that Iphigenia must be sacrificed in order to satisfy the army’s greed.

Iph.: ὦ τεκοῦσα μήτερο, ἀνδρῶν ὄχλον εἰσορῶ πέλας.  
Clyt.: τόν τε τῆς θεᾶς παῖδα, τέκνον, ὦ δεῦρ' ἐλήλυθας.

I: Oh mother, I see a mob of men drawing near!  
C: And the son of the goddess, the one for whom you came.

A mass of Achaean soldiers<sup>110</sup> is making their way toward Iphigenia and Clytemnestra, and they are once again called an *ochlos*. Neither their appearance nor Iphigenia's definition of them as a mob bodes well. On the contrary, it suggests that Agamemnon's prediction is coming true, and that the army will simply assert itself and demand Iphigenia's sacrifice.

This sensation is immediately confirmed by Achilles' account of all that has happened behind the scenes (*IA* 1345-53):

Ach.: ὦ γύναι τάλαινα, Λήδας θύγατερ . . .	1345	A: Oh wretched woman, daughter of Leda...
Clyt.: οὐ ψευδῆ θροεῖς.		C: You do not speak falsely.
A: δεῖν' ἐν Ἀργείοις βοᾶται . . .		A: The Argives are shouting terrible things....
C: τίνα βοήν; σήμαινέ μοι.		C: Shouting what? Explain this to me.
A: ἀμφὶ σῆς παιδός . . .		A: About your child...
C: πονηρὸν εἶπας οἰωνὸν λόγον.		C: The words you say are an evil omen.
A: ὡς χρεῶν σφάξαι νιν.		A: That they must slaughter her.
C: ἄκουδεις ἐναντία λέγεις;		C: And no one speaks up against this?
A: ἐς θόρυβον ἐγὼ τι καυτὸς ἤλυθον . . .		A: I myself risked it against their uproar.
C: τίν', ὦ ξένη;		C: Risked what?
A: σῶμα λευσθῆναι πέτροισι.	1350	A: Death by stoning.
C: μῶν κόρην σφάζων ἐμήν;		C: For defending my child?
A: αὐτὸ τοῦτο.		A: Yes, exactly.
C: τίς δ' ἂν ἔτλη τοῦ σώματος τοῦ σοῦ θιγεῖν;		C: But who would dare take hold of you?
A: πάντες Ἕλληνες.		A: All the Greeks.
C: στρατὸς δὲ Μυρμιδῶν οὐ σοι παρήν;		C: And your Myrmidon army wasn't on hand?
A: πρῶτος ἦν ἐκεῖνος ἐχθρός.		A: They were my first enemy.

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<sup>110</sup> I regard as highly unlikely the suggestion made by Stockert, 1992 vol. 2, p. 574, that this *ochlos* refers to the handful of "faithful soldiers" who remain by Achilles' side (cf. *IA* 1358, in which we learn that at least two comrades are on hand to arm Achilles). The term *ochlos*, which appears a full eight times in the *IA* (191, 450, 517, 526, 735, 1030, 1338, 1546), is in every other instance used in reference to the Achaean army as a whole.

We might recall, at this point, that when Achilles was pondering the issue with Clytemnestra, he had framed the question of Iphigenia's sacrifice as a dispute between himself and Agamemnon, or at most between himself and other Greek *basileis*.<sup>111</sup> At no point had he even spoken of the common soldiers, let alone considered their opinion to be of any consequence, and his main gripes indicated that he saw the disagreement as a struggle for power and status among the *basileis*. Generally speaking, his earlier explanation of the problem fell along the lines of the Homeric conflict, so one might expect his new report to further highlight the intractability of a dispute between two *basileis*.

The scene he describes, however, utterly defies these expectations. Instead of taking the matter up directly with Agamemnon or the other *basileis*, Achilles finds himself face to face with the entire army. The impact of the army's intervention can hardly be understated: Achilles' objections to Agamemnon's unilateral exercise of power, and his displeasure with his loss of status, are effectively rendered moot. Instead, Achilles must choose between allowing the sacrifice to go ahead as planned, or losing his life at the hands of the Achaean *ochlos*. Having already decided the question of Iphigenia's sacrifice, it appears as if the army will simply quash the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles. Once again, the *IA* shows us a Homeric problem resolved through a radical inversion of the traditional hierarchies and power-structures among the Achaean army.

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<sup>111</sup> Conflict specifically between Achilles and Agamemnon: *IA* 961; between Achilles and the Atreids: *IA* 928-29; or between Achilles and the "generals": *IA* 968: (τοῖς στρατηλάταις).



may wish to either enter the fray or return home, they have instead been doing just as Achilles ordered: standing idly by their ships. The situation at Aulis, on the contrary, is the reverse: as soon as the Myrmidons disagree with their leader, they rise up against him.

On its own, the Myrmidon rebellion speaks to how differently authority is exercised in the *IA* as compared to the *Iliad*, but it tells us relatively little about the precise characterization that Euripides gives the Achaean *ochlos*, or the specific dynamics that are at work at Aulis. Here, the type of behavior that Achilles attributes to the Achaeans provides decisive information. Achilles begins by telling Clytemnestra that the army is “shouting” that Iphigenia needs to die, and a few lines later, he tells us that this shouting turned into a veritable *thorubos* (“tumult” or “uproar”) when he attempted to speak in Iphigenia’s defense. Euripides’ use of the term is significant. Much like *ochlos*, the word *thorubos* was a decidedly contemporary word,<sup>112</sup> and it is laden with specific connotations. It could refer to the tumult in battle when opposing armies clashed,<sup>113</sup> but just as frequently we hear of *thorubos* occurring in the context of debate, where it was common for members of the public to “shout down” (*thorubein*) a speaker with whom they disagreed. The latter dynamic is certainly what Achilles has described.

The fact that a popular *thorubos* resolves the debate at Aulis lends to the proceedings an air that is at once contemporary and decidedly democratic. Indeed, resolution-by-*thorubos* was

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<sup>112</sup> It never once appears in Homer, or for that matter in any pre-classical author with the exception of Aesop, *Proverbia* 107 and 152. Among authors of the classical era, Thucydides, Euripides, Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato, and Demosthenes all use the term regularly.

<sup>113</sup> E.g. Th. 2.4.2, 4.127.1; Hdt. 8.91.

especially prevalent in democratic *poleis*.<sup>114</sup> In fact, it seems to have been, in a certain sense, an essential mechanism of ancient democracies. In Athens, for example, it was a common occurrence both in the law-courts and at assemblies where policy was debated—precisely what we see at Aulis.<sup>115</sup> In all likelihood, *thorubos* was the easiest, if not only, way for the vast majority of Athenian citizens to actively engage in or “regulate” public debate and to express a “negative” opinion regarding a specific proposal.<sup>116</sup> In other words, the primary method through which the Achaean *ochlos* resolves the central conflicts of the *IA* is one that is imported directly from the democratic world of Euripides’ audience.

Of course, the particularly violent nature of the *thorubos* in the *IA* was by no means standard operating procedure. But it was also not unheard of. Just a year before the *IA* was

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<sup>114</sup> This is implied by the fact that almost all classical-era descriptions of *thoruboi* in the context of debate are in reference to Athenian practices, as indeed are modern analyses of the phenomenon. Confirmation of the fundamentally “democratic” nature of *thorubos* may also be seen in its suppression during the oligarchic coups in Athens in 411 and 404 BC, as is pointed out by Robert W. Wallace, “The Power to Speak—and not to Listen—in Ancient Athens,” in *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity*, eds. Ineke Sluiter and Ralph M. Rosen (Leiden, 2004), p. 226.

<sup>115</sup> On the widespread practice of *thorubos* in democratic Athens in general, see Wallace, 2004; Melissa Schwartzberg, “Shouts, Murmurs, Votes: Acclamation and Aggregation in Ancient Greece,” *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 18 (2010): pp. 461-65; and Ryan K. Balot, “Free Speech, Courage, and Democratic Deliberation,” in *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity*, eds. Ineke Sluiter and Ralph M. Rosen (Leiden, 2004), pp. 243-46. *Contra*, see M.H. Hansen, “Review: Athenian Democracy,” *The Classical Review* 40 (1990): p. 350: “[t]horubos, heckling, was ideologically to be avoided...it was only a tolerated and *not* an intentional part of Athenian political discourse” [emphasis in original]. But Hansen’s argument suffers, in my view, from his emphasis that there was a single ideology of “discourse” in Athens, an orthodoxy that I believe is belied by, among other things, the widespread existence of *thorubos* itself, particularly in the law-courts and the assembly. On *thorubos* during legal proceedings, see esp. Victor Bers, “Dikastic *Thorubos*,” in *CruX: Essays in Greek History Dedicated to G.E.M. de Ste. Croix on His 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, eds. P.A. Cartledge and F.D. Harvey (London, 1985), pp. 1-15; and Edith Hall, “Lawcourt Dramas: The Power of Performance in Greek Forensic Oratory,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 40 (1995): pp. 43-44. Regarding episodes of *thorubos* in the assembly itself, cf. Judith Tacon, “Ecclesiastic *Thorubos*: Interventions, Interruptions, and Popular Involvement in the Athenian Assembly,” *Greece & Rome* 48 (2001): pp. 173-92; but also M.H. Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes: Structure, Principles, and Ideology* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 146-47.

<sup>116</sup> Wallace, 2004, pp. 225-26.

performed at the City Dionysia, in the aftermath of the Athenian victory at Arginousae, the assembly had expressed the will of an outraged *ochlos* by executing, *en masse*, the generals who had led the Athenian navy.<sup>117</sup> Both Xenophon and Diodorus, our two ancient sources concerning the episode, emphasize the importance of *thorubos* in the outcome of the deliberation. This *thorubos* was instrumental in two ways: in shouting down those who spoke in defense of the generals (Diod. *Bibl.* 101.6); and in terrorizing the *prytaneis* into allowing an illegal mass trial to proceed (*X. Hell.* 1.7.14). In short, *thorubos* effectively brought about the death of some Athens' leading generals, an outcome that hardly improved the city's chances in the Peloponnesian War. The army at Aulis, with its newfound authority, its willingness to exploit *thorubos*, and its eagerness to kill its greatest hero, resembles rather too starkly the Athenian populace on this occasion.

Even beyond the simple fact that the army is threatening to kill Achilles, its *thorubic* activity is cast in a particularly negative light. This is evident from the manner in which the Achaean *ochlos* intends to enact the execution: with death by stoning. The threat itself is not exceptional, as stoning was a commonly proposed sanction in the Greek literary tradition, especially in tragedy.<sup>118</sup> But the situation in the *IA* stands out for the manner in which the punishment is threatened. Indeed, nearly all other tragic instances in which a character risks

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<sup>117</sup> I discuss this episode in greater detail in Chapter Four, see below pp. 319-323.

<sup>118</sup> On the literary tradition more generally, see esp. Deborah Steiner, "Stoning and Sight: A Structural Equivalence in Greek Mythology," *Classical Antiquity* 14 (1995): pp. 193-211. The most notable example, at least within the context of this study, is *Il.* 3.56-57, where Hector claims that if they weren't cowards, the Trojans would have already stoned Paris for stealing Helen. But the fact that the Trojans have not stoned Paris suggests this is not a realistic possibility.

being stoned, the sentence is decided and delivered by a figure (or figures) in a legitimate position of power.<sup>119</sup> The example that provides the most relevant basis for contrast concerns another tragic version of Achilles himself, that of Aeschylus' *Myrmidons*. In the *Myrmidons* it is suggested that Achilles might be stoned by the Achaean army (fr. 132c)<sup>120</sup> for refusing to fight at Troy. On the surface, this is very similar to the uprising at Aulis, but unlike in the *IA*, Aeschylus suggests that a "judicial process" is used to arrive at the decision to stone Achilles,<sup>121</sup> and the news is brought to Achilles by an emissary from Agamemnon, possibly Phoenix.<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, in the *Myrmidons*, Achilles practically scoffs at the threat,<sup>123</sup> and the sanction serves only to make Achilles "more obdurate," for it is now "psychologically impossible for Achilles to rejoin battle."<sup>124</sup> In the *IA*, conversely, the impetus to stone Achilles arises from the masses and is taken most seriously by Achilles, who flees. While Euripides is clearly alluding to

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<sup>119</sup> Either by a tribunal, as in E. *Or.* 49-50, or by a group's leader or leaders, as in E. *Ion* 1111-12; *Ba.* 355-57; *S. Ant.* 36; *Ajax* 251-55). The only exceptions are in Euripides' *IT* 240-339, in which a group of shepherds uses stones to attack Orestes and Pylades for killing their livestock, though this seems less an instance of "justice" being sought through stoning than a group of people using the only weapons at their disposal to attack armed men; and A. *Ag.* 1616, in which the chorus suggests that Aegisthus will eventually be stoned by the people of Argos. Given the utterly unsympathetic light in which Aegisthus is cast, not to mention the illegitimacy of his tyranny, comparisons between the threats to stone Achilles at Aulis and Aegisthus at Argos should be limited.

<sup>120</sup> This fragment is from a papyrus, and it is itself fragmentary and of difficult interpretation. Even its Aeschylean provenance has been doubted, e.g. by D.L. Page, *Select Papyri* vol. 3 (Cambridge, MA, 1942), pp. 137-39. More recent commentators have generally seen this fragment as genuine, though they have differed in their interpretations of it. In general I follow here the reconstruction and analysis provided by Michelakis, 2002, pp. 22-57, as this is the most extensive recent treatment of the *Achilleis*. For other viewpoints, cf. Bruno Snell, *Scenes from Greek Drama* (Berkeley, 1967), pp. 1-22; Alain Moreau, "Eschyle et les tranches des repas d'Homère: la trilogie d'Achille," in *Panorama du théâtre antique: d'Eschyle aux dramaturges d'Amérique Latine*, ed. Moreau (Montpellier, 1996), pp. 3-27; and Alan H. Sommerstein, *Aeschylean Tragedy* (London, 2010), pp. 242-45.

<sup>121</sup> Michelakis, 2002, p. 24.

<sup>122</sup> Moreau, 1996, p. 14; Sommerstein, 2010, pp. 242-43.

<sup>123</sup> Achilles notes that he is "everything for the Achaean army" (fr. 132c 11: ἐγὼ τὰ πάντα Ἀχαιϊκῶ στρατῶ).

<sup>124</sup> Snell, 1967, p. 3.

the Aeschylean precedent, he differs in numerous and meaningful ways from that treatment of the stoning.

But although the situation in the *IA* is exceptional when compared to tragic precedents, it is strikingly similar to historic examples of stoning. To be clear, stoning was not a common practice in archaic and classical Greece. It seems to have been deployed only rarely, and usually against deposed tyrants or army leaders who ran afoul of their soldiers.<sup>125</sup> We are clearly dealing with the latter here, and two instances of stoning, one which involves a general and another a speaker in the Athenian *boulē*, correspond almost perfectly to the situation in the *IA* with respect to the circumstances and the manner in which the stoning arises. Both of these examples suggest that the stoning would force the audience to recognize that the Achaean army at Aulis is acting beyond the limits of acceptable behavior.<sup>126</sup>

One episode occurred near Argos in 418 BCE, where massive contingents of Spartans and Argives (and their respective allies) had gathered in preparation for what would surely have been a memorable encounter.<sup>127</sup> Before the fighting could begin, however, the Spartan king Agis and the Argive general Thrasylus brokered a truce without consulting the army or their allies. The soldiers on both sides were unhappy with the accord, not least because it was struck

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<sup>125</sup> Michel Gras, "Cité grecque et lapidation," *Publications de l'École française de Rome* 79 (1984): pp. 83-85.

<sup>126</sup> This point is contrary to the views presented by Gras, 1984, p. 85, who claims that stoning was an "expression of democracy." Gras is followed, and at greater length, by Sara Forsdyke, "Street Theatre and Popular Justice in Ancient Greece: Shaming, Stoning and Starving Offenders inside and outside the Courts," *Past and Present* 201 (2008): pp. 3-50. Nevertheless, the analysis which follows should serve to demonstrate that the stoning of military commanders was an exceptional and problematic measure.

<sup>127</sup> Thucydides calls the Spartan army "the finest Hellenic army that had ever been assembled" (5.60.3).

without their input. The situation is thus akin to that which we see at Aulis, where Achilles' faces the wrath of the Achaeans for single-handedly trying to stop the war against Troy. Thucydides' account of the soldiers' reactions to the truce is fascinating for its resemblance to that of the Achaean army, but also for the contrasts, both subtle and obvious, that distinguish the Spartans and Argives (Th. 5.60.2, 5.60.4-6):<sup>128</sup>

οἱ δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ οἱ ξύμμαχοι εἶποντο μὲν ὡς ἠγεῖτο διὰ τὸν νόμον, ἐν αἰτία δ' εἶχον κατ' ἀλλήλους πολλῇ τὸν Ἄγιν...τὸ μὲν οὖν στρατόπεδον οὕτως ἐν αἰτία ἔχοντες τὸν Ἄγιν ἀνεχώρουν τε καὶ διελύθησαν ἐπ' οἴκου ἕκαστοι, Ἀργεῖοι δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔτι ἐν πολλῶ πλέονι αἰτία εἶχον τοὺς σπεισασμένους ἄνευ τοῦ πλήθους...τόν τε Θράσυλον ἀναχωρήσαντες ἐν τῷ Χαράδρῳ, οὐπερ τὰς ἀπὸ στρατείας δίκας πρὶν εἰσέναι κρίνουσιν, ἤρξαντο λεύειν. ὁ δὲ καταφυγὼν ἐπὶ τὸν βωμὸν περιγίγνεται· τὰ μέντοι χρήματα ἐδήμευσαν αὐτοῦ.

The Spartans and their allies followed [Agis'] lead out of respect for the law, but amongst themselves they blamed him loudly [for denying them certain victory]...the army therefore withdrew blaming Agis, and returned to their respective homes. The Argives, on the other hand, were even louder in blaming those who had made the truce without consulting the people...and when they had withdrawn they began to stone [Thrasylus] in the Charadrus, the very place they hold military trials before entering the city. He survived by fleeing to the altar; they, however, confiscated his property.<sup>129</sup>

The differences in the behaviors of the two armies is highlighted by the fact that both sides consider their leaders to be “responsible” (*en aitiai*) for costing them the battle. The Spartans and their allies return to their cities unhappy, but they do not rebel against or otherwise punish Agis.<sup>130</sup> The Argives, on the other hand, look at Thrasylus' action as a betrayal of the collective

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<sup>128</sup> The segments I have deleted from the Thucydidean passage merely relate the reasons the armies were upset (namely that each side fancied their chances). A second account of this incident is found in Diod. *Bibl.* 12.78.5-6, and it falls along the general lines of Thucydides' narration.

<sup>129</sup> I am indebted to Richard Crawley's translation for a number of these turns of phrase.

<sup>130</sup> Diodorus says that the Spartans took legal action against Agis, but that he escaped punishment by promising to make up for his error (*Bibl.* 12.78.6).

will, and they react with incomparably greater severity by attempting to stone their leader to death.

The fact that this stoning took place in the normal venue for military trials lends a veneer of legitimacy to the Argives' actions, but reading between the lines we see that Thucydides suggests otherwise. To begin, he specifically emphasizes that the Spartans had maintained their collective cool "out of respect for the law"; no such explanation is supplied for the Argives' reaction, and we may thus infer that Thucydides sees the stoning as a deviation from legal standards. Moreover, had this stoning actually been mandated by the military tribunal (such as it may have been), it is unlikely that fleeing to an altar would have been sufficient to guarantee Thrasyllus' long-term survival. In fact, Diodorus tells us that it was not the altar that saved him, but a great deal of supplication (*Bibl.* 12.78.5: πολλῆς δεήσεως), and Forsdyke correctly points out that this amounts to an "emotional appeal...rather than a formal defence."<sup>131</sup> This in turn suggests that neither the stoning nor the pardon occurred within the context of a legal procedure. Finally, the fact that his property was subsequently confiscated implies that an actual legal ruling was made, and it regarded this confiscation. As such, the stoning of Thrasyllus appears to be an example of spontaneous and extra-legal activity, one that is enacted by an army that—unlike the Spartans—has little regard for the law.

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<sup>131</sup> Forsdyke, 2008, p. 30.

A similarly problematic dynamic emerges from a second instance of stoning, one which, although it occurred long before the production of the *IA*, would have been easily recalled by Euripides' audience. In refuge on Salamis in 479 BCE, the Athenian *boulē* found itself deliberating recently-received terms of surrender<sup>132</sup> from the Persians. One *bouleutēs*, a certain Lycides, suggested that they "receive the offer...and take it before the *dēmos*."<sup>133</sup> As it turned out, his fellow citizens did not appreciate the suggestion (Hdt. 9.5.2-3):

Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ αὐτίκα δεινὸν ποιησάμενοι οἱ τε ἐκ τῆς βουλῆς καὶ οἱ ἔξωθεν ὡς ἐπύθοντο, περιστάντες Λυκίδην κατέλευσαν βάλλοντες...γενομένου δὲ θορύβου ἐν τῇ Σαλαμῖνι περὶ τὸν Λυκίδην, πυνθάνονται τὸ γινόμενον αἱ γυναῖκες τῶν Ἀθηναίων, διακελευσαμένη δὲ γυνὴ γυναικὶ καὶ παραλαβοῦσα ἐπὶ τὴν Λυκίδεω οἰκίην ἦσαν αὐτοκέλεες, καὶ κατὰ μὲν ἔλευσαν αὐτοῦ τὴν γυναῖκα κατὰ δὲ τὰ τέκνα.

The Athenians immediately considered [his suggestion] terrible, both those in the *boulē* and those outside when they learned of it, and they surrounded Lycides and stoned him to death...and the Athenian women learned of the proceedings after the *thorubos* about Lycides in Salamis, and each woman exhorted the next to follow her, and they went to Lycides' house of their own accord and there stoned to death his wife and his children.

While Lycides is not a general, his position is similar to that of the Argive Thrasyllus and the Aulidan Achilles insofar as he is a central cog in a debate about whether or not to carry on a massive war. Beyond that, a number of elements in this episode stand out for their similarity to the proceedings in the *IA*. As at Aulis, the *dēmos* at Salamis resorts immediately to the extreme measure of stoning when an individual<sup>134</sup> stands in the way of a war effort. In both cases, we see

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<sup>132</sup> Terms which were seemingly generous, though we may of course doubt (as the Athenians surely did) how long they could have lasted. For the entire Persian proposal, cf. Hdt. 8.140-41.

<sup>133</sup> Hdt. 9.5.1: δεξαμένους τὸν λόγον...ἐξενεῖκαι ἐς τὸν δῆμον.

<sup>134</sup> Most likely an elite individual, as Forsdyke, 2008, p. 39, points out.

large displaced armies (the Athenians on Salamis; the Greeks at Aulis), and in both cases the war is portrayed as a Panhellenic effort against a barbarian foe.<sup>135</sup> More generally, the Athenians at Salamis react with the sort of spontaneous and unconstrained violence that is characteristic of a mob<sup>136</sup>—an *ochlos*—and they seem to realize Agamemnon’s fears by not only killing Lycides, but by then turning their rage against his family as well.<sup>137</sup> And finally, all of this occurs in the context of a large *thorubos*, a charged atmosphere that seems in no way inseparable from the violence it accompanies.

This episode is notable not only for its resemblance to many aspects of the *IA*, but also for its resonance in the collective Athenian memory. Such resonance may be detected in a number of oblique references to the incident in Greek drama,<sup>138</sup> but our most compelling piece of evidence regarding the after-life of the stoning incident comes a century-and-a-half after the

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<sup>135</sup> There is no doubt that Agamemnon, and subsequently Iphigenia, frame the Trojan war as just such an effort: cf. *IA* 1265-66 and 1400-01. How sincerely we are meant to take these claims is another issue entirely, and one into which I will not wade at this moment. For a selection of views on the subject, cf. esp. Hermann Funke, “Aristoteles zu Euripides’ *Iphigeneia in Aulis*,” *Hermes* 92 (1964): pp. 284-99; Gudrun Mellert-Hoffmann, *Untersuchungen zur Iphigenie in Aulis des Euripides* (Heidelberg, 1969); Herbert Siegel, “Self-Delusion and the ‘Volte-Face’ of Iphigenia in Euripides’ *Iphigenia at Aulis*,” *Hermes* 108 (1980): pp. 300-21.

<sup>136</sup> Vincent J. Rosivach, “Execution by Stoning in Athens,” *Classical Antiquity* 6 (1987b): pp. 232-48, makes this point repeatedly. Forsdyke, 2008, pp. 25-26, denies that this is an episode of “mob violence,” and emphasizes instead the “relative restraint of both men and women in this episode.” Her argument is belied not only by the particulars of Herodotus’ account—for example that all this occurred during a general *thorubos*—but also by subsequent reactions to the episode, which as Rosivach notes (pp. 237-38) include an effort to mitigate the spontaneity and ferocity of the Athenians’ behavior. (I discuss this in greater detail directly below.)

<sup>137</sup> Agamemnon expresses these fears two different times (*IA* 531-35, 1267-68), but it is notable that in the second instance he specifically connects the potential murder of himself, his wife, and his children to the army’s desire for war.

<sup>138</sup> Rosivach, 1987b, pp. 242-45, highlights many passages.

fact, when Lycurgus recalls it to argue in favor of condemning Leocrates to death (*Against Leocrates* 122):

ἄξιον τοίνυν ἀκοῦσαι καὶ <τοῦ> περὶ τοῦ ἐν Σαλαμῖνι τελευτήσαντος γενομένου ψηφίσματος, ὃν ἡ βουλή, ὅτι λόγῳ μόνον ἐνεχείρει προδιδόναι τὴν πόλιν, περιελομένη τοὺς στεφάνους αὐτοχειρὶ ἀπέκτεινεν.

Accordingly, it is worthwhile for you to hear as well of the measure passed concerning the man who died at Salamis, whom the [men of the] *boulē*, when he had attempted to betray the city in word alone, killed with their hands after removing their crowns.

Although Lycurgus does not mention Lycides by name,<sup>139</sup> there is every reason to believe that he is referring to the same episode. The fact that Lycides' execution remained exemplary after so many generations implies that it was an exceptionally memorable incident. But Lycurgus' retelling of the event presents some notable variations. In this new version, the members of the *boulē* put Lycides' fate to a vote (*psēphisma*), and it is specifically stated—unlike in Herodotus—that Lycides has betrayed the city (*prodidonai tēn polin*) with his proposal. The *bouleutai* are also thoughtful enough to remove their crowns, and so seem to have acted with a certain degree of respect for standard legal procedures.<sup>140</sup> Just as remarkably, Lycurgus does not specify that Lycides was stoned to death, opting instead for the comparatively bland report that they “killed him with their hands.”

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<sup>139</sup> This may be because the name was no longer certain. Demosthenes, who also brings up the incident (and who does not elide the fact that the victim was stoned to death), refers to the “traitor” in question as “Cyrilus” (18.204).

<sup>140</sup> Danielle Allen, *The World of Prometheus: The Politics of Punishing in Democratic Athens* (Princeton, 2000), p. 144, argues that “[i]n removing their crowns, the councilors handed their power back to the *demos* as a whole and acted not as magistrates...but merely as citizens...As such, they did not abuse their magisterial power by punishing beyond the limits of the magistrates.” Rosivach, 1987b, p. 238, is certainly correct in pointing out that the “detail is of interest precisely because it is unnecessary to Lycurgus’ account,” and his suggestion that it is meant to tacitly depict “the stoning...[as] a formal rational act, not a spontaneous outbreak of mob violence” is intriguing.

On the whole, Lycurgus' account of the affair is substantially milder than that of Herodotus, for he adds a façade of legality to the proceedings and elides nearly all the grisly details. All this suggests that subsequent generations were concerned with the "lawlessness and repulsiveness" of the stoning at Salamis,<sup>141</sup> to the extent that a subsequent mitigation of the tradition was required. Just as with the stoning of Thrasyllus by the Argives, the stoning of Lycides by the Athenians seems to have occurred in a manner that was recognizably problematic in its deviation from standard legal procedures. As a result, when the Achaeans react to Achilles' intervention with a *thorubos* that devolves into a near-stoning, they are clearly engaging in deviant behavior, and of a sort that makes them most akin to contemporary armies.

This critical characterization of the Achaean army is further enhanced by other information that Achilles provides about his encounter. Unlike Lycurgus' description of Lycides' crime, or Aeschylus' portrayal of the leader/army conflict in the *Myrmidons*,<sup>142</sup> Achilles does not seem to be accused of treason (προδοσία). Instead, the army has risen against him because he is "a slave to [his] marriage" (IA 1354: γάμων ἥσσονα). Achilles also reports that he attempted to defend his position only to be drowned out by "shouting" (IA 1357: κερραγμοῦ)—another apparent reference to the ongoing *thorubos*. All of this adds to the sense that the Achaean army is acting not in any rational manner, nor indeed in response to an offense that

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. A. fr. 132c.20: προδοσίαν.

would justify such extreme measures, but rather because it is in the grips of some sort of madness, just as Agamemnon had foreseen.

Nevertheless, Achilles remains firm in his intention to defend Iphigenia's life, and he has brought with him the weapons to prove it. As he prepares to stand his ground, he provides one final characterization of the army that returns us to the question of authority at Aulis and completes Euripides' project of contemporization (*IA* 1361-66):

Clyt.: ἤξει δ' ὅστις ἄψεται κόρης;	C: Who will come to seize the girl?
Ach.: μύριοι γ', ἄξει δ' Ὀδυσσεύς.	A: Thousands [will come], and Odysseus will lead her away. <sup>143</sup>
C.: ἄρ' ὁ Σισύφου γόνος;	C: The son of Sisyphus?
A.: αὐτὸς οὗτος.	A: The very one.
C.: ἴδια πράσσω, ἢ στρατοῦ ταχθεὶς ὑπο;	C: Pursuing his own interests, or sent by the army?
A.: αἶρεθεὶς ἐκῶν.	A: He was chosen willingly.
C.: πονηράν γ' αἶρεσιν, μαιφονεῖν.	C: Murder is a poor choice indeed.
A.: ἀλλ' ἐγὼ σχήσω νιν. 1365	A: But I will keep him at bay.
C.: ἄξει δ' οὐχ ἐκοῦσαν ἀρπάσας;	C: What—will he drag her off against her will?
A.: δηλαδὴ ξανθῆς ἐθειράς.	A: Of course, by her golden hair if need be.

Two things immediately stand out in this passage: the first is the extreme violence of the affair, exemplified by Odysseus' willingness to drag Iphigenia off by her hair;<sup>144</sup> the second is the return of Odysseus to the center of the fray. As it turns out, the Myrmidons, and indeed the rest of the Achaeans, are not acting entirely on their own, but in concert with another *basileus*.

<sup>143</sup> Following the note by Stockert, 1992 vol. 2, p. 581. Stockert argues that ἄξει is in reference only to Clytemnestra's question of "[τις] ἄψεται κόρης," but not in reference to the μύριοι, who are themselves the answer to Clytemnestra's first question ([τις] ἤξει). This is feasible on a grammatical level—the particle δὲ suggests we have two short, separate clauses—but it is especially convincing in light of v. 1364, which shows that a rather peculiar relationship exists between Odysseus and the *ochlos*.

<sup>144</sup> Idem, p. 582, points out that such an act is similar to the "humiliation" to which prisoners of war are subject, as for example in E. *Tr.* 881-82, and E. *Andr.* 401-02. Such comparisons hardly put the actions of the Achaean army in a positive light, in particular since they are theoretically seeking to prevent the very type of abductions of Greek brides (*IA* 1266: παῦσαι τε λέκτρων ἀρπαγὰς Ἑλληνικῶν, see above on p. 83) which they are about to commit.

At first glance, this revelation might seem to bring us a touch closer to the Homeric vision of authority that we have seen disintegrate at Aulis; after all, one can now say that the Achaeans are at least following a *basileus*. On the contrary, however, Euripides is still blazing his own trail. The wording of 1363-64 is crucial here. Clytemnestra first asks whether Odysseus is “pursuing his own interests, or [has been] sent by the army.” Neither of these choices suggests that Odysseus might be providing inspiring leadership for the Achaeans. This is obvious in the case that he has been “sent” by the army, in which case he would actually be following *their* orders. But even if he is coming of his own volition, Clytemnestra’s suggestion that he is *prassōn idia* is equally alarming. *Ta idia* were regularly juxtaposed to *ta koina*<sup>145</sup>—public matters—and in fifth-century Greek literature a very clear strain of thought emerges that sees the two as fundamentally incompatible, that the pursuit of private interests was considered to be deleterious to the interests of the community.<sup>146</sup> Regardless of whether Odysseus is following the *ochlos* or leading them in pursuit of his own interests, it is certain that he is providing a negative model of leadership.

According to Achilles, Odysseus is actually doing both: having been “chosen willingly,” he is now pursuing his own interests *and* being led by the mob. In this way, Odysseus is remarkably similar to Athens’ post-Periclean leaders who, at least according to Thucydides,

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<sup>145</sup> Stockert, 1992 vol. 2, p. 581.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Th. 2.61.4; 4.59.4-60.1; 6.12.2; 8.83.3; S, OT 634-36; E. *Hec.* 641-43. Though naturally Pindar claims to further both at once: *Ol.* 13.49.

began by looking towards their “private ambition and personal profit” (2.65.7: κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας φιλοτιμίας καὶ ἴδια κέρδη) and ended by “surrendering the affairs of the state to the whims of the *dēmos*” (2.65.10: ἠδονὰς τῷ δήμῳ καὶ τὰ πράγματα ἐνδιδόναι). Everything we hear about Odysseus in the *IA*—his obsession with *philotimia*, his eagerness to pursue his personal interests, his willingness to follow the Achaean mob—all of this serves to depict him as a contemporary paradigm of a poor leader.

In summary, Achilles’ report to Clytemnestra serves to confirm Agamemnon’s earlier fears and to definitively characterize the Achaean army at Aulis as one which is thoroughly contemporary—and also thoroughly in control of the situation. Achilles’ attempt to speak in Iphigenia’s defense results in a dangerous *thorubos*, an outcome that is unimaginable in the world of the *Iliad* yet common in fifth-century Athens. This *thorubos* then quickly devolves into an attempt to stone Achilles, one that recalls rare yet significant episodes of stoning from earlier in the fifth century. Finally, Achilles’ description of Odysseus’ particular role in this furious mob closely resembles Thucydides’ condemnation of Athenian leaders during the Peloponnesian War. All of this confirms not only the contemporary nature of the structures of power and authority at Aulis, but also the uniquely negative spin the *IA* provides through this contemporization.

### 3. *Conclusion: Questioning the Authority of Homeric Authority*

At this point, at least three things should be clear: that the political setting Euripides creates for the *IA* is far more closely based on the world of his audience than that of the Homeric epic which he constantly recalls; that the Iliadic echoes of the *IA* serve to highlight this departure from tradition; and that through this departure the *IA* constructs an implicit critique of the mechanisms of authority and leadership in democratic Athens. Still, the revision of Homeric conflicts and resolutions does more than simply cast a light on the intricacies and deficiencies of political authority in Athens. It also forces the audience to reevaluate the meaning of Homer's literary authority.

This final point is at odds with the opinion of most modern scholars, who, as I have mentioned, generally argue that Euripides' engagement with the *Iliad* results in the confirmation of the literary authority of Homer's text, and by extension in the inability of the tragic text to rewrite or revise the epic tradition. But if it is true that the existence of the *Iliad* makes Iphigenia's death a foregone conclusion, it is also true that the *IA* raises some troubling questions about the future in Troy. Indeed, in the aftermath of Euripides' Aulis, it becomes difficult to imagine just how Homer's *Iliad* would unfold; an army such as the one described by Euripides would hardly allow Agamemnon and Achilles to engage in the prolonged conflict which marks the *Iliad*. We might also wonder how successful Odysseus would be in turning back the tide of retreat once the Achaean soldiers decide they have had enough. In other words,

while Homer's text certainly imposes itself on the plot of the *IA*, the tragedy itself is able to question the contemporary relevance of the society described in Homer's epic.

In this light, the *IA*'s contemporization of the power structures among the Achaeans calls into question one specific aspect of Homeric authority: its educational purpose. We know that Homer was highly regarded not only for his poetic abilities, but also for the didactic potential of his poems.<sup>147</sup> The educational aspects of Homer's poetry may not have been a central concern to the poet himself, but it is clear that by the classical era, many Greeks believed his epics to be most instructive. Xenophanes, for example, claims that "from the beginning, all men have learned from Homer."<sup>148</sup> Herodotus notes that it is from Homer and Hesiod that the Greeks first learned of the gods' origins, names, and functions.<sup>149</sup> And Plato speaks of those who praise Homer because "the poet has educated Greece," and is a worthy example for the "ordering and culture of human affairs."<sup>150</sup> This is not to say that Homer's usefulness as a teacher was universally recognized; among others, Plato regularly attacks the notion that the Homeric texts were valid educational tools. But it is clear that the image of Homer as an

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<sup>147</sup> If indeed these aspects can be separated; cf. Simon Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 140. For more on Homer's role in Ancient Greek education, see esp. Henri Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1965), pp. 31-41, 246-47; Eric A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, MA, 1963), pp. 61-86; W.J. Verdenius, *Homer, the Educator of the Greeks* (Amsterdam, 1970); Kevin Robb, *Literacy and Paideia in Ancient Greece* (New York, 1994), pp. 159-82, who goes so far as to argue that "to convey an oral paideia was the fundamental cultural purpose of Homeric speech" (p. 166); and Penelope Murray, ed., *Plato on Poetry* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 19-24.

<sup>148</sup> Xenophanes fr. B 10 DK: ἐξ ἀρχῆς καθ' Ὅμηρον ἐπεὶ μεμαθήκασι πάντες.

<sup>149</sup> Hdt. 2.53.2. As is correctly pointed out by Andrew Ford, *The Origins of Criticism: Literary Culture and Poetic Theory in Classical Greece* (Princeton, 2002), p. 199, Herodotus does not mean to "praise the poets' omniscience...but [to form] a historical argument that Greek images and conceptions of divinity derive from them."

<sup>150</sup> Pl. *Rep.* 606e: τὴν Ἑλλάδα πεπαιδευκεν οὗτος ὁ ποιητὴς καὶ πρὸς διοίκησιν τε καὶ παιδείαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων παραγμάτων

educator was accepted by many Greeks in the fifth century, and it is likely that there was a certain amount of controversy surrounding the idea.

Indeed, the debate about Homer's educational merits existed not only the general level, but also regarding specific areas of expertise to which his poetry might be applied. This range of topics was said to be quite wide,<sup>151</sup> and some of these were especially germane to the problems set in motion at Aulis. For instance, judging from our classical sources, it was widely believed that Homer could impart specific lessons on war, the men who fought them, and those who led them. As Aeschylus asks in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, "how else did divine Homer win honor and glory, if not from teaching the most useful things: battle lines, virtues, and the arming of men."<sup>152</sup> Later on, Plato's *Ion* will claim that, thanks to his expertise on Homer matters, he should know how a general should speak to and exhort his soldiers.<sup>153</sup> And in Xenophon's *Symposium*, we see Niceratus suggest that "whoever might wish to become...a leader of people or a general...should consult [him]," thanks to his thorough command of Homer's poetry.<sup>154</sup> We

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<sup>151</sup> See Verdenius, 1970, for an enumeration of these topics, which range from the "moral," "political," and "religious," to the "technical" and "practical."

<sup>152</sup> Ar. *Frogs* 1034-36: ὁ δὲ θεῖος Ὅμηρος/ἀπὸ τοῦ τιμῆν καὶ κλέος ἔσχεν πλὴν τοῦδ' ὅτι χρήστ' ἐδίδαξεν,/τάξεις ἀρετὰς ὀπλίσεις ἀνδρῶν; Barbara Graziosi, *Inventing Homer: The Early Reception of Epic* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 177, argues that "the expression *hopliseis andron*...could not come closer to describing hoplites." This is perhaps an exaggeration, but she is surely correct that these lines suggest that Homer is adept at "teaching how to organise mass fighting" (ibid.). So too Kenneth Dover, ed., *Aristophanes: Frogs* (Oxford, 1993), p. 322: "it was still conventional in some quarters to regard Homer as the source of wisdom on tactics."

<sup>153</sup> Pl. *Ion* 540d. Also mentioned by Dover, 1993, p. 322.

<sup>154</sup> X. *Symp.* 4.6: ὅστις ἂν οὖν ὑμῶν βούληται...ἢ δημηγορικὸς ἢ στρατηγικὸς γενέσθαι...ἐμὲ θεραπεύετω. We know from X. *Symp.* 3.5 that Niceratus' education had consisted of memorizing the Homeric epics in their entirety.

may doubt the seriousness of Niceratus' offer,<sup>155</sup> but in making it he is clearly drawing on an idea that was accepted by many of his contemporaries, namely that the Homeric texts were repositories of knowledge of warfare and leadership.

That there was a widespread belief in Homer's expertise on war and generalship is further confirmed by Plato's fervent refutations of the notion. The *Ion* itself, of course, merely serves to ridicule Ion's claim that his knowledge of Homer made him an expert on "the art of generalship" (*Ion* 540d: τέχνη στρατηγική).<sup>156</sup> Plato engages in a broader confutation of Homer's didactic abilities in the *Republic* (cf. esp. 598d-600e), and he singles out "wars, generalships, the administration of cities and the education of men" as the "finest" (*kallistōn*) subjects on which Homer is reputed to be an expert.<sup>157</sup> There would be little point in elaborating such extensive denials if Plato did not believe that this view was common, so we may presume that many Athenians still claimed, and in all seriousness, that Homer was an expert in the art of war.

And in fact, the evidence suggests that the individuals who invoked this Homeric expertise were most variegated. This emerges in unexpected ways, for instance in the treatise that is known to us as the *Certamen* between Homer and Hesiod.<sup>158</sup> The surviving work can be

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<sup>155</sup> See Ford, 2002, p.205.

<sup>156</sup> This refutation is the crux of the conclusion of the *Ion*, cf. 540d-542a.

<sup>157</sup> Pl. *Rep.* 599c-d: πολέμων τε πέρι καὶ στρατηγιῶν καὶ διοικήσεων πόλεων, καὶ παιδείας πέρι ἀνθρώπου.

<sup>158</sup> On this curious work, see M.L. West, "The Contest of Homer and Hesiod," *The Classical Quarterly* 17 (1967): pp. 433-50; West, ed., *Homeric Hymns, Homeric Apocrypha, Lives of Homer* (Cambridge, MA, 2003), pp. 297-300; N.J.

dated to the Roman era, but it is almost certainly based on a tradition going at least as far back as the fourth century BCE, and is as such indicative of attitudes to Homer in democratic Athens. The basic and obviously fictional conceit of the treatise is that Homer and Hesiod meet at Aulis and engage in a poetic competition. All this would be of little concern to the matter at hand, except that the passage that Homer chooses as his “finest” passage<sup>159</sup> is most unusual: *Il.* 13.126-33, 339-44—lines which have been seen “as an interpolated or at best problematic depiction of hoplite-tactics.”<sup>160</sup> The choice of this unique passage seems to confirm that Homer was regarded as a teacher of hoplite battle tactics, and thus especially germane to the world of fifth-century Athens. Going even further, Graziosi argues that “in democratic Athens Homer becomes the poet of communal fighting.”<sup>161</sup> Despite the starkly different realities of war and leadership that existed in the Homeric epics and fifth-century Athens, the Athenians were nevertheless able to accommodate Homer as a teacher of these arts in a democratic society.

At the same time, we can also see the exploitation of Homeric texts by those who were ideologically opposed to Athenian democracy. Two passages, in fact, attest to the utilization of Homeric poetry within what we may call “oligarchic” contexts. The first is from Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*, where the author discusses the accusations made against Socrates in the trial that

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Richardson, “The Contest of Homer and Hesiod and Alcidas’ Mouseion,” *The Classical Quarterly* 31 (1981): pp. 1-10; and Graziosi, 2002, pp. 168-180.

<sup>159</sup> *Cert.* 12: τὸ κάλλιστον ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων ποιημάτων. Note that “Homer” here seems to agree with Plato, insofar as both claim that his poems’ “finest” (*kallistos*) moments involve lessons on warfare.

<sup>160</sup> Richard Janko, *The Iliad: A Commentary* vol. 4 (Cambridge, 1992), p. 59; cited by Graziosi, 2002, p. 175.

<sup>161</sup> Graziosi, 2002, p. 180.

led to his execution. One of these charges is that Socrates used to “choose the basest passages of the finest poets and use them as lessons to teach his companions to be criminals and tyrants.”<sup>162</sup> Xenophon then goes on to cite one of these so-called base passages, and it turns out to be none other than the lines which Odysseus speaks to the *basileis* and to the *dēmos* in Book Two of the *Iliad*, including the ones cited above in which the *dēmos* are said to be “of no account whatever in battle or council.”<sup>163</sup> The obvious implication is that these lines were seen as fundamentally undemocratic, and that they were wont to be used by individuals who argued in favor of oligarchy or tyranny.

An even more strikingly politicized example of Homeric citation is found in Theophrastus’ *Characters*. In his caricature of an “Oligarchic Man,” Theophrastus states that this is the type of man who, “of Homer’s words remembers only this, that ‘[l]ordship for many is no good thing. Let there be one ruler.’”<sup>164</sup> These are, again, taken from the very same episode to which Socrates’ “accusers” refer, that is the passage in which Odysseus rebukes the Achaean army as it flees. Theophrastus’ diagnosis of oligarchic exploitations of Homer is not subtle. In the light of this evidence, it is virtually certain that Homer, and in particular this passage of

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<sup>162</sup> X. *Mem.* 1.2.56: ἔφη δ’ αὐτὸν ὁ κατήγορος καὶ τῶν ἐνδοξοτάτων ποιητῶν ἐκλεγόμενον τὰ πονηρότατα καὶ τούτοις μαρτυρίαις χρώμενον διδάσκειν τοὺς συνόντας κακούργους τε εἶναι καὶ τυραννικούς. Once again, it is Graziosi who brings this passage to my attention (2002, pp. 178-79)

<sup>163</sup> X. *Mem.* 1.2.58, citing *Il.* 2.188-91, 198-203 (which are in turn cited and discussed at length above at pp. 48-50).

<sup>164</sup> Theophr. *Char.* 26.2: καὶ τῶν Ὀμήρου ἐπῶν τοῦτο ἔν μόνον κατέχειν, ὅτι ‘Οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη, εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω.’ This passage was brought to my attention by Josiah Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens: Intellectual Critics of Popular Rule* (Princeton, 1988), p. 365.

Homer, were used by opponents of democracy as a “lesson” in how power and authority should be exercised in an ideal society.

The *IA*'s consistent manipulation of the Homeric text must be read in the context of this highly charged debate concerning the educational merits and uses of Homer's poetry. By presenting the dynamics of the Achaean army in an overtly contemporary manner, he emphasizes the distance that lies between contemporary and Homeric societies. This gap, which becomes ever more apparent as the tragedy reaches its climax, suggests that there are severe limits to the lessons that can be imported from Homer's world. Achilles' plight exemplifies the irrelevance of the Homeric text. The young hero, who sees the conflicts along very much the same lines as his Homeric counterpart, discovers almost too late that he is living in a new world, one in which his elite status does not even grant him authority over his own Myrmidons, much less the rest of the Achaeans. As we watch Achilles complete this journey of discovery, we understand that these educational readings of Homer, whether “democratic,” “oligarchic,” or unaffiliated, are undermined by Euripides' depiction of the Achaeans at Aulis. Insofar as the world of Aulis is a mirror of contemporary Athens, a world in which the Achaean army has acquired a definite political consciousness and in which even Homer's heroes must adjust to this new reality, the audience sees most clearly the incongruity of their world with that of the epic *basileis*. The *IA* thus illustrates the utter impracticality of using the *Iliad* to impart lessons on leadership and military authority.

In the following two chapters I will examine a different kind of poetic engagement, one that concerns not a particular text but specific genres: epinician and paeon. Here too the dynamics of the poetic interaction will be complex and significant, for we will see that the plays in question—the *Heracles* and the *Ion*—both use external poetic expressions in order to emphasize the problematic nature of political issues explored in the play, and indeed to challenge Athenian uses of the poetic genres through which these issues are explored.

## Chapter Two

### Heracles in the City: Euripides and the Case for Epinician Poetry

ὕμνησαι στεφάνωμα μό-  
χθων δι' εὐλογίας θέλω.  
γενναίων δ' ἀρεταὶ πόνων  
τοις θανούσιν ἄγαλμα.

*I wish to sing, through fine praise,  
a crown for [Heracles'] toils.  
For the virtues of noble labors  
Are a pleasing gift to the dead.*

*(Euripides, Heracles 355-58)*

Considering the range, scope, and ostentation of the epinician tones in the *Heracles*, the relative dearth of scholarship on the issue is startling. To be sure, it was necessary for Leslie Kurke and others to lay bare the “integrative” aspects of Pindar’s poetry before we could begin to understand how the socio-political function of epinician poetry operates in the context of Euripides’ play. But even in the two decades since Kurke’s seminal work,<sup>1</sup> little has been written

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<sup>1</sup> I.e. Leslie Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise: Pindar and the Poetics of Social Economy* (Ithaca, 1991).

about the relationship between the tragic hero's struggle to secure himself a home in the *polis* of the play, and the epinician odes and tones that dominate the *Heracles*. In this chapter, I redress this dearth by examining the tragedy's epinician apparatus and its relationship to the tragic questions and problems concerning Heracles' eventual integration. After a brief review of previous scholarly interpretations of the tragedy, I begin by discussing the contexts in which the play is set, focusing in particular on the contemporary setting of the play, on Euripides' depiction of Thebes as a negative paradigm for the modern *polis*, and on how this negativity expresses itself solely through the devaluation of Heracles' heroism.

In the main section of the chapter, I analyze Euripides' many uses of epinician poetry in the *Heracles*, and compare them to the major themes and values that emerge in Pindar's epinician odes. Here, I demonstrate that the initial struggle for Heracles' acceptance in Thebes, and the success of his ultimate incorporation into Athens, are spoken or sung of in terms that are decidedly epinician, and that these poetic and political processes very closely reflect ideas that Pindar sets forth. Finally, I contrast the place of epinician poetry and values in the *Heracles* to the actual reception of the genre in fifth-century Athens, with a particular focus on the period in which the play was produced (around 415 BCE).<sup>2</sup> I thus make two separate but closely related points: that epinician poetry and values are shown in the *Heracles* to be beneficial—

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<sup>2</sup> On the date, cf. Godfrey W. Bond, ed., *Euripides: Heracles* (Oxford, 1981), pp. xxx-xxxii. Bond uses metrical evidence to date the *Heracles* to a period "within (or just before) the last decade of Euripides' work." See also James Diggle, ed., *Euripidis Fabulae* vol. 2 (Oxford, 1981), p. 116.

perhaps even necessary—for a community attempting to resolve the question of a hero's place in a *polis*; and that this depiction of epinician mediation does not fit easily with the manner in which Euripides' Athenian public generally perceived the place of epinician poetry—or the Olympic victors these odes celebrated—in the democratic *polis*.

### 1. Euripides' *Heracles*: Problems and Interpretations

*Herakles* of all the extent plays raises with greatest urgency the perennial Euripidean questions about the nature of dramatic unity, the role of the gods, and the uses of cult and legend; and it has been impossible for interpreters to proceed, while leaving these central issues unresolved.<sup>3</sup>

The seemingly “broken-backed”<sup>4</sup> nature of Euripides' *Heracles* has indeed, as Michelini suggests, caused much consternation regarding the meaning or unity of the tragedy. Scholars have, perhaps not surprisingly, offered and rejected numerous themes around which the tragedy may be said to center itself. These range from virtue (*aretē*)<sup>5</sup> to violence,<sup>6</sup> from human

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<sup>3</sup> Ann Norris Michelini, *Euripides and the Tragic Tradition* (Madison, 1987), p. 231.

<sup>4</sup> Gilbert Murray, *Greek Studies* (Oxford, 1946), p. 112, commenting on the apparent incoherence of the play's dramatic action.

<sup>5</sup> H.H.O Chalk, “*Areth and Bia* in Euripides' *Herakles*,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 82 (1962): pp. 7-18; S. Taragna Novo, “L'“APHTH” di Eracle e la sorte dell'uomo nel contrasto tra Lico e Anfitrione (Eur. *H.F.* 140-239),” *Rivista di Filologia e Istruzione Classica* 101 (1973): pp. 45-69. *Contra* see Arthur W.H. Adkins, “Basic Greek Values in Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Hercules Furens*,” *The Classical Quarterly* 16 (1966): pp. 193-219.

<sup>6</sup> Shirley A. Barlow, “Structure and Dramatic Realism in Euripides' *Heracles*,” *Greece & Rome* 29 (1982): pp. 115-25; Mark W. Padilla, “Heroic Paternity in Euripides' *Heracles*,” *Arethusa* 27 (1994): pp. 279-302.

friendship (*philia*)<sup>7</sup> to divine justice (or injustice),<sup>8</sup> and from combinations of these various themes<sup>9</sup> to the “unity of contrast” suggested by Bond.<sup>10</sup> Michelini’s own solution to the problem is attractive, not least because it absolves us of the need to “defend” the tragedy: “*Herakles* presents us with a part of reality usually left out of drama, a sequence of events that, like many sequences in life, is arbitrary, senseless and contradictory...it is designed to be unintelligible.”<sup>11</sup> If no true “sense” can be found in the tragedy, then we are free to attack other problems.

Perhaps following Michelini’s lead, in more recent years many scholars have turned their attention elsewhere.<sup>12</sup> Some have focused on the very contradictions, reversals, and odd

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<sup>7</sup> J.T. Sheppard, “The Formal Beauty of the *Hercules Furens*,” *The Classical Quarterly* 10 (1916): pp. 72-79.

<sup>8</sup> Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Euripides: Herakles* vol. 1 (Berlin, 1895), pp. 120-30; and Anne Pippin Burnett, *Catastrophe Survived: Euripides’ Plays of Mixed Reversal* (Oxford, 1971) pp. 175-80. Both argue in favor of the “justice” of Hera’s provocation of Heracles’ homicidal madness, and the resultant death of his wife and children. *Contra* see Michael R. Halleran, “Rhetoric, Irony, and the Ending of Euripides’ *Herakles*,” *Classical Antiquity* 5 (1986): pp. 171-81, who argues that “the entire drama raises the question of divine justice” (p. 179) and that the play “ends with two different views of the gods...The meaning of the drama does not lie with one or the other but, rather, in the interaction of the two.”

<sup>9</sup> E.g. D.J. Conacher, “Theme, Plot, and Technique in the *Heracles* of Euripides,” *Phoenix* 9 (1955): pp. 139-52; and J.A. Shelton, “Structural Unity in Euripides’ *Hercules Furens*,” *Eranos* 77 (1979): pp. 101-10. Both Conacher and Shelton argue that the *Heracles* brings to light the injustice of the gods and the necessity of *philia* as a remedy for this problem. J.C. Kamerbeek, “Unity and Meaning of Euripides’ *Heracles*,” *Mnemosyne* 19 (1966): pp. 1-16, argues that “the connecting links between the three parts of the tragedy are many,” including ideas about *aretē*, *philia*, and divine justice. In a similar vein see Harvey Yunis, *A New Creed: Fundamental Religious Beliefs in the Athenian Polis and Euripidean Drama* (Göttingen, 1988), pp. 139-71. Yunis argues that the issue of human/divine reciprocity is the question that dominates the tragedy.

<sup>10</sup> Bond, ed., 1981, p. xxiv. The title of Michelini’s chapter on the play (1987, pp. 231-76), “*Herakles*: Tragedy in Paradox,” suggests that she essentially follows Bond’s theory of a “unity of contrast,” though she is less explicit in endorsing this as a unifying theme.

<sup>11</sup> Michelini, 1987, p. 232.

<sup>12</sup> Though of course not all. A more recent article attempting to establish a central theme is E.M. Griffiths, “Euripides’ *Herakles* and the Pursuit of Immortality,” *Mnemosyne* 55 (2002): pp. 641-56.

repetitions the play presents, attempting to illuminate rather than solve them.<sup>13</sup> Others have concentrated on particular problems or points of interest in the play, such as the question of “divine agency,”<sup>14</sup> or the nature of Heracles’ madness.<sup>15</sup> And a few have even attacked the problems with which this chapter will engage: the centrality of epinician poetry within the *Heracles*, and the meaning of the hero’s struggle to find for himself a place in the *poleis* of the tragedy.

Of these, however, no one has discussed the manner in which epinician poetics, and their place in the play, work in conjunction with Heracles’ transitions throughout the tragedy and with his ultimate integration into the Athenian *polis*. Foley discusses both the significance of praise poetry and the issue of Heracles’ marginalization from society, but for her these arguments remain separate.<sup>16</sup> Papadopoulou notes that “the tragedy problematizes the nature of Heracles’ heroism and the ways in which this heroism can be accommodated in a civilized

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<sup>13</sup> In this category, which should of course be considered approximate rather than restrictive, one can include Mark Padilla, “The Gorgonic Archer: The Danger of Sight in Euripides’ *Heracles*,” *The Classical World* 86 (1992): pp. 1-12; Christina S. Kraus, “Dangerous Supplements: Etymology and Genealogy in Euripides’ *Heracles*,” *The Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 44 (1999): pp. 137-57; Francis M. Dunn, “Ends and Means in Euripides’ *Heracles*,” in *Classical Closure: Reading the End in Greek and Latin Literature*, eds. Deborah H. Roberts, Dunn, and Don Fowler (Princeton, 1997), pp. 83-111.

<sup>14</sup> As Michelini, 1987, puts it in her section heading (p. 267). This is particularly tricky since Heracles essentially denies that the gods can act out of need or spite, despite the fact that the audience has witnessed them doing so. In Michelini’s terms (p. 275), “[i]n the plane of the play’s mimesis of reality, what Herakles says [about the gods] is patently untrue.” For more on this subject, cf. esp. S.E. Lawrence, “The God That Is Truly God and the Universe of Euripides’ *Heracles*,” *Mnemosyne* 51 (1998): pp. 129-46, in which can also be found a helpful synthesis of previous interpretations; and Yunis, 1988, pp. 139-71.

<sup>15</sup> Karelisa Hartigan, “Euripidean Madness: Herakles and Orestes,” *Greece & Rome* 34 (1987): pp. 126-35; Brooke Holmes, “Euripides’ *Heracles* in the Flesh,” *Classical Antiquity* 27 (2008): pp. 231-81.

<sup>16</sup> Helene Foley, *Ritual Irony: Poetry and Sacrifice in Euripides* (Ithaca, 1985), pp. 147-204.

world,” but she makes almost no mention of the epinician language and odes of the play.<sup>17</sup> Swift is the first to engage both problems simultaneously, but she explains Euripides’ use of the genre as a “renegotiation of epinician values” that eliminates the “political overtones” of the genre.<sup>18</sup> This argument overlooks the emphasis in the play on the political consequences of either accepting or rejecting Heracles, and in particular the fact that it is only through epinician mediation that first Thebes, and later Athens, are shown to accept the hero. A fuller analysis of the *Heracles*’ epinician apparatus is fully warranted.

## 2. *Context and Setting: A Contemporary World, a Sick Polis*

One might be pardoned for supposing, during the prologue, that the *Heracles* takes place in the archaic past of its protagonist’s legendary endeavors. Such is the impression given by Amphitryon, Heracles’ father, when he describes Thebes’ famous foundation by an “earth-born crop of sown-men” (*HF* 4-5: ὁ γηγενῆς/σπαρτῶν στάχυς) as if their successors—the Cadmeians—were still in power. The image of a primordial world is further developed by his report of Heracles’ whereabouts: according to Amphitryon, he has left home “to tame the earth,” (*HF* 20: ἐξημερῶσαι γαῖαν) and is currently in the underworld completing his final

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<sup>17</sup> Thalia Papadopoulou, *Heracles and Euripidean Tragedy* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 57.

<sup>18</sup> L. A. Swift, *The Hidden Chorus: Echoes of Genre in Tragic Lyric* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 155-56.

mission. Thus far, it appears that the hero is well-entrenched in the age of most of his myths, the pre-modern world in which his civilizing prowess is still needed and in which he can be referred to, unhesitatingly, as *kleinos* (famous, renowned; cf. *HF* 12).

This illusion of an archaic setting is soon broken by Amphitryon's admission of the turmoil which seized Thebes after Heracles' descent into Hades. As it turns out, the old dynasty has succumbed to *stasis*, and the city has fallen into the hands of the Euboian usurper Lycus (*HF* 26-34). Having killed the Cadmeian ruler (Creon), Lycus now intends to dispatch Heracles' wife and children, the rightful heirs to the throne (*HF* 39-43). This violent rejection of the Theban dynasty is emblematic of a certain type of political strife, and it is a reflection of contemporary concerns. As Solon and Alcaeus attest, *stasis* was certainly not a new phenomenon in Greece.<sup>19</sup> But the universality which Thucydides ascribes to it,<sup>20</sup> as well as the belief he espoused that *stasis* was a natural consequence of war,<sup>21</sup> implies that this problem was of particular relevance at the end of the fifth century BCE. Even the emphasis on Lycus' status as an outsider (*HF* 32: Καδμεῖος οὐκ ὄν; *HF* 257: ἔπηλυς ὄν) specifically recalls contemporary correlations of *stasis* and the interference of outsiders.<sup>22</sup> In the space of a few lines in the prologue, the setting of the play subtly shifts from dynastic to revolutionary, from primordial to contemporary.

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<sup>19</sup> Solon fr. 4.19; Alcaeus fr. 326.1

<sup>20</sup> Thucydides notes that after the revolution in Corcyra "the whole of Greece, so to speak, was convulsed [by *stasis*]" (3.82.1: ὕστερόν γε καὶ πᾶν ὡς εἰπεῖν τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἐκινήθη).

<sup>21</sup> Th. 3.81.1-2.

<sup>22</sup> As we see in Th. 3.82.1, and Plato, *Rep.* 556e.

Within this contemporary tragic setting, it is obvious that Thebes, in its stasiotic state, represents a negative paradigm of Greek society. Finley calls *stasis* “the greatest evil and the most common danger” within the Greek world.<sup>23</sup> Thucydides is, if anything, more pessimistic. Speaking of the civil war in Corcyra, he states quite frankly that “on account of the *staseis*, every kind of iniquity arose in the Greek land.”<sup>24</sup> An even starker description of *stasis* is found in a document called the *Peri Politeias*, ostensibly a speech by an anonymous orator in 404 BCE:<sup>25</sup> “*stasis* surpasses war [in evil] to the same extent that war does peace.” Lest any uncertainty remain as to Thebes’ malignance, the *stasis* is described several times as a disease that has overcome the city. Amphitryon refers to it as such in the prologue (*HF* 34), as does Megara upon Heracles’ return (*HF* 542). But the most significant reference to Thebes’ sickness appears in a lament by the chorus (*HF* 272-74):

οὐ γὰρ εὖ φρονεῖ πόλις  
στάσει νοσοῦσα καὶ κακοῖς βουλευμάσιν.  
οὐ γὰρ ποτ’ ἂν σὲ δεσπότην ἐκτήσατο.

For the city, sick with  
*stasis* and evil resolutions, has lost its mind.  
Otherwise it would never have taken you as  
its leader.

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<sup>23</sup> M.I. Finley, “Athenian Demagogues,” *Past and Present* 21 (1962): p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Th. 3.83.1: πᾶσα ἰδέα κατέστη κακοτροπίας διὰ τὰς στάσεις τῶ Ἑλληνικῶ.

<sup>25</sup> *Peri Politeia* 11: ἴσῳ μέντοι μεγέθει τὸν πόλεμον ἢ στάσις ὑπερβάλλει, ὅσῳπερ ὁ πόλεμος τὴν εἰρήνην.

This document, attributed in antiquity to Herodes Atticus, is a speech exhorting the citizens of Larisa to join Sparta in their war against Macedonia, hence the precision of the presumed date. The debate over the actual date extends back at least a century and shows no sign of being resolved. Cf. William Scott Ferguson, *Greek Imperialism* (Boston, 1913), p. 21. Ferguson, quoting the same passage as above, argues that the writer of the speech was a “pamphleteer” from Larisa, but that “with characteristic conservatism the English scholars, Adcock and Knox...uphold the attribution of this pamphlet to Herodes Atticus” (see p. 21 fn 1). *Contra* Ferguson cf. D.A. Russell, *Greek Declamation* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 111. More recently, Simon Hornblower, *The Greek World 479-323 BC* (London, 2013), p. 186, argues that the speech is indeed original, and that the attribution to Herodes Atticus is false. Elsewhere, Hornblower argues that even if the text must be dated to the second century AD, “is it not possible that the author was after all using authentic Thessalian material?” Cf. Hornblower, “Sicily and the Origins of the Corinthian War,” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 41 (1992a): p. 121.

The chorus equates *stasis* with disease, with poor judgment, and even with insanity, and notes that it is only thanks to this disease that Lycus is now the tyrant of Thebes. Moreover, even beyond the fact that a *stasis* brought him to power, Lycus' tyranny is on its own a negative outcome. As Raaflaub has convincingly argued, tyranny and tyrants were anathema to the Athenian public to the extent that "[i]t helped Athenians define what they were not...[and] encompassed everything that was hostile to democracy."<sup>26</sup> Constitutionally speaking, Thebes is everything that Euripides' Athens eschews.<sup>27</sup>

Yet though Thebes is described as an abhorrent version of a *polis*, this perversion expresses itself in only one manner on-stage: with the denigration and marginalization of Heracles and his family. The connection between the two is emphasized from the very beginning. Shortly after his description of Lycus as a tyrant (*HF* 29) and of Thebes as a city "sick with *stasis*" (*HF* 34), *Amphitryon* portrays the effects on his family in no uncertain terms (*HF* 38-40):

ὁ καινὸς οὗτος τῆσδε γῆς ἄρχων Λύκος  
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας ἐξελεῖν θέλει  
 κτανῶν δάμαρτά <θ'>, ὡς φόνῳ σβέσῃ φόνον 40

This new ruler of this land, Lycus,  
 wishes to remove the children of Heracles  
 and kill his wife, to quench blood with blood.

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<sup>26</sup> Kurt A. Raaflaub, "Stick and Glue: The Function of Tyranny in Fifth-Century Athenian Democracy," in *Popular Tyranny: Sovereignty and Its Discontents in Ancient Greece*, ed. Kathryn A. Morgan (Austin, 2003), p. 83. On this subject as it pertains to tragedy, see in the same volume Richard Seaford, "Tragic Tyranny," pp. 95-115.

<sup>27</sup> This is, of course, a trend in Athenian tragedy: cf. Froma Zeitlin, "Thebes: Theater of Self and Society in Athenian Drama," in *Nothing to Do with Dionysus? Athenian Drama in Its Social Context*, eds. John J. Winkler and Zeitlin (Princeton, 1990), pp. 130-67.

Having established his tyranny, Lycus' first order of business is to eliminate potential rivals. His reason for killing the family is that he has no desire to see Heracles' children, his own potential "avengers," reach adulthood.<sup>28</sup> In other words, as tyrant Lycus wishes to consolidate his own position, which essentially means removing all traces of Heracles from Thebes.

Part and parcel with this operation is Lycus' attempt to sully Heracles' reputation as a means of justifying the murders he intends to commit (*HF* 151-56):

τί δὴ τὸ σεμνὸν σῶ κατείργασται πόσει,  
 ὕδραν ἔλειον εἰ διώλεσε κτανῶν  
 ἢ τὸν Νέμειον θῆρα; ὃν ἐν βρόχοις ἐλῶν  
 βραχίονός φησ' ἀγχόναισιν ἐξελεῖν.

What great thing has your husband done,  
 if he wiped out that marshy Hydra or killed  
 the Nemean beast that he took out with a noose  
 but claims to have crushed in the coils of his  
 arms?

τοῖσδ' ἐξαγωνίζεσθε; τῶνδ' ἄρ' οὐνεκα  
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας οὐ θνήσκειν χρεῶν;

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These are your arguments? Because of these  
 deeds the children of Heracles ought not die?

Lycus' argument is that Heracles has done nothing to warrant the salvation of his children; that the hero is "worthless" (*HF* 157: οὐδὲν ὄν), and that he is owed not even this minimal compensation for his toils or virtues. This denigration of Heracles' labors must have seemed radical to an audience accustomed to seeing sculptural representations of his "battles with beasts" (*HF* 158: θηρῶν ἐν αἰχμῇ)—side-by-side with those of Theseus no less—on a regular basis.<sup>29</sup> Lycus' words are shocking, and in conjunction with the accusation of cowardice which soon follows, they emphasize that the Theban *stasis* has one principal consequence: the

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<sup>28</sup> *HF* 168-69: οὐκ οὖν τραφέντων τῶνδε τιμωροὺς ἐμοὺς/χορήζω λιπέσθαι τῶν δεδραμένων δίκην. (I do not wish, when these [children] are grown, that my avengers remain as punishment for the things I have done.)

<sup>29</sup> These labors, including his battles with the Hydra and the Nemean Lion, were represented on the east metopes of the temple of Hephaestus in the Athenian *agora*. Cf. Homer A. Thompson, "The Sculptural Adornment of the Hephaisteion," *American Journal of Archaeology* 66 (1962): pp. 339-47.

dishonest devaluation of Heracles' heroic stock as a means to justify the extirpation of his family.

The tragic crisis that the family faces is thus explicitly related to the question of Heracles' heroism and of how to receive and accommodate such a hero in the contemporary *polis*. This question is one that epinician poetry is also deeply concerned with. What is more, Heracles is himself a vivid reminder of epinician poetry, for he is the hero whom Pindar most frequently cites<sup>30</sup> and was the mythical founder of the Olympic games, the occasion at which, Pindar suggests, epinician poetry was first performed.<sup>31</sup> Both the plot and characters of the tragedy thus imply that epinician poetry will play a crucial role in the *Heracles*. In the following section, I will provide a brief overview of the formal and ideological features of epinician poetry, after which I will examine, through an epinician lens, a series of six responses to Heracles' heroism in the tragedy.

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<sup>30</sup> M.P. Nieto Hernandez, "Heracles and Pindar," *Metis* 8 (1993): p. 76 (along with fn 2).

<sup>31</sup> On Heracles' founding of the Olympic games, cf. Pi. *Ol.* 10.57-59. On the performance of epinician songs at these first games, see *Ol.* 10.76-77: ἀείδετο δὲ πᾶν τέμενος τερπναῖσι θαλίαις/τὸν ἐγκώμιον ἀμφὶ τρῶπον ("and the whole precinct resounded with the sound of praise at joyous feasts").

### 3. *Epinician Poetry: A Survey of the Genre*

As with most questions of genre, many of the principal elements of epinician poetry, even some of the most basic ones, remain up for debate.<sup>32</sup> Among these is the question of epinician performance, specifically where and by whom the odes were performed. Most scholars agree that the majority of Pindar's epinician odes were sung in the victor's home city.<sup>33</sup> This notion is especially convincing given the emphasis, in a number of the poems, on the victor's return to his *polis*.<sup>34</sup> Regarding the matter of *who* performed these odes, scholars appear to have returned to the consensus that most epinicians were performed by choruses, though some have argued that the genre was primarily monodic in form.<sup>35</sup> Heath is certainly correct in

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<sup>32</sup> It is of course beyond the purview of this chapter to enumerate all the generic attributes of epinician poetry, a task which has, besides, been taken on by many other scholars. For more ample discussions of the genre and its features, cf. Elroy Bundy, *Studia Pindarica* (Berkeley, 1962); Kevin Crotty, *Song and Action: The Victory Odes of Pindar* (Baltimore, 1982); Gregory Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore, 1990), esp. chapters 5, 6, and 7; Kurke, 1991; N.J. Lowe, "Epinician Eidography," in *Pindar's Poetry, Patrons, and Festivals: From Archaic Greece to the Roman Empire*, eds. Simon Hornblower and Catherine Morgan (Oxford, 2007), pp. 167-76.

<sup>33</sup> E.g. Bundy, 1962, p. 81; Kurke, 1991, pp. 3-5; Swift, 2010, p. 105.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Crotty, 1982, pp. 104-38.

<sup>35</sup> Malcolm Heath and Mary Lefkowitz have questioned, in a series of articles, the general consensus that epinician was a choral genre. Cf. Lefkowitz, "Who Sang Pindar's Victory Odes?" *The American Journal of Philology* 109 (1988): pp. 1-11; Heath, "Receiving the κῶμος: The Context and Performance of Epinician," *The American Journal of Philology* 109 (1988): pp. 180-95; and Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," *Classical Philology* 86 (1991): pp. 173-91. But *contra*, see Anne Burnett, "Performing Pindar's Odes," *Classical Philology* 84 (1989): pp. 283-93; Christopher Carey, "The Performance of the Victory Ode," *The American Journal of Philology* 110 (1989): pp. 545-65; Carey, "The Victory Ode in Performance: The Case for the Chorus," *Classical Philology* 86 (1991): pp. 192-200; and Kathryn A. Morgan, "Pindar the Professional and the Rhetoric of the ΚΩΜΟΣ," *Classical Philology* 88 (1993): pp. 1-15. Morgan makes the rather ingenious argument (p. 12) that the textual ambiguity regarding the performers may be intentional, and that while the odes were intended to be performed chorally in the first instance, Pindar leaves the door open for future solo performances at symposia. More recently, the consensus seems to have returned to choral performance. Cf. Carey, "Pindar, Place, and Performance," in *Pindar's Poetry, Patrons, and Festivals: From Archaic Greece to the Roman*

asserting that “there is no reason to insist on a single context and a uniform mode of performance,”<sup>36</sup> but the evidence suggests that choral performance was the norm.<sup>37</sup> The choral performance itself is often described as a *kōmos*—a celebration or procession—a form that suggests the participation of a relatively large group of people.<sup>38</sup> Given the evidence, then, it is reasonable to assume that the victor’s return to his *polis* often occurred in the midst of a public celebration that was accompanied by, perhaps even driven by, epinician poetry.<sup>39</sup>

One of the primary goals of epinician poetry is to provide praise for the athletic victor. This is the subject of all extant epinicians,<sup>40</sup> and while it may not be the “single purpose” of Pindar’s poems,<sup>41</sup> it is certainly a central feature of all of them. This poetic praise can take

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*Empire*, eds. Simon Hornblower and Catherine Morgan (Oxford, 2007), pp. 199-210; Carey does not even mention the controversy or the possibility of original solo performance. More broadly, the inclusion of seven chapters on epinician poetry in a volume on choral song implies that the choral hypothesis still holds a great deal of currency among scholars. Cf. *Archaic and Classical Choral Song: Performance, Politics, and Dissemination*, eds. Lucia Athanassaki and Ewen Bowie (Berlin, 2011).

<sup>36</sup> Heath, 1988, p. 192. Heath’s suggestion appears to have been followed in full by Antonio Aloni, “Epinician and the *Polis*,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 55 (2012): pp. 21-37, as Aloni never refers to either choral or monodic performance alone, but only to both possibilities at once.

<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, epinician odes that appear in extant Athenian drama were generally performed by or with the chorus, typically in or near the victor’s *polis*. Beyond the three stasima of the *Heracles*, see also Ar. *Ach.* 1227-34; E. *Alc.* 435 ff.; E. *Electra* 859 ff. (though in this case the ode takes place outside the *polis*); A. *Ag.* 782-809; and S. *Trach.* 497-530. On these last three, cf. Christopher Carey, “The Victory Ode in the Theatre,” in *Receiving the Komos: Ancient and Modern Receptions of the Victory Ode*, eds. Peter Agócs, Carey, and Richard Rawles (London, 2012), pp. 1-29; on the epinician ode in the *Alcestis*, cf. Laura Swift, “Paeanic and Epinician Healing in Euripides’ *Alcestis*,” in *Greek Drama IV: Texts, Contexts, Performance*, eds. David Rosenbloom and John Davidson (Oxford, 2012), pp. 149-168. Based on the evidence, we can infer that Euripides’ audience would have thought of epinician praise poetry as a genre that was performed by a chorus in the home city of the *laudandus*.

<sup>38</sup> On the victory *kōmos*, cf. Carey, 1989; Morgan, 1993.

<sup>39</sup> Even more concise is Bundy’s formulation (1962, p. 22): “song and revelry are the two elements of the victory celebration.”

<sup>40</sup> With the exception of Pindar’s eleventh *Nemean*, though the athletic prowess of the *laudandus* is still a prominent feature of that ode.

<sup>41</sup> As Bundy, 1962, pp. 3 and 35-36 (quoted), argues.

several forms. As one might expect, much of it focuses on the victor himself. Pindar and Bacchylides consistently emphasize the *aretē* of their *laudandi*.<sup>42</sup> They also stress the toil and suffering (*ponos* or *mochthos*) their *laudandi* endured in order to achieve success.<sup>43</sup> In the context of epinician poetry, this toil can obviously refer to the struggle of athletic competition, but there is a spatial element that cannot be ignored: in order to compete and win at the games, one must depart from home.<sup>44</sup> In this way, Pindar and Bacchylides assimilate their *laudandi* to the heroes of yore, for mythical heroes and Olympic victors share the experience of leaving home to take on considerable toils.<sup>45</sup>

The prize for this toil is glory, and it is both guaranteed and embodied by the epinician poem itself. This interrelation of *aretē*, toil, victory, and poetic praise is neatly encapsulated in these lines from Pindar's eleventh *Olympian* (*Ol.* 11.4-6):

εἰ δὲ σὺν πόνῳ τις εὖ πράσσοι, μελιγάρυες ὕμνοι	
ὑστέρων ἀρχὰ λόγων	5
τέλλεται καὶ πιστὸν ὄρκιον μεγάλαις ἀρεταῖς.	

If anyone achieves success through toil, sweet-voiced hymns	
are the foundation of future fame	5
and a faithful oath to great <i>aretai</i> .	

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. idem, *passim*; Mary R. Lefkowitz, "ΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΕΓΩ: The First Person in Pindar," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 67 (1963): pp. 177-253; H.M. Lee, "Athletic Arete in Pindar," *The Ancient World* 7 (1983): pp. 31-37; Debra Hawhee, "Agonism and *Aretē*," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 35 (2002): pp. 185-207.

<sup>43</sup> Other synonyms include *aethlos* and *kamatos*. On the *topos* of toil in epinician, cf. Lee, 1983; Charles Segal, "Pindar's Seventh *Nemean*," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 98 (1967): pp. 431-80 (but esp. 436-45); Nagy, 1990, pp. 138-40, 152. A different type of toil is represented by the expense (*dapanē*) of breeding horses for the equestrian competitions. When relevant, Pindar often equates this with *ponos*, and poses it as another cause for celebrating the victor's exploits: cf. Pascale Hummel, "Le labeur et la grâce: étude d'une constellation lexicale (*dapanē*, *ponos*, et *charis* dans Pindare)," *Revue de Philologie* 70 (1996): pp. 247-54.

<sup>44</sup> On this, see Kurke, 1991, pp. 15-34.

<sup>45</sup> For more on the victor-hero comparison, see also Segal, 1967, pp. 444-45; Nagy, 1990, pp. 150-51, 196-206.

In this relatively straightforward formulation, Pindar states that epinician songs are the prize for the victor's toils. Poetic praise is, of course, a form of gratification in itself, but Pindar is at pains to point out that it also grants ever-lasting fame—a fame predicated on the victor's virtues and achievements.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, Pindar sees the composition of epinician songs as a veritable necessity (*Ol.* 11.2: χρῆσις): “a fitting wage for good deeds” (*Nem.* 7.63: ποτίφορος δ' ἀγαθοῖσι μισθὸς οὖτος”).<sup>47</sup> *Aretē* and toil thus lead to victory and require praise, and this praise confers both present and future glory.

Praise for the victor is not the only concern of the epinician poet. Another aspect of the genre, and one which is central to the *Heracles*, is the attempt to mediate the tensions that may arise between the victor and his community. Heroic returns (*nostoi*) in Greek mythology and literature are fraught with difficulties, and often even violence.<sup>48</sup> This appears to have been true of athletic victors as well, elite individuals who leave their communities and return imbued with even more honor and prestige, but who do not always encounter an easy reception.<sup>49</sup> As

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<sup>46</sup> M.M. Willcock, ed., *Pindar: Victory Odes* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 57, notes that ἀρεταῖς here refers to both the victor's “achievements” and “the qualities of skill and courage that gave rise to them.”

<sup>47</sup> On the “necessity” of praise, cf. esp. Bundy, 1962, pp. 10-11, pp. 53-70.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Crotty, 1982, pp. 110-11. Examples include Oedipus, Theseus, Perseus, Odysseus, et al.

<sup>49</sup> Joseph Fontenrose, “The Hero as Athlete,” *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 1 (1968): pp. 73-104, discusses several cases in which Olympic victors encounter problematic *nostoi*. See also the case of the Athenian Cimon in Hdt. 6.103.1-3. Herodotus implies that Cimon was put to death by the tyrant Hippias as punishment for winning one Olympic chariot race too many, and the episode shows that it was credible to claim that Olympic victory endowed the victor with a great deal of cachet within his *polis*. Naturally, Athens in the fifth century had a considerably different constitution than it did under the tyranny of the Peisistratids, but there is reason to believe that concerns persisted in democratic Athens about the excessive prestige endowed by Olympic victory. I discuss this issue in greater depth below, see pp. 168-173.

such, they are “potentially disruptive figure[s] who need to be reintegrated.”<sup>50</sup> One of the main purposes of epinician poetry, then, was to assist in this process of reintegration; to facilitate an athletic victor’s return to his *oikos* or *polis*.<sup>51</sup>

There are two integrative elements that are both common to epinician poetry and of particular relevance to the *Heracles*. One of these is the epinician poet’s constant attempt to allay the envy (*phthonos*) of the victor’s fellow citizens, who may begrudge a success which is unattainable for them, or even the praise of that success.<sup>52</sup> Such envy could be perilous, for it jeopardizes the victor’s return and positive reception by his community. This unfavorable outcome may take the relatively benign form of slander (cf. *Pyth.* 11.28-29) or censure (*Ol.* 6.74-76; *Pyth.* 1.81-86), but at its worst, Pindar suggests that *phthonos* can lead even to the exile (*Pyth.*

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<sup>50</sup> Simon Hornblower, *Thucydides and Pindar: Historical Narrative and the World of Epinician Poetry* (Oxford, 2004), p. 28.

<sup>51</sup> Crotty, 1982, noting Pindar’s frequent references to both athletic and heroic *nostoi*, was the first to convincingly argue that “the purpose of epinician poetry was to secure the victor’s reception by his fellow citizens” (p. 108). He compares the mediation offered by epinician poetry to that of ritual initiation, insofar as both the returning victor and the young initiate have an ambiguous or liminal status (cf. Crotty, 1982, pp. 112-21; and Nagy, 1990, pp. 140-45). Kurke, 1991, expands upon this point considerably, correctly noting that the process of epinician mediation differs depending on the community to which the victor is returning, whether it be *oikos* or *polis*, or indeed a democratic *polis* or a tyrannical one. Kurke shows that Pindar uses a variety of poetic techniques and conceptual frameworks to facilitate these different processes.

<sup>52</sup> On Pindar’s conception of *phthonos*, see esp. Gordon M. Kirkwood, “Blame and Envy in the Pindaric Epinician,” in *Greek Poetry and Philosophy: Studies in Honor of Leonard Woodbury*, ed. Douglas E. Gerber (Chico, 1984), pp. 169-84; Kurke, 1991, pp. 195-224; Patricia Bulman, *Phthonos in Pindar* (Berkeley, 1992); and Glenn Most, “Epinician Envy,” in *Envy, Spite, and Jealousy: The Rivalrous Emotions in Ancient Greece*, eds. David Konstan and N. Keith Rutter (Edinburgh, 2003), pp. 123-42. Most makes two observations about Pindar that are especially worth singling out: that *phthonos* is a subject of much greater interest to Pindar than to his epinician colleague Bacchylides; and that most of Pindar’s references to *phthonos* occur in poems dedicated to individuals who hailed from “situation[s] of exceptional political instability or unrest to which the victor was directly exposed” (p. 135).

7.18-19)<sup>53</sup> or the death of an exceptional individual (*Nem.* 8.21-23, which I discuss in more detail below, see pp. 133-135). Insofar as the epinician poet claims that he composes for the benefit of his *laudandus* and strives to engender good will for him within his community, it is obvious that warding off *phthonos* is a crucial aspect of this poetic project.

The second integrative element of epinician poetry, and one which is intimately related to the suppression of *phthonos*, is the encouragement of widespread public celebration. This often takes the form of a precept, which can be either direct or oblique, as in the following Pindaric passages:

*Nem.* 11.17-18:

ἐν λόγοις δ' ἀστῶν ἀγαθοῖσι νιν αἰνεῖσθαι χρεῶν,  
καὶ μελιγδούποισι δαιδαλέντα μελιζέμεν ἀοιδαῖς.

It is necessary that he be praised by the noble words of his townsmen,  
and that we celebrate him, adorned in sweet song.

*Nem.* 2.24:

τόν, ὦ πολῖται, κωμάξατε Τιμοδήμῳ σὺν εὐκλείῃ νόστῳ·

Celebrate [Zeus], oh citizens, with a glorious return for Timodemus.

*Isth.* 1.50-51:

ὅς δ' ἀμφ' ἀέθλοισι ἢ πολεμίζων ἄρηται κῦδος ἀβρόν,  
εὐαγορηθεὶς κέρδος ὕψιστον δέκεται, πολιατᾶν καὶ ξένων γλώσσας ἄωτον.

And the one who takes up delicate glory in war or contests  
wins the loftiest reward of praise, a blossom of words from citizens and strangers.

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<sup>53</sup> The reference to Megacles' ostracism in this passage is oblique, but Kirkwood, 1984, p. 178, is right to see that this is Pindar's point.

In each of these passages, Pindar emphasizes the importance of granting the victor<sup>54</sup> a worthy return. In the first passage, songs of praise are posed as a veritable necessity (*Nem.* 11.17: *chreōn*), and it is evident that this praise must come not only from the poet, but also from his fellow citizens (*astōn*). The same is true in the second passage, but we also learn that the glorification of Timodemus should take place within the context of a *kōmos* (*kōmaxete*) and that it is intimately connected to the celebration of Zeus. In the third passage, the necessity of praise is only implicit, but it is also extended beyond the confines of the victor's *polis* and applied to citizens and strangers alike. In each case, the epinician poet asserts that the proper way to receive the returning hero is with praise and celebrate, and in this way seeks to facilitate the reintegration of his *laudandus* into a broader community.

To that end, the epinician poet does not merely issue injunctions. He also seeks to "make the entire *polis* feel that it participates in the victory"<sup>55</sup> by stressing the tangible benefits that the victor bestows on his city. This may be in the praise of the city that is often embedded in Pindar's victory odes.<sup>56</sup> More concretely, Pindar emphasizes the fact that the victor shares his glory with the whole *polis*, for example by naming his city in the announcement of victory.<sup>57</sup> On a more symbolic, but still important, level, Pindar goes to great lengths to show that the victor

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<sup>54</sup> It is true that *Nemean* 11 was composed not in honor of an athletic victory but for Aristogoras' election to the *boulē*. But since the call for praise is followed directly by the statement that Aristogoras "crowned his fatherland" with sixteen victories (*Nem.* 11.19-21), it is implicit that athletic success constitutes grounds for communal praise.

<sup>55</sup> Kurke, 1991, p. 208.

<sup>56</sup> Among many others, cf. *Ol.* 13.3 ff; *Pyth.* 7.1; *Pyth.* 8.21 ff.; *Nem.* 10.1 ff.

<sup>57</sup> E.g. *Ol.* 5.8; *Ol.* 8.20; *Pyth.* 1.33; *Pyth.* 9.69-70, etc.

shares not only the praise he has earned, but also the *kudos* he has won.<sup>58</sup> As Kurke has argued, this *kudos* is a sort of “magical, talismanic force that guarantees victory.”<sup>59</sup> By sharing it with the *polis*, the victor becomes a source of strength for his entire community. The poet thus encourages the community to accept and celebrate the victor in recognition of his *ponoi* and *aretai*, which benefit the *polis* both directly and indirectly. As we shall see, a similar relationship is imagined between hero and *polis* in the *Heracles*.

#### ***4. Epinician Poetry and the Heracles: Rejection, Praise, Celebration, and Integration***

##### *Lycus, envy, and the rejection of an epinician hero*

From the beginning of the tragedy, Euripides presents Heracles as a hero of unquestionable prowess. Having departed to “tame the earth” (*HF* 20), Amphytrion tells us that his son, before his disappearance in Hades, had nearly finished the task (*HF* 22-25):

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. Kurke, 1991, pp. 203-09. Kurke cites, among others, *Ol.* 4.10-12; *Ol.* 5.7-8; *Isth.* 1.10-12.

<sup>59</sup> Eadem, p. 206, drawing on the work of Émile Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society*, tr. Elizabeth Palmer (London, 1973). See also Leslie Kurke, “The Economy of *Kudos*,” in *Cultural Poetics in Archaic Greece*, eds. Carol Dougherty and Leslie Kurke (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 131-63. Poulheria Kyriakou, “*Epidoxon Kydos*: Crown Victory and Its Rewards,” *Classica et Mediaevalia* 58 (2007): pp. 119-158, has recently argued against the “talismanic” qualities of *kudos*, claiming that in Pindar it is essentially equivalent to *doxa* or *kleos* (“glory” or “fame”). Her conclusions are certainly compelling, but while she assigns less symbolic power than Kurke does to these crown victories, by no means does she suggest that these victories were not considered to be of great value to the victor’s community.

καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἐξεμόχθησεν πόνους,  
τὸ λοίσθιον δὲ Ταινάρου διὰ στόμα

He has toiled through his other labors,  
and last of all he has gone to Hades through the  
mouth

βέβηκ' ἐς Ἴδου, τὸν τρισώματον κύνα  
ἐς φῶς ἀνάξων, ἔνθεν οὐχ ἦκει πάλιν.

25

of Taenarum to bring to the light  
the three-bodied dog, whence he has not  
returned.

Lest there be any doubt that the earth-taming efforts to which Amphitryon refers are Heracles' famous labors, he specifically mentions the capture of Cerberus, traditionally one of Heracles' final chores,<sup>60</sup> as the end of the cycle. The phrase “ἐξεμόχθησεν πόνους” (HF 22) lends a distinctly epinician flavor to this narration. Pindar constantly recalls the toils required for athletic success in order to emphasize the victor's self-sacrifice, but also to establish a thematic connection between his *laudandi* and Heracles.<sup>61</sup> The connection between Amphitryon's phrase and the Heracles of epinician poetry is multi-layered and subtle, but the tragedian follows this reference with a much more obvious one: the first of his many uses of the adjective *kallinikos* (HF 49), a word with unequivocally epinician connotations.<sup>62</sup> Already in the prologue, then, astute

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Charles H. Morgan, “The Sculptures of the Hephaisteion: I,” *The Journal of the American School at Athens* 31 (1962): pp. 216-17, for a list of the different sequences of the Heracleian labors in ancient depictions. Though there is no one established sequence, Heracles' struggle with Cerberus consistently comes at or near the end of the cycle.

<sup>61</sup> Chris Carey, “Pindar and the Victory Ode,” in *The Passionate Intellect: Essays on the Transformation of the Classical Tradition*, ed. William W. Fortenbaugh (New Brunswick, 1995), pp. 88-89. Cf. e.g. Pi. *Ol.* 5.15; *Nem.* 7.74; *Nem.* 10.23-24; *Isth.* 6.10-14.

<sup>62</sup> The word *kallinikos* was closely connected with both Heracles and athletic competition: it seems to have originated in an Archilochean hymn celebrating Heracles (Arch. fr. 324): τήνελλα καλλίνικε χαῖρε ἄναξ Ἡράκλειε, / αὐτός τε καὶ Ἰόλαος, αἰχμητὰ δύω (“*Tēnella* hail the *kallinikos* lord Heracles/and Iolaos, two warriors”). The hymn was sung in honor of athletic victors at Olympia (Cf. Pi. *Ol.* 9.1-4, and esp. Σ *Ol.* 9.1d, in which the scholiast reports that the victor himself would sing the hymn with his *philoī* by the altar of Zeus). As such, it was considered a sort of “proto-epinician,” a term I borrow here from Maria Pavlou, “Metapoetics, Poetic Tradition, and Praise in Pindar *Olympian* 9,” *Mnemosyne* 61 (2008): pp. 533-67. What is more, prior to the *Heracles* the term was used almost exclusively by Pindar in our extant sources, typically to refer to Olympic victors or to the rewards for their victories. According to the *TLG* database, only ten uses of this term survive prior to Euripides. One of these is found in the Archilochus

members of the audience would have been aware of the epinician tones that will come to dominate the play.

While this smattering of epinician vocabulary is perfectly consistent with Pindar's use of the same, the first overt reference to the ideals and values of the genre comes, oddly enough, by way of Lycus' rejection of them. Lycus comes on stage after the *parodos* and immediately confirms his intention to kill Heracles' family. The episode that follows consists primarily of a debate between Lycus and Amphitryon regarding Heracles' prowess and the relative merits of archery and hoplitic combat. On the one hand, the structure of the *agōn* recalls the *dissoi logoi* of sophistic rhetoric,<sup>63</sup> and thus further highlights the contemporary nature of the tragic setting. Even more importantly, the debate confirms the antagonistic role that Lycus is to play in the tragedy, and it marks his antagonism as antithetical to epinician ideals (*HF* 148-58):

<p>σὺ μὲν καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ἐκβαλὼν κόμπους κενούς,  ὡς σύγγαμός σοι Ζεὺς τέκνονος τε κούριον,  σὺ δ' ὡς ἀρίστου φωτὸς ἐκλήθης δάμαρ. 150  τί δὴ τὸ σεμνὸν σῶ κατείργασται πόσει,  ὔδραν ἔλειον εἰ διώλεσε κτανῶν  ἢ τὸν Νέμειον θῆρα; ὃν ἐν βρόχοις ἐλῶν  βραχιόνος φησ' ἀγχόναισιν ἐξελεῖν.</p>	<p>You who toss empty boasts around Greece  that Zeus had a share of your bed and child,  And you who claim to be wife of the finest man:  What noble feat has your husband done  if he wiped out a marshy Hydra or killed  the Nemean beast, that he took out with a noose  but claims to have crushed in the coils of his  arms?</p>
<p>τοῖσδ' ἐξαγωνίζεσθε; τῶνδ' ἄρ' οὐνεκα 155  τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας οὐ θνήσκειν χρεῶν;  ὃς ἔσχε δόξαν οὐδὲν ὦν εὐψυχίας</p>	<p>These are your arguments? And because of them  the children of Heracles ought not to die?  He's worth nothing but has a reputation of great</p>

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fragment cited above; another in an Aeschylean fragment (fr. 190); the remaining eight are all found in Pindar, and exclusively in his epinician odes. Euripides himself was quite fond of the term, using it over 30 times in his career (among extant tragedies and fragments). The eight uses in the *Heracles*, however, are the most of any of his tragedies, with only the *Electra* (three) and the *Phoenissae* (six) containing more than two instances.

<sup>63</sup> On this, see esp. Bond, ed., 1981, pp. 106, 108-09.

θηρῶν ἐν αἰχμῇ, τᾶλλα δ' οὐδὲν ἄλκιμος

courage from battles with beasts, in all else  
helpless

Insofar as these words are a defense of Lycus' plan to murder Heracles' family, it is normal to expect some rhetorical flourishes on his part. Nevertheless, it is impressive how much false information Lycus conveys in these few lines. He questions Heracles' divine fatherhood, about which there was no doubt.<sup>64</sup> More generally, he rejects every claim to valor that the most renowned Greek hero had, going so far as to imply that the Hydra was a generic marsh snake,<sup>65</sup> and denying that Heracles engaged in hand-to-hand battle with the Nemean lion.<sup>66</sup> These are radical claims, and they run counter to basically the entire tradition of Heracles' labors.

Classical Athenians were, of course, intimately familiar with the tradition surrounding Heracles' labors. In the nearby Hephaisteion, for example, the hero is actually depicted with the Nemean lion in the "coils of his arm,"<sup>67</sup> so many members of the audience would have regularly seen Heracles engaged in the very acts Lycus is attempting to debunk. Moreover, the veracity of Heracles' feats is reaffirmed throughout the rest of the play, first by the chorus' insistence on the

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<sup>64</sup> While it is true that Euripides problematizes the relationship between Heracles and his natural father Zeus, and indeed with fatherhood in general, there is no question in the play that Zeus is in fact his natural father. In lines 1263-65, Heracles claims that even though he considers Amphitryon his father instead of Zeus (1265: πατέρα γὰρ ἀντι Ζηνός ἡγοῦμαι σ' ἐγώ), it is in fact Zeus who begat him (1263: μ' ἐγένετο). On this passage, see Papadopoulou, 2005, pp. 85-86. On paternity in the *Heracles* more generally, see Michelini, 1987, pp. 254-58; and Mark W. Padilla, 1994, pp. 290-91.

<sup>65</sup> Bond, ed., 1981, p. 106: "the addition of the adjective ἔλειον serves to devalue this highly individual beast and turn it into a mere marsh snake."

<sup>66</sup> Lycus' new reading of the situation is emphasized by the play on words he uses to suggest that Heracles had used a noose (βρόχος) rather than the "coils of his arm" (βραχίων).

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Thompson, 1962, plate 91; it should be noted that while Heracles is using his left arm to put the lion in a stranglehold, he does stoop to using a sword with his right hand, presumably to finish the task.

heroism of Heracles' exploits, and later (and even more compellingly) by the goddess Lyssa (*HF* 849-54), and by Theseus' confirmation that Heracles had rescued him from the depths of Hades (*HF* 1169-70). In other words, Euripides' audience would have had little doubt that Lycus' speech was replete with lies, and any doubts that lingered would have been banished by the end of the play.

This mendacious effort to deny Heracles' fame and worth is Lycus' longest cohesive utterance of the play, and as such it is vital to any assessment of his character. It obviously casts him as an enemy of Heracles, but it also makes him a character reminiscent of Pindar's greatest antagonists, such as the envious men who denied Ajax's rightful claim to Achilles' arms, and who in so doing caused Ajax's death (*Nem.* 8.21-25):

ὄψον δὲ λόγοι φθονεροῖσιν·  
 ἄπτεται δ' ἐσλῶν αἰεὶ, χειρόνεσσι δ' οὐκ ἐρίζει.  
 κείνος καὶ Τελαμῶνος δάψεν υἱὸν φασγάνῳ ἀμφικυλίσει.  
 ἦ τιν' ἄγλωσσον μὲν, ἦτορ δ' ἄλκιμον, λάθρα κατέχει  
 ἐν λυγρῷ νείκει· μέγιστον δ' αἰόλω ψεύδει γέρας ἀντέταται. 25

Words are a delicacy for the envious:  
 and [envy] always fastens onto noble men; it vies not with the lesser sorts;  
 and it devoured the son of Telamon, wrapping him around his sword.  
 Oblivion holds down, in baneful strife, the man ineloquent  
 but strong in heart; and the greatest gift is held up to a nimble lie.... 25

The *logoi* of line 21 are the words of praise such as those which Pindar offers his *laudandi*, and they are "a delicacy for the envious," which is to say they inspire envy.<sup>68</sup> This *phthonos* (implied

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<sup>68</sup> Andrew M. Miller, "Phthonos and Parphasis: The Argument of Nemean 8.19-34," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 23 (1982): p. 112; C. Carey, "Pindar's Eighth Nemean Ode," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 22 (1976): p. 30.



men and for the benefit of the “obscure.” What emerges from these lines is a deep anxiety that envy may be inspired by the praise of significant deeds, and that the envious may exploit deceptive speech for their own gain, and to deny noble men the praise and honor they have earned.

This same process is played out, at length, in the *Heracles*. The *logoi* of praise which inspire envy (*Nem.*8.21) may be compared to the praise offered by Amphitryon and Heracles’ wife Megara in the opening of the play. Amphitryon recalls Heracles’ divine paternity by claiming to be “a partner of Zeus’ bed” (*HF* 1: τὸν Διὸς σύλλεκτρον) and reminds the audience of Heracles’ earth-taming exploits (*HF* 20-25), while Megara calls her marriage to Heracles, and by extension Heracles himself, “glorious” (*HF* 68: ἐπίσημον). It is implicit that these mountains of praise inspire *phthonos* in Lycus, for he responds directly to each of these claims: he echoes and rejects Amphitryon’s “*sullektron*” by calling this “*suggamos*” (*HF* 149) an empty boast; he picks up on Megara’s description of Heracles as *episēmon* by asking, sarcastically, “what *sēmon* feat” he accomplished (*HF* 151); and he questions both the value and the veracity of Heracles’ battles with the Hydra and with the Nemean lion (*HF* 152-54), deciding in the end that the hero is “worth nothing” (*HF* 157). Each of these verbal assaults is blatantly false, and they serve three related purposes: denying Heracles’ glory; justifying the execution of his family; and securing Lycus’ tyranny in Thebes. As such, Lycus’ speech is perfectly analogous to Pindar’s *parphasis*

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<sup>73</sup> Carey, 1976, p. 33.

("misrepresentation"). Though he is not called such specifically, he is nevertheless cast as a representative of *phthonos*.

*Amphitryon's response: the lamented loss of epinician values*

Lycus' stunning denial of Heracles' worth naturally calls for a response, and this is provided forthwith by Amphitryon. It has gone relatively unnoticed that epinician language and values abound in this defense of Heracles.<sup>74</sup> To begin, Amphitryon focuses not on the matter of his family's impending death, but rather on condemning Lycus' ignorance (ἀμαθία). In order to do so, he describes Heracles' valor in the *gigantomachy*, and recalls that he "celebrated [*ekōmasen*], with the gods, the *kallinikos* [hymn]"<sup>75</sup> (HF 180: τὸν καλλίνικον μετὰ θεῶν ἐκώμασεν). These terms are highly reminiscent of Pindar, who frequently describes the victory celebration as a *kōmos*, and his victors as *kallinikos*.<sup>76</sup> Indeed, in his ninth *Olympian*, when

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<sup>74</sup> It is likely that this fact has been overlooked because so many of the discussions about the debate have revolved around its curious structure (e.g. Lycus speaks far fewer lines [30] than Amphitryon [66], and the seemingly disparate nature of the points made by each character have prompted many questions about the "unity" of the *agōn*). For example, Bond, ed., 1981, pp. 101-02, criticizes the debate's lack of balance. But *contra* see Taragna Novo, 1973; and Richard Hamilton, "Slings and Arrows: The Debate with Lycus in the *Heracles*," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 115 (1985): pp. 19-25. Even the identity of the participants of the *agōn* have become a point of contention: Taragna Novo and Bond both consider this to be a debate between Lycus and Amphitryon alone, while Hamilton argues that the participants are Lycus, Amphitryon, and Megara, with Megara responding to some of Lycus' points. Regarding the "unity" of the *agōn*, Chalk, 1962, argues that *aretē* is at the center of all the points made; Taragna Novo believes that the main question is that of Heracles' divine heritage; and Hamilton sees the debate presenting a number of "fundamental themes in the play" (p. 25).

<sup>75</sup> Following, Bond, ed., 1981, p. 115.

<sup>76</sup> For more on *kallinikos*, cf. above p. 130 fn 62.

he refers to Archilochus' "proto-epinician"<sup>77</sup> he directly connects the *kallinikos* hymn and the celebratory *kōmos*, noting that the "triple *kallinikos* song sufficed...for Epharmostos celebrating [*kōmazonti*] with his companions."<sup>78</sup> In his opening gambit, then, Amphitryon describes the divinely blessed celebration of his son's exploits in the very same terms that Pindar uses to describe celebrations of Olympic victories. He thus places his defense of Heracles in a context that is specifically epinician.

From here, Amphitryon departs from his defense of Heracles to criticize Lycus' attack on archery,<sup>79</sup> and to lament about the general unfairness of the situation. But before he closes his speech, he launches a broad critique that again raises questions central to epinician poetry (*HF* 217-28):

φεῦ·  
 ὦ γαῖα Κάδμου· καὶ γὰρ ἐς σὲ ἀφίξομαι  
 λόγους ὀνειδιστήρας ἐνδατούμενος·  
 τοιαῦτ' ἀμύνεθ' Ἡρακλεῖ τέκνοισί τε;  
 ὃς εἷς Μινύαισι πᾶσι διὰ μάχης μολῶν 220  
 Θήβαις ἔθηκεν ὄμμ' ἐλεύθερον βλέπειν.  
 οὐδ' Ἑλλάδ' ἦνεσ' — οὐδ' ἀνέξομαί ποτε  
 σιγῶν — κακίστην λαμβάνων ἐς παῖδ' ἐμόν,  
 ἦν χρῆν νεοσσοῖς τοῖσδε πῦρ λόγχας ὄπλα

Alas!  
 O land of Cadmus, for even to you shall I come  
 apportioning reproachful words!  
 Thus do you defend Heracles and his children?  
 He who came alone in battle against all the  
 Minyans  
 and let Thebes look forth with free eyes?  
 Nor do I praise Greece—never shall I suffer  
 in silence—for she treats my son worst of all!  
 She who most of all should come to these  
 hatchlings

<sup>77</sup> See again p. 130 fn 62, and Pavlou, 2008, pp. 541-45.

<sup>78</sup> Pindar, *Oi.* 9.1-4: ὁ μὲν Ἀρχιλόχου μέλος/φωνᾶεν Ὀλυμπία, καλλίνικος ὁ τριπλῶος κεχλαδῶς,/ἄρκεσε Κρόνιον παρ' ὄχθον ἀγεμονεῦσαι/κωμάζοντι φίλοις Ἐφαρμόστῳ σὺν ἑταίροις· ("The hymn of Archilochus resounding at Olympia, the exultation of the triple *kallinikos* [song], sufficed for Epharmostos, celebrating with his beloved companions, to lead the way along Cronos' hill.")

<sup>79</sup> Amphitryon's defense of the merits of archery also has a contemporizing effect, both because the argumentation that Amphitryon uses is distinctly sophistic in nature (cf. Michelini, 1987, 245-46), and because the Peloponnesian War had, to some extent, demonstrated the tactical necessity of using bowmen (cf. Papadopoulou, 2005, pp. 141-42).

φέρουσιν ἔλθειν, ποντίων καθαυμάτων  
χέρσου τ' ἀμοιβάς — ὧν ἐμόχθησας χάριν.  
τὰ δ', ὦ τέκν', ὑμῖν οὔτε Θηβαίων πόλις  
οὔθ' Ἑλλάς ἀρκεῖ.

225 bearing fire, arms, and spears, repayment for his  
cleansing of land and sea, gratitude for his toils.  
All this, oh children, neither the city of Thebes  
nor Greece itself provides you.

Amphitryon here focuses not on Lycus' malice, but rather on the fact that Thebes and Greece have been remiss in their consideration of Heracles. Seen in this light, the crisis is not simply a matter of a tyrant refusing to grant Heracles his due, but rather one of widespread and systemic neglect. Moreover, Amphitryon contrasts the benefit that Heracles has bestowed (freedom) to the lack of regard with which these deeds were received. He considers recompense (*HF* 226: *amoibas*) for these deeds a "necessity" (*HF* 224: *chrēn*), and in this he imitates Pindar in both style and substance (cf. above p. 127 on *Nem.* 11.17 and *Nem.* 2.24). But unlike the world that Pindar describes, in Amphitryon's world this necessity has gone unheeded. By claiming that the whole of Greece is indebted to Heracles, and by emphasizing, once again, Heracles' role as a civilizing force, Amphitryon reiterates that the problem of a hero's place in the contemporary world is one of the central issues of the tragedy. Thus, while Amphitryon's defense of Heracles is not as obviously epinician as the choral ode that follows, it is nevertheless rife with epinician motifs and language, and it implies a pervasive indifference to the ideals that Pindar promotes in his victory odes.

The situation, as the chorus (*HF* 252-74) and Megara (*HF* 275-311) successively argue, is essentially hopeless. All that remains for Megara is to ask that she be allowed to return home to obtain funeral garments. Lycus' response is simple yet telling (*HF* 333):

κοσμεῖσθ' ἔσω μολόντες· οὐ φθονῶ πέπλων.

Go inside and bedeck yourselves; I have no  
*phthonos* for robes.

We find here the first mention of *phthonos* in the *Heracles*, one that is sharply ironic. Lycus' "generosity" in this circumstance underscores his lack thereof in all other matters: while he may "have no *phthonos* for robes," the implication is that in all else, he does. The first episode thus opens with Lycus' explicit rejection of praise for Heracles; it continues with Amphitryon's description of the gods' epinician appreciation of Heracles and his intimation that Thebes and Greece should (but do not) act the same; and it closes with the implicit recognition that Lycus, representing Theban and Greek attitudes toward Heracles, is the descendant of Pindar's *phthoneroi*. The stage is set for epinician's entrance.

#### *The first stasimon: epinician song and praise*

Up to this point, all references to epinician poetry have been, at least to some extent, cloaked. Any subtlety, however, vanishes with the first *stasimon*, an ode that is dominated by the poetic praise of Heracles' aforementioned conquests. Curiously enough, the song first advertises itself as a *thrēnos*,<sup>80</sup> beginning with the word *ailinon* (*HF* 348) and a dedication to "the one gone to the darkness beneath the earth" (*HF* 352-53). Such a proem does not seem especially auspicious, nor does it fit easily with the rest of the ode. But it is by no means unique within the tragic canon. A striking parallel is to be found in the second *stasimon* of Euripides' *Alcestis*, for

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<sup>80</sup> Both Bond, ed., 1981, p. 146, and Carey, 2012, p. 17, classify the ode as a *thrēnos*, though both also stress the abundance of encomiastic motifs that run throughout.

here too the chorus begins to sing a *threnos* for Alcestis only to transition into a song of praise which “evokes the conventions of encomiastic song” (*Alc.* 393-476).<sup>81</sup> More generally, the juxtaposition of different generic *topoi* within a single ode was a technique commonly used by the tragic poets.<sup>82</sup> Thus, while the first *stasimon* of the *Heracles* is unquestionably anomalous when compared to Pindar’s poems, Euripides’ audience would have been accustomed to seeing this type of “generic interaction,” and it is not too much to expect that they would recognize the epinician overtones of the song despite the threnodic elements.

The threnodic introduction to the *stasimon* lends a certain power to the song that follows. The chorus here is of course proceeding on the assumption that Heracles is dead, so the fact that they now sing a song of praise for him implies by necessity that such a song still has power after the death of a hero; that it can fulfill a principal goal of epinician poetry by ensuring that Heracles’ fame outlives him. As such, we might say that the *stasimon* is at once a confirmation of this fame’s survival, as well as a guarantor of its future endurance.

To this end, the chorus quickly turns from mourning to celebration, drawing on vocabulary and imagery that an audience even remotely familiar with Pindar would easily recognize (*HF* 355-58):

ὑμνῆσαι στεφάνωμα μό-  
χθων δι’ εὐλογίας θέλω.

355

I wish to sing, through fine praise,  
a crown for [Heracles’] toils.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Swift, 2012, pp. 158-61 (quote on p. 158).

<sup>82</sup> In fact, nearly all of the odes discussed by Swift, 2010, present significant amounts of what we might call generic dissonance. On the phenomenon more generally, see Swift, 2012, pp. 152-54.

γενναίων δ' ἀρεταὶ πόνων  
τοῖς θανοῦσιν ἄγαλμα.

For the virtues of noble labors  
Are a pleasing gift to the dead.

Each of these four lines is laden with Pindaric language and ideas. The explicit mention of praise fits easily into an encomiastic context, and the references to Heracles' *ponoi* and *mochthoi* are, as discussed above, normal epinician *topoi*.<sup>83</sup> Epinician is of course deeply concerned with the question of *aretē*,<sup>84</sup> so it should be no surprise to find such a mention here. And *stephanōma* is another term employed almost exclusively by Pindar prior to the *Heracles*,<sup>85</sup> and one which he used to refer to his songs of praise,<sup>86</sup> just as Euripides does here. As Kurke argues, "Pindar represents the victory ode as a crown offered to the victor, fashioned out of the most precious materials imaginable... Thus epinikion has it both ways: it is a crown and an *agalma*."<sup>87</sup> So too is the first *stasimon* of the *Heracles*.

This promised crown of praise lasts a full seventy-one lines (*HF* 359-429) before the chorus closes the ode in the threnodic mode with which it started (*HF* 430-41). The encomiastic section thus takes up the vast majority of the ode. It consists of an account, practically in list form, of the twelve labors to which Amphitryon had already referred.<sup>88</sup> The structure and meter

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<sup>83</sup> Cf. above, p. 124; Carey, 1995, pp. 88-89.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Bundy, 1962, *passim*; Lee, 1983; Hawhee, 2002.

<sup>85</sup> Pindar uses *stephanōma* seven times in his epinicians. The only other early poets to use the term are Alcaeus and Theognis (one time each). Sophocles uses the term twice, but only once prior to the *Heracles* (*Ant.* 122; *OC* 684).

<sup>86</sup> Cf. *Isth.* 4.44 for song as *stephanōma*. For a more complete treatment of Pindar's use of the "song as crown" metaphor, cf. Frank J. Nisetich, "Olympian 1.8-11: An Epinician Metaphor," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 79 (1975): pp. 55-68.

<sup>87</sup> Kurke, 1991, p. 105. On this see also Segal, 1967, pp. 460-69.

<sup>88</sup> Euripides' version of the twelve labors is: victories over the Nemean lion, the Centaurs, and the Golden Hind; taming the horses of Diomedes; defeating Cycnus; winning the Golden Apples of the Hesperides; ridding the sea of

of the ode have Pindaric precedents,<sup>89</sup> and the terms with which Heracles' endeavors are described are overtly epinician.<sup>90</sup> Given the chorus' introduction to this section, there can be no doubt that it would have been understood as a song of praise in honor of Heracles—exactly the sort of thing Lycus had so recently proscribed. The contents of the second and third stasima, as we shall see, are more interesting from a communal or “integrative” point of view. But the first *stasimon* serves to truly bring the epinician mode of the *Heracles* to the foreground of the play for the first time, and it sets the tone for much of what is to follow.

*The second stasimon: epinician song and the hero's just reward*

As the chorus breaks from the song, the mood becomes somber again: Megara, Amphytrion, and the children approach in their funerary garments; Megara recalls the seemingly empty promises of power and weapons Heracles had made to his sons, and wonders which of her children she should embrace first (*HF* 451 ff.); and Amphytrion, for his part, accuses Zeus of abandoning them in their time of need, bemoaning his fall from fame to misfortune. The stage is now fully set for Heracles' triumphant return.

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pirates; holding up the sky; victory over the Amazons and the seizure of the girdle of the Amazon queen; defeating the Hydra and Geryon; and descent into Hades for Cerberus.

<sup>89</sup> Shirley A. Barlow, ed., *Euripides: Heracles* (Warminster, 1996), p. 139.

<sup>90</sup> Among others, the typical references to his labors as *ponoi* (*HF* 388, 427) and “colorful compound epithets” (Barlow, 1996, p. 139) such as *ποικιλόνωτος* (*HF* 376; *Pi. Pyth.* 4.249) and *ξενοδαΰκτης* (*HF* 391; *Pi. Fr.* 140a).

Before Heracles arrives, however, Amphitryon makes one final, gnomic remark: “I do not know anyone for whom great wealth and fame are secure” (*HF* 511-12: ὁ δ’ ὄλβος ὁ μέγας ἢ τε δόξ’ οὐκ οἶδ’ ὄτ’ω/βέβαιός ἐστι.). The combination here is a curious one: while prosperity was, for the Greeks, famously tenuous,<sup>91</sup> ever-lasting fame was precisely what Pindar, much like Ibycus and Simonides before him, promised to provide with their praise poetry.<sup>92</sup> In his disillusionment, however, Amphitryon makes the two equivalent by refuting even the enduring nature of *doxa*. This judgment is surprising in and of itself; as Bond points out, “Euripides’ characters, who question most things, are seldom cynical, as here, about the value of fame.”<sup>93</sup> But coming as it does on the heels of a long epinician ode—one which presumes to provide a “*bebaia doxa*”—it is especially striking, for it almost seems a wholesale refutation of the first *stasimon*. At this climactic moment of the play, the very moment at which the entire audience expects Heracles’ return, Amphitryon places the notion of his son’s *doxa* front and center, and

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<sup>91</sup> The most famous assertion of this traditional line of thought is made by Solon in Herodotus 1.30-33. But Pindar endorses this view frequently: among others, cf. *Pyth.* 3.105-06; *Pyth.* 12.28-32; *Ol.* 12.7-12; and on these passages (and the general idea), see Hanna Boeke, *The Value of Victory in Pindar’s Odes: Gnomai, Cosmology, and the Role of the Poet* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 57-61.

<sup>92</sup> Indeed, Willcock, 1995, p. 17, asserts that “[t]his is, not surprisingly, the commonest of Pindar’s gnomic themes, appearing in virtually every ode.” Among others, cf. *Ol.* 11.4-6 (discussed above on p. 124). But see also *Nem.* 6.28-30, which Rosalind Thomas quotes to support her statement that “Pindar’s choral odes leave no doubt that they brought a victor fame in his lifetime, and memory far beyond it” (Thomas, “Fame, Memorial, and Choral Poetry: The Origins of Epinician Poetry—an Historical Study,” in *Pindar’s Poetry, Patrons, and Festivals: From Archaic Greece to the Roman Empire*, eds. Simon Hornblower and Catherine Morgan [Oxford, 2007], p. 141). As Thomas (p. 151) and Willcock (p. 17) both point out, the claim that poetry could secure ever-lasting fame goes as far back as Homer (cf. *Od.* 8.203-04). But the concept of poetic fame is stated especially clearly in encomiastic poetry. Ibycus, in his encomium to Polykrates (cf. fr. 1a, 46-48), claims that his poem will grant the tyrant “imperishable fame” (ἄφθιτον κλέος), while Simonides, Pindar’s most famous epinician predecessor, directly correlates poetic praise (ἔπαινος) and memory (μνάστις) in his epitaph to the fallen warriors of Thermopylae (fr. 531.3). In general, we might say that the idea that poetic praise leads to immortal fame is a recurring theme in encomiastic poetry in general, and in epinician poetry in particular.

<sup>93</sup> Bond, ed., 1981, p. 197.

questions both the natural endurance of his fame and the chorus' ability to perpetuate it with song. The very power of epinician seems in doubt.

As if to disprove his father's claim, Heracles himself is immediately spotted by Megara (HF 514). His arrival is naturally a source of joy for his family, who see in him their salvation, but the hero himself is dismayed to learn of their dire situation. All of this is fairly predictable, as is Heracles' promise to punish those responsible—both the tyrant and his supporters—with his "*kallinikos club*" (HF 570: τῶι καλλινίκῳ τῶιδε ὄπλῳ). Amphitryon suggests that he wait in ambush for Lycus' return, after which Euripides allows time for what will turn out to be a final moment of tenderness between Heracles and his children. The happy family exits together, and the chorus begins the second *stasimon*.

As Parry notes, this song "seems basically to be an epinician ode, and one particularly reminiscent of Pindar's songs in honour of mortal victors."<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, "its adherence to the conventions of encomiastic poetry"<sup>95</sup> is perhaps of less interest than the way the chorus intends to use this song. The actual praise of Heracles does not begin until the second strophic sequence, but the first strophic sequence constructs the framework through which the audience can better understand the purpose and importance of poetic praise.

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<sup>94</sup> Hugh Parry, "The Second Stasimon of Euripides' *Heracles* (637-700)," *The American Journal of Philology* 86 (1965): p. 364.

<sup>95</sup> Idem, p. 374.

The opening strophe (HF 637-54) develops the conventional view that youth is better than old age, while its accompanying antistrophe (HF 655-72) highlights the difficulty of distinguishing good and bad. The importance of this first antistrophe, in particular, has been undervalued,<sup>96</sup> and its relation to the strophe which follows it has not been properly understood. This is likely due to the curious rhetorical approach that the chorus adopts (HF 655-66):

εἰ δὲ θεοῖς ἦν ξύνεσις	655	If the gods had understanding
καὶ σοφία κατ' ἄνδρας,		and wisdom concerning men,
δίδυμον ἂν ἦβαν ἔφερον		they would offer a second youth
φανερὸν χαρακτῆρ' ἀρετᾶς		as a visible stamp of <i>aretai</i>
ὅσοισιν μέτα, κατθανόντες τ'	660	for whoever had it, and after death
εἰς ἀγὰς πάλιν ἀλίου		these men would return to the light
δισσοῦς ἂν ἔβαν διαύλους,		of the sun for a second run at life,
ἀδυσγένεια δ' ἀπλοῦν ἂν		while base men would have
εἶχεν ζόας βίοτον,		but a single course to live,
καὶ τῶδ' ἦν τοὺς τε κακοὺς ἂν	665	and in this way one might recognize
γνώναι καὶ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς		both the bad and the good

The chorus' main lament is that human *aretē* often goes unnoticed, precisely the issue that epinician poetry claims to resolve. At the same time, the mention of a second youth and life are quite obviously a reference to Heracles, on the one hand since he himself has just "return[ed] to the light," but also because, according to tradition, he would go on to marry the goddess of Youth (*Hēbē*).<sup>97</sup> Considered in this light, it would appear that not only has Heracles already

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<sup>96</sup> To wit, Yunis, 1988, dedicates only a few sentences to a discussion of the second stasimon (pp. 146-47), despite the fact that the chorus' criticism of the gods and suggestion of a reward for *agathoi* would seem to be relevant to the question of divine reciprocity which he addresses in his chapter.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Ruth Scodel, "Hesiod Redivivus," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 21 (1980): pp. 308-11; Bond, ed., 1981, p. 232; Papadopoulou, 2005, pp. 33-34. On Heracles' marriage to Hēbē, see Hes. *Theog.* 950-53.

received the “stamp of *aretē*” that the chorus longs for, but that he will earn it again. Thus, the problem of “recognizing” Heracles’ excellence, at least, has been resolved.

The chorus’ use of a contra-factual condition, however, implies that Heracles’ personal “solution” to the universal problem of discerning human excellence is not especially practical.

This is confirmed by the end of the antistrophe (*HF* 669-72):

νῦν δ’ οὐδεὶς ὄρος ἐκ θεῶν		But in truth there is no clear marker
χρηστοῖς οὐδὲ κακοῖς σαφής,	670	from the gods of either the good or bad,
ἀλλ’ εἰλισσόμενός τις αἰ-		but in its turning, time
ῶν πλοῦτον μόνον αὔξει.		increases wealth alone.

The term *horos* refers to a distinct landmark or boundary—precisely the type of “visible stamp” which the chorus calls for above. Despite Heracles’ successful return from Hades, the chorus still bemoans the lack of such a *horos*. This does not, as Papadopoulou argues, “question and undermine the validity of the identification of Heracles with pure virtue.”<sup>98</sup> Rather, it suggests that Heracles’ *aretē* is so extraordinary that he alone has earned this mark, and that it is not a solution that is adequate for all, or really any, mortals.<sup>99</sup> Indeed, most mortals risk being cast aside by individuals—such as Lycus—whose “wealth” time has favored. The first antistrophe thus eloquently articulates the difficulty of distinguishing good men from bad, and poses it as a central problem. This neatly encapsulates what the audience sees throughout the first part of the play, in which Lycus audaciously tries to cast Heracles as a *kakos*—and nearly succeeds. The

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<sup>98</sup> Papadopoulou, 2005, p. 34.

<sup>99</sup> Bond, ed., 1981, p. 232: “[t]he chorus, mindful of Heracles as an *exemplum*, are in fact asking why all good people (like themselves) should not receive the distinction of a second life.”

hero's return restores his status, but the chorus remains justifiably concerned that Heracles' "second youth" is not a viable marker of a man's excellence. Another measure must be found.

Fittingly, the following strophe describes the only practical solution to the problem of providing proper recognition of outstanding individuals (*HF* 673-86):

<p>οὐ παύσομαι τὰς Χάριτας Μούσαις συγκαταμειγνύς, ἀδίσταν συζυγίαν. 675 μὴ ζῶην μετ' ἄμουσίας, αἰεὶ δ' ἐν στεφάνοισιν εἶ- ην· ἔτι τοι γέρων ἀοι- δὸς κελαδεῖ Μναμοσύναν· ἔτι τὰν Ἡρακλέους 680 καλλίνικον αἰίδω παρὰ τε Βρόμιον οἰνοδόταν παρὰ τε χέλυος ἑπτατόνου μολπὰν καὶ Λίβυν αὐλόν· οὐπω καταπαύσομεν 685 Μούσας, αἶ μ' ἐχόρευσαν.</p>	<p>I will never stop blending the Graces with the Muses, the sweetest union. May I not live among the Muse-less, but always be among the crowned. Still now the old singer cries forth Remembrance!<sup>100</sup> I still sing Heracles' <i>kallinikos</i> [song]<sup>101</sup> alongside wine-giving Bromios and the tune of the seven-stringed lyre and the Libyan flute. Not yet shall I hold back the Muses who roused me to dance.</p>
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Here, the chorus affirms its intention to heap poetic praise upon Heracles, that most epinician of strategies for ensuring the preservation of a deserving individual's status and renown. References to the Graces, to garlands (*stephanoin*), and, naturally, to "Heracles' *kallinikos* song" all give this passage a distinctly Pindaric flavor, as does the choral use of a first-person singular

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<sup>100</sup> I.e. Mnemosyne, the mother of the Muses.

<sup>101</sup> Following Bond, ed., 1981, pp. 180, 242.

*aeidō*.<sup>102</sup> The instruments mentioned (lyre and aulos) are the ones that generally accompanied epinician songs.<sup>103</sup> In short, the strophe is unmistakably epinician.

The context here is also worth highlighting: immediately after lamenting the lack of a clear “marker” for *agathoi* and *kakoi*, the chorus dives headlong into a song of praise for Heracles. They emphasize this act by opening and closing the strophe with the statement that they will never desist from this song of praise. The song thus poses itself as the solution to the very problem the chorus has been lamenting: epinician poetry alone can establish the proper boundary between *kakoi* and *agathoi*, and it can keep the memory of that boundary permanent.

This solution is perfectly in line with the epinician tradition that Euripides has been evoking throughout the play. Indeed, we find in Bacchylides a perfect epinician parallel to the chorus’ argumentation (Bacch. 3.88-92):<sup>104</sup>

ἄνδρι δ’ οὐ θέμις, πολὺν παρέντα  
γῆρας, θάλειαν αὖτις ἀγκομίσσαι  
ἦβαν. ἀρετᾶς γε μὲν οὐ μινύθει      90  
βροτῶν ἅμα σώματι φέγγος, ἀλλὰ  
Μοῦσά νιν τρέφει.

For a man it is not allowed to pass over  
grey old-age and to recover again blooming  
youth. At least the splendor of mortal  
excellence does not dwindle with the body,  
but the Muse nurtures it.

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<sup>102</sup> Pindar often speaks of the Graces accompanying or favoring his epinician poems. Among others, cf. *Isth.* 3.8; *Pyth.* 9.89; *Nem.* 4.7, etc. For more on this point, cf. Parry, 1965, pp. 369-72. On the *stephanos* in Pindar, see above, p. 141. Pindar in fact uses the term more than all his predecessors combined. For *aeidō*, see *Ol.* 14.18; *Nem.* 10.31; *Isth.* 2.12.

<sup>103</sup> Carey, 2007, p. 208.

<sup>104</sup> This parallel was first identified and analyzed by Parry, 1965, pp. 369-71.

Just like Euripides' chorus, Bacchylides notes that a second youth is impossible, but that the memory of a man's *aretē* may nevertheless be secured by the muse, which is to say by songs of praise. In fact, the only way that Bacchylides' formulation of the question differs from Euripides' is in his explicit expression of the solution. Pindar's understanding of the problem is also comparable. As discussed above, Pindar was just as concerned as the chorus of the *Heracles* that a heroic individual might find obscurity instead of fame. The culprit he identifies in *Nemean* 8 are the *phthoneroi* who use slander to destroy their superiors and raise themselves up—individuals analogous to Lycus. And in the end, Pindar suggests that it is only by “praising the praiseworthy, and sowing blame for the wicked” (*Nem.* 8.39: αἰνέων αἰνητά, μομφὰν δ' ἐπισπείρων ἀλιτροῖς) that the epinician poet can ward off *phthonos* from his *laudandi*, and to guarantee their enduring fame.<sup>105</sup> In short, Pindar and Bacchylides both pose the same problem as the chorus of the *Heracles*, and all three suggest that praise poetry is the only way to ensure that *aretē* is properly and permanently recognized.

The final antistrophe of the ode continues to advance epinician motifs, but here the chorus broadens its base, so to speak, by implicating the Theban citizenry as a whole (*HF* 687-700):

παιᾶνα μὲν Δηλιάδες  
 ὕμνουσ' ἀμφὶ πύλας τὸν  
 Λατοῦς εὐπαιδα γόνον  
 εἰλίσσοισαι καλλίχορον·

690

Just as the Delian maidens sing  
 a Paeon, twisting around the  
 gates a fair dance for  
 the noble son of Leto,

<sup>105</sup> Carey, 1976, p. 34: “the form of the expression suggests especially the role of the poet and chorus as remembrancer of great deeds.”

παιᾶνας δ' ἐπὶ σοῖς μελά-		So shall I, like a swan, an aged
θροῖς κύκνος ὡς γέρον ἄοι-		singer, cry forth Paeans
δὸς πολιᾶν ἐκ γενύων		before your chambers from
κελαδήσω· τὸ γὰρ εὖ		greying jaws. For the good
τοῖς ὕμνοισιν ὑπάρχει·	695	lives in these hymns: He is
Διὸς ὁ παῖς· τᾶς δ' εὐγενίας		the son of Zeus; yet surpassing
πλέον ὑπερβάλλων <ἀρετᾶ>		even his nobility in virtue
μοχθήσας τὸν ἄκυμον		he labored and made the world
θῆκεν βίοτον βροτοῖς		safe for mankind, when he
πέρσας δείματα θηρῶν.	700	slayed the beastly horrors.

The chorus here transitions from a song whose central focus is the praise of Heracles, to the performance of a paeon in the hero's honor. This poetic progression has two principal and conflicting effects.<sup>106</sup> On the one hand, by invoking the paeon, a type of song that “had the integrative function of articulating a sense of community among the members, and of expressing this sense before the polis as a whole,”<sup>107</sup> the chorus turns its attention directly to Thebes and the city's relationship with the hero. The implication is that the entire *polis* should celebrate Heracles' deeds, both his now-inevitable defeat of Lycus as well as the fact that he has “made the world safe for mankind” by “slay[ing] the beastly horrors.”<sup>108</sup> In other words, the benefits he has conferred upon Thebes and upon humanity should be properly and widely

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<sup>106</sup> Setting aside the fusion of different poetic genres within a single ode, a common tragic technique that I discuss above on pp. 139-140 in relation to the first stasimon.

<sup>107</sup> Ian Rutherford, *Pindar's Paeans: A Reading of the Fragments with a Survey of the Genre* (Oxford, 2001), pp 61-62: See also Swift, 2010, p. 63: “In public *paianes*, the chorus not only represents the *polis* as a whole but often symbolizes a communal response to a potential disaster which could affect the group. Thus...the *paian* represents the community's response to the crisis they face or to their salvation.”

<sup>108</sup> In fact, his defeat of Lycus is by no means totally divorced from the beast-slayings that the chorus is invoking; the word *lukos*, after all, means “wolf.” Parry, 1965, p. 373, and Foley, 1985, p. 181, both briefly mention this correspondence.

repaid, just as Amphitryon had suggested earlier.<sup>109</sup> In this sense, at least, the final antistrophe does not represent a sharp break from the praise-song of the first three strophes, for it adopts the same epinician strategy that Pindar uses when he encourages his victors' communities to accept and celebrate their heroes by emphasizing the advantages they have conferred upon the *polis*.<sup>110</sup>

At the same time, the excessive nature of the chorus' praise represents a sharp divergence from the epinician tradition. By comparing their song for Heracles to the paeans sung by the Delian maidens, the chorus essentially accords Heracles the same status as Apollo.<sup>111</sup> As Hubbard points out, "[t]he *laudator's* praise should not be so excessive and unqualified as to make even the gods jealous. [He] must distinguish man from god."<sup>112</sup> This is precisely what the chorus does not do. This transition from the conventional to the unconventional—from crowning a mortal with a song of praise to honoring him with a paeon—is an act that brings with it great risk, namely that "he might obtain from the envious gods a

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<sup>109</sup> *HF* 222-28; on which see above, p.137.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. above, p. 128.

<sup>111</sup> Bond, ed., 1981, p. 243; Ian Rutherford, "Apollo in Ivy: The Tragic Paeon," *Arion* 3 (1995a): p. 125.

<sup>112</sup> T.K. Hubbard, "Pindaric *Harmonia: Pythian* 8, 67-69," *Mnemosyne* 36 (1983): p. 291. For a more complete analysis of this poetic dynamic, see Bulman, 1992, esp. pp. 31-36; and Hilary Mackie, *Graceful Errors: Pindar and the Performance of Praise* (Ann Arbor, 2003), pp. 22-27.

change in fortunes.”<sup>113</sup> The second *stasimon* thus ends on a note that is at once enthusiastic and ominous.

*The third stasimon: epinician song, the call to praise, and a kōmos in Thebes*

The third *stasimon* begins a mere forty lines after the end of the second, and the short episode that lies between the two odes consists mainly of Amphitryon convincing an ever-boastful Lycus to go inside, where Heracles awaits in ambush. The outcome—Lycus’ death—is predictable, and it occurs during the beginning of the third *stasimon*, with the tyrant’s death-screams punctuating the chorus’ triumphant song. The second strophe of the third *stasimon* begins immediately after the chorus announces Lycus’ death (*HF* 760-61), and it picks up where the second *stasimon* left off, with a call to the city as a whole to join with their song (*HF* 763-67):

χοροὶ χοροὶ		Dances, dances
καὶ θαλία μέλουσι Θή-		and celebrations enthrall
βας ἱερόν κατ’ ἄστν.		the holy town of Thebes.
μεταλλαγαὶ γὰρ δακρῶν,	765	Changes of tears,
μεταλλαγαὶ συντυχίας		Changes of fortune
< > ἔτεκον ἀοιδάς.		< > have given birth to songs.

While only implicit in the second *stasimon*, the civic dimension of the choral odes is explicit here. According to the chorus, Heracles’ victory has “given birth to songs” —presumably songs of praise. Most importantly, the entire city of Thebes is envisioned joining in this celebration of

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<sup>113</sup> Pi. *Pyth.* 10.20-21: μὴ φθονεραῖς ἐκ θεῶν/μετατροπῆαις ἐπικύρσαιεν. Even though *phthonerai*s obviously modifies *metatropiai*s in the Greek, in order to render the sense more clearly I have translated it as if it were modifying *theōn*. This is, in any case, the point that Pindar is making.

the hero, and it is apparent that the *polis* as a whole benefits from the “changes of fortune” wrought by Heracles.

A few lines later, the universal aspect of this celebration is even clearer—and indeed even more clearly epinician (HF 781-88):

Ἴσμήν' ὦ στεφαναφόρει, ξεσταί θ' ἑπταπόλου πόλεως ἀναχορεύσατ' ἀγυιαί, Δίρκα θ' ἄ καλλιρρέεθρος, σύν τ' Ἀσωπιάδες κόραι, πατρός ὕδωρ βᾶτε λιποῦσαι συναοιδί, Νύμφαι, τὸν Ἡρακλέους καλλίνικον ἀγῶνα.	785	Ismenus, deck yourself with garlands, And raise a choral dance, polished streets of the seven-gated city. Come, beautifully-flowing Dirce, And with you the daughters of Asopus, Leave your father's water to sing, Nymphs, in harmony, of Heracles' gloriously triumphant struggle.
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Perhaps the most striking feature of these lines is the series of imperatives the chorus delivers. The addressees—the Ismenus, the streets of the city, the Dirce, and the daughters of Asopus—represent the city as a whole, a metonymic strategy that Pindar also exploited.<sup>114</sup> According to the chorus, Thebes must welcome Heracles with song and dance, and by bearing the crown Heracles has bestowed upon the city. Since the subject of the song and dance will be Heracles' *kallinkos agōn*, it is clear that the chorus is calling for the performance of praise poetry in his honor. The use of imperatives, implying that this act is not only desirable but indeed necessary, is an “injunction of praise,” the sort of which are ubiquitous in Pindar's work.<sup>115</sup> And finally, the mention of a crown is especially suggestive, since it can only be a reference to the crowns with

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<sup>114</sup> This is obviously true of the “streets of the city”; the Ismenus and the Dirce were both bodies of water associated with the city; and the daughters of Asopus include Thebe, after whom the city is named (cf. Pi. *Isth.* 8.15-20). Pindar and other poets frequently used Dirce to refer “metonymically” to the entire city of Thebes. Cf. Pi. *Ol.* 10.85; Bond, ed. 1981, p. 272; Daniel Berman, “Dirce at Thebes,” *Greece & Rome* 54 (2007): pp. 21-24.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. above, pp. 127-128; Bundy, 1962, pp. 54-59; Kurke, 1991, pp. 97-107.

which victors were rewarded at the Olympic games, and we know from Pindar that the “bearing of the crown” (i.e. *stephanophoria*) was often an integral part of epinician celebration.<sup>116</sup> Hence, what the chorus imagines is unmistakably akin to the *kōmos* that would greet athletic victors in their home cities, and the strophe is a typical epinician demand that a local hero be received with celebratory praise.

Moreover, the chorus here does not simply call for the celebration and praise of Heracles’ victory: it also explains why this is a necessary recompense for the great benefit he has conferred on the Thebes. We know that victors would often dedicate their crowns to their home cities upon their arrival.<sup>117</sup> As Kurke has argued, this act symbolized the transferal of *kudos* from victor to *polis*, a major boon for the city as a whole.<sup>118</sup> Pindar frequently refers to this simultaneous sharing of crown and *kudos*, and he does so in order to both encourage and justify the accordance of poetic praise to the victor.<sup>119</sup> Within this epinician framework, “[t]he city ‘receives’ the *kudos*...and the individual ‘receives’ praise from everyone, but first and foremost from his fellow citizens.”<sup>120</sup> In other words, Pindar proposes a straightforward dynamic of

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<sup>116</sup> Cf. e.g. *Ol.* 8.9-10, in which the the *kōmos* and the *stephanophoria* occur simultaneously: ἄλλ’ ὦ Πίσας εὐδενδρον ἐπ’ Ἀλφεῶ ἄλσος/τόνδε κῶμον καὶ στεφαναφορίαν δέξαι.

<sup>117</sup> William J. Slater, “*Nemean One: The Victor’s Return*,” in *Greek Poetry and Philosophy: Studies in Honor of Leonard Woodbury*, ed. Douglas E. Gerber (Chico, 1984), p. 245 (and fn 24); Kurke, 1993, p. 140.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. above, p. 128; Kurke, 1991, pp. 203-09; 1993, pp. 137-41.

<sup>119</sup> Kurke, 1991, pp. 203-09. Among other sources, Kurke cites Pindar’s *Ol.* 4.8-12; *Ol.* 5.1-8; *Pyth.* 12.4-6; and *Isth.* 1.10-12

<sup>120</sup> Eadem, p. 209.

reciprocity between victor and *polis*—*kudos* in exchange for poetic praise—and this is precisely what the chorus suggests must take place in Thebes.

The end of the strophe represents this dynamic of reciprocity in an even more concrete manner, claiming for Heracles the honor of having restored the original Theban dynasty (*HF* 792-97):

αὔξετ' <sup>121</sup> εὐγαθειῖ κελάδω ἐμὰν πόλιν, ἐμὰ τείχη, Σπαρτῶν ἵνα γένος ἔφανε χαλκασπίδων λόχος, ὃς γᾶν τέκνων τέκνοις μεταμείβει, Θήβαις ἱερὸν φῶς.	795	Exalt my city, my walls, with a cheerful cry, where the race of Sown-men appeared, a bronze-shielded host that delivers this land to its children's children, a sacred light for Thebes.
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Heracles' defeat of Lycus, then, is not merely another one of his labors. Rather, it symbolizes the return of the descendants of Cadmus—Thebes' "sacred light"—to their rightful place. Once again, Heracles' benefaction is stressed, and the communal celebration and praise of Heracles is required as compensation for his work on behalf of the entire city. Euripides' chorus not only mimics Pindar's language,<sup>122</sup> they also adopt his poetic and rhetorical strategy.<sup>123</sup> In so doing, they appear to resolve the problem of Heracles' acceptance in the contemporary *polis* through the performance of epinician poetry and the application of epinician principles. Freed of *stasis*, Thebes can now properly welcome its hero.

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<sup>121</sup> Following Bond's editorial correction of ἤξετ', which "must be corrupt" (1981, p. 275). The subjects here are actually "the Pythian rock" and the muses (*HF* 790-91), though given the context it is obvious that they are to join in the general celebration that reverberates throughout Thebes.

<sup>122</sup> E.g. *stephanophorei* and *kallinikon agōna*.

<sup>123</sup> Bond, ed., 1981, 272, notes the "encomiastic use of geography, of which there is much in Pindar," though in his analysis of the passage he does not go beyond this basic enumeration of epinician elements.

*A new crisis, or,*

*How Athens saves the day: epinician reciprocity and Heracles' integration in the polis*

As the third *stasimon* comes to a close with one final, celebratory stanza,<sup>124</sup> one gets the sense that the chorus might make good on their claim to “never stop” singing Heracles' praises (*HF* 673-75). Alas, a rude interruption awaits them. Just as they are wrapping up the final antistrophe of their encomium, darkness, in the form of Iris and Lyssa, rises above the stage (*HF* 815-21). Madness descends on the hero and turns him against his family (*HF* 875 ff.). His wife and children are, of course, no match for Heracles' bow and club, both of which he uses to great effect. Amphytrion alone survives the onslaught, only thanks to Athena, who arrives and knocks Heracles unconscious.<sup>125</sup>

Many attempts have been made to explain the motives behind Heracles' downfall,<sup>126</sup> but the grounds that Iris specifically enumerates are ultimately the most credible (*HF* 840-42):

γνῶ μὲν τὸν Ἥρας οἶός ἐστ' αὐτῷ χόλος, μάθη δὲ τὸν ἐμόν· ἢ θεοὶ μὲν οὐδαμοῦ,	840	That he may know the depth of Hera's anger, and so he may learn mine; for the gods will be
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<sup>124</sup> The third antistrophe (*HF* 798-814) continues to develop the encomiastic themes developed throughout the first five stanzas, referring to Heracles' divine heritage, his strength (*HF* 806: ἀλκάν), and his victory over Cerberus.

<sup>125</sup> The scene is described by a messenger: *HF* 910-1015.

<sup>126</sup> For surveys of early explanations of Heracles' madness, see Bond, ed., 1981, pp. xix-xxii. More recently, scholars have tended to emphasize one of the two explanations provided by Iris (i.e. Hera's anger or the gods' desire to show their superiority): cf. e.g. Foley, 1985, p. 192; M.S. Silk, “Heracles and Greek Tragedy,” *Greece & Rome* 32 (1985): p. 17; Halleran, 1986, pp. 177-78; Hartigan, 1987; Yunis, 1988, p. 151; Justina Gregory, *Euripides and the Instructions of the Athenians* (Ann Arbor, 1991), p. 136. In a slight variation of this theme, Griffiths, 2002, has posited an innovative though ultimately unconvincing argument, namely that Heracles is punished for his “capture of Kerberos [which] threatens to destroy the fundamental basis of human/divine interaction, namely mortality” (p. 650).

τὰ θνητὰ δ' ἔσται μεγάλα, μὴ δόντος δίκην.

held of no account, and mortals considered  
great, if he does not suffer.

The first reason is relatively straightforward: Hera is angry because Heracles is the illegitimate child of her philandering husband Zeus. The second reason—that Heracles' punishment will serve as a lesson to mortals—is somewhat more complex. On the surface, there is no obvious reason that the gods should be threatened by Heracles' prowess; great hero that he is, Heracles is nevertheless destined to die. Laura Swift, however, has recently made a crucial observation that both helps explain the gods' reasoning and connects this episode to the epinician apparatus of the play: as she points out, the epinician odes of the first half of the play are, in their "lack of moderation," an inflammatory element; by assimilating Heracles to a god, the chorus paves his road to ruin.<sup>127</sup>

On the one hand, this observation reaffirms the importance of epinician poetry within the *Heracles*, for we see that the values of the genre are relevant even during the tragic crisis which threatens Heracles' identity as a hero worthy of celebration. As Iris suggests, epinician praise is not enough to secure for Heracles his proper place in the *polis*; epinician moderation is just as necessary. The divine backlash against the chorus' lack of epinician moderation creates doubts about the role that the genre is to play in the tragedy, and raises the need for a

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<sup>127</sup> Swift, 2010, p. 149. I discuss the excessive nature of the chorus' praise in the second stasimon above on p. 151; Swift (pp. 147-49) notes that all three choral stasima contain elements of this excess. The fact that Heracles later cites Hera's *phthonos* (*HF* 1309: φθονοῦσα) as the cause of his madness seems to confirm Swift's hypothesis.

reaffirmation of these epinician values. As it turns out, this reaffirmation can only be provided by Theseus, who arrives shortly thereafter and offers to bring Heracles to Athens.

Scholars have either failed to connect this pivotal episode to the epinician framework that dominates the first half of the tragedy, or have underestimated the extent to which Theseus' reasoning recalls epinician ideology. For Swift, in fact, the outcome of the tragedy actually "undermines epinician values,"<sup>128</sup> since when Athens accepts Heracles into the *polis*, the "political overtones [of the genre] are effaced...and the emphasis is on the role of the community to protect individuals, rather than their capacity to glorify it."<sup>129</sup> This argument, however, overlooks the fact that Theseus brings Heracles to Athens precisely because the *polis* stands to gain by its association with the hero—just as Pindar suggests—and that he uses epinician language to make this point. In this light, the ideals of epinician poetry appear very much alive in this tragic Athens.

It is worth looking more closely at the final episode of the tragedy, for in it we see Heracles once again at risk of exclusion from the modern *polis*, but with Athens now able to provide appropriate recompense for his earlier heroic deeds. Following an ample period of lamentation by the chorus, Amphitryon, and finally Heracles (*HF* 1016-1162), Theseus arrives on-stage to find Heracles covering his face in shame. Theseus learns of the murders from

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<sup>128</sup> Eadem, p. 151.

<sup>129</sup> Eadem, p. 156. See also Gregory, 1991, pp. 141-49, who argues more generally (and with no reference to epinician poetry) that Euripides creates out of Heracles a hero who fits more easily with the anti-individualist ideals of democratic Athens.

Amphitryon (*HF* 1178-95) and commands Heracles to desist from hiding (*HF* 1214-15). Heracles, however, is inclined to die (*HF* 1241), and in a somewhat surprising defense of this desire he notes that it is not simply the death of his children, but rather his life-long suffering that is driving him to suicide (*HF* 1255-78).

The situation in which he finds himself is eerily familiar, and appears to take us full circle to the beginning of the play. Even though Theseus recognizes that Heracles is a “benefactor to mortals,” (*HF* 1252: εὐεργέτης βροτοῖσι) the hero can justifiably echo Amphitryon’s earlier lament<sup>130</sup> and respond that “mortals do not help me at all” (*HF* 1253: οἱ δ’ οὐδὲν ὠφελούσι μ[ε]). This lack of reciprocity is exemplified by the universal exile which Heracles fears awaits him (*HF* 1281-88):

ἦκω δ’ ἀνάγκης ἐς τόδ’· οὐτ’ ἐμαῖς φίλαις  
 Θήβαις ἐνοικεῖν ὅσιον· ἦν δὲ καὶ μένω,  
 ἐς ποῖον ἱερόν ἢ πανηγυριν φίλων  
 εἶμι; οὐ γὰρ ἄτας εὐπροσηγόρους ἔχω.  
 ἀλλ’ Ἄργος ἔλθω; πῶς, ἐπεὶ φεύγω πάτραν; 1285  
 φέρε’ ἀλλ’ ἐς ἄλλην δὴ τιν’ ὀρμήσω πόλιν;  
 κᾶπειθ’ ὑποβλεπώμεθ’ ὡς ἐγνωσμένοι,  
 γλώσσης πικροῖς κέντροισι τκληδουχούμενοι†.

I’ve come to this point of need; it is not holy  
 For me to live in my beloved Thebes; even if I  
 did stay, to which temple or group of friends  
 would I go? For my curse is not easy to address.  
 Might I go to Argos? But how, an exile from my  
 own land? Then to what other city shall I turn?  
 When recognized I shall be held in suspicion,  
 and pricked by the bitter spurs of men’s words.

Just as Heracles’ family was cast out from Thebes at the start of the play, so too does the hero now find himself beyond the city walls and without a home. The cause this time is different—Heracles’ “curse” and pollution rather than Lycus’ tyranny—but the result is fundamentally the same: rather than receiving praise and acceptance, Heracles will be banished and subject to

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<sup>130</sup> *HF* 222-26; see above pp. 137-138.

insults. Moreover, just as Amphitryon had pointed out earlier, this problem exists not only in Thebes but in all of Greece. Little has changed with respect to the beginning of the play: the hero will receive no compensation for his toils, and the respect for epinician values in this contemporary world again appears lacking.

Were the play to end here, without any further reference to epinician poetry, one might be tempted to agree with arguments that the *Heracles* ultimately rejects or depoliticizes epinician values. But Theseus' analysis of the situation is quite different from Heracles', and indeed he revives the idea of reciprocity in a manner that recalls Pindar's poetry and the chorus' earlier ruminations. The first hint of Theseus' attitude comes directly after his arrival with a band of Athenian youths (*koroi*). Unaware of the massacre that has just occurred, he declares that he has come to aid in Heracles' battle against Lycus, in order to "give recompense" (*HF* 1169: τίνων δ'ἀμοιβὰς) for his recent rescue from Hades. On the one hand, Theseus' ignorance of the situation and Heracles' cowering stance cloud the argument that there is a reassertion of epinician ideals; Heracles now hardly seems to fit the role of the epinician hero. At the same time, however, the terms with which Theseus describes his intentions are reminiscent of both Amphitryon's earlier calls for *amoibai*, and Pindaric formulations of epinician reciprocity.<sup>131</sup> As

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<sup>131</sup> As for example in *Pyth.* 2.24, in which Ixion is imagined enjoining all mortals to "repay [*tinesthai*] your benefactor with gentle requitals" (τὸν εὐεργέταν ἀγαναῖς ἀμοιβαῖς ἐποιοχόμενους τίνεσθαι). It is worth noting that Euripides twice emphasizes, in this episode, the fact that Heracles is an *euergētēs* (*HF* 1252, 1309).

such, the audience is reminded that, despite his divinely inspired mishap, great debts are still owed to Heracles.<sup>132</sup>

A short time later, Theseus brings the notion of a widespread obligation to Heracles into sharper focus. He does so by proposing that Heracles come to Athens, using notions of both individual and collective reciprocity to persuade the hero to accept his offer (*HF* 1325-35):

δόμους τε δώσω χρημάτων τ' ἐμῶν μέρος.	1325	I shall give you a home and a share of my possessions.
ἅ δ' ἐκ πολιτῶν δῶρ' ἔχω σώσας κόρους δις ἑπτὰ, ταῦρον Κνωσίου κατακτανών, σοὶ ταῦτα δώσω. πανταχοῦ δέ μοι χθονὸς τεμένη δέδασται: ταῦτ' ἐπωνομασμένα σέθεν τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ βροτῶν κεκλήσεται ζῶντος: θανόντα δ', εὔτ' ἂν εἰς Ἴδου μόλης,	1330	What I received from the citizens when I saved the fourteen youths and killed the Cnosian bull, I shall give these to you. In all the land precincts have been given to me; and these shall be named for you and will be celebrated <sup>133</sup> thus by mortals while you live; and when you have died and gone to Hades,
θυσίαισι λαῖνοισί τ' ἐξογκώμασι τίμιον ἀνάξει πᾶσ' Ἀθηναίων πόλις. καλὸς γὰρ ἀστοῖς στέφανος Ἑλλήνων ὑπο ἄνδρ' ἐσθλὸν ὠφελούντας εὐκλείας τυχεῖν	1335	the whole city of Athens shall lift you up, honored by sacrifices and marbled mounds. For to earn great glory among the Greeks by helping a noble man is a beautiful crown for citizens.

A number of Pindaric principles are explicitly raised in these eleven lines. Theseus' gift of various lands is a case of reciprocity that falls well within the range of the closed circle of aristocratic gift-giving. Even more compellingly, Theseus asserts that the civic dimension of reciprocity is also crucial. In fact, such reciprocity seems to be common in Athens, for the Athenian citizens had rewarded Theseus with great honors in exchange for his heroic battle

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<sup>132</sup> It's true that Theseus understands the "debt" to occur within a more closed, aristocratic circle than the chorus had previously imagined, that is to say strictly between Theseus and Heracles. But Pindar's poetry is also replete with references to this very type of private gift exchange (cf. Kurke, 1991, pp. 85-159), and Theseus will soon show that he is aware of the need for a broader, civic recognition of Heracles' actions.

<sup>133</sup> Following Bond, ed., 1981, p. 396.

with the Minotaur. In other words, Theseus had already received in Athens the reception that Heracles so richly deserved in Thebes, and for the same beast-killing feats that Lycus had earlier mocked. It is thus apparent that Theseus' offer of honors in Athens is not simply a one-off, but rather part of a pattern of recognition and recompense for great deeds within the *polis*.

The epinician tones emerge even more directly in the final four lines. The word *stephanos* alone suffices to recall Pindar's poetry. As mentioned above, the concept of the crown is tied to epinician poetry in a number of ways, most obviously by virtue of being, quite literally, the prize for athletic success. But the epinician crown also functions on a number of symbolic levels, not least of which is the fact that it is the physical manifestation of the *kudos* with which the hero returns, and which he shares with his *polis*.<sup>134</sup> Theseus—much like Pindar<sup>135</sup>—suggests that the hero himself is the *stephanos*; that Heracles' very essence and presence in Athens bestows this *kudos* on all its citizens. But in order for Athens to gain this *kudos*, it will have to integrate him into the *polis* and provide him with honors in return for his benefaction. Theseus thus adopts a common epinician formulation: that the glory of an individual such as Heracles may be refracted throughout a larger community, but that the community must first accept him into its fold. In the world of the tragedy, then, epinician celebration is necessary on a city-wide level for two reasons: to provide proper recompense for Heracles' labors; and to allow the *polis* a share of his *kudos*.

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<sup>134</sup> For more, see above pp. 153-155.

<sup>135</sup> E.g. *Pyth.* 9.4.

The epinician nature of Theseus' offer is also borne out in the specific honors that he guarantees. That the precincts shall be named after Heracles is an obvious boon for the hero, as it will serve to preserve his memory in eternity; to ward off the *lēthē* ("oblivion") that Pindar warned was the gravest danger for his *laudandi*.<sup>136</sup> Regarding the promises of "sacrifices" and "marbled mounds," scholars have pointed out that this basically amounts to the establishment of a hero cult for Heracles.<sup>137</sup> Here too there is an intriguing connection to epinician poetry. As Bruno Currie has argued, "epinician poetry was...anchored to hero cult at both ends of its production: at the games where the victory was won, and at the victor's city where the ode was, most often, performed."<sup>138</sup> Currie suggests that the analogies between victor and hero, as frequent in Pindar as they are in the *Heracles*, might be literal on a certain level; that great achievements, combined with epinician poetry, could actually "anticipate a posthumous cult of the laudandus."<sup>139</sup> As such, in proposing that lands be named after Heracles, and by establishing posthumous honors for the man he calls the "crown" of Athens, Theseus uses the principles of epinician poetry to mediate the integration of Heracles into the Athenian *polis*. It need hardly be said that Athens plays the role of a virtuous *polis* in the *Heracles*. But just as Thebes' sickness was manifest exclusively in Lycus' denigration of Heracles, so too is Athens' excellence exemplified by their acceptance of the hero.

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<sup>136</sup> See above p. 134. Cf. also Charles Segal, "Naming, Truth, and Creation in the Poetics of Pindar," *Diacritics* 16 (1986c): p. 72: "[t]he very act of naming the victor in the epinician ode overcomes the potential threat of 'oblivion' brought by silence."

<sup>137</sup> E.g. Foley, 1985, pp. 165-67, 192-95.

<sup>138</sup> Bruno Currie, *Pindar and the Cult of Heroes* (Oxford, 2005), p. 58.

<sup>139</sup> *Idem*, p. 408. This concept is, in fact, argued for throughout much of Currie's book.

Less than a hundred lines remain after Theseus extends his invitation. In his reply, the hero addresses a number of different topics, among which are his view of the gods and his grief at the loss of his family.<sup>140</sup> His acceptance of Theseus' offer seems inevitable, but it is worth noting the terms on which he does so (*HF* 1351-53):

εἶμι δ' ἐς πόλιν	I will come to your city,
τὴν σήν, χάριν τε μυρίων δώρων ἔχω.	and I bear great thanks [ <i>charis</i> ] for your countless gifts,
ἀτὰρ πόνων δὴ μυρίων ἐγευσάμην·	though I have tasted countless troubles.

Heracles considers Theseus' offer an act of *charis*, a gift that is either the obligatory return of a prior favor, or one which establishes new obligations. This idea runs through nearly every area of Greek thought (or poetry), but the last line of the passage provides a definitively epinician flavor to Heracles' formulation.<sup>141</sup> Heracles conceives of the "countless gifts" he will receive from Theseus and Athens as proper compensation for the "countless troubles" he has undergone. This recognition of the *charis* he has earned mirrors Pindaric formulations, such as when the poet notes that it is "not with an un-toiled heart...that he [i.e. the *laudandus*] asks for

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<sup>140</sup> Scholars have interpreted Heracles' response in a number of different ways, focusing variously on his puzzling analysis of the divine sphere (puzzling because he appears "call into question the fundamental presuppositions of the plot" —Lawrence, 1998, p. 129) and on his true motivations in deciding to live. For more on these questions, the complexity of which makes a discussion here impossible, cf. Halleran, 1986; Michelini, 1987, pp. 267 ff.; Yunis, 1988, pp. 155 ff.; Lawrence, 1998; Papadopoulou, 2005, pp. 173 ff.

<sup>141</sup> While his use of *atar* might indicate that a new, unrelated thought is being introduced, Euripides' anaphoric use of *muriōn* belies that interpretation, and suggests we must consider the two lines to be completely connected. See the note *ad loc.* in Bond, ed., 1981, p. 404.

*charis*.”<sup>142</sup> In short, Heracles understands perfectly the purpose and intrinsic benefits of epinician mediation.

As he wraps up his acceptance speech, Heracles dwells on the question of whether he should take his weapons. Holding them before the audience, he imagines them reminding him of the murderous role they have just played (*HF* 1380-81). Nevertheless, he decides he cannot be deprived of the weapons with which he accomplished “the noblest of deeds in Greece” (*HF* 1383: τὰ κάλλιστ’ ἐξέπραξ’ ἐν Ἑλλάδι). He does so specifically in order that he not “die shamefully” (*HF* 1384: αἰσχροῶς θάνω), under the power of his enemies. The use of *aischrōs* here is important, for it confirms that, despite Heracles’ travails, his reputation is still of great import. It is on account of this that he brings “the symbol[s] of his *aretē*”<sup>143</sup> with him to Athens, the one *polis* that can guarantee a reception worthy of his fame.

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<sup>142</sup> *Nem.* 10.30-31: οὐδ’ ἀμόχθω καρδίᾳ...παραιτεῖται χάριν. Here the victor (Theaeus of Argos) is praying for *charis* from Zeus, but the point is the same: *charis* can only be given as a result for toil. Cf. Bonnie MacLachlan, *The Age of Grace: Charis in Early Greek Poetry* (Princeton, 1993), p. 90.

<sup>143</sup> Chalk, 1962, p. 14. Kamerbeek, 1966, p. 6, makes the same point. *Contra* see Dunn, 1997, pp. 96-101.

## 5. *Conclusions: A Contrast of Receptions in Euripides' Two Athens*

### *Epinician in the Heracles: some conclusions*

Throughout the *Heracles*, Euripides examines the twin problems of heroic glory and the communal recompense it is due, and he does so with a backdrop that is consistently epinician. These questions are of such import in the play that they are the focus of not one, but two different tragic crises. In the first part of the play, the possibility of praise for Heracles is blatantly rejected by the tyrant Lycus, an attitude that is the fundamental expression of Thebes' stasis. Against Lycus stand the chorus and Amphitryon, both of whom consistently describe Heracles as a prototypical epinician hero, and both of whom insist that he has earned a certain civic reciprocity. The chorus, in particular, describes the relationship between the hero and his *polis*, or indeed the world as a whole, in terms that are unmistakably epinician: poetic praise is described as the only way to both recognize and compensate Heracles' heroic travails, and the whole city of Thebes is called on to participate in an epinician *kōmos*. Yet the *polis*, as represented by Lycus, has failed to do so. Heracles' victory over Lycus seems to resolve this problem, as the city of Thebes, now led by the chorus, appears ready to give him the praise and reception he deserves.

Nevertheless, the interference of the gods makes this impossible, and Heracles' integration into a contemporary *polis* is once again endangered. Theseus resolves this second crisis, and just like the chorus before him, he does so under the guise of epinician principles:

Athens will welcome Heracles; it will accord him the honors he has earned; and in so doing, the city will earn a share of the glory and *kudos* that Heracles brings with him. In other words, Athens and Heracles will enact the very same dynamic that Pindar is ever at pains to encourage and cultivate. In the end, epinician poetry and principles earn the redemption that Heracles himself does; the genre's search for and discovery of a place in the contemporary *polis* mimics that of the hero.

*Epinician in Athens: a different story*

In the world of the tragedy, the reliance on epinician principles in order to accomplish the integration of Heracles into Athenian society seems perfectly natural, perhaps even inevitable given the constant references to the genre. In many ways, however, this tragic acceptance of epinician poetry and values is at odds with the genre's reception in the Athens of Euripides' audience. To be sure, a great many Athenians were familiar with Pindar's epinician odes.<sup>144</sup> But there is evidence that democratic Athens was particularly reluctant to welcome athletic victors in the celebratory manner that Pindar prescribed, or indeed to view them so favorably as to consider them "crowns" for the city. Moreover, there is compelling evidence that

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<sup>144</sup> On this question, please see the Introduction, pp. 30-34.

suggests that the question of whether or how to do so was of particular relevance in the specific period in which the *Heracles* was produced.<sup>145</sup>

The traditional view has long been that democratic Athens was naturally “hostile” to epinician poetry.<sup>146</sup> The basis for this argument generally rests on the relative dearth of epinician odes composed on behalf of Athenian victors,<sup>147</sup> on the supposition that all of these may have been composed before 486 BCE,<sup>148</sup> on the fact that no Athenian is mentioned by Pindar after the radicalizing reforms of Ephialtes in the late 460s BCE,<sup>149</sup> and on a Thucydidean passage which shows Alcibiades lamenting the unfair reception that greeted his Olympic victory at home.<sup>150</sup> Various motives have been adduced to explain this apparent indifference to athletic victors,

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<sup>145</sup> I.e. c. 415 BCE, cf. above p. 112 fn 2.

<sup>146</sup> As espoused by C.M. Bowra, “Xenophanes and the Olympic Games,” *The American Journal of Philology* 59 (1938): pp. 267-68; and H.T. Wade-Gery, *Essays in Greek History* (Oxford, 1958), pp. 247-52. Charles Segal, *Pindar’s Mythmaking: The Fourth Pythian Ode* (Princeton, 1986a), p. 124, implicitly follows this view when he argues that “Pindar writes for aristocratic patrons at a time when in many parts of the Greek world they are embattled against a rising wave of democratic feeling.” And this dichotomy has been examined more recently, and in a more nuanced manner, by Zinon Papakonstantinou, “Alcibiades in Olympia: Olympic Ideology, Sport and Social Conflict in Classical Athens,” *Journal of Sport History* 30 (2003): pp. 173-82.

<sup>147</sup> Three or four (Pi. *Pyth.* 7 and *Nem.* 2; Bacchylides 10; and Pindar’s fr. 6c, an “Oschophoricon” of which only the title remains). This is far fewer, especially considering the number of Athenian victors, than *poleis* such as Aegina (14) or Syracuse (7 or 8). All numbers listed here are based on those presented in a helpful chart in Aloni, 2012, p. 31.

<sup>148</sup> As expressed by Bowra, 1938, p. 268, and Mark Golden, *Sports and Society in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 86. Golden specifically says that “the last datable epinician” for an Athenian victor was composed in 486 BC (*Pyth.* 7), but this does not include the undatable second *Nemean*. Aloni, 2012, p. 33, states that “[a]ll three epinicia...date back to the early decades of the fifth century.”

<sup>149</sup> Wade-Gery, 1958, p. 247.

<sup>150</sup> Th. 6.16, on which more below.

above all that Athenian democratic ideology was fundamentally incompatible with the ostentatious celebration of an elite individual that epinician poetry entailed.<sup>151</sup>

While these arguments are compelling, this traditional stance has been recently and justifiably questioned by scholars such as Hornblower and Swift.<sup>152</sup> They note, variously, that the three or four epinicians composed for Athenian victors, while scanty in comparison to Aegina, are more than can be found for other major cities such as Corinth, Argos, and Sparta;<sup>153</sup> that insofar as it is completely undatable, Pindar's second *Nemean*, in honor of Timodemus of Acharnae, may well post-date the radicalization of Athenian democracy in the 460s BCE;<sup>154</sup> that epinician poetry seems to have "died out" throughout Greece a short time after Ephialtes' reforms;<sup>155</sup> that other, non-epinician honors were accorded to athletic victors, such as "meals at public expense in the *prytaneion*";<sup>156</sup> and that athletes appear to have been widely admired,

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<sup>151</sup> Once again in Bowra, 1938; Segal, 1986a; and Papakonstantinou, 2003. Other ideological reasons for this aversion have been suggested, such as the fact established cities such as Athens (or Sparta) "had little need of Pindar's public relations business," cf. T.K. Hubbard, "Pindar and Athens after the Persian Wars," in *Gab es das Griechische Wunder? Griechenland zwischen dem Ende des 6. und der Mitte des 5. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.*, eds. Dietrich Papenfuss and Volker Michael Strocka (Mainz, 2001), p. 397; or, as Aloni, 2012 argues, that epinician self-promotion was generally discouraged in cities with "'strong' polities where civic identity prevailed over ties to *genos* and family" (p. 37).

<sup>152</sup> Hornblower, 2004, pp. 247-61; Swift, 2010, pp. 106-18.

<sup>153</sup> Swift, 2010, p. 107.

<sup>154</sup> Hornblower, 2004, p. 248 fn 468, followed by Swift, 2010, p. 107. Hornblower (*ibid.*) argues that the same may be true of *Ol. 8*, in which the Athenian trainer Melesias is singled out for praise by Pindar. I would argue, however, that even if *Ol. 8* does post-date 460 BC, it says little about the relationship between Pindar and democratic Athens insofar as the poem, written for the Aeginetan victor Alcimedon, was not intended for performance in front of an Athenian audience.

<sup>155</sup> Swift, 2010, p. 108. Swift also mentions the possibility that victors were given "cash bonuses on their return home," though she herself notes that, since we hear of this only from Plutarch (*Sol.* 23.3) and Diogenes Laertes (1.55), the evidence "may be a retrojection of later practice" (*ibid.*, fn 19).

<sup>156</sup> *Eadem*, p. 110.

while their training was, to some extent, publicly funded.<sup>157</sup> In short, Hornblower and Swift effectively show that the evidence for democratic incompatibility with epinician poetry is problematic at best.

Nevertheless, there is still substantial reason to believe that the question of athletic honors, and of epinician honors in particular, was a complex problem for Athens throughout the fifth century. To begin, the existence of epinician poems for Athenian victors—whether before or after 460 BCE—cannot be unilaterally interpreted as evidence that the city had a completely easy relationship with the genre. The seventh *Pythian*, for example, was composed for Megacles while he was in exile from Athens, and is in fact overtly critical of Athenian attitudes towards the victory and his elite family.<sup>158</sup> Bacchylides 10, another undatable<sup>159</sup> epinician written for an unknown Athenian victor, features other anomalies. In particular, Bacchylides explicitly mentions the *phulē* (civic tribe) to which the victor belonged, noting that he has “brought *kudos* to broad Athens and fame [*doxan*] to the Oeneidae.”<sup>160</sup> This appears to be one of only two times epinician poetry refers to the victor’s civic group, rather than his *oikos* or *polis*.<sup>161</sup> On this basis, Aloni argues that the ode privileges civic institutions over family

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid. For a much more in-depth look at these questions, see Donald G. Kyle, *Athletics in Ancient Athens* (Leiden, 1987).

<sup>158</sup> Cf. *Pyth.* 7.18-19, where, after noting the numerous athletic successes achieved by Megacles and his “forefathers” [*progonōn*, i.e. the Alcmaeonidae], Pindar states that he “grieve[s] at the envy with which noble deeds are repaid” (τὸ δ’ ἄχθυμαι/φθόνον ἀμειβόμενον τὰ καλὰ ἔργα). On this, see more below, p. 177.

<sup>159</sup> Following Hornblower, 2004, p. 257, whose skepticism in this case seems prudent. *Contra* cf. Aloni, 2012, p. 33.

<sup>160</sup> Bacch. 10.17-18: κῦδος εὐρείαις Ἀθάναις/θήκας Οἰνεΐδαις τε δόξαν.

<sup>161</sup> At least in the extant odes of Pindar and Bacchylides. On the second instance, see below, p. 172.

connections. Aloni may be going too far here, not least because the fragmentary state of the poem prevents us from knowing with any certainty whether the victor's family is also singled out for praise.<sup>162</sup> But given the rarity of Bacchylides' tribal reference, it is fair to believe that he is modifying essential elements of the epinician tradition in order to conform to the peculiar civic reality of Athenian democracy.<sup>163</sup>

Pindar's second *Nemean*, conversely, appears to follow epinician conventions in repeatedly naming the victor and his family,<sup>164</sup> and the final lines include one of the most straightforward calls for city-wide praise that can be found in Pindar's poetry.<sup>165</sup> In these ways, it presents itself as a perfectly normal epinician ode, attempting to mediate the potentially complex relationship between a *polis* and an elite victor and his family. Nevertheless, it is difficult to call the second *Nemean* an obvious example of Pindar applying traditional epinician principles within the context of Athenian democracy. Despite the call for celebration of Timodemus by his fellow citizens, the place of performance is very much in question. Due to the relative brevity of the poem (only twenty-five lines), Gelzer has suggested that it was performed at Nemea on the day of Timodemus' victory.<sup>166</sup> Instone is doubtful that the ode was

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<sup>162</sup> Though Aloni argues (p. 33 fn 69) that it is "unlikely on the basis of the legible remnants that the verses contain anything more than the victor's name."

<sup>163</sup> Thanks are due to Prof. Jonathan Hall for his insight on this question.

<sup>164</sup> Timodemus is named in *Nem.* 2.14 and 2.24; his father (Timonous) is named in 2.10; and even his offspring (2.18: the "Timodemidai") are singled out for praise.

<sup>165</sup> *Nem.* 2.24 (on which, see also above p. 127): τόν [scil. Δία], ὦ πολῖται, κωμάξατε Τιμοδήμω σὺν εὐκλείῃ νόστω.

<sup>166</sup> Thomas Gelzer, "Μοῦσα ἀθιγενής: Bemerkungen zu einem Typ Pindarischer und Bacchylideischer Epinikien," *Museum Helveticum* 42 (1985): p. 109.

performed at all, but is otherwise cautious in noting that “if indeed so short an ode was performed, [the place] must remain uncertain.”<sup>167</sup> Most recently, Aloni has ingeniously proposed that the ode was performed not in Athens proper, but in Timodemus’ “rural deme” of Acharnae,<sup>168</sup> which Pindar rather singles out for praise (*Nem.* 2.16-17) in what is the second mention of a specific civic group in lieu of the *oikos* or *polis*. In short, there is no consensus on the question of where—or even if—the second *Nemean* was performed. But what is certain is that *Nemean* 2 is another case in which traditional epinician motifs are elided in a concession to Athenian civic institutions.

In summary, the difficulties presented by each of these Athenian epinicians precludes any firm conclusions on the “compatibility” between Athens and epinician poetry, but they do suggest that the genre’s status in the city was peculiar. Non-literary evidence also suggests that the relationship between Athens and Olympic victors was complicated. For instance, unlike other Greek *poleis*, Athens did not permit statues of athletic victors—another type of “epinician commemoration”<sup>169</sup>—to be erected in the *agora*.<sup>170</sup> Similarly, Athens stood out in the fifth

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<sup>167</sup> Stephen Instone, ed., *Pindar: Selected Odes* (Warminster, 1996), pp. 144-45.

<sup>168</sup> Aloni, 2012, pp. 34-35.

<sup>169</sup> Idem, p. 25. For more on victory statues, cf. R.R.R. Smith, “Pindar, Athletes, and the Early Greek Statue Habit,” in *Pindar’s Poetry, Patrons, and Festivals: From Archaic Greece to the Roman Empire*, eds. Simon Hornblower and Catherine Morgan (Oxford, 2007), pp. 83-136.

<sup>170</sup> Currie, 2005, p. 145; Swift, 2010, p. 110; Aloni, 2012, p. 27. The ancient evidence regarding the lack of statues is admittedly scant, and consists essentially of a contrast made by Lycurgus between Athens and other cities in which one “will find [statues] of athletes erected in the *agora*,” while the Athenians reserve this right for “generals and the tyrant-killers” (Lyc. 1.51: εὐρήσετε δὲ παρὰ μὲν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς ἀθλητὰς ἀνακεκμημένους, παρ’ ὑμῖν δὲ στρατηγούς ἀγαθοὺς καὶ τοὺς τὸν τύραννον ἀποκτείναντας.).

century for its reluctance to heroize “historical persons,”<sup>171</sup> one of the potential aspirations of epinician poetry. Finally, there is evidence of remarkable hostility among Athens towards the breeding of horses for athletic competition (*hippotrophia*),<sup>172</sup> the very activity Pindar sees as the most worthy of his epinician praise.<sup>173</sup>

All of this evidence dates from the fifth century, and it suggests that the place of athletics in Athens was sensitive, at least compared to other Greek cities.<sup>174</sup> Moreover, there is reason to believe that these complexities had come to the foreground right around the time of Euripides’ *Heracles*. In particular, Alcibiades’ Olympic victory in chariot racing in 416 BCE<sup>175</sup> seems to have generated a certain amount of hostility towards him among the Athenian populace. Certainly this was due in no small part to the extravagant nature of Alcibiades’ Olympic delegation and subsequent victory celebration—a celebration that included an epinician ode which was said to be written by Euripides himself.<sup>176</sup> But it is meaningful that Andocides specifically laments that Alcibiades had sought to present himself as “having crowned the city” (Andoc. 4.31:

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<sup>171</sup> Currie, 2005, p. 146.

<sup>172</sup> Hornblower, 2004, pp. 250-51. Hornblower introduces as evidence of “the antipathies which horse-breeding...could generate” (p. 250) two *ostraka* inscribed with the words “Megacles son of Hippocrates the horse-breeder” (SEG 46.84 ΜΕΓΑΚΛΕΣ ΗΠΠΟΚΡΑΤΟΣ ΗΠΠΙΟΤΡΟΦΟΣ). This is, of course, the same Megacles whom Pindar praises in *Pyth.* 7 for his victories in equestrian events. See also Th. 6.15 on Athenian suspicions regarding *hippotrophia*.

<sup>173</sup> Kurke, 1991, pp. 185-87.

<sup>174</sup> Some scholars have recently questioned this assertion—see esp. David M. Pritchard, *Sport, Democracy and War in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 2013). Nevertheless, the case of Alcibiades’ Olympic victory, which I discuss here below, confirms that the relationship between Athenian victors and the *polis* could become very problematic indeed.

<sup>175</sup> On the date of this victory, cf. Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* vol. 3 (Oxford, 2008), p. 343.

<sup>176</sup> I discuss the Euripidean epinician in some detail below. Concerning the delegation and other aspects of the celebration, see esp. Andocides 4.25-32, and especially, David Gribble, “Alcibiades at the Olympics: Performance, Politics, and Civic Ideology,” *Classical Quarterly* 62 (2012): pp. 45-71.

ἔστεφανωκῶς τὴν πόλιν) with his Olympic success. If this assertion is at all accurate,<sup>177</sup> it shows first of all that Alcibiades attempted to leverage his Olympic victory in exactly the way that epinician poetry was wont to do, and secondly that this attempt was received with some resentment by his fellow citizens.

Confirmation of this dynamic is provided by Alcibiades' own description of Athenian attitudes toward athletic victors at the end of the fifth century, as relayed by Thucydides (Th. 6.16.1-3):

καὶ προσήκει μοι μᾶλλον ἐτέρων, ὧ Ἀθηναῖοι, ἄρχειν (ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἐντεῦθεν ἄρξασθαι, ἐπειδὴ μου Νικίας καθήψατο), καὶ ἄξιός ἑμαίνομαι εἶναι. ὧν γὰρ πέρι ἐπιβόητός εἰμι, τοῖς μὲν προγόνοις μου καὶ ἐμοὶ δόξαν φέρει ταῦτα, τῇ δὲ πατρίδι καὶ ὠφελίαν. οἱ γὰρ Ἕλληνας καὶ ὑπὲρ δύνάμιν μείζω ἡμῶν τὴν πόλιν ἐνόμισαν τῷ ἐμῷ διαπρεπεῖ τῆς Ὀλυμπιάζε θεωρίας, πρότερον ἐλπίζοντες αὐτὴν καταπεπολεμηθῆναι, διότι ἄρματα μὲν ἑπτὰ καθῆκα, ὅσα οὐδεὶς πω ιδιώτης πρότερον, ἐνίκησα δὲ καὶ δεῦτερος καὶ τέταρτος ἐγενόμην καὶ τᾶλλα ἀξίως τῆς νίκης παρεσκευασάμην. νόμῳ μὲν γὰρ τιμῆ τὰ τοιαῦτα, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ δρωμένου καὶ δύνάμιν ἑμαίνομαι ὑπονοεῖται. καὶ ὅσα αὖ ἐν τῇ πόλει χορηγίας ἢ ἄλλῳ τῷ λαμπρύνομαι, τοῖς μὲν ἀστοῖς φθονεῖται φύσει, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ξένους καὶ αὕτη ἰσχύς φαίνεται. καὶ οὐκ ἄχρηστος ἦδ' ἡ ἄνοια, ὅς ἂν τοῖς ἰδίῳις τέλεσι μὴ ἑαυτὸν μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν πόλιν ὠφελῇ.

Athenians, it is both more suitable for me to rule than others (indeed it is necessary that I begin here, since Nicias has attacked me), and I also believe myself to be worthy of doing so. For I am derided for those very things which bring both honor to me and my forebears, and a benefit to my fatherland. For the Greeks, when before they hoped our city was beaten down by war, thought it to be even more powerful than it is because of the magnificence of my performance at the Olympic games, both because I entered seven chariots in the competition, a number no private citizen had ever before managed, and because I placed first, second and fourth and provided all things worthy of my victory. In custom such things are honorable, and from their performance one derives the appearance of power. And the ways in which I have distinguished myself in the city,

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<sup>177</sup> The authenticity of this speech has often been doubted, but even if it was written at a later date, it seems that its author took great care to present accurate historical details and to create an atmosphere that was compatible with the presumed late fifth-century context: cf. David Gribble, "Rhetoric and History in [Andocides] 4, *Against Alcibiades*," *Classical Quarterly* 47 (1997): pp. 367-91.

whether by supplying choruses or otherwise, are at once a natural source of envy to my fellow citizens, while to foreigners they appear a strength. And such folly is not useless, when someone by private means benefits not only himself but also his city.

Alcibiades makes a number of points in this passage, including the rather bold assertion that he is especially worthy of exercising power. Naturally, he must justify such a statement, and it is striking to see that his justification is strewn with epinician elements.<sup>178</sup> The most obvious of these epinician elements is the ample narration of his Olympic conquests, victories that would have been the very sort that epinicians were made to praise and which, furthermore, he appears to see as a basis for his place of privilege in the *polis*.<sup>179</sup>

Other points are even more epinician in tone. On an ideological level, we have seen that Pindaric poetry regularly presents the notion that Olympic success generates glory for the victor, his family,<sup>180</sup> and his *polis*.<sup>181</sup> This is precisely what Alcibiades does when he claims that his victories “bring both honor to me and my forebears, and a benefit to my fatherland.” Although it is “rare to find all three—victor, city and family—mentioned” in such quick succession in epinician odes, it is certainly not unheard of.<sup>182</sup> Indeed, we find a similar

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<sup>178</sup> On the question of whether or not Thucydides was familiar with epinician poetry, cf. Hornblower, 2004, pp. 57-59.

<sup>179</sup> Hornblower, 2008, p. 343. This is of course also reflected in Andoc. 4.31.

<sup>180</sup> Including one’s forefathers. Cf. Pi. *Ol.* 14.20-24, and esp. the fine analysis of this and other passages provided by Charles Segal, “Messages to the Underworld: An Aspect of Immortalization in Pindar,” *The American Journal of Philology* 106 (1985): pp. 199-212.

<sup>181</sup> While Thucydides uses a term—*ōphelia* (assistance, advantage)—that is decidedly un-epinician, it is clear from its juxtaposition with *doxa*, and from the fact that it endows the city with the appearance of power, that the “advantage” Alcibiades claims to confer upon Athens is an enhanced reputation.

<sup>182</sup> Kurke, 1991, p. 203; cf. Pi. *Isth.* 3.9-16, in which the victor Melissos (vv. 9-11), his hometown of Thebes (vv. 12-13), and his family (vv. 14-16) are all conferred a share of glory by Pindar’s ode; or *Ol.* 5.5-8, in which *oikos* and *polis* are both celebrated in short succession. (These passages are discussed in Kurke, 1991, pp. 202-04.)

formulation in Bacchylides 10, in which the poet equates the *stephanos* with which the Athenian victor has crowned himself (10.16), the *kudos* he has won for Athens (10.17), and the *doxa* he has brought the Oeneidae (10.18). The difference is that Bacchylides emphasizes the victor's connection to a *civic* group, while Alcibiades still focuses on his own family associations. In other words, where Bacchylides adjusts the tone of his ode to fit the political community for which he is composing, Alcibiades retains the more standard epinician trifecta of victor/*oikos*/*polis*, but notes that there has been little appreciation of his benefaction.

Alcibiades then moves on to discuss his generosity in local liturgies. This is apparently beyond the realm of epinician, which typically restricted its focus to the glory gained from athletic victory. But Alcibiades' mention of the *phthonos* he inspires cannot help but recall, once again, Pindar's poetry, since the fact that success often engendered *phthonos* is one of Pindar's main concerns.<sup>183</sup> Alcibiades then returns to the point with which he began: that his actions benefit the city (*tēn polin ōphelēi*). The notion that he is obviously advancing is that the *phthonos* which Athenians reserve for him is totally unwarranted on account of the great advantages he provides Athens. In so doing, he mimics Pindar, who time and again stresses the civic benefits his victors provide in order to "defus[e] the *phthonos* of his fellow citizens."<sup>184</sup>

The crux of Alcibiades' comments is that he is reviled for the very deeds which most become him, and he notes that this outcome is only natural (*phusei*). A similar point is made by

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<sup>183</sup> Eadem, esp. pp. 195-209. And cf. above, pp. 126-127.

<sup>184</sup> Eadem, p. 209.

Pindar in his ode dedicated to Megacles, the exiled Athenian victor who was also one of Alcibiades' forefathers (both were Alcmaeonidae): "I grieve at the envy with which noble deeds are repaid" (*Pyth.* 7.18-19: τὸ δ' ἄχθυμαι/φθόνον ἀμειβόμενον τὰ καλὰ ἔργα). Much like Thucydides' Alcibiades, albeit in an unsurprisingly more subtle manner, Pindar suggests that *phthonos* is a natural, almost inevitable reaction to all types of *kala erga*. The fact that Megacles was in exile at the time of the ode suggests that Pindar's formulation essentially doubles as a condemnation of Athens' failure to reciprocate its benefactors. Some seventy years later, it would appear that this problem still existed. While it is unwise to see Athens' aversion to athletic success and epinician poetry as rigid and intractable—Alcibiades was, after all, quite successful in the realm of Athenian politics—it nevertheless seems true that the city had a difficult relationship with its Olympic victors.

Such is the general context in which we must understand Euripides' *Heracles* and its constant references to epinician poetry. This survey of the reception of athletic victors and epinician poetry in Athens shows some contrasts with the image of the genre that is transmitted by Euripides' tragedy. While Athenian attitudes towards the epinician commemoration of elite victors were ambivalent at best, and hostile at worst, in the *Heracles* this type of celebration is posed not only as proper, but indeed as a mark of a good *polis*. Conversely, the rejection of epinician ideals, the symptom of Thebes' tragic *stasis*, appears to have been common in Athens, perhaps even widespread. The *Heracles* thus promotes the epinician genre in a way that appears fundamentally discordant with the way his audience perceived the place of the genre in the *polis*. In so doing, the tragedy questions Athenian attitudes towards outstanding individuals

such as Heracles or Alcibiades, and it appears particularly critical of the place to which epinician was relegated in the *polis*.

Such criticism is notable in its own right, but it is made even more striking by the final piece of epinician evidence that can be dated to the fifth century: fragments of a poem written in honor of Alcibiades' victory, and attributed in antiquity to none other than Euripides. This is the only epinician from the classical era of which we have any knowledge after Pindar's death in 446 BCE.<sup>185</sup> Euripides' authorship, although it has been contested by some scholars,<sup>186</sup> should be considered probable.<sup>187</sup> As such, the remaining lines constitute a unique piece of evidence in

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<sup>185</sup> Swift, 2010, p. 108.

<sup>186</sup> Most recently by Lowe, 2007, p. 176, though his arguments against authenticity are brief and confined to a section of a footnote (fn 30).

<sup>187</sup> For the longest argument in favor of authenticity, cf. C.M. Bowra, "Euripides' Epinician for Alcibiades," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 9 (1960): pp. 68-79. Other scholars who regard the Euripidean attribution as secure include Denys Page, ed., *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford, 1962), p. 391; Nagy, 1990, p. 187; Papakonstantinou, 2003, p. 175; Hornblower, 2004, pp. 28, 56-58. Many scholars do not contest the attribution but remain essentially non-committal, e.g. Swift, 2010, pp. 115-16; Aloni, 2012, p. 36. Our fragments of the ode for Alcibiades come from two later authors, Plutarch, who quotes it twice (*Dem.* 1; *Alc.* 11), and Athenaeus, who cites it once (*Deipnosophistae* 1.5.10-11). Plutarch expresses some doubt about the authorship in one instance, referring to "the author...of the encomium for Alcibiades, whether it was Euripides, as most believe, or someone else" (*Dem.* 1: Ὁ μὲν γράψας τὸ...εἰς Ἀλκιβιάδην ἐγκώμιον, εἴτ' Εὐριπίδης ὡς ὁ πολὺς κρατεῖ λόγος, εἴθ' ἕτερός τις ἦν). But on the other occasion, in which he quotes the ode more fully, he expresses no such reservations (*Alc.* 11.3: λέγει δ'ὁ Εὐριπίδης), and the same is true of Athenaeus, who merely notes that "Euripides wrote an epinician" for Alcibiades' victory in the chariot race (*Deipn.* 1.5.10-11: Εὐριπίδης ἔγραψεν ἐπινίκιον). On balance then, out of three citations we have two unequivocal statements of Euripidean authorship and one tepid endorsement of it, and we also know that Euripidean authorship was widely believed around 100 AD (Plutarch tells us this much). While such late attributions are not irrefutable evidence that Euripides did in fact write the ode for Alcibiades, they nevertheless point in that direction. Additionally, Bowra, 1960, has identified several stylistic points in the remaining lines of the ode that confirm Euripidean authorship. While the sample size of the poetic affinities is, in my opinion, too small to serve as definitive proof of any sort, there is a third argument for authenticity that has not yet, to my knowledge, been made. To wit, insofar as the very purpose of commissioning an epinician ode was to bolster one's reputation, it seems exceedingly likely that Alcibiades would have hired a poet of great repute. While Euripides is certainly not the only such poet active in Athens at this time, he was certainly one of a select few. And if another famous poet, say for example Agathon, had written these lines, it seems *unlikely* that later generations would have so broadly attributed the ode to Euripides

an attempt to establish the specific cultural context of the *Heracles* and its epinician tones (E.

*Epinician for Alcibiades* fr. 1):

σὲ δ' ἄγαμαι,  
ὦ Κλεινίου παῖ· καλὸν ἄ νίκα,  
κάλλιστον δ', ὃ μήτις ἄλλος Ἑλλάνων,  
ἄρματι πρῶτα δραμεῖν καὶ δεύτερον καὶ τρίτα<τα>,  
βῆναί τ' ἀπονητὶ Διὸς στεφθέντ' ἐλαίαι 5  
κάρυκι βοᾶν παραδοῦναι.

I marvel at you,  
Oh son of Cleinias; victory is a beautiful thing,  
but the most beautiful thing, which no other Greek has done,  
is to take first, second, and third in the chariot race,  
and to go effortlessly, crowned with Zeus' olive,  
and make the herald shout...

As we might expect at this point, Euripides appears to be quite familiar with the formal features of epinician poetry. Not surprisingly, this passage is riddled with elements that are classically epinician, such as the description and celebration of the Olympic victory and the references to the official crowning. The mention of the herald's cry is also a typical motif, though we are left frustratingly ignorant of just what was called out. It could certainly be Alcibiades' name, as Bowra argues.<sup>188</sup> But it could just as easily be Athens itself, which would certainly represent an effort, on the poet's part, to mediate the tensions inherent in the victor-*polis* relationship.

Whatever the subject of the herald's call, the other surviving fragment confirms that the victor's *polis* received special mention in the ode. Plutarch gives us only another three words—

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when the actual author was in fact quite well-known. Again, no definitive proof exists that Euripides composed the epinician, but the balance of the evidence leans strongly in favor of such an attribution.

<sup>188</sup> Bowra, 1960, p. 74

τὰν εὐδόκιμον πόλιν—but his comment about the quote help us understand their place in Euripides’ poem: “he [scil. Euripides] says that for a happy man, the most important thing is to have ‘a well-famed city.’”<sup>189</sup> Based on this fragment, it seems certain that Euripides stressed the specific benefit that Alcibiades had brought the city of Athens, namely to increase its fame. In so doing, he is exploiting a traditional epinician strategy for ingratiating the victor with his fellow citizens. What is more, he is also saying essentially the same thing as Thucydides’ Alcibiades, who emphasizes the benefits his Olympic victory had brought the city as a whole. It is noteworthy, however, that in Thucydides’ analysis of the situation, the ill-will felt towards Alcibiades in Athens persisted, and was in fact quite widespread. It would seem that the epinician mediation attempted by Euripides and Alcibiades was not wholly successful.

There are striking congruities, both poetic and chronological, between the *Heracles* (produced around or shortly after 415 BCE) and this epinician fragment (presumably composed in 416 BCE). One could potentially read the tragedy as a response to Athens’ lack of appreciation for Alcibiades’ victory and by extension Euripides’ epinician for him. Alas, the complete lack of evidence of any sort on this question makes such an argument difficult to make and impossible to prove. But some conclusions may be drawn. First of all, the fact that Euripides produced a tragedy with such obvious epinician overtones within just a few years of his composition of the only known epinician ode of the period suggests that the genre was, at

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<sup>189</sup> Plut. Dem.1: φησὶ χρῆναι τῷ εὐδαίμονι πρῶτον ὑπάρξαι “τὰν πόλιν εὐδόκιμον.”

this time, one of particular interest for the tragedian. Second, we see that in both cases, Euripides' stance on the genre, so to speak, is at odds with that of many Athenians, and this too is noteworthy: at the very least, Euripides seems to problematize mainstream notions about the relevance (or lack thereof) of epinician poetry in Athens, and he thus challenges popular concerns about extraordinary Olympic victors such as Alcibiades. Finally, and perhaps most germane to the broader scope of this dissertation, the *Heracles* shows how Euripides' interests in choral lyric are directly related to the social and political questions he explores in his tragedies. Indeed, one cannot fully understand the *Heracles*' epinician tones in isolation, nor yet the broader themes of the tragedy, for too strong a confluence exists between the issues explored by the play and those with which epinician poetry was concerned. In the following chapter, I will examine a similar poetic dynamic: the role of the paeon in the *Ion*'s exploration of Athenian civic and colonial identities. Once again, we shall see that the use of a specific genre is closely tied to the dramatization of specific political issues, an intersection of poetics and politics that will further demonstrate the interdependence of these aspects of Euripidean tragedy.

## Chapter Three

# The Paean and Euripides' *Ion*: A Song for Athens and Ionia?

### 1. *Ion and the Myth of Ion:*

#### *Euripides and the Fusion of Autochthonous and Ionian Bloodlines*

It has long been recognized that Euripides' *Ion* addresses and ultimately fuses two different notions of Athens' mythical origins: the myth of autochthony, according to which Athenians were descendants of the original and earth-born inhabitants of Attica;<sup>1</sup> and the idea

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<sup>1</sup> Depending on the tradition, the Athenians' mythical ancestor was known as either Erichthonios or Erechtheus. Erichthonios/Erechtheus was said to have been born from the earth in Attica after Hephaestus' aborted rape of Athena resulted in the god's semen spilling on and impregnating the earth. According to the myth, Cecrops was the king of Attica at the time, and it was to him (or his daughters) that Athena entrusted the infant. For a reasonably coherent version of the myth, cf. Apoll., *Bibl.* 3.14. On the meaning and importance of this concept in fifth-century Athens, see Enrico Montanari, *Il mito dell'autoctonia: linee di una dinamica mitico-politica ateniese* (Rome, 1981); Vincent J. Rosivach, "Autochthony and the Athenians," *Classical Quarterly* 37 (1987a): pp. 294-306; Nicole Loraux, *The Children of Athena: Athenian Ideas about Citizenship and the Division between the Sexes*, tr. Caroline Levy (Princeton, 1993); Loraux, *Born of the Earth: Myth and Politics in Athens*, tr. Selina Stewart (Ithaca, 2000); W.R. Connor, "The Problem of Athenian Civic Identity," in *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology*, eds. Alan L. Boegehold and Adele C. Scafuro (Baltimore, 1994), pp. 34-44; Jonathan M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 53-56.

that the Ionian peoples of Asia Minor and the Cycladic islands shared an “ethnic” identity with the Athenians by virtue of their common descent from Ion, son of Xouthos. Xouthos was decidedly not Athenian, so Ion was variously connected to Athens either by his mother Creousa (daughter of Erechtheus),<sup>2</sup> or simply because he had at one point served as their general.<sup>3</sup> Because his Athenian bloodline could be traced solely to his mother’s side, Ion’s autochthonous bona fides was, as Parker has noted, “precarious.”<sup>4</sup> Euripides, however, “purifies” Ion’s bloodline by eliminating Xouthos from his lineage and replacing him with Apollo as his natural father, all while maintaining Creousa as his autochthonous mother. The (re)construction of this mythical genealogy lies at the very heart of the *Ion*.

Whether this Apolline genealogy was a Euripidean innovation or an adaptation of a less well-known myth is still the subject of debate. Given Plato’s uncritical citation of the very same bloodline a mere twenty-five years after the *Ion* was produced, I would suggest that the tradition must have pre-dated Euripides in some form, though this evidence is hardly unassailable.<sup>5</sup> Regardless, Euripides appears to be the first to so fully articulate this

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<sup>2</sup> This is the genealogy presented by Pseudo Hesiod fr. 10a, 20-24.

<sup>3</sup> Hdt. 8.44.2. Regardless of the details of the Athenians’ and Ionians’ shared origins, Solon’s claim that Athens was the “oldest land of Ionia” (fr. 4a, 2: παρεσβυτάτην γαίαν [Ἰαονίης]) makes it clear that the idea of a shared ethnicity existed long before Euripides’ time. For more on the subject, see Noel Robertson, “Melanthus, Codrus, Neleus, Caucon: Ritual Myth as Athenian History,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 29 (1988): pp. 201-61; W.R. Connor, “The Ionian Era of Athenian Civic Identity,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 137 (1993): pp. 194-206; Hall, 1997, pp. 42-44, 51-53.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Parker, “Myths of Early Athens,” in *Interpretations of Greek Mythology*, ed. Jan Bremmer (London, 1988), p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> Plato, *Euthydemus* 302d, names Apollo as Ion’s father and cites this as the reason that Athenians and Ionians celebrate Apollo *Patrōos*: αὐτῆ ἢ ἐπωνυμία [scil. Zeus *Patrōos*] Ἰώνων οὐδενί, οὐθ’ ὅσοι ἐκ τῆσδε τῆς πόλεως

mythological tradition, and the fact that he does so in terms that are overtly political has suggested to most scholars that the *Ion* deliberately presents a merger of two myths with the potential to resolve, or perhaps challenge, highly charged issues of identity. But beyond these bare facts there is little consensus. Scholars have variously seen the tragedy as an instructive example of Athenian patriotism or as a sharp critique of Athenian nationalism, and the vast and fertile ground between has not remained fallow.

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ἀπωκισμένοι εἰσὶν οὐθ' ἡμῖν, ἀλλὰ Απόλλων πατρῶος διὰ τὴν τοῦ Ἴωνος γένεσιν. As H.A. Shapiro, "Apollo and Ion on Classical Athenian Vases," in *Apolline Politics and Poetics*, eds. Lucia Athanassaki, Richard P. Martin, and John F. Miller (Athens, 2009), p. 271, points out, "[t]his does not sound like a recently invented genealogy." On the whole, it seems rather unlikely that Plato, who was not necessarily known for gleefully passing on the less savory mythological innovations of the dramatic poets, would have so blithely mentioned Apollo as Ion's father had Euripides been the sole originator of this myth. Nevertheless, many scholars have taken the lack of extant literary evidence of a prior tradition of Apolline paternity as evidence that Euripides' *Ion* is totally innovative in this regard: cf. Parker, 1988, p. 207, and 213 n 80; Jan N. Bremmer, "Myth as Propaganda: Athens and Sparta," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 117 (1997): p. 12; and R.D. Crome, "Apollo Patroos and the Phratries," *L'Antiquité Classique* 75 (2006): pp. 44-45. Other scholars, relying on the (presumed) existence of the cult of Apollo *Patrōos* in Athens at the time, see the *Ion* as presenting an alternative, possibly Attic but certainly pre-existing, genealogy: cf. D.J. Conacher, "The Paradox of Euripides' *Ion*," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 90 (1959): pp. 24-25; Anne Pippin Burnett, *Ion by Euripides* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1970), p. 1; K.H. Lee, ed., *Euripides: Ion* (Warminster, 1997), p. 39; Katerina Zacharia, *Converging Truths: Euripides' Ion and the Athenian Quest for Self-Definition* (Leiden, 2003), pp. 44-45. Quite intriguingly, Shapiro, 2009, has argued that several heretofore unidentified figures found on mid-fifth-century Attic vases are in fact Ion in the presence of Apollo, an identification which, if correct, would essentially prove that Euripides is working with an established Attic tradition. For more on the cult of Apollo *Patrōos* in Athens, the foundation of which is typically dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, see Homer A. Thompson, "The Buildings on the West Side of the Agora," *Hesperia* 6 (1937): pp. 77-84, who identifies a 6<sup>th</sup> century BC structure in the Athenian *agora* as a temple to Apollo *Patrōos*; Xavier de Schutter, "Le Culte d'Apollon Patrōos à Athènes," *L'Antiquité Classique* 56 (1987): pp. 103-29, who generally follows Thompson's identification of the temple; Charles W. Hedrick Jr., "The Temple and Cult of Apollo Patroos in Athens," *American Journal of Archaeology* 92 (1988): pp. 185-210, who notes that there are "grave problems with the standard interpretation" of the archaic temple to Apollo *Patrōos* and that "even [its] existence" is not "beyond doubt" (p. 191), but who nevertheless does not dispute the Peisistratid foundation of the cult itself. *Contra*, see Mark L. Lawall, "The Temple of Apollo Patroos Dated by an Amphora Stamp," *Hesperia* 78 (2009): pp. 387-403. Lawall puts forth a strong argument that the temple of Apollo Patroos in the *agora* should be dated to the end of the fourth century BC, and he even doubts the existence of the cult in archaic or classical Athens.

One subject that has gone neglected, however, is Euripides' use of paeans in the *Ion*, and its bearing on the tragic themes. Doubtless the difficulty of approaching the topic, due not least to the nebulous nature of the genre, has dampened enthusiasm for any analysis of this sort. But there is ample reason to believe that such rocky terrain could bear rich fruits. To begin, paeans were traditionally performed in contexts where questions of civic and colonial identity were of central importance, and these are the same issues with which the *Ion* engages. Moreover, the play contains two paeanic monodies that appear to approach, albeit in a highly unconventional manner, these very same questions of identity. There appears to be a deep and multifaceted connection between the civic problems that Euripides explores in the *Ion*, and the lyric genre that he employs throughout this exploration.

In this chapter I examine the *Ion's* paeans in order to better understand their relation to the central questions of the play, and argue that they serve both to question the origin myths that the play proposes, and to challenge the means by which these myths were created and propagated. I begin by outlining the plot and mythical apparatus of the play so as to illustrate the *Ion's* emphasis on Athenian autochthony and Ionian descent, and by discussing scholarly reactions to the tragedy's focus on these complex questions of identity. The next and main section of the chapter consists of an examination of the *Ion's* paeans in contrast to traditional fifth-century examples of the genre. Here, I begin with a brief overview of the genre before moving on to an analysis of the paeon Ion sings at the beginning of the play, where I emphasize what I call the "internal dissonance" of Ion's song. I then move on to an exploration of the texts and contexts of five Pindaric paeans, each of which illuminates the manner in which Ion's paeon

deviates from the audience's expectations. Here, we shall see that paeans were frequently used in the fifth century BCE to celebrate or propagate civic and ethnic identities and to promote communal solidarity—the very things the *Ion* purports to do. Ion's deviation from these themes is striking, for with his paean he emphasizes his "isolation from community,"<sup>6</sup> and creates for himself an identity the audience knows to be fictional. Ion's song thus begins the process of undermining the fusion and dissemination of Athenian and Ionian identities Euripides claims to effect.

After I have fully explored the dissonance, both internal and external, of Ion's paean, I discuss the episodes that follow it. These scenes work to develop many themes introduced by the ode, in particular that of Ion's "fictional identity." The problems with Ion's identity culminate in another dissonant paean, this one an "anti-paean" sung by Creousa which recalls Ion's earlier paean and re-elaborates the problems with Apolline song and fictional "Ionian" identities that Ion had introduced with his monody. As I show, these problems are never fully resolved—even at the end of the play tensions remain between Ion's multiple identities—but they are expressed most poignantly in the two tragic paeans. Rather than aiding in the construction and propagation of a "new" version of Athenian/Ionian identity, the *Ion*'s two paeanic songs challenge the very solutions that Euripides poses in the play, and highlight the artificial manner in which mythical identities, be they Athenian or Ionian, are created. Looked

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<sup>6</sup> Ian Rutherford, "Apollo in Ivy: The Tragic Paean," *Arion* 3 (1995a): p. 131.

at through the lens of the paeans he creates, Euripides' *Ion* appears less a cohesive merger of competing ideologies—Athenian autochthony and Ionian “imperialism”—and more a critique of way these ideologies are developed.

## ***2. Beyond the Tragic Plot: The Politics of Ion's Identity***

### *From Hermes to Athena: Ion as the guarantor of Athenian/Ionian relations*

The *Ion* opens with Hermes standing before the temple of Apollo. The god wastes little time in exposing the tragedy's relevance to Athens, mentioning “[the] famous city of the Greeks/named after golden-speared Pallas”<sup>7</sup> and its autochthonous ancestors (*Ion* 10-11). In the following lines we learn of Apollo's rape of the Athenian Creousa and her secret parturition and abandonment of his child (*Ion* 10-27). The heretofore unbroken line of autochthonous descent is spelled out: we are told that Creousa is the daughter of Erechtheus (*Ion* 10-11) and a descendant of “earthborn Erichthonios” (*Ion* 20-21: γηγενοῦς/Ἐριχθονίου). Her child, as we learn, is still alive and well: at Apollo's behest, Hermes had rescued the infant and delivered him, and the basket in which he had been left with traditional Athenian ornaments, to Delphi (*Ion* 28-40). The Pythian priestess, though ignorant of his origins, had raised the child at the temple (*Ion* 41-53).

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<sup>7</sup> *Ion* 8-9: ἔστιν γὰρ οὐκ ἄσημος Ἑλλήνων πόλις,/τῆς χρυσολόγχου Παλλάδος κεκλημένη.

Now a young man, he remains at Delphi and serves as the “god’s gold-keeper and loyal steward of all things” (*Ion* 54-55: χρυσοφύλακα τοῦ θεοῦ/ταμίαν τε πάντων πιστόν). The child’s name, as we learn, will be Ion.

Meanwhile, Creousa is on her way to Delphi with her Achaean husband Xouthos. Both wish to consult the oracle about her current inability to conceive. As Hermes tells us, “Loxias is driving fortune to this point” (*Ion* 67-68: Λοξίας δὲ τὴν τύχην/ἔς τοῦτ’ ἐλαύνει). His plans for the future are even more curious (*Ion* 69-73):

δώσει γὰρ εἰσελθόντι μαντεῖον τόδε  
 Εὐθύω τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδα, καὶ πεφυκέναι 70  
 κείνου σφε φήσει, μητρὸς ὡς ἐλθὼν δόμους  
 γνωσθῆ Κρεούση, καὶ γάμοι τε Λοξίου  
 κρυπτοὶ γένωνται παῖς τ’ ἔχη τὰ πρόσφορα.

For when he comes to this oracle he will give to  
 Xouthos this child [Ion] as his own, and will say  
 he was born of him, so he’ll be recognized by  
 Kreousa  
 when he comes to her home, and Apollo’s rape  
 will remain secret while the boy has his due.

In other words Apollo, whom Hermes has just told us “ever reveals to mortals the present and the future” (*Ion* 6-7: βροτοῖς/τά τ’ ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα θεσπίζων ἀεί), will lie to Xouthos in order to conceal what should be considered, in this light, a transgression.<sup>8</sup> The plots—both Apollo’s and the tragedy’s—seem convoluted and contradictory, but Hermes is confident of the outcome: thanks to Creousa’s ability to “recognize” her own child, Ion (and the audience) will

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<sup>8</sup> Not all scholars agree that Apollo’s actions are depicted negatively in the play, but Francis Dunn, “The Battle of the Sexes in Euripides’ *Ion*,” *Ramus* 19 (1990): p. 131, correctly points out that the “unsettling topic” of Apollo’s rape of Creousa “persistently returns,” and that his actions are repeatedly “condemned as ‘criminal’ or ‘unjust.’” Along these lines, see also Michael Lloyd, “Divine and Human Action in Euripides’ *Ion*,” *Antike und Abendland* 32 (1986): pp. 36-38; Stanley E. Hoffer, “Violence, Culture, and the Workings of Ideology in Euripides’ *Ion*,” *Classical Antiquity* 15 (1996): pp. 289-318. *Contra* see Felix M. Wasserman, “Divine Violence and Providence in Euripides’ *Ion*,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 71 (1940): pp. 589-90; and Anne Pippin Burnett, “Human Resistance and Divine Persuasion in Euripides’ *Ion*,” *Classical Philology* 57 (1962): pp. 90-91. Finally, George Gellie, “Apollo in the *Ion*,” *Ramus* 13 (1983): pp. 93-101, skillfully straddles the line between condemnation and defense.

learn he is blessed with pure autochthonous descent. This revelation will have major consequences throughout the Greek world, for Ion will come to be the progenitor of the Ionian Greeks (*Ion* 74-75):

Ἴωνα δ' αὐτόν, κτίστορ' Ἀσιάδος χθονός,  
ὄνομα κεκλήσθαι θήσεται καθ' Ἑλλάδα.                      75                      [Apollo] shall see to it that all over Greece he,  
founder of the Asian land, shall be called Ion.

Apolline paternity and guidance are the decisive factors when it comes to Ion's fate, and the god thus becomes the guarantor of both Athenian purity and of Athens' genealogical and colonial connection to its Ionian allies. The stakes are high: Athenian identity, both at home and abroad, will be tested and proved by the tragedy.

As mentioned above, by making his father Apollo Euripides creates a significant and meaningful departure from Ion's traditional genealogy. The consequences are three-fold: Ion becomes an autochthonous Athenian untainted by foreign blood; all Ionians become descendants of Athenian autochthony; and both parties share Apollo's divine blood. Euripides seems to find a solution to fit everyone's needs. In the process, he merges two Athenian ideologies that had heretofore been kept separate: the concept of autochthony, which granted the Athenians superiority over the rest of the Greeks while bolstering a sense of democratic equality among their own civic body;<sup>9</sup> and the idea of a common ancestry with the Ionians,

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Isoc. 12.24; Plato *Menexenus* 237e-238a; Rosivach, 1987a; Connor, 1994; Loraux, 2000, pp. 33-38. It is also worth noting that the Athenian conception of autochthony did not arise until much after their theorization of a common Ionian ancestry: while Solon already speaks of Athens' conception of Ionia in the early sixth century BC (see above, fn 3), we hear nothing of Athenian autochthony until after the advent of democracy in the early fifth century (see esp. Rosivach, 1987a).

which had been used by Athenians and Ionians alike to justify Athenian involvement in Ionia and the Cyclades.<sup>10</sup> At the risk of oversimplifying, one might state that the concept of autochthony was used more in the democratic sphere of internal politics, while Ionianism was exploited within the imperialist sphere of Athens' dealings with its allies and subjects.<sup>11</sup> But regardless of the spheres within which these ideologies operated, it is obvious that Euripides' play engages in some serious way with Athenian and Ionian origin myths.

Lest anyone in the audience miss this point or underestimate the stakes, Euripides makes sure to frequently emphasize the tragedy's connections to both Athenian and Ionian identity. References to Athens' "earth-born" past are scattered throughout: Creousa tells Ion the story of her autochthonous roots when they meet in the first episode of the play (*Ion* 267-82); a general preoccupation with "Athenian racial purity"<sup>12</sup> throughout the tragedy confirms that Athenian identity is one of the *Ion's* central topics, and that this identity is autochthonous; and when Athena arrives at the end to confirm Apollo as Ion's father, she proclaims that "it is right that he rule [her] land since he was born from Erechtheus," (*Ion* 1573-74: ἐκ γὰρ τῶν Ἐρεχθέως γεγῶς/δίκαιος ἄρχειν τῆς γ' ἐμῆς ὄδε χθονός). In total, Euripides refers to Erichthonios,

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Hdt. 5.97.2; Th. 1.95.1; 3.86.3; see also John P. Barron, "Milesian Politics and Athenian Propaganda c. 460-440 B.C.," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 82 (1962): pp. 1-6; Connor, 1993; Bremmer, 1997; John Alty, "Dorians and Ionians," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 102 (1982): pp. 1-14.

<sup>11</sup> On the "elite" and "imperialist" associations of Ionianism, cf. Connor, 1993, pp. 200-04; Carol Dougherty, "Democratic Contradictions and the Synoptic Illusion of Euripides' *Ion*," in *Demokratia: A Conversation on Democracies, Ancient and Modern*, eds. Josiah Ober and Charles Hedrick (Princeton, 1996), pp. 252-54; On the "democratic" associations of autochthony, cf. Connor, 1993, pp. 204-06; Connor, 1994; Dougherty, 1996, pp. 254-57; and especially Rosivach, 1987a, pp. 302-06.

<sup>12</sup> I borrow the term from George B. Walsh, "The Rhetoric of Birthright and Race in Euripides' *Ion*," *Hermes* 106 (1978): pp. 301-15 *passim*.

Erechtheus, Cecrops,<sup>13</sup> and autochthony more times (each) in the *Ion* than he does in all his other extant plays combined.<sup>14</sup> Athens' autochthonous ancestors are never far from the minds of Euripides' audience.

Regarding Ionian identity, as long as Ion is in the limelight (the entire tragedy, more or less), it is difficult to forget about his mythical descendants. Nevertheless, this issue appears to be of only relative importance until Athena, filling in for Apollo at the last minute, fully articulates the ethnic and indeed military stakes of the autochthon's future (*Ion* 1581-94):

<p style="text-align: center;">οἱ τῶνδε δ' αὖ  παῖδες γενόμενοι σὺν χρόνῳ πεπρωμένῳ  Κυκλάδας ἐποικήσουσι νησαίας πόλεις  χέρσους τε παράλους, ὃ σθένος τήμῃ χθονὶ  δίδωσιν· ἀντίπορθμα δ' ἠπείροιν δυοῖν  1585 πεδία κατοικήσουσιν, Ἀσιάδος τε γῆς  Εὐρωπίας τε· τοῦδε δ' ὀνόματος χάριν  Ἴωνες ὀνομασθέντες ἕξουσιν κλέος.</p> <p>Ξούθῳ δὲ καὶ σοὶ γίγνεται κοινὸν γένος,  Δῶρος μὲν, ἔνθεν Δωρὶς ὑμνηθήσεται  1590 πόλις κατ' αἴαν Πελοπίαν· ὁ δεῦτερος  Ἀχαιοός, ὃς γῆς παραλίας Ῥίου πέλας  τύραννος ἔσται, κάπισημανθήσεται  κείνου κεκληῖσθαι λαὸς ὄνομ' ἐπώνυμος.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">And later still  at the allotted time [Ion's grandchildren]  shall settle the Cycladic island cities  and the sea-side lands, which give strength  to my land. They shall colonize the plains  of the two opposing continents, Asia  and Europe; and called Ionians in his honor  they shall win great glory.</p> <p>You [Creousa] and Xouthos shall also share  a family: first Doros, after whom the Dorian city  shall be sung of throughout the land of Pelops;  and second Achaios, who shall be the ruler  of the coastland near Rhion, where an  eponymous people shall be named after him.</p>
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Several things emerge from this description: Ionian descent from Erechtheus and Athens' status as "mother-city" of Ionia is reaffirmed; Athenians and Ionians are given primacy—both

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<sup>13</sup> Each of these mythical characters was associated with the various retellings of Athens' autochthonous roots. On which, see above fn 1.

<sup>14</sup> In the *Ion*, Erichthonios is mentioned four times; Erechtheus (including references to "Erechtheids") eighteen times; Cecrops (including references to Cecropians) six times; and autochthony three times. One can presume that these names and terms were used quite frequently in Euripides' lost *Erechtheus*, but that play also dealt closely with the concept of Athenian autochthony.

chronologically and genealogically—over the Dorians and Achaeans; and perhaps most intriguingly, the Ionian colonies that make up the Delian league are said to “give strength” to Athens. Whether this is a reference to Ionian military assistance or, as Hoffer suggests, to the tributes upon which Athens so heavily relied,<sup>15</sup> it is explicit that the *Ion*’s mythical apparatus is closely related to the propagation of Athenian alliances in the Cyclades and Ionia. Implicit is the idea that the Ionian Greeks win “great glory” on account of both their privileged descent from autochthonous Athenians, and their present status as allies of the city, a subtle encouragement to remain loyal. In all senses, Euripides’ aetiology encourages and justifies Athens’ hegemonic role in the Delian League, while also guaranteeing the purity of Athens’ autochthonous stock.

#### *Athenian/Ionian identity and the date of the Ion*

The date of performance can help us understand why Euripides may have chosen to address such complex issues of Athenian and Ionian identity. The precise year of production cannot be established, but the tragedy can in all likelihood be placed within a limited range. Metrical considerations (i.e. the percentage of “resolved” trimeters) suggest that the *Ion* was performed after the *Trojan Women* and before the *Helen*, or between 416/15 and 412/11 BCE.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Hoffer, 1996, pp. 313-14.

<sup>16</sup> The *Ion* contains resolution in 25.8 percent of its trimeters, as opposed to 21.2 percent in *Trojan Women* and 27.5 percent in *Helen*. On this subject, cf. E.B. Caedel, “Resolved Feet in the Trimeters of Euripides and the Chronology of the Plays,” *The Classical Quarterly* 35 (1941): pp. 66-89 (see esp. the table on p. 70).

The metrical criterion is, of course, approximate,<sup>17</sup> and earlier scholars attempted to ante-date the *Ion* based primarily on historical considerations.<sup>18</sup> In more recent years, however, scholars have generally placed the *Ion* in the later years of that range, generally between 413 and 411 BCE.<sup>19</sup> Such a date situates the production of the *Ion* either just before or during the revolt of many of Athens' Ionian allies, an event which certainly weighed heavily on Athenian minds.<sup>20</sup> It

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<sup>17</sup> To wit: the dating of the *Trojan Women* is itself highly uncertain, as it is based almost entirely Aelian's imprecise assertion (nearly five centuries after the fact) that the play was produced in the 91<sup>st</sup> Olympiad (cf. *Varia Historia* 2.8). And in fact, in a recent paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Philological Association, Erika Jeck (Dating *Trojan Women*: The Chronology of Euripidean Tragedy Reexamined," presented at the APA in 2012) has analyzed compelling evidence, in the form of a parody of the *Trojan Women* found in Aristophanes' *Wasps* (v. 1326), that suggests that Euripides' play must have been produced some time before 422 BC.

<sup>18</sup> A.S. Owen, ed., *Euripides: Ion* (Oxford, 1939), pp. xxxvi-xli, argues that the "patriotic" leanings of the *Ion* show that it must predate the incident on Melos, and thus assigns it to 418/17 BC; Conacher, 1959, pp. 26-29, also proposes a date closer to 420 BC, insisting that Athens' setbacks in 413 (Sicilian expedition) and 412 BC (Ionian revolt) would make the subject matter of the *Ion* appear a "tasteless mockery" (p. 28) if performed after those events. *Contra* see esp. Walsh, 1978, pp. 313-15.

<sup>19</sup> Scholars who lean toward 413 BCE include: J. Diggle, ed., *Euripides Fabulae* vol. 2 (Oxford, 1981), p. 306; Lee, ed., 1997, p. 40. For a compelling argument in favor of 412 BCE, cf. Zacharia, 2003, pp. 1-7. For 411 BC, see Walsh, 1978, pp. 313-15. And a slightly later date (410 BC) has been proposed by Rainer Klimek-Winter, "Euripides in den dramatischen Agonen Athens: Zur Datierung des *Ion*," *Gymnasium* 103 (1996): pp. 289-97.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Th. 8.2, 8.5 ff. Thucydides' narration of the "Ionian War" lasts almost the entirety of Book 8. The Ionian allies who revolted included the island of Euboea (Th. 8.5, 8.60, and esp. 8.91 ff.), Chios (Th. 8.6 ff., *passim*), Miletus (Th. 8.17 ff., *passim*), et al. The seriousness of the situation for Athens, to which the considerable space dedicated to it by Thucydides is certainly a testament, is encapsulated by Th. 8.15.1: "In their present state of terror, [the Athenians] immediately dissolved the penalties for anyone proposing [to use] the thousand talents which they had striven not to touch throughout the entirety of the war, and they voted to use it and man many ships" (Th. 8.15.1: τὰ τε χίλια τάλαντα, ὧν διὰ παντὸς τοῦ πολέμου ἐγλίχοντο μὴ ἄψασθαι, εὐθὺς ἔλυσαν τὰς ἐπικειμένας ζημίας τῷ εἰπόντι ἢ ἐπιψηφίσαντι ὑπὸ τῆς παρούσης ἐκπλήξεως, καὶ ἐψηφίσαντο κινεῖν καὶ ναῦς πληροῦν οὐκ ὀλίγας). In other words, after eighteen war-weary years during which they managed not to touch this nest-egg, which even the disaster of the Sicilian expedition and subsequent fear of a Syracusan invasion had not tempted them to use, the Athenians *immediately* [*euthus*] decided that the potential revolt of their Ionian allies represented such an extreme danger that an exception to their previous thrift in the matter was necessary. The fact that such a swift and drastic decision was made implies that the Athenians were well-aware of the delicate nature of their relationships with their allies, and the danger a revolt would represent, even before it actually happened. This is confirmed by Thucydides' earlier comment that the Athenians "looked out most of all for the affairs of their allies, in order that they not revolt from them" (Th. 8.4: μάλιστα δὲ τὰ τῶν συμμαχῶν διασκοποῦντες ὅπως μὴ σφῶν ἀποστήσονται). All of this suggests that the Ionian apparatus of the *Ion* would have easily caused the Athenian audience to think of the critical role of their Ionian allies, even were the play produced before the revolt. For a brief synopsis of the "Ionian War," cf.

also coincides with the only period in which democratic Athens “willingly relaxed”<sup>21</sup> Pericles’ citizenship law of 451/450 BCE by allowing Athenians to “marry one woman and to have children from another.”<sup>22</sup> In short, regardless of the precise year in which the *Ion* was produced, an abundance of evidence indicates that the questions of Ionian and Athenian identity discussed in the tragedy were highly charged topics. Euripides is clearly and deliberately broaching sensitive issues.<sup>23</sup>

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Simon Hornblower, *The Greek World: 479-323 BC* (London, 2011), pp. 178-82. For much more, see Donald Kagan, *The Fall of the Athenian Empire* (Ithaca, 1987), pp. 24-105.

<sup>21</sup> Susan Lape, *Race and Citizen Identity in the Classical Athenian Democracy* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 21. Lape notes that other changes were made to the law in 411 and 404/3 BC, but only under the duress of oligarchy (p. 21 fn 76).

<sup>22</sup> Diog. Laert. 2.26: γαμεῖν μὲν ἀσπὴν μίαν, παιδοποιεῖσθαι δὲ καὶ ἐξ ἑτέρας. Note the emphasis in the Greek on the wife being a citizen; whether or not the “other woman” was required to be a citizen is open to interpretation, though the construction of the sentence (*astēn* ≈ *heteran*) implies that the second woman was supposed to be an Athenian as well. Lape, 2010, pp. 263-65 argues that this was the original intent of the law, but that because of various difficulties (e.g. the unwillingness of Athenian citizens to “sacrifice their daughters to a life of concubinage” [p. 264]), the application of the law was probably fluid. Daniel Ogden, *Greek Bastardy in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods* (Oxford, 1996) pp. 72-75, provides a good overview of the “bigamy law,” but is non-committal in his assessment of potential collateral effects.

<sup>23</sup> An interesting dramatic comparative is found in Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* 582-86, in which the protagonist compares all the Athenian colonies (582: ὅπόσαι τῆς γῆς τῆσδ’ εἰσὶν ἀποικοί) to strands of wool that need to be gathered together in order to “weave a new cloak for the *demos*” (586: ἐκ ταύτης τῶ δήμῳ χλαῖναν ὑφῆναι). As Jeffrey Henderson, ed., *Aristophanes: Lysistrata* (Oxford, 1987), p. 145 points out, *apoikoi* is used here as an umbrella term for all “[t]he allied cities [who] were, with few exceptions, Ionian and thus descended...from Attic migrants.” According to Henderson, the metaphor functions on a practical level as a call “for their incorporation into a single Athenian state with a single citizenship.” But on a secondary metaphorical level, insofar as weaving had long and vast associations with the creation of poetry, *Lysistrata*’s proposal also suggests the creation of a new mytho-poetic apparatus that gathers into one the various strands of Athenian and colonial identity. In other words, *Lysistrata* calls for something akin to the *Ion*. (On the weaving-as-poetry metaphor, cf. Jane McIntosh Snyder, “The Web of Song: Weaving Imagery in Homer and the Lyric Poets,” *The Classical Journal* 76 [1981]: pp. 193-96.) While it is perhaps too much to see Aristophanes’ words as a direct allusion to Euripides’ tragedy (although Owen, ed., 1939, p. xxxvi, does just that, and thus establishes 411 BC as the *terminus ante quem* for Euripides’ tragedy), these lines certainly demonstrate that these questions of identity were of tremendous importance at the time of the *Ion*, and that Euripides’ audience was used to dealing with such questions in a dramatic context.

### *Critical interpretations*

Given such a loaded context, scholars have naturally been eager to determine whether Euripides is attempting to challenge or support mainstream Athenian notions of identity. Naturally, the question of a poet's intentions will always be subject to a range of interpretations, but it is fair to say that critical interpretations can be placed within three basic categories: those which see the *Ion* as a positive and patriotic celebration of Athenian autochthony and its successful merger with Ionian identity; those which see it as a negative critique, either pointed or ironic, of Athenian politics of identity, exclusion, and imperialism; and those which find a middle ground, generally by conceding that the complexities of the drama do not allow for a clear understanding of Euripides' goals.

A number of elements have been adduced as evidence for the "negative" argument. George B. Walsh, for example, argues that by showing Ion to be a potential victim of Athenian "xenophobia," and by associating Creousa's *Paidagōgos*, a character depicted in a profoundly negative manner, with "an extreme doctrine of racial purity, the poet invites his audience to reject it."<sup>24</sup> Nicole Loraux points out that the tragedy exposes the uncertainty of Athenian origin myths, and argues that by making a woman (Creousa) solely responsible for "carrying the weight of autochthony," Euripides fundamentally undermines his own genealogical creation.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Walsh, 1978, p. 313.

<sup>25</sup> Loraux, 1993, p. 236.

Others insist variously that the play's emphasis on ignorance,<sup>26</sup> violence,<sup>27</sup> complex notions of bastardy,<sup>28</sup> or the final and presumably prolonged deception of Xouthos, who will continue to mistakenly believe that Ion is his natural son,<sup>29</sup> all function to question not only Athenian civic myths but indeed the process of Athenian civic mythmaking.<sup>30</sup>

Earlier critics, conversely, were nearly unanimous in their assessment of the *Ion* as a "patriotic" play intended to "gratify the pride of the Athenians and to make closer the bonds that linked the Ionian cities with Athens."<sup>31</sup> After a period of unpopularity, this more "positive" interpretation of the *Ion* has returned, albeit in a more sophisticated fashion. Carol Dougherty emphasizes the political dimension of the tragedy and argues that Euripides successfully proposes "a new world in which Athenians emerge as both autochthonous and Ionian, simultaneously democratic and imperial."<sup>32</sup> For Froma Zeitlin, though the play is not without its difficulties, Ion "sets an example to colonists...[and] becomes the principle of unity in diversity,

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<sup>26</sup> Andrew Farrington, "ΤΝΩΘΙ ΣΑΥΤΟΝ. Social Self-Knowledge in Euripides' *Ion*," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 134 (1991): pp. 120-136.

<sup>27</sup> Hoffer, 1996; and to a lesser extent Dunn, 1990, pp. 130-33.

<sup>28</sup> Cynthia B. Patterson, "Those Athenian Bastards," *Classical Antiquity* 9 (1990): pp. 66-68. Patterson argues that by making Ion a "bastard" child of Apollo and Creousa, Euripides "exposes the ironies of Athenian social conventions and pretensions" (p. 67).

<sup>29</sup> Arlene Saxonhouse, "Myths and the Origins of Cities," in *Greek Tragedy and Political Theory*, ed. J. Peter Euben (Berkeley, 1986), pp. 252-73, esp. 271-72; Charles Segal, "Euripides *Ion*: Generational Passage and Civic Myth," in *Rites of Passage in Ancient Greece: Literature, Religion, Society*, ed. Mark W. Padilla (Lewisburg, PA, 1999), pp. 67-108, esp. 97-98.

<sup>30</sup> Segal, 1999. Other interpretations that fall into this first category include Page DuBois, *Sowing the Body: Psychoanalysis and Ancient Representations of Women* (Chicago, 1988), pp. 79-80; and Edward E. Cohen, *The Athenian Nation* (Princeton, 2009), pp. 85-87.

<sup>31</sup> The quote is from Owen, ed., 1939, p. xxxiii, but this is largely the same view taken by Burnett, 1970, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Dougherty, 1996, p. 250.

the central point of an expanding periphery."<sup>33</sup> Katerina Zacharia considers the play a lesson of sorts for the Athenians, who "learn to confront honestly the complexity and ambiguity of reality"<sup>34</sup> as they see their city become a "μητρόπολις" and thus mirror Creousa's discovery of her maternity.<sup>35</sup> And most recently, Laura Swift has directly countered several claims made by the "ironic" readers of the *Ion* and argues that these more negative interpretations are generally the result of an entrenched "belief that Euripides' work is fundamentally subversive."<sup>36</sup>

Finally, numerous commentators have avoided arriving at definitive conclusions about the message Euripides' seeks to transmit with the *Ion*. This view is concisely propounded by Kevin Lee, who warns that "one should be careful of finding in the play any simple critique of its implications."<sup>37</sup> A more recent exponent of this non-committal stance is Susan Lape, who focuses on the ideas of identity in the *Ion* in the light of evolving notions of citizenship in archaic and classical Athens.<sup>38</sup> Lape notes the problems inherent in the play's emphasis on a violent mythical past,<sup>39</sup> and she is particularly interested in Ion's identity as a *nothos* and how that compares to the parameters for citizenship set by Pericles (and others).<sup>40</sup> According to the Periclean law of 451/50, which stipulated that only freeborn children of an Athenian father *and*

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<sup>33</sup> Froma I. Zeitlin, *Playing the Other: Gender and Society in Ancient Greek Literature* (Chicago, 1996), p. 338.

<sup>34</sup> Zacharia, 2003, p. 102.

<sup>35</sup> Eadem, p. 100.

<sup>36</sup> Laura Swift, *Euripides: Ion* (London, 2008), pp. 94-100, quote on p. 99.

<sup>37</sup> Lee, ed., 1997, p. 36.

<sup>38</sup> Lape, 2010, pp. 95-136.

<sup>39</sup> Eadem, pp. 119-27.

<sup>40</sup> Eadem, pp. 127-36.

mother could be considered citizens,<sup>41</sup> Ion would *not* in fact qualify for citizenship. Lape notes the not-so-subtle irony in this situation, but while she “would not argue that Euripides is fully complicit in the racial ideology he depicts,” she also doesn’t believe “Ion’s bastardy to be the loose end leading to its unraveling.”<sup>42</sup> In short, according to Lape, Euripides’ mythical apparatus is neither a simple celebration, nor an open critique, of Athenian ideology.

### 3. *Generic Dissonance: Paeans and the Ion*

Given the nexus of myth and civic identity that scholars have seen in the *Ion*, it is surprising that so little attention has been given to the paeon, a genre that is both germane to the mythical and political issues at hand, and remarkably present in the tragedy itself. As mentioned above, this is no doubt due to the difficult nature of the genre itself, for which only a handful of fragments provide relevant fifth-century testimony. These scanty remains nevertheless provide convincing evidence that the genre, as it was perceived in the fifth century BCE, was an ideal vehicle for transmitting and reinforcing the very ideas and myths of identity

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<sup>41</sup> *Ath. Pol.* 26.3; Plut. *Pericles* 37.3. On the law, see A.L. Boegehold, “Perikles’ Citizenship Law of 451/0 B.C.,” in *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology*, eds. Boegehold and A.C. Scafuro (Baltimore, 1994), pp. 57-66; and Cynthia Patterson, “Athenian Citizenship Law,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Law*, eds. Michael Gagarin and David Cohen (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 278-83.

<sup>42</sup> Lape, 2010, p. 129. She takes a similar stance on the problem of violence in the play (p. 125): “[a]lthough the plot may well exploit the dark side of autochthony, I am not certain that this is tantamount to a critique.”

with which the *Ion* purports to engage. As such, an examination of the tragedy's paeans, especially in comparison to contemporary Athenian uses of the genre, should provide crucial color and shading to our interpretations of the civic myths Euripides creates and employs.

In the rest of the chapter, I offer a new assessment of the *Ion*, and in particular of its paeanic monodies, in the light of the actual forms and uses of Apolline paeans throughout Greece in the fifth century BCE. I begin with a general presentation of the features and functions of Greek paeans in order to demonstrate that the Delphic setting and the issues of the tragedy form a natural context for paeanic song. I follow this discussion with an analysis of *Ion*'s paeanic monody, which follows immediately on the heels of Hermes' prologue, and I demonstrate that *Ion*'s song is remarkably anomalous. I then present and discuss a number of fifth-century paeans, Athenian and otherwise, in order to elucidate the typical features and uses of Athenians paeans, and in particular to show just how strikingly *Ion*'s paeon differs from these standards. The following section is dedicated to an examination to the manner in which the tragedy develops and explores the themes that are central to *Ion*'s paeon, and culminates with a close reading of Creousa's monody, a song which presents itself as a sort of anti-paeon and which sets in motion a serious tragic crisis.

*An overview of the Paeon: a song for Apollo, a song for the community*

First and foremost, it is important to note that no fifth-century definition of the paeon has survived. Influenced no doubt by Proclus' proclamation that paeans were "sung to allay

plagues and diseases”<sup>43</sup> scholars have long persisted in the notion that the genre was primarily—even exclusively—apotropaic in nature.<sup>44</sup> Proclus’ definition, however, comes nearly a thousand years after the classical era, and as such cannot be considered an accurate reflection of the genre’s function in Athens and Greece at the time the *Ion* was produced. Indeed, the evidence that we have from the fifth century BCE suggests that the paeon was remarkably flexible in every respect, to the extent that Andrew Ford justifiably points out that “among all archaic genres, paeans have proven the most resistant to definition and categorization.”<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the fact that Greeks were able to simply use the word “paeon” to express a specific kind of poetic performance<sup>46</sup> implies by necessity that the Greeks were able to conceive of such a poetic form, and to associate with this genre specific, if varied, elements and functions.

A few general points may be made. The paeon was a form of lyric poetry that was typically performed by choruses of young men<sup>47</sup> and most often associated with Apolline cult.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Photius, *Bibliotheca* 320a23-24: ἐπὶ καταπαύσει λοιμῶν καὶ νόσων ἀδόμενος.

<sup>44</sup> E.g. Lutz Käppel, *Paian: Studien zur Geschichte einer Gattung* (Berlin, 1992).

<sup>45</sup> Andrew Ford, “The Genre of Genres: Paeans and *Paian* in Early Greek Poetry,” *Poetica* 38 (2006): p. 178.

<sup>46</sup> As we see for example in the *Ion* itself (v. 906), but also in Aeschylus (*Persians* 393, Ch. 870), Archilochus (fr. 121), Thucydides (7.75.7), Plato (*Symposium* 177a7), and many others. I discuss this issue at greater length in the Introduction: see pp. 26-28.

<sup>47</sup> Ian Rutherford, *Pindar’s Paeans: A Reading of the Fragments with a Survey of the Genre* (Oxford, 2001), p. 58, and pp. 58-68 on the performance of paeans in general; William D. Furley and Jan Maarten Bremer, *Greek Hymns: Selected Cult Songs from the Archaic to the Hellenistic Period* vol. 1 (Tübingen, 2001), pp. 90-91.

<sup>48</sup> Paeans to Artemis and Asclepius would also fall under the umbrella of Apolline cult, according to scholars both ancient and modern. Photius tells us that Proclus had identified the paeon as a type of song that “in antiquity was assigned to Apollo and Artemis” (*Bibliotheca* 320a22-23: τὸ δὲ παλαιὸν ἰδίως ἀπενέμετο τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι καὶ τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι). But Käppel, 1992, pp. 61-62, 344-46, identifies a number of paeans which were not “Apolline”; and Rutherford, 2001, pp. 47-50, identifies other (non-Apolline) cults that may have called for the singing of paeans, though he is non-committal regarding the chronology of these cultic paeans, i.e. whether they were classical or hellenistic. *Contra* see Stephan Schröder, *Geschichte und Theorie der Gattung Paian: Eine kritische Untersuchung mit einem*

Although this association was not exclusive, as the survival of Philodamus' fourth-century *Paeon for Dionysus*<sup>49</sup> shows, there are a number of reasons to insist on a link between Apollo and paeans. Most obviously, "Παιάν" was, at least by the classical era,<sup>50</sup> one of Apollo's titles.<sup>51</sup> We may also note that the vast majority of extant paeans are dedicated to Apollo; that the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* presents an aetiology for the invention of the paeon,<sup>52</sup> which was in this (fictional) origin dedicated to the god in question; that the majority of extant fifth-century paeans were written for performance at either Delphi, Delos, or other festivals of Apollo;<sup>53</sup> and that Pindar—our greatest fifth-century source on paeans—refers to "the seasonal paeon songs of the children of golden-distaffed Leto."<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, Delphi itself may have been the place most closely associated with the performance of paeans, and it "must have resounded on many

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*Ausblick auf Behandlung und Auffassung der lyrischen Gattungen bei dem alexandrischen Philologen* (Stuttgart, 1999), pp. 10-49, who denies that the songs identified by Käppel as non-Apolline paeans were indeed paeans at all.

<sup>49</sup> Though even this paeon was intended for performance, and indeed inscribed, at Delphi. On the *Paeon for Dionysus*, see Käppel, 1992, pp. 207-84; Jenny Strauss Clay, "Fusing the Boundaries: Apollo and Dionysos at Delphi," *Mètis* 11 (1996): pp. 83-100; Claude Calame, "Apollo in Delphi and in Delos: Poetic Performances between Paeon and Dithyramb," in *Apolline Politics and Poetics*, eds. Lucia Athanassaki, Richard P. Martin, and John F. Miller (Athens, 2009), pp. 167-91.

<sup>50</sup> On the evolution of the divinity Παιήων, who was considered a healing god distinct from Apollo at least as late as Homer (cf. *Il.* 5.401, 900), cf. Rutherford, 2001, pp. 10-17.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *LSJ* s.v.; Rutherford, 2001, p. 11.

<sup>52</sup> *HH* 3.516-19; on the aetiological nature of these lines, see Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1 p. 80.

<sup>53</sup> Following Rutherford, 2001, we find paeans for Apolline festivals in Delphi: Pindar, *Paean* 6, *Paean* 8 (probably); Delos: Pindar, *Paean* 5, *Paean* 7b; and Thebes: Pindar, *Paean* 1, *Paean* 9.

<sup>54</sup> Pindar fr. 128c: "ἔντι μὲν χρυσαλακάτου τεκέων Λατοῦς ἀοιδαί/ῶ[ρ]μαι παιάνιδες." In my translation I closely follow Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1 p. 83.

occasions of the year to the choral paian performed by both local choirs and foreign *theoriai*.<sup>55</sup> In short, the Delphic setting of the *Ion* practically begs for the performance of paean-songs.

Beyond its Apolline associations, fifth-century paeans are so inconsistent and varied in their forms that it has been decried that the genre has “practically no rules at all.”<sup>56</sup> The only generic markers we consistently find within the texts of extant paeans are the presence of the name (or word) “Paean,”<sup>57</sup> and what has been called the paean “refrain” — something along the lines of the “ἦ ἢ ἐ Παιάν” found at the end of each strophe in Pindar’s second *Paean*.<sup>58</sup> But even this refrain is not a universal feature of the genre: at times the refrain was simply “denoted by the verb (-)παιανίζω,” and some fifth-century paeans seemed to have lacked it altogether.<sup>59</sup> In short, the paean is not a genre that can be easily defined or recognized by its formal features.

In that light, an understanding of the paean’s performative contexts, and its functions within those contexts, may be the best way to determine how the Greeks conceived of the paean. Naturally, this too is easier said than done. The evidence shows that paeans were sung on a wide variety of occasions. These certainly included requests for divine aid—the apotropaic function mentioned above—but paeans were also sung in celebration of victories in battle, and

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<sup>55</sup> Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1 p. 83. Calame, 2009, argues this on the basis of Philodamus’ *Paean for Dionysus*, but even more compelling evidence is provided by Bacch. 16.18-22 (also cited by Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1 p. 83, and vol. 2 p. 22): δ’ ἴκη παιόνων/ἄνθεα πεδοιχνεῖν,/Πύθι’ Ἄπολλον,/τόσα χοροὶ Δελφῶν/σὸν κελάδησαν παρ’ ἀγακλέα ναόν (“and you come in search/of flowers of paeans/Pythian Apollo,/which the Delphic choruses/sing beside your glorious temple”).

<sup>56</sup> A.E. Harvey, “The Classification of Greek Lyric Poetry,” *The Classical Quarterly* 5 (1955): p. 173.

<sup>57</sup> Schröder, 1999, pp. 50-61; Rutherford, 2001, pp. 68-69; Furley and Bremer, 2001, vol. 1 p. 90; Ford, 2006, pp. 287-89.

<sup>58</sup> I.e. *Paean* 2.35, 71, 107. On the refrain and its possible variations, cf. Rutherford, 2001, pp. 69-72.

<sup>59</sup> Idem, pp. 19-23 (quote on p. 19).

even at weddings.<sup>60</sup> Such a broad spectrum of uses could be seen as a lack of generic unity, but Rutherford has developed an intriguing hypothesis regarding the genre's "coherence": insofar as paeans are "usually performed by a group of men...performing the *παῖάν* act on behalf of the polis as a whole," these songs "were perceived as promoting the safety and stability of the polis," and were "an assertion of the strength of the community" as a whole.<sup>61</sup> In other words, the paean is an expression of communal solidarity: whether it was sung to prepare an army for battle,<sup>62</sup> in celebration of a victory won,<sup>63</sup> by *theōriai* who performed at Apolline festivals,<sup>64</sup> or even for apotropaic purposes,<sup>65</sup> paeans were performed by groups of men that represented and advanced the interests of their communities. To Rutherford's analysis I would add one final point, and one that will emerge quite clearly from my analysis of fifth-century paeans below: the Apolline paean was used throughout Greece as a means of forging, reaffirming, or celebrating the collective identity of a single *polis* or of a group of *poleis*.

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<sup>60</sup> For a general typology of the different instances in which paeans were employed, cf. Rutherford, 2001, pp. 36-58.

<sup>61</sup> Idem, pp. 85-86. On this point, see also Rutherford, 1995a, pp. 115-16. Rutherford is followed by Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1, pp. 88-91, and Ford, 2006, pp. 284-85.

<sup>62</sup> As we see in Aeschylus, *Persians*, 392-94, and in Pindar's second *Paean*.

<sup>63</sup> E.g. Pindar, *Paean 2*, which has the double function of celebrating a past victory and preparing for a future battle.

<sup>64</sup> Ian Rutherford, "χορὸς εἷς ἐκ τῆσδε τῆς πόλεως (Xen. *Mem.* 3.3.12): Song-Dance and State-Pilgrimage at Athens," in *Music and the Muses: The Culture of 'Mousikē' in the Classical Athenian City*, eds. Penelope Murray and Peter Wilson (Oxford, 2004), p. 67, defines *theōriai* as "sacred delegations...sent out by their city-states to perform religious functions abroad." Examples of such theoric paeans include in all probability Pindar, *Paean 5*, *Paean 6* (at least the first two strophes), and *Paean 7b* and Bacch. 17 (if it is indeed a paean, on which more below).

<sup>65</sup> E.g. Pindar, *Paean 9*; the paean in the parodos of Sophocles' *OT* (151-215).

*Ion's paeanic monody: internal dissonance*

Given the Delphic context and the questions of Athenian and Ionian identity that Hermes refers to in the prologue, it is not surprising that paeans play a role in the *Ion*, nor indeed that the genre makes an appearance early on. Immediately after Hermes departs, Ion arrives on-stage, laurel broom in hand, and prepares to fulfill his daily task of sweeping the entrance to the temple. As he works, he introduces himself and the setting with a series of recitative anapaests.<sup>66</sup> These lines are rich in Apolline imagery, another frequent feature of fifth-century paeans: Ion sings of the temple's sacred tripod (*Ion* 91), of Delphi's prophetic workings (*Ion* 92-94, 98-102), of the Kastalia's "purifying waters" (*Ion* 96: καθαράϊς δὲ δρόσοις), and of the laurel branches with which Ion is making the temple's entry "pure" (*Ion* 105: καθαράς).<sup>67</sup>

The words and images are reminiscent of the Delphic Septerion,<sup>68</sup> a festival at which an ἀμφιθαλής κούρος (a young man with two living parents) re-enacted Apollo's post-Pytho purification by burning down a small hut in front of the temple at Delphi, traveling to Thessaly to purify himself in the river Peneius, and then collecting branches of laurel—the same ones with which victors at the Pythian games were crowned—before leading a procession to Delphi,

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<sup>66</sup> Lee, ed., 1997, p. 168. On recitative anapaests, cf. Edith Hall, "Actor's Song in Tragedy," in *Performance Culture and Athenian Democracy*, eds. Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 105-08.

<sup>67</sup> Each occurs with relative frequency in paeans to Delphic Apollo. The tripod: Aristonous, *Paeon in Apollinem*, 9; Limenius, *Paeon Delphicus in Apollinem* II, 21. Apollo's prophetic abilities: Pindar, *Paeon* 6.2; *Paeon* 7.1, *Paeon* 8.1, et al. And the Kastalian spring: Pindar, *Paeon* 6.8; Aristonous, v. 42; *Paeon Delphicus in Apollinem* I, 5. (In order to determine simple generic markers, as opposed to establishing the paeans' social roles in the fifth century BC, I am expanding the parameters to include later paeans as well.)

<sup>68</sup> Rutherford, 2001, p. 112.

branches of laurel still in hand.<sup>69</sup> Central to this festival was the performance of paeans.<sup>70</sup> And given its connection to the Pythian games,<sup>71</sup> one might imagine that the ritual was fairly well-known. In this light, it is significant that Ion closes the anapaestic section of his monody with the declaration that, rather than being ἀμφιθαλής, he is “motherless and fatherless” (*Ion* 109: ἀμάτωρ ἀπάτωρ τε γεγώς). Ion thus creates an early expectation that his song will express some sort of connection to an *oikos* or family, only to then immediately defy this expectation. In doing so, he anticipates the striking divide between form and content that will dominate the entirety of his song.

Following this strange proem, Ion then begins a lyric monody that at once trumpets its paeanic essence while presenting a number of themes that are incongruous with the genre (*Ion* 112-27):

<p>ἄγ', ὦ νηθαλὲς ὦ καλλίστας προπόλευμα δά- φνας, ἃ τὰν Φοίβου θυμέλαν σαίρεις ὑπὸ ναοῖς, κήπων ἐξ ἀθανάτων, ἵνα δρόσοι τέγγουσ' ἱεραί, ῥοὰν ἀέναον</p>	115	<p>Come, o fresh-blossomed lovely laurel servant who sweep the hearth beneath the temple of Phoebus, from immortal groves where sacred dew sends forth an ever-flowing</p>
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<sup>69</sup> On these rituals, cf. Plut. *De Def. Or.* 417e-418d; Rutherford, 2001, pp. 201-05; and Walter Burkert, *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*, tr. Peter Bing (Berkeley, 1983), pp. 127-30.

<sup>70</sup> Rutherford, 2001, pp. 28, 202-05. Rutherford makes a compelling argument that Pindar, *Paeon* X(a) was destined for performance at the Delphic Septerion. Given the preponderance of themes that perfectly match the festival (not least of which is an ample narration of the very Apolline purification the Septerion purported to reenact!), I suspect that Aristonoos of Corinth's fourth-century BC *Paeon to Apollo* (inscribed on the temple of Delphi) was also associated with the Septerion, though other scholars have argued that it was performed during the Delphic Daphnephoria: cf. Arthur Fairbanks, *A Study of the Greek Paeon* (Ithaca, 1900), p. 28.

<sup>71</sup> Burkert, 1983, p. 130: “[w]hen the procession [of the Septerion] arrived in Delphi, the games could begin”; Rutherford, 2001, p. 202 fn 4.

παγᾶν ἐκπροϊεῖσαι, μυρσίνας ἱερὰν φόβαν: ἅ σαίρω δάπεδον θεοῦ παναμέριος ἅμ' ἁλίου πτέρυγι θοᾷ λατρεύων τὸ κατ' ἡμαρ.	120	stream and wets the sacred lock of myrtle with which I sweep the god's ground all day long alongside the swift wing of the sun, serving day-by-day.
ὦ Παιᾶν ὦ Παιᾶν, εὐαίων εὐαίων εἴης, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ	125	O Paeon, o Paeon, blessed, blessed may you be, o child of Leto.

The strophe is dense with Apolline imagery—the laurel, the sun, the temple—and in its closing refrain (vv. 125-27) it fully and unmistakably defines itself as a paean. It is in fact striking to note, as Rutherford does, that this is “the only true παιᾶν-refrain in extant tragedy.”<sup>72</sup> And thanks to this refrain, the audience must have readily identified Ion’s song as an exemplar of the genre.<sup>73</sup> At the same time, however, they would also easily recognize that Ion’s paean is in many ways anomalous, beginning with the fact that he sings alone and defines himself as a slave and orphan.

The next strophe continues in the same vein and culminates in the same refrain, thus eliminating any doubt that the song purports to be a paean. But the puzzling aspects of the first strophe are only magnified (*Ion* 128-43):

καλόν γε τὸν πόνον, ὦ Φοῖβε, σοὶ πρὸ δόμων λατρεύ-	A beautiful toil, o Phoebus, I minister for you before the prophetic
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<sup>72</sup> Rutherford, 2001, p. 111.

<sup>73</sup> *Contra*, see Lee, ed., 1997, p. 172, who calls this a “Delphic Hymn”; and Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1 pp. 322-23 (and esp. fn 14), who argue that “the cultic refrain of Ion’s song is intended by Euripides to show Ion’s deep familiarity with the type of songs which rang out constantly at the oracle.” In my view, it is far less likely that the audience would come to this conclusion than that they would simply interpret this song as a “solo” paean, given the presence (and eventual repetition) of the paean refrain surrounded by a multitude other paeanic elements.

ω τιμῶν μαντεῖον ἔδραν·	130	seat of your honored home.
κλεινὸς δ' ὁ πόνος μοι		It is a glorious toil for me
θεοῖσιν δούλαν χέρ' ἔχειν		to keep my hand in slavery to the gods,
οὐ θνατοῖς, ἀλλ' ἀθανάτοισ·		not to mortals but to immortals;
εὐφάμους δὲ πόνους		and I do not tire to labor at
μοχθεῖν οὐκ ἀποκάμνω.	135	auspicious toils.
Φοῖβός μοι γενέτωρ πατήρ·		Phoebus is to me as an ancestral father;
τὸν βόσκοντα γὰρ εὐλογῶ,		for I praise the one who feeds me,
τὸ δ' ὠφέλιμον ἐμοὶ πατέρος		and I call by the name of father
ὄνομα λέγω		the beneficence
Φοίβου τοῦ κατὰ ναόν.	140	of the Phoebus of this temple.
ὦ Παιᾶν ὦ Παιᾶν,		O Paeon, o paeon,
εὐαῖων εὐαῖων		blessed, blessed
εἴης, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ.		may you be, o child of Leto.

The focus here is obviously on Ion's toils at the temple. Such a topic is, in a sense, suitable for paeans.<sup>74</sup> Typically, however, the toil to which a hymnal or paeanic chorus refers is the very act in which it is engaged—the song and dance.<sup>75</sup> Here, on the other hand, the *ponoi* to which Ion refers are the janitorial duties in which he is engaged. His use of this paeanic motif thus serves to emphasize the unconventional nature of his paeon. This incongruity is further highlighted by the fact that Ion calls his toils “auspicious” (v. 134: *euphāmous ponous*). The paeon itself was considered a form of *euphēmia*,<sup>76</sup> so by using the adjective to refer to his mundane task, Ion again seems to be using a paeanic formula in a most unusual manner. Euripides thus overtly

<sup>74</sup> Rutherford, 1995a, p. 130, notes that this is “a theme that can be paralleled in nondramatic paeans,” pointing to Simonides, fr. 35b.6 (=PMG 519), and Pindar, *Paeon* 7b.21-22.

<sup>75</sup> As Rutherford, 2001, p. 249 indeed notes regarding Pindar's seventh *Paeon*. But cf. also Pindar, fr. 70c.16 (a dithyramb): πόνοι χορῶν.

<sup>76</sup> Ian Rutherford, “Paeans by Simonides,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 93 (1990): p. 173, makes a similar point (“there seems to be an association between the word εὐφημος and its cognates and the paeon-refrain”), and the examples he cites point to how close this association was: rather than speaking of “singing a paeon,” a number of ancient authors simply say (*ep*)*eufēmēō paiana* or even simply (*ep*)*eufēmēō* (A. Pers. 389; Ar. Eq. 1316-18; E. IT 1403-04; IA 1467-68; Macedonius, *Paeon*, 3).

manipulates the generic conventions of the paean, and in so doing he draws the attention of the audience to the innovative nature of the song itself.

In this vein, Ion's words about Apollo are crucial. Ion speaks of Apollo *as* a father:<sup>77</sup> a father in "name," but not, it would appear from his formulation, in actuality.<sup>78</sup> He recalls his earlier claim to be "motherless and fatherless" (*Ion* 109), and affirms this fictional identity by referring to Apollo as "τὸν βόσκοντα," a term that befits a shepherd rather than a parent.<sup>79</sup> The irony here is obvious,<sup>80</sup> for of course Apollo actually *is* his father.<sup>81</sup> This underscores a crucial aspect of Ion's song: throughout the paean, but especially in the second strophe, Ion is intent on defining himself, and the definition he gives himself is erroneous: rather than stressing that he belongs to a community of Athenians or Ionians, or indeed any community, Ion instead defines himself as a temple slave who knows not who his actual parents are. His paean in fact "symbolizes his isolation from community,"<sup>82</sup> and it celebrates the fictional identity that Apollo has imposed upon him. As the audience might expect from the prologue, the question of Ion's identity will be central to the play. And as we shall see, this question will be marked by a

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<sup>77</sup> The line could of course also be interpreted as "Apollo is my father," but given the emphasis on Ion's ignorance of his origins, it seems unlikely that the audience would interpret it in such a way, and very likely that the double-entendre would only add to the sense that Ion is using his paean in a most unconventional manner.

<sup>78</sup> I discuss the Greek opposition of *logos* (or *onoma*) and *ergon* in ch. 4 (see below, pp. 284-285). See also Adam Milman Parry, *Logos and Ergon in Thucydides* (New York, 1981).

<sup>79</sup> Euripides uses this term several times in the *Phoenissae* as well (*Pho.* 396, 400, 405), but here too it is used to emphasize an individual's (i.e. Polyneices') exile and lack of community. To my knowledge the *Ion* is the only case in which Euripides uses βόσκω to refer to an actual parent; he generally uses the more appropriate τρέφω.

<sup>80</sup> Lee, ed., 1997, p. 173, also notes it.

<sup>81</sup> Though at the end of the play Apollo will refuse that name, for all intents and purposes.

<sup>82</sup> Rutherford, 1995a, p. 131.

constant tension between his real and fictional identities, a tension that is anticipated in this song. Ion's paean, with its inability to provide an accurate narrative, emphasizes the artificiality of myth and thus challenges the reliability of paeanic origins and mythical identities.

At this point, Ion's monody changes tone and becomes an "astrophic song"<sup>83</sup> that is unmarked by the paean refrain (*Ion* 144-83). In this section of the ode, we see Ion chasing birds from the premises, bow in hand (*Ion* 154-179), lest they sully the temple he has been cleaning. Among those that Ion abuses is a swan, Apollo's bird, whose "beautifully-resounding songs" he threatens to "bloody" (*Ion* 168-69) with his arrows.<sup>84</sup> While there is undoubtedly an element of humor in this scene,<sup>85</sup> there is also a sense that Ion has exceeded the bounds of propriety: to kill one of Apollo's swans "would surely constitute a form of sacrilege."<sup>86</sup> Even more disturbing is his preface to the threat (*Ion* 164-65):

οὐδέν σ' ἄ φόρμιγξ ἄ Φοίβου	Phoebus' lyre, your accompaniment,
σύμμολπος τόξων ῥύσαιτ' ἄν.	165 will not protect you from my bow.

On the surface, Ion's dismissal of Apollo's ability to preserve the swan may seem reasonable enough; in theory, a lyre would offer little protection against arrows. But the lyre in question belongs to Apollo, so Ion's suggestion that his own instrument is more powerful smacks of

<sup>83</sup> Lee, ed., 1997, p. 171.

<sup>84</sup> *Ion* 168-69: αἰμάξεις.../τὰς καλλιφθόγγους ᾠδάς. With αἰμάξεις I follow the manuscript reading of, though Diggle, ed., 1981, accepts Nauck's emendation of αἰάξεις. For recent defenses of αἰμάξεις, see Walther Kraus, "Textkritische Erwägungen zu Euripides' *Ion*," *Wiener Studien* 102 (1989): pp. 36-37; Maria Serena Mirto, ed., *Euripide: Ione* (Milan, 2009), p. 229; and John P. Harris, "The Swan's Red-Dipped Foot: Euripides *Ion* 161-9," *Classical Quarterly* 62 (2012): pp. 514-15.

<sup>85</sup> As is emphasized by Bernard Knox, *Word and Action: Essays on the Ancient Theater* (Baltimore, 1979), p. 259; and Katerina Zacharia, "The Marriage of Tragedy and Comedy in Euripides' *Ion*," in *Laughter down the Centuries*, eds. S. Jäkel and A. Timonen (Turku, 1995), pp. 49-50.

<sup>86</sup> Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1, p. 323.

hubris. Such a remark is particularly out of place in a paean. In essence, he is using an Apolline song to question the power of Apolline music. Though the event is made to seem insignificant by its triviality, it nonetheless speaks to the tension with which Ion's paean is laden, and it anticipates the serious criticism that Creousa will later direct at the god and, above all, his music.

*Ion's paean and paeans in fifth-century Greece: dissonance by contrast*

While the oddities of Ion's paean stand out on their own, it is in contrast to other fifth-century paeans that the song's dissonance is most remarkable. Indeed, it is obvious that Ion's solo paean does little to advance the outcomes that Hermes leads us to expect in the prologue, such as Ion's successful integration into the Athenian *polis* and the consequent fusion of Athens' more exclusive autochthonous identity with its broader Ionian identity. But it is only when compared to extant fifth-century paeans that it becomes apparent how boldly Ion's paean defies the standards for a genre that was consistently deployed to promote and celebrate these very civic and colonial identities.

An excellent starting point for this comparison is provided by Pindar's fifth *Paeon*, which is in fact the only Pindaric paean that we know, with relative certainty, was commissioned by Athens (Pindar, *Paeon* 5.35-43):

[Eὔ-]  
βοίαν ἔλον καὶ ἔνασσαν·

35

[The Athenians]  
took and inhabited Euboa.

ἰήϊε Δάλι' Ἄπολλον·  
 καὶ σποράδας φερεμήλους  
 ἔκτισαν νάσους ἐρικυδέα τ' ἔσχον  
 Δᾶλον, ἐπεὶ σφιν Ἀπόλλων 40  
 δῶκεν ὁ χρυσοκόμας  
 Ἀστερίας δέμας οἰκεῖν·  
 ἰήϊε Δάλι' Ἄπολλον·

Iēie Delian Apollo!  
 And they settled the scattered  
 flock-bearing islands and held  
 much-famed Delos, since  
 golden-haired Apollo gave them  
 the body of Asteria to settle.  
 Iēie Delian Apollo!

This paean, of which only ten other lines remain,<sup>87</sup> was almost certainly intended for a theoric pilgrimage to Delos.<sup>88</sup> The surviving strophe emphasizes Athens' early settlement of Euboia, Delos and the "flock-bearing" Cycladic islands,<sup>89</sup> all of which were Athenian allies and members of the Delian League. In what appears to be an "assertion of Athenian claims to leadership in the region,"<sup>90</sup> the paean emphasizes the allies' descent from Athenians.<sup>91</sup> Just as importantly, the Athenian colonization of Euboia and the Cyclades is explicitly endorsed by Apollo, the god to whom the song was dedicated. Moreover, it is implicit that the Athenians, as forebears of the Ionian people and the beneficiaries of Apollo's "gift" of Delos, had founded the very festival at which this song was performed. As such, the paean suggests that Athens' hegemony of the Delian League is justified by its status as mother-city, its foundation of the

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<sup>87</sup> Five of which are the paean refrain seen in v. 37.

<sup>88</sup> The context alone (settlement of Euboia and the Cycladic islands) points overwhelmingly to the Athenians, an assumption that is supported by the various surviving scholia (e.g. Σ 35: ἀπὸ Ἀθηναίων). Scholars generally agree on this point, and on the fact that it was destined to be performed in Delos. Cf. Rutherford, 2001, 296-97; Barbara Kowalzig, *Singing for the Gods: Performance of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Oxford, 2007), p. 84; G.B. D'Alessio, "Defining local identities in Greek lyric poetry," in *Wandering Poets in Ancient Greek Culture: Travel, Locality and Pan-Hellenism*, eds. Richard Hunter and Ian Rutherford (Cambridge, 2009), p. 146.

<sup>89</sup> On the identification of these islands as the Cyclades, cf. Rutherford, 2001, p. 295.

<sup>90</sup> Rutherford, 2004, p. 85.

<sup>91</sup> And given the presence of a scholion mentioning a son of Erechtheus (Σ 45: Πάνδωρον Ἐρέχ[θεως]Αἰκλον), he may even have connected them to autochthonous Athenians.

festival in question, and its appointment by Apollo's divine will. It is a powerful promotion of shared Ionian identity, and a stark contrast to the "isolation" that Ion projects in his paeon.

While the scarcity of Athenian paeans does not facilitate the task of confirming that Athens regularly used paeans to reinforce the solidarity of their allies via claims of kinship, we may use other evidence to buttress that argument. Pindar's second *Paeon* is another ode which provides an interesting comparison to Ion's paeon. While this ode, composed for the city of Abdera (also a member of the Delian League), focuses primarily on creating, perhaps even "performing its civic identity,"<sup>92</sup> it also shows the city forging ties with a broader community. After opening with an invocation of the city's mythical founder Abderus, the poet states his intention to "pursue this paeon for the Ionian people."<sup>93</sup> This may be the only instance that the word "Ionian" is found in all of Pindar in reference to a group of people,<sup>94</sup> so we may assume that the poet's choice is not casual and that he intends to emphasize Abdera's ties to a community outside the *polis*.

A large lacuna from lines 6-23 follows and unfortunately obscures much of what the poet may have done in this regard. But the contents of the first epode (directly after the lacuna) confirms the colonial character of the song (*Paeon* 2.28-34):

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<sup>92</sup> D'Alessio, 2009, p. 157.

<sup>93</sup> Pindar, *Paeon* 2.3-4: Ἴάονι τόνδε λαῶν/παι]ἄνα [δι]ώξω...

<sup>94</sup> With the probable exception of another paeanic fragment, in which we read only "Ἴονι [-" (cf. Rutherford, 2001, p. 346), though of course this only increases the possibility that Pindar considered the idea of Ionian identity to be particularly appropriate for paeans. It is fair to say that Pindar's mentions of the "Ionian" sea in *Pyth.* 3.68, *Nem.* 4.53, and *Nem.* 7.65, are distinct from the second *Paeon*'s references to an Ionian people.

νεόπολις εἰμι· ματρὸς  
δὲ ματέρ’ ἐμᾶς ἔτεκον ἔμπαν  
πολεμίῳ πυρὶ πλαγεῖ-  
σαν. εἰ δέ τις ἀρκέων φίλοις  
ἐχθροῖσι τραχὺς ὑπαντιάζει,  
μόχθος ἤσυχίαν φέρει  
καίρῳ καταβαίνων.

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I am a new city; but all the same  
I gave birth to my mother’s mother  
when she was struck by hostile fire.  
If anyone helps his friends and  
stands up fiercely to his enemies,  
the toil, arriving in due time,  
will bring peace.

Pindar boldly insists that the chorus is connected to both a local community—the city of Abdera—and a broader, colonial one. The former connection is obvious: the chorus actually embodies and speaks in the voice of Abdera. The remarkable phrase “I gave birth to my mother’s mother” has caused much consternation among scholars,<sup>95</sup> but what Pindar refers to here is actually Abdera’s re-foundation of its own mother-city Teos after the latter had been burned to the ground.<sup>96</sup> In this context, the gnomic lines that follow about “helping one’s friends” gain new meaning: they specifically encourage the idea of mutual assistance between mother-cities and their colonies. *Paean 2* thus provides another important contrast to Ion’s song. Abdera’s relationship with its “mother” may be peculiar, but unlike Ion it certainly does not consider itself to be “motherless,” nor is there any doubt that the chorus, and by extension the city, is composed of members and representatives of a broader community.

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<sup>95</sup> Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt, eds., *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri 5* (London, 1908), p. 83, incorrectly saw this as a reference to Athens. In this identification they were later followed by C.M. Bowra, *Pindar* (Oxford, 1964), p. 41, and others.

<sup>96</sup> Stefan Lorenz Radt, *Pindars zweiter und sechster Paian: Text, Scholien und Kommentar* (Amsterdam, 1958), pp. 33-39, was the first to make the point that the “mother’s mother” is certainly Teos. He was followed some time later by George Huxley, “Teos in Pindar,” in *Studies Presented to Sterling Dow on His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. A.L. Boegehold (Durham, NC, 1984), pp. 149-52. This stance is by now the consensus: cf. Carol Dougherty, “Pindar’s Second Paean: Civic Identity on Parade,” *Classical Philology* 89 (1994): p. 210; Rutherford, 2001, pp. 268-69.

A similarly colonial, and indeed Ionian, dynamic emerges in Bacchylides 17. There has been a great deal of debate regarding the genre of this ode, with scholarly opinion divided between dithyramb,<sup>97</sup> paeon,<sup>98</sup> and some mixture of the two.<sup>99</sup> The strongest arguments in favor of its identification as a dithyramb remain its classification as such by the Alexandrian scholars, its presentation of the narrative “*ex abrupto*,”<sup>100</sup> and its (possible) performance in a circular dance (*kuklios choros*).<sup>101</sup> None of these arguments is unassailable.<sup>102</sup> Meanwhile, a number of the ode’s

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<sup>97</sup> D. Comparetti, “Les Dithyrambes de Bacchylide,” in *Mélanges Henri Weil: Recueil de Mémoires*, ed. A. Fontemoing (Paris, 1898), pp. 27-28; Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb, Tragedy and Comedy* (Oxford, 1927), pp. 26-27; Lee T. Percy Jr., “The Structure of Bacchylides’ Dithyrambs,” *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 22 (1967): p. 93; G. Ieranò, “Il ditirambo XVII di Bacchilide e le feste apollinee di Delo,” *Quaderni di Storia* 30 (1989): pp. 157-83; Calame, 2009, esp. pp. 177-79.

<sup>98</sup> Richard C. Jebb, ed., *Bacchylides: The Poems and Fragments* (Cambridge, 1905), p. 223; R. Merkelbach, “Päonische Strophen bei Pindar und Bakchylides,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 12 (1973): pp. 45-55; Käppel, 1992, pp. 156 ff.; Herwig Maehler, *Die Lieder des Bakchylides* vol. 2 (Leiden, 1997), pp. 167-70; Schröder, 1999, pp. 51 ff.; Stephan Schröder, “Das Lied dem Bakchylides von der Fahrt des Theseus nach Kreta (C. 17 M) und das Problem seiner Gattung,” *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 143 (2000): pp. 128-60; Maria Pavlou, “Bacchylides 17: Singing and Usurping the Paeon,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 52 (2012): pp. 510-39.

<sup>99</sup> This is essentially the argument put forth by Christos C. Tsagalis, “Blurring the Boundaries: Dionysus, Apollo, and Bacchylides 17,” in *Apolline Politics and Poetics*, eds. Lucia Athanassaki, Richard P. Martin, and John F. Miller (Athens, 2009), pp. 199-215. But I would also place in this category scholars who mention the controversy but (perhaps wisely) eschew assigning a generic definition for the ode, such as Kowalzig, 2007, pp. 88-94; David Fearn, “The Ceians and their Choral Lyric: Athenian, Epichoric and Pan-Hellenic Perspectives,” in *Archaic and Classical Choral Song: Performance, Politics, and Dissemination*, eds. Lucia Athanassaki and Ewen Bowie (Berlin, 2011), pp. 210-17; Fearn, “Athens and the Empire: The Contextual Flexibility of Dithyramb, and its Imperialist Ramifications,” in *Dithyramb in Context*, eds. Barbara Kowalzig and Peter Wilson (Oxford, 2013), pp. 133-52 (despite its dithyrambic title, Fearn hedges on the question of genre, generally referring to the song—and its brethren—as the “circular choros”). An entirely different possibility is presented by D.A. Schmidt, “Bacchylides 17: Paeon or Dithyramb?” *Hermes* 118 (1990): pp. 18-31, who argues that the ode is in fact a *hyporchēma*.

<sup>100</sup> Comparetti, 1898, p. 27; much more recently, Calame, 2009, relies mainly on this point in identifying the ode as a dithyramb.

<sup>101</sup> Fearn, 2011, p. 210, notes that it was “probably performed by a circular chorus,” though does not claim this as proof of genre. On the dithyramb’s association with circular choruses, cf. Pindar, fr. 70b.1-5 (= *Dithyramb* 2); Armand D’Angour, “How the Dithyramb Got Its Shape,” *The Classical Quarterly* 47 (1997): pp. 331-51; and David Fearn, *Bacchylides: Politics, Performance, Poetic Tradition* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 165-74.

<sup>102</sup> Even its identification by the Alexandrians is tenuous, for we know from a marginal comment on P.Oxy. 23.2368 that Callimachus and Aristarchus disagreed over the classification of another Bacchylidean fragment (23b), with the former arguing (successfully) in favor of dithyramb, and the latter in favor of paeon. On this, cf. esp. Maehler, 1997

elements are decidedly paeanic, such as the poem's dedication to Delian Apollo,<sup>103</sup> its emphasis on Theseus' transition into adulthood,<sup>104</sup> and its structural similarities to the section of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* which describes the invention of the paeon.<sup>105</sup> The most paeanic moment of all, however, comes at the end of the poem, when Theseus' youthful companions celebrate his success by "singing the paeon" (17.129: *παιάνιξαν*). This small but significant moment has by no means sufficed to banish all disagreement on the question of genre, but it is certainly enough to demonstrate the ode's paeanic side: no one present at the poem's performance on Delos could listen to it without at least thinking of paeans.

Beyond the question of genre, the poem itself is a fascinating example of Athenian mythmaking in an Apolline context. The song was performed by Ceans at Delos,<sup>106</sup> most likely in the 470s BCE,<sup>107</sup> but the myth in question is clearly Athenian in origin. Theseus is aboard a Cretan ship as one of the fourteen Athenian youths who are to be sacrificed to the Minotaur. When Minos begins acting aggressively towards one of the young maidens, Theseus intervenes

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vol. 2, p. 167; and Fearn, 2007, pp. 205-12. For fuller arguments against the ode's identification as a dithyramb, cf. Schmidt, 1990, pp. 26-29; and Schröder, 2000, pp. 130-37.

<sup>103</sup> Maehler, 1997 vol. 2, pp. 168-69.

<sup>104</sup> See esp. Anne Pippin Burnett, *The Art of Bacchylides* (Cambridge, MA, 1985), pp. 28 ff.

<sup>105</sup> I.e. *HH* 3.397-501, in which Apollo takes to the sea in the form of a dolphin and leaps aboard a Cretan ship, and demands that the Cretan sailors follow him to Delphi and sing the first paeon song. On Bacchylides' many allusions to the *Hymn*, see Pavlou, 2012, pp. 518-26.

<sup>106</sup> Ieranò, 1989, p. 158; Maehler, 1997 vol. 2, pp. 168-69; Kowalzig, 2007, p. 88; Fearn, 2013, p. 135.

<sup>107</sup> On the date, cf. Käppel, 1992, pp. 181-83; C.D.P. van Oeveren, "Bacchylides Ode 17: Theseus and the Delian League," in *One Hundred Years of Bacchylides*, eds. I.L. Pfeijffer and S.R. Slings (Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 31-42; Fearn, 2007, p. 243. In all likelihood, the composition of Bacch. 17 occurred after Ceos had joined the Delian League as a founding member in 478 BC: cf. Gary Reger, "The Aegean," in *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*, eds. M.H. Hansen and T.H. Nielsen (Oxford, 2004), p. 748.

(17.8-50), at which point Minos demands that Theseus prove his descent from Poseidon by retrieving a ring he casts into the sea (17.50-81). The Athenian hero does not hesitate, and as soon as he takes the plunge he is accompanied by dolphins<sup>108</sup> to the bottom of the sea to the home of Poseidon's wife Amphitrite (17.81-101). After witnessing a dance of the Nereids and receiving gifts from Amphitrite (17.101-18), Theseus returns safely to the ship (somewhat oddly, the ring is never mentioned again) where he is celebrated with the aforementioned paean. He thus symbolically anticipates his defeat of Minos and the Minotaur and his liberation of Athens from its grisly debt to Crete. Just as importantly, he proves his divine heritage. Unlike in Ion's paean, there are no longer any doubts about his paternity.

It is easy to see how this validation of Theseus' divine heritage would appeal to Athens, but it is less apparent why the Cean should be celebrating Theseus' defeat of Minos, particularly since it is Minos whom the Ceans typically regarded as a mythical founder.<sup>109</sup> Kowalzig and Fearn have both demonstrated the serious ideological ramifications of Bacchylides' theoric ode, in particular Theseus' substitution of Minos as the Ceans' "culture-hero."<sup>110</sup> Even more crucially, Bacchylides fuses Athenian and Cean identities. This he does most cleverly at the end of the poem by transitioning directly from his description of the Athenian paean song (17.129) into a call for Delian Apollo to rejoice at and smile upon the Cean

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<sup>108</sup> It is perhaps not a coincidence that dolphins also appear on a number of Cean coins from the Archaic era: cf. again Reger, 2004, p. 748.

<sup>109</sup> Fearn, 2013, p 141. Minos' founding role is celebrated at length in Pindar's fourth *Paean* (on which more below, see pp. 223-225) and Bacchylides 1.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

chorus (17.130-31). Such a “merg[er] of choral identities...suggests an imposition of an Athenian, albeit mythical, identity onto the Ceans by means of their theoric performance.”<sup>111</sup> Put slightly differently, the Cean chorus mimics the song performed by Theseus’ companions and thus transforms itself into a chorus that self-identifies as Ionian, with Theseus serving as their “mythical *chorēgos*.”<sup>112</sup>

Even beyond that, their narration of the myth in an Apolline theoric context implies that the actual Cean chorus celebrates Theseus’ success in the same manner, and indeed for the same reasons, as the mythical Athenian chorus on board the ship. This final point is confirmed by the opening lines of the poem, in which Bacchylides most ostentatiously alters the identity of Theseus’ wards (17.1-4):

Κυανόπρωρα μὲν ναῦς μινέκτυπον  
Θησέα δις ἑπτὰ τ’ ἀγλαοὺς ἄγουσα  
κούρους Ἰαόνων  
Κρητικὸν τάμνε πέλαγος·

The dark-prowed ship bringing Theseus  
steadfast-in-battle and the twice-seven  
splendid youths of the Ionians  
cut through the Cretan sea.

Other sources are generally quite firm in noting that the “twice-seven” youths saved by Theseus were Attic or Athenian.<sup>113</sup> In ode 17, however, it is a tribute of *Ionian* youths that are sent to the Minotaur. The chorus, made up of Ionians from Ceos, is thus implicated in the very act of salvation about which they are singing, and so too are the other Ionians who were present at the theoric performance, which is to say a healthy portion of the Delian League. Meanwhile, the

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<sup>111</sup> Idem, p. 142; a similar point is made by Kowalzig, 2007, p. 89.

<sup>112</sup> Fearn, 2007, p. 255.

<sup>113</sup> It is explicit in Isoc. 10.27; Diod. Sic. 4.61.3; and Plut. *Thes.*14. And it is implicit in E. *HF* 1327 and Pl. *Phaedo* 58a11.

Ionians themselves “are subject to the finest ideological trick,” for in celebrating their liberation from Minos, they implicitly sanctify the tribute imposed on them by Athens.<sup>114</sup> As in *Paeon* 5, we see here a paeanic song performing an act of mythological mediation between Athens and its colonial allies by promoting their shared Ionian identity.

Paeans were by no means the only way to achieve this type of mediation, as is evidenced by the straight-forward appeals for military aid on the basis of Ionian kinship made by both Athens and its allies throughout the fifth century BCE.<sup>115</sup> But while these diplomatic appeals generally occurred strictly in times of need, the use of paeans as a mediatory mechanism seems to have been regular during the fifth century. Athens may have been sending such theoric choruses to Delos since Solon’s time,<sup>116</sup> and by the classical period this certainly occurred at least once a year.<sup>117</sup> Moreover, by the time the *Ion* was produced, Athens’ commitments to Delos had been further increased by their decision to repurify the island, and to establish the penteteric

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<sup>114</sup> Kowalzig, 2007, p. 91. Kowalzig applies the logic only to the Cean chorus, but given the opening lines of the poem, and the Delian context in which it was performed, it seems reasonable to extend this implicit debt to all the Ionians.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Hdt. 5.97.2; Th. 1.95.1, and 3.86.3; Barron, 1962; Alty, 1982; Bremmer, 1997.

<sup>116</sup> Rutherford, 2001, p. 297; Kowalzig, 2007, p. 84. Our source for this is Polemon Periegetes fr. 78 Preller (= Athenaeus 6.234e-f), who tells us it was stipulated in Solon’s *kyrbeis* (tablets) that a theoric delegation of *Dēliastai* was to be sent to Delos each year.

<sup>117</sup> Plato tells us that during Theseus’ voyage to Crete with the fourteen Athenian youths who were to be sacrificed to the Minotaur, “the Athenians had made a vow to Apollo, as they say, that if they were saved, they would lead a *theōria* to Delos every year, which they still now send to the god each year.” (*Phaedo* 58b: τῷ οὖν Ἀπόλλωνι ηὔξαντο ὡς λέγεται τότε, εἰ σωθεῖεν, ἐκάστου ἔτους θεωρίαν ἀπάξειν εἰς Δῆλον· ἦν δὴ αἰεὶ καὶ νῦν ἔτι ἐξ ἐκείνου κατ’ ἐνιαυτὸν τῷ θεῷ πέμπουσιν.) On other potential occasions on which Athenian choruses would be sent to Delos, cf. Rutherford, 2001, pp. 297-98. For a more detailed account of Athenian *theōriai*, particularly the annual trip in celebration of Theseus’ celebration, cf. Peter Wilson, *The Athenian Institution of the Khoregia: The Chorus, the City and the Stage* (Cambridge, 2000a), pp. 44-46; and Rutherford, 2004.

festival to Apollo on Delos in 426/25 BCE.<sup>118</sup> It is significant that Thucydides tells us that “the cities brought choruses” to this festival (Th. 3.104.3). Hornblower calls this increase in theoric activity in Delos “evidence of an Athenian desire to reaffirm the ‘Ionianism’ of the Delian league.”<sup>119</sup> And while we do not have any concrete evidence regarding the songs performed at this festival, paeans were certainly the most obvious generic choice for a festival to Apollo on Delos. Indeed, it is easy to imagine that songs such as Pindar’s fifth *Paeon* would have been the ideal choral vehicle for effecting Athens’ desire “to bring Ionian cult within her control.”<sup>120</sup>

Furthermore, two sources tell us of the great impact such *theoric* delegations had: Xenophon’s Socrates boasts that no city can match the splendor of Athens’ choruses, such as “the one sent to Delos,” while Plutarch, even several centuries after the fact, specifically recalls the splendid *theōria* that Nicias led to Delos.<sup>121</sup> In other words, theoric delegations to Delos, such as the one for which Pindar likely composed *Paeon* 5, left a lasting impression on all parties involved. As such, it is probable that much of Euripides’ audience would have understood the important role paeans played at Apolline festivals in promoting intra-Ionian relationships, and would have associated this genre with the mythological setting and goals of the *Ion*. In this

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<sup>118</sup> Th. 3.104. This was the second time that Athens had “purified” Delos, the first instance having been effected by Peisistratus in what A. Andrewes, “The Tyranny of Pisistratus,” *Cambridge Ancient History* 3 (1982): part 3, p. 403, calls “a notable assertion of Athens’ primacy among the Ionian cities.”

<sup>119</sup> Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* vol. 1 (Oxford, 1991), p. 521. But see also Hornblower, “The Religious Dimension of the Peloponnesian War, or, What Thucydides Does Not Tell Us,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 94 (1992b): pp. 169-97. And along the same lines, Christy Constantakopoulou, *The Dance of the Islands: Insularity, Networks, the Athenian Empire, and the Aegean World* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 71-73.

<sup>120</sup> Hornblower, 1992, p. 195. Wilson, 2000a, p. 46, also notes that paeans would seem to be the “most appropriate” genre for these festivals, though his reasoning is based on cultic grounds rather than political ones.

<sup>121</sup> X. *Mem.* 3.3.12; Plut. *Nicias* 3.4-6. On both passages, cf. Wilson, 2000a, p. 45; on Xenophon, cf. Rutherford, 2004.

light, it is somewhat ironic that the only paean we have seen that does not stress the idea of a shared Ionian identity is the one sung by Ion himself—the most Ionian of all possible singers.

While Athens' exploitation of paeans to further its interests among its Ionian allies is adequately attested by our sources, the matter of the genre's connection to questions of local, Athenian identity is a more difficult case to prove. Given the paean's role in community-building and the general importance of Apolline cult in civic matters throughout Greece, and especially among the Ionian Greeks,<sup>122</sup> one might expect to find evidence of Athenian paeans that asserted their autochthonous identity. Alas, this is not the case. The chief problem here is that besides the scanty fragments of Pindar's *Paean* 5, there are only two other fifth-century Athenian paeans from which any words survive.<sup>123</sup> One of these is an extremely fragmentary paean to Asclepius written by Sophocles,<sup>124</sup> of which fewer than twenty words can be salvaged. One of these is "Κεκροπιδῶν" (descendants of Cecrops), an obvious reference to Athens' earliest origins, but since the paean was dedicated to Asclepius it is difficult to connect this to

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<sup>122</sup> On Apollo as a civic god extraordinaire in Ionia (but in particular Apollo Delphinios in Miletos, for which we have the most evidence) see Fritz Graf, "Apollon Delphinios," *Museum Helveticum* 36 (1979): pp. 2-22; Graf, *Apollo* (London, 2009), pp. 106-16; Vanessa B. Gorman, *Miletos, the Ornament of Ionia: A History of the City to 400 B.C.E.* (Ann Arbor, 2001), pp. 168-86; and Alexander Herda, "How to Run a State Cult: The Organization of the Cult of Apollo Delphinios in Miletos," in *Current Approaches to Religion in Ancient Greece*, eds. Matthew Haysom and Jenny Wallensten (Stockholm, 2011), pp. 57-81.

<sup>123</sup> This does not include paeans found in tragedies, though none of those are performed by "Athenian" choruses.

<sup>124</sup> Sophocles fr. 1b Page, preserved in an inscription in the Athenian *agora* from the second century AD. On the inscription, see James H. Oliver, "The Sarapion Monument and the Paean of Sophocles," *Hesperia* 5 (1936): pp. 91-122.

civic cults or the promotion of Athenian identity.<sup>125</sup> The other fragment (Pindar fr. 152hAc = *Paeon* 7c [c]) somehow pales in comparison to the remains of Sophocles' paeon: only four, possibly five, words can be established with any degree of certainty. The presence of "δᾶμον Ἀθα[να...]'" among these hints that civic identity may have been stressed in this ode, but any argument based on such scanty evidence is inevitably doomed to uncertainty.

Equally frustrating is the lack of any source that mentions performances of paeans for Apollo in Athens. The Thargelia festival would seem to be the ideal setting for such songs:<sup>126</sup> not only was the festival dedicated to Apollo, but it included choral competitions,<sup>127</sup> and was one of the occasions on which young Athenian males could be enrolled in the phratries, with a concomitant oath to Apollo *Patrōos* guaranteeing the purity of the child's Athenian origins.<sup>128</sup> This marriage of Apolline cult, choral performance, and citizen-initiation, would seem the perfect occasion for paeans. Nevertheless, until recently scholars have generally insisted that the competition featured dithyrombs.<sup>129</sup> It must be said that the evidence for this claim is extremely

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<sup>125</sup> Considering the scholion to Pindar's fifth *Paeon* which mentions a son of Erechtheus (Σ 45: Πάνδωρον Ἐρέχ[θεως]Αἰκλον), one might see a pattern of mentioning autochthony in fifth-century Athenian paeans. The small sample-size and lack of context, however, renders it impossible to form any solid conclusions in this regard.

<sup>126</sup> On the festival, see H.W. Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians* (Ithaca, 1977), pp. 146-49; Wilson, 2000a, pp. 32-34; and Peter Wilson, "Performance in the *Pythion*: The Athenian Thargelia," in *The Greek Theatre and Festivals: Documentary Studies*, ed. Peter Wilson (Oxford, 2007), pp. 150-82.

<sup>127</sup> There were two choral competitions, one for men and one for boys. Tribes were grouped in pairs in order to form the choruses, making for a total of ten choruses, five in each competition. Cf. Lys. 21.1; Antiphon, 6.11 Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 56.3; Wilson, 2000a, p. 33; Wilson, 2007, p. 156-57.

<sup>128</sup> Such is the case in the fourth century BC, at any rate: cf. Isaios, 7.15-16; A. Andrewes, "Philochoros on Phratries," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 81 (1961): pp. 5-6; Cromey, 2006, pp. 59-62; Graf, 2009, p. 108.

<sup>129</sup> Pickard-Cambridge, 1962, pp. 4, 32; Richard Hamilton, "The Pindaric Dithyramb," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 93 (1990): p. 222; Giorgio Ieranò, *Il ditirambo di Dioniso: Le testimonianze antiche* (Pisa, 1997), p. 248; Robin

tenuous, for it consists merely of a very late reference to a competitions among *kuklioi choroi* at the Thargelia.<sup>130</sup> We cannot simply take this term to mean “dithyramps.”<sup>131</sup> On the contrary, as Wilson has argued, this term refers primarily to the shape the chorus takes during its performance, and its use specifically “avoid[s] any more explicit generic, or cultic, markers.”<sup>132</sup> Athenians would have used this term to refer to dithyramps for Dionysus, but also for Apolline songs such as Bacchylides 17 and Pindar’s fifth *Paean*.<sup>133</sup> As such, it is extremely unlikely that the competition at the Thargelia consisted solely of dithyramps, and by extension extremely likely that it included the performance of paeans.<sup>134</sup>

All that is well and good, but it still tells us remarkably little about the way, or whether or not, Athenian paeans were used to assert autochthonous identity. Our only recourse, then, is

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Osborne, “Competitive Festivals and the Polis: A Context for Dramatic Festivals at Athens,” in *Athenian Democracy*, ed. P.J. Rhodes (Edinburgh, 2004), p. 222.

<sup>130</sup> *Suda* and Photius, *Lexicon*, s.v. Πύθιον: οἱ τῶ κυκλίῳ χορῶ νικήσαντες τὰ Θαργήλια (“those who won in the [competition of the] circular chorus at the Thargelia”). Although Pickard-Cambridge, 1962, p. 4, mentions “many references in literature and inscriptions” to the performances of dithyramps at the Thargelia, with the exception of the *Suda* those which he cites (cf. p. 4 fn 2) make no mention of genre, or even of *kuklioi choroi*.

<sup>131</sup> Wilson, 2000a, p. 314 n 22, points out some problems with this line of reasoning, a discussion he continues in Wilson, 2007, pp. 164-69, where he notes that “the word διθυραμβός is *never* used of” the songs at the Thargelia (p. 167, italics in original). More recent explorations of the question have underscored how problematic it is to universally understand “dithyramb” for “*kuklios choros*”: cf. Fearn, 2007, pp. 165-74; Giambattista D’Alessio, “The Name of the Dithyramb’: Diachronic and Diatopic Variations,” in *Dithyramb in Context*, eds. Barbara Kowalzig and Peter Wilson (Oxford, 2013), pp. 113-32, and Paola Ceccarelli, “Circular Choruses and the Dithyramb in the Classical and Hellenistic Period: A Problem of Definition,” in Kowalzig and Wilson, 2013, pp. 153-70.

<sup>132</sup> Wilson, 2007, p. 168.

<sup>133</sup> *Idem*, pp. 177-78.

<sup>134</sup> As many scholars have suggested, e.g. Rutherford, 2001, p. 33 fn 37, who states that the Thargelian chorus mentioned in Antiphon 6.11 “may have been a παιάν”; Ceccarelli, 2013, p. 160 fn 35, follows Rutherford and states that “both in Delos and at the Athenian Thargelia the songs performed will have included dithyramps, but also paeans.” Another possibility for the performance of paeans at the Thargelia resides in the “presumably choral” dances of the *Orchestai* (Wilson, 2000a, p. 33). Somewhat incredibly, even less evidence exists for these performances than for those of the aforementioned competition, though we can at least presume that Euripides, who as Theophrastus tells us (fr. 119) was once a cupbearer for the *Orchestai*, knew more about them than we do.

to examine paeans that were performed in other Greek *poleis*. The evidence is not ample, but it is suggestive. One ode that confirms the paeon as a genre *par excellence* for expressions of self-definition is Pindar's fourth *Paeon*. Like Bacchylides 17, *Paeon 4* was composed for the Ceans, but unlike Bacchylides' poem it was most likely performed on Ceos,<sup>135</sup> and it presents a mythical structure which emphasizes the Cretan roots shared by all Ceans. Perhaps most importantly for our context, the ode sets upon these shared mythical roots the grounds for remaining dedicated to the civic community.

Pindar's approach to the topic is clever. He begins by noting the island's poverty and its lack of horses and oxen (4.27). He then gives an example of a foreign hero (Melampous) who had contented himself with the relative poverty of his homeland (4.28-30).<sup>136</sup> Finally, Pindar makes his point and illustrates it with an origin myth (*Paeon* 4.32-39):

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<sup>135</sup> On this, see especially Ian Rutherford, "State Pilgrimage and the Performance of *Paeon 4*," in *Poesia e religione in Grecia: Studi in onore di G. Aurelio Privitera*, eds. Maria Cannatà Fera and Simonetta Grandolini (Napoli, 2000), pp. 605-12; and Rutherford, 2001, pp. 292-93. *Contra* see Käppel, 1992, pp. 146-51, who argues that the ode was destined for performance on Delos on the basis of a reference to Artemis in the opening lines of the poem, the fact that the paeon's extensive praise of Ceos seems more appropriate for a pan-Hellenic context, and because a mention of the Graces must refer to reciprocity between Delos and Ceos. None of these arguments is unassailable (cf. Rutherford, 2000, p. 610), and it is particularly hard to see why the praise of Ceos would be more fitting for Delos than for a local context. What's more, Käppel's arguments are far outweighed, in my estimation, by the mention of a specific locality on Ceos (Karthaiia, 4.13-14), but especially by the fact that much of the poem is dedicated to the idea of not leaving Ceos (see below).

<sup>136</sup> These lines, in particular 4.28-29 (ἀλλ' ὃ γε Μέλαμπος οὐκ ἠθέλεν/λιπὼν πατρίδα μο[να]ρχε[ῖν] Ἄργει) have been subject to various interpretations centering around the question of whether Pindar is saying Melampous left his home (Pylos) or not. The tradition with which we are most familiar states quite plainly that Melampous did in fact leave Pylos (cf. Hdt. 9.34), and indeed Käppel, 1992, pp. 132-40, tries to reconcile Pindar's lines with this tradition. But G.B. D'Alessio, "The Greek Paeon [review of Käppel]," *The Classical Review* 44 (1994b): p. 64, points out that Käppel's reconstruction "simply makes no satisfactory sense," since it posits the following logical construct: 1) my homeland is poor; 2) Melampous left his homeland to accept a share of rule in Argos; and 3) it is best not to leave one's homeland.

τὸ δὲ οἴκοθεν ἄστυ καί[ι] —  
καὶ συγγένει' ἀνδρὶ φ[ι] —  
στέρξαι· ματ[αί]ων δὲ [ι] —  
ἐκὰς ἐόντων· λόγο[ν] ἄν]ακτος Εὐξαν[τίου] 35  
ἐπαίνεσα [Κρητ]ῶν μαιομένων ὃς ἀνα[ίνετο  
αὐταρχεῖν, πολίων δ' ἑκατὸν πεδέχει[ν  
μέρος ἕβδομον  
Πασιφ[ά]ας <σύν> υἰοῖ]σι·

For a man [it is always best]<sup>137</sup> to love  
his home city, [hearth],<sup>138</sup>  
and kin; but to foolish men [belongs  
a love] of things afar.<sup>139</sup> I praise the  
word of King Euxantios, who when the  
Cretans  
sought him refused to rule and to have  
a seventh share of the hundred cities  
with the sons of Pasiphae...

Pindar's point is that it is better to remain at home, as Euxantios had, rather than seek fame and fortune abroad. Euxantios was the son of King Minos and Dexithea (the last surviving Telchinean), and is essentially the mythical progenitor of the Cean.<sup>140</sup> The fact that Euxantios refused a share of the Cretan kingdom—the greatest Aegean power in that mythical time—is a poignant reminder for the Ceans that not only are they all descended from a common lot, but that it is one that has traditionally kept its sights focused on home. Pindar simultaneously emphasizes ethnic homogeneity and the tradition and benefits of loyalty to one's community.

In closing the poem, Pindar goes even further. The final twenty lines consist of Euxantios' words of refusal in reply to the offer of a Cretan kingdom, and the Cean chorus plays the part of their progenitor. This choral act is similar to that which we saw in Bacchylides 17, in which the Cean chorus embodies and thus identifies with Theseus' "Ionian" companions. In the

<sup>137</sup> G.B. D'Alessio, "Osservazioni e paralipomeni ad una nuova edizione dei frammenti di Pindaro," *Rivista di Filologia e Istruzione Classica* 119 (1991): p. 99, has suggested that the last four syllables of v. 33 may be integrated with the words "φέριστ' αἰί," a proposal that works both logically and grammatically.

<sup>138</sup> As per the proposal of ἐστία as the missing word in v. 32, made by Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Pindaros* (1922, Berlin), p. 472. The sense in any case must be something of the sort.

<sup>139</sup> Following the translation suggested by Rutherford, 2001, p. 283.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Rutherford, 2001, pp. 288-89 for a discussion of the myth and its variations, the most notable example of which is found in Bacch. 1.112-28.

case of *Paean* 4, however, the effect is altogether different: rather than placing themselves within a broader, Ionian, context, Pindar's chorus represents a figure with which all Ceans—and indeed only Ceans—could truly identify. Beyond being a simple appeal for loyalty to one's homeland, which D'Alessio correctly identifies as an endorsement of political stability,<sup>141</sup> Pindar's poem forcefully promotes the cohesion of the Cean people through an emphasis on kinship that is embodied by participation in a choral community.

Another fascinating paean, and one which artfully shows the genre's ability to negotiate both local and colonial identities, is Pindar's sixth *Paean*, an ode dedicated to the Aeginetans and possibly performed at both the Delphic Theoxenia as well as in Aegina itself (*Paean* 6.123-36):<sup>142</sup>

<p>ὄνομακλύτα γὰρ ἔσσι Δωριεῖ      μ[ε]δέοισα [πό]ντω      νᾶσος, [ῶ] Διὸς Ἑλ-      λανίου φαεννὸν ἄστρον.      οὔνεκεν οὐ σε παιήνων      ἄδορπον εὐνάξομεν, ἀλλ' ἀοιδᾶν      ῥόθια δεκομένα κατερεῖς,</p>	<p>125</p>	<p>Your name is famous, island      ruler of the Dorian      Sea, o bright star      of Zeus Hellanios.      Because of which I shall not put you to bed      starved of paeans, but you shall take      a surge of song and declare</p>
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<sup>141</sup> D'Alessio, 2009, p. 164.

<sup>142</sup> The question of the performance of *Paean* 6 is tremendously complicated. On this, see esp. Ian Rutherford, "For the Aeginetans to Aiakos a Prosodion': An Unnoticed Title at Pindar, *Paean* 6, 123, and Its Significance for the Poem," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 118 (1997): pp. 1-21; and Rutherford, 2001, 329-38. To summarize, the combination of a title which implied performance by the people of Delphi and a mythical structure that is decidedly Aeginetan has generated a number of (increasingly) complex hypotheses of performance scenarios over the last century. The question was further complicated by the recent discovery of a second title at the beginning of the third triad: "For the Aeginetans in honor of Aiakos, a Prosodion." After a survey of previous performance hypotheses Rutherford (1997) introduces a new set of theories based on the emergence of the new title, and decides that two scenarios are the most likely: that all of *Paean* 6 was performed at Delphi, the first two triads by a chorus of Delphians and the final one by Aeginetans; or that only the first two triads were originally performed at Delphi, and that the third triad was a supplement, most likely meant for performance in Aegina. Rutherford gives a slight advantage to the second option, insofar as it better explains the apologetic tone of Pindar's *Nemean* 7, but both are credible.

πόθεν ἔλαβες ναυπρῦτανιν δαίμονα καὶ τὰν θεμίξενον ἀρετ[άν].	130	whence you received your ship-ruling <i>daimōn</i> and the virtue of justice to guests.
ὁ πάντα τοι τά τε καὶ τὰ τεύχων σὸν ἐγγυάλιξεν ὄλβον εὐρύο[πα] Κρόνου παῖς, ὕδατ<εσσ>ι δ' ἐπ' Ἀσ[ω- ποῦ π[οτ' ἀ]πὸ π' ροθύρων βαθύκολ- πον ἄνερέψατο παρθένον Αἴγιναν·	135	The far-seeing son of Cronos, who builds all things, bequeathed your happiness, when on the waters of the Asopos he carried off the deep-bosomed maiden Aegina from her door-way.

The encomiastic elements of these lines are obvious, but other aspects of the genre's function are embedded within this praise. In Pindar's formulation, Aegina's self-evident fame and power require that paeans be sung in her honor; without these paeans, the island would be unjustly "starved."<sup>143</sup> The implication is that the paean is the genre *par excellence* for celebrating a city, much like epinician poetry was for athletic victors.

But Pindar does not simply celebrate Aegina's greatness; he also prompts the island to reveal the source of its naval prowess (i.e. its "ship-ruling *daimōn*") and its virtuous treatment of *xenoi*. The chorus responds to this query in its own voice, but the structure of the poem suggests that the island itself is providing the answer, and thus guaranteeing the legitimacy of the account. As we learn, the island's excellence stems from Zeus' rape of its namesake, the river-nymph Aegina. Zeus kidnapped her and brought her to the previously uninhabited island, where he begat Aiakos, the first king of the island. Despite the fragmentary state of the final forty lines, references to the Myrmidons—the island's semi-autochthonous inhabitants—<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> This is in no way dissimilar to the dynamic we see in his epinician poems, in which the song itself is necessitated by the victor's prowess and virtue.

<sup>144</sup> Zeus was said to have transformed the ants on the island into men, whence the name "Myrmidon." On this see Ps. Apoll. *Bibl.* 3.12.6; Hesiod fr. 205 West.

(6.143) and Aiakos (6.144-45, 155-56)<sup>145</sup> attest that Pindar recounts this origin story in some detail. The mention of “the boundless virtues of the Aiakides” (6.176-77) suggests that he extends the narration of Aiakos’ bloodline, perhaps through his grandson Achilles. And this genealogy is presented as a reason to “love [your?] native city and kindly people” (6.178-79).

The paean operates on several levels, and claims to be perfectly suited for each one: it celebrates Aegina’s fame; it augments that fame by “persuading” the island to tell of its divine provenance and glorious ancestry; and it ends with a call for civic unity, one that is clearly enhanced and encouraged by the paean’s mythical apparatus. These mythical elements—divine heritage, autochthony, and the city’s place in the broader Greek (in this case Dorian) world—are the same ones around which Euripides constructs the *Ion*. If the paean was indeed performed at an international festival such as the Delphic Theoxenia, one of the two hypotheses Rutherford suggests, “*Paeon* 6 would provide an excellent example of negotiation between panhellenic and local traditions within the context of ancient pilgrimage.”<sup>146</sup> In this case, the number of both contextual and mythical elements shared with Euripides’ *Ion* would be overwhelming, and there would be little question regarding the genre’s suitability for the tragedy. But even if all or part of Pindar’s song were performed in Aegina, it would still serve as confirmation that the

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<sup>145</sup> 6.144-45: τὸν [ ὄψωφορο]νέστατον/Διὸς, must refer to Aiakos, who, as Pindar tells us, was “the wisest of all men on earth” and “even settled disputes for the gods” (*Isth.* 8.23-24). It appears that he recounts this same episode in 6.155-56: Ζη[ν ὄψωφορο] πρὶν Στυγὸς ὄρκιον ἐξ εὐ- / [ ὄψωφορο] δικάσαι. On which cf. Rutherford, 2001, p. 326.

<sup>146</sup> Rutherford, 1997, p. 19.

fifth-century paeon was a convenient vehicle for the propagation of local myths and civic identities that we also see in the *Ion*, a thematic confluence that is on its own notable.

Like the “Ionian” paeans discussed earlier, the two “local” paeans examined above present powerful assertions of a community’s shared identity, and they again stand in contrast to the strange paeon with which Ion introduces himself to the audience. In both the Cean and the Aeginetan paeans, the divine paternities of the cities’ founding heroes are fully articulated and certain, and these origins are explicitly used to reinforce communal solidarity. Ion, on the other hand, emphasizes the uncertainty of his origins and his isolation from community, asserting instead an identity that the audience knows to be an Apolline fiction. The number of contrasts between Ion’s monody and traditional paeans suggests that Ion’s song deliberately eschews the genre’s typical promotion of origin myths and civic unity. And the fact that Ion closes his puzzling song with a singular critique of Apolline music certainly draws the audience’s attention to the idea of Apolline song itself, an implicit provocation which paves the way for Creousa’s more explicit critique of Apolline music later in the play.

#### 4. *Dissonance Refracted:*

##### *The Multiplication of Fictional Identities and Creousa's Anti-Paeon*

The problems of fictional identities, unknown origins, and isolation from community that Ion introduces with his paeon do not simply disappear when he ends his song. Ion closes his paeon by curbing his impulse to kill the temple birds, at least saving himself from sacrilege, at which point the chorus enters the stage. The *parodos* (*Ion* 184-236) does little to dispel the paeanic anxiety that Ion has developed. In other Euripidean tragedies in which a single actor follows the prologue—but precedes the chorus' entry—by singing an anapaestic monody, the *parodos* typically mirrors the themes and modes of the actor's monody.<sup>147</sup> For example, when Hecuba follows the prologue of the *Trojan Women* with an anapeastic dirge bemoaning the fall of Troy and the slave's fate that awaits her, the chorus is moved by her laments and joins her in song before performing a dirge of their own.<sup>148</sup> By analogy, we might expect the chorus of the *Ion* to present some sort of choral paeon, or to at least express some interest in the young man still present on-stage. Instead, a group of Creousa's female hand-servants arrives and performs an ekphrastic song in which they marvel at the decorations on Apollo's temple. They communicate with Ion only in order to find out the rules of the sanctuary.

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<sup>147</sup> Lee, ed., 1997, p. 177.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. E. *Tro.* 98-229. Hecuba's anapaests at the beginning of the *Hecuba* serve a similar function.

Even this light-hearted song is not without some anomalies. The sculptures described by the chorus are not those located at the entrance (east end) of the temple of Apollo—the side before which the tragic scene presumably takes place. Instead, the chorus sings of three battles (Heracles and the Hydra, Bellerophon and the Chimera, and the *gigantomachy*) that were depicted on the rear (west end) of the temple.<sup>149</sup> This incongruity has been the cause of much debate, as scholars have tried to reconcile the *parodos* to the theatrical setting in a number of ways.<sup>150</sup> Less has been made of the scene which actually did adorn the front of the temple and which Euripides quite obviously ignores, which is to say Apollo’s arrival at Delphi. As with any omission, one must be cautious in assigning too much meaning to it. But it is worth noting that the Apolline arrival the chorus declines to describe is an event for which paeans were typically performed.<sup>151</sup> It is as if Euripides deliberately avoids having his chorus describe a scene which is

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<sup>149</sup> On the images described by the *parodos* and how they relate to what the audience might actually see, cf. Owen, ed., 1939, pp. 82-83; Vincent J. Rosivach, “Earthborns and Olympians: The Parodos of the *Ion*,” *The Classical Quarterly* 27 (1977): pp. 284-85; Lee, ed., 1997, pp. 179-80. On the images that adorned the real temple at Delphi, cf. Ch. Picard and P. De La Coste-Messelière, *Fouilles de Delphes* vol. 4 f. 3 (Paris, 1931), pp. 16-32 (west pediment) and 33-62 (east pediment).

<sup>150</sup> The most successful of which is to suggest that the *skēnē* consisted of a “non-dimensional representation” of the temple, as it is put by Karelisa V. Hartigan, *Ambiguity and Self-Deception: The Apollo and Artemis Plays of Euripides* (Frankfurt am Main, 1991), p. 72 fn 10.

<sup>151</sup> This point has not yet, to my knowledge, been adequately argued. Rutherford, 1994, p. 116, makes it in regard specifically to Bacch. 16.8-9, and he hints at the possibility that Apollo’s springtime return was a traditional occasion for a paean in 2001, pp. 28 and 54. But there is meaningful evidence suggesting that Apollo’s annual arrival at Delphi would have been marked by the performance of paeans, and that this fact would have been reasonably well-known: according to the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, the very first paean was performed in honor of Apollo’s original return to Delphi (cf. *HH* 3.517-19.), and Bacchylides tells us that Apollo’s annual arrival at Delphi is greeted by “flowers of paeans” (Bacch. 16.8-9: ἕκη παηόνων/ἀνθεα πεδοιχνεῖν). Bacchylides’ testimony is particularly relevant for the nonchalance with which he relates the detail: the poem itself is not a paean but a dithyramb, and the point of mentioning this welcoming paean is simply to “mark the performative or contextual boundary between paeans and dithyrambs” (Fearn, 2007, p. 171). This suggests to me that the god’s paeanic greeting at Delphi was common knowledge. Further evidence that his return was marked by paeans can be found in Alcaeus’ “paean” for Apollo

both closely associated with paeans and by far the most logical choice considering the location. Ion's paean does not simply recede into the background; it is kept in the foreground by contrast.

*Ion and the projection of contemporary notions of Athenian identity*

The end of the parodos is marked by Creousa's arrival (*Ion* 237). Ion, still on-stage, instantly recognizes Creousa's "nobility" (γενναιότης), but of course he cannot know her relation to him; mother and son are united in ignorance. She gives him her background and the full story of her autochthonous lineage (*Ion* 260-82), an excursus that brings into focus the centrality of Athenian identity in the play. Soon thereafter, Ion inquires after Creousa's present circumstances, an exchange that recalls fifth-century Athenian citizenship laws (*Ion* 289-93):

Ion: πόσις δὲ τίς σ' ἔγημ' Ἀθηναίων, γυναίκα;	I: What Athenian husband married you, woman?
Cr.: οὐκ ἄστός, ἀλλ' ἐπακτός ἐξ ἄλλης χθονός. 290	C: He is not a citizen, but a foreigner from another land.
I: τίς; εὐγενῆ νιν δεῖ πεφυκέναι τινά.	I: Who? He must have been born a noble man.
C.: Εὐθός, πεφυκώς Αἰόλου Διός τ' ἄπο.	C: Xouthos, born of Aiolos the son of Zeus.
I: καὶ πῶς ξένος σ' ὦν ἔσχεν οὔσαν ἐγγενῆ;	I: And how did a foreign man acquire you, a native woman?

Ion's initial assumption that Creousa married an Athenian seems innocent enough, but his response upon learning that Creousa has married Xouthos is curious. Although Xouthos is a

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(paraphrased in prose by Himerius, 48.105 ff.; on this cf. esp. Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1, pp. 99-102; vol. 2, pp. 21-24). Alcaeus tells us that the Delphians "composed a paean" (Him. 48.115: παιᾶνα συνθέντες) in order to encourage Apollo to come to Delphi. And in Philodamus' *Paeon for Dionysus* we learn that Dionysus' arrival and acceptance at Delphi was to be marked by the performance of this paean (cf. esp. Clay, 1996, pp. 94-96), which further confirms the sense that the Greeks considered the paean to be a song of welcome *par excellence* at Delphi.

grandson of Zeus and thus a perfectly appropriate match for Creousa “[f]rom a mythic or aristocratic perspective,”<sup>152</sup> Ion is surprised that a “*xenos*” had been allowed to marry the “native” queen. He appears to be operating on the notion that “civic endogamy” is the norm among the elite classes in Athens,<sup>153</sup> a condition that in all likelihood arose only after Pericles’ citizenship law of 451/50 BCE.<sup>154</sup> In short, Ion appears familiar with Athens’ fifth-century citizenship laws,<sup>155</sup> and he places the tragedy’s questions about identity within this decidedly contemporary context.

The remainder of the episode focuses on Ion’s own background (308-29), and on Creousa’s intention to ask Apollo about the fate of their child (330-69). Unbeknownst to the two characters, these subjects are closely related, and the discussion naturally serves to set up the eventual *anagnōrīsis* (recognition). Just as importantly, both topics bring into focus another theme that had been introduced by Ion’s paean and that quickly becomes one of the tragedy’s focal points: fictional identities. In Ion’s case, the fictional identity is known to the audience, for he simply relates the same story of orphaned servitude that he had told in his paean. Somewhat more surprising is the fiction that Creousa’s creates. In the process of explaining her oracular

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<sup>152</sup> Lape, 2010, p. 29; see also Loraux, 1993, pp. 201-02

<sup>153</sup> Lape, 2010, p. 29.

<sup>154</sup> On Pericles’ citizenship law most generally, see above, p. 198. One effect of Pericles’ law, regardless of whether it was the primary motivation for the regulation, was surely to curb marriages between Athenians and non-Athenians. On the matter, cf. Boegehold 1994, pp. 62-63; Connor, 1994, pp. 36-38; Lape, 2010, pp. 23-24. S.C. Humphreys, “The Nothoi of Kynosarges,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 94 (1974): pp. 93-94, suggests that eliminating such marriages was actually the main goal of Pericles’ law, though Patterson, 2006, p. 282, correctly points out that we know too little about the frequency of such marriages to suppose that this was a serious motivating factor.

<sup>155</sup> Lape, 2010, pp. 29, 107-08.

request, she gives the details of Apollo's rape and the subsequent birth and abandonment of her child, but she does so under the guise that this had occurred to a friend of hers (*Ion* 338: τις φίλων ἐμῶν). Both Ion and Creousa thus present themselves inaccurately, Ion by revealing the bogus status he had been supplied by Apollo, Creousa by concealing her suffering at the god's hands. An uncomfortable blend of fictional identities and Athenian origins is well developed by the end of the first episode, and the problems inherent in this mixture will subsequently be dissected throughout the tragedy.

The following episode only sees the complexities of identity and origins deepen. Xouthos leaves the oracle and enthusiastically greets Ion as his child (*Ion* 517: ὦ τέκνον). Ion is naturally taken aback at this strange behavior, and threatens to fend off Xouthos' affectionate advances with "an arrow to the lungs" (*Ion* 524: εἶσω τόξα πλευμόνων). Xouthos prevents this assault by relating Apollo's strange oracle, namely that the first person he met on leaving the temple—Ion, of course—would be his natural son (530-37). Ion is strangely non-plussed at the news. Rather than celebrating with his newfound father, he asks after his mother (540). Disappointed to learn that Xouthos knows nothing of his maternal origins, he wonders if he wasn't, perhaps, "born from the earth as a mother" (*Ion* 542: γῆς ἄρ' ἐκπέφυκα μητρὸς;). Xouthos rejects this proposition out of hand, pointing out that "the ground does not bear children" (*Ion* 542: οὐ πέδον τίκτει τέκνα). The irony here is thick, for we already know that Ion's maternal ancestors were in fact born from the earth, but the important point is that just as Ion acquires a new fictional identity, Xouthos actually suggests that the entire basis of Athenian identity is also an impossible fiction.

This blend of Athenian and other fictional origins is drawn out in the rest of the exchange, and in terms that are again relevant to late fifth-century Athens. Xouthos offers to bring Ion with him to Athens, an offer at which Ion balks first and foremost because of issues of identity (*Ion* 589-92):

<p>εἶναί φασι τὰς αὐτόχθονας κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας οὐκ ἐπέισακτον γένος, ἴν' ἐσπεσοῦμαι δύο νόσω κεκτημένος, πατρός τ' ἐπακτοῦ καὐτὸς ὦν νοθαγενής.</p>	<p>590</p>	<p>They say that famous Athens is autochthonous, born of no foreign stock, so that I shall succumb to a double sickness as the bastard son of a foreign father.</p>
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Ion contrasts his new, but still fictional, identity to the purity of Athenian autochthony. Xouthos manages to convince Ion to leave Delphi by proposing to introduce him to Creousa and Athens as a *xenos* (*Ion* 654) and “sightseer” (*Ion* 656: θεατὴν), but here we simply see the replacement of one fictional identity with another, both of which are constructed in opposition to Athenian identity. Thus far in the tragedy, these two thematic strands—Athenian autochthony and fictional (Ionian) identity—have been consistently placed side by side, if not fully woven together.

This is expressed even more poignantly as the father-son discussion draws to a close. Although Xouthos finally convinces Ion to join him in Athens, he cannot allay all of Ion’s concerns (*Ion* 670-75):

<p>εἰ δ' ἐπεύξασθαι χρεῶν, ἐκ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν μ' ἢ τεκοῦσ' εἶη γυνή, ὥς μοι γένηται μητροθεν παρρησία. καθαρὰν γὰρ ἦν τις ἐς πόλιν πέση ξένος, κἂν τοῖς λόγοισιν ἄστος ἦ, τό γε στόμα δοῦλον πέπαται κοῦκ ἔχει παρρησίαν.</p>	<p>670     675</p>	<p>If I may pray for one thing, let my birth-mother be Athenian so I may inherit from her freedom of speech. For when a foreigner comes to a pure city, even if he is a citizen in theory, he acquires a slave’s mouth and has no freedom of speech.</p>
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Ion's use of the term *parrēsia* ("freedom of speech") confirms that the civic context in which the tragedy takes place is that of late fifth-century Athens.<sup>156</sup> Ion's recognition of "maternal inheritance" may be another reference to citizen identity in Athens after 451/50 BCE,<sup>157</sup> though insofar as he discounts the political obstacle his foreign father represents, this point should perhaps not be over-stated. More telling in this regard is his reference to Athens as a "pure city" in which foreigners have no political place, a condition that certainly reflects Pericles' citizenship law. The *polis* Ion imagines is Athens in the late fifth century, and it is within this context that the problems of autochthony and his fictional identity must be seen.

In the following episode, the problems with Ion's fictional origins lead to a tragic crisis that is both expressed within and prompted by paeanic song. Despite Xouthos' injunction that the chorus keep silent about his newfound son (*Ion* 666-67), no sooner does Creousa return, accompanied by her faithful *Paidagōgos*, than do the Athenian hand-maidens reveal his plot and the existence of his "son" Ion (*Ion* 752-807). The tragedy swiftly takes on a sinister tone. Creousa's *Paidagōgos* is convinced that she will be "cast out of the house of Erechtheus" (*Ion* 810-11: δωμάτων τ' Ἐρεχθέως/ ἐκβαλλόμεσθα)—that her childlessness and Ion's arrival will result in the loss of her community. The situation is not yet unsalvageable, but it appears to jeopardize the easy solution Hermes had envisioned in the prologue, and casts doubt on Apollo's prophetic powers and on his ability to control the narrative. Things do not seem to be working

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<sup>156</sup> Somewhat surprisingly, the term practically does not exist in extant literature before Euripides.

<sup>157</sup> As Lee, ed., 1997, p. 235, and Lape, 2010, pp. 114-15, both claim.

out quite as planned, and for a myth that relies on Apolline descent to establish a common link between Athenian autochthony and Ionia, it is perhaps troubling that the god in question seems less than reliable.

The *Paidagōgos* then provokes even more uncertainty by suggesting that Xouthos began engineering this plan years ago after coming to Creousa's home as a *xenos* (*Ion* 813-14) and learning of her inability to bear children (*Ion* 819-29):

<p>λαβὼν δὲ δοῦλα λέκτρα νυμφεύσας λάθρα  τὸν παῖδ' ἔφυσεν, ἐξενωμένον δέ τῳ 820  Δελφῶν δίδωσιν ἐκτρέφειν. ὃ δ' ἐν θεοῦ  δόμοισιν ἄφετος, ὡς λάθοι, παιδεύεται.  νεανίαν δ' ὡς ἦσθετ' ἐκτεθραμμένον,  ἐλθεῖν σ' ἔπεισε δεῦρ' ἀπαιδίας χάριν.  κἄθ' ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐψεύσαθ', ὅδε δ' ἐψεύσατο 825  πάλαι τρέφων τὸν παῖδα κἄπλεκεν πλοκάς  τοιᾶσδ'· ἀλοὺς μὲν ἀνέφερ' ἐς τὸν δαίμονα,  † ἐλθὼν δὲ καὶ τὸν χρόνον ἀμύνεσθαι θέλων †  τυραννίδ' αὐτῷ περιβαλεῖν ἔμελλε γῆς.</p>	<p>He took, in secret, a slave to the bridal bed  and begat the child, and gave him  to some Delphian to raise, who freely  taught him in the house of the god.  And when he knew the child was grown,  he convinced you to come here on account of  your childlessness. The god did not lie, Xouthos  did long ago by bringing up the child; and he  wove such a web, that if he were caught,  he could ascribe it to the god... [???]<sup>158</sup>  ...he meant to invest him with tyranny over our  land.</p>
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The *Paidagōgos* adds a false mother to the false father Apollo had already granted Ion. In the eyes of the Athenians on-stage, Ion is now the son of a foreigner and a slave, and the key cog in a years-in-the-making conspiracy to usurp the throne of the Erechtheids. His identity is ever-shifting and tenuous, and ever-contrasted to the purity of Athenian autochthony.

Just as troubling is Apollo's role in the affair. The question of Ion's identity has become confused, rather than clarified, by Apollo's prophecy, and Athenian interpretations of his oracle

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<sup>158</sup> Lee, ed., 1997, p. 254: "These words, which make no sense, seem incurable."

only muddle the situation further. Although he mistakenly acquits Apollo of lying, the *Paidagōgos* suggests that the Delphic oracle can be exploited in order to create false identities and to advance political aspirations. The idea that Apollo's will can be so brazenly manipulated for political purposes is certainly distressing in a play that explicitly deploys an innovative Apolline myth to advance Athenian aspirations, particularly since the tragic audience was accustomed to seeing these same mythical pretenses exploited in very real political contexts. Even though we know that Xouthos reports the oracle as he received it, this in turn means that Apollo himself has lied. Apollo's will, which Hermes has explicitly stated would be crucial to the successful fusion of Athenian and Ionian identities (cf. *Ion* 67-68, above p. 188), is steeped in deception and subject to human misinterpretation. Euripides thus emphasizes Apollo's unreliability in the matter of establishing origins and identities, and he casts doubt on the very mechanisms upon which his creation of a new Athenian/Ionian identity resides.

*Creousa's monody and the anti-paeanic culmination of the identity crisis*

Immediately after the *Paidagōgos* throws into relief the problematic nature of Ion's identity and the unreliability of an Apolline solution, Creousa reconnects these troubling dynamics to paeanic song. She can no longer contain the secret of Ion's birth, which she has kept so long, and to disclose it she resorts to a monody that is undoubtedly "a complement to

Ion's [paeon]."<sup>159</sup> Numerous scholars have classified her song as an "anti-hymn,"<sup>160</sup> but it may be more accurate to call it an anti-paeon. To begin, Creousa's monody abounds with elements that recall Ion's paeon:<sup>161</sup> like Ion before her, she introduces her song with a series of recitative anapaests before turning to lyric anapaests;<sup>162</sup> when Creousa names Apollo, her invocation is the very same one Ion had used in his paeon-refrain earlier in the play (*Ion* 127, 143, 885: ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ); while Ion introduces his ode by addressing the sun which puts the stars to flight (*Ion* 81-85), Creousa instead calls on the "starry seat of Zeus" as her witness (*Ion* 870: τὸ Διὸς πολύαστρον ἔδος); while Ion's song sees him rediscover his *aidōs* with regard to the temple birds (*Ion* 179: κτείνειν ὑμᾶς αἰδοῦμαι), Creousa uses song to let go of her *aidōs* in order to reveal her secret (*Ion* 861: αἰδοῦς δ' ἀπολειφθῶ); and Creousa even recalls Ion's false claim to be "motherless and fatherless" (*Ion* 109) when she mistakenly asserts that she is "bereft of home, bereft of children" (*Ion* 865: στέρομαι δ' οὔκων, στέρομαι παίδων). This mirroring has two principal effects: first, in recalling a song that was overtly paeanic, it shows that Creousa's song is intimately related to the genre; second, by drawing on some of the more disturbing elements

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<sup>159</sup> Shirley A. Barlow, *The Imagery of Euripides: A Study in the Dramatic Use of Pictorial Language* (Bristol, 1971), p. 48.

<sup>160</sup> Jene Larue, "Creousa's Monody: *Ion* 859-922," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philology Association* 94 (1963): pp. 126-36; Lee, ed., 1997, p. 257; William D. Furley, "Hymns in Euripidean Tragedy," *Illinois Classical Studies* 24/25 (1999/2000): pp. 188-90; Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 1, p. 327.

<sup>161</sup> See also José Antonio Fernández Delgado, "Luces y Sombras en la Comunicación con Apolo, de la Monodia de Ión a la de Creúsa," *Journal of Classical Philology* 16 (2012): pp. 17-34.

<sup>162</sup> To be more precise, Creousa begins with three lines of lyric anapaests (859-61) before turning to recitative anapaests (862-80) and then again to lyric anapaests (881 ff.) with a sprinkling of dochmiacs (894-96; 906). Cf. Lee, ed., 1997, p. 257, and Furley and Bremer, 2001 vol. 2, p. 317.

of Ion's monody, Creousa builds off the dissonance of his paeon to create a far more overt condemnation of Apolline music.

The hostile relationship between Creousa's monody and the traditional paeon-song is further exemplified by her subversion of a number of paeanic themes and *topoi*: most obviously, her song is dedicated to Apollo, but it serves not to praise or propitiate the god, but rather to "reproach" him (*Ion* 885: μομφάν); the structure of the monody mirrors the typical structure of cult paeans, except that the closing prayer is replaced by a curse against Apollo;<sup>163</sup> and references to Apolline music and singing appear throughout the ode, but in an overtly critical context. This is in fact clear from the very first lyric anapaests of her song (*Ion* 881-86):

ὦ τᾶς ἑπταφθόγγου μέλπων  
κιθάρας ἐνοπᾶν, ἅτ' ἀγραύλοισ  
κέρασιν ἐν ἀψύχοις ἀχεῖ  
μουσᾶν ὕμνους εὐαχήτους,  
σοὶ μομφάν, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ,  
πρὸς τάνδ' ἀγὰν αὐδάσω.

885

O you who stroke the voice  
of the seven-stringed *kithara*, which  
peals out from lifeless rustic horns  
the loud-sounding hymns of the muses,  
reproach for you, o son of Leto,  
I shall call out before this light.

The importance of Creousa's invocation must not be understated: in beginning her condemnation of Apollo, Creousa turns directly to, and indeed only to, his musical identity. Her reference to the *kithara* and the emphasis on sound (ἀχεῖ, εὐαχήτους) make Apolline music the central motif of Creousa's proem, and it is a theme that remains prominent throughout the ode.

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<sup>163</sup> Rutherford, 2001, pp. 74-75, notes that "cult παιᾶνες" typically consist of an opening section in which the god "is directly appealed to," a narrative section which describes an "aretology of Apollo," and "a closing prayer." On Creousa's "curse," cf. LaRue, 1963, p. 136.

Creousa follows her “musical” invocation with a striking description of her rape by Apollo and the subsequent birth and (presumed) death of their son. Her former pain and terror are palpable: she screams out for her mother as the god takes her (*Ion* 893); in giving birth to her son she is “wretched” (*Ion* 897: δύστανος); and she leaves the child in the very spot Apollo “took [her], wretched and miserable in an unhappy union” (*Ion* 900-01: με λέχεσι μελέαν μελέοις/ἐζεύξω τὰν δύστανον). It is on this unhappy note that she then returns to the subject of Apolline music (*Ion* 902-06):

<p>οἶμοι μοι· καὶ νῦν ἔρρει  παανοῖς ἀρπασθεῖς θοίνα  παῖς μοι — καὶ σοί.  τλᾶμον, σὺ δὲ &lt;καὶ&gt; κιθάρα κλάζεις 905  παιᾶνας μέλπων.</p>	<p>Alas for me! Now my son  and yours is gone,  a feast seized by birds.  And you, wretch, pluck your kithara  and sing paeans!</p>
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Within the context of the ode, the return to Apolline music serves to close the ring that Creousa had opened at line 881. In both lines she describes the god singing (μέλπων), a coincidence that confirms that, in this section at least, Creousa is deeply concerned with Apollo’s music, and that the songs themselves—his paeans—draw her ire. The stanza functions as a meta-poetic but overt condemnation of Apolline music.

Creousa’s image of Apollo singing a paeon has other effects as well. Given that he both opens and closes this strophe singing, it appears that she imagines Apollo singing his paeans throughout her own performance; the two songs are, in a sense, contemporaneous. More importantly, Creousa’s condemnation of Apollo’s paeans recalls Ion’s consideration, or lack thereof, of the god’s music in his own monody. Creousa’s critique is, if anything, more poignant. While Ion’s lack of reverence for the god’s music was troubling, he at least limits

himself to dismissing the power of the god's lyre. Creousa, on the other hand, singles out Apollo's song and condemns it as an accomplice to her own unjustified suffering. Here, it is important to note that both of the tragedy's Apolline songs challenge the very notion of the paeon, first with regards to its efficacy, and second with regards to its reliability. Given the associations between the paeon and the questions of identity that have been emphasized throughout the tragedy, the paeanic degradation of paeans severely undermines the play's supposed fusion of Athenian and Ionian identity.

Furthermore, the problematic nature of Creousa's monody stands out not only for its relation to Ion's ode but also for an allusion to an Aeschylean fragment (A. fr. 350):<sup>164</sup>

<p>[Thetis]: τὰς ἐ&lt;μ&gt;ὰς εὐπαιδίας νόσων τ' ἀπείρους καὶ μακροαίωνα βίου, ξύμπαντά τ' εἰπὼν θεοφιλεῖς ἐμὰς τύχας παιῶν' ἐπηυρήμησεν εὐθυμῶν ἐμέ. καὶ γὰρ τὸ Φοίβου θεῖον ἀψευδὲς στόμα 5 ἤλπιζον εἶναι, μαντικῇ βρῦον τέχνη· ὁ δ' αὐτὸς ὕμνων, αὐτὸς ἐν θοίνῃ παρῶν, αὐτὸς τὰδ' εἰπὼν, αὐτὸς ἐστὶν ὁ κτανῶν τὸν παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν.</p>	<p>[Apollo allotted]<sup>165</sup> to me the blessing of children both free from disease and long of life, and having told of all my god-loved fortunes, he sang a paeon and greatly cheered me. And I expected Phoebus' divine mouth to be unlying, abounding in its mantic craft; But the one who sang those hymns, who was present at my feast, who said those things, is the same one who killed my child.</p>
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This fragment belongs to an unknown play, but its contents are quite clear: Thetis is most displeased with Apollo for first predicting a long life for Achilles, only to then be responsible for his death at Troy. This story may well belong to a broader tradition with which even Homer

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<sup>164</sup> = Plato, *Republic* 383b. Ian Rutherford, "Paeanic Ambiguity: A Study of the Representation of the παιῶν in Greek Literature," *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 44 (1993): p. 91 fn 41, was the first to recognize that Creousa's words are an allusion to this fragment.

<sup>165</sup> From "ἐνδατεῖσθαι," Plato's introduction to the lines of Aeschylean verse.

was familiar,<sup>166</sup> but its relevance to the *Ion* is certain: these are the only two instances, to my knowledge, in which Apollo is said to sing a paean, and in each case the description is hardly flattering. Each woman holds the god responsible for her child's death, and both women implicate his paean in their loss. Like Creousa, Thetis emphasizes the treachery of the god's music by making a second, emphatic reference to the god in the act of singing (v. 7: ὑμνῶν), and by juxtaposing this song to her child's death.

Thetis' reference to the rare beast that is the false Apolline prophecy is also relevant to Creousa's monody, for immediately after condemning Apollo's song she too moves on to focus on his oracle (*Ion* 907-918):

<p>ὦή, τὸν Λατοῦς αὐδῶ,  ὅστ' ὀμφὰν κληροῖς  †πρὸς χρυσέους θάκουσ†  καὶ γαίας μεσσηρεῖς ἔδρας,  εἰς φῶς αὐδὰν καρούξω·  Ἴὼ &lt;ἰὼ&gt;κακὸς εὐνάτωρ,</p>	<p>910</p>	<p>ōē, I call the son of Leto,  who dispenses his divine voice  at golden thrones  and the midmost seats of the earth,  I shout this song out to the light:  iō iō, wicked bedmate,</p>
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<sup>166</sup> In *Iliad* 24.62-63, Hera lambasts the "ever untrustworthy" (*Il.* 24.63: αἰὲν ἄπιστε) Apollo for disrespecting Achilles despite having been present, "lyre in hand" (*Il.* 24.63: ἔχων φόρμιγγα) at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus. Ruth Scodel, "Apollo's Perfidy: *Iliad* ω59-63," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 81 (1977): pp. 55-57, argues that Aeschylus' fragment is an allusion to these lines in the *Iliad*, which in turn implies the existence of a tradition of Apollo's *apistia*. *Contra*, see Jonathan S. Burgess, "Untrustworthy Apollo and the Destiny of Achilles: *Iliad* 24.55-63," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 102 (2004a): pp. 21-40. Burgess denies both that Aeschylus' fragment is a Homeric allusion and that there was a tradition of "Apollo singing a misleading prophecy about Achilles at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis" (p. 21). At the very least, however, it seems clear that Apolline prophecy was associated in some way with the wedding: cf. Hes. fr. 212(b); Pi. *Nem.* 5.22-25; E. *IA* 1062-79. On Pseudo-Hesiod and Pindar, see esp. Jennifer March, *The Creative Poet: Studies on the Treatment of Myth in Greek Poetry* (London, 1987), pp. 12-20. But *IA* 1062-79 is perhaps the most compelling of these passages. Here, Chiron is said to deliver a prophecy which he received from the "Phoebic Muse" (*IA* 1064: φοιβάδα μουσαν; almost certainly a priestess—perhaps Delphic?—of Apollo), according to which Achilles would become a great warrior. It is true that Apollo is not directly involved in the prophecy, and that the "prophecy does not explicitly promise a long life for Achilles and so cannot be considered deceptive" (Burgess, p. 26). But the combination of an Apolline prophecy at Thetis' wedding that omits any mention of Achilles' death does seem to fall in the tradition of Aeschylus' fragment.

ὄς τῳ μὲν ἐμῳ νυμφεύτῃ  
χάριν οὐ προλαβὼν  
παῖδ' εἰς οἶκους οἰκίζεις·  
ὁ δ' ἐμὸς γενέτας καὶ σὸς τὰ μαθήστ  
οἰωνοῖς ἔρρει συλαθείς,  
σπάργατα ματέρος ἐξαλλάξας.

915

who took no favor  
from my husband  
yet settled a child for him in my home;  
and my child and yours, ignorant one,  
is gone, carried off by birds,  
casting off his mother's swaddling-  
bands.

The structure and many of the features of these lines should by now be familiar: both this and the earlier stanza begin with an invocation of Apollo as son of Leto. In each case, the invocation is followed by a narration of Apollo's crimes, though this time Creousa recounts his present offenses rather than his former ones. Creousa also continues to juxtapose her own suffering (916-18) to Apollo's actions (912-15), and she even uses the same word (ἔρρει) and image (an avian assault) to describe her son's death. The similarities between the two stanzas mean we do not simply cease to hear Apollo's paeon when Creousa turns to denigrate his prophecy; his song is always lurking in the background.

Furthermore, the connection between Apollo's prophecy and his paeon is suggested not only by the allusion to the Aeschylean fragment but also by the terms with which Creousa describes the oracle. She defines it as an act of colonization with Apollo "settling" (*oikizei*) Ion in her house.<sup>167</sup> Certainly this phrase elicits the strong associations between Apolline prophecy and colonial foundations in the Greek world.<sup>168</sup> This in turn reminds us of the role paeans played in establishing colonial narratives, as in Pindar's second *Paeon* where the poet explores, at length,

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<sup>167</sup> Creousa uses the same term that Thucydides does when describing the Athenian colonization of "Ionia and most of the islands" (Th. 1.12.4: Ἴωνας μὲν Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ νησιωτῶν τοὺς πολλοὺς ὤκισαν).

<sup>168</sup> Carol Dougherty, *The Poetics of Colonization: From City to Text in Ancient Greece* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 18-21.

the colonial relationship shared by Teos and Abderus. An even more intriguing (and Athenian) congruity exists between Creousa's words and Pindar's fifth *Paeon*. In that ode, Pindar lays the roots for Athenian hegemony by noting their early colonization (*Paeon* 5.39: ἔκτισαν) of the Cycladic islands and Apollo's desire that they "settle" (5.42: οἰκεῖν) Delos. *Oikeō* in particular is virtually synonymous with Creousa's *oikizō*,<sup>169</sup> so the two formulations are lexically analogous. Just as important is the conceptual similarity: while Pindar claims that Apollo gave Delos to Athens and allowed it to colonize the Cyclades, Creousa imagines Apollo giving Ion to Xouthos and colonizing the house of Erechtheus. In Creousa's song, the paeanic and prophetic are utterly entwined.

Central to Creousa's paeanic song, and to her objection to Apollo's colonization of her house, is the question of Ion's identity. Here it is once again a fictional one. While Creousa cannot of course know that her understanding of the situation is based on an entirely false premise, the audience can certainly grasp this point. As such, it must be factored into our interpretation of her ode. In this sense, Creousa's anti-paeon mirrors Ion's earlier paeon by expressing a false "Ionian" identity. The same can be said of Apollo's paeon, and of Apolline music more generally. Insofar as the god is envisioned singing a paeon while colonizing the house of Erechtheus with the son of Xouthos, his paeon and his music are closely related to the

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<sup>169</sup> Thucydides also uses the verb *oikeō* to mean "settle." Cf. Th. 1.8.1; 2.27.2; 6.2 *passim*.

expression of fictional (Ionian) origins. The blend of paeanic song, Athenian autochthony, and false Ionian identities is an all-encompassing theme of the tragedy.

Hence we must not lose sight of the paeon's role in establishing and magnifying the themes that dominate the tragedy. Ion's monody is a paeon that introduces Ion's fictional identity and, perhaps even more troubling, it openly questions the power and potential of Apolline song. The issue of identity remains squarely in the audience's mind throughout the tragedy, and though the uncomfortable critique of Apolline song passes momentarily from view, it is reintroduced with gusto by Creousa when she weaves the plot's many strands into an anti-paeon that is the tragedy's "emotional climax."<sup>170</sup> Here, she mimics Ion by using Apolline music to both demonstrate the paeon's potential in propagating an "Ionian" identity—she herself does so—but also the risk that this identity may be fictional. Apolline music continues to acquire dimensions that are deeply troubling for a play that purports to completely fuse Athenian and Ionian identities. By the end of Creousa's monody, Apolline song is expressly associated with colonial prophecies that are both false and deleterious to the purity of the house of Erechtheus and, by extension, of all Athenians.

Creousa's take on the Apolline paeon also leads directly to a full-blown crisis in the play. Beyond functioning as a condemnation of the god and his music, her monody is also a means to help her "abandon *aidōs*" (*Ion* 861: αἰδοῦς δ' ἀπολειφθῶ) and disclose the truth of Apollo's rape

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<sup>170</sup> G.M.A. Grube, *The Drama of Euripides* (London, 1941), p. 269.

and her lost child. In this sense, it is a complete success, for she tells the sad tale at length immediately upon finishing her song (*Ion* 923-69). This is problematic for a number of reasons. To begin, her revelation thwarts Apollo's stated (by Hermes, cf. *Ion* 73) intention of covering up his earlier relations with Creousa. Even more troubling is the response this revelation provokes: the *Paidagōgos* declares that Creousa must "punish the god" (*Ion* 972: ἀποτίνου θεόν) and proposes the radical solution of burning down Apollo's temple (*Ion* 974). Creousa and the *Paidagōgos* eventually adopt a more moderate course of action by deciding to poison Ion with a drop of Gorgon's blood before he can come to Athens (*Ion* 985-1038). But even though Apollo's temple is not at risk of conflagration, the god's modest goal of seeing Ion recognized by Creousa and receiving his due (*Ion* 72-74) is in serious danger of coming to naught.

Her murderous plot cannot, of course, be allowed to come into fruition. Ion's death is averted by the intervention of a temple bird who drinks the poison cup in his stead and dies damningly on the spot (*Ion* 1202-10). The bird's intervention naturally recalls Ion's earlier aggression against this future savior,<sup>171</sup> but above all it marks the final turning point in the tragedy. Creousa is sentenced to death (*Ion* 1222-25) and seeks shelter as a suppliant at Apollo's altar (*Ion* 1255-60). Ion arrives to confront her, intent on dragging Creousa from the altar and killing her (*Ion* 1261-1319). And lest we forget that this potentially gross violation of sacred laws

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<sup>171</sup> We may even be meant to understand that the dead bird is the same swan whose song Ion had earlier threatened to strangle: both birds are described via uncommon compound adjectives as having reddish feet or legs (*Ion* 162-63: φοινικοφαῖ/πόδα; *Ion* 1207-08: φοινικοσκελεῖς/χηλας).

is a product of mistaken identity, Creousa and Ion replay the latter's fictional identity, with Creousa accusing him of wishing to "colonize" her house (*Ion* 1295: ἔμελλες οἰκεῖν τᾶμ').

### *Athena and the problematic solution to the tragic crisis*

It is at this point that the Priestess of Delphi arrives to put an end to the quarrel. Ion greets the priestess as his "dear mother, even though you did not give birth to me," (*Ion* 1324: χαῖρ', ὦ φίλη μοι μῆτερ, οὐ τεκοῦσά περ). This address serves to keep the questions about Ion's identity front and center, and the priestess' response is equally telling, for she highlights the gap that exists between those who actually are and those who are simply called Ion's parents: "I am called this, at any rate, and the name is not bitter to me" (*Ion* 1325: ἀλλ' οὖν λεγόμεθα γ'· ἡ φάτις δ' οὐ μοι πικρά). Finally, in a move with the potential to banish this confusion once and for all, the priestess produces the basket and belongings with which Ion was first found (*Ion* 1337-39). Creousa recognizes the basket as hers and proves her maternity by identifying, sight unseen, the objects in it. A joyous and lengthy recognition follows (*Ion* 1357 ff.), culminating in Creousa's triumphant proclamation that "the house is established and the land has its rulers: Erechtheus has returned!" (*Ion* 1464-65: δῶμ' ἐστιοῦται, γὰρ δ' ἔχει τυράννουσ,/ἀνηβᾶ δ' Ἐρεχθεύς).

Despite Creousa's joy, the tragic problem is not fully resolved. Ion at first still believes that Xouthos is his natural father (*Ion* 1468-69), and then refuses to believe Creousa's tale of rape at Apollo's hands (*Ion* 1470-1527). He even wonders, and not illogically, why Apollo "gave

[me], his child, to another father, and said I was born a child of Xouthos.”<sup>172</sup> Creousa explains that Xouthos had merely misinterpreted Apollo’s prophecy; that Ion was said to be a gift to but not “born of” Xouthos (*Ion* 1534-36).<sup>173</sup> Ion, however, is not convinced, and he wonders whether the god “prophesies truly or falsely” (*Ion* 1537: ὁ θεὸς ἀληθῆς ἢ μάτην μαντεύεται;). The answer is obvious to the audience who know that Apollo has lied, but Ion’s uncertainty speaks to the tension between his true and false identities that has driven the play forward to this point. Not even Apollo can be a trusted guarantor of Ion’s origins.

In order to resolve his uncertainty, Ion proposes entering the temple and asking Apollo himself (*Ion* 1546-48). The possibility that Apollo will have the final word on the matter of Ion’s birth is tantalizing. But Athena arrives at this very moment and precludes any chance that we may see—or at least hear from—the god who has “driven” the plot to such confusing extremes. Acting on Apollo’s behalf (*Ion* 1556: σπεύσασ’ Ἀπόλλωνος πάρα), Athena confirms Ion’s Apolline paternity. As elucidated above (see p. 191), she takes great pains to outline the importance of this genealogical revelation both in Athens, where Ion will maintain the continuity of Erechtheus’ autochthonous line, and throughout the Greek world, where his descendants will “give strength to [her] land” (cf. *Ion* 1573-94). All things considered, Athena assures us, Apollo “has done everything well” (*Ion* 1595: καλῶς δ’ Ἀπόλλων πάντ’ ἔπραξε); in

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<sup>172</sup> *Ion* 1532-33: πῶς οὖν τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδ’ ἔδωκ’ ἄλλω πατρὶ/Ἰούθου τέ φησι παῖδά μ’ ἐκπεφυκέναι;

<sup>173</sup> One may wonder, as does Owen, ed., 1939, p. 176, just how Creousa knows this, since the exact words of Apollo’s prophecy have not been spoken in the play, nor was she present when Xouthos received the oracle.

her conception at least, Apollo has successfully and flawlessly carried out the promised fusion of Ionian and autochthonous ideologies.

The general levity of Athena's tone notwithstanding, her arrival and analysis by no means resolve all the play's difficulties. To begin, Athena's appearance as Apollo's "emissary,"<sup>174</sup> in a tragedy that is set in Delphi and which purports to present Ion as Apollo's natural son, is puzzling. While it's true that Athena's presence is in some ways "natural" for a play that concerns Athens as much as Delphi,<sup>175</sup> Apollo's absence, especially at this crucial juncture, only increases our doubts regarding the god's ability to control the situation.<sup>176</sup> The excuse Athena provides for his absence does not help his cause. According to her, Apollo does not wish "that blame for what happened earlier come to the fore" (*Ion* 1558: μή τῶν πάροιθε μέμψις ἐς μέσον μόλη). While we cannot necessarily take this to mean that Apollo is ashamed at his prior actions,<sup>177</sup> his reluctance to present himself certainly reminds the audience of the criticism, exemplified by Creousa's monody, that Apollo has faced throughout the play, and it further undermines the imperfect solution for which he ultimately settles.

More problematic, however, is the way Athena suggests that Ion and Creousa deal with Xouthos and the false prophecy Apollo had earlier offered (*Ion* 1601-03):

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<sup>174</sup> As Zacharia, 2003, pp. 99, 141, calls her.

<sup>175</sup> Farrington, 1991, p. 125. For other defenses of Athena's substitution of Apollo, cf. Wasserman, 1940, pp. 602-03; Burnett, 1962, p. 94; Swift, 2008, p. 97.

<sup>176</sup> A point made by Vasiliki Giannopoulou, "Divine Agency and 'Tyche' in Euripides' *Ion*: Ambiguity and Shifting Perspectives," *Illinois Classical Studies* 24/25 (1999/2000): p. 263.

<sup>177</sup> As Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Euripides: Ion* (Berlin, 1926), p. 13, suggests.

νῦν οὖν σιώπα, παῖς ὄδ' ὡς πέφυκε σός,  
ἴν' ἢ δόκησις Ξοῦθον ἠδέως ἔχη,  
σύ τ' αὖ τὰ σαυτῆς ἀγάθ' ἔχουσ' ἴης, γύναι.

Now then, do not reveal that this child is yours,  
so that Xouthos may delight in his delusion,  
and you, woman, may move on with your own  
blessings.

In a sense, Athena allows Apollo to achieve his desire to keep his relationship with Creousa secret. But there are steep costs associated with this outcome. This deceit is essentially a mirror-image of Xouthos' attempt to infiltrate his own son into the house of Erechtheus—a deceptive act for which Creousa had harshly condemned Apollo. In fact, it may be even more serious, for it will rely on Xouthos' false belief that Ion is his son; on the “uncertainty of paternity”<sup>178</sup> to which all men are subject, an issue of some concern in ancient Athens.<sup>179</sup> At the same time, it means that Ion will continue to possess two different—and mutually exclusive—identities: his “true” identity as the son of Apollo and Creousa, and his “false” identity as the son of Xouthos and an unknown woman.

Most disturbingly, however, this “division” between appearance and reality “exposes the factitious nature of Athens' civic mythologizing...[and] reveals the truth that the city's mythologized unity is a convenient fiction for the sake of some ulterior purpose.”<sup>180</sup> Athens creates for itself a myth that, as Athena emphasizes, has great authority both in the city and within the sphere of external (colonial) politics. But this myth is based on false premises: Ion can only return to Athens if Xouthos accepts that he is his true son, and we must imagine that this

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<sup>178</sup> Saxonhouse, 1986 p. 272.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Lysias 1.33.

<sup>180</sup> Segal, 1999, p. 68.

deception can only function if the Athenian *polis* of the tragedy remains ignorant of Ion's true origins. As such, Ion will have to assume a third and final fictional identity, and Creousa will perform what is essentially a mirror-image of the Apolline "colonization" that she had so furiously decried. The only difference is this time it is Xouthos who will see his home "settled" by a child who is not his own. Such an accumulation of false origin-myths, all of which are propagated by Apollo, can hardly be a source of comfort for those who understood the role these myths played in the creation of Athenian and Ionian identities.

At the same time, it is certainly no coincidence that the tragedy's real "dupe" is also its only non-Athenian. It is also telling that the autochthonous Athenians we see on-stage are more than happy to help propagate a false notion of Ion's origins and identity simply to further their own and their city's interests. These facts must be taken into consideration when it comes to the "conciliatory aspects"<sup>181</sup> of the *Ion*'s conclusion. Presuming that the tragedy was produced at the City Dionysia, there would certainly have been Ionian Greeks in the audience,<sup>182</sup> some of them even present as official delegates bearing the allies' annual tribute to Athens.<sup>183</sup> We should probably not press too far the similarities between Xouthos, whose acceptance in Athens, such as it may be, derived solely from his ability to provide military assistance (cf. *Ion* 59-61; 294-98),

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<sup>181</sup> Zacharia, 2003, p. 55.

<sup>182</sup> Cf. *Ar. Ach.* 501-03, and *Σ Ar. Ach.* 503. The same point is made by Walsh, 1978, p. 310, following Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford, 1972), p. 290.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. *Isoc.* 8.82; *Σ Ar. Ach.* 504; A.E. Raubitschek, "Two Notes on Isocrates," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 72 (1941): pp. 356-62; Simon Goldhill, "The Great Dionysia and Civic Ideology," in *Nothing to Do with Dionysus? Athenian Drama in Its Social Context*, eds. John J. Winkler and Froma I. Zeitlin (Princeton, 1990a), pp. 101-04.

and the allies present at the City Dionysia. But it is reasonable to assume that the ideological fusion presented in the *Ion* would be less compelling to Ionians in the audience if the only non-Athenian character, one with whom they might easily identify, is the victim of such a serious deception at the hands of his Athenian relations. In short, the tragic resolution, based on the deception of Xouthos, does not seem to hold much appeal for the non-Athenians in the audience; if Euripides is attempting to create some sort of “conciliation”<sup>184</sup> with them, his approach does not seem ideal.

We need not imagine that “the audience feels sufficient sympathy with [Xouthos]”<sup>185</sup> to see that his deception casts a pall over the play’s outcome. Even without this sympathy, much of the audience should have been able to recognize that this deception is the culmination of the persistent problems with Ion’s many and shifting identities, for these problems are exhaustively portrayed throughout the tragedy. Indeed, each of Ion’s three identities threatens to cause a tragic crisis: in the first case, Ion’s existence as a temple slave nearly causes him to defile the sanctuary with the murder of Apollo’s swan; in the second, the general belief in the prophecy which “gave” Ion to Xouthos almost results in the grotesque pollution of both Delphi and the house of Erechtheus, first by filicide and then by matricide; finally, the crisis that would presumably result from the broad disclosure that Ion is the son of Apollo is averted by maintaining his true identity a secret. But beyond the fact that the outcome relies on Xouthos

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<sup>184</sup> As Zacharia, 2003, pp. 54-55, suggests.

<sup>185</sup> Swift, 2008, p. 97.

raising his wife's child under the illusion that it is his own, this solution sustains and exemplifies the tension inherent in Ion's competing identities: at no point is the shadow of fiction banished.

## 5. *Conclusions*

At this point we must return to a more general consideration of the tragedy's paeans. Despite Hermes' description of a seemingly straightforward fusion of Ionian and Athenian identities in the prologue, the play focuses on the tensions that must be overcome, and which ultimately are not, for any such resolution to take place. These tensions are first introduced and ultimately encapsulated by the tragic paeans. Chief among these are the questions that arise concerning mythical identities and origins. These are artfully presented in the play's opening paean, in which Ion uses his poetic voice to stress his unknown parentage and to claim for himself an identity that is, as the audience well knows, an Apolline fiction. The questions surrounding Ion's identity only increase with his acquisition of a new identity—another Apolline fiction—in the episode following his paean. And the problems with these fictions are only fully realized when Creousa provides her own take on the Apolline paean. Here, she not only reiterates Ion's fictional identity: she also expresses the consequences the arrival of such an "Ionian" could have on the city of Athens, and above all emphasizes the role of Apollo's paean in creating this difficult situation. Especially troubling is the fact that her song works in perfect

disharmony with the theoretical goal of the tragedy, for Creousa's paeon does nothing to promote Athenian/Ionian solidarity; on the contrary, it threatens to destroy it.

The fact that the paeon is the vehicle chosen to express these problems, to emphasize that mythical identities, even those approved by Apollo, may be false, and to drive a wedge between the autochthonous Athenians and the progenitor of the Ionians, is neither arbitrary nor insignificant. It can hardly be a coincidence that Euripides takes paeans, the very genre that was used to celebrate group identities and promote communal solidarity, and uses them to instead reveal how artificial these identities may be, and how easily rifts may appear within even the most homogeneous communities. By using paeans in this most unorthodox way, Euripides challenges not only the stability and veracity of mythical origins, but also the process by which they are disseminated and by which popular identities are established.

It is in this light that we should see the play's critique of Apolline music. It is not enough for Euripides to merely use the paeon in a way that appears, on close inspection, to be antithetical to both the traditional use of the song and to the stated goals of the tragedy. The point is powerful but subtle, liable to be overlooked. The *Ion* also emphasizes the radical nature of its paeans by casting doubt on the notion that Apolline song is used to present mythical narratives that are beneficial or, above all, reliable. The critiques of Apolline music, delivered paeanically by both Ion and Creousa, draw our attention to the anomalous aspects of the songs these two characters sing. As such, the tragedy highlights the problems and difficulties that may arise when paeans are used to generate or propagate mythical identities, whether it be in Delphi

or in Athens. Once again, we see Euripides exploiting a form of choral lyric to both focalize the political issues of a tragedy, but also to challenge the use of this genre in the classical *polis*.

In the following chapter, we will look again to the *Iphigenia at Aulis* and the echoes it contains of a specific poetic text—Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. This return will allow us to see how Euripidean tragedy was able to accommodate multiple poetic forms at once, and to consistently do so in conjunction with the exploration of different social and political questions. As one of the last plays of Euripides' career, it is fitting that studies of the *IA* should both open and close this dissertation, for in its excavation of multiple texts it represents one of the final and most highly developed intersections of poetics and politics in Euripidean tragedy.

## Chapter Four

### Duplicity at Aulis:

# Euripides, Aeschylus, and the Gendering of Deceptive Speech

In chapter one, I discussed Euripides' use of the *Iliad* in his *Iphigenia at Aulis*. The *Iliad*, however, is not the only work with which Euripides consciously engages in the *IA*, for this tragedy also responds in many ways to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*.<sup>1</sup> The connection between the two plays is natural and, one could say, almost inevitable. To begin, the central question of the *IA*—the sacrifice of Iphigenia—is one that had been addressed by Aeschylus in his earlier play. In the *Agamemnon*, Iphigenia's death is the event that precipitates the play's dramatic action. It is described in the parodos by the chorus (A. Ag. 160-247), and it is invoked as the primary reason for Clytemnestra's murder of her husband (A. Ag. 1412-18, 1432, but cf. also 154-55).<sup>2</sup> In

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<sup>1</sup> This is by no means the only play in which Euripides reworks the *Agamemnon*. Richard Garner, *From Homer to Tragedy: The Art of Allusion in Greek Poetry* (London, 1990), p. 165, notes that the *Agamemnon* is "the most frequent source of imitation" in several of Euripides' plays. On top of the *IA*, Garner also points to the *Trojan Women*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and *Helen*.

<sup>2</sup> Though Iphigenia's sacrifice is not given as the motive for the murder of Agamemnon in Homer (cf. *Odyssey* 1.35-40; 3.262-72; 11.405 ff.), by the end of the fifth century BCE nearly every account of the affair stresses the relationship between Agamemnon's death and Iphigenia's sacrifice. Besides Aeschylus, cf. Pindar, *P.* 11.17-27, (Pindar wonders

the *IA*, Euripides unpacks the parodos of the *Agamemnon*, turning 100 lines into 1600 and breathing life into Agamemnon's indecision and Iphigenia's death, while also providing us with a surprising glimpse of Agamemnon's relationship with Clytemnestra before the sacrifice. Much like it does to the *Iliad*, the *IA* functions as a narrative prequel to Aeschylus' play.

In this chapter, I examine the relationship between the two tragedies and argue that a central aspect of Euripides' engagement with Aeschylus has heretofore been missed by scholars. The *IA*, we shall see, does not simply offer an earlier episode in the relationship between Aeschylus' characters: the characters themselves are radically different from those in the *Agamemnon*, and these differences have consequences that extend beyond the dramatic plot and relate to the world of the audience. In the first section, I discuss Aeschylus' portrayal of Clytemnestra, and argue that with her, he creates a paradigm for deceptive and dangerous women. In the second section, I show that Euripides rejects that paradigm by depicting Clytemnestra as a character who eschews deception in all circumstances, and that he does so while making explicit references to Aeschylus' version of the queen. In the third and longest section, I discuss Euripides' depiction of Agamemnon, and assert that he is portrayed as the consummate deceiver Clytemnestra had been in Aeschylus' play. Finally, in the fourth section I show that by making Agamemnon the deceiver, Euripides brings to the foreground an anxiety that is evident in the works of many of his contemporaries: that deceptive speech was now

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whether it was the sacrifice of Iphigenia or Clytemnestra's adulterous ways that led the queen to commit murder); Sophocles, *Electra*, 534-51; and Euripides' *Electra*, 1011-31.

characteristic of the male, political elite. In summary, I demonstrate that the *IA*'s intertextual relationship with the *Agamemnon* is another case in which Euripides uses a canonical text as a backdrop against which to illuminate a central political theme of the tragedy. In doing so, he competes with and questions Aeschylus' version of this peculiar husband-wife relationship, and frames his tragedy as one that deals directly with an issue that pertained more specifically to the world of his audience.

### ***1. The Agamemnon as Subtext: Evidence and Interpretations***

If Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* is an inevitable and ever-present subtext for Euripides' *IA*, Euripides seems to go out of his way to call his audience's attention to this fact. The *IA* is rife with dramatic elements that recall Aeschylus' tragedy. That Clytemnestra shares the stage with Agamemnon throughout the play is significant in and of itself, for one can hardly help but be reminded of their famous encounter in Aeschylus' play. And following Aeschylus, Euripides makes Argos (rather than the traditional Mycenae) the home of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra,<sup>3</sup> a detail Euripides dwells on to the extent that he mentions Argos more times in the *IA* alone (eleven) than Aeschylus does in the entire *Oresteia* (six). With Clytemnestra's

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Eisner, "Euripides' Use of Myth," *Arethusa* 12 (1979): p. 161. Sophocles, conversely, moves his *Electra* back to Mycenae.

entrance on chariot, he “evoke[s] the ominous arrivals for a sacrificial death of Agamemnon and Cassandra at Argos in Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*.”<sup>4</sup> Before Clytemnestra speaks her first lines, we are already reminded of the royal couple’s Aeschylean showdown.

Specific verbal allusions add to the sense that Euripides’ play is, at its most basic level, a response to Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*. One such example occurs when Euripides’ Agamemnon refers to “the yoke of necessity” (*IA* 443), paraphrasing the words of Aeschylus’ Agamemnon (*Ag.* 218) as he/they (i.e. both Agamemnons) face the harsh reality that Iphigenia must be sacrificed.<sup>5</sup> Another is Agamemnon’s first form of address to Clytemnestra, which in both plays is “offspring of Leda” (*IA* 686 and 1106; *A. Ag.* 914: Λήδας γένεθλον).<sup>6</sup> This is a moniker that appears nowhere else in extant Greek literature,<sup>7</sup> and the use of the matronymic is on the whole very rare in Euripides,<sup>8</sup> so this reclamation of the Aeschylean appellation is significant. Still, perhaps no allusion is more obvious than Clytemnestra threatening to kill Agamemnon upon his return (*IA* 1180-82), the very act she accomplishes in Aeschylus’ play. These allusions make

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<sup>4</sup> Helene Foley, *Ritual Irony: Poetry and Sacrifice in Euripides* (Ithaca, 1985), pp. 70-71; Rachel Aélión, *Euripide Héritier d’Eschyle* vol. 1 (Paris, 1983), p. 106, makes the same connection. It must be noted that Diggle, 1994, doubts the authenticity of the entrance (cf. *ad loc.*), though it is by no means certain that her entrance by chariot is a later invention simply because the text itself is interpolated.

<sup>5</sup> Garner, 1990, p. 174; Christina Elliot Sorum, “Myth, Choice, and Meaning in Euripides’ *Iphigenia at Aulis*,” *The American Journal of Philology* 113 (1992): p. 537. (Translation is Sorum’s.)

<sup>6</sup> Garner, 1990, p. 174.

<sup>7</sup> While it is true that the words Λήδας γένεθλον fit quite conveniently into the first two and a half feet of iambic trimeter, and that this no doubt encouraged the two poets to use it, it nonetheless seems significant that it appears only in these two works, as it is yet another examples of Euripides picking up on the language and themes of Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*.

<sup>8</sup> Walter Stockert, *Euripides: Iphigenie in Aulis* vol. 2 (Vienna, 1992), p. 211.

it very likely that an audience familiar with the *Agamemnon*, as Euripides' was, would certainly have recognized that the references to Aeschylus' play.<sup>9</sup>

Scholars have also long observed Euripides' reclamation of Aeschylean themes and language, but they have almost universally seen the *Agamemnon's* influence on the *IA* as unilateral and overwhelming. Foley, for example, argues that "[r]egardless of how the audience evaluates the motives of the characters...no one can in the end change the myth."<sup>10</sup> For Gamel, tradition itself "has worked to close down choices and alternatives in political, social, and artistic terms."<sup>11</sup> And according to Luschnig, *Agamemnon* is "caught in a traditional role from which there is no escape," for there is no way out of "the suffocating legend."<sup>12</sup> Each of these scholars sees the Aeschylean tradition as an uncompromising force that acts upon the *IA*, both in terms of plot and character.

An even more direct assessment is provided by Sorum, who follows the consensus by arguing that the inflexibility of tradition is most visible in Clytemnestra's attempt to alter it:

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<sup>9</sup> On the familiarity of Euripides' audience with the *Agamemnon*, see above in the Introduction, pp. 16-24.

<sup>10</sup> Foley, 1985, p. 97

<sup>11</sup> Mary-Kay Gamel, "Introduction: *Iphigenia at Aulis*," in *Women on the Edge: Four Plays by Euripides*, eds. Ruby Blondell, Gamel, Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, and Bella Zweig, (New York, 1999), p. 320.

<sup>12</sup> C.A.E. Luschnig, *Tragic Aporia: A Study of Euripides' Iphigenia at Aulis* (Melbourne, 1988), pp. 77-78. It should be noted that Luschnig does contend that Iphigenia "defies" the literary tradition in order to take control of her own fate: "she sees the portrait of herself as...the Iphigenia of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, and rejects that piteous spectacle for a heroic portrait of martyrdom" (p. 5). But this is a point of some contention, insofar as other scholars are skeptical that Euripides has created a truly "heroic" version of Iphigenia. Cf. D.J. Conacher, *Euripidean Drama: Myth, Theme and Structure* (Toronto, 1967), pp. 261-64, who agrees that Iphigenia is "heroic," but he calls it a generous, almost naïve, heroism (pp. 263-64); Herbert Siegel, "Self-Delusion and the 'Volte-Face' of Iphigenia in Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*," *Hermes* 108 (1980): pp. 300-21, who concludes that "Iphigenia is to be seen as a dupe, who has been exploited by a brutal force and who is an innocent victim of political expediency and necessity" (p. 316); and Dana L. Burgess, "Lies and Convictions at Aulis," *Hermes* 132 (2004): pp. 37-55.

In the fourth episode, Clytemnestra reveals a mythological past in which she has been previously married and Agamemnon had murdered her first husband and child (1146-56). More clearly here than anywhere else—at the very moment Clytemnestra is trying most desperately to persuade her husband to change his mind—the inability of the dramatic fiction to escape from the tradition and, consequently, from its future is manifest.<sup>13</sup>

Sorum's analysis is at once consistent with the critical consensus and representative of its shortcomings: while it is true that Clytemnestra is incapable of changing the outcome that the dramatic tradition demands, her failure to persuade Agamemnon is in and of itself a radical departure from the *Agamemnon*. Indeed, it is her very ability to persuade her husband through the use of deceptive speech that is perhaps her most marked quality in Aeschylus' play. While Euripides may be constrained by tradition on the level of plot, he faces no such constraints when it comes to the characterization of his main players. Moreover, insofar as Clytemnestra's portrayal in the *Agamemnon* is emblematic of the play's deep concern with the danger that feminine deceit represents to society, Euripides' new vision for her character is also a challenge to one of the main themes of Aeschylus' tragedy. By looking closely at the *IA*'s portrayal of Clytemnestra and—even more importantly—Agamemnon, we may also understand just how radically Euripides engages with the Aeschylean tradition.

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<sup>13</sup> Sorum, 1992, p. 538.

## 2. Aeschylus' Clytemnestra: The Epitome of the Deceptive Woman

For Aeschylus, Clytemnestra is a consummately persuasive woman, one who gains her ends primarily through deceit and guile. Aeschylus draws upon and refines a literary motif of women who use trickery to achieve their ends—ends that were generally ruinous for men.<sup>14</sup> A classic example of female deceitfulness is Pandora, the prototypical woman. Hesiod describes her as imbued by Hermes with “lies and wily words and a thievish heart” (Hes. *Op.* 78: ψεύδεά θ’ αἰμυλίου τε λόγους καὶ ἐπίκλοπον ἦθος). She is “a bane unto men” (Hes. *Op.* 82: πῆμ’ ἀνδράσιν ἀλφηστῆσιν) and an “irresistibly baited trap” (Hes. *Op.* 83: αἰπὺν δόλον ἀμήχανον; see also *Theog.* 589). More generally, and clearly as a result of Pandora’s legacy, Hesiod warns us that no woman can be trusted (*Op.* 373-75):

μηδὲ γυνή σε νόον πυγαστόλος ἐξαπατάτω  
αἰμύλα κωτίλλουσα, τεῖν διφῶσα καλήν.  
ὄς δὲ γυναικὶ πέποιθε, πέποιθ’ ὅ γε φηλήτησιν.

Let no temptress woman, eager for your land,  
deceive your mind by prattling on with wily words.  
Whoever trusts a woman trusts thieves.

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<sup>14</sup> Sue Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 19: “a woman employs trickery and deception in order to dispose of others; and the others disposed of are generally related to her by blood or by marriage.” Cf. also John Gould, “Law, Custom and Myth: Aspects of the Social Position of Women in Classical Athens,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 100 (1980): pp. 38-59. Gould argues that “[i]t emerges from an examination of Greek myth that male attitudes to women, and to themselves in relation to women, are marked by tension, anxiety, and fear. Women are not part of, do not easily belong in, the male ordered world...and they threaten continually to overturn its stability or subvert its continuity...” (p. 57).

Through their Pandoran origin, Hesiod directly links women and *dolos* (trickery, treachery, cunning), and posits that women represent a threat to men precisely because of their ability to deceive.

Before and after Hesiod, the motif of the “deceptive woman” is a common, though not universal, theme in Greek poetry. Penelope, for example, is able to remain a faithful wife only by a clever *dolos*,<sup>15</sup> but in Homer’s epic the true master of guile is a man: Odysseus. Semonides, who seemingly runs through the entire catalogue of negative female traits, grumbles only vaguely about a certain woman who “knows all ways and means.”<sup>16</sup> And Pindar, though he mentions Clytemnestra’s *dolos* (*Pyth.* 11.18), seems far more troubled by the ramifications of Odysseus’ trickery in the contest for Achilles’ arms (*Nem.* 8.20-32).

In contrast to Hesiod’s relatively vague warnings about female treachery, and to Semonides’ curious reticence on the subject, Aeschylus makes Clytemnestra a paradigm of deception. This is at once an actualization of Hesiod’s condemnation of women, and a departure from the mythical tradition surrounding the murder of Agamemnon. In part this is due to the time and space Aeschylus devotes to the story of Agamemnon’s death,<sup>17</sup> but it is mainly because he depicts Clytemnestra as the sole architect of his murder. Homer notes

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<sup>15</sup> Penelope tricks her suitors into waiting indefinitely for her hand by promising to marry one of them only when she had finished making a funerary garment for Laertes (Odysseus’ father). Unbeknownst to the suitors, for three years she spent her nights unraveling in her room each day’s work (cf. *Odyssey*, 2.93-106; 19.137-51; 24.121-41). Penelope’s act is called a *dolos* several times in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 2.93, 106; 19.137; 24.128, 141).

<sup>16</sup> Sem. 7.78: δήνεα δὲ πάντα καὶ τρόπους ἐπίσταται.

<sup>17</sup> Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* is nearly 1700 lines, while Homer only devotes thirty to Agamemnon’s narration of his own death (*Od.* 11.405-34).

Clytemnestra's treachery but offers no description of it,<sup>18</sup> and attributes to Aegisthus (Clytemnestra's lover) the lead role in both the plotting and the killing.<sup>19</sup> For Homer, Clytemnestra's fault lies much more in her susceptibility to Aegisthus' seduction than in her own desire for power.<sup>20</sup> Aeschylus, on the other hand, depicts every detail of Clytemnestra's *dolos* while (literally) relegating Aegisthus to the back rooms. This is done within a context of explicit antagonism between male and female.<sup>21</sup> As Zeitlin argued some time ago, Clytemnestra's attempt to seize power in the *Agamemnon* symbolizes the mythical "Rule of Women," wherein male is to be subjugated to the female.<sup>22</sup> For Aeschylus, Clytemnestra does not just tarnish the reputation of her gender: she epitomizes the extreme danger that women represent to men, a danger that must be suppressed.

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<sup>18</sup> We know only that she is treacherous. Agamemnon calls her δολόμητις (*Od.* 11.422) and Odysseus refers to her actions as a *dolos* when he hears this sad tale (*Od.* 11.439), but we hear nothing more of this.

<sup>19</sup> cf. *Od.* 3.303: ταῦτ' Αἴγισθος ἐμήσατο οἴκοθι λυγρὰ. ("Aegisthus plotted these baneful acts."); *Od.* 11.409-10: ἀλλὰ μοι Αἴγισθος τεύξας θάνατόν τε μόρον τε/ἔκτα σὺν οὐλομένη ἀλόχῳ ("Aegisthus fashioned death and doom for me/and killed me with my cursed wife"). Furthermore, Aegisthus is mentioned by name 20 times in the *Odyssey*, as compared to only 4 mentions of Clytemnestra. Marilyn B. Arthur, "Early Greece: The Origins of the Western Attitude Toward Women," *Arethusa* 6 (1973): p. 49, speaks of a "Homeric exoneration of Clytemnestra"; Rachel M.E. Wolfe, "Woman, Tyrant, Mother, Murderess: An Exploration of the Mythic Character of Clytemnestra in All Her Forms," *Women's Studies* 38 (2009): p. 695, also notes that Aegisthus' name comes up far more often in Homer than Clytemnestra's.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. John Peradotto, "Prophecy and Persons: Reading Character in the *Odyssey*," *Arethusa* 35 (2002): pp. 3-15; S. Douglas Olson, "The Stories of Agamemnon in Homer's *Odyssey*," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 120 (1990): pp. 57-71; Wolfe, 2009.

<sup>21</sup> On this, see Simon Goldhill, *Aeschylus: The Oresteia* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 37-40. Goldhill provides a useful catalogue of instances in the *Agamemnon* in which the male/female polarity is explicitly stressed. For a thorough analysis of the "economics" of this gendered conflict in the *Oresteia*, cf. Victoria Wohl, *Intimate Commerce: Exchange, Gender, and Subjectivity in Greek Tragedy* (Austin, 1998), pp. 59-117.

<sup>22</sup> From I Zeitlin, "The Dynamics of Misogyny: Myth and Mythmaking in the *Oresteia*," *Arethusa* 11 (1978): pp. 149-84.

Clytemnestra is a threat precisely because of her ability to manipulate and deceive the men around her, and Aeschylus emphasizes that her capacity for *dolos* is a specifically feminine trait. When the exiled Aegisthus is finally allowed to come on stage, he responds to the deluge of comments on his cowardice by noting that it was only natural that Clytemnestra be in charge of the *dolos*: τὸ γὰρ δολῶσαι πρὸς γυναικὸς ἦν σαφῶς (Ag. 1636: “setting the trap<sup>23</sup> was clearly the woman’s job”). The comment mirrors other references in the play to Clytemnestra (and her actions) as *dolios*<sup>24</sup>—“treacherous”—and confirms that not only is Clytemnestra dangerous, but that she is dangerous in a specifically feminine way.

The threat represented by Clytemnestra’s ability to deceive is emphasized throughout the play by both her speech and actions. As Goldhill notes, “[l]anguage, when Clytemnestra uses it, becomes frightening. The uncertainty she introduces is not merely verbal, but works also towards the death of her husband, the king—the overthrow of social order.”<sup>25</sup> Indeed, it is not difficult to find evidence for this, as Clytemnestra herself acknowledges as much (Ag. 1372-76):

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<sup>23</sup> τὸ δολῶσαι, from *dolos*.

<sup>24</sup> Clytemnestra is called treacherous (δολία) in the parados (Ag. 155); Agamemnon is said to die by a treacherous fate (Ag. 1495, 1519: δολίωι μόρωι); Cassandra foresees that Agamemnon will die in a treacherous basin (Ag. 1129: δολοφόνου λέβητος); Clytemnestra herself obliquely refers to her treachery when she says that falsely claims that her excuse for Orestes’ absence is credible because it “holds no *dolos*” (Ag. 886: οὐ δόλον φέρει).

<sup>25</sup> Simon Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 14. Numerous other scholars have also treated the issue of Clytemnestra’s tricky speech: Ernst Neustadt, “Wort und Geschehen in Aischylos *Agamemnon*,” *Hermes* 64 (1929): pp. 243-65; Aya Betensky, “Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*: The Power of Clytemnestra,” *Ramus* 7 (1978): pp. 11-25; Roberta Sevieri, “Linguaggio consapevole e coscienza individuale di Clitennestra nell’*Agamemnone* di Eschilo,” *Dioniso* 61 (1991): pp. 13-31; Laura McClure, “Clytemnestra’s Binding Spell (Ag. 958-74),” *CJ* 92 (1997a): pp. 123-40; McClure, “*Logos Gunaikos*: Speech, Gender and Spectatorship in the *Oresteia*,” *Helios* 24 (1997b): pp. 112-35; Helene Foley, *Female Acts in Greek Tragedy* (Princeton 2001), pp. 207-34.

πολλῶν πάροιθεν καιριῶς εἰρημένων  
τάναντί' εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἐπαισχυνθήσομαι.  
πῶς γάρ τις ἐχθροῖς ἐχθρὰ πορσύνων, φίλοις  
δοκοῦσιν εἶναι, πημονῆς ἀρκύστατ' ἂν  
φράξειεν, ὕψος κρείσσον ἐκπηδήματος

Having said, earlier, many things opportune  
I will not now be ashamed to say the opposite.  
How else could one, tending evil for enemies  
seeming as friends, secure dense nets  
of ruin at a height too great to be overleapt.

Clytemnestra makes two crucial admissions: that she has engaged in deceptive speech throughout the first three quarters of the play; and that she has done so with the specific aim of betraying and destroying her (male) adversary.

This confession merely serves to highlight what has been evident from the beginning of the play. In her very first speech, Clytemnestra celebrates the Greek success in Troy (Ag. 264-67), the first of many deceptive statements. Her joy at Agamemnon's victory may be real, but only because it will afford her an opportunity to kill him on his return—a fact that she conveniently omits. Her next great speech, delivered to the chorus and Agamemnon's messenger, is a veritable tour de force in deceit. It begins with a reiteration of her joy and culminates in this devious message for Agamemnon (Ag. 604-10):

ταῦτ' ἀπάγγελον πόσει·  
ἦκειν ὅπως τάχιστ' ἐράσμιον πόλει· 605  
γυναῖκα πιστὴν δ' ἐν δόμοις εὖροι μολῶν  
οἴαν περ οὖν ἔλειπε, δωμάτων κύνα  
ἐσθλὴν ἐκείνω, πολεμίαν τοῖς δύσφροσιν,  
καὶ τᾶλλ' ὁμοίαν πάντα, σημαντήριον  
οὐδὲν διαφθείρασαν ἐν μήκει χρόνου. 610

Tell my husband this:  
to come with all haste to his city, beloved,  
where he might find at home his faithful wife  
just as he left her, a noble watchdog  
of his home, an enemy to his foes,  
unchanged in every way, her seal  
unbroken by this length of time.

None of Clytemnestra's words are true in any real sense. It is possible, perhaps even likely, that she is "just as he left her," but if so this merely underscores the fact that she is able to lie without lying, as she had in describing her "joy." Certainly she has not been faithful—her seal has indeed been broken—and she has acted more like a welcoming committee for his enemies than

a watchdog against them. What this message is truly meant to do, as Clytemnestra herself later admits, is set an irresistible trap for Agamemnon. Such deception is typical of Clytemnestra's speech throughout the first half of the play.<sup>26</sup>

Clytemnestra's actions are no less tricky than her words, and they support the notion that Aeschylus is portraying a specifically feminine type of deceit. Once Agamemnon arrives, evidently persuaded by the duplicitous message Clytemnestra had sent him, a metaphorical contest takes place at the palace gates. Clytemnestra must convince her husband to walk upon colorful garments against his objections, and it is implicit that her victory in this *agōn* represents his death. Once inside, she will entangle him in another garment as he exits his bath,<sup>27</sup> thus ensuring that he can "neither flee nor ward off his fate"<sup>28</sup> as she kills him. The use of woven garments in her plot is significant. "The female art of weaving provided a natural metaphor for the art of deception,"<sup>29</sup> and it had been exploited by other mythical women in order to overcome male adversaries.<sup>30</sup> Aeschylus provides Clytemnestra with a murderous plot that is peculiarly feminine, and this femininity is emphasized repeatedly: Clytemnestra does not

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<sup>26</sup> For further examples of Clytemnestra's ability to convincingly lie, cf. *Ag.* 855-86.

<sup>27</sup> Or perhaps it is the same garment upon which Agamemnon had just trodden. Cf. Oliver Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus: The Dramatic Use of Exits and Entrances in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 314-15.

<sup>28</sup> *Ag.* 1381: ὡς μήτε φεύγειν μήτ' ἀμύνεσθαι μόρον.

<sup>29</sup> I.D. Jenkins, "The Ambiguity of Textiles," *Arethusa* 18 (1985): p. 115.

<sup>30</sup> Most notably Penelope in the *Odyssey* (see above p. 263), but the story of Procne and Philomela is another early example of women weaving deceit. Procne's husband Tereus had raped Philomela and cut out her tongue to ensure her silence. Not to be outdone by her brother-in-law's treachery, Philomela wove a garment depicting the events and sent it to her sister Procne. The two then teamed up to kill Procne's son (who is, of course, also Tereus') and "boiled him down and served him to an unwitting Tereus." Cf. *Ps. Apoll. Bibl.* 3.14.8; Richard Buxton, *Imaginary Greece: The Contexts of Mythology* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 123-24.

mention the weapon she uses to actually *kill* her husband,<sup>31</sup> yet she dwells on her description of this treacherous *peplos*.<sup>32</sup> In total, it is mentioned five times by four different characters,<sup>33</sup> and it is the garment that, in all likelihood, covers Agamemnon's dead body when he is brought out on stage.<sup>34</sup>

Aeschylus thus captures his audience's imagination with descriptions and, in the end, a display of this *peplos*, leaving no doubt as to the feminine nature of Clytemnestra's treachery. In so doing, he creates a paradigm for deceptive and dangerous women. The power and influence of this paradigm is illustrated by the imitations Aeschylus' Clytemnestra would spawn, especially in Greek tragedy. Among others, Euripides' *Medea*, *Phaedra*, and *Hecuba*, and Sophocles' *Deianeira* all use deception in order to bring about the death of a man; all of them are described as committing *doloi*;<sup>35</sup> three of them even use garments as part of their plots (*Deianeira*, *Medea*, and *Hecuba*). All of these can be considered descendants of Aeschylus' Clytemnestra. Outside of Athenian drama, a comparable situation can be found in Herodotus' story of the only woman to rule Egypt, a queen who had avenged her brother's death by

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<sup>31</sup> Ag. 1384-86: Clytemnestra describes "striking" Agamemnon twice, and then a third time, but does not say with what. On the controversy, see Malcolm Davies, "Aeschylus' Clytemnestra: Sword or Axe?" *Classical Quarterly* 37 (1987): pp. 65-75; A.H. Sommerstein, "Again Klytaimnestra's Weapon," *Classical Quarterly* 39 (1989): pp. 296-301; A.J.N.W. Prag, "Clytemnestra's Weapon Once More," *Classical Quarterly* 41 (1991): pp. 242-46.

<sup>32</sup> According to her, it is a "boundless net" (Ag. 1382: ἄπειρον ἀμφίβληστρον) and an "evil wealth of cloth" (Ag. 1383: πλοῦτον εἴματος κακόν).

<sup>33</sup> Respectively Cassandra (twice), Clytemnestra, the chorus, and Aegisthus (Ag. 1115-16 and 1126; 1383; 1492; 1580). The obsession with this device continues in the *Choephoroi*, as both Electra and Orestes cannot resist but mention it (Ch. 494, 999-1000). For a fuller discussion of all these references to the *peplos*, see Richard Seaford, "The Last Bath of Agamemnon," *Classical Quarterly* 34 (1984): pp. 247-54.

<sup>34</sup> Taplin, 1977, p. 325; Seaford, 1984, p. 250.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. S. *Trach.* 850; E. *Med.* 783; E. *Hipp.* 1312; E. *Hec.* 1269.

“killing many Egyptians by *dolos*.”<sup>36</sup> The proliferation of deadly and deceptive women in drama, and the fact that Herodotus singles out a woman as the culprit in his tale of murderous treachery, are a testament to the power of Aeschylus’ Oresteian paradigm in fifth-century literature.

### ***3. Euripides’ Clytemnestra: The Inversion of the Aeschylean Model***

It is against this Aeschylean backdrop that Euripides frames his own version of Clytemnestra. As mentioned above (see pp. 258-260), there are many overt references to the *Agamemnon* in the *IA*. As such, it is reasonable to conclude that much of Euripides’ audience would have Aeschylus’ play in mind as they watched the second half of the *IA*.<sup>37</sup> And those members of the audience who were familiar with the *Agamemnon* would undoubtedly have been able to recall one of the most striking themes of that play: Clytemnestra’s deceptive ways and her astounding perfidy.

In fact, Clytemnestra’s first scene manages to at once evoke her duplicitous past while also forming a strong contrast with it. Her arrival is reminiscent of her husband’s ill-fated

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<sup>36</sup> Hdt. 2.100.2: πολλοὺς Αἰγύπτιοι διαφθεῖραι δόλωι.

<sup>37</sup> Clytemnestra does not enter until close to the halfway point.

entrance in the *Agamemnon*,<sup>38</sup> and in both plays it is the first yet long-anticipated meeting between husband and wife. In Aeschylus' play, this scene is none other than the climactic carpet scene. There, we see Clytemnestra ask Agamemnon a series of trick questions which serve to change the terms of their discussion and persuade him to walk voluntarily to his own death. In the *IA*, she also introduces herself to Agamemnon with a barrage of questions, but these are undeniably plain and transparent: "where is Achilles from?"; "who are his parents?"; "when will the wedding be?"<sup>39</sup> These queries obviously serve not to trick her husband but to learn the details of Iphigenia's wedding and the background of her future son-in-law. In essence, Clytemnestra's first encounter with Agamemnon in the *IA* is the antithesis of the analogous scene in the *Agamemnon*, and it sets up a contrast that will be reinforced throughout the rest of the tragedy.

Soon thereafter, Clytemnestra comes to discover that her husband is secretly planning to sacrifice Iphigenia. This plot is quite similar to Clytemnestra's undisclosed intention to "sacrifice" Agamemnon in the *Agamemnon*, but from this point on the differences between the Aulidan and Aeschylean Clytemnestras become ever more marked. Her discovery of the plot occurs only thanks to an incidental encounter and conversation with Achilles, and it is

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<sup>38</sup> I.e. by chariot. On this allusion, see above p. 259 (and fn 4)

<sup>39</sup> I am paraphrasing here, but this is the gist of the series of questions that Clytemnestra asks Agamemnon in *IA* 695-720.

presence at Aulis that becomes Iphigenia's only hope for survival. The young hero promises to help Clytemnestra save her daughter, and he even has handy a plan of action (*IA* 1011):

πειθόμεν αὐτίς πατέρα βέλτιον φρονεῖν.                      Let us persuade her father to think better.

Achilles uses the first person plural as if to suggest that he and Clytemnestra will work together to convince Agamemnon of his folly, but what he really means is that Clytemnestra should do it herself (*IA* 1015-18):

ικέτευ' ἐκεῖνον πρώτα μὴ κτείνειν τέκνα·  
ἦν δ' ἀντιβαίνῃ, πρὸς ἐμέ σοι πορευτέον.  
τεῖη γὰρ τὸ χροῆζον ἐπίθετ'†<sup>40</sup> οὐ τοῦμὸν χρεῶν  
χωρεῖν· ἔχει γὰρ αὐτὸ τὴν σωτηρίαν.                      Beseech him first not to kill your child;  
if he resists, only then should you come to me.  
If he's persuaded by your desire I shall not  
be needed, for therein lies your salvation.

Achilles is not as eager to help as it first seemed when he boasted of the blood with which his sword would be stained were anyone to take Iphigenia (*IA* 970-72). More important, however, is Achilles' emphasis that Clytemnestra must persuade Agamemnon. Persuasion is, of course, the very same strategy that Clytemnestra employed to entrap her husband in the *Agamemnon*, and Achilles' reliance on her to convince her husband is reminiscent of Aegisthus' willingness to allow her to take care of "setting the trap."<sup>41</sup> The audience is thus reminded both of the *Agamemnon* on a general level, but also of Clytemnestra's rather unique way with words in that tragedy.

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<sup>40</sup> The first half of v. 1017 is marked with cruces by Diggle, but all the variants that have been suggested (e.g. ἦ γὰρ τὸ χροῆζον ἐπίθετ',) present fundamentally the same meaning. Regardless of the accuracy of this line, that this is the correct interpretation is borne out by the action of the play: Clytemnestra attempts to convince Agamemnon without Achilles' help, and only after she (and Iphigenia) fail to do so does Achilles return to the scene.

<sup>41</sup> *Ag.* 1636, on which see above p. 265.

One might imagine that if we were dealing with the same woman who so successfully ensnared Agamemnon, Clytemnestra would have made short work of her husband's resistance in the *IA*. This is not the case in Euripides' tragedy. Clytemnestra's failure to carry out Achilles' plan is the most obvious indication that her persuasive prowess is not what it was in Aeschylus' drama, but there are signs throughout that Euripides' queen no longer traffics in deceit and deception. Above all, her speech is consistently marked by frankness. This becomes rapidly apparent during her attempt to dissuade Agamemnon from sacrificing their daughter. Her first line of attack is to ask after her husband's plans, but unlike her manipulative questions in the carpet scene, this approach can hardly be characterized as cunning (*IA* 1131):

τὴν παῖδα τὴν σὴν τὴν τ' ἐμὴν μέλλεις κτενεῖν;            Do you intend to kill your child and mine?

Subtle this is not, and given her failure to save Iphigenia, it is perhaps not the best route for her to take. But such directness is entirely typical of the way she communicates in the *IA*. Agamemnon responds to this frank question with a weak lie—not his first of the play—which of course only angers Clytemnestra. This anger, however, does not lead to deceit. Instead, as Agamemnon continues to dance around the subject, Clytemnestra's language becomes more transparent rather than more opaque. She bemoans her fate and Iphigenia's (*IA* 1137), and declares bluntly that she already knows everything, that it is no longer worth it for Agamemnon to lie (*IA* 1141-43). All this suggests that Clytemnestra's communication techniques have evolved significantly with respect to her portrayal in the *Agamemnon*.

An even more intriguing indication that Euripides' Clytemnestra is utterly different from Aeschylus' comes at the beginning of her speech intended to dissuade Agamemnon (*IA* 1146-47):<sup>42</sup>

ἄκουε δὴ νυν: ἀνακαλύψω γὰρ λόγους,  
κοῦκέτι παρωδοῖς χρησόμεσθ' αἰνίγμασιν

Hear me now, for I shall unveil my words  
and no longer employ obscure riddles

This statement is important for several reasons: first, Euripides openly emphasizes the fact that his Clytemnestra will employ frankness rather than dishonesty; second, Clytemnestra has heretofore neither veiled her words nor employed obscure riddles, an irony which only heightens the emphasis on her directness; and finally, her words are highly reminiscent of the first lines of iambic trimeter which Cassandra speaks in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (*Ag.* 1178-79, 1183):<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> This monologue runs from *IA* 1146-1208, and its most striking features are: Clytemnestra's mention of a previous marriage of hers which Agamemnon had broken up by killing both her husband and her child from that marriage; and Clytemnestra's threat to kill Agamemnon upon his return (about which more shortly). It should be noted that scholars, on the rare occasions that they have analyzed it in its entirety, have been critical of this speech. Philip Vellacott, *Ironic Drama: A Study of Euripides' Method and Meaning* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 47, condemns Clytemnestra for reminding Agamemnon of "everything that ever made him regret marrying his wife," and for "speak[ing] no word appealing to his pity, to his fatherly love, his decency, his courage"; Susanne Aretz, *Die Opferung der Iphigenia in Aulis: die Rezeption des Mythos in antiken und modernen Dramen* (Stuttgart, 1999), pp. 165-69, offers a similar breakdown of Clytemnestra's use of "accusations and threats" (p. 166) in this speech, which for her are indicative of her selfish nature. But W.D. Smith, "Iphigeneia in Love," in *Arktouros: Hellenic Studies Presented to Bernard M.W. Knox*, eds. Glen W. Bowersock, Walter Burkert, and Michael C.J. Putnam (Berlin, 1979), p. 178, correctly notes that Clytemnestra's first marriage is rhetorically relevant: "[as] a girl, Clytemnestra, was violated, her beloved was killed, she was the object of negotiation among men...Readers, and there are many, who fail to see the relevance of this to Iphigenia's role, mistake the import of Iphigenia's acceptance of the man's decisions about her." More recently, John Gibert, "Clytemnestra's First Marriage: Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*," in *The Soul of Tragedy: Essays on Athenian Drama*, eds. Victoria Pedrick and Steven M. Oberhelman, (Chicago, 2005), p. 230, has provided a brief but astute defense of Clytemnestra's rhetorical approach, noting that it would be useless to "anticipate either the reasoning or the particular emotional angle adopted by Iphigenia whose first *rhexis*...is still to come."

<sup>43</sup> I am greatly indebted to Prof. Sarah Nooter for first bringing this to my attention. Garner, 1990, p. 174, also points out this allusion.

καὶ μὴν ὁ χρησμός οὐκέτ' ἐκ καλυμμάτων  
ἔσται...  
...φρενώσω δ' οὐκέτ' ἐξ αἰνιγμάτων.

No longer shall the oracle come from beneath  
veils...  
...and no longer shall I teach in riddles.<sup>44</sup>

There are two striking similarities between Cassandra's formulation in the *Agamemnon* and Clytemnestra's in the *IA* that suggest Euripides is purposefully drawing an analogy between the two characters: the twin usage of the term αἰνιγμα; and the identical metaphorical use of "unveiling" one's speech in order to be understood (χρησμός ἐκ καλυμμάτων vs. ἀνακαλύψω γὰρ λόγους). Both of these locutions are relatively rare,<sup>45</sup> and in fact, the *Agamemnon* and the *IA* contain the only two extant passages in which they are used together. The combination of αἰνιγμα and unveiled speech is not the only way in which these two passages are similar. Clytemnestra's use of the verb χράω (χρησόμεθα) mirrors Cassandra's χρησμός,<sup>46</sup> and both women insist that they will no longer (οὐκέτι) use such enigmatic, oracular

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<sup>44</sup> I have excluded four lines from this passage because, while they are indeed part and parcel of Cassandra's declaration that she will engage in clear speech, they manage, in their own inimitably Aeschylean oracularity, to at the same time be nearly impenetrable in their opacity. Cf. Simon Goldhill, *Language, Sexuality, Narrative: The Oresteia* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 85: "the expression of clarity comes through an extremely complex interplay of meanings of the central term for 'clear', which, through the cumulative refraction of the structure of the similes, undercuts the very desire for clarity."

<sup>45</sup> Prior to the *IA*, in fact, only nineteen uses of the noun αἰνιγμα are found in the *TLG*, and seven of these are in reference to Oedipus and the Sphinx (E. *Ph.* 48; 1049; 1688; 1731; 1759. S. *OT* 393; 1525), which is quite clearly not what Clytemnestra is talking about. The metaphorical concept of "unveiling" one's language is even rarer: I have found only five instances in extant classical Greek literature, including the two cited above. (This tally factors not only the uses of ἀνακαλύπτω and the expression ἐκ καλυμμάτων, as in the above passages, but also those of the verb ἐκκαλύπτω.) The other three are: A. *PV* 196; Critas Fr. 1 Snell; and, curiously enough, *IA* 872. Indeed, Clytemnestra uses a similar expression (ἐκκάλυπτε οὐστίνας στέγεις λόγους) when she insists that the *Presbutēs* inform of her of the plot to kill Iphigenia, to which he has been alluding. This second use of such a rare expression again points to a general preoccupation, in the *IA*, about the potential ubiquity of deceptive speech.

<sup>46</sup> The two words are etymologically related, and the verb, translated here as "employ," is also commonly used in reference to oracles and prophetic speech.

speech. It is clear that with Clytemnestra's first words in her attempt to persuade Agamemnon, she alludes to Cassandra's famous speech in the *Agamemnon*.

Despite Euripides' mimetic precision, this close verbal parallel could not have been easy for his audience to perceive on the spot. But this is not the only way in which Clytemnestra's speech echoes Cassandra's. As a prophetess, Cassandra is concerned with revealing the future, but she begins by revealing "crimes committed long ago"<sup>47</sup>—specifically the murder of Thyestes' children and the banquet at which they were served to him—before going on to predict Agamemnon's death at the hands of his wife.<sup>48</sup> In the *IA*, Clytemnestra also reaches into the past before discussing the future. After describing Agamemnon's past transgressions—namely his shockingly unchivalrous courtship techniques<sup>49</sup>—Clytemnestra goes on to issue a not-so-subtle warning to her husband. With a prediction that no one in the audience could have overlooked, she recalls the future acts already dramatized by Aeschylus (*IA* 1180-82):

βραχείας προφάσεως ἔδει μόνον,  
ἐφ' ἧ σ' ἐγὼ καὶ παῖδες αἰ λειμμέναι  
δεξόμεθα δέξιν ἧν σε δέξασθαι χρεών.

1180    only a small pretense is wanting  
for me and your abandoned daughters  
to receive you with the reception you deserve.

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<sup>47</sup> Ag. 1184-85: κακῶν/...τῶν πάλαι πεπραγμένων.

<sup>48</sup> Ag. 1219, 1222: παῖδες θανόντες ὡσπερὶ πρὸς τῶν φιλῶν...ῶν πατὴρ ἐγεύσατο. ("Just like children, killed by loved ones...whom their father tasted.")

<sup>49</sup> *IA* 1148-56. Euripides has either invented or used an uncommon variant of the story of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra's marriage. In this version, we find out that Clytemnestra was already married when she and Agamemnon first "met." Undeterred by this trifling detail, Agamemnon apparently killed her husband (a curiously named Tantalus) and her infant child, risking death at the hands of Castor and Pollux but ultimately procuring for himself the hand of his bride. Cf. Gibert, 2005, for the most complete discussion of this novel version of the myth.

As Smith quite elegantly put it, Euripides' Clytemnestra is "threatening Agamemnon with the *Agamemnon*."<sup>50</sup> With her talk of a fitting reception, she foresees, some ten years in advance, exactly what Aeschylus' Cassandra does: the murder of Agamemnon. Furthermore, the "small pretense" (*IA* 1180) yet lacking is almost certainly Cassandra herself,<sup>51</sup> who will eventually arrive in Argos as a replacement bride.<sup>52</sup>

In summary, Euripides' Clytemnestra draws on Cassandra's prophetic speech in three important ways: she echoes the words and meaning of Cassandra's introductory iambic lines; she adopts Cassandra's technique of highlighting past transgressions as a context for future consequences; and she does so for the same revelatory purpose, to prophesize both the act of and the motivation for Agamemnon's death. In doing so, she reminds the audience of Cassandra's future arrival at her house, the very circumstance in which, according to the tragic tradition, Cassandra will make the speech that Clytemnestra is now imitating in the *IA*. Such strong parallels in both style and substance can hardly be a coincidence. Euripides is clearly suggesting that there is a connection between his Clytemnestra and Aeschylus' Cassandra.

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<sup>50</sup> Smith, 1979, p. 178.

<sup>51</sup> As the prophetess well understood, Aeschylus' Clytemnestra will "redeem her abduction with death" (*Ag.* 1263: ἐμῆς ἀγωγῆς ἀντιτείσασθαι φόνον).

<sup>52</sup> On Cassandra being presented as a bride in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, cf. Taplin, 1977, pp. 302-06, for a reconstruction of Agamemnon's entrance with Cassandra at his side; on the "bridal imagery" that abounds throughout Cassandra's time on-stage, see Richard Seaford, "The Tragic Wedding," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 107 (1987): pp. 125-28; and Robin Mitchell-Boyask, "The Marriage of Cassandra and the *Oresteia*: Text, Image, Performance," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 136 (2006): pp. 269-97.

The connection between the two tragic women is profoundly relevant to any comparison between Euripides' Clytemnestra and Aeschylus' version of the queen. In the *Agamemnon*, Cassandra embodies "the inverse of Clytemnestra."<sup>53</sup> She first stands by silently as Clytemnestra weaves her web of lies around her husband, leading him to his (and eventually Cassandra's) certain death. She then wordlessly resists Clytemnestra's attempts to coax her inside, fending off her powerful *peitho* with an equally powerful silence (*Ag.* 1035-71).<sup>54</sup> When Cassandra finally does speak, her speech is very much the opposite of Clytemnestra's: she says nothing but the truth. Unfortunately, the outcome of her speech is also radically different, for where Clytemnestra is utterly convincing, Cassandra can persuade no one.<sup>55</sup> In each of these ways, Cassandra differs dramatically from Aeschylus' Clytemnestra, and is at the same time most similar to Euripides' version of the queen.

The Aulidan Clytemnestra's strong resemblance to Cassandra encapsulates the manner in which Euripides marks the differences between his queen and Aeschylus', namely through the contrast in their modes of communication. This contrast remains intact throughout Clytemnestra's long *rhesis* (*IA* 1146-1208). The specific purpose of this speech is to persuade Agamemnon, but rather than being laden with trickery and deceit, Clytemnestra's words are

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<sup>53</sup> W.G. Thalmann, "Speech and Silence in the *Oresteia* 2," *Phoenix* 39 (1985b): p. 229. For a more thorough list of the ways in which Cassandra and Clytemnestra function as opposites in the *Agamemnon*, cf. McClure, 1997b, pp. 121-24 ; and McClure, *Spoken Like a Woman: Speech and Gender in Athenian Drama* (Princeton, 1999), pp. 92-93.

<sup>54</sup> Thalmann, 1985b, pp. 228-29; Goldhill, 1986, pp. 23-26.

<sup>55</sup> Thalmann, 1985b, p. 229: "it is one of the terrible ironies of this play that [Cassandra] is cursed with the inability to *persuade*...whereas Clytemnestra's talent for persuasion is formidable."

completely consistent with the frankness she has thus far manifested. This is especially apparent in the way that she predicts that Agamemnon will receive the reception he deserves if he kills Iphigenia, a threat that Clytemnestra never dares to utter in Aeschylus' play. What is striking about this moment—and what should have stood out for the audience—is that the two Clytemnestras' modes of speech differ on the very same subject: Aeschylus' Clytemnestra cannot help but lie about her plans for Agamemnon's return; Euripides', on the other hand, tells the truth about the event when she is by no means forced to.

In summary, in both episodes in which Clytemnestra and Agamemnon appear on-stage together in the *IA*, Euripides goes to great length to emphasize the fact that his character is significantly different from Aeschylus' version of the queen. These contrasts are evident above all in their different modes of speech: the trick questions of the *Agamemnon* become the forthright ones of the *IA*; the Aeschylean Clytemnestra's ambiguous ritual language becomes, in Euripides' tragedy, an unveiled threat; and while Aeschylus' queen is depicted as fundamentally antithetical to his Cassandra, Euripides emphasizes the similarities between his Clytemnestra and the prophetess. In short, where the queen of the *Agamemnon* is the embodiment of feminine guile, one whose ability to manipulate speech represents a grave danger to her husband and to male society, the Clytemnestra of the *IA* seems to have forgotten how to either lie or persuade.

#### 4. *Agamemnon in the IA: Clytemnestra's Heir*

As boldly as Euripides flouts the Aeschylean tradition by portraying Clytemnestra as a frank wife and loving mother, his innovative treatment of Agamemnon is even more arresting. In Aeschylus' play, Agamemnon appears on-stage for a scant 200 lines, barely enough time to be bested by his wife in a contest of words and led blindly to his grisly fate. While many conflicting reasons have been given to explain Agamemnon's submission, it is at least clear that when it comes to manipulative speech, Agamemnon is the prey to Clytemnestra's predator. Euripides dispels the possibility of seeing this dynamic again in the *IA* by making his Clytemnestra avoid any of the "multivalent" language which she so fluently delivered in the *Agamemnon*. But it is not only Clytemnestra whose speech patterns and character undergo significant changes. In the *IA*, it is Agamemnon who dons the mantle of Clytemnestra's deceptive speech. In this section, I argue that one of Agamemnon's principal characteristics in the *IA* is his tendency to lie to essentially everyone, and that in creating such a character, Euripides completes his subversion of Aeschylus' portrayal of Clytemnestra as a deceptive and dangerous woman who ensnares the hapless male (Agamemnon) with her feminine guile. The result of this conversion is that in the *IA*, it is no longer feminine guile that threatens to corrupt the *oikos* and the *polis*, but rather the treachery of the male protagonists.

The fact that Agamemnon is not exactly honest in the *IA* has not been lost on scholars. Much critical analysis, however, has focused on trying to understand Agamemnon's "true"

motivations for sacrificing Iphigenia.<sup>56</sup> On this subject, at least, myriad conclusions have been reached. These include the explanation that Agamemnon is weak and pliable;<sup>57</sup> that he is dominated by fear,<sup>58</sup> or by personal ambition;<sup>59</sup> that he becomes truly convinced that the war is justified;<sup>60</sup> or that he succumbs to a form of “insanity.”<sup>61</sup> Some scholars have dodged the question of Agamemnon’s real motivations by claiming that he undergoes a process of self-deception whereby he unwittingly convinces *himself* of something that is not true—that Iphigenia must die because Greece requires it.<sup>62</sup>

The argument that Agamemnon manages to deceive himself is a particularly interesting one, though not necessarily because of its accuracy or its provability.<sup>63</sup> On the contrary, one

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<sup>56</sup> This is made difficult by the fact that Agamemnon changes his mind both as to whether or not to sacrifice Iphigenia (before the play he had agreed to; at the beginning of the play he decides not to; and eventually he decides that he must), and regarding his reasons for doing so. At first it seems that in sacrificing Iphigenia, Agamemnon simply relents to his brother’s pestering (*IA* 97-98), or perhaps to his own ambition (*IA* 361); then it is only because the perfidy of Odysseus and Calchas leaves him no choice (*IA* 511-37); then because the army’s bloodlust demands it (*IA* 1264); and, finally and most oddly, he decides to kill his daughter for the sake of Hellas and patriotism (*IA* 1271-75). On these vacillations, cf. John Gibert, *Change of Mind in Greek Tragedy* (Göttingen, 1996), pp. 202 ff.

<sup>57</sup> E.M. Blaiklock, *The Male Characters of Euripides: A Study in Realism* (Wellington, 1952), pp. 115-20; Siegel, 1981; Hermann Funke, “Aristoteles zu Euripides’ *Iphigeneia in Aulis*,” *Hermes* 92 (1964): pp. 284-99.

<sup>58</sup> Herbert Siegel, “Agamemnon in Euripides’ *Iphigenia at Aulis*,” *Hermes* 109 (1981): pp. 257-65; S.E. Lawrence, “*Iphigenia at Aulis*: Characterization and Psychology in Euripides,” *Ramus* 17 (1988): p. 94.

<sup>59</sup> Funke, 1964, p. 296; Conacher, 1967, pp. 256-57.

<sup>60</sup> Conacher, 1967, p. 262; Gudrun Mellert-Hoffmann, *Untersuchungen zur Iphigenie in Aulis des Euripides* (Heidelberg, 1969), pp. 9-90.

<sup>61</sup> Vellacott, 1975, p. 202.

<sup>62</sup> Blaiklock, 1952, pp. 115-16, 120; Siegel, 1981, p. 264; Lawrence, 1988, pp. 94-95; Burgess, 2004, p. 48. It is especially curious that Burgess, whose article is entitled “Lies and Convictions at Aulis,” chooses to focus so heavily on this idea of self-deception rather than on the (many) lies that Agamemnon tells throughout his play. In his final analysis of the king, he states: “I suggest that this speech [i.e. *IA* 1271-75] portrays the process of the formation of a conviction for Agamemnon. He is converting the lie that he has no agency in determining what will happen to Iphigenia into a belief that Iphigenia must die...with a justifying claim for the value of that action.”

<sup>63</sup> This is not to say that this reading isn’t justified, or that there is not any evidence that Agamemnon does indeed deceive himself. It is simply that, much like the other interpretations that have been advanced, there is no

might say that it is both a consequence of and a testament to the fact that a major theme of the *IA* has been consistently downplayed by critics: that Agamemnon spends most of the play trying to deceive the other characters. It is not that Agamemnon's lying ways have been completely ignored; his cruel deceit of Iphigenia (*IA* 640-90) can hardly go unmentioned in any discussion of his decision-making process.<sup>64</sup> But it has gone relatively unnoticed that his most consistent characteristic is a persistent tendency to distort the truth (and not just to himself).<sup>65</sup> Put simply, in every single scene in which Agamemnon appears, he either lies, talks about having lied, is exposed as a liar, or manages some combination of the three.<sup>66</sup>

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indisputable evidence that Agamemnon actually is being honest when he says that he must sacrifice Iphigenia "for Hellas."

<sup>64</sup> Though Felix M. Wasserman, "Agamemnon in the *Iphigeneia at Aulis*: A Man in an Age of Crisis," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 80 (1949): p. 183, has defended Agamemnon's treachery by arguing that "when he has recourse to lying and deceit he acts against his better nature."

<sup>65</sup> A particularly instructive example of this is Burgess, 2004. In the seven pages that he dedicates to Agamemnon (pp. 42-48), Burgess only mentions two specific lies that Agamemnon tells (p. 43: the false letter to Clytemnestra; and p. 45: the deceit of Iphigenia). At no point does he mention the many other instances of deception that we see Agamemnon perpetrate. Other scholars have de-emphasized Agamemnon's lying by arguing that they are the result of the pressures he faces or external factors: cf. Wasserman, 1949, p. 183; Siegel, 1981, pp. 263-64, who argues that his "web of lies and deceits" is merely a result of his "fear and powerlessness." Lawrence, 1988, on the other hand, scarcely mentions these deceptions at all, noting only his "agonizing hypocrisy in the presence of his wife and daughter," but even this appears to be the fruit of his "self-deception" (p. 94).

<sup>66</sup> This is again excluding the spurious lines 1621-26.

*Prologue: Agamemnon's first deceptions*

Agamemnon is the first to admit that he has not been entirely truthful during the events leading up to Iphigenia's sacrifice, and it doesn't take long for him to do so. Indeed, we first find out about his dishonesty in the iambic section of the prologue (*IA* 98-105):

κάν δέλτου πτυχαῖς γράψας ἔπεμψα πρὸς δάμαρτα τὴν ἐμὴν πέμπειν Ἀχιλλεῖ θυγατέρ' ὡς γαμουμένην, τό τ' ἀξίωμα τάνδρὸς ἐκγαυρούμενος, συμπλεῖν τ' Ἀχαιοῖς οὐνεκ' οὐ θέλοι λέγων, εἰ μὴ παρ' ἡμῶν εἴσιν ἐς Φθίαν λέχος· πειθῶ γὰρ εἶχον τήνδε πρὸς δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν, ψευδῆ συνάψας τάντι παρθένου <sup>67</sup> γάμον.	100 105	So I wrote a letter and sent it to my wife, asking her to send our daughter here to wed Achilles, while also glorifying the man's reputation and saying he would not sail with the Achaeans unless a bride came from us to his bed in Phthia. For I found the means to persuade my wife by contriving a false marriage for the maiden.
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Here, Agamemnon comes clean to his trusted servant, the *Presbutēs*, but only because he needs him to deliver a new letter to Clytemnestra telling her to remain at home (*IA* 115-23).<sup>68</sup> Thanks to this necessity, a mere 100 lines into the play we learn that Agamemnon has already perpetrated a series of deceptions: he has lured Clytemnestra and Iphigenia to Aulis with the promise of a “false marriage” to Achilles, and he has compounded this lie by exaggerating Achilles' status. The purpose of this false marriage—this *dolos* as it will later be called<sup>69</sup>—is to arrange the sacrifice of his daughter (cf. *IA* 89-98), and the efficacy of these lies quickly becomes evident. A short time later (*IA* 607), Clytemnestra arrives with Iphigenia; both are eager for the

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<sup>67</sup> Diggle marks these two words (ἀντι παρθένου) with cruces, but this must certainly be the point.

<sup>68</sup> Diggle has moved lines 117-18, spoken by the *Presbutēs*, up before line 115.

<sup>69</sup> *IA* 898, 1457.

wedding, and Clytemnestra is particularly curious to know more about Achilles' provenance.<sup>70</sup>

Agamemnon's lies have clearly been persuasive thus far.

Furthermore, his pre-play machinations are not limited to the deceit of his wife and daughter. As we soon learn, he has not been entirely honest with Achilles either. When the *Presbutēs* warns him that Achilles may be enraged to "be bereft of his marriage,"<sup>71</sup> Agamemnon brushes off this concern on the grounds that Achilles doesn't even know about the arrangement (IA 128-30):<sup>72</sup>

ὄνομ', οὐκ ἔργον, παρέχων Ἀχιλεὺς  
οὐκ οἶδε γάμους, οὐδ' ὅ τι πράσσομεν,  
οὐδ' ὅτι κείνῳ παιῖδ' ἐπεφήμισα

Achilles is supplying his name, not the deed,  
and knows not of the wedding, nor of what  
we are doing, nor that I have pledged my child to him

According to Agamemnon's defense, since Achilles has only supplied his name to the mission, his involvement is only marginal, and so there should be no cause for concern. He refers to the contemporary trope that *logoi* (words or speech) and *erga* (facts or reality) were often inconsistent with each other.<sup>73</sup> He "treats the issue casually,"<sup>74</sup> perhaps even too casually, for in

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<sup>70</sup> After Clytemnestra introduces herself and explains that she has come for the marriage that Agamemnon has arranged (IA 607-34), she proceeds to inquire after Achilles' provenance (seven separate questions, cf. IA 698-712) and about the plans for the wedding (four questions, cf. IA 716-22). (In between Clytemnestra's entrance and her questions there is a dialogue between Agamemnon and Iphigenia, about which more below.)

<sup>71</sup> IA 124-26: καὶ πῶς Ἀχιλεὺς λέκτρων ἀπλακῶν/οὐ μέγα φυσῶν θυμὸν ἐπαρεῖ/σοὶ σῆ τ' ἀλόχῳ;

<sup>72</sup> Foley, 1985, p. 68, notes that this may have been a Euripidean invention.

<sup>73</sup> Obviously Agamemnon uses the term ὄνομα rather than λόγος, but in this context *onoma* was commonly substituted for *logos* and equally antithetical to the notion of *ergon*. Cf. Adam Milman Parry, *Logos and Ergon in Thucydides* (New York, 1981), pp. 11-13. In general, the authors who juxtapose *onoma* and *ergon* are the same ones who do so with *logos* and *ergon* as well (e.g. Thucydides, Herodotus, Euripides, Isocrates, Xenophon etc.).

<sup>74</sup> Gamel, 1999, p. 456.

making this argument, he emphasizes his own lies of omission and mistakenly relies on the uncomfortable relationship between *logoi* and *erga*.

The idea that speech and fact were fundamentally antithetical had grown increasingly popular throughout the fifth century,<sup>75</sup> almost to the point of becoming a truism.<sup>76</sup> Euripides' audience surely would have recognized that Agamemnon is referring to this notion, according to which *logoi* were less reliable than *erga*, chiefly because words often didn't reflect reality.<sup>77</sup> The preponderance of false *logoi* was an increasing source of anxiety in the fifth century, especially in a democratic society such as Athens that relied on public discourse to achieve consensus.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, Agamemnon seems untroubled by the gulf between his words and his deeds; for him it is a trifling matter to manipulate *logoi* when it suits his purposes. In this, he

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<sup>75</sup> Parry, 1981, pp. 15-21, 47-51. According to the *TLG*, the words *logos* and *ergon* appear within one line of each other only twenty-two times before the fifth century BCE; in Thucydides alone this happens nearly twice as many times. On Thucydides' use of *logos* and *ergon*, cf. Parry, 1981, *passim*; Adam Parry, "Thucydides' Use of Abstract Language," *Yale French Studies* 45 (1970): pp. 3-20; Josiah Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens: Intellectual Critics of Popular Rule* (Princeton, 1998), pp. 53-63. Ober's reading of Thucydides' skepticism of *logoi* is particularly relevant since, in his view, it is a harsh critique of the democratic process which relied on the (unreliable) *logoi* of public speakers.

<sup>76</sup> Parry, 1981, p. 48 states that it "becomes common coin in the Vth century." Outside of Thucydides, the juxtaposition between *logos* and *ergon* comes up frequently in oratory (cf. Antiphon, *On the Choreutes*, 47.5, *On the Murder of Herodes*, 84.12; Isocrates, 3.1.8, 8.134.2) and in philosophy (cf. Plato, *Apology* 32a and 32d, *Gorgias* 450d), but also in drama (cf. *E. Alc.* 339, *Ph.* 389; *S. El.* 357, 893). Euripides had actually made this contrast the central conceit of one of his later tragedies: cf. Charles Segal, "The Two Worlds of Euripides' *Helen*," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 102 (1971): pp. 553-614. On Plato's stance on *logos* and *ergon*, cf. David Grene, *Greek Political Theory: The Image of Man in Thucydides and Plato* (Chicago, 1950), pp. 95-124; Gerald M. Mara, *Socrates' Discursive Democracy: Logos and Ergon in Platonic Political Philosophy* (Albany, 1997). Naturally, different Greek authors and thinkers took different stances on the relationship between words and deeds. But what is important in this context is that, given the frequency of the juxtaposition between *logos* and *ergon* in fifth-century literature, we can safely say that Euripides' audience would have had considerable exposure to this idea and would have recognized it as a contemporary discourse.

<sup>77</sup> Parry, 1981, pp. 18-19, calls this the "popular distinction" of the *logos/ergon* antithesis (as opposed to the "literary distinction" and the "philosophical distinction").

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Parry, 1981, pp. 76-89; Ober, 1998, pp. 53-63, but esp. p. 58.

resembles Aeschylus' Clytemnestra—both are only too happy to say “opportune things” when it suits their purposes<sup>79</sup>—but also politicians such as Cleon who, as we shall see, is depicted in a similar way by Thucydides and Aristophanes.

The *Presbutēs*, for his part, is unimpressed: “you’ve dared a terrible thing” (IA 133: δεινά γ’ ἐτόλμας), he tells Agamemnon, implying that he should be less cavalier about his manipulation of *logoi*. Achilles’ later response to the situation lends credence to the *Presbutēs*’ concerns. Indeed, when he eventually learns of the elaborate wedding ruse, Achilles finds little consolation in the fact that “only” his name was used to effect it (IA 936-41):

οὐ γὰρ ἐμπλέκειν πλοκάς  
ἐγὼ παρέξω σῶ πόσει τούμῳ δέμας.  
τοῦνομα γάρ, εἰ καὶ μὴ σίδηρον ἦρατο,  
τούμῳ φονεύσει παῖδα σὴν. τὸ δ’ αἴτιον  
πόσις σός. ἀγνὸν δ’ οὐκέτ’ ἐστὶ σῶμ’ ἐμόν,  
εἰ δι’ ἔμ’ ὀλεῖται διὰ τε τοὺς ἐμοὺς γάμους

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I shall not give my body  
to your husband so he can weave his webs.  
For even if it does not raise the sword,  
my name will murder your child. Your husband  
is responsible. But my body will no longer be  
pure if she dies through me and my marriage...

Achilles is clearly displeased that, unbeknownst to him, his hand in marriage has been used as bait for Agamemnon’s trap. He blames Agamemnon, but notes very specifically that his name will be the murderer, and that he himself can no longer be considered chaste—in fact, he will no longer consider himself an unmarried man.<sup>80</sup> He too is aware of the relationship between *logos* and *ergon*, but in a manner that is more reminiscent of Thucydides or Gorgias, both of whom

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<sup>79</sup> As in A. Ag. 1372; see above p. 266

<sup>80</sup> Helene P. Foley, “Marriage and Sacrifice in Euripides’ *Iphigeneia in Aulis*,” *Arethusa* 15 (1982): pp. 162-63.

understood that “λόγος is opposed to ἔργα, but it can act itself as an ἔργον.”<sup>81</sup> It is clear that the deceptive use of Achilles’ name for this plot is not merely a white lie for which there will be no consequences; on the contrary, Achilles’ reaction shows that Agamemnon’s tendency to lie is a serious and objectionable matter. Moreover, the fact that Achilles describes Agamemnon as “weaving a web” casts Agamemnon’s *dolos* in feminine terms, another reminder of his once and future murderess.

Beginning in the prologue, then, the audience learns that Agamemnon has been willing to bring about his daughter’s sacrifice by any (dishonest) means necessary. These include actively deceiving his wife and daughter in order to lure them to Aulis, and concealing from Achilles the fact that he has used his name as bait. Both of these lies are cast in a nefarious light, and in defending himself, Agamemnon refers to fifth-century concerns about deceptive speakers. Audience and reader alike are alerted to the possibility that this kind of deceitful behavior is central to the play. As the tragedy unfolds, two additional points will become increasingly clear: that deception is Agamemnon’s primary mode of communication; and that Euripides intentionally presents him as an individual analogous to Aeschylus’ Clytemnestra, the embodiment of feminine guile. While the latter of these only becomes obvious once Clytemnestra arrives near the middle of the play, the former is emphasized in the first episode.

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<sup>81</sup> Parry, 1981, p. 45. Parry here refers to Gorgias (on whom see more below, pp. 307-310), but given his analysis of Thucydides’ understanding of the *logos/ergon* dynamic (cf. pp. 76-89), the words seem applicable to both.

*Episode one: more lies revealed*

The parodos momentarily distracts us from the implications of Agamemnon's deceit, but Menelaus' arrival on stage brings his gamesmanship swiftly back into focus. It is only natural, though again hardly forthright of him, that Agamemnon has not told his brother that he plans to call off the wedding/sacrifice. After all, as we learned in the prologue, it was Menelaus who had insisted that they sacrifice Iphigenia.<sup>82</sup> But when Menelaus catches the *Presbutēs*, secret letter in hand, he is furious to learn that his brother has gone behind his back and back on his word. "Your mind is treacherous" (IA 332: *πλάγια γὰρ φρονεῖς*), he roars, before berating Agamemnon for being *οὐ βέβαιος* (IA 334: "inconsistent")—another key term in the *logos/ergon* dichotomy.<sup>83</sup> Menelaus' reaction is, if not predictable, then at least understandable.

What is surprising is Menelaus' description of Agamemnon's initial reaction to Calchas' announcement that Iphigenia had to be sacrificed. While Agamemnon had previously stated that he had ordered the army to disband at once (IA 94-96), Menelaus' recollection is rather different (IA 358-62):

κᾶτ', ἐπεὶ Κάλχας ἐν ἱεροῖς εἶπε σὴν θῦσαι κόρην  
Ἀρτέμιδι, καὶ πλοῦν ἔσεσθαι Δαναΐδαις, ἦσθεις φρένας  
ἄσμενος θύσειν ὑπέστης παῖδα· καὶ πέμπεις ἐκῶν,

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<sup>82</sup> IA 97-98: οὐ δὴ μ' ἀδελφὸς πάντα προσφέρων λόγον/ἔπεισε τλήναι δεινά ("At which point my brother, bringing forth every argument/convinced me to dare this terrible deed").

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Parry, 1981, pp. 67-68.

οὐ βία — μὴ τοῦτο λέξης — σὴ δάμαρτι, παῖδα σὴν  
δεῦρ' ἀποστέλλειν, Ἀχιλλεῖ πρόφασιν ὡς γαμουμένην.

When Calchas said the Danaans could sail if you  
sacrificed your daughter to Artemis, you rejoiced  
and happily promised to sacrifice her. You willingly, 360  
not by force—make no such claim—told your wife  
to send your child here, her marriage to Achilles a pretense.

Menelaus' version of the pre-tragic events is in many ways similar to Agamemnon's. Both brothers agree that Calchas had said that Iphigenia must be sacrificed to Artemis, and both brothers note that the ruse by which they lured Iphigenia to Aulis is a fake marriage to Achilles.<sup>84</sup> But they differ on one crucial point, and that is Agamemnon's willingness to kill his daughter: where Agamemnon claims that he had at first refused to sacrifice her, only to be persuaded otherwise by Menelaus, Menelaus insists, in no uncertain terms, that Agamemnon had been only too happy to do so.

Given these two contradictory accounts, it is impossible to know for certain what Agamemnon's true reaction had been in the (imaginary) time before the play. But there is some evidence that we may be "justified in assuming that Menelaus' version is nearer to the truth [than Agamemnon's]": when given the chance, for instance, Agamemnon does not disavow this accusation; and it is more likely that he would gloss over his enthusiasm to the *Presbutēs*, who was not present when Calchas made his prophecy (and thus could not know how Agamemnon reacted), than that Menelaus would lie so baldly to Agamemnon (who of course knows full well

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<sup>84</sup> In fact, even the precise language that the two brothers use is very similar: ὡς γαμουμένην appears in both lines 100 and 362; πέμπεις...σὴ δάμαρτι (360-61) and ἔπεμψα πρὸς δάμαρτα τὴν ἐμὴν (99);

how he reacted).<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, since (as we discover) the *Presbutēs'* first allegiance is to Clytemnestra, it would be ruinous (for Agamemnon) if he discovered how callously his master had at first acted.<sup>86</sup> So regardless of how precise Menelaus is in his description of Agamemnon's gleefully unpaternal reception of Calchas' prophecy, it seems safe to conclude that this is yet another example of Agamemnon's tendency to dissimulate. Within the first 400 lines, then, we have already discovered that Agamemnon has lied to his wife and daughter in order to bring them to Aulis; lied (by omission) to Achilles regarding the use of his name; and lied to the *Presbutēs*—and by extension the audience—about his reaction to the news about the sacrifice.

Each of these deceptions is obviously done in self-interest. Agamemnon first lies to his wife and exploits Achilles' name because he believes that it is in his own interests to sacrifice his daughter; perhaps he is even eager to do so. After he changes his mind, he coaxes the *Presbutēs* into faithfully delivering another letter to Clytemnestra by falsely characterizing his original intentions. At the same time, he attempts to circumvent his brother by operating behind his back, and it should also be noted that the army, the men whom Agamemnon is to lead into war, have been kept in the dark this entire time as well.<sup>87</sup> The picture that emerges is of a man who is

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<sup>85</sup> Both the quote and the reasoning belong to A. Maria van Erp Taalman Kip, "Truth in Tragedy: When Are We Entitled to Doubt a Character's Words?" *American Journal of Philology* 117 (1996): p. 532; Siegel, 1981, p. 260 also believes that Menelaus' version is closer to the truth.

<sup>86</sup> Soon after Clytemnestra arrives, the *Presbutēs* informs her of Agamemnon's plan to kill Iphigenia, noting "I am well-disposed to you [Clytemnestra], and less so to your husband" (*IA* 871: καὶ σοὶ μὲν εὖνους εἰμί, σὴ δ' ἦσσον πόσει). This is because he had come to Agamemnon's house as part of Clytemnestra's dowry (cf. *IA* 869-70), which of course Agamemnon knows perfectly well (this is obvious, but cf. *IA* 46-48).

<sup>87</sup> As we learn in *IA* 106-07, only Agamemnon, Menelaus, Odysseus, and Calchas even know of the need to sacrifice Iphigenia. Some scholars, most notably David Kovacs, "Towards a Reconstruction of *Iphigenia Aulidensis*," *The Journal*

woefully inconsistent except in his consistent use of deceit and manipulation; a leader who uses artifice and guile to achieve his goals. Euripides expands upon this motif in the following episodes as Agamemnon spars with Clytemnestra, and he does so in explicit juxtaposition to Aeschylus' memorable portrayal of feminine guile.

*Episode two, part one: Agamemnon deceives his daughter*

After he learns that Clytemnestra and Iphigenia have arrived at Aulis, Agamemnon's stated goal is to keep them from uncovering his plot so that Iphigenia's sacrifice may be accompanied by "the fewest tears possible" (IA 541). To this end, he orders both Menelaus and the chorus to keep quiet (IA 538-42). Silence will not, however, suffice for Agamemnon. Instead, he must resort to manipulative language to delude first Iphigenia—stirringly overjoyed to see her father—and then Clytemnestra. He begins with simple evasive tactics when Iphigenia wonders why he is not happy to see her, but as she begins to press him for the details of her future, he becomes more and more mendacious (IA 666-76):

Iph.: εἴθ' ἦν καλόν μοι σοί τ' ἄγειν σύμπλουν ἐμέ.	If only it was right for you to bring me by ship.
Ag.: ἔτ' ἔστι καὶ σοὶ πλοῦς, ἴν' ἑμνήσητ' πατρός.	A voyage yet awaits you, a memory of your father. <sup>88</sup>
I.: σὺν μητρὶ πλεύσασ' ἢ μόνη πορεύσομαι;	Will I sail with mother or be taken alone?

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of *Hellenic Studies* 123 (2003): pp. 77-103, have doubted the genuineness of the tragedy's "secret prophecy," but the evidence against its authenticity is insufficient to justify the number of deletions that would be required to eliminate this plot device. I address this issue in greater detail in Chapter One, p. 65 fn 71.

<sup>88</sup> This true meaning of this line appears unsalvageable.

A.: μόνη, μονωθεῖσ' ἀπὸ πατρὸς καὶ μητέρος.	Alone, deprived of your father and mother.
I.: οὐ ποῦ μ' ἐς ἄλλα δώματ' οἰκίζεις, πάτερ; 670	Are you then settling me in a new home, father?
A.: εἰτέ· οὐ χρὴ τοιάδ' εἰδέναι κόρας.	Enough; a girl need not know these things.
I.: σπεῦδ' ἐκ Φρυγῶν μοι, θέμενος εὖ τὰ κεῖ, πάτερ.	Make things right and hurry back to me from Phrygia, father.
A.: θῦσαί με θυσίαν πρῶτα δεῖ τιν' ἐνθάδε.	First I must sacrifice a certain sacrifice here.
I.: ἀλλὰ ξὺν ἱεροῖς χρὴ τό γ' εὐσεβῆς σκοπεῖν.	Yes, one must look to the holy with sacred rites.
A.: εἴση σύ· χερνίβων γὰρ ἐστήξῃ πέλας. 675	You shall see, for you shall be near the libations.
I. στήσομεν ἄρ' ἀμφὶ βωμόν, ὦ πάτερ, χορούς;	Oh father, will I lead the dances round the altar?

In response to this final question, Agamemnon manages not to lie, noting only that he envies her ignorance (*IA* 677). In response to the other questions, however, he either dissembles or deceives. Throughout the exchange, Agamemnon's ability to convey lies via the truth is especially reminiscent of Aeschylus' Clytemnestra.<sup>89</sup>

Agamemnon tells the truth, in the broadest sense of the word, when he says that Iphigenia will soon take a trip by boat (*IA* 667), though presumably she imagines she will be sailing the high seas and not the river Styx. While it is accurate to say that she will, on this voyage, be deprived of her mother and father (*IA* 669), the permanence of this state is hardly betrayed by Agamemnon's words. His most honest statement is his third (671), when he simply refuses to answer Iphigenia's question. But when she begs of him to make a speedy return from Troy (highly unlikely), Agamemnon for some reason mentions, in the vaguest terms possible, that he must "sacrifice a sacrifice." This is not a lie, but the full meaning is again impossible for Iphigenia to know. Euripides is obviously drawing attention to Agamemnon's dissimulation by

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<sup>89</sup> I am indebted to Shadi Bartsch-Zimmer for both this phrase and the broader point.

using this emphatic—and ridiculously ambiguous—formulation.<sup>90</sup> To pound the point home, the tragedian then has Agamemnon note that Iphigenia will be able to “see” the sacred rites herself, since she will be standing “near the libations” (an understatement if ever there was one). Had anyone in the audience heretofore failed to notice Agamemnon’s exploitation of multivalent and deceptive language, surely this last comment would have shocked them into recognition. At the same time, Iphigenia’s pathetically naïve excitement at the prospect of leading the dances around the altar emphasizes, yet again, how effectively Agamemnon can manipulate language.

*Episode two part two: Agamemnon deceives his wife*

So ends this (relatively) brief father-daughter reunion. But having convinced Iphigenia that everything is as it should be does not mean that Agamemnon can cease dissembling. He must now face his wife and attempt to convince her that nothing is amiss. Even before this encounter begins, it is already reminiscent of the famous husband-wife *agōn* in Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*; the roles have simply been reversed. This time, it is Clytemnestra who arrives by chariot,<sup>91</sup> summoned to her spouse by a duplicitous message.<sup>92</sup> And before Clytemnestra can

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<sup>90</sup> In fact, it is one that he will use again in a short time, cf. *IA* 721 and below, p. 294.

<sup>91</sup> Aélion, 1983 vol. 1, p. 106; Foley, 1985, pp. 70-71.

even get a word in edgewise, Agamemnon has already lied to her: he apologizes for his sour mood and once again shrouds the truth in ambiguity by noting that although Iphigenia's "sending off" is a happy occasion, it is always sad for parents to see their children leave (*IA* 685-90). His sadness is reminiscent of Clytemnestra's "joy" at the news of her husband's imminent return in the *Agamemnon*;<sup>93</sup> in each case the feeling is true, but the underlying motive is falsely implied. Agamemnon thus sets the terms of their exchange from the beginning: Agamemnon will play the deceiver, and Clytemnestra the deceived. At stake is Iphigenia's life.

Despite this inauspicious start, and despite the reminders (both textual and dramatic) of the royal couple's traditionally rocky relationship, the conversation begins on good terms. Clytemnestra asks after the provenance of Iphigenia's "future husband," and Agamemnon answers with candid ease. The natural simplicity of their dialogue is almost enough to make one forget that it is based on a lie. But when Clytemnestra brings up Iphigenia's wedding, Agamemnon must dissemble once more (*IA* 716-24):

Clyt.: ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίτην. τίτι δ' ἐν ἡμέρα γαμεῖ;	May they prosper! Which day will they marry?
Ag.: ὅταν σελήνης εὐτυχῆς ἔλθῃ κύκλος.	When the blessing of the full moon arrives.
C: προτέλεια δ' ἤδη παιδὸς ἔσφαξας θεᾶ;	And have you made offerings to the goddess <sup>94</sup> on behalf of our child?
A: μέλλω 'πὶ ταύτῃ καὶ καθέσταμεν τύχη.	I'm about to. It is for this act I am now prepared.
C: κάπειτα δαίσεις τοὺς γάμους ἐς ὕστερον; 720	And then you'll serve the wedding feast?

<sup>92</sup> In the *Agamemnon*, this function is fulfilled by a messenger who takes Clytemnestra's hypocritical greeting to her husband. In the *IA*, this is done not by a verbal message but by a letter, though on a dramatic level, it fulfills essentially the same function.

<sup>93</sup> A. *Ag.* 264-67.

<sup>94</sup> Gamel, 1999, p. 466: "Clytemnestra probably means Hera, who is the principal female deity of Argos, but Agamemnon and the audience would think of Artemis, also associated with marriage." Clytemnestra's misconceptions—constantly fostered by Agamemnon—take place even on this minute level.

A: θύσας γε θύμαθ' ἅ ἐμὲ χρὴ θῦσαι θεοῖς.

After I've sacrificed the sacrifices I must sacrifice  
to the gods.

C: ἡμεῖς δὲ θοίνην ποῦ γυναιξὶ θήσομεν;

Where shall I set up the feast for the women?

A: ἐνθάδε παρ' εὐπρύμνοισιν Ἀργείων πλάταις.

Here, by the well-sterned ships of the Argives.

C: καλῶς ἀναγκαίως τε· συνενέγκοι δ' ὅμως.

Fine, as it must be; all the same it will do.

Clytemnestra's first line—wishing the future newlyweds well—is yet another testament to the efficacy of Agamemnon's lies; much like Agamemnon when he arrives home in Aeschylus' play, she still believes in her spouse's good faith. Agamemnon's words, however, betray her trust. Even more so than in his discussion with Iphigenia, each of his responses is full of treachery. Knowing what we know, it is obvious that the full moon will not be blessing the wedding of Iphigenia and Achilles. It also seems unlikely that Agamemnon will get around to setting up Iphigenia's (or any) marriage feast, or that the women will, in the end, have a feast of their own by the Argive ships (a curious choice of venue, to say the least). Moreover, Euripides again accentuates the ambiguity of Agamemnon's language by giving him an absurd line (721) in which he uses three words stemming from *θύω* (to sacrifice). This is very similar to the line he uses to deflect Iphigenia's attention. It is once again an ostentatious and dramatically unnecessary allusion to the deception he is perpetrating, and a way of calling the audience's attention to the fact that he is systematically using veiled ritual language to disguise his intentions.

Nevertheless, perhaps the most peculiar “misunderstanding” in this scene concerns the *proteleia* to the goddess on behalf of Iphigenia. Clytemnestra asks Agamemnon if he has

performed these sacrifices, and it is obvious that she is referring to the prenuptial sacrifices that would take place before any wedding.<sup>95</sup> Agamemnon's response is again deceptive: it is true he is "about to" perform *proteleia*, but not the ones that Clytemnestra is asking about. But aside from the fact that Agamemnon clearly takes advantage of the multivalent nature of the word in order to deceive his wife, this is also a sly allusion, on Euripides' part, to the *Agamemnon*. Indeed, the only prior extant uses of "*proteleios*" occurred in Aeschylus' play.<sup>96</sup> And although only one of these concerns a sacrifice,<sup>97</sup> this sacrifice—the *proteleia*—is none other than Iphigenia herself as "an offering on behalf of ships."<sup>98</sup>

Euripides thus invents a situation that is bound to remind much of the audience of Aeschylus' play. He creates a sort of reverse *Agamemnon*, one in which it is now Agamemnon

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<sup>95</sup> John H. Oakley and Rebecca H. Sinos, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens* (Madison, 1993), p. 11: "[s]acrifices to the gods preceded every major undertaking in ancient Greece, and the wedding was no exception." By the fourth century, Oakley and Sinos continue, "it was especially important to pay respect to the gods by performing prenuptial sacrifices, called *proteleia*." Although the *IA* was first produced before any other known reference to these prenuptial sacrifices as *proteleia* (according to the *TLG*, after the *IA* the earliest certain use of *proteleia* in this manner is Plato, *Laws*, 774e9: ὄσα δὲ προτέλεια γάμων), it is reasonable to assume that the audience would interpret these *proteleia* as such; Clytemnestra is, after all, primarily interested in the wedding at this point. Furthermore, her follow-up question (v. 720)—"and then you'll serve the wedding feast?"—is perfectly in line with actual ceremonial procedures. Cf. Oakley and Sinos, 1993, p. 22: "[e]very wedding included a feast, with abundant meat provided by the prenuptial sacrifices performed by both families."

<sup>96</sup> According to the *TLG*. Cf. A. Ag. 65, 227, 720. On Aeschylus' uses of *proteleia* (and the audience's understanding of it), cf. Eduard Fraenkel, ed., *Aeschylus: Agamemnon* vol. 2 (Oxford, 1950), pp. 40-41; Froma I. Zeitlin, "The Motif of Corrupted Sacrifice in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 96 (1965): pp. 464-67.

<sup>97</sup> Ag. 227: here too *proteleia* takes a genitive complement to convey the meaning of a sacrificial offering on behalf of a person or thing.

<sup>98</sup> Garner, 1990, p. 174, also notes this allusion. Euripides had already alluded to the first line of the choral strophe from which these lines come by referring to the "yoke of necessity" which Agamemnon donned in his eponymous play. (Cf. above, p. 259; Garner, 1990, p. 174; and Sorum, 1992, p. 537.) In fact, the *IA* itself is arguably a massive elaboration of these ten Aeschylean lines, a process that is neatly illustrated by the fact Euripides directly alludes to both the first and last lines of this strophe.

who attempts to ensnare Clytemnestra with his words. He first draws attention to Aeschylus' tragedy by having Clytemnestra arrive on-stage on chariot and under the false impressions created by her spouse. He then alerts the audience that Agamemnon will continue with his earlier treacherous use of language by showing him brazenly manipulate Iphigenia, and by having him lie to Clytemnestra before the *agon* even begins. Then, even in the midst of the *agon*, even as we see Agamemnon hoodwink Clytemnestra much like she had him in Aeschylus' play, Agamemnon takes advantage of the ambiguity of a term that had only been used in the *Agamemnon*—and used to describe the very sacrifice which he is at such pains to conceal. There can be no doubt that Euripides is intentionally and openly using the *Agamemnon* as the backdrop against which to cast his depiction of his utterly untruthful king. He brings this point home by closing the husband-wife *agon* just as Aeschylus does: “obey!” demands Agamemnon (IA 739: *πιθοῦ*). This is the very same word with which Clytemnestra springs the trap she had set for her husband in the *Agamemnon* (A. Ag. 943). Euripides has systematically overturned one of the primary dynamics of Aeschylus' play: the male is now the deceiver, the female the deceived; Euripides' *Agamemnon* has essentially become Aeschylus' Clytemnestra.

### *Episode three: the dissolution of Agamemnon's duplicity*

In the fourth and final scene in which Agamemnon appears (episode three), his consistent distortion of facts and language continues—at least until he realizes the game is up. Clytemnestra has, by now, learned that her husband's true intention is to sacrifice Iphigenia.

And she is under express orders (by Achilles) to convince her husband to call off this sacrifice. Nevertheless, Agamemnon continues to use duplicity in his attempt to persuade Clytemnestra that nothing is amiss. Unaware that the *Presbutēs* has sold him out to Clytemnestra,<sup>99</sup> Agamemnon continues to speak as if the wedding preparations are proceeding without a hitch. He refers to Iphigenia as a “bride-to-be” (IA 1108: τὰς γαμουμένας) and speaks, in great detail, of the sacrifices which must be completed “before the wedding” (IA 1113: πρὸ γάμων). Clytemnestra is hardly pleased with this, and her response to Agamemnon’s duplicity provides more context. (IA 1115-16):

τοῖς ὀνόμασιν μὲν εὖ λέγεις, τὰ δ’ ἔργα σου  
οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως χρή μ’ ὀνομάσασαν εὖ λέγειν.

With names you speak well, but in naming your  
deeds I know not how to speak well of them.

Though this play on words is, at first glance, somewhat confusing, it is clear that Clytemnestra is using the exact same juxtaposition between *logoi* and *erga* that Agamemnon and Achilles did before. And just as for Achilles, the gulf between Agamemnon’s words and his deeds is a matter of grave concern for Clytemnestra. This third explicit juxtaposition of *logoi* and *erga* shows again that it is a central theme of this tragedy, and that dishonesty is the one consistent aspect of Agamemnon’s character.

Once Agamemnon can no longer invent words to disguise his deeds, there is little left for him to say. Soon after Clytemnestra hints at the distance between his *logoi* and *erga*, she

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<sup>99</sup> Contrary to his earlier claim to be completely trustworthy; IA 44-45: φέρε κοίνωσον μῦθον ἐς ἡμᾶς./πρὸς <δ’> ἄνδρ’ ἀγαθὸν πιστόν τε φράσεις. (“Come now, share with me your tale; you’ll be speaking to a good and loyal man.”).

reveals that she knows what his plot is. After a brief exclamation of despair (*IA* 1140: ἀπολόμεσθα), he falls silent (*IA* 1144: ἰδοῦ, σιώπω). It is almost as if, with lies no longer available to him, his power of speech abandons him; honest words, perhaps, do not become him. His final statement of the play comes some one-hundred lines later, after both his wife and daughter have, to no avail, sought to dissuade him from the sacrifice. Critics have endlessly tried to assess his sincerity, although there is no way of knowing whether the sentiments expressed—dismay at his options, fear of the army, and a patriotic love of Hellas—are honest.<sup>100</sup> But the irresolvable question of Agamemnon's belief in the Panhellenic cause is less striking than the undeniable consistency with which he uses deceit and deceptive speech throughout the *IA*. His dishonesty is pervasive.

### *The Agamemnon/Clytemnestra inversion and its reverberations at Aulis*

It should by now be clear that Euripides uses the *Agamemnon* as a central subtext to the *IA*, and in the process he inverts the deceiver/deceived relationship that existed between Aeschylus' *Clytemnestra* and Agamemnon. This inversion has several effects. The play both competes with and critiques Aeschylus' earlier work. By making *Clytemnestra* the deceived and Agamemnon the deceiver, Euripides rejects Aeschylus' version of the myth and completely

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<sup>100</sup> In favor of his sincerity are: Wasserman, 1949, p. 185; Conacher, 1967, p. 262; Mellert-Hoffmann, 1969, and perhaps Foley, 1985, p. 98 ("Agamemnon...now appears to undertake the venture to Troy as if it were a public...venture."). Contra see Blaiklock, 1952, pp. 119-20; Funke, 1964; Siegel, 1980, pp. 306 and fn 17; Siegel, 1981, pp. 264-65.

reformulates this canonical relationship. Even if we know that Clytemnestra will kill Agamemnon upon his return—perhaps some things truly are inevitable—the context supplied by the *IA* stands as a powerful explanation for her actions: she can no longer simply be considered an evil woman. Beyond the strictly dramatic implications of Euripides' reformulation, Euripides also rejects Aeschylus' idea that deceptive female speech is an evil that threatens "the overthrow of social order":<sup>101</sup> in the *IA*, *male* deceit is the main catalyst for instability. And while Agamemnon's lies to his wife and daughter are the most visible manifestations of male deceit in the play, it is also one of the tragedy's pervasive and unifying themes. Deceit is central to the political dynamics of Euripides' tragic world.

To a certain extent, this is visible even at the most general level. As mentioned above, the army is unaware of Agamemnon's machinations until the tragedy is nearly over. But Euripides is also careful to show how deceit and lying are integral to the political world of the play—a political world that reflects, in many ways, the world of his Athenian audience.<sup>102</sup> This is no easy task due to the physical and dramatic impossibility of actually showing, on-stage, such deceptive behavior on a broad and public scale. Yet it is implicit that the deceptive nature of Agamemnon's exchanges with Clytemnestra is characteristic not only of him, but also of his male peers in the tragedy, and more generally of the political climate of the play. Indeed, it is

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<sup>101</sup> Goldhill, 1986, p. 14, on Clytemnestra in the *Agamemnon*. Quoted in full above on p. 265.

<sup>102</sup> As argued at length throughout Chapter One.

one of the principal methods through which the leaders of the Greeks exert authority over an army that, as we have seen, is empowered with its own political clout.<sup>103</sup>

At first glance, it does not seem particularly noteworthy that Agamemnon has neglected to inform the army of Calchas' prophecy. After all, we learn of this neglect during the prologue (IA 106-07), at which time there is no reason to think that the army is (or will become) part of the decision-making process. It seems plausible that the Greek leaders have not informed the army simply because there is no reason to, and one could infer that Agamemnon is relatively forthright with his men. Menelaus' description of Agamemnon's behavior before Aulis contradicts this impression (IA 337-44):

οἷσθ', ὅτ' ἐσπούδαζες ἄρχειν Δαναΐδαις πρὸς Ἴλιον,  
τῷ δοκεῖν μὲν οὐχὶ χρήζων, τῷ δὲ βούλεσθαι θέλων,  
ὡς ταπεινὸς ἦσθα, πάσης δεξιᾶς προσθιγγάνων  
καὶ θύρας ἔχων ἀκλήστους τῷ θέλοντι δημοτῶν  
καὶ διδοὺς πρόσρησιν ἐξῆς πᾶσι — κεῖ μὴ τις θέλοι —  
τοῖς τρόποις ζητῶν πρίασθαι τὸ φιλότιμον ἐκ μέσου;  
καῖτ', ἐπεὶ κατέσχεσ ἀρχάς, μεταβαλὼν ἄλλους τρόπους  
τοῖς φίλοισιν οὐκέτ' ἦσθα τοῖς πρὶν ὡς πρόσθεν φίλος

You remember when you were eager to lead the Danaans to Ilium,  
wishing at once to seem willing yet not covetous—  
how humble you were! Taking each man's hand,  
your door open to any common man who wished,  
and time and again giving all a chance to speak  
—even those who did not wish to—  
striving in this way to buy the office from the middle class?<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> See again Chapter One.

<sup>104</sup> While this translation may seem anachronistic, the idea conveyed is that Agamemnon wishes to buy his office by winning over the "middle," and the term used (*mesos*) is the same one that Euripides gives Theseus in his famous discussion of the three groups of citizens (E. *Supp.* 238-49; 244: ἡ 'ν μέσῳ). See Ann N. Michelini, "Political Themes in Euripides' *Suppliants*," *American Journal of Philology* 115 (1994): p. 229, who refers to this *mesos* as a "middle class."

But when you'd won the command, you changed your ways  
and were no longer friendly to your friends as before

Just as he has consistently misrepresented reality in his dealings with Clytemnestra, with the *Presbutēs*, and with Achilles, so too has he misrepresented himself in his dealings with the army. His warmth, his open-door (tent?) policy, his willingness to hear out the common people, all of these are merely façades designed to “buy” the support of the common people of the army. Even before we see him in action with Clytemnestra, we already know that Agamemnon is a cagey politician willing to use flattery and duplicity to achieve his goals.

This dynamic of self-interested and deceptive leadership is a motif that Euripides explores primarily with Agamemnon, but also with the other leaders of the Greek army. A short time later, Agamemnon points his accusing finger at his partners in politics. Despite having convinced Menelaus to forego sacrificing Iphigenia, the news of Clytemnestra's arrival prompts a dramatic transformation in Agamemnon's attitude: he now believes he has no choice but to kill his daughter. Menelaus, justifiably enough, wonders why; after all, the army is as yet unaware of all these machinations. The answer is that Agamemnon fears his authority over the army will be usurped by his former ally Odysseus (IA 525-33):

Men.: οὐκ ἔστ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ὅ τι σὲ κάμῃ πημανεῖ. 525

Ag.: ποικίλος ἀεὶ πέφυκε τοῦ τ' ὄχλου μέτα.

M: φιλοτιμία μὲν ἐνέχεται, δεινῶ κακῶ.

A: οὐκ οὖν δοκεῖς νιν στάντ' ἐν Ἀργείοις μέσοις

λέξειν ἃ Κάλχας θέσφατ' ἐξηγήσατο,  
κάμ' ὡς ὑπέστην θῦμα, κατ' ἐψευδόμην,  
Ἀρτέμιδι θύσειν; οὐ ξυναρπάσας στρατόν,  
σὲ κάμ' ἀποκτείναντας Ἀργείους κόρη  
σφάξαι κελεύσει;

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M: It is not possible for Odysseus to hurt us.

A: He's always been most cunning with the mob.

M: He *is* obsessed with honor, a terrible evil.

A: Then don't you think he'll stand amidst the Argives

to tell them the prophecies Calchas enjoined, and that I lied and promised to sacrifice a victim to Artemis? That he'll seize the army, and order the Argives to kill you and me and to slaughter the girl?

Agamemnon does not claim that Odysseus will lie in order to persuade the army, but this description nevertheless alludes to a deep anxiety about the ease with which he could manipulate the “mob.”

To begin, the word *poikilos* (“many-colored,” “intricate,” but also “wily”) has many negative and deceptive connotations. It was often used to describe woven fabrics, and in fact it is the very term used to describe one of the “tricky” garments discussed earlier in this chapter: the “carpet” which leads Agamemnon to his death (cf. *A. Ag.* 923, 926, 936; see above p. 267). When used to describe humans, *poikilos* “indicate[s]...a man of cunning, full of inventive ploys...and tricks of every kind.”<sup>105</sup> Homer’s Odysseus, Hesiod’s Prometheus, and the divine trickster Hermes are all characterized as endowed with *poikilia*.<sup>106</sup> Within the context of these archaic texts this was considered a positive, or at least useful, attribute. But within the context of public discourse—the context within which Odysseus’ *poikilia* is described in the *IA*—this is not the case.

Alcaeus, for example, maligns a rival who “like a *poikilo*-minded fox foretold an easy outcome and hoped to escape notice.”<sup>107</sup> Since the figure of the fox in Greek poetry had

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<sup>105</sup> Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, tr. Janet Lloyd, (Chicago, 1991), p. 19.

<sup>106</sup> Odysseus is regularly described with the compound *ποικιλομήτης* (cf. *Hom. Od.* 3.163; 7.168; 22.115, etc.); Prometheus receives a variety of *poikilo*-compounds (*Hes. Th.* 511: *ποικίλος αιολόμητις*; *Th.* 521: *ποικιλόβουλος*); and Hermes is also called *ποικιλομήτης* (*HH* 4.155, 514).

<sup>107</sup> *Alc. Fr.* 69: ὁ δ’ ὡς ἀλώπα [... / ποικ[ι]λόφρων εὐμάρεα προλέξα[ις / ἤλπ[ε]το λάσσην.

heretofore enjoyed “a broadly positive profile” and “instantiat[ed] a laudable cunning,”<sup>108</sup> it is the term *poikilos* alone that conveys the negative connotations of Alcaeus’ remarks. In Euripides’ *Hecuba*, the chorus uses the same adjective (*poikilophrōn*) to describe this tragic version of Odysseus as a “*poikilo*-minded, glib, sweet-talking *dēmos*-pandering”<sup>109</sup> speaker who persuades the army that it is necessary to sacrifice the maiden Polyxena. The dramatic parallels to the *IA* are striking, but so too is the fact that both plays use *poikilos* to describe Odysseus’ ability to manipulate the crowd. Aristophanes draws on the same lexical tradition in his *Knights*, a comedy which, as we shall see, is similar to the *IA* in its preoccupation with deceptive speech.<sup>110</sup> In the *Knights*, the characters Cleon and the Sausage-Seller represent the ubiquity and danger of deceptive speech and flattery in Athenian political discourse.<sup>111</sup> Aristophanes calls each of these men *poikiloi*,<sup>112</sup> and even more compellingly, he refers to their methods of persuasion as *doloi poikiloi* (*Eq.* 685).

A speaker who is *poikilos*, then, is one who is able to twist words in order to be persuasive, and this is exactly what is implied of Odysseus when he is described as such. Furthermore, his reasons for using rhetorical *poikilia* are clearly self-interested: he is *philotimos* —

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<sup>108</sup> Cf. Deborah Steiner, “Framing the Fox: Callimachus’ Second *Iamb* and Its Predecessors,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 130 (2010): p. 100.

<sup>109</sup> E. *Hec.* 131-33: ὁ ποικιλόφρων/κόπις ἡδυλόγος δημοχαριστής/Λαερτιάδης πείθει στρατιᾶν.

<sup>110</sup> On this see below, pp. 315-319.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Alan Sommerstein, ed., *Aristophanes: Knights* (Warminster, 1981), p. 2; Jon Hesk, *Deception and Democracy in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 255-58; Andrew Scholtz, “Friends, Lovers, Flatterers: Demophilic Courtship in Aristophanes’ *Knights*,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 134 (2004): pp. 263-93.

<sup>112</sup> Also noted by A.M. Bowie, *Aristophanes: Myth, Ritual and Comedy* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 54. Cf. *Ar. Eq.* 685 (the Sausage-Seller), and 758 (Cleon). Cleon is in fact considered dangerous specifically because he is a *poikilos anēr*.

ambitious—a term which, even when not qualified as “a terrible evil” (as it is here) was already rife with negative connotations.<sup>113</sup> Finally, it is clear Odysseus’ *poikilia* allows him to exert considerable influence over the army—in Agamemnon’s words to “seize” (*IA* 531: *συνάρπασας*) the army. The use of this verb suggests an act of violence, one that is essentially analogous to Paris’ theft of Helen, which is also described in the *IA* with *harpazō*-compounds.<sup>114</sup> In other words, the terms with which Agamemnon describes Odysseus reflect, ironically enough, a deep anxiety on his part about his rival’s use of questionable rhetoric for his gain. Much like, for example, Cleon in Thucydides’ Mytilenian Debate (on which much more below), Agamemnon complains bitterly about his rival’s use his own deceptive tactics.

Even though Agamemnon is not the most trustworthy source, and despite the fact that we never see Odysseus in action, there is reason to believe that his concerns about Odysseus’ honesty and scruples are warranted. Achilles’ testimony at the end of the play confirms that Odysseus has succeeded in doing just what Agamemnon feared. After the exposure of Agamemnon’s lies, the passionate pleas for Iphigenia’s life, and the *pater familias*’ eventual

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<sup>113</sup> Cf. LSJ; Pindar, fr. 210; Th. 2.65.7: Thucydides speaks of private *philotimia* (*ιδίας φιλοτιμίας*) as being one of the downfalls of the Athenians in the Peloponnesian War; while Euripides does not specifically qualify Odysseus’ *philotimia* as “private,” it seems safe to say, from this passage, that he is perceived to be pursuing his own interests. See also Th. 3.82 and 8.89 (not terribly dissimilar in sentiment from 2.65); E. *Ph.* 531-32; and of course *IA* 342 (cited above on p. 67) and *IA* 520. Euripides and Thucydides are, essentially, the first authors to use these terms (*philotimos*, *philotimia* etc.) with any frequency.

<sup>114</sup> *IA* 75-76: *ἔρῳν ἐρῶσαν ᾧχετ’ ἐξαναρπάσας/Ελένην*. Iphigenia, when she explains her reasons for accepting her own sacrifice, also uses a *harpazō*-compound to describe Helen’s kidnapping/elopement (*IA* 1382: *ἦν ἀνήρπασεν Πάρις*). She even argues that it is right that she be sacrificed specifically because it is necessary to stop the barbarians from seizing (*IA* 1381: *ἀρπάζειν*) Greek women. See also Herodotus, 1.2-4, in which he constantly uses the terms *harpazō* and *harpagē* to describe the exchange of kidnappings that preceded the Trojan War. In all of these cases, including the one that relates to Odysseus, forms of *harpazō* clearly denote acts of violence.

rejection of the same, Achilles bursts onto the scene and announces that the Argive army is hot on his heels. Clytemnestra asks him if any of them are coming for Iphigenia, to which Achilles responds (*IA* 1362-64):

Ach.: μυρίοι γ', ἄξει δ' Ὀδυσσεύς.

A: Thousands, and Odysseus is leading.

Cly.: ἄρ' ὁ Σισύφου γόνος;

C: The child of Sisyphus?

A: αὐτὸς οὗτος.

A: The very one.

C: ἴδια πράσων, ἢ στρατοῦ ταχθεὶς ὕπο;

C: Acting on his own, or ordered by the army?

A: αἰρεθεὶς ἐκῶν.

A: He chose to be chosen.

Achilles' pithy analysis—αἰρεθεὶς ἐκῶν—says it all. Odysseus has most willingly been chosen to lead the Greeks in their mission to drag Iphigenia, by the hair, if need be (cf. *IA* 1366), to the altar.

While we cannot know exactly how Odysseus managed to be chosen, there is some evidence that the information he gave the army is not altogether accurate. Achilles, who had been at the camp and who describes a scene similar to an Athenian assembly,<sup>115</sup> reports that the army is furious with him for protecting Iphigenia because, according to them, “it is necessary to slaughter her” (*IA* 1348 *χρεῶν σφάξαι νιν*). Even Achilles' own men have turned against him and are calling him “a slave to marriage” (*IA* 1354: οἱ με τὸν γάμων ἀπεκάλουν ἥσσονα) believing that he is choosing his marriage over their war. Neither of these claims is true, since

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<sup>115</sup> Achilles notes that he had attempted to speak out against the plan to sacrifice Iphigenia, but had been shouted down by a general *thorubos* (uproar, clamor). This kind of popular uproar is described by Plato (*Rep.* 492B) as being frequent occurrences at “assemblies, law courts, theaters, or military camps,” and it is undoubtedly the type of commotion to which Xenophon refers in *Hell.* 1.7.13 when he describes the people's uproar at the thought that they should not be permitted to “do as they please.” On the frequency of such *thoruboi* in democratic Athens, cf. above, Chapter One pp. 89-90; Victor Bers, “Dikastic Thorubos,” in *Crux: Essays in Greek History Presented to G.E.M. de Ste. Croix*, eds. Paul Cartledge, F.D. Harvey, (London, 1985), pp. 1-15; Judith Tacon, “Ecclesiastic Thorubos: Interventions, Interruptions, and Popular Involvement in the Athenian Assembly,” *Greece & Rome* 48 (2001): pp. 173-192.

we know it is really a choice between sacrificing Iphigenia and returning home (cf. *IA* 89-93), and that Achilles wishes to save Iphigenia not in order to marry her, but rather to clear his name (*IA* 935-47). It is possible that the army has come to these conclusions on their own, without Odysseus' encouragement. But since we already know that he is a crafty speaker, that he is leading the army in this endeavor, and that the army has used misinformation to malign and shout down Achilles in an assembly-like atmosphere, the implication is that Odysseus has planted these ideas in the army's (collective) head. As the leader of this mob, he practically embodies a demagogue.

More generally, the terms with which Odysseus is described throughout the *IA*—*poikilos*, *philotimos*, “child of Sisyphus”—consistently depict him as a man who is untrustworthy because of his ambition and because of his ability to cunningly achieve his goals. A third leader of the Greeks, the prophet Calchas, is described in even less flattering and ambiguous terms. Like Odysseus, Agamemnon accuses him (and his ilk) of being an “ambitious evil” (*IA* 520: φιλότιμον κακόν). Later on, Achilles asks “what kind of man is a prophet? One who says a few true things, and many false.”<sup>116</sup> While he is not a central character in the *IA*, this brief characterization helps evince the idea that the Greek leaders, as evidenced by Agamemnon's behavior on stage, are ever willing to lie and deceive in order to win the glory that only Iphigenia's sacrifice can enable.

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<sup>116</sup> *IA* 956-57: τίς δὲ μάντις ἔστω ἀνήρ, ὅς ὀλίγ' ἀληθῆ, πολλὰ δὲ ψευδῆ λέγει.

The sacrifice of Iphigenia is in fact an ideal device through which to contemplate this male dishonesty. Through it, Euripides is able to portray Agamemnon deceiving his family on-stage, but also to show how leaders such as Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Calchas adopt a similarly cavalier attitude towards the truth in their dealings with the army. The *IA* thus focuses the audience's attention on the facility with which these men dissimulate when it serves their interests. This is done against the backdrop of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, and in particular his portrayal of Clytemnestra as the female deceiver *par excellence*. The constant allusions to the *Agamemnon* thus serve a dual purpose: they call attention to the fact that lying is a central to the plot of the *IA*, as it is in the *Agamemnon*; at the same time, they are instrumental in emphasizing the difference in the lying that takes place, namely that rather than feminine guile, it is deceptive male speech that is the true threat to society at Aulis. Agamemnon's deceit of Clytemnestra, in all its contrasts to the Aeschylean tradition, reverberates through every scene and relates to every aspect of the *IA*.

### ***5. Deceptive Male Speech in the Late Fifth Century***

The centrality of deceit to Euripides' play does not occur in a vacuum. It is closely related to the growing anxiety, felt in Euripides' Athens, concerning the use of deceptive language and rhetoric by the (male) political elite. This anxiety had been increasing throughout

the latter half of the fifth century, spurred on by both the influence of rhetoric within democratic Athens and by the resulting arrival of sophists, such as Gorgias, who claimed to be able to teach the power of persuasion. In the following section, I will first discuss the deceptive potential of rhetoric in the late fifth century BCE, as seen through the theories of Gorgias, after which I will examine three texts that mirror the *IA* in their concern about the proliferation of deceptive rhetoric: Thucydides Mytilenian Debate; Aristophanes *Knights*, and Xenophon's description of the aftermath of Arginousae.

### *Gorgias and the power of (deceptive) logos*

Gorgias of Leontini was a figure of some renown throughout the Greek world, including in Athens.<sup>117</sup> It is likely that many Athenians (and not just his pupils) were familiar with his theories on rhetoric and persuasion.<sup>118</sup> Relatively few of his writings have survived, and Plato's

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<sup>117</sup> The fact that Plato wrote a dialogue in which he is a central figure is certainly an indication of that, but we also know that Gorgias came to Athens on a diplomatic mission in 427 BCE. Cf. B.H. Garnon Williams, "The Political Mission of Gorgias to Athens in 427 B.C.," *Classical Quarterly* 25 (1931): p. 52 fn 5; Richard Leo Enos, "Why Gorgias of Leontini Traveled to Athens: A Study of Recent Epigraphical Evidence," *Rhetoric Review* 11 (1992): pp. 1-15. It was also said that he taught prominent Athenians such as Pericles, Critias, and Isocrates. For more details on Gorgias' life and works, see Scott Porter Consigny, *Gorgias, Sophist and Artist* (Columbia, SC, 2001), pp. 4-10.

<sup>118</sup> Jacqueline de Romilly, *The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens*, tr. Janet Lloyd, (Oxford, 1992), p. 70, argues that Plato has Gorgias play a relatively minor role in the Platonic dialogue bearing his name (for more than three-quarters of the dialogue Polus and Calicles are Socrates principal interlocutors) because "Plato could not have ascribed to Gorgias ideas that the latter himself, as was publicly known, would have disavowed." Charles P. Segal, "Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 66 (1962): p. 101, notes that Isocrates speaks of Gorgias "as if the association between Gorgias and the earlier fifth-century Eleatic and Sicilian physical and philosophical speculation was well-known and generally accepted."

depiction of the man and his teachings cannot simply be taken at face value,<sup>119</sup> but it is nevertheless possible to come to a general understanding of his theories. Perhaps most obviously, much like the characters of the *IA*, Gorgias was well aware that *logoi* and *erga* do not always correspond. Indeed, what remains of Gorgias' work is perhaps the "most extreme statement of the divergence and counterbalance of words and actuality."<sup>120</sup> In the *Defense of Palamedes*, for example, Gorgias directly contrasts the words of his accusers to his actual deeds: "you must not rely more on words (*logoi*) than deeds (*erga*)."<sup>121</sup> The implication is obviously that the things said about Palamedes in no way match the reality of the situation.

Even more telling is his conceptualization of the *logos/erga* opposition in his *Encomium for Helen* (8):

εἰ δὲ λόγος ὁ πείσας καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπατήσας, οὐδὲ πρὸς τοῦτο χαλεπὸν ἀπολογήσασθαι καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν ἀπολύσασθαι ὦδε. λόγος δυνάστης μέγας ἐστίν, ὃς σμικροτάτῳ σώματι καὶ ἀφανεστάτῳ θειότατα ἔργα ἀποτελεῖ

If *logos* persuaded [Helen] by deceiving her soul, then it is not difficult to defend her or absolve her of blame. For *logos* is a powerful master, which with the smallest form and appearance accomplishes marvelous *erga*.

Two obvious points emerge from this passage: first, that *logos* itself may be deceptive; and second, that *logos*, whether deceptive or not, is extraordinarily powerful. Further on, Gorgias

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<sup>119</sup> Bruce McComiskey, *Gorgias and the New Sophistic Rhetoric* (Carbondale, 2002), pp. 17-31, argues quite strongly that the arguments Plato puts in the orator's mouth are not, in fact, an accurate reflection of the historical Gorgias' thinking.

<sup>120</sup> Parry, 1981, p. 41.

<sup>121</sup> *Gorg. Palamedes* 34: ὑμᾶς δὲ χρὴ μὴ τοῖς λόγοις μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς ἔργοις προσέχειν τὸν νοῦν. The juxtaposition of *logoi* and *erga* continues throughout sections 34 and 35. Elsewhere (sections 24 and 25) he uses the contrasting terms *doxa* and *alētheia* to make a similar distinction.

highlights the dangers of deceptive *logos* by arguing that people tend to rely not on true knowledge but on *doxa*—opinion or reputation. *Doxa* itself is “slippery and unreliable” (*Hel.* 11: σφαλερὰ καὶ ἀβέβαιος<sup>122</sup>), and its “instability...makes possible the deception on which all persuasion must rest.”<sup>123</sup> Given our own tenuous grasp on reality, it is almost inevitable that some form of deception be a part of the persuasive process. Accordingly, and perhaps most disturbingly, in many debates (*agōnes*) “one speech (*logos*), written with skill but not delivered truthfully, has delighted a great crowd (*ochlos*) and persuaded them.”<sup>124</sup> Gorgias does not necessarily advocate such an approach, nor indeed can we be sure that his “Encomium” is entirely serious. Nevertheless, it is easy to see how the problems outlined by Gorgias would appear troublesome in democratic Athens, given that important decisions were made on the basis of speeches given to large audiences—the very *ochloi* whom Gorgias regarded as most susceptible to persuasion (*Hel.* 13 but also *Pal.* 33).

### *The Mytilenian debate and the rhetoric of deception in late fifth-century Athens*

While Gorgias himself, as far as we can tell from his writings, does not seem particularly concerned about the implications of rhetorical deception in fifth-century society, the same cannot be said of some of his contemporaries. A classic example, in this regard, is provided by

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<sup>122</sup> Note that Menelaus uses the same term to describe Agamemnon in *IA* 334, cf. above p. 287.

<sup>123</sup> Segal, 1962, p. 112.

<sup>124</sup> Gorg. *Hel.* 13: εἷς λόγος πολλὸν ὄχλον ἔτερεψε καὶ ἔπεισι τέχνηι γραφαίς, οὐκ ἀληθείαι λεχθεῖς.

Thucydides in his description of the Mytilenian debate. This episode is particularly germane to the previous discussion insofar as it demonstrates both a sharp anxiety about, but also a certain Gorgianic acceptance of, the inevitability of deception in public speech.

In the immediate wake of Mytilene's unsuccessful revolt from Athens in 427 BCE, the Athenian assembly had voted to execute all adult males in Mytilene and to enslave the women and children (Th. 3.36.2). The following day, however, the Athenians repented upon recognizing the cruelty of their plan (Th. 3.36.4). What follows in Thucydides' account is a debate between Cleon and a certain Diodotus. Cleon argues that the original plan must be adhered to; Diodotus that it is in Athens' best interests to reconsider. On the surface, the central question of this debate is whether or not wipe out Mytilene. At root, however, the main subject of the two speeches is the role and the amount of power political speech is to have in the Athenian democracy.<sup>125</sup> Both speeches are filled with rhetorical tricks and substantive inconsistencies.<sup>126</sup> And neither speaker really attempts to address the question at hand, that is to say the people's doubts about the morality of the death sentence. Instead, Cleon and Diodotus accuse each other of lying in order to further personal interests, and attack the Athenian assembly for being an active participant in this process of deception.

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<sup>125</sup> Ober, 1998, pp. 94-104, frequently calls both speeches discourses of "meta-rhetoric." Hesk, 2000, pp. 248-55, refers to the discourse as the "rhetoric of anti-rhetoric."

<sup>126</sup> On this, see especially, C.W. Macleod, "Reason and Necessity: Thucydides III 9-14, 37-48," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 98 (1978): pp. 64-78.

Cleon begins with a sharp critique of both the democratic process and of intellectualism<sup>127</sup> (Th. 3.37), and then turns to an excoriation of both speakers and speech. Whoever speaks against him, he says, is either treating this debate as a rhetorical contest (ἀγωνίσαιτ' ἄν), or has been “induced by profit” to “try and mislead” the people (Th. 3.38.2: ἢ κέρδει ἐπαιρόμενος...ἐκπονήσας παράγειν). The people themselves, however, are just as accountable as Cleon’s rivals: they put more weight on the words (*logoi*) of the orators than on the actual deeds (*erga*) in question; they judge future events (*erga*, again) based only on who speaks well; and they are “the best at being deceived by a fancy turn of phrase.” (Th. 3.38.5: μετὰ καινότητος μὲν λόγου ἀπατᾶσθαι ἄριστοι). “Slaves to your pleasure,” he exclaims, “you are more like the sophists’ seated spectators than men deliberating for their city.”<sup>128</sup> A clear concern with rhetoric and with the distance between words and deeds emerges from Cleon’s speech. He claims that the unreliability of *logoi* poses a great threat to democratic discourse, while at the same time he himself uses unreliable *logoi*. In this sense, he is akin to Euripides’ Agamemnon: he is able to use manipulative speech while complaining about his rivals doing the same.

Cleon’s attacks lead to some potentially chilling conclusions. Following his logic, whoever “speaks well” is doing so in order to manipulate the people for his own benefit; among

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<sup>127</sup> Cleon specifically praises ἀμαθία (ignorance) as more useful to the governance of a city (Th. 3.37.3). On this, see James A. Andrews, “Cleon’s Hidden Appeals (Th. 3.37-40),” *The Classical Quarterly* 50 (2000): pp. 53-56.

<sup>128</sup> Th. 3.38.7: ἀπλῶς τε ἀκοῆς ἠδονῆ ἡσσώμενοι καὶ σοφιστῶν θεαταῖς εὐκότεις καθημένοις μᾶλλον ἢ περὶ πόλεως βουλευομένοις.

the audience, whoever chooses to follow such a speaker willingly submits to such manipulation for his own enjoyment. Concerning his actual rival, Cleon makes two accusations: that he is knowingly “misleading” the people by encouraging them to abandon the execution of all Mytilenians; and that he is doing so either for purely “agonistic” purposes, or because he has accepted money (presumably from the Mytilenians) to do so. Cleon thus purports to be deeply concerned with those who use language in order to manipulate the people, with the people’s own fascination with such manipulative language, and even with the sophistic nature of this speaker/spectator experience. Given his ability to exploit these “problems” for his own ends, it is hard to believe that Cleon was sincerely troubled by them. But Thucydides’ use of these arguments implies that many in Athens were.

Cleon’s rival Diodotus, despite his more “lenient” stance on the Mytilenians, returns like-for-like rhetorically.<sup>129</sup> In defense of his audience (who have dared revisit the earlier sentence) and himself (who dares to speak against it), he dispels the notion that anything but words (*logous*) can be used to understand events (*pragmatōn*; Th. 3.42.2). He thus seems to re-establish a positive connection between *logos* and *ergon*. This impression is short-lived. Soon after we find “the most astounding stroke in Diodotus’ speech”:<sup>130</sup> according to Diodotus, any speaker—even an honest one must lie to the assembly in order to be believed (Th. 3.43.2), while

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<sup>129</sup> As Macleod, 1978, p. 72, notes: “[t]here is a wealth of verbal echoes” between Diodotus’ and Cleon’s speeches.

<sup>130</sup> Clifford Orwin, *The Humanity of Thucydides* (Princeton, 1994), p. 161.

Athens itself is “the only city it is impossible to openly benefit without using deception.”<sup>131</sup> Diodotus blames his audience for this sorry state of affairs, for it is their habitual suspicion of candor that forces the orators to turn to deception (Th. 3.43.4). All this obviously suggests that “Diodotus himself will have to use *apatē*.”<sup>132</sup> The fact that his proposal wins the day implies that he does so, and skillfully. Diodotus’ stunning proclamation and Cleon’s similar grumblings about deception indicate that there was a pervasive anxiety about deceitful speech in Thucydides’ Athens—an anxiety that would also have been stirred by Euripides’ portrayal of similarly manipulative speech in the *IA*.

In Thucydides’ portrayal, the tendency of orators to equivocate before the public was not only expected in Athens, it was practically demanded. This dynamic is propagated by speaker and spectator alike; each half of the equation is equally responsible for the dishonest nature of the discourse, and each is fully aware of this fact. But perhaps most troublingly, in Thucydides’ narration, neither speaker is at all inclined to reduce the gap between *logoi* and *erga* in Athenian public discourse, but instead try to exploit the gap for their own advantage. The same may be said about the leaders of the Greeks in Euripides’ *IA* who both use—and accuse others of using—words that are well removed from the reality of the situation, and who do so exclusively for their own gains.

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<sup>131</sup> Th. 3.43.2-3: μόνην τε πόλιν διὰ τὰς περινοίας εὖ ποιῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ προφανοῦς μὴ ἐξαπατήσαντα ἀδύνατον.

<sup>132</sup> Hesk, 2000, p. 53.

*Aristophanes' Knights and the Comedification of Deceptive Male Speech*

Thucydides was not alone among his contemporaries in his concern for the deceptive tendencies of the orators, nor in his suspicion that the people themselves played a role in this, nor even in his identification of Cleon as one of the most dangerous exponents of this problem. Aristophanes, in his *Knights* (424 BCE), also openly accuses the Athenian orators (and specifically Cleon) of dishonesty, and maligns the Athenian public for their willingness to accept it. In this play, Aristophanes is extremely direct in his depiction of the politicians (οἱ ῥήτορες—the orators, literally) as self-serving and manipulative. The main conceit of the play is that the two main characters (a thinly-veiled Cleon and his rival, an unknown Sausage-Seller) must pander for the favor of the *Dēmos* (itself a character). It is clear that they do so exclusively for their own personal gain, principally by means of flattering and, whenever necessary, lying to the people.

Aristophanes' allegory is not subtle. In the opening scene of the play, we see two other characters discussing Cleon's relationship to the people. They describe him bathing and feeding the *Dēmos* to its heart's content, fawning over it shamelessly (*Eq.* 50-65). Cleon's prize for this is that he can use his power to extort bribes from the other "slaves" of the people (*Eq.* 65-70) and, less allegorically, from other cities (*Eq.* 801-09). His methods are the same ones that Diodotus decries in Thucydides' Mytilenian debate: he makes false and slanderous accusations against

his peers, and thus scares them into submission.<sup>133</sup> This tactic is certainly analogous to the one Agamemnon ascribes to Odysseus in the *IA*, and which the latter then appears to use against Achilles.<sup>134</sup> Aristophanes implies that this is typical of all politicians, for indeed the Sausage-Seller's bright future in politics had been recognized at an early age due to his ability to steal and dissemble (*Eq.* 417-26).

Instances of both Cleon and the Sausage-Seller telling blatant and self-serving lies are so abundant in the *Knights* that it would be impossible to mention them all. The two characters square off in specious *agōnes* before both the *boulē* (not shown on-stage) and the *Dēmos*. At the *boulē* level, we hear that Cleon invents outlandish—yet “most persuasive” (*Eq.* 629: *πιθανώταθ'*)—tales of conspiracies until the Sausage-Seller, seeing the *boulē* “deceived by this crookery” (*Eq.* 633: *τοῖς φενακισμοῖσιν ἐξαπατωμένην*), steps in. He distracts them with the news of a steep drop in the price of sardines, an initiative clever enough to bring him victory. The chorus celebrates the Sausage-Seller's victory by claiming that with his *poikiloi doloī* (“devious tricks”; *Eq.* 686), he is more than a match for Cleon. They thus describe his political dishonesty with the same terms that Euripides uses to describe the tradecraft of Agamemnon and Odysseus in the *IA*.

The competition before the *Dēmos* takes place in two parts: a contest to see who can slather on the most obsequious compliments and offer the finest enticements to the people; and

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<sup>133</sup> The term used—*διαβάλλω*—is the same in the two authors (cf. *Th.* 3.42.2; *Ar. Eq.* 64).

<sup>134</sup> Cf. *IA* 526-37, 1348-54, and above pp. 301-306.

one in which Cleon and the Sausage-Seller take turns producing and interpreting a series of ludicrously unbelievable (and yet so easily swallowed) oracles for their own benefit. In the latter contest, the play's deep skepticism about the legitimacy of prophetic speech is similar to the condemnations of Calchas in the *IA*. And in both contests, it is evident that the two politicians are low-bred liars, and that the people enjoy this. It is on this final point that Aristophanes is most explicit (*Eq.* 1111-12; 1115-20):

ὦ Δῆμε καλήν γ' ἔχεις ἀρχήν...	1111	Oh Dēmos, a fine empire you have...
...ἀλλ' εὐπαράγωγος εἶ, θωπευόμενός τε χαίρεις κᾶξαπατώμενος, πρὸς τόν τε λέγοντ' ἀεὶ κέχρηνας· ὁ νοῦς δέ σου παρῶν ἀποδημεῖ.	1115     1120	...but you're easily led astray, delighting in flattery and being deceived, and always a-gape at your speakers. Your mind, though present, is on leave.

Aristophanes' opinion of the people's ability to discern honest arguments is similar to that of Thucydides' Cleon and Diodotus. Not only are the people easy to trick; they actually enjoy it. The *Dēmos* defends itself by arguing that it is in fact *the people* who have been duping Cleon: because of their penchant for drink, they simply allow their thieving politicians to get fat before they "sacrifice and eat them" (*Eq.* 1140: θύσας ἐπιδειπνεῖς). It is easy to be skeptical of this argument,<sup>135</sup> but even if the *Dēmos* is correct in its evaluation of the situation, this is hardly heartening.

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<sup>135</sup> And it is essentially rejected at the end of the play; when the Sausage-Seller describes the former behavior of the *Dēmos* (*Eq.* 1340-55), it is clear that the *Dēmos* had been completely hoodwinked by its politicians.

Despite all this, Aristophanes' *Knights* ends on a relatively high note. The Sausage-Seller prevails over Cleon and, even though "we are encouraged to believe that he will rule in the same way as his predecessor," he is presented at the end of the play as the "honest adviser" to a "rejuvenated" *Dēmos*.<sup>136</sup> In fact, the Sausage-Seller has quite literally "boiled down" the *Dēmos* (Eq. 1321), reverting it back to its pure state of the early fifth century. Despite this optimistic tone, Hesk is correct to argue that "[t]he conclusion of *Knights* is not...a *clear-cut* utopian fantasy of a democratic politics freed of flattery [and] deceit."<sup>137</sup> As Bowie points out, the way that this positive resolution is founded—the boiling down of the *Dēmos*—is obviously unrealistic; Aristophanes proposes no solution that could ever occur in the real world.<sup>138</sup> And reverting the *Dēmos* to its form in the age of Aristides and Miltiades implies a return to politics as they were before Ephialtes' reforms, a time that arguably precedes the advent of true democracy in Athens.<sup>139</sup> Ultimately, the vast majority of the play focuses on the deceptive and manipulative practices of Athenian politicians, and on the democratic public's willingness to submit to their perfidy. All this cannot be simply washed away by the magical rejuvenation of the *Dēmos* and its politicians; at the heart of Aristophanes' play there still resides a deep anxiety about the

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<sup>136</sup> Sommerstein, ed., 1981, p. 2.

<sup>137</sup> Hesk, 2000, p. 257.

<sup>138</sup> Bowie, 1993, pp. 76-77.

<sup>139</sup> The question of when we see the true beginning of Athenian democracy is complex and controversial. On the subject, cf. Kurt A. Raaflaub, "The Breakthrough of *Dēmokratia* in Mid-Fifth-Century Athens," in *Origins of Democracy in Ancient Greece*, eds. Raaflaub, Josiah Ober, and Robert W. Wallace (Berkeley, 2007), pp. 105-54; Raaflaub argues that it was only after the reforms of Ephialtes that the Athenian democracy was "as fully realized as was possible under the conditions prevailing in antiquity" (p. 106). For the opposite view, i.e. that the "origins of Athenian democracy" can be found in 508/07 BCE, see, in the same volume, Josiah Ober, "'I Besieged That Man': Democracy's Revolutionary Start," pp. 83-104. Thanks are due to Prof. Jonathan Hall for suggesting this point to me.

crooked and duplicitous nature of Athens' politicians, and about the people's eagerness to reward such behavior.

*The Arginousae affair and the dangers of deceptive rhetoric*

While Aristophanes and Thucydides both provide fine (literary) examples of the pervasive distrust of public speech in Athens, an even more concrete example is provided by the prosecution of Athenian generals after the battle of Arginousae in 406 BCE. Despite the success of the Athenian forces in this naval battle, this can hardly be described as a happy incident in Athenian history. Upon their return, six of the generals who had led the Athenians at Arginousae (two refused to return), were brought to trial because they had neglected to pick up the men who had been shipwrecked during the battle (*X. Hel.* 1.7.4). According to Xenophon's account, the trierarch (and former general) Theramenes was instrumental in prosecuting his colleagues. After a series of reversals—the generals had almost talked themselves out of trouble before nightfall, and a festival, intervened—they were all condemned to death and executed (*X. Hel.* 1.7.4-34). The city thus “deprived itself, by a tragic judicial error, of men who were both its best generals and the most loyal supporters of democracy.”<sup>140</sup> In the

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<sup>140</sup> Marta Sordi, “Teramene e il processo delle Arginuse,” *Aevum* 55 (1981): p. 3.

aftermath, the Athenian citizens “repented,” and lashed out at those who had urged the execution. The charge against these men was that they had “deceived the *dēmos*.”<sup>141</sup>

Both Xenophon and Diodorus provide accounts of this incident, and although they diverge on many important details,<sup>142</sup> they both agree that the Athenian *dēmos* felt it had been deceived, and that specific charges of deception were subsequently levied against those who had urged the prosecution of the generals. This is crucial, since it represents the “only certain instance of *probolai* against deceivers of the demos” in fifth-century Athens.<sup>143</sup> That fact alone would seem to indicate that the anxiety about elite deception, already well-embedded in the texts of Thucydides and Aristophanes that we have seen, had come to a head in 406 BCE. But Xenophon adds several other details which, even if not entirely accurate,<sup>144</sup> are nevertheless indicative of the atmosphere of distrust that existed in Athens.

Much like Euripides does in the *IA*, Xenophon describes a wide variety of deceitful machinations that are used in order to achieve certain political ends. The historian claims that, in order to inflame the *dēmos* against the generals, Theramenes’ partisans actually hired people to impersonate the relatives of those who had died at Arginousae. These individuals then

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<sup>141</sup> X. *Hel.* 1.7.35: τὸν δῆμον ἐξηπάτησαν; Diod. 13.103.2: τὸν δῆμον ἐξηπατηκώς.

<sup>142</sup> Most notably in their explanation of Theramenes’ role in the conviction of the eight generals. For a concise analysis of the divergences in the two accounts, the questions that it raises, and some possible solutions (especially concerning our interpretations of Theramenes), see A. Andrewes, “The Arginousai Trial,” *Phoenix* 28 (1974): pp. 112-22.

<sup>143</sup> Matthew R. Christ, “Ostracism, Sycophancy, and Deception of the Demos: [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 43.5,” *The Classical Quarterly* 42 (1992), p. 340 fn 20. Christos Kremmydas, “The Discourse of Deception and Characterization in Attic Oratory,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 53 (2013): p. 51, adds to this tally the prosecution of Miltiades as described in Hdt. 6.136.

<sup>144</sup> Andrewes, 1974, tends to cast doubt on these claims; Sordi, 1981, is more sanguine about Xenophon’s accuracy.

appeared at the assembly when the question of the generals was being discussed (*X. Hel.* 1.7.8). Obviously, the purpose of this gambit must have been to cause the assembly to become more incensed at the abandonment of those shipwrecked men. At the same time, Xenophon reports that Theramenes bribed a certain Callixenus to appear before the assembly and propose the extraordinary (and “probably illegal”)<sup>145</sup> measure of trying all the generals together (*X. Hel.* 1.7.9-10). After this, another man spoke to the assembly who claimed to have survived the shipwreck by chance, and to have been urged by his drowning companions “to report to the *dēmos* that the generals had not picked up the men who had done the most in service of the fatherland.”<sup>146</sup> Whether or not Theramenes was as central to this plot as Xenophon tells us, his narration and the outcome both suggest that a great deal of underhanded measures were taken in this debate.

The same thing is implied in a speech made in defense of the generals, as transmitted by Xenophon. After Callixenus’ proposal for a mass trial had been accepted, and the objections of the Prytaneis had been forcefully overruled, a certain Euryptolemus spoke up. The central argument of his speech is quite straightforward: he suggests that the generals be tried separately, as the law accords, and that they each be allowed to defend themselves (*X. Hel.* 1.7.20-23). But before he gets to his point, he feels compelled to note that he will “advise them in

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<sup>145</sup> Jennifer Tolbert Roberts, “Arginousae Once Again,” *The Classical World* 71 (1977): p. 111.

<sup>146</sup> *X. Hel.* 1.7.11: ἀπαγγεῖλαι τῷ δήμῳ ὅτι οἱ στρατηγοὶ οὐκ ἀνείλοντο τοὺς ἀρίστους ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος γενομένους. Xenophon does not actually say that this man was planted, but the structure of the narrative and the nature of the remarks suggest that he was.

such a way that you cannot be deceived either by me or by anyone else" (X. *Hel.* 1.7.19: συμβουλεύω δ' ὑμῖν, ἐν οἷς οὐθ' ὑπ' ἐμοῦ οὐθ' ὑπ' ἄλλου οὐδενὸς ἔστιν ἐξαπατηθῆναι ὑμᾶς). This is similar to what we see in Thucydides' retelling of the Mytilenian debate. Both controversies revolve around the appropriate punishment to mete out to people who have violated the trust of the Athenian people.<sup>147</sup> More strikingly, in both cases orators feel obliged to preemptively defend themselves from accusations of deceiving the people, whilst of course implying that others are trying to do just that. In this, Xenophon demonstrates a sensibility that is remarkably similar to that of Thucydides, one that clearly points to broad concerns about deceptive speech at the end of the fifth century.

Euryptolemus was not able to secure standard trials for the generals, a fact that no doubt influenced the people's decision to execute them. Just as they had after the initial vote to annihilate the Mytilenians, the Athenians repented. This time, however, it was too late to stop the executions; the generals were already dead. Rather than hold a new trial, then, they turned their wrath on Callixenus and four others. Xenophon and Diodorus agree that these men were accused of "deceiving the *dēmos*" (X. *Hel.* 1.7.35; Diod. 13.103.2). This was, as Christ notes,<sup>148</sup> nothing short of extraordinary. The case of Arginousae thus shows that the deep anxiety about deceptive rhetoric, one that is evident in Thucydides' Mytilenian debate and in Aristophanes

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<sup>147</sup> The Mytilenians had of course quite plainly betrayed their "alliance" with the Athenians; the actions of the generals is a much less obvious type of betrayal, but insofar as Euryptolemus suggests they be tried as traitors (X. *Hel.* 1.7.22), it would appear that they too could be considered to have betrayed the *dēmos*.

<sup>148</sup> Christ, 1992, p. 340 fn 20.

*Knights*, was not only present but indeed boiling over in 406 BCE, one year before the production of the *IA*.<sup>149</sup>

## 6. Conclusions

As we have seen, Athenian preoccupations about deceit and rhetoric had roots in the Gorgianic notion that deception was inherent to public speech. Such a theory would naturally be problematic in a city such as Athens that depended on public speech in order to arrive at political consensus. This anxiety is easily visible in both Thucydides' description of the Mytilenian debate and Aristophanes' *Knights*. In these texts, it appears to be a concern that is central to the Athenian *polis*. But these are not the only texts in which one can detect this apprehension concerning the use of deceit by elite males. Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, for example, is another comedy in which this is quite openly depicted.<sup>150</sup> And Thucydides' Melian dialogues goes so far as to suggest that not only were the Athenians suspicious of their orators, so too were the other Greeks. Indeed, the entire reason that the dialogue occurs, as the Athenian

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<sup>149</sup> Cf. the scholion to Ar. *Frogs*, 67; J. Diggle, ed., *Euripidis Fabulae* vol. 3 (Oxford, 1994), p. 358. Euripides may well have written the *IA* before these events occurred, or at any rate been unaware of them due to his (presumed) exile in Macedonia. Nevertheless, it is clear that the conditions in Athens were such that, regardless of his knowledge of the Arginousae affair, the play could speak to a great deal of concern about the use of deceptive speech in public debates.

<sup>150</sup> On the *Acharnians*, see Jonathan Hall, "Autochthonous Autocrats: The Tyranny of the Athenian Democracy" in *Private and Public Lies: The Discourse of Despotism and Deceit in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. Andrew J. Turner, James H. Kim On Chong-Gossard, and Frederick Juliaan Vervaeke, (Leiden, 2010), pp. 25-26.

ambassadors state in their opening sentence, is because the Melians will not let them speak before the people, lest they “be deceived” by the Athenians’ “alluring” words (Th. 5.85.1: μή...ἐπαγωγὰ καὶ ἀνέλεγκτα ἐσάπαξ ἀκούσαντες ἡμῶν ἀπατηθῶσιν).

Nor were these the only authors or genres that address contemporary anxieties about deceptive political speech. Sophocles’ *Philoctetes* is another tragedy that foregrounds the problem of deceit and sophistic rhetoric,<sup>151</sup> further proof that Athenian audiences were used to engaging with the questions Euripides raises in the *IA*. Antiphon’s *Tetralogies* highlight another problem Sophistic theory faced in the late fifth century. In these speeches, Antiphon all but gives up trying to establish what actually happened in the hypothetical incidents, focusing heavily on what is “likely” (τὸ εἰκός) or what is “credible” (τὸ πιστός). A recurring theme in Antiphon’s work is the relationship between *logos* and *ergon*, and what emerges is “an alignment of probability, discourse, and law on the one hand against direct evidence, facts, and nature on the other.”<sup>152</sup>

Finally, Critias fr. 19 portrays another instance of an individual using deceptive means in a coercive manner. The speaker of this fragment postulates that the gods were invented by “some cunning and wise man” (v. 12) as a means of scaring other humans into behaving well. It is explicit that this was achieved by “concealing the truth with false speech” (v. 26: ψευδεῖ

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<sup>151</sup> Cf. M.H. Jameson, “Politics and the *Philoctetes*,” *Classical Philology* 51 (1956): pp. 217-227; Peter W. Rose, “Sophocles’ *Philoctetes* and the Teachings of the Sophists,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 80 (1976): pp. 49-105.

<sup>152</sup> Michael Gagarin, *Antiphon the Athenian: Oratory, Law, and Justice in the Age of the Sophists* (Austin, 2002), p. 134.

καλύψας τὴν ἀλήθειαν λόγῳ). And although the outcome (good behavior) is theoretically a positive one, it is nevertheless another example of the disconnect between *logos* and *ergon*, particularly in persuasive speech. The nonchalance with which the speaker describes this act, and the fragment's conformity with mainstream sophistic thought on deceitful rhetoric, demonstrate that such means were considered common.<sup>153</sup> Unlike in the time of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, the proliferation of deceptive speech in the public arena seems to have been a source of grave concern when the *IA* was produced.

We can see that in the *IA*, Euripides addresses concerns that we see constantly in other late fifth-century Athenian documents. Euripides differs from these other writers, however, by framing this concern against a background of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. His use of this subtext has two purposes: to alert the audience that the *IA* will seriously engage with the question of problematic speech; and to provide a tragic model that competes with Aeschylus' depiction of deceptive *female* speech as a great—if not the greatest—threat to society. If the male elite consistently engages in the same type of “double-speak” as Aeschylus' Clytemnestra, if such deceptive rhetoric has become a key to obtaining power in Athens, if, furthermore, the democratic public actively encourages the use of such deceptive rhetoric, then the concerns raised by Aeschylus can hardly be pertinent to the Athenian audience, and perhaps not even to the tragic theater. Although he had, it would seem, followed this model in his *Medea* and

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<sup>153</sup> On this fragment cf. Hesk, 2000, pp. 180-88; Patrick O'Sullivan, “Sophistic Ethics, Old Atheism, and ‘Critias’ On Religion,” *Classical World* 105 (2012): pp. 167-85.

*Hippolytus*, Euripides now dismisses Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* as a relevant model for Athenian drama. He offers in its place a new type of tragedy that will engage the questions and problems of his own time. A new model for a new age.

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