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The Helix of Dionysus. Musical Imagery in Later Euripidean Drama

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THE *HELIX* OF DIONYSUS: MUSICAL IMAGERY IN LATER EURIPIDEAN DRAMA

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation studies the musical imagery contained in the choral and monodic lyrics of four major later Euripidean dramas: the *Trojan Women,* the *Phoenician Women,* the *Hypsipyle* and the *Helen.* Its aim is to show that such lyrics engage in a fundamental and systematic reflection on tragedy's internal musical discourse and poetics, and to further our understanding of the tragic genre's self-conception as a form of song and *mousikê*. A strong and recurrent focus in all these odes is on the god of theater and my reading illuminates the special value of the references to song, dance and music in connection to Dionysus.

The thesis is divided into four chapters: the first chapter shows how the lyrics of Euripides' *Trojan Women* effect the 'orientalization' and Dionysization of hallowed and authoritative Greek poetic forms when they are transplanted and alluded to in the odes of the Dionysiac genre of tragedy. Chapter two discusses the odes of the *Phoenician Women* as the quintessential *topos* for reflecting on the poetics of tragic and Dionysiac *mousikê*. Chapter three turns to the *Hypsipyle* in order to trace the confrontation and the final reconciliation of two disparate musical forces, the Orphic and the Dionysiac. Finally, chapter four demonstrates that the choral lyrics of the *Helen* ponder the beginnings of tragic lamentation and music, representing tragic song as a form of female, ecstatic, Dionysiac, archetypal music.

The lyrics of the plays studied in this thesis consciously foreground tragic song as new and distinctively Dionysiac and at the same time as an old, originary form of

mousikê. This characteristic Euripidean move is a gesture of legitimization and valorization of the poetics of the controversial New Music, of which later Euripidean lyrics offer prime instantiations; at the same time, it is a gesture of cultural colonization which allows the tragic medium to establish for itself a place of priority in the hierarchy of the Greek tradition by claiming for its *mousikê* a position at the very beginning of the ancient and revered poetic traditions that are evoked in the tragic lyrics.

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For my parents

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INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, scholarship on Greek drama has been marked by an increased awareness that tragedy is a song-form and an essentially musical experience. An important implication of this understanding has been the recognition that our appreciation and interpretation of tragic poetry can be significantly enriched if we restore tragedy back to its performative, as well as its social, cultural and religious contexts, and explore the lyrics of the plays within the wider spectrum of the Greek 'song-culture'[1] and performance traditions, that is, within the broader frame of activity the Greeks understood as *mousikê.* This realization has helped adumbrate new avenues of investigation and has generated a renewed interest in the chorus of tragedy. Laura Swift in her recent book shows how we can benefit from an exploration of the generic interaction between tragic lyric and other choral forms not simply on the level of linguistic or thematic echoes, but also as a means for achieving specific dramatic effects through the evocation and the manipulation of the original occasion-bound associations of the lyric genres that are transplanted or alluded to in the tragic odes.[2] As Swift suggests, and as I shall go on to show in detail in the case of Euripides, this type of approach also sheds light on tragedy's self-reflection and self-conception as a choral song-form.

Instrumental in the attempt of contextualization of the tragic genre have been the recent advances in the study of the dramatic chorus, which constitute a crucial development that has contributed to the rehabilitation of the centrality of the lyrics of tragedy. Albert Henrichs and Anton Bierl have stressed that in ancient Greek culture, choral dance, whether in the framework

[1] Herington (1985).
[2] Swift (2010).

of a theatrical festival or in other festal or ritual contexts, is always a form of cultic performance, and have thus highlighted the status of the chorus of tragedy not simply as *dramatis personae*, but also as a collective of ritual singers and dancers performing, in this case, in honor of Dionysus, the god who institutionally presides over tragedy within the frame of a major public, civic and religious festivity in which the *choreuts* are participating.[3] This work builds on and further develops important insights of scholars such as Froma Zeitlin, Charles Segal, Renate Schlesier, Richard Seaford and Anton Bierl on the ways Dionysus is brought into play by the tragedians, who situate plots, characters and the entire genre of tragedy within a distinctively Dionysiac atmosphere, and foreground the theater god as an iconic symbol of tragic ambiguity and self-reflection.[4] This reorientation in the field has major implications for our appreciation of the lyrics of Euripides, the tragic poet who has long labored under the grip of a narrative which casts him in the role of a representative of the degeneration and decline of the genre which went hand in hand with the gradual attenuation of tragedy's choral core, a move that was interpreted as an exemplification of tragedy's tendency to leave its choral, cultic roots behind.

A closely related development in the area of the study of tragic lyrics has been the attempt to trace an implicit poetics of the hypermimetic medium of tragedy. Charles Segal and Nicole Loraux have paved the way here and have explored tragedy's internal musical discourse by focusing on tragic lamentation, the figure of the 'unmusical song' and the paradoxical entity of the 'lyre-less', *alyros* Muse, which are privileged as powerful, unmistakable markers of the tragic *per se,* and function as the means by which tragedy reflects on its relationship of

[3] See: Henrichs (1994-1995), Henrichs (1996a), Henrichs (1996b); Bierl (2009) who examines both tragic and comic choruses; see also the earlier discussion in: Davidson (1986).
[4] See: Zeitlin (1993) and Zeitlin (1996a), Segal (1982), Schlesier (1988), (1993) and (2007), Seaford (1981) and Seaford (1993).

continuity and rupture with earlier forms of choral song and the preexisting Greek poetic tradition.[5] Peter Wilson returns to the discussion of tragedy's self-interrogation of its poetics from a different point of view, focusing on the pragmatics of performance and their interaction with the linguistic register of tragedy. One of his most important observations, which again has helped locate the profoundly Dionysiac character of tragic music, is the contradiction contained in the expression 'tragic choral lyric': the negation and absence of the lyre emphatically foregrounded in the term *alyros* hints at the presence of its rival instrument which sounds in the theatrical orchestra and accompanies the odes of tragedy, the *aulos* of Dionysus.[6]

Critics who work on Euripidean music need to always keep in mind that, unlike the art of his predecessors, Euripides' drama – especially the later phase of the tragic corpus – belongs to an age when *mousikê* no longer functioned as a (relatively) transparent, secure and uncontested medium of socialization and *paideia,*[7] but rather was at the heart of a profound controversy that shaped the Athenian socio-cultural landscape of the last few decades of the fifth century BCE; this controversy was sparked by the radical musico-cultural innovations that first developed in the Dionysiac genres of dithyramb and tragedy and then also influenced the song-form of the citharodic *nomos,* the so-called 'New Music'. In his seminal study of the tragic chorus, Walther Kranz discussed the impact of the cultural revolution on the composition of Euripides' later odes in an account that has largely shaped modern views on Euripides and New Music and still remains important and influential;[8] Bernhard Zimmermann has offered the

[5] Segal (1989) and Segal (1993a), Loraux (2002). See also: Calame (1994/1995).
[6] Wilson (1999-2000).
[7] On the social function of ritual *choreia* and on choral performances as a means for defining and negotiating group identity see: Kowalzig (2007).
[8] Kranz (1933).

fullest discussion of the developments in the area of the new dithyramb.[9] This major cultural event, of which Euripides, among other poets, was a leading exponent, was fiercely attacked already in antiquity by critics who viewed it as a landmark of the decay of classical culture. Until recently, modern scholarship has been unable to free itself from the ideological residues of ancient evaluations, branding the new style poetics as symptomatic of a steady disengagement from civic values and of an erosion of communal religious and spiritual feeling. According to this theory of decadence, dithyramb is transformed from a ritual song to the 'polis-Gattung' of fifth-century Athens *par excellence* and finally into a secular form of empty literary aestheticism, pure 'l'art pour l'art'; the development is taken to coincide with the end of the democratic polis.[10] This model treats New Music as an infection which soon also corrupts the lyrics of tragedy, in particular the later odes of Euripides.[11] However, a series of recent essays by Eric Csapo and Peter Wilson has put these older prevalent views into a new perspective. Their socio-cultural approach reevaluates the cultural event and shows that the New Music actually bloomed at the heyday of theater and radical Athenian democracy and within a distinctively Dionysiac performance context, that of the Attic theater.[12]

[9] Zimmermann (1992).
[10] See: Zimmermann (1989); also: Zimmermann (1992) esp. 133-136.
[11] Zimmermann identifies the tendencies of 'Gattungsmischung', 'Archaismus' and 'Manierismus' as characteristics shared by tragedy and dithyramb towards the end of the fifth century BCE and as signs of the decline of the two genres which goes hand in hand with the degeneration of democracy. According to Anderson (1994) 122, later Euripidean lyrics are an 'irrelevant diversion (…) concerned with immediate effect at the expense of a larger coherence'.
[12] Csapo (1999-2000), Wilson (1999), Csapo (2003), (2004), (2008), (2009), Csapo and Wilson (2009), Wilson (2004).

More than ten years ago, Eric Csapo in his contribution to the *Illinois Classical Studies* volume on Euripides, commented on the startling fact that Euripides is the only tragic poet who has never had a major study devoted to his music.[13] This dissertation aspires to fill a significant part of this gap. Its aim is to explore the musical imagery of four major late Euripidean dramas in order to bring out the general poetic and musical vision displayed in their lyrics, choral and monodic, and to argue that such lyrics are a primary *locus* for Euripides' reflection on the *mousikê* of tragedy and tragedy generally. A stong and recurrent focus in all these songs is on the god of theater, Dionysus, and my reading will attempt to illuminate the subtle, sometimes elusive but distinctively Dionysiac essence of the musical core of late Euripidean drama.

In outline, the thesis falls into four chapters, each one dedicated to a play: the *Trojan Women,* the *Phoenician Women,* the fragmentary *Hypsipyle,* and the *Helen.* The first chapter will show how the lyrics of Euripides' Trojan play effect the 'orientalization' and Dionysization of ancient and venerated Greek poetic forms when they are pressed into the frame of the tragic, Dionysiac genre; it will also be argued that this impressive move of cultural colonization in many respects represents an inversion of the developments that take place on the level of the plot. The voice of the eastern, Phrygian female chorus and protagonists who sing the odes of the play is privileged as the most appropriate medium for tragedy's reflection on the events at Troy, and so tragic song and music are foregrounded as eastern, barbarian, effeminate, fundamentally Dionysiac. Chapter two turns to Euripides' Theban play and explores 'Thebes' as the quintessential *topos* for pondering the poetics of tragic *mousikê*. As in the *Trojan Women,* the oriental chorus of Phoenician maidens becomes the primary vehicle of the play's exploration of tragic musical discourse, while a host of barbarian, theriomorphic

[13] Csapo (1999-2000) 400. On 'musical design' in Aeschylus and Sophocles see: Scott (1984) and Scott (1996).

beings – Ares, the Sphinx, even the Thebans themselves – emerge in the lyrics as figures of the tragic Muse and agents of tragic *mousikê*. Chapter three will argue that the *Hypsipyle* stages the confrontation between two incongruous musical forces, the Orphic and the Dionysiac, and ends with their fusion and reconciliation in the symbolic Dionysization of the *cithara.* My discussion will also attempt to illuminate the implications of this move within the context of the New Music debate, and will show that it becomes the means through which the drama intervenes in the late fifth-century cultural controversy. Finally, chapter four is devoted to the *Helen,* a play that – perhaps more than any other Euripidean drama – is thought to evade generic labels and challenge traditional definitions of tragedy. We will see that on the level of its lyrics the play systematically reflects on the beginnings of tragic lamentation and music, casting tragic song as a female, ecstatic, Dionysiac, primordial choral song-form.

All four dramas are late, modern, experimental. Their lyrics offer striking instantiations of the avant-garde style, and the New Music is instrumental in the creation of the dizzying, Dionysiac atmosphere with which the odes are imbued. In Euripides' subtle dialectics, the lyrics of the plays consciously present tragic song as new and distinctively Dionysiac and at the same time as an old, primary form of *mousikê*. This characteristic Euripidean move is a gesture of legitimization and redemption of the new music poetics; at the same time, this gesture of cultural appropriation allows tragedy to represent itself as the master song-form, conscious of its belatedness in the Greek literary tradition but at the same time capable of positioning its *mousikê* at the very beginning of the poetic traditions that are evoked and alluded to in the tragic lyrics. Euripides thus claims temporal and cultural priority in the Greek poetic canon, casting his poetry as the Ur-form of poetry and music from which all other song-forms arose.

CHAPTER ONE

TROJAN WOMEN

Carmina non prius audita

– Horace, *Carmina* III.3.2-3

The *Trojan Women* is a puzzling play, and has often been considered Euripides' worst. It defies many schemas that attempt to define a 'proper' tragedy, and scholars have repeatedly stressed the fact that it is a play in which nothing happens: there is virtually no plot, no *peripeteia,* no closure – the drama consists in a prologue followed by a series of disjointed and episodic scenes, and a lot of lamentation.[14] Moving away from Aristotelian notions of plot, more recent attempts to rehabilitate the play have tried to locate its tragic essence elsewhere. For some, it lies in its emotive power and in the unrelenting portrayal of the horrors of war as these are depicted through the suffering of its innocent victims.[15] Others have sought the tragic core of the play in its lyric passages. Nicole Loraux has called the *Trojan Women* 'the most 'lyric' of all Euripides' tragedies, (…) the site of the most systematic reflection that the tragic

[14] Dunn (1996) chapter seven offers an interesting discussion of the beginning and the end of the play. He points out that the entrance of a god is commonplace in Euripides' endings, but a divine epiphany is less common in the prologue and is answered almost always by an epiphany in the epilogue. The *Trojan Women* is a major exception in this respect, since it begins with a double epiphany which remains unanswered at the end of the play. The transport of the *deus ex machina* to the beginning intensifies the feeling that the play begins at the end and that after the prologue nothing changes or happens.

[15] Grube (1961) 282. Also see: Hall (2000) ix ff.

genre provides on the complex relationship connecting and sometimes opposing *Mousa* to the sung expression of lamentation'.[16] And Ann Suter has argued that the entire tragedy should be read as a lament that offers an appropriate, 'Iliadic' end as the third play in a trilogy.[17] My aim in the following pages is to bring out and explain the tragic and Dionysiac nature of the *Trojan Women* by examining the musical imagery that permeates its lyrics. Our starting point will be the first stasimon.

FIRST STASIMON: THE 'NEW SONG' OF THE TROJAN WOMEN

The Invocation of the Muse

The topic of the first stasimon is recalling the fall of Troy; it treats the night when the wooden horse was brought into the city and dwells on the ghastly opposition between the joy of its reception and the agony that marks Troy's end. The song opens with the following lines:

> ἀμφί μοι Ἴλιον, ὦ
> Μοῦσα, καινῶν ὕμνων
> ἄισον σὺν δακρύοις ὠιδὰν ἐπικήδειον.

[16] See: Loraux (2002) 68. On this issue see also the discussion in: Segal (1993a) chapter two.
[17] Suter (2003). The *Trojan Women* is the last play of Euripides' 'Trojan Trilogy', which is, as far as we can tell, the only Euripidean production in which three tragedies dramatize successive portions of the same legend. The other two plays, *Alexander* and *Palamedes,* survive only in fragments.

νῦν γὰρ μέλος ἐς Τροίαν ἰαχήσω…

(511-515)

[Sing for me concerning Ilium,

o Muse, a funeral ode

of new hymns accompanied by tears.[18]

For now I shall cry out a song of Troy…][19]

The beginning of the stasimon has drawn the attention of a large number of scholars who comment on the exceptional nature of these lines.[20] It has thus been pointed out that this – unique in Greek tragedy – appeal to the Muse for inspiration lends an epic flavor to the song, as it recalls the beginning of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* and that it is probably suggested by the ode's epic subject-matter. Further, both the beginning and the topic of the lyric passage create a connection between this song and the *Little Iliad* attributed to Lesches of Mytilene, which treats the reception of the wooden horse in Troy and the ensuing victory celebration of the Trojans for the supposed end of the war, and the *Iliou Persis* of the *Cycle,* which revolves around the sack of the city and its aftermath.[21] Scholars have also noted the relevance of Stesichorus' lyric *Iliou*

[18] Alternatively, Biehl (1989) ad loc. suggests the reading ὦ Μοῦσα καινῶν ὕμνων as an ἀπὸ κοινοῦ construction: 'o Muse of new hymns'.
[19] Translation adapted from Kovacs (1999).
[20] See: Lee (1976) 164, Barlow (1986) 184, Biehl (1989) 223f.
[21] The first line of the *Little Iliad* is: Ἴλιον ἀείδω καὶ Δαρδανίην εὔπωλον. See: Di Benedetto and Cerbo 1998 (introduction and 178-179) for possible points of contact between the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* and the *Little Iliad* and the *Iliou Persis.* Aristotle includes the *Trojan Women* among the eight tragedies that derive their subject-matter from the *Little Iliad.* See: *Poetics,* 1459b1-7. Hose (1990) vol. 2, 302 notes: 'Das Thema des Liedes ist eine Ἰλίου ἄλωσις'.

Persis. The diction is also reminiscent of epic.[22] Finally, the language of the opening lines is also clearly evocative of the diction of a citharodic proem. The phrase ἀμφί μοι ὦ Μοῦσα or slight variations of it form the opening of several Homeric hymns,[23] and Wilamowitz has pointed out the similarities between these lines and Terpander F 697 *PMG* ἀμφί μοι αὖτε ἄναχθ' ἑκατηβόλον ἀιδέτω <ά> φρήν, and F Adesp. 938e *PMG* Μοῖσά μοι ἀμφὶ Σκάμανδρον εὔρροον ἄρχομ' ἀείδειν.[24] In terms of meter, the dactylic opening (the first line ἀμφί μοι Ἴλιον, ὦ forms a *hemiepes*) gives way to a mainly lyric iambic metrical form. It thus recalls the meter of epic, but can also be read as an allusion to citharodic poetry, where it is often the case that a dactylic opening is prefixed to a narrative in a different metrical form.[25]

This short account does not of course claim to be an exhaustive discussion of the relationship between the first stasimon and the earlier song-forms Euripides alludes to. The sack of Troy and its aftermath was the topic of a large number of poems that are no longer extant – besides the cyclic poems, a number of lost tragedies dealt with the same theme. Thus, we can be sure that if we possessed these texts a much more complex intertextual dynamic

[22] See the genitive ending *linoio* in 537 and the unaugmented *aeiron* in 546. Also the epithets *xestos* (534), *kelainos* (539), *melaina* (549). Note also the *tmesis* in 522 (*ana d' eboasen*). See: Barlow (1986) ad loc. On echoes of Homeric vocabulary in the play see also: Davidson (2001) 65-68.

[23] Cf. the beginning of the Homeric hymn to Pan (19): ἀμφί μοι Ἑρμείαο φίλον γόνον ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, also the first line of the Homeric hymn to the Dioscuri (33): ἀμφὶ Διὸς κούρους, ἐλικώπιδες ἔσπετε Μοῦσαι. See also the discussion in: Breitenbach (1934) 285. On the citharodic proem see the account in: Koller (1956). On the connections between the citharodic proem and the beginning of the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* see also: Hose (1990) vol. 2, 302-306, and the more recent discussion in: Power (2010) 272-273.

[24] Willamowitz-Moellendorff (1921) 173. See also the discussion in Hose (1990) vol. 2, 302-306.

[25] Koller (1956) 170, 186-7. Hence the correption of *moi* in 511 can sound either epic or citharodic.

would be revealed.[26] However, we have enough to reach the conclusion that the beginning lines of the first stasimon clearly echo the rich poetic tradition that comes before and functions as a source of inspiration for both the Trojan women's song and the Euripidean drama itself, but at the same time also mark a significant departure: for the chorus ask for a Muse who will sing a funereal ode in a new strain (*kainôn hymnôn*, 512) and who will inspire the captive women to 'cry out' (*iachesô*, 515) a song about their city which has just, in dramatic time, fallen.

In what does the newness of the Muse's and the chorus' song consist? According to Lee, the novelty is twofold: the sorrowful song about to be sung is different from the songs of joy sung by the women in the past,[27] and it is also new in an extra-dramatic sense, when compared to the epic versions of the same subject.[28] Shirley Barlow's comment goes deeper: '(…) the old forms and themes are to be told in a new way and the Muse pressed to the service of a new kind of song. This is the lyric lament for Troy's destruction seen uniquely not through the eyes of warriors, but through those of a group of women. Their account is not the traditionally heroic one of glorifying war, yet it deserves, the poet implies, to be as important as epic in what new things it has to observe. There is of course some irony too in this implied measuring of old attitudes against new ones'.[29] Their Muse, the chorus proclaim, is going to be a new and paradoxical entity, one that will help them sing of sorrow, destruction and death.[30]

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[26] In her book *The Trojan Trilogy of Euripides* (1980) Ruth Scodel attempts to demonstrate a number of connections between the *Trojan Women* and the two other plays which Euripides produced along with it in 415.
[27] βοάν τ' ἔμελπον εὔφρον' (547).
[28] See: Lee (1976) ad loc.
[29] Barlow (1986) 184.
[30] Wright (1986) classifies the first stasimon as a 'reduced lament' for the city of Troy (175f.). This means that the ode has some but not all of the characteristic *topoi* and features of lament. The purpose of the reduced lament is to integrate lamentation in an unclimactic moment of the play (119).

We will return to the meaning and the significance of the novelty of the Trojan women's Muse and song. It is now time to turn to the rest of the musical imagery of the ode.

The Music of Troy

The Trojans greet the sight of the wooden horse with songs (κεχαρμένοι δ' ἀοιδαῖς / δόλιον ἔσχον ἄταν ('rejoicing with songs they received into their midst ruin in disguise', 529-30)). A few lines later, the women of the chorus describe the song, music and dance performed during the victory celebration on the night before the sack of Troy:

ἐπὶ δὲ πόνωι καὶ χαρᾶι
νύχιον ἐπεὶ κνέφας παρῆν,
Λίβυς τε λωτὸς ἐκτύπει
Φρύγιά τε μέλεα, παρθένοι δ'
ἄειρον ἅμα κρότον ποδῶν
βοάν τ' ἔμελπον εὔφρον'…
(542-547)

[But when their labor and their joy
were overtaken by night's blackness,
the Libyan aulos sounded
and Phrygian tunes were played, and maidens

as they lifted their feet in dancing

sang a song of joy…][31]

The women sing and dance on the stage and at the same time refer to the Libyan *auloi* and the Phrygian tunes that accompanied the dance of the Trojan maidens the night before the destruction of their city. Albert Henrichs has named this situation 'choral projection': 'Choral projection occurs when Sophoklean and Euripidean choruses locate their own dancing in the past or the future, in contrast to the here and now of their immediate performance, or when choruses project their collective identity onto groups of dancers distant from the concrete space of the orchestra and dancing in the allusive realm of the dramatic imagination'.[32] In the first stasimon, the women project their current song and dance on the ones that they performed in the past, right before the sack of Troy. Sadly, we have no information regarding the purely melodic and instrumental aspect of the performance of the song. It can only be suggested that Euripides made use of Eastern-sounding musical modes. Since the women refer explicitly to the Libyan *auloi* and the Phrygian songs that accompanied their dance during their last night of freedom, it is plausible to infer that they sang and danced at the rhythm of the Phrygian *harmonia* also at the time of the performance of the stasimon,[33] and it is almost certain that their musical performance was accompanied by the sound of the *aulos*, as was customary in Greek drama.[34]

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[31] Trans. Kovacs (1999)

[32] See: Henrichs (1996b) 49. Also Henrichs (1996a) and (1994-1995). See also Davidson (1986).

[33] See: West (1992) 181.

[34] LSJ s.v. Φρύγιος 2 notes that Φρύγια μέλεα referred especially to music accompanied by the *aulos*.

The different modes, their aesthetic value and the formative, emotional and ethical qualities that were ascribed to them were considered a subject of great importance and interest for the Greeks of the classical and post-classical period.[35] Each *harmonia* was thought to have a distinct moral, psychological and almost physical effect on the singer / performer or the listener. The Greek tradition associated the Phrygian mode, which was reportedly introduced into tragedy by Sophocles,[36] primarily with the *aulos*, loudness, Dionysiac frenzy, heightened emotionality and wild excitement.[37] Aristotle criticizes Socrates for admitting into his ideal state this *harmonia* – the only one besides the Dorian:[38] 'For of the modes, the Phrygian has the same potential as the aulos among instruments: both of them are exciting (*orgiastika*) and emotional. This is evident in practice, for all Bacchic celebration and that sort of dancing is predominantly accompanied by *auloi*, and goes most appropriately with melodies in the Phrygian mode', he observes.[39] In another passage, Aristotle labels the Phrygian mode as 'inspired', 'emotional' and 'bacchic'.[40]

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[35] West (1992) 180f. On the issue of the ethical, paideutic and emotional dimensions of Greek *harmoniai* see also: Anderson (1966).

[36] Aristox. fr. 79 Wehrli; Psell. *De trag.* 5.

[37] On the role and the function of the aulos in Athenian society and drama and on its ecstatic and Dionysiac associations, see the discussion in: Wilson (1999). Also Wilson (2002).

[38] Plato surprisingly seems to ignore the dangerous and inflammatory aspects of the Phrygian mode; he associates it with prayers and thus welcomes it in his state. See: West (1992) 180-181.

[39] ἔχει γὰρ τὴν αὐτὴν δύναμιν ἡ φρυγιστὶ τῶν ἁρμονιῶν ἥνπερ αὐλὸς ἐν τοῖς ὀργάνοις: ἄμφω γὰρ ὀργιαστικὰ καὶ παθητικά: [δηλοῖ δ᾽ ἡ ποίησις]. πᾶσα γὰρ βακχεία καὶ πᾶσα ἡ τοιάυτη κίνησις μάλιστα τῶν ὀργάνων ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς αὐλοῖς, τῶν δ᾽ ἁρμονιῶν ἐν τοῖς φρυγιστὶ μέλεσι λαμβάνει ταῦτα τὸ πρέπον. (*Pol.* 1342a32-b12).

[40] *Problems* 922b10-28. Here Aristotle (or his student) makes a distinction between the Hypodorian mode which is more grandiose and steady and thus suited to the actors who represent heroes, and the Phrygian mode which, being 'inspired and bacchic', is more appropriate for the song of the chorus: 'In this mode we become emotional and the weak are more emotional than the powerful, which is why this mode suits choruses…' trans. Csapo and Slater (1995) 347.

The verb *iacheô* that the chorus use at the beginning of the stasimon to refer to their musical activity also has strong Dionysiac resonances and is used to describe ecstatic songs of sorrow. As Fritz Graf notes, 'Das Substantiv ὁ ἴακχος… bezeichnet nich allein den spezifisch Kultruf, sondern findet sich (allerdings allein bei Euripides) auch in weiterem Bedeutung, derjenigen von Klagelied, von dionysischem Lied (…) Änlich verhält es sich mit den verwandten Wörtern ἰάχω und ἰαχή, ἰαχέω'.[41] Further, the Greek tradition forges a strong link between *iachê* and *iacheô,* and the sound of the *auloi* and the *tympana*, the musical instruments that in the parodos of the *Bacchae*[42] are closely connected to Dionysus and his cult.[43] Later in the same ode the maenads are exhorted to sing in the god's honor (μέλπετε τὸν Διόνυσον, 155)…

ἐν Φρυγίαισι βοαῖς ἐνοπαῖσί τε,
λωτὸς ὅταν εὐκέλαδος
ἱερὸς ἱερὰ παίγματα βρέμηι σύνοχα
φοιτάσιν εἰς ὄρος εἰς ὄρος.

(159-64)

[Sing of Dionysus,

…

with Phrygian shouts and cries,

when the lovely *aulos*

[41] See: Graf (1974) 56. Also the discussion in: Krummen (1998) 320, on *iachê*: '(…) einerseits freudiger Tanz und Gesang in Kult, andererseits aber auch der ekstatische Klagegesang'.
[42] *Bacchae,* 120-134.
[43] Graf (1974).

shrills, all holy, its holy songs in concert

with those who go to the mountain, to the mountain!][44]

Note that the Phrygian song of the maenads in the *Bacchae,* which is sung to the *aulos,* is not really presented as a song, but rather as a shout, or cry (βοά, ἐνοπή).[45] The same observation applies to the celebration song of the chorus in the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* (βοάν τ' ἔμελπον εὔφρον', 547).[46]

To sum up: the Greeks associated the sound of the *aulos*, the Phrygian mode and the verb *iacheô* with loud and ecstatic song and lamentation, and Dionysiac music and frenzy. All three are present in the Trojan women's song and this lends strong Dionysiac coloring to the first stasimon. It is also likely that the chorus sang and danced at the accompaniment of the Phrygian *harmonia*, which must have reinforced the Dionysiac character of their performance even more.

A few lines later, the women continue:

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[44] Translation adapted from Kovacs (2002).

[45] 'ἐνοπαί are always loud or excited cries', notes Dodds (1960) ad loc. On musical shouting in the *Bacchae* see also Segal (1982) 70-71.

[46] Other Euripidean passages that possibly allude to the Phrygian musical mode in connection with bacchic celebration or ecstatic lament are: *Iphigenia in Aulis,* 576-578: βάρβαρα συρίζων, Φρυγίων / αὐλῶν Οὐλύμπου καλάμοις / μιμήματ' ἀναπνύων (playing Asian melodies upon the syrinx, / imitating upon your reed pipe / the Phrygian aulos of Olympus), see: Stockert (1992) ad loc. Also: *Iphigenia in Tauris,* 179-185: ἀντιψάλμους ὠιδὰς ὕμνων τ' / Ἀσιητᾶν σοι βάρβαρον ἀχάν, / δέσποιν', ἐξαυδάσω <'γώ>, / τὰν ἐν θρήνοισιν μοῦσαν / νέκυσιν μέλεον, τὰν ἐν μολπαῖς / Ἅιδας ὑμνεῖ δίχα παιάνων. (Songs antiphonal to yours and the foreign / clamor of Asian hymns / to you, mistress, shall I intone, / music for the dead amid dirges, / the unblessed tunes which Hades sings / (no paean these) among his songs). On these lines see: Kyriakou (2006) ad loc.

ἐγὼ δὲ τὰν ὀρεστέραν

τότ᾽ ἀμφὶ μέλαθρα παρθένον

Διὸς κόραν ἐμελπόμαν

χοροῖσι. φοινία δ᾽ ἀνὰ

πτόλιν βοὰ κατέσχε Περ-

γάμων ἕδρας.

(551-557)

[In that hour in honor of her in the wilds,

Zeus' maiden daughter,

I was dancing about the temple, when a bloody cry

throughout the city possessed

the dwelling places of Pergamum][47]

The chorus describe the interruption of their musical activity by the enemy's 'bloody cry'. The Greek *boa* puts an end to the Trojan song and dance. The slaughter of the Trojans, the sack of their city and the capture of the women who sing this ode follow shortly after.

[47] Translation adapted from Kovacs (1999)

The New Song

We can now return to the issue of the novel character of the chorus' Muse and song. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the first and more obvious meaning of the 'new hymns' is in generic terms: the women ask their Muse to sing a tragic song of grief and lamentation over the fortune of their city and their own sad predicament; the old epic / citharodic Muse is not an appropriate source of inspiration for the song of sorrow they are about to sing. And yet, the song of the women, while marked as conspicuously 'new', is also enveloped by an aura of primordiality, and is cast as an old, primary form of music: as noted above, on the level of the plot, the performance of the first stasimon is set in the immediate aftermath of the defeat of the Trojans by the Greek army: the city has just been sacked, the women are waiting to be carried off on the Greek ships while – as Poseidon notes in the prologue (8) – smoke is still rising from the ashes of the ruins. The first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* is then, as it were, the first song ever composed on the fall of Troy, sung right after the sack of the city. This is the first of all the songs that will retell the fall of Toy.

We now need to revisit the intertextual dynamics of the ode with this observation in mind. I suggest that the correspondence between the first stasimon and the earlier poetic forms it alludes to has a double temporal aspect, which marks the song with an almost Hellenistic self-consciousness and irony: One the one hand, the song constantly acknowledges its lateness in the Greek literary tradition and its epigonal status. It clearly signals its debt to and its departure from the earlier poetic tradition, as it incorporates and reworks motifs, concepts, formulae, vocabulary and diction from texts and poetic accounts that by the fifth century had

acquired canonical status. The women appear to be acutely aware of the fact that they come last in a long line of poets who treated the same theme they do, and conscious of the literary status of their own lines. For the original spectator of the play, who must have been thoroughly familiar with the sequence of the events of the Trojan Cycle, as well as for the modern reader, the material treated in the ode, and also the entire plot of the play represent the realization of the future clearly foreshadowed in the *Iliad*; it can be read as an incision into the given framework of the continuum of the Trojan Cycle, a short sequel to the *Iliad,* a condensed *Little Iliad* and / or *Iliou Persis.* The chorus begin with an epic / citharodic appeal to the Muse, but then ask the Muse to sing an *epikêdeion ôidan* and employ the verb *iacheô* with all its Dionysiac and ecstatic resonances to define their musical activity: these lines can be read as a short narrative of the history of Greek poetry from epic and citharodic poetry to fifth-century drama. And yet, at the same time the ode is in a sense portrayed as being composed before the time of Homer and the citharodic nome, which in the fifth century was considered one of the oldest forms of lyric song.[48]

The interpretation of the first stasimon thus requires a kind of 'double vision': if we regard Euripides as the author of the ode, then the earlier Greek poetic tradition to which it alludes is temporally anterior to the chorus' song, which then echoes it. However, if we regard the women as the composers of the song, they then have temporal priority: the source texts – if we may call them that – are 'forestalled' by the Trojan captives and in this case – ironically – it is Homer, or the Cyclic poems, or Stesichorus that echo their lines.[49]

[48] See: Ford (2010) 286; Willink (1990) 78.
[49] My interpretation is indebted to work done on Hellenistic and Latin poetry. See e.g. Goldhill (1991) chapter four 249-253 on the Cyclops in Theocritus' *Idyll* 11 posing as pre- and post-Homeric at the same time and also chapter five on the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius; See further Barchiesi's reading of Ovid's *Heroides* (Barchiesi (1993)).

This twofold temporal aspect of the correspondence between the first stasimon and the earlier song-forms with which it engages has important implications: it allows Euripidean tragedy to claim through the mouth of this chorus temporal priority over venerated poems and genres that were and are still considered to stand at the very beginning of the Greek literary tradition. The first Greek song on the fall of Troy is presented as having been composed by a chorus of captive Trojan women. It is a Trojan, or rather, a 'Phrygian' song.

An important issue that needs to be brought into our discussion is the labeling of the Trojans as 'Phrygians' throughout the play.[50] In the *Iliad* the Phrygians are presented as a distinct ethnic group who fight as the Trojans' allies. However, as Edith Hall has shown, starting from the fifth century the name 'Phrygian' was used as a synonym of 'Trojan' to designate the people of Troy.[51] As Hall argues, this change in terminology is connected to the rise of a new ideology of Greek ethnic self-consciousness, which necessitated a sharp distinction between the Hellene and the barbarian 'other' against whom Greek – and especially Athenian – culture was defined.[52] The assimilation of the Trojans to the Phrygians has significant consequences as it 'marks an important point in the process of their barbarization'.[53] A number of derogatory connotations are attached to the term 'Phrygian', which becomes associated with all that is considered to be un-Greek, with servility, weakness, lack of restraint,

[50] See lines 7, 18, 432, 531, 545, 567, 574, 754, 994. With the exception of lines 7 and 18, which belong to Poseidon in the prologue, in the rest of the instances cited here it is the women of the chorus themselves, or Cassandra or Hecuba who self-identify as 'Phrygian'.
[51] Hall (1989) 38-39. Also Hall (1988) 15-18.
[52] Hall (1989) chapter one. The heightened Hellenic self-consciousness and the polarization of Greek and barbarian were the result of the rise of and the conflict with Persia.
[53] *Op. cit.* 38.

dissoluteness, effeminacy and heightened extremes of emotion. As discussed above, similar negative associations accompany the portrayal of the Phrygian musical mode. Dionysus, the god most 'vulnerable to 'barbarization'', was also closely associated with Phrygia.[54]

Thus, to call something 'Phrygian' is to barbarize it and to mark its 'otherness'. The women themselves identify their people, their city and – more importantly – their music-making as 'Phrygian' four times in the course of the first stasimon.[55] It is of course true that the play builds the polarities 'Greek versus barbarian', 'free versus slave', 'man versus woman' along which Athenian ideology is constructed in order to question and undermine them.[56] But this blurring of oppositions is not enough to cancel the surprise and the uneasiness the Athenian audience must have experienced when a group of Phrygian female slaves presented themselves as the composers of a song that claims priority over the entire Greek poetic tradition and thus in a way reduces it to a status of belatedness and secondariness.

There is something bold, irreverent and revolutionary about this move. Greek poetry is absorbed and subsumed by the chorus' 'Phrygian' song, it is made the offshoot of an eastern,

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[54] E. Hall (1989) 151, 154.

[55] Besides the Φρύγια μέλεα of l. 545 see also ll. 531 πᾶσα δὲ γέννα Φρυγῶν, 563 Φρυγῶν ἔν τε δεμνίοις and 567 Φρυγῶν δὲ πατρίδι πένθος.

[56] On this important topic see the discussion in: Croally (1994) chapter 2. Also: Hall (1989) 217-223, who argues that the Trojan plays of Euripides 'come closer than any other extant fifth-century text to subverting the antithesis on a moral level of Greek and barbarian' (95). Dué (2006) especially chapter 3, has more recently argued that evidence from visual and poetic fifth-century material points to the conclusion that over the course of the fifth century the Athenians responded in shifting and ambivalent ways to representations of the fall of Troy as Athens is transformed from the victim of the Persian aggression to an imperialistic power which becomes increasingly violent in its efforts to retain and expand its control. Thus, in the aftermath of the Persians' sack of Athens the Athenians seem to have identified at some level with the Trojans as victims of devastating, sacrilegious violence, whereas towards the end of the fifth century the depiction of the sack of Troy and its horror would have functioned as a negative exemplum for the Athenians and perhaps forced them to ponder some of their own atrocities. Her argument is interesting, but I find her conclusion that, even though tragedy consistently labels the Trojans as barbarians and others, 'this characterization… does not seem to have alienated them from the Athenian audience emotionally' (114), ultimately problematic.

tragic, Dionysiac song. The – difficult to reconstruct – aural dimension of the performance of the ode must have added to the effect of the women's words: it is to the music of the orgiastic and Dionysiac *aulos* and not to that of the lyre that the chorus sing their quasi-epic / citharodic invocation of the Muse. Further, if we accept the hypothesis that the women sing and dance the first stasimon (or at least part of it) at the accompaniment of the Phrygian *harmonia* with all its connotations of easterness, loudness, emotional abandon, unrestrained *ethos* and Dionysiac *mania*, this also must have rendered the gesture of cultural appropriation of the Greek literary tradition by the captive Phrygian women and their song even more pronounced.

New Music

The opening lines of the first stasimon have become famous ever since Walther Kranz in his highly influential study *Stasimon* prefixed them to his chapter with the title 'Das Neue Lied' and read them as a manifesto proclaiming the emergence of a new kind of Euripidean lyrics, 'das Zeitalter einer neuen Musik'.[57] The term 'New Music' is used to define the musical innovations that took place in late fifth-century Athens mainly in connection to the genres of dramatic and dithyrambic poetry. Euripides himself is included among the most prominent exponents of the new style, along with Agathon and a number of composers of dithyrambs, such as Phrynis, Melanippides, Cinesias, Timotheus, Philoxenus and Telestes.[58] The main features of the New Music consist in abrupt shifts from one musical mode to another and other

[57] Kranz (1933) 228-229.
[58] West (1992) chapter 12.

alterations in the harmonic sequence, complex rhythmical patterns, long periods and chaotic syntax, far-flung vocabulary, eccentric compounds, riddling expression, abandonment of the strophic form, and a preference for images to concepts typically combined with an appeal to the senses.[59]

New Music was fiercely attacked for all these characteristics. Its critics brand it as degenerate, barbarous, anarchic, unrestrained, self-indulgent, effeminate and servile, and invent a timeless Greek, manly and noble musical 'tradition' to which they oppose the new style. Eric Csapo has argued that the reception of New Music needs to be examined against the background of the highly polarized atmosphere of late fifth-century Athens politics, as well as within the context of the professionalization and specialization of musical performance that gradually took place in connection to late fifth-century dithyramb and drama. 'New Music was a new professional music, performed by foreign professionals, usually of working class origins, for pay, for the entertainment of the masses, when drunk, on holiday, and generally in their most assertive frame of mind. Because of its theatrical context and all this implied, New Music was systematically characterized as inferior by all the tropes used to designate the free male citizen's "Other"'.[60]

Interestingly, instead of refuting the criticism that is directed against them, the practitioners of New Music –and among them Euripides – seem rather to embrace the negative terms that are attached to their art and to employ them for their own purposes. 'New Music', writes Csapo, 'cultivated its womanly and barbarian associations, its reputation for high-emotion, and Dionysian hysteria. The lyrics are filled with feminine, orientalizing, and

[59] Wilamowitz (1903) 39-55; Schönewolf (1938); West (1992) chapter 12. See also: Kranz (1933) 228-263, Csapo (1999-2000) and Csapo (2004).
[60] Csapo (1999-2000) 405.

Dionysian imagery'.[61] The preponderance of female choruses and especially of choruses made up by Asian women in Euripidean drama from the late 420s onwards is also significant: the female, and particularly the Asian female voice is viewed as more plausibly suited to giving expression to the emotional excess, the Dionysiac madness and uncontrolled states of mind that are closely associated with the new musical style.

Recent scholarship has challenged Kranz's reading of the beginning of the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* as an open and official advertisement of his conversion to the new style. Among other things, it has been argued that the chronology he uses is problematic, that recent research has successfully refuted the issue of self-containedness or dramatic irrelevance of the choral odes that Kranz labels as 'dithyrambic', and, most importantly, that the idea that a choral tragic passage can give us direct access to the 'voice' and the 'intentions' of the author is no longer acceptable.[62]

This criticism is of course valid; I suggest however that we should not entirely dismiss Kranz's interpretation, but rather attempt to reformulate it in a more nuanced way. Emily McDermott has argued that in Euripides' drama words that mean 'new' (such as *kainos, neos, aelptos*) sometimes contain a double meaning: they point to something novel not only for the characters of the play but also for the audience, and are used to signal the introduction of new

[61] Csapo (2004) 247.

[62] For a good review of the objections raised against Kranz's interpretation see: Csapo (1999-2000) 406-409. Also: Neitzel (1967) who devotes pp. 44-48 to a refutation of Kranz's interpretation of our stasimon. Neitzel argues that the newness of the women's song consists in the interpretation of the facts, as opposed to epic or Homeric hymns that simply narrate the events. His reading remains, however, unsatisfactory. Hose (1990) 303f. also follows Neitztel's argument. For an interpretation of the lyrics of the *Trojan Women* that follows Kranz's line of thought see: Di Benedetto (1971) chapter 12. Also: Panagl (1971) 42-78 on the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women*.

plot elements and innovations into received myth.[63] McDermott does not discuss our passage and limits her argument to mythical innovations,[64] but I believe that we can extend her insight into other areas of novelty as well.

Thus, without going as far as Kranz does in arguing that the opening lines of the first stasimon mark the inaugural launch of the new style in Euripidean choral lyric, we can still view the expression *kainoi hymnoi* as a rhetorical marker that signposts the novelty of the aural and poetic nature of the women's song. This reading is supported by the fact that Timotheus, another acknowledged champion of the new style, employs the same word as a self-referential marker that advertises and legitimizes the newness of his verse:

οὐκ ἀείδω τὰ παλαιά.
καινὰ γὰρ ἀμὰ κρείσσω.
νέος ὁ Ζεὺς βασιλεύει,
τὸ πάλαι δ' ἦν Κρόνος ἄρχων.
ἀπίτω Μοῦσα παλαιά.

Timotheus *PMG* fr. 796.

[I do not sing the ancient songs,

[63] McDermott (1991).
[64] McDermott examines examples from the *Suppliant Women,* the *Heracleidai,* the *Hecuba,* the *Phoenician Women,* and the *Orestes.* See also Bierl's discussion of the use of *kainos* in Aristophanic comedy to signpost dramatic originality and innovation. As Bierl notes, the *topos* of highlighting the novelty and originality of one's art runs through the Greek tradition starting in the archaic era, but becomes more frequent in the classical and postclassical period and finally culminates in the literature of the Hellenistic age as a prime marker of the heightened self-consciousness that accompanies the Hellenistic condition ἐν βύβλοις. (See: Bierl (2004) 2-5).

for my new ones are better.

The young Zeus is king,

and it was in ancient times that Cronus was ruler.

Let the ancient Muse depart!][65]

In his *Persians,* Timotheus appeals to Apollo as a source of inspiration for his Μοῦσα νεοτευχής, and asks the god to offer his assistance in the composition of his song (ἐμοῖς ἔλθ' ἐπίκουρος ὕμνοις).[66]

After the epic / citharodic opening, the first stasimon exhibits characteristics of the modern style, as it shows a preference for longer syntactic units, abounds in rare and extravagant compounds,[67] elaborate periphraseis[68] and riddling phrases,[69] and mimetic sound-

[65] Trans. Campbell (1993). The fragment probably belongs to a nomic *sphragis.* On the strategies of self-representation in the passage see the discussion in: Power (2010) 534-535.

[66] 202-205. Cf. 206-212 where Timotheus asks Apollo's help against the Spartan critics who attack his musical innovations, with the discussion in: Hordern (2002) 228f. On the similarities between these lines and the beginning of the first stasimon see: Panagl (1972) 42. See also: Zimmermann (1992) 119-120 on *kainos* employed by the Aristophanic Cinesias in the *Birds* (1382-1384) to describe his new dithyrambic art (*kainas anabolas*), and compare *nean odon* at *Birds* 1376. The question of Euripides' place in the musical innovations of the late fifth century is the subject of a big debate. By dating the *Persians* before 415 and then reading the opening lines of the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* as a fanfare advertising Euripides' conversion to New Music older scholarship (Kranz (1933) Webster (1967) 20, Pintacuda (1978) 167ff.) tends to present Timotheus as the radical innovator and Euripides as the cautious imitator who either carefully adopts the new style only after its success in New Dithyramb is established, or reluctantly gives in to the demands of the popular taste of his times. This picture is however rightly complicated and questioned by Eric Csapo, who argues that New Music was conceptualized as 'theater music', which means that it cannot be limited to New Dithyramb. Also, both comic and theoretical ancient testimony places Euripides together with Agathon at the forefront of the late fifth-century musical innovations, and Euripides is actually represented in ancient anecdote as Timotheus' mentor and even as the composer of the proem of the *Persians.* (See: Csapo (1999-2000)).

[67] τετραβάμονος (516), δοριάλωτος (518), χρυσεοφάλαρον (520), ἀμβροτοπώλου (536), καράτομος (564)

play,[70] and employs sumptuous imagery that not only suggests sight, sound and texture but also brings about the interpenetration of the senses.[71] All these features are consistently associated with the new music style and were also perceived as having strong Dionysiac resonances, as they are suggestive of a form of communication that sidelines order and logic and appeals to the senses, the emotions and the subconscious, and is thus capable of producing an intoxication comparable to Dionysiac hysteria. Further, it is also significant that the Phrygian musical mode, which probably accompanied the women's song and dance and was viewed as having similar inflammatory effects, occupies a central place in the New Music critical debate: the critics of the modern style create a sharp contrast between the Dorian and the Phrygian *harmoniai*. The former is perceived as representing Greekness, manliness, self-restraint and nobility and is thus equated with 'tradition', whereas the latter's association with qualities such as barbarism, effeminacy, lack of control and Dionysiac madness allows the musical theorists to identify it with the new musical movement on which they impose the same labels.[72]

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[68] τετραβάμονος… ἀπήνας (516), πεύκαν οὐρεΐαν, ξεστὸν λόχον Ἀργείων (534) used to describe the Trojan Horse.
[69] φοινία… βοά (555-6), καράτομος ἐρημία (564).
[70] ἔλιπον ἵππον (519).
[71] 'Thus the sound of thudding feet and singing cuts through the darkness with its intermittent gleams of torchlight, so that sound and dark and light become indistinguishable. Thus a shout is described with a word which also has connotations of the redness of blood, *phoinia* (555), and an abstract word "ambush" (534) is given a tangible, textural adjective to suggest the surface of wood within which it is hidden', notes Barlow (1986) 183.

[72] See: Csapo (2004) 232f. As Csapo points out in his discussion of Aristotle's *Politics* 1290a19-29, the Greek critical tradition (which is endorsed by Aristotle) seems to have constructed a stark opposition between the Dorian and the Phrygian modes as the only 'pure' modes, and then to have reduced all other *harmoniai* to variations of one or the other. The practitioners of the new musical style also embrace this contrast: Melanippides' *Marsyas* narrates the musical contest between Apollo on the lyre and the Phrygian Marsyas on the pipes, and Telestes praises the 'Phrygian' who 'first composed the Lydian song as a rival to the Dorian Muse' (*PMG* 806).

Thus, we can conclude that the New Music traits that mark the composition of the first stasimon further connect the ode to the realm of the Dionysiac. It is sadly impossible to reconstruct the strictly musical innovations that Euripides may have introduced and the effect that they would have had on the audience of the play, but the aural dimension of the ode is also effected by other means, such as word-sound, semantics and syntax, and the passage's pronounced tendency towards a kind of language that was viewed as capable of creating a dizzying and inflammatory Dionysiac atmosphere legitimizes the claim of cultural colonization that is expressed in the song, and renders it even more explicit and manifest.

Choral Authority and Narratives of Imperialism

But what weight does the chorus' utterance carry? The crucial issue of the nature, function and authoritative status of the choral voice in Greek drama has received a good deal of critical attention in the last few decades. Recent scholarship has challenged interpretations that promote too much 'centrality' and civic identification for the chorus of tragedy. John Gould rightly reminds us of the increasing tendency in Euripidean drama to draw its choruses mostly from groups perceived as socially marginal and 'other', that is, women, foreigners and slaves.[73] These choruses 'express not the values of the *polis,* but far more often the experience of the

[73] Gould (1996).

excluded, the oppressed, and the vulnerable'.[74] He also points out the helplessness of the choruses, even when they occupy the center of the action, because their fate is in the hands of men who have total control over them. So far, Gould's insights are valuable for our understanding of the function of the chorus in the *Trojan Women,* which – even though it stands at the center of the play's world – is both marginal and 'other', both feminine and barbarian. The problem with Gould's interpretation lies in the fact that he equates the uprootedness and the powerlessness of the choruses with a lack of a representative or authoritative status and denies that the chorus can have a privileged presence within the dramatic fiction: in his own words, 'social marginality (…) deprives the chorus of tragic authority'.[75]

And yet, the marginality and the 'otherness' of the choruses in relation to the free, male, Athenian audience in the theater does not necessarily mean lack of authority of voice. Simon Goldhill in his response to Gould in the same volume argues for a more flexible concept of 'authority' when he writes that 'that the chorus can speak with the full weight of a collective authority is crucial to tragedy's explorations of authority, knowledge, tradition (…)',[76] and also that 'tragedy's detour through the other is integral to its – authoritative – sophia'.[77] Helene Foley also focuses on the issues of authoritative gnomic wisdom and cultural memory to which the chorus of Greek tragedy often claims and has a special access,[78] and Michael Silk has shown that, on the level of diction, song and dance, the tragic chorus can be said to occupy a stylistically, linguistically and performatively higher plane than that of the main characters of a

[74] *Op. cit.,* 224.

[75] *Op. cit.,* 221.
[76] Goldhill (1996) 253.
[77] *Op. cit.*
[78] Foley (2003a).

drama.[79] Arguing from a different point of view, Donald Mastronarde also reminds us of the authoritative status of the voice of the tragic chorus in his comment that it is important to recognize how the choral voice 'may shift from the "intradramatic" position of a group with particular fictional identity and status and (…) with all the limitations of a partial perspective, to the "extradramatic" position of a collective voice less tied to a particular identity, and standing more aloof from the action, and thus capable of more authoritative utterance'.[80] Further, Albert Henrichs' work on 'choral self-reflexivity', has helped promote our understanding of the extradramatic role of the tragic choruses, who should be viewed as performing their song and dance not only within the sphere of the tragic fiction, but also within the context of the festival that is devoted to the god of theater.[81] More recently, Anton Bierl's work has also investigated and highlighted the ritual dimension of the dramatic chorus (both tragic and comic), arguing that it '(…) occupies a dynamically mediating position between performing purely cultic activity and playing a fictional role as *dramatis persona*' .[82]

We can then reach the conclusion that their barbarian status and their position of weakness do not deprive the Trojan women of authority of voice. Admittedly, the identity of the chorus of Phrygian female captives does create some kind of identification-gap, assuming that the core of the audience that attended the tragic production was made up by male Athenian

[79] Silk (1999). On the female voice and speech in tragedy see the discussions in McClure (1999) and Mossman (2005) and see also Ebbott (2005) on marginal figures in Greek drama.
[80] Mastronarde (1999-2000) 88. See also: Mastronarde (1998).
[81] See: Henrichs (1996b) 48: 'The chorus assume a ritual posture that functions as a link between their own choral performance and the dramatically constructed rituals performed within the realm of the action. Far from breaking the dramatic illusion, as has often been claimed, such choruses draw their audiences into a more integrated theatrical experience, in which the choral performance in the orchestra merges with the more imaginary performances of polytheism that take place in the course of each play'; also Henrichs (1996a) and (1994-1995); Calame (1999).
[82] Bierl (2009) 47.

citizens,[83] but it is precisely this eastern and female identity that makes these women the most appropriate figures for the blurring of the line that separates the dramatic fiction from the ritual that honors the most oriental and effeminate among the Greek gods.

Besides, in a sense, the women of the chorus do something here that has long been associated with Greek tragedy. Athenian drama has been described as a particularly ravenous and inclusive form that has a unique capacity to absorb and appropriate (mainly in its lyric parts) multiple metrical forms, dialects and poetic genres originating in places across the Greek world such as Dorian choral lyric and Aegean monody.[84] Edith Hall has connected the ideological implications of this expression of cultural colonization to Athenian imperialism itself: 'A way of looking at tragedy', she writes, 'could be to see it as not only aesthetically 'panhellenizing', but effectively as imperialism expressed on the level of form'.[85] Hall notes that, unlike many other areas of Greece, which were associated with specific song-forms, Athens does not have its own distinct poetic genre. It thus invents in tragedy a poetic form that is able to assimilate all other genres and make them its own.

The first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* dramatizes an extreme instance of tragic imperialism. It performs a bold gesture not of 'panhellenization', but rather of 'orientalization' and 'phryginization' of the Greek song-forms it incorporates and alludes to in the course of its narrative. Thus, on the level of the plot, and on the level of the events narrated in the ode, the

[83] On the vexed issue of women's attendance at dramatic productions see: Podlecki (1990), Henderson (1991) and Goldhill (1994).
[84] See: Hall (1999) 120f. Also Hall (1997) 93-126. Cf. Swift (2010) 26.
[85] Hall (1999) 121.

play tells the story of the cruel conquest of the Trojans by the Greeks. Produced in 415, the *Trojan Women* has also been read as a dark comment on Athenian imperialism with strong contemporary resonances, as, in part, a piece of criticism condemning the sort of Athenian atrocities committed against the island of Melos,[86] or as a warning to the city against the dangers of the upcoming Sicilian expedition.[87] However, on the level of the poetic allusions and of the musical imagery of the first stasimon the situation is reversed: the Greek *boa* that violently muted their musical activity on the night of the fall of Troy was not able to silence the women for good. They return to their singing, and their Phrygian, tragic, Dionysiac *mousikê* now 'barbarizes' and 'conquers' the Greek song.

HECUBA

In the prologue, Hecuba is presented as a kind of living exemplification of the fallen city, lying stretched out on the ground, degraded, shedding tears (36-38). Once Poseidon and Athena leave the stage, the Trojan queen raises her head and delivers a monody in which she expresses her sorrow at her wretched destiny. She starts off with recitative anapaests which she continues until l. 121. These lines, like the beginning of the first stasimon, are marked by a

[86] For a good recent review of the scholarship on the 'Melos interpretation', including the objections raised against this reading, see: Goff (2009) 27-35.
[87] This reading takes the reference by Poseidon in the prologue to the storm that will destroy the Greek fleet as alluding to the threat of potential catastrophe that the Sicilian expedition poses to Athens, which is in danger because of her hybris. Suter (2003) offers a reading of the play as a 'proleptic lament' for Athens. See also the discussion in Dué (2006) chapter 3.

pervasive self-referentiality. Hecuba contemplates the impossibility of the subject-matter of her song, and initially even oscillates between song and silence:

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ

τί γὰρ οὐ πάρα μοι μελέαι στενάχειν,

ἦι πατρὶς ἔρρει καὶ τέκνα καὶ πόσις;

…

τί με χρὴ σιγᾶν; τί δὲ μὴ σιγᾶν;

τί δὲ θρηνῆσαι;

(105-111)

[Ah me, ah me!

What lament is there that I cannot utter, unlucky woman that I am?

My country is gone, my children, my husband!

…

Why should I remain silent? Why should I not remain silent?

Why should I lament?][88]

Hecuba's *aporia* highlights not only the exceptional nature of her misfortunes, but also the difficulty of finding a song that attempts to give expression to tragic suffering altogether.[89] Later in the play, Cassandra states that she prefers silence to acknowledging any kind of

[88] Translation adapted from Kovacs (1999).

[89] As several critics have pointed out, Hecuba's questions echo the traditional opening question of the 'desperation speech' (τί χρὴ δρᾶν;). See: Lee (1976) ad loc., Biehl (1989) ad loc., Dué (2006) 140.

affinity between the Muse and the evocation of evil:

σιγᾶν ἄμεινον τἀισχρά, μηδὲ μοῦσά μοι
γένοιτ᾽ ἀοιδὸς ἥτις ὑμνήσει κακά
(384-5)

[Better to say nothing of disgraceful matters: may my Muse not
be a singer who hymns disaster.][90]

Hecuba, however, does not share the reticence of her daughter, but rather seems to side with the women of the chorus, who in the first stasimon confidently appeal to the Muse in order to ask her to sing a funereal ode accompanied by tears.[91] Thus, the Trojan queen quickly overcomes her hesitation and reflects on the nature of the song and dance that she is about to perform:

… ὥς μοι πόθος εἰλίξαι
καὶ διαδοῦναι νῶτον ἄκανθάν τ᾽
εἰς αμφοτέρους τοίχους μελέων,
ἐπιοῦσ᾽ ἀεὶ δακρύων ἐλέγους.
μοῦσα δὲ χαΰτη τοῖς δυστήνοις
ἄτας κελαδεῖν ἀχορεύτους.
(116-121)

[90] Trans. Kovacs (1999).
[91] See also ll. 608-609 in which the chorus comment on the joys of lamentation in iambic trimeters: ὡς ἡδὺ δάκρυα τοῖς κακῶς πεπραγόσιν / θρήνων τ᾽ ὀδυρμοὶ μοῦσα θ᾽ ἣ λύπας ἔχει (‘How sweet for those in misfortune are tears, the keening of lamentation, and the song that has sorrow for it theme’.)

[How I long to roll

my back and spine about,

listing now to this side of my body, now to that,

as I utter continually my tearful song of woe!

This too is music for those in misfortune,

to utter aloud their danceless troubles.][92]

The paradox of the 'delight in lamentation' is already present in Homer,[93] and Hecuba is closely associated with lament in the *Iliad*. However – even though the queen does not explicitly mark her music as 'new', as the chorus did in the first stasimon – the strong self-reflexivity of these lines points to her quest for a novel kind of music, one that like the chorus' anomalous new Muse will sing of 'danceless troubles'. She envisages her dance as the swaying

[92] Translation adapted from Kovacs (1999).

[93] Cf. the Homeric phrases ὀλοοῖο τεταρπώμεσθα γόοιο, τάρφθη πολυδακρύτοιο γόοιο, and see the introduction in Di Benedetto and Cerbo (1998). See also the discussion on Book 8 of the *Odyssey* in Walsh (1984) chapter 1, in which the attitude of the Phaeacians, who expect song to offer pure and unmixed pleasure, is contrasted to that of Odysseus who in asking for a song about himself seems to welcome the sensation of sorrow since he is apparently aware that the memories that this song will awaken are going to be painful. The same idea is expressed by Andromache in Euripides' namesake play, and in her lines the pleasure in lamentation is specifically linked to the female voice: ἡμεῖς δ' οἷσπερ ἐγκείμεσθ' ἀεὶ / θρήνοισι καὶ γόοισι καὶ δακρύμασιν / πρὸς αἰθέρ' ἐκτενοῦμεν. ἐμπέφυκε γὰρ / γυναιξὶ τέρψις τῶν παρεστώτων κακῶν /ἀνὰ στόμ' αἰεὶ καὶ διὰ γλώσσης ἔχειν. ('For my part I shall fill heaven at great length with the laments and groans and tears to which my whole life is devoted. It is natural for women to get pleasure from their present misfortunes, by constantly having them on their lips.' (91-95))

of her aged body from side to side as if she were a vessel in motion in a stormy sea.[94] Her back is the keel, while her sides correspond to the sides (*toichous*) of the ship.

Ἑλίσσειν, the verb that Hecuba uses to describe her dance, has a special significance. As Eric Csapo has argued, words from the root ἑλικ- ('revolve') were associated with Dionysus, partly because the noun ἕλιξ denotes the tendril of the vine and the ivy, the plants that are most closely connected to Dionysus, and that are also evocative of roundness, as they grow in spirals and were used to make garlands and wreaths.[95] Ἑλίσσειν designates revolving motion and particularly circular, cultic dance;[96] Wilamowitz has called it Euripides' 'Lieblingswort',[97] as it appears more than fifty times in the poet's extant dramas and fragments (in its simple form or compounded with ἀμφι-, ἀν-, ἐξ- and συν-), all in plays of the later 420s onwards and with increasing frequency in the last decade of his career.[98] This word is employed by Euripides in the context of dances performed by circling Nereids, maenads, or dolphins and it develops strong associations with the sphere of Dionysus and his cult.[99]

We briefly discussed above Henrichs' contribution to our understanding of the malleability of the identity and the role of the tragic choruses, who locate themselves and the

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[94] The metaphor is contained in the word *toichous* meaning ship's benches / sides and is almost impossible to render in English adequately (literally: 'to both ship's sides of my limbs'). See: Barlow (1986) ad loc., Lee (1976) ad loc.

[95] See: Csapo (1999-2000) 419-422, Csapo (2003), and Csapo (2008) 274.

[96] See: Calame (2001) 35: 'the signified of this word combines the features 'to dance' and 'circularity''.

[97] von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1895) 159.

[98] See: Borthwick (1994) 30. The verb occurs only three times in Sophocles and never in Aeschylus. Note also that the *Trojan Women* opens with the image of the Nereids swirling in the bottom of the Aegean sea: Ἥκω λιπὼν Αἰγαῖον ἁλμυρὸν βάθος / πόντου Ποσειδῶν, ἔνθα Νηρήιδων χοροὶ / κάλλιστον ἴχνος ἐξελίσσουσιν ποδός. (I am Poseidon, and I have come here from the briny depths of the Aegean, where choruses of Nereids turn their footsteps in graceful rounds, 1-3). The verb appears for a third time in Cassandra's wedding-song.

[99] Csapo (2003) discusses the Dionysiac resonances and associations of the representations of choruses of dolphins and Nereids performing circular dances in Greek art, myth and literary tradition.

music they perform in the orchestra between the fiction of the play and the here and now of the dramatic performance. Henrichs has identified the instances in which the chorus refer to their own dancing ('choral self-referentiality') as the moments when the double identity of its members – as characters in the play but at the same time as a collective of dancers and singers who perform in honor of the god of theater – becomes more explicit and transparent. We might add to his insight that references to musical and poetical activity in Euripides' tragedies extend well beyond those made by the chorus, and that a closer study of those that belong to the rest of the characters – who are, after all, also performing for Dionysus – may further our grasp of the elusive but profoundly Dionysiac character of the *mousikê* of late Euripidean drama. One such reference is Hecuba's εἰλίξαι, which has strong Dionysiac connotations and also a programmatic force since it functions as a marker that defines the nature of the dance that the Trojan queen is about to perform.

After the first self-reflexive lines, Hecuba finally manages to raise herself from the ground and begins to sing.[100] The nautical imagery persists, as the ship-metaphor that Hecuba used to describe the rocking movement of her body now gives way to the account of the arrival of the Greek fleet:

πρῶιραι ναῶν, ὠκείαις
Ἴλιον ἱερὰν αἳ κώπαις
δι᾽ ἅλα πορφυροειδῆ καὶ
λιμένας Ἑλλάδος εὐόρμους
αὐλῶν παιᾶνι στυγνῶι

[100] On the switch from recitative anapaests to lyric anapaests, see: Lee (1976) 80.

συρίγγων τ᾽ ευφθόγγων φωνᾶι
βαίνουσαι πλεκτὰν Αἰγύπτου
παιδείαν ἐξηρτήσασθ᾽
αἰαῖ, Τροίας ἐν κόλποις
τὰν Μενελάου μετανισόμεναι
στυγνὰν ἄλοχον…
(122-131)

[Prows of ships, with swift oar
you came to holy Ilium
over the dark blue sea
and the fair harbors of Greece
with the hateful song of pipes
blent with the voice of tuneful flutes,
and you hung down from your sterns, alas,
alas, in the bay of Troy,
ropes, which Egypt taught you to make,
coming in quest of Menelaus'
hateful wife…][101]

The song exhibits distinctive features of the new style verse, such as elaborate and circumlocutory diction,[102] and complex syntax.[103] Like the first stasimon, Hecuba's monody

[101] Trans. Kovacs (1999).

employs an emotive language that shows a marked tendency towards the rejection of logical organization and a preference for riddling expression that amasses images rather than naming concepts; the new verse thus expresses the priority of music over logic, resonating with uncontrollable emotion and Dionysiac *mania*. It is significant that εἱλίσσω, which denotes rushing, revolving motion, also has New Music resonances, and is parodied by Aristophanes as a Euripidean New Musical mannerism.[104] Hecuba's lines are rich in Homeric echoes.[105] She condemns the arrival of the Greek fleet and their hated (*stygnos*) music employing epic vocabulary, but these words and phrases (which of course acquire a new meaning and force in the new context) are now absorbed by the Dionysiac and ecstatic song and dance of the whirling Trojan queen.

At the end of her song, Hecuba will go further in the exploration of the nature of the '*mousa* for those in misfortunes', as she compares her lament to the cry that the mother bird raises for her nestlings:

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[102] See the expression πλεκτὰν Αἰγύπτου παιδείαν ('the twisted growth of Egypt', 128-9), 'a rather involved periphrasis for rope!', exclaims Lee (1976 ad loc.). See also Breitenbach (1934) 201.

[103] The initial invocation of the ships consists in a long relative clause (αἵ… ἐξηρτήσασθε), to which a participial phrase is attached and which is finally left suspended, and is followed by a second relative clause (ἃ σφάζει μὲν… l. 134f). On these lines see: Di Benedetto (1971) 239ff, also Kranz (1933) 238-240, who discusses the tendency to begin a song with a long apostrophe to a person or thing which leads nowhere as it lacks a predicate as a characteristic trait of the new music style (Kranz however limits his study to choral songs). On the syntax of the new style verse in general see also Csapo (2004) 225-226.

[104] See: Borthwick (1994), Csapo (1999-2000) 422.

[105]Note the feminine form Ἴλιον ἱεράν (123) instead of the neuter Ἴλιον that is normally used in tragedy (and cf. the Homeric phrase Ἴλιον εἰς ἱερήν (*Il.* 7.20)), also: ἅλα… πορφυροειδῆ (124), λιμένας… ευόρμους (125) and see: Lee (1976) 86. The *hapax legomenon* epithet χαλκεγχέων (143) also has a distinctively heroic, epic flavor (See: Barlow (1986) ad loc.)

τύφεται Ἴλιον, αἰάζωμεν.

μάτηρ δ᾽ ὡσεὶ πτανοῖς κλαγγὰν

ὄρνισιν ὅπως ἐξάρξω ᾽γὼ

μολπὰν[106] οὐ τὰν αὐτὰν

οἵαν ποτὲ δὴ

σκήπτρωι Πριάμου διερειδομένου

ποδὸς ἀρχεχόρου πλαγαῖς Φρυγίαις[107]

εὐκόμποις ἐξῆρχον θεούς.

(145-152)

[Ilium is burning, let us wail aloud.

Like a mother bird for her young,

I shall lead the crying,

but it will not be the same song

as I once led

in honor of the gods

with the confident Phrygian beat of chorus leader's foot,

while Priam leaned upon his scepter.][108]

[106] μάτηρ… μολπάν: a difficult passage. The repetition ὡσεί, ὅπως is awkward, but, as Lee (1976) ad loc., and Barlow (1986) ad loc. point out, can be paralleled by *Hecuba* 398. Dindrof suggests the emendation ὄρνις ('as the mother bird').

[107] I agree with Lee that Wilamowitz's correction Φρυγίους for Φρυγίαις, which is also followed by Diggle, is unnecessary (See: Lee (1976) ad loc.)

[108] Translation adapted from Barlow (1986).

The queen recalls the past, when Priam was still the king of the city and she used to lead the choruses of Troy paying service to the gods. In the first stasimon, the Greek *boa* puts an end to the music and dance the women performed during the celebration of the supposed victory of the Trojans. The women resume their song, which is now 'cried out' as a tragic cry of lamentation, a Dionysiac *iachê*. In Hecuba's monody, the arrival of the hateful Greek *mousikê* brings about the transformation of the older Trojan song- and dance-forms. Thus, Hecuba now compares her *molpê* to a bird's cry (κλαγγή 146), and once again, song dissolves into an inarticulate, ecstatic cry (αἰάζωμεν 145). The monody motivates the parodos; the chorus claim to have come on the stage prompted not by their queen's song but by her shouts and cries… Ἑκάβα, τί θροεῖς; τί δὲ θωύσσεις; (Hecuba, what do you utter? What do you cry aloud?, 153).[109] Hecuba's song is indeed perceived as a cry.

Hecuba ponders the transformation of the music of Troy and reflects on the birth of a new tradition of music and song. The same woman who in the past used to sing and dance *plagais Phrygiais* (dare we suggest that this is another reference to the Phrygian *harmonia,* signaling that perhaps Hecuba also performed her monody at the accompaniment of the Phrygian mode?) is now associated with the birth of tragic, Dionysiac, ecstatic *mousikê*. And, like the voice of the women of the chorus in the first stasimon, Hecuba's Phrygian voice becomes the most appropriate medium for allowing, once again, the emergence of the Dionysiac.

[109] On the meaning of θωύσσω cf. *Hecuba* 113, τάδε θωύσσων referring to the shouts of Achiles' ghost, *Orestes* 118, θωύξασ' describing the cries of the chorus at the sight of the maddened Orestes, *Bacchae* 871 θωύσσων of the hunter calling his dogs, and see Biehl (1989) ad loc.

Near the end of the play, the queen brings together Troy, song and the Muses for one final time, advancing the claim that…

(…) εἰ δὲ μὴ θεὸς
ἔστρεψε τἄνω περιβαλὼν κάτω χθονός,
ἄφανεῖς ἂν ὄντες οὐκ ἂν ὑμνηθεῖμεν ἂν
μούσαις ἀοιδὰς δόντες ὑστέρων βροτῶν.
(1242-1245)

[(…) but if the god
had not turned the world upside down,
we should have remained unknown and unsung,
instead of giving a theme for song to the Muses of future men.][110]

Hecuba seeks consolation in the paradoxical thought that if the Trojan people were not conquered and annihilated they would never become famous through song, but would instead remain in perpetual obscurity, *aphaneis* (1244).[111] The idea that the preservation and commemoration of suffering through song and poetry in subsequent times brings *kleos* and immortalization rings peculiarly epic on the lips of the Trojan queen, and her sentiment (i.e. the attempt to take some comfort from the prospect of future fame) echoes closely the formulation

[110] Translation adapted from Barlow (1986).
[111] Cf. Cassandra's statement at 395-397 of the *Trojan Women*: δόξας ἀνὴρ ἄριστος οἴχεται θανών, / καὶ τοῦτ' Ἀχαιῶν ἵξις ἐξεργάζεται. / εἰ δ' ἦσαν οἴκοι, χρηστὸς ἔλαθεν ἂν γεγώς ('he [Hector] died after winning the greatest reputation, and this was brought about by the arrival of the Achaeans. If they had stayed at home, his valor would have remained unnoticed.')

of the Homeric Helen in Book 6 of the *Iliad,* that an 'evil doom' has been brought upon her and Paris so that they will be sung about in future generations.[112] Does this signal a return to the notion of a more traditional and conventional epic Muse, like that that the chorus of the first stasimon denounced in their search for a novel source of inspiration? I suggest that, as in the appeal to the Muse in the first stasimon, Hecuba's lines invite a double reading: in alluding to the Homeric epics, Hecuba speaks as one who is aware of the place of honor that Troy occupies in Greek song and poetry, and underscores the play's consciousness of its lateness in the Greek literary tradition. At the same time however, uttering these words as the city of Troy is being reduced to ashes, the Trojan queen forestalls, as it were, and claims precedence over the Homeric epics, which, within the temporal framework of the play's plot, have not yet been composed; and thus, the current performance is framed as the first instance of the realization of the literary future that Hecuba predicts for the fallen city: the songs of the *Trojan Women* will give a theme to Homer.

[112] *Il.* 6. 357-358: οἷσιν ἐπὶ Ζεὺς θῆκε κακὸν μόρον, ὡς καὶ ὀπίσσω / ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ' ἀοίδιμοι ἐσσομένοισι. See also *Od.* 8. 72-92 (Odysseus moved that his deeds form already part of Demodocus' repertoire), and *Od.* 8. 577-580 (εἰπὲ δ' ὅ τι κλαίεις καὶ ὀδύρεαι ἔνδοθι θυμῷ Ἀργείων Δαναῶν ἠδ' Ἰλίου οἶτον ἀκούων. τὸν δὲ θεοὶ μὲν τεῦξαν, ἐπεκλώσαντο δ' ὄλεθρον ἀνθρώποις, ἵνα ἦισι καὶ ἐσσομένοισιν ἀοιδή. ('tell me why you weep and mourn in spirit as you hear of the destruction of the Argives, the Danaans and of Ilium. This the gods brought about and spun the destruction of men that there might be a song for future generations'). See also: Barlow (1986) ad 1244-1245, Lee (1976) ad 1242-1245, and Ford (1992) 127-129.

Out of all the characters of the play, Cassandra is the one most overtly associated with terms that belong to the sphere of Dionysus and his frenzy, since she is insistently compared to a bacchant or even a maenad.[113] In the course of the first episode, she sings an excited wedding hymn in celebration of her impending union with Agamemnon (308-341). Cassandra's monody is of course a parody and a distortion of the wedding-song, and has been extensively discussed in recent scholarship.[114] As several critics have pointed out, the song is filled with imagery connected to Dionysiac dance and *mania*, and represents a conflation of wedding- and Bacchic celebration.[115] Cassandra enters the stage in a raving state (θοάζει, 307) and brandishing torches, which are associated both with the wedding ceremony, but also with the bacchanal,[116] and directly calls upon the god when she orders herself to πάλλε πόδ' αἰθέριον ,<ἄναγ'> ἄναγε χορόν / εὐᾶν εὐοῖ (325-6). 'Das ganze Lied ist… gekennzeichnet durch ekstatische, bakchantische Thematik. Man braucht im Grunde 'Hymenaios' nur mit 'Iakchos', den Ruf Ὑμήν durch Ἴακχε zu ersetzen, dann wird es ganz deutlich', notes Eveline Krummen.[117] Cassandra invites her mother to…

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[113] See: 42 μεθῆκ' Ἀπόλλων δρομάδα Κασσάνδραν ἄναξ (Poseidon in the prologue), 169 ἐκβακχεύουσαν Κασσάνδραν (Hecuba), 173 μαινάδ' (Hecuba), 307 μαινὰς θοάζει δεῦρο Κασσάνδρα δρόμωι (Hecuba), 341 βακχεύουσαν (chorus), 349 μαινὰς θοάζουσ' (Hecuba), 408 εἰ μή σ' Ἀπόλλων ἐξευάκχευσεν φρένας… (Talthybius), 415 μαινάδος (Talthybius), 500 σύμβακχε (Hecuba).

[114] See: Krummen (1998), Rehm (1994) chapter nine, Seaford (1987) and Seaford (1993), Rutherford (2001).

[115] Lee (1976) 124f., Barlow (1986) 174, Krummen (1998) 320.

[116] See: *Bacchae* 145, *Ion* 716, and Lee (1976) ad loc.

[117] Krummen (1998).

χόρευε, μᾶτερ, χόρευμ᾽ ἄναγε, πόδα σὸν

ἔλισσε τᾶιδ᾽ εκεῖσε, μετ᾽ ἐμέθεν ποδῶν

φέρουσα φιλτάταν βάσιν.

βόασον ὑμέναιον ὦ

μακαρίαις ἀοιδαῖς

ἰαχαῖς τε νύμφαν.

(332-337)

[Dance mother, lead the dance,

and whirl your foot this way

and that, joining with me

in the joyful step!

Shout the cry of Hymen

with songs and shouts of blessedness

to the bride!][118]

Her song and dance are marked by loudness, rushing motion, lack of restraint and uncontrollable emotion. When she asks her mother to join her ecstatic celebration, Cassandra employs the same verb Hecuba used in her monody to describe her own whirling dance (ἔλισσε, 333 cf. εἰλίξαι, 116); when she bids Hecuba to shout 'Hymen… with songs and shouts of blessendness' (βόασον ὑμέναιον… μακαρίαις ἀοιδαῖς ἰαχαῖς τε) – she is like the chorus in the first stasimon who state that they will 'cry out' (*iachesô*) their funeral ode to Troy and mix song and cry in the phrase βοάν τ᾽ ἔμελπον εὔφρον᾽ (547). The presence in Cassandra's more

[118] Translation adapted from Kovacs (1999).

pronouncedly Dionysiac song of the same self-referential terms that appear in Hecuba's monody and in the first stasimon should confirm the association of these terms with the god from Eleutherai also in those more elusively Dionysiac songs.

Renate Schlesier has argued that, even though the characters of Greek tragedy are clearly defined and identified by means of their masks, sometimes a figure is confounded with another kind of character, one that is terminologically associated with the realm of Dionysus' myth and cult.[119] Such characters wear two different kinds of masks, one material and tangible, and one non-tangible, and 'imaginary' which is engendered by means of words that create a nonmaterial image before the eyes of the audience. Thus, 'there is not one single truth but two (or even more) truths that are simultaneously operative and equally valid'.[120] The 'maenadic model', as Schlesier calls this situation, needs to be understood as a specific dramatic device that further illuminates the Dionysiac nature of the genre of tragedy, since it forges a link between the god who lends his auspices to the tragic productions and tragic plots, figures and myths which outside the sphere of theater have no connection to Dionysus.

Cassandra in the *Trojan Women* is a characteristic example of the 'maenadic model'. However, the connection of the play to the Dionysiac does not end here. As I hope I have shown in these pages, the references to song and dance in Hecuba's monody and in the first stasimon further connect the play with the god of theater, and reveal the Dionysiac essence of tragic *mousikê.* The lyrics of the play offer a reflection on the birth and nature of tragic song:

[119] See: Schlesier (1993).
[120] *Op. cit.,* 96.

born from fresh grief, it is feminine, oriental, barbarian, ecstatic, inflammatory, Dionysiac. Further, eastern, tragic *mousikê* is presented as a comprehensive song-form that is able not only to contain and assimilate earlier Greek narratives and genres, but also to present itself as their source.

The voice most suited to singing this new tragic and Dionysiac song on the fall of Troy is the voice of the Phrygian captive women. Violently reduced to slavery, they have lost everything and have no longer control over their lives and fates, but they can still do one thing: they can sing and dance. As they sing and dance, Hecuba, Cassandra and the chorus of Trojan women step out of their prescribed roles within the tragic fiction, take on a second role, and become maenadic women who perform their eastern, tragic music in honor of the quintessential outsider who presides over the festival in which they participate, thus offering a dizzying, intoxicating, truly Dionysiac experience.

CHAPTER TWO

PHOENICIAN WOMEN

ἐυστεφάνωι ἐνὶ Θήβηι

– *Iliad* 19.99

From the fallen city of Troy to the city of Thebes in its final throes. Produced a few years after the Trojan play,[121] the *Phoenician Women* is another late, experimental Euripidean drama that resists an easy categorization and challenges traditional definitions of tragedy, as it boldly expands the tragic form, amasses and piles upon each other multiple characters, plots, stories and texts, systematically dismantles the earlier literary tradition with which it constantly engages, and finally denies the characters and the audience the comfort of closure.[122]

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[121] The *Phoenician Women* is securely dated to the period 411-407 on both metrical grounds (see: Cropp and Fick (1985) 23 on the frequency of trimeter resolutions in the play), and external evidence, namely the scholion on *Frogs* 53, which comments on Dionysus' report of having lately read Euripides' *Andromeda*, and wonders: διὰ τί δὲ μὴ ἄλλο τι τῶν πρὸ ὀλίγου διδαχθέντων καὶ καλῶν Ὑψιπύλης Φοινισσῶν Ἀντιόπης; ἡ δὲ Ἀνδρομέδα ὀγδόωι ἔτει προεισῆκται. ('Why not one of the good plays that has recently been produced, *Hypsipyle, Phoenician Women, Antiope*? The *Andromeda* was produced eight years previously'), thus showing that the *Phoenician Women* was produced later than 412, the year of the *Andromeda* and the *Helen.* Mastronarde (1994) 12 argues that the expression 'shortly before' (πρὸ ὀλίγου) narrows the most likely period to 409 or the following year.

[122] See: Dunn (1996) 180 f., and also 102, where Dunn notes that the *Trojan Women* and the *Phoenician Women* are unique in this respect, as, in contrast to the rest of the plays of the extant Euripidean corpus, which clearly signal the end of the performance, the two plays lack closing gestures altogether.

And yet, as Froma Zeitlin has observed, on the Athenian stage, 'Thebes' functions as a 'conceptual category', a 'recurrent concept or formula', which 'supplies the radical tragic terrain where there can be no escape from the tragic in the resolution of conflict or in the institutional provision of a civic future beyond the world of the play'.[123] Given the prominent position that the city of Thebes occupies in Dionysiac myth and cult, Dionysus cannot be absent from the quintessentially tragic Theban scenario. 'Thebes' is the *topos* of the tragic *par excellence*, and it also becomes the site of an extensive reflection on the nature and the Dionysiac essence of tragedy's *mousikê.* The following pages offer a discussion of the musical imagery of the lyrics of the play with a focus on the special value of music in connection to Dionysus, which will help further our understanding of the essentially Dionysiac energy that governs the drama.

THE MUSIC OF THEBES

Between Thebes and Delphi

The chorus of the *Phoenician Women* consists of young women selected as 'choicest offerings' (ἀκροθίνια, 203) by the Agenoridae of Tyre and sent to serve as *hierodouloi* at the Delphic shrine of Apollo. They present themselves in the parodos of the play, and they explain

[123] See: Zeitlin (1990) 131.

their origins, their presence in the city of Thebes and their final destination. The epode of the choral ode opens with a long series of invocations which forms the prelude to an escape-wish:

ὦ λάμπουσα πέτρα πυρὸς
δικόρυφον σέλας ὑπὲρ ἄκρων
βακχείων Διονύσου,
οἵνα θ᾽ ἃ καθαμέριον
στάζεις, τὸν πολύκαρπον
οἰνάνθας ἱεῖσα βότρυν,
ζάθεα τ᾽ ἄντρα δράκοντος οὔ-
ρειαί τε σκοπιαὶ θεᾶν
νιφοβόλον τ᾽ ὄρος ἱερόν, εἰ-
λίσσων ἀθανάτους θεοῦ
χορὸς γενοίμαν ἄφοβος
παρὰ μεσόμφαλα γύαλα Φοί-
βου Δίρκαν προλιποῦσα.

(226-238)

[Ah, rock lighting up with fire's blaze
double-peaked, above the crags
Bacchic, of Dionysus;
and you, vine, which daily
ripen, fruitful
clusters of shoots producing;
and holy caves of the dragon

and mountain vantage-points of the goddesses

and sacred snowy mountain;

I wish I were, a whirling

to the immortals chorus of the god; free from fear,

by the hollows of Phoebus in the center of the earth

having left Dirce.][124]

The maidens wish they could leave Thebes, which is besieged and about to be attacked by the army of Polyneices and the Argives, and to reach Delphi, the cult center for Apollo and Dionysus, where they will dance in honor of the god. But who is the god? The meaning of the lines and the identity of the deity to which the chorus refer are obscure, and it has even been suggested that the chorus here refer to a female divinity,[125] but this seems to me to be unlikely. So far in the ode, the women have made four references to Loxias,[126] but Dionysus' presence is also strongly felt, as the stanza is filled with Dionysiac imagery: the girls invoke the Mount Parnassus, the rock which gleams with blaze above the bacchic, revelry-filled crags of Dionysus (ὑπὲρ ἄκρων / βακχείων Διονύσου). There too will be the famous vine of the god, which produced each day a new bloom for the god's worship. In Delphi, the girls imagine, they will be become a chorus free from fear, *aphobos* (236). The Phoenician maidens are, clearly, already a chorus, the chorus of our play, and these lines are an instance of choral projection: the girls project their current dance onto the one they aspire and hope they will perform in the

[124] Trans. Craik (1988) modified.
[125] Mastronarde (1994) ad loc., and Craik (1988) ad loc. prefer the reading ἀθανάτας θεοῦ and discuss the different attempts to identify the goddess the chorus is referring to (Artemis, Athena, Ge).
[126] 203: ἀκροθίνια Λοξίαι; 205: Φοίβωι δούλα μελάθρων; 215: καλλιστεύματα Λοξίαι; 225: Φοιβείαισι λατρείαις.

future, when they will be able to assume their service at the Delphic shrine. This is one of those moments that, as scholars such as Anton Bierl and Albert Henrichs have shown, blur the line that walls off the world of the tragic fiction from the world of the ritual performed in honor of the god who presides over the dramatic festival in which this play is presented.[127] Note also that the women employ the term εἰλίσσων, which functions as an attribute of χορός, and, as discussed in the previous chapter, is loaded with Dionysiac associations and evokes revolving, cultic dance. This is only the first of many references to rotating dance, and we will see that the play is permeated by imagery of circular dancing and movement. For the moment, it is enough to observe that the women express the wish to become something that they already are: a chorus dancing in honor of Dionysus.

νῦν δέ… the first two words of the next stanza mark the return to the present, as in the second strophic pair (214-260) the girls abandon fantasy and illusion to dwell on their present situation and the misfortunes of Thebes, which is in the grips of Ares: he stands before the walls of the city, covers it with a dark cloud of war (250-251), and is about to bring destruction and death to its people and 'the woes of the Erinyes' (πημονὰν Ἐρινύων, 255) to Oedipus' sons.

[127] See: Bierl (2009), and also Henrichs (1994-1995), Henrichs (1996a) and Henrichs (1996b).

The Birth of the God

It has long been recognized that there are numerous links between the parodos and subsequent odes of the *Phoenician Women,* and that the choral lyrics of the play form a 'song-cycle'.[128] Thus, the first stasimon, sung after the collapse of the efforts at reconciliation of the two brothers, picks up and expands many of the themes and motifs of the parodos. Dionysus is again present in the first stanza, which dwells on Thebes as the site of the god's birth; the girls sing of the green shoots of ivy which form a wreath on the head of the infant-god immediately after he is born:

Βρόμιον ἔνθα τέκετο μά-
τηρ Διὸς γάμοισιν,
κισσὸς ὃν περιστεφὴς
ἑλικτὸς εὐθὺς ἔτι βρέφος χλοηφόροι-
σιν ἕρνεσιν κατασκίοι-
σιν ὀλβίσας ἐνώτισεν…
(649-657)

[Where his mother gave birth to Bromios
in union with Zeus,
him whom twined ivy
even while he was still a child, spiralling

[128] See: Bierl (1991) 149-150, Mastronarde (1994) 330, Kranz (1933) 260, Panagl (1971) 178, 190-191, Arthur (1977).

in green shoots

all-shadowy, enfolded, in abundance][129]

The ivy (κισσός) is modified by two adjectives both indicating roundness: περιστεφής and ἑλικτός.[130] In the parodos, the maidens expressed the wish to become a χορός εἰλίσσων for the god. Now the epithet ἑλικτός is directly associated with Dionysus. Immediately after, follows another instance of choral projection, as the dancing chorus refer to the dances performed in Thebes to honor the god:

βάκχιον χόρευμα παρθέ-

νοισι Θηβαΐσι

καὶ γυναιξὶν εὐίοις

(655-657)

[the Bacchic god worshiped in dancing

by maidens and matrons of Thebes

in their ecstasy.]

[129] Trans Craik (1988).

[130] Mastronarde (1994) ad 652 on ἑλικτός notes: 'Here it means 'coiling-about', reinforcing περιστεφής'. Cf. Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazousae* 999-1000: κύκλωι δὲ περί σε κισσὸς / εὐπέταλος ἕλικι θάλλει ('and around you the ivy with its lovely tendrils blossoms in coils'), and see also the pertinent discussion in Bierl (2009) 120-125, who examines the special value and function of *kissos* and *helix* in the Aristophanic passage and points out that '(…) ivy is associated metonymically and metaphorically with the dithyrambic and cyclical dance form of the performance (…) the god stands at the center as imaginary *koryphaios*; about him his sacred plant arranges itself in a round dance (κύκλωι) and shoots up in spiral form (ἕλικι), which also plays on the circular motion of the chorus.' (Bierl (2009) 123-124).

As in the parodos, the Phoenician women establish themselves as a ritual Dionysiac chorus.

Dionysus and Ares

The opposition between Dionysus and Ares that is constructed in the parodos is maintained in the first stasimon, where the peaceful, idyllic scene of Dionysus' birth is followed by the grimness and violence of the slaughter of Ares' dragon. The contrast between the two gods first culminates and then finally breaks down in the strophe of the second stasimon. Following the discussion of strategy between Creon and Eteocles and the latter's departure with his armor, the ode begins with an invocation of Ares and a description of the fury and violence that has plagued the two opposing sides which are getting ready to clash in the battlefield:

ὦ πολύμοχθος Ἄρης, τί ποθ᾽ αἵματι
καὶ θανάτωι κατέχηι Βρομίου παράμουσος ἑορταῖς;
οὐκ ἐπὶ καλλιχόροις στεφάνοισι νεάνιδος ὥρας
βόστρυχον ἀμπετάσας λωτοῦ κατὰ πνεύματα μέλπηι
μοῦσαν ἐν ἃι Χάριτες χοροποιοί,
ἀλλὰ σὺν ὁπλοφόροις στρατὸν Ἀργείων † ἐπιπνεύσας
αἵματι Θήβας †
κῶμον ἀναυλότατον προχορεύεις.
οὐδ ὑπὸ θυρσομανεῖ νεβρίδων μέτα † δινεύεις

ἅρμασι καὶ ψαλίων τετραβάμοσι μώνυχα πώλων †

Ἰσμηνοῦ τ᾽ ἐπὶ χεύμασι βαίνων

ἱππείαισι θοάζεις,

Ἀργείοις ἐπιπνεύσας

Σπαρτῶν γένναι

ἀσπιδοφέρμονα † θίασον ἔνοπλον †

ἀντίπαλον κατὰ λάϊνα τείχεα

χαλκῶι κοσμήσας.

ἦ δεινά τις Ἔρις θεός, ἃ τάδε

μήσατο πήματα γᾶς βασιλεῦσιν

[Λαβδακίδαις πολυμόχθοις].

(784-800)

[O Ares, bringer of suffering, why in bloodlust

and death are you gripped, out of tune with Bacchic festivals?

Not at the lovely garlanded dance of young girls

do you sing to the breath of the flute, with hair flowing,

a strain in which are the graces who form the dance;

but with armed men, having incited the army of the Argives

with bloodlust against Thebes,

in revelry where no flutes play you lead the dance.

Not at the will of the thyrsus-maddened god, among fawnskins, you wheel the horse,

hooved quadruped, with chariots and bits

and at Ismenus' streams advancing

you charge on horseback,

having incited against the Argives

the race of sown men,

in a shield-baring armed band, hostile,

against the stone-walls

having equipped them with bronze.

Strife is indeed a terrible goddess;

she devised these troubles for the rulers of the land,

for the deep-suffering Labdakids.][131]

The opening lines of the strophe present Ares as an anti-Dionysus. '(…) the choral lyrics', notes Froma Zeitlin, 'effect the full conversion (and perversion) of Dionysiac celebration and revel into the bloodthirsty Bacchanale of Ares and in this way definitely set the seal on the inevitability of a tragic fulfillment'.[132] The stanza is permeated by imagery of Dionysiac dance and frenzy, which at first functions as a means for highlighting the distance that separates the two gods: Ares is *paramousos,* out of tune with the Bacchic festival (785); he has no place in the ecstatic Dionysiac choruses, nor does he sing to the music of the flute in honor of Dionysus. The following lines dwell on Ares' activity, still however employing language of Bacchic musical celebration and *mania* to define it: the verb *epipneô,* which picks up the expression λωτοῦ κατὰ πνεύματα μέλπηι (787) and is used twice with reference to Ares' action of spurring the armies of the Argives and the Thebans against one another (789, 794) seems to combine two senses in both instances: Ares' action is one of 'breathing or

[131] Trans. Craik (1988).
[132] See: Zeitlin (1993) 177, also Arthur (1977) 176f.

inciting against', but it is also one of musical, or rather anti-musical inspiration and enchantment.[133] The god is also presented as the leader (προχορεύεις, 791) of a κῶμος dancing a dance that is unfit to the music of the flute (ἀναυλότατον, 791), and arrays a *thiasos* composed not by Dionysiac revelers but by armies bearing arms (ἀσπιδοφέρμονα † θίασον ἔνοπλον, 796). Thus, in the chorus' song, the joyful music of the Dionysiac festivals and the grim music of Ares merge.[134] The war between Argos and Thebes is transformed into a musical contest and the two armies that are about to clash in the battlefield are represented as two competing choruses (note ἀντίπαλον in line 797) vying for the victory prize. The verbs δινεύω (792) and θοάζω (794), which describe the movement of Ares' chariot, also have a special significance. Θοάζω has strong Dionysiac associations and denotes rushing, uncontrolled motion.[135] Like εἰλίσσω, δινεύω, another favorite Euripidean term, is a poetic *vox propria* for rotating cultic dance. According to Borthwick,[136] it is a technical term of dithyrambic dance indicating violent circular movement, and Csapo observes that it is possible

[133] For a similar use of the verb see also: *Hippolytus,* 563: δεινὰ γὰρ τὰ πάντ' ἐπιπνεῖ [sc. Κύπρις]; cf. also Aesclylus, *Agamemnon,* 104-107: κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν ὅδιον κράτος αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν / ἐκτελέων. ἔτι γὰρ θεόθεν καταπνεύει / πειθὼ μολπᾶν / ἀλκὰν σύμφυτος αἰών. In the parodos of the *Phoenician Women,* Zephyr rides with his breezes and produces music: Ζεφύρου πνοαῖς ἱππεύσαντος ἐν ουρανῶι κάλλιστον κελάδημα, 211-213.

[134] See: Bierl (1991) 154f. Also Craik (1988) 211 who comments on the 'paradoxical rapprochement' of the two gods; also: Mueller-Goldingen (1985) 133f.; and finally Lonnoy (1985) 65-71. As Lonnoy notes, Ares may become a Bacchant, and Dionysus a warrior; the two gods also share a common vocabulary of possession, madness and inspiration (*mainomai, katekhesthai, entheos, epipneô*).

[135] The verb is employed in the *Trojan Women* to designate Cassandra's rushing movement onto the stage to sing her Dionysiac song (307, cf. 349: μαινὰς θοάζουσ'). In the *Bacchae,* the verb defines the movement of the maenadic chorus in the parodos (Ἀσίας ἀπὸ γαίας / ἱερὸν Τμῶλον ἀμείψασα θοάζω, 64-5) and later in the play (219-20) that of the Theban women, where it is also associated with Dionysiac dance: …ἐν δὲ δασκίοις / ὄρεσι θοάζειν, τὸν νεωστὶ δαίμονα / Διόνυσον, ὅστις ἔστι, τιμώσας χοροῖς…

[136] Borthwick (1968) esp. 67-68 and 70-71.

that the Greek tradition connected etymologically *dineuein* to Dionysus.[137] Thus, the chariot of Ares is transformed into a whirling Dionysiac dancer.

In the epode of the second stasimon, the chorus return to the theme of the history of the foundation of Thebes and – among other important moments – recall the miraculous construction of the walls of the city from rocks that moved by themselves enchanted by the lyre-playing of Amphion, the legendary builder of the city's fortress (822-823). Joyful musical and choral imagery belongs to an elsewhere, far away from Thebes, and to the future: in the parodos, the girls wish they could escape from the city and reach their final destination, Delphi, where they hope that they will be able to dance free from fear. Now the magical and beneficent power of music is evoked with reference to Thebes, but it belongs to her distant past. The city's present is instead dominated by Ares' Dionysiac, perverted *mousikê.*

Let us return to the beginning of the ode and the *kallichoroi stephanoi* the chorus refer to in 786. As Albert Henrichs has argued, in Greek drama the Homeric epithet *kallichoros* is a marker of choral projection: it is 'not only evocative of choral dancing in general, but the term evokes more palpably the annual competition of tragic choruses for which Athens was famous, including the dancing of this particular chorus in the orchestra', he notes.[138] Henrichs in these lines is discussing the appearance of the epithet in the first stasimon of the *Heraclidae,* but his comment also applies to our play.[139] The movement of choral projection is reinforced by the fact that *kallichoros* modifies *stephanos*, which means 'garland' or 'crown', but can also be

[137] See: Csapo (1999-2000) 422-424.
[138] Henrichs (1996b) 51.
[139] For similar uses of *kallichoros* in Euripidean lyrics, see *Heracles* 690 of Delian maidens, *Helen* 1454 of dolphins.

used metaphorically in the sense of 'circles / rings of dancers'.[140] For a third time in the play, the young women refer to Dionysiac dancing while they themselves dance for Dionysus. The chorus, who in their first appearance expressed the wish to revolve in honor of Dionysus (εἰλίσσων… χορὸς γενοίμαν, 234-236), and who in the first stasimon projected their dance onto the bacchic dances of the Theban women, are now referring to the uncontrollable whirling (*dineueis, thoazeis*) of Ares.

At this moment, we need to introduce into our discussion an important scholarly debate concerning choral dance and in particular the formation of the tragic chorus. According to an ancient tradition, which has been widely accepted by modern scholars, the dramatic chorus was rectangular as opposed to the dithyrambic chorus which was circular.[141] These assumptions however have been rightly challenged by critics such as J. F. Davidson, Helene Foley, and Eric Csapo, who find it very difficult to accept that all choral dancing was uniform and performed in rectangular formation; they argue instead that it is natural to assume that when choral passages refer to cyclic dance the chorus' movement in the orchestra would (at least sometimes) reflect the dance referred to in their song, and the *choreuts* would dance in circles.[142] As Csapo further points out, the surest evidence that choral performance at least sometimes reflects the imagery of round dance contained in so many tragic odes is that some of the most popular terms used especially by Euripides to indicate circular dance, such as *helix* and *dinos* also appear in the

[140] Mastronarde (1994) ad loc.
[141] See: Aelius Aristides, *On Behalf of the Four* 154 and the scholion to the passage; Hesychius, s.v. *grammai, aristerostates* and *laurostatai*; Photius, *Lex.,* s.v. *tritos aristerou, aristerostates* and *laurostatai.* Csapo and Slater (1995) 353ff. collect and discuss the evidence. See also: Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 239-242, and Lonsdale (1993) 92.
[142] See: Davidson (1986) 41-45, Foley (2003a) 9-11, and Csapo (2008) 281-284 (who also discusses the chorus of comedy).

technical vocabulary of contemporary music and choreography.[143] These insightful and important observations must apply to the choral lyrics of the *Phoenician Women* which, as we have seen, show a special fondness for terms indicating roundness at moments marked by the move of choral projection. The second stasimon in particular exhibits a heightened fascination with imagery of round and rushing dance and motion, and we can imagine that the lines find a mimetic resonance in the dance of the Phoenician maidens, who sing of Ares' and Dionysus' gyrating choruses of maidens and armies while rotating in the orchestra, reflecting Ares' frenzied Dionysiac dance around the besieged city of Thebes.

The stasimon closes with the following lines, which are best left untranslated:

μυριάδας δ᾽ ἀγαθῶν ἑτέροις ἑτέ-
ρας μεταμειβομένα πόλις ἅδ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἄκροις
ἕστακ᾽ Ἄρεος στεφάνοισιν
(830-832)

The meaning of the ode's conclusion has elicited an endless controversy since antiquity. 'The closing words are startling. We know of crowns or garlands for Dionysus or for Apollo, but for

[143] See: Csapo (2008) 284: 'The fourth-century Hibeh sophist ridicules musicians who claim to produce melodies that move in a *helix;* the name *dinos* is multiply attested for a kind of dance associated with tragedy; and the Anonymous *On Tragedy,* who draws on a source highly critical of Euripides' and Agathon's new musical experiments refers to actual dance, not dance imagery, when he complains that 'excessive eddying (τὸ λίαν ἐνδινεύεσθαι) is unsuited to tragedy and unworthy of its dignity'.

Ares?' asks Karelisa Hartigan.[144] The two main views are already reflected in the interpretations recorded in the scholia:[145] the so-called 'positive' interpretation takes ἄκρος as *summus* and στέφανος as a 'crown' or 'garland' of victory, and grants the passage an encomiastic tenor. Parry translates: 'This city in the past has enjoyed success upon success, past number, and now she takes her stand on her topmost crowns of war'.[146] According to the 'pessimistic' interpretation, the δέ in 831 is adversative rather than continuative, ἄκρος needs to be understood as *extremus,* and στέφανος is taken metaphorically in the sense of 'hostile encirclements' or 'the iron circles of the besiegers' force.[147] More recently, Bremer revisited the pessimistic interpretation with a twist, as he argues that the *stephanoi* in these lines are 'the walls of the city'.[148] Finally, there are those who find that the meaning of the phrase is murky, like Celia Luschnig who decides that the lines are 'more likely equivocal'.[149]

Both optimists and pessimists agree that the end of the ode echoes its beginning and that the *stephanoi* of Ares go back to the *kallichoroi stephanoi* of 786,[150] which, as I argue above, should be understood as 'circles of dancers'. Surprisingly, even Mastronarde who accepts this interpretation does not consider the possibility that the closing *stephanoi* of the ode contain the same meaning. I believe that the lines need to be read in the light of the collusion of the two

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[144] Hartigan (2000) 28.

[145] The scholiast records three interpretations, the last two of which are very close in meaning: 1. ἡ πόλις αὕτη μυρία ἀνδραγαθήματα καὶ νίκας συνάπτουσα εἰς ἄκρον ἐν τῶι πολέμωι προελήλυθεν ἀνδραγαθημάτων. 2. ἡ ἤδη τοσαῦτα πλεονεκτήματα εὐτυχήσασα καὶ ἄλλα ἄλλοις ἀμειψαμένη, νῦν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ πολέμου ἕστηκεν. 3. ἡ δὲ πόλις αὕτη πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις ἄλλας διαδεξαμένη μυριάδας ἀγαθῶν νῦν ἐν κινδύνοις ἄκροις ἕστηκεν.

[146] Parry (1967) 26. See also Parry (1978) 170. Mueller-Goldingen (1985) also adopts the optimistic interpretation, and so does Mastronarde (1994) ad 832-33 who agrees with Parry that the tone of the lines is encomiastic.

[147] See: Pearson (1909) ad loc. Pearson translates: 'stands on the verge of Ares' leaguer'.

[148] Bremer (1980) 278-287. Bremer argues that the image that the lines create is that of the Thebans waiting upon the rings of their walls for the enemy to attack.

[149] Luschnig (1995) 221.

[150] See: Parry (1967) 21, Bremer (1980), Mastronarde (1994) 390.

divinities as effected by means of Dionysiac musical imagery in the strophe of the stasimon. It is important that the stasimon starts from the present situation at Thebes in the strophe, then goes back to the past and meditates upon the history of the city, and finally returns to the present with these three closing lines. In the strophe of the ode the two gods are initially contrasted but then gradually merge, as they share the same vocabulary and the same rushing, rotating dance and motion. There, Ares and his armies perform a whirling, frenzied Dionysiac dance (*dineuô, thoazô*), and I propose that the final lines of the epode return to exactly that image. The 'circles' of Dionysus and the 'circles' of Ares are one and the same. At the end of the stasimon the entire city of Thebes stands on Ares' *stephanoi*: it joins the god in his perverted, manic Dionysiac rotating dance.

The Sphinx

If Ares is consistently presented in terms of perverted and negated *mousikê*, as the singer and composer of cacophonous music, the same is true for the Sphinx. Her famous riddle, which in the past had plagued the city of Thebes, is defined as a song throughout the play.[151] In the antistrophe of the second stasimon, the chorus highlight her arrival at Thebes as one of the most disastrous moments in the city's history. The maidens thus wish that…

μηδὲ τὸ παρθένιον πτερόν, οὔρειον τέρας, ἐλθεῖν

[151] 50: *melos;* 807: *ôidais*; 1028: *mousan*; 1506-7: *melos… aoidou*. The riddle was represented as being in verse (hexameter in the known versions).

πένθεα γαίας

Σφίγγὸς ἀπομουσοτάταισι σὺν ὠιδαῖς,

ἅ ποτε Καδμογενῆ τετραβάμοσι

χαλαῖς τείχεσι χριμπτομένα φέρεν αἰθέρος εἰς ἄβατον φῶς

† γένναν, ἂν † ὁ κατὰ χθονὸς Ἅιδας

Καδμείοις ἐπιπέμπει

(806-811)

[Nor should the winged maiden, mountain monster, have come

as bane to the land,

with the discordant verses of the Sphinx

who once, with her four talons, approaching the walls bore off to the light of the inaccessible heaven

the children of Cadmus; she whom Hades from under the earth

sent against the Cadmeians.][152]

The vocabulary employed by the women of the chorus to describe the Sphinx and the disastrous consequences of her attack against Thebes creates a strong connection between the monstrous creature and the Ares of the strophe of the second stasimon: she comes ἀπομουσοτάταισι σὺν ὠιδαῖς (807), much like Ares who is described as παράμουσος, out of tune (785); she sweeps down upon Thebes τετραβάμοσι χαλαῖς (808) – cf. τετραβάμοσι (793). Finally, both Ares and the Sphinx have chthonic associations: she is sent against the Cadmeians by Hades from under the earth (ἂν + ὁ κατὰ χθονὸς Ἅιδας Καδμείοις ἐπιπέμπει,

[152] Trans. Craik (1988) modified.

810), just as toward the end of the parodos the god of war is about to unleash upon the people of Thebes 'the woes of the Erinyes' (πημονὰν Ἐρινύων, 255).[153]

The theme of the catastrophic music of the Sphinx is picked up again and developed further by the chorus in the third stasimon (1018-1042). The first half of the strophe consists in an apostrophe to the Sphinx and describes the monster's attack upon the Cadmeians:

ἔβας ἔβας,
ὦ πτεροῦσσα, Γᾶς λόχευμα
νερτέρου τ᾽ Ἐχίδνας,
Καδμείων ἁρπαγά,
πολύφθορος, πολύστονος
μειξοπάρθενος,
δάιον τέρας,
φοιτάσι πτεροῖς
χαλαῖσί τ᾽ ὠμοσίτοις.
Διρκαίων ἅ ποτ᾽ ἐκ
τόπων νέους πεδαίρουσ᾽
ἄλυρον ἀμφὶ μοῦσαν,
ὀλομέναν γ᾽ Ἐρινύν,
ἔφερες ἔφερες ἄχεα πατρίδι
φόνια. φόνιος ἐκ θεῶν
ὃς τάδ᾽ ἦν ὁ πράξας.
(1018-1032)

[153] See also: Arthur (1977).

[You came, you came,

winged one, brood of the earth

and of the Snake of the Underworld,

seizing the Cadmeians;

killer of many, source of many sighs,

half-maiden

savage monster,

with beating wings,

and talons feeding on flesh;

who once from Dirce's

regions took young men away,

busying yourself with your lyre-less song,

a cursed Erinys,

and brought, brought upon the country woes

murderous;

murderous was the god's hand

who brought about all this.][154]

The description of the Sphinx is duplicated from the second stasimon. She is *polyphthoros,* a savage chthonic creature, a winged monster, a virgin who snatches up her victims with her terrible claws. Musical imagery once again dominates the chorus' narrative:

[154] Translation adapted from Craik (1988).

the Sphinx is portrayed as a musician and a singer, the composer of deadly and perverted *mousikê*: she 'busies herself with a song which is unfit for the lyre' (ἄλυρον ἀμφὶ μοῦσαν),[155] a song which is defined by the Phoenician maidens as a 'cursed Erinys' (ὀλομέναν γ' Ἐρινύν).[156]

The supernatural female figure is doubly transgressive: not only is she a *parthenos* who remains untamed by man, but she is also a destroyer of men. She sings alone, but the *poly*-compounds that modify her, *polyphthoros* and especially *polystonos*, 'the one who utters many sighs', or 'the one who causes many sighs', encourage us to view her music as a choral song, a corrupt *partheneion* that marks the violent and untimely death of the young men she abducts instead of accompanying and confirming their transition to maturity.[157]

The second half of the strophe deals with the effects of the visitations of the monster on the people of the city:

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[155] For this meaning of *amphi,* see: Mastronarde (1994) ad loc.

[156] I follow Diggle's correction in 1029 of τ' to γ' and take *Erinyn* as appositive to and epexegetic of *mousan.* Mastronarde (1994) ad loc. suggests that the transmitted τ' may be retained, in which case *Erinyn* would be a further object of *amphi* and translates 'with an accursed force of demonic destruction'. It is worth noting that in the Greek tradition the Erinyes have maenadic associations: 'The points of correspondence between Furies and maenads are aggressive movement, the frenzy associated with kin killing, and a similarity of appearance and accoutrements such that in vase painting they may be hard to distinguish: they both have snakes, wands, or torches and are often similarly dressed', notes Seaford, in his discussion of the expression *melenaigis Erinys* in the *Seven against Thebes* (See: Seaford (1993) 140). In the *Phoenician Women* the Erinyes are not explicitly associated with maenadism, they are, however, in the *Orestes,* where they impose bacchic madness on the central character of the drama (337-338, 411, 835). Cf. also Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 500, and the *komos* of Erinyes in the *Agamemnon* (1189-1190).

[157] The ode follows Menoeceus' departure to meet his death after he announces his heroic decision to sacrifice himself for the city. His *parthenos*-status, which sets him apart as the only suitable victim for the dragon (942-46), is thoroughly emphasized (see the discussion in Mastronarde (1994) ad 947 on the description of Menoeceus as a πῶλος), and assimilates his death to that of female *parthenoi* in Greek myth, whose untimely demise was presented as a 'marriage to death'. The chorus will directly refer to Menoeceus only towards the end of the antistrophe of the ode (1054 f.), but the strophe also picks up the theme of 'marriage to death' that was developed in the preceding episode.

ἰάλεμοι δὲ ματέρων

ἰάλεμοι δὲ παρθένων

ἐστέναζον οἴκοις.

ἰηϊήιον βοάν,

ἰηϊήιον μέλος

ἄλλος ἄλλοτ᾽ ἐποτότυζε

διαδοχαῖς ἀνὰ πτόλιν.

βροντᾶι δὲ στεναγμὸς

ἀχά τ᾽ ἦν ὅμοιος,

ὁπότε πόλεος ἀφανίσειεν

ἁ πτεροῦσσα παρθένος τιν᾽ ἀνδρῶν.

(1033-1042)

[Laments of women,

laments of girls

groaned in their houses.

The cry *ieie*,

the song *ieie*

by different voices

at different times was cried out in the city.

The groan and cry

were like the sound of thunder

every time the bird-woman

snatched one of the men from the city.][158]

The description of the musical activity and of the discordant song of the Sphinx gives way to the description of the dirge of the citizens of Thebes. The male victims of the monster are mourned by their mothers and by *parthenoi* whose presence acts as a reminder of the young age of the men that fall prey to the Sphinx before reaching sexual maturity. The girls who lament their deaths must be their future brides, and the lines continue the anti-*partheneion* imagery of the first half of the strophe, as the *parthenoi*, deprived from their prospective husbands and thus also from the chance to attain a successful transition to adulthood through marriage because of the music of the Sphinx, reply with laments, rather than *partheneia.*

Further, a close connection is established between the song of the Sphinx and that of the Cadmeians, since the lamentation of the Thebans is also presented as cacophonous music: the laments (*ialemoi*) of women and girls groan (*estenazon*) in the houses;[159] *ieie* is defined as both a cry (*boan*) and a song (*melos*), a song which can however be cried out (*epototyze*);[160] finally, the moaning (*stenagmos*) and the cries (*acha*) of the people are compared to the sound of the thunder. The distinction between song, lamentation, groans, inarticulate cries, and mere noise breaks down as they are all brought together to make up the lament of the people of Thebes. And the source of inspiration of this cacophonous medley is the destructive and unmelodious music of the Sphinx. In the second stasimon, the two armies were represented as two choruses

[158] Translation adapted from Craik (1988).

[159] As Mastronarde (1994) ad loc. notes, the verb *estenazon* 'either has a unique sense, "sounded mournfully" (elsewhere the subject is a person or personified thing emitting the noise) or ἰάλεμοι ματέρων implies ματέρες ἰαλεμοῦσαι as subject.'

[160] Mastronarde (1994) ad loc. prefers the reading ἄλλος ἄλλον ἐποτότυζε: 'another person keened forth a mournful cry for another victim.'

competing against one another for the prize of victory. The musical imagery of the third stasimon conjures a similar image, as the Thebans are presented as a chorus responding to the jarring song of the Sphinx with their own dissonant music.

THE 'LYRE-LESS SONG' AND THE *BARBAROS BOA* OF THE PHOENICIAN WOMEN

'Alyros' Mousikê

Tragedy's fundamental affinity with sorrow and lamentation has long been recognized as one of its most prominent characteristics – a characteristic that marks the genre's definitive break with large parts of the poetic tradition which proscribed mourning and sought to repose under the sign of Apollo and his lyre, the symbol of non-sad music and the antithesis of the *aulos*, the instrument of tragic music par excellence.[161] It has also been argued that one of the most salient means through which tragedy calls attention to the gap that separates it from earlier lyric song-forms is its repeated references to its close association with a novel, 'anomalous' Muse and a 'lyre-less' music, like that sung by the Sphinx in the *Phoenician Women*. Peter Wilson suggests that 'tragic choral lyric' is a misnomer that we should abandon, and further points out that '(…) a central term of tragedy's own internal discourse of *mousike,* it's "tragic Muse", is *alyros* – "without-lyre", or "non-lyre"'.[162] Tragedy thus seems to feel the

[161] On the relationship between tragedy and lamentation see: Segal (1989); also: Loraux (2002).
[162] Wilson (1999-2000) 433.

need to define itself in a negative way, by emphasizing what it is not – in Charles Segal's words, 'by transforming the celebratory lyric of choral or symposiac music into the oxymoronic form of the 'lyreless tune' or 'unmusic Muse', the tragic poet marks his connection with the traditional, communal role of the poet in archaic society, but simultaneously also stakes out his unique, problematical place within that tradition'.[163]

All three tragedians problematize the paradoxical anomaly of the tragic *mousa,* but Euripides is especially fond of the figure of the 'negated song',[164] and the one who most frequently reflects on the anomalous nature of the Muse of sorrow and stresses the novelty of the cheerless song and music of tragedy. In the *Phoenician Women*, Thebes becomes the site of destructive and perverted *mousikê.* It is dominated by the unmusical music of the *paramousos* Ares, and plagued by the discordant song, the *alyros mousa* of the *aoidos* Sphinx, which brings death. The oxymoronic expressions that accompany and define the (un)musical activity of the god of war and of the winged monster are exactly those expressions for which Greek tragedy displays a remarkable fondness when reflecting on the novelty and the anomalous nature of the tragic *mousikê,* and thus mark both Ares and the Sphinx as figures of the tragic Muse and agents of tragic music. The people of Thebes respond to their jarring music with their own unmelodious *threnos*, a cacophonous mixture of song, sighs, groans and noise. Behind Ares, the Sphinx and the Thebans stands Dionysus, the elusive and ambiguous god of Greek theater, whose dark shadow inevitably hangs over every tragic scenario that revolves around the history of Thebes.

[163] Segal (1989) 343.
[164] Segal (1993a).

The Enigma of the Chorus

The extensive reflection of the play on the nature of tragic, Dionysiac music is key to understanding the much-discussed choice of this specific chorus and its function within the drama. The chorus of the *Phoenician Women* is one of the four in the extant Euripidean corpus that give their name to the play whose chorals they sing. Like that of the *Trojan Women,* it is a female, foreign, marginal chorus;[165] it is actually even more marginal than the chorus of Phrygian captives, since they at least stand at the center of the play's action, whereas the Phoenician maidens are – as they themselves already stress in the parodos – transient beings on their way to the Delphic shrine and their engagement with the action is minimal.

'Why Phoenician Women?' is a question that many critics have asked since antiquity. Both the choice of this specific chorus and the hauntingly beautiful odes of the play have received much negative criticism and have been dismissed as irrelevant and / or merely decorative.[166] The scholion at 202 defends Euripides' choice on the grounds that a foreign chorus has more freedom to openly criticize Eteocles' injustice.[167] In an attempt to understand

[165] Gould (1996) 224-225.

[166] The scholiast's complaint on the third stasimon: πρὸς οὐδὲν ταῦτα. ἔδει γὰρ τὸν χορὸν οἰκτίσασθαι διὰ τὸν θάνατον Μενοικέως ἢ ἀποδέχεσθαι τὴν εὐψυχίαν τοῦ νεανίου. ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ Οἰδίπουν καὶ τὴν Σφίγγα διηγεῖται τὰ πολλάκις εἰρημένα. See also Kranz (1933) 251 f. on the choral odes of the play as ἐμβόλιμα, παραπληρωματικά, ἱστορίαι. Barlow (1971) 35 agrees with Hermann that the second stasimon is a 'tumidissimum inani verborum strepitu carmen' and argues that 'the use of Bacchic imagery here seems merely external, an extra rhetorical device thrown in for good measure'.

[167] See: Meijering (1985) 96. The scholion is refuting a commentator who accuses Euripides for not creating a chorus composed by fellow citizens or relations of Jocasta: ἔδει δέ, φασίν, ἀπὸ πολιτίδων ἢ συγγενίδων τῆς Ἰοκάστης τὸν χορὸν εἶναι, αἵτινες ἔμελλον παραμυθήσασθαι

the role of the chorus and to rehabilitate the lyrics of the drama, more recent scholarship has rightly suggested that the odes with their broad chronologic sweep offer a survey of the history of Thebes and create a critical bridge between its present and its legendary past, as they trace the disasters that the city is facing back to their origins and show that everything is interconnected;[168] it is thus argued that Euripides contrived a chorus from Tyre because its Phoenician origins tie in with the origins of Cadmus, the legendary founder of Thebes; the women have intimate knowledge of the city's history, and can function as representatives of its mythical past; further, they are sympathetic to the play's protagonists, but at the same time not as personally involved as a chorus of Theban women might have been, and thus 'an appropriate vehicle for the distant perspective of the ode-cycle' of the drama.[169] Others point out Euripides' marked fondness of the exotic, especially in the late phase of his career.[170] And then there are those who argue that the tragedian simply wishes to be innovative and different from Aeschylus and Sophocles who created citizen-choruses (women in the *Seven against Thebes,* men in the *Antigone* and in the *Oedipus Tyrannos*) for their Theban plays.[171] Most of these suggestions contain some truth, but there is more to be said in order to reach the heart of the matter.

αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς συμβᾶσιν. ἐπίτηδες δὲ οὔκ εἰσιν ἔγχώριαι αἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ χοροῦ, ἀλλὰ ξέναι καὶ ἱερόδουλοι, ὅπως ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς ἀδεῶς ἀντιλέγοιεν πρὸς τὴν Ἐτεοκλέους ἀδικίαν. Mueller-Goldingen (1985) also adopts the view of the scholiast, even though nowhere in the play do the chorus directly oppose or criticize Eteocles.

[168] See: Arthur (1977), Foley (1985) 137, Bierl (1991) 149ff., Hartigan (2000), Mastronarde (1994) 209.

[169] Mastronarde (1994) 209.

[170] Papadopoulou (2008) 78-79 situates the choice of the chorus of Phoenician women within the tendency of later Euripidean drama (*Helen, Iphigenia at Tauris*) to choose exotic settings and to create an exotic atmosphere. See also the discussion in: Craik (1988) 181.

[171] Rawson (1970).

Greeks, Barbarians and Beasts

Suzanne Saïd's comment on the diverging way in which the Aeschylean and the Euripidean plays treat the opposition 'Greek versus barbarian' will provide a starting-point for my discussion of the play's chorus: Saïd[172] notes that in the *Seven against Thebes* the walls of the city function as a border which clearly separates the inside (Thebes and the Theban people), identified with Greekness, from the outside (the Argive army), identified with barbarism.[173] This sharp contrast is dissolved by Euripides, who sets a foreign chorus in the very heart of the city of Thebes and of his play.

The foreign nature of the Phoenician women, possibly represented by their striking, exotic costume,[174] is highlighted throughout the play. The first words they utter as they enter the orchestra to sing the parodos are: Τύριον οἶδμα λιποῦσ' ἔβαν ('leaving the Tyrian sea behind I have come', 202), and as soon as Polyneices sees them, he does not hesitate to address them as 'foreign women' (ξέναι γυναῖκες, 278). What is even more important is the emphasis laid on the foreignness of the chorus' voice, both by the women themselves and by other characters in the play: Jocasta enters the stage to sing her monody prompted by their Φοίνισσαν βοάν (301); the girls themselves in the concluding lines of the first stasimon call upon Epaphus asking for his protection βαρβάρωι βοᾶι, / ἰώ, βαρβάροις λιταῖς (679-680);

[172] Saïd (1984) esp. 44 f.
[173] Saïd (1984) 45 observes: 'Au dedans, une cité qui 'parle la langue de Grèce' (Ἑλλάδος φθόγγον χέουσιν, v. 73) et un choeur de Thébaines. Au dehors, des guerriers caractérisés par leur démesure (ὕβρις) et leur jactance (κόμπος) qui ont, malgré leur origine incontestablement grecque, tous les traits du Barbare: ils 'parlent une autre langue' (ἑτεροφώνωι στρατῶι, v. 170) et leurs cavales 'hernissent sur un mode barbare' (v. 463), comme si l'invasion argienne était assimilée à l' invasion perse…'
[174] See: Mastronarde (1994) ad 278-279; also the discussion in: Cerbo (1984-1985), 183-191.

finally, in the fourth stasimon they announce their intention to lament the dead brothers βοᾶι βαρβάρωι. As noted by the commentators, this is not a metatheatrical cue referring to the foreign accent the chorus of Athenian male citizens might have adopted for their performance: 'reference to the foreign accent is purely conventional; the tragic choreuts use their normal Attic stage-voices', points out Mastronarde.[175] Rather, the emphasis on the otherness of the girls from Tyre must be a metapoetic marker destined for the play's audience.

The play further blurs the boundaries that separate Greeks from barbarians by giving an exceptional prominence to the oriental, Phoenician origins of the 'Tyrian Cadmus' (638-639), the city's founder, and consequently also of his descendants.[176] The women of the chorus greet Polyneices as their relative, reminding us that the Thebans and the Phoenicians are *homogeneis* (218) and that the suffering of Thebes is shared by the Phoenician land. In the epode of the second stasimon, the chorus sing of the birth from the Earth of the dragon brood of the Spartoi, a 'fairest reproach to Thebes' (Θήβαις κάλλιστον ὄνειδος, 821). The story – quintessentially Greek and so central to the definition of Theban identity – is tellingly called by the women a 'barbarous rumor', βάρβαρος ἀκοά (819). The same epithet then that is consistently applied to the voice of the chorus also modifies the Theban tale they recount. If the Phoenician maidens are *barbaroi,* so are the Thebans.

The ties between the two peoples, the chorus tell us, reach back to Agenor, the father of Cadmus and Phoenix, and still further back to Io and her son Epaphus. In two out of the three instances in which the women appeal to Io, the common ancestress of Thebans and

[175] Mastronarde (1994) ad 301.
[176] As Saïd (1984) 46 f. notes, the Phoenician Cadmus does not appear explicitly in extant texts until the fifth century and Herodotus. Thus, the emphasis on his barbarian origins in the play is all the more significant. On the question of the Phoenician origins of Cadmus see also: Edwards (1979) chapter 3 'The Phoenician Origins of Cadmos in the ancient tradition and in modern scholarship'.

Phoenicians, she is invoked in the dehumanized, horned form she was changed to in order to avoid Hera's jealousy (κερασφόρος Ἰώ 248, κερόεσσα προμάτωρ, 828).[177] Thus, the Tyrian maidens stress the fact that they share the same bestial origins as the Thebans, and forge a link between themselves, the Cadmeians and the numerous theriomorphic creatures that mark with their presence the past and the present of Thebes.[178]

Parthenoi and Maenads

The Sphinx occupies a prominent position among the monsters that plague the legendary history of the city, and the chorus, who sing of her unmusical song in the third stasimon, share another characteristic with the monstrous being besides their bestial origins, that of the status of a *parthenos.* According to a recent article by Laura Swift, the chorus exemplify an alternative, positive model of female sexual development, which stands in sharp contrast to the theme of mismanaged or dysfunctional sexuality that lies at the heart of Thebes' tribulations, runs through the drama and functions as a source of the play's unity and coherence.[179] Swift argues that the parodos evokes *partheneia* and rites-of-passage imagery, and presents the girls as desirable *parthenoi* about to make a successful transition into adulthood, after they undergo a period of withdrawal from society and isolation (their stay and religious service at the Delphic

[177] It is interesting that in Aeschylus' *Suppliants* the horned Io is explicitly presented as a maenadic figure: μαινομένα πόνοις ἀτί-/μοις ὀδύναις τε κεντροδα-/λήτισι θυιὰς Ἥρας (561-563).
[178] On the beast-imagery that runs through the play see: Podlecki (1962) especially 362-367.
[179] Swift (2009).

shrine).[180] And yet, we know that this phase of transition is one of precarious liminality, and has much in common with the movement from home to the wild periphery that maenads also perform, a movement threatening with disruption rather than leading to social integration. The violence of the play leaves the chorus unscathed, and we can imagine that after the end of the Argive siege they will finally depart for Delphi, but – at least for the time of the plot of the play – the transition of the maidens into maturity is halted, as they are drawn into the Dionysiac universe of Thebes. In the parodos, the city is represented as a liminal space between Phoenicia and Delphi; it is also consistently portrayed throughout the play as a place of wilderness, teeming with beasts.[181] The young women establish their role as dancers of Dionysus by means of three choral projections, one in each of the first three choral odes of the play. These moments mark the ritual role of the chorus in a very pronounced way, since in all three instances the dance to which the maidens refer while they are dancing in the orchestra is not just any kind of dance but one that is explicitly Dionysiac. As the mood of the play and of the odes darkens, so does the tenor of the choral projections. Instead of reaching Delphi, and performing a step towards their successful transition from maidenhood to maturity, the girls are gradually transforming into a – more and more explicitly – maenadic chorus. In the second stasimon, the women of the chorus project their dance onto the Dionysiac, perverted, dance of Ares. As discussed above, the ode is filled with imagery of round and rushing motion, and we can imagine that this was also reflected in the movements of the maidens, who, in a sense, recreate and join in the god's mad, ecstatic dance, wildly rotating in the orchestra. And in the

[180] Swift (2009) 78-82. Swift suggests that the vocabulary of the ode encourages the creation of parallels between the religious service the chorus will enter in Delphi and Athenian rites of passage such as the *arkteia,* which requires a temporary removal from normal society for the performance of a religious service, and is followed by the successful reintegration of the female into the society and the transition from maidenhood to adulthood.
[181] See: Podlecki (1962).

next choral lyric, it is the same chorus of Dionysiac, maenadic women that sing of the attacks of the Sphinx, the deadly *parthenos*, who instead of being tamed and controlled by men brings about their death, and causes the *parthenoi* of Thebes to sing dirges rather than *partheneia.*

New Music

As in the *Trojan Women,* in the *Phoenician Women* New Music, with its connotations of barbarism, lack of restraint, emotional abandon and hysteria, is instrumental to the creation of an ecstatic, Dionysiac mood in the choral lyrics of the play and to marking the maenadic character of its eastern chorus. This is poetry that favors a distinctly musical architecture, rejects structures that are characteristic of verbal logic, especially the causal connection associated with hypotaxis, in favor of parataxis, creating strings of images, rather than building concepts up into an argument.[182] Is it poetry that is suggestive rather than meaningful, especially fond of precious, riddling diction[183] and polysyllabic epithets many of which are

[182] A characteristic example is the clause-structure of the strophe and antistrophe of the first stasimon: the five-word main clause that opens the initial stanza is followed by four relative clauses, and the antistrophe opens with a further relative connection followed by three more relative clauses. Cf. the structure of the strophe of the third stasimon, the first half consisting in an apostrophe to the Sphinx, in which appositives and a relative clause carry the content.

[183] See the learned lyric periphrasis for 'the winged maiden Sphinx' in 806-807: μηδὲ τὸ παρθένιον πτερόν, οὔρειον τέρας, ἐλθεῖν / πένθεα γαίας/ Σφίγγὸς ἀπομουσοτάταισι σὺν ὠιδαῖς and Mastronarde (1994) ad loc., who rightly notes that 'the postponement of the genitive (and the possibility of taking it in its own colon with ὠιδαῖς) almost creates a *griphos* in 806 which is clearly resolved in 807. I agree with Mastronarde that we should retain the transmitted genitive Σφίγγός instead of Nauck's correction Σφίγγ' which wrongly simplifies the style.

rare, *hapax legomena,* or employed in novel contexts and ways.[184] The language of the play's so-called 'dithyrambic'[185] or new musical stasima is voluble, sensual, fluid and the lines weave together lavish, sensuous description with violent and horrible content[186] in a paradoxical way which reflects beautifully the paradoxes and the oxymora of which the Phoenician maidens sing, such as the *kalliston oneidos* of the teeth-bred generation, or the Sphinx's *apomousotatai ôidai* and 'lyre-less muse'. The odes also foreground the priority of sound over sense, another salient characteristic of the new musical verse, as they are rich in repetition, anaphora, anadiplosis, alliteration and other types of mimetic sound play.[187] When the chorus in the epode of the first stasimon ask for the help of Epaphus βαρβάρωι βοᾶι, / ἰώ, βαρβάροις λιταῖς. βᾶθι βᾶθι (679-681), one can hear the cacophonous barking of the barbarian women and sense the unmusicality of the music of tragedy.[188] Finally, let us also recall the obsessive preoccupation with round movement and dance that runs through the choral lyrics of the play. I have discussed the Dionysiac and New Music resonances of εἱλίσσω in the previous chapter, and the same observations apply to δινεύω, which also designates round, cultic, rushing dance, and occupies a prominent position in Aristophanes' parody of Agathon's new style verse.[189] All these characteristics of the Phoenician women's song are conducive to the creation of an atmosphere of high emotionality and Dionysiac hysteria and intoxication, similar to the one that

[184] καλλιπόταμος (645), χλοηφόροισιν ἔρνεσιν κατασκίοισιν (653-654), ὀλεσίθηρος (664), θυρσομανεῖ (791), τετραβάμοσι (792), ἀσπιδοφέρμονα (796), πολυθηρότατον (802), χιονότροφον (802), θηροτρόφου (820), φοινικολόφοιο (820), ὀδοντοφυᾶ (821), χλοεροτρόφον (826), μειξοπάρθενος (1023), ὠμοσίτοις (1025), λιθόβολον (1063).
[185] See Kranz (1933), Panagl (1971), Mastronarde (1994) passim.
[186] See the χρυσοδέτοις περόναις ἐπίσαμον in 805.
[187] Mastronarde (1994) esp. 331, 374, 435.
[188] See: Csapo (2004) 222-223; also Craik (1988) ad 806-807: 'the cacophonous consonants of 806, with the alliterative play on pi and the assonance of the syllable -ter- anticipates the designation of the Sphinx's song as unmelodious'.
[189] *Thesmophoriazousae* 122. On the Aristophanic criticism and parody of Agathon see Bierl (2009) 137-149.

envelops the city and the people of Thebes.

Intertextuality

Current opinions agree on the principle that, even though the *Phoenician Women* is an autonomous, independent creation, any attempt to appreciate the play's workings needs to take into consideration its unprecedently systematic and insistent engagement with and reaction to tradition. '(…) the action of Euripides' play', notes Foley, 'must be interpreted in the light of its omissions, additions, and failed promises as in the light of its actual development of the action onstage (…)'.[190] Although much of the epic, lyric and tragic poetry that deal with Thebes and the house of Laius is no longer extant, numerous clear allusions to the *Iliad,* Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes,* Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *Antigone* have been identified, and the two war epics that have almost completely disappeared, the *Thebaid* and the *Oedipodeia*, must also have been important models and sources for the play.[191]

It has also been argued that the Aeschylean drama, which treats the same subject-matter, occupies a privileged position in the tradition that is invoked and abused in Euripides' play.

Already the ancient hypothesis remarks that the *Phoenician Women* is 'stuffed full', παραπληρωματικόν,[192] and recent scholarship comments on the expansive, inclusive character of the play, its multitude of plots, proliferation of characters and stories, and 'epic'

[190] Foley (1985) 114.
[191] On the *Phoenician Women* and intertextuality see: Foley (1985), Saïd (1985), Goff (1988), Zeitlin (1994), Burian (2009), Papadopoulou (2008) chapter 2, 'myth and intertextuality'.
[192] See hypothesis C in the Oxford edition of Diggle.

ambitions, which stand in marked contrast to the intense concentration on few events and personages, and limited time-spans that we normally associate with the tragic genre, and are the ingredients of Aeschylus' Theban drama.[193] The choral lyrics of the play fulfill an important function in this respect, since they are the main means through which the drama offers its panoramic view of the history of Thebes. As in the *Trojan Women,* the literary and legendary past of the city is absorbed, reshaped and retold in the eastern, Dionysiac song of the Phoenician maidens. The choice of the chorus also occupies a central position in this movement of cultural imperialism, as it alludes to that of Phrynichus' play of the same name. Several critics observe that the Phoenician maidens' entrance clearly echoes that of the chorus of the older tragic poet,[194] and comment on the strikingly archaic aura of the parodos in general.[195] Thus, strikingly modern and innovative, but at the same time also remarkably archaizing, this profoundly and self-consciously derivative play which constantly reflects on its epigonal status especially in relation to the *Seven Against Thebes*, in a way goes back to a time before Aeschylus and his Theban tragedy*,* and lays a claim of priority comparable to that of the first

[193] See especially Dunn (1996) chapter 11 '*Phoenician Women* and Narrative', and Michelini (2009). Also Michelini (1999-2000). 'The *Phoenissae,* more than any other Euripidean drama, should be understood as a bold experiment in crossing theatrical forms with epic techniques that, in focusing attention on the final and climactic moment in a city's history, circumscribes its actions in the widest frame of reference', notes Zeitlin (1994) 172.

[194] Phrynichus *TrGF* 1, 3 F9 = scholiast to Aristophanes *Wasps* 220, and compare: Kranz (1933) 111, 233f., Cerbo (1984-1985) and Dunn (1996) 192.

[195] See Mastronarde (1994) 207 on the archaic flavor of the chorus' entrance: 'The chorus enters upon an empty stage, probably the more archaic technique (in many plays of Eur. and Soph., esp. later ones, the parodos is not only directed to a tableau present on stage, but is shared by actor and chorus)'. Also Kranz (1933) 232 f., on the archaic air of the parodos and on the archaizing use of trochaic tetrameters in 1308 f. to mark the transition from song to action in a manner that is particularly reminiscent of Aeschylean and pre-Aeschylean tragedy. Kranz includes the archaizing tendencies of later Euripidean drama among the characteristics of the new musical verse: 'Sein Wesen offenbart sich überraschenderweise zunächst in der Neubelebung ältester Form', he notes (232). Finally, Euripides' fondness for the exotic as this is exemplified in the choice of the choruses of the *Phoenician Women* or the *Bacchae* is, according to Kranz, again a manifestation of this trend.

stasimon of the *Trojan Women,* in which, as discussed in the previous chapter, the eastern chorus boldly present the 'Phrygian', Dionysiac song-form of tragedy as in a sense prior to the Greek poetic tradition that precedes it.

The discussion of the relationship between the *Phoenician Women* and the *Seven against Thebes* mainly focuses on the reworking of the famed Aeschylean 'shield scene',[196] but several scholars also comment on the contrasts between the Aeschylean and the Euripidean choruses, and agree that they could hardly be more different:[197] Aeschylus' chorus of native-born women occupies a central role in the action of the drama, and is also very emotionally entangled in its events. In the parodos*,* the young Theban girls enter in panic to embrace the statues of Olympian gods in supplication and to express their fears for the safety of the city in a what is viewed by Eteocles as a hysterical outburst which constitutes a threat to the morale of the city's defenders and must therefore be tamed and suppressed;[198] but after the death of the two brothers there is no one left to silence the women, and in the end Eteocles will be mourned by the same chorus, maenadic (*thuias,* 836) in their violent grief over the dead bodies. In contrast, critics argue, with the exception of the fourth stasimon, Euripides' foreign female chorus consistently refuse to comment upon the action of the play, and remain remarkably composed and detached, calmly singing of the city's legendary past; it is a powerless chorus, which can be

[196] See especially Goff (1988), Saïd (1985).
[197] Burian (2009) 23, Foley (1985) 118f., also Luschnig (1995) 195-196, and Sewell-Rutter (2007) 41.
[198] On the function of the parodos and the chorus of the *Seven Against Thebes* see the excellent article by Edmunds (2002). See also Foley (2003b) chapter 1 'The Politics of Tragic Lamentation', who offers a reading of the function of the chorus in the drama within the context of fifth-century Athenian shifting attitudes towards death ritual and attempts to control and regulate funeral lamentation. Also Zeitlin (1990) 137, who compares the unruly chorus of the *Seven against Thebes* to the chorus of maenadic, Asiatic women in Euripides' *Bacchae,* and argues that both plays stage a conflict between a male (Eteocles, Pentheus) and a chorus of insubordinate females whom the males unsuccessfully attempt to tame, control and suppress.

conveniently pushed to the side when the thematic concerns of the play reach their climax, and which can be silenced when the time for lamentation comes. The critics who comment on the detachment and lack of emotionality of the Euripidean chorus base their argument mainly on metrical grounds,[199] but, as I hope I have shown above, there are other means besides meter for creating an emotionally loaded atmosphere. It seems that the trend to read the play as a reaction to Aeschylus and to locate the divergences between the two dramas – and consequently also between the two choruses – has to some extent overshadowed their sameness, and has led critics to overestimate the distancing and the calmness of the Tyrian maidens. Rather, this is a Dionysiac, eastern, tragic, whirling, maenadic chorus, passionately singing of the woes of Thebes, and cultivating – albeit in a more indirect, subtle and allusive manner than that of the *Seven against Thebes* – an atmosphere of heightened excitement and emotional abandon that closely resembles the one that permeates the opening and concluding lyrics of the Aeschylean drama.

Ultimately, the voice of the Phoenician women is the voice of Thebes. The play's odes effect the assimilation of the Thebans to barbarians who share the same blood and the same bestial origins as the exotic oriental chorus: κοινὸν αἷμα, κοινὰ τέκεα τᾶς κερασφόρου πέφυκεν ἰοῦς (247-248). The *barbaros boa* of the Tyrian maidens thus becomes the most appropriate vehicle for recounting the barbarous tales, the *barbaros akoa* of Thebes. The voice of the women of Tyre is also the voice of tragedy and of tragic Dionysiac music: they come to

[199] See: Mastronarde (1994) 329, Michelini (2009) 177.

Thebes Ἀσίας ἀπὸ γᾶς,[200] like the quintessential easterner Dionysus and his bacchants, and like the god of theater, 'the *xenos* ("stranger") who is also native born (*suggenês*)',[201] they are foreign, *xenai* (278), but at the same time also *homogeneis* (218). The two characteristics of the chorus' voice that are underscored in the play, its otherness and its unmelodious nature, are features that the voice of the Phoenician maidens shares with the music of Ares, the Sphinx and the Thebans, the agents and practitioners of tragic *mousikê,* which the choral odes of the play represent and recreate. Thus, much like the *boa* of the Phrygian captives in the *Trojan Women,* the 'barbarian cry' of the Tyrian maenadic maidens, becomes the most fitting medium for the reflection on the nature of eastern, tragic, inharmonious, corrupted, intoxicating Dionysiac music which permeates the past and the present of the city, and the choral lyrics of the play.

The (Maenadic) Conclusion

The maenadic quality of the chorus becomes even more overt in the fourth and final stasimon of the play, which also marks the merging of the subject of the choral odes into the action of the drama, and dwells on the fearful anticipation of the fratricidal conflict and the lamentation that will result from it. The intense self-reflexivity that has marked the play so far continues in these lines, as the women ponder the tragic emotions of pity and fear: their

[200] *Bacchae,* 64.
[201] Zeitlin (1993) 151.

τρομερὰν φρίκαι τρομερὰν φρέν᾽ and the ἔλεος ἔλεος that runs through their flesh (1284-1286).[202]

τάλαιν᾽ ἐγὼ τάλαινα,
πότερον ἄρα νέκυν ὀλόμενον ἰαχήσω;
(1294-5)

[Unhappy I am, unhappy;
which corpse shall I bewail in its death?][203]

the chorus wonder. Much as in the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women*, the verb *iacheô* with all its Dionysiac, ecstatic associations has a programmatic force and defines the girls' musical activity as an ecstatic, frantic song of sorrow. The Phoenician maidens predict the death of the two brothers, or rather, continuing the animal-imagery that ran through the previous odes, the death of the 'twin beasts' (δίδυμοι θῆρες, 1296),[204] and continue:

βοᾶι βαρβάρωι στενακτὰν ἰαχὰν
μελομέναν νεκροῖς δάκρυσι θρηνήσω
(1302-3)

[202] Cf. Gorgias *Helen* 9: τοὺς ἀκούοντας εισῆλθε καὶ φρίκη περίφοβος καὶ ἔλεος πολύδακρυς καὶ πόθος φιλοπενθής and Mastronarde (1994) ad 1287. See also Bierl (1991) 159 and Papadopoulou (2008) 87.
[203] Trans. Craik (1988).

[204] Cf. also the oracle (411-412 and 420-421) and the similes used of the two brothers in 1380-1 (boars) and 1573 (lions).

[with barbarian shriek I shall wail a groaning dirge
suited to the dead with tears.][205]

Once again the women stress the foreignness of their voice and their barbarian sound is this time explicitly associated with the act of lamentation (θρηνήσω), tears (δάκρυσι), and the Dionysiac, ecstatic *iachê* (cf. the ἄισον σὺν δακρύοις ὠιδὰν ἐπικήδειον. / νῦν γὰρ μέλος ἐς Τροίαν ἰαχήσω… (511-515) and the βοάν, 547 of the Trojan women in the first stasimon of the play).

The maidens sing their dirge while Eteocles and Polyneices are still alive, but they will never fulfill their promise to lament them dead. After the end of the fourth stasimon the chorus fall into silence and the burden of their lyrics is taken up by Antigone, to whom I shall now turn.

[205] Trans. Craik (1988) modified.

ANTIGONE

The beginning of the play carefully establishes Antigone as a timid, modest, well-behaved *parthenos,* who leaves the *parthenônes* (89) to observe the Argive army only after obtaining the permission of her mother (90-91) and is chaperoned by an old male servant. As several critics have observed, in the *teichoscopia* scene, which corresponds to the parodos of the *Seven against Thebes,* Antigone assumes the role of the Aeschylean chorus, and their terror and unruly behavior stands in sharp contrast to the young girl's composed reaction at the sight of the enemy – a mixture of fear and exhilaration, but neither in excess.[206] However, as the action of the play unfolds, Antigone is violently wrenched away from the sequestered world of happy, virginal choruses[207] into that of the grimness of the battlefield, and later, when the second messenger reports the brutal death of Eteocles and Polyneices at each other's hands and the suicide of Jocasta over the corpses of her fratricidal sons, the young woman appears onto the stage in order to lament…

οὐ προκαλυπτομένα βοτρυώδεος ἁβρὰ παρῆιδος
οὐδ᾽ ὑπὸ παρθενίας τὸν ὑπὸ βλεφά-
ροις φοίνικ᾽, ἐρύθημα προσώπου,
αἰδομένα φέρομαι βάκχα νεκύ-
ων, κράδεμνα δικοῦσα κόμας ἀπ᾽ ἐ-
μᾶς, στολίδος κροκόεσσαν ἀνεῖσα τρυφάν,
ἀγαμόνευμα νεκροῖσι πολύστονον. αἰαῖ, ἰώ μοι.

[206] Foley (1984) 117-118, Burian (2009) 28.
[207] ὦ τέκνον ἔξελθ᾽ Ἀντιγόνη δόμων πάρος. / οὐκ ἐν χορείαις οὐδὲ παρθενεύμασιν / νῦν σοι προχωρεῖ δαιμόνων κατάστασις… (1264-1266).

(1485-1492)

[Not covering up the delicate skin of my cheek adorned with curls
nor concealing from maiden modesty
the crimson below my eyes, my face's blush,
I rush forth a bacchant of the dead,
hurling the covering from my hair,
and putting aside the luxurious saffron robe:
a leader, much lamenting, of the dead.][208]

No longer a sheltered *parthenos,* Antigone enters at the head of a procession of silent extras who carry the three dead bodies on litters. Her grief is violent, and her detailed self-presentation as a mourner is telling: Dionysus, whose aura has so far enveloped the play will also preside over her song; her head now uncovered, her saffron robe undone and her *aidos* abandoned, she rushes onto the stage. *Pheromai,* implies rushing movement and loss of rational control, and she further defines herself as a 'bacchant of the dead' (βάκχα νεκύων).[209] As discussed above, the strophe of the second stasimon results in the corruption and distortion of the Bacchic dance and celebration through the association and assimilation of Dionysus to Ares. Now the perversion of Bacchic dance is once again effected through its association to death, and once again the deadly and dark side of Dionysus emerges. The scene represents a distortion of wedding and transition-ritual imagery that is evoked (especially in the shedding of the veil) so as to be negated precisely at the moment when Antigone is transformed into a

[208] Trans. adapted from Kovacs (2002).
[209] See also Bierl (1991) 159-162.

maenad.[210] In a perversion of traditional choral imagery, Antigone presents herself as a 'leader, much lamenting, of the dead' (ἀγαμόνευμα νεκροῖσι πολύστονον),[211] the *koryphaia* of a chorus which is made up by the corpses of her kin.

Next, after a brief apostrophe to the dead of Polyneices and the wretched destiny of Thebes and the house of Oedipus, Antigone, at a loss, wonders…

† τίνα προσωιδὸν †
ἢ τίνα μουσοπόλον στοναχὰν ἐπὶ
δάκρυσι δάκρυσιν, ὦ δόμος, ὦ δόμος
ἀγκαλέσωμαι
τρισσὰ φέρουσα † τάδε σώματα † σύγγονα,
ματέρα καὶ τέκνα, χάρματ᾽ Ἐρινύος;
ἃ δόμον Οἰδίποδα πρόπαρ ὤλεσε,
τᾶς ἀγρίας ὅτε
δυσξύνετον ξυνετὸς μέλος ἔγνω
Σφιγγὸς ἀοιδοῦ σῶμα φονεύσας.

[210] Seaford (1993) 117f. Seaford argues that the discarding of the veil recalls the ceremony of the *anakaluptêria,* the unveiling of the bride at the wedding. He also discusses the debt of the scene and Antigone's representation to the portrayal of Andromache in *Iliad* 22. 460 f. See also Swift (2009) 64 f., who points out the eroticized representation of Antigone (loose, flowing hair, tender skin, blushing cheeks), which establishes her status as a desirable *parthenos* about to make her transition into maturity, and argues that the shedding of the saffron cover alludes to the ritual of the *arkteia,* in which the removal of the *krokotos* symbolizes a healthy transition into female sexual maturity, whereas in Antigone's case the gesture comes at a moment in the play when she refuses this progression of a *parthenos* and the transition to marriage. Swift also discusses lines 1715-1717, in which Oedipus refers to Antigone as *athlia,* a word she repeats back to him, as alluding to the conventional *makarismos* of the wedding-song, where the bride and the groom are called 'blessed'.

[211] 'The *hapax* ἀγεμόνευμα governs the dative because the epic verb ἡγεμονεύω does', notes Mastronarde (1994) ad loc.

(1498-1507)

[What tuneful,
what muse-inspired groan amidst
tears tears, O house, O house,
shall I summon to my aid
as I bear these three slain bodies of kinsmen,
mother and sons, the delight of the Erinys?
Erinys, which destroyed utterly the house of Oedipus,
when he, the intelligent one,
understood the unintelligible song
and slew the singer Sphinx' body.][212]

Where can a *mousa* be found that can satisfactorily communicate the magnitude of her suffering? Much like Hecuba in the opening of her monody in the *Trojan Women,* Antigone in these self-reflexive lines ponders the novelty of her situation, the impossibility of the subject-matter of her song, and the need for a new kind of music. Her *aporia* highlights not only the exceptional nature of her misfortunes, but also the difficulty of finding a *mousa* who will preside over a song that endeavors to sing of tragic pains altogether. *Mousopolos,* 'the one who busies himself with the Muses', is a rare word.[213] Before Euripides it is only found in the

[212] Translation adapted from Kovacs (2002).
[213] The word appears one more time in Euripides, when the chorus of the *Alcestis* announce that the *mousopoloi* will celebrate the glory of the young woman with the lyre and with 'lyreless hymns' (445-454). Loraux (2002) 68 reads these lines as a polemical allusion to the Sapphic opposition between music / poetry and lament.

fragment by Sappho (fr. 150 Voigt) which states that οὐ γὰρ θέμις ἐν μοισοπόλων † οἰκίαι / θρῆνον ἔμμεν' (…) οὔκ ἄμμι πρέποι τάδε: lamentation is not *themis* – customary or legitimate among the ministers of the Muses. In the *Phoenician Women,* the Sapphic opposition between song and dirge is challenged to the extent that the adjective *mousopolos* qualifies not just a song of lamentation but a cry of moaning, a *stonachê,* when Antigone wonders where to turn for musical inspiration to express her grief. The paradoxical expression that defines Antigone's song recalls the musical activity of the Sphinx, the deadly *parthenos* who comes to Thebes with her *apomousotatai ôidai* and sings her 'lyre-less song', and thus continues to develop the play's extensive reflection on tragic *mousikê*.

Antigone's aporetic rhetoric of grief continues: what other woman, Greek or foreign, has endured so many sufferings (1509-1513)? What bird will accompany her song (1515-1518)? Whom should she lament first, her mother or her brothers (1524-1529)?[214] Normally, the device of tragic *aporia* introduces a lyric song of sorrow. As we saw in the previous chapter, Hecuba in the *Trojan Women* also confesses her inability to give expression to her sorrow and at first even hesitates between song and silence, but soon after breaks into an emotional aria which laments the arrival of the Greek fleet at Troy. Antigone's case is different: after the initial lines of self-description (1485-1498) the rest of the monody down to 1529 is taken up by her excited questions that highlight the difficulty of finding a song to express her vast suffering, and concludes by summoning Oedipus onto the stage (1530-1538). Rather than providing a starting-point for her lament, the *aporia* becomes the subject-matter of her song *per se*. It is easy to recognize that Antigone's questions contain traditional images of grief and conventions of the threnodic song that often recur in Greek tragedy and in Euripidean drama in

[214] Cf. the chorus' bewilderment at 1294-1295.

particular. The parallels of the passage to the lyrics of the earlier *Helen* are especially striking: Helen, too, is in search for a Muse who will accompany her sorrowful song,[215] but then quickly decides that the answer to her question are the Sirens, whom she calls upon in a long and elaborate invocation (167-178). The figure of the nightingale is also present in that play, summoned by the chorus who carefully dwell on the image of the mourning bird at the beginning of the first stasimon (1107-1112), before embarking on a threnody for the title-character and the women of Troy.[216] Instead, Antigone's monody spasmodically flits from one traditional *topos* of lament to the next, treating them summarily, amassing and piling up images of sorrow. The extensive, unending *aporia* highlights the character's unremitting grief. It also furthers the marked self-referentiality of the drama, which so intensively ponders the nature of tragic *mousikê* in the figures of Ares, the Sphinx, and the Theban people, and now, as the end approaches, offers a condensed catalogue of 'ways to start a lament' with Antigone admitting that she is unable to decide on any one among them.

The chorus in the first stasimon of the *Helen* describe the mourning nightingale as ἐλελιζομένα (1111). And in the *Phoenician Women,* right before she asks for a bird as a *sunôidos* of her song, Antigone addresses herself:

τάλαιν', ὡς ἐλελίζω (1514)[217]

[215] ὦ μεγάλων ἀχέων καταβαλλομένα μέγαν οἶκτον / ποῖον ἀμιλλαθῶ γόον ἢ τίνα μοῦσαν ἐπέλθω / δάκρυσιν ἢ θρήνοις ἢ πένθεσιν; αιαῖ. (164-166).

[216] I discuss Helen's invocation of the Sirens and the chorus' appeal to the nightingale in chapter four.

[217] I accept Mastronarde's reading (1994) ad 1508-14. Other editors and commentators defend the readings ἐλελίζηι or ἐλελίζει, and think that with this second- or third- person verb

According to Mastronarde, 'the verb's two possible origins seem to have become confused. As a reduplicated form of ἑλίσσω, the verb means 'set astir' or the like and is applied in poetry to quivering strings (…) But it could also be felt to be derivative of ἐλελεῦ (…); this is not just a war-cry, but also a cry of grief or pain (…)'.[218] Mastronarde reaches the conclusion that the influence of ἐλελεῦ here must be primary and translates the verb with 'utter a shrill, mournful cry',[219] but I would argue that – given the chorus' obsession with imagery of circular dance and with the Dionysiac verb ἑλίσσω in particular – Antigone is here referring to her ecstatic, whirling movement on the stage, thus continuing the imagery of rushing motion (*pheromai baccha nekuôn,* 1489), highlighting her transformation into a maenad and, at the same time, offering one of those moments of self-referentiality that create a link between the character's performance in the world of the play and that of the dancer performing in the theater in honor of Dionysus. Ultimately, perhaps we should view ἐλελίζω as containing and combining the senses of both ἑλίσσω and ἐλελεῦ, which would create an image of the heroine violently rotating on the stage in her Dionysiac frenzy, while singing her song, or rather her cry, the product of the inspiration of her *mousopolos stonacha.*

Like Cassandra in the *Trojan Women,* Antigone is the figure most explicitly associated with Dionysus, maenadism and ecstasy in the play. Her clearly-drawn evolution from *parthenos* to maenad is parallel to the more indirectly represented transformation of the chorus;

Antigone is addressing someone else, but I agree with Mastronarde that ἐλελίζω is the only reading that makes sense, since there is no reason to believe that Antigone, who up to 1529 focuses on her self-presentation, her own relationship to the dead and to the destiny of her family, and to the *aporiai* she is facing with regard to finding an appropriate song to express her grief would address another person here.

[218] See Mastronarde (1994) ad loc.

[219] *Op. cit.*

her song also reinforces the more allusively Dionysiac character of that of the Phoenician maidens, and we will now see, also of Jocasta's monody.

JOCASTA

If at the end of the play Antigone frantically whirls around the corpses of her family, Jocasta, near the beginning of the drama, dances around Polyneices while he is still alive…

… πῶς ἁπάνται
καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λόγοισι
πολυέλικτον ἀδονὰν
ἐκείσε καὶ τὸ δεῦρο
περιχορεύουσα τέρψιν παλαιᾶν λάβω
χαρμονᾶν;
(312-17)

[… how can I in every way
by deed of hand and spoken word
dancing about you
to this side and that
through many turns that give me pleasure,

win the delight of joys long missed?][220]

Another aged queen who – despite her years (γηραιῶι ποδὶ τρομερὰν / ἔλκω ποδὸς βάσιν, 302-303) – gives in to the urge to dance in circles (πολυέλικτον, περιχορεύουσα) ,[221] and another character who refers to circular dancing while herself revolving on the stage within the context of the Dionysiac festival. Jocasta's emotional aria is a curious mixture of ecstatic joy and sorrow. The *polueliktos hadona* of her reunion with Polyneices gives way to the description of the mother's grief at her separation from her son. Jocasta dwells on her appearance as a mourner: dressed in black, her white hair shorn off in grief (322-325). The house of Oedipus, she tells us, is filled with the sounds of his sighs and cries of woe (στενάζων ἀρὰς τέκνοις. σὺν ἀλαλαῖσι δ' αἰὲν αἰαγμάτων, 334-335), whereas Polyneice's wedding is described in terms of negation, stressing the absence of the sounds of celebration that normally accompany the joyful occasion: ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίων πόλιν ἐσίγαθεν σᾶς ἔσοδοι νύμφας, 349. Once again the play here draws on the 'marriage to death' motif. Even though Polyneices' marriage really is a marriage and not a funeral, by describing it in terms of absence and negation these lines encourage us to imagine it as if it were a death, and to view the passage as a funereal lament which dwells on the conventional theme of the marriage that was never achieved. Much like the chorus in the fourth stasimon, Jocasta laments her son while he is still alive. Polyneices' marriage was never celebrated in Oedipus' house, but the Theban

[220] Trans. Kovacs (2002).

[221] As Mastronarde notes, Jocasta probably embraces Polyneices at 306, and then at 311 breaks from the embrace and starts circling her son stroking him with her hands. (See: Mastronarde (1994) ad 316)).

palace became the site of a different celebration, a destructive, Dionysiac revel (εἴτ᾽ Ἔρις εἴτε πατὴρ ὁ σὸς αἴτιος, εἴτε τὸ δαιμόνιον κατεκώμασε δώμασιν Οἰδίποδα, 350-352).[222]

CIRCLES GARLANDS CROWNS

About one thousand lines later, Jocasta will commit suicide, having put her arms around the dead bodies of her sons in a final embrace: ἐν δὲ τοῖσι φιλτάτοις θανοῦσα κεῖται περιβαλοῦσ᾽ ἀμφοῖν χέρας (1459-60); and then, it is Antigone's turn to dance in circles around the corpses of her kin. The chorus constantly refer to their rotating movements in the orchestra. The curled ivy-shoot crowns the head of the baby-Dionysus, Ares is whirling on his chariot, Thebes is standing on Ares' crowns. The play is obsessed with circular dance and movement. There is more: Creon announces that the army of the Seven is about to encircle (ἑλίξειν, 711) the city.[223] On the shield of Polyneices, the raw flesh-eating Potnian horses who devoured their own master Glaucus, and are thus emblematic of the internecine nature of civil war, rage in an uncontrollable circular movement.[224] Capaneus also rages (ἐμαίνετο, 1172) and whirls his body (εἱλίξας, 1178) until his expired corpse finally spirals off the walls (εἱλίσσετ᾽, 1186) in flames on the ground. Finally, if the *Trojan Women* opens with the image of the

[222] Cf the Erinyes that live in Agamemnon's palace, *Agamemnon* 1189-1190: κῶμος ἐν δόμοις μένει, δύσπεμπτος ἔξω, συγγόνων Ερινύων.
[223] Cf. 733: κἀκεῖ πέφαρκται λαὸς ἅρμασιν πέριξ.
[224] Ποτνιάδες δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀσπίδι / ἐπίσημα πῶλοι δρομάδες ἐσκίρτων φόβῳ, / εὖ πως στρόφιγξιν ἔνδοθεν κυκλούμεναι / πόρπαχ᾽ ὑπ᾽αὐτόν, ὥστε μαίνεσθαι δοκεῖν (1124-1127).

Nereids whirling in the depths of the Aegean sea, the *Phoenician Women* opens with that of Helios rotating high in the sky: Ἥλιε, θοαῖς ἵπποισιν εἱλίσσων φλόγα… (1). In Euripides' Theban play, even the sun is dancing for Dionysus.

CHAPTER THREE

HYPSIPYLE

ἐξ Ἀπόλλωνος δὲ φορμιγκτὰς ἀοιδᾶν πατήρ

ἔμολεν, εὐαίνητος Ὀρφεύς

– Pindar, *Pythian* 4. 176-177

The first thing to note as we move away from the quintessentially tragic, cacophonous musical universe of the *Phoenician Women* and enter that of the *Hypsipyle,* is that Euripides' fragmentary drama represents in many respects an inversion of the plot of the Theban tragedy. If the tragic scenario of the *Phoenician Women* revolves around the fateful confrontation of Eteocles and Polyneices for sovereignty over Thebes, a clash which results in their violent end and in their mother's suicide in grief over their dead bodies, in the *Hypsipyle,* Euneus and Thoas, another pair of brothers who are again antithetically opposed to each other (a musician and a warrior) are successfully reunited with their mother, from whom they were separated in early childhood, and rescue her from a life-threatening crisis and restore her welfare.[225]

In addition to these contrasts and reversals, the two dramas are connected by references to Dionysus and Thebes and treat different stages of the same myth: the events of the *Hypsipyle,* in which the army of the Seven marches through Nemea on its way to Thebes,

[225] See: Zeitlin (1993).

immediately precede the action of the *Phoenician Women,* in which the attack of the Argive army against the city unfolds. These structural oppositions, shared concerns, common themes and points of contact, along with a scholion at Aristophanes' *Frogs* 53 which mentions the two plays together,[226] have in fact led several scholars to suggest that it is very likely that the *Hypsipyle* formed part of the same production as the *Phoenician Women.*[227] The evidence is not secure, but the strong links that have been identified between the two plays support the inference that they were performed together at the City Dionysia in the same year.

The *Hypsipyle* is permeated by the same pervasive concern with music as the *Phoenician Women.* As one might suspect, the role of Dionysus and the function of Dionysiac music is very different in this play. But we will also see that the Theban Dionysus and his tragic *mousikê* are not far away and threaten to taint and destabilize the plot and the musical forces that are present in the drama. Further, if the *Phoenician Women* reflects on the nature of tragic, Dionysiac music, the *Hypsipyle* is self-referential in a different way, as it employs musical imagery as a vehicle for exploring the conflicts that result from the confrontation of the

[226] I quote the scholion in chapter two, 52, n.121.

[227] See: Zeitlin (1993). Also: Webster (1966) 83-97. Webster also points out the metrical similarities between the two plays (the figures of resolution of the *Hypsipyle* and the *Phoenician Women* agree closely), and argues that the trilogy possibly belonged to a phase of the Euripidean production that experimented with producing together plays that treated different stages of the same myth, like the Trojan trilogy of 415 BCE. See too: Bond (1963) 144, on the similarities between the *Hypsipyle* and the *Phoenician Women* and on the common themes present in the two plays (although he cautions the reader that it is too dangerous to work on the basis that the plays were produced together); also Mastronarde (1994) 13, and Collard, Cropp and Gibert (2004), vol. 2, 182. The second major theory is based on a corrupt passage in the hypothesis to the *Phoenician Women,* which was restored by Kirchhoff as saying that the *Phoenician Women* formed a trilogy together with the *Chrysippus* and the *Oenomaus.*

disparate musical identities that are present in the play, but also as a means of bringing about the final reconciliation of these oppositions at the end of the drama. Finally, we will see in the last part of the chapter that the play engages in a systematic reflection on the profound cultural and musical controversies that Athens witnessed in the last few decades of the fifth century, the New Music phenomenon, of which the modern, exquisite lyrics of the *Hypsipyle* offer a striking instantiation.

THE *RECUSATIO*

The Lullaby

The importance of music is established early on in the play, where Hypsipyle is portrayed as a self-conscious singer. Immediately before the parodos she sings a lullaby to calm Opheltes:

> ἰδού, κτύπος ὅδε κορτάλων
> < >
> οὐ τάδε πήνας, οὐ τάδε κερκίδος
> ἱστοτόνου παραμύθια Λήμνια
> Μοῦσα θέλει με κρέκειν, ὅτι δ᾽ εἰς ὕπνον
> ἢ χάριν ἢ θεραπεύματα πρόσφορα

π]αιδὶ πρέπει νεαρῶι

τάδε μελωιδὸς αὐδῶ.

(752 f. 194-201)[228]

[Look, here is the sound of castanets

…

These are not Lemnian songs for relieving the labor

of weft-thread and web-stretching shuttle

that the Muse wants me to voice, but what serves for a tender young boy, to lull him

or charm him or tend to his needs

– this do I tunefully sing.][229]

Hypsipyle's song is about singing, and the protagonist presents herself as a skilled, Muse-inspired *melôidos* reflecting on her musical activity. Her priamel establishes a pronounced opposition between the music of her happy past, the Lemnian work-songs (παραμύθια) that used to accompany her work on the loom when she was queen of the island, and the music of the present, a song appropriate (πρέπει) for an infant which she must sing now that she is reduced to slavery in Nemea, in the role of the nurse of queen Eurydice's son.

References to instruments are also present: the opening line of the fragment foregrounds the sound of the castanets (κτύπος ὅδε κορτάλων) which Hypsipyle must have used as an

[228] I cite the fragments of the *Hypsipyle* from the edition of Collard, Cropp and Gibert (2004) vol. 2, which from now on will be referred to as Cropp (2004).
[229] The translation of all the passages from the *Hypsipyle* cited in this chapter is from Cropp (2004).

accompaniment to her song,[230] and on whose exceptional presence in the drama several scholars have commented. The *krotala* or *kortala* are closely connected to Dionysus and his cult,[231] and in fifth-century vase painting are played by satyrs and maenads in celebration of their god, but are very rarely introduced into the theater of Dionysus.[232]

Κρέκειν, the verb that Hypsipyle employs to define the performance of her Lemnian songs on the loom is a particularly interesting choice, and evokes a different kind of instrumental music. The semantic development of the term is uncertain and depends on the context in which it appears:[233] in its first and primary sense, *krekein* means 'weave'; in its second meaning, the term refers to the action of playing a stringed instrument.[234] Finally, the verb can also refer to singing. Bond argues that in our passage *krekein* has this last meaning and that it denotes vocal music,[235] but this interpretation does not do justice to the term, whose special value in this specific context lies in its polyvalence and in the multiple connotations that it carries. The verb should rather be viewed as containing all three meanings and is particularly

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[230] Cf. the unplaced F 769: τῆς κροταλισάσης, which is probably a reference by another character to Hypsipyle's castanet-playing. On the uncertainties of the attribution see: Cropp (2004) 258 and Bond (1963) 139.

[231] See: West (1992) 122 f. It should be noted that West expresses some caution regarding the evidence, and suggests that there were perhaps more than one kinds of *krotala,* and that it is possible that the ones associated with Dionysus and his cult form a distinct category and are sometimes said to be made of bronze as opposed to regular castanets which were wooden.

[232] West (1992) 123. For references to *krotala* in Greek drama see: *Cyclops* 204-205 (τί βακχιάζετ'; οὐχὶ Διόνυσος τάδε, / οὐ κρόταλα χαλκοῦ τυμπάνων τ' ἀράγματα), with Seaford (2003) ad 205, who comments on the exceptional presence of the instrument in the *Hypsipyle*. Also *Helen* 1308: κρόταλα βρόμια. Kannicht ((1969), vol. 2 ad 1308-1309) notes that 'Die Krotala gehören zum festen Bestand der Lärmgeräte des Kybele- und Dionysoskults (…) βρόμια ist (…) von gesuchter Ambivalenz: einerseits (vordergründig) = βρέμοντα 'tönend, lärmend' (…) andererseits (hintergründig) = 'dionysisch'…'

[233] See: LSJ s.v. κρέκω, Bond (1963) 66, Dunbar (1995) ad Ar. *Birds* 682-683, Garvie (2002) 269.

[234] Aristophanes, however, extends the use of *krekein* to the *aulos* See: Ar. *Birds* 682-683, where *krekein* defines the nightingale's *aulos*-playing (καλλιβόαν κρέκουσ' αὐλόν).

[235] Bond (1963) 66, who takes it as parallel to αὐδῶ.

fitting for describing Hypsipyle's activity precisely because it has the ability to conjure an image of the protagonist engaging in weaving, playing stringed music, and singing her work-songs at the same time.[236] The term *krekein* thus assimilates Hypsipyle's activity on Lemnos to the music and song of a performer of a stringed instrument such as the lyre or the *cithara,* and it is probable that the incorporation of this type of musical performance in the lines was somehow reflected and recreated in the central character's current song on the stage. The lines then have an effect that resembles that of the device of *praeteritio,* as Hypsipyle draws attention to her association with playing the strings and singing at their accompaniment right at the moment when she professes that she can no longer perform this type of music. Instead, she tells her audience, she must now clap the Dionysiac *krotala.*

Orpheus and the Argonauts

At this moment, the chorus of Nemean women appear on the stage to sing the parodos.[237] The close association between the title-character and music-making continues:

[236] See also Cropp (2004) 231. The image of the singing shuttle is especially popular among poets. See also: *Iphigenia in Aulis* 223 ἱστοῖς ἐν καλλιφθόγγοις, Sophocles fr. 595 κερκίδος ὕμνοις and Bond (1963) 66 for more examples. It is also significant that line 1316 from Aristohpanes' *Frogs* κερκίδος ἀοιδοῦ μελέτας ('practicings of the singing shuttle'), which has been identified as a parody of Hypsipyle's lines (see Borthwick (1994) 29-30, and the discussion of the passage later in this chapter), again promotes the conflation of weaving and music-making at the strings.

[237] It is generally accepted that F 752f. 15ff. preserves the chorus' opening words. See, however, Diggle (1995) 40, who objects and believes that there was a previous choral utterance because the lines contain (he cites Willink's observation) 'not a hint of self-address'.

τί σὺ παρὰ προθύροις, φίλα;

πότερα δώματος εἰσόδους

σαίρεις, ἢ δρόσον ἐπὶ πέδωι

βάλλεις οἷά τε δούλα;

ἦ τὰν Ἀργὼ τὰν διὰ σοῦ

στόματος αἰεὶ κληιζομέναν

πεντηκόντερον ἄ[ι]δεις,

ἢ τὸ χρυσεόμαλλον

ἱερὸν δέρος ὃ περὶ δρυὸς

ὄζοις ὄμμα δράκοντος

φρουρεῖ, μναμοσύνα δέ σοι

τᾶς ἀγχιάλοιο Λήμνου,

τὰν Αἰγαῖος ἑλί[σ]σων

κυμόκτυπος ἀχεῖ;

(752f. 15-28)

[What are you doing at the doorway, dear friend?

Are you sweeping the entrance to the house,

or casting water on the ground

as a slave-woman does?

Are you singing now of Argo,

whom your voice is always celebrating,

that famous penteconter,

or the sacred gold-fleeced

hide on which around the tree's boughs

the serpent's eye keeps watch;

and does your memory

dwell on sea-bound Lemnos

which the Aegean encircles

and beats with echoing waves?]

The chorus wonder about the nature of Hypsipyle's musical activity. The opening lines with the references to the menial tasks that the women hypothesize the protagonist might be performing are again suggestive of work-songs, to which the protagonist has already referred in her song as belonging to her past, her song and music accompanying her work on the loom on Lemnos .[238] Then the chorus go on to specify the subject-matter of the song that is always on Hypsipyle's lips: the Argonautic expedition and the quest for the golden fleece, and the protagonist's island, possibly again in association with the Argonauts, who made a stop on Lemnos on their way to Colchis and received Hypsipyle's hospitality. I argued above that Hypsipyle in her monody creates a distinction between the music of her earlier days and that of her present, but her current performance incorporates and reflects that of her past, and her lullaby morphs into the Lemnian songs she complains she can no longer perform. The women

[238] Critics see parallels between this scene and the work-song of Ion in the parodos of Euripides' namesake play. See: Bond (1963) 67, and Cropp (2004) 230.

of the chorus now confirm that the protagonist's musical activity in Nemea still very much centers around her past life and music.[239]

Next, the women urge Hypsipyle to abandon the door of the palace and to follow them to the Nemean meadow in order to observe the Argive army that has just arrived and is moving against the walls of Thebes:

δεῦρο † ταν † λειμῶνα Νέμει[ον
ἀσ[τ]ράπτει χαλκέο[ι]σιν ὅπλο[ις
Ἀργείον π[ε]δίον πᾶ[ν.
ἐπὶ τὸ τᾶ[ς] κιθάρας ἔρυμα
τᾶς Ἀμφιονίας ἔργον [
ὠ[κυ]πόδας Ἄ[δρ]ασ[το]ς [...

(752f. 29-34)

[Come now to the Nemean meadow.
All of the Argive plain is flashing with armaments of bronze.
Against the bastion built
by Amphion's lyre
swiftfooted Adrastus…]

[239] It is especially interesting that Statius in the *Thebais* (5. 615-616) makes the quests of the Argo and Lemnos the subject-matter of Hypsipyle's lullaby: '… quotiens tibi Lemnon et Argo / sueta loqui et longa somnum suadere querela!' ('How often would I talk to you of Lemnos and the Argo and lull you to sleep with my long tale of sorrow'). Hypsipyle in these lines is addressing the dead infant Opheltes.

Hypsipyle, however, will not be distracted by the presence of the Seven. Instead, she will confirm the chorus' observation that she always – *aiei* – sings of the Argo: her answer takes the Nemean women and the audience back to the ship's arrival at Lemnos, as she recalls Peleus fastening its stern cables. To the chorus' reference to Amphion's *cithara* she opposes her recollection of the *cithara* and the music of Orpheus setting the rowers' rhythm:

… μέσωι δὲ παρ᾽ ἱστῶι
Ἀσιάδ᾽ ἔλεγον ἰήιον
Θρῆισσ᾽ ἐβόα κίθαρις
μακροπόλων πιτύλων
ἐρέταισι κελεύσματα μελπομένα,
τότε μὲν ταχύπλουν,
τότε δ᾽ εἰλατίνας ἀνάπαυμα πλάτα[ς.
(752g. 8-14)[240]

[and by the mast amidships
the Thracian lyre cried out
a mournful Asian plaint
singing commands to the rowers
for their long-sweeping strokes,
now to speed forward,

[240] v. 9, Ἀσιάδ᾽ ἔλεγον ἰήιον (mournful Asian plaint): the text is somewhat uncertain: Kannicht (*TrGF*) understands ἔλεγον ἰήιον as a paean-song (*ie paean*) that the Argonauts are singing thankful for their successful landfall; Page (1936) 209, cites this passage as implying a 'wider extension of *elegos*' [i.e. wider than 'lament for the dead'], whereas Bond (1963) 72 thinks that the song is still mournful here, and compares it to modern mournful sea-shanties.

now to take rest from the pinewood oar.]

These are the things she desires to dwell on, Hypsipyle insists:

τ[ά]δε μοι τάδε θυμὸς ἰδεῖν ἵεται,
Δαναῶν δὲ πόνους
ἕτερος ἀναβοάτω.
(752g, 15-17)

[These things, yes these, does my spirit yearn to see;
but as for the Danaans' labors,
let someone else acclaim them.]

Wilamowitz has suggested the interesting conjecture ὐδεῖν (to tell of, celebrate) for ἰδεῖν, and Bond notes that this reading is supported by the fact that ὐδεῖν and not ἰδεῖν is the proper parallel to ἀναβοάτω and that there is no chance that Hypsipyle will see Jason ever again.[241] I would add that the choice of ὐδεῖν is also supported by the earlier reference made by the women of the chorus to Hypsipyle's most favorite song-topic, the Argonautic expedition: ἦ τὰν Ἀργὼ τὰν διὰ σοῦ / στόματος αἰεὶ κληιζομέναν / πεντηκόντερον ἄ[ι]δεις…, (752f. 19-21). Regardless of whether we accept Wilamowitz' conjecture, what is important is that the heroine rejects the labors of the Argives (Δαναῶν πόνους) as a possible subject-matter of her song. As Ruth Scodel has pointed out, Hypsipyle's refusal to follow the chorus is '(…) a priamel of the type that shades into recusatio. When she calls for someone else to celebrate the

[241] See: Bond (1963) 72.

labors of the Argives, she makes the Argo not only the desired object of her vision, but the proper subject of her song'.[242] The attitude of the central character has been rightly compared to that of Electra who refuses to join the chorus in the festival of Hera in Euripides' namesake play.[243] Hypsipyle rejects the suggestion of the women in the same metrical structure as the title-character in the *Electra:* she does not sing the antistrophe to the chorus' strophe, but instead responds to her own earlier strophe, and this renders her isolation even more pronounced.

The parodos thus explicitly treats the Argonautic saga and the myth of the Seven against Thebes as song-topics and stages a conflict of songs.[244] The protagonist's singing is firmly connected to the Argonautic expedition, and Hypsipyle rejects the introduction of the Seven into her musical repertoire. The title-character further associates her song with the musical

[242] Scodel (1997) 93.
[243] See: Scodel (1997) 92, and also the discussion in: On Chong-Gossard (2003) esp. 218-222.

[244] In his discussion of the parodos of the *Hypsipyle*, Robert (1909) comments on the confrontation between the Argonauts and the heroes of the Theban cycle ('Gegenüberstellung der Argonauten und der Helden des thebanischen Kreises' (382)), and later in the same article he notes that 'Die Tendenz der euripideischen Erfindung is es, (…) zwei der berühmtesten Ereignisse der Heldensage, die Argofahrt und den Zug der Sieben gegen Theben, miteinander in Verbindung zu bringen und zueinander in Parallele zu setzen (401).' Robert also argues that the migration of the main character from Lemnos to Nemea should be viewed as an innovation of the dramatist, as there is no firm evidence of any connection between Hypsipyle and Nemea before Euripides, and that the confrontation between the two myths in the parodos possibly reflects the Euripidean novelty. The inference that Euripides grafted the story of Hypsipyle and her sons onto a story about the foundation of the Nemean games has been widely accepted. Cropp (2003) has recently revisited the evidence. He focuses on the political dimension and resonances of the Euripidean reinvention of the myth, arguing that the play essentially affirmed Athenian associations with Nemea, Lemnos and Oropos, all places of prime strategic importance to the city of Athens in both military and mythical / religious senses. See also Michelini (1999-2000), who explores the tendency of mythical innovation and expansion in later Euripidean drama (she discusses the *Phoenician Women,* the *Orestes,* and the *Iphigeneia in Aulis*).

activity of one figure from the Argonautic saga in particular, that of the legendary musician Orpheus, when she dwells on his song and music guiding the rowers of the ship.

This choice has a special weight. According to Charles Segal, references to Orpheus – the archetypal poet and musician – in Euripidean drama are rare but significant.[245] In the Greek imaginary, the song of Orpheus is the quintessential example of magic, incantatory music, as it has the power to charm gods and men alike, and to move nature and beasts. In the *Hypsipyle*, the magic *thelxis* of his song is demonstrated in an indirect fashion, through the mediation of human response to his musical commands that propel and guide the Argo.[246] As discussed above, Hypsipyle is also portrayed as a skilled and self-conscious musician, and is associated with therapeutic song that alleviates suffering and music that has the power to accomplish things, as she sings a lullaby that calms and brings χάριν ἢ θεραπεύματα (F 752f, 12) and recalls work-songs that relieve the fatigue at the loom. In accompanying the intensive labor of the rowers and commanding them when to strain and when to rest, Orpheus' song can be seen as having a similar therapeutic function. Further, according to E. Moutsopoulos, the evidence from Euripidean drama indicates that work-songs form a special category of incantatory music: 'Le mechanisme de base dans cette activité consiste à accorder le rythme des gestes au rythme de quelque ordre musicalement prononcé, en guise d' exhortation'.[247] Moutsopoulos also argues that the most prominent example of this particular type of enchanting music is the song

[245] Segal (1978). Cf. Segal (1982) 73-77 on Orpheus' presence in the second stasimon of the *Bacchae.*
[246] Segal (1978) 117.
[247] Moutsopoulos (1962) 417. Moutsopoulos contrasts the ordered movements that are the result of the enchantment produced by work-songs with the unordered ones that are the result of orgiastic enchantment, a state that is primarily inspired by Dionysus and closely associated with his influence.

that accompanies and guides the activity of the rowers,[248] that is, exactly the kind of song that Orpheus is represented as singing in the parodos of the play.

The play thus establishes a firm connection between the types of music that Orpheus and Hypsipyle practice and thereby creates a special bond between the two figures. This association further sheds light on the protagonist's musical identity: Hypsipyle feels that the Argonauts and Orpheus' music are the appropriate topic of her song because of the affinity of her music with that of the legendary singer. The subject-matter of the protagonist's song also forges a link between her musical activity and that of the prototypical citharode: Hypsipyle desires to sing an *Argonautica,* and it is important to remember that, according to the tradition, Orpheus was also credited with a composition treating the adventures of the Argo. Finally, let us recall here that Hypsipyle's monody assimilated the protagonist's music to that of a performer of strings; now, Hypsipyle again makes song and music the topic of her song, this time assimilating her performance to that of the *cithara* of the quintessential mythical lyre-player, Orpheus. This move further reinforces the portrayal of the title-character as a *lyrikos* on the stage of Dionysus.

The choice of the Argonautic expedition as the topic of her song is also significant in this respect. The quests of the heroes of the Argo were treated extensively in archaic epic poems of the later sixth century BCE such as Eumelus' *Corinthiaca* and the anonymous *Carmen Naupactium*, but the story was already known to the Homeric epics which allude to characters and events from the myth;[249] it has also been argued that it is very likely that the primary, seventh-century oral narrative with which the *Odyssey* engages was citharodic, which

[248] *Op. cit.,* 418: 'Ce n' est cependant qu' à propos du travail cadencé que ce procédé acquiert sa valeur intégrale; celui des rameurs en est le type par excellence'. He brings in examples from the *Iphigenia in Tauris* and the *Helen.*
[249] See: West (2005), also Mastronarde (2002) 45f.

would also explain the place of pride occupied by the legendary citharode Orpheus in the story, as it is natural that the Lesbian practitioners of *citharodia* who elaborated the Argonautic myth would assign the mythical initiator of their tradition a prominent role.[250] The phrase τὰν Ἀργὼ τὰν διὰ σοῦ / στόματος αἰεὶ κλιζομέναν (F 752f. 19-20), employed by the chorus in the parodos to define the subject-matter of Hypsipyle's song, is a clear allusion to the celebrated Homeric line Ἀργὼ πᾶσι μέλουσα,[251] and the emphasis on the music of Orpheus' *cithara* in Hypsipyle's lines is again evocative of the archaic poetic (and probably citharodic) tradition that revolves around the travels of the Argo, thus casting Hypsipyle in the role of an epic *aoidos* or a citharode.

The Seven

If Hypsipyle and Orpheus are portrayed as practitioners of incantatory, beneficent music, the Seven against Thebes are represented in the parodos as a threatening force moving against one of the most celebrated products of the musical activity of another prototypical citharode and mythical practitioner of enchanting music, Amphion. The chorus' mention of the miraculous construction of the walls of Thebes from rocks that were sounded into harmonic movement by the lyre-playing of Amphion serves as a warning of the fragility of music and its

[250] See: Power (2010) 274, also: West (1973) 189 on the transmission of the Argonautic myth from Thessaly to Lesbos by Aeolian colonists.
[251] *Odyssey* 12. 70. For more allusions to episodes from the Argonautic expedition in Homer, see: *Iliad* 7. 467-469, cf. 20. 40-41 and 23.746-747. The travels of the Argo are also known to Hesiod (*Theogony* 338-345); and see West (2005) 39-40, who also comments on the mystery covering the earlier history of the Argonautic myth in the seventh century BCE.

failure to impose stability and perpetuate harmony (musical or other) in Thebes. The point is vividly made when the women of the chorus allude to Amphion's work while informing Hypsipyle that the army of the Argives is marching against it (ἐπὶ τὸ τᾶ[ς] κιθάρας ἔρυμα / τᾶς Ἀμφιονίας ἔργον, F 752f. 32-33), thus hinting at the acts of violence that will follow.[252] The term ἔρυμα denotes a structure for defense / bastion, but at the same time it is also evocative of the act of dragging the rocks by music,[253] thus containing within itself both the miraculous action and its result; also, the peculiar construction κιθάρας ἔρυμα stresses the magical capacities of the instrument, as the lyre of Amphion is directly and explicitly represented as the agent of the wonder of the Theban walls.[254] The power of music is then invoked so as to be simultaneously challenged and negated.

Like the Argonautic saga, the story of the Seven marching against Thebes was the subject of archaic epic poetry, treated in the cyclic *Thebais,* and the chorus' announcement of the arrival of the Argive army at Nemea is again colored by epic allusions.[255] The myth was also treated in tragic poetry, where the 'Seven' and 'Thebes' are elevated to the status of the quintessential *topos* of tragedy*,* one that 'can furnish no enduring way of escaping the tragic'.[256] If we accept the hypothesis that the performance of the *Hypsipyle* was immediately preceded by

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[252] Cf. 112-116 of the *teichoscopia* scene in the *Phoenician Women*, where the therapon's reference to the arrival of Polyneices πολλοῖς μὲν ἵπποις, μυρίοις δ' ὅπλοις βρέμων is followed by Antigone's preoccupied question regarding the safety of Amphion's walls: ἆρα πυλᾶν κλήιθροις χαλκόδετ' ἔμβολ' <ἐν> λαϊνέοισιν Ἀμφίονος ὀργάνοις τείχεος ἥρμοσται; Dionysiac sound (βρέμων) threatens the product of creative, enchanting music.

[253] LSJ s.v. ἔρυμα, ἐρύω.

[254] The first editors suggest the supplement χερός at the end of line 33 to give 'against the lyre-built bastion, work of Amphion's hand', but as Bond (1963) 70 rightly points out, 'τᾶς κιθάρας stands where one would expect the builder's name, for Amphion's lyre *was* the builder' (emphasis in the original). See also Cropp (2004) 232 and cf. *Phoenician Women* 823-824: (…) φόρμιγγί τε τείχεα Θήβας / τᾶς Ἀμφιονίας τε λύρας ὕπο πύργος ἀνέστα.

[255] See the epithet ὠκυπόδας (F 752f. 34) which modifies Adrastus, also ἀστράπτει (F 752f. 30) with Cropp (2004) 232.

[256] Zeitlin (1993) 131, and see also Zeitlin (1990).

that of the *Phoenician Women,* the tragic resonances of the Seven for the fifth-century audience become even clearer and louder. We should then remember that in the *Phoenician Women* Thebes is presented as the site of perverted, tragic, Dionysiac *mousikê* par excellence, as a city dominated by the unmelodious song of the *paramousos* (*Ph.* 785) Ares, the dissonant music of the Sphinx, who comes *apomousotataisi sun ôidais* (*Ph.* 807) to unleash destruction and death upon the Cadmeians, and the cacophonous lament of the Theban people. Dionysus orchestrates the lethal music of the god of war and of the winged monster, and incites or inspires (*epipneusas, Ph.* 789, 794) – an act of (anti)musical incantation – the two armies against one another. The *Hypsipyle* associates the protagonist with the magical, therapeutic music of Orpheus, whereas in the Thebes of the *Phoenician Women* there exists no faith in the power of incantatory song and in musical cure. The messenger who brings to Jocasta the news that Eteocles and Polyneices are about to engage in a deadly duel exhorts her:

> ἀλλ᾽, εἴ τιν᾽ ἀλκὴν ἢ σοφούς ἔχεις λόγους
> ἢ φίλτρ᾽ ἐπωιδῶν, στεῖχ᾽, ἐρήτυσον τέκνα
> δεινῆς ἁμίλλης
>
> (*Phoenician Women* 1259-60)

> [So if you have any strength to save them or clever words
> or incantatory charms, go rescue your sons
> from the dread contest.][257]

[257] Trans. Kovacs (2002).

But the Theban queen has no recourse to incantations that might avert destruction from her house and family, and we know that she will soon commit suicide over the corpses of her sons.

Hypsipyle then is, as it were, trying to escape from the potentially tragic scenario that the chorus with their insistence on the theme of the Seven are introducing into the play. In this light, her rejection of the 'toils of the Argives' (Δαναῶν πόνους) as a subject-matter of her song has a special significance, since in performing this gesture she is rejecting precisely the material treated in the *Phoenician Women.*[258] Thus, Hypsipyle, who has so far established herself as a talented and self-conscious singer, now presents her voice as inherently untragic, unsuited to the song-form of tragedy and to tragic subject-matter. Instead, the protagonist is obsessed with singing of the Argo and of the lyre and the song of Orpheus. Her self-conscious association with the music of Orpheus and her self-representation as a lyric *mousikos* on the tragic stage is her way of arguing that neither she nor her song and music have any place in the unmelodious and perverted musical universe of tragedy.

Let me sum up: we have established that the parodos of the *Hypsipyle* constructs a sharp conflict between two myths, the journey of the Argo and the march of the Seven. This contrast is staged as a confrontation between two different topics of song and results in the creation of a tension between two different forces, as it associates Hypsipyle and the theme of the Argonautic expedition with the integrating music of Orpheus, a song older than epic, and at the same time creates the prospect of a tragic scenario and outcome through the introduction of the

[258] Note also that Hypsipyle's lack of interest in viewing the army of the Argives stands in sharp contrast to Antigone's eagerness to see the army and to learn about it at the beginning of the *Phoenician Women.*

Seven with all their destructive, sinister, anti-musical and tragic associations. The conflict of song-topics further becomes implicitly one of different poetic genres, as Hypsipyle is cast in the role of a performer of strings who now finds herself on the stage of Dionysus, and her figure and music become the means by which the play explores the tensions that are created as a result of incorporating the traditionally Orphic / Apollonian medium into the Dionysiac song-form of tragedy.

Tragic Aporia

The discord between Hypsipyle and the chorus continues in the antistrophe of the parodos. There the women attempt to console the distressed protagonist by means of mythological exempla: according to wise men, they say, Europa and Io also suffered the pains of exile, but were cared for by gods who loved them and had happy destinies; they even predict the protagonist's rescue by her grandfather Dionysus, who, they assure her, will not abandon her (F 752g. 34-37). Hypsipyle, however, rejects the chorus' *parainesis*, and remains stubbornly unreceptive to the gestures of consolation.[259] Instead, continuing the theme of the confrontation between different stories and opposition of song-topics, she responds to the exempla offered by the women of the chorus with a counter-exemplum of her own:

κυναγόν τε Πρόκριν τὰν πόσις ἔκτα

[259] On the exploration of the theme of consolation in the play see: On Chong Gossard (2009), who reads the *Hypsipyle* as a series of attempts at successful and unsuccessful consolation.

κατεθρήνησεν ἀοιδαῖς [

θάνατος ἔλαχε. τα δ᾽ ἐμὰ πάθεα

τίς ἂν ἢ γόος ἢ μέλος ἢ κιθάρας

ἐπὶ δάκρυσι μοῦσ᾽ ἀνοδυρομένα

μετὰ Καλλιόπας

ἐπὶ πόνους ἂν ἔλθοι;[260]

(752h, 3-9)

[and the huntress Procris, whom her husband killed…

lamented with songs…

death claimed her;

but my sufferings –

what grieving cry or song or lyre's music,

bemoaning them

with Calliope's aid amidst my tears,

will come to mourn my troubles?]

According to Bond, the central character here creates a contrast between Procris, who had someone to mourn her fate with songs, and herself, who is alone and has no one to weep for her.[261] This is true, and the isolation of the protagonist has been foregrounded early on in the play, but there is more in Hypsipyle's gesture: the device of *aporia* is used by several

[260] The syntax of 3-5 and the subject κατεθρήνησεν are uncertain because of incompleteness of the text. According to Bond (1963) 76, the subject of 'lamented' must be Procris' husband Cephalus. See also Cropp (2004) 235.

[261] Bond (1963) 76.

Euripidean female figures as a preface to a song of lamentation.[262] We have had the chance to observe in the previous chapters that the trope not only highlights the extraordinary severity of the tragic character's misfortunes, but also stresses the impossibility of a song that attempts to sing of tragic pains. Antigone in the *Phoenician Women* (1498-1503) expresses the difficulty she is facing with regard to finding an appropriate source of musical inspiration while she prepares to lament the dead bodies of her kin in a way that closely resembles Hypsipyle's lines, as she is in search of a *mousopolos stonacha* (*Ph.* 1499) – an oxymoron that lumps together two very disparate concepts, that of the 'attendant of the muses' and that of a 'cry of woe' – which will inspire and accompany her song. In a similar way, Hypsipyle's utterance now brings together a 'grieving cry' (*goos*), a 'song' (*melos*), and the 'lyre's music bemoaning amidst tears with Calliope's aid' (κιθάρας ἐπὶ δάκρυσι μοῦσ᾽ ἀνοδυρομένα μετὰ Καλλιόπας).[263]

The protagonist's song has so far been associated with beneficent, incantatory music, akin to that practiced by Orpheus, and also with a Muse that has nothing to do with lamentation and the musical expression of grief, and can therefore not provide inspiration for a tragic lament. Thus, Hypsipyle in these lines is again negotiating her identity by means of musical imagery. Her *aporia* indicates once more that she finds herself in a genre (tragedy) where she does not belong (or would rather not be). Note also, that she now desperately seeks the assistance of Calliope, who is recorded in the tradition as Orpheus' mother,[264] and calls upon

[262] See the account in Fantuzzi (2007), who gathers and discusses several instances of tragic *aporia*.

[263] Or 'a lyric Muse bemoaning with Calliope's aid', if we accept *mousa* as a personification (see Bond (1963) 77). Bond (1963) 76-77 also comments on the similarities between the τίς… ἤ… ἤ… ἤ… structure of the *Hypsipyle* passage and those in the *Phoenician Women* at 1509-1511 (τίς Ἑλλὰς ἢ βάρβαρος ἢ / τῶν προπάροιθ᾽ εὐεργετᾶν / ἕτερος ἔτλα…) and 1515-1516 (τίς ἄρ᾽ ὄρνις δρυὸς ἢ / ἐλάτας ἀκροκόμοις ἂμ πετάλοις…)

[264] See e.g. Timoth. F 791.221-224, Ap. Rhod. 1.24-26, Asclepiad. Trag. *FGH* 12 F 8, and Cropp (2004) 236.

the muse's *cithara,* the instrument with which her own performance has been associated, which however must now be pressed into the service of a new kind of song, a tragic *thrênos*. The lyre's elaborate, inspired, artful music is mixed with the inarticulate, artless and cacophonous *goos* of tragedy, and the *cithara* is now asked to moan and wail (ἀνοδυρομένα) in accompaniment to Hypsypile's tears of sorrow. Hypsipyle no doubt sang these lines to the music of the *cithara's* rival instrument, the *aulos*, and this again signals a clash and amalgamation of disparate musical identities as the evocation of the sound of the Apollonian / Orphic instrument is subsumed by the sound of the tragic, Dionysiac instrument *par excellence;* the frame of the Dionysiac genre insists on referring to the lyre in accents of musical negation and privation, defining its unmelodious music as *alyros,* or *akitharis,* 'lyre-less'.[265]

DIONYSUS

The chorus continue to function as the vehicle for the introduction of the story of the Seven in the lyrics of the first stasimon (F 753c), which fills the time between Hypsipyle's departure with Amphiaraus and the Seven to assist them in finding spring-water needed for a sacrifice (F 753) and her return to inform us of the death of Opheltes. The ode, which shows the same tendency of expansion into the mythical past as the choral odes of the *Phoenician Women,* takes us back in time to the mythological background of the play and the preliminaries

[265] See: Segal (1993a) chapter 2, also Wilson (1999-2000) 433-434, and Wilson (2004) 279.

of the expedition of the Seven against Thebes, as it recalls the famous episode of the quarrel of Tydeus and Polyneices who arrived as exiles at Adrastus' palace and implicated the Argive king in the calamitous campaign against Thebes. By incorporating this episode, which was no doubt narrated in the epic *Thebais* and was also included in the stichomythia between Polyneices and Jocasta (*Phoenician Women* 408-429),[266] the song foreshadows the disaster that is about to come,[267] and creates an atmosphere of doom, into which Hypsipyle and her music are eventually drawn. When she re-enters the stage, the protagonist is in great agony and sings an *amoibaion* with the chorus (F 753d, F 753e, F 754). The text is very problematic,[268] but it is nevertheless clear that the tragic consequences of the protagonist's involvement with the Seven also draw her in the realm of tragic *mousikê,* as her song is now reduced to inarticulate cries of grief and despair (F 753d, 1: φευ, F 753d, 14: οἴ] ἐγώ, F 753 e: ἐὲ ἐέ).

Hypsipyle contemplates escape from Nemea to avoid punishment, but is eventually confronted with the wrath of Eurydice, who threatens her with death. However, the protagonist's grief will not last for long, and Dionysus plays an instrumental role in securing her welfare.[269] As Froma Zeitlin has argued, the tragic destructive Dionysiac scenario of the

[266] Another extant account of the story is that of Euripides' *Suppliant Women*, 131-150. For more sources see: Bond (1963) 87-88 and Cropp (2004) 239. Also Mastronarde (1994) ad 411.
[267] 'A parallelism (and contrast) between the quarrel of Tydeus and Polyneices leading to Adrastus' intervention and its negative outcomes and the quarrel of Eurydice and Hypsipyle leading to Amphiaraus' intervention and its positive outcomes, is perhaps implied', notes Cropp (2004) 239.
[268] Editors have distributed the entire passage between the protagonist and the chorus, but Cropp (2004) 240-241 suggests the possibility that the first ten lines are a dialogue within the chorus hearing Hypsipyle's off-stage cries, then in lines 11-12 Hypsipyle appears on the stage and addresses them (14-16).
[269] The recognition between Hypsipyle and her sons, which brings an end to the protagonist's suffering, was probably brought about by means of Dionysiac symbols: See F 759a, 1632 Θόαντος οἰνωπὸν βότρυν, possibly an ornament which secured the identity of Hypsipyles'

Phoenician Women is reversed in the *Hypsipyle,* where the god's positive and benevolent side is allowed to emerge.[270] It is also worth quoting Zeitlin's valuable insight into the nature and the function of musical imagery in these plays: 'Music is the Dionysiac theme that finally seems to organize the three dramas into a triptych of pedimental shape, in which the full force of negation in the Theban scenario, exemplified in the *Phoenician Women,* is contrasted by the two plays on its periphery'.[271]

Fragment 759a preserves the last five lines of what was probably a celebration-monody sung by Hypsipyle or a lyric exchange between the protagonist and the chorus following the recognition scene.[272] The rest of the lyric passage is not extant, but marginal notes in the papyrus (Ἡ]δωνίσι Θρακίαις, Πά]γγαιον ὄρος τῆς Θράκης) indicate that the lines mentioned Mount Pangaeus and the local Edonian women, presumably with reference to Dionysus who was closely connected to the area and had an oracle there.[273] We can thus plausibly infer that

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sons. Also F 765 οἰνάνθα τρέφει τὸν ἱερὸν βότρυν (the vine-shoot nourishes its sacred cluster) and the discussion in Bond (1963) 138, who argues that it might belong to the reunion-scene where it was used as a recognition-token. The description in *Anth. Pal.* 3. 10 of the sons 'being recognized by their mother and showing her the golden vine' also suggests that the vine served as proof after the initial recognition. The hypothesis is also supported by evidence from the Aristophanic Aeschylus' pseudo-Euripidean song in the *Frogs,* which I discuss later in the chapter. We should finally note that, as Euneus tells Hypsipyle after their reunion, her father Thoas was also saved through 'Bacchus' contriving' (Βακχίου γε μηχαναῖς, F 759a 107).

[270] See Zeitlin (1993) who reaches the conclusion that 'a positive Dionysiac pattern can be shown to operate in a significant relation to Thebes, but only in displacement from its actual territory and the temporal frame of its usual sequence of events. On the other hand, the *Phoenician Women,* the strictly Theban drama with the most pervasive Dionysiac mood, is shaped in such a way as to thwart any such redemptive pattern.' (181).

[271] Zeitlin (1993) 178. Zeitlin discusses both the *Hypsipyle* and the *Antiope,* which probably was the third play of the trilogy.

[272] See the discussions in: Bond (1963) 123 and Cropp (2004) 253-254. Both disagree with Webster (1966) 93 who thinks that the lines belong to a choral stasimon. Bond also notes that such references to Dionysus 'would be especially appropriate if a Dionysiac σῆμα (the 'golden vine') had been used in the recognition scene'. Euneus and Thoas were also educated in this area by Orpheus, although this is not mentioned until later in the play.

[273] Cropp (2004) 253-254.

the song had a strong Dionysiac coloring, especially since the role of the god in the reunion of Hypsipyle and her two sons was likely very prominent. The preserved final lines which are sung by the title-character will confirm this hypothesis:

τέκνα τ᾽ ἀνὰ μίαν ὁδὸν
ἀνάπ[α]λιν ἐτρόχασεν
ἐπὶ φόβον ἐπὶ χάριν
ἐλίξας, χρόνωι
δ᾽ ἐξέλαμψεν εὐάμερος.
(759a 58-62)

[… has driven <me> and my sons along a single path,
this way and that,
swerving us
first towards fear, then towards gladness,
but with time's passing has shone out bright and fair.]

Hypsipyle contemplates the changes of her and her sons' fortunes. Despite the difficulties of the text,[274] it remains clear that the image that the lines create is one of rushing and

[274] The fragmentary nature of the passage makes it impossible to establish the exact meaning of the lines with any certainty, mainly because the subject of the whole sentence is lost, and various possibilities and translations have been suggested. As Bond (1963) 123 notes, τροχάζω appears to be used transitively, even though elsewhere it has an intransitive meaning equivalent of τρέχω. Grenfell and Hunt translate: '<the wheel of the god>… me and my children has run back again along a single road, rolling us now towards terror, now delight.' Page translates: 'the wheel of Fortune has sped my sons and me back again along a single road. Now to terror, now to joy it turned us.' Bond argues that we should 'imagine Hypsipyle and her

uncontrollable revolving motion and dance, contained in both ἐτρόχασεν[275] and the Euripidean favorite ἑλίξας. The term, as discussed in the previous chapters, has strong New Music and Dionysiac associations, as it evokes circular, cultic dance. Thus, this is yet one more instance of the tendency of later Euripidean drama to allude to Dionysus and to Dionysiac dance and celebration indirectly, through terms that imply circular movement. Let us also recall that the verb ἑλισσω was associated with the musical performance of the title-character already in the parodos of the play. There, it was employed by the women of the chorus when speculating about the nature of the protagonist's music with reference to the circular movement of the waves in Hypsipyle's Lemnian song (μναμοσύνα δέ σοι / τᾶς ἀγχιάλοιο Λήμνου, / τὰν Αἰγαῖος ἑλί[σ]σων / κυμόκτυπος ἀχεῖ); and it is possible that the waves which are clapping (κυμόκτυπος ἀχεῖ) and whirling (ἑλίσσων) around the island of Lemnos were mimetically reproduced in the chorus' dance, another characteristic of the new musical style.[276] Here, it is used by Hypsipyle herself and it is also most likely reflected in her dance, as we can imagine that the protagonist – freed at last from her troubles and distress – is performing an enthusiastic circular celebratory dance as she is singing about the 'turns' of her fortune, thus paying the appropriate tribute to the god who brought about these changes, Dionysus. The lines then create one of those moments that blur the lines that separate fiction from ritual, and highlight

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sons as puppets (or hoops) driven by Fate'. Cropp (2004) 254 suggests that 'the Greek verb imagines Hypsipyle and her sons as chariot-horses driven remorselessly and veering alternatively towards fear, then towards gladness'. Cropp also rightly points out that the subject must be masculine like ἑλίξας, and proposes *daimôn*.

[275] The term *trochos* is employed as an analogue for circular (choral) dance already in the *Iliad* (18. 599-601), in the simile that Homer uses of the dancers fashioned by Hephaestus on the shield of Achilles, where the chorus of young boys and girls perform movements like that of the potter's rotating wheel: οἱ δ' ὁτὲ μὲν θρέξασκον ἐπισταμένοισι πόδεσσι / ῥεῖα μάλ', ὡς ὅτε τις τροχὸν ἅρμενον ἐν παλάμῃσιν / ἑζόμενος κεραμεὺς πειρήσεται, αἴ κε θέῃσιν ('now they would run around with cunning feet very nimbly, as then a potter sits by his wheel that is fitted between his hands and makes a trial of it whether it will run'. Trans. Murray (1999)).

[276] On the mimetic character of New Music see Kranz (1933) 240-241 and also Csapo (2004).

Hypsipyle's double role as a *dramatis persona* and at the same time as a dancer who performs within the frame of a ritual that honors the god under whose auspices the play is produced. We can then reach the conclusion that, even though the heroine resists the tragic Dionysiac scenario of the *Phoenician Women,* and insists on her exclusive association with the Argonauts and with the music of Orpheus, she is in fact also a practitioner of Dionysiac *mousikê.*

THE FUSION OF THE ORPHIC AND THE DIONYSIAC

The *Hypsipyle* opens with the image of Dionysus dancing with his bacchants on Mount Parnassus at Delphi:

> Διόνυσος, ὃς θύρσοισι καὶ νεβρῶν δοραῖς
> καθαπτὸς ἐν πεύκαισι Παρνασσὸν κάτα
> πηδᾶι χορεύων παρθένοις σὺν Δελφίσι.
> (752)

> [Dionysus, who girt with thyrsuses and fawnskins
> leaps in the torch-lit dance across Parnassus
> with the Delphic maidens]

The play also ends with Dionysus and with the formal institution of cultic music and song in honor of the god. The papyrus shows that Dionysus appears in the final scene as a *deus ex machina* to deliver a speech, and contemporary criticism widely accepts Wilamowitz' suggestion that in this speech Dionysus orders Euneus and Thoas to take Hypsipyle back to Lemnos thus redeeming her from exile and slavery.[277] It has also been argued by Wilamowitz that the god bade Euneus to go to Athens after disposing of his mother and to establish there the family of the Euneidae who would serve as official priests in the cult of Dionysus Melpomenos and provide sacred music for the city. The Euneidae were active in Athens before 424 BC and their official function in Dionysus' Attic cult is known to us from the lexicographers. According to Photius, γένος Ἀθήνησι μουσικόν, ἀπὸ Εὔνεω τοῦ Ἰάσονος καὶ Ὑψιπύλης. γένος ἐστὶ παρὰ Ἀθηναίοις οὕτως ὀνομαζόμενον. ἦσαν δὲ κιθαρωιδοί, πρὸς τὰς ἱερουργίας παρέχοντες τὴν χρείαν. ('From Euneus, son of Jason and Hypsipyle, the genos is thus named among the Athenians. They were singers accompanied by lyres [i.e. citharodes], and provided the liturgy for the performance of holy rites'). This testimony is confirmed by an inscription (*IG* ii 3^2 no. 5056) found on an Athenian theater seat which was held by the priest of Dionysus Melpomenos from the family of the Euneidae (Ἱερέως Μελπομενοῦ Διονύσου ἐξ Εὐνειδῶν.)

We will return to the Euneidae and attempt to further explore the significance of the *aetion* with which the play ends in the final section of this chapter. For now, it should be noted that Dionysus' gesture has a special significance: earlier in the play, soon after the identification of the twins as Hypsipyles' sons, the protagonist and the audience learn from

[277] See: Bond (1963) 20, Cropp (2004) 176.

Euneus that, following Jason's death, Orpheus took the boys with him to Thrace, were he taught him the music of the *cithara* and trained his brother Thoas in the arts of war:

> μοῦσάν με κιθάρας Ἀσιάδος διδάσκεται,
> τοῦτ[ο]ν δ' ἐς Ἄρεως ὅπλ' ἐκόσμησεν μάχης
> (F759a, 101-102)

So, in sending Euneus, who was taught the art of the lyre by Orpheus, to Athens to found the clan of citharodes who will grace with their music Dionysus' Attic cult, the end of the *Hypsipyle* finally establishes a clear connection between the music of the archetypal singer and that of Dionysus. As Charles Segal has pointed out, Orpheus is situated in an Apollonian milieu in some versions of the story and in a Dionysiac one in others: sometimes he is portrayed as the son or protégé of Apollo, and the enemy of Dionysus and his maenads who cause his death. However, other versions present him as the son of a Thracian king named Oeagrus, who is connected to Dionysus in his descent to the underworld, and is the founder of Dionysiac mysteries and of a sect that gives the god an important place.[278] By establishing a strong opposition between the Argonauts and the Seven, the two myths that clash in the parodos of the play, the *Hypsipyle* initially creates and maintains an uncertainty regarding the relationship of the Orphic and the Dionysiac and a tension between the two musical forces. However, these contrasts are gradually blurred as the plot progresses, and are cancelled and reconciled at the end of the drama, when the two musical forces and identities (Orphic and Dionysiac) that are

[278] See: Segal (1978*)* 113-114. Cf. Segal (1982) 75. As Segal further notes, Orpheus is also the doublet of Dionysus in his horrible suffering. He suffers a *sparagmos* at the hands of the enraged maenads as the god is torn apart by the Titans in 'Orphic' mythology.

already latently present in the musical activity of the protagonist are finally explicitly brought together and meld.

The fusion of the music of Orpheus and the music of Dionysus in the god's speech has important implications. As Froma Zeitlin has argued, at least for the dramatic present of the play, the power of Orpheus' magic and music can be said to have a 'stabilizing' effect on Dionysus.[279] The potentially negative and destructive activity of the god that we see unleashed in full force in the scenario of the *Phoenician Women* is now diverted, and his powers are captured for the benefit of protagonist and the characters of the play. As Zeitlin notes, the drama 'celebrates the power of Dionysus precisely through the magical and beneficent power of music, which draws its mysterious and creative energy from its associations with the realm of Orpheus, the sweetest singer of all (…) although (…) one brother is marked as a poet-musician and the other is trained in the arts of war, their pairing does not lead, as in Thebes, to a fateful collusion between Dionysus and Ares in the madness of the battle, but rather to a fruitful coalition that enhances the quieter virtues of a Dionysiac life.'[280]

Not that there are no darker undertones: immediately after the Dionysiac song that celebrates the reunion of Hypsipyle and her twins, Amphiaraus makes a brief farewell and the Argive army resumes its march against Thebes, and we know that the plot of the *Hypsipyle* will soon give way to that of the *Phoenician Women,* in which the power of Dionysiac music has very different, destructive and sinister associations. The references to Mount Pangaeus and the Edonian women in the lyrical passage celebrating Dionysus call to mind the fact that this was the region in which Euneus and Thoas were brought up and educated by Orpheus, but at the

[279] Zeitlin (1993).
[280] Zeitlin, (1993) 178.

same time the place in which the maddening of the singer and his brutal death and dismemberment in the hands of Dionysus' maenads occurred. However, the beneficent power of Orpheus' magic and music prevails over these sinister allusions. Thus, unlike Antigone in the *Phoenician Women,* who viewed the dances and the service she performed for Dionysus as a 'favor that won her no return' (*charin achariton, Ph.* 1757) the characters and the chorus of the *Hypsipyle* have every reason to seek his grace (*charin,* F 758a, 18) and to celebrate this most elusive and ambiguous god.

CITHARODIA ON THE TRAGIC STAGE

Euneus and the Euneidae, Amphion, Orpheus, Hypsipyle, the lyre of Calliope: the *Hypsipyle* is fascinated with the art of the *cithara* and insists on putting or recalling on the theatrical stage its mythical and historical practitioners; and it is not the only play to do so. As Peter Wilson notes, the proud place mythical citharodes enjoyed in tragedy was much greater than the extant tragic corpus might suggest.[281] Orpheus was a central figure in Aeschylus' Lycourgan trilogy and probably met a violent end for disdaining Dionysus in the lost *Bassarids*; Sophocles' *Thamyras* revolved around the musical hybris of the arrogant mythical Thracian singer and lyre-player, and, according to the tradition, the tragedian himself played the lyre on the stage presumably in the role of the protagonist, and was thereafter depicted in

[281] Wilson (1999-2000) 431.

the Stoa Poikile holding a *cithara*;[282] and the central character of the *Antiope* was the mythical citharode Amphion, who, as we saw above, also makes a brief but significant appearance in the parodos of the *Hypsipyle*.

In his study of the role of Amphion in that drama, Wilson points out that 'the *mousikê* of the lyre and its symbols appear to have been one terrain on which broadly cultural and political struggles were fought in late fifth-century Athens'.[283] The final section of this chapter will suggest that the *Hypsipyle* employs the genre of *citharodia* as a means for reflecting on the ongoing debate that profoundly shaped and marked the contemporary Athenian social, musical and cultural landscape. Once again, our discussion will take us back, from a different point of view, to the blending of the 'Orphic' and the 'Dionysiac'.

The Hypsipyle and Aristophanes: New Music

The *Hypsipyle* is a profoundly new musical, experimental play, and its lyrics made a powerful impression on Aristophanes: in the *Frogs*, the Aristophanic Aeschylus singles out of all Euripidean characters 'the woman who plays the castanets' (ἡ τοῖς ὀστράκοις… κροτοῦσα, 1305-1306) as Euripides' Muse and as the appropriate person to accompany his pseudo-Euripidean song. The figure has long been identified with Hypsipyle (λέγεται δὲ εἰς Ὑψιπύλην ταῦτα, schol. 1305). Aeschylus then begins to sing his parody of Euripides' lyrics:

[282] *Life* 5.
[283] Wilson (1999-2000) 445.

ἀλκυόνες, αἳ παρ᾽ ἀενάοις θαλάσσης

κύμασι στωμύλλετε,

τέγγουσαι νοτίοις πτερῶν

ῥανίσι χρόα δροσιζόμεναι.

αἵ θ᾽ ὑπωρόφιοι κατὰ γωνίας

εἰειειειειειλίσσετε δακτύλοις φάλαγγες

ἱστότονα πηνίσματα,

κερκίδος ἀοιδοῦ μελέτας…

(*Frogs* 1309-1316)

[You halcyons, who chattered by the everflowing

waves of the sea,

wetting and bedewing the skin

of your wings with rainy drops;

and you spiders in crannies beneath the roof

who with your fingers wind

loom-taut spoolings,

a recital by the minstrel loom…][284]

The scholia at 1310 attribute the first four lines of the parody to the *Iphigenia in Aulis*, however, as Bond notes, 'it is quite likely that Euripides' muse with the rattle would begin with an extract from the play which gave birth to her. The fragment might come from an escapist

[284] Trans. Henderson (2002).

monody sung by Hypsipyle ('Would that I could follow the halcyons to Lemnos') on the lines of *IT* 1089 ff. or *Hipp.* 732 ff.'[285] This hypothesis is supported by the close resemblance of the following lines (αἵ θ' ὑπωρόφιοι… μελέτας) to the castanets-scene from the *Hypsipyle* (ἰστότονα πηνίσματα, κερκίδος ἀοιδοῦ μελέτας, *Frogs* 1315-1316 cf. πήνας, ἱστοτόνου κερκίδος, *Hyps.* F 752f 9-10).[286] The main target of the Aristophanic attack is the new music style of later Euripidean lyric.[287] Aristophanes does not fail to introduce into his parody Euripides' favorite word εἰλίσσω,[288] which, as we observed above, in the *Hypsipyle* is associated with the musical performance of the protagonist by both the chorus and the title-character herself, and was also probably reflected in Hypsipyle's dance in the monody following the recognition scene (and perhaps also elsewhere in the play). As for the Aristophanic spectacular εἰειειειειει-flourish on the first syllable of the verb, it represents an exaggerated parody of a salient characteristic of the new musical style, the *epektasis* (scho. 1314), whereby a single long syllable instead of having a single note in the melody could be extended to at least two.[289]

After a couplet from the *Electra* and one uncertain verse, the final three lines of the Aristophanic Aeschylus' 'Euripidean' ode return to the *Hypsipyle*:

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[285] Bond (1963) 140.
[286] See: Borthwick (1994).
[287] Note the beginning of the song with an apostrophe to the halcyons, which is followed by a complex relative clause, and finally leads nowhere as the relative clause is followed by another apostrophe, this time to the spiders. Further, the apostrophe to the halcyons needs to be interpreted not simply as a parody of the Euripidean fascination with appealing to birds in flight (as he does in the *Ion,* the *Hippolytus* and the *Andromache*), but also as an attack against what was viewed by the Aristophanic Aeschylus and others critical of the musical avant-garde as an obsession with aerial and avian phenomena characteristic of the new dithyramb and the modern style. See on this issue Zimmermann (1992) 119-120.
[288] Aristophanes also gives Euripides a εἰλίσσω in the choral prelude to the tragic poets' *agon*: ἔνθεν δὴ στοματουργὸς ἐπῶν βασανίστρια λίσπη γλῶσσ' ἀνελισσομένη, φθονεροὺς κινοῦσα χαλινούς (*Frogs* 826-827), and again in the pseudo-Euripidean lament (*Frogs* 1348).
[289] See: Kranz (1933) 238. Also Borthwick (1994) 223, and cf. εἰειειλίσσουσα in *Frogs* 1348.

οἰνάνθας γάνος ἀμπέλου,

βότρυος ἕλικα παυσίπονον,

περίβαλλ', ὦ τέκνον, ὠλένας

(*Frogs* 1320-1322)

[Sparkle of the vine's winey blossom

anodyne tendril of the grape cluster,

throw your arms around me, child!] [290]

The passage, a characteristic instance of the Aristophanic delight in parodying Euripides' recognition scenes, quotes and / or closely echoes lines from the emotionally charged, climactic moment of the reunion between the protagonist and her sons,[291] and, as Borthwick has argued, we can imagine that the Euripidean Muse pirouetted in enthusiasm around the startled dramatist before acknowledging him as her true son and embracing him.[292] Let me just add to

[290] Trans. Henderson (2002).

[291] The final line, περίβαλλ', ὦ τέκνον, ὠλένας has been identified as belonging to the recognition scene in the *Hypsipyle* (=F 765a). See: Bond (1963) 138, Cropp (2004) 258. Lines 1320 and 1321 (οἰνάνθας… παυσίπονον) are close to a line ascribed by the schol. to the *Hypsipyle* (= F 765) οἰνάνθα τρέφει τὸν ἱερὸν βότρυν, which again probably belongs to the reunion-scene. The three lines are ascribed as a whole to the *Hypsipyle* by Wilamowitz, who is followed (with some hesitation) by Bond (1963) 139, and see also Borthwick (1994) 32. Cropp (2004) 259 on the other hand thinks that 1320-1321 are not directly quoted from the *Hypsipyle* and should rather be taken as a pastiche.

[292] Borthwick (1994) 33. The Aristophanic Aeschylus concludes his parody of Euripides' avant-garde musical style with one last quotation from the *Hypsipyle* which replaces the 'star' featured in the equivalent phrase of the Euripidean drama with the name of the notorious courtesan Cyrene (*Frogs* 1327-1328: ἀνὰ τὸ δωδεκαμήχανον / Κυρήνης μελοποιῶν, cf. *Hyps.* F 765b ἀνὰ τὸ δωδεκαμήχανον ἄστρον). The joke turns upon Cyrene's expertise in sexual positions or *schêmata,* which in the Aristohanic line replace the astral *schêmata* (planetary revolutions) to which the *Hypsipyle* passage presumably refers. The target of the

Borthwhick's insight that is very likely that the Muse reenacts on the comic stage the circular dance its Euripidean model, Hypsipyle performed after the identification of Euneus and Thoas as her long-lost twins.

A few moments before 'Aeschylus' delivers his parody of Euripides' *melos*, as soon as the Euripidean Muse appears on the stage, Dionysus exclaims: αὕτη ποθ' ἡ Μοῦσ' οὐκ ἐλεσβίαζεν, οὐ (1308). The precise point of Dionysus' reaction is debated, and must also depend on the appearance and comportment of the castanets-playing dancer, but critics agree that the line refers back to the Aristophanic Euripides' parody of Aeschylus' choral lyrics inspired from the citharodic *nomos* (στάσιν μελῶν / ἐκ τῶν κιθαρωιδικῶν νόμων εἰργασμένην, 1281-1282),[293] thus creating a contrast between the old-fashioned Lesbian / Terpandrean lyrics of the traditionalist Aeschylus and the modern, new style lyrics of Euripides.[294] It cannot be an accident that Aristophanes incorporates into the 'Euripidean' ode language and musical imagery that closely echoes that employed in Hypsipyle's opening monody to assimilate the protagonist's music to that of a citharode.[295] This choice suggests that the special place of *citharodia* in our play was not lost on Aristophanes: it is then only appropriate that the figure who will accompany the Aristophanic Aeschylus' response to the

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Aristophanic attack is again primarily the dance-movements performed by the dancers in Euripides' plays (along with the polymetrism introduced by Euripides into his lyrics), and in which the Euripidean Muse also indulged during her performance preceding the recognition and embrace of 'Euripides'. See Borthwick (1994) 36-37.

[293] See: Stanford (2009) ad *Frogs* 1308, also Dover (2002) 351-352, and Borthwick (1994) 26.

[294] According to the schol., χαρακτηρίζει τὰ Εὐριπίδου μέλη ὡς ἐκλελυμένα, and see Csapo (2004) 229 on *eklelymenos* (or *apolelymenos*) as a key-term in the new music debate.

[295] ἱστότονα πηνίσματα, κερκίδος ἀοιδοῦ μελέτας, *Frogs* 1315-1316 cf. πήνας, ἱστοτόνου κερκίδος, *Hyps.* F 752f 9-10, and also see the discussion on *krekein* near the beginning of the chapter.

vilification by 'Euripides' of his traditional and outmoded *citharodia*-inspired lyrics comes from the new musical Euripidean play that is so obssesed with the art of the *cithara,* the recently-produced *Hypsipyle.* With this, I turn to a consideration of the play's reflection on the song-form of the citharodic *nomos,* which also functions as a means by which the *Hypsipyle* intervenes in the new music debate.

Strategies of Authorization

In order to appreciate the play's engagement with contemporary musico-poetic concerns, practices and controversies we first need to briefly sketch the impact of the new music movement on the song-form of *citharodia*. What follows does not pretend to be a full discussion of the evolution and the innovations associated with the genre; instead, I shall focus on the consideration of a few key developments that are important for my purposes.[296] The art of *citharodia* occupied an important place within the context of the cultural and musical developments and controversies of late fifth century Athens. While the innovations that we associate with the New Music took root in the Athenian, *aulos*-based genre of the dithyramb, they soon spread to the song-form of the citharodic *nomos.* Thus, alongside the older tradition of classical Terpandrean *nomoi* that were performed at the Panathenaia as late as the 420s BCE, the Athenian audience witnesses the emergence of a new style of citharodic poetry; the

[296] For a comprehensive account on the developments and innovations associated with late fifth century citharodic poetry, see: Wilson (2004); also Power (2010) Part IV (Panathenaic *Kitharôidia*), esp. 500-554.

innovations include the import of rhythmic variety, the increase of the *cithara's* strings, the introduction of novel, experimental harmonic modulations enabled by the instrument's *polychordia,* and the incorporation of the diction, narrative content and mimeticism of the Dionysiac song-forms of dithyramb and tragedy into the traditionally Apollonian lyric genre.

The citharode Phrynis of Mytilene stood at the vanguard of the new *nomos,* and so did his younger rival Timotheus of Miletus, who was also a composer of dithyrambs, and whose work most clearly reflects the musical and poetical *kainotomia* that came to be associated with the new music phenomenon; his best known innovations consisted in a breakdown of the categories and boundaries between the citharodic *nomos* and dithyrambic poetry on the level of diction[297] but also on the level of music and sound, as the new, controversial eleven-stringed *cithara* now aspired to emulate the musical range of the dithyrambic *aulos,* the instrument that in a telling metaphor Plato calls 'the most polychord of all', πολυχορδότατον.[298] In the celebrated passage of the *Laws* which complains about the lawless mixing of the genres, Plato deplores the innovations introduced into the song-form of *citharodia* as symptomatic of a musical, cultural and social catastrophe, condemns the mimetic tendency of the *cithara* as a sign of decline and corruption of the genre,[299] and decries the introduction into the masses of a spirit of musical lawlessness, *paranomia.*[300]

The role of Athenian tragedy in the refashioning of citharodic poetry was also very important; already Aeschylus was known for borrowing from the citharodic *nomoi* of his time

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[297] According to Heraclides of Pontus (Plutarch, *On Music* 4.1132e), Timotheus' experimentation involved the mixing of dithyrambic diction (διαμιγνύων διθυραμβικὴν λέξιν) into the *epê* of his citharodic poetry. On Timotheus' innovations see also: Power (2010) 502-503, and LeVen (2011).
[298] Plato, *Republic* 399d.
[299] Plato, *Laws* 700d: καὶ αὐλωιδίας δὴ ταῖς κιθαρωιδίαις μιμούμενοι
[300] Plato, *Laws* 700e: τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐνέθεσαν παρανομίαν εἰς τὴν μουσικήν

when he composed his choral odes, and we saw above that his *citharodia*- based lyrics were parodied by the Aristophanic Euripides in the *Frogs*;[301] but the late fifth century witnessed a marked increase in the cross-fertilization between the two genres on the level of both music and themes.[302] According to the biographical tradition, Euripides was a friend and admirer of the citharode Timotheus, and allegedly encouraged the poet when he was on the verge of suicide after suffering a painful poetic failure and even assisted him in the composition of the proem to the *Persians.*[303] However, as Timothy Power has pointed out, 'that collaboration (…) is probably less historical fact than narrative condensation of the notable continuities between the works of the two composers'.[304]

Aristophanes' unerring ear was quick to pick up the tragic poets' fascination with the music of East Greek citharodes such as Timotheus. The marked sympathy between the *melos* of Agathon – the tragedian whose zeal to adopt the new musical trends rivals and perhaps even exceeds that of Euripides – and contemporary citharodic poetry becomes the target of the comedian's attack in lines 101-129 of the *Thesmophoriazousae,* where the tragic poet sings a pseudo-amoibaion which takes the form of a hymn to Apollo, Artemis and Leto. Both the portrayal of Agathon and his song resonate with orientalizing, Dionysiac associations.[305] In the

[301] Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1281-1300.
[302] Aeschylus' *Persians* is an obvious antecedent to Timotheus' namesake poem. The stories of Nauplios and Niobe were also treated in tragedies by both Aeschylus and Sophocles, and Timotheus' *Cyclops* shares its title with the Euripidean satyr play. See Power (2010) 506-507; also Bassett (1931) 159-161 who points to the *Phoenician Women,* the *Hypsipyle,* the *Antiope* and the *Orestes* as the plays most distinctively marked by the influence of Timotheus' poetry, and Porter (1994) 199-207 on the similarities between the Phrygian Eunuch's polymetric aria in Euripides' *Orestes* and the barbarian laments in the *Persians.*
[303] Satyrus, *Life of Euripides* (P. Oxy 1176 fr. 39 XXII, with supplements of Wilamowitz = T 4.24 Kovacs).
[304] Power (2010) 506.
[305] For Agathon as Dionysus, see: Bierl (2009) 39-141. On the assimilation of Agathon to Apollo see: Muecke (1982) 44.

hymn, Apollo himself is represented as an Easterner, the founder of Troy,[306] and the *cithara* is cast as an exotic, oriental instrument in a particularly emphatic manner:

> Λατώ τε κρούματά τ᾽ Ἀσιάδος ποδὶ
> παράρυθμ᾽ εὔρυθμα, Φρυγίων
> δινεύματα Χαρίτων.
>
> (*Thesmophoriazousae* 120-122)

> [And Lato too [I venerate] and the blows on the Asian (*cithara*)
> counterrhythmic and rhythmic,
> the whirlings of Phrygian Graces]

Not only is the *cithara* explicitly designated as 'Asiatic', but its oriental character is further stressed through the instrument's association with the dances of the Graces of Phrygia, the homeland of the Dionysiac *aulos.*[307] Everything then suggests that New Music is in the air,[308] and that the lines point to a deliberate mixing of Apollonian and Dionysiac musical identities, akin to that practiced by the innovators of the citharodic *nomos* such as Timotheus.

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[306] Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazousae,* 109-110.
[307] As already discussed in chapter two, *dineumata,* the term employed to designate the dancing movements of the Graces, also has strong Dionysiac connotations, as it evokes round, cultic dance. It is also a term loaded with New Music associations. See: Csapo (1999-2000) 422, 424, and Csapo (2008) 274, 284, and also Borthwick (1968) esp. 67-68 and 70-71.
[308] See also Bierl (2009) 144: 'The Asiatic element resides (…) above all (…) in the modern playing style of the new music and the New Dithyramb. The Kharites are more precisely characterized as Phrygians not only because of the plot locale, but also because of the mode in which the song is composed'.

It is especially interesting that, at least to our knowledge, Euripides is the first poet and the only tragedian to employ the term *Asias* (*cithara*).[309] A scholiast actually claims that Ἀσιάδος κρούματα – the expression that Aristophanes puts in Agathon's mouth in his parody of the tragedian's avant-garde *melos* and of the Dionysiac experimentations of the new style *nomos* in the *Thesmophoriazousae* – is in fact a parody of a passage from Euripides' *Erechtheus* produced in 423 BCE.[310] According to T.B.L. Webster, *Asias* (*cithara*) was coined by Euripides in homage to Timotheus, who was of 'Asian', Milesian descent.[311] Yet, as more recent scholarship has suggested, the Euripidean obsession with the notionally Asiatic nature of the instrument should rather be interpreted as an acknowledgement of the collusion and affinity between the musico-poetic program and aesthetics of later Euripidean lyrics and the new citharodic *nomos.*[312] In the words of Timothy Power, '(…) it seems probable that Euripides was responding to an actual exoticizing trend in the contemporary culture of *kitharôidia.* That is, Timotheus and citharodes like him, themselves inspired by tragedy's romance with barbarian, Eastern cultures, likely emphasized the "archaic exotism" of their *tekhnê* and their own

[309] See: Seaford (2003) 188.

[310] Ἀσιάδος κρούματα. τῆς κιθάρας. οὕτως Ἀριστοφάνης εἶπε παρωιδῶν τὸ ἐξ Ἐρεχθέως Εὐριπίδου: Euripides fr. 64 Austin = 370 N. This makes 423 BC (the year of production of the *Erechtheus*) the *terminus post quem* for the appearance of *Asias* (*cithara*) in Euripides, the other two instances (in the *Cyclops* and in the *Hypsipyle*) being quite later. Strabo (10.3.17) cites a fragment from an unnamed poet κιθάραν Ἀσιᾶτιν ῥάσσων (or ἀράσσων) which is of uncertain date.

[311] Webster (1967) 18.

[312] It should be noted here that the concept of the Asiatic character of the *cithara* must have predated Euripides. The glosses of *Asias cithara* by Duris of Samos (*FGrHist* 76 F 81 = Terpand. test. 51b Gostoli) and in Plutarch, *De Musica* 6. 1133c (perhaps drawn from Heraclides of Pontus) both discuss the term in association with the Lesbian tradition of *citharodia* and offer the explanation that the *cithara* was called "Asian" because of Lesbos' proximity to Asia. See: Cassio (2000) 107 who gathers and discusses the evidence. However, the term *Asias* must have acquired new connotations within the context of the New Music debate and I believe that it is within this specific frame that Euripides' fascination with the 'Asian' character of the *cithara* should primarily be explored.

performative personae. The reception of *kitharôidia* by tragedy thus involved its theatricalizing, its "othering". But there was a sort of feedback loop at work. Citharodes were already, under the influence of Dionysian forms, "othering" themselves and their art'.[313]

Other than in the fragment from the *Erechtheus,* the term *Asias cithara* is attested twice in the Euripidean corpus: in the *Cyclops,* where it is employed within a distinctively Dionysiac context,[314] and in the *Hypsipyle*, which places the 'Asian *cithara*' in the hands of the prototypical singer and citharode Orpheus. Note here the possibility that the *cithara* of Orpheus is termed 'Asian' already in the parodos, when Hypsipyle recalls the hero's music guiding the rowers of the Argo (Ἀσιάδ' ἔλεγον ἰήιον / Θρῆισσ' ἐβόα κίθαρις, 752g 9-10), if we accept P's reading Ασιάς (which gives 'Asian Thracian *cithara*') instead of Beazley's Ασιάδ' ('Asian plaint') which is preferred by most editors;[315] and, even with Ασιάδ', Orpheus' music is still emphatically cast as exotic, 'Asiatic', oriental, and barbarian.[316] In the light of the new musical

[313] Power (2010) 509. Cf. the discussion in Wilson (2004) 284-287 on the iconographic distancing of Apollo from the *cithara*, which by the end of the fifth century is represented in the hands of Marsyas, the satyr who in the myth is defeated and skinned alive by the god after a musical contest between their representative instruments, the *aulos* and the lyre.

[314] See: Euripides, *Cyclops* 443-444. There, the expression *Asias cithara* is employed by the leader of the chorus of satyrs to define their music: λέγ', ὡς Ἀσιάδος οὐκ ἂν ἥδιον ψόφον / κιθάρας κλύοιμεν ἢ Κύκλωπ' ὀλωλότα (the lines contain the reaction of the chorus leader to Odysseus announcing his plan to punish the Cyclops and release the satyrs from slavery).

[315] Page, Bond and Cropp adopt Beazley's suggestion. Bond (1963) 71 argues that the combination of Ασιάς and Θρῆισσα is difficult, but see Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, ad 1451-1452 on the 'Phoenician Sidonian ship' in the *Helen.* Also, as Bond notes, Beazley himself accepts that all other instances in which Ασιάς occurs in Euripides (ten in number) are feminine, so Ἀσιάδ' (modifying *elegon*) would be the only instance of the epithet in the masculine form in Euripides. Grenfell and Hunt (1908) support the reading Ασιάς as a gloss on *kitharis* in the following line on the grounds of the popularity of the expression 'Ἀσιὰς κίθαρις' in Euripides.

[316] Note the verb employed to define the music of Orpheus' *cithara*: ἐβόα. The definition of Orpheus' *cithara* as 'Thracian' is also significant. 'Thracian' or 'Thamyris' *cithara* is an expression employed by critics to describe the *cithara* that appears in the hands of the Thracian singers Orpheus and Thamyris in fifth century vase painting (see: West (1992) 55-56). However, as Power (2010) 48-50 notes, the Thracian *cithara* is often depicted on vases of the later part of the fifth century in the hands of young citharodic competitors who style themselves

evolutions and controversies we just discussed and of the special weight the term *Asias* (*cithara*) carries – signaling the Euripidean acknowledgment and endorsement of the innovations introduced into the citharodic poetry of the day by its practitioners, and especially by Timotheus, and the relationship of kinship between the poetics of his own lyric art and that of contemporary *citharodia* – the gesture that the *Hypsipyle* performs has a special significance: in terming the *cithara* of Orpheus 'Asian' (with all its new music associations), the play casts the proto-citharode as a new music practitioner *avant la lettre.* The new *nomos* is thereby assimilated to the ur-citharodic music of Orpheus, and the drama retrojects the musical innovations onto the primary song of the legendary musician, thus naturalizing the novelty, and neutralizing the charges of *kainotomia* that were hurled against the new *nomos* and also against the new style lyrics of later Euripidean drama.

The same observation applies to the music of Hypsipyle, which is again portrayed as simultaneously 'old' and 'new': from the beginning of the play Hypsipyle is represented as a leading exponent of the avant-garde style. In her first musical appearance she claps the *krotala* and sings a lullaby, thus offering a striking instance of the New Music tendency to incorporate into tragic poetry forms of song and music that seem out of place on the tragic stage – a tendency that seems to be increasingly favored by Euripides in the later years of his career.[317] The castanets-scene must have been very memorable, and we saw above that it made a

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after the mythical musician Thamyris or possibly Orpheus ('the effect is a very stylized naturalism or primitivism – Thracian chic.' (49)), and in turn Thamyris is also often portrayed in the attire of a contemporary citharodic singer. Power suggests that these iconographic tendencies indicate an association between the exotic legendary singer and professional citharodes of the day or at least their popular perception.

[317] See the discussion in: Kranz (1933) 237. Other examples Kranz gives include the *tympana* that accompany the songs of the bacchants in the *Bacchae*, the *nomos armateios* of the Phrygian eunuch in the *Orestes,* the *citharodia* in the *Antiope* and the cult-song in the *Ion.*

profound impression on Aristophanes, who has his 'Aeschylus' call on the stage 'the woman who plays the *krotala*', Hypsipyle, as a representative of the degeneration and deformation tragic *mousikê* suffered in the hands of Euripides (*Frogs* 1301-1303) before launching an attack on the new style of late Euripidean lyric employing lines from Hypsipyle's opening monody and other odes from the play.

At the same time however, Hypsipyle also shows an affinity for primordial song, situated in the mythical past of Orpheus, the legendary prototypical citharode, with whose musical activity the play closely associates the protagonist's performance. The new song is thus invested with a primordial aura, and its features are redeemed and 'legitimized' as they are projected back onto the music of the archetypal figure of song. Hypsipyle's favorite song-topic, the expedition of the Argonauts, is also particularly suggestive: as discussed earlier in this chapter, the journey of the Argo has acquired fame already in Homer, where it is presented as being celebrated by all: Ἀργὼ πᾶσι μέλουσα. In the parodos of the *Hypsipyle,* the protagonist, a figure contemporary with the Argonauts, is represented by the chorus of Nemean women as being in the process of creating *kleos* for the Argo (ἦ τὰν Ἀργὼ τὰν διὰ σοῦ / στόματος αἰεὶ κλιζομέναν / πεντηκόντερον ἄ[ι]δεις), the *kleos* that it will later have in the *Odyssey*, and Hypsipyle's performance is thus portrayed as being, in a sense, pre-Homeric. Much like the *Trojan Women* and the *Phoenician Women,* the *Hypsipyle* then stages the modern, avant-garde song as an old, primary form of music, thereby effecting the 'archaization' of the musical innovations and annulling the slurs of novelty and corruption that were attached to the new style verse by its enemies.

It is important that Timotheus was engaged in a similar project of legitimization of his poetry in the *sphragis* of the *Persians*:[318]

πρῶτος ποικιλόμουσος Ὀρ-
φεὺς <χέλ>υν ἐτέκνωσεν
υἱὸς Καλλιόπα<ς
> Πιερίαθεν.
Τέρπανδρος δ᾽ ἐπὶ τῶι δέκα
ζεῦξε μοῦσαν ἐν ὠιδαῖς.
Λέσβος δ᾽ Αἰολία ν<ιν> Ἀν-
τίσσαι γείνατο κλεινόν.
νῦν δὲ Τιμόθεος μέτροις
ῥυθμοῖς τ᾽ ἐνδεκακρουμάτοις
κίθαριν ἐξανατέλλει.

(Timotheus, *Persians* 221-231)

[First Orpheus of the intricate music
son of Calliope,
begot the tortoise-shell lyre…
from Pieria.
After him Terpander yoked
the Muse in ten songs;
Aeolian Lesbos bore him

[318] See: Wilson (2004) esp. 304-306, and Power (2010) 336-345 and 516-549.

to give glory to Antissa.

Now Timotheus with measures

And rhythms of eleven strings

brings the lyre to life] [319]

As Wilamowitz[320] first observed, Timotheus here attempts to authorize and legitimize his musical innovations, and in particular the novel and controversial eleven-stringed *cithara,* which, he complains, suffered humiliation and mutilation at the hands of the musically conservative Spartans.[321] In these lines, the radical Milesian innovator carefully constructs a history of citharodic poetry (Orpheus – Terpander – Timotheus) effectively appropriating for himself the role of the continuator of the revered Orphic and Terpandrean citharodic traditions;[322] at the same time however, the traditions that serve as means of legitimization of his new citharodic *nomos* are boldly reinvented, as the key new musical term *poikilomousos*[323] modifies the music of Orpheus' lyre, casting the archetypal citharode as a new music figure, and Terpander's *cithara* is now assigned ten strings instead of the traditional seven, while

[319] Trans. Campbell (1988).
[320] Wilamowitz (1903) 27, 68-69.
[321] Timotheus, *Persians* 206-212; cf. Pausanias 3.12.10, who says that the Spartans cut 'excess' strings from Timotheus' polychord *cithara*.
[322] See also Power (2010) 516-522, who suggests that early in his career Timotheus was careful to maintain the traditional decorum associated with citharodic poetry and the Terpandrean *nomoi* that were still performed in Athens through at least the 420s BC, while at the same time also introduced his innovations into the genre borrowing from the Dionysiac song-forms of dithyramb and tragedy. However, at some point the poet was probably not as successful in maintaining this balance between tradition and *kainotomia* and his innovations were received as transgressive musical *paranomia* and met with disfavor. The *Persians* then represent Timotheus' attempt to re-establish the proper balance and win back a mass audience.
[323] On the new musical associations of terms indicating plurality and heterogeneity such as *poikillein* and *poikilos*, see Csapo (2004) 229, and also Zimmermann (1992) esp. 122-126.

Timotheus' modern eleven-stringed *cithara* is designated by the term *kitharis* – a marked archaism. Again, the old becomes new and vice versa.[324]

The *Hypsipyle*'s strategy of legitimization of the new citharodic *nomos* is then in agreement with that of the leading exponent of the innovations associated with the genre, Timotheus, and this again foregrounds the relationship of affinity and complicity between the poetics of the two song-forms. Finally, it should also be noted that the play's comment on contemporary *citharodia* forms obviously also a reflection on its own new music lyrics – a reflection that is consistent with that offered in the *Trojan Women* and the *Phoenician Women,* and, we will see in the next chapter, is also central to the musical discourse of the *Helen.*

The Euneidae and the Cithara of Dionysus

Much like Timotheus' *Persians,* the *Hypsipyle* invents its own history of *citharodia*: Orpheus, who is positioned at the head of the tradition transmits the art of the 'Asian *cithara*' to Euneus, who in turn stands at the beginning of a long line of generations of musicians who will perform cultic music in honor of Dionysus – a line which finally grafts the mythical musical universe of the play onto the actual musical world of late fifth-century Athens. Walter Burkert is right to stress that the thematization of the initiation of the Euneid clan in the play must have

[324] See: Wilson (2004) 304-306 and Power (2010) 336-340.

had special and strong resonances among the Athenian audience;[325] and we can even imagine that a member of the Euneidae was present among the spectators at the performance of the play, occupying the seat of honor that was reserved for the representative of the musical family in the theater of Dionysus. Burkert also lays emphasis on the element of innovation and surprise involved in the Euripidean portrayal of Orpheus in the role of the founder of the revered tradition of cultic music practiced by the Euneidae in Athens, as (at least to our knowledge) the tradition does not associate in any way the Euneid clan with the legendary singer before Euripides.[326]

The first and obvious implication of the lyric heritage that the *Hypsipyle* so carefully and innovatively constructs for the Euneidae is that in representing the fifth-century Athenian citharodes as descendants of the primordial singers of the mythical world of the plot, the drama confers upon their music authority, validity and the power of antiquity. We saw that Timotheus performs a similar gesture, as did, presumably, the citharodes of the Lesbian *diadochê* who were eager to link themselves and their archetype, Terpander, to the music of the proto-citharode Orpheus.[327] Thus, tracing the music of the Euneidae back to that of the legendary singer is a gesture of authorization of their musical activity, and at the same time it is a move that is consistent with the poetics of *citharodia.*

[325] Burkert (1994) 45-46; also Cropp (2004) 256. See also the discussion in Robert (1909) who comments on the care with which Euneus reveals to his mother the events that took place between the time of their separation and their current reunion – a care that suggests that these developments were new not only for Hypsipyle but also for the audience of the play.
[326] '(…) ist die Tatsache bemerkenswert: Eine bestimmte Art von Kultmusik in Athen, mit einer altangesehenen Familie verbunden und also wohl speziell im anerkannten Dionysoskult dieser Familie praktiziert, wird von dem thrakischen Sänger Orpheus hergeleitet.' (Burkert (1994) 47).
[327] Power (2010) 250-255.

However, the situation becomes more complicated if we take into consideration the further twist added by the Euripidean drama: the mythical musical predecessors of the Euneid clan, Orpheus and his student Euneus, are emphatically represented as cultivating the music of the 'Asian' *cithara* with all its new musical associations, and Hypsipyle, the common ancestress of the musical *genos,* is also portrayed as a distinctly new musical figure. This situation must have added to the element of surprise that Burkert assumes the Athenian audience must have felt at the introduction of Orpheus as initiator of the Euneidae tradition.[328] So, the difficult question arises, what are the significance and the implications of the association of the musical activity of the Euneidae with the new music of Hypsipyle and the 'Asian' *cithara* Orpheus bequeaths to Euneus?

The landscape is difficult to navigate. The sources regarding the Euneidae and our knowledge of the form and nature of their musical activity and of its performance context remain frustratingly vague.[329] It is possible that their music was largely choral in nature,[330] but it is also possible that *kitharôidoi* in Photius' entry is employed in its primary sense defining them as solo performers of citharodic song. This latter view is adopted by Burkert, who believes that the Euneidae were the possessors and performers of a collection of citharodic

[328] Burkert (1994) 46-47 dismisses the importance of the Asiatic character of Orpheus' *cithara* and music as '… eher einer zeitgenössischen Mode als dem Dionysischen verpflichtet.' Later in the same essay, he suggests that the introduction of the figure of Orpheus into the play and the emphasis on the oriental / 'Asian' nature of his music might represent a response to Alcibiades' attempt to appropriate the Eleusis cult to his personal west-ward looking designs.

[329] On the evidence for the Euneidae and their role in the city's life see Burkert (1994) and Power (2010) 365-367.

[330] Hesychius s.v. Εὐνεῖδαι records that the family was composed by 'citharists and dancers'. It is well attested that in the post-classical period the Euneidae along with the Eumolpidae performed and accompanied choral paeans in honor of Apollo at Delphi (see: Wilson (2004) 278).

hymns that were attributed to Orpheus.[331] He also argues that one (quasi) hexameter verse composed in the Attic dialect and preserved in the Derveni Papyrus[332] forms evidence for the possibility of existence in Athens of a relatively old tradition of Orphic hymns that was cultivated by the musical clan.

Other than noting that the Euneid *genos* had links to the Eleusinian Kêrykes, which might suggest that they performed their Orphic hymns at the Eleusinian Mysteries like other Attic *genê* such as the Eumolpidae, Burkert does not deal with the thorny issue of the performance context of the music of the Euneidae.[333] As Power argues, we know of no major Dionysiac cultic and festival occasions on which choral or monodic *cithara*-music ever played a significant role.[334] It thus seems likely that the performance of the Euneidae was restricted to private and aristocratic contexts presumably connected with the cult of Dionysus Melpomenos and removed from public large-scale agonistic spectacles. We cannot however exclude the possibility that the members of the Euneid *genos* participated in public festival competitions.[335]

We saw above that the *cithara,* an instrument traditionally associated with elite culture, was inevitably drawn into the maelstrom of the profound musico-cultural debate that Athens witnessed in the last few decades of the fifth century, and that the art-form of *citharodia* underwent a number of innovations and developments in connection to the New Music. One of these developments was the gradual professionalization of the performance of the genre. By the time of Aristotle, the once noble *cithara* has become the preserve of the professional star performer and attracts the horrific slur of *banausia,* as it is called in the *Politics* a 'technical

[331] Burkert (1994).
[332] Δημήτηρ ῾Ρέα Γῆ Μήτηρ Ἑστία Δηιώι. On the peculiarities of scansion see Burkert (1994) 47.
[333] Burkert (1994) 46.
[334] Power (2010) 366.
[335] *Op. cit.*

instrument' (τεχνικὸν ὄργανον),[336] like the *aulos.* Given the special ideological inheritance that the *cithara* brought with it, this situation was particularly challenging to the Athenian aristocracy, and it was responsible, so the elitist narrative went, for precipitating the crisis and corruption of the venerated medium of *citharodia.*[337] Within this context, Wilson notes, 'participation in *genê* activities (…) served as an 'ideological haven' for beleaguered Athenian aristocrats',[338] and Wilson also points out that cultic music must have been one of the few strongholds still controlled by the well-born Athenian, such as the Euneidae and other *genê* of 'sacerdotal musicians' who belonged to the very upper layers of the Athenian aristocracy like the Eumolpidae and the Kêrykes.[339]

Finally, it is worth noting that the poet Cratinus wrote a fragmentarily preserved comedy with the title *Euneidae* apparently more than ten years before Euripides' *Hypsipyle*, about which very little is known. The very existence of a comic play whose plot centers around the Euneidae is enough to suggest that the *genos* and their musical activity were recognized in Athens, and possibly also hints at some contentiousness with regard to their role and position in the city. Further, a fragment from that play preserves the verb ἀμφιανακτίζειν,[340] which most likely alludes to the celebrated Terpandrean proem (ἀμφί μοι αὖτε ἄναχθ' ἑκατηβόλον ἀιδέτω <ά> φρήν),[341] indicates that the genre of *citharodia* occupied an important role in the drama. As Power has suggested, it is likely that Cratinus in his comedy staged some sort of

[336] Aristotle, *Politics* 1341a15.

[337] See: Power (2010) esp. 462-463, 475-477 and 486-487; also: Wilson (2004) 281-287.
[338] Wilson (2004) 278.
[339] *Op. cit.*
[340] R. Kassel, A. Austin, *CGF* IV fr. 72. The context in which the verb appears is unknown.
[341] fr. 2 Gostoli = *PMG* 697.

conflict and antagonism between professional citharodes and the noble, sacerdotal music of the aristocratic Euneid *genos.*[342]

Even though the lack of sufficient evidence does not allow us to reach a definitive conclusion, I am inclined to think that the Euneidae should be viewed as representatives of an Athenian elite which appropriated for itself the role of the keeper and continuator of revered traditions of ancient music, and felt that the musico-cultural evolutions and innovations that took place in connection to the New Music phenomenon threatened to contaminate and erode their musical activity. The *Hypsipyle* then offers a comment on the ongoing controversy and reflects on reactions to the new, professionalized music among traditionalists who claimed their status by right of inheritance. The gesture that the Euripidean drama performs is especially bold: in representing Hypsipyle, Orpheus and Euneus as primordial new musicians and at the same time as mythical ancestors and musical predecessors of the Euneidae the play annuls a number of oppositions and dualities that were at the center of the new music debate, such as 'old' versus 'new', 'aristocratic / revered' versus 'professional / vulgar'; it is again a gesture of authorization and valorization of the new music style.

Further, if the *cithara* of the Euneidae performs in the service of an Athenian Dionysiac cult, the protagonist and the chorus of the *Hypsipyle* also sing and dance in honor of Dionysus in his theater in a play that gives the god a role of such great significance. And their new musical lyrics with their cultic, Dionysiac associations highlight their role as cultic dancers performing within the frame of a ritual that honors the theater-god. Finally, as we saw above,

[342] Power (2010) 367.

the Euripidean drama also comments on the affinity between the poetics of new style tragic lyrics and the new *nomos,* and applauds the innovations introduced into *citharodia* by practitioners of the genre such as Timotheus, who is engaged in a project of 'Dionysization' of the song-form, thereby transforming the *cithara* of Apollo and Orpheus into an 'Asian' *cithara*, the *cithara* of Dionysus.

Fragment 758a-b of the *Hypsipyle* preserves in a very lacunose state a choral ode that is most likely the second stasimon, which follows Hypsipyle's escape from punishment for the death of Opheltes after the successful intervention of Amphiaraus.[343] The chorus' song takes the form of a hymn to Dionysus which praises the god's power, presents his gifts to humankind, celebrates the joys of his cult and ritual, and expresses hope for experience of his grace.[344] In what is probably the antistrophe of the ode beginning at line 1103,[345] the chorus of Nemean women further reflect on the story of Dionysus' birth in a theogonic-cosmogonic narrative which probably gives him a central place and presents him as a divinity of cosmic significance. The lines start with an invocation, probably of the mother of the gods[346] (ὦ πότνια θεῶ[ν, 1103) and describe the beginnings of the universe and the gods. The passage seems to include references to the *chaos* that precedes the various stages of creation, (]άος, 1104),[347] a 'first-born' god who emerges from the *aether* (]έρι πρωτόγονο[, 1105), *Eros*

[343] On the reconstruction and the placement of the fragment see Cropp (2004) ad loc. The fragment begins with scene-ending iambic trimeters which contain a reference to Dionysus, probably in the role of Hypsipyle's protector and savior, thus anticipating the following choral ode.
[344] Several critics comment on the similarities between the ode and the hymn to Dionysus in the parodos of the *Bacchae*. See: Bond (1963) 120, Bierl (1991) 238, Cropp (2004) 250.
[345] Bond (1963) 121.
[346] Bond (1963) 121, Cropp (2004) 250.
[347] For alternative readings see: Bond (1963) 121.

(1106), the goddess Night (νυ[,1106), and a 'race of gods' (θεῶν γένο[ς, 1108) generated (ἐτράφη, 1107) from these beginnings.

It has been suggested that the occurrence of these references within the context of a hymn to Dionysus indicates that the passage may have been a cosmo-theogonic narrative of the sort that was attributed to Orpheus, and Kern prints these lines as fr. 2 in his edition of the Orphic fragments.[348] Given the prominent position that Euneus occupies in the drama and the final *aetion* which most likely links him to the Euneid clan still active in the present of the late fifth century audience, it is tempting to entertain the possibility that the song alludes to a hymn such as those Burkert suggests the Euneidae were known to cultivate and perform within the frame of the cult of Dionysus Melpomenos or perhaps at Eleusis. If this is the case, the play shows how such an Orphic hymnic / cultic narrative can be integrated in the experimental, avant-garde lyrics of a late Euripidean drama. And this gesture once again collapses the

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[348] Kern (1922) 81: 'Poetam doctissimum (…) Theogoniam Orphicam in mente habuisse apparet', followed by Cropp (2004) 250-251. If the narrative is Orphic, the 'first-born' (*prôtogonos*) is the primeval god who was also known as Phanes and was the product of the union of Aether and Chaos; he then joined with Night and generated the race of gods that were dominated by Uranus and his successors. When Zeus came to power he swallowed this god, re-created the order of the older gods, and generated Persephone by Demeter and consequently Dionysus by Persephone. For a summary of the so-called 'Protogonos Theogony' see the account in: West (1983) 100-101. The passage from the *Hypsipyle* and Aristophanes' *Birds* 693-702 (which is printed as fr. 1 in Kern's edition) have been widely accepted as evidence for the existence of such theogonies in Athens towards the end of the late fifth century BCE. (See however Bond (1963) 121-122 and Dodds (1951) 169 n. 82 who express doubts and remain skeptical.) The performance context of such Orphic theogonic material remains the subject of great critical controversy. According to West (1983) 79-80, 260-263 its circulation was very limited, whereas Martin (2001) 32 argues that it was 'public, performed and popular'. For a good recent assessment of the views on the subject, see: Power (2010) 355-367, who reaches the conclusion that we should perhaps make a distinction between 'doctrinal' Orphic poetry treating Orphic cosmo-theogonic ideas, whose performance would be probably restricted mainly within the more private confines of cult and ritual, and poems dealing with the experiences and exploits of Orpheus, such as the *Descent*, which were very likely publicly performed at large-scale festival events such as the Panathenaia.

boundaries that separate the fictional world of the play from the ritual that is performed in honor of the theater god, stresses the double status of the *choreuts* as characters in the play and as cultic dancers, and thereby foregrounds the commonalities between the musical activity of the Euneidae and that of the chorus who – much like the elite sacerdotal clan – sing their new music lyrics in honor of Dionysus.

The *Hypsipyle* is an immensely musical – new musical – play. Its beautiful odes offer a striking example of the modern style and at the same time a reflection on the poetics and the place of the new citharodic *nomos* – and by extension of the new style later Euripidean lyrics – within the context of the musico-cultural controversies of late fifth century Athens. If the *Hypsipyle* ponders contemporary musical practices and concerns in an oblique way, primarily via the medium of *citharodia*, the choral lyrics of the *Helen* directly engage with the new music debate on the level of tragic *mousikê*. In the next and final chapter, we will see that a host of figures of primordial song emerge in the new music odes of the play: the nightingale, the Pleiads, Aphrodite with the Muses and the Graces, and the protagonist herself, among others; and they all become the means through which the play offers a sustained reflection on the beginnings of tragic song and music, casting its avant-garde lyrics as an originary song-form, claiming for them a place of primacy in the Greek musical and literary tradition and the role of a source and model of ancient, revered and noble traditions of Greek *mousikê*.

CHAPTER FOUR

HELEN

Pleiadum choro scindente nubes

– Horace, *Carmina* IV. 14. 21-22

PARODOS

The Invocation of the Sirens

A double surprise awaits the audience of the *Helen*: not only does the protagonist inform us in the opening monologue that she has never set foot to Troy and that the Trojan War was fought in vain over her phantom,[349] but we soon learn that the figure who in the *Iliad* is the last to utter a *thrênos* over the dead body of Hector at the very end of the poem[350] is now at a loss when it comes to lamentation: having found out from Teucer that Troy has been sacked and destroyed, Menelaus is rumored dead, and her mother and brothers are said to have committed suicide out of shame at her conduct, Helen, now left alone on the stage,

[349] Most critics agree that, even though the version of the myth that Euripides presents in the play has been treated by Stesichorus and Herodotus before him, the element of shock for the audience remains strong. See: Zuntz (1960), Seidensticker (1982) 153, Burian (2007) 1.
[350] *Iliad* 24. 761-776.

contemplates her destiny and, about to give expression to her grief in song, hesitates and confesses that she does not know where to turn for musical inspiration:

> ὦ μεγάλων ἀχέων καταβαλλομένα μέγαν οἶκτον
> ποῖον ἀμιλλαθῶ γόον ἢ τίνα μοῦσαν ἐπέλθω
> δάκρυσιν ἢ θρήνοις ἢ πένθεσιν; αιαῖ. [351]
>
> (164-166)

> [O, as I begin a great lament for my great griefs,
> what dirge can I bring forth, or what muse should I approach
> with tears, keenings, cries of sorrow? Alas!]

The lines form a brief prelude to the parodos proper, and the participle *kataballomenê,* which has a long history in lyric proems, suggests that the Spartan queen is 'laying the foundation' for a song.[352] The protagonist's *aporia* has been read as a 'comment on the process of composition that lies behind the (…) play',[353] foregrounding Helen as a figure associated with poetry and song at the moment that she is about to start singing, and formally marking the beginning of her

[351] Willink (1990) 79 deletes line 166 as a 'metrically and otherwise redundant appendage', however, as Allan (2008) 171 points out, 'the piling up of further alternatives emphasizes Helen's struggle to find appropriate (lyrical) expression for her grief' .
[352] Cf. Dale (1967) ad loc who notes that *kataballomai* is 'very little different from the more technical *anaballomai*, 'strike up'', and Willink (1990) 78 n. 9, who comments on the analogy to *katarchesthai.* Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, ad loc. offers as a parallel the Homeric ἀναβάλλεσθαι (*Od.* 1. 155; 8. 266-7) and the Pindaric *ballesthai* (*Pyth.* 4. 137-139 and *Pyth.* 7. 1-3).
[353] Pippin Burnett (1971) 78 who discusses the self-awareness of the passage. See also: Pucci (1997) 52-53 and Downing (1990) 13, who argues that the expression *poion hamillathô goon* Helen uses 'gives early expression to her conscious participation in the play as a contest'.

performance.[354] The *proode* is composed in dactylic meter and is thus evocative of epic, lending an air of solemnity,[355] and providing 'an appropriate introduction to a song so concerned with the origins and aftermath of the Trojan War'.[356] Finally, the dactylic rhythm of the lines also references the proem of *citharodia.*[357]

Yet, the epic / citharodic aura of the proem clashes with the threnodic theme that it announces. As in the cases of Hecuba in the *Trojan Women*, Antigone in the *Phoenician Women* and the title-character of the *Hypsipyle* discussed in the previous chapters, Helen's *aporia* stresses not only the exceptional nature of her misfortunes, but also the impossibility of a *mousa* who will preside over a song that will do justice to the magnitude of tragic sorrows.[358] Impossible grief calls for an impossible song and also for impossible, paradoxical Muses, and it soon becomes clear that Helen's song, a characteristic example of the Euripidean fondness of the figure of 'negated music',[359] is going to be the product of a non-traditional, novel source of inspiration:

πτεροφόροι νεάνιδες,

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[354] As Timothy Power notes, '(…) the "deferral" (*anabolê* in its non-technical sense) of song proper (…) plays an important psychological role in the ritualized performance event. Beyond simply alerting the audience that the performance is beginning, it mediates the transition from the quotidian phenomenal world to the emotionally heightened, ritually marked experience of song that, ideally, both performer and listeners share' (Power (2010) 185).

[355] Willink (1990) 78. Ford (2010) 286 with n. 14 thinks that the lines allude solely to citharody and not to epic recitative.

[356] Allan (2008) ad loc., who offers as a parallel Timotheus' *Persae* fr. 788 *PMG.* See also: Willink (1990).

[357] Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 60.

[358] *mousan* can be both a 'form of song' and a 'Muse'. As Willink (1990) 79 notes, ''What music (Music)?' is the appropriately ambivalent interpretation here'; Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 66 prints Μοῦσαν and argues for 'Muse' on the grounds that the lines represent a variation of the citharodic proem. Given the invocation of the Sirens that immediately follows, I disagree with Allan (2008) 171 who reads *mousan* and rules out any reference to the Muses.

[359] Segal (1993a) 16.

παρθένοι Χθονὸς κόραι,

Σειρῆνες, εἴθ᾽ ἐμοῖς

† γόοις μόλοιτ᾽ ἔχουσαι Λίβυν

λωτὸν ἢ σύρριγγας [ἢ

φόρμιγγας] αἰλίνοις κακοῖς †

τοῖς ἐμοῖσι σύνοχα δάκρυα,

πάθεσι πάθεα, μέλεσι μέλεα,

μουσεῖα θρηνήμα-

σι ξυνωιδά, πέμψαιτε

Φερσέφασσα † φονία χάριτας †

ἵν ἐπὶ δάκρυσι παρ᾽ ἐμέθεν ὑπὸ

μέλαθρα νύχια παιᾶνα

νέκυσιν ὀλομένοις λάβηι.

(167-178)[360]

[Winged maidens,

virgin daughters of the Earth,

Sirens, may you join me

[360] The text is problematic. One main difficulty lies in the expression *mouseia thrênêmasi xunôida,* which can be interpreted as either standing in apposition to the tears, pains, songs that the Sirens are asked to send forth in response to Helen's and translated as 'music-halls resounding with dirges' (Dale (1967) ad 175-177, Ford (2010) 9-10) or, as having by metonymy the meaning of 'singers' rather than their place of singing, in which case the expression refers to and modifies the Sirens (Allan (2008) ad 174, Willink (1990) 89). See also Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 70. Another important difficulty consists in the choice between the readings *pempseie* and *pempsaite* in line 174. In the case of *pempsaite* which is preferred by most editors (Diggle in his Oxford edition, Allan (2008), Kovacs in the 2002 Loeb edition, Willink (1990) 89) the subject of the verb are the Sirens, whereas Kannicht (1969) and Dale (1967) retain *pempseie* with Persephone as the subject.

in my mournful woes

bringing the Libyan

lôtus, or panpipes [or

lyres], and may you send

tears in accord with my tears

pains with my pains, and songs with my songs,

music halls resounding with dirges,

so that deadly Persephone

in her halls of night

may receive from me with my tears a paean

for the dead that are gone.]

The Sirens figure as the chthonic equivalents of the Olympian Muses already in the Homeric epics,[361] and thus their invocation in a way conforms to the epic convention of appealing to the goddesses of song for assistance as a necessary prerequisite for the composition of poetry. However, the identity of the infernal entities who are asked to accompany and respond to Helen's song of sorrow also clearly marks the break with the tradition to which the epic / citharodic proem alludes. Several critics comment on the exceptional appeal to the Sirens in the Euripidean passage and argue that their appearance should be interpreted not so much in connection to the daemonic *femmes fatales* of the *Odyssey* who bring death, but primarily within the context of fifth century Greek art (funerary iconography in particular), in which the

[361] See Ford (1992) 83-84 on the Sirens as 'infernal counterparts of the Muses' in the *Odyssey*, and Cerri (1984-1985) who also discusses the identification of the Muses with the Sirens in Alcman; also Barker (2007) 9-11.

female divinities figure as gentle and sorrowful companions of the dead and preside with their song and musical instruments over funeral lamentation.[362]

G. Cerri has shown that consideration of the *incipit* of Stesichorus' second palinode[363] can significantly further our understanding of the Sirens' appearance in the parodos of the *Helen.*[364] He discusses the mysterious Stesichorean appeal to the 'golden-winged maiden' (χρυσόπτερε παρθένε), and argues that the invocation of the Sirens as πτεροφόροι νεάνιδες παρθένοι (167-168) in the Euripidean passage offers a plausible solution to the riddle of the identity of the invoked entity: the addressee of Stesichorus' appeal is a Siren who is asked to take on the role of a Muse and to offer her assistance in the composition not of a funeral lament like Helen's, but rather of a particularly difficult mythical narrative, meant to restore the truth and to unmask a lying tale.[365] Thus, the invocation of the Sirens in the parodos of the *Helen* has a special significance, as it renders explicit the connection between the two texts and gives the audience an unmistakable hint about Euripides' dependence on Stesichorus. The allusion is reinforced by the form and structure of the parodos, in which a citharodic proem is placed before a song, a choral song like the model with which Euripides wishes to connect his play.[366]

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[362] See: Dale (1967) 76, Cerri (1984-1985), Barker (2007).
[363] Fr. 193 *PMG*. On the two palinodes of Stesichorus see: Gentili (1988) and Bowra (1963).
[364] Cerri (1984-1985).
[365] As Cerri (1984-1985) notes, Stesichorus calls upon a single Siren, isolated from her sisters, who at the same time can function as a representative of that group, in the same way as one can appeal to the Muse or the Muses.

[366] There has been much discussion about whether Stesichorus' poetry was choral or monodic. West (1971) has argued that the triadic structure of his poems is not enough evidence to suggest a choral performance; Barker (2001) agrees with West and suggests that we should envision Stesichorean performance as similar to that of Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8, that is, a citharode singing and a chorus dancing but not necessarily participating in the song. See, however, Gentili (1988) 121f. who argues that the triadic structure implies choral performance; Burkert (1987) 43f. also argues for choral performance. See also the more recent discussion in

The evidence of reference to Stesichorus is also strengthened by the fact that the appeal to the Sirens is an exceptional phenomenon in Greek literature. With the exception of the two passages just discussed, there exists no other surviving example.

Helen's appeal to the Sirens thus clearly echoes the Euripidean model, at the same time however the clash that we observed between the epic / citharodic form of the proem and the threnodic content of the song that it introduces continues, as the protagonist invites the feathered maidens to come to Egypt from the underworld bearing pipes instead of the *cithara*, the instrument that is associated with the art of the citharode.[367] The exotic, un-Greek nature of the instrument is emphasized not just by the adjective 'Libyan' that modifies it, but also by the metonymical use of the term λωτός for *aulos.*[368] The gap that separates the current performance from the one that is alluded to is further accentuated by the fact that Helen's own song is accompanied by the music of the *aulêtês.*

Krummen (2009), who also points out the choral associations of the name 'Stesichorus' which denotes someone who 'sets up a chorus' (194). For a good overview and discussion of the different theories advanced on the nature of the Stesichorean lyric and performance see the account in: Willi (2008) 76-82.

[367] ἢ φόρμιγγας was deleted already by Triclinius in order to metrically align the strophe with the antistrophe and his choice was followed by most editors (Allan (2008) ad loc. and Willink (1990) 87-88). Metrical reasons aside, the lyres clearly do not have a place here and Helen's song is soon after called by the chorus an *alyros elegos* (185). Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 67 defends the reading arguing that such a precious poetic term cannot be an interpolation and that the three instruments correspond to the threefold apposition *dakrua – pathea – melea;* finally, Dale (1967) ad loc. rejects the deletion on the grounds that the Sirens are regularly depicted bearing lyres (among other instruments) in contemporary funerary art. However, as Willink (1990) 88 points out, it is possible that this widespread practice is actually hiding behind the motive of the interpolator, who wishes to 'correct' the text and make it reflect it.

[368] Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, ad loc. It is interesting that, as Kannicht further points out, unlike Pindar, Euripides never calls the *aulos* by the Greek name of its material, *kalamos,* thus stressing the foreign, exotic provenance of both the material and the instrument. Rather, in Euripides *kalamos* always means 'syrinx'.

The Sirens are asked to match and mirror (*sunocha*) Helen's tears, pains[369] and songs (*dakrua, pathea, melea*), so that Persephone in the underworld may receive from her 'a paean for the dead'. Greek dramatic poetry abounds in allusions and references to the paean, the Apolline song-form whose introduction into the Dionysiac framework of tragedy inevitably functions as a source of generic anomaly and discord.[370] The paean, with its association with cohesion, order and healing, its apotropaic function and its joyful connotations, was perceived as being incompatible with the chthonic sphere and the world of lamentation,[371] and was felt to be incongruous with the tragic thrust toward disruption and death. At times, tragedy stresses the incompatibility of Apollo's genre with the bleak world of the dead and opposes the chthonic dirge with the Olympian, joyful paean.[372] And yet, at the same time, the break-down of the distinction between the upper and the lower sphere and the collapse of the contrast between the genres they are associated with 'in the seemingly pacific but in fact intensely violent means of an oxymoron'[373] has long been recognized as a hallmark of tragedy's musical discourse. Helen's definition of her lament as an oxymoronic, paradoxical paean for the dead is especially apt, given that the invocation of the chthonic Sirens already alerts us to the invasion of the

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[369] *Pathea* refers to the customary and distinctive acts of grief, such as the tearing of the hair, the beating of the breasts and the scratching of the cheeks (See: Willink (1990) 89 and Allan (2008) ad loc).

[370] See: Rutherford (1993) Rutherford (1994-1995) and Rutherford (2001). Also: Ford (2006).

[371] See e.g. Stesichorus *PMG* 232: †μάλα† τοι μάλιστα / παιγμοσύνας <τε> φιλεῖ μολπάς τ᾽ Ἀπόλλων, / κήδεα δὲ στοναχάς τ᾽ Ἀΐδας ἔλαχεν.

[372] A characteristic, much-quoted example is the fragment of Aeschylus' *Niobe* (*TrGF* 161) according to which Death cannot be supplicated by any means, even by addressing paeans to it (Μόνος θεῶν γὰρ θάνατος οὐ δώρων ερᾶι / οὐδ᾽ ἄντι θύων οὐδ᾽ ἐπισπένδων ἄνοις, / οὐδ᾽ ἔστι βωμὸς οὐδὲ παιωνίζεται). Cf. the *Iphigenia in Tauris* where the chorus join in the protagonist's dirge with the following lines: ἀντιψάλμους ὠιδὰς ὕμνων τ᾽ / Ἀσιητᾶν σοι βάρβαρον ἀχάν, / δέσποιν᾽, ἐξαυδάσω, τὰν ἐν / θρήνοις μοῦσαν νέκυσιν μέλεον, / τὰν ἐν μολπαῖς Ἅιδας ὑμνεῖ δίχα παιάνων. ('Songs antiphonal to yours and the foreign clamor of Asian hymns to you, mistress, shall I intone, music for the dead amid dirges, the unblessed tunes which Hades sings – no paean these – among his songs', 179-185).

[373] Loraux (2002) 63.

underworld into the world of the living and naturally extends to the blurring of the boundaries between their associated genres. The protagonist's corrupted paean is a clear indication that we are firmly in the realm of the tragic and of tragic *mousikê.*[374]

Song and Cry

It is not the Sirens who will respond to Helen's appeal, but the chorus of Greek women, who join her in an *amoibaion* motivated, in typically Euripidean fashion, by a sense of sympathy and concern for the distressed Spartan queen.[375] At the beginning of the parodos they sing that they abandoned their domestic activities and came on the orchestra because…

ἔνθεν οἰκτρὸν ὅμαδον ἔκλυον,
ἄλυρον ἔλεγον, ὅτι ποτ᾽ ἔλακεν
< > αἰάγμα-
σι στένουσα νύμφα τις
οἷα Ναΐς ὄρεσι † φυγάδα
γάμων † ἱεῖσα γοερόν, ὑπὸ δὲ
πέτρινα γύαλα κλαγγαῖσι

[374] For a different interpretation see: Käppel (1992), 48-49, who argues that Helen still believes that a paean-prayer might be of avail, and Rutherford (1995) 124 who agrees with this (in my view unconvincing) reading.
[375] The most obvious parallel is the 'laundry-scene' of the *Hippolytus* (121-130). Cf. also the parodos of the *Medea* (131-138) in which the chorus enter in response to the protagonist's outbursts from within the palace; also the parodos of the *Trojan Women*, whose parallels to the *Helen* passage I shall soon discuss.

Πανὸς ἀναβοᾶι γάμους.

(184-190)

[There I heard a pitiful din,
a lament not fit for the lyre, what some bride
screamed once, groaning with anguish,
like a Naiad in the mountains fugitive
from marriage utters a mournful plaint,
and under the rocky hollows with echoing cries
shouts aloud the marriage of Pan.][376]

Not one word in these lines presents Helen's elaborate, learned and artful call to the Sirens that was no doubt sung at the accompaniment of the *aulos,* as a song. It is instead described as a '*noise* or *din* that stirs pity' (οἰκτρὸν ὄμαδον) and a '*cry* not fit for the lyre' (ἄλυρον ἔλεγον), and it is compared to the *wail* (αἰάγμασι) of a Naiad, who is *shouting out* (ἀναβοᾶι) in *screams / cries* (κλαγγαῖσι) as she is being ravished by Pan. I have discussed in the previous chapters the tragic genre's self-presentation of its relationship to music as one of rupture and negation, and tragedy's obsession with stressing the otherness of its unmelodious, 'lyre-less' Muse, a chief manifestation of its fundamental affinity with sorrow and lamentation. The mutation of cry into song and song into cry and the leveling of the distinction between artful music and the inarticulate *aiai* that marks the parodos of the *Helen* is an intrinsic characteristic of the tragic musical discourse. Let us briefly recall here the chorus of Trojan Women who in the first stasimon of Euripides' namesake play refer to the *euphrona boan* they sang on the

[376] Trans. Burian (2007) modified.

night before the sack of Troy; or the cacophonous, jarring medley that made up the music of the Sphinx and the Cadmeians, and the *boa* of the eastern chorus who sing the choral lyrics of the *Phoenician Women.*

First Songs

In a recent essay, Andrew Ford argues that the first strophic pair of the parodos of the *Helen* reflects on female lamentation as a prototypical form of choral song and on the birth of music from the 'doubling' of and the response to solitary inarticulate cries of sorrow.[377] By answering the central character's appeal for musical accompaniment, the women of the chorus effect the transformation of her cries of pain from artless spontaneous *goos* to formal, artful lamentation.[378] A quasi-improvised chorus is formed and Helen takes on the role of its leader: 'Looking (…) at the parodos, we see that its musical form, diction, and themes combine to stage it as a primal mortal song of consolation. Accidentally and as if for the first time, the players enact the archetypal form of women's lament'.[379]

The implications of the interpretation of the parodos of the *Helen* as a 'first song' for my reading of the passage will become clear in a moment. Before I come to that, I would like to briefly discuss the striking parallels between this passage and the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* which seem to have largely escaped the notice of the critics: both choral odes are

[377] Ford (2010).
[378] *Op. cit.* See also Barker (2007) 11-13. On the distinction between the spontaneous, emotionally uncontrolled *goos* associated with the female relatives of the deceased and the musical *thrênos* performed by professional mourners in the Greek tradition see also: Alexiou (2002) 10-14 and Segal (2003) on *Illiad* 24.
[379] Ford (2010) 300.

staged in a way that is highly evocative of non-dramatic poetry, especially epic and the citharodic proems, while Stesichorus in particular seems to be singled out as an important model: they begin with an exceptional appeal to divine entities that are associated with song– as far as we know a unique situation in Greek tragedy (note, too, the dactylic rhythm of the appeal to the Muse in the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* and in the proem that prefaces the invocation of the Sirens in the parodos of the *Helen*). The invocation of the Muse by the chorus of Phrygian captives initially seems to be a more orthodox musical and poetic choice than Helen's appeal to the feathered maidens with all their chthonic associations, but, as discussed in the first chapter, it immediately becomes clear that that Muse is also a paradoxical entity, removed from her customary epic / citharodic context and asked by the women to assist them in the composition of a 'novel' song, an *epikêdeion ôidan.* The explicit reference to the sound of the exotic 'Libyan *lôtus*'[380] that accompanies the two lyrics further underscores and magnifies the distance that separates the Euripidean Muses from their traditional counterparts.

I argued in the first chapter that the first stasimon of the *Trojan Women* invites a double reading, since the chorus of Phrygian captives present their eastern, Dionysiac song as coming at the end of a long poetic tradition (Homer, the epic Cycle, Stesichorus' *Iliou Persis*) but at the same time also as a 'first', primal song which is sung right after the fall of Troy, and thus in a sense predates the literary tradition which it incorporates and over which it claims temporal and cultural priority. I would now like to suggest that the same observation applies to the parodos of the *Helen*: on the one hand it acknowledges its lateness in the tradition and clearly echoes its literary models in epic and Stesichorus' lyric – the strong allusions to which we already discussed – and as such can be read as a comment on the history of the literary tradition of

[380] *Tro.* 544, *Hel.* 171.

Helen and her myth from citharody to epic to choral lyric to fifth-century dramatic poetry. However, as Andrew Ford has shown, at the same time it poses as a primordial choral song, born from the response of the chorus to Helen's appeal which transforms her artless cries into artful music, and thus in a way positions itself at the beginning of the tradition it absorbs and evokes.

There are also strong similarities between the parodos of the *Helen* and that of the *Trojan Women.* As I hope I have shown in the first chapter, the elderly queen reflects on the birth of tragic *mousikê* and on the dissolution of the song and musical tradition of Troy into tragic, inarticulate cries. Hecuba, who also initially confesses her inability to find a song that will adequately convey the magnitude of her sufferings, compares her aria to a bird's *klaggê* (146), a term that the chorus of the *Helen* apply to the central character's sorrowful song. In both instances the arrival of the choruses at the orchestra is motivated by the protagonists' singing, and, much like Helen's, Hecuba's monody is perceived by the chorus as mere noise and inarticulate cries, rather than music. And then, the women join their leader and the cry is transformed into a song.

Of course, despite the primordial air of their musical performances, neither Hecuba nor Helen make their first appearances as singers in Euripidean drama. Several critics comment on the relationship of affinity between Helen and poetry that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* create, and on her representation in the Homeric epics as being capable of composing a poetic narrative

and conscious of her participation in poetic tradition.[381] As already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, in the last book of the *Iliad,* the Spartan queen leads the lament for Hector (ἐξῆρχε γόοιο, 24.761) to which the Trojan women respond with groans, and Richard Martin has argued that Helen embodies lamentation on a larger scale in the poem, as her other speeches, even though they are not called laments, incorporate the diction and strategies of the genre.[382] In singing the last lament of the poem, Helen has been viewed as taking on a role akin to that of the *aoidos*, whose task is the commemoration of the deeds of epic heroes. 'It happens that lament, this antiphonal, foundational speech-act, can be represented in archaic Greece as the original authorizing speech-act which lies behind *all* poetry of commemoration. That may be why the Muses are women, for only women take the professional role of praising and mourning the dead',[383] writes Martin, who concludes that, since Helen represents lamentation in the poem, her place as the last person to sing a lament at the very end of the poem elevates her to the status of a Muse-figure, who counterbalances the Muse of the proem.

Helen's function as an embodiment of lamentation in the Homeric epics makes her an especially intriguing choice for the Euripidean play's reflection on tragic lament and its beginnings. On the one hand, her opening self-conscious hesitation and *aporia* reinforce the

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[381] See: Ford (1992) 74 on Helen's *recusatio* in the *Odyssey* (4. 240-243), and 127-128 on *Iliad* 3. 125-129 and the weaving of the tapestry, an activity which in the Greek tradition was viewed as having important associations with the art of poetry itself. Other important moments include the description of the Achaeans in the *Teichoscopia* in *Iliad* 6. 182-242. (see: Suzuki (1989) 40), *Iliad* 6. 354-358, where Helen says to Hector that they will both become the object of song for future generations of men, and Helen's lament in *Iliad* 24. See also: Holmberg (1995) 26f., Clader (1976) 5-9.

[382] Martin (2003). See also: Hall (1999).

[383] Martin (2003) 128 (emphasis in the original). See also the discussion in: Clader (1976) 11, who notes that 'In effect the laments of the three women at Hektor's funeral represent the beginnings of the memorial of oral poetry that the heroes have won. Coming at the very end of an epic, they are also a reference to the composition which has just been performed'.

'newness' of this *kainê*[384] Helen who bears no resemblance to her Iliadic counterpart – after all, this Helen never went to Troy and never lamented Hector's dead. However, given the primordial aura that surrounds the performance of the parodos which ambitiously claims for tragic *thrênos* the role of a 'first', archetypal choral song, the figure that was so closely associated with song and lamentation and endowed with a quasi-Muse status in Homer becomes a particularly apt medium for the drama's reflection on the birth of tragic *mousikê* and particularly for reclaiming for lamentation a position akin to the one it held in the *Iliad,* that of the primal commemorative song from which all other genres of commemoration, the Homeric epics and Stesichorean lyric included, arose.

The Euripidean Helen is thus 'new' and 'old' at the same time; inexperienced in the ways of her Homeric version, lamentation included, she initiates a new poetic tradition, but her appropriateness in this role lies precisely in her past in Homer, and, interestingly, also in Stesichorus, where, as Froma Zeitlin has shown, the figure of Helen again draws attention to the process of poetic creation and in particular to the invention of a new song-form, the palinode.[385] The full significance of the value of Helen's import into the drama and of the associations that she carries will become clear later in the chapter. For the moment, let me note that, in its sustained reflection on the beginnings of song and in its presentation of tragic song as a form of female primordial music, the parodos establishes a pattern that will be repeated in the three stasima of the play. It is now time to move from one figure of archetypal lament to another, from Helen to the nightingale.

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[384] Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazousae* 850.

[385] Zeitlin (1996b) 408: 'Stesichorus uses Helen, as it were, to assert his role as a poet. Working within a received tradition that he alters in two different ways (the "blasphemy" in the first version and the recantation in the second), he raises the notion of fictionality as a possible attribute of mythic texts in order to account for his own innovations. In the process, he invents a new literary genre – the palinode'.

FIRST STASIMON

The Nightingale: Euripides and the Tradition

The first episode sees the reunion of Helen and Menelaus and the hatching of the couple's escape-plan from Theoclymenus and Egypt. Yet, the chorus resist the positive thrust of the action and instead look back and reflect on the needless suffering and devastation of the Trojan War as they sing and dance the first stasimon of the play. The opening of the ode closely echoes the beginning of the parodos, as the women recognize the need for assistance in their musical performance and – much like Helen who calls upon the infernal winged maidens to arrive from the realm of the dead – invoke the nightingale, the ever-mourning bird to appear as a helper (*sunergos*) in their song of lamentation.

σὲ τὰν ἐναύλοις ὑπὸ δενδροκόμοις
μουσεῖα καὶ θάκους ἐνί-
ζουσαν ἀναβοάσω,
τὰν ἀοιδοτάταν
ὄρνιθα μελωιδὸν
ἀηδόνα δακρυόεσσαν,
ἔλθ' ὦ διὰ ξουθᾶν γενύων ἐλελιζομένα
θρήνων ἐμοὶ ξυνεργός,
Ἑλένας μελέους πόνους
τὸν Ἰλιάδων τ' ἀει-
δούσαι δακρυόεντα πότμον

Ἀχαιῶν ὑπὸ λόγχαις…

(1107-1116)

[You, perched under leafy shelter
in your haunts that are halls of melody,
I will raise my cry to you,
most tuneful
songbird,
tearful nightingale:
come, trill from your quivering throat
as partner in my laments,
as I sing the sorrow and misery of Helen
and the tearful fate
of Troy's women
under Achaean spears…][386]

The figure of the nightingale has a long history as an emblem of the female voice of lamentation; conventionally enough, she makes her first appearance in Greek literature in the nineteenth book of the *Odyssey*:

ὡς δ᾽ ὅτε Πανδαρέου κούρη, χλωρηὶς ἀηδών,
καλὸν ἀείδησιν ἔαρος νέον ἱσταμένοιο,
δενδρέων ἐν πετάλοισι καθεζομένη πυκινοῖσιν,

[386] Trans. Burian (2007).

ἥ τε θαμὰ τρωπῶσα χέει πολυηχέα φωνήν,
παῖδ᾽ ὀλοφυρομένη Ἴτυλον φίλον, ὅν ποτε χαλκῶι
κτεῖνε δι᾽ ἀφραδίας, κοῦρον Ζήθοιο ἄνακτος…
(518-523)

[Just as the daughter of Pandareus, the nightingale of the greenwood,
sings beautifully, when spring is newly come,
as she sits perched amid the thick leafs of the trees,
and with many trillings pours forth her many-noted voice
lamenting her dear child Itylus, whom she had one day killed with the sword
in her folly, Itylus, the son of king Zethus….][387]

Even though the version of the myth that is presented in these lines is somewhat different from the one that prevails later, most of the recurrent features of the representation of the bird's musical activity are already present in this passage:[388] the nightingale is female; she is closely associated with a green forest setting (χλωρηίς); her song is beautiful (καλὸν ἀείδησιν), fluid and 'poured forth' (χέει), characterized by swift turns (θαμὰ τρωπῶσα) and many notes (πολυηχέα); finally, it is a lament for the child that she has inadvertently killed. The emphasis on the beauty of her song and the image of the nightingale as a supreme musician and a figure akin to that of the poet remain prominent elements in the representation of the bird in the

[387] Trans. Murray (1995) modified.
[388] See: Barker (2004).

archaic epic and lyric tradition,[389] and persist in her appearances in fifth-century Athenian dramatic poetry.[390]

Yet, the tragic poets also add new associations to the nightingale's musical performance. So, even though references to the skill and artfulness of her music continue, at the same time – somewhat paradoxically – there is a new emphasis on the repetitiveness of her song, which is portrayed as an insatiable, endless iteration of her dead son's name Itys, often suggested by repetition in the language employed to represent the bird's lament.[391] The nightingale's song is above all a lament of a murderous female, and given the special and ambiguous place of female lamentation in the tragic realm and its musical discourse, it acquires more dangerous, dark and threatening overtones, becoming a vehicle for the expression of precarious female emotional excess and an outlet of destructive energy, perhaps developing the motif of disorientation, loss of identity and emotional abandon already latently present in the passage of the *Odyssey*.[392] Thus, the evocation of Procne by the Danaids and the identification of their voice and lament with hers in Aeschylus' *Suppliant Women* (58-76) has been

[389] On the affinity between the figure of the nightingale and the epic poet and on the assimilation of the bird's song with oral tradition and performance, see: Nagy (1996) chapters one and two. See also West (1978) on *Works and Days* 203 who discusses the self-referential dimension of the fable of the nightingale and the hawk and the association of the nightingale with the poet ('The Hawk's standard prey in Homer is the dove (…) Hesiod prefers a nightingale because it stands for himself'). West also cites the scholiast, καλῶς οὖν ἑαυτὸν ἀηδόνι ἀπείκασε, μουσικὸν γὰρ τὸ ὄρνεον.

[390] See Suksi (2001).

[391] E.g. Sophocles, *Electra*, 148-149: ἃ ΄Ιτυν, αἰὲν ΄Ιτυν ὀλοφύρεται, / ὄρνις ἀτυζομένα ('the grieving bird, wailing for Itys always Itys'), with Loraux (1998) 61 who notes that the *aei* is suggestive of the inarticulate cry of mourning *aiai*; Euripides, *Phaethon* (Fr. 773.25-26 *TGrF*): ὀρθευομένα γόοις ΄Ιτυν ΄Ιτυν πολύθρηνον ('wailing sleeplessly in lamentation Itys, Itys much lamented'); Euripides' *Palamedes* (Fr. 588 *TGrF*) presents a variation of the motif through the repetition not of the name Itys but of the verb: ἐκάνετ' ἐκάνετε τὰν πάνσοφον, ὦ Δαναοί, τὰν οὐδὲν ἀλγύνουσαν ἀηδόνα Μουσᾶν ('You have killed, you have killed, you Danaans, the all-skilled, harmless nightingale of the Muses'). See also the discussions in: Ford (2010) 299, Barker (2004) 191, Segal (1993b) 70.

[392] Segal (1993b).

interpreted as a moment foreshadowing the horrible acts of female violence the young women are about to commit,[393] and the same menacing and destructive aura envelops the invocation of the bird as the 'child-murdering nightingale' (τεκνολέτειρα ἀηδών, 107) by the Sophoclean Electra in her lament.[394]

The representation of the nightingale's voice in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* is marked with perhaps the most striking departure from the traditional portrayal of the bird's lament as a sweet, melodious song. There, at lines 1140-1145, the chorus compare the lamentation of the raving, maenadic (*phrenomanês, theophorêtos*) Cassandra to the *nomos anomos,* the 'unmusical music' of a *xoutha aêdon,* which consists in the ceaseless repetition of 'Itys, Itys', the name of the dead child which now becomes an cry of grief. In her rejection of the association, Cassandra calls the nightingale 'tuneful', *ligeia* (1146)*,* but the elders insist that the priestess' lamentation is an ill-omened, non-verbal, unutterable scream, a *dysphatos klagga* (1152), blent with high-pitched, piercing strains (*orthiois en nomois*, 1153). The nightingale's music is transformed into inarticulate cries of immense grief and the horrifying clamor of vehement, loud, ecstatic, female lamentation, and the bird herself undergoes yet another transformation as her 'songless song' marks her as figure of tragic *mousikê*.

If the Aeschylean nightingale resonates with Dionysiac madness, the same seems to be true for the protagonist of Sophocles' *Tereus,* who is no other but the *aêdon* in her pre-metamorphosis, human form. The play is, according to our evidence, the first tragedy that dramatized the myth of Procne's transformation into a nightingale and survives only in fifty-eight lines of fragments. Even though the exact extent of the Bacchic element is debated,[395]

[393] Segal (1993b) 68-70.
[394] Loraux (1998).
[395] See: Dobrov (2001) chapter seven.

critics agree that the Sophoclean Procne is a maenadic figure possessed by the god's transforming power, and that the Dionysiac theme must have been strong as is fitting in a drama that is so acutely aware of its own conventions, so concerned with disguise, intrigue, delusion and the staging of *apatê*, a play that, as Dobrov notes, seems 'to anticipate (perhaps even serving as a model for) the metatheatrical strategies of Euripides' *Bacchae*',[396] and, one might add, of the *Helen.*[397] It is further worth noting that Dionysus and the nightingale exist in close connection in the opening stanza of the first stasimon of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*: there, we meet the bird dwelling among the 'wine-faced ivy and the god's inviolate grove' (674-676), where Bacchus also walks accompanied by his divine nurses (678-680).[398] The image is reproduced in a Euripidean fragment (88 *TrGF*) in which The Dionysiac ivy is specified as the bird's 'music-hall' (ἀηδόνων μουσεῖον).

If we now return to the opening lines of the first stasimon of the *Helen*, we can observe that the main ideas and motifs that we saw associated with the nightingale and her music are also present in the Euripidean passage. The nightingale is imagined amid green foliage, its

[396] Dobrov (2001) 113, who also suggests that the strong Dionysiac coloring of the Ovidian treatment of the myth (*Metamorphoses* 6. 587-600) most likely reflects the Sophoclean drama (122). 'It is precisely in this play where action swirls along the edge of sobriety that Bacchism is to be brought in, and not merely as a dramatic expedient', notes Kiso (1984) 80. On the Dionysiac theme in the play see also the discussion in: Sutton (1984) 131.

[397] On the affinity in metatragic concerns, structure and themes between the *Bacchae* and the *Helen* see mainly: Downing (1990) 10-11, and also the older discussion in Förs (1964) 156 .

[398] On the function and significance of the figure of Dionysus in these lines, see: Bierl (1991) 100-103, who points out that the reference to the god of theater marks the passage as a moment of special metadramatic importance. See also Suksi (2001), who again attaches to the passage a special metatheatrical significance: 'The nightingale, transformed by the gods from a figure polluted by horrible vengeance and pursued by violence into a singer of melodic laments, embodies the transformation brought about by the tragedian himself of stories of grief and horror into a performance in honour of Dionysus', she notes (656).

traditional habitat. The artfulness and the melodious nature of her song are emphasized as she is called a 'most tuneful, music-making bird', ἀοιδοτάταν ὄρνιθα μελωιδὸν ἀηδόνα (1109-1110).[399] At the same time, the nightingale is also closely connected to grief and lamentation, as she is described as 'tearful', δακρυόεσσα. Then, the chorus ask the bird to come διὰ ξουθᾶν γενύων ἐλελιζομένα. The editors agree that *elelizomenê* must be read as passive of the verb of motion *elelizô* (a reduplicated form of ἑλίσσω meaning 'whirl around', 'cause to shake'). Kannicht in particular has argued that the participle here functions as a synonym of the Homeric *thama trôpôsa*, indicating the quivering of the nightingale's throat and the modulations of her voice.[400] This interpretation is certainly attractive and it is also reinforced by the use of the mysterious adjective *xouthos* that modifies the bird's throat and seems to indicate vibrating sound and rapid movement.[401] However, *elelizô* is also a verb of sound. Let us recall that a few years later Antigone in the *Phoenician Women* employs the same verb (τάλαιν', ὡς ἐλελίζω, 1514) and then immediately asks for a bird to appear as a co-singer (*sunôidos*) of her lament. In his discussion of the passage, Mastronarde decides that the verb should be taken as onomatopoeic, deriving from the cry *eleleu,* but I argued in the second

[399] 'The proximity of ἀοιδότατος and ἀηδών emphasizes the bird's characteristic act (ἀείδων)' notes Allan (2008) ad 1109-10.

[400] Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 284, Allan (2008) 272. See also: Dunbar (1995) ad Ar. *Birds* 213-214 (pp. 204-205): 'The Nightingale is either 'quivering *with* song', or perhaps, if ἐλελιζομένη refers in particular to the shaking of the voice, 'quivering *in* song', 'trilling'' (emphasis in the original).

[401] Dale (1967) 138, who notes that *xouthos* should be interpreted 'primarily as the quick, throbbing vibrato of sound'; See also: Burian (2007) 258, Allan (2008) 272, Dunbar (1995) ad Ar. *Birds* 213-214. Also Silk (1983) esp. 317-319 who argues that the adjective, which in the poetry of the classical period was generally applied to flying creatures (such as birds or bees), did not have a precise meaning and had instead become an 'iconym', i.e. 'a word which has lost its denotations' but was associated with sound and rapid movement. Note, however, Fraenkel (1950b) ad 1142: 'in the fifth century the word was always taken to refer to colour', and Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 284-285 who notes that *xouthos* 'kostbares Formelwort zu sein scheint, etwa dem deutschen 'golden' entsprechend', and translates διὰ ξουθᾶν γενύων with 'durch deinen (mit deinem) goldenen Schnabel'.

chapter that we should view the term as combining both meanings (motion and sound), and imagine Antigone violently whirling on the stage while uttering the ecstatic clamor. I believe that the same conflation of sound and movement applies to the nightingale in the *Helen.*[402] Critics reject this possibility on the grounds that the inarticulate cry *eleleu* cannot be part of the repertory of the melodious bird since it is incompatible with the musicality of her song.[403] But we also know that the breaking down of the boundaries that separate song from cry is an essential characteristic of the musical program of tragedy, and we also observed above that the voice of the nightingale becomes an integral part of this discourse. The special value of *elelizomenê* lies precisely in its ambiguity, polyvalence and multiple, competing associations. Much like Helen's invocation of the Sirens in the parodos of the play, the idea conveyed in these lines is that of the nightingale's music as an artful, quivering song, but at the same time also an inarticulate cry of sorrow.

The Nightingale, Aristophanes and New Music

Even though the Euripidean passage broadly engages with the long literary tradition of the nightingale as a figure of female mournful song, there is one text that seems to stand out in particular: it is the invocation of the nightingale by the hoopoe in Aristophanes' *Birds*, performed just two years before the *Helen* in 414 BCE, on whose striking similarity with the

[402] See also: Corbel-Morana (2004) who also argues for a fusion of the semantic fields of *elelizô* as a verb of sound and as a verb of motion.
[403] Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 284; see also Dunbar (1995) 204-205 who makes the same argument in his discussion of *elelizomenê* in Aristophanes' *Birds* (213-214).

opening strophe of the first stasimon of Euripides' play many scholars have commented. There, Tereus calls upon his wife Procne with the following lines:

> Ἄγε σύννομέ μοι, παῦσαι μὲν ὕπνου,
> λῦσον δὲ νόμους ἱερῶν ὕμνων,
> οὓς διὰ θείου στόματος θρηνεῖς
> τὸν ἐμὸν καὶ σὸν πολύδακρυν Ἴτυν,
> ἐλελιζομένη διεροῖς μέλεσιν
> γένυος ξουθῆς.
>
> (209-214)

> [Come, my songmate, leave your sleep,
> and loosen the strains of sacred songs,
> lamenting through your divine lips
> your child and mine, Itys of many tears,
> trilling forth fluid melodies
> from your quivering throat][404]

The striking resemblance between the two passages has led many critics to suggest that it is tempting to entertain the possibility that Euripides models the chorus' appeal to the nightingale on Aristophanes' passage, and that it is very likely that this is a very rare instance in which

[404] Trans. Henderson (2000) modified.

tragedy actually draws on comedy rather than vice versa.[405] If this is the case, then the Aristophanic echoes must have a special significance.

In a recent article, Andrew Barker shows that the figure of the nightingale in the *Birds* occupies a very important role in the play's commentary on contemporary musical values, practices and controversies.[406] As Barker points out, the words used to designate traditional characteristics of the nightingale's music, such as the sweet liquidity, the trills and turns, the multiplicity of notes and the modulation of her song, are marked by semantic instability, and acquire new, derogatory associations within the context of the New Music controversy in late fifth-century Athens, becoming part of the vocabulary used by the enemies of the avant-garde style to attack and disparage it.[407] The comic poet exploits the shift in meaning and ideological load of the motifs, terms and ideas that accompany the representation of the nightingale's song since the beginning of her career in Greek literature in order to establish her as a figure representative of the new style which so often comes under attack in Aristophanic comedy and also in this particular play in the figure of one of its main practitioners, the dithyrambic poet and chorus-trainer Cinesias.[408] Thus, the terms that once designated the artfulness and musical supremacy of the bird's song (ἐλελιζομένη, διεροῖς μέλεσιν, ξουθῆς) now become emblematic

[405] Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, ad loc., Dover (1972) 148-149, Silk (1980) 101, Zimmermann (1985) 73, Dunbar (1995) 205, Burian (2007) 258, Allan (2008) 272; also Dobrov (2001) 126, and Corbel-Morana (2004) 224-225. The alternative is that the two passages are imitating a common model that is unknown to us. There is also the possibility that the Aristophanic passage is a parody of the invocation of the nightingale in Euripides' *Cresphontes* 117-122 (see Collard, Cropp and Lee (1995) ad loc.), which would make the exchange between the two poets even more interesting.
[406] Barker (2004).
[407] See also Csapo (2004), esp. 229f. on the language used to describe the musical innovations.
[408] *Birds* 903-957, 1373-1409. See Dunbar ad Ar. *Birds* 1372-1409, also Barker (1984) 105-108.

of the New Music and everything that is wrong with it.[409] Finally, Barker argues that, in an impressive break with the tradition, the nightingale is represented not as a singer, but as a pipe-girl, an *aulêtris*;[410] she is the official musical accompanist of the play's lyrics, and when she appears onto the stage she brings into the chorus' presence the music of the pipes, which was so far heard from behind the scene. Thus, in an ironic twist, Aristophanes 'brings the whole of his own production within the target area of its own brand of musical parody'.[411]

Why, then, does Euripides choose to so closely echo the Aristophanic passage that represents the nightingale as a degraded embodiment of the notorious New Music, replicating terms and ideas that Aristophanes attaches to the bird and that were part of the language and rhetoric used by the critics of the new style to disparage and to condemn it? I suggest that we need to look for the answer in the relationship between the New Music style and the poetics of tragic *mousikê* in later Euripidean drama. We have had many chances to observe that, rather than trying to disassociate their art from the derogatory terms that their critics attach to it, Euripides and the other practitioners of the new style verse actually seem to embrace the elements of this discourse, and consciously represent their verse and music as an embodiment

[409] As Barker (2004) 192-193 points out, it is also important that the nightingale's song is also represented as all kinds of music at once (*nomos, hymnos, thrênos, elegos*), playing with the recurrent complaint that the new style abolishes established and revered boundaries of genre (e.g. Plato, *Laws* 700a-b).

[410] 'Enter the figure of Music incarnate, probably dressed in nothing to speak of apart from her golden ornaments, with pipes in her mouth, shimmying provocatively at Euelpides. Where we might look for a vision of idealized beauty from another world, what we get is the all too familiar, degraded figure of the slave-girl hired out to play the pipes and doubling as a prostitute', notes Barker (2004) 198, who further compares the nightingale to the Euripidean Muse in the *Frogs.* On the representation of the nightingale in the *Birds* as a female pipe-player see also: Romer (1983); and also: Dunbar (1995) 422.

[411] Barker (2004) 204. On the complicated relationship of Aristophanic comedy and New Music see also Dobrov (1997) esp. 64-69. On the influence of the New Music / 'dithyrambic' style on the composition of the hoopoe's monody in Aristophanes' *Birds* see the discussions in: Fraenkel (1950a), Zimmermann (1985) 78-81 and Dunbar (1995) 212-213.

of all that its opponents reproach it with – un-Greek, eastern abandonment, lack of order, unashamed emotionalism, uncontrolled, Dionysiac frenzy. It is interesting that Aristophanes first associates the nightingale with the New Music style and then portrays it as the official accompanist of his play, thus demonstrating a similar strange complicity with the elements of the discourse he parodies and attacks in his comedy, and this irony is probably not lost on Euripides. What is even more important is that in recalling the Aristophanic Tereus' appeal to the nightingale, Euripides seems to explicitly espouse the comic play's view of the bird as an emblem of the new style and everything that it represents.

We saw that Aristophanes equates the voice of the nightingale with the intoxicating, *mania*-inducing sound of the *aulos,* the 'material cause'[412] of the avant-garde movement with its strong connotations of eastern emotional excess, uncontrollable wailing and extreme grief; the instrument was viewed as filling and stopping the mouth, hindering speech, robbing the performer of *logos* as it puffed the piper's cheeks making his face appear similar to a mask, or *gorgoneion,* indicating loss of control and individuality and Bacchic possession.[413] The music-making bird and the music of the *aulos* exist in close connection also in Euripidean drama: Fr. 931 K. designates the instrument with the periphrasis '*lôtus*-wood nightingale' (λωτίνας ἀηδόνας), and another fragment (556 K.) refers to the 'music making reed' of the Black River as 'the skilful nightingale of pipes sweetly blown' (τόν θ' ὑμνοποιὸν δόνα[χ' ὃν ἐκτρέφει Μέ]λας ποταμός, ἀηδόν' εὐπνόων αὐλῶν σοφήν). For the Athenians, the music of the *aulos*

[412] Csapo (2004) 217.

[413] On the analogy between the piper, the mask and the gorgon see Csapo (1997) 257. On the *aulos* as a speech-impeding and anti-*logos* instrument see also: Csapo (2004), Wilson (1999) and Wilson (2002). See also Wilson (2004) on the Athenian construction of oppositions and contrasts between the *aulos* and the lyre. As Barker notes, it is a plausible hypothesis that Procne's bird-mask in the *Birds* was not equipped with a beak, but the beak was instead simulated by a pair of *auloi.* (See: Barker (2004) 201). On the beak/pipes of the nightingale in the *Birds* see also the earlier discussion in: Romer (1983).

was perceived as having a distinct threnetic quality,[414] and this must be one of the reasons for the association of the instrument's sound with the haunting, never-ending lamentation of the bird. The *aulos* was also notorious for its versatility, its capacity to produce a great range of notes, and its ability to seamlessly glide from one note to the other in a constant flux of sound, thus creating an atmosphere of indistinctness, destabilization and confusion that was viewed as proper to the realm of Dionysus.[415] I noted above that in the third Book of the *Republic,* Plato distinguishes the *aulos* as the 'most many-noted' (πολυχορδότατον) of instruments,[416] and the chorus of the *Rhesus* employs the same epithet to modify the voice of the child-murdering nightingale who wails the death of her offspring by the stream of Simois:

> …Σιμόεντος ἡμένα κοίτας
> φοινίας ὑμνεῖ πολυχορδοτάται
> γήρυϊ παιδολέτωρ
> μελοποιὸν ἀηδονὶς μέριμναν.
>
> (546-550)

> [… she sits on her bloodstained nest by the Simois
> she, the child-slayer nightingale
> and with her many-noted voice
> sings her musical woe.][417]

[414] Wilson (1999) 80.
[415] Csapo (2004); see also Bierl (2006) esp. 120-128 on the effects of the *aulos*-music on the Satyrs of Pratinas' *hyporchema.*
[416] *Rep.* 3.399d.
[417] Trans. Kovacs (2002) modified.

It should also be noted here that *polychordia,* together with other *poly*-compounds, (*polykamptia, polymetria, polyharmonia, polychrômia, polyphônia, polyeidia*), became a key-term in the debate surrounding the new musical style, and so were terms that emphasized the music's variability and adaptability, such as *poikillein, metaballein, kamptein.*[418] These words were part of the vocabulary employed by the enemies of the new musical developments who aimed at cultivating their negative political and ethical meanings, associating the new verse with notions such as 'indiscipline', 'anarchy' and 'loss of control', and branding it as responsible for the creation of a dizzying effect of hysteria akin to that produced by the manifestation of the power of the *polymorphos* and *polyeidês* theater-god. Finally, let me add that the repetitiveness of the bird's lament, which, as I observed above, was often recreated in the language used in tragedy to represent the *aêdon's* song, is evocative of the figures of anadiplosis and repetition that are regarded as salient characteristics of the new style, and parodied as new musical Euripidean mannerisms by the Aristophanic Aeschylus in the *Frogs.*[419]

To sum up: our evidence suggests that in the late fifth-century Athenian discourse surrounding *mousikê* the figure and the voice of the nightingale invite a comparison and a connection to the ecstatic, the Dionysiac, the sound of the *aulos,* and the new style. The strong allusions to the Aristophanic passage from the *Birds* in the opening lines of the first stasimon of the *Helen* indicate the Euripidean affirmation and endorsement of the comic poet's representation of the nightingale's music as emblematic of the musical avant-garde and all that

[418] Csapo (2004) 229.
[419] See: Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1353-1355: ἐμοὶ δ' ἄχε' ἄχεα κατέλιπε, / δάκρυα δάκρυά τ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων / ἔβαλον ἔβαλον ἁ τλάμων. See also Kranz (1933) 231-232 for examples of the 'Wortwiederholung unmittelbar hintereinander' from later Euripidean drama.

it stands for, barbarism, eastern abandon, emotional excess, Dionysiac *mania* – and it is important to note here that both the verb *elelizô* and the cry *eleleu* that we discussed above are loaded with associations of Bacchic frenzy.[420] The voice and the song of the bird are thus foregrounded as the sound of tragic, Dionysiac lamentation and *mousikê*.

It is also telling that the lines that contain the appeal to the nightingale are composed in the characteristic manner of the avant-garde verse and that the quasi-hymnic invocation of the nightingale itself is considered a hallmark of the new style.[421] Further, given the strong mimetic aspect of New Music, it is plausible to argue that the *aulos*, the instrument that accompanies the chorus' song and dance, was viewed as possessing special dramatic effects and mimetic properties,[422] and, as we observed above, was so closely connected to the sound of the nightingale in the Athenian imaginaire, was recreating the modulations of the bird's voice, contributing to and heightening the atmosphere of tragic *pathos,* emotional intensity and Dionysiac *mania* that the evocation of the nightingale and the women's words are creating. Thus, the nightingale is appropriately invoked in a manner that replicates and reproduces on the stage the conceptualization of its voice as emblematic of the New Music style along with all its 'vices'.

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[420] See Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 284, who comments on the Dionysus 'Eleleus' in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 4, 15 and on the maenads called Ἐλελητίδες in Ovid, *Heroides* 4. 47 ('nunc feror, ut Bacchi furiis Eleleides actae').

[421] See Kranz (1933) 238-239, who discusses the obsession of later Euripidean choral lyric with starting an ode by making an apostrophe to a being (human or divine), animal, or inanimate object (the nightingale from the first stasimon of the *Helen* is included in his long list of examples) and the parody of this mannerism in Aristophanes' *Frogs* 1309, 1313. The trend of the 'Verweltlichung des alten Rufgebetes', as Kranz calls it, is considered to be one of the salient characteristics of the new verse. See also Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 276.

[422] The piper of Timotheus, one of the most prominent representatives of the New Music style, supposedly imitated a storm, the cries of a woman in labor, the hissing of a snake. See Csapo (2004) 213-214.

At the same time, much like the parodos, the first stasimon is a staged as a 'first', primal song of sorts, as the invocation of the nightingale reflects on the birth of music from the sounds of nature, or, in Pucci's words, 'represents music as a natural phenomenon, and the human song as a repetition (copy?) of the natural one'.[423] The nightingale's song is also primal in the sense that it never changes, and so every performance is a re-iteration of that first complaint; we do not get on or progress from the initial, trauma-induced melody. Thus, the figure of the *aêdon* brilliantly straddles the gap that separates the 'old' from the 'new', being capable of representing both, and, once again, the novel song is invested with a primordial aura and is ultimately redeemed and 'legitimized', as the ode projects the features of the avant-garde style onto the natural, primal sound of the archetypal, iconic figure of mourning.

SECOND STASIMON

The choral lyrics of the *Helen* return to the theme of archetypal singing and dancing in the second stasimon, the hymn to the Mountain Mother. The topic of the ode is the myth of the search of Demeter, who in the song is assimilated to Cybele, for her lost daughter Persephone.[424] In the first antistrophe, the women dwell on the catastrophic grief of the Mother

[423] Pucci (1997) 71.
[424] On the syncretism of the rites of Cybele, the Mother of the gods, with the myth of Demeter's search for her daughter Persephone see: Scott (1909), Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 327-330, Allan (2008) 294-295.

which causes great suffering and halts the fertility of the earth until Zeus sends a chorus composed of the Graces, the Muses and Aphrodite to dispel her sorrow with their songs and dances. An aura of primordiality envelops their performance, as befits the moment of the institution of the new cult in honor of the goddess: Aphrodite 'for the first time' (πρῶτα, 1347) takes up the 'tambourines of stretched hide' (τύπανα… βυρσοτενῆ, 1347).[425] The Mother is at last released from her rage; she laughs and accepts in her hands the *barubromos aulos,* delighting in the instrument's *alalagmos* (1352).

The second stasimon – once accused of irrelevance and relegated to the category of lyric interludes (*embolima*)[426] – has become in the more recent years the primary *locus* on which a good deal of the discussion on the play's metatheatrical dimension and reflection on the processes of its own making focuses.[427] The nature of the music of the divine chorus is of course overtly ecstatic and Dionysiac, since it involves the sound of the drums and the pipe,

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[425] The musical aetiology offered in these lines recalls that of the parodos of the *Bacchae* (123-129), where the chorus of Bacchants narrate the invention of the *tympana* by the companions of Mother Rhea, the Corybants. Cf. Ford (2010) 299.

[426] See: Kranz (1933) 253f. According to Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 327, 'Das zweite Stasimon steht nicht nur dem unmittelbaren Handlungszusammenhang, sondern auch der Fabel des Dramas im ganzen thematisch ferner als irgendein Stasimon der späten euripideischen Tragödie'. Dale (1967) ad 1301-68 describes it as 'a strange ode, perhaps reflecting something of the style of contemporary dithyramb'. Other critics have attempted to rehabilitate the ode by tracing the themes and patterns that it shares with the rest of play, focusing mainly on the *anodos* pattern and on the allusions to the model on which the story of Helen is based, with Persephone in the role of her mythical prototype See: Segal (1971), Foley (1992). See also Wolff (1973) 72 on echoes in the ode from elsewhere in the play.

[427] Pucci (1997), Bierl (1991) 163ff., Downing (1990) 12, Seidensticker (1982) 161, Pippin (Burnett) 1960.

and the cultic cry of *alalagmos* is also closely associated with the orgiastic cults of Cybele and Dionysus.[428]

Ecstatic, Dionysiac musical imagery is not restricted to this passage but also pervades the first strophe of the ode. There, the chorus dwell on the maddened Deo's rushing motion, (ὀρεία ποτὲ δρομάδι κώ-/λωι Μάτηρ ἐσύθη θεῶν, 1301-1302),[429] the 'deep-thundering waves of the sea' (βαρύβρομόν τε κῦμα ἅλιον, 1305), and the chariot's 'roaring cymbals which cry out a loud din' (κρόταλα δὲ βρόμια διαπρύσιον / ἱέντα κέλαδον ἀνεβόα, 1308-1309).[430] A reference to circular dancing is also present, when the women describe the abduction of Persephone, who was 'snatched away from the circling dances of the maidens' (ἁρπασθεῖσαν κυκλίων χορῶν ἔξω παρθενίων, 1312-1313).

Finally, in the final stanza of the stasimon, which is corrupt and beset with deep problems of interpretation,[431] the women of the chorus reflect on the powerful effect of

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[428] See: Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 351, and cf. Eur., *Bacchae* 592-593 which describes Dionysus' cries from within the palace: Βρόμιος <ὅδ> ἀλαλάζεται / στέγας ἔσω, with Dodds (1960) and Seaford (2001) ad loc., also 1132: αἳ δ' ἠλάλαζον (the messenger describing the cry of the bacchants at the moment of Pentheus' *sparagmos*). Dionysus is also closely associated with the Muses and the Graces in the first stasimon of that play (410-416). On this motif and on the Dionysiac cult as 'Religion des Schönen', see: Henrichs (1969) 139f.

[429] Cf. the speed of movement of Artemis and Athena: μετὰ δ' <ἦξαν> ἀελλόποδες (1314). On the association of *dromas* with wild, out of control movement and possession, often in explicitly Dionysiac contexts, see: Burian (2007) 271, and cf. the Mother's δρομαῖον πόνον at 1319-1320, and Helen's dash for safety like a bacchant at 543: οὐχ ὡς δρομαία πῶλος ἢ Βάκχη θεοῦ τάφωι ξυνάψω κῶλον; cf. also the rushing motion of the *dromades* Potnian horses on the shield of Polyneices in the *Phoenician Women* 1124-1127, which also have clear maenadic associations (ὥστε μαίνεσθαι δοκεῖν), and see Mastronarde (1994) ad 1124-1125, who notes that for Euripides the word 'is almost a *Lieblingswort*'.

[430] On the cultic and Dionysiac associations of the *krotala* see Kannicht (1969) and 1308-1309, Seaford (2003) 143-144, and the discussion of the instrument in the *Hypsipyle* in chapter 3.

[431] In these lines, Helen is accused of having incurred the wrath of the Mother by not honoring her rites (μῆνιν δ' ἔχεις μεγάλας Ματρός, ὦ παῖ, θυσίας οὐ σεβίζουσα θεᾶς, 1355-1357). The nature of Helen's mysterious offense has generated much discussion. For a comprehensive review of earlier scholarship on the subject see: Bierl (1991) 165-167. According to Cerri (1987) Helen is punished because she values beauty more than anything else with the result of

Dionysiac celebration and possession. The lines are again filled with references to loud, orgiastic music and dance, imagery of roundness and rotating movement, 'the greenery of ivy that crowns the holy thyrsus' (κισσοῦ τε στεφθεῖσα χλόα / νάρθηκας εἰς ἱερούς, 1360-1361), the 'din of the *rhombos* which is whirled high in the air' (ῥόμβου θ' εἱλισσομένα / κύκλιος ἔνοσις αἰθερία, 1361-1362) and the 'hair leaping in Bacchic revel' (βακχεύουσά τ' ἔθειρα Βρομίωι, 1364-1365).

The stasimon is rich in instances of choral self-reflexivity and choral projection, which in a sense merge the 'then' and 'there' of the songs and dances of the mythical, imaginary choruses of which the women sing and the 'here' and 'now' of the song and dance in the orchestra of the theater of Dionysus. These are moments that highlight the ritual nature of the dramatic chorus, and, as in the case of the chorus of the *Phoenician Women* discussed in the second chapter, this dimension is pronounced in an especially emphatic way, since the performances to which the women refer within their own performance are explicitly Dionysiac. The loudness, ecstatic mood and atmosphere of Bacchic possession of the performances of the characters and the choruses that the stasimon incorporates in its narrative must have been reflected in the actual song and dance of the chorus on the Athenian stage: we can imagine that the women's performance recreated the rushing motion of the grief-stricken Mother, the circling of the virginal choruses from which the daughter was violently wrenched away, the dances of the divine chorus that mollifies the wrath of Demeter, the latter's *alalagmos,* that the chorus rotate in imitation of the *rhombus'* whirling din, and at the same time in honor of the

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neglecting the disorder of ecstasy, bacchic dance and enthusiasm. Swift (2010) argues that Helen, as an allegorical parthenaic figure, has been refusing to make the transition to sexual maturity and thus rejecting the moral of the myth of Demeter, who in her new Cybele-like form presides over fertility and sexuality. See also: Allan (2008) 306-7.

god for whom they are performing within the context of the dramatic festival. And, even though the chorus' singing and dancing was accompanied solely by the music of the *aulos,* a skilled *aulêtês* would have exploited the dramatic properties of the instrument in a fashion that enabled its sound to recreate and in a way to bring into the presence of the audience the sounds of the other ecstatic, Dionysiac instruments the women refer to throughout the course of their narrative, contributing to the creation of an atmosphere of heightened emotionality and Bacchic frenzy.

The 'dithyrambic' ode is considered to be one of the most striking instantiations of the New Music style, showing a characteristic preference for lush imagery, allusive, 'decorated', pictorial language, and moving in a series of powerful, independent 'vignettes' rather than offering a continuous and straightforward narrative. Significantly, it is in this avant-garde narrative and music style that the 'first' (*prôta*) song that alleviates the rage of the Mother and lies at the heart of the ode is couched. The dramatic and the divine chorus merge, and the assimilation of the performance of the new music, Dionysiac dancers and singers with that of Aphrodite, the Muses and the Graces results in the retrojection of the innovatory features of the modern style back onto the archetypal song. We can thus reach the conclusion that the second stasimon of the *Helen* performs the same movement that we traced in the previous lyrics of the play: Once more, the tragic chorus claim a role of primacy for their performance, and the new song is again staged as an old, primordial, first song.

THIRD STASIMON[432]

Dancing in the Sea

Choral projection also marks the beginning of the third and last stasimon of the play. Helen and Menelaus are already on their way to freedom and Greece, and the chorus now sing a *propemptikon,*[433] wishing the royal couple a safe journey and envisioning their return to Sparta.

Φοίνισσα Σιδωνιὰς ὦ
ταχεῖα κώπα, ῥοθίοισι Νηρέως
εἰρεσία φίλα,
χοραγὲ τῶν καλλιχόρων
δελφίνων, ὅταν αὐ-
ρᾶν πέλαγος ἀνήνεμον ᾖι,
γλαυκὰ δὲ Πόντου θυγάτηρ
Γαλάνεια τάδ᾽ εἴπηι.
Κατὰ μὲν ἱστία πετάσετ᾽ αὔ-
ρας λιπόντες εἰναλίας,
λάβετε δ᾽ εἰλατίνας πλάτας,
ὦ ναῦται ναῦται,
πέμποντες εὐλιμένους

[432] I am pleased to find myself much in agreement with Deborah Steiner's perceptive article on the third stasimon of the *Helen* (Steiner (2011)), which I read after I finished writing this chapter, and would like to thank her for sharing it with me in advance of publication.
[433] Allan (2008) ad 1451-64.

Περσείων οἴκων Ἑλέναν ἐπ᾽ ἀκτάς.

(1451-1464)

[Swift Phoenician ship of Sidon,
whose oar-beat is dear
to the waves of Nereus,
chorus-leader of the beautifully-dancing
dolphins, when the sea is calm
and windless
and Galaneia,
the grey-green daughter of Sea speaks thus:
spread the sails
leaving sea-breezes behind
take up pinewood oars,
o sailors sailors,
escorting Helen to the fair-harbored shores
settled by Perseus.][434]

The first stanza of the ode opens with an apostrophe to the ship that will carry the protagonist home. The chorus envision the boat as the *koryphaios* of a chorus composed of dolphins. We have already had the chance to discuss in the second chapter that the term *kallichoros* is evocative of choral dancing and in particular of the performance of the tragic

[434] Trans. adapted from Burian (2007).

chorus in the theater of Dionysus. In our passage, the moment of choral projection is especially pronounced, as the epithet modifies the dolphins, the marine creatures which, as Eric Csapo has shown, were closely associated with choral, and especially with cultic, round, comastic, Dionysiac choral dance in the Greek mythical and literary tradition.[435] We have seen in our discussion of the first stasimon that the voice of the nightingale was perceived as having a distinct auletic quality in Euripidean drama and elsewhere, and it is important to note that the dolphins, which in the first choral ode of Euripides' *Electra* are called '*aulos*-loving' (φίλαυλος),[436] were similarly associated with the music of the Dionysiac instrument which accompanies the chorus' singing and dancing.[437]

Csapo also argues that dolphins have a special place in the imagery of the avant-garde style.[438] The quasi-hymnic invocation of the ship with which the chorus open their song resembles the appeal to the nightingale at the beginning of the first stasimon, and it is also worth noting that the address belongs to a special type of loose invocation, which lacks a second-person verb of its own and diverts the construction on to a secondary clause (here the temporal clause introduced with ὅταν at line 1455).[439] The so-called 'floating' or 'hanging' apostrophe is viewed as a salient feature of the new style, part of its program aiming at

[435] See: Csapo (2003). It should also be noted here that the reference to Nereus (1452) and later in the same strophe to his daughter Galaneia (1458) are evocative of the second group of dancers that according to Csapo are symbolic of cult- and Dionysiac round dance, that of the Nereids, who are often found in the company of dolphins in Greek literature and art.
[436] Euripides, *Electra* 435.
[437] Csapo (2003). On the *aulos* and the dolphins see also Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, ad 1454-1455.
[438] Csapo (2003).
[439] This kind of extended invocation is a device typical of later Euripidean lyric (e.g *I.T.* 1089-1105, *Ion* 492-506, *El.* 432-441 (on which see the discussion in: Csapo (2003) 71-72) and is notoriously parodied by Aristophanes in the *Frogs* 1309-1321, where the halcyons are invoked only to be lost in a series of relative clauses (see Kranz (1933) 238-240).

subordinating words to music and at a kind of poetry that appeals primarily to the senses rather than the intellect,[440] and thus cultivates an atmosphere of dizzying, Dionysiac volubility.

The opening lines of the play's final choral ode suggest velocity and rapid, animated movement: the ship is 'swift' (ταχεῖα, 1452) and is surrounded by rushing waves (ῥοθίοισι, 1452)), while Galaneia's imperatives (Κατὰ μὲν ἱστία πετάσετ' (1459), λάβετε (1461)) and the anadiplosis of *nautai* at 1462 (another characteristic trait of the avant-garde verse) also contribute to the atmosphere of vividness and urgency;[441] and, given the tendency of the new style to create mimetic play between the perfomance in the orchestra and the performance in the dramatic lyrics, the sense of animated movement conveyed in the lines must have been reflected in the dance of the chorus, thus linking the present performance with the excited and ecstatic singing and dancing of the women in the previous stasimon.

Dancing in Sparta

After the striking, modern opening, song- and dance imagery continue to dominate the chorus' narrative, as in the first antistrophe the thoughts of the women race to the future of the protagonist. The chorus imagine that, when she arrives to Sparta, Helen…

ἦ που κόρας ἂν ποταμοῦ

[440] 'In part, it is a symptom of New Music's imitation of cultic forms, and in part of New Music's indifference to verbal logic, the flipside to its commitment to a more sensual and ultimately musical logic', notes Csapo (2003) 72.
[441] Padel (1974) 236-237.

παρ᾽ οἶδμα Λευκιππίδας ἢ πρὸ ναοῦ

Παλλάδος ἂν λάβοι,

χρόνωι ξυνελθοῦσα χοροῖς

ἢ κώμοις Ὑακίν-

θου νύχιον ἐς εὐφροσύναν…

(1465-1470)

[I think she will find the daughters of Leucippus

by the river or before the temple

of Pallas,

as she arrives home at the time of the dances

or revels of Hyacinth

and their nightlong feasting…][442]

The lines resonate with archaic Spartan festivals, choral performances and ritual music, which, as Claude Calame has shown in his fundamental analysis of the Greek maiden choruses, were closely associated with the transition of young girls from *ephebeia* to maturity.[443] Calame's work has also promoted our understanding of Helen's strong choral and ritual associations, as well as her crucial role as leader of maiden-choruses in Spartan myth and cult, a function with which the Athenians must have been familiar, as the end of Aristophanes'

[442] Trans. Kovacs (2002).

[443] Calame (1977), vols. 1 and 2. References to the first volume are made from the English translation of 2001.

Lysistrata, produced one year after the Helen in 411, shows.[444] As in the second stasimon, the chorus dwell on the song and dance that marks the originating moment of a cult, since Helen is here imagined as joining the daughters of Leucippus and initiating the kind of choral dancing that later generations of Spartan girls will perform in her honor.[445] As Calame observes in his study of Alcman's *partheneia,* the Euripidean scene provides the mythical prototype for the many such choruses that formed the core of Sparta's musical and religious life, and for the ritual executed by Hagesichora and her chorus in particular.[446] The transition-ritual- and

[444] Ar., *Lysistrata* 1305-1315. On the familiarity of the Athenian audience with Spartan cultic choruses and Alcman's work in particular, see the discussion in: Bierl (2007), who offers a perceptive reading of the relationship between Aristophanes and Alcman and of the special function and significance of the Aristophanic allusions to Alcman's *partheneia*.

[445] The Leucippides, Phoebe and Hilaeira, were the wives of Castor and Polydeuces, who had abducted them from the altar as they were about to marry Idas and Lyncaeus. According to Pausanias, they had a cult and a temple in the precincts of Sparta, near the Limnaion. As Calame (2001 (1977) vol. 1, 185-191) notes, the Leucippides and their cult occupy a liminal place between ephebeia and adulthood which can be explained by the fact that their myth marks the moment of exit from adolescence and entrance into adult, married life. In Sparta, the same ambiguous quality of both girlhood and adulthood governs the figure of Helen and her cult. The double aspect of her figure is reflected in the two different cults and the two cult-sites where the legendary heroine was venerated: Therapnai, where Helen received a cult as a married woman together with Menelaus, and the Dromos, where the Helen venerated was still a young maiden who is about to marry (See: Calame 2001 (1977) vol. 1, 191-202). The Dromos, has been identified as the first of the three locales (ποταμοῦ παρ' οἶδμα) referred to by the chorus when they evoke the meeting of the Leucippides and the protagonist on her return to Sparta in the third stasimon of the *Helen* (Calame, 2001 (1977) vol. 1, 186, and see also Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, ad loc.). The temple of Pallas to which the chorus refer has been identified with that of Athena Chalkioikos, and Helen's association to the goddess also reinforces her role as a figure symbolic of transition from adolescence to adulthood. 'Athena is a young girl, but warrior and protector of the city, in other words a girl who, as Helen, has passed through adolescence and has been admitted to the body of citizens', notes Calame (2001 (1977) vol. 1, 196). Finally, according to Calame, the third cult alluded to in the first antistrophe of the ode, that of Apollo Amyclaeus who is worshipped at the Hyacinthia, also seems to indicate Helen's status as a liminal figure, as it was probably a festival of initiation.

[446] Calame (1977) vol.2, 124: '…l'ensemble du rituel exécuté par les choreutes du fr. 1 ne fasse que répéter les actes dont Hélène et son group de compagnes sont les fondateurs mythiques'. Calame also discusses the close association between Helen in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* and Theocritus *Idyll* 18 and the figure of Alcman's Hagesichora. In her discussion of *parthenaic* motifs in the parodos of the *Helen,* Swift thinks that the protagonist's role is similar to that of

partheneia imagery that pervades the lines is significant on multiple levels. Its most obvious role is that it forms the culmination of the systematic representation of Helen as a *parthenos*-figure throughout the play.[447] Now, at the moment when Helen and Menelaus successfully overcome the obstacles that had so far hindered their reunion, the ode creates a consistent association between the central character and Spartan festivals, rites, cults and cult-figures that signify and represent the passage from *ephebeia* to maturity, thereby marking and celebrating the protagonist's successful transition from the status of a *parthenos* to that of a wife. Foley and other critics have also argued that the subtext of Spartan ritual and religious life and *mousikê* that informs the drama and the third stasimon in particular become the means by which the play effects the rehabilitation of the protagonist's figure, offering 'an alternative context in which Helen can escape *dyskleia*'.[448] There is more to be said about the significance of *partheneia* and rites-of-passage imagery in the ode, an issue to which I shall soon return. For now we need to turn to the second strophe, where images of chorality persist.

Hagesichora, or Agido, or Astymeloisa. 'She is part of the chorus but separate from it, and the object of their interest and attention', she notes (Swift (2010) 223). On the ritual connections and function of Alcman's maiden chorus, underscored by the self-referentiality and self-description that pervades the fragment, see: Bierl (2009) 31-36; also Bierl (2007).

[447] On Helen's representation as a quasi-*parthenaic* figure threatened by Theoclymenus' sexual aggression and the *partheneia* imagery in the play see: Foley (1992), Zweig (1999) and Swift (2010), chapter 5.

[448] Foley (1992) 146. Zweig (1999) also examines the way in which Helen's Spartan ritual roles and associations inform the structure and action of the drama. She argues that '(…) taken together, the three stasima affirm Spartan aspects of Greek religiosity' (171), and concludes that the Euripidean emphasis on Helen's ritual dimension should be read as a comment on contemporary Athenian practices and politics in the wake of the Sicilian disaster, as the play reinforces '(…) voices that view Sparta's recent success as a sign of her adherence to traditional ritual customs' (172). See also: Murnaghan (forthcoming), who reads Helen's situation in Egypt as an experience of distorted *choreia,* with the protagonist in the role of the dislocated chorus-leader. The third stasimon, then, represents Helen's reinstatement in her former position as leader of Spartan maidens' choruses.

δι᾽ αἰθέρος εἴθε ποτανοὶ
γενοίμεθ᾽ ὅπαι Λιβύας
οἰωνῶν στιχάδες
ὄμβρον χειμέριον λιποῦ-
σαι νίσονται πρεσβυτάτου
σύριγγι πειθόμεναι
ποιμένος, ἄβροχα θ᾽ ὃς
πεδία καρποφόρα τε γᾶς
ἐπιπετόμενος ἰαχεῖ.

(1478-1486)

[Could I but wing
through the firmament to where the Libyan
birds, rank on rank,
fleeing the wintry weather,
fly obedient
to the piping of their eldest,
their shepherd,
who flies to the rainless and fruitful lands
and shrills as he goes.][449]

[449] Trans. Kovacs (2002).

The stanza opens with the impossible wish of the women of the chorus who long to fly like cranes to the banks of the Eurotas.[450] Several Euripidean choruses express the desire to escape from a desperate situation,[451] but here the women's wish has added significance. The birds, flying 'obedient to the piping of their eldest', clearly represent a chorus of girls. One of the most salient and recurrent features of the cranes' representation in Greek literature ever since their first appearance in the opening simile of the third Book of the *Iliad,*[452] is their piercing, loud cry,[453] which in the ode is reflected in the verb *iachei* that is employed to define the sound of their leader and lends the birds' call an overtly Dionysiac and ecstatic coloring. The *koryphaios* of the crane-chorus is also represented as playing the *syrinx*, whose sound the *aulos*-player could have easily recreated on the stage.[454] Finally, note that Libya, the country of provenance of the *aulos* (and cf. the Λίβυν λωτόν of the Sirens in the parodos, at 170-171) is also present. Thus, much like the nightingale and the dolphins, the cranes are represented in a way that invites associations with the music of the Dionysiac *aulos*. Further, like the opening stanza of the ode, the lines are also suggestive of velocity, as the birds are termed as 'partners

[450] For the identification of the birds with cranes, whose migration south from Greece to avoid the winter was perceived as an annual phenomenon as early as Homer and Hesiod, see: Kannicht (1969) vol. 2, 389, also: Burian (2007) 282 and Dunbar (1995) ad Ar. *Birds* 710.
[451] On the escape motif in Euripidean lyrics, see: Padel (1974), and also Barlow (1971) 38-40.

[452] *Iliad* 3. 1-9.
[453] See Dunbar (1995) ad Ar. *Birds* 710 on the voice of the cranes as a 'clarion call… a loud, clear, non-guttural bugling' and 'a strident, trumpeting "*Krook*"'. In the *Iliad* (3. 3) the cranes' sound is defined as a κλαγγή, while Aristophanes employs the verb κρώζουσ' for the birds' call.
[454] As Allan (2008) 324-325 notes, the *syrinx* (as another wind instrument) must have been one of the easiest instruments for the *aulêtês* to imitate in the theater. See also West (1987) ad 145 on the parodos of the *Orestes* and the discussion of the *Orestes* passage as an instance of the new 'mimetic' style of music in Kranz (1933) 240-241.

in the racing of the clouds' (σύννομοι νεφέων δρόμωι, 1488), and we can imagine that the excited dance of the human *choreuts* recreated the swift movement of the bird-chorus.

Dancing in the Sky II: Partheneia

In the second half of the strophe, the women of the chorus address the birds and bid them to bring to Sparta the joyous message of Helen's and Menelaus' return:

ὦ πταναὶ δολιχαύχενες,
σύννομοι νεφέων δρόμωι,
βᾶτε Πλειάδας ὑπὸ μέσας
Ὠρίωνά τ' ἐννύχιον,
καρύξατ' ἀγγελίαν
Εὐρώταν ἐφεζόμεναι,
Μενέλεως ὅτι Δαρδάνου
πόλιν ἑλὼν δόμον ἥξει.
(1487-1494)

[O long-necked birds
partners in the racing of the clouds
go beneath the Pleiades in mid-sky
and Orion in the night

herald the message

as you settle on the Eurotas

that Menelaus has taken the house of Dardanus

and will be coming home.][455]

The Pleiades and Orion beneath which the birds are imagined as transversing the sky form one more chorus of airborne dancers. As Gloria Ferrari notes in a recent study, the association of constellations in the heaven and dancing maiden-choruses is common in Greek thought and literary imagery.[456] The Pleiades in particular were represented as primordial dancers, and were credited with the invention of the choral dance and the *pannuchis* when they still had their human form and before they metamorphosed into stars and were placed in the sky, where they continued their dancing.[457]

Euripides is especially fond of this figure: in the first stasimon of the *Electra,* the Pleiades together with their sisters, the Hyades, appear as dancers on the shield of Achilles,[458] and in the *Ion* the entire sky and the moon are represented as joining in choral dance.[459] Interestingly, the star-chorus coexist with the nightingale in the first strophe of the parodos of

[455] Trans. adapted from Kovacs (2002).
[456] Ferrari (2008) 3.
[457] *Op. cit.*
[458] Eur., *El.* 464-69: ἐν δὲ μέσωι κατέλαμπε σάκει φαέθων / κύκλος ἁλίοιο / ἵπποις ἂμ πτεροέσσαις / ἄστρων τ᾽ αἰθέριοι χοροί, / Πλειάδες, Ὑάδες, † Ἕκτορος / ὄμμασι † τροπαῖοι (‘In the middle of the shield the bright circle of the sun was shining on winged horses, and the heavenly choruses of stars, the Pleiades, the Hyades, bringing defeat to the eyes of Hector’).
[459] See: Eur., *Ion* 1078-1080: ὅτε καὶ Διὸς ἀστερωπὸς / ἀνεχόρευσεν αἰθήρ, / χορεύει δὲ σελάνα (‘When Zeus’ star-eyed sky has begun its choral dance and the moon dances’).

the *Phaethon,* where the performance of the Pleiades gives way to that of the lamenting bird thus marking the advent of dawn.[460]

Outside Euripides, there is one passage in particular that is important for our discussion, Alcman's Louvre *Partheneion* (fr. 1 *PMGF*), where the constellation occupies a prominent, even if tantalizingly obscure, role:

> ταὶ Πεληάδες γὰρ ἅμιν
> ὀρθίαι φάρος φεροίσας
> νύκτα δι᾽ ἀμβροσίαν ἅτε Σήριον
> ἄστρον ἀυηρόμεναι μάχονται.
>
> (60-63)

> [For the Pleiades
> as we bring Orthia a robe,
> rise through the ambrosial night like the star
> Sirius and compete against us.]

The exact meaning of the tormented passage remains a subject of endless debate, and so does the identity and function of the Peleiades within the context of the poem, but most scholars

[460] Eur., *Phaethon* fr. 773.63-70: ἤδη μὲν ἀρτιφανὴς / Ἀὼς ἱ[ππεύει] κατὰ γᾶν, / ὑπὲρ δ᾽ ἐμᾶς κεφαλᾶς / Πλειά[δων πέφευγε χορός], / μέλπει δὲ δένδρεσι λεπ- / τὰν ἀηδὼν ἁρμονίαν / ὀρθευομένα γόοις / ῎Ιτυν ῎Ιτυν πολύθρηνον. ('Already the newly appearing Dawn rides over the earth, and above my head the chorus of the Pleiades has fled; the nightingale sings her subtle harmony in the trees, awake at dawn with her lament of many tears for 'Itys, Itys'').

today agree that they should be identified with the star-cluster.[461] For my purposes, it is enough to note that their importance within the Spartan context and Alcman's parthenaic lyric in particular adds a new dimension to their presence in the third stasimon of the *Helen*, and reinforces the ode's consistent engagement with *partheneia*- and Spartan *rites de passage* imagery.[462]

For Ferrari, Alcman's maiden-chorus take on the role of the cluster of the Hyades who model their dance on the archetypal performance of the star-chorus of the Pleiades,[463] and the Euripidean chorus reenact the same movement. After the nightingale of the first stasimon, the divine chorus of the second stasimon and the choruses of the dolphins, the Spartan maidens and the cranes in the third choral ode, the dancing stars offer one more possibility for projection of the chorus' performance back onto that of authoritative, originary musicians and dancers, Alcman's archaic Spartan parthenaic choruses and their heavenly prototype. The last choral lyric of the play thus represents the culmination of the movement of the merging of the chorus' song and dance with those of archetypal figures of song, which again results in the investment of their innovative, new musical performance with an aura of authority and primordiality.

[461] The other two main theories that have been advanced identify the Pleiades with Hagesichora and Agido and a rival chorus respectively. See: Swift (2010) 179f. with bibliography in p. 179 n. 18, Ferrari (2008) 83-89, also Stehle (1997) 79-85, and Krummen (2009) 192, who all agree that the Pleiades must be the constellation given that they are mentioned together with Sirius.
[462] Swift (2010) views the Pleiades as having sinister associations in both Alcman and Euripides. In her reading, the star-chorus together with the Sirens represent symbolic forces of resistance to the chorus' transition from adolescence to maturity. Csapo (2009) discusses the chorus of Pleiades in the first stasimon of Euripides' *Electra* similarly as having apotropaic and funereal overtones.
[463] Ferrari (2008) 89f.

The gesture of assimilation of the chorus' performance to that of archaic Spartan female choruses is one of special significance, as it forms a comment on the beginnings of the tragic genre in the ritual maiden choruses of the Peloponnese, thus highlighting the continuities between the two song-types and acknowledging tragedy's debt to female non-dramatic choral lyric, a song-form which is closely connected to Sparta.[464] The formal, public and festal maiden performances attested in cities such as Sparta or Thebes have no equivalent in classical Athens, where the role of female choruses in the public and ritual life of the city seems to have been remarkably insignificant and suppressed.[465] And – given the prominent role that female singing and choruses are assigned in the Euripidean corpus, a role that I have attempted to further explore and understand throughout this dissertation – it is entirely appropriate that a female Euripidean chorus, the women who sing the choral lyrics of this play, brings the importance for tragedy of such non-dramatic and non-Athenian choruses and performances to the foreground. We may add that, in the theater, the putative original female performers were replaced by boys imitating women; Attic tragedy, Euripidean drama implies, is women's singing doubly estranged from itself; new musical tragedy bewails this estrangement.

This movement of return to the 'roots' can also be interpreted as yet another aspect of the *Helen's* metatheatrical dimension and intense reflection on the processes of its own creation, which is the focus of much of the current scholarship on the play.[466] Much has also been written on the 'experimental' nature of this late, innovative, modern Euripidean drama, which only tenuously conforms to the formal and emotional requirements of the tragic genre. The *Helen* has been read as a play hesitating in form between tragedy and comedy, as a

[464] See also the pertinent discussion in: Murnaghan (forthcoming).
[465] See: Stehle (1997) 117-118; also: Parker (2005) 182-183, and Swift (2010) esp. 186-188.
[466] See especially: Pucci (1977), Zeitlin (1996b), Segal (1986), Downing (1990), Bierl (1991).

'comedy of ideas',[467] or a 'romantic comedy',[468] while others have attempted to locate its tragic core and 'basic seriousness'[469] in specific themes and patterns that underlie and inform its plot and structure, or in the moral, intellectual, philosophical and epistemological concerns of late-fifth century Athens that are reflected in the drama.[470] The deployment of choral song, lyric duets and actors' monodies in the *Helen* is another aspect of the play's modernity, as it is symptomatic of Euripides' interest in New Music and exhibits the same basic tendency as other late Euripidean plays, namely a fondness for astropic and polymetric 'free' forms[471] that were evidently first introduced into tragedy by Euripides,[472] and a shift of the musical burden and of lyric expression from the chorus to actors. The attenuation of the choral element is reflected in the play in the remarkably large stretch between the parodos and the first stasimon, which begins at line 1107, already two thirds of the way into the play. And yet, this chorus sing three

[467] Pippin Burnett (1960) who reads the consolation of Demeter in the second stasimon as an aetiological myth expressing the aim of the play: 'it is to be a diversion to make the Athenians smile in the midst of suffering' (155).
[468] Seidensticker (1982) 153-199. See also Dunn (1996) 133-157 on the comic character and the 'romantic' and 'melodramatic' quality of the *Helen* whose plot is viewed as 'pushing the limits of Greek tragedy in ways that we now associate with the predictable plots of romance and melodrama' (142). On the *Helen* as comedy see also the earlier article by Maniet (1947) and Grube (1961) 332-252. The play has been called a 'parody' by Steiger (1908) and 'satiric' by Sutton (1972). See however the discussion in Mastronarde (2010) chapter 2 on the problematic aspects of the concept of 'genre' and of generic definition and on the dangers of generic labels such as 'romantic comedy', 'romantic tragedy', 'tragicomedy', 'melodrama', when retrospectively applied to Greek drama. Mastronarde also points out that it is important to remember that in the fifth century tragedy was still an ever-evolving genre, which had no ideal fixed form from which Euripides could then deviate. On the same issues see also: Wright (2005), especially chapter 1.
[469] Podlecki (1970), for whom there is a 'basic seriousness of situation and tone, a pattern of carefully reiterated serious themes (personal identity and status, paternity, place of origin and, above all, return thereto after detention in a foreign land)' (402).
[470] See: Solmsen (1934), Zuntz (1960), Walsh (1984) 80-106, Segal (1986), Wright (2005) chapter 4.
[471] Polymetric and astrophic monody: 229-251, 348-385. Polymetric and astrophic actors' duets: 625-697.
[472] Csapo (1999-2000) 407.

beautiful odes, all of them characterized by a sustained reflection on the origins of music and song, tragic song in particular, and engaged in what we interpreted above as a project of 'legitimization' of the avant-garde style of which they are representative examples through association with primordial forms of *mousikê.* The third stasimon represents the conclusion of this movement and, with its reflection on the tragic genre's debt to the archaic female, ritual choral performances and by extension on its own cultic roots, undertakes what can be viewed as a serious and 'conservative' enterprise.

OLD AND NEW SONGS

In conclusion, I would like to return for one last time to the performances with which the chorus assimilate their own song and dance in the three stasima of the play, this time to focus on a significant difference and its implications. The nightingale, the divine chorus composed of Aphrodite, the Muses and the Graces, the dolphins and the cranes are all primordial mythical performers who clearly lie in an atemporal past with respect to the chorus' singing and dancing in the present of the play. Obviously, the archaic maiden choruses of Sparta and the Pleiades with their parthenaic associations also belong to the chorus' and the play's past, at least from the point of view of the audience and the reader of the *Helen*. However, within the time-frame of the plot, the choruses that the protagonist is imagined as initiating upon her return home, and on whose performance the Euripidean chorus project their

own, belong to the *future* of the women's song and dance, of Helen and of the action of the drama. Thus, the chorus who have been consistently endowing their performance with authority by projecting their music back onto that of archetypal figures of song, now sing in a sense the 'first' *partheneion,* initiating, as it were, themselves this famed and revered Spartan tradition and taking on the role of the mythical prototypes whose performances Sparta's maiden choruses will reenact and Alcman's parthenaic poetry will echo in the future. Much like the parodos, which on the one hand is marked by a pervasive awareness of its belatedness in the Greek tradition, but at the same time casts tragic song and lamentation as the 'source' from which the poetic models that are clearly echoed in its course arose, the third stasimon of the *Helen* shows once again how the tragic genre can comment on its own beginnings, but also claim for itself and its *mousikê* a place of priority in the hierarchy of the tradition.

The parodos of the *Helen* stages tragic, female *thrênos* as a primal choral song. The music of the nightingale and of the divine chorus of the second stasimon poses as 'old' and 'new' at the same time. The third stasimon caps the play's reflection on the origins of song by situating tragic song at a time before Alcman and the hallowed Spartan musical traditions that held such a prominent position in the musical, cultural and political controversies of late fifth-century Athens as representatives of an ancient, revered, noble tradition which was invented so as to be opposed to the degenerate current musical practices and tastes. To this tradition, the Euripidean drama answers by fashioning its own: tragic *mousikê* is indeed degenerate and corrupt, female, ecstatic and Dionysiac, melodious but also cacophonous, music born from cries. Finally – much like Helen herself, one might note – it is innovative and 'new' but also 'old' at the same time, and – in a superb ironic twist – capable of representing itself as standing

at the beginning of and inspiring the musical Golden Age that is mourned by the critics of late Euripidean lyrics as irretrievably lost.

EPILOGUE

The reader of a dissertation that seeks to further our understanding of the *mousikê* and the poetics of later Euripidean drama may feel cheated by the absence of a chapter dedicated to the *Bacchae,* undeniably Euripides' most profoundly and explicitly Dionysiac drama. It is especially interesting that the tragedy, one of the very last Euripidean plays written, according to the tradition, near the end of the poet's life in Macedonia, has been treated as a startling but clear departure from the kind of dramaturgy the tragedian produced in the later phase of his career. Once even viewed as an atheist's deathbed conversion, as Euripides' own palinode,[473] the *Bacchae* is often read as a reversion to an older, more traditional form of tragic poetry and as a play that comes closer to a view that we readily accept as properly and genuinely 'tragic' than the other experimental and modern dramas of the later part of the Euripidean corpus.[474] Critics are particularly struck by the impressively archaic aspect of the late drama on the level of form, diction and style.[475] And yet, the *Bacchae* is also a profoundly new musical play, as already recognized by Kranz who includes numerous examples from the odes of the tragedy in his discussion of the impact of the New Music movement on later Euripidean lyric.[476] Besides,

[473] On the earlier reception of the *Bacchae* see the introduction in Dodds (1960), especially xl-xli.
[474] See Dunn (1996) 182, who contrasts the later plays by Euripides (*Helen, Orestes, Phoenician Women, Iphigenia in Aulis*) with the *Bacchae*: 'The case of the *Bacchant Women* is very different. Archaic features of its form and diction, together with the taut logic of its plot, might suggest that the author has reverted to a more traditional conception of tragedy'. Cf. 225, n. 74: '*Bacchant Women* might be considered an exception in which Euripides belatedly rediscovered his medium'.
[475] On the archaic character of the play see especially: Dodds (1960) xxxvi-viii. Cf. Kranz (1933) 232f.
[476] Kranz (1933) 228f.

again as noted by Kranz, among others, and as I also observed earlier in this dissertation, archaizing tendencies and the revival of older forms are to be understood as an essential part of the New Music program.[477]

Rather than viewing the *Bacchae* as a strange experiment with or a return to an older tragic form that was abandoned by Euripides towards the end of his career, we should read the play, as Dodds already suggested long ago, as the natural continuation and climax of tendencies that run through the Euripidean tragic corpus and as the fullest expression of preoccupations that especially permeate the later phase of Euripides' poetic art.[478] Dodds[479] brings in as examples the ode to the Mountain Mother in the *Helen,* and the ritual / hymnic song in the *Hypsipyle* that we discussed as prime instances of new musical lyric narratives that strive to create a distinctively and authentically cultic, Dionysiac atmosphere and experience. In his discussion of the new dithyramb and the new musical dramatic lyrics at the end of the fifth century, Bernhard Zimmermann is right to note that the *Bacchae* represents a distinctive moment in the archaizing tendency of the New Music;[480] he does not hesitate, however, to describe the cultic, archaizing quality of the new dithyramb, as superficial, decorative, unimportant – a comment that also applies to the late lyrics of tragedy, whose evolution is

[477] Kranz (1933) esp. 234-235 on New Music and the *Bacchae.* It is interesting, however, that, even though he recognizes the influence of the New Music on the lyrics of the *Bacchae,* Kranz insists on contrasting the play to the rest of the late, new musical Euripidean dramas. In his discussion of word-repetition as a key feature of the new style verse, Kranz argues that the *Bacchae* is the only play in which this characteristic new musical trait functions as the vehicle for the expression of pure cultic and religious feeling: 'Nur in den Liedern der *Bakchen,* z. B. der Parodos (V. 68. 83 = 152. 107. 116 = 165) empfinden wir die zahlreichen Wortwiederholungen als das, was sie ursprünglich waren: als natürlichen Ausdruck gesteigerter religiöser Empfindung'. (See: Kranz (1933) 232).
[478] Dodds (1960) xxxvi, xxxix-l. Cf. Csapo (1999-2000).
[479] Dodds (1960) xlii.
[480] Zimmermann (1992) 134, cf. Zimmermann (1989).

sketched as parallel to that of the genre of dithyramb. The reader of the *Bacchae* and, I hope, of this dissertation would strongly disagree.

The return to the past and the quest for a moment of poetic initiation and inception, an originary moment in Greek musical culture which the choruses and the characters who sing the lyrics of late Euripidean drama can appropriate for their own modern performances is, of course, one of the multiple manifestations of the new musical odes' proclivity to archaization. This recurrent Euripidean gesture is one that I have sought to trace throughout the course of this dissertation in the odes of the four late Euripidean plays that I explored. It is a gesture that needs to be interpreted within the wider frame of the voracious appetite and the 'imperialistic' tendencies of the tragic genre, which I briefly touched upon in my investigation of the chorus of the *Trojan Women* in the first chapter; it is also a movement that should be viewed as concomitant with the mythical expansiveness and inclusiveness, and the quasi-epic universalism which is particularly characteristic of the later phase of Euripides' tragic production and of which the plays discussed in this dissertation, especially the *Phoenician Women* and the *Hypsipyle* offer conspicuous instantiations.

In the third stasimon of the *Iphigenia in Aulis* – another later Euripidean drama whose comprehensiveness and expansive mythic vision rival those of epic and are comparable to those of the *Phoenician Women,* and which I hope to study more fully in the future – two primordial mythical choruses appear to sing of the glorious festivities that accompanied the wedding of Thetis and Peleus. The first chorus is composed of the Muses, and the second of the Nereids, Thetis' customary attendants, who also make a brief appearance near the beginning of the

Trojan Women, whirling in the depths of the sea, and in the third stasimon of the *Helen* in the figure of a representative of the group, Galaneia. The ode is a salient example of the late, new musical Euripidean lyric compositions. It is also permeated by references to song, dance and the sounds of Dionysiac celebration. We hear how the chorus of Pierian Muses at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis strike their feet on the earth (1042-1043), while singing a *hymenaios* accompanied by the 'Libyan *lôtus*' (1036) and raising a piercing *iachê.* The maritime nymphs occupy an important position in the musical imagery of the avant-garde verse; much like the dolphins, in whose company they are often found, the Nereids also resonate with Dionysiac associations.[481] Their depiction in our passage as 'winding' (εἱλισσόμεναι κύκλια) by the white, gleaming sand (1054-1055) is typical of their recurrent portrayal in Greek art and poetry as a maidenly chorus dancing in circles, a chorus who, as Csapo has argued, is consistently associated with circular, cultic, dithyrambic-style dance.[482] Their number – fifty – stressed in typically Euripidean fashion (πεντήκοντα κόραι (1056)),[483] is again evocative of the dance of the dithyramb. This circular formation and motion, according to Csapo, 'came increasingly to be figured as the original form of all dance'.[484] The stasimon then presents us with yet another instance of a late Euripidean lyric narrative representing mythical, archetypal choruses as new musical at the same time, situating their modern performances in a mythical time before Achilles was even born, before the Trojan War, Homer and his epics. The plot of the drama itself is set at an originary, pre-Iliadic moment – that of the inauguration of the great war.

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[481] See: Csapo (2003) and the discussion of the dolphins in the third stasimon of the *Helen* in chapter four above.
[482] Csapo (2003). Cf. Csapo (1999-2000).
[483] 'The point (…) is not so much the number, as Euripides' persistent *enumeration.* Outside *Electra* Nereids are mentioned seven times in Euripides, and every time they are said to be fifty', notes Csapo (2003) 74 (emphasis in the original). Compare Csapo (1999-2000) 418.
[484] Csapo (2008) 285.

We also had the chance to observe that the lyric form of *citharodia*, which, as already noted above, was perceived in the fifth century as one of the most ancient and authoritative forms of poetry, is singled out systematically in Euripidean lyrics as representing an important moment of poetic beginnings and a great model to be engaged with – imitated and at the same time antagonized in tragedy's quest for a place of priority for its medium in the hierarchy of Greek culture. In fact, I would venture to suggest that it is possible that Euripidean lyrics foreground the form of *citharodia* as prior to that of Homeric epic, and thus the lyric mode as anterior to the epic mode (again a gesture of prioritization of Euripides' own – lyric – medium?). Perhaps the clearest instance of this view is represented in the protagonist's singing of the Argonauts and the lyre of Orpheus in the parodos of the *Hypsipyle*, which, as I argued in the third chapter, is possibly evocative of a citharodic tradition that functioned as a model for and was alluded to in the *Odyssey*.

Besides the *Hypsipyle,* the *Antiope* stands out in the Euripidean corpus as another profoundly musical play in which the song-form of *citharodia* occupies an important place – functioning as the medium which allows the drama to anchor its musical discourse to a moment of inception of ancient and hallowed poetic traditions, and at the same time as the vehicle for reflection on the intense ongoing cultural and metapoetic debate in Athens of the late fifth century. In this play, the proto-citharode Amphion sings a monody of cosmo-theogonic content to the lyre in 'Terpandrian dactyls'.[485] It has been suggested that the ode forms a hymn to

[485] Snell (1964) 73. The first line of Amphion's song is most likely F VI K. Αἰθέρα καὶ Γαῖαν πάντων γενέτειρα ἀείδω.

Dionysus[486] like the one performed by the chorus of the *Hypsipyle* in the ode that (most likely) forms the second stasimon of the drama. An aura of primordiality envelops the performance: as Amphion is the hero who first introduces the *cithara* and its music among mortals, the chorus of Attic farmers express their curiousness, wonder and amazement at the new instrument and art-form in a manner that vividly recalls the reaction of the startled satyrs to the sound of Hermes' freshly-invented lyre in Sophocles' *Ichneutae*.[487] Current scholarship has widely accepted Wilamowitz' suggestion that Fragment 911 N contains part of the response of the chorus to Amphion's music:[488] in these lines, the chorus wish they were able to grow wings on their backs, equip their feet with the winged sandals of the Sirens and fly to the sky to visit Zeus.[489] It has been observed that the language employed to describe the reaction of the first mortal audience to this novel form of music and song has a lot in common with that used in association with current musical fashions and innovations.[490] In particular, the emphasis on the feeling of lightness and the desire to become airborne look to the motif of the 'aerial' quality that was regarded by those unsympathetic to the musical avant-garde as a salient feature of both the new style compositions and their authors and was systematically parodied in Aristophanic comedy.[491]

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[486] See: Wilson (1999-2000) 441 n. 47. On the difficulties of defining the qualities of the ode see: Kambitsis (1972) 31.
[487] See: López Cruces (2007), Wilson (1999-2000) 440-441.
[488] See: Webster (1967) 207, Kambitsis (1972) 135, Wilson (1999-2000) 441, and López Cruces (2007) 11. See however Podlecki (1996) for reservations and objections against this view.
[489] Χρύσεαι δή μοι πτέρυγες περὶ νώτωι / καὶ τὰ Σειρήνων πτερόεντα πέδιλ' ἁρμόζεται. / βάσομαι δ' εἰς αἰθέρα πουλὺν ἀερθεὶς / Ζηνὶ προσμείξων.
[490] See: Wilson (1999-2000) 441, Saïd (2006) 114. See also López Cruces (2007) who discusses further connections between Amphion and the New Music established in the play, especially the representation of the appearance and lifestyle of Amphion as effeminate which is comparable to the effeminacy of Agathon parodied in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae.*
[491] See: Aristophanes, *Birds* 1383-1385, 1387-1390, and 1392-1394; see also *Clouds* 333-338.

It thus seems that Amphion, like Orpheus, Euneus and the title-character of the *Hypsipyle,* is another proto-citharodic hero who cultivates the art of the modern, new musical, 'Timothean' and 'Dionysiac' *cithara.* The *Antiope* is then another late Euripidean drama that casts an archetypal citharode as a new musician,[492] and the primordial chorus who is graced with the first experience of the melody of the lyre as a distinctively new musical one. Peter Wilson briefly entertains this possibility only to reject it on the grounds that Amphion is represented as a reactionary, conservative figure.[493] But I suggested that the *Hypsipyle* stages precisely this situation in its representation of the new musical Orpheus, Euneus and the protagonist of the drama as mythical musical precursors of the Euneid *genos*, thereby dismantling the very dualities and oppositions on which the enemies of the new style built their rhetoric; I further argued that so does the *Helen* in its foregrounding of the play's odes as distinctively modern and new musical but at the same time as archetypes to be imitated and reenacted by the choruses of Alcman, and as the source of ancient and authoritative Spartan traditions of *mousikê.*

According to Francis Dunn, the *Helen* reflects Euripides' 'doubt about the viability of his medium'.[494] Dunn also writes that 'Euripides (…) probably would have agreed that what he saw and understood in the later years of his career could no longer be expressed by means of tragedy'.[495] These formulations nicely capture a sentiment that is shared by a large number of

[492] López Cruces (2007) reads Amphion's argumentation in the *agon* as a defense of the new musical taste and practices.
[493] Wilson (1999-2000).
[494] Dunn (1996) 157.
[495] *Op. cit.*

modern scholars who feel that the later phase of the Euripidean corpus (with the exception of the *Bacchae*) is pushing the limits of the tragic form in ways that are revealing of the deep crisis of tragedy and at the same time anticipate the birth of new genres, such as New Comedy and the novel.[496] Without wishing to devalue this kind of approach, which I believe has its merits, I hope to have shown that – at least on the level of their lyrics in their fundamental and systematic reflection on tragic musical discourse – the *Helen* as well as the rest of the later Euripidean dramas studied in this dissertation have a different story to tell. Further, in casting tragic song as 'old' and 'new' at the same time, late Euripidean lyrics function as the prime vehicle for the expression of the tragic medium's aspiration to challenge authoritative traditions of Greek poetry and to establish the song-form of tragedy as the dominant form of high literature and *mousikê*;[497] and this should be seen as an ambitious, serious and conservative endeavor. At the same time, I suggested, the confrontation of the late odes with their literary past is a marker of true modernity; it is symptomatic of an art-form that feels the enormous weight of the legacy of the past and operates under the 'anxiety of influence' in a way that looks forward to the poetics of the Alexandrian era whose own struggle with the traditions of the past betrays a consciousness that is already largely present in the late lyrics of Euripides.

[496] See: Knox (2001 (1970)) on Euripidean drama anticipating the form of New Comedy, Post (1994) on the *Helen* and Menander, Dunn (1996) on the *Helen* and the *Phoenician Women* looking forward to New Comedy and the novel. See also the bibliography in chapter four, p. 216, n. 468 above.

[497] On the replacement of Homeric epic by tragedy as the prime model of high poetry see: Else (1957) 203-204.

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