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Euripides and Thucydides from 415-411: thematic parallels

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EURIPIDES AND THUCYDIDES FROM 415-411: THEMATIC PARALLELS

by

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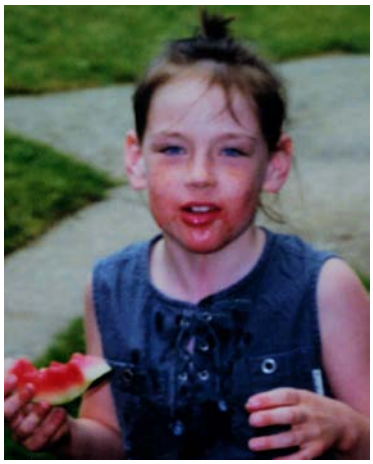

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I consider Euripides' tragedies of 415 (*Alexandros-Palamedes-Troiades*) and 412 (*Helen-Andromeda*), and books 6-8 of Thucydides' *Histories* (on 416/15-411), with attention to particular thematic elements in each text. These include: ritual and religious impiety; infighting and power struggles between the upper-classes; and personal or collective abandonment to erotic impulses. I propose that during the period in question (or when writing about the period in question, in Thucydides' case), both authors place novel emphasis on the combined effect of all three elements.

This novelty expresses itself in two major ways. First, the authors treat religious indecorum, aristocratic jockeying, and erotic impulsivity as a set, with a consistency that exists neither in Euripides' previous works, nor in Thucydides' *Histories* 1-5. Second, both authors develop a particular vocabulary for these religious and socio-political struggles. Thucydides introduces new terms, or

prefers alternative definitions for some that he regularly employs. The result is a section of text that is at once consistent with the material that precedes it, yet outstanding for its peculiar thematic and verbal elements. The focused consistency of Euripides' thematic and verbal choices in his trilogy of 415 supports the argument that the tragedies of this year must be read as an interdependent set, in which the first two works hold the keys to the content of the third. In his works of 412, choice terms signal Euripides' unique engagement with the mythical tradition; choice themes link *Helen* and *Andromeda* while separating them from Euripides' other works.

My aim in considering these innovations is to offer a fresh way into a wide-ranging conversation regarding Euripides' and Thucydides' shared historical context and the similarities between their respective texts. A focused perspective calls attention to the exceptionality of the narrative subset in question, the perception of which can be dulled by generalizing, comprehensive approaches. Euripides and Thucydides appear to have shared certain literary sensibilities that set them in close alignment with one another — and apart from their contemporaries — as men whose contributions to the broader literary landscape were remarkable for the precise features of their construction and expression.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AJPh	*American Journal of Philology*. Baltimore (Md.): Johns Hopkins University Press.
Austin	Austin, C. 1968. *Nova Fragmenta Euripidea in Papyris Reperta*. Berlin.
Balot et al. 2016	Balot, R., S. Forsdyke, and E. Foster, eds. 2016. *The Oxford Handbook of Thucydides*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Bernabé	Bernabé, A. 1987. *Poetarum Epicorum Graecorum Testimonia et Fragmenta.* Leipzig.
BICS	*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*. London: University of London, Institute of Classical Studies.
CJ	*The Classical Journal*. Ashland (Va.): Randolph-Macon College, Department of Classics, Classical Association of the Middle West and South.
ClAnt	*Classical Antiquity.* Berkeley (Calif.): University of California Press.
Collard et al. 1995	Collard, C., Cropp. M. J., and K. H. Lee., eds. 1995. *Euripides: Selected Fragmentary Plays, Vol. I*. Warminster: Aris & Phillips.
Collard et al. 2004	Collard, C., Cropp, M. J., and J. Gibert., eds. 2004. *Euripides: Selected Fragmentary Plays, Vol. II.* Warminster: Aris & Philips.
CPh	*Classical Philology: a Journal Devoted to Research in Classical Antiquity*. Chicago (Ill.): University of Chicago Press.
CQ	*Classical Quarterly*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CW	*Classical World*. Pittsburgh (Pa.): Duquesne University, Department of Classics, Classical Association of the Atlantic States.
D	Diggle, J. 1998. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta Selecta.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
D-K	Diels, H. and W. Kranz. 1951-2. *Die Fragemente der Vorsokratiker,* 6th edn. Berlin.
Davies	Davies, M. 1988. *Epicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. Göttingen.
Gomme *HCT*	Gomme, A. W., ed. 1945-81. I: *Introduction and Commentary on Book I*; II-III: *The Ten Years' War (Books II–III and Books IV–V)*; IV: *Books V.25–VII* (with A. Andrewes and K.J. Dover); V. *Book VIII* (with A. Andrewes and K.J. Dover). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
G&R	*Greece and Rome*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Hermann	Hermann, G., ed. 1811-41. *Euripides: Hecuba, Iphigenia in Aulide, Iphigenia Taurica, Helena, Andromacha, Cyclops, Phoenissae, Orestes, 2 vols*. (repr. 2010, Cambridge Library Collection). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Historia	*Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte = revue d'histoire ancienne*. Stuttgart: Steiner.
HSPh	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press.
ICS	*Illinois Classical Studies*. Champaign (Ill.): Stipes Publishing L.L.C.
IG I³	Lewis, D., ed. 1994. *IG I³ Inscriptiones Graecae I: Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno anteriores. Fasc. 1. Decreta et tabulae magistratuum (nos. 1-500).* 3rd edn. Berlin.

JHS	*The Journal of Hellenic Studies*. London: Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies.
Kock	Kock, T. 1880-7. *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*. Leipzig.
LSJ	Liddell, H. G. and R. Scott, eds. 1843. *A Greek-English Lexicon,* 9th edn. with supplement (rev. by H. S. Jones, 1968). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Meineke	Meineke, A., ed. 1839-57. *Fragmenta Comicorum Graecorum*. Berolini: Typis et Impensis G. Reimeri.
N *or* Nauck	Nauck, A. 1889. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, 2nd edn. (repr. with *Supplementum* by B. Snell, 1964. Hiddlesheim). Leipzig.
P. Oxy.	Grenfell, B. P. and A. S. Hunt, eds. 1869-1934. *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.
PEG	= Bernabé *(above)*
PMGF	Davies, M. 1991-. *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
QUCC	*Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica*. Pisa: Serra.
Radt	Radt, S., ed. 1977. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragementa, vol IV: Sophocles.* Göttingen.
RhM	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*. Frankfurt am Main: Sauerländer.
RPh	*Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*. Paris: Pr. Universitairesde France.

Smyth	Smyth, H. W. 1956. *Greek Grammar*, rev. by G. M. Messing. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
SyllClass	*Syllecta Classica*. Iowa City (Iowa): University of Iowa, Department of Classics.
TAPhA	*Transactions of the American Philological Association*. Baltimore (Md.): Johns Hopkins University Press.
TLG	Berkowitz, L., K. A. Squitier, and W. A. Johnson, eds. 1990. *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae Canon of Greek Authors and Works*, 3rd edn. New York: Oxford University Press.
TrGF	*Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. (Göttingen, 1971-): I. *Poeta Minores*, edited by B. Snell (1971, rev. R. Kannicht, 1981); II. *Adespota*, edited by R. Kannicht and B Snell (1981); III. *Aeschylus*, edited by S. Radt (1985); IV. *Sophocles*, edited by S. Radt (1977); V. *Euripides*, edited by R. Kannicht (2006).
W	West, M. L., trans.2003. *Greek Epic Fragments*. (Loeb Classical Library No. 497). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Wehrli	Wehrli, F., ed. 1967. *Die Schule des Aristoteles, vol. 2: Aristoxenos,* 2nd. edn. Basel/Stuttgart.
YClS	*Yale Classical Studies*. New York (N.Y.): Cambridge University Press.

Introduction

I. The temporal and textual boundaries of this study

When one compares Thucydides' *Histories* to Euripides' extant tragedies, a number of broad, thematic resonances between the texts become apparent. In general, this is unsurprising. Euripides and Thucydides lived through many of the same fluctuations in, for example, popular philosophical thought, linguistic norms, and artistic practice. An examination of these two authors, of the manner in which they address certain intellectual movements and historical events of the mid-late 5th century in comparable ways, reveals the theoretical (e.g., philosophical, rhetorical) and technical (e.g., verbal, metrical) trends that are broadly relevant to the period in which the two lived and composed, while also demonstrating how these trends reverberated within and across multiple genres.

These general points of contact between Euripides and Thucydides have long attracted scholarly interest. At the turn of the 20th century, F. M. Cornford examined how Thucydides structured his text, and imbued it with a tragic tone, by drawing from the same well of storytelling traditions as his dramatic contemporaries. In the 1930s, J. H. Finley argued for the verisimilitude of the speeches delivered by public figures in Thucydides' history by grounding their rhetoric in the vocabulary and argumentation that characters in Euripidean

drama had employed. G. Zuntz acknowledged such overlap in 1958, yet emphasized the need to take a measured approach when listening for the echo of contemporary politics in the continual sound wave of the mythical tradition. Mme. de Romilly set the standard for such a cautious approach in the 1960s, using Thucydides' historical record as a means of highlighting the topical relevance of Euripides' tragic works, without arguing for a definitive, 1:1 relationship between dramatic and actual events. Throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries, scholars such as Macleod (1983), Michelini (1994), Hose (1995) and Rubel (2000) — to name only a very few — have continued to define the nature of the literary ground that Euripides and Thucydides often appear to share.[1]

This study aims to contribute to a longstanding and far-reaching conversation by focusing on a particular segment of Euripides' and Thucydides' respective literary careers. It is not simply the case that Euripides and Thucydides each dealt with comparable themes at some point —such a conclusion is so universal as to be meaningless.[2] The question I am asking is not:

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[1] See, e.g., Cornford 1907; de Romilly 1965, 28-47; Finley 1938 (repr. 1967), esp. 51-4; Macleod 1983 140-58; Michelini 1994, 219-52; Hose 1995; Rubel 2000. See also Mastronarde 2010, esp. 209-11 and 233-4.

[2] It is always possible to find *some* passage in Thucydides that supports one's impression of Euripides, or vice versa. D. G. Smith (2004, 59-64), for example, attempts to justify a political subtext in a passage of a Euripidean satyr play, which likely belonged to 408, on the basis of the sentiments it shares with Thucydides' Corinthian debate in book 1, which represents the political

"Did Euripides and Thucydides both write about *eros*?" Rather, I want to know whether or not Euripides and Thucydides dealt with *eros* at the same time, in the same way, and to the same end. As such, I have chosen to narrow my field of vision to a limited period of time, 415-11 B.C.E., in the belief that there is something unique about the way in which Euripides and Thucydides consider and communicate about impactful socio-political issues during these years.[3]

In Euripides' tragedies of 415 (*Alexandros-Palamedes-Troiades*) and 412 (*Andromeda-Helen*), and in the portions of Thucydides' *Histories* that correspond to the same years (books 6-8: winter 416/5- summer 411), both authors explore three inter-related factors. These factors are: 1) religious laxity and outright impiety; 2) political competition and personal promotion among the nobility; 3)

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atmosphere in 432/1. See earlier Macleod 1983, 155-8 on Euripides' *Hecuba* (c. 424) and Thucydides' Plataean Debate (3.52-68; "date" of 431).

[3] Arrowsmith (1963, 32-56) wrote extensively on what he termed "the loss of innocence" that supposedly occurred in the late 5th century B. C., and the response of authors, such as Euripides, Thucydides, Sophocles, and Aristophanes, who were "haunted" by a shifting socio-political landscape (34). More recently, G. Meltzer (2006, 1) has written that Euripides' tragedies, nostalgic and investigative, "[epitomize] the discursive practice of his era, as exemplified by Thucydidean history, Aristophanic comedy, and Platonic philosophy." Meltzer goes on to describe the questions Euripidean tragedy poses as those which remain relevant to today's reader, yet one could easily and legitimately insert "Thucydides," "Aristophanes," or "Plato" as the ancient author responsible for posing such queries. Considered in this way, Euripides and Thucydides (and their relative contemporaries) are witnesses to a "crisis of values" so homogeneous and overarching that it may apply broadly both to ancient Athens and modern America (e.g., 2, 28-32). Furthermore, W. R. Connor (1977 289-98) has already explained why such a view of Thucydides as a conventional moralist is not conducive to a sensitive reading of the text. For a contrast to Meltzer's study, see also G. Crane (1998, 134-47), who surveys important differences between Thucydides' artistic choices and those of his contemporaries.

and the foolish indulgence of erotic impulses and desires. These select themes, which appear throughout Euripides' and Thucydides' respective texts, garner each author's attention in new and unique ways during the period in question.

As a result, these particular segments of each author's corpus are remarkable for the extent to which each author privileges this specifc mixture of themes during this select period. The list of ingredients is not new, that is, but the proportions of the recipe have changed, allowing certain flavors to dominate to a novel extent. The tragedies of 415 and 412, and the narrative of 416/5-11 are also remarkable due to the consistency with which each author insists upon presenting these thematic elements, these particular flavors, as having a mutually-dependent impact on the audience members' experience.

By identifying and analyzing specific thematic elements that appear only at certain points (and thus to greater effect) in each author's respective works, one can perceive the exceptionality of Thucydides' narrative of 416/5-411, and of the Euripidean works dated to 415 or 412. The existence of these outstanding thematic elements demonstrates how Euripides and Thucydides each express clear variations in topical and compositional concern over time.[4] Euripides' late

[4] On such variations, see, e.g., McDermott 2000, 239-59 (on Euripides' two *Hippolytus* tragedies), or Dewald 2006, *passim* (on changes in Thucydides' compositional technique over time).

works are not a comprehensive symphony of despair, but a suite of variations on particular themes.[5] In his final (extant) books, Thucydides does not simply confirm the characterizations that he creates in books 1-5, but recalls these commonplaces as a means of emphasizing the distinct features of events c. 416/5-411.

What can account for this parallel movement in Euripides' and Thucydides' respective thematic focuses? The scholars noted above, and others besides, have all shown how a shared social context provides common ground from which these authors can depart, and to which they can return. It is reasonable to consider that the authors' respective educations and social experiences, and their contemporaneous exposure to specific events, prompted them to react in similar ways to these circumstances. Given the breadth of the scholarly arguments that have been offered in favor of this position, I have made little attempt in what follows to shore it up. This position is a reasonable one, but it is not without its limits.[6]

First, because Thucydides is our most robust historical source for the period in which Euripides wrote, and in which he himself wrote, it is a

[5] Knox 1985, 1-12.
[6] Zuntz 1958 (repr. 1972), 54-61.

precarious exercise to justify the tenor of Euripides' tragedies by searching for the events in Thucydides' text to which this tenor might (cor)respond.[7] An approach that justifies literary content as a reaction to a contemporary event risks blurring the line between the facts themselves of an event, and the manner in which a historical source (i.e., Thucydides) presents the facts of that event.[8] The degree of accuracy that Thucydides attains in his narrative of Athenian affairs exists in tandem, and sometimes in conflict with, his artistic choices,[9] and these choices are important because they are not categorically dictated by the nature of the events themselves.[10]

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[7] One well-known example of this is the scholarly argument as to whether or not Thucydides' presentation of events at Melos explains the content of Euripides' *Troiades*. On this, see van Erp Taalman Kip 1987, 414-19, and the response from Kuch 1998, 147-53; Croally 1994, 234; Torrance 2013, 234-5; Ringer 2016, 164-5. In his own study, which considers many of the same texts as this dissertation, M. Hose (1995) also makes a guarded approach to identifying particular passages of tragedy or comedy as direct allusions to contemporary events. However, Hose does often attempt to interpret the dramatic works which he considers with respect to the social climate at large (e.g., 36-45; 127-33). Furthermore, Hose does not consistently question the reasons for which Thucydides portrays events as he did, but uses the *History* as a more-or-less neutral witness to the events of the real world (*passim*).

[8] Thucydides' Melian Dialogue has spurred considerable disagreement among modern readers. Scholars have argued at length over the tenor of this portion of Thucydides' narrative, with some rejecting the position that the Melian Dialogue represents a condemnation of Athens' imperial program. For this position, see, e.g., de Ste Croix 1972; Cohen 1984; Doyle 1990; Bosworth 1993. Arguably, however, Thucydides does suggest a link between Athenian conduct at Melos and Athens' disastrous failure in Sicily. On this, see, e.g., Liebescheuetz 1968, as well as the insightful analysis in Greenwood 2015, 51-3.

[9] Henderson 2016, 605-20.

[10] Regarding book 6 in particular, D. Kagan (2009, 162) neatly summarizes the idea behind many previous studies, writing that this section of Thucydides' work is: "the most carefully constructed for dramatic effect, the most hauntingly convincing." On Thucydides' method of constructing his book 6 narrative, see also: Hunter 1973, 123-48; Rawlings 1981, 85-125; Connor 1984, 158-84. On

As for Euripides' own artistic choices, even (or perhaps especially) in the case that certain of his tragedies did have a specific resonance with Athenian events as Thucydides describes them, it is still untenable to adopt the position that the playwright always had Athenian affairs at the forefront of his mind. Such an approach assumes that Euripides composed his tragedies with a view to their presentation before a limited and specific audience, rather than in the interest of their widespread appeal and production, and this is likely not the case.[11]

Recently, V. Wohl has articulated a means of describing the thematic confluences between Euripides and Thucydides that incorporates both shared context and personal imperative. She describes how: "a play like *Trojan Women* does not merely mirror the realities of Athens's ongoing war: it constructs those

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Thucydides' use of temporal manipulation to guide the reader's perception of how the expedition in Sicily will unfold, see Rood 1998, 124-32.

[11] The physical destruction and mutually-damning violence contained in Euripides' Trojan trilogy of 415, for example, was certainly not limited to Attica, but was recurrent and widespread. Here, we may use Thucydides purely as a source of the events that occurred, e.g., the Spartans' destruction of Argos' walls in the winter of 417/6, and subsequent slaughter of the men of Hysia (Thuc. 5.83.2); the Argives' reprisals against Phliasia (5.83.3) during the same winter; their renewed, but botched attacks the following winter (5.116.1). On the widespread violence of this period, see also Price 2001, 272-3. In addition, there is ample evidence to suggest that Euripides' tragedies would have appealed to audiences from beyond Attica's borders, including the Panhellenic attendance of the City Dionysia (at which *Troiades*, for example, was performed), and the likelihood that tragedians—Euripides included— wrote their works with the possibility of reperformance abroad in mind. On these issues, see: Easterling 1994, 73-80; Dearden 1999, 222-48; Revermann 1999-2000, 451–67; Rhodes 2003, 104-19; Millis 2015, 228-308.

realities by providing the Athenians (of whom Thucydides is just one particularly articulate and authoritative example) with a means of comprehending the events unfolding around them."[12] Wohl's instinct to read Euripides' trilogy of 415 forwards into Thucydides' account of the same year (rather than reading Thucydides backwards into Euripides) is a good one. The next step, beyond the one Wohl takes, is to investigate the precise nature of the constructs that these authors create and utilize. We can refine this investigation by isolating and examining particular Euripidean thematic progressions as organizational patterns to which Thucydides was himself acutely sensitive, and upon which each man relied as a set of compositional guiding principles.

II. The method and structure of this study

In essence, I have approached each text as an author's attempt to map a particular subject in a novel way, and each author as a cartographer who

[12] Wohl 2015, 117. Euripides' focus on social stratification and infighting among a city's elite is also a theme that would readily have resonated with an Athenian audience in 415. Hyperbolus, an important figure for politicians who presented themselves as populists, had been ostracized c. 416, and individuals who relied on their aristocratic roots as political currency (e.g., Alcibiades), firmed up their position as the most prominent members of Athens' political elite. On political tensions in this period, see Kagan 1991, 143-7.

combines received information with personal observations in order to create his own diagram. The aim is not to pinpoint a certain location, or to direct the reader to a particular destination by drawing a line from point A to point B. Rather, my aim is to consider how each map was made — noting the markers which comprise its key, and contemplating how these symbols affect the overall presentation and intelligibility of the image. I realize that this may be frustrating to some — what is the purpose of a map if not to provide its viewer with a precise sense of space and direction? Yet I hold that the texts in question are worth admiring for reasons beyond their predictive or advisory value. A map can be at once useful and beautiful; for better or for worse, I have focused on the latter quality.

While I have considered Euripides and Thucydides as the mapmakers, and the theater-goer or reader as the traveler whose impressions are guided by these authors' creative choices, I have attempted to maintain a status that lies somewhere in between. No one chapter of this study culminates in a grand or comprehensive conclusion, in the argument that either Thucydides or Euripides is right to hew to a certain portrayal. Rather, each chapter serves as a concentrated commentary on the thematic and verbal legend of a particular Euripidean tragedy, or a section of Thucydides' *Histories*. I have focused my

commentary on the elements of each work's legend that correspond to the most emphatic markers on each author's literary layout, in order to delinieate how these markers contribute to a unique rendering of common ground.

Each chapter offers my reading of the text in question, and my method of reading is much the same in each case. With regard to my focus on the interrelated themes of impiety, intra-noble competition, and erotic laxity, this method is subjective. My decision to investigate these themes in particular is based on my own impression that Euripides and Thucydides mark out unique pathways through existing narrative territory by innovating upon extant paradigms (e.g., the cycle of stories attached to the Trojan War) for discussing religion, social competition, and emotional conflict.[13] This novelty provides a certain scheme to their respective texts. Due to the uniquely consistent-emphasis that Euripides and Thucydides place upon *these* themes during *this* period, this scheme is unmatched by that of the tragedies or chapters which belong to the years before 416/5.

[13] See Wright 2007, 412-31, on the use of the Trojan War as a paradigmatic event, which authors working across multiple genres used "as a vehicle to reflect on contemporary conflicts in all sorts of different ways… as a means through which the causes and justifiability of wars were explored" (413).

In order to support this subjective analysis, I simultaneously examine a quantifiable set of evidence, namely, the particular words that Euripides and Thucydides use as a means of signaling their focal thematic elements to the reader. The precision with which these authors choose certain terms, and the measured control with which they both employ this selective vocabulary, supports the impression that there are noteworthy differences between the texts or chapters on which this study focuses, and the extant remainder of each author's body of work. Both playwright and historian capitalize upon this minute verbal precision as a means of marking out the novel pathways they create through their chosen subjects. The works of this period, that is, are unique on a verbal — and therefore objectively-observable — level.

In order to give each author his due, I have devoted separate chapters to: Euripides' works of 415 (Chapters 1-2); Thucydides' narrative of 416/5 (Chapter 3); Euripides' works of 412 (Chapter 4); and Thucydides' narrative of 412/1 (Chapter 5). The subsections of each chapter explore the markers — a particular term, a repeated theme — that serve to make each author's map of a particular subject intelligible to the reader, and that validate each author's vantage point on this subject, and thus his decision to present it as he does.

III. Euripides and Thucydides: sharing a specific paradigm

Disrespect for publicly-sanctioned religious norms, political self-promotion among a city's most powerful, and uninhibited lust — this thematic combination holds considerable influence over the course of action in Euripides' *Troiades* of 415 (and likely over his *Alexandros* and *Palamedes* of the same year), as well as that of his *Helen* and *Andromeda* of 412. Though each of the thematic elements described above may be found in Euripides' earlier, extant tragedies, Euripides' works of 415 and 412 explore the mutually-informative effects of these themes with a focused intensity that has no parallel among the playwright's previous works.

In *Troiades*, cracks in the ideological cohesion of both the Trojans and the Hellenic forces deepen and expand under the collective pressure of these interrelated forces, until intangible types of religious, political, and emotional corruption manifest as the physical destruction of a city, its inhabitants, and (eventually) its conquerors. Based upon the fragmentary evidence, it seems that

Euripides repeats these themes throughout his trilogy of 415, and thus creates a cohesive impression regarding the major elements of Troy's demise.[14]

Importantly, this thematic reverberation does not make the tragedies repetitive. Rather, Euripides reprises these themes only to rearrange and rework them, to reduce one and intensify another. The result is that each tragedy functions not only as an independent unit alongside its companions, but also derives meaning and impact from a deeply-layered, thematic interrelationship with and interdependence upon them.

The thematic interdependence, which Euripides arguably achieves in 415, is also well worth considering with respect to his works of 412. In both *Helen* and *Andromeda*, ἔρως, in its many forms, runs roughshod over Euripides' characters, exercising a novel degree of control, and inspiring impiety and violence at a new level of intensity. These novelties of emphasis distinguish the works of 412 from others in the extant Euripidean corpus; many of the latter deal with the same themes, but not in the same way.[15] In his *Helen*, furthermore, Euripides explores the incorporated effects of impiety and personal promotion. In the model of

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[14] For a recent, detailed analysis of the trilogy and the interrelationship shared by its tragedies, see Clay (in Esposito, ed.) 2010, 229-51.

[15] For example, on the effects of *eros* in Euripides' *Medea* of 431 and *Hippolytus* of 428, see Esposito (ed.) 2002, 22-4.

behavior that he creates, Euripides shows how religious impudence can provide a means, albeit an ironic one, of personal rescue.

In his works of 415 and 412, Euripides charts his characters' suffering in ways that are timeless and universally applicable, but he also homes in on certain elements of this suffering in a precise and unprecedented manner. The thematic and verbal content of these particular tragedies represents a particular map of common themes. For his part, Thucydides appears to be particularly sensitive to those elements that define Euripides' portait of civic decline, and he takes advantage of many of the same elements as organizing principles of his own work.

To be fair, it is unlikely that Thucydides would have appreciated the implications of the above hypothesis. Early in the *Histories*, the author defines his manner of composition, in part, by explaining how his methods contrast with those of other composers. Due to his sober "discussion of proofs" (ἐκ δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων τεκμηρίων) he considers himself unlike the singing poets, for the latter privilege arrangement over credibility.[16] Thucydides argues that he is also unlike the so-called logographers, who create imprecise yet superficially-

[16] Thuc. 1.21.1: "How the poets have sung about events in a manner given to embellishment more than believability" (ὡς ποιηταὶ ὑμνήκασι περὶ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ μεῖζον κοσμοῦντες μᾶλλον πιστεύων).

convincing narratives (ξυνέθεσαν…ὄντα ἀνεξέλεγκτα, 1.21.1).[17] This ensures that their tales will occupy a place in the realm of myth (ἐπὶ τὸ μυθῶδες), but renders their stories valueless to one who seeks a genuine account.[18]

When he at last gives a substantive definition to his own work, Thucydides opts to call his *opus* by what it is not: τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες (1.22.4).[19] Because his work is not the "stuff of myth," which he suspects his listeners will crave, Thucydides provides an alternative criterion for judgment. He requests that the reader evaluate the work based upon the clarity of the view that it provides "of events gone by and those yet to come" (τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων, 1.22.4).

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[17] Thuc. 1.21.1: "How the logographers have composed with a view to what will lead the listener along rather than to the unvarnished truth; their subject matter is unscrutinized, and much of it, through time, wins an incredible status approaching legend" (ὡς λογογράφοι ξυνέθεσαν ἐπὶ τὸ προσαγωγότερον τῇ ἀκροάσει ἢ ἀληθέστερον, ὄντα ἀνεξέλεγκτα καὶ τὰ πολλὰ ὑπὸ χρόνου αὐτῶν ἀπίστως ἐπὶ τὸ μυθῶδες ἐκνενικηκότα).

[18] A demand for truth value (ἡ ζήτησις τῆς ἀληθείας), Thucydides finds, is often not the priority it ought to be among listeners; instead, men are inclined to complacency (ἐπὶ τὰ ἑτοῖμα, 1.20.3) in their acceptance of elaboration and narrative cohesion (ἐπὶ τὸ μεῖζον κοσμοῦντες…ἐπὶ τὸ προσαγωγότερον 1.21.1).

[19] Whereas his best-preserved contemporary begins his own work with a substantive definition (Ἡροδότου Θουρίου ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἥδε, Hdt. 1.1.1), Thucydides instead speaks of the action he has taken (ξυνέγραψε) to record the war of the Peloponnesians and Athenians (Thuc. 1.1.1). In fact, up to the point that he gives a positive definition of his work (κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ, 1.22.4), Thucydides describes the productive process, rather than the product itself, e.g., ἐκ δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων τεκμηρίων; ἡγησάμενος ἐκ τῶν ἐπιφανεστάτων σημείων (1.21.1); διαμνημονεῦσαι (1.22.1); εἴρηται; ἠξίωσα γράφειν (1.22.2).

When he sets legend against clarity, however, Thucydides creates a dichotomy that neither his predecessors nor his contemporaries categorically uphold. In Homer, a μῦθος can contain clear knowledge (Hom. *Od.* 17.153), and even one's capacity for unseemly speech is a sign of mental acuity (ἐπεὶ σάφα οἶδα… αἴσυλα μυθήσασθαι, *Il.* 20.202, 433).[20] Aeschylus' characters twice describe the possibility of providing an accurate account (σαφεῖ δὲ μύθωι, *Prom*. 641) or clear command (σαφῶς…μυθουμένη, *Prom*. 664). In Euripides' *Medea*, a μῦθος can be true or false (ὁ μέντοι μῦθος εἰ σαφὴς ὅδε, 72); the chorus of his *Heraclidae* notes that, before judgment is passed, each contestant in a debate be given the opportunity to state his case clearly (τίς ἂν δίκην κρίνειεν ἢ γνοίη λόγον,/ πρὶν ἂν παρ' ἀμφοῖν μῦθον ἐκμάθηι σαφῶς;, 180-1).

Thus, despite Thucydides' own protestations, it is eminently possible for the historian to observe arduous standards of investigation, to place a premium on the plausibility of the facts which he records, and to produce an account with a sober perspective, without abandoning the verbal embellishments and thematic patterns that he consigns to the production of λόγοι μυθῶδες. One might argue,

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[20] In his *Republic* (441b.6), Plato cites Homer himself as a source of accurate testimony (τὸ τοῦ Ὁμήρου μαρτυρήσει… μύθωι· ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ σαφῶς…πεποίηκεν Ὅμηρος). In the *Laws* (872e.1), furthermore, λόγος and μῦθος are bywords for ancient proscriptions that priests have delivered clearly (ὁ γὰρ δὴ μῦθος ἢ λόγος, ἢ ὅτι χρὴ προσαγορεύειν αὐτόν, ἐκ παλαιῶν ἱερέων εἴρηται σαφῶς).

in fact, that Thucydides sometimes not only adapts the poetic and logographic methods he disavows, but that in these instances, he even outdoes each of his theoretical, compositional rivals.

The historian's account of the growth and instantiation of Athenian oligarchy evinces how his subjective stylistic judgments and intellectual choices transform a chronological record of true events into a meaningful, intelligible, and persuasive narrative. Thucydides suggests a direct relationship between the events of 415 and 411 by adapting his very manner of writing about the events of each year: he introduces novel word forms (ὀλιγαρχική, τυραννική) and alters the respective connotations of terms already seen (ξυνωμοσία), such that these terms become distinct markers of (an unrealized) *stasis* and oligarchic revolution at Athens in 415. Thucydides also writes in a matchless manner about the emotional impulsivity (πόθος, ἐπιθυμεῖν/ἐπιθυμία) that drives the Athenians to invade Sicily in 415. Just as their fervor is unmatched, so is the divine odium (ἐπίφθονος τῶν θεῶν) it invites in 413, and the political turmoil it fosters in 411.

As a result, the reader can follow the unrest of 415 directly to the oligarchic revolution of 411, because the events of the latter year unfold along the same verbal lines as those of the former. One reason we trust the accuracy of Thucydides' evaluation is that its constituent verbal elements come together to

form a consistent, even predictable whole. On a verbal level, the Athenians are the *only* men who indulge certain desires on certain terms; the Athenians *alone* are those whom the gods truly begrudge.

The poets privilege embellishment over plausibility (ἐπὶ τὸ μεῖζον κοσμοῦντες μᾶλλον πιστεύων, 1.21.1); Thucydides selects and arrays certain terms with such measured precision that the verbal patterns in his text foster the reader's willingness to credit the historian's views. The logographers trade truth for persuasion (ἐπὶ τὸ προσαγωγότερον…ἢ ἀληθέστερον, 1.21.5); the historian puts one in service of the other. Thucydides reports the facts, but he also leads the reader's eye very carefully from one piece of evidence to the next, fitting out his overview of events with a series of distinct verbal and thematic markers.

Chapter One ~ Euripides' Troiades and the Trojan Trilogy of 415

Euripides' *Troiades*, produced at the City Dionysia in the spring of 415, presents the plight of the women of Troy, who wait to be divided up as slaves among the members of the Hellenic forces. The principal Trojan characters — Hecuba, Andromache, Cassandra — deliver litanies of pain, fear, rage, and indignation that constitute the action of the tragedy.[21] The various miseries that the women confront and endure — grief over the loss of home and family, fear of sexual violation and forced remarriage — are not without their analogues in other of Euripides' earlier tragedies featuring the women of the Trojan royal family (e.g., *Andromache* c. 425 and *Hecuba* c. 424). In these earlier plays, Euripides explores the womens' miseries in the aftermath of Troy's destruction: the city itself has ceased to exist, and his characters suffer in the wake of this loss. In his tragedy of 415, on the other hand, Euripides reframes his presentation of these women by attaching their suffering to the degradation of Troy itself.

The playwright consistently connects the progression of Troy's ruin to several key factors, including the collapse of religious propriety (section *I*), and the personal reversals caused by the social and political strife that attend military

[21] G. Murray's description is worth keeping in mind: "The only movement of the drama is the gradual extinguishing of all the familiar lights of human life…" (1946, 127).

conquest (section *II*). In this environment of religious and political decay, the foremost among the Hellenes and the Trojans accelerate the rate of this degradation through their capitulation to ἔρως (section *III*). Of course, the breakdown of the city's normative institutions, and the devastation its citizens experience, is inextricable from the simple fact of Troy's capture. However, by circumscribing the sequence of this breakdown within the city walls, Euripides connects abstract, universal issues to something concrete, to a city which, before our very eyes, crumbles under the combined pressures the playwright places upon it.

I. Broken religion, broken Troy

In *Troiades*, Euripides' treatment of the interruption and corruption of religious customs and faith in the gods — a theme that runs through many of his extant tragedies — is unlike what we find in his earlier works. Euripides' decision, in 415, to establish the physical presence of the city more strongly than he had in any of his previous plays is a significant one. It allows him to explore the religious dilemmas faced by the captive women in a manner that explicitly

measures the loss of the vitality of Troy's religious customs, and of the Trojans' hopes of divine succor, against the physical dissolution of the city itself.

I.a. Troy's physical destruction

The portrayal of Troy's structural degradation is an important signature of Euripides' *Troiades*, in which the playwright ensures that his audience will feel Troy's physical presence to an exceptional degree. The tragedy is unique compared to its predecessors with respect to the number of times throughout the play that the characters name the city in which the action is set (33 total, more than double the number in any other pre-415 tragedy).[22] Euripides frames his

[22] By my count, listed in order from least to most appearances: *Heraclidae*, Athens, 4 times (38, 191, 198, 387); *Alcestis*, Pherae, 5 times (234, 476, 480, 606, 1045); *Medea*, Corinth, 5 times (10, 70, 702, 706, 916; Athens, to which Medea flees, is never called by name); *Hippolytus*, Troezen, 5 times (12, 29, 1095, 1159, 1424); *Hecuba*, the camp in Thrace, and Thrace itself, 6 times (7, 36, 73-4, 81, 428, 963); *Supplices*, Athens, 6 times (4, 28, 164, 185, 520, 643); *Andromache*, Phthia, 13 times (16, 119, 202, 403, 507, 664, 723, 730, 760, 861, 887, 925, 1230); *Heracles*, Thebes, 13 times (4, 13, 221, 227, 271, 467, 478, 764, 797, 1282, 1322, 1389, 1421); *Electra*, Argos, 14 times (6, 48, 88, 138, 274, 410, 601, 641, 699, 715, 988, 1242, 1250, 1313); *Troiades*, Troy as Τροία, 33 times (57, 99, 100, 130, 173 [twice], 189, 195, 213, 235, 506, 515, 576, 582, 598, 600, 703, 780, 816, 844, 858, 864, 876, 908, 921, 1002, 1160, 1241, 1258, 1264, 1278, 1293, 1324). Troy does also figure prominently in Euripides' *Andromache* and *Hecuba*. *Andromache* names Troy 22 times (11, 58, 105, 292, 305, 325, 329 [twice], 341, 369, 438, 462, 542, 583, 616, 627, 704, 871, 968, 1018, 1025, 1251), but in this play, the frequency arguably emphasizes the extent to which the city is utterly lost to the protagonist, and to which she is trapped in a city that fails to compare. *Hecuba* names Troy 13 times (21, 34, 140, 266, 304, 443, 922, 928, 994, 1020, 1133, 1139, 1209). Again, the emphasis is on the fact that the city is already lost to Hecuba, rather than on Troy's continuous degradation (as in *Troiades*). *NB: The above count does not include adjectival uses of a city's name to refer singly or collectively to its inhabitants.*

play with descriptions of Troy's physical construction and demolition, and as he portrays its downfall, he consistently calls attention to the physical structure of the city, in particular its walls and towers, as the tangible markers of the Troy's lost sovereignty and former longevity.[23]

Euripides marks the innovative quality of his approach to Troy's downfall from the first lines of his tragedy by reversing a traditional (i.e., epic) divine allegiance.[24] Poseidon, who speaks the prologue, calls attention to the burnt and destroyed remnants of the city walls, which he himself helped to build, claiming that since Troy's construction: "my goodwill towards the city of the Phrygians has never left my heart" (οὔποτ'ἐκ φρενῶν/ εὔνοι' ἀπέστη τῶν ἐμῶν Φρυγῶν πόλει, 6-7). In Homeric epic, Poseidon is a decidedly pro-Hellenic deity (e.g., Hom. *Il.* 14.357) whose assistance in constructing Troy was a punishment assigned by Zeus (21.441-57). Euripides' Poseidon, on the other hand, feels a tender sort of allegiance to a city he founds as a willing beneficence, a sentiment that Euripides signals with the carefully placed ἐμῶν in line 7 (above, *lit*. "goodwill towards the city of my Phrygians").

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[23] See Barlow 1986, 158.

[24] As noted by Kovacs 1999, 15 n. 2.

Due to Euripides' emphasis on Poseidon's role as the deity who created Troy, the playwright's descriptions of the city's ultimate demise are particularly affecting. Though Troy's burnt and broken walls are compromised from the beginning of the tragedy (8-9), enough remains of these structures that their downfall shakes the ground when the women depart from the city for the final time: "[Hec.] Do you understand, do you hear? [Cho.] Yes, the citadel is crashing down. [Hec.] The shaking, the shaking, the entire… [Cho.] city, it overflows" ([Εκ] ἐμαθέτ', ἐκλύετ; [Χο] περγάμων <γε> κτύπον./ [Εκ] ἔνοσις ἅπασαν ἔνοσις [Χο] ἐπικλύζει πόλιν, 1325-6). Here, Euripides trades Poseidon, the city's anthropomorphic founder, for the physically-felt, earth-shaking flood (ἔνοσις), an impersonal destroyer filling in for the absentee divinity.[25]

I.b. Troy's religious destruction

Poseidon's decision to defect from his post as Troy's protector creates a sense of divine loss that is inextricable from the loss of the city's physical

[25] Poseidon as *Enosichthon*: Hom. *Il*. 13.89; *Enosigaios*: Hes. *Theog*. 15, 441, 456; Hom. *Il*. 9.183, 13.43. The metaphorical "flood of shaking" that Euripides describes finds a literal analogue in Thucydides' description of the earthquake-induced flooding at Peparethus (modern-day Skopelos, north of Euboea) in 426 (Thuc. 3.89.4).

integrity. Early in the tragedy, the god rightly despairs of the captive Trojans' ability to continue worshipping him: "for whenever wretched emptiness takes hold of a city, worship of the gods suffers and is not normally honored" (ἐρημία γὰρ πόλιν ὅταν λάβηι κακή,/ νοσεῖ τὰ τῶν θεῶν οὐδὲ τιμᾶσθαι θέλει, 26-7). When he agrees to assist Athena and wreak havoc on the Hellenic fleet (87-91), Poseidon justifies his involvement in the punishment, stating: "he is a fool of a man, whosoever plunders cities and yet, because he handed over temples and graves, the consecrated places of those who have met with disaster, to barrenness, later perishes himself" (μῶρος δὲ θνητῶν ὅστις ἐκπορθεῖ πόλεις/ ναούς τε τύμβους θ', ἱερὰ τῶν κεκμηκότων,/ ἐρημίαι δούς αὐτὸς ὤλεθ' ὕστερον, 95-7).[26] Poseidon's repetition of ἐρημία (97; cf. 27) stresses the extent to which the human characters' abandonment of religious propriety, and the gods' rational-yet-detrimental abandonment of their respective worshippers, is inextricable from the physical degradation of Troy's religious spaces both during and after its capture.

[26] The participle, δούς, is best translated with causal force, given what the reader knows to be the source of Athena's anger towards the Hellenes (i.e., Ajax' unpunished rape of Cassandra (Eur. *Tro*. 69-71). On Athena's and Ajax' relationship in Homeric epic, see Duffy 2010, 149-71, esp. 158 ff. On the significance of the Hellenic commanders' failure to punish Ajax' crime, see Gregory 1997, 175.

Indeed, the mutability of Poseidon's traditional allegiance finds its counterpart in the variability of Athena's own. This much is clear from Poseidon's initial, skeptical reply to Athena's request for his assistance: "But why do you [Athena] jump from one disposition in one moment to another disposition in the next, and why do you hate and cherish to excess whomever you may happen to?" (τί δ' ὧδε πηδᾶις ἄλλοτ' εἰς ἄλλους τρόπους/ μισεῖς τε λίαν καὶ φιλεῖς ὃν ἂν τύχηις; 67-8). A supporter, protector, advisor, and even comrade-in-arms to the Hellenes in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*,[27] the Athena of *Troiades* instead seeks to gladden her former Trojan enemies and to secure a bitter homecoming for the Hellenes themselves (*Tro.* 65-6).[28] Thus, both the Hellenic forces and the Trojan women are on unstable ground from the outset of *Troiades*, as communities that have each lost access to valuable sources of divine favor and assistance.

Euripides also ultimately replaces the anthropomorphic Athena, though with an abstract force rather than a natural one. In her final major speech (1156-1206), Hecuba decries the foolishness of those who presume the constancy of

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[27] E.g., Hom. *Il.* 1.206-220 (advisor to Achilles); 4.540-4 (supporter of Hellenic soldiers on the battlefield); 5.121-32 (protector of Diomedes); Hom. *Od.* 2.260-95 (Telemachus' advisor); 22.255-74 (Odysseus' protector).

[28] In the tragedy, Hera and Athena are the true, joint destroyers of Troy, e.g., *Tro.* 24 (συνεξεῖλον, with Hera), and 47, 65, 561, 599-600 (Athena alone as Troy's enemy and destroyer).

happiness: "for in its manner, fortune, like a man struck mad, leaps about from one position to another, and no one person is ever-fortunate" (τοῖς τρόποις γὰρ αἱ τύχαι,/ ἔμπληκτος ὡς ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλοτ' ἄλλοσε/ πηδῶσι, †κοὐδεις αὐτος εὐτυχεῖ ποτε†, 1204-6).[29] The lines contain several echoes of Poseidon's question to Athena in the prologue, in which τύχη was the director of Athena's rage (τί δ' ὧδε πηδᾶις ἄλλοτ' εἰς ἄλλους τρόπους/ μισεῖς τε λίαν καὶ φιλεῖς ὃν ἂν τύχῃς, 67-8).[30] As Troy's ultimate destruction draws nearer, however, Euripides' protagonist elides the goddess from the equation, and speaks instead in terms of mortal experience (ὡς ἄνθρωπος, 1205). In the end, that is, Troy has neither the gods' attention, nor the gods themselves.[31]

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[29] I have followed Diggle 1982 at *Tro.* 1206.

[30] Barlow (1986, 223 n. 1203-06) instead relates the lines to Cassandras' characterization of the Hellenic victory at Troy as a specious accomplishment (Eur. *Tro.* 447).

[31] This sense of an utter absence of the divine is more complete than in Euripides' previous, extant tragedies. In *Alcestis* (of 438), *Medea* (of 431), and *Andromache* (c. 425), a demi-god (Heracles in *Alcestis*) or god (Helios in *Medea* or Thetis in *Andromache*) provides crucial aid and/or comfort to the principal characters. *Heraclidae* (c. 430) certainly portrays the complexities of religious propriety and the human suffering required to uphold it, yet Macaria's and Eurystheus' capitulation to oracular orders assures Athens' victory and future protection, rather than its destruction. In *Supplices* (c. 423) Athena arranges and assures the treaty between Athens and Argos. Likewise, the manifest Dioscouri prove integral to the resolution of *Electra* (c. 420), even if that resolution does not altogether negate the evils of the protagonists' actions. The gods' total abandonment of the Trojan women also differentiates this tragedy from other Euripidean works in which the gods' intervention in mortal affairs appears detrimental, rather than helpful. For example, in *Hippolytus* (of 428) and *Heracles* (c. 416), the suffering of the human characters derives not from the absence of certain gods (e.g., Aphrodite, Lyssa), but rather from an excess of their presence and intervention in human affairs.

The religious instability Euripides portrays in *Troiades* is unique when compared with his treatment of the same topic in his pre-415 tragedies. In *Medea* of 431, for example, the first stasimon famously expresses the troubling reversal of religious order (*Med*. 410-415). However, the end of the tragedy also emphasizes the continued practice of religious customs,[32] and the sustained (and justified) expectation that the gods listen to, and will assist the wronged.[33] In *Troiades*, by contrast, the audience member witnesses no such practical continuity: Poseidon knows his temples will be left broken and untended (*Tro*. 26-7); Talthybius forces Andromache's compliance with the threat that her son will be left unburied if she resists her marriage to Neoptolemus (735-9); the chorus of captive women lament the disappearance of sacrifices and festivals (1071-6); Hecuba despairs of her ability to prepare Astyanax' body properly (1232-4) and speaks of his funeral as a hollow and perfunctory gesture (1246-50). The Trojan women, furthermore, do not share Medea's and Jason's confidence that the gods have any intention of assisting them, nor are these women truly certain that the gods can even hear them (e.g., 1077, 469-71 vs. 1280-1).

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[32] E.g., the dispute over the proper burial of the children, *Med.* 1377-82.

[33] E.g., Medea's appeals to Zeus and the other gods as witness to Jason's defiance of his oaths (*Med.* 1351-2 and 1391-2); Jason's appeal to Zeus for retribution (1405-14); Helios' intervention (1317-22).

Euripides' emphasis on the parallel effects of the degradation of religious practice and the physical setting also differentiates *Troiades* from tragedies in which the protagonists face comparable losses. In her name play (c. 424), Hecuba's isolation from any and all divine succor is comparable to that of the Trojan women. Furthermore, in works such as *Heraclidae* (c. 430) and *Supplices* (c. 423), Euripides also raises questions regarding the persistence of religious customs in the face of military brutality and the destruction of the city. However, the breakdown of religious propriety that Euripides explores in *Hecuba* (e.g., Polymnestor's murderous disregard for his sworn oath) does not occur in parallel with the degradation of the tragedy's physical setting. In *Supplices* and *Heraclidae*, Euripides portrays individuals and communities who have already been displaced from their original *poleis* (as is also the case in *Hecuba* and *Andromache*), and for whom the city into which they are received as suppliants (Athens) represents the restoration of disrupted social and political structures.[34]

By emphasizing the mutability of Poseidon's and Athena's allegiances and by tying these gods to the physical integrity of his tragedy's setting, Euripides creates a fresh perspective on the link between the religious incertitude and

[34]In *Supplices*, Athena arranges and endorses the treaty between Athens and Argos. In *Heraclidae*, Macaria's and Eurystheus' respective capitulations to oracular orders ensure Athens' victory and future protection, rather than its destruction.

suffering of his characters, and the ultimate destruction of their city. The audience member who doubts the overarching significance of this connection need only consider the words of the *Troiades* themselves, the women who constitute the chorus of Euripides' tragedy.

I.c. Articulating the link between religious and physical degradation

The Trojan women of the chorus perceive and decry the gods' absence throughout the tragedy. As the voices behind the choral odes, furthermore, they expand the isolated expressions of individual characters to a level of universality. Unlike the individual characters, who call upon the gods for aid at one moment only to reject them later (e.g., Hecuba at 469-71 and 1280-1), the women of the choral collective are consistent in their message of abandonment, and in their diagnosis of Troy's severely ailing, if not altogether severed, relationship to the divine.

One example of the chorus' consistency is the limited set of adjectival terms for "holiness" that the women repeat throughout the first ode (197-234), all of which imply either proper human devotion to deserving gods (σεμνός) or

divine protection (ἱερός) and favor (εὐδαίμων, ζάθεος).[35] The lands and rivers, to which the women imagine they might be taken as captives, possess these qualities: the waters of the Corinthian Peirene (σεμνῶν ὑδάτων, 206); Athens (εὐδαιμονα χώραν, 209; ἱερὰν... ζαθέαν... χώραν, 219-21; cf. 801); the Thessalian land of the Peneus (σεμνὰν χώραν, 214); and the streams of the Italian Crathis (ζαθέαις παγαῖσι, 228). The chorus' emphasis on the reverent or sacrosanct merits of these non-Trojan lands suggests the extent to which Troy itself is no longer the recipient of the same divine protection and favor.

In the second stasimon (511-67), Euripides provides more substantial support for the inference that Troy has lost whatever divine favor it once possessed, and links this loss more closely to concrete circumstances. In the ode, the chorus women give an account of Troy's destruction that balances a description of the joyous religious celebrations, enacted upon the receipt of the Trojan horse, against a recollection of the horrific slaughter of the celebrants. The horse itself is a heavenly, holy object (ἵππον οὐράνια, 519; ἱερὸν ζόανον, 530), a fitting gift for the maiden goddess of immortal horses (ἄζυγος ἀμβροτοπώλου,

[35] The connotations I identify are based upon the definitions given in the following LSJ entries: σεμνός s.v. I and II; ἱερός II.3, "under divine protection, freq. of places;" εὐδαίμων s.v. I; ζάθεος s.v. I, "used only in lyric sections of Tragedy, and connoting places especially favored by the gods."

536). Yet the temple and its precincts, within which the horse is placed, are murderous (εἰς ἕδρανα/ λάνια δάπεδα τε, φόνια πατρίδι, 539-41), and the attack of the Hellenes, who emerge from within, results in desolation (ἐρημία, 564). The adjective Euripides uses to modify this desolation, καράτομος, is exceedingly rare in extant tragedy.[36] It is all the more outstanding for being coupled with ἐρημία, Poseidon's term for the state of abandonment that undermines the worship of the gods (26), and that is the direct result of the sacking of temples and other holy places (97). Thus, the second stasimon provides an augmented view and confirmation of Poseidon's theoretical assessment of Troy's ailing connection to the divine. In the second stasimon, the severance of this abstract connection finds a grotesque physical parallel in the severance of the Trojan soldiers' heads (καράτομος), which land upon the altars that these men fail to defend.

The words of the third stasimon (799-859) eliminate any need for the audience member to infer the state of Troy's relationship to the gods, and instead

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[36] E.g., Eur. *Alc*. 1118: καρατόμων and Eur. *fr*. 2.10 Austin, in both cases referring to Medusa's beheading; Soph. *Elec*. 52: καρατόμοις χλιδαῖς with scholiast's note; [Eur.] *Rhesus* 606. The term does not occur in extant texts predating Euripides, though it does appear: in the scholiast to Hom. *Il*. 9.553 (explaining how Evenus beheaded the suitors of his daughter, Marpessa) and *Il.* 17.38 (Euphorbus threatens to deliver Menelaus' head to his mother and father); and in the scholiast to Pind. *Pyth*. 12.16-17 (where Pindar also references Medea's fate: εὐπαράου κρᾶτα συλάσαις Μεδοίσας / υἱὸς Δανάας).

connect Troy's spiritual demise directly to its physical ruin. Euripides emphasizes the extent to which this devastation can be measured by the state of the city's divinely-wrought structures. Fire destroys Apollo's straight stone walls (κανόνων δὲ τυκίσματα Φοίβου, 814), the very walls around which the Trojans perish at spear point (τείχη πέρι/ Δαρδανίδας φονία κατέλυσεν αἰχμά, 818-19). Desire once built Troy's towers (Ἔρως... Τροίαν ἐπύργωσας, 840-4) by fostering Zeus' love of Ganymede and Eos' of Tithonus; now, Ganymede watches with serene detachment as his city burns (821-37) and Eos' love of Tithonus does not prevent her from looking upon the destruction with similar dispassion (849-57). Fittingly, the stasimon concludes with the definitive statement that: "the gods' affections for Troy have vanished" (τὰ θεῶν δὲ / φίλτρα φροῦδα Τροίᾳ, 858-9).

Euripides lends additional force to the chorus' words at 858-9 when he has the women, in their final song to Zeus (1060-1122), decry the god himself as their betrayer (προύδωκας... ὦ Ζεῦ, 1162-3). Indeed, Zeus' sacrifices, songs, festivals, and statues have all vanished (φροῦδαι, 1071) from the destroyed city. At play's end, furthermore, the chorus identifies this utter disappearance a final time (1323), in a context that intertwines religious bereavement with the physical instability of the city itself: "[Hec.] Io! Temples of the gods and my beloved city… [Cho.] You will fall at this moment to the beloved earth, nameless… The name of

the land is lost… to each nothing remains (ἄλλο φροῦδον, οὐδ' ἔτ' ἔστιν), nor does wretched Troy any longer exist."[37]

Euripides' chorus takes the lead in using Troy's physical structures as the measure of its religious ailments, yet the playwright also employs Hecuba to this end. For example, before learning of Polyxena's sacrifice, Hecuba laments that she is bereft of both city and children (ἐρημόπολις μάτηρ ἀπολείπεται ὑμῶν [τέκνων], 603). Through her self-identification as a mother in a desolate city ἐρημόπολις, Hecuba embodies the emptiness of Troy's holy places that Poseidon identified (ἐρημία, cf. 27 and 97).

This is a physical desolation for which Hecuba holds the divine responsible.[38] Indeed, the final time that Hecuba articulates the gods' abandonment of Troy coincides with the very moment at which the torch-bearing Hellenes actually undertake the final firing of the city (1279-81, cf. 1240-2, 1256-9). Hecuba resolves to cast herself into the flames,[39] but is prevented from so

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[37] Eur. *Tro*. 1316-24: [Εκ.] ἰὼ θεῶν μέλαθρα καὶ πόλις φίλα… [Χο.] τάχ' ἐς φίλαν γᾶν πεσεῖσθ' ἀνώνυμοι… ὄνομα δὲ γᾶς ἀφανὲς εἶσιν· ἄλλαι δ'/ ἄλλο φροῦδον, οὐδ' ἔτ' ἔστιν/ ἁ τάλαινα Τροία.

[38] Eur. *Tro*. 612-13: "I see the work of the gods, who build up towers from nothing and destroy what appears substantial" (ὁρῶ τὰ τῶν θεῶν, ὡς τὰ μὲν πυργοῦσ'ἄνω/ τὸ μήδεν ὄντα, τὰ δὲ δοκοῦντ' ἀπώλεσαν).

[39] Eur. *Tro* 1282-3: "The noblest thing for me is to perish together with the city as it burns" (ὡς κάλλιστά μοι/ σὺν τῆιδε πατρίδι κατθανεῖν πυρουμένηι).

doing. Thus, at play's end, she is left standing, a human *locus* for the progression from divine abandonment to ethereal destruction that the chorus describes.

II. Broken Trojan, broken Troy

Astyanax, like Hecuba, serves as a human *locus* for the interplay between Troy's religious and physical dissolution.[40] Euripides follows Homer's lead by using Astyanax as a symbol of Troy itself, and thus the child's death as a signal of Troy's final destruction (e.g., Hom. *Il.* 6.403). Yet the playwright's tragic presentation of Astyanax' story is exceptional for the depth in which it explores the religious turpitude of Astyanax' sacrifice, and in the degree to which it creates a parallel between the unique and novel baseness of Astyanax' murderers and the unprecedented nature of the murder itself.[41]

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[40] There is a key difference between Astyanax and Hecuba as human *loci* for Troy's collapse. Hecuba embodies Troy's ἐρημία, and this emptiness underlies her willingness to die. On the other hand, Astyanax' captors decide to kill him precisely because he represents the potential for Troy's return to a full and vital existence.

[41] The character's reports and discussions regarding Astyanax' condemnation and gruesome execution constitute nearly 1/6 of *Troiades*. From this count, I have omitted the lines merely announcing Astyanax' presence (570-1 and 614-15). Those lines which deal explicitly with his condemnation and death include: 713-79 (66 lines), 782-9 (8 lines), 1118-22 (5 lines), 1133-1255 (123 lines) = 202 lines (out of 1332 total in the tragedy).

II.a. Astyanax as a religious victim

Astyanax embodies the breakdown of Troy's religious health. Andromache, for example, laments that her son's fate as a sacrifice (σφάγιον) for his captors occludes his rightful path: "I did not bear my son in order that he become a victim for the Danaans, but so that he become tyrant of fruitful Asia" (οὐ σφάγιον <υἱὸν> Δαναΐδαις τέξουσ' ἐμόν/ ἀλλ' ὡς τύραννον Ἀσιάδος πολυσπόρου, *Tro.* 747-8).[42] She emphasizes the Hellenes' religious depravity (774) when she invites the men to: "feast on [Astyanax'] flesh" (δαίνυσθε τοῦδε σάρκας, 775), and she decries the gods themselves as destroyers of herself and her child (ἔκ τε γὰρ θεῶν/ διολλύμεσθα, 775-6).[43]

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[42] Of course, this sacrificial vocabulary is not unique to *Troiades*. In both *Andromache* and *Hecuba*, a child's death (or potential death, in the case of Molossus) is described as a sacrifice (e.g., *Andr.* 547 on Molossus; *Hec.* 109, 119, 135, 305, 433, 522, 571 on Polyxena). Yet neither of these tragedies contains the explicit sentiment that these sacrifices occur as a result of the perversion of religious ritual (ἀνοσίων, *Tro*. 628) or the direct aggression of the gods (θεῶν/ διολλύμεσθα, 775-6). In *Andromache*, the queen does not discount ritual practice altogether, but begs, in the name of the gods, to take Molossus' place on the altar (ῥῦσαί με πρὸς θεῶν, *Andr.* 575). Likewise, none of the characters who describe Polyxena's death in *Hecuba* speak of the sacrifice as unholy, nor do they question the gods' presence thereat. In fact, the final description of the girl's death is in the chorus' elaborate report of the careful and methodical ritual in which Polyxena is forced to participate (*Hec*. 518-82). Thus, Euripides' presentation of Astyanax' (and Polyxena's) sacrificial death in *Troiades* is unique, insofar as the degradation of religious propriety at Troy has a direct effect on the emphatically-unholy nature of the child's death.

[43] Andromache also suggests the baseness of Polyxena's murderers by emphasizing the pointlessness of her "sacrificial" death: "She was sacrificed at the tomb of Achilles, a gift for an inanimate corpse" (πρὸς τάφωι Πολυξένη/ σφαγεῖσ' Ἀχιλλέως, δῶρον ἀψύχωι νεκρῶι, 622-3; cf. *Hec*. 305). Hecuba replies by lamenting the girl's "unholy sacrifice" (ἀνοσίων

Euripides emphasizes the depravity of Astyanax' death by playing up the impropriety of Odysseus, the author of the boy's death. Hecuba, for example, upon learning that she has been assigned to Odysseus as his slave, unleashes a stream of insults meant to emphasize the ignominy of serving such an individual. Alongside less surprising terms — "crafty" and "an enemy of justice" (δολίωι, 283; πολεμίωι δίκας, 284) — Hecuba employs one which connotes religious pollution (μυσαρῶι, 283),[44] and calls Odysseus a "law-defying poisonous beast" (παρανόμωι δάκει, 284). With these descriptors, Hecuba creates a unique characterization of Odysseus' brand of personal perversity.[45] This is before she learns that it is he who has contrived Astyanax' murder (725),

προσφαγμάτων, 628). The chorus later uses the same term to describe the murder of Priam, whose eyes: "black death, holy among unholy murders, closed shut" (μέλας... κατεκαλύψε θάνατος ὅσιος ἀνοσίοις σφαγαῖσιν, *Tro.* 1315-16; cf. *Hec.* 24).

[44] See LSJ μυσαρός, esp. s.v. A.2. Euripides uses the same term in Jason's rebuke of Medea as a child murderer (φεῦ φεῦ, μυσαρὰ καὶ παιδολέτορ, *Med*. 1393), and in *Electra*, the Dioscouri claim that they do not aid those who are polluted (*El*. 1350). Herodotus, when describing the Egyptian priests as religious beyond the norm (θεοσεβέες δὲ περισσῶς), notes that they shave assiduously in order to prevent lice or any other "foul" thing (ἄλλο μυσαρὸν) from polluting their bodies as they attend the gods (Hdt. 2.37.1-2).

[45] In *Troiades*, certain of Hecuba's adjectives occur only in this passage (μυσαρῶι and παρανόμωι δάκει), whereas the others are each found, separately, in only one other instance: the Trojan horse is described as destruction in disguise (δόλιον...ἄταν, 530; cf. 283); Helen knows that Menelaus considers her an enemy (πολεμίαν, 915; cf. 284), and Odysseus' double talk (διπτύχωι γλώσσαι, 287) has a parallel in Hecuba's torn cheeks (δἰπτυχον παρειάν, 280). On Euripides' characterization of Odysseus in several of his "Trojan" tragedies, see Esposito (ed.) 2010, esp. xi-xiii; 240-1.

yet the singularity of Odysseus' improbity proves an apt parallel to the distinctive manner of death he proposes for the child.

Odysseus' prescription for Astyanax' execution, furthermore, opens the gateway for a seemingly unprecedented form of religious depravity to take hold of an already-ailing Troy. The story of Astyanax' headlong demise appears in numerous pre-Euripidean works,[46] yet the chorus of *Troiades*, the collective repository of these oral and literary traditions, perceives something novel in the execution's wickedness. The women lament that: "from fresh sufferings the misfortunes of our country take a new direction (καίν' <ἐκ> καινῶν…)," [47] and attest the unseemliness of the Hellenes' decision to cast the child from the towers like an insignificant piece of athletic equipment (δίσκημα, 1121). Hecuba also asserts the unprecedented nature of the Hellenic soldiers' cruelty, and berates the soldiers for allowing fear of her grandson (παῖδα δείσαντες, 1159; βρέφος τοσόνδ' ἐδείσατ', 1165; οὐκ αἰνῶ φόβον, 1165)[48] to drive them to adopt

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[46] In the *Little Iliad,* Neoptolemus throws Astyanax from the walls (PEG fr. 21 = fr. 20 D = fr. 29-30 W); in the *Iliou Persis*, Odysseus kills the boy (*arg*. line 268 Severyns); Quintus of Smyrna assigns the murder to an anonymous group of Achaeans (13.251-7).

[47] Eur. *Tr*. 1118-9: καίν' <ἐκ> καινῶν μεταβάλλουσαι / χθονὶ συντυχίαι.

[48] The novelty of Astyanax' death matches the newness of his youth: although she recalls her grandson's spoken promise to cut a lock of his hair as an offering on her tomb (1180-4), Hecuba also tenderly calls him a newborn (βρέφος, 1165) in her rebuke to the Hellenic soldiers. Andromache, likewise, imagines him as a young bird who seeks shelter under her wings (νεοσσὸς ὡσεὶ πτέρυγας ἐσπίτνων ἐμάς, 751), and recalls cradling and feeding him as a

Odysseus' proposal and commit an illogical (ὅστις φοβεῖται μὴ διεξελθὼν λόγωι, 1166), unparalleled murder (φόνον/ καινὸν διειργάσασθε, 1159-60).[49]

II.b. Astyanax as a political victim

Aside from serving as a physical representative of the contentious religious environment at Troy, Astyanax also constitutes the tragedy's human *locus* for the social and political strife that attend Troy's capture. In *Troiades*, Astyanax' main competitor for power is none other than the figurehead of Hellenic depravity, Odysseus. Euripides calls attention to the competition

swaddled infant (ὦ νέον ὑπαγκάλισμα μητρὶ φίλτατον… διὰ κενῆς ἄρα/ ἐν σπαργάνοις σε μαστὸς ἐξέθρεψ᾽ ὅδε, 757-9).

[49] Her grandson's death compels Hecuba to abandon whatever recourse she may have had to the gods' support and to religious customs. She dismisses the child's funereal proceedings as a specious display for the living (κενὸν δὲ γαύρωμ' ἐστὶ τῶν ζώντων τόδε, 1250). Her sentiment calls to mind Thucydides' Pericles, who claims that *encomia* are idle in the face of the commemorative actions undertaken by the citizens on behalf of the dead (Thuc. 2.35.1). However, whereas the Athenians of 429 do not allow religious custom to fall victim to the war and the devastation of the plague so long as their city still remains, Hecuba, whose city is about to be burned before her eyes, expects these customs, and those who practice them, to perish in the flames as well (*Tro.* 1272-83). She also speaks to the futility of continued sacrifice: "There was nothing between the gods beyond my toils and the select hatred for Troy above all other cities; we made our sacrifices in vain" (†οὐκ ἦν ἄρ᾽ ἐν θεοῖσι† πλὴν οὑμοι πόνοι/ Τροία τε πόλεων ἔκκριτον μισουμένη,/ μάτην δ᾽ ἐβουθυτοῦμεν, 1240-2). In *Hecuba* (c. 424), the queen's isolation from any and all divine succor is comparable her situation in *Troiades*, but her assessment of the breakdown of religious propriety (e.g., the unforgivable sacrifice of Polyxena, Polymnestor's murderous disregard for his sworn oath) does not connect these improprieties the tragedy's physical setting with the overwhelming emphasis that *Troiades* does.

between the two by establishing a binary verbal relationship between the man of many ways and his puerile victim. In so doing, Euripides turns Astyanax' literal rival for control of Troy, and for the favor of the gods, into his conceptual rival as well.

Astyanax' formal name, "lord of the *astu*," appears only twice in *Troiades*, and in each instance it explicitly signals the child's presence on stage (alive at 571, dead at 1120). As such, the audience members connect the meaning of the child's name with his physical manifestation as the mortal embodiment of the *astu*, and the destruction it faces at the hands of its jealous captors. The other half of the child's name, ἄναξ, is an appellation that Euripides typically reserves for the gods.[50] Thus, Hecuba's identification of Astyanax as ἀνάκτωρ πόλεως (1217) not only furthers the child's connection to the divine, but also sets the boy apart on a mortal level. He is the only Trojan of adequate status to present a legitimate threat to those of Troy's aristocratic captors who share this designation.[51]

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[50] E.g., Apollo (42, 454), Poseidon (54 and 85 [τἄμ' ἀνάκτορ']), Hymenaeus (310, 314; his shrines is referenced at 330 [ἀνάκτορον]), and Zeus (1077 and possibly 1289, but the line is corrupt).

[51] The only other time the child's name appears in Euripides' extant works is at *Andr.* 10. Like Astyanax, Molossus is also conceived of as a threat to the power of his captors. In *Andromache*, however, Molossus is merely a pawn used to gain leverage over a suppliant Andromache, and Peleus is able to prevent the murder of both mother and son. Andromache and Molossus, that is, are saved precisely because they receive aid from a sympathetic noble, who is in a position to challenge their would-be murderers. In *Troiades*, by contrast, Andromache can only respond to Talthybius' demand that she hand over her child with regret that Hector's nobility can do nothing to aid his son (τὸ δ'ἐσθλὸν οὐκ ἐς καιρὸν, *Tro.* 744; cf. 740-4 and 614-15).

Aside from Astyanax, the only mortals in *Troiades* who claim the title of ἄναξ are Agamemnon (249, 358) and Odysseus (277). Of these three mortal "lords," however, it is only Odysseus and Astyanax whom Euripides connects, on a verbal basis, to tyranny.[52] In *Troiades*, tyrannical power is presented as the manifestation of divine favor.[53] Yet in Astyanax' case, Troy's religious emptiness directly drains any advantage that exists from holding the title of tyrant. Thus, Andromache explicitly connects Astyanax' aristocratic birth (ὡς τύραννον Ἀσιάδος πολυσπόρου, 747-8) to his selection for death, and Hecuba mourns the godlike tyranny her grandchild will never hold (τῆς ἰσοθέου τυρρανίδος, 1169).[54] By speaking of Odysseus as both lord (277) and tyrant (425-8) in his own right, Euripides establishes a verbal replacement for the soon-to-be-executed Trojan prince, albeit one who will continue to corrupt, rather than restore and uphold, the integrated relationship between the divine propriety and physical sovereignty of Troy.

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[52] Cassandra berates Talthybius (and all heralds) as servants of tyrants and states, with Odysseus as her first example of such a master (425-8).

[53] When Helen describes Athena's offer to Paris during the Judgement— tyranny over Asia and Greece (τυραννίδ'ἔχειν, 928) — she argues that she has helped protect Greece from tyrannical rule (τυραννίδι, 934) by enticing Paris away from Athena's and Hera's offers of military conquest (925-8).

[54] This tyranny is Astyanax' birthright, as is clear from Hecuba's lamentation that she, herself a royal and married to a royal, produced children destined to hold tyrannies (474-6).

The connection between the intra-noble struggle for control and the physical integrity of the city constitutes a key difference between *Troiades* and *Hecuba* (c. 424). In the latter, Polymnestor's motivation for murdering Polydorus is nearly parallel to that of Astyanax' murderers in *Troiades*: each noble child is killed in order to prevent his future rise to power (*Hec.* 1132-44, 1175-7; *Tro*. 1160-1). Yet the opportunity for Polydorus' murder stems from his displacement from Troy. The city's fall to the forces under Agamemnon's aegis gives Polymnestor an incentive to put himself in the general's good graces by eliminating his Trojan ward. On the other hand, Astyanax is endangered by the fact that he remains trapped within a city that has lost its capacity to meaningfully uphold its relationship with the gods. In *Hecuba*, each Trojan youth represents one type of victimhood (Polyxena is a sacrificial victim and Polydorus a victim of his own nobility); in *Troiades*, Astyanax alone simultaneously embodies both aspects of victimhood.

II.c. Astyanax as a physical victim

Through the figure of Astyanax, Euripides demonstrates how the physical integrity of both child and city become vulnerable simultaneously, as the result

of the contentious struggle among nobles for primacy that prevents each entity from access to divine favor.[55] For example, Euripides uses verbal echoes to suggest that Troy's physical integrity hinges upon that of Astyanax' body. When they found the city, Poseidon and Apollo lay Troy's stone towers in straight alignment (λαΐνους πύργους… ὀρθοῖσιν ἔθεμεν κανόσιν, 6). This divine rectitude collapses upon Astyanax' death, as is clear when Hecuba posits that the Hellenes have murdered her grandson merely to ensure that he: "could never set aright a Troy that has [already] fallen" (μὴ Τροίαν ποτὲ/ πεσοῦσαν ὀρθώσειεν; 1160-1).

In turn, Euripides' verbal choices also suggest that the city partakes in the destruction of its own bulwark. The unforgiving structures shear the boy's locks from his head (ἔκειρεν…βόστρυχον, 1173-5), the same locks he had once promised to place upon his grandmother's tomb (βοστρύχων/ πλόκαμον κεροῦμαι πρὸς τάφον, 1182-3). Hecuba, furthermore, visualizes the sweet mouth (φίλον στόμα, 1180) with which Astyanax made this promise as a crooked smile

[55] In *Hecuba*, the queen's ignominious enslavement also renders her powerless to prevent Polyxena's and Polydorus' murders (*Hec*. 303-10, 1132-44, 1175-7). Yet the situation is still unlike what we find in *Troiades,* insofar as Euripides' *Hecuba* provides his audience with the view of a captive outsider, who is drawn into the depravity and brutality of her captors, whereas his *Troiades* showcases the process by which comparable depravity and brutality eat away at the city and its institutions from the inside out.

of blood, smeared amidst his shattered bones (ἔνθεν ἐκγελᾷ/ ὀστέων ῥαγέντων φόνος, 1176-7).

II.d. The Hellenes as victims

In theory, at least, Euripides does not reserve all of the suffering for the Trojans.[56] In the prologue, the collective Hellenic forces draw Athena's ire as a result of their insulting failure to punish Ajax, who had defiled the goddess' temple by raping Cassandra (cf. 69-73). The tragedy ends before the viewer can witness the havoc that Poseidon will wreak upon the Hellenic fleet (cf. 75-94), yet Euripides vocabulary choices attach the taint of the religious and political decay at Troy to the city's captors. As we have seen, Hecuba speaks of Odysseus' vile nature with a term often applied to ritual impurity (μυσαρός, 283), and implicates the Hellenes as the perpetrators of the incomparable murder (φόνον καινόν, 1159-60) that robs her grandson of his divine reign (τῆς ἰσοθέου τυραννίδος, 1169). Thus, the Hellenes who had insulted Athena by failing to

[56] A number of scholars have described the element of "universal suffering" in *Troiades*, e.g., Poole 1976, 257-87; Gregory 1997, 155-84; Goff 2009, 77.

punish Ajax are now on a level with the rapist himself as ready participants in acts of religious defilement.

Among the Hellenic soldiers, Euripides forces Neoptolemus in particular to reap what he sows. Talthybius reports that Achilles' son has departed in haste: "since he heard that [his grandfather] Peleus has met with some unexpected complications; Acastus has cast him out of the country… for which reason Neoptolemus, having no tolerance for delay, has disappeared in a hurry" (καινάς τινας/ Πηλέως ἀκούσας συμφοράς, ὥς νιν χθονὸς/ Ἄκαστος ἐκβέβληκεν… οὗ θᾶσσον οὕνεκ', οὐ χάριν μονῆς ἔχων,/ φροῦδος, 1126-30).[57] The novelty of Peleus' misfortunes (καινάς τινας, 1126) picks up the chorus' emphatic assertion of the constant stream of fresh suffering that plagues the Trojans (καίν' <ἐκ> καινῶν, 1118). Neoptolemus' disappearance (φροῦδος) from Troy, furthermore, finds its parallel not only in the disappearance of certain Trojans themselves (Priam and his children are φροῦδος, 41; Astyanax' death nullifies [φροῦδα] Hecuba's gestures of care, 1188), but also in Troy's broken connection to the divine (φροῦδα, 858 and φροῦδαι, 1071), and to the end of the city's very existence (φροῦδον, 1323). Thus, such absence not only characterizes a

[57] See also Cassandra's prediction of Odysseus' impending suffering (427-44). For Peleus' quarrel with Acastus, see Pin. *Nem*. 4.90-109.

religiously bereft Troy, but also attaches to the ill-fated captors who destroy the physical evidence of Troy's former religious dedication and favor.

III. "Love" thy enemy[58]

In his treatment of Cassandras' assignment to Agamemnon, Euripides addresses a third, significant thematic element: ἔρως.[59] As we have seen, Hecuba is a physical representative of Troy's religious desolation, and Astyanax a point of intersection between this lack of religious structure and an excess of political strife. For her part, Cassandra, and her perverse marriage rites, entangle the

[58] The quotation marks are my own acknowledgement that the term at Matthew 5:44 is actually ἀγαπᾶτε. However, they are also appropriate because the erotic desire that Paris and Agamemnon feel for Helen and Cassandra, respectively, is an ἔρως around which each woman puts her own conditional quotes. Helen, for her part, disavows Paris' attraction as a product of Aphrodite's contrivances (*Tro.* 930-2); Cassandra is willing to indulge Agamemnon's desire primarily because it gives her the opportunity to seal his fate and destroy his house in the same way that he has destroyed hers (460-1).

[59] With the exception of the chorus' rebuke of Eros for allowing the gods to fall out of love with Troy (840), all other references to ἔρως belong to Hecuba's appeals in the *agon* (977, 1006), and her advice to Menelaus (1052). Additionally, mentions of Cypris, and the play's single mention of Aphrodite by name (989), also occur in the *agon* between Helen (Κύπρις, 929 and 932) and Hecuba (Κύπριν 983; Κύπρις 988 and 1038). For in-depth analysis of this section of Euripides' tragedy, see: Lloyd 1984, 303-13; Lloyd 1992, esp. 94-112; Blondell 2013, 182-201. I would like only to call attention to one "stray" mention of Cypris, as it is relevant to the discussion of Cassandra as a voice for the ripple of cause and effect in *Troiades*. It is the priestess who provides the link between Agamemnon's desire and that of his brother, Menelaus, when she describes the μίαν γυναίκα καὶ μίαν Κύπριν (368) who gives the Hellenes their excuse to hunt down and destroy thousands (369).

destructive force of desire in the complex interplay between Troy's ailing religious health and the cycle of challenge and retribution among the Hellenic and Trojan nobility. The ἔρως that Agamemnon harbors for Cassandra, furthermore, proves an integral counterpart to the more infamous erotic impulse that arguably sets the Trojan War in motion (a key element of the *agon* between Helen and Hecuba, 914-1032). Whereas Paris' capitulation to desire proves ruinous primarily for the Trojans, Agamemnon's similar capitulation provides an opportunity for Apollo's priestess to return this ruin to the Hellenes in kind.

Cassandra serves as the vocal and physical agent through whom the forces destroying Troy (religious dissolution, aristocratic competition, and erotic compulsion) will reach out and ruin those who have fostered their growth. The gleaming torches that she and her attendants bear upon entering, for example, signal the reciprocal destruction of Hellene and Trojan alike. Distraught over Cassandra's wedding song, for which the priestess bears her torch without propriety (οὐ ὀρθά, 348), Hecuba takes the "miserable flame" (λυγρὰν φλόγα, 344) from Cassandra's hand and entreats her to acknowledge the gravity of the circumstances. The personal disaster that these flames signify for Cassandra is an early hint of the destruction such torches will cause when the Hellenic soldiers

use them to set the city ablaze (λεύσσω φλογέας δαλοῖσι χέρας/ [τίνας] διερέσσοντας, 1257-8).

Yet Cassandra herself emphasizes the blissfulness of her situation, using the same adjective to describe the bridegroom (μακάριος ὁ γαμέτας, 311), herself (μακαρία δ' ἐγὼ, 312), the fortunes of her fatherland (ἐπὶ πατρὸς ἐμοῦ μακαριωτάταις/ τύχαις, 327-8), the bridal songs (μακαρίαις ἀοιδαῖς, 336; cf. ὁ χορὸς ὅσιος, 328), and Troy itself, more prosperous than the Achaeans (πόλιν δὲ δείξω τήνδε μακαριωτέραν/ ἢ τοὺς Ἀχαιούς, 365-6).[60] Ultimately, the shining beacons by which she marks her entrance are Cassandra's means of counteracting Talthybius' characterization of the "marriage" to Agamemnon as a hidden affair (λέκτρων σκότια νυμφευτήρια, 252). Propriety may require that

[60] Hecuba (306-07, 348-50), Talthybius (408-10, 417-19), and the chorus (341-2) object that Cassandra is not in her right mind, and liken her to a bacchant. Cassandra's own words support the simile (εὐᾶν εὐοῖ, 326; cf. ἀγάλματ' εὔια, 451-3). The terms she chooses are connected to Dionysiac worship in particular (cf. Soph. *Tr*. 219; Arist. *Lys*. 294; Eur. *Ba*. 141b; D. 18.260; Luc. *Podagra* 38; *Hymni Anonymi* fr. 3.9 ; sch. *Eur*. *Ph*. 649-656; sch. *Soph*. *Ant*. 1135; *Suda*, α 2342 and ε 2807; Dion. Thrax. *Ars*. 1.1.86.1). Cassandra's frenzy is elsewhere described as "bacchic" (e.g., Eur. *Hec*. 676-7), but her use of this cry to Dionysius is unique to *Troiades*. The playwright also emphasizes the Bacchic overtones when he has Cassandra, casting aside her garments, exclaim: "Be gone from my flesh, torn to pieces" (ἴτ' ἀπ' ἐμοῦ χρωτὸς σπαραγμοῖς, 453). The ritual of *sparagmos* is one element of overlap between Dionysiac and Apolline worship (the latter being Cassandra's rightful patron), which can be traced back, through a summary of Aeschylus' *Bassarids*, to Orpheus' dismemberment by Thracian maenads. On this element of the ritual's lineage, see: Kern 1922, 33; Guthrie and Alderlink 1993, 32. See also the account in Ov. *Met*. 1-66 and Apollod. 1.3.2, which states that Orpheus invented the mysteries of Dionysus.

Cassandra be Agamemnon's concubine rather than his wife, but torch-bearing Cassandra will not allow her captor to hide from his deed, or from his fate.

Agamemnon's capitulation to ἔρως exacerbates the severance of Troy's connection to the divine. Talthybius explains on two occasions that desire ensures Agamemnon's selection of Cassandra. In the first instance, passion itself is the agent: "desire for the prophet girl lodged its arrow deep within him" (ἔρως ἐτόξευσ' αὐτὸν ἐνθέου κόρης, 255); in the second, the king bears responsibility for submitting to his self-chosen desire for the "maenad woman" (τῆσδ' ἔρωτ' ἐξαίρετον/ μαινάδος ὑπέστη, 414-15).[61] Whatever its cause, Agamemnon's passion for Cassandra requires the disruption of the young woman's religious duties. When she first hears the news, Hecuba laments that priestess will have to abandon her post as Apollo's servant, throwing away her "sanctified branches" (ῥῖπτε... ζαθέους κλάδας, 256-7) and "casting the consecrated raiment of garlands from [your] flesh" (ἀπὸ χροὸς ἐνδυτῶν στεφέων ἱεροὺς στολμούς, 257-8). Cassandra's removal of these trappings reflects the corruption of the sacrosanct qualities that the chorus attaches to every land outside of Troy (cf. 197-234).

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[61] Self-chosen insofar as the Trojan women were assigned to their captors by lot (e.g., κεκλήρωσθ', λελόγχατε, ἔλαχε, 240-5), but Agamemnon was able to set Cassandra aside as a special prize (ἐξαίρετον, 249).

Yet Euripides is careful never to abandon the sense of reciprocity that is so integral to his play, and Agamemnon, consequently, is not the only one for whom Cassandra predicts suffering born from capitulation to desire and his disruption of religious propriety.[62] Odysseus, too, she declares, will face so many evils that those which she and the Trojans face will seem golden by comparison (ὡς χρυσός, 432).[63] Cassandra declares, furthermore that both Agamemnon and Odysseus, the latter of whom is especially responsible for dismantling Troy's social and political hierarchy, will each contend with challenges to the integrity of his own household ([Ὀδυσσεύς] κάκ' ἐν δόμοισι μυρί' εὑρήσει μολών, 443; [Κασσάνδρα] δόμους πέρσασ' Ἀτρειδῶν, 461). Cassandra's vocal and visible presence as both victim and representative of several of the tragedy's central themes provides a fitting counterbalance to Astyanax' silent embodiment of the same. While he, in death, serves as the human analogue for the city's destruction, a vibrantly living Cassandra speaks out and moves forth, projecting the forces behind Troy's collapse out among the ranks of her captors.

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[62] Cassandra assures Hecuba that her enslavement to Agamemnon is worth celebrating, for: "by this marriage I will reduce to nothing those whom you and I despise" (τοὺς γὰρ ἐχθίστους ἐμοὶ / καὶ σοὶ γάμοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς διαφθερῶ, 404-05).

[63] These sufferings include the crew's fatal desire for the lotus and the sacred cattle of Helios (λωτοῦ τ' ἔρωτες Ἡλίου θ' ἁγναὶ βόες, 439), and the hateful torrent of noises that the bloodied flesh of these sacrosanct animals will spew a torrent of at Odysseus (αἳ σαρξὶ φοινίαισιν ἥσουσίν ποτε/ πικρὰν Ὀδυσσεῖ γῆρυν, 440-1).

Cassandra's fellow Trojan women retain this forward momentum as they leave behind the burning walls of their city and board the Hellenic ships (1331-2). There is some power, perhaps, in the chorus' self-direction as the women extract themselves from Troy. Unlike Euripides' characters, however, the principal themes of his tragedy — religious, political, erotic — remain enmeshed within the city itself, for the city forms both the physical and ideological borders of the play. Poseidon builds Troy's walls and towers in his prologue speech, and Euripides pulls them apart, piece by piece, consistently directing our gaze to these structures as they weaken under force and fire. Troy's physical existence does not come to an end, however, until the penultimate line, when the chorus issues one final lament for the broken city (ἰὼ τάλαινα πόλις, 1331). In a more sustained and thorough manner than in his earlier tragedies, Euripides reifies the emotional and religious ruin of his characters as the parallel collapse of their physical world. In doing so, he creates a type of *pathos* that unremittingly anchors the audience members' internal, emotional response to the tangible world around them.

Chapter Two ~ *Alexandros* and *Palamedes*

The integrated influence of the religious, socio-political, and emotional degradation that Euripides portrays in his *Troiades* also appears to bear upon its companion plays in the trilogy of 415, *Alexandros* and *Palamedes*.[64] Despite the fragmentary state of these tragedies, it is possible to identify several meaningful, specific ways in which they not only form a cohesive trio with *Troiades*, but also play a foundational role in the particular type of emphatic, focused destruction Euripides portrays in his final tragedy of 415.

A number of expansive, tragic themes provide integral points of contact between *Alexandros, Palamedes,* and *Troiades*: the uncertainty of human life in a disorderly universe; the constraints of human knowledge and virtue; the fragility of human moral values; the responsibility of human beings for their own destruction.[65] The characters of Euripides' tragedies of 415 are not unique for the

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[64] So little remains of *Sisyphus,* which completed the tetralogy, that it is impossible to confirm the precise nature of the satyr play's connection to the other three. Fr. 673 provides evidence that Heracles was a character (βέλτιστον Ἀλκμήνης τέκος); fr. 674 is only a single word, ἑλίσσων, which Hesychius later glosses as: "a dramatic term: falsifying, not speaking frankly, or wavering back and forth, [as in] Euripides' *Sisyphus*" (πλέκων. ψευδόμενος, οὐκ ἐπὶ εὐθείας λέγων. ἢ κινῶν. Εὐριπίδης Σισύφῳ, Hesych. ε 2116). If Hesychius is correct to associate the term with Euripides' satyr play, there may have been some thematic connection between Sisyphus and his grandson, Odysseus, whose guileful speech is an element of *Palamedes* and *Troiades*.

[65] On broad thematic connections and recurring elements among Euripides' plays of 415, see: Murray 1913, 137; Scodel 1980, esp. 20-42, 68-121, 138-42. For arguments against interpreting the plays on the basis of their connectivity, see Koniaris 1973, 85-124. See also Collard et al. 2004, 48: in the edition, Cropp argues that *Palamedes* would have been a "very different play" from those that surrounded it.

hand they have in the various *peripeteiae* that they endure. The part that humans play in securing their own suffering, whether by ignorance, error, or some personal or moral flaw, is a theme that one can identify in any number of tragedies, from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* to Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannos* to Euripides' *Bacchae*. For this very reason, Euripides' consistent iteration of certain themes as a mutually-dependent set (disregard for religious propriety, competition among the upper classes for primacy, capitulation to *eros*) serves as an important counterpoint to their universalizing nature.

This distinction between universal and particular is worth observing as a means of understanding how the thematic connections that are specific to the tragedies of 415 are significant to the structure of the trilogy as a whole. When considered with an eye to universal themes, the cohesion between Euripides' tragedies appears to be a matter of thematic breadth. Each tragedy is one panel of a triptych, most intelligible when viewed alongside the counterparts that portray comparable themes. When considered with an eye to the specific combination of themes identified above, however, we can see that the cohesion of the trilogy is also a matter of individual, thematic depth. Each panel possesses its own richness and complexity, and explores the shared themes in its own way.

I. Alexandros[66]

The first tragedy performed in 415 traces the years of Alexander's life from his ominous birth and exposure to his return, as a young man, to a position of power at Troy. The prologue describes the (failed) exposure of the babe Alexander and the establishment of games in his honor; a murder plot develops as a response to Alexander's victory (as the slave, Paris) over prince Deiphobus in these very funereal games; the play concludes with Hecuba's recognition of and reconciliation to the adult Alexander, whom she narrowly avoids murdering on Deiphobus' behalf. Against this general outline, the precise place of the mortal (and possibly divine) characters in the tragedy's final tableaux proves somewhat difficult to reconstruct. No specific evidence strongly suggests the appearance of a *deus ex machina*, and such a figure would be particularly challenging to fit into the tragedy's final progression of attempted murder, recognition, and reconciliation.[67] Paris and Hecuba were assuredly present throughout, but the

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[66] For the fragments, I have used the edition by Collard et al. 2004 (in which the numbering of the fragments also corresponds to those found in Kannicht 1969). As in Collard et al., those fragments not included in Nauck's *TrGF* (1889[2]) or Snell's reprint (with supplement, 1964) are marked with (-N), and those renumbered by Kannicht are given with the corresponding number in Nauck and/or Snell, e.g., 62f (935N, 42a N-Sn).

[67] The identity of the prologue speaker is equally doubtful. Cropp notes that, among mortals, Paris' foster father is the most likely candidate: unlike Hecuba and Priam, he would have known of the child's survival and rearing, and unlike Cassandra, his knowledge is empirical rather than

role of additional characters is far from certain. Despite our inability to reconstruct *Alexandros'* final scene with absolute clarity, we are still able to find telling evidence of the degradation of religious propriety that preceded the royal mother's near-murder of her suppliant son, an act likely inspired by the competitive threat he poses to the extant political hierarchy. As such, *Alexandros* establishes a significant, albeit incomplete, baseline for Troy's religious health, and for the manner in which its most powerful citizens seek to preserve their position in Troy's socio-political hierarchy.

I.a. Religious decay in Alexandros

As they will be in *Troiades*, disregard for religious propriety and escalating intra-noble violence are parallel lanes on the same road to the city's decline. At first sight, Euripides shows us a city in which the foremost inhabitants possess a respectful regard for divine prescriptions, and use personal misfortune as an opportunity to create a communal religious celebration. The tragedy opens upon the city in the midst of an annual, ritual commemoration: funerary games that

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prophetic. Among the gods, scholars favor Aphrodite, Apollo, and Hermes as the likeliest candidates (Collard et al. 2004, 37).

Hecuba persuaded Priam to establish in memoriam of the exposed (and presumed expired) Alexander, whose death was prescribed by oracular command (Hypoth. 7-11, 19-21 [-N]; fr. 61d, 61a [47N], 62a [-N]).[68] Yet the games, initially evidence of Hecuba's (and Priam's) capitulation to divine prescriptions and of Troy's practical piety and communal cohesion, also serve as the testing ground for the main characters' dedication to these ideals. It is a test that the characters fail.

In a fragment that likely belongs to an early portion of the tragedy, the chorus emphatically advises that Hecuba attempt to move on from the pain of her child's exposure, and suggests that she has continued to grieve far beyond the point of prudence or appropriateness.[69] It is this same, inconsolable mother who, by tragedy's end, is on the brink of committing vengeful murder. From the

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[68] Euripides provides more than one version of the story of Alexander's exposure. In *Andromache* (c. 425), Euripides writes that Hecuba approached the city's elders for help murdering her son (293; cf. sch. *Eur. Androm.* 294). In *Iphigenia at Aulis* (406), by contrast, Hecuba seems to have little control over the situation. Instead, Euripides describes Priam's exposure of the child: "removed far away from his mother" (ματέρος ἀποπρὸ νοσφίσας, *IA* 1286), and alludes to Alexander as a: "herdsman brought up among the herds" (ἀμφὶ/ βουσὶ βουκόλον τραφέντ᾽, 1291-2). Priam himself, however, did not lay the child out, but entrusted his servant, Agelaus, with the task, thus providing the opportunity for Alexander to be reared to adulthood without his parents' knowledge. Among our extant sources, it is Apollodorus who provides Agelaus' name, in a summary of the exposure (3.12.5).

[69] E.g., *Alex*. fr. 43 (46N): πάντων τὸ θανεῖν·/ τὸ δὲ κοινὸν ἄχος/ μετρίως ἀλγεῖν σοφὶα μελεταῖ, "All of us die, but wisdom takes care to grieve this common pain in moderation;" fr. 45 (44N): οἶδ᾽· ἀλλὰ κάμπτειν τῶι χρόνωι λύπας χρεών, "I know, but one should turn back from grief in time;" fr. 46.5 (43N): παλαιὰ και[νοῖ]ς δαρυ[ύιοις οὐ χρὴ στένειν, "One ought not to bewail what has passed with present tears."

evidence of the extant fragments, it is unclear at what point, and by whom, Hecuba was restrained from killing her son (Hypoth. 29-30). Our lack of knowledge regarding the content[70] and placement[71] of Cassandra's prophetic pronouncement further complicates our ability to interpret Hecuba's motivations, and her ultimate abstention from seeing her and Deiphobus' plans through (cf. 62b [-N]). In either case, what we do know is that: 1) before Alexander's identity is revealed and she is prevented from killing him (if we follow the Hypothesis), Hecuba is willingly on the brink of killing the suppliant Paris at the altar where he has taken refuge; 2) Hecuba is ultimately unable to end the life of the young man whom she found the presence of mind to leave for dead during his infancy. Despite the obscurity of this portion of the tragedy for the modern interpreter, these two elements of the final progression provide some clarity as to the manner in which the queen's former priority — religious piety —

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[70] Did Cassandra exhort the queen to appease the gods by ending the life which should have ended long before, or did she plead with Hecuba not to commit an inter-familial murder in a holy place?

[71] Did Cassandra deliver her prophecy: 1) prior to the murder attempt (which would heighten the stakes for Hecuba's success); 2) during the melee (thus providing the impetus for recognition); or 3) after the reconciliation (as a warning against taking Paris back into the city)? Given the Hypothesis (P. Oxy. 3650 col i, 1-32 [-N]), option 3 is highly unlikely. The choice between options 1 and 2 is difficult to make, for the content and effect of Cassandra's prophecy is unknown. The Hypothesis states that the herdsman, who reared Paris, was: "forced to speak the truth according to the danger" (διὰ τὸν κίνδυνον ἠναγκάσθη λέβειν τὴν/ ἀλήθειαν, 31-2), suggesting that, if Cassandra did reveal Paris' identity, she was either misunderstood or disbelieved, thus requiring additional confirmation from the herdsman.

thus ceases to be the primary impetus for her actions, tainted as it is by her willingness to indulge Deiphobus' need to re-assert his social superiority.

Hecuba's actions also illustrate the trajectory that Euripides traces with regard to the degradation of piety among the Trojan elite. On the evidence of *Troiades* alone, Hecuba has a hand in Troy's destruction only insofar as she is the bearer of the firebrand who seals the city's demise (δαλοῦ πικρὸν μίμημ', *Tro.* 922). Andromache makes Alexander the active instigator of Troy's fall, a fate occasioned: "by the contempt the gods felt when your son escaped Hades" (δυσφροσύναισι θεῶν, ὅτε σὸς γόνος ἔκφυγεν Ἅιδαν, 597). The audience member who has just seen *Alexandros*, however, knows that Hecuba's true fault was not delivering her son at birth, nor her failure to follow divine ordinance and expose him. Rather, the queen's ultimate crime is her re-delivery of her son, at the end of *Alexandros*, to his ill-fated position as a prince of Troy. Although her child has changed from a helpless infant to a vital young man, it is really Hecuba who is different. Her dedication to divine order no longer trumps her love for her child. By concluding his *Alexandros* with Hecuba's failure to do what she

once knew to be necessary, Euripides shows that the queen has ceased to listen to the gods long before they cease, in *Troiades*, to listen to her (*Tro.* 1280-1).[72]

I.b. Political decay in Alexandros

The volatile emotionality according to which Hecuba operates is a trait that her children inherit. While Hecuba's own lack of control manifests as a threat to the city's religious well-being, that of her sons manifests as a dangerous struggle for political primacy at Troy. At the heart this competition is the perception of the noble royals (especially Deiphobus) that their reputation is threatened by one whom they had presumed powerless to challenge it.

Deiphobus' loss to Alexander in running and the pentathlon (δρόμον δὲ καὶ πένταθλον, Hypoth. 21) motivates the development of the murder plot

[72] The fragmentary state of *Alexandros* prevents a full understanding of how the other Trojans share in Hecuba's ultimate disregard for divine prescription. *Troiades* provides some evidence of what is missing. In her *agon* with the Trojan queen, Helen blames Hecuba for bearing Alexander (πρῶτον... Πάριν τεκοῦσα, *Tro.* 919-20), but she implicates the old man (either Priam or the servant who raised Alexander) as the one responsible for destroying her and Troy by failing to ensure the child's death (δεύτερον δ' ἀπώλεσεν/ Τροίαν τε κἄμ' ὁ πρέσβυς οὐ κτανὼν βρέφος, 920-1). The fragments of *Alexandros* confirm that in the trilogy of 415, Hecuba consistently has the impression that the exposure was a success (hence her laments at *Alexandros'* outset), but the case is less certain with respect to Priam. His willingness to establish the games in Alexander's honor belies the fact that he could not be absolutely certain of the child's death, for he had entrusted the exposure to his servant, Agelaus. Of course, Agelaus fails at his task and lies to his master. Perhaps the ambiguity of Helen's reference to an old man, rather than Priam or Agelaus in particular (*Tro.* 921), effectively condemns both men for allowing Alexander to live.

against the latter. Although the Trojans are under the impression that Alexander is Paris, a slave, Euripides' language in the extant fragments highlights the extent to which Paris and Deiphobus serve not only as foils for each other in terms of their respective, apparent social status, but also as iterations of one another in terms of their inborn (noble) qualities. Thus, the competition between them is very much a competition between nobles, even before Paris' true identity is revealed.

The chorus' proclamation regarding the distinction between specious and inherent nobility offers an important, verbal basis for recognizing the similarities between Hecuba's sons: "High and low-born are a single stock, but time accustoms the former to arrogance. Nobility is intelligence and mindfulness, and is given by the gods, not wealth" (μία δὲ γόνα τὸ τ' εὐγενὲς καὶ δυσγενές,/ νόμωι δὲ γαῦρον αὐτὸ κραίνει χρόνος./ τὸ φρόνιμον εὐγένεια καὶ τὸ συνετόν, ὁ δὲ/ θεὸς δίδωσιν, οὐχ ὁ πλοῦτος, fr. 61b [52N], ll. 7-10). With god-given nobility comes insightful intelligence; the practice of attaching status to wealth encourages an air of superiority. Based on this formulation, only the wealthy εὐγενές are prone to arrogance, but wealth itself prevents neither εὐγενές nor δυσγενές from possessing εὐγένεια, for the gods are free to bestow this intelligence (τὸ φρόνιμον) upon whomever they wish.

The chorus' association of τὸ φρόνιμον with εὐγένεια proves especially helpful as a means of discerning the most appropriate connotations for both the noun for the mind (or emotional center), φρήν, the related verb, φρονέω, each of which appear numerous times through the fragments. In the case of certain of Troy's princes, this noble "mindfulness" instead materializes as a type of uncontrolled spiritedness that leads these men to behave as arrogant εὐγενὲς, rather than examples of divinely-sanctioned nobility.

Through the actions and temperaments of Troy's princes, Euripides provides grounds for his audience to question whether these leading Trojans are prone to follow the chorus-approved model of pious nobility. Paris is the most interesting case, for he is the character who comes closest to embodying the μία γόνα of which the chorus speaks. Even under his slavish guise, Paris appears to suffer from the same type of arrogance that the chorus associates with wealth and, therefore, nobility. Paris himself laments that his outstanding φρήν, (τὸ χρήσιμον φρενῶν, fr. 62i [58N], l. 1), the salvation of other men, has condemned him to death.[73] Furthermore, the Hypothesis suggests that Paris' pride ([τ]ὴν

[73] When associated with slaves in general, the connotation of φρήν and its related terms is one of excessive mental prowess. An unknown speaker reminds Priam that the basest, most burdensome, least beneficial possession is: "a slave who thinks about what he should not" (δούλου φρονοῦντος μεῖζον ἢ φρονεῖν χρεὼν, fr. 48, l. 2).

ὑπερήφανον) puts him at odds with the other shepherds (ἄλλοι νομεῖς, l. 15), and his mixture of pride and (self-described) spiritedness makes Paris a threat to Deiphobus. The latter, upon losing to Paris at the games, complains to Hecuba that his rival: "fills the entire Trojan town with his self-celebration" (πᾶν ἄστυ πληροῖ Τροϊκὸν γαυρούμενος, 62d [-N], l. 28; cf. fr. 61b [52N], l. 8). Deiphobus, too, is rash rather than restrained when it comes to matters of emotion. In fr. 62a (-N), he refuses to "soften his attitude" (μαλθάσσει φρένας, l. 6) and cannot fathom why his brother, Hector, has not taken the insult of Paris' victory to heart (οὐκ ἀλγεῖς φρένα[ς, l. 9).

Deiphobus' intractability is inspired by his frustration that a slave has carried off the prizes in the contest (ἆθλ' ἀπεστερημέν[ος, l. 10). His irascible mind thus reflects his prideful attachment to material markers of superiority, which would prove meaningless in the absence of an inferior social class, such as that to which Paris "the slave" belongs, against which to define them. Hector, for his part, refuses to be troubled by Deiphobus' defeat (ὠδίνειν φ[ρέ]νας, l. 12).[74] In full control of his φρήν, Hector has access to both the material and the inherent sources of nobility. The combination is crucial, for neither Deiphobus'

[74] The term also occurs in fr. 62e (-N), in which Cassandra's ravings betray her mental state (β]ακχεύει φρένα[).

knowledge of his noble lineage, nor Paris' humble rearing, grants either man possession of the self-controlled intellect that Hector displays. Thus, Euripides' language makes clear to the viewer (and reader) what is not yet clear to the characters, namely, that the heart of the conflict between Paris and Deiphobus blossoms not from the confrontation of slave and noble, but from the clash between two brothers who have the blood of εὐγενὲς, but the aspirations of δυσγενές.

Of course, as Paris is really the noble Alexander, there is heavy irony in any defense that he (or any other character) provides regarding the natural goodness of the low-born poor, and the empty veneer of blue-blooded, wealth-derived virtue (e.g., fr. 54 [messenger?], 57 [Alexander]?, 61b-c [52-3N] [chorus]).[75] Such is also the case with respect to the various remarks that seek to undermine the belief that a high social station is a mark of inherent goodness (e.g., fr. 54, 55, 57). Yet the clash between Paris and Deiphobus does more than exploit the numerous ironies that Euripides' viewer might perceive. Rather, the struggle for primacy that undermines the city's social and political stability relates in key ways to the religious disrespect that dooms Troy. Paris' potential to

[75] Alongside gnomic praise of a poor and hard-scrabble life we find fragments expressing equally-generalizing statements regarding slaves and a slavish nature (e.g., fr. 49, 50, 59).

upset Troy's reigning hierarchy is integral to the other characters' willingness to pervert a constructive religious practice (i.e., the celebration of the games) by using its outcome as a justification for impious acts (i.e., murder of a suppliant).

I.c. Religious and political decay: Alexandros *vs.* Krestophontes

If we compare what we know of the dénouement of *Alexandros* to that of another of Euripides' fragmentary plays, *Krestophontes* (c. 430-24), we can appreciate how closely (and uniquely) Euripides relates a Troy-centric erosion of religious dedication to the city's hierarchical struggles in his trilogy of 415. In *Krestophontes*, the Messenian queen Merope has been forced to send away her child, the titular character, out of fear of Polyphontes, who murdered the boy's father (also Krestophontes). This Polyphontes has claimed command of the city, and offered a reward to any man who kills the escaped heir. Having come of age, Krestophontes uses the reward as a premise for getting close to Polyphontes, and returns to Messene claiming that he has killed Polyphontes' rival for the throne.

To this point, Merope has gained knowledge of her son's rearing away from the city through an aged servant who has been acting as liaison. However, Merope has not actually seen her son since he was a child, and does not know of

his return. Thus, she fails to recognize the stranger as her own Krestophontes, and believes the stranger's report that he has killed her son. Furious, Merope attempts to murder the stranger, and it is only the intervention of the servant, who knows the grown Krestophontes at sight, that prevents the mother from inadvertently killing her son.[76] However heinous is her narrowly-avoided intention to murder a stranger, Merope's motivation is her mistaken belief that she is only returning blood for blood, that she is acting in vengeful balance by answering murder with murder

In *Alexandros*, by contrast, Euripides eliminates the balance between crime and punishment that he asserts in his earlier tragedy. Hecuba does not seek blood for blood; rather, her motivation and priority is the hollow vengeance of Deiphobus' perceived social sleight. Hector's words to Deiphobus confirm the petty nature of this vendetta. It is not Paris' victory in the games, but Deiphobus' response, with which Hector takes issue: "[I do not approve of] one who, having trivial complaints, [thinks that they are significant] and organizes his actions [through fear]" (ἐγὼ δέ γ' ὅσ]τις σμίκρ' ἔχων ἐγκλήματα / μεγάλα νο]μίζει καὶ †συνέστηκεν φόβω[ι†, *Alex.* 62a [-N] l. 6-7).[77] Thus, between 430 and 415, the

[76] Once reconciled, Merope and Krestophontes plot together to murder Polyphontes and reclaim the throne.

[77] For the sense of συνέστηκεν, cf. LSJ συνίστημι A.II and B.II.2, III.2.

complexion of Euripides' tragic universe has changed: an act of retribution, conceivable in *Krestophontes* as Merope's response to ἐγκλήματα μεγάλα, is now Hecuba's reaction to ἐγκλήματα σμίκρα. With the difference between the respective motivations in *Krestophontes* and *Alexandros* in mind, we can see that the hierarchical strife of *Troiades* is not simply a state to which the city has devolved as the result of the devastation of war and the clash between captor and captive.[78] Rather, this feature is, foremost, a flaw inherent to the Trojans themselves.

I.d. The Trojan tragedies of 415

In his first play of 415, Euripides begins to chip away at the ideological structure of the city by tracing the internal origins of the flaws that the Hellenic invasion pushes to a breaking point in *Troiades*. Alexander's near-murder and his

[78] In *Troiades*, both the Hellenes and the Trojans are guilty of religious disregard. The matter of intra-noble competition is one which the Hellenes emphatically introduce with regard to their reason for killing Astyanax, yet the Trojans are also implicated in this upper-class quarrelling, due to Paris' competition with Menelaus for Helen's favor. Hecuba describes the quarrel in her *agon* against Helen: "You praised Menelaus any time you heard that he had the upper hand in the struggle, in order that my son would be pained by having a powerful opponent of [his] desire" (εἰ μὲν τὰ [ἀγωνία] τοῦδε κρείσσον'ἀγγέλλοιτό σοι/ Μενέλαον ἤινεις, παῖς ὅπως λυποῖτ' ἐμὸς/ ἔχων ἔρωτος ἀταγωνιστὴν μέγαν, *Tro.* 1004-06). On the Trojan's own culpability for the city's destruction, see Burnett 1977, 291-316.

return to a position of power suggest the perpetuity of the Trojans' disregard for the gods' warnings and prohibitions. At play's end, the characters are in an impossible position: if Cassandra aims to prevent the murder through her prophecy, then she is failing to protect the city from its future destroyer; if the priestess spurs Hecuba on towards murder, she is guilty of encouraging an impious defilement of the suppliant and the altar where he takes refuge. Hecuba, too, must choose either to commit this impious murder, or to defy the oracle by instead welcoming her child with open arms. Banishing Alexander may at first seem an appropriate compromise, but the flaw of this option is that it simply repeats the mistake of the child's failed, i.e., non-fatal, exposure.

Given that Euripides' characters have only unfavorable options from which to choose, is it possible to consider them to be active instigators of their own, and of Troy's destruction? The clash between Deiphobus and Alexander, born out of each man's dedication to his own petty emotionality, suggests that it is. When Alexander is restored to his rightful place, the significance of a status-based social structure to Troy's *status quo* is confirmed: prideful Paris simply becomes prideful Alexander, but his pride is now justified by his station. Whereas true nobility does exist among some of the leading Trojans (i.e., Hector),

those whom Euripides chooses as the focal figures in his plot are those whose actions consistently undermine the religious and hierarchical stability of Troy.

Consequently, we can see that the impieties, hierarchical struggles and physical destruction pursued by the Hellenes in *Troiades* do not create the fissures in the integrity of Troy's sovereignty, but simply apply the necessary pressure to rupture the cracks that have already formed in *Alexandros*. The situation in *Troiades* is not simply a reprisal of that in *Alexandros*, but is, rather, an amplification thereof.

The causes for Troy's fall — impious behavior, jockeying among nobles for social supremacy, capitulation to emotional excess — have not changed in name between *Alexandros* and *Troiades*, but they have changed hands. For example, the perpetuation of the cycle of intra-noble competition that begins in *Alexandros* is no longer the exclusive result of Trojan actions in *Troiades*. Rather, Troy's typical nobles must cede their social position in order to accommodate a newly-imposed social tier, a Hellenic ruling-class that defines itself on the basis of its possession of Troy's newly-minted slaves. These conquerors (answer Odysseus') call for Astyanax' death, fearing that this child, the son of the city's best father (ἀρίστου παῖδα… πατρός, 723), is uniquely placed to incite a future struggle between Troy's native ruling class, and the foreigners who have co-

opted their power. Hecuba, the reader may recall, chides the Hellenic soldiers for allowing fear to drive them to commit an illogical murder (*Tro*. 1159-66).

Hecuba's words in *Troiades* echo Hector's reply to Deiphobus in fr. 62a [-N], ln. 6-7 of *Alexandros*, but in the trilogy's third play, the stakes are much higher. Whereas Deiphobus directs his fear-driven vitriol against one who is his equal in terms of spirited arrogance, the Hellenes exorcise their fears by punishing a child whose pure, inherent nobility Euripides does nothing to undermine. As such, it is the Hellenes who help to push the ideological destruction of Troy's religious and hierarchical institutions, which the city's inhabitants have themselves been undertaking for some time, to a point of no return.

II. Palamedes

Palamedes, the second tragedy performed in 415, takes place in the Hellenic camp, and pits its titular character, the inventor of writing, against an equally-clever Odysseus.[79] The paucity of the extant fragments limits our

[79] The scholiast's note to Euripides' *Orestes* 432, along with the scholion to Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusai* 770 provide considerable help towards a reasonable, albeit bare reconstruction of the plot. The former attributes the conflict between the tragedy's primary characters to the fact

certainty about the tragedy's connections to its companions. Nonetheless, the surviving text does suggest that the violent friction between nobles with claims to the same social space, integral to *Alexandros* and *Troiades*, was an equally-important element of *Palamedes*.

In each of his tragedies of 415, Euripides portrays men of excellent status (Deiphobus, Odysseus, Palamedes) and/or ability (Alexander, Odysseus, Palamedes). He pits these figures against each other in jealous competitions for sole occupancy of a superior rank, and these social clashes threaten to undermine the integrity of their respective communities. In both *Alexandros* and *Palamedes*, these clashes relate to whether wisdom is appropriately directed towards the promotion of moderation or, alternatively, is ignored or perverted in favor of disruptive excellence.

In *Palamedes* in particular, the characters appear to take great pains to define the nature of a man who is σοφός. Thus, taken together with *Alexandros*, the fragments of *Palamedes* suggest that the essential weaknesses of the Trojan

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that: "[Palamedes] discovered measures and calculation, resulting in his having a great name among the Hellenes. But for this reason Agamemnon, Odysseus and Diomedes were jealous of him, and arranged the following sort of device against him" (ὥστε μέγα ἔχειν ὄνομα παρὰ τοῖς Ἕλλησι. τούτῳ δὲ φθονήσαντες οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα καὶ Ὀδυσσέα καὶ Διομήδη τοιόνδε τι σκευωροῦσι κατ' αὐτοῦ·, ll. 10-12). For a helpful summary of the ancient sources, see Collard et al. 2004, 92-5.

collective are also those that plague the Hellenic forces. When these two populations are exposed to one another in *Troiades*, furthermore, Euripides takes the fear- and jealousy-driven, violence-inducing competitions between Alexander and Deiphobus, and Odysseus and Palamedes, and combines them into a force with the capacity for city-wide, rather than merely personal destruction.

II.a. Wisdom as a zero-sum game

Although Odysseus' willingness to murder Palamedes certainly makes the former the more villainous of the two, there is good reason to think that Euripides did not simply portray Palamedes as the selfless victim of Odysseus' selfish aims, "a righteous man condemned by an evil world." [80] If we examine the several fragments of *Palamedes* in which we find σοφία and its related terms, we can see that both of the tragedy's main characters share an equally preoccupation

[80] Murray 1913, 137. Scodel 1980 renews this position, arguing that the theme of unjust murder is a key link between the plays of the trilogy. The modern portrait of Palamedes the selfless culture hero, whose inventiveness proved a boon for his fellow Hellenes, owes much to Xenophon's portrayal of Socrates. In *Apology* 26, the example of Palamedes' unjust condemnation provides comfort to Socrates, who believes that he will be remembered for his service to mankind (see also Plato *Apol*. 41b). In *Memorabilia* 4.2.33, the examples of Palamedes and Odysseus prove that wisdom is not an "indisputable good" (ἀναμφισβητήτως ἀγαθόν), insofar as Odysseus' jealousy of Palamedes' wisdom inspired the former to murder the latter.

to establish a preeminent reputation by laying excessive, or even exclusive, claim to σοφία.

In *Palamedes*, there is only so much σοφία to go around. A number of sentiments on wisdom and/or craftiness appear in fragments (580, 581, 583) that "almost certainly" come from the *agon* between Odysseus and Palamedes,[81] making either of the two the most likely speaker in each case. In *Pal.* fr. 580, for example, the speaker (Odysseus?) states that: "all [men], both those who are fond of music and however many live in disregard of it, toil for money, and the craftiest man is he who has the most" (πάντες, οἵ τε μουσικῆς φίλοι/ ὅσοι τε χωρὶς ζῶσι, χρημάτων ὕπερ/ μοχθοῦσιν, ὅς δ' ἂν πλεῖστ' ἔχηι σοφώτατος). In this case, it is superlative σοφία that allows a man to secure the object of his desire. In fr. 581, the speaker (Palamedes?) also associates wisdom with a superlative type of exclusivity when he claims that, given a long line of countless commanders, time will prove only one or two to be wise (σοφός). Finally, the speaker of fr. 583 attempts to delimit his opponent's claims to wisdom, by associating skillful speech with cleverness that goes beyond decorum and that ought to be censured (τὸ σοφὸν οὐκ αἰνῶ ποτε, fr. 583, l. 2).[82] All told, the

[81] Collard et al. 2004, 99.

[82] This sentiment echoes what the audience member has already heard in *Alex.* fr. 61: "I despise a man is skillful in his speeches, but with no skill for anything useful" (†μισῶ σοφὸν ἐν λόγοισιν,

greatest advantages — be they material (fr. 580), political (fr. 581), or argumentative (fr. 583) — belong to the man who is able to claim a premium on wisdom.

For a viewer who has just seen *Alexandros*, the association of σοφία with superiority in *Palamedes* would have stood in opposition to the moderation with which the quality is associated in the former play. In *Alexandros*, a key element of true wisdom is moderation, whether with respect to grief (fr. 43 [46N]), or in relation to recognizing the danger posed by a slave whose mental capacity exceeds his station (fr. 48).[83] Opposed to this moderation is Hecuba's prolonged state of grief, Deiphobus' inconsolable anger, and Paris' boastful nature, supported by his outstanding spiritedness. In short, a disregard for what is wise appears to correspond, in *Alexandros*, to a tendency to disrupt the personal and collective social order that moderation maintains.[84]

ἐς δ'ὄνησιν οὐ σοφόν†). On the metrical corruption of the line and previous emendations, see Collard et al. 2004, 58 and 76.

[83] *Alex*. fr. 43 (46N): πάντων τὸ θανεῖν·/ τὸ δὲ κοινὸν ἄχος/ μετρίως ἀλγεῖν σοφία μελεταῖ, "All of us die, but wisdom takes care to grieve this common pain in moderation"; fr. 48: σοφὸς μὲν οὖν εἶ, Πρίαμ', ὅμως δέ σοι λέγω·/ δούλου φρονοῦντος μεῖζον ἢ φρονεῖν χρεὼν/ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄχθος μεῖζον οὐδὲ δώμασι/ κτῆσις κακίων οὐδ' ἀνωφελεστέρα, "Though you are wise, Priam, I tell you nevertheless: there is nothing more burdensome for a household, no possession baser or less helpful, than a slave who does more thinking than he needs to."

[84] From what remains of *Palamedes*, it appears that justice is also a distinguishing, rather than a levelling feature. In fr. 585, for example, an unknown speaker (very probably Palamedes) claims that the reputation (δόξα) of a just man is not only eternal, but belongs to that man alone (τοῦ γὰρ δικαίου...μόνου). A just man, furthermore, stands against countless others, and overcomes

In *Palamedes*, however, an excess of wisdom is precisely what defines the titular character. In a lament for Palamedes, Oeax (or perhaps the chorus) refers to Palamedes as the "all wise one" (πάνσοφον, fr. 588, l. 2), thus voicing the most aggressive claim to superiority based upon wisdom that can be found in the extant fragments. Palamedes, for his own part, appears to build his defense in the *agon* around his singular excellence as the man who discovered the necessary elements of written language (fr. 578).[85] The protagonist, the likely speaker of fr. 584 and 585, also portrays himself as a lone, righteous man (εἷς τοι δίκαιος) who conquers the faceless myriad of unjust men (μυρίων οὐκ ἐνδίκων, fr. 584), and whose own righteousness puts him on a level above other mortals: "Among mortals and gods, the repute of the righteous man alone exists, undying, in perpetuity" (τοῦ γὰρ δικαίου κἀν βροτοῖσι κἀν θεοῖς/ ἀθάνατος ἀεὶ δόξα διατελεῖ μόνου, fr. 585). Thus, while it is impossible to reconstruct the overall effect of the titular character's defense against the charges that he faces, it

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them righteously if he has the gods and justice on his side (εἷς τοι δίκαιος μυρίων οὐκ ἐνδίκων/ κρατεῖ τὸ θεῖον τὴν δίκην τε συλλαβών, fr. 583).

[85] There is an immediate irony to Palamedes' claim that he alone (μόνος, fr. 578) invented letters and writing, thereby supplanting hearsay or second-hand reports with dependable, written records, for it is a written tablet upon which Odysseus will base his false accusations. In his later work, Plato (*Rep*. 522d) also says that Palamedes did not invariably use his inventions for good, but instead used his numerical prowess to make a fool of Agamemnon ἐν ταῖς τραγωιδίαις. However, it is not clear whether he means Aeschylus' or Euripides' *Palamedes* (or Sophocles', or someone else's, for that matter), as such a situation could plausibly belong to any of the tragedies known to have treated the subject.

appears that a key element of his argument is his immoderate claim that he occupies both the moral and practical high ground.

II.b. The price of exceptionality

In both *Alexandros* and *Palamedes*, it is possible to pity the accused as the victim of slanderous charges, yet there are also grounds for pause when considering the extent to which each defendant inspires his respective opponents' vitriolic prosecution. When refuting Odysseus' accusations, Palamedes calls attention to his exclusivist, superior nature, which may have inspired a jealous Odysseus to target him in the first place. To accept the image of Palamedes as an entirely unsuspecting victim, furthermore, is to regard as fact, rather than opinion, Oeax' (or the chorus') claims that this man was: "the Muses' nightingale, who pained no one" (τὰν οὐδέν' ἀλγύνουσαν ἀηδόνα Μουσᾶν, l. 3).[86] Palamedes' likely insistence upon his own superiority represents a

[86] This is the position Murray took in his seminal examination of the trilogy of 415 (1946, esp. 141-2), yet the image of Palamedes as a guiless victim was by no means universal among ancient authors. See, e.g., Plato *Rep*. 522d and *Phaed*. 261b-d. In the latter, Socrates associates Odysseus, Nestor, and Palamedes with the type of psychagogic, manipulative rhetoric (ἡ ῥητορικὴ) that Phaedrus recognizes as the language of law courts and the Assembly. Socrates also compares Palamedes to Zeno, for both men are apt manipulators of their respective listeners' perceptions, regardless of the setting (261d). Furthermore, the idea of Nestor, Odysseus, and Palamedes composing petty court-room speeches in their downtime at Troy (ἐν Ἰλίῳ σχολάζοντες

perversion of the tempering effect that true σοφία is meant to have.[87] In the extant fragments of *Palamedes*, the speakers' major concerns center upon securing their own preeminence, and Palamedes does not appear to be an exception.

Alexander appears to face a similar situation in his name play. Speaking in his own defense, Alexander decries slander as: "a dreadful evil for men" (διαβολαὶ δεινὸν ἀνθρώποις κακόν, *Alex.* fr. 56, l. 1), and the Hypothesis picks up the term, noting that Alexander argued successfully against the other shepherds: "who were slandering him" (τοὺς/ διαλβάλλοντας, ll. 18-19). However, the Hypothesis also claims that these shepherds brought Alexander to trial in the first place because of his arrogance among his fellows ([τ]ὴν ὑπερήφανον/ συμβίωσιν, ll. 15-16), and Deiphobus himself takes issue with Alexander for filling all Troy with his exultation (γαυρούμενος, fr. 62d [-N], l. 28). The chorus' connection of this type of pride (γαῦρον, fr. 61b [52N], l. 8) to nobility suggests that Alexander, like Palamedes, plays a part in his own condemnation, by continuously failing to temper his outstanding nature

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συνεγραψάτην, *Phaed.* 261b) corresponds to Euripides' own language in both: *Palamedes* fr. 579: [unknown speaker]: "For a long, long time indeed I have wished to question you carefully, [but] leisure prevented me" (πάλαι πάλαι δή σ' ἐξερωτῆσαι θέλων,/ σχολή μ' ἀπεῖργε); and *Troiades* 911: [Menelaus]: "This [i.e., time for a debate between Helen and Hecuba] is a gift of leisure" (σχολῆς τὸ δῶρον).

[87] Plato's Palamedes also has a monopoly on ingenuity, as the inventor of: "the cleverest means of passing the time" (χρόνου τε διατριβὰς σοφωτάτας, Radt. fr. 479).

(θανοῦμαι διὰ τὸ χρήσιμον φρενῶν, 62i [58N], l. 1). For those who would object that such temperance is impossible for one whose excellence is inborn, Hector's modest conduct and advice demonstrate that, in *Alexandros*, such moderation (fr. 62a [-N]) and self-control (fr. 62b [-N], ll. 30-4) is conceivable among nobles.

The paucity of examples undermines the certitude of any conclusions one can draw from a side-by-side comparison of *Alexandros'* and *Palamedes'* respective sentiments on the relationship between σοφία and moderation. It is for this reason, however, that we have something to gain by considering the thematic connections between the tragedies of 415 from a perspective of both breadth (connectivity across the trilogy) as well as depth, for the latter concerns the unique contribution that each tragedy makes to the image of the whole by providing varied points of access to a core of significant thematic and verbal elements.

III. The trilogy of 415

In the tragedies of 415, the social rivalry among the most prominent figures in each tragedy exacerbates these individuals' disregard for religious propriety, and their capitulation to immoderate emotional instincts. The

contentious rivalries between Alexander and Deiphobus, between Palamedes and Odysseus, set the stage for the equally-contentious intra-noble rivalries that Euripides explores in *Troiades*. In his final tragedy of 415, the noxious concoction of religious depravity, hierarchical decay, and emotional abandon reaches its peak, afflicting mortals of diverse allegiances and social levels, as well as the structures that surround them.

Euripides' tragedies of 415 stand out from the playwright's earlier, extant works in the degree to which every level of Trojan society falls apart in tandem with the city itself. *Alexandros* explores the nature of a great deal of volatile material that is present within Troy's walls; *Palamedes* delineates the existence of a similar volatility among the Hellenic forces; *Troiades* not only shows the aftermath of the immediate reaction between these two unstable elements, but also follows the reaction, in the form of strife among the Trojan elite and their Hellenic captors, as it encompasses and transforms the entire city. Thus, in *Troiades*, Euripides does not simply reprise, but instead amplifies the conflicts of his first two tragedies, and emphasizes the extent to which these conflicts corrupt all levels of a city's (or a collective's) social hierarchy.

This corruption, built up over the course of the trilogy, assures that the breakdown of Troy's institutional integrity will occur in tandem with the

destruction of every level of the city's walls. In *Troiades'* second stasimon (511-67), the chorus includes the entire population when describing of the conveyance of the Trojan horse to the temple of Athena: "The people shouted out from their station up on Troy's citadel" (ἀνὰ δ'ἐβόασεν λεὼς/ Τρωιάδος ἀπὸ πέτρας σταθείς, 522-3) to bring in the "holy statue… Which of the youths, which of the elders did not emerge from their homes" (ἱερὸν ξοάνον... τίς οὐκ ἔβα νεανίδων/ τίς οὐ γεραιὸς ἐκ δόμων; 525-8)? The high point of the Trojans' celebrations coincides with the high ground (ἀνὰ… πέτρας σταθείς). The low point, by contrast, comes amidst the violence of the Hellenes' ambush, which occurs on the ground level (Περγάμων ἕδρας, 556-7). No other of Euripides' earlier, extant tragedies portrays the fall of the city itself so intensely. Thanks to the fragmentary existence of *Alexandros* and *Palamedes*, we can better understand the sources of this intensity, for it is these first two tragedies that provide the sparks for the flame that will burn Troy's walls slowly, but finally, to the ground.

Chapter Three ~ Thucydides on Athens (415-11): ξυνωμοσία, ὀλιγαρχία, and ἔρως

In his account of Athens' organization and dispatch of the Sicilian Expedition, and of the impiety trials of 415,[88] Thucydides portrays the Athenians as a volatile and self-destructive group. An interdependent combination of religious impertinence, intra-aristocratic strife, and emotional excess deeply affects every level of the citizen body. The reader of book 6 will already be familiar with this combination, for all of these elements appear in the historian's account, in book 3, of the rise (and demise) of the oligarchic faction during the Corcyraean *stasis* and revolution (summer 427).[89] Yet Thucydides also makes these elements highly visible to the reader at a point in his narrative in which *stasis* is never named as such, nor leads to an actual attempt at revolution.[90]

In book 6, rather, Thucydides portrays choice elements of *stasis* writ large — a rise in religious impertinence, aristocratic rivalry, and unchecked

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[88] Thuc. 6.1, 8-31, and 53-61.

[89] E.g., 3.82.6, 82.8, 83.1 (religious disrespect); 3.82.8 (upper-class competition); 3.84.1-2, 85.1 (emotional excess). On Thucydides' use of the Corcyraean *stasis* as a structuring element of his narrative, see Erbse 1989, 93-105 and Price 2001, 6-78.

[90] According to Thucydides, at least, Athens itself is not in an explicit state of *stasis* at any point during the period described in book 6 (winter 416/5- summer 414). Forms of the verb, στασιάζω, apply only to the Sicilians (6.17.3, 6.17.5) and the revolutionaries at Messene (6.74.1); forms of στάσις, likewise, appear only in reference to the Camarinaeans (6.5.3) and the Syracusans (6.38.3).

emotionality — as the radical factors of intra-Athenian political unrest. In doing so, Thucydides renders his general, "Corcyraean" model specific to Athens and the proclivities of its citizens in 415.[91] Thucydides sets his account of 415 apart from his Corcyraean paradigm by infusing his narrative of Athenian unrest with novel uses or connotations of terms that the reader has already seen.

In so doing, the historian gives his reader a select vocabulary for discussing religious impertinence and upper-class competition — which underlie the threat of revolutionary *stasis* in general — that is tailored to the circumstances at Athens in 415 (section *I*). The most vital term that evinces this method is ξυνωμοσία (and the related nouns ξυνώομοτος, ξυνομότης, and verb, ξυνόμνυμι). At noteworthy points in his book 6 narrative, Thucydides privileges a particular connotation of the term, such that it clearly denotes an impious conspiracy, rather than the pious alliance that it had signified in books 1-5. In the same portion of his narrative, Thucydides introduces a novel form of ὀλιγαρχία,

[91] Given Thucydides' summation regarding Corcyra, it is no surprise to the reader to find that elements of the paradigmatic narrative of the Corcyraean revolution are reflected in the historian's other descriptions of revolutionary *stasis*. In the historian's estimation, there is no end in sight to the harsh fallout of *stasis* (κατὰ στάσιν, 3.82.2), for such results are bound to occur continuously: "as long as the predispositions of men are the same, but [the effects will be] severe to greater or lesser degree and altered in appearance" (ἕως ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾖ, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ἡσυχαίτερα καὶ τοῖς εἴδεσι διηλλαγμένα, 3.82.2).

namely, the adjective ὀλιγαρχικός, ή, όν, as well as an entirely unique adjective, τυραννική.

The detailed attention that Thucydides gives to these factors in his account of 415 proves integral to his account of 411, at which time Athenians in Athens and at Samos aimed to install oligarchic governments (section *II*). Both ξυνωμοσία and ὀλιγαρχία are noteworthy verbal elements in the historian's description of these events. In his book 8 narrative, Thucydides retains the altered connotation of ξυνωμοσία that he introduced in book 6, and thus emphasizes the connection between its unique definition and its use in an Athenian context. He also employs the rare verb, ὀλιγαρχέω, a form of ὀλιγαρχία that appears outside of book 8 only a single time in the extant narrative.

In book 6, Thucydides also consistently uses one term in particular — ἔρως (and related terms such as ἐρωτικός, ἐραστης, and δύσερως) — to a degree unparalleled in any other section of the extant text. As such, the term acquires an especially close relationship to the circumstances of 415, and to the actions and demeanor of the Athenian population at that time (section *III*).

The reader can recognize a direct line between the political and social *stasis* of 415 and the formal, regime-shifting revolution of 411 due to the

outstanding vocabulary with which Thucydides describes the political tensions at Athens during this period.[92] Consequently, Thucydides' account of Athens in 415 is more than a narrative of unrest in which the components of *stasis* signal a general breakdown of social propriety and political vitality at Athens. It is, rather, a model for a very particular type of oligarchic, Athenian-centric *stasis* and revolution, distinct for the manner in which impiety and desire fuel aristocratic in-fighting aimed at limited rule.[93]

Thucydides' description of the coups of 411 draws thematic and verbal sustenance from a network of veins that extends back into his account of earlier years. However, on a verbal level in particular, Thucydides' description of the events of 415 represents the pulmonary, the unique vein that delivers pure blood to the heart of Athenian oligarchy. [94]

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[92] Thucydides suggests that the roots of *stasis* at Athens stretch back much earlier than 415. Upon the death of Pericles in 429, for example, the historian claims that Pericles' successors, through their own divisive, demagogic quarrelling, diluted the unitary administrative power exercised by Athens' "first man" (ὑπὸ τοῦ πρώτου ἀνδρὸς ἀρχή, 2.65.10). Yet even here, Thucydides singles out the Sicilian Expedition of 415 as an integral example of the acrimonious political jockeying and fruitless contention that, he claims, hindered and distracted the Athenians from making adequate preparations for the mission.

[93] See Price (2001, 226-7), who notes that the incidents of religious sacrilege in 415: "became weapons in the political struggles at Athens (cf. 8.53.2), and should be recognized both in their substance and in their subsequent rhetorical service as key episodes in the brewing *stasis* in Athens." See also Hornblower 2008, nn. 6.27-29.

[94] When he examines the coup of 411, Price (2001, 304-27) focuses almost entirely on drawing connections between the Corcyraean *stasis* in book 3 and the revolutionary events of book 8. For a consideration of the relationship between Thucydides' style at 3.82-83 and the meaning of his "account of faction," see Macleod 1983, 52-68.

I. ξυνωμοσία: a paradigm for Athenian conspiracy (415)

In his description of the suspected conspiracy of 415 (6.27.3), Thucydides alters the connotation of ξυνωμοσία to which he adheres prior to this passage. In books 1-5, the historian always uses ξυνωμοσία to refer to a military alliance guaranteed by the swearing of a divinely-witnessed (and sanctioned) oath.[95] In general, the historian refers to these oaths as ὅρκοι,[96] and sometimes combines this term with the verb for swearing, ὄμνυμι.[97] The presence of the gods is often an implicit element of oath-taking, but Thucydides also makes this divine aspect more visible in certain instances by referencing the collective gods under whose witness the oaths are sworn.[98] When the reader encounters ξυνωμοσία prior to book 6, it is almost always in close proximity to these typical terms and

[95] All uses of ξυνωμοσία and the related terms cited above, prior to 6.27.3 (the narrative of the impieties of 415), are as follows: 1.58.2 (ξυνομόσαντες); 1.71.5 (ξυνομόσωσιν); 2.72.1 (ξυνώμοσαν); 2.74.2 (ξυνώμοτον); 3.63.3 (ξυνωμόσατε); 3.64.3 (ξυνωμοσίαν); 5.38.3 (ξυνομνύναι and ξυνομνύντες); 5.48.2 (ξυνώμοσαν); 5.80.2 (ξυνομόσαι); 5.83.4 (ξυνωμοσίαν); 6.18.1 (ξυνωμόσαμεν).
[96] E.g., 1.9.1, 78.4, 102.4; 2.71.4, 72.1; 3.59.2, 82.7, 83.2; 4.19.2, 86-88 *passim*; 5.18-42 *passim*.
[97] E.g., 2.73.3; 3.59.2; 5.23.4, 47.8, 80.3.
[98] E.g., 1.71.5, 78.5; 6.19.1; cf. 2.74.2 and 5.47.8 on the necessary ἱερῶν τελείων. On the divine element of oath swearing, see Sommerstein and Bayliss 2012, 3-4. See also Sommerstein and Torrance (eds.) 2014, 112-55.

formulations,[99] and thus ξυνωμοσία itself shares in the implication of a pious alliance. [100] In the context of the religious impieties of 415, however, this expected connotation of ξυνωμοσία no longer applies.

At 6.27.3, this term, which the reader expects to signify a military alliance guaranteed by the swearing of a pious oath, instead signifies a (suspected) political allegiance among men who (supposedly) intend to undermine Athens' religious institutions through a deliberately impious display.[101] The Athenians sought to expose those responsible for the mutilation of the Herms, Thucydides claims, because the event (τὸ πρᾶγμα) seemed to be a presage of the Sicilian Expedition (τοῦ τε γὰρ ἔκπλου οἰωνὸς ἐδόκει εἶναι), as well as one that: "had occurred with a view to conspiracy synchronized with revolutionary actions and the destruction of the demos" (καὶ [ἐδόκει] ἐπὶ **ξυνωμοσίαι** ἅμα νεωτέρων πραγμάτων καὶ δήμου καταλύσεως γεγενῆσθαι, 6.27.3).[102] In this particular,

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[99] The only exception is Thucydides' description of an oath sworn among the Thracian Chalcidians and Macedonian-derived Bottiaeans (1.58.1). Though the oath sworn among these men is in the interest of a combined rebellion against the Athenians, the swearers themselves are nonetheless united (κοινῆι ξυνομόσαντες) by a desire to protect their own. Thus, the connotation of the term corresponds to that found elsewhere in the text, prior to 6.27.3.

[100] These alliances are most often aimed at one of two ends: protecting member *poleis* against aggression from *poleis* outside of the alliance (e.g., 1.58.2, 71.5; 2.72.1-74.2; 3.63.3-64.3; 6.18.1); assuring that individual *poleis* maintain a united front, as allies, with respect to decisions about war and peace (e.g., 5.38.3 and 48.2, 5.80.2 and 83.4).

[101] Neither Gomme *HCT* IV nor Hornblower 2008 comments on this change (see notes *ad loc*).

[102] McGlew (1999, 1-22) argues that the destruction of the Herms directly undermined state control in favor of private prerogatives. For evidence of the function of the Hermai as public symbols of the Athens' collective strength and accomplishments, see Crawley Quinn 2007, 82-105.

Athenian context, ξυνωμοσία signals neither allegiance to the political collective nor pious action. Rather, Thucydides capitalizes upon a certain set of circumstances as an opportunity to privilege a particular connotation of ξυνωμοσία.

The historian can rely upon his own summation of the Corcyraean *stasis* and revolution as the justification for his decision to prefer a certain terminological signification. Once this single-city *stasis* explodes into a Pan-Hellenic conflict, Thucydides writes that:

> ἐστασίαζέ τε οὖν τὰ τῶν πόλεων, καὶ τὰ ἐφυστερίζοντά που πύστει τῶν προγενομένων πολὺ ἐπέφερε τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τοῦ καινοῦσθαι τὰς διανοίας τῶν τ᾽ ἐπιχειρήσεων περιτεχνήσει καὶ τῶν τιμωριῶν ἀτοπίαι. [4] καὶ τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐς τὰ ἔργα ἀντήλλαξαν τῇι δικαιώσει. (3.82.3-4)
>
> The affairs of the cities, therefore, became discordant, and those events that came later, doubtless in review of past occurrences, extensively compounded the extreme degree of innovation with respect to ideas for the guileful [practice] of violent deeds and for the extraordinary [extraction] of retribution. And [the circumstances] altered the customary value of the designations for deeds according to what was right.

In this passage, inanimate "affairs" (τὰ τῶν πόλεων, 3.82.3) are a sentient agent, and these circumstances themselves underlie the changes in signification that Thucydides describes (3.82.4).[103] As such, the historian emphasizes his previous

[103] Cf. Macleod 1983, 61 (a).

statement that the appearance of *stasis* itself varies as a result of: "however particular changes in the circumstances impose themselves" (ὡς ἂν ἕκασται αἱ μεταβολαὶ τῶν ξυντυχιῶν ἐφιστῶνται, Thuc. 3.82.2). In the partnership between circumstance and signification, that is, the former is the senior associate. While an adjustment to the "value" of a word may be a ubiquitous element of *stasis*, the novel implication of this term can only be understood in light of the circumstances under which it changes its meaning.

The novel connotation of ξυνωμοσία at 6.27.3 provides a striking example of the manner in which Thucydides can adapt his book 3 model. With respect to the revolutionary *stasis* at Corcyra, Thucydides supports his emphasis on the relationship between circumstance and signification by spelling out some of the specific alterations of "the customary value of the designations for deeds" (e.g., τόλμα ἀλόγιστος, "uncalculated recklessness" becomes ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος, "manly partisanship," 3.82.4). In book 6, however, there is no named *stasis* at Athens, nor does Thucydides provide his reader with a novel term by which to refer to the conspiratorial act that ξυνωμοσία now connotes. Instead, Thucydides emphasizes the link between circumstance and verbal signification: by introducing the conspiratorial connotation of ξυνωμοσία during his account of the impieties, and the political unrest they fueled, Thucydides creates the

impression that, when it comes to the Athenians, ξυνωμοσία indicates a specific type of "allegiance," both irreverent and conspiratorial.

It is necessary to note, as A. H. Sommerstein has, that it is not unusual to find ξυνωμοσία as a term for conspiracy in ancient Greek texts.[104] J. Henderson has detailed the evidence from comedy in particular, demonstrating that ξυνωμοσία was in regular use as a byword for a political club of upper-class men, accused of plans to undermine the democracy, if not to pursue tyranny outright.[105] As Henderson has also shown, Aristophanes' *Wasps* even provides a dramatic precedent for the actual charges of profaning the Mysteries that were levied in 415.[106] Yet in Aristophanes' comedies, accusations of religious impiety are not — as they are in Thucydides' text — an integral rallying cry of the

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[104] Sommerstein and Bayliss 2012, 120-4, esp. 122-3. Sommerstein provides a thorough summary of ξυνωμοσία in Archaic and Classical Greek literature, with a systematic analysis of the term's appearance in Aristophanes' comedies. Of Thucydides' use of the term with a sinister connotation in books 6-8, Sommerstein highlights the "rich irony" of the Athenian public's response to the suspected conspiracy of 415, and to the actual conspiracy of 411 (124-5).

[105] Henderson 2003, 165: "The comic evidence [in Aristophanes' *Knights* and *Wasps*] thus calls into question the impression given by Thucydides that serious concerns about tyranny began only in 415." Aristophanes' *Knights* of 424 is replete with Paphlagon's shrill protestations against the οἱ ξυνωμόται who oppose him (e.g., 235-6, 255-6 [cf. 257, 452], 475-9, 628, 860-3), and in his *Wasps* of 422, Aristophanes directly associates conspiracy with tyranny (e.g., 342-5 [cf. 953], 482-8 [cf. 507]).

[106] Defending the reading of ταῖν θεαῖν at *Wasps* 378 (over τῶν θεῶν, found in MSS R), Henderson concludes: "Aristophanes clearly meant the charge itself to sound overwrought, and so it might have been in 422. Even so, it was not a fantastic charge, as it anticipates the later prosecution of Alcibiades and his friends on accusations fueled by popular fears of tyranny" (2003, 165). See also Hornblower 2008, n. 8.54.4, which passage the scholar takes as evidence that ξυνωμοσίαι at Athens were "not an ephemeral phenomenon" of the oligarchic movement of 411.

opponents to each play's "conspirators."[107] Aristophanes' extant works also do not contain the sense of contrast between opposing significations for ξυνωμοσία that Thucydides portrays for his readers. Thucydides, furthermore, is unique for the manner in which he isolates a particular group (the Athenians) as the only men whose actions require that the term take on its impious connotation.

In the *Histories*, ξυνωμοσία occupies an exceptional place in the reader's vocabulary for revolutionary *stasis*, insofar as Thucydides relegates the conspiratorial connotation of the term entirely to its use in relation to a specific set of circumstances at Athens. In these instances, there is no actual, *stasis*-driven revolution, merely the Athenian perception of one (6.27.3). The definitional flexibility Thucydides affords ξυνωμοσία in the absence of a named *stasis* is

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[107] The Chorus in Aristophanes' *Wasps* never carries out its threat to levy charges on religious grounds (373-8), and their later threats of prosecution are concerned either with general acts of conspiracy (e.g., 482-3 488-99), or with charges regarding a missing wheel of Sicilian cheese (e.g., 836-40, 905-911, 932). In *Knights*, Paphlagon's initial accusation of conspiracy does come just after Demos' First Slave has assured the Sausage Seller that the latter has the mutual support of oracles and Delphic Apollo (χρησμοί τε συμβαίνουσι καὶ τὸ Πυθικὸν, 220), and of Paphlagon's enemies—the knights, the aristocracy, and the clever members of the audience (ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ἱππῆς ἄνδρες ἀγαθοὶ χίλιοι... καὶ τῶν πολιτῶν οἱ καλοί τε κἀγαθοί. / καὶ τῶν θεατῶν ὅστις ἐστὶ δεξιός, 225-8). Yet Paphlagon never explicitly connects the oracle and/or Apollo to the conspiracy, and he supports his subsequent claims of conspiracy on the grounds of the physical violence enacted against him (e.g., 257, 452). His threats at 300-2 and 445-6 also ring hollow. The women of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (of 411) are also called "conspirators" (ξυνομώμοται, 1007), and enact their plot upon taking a joint oath (ξυνωμόσαμεν, 182). However, whatever subversion and disorder their actions threaten for the men of the city, the women are interested not in securing permanent power for themselves, but in prompting and promoting an end to the war (e.g., 149-54).

significant, for the historian almost always calls this type of unrest by its in name when using other terms for conspiratorial designs, such as ἐπιβουλεύω and ξύνοιδα.

When examined in context, appearances of both ἐπιβουλεύω and ξύνοιδα evince Thucydides' proclivity to use the existence of a named *stasis* as the catalyst for the alteration of verbal significations. [108] In fact, the only speakers who use ἐπιβουλεύω to describe a conspiratorial plot without naming *stasis* are either Athenians themselves, or are describing Athenian actions.[109] With respect to events at Athens, furthermore, ἐπιβουλεύω and ξύνοιδα adhere to their *stasis*-based connotations only when they appear in passages that are directly related to Thucydides' account of the impieties of 415.[110] Thus, the common denominators,

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[108] Neither ἐπιβουλεύω nor ξύνοιδα categorically conveys the existence of a conspiracy. The former often refers to an individual or a *polis* in the process of forming a plan of action or attack, undertaken on behalf of the state (e.g., 1.2.4, 68.3, 82.1, 93.6 [ἐπιβουλή], 140.2; 2.5.4; 3.20.1, 96.3, 109.3; 4.61.1, 64.5, 97.1, 116.3; 6.18.3, 33.5, 54.3, 80.3, 86.3, 87.4, 88.7; 7.51.1, 70.6 [ἐπιβουλή]). In circumstances of *stasis*, however, ἐπιβουλεύω and its cognates signify the formulation of plots (e.g., 3.80.2-82.5; 4.68.6-71.4; 4.77.1-89.1; 4.103.4-5). As is the case with ἐπιβουλεύω, there is a neutral connotation of ξύνοιδα, by which the verb simply conveys one's knowledge of a subject (e.g., 1.73.2, 2.35.2, 3.56.1, 4.119.3). Yet when ξύνοιδα occurs in conjunction with ἐπιβουλεύω (or ἐπιβουλή or ἐπιβούλευμα), the knowledge in question is consistently that held by men operating amidst *stasis*, and seeking to effect a political revolution (e.g., 4.66.1, 68.4-6; 5.82.2, 82.6).
[109] Cleon, Brasidas, and Nicias all use the verb or noun forms to suggest the sinister or unjust nature of plans formed by their respective enemies (e.g., Cleon on the Megarians in 427: 3.37.2 [cf. 3.39.2], 40.1, 40.5; Brasidas at Acanthus in 424: 4.86.6; Nicias on the Spartans in 415: 6.11.7).
[110] E.g., 1.20.2 (in which Thucydides describes Harmodius' and Aristogeiton's associates as ἐκ τῶν ξυνειδότων σφίσιν, 1.20.2); 6.59.1 (the "plot" of the tyrannicides, τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς); 6.60.4 (those accused, in 415, of conspiratorial "plotting," τοὺς ἐπιβουλεύοντας σφῶν τῶι πλήθει); 6.74.1 (Alcibiades ruins Athens' hopes that Messene will be betrayed to them by revealing the

shared by the particular passages in which Thucydides discusses conspiracy without naming *stasis*, are Athenian speakers and Athenian actions.

Nonetheless, as he proceeds through his account of the impieties of 415, Thucydides shows a heavy preference for ξυνωμοσία over his typical terms for conspiracy. This preference is especially evident in his excursus on the conspiracy of Harmodius and Aristogeiton in 514 (6.54-9). The men who partake in Harmodius and Aristogeiton's plot, formerly referred to as the lovers' ξυνειδότες (1.20.2) are now called οἱ ξυνομωμοκότες (6.56.3). When speaking of the pair's accomplices at 6.57.2, Thucydides again mirrors his formulation from 1.20.2, and again replaces "those in the know" (ἐκ τῶν ξυνειδότων σφίσιν, 1.20.2) with "those who swore the oath" (τινα τῶν ξυνωμοτῶν σφίσι, 6.57.2). When he picks up his account of the impieties of 415 (6.60), furthermore, Thucydides retains his newly-introduced designation for conspirators. Thus, at 6.60.1, it is with the events of 514 in mind that the Athenians hold onto their suspicions: "regarding those culpable in the matter of the Mysteries, and it seemed to them that all these deeds have been done with an aim towards oligarchic and tyrannical conspiracy (ἐπὶ ξυνωμοσίαι ὀλιγαρχικῆι καὶ

"plot" to the allies of Syracuse at Messene: Ἀλκιβιάδης...μηνύει τοῖς τῶν Συρακοσίων φίλοις τοῖς ἐν τῆι Μεσσήνηι ξυνειδὼς τὸ μέλλον; cf. 4.68.6: τοῖς ἐπιβουλεύουσι πρᾶξαι ὅ ἔμελλον).

τυραννικῆι πεπρᾶχθαι)."[111] When Thucydides' Athenians of 415 think back on the events of 514, that is, they do so in the terms that match their manner of speaking about the current conspiracy.

Not only does Thucydides attach ξυνωμοσία to beliefs that are specific to the Athenians — whether in regard to the tyrannicides of 514 or to the impieties of 415 — but he also undermines objective legitimacy of these beliefs in each case. Throughout his review of the impieties and the trials that followed, and in his excursus on the tyrannicides, Thucydides is diligent about writing only in terms of what "seemed" to be true at the time (ἐδόκει).[112] The Athenians' flawed recollection regarding the actual events of 514 (6.54.1) mirrors their flawed comprehension of the aims and allegiances of the suspected conspirators of 415 (6.60.2, 5).

This air of "seeming" lends itself well to Thucydides' adaptation of his paradigm from book 3, for *stasis*-based shifts in verbal signification, to a portion of the narrative that describes an unnamed *stasis* and an unrealized revolution. Rather than provide his reader with a sample of alternative descriptors for certain actions (as at 3.82.4), Thucydides instead leaves the words themselves as

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[111] Thuc. 6.60.1: χαλεπὸς ἦν τοτὲ καὶ ὑπόπτης ἐς τοὺς περὶ τῶν μυστικῶν τὴν αἰτίαν λαβόντας, καὶ πάντα αὐτοῖς ἐδόκει ἐπὶ ξυνωμοσίαι ὀλιγαρχικῆι καὶ τυραννικῆι πεπρᾶχθαι.
[112] Cf. 6.27.3, 29.3, 53.2, 55.3 (Thucydides expressing his own opinion), 60.1, 60.2, 61.1, and 61.2.

prompts. As a result, Thucydides' reader actually partakes of the process whereby a term's meaning evolves to reflect the circumstances, continuing to "speak" of ξυνωμοσία as he or she always has, despite a clear change in the term's signification.

For this reason, Thucydides' formulation at 6.61.1 is especially beautiful. In this passage, the Athenians think that the impious deeds of both the mutilators and profaners alike follow the selfsame rationale (τοῦ αὐτοῦ λόγου) of promoting conspiracy (τῆς ξυνωμοσίας). In book 6, ξυνωμοσία is the word it has always been (τό ὀνόμα, 3.82.4), but it now represents a word and a rationale, an *onoma* and a *logos*, related entirely to the deeds that occur in the context of Athens in 415. The reader does not abandon the standard vocabulary for conspiracy (i.e., ἐπιβουλεύω, ξύνοιδα), but must instead expand it to include this Athenian-specific ξυνωμοσία.

I.a. ὀλιγαρχικὴ καὶ τυραννική: features of Athenian conspiracy (415)

By the time Thucydides reaches his summation of the impieties and trials of 415 (6.60-1), he has regularized ξυνωμοσία, a signifier of pious allegiances in books 1-5, as the preferred term for Athenian conspiracy. At this point, the

historian further refines the nature of the purported conspiracy by pairing it with two novel, adjectival forms.

With the conspiracy of Harmodius and Aristogeiton in mind, Thucydides writes, the Athenians of 415: "were of a severe manner at that time, and, having held onto [their] suspicion regarding those culpable in the matter of the Mysteries, it also seemed to them that all these deeds had been done with an aim towards oligarchic and tyrannical conspiracy" (χαλεπὸς ἦν τοτὲ καὶ ὑπόπτης ἐς τοὺς περὶ τῶν μυστικῶν τὴν αἰτίαν λαβόντας, καὶ πάντα αὐτοῖς ἐδόκει ἐπὶ ξυνωμοσίαι ὀλιγαρχικῆι καὶ τυραννικῆι πεπρᾶχθαι, 6.60.1). In this passage, ὀλιγαρχικός, -ή, -όν appears not only for the first time in Thucydides' narrative, but also for the first time in extant Greek.[113] The adjective that appears alongside it, τυραννική, is found only here in the extant narrative.[114]

Given that these adjectives serve as the explicit modifiers of ξυνωμοσία, their appearance signals a direct link between oligarchy, tyranny, and a particularly-Athenian type of impiety-driven conspiracy. These adjectives, that

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[113] See Hornblower 2008, n. 6.60.1.

[114] If Thucydides did coin ὀλιγαρχικός, then he was also the first to use it in conjunction with τυραννική. Among Thucydides' contemporaries, furthermore, the latter term appears only in drama (e.g., Aesch. *Ag*. 828, *Choe*. 479; Eur. *Med*. 348, 740, *Andr*. 882, *Hec*. 55, *Ion* 1572, *Hel*. 1170, *Phoen*. 197, *Orest*. 1356; Soph. *Ajax* 749, *OC* 373; Ar. *Frogs* 507). After Thucydides introduces ὀλιγαρχικός to (extant) prose, Isocrates, Xenophon, and Plato use it regularly (e.g., Isoc. 2.53.4, 8.91.8 and 142.7, 12.125.6, 16.25.6; Xen. *Hel*. 2.3.49, *Mem*. 1.2.56, *Cyr*. 1.3.18; Plato *Soph*. 222c5, *Pol*. 276e10, 302d1).

is, mark out the purported ξυνωμοσία of 415 as one with characteristics that are specific to the beliefs and proclivities of the Athenian citizen body at that time. Each term has a unique, albeit complimentary, relationship to a particular aspect of Thucydides' narrative of the impieties, and of his digression on the tyrannicides.[115] On the one hand, τυραννική relates more closely to the Athenians' shared memory regarding the events of 514, and to the *demos'* collective, emotional response to the events of 415; on the other hand, ὀλιγαρχική highlights the selective divisions between those implicated in the conspiracy of the putative conspiracy of 415, and those who pursued their prosecution.

The point of transition from Thucydides' excursus on the Peisistratids back to his main account of the impieties is at 6.60.1. When it appears in this passage, τυραννική represents the intersection of particular elements, which are key to both the excursus and the main narrative. The first of these is the association between tyranny and a harsh temperament (χαλεπός). Immediately prior to and within the excursus, Thucydides associates χαλεπός with the

[115] Scholars often read the terms as "a virtual hendiadys" (Hornblower 2008, n. 6.60.1). Of the combination, Dover writes that: "after a century of democracy the conception of the tyrant as popular champion had faded…and the Athenians regarded oligarchy and tyranny indifferently as the antithesis of democracy" (Gomme *HCT* IV, n. 6.60.2).

tyranny and the (re)actions of the tyrants (cf. 6.53.3, τυραννίδα χαλεπὴν; 6.56.2, χαλεπῶς δὲ ἐνεγκόντος τοῦ Ἁρμοδίου; and 6.59.2, χαλεπωτέρα...ἡ τυραννίς). The structure of the statement at 6.60.1, bracketed by χαλεπὸς ἦν on one end, and τυραννικῆι περᾶχθαι on the other, transports the harshness of the tyrants from its historical context to the present reality in 415. At 6.60.1, χαλεπὸς ἦν simultaneously evokes the Athenian *demos*' sentiments regarding both the deeds of 514 and the impieties of 415.[116] Subsequently, this (historically tyrannical) harshness guides the Athenians' assessment of Alcibiades' culpability in the profanities (περὶ δὲ τοῦ Ἀλκιβιάδου...χαλεπῶς οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι ἐλάμβανον, 6.61.1).[117]

Whereas τυραννική relates the Athenians' collective, emotional response to a particular set of memories and circumstances, ὀλιγαρχική marks the separation of the Athenian population into discrete groups. The introduction of ὀλιγαρχική at 6.60.1 provides the reader with a verbal marker that emphasizes

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[116] A great deal of scholarship attempts to posit the existence of and/or understand the nature of distinct parallels between the events of each period. For a thorough list of scholarship, divided by thesis, see Meyer 2008, 14-15 with nn. 4-15.

[117] In a section on Thucydides' book 6 account of the impieties and the tyrannicides, Connor (1984, 180) concludes: "In seeking to protect itself from a tyranny Athens begins to become a tyrant and a tyrant whose effects are felt not so much by its subjects as by its own citizens." See also Meyer 2008, 22-4.

the exclusivity of the accused as a subset of the Athenian collective.[118] Outside of book 6, Thucydides not infrequently represents oligarchy itself as a perfectly suitable and legitimate form of government.[119] In book 6, Thucydides consistently speaks of the charges against those accused of oligarchic sympathies as conjectural, portrays the prosecutorial process as haphazard at best, and ultimately questions the severe treatment of the indicted.[120] As such, Thucydides sets the threat of oligarchy at Athens in 415 firmly within a realm of hypothetical

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[118] Aside from Thucydides' non-specific statements on the imprisonment of "the most exemplary of citizens" (πάνυ χρηστοὺς τῶν πολιτῶν, 6.53.2) and "many—and reputable—men" (πολλοί τε καὶ ἀξιόλογοι ἤδη ἐν τῶι δεσμωτηρίωι, 60.2), we also have Andocides' *De Mysteriis* and *IG* I^3 426 and 430 as evidence of the names and material wealth of a number of those implicated during the trials of 415.

[119] Thucydides' language at 1.19.1 (e.g., οὐχ ὑποτελεῖς, ἡγοῦντο) gives the impression that the Spartan practice of establishing oligarchies among its allies, though advantageous for Sparta itself (ἐπιτηδείως), nonetheless did not create any undue imposition upon these allies. At 3.62.3, Thucydides demonstrates that oligarchy and equal representation under the law (ἰσόνομον) are not mutually exclusive (see Gomme *HCT* II-III, n. 3.62.3). At Thuc. 5.31.6, the constitution (πολιτεία) of the Spartans provides a legitimate model for the oligarchies at Boeotia and Megara, and at 8.48.4, oligarchy and democracy are parallel (albeit opposed) orders of governance (κόσμος; cf. 8.72.2). See also 8.64.5, where the Thasians (and others) prefer the absolute freedom (τὴν ἄντικρυς ἐλευθερίαν) of a self-established oligarchy over the imposition of any form of government (this in fulfillment of Phrynichus' prediction regarding the preference of Athens' former allies for freedom above all else, 8.48.5). Finally, see Thucydides' assessment at 8.97.2, in which the appeal of replacing the Athenian oligarchy comprised of 400 authorities, with one comprised of 5000, is the latter's greater constitutional legitimacy (πυκναὶ ἐκκλησίαι; ἠφίσαντο ἐς τὴν πολιτείαν... φαίνονται εὖ πολιτεύσαντες), and its moderate integration of the few and the many (μετρία γὰρ ἥ τε ἐς τοὺς ὀλίγους καὶ τοὺς πολλοὺς ξύγκρασις ἐγένετο).

[120] E.g., 6.29.2 (διαβολάς); 29.3 (διαβολῆς); 53.2 (οὐ δοκιμάζοντες τοὺς μηνύτας); 60.2 (ὅσπερ ἐδόκει αἰτιώτατος εἶναι… ἐπ' ἀμφότερα γὰρ εἰκαζεται, τὸ δὲ σαφὲς οὐδεὶς [ἔχει]); 60.5 (οἱ μὲν παθόντες ἄδηλον ἦν εἰ ἀδίκως ἐτετιμώρηντο).

circumstances and ill-founded accusations, none of which legitimate the actual punishments that the alleged conspirators suffer.

The hypothetical nature of the threat which ὀλιγαρχική represents also helps to distinguish the conspiratorial "few" from their most active prosecutors.[121] A group equal in its exclusivity to the putative conspirators, the ἐχθροί of the accused create a path that winds from the actual mutilations, to alleged profanations, to the insinuation of conspiracy aimed at revolution, and they encourage the *demos* to continue along it at every turn.

Thucydides' use of passive and active verbs, in his description of the genesis and evolution of the accusations, provides evidence of the aggressively active role that the ἐχθροί take on. When describing the general members of the *demos* and their participation in the prosecutions at 6.28.1, Thucydides uses not a single active verb (μηνύεται, ποιεῖται, ἐπητιῶντο)[122] and notes that the

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[121] These are the men who connect the suspicion of a ξυνωμοσία, which grows from the defacement of the Herms (6.27.2-3), to the (previously) unrelated accusations regarding the Mysteries (6.28.1). The main motive that the prosecutors share, according to Thucydides, is a rivalrous aspiration to power over their aristocratic competitors: "Those particularly vexed by Alcibiades… thinking that, if he were expelled, they could be in command, exacerbated the situation to excess, proclaiming that the [profanation of] the Mysteries and the defacement of the Herms was aimed at the dissolution of the demos" (οἱ μάλιστα τῶι Ἀλκιβιάδῃι ἀχθόμενοι… νομίσαντες, εἰ αὐτὸν ἐξελάσειαν, πρῶτοι ἂν εἶναι, ἐμεγάλυνον καὶ ἐβόων ὡς ἐπὶ δήμου καταλύσει τά τε μυστικὰ καὶ ἡ τῶν Ἑρμῶν περικοπὴ γένοιτο, 6.28.2).

[122] I have omitted γεγενημέναι from the consideration of active vs. passive voice, as it is a form of the deponent, γίγνομαι.

information the witnesses provide is entirely unrelated to the crime in question (περὶ μὲν τῶν Ἑρμῶν οὐδεν).[123] At 6.29.3, furthermore, Thucydides selects passive verbs in relation to the accused (Alcibiades, in this case) and the *demos* (ἀγωνίζηται and μαλκίζηται, respectively).[124]

On the other hand, the men who capitalize upon the specious connections as a means of targeting their political rivals are those who actively take up these accusations (ὑπολαμβάνοντες, 6.28.2). Although these men position themselves, according to Thucydides, as potential leaders of the *demos*,[125] their interests and actions mark them as a distinct group.[126] At 6.29.3 the ἐχθροὶ are the subject to

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[123] Rather, these men testify to previous mutilations of other statues (ἄλλων δὲ ἀγαλμάτων περικοπαί...πρότερον), which they claim occurred around the same time (ἅμα) as private profanation of the Mysteries. Thucydides makes a point of speaking of the charges in tandem (e.g., 6.28.2; 53.1; 53.2), separating them only after the Athenians feel they have uncovered the truth about the Herms (60.4). On the progression and conflation of the charges, see Rubel 2000, 192-220.

[124] Thuc. 6.29.3: "Alcibiades' enemies, fearful that the army would show its allegiance to him if he were prosecuted immediately, and that the *demos* might soften and protect him on the grounds that the Argives and some of the Mantineans were going into combat with them [in Sicily] on his account, ceased from and endeavored to prevent [the prosecution], putting forward other speakers who argued that he should sail at the present time... [his enemies] planning to arrange for his return and to bring him to trial on a more serious charge, which they were likely to contrive more easily in his absence" (οἱ δ' ἐχθροὶ δεδιότες τό τε στράτευμαμὴ εὔνουν ἔχηι, ἢν ἤδη ἀγωνίζηται, ὅ τε δῆμος μὴ μαλακίζηται θεραπεύων ὅτι δι' ἐκεῖνον οἵ τ' Ἀργεῖοι ξυνεστράτευον καὶ τῶν Μαντινέων τινές, ἀπέτρεπον καὶ ἀπέσπευδον, ἄλλους ῥήτορας ἐνιέντες οἳ ἔλεγον νῦν μὲν πλεῖν αὐτὸν… βουλόμενοι ἐκ μείζονος διαβολῆς, ἢν ἔμελλον ῥᾴιον αὐτοῦ ἀπόντος πορισεῖν, μετάπεμπτον κομισθέντα αὐτὸν ἀγωνίσασθαι).

[125] Thuc. 6.28.2: "Those particularly vexed by Alcibiades, who was an impediment to their positioning themselves firmly at the head of the *demos*" (οἱ μάλιστα τῶι Ἀλκιβιάδῃι ἀχθόμενοι ἐμποδὼν ὄντι σφίσι μὴ αὐτοῖς τοῦ δήμου βεβαίως προεστάναι).

[126] See Meyer 2008, 21: "[Alcibiades'] enemies are distinguished in 6.28-9, and are clearly not the same as the entire demos."

whom Thucydides assigns independent, active fear (οἱ δ' ἐχθροὶ δεδιότες), and the main verbs, ἀπέτρεπον καὶ ἀπέσπευδον, give Alcibiades' enemies particular control as those who are actively directing the prosecutions.[127]

Thucydides ultimately suggests that the slander of Alcibiades' enemies deters the general from returning to face trial,[128] and that the self-serving agenda, according to which Alcibiades' enemies operate, sets the terms for the *demos*' collective response.[129] According to Thucydides, the Athenian's harsh punishment of the suspected profaners is not self-directed, but arises from the prompting of Alcibiades' self-interested enemies (ἐναγόντων τῶν ἐχθρῶν,

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[127] Andocides writes that the aristocrat, Pythonicus, initially brought the matter of the Mysteries to the attention of the Assembly, and also provided them with a witness, namely the slave Andromachus (Andoc. 1.11-12). These men are of the lowly sort that Thucydides generally describes (Thuc. 6.27-8). Andocides also confirms the role played by the influential Androcles, who likely induced the metic, Teucer, to approach the Council as an informant (Andoc. 1.15, 27; cf. Thuc 8.65). From Andocides, we also know that the aristocrats, Peisander and Charicles, oversaw the specially-commissioned board of ζητήται, tasked with investigating the impieties (Andoc. 1.36). The board was comprised of some of Athens' wealthiest citizens, many of whom would later join the ranks of the 400.

[128] Thuc. 6.61.7 (διαβολή); cf. 6.29.2, 6.29.3.

[129] Scholars have argued that the Athenian public eventually assumes the lead in the prosecution of the accused, based upon passages in which the Ἀθηναῖοι, the δῆμος, or the πόλις are the agents in the prosecutorial process (e.g., Thuc. 6.53.2-3 and 60.4-5). H. S. Rawlings (1981, 101-02 and 108-11) concludes that the prosecutions were driven by the Athenian middle class (see also Meyer 2008, 21). Yet we ought to keep in mind that Thucydides narrows his focus to only a single informant (likely the aristocratic Andocides) as the one responsible for prompting a final judgement in the matter of the Herms (Thuc. 6.60.4). Thus, to whatever extent the other, "lowly" informants calmed the fear and consternation of the *demos*, in Thucydides' version of events, it is one (aristocratic) man who ultimately holds the power either to win pardon for, or to secure the condemnation of, the vast majority of imprisoned suspects.

6.61.1).[130] In response to the implied threat of an oligarchic few, that is, the *demos* capitulates to a different "few," namely, a body of ἐχθροί who undermine the stability of the city in the broad light of day.[131] Alongside ξυνωμοσία, ὀλιγαρχική takes its place (together with τυραννική) as a feature in the Athenian-specific model for conspiracy. This type of conspiracy does not arise from *stasis* named as such, nor does it feed an immediate revolution. It does, however, set the verbal stage for the divisive upheaval — which Thucydides names as such — that will come to Athens (and Samos) in 411.[132]

II. ξυνωμοσία: a real Athenian conspiracy (411)

When he describes the actual conspiracy of 411 in book 8, Thucydides adopts and adapts the quintessential terms that define the hypothetical

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[130] Thuc. 6.61.1: "The Athenians took a severe view of Alcibiades, with his enemies, those who had fallen upon him even before the expedition, leading [them] on" (περὶ δὲ τοῦ Ἀλκιβιάδου ἐναγόντων τῶν ἐχθρῶν, οἵπερ καὶ πρὶν ἐκπλεῖν αὐτὸν ἐπέθεντο, χαλεπῶς οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι ἐλάμβανον).

[131] Thuc. 2.65.11: "The Sicilian Expedition was also a failure... because of personal accusations motivated by democratic partisanship, [those who sent the expedition] were the first to fall into disarray amongst themselves, and began to make both the efforts of the soldiers and political actions less effective" (ἡμαρτήθη καὶ ὁ ἐς Σικελίαν πλοῦς... κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας διαβολὰς περὶ τῆς τοῦ δήμου προστασίας τά τε ἐν τῶι στρατοπέδωι ἀμβλύτερα ἐποίουν καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν πόλιν πρῶτον ἐν ἀλλήλοις ἐταράχθησαν).

[132] Thucydides uses both στάσις and στασιάζω to describe the conflict at Athens in 411 (e.g., 8.48.4, 95.2, 96.2, 98.4, 106.5).

conspiracy of book 6. Up to the point at which the democrats regain control of Samos in 411 (8.75.3), ξυνωμοσία retains its book 6 implication of an impious and conspiratorial alliance. The specter of tyranny continues to inform the *demos'* impression of the aims of suspected conspirators (e.g., 8.68.4), and, to an unprecedented and unparalleled degree, Thucydides directs his reader to observe men in the process of "being oligarchs."[133]

By recycling the vocabulary from his account of the putative conspirators of 415 in his account of the actual conspirators of 411, Thucydides stresses the direct relationship between the impious circumstances of the ξυνωμοσία ὀλιγαρχική καὶ τυραννική, and the instantiation of the limited, nearly-tyrannical oligarchy of 400.[134] If we examine the vocabulary that books 6 and 8 share, we can recognize that Thucydides' book 3 paradigm, which delineates the process of a shift in verbal signification during periods of revolutionary *stasis*, can function as both a theoretical and a practical model for Athenian behavior.

In book 6, the paradigm is most useful as a theoretical model. In 415, neither named *stasis* nor political revolution occurs at Athens, but the seeming

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[133] The verb, ὀλιγαρχέω, appears a spare five times in the extant narrative, the majority of which belong to book 8: cf. Thuc. 5.31.6; 8.63.3 (twice), 76.2, and 91.3.

[134] For a similar argument on a smaller scale, see Kallet (1999, 223-44), on the link between Thucydides' digression on Mykalessos (7.27-9) and his broader description of Athenian affairs.

threat of both looms large. This hypothetical menace grows from suspicion regarding religious impieties and the potentially oligarchic, even tyrannical, aims of the conspirators who supposedly committed the crimes. The ξυνωμοσία of book 6 is not the pious alliance of books 1-5, nor is it the literal conspiracy that other authors like Aristophanes evoke in their respective works. The term changes its meaning, as one would expect under circumstances of *stasis* (3.82.4), but the circumstances themselves are highly theoretical, and do not strictly justify the altered signification. Thucydides' Corcyra paradigm can serve as a practical model in book 8, when ξυνωμοσία describes a conspiracy in the context of named *stasis* and revolution.

The men of Athens are the common denominator: in books 6 and 8, the Athenians alone are able to pervert the pious sense of ξυνωμοσία. They do so in service of oligarchy — imagined or substantive — and always in a context of religious laxity, insincerity, or outright impiety. In 411 (book 8), ξυνωμοσία is the purview of the men who prosecuted the alleged conspirators of 415 (book 6). These actual conspirators of 411 coopt the identity of oligarchic plotters of 415, and they do so in the interest of affecting a very real revolution.[135] By sharing a

[135] Scholars have seized upon Thucydides' repetition of ξυνωμοσία, between books 6 and 8, as a means of reconstructing the specific identities of the conspirators of 411. Many of these conspirators played an important role in the prosecutions of 415, on which see Andrewes'

common set of key terms between the two sets of oligarchs, alleged or actual, Thucydides creates an important point of contact between his account of 415 and that of 411. This shared vocabulary obscures the line between accusers and accused, between assumed and apparent conspirators, with the result that the reader comes to associate a sinister connotation of ξυνωμοσία with a certain swath of the Athenian population, defined by the upper-class status of the group's most powerful members, and their disregard for the piety that defines allegiances among other men.

II.a. Conspiracy at Samos

With his first use of ξυνωμοσία in book 8 (48.2), Thucydides confirms for the reader that the term's conspiratorial connotation is contingent upon its use in reference to Athenian subjects. During the winter of 412/1, it is on their own initiative (ἀπὸ σφῶν αὐτων) that: "the trierarchs at Samos and the most powerful of the Athenians as well set out to break down the democracy" (οἱ ἐν τῆι Σάμωι τριήραρχοί τε τῶν Ἀθηναίων καὶ δυνατώτατοι ὥρμηντο ἐς τὸ

"Excursus: Sources for the Revolution" (Gomme *HCT* IV, 184-256), along with n. 8.54.4. On the precise identity of the key players in 411, see also Ostwald 1987, 346-54.

καταλῦσαι τὴν δημοκρατίαν, 8.47.2).[136] Having travelled to Sardis to solicit Alcibiades' advice (8.47.1),[137] some of these men: "came [back] to Samos and gathered together a group of men suitable for a conspiracy," (ἔς τε τὴν Σάμον ἐλθόντες ξυνίστασάν τε τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοὺς ἐπιτηδείους ἐς **ξυνωμοσίαν**, 8.48.2). The hypothetical conspiracy of book 6 — a supposed association of a select group of men thought to be working for an oligarchic revolution — makes its first appearance in book 8 as an equally-exclusive, conspiratorial alliance of certain men whose collective desire for *stasis* and oligarchy is now anything but hypothetical.

For a moment, Thucydides appears to undermine the exclusivist, conspiratorial connotation of ξυνωμοσία, for he goes on to state that these men openly shared their plans with the majority (ἐς τοὺς πολλοὺς φανερῶς ἔλεγον, 8.48.2). Yet he knocks down this collective straw man in almost the same breath: "The crowd took no action, but those putting together the oligarchy, after communicating with the public, again contemplated Alcibiades' proposals

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[136] On the preference for οἱ δυνατώτατοι instead of οἱ δυνατοί, see Hornblower 2008, n. 8.48.1.
[137] At this time, Alcibiades was with Tissaphernes at Sardis (Thuc. 8.45). The δυνατώτατοι who determine to break up the democracy (8.47.2) are those whom Alcibiades himself— in the hopes of ending his exile— entreats to end the democracy at Athens (μὴ δημοκρατουὺμενων, 48.2), and to establish an oligarchy in its place (Ἀλκιβιάδου προσπέμψαντος λόγους ἐς τοὺς δυνατωτάτους...ὅτι ἐπ'ὀλιγαρχίαι βούλεται...κατελθών, 47.2).

among themselves and with more members of their association" (ὁ μὲν ὄχλος... ἡσύχαζεν· οἱ δὲ ξυνιστάντες τὴν ὀλιγαρχίαν, ἐπειδὴ τῶι πλήθει ἐκοίνωσαν, αὖθις κὰν σφίσιν αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῦ ἑταιρικοῦ τῶι πλέονι τὰ ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀλκιβιάδου ἐσκόπουν, 8.48.3). The extended process of ever-refining selection for the ξυνωμοσία, along with the repeated distinction between the Samian multitude and the conspiracy-bound few, make the exclusivist, conspiratorial implications of ξυνωμοσία indisputable.[138]

Although the movement towards oligarchy begins at Samos, Thucydides' consistent use of a limited vocabulary, with connotations that are specific to Athenian actors, gives the impression that the conspirators at Samos are accustomed, as Athenians, to operating in a certain manner when instigating *stasis* to support an oligarchic revolution. Thucydides' use of ξυνίστημι alongside ξυνωμοσία, in his descriptions of the Athenian conspirators, fosters the impression that Athenians approach conspiracy in a particular manner.

[138] Thucydides' mention of the ἑταιρικός not only serves to further define the exclusivity of the organizers from the majority of the Samians, but also associates these oligarchy-inclined comrades with Thucydides' Corcyraean paradigm for *stasis* that is inspired by the threat of oligarchy. The only other appearance of the substantive adjective in the extant text is at 3.82.6, where: "[connection according to] kinship was undoubtedly less natural than party allegiance" (καὶ μὴν καὶ τὸ ξυγγενὲς τοῦ ἑταιρικοῦ ἀλλοτριώτερον ἐγένετο).

For the most part, ξυνίστημι signifies the act of gathering together or forming an arrangement in the interest of protecting the allied group against an external opponent.[139] As is the case with ἐπιβουλεύω or ξύνοιδα, the verb takes on a *stasis*-specific connotation in descriptions of revolutionary unrest, yet Thucydides reserves this use of ξυνίστημι almost exclusively to describe the oligarchic revolutions at Athens and Samos.[140] The historian uses the verb to describe the organization of the conspirators at Samos (ξυνίστασάν…ἐς ξυνωμοσίαν, 8.48.2), and that of their preferred form of governance (ξυνιστάντες τὴν ὀλιγαρχίαν, 8.48.3). As such, the term functions like a verbal equals sign, on either side of which stand ξυνωμοσία and ὀλιγαρχία as equally-viable, mutually-dependent aspects of an Athenian congregation.

II.b. Conspiracy at Athens

The utter proliferation of ξυνίστημι in an Athenian-specific context serves not only to distinguish the Athenian "method" of organizing a conspiracy, but

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[139] E.g., 1.1.1, 15.2 (consolidation of revenue and control over others); 2.88.1; 4.55.2, 78.5, 96.2; 6.16.6, 21.1, 33.5, 37.2, 79.3, 85.3 (twice), 96.3; 7.15.1, 33.2; 8.83.3 (the Peloponnesian soldiers under Tissaphernes organize to protest his failure to pay them).

[140] The only instances, outside of book 8, in which ξυνίστημι describes a gathering of men who aim to attack their own fellow-citizens are at: 3.70.6 (oligarchic conspirators at Corcyra band together to murder Peithias and his supporters in 427) and 5.82.2 (the popular party at Argos gathers together to oppose the oligarchs in 417).

also provides insight into the extent to which the Athenian conspirators at Samos plan and act according to a procedure for establishing oligarchy that is ingrained in the political practices of their fellow citizens at Athens. The Athenians at Samos find support for their efforts from "associates" already at Athens (τάς τε ξυνωμοσίας, 8.54.4),[141] some of whom put Peisander's proposal into action by "organizing" (**ξυστάντες**, 8.65.2) and killing those opposed to their cause. At 8.66.2 and 66.3, the verb becomes a byword for the 400 conspirators and their conspiracy (τοῖς ξυνεστῶσι, 8.66.2; τὸ ξυνεστηκὸς, 8.66.3); likewise, at 8.73.4, Thucydides uses the term as a byword for the 300 conspirators at Samos (τοῖς ξυνεστῶσιν), whom the Athenians are responsible for recruiting. Finally, Thucydides employs the verb at 8.73.2 to describe the organization of the 400 (οἱ τετρακόσιοι ξυνίσταντο), and again at 8.89.2 to describe the organization of those opposed to the 400 (ξυνίσταντό).

As in 415, the vitality of oligarchy at Athens depends upon the perversion of religious propriety, with the important difference that, in 411, neither this impiety nor the oligarchy itself is conjectural. This much is clear from the verbs

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[141] Thuc. 8.54.4: "And Peisander approached all the clubs, which were already in place in the city for the purpose of overseeing lawsuits and magistracies, and encouraged them to unite around a shared wish to break apart the democracy" (καὶ ὁ μὲν Πείσανδρος τάς τε ξυνωμοσίας, αἵπερ ἐτύγχανον πρότερον ἐν τῇ πόλει οὖσαι ἐπὶ δίκαις καὶ ἀρχαῖς, ἁπάσας ἐπελθὼν παρακελευσάμενος ὅπως ξυστραφέντες καὶ κοινῇ βουλευσάμενοι καταλύσουσι τὸν δῆμον).

Thucydides chooses at 8.53.2, in order to describe the Athenian's response to Peisander, when he calls for revolution in the city. Some speak against his proposal in general, Alcibiades' enemies in particular decry permitting a condemned man to flout the law, and: "the Eumolpidae and the Ceryces gave testimony (Εὐμολπιδῶν καὶ Κηρύκων μαρτυρομένων) regarding the Mysteries, on account of which [Alcibiades] had fled, and appealed to the gods (ἐπιθειαζόντων) to disallow his return."[142] Not only is this the lone instance, in the extant narrative, in which Thucydides names these officials, but the participles that dictate their actions are also exceedingly rare.[143] In the "testimony" of 411, the reader hears an echo of Alcibiades' own appeals to the Athenian people, whom he entreated (ἐπεμαρτύρετο, 6.29.2) to disregard the

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[142] Peisander appeals to the Athenians to recall Alcibiades and alter the nature of the democracy at Athens (Ἀλκιβιάδην καταγαγουσι καὶ μὴ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον δημοκρατουμένοις, 8.53.1). In response to his proposal: "A number of others spoke against [the proposal] concerning the democracy, and at the same time, there was an uproar from Alcibiades' enemies that it would be dangerous for him to return after he had acted above the law, and the Eumolpidae and the Ceryces gave testimony regarding the Mysteries, on account of which [Alcibiades] had fled, and appealed to the gods against his return" (ἀντιλεγόντων δὲ πολλῶν καὶ ἄλλων περὶ τῆς δημοκρατίας καὶ τῶν Ἀλκιβιάδου ἅμα ἐχθρῶν διαβοώντων ὡς δεινὸν εἴη εἰ τοὺς νόμους βιασάμενος κάτεισι, καὶ Εὐμολπιδῶν καὶ Κηρύκων περὶ τῶν μυστικῶν, δι' ἅπερ ἔφυγε, μαρτυρομένων καὶ ἐπιθειαζόντων μὴ καταγειν, 8.53.2).

[143] The verb, μαρτύρομαι, appears only one other time in the extant narrative, when the Syracusan general, Hermocrates, accuses the Ionians of plotting against his city in 415/4 (6.80.3). The noun, ἐπιμαρτυρία, appears once at 2.74.2, in the form of Archidamus' solemn appeal to the gods at Plataea in 429. Finally, at 8.51.3, Alcibiades' plans to discredit Phrynichus in 411 backfire, with his accusations against the latter instead corroborating (ξυνεμαρτύρησε) those already aimed at him.

διαβολάς levied against him in 415.[144] As such, the reader can draw a direct line between the "denunciations" of 415, culled from lowly informants, and the authoritative "testimony" of 411, provided by some of Athens' highest religious officials.

Contributing to this escalation is the equally-rare ἐπιθειάζω, which appears, in the extant narrative, only at 2.75.1 and 8.53.2.[145] In book 2, Archidamus appeals to the gods to uphold the terms of the Spartan-Plataean (non-conspiratorial!) ξυνωμοσία by punishing the latter for breaking their obligation to this alliance (c. 429). But in book 8, though the appeal to the gods comes from the mouths of those perhaps most suited to make it, this is no righteous entreaty. Rather, it is an overblown condemnation of an absent threat, whose exile was predicated upon accusations of promoting oligarchy through ξυνωμοσία. In fact, the religious officials themselves are those who actually

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[144] In general, the noun for testimony, τὸ μαρτύριον, always refers either to evidence offered as proof of the speaker's own claim (e.g., 1.8.1, 73.3; 3.11.4, 53.4; 6.82.2), or else connotes a positive testament to one's actions (1.33.1). The noun for a witness (mortal or divine), ὁ/ἡ μάρτυς, also bears no explicitly accusatory connotation (e.g.,1.37.2, 73.2, 78.4; 2.71.4; 4.28.3, 87.2; 6.14.1; cf. 2.41.4, ἀμάρτυρόν γε τὴν δύναμιν). It is only the "testimony" of the Eumolpidae and Ceryces that is, which carries an obviously divisive and accusatory tone.

[145] The related noun, ὁ ἐπιθειασμός appears only once. In book 7, the retreating Athenians are forced to leave behind their sick and wounded, whose wrenching cries to the gods against this abandonment (ἐπιθειασμῶν) move their comrades to tears (7.75.4)

capitulate, with little resistance, to Peisander's appeals for a real oligarchy (8.53.3).

Brief though it is, Thucydides' description at 8.53.2 clearly demonstrates how his account of the impieties of 415 helps shape his presentation of oligarchic conspiracy at Athens in 411. The religious impropriety of 411, which initially resurfaces as a conspiratorial ξυνωμοσία among the Athenians at Samos, finds a ready counterpart in the actions of the religious officials at Athens itself.

Thucydides also draws the 400 into the process whereby men coopt public, religious norms for private aims. On the day that the 400 gather to drive the Council members from their chambers, the conspirators: "allowed those not wise to their plans to depart, but to those sworn into the conspiracy they ordered to remain calmly, not with their weapons at arm's reach, but instead at a distance from them..." (τοὺς μὲν μὴ **ξυνειδότας** εἴασαν ὥσπερ εἰώθεσαν ἀπελθεῖν, τοῖς δ' ἐν τῇι **ξυνωμοσίαι** εἴρητο ἡσυχῆι μὴ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς τοῖς ὅπλοις, ἀλλ' ἄπωθεν περιμένειν..., 8.69.2). Upon taking the chamber and electing their own Prytanes, the 400: "… to the extent necessary with respect to the gods, offered prayers and made sacrifices when they came to power, but after this mostly

abandoned the administrative practices of the *demos*."[146] Thucydides hollows out the conspirators' gestures towards democratic order, and their perfunctory acts of piety, neither of which they perform in service of unifying enfranchised citizens at every level, but rather as a means of assuring the limited power of the conspiratorial few. As in 415, impiety and oligarchic conspiracy are an inextricable pair at Athens.

II.c. Conspirators: Athenians vs. Samians

On a verbal level, the conspirators on Samos share their revolutionary aims, and even the proponents thereof, with the men at Athens. Thucydides reports they synchrony of the coup on Samos with the organization of the coup at Athens (ὑπ' αὐτὸν τὸν χρόνον τοῦτον, 8.73.1), and he names Peisander, and his Athenian supporters at Samos, as those who persuade 300 of the Samians to become conspirators (ξυνωμόται, 8.73.2) and to attack the island's *demos*. In

[146] Thuc. 8.70.1: "… to the extent necessary with respect to the gods, offered prayers and made sacrifices when they came to power, but after this mostly abandoned the administrative practices of the *demos*—except that they did not recall the exiles on account of Alcibiades—and they kept affairs of the city in order through force" (ὅσα πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς εὐχαῖς καὶ θυσίαις καθιστάμενοι ἐς τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐχρήσαντο, ὕστερον δὲ πολὺ μεταλλάξαντες τῆς τοῦ δήμου διοικήσεως— πλὴν τοὺς φεύγοντας οὐ κατῆγον τοῦ Ἀλκιβιάδου ἕνεκα— τά τε ἄλλα ἔνεμον κατὰ κράτος τὴν πόλιν).

addition, Thucydides limits the use of ξυνωμόται to those Samians acting under the guidance of the pro-oligarchic Athenian conspirators ([ξυνωμόται] ξυνέπραξαν, 8.73.3).

When he writes of the uprising on Samos, Thucydides also addresses the connection between religious corruption and ξυνωμοσία. He does so, however, not by associating impiety with the conspirators, but by emphasizing the ceremonial rectitude of their opponents. In fact, he refrains from using ξυνωμοσία and its cognates in his description of the solemn oath, led by the Athenian generals in support of democracy. When Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus abandon the oligarchic movement (οὗτοι γὰρ μάλιστα προειστήκεσαν τῆς μεταβολῆς, 8.75.2), they also abandon its precise vocabulary. Instead, in order to compel their forces to uphold a democratic government at Samos and to oppose the 400 at Athens, the generals: "directed all of the soldiers to swear the firmest oaths" (ὥρκωσαν πάντας τοὺς στρατιώτας τοὺς μεγίστους ὅρκους, 8.75.2). Importantly, when Thucydides describes how the Samian population joined in this pledge to uphold democracy, he does use the verbal cognate of ξυνωμοσία (συνόμνυμι): "And the Samians also all swore the same oath together" (**ξυνώμνυσαν** δὲ καὶ Σαμίων πάντες τὸν αὐτὸν ὅρκον, 8.75.3). In this sentence, the term is devoid of conspiratorial implication for the first time since

Thucydides introduced it in book 6. This key shift in signification is only temporary, but it confirms the contrast, which Thucydides develops throughout his narrative, between the pious oaths sworn among non-Athenians, and those sinister pledges to which the Athenian proponents of (alleged or actual) oligarchy alone give voice.

The final appearance of ξυνωμοσία in the extant narrative (8.81.2) solidifies the reader's impression that the term's conspiratorial connotation depends upon its use in relation to Athenian impiety and oligarchy. Upon swearing to uphold the democracy at Samos, Thrasybulus grants Alcibiades immunity, and hopes that the latter will assist in negotiations with Tissaphernes (8.81.1). As usual, Thucydides chooses his words very carefully when describing Alcibiades' subsequent actions: "Alcibiades…greatly exaggerated (ὑπερβάλλων ἐμεγάλυνε) his influence with Tissaphernes, aiming to make those directing the oligarchy (τὴν ὀλιγαρχίαν) at home fear him, and wanting even more to disband the conspirators (αἱ ξυνωμοσίαι)."[147] The ξυνωμοσίαι, whom Alcibiades hopes to thwart by overstating his political connections (ὑπερβάλλων ἐμεγάλυνε), are the very τάς τε ξυνωμοσίας to whom Peisander appealed to

[147] Thuc. 8.81.2: ὁ Ἀλκιβιάδης…ὑπερβάλλων ἐμεγάλυνε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν παρὰ τῶι Τισσαφέρνει, ἵνα οἵ τε οἴκοι τὴν ὀλιγαρχίαν ἔχοντες φοβοῖντο αὐτὸν καὶ μᾶλλον αἱ ξυνωμοσίαι διαλυθεῖεν.

establish oligarchy at Athens in 411 (8.54.4). They are also those who, as Alcibiades' ἐχθροί, had made their own exaggerated claims in 415 (ἐμεγάλυνον καὶ ἐβόων, 6.28.2). In that year, they argued that Alcibiades was integral to the fomentation of an oligarchic revolution (οὐδὲν εἴη αὐτῶν ὅτι οὐ μετ' ἐκείνου ἐπράχθη, 6.28.2); [148] in 411, these men exclude Alcibiades from their own conspiratorial alliance (8.63.4, 70.2), despite Alcibiades' own assistance in shaping it (8.47-8).

Thucydides' verbal consistency, with regard to the hypothetical conspiracy of 415 and the actual conspiracy of 411, creates a unified impression regarding the proclivities of Athens' leading citizens. Regardless of where their allegiances lie at any given time, the Athenians alone are those who foster revolutionary aims by corrupting the traditional piety of a ξυνωμοσία, a piety

[148] Thuc. 6.28.2: "Those particularly vexed by Alcibiades… thinking that, if he were expelled, they could be in command, exacerbated the situation to excess, proclaiming that the [profanation of] the Mysteries and the defacement of the Herms was aimed at the dissolution of the demos, and that none of these actions could have occurred without him" (οἱ μάλιστα τῷ Ἀλκιβιάδῃ ἀχθόμενοι… νομίσαντες, εἰ αὐτὸν ἐξελάσειαν, πρῶτοι ἂν εἶναι, ἐμεγάλυνον καὶ ἐβόων ὡς ἐπὶ δήμου καταλύσει τά τε μυστικὰ καὶ ἡ τῶν Ἑρμῶν περικοπὴ γένοιτο, καὶ οὐδὲν εἴη αὐτῶν ὅτι οὐ μετ' ἐκείνου ἐπράχθη). The verb, μεγαλύνω, used at 6.28.2 and 8.81.2, occurs only one other time in the extant narrative, when the Melians warn the Athenians that the forced capitulation of Melos will increase Athens' list of enemies, by providing neutral *poleis* with an excuse to arm themselves against similar intervention (κἂν τούτῳ τί ἄλλο ἢ τοὺς μὲν ὑπάρχοντας πολεμίους μεγαλύνετε, τοὺς δὲ μηδὲ μελλήσαντας γενέσθαι ἄκοντας ἐπάγεσθε, 5.89.1).

that remains incorruptible, throughout Thucydides' extant narrative, among every citizen body aside from Athens' own.

II.d. ὀλιγαρχικὴ καὶ τυραννικὴ: features of Athenian conspiracy (411)

Though τυραννική appears only in book 6 (60.1), Thucydides suggests, in book 8, that the Athenian *demos'* willingness to associate tyranny with oligarchy in 415 directly informs its reception, in 411, of the actual oligarchy of 400. There are only three passages in the *Histories* in which tyrannical oppression qualifies the nature of oligarchy in any way (1.18-19.1; 3.62.3; 6.38.3-4).[149] In none of these passages, however, does Thucydides use tyranny and oligarchy as by-words to indicate a mutually-supportive form of governance.[150] The Thebans of 427 are

[149] To determine this, I have searched for an overlap between passages in which Thucydides speaks of oligarchy (ὀλιγαρχία, ὀλιγαρχική, ὀλιγαρχέω), and those in which he uses τυραννεύω and/or ἡ τυραννίς/ὁ τύραννος (the only forms besides τυραννική that occur in the extant work).

[150] On 1.18-19.1, see above, n. 119. At 3.62.3, Theban ambassadors to Plataea in 427 contrast an: "oligarchy administrated according to legal equality for citizens" (ὀλιγαρχίαν ἰσόνομον πολιτεύουσα) to one: "nearest to tyranny, the dominion of a few men" (ἐγγυτάτω δὲ τυράννου, δυναστεία ὀλίγων ἀνδρῶν). At 6.38.3-4, part of Athenagoras' speech to the Syracusans in 415, Athenagoras mentions both only to separate them definitively. Speaking first of the tyrannies or lawless dynasties, to which Syracuse has been subject in the past (τυραννίδας δὲ ἔστιν ὅτε καὶ δυναστείας ἀδίκους, 6.38.3), he promises to punish those who entertain plots towards such ends (τοὺς δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα μηχανωμένους κολάζων, 38.4). Athenagoras then describes an entirely separate response to would-be oligarchs (τοὺς δ' αὖ ὀλίγους), whom he would: "scrutinize in some instances, in other instances keep tabs on, in some cases even educate" (τὰ μὲν ἐλέγχων, τὰ δὲ φυλάσσων, τὰ δὲ καὶ διδάσκων, 6.38.4).

careful to distinguish oligarchy by name from a near-tyrannical, dynastic cabal (3.62.3), and in 415, Athenagoras considers tyranny and oligarchy worthy of two very different responses (6.38.4).

The Athenians of book 6, on the other hand, are unique for developing and accepting the view that oligarchy and tyranny go hand in hand (ξυνμοοσιᾶι ὀλιγαρχικῆι καὶ τυραννικικῆι, 6.60.1). Thucydides reminds his readers of this fundamentally-Athenian perception at 8.68.4, when he explains why the plot of the 400, though successful, did not come to fruition without a struggle. The Athenian *demos*, he claims, balked at the idea of oligarchy because it did not wish to give up the freedom it had attained in the century after the Peisistratid tyrants were expelled (ἐπ' ἔτει ἑκατοστῶι μάλιστα ἐπειδὴ οἱ τύραννοι κατελύθησαν, 8.68.4). Thus, the Athenians of 411, however, informed by their perceptions of 415, do not recognize the gradations or distinctions that the Thebans and Athenagoras espouse. For the Athenian collective, there is no such thing as a "near-tyrannical" oligarchy (ἐγγυτάτω δὲ τυράννου, 3.62.3).

The prosecutors of 415 not only lay the theoretical groundwork for the establishment of an oligarchy of 400 at Athens in 411, but they also, simultaneously, lay the theoretical groundwork for its demise. The first time the reader encounters ὀλιγαρχική (6.60.1), the adjective describes a putative

conspiracy, which threatens to overturn the order of the Athenian democracy. The second, and only other time that Thucydides uses this term in his extant narrative, the adjective modifies the very word for stable order: ὁ κόσμος (8.72.2). The men who constitute the 400, Thucydides writes, fear: "that, as it actually came to pass (ὅπερ ἐγένετο), the multitude of sailors [at Samos] themselves would not willingly abide an oligarchic government (τῶι ὀλιγαρχικῶι κόσμωι), and would, instigating trouble there, force them to change [the government at Athens]."[151] Thucydides' editorial ὅπερ ἐγένετο underscores the transition from theory to practice. In 415, the prosecutors in the impiety trials generated and stoked fear among the *demos* that the accused aimed to establish an (ultimately unrealized) oligarchy. In 411, the interruption of an established oligarchy instead creates fear among the 400, many of whom so recently benefitted from fostering oligarchy's negative associations.

When the pro-oligarchic partisans of 411 earn the designation of ξυνωμόται for themselves, they also adopt the threat of impiety and revolution, which they themselves had a hand in associating with the Athenian "conspirators" of 415 (6.28.2). Of course, these men no longer employ conspiracy,

[151] Thuc 8.72.2: ὅπερ ἐγένετο, ναυτικὸς ὄχλος οὔτε αὐτὸς μένειν ἐν τῶι ὀλιγαρχικῶι κόσμωι ἐθέλοι, σφᾶς τε μὴ ἐκεῖθεν ἀρξαμένου τοῦ κακοῦ μεταστήσωσιν.

nor its oligarchic and tyrannical associations, as verbal elements of a fear campaign against their opponents. Instead, they embrace these elements as integral aspects of their own plans to install themselves as exclusive rulers at Athens and Samos. Whereas the threat of oligarchy in 415 only seemed real, the oligarchy of the 400 is so real that it constitutes an actual, active form of governance.

II.e. The (Athenian) practice of oligarchy at Samos

Thucydides confirms the vitality of the oligarchy of 411 by speaking of its existence in active, verbal terms: ὀλιγαρχέω is rare in the narrative, and four of its five appearances are in book 8.[152] By referring to the active practice of oligarchy with unprecedented consistency in book 8, Thucydides supports the

[152] The verb appears at: 5.31.6; 8.63.3 (twice), 76.2, and 91.3. The noun, ὀλιγαρχία, and related terms such as ὀλιγαρχική and ὀλιγαρχέω, occur a total of 41 times in Thucydides' narrative. The noun is, unsurprisingly, used throughout the extant work, appearing a total of 34 times: 1.19.1; 3.62.3; 4.74.4; 5.81.2; 6.11.7, 39.1, 39.2; 8.47.2, 48.3, 48.4, 48.5 (twice), 54.1, 63.4, 64.1, 64.5, 66.5, 68.3 (twice), 72.1, 72.2, 73.1, 73.4, 73.5, 75.1, 75.2, 81.2, 89.1, 89.2, 89.3, 89.4, 92.4, 96.4, 98.1, 98.4. The adjective, as we have seen, occurs only twice. Thucydides also speaks of oligarchy by describing the "few" as opposed to their political opponents. A *TLG* search of the lemma ὀλιγ- produces 218 results, of which only 28 (i.e., roughly 13%) refer to oligarchic factionalism or governance: 2.37.1; 3.39.6 (twice), 47.2, 62.3, 74.2, 82.1; 4.22.1, 86.5, 110.1, 110.2, 113.2, 123.2; 5.27.2, 81.2, 82.2, 82.3, 84.3, 85.1; 6.38.4; 8.9.3, 14.2, 38.3, 53.3, 66.5, 89.2, 92.2, 97.2. In the remaining 190 cases (i.e., roughly 87% of the time), words built from this lemma do not refer to oligarchy.

transition from the hypothetical circumstances of 415 to the reality of 411. In this context, the verb refers only to Athenians subjects, the proponents of oligarchy at both Samos and Athens. Altogether, Thucydides' verbal consistency fosters the reader's expectation that the actual oligarchy of the 400 will be met with the same, if not a greater, amount of demotic vitriol as was its hypothetical counterpart in 415.

In his narrative of the failed oligarchic uprising at Samos, Thucydides uses the verb three times (8.63.3, twice; 8.76.2). These verbal forms make an impression not only because they are rare, but also because of the paradox they present. Thucydides employs ὀλιγαρχέω to describe actions that are static, insofar as one group's efforts to establish an oligarchy always meets immediately with an opposing group's resolution to prevent this change in governance. Thus, the historian reflects the impasse at Samos by using a verbal form to describe efforts that bear no fruit.

As he describes the course of events at Samos, Thucydides scatters important details, regarding the parties involved, across non-sequential chapters. The reader's impression of the conflict between pro- and anti-oligarchic parties on Samos corresponds to his or her ability to synthesize the verbal connections

between (at least) three integrally related, yet disconnected passages. For ease of reference and comparison, the passages appear in succession below:

> ἐγένετο δὲ κατὰ τὸν χρόνον τοῦτον καὶ ἡ ἐν Σάμωι ἐπανάστασις ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου τοῖς δυνατοῖς μετὰ Ἀθηναίων, οἳ ἔτυχον ἐν τρισὶ ναυσὶ παρόντες. καὶ ὁ δῆμος ὁ Σαμίων ἐς διακοσίους μέν τινας τοὺς πάντας τῶν δυνατωτάτων ἀπέκτεινε, τετρακοσίους δὲ φυγῆι ζημιώσαντες καὶ αὐτοὶ τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν καὶ οἰκίας νειμάμενοι… (8.21.1)
>
> At this time[153] a rebellion at Samos also occurred, carried out against those with power by the *demos*, with [the help of] some Athenians, who happened to be present on three ships. And the Samian *demos* killed the most powerful citizens, some two hundred altogether, and punished four hundred with exile, while they themselves took possession of the exiles' land and property…
>
> ἐπειδὴ γὰρ οἱ περὶ τὸν Πείσανδρον πρέσβεις παρὰ τοῦ Τισσαφέρνους ἐς τὴν Σάμον ἦλθον, τά τε ἐν αὐτῶι τῶι στρατεύματι ἔτι βεβαιότερον κατέλαβον καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν Σαμίων προυτρέψαντο τοὺς δυνατωτάτους ὥστε πειρᾶσθαι μετὰ σφῶν ὀλιγαρχηθῆναι, καίπερ ἐπαναστάντας αὐτοὺς ἀλλήλοις ἵνα μὴ ὀλιγαρχῶνται· (8.63.3)
>
> When [in 411] the envoys in Peisander's company came from Tissaphernes' camp to Samos, they took a firmer hold of the affairs in the army itself, and persuaded the most powerful of the Samians themselves to join with them in an attempt to govern as oligarchs, although the Samians had risen against each other in order to avoid living under an oligarchy.
>
> οἱ γὰρ τότε τῶν Σαμίων ἐπαναστάντες τοῖς δυνατοῖς καὶ ὄντες δῆμος μεταβαλλόμενοι αὖθις καὶ πεισθέντες ὑπό τε τοῦ Πεισάνδρου, ὅτε ἦλθε, καὶ τῶν ἐν τῆι Σάμωι ξυνεστώτων Ἀθηναίων ἐγένοντό τε ἐς τριακοσίους ξυνωμόται… (8.73.2)

[153] Chapter 8.20 ends with the notice of Diomedon's failed naval assault at Haerae in the summer of 412.

> For those of the Samians, who had opposed the aristocrats when they were members of the *demos*, changed to the opposite position and were persuaded by Peisander, when he came [in 411], and they became a group of 300 conspirators [who joined with] the Athenian conspirators gathered together at Samos …

Chapters 8.63.3 and 73.2 describe the same point of the oligarchic uprising of 411: the creation of a joint alliance between Athenian and Samian conspirators, upon Peisander's return from his first envoy to Athens in the winter of 412/11 (see 8.53-4). On the other hand, 8.21.1 refers to a revolution on Samos in 412, which most likely did not have the goal of establishing an oligarchic government.[154]

Though 8.21.2 describes a separate circumstance, the passage bears upon Thucydides' verbal choices in the latter two passages.[155] By reminding the reader of 8.63.3 and 73.2 of the circumstances in 412 (8.21.1), Thucydides sets the Samian conspirators up for failure even before they begin to act in service of instituting an oligarchy. One way he achieves this is by using the language of 8.21.1 as a basis against which to define the "opposite position" that the δῆμος takes in 411. The pro-oligarchic Samian cohort of 411 consists of those who had opposed the

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[154] See Hornblower 2008, n. 8.21.1.

[155] The rarity of ἡ ἐπανάστασις and ἐπανίστημι, terms which appear, in book 8, only in the three passages discussed, suggests that Thucydides means to prompt his reader to connect 8.21.1, 63.3, and 73.2. Outside of book 8, the terms appear only a few times, the noun at 2.27.2 and 4.56.2, and the verb at 1.115.5, 3.39.2, and 5.23.3.

Samian elite in 412 (ἐπαναστάντες τοῖς δυνατοῖς, 73.2). This opposition recreates the verbal circumstances of 8.21.1 (ἐπανάστασις…τοῖς δυνατοῖς), in which the result of comparable opposition was the death of two hundred elites, and the exile of four hundred more (διακοσίους… τῶν δυνατωτάτων ἀπέκτεινε… τετρακοσίους δὲ φυγῆι ζημιώσαντες, 21.1). When the men of 411 switch sides (μεταβαλλόμενοι αὖθις, 73.2), they place themselves in the verbal position of those whom the men of 412 either executed or expelled.

The same holds true at 8.63.3. When Thucydides reassigns the designation of "most powerful" to the men who take part in the conspiracy of 411 (τοὺς δυνατωτάτους ὥστε πειρᾶσθαι μετὰ σφῶν ὀλιγαρχηθῆναι), he effectively saddles these men with the verbal identity against which they are elsewhere defined (at 21.1 and 73.2). Through his consistent choice of words, Thucydides thus connects the newly-crowned δυνατωτάτοι of 411 to the elite victims of 412. When the side-switchers of 411 adopt the designation of their previous enemies, they also expose themselves to comparable resistance from those who have not made this transition.

Thucydides' reprisal of ὀλιγαρχέω at 8.63.3, the first time the reader has seen the term since its lone, previous appearance (5.31.6), bolsters the impression of the oligarchic uprising at Samos as an inevitably futile endeavor. His double

use of ὀλιγαρχέω sets the aspirations (ὀλιγαρχηθῆναι) of Samos' newest class of δυνατωτάτοι alongside a reminder to the reader that, thanks to the circumstances of 412, those who remain opposed to oligarchy in 411 already have the tools they need to successfully curb the influence of Samos' δυνατωτάτοι.

Thucydides describes the hope for prevention using a final clause (ἵνα μὴ ὀλιγαρχῶνται, 63.3). The phrase showcases Thucydides' manipulation of his unique set of verbal markers.[156] First, Thucydides alters the relationship between δῆμος, δυνατωτάτοι, and ἐπανάστασις (8.21.1). In 412, the relationship is something along the lines of: δῆμος + ἐπανάστασις > δυνατωτάτοι. In 412, however, part of the δῆμος = δυνατωτάτοι, while another portion remains loyal to an anti- δυνατωτάτοι position. Thus, ἐπανάστασις can no longer be the tool of a cohesive, demotic collective; rather, this opposition is a tool to which both sides of the fractured citizen body lay claim (ἐπαναστάντας αὐτοὺς ἀλλήλοις, 8.63.3), but which only one side (the δῆμος) has ever successfully wielded against its opponent (cf. 8.21.1).

[156] Hornblower (2008, n. 8.63.3) takes the phrase as Thucydides' means of highlighting a paradox, whereby "the same men," who feared the limited rule of the δυνατωτάτοι at 8.21.1, "now take steps to bring [oligarchy] about." This is almost certainly what Thucydides is calling his reader's attention to in chapter 8.73.2, but it is not the most important aspect of the passage at 8.63.3.

Thucydides' use of ὀλιγαρχέω at 8.76.1 also fosters the expectation that Samos' fresh crop of "most-powerful" men will fail in their oligarchic endeavor. This passage describes how Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus successful enforcement of a pro-democratic, anti-400 position among the troops at Samos (cf. 8.75.2). Of the opposition they faced, Thucydides writes: "At this time they had established their positions as rivals, one party compelling the city to be a democracy, the other compelling the army to operate as an oligarchy" (ἐς φιλονικίαν τε καθέστασαν τὸν χρόνον τοῦτον οἱ μὲν τὴν πόλιν ἀναγκάζοντες δημοκρατεῖσθαι, οἱ δὲ τὸ στρατόπεδον ὀλιγαρχεῖσθαι, 8.76.1). Unlike at 8.63.3, oligarchy and democracy appear as two entirely separate verbal entities. Thucydides hints at the superiority of the democrats, furthermore, through the order in which he describes each faction: a slight imbalance in the μὲν...δὲ clauses isolates ἀναγκάζοντες between τὴν πόλιν and δημοκρατεῖσθαι. While both the oligarchs and the democrats depend upon compulsion for their actions, that is, this compulsion is more strongly on the side of the latter

In addition to unevenly positioning δημοκρατεῖσθαι and ὀλιγαρχεῖσθαι at 8.76.1, Thucydides also undermines the strength of the oligarchic effort by removing its target recruits (τὸ στρατόπεδον) almost as soon as he identifies them. Subsequently, the historian makes the soldiers the subject of the very next

sentence (οἱ στρατιῶται). These men independently pursue their own, pro-democratic agenda, which includes deposing the generals and trierarchs suspected of supporting the oligarchy (εἴ τινα τῶν τριηράρχων ὑπώπτευον, ἔπαυσαν) and appointing others, including Thrasybulus and Thrasyllus, to the command (ἄλλους δὲ ἀνθείλοντο… ὧν Θρασύβουλός τε καὶ Θράσυλος ὑπῆρχον, 8.76.2). Finally, Thucydides robs the oligarchy of its primary proponents — the (Athenian and Samian) δυνατωτάτοι — by twice re-assigning the comparative, δυνατώτεροι, to the pro-democratic forces (8.76.4, 76.5).[157] Thus, Thucydides relegates the firm instantiation of oligarchy at Samos to the status of a futile threat, which itself supplies the precise terms of its own defeat.

II.f. The Athenian practice of oligarchy at Athens

Although Thucydides uses ὀλιγαρχέω only a single time in his narrative of the oligarchy of 400 at Athens (8.91.3), he manages to augment the picture of Athenian oligarchy as a type of governance that is of a separate piece, defined by the particular proclivities of the 400 and their Athenian supporters. Unlike other

[157] The "most powerful" Athenians: e.g., 8.47.2, 48.1 (at Samos) and 90.1 (at Athens); the "most powerful" Samians: e.g., 8.63.3 (cf. 21.1). On the superlative, see above, n. 136.

Hellenes who practice oligarchy, the 400 Athenian oligarchs, united by their exclusivity as a group of uniquely-impious conspirators (ξυνωμοσίαι), exercise a distinctively selfish disregard for constitutional propriety.

This selfishness manifests as the Athenian oligarchs' willingness, should they lose their preferred point of access to political control (ἐβούλοντο ὀλιγαρχούμενοι ἄρχειν), to ensure their own autonomy by betraying the city (ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς πολεμίους ἐσαγαγόμενοι… εἰ τοῖς γε σώμασι σφῶν ἄδεια ἔσται).[158] Thucydides offers a direct, editorial confirmation of the oligarchs' motivations, though he does not explicitly condemn them.[159] However, the ὀλιγαρχούμενοι at 8.91.3 is an important echo of 5.31.6, the only other time that Thucydides uses the same participial form to describe men "being oligarchs."

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[158] Thuc. 8.91.3: "Those men preferred above all to command the allies as oligarchs, but if not [the allies], they wished to have an independent oligarchy, keeping their ships and walls; and in the event that they were prevented from doing so, they wished more than anything not to be destroyed as the primary targets of a restored *demos*, but were even willing to admit [Athens'] enemies and to give up their walls and ships in the bargain, and to arrange the affairs of the city in any sort of way, if doing so would assure their own personal safety" (ἐκεῖνοι γὰρ μάλιστα μὲν ἐβούλοντο ὀλιγαρχούμενοι ἄρχειν καὶ τῶν ξυμμάχων, εἰ δὲ μή, τάς τε ναῦς καὶ τὰ τείχη ἔχοντες αὐτονομεῖσθαι, ἐξειργόμενοι δὲ καὶ τούτου μὴ οὖν ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου γε αὖθις γενομένου αὐτοὶ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων μάλιστα διαφθαρῆναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς πολεμίους ἐσαγαγόμενοι ἄνευ τειχῶν καὶ νεῶν ξυμβῆναι καὶ ὁπωσοῦν τὰ τῆς πόλεως ἔχειν, εἰ τοῖς γε σώμασι σφῶν ἄδεια ἔσται).

[159] Thucydides, explaining that Theramenes accused the 400 of endangering Athens by soliciting nearby Peloponnesian forces to aid the oligarchs in the fortification of Eetioneia (summer 411), continues: "And excessive prejudice was not the only basis for his accusation, but it was also that case that something of this sort was being arranged by those whom he accused," (ἦν δέ τι καὶ τοιοῦτον ἀπὸ τῶν τὴν κατηγορίαν ἐχόντων, καὶ οὐ πάνυ διαβολὴ μόνον τοῦ λόγου, 8.91.3).

In 421, the Boeotians and Megarians opt out of an anti-Peloponnesian alliance with the Argives, because: "in their opinion, the democracy of the Argives was less suited to them, being oligarchs as they were, than was the administrative policy of the Spartans" (νομίζοντες σφίσι τὴν Ἀργείων δημοκρατίαν αὐτοῖς **ὀλιγαρχουμένοις** ἧσσον **ξύμφορον** εἶναι τῆς Λακεδαιμονίων **πολιτείας**, 5.31.6).[160] For the Boeotians and Megarians, oligarchy is not simply a means of ensuring limited, aristocratic control, but is also a tool for safeguarding the collective, constitutional vitality of their respective cities. For those who practice oligarchy at Athens, the affairs of the city are a bargaining chip, valued for its ability to ensure the vitality of 400 individuals.

In Thucydides' estimation, the 400 are not concerned with what is expedient (ξύμφορον) for collective administration (τῆς πολιτείας, 5.31.6), as much as they are determined either to command Athens and its allies unilaterally (ὀλιγαρχούμενοι ἄρχειν), or to betray Athens and command themselves as a separate entity (αὐτονομεῖσθαι, 8.91.3). Furthermore, his

[160] The alliance of 421 joined the Argives, Mantineans, Eleans, Corinthians, and Thracians of Chalcidice. Argos, Mantinea, and Elis bore ill will towards the Spartans in particular (Thuc. 5.28-31); the Corinthians and Chalcidic Thracians were drawn to the alliance because they opposed the terms of the recent treaty between the Spartans and Athenians (5.25-7, 31).

suggestion that the 400 have no concern for constitutional legitimacy bolsters his own validation of the efforts of the 5,000. These men, Thucydides writes, governed well on a constitutional basis (ἠφίσαντο ἐς τὴν πολιτείαν... φαίνονται εὖ πολιτεύσαντες, 8.97.2). Thus, in the *Histories*, disregard for constitutional propriety is not a hallmark of oligarchy itself; rather, it is a hallmark of the Athenian oligarchy of 400. On a verbal level, Thucydides definitively anchors this revolutionary government to the (supposedly) revolution-breeding conspiracy of 415. It is the reader who speaks the near-tyrannical oligarchy of 411 into existence, using words Thucydides has provided for this very purpose.[161]

III. ἔρως (a brief excursus)

Alongside ξυνωμοσία, ὀλιγαρχική, and τυραννική, ἔρως is another exceptional verbal element of the Thucydides' account in book 6.[162] Even when the term appears outside of book 6, furthermore, the historian relegates ἔρως to Athenian actors and actions. By failing to apply their ἔρως to actual

[161] On the relationship between words and deeds in Thucydides' text, see Parry 1957.
[162] In the extant text, ἔρως and its derivatives occur a total of 9 times: 2.43.1 (ἐραστάς); 3.45.5 (ἔρως); 6.13.1 (δυσέρωτας), 24.3 (ἔρως), 54.1 (ἐρωτικήν), 54.2 (ἐραστής), 54.3 (ἐρωτικῶς), 57.3 (ἐρωτικῆς), 59.1 (ἐρωτικήν).

circumstances in a manner that is not (self) destructive, the Athenians of book 6 (and the tyrannicides who exist in the *demos'* memory) make a fatal decision between the two metaphorical constructs of ἔρως that occur earlier in the extant work (2.43.1 and 3.45.5).[163]

Thucydides introduces one metaphorical type of ἔρως in Pericles' Funeral Oration of 429; the other appears in Diodotus' address during the Mytilenean Debate of 427. Pericles famously exhorts the men of Athens to embody their passion for the city and its success so thoroughly as to carry out their civic duties under the assumed identity of ἐρασταί (2.43.1).[164] On Pericles' model, the Athenians themselves ought to embody ἔρως. Diodotus instead personifies the emotion as its own entity, the self-directed co-conspirator of Hope. Together, the two forces encourage men to mistake their own capacity for success, and thus to engage in perilous actions which they should know to avoid (3.45.5).[165]

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[163] On Thucydides' arrangement of his book 6 narrative in order to paint Athens' plans for the expedition as excessive and ill-advised, see: Connor 1984, 167-8, 177-80; Kagan 2009, 162-88.
[164] On this section of Pericles' speech, see: Loraux (trans. A. Sheridan) 1986, 180-92; Monoson 1994, 253-76; Ludwig 2002, 124-53; Samons 2004, 187-9; Yates 2005, 33-47; Ludwig 2008, 294-307.
[165] Though the context of Diodotus' advice is the failed uprising at Mytilene, his comments at 3.45.5 provide a generalization regarding the typical behavior of all men. The Mytileneans are the example at hand, but they are not the only Hellenes who are vulnerable to the machinations of *Elpis* and *Eros*, as Thucydides demonstrates in book 6. See the analyses by: Andrewes 1962, 66-8; Debner 2000, 161-78; Harris 2013; 94-109.

As Thucydides represents them, the Athenians of 415 come much closer to Diodotus' model than Pericles'. It is Diodotus' portrayal of ἔρως that guides the reader's expectations regarding Athenian military and political conduct early in book 6. When, in the spring of 415, the Assembly convenes for a second meeting to discuss Athens' plans for a Sicilian Expedition, Nicias implores the body's senior members (τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις): "do not be madly in love with what is remote, [according to] which these [younger] men themselves might suffer" (μηδ', ὅπερ ἂν αὐτοὶ [νεωτέροι] πάθοιεν, δυσέρωτας εἶναι τῶν ἀπόντων, 6.13.1).[166] Using the general of 415 as his mouthpiece, Thucydides creates a line of continuity between a novel formulation in the reader's "erotic" vocabulary (δυσέρωτας), and an image of ἔρως about which the reader already has a certain set of expectations.

The sick passion that Nicias identifies is itself a real threat (εἶναι), yet at the moment of his address, neither the older nor the younger men are actually δυσέρωται.[167] Furthermore, an unadulterated "desire for sailing" (ἔρως…

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[166] Thuc. 6.8. On possible omissions in Thucydides' account of the Assemblies regarding the expedition, see: Dover (in Gomme *HCT* IV, 224-7); Hornblower 2008, n. 6.8.1-2.

[167] In fact, the Athenians had previously decided to send only 60 ships (Thuc. 6.8), an entirely reasonable contingent given their previous experiences in Sicily between 427-4 (cf. 3.86.4-115.4). For an analysis of how Thucydides presents events in books 6 and 7 as a confirmation of his speaker's words, see Stahl 1973, 60-77.

ἐκπλεῦσαι, 6.24.3) only actually overtakes the Assembly after Nicias — in a gambit meant to dissuade the Athenians from approving the expedition (6.19.2) — advises a significant, unprecedented increase in the size of Athens' expeditionary forces (6.20-3). As such, Nicias supplies the Athenians with a grandiose plan of the sort that Diodotus had described as the product of Eros' contriving (ὁ ἔρως... τὴν ἐπιβουλὴν ἐκφοντίζων, 3.45.5). Through Nicias, this Diodotean concept of ἔρως transitions from a theoretical malaise into a disease with tangible implications.

Diodotus' notions of ἔρως also shape Thucydides' excursus on the would-be tyrannicides (6.54.1-6.59.3)[168] by fostering the reader's impression that the lovers' undertaking, motivated by an "erotic mischance" (διὰ ἐρωτικὴν ξυντυχίαν, 6.54.1), was doomed to fail.[169] As the man who contrives the plot against the tyrants, Aristogeiton embodies Diodotus' personified, plan-arranging Eros: "The starting point of the plot was along such a path as was determined by erotic pain" (τοιούτωι μὲν τρόπωι δι'ἐρωτικὴν λύπην ἥ τε ἀρχὴ τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς... ἐγένετο, 6.59.1; cf. 3.45.5, τὴν ἐπιβουλὴν). Though Aristogeiton is,

[168] On which see Forde 1986, 433-48.

[169] Thucydides' phrase (διὰ ἐρωτικὴν ξυντυχίαν) neatly recalls another key element of Diodotus' speech: τύχη aids hope and desire by causing men to take risks despite a lack of resources, and to overestimate their own strength (Thuc. 3.46.6).

like Pericles' ideal citizen, an active agent of ἔρως (ἐραστὴς, 6.54.2), his desire fills him not with pride, but with grievous pain (ὁ δὲ ἐρωτικῶς περιαλγήσας, 6.54.3; cf. 6.57.3), and his personal motives contrast starkly with those of Pericles' boldness-averse (ἀτολμοτέραν), city-serving, power-loving ἐρασταί (τὴν τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν…ἐραστὰς γιγνομένους αὐτῆς, 2.43.1). Rather, Aristogeiton helps to lead a group of conspirators (τῶν ξυνωμοτῶν, 6.57.2) whose actions disturb the balanced rule that Peisistratid tyrants had previously exercised.

In book 6, whether in the context of the plans for the expedition, or the (suspected) plots for revolution, ἔρως exists both in conjecture and in reality, in memory and in action. When Thucydides entangles the conspiratorial identity of the failed tyrannicides with erotic motivation, he provides a bridge for ἔρως to cross, allowing the impulse to move from the Athenians' collective memory to their misguided prosecution of the (suspected) conspirators currently among them. This destructive erotic impulse underlies the Athenians' attack upon each other, while simultaneously fueling their determination to launch an attack on Sicily.

In 415, the Athenians do not support the city by becoming the active ἐρασταί whom Pericles had conjured in his funeral address. Instead, they are the passive objects of an all-consuming ἔρως (καὶ ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως

ἐκπλεῦσαι, 6.24.3); they do not direct their desire towards the city, but are directed by it to expand their foreign holdings. As such, the Athenians endanger Athens by succumbing to the very same suggestive power of ἔρως about which Diodotus had warned the Athenian Assembly in 427.

Chapter Four ~ Euripides in 412: *Helen* and *Andromeda*

In her monody, which opens Euripides' *Helen* of 412,[170] the eponymous heroine explains that her primary reason for living is her hope that she will see her home and her husband once again: "Why, after all this, am I still alive? I heard the following tale from divine Hermes, who knew I never arrived at Ilium, that I can yet make my home on the famed plain of Sparta with my husband, so long as I do not become subject to another's bed."[171] Given this goal, it is no surprise to the reader that νόστος and its verbal form, νοστέω, appear throughout the subsequent text.[172]

Each time Euripides uses one of these words, he marks a point of contact with the accounts that preceded his own. In addition, the playwright often capitalizes upon the term's capacity to signal both arrival and departure by using this verbal marker as a jumping-off point, from which he can craft his own, novel

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[170] See: sch. Ar. *Frogs* 53; sch. Ar. *Thesm*. 850, which place Euripides' *Helen* a year before Aristophanes' *Thesm.* of 411; and sch. Ar. *Thesm.* 1012, which notes that *Helen* and *Andromeda* were produced in the same year (i.e., 412).

[171] Eur. Hel. 56-9: τί οὖν ἔτι ζῶ; θεοῦ τόδ' εἰσήκουσ' ἔπος/ Ἑρμοῦ, τὸ κλεινὸν ἔτι κατοικήσειν πέδον/ Σπάρτης σὺν ἀνδρί, γνόντος ὡς ἐς Ἴλιον/ οὐκ ἦλθον, ἢν μὴ λέκτρ' ὑποστρώσω τινί.

[172] Eur. *Hel*. 428, 474, 877, 884, 891, 1025. *Iphigenia among the Taurians* is the only extant, Euripidean tragedy that surpasses *Helen* in its inclusion of νόστος vocabulary. Among Euripides' extant works, in which the protagonist(s) is displaced from his or her native city (e.g., *Medea, Heraclidae, Hippolytus, Andromache, Hecuba, Electra, Troiades, Phoenissae, Iphigenia at Aulis*), and then attempts to return home (e.g., *Supplices, Heracles, Ion, Orestes*), the tragedies in which nostalgia for one's home registers the strongest, on a verbal level, are Euripides' *IT* and his *Helen*, as demonstrated in *Table I* (printed below, p. 171).

account of Helen's journey (section *I*). A key factor of Euripides' innovation, with respect to his portrayal of Helen's νόστος, is the degree to which he figures Helen as the creator and arbiter of her own λόγος, as the one who posits and performs a course of action that will lead to the outcome she desires (section *II*).[173] As she and (eventually) Menelaus work to ensure their νόστος, they dismantle extant λόγοι and craft impious rites that either abandon or break apart accepted ritual practices. The heroine does manage to leave behind her Egyptian purgatory at tragedy's end, yet the story Helen creates in order to do so advances a fundamentally destructive idea of the homeward journey (section *III*).

Acting in service of the impious rites that they create in order to secure their νόστος, Menelaus and Helen not only open the door to excessive bloodshed that mars their exodus from Egypt and their eventual return to the port at Nauplia, but also fail to propitiate the goddess who demands it most: Kypris. Euripides' treatment of this goddess is itself a noteworthy aspect of his *Helen*, and is also well-worth considering when developing a hypothesis regarding which tragedy completed the trilogy of 412 (section *IV*). Scholars have good

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[173] Between *Helen* and *IT*, the two Euripidean works in which νόστος appears most frequently, there are significant differences with regard to the manner in which each heroine secures her νόστος. These are not mere variations; rather, they represent fundamental dissimilarities (discussed below, *passim*) in terms of: each heroine's respective approach to piety; her dedication to a false λόγος; and her willingness to promote violence.

reason to question the likelihood that (the undated) *Iphigenia Among the Taurians* (henceforth *IT*)[174] — in which neither Aphrodite nor her son, Eros, exert any significant influence — accompanied *Helen* and *Andromeda*, in which the same erotic forces play an integral, and perhaps even parallel, role.

I. The history of Helen's νόστος

In *Helen*, Euripides presents his audience with a recognizable, yet modified, version of the story of Helen's and Menelaus' time in Egypt. Each of the six times that the playwright inserts a νόστος term into the tragedy, he highlights his engagement with, and subsequent alteration of, previous accounts. As such, νόστος terms serve as a versatile and flexible pin: versatile, insofar as these terms allow Euripides to connect his tale to the many hinges that various, competing traditions provide; flexible, insofar as Euripides can, once he establishes this connection, swing the arc of his narrative in a variety of novel directions.[175]

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[174] For a brief survey and discussion of studies related to the dating of *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, see Kyriakou 2006, 39-41 with nn. 37-41.

[175] On Euripides' use of prior accounts, see Downing 1990, 1-16.

Menelaus is the first character in *Helen* to reference a νόστος, stating upon his arrival at the walls of Theoclymenus' home: "I arrive alone (μόνος δὲ **νοστῶ**), wondering if I might somehow find and take some food for my friends who are there [in a cave]… surely one can expect to obtain something for the sailors from a rich house."[176] Though the verb must be translated here as "arrive" rather than "return," it nonetheless likely: "evokes the delayed *nostos* of [Menelaus] in early epic," as W. Allan suggests.[177] Yet as far as Euripides' use of Homeric content, the verb does more than prompt a general recollection of Menelaus' homecoming; rather, it evokes the specific terms of Menelaus' self-narration in *Odyssey* 4.

Among the handful of extant sources that preserve the tradition of Menelaus' detainment in Egypt on his way back from Troy, the only version in which Menelaus narrates the story himself is that found in Homer's *Odyssey*.[178] In the epic, forms and derivatives of νόστος, νόστιμος, and νόστεω appear most

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[176] Eur. 428-33: μόνος δὲ νοστῶ, τοῖς ἐκεῖ ζητῶν φίλοις/ τὰ πρόσφορ' ἤν πως ἐξερευνήσας λάβω… ἐλπὶς δ' ἔκ γε πλουσίων δόμων/ λαβεῖν τι ναύταις…

[177] Allan 2008, 198 n. 429 (cf. 196, nn. 405-07).

[178] For a brief and useful summary of major and auxiliary sources for the tradition that places Menelaus (and Helen) in Egypt, see Allan 2008, 10-28. The works from which we can draw the most detailed information are Homer's *Odyssey*, Stesichorus' poetry (especially his *Palinode*), and Herodotus' *Histories*. The chorus of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* uses νόστιμος in its enquiry about Menelaus' journey home from Troy (*Ag.* 618), but there is no mention of Egypt in the messenger's response (617-35, 674-9; cf. A. *Cho*. 1040-2).

often in books 1 (16 times) and 4 (11 times),[179] and there is a noteworthy preponderance of νόστος vocabulary throughout the Spartan king's recollections (esp. *Od.* 4.350-619). Of the 11 times νόστος/νοστέω/νόστιμον appear in *Odyssey* 4, furthermore, seven are in the context of Menelaus' narration of his encounter, while he is detained at the port of Pharos, with Eidotheia and Proteus.[180] Although Nestor introduces the story of Menelaus' delay in Egypt in book 3 (cf. 3.278-328), it is only in book 4 that νόστος vocabulary appears in the narration of the detour itself.[181] From a verbal standpoint, that is, the true point of departure for Menelaus' νόστος in the *Odyssey* is Egypt, not Troy.[182]

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[179] A *TLG* search for all of the inflected forms of νόστος and its related terms (i.e., those listed in *Table I*, p. 171), returns the following totals: 16 times (book 1); 11 times (book 4); 7 times (book 14); 6 times (books 2, 11, 15, 19); 5 times (books 3, 5, 8, 13, 24); 4 times (book 10); 3 times (books 6, 9, 12, 17, 20, 23); twice (book 18); once (books 16, 21, 22); never (book 7).

[180] E.g., Hom. *Od.* 4.381, 390, 424, 470 (a repeated, formulaic line); 4.497, 516-19. All of these passages use the noun (νόστος). A single verbal form (νοστήσαντα) appears in Menelaus' promise to give Telemachus the crater of Phaedimus, which the king received during his post-Egyptian stop in Sidon (4.619; cf. 4.83.5, 15.67ff).

[181] None of the 5 mentions of νόστος/νόστιμος in book 3 refers to Menelaus' attempts to get home from Egypt (cf. 3.132, 142, 160, 233, 241).

[182] This verbal association does not guide Herodotus' account, our only other record of Menelaus' time in Egypt which has survived in near-complete condition (Hdt. 2.112-20). Herodotus' use of νόστος vocabulary in book 2 is limited to the following passages: 2.33, 108, 135, 161; none of these dictates the content of his account regarding Helen and Menelaus (2.112-20). Too little of Stesichorus' works remain to draw any certain conclusions about verbal parallels between his treatment of Helen's and Menelaus' time in Egypt and Euripides' own. Cf. the fragments of Stesichorus' *Sack of Troy* (S 103.5-6 *PMGF*), as well as descriptions of his *Helen* (frs. 189-91 *PMGF*) and *Palinode* (Pl. *Phaedr*. 243a-b = fr. 192 *PMGF*; Isoc. *Hel.* 64 = fr. 192 *PMGF*). The only mention of νόστος, with relation to Stesichorus, is in an anonymous papyrus fragment of the 2nd cent. CE (P.Oxy. 2506 fr. 26 col 1 = fr. 29 Wehrli). The author writes that Stesichorus put the real Helen in Troy, and subsequently details a separate, Stesichorean innovation, namely, Demophon's stop in

I.a. νοστέω: arrivals in Euripides' Helen

Consequently, when Euripides puts νοστέω in Menelaus' mouth at *Hel.* 428, he is able to exploit the range of meanings that the verb can possess. From the perspective of *Helen's* characters, νοστέω indicates an advent: Menelaus has "arrived" in Egypt and on stage; he has "come" to the house inhabited by Proteus' children. From Euripides' perspective, by contrast, the νόστος that Menelaus describes in *Odyssey* 4 provides a mythological touchpoint to which the playwright can "return" his audience.[183]

The epic tradition also serves a point of departure, from which Euripides can (and does) alter the circumstances and implications of Menelaus' arrival in Egypt, and of his subsequent actions while there.[184] The members of the audience have access to each of these perspectives, and thus the power to perceive how,

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Egypt on his way home from Ilium: φης[ιν ὁ] Στησίχορο[ς]… [ὥ]στε Δημοφῶντ[α]…ἐν τ[ῶ]ι νόστωι… ἀνενεχ[θῆναι λέγ]ειν [ἐ]σ̣ [Αἴ]γυπτον.

[183] We should also admit the cyclic epic *Nostoi* to the category of "common mythological ground." Reportedly, the work detailed how Menelaus was blown off course on his way home from Troy and detained in Egypt (cf. [Proclus] *Chrest*. 285-7; *Nostoi* Arg. p. 94.6-7 Bernabé = 67.9-11 Davies). However, too little survives to draw any detailed conclusions about the manner in which Euripides may have drawn on this account.

[184] For identifications and analyses of similarities and differences, see: Steiger 1908, 202-37; Eisner 1980, 31-7; Blondell 2013, 202-21. See also Allan 2008, pp. 194-8, "Introductory Note" and nn. 386-434.

even if the strict translation is limited, the νοστέω at *Hel.* 428 announces an arrival, a return, and a parting of ways, all in equal measure. Menelaus' arrival in Egypt should surprise no one in Euripides' audience. As we shall see (section *III*), the same cannot be said of his actions while there.

When the verb appears next, at *Hel.* 473, it again marks the intersection of a variety of perspectives and implications. At this particular point in his tragedy, Euripides addresses the competing elements of the accounts that Stesichorus and Herodotus provide: in the former, it is an εἴδωλον, not Helen herself, that goes to Troy; the latter describes no εἴδωλον, but agrees that the real Helen never makes it to Ilium.[185] In *Helen*, these two λόγοι converge, and they do so around descriptions of a νόστος.

Menelaus, as we have seen, arrives (νοστῶ, 428) to Theoclymenus' house, but is barred from it by an aged servant woman. She refuses to report the Spartan king's troubles to her master (πικρῶς †ἂν οἶμαί γ' ἀγγελεῖν† τοὺς σοὺς **λόγους**, 448),[186] explaining that Helen's presence has caused Theoclymenus to be

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[185] Stesichorus provides a poetic precedent both for the εἴδωλον that journeys to Troy in Helen's place (cf. *PMGF* fr. 192 *PMGF* = Pl. *Phaedr.* 243a-b; Pl. *Rep.* 586c) and for her sojourn at Proteus' Egyptian court (cf. fr. 193 *PMGF* = *P. Oxy.* 2506). Herodotus, on the other hand, makes no mention of an εἴδωλον; instead, he reproduces the account of the priests of Memphis, in which Proteus takes Helen away from Paris after the lovers are blown off course on their way to Troy (cf. Hdt. 2.112-20).

[186] For possible emendations, see Allan 2008, 104 and 200 n. 448. These alterations pertain to the tense of the infinitive, not the meaning of the phrase.

averse to all Hellenes (468-70). Menelaus, thinking that his wife is the woman whom he collected at Troy, asks: "Where did she come from? What accounts for this state of affairs?" (πόθεν μολοῦσα; τίνα τὸ πρᾶγμ' ἔχει **λόγον**; 473).[187] Helen, the old woman explains: "came here from Lacedaemon" (Λακεδίμονος γῆς δεῦρο **νοστήσασ'** ἄπο, 474).[188] As at *Hel.* 428, however, the νοστέω of 474 does more than signal an arrival. The verb also marks Euripides' return to extant traditions, which, as the scene shows, cannot readily coexist. By playing up the discrepancies as he does, however, Euripides simply highlights the departure he is about to make, as he reshapes the details of prior accounts in a manner more suited to the exigencies of his own version.

I.b. νόστος/νοστέω: departures in Euripides' Helen

Euripides highlights the innovative aspects of his version of this escape by exploring the connotative plasticity of νόστος at the precise moment in which he

[187] Euripides has made his reader aware from the tragedy's prologue that the real Helen has been in Egypt all along, while it is her εἴδωλον that Menelaus took back from Troy (cf. Eur. *Hel.* 22-55). However, it is not until line 474 that the competing traditions come to a head, at least as far as the characters are concerned. In her earlier exchange with Teucer (cf. 68-163), Helen does not reveal her identity to her interlocutor.

[188] The contradictory account, which the old woman provides, aligns with Helen's own claim that she herself never went to Troy (cf. 22-55).

prepares to expand Helen's myth into (so far as we know) uncharted territory. Theonoe is Euripides' most valuable helper as he makes this departure, and she is responsible for the remaining four mentions of a νόστος in *Helen*. Her words come at an integral juncture in the development of the tragedy's signature escape sequence, in the course of which the priestess introduce a novel (in the context of the tragedy) connotation for νόστος.

Theonoe retains the term's previous implication of an arrival (891; cf. 428, 474), but also uses it in reference to the royal couple's possible return to Sparta (887, 884, 1025). By using νόστος to mean both "return" and "arrive," Theonoe gives voice to a type of definitional flexibility that has, to this point, been implicit. As such, she puts the words of the tragedy in service of its actions: it is only after the priestess speaks that Helen and Menelaus relinquish the expectation of certain death in favor of a concerted effort to escape with their lives (835-64).

In addition to opening up the connotative possibilities of νόστος, Theonoe is also the speaker who establishes the initial terms of Helen's and Menelaus' hoped-for departure. Compared with Menelaus' non-specific propitiation of the entire Olympian population in the *Odyssey*, Theonoe's dedication to appeasing

Kypris in particular resets the traditional (Homeric) terms of the couple's escape from Egypt.[189]

After Theonoe expresses her pity for the ragged Menelaus, ignorant as to whether a return journey or permanent detainment will be his fate (οὐδ' οἶσθα **νόστον οἴκαδ'** εἴτ' αὐτοῦ μενεῖς, 877), she goes on to explain that he and his wife are at the center of considerable strife (ἔρις) among the gods: "and on this very day there will be a collective discussion about you, with Zeus presiding" (**σύλλογός** τε σοῦ πέρι/ ἔσται πάρεδρος Ζήνι τῶιδ' ἐν ἤματι, 878-9). Euripides' choice of σύλλογός is worth noting, for it is at this point that Theonoe condenses the motivations of two goddesses, Hera and Kypris,[190] into a single directive for Helen and Menelaus.

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[189] In the *Odyssey*, it is Eidothea who advises Menelaus as to how he might capture her father (Proteus), in order to learn how to resuscitate the dead winds, which have kept him stalled in the harbor at Pharos. When he consults Proteus, Menelaus asks: "Who among the immortals constrains me and obstructs my path? (ὅς τίς μ' ἀθανάτων πεδάᾳ καὶ ἔδησε κελεύθου, Hom. *Od*. 469). In his reply, Proteus speaks of appeasing Zeus and the other immortals (Διί τ' ἄλλοισίν τε θεοῖσι, 472; ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσι, 479), and Menelaus later reports to Telemachus that he secured his journey home only after appeasing this Olympian collective (αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ κατέπαυσα θεῶν χόλον αἰὲν ἐόντων… ἔδοσαν δέ μοι οὖρον/ ἀθάνατοι, τοί μ' ὦκα φίλην ἐς πατρίδ' ἔπεμψαν, 583… 585-6). Herodotus, for his part, prefaces his account of Menelaus' Egyptian detour (Hdt. 2.112-20) with a notice that a temple to foreign Aphrodite (Ξείνης Ἀφροδίτης) stood in the region under Proteus' control (2.112). However, the goddess does not play any part in the historian's subsequent narrative.

[190] Throughout the tragedy, Hera is called by name 15 times, 10 of which connect the goddess to her creation of the εἴδωλον as a reprisal against Kypris, who used Helen to win Paris' vote (Eur. *Hel.* 25-36, 243, 261, 586, 610, 668, 675-9, 708, 1136). Kypris, on the other hand, is referenced 12 times, most often as the author of Helen's and Paris' unrealized matrimony (25-8, 238, 364, 681, 883-7, 1100-02; cf. 1121, the only use of Ἀφροδίτη as the goddess' appellation).

Though Kypris stands firmly opposed to the couple's safe *return* to Sparta (**Κύπρις** δὲ **νόστον** σὸν διαφθεῖραι θέλει, 884), Theonoe declares that she will serve Hera's agenda by keeping Menelaus' presence a secret from her brother: "who ordered me to tell him if ever you happened to *come* to this land" (ὅς με προστασσει τάδε/ εἰπεῖν, ὅταν γῆν τήνδε **νοστήσας** τύχηις, 890-1).[191] Still, the priestess is loath to neglect Kypris altogether. She advises Helen and Menelaus to pray to Hera for safety (σωτηρίας, 1027; cf. μεθ' Ἥρας στᾶσα σώσω τὸν βίον, 889), but to Kypris: "to permit you to *return* home to your fatherland" (χἰκετεύετε/ τὴν μέν σ' **ἐᾶσαι πατρίδα νοστῆσαι Κύπριν**, 1024-5). It is Kypris, that is, who will serve as the gatekeeper of the protagonists' journey home.[192]

The broader significance of Kypris' role in *Helen*, with respect to the thematic content of the trilogy of 412, warrants separate examination (section *IV*); for now, it is necessary simply to confirm Kypris' function as the gatekeeper of the νόστος in *Helen*. Following Theonoe's lead, Helen makes a four-line appeal to

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[191] Hera desires to save Helen and Menelaus, which will discredit Kypris' power by exposing Helen's and Paris' marriage as sham union between the Trojan prince and the εἴδωλον (for whose creation Hera herself was responsible).

[192] Aphrodite-as-Kypris (along with Theonoe) is even a tangential factor in Teucer's homeward journey. In his encounter with Helen, the warrior notes that he desires to consult Theonoe as to how he might sail to Cyprus, his new home according to an Apolline prophecy (144-50). Aphrodite was already long connected with the island by the time Euripides created his *Helen* (e.g., Hom. *Il*. 5.330, 458; *HH* 5.1-2, 6.1-2, 10.1; Sapph. 5.1).

Hera to relieve the burden that the Spartan couple bears (1093-6), and then a 10-line appeal to Kypris, in which she asks that the goddess either cease from punishing her, or: "if you [Kypris] wish to kill me, permit me to die in my own country" (κόρη Διώνης **Κύπρι**... θανεῖν δ' **ἔασόν** μ', εἰ κατακτεῖναι θελείς,/ ἐν γῆι **πατρώιαι**, 1098-1102).[193] With these words, Helen follows Theonoe in uniting the discordant elements of the divine σύλλογός into a new, congruent λόγος that will secure her own, and her husband's safe return to Sparta.

All told, whenever νόστος term appears in *Helen*, it carries a mutable set of connotations, both implicit and explicit. While the verb serves as the marker of an arrival (cf. 428, 474, 891), it also has the power to signal a departure (1025), and the noun partakes of this second connotation (877, 884). The terms' plural meanings not only relate to the various perspectives of the tragedy's characters, but also to Euripides' diverse engagement with, and modification (or outright rejection) of alternate narrative traditions.

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[193] Kypris is also the figure who first elicits the laughter of the Mother goddess in the chorus' second ode, thus playing an integral role in remedying the grieving Mother's estrangement from her Olympian home (Eur. *Hel*. 1339-52). Of the encounter, Allan (2008, 305 n. 1349) writes: "The goddess's reconciliation marks the turning point in the play's pervasive *anodos* pattern (244-9n.), thus linking Persephone's abduction and return from Hades to [Helen's] abduction and return from Egypt." Allan does not comment on Euripides' use of Kypris in place of Iambe, the latter of whom is responsible for Demeter's laughter in *HH* 1.202-5.

Once Theonoe introduces the possibility that the protagonists' νόστος will see them safely back to Sparta, however, the characters cease to speak of this return as such. Euripides, that is, eliminates νόστος from the tragedy's lexicon as he sets out upon his innovative portrayal of the protagonists' escape and salvation. To whatever extent Homeric, Stesichorean, and Herodotean influences may continue to assert themselves after Helen and Menelaus converse with Theonoe, and as they proceed to plot and undertake their exodos, these influences become increasingly secondary to the λόγος that Euripides creates to suit his tragic context. This new rationale requires consistent impiety and violence, the effects of which are felt by all those whom Helen and Menelaus leave in their wake.

II. Helen speaks: a (new) λόγος

Although νόστος itself does not appear again after line 1025, its "new" connotation, which Theonoe introduces (i.e., a departure for home, rather than an arrival to a foreign place), underlies the innovative λόγος that Helen creates in order to ensure her journey home. By organizing Helen's νόστος according to a λόγος that is increasingly of her own design, Euripides highlights the

originality of his own efforts. His innovation is on full display with respect to the protagonists' plotting and execution of their escape from Egypt, and to Helen's novel role as the true focus, and potential shaper, of her own λόγος.[194]

In tandem with his concentrated use of νόστος, Euripides uses λόγος, on a broader scale, as a signpost for points at which he deliberately engages with, and often differs from, previous traditions.[195] This much is clear from the recognition scene: once husband and wife have seen each other (544 ff.), they share in the struggle to resolve the contradictions that exist in the stories which they have each received and told about themselves (αὐτὸς γὰρ σὲ κἄμ' ἔχει **λόγος**, 558).[196] It is only when the messenger reports that the εἴδωλον has

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[194] For a broad summary of the ways in which Euripides nods to Homeric, Stesichorean, and Herodotean versions of the story, see Allan 2008, 24-7, esp. 27. Allan devotes his description of the νόστος element as an epic pattern almost entirely to Menelaus (who is indeed more prevalent than his wife in Homer's *Odyssey*), rather than to the tragedy's titular character.

[195] E.g., Eur. *Hel.* 18-21, describing Helen's birth from an egg produced by Leda, not Nemesis. Helen is the daughter of Nemesis both before Euripides (*Cypria* fr. 9.3 Bernabé = fr. 7.3 Davies; cf. Allan 2008, 148-9 nn. 16-21), and after him (Callim. *Hymn in Dian*. 232: Ἑλένηι Ῥαμνουσίδι; cf. Paus. 1.32.2-3). Cratinus appears to be responsible for incorporating both Leda and Nemesis: in his *Nemesis* 110 = Kock 108, Leda is responsible for incubating the egg, which was itself likely the product of Zeus' rape of Nemesis. For another novel element of Euripides' tragedy, see *Hel.* 137-8, our earliest evidence of the catasterism of the Dioscouri ({Ελ.} οἱ Τυνδάρειοι δ' εἰσὶν ἢ οὐκ εἰσὶν κόροι;/ {Τε.} τεθνᾶσι κοὐ τεθνᾶσι· δύο δ' ἐστὸν λόγω). Finally, see *Hel*. 688, Helen's confirmation that Hermione remains unmarried. Not only is it unclear how this news has reached Helen (for Teucer informs her only of her mother and brothers, cf. 282-3), but it does not follow previous versions—including some of Euripides' own— which report Hermione's marriage either to Neoptolemus or Orestes (e.g., Hom. *Od*. 4.4ff; Pind. *Nem*. 7.43 and schol ad Pind. *Nem*. 7.58; Eur. *Androm*. 33, 891; Soph. *ap. Eustath. ad Hom*. p. 1478; Paus. 1.33.7, 2.18.5).

[196] Cf. Eur. *Hel*. 16-21 (a λόγος Helen receives); 663-82 (a λόγος Helen explains); 975-995 (a λόγος Menelaus repeats and expands upon). The chorus (1137-50) voices frustration with respect to the instability of the stories told, and the judgments made, about Helen. The women draw a parallel

vindicated Helen before its subsequent skyward departure (606 ff.), that Menelaus can accept Helen's account as a counterpart of, rather than a contradiction to his own (ξυμβεβάσί μοι **λόγοι**/ οί τῆσδ' ἀληθεῖς, 622-3). After Euripides lifts away the weight of the εἴδωλον, and with it the weight of extant accounts, he leaves a void that his characters can fill with a new λόγος, and one which moves past the contradictions and complications that separate the tale's previous iterations.

For his part, Menelaus suggests the necessity of such an endeavor. Once he accepts that his wife has been in Egypt all along, the king remarks: "In the midst of this [situation], I have many things to say, but at the moment I don't know where I ought to begin first" (… πολλοὺς δ' ἐν μέσωι **λόγους** ἔχων/ οὐκ οἶδ' ὁποίου πρῶτον ἄρξωμαι τὰ νῦν, 630-1). After he and his wife talk through their respective experiences in greater detail, and express their mutual desperation to escape their current circumstances, Menelaus asks whether the salvation that Helen suggests (σωθεῖμεν ἄν, 815) will be achieved: "through corruption, courage, or contention" (ὠνητὸς ἢ τολμητὸς ἢ **λόγων** ὕπο; 816). In the end, it is the latter (**λόγος**, 832) that will save Helen from marriage to

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between the unpredictability of the heroine's narrative (οὐδ' ἔχω... ὅ τι... ἔπος ἀλαθὲς εὕρω, 1148-50) and that of life itself (**ἀντιλόγοις**... ἀνελπίστοις τύχαις, 1141-2).

Theoclymenus, and Menelaus from death at his hands, but only if Theonoe herself accepts it (cf. 831-3).[197]

Consequently, the appearances of λόγος in the lines devoted to the Spartan couple's appeal to Theonoe further accentuates the manner in which Euripides' tragic Helen transitions from a multifaceted yet secondary character, conjured from a conglomeration of extant accounts, to a central and active shaper of her own narrative.[198] As we have seen, the primary impetus for this transition is the development of a plan to return home, and Theonoe is the character responsible for introducing this connotation to νόστος.

Once Theonoe enlarges the implicational scope of νόστος/νοστέω, and asserts a preference for its suggestion of a return (e.g., 877, 884, 1024-5), Helen takes the lead. She directs her husband to help her craft a cohesive narrative that will support their escape: "Menelaus, we are safe as far as the maiden [Theonoe]

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[197] The chorus tasks Theonoe, as the "judge of this appeal" (ἐν σοὶ βραβεύειν, ὦ νεᾶνι, τοὺς **λόγους**, 996), with offering a ruling that will "gratify everyone" (οὕτω δὲ κρῖσιν, ὡς ἅπασιν ἀνδάνηις, 997).

[198] In this regard, Euripides differentiates his version from yet another account of Helen's journey—Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen* (c. 427)—which would have been known to Athenian audience members for nearly two decades by the time Euripides' tragedy was staged. In Gorgias' trifle, the Leontine orator is clearly the speaker and crafter of a particular representation of Helen ("I myself wish, by imparting some type of design to my speech, to make an end of the blame attached to this vilified woman," ἐγὼ δὲ βούλομαι λογισμόν τινα τῶι λογῶι δοὺς τὴν μὲν κακῶς ἀκούουσαν παῦασι τῆς αἰτιας, Gorg. *Hel*. 2), and Helen is grammatically on par with the speech itself ("the woman whom the speech concerns," ἡ γυνὴ περὶ ἧς ὅδε ὁ λόγος, 3), rather than in control of the narrative. As such, Helen's autonomy in her namesake tragedy is worth noting, even if it is ultimately an illusion of Euripides' authorial omniscience.

goes. From here on out, it is necessary to join these arguments (τοὺς λόγους) into a single directive, and to join [ourselves] in a shared plan for [our] safety."[199]

Helen herself, furthermore, is responsible for the most crucial element of this story: the lie that Menelaus has perished and requires a burial at sea. She asks her husband: "Would you be willing, though very much alive, for the announcement of your death to be made?" (βούλῃ λέγεσθαι **μὴ θανὼν λόγωι θανεῖν**; 1050). Menelaus follows his wife nearly word-for-word: "I am prepared, while I am alive, to die for the story (ἕτοιμός εἰμι **μὴ θανὼν λόγωι θανεῖν**, 1052), but expresses some hesitation: "What guarantee of safety does your prescription have? Surely there's something inherently predictable in this tale" (σωτηρίας δὲ τοῦτ' ἔχει τί νῶιν ἄκος;/ παλαιότης γὰρ **τῶι λόγωι** γ' ἔνεστί τις, 1055-6). [200] Despite her husband's hesitation, Helen continues to lay out her plan step-by-step.

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[199] Eur. *Hel*. 1032-4: Μενέλαε, πρὸς μὲν παρθένου σεσώμεθα·/ τοὐνθένδε δ' εἰς ἓν τοὺς λόγους φέροντε χρὴ/ κοινὴν ξυνάπτειν μηχανὴν σωτηρίας. In this case, I have chosen to retain Jackson's emendation (1955, 154-5) instead of adopting Allan's solution (2008, 121 and 258 n. 1032-4): τοὐνθένδε δὴ σὲ τοῦς λόγους φέροντα χρὴ. There is no need for Helen to remind Menelaus to contribute to the λόγος itself, for he has already done so in the course of his appeal to Theonoe (e.g., 946, 976, 979, 994). It is Helen's insistence upon a need for a single, cohesive account that is important, a point highlighted by the chorus' subsequent remark at 1141-2 (see above, n. 196).

[200] Cf. *Hel*. 1547-91, wherein the messenger explains that he and his fellows put aside their suspicions about the size of Menelaus' burial contingent (ἡμῖν δ' ἦν μὲν ἥδ' ὑποψία/ **λόγος** τ' ἐν ἀλλήλοισι, τῶν ἐπεσβατῶν/ ὡς πλῆθος εἴη, 1549-51) in order to follow Theoclymenus' orders (διεσιωπῶμεν δ' ὅμως/ **τοὺς σοὺς λόγους** σώιζοντες, 1551-2), realizing too late that the report

The Spartan queen hands control of the operation to her spouse (σὲ χρὴ βραβεύειν πάντα, 1073) only after she has explained how they can secure a νόστος by sea. She directs Menelaus to sit quietly, furthermore, while she prepares herself for an appeal to Theoclymenus (1083-9), and it is she who both makes the announcement of Menelaus' (false) demise (1196) and sets the stage for her husband to speak again when soliciting the necessary provisions from the unsuspecting Egyptian ruler (e.g., 1199, 1249). As she develops her strategy, Helen proves herself a more effective general than her husband ever did during his time at Troy.

III. Helen acts: a (new) νόστος

Euripides makes his own, meta-textual departure from tradition an integral element of the tragedy's actual departure, which Helen and Menelaus contrive to pull off by means of their novel λόγος. As the audience member is hearing the innovative story that Helen and Menelaus craft with νόστος in mind, he or she is also watching Euripides simultaneously leave prior accounts behind.

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of Menelaus' death (ὅ τ' οὐκέτ' ὢν **λόγοισι** Μενέλεως πέλας, 1572) had been greatly exaggerated.

One of the most apparent points of departure is Euripides' consistent portrayal, in the second half of his tragedy, of the impious deeds that inform Helen's and Menelaus' escape. A second element, which weighs heavily upon these new narrative waters, is the striking violence with which *Helen* culminates. In each of these regards, Herodotus' account of the Spartans' exodus from Egypt provides a useful baseline against which to compare Euripides' own portrayal.

For his own part, Herodotus efficiently undermines the neat summation that Homer's Menelaus provides in his report to Telemachus. The king of the *Odyssey* notes that he made his departure only after appeasing the gods with appropriate offerings, and that his subsequent trip home was swift and without incident.[201] Herodotus' Menelaus, by contrast, does a vile and impious deed in order to secure his departure from Egypt with Helen in tow: "Menelaus behaved unjustly (Μενέλεως ἀνὴρ ἄδικος) towards the Egyptians… [and in order to prompt the winds needed for sailing] contrived an impious act (ἐπιτεχνᾶται πρῆγμα οὐκ ὅσιον), namely, he took two children from the native population and cut them into pieces."[202] Hated and pursued by the Egyptians, this Menelaus

[201] Hom. *Od*. 582-3: καὶ ἔρεξα τελήεσσας ἑκατόμβας… κατέπαυσα θεῶν χόλον αἰὲν ἐόντων; and 585-6: … δοσαν δέ μοι οὖρον/ ἀθάνατοι, τοί μ' ὦκα φίλην ἐς πατρίδ' ἔπεμψαν.
[202] Hdt. 2.119: ἐγένετο Μενέλεως ἀνὴρ ἄδικος ἐς Αἰγυπτίους... ἐπιτεχνᾶται πρῆγμα οὐκ ὅσιον· λαβὼν γὰρ δύο παιδία ἀνδρῶν ἐπιχωρίων ἔντομά σφεα ἐποίησε.

does not go straight home, but flees to Libya, before departing for additional destinations unknown to Herodotus' priestly sources (cf. 2.119).

III.a. An impious plan for a νόστος

Euripides sees the impiety of Herodotus' Menelaus and decides to raise the historian. In *Helen*, the king's list of demands from his Egyptian counterpart contains a number of ritual elements, which would have been readily recognizable to Athenian audience members, including: a sacrificial bull and panoply (reminiscent of the tribute required of Athens' allies at the Panathenaia and Dionysia);[203] an empty bier for the body (which recalls that carried, at the state festival for the burial of Athens' war dead, in commemoration of the soldiers lost abroad);[204] and the best of the land's βλαστήματα (a first fruits offering reminiscent of that presented at Eleusis) (Eur. *Hel.* 1256-65).[205] In short,

[203] For an example of the requirement that allies present a bull and panoply at Athens, see *IG* I^3 46 (c. 446/5 or 426/5), the foundation decree for the colony at Brea. See also Sourvinou-Inwood 2003, 72: "Because the city Dionysia and the Panathenaia were loci for articulating symbolically the polis as an open system, they became loci for the articulation of …the Athenian Empire: for this was one of the results achieved by the fact that the Allies' tribute was brought to Athens at the Dionysia and displayed in the theater, while at the Great Panathenaia the Athenian allies were required to bring a cow and panoply like colonists."

[204] For the significance of the empty funeral bier, which was carried in the "most solemn festival of the Athenian year, after 464," see Freeman 2014, 242.

[205] See *IG* I^3 78 (the First Fruits Decree, c. 425/4 or 422 or 416/5).

Menelaus coopts certain rituals, which were typically subject to collective, public sanction and performance, and puts them in service of a personally-designed, mix and match set of rites for his false funeral.[206]

Rather than cutting unnamed, barbarian children to pieces, Menelaus instead cuts apart rituals that were integral to the common experience of Euripides' audience members — Athenian and otherwise — and reassembles the pieces as he sees fit. Although his disregard for proper ritual practice is tame by comparison to that of Herodotus' murderous Menelaus, the actions of Euripides' Spartan king represent only the starting point of a crescendo of impiety and violence.

Helen herself does much to support this crescendo. Immediately after Menelaus has convinced Theoclymenus to proffer the requested supplies, and to allow Helen to oversee the burial process (1275-1300), the chorus enters and performs its second ode (1301-68). In the second antistrophe of this so called

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[206] Menelaus' choices represent some of the most emphatically-public rituals performed at Athens, the communal nature of which encouraged state oversight of the acts performed by individual agents. With respect to the Mysteries in particular, epigraphic evidence provides ample testimony of such oversight, and of the particular pains the Athenians took to maintain control of ritual propriety with respect to Eleusis. See: *IG* I^3 6 (regulation of the Eleusinian Mysteries, c. 460); *IG* I^3 32 (establishing the Eleusinian *epistateis*, c. 450 or 432/1); *IG* I^3 58 (prescriptions regarding Eleusis, c. 430). On the decrees, see Parker 1997, 143. On the Mysteries in general, see also Parker 2007, 327-69.

"Demeter Ode,"[207] the chorus describes how Helen has earned the "wrath of the great Mother" due to her "irreverence for the sacrifices of the goddess."[208] During the "night-long festivals of the goddess" (παννυχίδες θεᾶς, 1365), the chorus continues, "you boasted in your shapely form alone" (μορφαῖ μόνον ηὔχεις, 1368).

Given the nature of the chorus womens' complaints, is seems that the reason Helen's sacrifices are impious is not the nature of the offerings themselves, but the fact that she partakes of these collective offerings in the interest of securing purely personal gains. When she makes herself the focal point of the chorus' carefully combined, group-sanctioned ritual practices, Helen, like her husband, upsets the balance between public and private that collective (choral) oversight is meant to secure.[209]

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[207] The song was once "generally considered the most irrelevant ode in Greek tragedy" (Whitman 1974, 65), and was long dismissed as an example of an Aristotelian ἐμβόλιμον (cf. Decharme 1906, 314-15; Michie and Leach 1981, 12-13 and n. 1391). This position has for the most part been discounted, however, as it is based upon a misreading of Aristotle's *Poetics* 1456a 25-9, which Allan rightly shows (2008, 293). The most popular argument for linking the second stasimon to the rest of the tragedy is the claim that the action and themes of the Demeter myth, best known from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, provide the model for the overall structure of *Helen*. See, e.g., Burnett 1960, 151-63; Kannicht 1969, 2.334; Segal 1971, 553-614; Foley 1992, 133-60.

[208] Eur. *Hel*. 1353-7: In the chambers, you [Helen] made burnt offerings neither customary nor sanctified, and you acquired the wrath of the great Mother, child, in your irreverence for the sacrifices of the goddess," (ὧν οὐ θέμις <σ᾽> οὔθ᾽ ὁσία/ πύρωσας ἐν <γᾶς> θαλάμαις,/ **μῆνιν** δ᾽ ἔσχες μεγάλας/ ματρός, ὦ παῖ, θυσίας/ οὐ σεβίζουσα θεᾶς). On the types of sacrifices (θυσία) disallowed from the inner sanctuary at Eleusis, see Evans 2002, 227-54.

[209] McGlew's analysis (1999, 1-22) of the profaned rites which were *actually* taking place at Athens in the years prior to the production of the *Helen* in 412 (cf. Thuc. 6.28.1-2; Plut. *Alc*. 22.3), explores

The Demeter myth was likely quite flexible with respect to its capacity to absorb elements of non-Athenian rituals. In the second ode, for example, the chorus blends the rites of the Demeter myth with those typically performed in celebration of the "mountain Mother", to whom the ode is addressed (ὀρεία...Μάτηρ, Eur. *Hel*. 1301-02; μεγάλας Ματρός 1356-7). Initially, W. Burkert writes, the *Meter* cult was: "to a large extent for private individuals and [was] sustained and carried abroad by itinerant mendicant priests."[210]

Despite the plasticity of its mythical underpinnings, the celebration of Demeter's rites was subject, at Athens, to extensive public legislation and control.[211] We can detect the extent of the Athenians' discomfort with the myth's

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the delicate line between public and private worship. Of the accusations regarding the inappropriate practice of Demeter's rites behind closed doors (καὶ τὰ μυστήρια ἅμα ὡς ποιεῖται ἐν οἰκίαις ἐφ᾽ ὕβρει, Thuc. 6.28.1), McGlew concludes (1999, 9-10): "the Athenian *hetaireiai*, as the Athenians feared, seem to have exploited… the social ties that the mysteries provided… they implicitly challenged the city's control over the most elementary bonds between individuals, giving them instead to small groups of elites." See also: McGlew 2002, esp. 116ff; Draganic 2010, 43-54. Some scholars argue that the accused did not actually favor sedition, and that the practice of parodying or profaning religious rites during *symposia* was simply a fashionable pastime amongst Athens' youth, a rejection of traditional values and those (elders) who espoused them (e.g., Ellis 1989, 59; Rubel 2000, 210-15 and 228-9). However, Henderson (2003, 155-79, esp. 165) has shown that, regardless of their actual intentions, these groups of aristocratic youths *were* perceived as a threat to democratic stability prior to 415.

[210] Burkert 1985, 178.

[211] In addition to the epigraphic evidence (see above, nn. 205-06), one might also consider the role of the Athenian ἔφηβοι—young men undergoing their military training—who were tasked with accompanying and safeguarding the procession to Eleusis each year. The presence of the ἔφηβοι indicates the deep interrelation between personal, ritual practice and state function: as they accompanied the procession to Eleusis, these young men were simultaneously engaged in civic, military, and religious training. While the act of initiation into the Mysteries was an individual

private associations from the fact that, when the New Bouleuterion was constructed at Athens in the last quarter of the fifth century (around the time of Euripides' *Helen*), the Old Bouleuterion, which remained the home of the state archives, came to be closely associated with the Mother goddess, if not a Metroon in and of itself.[212] As E. D. Francis writes: "the Mother of the Gods was now assigned the task of guarding the documents of state by reference to which constitutional order was maintained and the intrusion of wilder influences kept at bay."[213] At Athens, that is, there was room for more than one Mother goddess, so long as the public controlled the identity of each matriarch.

It is precisely this type of collectively-sanctioned order that Helen ignores in favor of securing her own salvation. In their second ode, the women of the chorus adopt and adapt elements of the Demeter myth in order to serve their current narrative, which represents a pioneering, and thus potentially

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choice, it was emphatically overseen by those whose primary goal was to become effective agents of state. For further analysis, see: Pakkanen 1996, 33-9; Evans 2010, 121.

[212] See Aeschines 3.187. Scholars contend over the location of the cult statue of *Meter* in the Old Bouleuterion, and the date of its placement. See, e.g., Curtius 1868; Shear 1995, 157-90; Sickinger 1999, 93-113; Francis 2005, 112-20.

[213] Though Francis (2005, 118-19) argues that the Old Bouleuterion and the Metroon were two separate buildings, he maintains that the relationship between these was inextricable, since the temple of the Mother goddess was: "not only topographically adjacent to the Old Bouleuterion as part of the same building programme, but also functionally adjunct to it."

unapproved, blend of traditions associated with a variety of goddesses.[214] Because they do so as a collective, however, the chorus women mimic the process of ritual admixture that characterized Attic cult.[215] Helen's determination to stand out, rather than blend in, upsets the balance between tradition and innovation that the chorus women preserve. Through her dedication to her own self-promotion, furthermore, Helen fails in her role as χορηγός, as the exemplar who protects ritual practice and the collective mindset it supports.[216] She upsets

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[214] As any audience member familiar with the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (*HH* 1) would quickly notice, the events of the *Hymn* are taken out of order in the portions of the ode that precede the second antistrophe. For example, *HH* 1 places the goddess' laughter at Iambe (202-5) prior to the horrible famine (305-13), whereas the second stasimon makes the famine (Eur. *Hel.* 1327-37) the reason for Zeus' dispatch of the Charites, Muses, and Aphrodite to lighten the Mother's mood through music and laughter (1341-52). Allan (2008, 293) writes that Euripides is: "responding to contemporary religious ideas and practices" by incorporating the syncretism of Demeter's myth with the rites of Cybele and with Dionysus in his tragedy. In Burkert's view (1985, 178-9), this type of syncretism was not only normal, but necessary: "The Mother [Kybele] does not fit easily into the genealogical system of Greek mythology… The Greeks transferred the Demeter myth onto her… Since Pindar at least, the retinue of *Meter Kybele* is seen as one with the Dionysian throng." On the chief elements of Dionysian ritual and its representation by the dramatic poets (Euripides in particular), see Seaford 1981, 252-7.

[215] I have focused on Attic cult, given *Helen's* performance at Athens, but it is worth keeping in mind that Helen's Spartan nationality might also constitute a novel element of the worship that the chorus describes in the ode. On the chief elements of Demeter worship in Spartan cult in particular, see D'Alessio 2013, 113-32.

[216] For examples of Helen as a chorus leader, see Ar. *Lys*. 1314-15, where Helen is the ἁγνὰ χοραγὸς εὐπρεπής at Sparta (or ἐκπρεπής, cf. Alcman 1.46). On the tradition of Helen as a χορηγός, see Robinson 1979, 162-72. A number of recent studies compare Helen's allegorical role as a παρθένος, and her actual role as χορηγός, e.g., Allan 2008, 295-6, nn. 1355-7 and 317 n. 1; Swift 2009, 418-38; Murnaghan 2013, 155-7. For a darker reading of Helen's role, see: Juffras 1993, 45-57; Friedman 2007, 209-10; Sebo 2014, 144-68.

cult procedure in order to secure her own salvation, and leaves no realistic path to safety for the chorus women, who long to follow her to better circumstances.[217]

III.b. An impious and violent νόστος

The impiety that Helen commits in the second stasimon, and that which her husband commits in his exchange with Theoclymenus, taints the couple's subsequent escape and νόστος. A number of elements in the dénouement of Euripides' tragedy indicate how the Spartan royals' ritual selfishness casts a shadow over their journey.

The first of these is the foreboding nature of the harbor at Nauplia, to which Helen and Menelaus will sail.[218] At the outset of the third stasimon (1451-1511), the chorus calls upon the rowers of the escape vessel to: "escort Helen to the well-harbored shores of Perseus' home" (πέμποντες εὐλιμένους/ Περσείων οἴκων Ἑλέναν ἐπ'ἀκτὰς, 1463-4). Prior to the third stasimon, however, Nauplia

[217] The members of the chorus, in fact, are the only ones who do not manifestly benefit from their collective participation in Helen's plot: Menelaus escapes, as do his men, and even Theonoe is reconciled to Theoclymenus, despite her betrayal of his directive to alert him to Menelaus' presence. The fate of the chorus is one important difference between *Helen* and *IT*. In the latter play, the chorus women bemoan their abandonment (*IT* 1123-33), but Athena arranges for their departure from Tauris at play's end (1468-83).

[218] For a useful summary of references to Nauplius in other dramatic poetry (including Euripides' own *Troiades* of 415), see Allan 2008, 234.

has never served as an ideal site for a propitious homecoming; rather, Euripides' characters consistently associate the harbor with the destruction and loss resulting from Nauplius' revenge.[219] By giving his audience a set of expectations regarding Nauplius, Euripides tethers the protagonists' coming journey to a violent and painful past, which itself tempers the chorus' hopeful prognosis.[220]

Alongside the specter of Nauplius' revenge, the imagery of fire and light also connects the couple's future salvation to their prior indiscretions. In *Helen*, fire (πῦρ) is only twice associated with appropriate ceremonial practice (547, 936). Fire appears in both Menelaus' and the chorus' description of Nauplius' revenge (e.g., 767, 1122-31).[221] Earlier in the tragedy, Euripides recalls for his audience the conflagration at Troy (e.g., 107, 197), a murderous inferno which

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[219] When Menelaus lists the places that he has visited after leaving Troy, he includes Euboea, famed for: "Nauplius' false beacons" (τὰ Ναυπλίου τ' Εὐβοικὰ πυρπολήματα, 767). When the chorus women, in their first ode, lament those who lost their lives as a result of Nauplius' revenge, they not only mention Euboea again (1126-7), but also the: "outstretched Aegean promontories upon which [Nauplius] flashed his false flame" (Αἰγαίαις ἐνάλοις δόλιον/ ἄκταις ἀστέρα λάμψας, 1130-1).

[220] Early in the tragedy, Teucer also makes an oblique reference to the harbor, when he explains to Helen that Menelaus is missing, seen: "neither anywhere in Argos nor on the banks of the Eurotas" (οὔκουν ἐν Ἄργει <γ'> οὐδ'ἐπ'Εὐρώτα ῥοαῖς, 124). Subsequently, in the third stasimon, the chorus women imagine themselves as birds who would announce the couple's return to Sparta: "as you settle on the Eurotas" (Εὐρώταν ἐφεζόμεναι, 1492). This is, of course, a hope that will never be fulfilled (see above, n. 217).

[221] In the tragedy, the word for flame (φλόξ) also has both propitious (629, 869-72) and ominous (746, 1126, 1162) associations.

Menelaus himself claims credit for igniting (κλεινὸν τὸ Τροίας πῦρ ἐγώ θ' ὃς ἤψά νιν/ Μενέλαος, 503-4).

Euripides' messenger, furthermore, associates fire with the useless and misleading prophecies of those who examine burnt offerings or the cries of birds (e.g., 745-8, 755-7), and it is the burnt offerings Helen makes with which the chorus takes issue in the second stasimon (1353-4).[222] Finally, in the third stasimon, the as-yet unlit marriage torches of Hermione (οὔπω πεῦκαι πρὸ γάμων ἔλαμψαν, 1478) mark the point of Helen's and Menelaus' return by taking the place of the beacons which led so many Argives to their doom.[223] Thus, if there is a fire lighting the way home for Menelaus and Helen, it is one that, though associated with both pious and impious acts, is fueled by the latter more often than not.[224]

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[222] I agree with Allan's reasons for keeping lines 503-9 in the tragedy, as well as his defense of lines 744-57 (2008, 204 n. 503-09; 231-2 n. 744-57). As for the emendation of lines 1353-4, I agree that Hermann's πύρωσας is a reasonable emendation for manuscript L's unmetrical ἐπύρωσας.

[223] The pine used for Hermione's torches does appear in Theonoe's august ritual procession (870), but is also provides the material from which Paris fashions his ship and opens Troy up to death and destruction (229-35).

[224] Even the Dioscouri, who ultimately ensure that Helen and Menelaus escape, have a dubious association with fire and light. When the women of the chorus locate the twin gods: "in the sky under the whirlwind of bright lights" (λαμπρῶν ἀστέρων ὑπ' ἀέλ-/ λαις οἳ ναίετ' οὐράνιοι, 1498-9), they recycle a combination of their own words, which are found only here and in the first stasimon's description of Nauplius' deadly, burning beacons (1131).

The impious treachery by which Menelaus and Helen achieve their departure exemplifies the ineluctable connection between the couple's irreverent arrangements and the success of their νόστος. The messenger testifies to this when he describes how the sacrificial bull, which Menelaus requested from Theoclymenus, refused to board the ship: "Yet the bull was unwilling to put its foot straight (οὐκ…ὀρθὸς) upon the plank, and instead bellowed forth, turning its eyes round in circles (ὄμμ' ἀναστρέφων **κύκλωι**), bucking its back in the air and looking aside through its horns, preventing us from taking hold of him."[225] This image brings to mind the second stasimon, and the: "quake of the bull-roarer while it is wheeled in circles in the aether" (ῥόμβου θ᾽ εἱλισσομένα/ **κύκλιος** ἔνοσις αἰθερία, 1362-3). The curved path of this instrument, with its sound like a bellowing bull, is literalized as the crooked embarkment of an actual bull, whose eyes trace similar circles in the air.

The animal's patent unwillingness to partake of the ritual underscores the contrived and highly suspect nature thereof.[226] This is significant, given the

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[225] Eur. *Hel*. 1555-9: ταύρειος δὲ ποὺς/ οὐκ ἤθελ' ὀρθὸς σανίδα προσβῆναι κάτα,/ ἀλλ' ἐξεβρυχᾶτ' ὄμμ' ἀναστρέφων κύκλωι,/ κυρτῶν τε νῶτα κὰς κέρας παρεμβλέπων/ μὴ θιγγάνειν ἀπεῖργεν.

[226] Euripides highlights the extent of the bull's resistance when he has the messenger describe the tame compliance of the accompanying horse (cf. *Hel.* 1567-8). Unlike the bull, the horse is associated neither with Hera, Aphrodite, nor Demeter/Meter, but with Athena (especially Athena *Hippia*, on which see Burkert 1985, 140). The latter goddess appears in *Helen* in mentions of the Spartan cult of Athena *Chalkioikos*, the ritual practices of which have continued undisturbed

goddesses with whom such an animal had associations: Demeter/the Mountain Mother, the subject of the second stasimon with its impious rites; Hera and Aphrodite, the guarantor and gatekeeper, respectively, of the tragedy's νόστος, both of whom require appropriate propitiations if this journey is to be a success.[227]

Euripides' description of the bull's sacrifice, furthermore, supports the audience members' perception that Helen's and Menelaus' actions are equally-destructive iterations of Nauplius' own. Though Menelaus does manage to sacrifice the bull, an act that the messenger calls a propitious omen for sailing (οὔριαι ξένωι, 1588), this auspice is itself tainted by the mention of the heretofore unwelcoming port — Nauplia — to which the winds will send the Spartan's ship (ἐπ'ἀκτὰς Ναυπλίας, 1586).

It is immediately after the sacrifice, furthermore, that one of Theoclymenus' men realizes: "This voyage is a deception" (καί τις τόδε εἶπε

during the royal couple's absence (Eur. *Hel.* 226-8, 1465-7 with Allan 2008, 177 and 322-3 nn. *ad loc*).

[227] Hera has the strongest association with the bull (as evidenced by cult epithets such as *ataurote, azuges, boopis,* and *zugia,* cf. Suda s.v. *Ataurote*), but Minoan and Mycenaean iconography attests to the joint association of Hera, Aphrodite, and the Mother with bull's heads and the "horns of consecration" (Benigni 2013, 23-49). These Bronze and Iron Age associations carry through to Roman Republican and Imperial authors, in whose astrological works Venus rules the constellation Taurus. See: Germanicus, *fragmenta Aratea*, fr. 4, v. 52 ff; Maurus Servius Honoratus, *In Vergilii Aeneidos Libros (Servii Grammatici Qui Feruntur in Vergilii Carmina Commentarii)*, 8.590.4.

Δόλιος ἡ ναυκληρία, 1589). His word recalls not only Menelaus' deceitful display of pity in his role as overseer of the false funeral (προσεῖπε **δόλιον** οἶκτον, 1542), but also aligns the couple and their νόστος with several other instances of trickery, including: the deceptive, and destructive, proclivities of their main, divine opponent (ἅ τε **δόλιος** ἁ **πολυκτόνος Κύπρις**, 238; **δόλιά**… ἀσκοῦσα, 1103-4); Persephone's kidnapping in the impiety-tinged second stasimon (θυγατρὸς ἁρπαγὰς **δολίους**, 1322); and Nauplius' murderous revenge (cf. 1128-30: **δόλιον**/ ἀκταῖς ἀστέρα λάμψας).[228] Just as the Kypris and Nauplius' plots claimed many lives, so too does the protagonists' escape. As the messenger notes, it is gore, not water, which wets their departing ship (φόνωι δὲ ναῦς ἐρρεῖτο, 1602).

The self-serving impiety of Menelaus' funereal rites, and of Helen's inappropriate ritual practices, spread far beyond the points at which Euripides introduces each, and thoroughly infect the novel escape sequence that the playwright devises. Through subtle verbal repetition and substantive associations, Euripides creates echoes of past devastation and degeneracy —

[228] On this line and others that exculpate the messenger from responsibility for the escape, see de Jong 1991, 55-6. As far as trickery and its unfortunate associations go, Helen herself also decries the treachery by which Zeus, as a swan, reportedly raped and impregnated Leda (Ζεὺς…κύκνου μορφώματ' ὄρνιθος λαβών,/ ὃς **δόλιον** εὐνὴν ἐξέπραξ'…, 18-20).

Menelaus' hand in Troy's fiery destruction, Nauplius' deceitful revenge, Helen's offense against the grieving Mother goddess — that reverberate even in the chorus' positive forecast for the protagonists' νόστος.

Euripides even marks Castor's final speech with the verbal residue of Helen's and Menelaus' selfish, impious, and violent actions. For example, when the twin god declares that Helen must remain yoked in marriage to her initial husband (ἐν τοῖσι δ' αὐτοῖς δεῖ νιν **ἐζεῦχθαι** γάμοις, 1654), his term recalls Helen's lament to the chorus, earlier in the tragedy, that she is yoked to the wretched lot of her portentous and unnatural birth (τίνι πότμωι **συνεζύγην**, 255). In an equal state of despair, furthermore, the Mother goddess of the second stasimon yokes her chariot **ζυγίους**/ **ζεύξασα**) and sets off in search of her daughter: "snatched away from the circling chorus of virgins."[229] By connecting the term to characters in a state of despair and distress, Euripides conditions the audience member to prefer a certain implication.[230] Castor's prediction

[229] Eur. *Hel*. 1310-14: θηρῶν ὅτε ζυγίους/ ζεύξασα θεὰ σατίνας/ τὰν ἁρπασθεῖσαν κυκλίων/ χορῶν ἔξω παρθενίων/κούραν.

[230] There is only one additional reference to yoking which does not fit this pattern. In a carefully detailed description of the actions Theoclymenus' men took to prepare the ship for the funeral service, the messenger uses ζεύγλαισι to refer to the cross-bars on which the ship's rudders are lowered into the sea (1536). These preparations do, however, lead to the bloody escape that follows.

undermines this connotation, perhaps, yet the alternative view he introduces serves only to complicate, rather than erase, the term's previous implications.

Such is also the case when Castor reveals that the: "island that extends alongside Akte as its guard" (**φρουρὸν** παρ' **Ἀκτὴν** τεταμένην νῆσον λέγω, 1673), was the first place to which Hermes brought the real Helen, having stolen her from Paris (**κλέψας**, 1672; **κλοπαίαν**, 1675; cf. 1670-75).[231] The mention of any sort of promontory brings to mind the various recollections of the blood-stained harbor at Nauplia (e.g., ἀκταῖς, 1131; ἀκτάς, 1464; ἀκτὰς Ναυπλίας, 1586), and Helen herself associates the term with the men who died on her account: "on the banks of the Scamander" (ἐπὶ Σκαμανδρίοις/ **ἀκταῖσιν**, 609).

Menelaus, furthermore, foreshadows the substance of Castor's sentiment when he instructs his servant to inform the men that they ought to: "remain at the seaside (ἐπ' **ἀκταῖς**) … and if I should manage, in some way, to steal (**ἐκκλέψαι**) this woman from this land, to watch for a way (**φρουρεῖν**) that… we might have safe passage away from these barbarians."[232] These same soldiers, the messenger later recalls, were a sorry sight as they approached the false funeral

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[231] Allan (2008, 343-4 n. 1670-5) praises Euripides' inventive aetiology, which connects the naming of the isle of Helen (now Makronissos) to the tragic narrative. See also Dale (1967, 168 n. 1673), who provides a more succinct note and is also far less impressed.

[232] Eur. *Hel*. 739-43: μένειν τ' ἐπ' ἀκταῖς… εἰ τήνδε πως δυναίμεθ' ἐκκλέψαι χθονός,/ φρουρεῖν <θ'> ὅπως ἂν… ἐκ βαρβάρων σωθῶμεν.

service upon the seashore (προσῆλθον **ἀκτὰς**… αὐχμηροὶ δ' ὁρᾶν, 1539-40). Few of Menelaus' men, and even fewer of Theoclymenus', manage to depart these headlands with their lives (1589-1618).

It is with the violence of this confrontation in mind that we might reconsider the traditional understanding of Castor's ultimate remark: τοὺς εὐγενεῖς γὰρ οὐ στυγοῦσι δαίμονες,/ τῶν δ' ἀναριθμήτων μᾶλλον †εἰσιν οἱ πόνοι† (1678-9). Modern readers have often translated τῶν δ' ἀναριθμήτων separately from οἱ πόνοι as: "the uncounted [masses],"[233] thereby taking Castor's

[233] However, if we consider other extant examples of ἀναρίθμητος, -ον in authors prior to, and roughly contemporary with, Euripides, one thing is clear: the adjective is <u>never</u> found without a noun to which it explicitly refers, regardless of whether the adjective is found in the same case as the noun it modifies, or in a separate case (as in Thrasymachus fr. 4.4 D-K: "a countless number of Persians," Περσῶν ἀναριθμήτους). In poetic works, Pindar describes: "countless errors" (ἀμπλακίαι/ ἀναρίθμητοι, *Ol.* 7.24-5) and Sophocles defines: "a long, even unfathomable period" (ὁ μακρὸς κἀναρίθμητος χρόνος, *Aj.* 646). As for prose works, in Herodotus, we find: "innumerable labors" (πόνοι…ἀναρίθμητοι, 1.126.5); "incalculable thousands of talents" (ταλάντων χιλιάδες ἀναρίθμητοι, 2.134.2); "a countless multitude of Persians" (πλήθεϊ ἀναριθμήτους τῶν Περσέων, 7.211.3); and "countless souls" (ψυχῇσί… ἀναριθμήτοισι. 9.79.2). Examples from Plato include: "countless myriads of women" (μυριάδες ἀναρίθμητοι γυναικῶν, *Laws* 7.804e); "countless thousands of ancestors" (προγόνων μυριάδες...ἀναρίθμητοι, *Theaet*. 175a); "and [Palamedes] counted out the number of ships and all other items, as they were uncounted prior to this" (καὶ ἐξαριθμῆσαι ναῦς τε καὶ τἆλλα πάντα, ὡς πρὸ τοῦ ἀναριθμήτων ὄντων, *Rep*. 7.522d). Xenophon writes of: "an infinite number of men" (ἀνθρώπων…ἀναριθμήτων, *Ways* 4.25); "innumerable slingers" (σφενδονήτας δὲ ἀναριθμήτους, *Cyrop*. 7.4.16); and Xerxes' "countless armed forces" (τὴν ἀναρίθμητον στρατιὰν, *Anab*. 3.2.13). In Isocrates, we find: "countless years" (χρόνοις τοῖς ἀναριθμήτοις, 12.98); "innumerable peltasts" (8.118); "an innumerable armed force" (στρατιᾶς ἀναριθμήτου, 4.93); "the discourses spoken and the laws set down [are] innumerable" (καὶ τοὺς λόγους τοὺς εἰρημένους καὶ τοὺς νόμους τοὺς κειμένους ἀναριθμήτους εἶναι, 15.82); "other innumerable deeds" (περὶ ἄλλων πραγμάτων ἀναριθμήτων, 15.171); and "innumerable evils" (κακῶν ἀναριθμήτων, 9.8).

statement to imply that excessive suffering is disproportionately the lot of the well-born, irrespective of divine ill-will. To hear this sentiment behind Castor's words is to assign a particular type of situational ineptitude to the *deus ex machina*. Given that both Helen and Menelaus receive conciliatory cult status at play's end, in spite of their equal disrespect for ceremonial proscriptions, and keeping in mind the blood — both Spartan and barbarian — that they have spilled in the process, it is rather difficult to accept the appropriateness of a remark that insists, nonetheless, upon identifying the royal couple as the true victims.

I would suggest the following alternative, which treats μᾶλλον (δε) as a correction of the preceding negative (οὐ στυγοῦσι), and τῶν ἀναριθμήτων as a genitive of quality, not comparison: "The gods, you see, do not hate the well born; rather, [their] labors are of a type that defies accountability."[234] The

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[234] For genitive of quality, see Smyth 1320-1. In this passage of *Helen*, we should question whether or not to take ἀναρίθμητος, -ον to mean "of no account." In all other extant instances, in which this is the implicit or explicit connotation of the adjective, the descriptor always has a particular noun which it modifies. For an explicit example, consider Eur. *Ion* 836-8, when the old man warns: "And last of all you shall be persuaded of this evil: to invite a motherless no-account, born of some slave woman, into your house as master" (καὶ τῶνδ᾽ ἁπάντων ἔσχατον πείσῃ κακόν:/ ἀμήτορ᾽, ἀναρίθμητον, ἐκ δούλης τινὸς/ γυναικός, ἐς σὸν δῶμα δεσπότην ἄγειν). An implicit example is Ar. *Wasps* 1010-11, when the chorus leader addresses the "countless myriads" (ὦ μυριάδες/ ἀναρίθμητοι), and asks them to take care that his advice is not lost on them, as it might be on "stupid spectators" (σκαιῶν θεατῶν, 1015). See also Strattis fr. 31.1-2 = Kock 0.1-2 = Meineke 1.1-2 =Harpocration p. 290.5, when the speaker explains that: "it takes countless men to haul this peplos with ropes" (τὸν πέπλον δὲ τοῦτον/ ἕλκουσ᾽ ὀνεύοντες τοπείοις ἄνδρες ἀναρίθμητο, fr. 31.1-2 = Kock 30.1-2 = Meineke 1.1-2 =Harpocration p. 290.5). Given these

innovative and shocking trials that Euripides' characters have just faced, that is, cannot be simply be explained away as the result of divine malice. This explanation corresponds to traditional λόγοι, which the audience has heard many times already (i.e., the rivalry of Hera and Aphrodite, the tale of the εἴδωλον), but these are accounts which Euripides' characters question (18-21, 136-42 with 284-5, 306-09) and which his chorus finds no reason to trust (1137-1160). Instead, it is the unfathomable tradition, the repository of the incalculable and irreconcilable variety of labors that these characters have endured, that provides the basis for their continual suffering.

In his *Helen*, Euripides identifies the "traditional" contradictions his characters face, and dramatizes his departure from these contradictions as the actual departure that his characters make, through a plot that actually depends upon the invention of a new λόγος. Though the protagonists' νόστος may return them to a familiar port, Castor's final statement (and that of the chorus, if it is genuine),[235] underscores the innovative means by which Euripides delivers

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examples (including above, n. 233), it seems most likely that Euripides' τῶν δ' ἀναριθμήτων in *Hel*. 1679 refers not to an abstract, unnamed group of lowly men, but to the subject of the phrase, namely, οἱ πόνοι.

[235] Eur. *Hel*. 1688-92: "There are many forms of the divine, and the gods bring much to pass against expectation; and these matters did not reach the expected resolution, but the god found an opening for surprises. This is the way it turned out, in this case" (πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,/ πολλὰ δ᾽ ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί:/ καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ᾽ οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,/ τῶν δ᾽ ἀδοκήτων πόρον ηὗρε θεός./ τοιόνδ᾽ ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα). Because these lines also appear at

Helen and Menelaus back home. Throughout his tragedy, Euripides invites the members of the audience to adapt the flexibility reflected in the work's verbal underpinnings, and to appreciate the freedom that they each have to decide whether or not to accept his, or any other account, as the final word on the matter.

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the end of Eur. *Alc., Andr., Ba.* (and *Med.*, with a slight variation), scholars have dismissed them as gnomic statements appended at the discretion of later actors (Allan 2008, 346 n. 1688-92). For a defense of the lines' authenticity, see Sourvinou-Inwood 2003, 410 ff.

Table I[236]

Tragedy	*Date*	*νόστος*	*ἄνοστος*	*δύσνοστος*	*νόστιμος*	*ἀνόστιμος*	*νοστέω*	*ἀπονοστέω*	*Total*
Alcestis	438	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
Medea	431	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Heraclidae	c. 430	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Hippolytus	428	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Andromache	c. 425	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Hecuba	c. 424	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Supplices	c. 423	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Electra	c. 420	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Heracles Furens	c. 416	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Troiades	415	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	4
Ion	c. 414-11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
IT	c. 414-12	9	1	-	-	-	1	1	12
Helen	412	2	-	-	-	-	4	-	6
Phoenissae	c. 409	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Orestes	408	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Bacchae	406	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Iphigenia at Aulis (IA)	406	4 (7)[237]	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 (7)

[236] The figures in this table represent the results of a *TLG* search of the Euripidean corpus for all inflected forms of each term: 1) nouns: νόστος, ἀπονόστησις; 2) adjectives: ἀνόστιμος, ἄνοστος, δύσνοστος, ἐπίνοστος, εὔνοστος, νόστιμος, παλινόστιμος, παλίννοστος, πολύνοστος; 3) verbs: ἀνανοστέω, ἀπονοστέω, διά-νοστέω, ἐκ-νοστέω, ἐπί-ἀνανοστέω, ἐπί-νοστέω, κατανοστέω, νοστέω, παλινοστέω, σύν-ἀπονοστέω. I have not listed Euripides' fragmentary works, as νόστος (or a cognate) appears in only a single fragmentary tragedy (*Hypsipyle*, P. Oxy. col. 16, fr. 60.ii), nor have I included *Rhesus,* as it is likely spurious. Per play, these terms appear at: *Alc*. 1023, 1153; *Heracl*. 310, 587, 645, 1042; *Andr*. 971; *Hec*. 541, 939; *Supp*. 641, 1209; *HF* 431; *Tro*. 66, 75, 167; *IT* 117, 527, 534, 535, 662, 731, 751, 1003, 1016, 1019, 1066, 1112; *Hel*. 428, 474, 877, 884, 891, 1025; *Phoen*. 949; *Ba*. 1337; *IA* 298, 882, [966], 1179, 1187, 1261, [1603].

[237] Three appearances are uncertain: lines 966 and 1603 are likely spurious; line 1179 is Kovacs' (2002) restoration of a lacuna.

IV. Excursus: Euripides' Helen, Andromeda, *and the trilogy of 412*

Kypris has an integral role in the λόγος of Euripides' *Helen*. Arguably, the goddess' son and counterpart (whether as himself or an abstraction) is equally integral to the action of *Andromeda*.[238] In both tragedies, Euripides conspicuously lays the influences and consequences of erotic desire along the fault line of the tragic divide between human and divine. Given the unique significance of these divine, erotic forces in both the known plays of 412, it is reasonable to consider that this thematic element was integral to the trilogy of that year, the third tragedy of which is unknown.

Of course, neither *Helen* nor *Andromeda* is unique for its presentation of how divine forces direct, or interfere with, human aspirations.[239] Such is also clearly the case in Euripides' *IT*, likely produced in the year(s) just before 412.[240] While it is not surprising to find that erotic desire, and the goddess who sets it upon mortals, features more heavily in *Helen* than in *IT*, it is worth noting that

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[238] In *Helen*, the abstract force (ἔρως) appears twice: Helen corrects the notion that she was transported to Troy with the desire for an unjust marriage (ἔρω-/ τος ἀδίκων γάμων, 667-8); Helen decries Aphrodite's dedication to: "working out passionate affairs, beguilements, deceitful devices, and love charms causing blood feuds between houses" (ἔρωτας ἀπάτας δόλια τ' ἐξευρήματα/ ἀσκοῦσα φίλτρα θ' αἱματηρὰ δωμάτων, 1103-04).

[239] On which see Hartigan 1986, 119-25 and 1990 *passim*.

[240] Metrical considerations usually place *IT* ahead of *Helen* by one or two years (i.e., 414-13). See: Devine and Stephens 1981, 43-64; Cropp and Fick 1985, 20-3. As all of the aforementioned note, metrical criteria are not ultimately decisive, with regard to reconstructing Euripides' trilogies, for the resolution rates in his tragedies do not increase in a linear fashion.

Euripides has altogether eliminated these forces from the latter tragedy.[241] This absence is significant, in light of the temptation to group *IT* together with the tragedies known to belong to 412.[242] It is likely that ἔρως/Ἔρως is integral to the plot of *Andromeda* in a way that fits so closely with Kypris' role in *Helen* as to make the utter lack of this erotic theme in *IT* a puzzling and disruptive dissimilarity.

IV.a. The importance of eros *in* Helen *and* Andromeda

Kypris' role in *Helen* goes far beyond her initial culpability in the divine feud that sets the εἴδωλον storyline in motion. The goddess fosters division between humans as well, whether with respect to the war for Menelaus' stolen wife (*Hel.* 233-40, 1113-21), or with respect to Theonoe's decision to flout her brother's (and Kypris' own) wishes to reveal Menelaus' identity to the Egyptian tyrant (887-91).

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[241] Iphigenia has nothing to say about Aphrodite's role in Helen's marriage to Paris (*IT* 10-14), nor does the goddess receive any sort of incidental mention, which—as the unobtrusive and ultimately incidental mentions of Athena in *Helen* show—Euripides was perfectly capable of including (e.g., *Hel.* 226-8, 1465-7). Two uses of ἔρως/ ἐράω (*IT* 530, 1172) have no obvious erotic connotation (see below, n. 244).

[242] Wright 2005 argues for this grouping.

Euripides further highlights the goddess' presence by giving her a unique place in the λόγος that underlies the protagonists' νόστος. It is Kypris (rather than the Homeric divine pantheon) who stands between Helen, Menelaus, and a safe return to Sparta. It is Kypris whom the couple, Theonoe notes, must appease if they wish to return home. It is Kypris who changes the terms of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* when she, on Zeus' orders, takes the lead in propitiating Demeter in the second stasimon. Thus, it is also necessarily Kypris whose efforts Helen directly undermines when she fails to participate in the rites in an appropriate manner.

Though Helen formulates the λόγος for her νόστος with an awareness of Kypris' influence, there is little to suggest that this λόγος successfully appeases the goddess of desire. Rather, Menelaus' ill-omened bull sacrifice merely highlights the gory impiety that the couple's escape plan engenders. Helen and Menelaus do manage to leave Theoclymenus' kingdom behind, but not before they have polluted its waters and stained its shores with the blood of both Spartan and Egyptian men.

Extant fragments of *Andromeda* suggest that Euripides singles out Eros in this tragedy, as he does Kypris in *Helen*, as a focal deity whose depiction

innovates upon traditional portrayals.[243] For example, using an: "expression [that] is almost unique in classical Greek,"[244] the speaker of *Androm.* fr. 138 states: "For any mortals who fall passionately in love (εἰς ἔρωτα πίπτουσιν), whenever they happen upon an object worth yearning for, are left wanting for no sort of pleasure in this case."[245] In one of the more substantial fragments, furthermore, Perseus addresses Eros as: "tyrant of gods and men" (σὺ δ' ὦ θεῶν τύραννε κἀνθρώπων Ἔρως, f. 136.1), a sentiment which, as F. Bubel notes, Euripides appears to be responsible for introducing to tragedy.[246]

In the extant Euripidean corpus, furthermore, Kypris (Aphrodite) stands alongside Eros as the only other divinity to whom even Zeus is subject (cf. *Tro*.

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[243] The fragment numbers cited for *Andromeda* correspond to those found in Collard et al. 2004, 133-68.

[244] Gibert (in Collard et al. 2004, 164) on εἰς ἔρωτα πίπτουσιν βροτῶν. In the same note, Gibert marks a parallel between this line and *IT* 1172: {Θο.} τίν'; εἰς ἔρον γὰρ τοῦ μαθεῖν πεπτώκαμεν. Thoas' "desire" to learn more about Iphigenia's plan compliments Orestes' statement that he will fulfill Iphigenia's desire to glean information from him, regarding the aftermath of the Trojan War ({Ορ.} ἔλεγχ', ἐπειδὴ τοῦδ' ἐρᾶις· λέξω δ' ἐγώ, 530). However, as Orestes aims his choice words at one whom the audience knows to be his sister, the chance of an erotic connotation is troubling. The unlikelihood of an erotic undertone also undermines the slim chance of any erotic connotation behind Thoas' similar request for knowledge from a priestess who serves the goddess of chastity (1172).

[245] *Androm*. fr. 138: ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς ἔρωτα πίπτουσιν βροτῶν,/ ἐσθλῶν ὅταν τύχωσι τῶν ἐρωμένων,/ οὐκ ἔσθ' ὁποίας λείπεται τόδ' ἡδονῆς. Gibert (in Collard et al. 2004, 164) does not cite the following, albeit non-poetic, parallel for Euripides' expression, namely, Thucydides 6.24 (καὶ ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι). The citation is also missing from Bubel 1991, 138-9.

[246] Bubel 1991, 135-7. The poetic characterization later makes its way into prose, notably Plato's *Republic*, in which Eros is the "tyrant who dwells within" (Ἔρως τύραννος ἔνδον οἰκῶν, 573d).

946-50).[247] A. M. Dale cites Perseus' words in *Androm.* fr. 136 as an example of a "challenging-nouthetetic" address, a typical element of a number of Euripides' later tragedies and: "a high point in the development of the central theme."[248] Yet of the additional examples Dale selects (including *IT* 1082-8, 1230-3; *Hel*. 1093-1106, 1441-50), only those directed at Aphrodite (*Hel*. 1093-1106) and Eros (in *Androm.*) are unique for evoking the superlative nature of each god's respective power. Considering these parallel, innovatively-termed leading roles, and given the knowledge the *Helen* and *Andromeda* were performed together, we may suppose that the playwright's particular insistence upon erotic passion, and his novel portrayal of its divine patrons, was a source of thematic cohesion for the trilogy of 412.

A λόγος centered upon the potentially destructive power of ἔρως also appears to ignite the major conflict between the protagonists and their opponents in *Andromeda*. Whatever pleasure Perseus and Andromeda derive from their love (fr. 138), the passion that fuels their attraction also constitutes a dreadful force:

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[247] A comparison with Aeschylus elucidates the unique power of Kypris' position in Euripidean tragedy. In *Suppliants* 1034-5, Aeschylus' chorus sings that Kypris and Hera must share a position of power approximate to that of Zeus: "But our cheerful song is not heedless of Kypris, for she, with Hera, holds power nearest that of Zeus" (Κύπριδος δ᾽ οὐκ ἀμελεῖ θεσμὸς ὅδ᾽ εὔφρων δύναται γὰρ Διὸς ἄγχιστα σὺν Ἥραι). Thus, Aeschylus' Zeus answers to neither goddess (as he does Kypris in Euripides), nor does Aeschylus' Kypris have autonomous power to overrule Zeus' authority (as she does in Euripides).

[248] Dale 1969, 181-4, esp. 182.

"The desire we have is fearfully powerful, and from these words, grasp the chief points: that desire is untrustworthy, and is wont to inhabit the most degraded region of the heart" (**ἔρωτα** δεινὸν ἔχομεν· ἐκ δ' ἐμῶν **λόγων**/ ἑλοῦ τὰ βέλτισθ'· ὡς ἄπιστόν ἐστ' **ἔρως**/ κἀν τῶι κακίστωι τῶν φρενῶν οἰκεῖν φιλεῖ, fr. 138a, 1054 N).[249] In this fragment, λόγος is the tool with which the (unknown) speaker encourages the listener to address the force of *eros*. Yet if Perseus and Andromeda end up together at tragedy's end — and I do not know of any argument suggesting that they do not — such a conclusion necessarily means that they have each failed to use λόγος as a means of mitigating the erotic influence on which their mutual attraction depends (as fr. 138 suggests).

When the protagonists of *Andromeda* fail to master or appease *eros* (just as Helen and Menelaus fail to appease Kypris), Perseus and Andromeda almost certainly cause a distinct degree of turmoil for those whom they leave behind (just as Helen and Menelaus demonstrably do). Although the extant fragments do not allow for a precise reconstruction of the opposition that Perseus and Andromeda faced, nor the degree of violence or trickery to which either had to

[249] The beginning of the fragment is incomplete. Meineke (*Arch.* fr. 250 n.) suggests that the preceding line ended with δεσπότην, in which case the sentiment would be: "In Love, we have a fearfully powerful master."

resort in order to escape and be together, a violent confrontation between the lovers and their opponents is certainly not out of the question.[250]

This argument — that the protagonists of *Andromeda* likely wrestled with the same type of erotically-driven excess and violence which besets Helen's νόστος — runs counter to the prevailing scholarly estimation of the relationship between these tragedies and their respective heroines. C. Moulton, for example, writes that Aristophanes chooses *Helen* and *Andromeda* as subjects for parody in his *Thesmophoriazusae* (of 411) because of the juxtaposition Euripides achieves through the: "radical technique of the *Helen*, set beside the more conventional treatment of subject and situation in the *Andromeda*." The side-by-side presentation of two "such opposite heroines," Moulton continues, allows the comic playwright to explore the unstable separation of male and female roles.[251]

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[250] There is no certain reconstruction of the nature of the conflict that prevents Perseus and Andromeda from marrying as soon as the former rescues the latter. It may be that Cepheus and/or Cassiopeia (Andromeda's parents) were the primary opponents to the marriage; Phineus, Andromeda's previous fiancée, may instead have been the main impediment to the new couple's relationship, or may even have joined with Andromeda's parents to prevent the union. The burlesque violence that mars the marriage banquet in Ovid's version of the story (cf. *Met.* 4.668-5.238) need not have been modeled primarily on Euripides' account. However, given the content of *Helen*, a long and violent contest at the end of *Andromeda* is not out of the question. For a full consideration of the sources and options, see: Bubel 1991, 17-23; Gibert (in Collard et. al.) 2004, 134-7.

[251] Moulton 1981, 108-43, esp. 138-9.

The key to Moulton's claims is the conceit that Euripides presented Andromeda as a more conventional, passive tragic heroine than he did her plot-making Spartan counterpart. More recently, M. Wright has made much the same argument, writing that Andromeda served as Euripides' model for a damsel in distress, in whose image the playwright could cast two separate, but comparable versions of the same female protagonist (i.e., Helen and Iphigenia). In the *Helen-IT-Andromeda* trilogy that Wright proposes for 412, it is Andromeda who: "embodies the themes of captivity, oppression, danger from the sea, rescue, and escape which are so central to these plays."[252]

There are, clearly and admittedly, a number of elements that unite *IT* and *Helen*.[253] However, as the evidence of Euripides' fragmentary tragedies shows, the playwright consistently recalled and reshaped shared "mythical cores" and

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[252] Wright 2005, 126. On the other hand, see Harder 1993, 397-404. Harder argues that Helen and Iphigenia represent two very different character types. Whereas Helen is the emblematic guilty woman ("Helena wird durch ihre Rolle als Schuldige ungemein wichtig," 400), Iphigenia is an ideal victim who aids her father in bridging the gap between his private concerns and public obligations, and who appeases the crowd with her willing sacrifice (403-4). See also Zeitlin 1981, 301-27, esp. 319-27.

[253] One such element, which is particularly germane to my argument, is that the delineation of a particular λόγος in *IT* often signals, as it does in *Helen*, the character's departure from previous traditions, and Euripides' subsequent introduction of an alternative. Both protagonists of *IT*, for example, use the term when explaining their presence in a novel, Taurian setting: Orestes travels to Tauris at Apollo's behest (πεισθεὶς σοῖς λόγοισιν, 93-4); when recounting the contents of her letter, Iphigenia describes the details (λόγωι φρασω, 761) of her post-substitution journey to Tauris (cf. 759-87).

predictable plot "outlines" throughout his career.[254] Thus, grouping Euripides' (extant) "escape tragedies" together on the basis of common themes and plot points is no more necessary than grouping his "suppliant tragedies" (*Heraclidae, Supplices*) into a trilogy for the same reason.

Furthermore, there is an argument to be made that the similarities between *Helen* and *IT* do not sufficiently outweigh the key, thematic differences that separate them. Indeed, alongside the parallels that Wright explores, we ought to note such important differences as: the divergent priorities according to which Helen and Iphigenia each formulates her respective λόγος for an escape,[255] the violent and (for some) deadly escape sequence in *Helen*, versus the comparatively tame sequence in *IT*, [256] and the extent to which each heroine's respective plot involves acts of religious impiety.[257]

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[254] See Cropp's commentary on *Melanippe Wise* and *Melanippe Captive* in Collard et al. 1995, 245-6.
[255] Iphigenia's primary concern, when preparing to justify her request to take Orestes, Pylades, and Athena's statue to the seaside, is to use her words to mitigate the threat of death (Eur. *IT* 998, 1073-4). By comparison, Helen secures her salvation not through an aversion to bloodshed, but by her encouragement of slaughter on a massive scale (*Hel.* 1602-3; *cf. IT* 1017-19, 1021).
[256] See: Luschnig 1972, 158-63; Belfiore 2000, 21-38. In Belfiore's estimation, the central concern of *IT* is the denial of a need for bloodshed.
[257] On the manner in which the cults established at the end of *IT* are constructive (of Athenian communal identity), see Goff 1999, 109-28. Although Iphigenia herself invents the excuse that Artemis' statue has been defiled and requires cleansing, she does not propose to disregard extant ritual proscriptions in order to carry out the expiation. Rather, the heroine of *IT* confirms to Thoas that: "There is an obligation to show reverence for a fundamental law" (τὸν νόμον ἀνάγκη τὸν προκείμενον σέβειν, 1189). Even Orestes, who at one point entertains the irreverent possibility of murdering Iphigenia's hosts, ultimately abandons the ceremonial façade that his sister has devised as he and his companions attempt their escape. When one of Thoas' men questions

One additional thematic element, which Wright expressly ignores in order to draw his conclusions, is the forceful and significant presence of divinely-directed, human-felt erotic impulse, so visible in *Helen*, likely key to *Andromeda*, and (thus) conspicuously absent from *IT.* This is problematic, not least of all because Wright's argument for placing *IT* together with *Helen* and *Andromeda* in 412 depends, chiefly, upon the likelihood that Euripides sought to compose a cohesive trilogy by creating insistent thematic and structural parallels between the tragedies in question.

IV.b. The importance of eros *in 412/1*

Given the complications that arise from reconstructing trilogies solely on the basis of internal, thematic cohesion between plays, scholars have looked to external considerations for support and insight.[258] With respect to Euripides'

Orestes (λόγοι δ' ἐχώρουν, 1358), demanding to know "for what reason" (τίνι λόγωι, 1358) he is attempting to steal away with priestess and statue in tow, Orestes answers him straight: "Know that I am Orestes, brother of this woman, child of Agamemnon, and I aim to take my sister, whom I lost from my home, and carry her safely away" (Ὀρέστης, τῆσδ' ὅμαιμος, ὡς μάθηις,/ Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖς, τήνδ' ἐμὴν κομίζομαι/ λαβὼν ἀδελφήν, ἣν ἀπώλεσ' ἐκ δόμων, 1361-3). On the other hand, Helen and Menelaus create novel rites by abandoning or breaking apart extant ritual practices, and remain dedicated to their deceitful λόγος until their ship has already put out to sea.

[258] E.g., Stieber 2011, 138-41; Storey 2013, 23-8.

trilogy of 412, Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* and *Thesmophoriazusae* of 411 constitute two examples of such "external considerations," of thematic and historical anchors to which Euripides' *Helen* and *Andromeda* are arguably attached.[259] Not only do erotic forces represent a major thematic component of Euripides' *Helen* and *Andromeda*, but this component is one which Aristophanes finds it worthwhile to address in each of the aforementioned comedies.

In light of these comic works, the lack, in *IT*, of the sustained focus that Euripides gives to the manipulative and divisive powers of Aphrodite and Eros in his *Helen* and *Andromeda*, becomes all the more glaring. Euripides' *IT* may be thematically-compatible with his *Helen* to a certain degree, but the former tragedy is less so when one considers *Helen* and *Andromeda* together, and especially when one adds the evidence of Aristophanes' works of 411.[260]

Erotic forces play both a divisive and conciliatory role in *Lysistrata*, the plot of which Aristophanes saw fit to design around a conjugal strike organized

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[259] In *Thesmophoriazusae,* both *Helen* and *Andromeda* are subject to extensive parody. On the date of *Lysistrata* and *Thesmophoriazusae*, see the introductory notes in Henderson 2000, 254-63 (on *Lysistrata*) and 444-51 (on *Thesmophoriazusae*). For the argument that *Thesmophoriazusae* belongs to 410, see Samons 2000, 318-22.

[260] The possibility that Aristophanes (very obliquely) parodies *IT* at the end of his *Thesm.* does not necessitate *IT*'s inclusion in the trilogy of 412. See Bobrick 1991, 67-76. Bobrick (72 n. 15) notes allusions to *IT* in *Thesm.* 1160-1225, but she does not argue that *IT* must, consequently, belong to the trilogy of 412, and instead places it in the years just prior. Wright endorses Bobrick's view (2005, 50 n. 170), but also banks on previous arguments against this position (esp. MacDowell 1995).

under the joint auspices of the goddess and god of desire (Ar. *Lys.* 551-4). J. Gibert argues that the significance of *eros* in *Lysistrata* lies in Aristophanes' presentation of the force as more than a sexual impulse: "Beneath all the ribaldry, the mainspring of the play is true love, and it is serious."[261] Yet there is certainly a baser element in play: Lysistrata's comrades lead the men to arbitration by their pricks (1120-1), which the men themselves admit are at the point of rupture (1136). After commenting on the state of Reconciliation's private anatomy (1158), the men proceed to divvy her up piece by piece (1162-71), and conclude their negotiations by expressing their mutual desires to plough and fertilize their new property (1173-4).

On the one hand, Lysistrata manipulates the erotic cravings of her fellows — male and female alike — in the upstanding and sober interest of peace rather than division, and she does ultimately send the comedy's wayward husbands back to their own wives (1186-7).[262] However, the reconciliation she oversees on stage, did not, as J. Henderson notes, have much chance of finding a real-world parallel in the cessation of hostilities between Athens and Sparta, due to the

[261] Gibert 1999-2000, 90.

[262] For the two sides to Lysistrata's characterization, see Faraone 2006, 207-23l, esp. 208, 222.

majority of Athenians' refusal to pursue peace when the option was on the table.[263]

To some degree, in fact, Lysistrata's successful management of individual desire, in the interest of collective benefit, merely highlights the extent to which Aristophanes' Athenian viewers refused to coalesce behind real-world efforts to treat with the Spartans and bring the war to an end (e.g., Thuc. 8.70-71, 89-91).[264] Thus, Aristophanes' viewers assume a role not unlike that of the chorus and secondary characters in *Helen* and (likely) *Andromeda*. None of these women shares in the heroines' reprieve from the respective troubles that plague her, but instead they all remain mired in an atmosphere tainted by inescapable violence and unatoned impiety.[265]

Issues of sexual control also constitute the heart of the charges that Euripides' would-be prosecutors levy against him in *Thesmophoriazusae*.[266] The Coryphaeus, for example, calls down the wrath of the gods upon: anyone whose

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[263] Henderson 2000, 259.

[264] For an argument that considers Aristophanes' prior treatment of *eros* in his *Birds* (414) as an explicit expression of the Athenians' ardency for pursuing an imperial agenda, see Arrowsmith 1973-4, 119-67.

[265] By rescuing Andromeda, of course, Perseus necessarily interrupts her parents' atonement for their religious offense. For callous religious practice as a tool for power in Athens, see the preceding discussion of Thuc. 8.70.1.

[266] Additionally, the chorus and individual women express concerns, or issue threats, regarding criminal and callous impiety— in general practice and in Euripides' tragedies— on more than one occasion (e.g., 355-68, 450-1, 887-8).

harmful plots against women include the revelation of supposititious children and secret liaisons; male lovers who do not deliver on their promises; and (elderly) female lovers who lure men away from young women (Ar. *Thesm*. 335-346).

Mika begins her list of grievances, furthermore, by decrying the portrayal of women as man-craving adulterers (τὰς μοιχοτρόπους, τὰς ἀνδρεραστρίας, 392), whose husbands, thanks to Euripides, suspect that their wives are constantly engaged in affairs (395-7), and that the womens' actions are generally aimed at carrying out and/or hiding sexual affairs (400-409). Kinsman, too, touches upon all of these complaints and provokes the women to arrest him by providing a (false) anecdote about "her" own affair, and by claiming personal knowledge of other adulterous actions, as well as the efforts of one woman to substitute a child at birth (478-519).

It is with this network of "erotic" charges in place that Aristophanes proceeds to parody two of Euripides' most recent tragedies, namely, *Helen* and *Andromeda*.[267] In each parody, Aristophanes' verses insert erotic elements into

[267] Aristophanes also constructs a parody of Euripides' *Telephus* of 438 B.C.E. and *Palamedes* of 415. For an outline and brief analysis of each parody, see Austin and Olson 2004, lvi-lxiii. Alongside these extended parodies, Aristophanes incorporates a number of lines from various Euripidean tragedies, including: *Aeolus, Alcestis, Cyclops, Danae, Erechtheus, Hippolytus, IT, Medea, Melanippe, Phoenix,* and *Sthenobia*.

sections of Euripides' tragedies from which these elements are absent. In Euripides' *Helen*, for example, the initial confrontation between wayward spouses sends Helen running for her life (Eur. *Hel.* 541-5). Kinsman-as-Helen, by contrast, celebrates the arrival of Euripides-as-Menelaus, stating: "But there may be something that entices my heart" (Ἀλλ' ὥσπερ αἰκάλλει τι καρδίαν ἐμήν, Ar. *Thesm.* 869).[268]

In Euripides' tragedy, furthermore, Helen's sexual integrity remains notably intact, despite Theoclymenus' advances (Eur. *Hel*. 60-4). The queen speaks only once of the possible insult that a marriage to Theoclymenus would represent (ὕβριν γ' ὑβρίζων ἐσ τὰ σ', 785), but confirms that this outrage is yet hypothetical (795). Aristophanes' faux Helen, by contrast, has *already* been: "forced to marry Proteus' son and share his bed" (βιάζομαι γάμοισι Πρωτέως παιδὶ σθμμεῖξαι λέχος, Ar. *Thesm*. 890) and is ashamed to look at her husband, due to the physical insult that she has *already* suffered (αἰσχύνομαί σε τὰς γνάθους ὑβρισμένη, 903).[269] Thus, Aristophanes' alterations clearly and

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[268] The line recalls Euripides' *Andromache*, wherein the titular character inveighs against Menelaus for failing to kill his wife at Troy: "you, a sad-sack born helpless against Kypris, fawned all over that two-timing bitch" (…προδότιν αἰκάλλων κύνα,/ ἥσσων πεφυκὼς Κύπριδος, ὦ κάκιστε σύ, Eur. *Andr*. 630-1). For additional parallels, see Austin and Olson 2004, 283 n. 869-70. A scholiast to *Andromache* notes that Ibycus wrote a (more economical) version of the scene Andromache describes, in which the power of Aphrodite/Eros was readily apparent (sch. Eur. *Andr*. 630.3)

[269] Even when Euripides' Helen pretends, in front of Theoclymenus, to be in mourning for her dead husband, she does not go so far as to mark up her face by scratching her cheeks (cf. Eur. *Hel*.

efficiently present Kinsman-Helen as a flattery-seeking, yet passive and violated sexual object.

Aristophanes abandons the subtle erotic tone of his *Helen* parody as he moves on to his lampoon of Euripides' *Andromeda*. When Euripides-as-Perseus attempts to convince the Scythian that Kinsman is the virgin Andromeda (ὦ παρθέν', 1111), the Scythian rebuts the claim by citing the indisputable evidence to the contrary: "Take a look at his sack! It's clearly nothing to sneeze at" (σκέψαι τὸ κύστο· μή τι μικκὸν παίνεται, 1114). The Kinsman's "sexual humiliation" at the hands (literally) of Euripides and the Scythian continues for several lines, in a scene which has already received extensive scholarly comment.[270] Aristophanes' intentions in placing such visceral erotic impulses at center stage are a matter worthy of separate consideration. The vital point here is that the comic playwright chooses not once, but twice (and only months apart), to foreground these impulses in his comedies, and to reattribute them, twisted and reimagined

1186-92). On the other hand, although neither βιάζομαι nor ὑβρισμένη automatically indicates rape, Aristophanes' use of the two in such close proximity, and in clear connection to the bedroom—λέχος—and Helen's physical integrity—τὰς γνάθους—underscores the implication of violence.

[270] On sexual humiliation, see Compton-Engle 2015, ebook *np*. For commentary on this scene, see: Rau 1967, 65-89; Austin and Olson 2004, 329-30.

in *Thesmophoriazusae*, to the dramatic playwright who had staged them scarcely a year prior.

When Aristophanes re-stages Euripides' heroines, he makes the erotic elements of Euripides' tragedies all the more vivid and immediate by underscoring the basest physical aspects of human sexual pursuits. Though *Thesmophoriazusae* represents a more obvious engagement with this element of Euripides' trilogy of 412, *Lysistrata*, too, supports a similar perspective. Indeed, the respective conclusions of Aristophanes' comedies of 411 are not really so different: the near-final act of both protagonists (Lysistrata, Euripides) is to conjure an object of sexual gratification (Reconciliation, Elaphion) as a reward for the compliance of male opponents. To the extent that the similarities between *Helen, Andromeda*, and *IT* speak in favor of uniting the three into a cohesive trilogy, the near-complete excision of Aphrodite and Eros from the latter tragedy, taken together with Aristophanes' apparent interest in incorporating these figures into his comedies of 411, speaks just as loudly, if not more so, in favor of placing *IT* outside of Euripides' trilogy of 412.

As a final, external consideration, we might keep in mind that Thucydides, too, characterizes the entire expedition to Sicily (415-413) — the source of the death and enslavement, on a massive scale, of Athenian and allied

troops — as an erotic misadventure (Thuc. 6.24.3). The empty funeral bier that Menelaus requests for his fake procession in *Helen* (Eur. *Hel.* 1261), evocative of the bier carried each winter in honor of Athens' war dead, was one that would, in the winter before the Dionysia of 412, have been filled to its figurative brim with the bodies of the men had not returned home.

There is no reason to underestimate the significance of the callous desire that besets the action of Euripides' *Helen*, and likely his *Andromeda* as well. This is an erotic folly which Euripides, Aristophanes, and Thucydides all refuse to let the Athenians forget, and neither Euripides nor Thucydides shies away from presenting a direct link between Eros' machinations and the gory νόστοι that the Athenian people witness both on stage, and in reality: καὶ ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπ'οἴκου ἀπενόστησαν.[271]

[271] "And few out of many made the journey back home" (Thuc. 7.87.6). On allusions to Homeric epic in Thucydides' account of the expedition, see Allison 1997, 499-516. For a broader view of the connections between epic and historiography, see Rutherford 2012, 13-38.

Chapter Five ~ Thucydides on Athenian Impulses and Impiety (415-11)

Thucydides' sparing and selective use of ἔρως and its cognates amplifies the impact that this term has on the reader when it does appear in the extant narrative.[272] Yet the acquisitive desire that he emphasizes in his account of the Athenian's organization and dispatch of the Sicilian Expedition of 415-13, and in the corresponding excursus on Harmodius and Aristogeiton, continues to plague the Athenians even after ἔρως itself disappears from the text.

Thucydides does not rely upon ἔρως alone in order to bolster the reader's expectations of a colossal erotic misfire in Sicily. Rather, his noteworthy use of ποθεινός (Thuc. 2.42.4) and of πόθος (6.24.3), each term a *hapax legomenon* in the extant narrative, supports a disparaging appraisal of the emotional impetus behind Athens' expedition (section *I*).[273] In addition, Thucydides' use of ἐπιθυμία and ἐπιθυμεῖν supports the impression that the disaster in Sicily is the direct result of a unique type of Athenian-specific yearning and indulgence (section *II*).[274]

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[272] On Thucydides' use of *eros* as thematic element of his accounts involving Athenian military conquest, see Ludwig 2002, 153-69 and 319-380.

[273] On a possible connection to Pindaric themes, see Hornblower 2008, n. 6.24.3.

[274] I have forgone an examination of θυμός, its cognate, προθυμία, their related adjectival, verbal, and/or adverbial forms, and other terms that express emotional states based in one's θυμός (i.e., ἀντιθυμόομαι, ἀποθύμιος, ἐκθυμία, καταθύμιος, περίθυμος, συνθυμέω, ὑπέρθυμος) on the grounds that none of these terms consistently connotes an explicitly-sexual desire for an object or individual.

The Athenians' experiences in Sicily appear exceptional due not only to the nature of the erotic motivations for the expedition,[275] but also to the jealous regard (ἐπίφθονος) that purportedly moves the gods (θεοί) and threatens the possibility of a return home (section *III*).[276] There are no parallel instances in Thucydides' text in which mortal men are the direct object of this type of divine jealousy. As such, the terms of the gods' response to the expedition represent a verbal anomaly, an outstanding divine response to the Athenians' particular emotional indulgences.

I. Athenian yearning (πόθος)

Thucydides twice portrays Athenian citizens as men whom πόθος lures into a grand military mission.[277] Thus, this particular type of longing is striking

[275] There has not, to my knowledge, been a systematic examination of how Thucydides adapts terms for sexual desire to suit a specifically-Athenian context. However, the general erotic motivations behind the mission are ones which scholars have long discussed. Several papers in Balot et al. 2016 summarize key aspects of the arguments related to this topic, and offer comprehensive bibliographies. See especially: Orwin, 360-5; Rahe, 435-8; Wohl, 444-57; Nichols, 466-8; Mara, 536.

[276] On "religious panic" at Athens during the time of the Sicilian Expedition, see Rahe (in Balot et al. 2016), 440-1.

[277] The term's primary connotation is one of desire or yearning, in particular for something that is not present. For the implication of desire, see Aeschylus' *Suppliants*, in which Pothos is the child of Kypris (1034-9). The concept of longing for someone (or something) out of reach runs from Homeric times (Hom. *Il*. 19.319-21, 23.15-18, 24.4-9) through to Plato's era (Plat. *Crat*. 420a).

not only because of its rarity in the extant work, but also due to its specific function as an impetus for Athenian campaigns. When the reader encounters ποθεινός at 2.42.4, the term conveys a noble yearning for righteous vengeance and entails the self-denial of personal profit. This passage — a segment of Pericles' funeral oration of 430 — provides a key verbal point of comparison for the πόθος that appears at 6.24.3. By setting so stringent a limitation on the context of ποθεινός and πόθος in his work, Thucydides casts the motivations of the Athenians in book 6 into sharp relief, and emphasizes the extent to which these men have relaxed into a dangerous state of erotic vulnerability as they prepare to launch their ambitious campaign in 415.[278]

I.a. Periclean πόθος as an idealogical model

Through Pericles' oration for Athens' war-dead (2.35-46), Thucydides gives his reader an understanding of how a particular type of yearning can constitute a noble and praiseworthy form of desire. The ideology Thucydides develops in this passage lays the groundwork for the Athenians' subsequent

[278] Although scholars have noted the unique presence of πόθος in Thucydides, there has not, to my knowledge, been any proposal of a relationship between the passages at 2.42.4 and 6.24.3. On Thucydides' use of πόθος, see: Ehrenberg 1947, 44-67, esp. 62ff; Porciani 2016, 551-66, esp. 561.

experience with πόθος, and their failure to entertain their cravings in a constructive manner.

In only a few lines of text in book 2, Thucydides (re)creates Pericles' idealized conceit of an Athenian citizen and soldier, a man who willingly sets aside ephemeral pleasures in the name of righteous vengeance, and whose personal erotic impulses drive him to reach for collective redemption. As Pericles nears the end of his speech, he extols the readiness with which Athens' dead soldiers put aside the comforts of their daily lives and faced up to the terrible threat of combat. Of their motivations for doing so, Pericles claims that:

> None of these men, neither [one who] esteemed the future enjoyment of wealth, nor [one who] regarded poverty with the hope that he might yet become wealthy and escape it, was cowed into putting off a dreadful circumstance. Rather, taking [the position that] vengeance against opponents was a more desirable option than these (τὴν δὲ τῶν ἐναντίων τιμωρίαν **ποθεινοτέραν** αὐτῶν λαβόντες), and at the same time considering this the fairest of dangers, they resolved, given the circumstance, to punish [their opponents] and let go of their prospects, committing to hope the uncertainty that they would succeed…[279]

[279] Thuc. 2.43.4: τῶνδε δὲ οὔτε πλούτου τις τὴν ἔτι ἀπόλαυσιν προτιμήσας ἐμαλακίσθη οὔτε πενίας ἐλπίδι, ὡς κἂν ἔτι διαφυγὼν αὐτὴν πλουτήσειεν, ἀναβολὴν τοῦ δεινοῦ ἐποιήσατο: τὴν δὲ τῶν ἐναντίων τιμωρίαν ποθεινοτέραν αὐτῶν λαβόντες καὶ κινδύνων ἅμα τόνδε κάλλιστον νομίσαντες ἐβουλήθησαν μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ τοὺς μὲν τιμωρεῖσθαι, τῶν δὲ ἐφίεσθαι, ἐλπίδι μὲν τὸ ἀφανὲς τοῦ κατορθώσειν ἐπιτρέψαντες.

With wealth either at their fingertips or constantly in view,[280] these soldiers willingly relinquished their personal desires, and endeavored to grab hold of an object of enticement situated much further from their grasp. The acquisition of their goal came only at the ultimate price, yet the commendation that they seized upon in death is everlasting (τὸν ἀγήρων ἔπαινον ἐλάμβανον, 2.43.2).

The Athenian forces of 415 — in particular the youngest among them — do not measure up the exemplary model provided by the soldiers whom Pericles commemorates. On the motivations of the expedition's fledgling soldiers, Thucydides claims that: "the desire (ἔρως) to sail beset the [Athenians] all alike… the young men with a yearning for the sight and spectacle (**πόθωι** ὄψεως καὶ **θεωρίας**) of a distant place, and they had high hopes that they would not suffer any harm."[281] Thucydides' sparing use of ποθείνος and πόθος underscores how the longing of 415 reverses a specifically Periclean ideology. While a former, idealized generation of soldiers preferred to aim for fatal success in avenging the

[280] In his book 3 summation of the uprising at Corcyra, Thucydides (3.84.1) portrays the natural allure of a neighbor's wealth for a man suffering in a state of poverty: "some entertained unjust thoughts, wishing for delivery from consistent poverty and, especially because of their suffering it entailed, longing to possess their neighbors' goods" (πενίας δὲ τῆς εἰωθυίας ἀπαλλαξείοντές τινες, μάλιστα δ᾽ ἂν διὰ πάθους, **ἐπιθυμοῦντες** τὰ τῶν πέλας ἔχειν, παρὰ δίκην γιγνώσκοιεν). On the question of this passage's authenticity, see Gomme *HCT* II-III, 382-6 n. 84.
[281] Thuc. 6.24.3: ἔρως ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι…τοῖς δ᾽ ἐν τῆι ἡλικίαι τῆς τε ἀπούσης πόθωι ὄψεως καὶ θεωρίας, καὶ εὐέλπιδες ὄντες σωθήσεσθαι. See Wohl 2002, 194-5.

state, the young soldiers of 415 care more for the likelihood of their return than the destruction of their enemies.[282]

I.b. Periclean πόθος as a verbal model

By relying upon specific and consistent verbal echoes between Pericles' speech in book 2 and his own narrative in book 6, Thucydides demonstrates how the Athenians of 415 uproot the Periclean imperative at its most basic, verbal level. For one, the young troops' erotic yearning for sights unseen (ἔρως, πόθος ὄψεως) reverses the prerogative of Pericles' exhortation to the Athenians to exercise their desires within the city, in the role of ἐρασταί.[283] Furthermore, Pericles argues that the spectacle that ought to compel erotic devotion is the daily display of Athens' own power (τὴν τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν καθ᾽ ἡμέραν ἔργωι **θεωμένους** καὶ **ἐραστὰς** γιγνομένους αὐτῆς, 2.43.1), a sight that the city never denies to visitors from abroad (οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτε ξενηλασίαις ἀπείργομέν τινα ἢ μαθήματος ἢ **θεάματος**, 2.39.1).[284] By investing their desire, their yearning for

[282] See Samons 2015, 156-63.
[283] On the relationship between pederastic practices and Athenian political discourse, see Yates 2005, 33-47.
[284] Plato later makes the relationship between sight and erotic desire explicit in his *Cratylus*. The philosopher characterizes ἔρως as a foreign influence: "And ἔρως [is so named] because it

spectacle, and their hope in the promise of a foreign land, rather than the prominence of Athens itself, the young men of 415 overturn this Periclean imperative to exalt, and derive pleasure from, the sight of one's native city.

Thucydides' decision to pair θεωρίας with ὄψεως at 6.24.3 further exposes the superficiality of the troops' desire, and the false hope of success that it promotes. When the degree of danger that they will face in Sicily begins to gnaw at them, the Athenians survey their fleet and are encouraged, nevertheless: "by the sight (**τῇι ὄψει**) of their present strength, as evidenced by the sheer abundance of each aspect [of the armament] on which they gazed." Indeed, the fleet is so unbelievable in its magnitude that even foreigners and the unarmed masses head to the harbor to catch a glimpse (κατὰ **θέαν**).[285] Additionally, Thucydides writes that the fleet's renown derived no less from the grandeur of its appearance (**ὄψεως** λαμπρότητι περιβόητος ἐγένετο, 6.31.6) than from the audacity of the expedition's aims.

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streams in from the outside, and this stream itself is not domestic to the one who possesses it, but is imported through the eyes" (ἔρως δέ, ὅτι εἰσρεῖ ἔξωθεν καὶ οὐκ οἰκεία ἐστὶν ἡ ῥοὴ αὕτη τῶι ἔχοντι ἀλλ' ἐπείσακτος διὰ τῶν ὀμμάτων… Plat. *Crat*. 420b). If this distinction was a part of Thucydides' own conception of ἔρως, then Pericles' exhortation to the Athenians is all the more outstanding, for it offers the men a means of controlling desire, which is foreign to their bodies, by attaching it to a native source (i.e., Athens).

[285] Thuc. 6.31.1: ὅμως δὲ τῆι παρούσηι ῥώμηι, διὰ τὸ πλῆθος ἑκάστων ὧν ἑώρων, τῆι ὄψει ἀνεθάρσουν... οἱ δὲ ξένοι καὶ ὁ ἄλλος ὄχλος κατὰ θέαν ἦκεν.

With respect to the verbal echoes between the passages above, it is worth noting that both θεάματος (2.39.1) and θεωρίας (6.24.3) are themselves quite rare in the work, the former a *hapax legomenon*, and the latter appearing only twice. Aside from 6.24.3, θεωρίας shows up in Alcibiades' boast that: "by the distinction of my performance at Olympia (τῆς Ὀλυμπίαζε θεωρίας), the Hellenes judged our city powerful (δύναμιν) beyond its actual strength, though they had hoped that it was exhausted by war."[286] Although Alcibiades' moment of bald self-promotion also diverges from the Periclean paradigm, Thucydides still gives Alcibiades the good sense to present his spectacular display as a means of augmenting Athens' power, and of crushing the hopes of its enemies.

Yet appearances themselves are no assurance of actual power. This is a point Thucydides sees fit to make in the very first chapters of his work, when writing of the likelihood that Sparta's lack of edifices, and Athens' abundance of them, will cause later observers to misjudge the actual power of each *polis*: "we have no right, consequently, to disbelieve [Homer about the size of Mycenae's

[286] Thuc. 6.16.2: οἱ γὰρ Ἕλληνες καὶ ὑπὲρ δύναμιν μείζω ἡμῶν τὴν πόλιν ἐνόμισαν τῷ ἐμῶι διαπρεπεῖ τῆς Ὀλυμπίαζε θεωρίας, πρότερον ἐλπίζοντες αὐτὴν καταπεπολεμῆσθαι.

fleet], nor to base our insight about cities on their appearances (**τὰς ὄψεις**) more so than on their power (**τὰς δυνάμεις**)."[287]

All told, the soldiers of 415 — first the younger ones, but eventually the entire contingent — effectively replace a hopeful yearning for vengeance with a (less-preferable) longing for specious displays, and with superficial hopes for personal entertainment. The degree to which they do so is not merely theoretical. Rather, the reader can apprehend these alterations in motivation due to the verbal guideposts that Thucydides provides.

The historian clearly demarcates these points of reference and connects them to each other by choosing terms that are unique to a precious few passages (e.g., ποθεινός, πόθος, θεάματος, θεωρίας), and by then clearly associating these verbal rarities with a particular cluster of more common words (e.g., ὄψις, δύναμις). Admittedly, the reader must be paying a great deal of attention in order to recall the descriptive ποθείνος of book 2 upon encountering the substantive ποθός of book 6. However, when Thucydides chooses to use a consistent, yet unique, vocabulary in both places, he gives the reader substantive (i.e., verbal) evidence of a connection between these disparate passages.

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[287] Thuc. 1.10.3: οὔκουν ἀπιστεῖν εἰκός, οὐδὲ τὰς ὄψεις τῶν πόλεων μᾶλλον σκοπεῖν ἢ τὰς δυνάμεις.

II. Athenian craving (ἐπιθυμεῖν/ ἐπιθυμία)

Thucydides does not rely upon ποθείνος/πόθος alone in order to express the state of emotional degradation under which the Athenians undertake the Sicilian expedition. Rather, the πόθος and ἔρως that underlie Athens' military endeavor in 415 are constituent elements of a particular type of Athenian ambition (ἐπιθυμεῖν/ ἐπιθυμία), of an eagerness for augmentation that belongs, almost exclusively, to the men of Athens.[288] While it is true that the Spartans also experience longing in these terms, it is only among the Athenians that this longing proves ruinous in both domestic and foreign contexts. In the extant text, both ἐπιθυμεῖν and ἐπιθυμία indicate an Athenian craving that comes full circle in a most devastating manner.

[288] In extant texts, ἐπιθυμία and its verbal counterpart, ἐπιθυμεῖν, convey a sense of eagerness or longing for a wide range of objects: the soldiers crave virgin blood in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (216); mother cats long for more offspring in Herodotus' *Histories* (2.66.2); Lysias and Simon have a rivalrous appetite for the Plataean boy, Theodotus (Lys. 5.3).

II.a. ἐπιθυμεῖν

In the *Histories*, there are only two groups whom the author repeatedly portrays in the act of longing for something (ἐπιθυμεῖν): the Spartans and the Athenians. [289] The Spartans, as far as Thucydides represents them, long for one object in particular, namely, peace. In book 1, Archidamus warns his fellows off of going to war with Athens in 432, and appeals to the elder Spartans as men whose experience with war prevents them from craving it (ὥστε μήτε ἀπειρίαι **ἐπιθυμῆσαί** τινα τοῦ ἔργου, 1.80.1). When the Potidaeans seek to convince the Spartans to march against Athens nonetheless, they attempt to entice their audience with the argument that the present danger is worth the promise of lasting peace (ψηφίσασθε τὸν πόλεμον μὴ φοβηθέντες τὸ αὐτίκα δεινόν, τῆς δ᾽ ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ διὰ πλείονος εἰρήνης **ἐπιθυμήσαντες**, 1.124.2). On a verbal level, that is, Spartan longing underlies the rationale both for the avoidance and the pursuit of war, but the goal is the same in either case.

Nearly a decade after 432, the Spartans project their own hopes for peace upon the Athenians. As they consider agreeing to a yearlong armistice in the

[289] Of the 14 times ἐπιθυμεῖν appears in the extant narrative, six refer to Spartan longing and six to Athenian longing. The other two appearances are at 3.84.1 (see above, n. 280) and 4.108.4 (discussed below). Altogether, the term appears at: 1.80.1, 124.2; 3.84.1; 4.21.1, 108.4, 117.2; 5.36.1, 41.3; 6.10.1, 15.2, 15.4, 24.2, 92.4; 7.77.7.

spring of 423, Thucydides writes, the Spartans: "thought that the Athenians, who suffered the very same fears as they did, would be all the more eager (μᾶλλον **ἐπιθυμήσειν**), given a cessation of their troubles and distress,[290] to come to terms with them, and also to restore their men[291] and reach a lasting accord" (4.117.2).[292] Such had also been the Spartan expectation prior to the battle of Pylos in 425 (Λακεδαιμόνιοι τοσαῦτα εἶπον, νομίζοντες τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἐν τῶι πρὶν χρόνωι σπονδῶν μὲν **ἐπιθυμεῖν**, 4.21.1), but the Athenians — on firmer ground at that time than they would be following Brasidas' northern campaign — elected to fight (4.21.2).[293]

Finally, Thucydides also uses the verb twice in the context of Spartan considerations regarding a possible alliance with Argos in 420. The historian

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[290] Athens had lost numerous allies and colonies in Boeotia and Thrace, among the latter Amphipolis, which fell to Brasidas in 424/3 (Thuc. 4.102-108).

[291] Namely, those taken captive after the battle of Sphacteria in 425 (Thuc. 4. 4.38.2-4.41).

[292] Thuc. 4.117.2: Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ ταῦτα τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἡγούμενοι ἅπερ ἐδέδισαν φοβεῖσθαι, καὶ γενομένης ἀνοκωχῆς κακῶν καὶ ταλαιπωρίας μᾶλλον ἐπιθυμήσειν αὐτοὺς πειρασαμένους ξυναλλαγῆναί τε καὶ τοὺς ἄνδρας σφίσιν ἀποδόντας σπονδὰς ποιήσασθαι καὶ ἐς τὸν πλείω χρόνον.

[293] Thuc. 4.21.1-2: "The Spartans made such a proposal, thinking that the Athenians had previously been eager to treat, but had been hindered by Spartan opposition, and that they would gladly accept the current offer for peace and give back the captives. [2] But the Athenians, in light of the captives they had taken, thought that they were already in a position to make peace with the Spartans at any point they wished, and (instead) reached out for more" (οἱ μὲν οὖν Λακεδαιμόνιοι τοσαῦτα εἶπον, νομίζοντες τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἐν τῶι πρὶν χρόνωι σπονδῶν μὲν ἐπιθυμεῖν, σφῶν δὲ ἐναντιουμένων κωλύεσθαι, διδομένης δὲ εἰρήνης ἀσμένους δέξεσθαί τε καὶ τοὺς ἄνδρας ἀποδώσειν. [2] οἱ δὲ τὰς μὲν σπονδάς, ἔχοντες τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν τῆι νήσωι, ἤδη σφίσιν ἐνόμιζον ἑτοίμους εἶναι, ὁπόταν βούλωνται ποιεῖσθαι πρὸς αὐτούς, τοῦ δὲ πλέονος ὠρέγοντο).

writes that the encouragement of an alliance was actually a ploy by the ephors, Cleobulus and Xenares, to dissolve the peace treaty of 421 (5.36.1). However, Thucydides also makes it clear that the majority of the Spartans considered an alliance out of a genuine desire for friendly relations with Argos (**ἐπιθυμοῦντας** τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους καλῶς σφίσι φίλιον γενέσθα, 5.36.1).[294] Thucydides subsequently repeats the sentiment at 5.41.3 (**ἐπεθύμουν** γὰρ τὸ Ἄργος πάντως φίλιον ἔχειν).[295] Taken together, these examples demonstrate how Thucydides uses a single term to assert a consistent, Spartan longing for the avoidance of hostility.

The Athenians, by contrast, repeatedly long for confrontation as a means of political expansion. These aspirations multiply both the number of enemies they face from without, as well as the enmity they feel for each other. When they vote to undertake the expedition in 415, the Athenians make the same mistake that their subject cities to the north had made in the wake of Amphipolis' fall to Brasidas (in 424/3). The men of these cities, Thucydides writes, underestimated Athens' power to quell nascent revolts: "as it is the habit of men, to entrust that

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[294] Thuc. 5.36.1: "For they (Cleobulus and Xenares) knew that the Spartans had always longed to be friendly with Argos on fair terms" (τὸ γὰρ Ἄργος αἰεὶ [Κλεόβουλος καὶ Ξενάρης] ἠπίσταντο ἐπιθυμοῦντας τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους καλῶς σφίσι φίλιον γενέσθαι).
[295] On which see Hornblower 2008, n. 5.36.1.

which they crave to thoughtless hope (**ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἐλπίδι** ἀπερισκέπτωι διδόναι), and to use the authoritative veneer of calculation to reject what is unappealing" (4.108.4).[296]

Indeed, when Nicias dresses down the Assembly in 415, he decries the men's willingness to ignore Athens' enemies in the Peloponnese (πολεμίους πολλοὺς ἐνθάδε ὑπολιπόντας) and sail off in search of other, more distant rivals (ἑτέρους **ἐπιθυμεῖν** ἐκεῖσε πλεύσαντας δεῦρο ἐπαγαγέσθα, 6.10.1).[297] Though he means to undermine their confidence in the Sicilian Expedition by describing the sheer magnitude of men and resources necessary for success, Nicias manages only to arouse Athenian eagerness for the campaign (οἱ δὲ τὸ μὲν **ἐπιθυμοῦν** τοῦ πλοῦ… πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον ὥρμηντο, 6.24.2).

As the embodiment of the Athenians' collective craving in 415, Thucydides chooses one man in particular. Alcibiades promotes the expedition not only due to his wish to oppose Nicias, Thucydides writes, but also, even *especially*, due to his eagerness to distinguish himself as a general (καὶ μάλιστα

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[296] Thuc. 4.108.4: εἰωθότες οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὗ μὲν ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἐλπίδι ἀπερισκέπτωι διδόναι, ὃ δὲ μὴ προσίενται λογισμῶι αὐτοκράτορι διωθεῖσθαι.

[297] Through Nicias' words, Thucydides (7.77.7) balances the Athenians' craving to sail off in search of enemies with the desire of the non-Athenian troops to return to their homes. Nicias addresses the latter in his exhortation to the men, prior to the ultimate battle in the Great Harbor at Syracuse in the late summer of 413 (οἵ τε ἄλλοι τευξόμενοι ὧν **ἐπιθυμεῖτέ** που ἐπιδεῖν).

στρατηγῆσαί τε **ἐπιθυμῶν**, 6.15.2).[298] Unlike the Periclean model soldier, who turned away from the siren call of personal wealth, Alcibiades: "was hoping to spearhead the conquest of both Sicily and Carthage, and thus in one fell swoop to set his private life aright, and enjoy both riches and renown."[299] Just as the Athenians' collective longing for the expedition will serve only to increase the hostility they face from abroad (or so Nicias warns), so too does Alcibiades' eagerness intensify his fellow citizens' mistrust: "they set themselves against him as do the enemies of a man longing for tyranny" (ὡς τυραννίδος **ἐπιθυμοῦντι** πολέμιοι καθέστασαν, 6.15.4).

One the one hand, Thucydides undermines the legitimacy of this conclusion through his consistent characterization of the Athenians themselves, who are driven throughout the prosecutorial process by fear and unfounded suspicion. On the other hand, the historian's verbal choices also allow the reader to trace the Athenians' understanding of the connection between Alcibiades and the specter of tyranny.[300] Both Hipparchus and Alcibiades earn the ire of the

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[298] See Hunter 1973, 139 n. 19; 144; 180.

[299] Thuc. 6.15.2: ἐλπίζων Σικελίαν τε δι᾽ αὐτοῦ καὶ Καρχηδόνα λήψεσθαι καὶ τὰ ἴδια ἅμα εὐτυχήσας χρήμασί τε καὶ δόξῃ ὠφελήσειν.

[300] See Samons 2015, 31.

Athenians for their single-minded craving for an object of desire, whether a beautiful young man, or the repute and riches that a successful general can claim.

In his excursus on the tyrannicides, Thucydides notes that Hipparchus earned an undeserved reputation as a tyrant due to his reaction when Harmodius rejected his amorous "advances" (πειράω and ἡ πείρασις, 6.54.3-4).[301] The term reappears (alongside ἐπιθυμεῖν) in Alcibiades' appeal to the Spartans. Asking that they accept him as an advisor in the fight against Athens, the fugitive general denies that such a proposition is unjust, for: "the man who truly loves his country is not he who refuses to go against it after losing it unfairly, but he whom eagerness drives in his attempts (διὰ τὸ **ἐπιθυμεῖν πειραθῆι**) to take it back by any available means."[302] Although πειράω itself need not have an erotic connotation, Thucydides' suggestive language retroactively aligns Alcibiades' acquisitive ambitions with Hipparchus' own,

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[301] Thuc. 6.54.3: **πειραθεὶς** δὲ ὁ Ἁρμόδιος ὑπὸ Ἱππάρχου; 6.54.4: ὁ Ἵππαρχος ὡς αὖθις **πειράσας** οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἔπειθε τὸν Ἁρμόδιον; 6.56.1: Τὸν δ' οὖν Ἁρμόδιον ἀπαρνηθέντα **τὴν πείρασιν**. The noun appears only here in the extant text. See Hornblower 2008, n. 6.54.4: Hornblower explains the sexual connotations of the terms, but does not mention a possible connection between 6.54.4 and 6.92.4.

[302] Thuc. 6.92.4: καὶ φιλόπολις οὗτος ὀρθῶς, οὐχ ὃς ἂν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀδίκως ἀπολέσας μὴ ἐπίηι, ἀλλ᾽ ὃς ἂν ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου διὰ τὸ ἐπιθυμεῖν πειραθῆι αὐτὴν ἀναλαβεῖν. Alcibiades' use of φιλόπολις provides the reader yet another point of comparison between books 2 and 6. To the Athenians who criticize his actions, Pericles responds by pairing his care for the city with his personal incorruptibility (φιλόπολίς τε καὶ χρημάτων κρείσσων, 2.60.5). Despite his triple use of the term at 6.92, Alcibiades, as Thucydides portrays him, can claim no such equation (cf. 6.15.2).

clearly erotic aims. Whereas Hipparchus' desired object remains the same, however, Alcibiades' craving changes from an eagerness for personal distinction via his actions on Athens' behalf, to a longing for personal fulfillment via the procurement of Athens itself.[303]

II.b. ἐπιθυμία

Through his use of ἐπιθυμία, Thucydides further distinguishes the Athenians from their Hellenic counterparts. It is the former who experience this type of longing most often — of the nine times ἐπιθυμία occurs in the extant text, six refer directly to the Athenians.[304] These appearances of ἐπιθυμία clearly illustrate how Thucydides, through his conscientious application of particular terms at key junctures, sets and fulfills certain expectations in his readers. Through his concentrated use of ἐπιθυμία, in passages concerning the Sicilian Expedition of 415-13, Thucydides strengthens the readers' impressions that, at

[303] On Thucydides' use of ἔρως as a centerpiece of his presentation of the tension between collective success and personal advancement, see, e.g., Wohl 1999, 349-85; Monoson 2000, 42-51; Scholtz 2007; Paiaro 2016, 139-50.

[304] The noun refers to the Athenians at: 2.53.2; 6.13.1, 15.3, 24.4, 33.2; 7.84.2. The other three appearances, discussed below, are at: 4.81.2; 5.15.1; 6.78.2.

this time, the Athenians were driven by a type of passion both uniquely powerful, and exceptionally destructive.

Thucydides first employs the term in his description of the plague at Athens in 430: "The pestilence came on without rhyme or reason, and as they turned to corpses the men either piled up in tangled heaps, or else they roamed about in the streets and by the wells, animated by a craving for water" (ἡμιθνῆτες τοῦ ὕδατος **ἐπιθυμίαι**, 2.52.3).[305] Given the horror of the circumstances, this longing carries with it no sense of reproach or condemnation. As such, it provides a useful point of comparison for the longing which the Athenians feel as they contemplate an expedition to Sicily in 415. Despite Nicias' warning that preparations based on foresight (προνοίαι), not fervor (**ἐπιθυμίαι**), are those that ensure a favorable outcome,[306] the Athenians are determined to satisfy their collective craving (**ἐπιθυμίαν**) for an expedition,[307] even if it means appointing a co-general (Alcibiades) whose outsized personal hunger (**ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις** μείζοσιν) breed fear and envy among his fellow citizens.[308] Set

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[305] Thuc. 2.52.3: ὁ φθόρος ἐγίγνετο οὐδενὶ κόσμωι, ἀλλὰ καὶ νεκροὶ ἐπ' ἀλλήλοις ἀποθνήσκοντες ἔκειντο καὶ ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς ἐκαλινδοῦντο καὶ περὶ τὰς κρήνας ἁπάσας ἡμιθνῆτες τοῦ ὕδατος ἐπιθυμίαι. On possible difficulties with this passage, see Gomme *HCT* II-III, 158-9 n. 52.1-3.

[306] Thuc. 6.13.1: γνόντας ὅτι ἐπιθυμίαι μὲν ἐλάχιστα κατορθοῦνται, προνοίαι δὲ πλεῖστα.

[307] Thuc. 6.24.4: τὴν ἄγαν τῶν πλεόνων ἐπιθυμίαν.

[308] Thuc. 6.15.3: ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις μείζοσιν ἢ κατὰ τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν οὐσίαν ἐχρῆτο.

against the earnest cravings of dying men, the Athenians' thirst for personal enrichment and political expansion can hardly inspire confidence in the reader.

As he continues his narration of the Sicilian Expedition, Thucydides emphasizes how this particular, and particularly destructive, military endeavor is exemplary of the danger that underlies Athenian eagerness. The historian puts the term in Hermocrates' mouth on two occasions, first when the Syracusan general claims that Athens' intervention on behalf of the Egestaians and Leontines is merely the excuse for an expedition aimed at the conquest of all of Sicily (τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς Σικελίας **ἐπιθυμίαι**).[309] Hermocrates also appeals to the Camarinaeans to refuse an alliance with Athens, reminding them that, despite their desire to see Syracuse suffer, the latter is the only city powerful enough to protect Camarina (and Sicily) from Athenian domination: "for one can master his cravings (**τῆς ἐπιθυμίας**), but cannot likewise be master of his fortunes (τῆς τύχης)."[310] Hermocrates' sentiment undermines Nicias' denial of ἐπιθυμία in favor of προνοία (6.13.1), for τύχη can upset even the best laid plans. Sober

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[309] Thuc. 6.33.2: πρόφασιν μὲν Ἐγεσταίων ξυμμαχίαι καὶ Λεοντίνων κατοικίσει, τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς Σικελίας ἐπιθυμίαι.

[310] Thuc. 6.79.2-3: "…for one can master his cravings, but cannot likewise be master of his fortunes, [3] and if his expectations prove misguided, he may, perhaps, come to wish, as he bemoans his wicked circumstances, that he could envy my prosperity once again" (… οὐ γὰρ οἷόν τε ἅμα τῆς τε ἐπιθυμίας καὶ τῆς τύχης τὸν αὐτὸν ὁμοίως ταμίαν γενέσθαι. [3] καὶ εἰ γνώμηι ἁμάρτοι, τοῖς αὑτοῦ κακοῖς ὀλοφυρθεὶς τάχ᾽ ἂν ἴσως καὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ποτὲ βουληθείη αὖθις φθονῆσαι).

action, in Hermocrates' estimation, stems from the acknowledgment and mastery, rather than the dismissal, of one's cravings. Thanks to Thucydides' verbal precision, the reader who has paid attention to passages such as 6.15.3, 24.4, and 33.2 knows that the Athenians possess no such capacity when it comes to the expedition of 415.

Other passages, in which ἐπιθυμία does not refer to Athens' citizens, provide the reader an additional means of distinguishing Athenian cravings as a particular type of eagerness. In contrast to the Athenians, citizens of separate *poleis* aim not for the control of others, but for personal and political autonomy and a cessation of hostilities. For example, the memory of Brasidas, honorable and shrewd (ἀρετὴ καὶ ξύνεσις), makes Athens' allies eager (**ἐπιθυμίαν**) to defect to Sparta's side, even after the general himself is killed in action.[311] The only explicit instance of Spartan ἐπιθυμία, furthermore, is their earnest desire to reclaim the 120 Spartiates taken prisoner at Sphacteria in 425.[312] In neither case does the eagerness of Athens' restless allies or of Sparta's citizens lead to action in the form of territorial acquisition. The allies strive for confederacy, not

[311] Thuc. 4.81.2: μάλιστα ἐπιθυμίαν ἐνεποίει τοῖς Ἀθηναίων ξυμμάχοις ἐς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους.
[312] Thuc. 5.15.1: **ἐπιθυμίαι** τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῶν ἐκ τῆς νήσου κομίσασθαι.

hegemony, and the Spartans, desperate for their men, are nonetheless willing to advocate patiently and repeatedly for a treaty with the Athenians.

Through his mindful application of ἐπιθυμία, Thucydides creates a consistent portrait of Athenian eagerness, first as a legitimate symptom of a devastating sickness, and then as an auxiliary element of the overwhelming, erotic desire that drives the actions of Athens' citizenry in 415. Ultimately, the historian marries the two, in his description of the horrifying end that many of Nicias' men meet in Sicily in 413. When the retreating soldiers catch sight of the Assinarus, they push forward towards the river, hoping not only to escape the assault of the Sicilian cavalry and auxiliary troops, but also: "because they were worn out and desperate for water" (ἅμα δ᾽ ὑπὸ τῆς ταλαιπωρίας καὶ **τοῦ πιεῖν ἐπιθυμίαι**, 7.84.2). As the men rush into the water, they begin to fall upon and trample one another, and some are swept away down the river in a tangled mass (7.84.3).

Thucydides' report of the congested melee at the Assinarus readily evokes his portrayal of the piled, half-dead bodies and aimless, wandering men who crowd around the wells during the plague at Athens.[313] Though ἐπιθυμία alone provides the verbal link between the two episodes, the impact of its

[313] On the Orphic overtone of these passages, see Connor 1984, 204 n.51.

reappearance in book 7 is particularly devastating. The dying men of book 2 long for water as the indiscriminate victims of a pervasive disease. The Athenian soldiers of book 7 fall prey to the same craving, yet they do so as men who have deliberately indulged their collective yearning for the erotic fulfillment that political acquisition and personal enrichment can provide.[314]

Thucydides' first and final uses of ἐπιθυμία are his most striking. Each of these two appearances sets a memorable image in the reader's mind, and provides, respectively, the initial warning and ultimate confirmation of the detrimental implications of Athenian eagerness. In between these appearances, furthermore, Thucydides focuses his reader's attentions on Athenian eagerness for one object in particular — Sicily — thereby entangling the expedition of 415-13 in a unique web of Athenian-specific craving and calamity.

After introducing ἐπιθυμία in book 2, Thucydides, careful and sparing in his subsequent use of the term, skillfully creates a verbal line of continuity between the episodes in which this zeal defines to Athenian actions. Unlike the eagerness which the allies or Spartans experience, *Athenian* ἐπιθυμία — whether due to circumstantial constraint (e.g., 2.52.2; 7.84.2) or unconstrained

[314] See Wohl 2002, 201-02.

determination (e.g., 6.15.3, 24.4) — is frequently erotic, and always self-destructive.

III. Athenians, grudges, and the gods (ἐπίφθονοι, θεοί) [315]

Just as Thucydides' Athenians are outstanding in the extent to which they are driven by, and entertain, their longings and desires, they are also unique for being the only men in the extant text who portray themselves as the objects of jealous regard (ἐπίφθονοι), both mortal and divine.[316] This jealousy initially comes from their fellow Hellenes, who bristle at Athenian command (ἀρχή), and who envy the Athenians for outshining them (λαμπρότης).[317] On the eve of the

[315] For a systematic overview of religion in Thucydides, see Marinatos 1981. On Thucydides' presentation of the breakdown of religious propriety during periods of war, see Price 2001, 217-36.

[316] Aside from the Athenians, the only other men connected to the same type of odium are those at Corcyra, who disregard religious propriety in favor of specious justifications for their unsavory actions (εὐσεβείαι μὲν οὐδέτεροι ἐνόμιζον, εὐπρεπείαι δὲ λόγου οἷς ξυμβαίη ἐπιφθόνως τι διαπράξασθαι, ἄμεινον ἤκουον, 3.82.8).

[317] Both ἐπίφθονοι and λαμπρότης are in sparse supply throughout the extant text: ἐπίφθονος appears only at 2.64.5 and 7.77.3; ἐπιφθόνως appears at 1.75.2 and 3.82.8. Thucydides uses λαμπρότης only six times: 2.64.5; 4.62.2; 6.16.5, 31.6; 7.69.2, 75.6. Both terms appear in sentiments regarding Athenian imperial ἀρχή. In their address to the Spartan assembly in 432/1 (1.75.1), the Athenian envoys decry the invidiousness that their ἀρχή invites from the other Hellenes: "Don't we deserve… at least when it comes to the command we possess, to avoid the burden of such excessive odium from the Hellenes?" ('ἆρ᾽ ἄξιοί ἐσμεν… **ἀρχῆς** γε ἧς ἔχομεν τοῖς Ἕλλησι μὴ οὕτως ἄγαν **ἐπιφθόνως** διακεῖσθαι). On the other hand, Pericles (2.64.5) argues that the pursuit of ἀρχή is bound to incur the overwhelming, jealous hatred of others (ὅστις δὲ ἐπὶμεγίστοις τὸ **ἐπίφθονον** λαμβάνει), but that this hatred is a small price to pay for the "immediate distinction

Sicilian Expedition, the Athenians who propagate the same envy amongst themselves as they compete for distinction. The desire for personal merit plays a role in the choice of commander,[318] and the expedition as a whole owes part of its fame to the overwhelming appearance of the Athenian armament (ὁ στόλος… **ὄψεως λαμπρότητι** περιβόητος ἐγένετο, 6.31.6).[319]

When the mission falls apart, however, the Athenians not only fail to achieve the type of excellence after which they strove, but also become the object of a divine jealousy that has no parallel in Thucydides' account. Throughout Thucydides' text, men of various *poleis* consider the gods as advisors regarding

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and future glory" (παραυτίκα τε **λαμπρότης** καὶ ἐς τὸ ἔπειτα δόξα) that accompany total command.

[318] Alcibiades picks up Pericles' argument from 2.64.5 (see just above), and its phrasing, when he claims that he is a more fitting choice than others for command in Sicily (καὶ προσήκει μοι μᾶλλον ἑτέρων, ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι, **ἄρχειν**, 6.16.1). See also Alcibiades' argument at Thuc. 6.16.3: "And given the degree to which I've stood out in the city through my [funding of] choruses or in other ways, it is only natural that the townspeople experience some envy" (καὶ ὅσα αὖ ἐν τῇι πόλει χορηγίαις ἢ ἄλλωι τωι **λαμπρύνομαι**, τοῖς μὲν ἀστοῖς **φθονεῖται** φύσει); and at 6.16.5: "I know that the sort of men who attain to some distinction are, in their lifetime, the objects of jealousy among their fellows, and especially among their social equals" (οἶδα δὲ τοὺς τοιούτους, καὶ ὅσοι ἔν τινος **λαμπρότητι** προέσχον, ἐν μὲν τῶι καθ᾽ αὑτοὺς βίωι λυπηροὺς ὄντας, τοῖς ὁμοίοις μὲν μάλιστα).

[319] Insofar as the strength of their military forces feeds their enthusiasm for conquest in 415, the Athenians pick up where they left off after their first Sicilian Expedition (427-24), during which their aggressive aims set them at odds with the island's inhabitants. In 424, Hermocrates had ultimately managed to unite the Sicilians against Athenian intervention with the promise of: "peace, with honors and merits that pose less of a threat [than war]" (καὶ τὰς τιμὰς καὶ **λαμπρότητας** ἀκινδυνοτέρας ἔχειν τὴν εἰρήνην 4.62.2).

appropriate practice,[320] as witnesses regarding ritual propriety,[321] as guarantors of political efficacy and military success,[322] or as the rightful dedicatees of honors, sacrifices, and sacrosanct territory.[323] Unique among these various perceptions, however, is the explanation of divine jealousy and retribution that Nicias offers his despondent men in book 7.[324]

As the Athenians' erotically-driven hopes for success reach the point of frustration, Nicias does his best to encourage his men, urging them to focus on the possibility of a return home. The desperation of the situation, however, forces the general to resort to perfunctory appeals to Athenian exceptionalism and a mechanical evocation of divine support: "[Nicias] called again on his captains, one by one…not to relinquish an ounce of the distinction they each already had (ὧι ὑπῆρχε **λαμπρότητός** τι)… and added… readymade appeals to wives, children, and the national gods (**θεοὺς πατρώιους**),[325] that men wheel out

[320] E.g., Thuc. 1.25.1, 118.3, 123.1, 134.4; 3.92.5; 5.30.1, 32.1.
[321] E.g., Thuc. 1.71.5, 78.4; 2.71.4, 74.2; 3.58.1, 59.2; 4.87.2, 97.4; 5.30.3, 77.4. For an analysis of the gods as witnesses to oaths in ancient Greece, see Sommerstein and Torrance (eds.) 2014.
[322] E.g., Thuc. 1.86.5, 123.2; 2.54.4.
[323] E.g., Thuc. 2.15.3-4; 3.50.2, 58.5; 4.92.7, 116.2, 118.3; 5.49.5; 6.54.6.
[324] See Connor 1984, 201-2.
[325] As the battle unfolds, the gods appear indifferent to the Athenians' cries for salvation (**θεῶν**, 7.71.3); Nicias' personal piety, furthermore, bears no advantage for him or his men (πολλὰ μὲν ἐς **θεοὺς** νόμιμα δεδιήτημαι, 7.77.2).

whenever they discard any concern for sounding old-fashioned."[326] The divine aid, in which Nicias encourages the men to place their hopes, never comes. Rather, when the Athenians lose the battle in the harbor, the gods become the stated gatekeepers of the mortals' retreat from desperate circumstances, and the ones (like Kypris in Euripides' Helen) with an axe to grind when it comes to the Athenians' indulgence of their cravings for enrichment and expansion.

After the Athenians and their allies fail to break out of the harbor, and their armament has lost all claim to its former renown, they turn instead to a retreat by land.[327] Nicias places their salvation in the hands of vengeful gods, whose jealousy has — the general hopes — reached its peak and can only subside: "If we offended one of the gods (**τωι θεῶν ἐπίφθονοι**) through our expedition, we have more than paid the price at this point… and now we are right to hope for milder treatment from this god (ἀπὸ **τοῦ θεοῦ**), for we are

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[326] Thuc. 7.69.2: [ὁ δὲ Νικίας] αὖθις τῶν τριηράρχων ἕνα ἕκαστον ἀνεκάλει…ὧι ὑπῆρχε λαμπρότητός τι, μὴ προδιδόναι… ἄλλα τε λέγων…ὄντες ἄνθρωποι οὐ πρὸς τὸ δοκεῖν τινὶ ἀρχαιολογεῖν φυλαξάμενοι εἴποιεν ἄν, καὶ ὑπὲρ ἁπάντων παραπλήσια ἔς τε γυναῖκας καὶ παῖδας καὶ θεοὺς πατρώιους προφερόμενα.

[327] Thuc. 7.75.6: "And aside from the outrage [they felt], the utter proliferation of their failure, even if lightened by virtue of its being shared among many, also did not rest easy with them at the present moment, especially given their transition from so glorious and prideful a beginning to such a lowly end" (καὶ μὴν ἡ ἄλλη αἰκία καὶ ἡ ἰσομοιρία τῶν κακῶν, ἔχουσά τινα ὅμως τὸ μετὰ πολλῶν κούφισιν, οὐδ᾽ ὡς ῥαιδία ἐν τῶι παρόντι ἐδοξάζετο, ἄλλως τε καὶ ἀπὸ οἵας **λαμπρότητος** καὶ αὐχήματος τοῦ πρώτου ἐς οἵαν τελευτὴν καὶ ταπεινότητα ἀφῖκτο).

more deserving, at present, of the gods' pity than we are of their hatred."[328] Yet Nicias does not ultimately attempt to convince his fellow Athenians to abandon the ἐπιθυμία for political enrichment that propelled the expedition: "the rest of you [allied soldiers] may yet look upon that which you desire (ὧν **ἐπιθυμεῖτέ** που ἐπιδεῖν), while the Athenians will certainly build (ἐπανορθώσοντες) the city's greatness back up, lapsed as it is" (7.77.7).[329] As a collective, the allied troops long only to return home; as a mobile representation of the Athenian *polis* (ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλις, 7.77.7), the Athenian troops cannot see past their craving for exceptionality, a yearning that costs them both divine favor and collective distinction.

The few who do make it home in the summer of 413,[330] furthermore, return to a *polis* led by men whose perfunctory acts of ritual propriety do not prevent them from perverting Athens' legislative agenda. The final appearance of the gods, named as such, occurs in Thucydides' account of the initial actions that the 400 take when they seize power at Athens in the summer of 411. The

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[328] Thuc. 7.77.3-4: εἴ τωι θεῶν ἐπίφθονοι ἐστρατεύσαμεν, ἀποχρώντως ἤδη τετιμωρήμεθα...καὶ ἡμᾶς εἰκὸς νῦν τά τε ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐλπίζειν ἠπιώτερα ἕξειν (οἴκτου γὰρ ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν ἀξιώτεροι ἤδη ἐσμὲν ἢ φθόνου). Scholars disagree as to whether Nicias has a specific offense in mind. For a summary of recent positons, see Hornblower 2008, n. 7.77.3.

[329] Thuc. 7.77.7: οἵ τε ἄλλοι τευξόμενοι ὧν ἐπιθυμεῖτέ που ἐπιδεῖν καὶ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὴν μεγάλην δύναμιν τῆς πόλεως καίπερ πεπτωκυῖαν ἐπανορθώσοντες.

[330] Thuc. 7.87.6: "And few out of many made the journey back home" (καὶ ὀλίγοι ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπ᾽οἴκου ἀπενόστησαν).

conspirators begin their first official council meeting by drawing lots and making the customary sacrifices to the gods (πρὸς **τοὺς θεοὺς** εὐχαῖς καὶ θυσίαις καθιστάμενοι), but it is not long before: "they made considerable alterations to the internal administration of the popular government… and held sway over the various functions of the city by force."[331]

As Athens' current crop of oligarchs, the 400 immediately prove themselves less scrupulous even than did the Peisistratids following Hipparchus' murder. The latter were, in the collective Athenian psyche, the prime example of repressive, limited rule, yet Athens' most infamous tyrants also provided exorbitant sacrifices for the temples and dedicated new altars, all while adhering to a predictable and customary legislative agenda (cf. 6.54.5-6).[332]

The sacrifices of the 400, in contrast to those encouraged by the Peisistratids, appear to be just as fruitless for the actual *polis* as were Nicias' evocations of god and country before the mobile *polis* of Athenian and allied troops (7.69.2). Unlike the pious general, however, the 400 are operating under no significant constraints. Their religious display is insincere rather than misguided. And, like the novel agenda the oligarchs pursue, it is a far cry from

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[331] Thuc. 8.70.1: πολὺ μεταλλάξαντες τῆς τοῦ δήμου διοικήσεως… τά τε ἄλλα ἔνεμον κατὰ κράτος τὴν πόλιν.
[332] See Hornblower 2008, n. 70.1.

the foundational religious and political ideals from which Nicias encourages his men to draw courage.

IV. Athenian (verbal) exceptionalism

As he constructs his account of the erotic impulses that underlie Athens' most disastrous military mission, Thucydides selects a handful of terms that are exclusive (ἔρως, πόθος, ποθεινός) or almost exclusive (ἐπιφθονός) to a limited number of passages, and to Athenian actors and actions. To these terms, he consistently joins others that occur throughout his text, and in reference to various Hellenic populations (ἐπιθυμία, θεός). When the terms in more general rotation appear alongside those in limited use, Thucydides alters the implications of the former group: the Spartan longing for peace becomes the Athenian yearning for military aggression; the gods do not foster stability, but harbor a unique and vengeful resentment. As such, Thucydides develops a vocabulary of key terms, which the reader comes to define relative to their description of Athenian motivations and actions.

In books 6-8 in particular, alongside each exclusively-Athenian term (e.g., ἔρως, πόθος), Thucydides piles up Athenian-specific examples of additional

terms, with each new ἐπιθυμία or θεός like one more straw added to the camel's back. Of course, Thucydides does not take his reader through to the point of Athens' collapse, and the historian even provides several reminders of instances in which Athens' enemies misjudged the city's resilience (e.g., 7.28.3; 8.2, 24.4-5). The historian's verbal precision, however, provides unmistakable, if subtle, evidence of a persistent state of personal and political decay among Athens' men, and one that is specific to these men alone.

As such, the historian's account of the Sicilian Expedition and its aftermath provides a verbal illustration of his claim that the Athenians: "did not give in until they made the mistake of becoming caught up in their own private disagreements" (καὶ οὐ πρότερον ἐνέδοσαν ἢ αὐτοὶ ἐν σφίσι κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας διαφορὰς περιπεσόντες ἐσφάλησαν, 2.65.12). On a verbal level, the Athenians, from the moment they ratify the expedition in 415, do more than disagree with one another. Rather, they stand apart from their fellow Hellenes as a collective of men who are determined to drive themselves to the edge of destruction, through the indulgence of erotic imperatives and impious laxity.

Conclusion

Euripides, in his trilogies of 415 and 412, focuses on a particular set of key, thematic and verbal elements, with a degree of cohesion and emphasis that he does not observe in his earlier works. As a result, the tragedies that belong to these years include specific innovations on well-represented elements of Euripidean tragedy. The works of 415 showcase a situation in which the decay of a city's conceptual structures — in particular its religious customs and social hierarchies — cannot be separated from the decay of its physical structures. The works of 412 do not focus on the *polis* as an organism, but they do carry on the investigation into the disastrous and violent consequences that are, in Euripides' tragic universe, the natural result when one's commitment to public definitions of pious conduct loses out to the impulse to secure one's private aspirations.

If Euripides' thematic focal points seem to us well-suited to the times in which he selected them, our impression is likely due, in part, to Thucydides' own instincts and choices regarding the most authoritative manner in which to describe the actual lives of the men who formed Euripides' audience. Indeed, if we consider Thucydides' account of Athens between 416/5-11, we can identify a thematic and verbal substructure that is remarkably consistent with Euripides' own. In 415, the Athenian *polis* begins to fragment — in a way that is

unparalleled in Thucydides' extant account — under the combined pressures of impious actions, personal aspirations, and erotic impulses. The capitulation to the latter sets the stage for the depraved violence that grips the city in 411, and for the rise of the select few who enable this violence in order to ensure the success of their own aims.

The instinct to glimpse particular Athenian affairs, as Thucydides describes them, behind the action of Euripides' tragedies is an understandable one, but it requires cautious indulgence. Thucydides could not have composed his account of 415 prior to Euripides' composition of his *Troiades, Alexandros,* and *Palamedes*. He also could not have written up his account of 411 in advance of the Dionysia at which *Helen* and *Andromeda* appeared in 412. In these years, we cannot say that Thucydides is behind Euripides.

We can, as many scholars have, consider how each author partook of an ongoing cultural conversation, promulgated among a wide field of contemporary artists, thinkers, and public figures. I have attempted to demonstrate that we can also profit from a more focused approach, by considering how the distinct thematic groundwork, which underlies Euripides' works of 415 and 412, is one which Thucydides also puts to good use as the literary underpinning of his own account.

If we consider how the thematic confluences between authors can be the result of the individual choices of each, as well as of the general Zeitgeist that helped to shape these choices, we may ultimately perceive a greater degree of nuance in the tenor and appearance of the epoch in question. There is no reason to doubt that the authors of the last quarter of the 5th century may all have been experimenting with shared language and ideas, and if we step back far enough, the communal elements of the era can create the impression of a smooth complexion.[333] However, the view under the microscope is important, too, for it reveals the variegated cells that contribute to the comprehensive whole.

Upon close inspection, it is clear that Euripides' works of 415 and 412, and Thucydides' narrative of 416/5-412/1, differ in comparable ways from the cells that surround them. Like the human complexion, the era to which these works belong gains its color from depth as well as breadth. Euripides' depiction of Troy is embedded in a layer that sits, in time, beneath Thucydides' portrait of Athens' exploits in Sicily. On the other hand, Euripides' impious and self-serving Helen provides a model for the Athenians as they proceed along the path to oligarchy,

[333] For a related argument on the similarities between Herodotus and his contemporary authors, see Griffin 2006, 46-59.

yet she also reflects human tendencies that Thucydides himself identifies throughout his narrative.

Surely, one can trace the influence of a number of Thucydides' predecessors and contemporaries throughout the *Histories*.[334] With respect to books 6 and 8 in particular, however, there is good reason to look closely at the manner in which Euripides' thematic choices can provide either a stable foundation for, or an important counterpart to Thucydides' own. Between 416/5 and 412, Euripides chooses to create and present a handful of distinct narratives, each of which turns upon a specific progression of religious, political, and/or emotional corruption. When he sets himself the task of accurately representing the same period, Thucydides decides to utilize a strikingly comparable progression, a progression that transforms a record of researched events into a thematically-rich history.

The playwright could not have predicted for sure how the expedition in Sicily was to unfold, nor could he have known the residual effects of the loss on

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[334] To take one example, scholars have been interested in and posited parallels (structural, linguistic, conceptual) between Aeschylus and Thucydides. Often, the two authors are read as having similar moral and stylistic sobriety, and commentary on this matter existed even in antiquity. In *On Demosthenes,* Dionysius cites Aeschylus, Thucydides, and Pindar as men who represent αὐστηρά ἁρμονία, and whose writings are composed in an old fashioned style (τό ἀρχαιοπρεπὲς διώκουσα, 39). For modern studies, see, e.g., Cornford 1907, 129-73; Smertenko 1932, 233-35; Stoessl 1952, 113-39; Williams 1998, 56-62; Samons 1999, 221-33; Visvardi 2015, 51-85.

the personal and political conduct of Athens' men. Yet the model of uniquely-intermingled religious disrespect, social infighting, and erotic abandon — around which Euripides builds his paradigmatic city at war (415), and which he uses to restructure old stories into novel edifices (412) — this model may indeed have predicted, in the truest sense of the word, the elements according to which Thucydides would later organize his equally-exceptional account of these same years.

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