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THEATRE AND METATHEATRE

DEFINITIONS, PROBLEMS, LIMITS

Edited by
Elodie Paillard and Silvia Milanezi

Theatre and Metatheatre

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Contents

Acknowledgements —— V

Elodie Paillard and Silvia Milanezi
‘“Theatre”, “Paratheatre”, “Metatheatre”: What Are We Talking About?’ —— 1

Theatre and Paratheatre

Definitions and Limits of Theatrical Performances

Oliver Taplin
‘Diffused Performance and Core Performance of Greek Theatre’ —— 21

Andrea Giannotti
‘(Un)Masking the πόλις: The Pre-Play Ceremonies of the Athenian Great Dionysia as Theatrical Performances?’ —— 29

Elodie Paillard
‘Greek to Latin and Back: Did Roman Theatre Change Greek Theatre?’ —— 63

Paratheatre

Mali Skotheim
‘Defining Paratheatre, From Grotowski to Antiquity’ —— 89

Metatheatre

Theoretical Aspects

Anton Bierl
‘New Thoughts on Metatheatre in Attic Drama: Self-Referentiality, Ritual and Performativity as Total Theatre’ —— 107

Performative Aspects

Matteo Capponi
'A Gesture That Reveals Itself As a Gesture: Thinking About the Metatheatricality of the Body in Greek Tragedy' —— 133

Case Studies

Tragedy

Emilie Ruch
'Metatheatre and Dramaturgical Innovation: A Study of Recognition Scenes in Euripides' Tragedies *Electra, Helen, Iphigenia in Tauris,* and *Ion*' —— 153

Pascale Brillet-Dubois
'The Mask of Troy: Metatheatre in the Prologue and Final *kommos* of Euripides' *Troades*' —— 177

Aristophanes, Old Comedy

Marco Vespa
'Animal Metaphors and Metadrama. A Cultural Insight into the Verb πιθηκίζειν' —— 193

Loredana Di Virgilio
'Ar. *Eccl.* 889 ὅμως ἔχει τερπνόν τι καὶ κωμῳδικόν. A Comedy's Self-Consideration of Its Lyrical Forms at the Dawn of "Middle Comedy"?' —— 213

Mimes

Anne Duncan
'Mime and Metatheatre' —— 235

Abbreviations —— 253

Bibliography —— 257

List of Contributors —— 285

Index verborum —— 289

Index locorum —— 295

Elodie Paillard and Silvia Milanezi

'"Theatre", "Paratheatre", "Metatheatre": What Are We Talking About?'

The need for a more thoughtful discussion of what specialists of the ancient theatre understand when they use the words 'theatre', 'paratheatre', and 'metatheatre' became apparent during a study day devoted to the question of the audience of Greco-Roman theatre, organized in December 2017 within the framework of a *groupe de recherche* directed by Brigitte Le Guen.[1] During the discussions that took place at this meeting we realized even more clearly than before that scholars were using the terms 'theatre', 'paratheatre', and 'metatheatre' in various and sometimes contradictory ways.

Colleagues included in and excluded from their respective definitions of theatre different types of performances. For some, 'theatre' can only take place in a theatre building, whereas others are ready to include forms of entertainment that took place outside of theatre buildings within what they consider 'theatre'. Some limit their definitions of 'theatre' to the most formalized types of drama (essentially tragedy and comedy), while others also consider as theatre more diffuse forms of entertainment, even without always specifying according to what criteria such determination is made. Moreover, explicit definitions of what is and what is not treated as theatre rarely feature in works published on relevant topics, or in definitions of the scope of research projects devoted to ancient Greek theatre.

As for 'metatheatre', its uses in one of the publications discussed during the course of this study day[2] were so numerous and so distinct that one could not help but feel that further discussion would lead to stimulating exchanges and to a better grasp of this sometimes-elusive concept. Metatheatre is variously understood as theatricality, reflexivity, auto-referentiality, forms of theatrical illusion, or what is called play-within-the-play. While in the past some have considered metatheatre to consist in the breaking of the theatrical illusion or the crossing of the fourth wall, others have argued that such a phenomenon does

1 GDR 3279 THEATHRE (Théâtre antique: textes, histoire, reception), funded by the *CNRS* (France) and devoted to the history of ancient theatre. The aim of the meeting was to present and discuss two recent publications: Elodie Paillard (2017), *The Stage and the City. Non-élite Characters in the Tragedies of Sophocles*, and Marion Faure-Ribreau (2017), C*onfrontations Plaute/Aristophane*.

2 Faure-Ribreau (2017).

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not apply to the ancient theatre. Scholars who had contributed to the volume edited by Marion Faure-Ribreau had thus already called for caution in the use of the term 'metatheatre'.

These different points of view on theatre and metatheatre prompted us to invite scholars from various methodological backgrounds to further discuss and explicitly define 'theatre', 'paratheatre', 'metatheatre' at the occasion of a conference held in Basel in November 2018.[3] Once again, the large number of different approaches and understandings of these concepts, as well as the rich dialogue that took place between scholars, led us to believe that the publication of a collective volume dedicated to these methodological and terminological questions would be a valuable contribution to the field of ancient theatre studies. Authors were asked to reflect on 'how far extended and diverse theatre-like and theatre-related activities were in the Greek and Roman world',[4] but also what exactly these concepts were thought to encompass within their own research and writing.

Proposals for papers focusing on definitions of metatheatre were more numerous than those addressing the limits and definition of 'Greek theatre' (and 'paratheatre', which often seems to sit precisely on the moving boundaries of the concept of 'theatre'). This came as a relative surprise, given that in recent years important progress had been made in ancient theatre studies and given the fact that this project called for a broad discussion of this field in particular. We have resolved to preserve this imbalance in the numbers of chapters dedicated respectively to theatre and paratheatre and to metatheatre, as this reveals part of what prompted us to edit this collective volume to begin with: that is, scholars apparently rarely feel the need to think deeply and critically about what they understand when using the expression 'ancient Greek theatre' (whereas the need to define one's conception of metatheatre is more often explicated). It is hoped that the contributions presented here will reveal the gap that can exist between one person's understanding of 'theatre', 'paratheatre', and/or 'metatheatre' and another's. While these discrepancies can lead to misunderstandings or false generalizations, they can also be a source of stimulating dialogue regarding the concepts themselves.

Before summarizing the contributions to this volume, it is worth briefly mentioning how ancient Greeks understood *theetron*/*theatron* and what they

3 The conference was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and the Centre de Recherche en Histoire européenne comparée (CRHEC) of the University of Paris-Est-Créteil.

4 See Taplin in this volume.

meant by this term.[5] According to P. Chantraine,[6] the term *theatron* derives from the noun *thea*, 'show, performance', and the suffix *-tron* designates a place 'where there is an audience' or a place in which an object of contemplation – a show or a performance – occurs before an audience.

If θαιετρα stands for θέατρα, the first occurrence of the word 'theatre' would date back to the 7th or to the 6th century BC in Tiryns.[7] However, the earliest literary attestations of *theetron* in the fifth century BC present the Ionian form, while the Attic form appears in the last quarter of the same century.[8] The reverse situation appears in epigraphic evidence from the fourth century BC onwards, with the Attic form appearing first and then giving way again to the Ionian spelling by Late Antiquity.[9] There is often a gap between the way we use the term *theatron* to refer to performative spaces (any building, temporary or permanent, in which a performance took place[10]) and what the ancient sources themselves reveal concerning such spaces. For example, while the theatre of Thorikos is attested archaeologically between the end of the sixth and the beginning of the fifth century BC,[11] the term *theatron* does not appear in the epigraphic record associated with this deme. However, even if the theatre of Thorikos had been completely buried or destroyed, we could still have assumed its existence from epigraphic allusions to the Dionysia, to the contests, to the *choregiai*, and to

5 This part stems from the reflections presented by Silvia Milanezi at the conference held in Basel in 2018.

6 Chantraine (1999) s.v. θεάτρον.

7 See *NGSL* 6, Lupu (2005). This document probably alludes to an assembly held at the theatre of Tiryns.

8 Hdt. 6.21; 6.67. For *theatron,* see Ar. *Eq*. 233 and Thuc. 8.93.

9 Even though the reform of the alphabet occurred in Attica under Eucleides' archontate, *theatron* was used from the fourth century BC onwards: see *IG* II^2 223, face B, l. 8, 343/2 BC. Yet, in Late Antiquity, precisely at the end of the fourth century/beginning of the fifth century AD, we also find *theetron*, *IG* II^2 5021, l. 1 = *IG* II^2 13293, l. (Phaidros' *bema* dedicace). As for Ionia, the use of *theatron* is widely spread out: *IK Priene* 19, 330–300 BC, l. 32 (restitution); *Ephesos* 36, 302/301 BC, l. 3; *Erythrai* 21, 2.3.1, l. 32. In the Aegean Islands, particularly in Kos, *theatron* is presumably used from the fourth century BC onwards, *IG* XI.2 142, l. 27, 315–300 BC; *IG* XII.4 1.75, face A, fr. 1, l. 25, 202/201 BC; *IG* XII.5 1010, l. 3, third century BC (Ios), while *theetron* seems to be used only in Kos *IG* XII.4 1.129, fr. X, 67, l. 71, 306–301 BC.

10 For the temporary buildings, see Cratinus fr. 360 K.-A.; Ar. *Thesm*. 395; Hesych. *Lexicon* ι 501, ἴκρια· καὶ τὰ ξύλινα οὕτως ἐλέγοντο Ἀθήνησιν, ἀφ' ὧν ἐθεῶντο, πρὸ τοῦ τὸ ἐν Διονύσου θέατρον γενέσθαι; *Sud*. αι 35; ι 275; Pseudo-Zonar. *Lexicon* ι 1101, Ἰκρίον· τὸ ὀρθὸν ξύλον, ἢ ὁ σταυρὸς, ἢ ἡ φούλκα, ἢ σανιδώματα τῆς νηὸς, καὶ τὰ τῶν θεάτρων, ἃ ἦσαν ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις. ἐπὶ ξύλων γὰρ ἐκάθηντο, πρὶν γένηται τὸ θεάτρον·ικρίον ἐπὶ ξύλων καὶ ἐκάθηντο, πρὶν γένηται τὸ θεάτρον. On the *ikria*, see Papastamati-von Moock (2014) 20; 53; 66.

11 See Hackens (1968) 105–118; Paga (2010) 355; Moretti (2014) 108.

the actors performing in this Attic deme, some of which date from the fifth century BC;[12] yet no direct mention of a *theatron* of Thorikos is extant. What is designated as *theatron*/*theetron* in the epigraphical sources may directly describe a building housing *agones*, but may also signal a site of political gatherings. In these places honours, whether or not they were associated with *agones*, were awarded, publicized and memorialized.[13]

However, if the etymology of *theetron/theatron* seems to indicate a physical space, the first occurrence of the term in Greek literary sources designates an audience attending a specific performance: Phrynichus' *Capture of Miletus*.[14] Although ancient authors could refer to the audience as *theatai* or *theomenoi*, the term *theatron* is widely used metonymically to mean 'audience' in drama.[15] From the fifth century onwards this meaning for *theatron*, and that of performative space for dramatic venues, recur regularly in literary sources.[16] Becoming the centre of ancient *poleis*, theatres came to be strategic places assuring the citizens' security, a place to keep weapons during critical times, a place to gather and

12 See *IG* I^3 256 bis, *c*.440–420 BC; *IG* I^3 258 bis, *c*.420 BC; *Thorikos* VIII 75, fifth century-fourth century BC; *Thorikos* VIII 76, *c*.375–325 BC; *Thorikos* IX 83 and 84, *c*.375–325 BC.

13 For assemblies in the theatre, see *IG* II^2 357, l. 6, 327/6 BC; *IG* II^2 389, ll. 5–6, 319/8 BC; for Dionysiac contests and the awarding of honours, see *IG* II^2 555, ll. 21–23, 307/6–304/3 BC; *CID* 4.88, l. 6, end of the third/beginning of the second century BC; honorific decrees, *IG* II^2 223, face B, left 1, l. 8, 343/2 BC; *IScM* I 8, Istros, third century BC; publication of documents: *IG* II^2 410, ll. 38–39, *c*.330 BC; other *timai*, such as statues, *IG* II^2 648, ll. 3–4, 295/4 BC; *Magnesia* 85, l. 12, n. d.; list of choragic donations: *Iasos* 103, second/first century BC; prescriptions concerning rituals that the priest of Dionysos should perform in the theatre, *IK Priene* 144, *c*.130 BC; oracle concerning the construction of a theatre, *Miletos* 479, *c*. AD 120; dedication within the theatre (its parts such as *kerkeida, pselidas*, *triton diazoma, etc.*): *Aphrodisias* 99. On the awards of honours in the theatre, see Giannotti, this volume.

14 Hdt. 6.21; Ar. *Ach*. 629; *Eq*. 233; 508; 1318; *Pax* 735; Pl. *Leg*. 659a; Alciphr. *Letters of the Courtesans* 4.19.5 (Glycera to Menander).

15 For *theatai*, see Ar. *Eq*. 36; 288; 1210; *Nub*. 575; 1096; *Vesp*. 1013; *Pax* 43; *Thesm*. 391; *Ran*. 919; *Eccl*. 1141, etc. For *theomenoi*, see *Ach*. 497; *Eq*. 327; *Nub*. 518; *Pax* 658, etc. For *theatron*, see Ar. *Ach*. 629; *Eq*. 233; 508; 1318; *Pax* 735; Pl. Com. *Alliance*, fr. 167 K.-A. *Theatron* may also refer, as in Ael. *VH* 2.13, to a good place, a good seat in the theatre, that is to say, among the audience, such as that in which Socrates settled down to attend Aristophanes' *Clouds*: ἐν καλῷ τοῦ θεάτρου ἐκάθητο. See also Aeschin. 2.55, θέαν εἰς Διονύσια κατανεῖναι τοῖς πρέσβεσιν and Σ *ad* Aeschin. 2.55, in which instead of *theatron* we find *thea*, meaning a place in the theatre: θέαν] τόπον ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ φησίν, ἐν ᾧ καθεζόμενοι θεῶνται τοὺς ἀγῶνας ἐν τοῖς Διονυσίοις.

16 For performative space, see Pl. *Symp*. 194a-b; *Grg*. 502d; *Resp*. 604e; Xen. *Hell*. 4.4.3; Isoc. 8.82; Isoc. 12.22; Dem. 21.1; 21.7; 21.59 etc.; Dem. 18.28; Aesch. 2.55; Theophr. *Char*. 11.3; Alciphr. *Letters of the Courtesans* ('Menander to Glycera') 4.18.10; Ael. *VH* 2.13; *NA* 2.11; 6.1 etc.

control the city.[17] By the same token, theatres were potentially dangerous places: seditious factions of a city as well as external enemies could take advantage of theatrical venues to overthrow a government or impose one's own rule.[18] Less violent activities also took place in theatres: sometimes doctors performed surgeries in theatres in the hope of attracting patients.[19] People also used these spaces, especially during performances, to put on a show politically or socially[20] or to pick new lovers.[21] The centrality of the theatre and of drama in Athens prompted Plato to dub Athens a theatrocracy.[22] Later, the early Church Fathers did not spare of criticism their contemporaries' infatuation with the theatrical world, an infatuation which was then just as powerful as the passion that had dominated Athenians and Romans in past centuries.[23] And theatre became a widespread metaphor as well.[24]

It remains to be seen how Greek lexicographers defined *theatron*. More often than not (in a way that reminds one of the attitude of many contemporary scholars) they did not seem to have felt the need to define or explain the meaning of *theatron*, probably assuming that their contemporaries knew well to what that term referred. One such author rather unhelpfully glosses the term *theatreion* as *theatron*.[25] However, to what reality did these terms refer? To the Greek theatre or to the amphitheatre?[26] Did the lexicographers consider the theatre to be one particular performative space or did they use this term indistinctly as a generic name for any place in which θέαι occurred? By the fourth century BC, Hyperides made a clear distinction between the Athenian buildings used for performative shows, such as the theatre and the odeum, and other structures, just as Pollux and

17 Aen. Tact. *Poliorcetica* 3.5.3.

18 See, respectively, Polyaen. *Strategemata* 6.10; Aen. Tact. *Poliorcetica* 22.4.3. According to Diod. Sic. 14.86, performative venues contributed to the eruption of *staseis*. See also Polyaen. *Strategemata* 4.6. A foreign power could know the potential number of its enemies thanks to their attendance at the theatres. On this topic, see Polyaen. *Strategemata* 5.44; Aen. Tact. *Poliorcetica* 1.9.2.

19 Plut. *Mor*. 71a32.

20 Isoc. 8.82; Aesch. 2.55; Aesch. 3.76; Plut. *Mor*. 58c15; 63a22.

21 Ath. 4.157a; Anaxandr. *Odysseus* fr. 35 K.-A. suggest that the theatre was a place to flirt, as someone who used to eye nice-looking boys was called θεατροποιός.

22 Pl. *Leg*. 701a.

23 See Tert. *Apol*. 6.2–3; 36.4; Lactant. *Div. inst*. 6.21.2–3.

24 Clem. Al. *Paedagogus* 2.4.40 (theatre of drunkenness); 3.11.76 (chair of pestilence). For previous metaphors, see Isoc. 6. *Archidamus* 106; see also Plut. *Mor*. (*Sayings of Kings and Commanders*) 178a (theatre of glory); 183d (theatre of actions); 193e (orchestra of war).

25 See *Sud*. θ 87.

26 For a definition of amphitheatre, see *Sud*. α 1730.

Plutarch would do later.[27] It is likely that at some point theatre became a generic term to designate performative spaces, particularly built ones. Indeed, evoking the odeum, Pausanias says that it is called a theatre, while Photius and some lexi-cographers of the *Suda* observe that it is *like* a theatre (ὥσπερ θεάτρον).[28] On the other hand, *theatron* may also designate an amphitheatre. Dio Cassius, reporting Caesar's triumph, underlines the construction of 'a sort of theatre', i.e., an amphitheatre, which acted as a venue for *venationes*.[29]

One common way to use the term 'theatre' today is to denote the performance in itself. Yet, it seems that *theatron* takes this meaning only in the New Testament.[30] Although we cannot assert that this usage follows an earlier trend, what is certain is that the usual generic term denoting a performance was θέη/θέα and θέαμα. From the Classical era onwards, if θέα and θέαμα could in general designate musical and dramatic performances linked to the Dionysiac *agones*,[31] we also see the word 'drama' and 'pragma' being used by playwrights and philosophers to define dramatic 'scripts' and performances.[32] Thus, while θέα and θέαμα continued to designate shows or performances in general, including

27 Hyp. fr. 118 Kenyon; Poll. *Onomasticon* 9.44; Plut. *Mor.* (*On Listening to Lectures*) 42 a. See also Heracl. Pont. *Description of Greece* fr. 1 Müller.

28 Paus. 1.8.6; see also *Lexica Segueriana* ω 317: Ὠιδεῖον θεάτρον Ἀθήνησιν. For Phot. *Lexicon* ω 659 (Ἀθήνησιν ὥσπερ θεάτρον·); *Sud.* ω 18 (Ἀθήνησιν ὥσπερ θεάτρον·).

29 Dio. Cass. 43.22.2: θέατρον τι κυνηγετικὸν ἰκριώσας, ὅ καὶ ἀμφιθέατρον ἐκ τοῦ πέριξ πανταχόθεν ἕδρας ἄνευ σκηνῆς ἔχει προσερρήθη. See also Porph. *De abstinentia* 3.20.6, who, commenting on the cruelty of human beings, observes that the slaughtering of animals took place during shows held in the amphitheatres and during hunting parties.

30 See I *Ep. Cor.* 4.9, where Paul calls the apostles 'a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to human beings'. However, cf. *Acts* 19.29; 19.31.

31 For θέαμα, see Pl. Com. *Theatrical Gear* fr. 138 K.-A.; for θέα, Theophr. *Char.* 5.7; 30.6, and 9.5, although in this last occurrence there is no mention of theatre. On this *thea* and *theoria*, see also Giannotti in this volume.

32 On scripts, see Taplin in this volume. See Ar. *Ach.* 415 (Euripides' props belonging to his performances); *Pax* 793–795 (Carcinos' drama to be performed); *Thesm.* 149–151 (Agathon's drama); 166 (Phrynichus' drama); *Ran.* 947 (Euripides' drama); *Ran.* 920–923 (Aeschylus' performance of *Niobe*); *Ran.* 1021–1022 (Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* drama and performance), *Incertae fabulae* fr. 696 K.-A. (Aeschylus' *Phrygians*); Stratt. *Anthroporraistes* fr. 1 K.-A. (Euripides' cleverest drama, *Orestes*); Telecl. *Incertae fabulae* fr. 41 (Euripides' partners in drama, Mnesilochus and Socrates); Alex. *Gynecocracy* fr. 42 K.-A.; Antiphanes *Poiesis* fr. 189 K.-A.; Pl. *Symp.* 222d; Arist. *Poet.* 1448a28. For *pragma*, see Euripides' tragic closure line: τοιόνδ'ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα (*Alc.* 1163; *Andr.* 1288; *Hel.* 1692, etc.). For drama as performance, see Phot. *Lexicon* δ 743; *Sud.* δ 1498; Pseudo-Zonaras *Lexicon* δ 571, δρᾶμα is τὸ ποίημα καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα. On theatre/drama and performance, see Taplin and Paillard in this volume.

musical or 'paratheatrical' ones such as those of *akroamata* or *theatristai*,[33] the words 'drama' and 'pragma' were reserved for performances of a more formally theatrical nature (tragedies, satyr dramas, and comedies, for example).

Theatre/drama was a total show, an extraordinary experience that fascinated ancient cities. Imitation of action, as Aristotle puts it,[34] drama was a complex monument mingling ritual and politics, making all kinds of skills and arts its own. Inspired by everyday life, it inspired it in turn, nourishing conversations, stimulating minds, seeping into the assemblies and the courts, creeping into streets and houses where professional performers or the everyday man could reenact selected pieces, reading, reciting, dancing or singing them, creating new shows. An ancient mass medium *par excellence*, theatre spread around the Greek and Roman World and beyond.

For Greeks and Romans, *theatron* was a protean term, a complex reality, one they did not need to explain because it was so deeply embedded in their world and lives.[35] During the last decades, an increasing number of aspects of ancient theatre have become better understood thanks to new directions of research. Recent studies have not only helped highlight the role and place of theatre/drama in the ancient world but have also contributed to the dusting off of some stereotypes about theatrical space and world, performers and performances, transforming and reinvigorating a subdiscipline which has become one of the leading trends within the field of Classics.[36] A shift away from the understanding of 'Greek theatre' as a mere collection of texts composed by a few authors in Classical Athens has now occurred: it is high time to rethink what we include under the terms 'ancient Greek theatre', 'paratheatre', and 'metatheatre'.

33 Xen. *Symp*. 2.2; 7.5; Hesych. *Lexicon* η 238; Phot. *Lexicon* η 64; *Sud*. η 156; Pseudo-Zonar. *Lexicon* η 980; *Lexica Segueriana* η 249.

34 Arist. *Poet*. 1448a28–29.

35 On the complexity and evolution of Greek theatre from the Classical era to Imperial times, see Paillard in this volume. See also Paillard (2019a; 2020b and 2021 forthcoming). For the Hellenistic era, see also Le Guen (1995; 2001; 2003).

36 See, for example, Taplin (1977; 1978; 1993; 2007); Taplin/Wyles (2010); Vernant/Vidal-Naquet (1972; 1986); Zimmermann (1985); Bierl (1986; 1990; 2001 and 2009); Goldhill (1987; 1990); Winkler/Zeitlin (1990); Slater/Csapo (1995); Rusten (2002; 2011); Easterling (1999) and Hugoniot *et al.* (2004); Slater (2002); Csapo (2004; 2010); Csapo/Wilson (2020); Mastromarco (2006); Medda *et al.* (2006); Wilson, P. (2000, 2007); Revermann (2006); Le Guen (1995; 2001; 2014; 2018); Csapo *et al.* (2014); Chaniotis (1997; 2007); Lamari (2017); Paillard (2017); Liapis/Petrides (2019).

Theatre and Paratheatre

The first half of the volume focuses on questions surrounding the definitions of 'theatre' and 'paratheatre'. As the limits between these two concepts are closely interrelated and complementary, it seemed sensible to us to present the four relevant chapters within the same part of the book, while keeping two distinct subsections for 'theatre' and 'paratheatre' respectively.

Definitions and Limits of Theatrical Performances

What is 'theatre' in contemporary scholarly usage? In the first section, Oliver Taplin, Andrea Giannotti, and Elodie Paillard present their approaches to and definitions of theatre/performance and discuss the limits of 'theatre'. While Taplin displays a broad canvas of the applications of the word 'performance' within the ancient Greek theatrical world, Giannotti focuses mostly on Dionysian pre-play performances and their incorporation into Attic drama. In the third chapter, Paillard concentrates on the question of the definition of 'theatre' by analysing the relationship between Greek and Latin drama, highlighting the need to extend the range of what we understand under the label 'Ancient Greek theatre/drama'.

In 'Diffused Performance and Core Performance of Greek Theatre', Taplin proposes a *mise au point* of the applications of the term 'performance' and its gradations. Under the label 'diffused performance' he classes creative inklings, rehearsals, festival rituals, pre-play ceremonies, discussions, reperformances, and various receptions across genre and time. As for 'core performance', according to the author this refers to an event contained within the time and place of the *theatron,* which is thus differentiated from the world of everyday life. Taplin invites us to question what we take for granted when we study ancient theatre. Underlining grey areas, he highlights some misleading attitudes, such as the use of the term 'text' to designate dramatic plays. He notes that '[. . .] the "text" is only a transcript of the words, and does not encompass the sounds as delivered, let alone the enactment' and reminds us that Greek audiences did not think of a play as a text. They thought of it as a performance. They were transported elsewhere thanks to the play world which was created when the first masked figure was seen and which ended when the last one disappeared. A core performance was finished when the audience returned to its daily life, when the locality and temporality of the play world were closed, making space for the diffused performance to spread.

In his chapter '(Un)Masking the πόλις: The Pre-Play Ceremonies of the Athenian Great Dionysia as Theatrical Performances?', Giannotti invites us to revisit part of Taplin's 'diffused performance': namely, the pre-play ceremonies held in the theatre of Dionysos *Eleuthereus*. During the Classical era, libations to Dionysos, the display of allies' tributes, the war-orphans' parade, and the proclamation of honours to the benefactors of the city constituted the programme of these ceremonies. Giannotti's main goal is to focus on the theatricality of these ceremonies, to show to what extent they were staged and how far they were understood as theatre or as theatrical performance. Putting forward the inextricable relationship between political and religious rituals, Giannotti shows how these ceremonies themselves become theatre, performances inside performances. Although dramatic poets appropriate these ceremonies, the city appears at the same time as the real *metteur en scène*, the poet who creates and produces, and the actor who performs the display of his own power.

In her chapter, 'Greek to Latin and Back: Did Roman Theatre Change Greek Theatre?', Paillard examines the possible influence of Latin drama on late Greek dramatic production and discusses how it might encourage scholars to widen their definition of 'ancient Greek theatre'. The author first confronts the contexts, spaces, and occasions in which Classical Greek drama and Latin theatre were performed, stressing their similarities and differences; then, she underlines how the new conditions of performances for drama in the Roman world might have influenced late performances of Greek drama. Highlighting the fact that the Roman Empire was a place of mixing and innovation, Paillard suggests that politics participated in the evolution, or the transformation, of the dramatic genres. The author also shows how Roman pantomime, born when Greek and Roman culture blended, might have had an impact on late Greek dramatic productions. This contribution emphasizes the mutual influence that Greek and Roman drama had on each other, inviting us to revise our definition of Greek theatre in order to accommodate late Greek dramatic production, which in part differed from the Classical Athenian model but which is nonetheless to be considered 'Greek theatre'.

Paratheatre

The fourth chapter is devoted to 'paratheatre'. Ancient Greeks did not invent the term. When Plato or Athenaeus used the expressions παρὰ θεάτρου or παρὰ τοῖς θεάτροις, they were referring to the audience's reception of musical, dramatic, or

athletic events, rather than to the show itself.[37] The term 'paratheatre' in itself first appears in the second half of the 20th century.[38] At first used by theatre practitioners, it entered step by step into Theatre Studies proper. Theatre practitioners use this term to define a new dramatic approach, a theatre 'beyond theatre'. Advocating the primacy of the body over the words,[39] promoting the dramatic experiences inside and outside the theatrical space, this trend aims at abolishing the boundaries between actors and audience, between performance and everyday life.[40]

Although classicists readily embraced Abel's concept of metatheatre, they were more reluctant to use the term paratheatre. Until recently, one of its manifestations in Classical studies was but a mere reaction to Abel's concept of metatheatre. Thomas Rosenmeyer indeed observes that paratheatre would be a better term to encapsulate Abel's metatheatre.[41] However, some scholars, such as Wiles and Wilson, use its adjectival form 'paratheatrical' according to one of the meanings of the Greek preposition, παρά ('beside' and 'beyond'), to define the blending of political and theatrical spectacle such as Demetrius Poliorcetes' display of authority before the Athenians.[42]

In 'Defining Paratheatre, from Grotowski to Antiquity', Mali Skotheim proposes a new approach of the question. She first draws attention to the different meanings of the term 'paratheatre' in Classics and Theatre Studies, underlining how fruitful Jerzy Grotowski's theories regarding paratheatre can be. She argues that his definition of paratheatre 'can be usefully applied to premodern performances categories, including those of the ancient Greek theatre'. For the Polish theatre director, 'paratheatre implies a relationship to the traditional theatrical performance genres, such as tragedy and comedy (and potentially also music), while delineating some separation'.[43] Consequently, Skotheim, examining the

37 See Pl. *Leg*. 659a and Ath. 14.631f.

38 See Skotheim in this volume, p. 89.

39 See Frost and Yarrow (1990) 84, commenting on Grotowski's paratheatre. See also Skotheim in this volume, pp. 93–94.

40 On this topic, see Gerould (1980) 381–383.

41 See Rosenmeyer (2002) 91. On Rosenmeyer's criticism of Abel's theories, see also Bierl in this volume, pp. 113–114; 134.

42 See Wiles (1997) 36 and Castiajo (2012) 34 commenting on Plut. *Demetr*. 34. Chaniotis (2007) 48–66, and Wilson, P. (2007) 15 use the term paratheatrical to refer to some ritual beyond theatrical ones. Paratheatrical is somehow the expression of what Chaniotis (1997) 219–259, following Burns (1972) and Turner, V. (1974; 1982), calls theatricality. For a comprehensive survey of the use of paratheatre, see Skotheim in this volume.

43 See Skotheim in this volume, p. 92.

different facets of street performers and performances, comes to define 'paratheatre' or 'paratheatrical entertainment' as any genre in which *thaumatopoioi*, 'marvel-makers', used to perform. She explores the various types of such entertainers' performances and the types of contexts in which they were called to amuse and fascinate crowds. Skotheim highlights the fact that neither paratheatrical performances nor theatre are monoliths, fixed forever, but rather depend on context. Her chapter is an invitation to reflect further not only upon the precise definitions of 'paratheatre' and paratheatrical shows and performers but also on where the ever-moving boundaries between 'theatre' and 'paratheatre' are located.

Metatheatre

The second half of this volume gathers contributions focusing on the definition of 'metatheatre'. As for 'paratheatre', ancient Greek authors did not use this term either. Yet, they were not ignorant of the concepts and mechanisms related to what scholars nowadays label as metatheatre. René Magritte's paintings come to our mind, particularly *L'Usage de la parole I*, renamed later *La Trahison des images*.[44] This painting shows a pipe under which is inscribed 'Ceci n'est pas une pipe'. This masterpiece encourages its viewers to analyse the relationship between text and image, between reality and representation (or illusion), between the painter, his art, and the beholder. Long before René Magritte, Greek and Roman playwrights constantly drew their audience's attention to the fabric of their performances.

In this part of the volume, the chapters have been grouped into three sections. The two first sections (each composed of one chapter, on theoretical matters and performative aspects respectively) are followed by a number of case studies where authors discuss illustrations of what they consider to be 'metatheatre' in theatrical works pertaining to different genres.

Theoretical Aspects

Anton Bierl begins by presenting a panorama of the different definitions of and approaches to metatheatre in his 'New Thoughts on Metatheatre in Attic Drama: Self-Referentiality, Ritual and Performativity as Total Theatre'.

44 Oil on canvas, 23 3/4 x 31 15/16 in. (1929), Los Angeles County Museum of Art (78.7). On the title of this painting, see Speidel (2016) 60–61.

From the second part of the twentieth century onwards, scholars dealing with ancient and contemporary theatre studies have taken different approaches to metatheatre. Bierl's chapter provides a historical overview of the term and of the concept of 'metatheatre', as well as its correlates such as metadrama, metaritual, or metachoreutic. Starting from a personal perspective, the author proposes a 'retour aux sources', a study of Abel's invention of the concept. He shows its broadly positive reception but also the serious misunderstandings and strong criticism with which it met. The author then returns to ritual and performance in ancient Greece and to the study of the different manifestations of metatheatricality and self-referentiality in dramatic poetry, tragedy, comedy, and satyr play. He insists on the difference between metadrama and metatheatre, the first relating to the text, the second to the performance. According to Bierl, metatheatre, or the theatre that makes theatre, 'neither destroys the illusion nor the entire play, deconstructing its texture and form. On the contrary, it reinforces performance and enhances generic colouring.' This leads him to propose a new definition of metatheatre: 'All in all, metatheatre means total theatre'.[45]

Performative Aspects

In this subsection, Matteo Capponi focuses on the performative aspects of metatheatre and on theatrical gestures, inviting us to consider or reconsider the definitions of these terms. In his chapter, 'A Gesture That Reveals Itself As a Gesture: Thinking About the Metatheatricality of the Body in Greek Tragedy', his main purpose is to study the metatheatricality of the body in Greek tragedy, particularly in order to understand to what extent a gesture contributes to creating a self-reflexive drama or performance that unveils its artistic status to the audience. He examines how a gesture can show an 'aesthetic self-consciousness'. Capponi first highlights in the first stage of his analysis the value of Pavis's definition of metatheatricality as a 'property'. As for theatrical gestures themselves, he explores not only the *didaskaliai*, 'internal stage directions', but also the typology of gestures performed onstage, stressing that ancient dramaturgy involves kinesics or metagestuality. Considering that theatre is metatheatre and that its expressive movements are aesthetic gestures, Capponi assumes that a gesture affirming itself as a gesture is metatheatrical. To prove his point, he analyses more precisely a passage of Euripides' *Orestes* and juxtaposes it to

45 See Bierl in this volume.

a fresco from Ephesus in which he sees a reception of metatheatricality or of theatrical metagestuality.[46]

Case Studies

Tragedy

In this first series of case studies, scholars examine Greek tragedy and particularly Euripides' plays, highlighting the metatheatricality of the construction and role of recognition scenes, and of the relationship between tragic plot, performance and contemporary events.

Firstly, Emilie Ruch deals with 'Metatheatre and Dramaturgical Innovation' in her 'Study of Recognition Scenes in Euripides' Tragedies: *Electra*, *Helen*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and *Ion*'. After underlining Roland Barthes' definition of meta-literature – 'literature which takes itself as its object' – Ruch compares metapoetry and metatheatre, aiming at defining the latter: '[. . .] metatheatre is a form of speech that refers to the scenic representation – the performance – which summons the audience's hearing and sight'.[47] According to the author, Euripides' recognition scenes are key to understanding certain aspects of Euripides' metatheatre and of his innovative dramaturgy. Ruch underlines how Euripides' use of topical scenes of recognition goes beyond the competition he creates in his tragedy between himself and his past and present rivals. In his *Electra*, *Helen*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and *Ion*, Euripides delineates the different aspects of this pattern, leading his heroes from ignorance to knowledge and recognition. With these scenes, the poet stages his awareness of the dramatic art and his efforts to promote innovations not only in the construction of the tragic plot but also in his dramatic music and in the *tableaux scéniques*. In Euripides' drama, according to Ruch, metatheatre is a *poikilon* tool transforming tragedy into a world of *pathos* and wonder.

In her chapter, 'The Mask of Troy: Metatheatre in the Prologue and Final *kommos* of Euripides' *Troades*', Pascale Brillet-Dubois explores the kaleidoscopic aspects of metatheatre in Euripides' tragedy. Inviting us to reconsider Euripides' *Trojan Women* and the poet's exquisite play on language, poetry,

46 Although their respective foci diverge, Giannotti's, Bierl's, Vespa's, Ruch's and Brillet-Dubois's studies in this volume all address the question of theatrical gesture, kinesics or movements.

47 Ruch, p. 153. For the poet's play on theatrical sound effects, see Brillet-Dubois in this volume.

and complex effects, she unveils metatheatricality, its fabric, its use, and its function. The author shows how the Aegean context, in which Athens plays a mediating and oppressing role, mingles with Euripides' tragic plot. The poet 'places his mask of words upon the Athenian theatre and then finally takes it off to confront his fellow citizens with the spectacle of their own reality'.[48] Thanks to the plot, rooted in the mythical tradition and characters' performances, speeches and songs, Troy comes to Athens and the Athenian audience becomes Trojan. The poet constantly plays on the twin themes of victory and defeat, of glory and destruction. The fall of Priam's city recalls the destruction the Athenians inflicted on Melians, the necessity to appeal for purification for their crimes, and the need for caution in the hazardous Sicilian expedition which was to contribute to the fall of Athens. Euripides' characters' speeches, the choruses' songs, and the brilliant *mise en scène*, including the use of fire and sounds stressing the destruction of Troy, make the *Trojan Women* not only an exceptional theatrical play but also a lesson on core and diffused performance and on metatheatricality. The mask of Troy reveals the mask of Athens; the poet invites his spectators to recognize themselves as being, and thus having been, from the start, a part of the play, as Brillet-Dubois shows.

Aristophanes, Old Comedy

Past and present studies continually underscore the intimate relationship between Old Comedy and metatheatre.[49] Marco Vespa and Loredana di Virgilio present in this section new approaches to metadrama and metatheatre in Aristophanes' comedy. The former focuses on the cultural representation of animals and its potential pragmatic value onstage, while the latter explores the metatheatrical aspects of the poet's comic lyrics.

In his chapter, 'Animal Metaphors and Metadrama. A Cultural Insight into the Verb πιθηκίζειν', Vespa examines ancient sources focusing on animals, particularly monkeys, as metaphors for or as performers themselves. First, he tracks the use of the verb *pithekizein* in ancient Greek texts, particularly Greek comedy. Comic poets used to debase known Athenians, whatever their profession or political status or role, by comparing them to animals or by transforming them (metaphorically speaking) into animals. Neologism or not, Greek comedy associates the verb *pithekizein* with the performance itself, as it underlines and unveils deception. Thanks

48 Brillet-Dubois in this volume, p. 178.

49 On this topic, see Bierl in this volume, pp. 127–128.

to a close study of the cultural representations of monkeys in Antiquity and of the etymology of the term *pithekos*, Vespa stresses the metadramatic value of *pithekizein* in Aristophanes' comedy. The nature of the performance is somehow akin to that of simian performers: meant to convince, it joyfully deceives audiences like primates do. Reconstructing the interspecific relations and ethological characteristics that Greeks imputed to monkeys, the author shows how the metadramatic value of Aristophanes' expression *pithekizein* goes hand in hand with the relationship between stage and primates highlighted in other ancient sources.

Although scholars have explored different aspects of metatheatre at work in Aristophanes' comedies, his lyrics are often overlooked. In her chapter 'Ar. *Eccl.* 889 ὅμως ἔχει τερπνόν τι καὶ κωμῳδικόν. A Comedy's Self-Consideration of Its Lyrical Forms at the Dawn of "Middle Comedy"?', Di Virgilio focuses precisely on a metatheatrical line bordering the exchange between the Young Woman and the Old Hag who precedes her onstage as she tries to attract a lover. Stressing the context in which verse 889 is inserted into the play and observing that the Young Woman is speaking in the poet's name, Di Virgilio refutes traditional interpretations and proposes two possible alternatives based on her analysis of dramaturgy, audience, and song. The author considers that the Young Woman's tirade may be an appeal to the audience, aiming to explain the shift from the monody the Old Hag was supposed to sing to the duet involving both characters which is actually sung. Putting forward the relationship between the characters' song and the Chorus' song immediately preceding it, Di Virgilio shows how the poet affirms the self-consciousness of his art while purposefully creating a ridiculous musical pattern to entertain his audience. In this metatheatrical scene, Aristophanes invites his audience to appreciate poetic choice and to consider it, as he does, amusing and fitting for this comedy.

Mimes

After tragedy and comedy, the final chapter of this volume is devoted to mime. In her chapter 'Mime and Metatheatre', Anne Duncan investigates the metatheatrical effects on the audience of the unmasked female performers of mime. Stressing the logic of the masked drama in the ancient world, the author explores the growth of mime in the Hellenistic world.[50] She points out its nature, its lack

50 For mimes before the Hellenistic period, see Rusten/Cunningham (2002); Hordern (2004). For some of their shows, see Pl. *Resp.* 396b; Xen. *Symp.* 2.7–9; 9.1–7 (Dionysos and Ariadne mime). On Xenophon's female performer, see Hov (2015).

of artifice, exploring how a genre which was open to female performers, the *mimae*, could draw attention to the conventionalized artifice of 'traditional' Greek masked, all-male genres. In order to discuss the question of whether mime was inherently metatheatrical, Duncan analyses mime scripts, such as the 'Charition mime' and the 'Jealous mistress mime', reminiscent of Euripides' tragedies, the *mimiambus*, and the adultery mimes. The main characters of these mimes preserved on papyri were adulterous women. The author shows that unmasked women performed female roles onstage, but she also suggests that *mimae* used stage names as masks, including outside of the performative space. *Mimae*'s names contributed to the blurring between reality and illusion, self and other.[51]

All the authors have accepted our challenge to give and make explicit their precise definitions of 'theatre', 'paratheatre', and/or 'metatheatre'. In this methodological endeavor lies the most important contribution of the present work to the study of ancient theatre/drama. In a way, the kaleidoscopic aspects of theatre, paratheatre, and metatheatre studied here give us a historical, literary, and cultural survey of drama in its ever-evolving manifestations.[52] Obviously, a single volume cannot address the endless number of questions related to these topics and to terminological subtleties. We do hope, nonetheless, that the contributions presented here will stimulate new discussions and encourage scholars to disclose more explicitly what they understand by these terms when using them in their research. The aim of this collective volume has in no case been the establishment of a series of normative definitions. However, it has demonstrated that clarifying what each of us includes under 'theatre', 'metatheatre', and/or 'paratheatre' can greatly improve scholarly dialogue on those topics. As we all know, theatre is like Proteus, it has many shapes, and when we think we have grabbed its mask, we often find that we are holding just one layer of a dream.

51 On this blurring between reality and fiction, see also Paillard in this volume.

52 On this point, see Vespa in this volume.

Theatre and Paratheatre

Definitions and Limits of Theatrical Performances

Oliver Taplin

‘Diffused Performance and Core Performance of Greek Theatre’

My aim is to introduce some gradations in the application of the word ‘performance’ to the ancient Greek theatrical world, and to clarify some distinctions among current usages that are in danger of being confused or set in false conflict as though incompatible. ‘Performance’ is one of a cluster of terms that have in the last 50 years or so become extended far beyond their original sense in the related scholarly discourse: other examples include complexity, problem, text, authority, and, not least, theatre. Indeed the Basel conference was conceived as an opportunity to think about how far extended and diverse theatre-like and theatre-related activities were in the Greek and Roman world.

What I am calling the ‘diffused performance’ stands at one extreme of a sliding-scale of usages. This concept is not confined by any kind of hierarchy, nor limited to any particular theatrical occasion. The other end-marker, which I shall call ‘core performance’, is an event contained within the time and place of the *theatron*, and differentiated from the ambient world of everyday life. I shall maintain that the core performance, as distinct from wider senses of the word, conjures up for its public a crucially other world in time and place.

First, then, some highly simplified generalisations about the diffused sense of performance. In the last half century or so, there has been a gathering movement towards breaking down boundaries and binaries, presenting itself as a liberation from authoritarian norms and regulations. On a more theoretical level this is related in different ways to, for example, the performance studies developed by Richard Schechner[1] and to the ideas of post-dramatic theatre explored by Hans-Thies Lehmann.[2] Also in actual theatrical practice we have seen a breaking down of frames and distinctions between players and audience, between verbal and non-verbal, inside and outside the theatre-space, artifice and reality. This is a fact of contemporary theatre practices, and it is not the role of

1 See Schechner (1977), (1988 [^{4}2020]).

2 See Lehmann (1999 [^{4}2008]).

Notes: This is a revised version of the opening talk that I gave at the Basel conference. I have retained the somewhat colloquial and broad-brush character of that occasion, and have not weighed it down with academic detail and exhaustive bibliography. I am most grateful to Silvia Milanezi, Elodie Paillard and others there for stimulating communication. I further thank Silvia Milanezi for adding some textual and bibliographical references in the footnotes.

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the pedantic professor to try to question or interfere in the enterprises of theatre-practitioners.

Retreating to the context of academic theatre history, however, the situation is rather different and open to scrutiny. The claim of the current tendency that I wish to re-consider is whether the broadening and diffusion of 'performance' somehow invalidates the notion of a 'core event' which has some special claims to attention. Performance in the broadest diffused sense may now be regarded as starting with first creative inklings, continuing through rehearsals, festival rituals, pre-play ceremonies; and then continuing on to responses, discussions, reperformances, and various receptions across genres and time. Within that long perspective any event mounted by players in front of a gathered audience in a designated theatre-space, *theatron*, becomes just one episode within a continuity. Consequently the particular attention claimed for it as somehow especially significant – as 'core' – is thrown into question.

Once we try to focus in on the actual practice of theatre-going in Classical Greece, whether the first performance or a subsequent reperformance, our evidence is regrettably thin. It can be agreed that the bulk of the audience gathered in the *theatron* in the morning and dispersed in the evening,[3] but we cannot be certain whether or how far there was any kind of passing through a monitored entrance; nor how extensive the *prohedria* was and how controlled;[4] nor how it was determined who sat where in the larger auditorium (first come, first served?); nor how the audience behaved while they assembled and waited.

And there is further lack of evidence about the exact programming of 'the play', in the sense of the pre-rehearsed show mounted by the players. Was it signalled that the play was about to begin, and, if so, how? It is said that there was a blast on the trumpet, but that comes solely from an anecdote in Pollux (4.88) about a comic actor who failed to turn up when summoned – clearly not fifth-century and very probably fictional. Then what happened in between the individual plays? And at the end of the show? How orderly or disorderly was the audience's departure from the *theatron*? How did they disperse? The lack of attention given to these matters in our surviving sources is no problem for the diffused approach, since that breaks down distinctions between the players' show and the surrounding societal activities and responses.

There is, however, one standard term encouraging this methodology which I would regard is misleading: that is the application of the very word 'text'. This

3 On the audience, see Slater, N. (2002); Arnott, P. (2002); Roselli (2011); Csapo and *al.* (2014); Revermann (2017).

4 On *prohedria*, see Maass (1972); Gauthier (1985); Moretti (2000), (2014); Chaniotis (2007) 61; Csapo (2007) 91–95; 110–115; Goette (2014); Moloney (2014); Le Guen (2014).

has become a standard term for the players' time-bound and place-bound show in the *theatron*, but that is a limiting anachronism which tends to diminish the actuality of the enacted play. For us the play may be a text, in so far as that is how scholars and students mostly encounter it; but 'the text' is only a transcript of the words, and does not encompass the sounds as delivered, let alone the enactment. And the Greek audiences most definitely did not think of the play as a written script.

My main thesis in this chapter is that the diffused usage of 'performance', with the associated downgrading of the show in the *theatron* to 'the text', neglects two important things that we *do* know about the theatre-event in Classical Greece. These are features that were the case both at the first showing and at subsequent showings – that is to say at performances and re-performances in the core sense. Neither of these features is normally the case in our contemporary theatre, and never necessarily so, as they were in Classical Greece.

The first is that every play was competing in an *agon* – or at least we do not know of any that were not. Indeed there was a set of combined *agones*, between *choregoi*, between choruses, and between actors, as well as between playwrights.[5] An *agon*, if its validity is to be respected by the competitors and spectators, has to have some sort of or agreed guidelines, including the shared location and the distinct time-limits – the marked-out pitch and the referee's starting and closing whistles, so to speak. The competitive event has to be finite and framed off from its surrounding context. Just as all the ritual and other activities at the Olympic games were not part of each particular athletic event, so the pre-play ceremonies, after-play celebrations etc., were not part of the core performance. This means that there must have been a fairly distinct moment when the play began, and another when it ended. That is the core performance that was supposed to be adjudicated for the *agon*.

The importance of the *agon* is confirmed by the institution of the *proagon*, which was held some three days before the festival began.[6] At this the *choregos*, playwright and actors of the three tragic 'teams', and probably the chorus-members as well, presented themselves in public without costumes and masks, i.e. as citizen individuals. So this was a ceremonial non-competitive event, a kind of shared overture to the *agon* proper. At the Great Dionysia in Athens there were also pre-play rituals and ceremonies held in the *theatron* in front of

5 On these topics, see Pickard-Cambridge (1968); Csapo/Slater (1995); Wilson (2000); Csapo *et al.* (2014).

6 On *proagon*, see Aeschin. 3.66–67 and Σ *ad* 3.67; Ar. Σ *ad Vesp.* 1109; Pl. *Symp.* 194a–b; *TrGF* V T1 IA 11.39–41.

the assembled audience.[7] The extent of these ceremonies and the chronology of their introduction are open to much discussion, but, so far as we know, they only took place on the first day of the festival, and were common to all the competitors. In other words they were not part of the actual *agon*, the core performance.

The second distinctive feature of the core plays within the wider diffused span was the masks.[8] So far as we know, every actor and every chorus-member in every tragedy always wore their mask throughout the whole course of every play. Even in Old Comedy, which is so pervasively metatheatrical, there is nowhere we know of where an actor takes off his mask in mid-play to reveal his 'outside-life' identity. The mask was evidently so essential to the activity of playing theatre that its integrity could not be breached or broken even by comic self-subversion. Some personnel without masks may well have been seen in the *orchestra* before any masked figures came into view – scene-setters, stage-managers and suchlike. They may even have also been visible on-stage sometimes during the course of the plays, but never with a role defined within the world of the play. The *aulos*-player was a special exception – but he was also specifically differentiated by costume and by the *phorbeia*.

Given the distinct signal of the mask, we might be inclined to say that the play began when the first masked figure first spoke; and that it ended with the last words delivered by a masked figure. That would, however, be to put an anachronistic emphasis on the *words*: I suggest that, for both tragedy and comedy, the 'core performance' began when a masked figure was first *seen*, and ended when the last masked figure went out of sight. This would be the case at the start of each play even when there is some kind of assembling or setting up of a tableau before the first lines are spoken. In such cases the players are to be imagined as having been there for a while, such as in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* or Euripides' *Heracles*. When I discussed these openings (more than 40 years ago!), I called them 'cancelled entries', but now I think that term fails to bring out the impact of seeing the first masked figures, even when they don't speak: so I would now prefer to call them something like 'set-up entries'.[9]

Along the same lines, I propose that the ending of the core performance was marked, not by the last spoken word, but by the final disappearance from sight of the last masked figure, nearly always the last members of the chorus. This may throw a different light on the closing lines of our plays. The choral anapaests which conclude nearly every tragedy, and are even identical for several

7 On this topic, see Giannotti in this volume, pp. 29–62.

8 On this topic, see Easterling/Hall (2002); Taplin/Wyles (2010); Halliwell (1993); Taplin (2018) = [*Scienze dell'Antichità* 24.3 (2018) 1–9.]

9 Taplin (1977) 134–136.

plays of Euripides,[10] are usually dismissed as mere banalities, hardly worthy of the great dramatists. Whether or not they are original, as I am inclined to think they were, they have the function of leading into this closing movement of the exit of the last masked figures. It is notable how often these closing anapaests include 'closure words', including verbs as well as nouns, referring to completion or outcome.[11]

The situation with the framing of comedies is broadly similar. They also were competing in an *agon*; and every participant character was invariably masked. But Old Comedy reveals an interesting, and characteristic, self-consciousness about its openings and closures (New Comedy would call for separate discussion). Several of Aristophanes' surviving plays allude to the audience or address the audience soon after the beginning,[12] setting up an explicit awareness that the world of the players has come into contact with the world of the assembled public. And towards the end of the comedies there are quite often allusions and encouragements towards victory, and even occasionally appeals to the judges, most persistently towards the end of *Ecclesiazusae* (1155–1162). A triumphant end to the comedy, such as in *Birds*, suggests a progress towards triumph in the comic competition.[13]

This leads on to some generalisations about the conjured-up world of the play, or, rather, *within* the play, as distinct from the quotidian world that the audience inhabits. The situation has interesting similarities and differences between comedy and tragedy. The world inside a comedy is not so distant in time and place from that of the audience, unlike that of tragedy: the displacement is more one of decorum, tone and fantasticality. The time in comedy is usually a kind of present, and the setting usually a kind of Athens, and the play enacts a kind of recognisable way of life, at least at the start. So the play enters into, and eventually emerges from, a reshaping of the everyday world of the audience.

Tragedy is very different in both temporality and locality. The moment that the tragedy begins, the conjured time becomes a distant past with all its heroic and epic associations. And the place becomes elsewhere (the Athens of *Eumenides*

10 See Eur. *Alc*. 1159–1163; *Andr*. 1284–1288; *Bacch*. 1388–1392; *Hel*. 1688–1692. See also *Med*. in which the chorus' first closure line is slightly different, 1415–1419. For another tragic closure, see *IT* 1497–1499; *Or*. 1691–1693; *Phoen*. 1764–1766. On Euripides' tragedies parting words, see Roberts (1987) 51–64; Dunn (1996).

11 See πόρος (Eur. *Alc*. 1163; *Andr*. 1288; *Bacch*. 1391; *Hel*. 1692; *Med*. 1419) κραίνω (*Alc*. 1161; *Andr*. 1285; *Bacch*. 1389; *Hel*. 1689; *Med*. 1416); τελέω (*Alc*. 1161; *Andr*. 1287; *Bacch*. 1390; *Hel*. 1691; *Med*. 1418) ἀποβαίνω (*Alc*. 1164; *Andr*. 1289; *Bacch*. 1392; *Hel*. 1693; *Med*. 1420).

12 See Ar. *Eq*. 36; *Vesp*. 54.

13 See Ar. *Av*. 1706–1765. See also *Ach*. 1190–1234.

is an exception to some extent). The very ground of the *orchestra* in the tragedy becomes the ground of somewhere else – and it remains so until after the last exit of the last figure. This is one reason why it is crucial that the chorus as well as the characters belong to the time and place of the play, not to that of the audience, and why they too are masked.

Finally there was a concluding framing occasion which was, arguably at least, both an element in the theatrical *agon*, and yet also created a kind of overlap or bridge with the audience's world outside and beyond the play. Importantly, this took place in the *theatron* itself, with the audience still in place (contrast the *proagon*). What I have in mind is that immediately after the end of each 'core' performance, there was the audience's applause (provided the play had not been a failure!). There can be no doubt that this happened, although there is annoyingly little reference to it, even in Aristophanic metatheatricality. We can be pretty certain that the audience's appreciation was expressed by clapping. We do not, however, find the explicit call of 'ἐπικροτήσατε' (Latin *plaudite*) until Menander *Dyskolos* 967 (the same closing lines in fr. 908 K-A).

There remain some significant questions to which we would dearly like to know the answer. Did the players come back on stage to acknowledge the applause? We can't be sure, but it is surely very likely that they did, both actors and chorus. Did the playwright come on as well? And the *choregos*? We simply don't know, but I would wager that they did. This was, after all, a big opportunity for public attention and approbation.

This raises, finally, a question whose importance has not been generally appreciated: when the actors and chorus-members came on for the applause, did they keep their masks on, or had they taken them off? We have no definitive evidence, but I suggested that it is telling that all but one of the eleven members of the chorus included on the celebrated Pronomos Vase have taken off their masks.[14] They are relaxing after their performance, and all of them wear the wreaths which signify their victory in the preceding *agon* (i.e. in the whole tragic tetralogy that has concluded with the satyr play). The other crucial indication is that all but two of them have personal names written by them – anthroponyms, whether they are real or made up. So they still wear their satyr-costumes, but they are clearly not still within the core play(s). They have taken off their masks, and, by revealing their faces, they show that they are back in their citizen-identity, back with their 'real-life' names.

If that argument is right, then it is evidence that the players took off their masks and held them in their hands for the curtain call. This is surely what we

14 Taplin/Wyles (2010) 255 ff.

would suppose even without any such evidence. At the curtain-call the players, actors and chorus, will have taken off their masks to signify that they were no longer inside the conjured world of the play, whether tragedy or comedy, but were back in the world of the audience. They are no longer the grotesquified figures of comedy, or no longer the lofty but often suffering – and sometimes dead! – heroes and victims of tragedy. They are citizens again, showing their ordinary, everyday faces.

By standing in the *orchestra* with their masks off, they also demonstrated that they are no longer inside the temporality and locality of the play-world: they are back in the time and place of the audience in the sanctuary of Dionysos at his festival. If this train of thought is right, it epitomises what I am trying to say about the two senses of 'performance'. In the diffused sense the curtain-call applause is clearly very much part of it: but in the core sense, it is crucially outside the conjured-up time and place of the play. That world has evaporated – 'melted into air, into thin air' – once the masked figures have left the scene. The core performance is over: the diffused performance continues.

Andrea Giannotti

‘(Un)Masking the πόλις: The Pre-Play Ceremonies of the Athenian Great Dionysia as Theatrical Performances?’

Nothing to Do with the Theatre?

‘The shows in the ancient theatre did not only consist of theatrical and other artistic performances. A large variety of other activities, including ritual actions, took place both on the occasion of thymelic and musical competitions and in context of other celebrations. [. . .] Theatre rituals were perhaps not meant to be spectacles; perhaps the theatre was chosen as their setting only because of the advantages it offered in a practical sense (acoustics, seats, large gatherings of people). But the choice of this particular setting, i.e. the space of *thea* (the watching of spectacles), sooner or later had consequences for the form of the rituals themselves’.[1] The word (as well as the concept of) *theatre* did not include only dramatic performances, but rather it held together everything that took place in the *orchestra*. Angelos Chaniotis’ assessment sets forth the position that I am going to develop in this chapter regarding the theatrical dimension of the Athenian Great Dionysia’s pre-play ceremonies. Unlike Chaniotis, I will focus on the most important period for the Greek theatre and the origins of its pre-play ceremonies: fifth century BC in Athens. It was there that the ritual space of the ceremonies seemingly coincided with the theatrical space of drama for the first time, thus expanding a theatrical programme which would have provided the audience with a mixed set of civic/religious rituals and dramatic performances within the same venue. Such a coincidence in the *orchestra* invites us to consider the audience perception of and reaction to the spectacle as a whole: for, once having taken their seats, a heterogeneous public attended both performances, the pre-play ceremonies *and* the dramatic plays. Did the spectators consider all of these performances a holistic and coherent set? What made the pre-play ceremonies suitable to the theatrical context (along with its spaces and conventions)? As far as the evidence goes, and despite the importance of this set of problems, no attempt to ask or to answer such questions has been made.

1 Chaniotis (2007) 48.

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The Athenian Great Dionysia[2] was undoubtedly one of the city's most important dramatic festivals. Between the 11th and 14th of Elaphebolion, it could entertain up to 15,000–20,000 spectators per day. Along with dramatic performances, the festival also included other ceremonies: some were performed in the days preceding the dramatic performances, such as the transport of the statue of Dionysos from Eleutherae to Athens (εἰσαγωγὴ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσχάρας), the religious procession with sacrifices and offerings to Dionysos (πομπή), the festival banquet (κῶμος), and the *proagon* (a kind of introduction to the dramatic representation of the following days);[3] others – those we are going to consider here – were performed immediately[4] before the plays: the libations to Dionysos poured by the ten generals, the war-orphans' parade, the display of the allies' tributes and the proclamations of honours and crowns to the benefactors of the city; another took place after the performances, i.e. the post-festival assembly. Although much has been said in the past 30–35 years about the socio-political value of such ceremonies and about the critical/unifying character of the Great Dionysia, scholarly attention to the ceremonies has not included any theatrical analysis. Indeed, a closer look at this uncharted aspect of pre-play ceremonies can show that, although less religious and processional than the εἰσαγωγή, πομπή and κῶμος, they included processions and fixed gestures/movements. And 'processional ritual shares with theatrical performances – performances *par excellence* – an explicitly declared emphasis on viewing: processions as well as theatre (θέατρον) (along with a number of other occasions) are 'viewing occasions', 'spectacles', θεωρίαι, θέαι'.[5] It may not be a coincidence that Simon Goldhill, throughout his analysis of the four pre-play ceremonies, uses the term 'ceremonies/ceremonials' along with the term 'rituals',[6] for these did have a set of performative rules, just as ritual/processional and theatrical performances did. There was a consciousness *of* performance, and it is surprising that the well-known debate of Goldhill, Griffin, Rhodes, and Carter[7] on the pre-play ceremonies' socio-political value never brought this aspect to the fore.

2 For a complete description and collection of sources on the Athenian dramatic festival see Pickard-Cambridge ([2]1968 [1953]) 57–125 and Csapo/Slater (1995).

3 For an overview and analysis of rituals and processions at the Dionysia, see Sourvinou-Inwood (1994) and Cole, S. G. (1993).

4 We do not know how 'immediately' after the pre-play ceremonies the first plays began. There might have been some change of setting on the stage and perhaps some movement among the spectators as well.

5 Kavoulaki (1999) 294.

6 See Goldhill (1987) 62 (= [1990] 104) (tributes); 64 (= [1990] 106) (orphans); 74 (= [1990] 123) (festival in general); (2000) 45 (crowns).

7 See Goldhill (1987 = 1990) (2000); Griffin (1998); Rhodes (2003), and Carter (2004).

'Where we might construe tragedy as ritual, or insist that drama is political, or claim the theatre primarily as an aesthetic phenomenon, or theorize performance as "playing the Other"', Rush Rehm points out, 'the Athenians experienced a theatrical continuum that incorporated sacred, secular, civic, artistic, and natural realms'.[8] It is precisely in the name of this 'theatrical continuum' that visualising the pre-play ceremonies is fundamental, and it is from their consideration as real performances in action that we can deduce several details about their *mise en scène*. Hence, before stating that 'the Dionysia's pre-play ceremonies [. . .] were a very graphic (re)performance of the Athenian democracy's civic ideology'[9] (and, consequently, moving from the ideological abstract into the performative concrete), let us consider the pre-play ceremonies' performance *qua* visual performance. To be fair, I am not introducing new materials here: in terms of the number of sources, the pre-play ceremonies remain – as they were twenty to thirty years ago – sparsely attested. It goes without saying that the reconstruction of the theatrical staging of the pre-play ceremonies remains problematic due to the lack of sufficiently detailed information from direct sources. Therefore, this chapter outlines more what *might have happened* on stage rather than what *really happened*. Yet this is a matter of methodology and approach: the pre-play ceremonies and their sources need to be considered and analysed from an alternative, new perspective, i.e. from a scenic point of view.

To the central point: why should we consider the four pre-play ceremonies as theatrical performances, or at least as ceremonies with elements of theatricality? (i) First, because they were performed in the *orchestra* of the theatre, when the whole audience had already taken its seats. (ii) As a second (and more technical) argument, the ceremonies necessarily had specific performers who manipulated specific objects and made carefully choreographed movements (probably not accompanied by music as in dramatic performances); hence, they had a defined set of rules to follow, just like dramatic plays did. If we follow (as I do) Oliver Taplin's description and analysis of Greek tragedy in action,[10] we notice that the pre-play ceremonies, just like tragedy, had exits and entrances, actions and gestures, objects, tableaux and silences, and (seemingly) scenic sequences. Furthermore, the direct sources which attest to the pre-play ceremonies present several verbs which undoubtedly indicate actions pointing to

8 Rehm (2002) 45.

9 Hesk (2007) 73.

10 See Taplin ([2]2003 [1978]). See also Ley (2007) for a detailed analysis of the theatrical playing space. For the stagecraft of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, see Taplin (1977); Seale (1982), and Halleran (1985).

theatrical movements and gestures on stage. These include:[11] ἀναγορεύειν ('to proclaim publicly'), ἀναλέγειν ('to collect'), ἀνείρειν ('to announce/proclaim'), ἀπέρχεσθαι ('to go away/depart from'), διαιρεῖν ('to divide'), εἰσφέρειν ('to carry/bring'), ἐπιδεικνύναι ('to exhibit'), καλεῖν ('to call'), κηρύσσειν ('to announce'),[12] λέγειν ('to speak'), παρεισάγειν ('to bring forward/introduce'), παρέρχεσθαι ('to come to/arrive at'), ποιεῖν ('to do'), προέρχεσθαι ('to go forward/advance'), στεφανοῦν ('to crown'). (iii) Thirdly, although it is not known whether the dramatic performances took place *immediately* after the ceremonies, we can imagine that the stage was partially 'dressed' for the first play. It follows that the ceremonies took place within a stage which probably had some decorations and buildings/painted walls.[13] Hence, there is the possibility that the pre-play ceremonies, whether intentionally or not, found themselves set in a real theatrical scene.[14] (iv) Lastly – and this is the most suggestive point: it has often been argued that the playwrights were accustomed to challenge[15] Athenian ideology and contemporary political views through their plays (in this way playwrights can be seen as 'social critics'); it has also been shown how Athenian (democratic, civic or imperialistic) ideology was displayed through the four pre-play ceremonies of the Dionysia, and how 'the sense of tension between the texts of tragedy and the ideology of the city'[16] existed. But, in order to investigate such a relationship

11 For a specific 'grammar' of gestures in Athenian tragedy, see Telò (2002a) and (2002b). See also Capponi in this volume.

12 Specifically concerning announcement scenes in Athenian tragedy, see, e.g., Di Gregorio (1967); Hamilton (1978), and Poe (1992).

13 As for the σκηνογραφία, as Di Benedetto/Medda (1997) 17 warned, 'si resta nel campo dell'ipotetico'. Wilson, P. (2000) 87 n. 170 and 171 provides some useful references.

14 However, the compelling argument of Mastronarde (1990) 253 should be kept in mind: 'at a single City Dionysia festival the skene building had to serve some 15 to 17 plays of three separate genres, and I suggest that there would be some hesitation to build any very elaborate *ad hoc* structure for one play, and, accordingly, a preference for light, movable panels and accessories that need not to continue to be present to create a distraction during another play (whether one's own, a rival's, or a play in a separate competition)'. In that case, it would have been easy to set up the stage soon after the pre-play ceremonies.

15 Of course, such a view is not held by all scholars. The bond between politics and tragedy (see Saïd [1998] and Carter [2007] 21–63 for an overview of multiple approaches to 'tragic politics') is not considered, for example, by Griffin (1998); (1999), and Heath (1987); (2006). Overtaking such a dichotomy, Finglass (2005) 208 (specifically in relation to Sophocles' *Electra*) has stated that 'if we rid our minds both of the idea that tragedy must have everything to do with the *polis*, and of the idea that tragedy must have nothing to do with the *polis*, we can at last begin to appreciate the significance which the *polis* really plays in an individual drama such as Sophocles' *Electra*'.

16 Goldhill (1987) 69 (= [1990] 115).

between pre-play ceremonies and tragedy, why cannot we think of (before and/or in parallel with the ideological abstract) a *concrete* relationship, i.e. a visual and theatrical similarity between the two sets of performances? In other words, if the performance of the pre-play ceremonies reaffirmed specific social/ideological norms while tragedies subverted them, it must follow that tragic performances dramatised and re-performed in some way the pre-play ceremonies on stage to confer a new value upon them. My belief is that such an ideological tension did exist, but my present concern is to point out that before ideology there was a performance in action which implied, let us say, a 'theatrical tension/contest': indeed, within Athenian drama we find many passages which resemble the pre-play ceremonies. If dramatic performances really (and concretely) re-staged the pre-play ceremonies, this can provide us with many details about the visual and dynamic aspects of the pre-play ceremonies.

As Taplin states, 'the play is realized, finds its finished state, in the theatre',[17] but the same can be said for the pre-play ceremonies. As far as we know, none of the four (with some reservations regarding the libations to Dionysos) were performed elsewhere during the fifth century BC in Athens: the theatre was the ultimate realisation for this set of rituals. This testifies the unavoidable 'challenge' which came to happen exclusively in the *orchestra* during the festival: the theatre rituals had to compete (not officially) against actors and playwrights, and consequently they had to adapt to the theatrical context (and contest) to provide the spectators with a similarly (if not equally) lavish show. It follows that generals, heralds, ambassadors and war-orphans (i.e. all representatives and members of the *polis*) involved in the pre-play ceremonies found themselves to be *performers* on stage. As such, it is our task now to unveil and focus on the identity, movements and gestures of the performers of each of the four pre-play ceremonies, relying on the one hand on the direct sources which attest explicitly to the pre-play ceremonies, and on the other hand on the allusions/re-stagings of the ceremonies which can be found within dramatic texts[18] (these will be a sort of supplementary *scholia* to the performance of the ceremonies). The overall consideration of literary, oratory, historical and epigraphic testimonies will (a) allow us to reconstruct and visualise (at least in a comprehensible way) how the ceremonies were staged in the theatre, and (b) provide a full set of data for future and more specific investigations.

17 Taplin ([2]2003 [1978]) 1. See also Taplin in this volume.

18 I use texts and translations from the *LCL* editions: Sommerstein (2008a); (2008b); (2008c) for Aeschylus; Lloyd-Jones (1994a); (1994b) for Sophocles; Kovacs (1994); (1995); (1998); (1999); (2002a); (2002b) for Euripides; Henderson (1998); (2000); (2002) for Aristophanes.

The Libations to Dionysos

A brief preliminary clarification needs to be made before analysing the ceremonies, and it concerns the programme of the festival: no testimony tells us the precise order of the pre-play ceremonies at all. The order in which I analyse the pre-play ceremonies here results from the following hypothesis and attempted reconstruction. Relying on some inscriptions which attest to public proclamations of honours, one notices that some epigraphic texts state that proclamations used to take place μετὰ τὰς σπονδάς, i.e. 'after the libations'.[19] This suggests that proclamations were preceded by libations. However – relying on the context described by Plut. *Cim*. 8.8–9 who, as we will see shortly, attests to the ten generals' libations – it seems that, when libations were poured, the dramatic festival had recently started and spectators had just been seated. Moreover, since libations were often considered opening rituals, this should lead us to look at libations as the first pre-play ceremony to be performed, followed by the proclamation of honours, and then – relying on the sequence given by Isoc. 8.82–84, as we will read later – the display of the tributes and, lastly, the war-orphans' parade. This seems the most plausible scenario. To further problematise the situation there is the fact that we do not even know on which day the ceremonies were performed: again, as the libations (along with sacrifices) were opening rituals which served to purify the theatre, a performance on the first day of the performances would appear sensible. Although there is no concrete proof of this, we would hardly expect a performance of the ceremonies taking place in the middle of the competition or on the last day of the festival, or even a separate celebration for each ceremony on different days.[20] Therefore, I am inclined to consider the

19 Few Athenian inscriptions show that announcements of crowns were made 'after the libations' (though not at the Dionysia nor from the fifth century BC): *IG* II^2 1263; *IG* II^2 1273; *IG* II^2 1282; *IG* II^2 1297; *MDAI(A)* 66 (1941) 228.4; *IG* II^2 1325. Conversely, several non-Athenian inscriptions (beyond the fourth century BC) denote announcements of crowns after libations at the local Dionysia, e.g.: *Tit. Calymnii* 64 (face B); *Magnesia* 32; *Priene* 16; 33; 35; 39; 51; 66; *IK Laodikeia am Lykos* 5; *SEG* 26.677; 48.1110; 48.1112; 53.860; 53.861; 53.862; *IG* IV^2.1 66; *IK Knidos I* 74.9–15.

20 While Goldhill has never dealt with the issue related to their temporal concurrence, Carter (2004) 9 has concluded that 'on the question of whether the four ceremonies took place annually in the fifth century, then, we have a yes (*sc*. the libations), two maybes (*sc*. the display of the tributes and the war-orphans' parade) and a no (*sc*. the proclamations of honours)'. However, there are some doubts about the libations to Dionysos in 468 BC: if we aim to test the frequency and the occurrence of the ceremony, we can only rely on Plutarch – as Carter does – and his τὰς νενομισμένας σπονδάς ('the customary libations'), and all those inscriptions which attest to the proclamations of honours in the theatre μετὰ τὰς σπονδάς ('after the libations').

pre-play ceremonies as opening performances – in the order described above – which took place on the first day of theatrical performances in the *orchestra*, i.e. the 11th of Elaphebolion.

Let us turn now to the first pre-play ceremony. The only literary testimony of the libations to Dionysos in the theatre is Plutarch's *Life of Cimon* (8.8–9), which says that in 469/468 BC the archon Apsephion κριτὰς μὲν οὐκ ἐκλήρωσε τοῦ ἀγῶνος, ὡς δὲ Κίμων μετὰ τῶν συστρατήγων παρελθὼν εἰς τὸ θέατρον ἐποιήσατο τῷ θεῷ τὰς νενομισμένας σπονδάς, οὐκ ἐφῆκεν αὐτοὺς ἀπελθεῖν, ἀλλ' ὀρκώσας ἠνάγκασε καθίσαι καὶ κρῖναι δέκα ὄντας, ἀπὸ φυλῆς μιᾶς ἕκαστον ('did not appoint by lot the judges of the agon; but when Cimon, coming to the theatre together with the generals, made the customary libations to the god, he did not let them go away, but he forced them to sit and judge after they had sworn: they were ten, one for each tribe').[21] Thus, what did the ten generals do? Generally speaking, 'a libation is a ritual outpouring of liquids. Libations were part of all sacrifices but could also be performed as independent rituals. The common terms for the rituals are *spondai* and *choai*. The former term is most frequent and referred to a controlled outpouring of a small amount of liquid for the Olympian gods by the help of a jug and a phiale. *Choai* were poured out entirely and were used for libations to the gods of the underworld, the heroes and the dead. Regular animal sacrifices were concluded with a libation of wine and water over the fire on the altar, but every invocation or prayer to the gods or heroes was accompanied by libations. Unmixed wine, milk, oil, and honey were less frequently used and seem to have marked particular parts of the ritual or specific traits in the recipient. [. . .] Before any meal some wine would be

However likely it is that libations in honour of Dionysos might have occurred during the Great Dionysia in the theatre of Dionysos, we have no clear evidence to confirm that libations took place *annually* throughout the fifth century BC. The display of the tributes and the war orphans' parade took place during the fifth century BC only (the former approximately between 453 BC and 404 BC [or rather 413 BC]). Moreover, it is likely that – given that the display occurred exclusively during the period of the Athenian empire – the war-orphans' parade, which seems to have archaic origins, was much older than the display of the tributes, so that the two pre-play ceremonies did not always take place together. We can be sure that both ceremonies were no longer performed during Isocrates' and Aeschines' time. Finally, we have only three attestations of public proclamations of honours during the very late fifth century BC: 410/409, 405/404 and 403/402 BC (to be sure, the display of the tributes was no longer celebrated in 403/402 BC). Besides these two cases in which three pre-play ceremonies out of four were performed together, there is no occasion in which we are sure that the four pre-play ceremonies where celebrated all together at the same Great Dionysia.

21 My translation. Against the credibility and chronology of Plutarch's anecdote see Scullion (2002a) 87–90.

poured out, while at symposia three libations were performed at the start. Journeys, sea voyages, and departure for battle were accompanied by libations. Oaths, contracts, and truces were concluded with libations, and the term *spondai*[22] eventually came to mean a peace treaty'.[23] From this comprehensive description, we need to move to the context of the libations in Dionysos' honour and, even more specifically, of those performed during the Dionysia. Offerings and sacrifices to Dionysos were common in Athens (as well as all over the Greek world), both during the Dionysia and at many other festive and religious occasions.[24] Libations were usually a part of a broader set of rituals which could include prayers, oaths, processions, and sacrifices. It seems, however, that sacrifices and parades in honour of Dionysos were much more common (and attested) than libations, which could also occur independently. This is the case in Plutarch's passage, since we face there an isolated libation without any sacrifice. The libations Plutarch is talking about were an independent ritual aimed at purifying[25] the theatre and opening the dramatic performances.

It goes without saying that, because Dionysos was the god of wine, wine libations in his honour were always included in Dionysiac festivals[26] (certainly during the *Pithoigia* and *Choes* at the Dionysiac festival of the Anthesteria, where tastings of wine and drinking competitions took place).[27] The usual libations to Dionysos thus consisted of pouring wine[28] in his honour and, if we consider the

22 See Karavites (1984). In Ar. *Ach*. 178–203 Dikaiopolis and Amphitheus play on the double meaning of σπονδή, as truce and libation (see Olson [2002] 86–87 and 127). See also Burkert (1985) 71. For the relationship between oaths, truces and libations, see Sommerstein/Bayliss (2013) 151–155; 241–244 (cf., e.g., Eur. *Phoen*. 1240–1241).

23 Ekroth (2012) 4051–4052. See also Burkert (1985) 70–73 (and 54–66 for animal sacrifices), Simon (2004) 239–245, and Patton (2009) 27–99 (although Patton deals more specifically with libations made by the gods).

24 See Evans (2010) 170–207. For libations during a private occasion cf. Hes. *Op*. 338, Antipho 1.18–20, and Pl. *Symp*. 176a. Herodotus (6.57) says that pouring libations was a prerogative of the kings of the Spartiatai (cf. also Xen. *Ages*. 3.1). Cf. also Hdt. 7.223, where Xerxes pours libations (although Hdt. 1.132 says that Persians did not pour libations; but cf. Xen. *Cyr*. 2.3.1; 3.3.40; 4.1.6; 6.4.1).

25 In the same way, the Pnyx, before the meetings of the Assembly, was purified with offerings and sacrifices, perhaps made by the herald or the *prytaneis* (cf., e.g., Aeschin. 1.23).

26 For an analysis of Dionysiac rituals, see Obbink (1993) 65–86. For an overview and detailed analysis of rituals and processions at the Dionysia, see Sourvinou-Inwood (1994) and Cole, S. G. (1993).

27 Cf. Plut. *Mor*. 655e. For an analysis of the Anthesteria, see Pickard-Cambridge (^{2}1968 [1953]) 1–25; Burkert (1985) 237–242, and Parker, R. (2005) 290–316.

28 Plutarch does not say that it was wine, we can only suppose that it was. In Soph. *OC* 469–484, we read of a libation with honey and water. Phanodemus (*FGrH* 325 F 12) says that

performance in action, we are not faced with a difficult case. If we rely on Plutarch's passage, the opening scene was chaired by the archon; next, the ten generals all arrived together in the theatre, near the altar, and made libations. We can assume that they took the stage with their elegant clothes, which were also not unknown in dramatic performances: generals might have their armour or a long *chiton* with (or without) a *himation* (probably all white),[29] whilst priests had purple garments, gold crowns and rings.[30] Considering the high status of the performers, it was undoubtedly a polished ritual. But when we seek further information from our direct source, we are disappointed, because no further details are provided by Plutarch. Here we can turn to Athenian tragedy, which, thanks to its stock libation-scenes,[31] can provide us with useful details about the ceremony. Indeed, here we see that both *spondai* for the gods above and *choai* for the gods below, along with heroes and the dead, were staged in Athenian drama. Unfortunately, we do not have long dramatic passages specifically related to *spondai*. Here and there we find references to *spondai* during banquets (especially in comedy), but overall – given that in tragedy there are more sacrifices and mourning scenes than libations for the gods above – *choai* scenes prevail. Two major (non-*spondai*) scenes which can help in understanding a libation in performance are Aesch. *Cho*. 84–99, in which Electra and the Chorus pour *choai* over Agamemnon's tomb, and Soph. *OC* 466–492, where the Chorus guides Oedipus into the καθαρμός ritual. These two scenes are also important because they include a real-to-life instruction from the Chorus to the lead character about how to make a libation (Aesch. *Cho*. 118 and Soph. *OC* 468).

The first passage is interesting insofar as the Chorus enters from the *skene* with vases (*oinochoai* or *hydriae*) full of liquids (Aesch. *Cho*. 15) to pour out over the central altar, representing Agamemnon's tomb: the entrance of the dozen libation bearers from an *eisodos* is a surprising parallel to the entrance of the ten generals in the theatre towards the altar in the *orchestra*. Electra is asking the Chorus what she needs to do to perform a libation in a proper and pious way. The first interesting point concerns the words to be used: Electra asks

libations were made with must and water, whilst Philochorus with unmixed wine (*FGrH* 328 F 5a) or wine mixed with water (*FGrH* 328 F 5b). See Graf (1980). For a brief overview of the usage and function of wine in Greece, see Frontisi-Ducroux/Lissarrague (1988).

29 For ancient Greek garments, see Lee, M. (2015) 89–126.

30 See Jones (1999) (especially 248–249; see *ibid*. for a collection of sources about colours and clothings in Greek processions). For a detailed analysis of Greek dress in social context, see Lee, M. (2015) 198–229. A *c*. 470 BC *kylix* of the Villa Giulia painter (The Metropolitan Museum of Art 1979.11.15) shows a woman pouring a libation with a (seemingly purple) mantle. For few artistic examples of Greek processions, see also Neils (1996b) 178–182.

31 See Jouanna (1992a) and (1992b).

whether she must speak a specific sentence while pouring out the liquids or if the ritual must be completed in silence, throwing away the jars and without looking round (87–99). The Chorus suggests she pronounce solemn/good words for friends (109) and evoke an avenger for enemies (121). It goes without saying that the ten generals did not pronounce any of these words, but they could have performed libations in silence and/or accompanied the act of pouring with prayers or religious words to Dionysos.[32] As for the custom of pouring liquids and walking away without looking round, Garvie mentions several parallels and says that 'in general the precaution is taken against the possibility of angering a malignant, and often chthonic, power by observing his reception of the offerings'.[33] Since the libations poured by the ten generals was meant to be a purificatory ritual, it is likely that they took that 'precaution' too.

On the other hand, the Chorus of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* explains how to perform a libation on the occasion of a cathartic sacrifice. In *OC* the Chorus invites Oedipus to purify the soil of the Erinyes' shrine, and, as a first act, he must wash his hands with the water contained in the vessels (469–470). Next, he must crown the edges of some cups close to the altar, and pour out the libations whilst standing up and looking East (since West was the direction of death and horrible creatures) (472–473; 475; 477). Finally, after having poured out the liquids three times (479), Oedipus must put nine olive twigs on the ground and pray with an imperceptible volume of voice (483–484). As in Aeschylus' passage, Oedipus must walk away without looking round. Now, these rituals could be similar to libations in general[34] (those poured by the ten generals too), as we are dealing with offerings to gods (though gods of the underworld require *choai*, not *spondai*). The detail about the hand-washing[35] might have really taken place in the pre-play ceremony: this implies the presence of vessels full of water in the centre of the *orchestra*, ready to be used by the generals. The gestures of pouring the whole liquid, crowning the cups with wool, and putting olive twigs on the ground, do not belong to the practice of *spondai*: rather, they were included during *choai* and supplication scenes/procedures. However, it is likely that a final prayer/invocation (probably whispered) was delivered by the performers.[36]

32 Cf. Aesch. *Cho*. 149.

33 Garvie (1986) 70–71.

34 For direct and indirect allusions to 'sacred actions' (such as libations, dances, processions, sacrifices, etc.) related to religious festivals in Euripidean drama, see Taddei (2020).

35 For which cf. also, e.g., Hom. *Il*. 9.174–176.

36 As Burkert (1985) 71 points out, 'invocation and prayer are inseparable from libation' (see *ibid*. 73–75 for an analysis of prayer in Greek religion).

Further dramatic passages testify to the variety of libations scenes, whether they were *spondai*, *choai* or purificatory rituals. After all, *spondai* and *choai*, generally speaking, were both gestures of pouring liquid in order to honour someone and purify a place: they are only different with regard to their addressees. In much the same way, the verb σπένδειν, 'make a drink-offering' or 'pour a libation',[37] was used both for *spondai* and *choai*,[38] as in Aesch. *Ag*. 1395,[39] Soph. *Phil*. 1032–1033, and Eur. *Bacch*. 313 (throughout the whole tragedy we read of Dionysian rites, libations and banquets,[40] performed by characters with ivy-crowns on their heads: cf. *ibid*. 81; 177; 253; 341–342; 376–377; 383–384; 702–703; cf. also Ar. *Eq*. 221; *Thesm*. 793 and *Pax* 1319). Expressions used to denote the pouring of a libation could also include ἐγχεῖν τήν σπονδήν (Ar. *Pax* 1102 and 1105 [during a sacrifice]) and λείβειν τάς σπονδάς or ὑπολείβειν (Aesch. *Ag*. 69–71). The theatrical act of pouring libations was usually accompanied by prayers and hymns, as in Aesch. *Supp*. 980–982 and *Pers*. 522–524. In Eur. *Hec*. 527–529 Talthybios tells Hecuba that Neoptolemus, during the sacrifice of Polyxena in front of Achilles' tomb, took and raised a golden cup (δέπας πάγχρυσον),[41] poured the libations (χοάς)[42] with the whole crowd in silence (529–533; libations in silence also in Eur. *Ion* 1194–1195[43] and Ar. *Pax* 431–435), and that after his words, the crowd started to pray (542).[44]

37 We find also the verb χέω as in Aesch. *Pers*. 219–220, where libations are accompanied by a prayer.

38 Also, the term λοιβαί ('drink-offerings') could refer indifferently both to *spondai* and *choai* (cf. Soph. *El*. 269–270).

39 See Medda (2017) 330–331.

40 Crowns and cups are mentioned in Soph. *Aj*. 1199–1200 (κυλίκων): see Finglass (2011) 474 for parallels of *symposia* with garlands and *kylikes*, and Konstantakos (2005) for *symposia* in Greek comedy. Heracles, in Eur. *Alc*. 1015–1016, regrets having crowned himself and poured libations (here, unexpectedly, in the middle form: see Parker, L. [2007] 254) while Admetus was suffering for his wife. Crowns were brought during banquets also in Eur. *El*. 496 (conversely, we read of libations with crowns on a tomb in *ibid*. 1321–1322).

41 Gregory (1999) 110 notes that here 'narrative attention focuses on the libation vessel as emblematic of a prayer or pledge. [Cf. *Il*. 16.225–27; *Od*. 15.148–49; Pind. *Ol*. 7.1–5; *Pyth*. 4.193, and *Isthm*. 6.40]'.

42 See Battezzato (2018) 145 for comment on and parallels to Neoptolemus' libations.

43 For the Bibline wine see West (1978) 306.

44 In Soph. *Phil*. 8–9, Odysseus says that, due to Philoctetes' shouts, they could not perform libations and sacrifices in silence (as the custom required). As Schein (2013) 119 comments, '"ritual silence" (εὐφημία) was required to ensure that an offering would be auspicious and acceptable to the god, and Od. goes on to claim that Phil.'s sounds (11 βοῶν, στενάζων) were inauspicious (cf. 10 δυσφημίαις)'. Since here libations and sacrifices are mentioned together, Jebb (1890) 7 comments with good reason: 'the sacrifice regularly preceded the libation (cp. *Il*. 1.462); [. . .]. At a sacrifice, all present were first sprinkled with consecrated water, then silence

The quoted passages draw our attention toward the objects used during libations, and Euripides provides some evidence: even if not within a religious libation, in Eur. *Cyc*. 556 the Cyclops orders Silenus to pour wine – contained in a wineskin, ἀσκόν (510; also in Eur. *El*. 511–512), and a bowl (545: τὸν κρατῆρ') – into a cup (σκύφον);[45] we have seen above that in Eur. *Hec*. 527–529 Neoptolemus, in his capacity as ἐπιστάτης and ἱερεύς at Polyxena's sacrifice (cf. *ibid*. 224), uses a golden goblet; during Xouthos' banquet in Euripides' *Ion* we read of golden cups (1175: χρυσέων τ' ἐκπωμάτων),[46] jars (1179: οἰνηρὰ τεύχη), silver and golden *phialai* (1181–1182: ἀργυρηλάτους / χρυσέας τε φιάλας), and bowls (1192: κρατῆρα) which were filled with water and wine (1194–1195); while performing *choai* for the dead in Eur. *IT* 159–166, Iphigenia uses a mixing-bowl, perhaps made of gold (167–168: πάγχρυσον / τεῦχος), including milk, wine and honey.[47] Such a mixture of ingredients was called πελανός, and it was an offering to the gods and the dead generally made of meal, honey and oil: in addition to Aesch. *Cho*. 92, we find this type of offering in Aesch. *Pers*. 202–204,[48] Eur. *Hel*. 1333–1334, Eur. *Ion* 226–228[49] and 706–708, and Eur. *Tr*. 1063.

Dramatic libations indeed made for a scene rich in gestures, movements and objects, and thanks to the combination of the sources considered so far, we can reconstruct the scene. Similarly to actors entering the stage to perform their roles, the performers of the pre-play libations had to come into the *orchestra* either from the *eisodoi* or (if they were already seated) from the first row of seats, intentionally reserved for Athenian state officials and priests. They moved towards the centre of the *orchestra* (near the θυμέλη), called by the archon. It is likely that the performers, as Euripides and Aristophanes suggest, wore ivy or golden crowns: also, we have a fragmentary cup from Athens' acropolis (Athens Acr. 434 [*ARV*^{2} 330.5] and Paris Louvre G 133) in which a bearded and crowned man is pouring a

was proclaimed, and then the offering began: Ar. *Av*. 958 αὖθις σὺ περιχώρει λαβὼν τὴν χέρνιβα. / εὐφημί' ἔστω. ΧΡ. Μὴ κατάρξῃ τοῦ τράγου'.

45 While drinking, Silenus puts a crown upon Polyphemus' head (Eur. *Cyc*. 558–559). See Seaford (1984) 203 and O'Sullivan/Collard (2013) 197 for some parallels attesting the wearing of wreaths during weddings and *symposia*.

46 We find golden cups and plates also in Ar. *Pax* 423–425. In Soph. *Ant*. 430–431 the guardian tells Creon that Antigone poured out a threefold libation over her brothers' tomb from a bronze cup/jug containing mead, water, and wine.

47 See Parker, L. (2016) 92–93 for a useful comment on this passage.

48 See Garvie (2009) 122–123.

49 On this mixture here see Martin (2018) 195.

libation from a *phiale* (either during a banquet or a public sacrifice).[50] Once they reached the *orchestra*, the performers washed their hands and – relying on Euripides' *Hecuba* and *Ion* and Aristophanes' *Peace* – might have taken a vessel and poured the liquid into several (golden or silver) cups or *phialai*. All these objects could be either on a table, as Ar. *Pax* 1059 suggests, or on the ground as with the vessels full of water in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*. It is likely that the performers raised the cups, whispered a prayer to Dionysos – while the audience was silent, being this a custom, as Odysseus in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and the servant in Euripides' *Ion* maintain – and then poured the liquid (wine, perhaps mixed with water, is most probable) on the ground either directly or from the *oinochoe*/*hydria* through *phialai* (as represented in the *lekythos* Carlsruhe 234): since *spondai* consisted in pouring a few drops of liquids, we can be quite sure that the small amount of liquid was poured out from/through smaller containers, such as cups or *phialai*. Since the usual number for libations was three, the generals might have poured out a few drops of wine three times and then drunk from the cups. We do not know the divine addressees of the performers' prayers and libations: if we assume that there were three libations (including prayers), we might hypothesise that the first was dedicated to Hestia, the second to Dionysos as god of the theatre, and the last to Zeus *Soter* or Athena.[51]

If the procession and ritual of the generals' libations can be deduced thanks to dramatic parallels, there is a detail in staging these libations which will remain unresolved: who brought the vessels/jars with liquids on (and then removed from) stage?[52] As it has been noticed with regard to Aeschylus' *Libations Bearers*, 'part of the presumed awkwardness of bringing libations onstage in this

50 See Lissarrague (1995) 128–129. It seems that the *phiale* could have different dimensions: during libations, a flat *phiale* was used; in Hom. *Il*. 23.243, a golden *phiale* is used to contain Patroclus' bones; in Pl. *Smp*. 223c, Agathon, Aristophanes and Socrates are drinking from a large *phiale*, akin to a cup.

51 In *h.Hom* 29.4–6 we read that during banquets the first and the last libation were dedicated to Hestia. See also Finglass (2007) 180 and Olson (2012) 318–319 for literary occurrences of Hestia as the first addressee during libations and sacrifices. Lee, K. (1997) 286, commenting on Eur. *Ion* 1192 ff. (where the Servant describes Ion's libation to the god), says that 'three libations were made: to Zeus Olympios and the Olympian gods; to the Heroes; to Zeus *Soter* (cf. schol. Plato *Phileb*. 66d)' and that the singular 'god' 'may be used loosely for Zeus Olympios standing for all the Olympians as a group'. Conversely, Martin (2018) 444 thinks that 'the most plausible god to receive Ion's libation is Apollo, as the god to whom libations were poured at the start of a symposion could apparently be freely chosen'.

52 To bring libations: Soph. *El*. 434; Eur. *Or*. 96 (Helen comes out from the palace carrying herself libations [106 and 113: see Willink {1986} 99] and she pours them on a tomb. Cf. also *ibid*. 472; 1187); Ar. *Pax* 1059.

way is that after this the chorus never leaves the performance area. As a result, their props also remain present throughout the play'.[53] As for the libations to Dionysos, we have three possibilities, each of which implies the presence of further figures: (a) the vessels containing liquids were already on a table (carried on by someone before the ceremony); once they made the libations, the generals left the vessels near the altar which thus remained there during the following ceremonies; (b) unidentified figures arrived (or were already present) in the *orchestra* carrying on the vessels with liquids, who gave them to the generals and then took them off stage; (c) the ten generals arrived in the *orchestra* bringing the vessels, they poured the libations and then went away (with or without the vessels; in the latter case, someone would have taken the vessels at the end either of the ceremony or of all the pre-play ceremonies). At any rate, an entrance (either of the generals or of unknown figures) with libations in hand would have created a proper procession of *spondophoroi* in theatrical fashion. Equally, leaving the vessels near the altar throughout the celebration of the other pre-play ceremonies would have reinforced the ritualistic and religious value of the whole performance.

Once they had poured the libations, the generals either walked away (probably without looking round), taking their seats in the first row, or left the theatre altogether, as it would have happened in Plutarch's passage if the archon had not appointed them as judges. This could be the first theatrical 'sketch' that spectators watched: a brief and solemn procedure which would have reminded the audience of many tragic and comic characters who poured libations on stage, following a common performative pattern and creating a tableau of 'pictorial impression'.[54]

The Public Proclamations of Honours

The second pre-play ceremony might have taken place μετὰ τὰς σπονδάς: the archon left the stage and a herald (unless already present) replaced him to announce the name(s) of the benefactor(s) of the city, conferring honours/crowns on them. About this ceremony, two initial clarifications should be made. First of

53 Marshall (2017) 32.

54 By tableaux Taplin (^{2}2003 [1978]) 101 means 'those places where there is not only a lack of dramatic movement, but also some or all of the visual constituents of a scene are held still for a longer or shorter time in a combination which captures or epitomizes a particular state of affairs'.

all, before public proclamations at the Dionysia became a common practice (approximately from the second half of the fourth century BC onwards), we only have four Athenian attestations of public proclamations of honours in the theatre: *IG* I^3 102 (410/409 BC), *IG* I^3 125 (405/404 BC), *IG* II^2 2/*SEG* 32.38 (403/402 BC or 382/381 BC), and *IG* II^2 20 p. 656 (394/393 BC).[55] Given this situation, it is hard to argue that most Athenian tragedies before 410/409 BC alluded to and/or re-staged public conferrals of crowns in the theatre.[56] Secondly, no evidence can confirm that non-Athenian honorands were in Athens at the time of the proclamation. To be sure, Athenian honorands were in Athens at the time of the proclamation, but Athenian public proclamations for Athenians began only from the second half of the fourth century BC (and, regularly, from the first half of the third century BC) onwards.[57]

Bearing this in mind, let us take the honours paid to Thrasybulus (*IG* I^3 102) as an *exemplum* so that we can visualise in part what happened in the *orchestra*. At ll. 6–11 we read that Thrasybulus must be praised for his services and entitled to a gold crown, καὶ [ἀνειπ]/ἓν τὸν κέρυκα Διονυσίον ἐν τõι] ἀγõνι *h*õν *h*έν/[εκα αὐτὸν *h*ο δẽμος ἐστεφάνοσ]ε (12–14: 'and [*sc*. the herald] announce at the tragedy competition of the Dionysia the reason why the people crowned him').[58] The decree – the complete version of which includes honours for other 7/8 foreigners – dates to the spring of 409 BC (thus, just before the Dionysia) and was proposed first in the Council and then in the Assembly. In the second part of the decree, we read (30–32) that Thrasybulus and the others [καὶ ἔγκτεσι]ν εἶναι αὐτοῖς ὅπερ / Ἀθεναίοις, [καὶ γεπέδο]ν καὶ οἰκίας, καὶ οἴκεσ/ιν Ἀθένεσι ('are to have the same right to own property that the Athenians have, both a plot of land and houses, and to dwell at Athens'). As Osborne and Rhodes point out, these honours are particular because the honorands 'seem generally expected to remain in Athens

55 See Giannotti (2021 forthcoming) for a more detailed discussion of these four testimonies.

56 Despite this, I do believe that Greek tragedy mirrors the formulaic language of contemporary honorific decrees (and this will be argued in two forthcoming papers of mine). Also, fr. 241 Kn. from Euripides' *Archelaos* (staged between 408 and 406 BC) includes a crowning for the homonymous hero (and this might have something to do with the missing conferral of crowns in the honorific decree, *IG* I^3 117, for the contemporary King Archelaus I). The fact remains that, if before 410/409 BC crownings had usually taken place in the Assembly and/or Council, playwrights might have been aware at least of that early way of conferring honours and crowns.

57 And it became an argument of debate as [Eur.] *Rh*. 161–194 shows: see Fantuzzi (2016). See Domingo Gygax (2006) for a re-evaluation of Plutarch's testimony (*Alc*. 33.2) about the crowning (in the Piraeus and Assembly) of Alcibiades. See *ibid*. (especially 490–492) for early crownings of Athenian citizens in Athens (though not in the theatre).

58 See Osborne/Rhodes (2017) 498–505.

(and in the case of Agoratus, at least, did)':[59] keeping clarification no. 2 above in place, could it be that οἴκεσιν indicates an exceptional case in which the honorands were currently in Athens for the public proclamation and invited to remain after that? It is a plausible idea, especially for one further reason. When talking about the honours for Thrasybulus in 410/409 BC, we need to consider, as Julia Shear does, that the Dionysia of 409 BC 'must have been a particularly charged affair':[60] the pre-play ceremonies (and the Great Dionysia in general) were enriched by a further ceremony, the oath of Demophantos – seemingly a pre-pre-play ceremony celebrated on the 9th of Elaphebolion (πρὸ Διονυσίων) in the *agora*[61] – on which the Athenians, deme by deme, swore to kill anyone who would have tried to overthrow democracy and establish tyranny, imitating thus the two great tyrant-slayers Harmodios and Aristogeiton. On such a great occasion of democratic feeling, the presence of Thrasybulus and his comrades, the oligarch-slayers, would undoubtedly have further enhanced the importance of the festival and its collective democratic celebrations. It is a mystery whether the Athenians took advantage of this occasion to ensure that Thrasybulus was present along with the other honorands at the Dionysia or not. Unfortunately, we have no evidence for that.

The text of the honorific decree does not provide us with many visual details: it only shows that a herald was in the theatre and had to give the announcement. We do not know what words were spoken precisely, but it is likely that the herald[62] did not read the decree (the current restored, yet still incomplete, version of which is already 47 lines long): the herald might have explained to the audience the reasons for the conferral of crowns, perhaps following a text provided by the Assembly and/or the Council: as Wilson describes it, 'the event is thus to be no mere report, but a live performance, complete with a script for a herald to deliver that voices the will of the *dêmos*'.[63] If only Thrasybulus had been in the theatre, the audience would have attended a crowning in real theatrical fashion. Like a foreign character in exotic clothes, he might have taken the

59 Osborne/Rhodes (2017) 505. As for Agoratus staying in Athens, cf. Lys. 13.

60 Shear (2007) 156. Shear (along with Wilson, P. [2009]) puts much emphasis on the strong democratic character of the 409 BC Great Dionysia. For a discussion of the formulaic language of early Athenian honorific decrees (including those stipulating a public proclamation) and their (supposed) democratic value, see Giannotti (2020).

61 But see Canevaro/Harris (2012), who have successfully challenged the date and authenticity of the text of decree of Demophantos contained in Andoc. 1.96–98.

62 In Aesch. *Ag*. 493–494 we read that the Chorus sees the arrival of a herald with a crowned head. While Fraenkel (1950) 250–251, considering parallels of wreathed characters in tragedy, does not manage to provide a 'cogent explanation' for the wreathed herald, Sommerstein (2008b) 56 n. 102 states that 'this should mean that he brings good news'.

63 Wilson, P. (2009) 12.

stage to receive his prize and to be celebrated in front of a heterogenous audience, entering from one of the two *eisodoi* or *skene* doors (if they were already set up) – perhaps the farthest one, which in drama represented an arrival from a distant *polis*.

Again, we can turn to Athenian drama to add and resolve detail, though the genre is not rich in crowning-scenes: we find some Athenian and non-Athenian characters who took the stage with golden, ivy, or laurel crowns, or, more generally, bearing gifts[64] and rewards to deliver, confer, or receive, but tragedy is not full of political crownings which might have resembled the real practice. In effect, we have more crowns than crownings. For example, Euripides' *Medea* presents several scenes in which gifts and crowns are mentioned in relation to Medea's plan, when she gives her sons a cloak and a crown (786: λεπτόν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον ['a finely woven gown and a diadem of beaten gold']) as gifts (784 and 947: δῶρ'; 789: δωρήματα) to deliver to Creon's daughter. However, both the entrance of the children who are carrying the gifts and the physical delivery are off-stage scenes and are only described by the Chorus (977–984). The self-crowning scene, too, is described (1156–1166) by the Messenger: χρουσοῦν τε θεῖσα στέφανον ἀμφὶ βοστρύχοις (1160: 'and setting the gold crown about her locks'). Thus, we can only imagine the gestures and movements of the act of putting (τιθέναι) a crown on Glauce's head. Conversely, in Soph. *OT* 82–83 the priest describes Creon taking the stage with an ivy crown on his head (κάρα πολυστεφής), whilst in Eur. *Hipp*. 73–74 we see Hippolytus, who crowns the head of Artemis' statue,[65] and Theseus, who enters with a wreath on his head and then tears it off (806–807: αἰαῖ· τί δῆτα τοῖσδ' ἀνέστεμμαι κάρα / πλεκτοῖσι φύλλοις, δυστυχὴς θεωρὸς ὤν; ['Oh! Oh! Why then is my head crowned with these plaited leaves since my mission to the oracle has ended in disaster?']). A few further testimonies are Eur. *Andr*. 147–153, where Hermione enters the stage with a golden diadem, and Eur. *Bacch*. 81–82; 177; 253 and 313, where those who honour Dionysos are always crowned with ivy crowns. Much more interesting are Eur. *El*. 854–855, with Orestes crowned by the servants of the palace for having killed Aegisthus (στέφουσι δ' εὐθὺς σοῦ κασιγνήτου κάρα / χαίροντες ἀλαλάζοντες. [. . .] ['immediately with rejoicing and shouts of joy they garlanded your brother's head']; cf. also *ibid*. 862; 872), and especially *ibid*. 880–889, where we have Orestes' and Pylades' crowning by Electra, whose

64 Honours and benefactions were indeed considered 'gifts'. Cf., e.g., Lys. 21.11; Isoc. 18.66; Xen. *Hell*. 2.3.8; Aeschin. 3.236; Dem. 19.35; Diod. Sic. 11.27.3; 20.11.1; Plut. *Mor*. 850b–1f; *IG* II^3 298; *IG* II^2 682.

65 Cf. also *ibid*. 82–83.

wording could have recalled the official formulae pronounced in the Assembly/Council and/or theatre:

ὦ καλλίνικε, πατρὸς ἐκ νικηφόρου (880)
γεγώς, Ὀρέστα, τῆς ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ μάχης,
δέξαι κόμης σῆς βοστρύχων ἀνδήματα.
ἥκεις γὰρ οὐκ ἀχρεῖον ἔκπλεθρον δραμὼν
ἀγῶν' ἐς οἴκους ἀλλὰ πολέμιον κτανὼν
Αἴγισθον, ὃς σὸν πατέρα κἀμὸν ὤλεσεν. (885)
σύ τ', ὦ παρασπίστ', ἀνδρὸς εὐσεβεστάτου
παίδευμα Πυλάδη, στέφανον ἐξ ἐμῆς χερὸς
δέχου· φέρῃ γὰρ καὶ σὺ τῶδ' ἴσον μέρος
ἀγῶνος· αἰεὶ δ' εὐτυχεῖς φαίνοισθέ μοι

(EL.) O Orestes, glorious in victory, son of the man who won the prize of victory in the war at Troy, accept this garland for the tresses of your hair! You have come home: you have run no futile furlong but have destroyed your enemy Aegisthus, who killed your father and mine! (*She garlands Orestes' head.*) And you, Pylades, his companion in arms, nursling of a man most god-fearing, accept a garland from my hand! For you win from this contest a prize equal to his. Ever may I see you both in prosperity!

(*She garlands Pylades' head.*)

Further 'tragic crowns' can be found at Eur. *Phoen.* 856–857, when Teiresias enters with a golden crown received from the Athenians as 'concrétisation de son succès',[66] and also in E. *Tr.* 353–354 where a frenzied Cassandra asks Hecuba to crown her.

As a matter of fact, we are not provided with full details, but rather we can recognize a few stereotypical situations in which crowns and crownings are involved: when a character took the stage with a crown on his/her head that person did so to convey happiness, euphoria or glory and victory; a character could take the stage without a crown and later receive it (δέχεσθαι) as a gift/reward for his/her efforts; the conferrer would put (τιθέναι) the wreath on the conferee's head and made a specific speech articulating the conferee's merits. It is hard to move beyond such a vague outline, both because of the meagre evidence and the fact that, after all, a crowning was not a complicated procedure. However, there is a dramatic passage that is worthy of consideration due to its *visual* resemblance to public crownings. This time it comes from a comedy: Aristophanes' *Birds* (1271–1276). Here, Peisetaerus and Euelpides are told by a bird-herald that humans now love birds and their city, and because of this esteem, Peisetaerus receives a crown from 'all the people':

66 Amiech (2004) 439.

(ΚΗ.) ὦ Πεισέταιρ', ὦ μακάρι', ὦ σοφώτατε,
ὦ κλεινότατ', ὦ σοφώτατ', ὦ γλαφυρώτατε,
ὦ τρισμακάρι', ὦ – κατακέλευσον.
(ΡΕ.) τί σὺ λέγεις;
(ΚΗ.) στεφάνῳ σε χρυσῷ τῷδε σοφίας οὕνεκα
στεφανοῦσι καὶ τιμῶσιν οἱ πάντες λεῴ. (1275)
(ΡΕ.) δέχομαι. τί δ' οὕτως οἱ λεῳ τιμῶσί με;

(HE.) Hail Peisetaerus, Hail the Blest One, Hail the Most Wise, Hail the Most Illustrious, Hail the Most Wise, Hail the Most Slick, Hail the Triple Blest, Hail the – just give me my cue! (PE.) What's your message? (HE.) With this crown of gold all the people recognize and reward you for your wisdom. (PE.) I accept it. But why do the people honor me this way?

The bird-herald will then exhaustively explain all of Peisetaerus' merits. These lines are crucial to our investigation as they allow us to visualise the scene more clearly. Considering that Aristophanes' *Birds* was staged in 414 BC, i.e. before the first public proclamation of honour and (seemingly) the first conferral of a crown for an Athenian citizen (i.e. Alcibiades in 407 BC), and that the early crownings seem to be attested only in Hdt. 8.124.2 (where crowns are given by Spartans to Eurybiadas and Themistocles) and Thuc. 4.121.1 (crown given by the city of Scione to Brasidas),[67] Dunbar is right in pointing out that 'we cannot tell whether the audience would now think of Peisetaerus as an Athenian being signally honoured for his σοφία by his fellow-citizens or as an eminent member of a foreign (bird) city being honoured by Athens, [. . .]'.[68] As a matter of fact, this scene was a re-staging[69] of a real conferral of crowns (which could happen in the Assembly and/or Council), first announced by a herald who, integrating the Aristophanic version, might have 1) publicly introduced the honorand (with vocatives and epithets), 2) praised his person on behalf of the conferring city/cities/people,[70] 3) conferred a crown on him, and 4) explained the reasons for his

67 The euergetic system, along with its exchange of favours and rewards, was already operating between the end of the sixth century and early fifth century BC. Cf. Hdt. 1.54; 8.85.3; 8.136; Thuc. 1.129.3; 1.136; Plut. *Them*. 24; *I. Cret*. IV 64; *Syll*.[3] 4; *IG* XII Suppl. 549; *IG* IX.2 257. See more exhaustively Domingo Gygax (2016).

68 Dunbar (1995) 635.

69 To be sure, also due to the comic context, we cannot be totally confident of its faithfulness. However, Zanetto/Del Corno (1987) 281 describe it: 'una trasposizione scenica di una prassi reale'.

70 Dunbar (1995) 635 says that 'οἱ πάντες λεῴ was part of a traditional herald's proclamation at Athens, δεῦρ' ἴτ', ὦ π. λ., popularly ascribed to Theseus when calling a general assembly after his συνοικισμός of Attica (Plut. *Thes*. 25)'. Further parallels in Ar. *Eq*. 163 (here Sommerstein [1997 {1981}] quotes Hom. *Il*. 4.90–91 as parallel), *Pax* 297–298, and *Ran*. 219; 676.

crowning. Therefore, Aristophanes' *Birds* seem to be an outstanding case which definitely has something to do with the real practice.

Now that we have a more precise idea of what might have happened in the *orchestra*, we can note that the staging of such a ceremony did not require any special or complicated objects or movement. Moreover, if the honorand was not in Athens at the time of the proclamation, the scene would be simple: the herald, once having entered the centre of the *orchestra*, simply pronounced the name and origins of the honorand and read the text that stated the reasons for the crowning. It goes without saying that, if the honorand was in Athens, the crowning scene would have been magnificent: the entrance of the honorand either from the *eisodoi* or from his honorary seat, and the physical conferral of the crown, would have been a spectacle worthy of being staged. In this way, Athens utilised the stage to praise its benefactors ostentatiously and theatrically, and I tend to believe that when the practice became regular and fixed, the honorands were indeed present at the festival.

How was the third spectacular ceremony introduced within our sequence? We must assume another procession coming from the *eisodoi*, one involving more people who, this time, gave something to Athens (without receiving anything in return). Indeed, the scenic continuity was guaranteed by the herald, who remained in the *orchestra* and had the duty of introducing the representatives of the allied cities which were bringing their annual tribute to the Delian League's treasure.

The Display of the Tributes

When Athens led the fifth-century BC Delian League, spectators at the Dionysia attended another important pre-play ceremony: the display of the tributes from those cities allied with Athens. As in the case of the libations to Dionysos in the theatre, we have scarce testimony[71] of the display of the tributes, for two principle

71 Conversely, for the Athenian empire we have many literary and epigraphic sources (see, e.g., Low [2017] for a useful overview). For a collection and analysis of documents of the tributes see Meritt (1937) and Mattingly (1996). See also Osborne (2000). The epigraphical evidence comes from the so-called *Lapis Primus* and *Lapis Secundus* (*IG* I^3 259–290), which record the annual lists of tributes paid by the allied cities from 454/453 to 432/431 BC (see Osborne/Rhodes [2017] 94–109; for payment at the time of the Dionysia see *ibid*. 300–307 and 322–329). However, we know from Thucydides that Athens started to ask for contributions (initially the sum of tribute was 460 talents) from 478/477 BC – that is, when the Athenians became leaders of the alliance against Persia (cf. Thuc. 1.96 and Plut. *Arist*. 24.4. Diod. Sic. 11.47.1 records 560

reasons: firstly, the practice was enacted only during the period of the fifth-century BC Delian League;[72] secondly, it seems that this practice was exclusively Athenian,[73] so that we do not have evidence from external cities. Our evidence for the public celebration at the Dionysia is given by the *scholion* to Ar. *Ach*. 504 (εἰς τὰ Διονύσια ἐτέτακτο Ἀθήναζε κομίζειν τὰς πόλεις τοὺς φόρους, ὡς Εὔπολίς φησιν ἐν Πόλεσιν ['it was decided that the cities had to bring their tributes to Athens at the Dionysia, as Eupolis says in his *Cities*']), which refers to that passage of Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (502–506) which explains us that these ceremonies were celebrated only during the Great Dionysia,[74] while at the Lenaia no allies or foreigners were present in the theatre.

Conversely, a more detailed explanation of the ceremony can be found in Isocrates (8.82–83), who says:

> οὕτω γὰρ ἀκριβῶς εὗρισκον ἐξ ὧν ἄνθρωποι μάλιστ' ἂν μισηθεῖεν, ὥστ' ἐψηφίσαντο τὸ περιγιγνόμενον τῶν φόρων ἀργύριον διελόντες κατὰ τάλαντον εἰς τὴν ὀρχήστραν τοῖς Διονυσίοις εἰσφέρειν ἐπειδὰν πλῆρες ᾖ τὸ θέατρον· καὶ ταῦτ' ἐποίουν καὶ παρεισῆγον τοὺς παῖδας τῶν ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ τετελευτηκότων, ἀμφοτέροις ἐπιδεικνύοντες, τοῖς μὲν συμμάχοις τὰς τιμὰς τῆς οὐσίας αὐτῶν ὑπὸ μισθωτῶν εἰσφερομένας, τοῖς δ' ἄλλοις Ἕλλησι τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ὀρφανῶν καὶ τὰς συμφορὰς τὰς διὰ τὴν πλεονεξίαν ταύτην γιγνομένας.
>
> For so scrupulously did they invent reasons to be deeply hated by men, that they voted that the excess of tributes had to be displayed talent by talent and brought onto the *orchestra* at the Dionysia, when the theatre was full of people; they also used to do this: they introduced the sons of those who died during the war, showing off to both the allies the amount of their treasure brought (on the stage) by the salaried men, and to the other Greeks the crowd of the orphans and misfortunes caused by their greed.[75]

talents). It is important to underline the fact that neither the epigraphic evidence nor Thucydides state that the tributes were displayed during the Dionysia (and democracy, although not radical democracy, was already effective in that period). As the treasury was initially based in Delos (until 454 BC), presumably the allies sent their tribute there, and not to Athens: hence, the display of the tributes in Athens cannot have happened until the treasury had been moved. For a concise, but detailed, overview of the Delian League and the collection of the tributes, see Rhodes (2006) 41–51. For an overview of Athenian empire's structures and ethics, see Low (2007) 233–251, and (2009).

72 The tribute was replaced by a harbour tax in 413 BC (cf. Thuc. 7.28.4), and if it was reinstated later (which is not certain) that happened under the restored democracy of 410 BC.

73 But see Low (2007) 237 n. 62.

74 But cf. *IG* II^2 1202 (noticed also by Ceccarelli, P. [2010] 117–118 and 118 n. 58) in which we have an attestation of a proclamation of honours during comic performances in the Attic deme of Aixone.

75 My translation.

The display of the tributes was a glorification of Athens and a public demonstration of its power. The image of the city was strongly present, glorified and displayed during this ceremony. The performance should have been a magnificent celebration in the *orchestra*: the Athenians would have been deeply stirred by civic pride; simultaneously, foreigners might have admired this glorification or, more likely, they resented the pomposity of their tyrannical rulers. As Shear says, 'for the Athenians, looking at other cities' wealth brings out their superior status, but, for the allies, looking at their own wealth now in the hands of the Athenians stresses their inferior status', and 'in this web of relationships, the power displayed is Athenian power'.[76] The scene consisted of a parade of 'salaried men' who carried talents, in Antony Raubitschek's opinion, 'in terracotta vessels or in money bags, each of which contained just one talent'.[77] Raubitschek even imagined an astonishing (but still plausible) parade of 'at least five hundred men each carrying one talent of money', before an audience that 'could easily estimate the total value of the display'.[78] We cannot know how many men paraded in the theatre, but each allied city should have had at least one or two delegates who, coming from many cities around the Greek world, would have 'painted' the parade with their various clothes. As far as we know, Athens never had more than 190 allied cities paying tribute:[79] if each city sent one or two delegates with money (either carried by their sole servant or by Athenian servants), we are not far from the number hypothesised by Raubitschek. One by one they were giving Athens a 'gift' to recognize and celebrate its power. It is unlikely that the delegates carried the talents into the *orchestra* since Isocrates mention certain obscure 'salaried men' who served to bring the tributes into the theatre. Their identity remains uncertain: in Max Laistner's opinion, comparing Pl. *Plt*. 290a, they were 'hired servants';[80] George Norlin translates 'hirelings'[81] and argues that they could be either paid servants or paid soldiers (comparing Isoc. 8.79); Terry Papillon translates 'workers'.[82] Whether the *misthotai* had to bring a part of the tribute quota or the whole amount, it is improbable that they did so by hand. Just like the *hydriaphoroi*

76 Shear (2011) 148 *passim* (focusing specifically on the Dionysia of 409 BC).

77 Raubitschek (1941) 359.

78 Raubitschek (1941) 358 *passim*. The number of the allies and the amount of the tributes changed every year: see Rhodes (2010) = P.J. Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World. 478-323 BC*. Second Edition, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. For a general overview of Athenian resources during the Peloponnesian War. See also Low (2007) 233–248.

79 See Meiggs/Lewis (1988) 199. See also Osborne/Rhodes (2017) 94–109.

80 Laistner (1927) 103.

81 Norlin (1929) 58 n. *a*.

82 Papillon (2004) 153.

and *kanephoroi* during the Panathenaia,[83] the servants might have carried the money in *hydriae* on their shoulders. Relying on the sources at hand, we can maintain that there were not important magistrates in the *orchestra*: hence, the hypothesis that the *hellenotamiai* were the officers of this ceremony cannot be claimed. However, as the treasurers were primary figures for the payment procedures of the Delian League, it remains ambiguous why they are not explicitly mentioned nor involved anywhere.

What about the relationship between drama and the public display of the allies' tributes? We have seen how Aristophanes openly referred to the ceremony, testifying to the presence of the allies too. However, there was another comic playwright – quoted by the *scholium ad* Aristophanes – that dealt with the display of the tributes, not by mentioning the ceremony but by re-staging it: Eupolis with his *Cities*. Indeed in his (unfortunately fragmentary) play (dating between the late 420s and 413/412 BC),[84] Eupolis staged the entrance of the chorus – whose twenty-four members represent several cities which were currently allies of Athens – in a way that reproduced visually the ceremony of the display of the tributes. The fragments which illustrate this are 245; 246 and 247 K.-A.: in these passages, the cities of Tenos, Chios and Cyzicus are presented.[85] I will not deal here with the political value of Eupolis' *Cities*,[86] since – as Olson anticipates – 'what attitude the play adopted toward the treatment of the allies is impossible to say, despite the conviction of many modern critics that its guiding purpose must have been to turn away from their cruel handling of their subjects'.[87] Eupolis' fragments are much more useful here to get at some details about the procession during the display of the tributes. Let us consider the three passages, in which it

83 For a complete analysis of the Panathenaia and the Parthenon frieze, see the contributes in Neils (1996a), especially Neils (1996b) and Harrison (1996). As for the organisation, origins and story of the Panathenaia, see also Parke (1977); Parker, R. (2005), and Sourvinou-Inwood (2011).

84 As for the date of Eupolis' *Cities*, see, e.g., Storey (2003) 216–217 and Olson (2016) 229.

85 Perhaps Amorgos too (cf. fr. 256 K.-A.). Aristophanes' *Babylonians* (about which see Norwood [1930] and Welsh [1983]) might be a good parallel of this episode, since there the comedian criticised Athenian imperialistic rule probably by staging his chorus (which alluded to the condition of the allied cities) as an enslaved mass – perhaps 'redeployed as rowers and marines in the Athenian navy' (Starkey [2013] 506).

86 For which, see Storey (2003) 219–228. We do not know at which festival Eupolis' *Cities* were staged. Storey (2003) 217 does not go too far in saying: 'since allies were present (with their *phoros*) at the Dionysia, such a comic presentation might belong better at the more Athenian festival of the Lenaia [. . .]. On the other hand, since the presentation of the phoros was part of the Dionysia, *Poleis* might be appropriate at that festival'.

87 Olson (2016) 228.

seems that two characters are watching and describing the entrance of each *choreutes*:[88]

ν(A.) Τῆνος αὕτη,
πολλοὺς ἔχουσα σκορπίους ἔχεις τε. (B.) συκοφάντος
(A.) This is Tenos,
full of numerous scorpions and vipers. (B.) Sycophants!

αὕτη Χίος, καλὴ πόλις ⟨ ⟩
πέμπει γὰρ ὑμῖν ναῦς μακρὰς ἄνδρας θ' ὅταν δεήσῃ,
καὶ τἄλλα πειθαρχεῖ καλῶς, ἄπληκτος ὥσπερ ἵππος
This is Chios, a lovely city ⟨ ⟩
for she sends you war-ships and men whenever necessary,
and she's generally nice and obedient, like a horse that requires no blows

(A.) ἡ δ ὑστάτη ποῦ'σθ'; (B.) ἥδε Κύζικος πλέα στατήρων.
(A.) ἐν τῇδε τοίνυν τῇ πόλει φρουρῶν ⟨ἐγὼ⟩ ποτ' αὐτὸς
γυναῖκ ἐκίνουν κολλύβου καὶ παῖδα καὶ γέροντα,
κἀξῆν ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν τὸν κύσθον ἐκκορίζειν

(A.) Where's the last one? (B.) This is Cyzicus, full of big coins.
(A.) Well, I myself once in this city, while on guard-duty,
screwed a woman for half a cent, and a boy and a old man;
and you could 'de-bug' her cunt all day long

Here, each member of Eupolis' multiform chorus individually represents[89] an allied city of Athens, and the comedian describes the aspect of the feminised cities[90] and, in the case of Chios, what kind of tribute the city was sending (πέμπειν) to Athens.[91] It goes without saying that, during the real pre-play ceremony, Tenos' representatives did not wear anything resembling scorpions or sycophantic garb, Chios' representatives did not appear dressed like beautiful and submissive women, and Cyzicus' delegates were not dressed like prostitutes. This was just Eupolis' way of describing, perhaps, the Athenians' colonialist conceptions of their allies' status. Conversely, during the pre-play ceremony the

88 Text and translation of Olson (2016). We find this kind of structure (i.e. two characters commenting upon the entrance of the chorus members) also in Ar. *Av*. 263–309.

89 For the individual character of chorus' members in Old Comedy, see Wilson, A. (1977).

90 For the value of the gendered chorus in Eupolis' *Cities*, see Rosen (1997) = Ralph M. Rosen, 'The Gendered Polis in Eupolis' *Cities*', in Gregory W. Dobrov (ed.), *The City as Comedy. Society and Representation in Athenian Drama*, Chapel Hill/London: The University of North Carolina Press, 149–176. For a specific analysis of Cyzicus (both in Eupolis *Cities* and Aristophanes' *Peace*) and its feminised character on stage, see Ceccarelli, S. (2018).

91 Given its strength, Chios used to send ships and crews to Athens in place of the tribute quota.

herald might have announced – just as the two characters of Eupolis' *Cities* – the name of each city (perhaps with a short introduction about the country, or an epithet) and the amount of money brought into the theatre by them. This had to be a pompous scene, worthy of – if we move onto tragic ground – the great entrances of Agamemnon while bringing his prize, Cassandra,[92] to the stage (Aesch. *Ag*. 950–951: ἐσκόμιζε), or Lichas entering the stage carrying (Soph. *Trach*. 400: ἄγων) Heracles' women prisoners from Oechalia (Soph. *Trach*. 225–228), or even Andromache who, as a δορὸς γέρας, arrives on stage in chains with her son, Menelaos, and his entourage (Eur. *Andr*. 559–560: ἄγουσι μ').

In addition to these tragic entrances, Pascale Brillet-Dubois, in analysing Euripides' *Trojan Women*, suggests that Andromache's 'entrée en scène du chariot plein d'objets précieux pouvait rappeler au public athénien et à ses hôtes étrangers l'exposition du tribut des alliés, qui avait lieu lors des Grandes Dionysies avant le concours tragique':[93] –Ἑκάβη, λεύσσεις τήνδ' Ἀνδρομάχην / ξενικοῖς ἐπ' ὄχοις πορθμευομένην; / παρὰ δ' εἰρεσίᾳ μαστῶν ἔπεται / φίλος Ἀστυάναξ, Ἕκτορος ἶνις. / ποῖ ποτ' ἀπήνης[94] νώτοισι φέρῃ, / δύστηνε γύναι, / πάρεδρος χαλκέοις Ἕκτορος ὅπλοις / σκύλοις τε Φρυγῶν δοριθηράτοις, / οἷσιν Ἀχιλλέως παῖς Φθιώτας / στέψει ναοὺς ἀπὸ Τροίας; (Eur. *Tr*. 568–576: 'Hecuba, do you see Andromache here carried on an enemy wagon? Next to her heaving breast is her beloved Astyanax, Hector's son. Where are you being taken on the seat of a wagon, poor woman, sitting next to the bronze armor of Hector and the spear-captured spoils of the Phrygians, with which Achilles' son will deck the temples of Phthia from Troy's store?'). Hence, Andromache and Astyanax's entrance was not only a dramatic episode, but also an ideological reversal of the pre-play ceremony: 'si tel était le cas, le poète chercherait alors à associer le butin des vainqueurs grecs au tribut, symbole de la puissance athénienne. En superposant le spectacle des dépouilles troyennes à celui de la contribution des alliés, il pourrait suggérer que la différence entre empire et conquête est mince, qu'il n'y a qu'un pas de la direction légitime de l'alliance à l'asservissement des

92 Cf. Aesch. *Ag*. 954–955, where Agamemnon describes Cassandra as a 'gift from the army'. See Medda (2017) 88. However, Taplin (1977) 305 argues that 'if Aeschylus had meant that there should be a significantly extravagant show of Agamemnon's booty,' – just like Neoptolemus' booty in Eur. *Tr*. 568 ff. – 'then there would surely be some indication of it in the words. The entry is triumphal and certainly not mean; but there is no sign of a conspicuous show of wealth'.

93 Brillet-Dubois (2010) 36–37.

94 Cf. also Aesch. *Ag*. 1039 and 1070, where Cassandra gets off (ἐκβαίνειν) the chariot. Cf. also Eur. *IA* 145–148; 599–600; 610–611; 613; 616, where Iphigenia, Clytemnestra and Orestes arrive on stage on a chariot with Iphigeneia's dowry (φερνὰς).

alliés'.[95] Andromache and Astyanax are indeed carried on stage by the Acheans like a tribute/prize of war on a chariot (Eur. *Tr*. 614: ἀγόμεθα λεία σὺν τέκνῳ· [. . .] ['I am carried away as booty with my son']):[96] could the allies' tributes have been carried into the *orchestra* on chariots as well? Brillet-Dubois thinks that this cannot be excluded. Such an argument is attractive, but a large procession of hundreds of people carrying money on multiple chariots (which, consequently, would have needed charioteers too) might have been complicated in terms of staging and space. Andromache's chariot in Euripides' *Trojan Women* was coherent with the plot, time and context of the play, and the fact that that scene might refer to the existing display of tributes does not necessarily imply that every facet of the scene was included also in the real practice. Moreover, the silence of Aristophanes and Isocrates on the presence of chariot(s) full of tributes is telling: why should their (disapproving) descriptions have omitted such an important detail, which would have made the ceremony even more monumental, opulent, pompous, and – because of this – open to critique?

Whether on wagons or not, it seems that the display of the tributes needed a heterogeneous parade of performers: heralds, perhaps archons, delegates, soldiers or servants. To be sure, it was more spectacular than the proclamations of honours, and less solemn than the libations to Dionysos. The display of the tributes undoubtedly had an imperialistic grandeur, but such a varied parade conferred an exquisite theatrical value on the ceremony, which could not have been better staged anywhere than the theatre of Dionysos.

The War-Orphans' Parade

We come to the final stages of our investigation by again relying on the passage of Isocrates quoted above, as it bears witness to the fourth pre-play ceremony celebrated during the Dionysia: the war-orphans parade,[97] which consisted of

95 Brillet-Dubois (2010) 37.

96 Cf. also Eur. *Tr*. 577.

97 State responsibility for the war-orphans is attested by Thuc. 2.46.1 and Diog. Laert. 1.55, who attributes it to Solon. However, Diogenes is contradicted by Plut. *Sol*. 31.2–5 who says that Peisistratus, on the one hand, preserved much of Solon's law but, on the other hand, promulgated other laws such as that one which gave support to the war wounded with public expenses. By contrast, Heraclid. Pont. fr. 149 Wehrli (cited by Plutarch in the same passage) argued that it was a law of Solon, and that Peisistratus was only imitating him. The literary evidence for the parade consists of three orators: *P.Hib* i 14a-b (= Lysias, *Against Theozotides*); Isoc. 8.82; Aeschin. 3.154. Cf. also *SEG* 28.46 (the so-called 'Theozotides' decree', on which see

another large procession. Ronald Stroud has described the ceremony as follows: 'on coming of age the orphans were supplied with a suit of armor by the state and presented to the assembled Athenians and their allies at the Dionysia in a grand ceremony in the *orchestra*. The herald read a proclamation calling out each young man's name and patronymic and then the orphans were sent away each to his own home'.[98] However, Isocrates is not the only available source: this time, it is Aeschines who provides the most detailed description of the parade:

> Τίς γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ἀλγήσειεν ἄνθρωπος Ἕλλην καὶ παιδευθεὶς ἐλευθερίως ἀναμνησθεὶς ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ ἐκεῖνό γε, εἰ μηδὲν ἕτερον, ὅτι ταύτῃ ποτὲ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ μελλόντων ὥσπερ νυνὶ τῶν τραγῳδῶν γίγνεσθαι, ὅτ' εὐνομεῖτο μᾶλλον ἡ πόλις καὶ βελτίοσι προστάταις ἐχρῆτο, προελθὼν ὁ κῆρυξ καὶ παραστησάμενος τοὺς ὀρφανούς, ὧν οἱ πατέρες ἦσαν ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ τετελευτηκότες, νεανίσκους πανοπλίᾳ κεκοσμημένους, ἐκήρυττε τὸ κάλλιστον κήρυγμα καὶ προτρεπτικώτατον πρὸς ἀρετήν, ὅτι τούσδε τοὺς νεανίσκους, ὧν οἱ πατέρες ἐτελεύτησαν ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ ἄνδρες ἀγαθοὶ γενόμενοι, μέχρι μὲν ἥβης ὁ δῆμος ἔτρεφε, νυνὶ δὲ καθοπλίσας τῇδε τῇ πανοπλίᾳ, ἀφίησιν ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ τρέπεσθαι ἐπὶ τὰ ἑαυτῶν, καὶ καλεῖ εἰς προεδρίαν. Τότε μὲν ταῦτ' ἐκήρυττεν, ἀλλ' οὐ νῦν, [. . .].
>
> What Greek with a free man's education would not feel pain to recall this, if nothing else, that once on this day, when as now the tragedies were about to take place, when the city was better governed and had better champions, the herald would have come forward and, with the orphans whose fathers had died in war beside him, young men decked out in full armor, would make a proclamation, one that brought most honor and was most calculated to inspire courage, that these young men, whose fathers had died in war displaying their valor, were reared to adulthood by the people, who, having equipped them with this hoplite armor, now send them off to their own affairs with their blessing and invite them to a seat of honor. This was the proclamation in those days, but not now, [. . .].[99]

From this passage, we gain some details: in the late fourth century BC the ceremony was already considered old-fashioned and was no longer celebrated; the orphans were already in full armour, and they were not gifted any additional armour during the celebration; there was no drilling in the theatre and no battle

Stroud [1971]; Calabi Limentani [1975]; Matthaiou [2011]; Blok [2015], and Osborne/Rhodes [2017] 464–471). But cf. Arist. *Pol*. 2.1268a6–11, where it appears – though with some doubts from Aristotle himself – that Hippodamus of Miletus, in the second quarter of the fifth century BC *ca*., was (or claimed to be) the *protos euretes* of the support for war-orphans. For a complete overview of civic assistance towards the war-orphans in Thasos and Athens, see now Proietti/Giannotti (2021).

98 Stroud (1971) 288–289.

99 Translation of Carey (2000).

march,[100] but rather the young men were given an honorary seat in the audience. At a first glance, it is difficult to understand the real political value of the war-orphans' parade. It seems that the ceremony primarily aimed at celebrating the Athenian war dead and their orphan sons: the Dionysia's fame was clear among Greeks and it provided – as it is evident at this point – the best stage to celebrate[101] the orphans publicly. Thinking about audience reaction, I believe that the 'external message' (the one addressed to the foreigners among the audience) consisted of a display of strong young Athenian boys as a warning that Athens would always have new soldiers to protect its empire, whereas the 'internal message' (the one addressed to the domestic audience) reassured Athenian citizens that the city would have taken care of its young orphan citizens- and soldiers-to-be. It is clear, at any rate, that Aeschines (in contrast to Isocrates) fondly recalls that civic practice along with the glorious days of Athens.

Also, another important (and slightly earlier) testimony comes from a fragmentary oration of Lysias, *Against Theozotides*. It is from fr. 129 Carey (col. i, ll. 23–47) that we learn the words spoken by the herald: he called the war-orphans by their patronymics and said a) the name of their fathers, and b) that the state would feed them until adulthood. This time we collect a decent amount of information about the movements and announcements in the *orchestra* from our non-dramatic evidence. If we combine together Isocrates', Aeschines', and Lysias' testimonies, we come up with a precise picture of the parade in action. And Athenian tragedy – especially Euripidean tragedy (such as *Heracles*, *Children of Heracles* and *Suppliant Women*, which are purposefully full of deictics which referred to real war-orphans in the *orchestra*) – comes to 'complete' our partial view with its explicit dramatising of the war-orphans' parade.[102] After all, as Gregory Sifakis noted, 'all children in tragedy are in a state of great misfortune, which has struck their parents and thus involves them directly':[103] this was the same situation experienced by the real war-orphans who had lost their fathers and, consequently, a social and financial basis upon which to rely. More than this: each children's parade in tragedy is related to the loss of the fathers. Consequently, the children's parade that spectators watched

100 A proper battle march was performed during the fourth-century BC ephebes' parade. Although Goldhill talks about war-orphans and ephebes indiscriminately, Dillery (2002) has shown how those two groups were different, and that two ceremonies existed, one for the ephebes and another for the war-orphans.

101 But Dillery (2002) 467, considering Isocrates' passage (8.82–83), argues that 'the emphasis in this passage is very much on the Athenians making ill-advised demonstrations to others, not on the orphans demonstrating anything of their own military prowess'.

102 We find a comic allusion to the war-orphans' parade also in Ar. *Av*. 1360–1361, when Peisetaerus tells the young 'father beater' that he will fit him to 'with wings like an orphan bird'.

103 Sifakis (1979) 68.

during tragic performances was exactly the same parade they had witnessed a few hours before. In this way, Euripides is of great help because his tragedy is the only one with children as speaking characters, which gives them a preeminent role within the play.

If, on the one hand, Aeschines says that the war-orphans presented themselves in the theatre in full armour, on the other hand Euripides' *Children of Heracles* can give us an idea about what such a ὁπλίτης κόσμος was made of.[104] To be sure, dressing scenes are common in Greek literature and the Euripidean passage includes nothing which we could not surmise, but at least there we have a tragic source confirming our expectations. For in Eur. *Heracl*. 698–699, Iolaos (who is about to become younger) asks the servant to take the suit of armour within the temple, and in the dressing scene[105] we read that that complete armour (720: παντευχίαν) was heavy (723: βάρος), and included a spear (726–728: ὀξύην) and a shield[106] (738: ἀσπίδος). The armour included a helmet, but we do not know whether the war-orphans wore it, or if they just carried it in their hands so that the audience could recognize their faces when the herald called their names. There is the possibility that they entered the theatre with crowns on their heads as in the parade of Heracles' sons in Eur. *HF* 525–526 (κρᾶτας ἐξεστεμμένα). However, this could be related to the funerary context of the scene, given that Amphitryon, Megara and Heracles' sons, thinking that Heracles is dead, dedicate to him a funerary parade while they are waiting to be killed by Lycus. It is interesting to note that this is a wholly reversed war-orphans' parade: Heracles' orphans are not celebrated and helped by the city, but rather are approaching death (329–335); they do not enter the stage in full armour, but rather are described by the Chorus as entering in funerary clothes (442–443: ἀλλ' ἐσορῶ γὰρ τούσδε φθιμένων / ἔνδυτ' ἔχοντας ['but look, I see the children here with the finery of the dead upon them]); they are not waiting to be called by a herald, but are waiting to be called by a priest who will slit their throats' (451–453).

At any rate, in *Heracles*, *Children of Heracles* and *Suppliant Women*, the orphans enter onto the stage in parade, always accompanied by a pair of figures: in Eur. *HF* 454–455 Heracles' sons are guided by Megara and Amphitryon (ὦ τέκν', ἀγόμεθα ζεῦγος οὐ καλὸν νεκρῶν, / ὁμοῦ γέροντες καὶ νέοι καὶ μητέρες ['children, we are led away as an inglorious yoked team of corpses, old men and children and mothers all together!']); in Eur. *Heracl*. 39 Heracles' sons and daughters are guided by Iolaos and Alcmene (δυοῖν γερόντοιν δὲ στρατηγεῖται

104 See Echeverría (2012) for a useful overview of the figure of the Greek hoplite and its sources.

105 See Allan (2001) 183–189.

106 Cf. also Ar. *Thesm*. 19.

φυγή ['our flight is being marshalled by a pair of grayheads']); in Eur. *Supp*. 1114 the Argive orphans enter on stage along with Theseus and Adrastus. Such pairs of characters could stand for the paidagogos[107] and *kosmetes* who might have led the war-orphans' parade in the theatre. The latter play provides a further example of 'ideological reversal'[108] as the war-orphans, instead of a suit of armour for the future, are given their fathers' ashes in urns to carry on stage (Eur. *Supp*. 1114–1115: τάδε δὴ παίδων ἤδη φθιμένων / ὀστᾶ φέρεται. [. . .] ['they are bringing the bones of our dead children!']),[109] as a token of the past: for, in this fictional parade, the οἶκος is more important than the πόλις.[110] Eur. *Supp*. 1165–1182 is particularly interesting because, close to the end of the play, it seems that the Argive orphans' parade has stopped in the centre of the *orchestra*. Theseus explicitly points to the orphans with a deictic[111] which might have referred to the real war-orphans who were watching the play. James Morwood noticed this feature and stated: 'in a remarkable coup de théâtre, these orphans in the front seats now find themselves represented on stage. This is not only an arresting instance of a civic ceremony directly impinging on a play which it preceded [. . .]; it also adds a powerful tragic charge, especially to the lines where the sons in the play wonder whether they will ever take up their shields to repay their father's murder (1143–1144; 1150), for the orphans in the front seats are dressed in full armour'. He added that 'even if, as of course may well have been the case, the orphans left the theatre at some stage of the festival or took off their armour, the point still stands, since the audience's recollection of the armed boys appearing in the theatre and being led to the front seats in this patriotic ceremony will remain vividly alive'.[112] Thus, the king of Athens, by continuously using the second plural, is presenting both to the fictional[113] and to

107 Cf. Eur. *Med*. 46–47.

108 See Storey (2008) 80: 'young men in uniform can be a source of pride and provide an upswing of feeling to the play, but some spectators will see only the futility of yet more destruction, another instance of the double-edged theme that operates throughout this drama. The young men honoured in the theatre are now warriors, while the boys in the play have yet to grow up'.

109 It is not clear whether the orphans had armour and weapons. At 1142–1144 and 1149–1151 the orphans say that they are going to avenge their fathers with their weapons: this might be a reference to the weapons they were carrying on stage.

110 See Rehm (1992) 129.

111 Throughout the play the Argive orphans are often indicated via deictics: cf. Eur. *Heracl*. 168; 205; 213; 266; 307; 309; 427; 439; 467; 574–575; 581.

112 Morwood (2007) 231.

113 As Collard (1975) 408 points out, 'Th. now for the first time addresses Adr. and Cho. together as representatives of their whole city, demanding not personal but political recognition

the real audience the sons of men who died during war, and he is giving the ashes of those war-dead to their sons. The Argive orphans, in return for such a gift, must remember Athens' beneficent deed, repay it in gratitude, and honour the Athenian city. The Athenian war-orphans among the audience would have recognised that ritual performance. It is also likely that the herald would also have pronounced a speech similar to that of Theseus: perhaps he called the orphans, introduced them, stated what the city was giving them, and invited them to 'honour this country' and pass the memory of that day to their future sons. An invocation to Zeus (or to the gods in general)[114] might have taken place and closed the speech.

Therefore, the image of the war-orphans' parade one gleans from these sources is quite detailed. The war-orphans came to the *orchestra* from the *eisodoi*. It is unlikely that they were already in their seats wearing the armour, ready to be called. Rather, they entered in full battle dress, i.e., perhaps with an helmet and surely a spear, a shield, and armour: this was the ὁπλίτης κόσμος that Euripides briefly describes in *Children of Heracles*. It is unlikely that the war-orphans (we do not know their number) took to the stage alone. I would rely here on Euripides' scenes which depict one or two figures accompanying them: a pedagogue and/or a trainer who might have led the parade toward the centre of the *orchestra*. In Eur. *Heracl.* 43–44 we are told that only male war-orphans can stay on stage near the altar:[115] it is very likely that this was also the case during the real war-orphans' parade, as armour was given only to boys. Moreover, from the passages of Isocrates and Aeschines, nothing is said about female war-orphans. Rather, it is only in a mid-fourth-century BC Thasian decree (included in *SEG* 57.820) that we find mention of female war-orphans.[116] During the parade in Euripides' *Heracles*, we have seen that the war-orphans entered with crowned heads: since crowns were often worn during celebrations, it is likely that the real war-orphans had crowns or that the herald crowned their heads after having stated their names and patronymics and having praised the deeds of their fathers. After this military scene (which should have moved

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of his service to Argos. In reminding them, his description shades it from a humanitarian into a political undertaking, 1168 ἐγὼ . . . καὶ πόλις'.

114 See Collard (1975) 409 for parallels.

115 As Allan (2001) 136 rightly notes, 'here, as often in tragedy, a fifth-century convention (governing the behaviour of young women) is retrojected into the world of heroic myth (cf. 474–477; *Phoen.* 93–95; 1275–1276; *Or.* 108; for the idea applied to married women, cf. *Andr.* 876–878; *El.* 343–344; *IA* 825–834)'.

116 See Pouilloux (1954), Fournier/Hamon (2007). Thasos' testimony is more detailed even as for male war-orphans as it clearly shows that they were given greaves, armour, dagger, helmet, shield and spear (whose value had to be no less than three minas).

all spectators' feelings and enflamed Athenian civic pride), the war-orphans were guided either by the herald or by the trainer/pedagogue to honorary seats among the audience. Therefore, the war-orphans took their seats, the herald (and whoever was in the *orchestra*) left the stage through one of the *eisodoi* (or remained to watch the plays), and the dramatic festival was ready to begin – or rather, to continue.

Since after this 'scene' the performers became spectators – perhaps the most important spectators, if one follows John Winkler's 'ephebic interpretation' of Athenian tragedy[117] – and emotions reached their peak, the war-orphans' parade is the best candidate to be the last pre-play ceremony of the Athenian Great Dionysia. This allows us to sketch a thematic coherence, and in so doing to approach our conclusion: the opening and propitiatory ceremony in Dionysos' honour represented 'archaic' religion in action; the proclamation of honours and the display of tributes celebrated the present and current power of Athens; lastly, the war-orphans' parade celebrated the future of the *polis*, a future that would have been prosperous thanks to the nascent valorous soldiers of Athens. The audience of the Dionysia thus bore witness to a great 'civic' tetralogy performed by members of the *polis*, set in the Athenian *polis*, watched by the Athenian *polis*, and sponsored by the Athenian *polis*. But, after all, was not this equally the case for drama?

Conclusions: The Theatre of the πόλις

Looking back through the pages of my notebook, I returned to a sentence that Professor Taplin pronounced during his talk 'How distinctly framed were the plays in the Greek θέατρον?' which he delivered in Basel: 'the soil of the *orchestra* becomes the soil of somewhere else'. That is precisely what happened, for example, when Orestes faced the Erinyes along with Apollo and Athena, or when Oedipus blinded himself, or even more when Medea appeared on a golden chariot after having killed her sons. The playwrights had to play with their spectators' minds, because not everything could be staged and performed: the most incredible the most incredible facts and actions were projected onto another time, place and dimension, so to speak. Conversely, the pre-play ceremonies of the Great Dionysia had nothing supernatural to cast them into unreal spaces: they were performed in the contemporary city of Athens by real civic representatives, specifically on that occasion. When the performers (active or passive)

117 See Winkler (1985 = 1990).

of the ceremonies entered and exited the *orchestra* from the *eisodoi*, they arrived from Athens and left for Athens: everything and everyone was in and about the city of Athens. Conversely, in Athenian drama, the *eisodoi* and the doors of the *skene*-building served to connect different cities or places. This is not to say that there was a sort of reality *vs*. fantasy, inasmuch as Greeks believed that their myths had something real and historical. Yet it is undeniable that the pre-play ceremonies were something more concrete and tangible than mythical facts.

Drama and the pre-play ceremonies – though representing opposing events – shared the *orchestra* in common, and on that soil they were both performed, as we have seen, following similar patterns. We can agree that the dramatic 'what', 'when', and 'where' were different from the ceremonial 'what', 'when', and 'where', and that aestheticism was what most differentiated drama and pre-play ceremonies: to the former aestheticism was an end, to the latter it was a means. But it remains the fact that the aesthetic dimension was essential to both. Yet it was above all the 'how' that equated the performances: we have seen that they both had processions, performers, gestures, objects, movements, speeches, silences, exits and entrances. The soil of the *orchestra* became the soil of performance in general, where everything could be aesthetically staged and – because of the venue – everything acquired a theatrical dimension. In light of this, the spectators, bearing witness to the space of performance *par excellence*, did expect performances. Whether dramatic or civic or religious, they were all nevertheless performances at heart, with performers and performative rules.

What would spectators and playwrights have thought about the performance of the pre-play ceremonies? While we cannot reproduce those ancients' thoughts, the data available, though poor, are eloquent enough to demonstrate that there must have been a reason why Athenian drama re-shaped and re-staged the pre-play ceremonies on stage. Playwrights might have recognised the suitability of the pre-play ceremonies to theatrical rules: masked actors, music and dances were added, but the core of the ceremonies remains untouched; We could say that the *signified* (that is, the value of the pre-play ceremonies) changed as it was shifted into a theatrical dimension with theatrical aims and meanings, but the *signifier* (that is, the performance of the ceremonies) did not change at all. Here, spectators might have played an important role as their visual memory should have recalled the pre-play ceremonies and recognised them while being theatrically evoked at that precise moment. Theatre necessarily influenced everything that was performed within its space, and, consequently, everything became part of a single whole. As Oddone Longo – to whom I indirectly owe the title of these modest conclusions – pointed out, the pre-play rituals 'constituted the immediate framework of the

plays', and, just like 'the community of the plays' *spectators* [. . .] was not distinct from the community of *citizens*',[118] we might posit that the community of the pre-play ceremonies' performers was not wholly distinct, in that specific moment, from the community of actors. It goes without saying that the pre-play ceremonies' performers had no masks, were (mostly) magistrates and not *hypokritai*, and had one role (on stage) rather than several. However, it was *performance* in the *theatre* which held those two groups together.

With this, the city – aware of the visibility the theatre would have given to its ceremonies – played its part and provided its audience with a rich programme. After taking their seats, and before watching the dramatic performances, Athenian and non-Athenian spectators of the Great Dionysia knew that they were in for four 'opening acts'. As far as we know, dramatic performances were staged 'immediately' after the pre-play ceremonies and that there was no long pause between the two kinds of performances. Therefore, there was indeed a theatrical continuum. If we had to judge the ceremonies from a theatrical point of view, we might say that they were reminiscent of Aeschylean scenes, with one man always present on stage (most of time, the herald) and a majestic use of exits and entrances. In much the same way, the solemnity of the ceremonies reminds us of both Aeschylean and Sophoclean passages, deep and silent. On the other hand, the variety of characters who gradually came into the *orchestra*, and the objects which were (and were brought) in the *orchestra*, mirror Euripidean and Aristophanic festive and colourful scenes. However, it was not Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides or Aristophanes who were the authors of such performances. This time, the playwright was the *polis*, which, by setting its officers as unmasked actors on its own soil of performance, launched the Great Dionysia by staging its own ritual of civic magnificence in theatrical manner: one further and striking proof of Athenian θεατρομανία.

118 Longo (1990) 16.

Elodie Paillard

‘Greek to Latin and Back: Did Roman Theatre Change Greek Theatre?’

Introduction

The influence of Greek drama on the birth and development of Latin theatre is a well-studied phenomenon. Greek theatrical production is not only behind the creation of the first full play in Latin, as well as many successive tragedies and comedies in this language, but its influence, direct or indirect, also needs to be acknowledged in pieces from the so-called ‘minor’ theatrical genres that were performed in the Roman world. Local, Italic forms of entertainment (such as Atellan plays) also contributed to the Roman theatrical landscape, but it is likely that they had themselves developed and evolved through contact with dramatic activities taking place in Greek-speaking areas.[1] Roman theatre emerged at a time and in places characterized by contacts between several cultures, and Latin drama never quite succeeded in becoming fully independent from its models. Early Roman tragedies and comedies were certainly no mere literal translations of Greek plays. Yet, Latin dramatic literature remained deeply indebted to Greek drama. This is not in itself surprising, since this is arguably the case for the major part of Latin literature, something which has led D. Feeney to call Latin literature ‘a Grecizing literature in the Latin language’.[2] From 240 BC onwards, it took some time for Latin theatre to acquire a status of its own, and even then Greek theatre was still perceptible behind most Roman dramatic productions. In parallel, Greek drama never stopped to exist in itself even in the heart of the Roman empire. As G. Hutchinson has noted: ‘At the very time when Latin literature is sometimes supposed to achieve independence from Greek, Greek literary activity is acknowledged in the capital with more emphasis than

1 For a summary of the influence (direct and indirect) of Greek theatre on the origin of Roman theatre, see Paillard (2019a).

2 Feeney (2016) 4. On the creation of Latin literature and its relationship to its Greek predecessor, and the ‘Roman translation project’, see Feeney (2016).

Notes: My thanks go to Anton Bierl, Jean-Paul Descœudres, Hans R. Goette, J. Richard Green, Gesine Manuwald, Silvia Milanezi, Vanessa Monteventi, Sebastiana Nervegna, Mali Skotheim, and Oliver Taplin for their help and the stimulating discussions we have shared on the topic of this chapter.

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before.'[3] This is also true for dramatic activity. Indeed, despite the (false) idea that Greek and Latin literatures succeeded each other in two distinct chronological series, Greek literature stayed well alive even as Latin literature developed.[4] The division between Greek and Roman literature, as Hutchinson (2013, 12) remarks, 'seems obvious to us, because it is reinforced by our own academic structures. But Romans employed considerable artificiality to maintain it [. . .]'. Scholarship on Greek drama has recently begun to focus on its evolution beyond its flourishing in Classical Athens: Greek theatre did not end with Euripides for tragedy and Menander for comedy.[5] Even in Italy and in Rome itself, the political and cultural 'centre' of the Roman Republic and then Empire, Greek theatre continued to be composed (sometimes even by Romans themselves) and, more importantly, performed.[6] Further East, dramatic competitions and festivals continued well into the Roman Imperial period, offering occasions at which Greek drama, including new plays, was performed.[7]

The question that will be discussed in this chapter, therefore, is less odd than it might sound: has Latin drama exerted any kind of influence on late Greek dramatic production? And if so, is there anything in this process or its results that should encourage us to redefine what we encompass under the label 'Ancient Greek theatre/drama'?

The influence of Latin literature on late Greek literature has left enough traces to have been noted. Feeney (2016, 153) summarizes it so: 'The new literature [i.e. Latin literature] had a kinetic impact on Roman life in many different spheres, and it set in train a process that in time transformed Greek literary and intellectual life as well [. . .].' However, relatively little has been done to

3 Hutchinson (2013) 51.

4 On the 'two series', see Hutchinson (2013) esp. 13–24.

5 Against the myth of the death of tragedy after Euripides, see Petrides's remark in his introduction to Liapis/Petrides (2018) 9–10. Beside the contributions found in Liapis/Petrides (2018), other works focusing on post-Classical performances and production of Greek theatre include, e.g.: Xanthakis-Karamanos (1993); Nervegna (2007) and (2013); Gildenhard/Revermann (2010); Petrides/Papaioannou (2010); Marshall/Hawkins (2016); Paillard (2021 forthcoming).

6 Two successive grants from the Swiss National Science Foundation have allowed me to study the question of the performances of Greek theatre in Rome and Roman Italy during the Republic and Early Imperial times. By carefully collecting the available evidence, both in literary and in documentary sources, for theatrical performances in Greek language in these contexts, it became possible to demonstrate that they were less rare than previously thought. Some preliminary results of this research are available in Paillard (2019a) and Paillard (2021 forthcoming). On Romans who composed poetry and plays in Greek, see Hutchinson (2013) 143–146. On the survival of Greek comedy in the Roman Empire, see Marshall/Hawkins (2016).

7 See Graf (2015) and (2016); Skotheim (2016).

understand more precisely what late Greek literary production may owe to Latin literature, in particular as regards late Greek theatrical production.[8] As mentioned, Greek drama was still alive and performed at least during the first centuries of the Roman Empire. If theatre, as an independent literary genre, seems to be almost entirely excluded from the Second Sophistic as noted by M.-H. Garelli (2007, 209 n. 1), this still does not mean that drama in Greek language was not composed and performed anymore during this period.[9] As such, it was theoretically exposed to the influence of what was composed and performed in Latin during the Imperial period and earlier. Therefore, if this is not the case for theatrical literature as opposed to other literary genres, discussing the reasons for such an absence of influence is still a worthwhile enterprise.

Yet, this project is not an easy one, and there are good reasons why scholars seem to have avoided a systematic analysis of this question. Among the first problems encountered when discussing the possible impact of Roman theatre on late Greek theatre (from the end of the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD) is the scarcity of extant Greek dramatic texts in this period. No Greek play dating to this time is known to us in its entirety: we must rely on fragments and indirect testimonies about texts that have not survived. In most cases it remains uncertain whether what we have was intended for performance at all. Besides, when we do possess texts (fragments) that can be identified as belonging to the dramatic genre (widely speaking) and that date to the post-third-century BC, it remains difficult to gauge whether they differ from Classical drama (e.g., in style, structure, or metre) because of a possible influence from Roman drama or by reason of the intrinsic evolution of Greek drama after the 5th century BC.[10] After the 3rd century BC, our understanding of the evolution of Greek theatrical production becomes patchy at best and makes it almost impossible to pinpoint 'Roman influences' in the meagre fragments we have.

8 See, e.g., Hutchinson (2013) 1–2: '[. . .] the effect of Latin literature on Greek is a more problematic subject [. . .]'.

9 On the perception of Greek tragedy in the first centuries of the Imperial period, see Webb (2018).

10 Conversely, determining exactly what features and components of theatre in Latin are 'truly Roman' in order to trace their possible influence on late Greek theatre is also an almost impossible task. A good example of this double difficulty can be found in the question of the metric regularities: Roman theatre seems to conform less strictly to regular metrical rules than does Classical Greek theatre. However, openness to less strict metrical rules and to a wider array of metres and musical possibilities had already begun in late Euripidean tragedies and continued in fourth-century tragedy (see, e.g., Griffith, M. [2018] on the question of music). If late Greek theatre is found to make use of less regular metres than Classical theatre, it would thus not be cautious to attribute this to direct Latin influence.

Yet, the problem could be addressed from a range of new, indirect angles – some of which will be examined in the following attempt at opening a path that research has hitherto left underexplored.[11] Rather than providing answers, it will examine examples of elements where the influence of Roman theatrical production and tastes could have weighted into the composition of late Greek language drama. Some speculation will be unavoidable, but it is hoped that this attempt will show that late Greek theatre might not have developed in total independence from Roman theatrical practice, however closely the latter was originally dependent upon the former. New contexts and performative aspects, the mixing of theatrical and non-theatrical genres and the influence of new dramatic (widely speaking) genres, as well as the question of the pantomime, will be investigated as possible ways to tackle this problem. Finally, the question of the definition of 'Greek theatre' will be addressed in light of the elements discussed in this chapter.

Contexts and Performance

Greek drama staged during the Roman period, even when Classical plays were reperformed, was different from what 5th-century Athenians would have seen. A performance of a tragedy in Classical Greece was different, on many levels, from what it was in Rome, Naples, or even Athens itself, in the first century AD. Centuries of evolution rendered the content, audience expectations in terms of literary genres, and the performative aspects of a dramatic spectacle different from what would have been experienced in the 5th century BC.

Traces of this dichotomy between what 'Greek theatre' was in the Classical period and what it had become by Roman times can be found in the apparently incoherent attitude of Cicero towards Greek drama, which was no doubt representative of what many of the contemporary élite members of Roman society thought of Greek theatre. On the one hand, citing Classical Greek dramatic authors, reading their plays, studying them at school, trying to imitate them by writing tragic pieces in the Classical style, were all deemed respectful activities

11 The absence of a systematic study of the possible spread of Roman/Latin drama (understood as theatrical performances of comedies and tragedies in Latin rather than written texts) to the East, and more fundamentally, the absence of much evidence for such a spread, also prevents us from using what would be another good angle to approach its possible influence on late Greek drama.

for members of the learned élite. On the other hand, contemporary performances of Greek drama were not seen in such a positive light, and Greek actors in particular were criticized openly by the same people who professed admiration for Classical Greek theatre.[12] Such an attitude may well stem from the idealization of the Classical past that manifested itself among some members of the Roman élite.[13] Yet, it remains likely, however biased our (mostly élite) sources might be, that the theatrical performances in Greek which Cicero could have seen in theatres in his time did not correspond with the idea he had (and we still have) of what was going on in 5th-century Greek theatres.

In this section, we will discuss three aspects of Roman-era dramatic performances that might have influenced how late Greek theatre was composed and performed: the contexts, occasions, and spaces of performances, the blurring between reality and fiction, and the increased spectacularity of what Romans liked to see on stage. For each of these three aspects, it will be important to discuss whether a clear influence of Roman theatrical practice on Greek contemporary production can be pinpointed, or whether Greek theatre had simply followed its own evolution, which had begun much earlier than 240 BC. The two explanations are difficult to disentangle and not mutually exclusive.

Contexts

Classical theatre, too often reduced in our minds to its manifestation as full-scale performances of tragedies, comedies, and satyr plays delivered in a theatre, has been described as an 'institution'. Such performances were following the '[. . .] conditions and conventions of ancient Greek open-air, communal, religious theatre'.[14] Although including performance in the definition of theatre was an important step away from considering ancient Greek theatre plays as mere texts, this definition excludes a large number of theatrical activities that took place outside of the strict framework of religious festivals where tragedies, comedies, and satyr plays were performed in a contest, in theatre buildings (whether permanent or temporary).

Indeed, there is convincing evidence that less formal theatrical performances took place, for example, in the margins of events that did not officially

12 On this dichotomy, see Webb (2018) and Paillard 2021 (forthcoming).

13 The idealization of the Greek Classical past has had a long-lasting effect on the history of scholarship devoted to ancient theatre: see Paillard (2019b).

14 See Wilson, P. (2007) 1.

include theatre performances, such as the Olympics, or at other occasions.[15] There is no good reason to exclude such performances from what we consider to be 'Ancient Greek theatre'. As W. Slater (2007, 45) puts it: 'We should not insist on too strict a dichotomy between familiar formal festival categories and the artists on the fringe.' Likewise, we should abandon the idea of an exclusive link between 'proper' Greek theatrical performances and theatre buildings: one can exist without the other.[16] This may well be especially true for Late Classical (4th-century) and post-Classical times: with the spread of theatre as a marker of Greekness it is not unlikely that theatrical performances began to take place in an increasing number of less formal contexts and at more various occasions than what was the case in Athens in the fifth century.[17] In the Roman period, trends identified in the change of spaces and occasions for theatrical performances in the post-Classical times seem to develop further.

As the aim of this chapter is to discuss the possible influence of Roman/Latin theatre on late Greek dramatic production, it focuses on Rome and Roman Italy, as the first centres where Latin theatre emerged.[18]

Occasions

While many theatrical events still took place within the framework of regular public religious festivals comprising dramatic competitions, one sees a proliferation of other theatrical or theatre-like events taking place at other occasions in the Roman world. Following a trend that had already begun earlier,[19] victories, funerals, or other wide-scale public events were considered good opportunities to stage theatrical performances. In such contexts, theatre in Greek language was

15 See, for example, Slater, W. (2007); Rutherford (2007), albeit not for the Classical period.

16 See, e.g., Rutherford (2007) esp. 288.

17 Suffice it to note that Alexander organized dramatic performances sometimes far away from places that may have offered conventional formal spaces and contexts for such activities. On this topic, see Le Guen (2014). On the variety of contexts and occasions at which fifth- and fourth-century autocrats organized theatrical performances, see Csapo/Wilson (2021 forthcoming). On the spread of Greek tragedy after the Classical period, see Duncan/Liapis (2018) and Le Guen (2018), both with further references.

18 It will not be possible here to survey all theatrical events that included performances in Greek and might have taken place in Rome and its surroundings from 240 BC: only some examples will be discussed.

19 See Csapo/Wilson (2021 forthcoming) for the idea that, already from the fifth century, autocrats tended to use theatre more as a way to celebrate their own life milestones rather than keeping performances as general religious events.

sometimes performed in Rome and Roman Italy. The delicate question of whether such occasions were still thought of as religious, thus keeping theatrical performances within a framework not dissimilar from what was known of the Classical period, remains difficult to answer.[20] It could be argued that many of those apparently non-religious occasions retained a fundamentally religious character. Indeed, entertainment organized on the occasion of a military victory, for example, could be understood as a way of thanking the gods for bringing military success to the organizer.[21] Livy (39.22) notes that the games organized in 186 BC by Marcus Fulvius Nobilior had been vowed by the general during the war:

> *Per eos dies, quibus haec ex Hispania nuntiata sunt, ludi Taurii per biduum facti religionis causa. Decem deinde dies magno apparatu ludos M. Fulvius, quos voverat Aetolico bello, fecit. Multi artifices ex Graecia venerunt honoris eius causa. Athletarum quoque certamen tum primo Romanis spectaculo fuit, et venatio data leonum et pantherarum, et prope huius saeculi copia ac varietate ludicrum celebratum est.*
>
> About the time that these reports were brought from Spain, the Taurian Games were performed for two days for religious reasons. Then for ten days, with great magnificence, Marcus Fulvius gave the games which he had vowed during the Aetolian war. Many actors too came from Greece to do him honour. Also a contest of athletes was then for the first time made a spectacle for the Romans and a hunt of lions and panthers was given, and the games, in number and variety, were celebrated in a manner almost like that of the present time.[22]

The distinction between the clearly religious nature of the Taurian Games and the games subsequently organized by Marcus Fulvius Nobilior should not detract from the fact that a religious component is also present in the latter (see *voverat*). (Whether dramatic activities took place at this occasion is less easy to deduce from the text itself. The Greek *artifices* mentioned by Livy need not necessarily have been actors, and nothing clearly indicates that they performed at all.)

What remains likely, however, is that the religious character of the contexts in which drama was performed became less and less important in the Roman world. Theatre performance, an activity closely linked to the cult of Dionysos in the Greek world, was increasingly perceived as being comparable to other types of popular mass entertainment in the Roman world. Whether Terence's complaint (*The Mother-In-Law*, 25–40) that he must compete with boxers for the interest of the Roman audience reflects a historical event or not, his remark still indicates that the success of theatre as mass entertainment was becoming more

20 On the debate about whether post-Classical festivals became less religious in character, see Csapo/Paillard/Wilson (2021 forthcoming), with further references.

21 See Gruen (1992) 195.

22 Text and transl. Sage (1936) 280–281.

fragile in the Roman world. Theatre was in direct competition with other types of (more spectacular) entertainment. The religious component of performing or attending theatre was not felt as important enough to draw the exclusive interest of the audience. As A. Petrides (2010, 92) notes: 'Make no mistake: *panem et circenses* was a phenomenon mainly of Rome and Greece under Rome, and chiefly a development of the Imperial period rather than the Hellenistic period.' Even for theatre, the 'entertainment' component took precedence over its religious component. It is therefore likely that the contexts for performance of Greek theatre had to be adapted to the new Roman framework: beside major religious festivals, theatrical performance in Greek must have taken place at occasions that were felt to be less religious, or at least less directly and closely linked to the cult of Dionysos in particular (despite the close links between Dionysiac cult and the associations of *technitai*).[23]

Spaces

Theatre was also often played outside of theatre buildings or areas (temporary or not) specifically designated for this type of entertainment. While, as mentioned above, theatre could in some ways also be performed outside of theatre buildings in Classical Greece, the variety of places in which it was performed in the Roman world seems to have been larger, and the spread of the habit of building stone theatres throughout the Roman Empire did nothing to stop theatre being performed outside of them.

For centuries after the 'invention' of Roman drama, Rome did not possess any permanent stone theatre building, not even a designated place regularly reserved for theatrical uses. In consequence, what we consider to be truly Roman/

23 One cannot exclude that the perception of dramatic performances as religious events or not could have been dissimilar for the people actively involved in the event (guilds, performers, theatrical practitioners, organizers) and for the audience. The links between Roman Emperors, ruler-cults, and theatre, consolidated through the associations of *technitai*, could bring another element to this question. It would be interesting to know whether spectators actually perceived theatre performances as a religious occasion within this framework. Christian authors, at least, regularly insist on the fact that theatrical activities are intrinsically linked to the cult of pagan gods (see, e.g., Garton [1972] 37). However, it remains difficult to tell, for example, whether the presence of statues representing members of the imperial family in some theatres encouraged the audience to feel like they were indeed attending a religious event in honour of a divine being, the Emperor and his family replacing Dionysos. (The same type of statues, however, was also found in non-theatrical and non-religious buildings.) On the relationship between autocrats and theatre in general, see Csapo *et al.* (forthcoming 2021).

Latin dramatic plays, such as the comedies of Plautus or Terence, were not composed with a performance in a big theatre in mind. Early Roman comedies were performed in smaller-scale settings (e.g., on temporary structures on the Forum Romanum, or on the Palatine outside the temple of Magna Mater), thus also reinforcing a feeling of closeness to their audiences.[24] During the Republic, it was this type of performance context that dominated the theatrical landscape of Rome. Plays could also be performed in temporary structures in the circus, for example (see Plautus' *Miles gloriosus*, 991), or near other temples, perhaps using their steps as seating spaces. The number of spectators would have been much smaller than what the theatre of Dionysos in 4th-century Athens, for example, could accommodate. While larger-scale permanent theatre buildings began to be constructed in Rome and in the broader Roman world in greater numbers during Imperial times, the relatively long period of existence of a Roman drama which was intended for performance in different, small-scale contexts left traces in the definition of 'theatre' to the Roman mind: at least for some time, the emphasis moved away from large-scale tragedies and comedies, and what would have barely, until then, made its way into a 'Greek definition' of theatre, began truly to be considered theatrical. Minor genres such as mimes, performances of extracts,[25] more or less Romanized theatrical performances of Oscan dramatic forms, began to make their way into what was understood as 'theatre'. Such 'minor' productions were easier to perform in non-formal contexts and outside of a proper theatre building and might thus have made up a large part of what was performed during the early stages of Roman theatre production in Rome. As W. Slater (2007, 45) remarks, this increasing importance of 'fringe-performers' could explain 'the movement away from formal drama to mime and pantomime'. Indeed, even the later Imperial pantomime could easily adapt to various performance settings and could range from wide-scale spectacles including large numbers of performers to much smaller, more intimate performances that could well take place in the streets or in private residences. Theatrical performances in private contexts also became increasingly frequent in the Roman world, although they were not unknown in the Greek world, especially since the times of Philip and Alexander the Great.[26]

To come back to public performances, A. Duncan (2006, 215) speaks of a 'developing theatricalization of "ordinary" public space'. In the Roman world, dramatic performances indeed freed themselves from the formal space of the theatre

24 On the performance spaces of Plautus' comedies and their resulting influence on the relationship between actors and audience, see, e.g., Moore (1991) and (1998), and Goldberg (1998).
25 Against the idea that the performance of extracts was the norm for late Greek dramatic performances, see Nervegna (2007) 25–41 and (2013) 78–88.
26 See Csapo (2010) 172–178.

and, conversely, spectacles happening outside of theatre buildings began to be thought of as 'theatre' as well. We know of at least two occasions at which theatre in Greek language was made part of this trend. Suetonius mentions that both Caesar and Augustus organized theatrical spectacles of some sort (*ludi* performed by *histriones*), which included spoken/sung parts (since the language of the actors is noted), *regionatim urbe tota*, i.e. in all the suburbs of the city of Rome. Presumably, such performances took place 'in the streets', so as to be available to everyone, perhaps on temporary structures (Suetonius, *Life of Julius Caesar*, 39.1):

> *Edidit spectacula varii generis: munus gladiatorium, ludos etiam regionatim urbe tota et quidem per omnium linguarum histriones, item circenses athletas naumachiam.*
>
> He gave entertainments of diverse kinds: a combat of gladiators and also stage-plays in every ward all over the city, performed too by actors of all languages, as well as races in the circus, athletic contests, and a sham seafight.[27]

The same anecdote is reported about Augustus in Suetonius' *Life of Augusutus* 43.1 (*fecitque nonnumquam etiam vicatim ac pluribus scaenis per omnium linguarum histriones*). This shows that drama is no longer limited to the formal space and context of the theatre, where spectators came to attend a performance, but now really pervades the whole social space of the city. In these instances, theatre in Greek (it would be surprising if Greek was not among the languages spoken by the performers) was made part of this Roman evolution. What would have been perceived in the Greek world as something not fitting a Classical definition of 'theatre', also no doubt began to be considered as such. The Roman interest in shorter, less complex, theatrical forms, must have encouraged at least some composers of pieces in Greek to adapt their art to these new contexts, spaces, and tastes. Instead of (or beside) composing new comedies and tragedies for formal contests or occasions, composers of Greek drama might have begun to create scripts for mimes, or, later, for pantomime libretti, as discussed below.

Performance: Blurring the Lines Between Reality and Fiction

Another aspect of Roman theatrical activities is the tendency to play with the borders between reality and fiction, and, for actors, between real identity and performed fictional character. This tendency became especially marked in Imperial

27 Transl. Rolfe (1998) 85.

times, as has been demonstrated by Duncan (2006, *passim* but esp. chap. 6). While in the Greek world, and still mainly in Roman Republican times, the gap between reality and fiction was as clearly maintained as possible and any uncontrolled transgression was perceived as dangerous for one's identity and, at a larger level, for society itself, in Imperial Rome, both performers and audience consciously began to create and to appreciate types of entertainments that blurred the distinction between self and other, between reality and fiction. In other words, while the Greco-Roman world seemed mainly to have followed platonic-like views on *mimesis* (*Resp*. 595a) until about the first century AD, Imperial times revelled in playing with the interaction between real and fictive worlds.

Absent from the Greek world, some types of mass entertainment became increasingly popular with the development of the Roman Empire. Such spectacles, as, for example, gladiatorial shows, *venationes*, reenactment of naval battles, were in direct competition with theatrical performances and indirectly influenced them. Indeed, to remain attractive to an audience now used to seeing blood shed before their eyes and other extreme forms of spectacle offered to their gaze, theatrical performances in Imperial Rome might have tended to include more 'real spectacle', more playing with the boundaries between reality and fiction, and less formal, well-defined acting according to a literary script as would have been the case in a (re)performance of a Greek tragedy, for example, or of a traditional Roman comedy.

To a mass of Roman (and non-Roman) spectators used to seeing people being killed in the arena, the Greek tragic habit (not to call it a rule) of never showing a scene of killing on stage, but rather of having a messenger narrate it, must have appeared almost ridiculous. Unfortunately, we remain ill-informed about the staging and performative aspects of plays in Early Imperial Rome. Yet, some evidence that theatrical entertainment began to adapt to the new tastes of its audience, an audience used to witnessing violence and death on-stage, may have survived.

Seneca's tragedies would be good places to look for theatrical performances that included the spectacle of real violence (or even perhaps death) on stage, but of course we still do not know whether these were actually performed or not. However, as Duncan (2006, 199) points out, 'even if Seneca's tragedies were never staged, they speak to their historical moment's emphasis on *looking* at violence'. Two other phenomena (also examined by Duncan 2006, 200–203) seem to lead to the same conclusion: the staging of executions as if they were theatrical performances (e.g., Strabo 6.2.6–7), and the fact that real executions were sometimes embedded within what was defined as a theatrical performance (e.g., Suet. *Life of Caligula* 67). Such spectacles clearly blurred the borders between reality and fiction in a way that was entirely new.

Conversely, the Early Imperial trend towards a general theatricalization of real life also contributed to this blurring between the world depicted on stage and reality.[28] Theatre was real life as much as real life was theatre. Suffice it to recall here Augustus' alleged question at the end of his life, recorded by Suetonius (Suet. *Life of Augustus* 99.1), when he asked whether it looked like he had correctly played '*mimum vitae*'.[29] This absence of real distinction between being oneself and performing as someone else was no longer fear-inducing, but became a part of theatre and of society itself in the Imperial period.

At a smaller level, this phenomenon also had implications for the performers. Once the anxiety about actors' identity *vs* their ability to impersonate someone else relaxed itself to turn into a source of fascination, it opened the door for new performance practices which went hand in hand with a new type of questioning of actors' identities. As actors allowed themselves to play on stage between their real identities and the characters they impersonated, the audience itself began in some cases to get confused about the true identities of the performers: was this female mime dancing lasciviously on stage actually a prostitute in real life, rather than an actress impersonating one?[30] Spectators' confusion can be forgiven when one considers some of the most striking examples of performers consciously playing on the distinction between real and fictive identity on stage. In the Greek (at least Classical) world, it seems that it was always clear to the audience, even in the most 'metatheatrical' situation, whether the performers spoke/sung as themselves or as an enacted character. For Greek language theatre performed in the Roman Imperial period, this might have changed.

The example of pantomime dancers (on which see below), who intentionally changed masks on stage in view of the audience, thus embodying again for a while their 'real' identities as they were still in acting situations, is an indication that Roman audiences were not always exposed to a clear distinction between self and other in the case of theatrical performers. Two anecdotes about pantomime performers also show that the border between reality and fiction was so blurred that it became unclear whether a dancer had not actually become

28 This theatricalization of public life was not a new invention of Imperial Rome. It can be traced back, in certain contexts, at least to the Hellenistic period, as Chaniotis (1997 and 2009) has demonstrated. The way in, and the degree to, which such theatricalization interfered with theatrical practice, however, seem to have taken another level altogether in Imperial Rome.

29 Whether or not this anecdote and the words themselves should be taken as reflecting a historical fact, they nonetheless constitute a compelling testimony of the kind of shift that took place at the time in the perception of the borders between reality and fiction. On 'theatrical deaths' in Imperial times and their philosophical implications, see Edwards (2002).

30 See Duncan, this volume, on the question of the identity of female mime dancers.

the character being impersonated. Lucian (*On Dance* 82) reports that a pantomime dancer who was performing the role of Ajax became so involved in the character he was playing that it became unclear whether he had actually become mad. A similar anecdote is told about Pylades by Macrobius (*Sat*. 2.7.16). The question is not only a matter of exaggerated performance, whether these anecdotes be historical or not, but witnesses a new way of performing theatre, where the pleasure of the audience is not found in the viewing of a fictive world but in the blurring of the border between reality and fiction. Likewise, Suetonius (*Life of Nero* 21.3) mentions that Nero performed in tragedies wearing a mask representing himself. Nothing could spell out more clearly Roman Imperial fascination with the interplay between real identity and fictive, theatrical(ized) character.

This leads us to the question of the importance of masks for the definition of Greek theatre.[31] When only looking at what we know of formal performances of Greek drama in the Classical period, it would be fair to think that the use of masks should be taken as one of the defining criteria of 'Greek theatre'.[32] Masks seem indeed to be intrinsically linked to another of these possible defining criteria, i.e. the fact that the actor 'becomes someone else' when performing. As Rodríguez Adrados (1975, 45–46) summarizes: 'The mask signifies that there is no mere representation but that the actor 'is' somebody different, outside the frontiers of time and space, outside the limits of the human, and of course of the individual.' In the Classical Greek world, there is indeed evidence that the idea of acting, in a theatrical or theatrical-like context or activity, without a mask looked disturbing.[33] This fundamental link between mask and theatre seems, however, to have become much less important in Roman times, as we have seen above. With the proliferation of theatrical performances that either took place without the performers being masked (as in mimes) or which consciously used the mask in a way that allowed the actors to play with the border between reality and fiction, between identity and otherness, this mask, instead of a marker of this border, became a tool to transgress it. As such, it could not be taken anymore as a secure element for establishing a definition of 'theatre'.[34]

31 I am grateful to Oliver Taplin for a very stimulating discussion on this point. See Taplin (2018) on the fundamental role of the mask for the invention of theatre. See also Goette (2020).

32 For explanations of the use of mask in ancient drama, as well as further references on the topic, see the beginning of Duncan's chapter and Taplin's chapter in this volume.

33 Dem. 19.281.

34 This change in the importance and use (or non-use) of the mask might have been somehow linked to the loosening of the relation between Dionysos and theatre, but this topic would require another discussion altogether.

Did such a change have any influence on Greek theatrical production of the time? There is indeed good evidence that some theatrical performances in Greek language took place without the actors being masked, and this type of less formal theatrical activity might have become increasingly frequent with the success it encountered in the Roman world. Some inscriptions relating to mime actresses suggest that they might have performed in pieces containing words spoken or sung in Greek.[35] If a mime actress performed in Greek but without wearing a mask, should we exclude her performance from the definition of 'Greek theatre' only because of the absence of a mask?[36] It would have been clear (despite the possible ambiguity discussed above) that the actress was not performing as herself (contrary to a simple dancer, for example, or an acrobat) but as the character of the story she impersonated, in spite of the absence of a mask. I would therefore suggest that, instead of the mask itself, it is rather the mechanism of impersonation, the enacting of someone else, that should lie at the core of a definition of Greek theatre. (The linguistic component of the performance is also obviously crucial. It allows us to define what is *Greek* theatre as opposed to, for example, *Latin* theatre. It is also decisive in allowing us to leave aside, among other types of entertainments, staged gladiatorial shows where the performers could be perceived as embodying a persona rather than fighting as themselves.)[37]

Mixing and Innovation

One of the most defining features of Roman/Latin theatre is its seemingly constant mixing of different theatrical traditions (Greek, local Italic) to create new (more or less literary) theatrical genres.[38] Borders between those genres also became more porous than might have been the case for Classical Greek theatre,

35 See, e.g., *CIL* 6.10096, also quoted (with translation) by Duncan, this volume. On female mime performers, see Panayotakis (2006).

36 On mime, see Duncan's chapter in this volume.

37 In some extreme cases, even this mechanism of impersonation could have been played upon by the performer. The discussion below about the various ways in which the word *tragoidos* could be interpreted hints at cases where it might not have been clear to the audience whether the performer was on stage as himself (e.g., as a virtuoso singer of tragic passages) or as embodying a fictive character (i.e., with a clear dimension of acting present in the performance).

38 This tendency to mix literary genre might, however, not be entirely new, as we already see this phenomenon emerge in Hellenistic times, for example with pieces mixing satyr plays and bucolic traditions: see Krumeich *et al.* (1999) 11. More generally on the contamination between literary genres in the Hellenistic period, see Fantuzzi (1980).

where it is usually easy to classify plays as either tragedies, comedies, or satyr dramas. We know of at least one example of a famous Roman actor, Roscius, who performed in both tragedies and comedies, thus indicating that the two genres were not hermetically separated. Authors, and perhaps actors (although we do not know whether Roscius' case was an exception rather than the rule), seemed not to be exclusively specialized in only one genre anymore. Given the restricted and fragmentary nature of the theatrical texts in Greek that remain from the relevant period, it is almost impossible to tell whether such a phenomenon might have influenced Greek theatrical production of this time at a literary level.

Another, more promising type of 'mixing' with which Roman theatre experimented was the creation of types of entertainment that contained theatrical and non-theatrical elements (or that theatricalized what was at first sight not a theatre play, such as a naval battle), or which played with the borders between theatre and music, song, dance, or poetic recitation. Here, an anecdote sheds some light on how this Roman trend might have influenced Greek theatrical practice. A passage of Polybius, reported by Athenaeus, describes events that took place during the games organized by Lucius Anicius Gallus to celebrate his triumph over the Illyrians (166/7 BC) (Polybius 30.22 [from Athenaeus 14.615; for the same anecdote cf. Livy 45.43.1]):

> Λεύκιος δὲ Ἀνίκιος, καὶ αὐτὸς Ῥωμαίων στρατηγήσας, Ἰλλυριοὺς καταπολεμήσας καὶ αἰχμάλωτον ἀγαγὼν Γένθιον τὸν τῶν Ἰλλυριῶν βασιλέα σὺν τοῖς τέκνοις, ἀγῶνας ἐπιτελῶν τοὺς ἐπινικίους ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ παντὸς γέλωτος ἄξια πράγματα ἐποίησεν, ὡς Πολύ βιος ἱστορεῖ ἐν τῇ τριακοστῇ. μεταπεμψάμενος γὰρ τοὺς ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἐπιφανεστάτους τεχνίτας καὶ σκηνὴν κατασκευάσας μεγίστην ἐν τῷ κίρκῳ πρώτους εἰσῆγεν αὐλητὰς ἅμα πάντας. οὗτοι δ' ἦσαν Θεόδωρος ὁ Βοιώτιος, Θεόπομπος, Ἑρμιππος, [ὁ] Λυσίμαχος, οἵτινες ἐπιφανέστατοι ἦσαν. τούτους οὖν στήσας ἐπὶ τὸ προσκήνιον μετὰ τοῦ χοροῦ αὐλεῖν ἐκέλευσεν ἅμα πάντας. τῶν δὲ διαπορευομένων τὰς κρούσεις μετὰ τῆς ἁρμοζούσης κινήσεως προσπέμψας οὐκ ἔφη καλῶς αὐτοὺς αὐλεῖν, ἀλλ' ἀγωνίζεσθαι μᾶλλον ἐκέλευσεν. τῶν δὲ διαπορούντων ὑπέδειξέν τις τῶν ῥαβδούχων ἐπιστρέψαντας ἐπαγαγεῖν ἐφ' αὐτοὺς καὶ ποιεῖν ὡσανεὶ μάχην. ταχὺ δὲ συννοήσαντες οἱ αὐληταὶ καὶ λαβόντες . . . οἰκείαν ταῖς ἑαυτῶν ἀσελγείαις μεγάλην ἐποίησαν σύγχυσιν. συνεπιστρέψαντες δὲ τοὺς μέσους χοροὺς πρὸς τοὺς ἄκρους οἱ μὲν αὐληταὶ φυσῶντες ἀδιανόητα καὶ διαφέροντες τοὺς αὐλοὺς ἐπῆγον ἀνὰ μέρος ἐπ' ἀλλήλους. ἅμα δὲ τούτοις ἐπικτυποῦντες οἱ χοροὶ καὶ συνεπεισιόντες τὴν σκηνὴν ἐπεφέροντο τοῖς ἐναντίοις καὶ πάλιν ἀνεχώρουν ἐκ μεταβολῆς. ὡς δὲ καὶ περιζωσάμενός τις τῶν χορευτῶν ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ στραφεὶς ἦρε τὰς χεῖρας ἀπὸ πυγμῆς πρὸς τὸν ἐπιφερόμενον αὐλητήν, τότ' ἤδη κρότος ἐξαίσιος ἐγένετο καὶ κραυγὴ τῶν θεωμένων. ἔτι δὲ τούτων ἐκ παρατάξεως ἀγωνιζομένων ὀρχησταὶ δύο εἰσήγοντο μετὰ συμφωνίας εἰς τὴν ὀρχήστραν, καὶ πύκται τέτταρες ἀνέβησαν ἐπὶ τὴν σκηνὴν μετὰ σαλπιγκτῶν καὶ βυκανιστῶν. ὁμοῦ δὲ τούτων πάντων ἀγωνιζομένων ἄλεκτον ἦν τὸ συμβαῖνον. περὶ δὲ τῶν τραγῳδῶν, φησὶν ὁ Πολύβιος, ὅ, τι ἂν ἐπιβάλωμαι λέγειν, δόξω τισὶ διαχλευάζειν.

> Lucius Anicius, who had been Roman praetor, upon conquering the Illyrians and bringing back as his prisoners Genthius, the king of Illyria, and his children, in celebrating games in honor of his victory, behaved in the most absurd manner, as Polybius tells us in his Thirtieth Book. For having sent for the most celebrated scenic artists from Greece and constructed an enormous stage in the circus, he first brought on all the pipers at once. These were Theodorus of Boeotia, Theopompus, Hermippus and Lysimachus, who were then at the height of their fame. Stationing them on the proscenium, he ordered them to accompany the chorus in unison with their piping. When they went through their performance with the proper rhythmic movements, he sent to them to say they were not playing well and ordered them to show more competitive spirit. They were at a loss to know what he meant, when one of the lictors explained that they should turn and go for each other and make a sort of fight of it. The players soon understood, and having got an order that suited their own appetite for license, made a mighty confusion. Making the central groups of dancers face those on the outside, the pipers blowing loud in unintelligible discord and sounding their pipes discordantly, advanced toward each other in turn, and the dancers, clapping their hands and mounting the stage all together, attacked the adverse party and then faced about and retreated in their turn. And when one of the dancers girt up his robes on the spur of the moment, and turning round lifted up his hands in boxing attitude against the piper who was advancing toward him, there was tremendous applause and cheering on the part of the spectators. And while they were thus engaged in a pitched battle, two dancers with musicians were introduced into the *orchestra* and four prize-fighters mounted the stage accompanied by buglers and clarion players and with all these men struggling together the scene was indescribable. As for the tragic actors Polybius says, 'If I tried to describe them some people would think I was making fun of my readers.'[39]

In this detailed description, theatrical practitioners such as aulos-players, chorus members, and *tragoidoi* (on which, see below), are asked by the organizer to perform alongside other types of performers/athletes who do not usually appear in theatrical contexts. Moreover, the theatre specialists are at some point required to perform in a very different way from what they are used to and to transform themselves into performers of non-theatrical activities. We will never know what the *tragoidoi* were actually doing, nor what they were expected to do in such a spectacle, but it is likely that the same was true for them: they were not behaving as *tragoidoi* usually do. The spectators react positively to this performance, thus confirming Roman tastes for types of entertainment that was different from traditional drama. The much-discussed possible reasons behind Lucius Anicius Gallus' decision of inviting Greek artists and asking them to perform such a spectacle need not concern us here, nor does Polybius' perception of the event.[40] What matters for the purposes of the present chapter is to point out that the

39 Transl. Paton 2012, p. 139–141.

40 On these questions, see Paillard (2021 forthcoming), with further references.

organizer of the event had invited the best Greek scenic performers only to deliberately ask them (before the performance, if one follows Franko [2013]) to deliver a spectacle that was more adapted to Roman tastes than what they were no doubt used to do in Greek settings.[41] The Greek performers accepted the invitation and the request to perform in a spectacle that was certainly not in their usual repertoire.[42] We might therefore have here an early example of Greek theatrical practice that actively evolved to adapt to Roman tastes. Greek theatrical artists adapted to a new way of 'doing theatre' suggested by their Roman audience's tastes.

The end of this passage leads to the question of the meaning of *tragoidoi*. It is notably difficult, and not only in this passage, to decide what exactly was designated by this word: playwrights who composed tragedies? Actors specializing in tragic roles? Singers of extracts of tragedies? People who recited tragedies with a more or less pronounced degree of acting? The problem is best illustrated by what M. Griffith (2018, 216) says about Nero's many ways of 'performing theatre': the Emperor is known to have performed as a singer of pieces accompanied by cithara (*citharoidia*), to have composed tragedies, and also acted in them. Griffith concludes: '[. . .] such a range of talents and contexts seems to have been somewhat typical of a *tragoidos* (however we choose to translate this term) – and presumably Nero could and did perform some of his pieces in Greek'. Indeed, translating *tragoidos* remains a problem, and I would suggest that the marked hesitation about the exact meaning of the term has something to do with the Roman interest in types of entertainment that were previously outside of the margins of what could be described as 'theatrical'. This evolution should encourage us to modify the boundaries of what could be encompassed under the term 'theatre'. If the vocabulary employed in Roman contexts does not clearly distinguish between someone who recites an extract of a tragedy without acting and someone who really impersonates a fictional tragic character on stage, this could mean that more types of entertainments had made their way into the category of 'theatre'.[43] The degree to which a reciter accompanied his recitation or his song by some form of acting (gestures, uses of props, tone of the voice) could vary.[44] While

41 Again, whether it was planned from the outset or not does not matter here.

42 For the reasons why these Greek artists might have accepted the invitation, see Günther (2002) 131–132.

43 In formal contexts such as festivals, categories for *citharoidia* and actors of tragedy remained clearly differentiated, however.

44 On the relationship between recitations and fully acted dramatic performances (mainly in the early Empire) and on the fact that the former could include elements rendering them 'quasi-dramatic', see Bexley (2015).

'semi-theatrical' or 'para-theatrical' performances were not unknown in the Greek world, it is the success they encountered with Roman audiences that changed their status. From a type of entertainment that barely merited the title of 'theatre' compared to traditional tragedies or comedies, they acquired an importance at least comparable to that of formal traditional comedies and tragedies, which warranted their inclusion inside the margins of what was considered as theatre.

These points are important to keep in mind when focusing on the definition of Greek theatre: Greek practitioners quickly adapted to the new contexts and opportunities opened by Roman tastes and practices. Even if it remains difficult or impossible to gauge whether a Roman spectator would think of a somewhat theatricalized recitation (sung or not) on stage of an extract of a Greek tragedy as 'Greek theatre', it would be too reductive to state a definition of the term that excluded *a priori* all performances of this type. The 'impersonation' aspect may be what remains at the centre of our proposed definition, but even this seems to have been up for alteration in the Roman world.

The Case of Pantomime

Pantomime is often considered to be the Roman theatrical entertainment *par excellence*. Its immense success began in the early Empire and lasted for six centuries.[45] Its specific form (dancer with closed-mouth mask, accompanied by singer [s] and musician[s]) seems to have been 'invented' in a context that blended Greek, Italic, and Roman theatrical and dance cultures. Evidence suggests that the first (or at least some of the first) pantomime libretti were composed in Greek, and some of the most famous early pantomime dancers seem to have come from a Greek-speaking background, in particular Pylades (sometimes credited with the invention of pantomime).[46] One of the best pieces of evidence for the fact that early pantomime libretti were composed in Greek is found in Macrobius' *Saturnalia* (2.7.12–13):

> *12. Sed quia semel ingressus sum scaenam loquendo, nec Pylades histrio nobis omittendus est, qui clarus in opere suo fuit temporibus Augusti et Hylam discipulum usque ad aequalitatis contentionem eruditione provexit.*

45 On pantomime, see, e.g., Garelli (2007); Lada-Richard (2007); Hall/Wyles (2008). For an accessible summary of the history of the genre and the questions surrounding it, see Paillard (2020b). On the etymology of the word 'histrio', used in the Imperial period also to specifically designate pantomime performers, see Paillard (2020a).

46 On Pylades, see Jory (2004).

13. populus deinde inter utriusque suffragia divisus est, et cum canticum quoddam saltaret Hylas cuius clausula erat τὸν μέγαν Ἀγαμέμνονα, *sublimem ingentemque Hylas velut metiebatur. non tulit Pylades et exclamavit e cavea:* σὺ μακρὸν οὐ μέγαν ποιεῖς.

12. But having once mounted the stage in giving my account, I shouldn't omit the actor Pylades, who flourished in the Augustan age and brought his follower Hylas so far along in his art that they competed on an equal footing. 13. The people then divided its support between the two, and when Hylas was dancing to some song whose concluding rhythm contained the phrase 'the great Agamemnon,' Hylas measured out his stature to give the impression of someone massive and grand: Pylades lost his patience and called out from the audience, 'You're making him big, not great!'[47]

Sadly, this τὸν μέγαν Ἀγαμέμνονα is one of the very rare fragments[48] of these early pantomime libretti, some of which were probably soon also composed in Latin. There is good evidence that in the 1st century AD, pantomime libretti were sometimes composed by well-established Roman poets.[49] Later, in the 2nd century AD, pantomime became, along with other traditional theatrical genres, part of the contests organized at the occasion of sacred festivals and games in Greece. It would therefore be very surprising if Greek theatrical composers did not, in turn, create new libretti in Greek for pantomimes, no matter what kind of opposition this genre had initially faced in the Greek regions. The famous pantomime Apolaustus, who won an impressive number of victories at the end of the second century AD all around the Eastern Mediterranean and in Greece itself, never seems to have performed in Italy.[50] This suggests that he was dancing to accompanying libretti composed in Greek rather than in Latin, although one cannot affirm this with absolute certainty. Unfortunately, there is little evidence to confirm that the number of pantomime libretti composed in Greek increased when categories for such performers were created in Games taking place in Greece. As mentioned above, almost no written trace of pantomime libretti survives. The best candidate for a (probably late) Latin pantomime libretto may be the so-called 'Barcelona *Alcestis*', if one follows Hall's (2008) convincing proposal.

Yet, possible indications that the success of pantomime performances in the Roman world had influenced in turn Greek dramatic practice might come from more indirect sources. Quintilian's (11.3.178–180) description of the way Demetrius and Stratocles acted on stage emphasizes the former's exaggerated gestures, poses, his way of playing with the wind in his clothes, and the latter's

47 Text and transl. Kaster (2011) 376–377.

48 For another possible short fragment, see Petron. *Sat*. 52.

49 See Jory (2004) 152.

50 On Tiberius Julius Apolaustus, see Slater, W. (1995).

'out of character' laugh addressed to the audience from behind the mask. He also notes that both were able to impersonate many very different characters. These performing abilities are not dissimilar from the way we would describe the skills of a pantomime performer. While it is true that Greek actors' performance style became increasingly spectacular over time, would it be completely out of the question to suppose that the success of pantomime, from the beginning of the Imperial period, encouraged Greek theatre performers to go even further in their attempts at providing spectators with a more visually stunning, spectacular performance? The success of pantomime could have influenced the composition of Greek tragedies at a more textual level, too. A. Zanobi (2008 and 2014), expanding on an idea expressed by B. Zimmermann (1990 [Engl. transl. Zimmermann 2008]), has highlighted the possible influence of pantomime on the composition of Seneca's tragedies. I can only agree with Webb (2018, 304) when she states: 'It would not be surprising if this were true also of the Greek tragedies composed for competitions in the second and third centuries AD, when pantomime was becoming more and more widespread in the East; unfortunately, the lack of evidence for the nature of these plays makes it impossible to know with any certainty whether this was the case.'

Synthesis and Conclusion

After this survey of three angles (contexts, mixing and innovation, and pantomime) from which the question of the influence of Latin theatre on late Greek theatrical production might be addressed, it will be useful to summarize some conclusions and to come back to the definition of 'ancient Greek theatre'.

A direct influence of Latin dramatic literature could not be highlighted. A more detailed and exhaustive examination of all dramatic fragmentary remains (both Greek and Latin) might provide different results, but such a task would be beyond the scope of this preliminary attempt at providing a framework for discussing the question, and it remains uncertain whether the evidence available could lead to further conclusions. The problem of the small number of extant texts that can be classified as 'dramatic' from the period between 240 BC and the 2nd century. AD, the rather short-lived history of Roman comedy and tragedy, as well as the fact that pantomime libretti were apparently thought less worthy of transmission, might explain why the influence of Roman theatrical genres on Greek (literary) theatre remains difficult to track. This is not the place to discuss the whole history of Latin literature, but it is worth remarking that 'formal theatrical genres' such as comedies and tragedies almost completely disappear between

the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. Besides, the spread of Latin drama outside of Rome and Italy is still in need of a comprehensive study, as noted above. If Roman theatre spread to the Greek East even in a limited way, such geographical contexts might have provided another place where Latin drama could have influenced Greek drama. However, from the time Rome began truly to expand in the Greek East, and even more clearly during the Early Empire, the use of Greek theatre (rather than drama in Latin) as a mass communication medium able to reach non-Latin-speaking populations and as a political tool was clearly understood by Roman élites and autocrats.[51] This might be one of the reasons which discouraged the production of more formal comedies and tragedies in Latin and which favoured genres for which linguistic/literary components were less important, or which used a language more widely understood. The influence of such dramatic production on Greek pieces (whether comedies or tragedies or other 'minor genres') thus becomes extremely hard to trace.

Yet there are indications that late Greek theatrical production could not entirely escape the preferences of what was quickly becoming the dominant political power around the Mediterranean. The causes of the success of pantomime are no doubt multifarious, but it is clear that it is the genre's success in Rome itself that caused its spread all around the Roman Empire. Its formal admission as a distinct category in the dramatic competitions of the Greek East must have encouraged Greek poets to compose libretti for entries in such prestigious contests. Dramatic poets and performers were not completely isolated from their socio-political and cultural contexts: if the demand of that audience was higher for pantomime than for full tragedies and comedies, they had to adapt somehow to the new tastes in order to survive. The same is likely for the development of other 'minor dramatic genres'. In other words, what might have influenced the composition of late Greek dramatic plays is less Latin theatre in itself than Roman tastes. If Rome's interest in theatre was more towards less complex/less literary forms of entertainment, more oral and visual productions, less well-defined genres, and a fascination for the blurring between reality and fiction, there are good chances that Greek poets and composers of theatrical pieces were encouraged to produce texts/supports for performances along those lines.

How does this relate to the possible need for a redefinition of what we understand by 'ancient Greek theatre'? The need for such a reflexion stemmed from the observation that various research projects devoted to ancient Greek theatre seem to use different definitions of 'Greek theatre'. Some only encompass what was performed in permanent theatre buildings, either including everything

51 See Paillard (2021 forthcoming).

or excluding musical and other non-mimetic performances. Traditional literary genres divisions are followed by some, who understand 'Greek theatre' as a label only applying to formal tragedy, comedy, and satyr play, while others include minor mimetic genres or other forms of performances at the margins of the theatrical, wherever they are performed.

Recent research on the evolution of Greek theatre after its life in Athens in the 5th century has shown that it would be artificial (not to say plainly wrong) to restrict the definition of 'Greek theatre' to include only Classical Athenian tragedies, comedies, and satyr play. Theatre in Greek language had many other manifestations. This becomes even clearer for later periods, during which additional types of performances in Greek language either appeared or acquired a visibility and a status that they had previously not had, possibly through the influence of theatrical production in Latin and certainly influenced by Roman tastes. In a rather paradoxical and unexpected way, Roman theatre thus changed Greek theatre. In the conclusion of his chapter on music and dance in post-Classical tragedy (in Liapis/Petrides 2018), after his survey of the many shapes that tragic performances could take in later periods, Griffith notes: 'Whether we choose nowadays to characterize all these post-Classical performances as "tragedy" is a delicate matter of definition. If we mean by "tragedy" a fully staged production of a complete play, or even a written play-text carefully read in school or in the privacy of one's home or library, then we obviously should exclude many of the phenomena that I have been discussing in this chapter. But if we expand our horizon to include all kinds of adaptations and musically enhanced dramatic scenes, performed by a skilled singer with or without a chorus, then the picture looks quite different.'[52] Indeed, the same question applies to Greek theatre more generally: if we want to be able to include in our definition of 'Greek theatre' the various forms that late theatrical performances could take, we must go beyond the idea that it was limited to fully formal tragedies, comedies, and satyr-plays.

What should remain, then, at the core of a definition of 'Greek theatre' so that it could encompass not only Classical but also later theatrical production?

The first and most straightforward element should probably be language. A performance without words, sung or spoken, even if only as an accompaniment as in the case of pantomime, can hardly qualify as theatrical, and if the language is not Greek, it should obviously not be considered to be Greek theatre.

Should the place of performance be taken as one of the criteria for what qualifies as Greek theatre and what should be excluded from its definition? If for the Classical period it might be safe to assume that what was really

52 Griffith, M. (2018) 242.

considered as theatre always took place in a theatre building, we have seen in this survey that this was not necessarily the case for later periods. Theatrical activities frequently took place in other venues, including spaces not specifically designated for dramatic performances.

Should we, then, revert to more literary criteria to establish a definition of 'Greek theatre'? With the proliferation of less-clearly defined types of theatrical performances, and less-evidently literary/written theatre, it would be difficult to argue that such a clear-cut definition should be used. In the Roman period, theatrical performances in Greek very often existed beyond the borders of well-defined literary genres.

Is the distinction between music, dance, and theatre any more valid? While Greek drama seems always to have encompassed music and dance, it is possible to draw a line between 'theatre' or 'drama' on the one side and purely non-mimetic dance and music (including song) on the other, where the performers do not take on the identities of the characters whom they depict. Likewise, acrobatic performances (even if they happen to be performed in a theatre) do not require that the acrobat perform as someone else: they are themselves, doing a specific (visual) performance.

Classical tragedy, comedy, satyr play, pantomime, and the later proliferation of 'minor' theatrical genres all have in common the fact that the performer 'becomes someone else'. I have suggested here that this dimension of impersonation is the smallest common denominator between Classical Greek theatre and what we see performed in Greek language in later periods. A mere recitation or reading in Greek of a tragedy of Euripides, for example, in a Roman theatre in Italy would not count as 'Greek theatre', if there is no dimension of 'performing the other'. The reciter recites as himself (even when pronouncing the words spoken by a fictive character in a dialogue), he does not become Electra. The actor 'becomes' Electra. The pantomime dancer, with his costumes and masks, becomes the character he impersonates. *Citharoidia*, on the other hand, if understood as the mere singing of, in at least some cases, dramatic pieces, is not theatrical in itself. However, while it might theoretically be easy to draw a line between performances where the performer performs as him/herself and cases where he/she impersonates a fictive character, the fact that it is in many cases difficult to understand what a 'tragoidos' was exactly thought to do in the Roman period indicated that even such a line might have become blurred in the Roman world. Was there in this period such a clear difference between a tragic actor (performing as Oedipus) and a singer who sung, without acting or with minimal acting, an extract of Oedipus' role in a given tragedy? As we have seen, playing between real and fictional identity became a favourite activity in Imperial times.

To conclude, this leads us again to the question of the mask. Was the mask, in Roman-time theatrical performances in Greek, still as fundamental as it seems to have been in Classical drama? In other words, should we exclude from 'Greek theatre' everything that was not performed with masks? As we have seen, the success of mime and of certain forms of tragic singing/recitation (*tragoidia*) might encourage us not to draw too tight a line around our definition of 'Greek theatre'. Mime performers no doubt impersonated 'someone else' although they were not wearing masks; conversely, pantomime dancers were often very close to appearing on stage as themselves rather than as fictive figures. It is possible that the wearing of a mask might have looked less and less important as the play between identity and fiction was increasingly perceived as enjoyable. As it seems to be a mark of Roman Imperial tastes, should we perhaps understand such types of performances (when in Greek) as being 'Roman theatre in Greek language', in the same way as Latin plays, at their beginning, could be qualified as 'Greek theatre in Latin language'?

Paratheatre

Mali Skotheim

‘Defining Paratheatre, From Grotowski to Antiquity’

The invention of paratheatre, as a concept applicable to modern performance, stems from the work of Jerzy Grotowski (1933–1999), Polish avant-garde theatre director, best known for pioneering the ‘Poor Theatre’. In the 1970s, Grotowski pursued a series of investigations into paratheatre, attempting to change the relationship between spectator and spectacle. This paratheatrical research, iterations of which Grotowski called ‘Special Projects’, took place primarily in the Polish countryside, but also in other locations, including Pennsylvania.[1] Participants applied, and were chosen for a certain openness to the experience, which involved living in nature, doing various exercises, some of them ritualistic, and not performing for an audience. A core aim was to free actors from artificiality, including the built environment of the theatre, roles separate from the self, and narrative and plot.[2] Speaking of Grotowski and the Laboratory Theatre members, Kumiega writes, ‘The activity that encapsulated their search (from 1970–1978) became known in time as paratheatre: formally, this related to an activity that had its roots in drama, but specifically did not result in a theatrical presentation before an audience. The terms “spectator” and “actor” lost their divisive significance, and both the action and the creation became the collective responsibility’.[3] Grotowski presented the results, which he called ‘University of Research’, in Wrocław in July of 1975, at the Theatre of Nations Festival. This paratheatrical research continued for a few years after that, and the Laboratory Theatre finally disbanded in 1984.

Grotowski did not coin the word ‘paratheatre’. In 1969, presumably without knowledge of Grotowski’s work, which was just turning to paratheatre, Theodoros Kretikos described *Antigone*, performed by the National Theatre, at Epidauros, as a παραθεατρικό ὑπερθέαμα (‘paratheatrical hyper-spectacle’).[4] In this

1 Mennen (1975) and Findlay (1980) are first-hand accounts of these ‘paratheatrical experiences’. Findlay (1980) reflects on this experience as a ‘temporary culture’ and a ‘third realm – a realm that is neither art on the one hand nor life on the other but rather something else that partakes of both without really being either’ (353). Gerould (1980); Schechner (1981; 1985), and Kumiega (1985) provide analysis of Grotowski’s paratheatre.

2 On the erasure of the divide between performer and spectator in Grotowski’s paratheatre, see esp. Schechner (1981).

3 Kumiega (1985) 144.

4 Van Steen (2002) 208.

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usage, the term was derogatory, classifying the 1969 *Antigone* as less than true theatre. However, Grotowski's lasting influence on paratheatre was to view this as a distinct type of performance, a genre in and of itself, a different way of engaging with and even conceiving of performance and the theatre.

Forty years after Grotowski's paratheatrical experiments, paratheatre lacks a foundational study or theoretical approach equivalent to Abel's 1963 *Metatheatre*, and is plagued by a persistent confusion about what it is, what types of performance paratheatre might encompass, and how and why paratheatre might be different from traditional theatrical genres. Bruce Wilshire's 1990 essay, 'The Concept of the Paratheatrical,' does not address this, as it mainly considers 'paratheatre' as a metaphor of the theatre applicable to non-theatre contexts such as the performance of social roles, rather than paratheatre as a performance category in itself.[5] Neither 'paratheatre' nor 'paratheatrical' is in the Oxford English Dictionary, an unfortunate contributing factor to the inconsistent application of these terms to diverse phenomena.

A survey of the use of the term 'paratheatre' in scholarship reveals that it is already being used to designate more informal or low-brow forms of performance, such as puppetry, trick magic, mime, burlesque, and the circus arts, across a wide range of historical eras and geographical regions. In ancient Mediterranean studies, Sifakis uses 'paratheatrical performances' to refer to popular performances which respond to the theatrical tradition, such as those of ancient pantomimes, who told the mythological stories of tragedy in dance, and the *Homeristai*, who acted out Homeric stories with slapstick humor.[6] Lin demonstrates that 'popular festive performance' in early modern England included 'various kinds of theatrical and paratheatrical activity' without clarifying what the distinction between the two categories would have been at that time.[7] Brown describes performances of puppetry, animal baiting, and other entertainments of the fair within Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) as 'paratheatrical spectacles'.[8] Similarly, Burt writes, in reference to the same period of London theatre history, 'By the late 1620s paratheatrical shows, entertainments, and exhibitions such as prize fighting, fencing, acrobatics, and displays of halberd and pikes, among others, displaced plays as forms of entertainment at theatres like the

5 Wilshire (1990). Oddly, despite publishing his work in *The Drama Review*, which had published extensively on Grotowski, Wilshire does not mention Grotowski's paratheatre at all in the essay.

6 Sifakis (1992) 140–141. On pantomime, see Paillard's chapter in this volume.

7 Lin (2009) 271–272.

8 Brown (2012) 156.

Swan, the Rose, and the Hope'.[9] For Shershow, the 'para-theatrical entertainers' of 17th century London include itinerant puppeteers and other street performers.[10] On late 18th century Madrid, Espinosa uses 'paratheatrical shows' to refer to 'the heterogeneous variety of popular entertainments – cribs, puppets, magic lanterns, shadow plays, automatons, *totilimundis*, scientific, and pseudo-scientific experiments, circus performances and dioramas'.[11]

'Paratheatre' is, alternatively, used to indicate activities, including rituals, relating to the theatre, outside of the performance of drama. For example, in a discussion of the relationship between ritual and theatre in ancient Greece, Tzanetou notes that in the Greek context, theatre was ritual, and, 'Religious rituals . . . often included events of a theatrical or paratheatrical nature'.[12] Shared elements of religious rituals and the theatre included 'choral dancing, use of masks, various disguises and role-playing'.[13] In this usage, paratheatre means those rituals which happen outside of the immediate context of the theatre, but which nevertheless respond to or reference rituals and practices represented in theatrical productions. Wilson suggests that announcements which took place before the start of the tragic competitions at the Athenian Dionysia were 'the most significant focus of collective, para-theatrical attention within the festival programme,'[14] and that even business meetings which occurred after the festival could be viewed as 'para-theatrical social spectacle'.[15]

Despite the adoption of the word 'paratheatre', scholars of the premodern theatre may be unaware of the history of this term in the modern theatre, particularly in the work of Grotowski. Rosenmeyer, for example, briefly suggests that Abel might have been more correct to use paratheatre to describe the phenomenon he termed metatheatre, without reference to the contemporary usage of this term in theatre studies.[16] In contemporary theatre studies, on the other hand, where Grotowski's influence is understood, paratheatre has been used to refer to non-representational performance. Writing on the Catalan poet and playwright Joan Brossa (1919–1998), George calls the use of carnivalesque elements,

9 Burt (1987) 545.
10 Shershow (1994) 188.
11 Espinosa (1998) 225.
12 Tzanetou (2002) 338.
13 *Ibid.*
14 Wilson, P. (2009) 16.
15 Wilson, P. (2011) 84 n. 28.
16 Rosenmeyer (2002) 91. See also Bierl in this volume.

inspired by the *commedia dell'arte* tradition, 'paratheatrical devices which belong to an essentially non-representational form of art'.[17]

But what does Grotowski's paratheatre have to do with ancient performance? Grotowski did not have ancient Greek performance categories in mind, nor should Grotowski's paratheatrical methods and purposes be confused with those of the ancient theatre. Yet Grotowski's term, 'paratheatre', can be usefully applied to premodern performance categories, including those of the ancient Greek theatre. 'Paratheatre' implies a relationship to the traditional theatrical performance genres, such as tragedy and comedy (and potentially also music), while delineating some separation. It allows scholars of ancient performance to speak of multiple paratheatrical genres as related to one another, under a common umbrella term. This term, 'paratheatre,' or 'paratheatrical entertainment,' has a further benefit, in that it cannot be confused for a specific type of entertainment, in contrast to the term 'juggler,' used in older texts and translations of ancient works to describe a range of types of performers. This causes confusion, as 'juggler' in English has the connotation of one who throws objects up in the air and catches them, as opposed to the medieval French *jongleur*, who did not only juggle objects, but also performed magic tricks, dances, songs, stories, acrobatics, and jests.[18] There may have been a time when 'juggler' was an intelligible term in English to describe an ancient mime, pantomime, acrobat, jester, and so on, but this is no longer the case.

Understanding the use of 'paratheatre' in the contemporary theatre is also important, not only because it is part of the history and usage of the word, but also because theatre practitioners experimenting with paratheatre have asked, and continue to ask, questions about what is distinct or unique about paratheatre, for example, in terms of performer-spectator relationship, or the relationship of paratheatre to ritual, which are worthwhile questions to ask of ancient Greek paratheatre as well, even if the answers may be quite different. Just as Thumiger has argued for the existence of multiple metatheatres in ancient and modern contexts, it may be necessary to speak of multiple 'paratheatres,' or in other words, to recognize that paratheatrical performance categories have cultural and historical specificity.[19]

What, then, characterized Grotowski's paratheatre? One important aspect was flexibility of place, as Grotowski's paratheatre took place outside of traditional theatre spaces, in natural settings. This can be related to other theatrical

17 George (1995) 346.

18 For a comprehensive history of the art of the *jongleur*, see Ziolkowski (2018).

19 Thumiger (2009).

experiments in the early 1970s which utilized landscape in an attempt to dissolve the boundaries between spectators and performers. Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theatre event, 'Domestic Resurrection Circus,' based in Plainsfield, Vermont from 1970–1974, and in Glover, Vermont from 1975 onwards, is one such example.[20] Staged as a sort of outdoor fair, performances included puppetry, mime, masked shows, and pageantry. Like Grotowski, Schumann and the Bread and Puppet Theatre rejected the physical space of the theatre for their performances. Communal living on the part of the performers was a key element in both projects.[21] Above all, both sought a new kind of participation in performance, in which spectators were not separate from performers.[22]

Another aspect of Grotowski's paratheatre was its complex relationship to ritual. On the one hand, many of the activities in the 'paratheatrical experiences,' such as running in the woods and dancing around fires, derived from initiation rituals.[23] Yet, Schechner writes, there was no attempt to reintegrate participants' paratheatrical experiences with their post-Grotowskian lives. Schechner writes that, 'Theatre has but two stances in relationship to society at large: either to be tightly woven into broader social patterns, as rituals are, or to serve as an analytical and dialectical instrument for a critique of society, as Brecht's theatre tried to be'.[24] Grotowski's 'paratheatrical experiences,' Schechner argues, conformed to neither of these patterns.

The influence of Grotowski's paratheatrical phase on contemporary experimental theatre is also relevant to the development of the meaning of 'paratheatre'. For example, in their 'Paratheatric Rehearsal Technique,' the Gorilla Theatre has adopted Grotowski's paratheatrical approach, using the natural environment and improvisational techniques to break down barriers between spectator and performer.[25] Antero Alli's ParaTheatrical ReSearch in California and Oregon, and Matt Mitler's Theatre Group Dzieci in New York also build upon Grotowski's paratheatrical experiments.

Both Alli's ParaTheatrical ReSearch and Mitler's Theatre Group Dzieci have incorporated genres traditionally seen as on the fringes of the theatre, such as fooling, clowning, and puppetry. Antero Alli trained as a mime before adopting Grotowski's paratheatrical methods and developing his own experimental theatre in the 1970s. A desire to break free of social norms, and even social interaction,

20 Falk (1977).
21 Falk (1977) 26.
22 Falk (1977) 27.
23 Schechner (1985) 105; Mennen (1975) 67 is an account of one such 'trip to the woods'.
24 Schechner (1985) 106.
25 Sanderson (2013).

and the adoption of ritual actions and body-oriented processes are central to Alli's paratheatrical work. Like Grotowski, Alli favors natural settings without audiences for the experiments. The elimination of the separation between performer and spectator, and the adoption of non-representational forms, is directed, at least in part, at self-realization on the part of the performer. In his manifesto on paratheatre, Alli asserts about the co-development of theatre and paratheatre, 'Any theatre that cannot outgrow itself ceases to function as a vital sustaining ritual. For theatre to remain vital, a kind of 'paratheatre' must be implemented to dismantle stagnant habits that frustrate more truthful creative response. Paratheatre, *in the theatre but not of it*, must provide a time and space set apart to explore a non-performance setting to excavate the internal landscape towards a total recalibration of performer'.[26]

Grotowski and his continuators have drawn upon premodern folk culture and ritual in their explorations of paratheatre. Theatre Group Dzieci, for example, draws upon the premodern and early modern tradition of the Fool to create Fool's Mass, in which fools take over a village mass after the death of the pastor, performed since 1998,[27] and Fool's Wedding, a real wedding orchestrated by the Fools, with Mitler as minister, which took place in New York in 2016.[28] Fool's Mass incorporates religious songs from the 8th to the 14th century, collapsing performance and reality through the use of ritual grounded in historical practice, on the one hand, and the character of the Fool, a staple of medieval and early modern performance, who circulated among banqueters at court, performing mockery without a fourth wall. This construction of paratheatre as not just premodern, but specifically medieval, and as such, an antidote to modernity, must be understood in relation to the construction of the ancient Greek theatre as anticipating modernity, as for example in the work of Isadora Duncan. Yet, the world of the ancient Greek theatre, and performance culture more generally, also encompassed genres such as clowning and jesting, as explored in the next section, which may complicate perceived divisions between ancient and medieval performance.

26 Alli (2019).
27 Dzieci Theatre (2019).
28 Tate (2016).

Paratheatre in Ancient Greece: *paramisthomata, akroamata, theamata, thaumatopoiia*

I propose 'paratheatre' or 'paratheatrical entertainment' to mean any genres which were performed by the *thaumatopoioi* ('marvel-makers'). It is clear from the Greek term *thaumatopoiia* that there existed a category of performance which was considered to be distinct from the performance of theatrical categories which were eligible for prizes at festivals, such as tragedy, comedy, satyr drama, *kitharoidia*, and *auloidia*, for example, necessitating a term in English which might encapsulate this category. *Thaumatopoiia* cannot be considered exclusively a 'theatrical' performance category, in the sense of a performance within the space of the theatre, as these performances took place in a number of different contexts, including in the theatre, in the street, and at dinner-parties.

Paratheatrical entertainment is also referred to in Greek as *akroamata* and *theamata,* 'pleasures for ear and eye'.[29] This included puppeteering, whose practitioners were called *neurospastai*, performances of illusion (magic tricks, pebble tricks), funny and parodical performances (jesting, joking, clowning, mime), acrobatics, dance (including pantomime), and perhaps also automata.[30] Most of these paratheatrical performances were humorous, with the notable exception of pantomime, the tragic dance.

One important venue for paratheatrical entertainment was in public theatres, in the context of festivals. An inscription from Delos from 169 BC includes *thaumatopoioi*, among them a dancer and puppeteers, at the end of a list of victors from the Delian festival.[31] In AD 127, in Oenoanda, in Northern Lycia, three days of the month-long local festival, the *Demostheneia*, were set aside for 'hired performances (παραμισθώματα), among which will be mimes and performances for eye and ear (μεῖμοι καὶ ἀκροάματα καὶ θεάμ̣α̣[τα]),' at the close of the musical and dramatic competitions and before the athletic competitions.[32] This document makes clear a fundamental distinction between dramatic and musical genres,

29 For *akroamata* and *theamata* used for paratheatrical entertainment, see Plutarch, *Moralia* 711a; Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 52.30; Xenophon, *Symposium* 2.1. It is also common in epigraphy. Milanezi (2004) has explained the terminology relating to *thaumatopoia,* including *akroamata* and *theamata,* and has provided an account of the ancient sources of such terms.

30 Milanezi (2004) 187–195 discusses the categories of the *thaumatopoioi*, focusing particularly on the humorous arts.

31 *IG* XI.2 133.

32 *SEG* 38.1462. For a detailed discussion of this inscription and its context see Wörrle (1988) and the lengthy review, with English translation of the inscription, by Mitchell, S. (1990).

which were performed in competition, and those who were paid to perform, even though both categories were part of the festival and performed in the theatre.

In addition to public theatres, performance contexts included symposia and the street. Jesters and clowns (*planoi* and *gelotopoioi*) were particularly associated with sympotic entertainment.[33] Performances in the theatre were a significant step up from the more informal marketplace shows, for which crowds circled around the ὀχλαγωγοί ('crowd-gatherers').[34] Stobaeus mentions the marketplace and the theatre as the two places where *thaumatopoioi* performed.[35] Athenaeus tells a story about a 4th century BC mime, Ischomachus, making this transition from marketplace entertainer, performing to people standing around him, to the stage: 'he did imitations in the round (ἐν τοῖς κύκλοις), but after he became known, he changed and acted mimes in stage-shows (ἐν τοῖς θαύμασιν)'.[36] In many cases, the same people may have performed in multiple types of venues. One example of such a public-private crossover is the story that performers from the Anthesteria (festival of the pots) in Athens performed at the wedding feast of Caranus in Macedonia (4th c. BC), followed by dancers, clowns, and fire-breathing acrobats.[37] Just as these performers brought something of the prestige of their festival performance to Caranus' wedding, perhaps also paratheatrical entertainment could bring some taste of private performance onto the public stage.

Some paratheatrical performances, such as trick magic, brought a more intimate viewing experience into the theatre. Magic tricks were performed in public, including in the theatre, as well as in private, at symposia. One papyrus from the 2nd or 3rd century AD, concerning the accounting for an athletic festival, mentions a μαγγανάριος (conjurer) along with an aulete, mime, and dancer (ὀρχηστής).[38] Conjuring with pebbles was a popular type of magic trick. A practitioner of these pebble tricks was called a ψηφᾶς, ψηφοκλέπτης, ψηφολόγος, ψηφοπαίκτης, or ψηφιστής (Latin *cauculator*).[39] In the astrological treatise by

33 See Milanezi (2004) 196–199 for the sympotic context of the shows of these humorists.

34 See Dickie (2001) 602 for discussion of these marketplace entertainments.

35 Stob. 4.50c.95, 'And just like on the stage or some market-place in which the marvel-makers display their marvels . . . ' (καὶ δὴ καθάπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς ἤ τινος ἀγορᾶς, ἐν ᾗ δεικνύουσιν οἱ θαυματοποιοὶ τὰ θαύματα).

36 Ath. 10.452f, ὃς ἐν τοῖς κύκλοις ἐποιεῖτο τὰς μιμήσεις· ὡς δ' εὐδοκίμει, μεταβὰς ἐν τοῖς θαύμασιν ὑπεκρίνετο μίμους.

37 Ath. 4.129d, quoting a letter of Hippolochus of Macedonia, a contemporary of Duris of Samos (340–260 BC).

38 *P.Oxy*. 1050.

39 Dickie (2001) 599–600. Dickie corrects the *LSJ* definitions of ψηφᾶς and ψηφοπαίκτης as juggler to 'someone who tricks spectators, by sleight of hand, into believing that they are seeing what they are not seeing; that is to say, a conjuror or prestidigitator' (600).

Ps.-Manetho, pebble-conjurers are wandering players, compared to buzzing bees, traveling the earth and living off of the offerings of the crowd.[40] In addition to informal marketplace shows, pebble-conjurors performed in theatres: according to Athenaeus, the citizens of Hestiaea or Oreos [in Euboea] erected a statue of the ψηφοκλέπτης Theodorus in their theatre.[41]

A letter of Alciphron also contains valuable evidence for the practicalities of performance of pebble-conjuring in the theatre.[42] This fictional letter is in the voice of a farmer who has come to the city to sell his wares. He comes to the theatre and sees various shows. One of them is a pebble-conjurer, who performs his tricks first on a table, and then by interacting directly with the spectators, pulling pebbles from their noses and ears. The farmer emphasizes the smallness of the conjuror's props. Both the cups and the pebbles are small things, suggesting that spectators needed to be close up to see them.

The practice of performing tricks visible only to audience members in the front rows has ramifications for our understanding of the performance of other paratheatrical entertainment which required a close-up view on the part of the spectators. Writing in the 4th c. AD, Gregory of Nyssa also describes a festival of Zeus, at which the crowd (τὸ πλῆθος) is so eager to see the 'performances for eye and ear' (τὰ θεάματά τε καὶ ἀκροάματα) that they rush onto the stage, which prevents the *thaumatopoioi* from performing.[43] Puppet shows and, if they were displayed in the theatre, automata, would have been visible only to the front rows. While the front rows were occupied by local elites during the festival competitions, it is the common people (Alciphron's farmer, Gregory's τὸ πλῆθος) who are represented as the spectators of paratheatrical entertainment. This either means that there is a disconnect between actual practice (i. e. that elites sitting in the front rows did have a better view of the conjurers and puppeteers) and literary representation, or that the seating during paratheatrical shows was more flexible, allowing spectators who had been sitting farther up to come closer to watch the more intimate performances. The limitations of putting shows on stage which could not be seen clearly by most of the theatre audience may help to explain why trick magic and puppeteering never became festival competitions. Mime, pantomime, and acrobatic performances could be seen from any part of the

40 Ps-Manetho 4.448–449.

41 Ath. 1.19b. Cf. Dickie (2001) 602.

42 Alciphron, *Letters* 2.17.

43 Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Gregory Thaumatourgos* 956b.

theatre, and it is perhaps not coincidental that these were the performances which eventually made the leap from hired entertainment to festival competitions.[44]

In the theatre, the primary distinction between *thaumatopoiia* and the *musikoi agones* was the fact that *thaumatopoioi* were paid to perform, while actors and poets of tragedy, comedy, and satyr drama, as well as musicians, competed for prizes at the festivals. This line was blurred in the Roman imperial period, when pantomimes were awarded prizes at some festivals, first at the *Sebastea* in Naples in the first century AD, and at festivals in the Greek East in the late second century AD.[45] However, even prize-winning pantomimes remained *thaumatopoioi*, preserving an echo of the earlier hierarchy between prize-winning and hired performance categories.

Throughout this multiplicity of performance contexts, *thaumatopoiia* did have a persistent relationship to the theatre, and to the 'higher' or more canonical genres performed in the theatre, such as drama. For this reason, *thaumatopoiia* was 'paratheatrical'. In the case of mime and pantomime, this relationship is very clear. Mime represented scenes set in the real world as opposed to the world of myth, and mimes performed in groups, without masks. In addition to being representational performance, like drama, even intertextual relationships between mime and drama were possible. The *Charition* (*P.Oxy* 413), a mime script from Oxyrhynchus from the second century AD, is a spoof of Euripides' *Iphigeneia among the Taurians*, transposing the Euripidean plot to the Malabar coast of India, with a chorus of Indian men and a chorus of Indian women.[46] Pantomime dance, on the other hand, was masked, like tragedy, and drew upon the world of myth for its plots. Lucian's extended comparison between tragedy and pantomime in *On the Dance* suggests that pantomime was considered danced tragedy, each telling the same stories, and acting the same characters, with different methods.[47]

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44 The evidence for acrobatic competitions is limited. An epitaph for an acrobat from Beroia from the second century AD refers to prizes (ἀθλήματα) and suggests that he competed alongside his teacher Maximus, referred to as a 'co-competitor' (συναγωνιστής): *SEG* 27.266. Mime competitions are better attested in the second and third centuries AD: *IGSK* Ephesos 1135 (victories of the mime Tiberius Claudius Philologos Theseus); *LW* 1652b (Tralles, honors for the *biologos*, or mime, Flavius Alexandros Oxeidas, who won at contests in Asia 18 times and Lycia and Pamphylia 26 times). On mime, see Paillard and Duncan in this volume.

45 Slater, W. (1995) discusses the epigraphical evidence for the festival victories of pantomimes.

46 For discussion of this mime and its imperial context, see Hall (2010) and Tsitsiridis (2011). On the *Charition*, see also Duncan's chapter in this volume.

47 Jory (2004) explores the close relationship between pantomime and tragedy. For an extended study of Luc. *Salt.*, see Lada-Richards (2007).

As miniature theatre, puppetry also had strong associations with drama. For example, the Athenian claims in Plato's *Laws* that if children judged the contests, they would award the prize to puppetry (τὰ θαύματα ἐπιδεικνύντα), while older children would give the prize to comedy, women and teenagers to tragedy, and old men to rhapsody.[48] This sets puppetry in a clear relationship to drama, through a hierarchy based on the supposed maturity of its most eager spectators. Small children, he suggests, would award a prize to a category which did not, in reality, have a prize attached to it, but which some spectators may have encountered in the theatre. One of the implications of this passage is that children, as they grow up and learn correct behavior at the festivals, through experience, come to understand that puppetry is not an appropriate prize category. While both exist within the space of the festival, the ability to distinguish between *thaumata* and drama is one marker of maturity and education for Athenians.

Another form of miniature theatre was the *automaton*. In the first century BC, Heron of Alexandria, in his treatise on automata, *Peri automatapoietikes*, describes an automatic theatre in which a five-act tragedy can be viewed, ending in a *deus ex machina*. Earlier in the treatise, he says that the ancients called those who made such devices *thaumatourgoi*, because of the amazement of the onlookers.[49] While it cannot be demonstrated that automata were displayed in the theatre, the text of Heron suggests at least a reference to the contemporary theatre in this automaton.

Conclusion

Paratheatre in ancient Greece represents a set of performance genres, known collectively in Greek as *thaumatopoiia*, which were related by a common aesthetic of *thauma*, and often distinguished, in some way, from genres of festival competition in the theatre. We can see something of Grotowski's experimentation and boundary-pushing in ancient paratheatre, particularly regarding the relationship between performer and spectator. Some paratheatrical entertainers shared a common performance context, the public stage, with the practitioners of tragedy and comedy, while many of their performances occurred in private spaces, especially the symposium. I have suggested that ancient paratheatrical forms established a particularly close relationship between spectator and performer, using a variety of strategies (the absence of mask in the case of mime,

48 Pl. *Leg*. 658c.

49 Heron, *Peri automatapoietikes* 1. Cf. Murphy (1995).

the close viewing space in the case of magic tricks and puppetry) to give spectators a feeling of intimacy with paratheatrical performance that standard theatrical genres lacked.

Writing on the concept of paratheatre in contemporary performance, including social performance, Wilshire suggests that 'the paratheatrical' challenges notions of fact and fiction, as it crosses from the fictional space of the stage to reality.[50] This concept also applies to ancient paratheatre, as at the heart of the *thauma* associated with the *thaumatopoioi* was the ability to mix fiction and reality, as in the unmasked performance of mime, which represented the real, everyday world, or to make the impossible real, as in acrobatic feats, tricks of illusion, and the miraculous communication of myth through the silent gestures of pantomime dancers.

While I have attempted to define paratheatre as it might relate to the ancient theatre, there is an inherent instability in paratheatre, which make it difficult, and perhaps even counter-productive, to universalize. There are specific historical and cultural contexts which make a stronger distinction between theatre and paratheatre, and this delineation will not always be the same, or be made for the same reasons. For example, the theatre changed in Late Antiquity, to encompass primarily mime and pantomime.[51] In a consular diptych of Anastasius from AD 517, a group of mimes crowds on one side of the lower left register, and on the other side, a group of tragic actors, identified on the basis of their open-mouthed masks and high shoes.[52] Is the distinction on this diptych, then, between theatre (tragedy) and paratheatre (mime), or merely two theatrical genres? And if mime, at this time, can be regarded simply as theatre, then what became of paratheatre? Rather than defining certain forms of performance as paratheatre across all time and space, it is important to recognize that what constitutes the theatre and what constitutes paratheatre varies depending on historical, cultural, and social context.

A word might be said, additionally, about the relationship between the term 'paratheatre' to 'paratragedy' and 'paracomedy,' terms which are suited to texts which respond to the literary tradition of tragedy and comedy. Lucian's *Podagra*, for example, is paratragic, in the sense that it responds to tragedy as a specific literary genre.[53] Compare this to the *Charition* mime (*P.Oxy*. 413), which responds not just to the textual tradition of Euripidean drama but to its performance tradition, from which the audience was surely acquainted with

50 Wilshire (1990) 170.

51 For mime and pantomime in Late Antiquity, see Webb (2008).

52 Neiiendam (1992) 120, pl. 42.

53 Whitmarsh (2013) 176–185 discusses what he calls 'Lucianic Paratragedy'.

the story. Moreover, mime is part of a performance tradition which, I have argued, is paratheatrical in its relationship to the theatre as a whole, not just to a specific genre within the theatre. The *Charition* is, therefore, both paratheatrical and also paratragic. Just as the use of 'paratheatre' to describe categories of performance such as mime, pantomime, trick magic, puppetry, and so on, follows the use of 'paratheatre' already in use in many areas of scholarship on theatre studies, including theatre history, so too this understanding of paratragedy and paracomedy as primarily textual and literary categories, which engage with specific literary genres, follows upon the current use of these terms in scholarship, where 'paratragedy' has been used to describe not only Lucian's satirical relationship to tragedy in the *Podagra*, but also allusions to tragedy in Plato, tragic parody in Old and Middle Comedy, and Plautus' literary engagements with tragic texts.[54] The term paratheatre also may help in moving past modes of engagement with the dramatic tradition which privilege literary texts, such as allusion and intertext, to a broader conception of how performance traditions related to one another in Antiquity.

54 Plato: Trivingo (2009); Old and Middle Comedy: Farmer (2017) 67–116; Plautus: Manuwald (2014). Kanellakis (2017–2018) 63–64 reviews the use of 'paracomedy' in scholarship on the ancient theatre since 1993.

Metatheatre

Theoretical Aspects

Anton Bierl

‘New Thoughts on Metatheatre in Attic Drama: Self-Referentiality, Ritual and Performativity as Total Theatre’

Introduction and the History of the Concept in Personal Perspective

Metatheatre refers to a fundamental and revolutionizing insight that theatre can self-referentially point out its own structure or that, in a play-within-play form, features like the poet or the audience or objects can themselves become centers of performative interest. Theatre thus recognizes, makes use of, exploits and engages with its own theatrical nature. Despite the problematic and fluid nature of terms like ‘metatheatre’, ‘metatheatricality’ or ‘metadrama’, which defy the status of a universal category or further clear-cut definitions,[1] the philological application of metatheatre has uncovered strands of hermeneutics in Classical dramatic texts previously hidden or seen from different angles. It goes without saying that the mere historical and spatial range of theatrical forms implies manifold frames containing various modes of ‘*collusion*’ between audience and actors, stage and real word.[2] Generic framings and hybrid interaction among these result in indistinct delimitations. This contribution can only advocate the practical use of the concept in a specific, yet highly relevant and very concrete instance of theatre, namely the Attic drama of the 5th century BC, i.e. theatre as practiced within limited time and space. It points out generic features and trends in tragedy, comedy and satyr play. This essay avoids any overly theoretical and universalized use of the term, on the contrary, which only results in increased historical vagueness, hypercritical scepticism and thus in a self-imposed and intentional abstinence from applying an innovative theoretical concept that helps elicit new insights and questions.

Before entering the discussion, I would like to start out on a personal note. When I published my dissertation *Dionysos und die griechische Tragödie* in 1991, introducing metatheatre onto the scene of German Classical philology, there

1 See, e.g., Rosenmeyer (2002); Thumiger (2009).

2 Easterling (1997b) 167 (her emphasis).

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was still a rather conservative and hostile bulwark against the dissemination of any theoretical concepts coming from modern literary or cultural studies, and my work met with fierce opposition and critical reaction.[3] On the one hand, I had to face one particular question numerous times: how could a fashionable and voguish notion help us understand Greek tragedy and a play like the *Bacchae*? At the same time, being among the very first to introduce metadrama into tragedy, I also had the privilege of attracting the attention of the established generation as a very young scholar at the very first step in his career. Wolfgang Kullmann (1993) dedicated an entire article to proving me wrong.[4] In a different vein, Joachim Latacz, who edited my first article on the issue in the *Würzburger Jahrbücher*,[5] was open enough to acknowledge the contribution critically, later mentioning my name in his famous *Einführung in die griechische Tragödie*.[6] A relatively late and rather misconceived frontal attack against the concept of metadrama as modern anachronism in Germany by Guyburg Radke entered the debate in the form of a monograph dedicated to the subject; Radke's argument was, however, unconvincing,[7] since she had not reconsidered or engaged with the latest modifications to the theory and their ramifications. Her reading was based entirely on Aristotle's *Poetics*, which is itself an anachronism which she shares with her teacher Arbogast Schmitt.

I still remember my enthusiasm when I first read the seventh chapter of Charles Segal's book *Dionysiac Poetics and Euripides'* Bacchae (Princeton 1982[1]) while nearing the final stage of writing my MA thesis (1986).[8] I mentioned the monograph in respect to Dionysos in dramatic reversals[9] without even using the term metatheatre, but only at the very end of the manuscript at that time (in 1986),[10] in which I had left out the *Bacchae* for practical reasons. However, from the very start of my PhD dissertation, which I began in 1987, when I completely reorganized, reviewed and rewrote the material, I decided that metatheatre would be, along with politics, a central point in my analysis. I soon learned

3 Bierl (1991); anticipating the criticism, I put the term in quotations marks.

4 See also Segal's lucid handling of the question in the new afterword (369–378, esp. 370–375) to the second and expanded edition (1997) of Segal (1982) and the paradigmatic discussion with Seaford: Seaford's critical review (*BMCR* 98.3.10) and Segal's excellent response (*BMCR* 98.5.26).

5 Bierl (1989).

6 Latacz (1993) 294; 299.

7 Radke (2003).

8 Segal (1982).

9 Bierl (1986), e.g., 41; 46; 53; 56–57; 59; 71–72; 87; 91; 96; 107; 123; 132; 139; 147; 164; 165, independently from the insights by Segal (1982).

10 Bierl (1986) 160.

that Charles Segal was not the only scholar to apply this framework, and so I read Froma Zeitlin, Simon Goldhill and Helen Foley.[11] In the winter of the same year I embarked on a plane to the US – back then still a major adventure – determined to meet some of the major experts on Dionysos. Charles Segal received me, still a PhD student in his first year, in Princeton with great hospitality and discussed many issues about the concept of metatheatre with me. Furthermore, he told me more about his colleague Froma Zeitlin, whom I would soon meet thereafter, on the occasion of a conference on Dionysos in Blacksburg, Virginia in October 1990.[12] Moreover, I visited Albert Henrichs at Harvard, at the time a star in research on the religious aspects of Dionysos. Unexpectedly, I met him again in Munich shortly afterwards. I exchanged my MA thesis with him and soon my almost finished book manuscript in 1990. He remained rather sceptical with respect to the concept of metatheatre. Thus, when I, after the defense of my PhD, worked as a research associate in the US at the University Urbana-Champaign, Illinois in 1990–1991, William Calder, a close colleague of his, had me read a postcard by Albert Henrichs addressed to him in which he emphasized that he liked my work, but could not understand why I used this modernist theoretical term. Shortly before, Albert Henrichs had invited me to give my first lecture at Harvard on a papyrus containing a Dionysian dramatic fragment (*TrGF* II F 646a), in which I employed the concept of metatheatre again.[13] But only in January 1994, when I came to Harvard again, did he show me his almost finished article 'Why should I dance?', which heavily drew on my insights that choral songs mentioning Dionysos are often related to self-referential concerns.[14] The German philologist Albert Henrichs closed the divide between Germany and English speaking scholarship, and the concept gained popularity. Moreover, perhaps to some extent also under the influence of Harvard, I began developing related ideas that brought ritual, chorality, linguistics, speech act theory and performativity to the fore. All of my new theoretical endeavors

11 Zeitlin (1980) 62–73, for Euripides' *Orestes*; Zeitlin (1982/2009), for Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*; Goldhill (1984), for the *Oresteia*; Goldhill (1986) 244–259, for Euripides' *Electra*; Easterling (1985); on *Bacchae*, see Foley (1980) and (1985) 205–258; Segal (1982) 215–271; Goldhill (1986) 259–286.

12 On this occasion she presented her metatheatrical reading of Dionysos in Greek tragedy – see Zeitlin (1993) – following Segal (1982) and recurring already in Bierl (1989) and (1991): Zeitlin (1993) 148 n. 3; 153 n. 15; 154 n. 17; 156 n. 20. See my remarks in the review of the Proceedings in Bierl (1997) 391–394, on Zeitlin 393–394.

13 Bierl (1990).

14 Henrichs (1994/95), with notes on Bierl, see Henrichs (1994/95) 57; 58; 91 n. 2; 92 n. 7; 8; 9; 10; 13; 15; 16; 101 n. 76; 102 n. 84; 85; 103 n. 88; 89; 91; 107 n. 111; 112; 109 n. 120; 122; 110–111.

culminated in my Habilitation in 1998, which was published at the end of 2000 as *Der Chor in der Alten Komödie*.[15]

Many critics believed in an unbridgeable divide between tragedy and comedy with reference to metatheatre. Until Segal (1982), there was a general belief that tragedy on principle could not be associated with the concept, but that comedy was metatheatrical by nature.[16] Therefore, the term was embraced by numerous scholars of comedy. Oliver Taplin, who participated in the Basel conference and who had once critically downplayed the role of Dionysos in tragedy also regarding metatheatre,[17] belongs to this group. I only recall that he had vehemently excluded tragedy from this discussion for a long time, limiting the phenomenon strictly to comedy.[18] But soon he would acknowledge the *Oresteia* as the tragic exception and carefully revised his former position.[19] In the English speaking world, Ann G. Batchelder (1995), Francis Dunn (1996), Mark Ringer (1998) and Gregory W. Dobrov (2001) followed up on the central issues of metatheatre in tragedy very soon. Francis Dunn (2011) and Isabelle Torrance (2013) represent a second generation. After my introduction into German scholarship, it took at least another decade before the term was firmly established, whereas French and Italian scholarship, beginning with Marino Barchiesi's introduction into Classical literature (1970), were much more open and bolstered the theory's success.[20]

When Elodie Paillard and Silvia Milanezi cordially invited me to deliver the keynote for the Basel conference, I was very honoured. Yet only when I was preparing the lecture did I realize that my work in this area had become one of my major contributions to the field of drama studies. Moreover, I came to appreciate that much of what I had written over the last 30 years had revolved around modifying and fine-tuning the term 'metatheatre' in a broad way, an argument which has been associated with so many misconceptions from its very beginning.[21]

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15 Bierl (2001); see the revised second English edition Bierl (2009).

16 E.g., Bain (1977) 208–211; Taplin (1986) 163–174.

17 Taplin (1986) 166 criticizes Segal's (1982) position: 'But, while there are no allusions in tragedy to the Dionysia or its appurtenances, there are plenty to Dionysus. Are these automatically metatheatrical? Any answer to this question should be reached in the light of the whole issue of the relation of the world of the tragedy to the world of the auditorium. Was the audience expecting self-reference of this sort, on the look-out for it? At least it should not be taken for granted without argument that any reference to "the god of tragedy" (whatever that means) is thereby self-reference.' In agreement, on the contrary, with Segal (1982) and Bierl (1991), is Zeitlin (1993).

18 Taplin (1986) and (1993).

19 See Taplin (1986); Wilson/Taplin (1993); see now Thumiger (2009) 22–24.

20 Gentili (1977) 3–4.

21 Esp. Bierl (1989); (1990); (1991); (1999); (2001); (2009); (2006); (2011a); (2011b); (2011c); (2013); (2017a); (2017b); (2019a).

Abel: The Invention of the Concept, Criticism and Mutual Misunderstanding

The term 'metatheatre' was coined by Lionel Abel in 1963, and it spanned many notions, e.g., play that is self-aware of its own status as theatre and fiction; play that turns on itself and reflects its own nature as art in the acting; the intrusion and presence of the author; the self-referencing of and play on, with and about props, costumes, masks and theatrical fiction; theatre as life (*theatrum mundi*); the references to acting, dramatic composition, theatre and spectatorship; references to abstract plot elements considered essential to the genre like prologue or *peripeteia*; self-referencing the specifics of what constitutes a drama; mirroring strategies like the *mise en abyme*; the notion of theatre as dream and dream-like experience; play-within-play; the presence of ceremonies in the play; the inclusion of improvisations; breaking the illusion; the Brechtian notion of epic theatre, with its defamiliarizing or estranging effects and its conscious breach of the fiction; the subversion of closure; the direct audience address and drawing-in of the spectators through the rupture of the fourth wall via active response.[22]

According to his definition, 'the world is a stage, life is a dream',[23] Abel regards metatheatre as a modern third genre beyond tragedy and comedy, which has its origin in the Renaissance. It is thus a construct that defines itself against the foil of Classical, mimetic, cathartic and Aristotelian theatre. He writes as if the dramatic depth and emotional involvement leading to *katharsis* were to be saved from modern deviations related to philosophical and theoretical ideas. With this broad literary and comparative approach, Abel's main focus is on Cervantes, Shakespeare (particularly *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*) and Calderón, modern theatre in general, esp. Pirandello, Brecht and Ionesco. But the concept even ties in with postmodern interests and trends in postdramatic theatre, in which metatheatrical modes undermine dramatic and mimetic forms.

Abel's term attempts to cover too many features of theatre at once in too broad a comparative view. It is thus an umbrella term with restricted hermeneutical value.[24] Abel has been proven wrong in many ways, especially in his constructing of a third genre against the foil of ancient theatre. In the context of the 1960s and through a strictly Classical and Aristotelian lens, Abel as a non-classicist idealizes ancient tragedy, preferring it to comedy. Classical drama, in

22 Abel (1963); (2003); Hornby (1986) 31–118; Calderwood (1971); Waugh (1984); see Bierl (1991) 115–119; Slater, N. (2002) 1–2; Egginton (2003); Nischik (2004).

23 Abel (1963) 83.

24 Rosenmeyer (2002); Thumiger (2009).

his view, observes the laws of illusion, the unity of place, space and action. He privileges text over performance and helps perpetuate old prejudices. Although Abel is mistaken in matters of genre, definition, presuppositions and historical outlook, his term possesses hermeneutical value as a tool and has a felicitous history, representing one of the most important developments in research on Classical theatre. According to the classification of Karin Vieweg-Marks (1989), it can be divided into six subtypes of operationalization: thematic (theatre becomes the setting); fictional (play within a play); epicizing (asides to audience); discursive (through references to theatre the medium is foregrounded in *mimesis*); figural (awareness of double identity of actor and role); and adaptive (via intertextual reference to other pretexts or genres) metatheatre. Despite Abel's limitations and the numerous objections to his idea, the perspective proved to be fruitful: Marino Barchiesi (1970) was the first to apply it to ancient theatre, modifying the concept.

One major stumbling block seems to be the term *meta*-theatre.[25] Abel probably was inspired by the *meta-* from Barthes' metalangue, esp. by Roman Jakobson's taxonomy of functions of language, which he called 'the metalingual,' presented in a paper given at Indiana University in 1958 and published two years later.[26] The preposition *meta* seems to imply that the position is not only *with* theatre, but mostly outside, on a level removed, that is *beyond* or even *after* theatre. The alleged misnomer implies outsidedness, but all allusions and elements remain within theatre.[27] William Egginton believes that metatheatricality is constitutive of every form of theatre that incorporates mirroring, doubling and awareness of its status.[28] But I think there are at least gradations in the level of metatheatrical self-awareness as far as historical specificities are concerned. This everlasting discussion, which continues at cross-purposes, would quickly come to an end if the term and its application were more precise and less broad. Some critics have considered replacing it with 'paratheatrical', which might work, but the term 'paratextual' is reserved for something else and implies that a phenomenon is aside from theatre. The prefix *meta-* implies the turn towards the self, the reflexive, but metatheatre is definitely not a whole metadiscourse. Metatheatre means that theatre introduces a critical and self-conscious dimension. Without totally undermining the play, an extra level appears on top of it. It sparks interest in the theatrical process and highlights mechanisms and devices. It functions as do all meanings of the Greek preposition μετά: it comes with the theatrical

25 Rosenmeyer (2002) 90–91.
26 Jakobson (1960/1981); see Pérez-Simón (2011) 3–5.
27 For a defense of the term, see Rengel (2017) 147–148.
28 Egginton (2003) 74.

event, extends the view to the beyond and from above and evokes a critical look back on the scene after taking place. I cautiously venture to propose the term 'auto-theatrical', since it is a dimension that is constitutive of any play itself. Yet for matters of convention, it is advisable to stick to the term and adjust it to the historically more appropriate use as far as Attic drama is concerned. Thus, it would be misleading to argue that it entails etiolation; rather, it intensifies the theatrical experience in various mirroring effects. Metatheatre is thus vital theatralization, a theatricalized emphasis and self-reflection that underlines and affirms its status. In the same vein, Andrés Pérez-Simón tries to substitute Roman Jakobson's metalingual with his famous 'poetic function' that '*projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination*'.[29] However, this is not totally satisfying either, since it applies exclusively to the totalizing effect of *choreia* and ritual song that are among the self-references in Attic theatre addressed in this chapter.[30] To return to the broader meaning of self-awareness of theatre, Pérez-Simón finally suggests reverting to Russian formalism, especially to Jan Mukařovský's aesthetic function, which focuses on *Darstellung*, the aesthetic impact of showcasing the devices and structural elements of a work of art.[31]

By examining numerous points of criticism, especially Thomas Rosenmeyer's (2002) detailed attack and Chiara Thumiger's (2009) modifications, I identify several items regarding metatheatre that have conduced to mutual misunderstanding:

- The term's being coined with the prefix *meta-*, and its alleged connotations of outsideness.
- The inappropriate concept of illusion and the erroneous notion that ancient theatre applies to a strictly observed law of illusion where disbelief must not be willingly suspended.
- The idea that metatheatre is exclusively applicable to comedy, but not to tragedy.
- The erroneous assumption that metatheatre must be effective entirely in a theatre play, and that it is impossible for self-reflective elements to partially shed some light on the devices of art.
- The belief that the concept is a catch-all umbrella term, a 'general nostrum' and an overall, essentializing approach that runs the risk of losing sight of the very specifics of a text, an 'obstruction to enlightenment' in the work of art.[32]

29 Jacobson (1960/1981) 27 (his emphasis).
30 Bierl (2001) 293–298, esp. 293–294; 335 (Engl. [2009] 259–264, esp. 260; 299).
31 Pérez-Simón (2011) 5–8.
32 Rosenmeyer (2002) 107.

- The erroneous assumption that it works autonomously as though driven by hidden, inherent postmodern forces that imply the death of the author and of art.
- The prejudice that it is a poststructuralist, postmodern approach full of jargon, which pales the nature of art. Moreover, the opinion that it is a poststructuralist phenomenon, applicable only to postmodern works of art.[33]
- The frustrating fact that the idea's fierce opponents do not acknowledge the modifications made by several scholars in the past. On the contrary, they hold to stereotypes and repeat their prejudices.

Lothar Willms (2014) has recently tried to restrict the loose use of the term to instances when theatre makes theatre its subject, the 'play about play', differentiating it from *intratheatre*, 'a play within the play', and *intertheatre*, 'a reference to another play' in the sense of intertextuality. He links these moments, when the play turns towards itself, with the essential tendency of dramatic transgression. Whereas on the level of content we encounter a social transgression, on the level of form we can speak about metatheatre as poetic transgression, opening the space, crossing the boundaries and transcending its own mimetic outline. Even with more than 900 pages, Willms remains rather vague as to how this poetic transgression really works on the level of dramatic performance, audience reception and hermeneutical understanding.

Ritual and Performance

For my contribution to the issue in respect of Attic drama, it is critical not to look at the text as metadrama, but rather to look at performance, since we must take into account the fact that literary texts in fifth-century Athens are still predominantly understood in terms of oral reception.[34] This is particularly true in the case of theatre, since, at least originally, plays were primarily composed for a single performance in front of a large portion of all citizens of the polis (which

33 E.g., Seaford (1996) 32.

34 For a general orientation to the problem of orality in literature see Finnegan (1977); on the Greeks specifically, see Havelock (1963) and Gentili (1983) 30–52. Gentili (1983) 31 distinguishes between three different conditions of orality, occurring separately or together: (1) orality in composition; (2) orality of communication; (3) orality of transmission. Tragedy exists in a transitional stage from orality to writing, and therefore in contrast to epic and lyric poetry; only point (2) applies to it. For the tragedian, composition and presentation do not intersect; the tragic author fixes his composition in a written text presented according to the rules of oral communication.

does not exclude the possibility that the poet might already have had reperformances in mind), whereas reading dramatic texts was a side-effect limited to a very small group of intellectuals coming from rich aristocratic families around the last quarter of the fifth century, when we can begin to speak of an emerging book market.[35] The written composition of a dramatic text, of course, can reference facts of its actual performance. Therefore, it is useful to adopt an inter- and transmedial perspective in respect of the so-called metaheatrical dimension. Metatragedy and metadrama, in general, thus do not imply the rupture of illusion, creating an increased awareness of the text's fictional state by means of this breach; rather, they enable the audience to become even more deeply involved in the dramatic events on stage. Moreover, the intertheatrical play within a play does not work like intertextual referencing, as we are used to seeing in cultures of dominant literacy. Any scene alluding to other plays must be understood through its own theatrical and performative potential, whereas the purely textual dimension is secondary and can be supplied only via memory and basic content.

In 1991, I already argued for a rather open, but cultural-historically appropriate and thus non-anachronistic definition and for taking into consideration the context of performance: for example, a festivals cultic background and its organization and constitution, as well as comments on its musical quality, individual instruments, the choral dance and rhythm. If this is so, reference to Dionysos can also carry metatragic implications. Yet I emphasized that such self-references did not at all break the so-called illusion, since his cultic aspect undoubtedly takes precedence over the metatragic, whenever Dionysos is mentioned within the context of a religious event taking place especially in his honour. By integrating the festival's god into the play, the play could also reinforce the theatre's cultic function. The religious effect oscillates between the fictive and the here and now. When the god of the theatre or the religious context is mentioned, the so-called metatragic effect is inseparable from the cultic. Therefore, the ancient audience never considered this to be breaking the illusion; rather, such passages, because of their cultic connections, enhanced the emotional spell emanating from the stage. Philologists as specialists of text can analyse the isolated metatragic dimension in hindsight, but the spectators of the oral performance could be aware

35 We find the earliest evidence of published texts being read in papyrus rolls only in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (52), where Euripides' *Andromeda* is mentioned by name; see also lines 943 and 1114. On the beginnings of the book trade in Athens, see Turner, E. (1952). On the consequences of the shift from orality to writing in the time of Euripides, Thucydides and Plato, see Havelock (1963) and Detienne (1981) 50–189.

of this additional dimension only to a limited extent and are apt to be more impressed by the encompassing Dionysian atmosphere and energy.[36]

In another book (2001/2009), I argued that self-referentiality should be conceptually distinguished from metatheatre to a greater extent than has been the case so far, since the latter term can imply anachronistic associations, as Rosenmeyer (2002) and Thumiger (2009) prove. While dramatic self-referentiality is to be understood as an expression by which someone refers to one's own activity in the performance happening in the *hic et nunc*, that is, to one's ritual action, metatheatre makes theatre the subject of itself. It problematizes, thematizes theatre and denotes self-reflective utterances in the theatre about the aesthetic phenomenon of the theatre.[37] Since the boundaries between ritual and theatre are, as seen above, fluid, the two concepts overlap. If we look at choral dance, mask and costume from the perspective of ritual and the carrying out of an aesthetic performance, self-reference seems to be more appropriate than distanced textual reflection.

Moreover, I emphasized that the examination of self-referential phenomena is not the result of an anachronistic transfer of contemporary (poststructuralist) theory to ancient texts,[38] but self-referentiality is constitutive of ancient poetry and drama. It is connected with its specific closeness to ritual and to the oral nature of the medium. Ritual performances tend to include self-referential traits. Simple ritual performance without mythic narration needs self-referencing in order to support and affirm its status.[39] The same applies for orally-based epic narration and choral performance. Only in the last three decades, however, has it become increasingly evident that the *Iliad* and, even more so, the *Odyssey* tend to reflect self-referentially on their own poetic tradition.[40] I recall, e.g., the long *ekphrasis* of Achilles' new shield in *Iliad* 18 and the scene of Achilles playing cithara in his tent and singing about the 'glories of men' (*Iliad* 9.189). Other examples are found in the idealized *aoidoi* Demodocos and Phemios as self-reflective figures of the performance tradition. Furthermore, we frequently find the technique of a *mise en abyme*.[41] To speak about *kleos aphthiton* highlights the oral medium and tradition that perpetuates itself over the generations such that a deed will not be forgotten. Making such statements, the Homeric tradition affirms itself. On the other hand,

36 Bierl (1991) 111–119, esp. 115–118; this passage draws on 117–118.

37 For this reason, it is often equated with the concept of self-reflexivity.

38 The concept can also be fruitfully applied to other ancient forms of literature; e.g., for Sanskrit, see Lockwood/Bhat (2005).

39 This passage is partially derived from Bierl (2009) 27–31, esp. 30.

40 E.g., Segal (1994) 85–183; Rengakos (2002) 189–191; de Jong (2006).

41 See Dällenbach (1977).

choral groups continuously reference their own dancing and singing, and by doing so they do not destroy their performance, but rather they support and strengthen it.[42]

Since drama carries on its own prehistory in choral lyric, integrating it into the choral parts, choral self-references are an important feature. Therefore, while alluding to its own singing and dancing, the dramatic chorus never breaks the so-called illusion. The chorus, the basis and origin of drama, proves this fact in its complex status of different voices and layers. In the case of dramatic choruses, a second level of dramatic plot (*énoncé*) is layered over the purely ritual anchoring of the plot in festive occasion, that is, in the frame of the actual communication situation (*énonciation*).[43] The members of the dramatic chorus thus have a double identity: on the one hand, they dance as a ritual group in the here and now; on the other hand, they also undertake a dramatic role within the structure of the plot. The utterance, making use of the linguistic category of shifters (*embrayeurs*) ('now', 'here', 'I'/'we'), can change the focus from the narrated dimension of *mimesis* (*énoncé*) to the event of utterance (*énonciation*). In references to their own performance, the performers are able to 'switch' freely between levels of communication spanning from role to function, the then and there and the here and now. Their role identity is limited as they function as hinges between *mimesis* and the actual communication situation. Albert Henrichs, partly relying on my earlier results about self-referentiality and metatheatre, has analysed the chorus' utterances about its own singing and dancing in the *orchestra* and calls this phenomenon choral self-referentiality.[44] However, this only represents one part of a larger complex. Thus, it is worth extending the perspective to a ritual or performative self-referentiality, since all actions which are named in the *embrayage* fall into the realm of ritual and performative activity in the here and now.[45]

By mentioning the theatre god Dionysos, whose rituals constitute the frame of dramatic performances, and his entourage in their emblematic status in respect of musical activity, it is again possible to shift into the actual utterance

42 This passage closely draws on Bierl (2015) 201–202.

43 Calame (1995) esp. 3–26; 98–100 and 106–111. On shifters, see Jakobson (1984). On *énonciation*, see Greimas/Courtés I (1979/86) 125–128 and Greimas/Courtés II (1979/86) 75–77; on *énoncé* (i.e. the result of the act of utterance), see Greimas/Courtés I (1979/86) 123–125 and Greimas/Courtés II (1979/86) 74–75. On shifting in/out or *embrayage/débrayage*, see Greimas/Courtés I (1979/86) 119–121 and 79–82, Greimas/Courtés II (1979/86) 73–74 and 61.

44 Henrichs (1994/95) and Henrichs (1996); Henrichs (1994/95) 58–59 even refers in passing to the concept of ritual self-referentiality. On Dionysiac choral self-references, see Segal (1982) 242–247; Bierl (1991) 35–36; 83–84; 99; 106–107; 129; 155; 164; 174; 190–191; 224–225 und 242–243.

45 This passage closely draws on Bierl (2009) 24–28.

situation. In most cases, then, the performative element is coupled with ritual self-reference. Through synecdoche, Dionysos stands for mask, mimesis, ecstatically inspired enactment or reenactment and the dramatic choral dance itself. The tragic chorus refers either to the *énonciation*, that is, to Dionysiac music, the *aulos* and whirling, enthusiastic movement, or it associates its current ritual activity with other mythical transfigurations of a Dionysos who dances in an idyllic and ideal landscape with male and female members of his entourage. In this case, myth and ritual engage in close interaction. Ritual frames the myth in the performance in such 'choral projections.' The ritual chorus, which is present in the *orchestra* in honor of Dionysos, sees itself as a mirror of other Dionysiac choral circles which in turn take as their model the mythical constellation of Dionysos ἔξαρχος or χοραγός, leading his entourage of maenads, nymphs or satyrs. The Euripidean *Bacchae*, where the Dionysian itself is the mythic-cultic scenario, are characterized by this 'metatheatrical' interplay of mythic and ritual techniques of interlocking and nesting.[46] The *Bacchae* and other plays about Dionysos[47] are the extreme case and the metatheatrical self-referencing of choral and musical aspects raised to the second power, so to speak. Yet it is well known that ancient tragedy transferred the plot to other mythic contexts. Even though created by a poet and embedded in a mythic plot, in the audience's reception dramatic choruses are modeled on the foil of traditional choruses that dance and sing. Whenever it is shifted to Dionysos and his sphere of dance, the audiences response will be of a particular nature. Without regard to these further clarifications of mine,[48] Rosenmeyer is not ready to accept these important modifications and subsumes them under 'the delusoriness of the term, and to the arbitrariness of its employment'.[49]

As outlined above, due to an Aristotelian dogma,[50] metatheatricality and the self-referential consciousness of a play within a play in ancient tragedy went unrecognized until an awareness that this aspect also played a significant role slowly started growing in the 1980s. Aeschylus' *Oresteia* is a perfect example for demonstrating how tragic authors used musical and choral referencing to highlight the political and anthropological concerns of the trilogy on the aesthetic medium constitutive of tragedy, that is music and choral dance. The initial work on the *Oresteia* employing this metatheatrical angle ironically came

46 This passage closely draws on Bierl (2009) 28–29. On choral self-reference in Euripides, see Henrichs (1996). On *Bacchae* under these premises, see Bierl (2013).

47 Bierl (1991) 10–13.

48 Bierl (1999) on Seaford (1996); Bierl (2001).

49 Rosenmeyer (2002) 101.

50 See Radke (2003).

from Wilson and Taplin (1993), ironic because the latter had vehemently rejected metatheatre for the tragic genre: both rightly stressed the theme of the dissolution of choral order and its final reintegration as a sign of order in general, in which the incorporation of the Erinyes represents the quintessence of the tragic in a self-reflective mode, that is to make dread fruitful for the polis. I have recently demonstrated that Aeschylus composed *Agamemnon* alongside an ongoing conflict, inscribed into the texture of the play, between *euphemia* and *dysphemia*, between attempts at mitigating and silencing the horror of pure and natural voice through aesthetic voice, ritual practice, kinesics and the violent outbreak of *pathos* conveyed by shrieking cries, *goos*, and distorted body movements. Tragedy denotes the display of terror, horror and suffering. Therefore, in view of the abundance of woe and disruptive energy, all euphemizing tendencies are bound to fail. But in this genre, violence and lament, *pathos* and *goos*, though terrible, are acted out in musical, vocal and aesthetic forms and underscored with self-referential markers.[51]

In the third stasimon (975–1034) of *Agamemnon*, the negative songs full of evil premonition emerge spontaneously from within, intoning the threnody of the Erinys, the lyre-less (988–993):

> πεύθομαι δ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων
> νόστον αὐτόμαρτυς ὤν·
> τὸν δ' ἄνευ λύρας ὅμως ὑμνωιδεῖ
> θρῆνον Ἐρινύ⟨ο⟩ς αὐτοδίδακτος ἔσωθεν
> θυμός, οὐ τὸ πᾶν ἔχων
> ἐλπίδος φίλον θράσος.
>
> I recognize with my eyes
> the return, I am a witness myself;
> without the lyre, intones my breast nevertheless
> from inside out the threnody of the Erinys completely without instruction,
> without possessing in any way the confidence of hope.

From the chorus of Elders, at this point acting as a prophets, poetic *manteis* as it were, a spontaneous, internal voice emanates, witnessing dream images of terror. The heart of the chorus is propelled in circles by the dynamic vortex twisting towards the end (τελεσφόροις δίναις κυκλούμενον κέαρ, 997), spinning like a chorus in a round dance. The old bodies obviously begin to express themselves in dancing figures. The circular movement of the dance's self-referentially reflects the storm of emotions. Spontaneously, 'self-inspired' (αὐτοδίδακτος, 992), that is

51 Bierl (2017a); this passage closely draws on Bierl (2017a) 169.

without instruction by a choral trainer, the *chorodidaskalos*,[52] the chorus turns to an expressive melody of lament. In frightened agitation and fearful premonition, directed by the desired yet tentative quest for meaning, full of hope, toward melodies of moderation and order, there springs an uncontrollable and unmusical dance, implying chaos and horror. This dissonant song clearly underscores the tragic development in self-referential terms. A chorus in tragedy typically sings about its change of mood when the *pathos* cannot be pushed back again in choral and musical terms. It is still a dirge of the Erinyes, who only become visible metaphorically. But this internal song and dance already anticipate the terrible songs of the Erinyes who will act out their theatrical epiphany as a real chorus in the last play of the trilogy.[53]

A growing group of scholars is currently working on the self-referential quality of tragedy in respect to performance and *choreia* and its aesthetic implication. Based on Henrichs' and my earlier work, Naomi Weiss, for example, is developing the concept of 'imaginative suggestion': in her monograph *The Music of Tragedy* (2018), focusing on Euripides in his late plays (*Electra*, *Trojan Women*, *Helen* and *Iphigenia in Aulis*), she shows how references to music and dance can direct, support and sometimes undermine the dramatic plot and audience response. Some years earlier, Aikaterini Tsolakidou had already followed similar tracks in her unpublished dissertation *The Helix of Dionysus* (2012). Using the examples of *Trojan Women*, *Phoenissae*, *Hypsipyle* and *Helen*, she argues that Euripides, influenced by New Music, uses the lyrical passages as the main place to reflect self-consciously on tragic *mousike* and his poetics after 420 BC. Moreover, as I have already stressed in 1991, she emphasizes that Dionysos and the Dionysiac become the thematic nucleus of this endeavor. With this aesthetic appreciation of metaritual, -musical and metachoreutic devices, it becomes evident that metatragedy in Classical Attic tragedy does not serve to highlight hermeneutical gaps or blur boundaries, break the illusion in order to critically turn on the tragic structure itself, put it into question or even to deconstruct it, but rather to create a fusion with the performative and ritual frame and to involve the audience in an all-encompassing aesthetic experience.

Richard Hornby regards the incorporation of ceremonies as an aspect of metatheatre.[54] In ancient theatre this is much more complex. When ritual is included on the stage and in a Dionysian performance, we have a situation of 'ritual within ritual'. It can always be highlighted in a self-reflexive manner. It

52 See Hom. *Od*. 22.346–347: αὐτοδίδακτος, referring to Phemius.

53 This part closely draws on Bierl (2017a) 183–184, intentionally without quotations marks for self-citation.

54 Hornby (1986) 49–66.

is thus a matter of framing, of laminations and changes of frames, in the sense of Erving Goffman's (1974) frame analysis that entails self-reflexivity in metarituality. These scenes can be connected with narratives and myth such that they assume a high theatricality.

At the same time, such reenactments of ritual or connected mythic narratives are reassembled with other components to form new and impressive scenes that tragedians deploy for dramatic effect. Since ritual and theatre are deeply connected, each reenactment of ritual on stage possesses a genuinely theatrical dimension. Aeschylus tends to display ritual dramatically as a *mise en abyme*, reflecting the macrostructure of the play in the microstructure. Thus, in the central, ostentatious and striking necromantic scene of Darius in *Persians* (532–907, esp. the ritual invocation, 598–680), Aeschylus can mirror key motifs and religious themes of the whole tragedy. Even the king conjured up from the dead becomes a voice to interpret the intricacies of the recent historical past in hermeneutical tones fusing the Persian with the Greek perspective. Positioned in the middle, the scene helps transfer *pathos* and suffering into the collective memory, to act out and communalize *pathos* in a predramatic oratorium. In the collective lament (*goos*) and necromantic ritual, life is adjusted to death just as the entire play is focused on a vision of an existence after the catastrophic defeat that leads to an experience in Hades. Ritual practice is usually represented by the choral group acting out a multimodal performance on the level of song, dance, rhythm and music. Therefore, staging religion becomes self-reflexive in a double sense. First, choral self-reference highlights the ritual action in the form of a speech-act, and second, *choreia* represents ritual action in the purest sense, embedding other ritual reenactments that aim at highly spectacular performances.[55]

In another article I tried to shed some light on the mutual reciprocity and circular interaction of fatal entanglements in Thebes and its ruling family in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*. Viewed from a cultural perspective, namely that of an oriental healing ritual, the central description of the shields can be read as a *mise en abyme* and *mise en scène* of the entire play, speaking to mutual destruction and the resulting salvation of the polis. Metaritual and metatheatre thus go together to highlight the dramatic action and the audience response of the entire play again. Aeschylus reenacts the mythic tradition of the Seven found in the epic called *Thebais* which, according to Walter Burkert (1981), can be linked to a Babylonian healing and purification ritual, described in a series

55 This part closely draws on the abstract of Bierl (2019a) 86, on purpose without quotations marks for self-citation. See the detailed treatment in Bierl (2019a) 92–101.

of magical texts, the *Bit meseri*, enacted to drive out evil. Apparently, Aeschylus used this underlying concept of catharsis, integrating it and transposing it into a tragedy with the same mythic background, *Seven Against Thebes*. The texts describe how seven Babylonian priests or magicians cured diseases by setting up figurines corresponding to seven attacking terrible demons, and against these, figurines of seven protective gods. Thus brothers-in-effigy fight against each other in a metaphorical battle between good and evil. In particular, a pair of twins made of plaster was set up at the head of the person to be cured, on the left and right. At the end of the ceremony the figures were destroyed. The object of this model-play was to work through violence on a symbolic level, and to exorcize the evil spirits. Transposed into tragedy, in the mutual and total self-annihilation of the brothers Eteocles and Polynices, a catharsis, mirroring the quintessential effect of tragedy according to Aristotle, is established, one which will be needed for the solidarisation and the survival of the city as a whole. The myth enacted on stage mirrors the ritual and focuses on emotion and audience response.[56]

As emphasized above, Euripides' *Bacchae* presents the most metatheatrical tragedy, but even in this case the sense of the play is not entirely encompassed by this aspect. In *Dionysos und die griechische Tragödie*, I argued 'that the *Bacchae* reveals the process of how somebody, namely Pentheus, resists theatre and how eventually he is so completely captivated by it that he perishes under its influence, or more accurately from a perverted form of theatre'.[57] However, this play not only lays bare the devices of theatre in a sophisticated manner, but metatragic self-referencing of ritual elements, music and choral dance also strengthen the framing and ritual-mythic plot as well as an overall atmosphere aimed at the audience response. Because of the chorus' dramatic role as Dionysian maenads, it goes without saying that in this play metatheatre is completely absorbed in specific mytho-ritual and performative references. According to the aesthetic frame of the theatre, Dionysos is manifest not only in other paraphernalia, but specifically in choral dance and music. The famous *parodos* that makes the god present by means of *choreia* breaks previous resistance to the god. The absorbed energy is released in an even more violent manner as a consequence. Dramatically, the initial *parodos* functions as an interface between two ritual choruses, the Asian and the Theban. The chorus of the Asian bacchants as a theatrically and aesthetically confusing ensemble becomes the aesthetic message. The dimensions of time and space, as well as other oppositions,

56 This part draws on Bierl (2018) 37–38, on purpose without quotations marks for self-citation.
57 Bierl (1991) 190, for an interpretation of Dionysos in the *Bacchae*, see Bierl (1991) 67–75; 177–218. For metatheatre in the play see also Segal (1982) 215–271.

are blurred in a ritual flux of the songs. Past, present, future and actual time of performance are fused, and the time of myth is reenacted in the ritual of drama.[58] The choral songs of this play – particularly the *parodos*, which effects the necessary entrance into the matrix of an implicit resistance – fulfill the criteria of rituality and performativity defined by Stanley Tambiah – that is by means of the speech-act, in multimedia presentation and in the indexical enumeration of metonymic and synecdochic relations between parts and the whole. Form and content interact closely.[59] Euripides, the sophisticated dramatic artist, constructs the act of revenge in such a way that all details of Pentheus' punishment can be derived from and identified with cultic and mythical elements of Dionysos' realm. The cultic bacchants correspond to mythic maenads, who execute the revenge through violent practices. Through aetiology, on the one hand, myth lays the ground for ritual. On the other hand, ritual reenacts myth. Following up Marshall McLuhan's famous sentence 'The medium is the message',[60] we could say: *The choral medium is the message qua performance in self-referentiality*.[61]

Rosenmeyer and other critics tend to downplay the notable status of Dionysos as a self-referential device to trigger crucial poetic moments.[62] In such passages, something that is of dramaturgical significance for the artistic composition almost always takes place. It is my contention that Sophocles and especially Euripides were aware of the metatragic dimension that naming the god of tragedy entails within choral songs. Despite their individual differences the tragedians tend to use Dionysos as a kind of dramatic device to direct the emotions they arouse in the audience more efficiently. Thus, the god of tragedy, when mentioned, becomes, as it were, the 'catalyst' of the drama's plot. In this way the author uses the established tension between diametrically opposite states inherent in his nature to create dramatic reversals, the typical dramatic arc reflecting his characteristically abrupt μεταβολαί from one extreme to the other. Hence it can also be no coincidence that references to Dionysos or Dionysian cultural notions are frequently found close to the *peripeteia*, which Aristotle defined as 'a change from what is done into its opposite'.[63] The author, particularly Sophocles, e.g., in

58 This part draws on Bierl (2013) 213–214.

59 Tambiah (1985) 128.

60 See also the entire chapter titled after this sentence in McLuhan (1964) 23 (citation) and 23–35.

61 This part draws on Bierl (2013) 225–226, on purpose without quotations marks for self-citation.

62 Rosenmeyer (2002) 101. See also, e.g., Taplin (1986) 166.

63 *Poetics* 1452a22–23: Ἔστι δὲ περιπέτεια μὲν ἡ εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον τῶν πραττομένων μεταβολή. On Dionysos and the μεταβολή in Euripides, see also Schlesier (1985) 20.

the fifth stasimon of *Antigone*, guides the spectator's emotions specifically with these mentions of Dionysos.[64]

Metatheatre in Satyr Play

On account of the false presumption that such self-references never appear in tragedy, supposedly due to an invariably closed illusion in opposition to comedy, their existence was likewise vehemently contested in satyr play until very recently.[65] Yet this dimension is also present in satyr play, but in a different key according to generic conventions.[66] Since the Dionysian collective of satyrs constitutes the chorus in this genre, strengthening the ritual experience of unity succeeds in a particular measure; or in other words: in the theatre, Dionysos manifests himself specifically in his quality as the god of choral dance.[67] *Cyclops*, the single completely extant satyr play, is full of choral and ritual self-references. In satyr play, where the tragic chorus of the trilogy is embodied by quintessentially Dionysian beings, we encounter this slightly absurd constellation: the Dionysian choral dance and music are essentially excluded, Dionysos is absent – we remember that the satyrs are often imprisoned, separated from their divine leader and confronted with totally different scenes of mythology –, whereas they are present on stage and in the *orchestra*.

Let us have a look at the beginning of *Cyclops*: although father Silenus emphasizes their recent slavery under the giant Polyphemus in the prologue, the satyrs cannot leave their old service and particular attachment to Dionysos behind. Corresponding to their incongruent nature, they themselves dance the *sikinnis* typical for them while pasturing the lambs. With a deictic reference to the choral spectacle Silenus expresses amazement over the emerging chorus (Eur. *Cyc*. 37–40): τί ταῦτα; μῶν κρότος σικινίδων / ὁμοῖος ὑμῖν νῦν τε χὥτε Βακχίῳ / κῶμοι συνασπίζοντες Ἀλθαίας δόμους / προσῆτ' ἀοιδαῖς βαρβίτων σαυλούμενοι – 'What is this? Are you all stomping the *sikinnis* now as once before, when you marched at Bakchos' side as comrades-in-arms in komastic processions to the

64 This part draws on Bierl (1991) 119.

65 See, e.g., Lissarrague (1990) 236: 'None of this [i.e. metatheatrical play] appears in satyric drama, which follows tragedy in its complete respect for the fiction of the stage.'

66 Easterling (1997a) esp. 42–44; Bierl (2001) 64–86, esp. 76–79 (Engl. [2009] 47–66, esp. 58–61); Kaimio *et al.* (2001). This part draws on Bierl (2006) 119–120.

67 This following passage closely draws on Bierl (2006) 130–131.

house of Althaia and effeminately, lasciviously you balanced yourselves to the song of large lyres?'[68]

The satyrs, of course, are dancing as they enter and they also obey theatrical necessity in this way. Their stomping in the *hic et nunc* is linked with the dance in the Dionysian revelry (κῶμος) of yore, in which the satyrs marched arm in arm with Bacchus to Calydon, where he fell in love with Althaia, the wife of his host Oineus. The rite of the ongoing performance thereby brings to mind this mythical event of the past.[69]

In the ensuing *parodos*, the satyrs give a typically negative choral projection that nevertheless functions as a self-reference to their own dancing, singing and music-making. While Bacchic dance is not present on the level of dramatic plot (*énoncé*), which takes place on the meadow in front of the Cyclops' cave, this dance is obviously performed as part of the actual communication situation (*énonciation*), in the *orchestra* of the theatre of Dionysos *Eleuthereus* in Athens, at the same time as the following verses are being uttered (Eur. *Cyc*. 63–72): οὐ τάδε Βρόμιος, οὐ τάδε χοροὶ / Βάκχαι τε θυρσοφόροι, / οὐ τυμπάνων ἀλαλαγμοὶ / κρήναις παρ' ὑδροχύτοις, οὐκ οἴνου χλωραὶ σταγόνες· / οὐδ' ἐν Νύσᾳ μετὰ Νυμφᾶν / ἴακχον ἴακχον ᾠδὰν / μέλπω πρὸς τὰν Ἀφροδίταν, / ἂν θηρεύων πετόμαν / Βάκχαις σὺν λευκόποσιν. – 'Here *Bromios* does not dwell, here there are no choruses and no thyrsos-brandishing bacchants, no banging of the drums at the rippling springs, no sparkling drops of wine. Nor in Nysa, in the circle of the nymphs, do I sound the "Iakchos, Iakchos" to Aphrodite, whom I flew off to hunt down together with the white-footed bacchants.'

From the standpoint of the performance situation (*énonciation*), the negated deictic reference is ambiguous, since the chorus really dances in the here and now and thereby Dionysos *Eleuthereus* is imagined to be present. In the play's fictive story (*énoncé*), to be sure, it may be vehemently disputed, yet in the moment of performance, the drums (τύμπανα) resound clearly. The chorus members intone the ritual cry in the Athenian theatre of Dionysos; they sing and act out wild movements. In ritual self-reference and through choral performance, the central god, in whose honor the play takes place, builds a bridge to the inner fiction.[70] One critic has recently chosen a very distanced, self-aware path of metatheatrical interpretation: the phenomenon of the god's absence and his suppression would represent a poetical and parodistic response to tragedy and its historical development, since tragedy systematically excludes

68 Similar and following my choral approach, Lämmle (2013) 155–243, esp. 158–160 (for this passage); 169–170; see also 93–107; 122–145; 172–185; 186–214.

69 See Bierl (2001) 77–78 (Engl. [2009] 58–59).

70 See Bierl (2001) 78–79 (Engl. [2009] 59–61).

the god in new mythic constellations, once it has ceased staging only Dionysian myths of resistance.[71]

This is again an intriguing argument, but perhaps too sophisticated. Poetological statements from one genre to another cannot be excluded. However, the reasoning seems to result from a well-read reader's perspective rather than from live theatre. It seems to suit an intellectual poet like Euripides, but hardly the average citizen in the audience. In my view, the context is still more fundamental, since it is ritually and performatively based. I argue that it is about the transfer of repressed Dionysian energy which will be much more drastic in its eventual release. The same applies for Pratinas' famous fragment (*TrGF* I 4 F 3 = *PMG* 708).[72] In contrast to the majority of interpreters, who postulate a protest against another chorus or half-chorus, I argue that the chorus continually references its own dancing. I venture to see the fragment in an entirely new interpretive perspective. In a grotesque way, the satyrs' attack is directed against themselves. The key to this understanding lies in their absurd mindset of wishing to distance themselves from their actual Dionysian performance through their claim to more pleasant, Apollonian musical forms. One can only laugh heartily at such a childish, incongruent undertaking of bravado. As a quintessentially Dionysian entourage they are and remain entirely under the spell of Bacchus.

In this way, the song thematizes the paradox typical for the satyrs of intersecting opposite spheres. While singing and dancing, they feel dominated by the accompanying instrument. Their ambition is to monopolize Dionysos entirely for themselves. They encourage one another to destroy the flute (αὐλός), admittedly the Dionysian instrument *par excellence*. In their desire for command, the αὐλός itself is imagined equally in choral action: let it dance in the subordinate position (ὕστερον χορευέτω, 11). Liberation from the flute can hardly mean metapoetic revolt of the satyr-playwright Pratinas against elevated tragedy in the style of a Phrynichus.[73] Rather, the subject of the revolting disentanglement once again underlines the central conception of discharging choral, Dionysian energy, which falls in the realm of Dionysos Lysios' responsibility. As satyrs, they embody the ritual guarantee that drama is concerned with Dionysos and playful choral dance.

All things considered, the dynamic, paradoxical recycling of a spectrum of mythical actions always revolves around the same basic idea in satyr play, that

71 Lämmle (2013) 217–243 and 111–153.

72 See Bierl (2006) 120–128. The following paragraphs draw on Bierl (2006) 123–124.

73 See Pohlenz (1965) 493–494, who represents the opinion that the word φρυνεοῦ (16) alludes to Phrynichus. Again, in the wider metapoetical manner (see above), see Lämmle (2013) 226–227, also 160–162; 181–183.

is, the whirling body in dance and the jovial, absurd blending of cultural connections. It yields a new mix of experimental, explosive force which, like foaming wine, makes it possible to play out cheerfully all civilizing discourses from the Dionysian perspective of the 'other' in the collective of the theatre. The genre continually reprocesses, variegates and renegotiates the schema of excluding the Dionysian in its simultaneous presence. It can be played out by scenarios of captivation and self-distancing from the god. Both imply a simple plot of the suppression of Dionysos' power which in this way manifests itself as all the more effective. It is all about damming up and the subsequent, explosive release of energy in dance and movement. This genre-determining pattern is itself intrinsically linked to rituals and myths of Dionysos. Continuous choral self-references underscore its specifically Dionysian aspect in the context of theatre.[74]

Old Comedy

It was never a problem to describe Old Comedy in metatheatrical terms, at least since Gregory Michael Sifakis ruled out illusion in this genre.[75] Aristophanes is a master in all facets of the metatheatrical, such as role play, play with costume, props, and acting, self-aware playing within play, ritual within ritual and *paratragoidia*.[76] Metatheatre is the perfect device to open up and subvert the traditional perspective on tragedy and thus perfectly accords with the generic laws of Old Comedy. In *Spectator Politics*, Niall Slater (2002), a recent proponent of associating performance with metatheatre, made Aristophanes the first performance critic propagating liberal and enlightened politics with these tools. This approach seems another modern reduction, likewise the purely literary and sophisticated interpretation based on intertextuality. In my view ritual and performativity widen the picture towards a genre-dependent aesthetics and functionalism.[77] The metatheatrical play thus functions according to the generic trend of distortion, subversion, vitality and theatricality to make boundaries fluid and to produce antistructure in complicated, partially mytho-ritual scenarios.[78] Life in the polis and politics are part of this theatrical distortion staged as returns to utopias of the

74 This passage draws on Bierl (2006) 138.
75 Sifakis (1971) 7–14.
76 For metatheatre as constitutive of comedy, see Warning (1976) 311–316. Hence the notion of metatheatre is generally accepted for ancient comedy; see, e.g., Bain (1977); Chapman (1983) 1–23; Taplin (1986).
77 Bierl (2001), esp. 37–86 (Engl. [2009] 24–66).
78 Bierl (2019b).

primordial past. Once again, it becomes clear that energy, aesthetics, and performance acted out in these self-referential plays embedded in a Dionysian framing are paramount.

Conclusion

Metatheatre is now established as a fruitful term and concept for the study of Attic drama. The term may not be very felicitous, but scholars understand very well what is meant by it. Metatheatre deals with moments when theatre makes theatre its subject and revolves around the discourse of theatre. This can be analyzed in the strict sense of metadrama, as a reference in a written script. Nevertheless, we must be aware of the fact that the play is performed. Thus, the issue assumes an inter- and transmedial dimension. In a literacy-based approach it is a text about a text, in poststructuralist terms it could entail the dissolution of the theatre, the dominant text through the embedded text. Yet this does not apply for the Classical Attic theatre in which metatheatre expresses itself to a much smaller extent through self-consciousness, -reflexivity or -awareness but to a larger extent via self-referentiality. Self-referencing in performance neither destroys illusion nor the entire play by deconstructing its texture and form. On the contrary, it reinforces performance and enhances generic coloring.

With these modifications 'metatheatre' becomes rather a part of 'theatre'. It does not denote another level from the outside, but performance playing with elements of performance. Be that as it may, a certain amount of reflexive potential is inherent, too. However, it does not diminish or erode theatre, but increases the effect which theatre has that, after all, bears a strong reflexive note in the medium. In this context I only recall the medial devices that help make Attic drama a form of theatre where the polis becomes its subject. The entire Attic theatre incorporates its reflexive effect from its very origins. The performance embedded in a ritual frame, the open *cavea*, the masks, the *schemata* in kinetic movement and gestures, the action firmly anchored in the mythic past and the Greek myth help assume a slightly distanced view that makes it possible to draw cognitive conclusions on political life in the here and now. Attic theatre is open in all respects, vis-à-vis space, time, inside and outside, myth and ritual, the city and its festive framing.[79] Thus mythic action qua *mimesis* has resonances with and within the polis; in its mythic scenarios theatre contorts reality so that the audience can reflect upon general issues that cannot be

79 Girshausen (1999) 353–404.

treated (or treated well) as part of the democratic process. The mere presence of the chorus means intermission, reflection and self-reflection, polyphony, fluidity and fusion, affection and wisdom, affective transport of emotion, and references to the cultic function and to the role inside the fiction. Reflection also originates in metatheatre, or better yet in self-referentiality, which at the same time both opens up new perspectives and draws a large section of the citizens as onlookers into the performance. The play of different frames produces increased theatricality. Everything becomes theatricalized. All in all, metatheatre means total theatre.

Performative Aspects

Matteo Capponi

‘A Gesture That Reveals Itself As a Gesture: Thinking About the Metatheatricality of the Body in Greek Tragedy’

This chapter aims to question the metatheatricality of the body. Does the concept make sense, and is it relevant in the case of ancient tragedy? When the very notions of metatheatre and metatheatricality are controversial,[1] the answer will depend on the definitions we give for these terms, as well as for gesture. But the mere fact that we are asking these questions enriches our reflections on ancient drama, as I hope to show at the end of this chapter with an analysis of a scene from Euripides’ *Orestes*.[2]

Do body movements have a metatheatrical dimension in Greek tragedy? Or, to borrow Pellegrini’s definition of metatheatre in the *Oxford Companion to Theatre and Performance*, does gesture help make a play ‘a self-reflexive drama or performance that reveals its artistic status to the audience’?[3] Does gesture show in any way an ‘aesthetic self-consciousness’?[4] Given the specific nature of gestures, designated as *schemata* in Greek theatre, these issues are of great interest, as we shall see. Yet, the question being asked does not refer to the original idea of metatheatre as a genre in itself, like tragedy, comedy, and so forth.[5] It takes into consideration the fact, noted by Andrés Pérez-Simón, that ‘scholars [. . .] have advocated in recent years the adoption of the term “theatrical” or “theatricalist” in lieu of the more popular “metatheatrical”’.[6] In other words, metatheatricality as a ‘property’ is what is considered here, i.e. the ‘self-consciousness of enunciation,’ as described by Pavis in his *Dictionary of the Theatre*:

1 In his *Dictionary of the Theatre*, Pavis (1998) presents four major definitions of metatheatre/metatheatricality. However, the term does not appear in his *Dictionnaire de la performance théâtrale et du théâtre contemporain* (2017). Instead, Pavis reports it under the rubric ‘autoreflexibility’. See also Pérez-Simón (2011), who revisits the basis of the concept.

2 This chapter is a continuation of my PhD thesis, Capponi (2020a), dedicated to the various relations between gesture and speech in ancient Greek drama. I warmly thank Magali de Haro Sanchez and Jon Wilcox for their excellent translation and editing of this article from the original French and for their valuable advice.

3 Pellegrini (2010) s.v. *metatheatre*.

4 Pellegrini (2010) s.v. *metatheatre*.

5 The founding work on the concept of metatheatre is Abel (1963). Rosenmeyer (2002), which we will often refer to, offers an excellent summary and a sharp critique.

6 Pérez-Simón (2011) 4.

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> Metatheatricality is a fundamental property of all theatrical communication. 'Operation Meta' in theatre consists in taking the stage and everything on it – actor, scenery, text – as objects equipped with a demonstrative sign of *denial* ('it is not an object, but a meaning of the object'). Just as poetic language designates itself as an artistic *device*, theatre designates itself as a world already tainted by illusion.[7]

According to Pavis, gestures, as participating in 'theatrical communication,' should therefore possess this 'demonstrative sign of denial'. However, the very principle of a metatheatricality of gesture is not self-evident; Pavis, as we can see, does not refer to it clearly. Neither are references to gestures among the 'principal features which according to Abel set metatheatre apart from tragedy,'[8] as Rosenmeyer notes in an article in which he clearly criticizes the differing criteria used by Lionel Abel, the founder of the concept of metatheatre. Nor is gesture mentioned among the 'four figures of metatheatrical play commonly found in ancient drama'[9] outlined by Kathryn Gutzwiller in her essay on Menander: 'direct reference to staging or performance, tragic quotations and parallels, allusion to technical dramatic terminology, use of disguise and deceit'.[10] These figures, except for the last, are based on textual elements.

Yet, we can immediately see that gesture is not, in fact, missing. With respect to these four figures, we can readily imagine a deictic gesture being made on stage to support an allusion to the performance or to a technical element; we can see a tragic 'pose' – what ancient Greeks would have called a *schema* – being welcome or even necessary to reinforce a tragic quotation; and we know the use of a disguise or ruse goes hand in hand with body language. In these instances, gesture is far from anecdotal. Rather, it is very useful in completing the break with the 'theatrical illusion,' or at least in reinforcing this process by which 'theatre [. . .] self-consciously calls attention to itself as theatre'.[11] We can therefore take the opportunity to deepen the question in the context of this volume, since one of its aims is to question the definitions and limits of the concept of metatheatre.

It would be inaccurate to say that gestures were never understood from a metatheatrical perspective in ancient sources. However, scholars have proven more inclined to focus on the very mention of gestures in playscripts. In the 1930s,

7 Pavis (1998) s.v. *metatheatre*. Rosenmeyer (2002) 98 mentions it too: 'The hermeneutics practiced in metatheatre is often couched in the language of two virtually synonymous terms, "self-consciousness" and "reflexivity" (or "self-reflection").'

8 Rosenmeyer (2002) 88.

9 Gutzwiller (2000) 102.

10 Gutzwiller (2000) 102.

11 Gutzwiller (2000) 102.

Gone Capone, in her work on Greek tragedy, indirectly acknowledged a metatheatrical function to gestures by giving them the role of 'internal stage directions'.[12] In each play in the ancient Greek corpus, Capone distinguishes an 'informative intention', which seems to her to be intended for spectators, from a 'didascalic intention' intended for actors. This idea has not lasted, and it is no longer believed that gestures mentioned in a playscript only serve as technical indicators. Nevertheless, Capone's approach points to the fact that these occurrences have a self-referential value, which means they describe the action in progress by referring to both the gestures of characters and to their realization by actors. Besides being a mine of useful references, another point of interest in Capone's survey is that it offers an inventory of the types of gestures performed on stage. Capone indexes thirty-five 'gestures, attitudes, scenic uses, which recur in tragedies,'[13] and in doing so, highlights the great scope of gestures performed, from 'kissing' to 'breathing,' to 'touching,' 'crowning,' or 'dragging by the hair'.

A decade later, a similar approach was taken by Anna Spitzbarth in her 1946 work, *Untersuchung zur Spieltechnik der griechischen Tragödie*. However, in this case, the author attempted to define more precisely the nature of the gestures performed on stage. She arranged the gestures she identified into different categories by first identifying 'single gestures,' 'complex gestures,' and 'spatial movements on stage'.[14] She then divided these gestures into thirteen categories, which cover, for example, gestures of salutation, gestures of mourning, and acts of violence.[15] Spitzbarth has thus shown that not all gestures are of the same nature or have the same scale on stage: a simple deictic gesture contrasts, for example, with the complete and ritual act of supplication.

We can glean from the work of Capone and Spitzbarth, then, that there existed a considerable number of gestures performed on the ancient stage and that these gestures differed in their nature and function. We can further our inquiry on the basis of these considerations. In his 1978 work *Greek Tragedy in*

12 Capone (1935) 52, my translation.

13 Capone (1935) 112–120, my translation.

14 My translation.

15 Spitzbarth's thirteen categories of gesture are: (1) *Zeigegebärde*, 'pointing gestures' (2) *Enthüllen und Verhüllen*, 'unveiling and veiling' (3) *Anrufung*, 'invocation' (4) *Lauschen und Spähen*, 'eavesdropping and peeking' (5) *Begrüssung und Abschied*, 'greetings and farewells' (6) *Trauer*, 'mourning' (7) *Vorgänge der Gewalt*, 'acts of violence' (8) *Formen des Auf- und Abtretens*, 'forms of appearance and departure' (9) *Tätigkeit der Statisten*, 'activities of the extras' (10) *Gerätspiel*, 'playing with props' (11) *Doppelvorgänge*, 'doubling' (12) *Rollencharakteristik*, 'role characteristics' (13) *Darstellung seelischer Vorgänge*, 'representation of emotional processes' (my translation).

Action, a seminal text in the emergence of performance studies, Oliver Taplin also made distinctions between different types of gestures, among other things depending on the connection between the text and the actions performed on stage. His initial remarks are general:

> Apart from exits and entrances, the range extends from the simple gestures which emphasize speech – movements and positioning of hands, feet or head – to rapid and fluent actions such as running, fainting or raving in madness. In between come kneeling, embracing, veiling, drawing swords, handing over objects, approaching, fleeing and so on and so forth.[16]

Hereafter, Taplin identifies a category of gestures connected more fundamentally to the plot and to the show:

> No doubt conventional gestures and small movements often accompanied the speech of Greek tragedy. [. . .] But these run-of-the-mill bodily movements, while they are a concern for the actor and producer and while their economy and appropriateness are essential for a good performance, are not my chief concern here. I am preoccupied with the unique action which is brought about by, and which often epitomizes, the dramatic impact of a particular moment. [. . .] There is still a large residue: sitting and lying down, running, kneeling, supplicating, embracing, striking, bowing the head, looking away and so on.[17]

For Taplin, anecdotal gestures or 'run-of-the-mill bodily movements' thus contrast with particular 'unique actions' depicted by the text. A whole scene can be articulated around actions of this latter type, where the gesture carries the 'dramatic impact of a particular moment'. This would justify the repeated mention of such gestures in the text.

A different point of view is adopted by Mario Telò who, in two successive studies,[18] attempts to lay the foundation of a 'grammar of gesture' based on 'the verbal trace of a gesture, the principal starting point for any attempt at reconstruction'.[19] For his part, Telò tries to identify in the tragic corpus the traces of actions such as falling to the ground and getting up, covering oneself and uncovering one's face, and supplicating. In doing so, he succeeds in reconstituting the staging of these actions. However, according to Telò, these gestural references are 'involuntary stage indications, not deliberately inserted by the author in order to inform the spectators about the actors, but presented in the text as a natural verbal accompaniment to the ongoing action on stage'.[20] Like Taplin, Telò highlights some movements that play a special role in the dramaturgy of

16 Taplin (1978) 15.
17 Taplin (1978) 58.
18 Telò (2002a); (2002b).
19 Telò (2002a) 15–16, my translation.
20 Telò (2002a) 11, my translation.

performance. By contrast, he seems to miss the point in considering the gestural references in the text as a 'natural accompaniment' to their enaction, since the notion of 'natural' here has no epistemological or dramaturgical basis. Neither informative nor redundant, the gestural references from which Telò's staging and 'grammar of gesture' result invite us, on the contrary, to seek there the dramaturgical intention of the poet, which finds fulfillment in performance. As such, it is worth reminding that Aristotle, in *Poetics*, recommends that the poet composes by resorting to the visualization of the scene and even to the *schemata* (here translated as 'gestures'):

> δεῖ δὲ τοὺς μύθους συνιστάναι καὶ τῇ λέξει συναπεργάζεσθαι ὅτι μάλιστα πρὸ ὀμμάτων τιθέμενον· [. . .] ὅσα δὲ δυνατὸν καὶ τοῖς σχήμασιν συναπεργαζόμενον.
>
> In constructing plots and completing the effect by the help of dialogue the poet should, as far as possible, keep the scene before his eyes. [. . .] The poet should also, as far as possible, complete the effect by using the gestures.[21]

By choosing to highlight some gestures and not others, the playwright alerts his audience/listener. He prepares them to enjoy the spectacle of an action amplified by its staging. Taplin expresses this principle in very simple terms: 'When the playwright draws attention to a stage action, we should take up the invitation and consider what the significance of that action is meant to be.'[22] These words cohere well with those of Pavis; they invite us to see in the process of theatrical *mimesis* not the imitation of daily acts, but the production of 'demonstrative sign[s] of denial'.[23] The ancient *mimesis* implies a recreation, a re-presentation, in the literal sense of the term.[24] The gestures proceed from the same logic as the dramatic text, as described by Florence Dupont (in whose description we also see the reappearance of the notion of denial):

> D'une façon générale le théâtre antique ne représente pas sur scène des conversations, même transposées, il les déconstruit pour reconstruire un dialogue théâtral. Mais cette déconstruction est à l'œuvre dans le texte lui-même, elle est elle-même spectacle et l'intelligibilité du dialogue théâtral passe par la reconnaissance du modèle selon une procédure de dénégation qui l'identifie pour l'écarter ou le détourner au moyen du code théâtral. (. . .) Une déconstruction est une analyse, et finalement chaque théâtre antique implique une linguistique.[25]

21 Aristotle, *Poet*. 1455a22–1455a32, transl. Fyfe (1932).
22 Taplin (1978) 19.
23 Pavis (1998) s.v. *metatheatre*.
24 This is how Dupont-Roc and Lallot (1980) translate the term *mimesis* in their commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics*.
25 Dupont (2000) 147.

Indeed every ancient theatre play involves 'une linguistique' – namely, a discourse upon language, a metadiscourse. In a similar way, every ancient theatre play also involves a discourse upon gestures, that is to say a metagestuality. The truth is, whether we talk about metagestuality, metatheatricality, or self-referentiality, we are dealing with the same principle. We see the shape it takes in the case of the ancient theatre play: to return to Pellegrini's definition of metatheatre, the self-referential gestural terms also, referring to the gestures of the performance, 'reveal their artistic status to the audience' and imply an 'aesthetic self-consciousness' insofar as they highlight specific actions among all those performed on stage.

The follow-up to this research, by which we could achieve concrete results, would therefore be to observe more closely the process of deconstruction and reconstruction mentioned by Dupont, to see what types of gestures (or *schemata*) are prioritized and how the text interacts with the gestures performed on stage. However, this is not the place to undertake such a large-scale study, especially since efforts in this direction have already been made in the case of specific gestures.[26] Rather, let us deepen the concept of metatheatricality by turning to a study by Patricia Legangneux, published in the same volume of *Lalies* as Dupont's, which examines the gesture of supplication. Recalling the principle of double theatrical enunciation, Legangneux explains that the logic of speech acts and corresponding gestures changes as soon as it incorporates a spectacular dimension:

> Une supplication théâtralisée n'est plus performative, mais mimétique. Elle présente d'autres enjeux que la supplication rituelle entre deux protagonistes, puisqu'elle se situe dans le cadre d'une double énonciation : la supplication s'adresse au partenaire sur scène sous le regard du public.[27]

As a result, Legangneux explains the transformation that both speech and gesture undergo:

26 For example, Taplin (1977) has studied the entries and exits of the characters in the work of Aeschylus and Telò (2002a), as we said, has focused on falling to the ground and getting up, covering oneself and uncovering one's face.

27 Legangneux (2000) 176. Regarding double enunciation, Dupont (2000) 145 notes: 'Le personnage de théâtre est donc installé dans une double énonciation, correspondant à deux destinataires. Le public est toujours là, l'autre interlocuteur n'est présent que dans les dialogues. C'est pourquoi nous appellerons "première énonciation" celle dont le public est le destinataire, "seconde énonciation" celle dont un autre personnage est destinataire'. This logic of first and second utterances likewise applies to gestures: the first recipient of gestures is always the audience.

> Un autre intérêt de ces scènes est la façon dont le code linguistique que nous avons décrit précédemment est exhibé au théâtre : l'énoncé est amplifié et suit des modèles rhétoriques argumentatifs, surtout chez Euripide ; les gestes effectués nécessitant des jeux de scène précis sont commentés longuement, ce qui nous permet de penser qu'ils étaient effectivement réalisés.[28]

Further, the author adds: 'La supplication rituelle est devenu une convention théâtrale avec des règles d'efficacité spectaculaire.'[29] And she concludes: 'La *mimesis* tragique de la supplication est donc une transposition distanciée, à la fois critique et pathétique, d'un rite codifié.'[30] It is this act of transposition and criticism that gives tragic gestures a metatheatrical dimension. Strictly speaking, this is not a gesture performed on stage. This is the theatricalization of a gesture, determined by the textual elements, and which the term *schema* accurately designates. To paraphrase Pavis: 'It is not a gesture, but a meaning of the gesture.'[31] And in the following sentence, the word 'theatre' refers as much to the speech as to scenic gestures: 'Just as poetic language designates itself as an artistic *device*, theatre designates itself as a world already tainted by illusion.'[32] In short, one can apply to staged gestures the same reflection that Neumann applies to gestures in the visual arts. In his in-depth study of the *Gesten und Gebärden in der griechischen Kunst*, he concludes: 'The expressive function of their various manifestations, which in real life is often concealed and usually not fully realized, is emphasized in the visual arts in a convincing and obvious way.'[33] Not only do the gestures/*schemata* performed on stage belong to another logic and obtain a realization other than those of everyday life, but in addition they benefit from the spotlight offered by the self-referential terms, so to speak.

Having reached this point, can we safely conclude that gestures are metatheatrical? If we mean by metatheatre, following Gutzwiller, 'theatre that self-consciously calls attention to itself as theatre, often for the purpose of playing with the distinction between the fiction of the play and the reality of perform-

28 Legangneux (2000) 177.

29 Legangneux (2000) 178.

30 Legangneux (2000) 187.

31 The original sentence is: 'It is not an object, but a meaning of the object.' Pavis (1998) 211.

32 Pavis (1998) 211.

33 Neumann (1965) 1, my translation. Original: 'Die im wirklichem Leben oft verdeckte und meist nicht voll realisierte Aussagefunktion ihrer verschiedenen Erscheinungsweisen wird in den bildenden Kunst in überzeugender und sinnfälliger Weise herausgestellt.'

ance,'[34] then the answer is no. There is, strictly speaking, no self-reflexive intention in the staging of gestures, no desire to expose the theatrical codes. Moreover, as Rosenmeyer reminds us, no play in ancient theatre really makes this fact a central element. It leads him to this conclusion:

> It is evident that 'metatheatre' has, in the wake of Abel's overload, been employed to cover too many different moves, and to elicit responses that undervalue the traditional inventiveness and the wonderful immediacy of the emotional power of theatre.[35]

On the other hand, if we consider a broader understanding of metatheatricality, namely if we see it as inherent in any theatrical production, then yes, gestures play a role in it. The logic is that highlighted by William Egginton in *How the World Became a Stage*:

> There can be no theatre that is not already a metatheatre, in that in the instant a distinction is recognized between areal space and another, imaginary one that mirrors it, that very distinction becomes an element to be incorporated as another distinction in the imaginary space's work of mimesis.[36]

The objective would be to observe by which linguistic and visual means gestures on stage are distinguished from their everyday reference. To use the title of this contribution: how does a gesture *reveals itself as a gesture*? We will see that this perspective sheds light on certain aspects of ancient theatre. Previous studies have provided us with some answers. As much as those of Telò and Legangneux, those of Taplin have highlighted certain specific gestures more apt to constitute the heart of a scene, to be theatrical, both deconstructed and reconstructed. The process they follow is an amplification, which Pavis describes in the following terms: 'Dès que le mouvement se fait expressif, dès qu'il s'intensifie, il devient un geste esthétique.'[37]

This process takes a particular turn in the case of ancient theatre, whose gestuality is not that of the theatre to which we are accustomed. Influenced by dance,[38] it is a theatre made of poses and attitudes, called *schemata*, alternating with movements or *phorai*. We could rather find a correspondent in oriental theatres, Japanese *kabuki* theatre or Indian *kathakali*. The entry for 'Poses' in

34 Gutzwiller (2000) 102.

35 Rosenmeyer (2002) 106–107.

36 Egginton (2003) 74, quoted by Pérez-Simón (2011) 4.

37 Pavis (2017) s.v. *movement*.

38 'Greek dance was not as specialized as today and the distinction between dance, acting, mime, and gesture was blurred.' Llewellyn-Jones (2014) s.v. *poses*. For an attempt to differentiate between dance and acting *schemata*, see Capponi (2021a) 312–315.

The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy describes this type of theatricality, consisting of a 'series of movements with a pose or with a frozen gesture'.[39] Following a comparison with acting in *kabuki* theatre, the *Encyclopedia* entry defines it as 'a codified theatrical language performed not simply through speech, but through movement and gesture'.[40] In all cases where these *schemata* appear, we are therefore dealing with codified gestures, relating to an aesthetic shared by sculpture and iconography.[41] We also find a trace of this (metatheatrical) code in comedy, in the case of tragic parodies: Dionysos imitating the *schema* of Heracles in *The Frogs* (the term itself appears in verse 86); the roles played and range of traditional images employed by Euripides and his parent in the *Thesmophoriazusae* to try to escape the guard (Helen, Menelaos, Echo, Perseus and Andromeda); or Dikeopolis in *The Acharnians*, who borrows the costume and speech but also the pose of Telephus, by taking hostage a sack of coal to make his argument before the chorus![42]

In each of these cases, self-referential terms are used to highlight the image produced. One direction to take for further research would be to list all identifiable *schemata* and then to observe how they are indicated and dramaturgized by the text and, at the same time, integrated into the action. Capone, once again, has led the way by listing in her 'glossary of mimicry and theatrical terminology' twenty-two '*schemata*', as she calls them, which gather such terms as 'arrogance,' 'blindness,' and 'old age'. Capone does not, however, explain clearly upon what criteria she bases her selection.

If one wants to demonstrate the relevance of the concept of (meta)theatricality in the case of tragic gestuality, it would be more promising to look at gestures that do not belong to these traditional *schemata*. It is a question of reflecting on less obvious gestures, ones we will not find in the lists of Capone or Spitzbarth, ones set aside by Taplin. These gestures exist and, paradoxically, they can also be found at the heart of a scene. In a study devoted to physical contact in tragedy, Maarit Kaimio[43] evokes such gestures: she adopts a transversal perspective, which

39 Llewellyn-Jones (2014) s.v. *poses*.

40 Llewellyn-Jones (2014) s.v. *poses*. The book by Capponi (2020a) focuses on the relationship between *schemata*, modalities of statements, and speech acts.

41 On this polysemy of the *schemata*, see Catoni (2005).

42 See also Llewellyn-Jones (2014) s.v. *poses*: 'Aristophanes however provides specific evidence for actors (not dancers) employing *schemata*,' for example Philocleon in *The Wasps* who, imitating Phrynichus, 'performs a number of *schemata* associated with early styles of tragic performance'.

43 Kaimio (1988).

encompasses ritual gestures of supplication or greeting as much as gestures of 'nursing'. It is this last gesture that I am interested in, as it appears in a scene from the *Orestes* of Euripides. It is by examining this example that I hope to draw attention to an area that remains largely unresolved: that of everyday gestures, which metatheatrical reflection allows us to highlight.

In the scene that will be examined here (*Or*. 215–238), the beginning of a long stichomythia, Electra takes care of her brother Orestes, bedridden and sick, in the grip of delirium. The scene's purpose is, according to Martin West's commentary, 'to display the selfless mutual devotion of brother and sister'.[44] I adopt a method I developed in other studies,[45] which consists in reconstructing the gestures performed on stage by taking into account the pragmatic elements of the utterances, as well as gestural references, but also the technical aspects of ancient theatre, as far as we know them. Regarding the latter, let us summarize them in these terms: for reasons of acoustics and optics, when an actor speaks or sings, he must remain motionless, the mask turned toward the audience as much as possible, adopting for example a defined *schema*; for the same reason, gestures must take place between spoken replies, indicating at the same time which character is about to speak; finally, gestures must be made to the audience (the first recipient[46]); that is, amplified and visible at a 180-degree angle.[47] Some wall-paintings found in Ephesus highlight these principles. They picture dramatic figures identified by titles of plays. Besides the *Sicyonioi* or the *Perikeiromene* of Menander, one of them could even refer to our scene, since the caption identifies the play as *Orestes*.[48] The actors' costumes rather belong to the Hellenistic period, but we clearly recognize Orestes lying across his bed and Electra standing by his side. Both face the public and execute gestures in its direction *[Figure 1]*.

In what follows, I present the spoken lines in this scene in turn and try to visualize the gestures that accompany them.

Orestes has just woken up; he is lying on his bed, parallel to the skene. *He has thanked Hypnos, the Sleep, but now wonders out loud, because he no longer remembers anything* (215–216)*:*

44 West (1987) 195.

45 See Capponi (2020a) and (2020b).

46 Other characters, on or off stage, being the second recipient.

47 For an explanation of these principles, see Capponi (2020b) 345–349.

48 See Strocka (1977) fig. 65.; Zimmermann/Ladstätter (2010) 117 fig. 205. See also *SEG* 29.1118.

Figure 1: Mural fresco from the Terrace Houses in Ephesus. By courtesy of the Austrian Archaeological Institute | Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Ὀρ. πόθεν ποτ᾽ ἦλθον δεῦρο; πῶς δ᾽ ἀφικόμην; ἀμνημονῶ γάρ, τῶν πρὶν ἀπολειφθεὶς φρενῶν.	*Or*. Where have I come from? How am I here? For I have lost all previous recollection and remember nothing.[49]

Electra is by his side. She speaks to her brother and therefore extends an arm toward him. Then her gesture becomes interrogative to accompany her question (217–218).

Ἠλ. ὦ φίλταθ᾽, ὡς μ᾽ ηὔφρανας εἰς ὕπνον πεσών. βούλῃ θίγω σου κἀνακουφίσω δέμας;	*El*. My dearest, how glad I was to see you fall asleep! Do you allow me to touch you and lift your body?

Orestes reaches out to Electra (219–220).

Ὀρ. λαβοῦ λαβοῦ δῆτ᾽, ἐκ δ᾽ ὄμορξον ἀθλίου στόματος ἀφρώδη πέλανον ὀμμάτων τ᾽ ἐμῶν.	*Or*. Yes, take hold, take hold of me, and from this sufferer's mouth and eyes wipe off the flakes of foam.

49 Edition Diggle (1994), translation by Coleridge adapted when necessary.

Electra wipes (with her dress?) the face of Orestes, or at least the actor indicates that he is wiping Orestes' face. The end of this gesture is marked by the expression ἰδού *('There!'). Then Electra, facing the audience, comments on her action, which gives it even more weight* (221–222).

Ἠλ. ἰδού· τὸ δούλευμ' ἡδύ, κούκ ἀναίνομαι
ἀδέλφ' ἀδελφῇ χειρὶ θεραπεύειν μέλη.

El. There! The service is sweet, and I do not refuse to tend
a brother's limbs with a sister's hand.

Orestes makes two requests in a row: that Electra pull him up, then that she comb him (223–224).[50]

Ὀρ. ὑπόβαλε πλευροῖς πλευρά, καὐχμώδη κόμην
ἄφελε προσώπου· λεπτὰ γὰρ λεύσσω κόραις.

Or. Prop me up, your side to mine; brush the matted hair
from my face, for I see dimly.

Electra takes time to get Orestes seated, leaning against him.[51] *Then she removes (or the actor pretends to remove) his hair which has fallen about the face. Sitting on the bed also, Electra can then speak facing the audience again, before looking back at Orestes* (225–226).

Ἠλ. ὦ βοστρύχων πινῶδες ἄθλιον κάρα, (225)
ὡς ἠγρίωσαι διὰ μακρᾶς ἀλουσίας.

El. Ah, poor head, how dirty your hair!
How savage you look, remaining so long unwashed!

Orestes sitting, his mask facing the audience, asks that Electra lay him on the couch again (227–228).

Ὀρ. κλῖνόν μ' ἐς εὐνὴν αὖθις· ὅταν ἀνῇ νόσος
μανίας, ἄναρθρός εἰμι κἀσθενῶ μέλη.

Or. Put me once more upon the couch; whenever the madness leaves me, I am unnerved and weak.

Electra gets up and makes Orestes lie down again. Here again, her gesture ends with the expression ἰδού. *Electra's comment highlights her patience and affection* (229–230).

50 Willink (1986) 122 notes in his commentary: 'Presumably El. is to put an arm and shoulder beneath Or.'s back.' But he doesn't try to organize the order of the gestures performed.

51 Kaimio (1988) 9 emphasizes the intensity of such contact scenes: 'From the point of view of the use of theatrical space, it is probable that scenes involving physical contact were rather an exception from the usual way of acting and that they consequently had great potential theatrical effect.' This scene reverses the expected hierarchical relationship: the girl is the last support of the male hero.

Ἠλ. ἰδού. φίλον τοι τῷ νοσοῦντι δέμνιον,	*El.* There! His couch is welcome to the sick man,
ἀνιαρὸν ὂν τὸ κτῆμ', ἀναγκαῖον δ' ὅμως. (230)	a painful possession, but a necessary one.

Orestes again asks that Electra pull him up! The repetition is almost comical. Orestes is forced to justify himself (231–232).

Ὀρ. αὖθίς μ' ἐς ὀρθὸν στῆσον, ἀνακύκλει δέμας·	*Or.* Set me upright once again, turn my body round;
δυσάρεστον οἱ νοσοῦντες ἀπορίας ὕπο.	it is their helplessness that makes the sick so hard to please.

Instead of obeying, Electra takes the initiative and invites Orestes to get up. The proposition is skillfully modeled by the verb θέλεις *('do you want, do you accept?') and two arguments* (233–234).

Ἠλ. ἦ κἀπὶ γαίας ἁρμόσαι πόδας θέλεις,	*El.* Will you set your feet upon the ground
χρόνιον ἴχνος θείς; μεταβολὴ πάντων γλυκύ.	and take a step at last? Change is always pleasant.

Orestes answers in the affirmative, with a 'semi-philosophical remark' (235–236).[52]

Ὀρ. μάλιστα· δόξαν γὰρ τόδ' ὑγιείας ἔχει. (235)	*Or.* Oh, yes; for that has a semblance of health;
κρεῖσσον δὲ τὸ δοκεῖν, κἂν ἀληθείας ἀπῇ.	and the semblance is preferable, though it is far from the truth.

Subsequently, Electra gets Orestes up. The particles δή *('indeed') and* νῦν *('now') in Electra's reply confirm the end of this action, which probably lasts some time. It reveals both the weakness of Orestes and the will of Electra. It should also be noted that the resulting image, the hero supported by an ally (usually a man!), is a traditional motif.*[53] *The scene therefore ends on a well-known but perverted* schema (237–238).

Ἠλ. ἄκουε δὴ νῦν, ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα,	*El.* Hear me now, my brother,
ἕως ἐῶσιν εὖ φρονεῖν Ἐρινύες.	while the Furies permit you to use your senses.

52 West (1987) 197.

53 Kaimio (1988) 16: 'In scenes of supporting the wounded or caring for the sick, tragic heroes are often brought into physical contact with their helpers, either mute attendants or actors.' Kaimio cites as examples Theseus supporting Heracles in *The Madness of Heracles* by Euripides, Pylades accompanying Orestes to the assembly in the *Orestes* of the same author, and, in Sophocles' play *Philoctetes*, Philoctetes leaving his island supported by Neoptolemus.

From this symbolic position, Electra resumes the dialogue, which concerns the salvation of Orestes, while Menelaos returns to Greece. But this dialogue doesn't last: a new delirium seizes Orestes, which will leave him slumped on his bed once again!

Our scene ends with Orestes getting up. It is brief, but what I wanted to show with this scene of intimacy – rather than a scene illustrating a more spectacular gesture of supplication, prayer, or exchange of *philia*, for example (by a handshake) – is that ultimately Taplin's distinction between 'unique actions' and 'run-of-the-mill bodily movements,' between emblematic and everyday gestures, does not necessarily hold. It does not show the diversity of gestural realizations. The gestures typically observed as a priority by scholars, as we have seen, are movements or *schemata* that have a dramaturgical (Capone, Taplin) or ritual (Telò, Dupont, Legangneux) function. We would look in vain in their lists for the gesture of wiping a foaming mouth (220–221) or restyling filthy hair (225–226). Yet these gestures are the very material of the scene between Electra and Orestes. They are praxic (non-verbal and non-communicative) gestures, made within an intimate sphere of care – yet the aestheticization process remains the same for them as for more traditional *schemata*.

Thus, this brief passage reveals to us a tendency, at least in Euripides, to stage marginal gestures, that is to say intimate or even unsightly gestures. From this point of view, Euripides once again appears innovative. It is not surprising that the only two examples of 'Sickroom Scenes' listed by Kaimio come from his work, the scene in *Orestes* we have just studied and a scene at the beginning of *Hippolytus* (Phaedra appears on her bed, in the grip of love-sickness). Kaimio comments on this: 'Such an elaborate choreography of realistic nursing, not merely of conventional gestures of support, supplication, greeting of farewell, [. . .] is without parallel in earlier dramas that have survived.'[54] We will appreciate the paradox of this 'realist choreography' which echoes what we have discussed in this chapter about the gesture considered as a 'demonstrative sign of denial,' as Pavis said, i.e. as possessing a metatheatrical dimension.

Surprisingly, Euripides' approach finds an echo in what Pavis says about the contemporary scene: 'L'expérimentation, souvent anarchique et antithéorique, (. . .) fait en retour considérablement avancer notre compréhension du mouvement et du corps en situation de représentation.'[55] In the scene from *Orestes* at least, Euripides' dramaturgical treatment of such uncommon *schemata* seems to me to be part of a critical, self-reflexive approach – it is, in

54 Kaimio (1988) 20.

55 Pavis (2017) s.v. *mouvement*.

a word, metatheatrical. To reinforce this hypothesis, it would be necessary to open up the perspective, to look for other occurrences of this type in Euripides, and to compare this treatment with that in Sophocles and in Aeschylus. The work remains to be done, but I am convinced that it would be enough to confirm the relevance of a metatheatrical approach to gesture.

Case Studies

Tragedy

Emilie Ruch

‘Metatheatre and Dramaturgical Innovation: A Study of Recognition Scenes in Euripides’ Tragedies *Electra*, *Helen*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and *Ion*’

Introduction

By associating the concepts of metatheatre and dramaturgical innovation, I aim to demonstrate how the study of metatheatre is indivisible from the study of dramaturgy, to which it belongs. Indeed, if we follow Roland Barthes’ definition of meta-literature[1] as ‘literature which takes itself as its object’, then I deduce from the very composition of the term (with the *meta-* prefix followed by a common name) that metatheatre is a generic sub-category that comprises a discourse that refers to its theatrical nature.

It seems important to me to distinguish first and foremost the two concepts of metapoetry[2] and metatheatre, which in my opinion cannot be used interchangeably: even though both concepts refer to the fictional nature of the associated work, speaking of metatheatre is more precise and refers to the generic properties of the theatrical work. Therefore, metatheatre is a form of speech that refers to the scenic representation – the performance – which summons the audience’s hearing and sight. Yet these generic qualities of theatre are also those which fall under the scope of dramaturgical study.[3] The metatheatrical remarks that I will comment upon throughout this chapter will therefore highlight

1 Barthes (2002) 364–365.

2 I think in particular of the work of I. Torrance, who studied metapoetry in the Euripidean corpus. See Torrance (2011; 2013).

3 Dramaturgical study consists mainly in the study of three topics: the work of the author (the play’s structure, the characters’ composition and the poetry), the play’s performance (the use of props, the staging in its visual and aural dimensions) and the audience’s reception (the study of the expectations caused by tradition or genre, the classification of the different levels of reception, the innovations of the playwright). See Taplin (1978), Wiles (1987) and Pavis (1980) s.v. ‘dramaturgie’ 135–138 and s.v. ‘dramaturgique’ (analyse) 139–140.

Notes: I would like to thank again the editors of this volume for giving me the opportunity to present here my work.

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the characteristics of Euripidean dramaturgy as it is implemented in four of his tragedies: *Electra*, *Helen*, *Iphigenia in Tauris* and *Ion*.

If I have restricted my corpus to Euripides' tragedies of recognition, it is because, in my opinion, these works especially allow us to understand the expression of the poet's aesthetic choices. Importantly, Euripides took a special interest in recognition at the end of his career. In the agonistic context of theatrical creation in the 5th century BC, to treat the topical scene of the recognition amounts to including oneself in a line of authors and theatrical representations in order to measure oneself against them and to try and surpass them. To sum up, a *topos* that is both literary and theatrical is therefore also based on conventions and expectations inherent in the pattern. Spectators, for example, had to wait for certain key steps of the recognition, such as the identification by one of the two characters involved, the speech as a mean of persuasion, the expression of disbelief, doubt or mistrust from one of the protagonists, the claim or proving one's identity, the memory of past suffering, and finally, the expression of joy and the embrace.[4] In particular, we can think of the case of Euripides' *Electra*, whose close relationship with Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* has been remarked upon many times.[5] This example clearly illustrates how Euripides not only consciously entered into a relationship of literary filiation with his predecessor, but also how he exploited this heritage to emphasize the originality of his own production. To the latter point, it is much easier to show the novelty of a process when it is contextualized by codes and within a tradition belonging to the common cultural substratum. Moreover, if one thinks of the tragedies' production context in annual drama competitions, it is not an exaggeration to assume that at least some of the audience took pleasure in identifying similarities and differences between recognition scenes.[6] The fact that Euripides chose to follow such a pattern, especially one repeated several times in a short period of time, represents, in my opinion, an active reflection on the conditions of theatrical creation at that time.

While it is important to understand the context of Euripides' actions, the repeated treatment of recognition in the last pieces of the Euripidean corpus was not only a convenient means for the author to surpass his opponents. Indeed, Euripides' metatheatrical practice would be relatively poor if it merely explained and claimed its originality. After all, the very principle of innovation is extremely

4 Furthermore, it is important to have in mind that each of these steps involves a specific vocabulary and codified stage games. These vocabulary and stage games will be commented upon throughout this paper.

5 See for example: Aélion (1983); Bond (1974); Conacher (1967) 199–212; Noël (2013); Roux (1974) 42–56; Torrance (2011); Torrance (2013) 14–33.

6 For the audience's pleasure, see also Di Virgilio and Duncan in this volume.

limited in its duration, always exposing itself to the inventiveness of a successor. Importantly, however, Euripides' metathetrical practice suggests especially that this practice allowed the playwright to express the singularity of his theatrical choices through the exploration of the same pattern. Thus, what Euripides sought to represent in these scenes is not only the difficulty posed to the characters (at the level of the plot) to achieve the recognition, but also (for the poet), onstage and in front of a large audience, the brief and imperceptible move from ignorance to knowledge.[7] Consequently, the many metatheatrical remarks inserted into Euripidean recognition scenes are not only references to the reality of the poetic composition and the fictional character of the tragic work, but they are also, above all, indications of a serious interrogation by the playwright of the conventions that surround the topical scene.[8]

When considered in more detail, Euripides' metatheatrical remarks clearly illustrate the characteristics of theatrical performance and its livelihood. In his remarks, the costumes, the accessories, the surprising changes of context, and even the senses awoken during the theatrical performance are mentioned. Therefore, by drawing the public's attention to the process and the scenic tools used during the performance, Euripides was able to give his viewers a glimpse of the behind-the-scenes and to help improve their understanding of the show. Metatheatre became a theatrical reading and teaching tool that gave the viewer the keys to access the various degrees of meaning of the tragic work.[9]

To demonstrate that metatheatre was consciously used by Euripides to report the new and original aesthetic that he built into his recognition scenes, I will proceed in three stages. I will first show that his metatheatrical remarks are a sign that Euripides was questioning the validity of the traditional codes of the recognition scene. Secondly, I will demonstrate that Euripides did not adopt a

7 The level of the plot and the level of the dramatic construction are not opposed here, but work together as equal components of the play. In fact, the concept of metatheatre solves the problems raised by the question of the direct address to the public and the rupture of the dramatic illusion: we can say that there is no such thing as the rupture of the dramatic illusion precisely because the metatheatre makes it possible to bring into existence two levels of concomitant discourse that do not destroy each other, that is to say the level of the plot and the level of the metatheatrical comment. See Marshall (2000). In contrast, see Bain's point of view: Bain (1987).

8 See Arnott, G. (1973) about Euripides' conscious game with conventions.

9 The concept of metatheatre also allows us better to account for the diversity of the Athenian public and its skills, literary or theatrical, but also the variables induced by the particular reception within θέατρον (sight, hearing, attention or concentration, interruptions, theatrical experience or not, etc.). See Cole, T. (1997); Cole, S. (2008) and Revermann (2006). On the audience's competence, see also Di Virgilio in this volume.

purely reflexive and critical attitude, but that he endeavoured to create new tools for staging the recognition. Finally, I will defend the idea that the many metatheatrical remarks that Euripides inserted into his tragedies were not only descriptive, but also allowed him to promote a new dramaturgical model to his audience.

Metatheatre as a Tool for Questioning the Recognition Scene's Conventions

I will first examine several examples of recognition scenes. Together, these indicate that Euripides was questioning the proper theatrical means to stage the process of recognition. Recognition (a complex cognitive process) occurs when theoretical knowledge is combined with sensory perception such as hearing and especially sight. Euripides sought to represent this cognitive process in a concrete way by rendering it audible and visible onstage. It was not only a matter of confronting a scene already treated by his predecessors; the playwright also had to make this as clear as possible through its staging.

For a clear example, witness the famous scene of *Electra (below)*. Rather than repeating the familiar elements that would merely reflect the resumption of *Libation Bearers*, I instead draw attention to the structure of the passage and to the vocabulary used by the two characters at the misunderstanding that pits Electra against the old servant just before the recognition.[10]

Πρ. Σκέψαι δὲ χαίτην προστιθεῖσα σῇ κόμῃ, (520)
εἰ χρῶμα ταὐτὸν κουρίμης ἔσται τριχός·
φιλεῖ γάρ, αἷμα ταὐτὸν οἷς ἂν ᾖ πατρός,
τὰ πόλλ' ὅμοια σώματος πεφυκέναι.
Ηλ. Οὐκ ἄξι' ἀνδρός, ὦ γέρον, σοφοῦ λέγεις,
εἰ κρυπτὸν ἐς γῆν τήνδ' ἂν Αἰγίσθου φόβῳ (525)
δοκεῖς ἀδελφὸν τὸν ἐμὸν εὐθαρσῆ μολεῖν.
Ἔπειτα χαίτης πῶς συνοίσεται πλόκος,
ὁ μὲν παλαίστραις ἀνδρὸς εὐγενοῦς τραφείς,
ὁ δὲ κτενισμοῖς θῆλυς ; Ἀλλ' ἀμήχανον.
Πολλοῖς δ' ἂν εὕροις βοστρύχους ὁμοπτέρους (530)
καὶ μὴ γεγῶσιν αἵματος ταὐτοῦ, γέρον.
Πρ. Σὺ δ' εἰς ἴχνος βᾶσ' ἀρβύλης σκέψαι βάσιν
εἰ σύμμετρος σῷ ποδὶ γενήσεται, τέκνον.

10 Eur. *El*. 520–546.

Ηλ. Πῶς δ' ἂν γένοιτ' ἂν ἐν κραταιλέῳ πέδῳ
γαίας ποδῶν ἔκμακτρον ; Εἰ δ' ἔστιν τόδε, (535)
δυοῖν ἀδελφοῖν ποὺς ἂν οὐ γένοιτ' ἴσος
ἀνδρός τε καὶ γυναικός, ἀλλ' ἄρσην κρατεῖ.
Πρ. Οὐκ ἔστιν, εἰ καὶ γῆν κασίγνητος μολών,
. . . . . (538)
κερκίδος ὅτῳ γνοίης ἂν ἐξύφασμα σῆς,
ἐν ᾧ ποτ' αὐτὸν ἐξέκλεψα μὴ θανεῖν ; (540)
Ηλ. Οὐκ οἶσθ', Ὀρέστης ἡνίκ' ἐκπίπτει χθονός,
νέαν μ' ἔτ' οὖσαν ; Εἰ δὲ κἄκρεκον πέπλους,
πῶς ἂν τότ' ὢν παῖς ταὐτὰ νῦν ἔχοι φάρη,
εἰ μὴ ξυναύξοινθ' οἱ πέπλοι τῷ σώματι ;
Ἀλλ' ἤ τις αὐτοῦ τάφον ἐποικτίρας ξένος (545)
† ἐκείρατ', ἢ τῆσδε σκοποὺς λαβὼν χθονὸς †. . .

Old man. – Go look to see if the color of the cut lock is the same as yours, putting it to your own hair; it is usual for those who have the same paternal blood to have a close resemblance in many features.
Electra. – Old man, your words are unworthy of a wise man, if you think my own brave brother would come to this land secretly for fear of Aegisthus. Then, how will a lock of hair correspond, the one made to grow in the wrestling schools of a well-bred man, the other, a woman's lock, by combing? No, it is impossible. But you could find in many people hair very similar, although they are not of the same blood, old man.
Old man. – Then stand in the footprint and see if the tread of the boot will measure with your own foot, child.
Electra. – How could there be an imprint of feet on a stony plot of ground? And if there is, the foot of brother and sister would not be the same in size, for the male conquers.
Old man. – There is not, even if your brother, coming to this land . . . by which you might know your loom's weaving, in which I once stole him away from death?
Electra. – Don't you know that I was still young when Orestes was driven out of the land? And even if I had woven him a robe, how could he, a child then, have the same one now, unless his clothes grew together with his body? But either a stranger, taking pity on his grave. . .[11]

Indeed, we observe in this dialogue a repetitive structure: every time the old man assumes that an element could be a token of Orestes, he invites Electra to make the comparison, for example, with her hair or her foot. In the first part of the old man's reply, we find the imperative σκέψαι used twice (520; 532), which shows that the old man is drawing attention to the recognition process based on visual perception. This observation aims to verify the supposition articulated by the servant (introduced by εἰ in the Greek text). This supposition is based on the assumption of a physical similarity between brother and sister, represented in the Euripidean text by the adjectives ὅμοιος and σύμμετρος (523; 533).

11 Translation by Edward P. Coleridge; see Oates/O'Neill (1938).

For her part, the girl follows the same process in her replies: while formulating hypotheses to support the idea of the old man, perhaps thanks to a hypothetical optative system, she questions and then invalidates the very possibility of such a similarity between herself and her brother. The repetition of the interrogative πῶς (527; 534; 543) in Electra's lines underscores her interrogation of the method of supporting such hypotheses. In fact, Euripidean characters do not claim outright that any particular situation is impossible; instead, their interrogative sentences highlight practical impossibility. As such, it seems to me that we must neither neglect the type of sentence chosen by the playwright nor restrict it to a form of rhetorical process. In fact, it is my belief that the interrogative mode conveys a particular meaning which is addressed both to character and to the audience.

We find the same conceptual structure informing the third token (the woven garment) even though it is not visible onstage and is entirely conceived by the old man. What appears here is that the Euripidean scene does not revolve so much around the likelihood of a particular token, but rather around the search by the characters themselves as the means of effecting such recognition. This scene evokes the tools proper to the theatre to represent such an awareness. Specifically, Electra's questioning of the evidence of Orestes' identity highlights both the exploitation of the scenery and the space occupied by the actors (by the mention of the footprint on the ground, 534–535), the costumes (with the comparison between the size of the feet and especially between the hair, 520–521, and therefore the masks, of the two characters), and the theatrical prop that can represent a woven garment (539). In this sense, this scene of *Electra* is a way for Euripides to say that the method followed by Aeschylus to actuate recognition is not fully effective from a scenic point of view. One potential proof is the use of the term ἀμήχανος in Euripides' scene (529): if we refer to the various meanings listed in the *LSJ*,[12] this adjective is not, strictly speaking, a synonym for ἀδύνατος (which means 'impossible'), but it emphasizes the lack of resources or means available for summoning in order to effect a process. Further encouragement for attributing a strong definition to this adjective is that it is built on the association of the privative prefix with the technical and theatrical term of μηχανή. Therefore, we have in it evidence that supports the idea that Euripides was interested in the exploitation and practical implementation of the topical rec-

12 Liddell/Scott/Jones (1968) s.v. ἀμήχανος and s.v. ἀδύνατος.

ognition scene. Thus, the above scene from *Electra* should be considered less a parody[13] of the *Libation Bearers* than a reflection on the theatre and its tools for representing such a scene – thus, it has a metatheatrical reach.

In a related vein, I would next like to demonstrate that, in addition to his taking over the *topos* of recognition, Euripides also managed to reveal the structure and conventions of that scene through the representation of recognitions that fail to take place. While this may seem paradoxical, it is clear to me that by showing the causes of the failure of recognition (or difficulties presented by such scenes) in another author's work, the playwright exacerbated the purely artificial nature of the codes that govern this *topos* in the theatre. Furthermore, he even managed to renew them. The false recognition scene between Ion and Xouthos at the beginning of the eponymous tragedy bears witness to this idea.[14]

Ξο. Ὦ τέκνον, χαῖρ'· ἡ γὰρ ἀρχὴ τοῦ λόγου πρέπουσά μοι.
Ιω. Χαίρομεν· σὺ δ' εὖ φρόνει γε, καὶ δύ' ὄντ' εὖ πράξομεν.
Ξο. Δὸς χερὸς φίλημά μοι σῆς σώματός τ' ἀμφιπτυχάς.
Ιω. Εὖ φρονεῖς μέν ; Ἤ σ' ἔμηνε θεοῦ τις, ὦ ξένε, βλάβη ;
Ξο. Σωφρονῶ· τὰ φίλταθ' εὑρὼν οὐ φυγεῖν ἐφίεμαι. (520)
Ιω. Παῦε, μὴ ψαύσας τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ στέμματα ῥήξῃς χερί.
Ξο. Ἅψομαι· κοὐ ῥυσιάζω, τἀμὰ δ' εὑρίσκω φίλα.
Ιω. Οὐκ ἀπαλλάξῃ, πρὶν εἴσω τόξα πλευμόνων λαβεῖν ;
Ξο. Ὡς τί δὴ φεύγεις με ; Σαυτοῦ γνωρίσας τὰ φίλτατα. . .
Ιω. Οὐ φιλῶ φρενοῦν ἀμούσους καὶ μεμηνότας ξένους. (525)
Ξο. Κτεῖνε καὶ πίμπρη· πατρὸς γάρ, ἢν κτάνῃς, ἔσῃ φονεύς.
Ιω. Ποῦ δέ μοι πατὴρ σύ ; Ταῦτ' οὖν οὐ γέλως κλύειν ἐμοῦ ;
Ξο. Οὔ· τρέχων ὁ μῦθος ἄν σοι τἀμὰ σημήνειεν ἄν.
Ιω. Καὶ τί μοι λέξεις ;
Ξο. Πατὴρ σός εἰμι καὶ σὺ παῖς ἐμός. (530)

Xouthos. – My boy, welcome! That is a suitable way to begin speaking!
Ion. – I am well; as long as you stay in your right mind, we are both doing well.
Xouthos. – Let me kiss your hand, and throw my arms around your body!
Ion. – Are you in your right mind, stranger? Or has some damage from a god driven you mad?
Xouthos. – I am sane; since I have found my dearest, I long for him not to escape.
Ion. – Stop, do not break by your touch the garlands of the god.
Xouthos. – I will touch; I am not seizing you as a pledge, but I have found my own.
Ion. – Won't you stop, before you get an arrow in your side?
Xouthos. – Why do you try to escape from me? When you have met your own dearest. . .
Ion. – I do not like to teach rude and maddened strangers.

13 See commentaries of the scene, e.g., Bond (1974); Ronnet (1975) and those quoted in note 5.
14 Eur. *Ion* 516–530.

> Xouthos. – Kill me and raise my funeral pyre; but if you kill me, you will be the murderer of your father.
> Ion. – How are you my father? Isn't this a joke on me?
> Xouthos. – No; the story as it goes on will make clear my words to you.
> Ion. – And what will you tell me?
> Xouthos. – I am your father, and you are my child.[15]

We become aware in this passage of a kind of reversal of the topical recognition scene. In particular, there is an inversion of the traditional stages allowing for the reunion of two characters. Upon seeing Ion, Xouthos immediately addresses him as a father would his son; but this step is not effective, since it is not known why he, whom Ion regards as a stranger, behaves with such familiarity towards him.

We observe in this passage a very clear opposition between the two characters. On the one hand, we see in Xouthos's words many marks of tenderness and the lexical fields of family and reunion, suggested by the terms τέκνος (516), πατὴρ (526; 527; 530), παῖς (530), as well as the more general expressions τἀμὰ φίλα (522) and τὰ φίλτατα (520; 524). We also note, after the usual greeting with χαῖρε (516; 517), the joint references to the process of recognition and gesture of embrace: the verb εὑρίσκω is used twice (520; 522), followed closely by the verb γνωρίζω (524). In sum, we see in Xouthos's replies that it is normal for reunion with a dear one to be celebrated with an embrace.[16] On the other hand, verse 518 highlights the bodily dimension of the reunion in the embrace with the verb ἀμφιπτύχω, as well as with the mention of the enclosed body.[17] This also tells us that there must be a specific gesture from the actors in this scene, which is confirmed by the exclamation of Ion in 521. Indeed, the fact that Xouthos is so violently rejected suggests that his wishes to embrace the one he thinks is his son are not merely a request but a physical action: the first actor must have gotten close to the second, which results in Ion's strong rejection. This double movement of approach and rejection alone symbolizes, both in words and in the

15 All translations of Euripides' *Ion* are by Robert Potter; see Oates/O'Neill (1938).

16 This then implicitly indicates to us that the embrace should be an integral part of the representation of the topical recognition.

I adopt, rather, a dramaturgical interpretation which allows me to comment on the scene according to the reception of the performance by the audience. I deliberately leave aside the many comments of critics that see in this passage a comic scene mobilizing the imaginary of pederasty. See for example Knox (1979) 250–274 and Lloyd (1986) 37. On theatrical gesture, see Capponi's chapter in this volume.

17 The very interesting structure of this verse is also notable as it is constructed in the image of the embrace: the terms referring to the action of Xouthos's embracing (Δὸς χερὸς φίλημά μοι . . . τ' ἀμφιπτυχάς) frame the genitive σῆς σώματός (referring to Ion).

gestures and movements of the actors onstage, the very clear opposition of the two characters. Both act according to their own reasoning, and Xouthos' comments do not allow for either the dialogue alone to be effective or for Ion to better react to the situation.

We should note the use of the term ξένος,[18] repeated in 519 and 525 by Ion, opposing the lexical field of the family employed by Xouthos. The fracture between the two characters is finally emphasized in this dialogue by Ion's proclamations of expressions conveying the meaning of madness (particularly 519 and 525).

I will now take this opportunity to comment in more detail on the metatheatrical remark in 527.[19] Its interrogative nature and negative turn emphasize Ion's astonishment (or exasperation) in the face of the news of which Xouthos has just told him; however, they can also echo the astonishment (or perplexity) of the audience, as they have just been confronted with this ineffective scene. One potential reinforcement of this interpretation is the joint mention of a hearing verb, κλύειν, which refers to the aural sense convened at the reception of the performance, and the adverb γέλως, which evokes laughter. Interpreting this verse as a wink of the playwright to his audience would imply here Euripides' anticipation of the public's reaction. However, such anticipation would not work without the poet's certainty of thwarting the expectations of the public and thus overturning the codes of representation of the recognition by making it fail at first.

What also supports this hypothesis is the essential role that this proposal occupies in the scene. Indeed, the line operates as a hinge between the two stages of recognition: before, the two characters speak but do not understand each other. Afterwards, however, Xouthos' statement is explanatory and picks up the various elements that led him to recognize Ion as his son from a chronological point of view. This is manifested by the last verses of the passage quoted above which announce the story (ὁ μῦθος) of Apollo's oracle and its role of clarification as to the present situation, notably by the use of the verb σημαίνω (528). The metatheatrical remark in 530 has as such a dual function: it obviously represents an anticipation of the story to come, but it also operates a form of conclusion to the scene in question. Indeed, we see throughout the dialogue

18 The emphatic place, at the end of the verse, of the term ξένος is significant in many respects here. First, it serves to complete the verse, representing the state of mind of Ion regarding his interlocutor. But more importantly, it highlights the structure of the verse that begins with οὐ φιλῶ: Ion's words insist on the inappropriateness of tenderness and affection discussed between two strangers.

19 Ταῦτ' οὖν οὐ γέλως κλύειν ἐμοῦ;

that the misunderstanding between the two characters is reflected in the inadequacy between the terms of the family and the personal pronouns of the second person in the mind of Ion. However, thanks to the intertwining of the marks of the first and second person in 530, Xouthos expresses more clearly than before the identity of each of them and the reciprocity of their relationship.

In this sense, we can see in these last verses of the quoted passage a point of reversal of the scene, where allusion to the feeling of the spectators occupies a more prominent place. After suggesting the surprising and confusing nature of the scene to the public, Euripides highlights transition to a new stage and reassures his audience of the upcoming success of the reunion. Therefore, we observe that this scene is helpful for understanding the poet's dramaturgical work on the staging of the recognition in the *Ion*: the conventions attributed to this *topos* are exacerbated by its failure (and more particularly, its scenic dimension, thanks to rejection of the embrace), and the two-step decomposition of recognition is underlined by the key role given to the metatheatrical remark in 527, which implies the incongruity of the scene.

Next follows the story of the oracle of Apollo, who designated Ion as the son of Xouthos, a narrative which finally is able, in a rather artificial way, to operate as the recognition.[20]

Ιω. Τοῦτ' ἐκεῖν' ἴν' ἐσπάρημεν.
Ξο. Ὁ πότμος ἐξηῦρεν, τέκνον.
Ιω. Πῶς δ' ἀφικόμεσθα ναούς ;
Ξο. Ἔκβολον κόρης ἴσως. (555)
Ιω. Ἐκπεφεύγαμεν τὸ δοῦλον.
Ξο. Πατέρα νυν δέχου, τέκνον.
Ιω. Τῷ θεῷ γοῦν οὐκ ἀπιστεῖν εἰκός.
Ξο. Εὖ φρονεῖς ἄρα.
Ιω. Καὶ τί βουλόμεσθά γ' ἄλλο . . .
Ξο. Νῦν ὁρᾷς ἃ χρή σ' ὁρᾶν.
Ιω. Ἦ Διὸς παιδὸς γενέσθαι παῖς ;
Ξο. Ὅ σοί γε γίγνεται.
Ιω. Ἦ θίγω δῆθ' οἵ μ' ἔφυσαν ;
Ξο. Πιθόμενός γε τῷ θεῷ. (560)
Ιω. Χαῖρέ μοι, πάτερ . . .
Ξο. Φίλον γε φθέγμ' ἐδεξάμην τόδε.
Ιω. Ἡμέρα θ' ἡ νῦν παροῦσα.
Ξο. Μακάριόν γ' ἔθηκέ με.

20 Eur. *Ion* 554–562.

Ion. – It was then that I was conceived.
Xouthos. – Fate has discovered you, my son.
Ion. – How did I come to the temple, then?
Xouthos. – Perhaps you were exposed by the girl.
Ion. – I have escaped from slavery.
Xouthos. – Now receive your father.
Ion. – It is reasonable not to distrust the god, at any rate.
Xouthos. – Now you are in your right mind.
Ion. – And what else do I want?
Xouthos. – Now you are seeing what you ought to see.
Ion. – Than to be the son of Zeus' son?
Xouthos. – Which is yours.
Ion. – Am I really touching the one who gave me birth?
Xouthos. – If you trust in the god.
Ion. – Welcome, father!
Xouthos. – What a sweet word to hear!
Ion. – This present day. . .
Xouthos. – Has made me happy.

This is emphatically underlined by Euripides, who uses 1st and 2nd personal pronouns, as well as the lexical field of vision combined with that of reason. Thus, we observe that this was a good opportunity for Euripides to stage the artificiality of the process of recognition and its implementation stage.

Shifting to another of Euripides' tragedies, I will next highlight how the same general theme is present in *Helen*. Indeed, even though the play is very different, the recognition scene between Helen and Menelaos also illustrates that the challenge of such a moment for the playwright is to resolve the dichotomy between their vision and the alleged knowledge that they associate with it. In fact, the first confrontation between Helen and Menelaos leads to a failure, an *aporia*, since Menelaos cannot bring himself to admit that his real wife is in front of him when he thinks he has left her at the bottom of a cave near the shore.[21]

Ελ. Ὦ χρόνιος ἐλθὼν σῆς δάμαρτος *ἐς χέρας*.
Με. Ποίας δάμαρτος ; *Μὴ θίγῃς* ἐμῶν πέπλων.
Ελ. Ἥν σοι δίδωσι Τυνδάρεως, ἐμὸς πατήρ.
Με. Ὦ φωσφόρ' Ἑκάτη, πέμπε φάσματ' εὐμενῆ.
Ελ. Οὐ νυκτίφαντον πρόπολον Ἐνοδίας μ' ὁρᾷς. (570)
Με. Οὔ που φρονῶ μὲν εὖ, τὸ δ' ὄμμα μου νοσεῖ ; (575)
Ελ. Οὐ γάρ με λεύσσων σὴν δάμαρθ' ὁρᾶν δοκεῖς ; (576)
Με. Τὸ σῶμ' ὅμοιον, τὸ δὲ σαφές μ' ἀποστερεῖ. (577)

21 Eur. *Hel*. 566–592. I quote here the text established by Kannicht. See Kannicht (1969) 161–162.

Ελ. Σκέψαι· τί σοὐ<ν>δεῖ ; Πίστις οὐ σαφεστέρα. (578)
Με. Ἔοικας· οὗτοι τοῦτό γ’ ἐξαρνήσομαι. (579)
Ελ. Τίς οὖν διδάξει σ’ ἄλλος ἢ τὰ σ’ ὄμματα ; (580)
Με. Ἐκεῖ νοσοῦμεν, ὅτι δάμαρτ’ ἄλλην ἔχω. (581)
Ελ. Οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη σή τις ἀντ’ ἐμοῦ γυνή. (574)
Με. Οὐ μὴν γυναικῶν γ’ εἷς δυοῖν ἔφυν πόσις. (571)
Ελ. Ποίων δὲ λέκτρων δεσπότης ἄλλων ἔφυς ; (572)
Με. Ἥν ἄντρα κεύθει κἀκ Φρυγῶν κομίζομαι. (573)
Ελ. Οὐκ ἦλθον ἐς γῆν Τρῳάδ’, ἀλλ’ εἴδωλον ἦν. (582)
Με. Καὶ τίς βλέποντα σώματ’ ἐξεργάζεται ;
Ελ. Αἰθήρ, ὅθεν σὺ θεοπόνητ’ ἔχεις λέχη.
Με. Τίνος πλάσαντος θεῶν ; ἄελπτα γὰρ λέγεις. (585)
Ελ. Ἥρα<ς>, διάλλαγμ’, ὡς Πάρις με μὴ λάβοι.
Με. Πῶς οὖν ; Ἆμ’ ἐνθάδ’ ἦσθ’ <ἄρ’> ἐν Τροίᾳ θ’ ἅμα ;
Ελ. Τοὔνομα γένοιτ’ ἂν πολλαχοῦ, τὸ σῶμα δ’ οὔ.
Με. Μέθες με, λύπης ἄλις ἔχων ἐλήλυθα.
Ελ. Λείψεις γὰρ ἡμᾶς, τὰ δὲ κέν’ ἐξάξεις λέχη ; (590)
Με. Καὶ χαῖρέ γ’, Ἑλένῃ προσφερὴς ὀθούνεκ’ εἶ.
Ελ. Ἀπωλόμην· λαβοῦσά σ’ οὐχ ἕξω πόσιν.

Helen. – Oh, at last you have come to the arms of your wife!
Menelaos. – What do you mean by wife? Do not touch my robe.
Helen. – The one whom Tyndareus, my father, gave to you.
Menelaos. – O torch-bearing Hekate, send visions that are favorable!
Helen. – You see in me no specter of the night, attendant on the queen of phantoms.
Menelaos. – Can it be that I am in my right mind, but my sight is failing?
Helen. – Don't you think that when you look at me you see your wife?
Menelaos. – Your body resembles hers, but the real truth robs me of this belief.
Helen. – Look; what more do you need? Who knows better than you?
Menelaos. – You are like her; I will not deny that at least.
Helen. – Who then shall teach you, if not your own eyes?
Menelaos. – It is there that I am ailing, because I have another wife.
Helen. – You have no other wife but me.
Menelaos. – As one man, I am certainly not the husband of two women.
Helen. – You are the master of what other wife?
Menelaos. – The one hidden in the cave, whom I am bringing from Troy.
Helen. – I did not go to Troy; that was a phantom.
Menelaos. – And who fashions living bodies?
Helen. – The air, out of which you have a wife that the gods labored over.
Menelaos. – What god’s handiwork? You are saying things beyond hope.
Helen. – Hera’s, as a substitute, so that Paris would not have me.
Menelaos. – How then could you be here and in Troy at the same time?
Helen. – The name may be in many places, though not the body.
Menelaos. – Let me go! I have come here with enough pain.

Helen. – Will you leave me, and take that phantom bride away?
Menelaos. – Yes, and fare well, for your likeness to Helen.
Helen. – I am ruined! I found you, my husband, but I will not have you.[22]

It is important here to notice the distinction (consciously performed by Menelaos) between the name of Helen or circumlocutions that designate her, and Menelaos' use of the 2nd person pronoun. Such a move clearly shows that he does not identify the woman in front of him as his wife. Above all, this scene allows us to see two very different types of reasoning: Menelaos relies entirely on history as he knows and experiences it (575; 577; 581; 571; 573), while Helen advocates for sensation and perception (especially vision) as the only source of reliable knowledge, as shown for example in line 580 (576; 578).

Through these examples, we observe that Euripides not only criticized a conventional model of the recognition scene, but he also clearly demonstrated, even within his own tragedies, the difficulties of its staging.

Metatheatre as a Tool for Renewing the Recognition Scene's Staging

In this section, I aim to demonstrate how Euripides invented new dramaturgical tools for the staging of recognition scenes. In order to show how Euripides undertook the task of re-motivating the processes that inspire recognition, I will highlight one example of each of his tools.

For my first example, I would like to return to the case of *Ion*.[23] I believe this example will allow me to effectively demonstrate how Euripides used dramatic composition to justify a seemingly artificial scene.[24]

Χο. Ἴωνα δ' ὀνομάζω σε τῇ τύχῃ πρέπον, (661)
ὀθούνεκ' ἀδύτων ἐξιόντι μοι θεοῦ
ἴχνος συνῆψας πρῶτος.

Xouthos. – Ion I name you, as befits your fortune, since you were the first to meet me as I came out of the god's shrine.

22 All translations of Euripides' *Helen* are by Edward P. Coleridge; see Oates/O'Neill (1938). However, the reader will note that we swapped some verses in Coleridge's translation in order to match the Greek text quoted and established by Kannicht.
23 Eur. *Ion* 661–663.
24 On this scene, see Giannopoulou (2000).

Previously, I showcased how Euripides emphasized the artificiality of recognition between Xouthos and Ion. But by using the etiological aim of the play, he also re-motivated this recognition scene within the economy of the play. Indeed, the very fact of justifying the name of the hero by a pun in Greek draws the attention of the public to the arrangement of the tragedy: Ion is named as such by Xouthos because he is the first one that Xouthos meets at the exit of Apollo's temple. However, it is Euripides who designed his play so that Ion is the first contact of Xouthos. Thus, this false recognition scene allowed Euripides to justify not only the name of the hero, but also to re-motivate a complex dramatic structure. That the recognition scene could seem at first incongruous, or even comical, is justified afterwards. Moreover, it seems to me that the pleasure experienced at this point by the spectators is not only due to the quick succession of opposing tones but also results from the opportunity offered by the playwright to perceive poetic and theatrical workings. Indeed, audience members are not only aware of the artificiality of theatrical conventions or the need to follow a certain logic allowing recognition to happen; they are also able to change their judgment upon the stage and to recognize the playwright's skill.

Moving now to another tool used by Euripides to provoke recognition – the props[25] – I move to explain another example in the same tragedy, but this time during the real recognition between Ion and his mother Creusa.

Πυ. Ὁρᾷς τόδ' ἄγγος χερὸς ὑπ' ἀγκάλαις ἐμαῖς ;
Ιω. Ὁρῶ παλαιὰν ἀντίπηγ' ἐν στέμμασιν.
Πυ. Ἐν τῇδέ σ' ἔλαβον νεόγονον βρέφος ποτέ. (1340)
Ιω. Τί φής ; ὁ μῦθος εἰσενήνεκται νέος.
Πυ. Σιγῇ γὰρ εἶχον αὐτά· νῦν δὲ δείκνυμεν.

Priestess. – Do you see this vessel in my arms?
Ion. – I see an ancient cradle, in garlands.
Priestess. – In this I received you when you were a new-born infant.
Ion. – What are you saying? A new story is introduced.
Priestess. – I kept it in silence; now I reveal it.

In this dialogue between Ion and Pythia, there are many noteworthy references to the scenic situation; the verbs of visions (1338; 1339), deictics (1338; 1340; 1349; 1352) or temporal references to the present of the enunciation (1342; 1349; 1355) bear witness to this. Recalling the funeral urn used by Sophocles in his *Electra*, it is readily apparent that the use of props by Euripides was here very

25 Eur. *Ion* 1338–1341 and 1348–1355.

different. Indeed, the urn is used in Sophocles as the stage incarnation of a false rumour, a μῦθος. In other words, it was a tool to spread news of the death of Orestes. On the contrary, here in Euripides' work, it is used as an object in that it represents a concrete way to bring about the reunion.

Ιω. Τί χρῆμα δρᾶσαι ; Λέγε, πέραινε σοὺς λόγους.
Πυ. Σῶσαι τόδ' εὕρημ' ἐς τὸν ὄντα νῦν χρόνον.
Ιω. Ἔχει δέ μοι τί κέρδος – ἢ τίνα βλάβην ; (1350)
Πυ. Ἐνθάδε κέκρυπται σπάργαν' οἷς ἐνῆσθα σύ.
Ιω. Μητρὸς τάδ' ἡμῖν ἐκφέρεις ζητήματα ;
Πυ. Ἐπεί γ' ὁ δαίμων βούλεται· πάροιθε δ' οὔ.
Ιω. Ὦ μακαρίων μοι φασμάτων ἥδ' ἡμέρα.
Πυ. Λαβών νυν αὐτὰ τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἐκπόνει. (1355)

Ion. – To do what? Speak, finish what you have to say.
Priestess. – To keep to this time what I found.
Ion. – What gain does this have for me, or what harm?
Priestess. – The baby-clothes in which you were wrapped are hidden here.
Ion. – You are producing a means to find my mother?
Priestess. – Since the god wishes it; before, he did not.
Ion. – O day of blessed discoveries!
Priestess. – Now take them and find your mother.

Having discussed the use of props by Euripides, I now focus on another method used by Euripides to renew the staging of recognition: the use of an intermediate character. Even if it had been done before, for instance by Sophocles in *Oedipus Rex*, Euripides uses this pattern in a different way. One example of this comes from the *Electra*,[26] in which Euripides makes the old man the necessary intermediary of the reunion between Electra and Orestes. Another example is the scene in *Helen* where the messenger also acts as a trigger for the recognition.[27]

Με. Τί δ' ἔστιν ; Οὔ που βαρβάρων συλᾶσθ' ὕπο ; (600)
Αγ. Θαῦμ' ἔστ', ἔλασσον τοὔνομ' ἢ τὸ πρᾶγμ' ἔχον.
Με. Λέγ'· ὡς φέρεις τι τῇδε τῇ σπουδῇ νέον.

Menelaos. – What is it? Surely you are not being plundered by the foreigners?
Messenger. – It is a miracle; what I say is of less account than what happened.
Menelaos. – Tell me; for, judging by this eagerness, you are certainly bringing something new.

26 Eur. *El.* 509–581.
27 Eur. *Hel.* 600–602; 616 and 622–623.

Indeed, it is only possible for the reunion to occur after the intervention of the companion of Menelaos and, importantly, his account of the disappearance of Helen's ghost. The use of the term θαῦμα (601) or the adjective νέος (602) reveals the astonishment of the messenger.

Αγ. Ὦ χαῖρε, Λήδας θύγατερ, ἐνθάδ' ἦσθ' ἄρα ; (616)

Messenger. – Welcome, daughter of Leda, were you here after all?

Με. Τοῦτ' ἔστ' ἐκεῖνο· ξυμβεβᾶσιν οἱ λόγοι (622)
οἱ τῆσδ' ἀληθεῖς· [. . .].

Menelaos. – This is the meaning of that; her words have turned out to be true; [. . .].

But a few verses further, the simplicity with which he calls Helen (616) echoes the passage that precedes and affirms the association of knowledge with the sense of vision. Although this is exactly what Menelaos was unable to do before, the messenger accomplishes it onstage in a straightforward manner in line 601. What is particularly interesting in this verse is the superiority that the messenger attributes to the action rather than to Helen's name or to the story of the famous myth. It seems then that this line echoes willingly Euripides' purpose in this tragedy, which is a re-motivation of a well-known story through a new version of the myth. In order to support such an interpretation and to give a metatheatrical meaning to this reply, it is my opinion that the messenger is very clearly used as a dramaturgical tool allowing the progression of the plot and the recognition's achievement. To this point, witness lines 622–623, which embody Menelaos' understanding of the situation onstage.

The recognition scene between Helen and Menelaos can now take place, thanks to the recourse of the amoebaean song and its choreography with which Euripides motivated this long episode.[28] Indeed, by breaking down the recognition scene into two stages, interspersed with the salutary intervention of the messenger, Euripides managed to give a skilful display of the different stages of recognition, passing from doubt to certainty of the characters' identity, then to the emotion of the meeting, and finally to the embrace. And this cognitive level is intertwined with a theatrical one, because using amoebaean singing and choreography allowed Euripides to re-motivate the traditional vocabulary of recognition.

28 Eur. *Hel.* 622–638 and 648–659. See Cerbo (1989) and Willink (1989).

Με. [. . .] Ὦ ποθεινὸς ἡμέρα,
ὡς εἰς ἐμάς <σ'> ἔδωκεν ὠλένας λαβεῖν.
Ελ. Ὦ φίλτατ' ἀνδρῶν Μενέλεως, ὁ μὲν χρόνος (625)
παλαιός, ἡ δὲ τέρψις ἀρτίως πάρα.
Ἔλαβον ἀσμένα πόσιν ἐμόν, φίλαι,
περιπετάσασα χέρα φίλιον ἐν μακρᾷ
φλογὶ φαεσφόρῳ.
Με. Κἀγὼ σέ· πολλοὺς δ' ἐν μέσῳ λόγους ἔχων (630)
οὐκ οἶδ' ὁποίου πρῶτον ἄρξωμαι τὰ νῦν.
Ελ. Γέγηθα, κρατὶ δ' ὀρθίους ἐθείρας
ἀνεπτέρωκα καὶ δάκρυ σταλάσσω·
περὶ δὲ γυῖα χέρας ἔβαλον, ἡδονάν
ὦ πόσις ὡς λάβω. (635)
Με. [Ἰὼ γύναι,]
ὦ φιλτάτα πρόσοψις, οὐκ ἐμέμφθην·
ἔχω σὰ τᾶς Λήδας Διός τε λέκτρα [. . .].

Menelaos. – [. . .] O longed-for day, that has given you to my arms!
Helen. – O Menelaos, dearest of men, the time was long, but delight is just now ours. With joy I have found my husband, friends, I have embraced my dear one, after long days of blazing light.
Menelaos. – And I have found you; but I have many questions about those years; now I do not know what to begin with first.
Helen. – I am so happy, the hair rises on my head and my tears run down. I fling my arms around your neck, [635] dear husband, to have my delight.
Menelaos. – O dearest sight! I have no fault to find: I have my wife, the daughter of Zeus and Leda [. . .].

Ελ. Φίλαι φίλαι,
τὰ πάρος οὐκέτι στένομεν οὐδ' ἀλγῶ·
πόσιν ἐμὸν ἔχομεν ἔχομεν ὃν ἔμενον (650)
ἔμενον ἐκ Τροίας πολυετῆ μολεῖν.
Με. Ἔχεις, ἐγώ τε σ'· ἡλίους δὲ μυρίους
μόγις διελθὼν ᾐσθόμην τὰ τῆς θεοῦ.
Ελ. Ἐμὰ δὲ δάκρυα χαρμονὰ<ν> πλέον ἔχει
χάριτος ἢ λύπας. (655)
Με. Τί φῶ ; Τίς ἂν τάδ' ἤλπισεν βροτῶν ποτε;
Ελ. Ἀδόκητον ἔχω σε πρὸς στέρνοις.
Με. Κἀγὼ σὲ τὴν δοκοῦσαν Ἰδαίαν πόλιν
μολεῖν Ἰλίου τε μελέους πύργους.

Helen. – My dear friends, I no longer sigh or grieve over what is past. I have my husband, for whom I have been waiting to come from Troy for many years.
Menelaos. – You have me, and I have you; although it was hard to live through so many days, I now understand the actions of the goddess. My joy is tearful; it has more delight than sorrow.

> Helen. – What can I say? What mortal could ever have hoped for this? I hold you to my heart, little as I ever thought to.
> Menelaos. – And I hold you, whom we thought to have gone to Ida's city and the unhappy towers of Ilion.

The metatheatre is particularly present at the end of the scene, especially in the use of the vocabulary of the embrace associated with singing. In fact, the viewer can only be sympathetic to the visual rendering of this scene that still manages to bring together two lovers separated for so many years. If we examine the passage in more detail, we see that verbs such as ἔχειν or λαμβάνειν are often repeated by characters, like a refrain that punctuates the song of the reunited spouses (624; 627; 630; 635; 638; 650; 652; 654; 657). But it would be rather poor from a scenic point of view to imagine that these words are only an incarnation of the reunion. Thus, we might also imagine that there existed choreography corresponding to the song and performed by Helen and Menelaos.[29] To this refrain, then, we can suppose a corresponding repetitive gesture within the dance of the actors emphasizing the physical rapprochement of the two characters during this reunion. Thus, words support acting. By virtue of its composition and the appropriate use of song and dance, Euripides consequently managed to create a powerful scene, both visually and musically, that reignited the traditional vocabulary of recognition.

Metatheatre as a Tool for Promoting a New Dramaturgical Type

In my third and final section, I will expand upon my examination of Euripides' metatheatrical remarks to show that their sole purpose was not simply to allow Euripides to make the audience attentive to the questioning or the reinvention of the codes structuring the recognition and its representation. Indeed, further examination of the vocabulary employed and the attempts to reconstitute the

29 As far as we are concerned, we think that it would be more meaningful to imagine the actors choreographically performing the gestures and the reunion they evoke repeatedly in their words. If the metre assures us about the lyrical nature of the passage, it is the properties and specificities of the theatrical performance which might suggest the need for a visual embodiment of the reunion: repetitions of words and verbs like ἔχειν or λαμβάνειν are audible for an attentive and educated audience, but would be clearer for a large public, even distracted or kept away from the stage.

staging of this reunion encourage us to consider these metatheatrical remarks as a kind of manifesto in action, advocating an aesthetics of the surprise and the spectacular.

First, I would like to mention the very frequent use by Euripides of terms highlighting the incredible and unexpected dimension of the events represented and their implementation onstage. To this point, we will report terms such as ἄπιστος, ἀνέλπιστος, or ἀδόκητος, which are far more prevalent in the Euripidean corpus relative to their use by Aeschylus or Sophocles.[30] Similarly, the terms of the θαῦμα family are overrepresented by Euripides, highlighting association with the visual dimension of the tragic event.[31]

Furthermore, some Euripidean plays show the poet as the craftsman of an extraordinary plot full of twists. For example, *Helen*'s last verses emphasize the role of the poet in the dramatic construction of the tragedy and his desire to promote sudden changes of circumstance.[32]

Χο. Πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,
πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·
τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκήτων πόρον ηὗρε θεός.
Τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

Chorus. – Many are the forms of divinities, and many things the gods bring to pass unhoped for. And what was expected has not been fulfilled; for what was not expected, a god finds a way. Such was the result of this action.

30 15 occurrences of ἄπιστος in Euripides: *Ion* 751; 1608; *Hel.* 1148; 1520; *Hec.* 689; *Suppl.* 479; *El.* 350; *HF* 1017. See note 38 for occurrences in *IT*. In comparison, only 2 occurrences in Sophocles: *Ajax* 683 and *Phil.* 868, and 6 occurrences in Aeschylus: *Suppl.* 277; *Prom.* 832; Sept. 842; 846; 876; 1030. 10 occurrences of ἀδόκητος in Euripides: *Alc.* 1162; *Med.* 1418; *Andr.* 1287; *HF* 92; *Ion* 1448; *IT* 896; *Hel.* 657; 1691; *Phoen.* 311; *Bacch.* 1391. In comparison, only 1 occurrence in Sophocles: *OC* 249, and none in Aeschylus. 5 occurrences of ἀνέλπιστος in Euripides: *Ion* 1395; *El.* 570; *IT* 1495; *Hel.* 412; 1143. In comparison, only 2 occurrences in Sophocles: *Trach.* 673; *El.* 186 and 1 occurrence in Aeschylus: *Suppl.* 330.

31 As an example, 23 occurrences of θαῦμα in Euripides, 10 in Sophocles and 2 in Aeschylus.

32 Eur. *Hel.* 1688–1692. Many Euripidean plays end with similar verses; see for instance: *Alc.* 1159–1163; *Andr.* 1284–1288; *Bacch.* 1388–1392; see also the use of slightly different verses in *Med.* 1415–1419.

The use of the term θεός in the singular (1691) after plural uses (1688; 1689) in the preceding lines also shows us that Euripides amused himself by emphasizing the essential role of the poet as architect of the plot and master of the destiny of his characters.[33]

Moreover, we can say that the dramatic composition plays a preponderant role in the new aesthetics advocated by Euripides. The *Ion* illustrates this well, since we can observe that the composition of this tragedy is very elaborate and is constructed with a mirrored structure. In other words, each scene is either duplicated or put in opposition to another. This is the case with the recognition: the real recognition appears in the *exodos* and serves as a response to the false recognition between Xouthos and Ion in the second episode. This means that the composition of the work itself encourages the viewer to remember and compare the two scenes. From then on, the understanding and interpretation of the tragedy, even unconsciously, takes place in view of the significance produced by the confrontation of these scenes and their visual and aural properties. It should be noted that the term μεταβολή, particularly used later by Aristotle to talk about reversals induced by events and recognitions, appears only in the Euripidean corpus.[34] At the end of the play, for example, Ion associates with Fate the participle of the verb μεταβάλλω.[35] His metatheatrical comment shows within the play that its plot is surprising and full of unpredictable twists.

Ιω. Ὦ μεταβαλοῦσα μυρίους ἤδη βροτῶν
καὶ δυστυχῆσαι καὖθις αὖ πρᾶξαι καλῶς,
Τύχη, παρ' οἵαν ἤλθομεν στάθμην βίου
μητέρα φονεῦσαι καὶ παθεῖν ἀνάξια. (1515)
Φεῦ·

33 The idea of proximity between the poet and the divinity, especially Apollo, is recurrent in Greek poetry, for example in the Presocratics or Pindar. See for example Pindar's *Olymp*. 3.6–7; 11.8–9; *Nem*. 4.42.

Maybe this passage is also an allusion to the subject of Plato's *Ion*, in which the philosopher discusses lyric inspiration and the art of the craftsman: Euripides might suggest, against Plato, that poetry is not just about divine inspiration, but altogether a gift from the god and a τέχνη improved by the author.

Later, the proximity between the poet as a lyric creator and the divinity appears for examples in Callimachus' *Hymns*.

34 8 occurrences of μεταβολή in Euripides' complete plays and 6 in the fragments. See *HF* 735; 1292; *Tro*. 615; *Or*. 234; *IT* 722; *Bacch*. 1266; *IA* 500; 1101. In comparison, 2 occurrences in contexts of citing Aeschylus' fragments *apud* Plut. *De E apud Delphos* 9.389a; *Demetr*. 35.4, and none in the Sophoclean corpus.

35 Eur. *Ion* 1512–1519.

Ἆρ' ἐν φαενναῖς ἡλίου περιπτυχαῖς
ἔνεστι πάντα τάδε καθ' ἡμέραν μαθεῖν ;
Φίλον μὲν οὖν σ' εὕρημα, μῆτερ, ηὕρομεν,
καὶ τὸ γένος οὐδὲν μεμπτόν, ὡς ἡμῖν, τόδε·

Ion. – O Fortune, you that have already changed the lives of countless mortals, involving them in ills, and raising them to happiness again, to what a point of life had I come, ready to kill my mother and suffer unworthily. Ah! Is it possible to learn all this day by day, in the sun's bright encircling rays? I have made a dear find in you, mother; nor do I see anything to blame in my birth.

The reversal of the final situation allowed by the interventions of the Pythia and Athena (i.e. the recognition) is made significant explicitly by the playwright through a specific metatheatrical remark. But I will even go so far as to say that the very structure of the play and the mention of the recognition's vocabulary also alert us to the possibility that it is thematized within the dramatic structure itself.

As a final example, I will examine the recognition scene of *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Indeed, the metatheatrical remarks that punctuate the scene show that the goal of Euripides in this passage was to create a new visual *tableau*.[36] The poet underlined the unexpected and prodigious mood of the reunion through his unprecedented staging.

Ορ. Ὦ φιλτάτη μοι σύγγον', ἐκπεπληγμένος (795)
ὅμως σ' ἀπίστῳ περιβαλὼν βραχίονι
ἐς τέρψιν εἶμι, πυθόμενος θαυμάστ' ἐμοί.

Orestes. – My dearest sister, with what astonishment and delight I hold you in my unbelieving arms, after learning these marvels![37]

Ιφ. Ὦ κρεῖσσον ἢ λόγοισιν εὐτυχοῦσά μου
ψυχά, τί φῶ ; Θαυμάτων
πέρα καὶ λόγου πρόσω τάδ' ἀπέβα. (840)

Iphigenia. – O my soul, you have been more fortunate than words can say. I have come upon things that are beyond wonder, far from speech.

In support of my hypothesis, I will highlight the seven occurrences of the adjective ἄπιστος in this tragedy alone.[38] Indeed, after Iphigenia's doubt and surprise, and after Orestes' proof of identity, the playwright chose not to interrupt the

36 Eur. *IT* 795–797 and 837–840.
37 All translations of Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris* are by Robert Potter; see Oates/O'Neill (1938).
38 *IT* 328; 388; 782; 796; 1293; 1298; 1476.

reunion, but rather to extend it. The public then attends a kind of pause in dramatic time created by Iphigenia's monody; it breaks the course of the action in an attempt to restore the chronology between the past events Iphigenia knows of and the incredible present situation in which she finds herself. By this dramaturgical process of decomposing the recognition into several steps, and by having recourse to the monody, Euripides not only stages the cognitive difficulty in achieving the recognition, but he also underlines the power of singing over the partial ineffectiveness of speech. Now, once again, it must be emphasized that if there was a song performed on the Athenian theatre's stage, a choreography would have completed it. And via two metatheatrical remarks made by the coryphaeus and then by Pylades, Euripides emphasizes the extraordinary and unprecedented properties of the scene that just unfolded.[39]

Χο. Ἐν τοῖσι θαυμαστοῖσι καὶ μύθων πέρα (900)
τάδ' εἶδον αὐτὴ κοὐ κλύουσ' ἀπ' ἀγγελων.
Πυ. Τὸ μὲν φίλους ἐλθόντας εἰς ὄψιν φίλων,
Ὀρέστα, χειρῶν περιβολὰς εἰκὸς λαβεῖν·

Chorus Leader. – It is marvelous and surpasses a fable, this event that I myself have seen and shall relate, not as hearsay.
Pylades. – When friends come into the sight of friends, Orestes, it is reasonable to embrace.

My suggestion is to view in the conclusion of the chorus support for an unprecedented show, or better yet, an unprecedented *tableau*. First, the performance of a song and its choreography, and second, the use of the dual[40] at the end of Iphigenia's monody both suggest the prolongation of the pathetic effect with an embrace. To the agitation of the monody there corresponds a similarly moving silent and static scene. The theatricality of the stage is then accentuated by the words of the chorus and Pylades, a sort of echo to the astonishment or admiration of the stage by the spectators. But even more, and this is all the strength of the use of metatheatre in this scene, the words of the coryphaeus insist on the unspeakable nature of such a moment (900). However, to observe the ineffectiveness of speech in describing such an emotion only further emphasizes the power and efficacy of the constructed scene and its spectacle, that is to say, the visual *tableau* produced.

We have seen that Euripides made surprise and wonder an essential element of his dramaturgy, which he elaborated by commenting on it. Importantly, we

39 Eur. *IT* 900–903.
40 Eur. *IT* 898.

have also seen that it is not wholly appropriate to consider these metatheatrical remarks as simple intra-scenic echoes to the feelings and astonishment of the public. These remarks reveal furthermore that Euripides utilized them in order to integrate his spectators into his process of reinvention of the recognition scene's traditional staging. In this way, the audience was better equipped to understand the different degrees of meaning of the representation and can better appreciate its effects.

Conclusion

Thus, this study of the four recognition tragedies shows that the repeated treatment of this pattern by Euripides in his final works is not redundant. It consists instead of dramaturgical experimentation emphasized by the many metatheatrical remarks punctuating the tragedies. The repetition of the *topos* must therefore be understood as a means for the playwright to question his theatrical practice and to innovate in the field. In addition, the examples discussed above have shown us that the metatheatre, as it is implemented in Euripidean tragedies, is not theoretical. It does not express itself in the reflexive mode and does not evoke the theatre and its properties in general. The tools for stage performance – such as props, costumes, visual and sound effects of a *tableau*, a monody or its choreography – are at the heart of Euripides' dramaturgy. The effect of these scenes and innovations on the audience is also highlighted by the author's use of the metatheatre. In this sense, it consists rather in a singular dramaturgical practice, elaborated in taking itself as an object.

However, we observe that Euripides did not use a single, unique metatheatrical tool in each tragedy to put his dramaturgical practice and innovation into perspective. In fact, the tragedies studied are very different, whether in their structure or in their treatments of recognition. Yet, even though they might have operated in varying degrees and modes, Euripides utilized in each of them the two levels of the theatrical work: the structural level, which gives meaning to the arrangement of the scenes in relation to each other; and the scenic level, which makes wholly meaningful visual and aural languages, for example by the use of singing and of the scenic *tableau*.

In addition, we have seen that the recurrent use of metatheatrical remarks consists of a kind of accompaniment of the spectators by the playwright, integrated in a subtle way into the economy of the play. Euripides made his audience more attentive to the strictly theatrical properties of his tragedies, which generated a more active and intense participation in the show on the part of the

spectators. We are therefore very far from a reflexive or elitist conception of metatheatre, which would be addressed only to a small number of scholars particularly fond of drama. Euripides' metatheatrical approach allowed his audience to live the theatrical performance in all its richness and to adopt willingly a new type of dramaturgy, more focused on πάθος and surprises – a type of dramaturgy which was, in a word, more spectacular.

Pascale Brillet-Dubois

'The Mask of Troy: Metatheatre in the Prologue and Final *kommos* of Euripides' *Troades*'

When it comes to Euripides' *Trojan Women*, metatheatre tends to be confused with metapoetry. The play's structure at first sight seems straightforward, to the point that it has been deemed too linear or undramatic. It does not attract much attention, whereas allusions to the Muse and to new hymns in the first stasimon, as well as other self-reflexive songs and dances, are at the core of an important discussion about the specificity of tragic lament.[1] I will therefore seek to contribute to this volume's debate on metatheatre by focusing on aspects of dramaturgy and performance that imply not only language or reference to poetry but, potentially, also spectacular and complex effects which combine different media and appeal to all the senses.[2] I hope to demonstrate that this play's metatheatricality makes it much more theatrical, in fact, than has been established so far.

The Trojan Women was performed in 415 BC at the Great Dionysia, a few months after the sack of Melos and after several months of debate about the expedition to Sicily. In my reading, which is based on a renewed analysis of its poetics and staging, this play is not only a universal and poignant representation of war's impact on a community,[3] but also a highly topical work addressing contemporary events before an audience composed of the Athenians, their allies and, very probably, seated in the front rows, the Egestan ambassadors who arrived at Athens at the end of the winter.[4] By competing in the *agon* of the Dionysia, Euripides offers

1 *Tr.* 511–512. See Torrance (2013) 218–245, and before her Segal (1993), Loraux (1999).

2 This paper is a small part of the dramaturgical commentary I am devoting to Euripides' *Trojan Women*, to be published in the *Commentario* collection of the Belles Lettres.

3 See for example Poole (1976); di Benedetto (1992); Loraux (1999); Dué (2006).

4 Thuc. 6.8. A lot has been written on Euripides and Athenian history. Though I often disagree with the systematic historicist approach of Delebecque (1951) and Goossens (1962), I find that their postulate – Euripides stages myths and characters that are related to contemporary events – has been discarded rather than refuted (see for example Zuntz (1972), which has been influential in the debate). I do not agree with the argument that the poet did not have the time to compose his tragedy between the sack of Melos (automn of 416) and the Dionysia (early spring of 415) nor to take into the account the idea of an expedition to Sicily, for 1) Euripides was used to composing at least four plays a year, 2) Thucydides reports that debates about sailing to Sicily had started before winter.

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this most elaborate tragedy to Dionysos in order, I believe, to obtain the god's protection for his city, a city prone to impiety and *hubris* in its role as leader of the Delian league. He also appeals to his fellow citizens for purification of the crimes committed in Melos and for caution in the hazardous conquest of Sicily.

To this end, he makes complex use of the Trojan fiction, inviting the Athenians into a double identification. On the one hand, as the descendants of the Theseids who participated in the Trojan war and as sackers of cities, they can easily relate to the Greek victors to whom Ilion's captives are allotted. On the other hand, Euripides assimilates the Athenians to the Trojan women by different means, so that Troy becomes an *exemplum* of the catastrophe that might await them, notwithstanding their present greatness, should they be defeated in the Peloponnesian war.[5] The relationship of the Trojan myth to Athens' recent history is thus comparable to the one created by the actors' masks, which cover Athenian heads with the faces of sometimes Trojan, sometimes Greek characters. My hypothesis is that in this play more than in others, Euripides bars the audience from giving themselves up to the distraction of the performance, or from forgetting the reality beneath the mask. In this he maintains a degree of self-awareness. I will try to demonstrate this by commenting on a few elements of the prologue and the *exodos*, which are the moments when Euripides first places his mask of words upon the Athenian theatre and then finally takes it off to confront his fellow citizens with the spectacle of their own reality. I will thus be focusing, as O. Taplin put it during the conference, on transitions between the diffused performance and the core-performance.

Poseidon is the first speaking character to appear on stage. A woman lies there, whom he will soon designate as Hecuba for the benefit of 'whoever wishes to look' (εἴ τις εἰσορᾶν θέλει, v. 36) – thus establishing a relation of connivance with the other onlookers in the *theatron*. As for him, he is probably easy to recognize thanks to his costume and attributes, thanks also to the fact that he appears on the roof of the *skene*, so the revealing of his name is not delayed (ἥκω λιπὼν Αἰγαῖον ἁλμυρὸν βάθος / πόντου Ποσειδῶν: 'I am Poseidon, and I have come here from the briny depths of the Aegean', vv. 1–2).[6] The speaker then sets out to disguise the space, if I may say so. The location of the drama, designated by a deictic, will be the Trojan land (τήνδε Τρωικὴν χθόνα, v. 4). We cannot be sure that the actor gestured to underline his words, but the simple fact of his standing up on the roof to pronounce them includes at least the lower part

5 Croally (1994); Brillet-Dubois (2010).

6 I have made free use of D. Kovacs's translation in this paper.

of the *theatron* in the range of the deictic.[7] Then he mentions 'these roofs' (ὑπὸ στέγαις / ταῖσδ(ε), vv. 32–33), which turns the *skene* into one of the tents in the Greek camp where the Trojan captives are held. However, the plural and the emphasis laid on the deictic by the enjambment may imply reference to a larger space, including the other rooftop visible to the audience, i.e. that of the recently built Odeon, which happens to be modelled on the tent of Xerxes.[8] Pericles conceived it as a monument to the defeat of the king of Persia and had it erected at the bottom of the acropolis, which he had sacked. The hypothesis that this other rooftop is implied by Euripides seems all the more likely since not all the Trojan women mentioned by Poseidon vv. 32–35 will enter the stage through the door of the *skene*: the chariot carrying Andromache, her son and her spouse's spoils will arrive from the tent of Neoptolemus using one of the *eisodoi*.[9] If I am right, then it is the complex of buildings facing the audience that is defined as the stage set. Euripides would thus be subtly calling attention to Xerxes, the fallen sacker of Athens, as Poseidon proceeds to denounce the crimes of the Greeks and foretell their punishment.

Enunciation enhances these processes of identification as the god, v. 45, addresses the *polis* and its walls in the second person and bids them farewell. Now *polis*, to an Athenian ear, can designate both a political group of citizens and, much more specifically, Athens' acropolis. The character facing not only this acropolis and its walls but also the crowd of the Athenians might thus seem to be addressing Athens, and from there, it is not only the *orchestra*, the *skene* and the Odeon which constitute the setting of the play, but the whole theatre and the hill behind it.

The way Euripides uses the mythical tradition complements these enunciative phenomena. In accordance with Homeric *epos*, the god reminds the audience that he and Apollo have built Troy's walls (vv. 4–6). In the *Iliad*, though, this episode was the starting point of Poseidon's unquenchable hatred towards the Trojans.[10] Here, on the contrary, the god makes the most surprising statement: since he has completed this labor, he has felt nothing but benevolence towards them (εὔνοι(α), v. 7, is delayed and emphasized by the enjambment). This innovation, which might be ironically and metapoetically signalled by the

7 On theatrical gestrure, see Capponi's chapter in this volume.

8 Plut. *Per.* 13.9.

9 The examination of entrances and exits in the play allows us to consider that Euripides chose the Western *eisodos* – which in real Athens led to the Piraeus – as the way to reach the off-stage Greek ships. Andromache, who crosses the *orchestra* before leaving Troy to embark, would therefore be coming from the Eastern *eisodos* and the vicinity of the Odeon.

10 *Il.* 21.458–460.

use of the word *kanon* just before the playwright bends the tradition, has never been actually interpreted, even though Euripides' mythical twist is as paradoxical as if in a World War II fiction Hitler appeared to say he had always been a great friend of the Poles! In fact, it turns Poseidon into the defeated opponent of Hera and Athena, as he admits in vv. 24–25, which greatly affects the interpretation of the spectacle. For when Athena appears next to her uncle in the second part of the divine prologue, she forms with him a pair of former enemies who have fought over a city and who now switch alliances to punish its conquerors.

Both visually and thematically, this tableau resembles the imagery of the conflict over Attica. I believe we can even go further and see here a visual allusion to one specific image, that of the recently finished pediment of the Parthenon. In order to explain my reasoning, I need to go back a few lines. When Poseidon explains how Troy was taken and mentions the wooden horse, he adds two strange lines which refer to the present of the audience (ὅθεν πρὸς ἀνδρῶν ὑστέρων κεκλήσεται / δούρειος ἵππος, κρυπτὸν ἀμπισχὼν δόρυ: 'whence among later men, it will be called the *doureios* horse, for it held in its flanks a hidden spear (*doru*)', vv. 13–14).[11] The *doureios hippos* is known, thanks to Aristophanes, Pausanias and archeology, to be a colossal bronze statue of the Trojan horse erected on the platform of the Acropolis some time just before 415.[12] It represented the Athenian heroes hidden inside the wooden device, just visible through little windows. Ἀνδρῶν ὑστέρων, then, refers to none other than the Athenians, whom Euripides invites to gather imaginarily on the Acropolis for a brief moment as the present intrudes into the mythical past. This short but brutal journey prepares the audience to identify the scene formed by Poseidon and Athena, standing above the door of the *skene* where a pediment would be if the facade had one: it is a replica of the Parthenon's West pediment, the one that faces whoever enters the Acropolis and who thus walks past the *doureios hippos* towards the great building.

As we can see, the prologue's communicative situation, its mythical and visual effects concur so that the Athenian audience is associated with an ambiguous victory over Troy, both glorious and excessive, as well as with the great fallen city. The whole play explores this reversal of victory and defeat, this exchange of

11 I agree with Parmentier (1923) that there is no philological reason to reject these lines. Yet they have been suppressed by most editors since Burges, in accordance with the scholiast's judgement, on the ground that the etymological figure seems a weak one and that tragedy, unlike comedy, should never breach dramatic illusion.

12 Ar. *Birds* 1128 and schol. *ad v.*; Paus. 1.23.8; *IG* I^3 895, voir Raubitschek (1949) n° 176.208–209.

roles between conquerors and conquered.[13] At the same time, the poet incorporates within his tragic fiction a set of references to recent realities, events, objects, buildings, which makes the process of dramatic illusion more complex. He thereby keeps at least some of the spectators aware of the time and place of the performance, just as the specificities of an actor's voice or figure might prevent the audience from forgetting his presence under the mask.

There are many other poetic and visual ways in which Euripides suggests in the course of the tragedy that his Trojan drama is also or actually an Athenian and Melian one, but they exceed the limits of this article, so I will skip straight to the second part of the *exodos*, which in the circular construction of the play echoes the prologue in many ways. Once Astyanax has been mourned and taken away for burial, only Hecuba and the women of the chorus have yet to be led away. Talthybios the herald warns them that they must leave for the Greek ships when the trumpet rings (vv. 1266–1267) and that the queen must follow Odysseus' men (vv. 1269–1271). But before that, he orders his soldiers to set Troy's acropolis on fire for the last time (vv. 1260–1264).

It is not easy to determine where those fires are located in the theatre – in the event that they are in fact to be seen and not merely imagined. The chorus calls attention to them and Hecuba tries to throw herself into the flames and so die with her city. So either they are lit in the back of the audience, at the top of the *theatron*, and the assimilation between Athens' and Troy's sacred hills is made even more obvious than before, or we must assume that the stage set changes and that the function of the *skene* switches to represent Troy instead of the Greek tents.[14] However bold and original, this latter option is not to be excluded. The change would occur at verse 1256 between two sets of choral anapests and the fires would be lit either inside or on the roof of the building. The reversal from Agamemnon's tent to the Trojan acropolis would be consistent with the reflexive relation between victory and defeat constantly suggested in the rest of the play. As for Hecuba's attempt to enter the building lit by flames, it would be a neat reminder of Cassandra's exit in the first episode, for the torches she waved had Talthybios worrying that the Trojan slaves might try to commit suicide (vv. 298–303). With this choice of staging, the audience facing Troy would have to adopt Poseidon's perspective in the prologue. This is, as will soon become clear, the reason why I have a slight preference for this hypothesis.

13 Croally (1994).

14 For a discussion, see Lee, K. (1976); Biehl (1989); Kovacs (2018) *ad v*.

Be that as it may, the combination of the fire and of the dispersal of the women indicates the end of Troy (vv. 1277–1280), and more specifically the disappearance of its name (τὸ κλεινὸν ὄνομ' ἀφαιρήσῃ τάχα: 'you will soon be deprived of your illustrious name!', v. 1278). As Hecuba sees it, once the captives are scattered and the city burned to the ground, there will be no Trojan community left, and no recognizable location that might still bear the name of Troy. Yet the use of ἀφαιρέω, 'to take off or away', allows the spectators to hear also something else: these two actions prepare the moment when the stage will lose its fictitious and temporary name and the mask of Troy will be taken off.

At this point starts the final *kommos*, which is a poignant song of farewell. Hecuba, who has been prevented by the Greek soldiers from committing suicide, implores Zeus, asking whether he sees Troy's sufferings. Then she kneels down to call upon the Earth and the dead, and the women of the chorus join her. Finally, she addresses the temples of the gods and the city, echoing Poseidon in the prologue (vv. 45–47), before being set in motion by a noise.

The song presents certain metrical and enunciative peculiarities which have been considered anomalous and thus have been corrected by all modern editors, starting with Seidler and Kirchhoff in the 19th century. The composition is a complex one indeed. At first sight, the song comprises first a non-strophic section[15] which is nevertheless divided in two, as is underlined by the duplication of ὀττοτοτοτοῖ (1287; 1294), then a pair of strophes which, if one considers the text of the manuscripts, do not strictly abide by the rules of the *responsio*. There are a few metrical flaws, some of which are likely to be errors, but the most remarkable thing is that cues are not distributed evenly between the strophe and the antistrophe. As Enrico Medda justly points out, in this type of matter, manuscripts are not to be blindly trusted, as the habit of indicating changes of speakers is a late one, yet he also stresses the fact that editors' decisions are guided by the idea they have of what is occurring on stage.[16] In this case, according to a normative conception of the *responsio* and of the place of the chorus in the *exodos*, Seidler and Kirchhoff, followed by all subsequent editors, assumed against the unanimous tradition that the manuscripts omitted character names in places, even though they do signal them elsewhere. They redistributed the cues in order to obtain the same pattern in both strophes and to have the chorus say the last verses of the tragedy, which is the general habit, at least in the remaining plays as we know them.[17] But apart from the fact that the final *kommos* does not go by what

15 Biehl (1989) largely rewrites the text to create a strophic structure.

16 Medda (2013) 287.

17 Among the plays whose final verses present no textual nor cue-related issues, only *Prom. B.* and *Ag.* have characters other than the chorus speak last.

we have come to define as the conventions of the genre, there is nothing inconsistent in the text as it is transmitted by the manuscripts.[18] So the actual question here is that of the poet's liberty to create significant effects by disturbing the *responsio* and the audience's expectations. What if modern editors were here more inclined than medieval copyists to normalize rather than to interpret the unordinary? What if the *lectio difficilior* was preferable?

As a matter of fact, Seidler's and Kirchhoff's corrections conflict with another principle of composition: the ring composition of verses 1285 to 1332. A close look at the text of manuscript P, considered by many editors as our best source, reveals that the cues, regardless of their length, are distributed in a symmetrical fashion. Talthybios's initial injunctions are repeated in the imperative form in the last verses, the difference being that Hecuba regains some dignity by commanding her own limbs to carry her, whereas the herald ordered the guards to escort her. Then each of the queen's and the chorus's cues is echoed in reverse order after v. 1310. Themes and wordings are also repeated: a question to an audience (1290; 1325), the disappearance of Troy (οὔδ' ἔτ' ἐστι Τροία: 1292; 1323–1324), blazing Ilion turning into an invisible name (Λέλαμπεν Ἴλιος: 1295; Ὄνομα δὲ γᾶς ἀφανὲς εἶσιν: 1322), smoke flying up in the air (1298; 1320), fire and spear (1300–1301; 1318), a call to the dead children mirrored by a call to the dead husband (1302–1304; 1312–1316), a double injuction from Hecuba to her companions (κλύετε, μάθετε: 1303; Ἀγόμεθα, φερόμεθ(α): 1310). At the heart of the structure are verses 1305–1309, in which the women of the chorus say that they are kneeling down to imitate their old queen and are invoking the Earth. The disturbing thing is that this ring composition does not coincide with the strophic system, nor even with the limits of the song, as it comprises verses 1284–1286 spoken by Talthybios. The *kommos* is, in effect, slightly off-center. My interpretation of this anomaly is that it allows and enhances an extraordinary metatheatrical effect.[19]

Let us now focus on the chorus's last words as they appear in P. Verses 1318–1324 end with the sentence οὐδέ τ' ἔστιν / ἃ τάλαινα Τροία, which echoes, as we have just seen, v. 1292 in the ring composition. Preceded by ὄνομα δὲ γᾶς ἀφανὲς εἶσιν· ἄλλᾳ δ' / ἄλλο φροῦδον ('The name of our land will be invisible; it's all gone, / scattered!'), it has a conclusive and final tenor. The shift from the future to the present tense stresses the completion of the name's gradual disappearance, which started v. 1278.[20] Ashes and smoke have hidden Ilion and prevented its identification.[21] It is now an invisible, secret name. This being the

18 See the appendix showing the text of P.

19 On the metatheatrality of meter and music, see Di Virgilio in this volume.

20 On closure words and completion, see in this volume Taplin, pp. 24–25 and n. 10–11.

21 See Wohl (2018).

case, v. 1324 is the last time Troy's name is pronounced in the play. The manuscripts have the reading οὐδέ τ(ε) ἔστιν, 'and wretched Troy doesn't even exist', which was later corrected to οὐδ' ἔτ' ἔστιν 'and wretched Troy does not exist anymore'. To be sure, there is little chance that the spectator would draw a firm distinction between the two phrases while the song is being performed. The audience might perceive a sentence concluding the tragedy of Troy's annihilation, a peak of tragic *pathos*, as well as a metatheatrical statement about the non-existence of the mythical city enhancing awareness that the tragedy was fictitious. Thus, as V. Wohl notices, language conveys the same kind of mixture of materiality and immateriality, absence and presence as smoke and ashes, which are and are not Troy,[22] and the audience stands at this point in an intermediary zone between fiction and reality.

The play could end on this ambiguous verse, if it were not for the strophic structure that implies that the tragedy is not over yet. Hecuba's questions follow (ἐμάθετ', ἐκλύετε; 'Do you understand? Do you hear?', v. 1325), which correspond in the ring composition to her address to Zeus (Κρόνιε (. . .) /τάδ' οἷα πάσχομεν δέδορκας; 'Son of Cronos, (. . .) do you see the things we suffer?', vv. 1288–1290). At first, a reader may get the impression that the queen is asking about the chorus's last words, but she goes on by giving the two verbs an object, and it becomes clear that the performance implied the hearing of a thunderous noise: περγάμων κτύπων, 'These are the sounds of Pergamon', κτύπων being emphasized, if we accept the manuscripts' text, by a syncope, or maybe preceded by γε as Seidler suggested. Then the word ἔνοσις narrows down the nature and meaning of this noise without, however, resolving its ambiguity: we do not know whether Hecuba refers to the crash of the crumbling fortress or to an earthquake shaking the city and expressing Poseidon's anger – for he is traditionally called ἐνοσίχθων – or to the shaking produced by the captives' feet as they leave – for κτύπος can be said of the trampling of feet[23] and ὠθέω, from which ἔνοσις derives, means 'to push someone forward'. What we do know is what the noise corresponds to in the ring composition, for when Hecuba asked Zeus, the divine onlooker: δέδορκας; 'Do you see?' – in itself a metatheatrical effect –, the Trojan women replied bitterly: Δέδορκεν. 'He sees alright', and went on lamenting the fact that Troy was nevertheless being destroyed. It would therefore be logical to find just before the mirroring questions 'Do you understand, do you hear?' something that might at the same time confirm the presence of a divine audience and express the city's final annihilation.

22 Wohl (2018) 25–33.

23 *Od.* 16.6. See also the κτυπέω, AR.

From the material point of view, I see three elements that might produce the sound. The most obvious one is the *bronteion*, this metallic instrument which makes a thunderous noise and which, according to Pollux, is sometimes used to indicate a divine intervention.[24] Pessimistic spectators attuned to the despair expressed by the Trojan women can consider that what they are hearing is nothing but the fall of the mortal city and thus can presume that the gods are indifferent. Or, remembering the prologue, they can attribute the noise to Poseidon, conclude that Hecuba's prayers are about to be answered (if not by Zeus, then by another son of Cronos), and hope that the Greeks are about to be punished for their crimes. But Bacchylides also dubs as κτύπος the sound of the trumpet.[25] Now Talthybios has announced that the *salpinx* would ring to signal departure (v. 1267), and it makes great sense that it should resonate now, forbidding the chorus to say another word and forcing them to exit, maybe with trampling feet. That the manuscripts hereafter attribute the last lines to the herald and not, as expected, to the women could be a neat manifestation of their change of condition from freedom to slavery (v. 1330) and of the abnormal power that the Greeks exert over the stage, just as Clytemnestra silences the chorus's voice at the very end of *Agamemnon* in a symbolic act of illegitimate *kratos*.

It is not at all unlikely that both the *salpinx* and the *bronteion* should be used at this point, each instrument having its signification within the fiction; their combination would associate mortal and potentially divine actions. Yet I believe we should also take into consideration a third possibility. Assuming that the *kommos* is off-center, that its beginning is non-strophic and the *responsio* in the strophic part irregular, it might cause some of the spectators, when they hear the conclusive line of the chorus, to think that the tragedy is over, especially if it is followed by a musical suspension of some sort and the women start leaving the stage at the sound of the trumpet. Just as it happens today that in classical or jazz concerts people applaud before a piece is over, between the movements of a symphony, or when the band slows down almost to a stop, I believe it is possible that Euripides gives the audience the time and opportunity to mistakenly stomp their feet or clap as if the tragedy had ended. The *ktupos* heard by Hecuba would thus come also from the *theatron* and merge with the mortal and divine characters' actions.

Now, if we contemplate this hypothesis and the possible overlap between core-performance and diffused performance – to use O. Taplin's words –,[26]

24 Poll. 4.127.

25 *Paian* F1.75 Irigoin.

26 See Taplin in this volume, pp. 21–28.

the queen's questions take on a new ring. They are not only spoken to the chorus, who is leaving, nor to Talthybios or the gods, but also to the spectactors who are drawn into the action and whose position now equals that of the internal audience. 'Do you understand', she is asking the Athenians, 'that Troy does not exist and that it is your story we are telling? Do you hear that you have a part to play in the barely disguised drama we are performing for you?'. The name of Troy has vanished, but once the chorus has revealed its emptiness, it gives way to the noun Pergamon (v. 1325), which is both a proper name for the Trojan acropolis and a common term designating any fortress, then to πόλις (v. 1326) which, as we have seen, can designate any city but in Athens names specifically the sacred hill now shaken by the noise coming from the *theatron*. Troy thus gradually becomes Athens, until ἁ τάλαινα Τροία (v. 1324) is replaced in Talthybios's words with ἰὼ τάλαινα πόλις (v. 1331).

This revelation of the reality hidden by the fiction is enhanced by a reminder of vv. 8–9 and vv. 13–14, concerning the enemies' weapons and the *doureios hippos*. For, just as the horse was called *doureios* because it held a hidden spear, *doru*, the temples and the Trojan city hold another spear (v. 1318, ἔχετε . . . δορός τε λόγχαν). I think Euripides here reveals the cryptic and allusive nature of his tragedy, suggesting that Athenians were hiding in his stage set as they are in the Acropolis statue. He thus brings his audience back to the present of the performance and out of the fiction.

By associating the noisy stomping or clapping of a part of the audience to the sound of the *bronteion* and of the trumpet, the poet gives his spectators and fellow-citizens a choice: will they endorse the part of the crumbling city, or persist in acting as the Greeks, enslaving women, killing innocents and provoking the wrath of their city's divine patrons? Will they look down on the victims of their power as an indifferent Zeus or will they adopt Poseidon's perspective, his benevolence towards the vanquished and severity towards the impious victors? The answer does not belong within the play, but neither do the disastrous return of the Greeks nor the vengeance of the Trojan women foretold by the gods in the prologue and by Cassandra in the first episode.[27] Euripides does not predict what will come out of his unsettling show. Yet, with Hecuba's questions repeating her injunctions of v. 1303, he suggests that his contemporaries imitate the women of the myth as the chorus imitated the old queen when she asked them to 'hear and understand [their] mother's voice' (κλύετε, μάθετε ματρὸς

27 Eur. *Tr.* 75–94; 425–461.

αὐδάν).[28] Maybe they too should kneel down to implore Gaia and the other gods of the Acropolis, if not in mourning, then as a prayer for forgiveness and purification from their crimes.

In this most elaborate composition and staging, what is at stake is a duality experience very similar to that of Pentheus in the *Bacchae*: it is when they see double that the spectators 'see what [they] must see',[29] or rather when they see both the masks and the faces united in the same reality, a Trojan drama that is also their own. I suggest that Euripides inscribes this reflexivity in the *exodos* by introducing one more structural twist. According to P, just before the *kommos* as Hecuba tries to die in the fire with her homeland (σὺν τῇδε πατρίδι . . . πυρουμένῃ, v. 1283), the chorus says to her: 'You are possessed, poor woman, with your own misfortunes!' (Ἐνθουσιᾷς, δύστηνε, τοῖς σαυτῆς κακοῖς, v. 1284). V has an interesting variant attributed to Talthybios: 'You are possessed, poor woman, with the same misfortunes!' (Ἐνθουσιᾷς, δύστηνε, τοῖς αὐτοῖς κακοῖς). The sentence is more difficult and seems to link Hecuba's miseries to that of the land and city she has always embodied but is not allowed to perish with.[30] Editors choose to keep P's text while giving the line to Talthybios, who would thus be thwarting Hecuba's insane gesture while expressing his sympathy to her (δύστηνε) and making sure to secure his masters' property, both things that he does again in the final verses of the play. This is enough, I believe, to contemplate that the line might be the first element of the ring composition of the *kommos*. It should then have an equivalent after what is for us the last verse of the play. But the tragedy, in a way, is one sentence short. In its place, there is nothing on stage but silence and emptiness, creating a moment at which the spectators are meant to acknowledge that during the performance, they have been looking at the Athenian theatre, Athenian actors and chorus members, even maybe the smoke of Athenian sacrifices coming from the altar of Dionysos behind the *skene*, and that they themselves have been part of the drama. At the end of a ritual that is supposed to have summoned the god's presence among them, speaking is now up to them. It is the jury's turn to reveal by their vote as to whether or not the lesson that Euripides has been staging has been understood and heard; it is the Athenians' turn to show whether they are positively inspired by the Dionysiac spectacle of 'their own misfortunes', or possessed with suicidal frenzy.

28 *Tr.* 1303. For this self-reflexiveness of choral performance, see in this volume Bierl p. 107 ff., and its bibliography.

29 *Bacch.* 924.

30 It can also be understood by comparison with the Cassandra scene, for the prophetess was described several times as being in a state of Bacchic trance: *Tr.* 170; 172; 307; 341; 349; 408.

Appendix: *Tro.* 1284–1332 The *kommos* According to Ms P

Χο . ἐνθουσιᾷς, δύστηνε, τοῖς σαυτῆς κακοῖς.
Τα. ἀλλ' ἄγετε, μὴ φείδεσθ'· Ὀδυσσέως δὲ χρὴ (1285)
ἐς χεῖρα δοῦναι τήνδε καὶ πέμπειν γέρας.
Εκ. ὀττοτοτοτοῖ.
Κρόνιε, πρύτανι Φρύγιε, γενέτα
πάτερ ἀνάξια τῆς Δαρδανίου
γονᾶς, τάδ' οἷα πάσχομεν δέδορκας; (1290)
Χο. δέδορκεν· ἁ δὲ μεγαλόπολις
ἄπολις ὄλωλεν οὐδέ τ' ἔστι Τροία.
Εκ. ὀττοτοτοτοῖ.
λέλαμπεν Ἴλιος, Περ- (1295)
γάμων τε πυρὶ καταίθεται τέραμνα
καὶ πόλις ἄκρα τε τειχέων.
Χο. πτέρυγι δὲ καπνὸς ὥς τις οὐ-
ρίᾳ πεσοῦσα δορὶ καταφθίνει γᾶ.
μαλερὰ μέλαθρα πυρὶ κατάδρομα (1300)
δαΐῳ τε λόγχαι.
Εκ. ἰὼ γᾶ τρόφιμε τῶν ἐμῶν τέκνων. Str.
Χο. ἒ ἔ.
Εκ. ὦ τέκνα, κλύετε, μάθετε ματρὸς αὐδάν.
Χο. ἰαλέμῳ τοὺς θανόντας ἀπύεις
γεραιά τ' ἐς πέδον τιθεῖσα μέλεὰ (1305)
καὶ χερσὶ γαῖαν κρύπτουσα δισσαῖς.
διάδοχόν σοι γόνυ τίθημι γαίᾳ
τοὺς ἐμοὺς καλοῦσα νέρθεν
ἀθλίους ἀκοίτας.
Εκ. ἀγόμεθα φερόμεθ' Χο. ἄλγος ἄλγος βοᾷς. (1310)
Εκ. δούλειον ὑπὸ μέλαθρον. Χο. ἐκ πάτρας γ' ἐμᾶς.
Εκ. ἰὼ,
Πρίαμε Πρίαμε,
σὺ μὲν ὀλόμενος ἄταφος ἄφιλος
ἄτας ἐμᾶς ἄιστος εἶ.
μέλας γὰρ ὅσσε κατακάλυ- (1315)
ψει θάνατος ὅσιος ἀνοσίοις σφαγαῖς.
ἰὼ θεῶν μέλαθρα καὶ πόλις φίλα Ant.
Χο. ἒ ἔ.

τὰν φόνιον ἔχετε φλόγα δορός τε λόγχαν.
τάχ' ἐς φίλαν γᾶν πεσεῖσθ' ἀνώνυμοι.
κόνις δ' ἴσα καπνῷ πτέρυγι πρὸς αἰθέρα (1320)
ἄιστον οἴκων ἐμῶν με θήσει.
ὄνομα δὲ γᾶς ἀφανὲς εἶσιν· ἄλλᾳ δ'
ἄλλο φροῦδον, οὐδέ τ' ἔστιν
ἁ τάλαινα Τροία.
Εκ. ἐμάθετ', ἐκλύετε; περγάμων . . . κτύπων. (1325)
ἔνοσις ἅπασαν ἔνοσις ἐπικλύσει πόλιν.
ἰὼ
τρομερὰ τρομερὰ μέλεα, φέρετ' ἐ-
μὸν ἴχνος·
Τα. ἴτ' ἐπὶ τάλαιναν
δούλειον ἀμέραν βίου. (1330)
ἰὼ τάλαινα πόλις. ὅμως
δὲ πρόφερε πόδα σὸν ἐπὶ πλάτας Ἀχαιῶν.

Var. V: 1284 Τα. ἐνθουσιᾷς, δύστηνε, τοῖς αὐτοῖς κακοῖς.
1289 πάτερ ἄξια τᾶσδε Δαρδανου

Aristophanes, Old Comedy

Marco Vespa

‘Animal Metaphors and Metadrama. A Cultural Insight into the Verb πιθηκίζειν’

> Il verosimile ingaggia un’ambigua battaglia con l’ideale:
> gli eroi devono essere attraenti e dunque verosimilmente belli –
> dall’imitazione del vero si scivola inavvertitamente verso
> l’imitazione di un modello canonico, chi crederebbe all’amore
> tra un bellissimo masnadiero e un’impiegatuccia strabica coi denti storti?
> W. Siti, *Il realismo è l’impossibile*, 27–28

Introduction

Since it was first elaborated some fifty years ago, the notion of *metatheatre* has been the subject of numerous studies. These gradually modified its constituent features and even its name, elaborating different analytical versions according to the different historical and cultural forms of the literary phenomena under study.[1]

When taking into account all the expressions that might be defined as metadramatic, one must consider historical-literary contexts, but one must also reconstruct as accurately as possible a cultural encyclopaedia that varied over time. The words that have traditionally been at the centre of the debate regarding self-referential theatre belong to largely culturally-determined systems of relationships. Masks, *agones* or magistrates cannot be separated from a precise definition of what Athenian culture understood by those words. Otherwise, reference to these realities in the play, especially in a metadramatic context, risks not being fully understood. Our study will try to understand first of all the possible

1 A complete summary of the debate on the notion of metatheatre, from the essay by Lionel Abel in 1963 to the latest critical developments, can be found in Thumiger (2009). As for the notion of metadrama in the field of ancient Greek performances see recently Slater, N. (2019) 548–550. A sharp criticism of the heuristic potential of the notion of metatheatre for a better understanding of the literary and cultural phenomenon of theatrical performance, ancient or not, has been formulated by Rosenmeyer (2002). On this topic, see Bierl in this volume.

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metadramatic significance of the verb *pithekizein*, lit. 'to play the monkey', in Aristophanes' plays.

This verb was probably a neologism invented by the great playwright. Its rarity as well as the context of enunciation of one of only two occurrences in ancient theatre, in particular in the second *parabasis* of the *Wasps*,[2] largely justify this investigation as a contribution to metatheatrical studies in the ancient Greek world.[3] In the first part of the study we will analyse the explicit passages that mention inter-species interactions where monkeys and humans were involved in fictional performances as actors and spectators respectively. Then we will focus on the relevance of similar links between the stage and monkeys on the basis of some testimonies from Classical Athens nearly contemporary to Aristophanes. Finally, we will try to establish how this link had a long tradition in the Greek world which spanned from the time of Aristophanes to the time of the Alexandrian scholars in their discussions about the etymology of the term *pithekos*.

Deception Revealed: The Pragmatics of *pithekizein*

The use of the verb *pithekizein* throughout the entirety of ancient Greek literature was limited, if not marginal. Conversely, out of about ten occurrences of the word 'monkey' in Aristophanes' plays, the verb was used twice. The verb is one of the many references to the world of non-human primates, *pithekoi*, which are often found in Old Comedy.[4]

The first passage we will analyse, the best known and most commented upon among those employing the verb *pithekizein*, is found in Aristophanes' *Wasps*, more precisely in the antepirrhema of the second *parabasis*:[5]

2 On the metadramatic aspects of the choir in Attic comic theatre, see in particular Bierl (2001) 37–64 with further bibliography.

3 Even without considering the two mentions of the verb *pithekizein*, which will be dealt with in this study, the presence of the non-human primates in Aristophanes' plays is not negligible, since there are nine such mentions, Ar. *Ach.* 120–121; *Eq.* 887; *Eq.* 416 (for *kynokephalos*); *Pax* 1065–1066; *Av.* 440; *Ran.* 708; *Eccl.* 1072; fr. 409 K.-A. (*Nesoi*). For a recent summary of the animal presence in Old Comedy see Pütz (2019), and Marshall (2019), where, however, no mention of the monkey is recorded. See Lilja (1980) for an analysis of the presence of the monkey in Attic comic imagery.

4 Numerous contributions address the question of the discursive representation of animals in general, and of monkeys in particular, in Attic comedy; see in particular Taillardat (1962) 37–39; 221–236; Conti Bizzarro (2009); Corbel Morana (2012). On monkeys in Latin comedy, see Connors (2004).

5 Ar. *Vesp.* 1284–1291, transl. Henderson (1998b), slightly modified. Following Sommerstein and Storey, Henderson understands the *kekragota* participle, v. 1287, as reported to Cleon. Following another interpretation, I modify the translation of the text by referring the participle to

ΚΟ. εἰσί τινες οἵ μ᾽ ἔλεγον ὡς καταδιηλλάγην,
ἡνίκα Κλέων μ᾽ ὑπετάραττεν ἐπικείμενος (1285)
καί με κακίσας ἔκνισε, κᾆθ᾽, ὅτ᾽ ἀπεδειρόμην,
οἱ ᾽κτὸς ἐγέλων μέγα κεκραγότα θεώμενοι,
οὐδὲν ἄρ᾽ἐμοῦ μέλον, ὅσον δὲ μόνον εἰδέναι
σκωμμάτιον εἴ ποτέ τι θλιβόμενος ἐκβαλῶ.
ταῦτα κατιδὼν ὑπό τι μικρὸν ἐπιθήκισα·
εἶτα νῦν ἐξηπάτησεν ἡ χάραξ τὴν ἄμπελον.

Chorus Leader: There are some who said that I'd made peace, that time when Cleon laid into me and tried to shake me up some, and did sting me with abuse. Furthermore, while I was being skinned alive, the crowd outside kept laughing as they watched me shouting hard, with no concern at all for me, save only to see if I would toss up some little joke when squeezed. I saw all this and pulled a little monkey business; and today the stake has played the vine for a fool.

This passage has been debated for a long time, and two crucial points have always been at the centre of the discussion: on the one hand, the timing and manner of the public clash between Cleon and Aristophanes, and on the other hand the veracity of a truce between the comic poet and the Athenian politician.[6] The question of the meaning to be given to the verb *pithekizein* has been raised with reference to this second point. Most interpreters who have considered plausible the hypothesis of a peace agreement, albeit temporary, between Aristophanes and Cleon have interpreted 'making the monkey' as denoting sneaky and deceptive behaviour aimed at simulating a fake attitude, i.e. Aristophanes' temporary surrender to Cleon.[7] Many scholars, however valuing different aspects of the literary representation of the monkey in the ancient world, have put forward the buffoonish behaviour and comic attitude embodied by the animal. Thus, the verb *pithekizein* might refer more to the clownistic aspects of the *pithekos*' behaviour, whose main function was to amuse its audience as much as possible.[8] It is

Aristophanes and logically implying the presence of an accusative *me*. For this interpretation see recently Biles/Olson (2015) 457; cf. Totaro (1999) 179.

6 A detailed presentation of the debate on whether the clash occurred after the *Knights* or after the *Babylonians*, in 426 BC, can be found in Totaro (1999) 180–187, with extensive discussion of the critical bibliography. Cf. MacDowell (1971) 299, according to whom the judicial clash took place on the initiative of Cleon following the staging of the *Knights* in 424 BC.

7 For this interpretation of the verb *pithekizein*, see in particular Demont (1997) 474–477. The same understanding can be found in Biles/Olson (2015) 458, where the expression 'playing the monkey' refers to 'pulling a trick'. See also Corbel Morana (2012) 96 n. 60, where the author speaks of deceptive flattery as the main meaning of the verb. Cf. Beta (2004) esp. 203–232, for the terminology of deception in Aristophanes' comedies.

8 The most complete expression of this interpretative hypothesis is found in Mastromarco (1993), who sees in the entertainment that the monkey-Aristophanes would have continued to

precisely the appreciation of those elements which refer to theatrical performance itself by staging a comic play, an *agon*, between Aristophanes and Cleon, that direct us to a partially new reading of the text. This reading aims to identify within the scenario activated by the theatrical communication the illocutionary value more than the meaning of the verb *pithekizein*.[9] Pursuing this interpretative line we can take a step forward in the interpretation of the verb's meaning if one takes into account the cognitive and rhetorical functions usually inherent in metaphors, even in the case of a metaphor taken from the world of animals. Analyses conducted so far have tried to explain the metaphor represented by the verb *pithekizein* by seeking its meaning in a simple equivalence with other less connotative and more descriptive verbs, as if it were a simile or a metonymy, i.e. two different semiotic phenomena.[10] The principle of analogical translation, according to which 'to make the monkey' or 'to play the monkey' is nothing more than an original or stylistic way of saying 'to deceive' or 'to entertain', does not seem to grasp fully the possible meanings of the verb.[11]

Translations of this kind are likely to overshadow other fundamental properties, semiotically called 'semes'.[12] The metaphor, on the other hand, functions like a mechanism of condensation, each time potentially new between the properties of the vehicle (that is, the metaphorizing term) and those of the tenor (that is, the metaphorized term), activating different inferential processes for the

guarantee to the audience one key to understanding the final proverb of the *parabasis* as an allusion to the deception orchestrated by the poet against the audience and not against Cleon. With regard to the monkey's entertaining ability in ancient Greek imagery, see, above all, Steiner (2016); Hubbard (1990) 75.

9 The presentation of the dispute between Aristophanes and Cleon as a show for an audience of bystanders is well highlighted already by Storey (1995).

10 The semiotic specificities of the metaphor are described in Eco (1986) 87–129.

11 As is known from Laks' (1994) research, the metaphorical mechanism has strong (increasingly well-understood) cognitive implications, starting with but not limited to a substitution of words, as already noted at several points in Aristotle's reflections on the metaphor. See especially Lakoff/Johnson (1980) for pioneering work on the cognitive implications of metaphor as a means of structuring a field of experience. On the notion of metaphor in the Aristotelian corpus see Manetti (2005). For a presentation and review of the immense bibliography on the subject see recently Wood (2017).

12 Considerations of this kind have been advanced in an effective way from the interpretative point of view in the study of insults and in particular of the ancient Greek vocative *kuon* 'dog!' by Franco (2014) 8–9: 'In other words, two images are conflated, two things become different from themselves, and yet remain recognizable, and there is born a visual (as well conceptual) hybrid.' Eco (1986) 96.

identification of the latter.[13] Searching for the semantic values of the metaphorized term requires as detailed an analysis as possible of the semantic values of the metaphorizing term. Such values are inscribed in a specific cultural encyclopaedia consisting not only of definitions but also of action frames, models of interaction and social practices that represent the basis of contextual selections that can be made when the term, vehicle or tenor, is used in a text or a conversation. Investigation of the meaning of *pithekizein*, therefore, is only possible after the widest possible analysis of ancient encyclopaedic representations of the monkey and its most culturally salient aspects.

In the passage from the *Wasps*, Aristophanes qualifies his behaviour as a monkey claiming to be a living show, evidently for an audience of spectators, *theomenoi*, who would be 'outside': *hoi' ktos* refers both to those who do not participate in the action and are thus not involved and to the public placed outside the scene.[14] In the middle of the scene there are two figures: Cleon, in a position of strength, harasses and abuses, *kakisas eknise,* Aristophanes, who seems to accept his subjugation while limiting himself to shouting his disappointment. He still manages to produce some comic actions, *skommation,* to entertain and excite the audience, which is waiting for nothing else and is uninterested in the performers' suffering. The setting recalls the performance of a tamer, and street performer, Cleon, trying to force the monkey, Aristophanes, to perform a show tried and tested off-stage, while an amused audience stands around the scene and laughs.

But the coryphaeus of *Wasps*' second *parabasis* is not the only character in Aristophanes' plays to 'play the monkey'. The same expression is used in one of the final scenes of the *Thesmophoriazusae*. After the threatening words spoken by the fictitious character of Euripides playing Perseus in order to free the Inlaw-Andromeda, the Scythian Archer replies:[15]

Το. τὸ κεπαλή σ' ἄρα (1126, bis)
τὸ ξιπομάκαιραν ἀποκεκόψι τουτοΐ.
Ευ. αἰαῖ· τί δράσω; πρὸς τίνας στρεφθῶ λόγους;
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν <ἐν>δέξαιτο βάρβαρος φύσις.

13 'Analysis of the offensive uses of *kuon* and its derivatives clearly shows that the trope did not have one single key: the dog was not emblematic of one particular human attitude or behavior.' Franco (2014) 10.

14 The monkey as an animal that literally shows off and tries to win the favor of the public seems to be a rather widespread trait of the ancient encyclopedia on this animal, as evidenced by some Aesopic fables, e.g., Aes. *Fab*. 83 (I) Hausrath, where an animal reunion, *synodos*, crowns the monkey king of the animals after having appreciated its dance performance.

15 Ar. *Thesm*. 1126–1135 transl. Henderson (2000).

σκαιοῖσι γάρ τοι καινὰ προσφέρων σοφὰ (1130)
μάτην ἀναλίσκοις ἄν. ἀλλ' ἄλλην τινὰ
τούτῳ πρέπουσαν μηχανὴν προσοιστέον.
Το. μιαρὸς ἀλώπηξ, οἷον ἐπιτήκιζί μοι.
Κη. μέμνησο, Περσεῦ, μ' ὡς καταλείπεις ἀθλίαν.
Το. ἔτι γὰρ σὺ τὴ μάστιγαν ἐπιτυμεῖς λαβεῖν; (1135)

Archer
I'd have to chop off yer head with this here scimitar.

Euripides (aside)
Ah me, what action, what clever logic now?
All wit is lost upon this savage lout.
For work a novel ruse upon a clod
and you have worked in vain. I must apply
a different stratagem, one suitable for him.

(Exit Euripides)

Archer
The lousy fox, what monkey-tricks he tried to pull on me!

Kinsman
Remember, Perseus, what a wretched state you're leaving me in!

Archer
So you're still hungry for a taste of the whip, are ya?

As E. Hall rightly pointed out, the rude and crude common sense of the archer sanctions the failure of the theatrical illusion that Euripides recreates on stage by pretending to be Perseus.[16] Most commentators understand the reference to the verb *pithekizein* as a synonym for 'deceiving', also believing that the verb could have the same meaning as *alopekizein*, 'playing the fox' in turn translated as 'deceiving', precisely because of the close sequence of the two animals in the verse pronounced by the archer.[17] Considering, however, the fact that the term *pithekizein* was probably a neologism, it is more likely that Aristophanes used this term to maximize some communicative effects that the verbs *alopekizein* or *apatan* could

16 Hall (1989). For a detailed commentary of the scene, see Austin/Olson (2004) 326–333.
17 See in particular Corbel Morana (2012) 96 n. 60: 'La juxtaposition des deux images prouve sinon qu'elles sont usées, du moins qu'elles n'évoquent plus la figure de l'animal réel, mais seulement la notion abstraite de ruse'. Already Taillardat (1962, p. 228) claimed that references to the fox and the monkey had been used by Aristophanes in this passage as dead metaphors to refer to the concept of deception. Cf. Prato/Del Corno (2001) 328.

not guarantee. The reference to the fox would certainly suggest a fraudulent action designed to deceive someone, but it is unlikely also to allude to the fictional aspects of theatrical performance. The illocutionary effectiveness of the insulting expression by which the Archer insults the character of Euripides can be broken down into several scenarios. The evocation of monkey behaviour seems to involve Euripides' attempt to create a peculiar form of deception, created through the somewhat illusionistic instruments of theatrical fiction, from the voice to the disguise and dramatic gestures.[18] The verb *pithekizein* precisely indicates the fictional dimension that only mimetic staging could embody. 'Making foxes, playing foxes' could certainly evoke a scenario of fraud and deception, but it would be far less effective in suggesting the fictional aspect of acting and even disguise.[19]

The two texts by Aristophanes where the verb *pithekizein* is used are both constructed as stage performances in which those who perform for the amusement or entertainment of an audience are described and thought of as 'playing the monkey'. A clearer narrative articulation is offered to us by a text several centuries later than Aristophanes' comedies, but which can nevertheless present a relevant point of comparison for understanding the link between monkeys and theatrical fiction.

In a satirical dialogue of the mid-second century AD, Lucian, in the role of the rhetorician Parresiades, defends his case against the accusation of the philosophers of the past who blame him for having slandered Philosophy; Parresiades argues for his innocence by claiming to have attacked only those who stage philosophy and do not really practice it, only imitating the speeches as well as the life habits of the ancient philosophical schools:[20]

> Λέγεται δὲ καὶ βασιλεύς τις Αἰγύπτιος πιθήκους ποτὲ πυρριχίζειν διδάξαι καὶ τὰ θηρία – μιμηλότατα δέ ἐστι τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων – ἐκμαθεῖν τάχιστα καὶ ὀρχεῖσθαι ἀλουργίδας ἀμπεχόμενα καὶ προσωπεῖα περικείμενα, καὶ μέχρι γε πολλοῦ εὐδοκιμεῖν τὴν θέαν, ἄχρι δὴ θεατής τις ἀστεῖος κάρυα ὑπὸ κόλπου ἔχων ἀφῆκεν εἰς τὸ μέσον· οἱ δὲ πίθηκοι ἰδόντες καὶ ἐκλαθόμενοι τῆς ὀρχήσεως, τοῦθ' ὅπερ ἦσαν, πίθηκοι ἐγένοντο ἀντὶ πυρριχιστῶν καὶ συνέτριβον τὰ προσωπεῖα καὶ τὴν ἐσθῆτα κατερρήγνυον καὶ ἐμάχοντο περὶ τῆς ὀπώρας πρὸς ἀλλήλους, τὸ δὲ σύνταγμα τῆς πυρρίχης διελέλυτο καὶ κατεγελᾶτο ὑπὸ τοῦ θεάτρου.

18 On dramatic gesture, see Capponi in this volume.

19 That the two images do not evoke the same scenarios of action seems to be evident from some traditional Greek fables. In at least two tales attributed to Aesop, the monkey finds itself playing a role that it has either built itself by pretending to be someone else or a role that it cannot fully and rightly perform; in both cases, it is the character of the fox who unmasks it and reveals the unlikely fiction which the monkey persists in undertaking; see Aesop. *Fab.* 14; 81 Hausrath. The reference to a monkey, therefore, does not seem to imply any particular capacity for successful deception or shrewdness on the part of the animal; on the contrary, it embodies a fiction destined to fail.

20 Luc. *Pisc.* 36 transl. Harmon (1921). A similar anecdote is also found in Lucian *Apol.* 5–6.

> It is said, too, that a king of Egypt once taught apes to dance, and that the animals, as they are very apt at imitating human ways, learned quickly and gave an exhibition, with purple mantles about them and masks on their faces. For a long time the show, they say, went well, until a facetious spectator, having nuts in his pocket, tossed them into the midst. On catching sight of them, the monkeys forgot their dance, changed from artists of the ballet to the simians that they really were, smashed their masks, tore their costumes, and fought with each other for the nuts; whereby the carefully planned ballet was entirely broken up, and was laughed at by the spectators.

The anecdote told by Parresiades aims to illustrate in a provocative way the evanescence of fake philosophers. They would behave as the trained monkeys who, after a period of instruction, succeed in performing some pieces of pantomime,[21] following the rhythm of the *aulos* that accompanies them. Like in the passage from the *Wasps,* an audience of bystanders, *thea,* is on the edge of the scene and appreciates the show, *pollou eudokimein.* An aspect of particular interest here lies in the association between the two successive moments of the theatrical fiction, on the one hand, and its dissolution on the other. In this episode, too, the stage fiction is destined to fail because a spectator refuses to enter the fictitious space created by the performance of the monkeys acting with masks and cloaks. The rupture of this scenic fiction produces first amazement and then thunderous laughter, just like the public of *Thesmophoriazusae* which laughs when faced with the endless dialogue ruptures created by the clash between dramatic acting (Euripides-Perseus) and the Archer refusing to suspend his disbelief by 'playing the game'. In light of this, it cannot be excluded that even the sudden reversal of the situation evoked – through the proverb of the vine on the pole – in *Wasps'* second *parabasis*, may contain a reference to such side effects of the animal show interrupted and shattered by the unexpected change in the *pithekoi*'s behaviour.[22]

21 In the Roman Imperial period the term *pyrriche* was often used to refer to the pantomime: see Schlapbach (2018) 31–39. On pantomime, see Paillard in this volume, p. 71 ff.

22 It would seem that true laughter is based on the foreknowledge that monkeys will never stand up to their human model and will necessarily revert to their animal nature at some point. The game here is a 'waiting game', waiting for the rupture. Tea shows staged in Europe's major zoos between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries featured trained great apes taking tea perfectly like human beings, but ready to shatter porcelain and stage costumes once the trainer turned his back; see Herzfeld/Van Schuylenbergh (2011). Performances of this kind must not have been uncommon at gatherings and banquets. It could be the case of multi-phase performances, in which a rhythmic dance show could be followed by other, more scommatic, parts that addressed the audience, directly breaking down the fiction and provoking their reactions and, in some cases, leading to a ridiculous ending, as happens in the comic brawl between the jester Satyrion and the cynical philosopher Alcidamas in Luc. *Symp.* 17.

If Lucian's text provides a valuable indication of the possible pantomimes performed on stage by animals such as monkeys, a passage by Plutarch written a few decades earlier supplies useful information on the behaviour and the nature of acting in the manner of monkeys. In the first section of his treatise on the distinction between friends and flatterers, which draws upon similarities to folk representations of animals, the monkey is considered to be the animal that best embodies the 'ethological' traits of the flatterer.[23] But what would *pithekizein* consist of when imputed to a flatterer? It would be a condition of deliberate submission to humans, a condition that causes animals to endure violence and oppression, *hybrin pherei*, which humans might inflict on them. Every act of *hybris* poses a real threat to the identity and social prestige of a person threatened with verbal offense or violent behaviour.[24] This loss of personal prestige because of acts of *hybris* consist of ridiculous scenes and acts of mockery, *bomolochian kai paidias*, that monkeys are subject to, with an audience ready to laugh at them.[25] Not having much more to offer to the human beings on whom its survival depends, the monkey – this is Plutarch's argument – agrees to make its body and its performance activities the instrument of laughter and amusement for others by offering itself to this type of relationship, *gelotos organon emparechon heauton*. This type of behaviour is rooted in the ethology of the animal, whose main trait is the propensity to imitate human actions, as recognised in ancient texts. Moreover, even from a linguistic point of view, the semantic field of *mimesis* makes the monkey the animal *mimetes* and *mimos* in the world of living beings, two terms that, as is broadly known, not only indicate imitators in general but are also technical terms in ancient Greek for referring to actors.[26]

Considering the mention of purple dresses in the performance evoked by Lucian, the *halourgides*, it is not excluded that a paremiographic tradition regarding

23 Plut. *Mor.* 64e: Ὁρᾷς τὸν πίθηκον; οὐ δύναται τὴν οἰκίαν φυλάττειν ὡς ὁ κύων, οὐδὲ βαστάζειν ὡς ὁ ἵππος, οὐδ' ἀροῦν τὴν γῆν ὡς οἱ βόες· ὕβριν οὖν φέρει καὶ βωμολοχίαν καὶ παιδιὰς ἀνέχεται, γέλωτος ὄργανον ἐμπαρέχων ἑαυτόν, 'You must have noticed the monkey. He cannot guard the house like the dog, nor carry a load like the horse, nor plough the land like oxen; and so he has to bear abuse and scurrility, and endure practical jokes, thus submitting to be made an instrument of laughter.' Transl. F. C. Babbitt, slightly modified.

24 On the relations between *hybris* and *atimia* depending on the social status of the person involved, see the detailed overview in Fisher (1995).

25 Citing fragments of Timaeus and Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II, Athenaeus also inserts among the manifestations of the luxury of the Sybarites their habit of being constantly surrounded, on occasions of symposia and private parties, by dwarves, dancers, actors, and monkeys, which they procured on the Carthaginian coast in large quantities: Ath. 12.518f.

26 For the cultural representation in ancient texts of the imitation of human actions by monkeys, see Vespa/Zucker (2020).

the monkey in purple draws its origin precisely from shows and performances of this type. The Byzantine tradition that passes under the name of Diogenian's epitome and the *Suda* itself report the proverbial statement 'the monkey in purple', *pithekos en porphyrāi*, an expression that described those who were dressed in the stage's best costumes but were otherwise useless, devoid of any abilities, *hoi phauloi*.[27] It is precisely in light of Lucian's anecdote that we can better understand the proverb and its *interpretamentum*. The artistic mediocrity of the trained animal, its *phaulotes*, is presented as unavoidable because of the monkey's animality, ready to re-emerge at any moment and ruin all the dramatic staging in the process. The *ethos* of the animal shines through continuously and the dignity of the costumes can only delay the moment of the comic exploit. Finally, the performance failure is also intertwined with *poneria*, the sly wickedness of those who are ready to send everything to ruin.

These action tropes are also at work in other plays by Aristophanes like *Acharnians*, where regardless of the absence of the verb *pithekizein*, the figure of a monkey is mentioned by the comic hero Dikaiopolis when unmasking the impostor Cleisthenes, the fake eunuch, who had tried to pass himself off as one of the Persian ambassadors. The clothing, the orientalising ornaments and finally some anatomical details like his preposterous beard, prove to be ineffective in masking the true identity of the wearer. It is precisely the perfect scenic devices used by the actor-impostor Cleisthenes to play the role of the eunuch from the court of the Great King that prove to be his undoing and the very clues that Dikaiopolis uses to expose the false identity, causing the failure of the mise-en-scène. The staging is ruined and Dikaiopolis can indicate precisely in the false beard of the fake eunuch Cleisthenes the discrepancy with what the public expects from a real stage eunuch.[28] In the insult that Dikaiopolis addresses to Cleisthenes, calling him 'monkey', there is a clear reference to his innate inability to go through with a role, but at the same time Dikaiopolis denounces the trick by which the Athenian politician Cleisthenes had tried to pass himself off to the public as someone he was not.[29]

27 *Suda* π 1581 Adler: Πίθηκος ἐν πορφύρᾳ: παροιμία. ὅτι οἱ φαῦλοι, κἂν καλοῖς περιβληθῶσιν, ὅμως δ' οὖν διαφαίνονται πονηροὶ ὄντες. '*Monkey in purple': it's a saying. It means that those who are worthless, even if they are surrounded by precious things, are still miserable.* Cf. Diogen. 7.94 (*CPG* I, p. 303).

28 Ar. *Ach.* 118–121. See Olson (2002) 111–112.

29 As is well known, other aspects are at stake in the opening scene of the comedy, in particular the parodic evocation of an epode by Archilochus, fr. 187 West. Due to limits of space and theme, it is not possible for us to enter into the detail of the scene, but what is pertinent to our topic is the link between failed performance and evocation of the figure of the monkey. As for Archilocus' fragments, see recently Steiner (2016).

A Culturally Relevant Way of Talking about Performance: Monkeys in Aristotle and Demosthenes

If some episodes analysed above were transmitted and inserted into enunciative contexts dating back to many centuries after Aristophanes, such anecdotes can still be considered part of a long-standing tradition handed down over the centuries. Nevertheless, we must still demonstrate a relevant link between the world of stage fiction and monkeys among Aristophanes' literary contemporaries.[30]

In the last section of Aristotle's *Poetics* (at least that part of the work that has been preserved) in particular in chapter 26, the philosopher reverses the Platonic conception of the primacy of epic over tragedy. According to Aristotle, many believed that the poetic form of tragedy was more likely to degenerate into more debased forms of entertainment because of the ease with which on many occasions actors and performers overplayed their mimetic reproduction of gestures and movements. Aristotle's argument in this chapter aims to overturn this conception of the relationship between epic and tragedy by stating that the blame for a vulgar form of tragic art that tends to imitate too much must be attributed to the inability of the actors and not that of the dramatic poets. It would therefore be a matter of performance. Aristotle recalls the famous criticism of a younger actor by a more experienced one, for his monkey behaviour:[31]

> Πότερον δὲ βελτίων ἡ ἐποποιικὴ μίμησις ἢ ἡ τραγική, διαπορήσειεν ἄν τις. εἰ γὰρ ἡ ἧττον φορτικὴ βελτίων, τοιαύτη δ' ἡ πρὸς βελτίους θεατάς ἐστιν ἀεί, λίαν δῆλον ὅτι ἡ ἅπαντα μιμουμένη φορτική· ὡς γὰρ οὐκ αἰσθανομένων ἂν μὴ αὐτὸς προσθῇ, πολλὴν κίνησιν κινοῦνται, οἷον οἱ φαῦλοι αὐληταὶ κυλιόμενοι ἂν δίσκον δέῃ μιμεῖσθαι, καὶ ἕλκοντες τὸν κορυφαῖον ἂν Σκύλλαν αὐλῶσιν. ἡ μὲν οὖν τραγῳδία τοιαύτη ἐστίν, ὡς καὶ οἱ πρότερον τοὺς ὑστέρους αὐτῶν ᾤοντο ὑποκριτάς· ὡς λίαν γὰρ ὑπερβάλλοντα πίθηκον ὁ Μυννίσκος τὸν Καλλιππίδην ἐκάλει, τοιαύτη δὲ δόξα καὶ περὶ Πινδάρου ἦν· ὡς δ' οὗτοι ἔχουσι πρὸς αὐτούς, ἡ ὅλη τέχνη πρὸς τὴν ἐποποιίαν ἔχει. τὴν μὲν οὖν πρὸς θεατὰς ἐπιεικεῖς φασιν εἶναι <οἷς> οὐδὲν δέονται τῶν σχημάτων, τὴν δὲ τραγικὴν πρὸς φαύλους· εἰ οὖν φορτική, χείρων δῆλον ὅτι ἂν εἴη. πρῶτον μὲν οὐ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἡ κατηγορία ἀλλὰ τῆς ὑποκριτικῆς, ἐπεὶ ἔστι περιεργάζεσθαι τοῖς σημείοις καὶ ῥαψῳδοῦντα (. . .) εἶτα οὐδὲ κίνησις ἅπασα

30 Cautious considerations on the use of imperial age anecdotes as a source for the reconstruction of earlier cultural practices can be found in Duncan (2006) 17–20.

31 Arist. *Poet*. 1461b–1462a transl. Csapo (2002). For an overarching comment on the chapter, see Dupont-Roc, Lallot (1980) 405–413. Cf. Janko (1987) 154, where the insult addressed by Mynniskos to Kallipides would evoke the monkey in reference to several tricks carried out by Kallipides to obtain the favour of the public.

> ἀποδοκιμαστέα, εἴπερ μηδ' ὄρχησις, ἀλλ' ἡ φαύλων, ὅπερ καὶ Καλλιππίδῃ ἐπετιμᾶτο καὶ νῦν ἄλλοις ὡς οὐκ ἐλευθέρας γυναῖκας μιμουμένων.
>
> One may well be at loss to decide whether the epic imitation is better than the tragic. For if the less vulgar is the better – the less vulgar being always that which is directed at the better part of the audience – it is only too clear that the vulgar art is that which imitates everything. Supposing that their audience will understand nothing unless they incorporate it in their representation, some artists will produce any gesture. . . Now tragedy is just this sort of art. So too the older actors perceived the younger generation of actors: Mynniskos used to call Kallipides an ape because he went too far; the same opinion might be held of Pindaros. The relation of these actors to their older contemporaries is arguably the same as that between tragedy and epic. Epic, so the argument goes, is directed to a superior audience that has no need for such gestures and postures, but tragedy is directed toward an inferior one. If then tragedy is vulgar, clearly it would be worse. We may answer, first of all, that this charge has nothing to do with poetry but with acting, since one can be intrusive with one's use of gestures even in an epic recitation. . . Secondly, not all movement is objectionable – one would not condemn dance, for example – but only that which is imitation of inferior people: Kallipides was censured, as are others today, for representing lower-class women.

As Eric Csapo has pointed out, the accusation made against Kallipides was directed not so much at the actions imitated in an affected and excessively realistic manner, but rather at the base nature of the scenes and protagonists staged. It is not by chance that Aristotle circumstantiates the accusation of excess of gesture by stating that Kallipides had brought to the stage the vulgarity of the lives and gestures of common people who did not fit with the attitudes and prestige of the dramatic (and heroic) characters.[32] The staging of miserable and degrading behaviours, at the limit of ridicule, unsuited to the composure required of tragic acting, made Agesilaus, King of Sparta, call Kallipides a street jester, or *deikeliktas*.[33] This contemptuous label denoting an entertainer of little value, which underscores certain ridiculous aspects of his stage acting, might be confirmed by a fragment of Aristophanes handed down by Pollux.[34] In this fragment, whose *constitutio textus* is still debated, reference is made to a famous scene played by Kallipides in which the latter, playing a tragic character, sat on

32 Csapo (2002) 128: 'But the broader context of the passage shows that Aristotle understood the slur to refer not to *excessive* or *exaggerated gestures*, but rather to an *excess of gestures*, i.e. excessive *mimesis,* not overacting, but imitating actions that are best not imitated at all'.
33 Plut. *Ages.* 21; Apost. 13.66 (*CPG* II, p. 593). On the meaning of *deikeliktas* to be understood as 'actor of laughable sketches' see *LSJ*[9] s.v. δεικηλίκτας.
34 Ar. fr. 490 K.-A. (*apud* Poll. 10.28–29 Bethe).

the ground in the dust.[35] Such a scene, whether or not it was related to Euripides' *Telephus*, must certainly have seemed a surprising staging choice at the time, lacking in decency for a tragic character, causing the actor to risk sliding into comedy. In the light of what has been said above, therefore, it would seem that Kallipides' monkey-like stage behaviour consisted in the reproduction of certain types of behaviour considered to lack proper decorum in a tragic context.

Such actions, gestures or postures could be so unsuitable to the world of heroes as to divert the attention of the audience from the dramatic action onto the pointless and potentially comic behaviour of an eccentric actor. The evocation of the monkey in the elaboration of a value judgment on someone's performance also occurs in a famous passage of ancient Attic oratory.

As has long been pointed out, the political and legal conflict between Demosthenes and Aeschines in the middle of the fourth century BC often used stage performance to discuss political loyalty, betrayals and attempts at corruption, in short, to raise the question of the credibility and sincerity of political figures.[36] Personal events, political career and success as logographer are intertwined with public decisions and the geopolitical events of the conflict between the Greek cities and the Macedonian kingdom. In the final act of the conflict, i.e. the discourse *On the Crown* (330 BC), which will see the exile of Aeschines to Rhodes and an ephemeral victory for Demosthenes, the latter draws a portrait, full of shadows, of Aeschines' public figure. Demosthenes builds part of his argument precisely by exploiting Aeschines' early career as an actor.[37] Demosthenes' rhetorical objective is twofold: on the one hand, doubts are cast on Aeschines' political sincerity by consideration of the fact that he used to act and impersonate many fictitious characters, while on the other hand, Aeschines' former profession is degraded to the role of a low-level entertainer, a second-rate actor with poor mimetic skills.[38] After recalling the political advantages of the alliance between Athens and Thebes and the merit of having led Athenian politics in recent years, Demosthenes attacks Aeschines by highlighting his hesitations and ambiguities towards Philip II of Macedonia, and above all by blaming the

35 See Csapo (2002) 130–131. The text chosen by Csapo takes up a conjecture by Brunck, who reads ὡσπερεὶ Καλλιπίδης instead of ὥσπερ ἐν Καλλιπίδῃ, which is transmitted by mss. F and S of the *Onomasticon* by Pollux.

36 Duncan (2006) 58–89. See also Easterling (1999).

37 On the biographical vicissitude of Aeschines, of humble social origin and then married to a rich Athenian woman, see Harris (1995) esp. 31–40.

38 Dem. 19.10; 19.189; 19.209. See Duncan (2006) 65–66.

opportunism of Aeschines who had found a way to attack him (Demosthenes) in front of his fellow citizens for something he had not done:[39]

> οὐκ ἂν ταῦτ' ἔλεγον καὶ πολλά γε πρὸς τούτοις ἕτερα; πονηρόν, ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πονηρὸν ὁ συκοφάντης ἀεὶ καὶ πανταχόθεν βάσκανον καὶ φιλαίτιον· τοῦτο δὲ καὶ φύσει κίναδος τἀνθρώπιόν ἐστιν, οὐδὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑγιὲς πεποιηκὸς οὐδ' ἐλεύθερον, αὐτοτραγικὸς πίθηκος, ἀρουραῖος Οἰνόμαος, παράσημος ῥήτωρ.
>
> Would they not have made all those complaints, and plenty more? O, men of Athens, what a vile monster is the calumniator, gathering malice from everywhere, always backbiting! But this fellow is by very nature a spiteful animal, absolutely incapable of honesty or generosity; this monkey who takes the stage for itself, this bumpkin tragedy-king, this pinchbeck orator!

After evoking the traditional figure of the sycophant, a professional in political denunciation, and treacherous par excellence, Demosthenes seems to consider such a figure less dangerous than Aeschines, whose portrait is composed of images and references taken from the entertainment world and the stage. If we accept the recent hypothesis of a pun linking *kinados,* the 'fox', and *kinaidos*, 'the effeminate',[40] we could interpret Demosthenes's words as a reference to those activities of mimicry and dance performances that took place in private symposia or on public festivals and whose professional figures were also called, among other things, *kinaidoi*.[41] But the most explicit reference to the theatrical performance is in the sequence of the two following insults. The reference to the 'rural' Oinomaos is explained by a tragic performance of secondary importance that Aeschines would have made at his youth during the Rural Dionysia on a secondary stage like that of Collytus' deme, as an earlier passage of the same oration seems to confirm.[42] Despite the tragic role played by Aeschines on that occasion, Demosthenes wants his audience to believe that many spectators found the character less than tragic because of the mimetic inability displayed by Aeschines. They laughed at it because the character of Oinomaos, beaten and tortured, *kakos epetripsas*, was played by an actor who simply was not up to the task. The monkey insult is placed

39 Dem. 18.242 transl. Vince/Vince (1926), slightly modified.

40 The hypothesis was recently put forward by Kamen (2014), who emphasizes not only the use of the insulting epithet of *kinados* directed by Demosthenes against Aeschines (e.g., Dem. 18.162), but also the references of the latter to the alleged effeminate nature of Demosthenes (e.g., Aeschin. 2.88; 2.99).

41 The literary testimonies for these figures of dancers and mimes can only be found from the late Hellenistic period, but papyrus evidence shows that the professionalization of *kinaidoi* is already certified by the middle of the third century BC at least in Egypt, see Tsitsiridis (2015) 220–227.

42 Dem. 18.180. For a commentary of this passage see Yunis (2001) 210–212.

immediately before the evocation of the disastrous performance in which Aeschines failed to play the tragic role of Oinomaos. The expression *autotragikos pithekos* is to be understood in the context of what comes just before, i.e. Aeschines' inability to behave as a free citizen, forced to go on stage to earn a living.

Although many translations tend to consider *autotragikos* merely as a synonym of *tragikos* without proposing any proper translation of the semantic difference,[43] the semantics of the pronominal prefix that composes the adjective must be analysed. In Homeric poetic diction and epic in general, but also in some uses of tragic *lexis*, the prefix *auto-* indicates the isolation, a particular form of separation from the circumstances of an action process that is usually indicated by the second element of the compound. The prefix *auto-* refers to a sort of self-referential closure that isolates the protagonist of the action from what is outside, as is the case with the well-known Homeric adjective *autodidaktos*, 'naturally, spontaneously wise'.[44] Harpocration's explanation of the expression, given some centuries after Demosthenes, could offer us another interpretative path. The Alexandrian lexicographer understood this expression as a reference made by Demosthenes to Aeschines' recitative abilities, *peri ten hypokrisin*; Aeschines was a stage monkey precisely because he was a failed stage actor, since he was more intent on imitating gestures, attitudes, and jokes of tragic actors instead of knowing how to interpret properly a tragic character. It is therefore an opposition between imitation of an actor's style, on the one hand, and the ability to be a tragic actor on the other. The reference to the monkey embodies these two dimensions as well as the adjective *autotragikos*.[45] This expression should be understood as a specific attitude that consisted in an exaggerated and affected attention to single gestures. For an *autotragikos,* the imitation of precise gestures or individualistic interpretations of the dramatic action are considered more important than action itself and its progression. Moreover, the adjective *tragikos* is not only a *vox media* with the transparent meaning of 'tragic', 'pertinent to tragedy'

43 Cf. Vince/Vince (1926): 'This monkey of melodrama'; López Eire (1980): 'un mono de imitación en las tragedias'. See Seraphim (2017) 96: 'An ape on the tragic stage', where the semantic value conveyed by the prefix *auto-* is not taken into account.

44 An in-depth study can be found in Belardi (1990), esp. 225–226: 'Il determinante, in questa occasione, è un elemento *auto-*, che, come il pronome *autos*, è atto, secondo quanto osserva già J. van Leeuwen, a denotare uno stato di separazione, di isolamento, spesso con valore più negativo che positivo . . . '. See also Sforza (2007) for the semantics of compounds with *auto-*.

45 Harp. τ 21 Keaney: Τραγικὸς πίθηκος· Δημοσθένης ἐν τῷ Ὑπὲρ Κτησιφῶντος. ἔοικε λέγειν τοῦτο ὁ ῥήτωρ ὡς καὶ περὶ τὴν ὑπόκρισιν ἀτυχοῦντος τοῦ Αἰσχίνου, καὶ μιμουμένου μᾶλλον τραγῳδοὺς ἢ τραγῳδεῖν δυναμένου.

or 'dramatic', but could be understood negatively as 'pathetic', 'excessive' and precisely 'affected'.[46] The *autotragikos* monkey is an interpreter who does not play a role, does not follow a dramatic development, does not dialogue or interact with other figures on the scene, but who remains enclosed and isolated within his character. Due to incessant and excessive imitation, the character becomes the centre of the action. A paroxysmal and cloying recitative is judged too mimetic and leads the audience to focus all its attention on the actor's body and gestures, leaving the rest aside; the negative mimetic behaviour of the monkey engaged in actions and gestures that are too demonstrative and affected, to the point of captivating the undivided attention of the public on these gestures, can be interpreted in this case as a serious threat to the internal credibility of the fictional stage. This case, just like the evocation of the monkeys performing a show, could allude to the risk of a sudden interruption of the show itself. Demosthenes' evocation of Aeschines' failure to play the character of Oinomaos could implicitly refer to one of the worst events that could befall an actor, the loss of balance and falling to the ground, *katapesein,* a serious unexpected event that might affect the entire performance. An excessive dramatic posturing that does not meet the criteria of gravity of a tragic character could be encapsulated in the expression *autotragikos pithekos* and would explain quite nicely the reference to Oinomaos. Rumours seemed to have circulated about that (in-)famous performance by Aeschines. Harpocration himself mentions Aeschines' ruinous fall on stage, when he was acting as a third actor standing next to another actor, Ischandros, precisely in the deme of Collytus where Demosthenes placed his (ridiculous) performance as a 'coarse' Oinomaos.[47] Furthermore, the mention of the monkey as an animal involved in public show performances could be part of a wider phenomenon whereby Attic orators used elements from different performative genres (above all theatre, but not exclusively) to characterize themselves and especially their opponents at trial.[48]

A sudden fall on the stage and an exaggerated and affected acting style represent two different but functionally similar processes which are structurally similar to the rebellious gesture of a monkey dropping his mask and leaving the stage to follow a walnut that fell to the ground. The monkey regains its natural state, putting an end to the fiction. It reveals the very nature of acting, an artificial construction aimed at deceiving its audience.

46 Dalfen (1972).

47 Harp. ι 25 Keaney: Ἴσχανδρος· Δημοσθένης Κατ' Αἰσχίνου. τραγικὸς ὑποκριτὴς ὁ Ἴσχανδρός ἐστι. δοκεῖ δ' αὐτῷ συνυποκρινόμενος Αἰσχίνης ὁ ῥήτωρ ἐν Κολλυτῷ καταπεσεῖν, καθά φησι Δημοχάρης ἐν τοῖς Διαλόγοις.

48 On this phenomenon of inter-generic *ethopoiia,* especially in the discourses by Aeschines and Demosthenes, see recently Seraphim (2017) 91–111.

peithein and *apatan*. The Two Poles of Monkey Action

Considering what has been briefly analysed above, we can hypothesize that in *Wasps' parabasis* the verb *pithekizein* and the mention of the pole that deceives the vine should not be understood as being opposite or very different in meaning. Entertaining the public by becoming a laughing stock for those who were uninterested in the performer's fate does not seem to stand in contradiction to the sudden change of scenery in which the spectators themselves were deceived and disappointed by the monkey-Aristophanes. Moreover, from what we have considered, the mimetic-dramatic capacity of the animal is inseparable from an equally natural tendency to fail to meet expectations, which often raises laughs in an audience. Aristophanes may have chosen this animal metaphor, a complex communicative tool, to build on folk knowledge that considered monkeys bad and laughable actors, ready at the first opportunity to dismantle the scenic fiction in which they were engaged. As far as we can reconstruct the ancient Greek cultural representation of monkeys, they presented many traits that lent themselves perfectly to a metaphorical neologism like *pithekizein*. If dramatic representation is built on deception, *apate,* and on a fictional construction of a reality that is not that of the audience, as Gorgias, a contemporary of Aristophanes, stated provocatively,[49] then this manipulative behaviour was inscribed in the monkey's very name. According to an etymological reconstruction dating back to the Alexandrian grammarian Philoxenus, at the end of the 1st c. BC, the zoonym *pithekos* derived from the verb *peitho* in its future form:[50]

> πίθηκος· παρὰ τὸν πιθήσω μέλλοντα, ὅπερ ἀπὸ τοῦ πιθῶ περισπωμένου γέγονεν· πείθει γὰρ ἡμᾶς τὸ ζῷον εἰδεχθὲς ὂν προσέχειν αὐτῷ. οὕτω Φιλόξενος ἐν τῷ Περὶ μονοσυλλάβων ῥημάτων.
>
> *Pithekos:* (it comes) from the future *pitheso* (I will convince you), which comes in turn from the abbreviated form *pitho*. Even though this animal is hideous, it bewitches us and makes us pay attention to it. This is what Philoxenus said in his *On Monosyllabic Verbs*.

49 Gorg. 82 B23 DK (*ap*. Plut. *Mor*. 348c).

50 Philox. fr. 17 Theodoridis. Cf. *Suda* π 1580 Adler. In the context of a literary dialogue on the intelligence of animals, the *Alexander* or *De animalibus,* where anecdotes drawn from the world of entertainment and circus are quite numerous, Philo of Alexandria describes the monkey as an animal capable of deceiving the public, whose attention it has previously managed to capture, Phil. *Alex*. 46 Terian. This is the French translation from the Armenian version that preserves Philo's text, whose version in ancient Greek is lost: ' . . . après les avoir capturés à son gré, il se moque de ceux qu'il a dupés', Terian p. 139.

In conclusion, Aristophanes' *pithekizein* metaphor touches upon different cultural spheres. *Apate* was one of them, the ability to create a deceptive reality, well-suited to suggesting the performative activity of the actor who creates a dramatic space through his gestures and words. But *apate* and *pithekizein* could also, on the contrary, consist in the sudden ruin of what scenic fiction tries to hide at all times, the face hidden by the mask, the world of reality outside the stage which the awkwardness of the monkey constantly risks showing by revealing the fiction. The monkey's fiction should not be understood as the fictitious universe of the performance but as a means of deceiving the audience.

It seems appropriate then to read in the image of the pole that deceives the vine in *Wasps' parabasis* the revelation of scenic deception, a deception that is not in opposition to Aristophanes' monkey behaviour; on the contrary, such a deception is the natural and comic consequence of the animal's way of being, confirmed by the adverb *eita*.[51] This particle can certainly refer to the temporal dimension of the succession of the two events, translated as 'then' or 'after'. But it could also be interpreted as the exclamation by which Aristophanes throws away the mask, saying 'well, here is the trick', not unlike the Egyptian king's trained monkeys evoked by Lucian.

In the study of the dramaturgical choices through which the mechanisms of staging and narrative fiction are laid bare and somehow revealed to the audience, becoming the object of stage communication, the analysis of Aristophanes' comedy has shown the importance of the metaphorical reference to the monkey in the construction of this metatheatrical dimension. In a comedy, the *Wasps,* where the critical reflection on the performative power of the word returns several times in the discussion of rhetorical persuasion, *peitho,* and adherence to the words of others,[52] Aristophanes' reference to the way of acting displayed by a monkey, *pithekos,* that is its penchant for breaking the spectacle it has staged up until then, seems all the more pertinent in metadramatic perspective.

In this study, we have highlighted for the first time how the reference to the verb *pithekizein* in a part of the play, the *parabasis*, which is addressed directly to the audience, breaks the fiction of the staged action. This usage is not at all accidental and should not be understood generically as a reference to mockery or a joke. The metatheatrical dimension of the fiction revealed within a theatre spectacle finds in the monkey's action its relevant metaphorical vehicle, if we consider the aspects of scenic illusion and its sudden rupture that characterise

51 *LSJ*[9] s.v. εἶτα, II. Cf. Eur. *Ion* 823–827. As for the conjunctive and consecutive values of εἶτα in ancient Greek theatre see Fornieles Sánchez (2014) 111–115.

52 On the particular relevance of *peitho* in Aristophanes' *Wasps* see Jedrkiewicz (2006), esp. 72–76.

the mimetic performances of the *pithekos* (unlike other animals that also deceive but which do not stage themselves to do so). Compared to other possible animal metaphors, such as the one concerning the fox, the case of the monkey presents us with a metaphorical scenario that does not simply involve a cunning action on the part of an animal in an everyday situation, as for example the ambush of a fox while hunting. In the case of the verb *pithekizein*, the minimal narrative scenario that makes the metaphor effective in the theatrical and metatheatrical spheres lies precisely in the context of the staging in which the animal-*pithekos* interacts in Greek society, lending itself as an animal of comic illusion to represent in the most salient way the metadramatic dimension of reflection on the breaking of such a scenic illusion.

Loredana Di Virgilio

‘Ar. *Eccl*. 889 ὅμως ἔχει τερπνόν τι καὶ κωμῳδικόν. A Comedy’s Self-Consideration of Its Lyrical Forms at the Dawn of “Middle Comedy”?’

Introduction

The following pages are devoted to the analysis of a metatheatrical moment in the second half of *Ecclesiazusae*. In particular, at line 889 of the play something that is going to happen in the scene is, significantly, said to contain something τερπνόν and κωμῳδικόν. This statement is made in order to reassure the audience. The actual meaning of the expression of line 889 is not completely clear to us because of its implicit connection with something strictly dramaturgical, which we can only try to reconstruct. In the past and in recent years, different interpretations of the expression have been proposed by some scholars, none of them fully convincing. This chapter intends to consider two new reconstructions of the scene in order to understand the scene better and the meaning of line 889 as well: the first hypothesizes a relationship with the actors’ song immediately following the scene; the latter, instead, implies a possible connection of that very moment of the play with the immediately preceding choral interlude.

A couple of clarifications are in order before going into the following paragraphs. Firstly, it should be noted that the proposed object of study for this investigation, implied in its title, should be extended to lines 887–888, as will become clear from the argument overall. Secondly, it seems appropriate to warn the reader that, for an ambiguous passage like the one considered here, we are probably going to remain necessarily in the field of speculation.

Nevertheless, it is useful to analyse *Eccl*. 887–889 in depth by trying to evaluate its coherence with the plot and its relationship with and between the different lyrical forms of this part of the play, and, last but not least, by considering possible connections of this passage with the innovations of the fourth century and by making comparisons with other texts. All of this could lead to

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more plausible reconstructions of the dramaturgical sequence of scenes within which this passage appears and thus to a better understanding of the meaning of the metatheatrical sentence under question. In short, this investigation aims to re-open an important issue within this Aristophanic play.

Context and Main Questions

The plot of *Ecclesiazusae* is well-known: under the leadership of Praxagora, the women occupy the Assembly and gain political power. Included in the new constitution are the communality of properties and a special rule in the matter of sex: if a man wants to go to bed with a girl, he has to go with an older and ugly one first, so that every woman will be satisfied. After a choral interlude (*post* 729), two anonymous men discuss the idea of giving their goods to the city, even as one of them is already bringing out his possessions out of the house (730–876). To separate this episode from that which follows, after line 876 there is a second choral interlude, indicated on codex *Ravennas* 429 with the abbreviation ΧΟΡΟΥ.[1]

The new episode (877–1111) deals with the consequences of the new laws pertaining to sex. The scene opens with an Old Woman, probably walking in front of the *skene*.[2] She is softly singing a melody by herself (880 μινυρομένη τι πρὸς ἐμαυτὴν μέλος), wondering why no man has come to her yet. Her attitude seems to be that of a prostitute waiting for men to approach (877–883):[3]

ΓΡΑΥΣ Α
τί ποθ' ἄνδρες οὐχ ἥχουσιν; ὥρα δ' ἦν πάλαι.
ἐγὼ δὲ καταπεπλασμένη ψιμυθίῳ
ἔστηκα καὶ κροκωτὸν ἠμφιεσμένη
ἀργός, μινυρομένη τι πρὸς ἐμαυτὴν μέλος, (880)
παίζουσ' ὅπως ἂν περιλάβοιμ' αὐτῶν τινὰ
παριόντα. Μοῦσαι, δεῦρ' ἴτ' ἐπὶ τοὐμὸν στόμα,
μελύδριον εὑροῦσαί τι τῶν Ἰωνικῶν.

1 *Ecclesiazusae*'s double exhibition of the use of choral interludes detached from the comic narration, indicated twice (after lines 729 and 876) on codex *Ravennas* 429 with the abbreviation ΧΟΡΟΥ (*scil.* μέλος), belongs to a well-attested manuscript and papyrus tradition concerning indications of this kind. See for example Taplin (1976) on ΧΟΡΟΥ indications in papyri; Handley (1953) on ΧΟΡΟΥ indications in *Wealth*'s manuscripts; cf. also Imperio (2011) 130–134.

2 On the reconstruction of the houses and the number of the doors in this scene, see Mastromarco (2017).

3 Cf. Ussher (1973) 195; Sommerstein (1998) 214; Vetta/Del Corno (2008) 234; Mastromarco (2017) 68.

> Why haven't the men come? They were due long ago. And I'm standing here, plastered with white-lead and wearing a saffron dress, doing nothing, just warbling a little tune to myself, disporting myself in the hope that I might snare one of them as he passes by. [*Praying*] Muses, come here to sit on my lips, and find me a nice little melody in the Ionian style. (transl. Sommerstein)[4]

Trying to catch men's attention, the Old Woman prays to the Muses to inspire her with a μελύδριον τῶν Ἰωνικῶν (883), some Ionian tune, thought to be pleasant and lascivious.[5]

As regards the verb μινυρίζειν at line 880, it is important to notice that in Aristophanes this term is always related to songs composed in Ionian style, as in *Vesp.* 219 with its reference to the ἀρχαιομελισιδωνοφρυνιχήρατα (*Vesp.* 220) sung by the Chorus, and *Thesm.* 100, with reference to Agathon's song.

Considering the scene and the fact that the Old Woman is alone in front of the spectators, it is legitimate to assume that this character is expected to sing a monody. However, the proposal of the Old Woman is soon interrupted, because a Young Woman appears from a window, saying (884–889):

> ΚΟΡΗ
> νῦν μέν με παρακύψασα προὔφθης, ὦ σαπρά.
> ᾤου δ' ἐρήμας, οὐ παρούσης ἐνθάδε (885)
> ἐμοῦ, τρυγήσειν καὶ προσάξεσθαί τινα
> ᾄδουσ'· ἐγὼ δ', ἢν τοῦτο δρᾷς, ἀντᾴσομαι.
> κεἰ γὰρ δι' ὄχλου τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τοῖς θεωμένοις,
> ὅμως ἔχει τερπνόν τι καὶ κωμῳδικόν.
>
> So now you have poked your head out before me, you wreck! / But you thought you might harvest deserted vineyards, / me not being here, and entice someone to you / by singing. But, if you do this, I will sing in response. / And if the spectators, indeed, find this annoying, / nevertheless it has something pleasant and fitting with the comedy.

4 From this point on, when there is no attribution for the English translation of a Greek text, it means that the translation is my own. The Greek text of Aristophanes always follows Sommerstein's edition.

5 The adjective 'Ionian' was traditionally intended to be synonymous with 'lascivious', in music as in lifestyle or behaviour, as testified by many sources, including Ar. *Thesm.* 163; Ath. 12.524f–526d, 13.573b–c, 14.620e–621b. *Scholia vetera* to Ar. *Eccl.* 883 and 918 bear witness to this conception. Vetta/Del Corno (2008) 235, commenting on *Eccl.* 882–883, with reference to the kind of song intoned by the Old Woman, says: 'Con μελύδρια Ἰωνικά ci si poteva riferire a quello stesso patrimonio di canzonette popolari oscene che altrove troviamo definito come ᾠδαὶ ἑταιρικαί o πορνῳδίαι ("canti puttaneschi"; *Ran.* 1301, Platone comico, fr. 620, 14 Kock)'. The fragment of Plato Comicus cited by Vetta is nowadays indicated as fr. 71 K.-A..

It is clear that at lines 887–889 the character of the Young Woman is speaking in the name of Aristophanes, introducing the skoptic duet (a contrast song) between the Old Woman and the Young Woman which covers lines 893–923.

The main questions about this piece of metatheatre are: why does the author feel the need to justify one of his choices in the matter of composition? What do the words of the Young Woman really mean? What could annoy people, how, why and in which way? Finally, how should the adjective κωμῳδικόν be intended when viewed within the context of metatheatre, in a comedy that is experiencing new trends?[6]

Evaluation and Confutation of Current Interpretations

Interpretations of this statement provided by scholars can be summarized in three points, but none of them seems to be really convincing. After evaluating their plausibility, we will consider other solutions by analyzing the scene more closely.

1 A Rhetorical Expedient

Commenting on the expression δι' ὅχλου (888), Rogers asserts that this 'self-depreciation' is to be interpreted as a rhetorical expedient, 'intended merely to elicit from the audience a counter expression of encouragement'.[7] Ussher takes

6 Apart from the strong presence of anonymous (yet playing important roles) characters among its formal elements of transformation, *Ecclesiazusae* shows a gradual approach to the episodic structure, which will become standard with five acts in Menander. The *parabasis*, 'shortened and simplified in Aristophanes' plays of 411 and later, has now vanished altogether' (Sommerstein [1998] 24). Of that part recognised by modern scholars as *agon*, *Ecclesiazusae* presents only an *ode* (571–580) and a *katakeleusmos* (581–582) introducing a long speech by Praxagora (583–688, including questions and interruptions by Blepyros and the Citizen), which ends with a *pnigos* (689–709). Reading the text of *Ecclesiazusae*, it soon becomes clear how often Aristophanes interrupts the comic illusion by addressing the audience, and thus paying attention to the spectators' tastes in the matter of comedy and politics, two elements that are strictly connected in this play (e.g., 580–585, 777, 797–798, 888–889, 1141–1143). Regarding the comedy's self-reflection in regard to content and form, it has also been rightly noted that, thanks to the numerous appeals for the audience's and judges' favours, 'what is striking about Ecclesiazusae is that we nevertheless find several traces of the *parabasis*, even with the form itself no longer visible' (Hubbard (1991) 248).

7 Rogers (1902) 137.

the same view: saying that the oncoming duet may be boring, it gives the audience the opportunity 'for shouting "No!"',[8] so that the global expression of lines 887–889 simply represent Aristophanes playing with his spectators. Accepting this idea, Sommerstein and Ussher refer to an analogous example in *Lys*. 1218–1220 – already cited by van Leeuwen – where a character is threatening someone with his torch and then says that he knows that this gesture would be a boorish thing, but that he must do it to please the audience:

> ΑΘ.$^{\alpha}$ ὑμᾶς κατακαύσω; φορτικὸν τὸ χωρίον
> κοὐκ ἂν ποήσαιμ'. εἰ δὲ πάνυ δεῖ τοῦτο δρᾶν,
> ὑμῖν χαρίσασθαι ταλαιπωρήσομεν. (1220)
>
> You don't want me to burn you up with my torch, do you? [*The slaves retreat from the door*.] Vulgar routine, that, though. I'm not going to do it. [*Some protests from the audience*.] Well, if it's absolutely necessary to do it, we'll suffer that bit more to do you a favour!

Despite similarities, the example from *Lysistrata* does not exactly correspond to our case in *Ecclesiazusae*. Through the character of the First Athenian in *Lysistrata*, Aristophanes admits that he is going to do something *to please the audience*, something which, for his part, he would rather *not* do. In *Ecclesiazusae*, on the other hand, the author says that he is putting something in the scene that *the audience may not like*; in other words, he is going *against* their tastes.[9] This distinction is of fundamental importance, because in *Lysistrata*, Aristophanes postures himself as being condescending towards the vulgar tastes of the audience in an almost playful way, while in the *Ecclesiazusae* he appears almost worried about a negative reaction to one of his choices. Yet in the latter he does not renounce his own dramatic choices, but justifies them at a moment which is broader and much more important to the plot than that of the above passage in *Lysistrata*.

In general, this first interpretation seems to avoid a problem which, on closer inspection, turns out actually to be more complex. Before accepting it, one should at least ponder other possibilities.

2 Preventing a Bored Reaction to an Abused Feature of Performance

Massimo Vetta proposes two alternative solutions to the enigmatic metatheatrical sentence of the Young Woman.

8 Ussher (1973) 197.

9 Bremer (1991) 139 too seems to misunderstand the two different types of 'compromise'.

Starting from the expected negative reaction of the audience to the Young Woman's ἀντᾴδειν, Vetta infers that, in the period of *Ecclesiazusae*, dramatists would have abused (888 δι' ὄχλου) the skoptic duet in their plays.[10] By this reading, Aristophanes' statement apologises for following a current fashion. However, as Vetta admits, we are unfortunately unable to prove the exaggerated use of the skoptic duet in late fifth-century and fourth-century comedy. Furthermore, we should take into consideration that in our available sources the verb ἀντᾴδειν seems not to be strictly related to a specific kind of song: musical terms with the prefix ἀντι- are not so common, but one cannot overlook the fact that they always indicate simply something *in response*, not necessarily *in contrast*.[11] We have a definition of a *modality of performance*, not of a *musical genre*. In this sense, when Aristophanes' audience heard ἀντᾴσομαι (887), it may have expected a simple and traditional lyric dialogue. The audience, certainly, could even have thought naturally of the lyrical 'oppositions' already found in the early plays of Aristophanes, and thus not of something indicative of a newer trend.

Furthermore, the Aristophanic cases adduced by Vetta as similar to that of *Ecclesiazusae* are not entirely convincing. Among the examples provided as '*topoi* teatrali di cui non abbiamo diretto riscontro',[12] *Pax* 962 and *Eccl.* 1144–1146 can be omitted from our discussion: the first because its context is actually that of a sacrifice;[13] the latter because the reference is to the banquet following the *exodos* of a comedy. The other examples all deal with something from which Aristophanes keeps *distance* with pride: in *Vesp.* 54–66, Xanthias warns the audience that in that play one should not expect the trivial jokes used by other dramatists to make people laugh; in *Ran.* 1–18, Aristophanes mocks some of the means used by Phrynichus, Lycis and Amipsias;[14] in *Plut.* 788–799, Wealth stops

10 Cf. Vetta (1981) 86–87 and then Vetta/Del Corno (2008) 236.

11 Cf. Ar. *Av.* 218 where the verb ἀντιψάλλω is used for Apollo responding with his *phorminx* to the Nightingale-*aulos*; *Anth. Pal.* 7.196 ἀντῳδός is a cicada responding to Pan; Pind. fr. 125 Maehler (= Ath. 14.635b) ἀντίφθογγος is the harp responding to *barbitos*. Other compounds used in tragedy are reported in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistai* within a list of antiphonal typologies, for example 14.635c ψαλμοῖσιν ἀντίσπαστ' ἀείδοντες μέλη (Phrynichus, *TrGF* 3 F 11), πολὺς δὲ Φρὺξ τρίγωνος ἀντίσπαστά <τε> / Λυδῆς ἐφυμνεῖ πηκτίδος συγχορδία (Soph. *Mysoi TrGF* F 412 Radt), 14.636b ψαλμοῖς τριγώνων πηκτίδων ἀντιζύγοις / ὀλκοῖς κρεκούσας μάγαδιν (Diogenes Athen. *TrGF* 45 F 1). Cf. also Poll. *Onom.* 4.107.4–5, where ἀντᾴδουσιν really is used (see here pp. 228–229).

12 Cf. Vetta (1981) 87 and then Vetta/Del Corno (2008) 236.

13 Maybe with the intent of parodying, at the same time, the practice of other dramatists of making characters throw nuts or something else to the audience: cf. Sommerstein (2005) 179.

14 Cf. also schol. *vet. ad* Ar. *Ran.* 1b Chantry.

Chremylos' Wife from throwing figs. To these examples one could add the case of *Lys.* 1218–1220 discussed above.

In addition, one can recall the well-known passages from *Clouds* (537–548), *Wasps* (54–66 –also cited by Vetta– and 1043–1045; 1535–1537) and *Peace* (736–753). In all of these cases, Aristophanes strongly asserts the superiority of his comedy, or shows pride in something never seen before him.

Unlike these cases listed so far, in the passage of *Ecclesiazusae* on which we are focusing, Aristophanes does not provide the name of any other poet, nor does he use metaphors (as he often does in his *parabasis* celebrating his own art[15]) or indicate duets in comedy as a common *praxis*.

The central issue, therefore, is to understand whether Aristophanes is referring to the *general* comic production of his time, implicitly involving reference to other poets, or whether he is referring instead to that precise scene in *Ecclesiazusae*, to something which has just happened or is about to happen in that comedy in a *precise* moment for some *precise* dramaturgical reason(s).

3 A Boring Succession of Songs

In considering an alternative meaning for the metatheatrical sentence of *Eccl.* 887–889, Vetta focuses his attention on the proximity of the Young Woman's ἀντᾴσομαι (887) to the indication ΧΟΡΟΥ (*post* 876): only 10 iambic trimeters separate the choral interlude from the announcement of the duet. He underlines how this circumstance concretely represents a further delay in the fluidity of the plot. The events, in fact, stop at line 876 with the interlude, and the Young Woman's ἀντᾴδειν would have caused disappointment because the audience may have expected the story to continue, instead of another song.

Vetta also supposes that the duet and the preceding choral interlude would have shared a 'thematic independence' from the script and an 'episodic character' if compared to the continuation of the plot.[16]

15 Imperio (2004) 100: 'Il repertorio delle immagini metaforiche, che, com'è stato da tempo riconosciuto, rappresentano uno degli aspetti distintivi della lingua e della poetica di Aristofane, appare dunque particolarmente cospicuo nelle parabasi, dove assume una speciale pregnanza allorché si fa veicolo di una programmatica riflessione dell'autore sull'arte comica e sul fare poetico in genere, e sulle prerogative che connotano in maniera peculiare e originale il proprio prodotto artistico'. Imperio dedicates a paragraph to the metaphorical language of Aristophanes' *parabasis* in Imperio (2004) 99–104.

16 See Vetta (1981) 87.

Finally, he provided a personal interpretation of the adjective τερπνόν (889):

> 'Dopo un corale con ogni probabilità estraneo alla commedia, viene annunciato sulla scena un duetto scoptico che è anch'esso, come il corale, un τερπνόν in qualche modo fuori dall'intreccio, un τερπνόν che apprendiamo come sempre meno gradito ad un pubblico che ha già condizionato una drastica riduzione delle parti liriche dell'antica struttura della commedia.'[17]

Concerning the duet, in his view τερπνόν would signify something pleasant but having no connection to the plot, simply a *divertissement*, and just like the choral interlude.

Although Vetta is the only one who takes into account the context in which the duet is inserted (a fundamental aspect indeed), his interpretation still fails to convince for multiple reasons.

First, Aristophanes' plays prior to *Ecclesiazusae* provide plenty of examples of two different lyric sections coming one after the other. Already in *Acharnenses* and *Wasps*, the monodies of Dikaiopolis (*Ach*. 263–279) and Philocleon (*Vesp*. 317–333) follow the respective *parodoi* (*Ach*. 204–236; *Vesp*. 230–316) after only a few lines. In *Birds*, the two monodies of the Hoopoe (*Av*. 209–222 and 227–262) are separated by only five lines. In *Thesmophoriazusae*, to the long choral piece in lines 947–1000 follows the longest paratragic monody of the Inlaw (*Thesm*. 1015–1055) and then, after very few lines, another monody by him (*Thesm*. 1065–1072); at the end of *Lysistrata* there is a sequence of three songs following one after the other (*Lys*. 1247–1272 first Spartan monody; 1279–1294 song of Athenian Chorus; 1296–1321 second Spartan monody). In *Frogs*, Aeschylus and Euripides compete by singing four monodies in succession (*Ran*. 1264–1277; 1284–1295; 1309–1328; 1331–1363). Even in *Wealth* a XOPOY immediately follows the *parodos* (*Plut*. 257–321), and this circumstance could lead us to revise the idea of a declining interest on the part of the audience in the lyric parts of comedy.

It is also important to notice that it is specifically the ἀντάσομαι of the Young Woman that may cause annoyance, not 'a song' in general. In fact, after the choral interlude Aristophanes not only stages a single lyrical piece but also *two* additional songs (938–945; 952–975). So why would the author need to justify himself, foreseeing a boring effect on the audience for one excessive song, and then continue with two more songs over many more lines (until line 975)?

Furthermore, even *before* the appearance of the Young Woman (884), the audience is introduced into a 'musical episode'. The Old Woman appears, in fact,

17 Vetta (1981) 88.

while singing something to herself (880) and, only a few seconds later, decides to invoke the Muses for a Ἰωνικῶν μελύδριον (883). She is *alone* and a *monody* is expected, and this does not appear to be a problem for the audience. Therefore, it cannot be the simple succession of lyrical pieces that is annoying.

As regards the theme of the songs, Vetta seems to be missing the main point. While it is normally assumed that ΧΟΡΟΥ remains in manuscripts and papyri to indicate a choral song not belonging to the comedy script,[18] the duet between the two women in *Ecclesiazusae* is indeed *very* relevant to the narration in that it represents a chaotic and comic actualisation of the new orders.[19] Thus, it seems inappropriate to put the choral interlude and the duet on the same level.

Despite the hypothesis of Vetta, the adjective τερπνόν – as much as κωμῳδικόν – is used in the text with an evident *positive* connotation, designed to prevent the audience from refusing what is to come, but rather to gain its favour. In Aristophanes, τερπνός is a rare adjective, but it always has a positive meaning;[20] similarly, the verb τέρπειν has the positive meaning of 'giving pleasure, delight', as it does in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, for example.[21] So we can assume that in *Ecclesiazusae* the meaning of τερπνός is also 'pleasant, delightful', though referring, significantly, to something that is not expected to be pleasant: we must not forget that we are dealing with a 'defense' of the author.

Ultimately, it is clear that we are missing something that was immediately comprehensible to Aristophanes' audience. Still, a pair of new reconstructions, both based on the meaning of individual words and with respect to the ongoing scene, deserves to be taken into account in order to understand the 'voice' of the poet and the dramaturgical meaning of these lines of *Ecclesiazusae*.

The question must be addressed first by identifying *what* represents the real problem for the author, and then trying to understand *how* the author justifies his choice. In this vein, it is worth trying to analyse closely the single passages of the text as well as the scene.

18 Along the same lines of tragic *embolima*. On ΧΟΡΟΥ and ἐμβόλιμον see, for example, Maidment (1935); Handley (1953); Taplin (1976); Hunter (1979); Scattolin (2011); Martina (2016).

19 It has the same function as the two following songs: the *skolia* of the Young Man and the Old Woman (938–945) and the *paraklausithyron* of the Young Man and the Young Woman (952–975).

20 Apart from our case, it is used in *Ach.* 881 with reference to a tasty plate of foods, and in *Lys.* 553 to describe sexual delights.

21 Cf. Wartelle (1982) s.v. τέρπειν.

Dramaturgy of ᾄδειν and ἀντᾴδειν

Line 887 contains three important elements that explain the development of the scene in its different moments.

ᾄδουσα refers to what the Old Woman is about to do before the appearance of the Young Woman. The 'normal' situation is thus that of people expecting a monody from the Old Woman, as she declares at lines 882–883.

ἢν τοῦτο δρᾷς, placed after the pronoun ἐγὼ and the particle δέ, which both have an important contrasting function, underlines that the possibility that the Old Woman will sing something alone represents the reason that the Young Woman is going to do something special in reply.

ἀντᾴσομαι marks the unexpected element of the scene: the Young Woman exclaims to the Old Woman that 'if you do that, then I will do something to prevent you'. It is precisely for the Young Woman's ἀντᾴδειν ('singing in response'), which represents a novelty in the plot, that Aristophanes needs to prepare the audience and gain its 'permission'. Significantly preceded by γὰρ, at line 888, the pronoun τοῦτο refers precisely to that ἀντᾴσομαι, not to something general.

Each element leads to the conclusion that this is all something strictly *dramaturgical* before it is musical and poetic: it is the unexpected 'interference' of the Young Woman in the intentions of the Old Woman that causes something potentially unpleasant.

The Meaning of δι' ὄχλου

The expression δι' ὄχλου (888) is glossed by the schol. *ad loc*. as ἐπιβαρές, 'heavy'. This is to be interpreted as a 'heaviness' resulting from something unpleasant, unwanted and nonetheless to be endured, as shown in general by the ancient attestations. Taking into account the relevant *loci similes*, in the fifth century the expression δι' ὄχλου εἶναι is attested elsewhere only once, in Thuc. 1.73.2:

> τὰ δὲ Μηδικὰ καὶ ὅσα αὐτοὶ ξύνιστε, εἰ καὶ δι' ὄχλου μᾶλλον ἔσται αἰεὶ προβαλλομένοις, ἀνάγκη λέγειν.

The reference is to the Persian Wars, presented as something already well-known and frequently retold, but which must be narrated again, even if this might annoy the audience. In fact, Dionysus of Halicarnassus (*Amm*. 2.10) notes the use of ὄχλος for ὄχλησις. The structure of the Thucydidean sentence is quite similar to that of Aristophanes (εἰ . . . δι' ὄχλου εἶναι), although in Thucydides the dative

(προβαλλομένοις) indicates people *toward which* one may feel annoyance, whereas in Aristophanes (888 τοῖς θεωμένοις) it stands for people *who* will feel annoyance themselves.

Another relevant attestation, with γίγνομαι in the place of εἶναι, is Pl. *Alc.* 103a3, where the lovers of Alcibiades turn out to be annoying him (δι' ὄχλου ἐγένοντό σοι) with their conversation:.

> . . . ἐραστής σου γενόμενος τῶν ἄλλων πεπαυμένων μόνος οὐκ ἀπαλλάττομαι, καὶ ὅτι οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι δι' ὄχλου ἐγένοντό σοι διαλεγόμενοι, ἐγὼ δὲ τοσούτων ἐτῶν οὐδὲ προσεῖπον.

The global meaning is the same: repetition of a same thing causes annoyance.

Apart from these examples is the focus on the simple word ὄχλος, which could help in our interpretation. ὄχλος in itself means 'crowd', and so an exaggerated or large number of people or things, generally carrying a negative or dismissive undertone. Attestations of the word are so many that it would be pedantic to cite them all, but, in addition to the case of line 888, ὄχλος appears three other times in the *Ecclesiazusae* itself: 383–384 πλεῖστος ἀνθρώπων ὄχλος, / ὅσος οὐδεπώποτ', ἦλθ' ἀθρόος ἐς τὴν πύκνα, a statement made by Chremes to Blepyros to explain that a mass such as never was seen before had crowded together towards the Pnyx, preventing him from arriving on time to the assembly; 394–395 ἀτὰρ τί τὸ πρᾶγμ' ἦν, ὅτι τοσοῦτον χρῆμ' ὄχλου / οὕτως ἐν ὥρᾳ ξυνελέγη;, where the same term is recalled by Blepyros in asking for explanations; and 745 τὰ χυτρίδι' ἤδη καὶ τὸν ὄχλον ἀφίετε, something said by the Neighbour who has already brought all the goods he intends to deliver to the city out of his house and so tells his servants to leave, for the moment, the pots and the other things (of evidently minor importance).[22]

The sense of 'crowd', anyway, can be extended to something that gives annoyance or is boring because of its 'repetition' – precisely its 'crowding' effect – of the same thing, as can also be deduced from the sources mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph.

It is interesting that the adjective ὀχληρός appears with an aesthetic nuance in the *Vita Euripidis* (*TrGF* V T1 IB 4), where the tragic poet is described with negative adjectives as regards in particular his dialogues (ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀμοιβαίοις περισσὸς καὶ φορτικός, 'superfluous and vulgar') and his prologues (ἐν τοῖς

22 For Aristophanes we may also recall, for example, *Vesp.* 540–545, where the mass of the old men of the Chorus (πρεσβυτῶν ὄχλος) fears to be mistreated; *Lys.* 327–331, where ὄχλος is used within the description of a situation of general confusion; *etc.* See also 229 and n. 34.

προλόγοις δὲ ὀχληρός, 'tedious').[23] Even if the *Vita* does not provide a specific explanation for this judgement, the passage can be compared to the words pronounced by Aeschylus in *Frogs* for introducing his parody of Euripidean prologues, and it may be intended to be seen as full of insignificant things or, in an extended sense, too full of details and thus tedious.[24] Looking at our scene in *Ecclesiazusae*, the comparison could lead us to think of an accumulation of something which may cause annoyance.[25]

Two New Interpretative Proposals

Given that everything within the dialogue seems to be related to the scene, Aristophanes may be referring to something repetitive happening at that particular moment of the play. What is this annoying 'crowding' referring to? We should take into consideration at least two possibilities.

a. An Impossible Monody: A 'Crowding' of Characters?

The first –and maybe more plausible from a dramaturgical point of view– new interpretation of the sentence pronounced by the Young Woman implies that the expression 'being δι' ὅχλου to the spectators' may be relative to what follows the metatheatrical passage.

By taking a closer look at what is happening on the scene, it is possible to recognize in the Young Woman an intruder, a type of character appointed to hinder the protagonist from the execution of an action –and, in the case of the episode we are focusing on, the Old Woman should be considered the protagonist– as it happens in many of Aristophanes' plays, which contain plenty of 'intruders' scenes'.[26]

23 Here, the complete passage with the aesthetic judgment of Euripides' style (*TrGF* V T1 IB 4. 53–56): καὶ τοῖς μέλεσίν ἐστιν ἀμίμητος παραγκωνιζόμενος τοὺς μελοποιοὺς σχεδὸν πάντας, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀμοιβαίοις περισσὸς καὶ φορτικὸς καὶ ἐν τοῖς προλόγοις δὲ ὀχληρός, ῥητορικώτατος δὲ τῇ κατασκευῇ καὶ ποικίλος τῇ φράσει καὶ ἱκανὸς ἀνασκευάσαι τὰ εἰρημένα.

24 Cf. *Ran*. 1202–1204. Cf. also schol. *vet*. *Ran*. 1202 Chantry.

25 ὀχληρά is used to describe Echo in Ar. *Thesm*. 1075 by Euripides' Inlaw, who is trying to sing a monody but is continuosly interrupted by the voice of Echo repeating his words.

26 Examples can be found in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, where many characters crowd and disturb Dikaiopolis' own market (719 ff.) or especially in *Birds*, which contains two large 'intruders' scenes': at lines 904–1057 five 'visiteurs inopportuns' – following the definition of Kakridis (1997) – interrupt Peisetaerus' sacrifice for Nephelokokkygia; at lines 1308–1469 three

The Young Woman interrupts with the intention of causing trouble for the Old Woman and of contrasting her song. In this sense, ὄχλος should be intended as a 'crowding' of characters, i.e. of voices, where only one (for the monody of the Old Woman) was expected. Not only the presence of the Young Woman, but her ἀντᾴδειν itself is assumed to be annoying to the spectators, namely because it represents an obstacle to the monody.

On closer inspection, it is also meaningful that the Old Woman, after the metatheatrical sentence, ignores the Young Woman (though not before having insulted her) and –with another metatheatrical trick– addresses the *auletes* as if nothing had happened (890–892):

ΓΡ.^{α} τούτῳ[27] διαλέγου κἀποχώρησον· σὺ δέ,
φιλοττάριον αὐλητά, τοὺς αὐλοὺς λαβὼν
ἄξιον ἐμοῦ καὶ σοῦ προσαύλησον μέλος.

[*bending over and presenting her posterior to the Girl*]: Talk to *that*, and be off with you! [*To the piper who has been accompanying the Chorus*] And you, piper sweetie, take your pipes and play a tune to show your quality – and mine. (transl. Sommerstein)

She prays the *auletes* play something appropriate for her and for him: she wants to sing her monody, not a duet. The first *strophe* of her song (893–899), before its development into a duet, seems to be just the beginning of the μελύδριον Ἰωνικῶν (883) that she had already decided to sing alone:

ΓΡ.^{α} εἴ τις ἀγαθὸν βούλεται πα-
θεῖν τι, παρ' ἐμοι χρὴ καθεύδειν·
οὐ γὰρ ἐν νέαις τὸ σοφὸν ἔν- (895)
εστιν, ἀλλ' ἐν ταῖς πεπείροις.
οὐδέ τοι στέργειν ἂν ἐθέλοι μᾶλλον ἢ 'γὼ
τὸν φίλον ᾧπερ ξυνείην,
ἀλλ' ἐφ' ἕτερον ἂν πέτοιτο –

more characters burst onto the stage asking Peisetaerus for wings. For the intruders in Aristophanes' plays and in Old Comedy in general see also Hartwig (2009) 66–68.

27 This is the word we find in manuscripts; the *scholia* to this passage explain that ἡ γραῦς 'τῷ αἰδοίῳ' λέγει. As Sommerstein says in his edition of *Ecclesiazusae*, 'as often . . . the text uses a demonstrative pronoun to refer to an object which the audience could see, with the result that we as readers cannot identify the object with certainty: here we know only that the object is masculine or neuter in grammatical gender, that the invitation to talk to it is an insult, and that, in view of the whole tenor of the scene, the insult is likely to have some sexual content or connotation' (Sommerstein [1998] 215). While working from both a textual and a dramaturgical point of view, the text was the object of conjecture by some scholars, who proposed to amend τούτῳ to τύμβῳ (Meineke) or σαυτῇ (Blaydes), but there is actually no need to modify a well-functioning text, which is also supported by *scholia*.

If anyone wants to have a good / time, he should sleep with *me*! / For expertise is not to be found / in the young, but in the mature. / And I tell you she couldn't be more ready then I am / to cherish my boyfriend; / no, she'd fly off to another – (transl. Sommerstein)

It is at this point that the Young Woman violently interrupts her, giving birth to the real 'burning' contrast song (900–924):

ΚΟ. μὴ φθόνει ταῖσιν νέαισι· (900)
τὸ τρυφερὸν γὰρ ἐμπέφυκε
τοῖς ἁπαλοῖσι μηροῖς
κἀπὶ τοῖς μήλοις ἐπάν-
θεῖ· σὺ δ', ὦ γραῦ, παραλέλεξαι κἀντέτριψαι
τῷ Θανάτῳ μέλημα. (905)
ΓΡ.[α] ἐκπέσοι σου τὸ τρῆμα
τό τ' ἐπίκλιντρον ἀποβάλοις
βουλομένη σποδεῖσθαι,
κἀπὶ τῆς κλίνης ὅφιν προσελκύσαιο
βουλομένη φιλῆσαι. (910)
ΚΟ. αἰαῖ, τί ποτε πείσομαι;
οὐχ ἥκει μοὐταῖρος·
μόνη δ' αὐτοῦ λείπομ'· ἡ
γάρ μοι μήτηρ ἄλλῃ –
καὶ τἄλλα μ' οὐδὲν τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα δεῖ λέγειν.
ἀλλ', ὦ μαῖ', ἱκετεύομαι, (915)
κάλει τὸν Ὀρθαγόραν,
ὅπως ἂν σαυτῆς κατόναι',
ἀντιβολῶ σε.
ΓΡ.[α] ἤδη τὸν ἀπ' Ἰωνίας
τρόπον, τάλαινα, κνησιᾷς·
δοκεῖς δέ μοι καὶ λάβδα κατὰ τοὺς Λεσβίους. (920)
ΚΟ. ἀλλ' οὐκ ἄν ποθ' ὑφαρπάσαι-
ο τἀμὰ παίγνια· τὴν δ'
ἐμὴν ὥραν οὐκ ἀπολεῖς
οὐδ' ἀπολήψει.

GIRL [*interrupting*]: Don't be jealous of the young; / for voluptuousness has its natural abode / in tender thighs / and blooms on firm breasts; / while *you*, old woman, are plucked and plastered / to be the darling of Death!

FIRST OLD WOMAN: May your hole fall out / and may you lose your lie-upon / when you want a shag, / and may you, on your bed, draw a snake to your arms / when you want a kiss!

GIRL: 'Ah me, what will become of me? / My boyfriend hasn't come, / and I'm left alone here, / because my mother's somewhere else –' / [*speaking*] and I've no need to add what comes after that! / [*Singing again*] 'Oh, nurse, I implore you –' / [*maliciously, to the Old Woman*] invite the Hard Man round, / so that you can five yourself some pleasure, / [*passionately again*] 'I beg you!'

> FIRST OLD WOMAN: Already, poor soul, you've got the itch / in the Ionian fashion, / [*speaking*] and it looks to me like you've got the big L as in Lesbos too!
> GIRL: But you'll never rob me / of my playmates, and / my youth you will not destroy / nor grab a share of! (transl. Sommerstein)

One way of reading this would be to see Aristophanes as trying to prevent the annoyance of the spectators, for a new character that is going to impede the normal lyrical progression of the script.

b. Choral Interlude and Actors' Duet: A 'Crowding' of Similar Songs?

If δι' ὅχλου (888) is 'retroactive', then the skoptic duet introduced by ἀντᾴσομαι (887) must be bothersome because something similar has happened immediately before. In this case, the repetition would be that entailed by the presence of two similar songs, a 'crowding' of similar musical-poetic genres one after the other.

From this point of view, even if we know very little about the interludes indicated by ΧΟΡΟΥ, we could assume that the choral interlude performed after line 876 was a contrast song, characterised by *skommata*, in which two parts contend in a lyrical way, a 'cut and thrust' in which what is said by one is recovered and twisted by the other. In this case, the Young Woman's proclamation of ἀντᾴδειν to the Old Woman would be seen by audience as the introduction to another contrast song, and this would cause annoyance. The interlude and the duet could have been similar: it does not really matter if one were choral and the other not, or if one were disconnected from the plot and the other is relevant to it, because they would be of the same genre in their sharing of the same basic characteristics.

Even if this hypothesis cannot be proved, there are important elements to consider. The most similar case comes in *Wealth*. The song of the *parodos* and the choral interlude indicated by χοροῦ are placed one after the other, as in *Ecclesiazusae* (where, however, the interlude comes first, followed by the duet). Besides, the *parodos* of *Wealth* is a skoptic song, and one of the same character as *Ecclesiazusae*'s duet, because the slave Karion and the Chorus alternate their parts, each upturning what was said by the other previously.[28] Furthermore, it is also important to notice that, at the end of the *parodos*, Karion addresses the

28 On the *parodos* of *Wealth*, see in particular Totaro (2015), which deals with the *onomasti komoidein* characterizing this dialogical *parodos*; cf. also Bravi (2017) 186–189.

Chorus by saying 'stop with your *skommata*, now turn to *a different kind of song*' (*Plut*. 316–317):[29]

> ἀλλ' εἶά νυν τῶν σκωμμάτων ἀπαλλαγέντες ἤδη
> ὑμεῖς ἐπ' ἄλλ' εἶδος τρέπεσθ(ε).

After this invitation comes the interlude, not transmitted in the *codices*. This makes us think that the author knows that two lyrical pieces one after the other should be different,[30] so as not to bother the audience. It is a sort of 'rule', which would explain why the 'exception' in *Ecclesiazusae* needs to be justified.

The case in which a character speaks with reference to something from the interlude is very interesting, and again it has a parallel in *Wealth*. At line 771 of the play, in fact, Wealth appears on the scene just after a choral interlude (the indication KOMMATION XOPOY following line 770 is retained in some manuscripts, among which are the ancient *Ravennas* 429 and *Venetus Marcianus gr*. 474, and it is testified also by the *scholia vetera* and *recentiora ad* Ar. *Plut*. *post* 770). His words –a reference to the sun– seem to refer to something said immediately before, as his first line opens with καὶ . . . γε (καὶ προσκυνῶ γε πρῶτα μὲν τὸν ἥλιον, κτλ.). Nevertheless, at the end of the previous episode, there was no 'sun', nor does it appear at the beginning of the new episode. Therefore, it is possible that, during the interlude, the Chorus has been singing something about the sun, even if something disconnected from the plot, and that Wealth takes that reference as opening the new scene.[31]

Finally, a Chorus singing a contrast song as interlude would not be an absurd hypothesis at all: more than once in Aristophanes it is possible to identify a Chorus divided into two parts (e.g., in *Ach*. 557 ff., in *Ran*. 324 ff., and in *Lysistrata* up to the reunification of men and women),[32] one responding to the other. Ancient *scholia* to Aristophanes likewise show awareness of these cases of διχορία.[33]

Given the above, it is interesting that when Pollux, in his *Onomasticon*, talks about the chorus, he says (4.107.4–5):

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29 Cf. Handley (1953) 59; Sommerstein (1984) 141 (though actually speaking of 'another kind of entertainment'; cf. also Sommerstein (2001) 160 and 151 n. 16 with the confutation of other proposals; Imperio (2011) 141 evinces some doubts about the interpretation of these words.

30 For the different shades of meaning of εἶδος in Antiquity, see Grandolini (1999), in particular 11–12.

31 Cf. also Hunter (1979) 31–33; Sommerstein (1984) 141–142; Sommerstein (2001) 185.

32 Cf. *Lys*. 1042 ἀλλὰ κοινῇ συσταλέντες τοῦ μέλους ἀρξώμεθα.

33 Cf. also schol. *(vet. Tr.) Eq*. 589a, 589b on the composition of the comic chorus and the possibility of *hemichorus*.

> ὁπόταν γὰρ ὁ χορὸς εἰς δύο μέρη τμηθῇ, τὸ μὲν πρᾶγμα καλεῖται διχορία, ἑκατέρα δ' ἡ μοῖρα ἡμιχόριον, ἃ δ' ἀντᾴδουσιν, ἀντιχόρια.
>
> In fact, when the Chorus is divided in two parts, this thing is called διχορία, each part ἡμιχόριον, what they sing in response ἀντιχόρια.

Here we should also note the use of the verb ἀντᾴδειν.

A skoptic song, finally, would not be out of context in a comedy, if we consider also the *praxis* of the Middle and New Comedy to introduce the first appearance of the Chorus (for a so-called 'χοροῦ' μέλος, an interlude) as a group –note also the mention of ὄχλος in some texts–of drunk men.[34]

Although, as I have said at the beginning, both new interpretations of the metatheatrical passage from *Ecclesiazusae* offered here are speculative, they are both more consistent with all factors and thus more plausible than what has been said before. In addition, they both draw our attention closer to the scene.

What is τερπνόν and κωμῳδικόν? And in which Sense?

Speaking through the voice of the Young Woman, Aristophanes reassures the audience that what is about to happen on the scene is τερπνόν and κωμῳδικόν (889). We have already said that τερπνός should be translated as 'pleasant, amusing'.[35] But what about κωμῳδικόν, a word so important and charged with metatheatrical significance, inserted into a metatheatrical moment of the play, and yet so elusive?

34 Martina (2016) 358: 'mentre da una parte è innegabile che il coro fosse diventato talmente estraneo all'azione da essere usato solo come elemento di divisione della commedia in parti, dall'altra si può anche pensare che la ricorrenza di un coro di gozzovigliatori possa essere intesa come un ritorno alle origini, vale a dire al κῶμος, la "baldoria", da cui era sorta la commedia antica'. See in particular Martina (2016) 349–350. Cf. Men. *Aspis* 247–248 ὄχλον ἄλλον ἀνθρώπων προσιόντα τουτονὶ / ὁρῶ μεθυόντων κτλ.; *Dys*. 230–231 καὶ γὰρ προσιόντας τούσδε Πανιστάς τινας / εἰς τὸν τόπον δεῦρ' ὑποβεβρεγμένους ὁρῶ; *Epit*. 169–170 μειρακυλλίων ὄχλος / εἰς τὸν τόπον τις ἔρχεθ' ὑποβεβρεγμένων; *Pk*. 261 μεθύοντα μειράκια προσέρχεται. Note that in Antiphanes' *Dodonis* (fr. 91 K.-A.) an ὄχλος of young men joining in revelry appears, and in Alexis' *Kouris* (fr. 107 K.-A.) a similar κῶμος is seen moving forward: both situations seem to cause worry to the speakers.

35 On audience's pleasure, see Duncan in this volume.

The adjective cannot simply mean 'amusing', because τερπνόν is already present in the text: this meaning would represent a pointless repetition and, most of all, the word would lose every metatheatrical meaning within the comedy, as the term itself seems to indicate. κωμῳδικόν, especially in a metatheatrical moment immediately following a ΧΟΡΟΥ, and (we could add) in a comedy without *parabasis*, must carry an important meaning in itself.

Nevertheless, the word is attested very few times in Aristophanes. Elsewhere, in *Wasps* (1020; 1047) it refers to the 'comic verses' of Aristophanes himself; in fr. 31 K.-A., from Aristophanes' *Amphiaraos*, it defines a mask; in *Eccl.* 371 it is an attribute of a chamber pot. In any case, the meaning of the word is not *just* 'typical of comedy as *a genre*', but more precisely is 'admitted and used concretely in a comedy as an instrument of expression', and it is so used for verses, masks, objects, and probably songs as well.

Aristophanes, in effect, always adopts the substantive κωμῳδία as 'play' – so the relative adjective identifies everything that can be used in a play: *Ach.* 377–378; *Nub.* 534–535; *Vesp.* 64–66; *Ran.* 12–15.

To indicate the 'genre' of comedy, Aristophanes adopts τρυγῳδία and the related adjectives τρυγῳδός and τρυγῳδικός. These are always used to qualify elements of the comic 'genre' per se, in particular the comic chorus and the general comic production (also implying, almost sometimes, a comparison with tragedy): *Ach.* 497–500; *Vesp.* 1535–1537; fr. 347.1 K.-A. (*Thesmophoriazusae B'*); fr. 150.1–3 K.-A. (*Gerytades*).

Therefore, admitting the first interpretation (*a*) proposed in this investigation: if Aristophanes does specify to the audience that the intrusion of the Young Woman, which is to create an undesired duet of what began as a monody, has in itself something 'pleasant' and 'comic', it is to make people aware that this circumstance will be amusing, that it fits well in a play, and that it belongs to *this* play, the one they are watching. By following, instead, the second interpretation (*b*), κωμῳδικόν would be remarking upon the difference between the χοροῦ (μέλος)'s 'non-involvement' in the comedy plot, and the duet of lines 893–923 as belonging to the plot. In simple terms, it would be as though Aristophanes were saying: 'Spectators, listen to me: you are going to hear a skoptic song. I know that you may find this annoying, boring, because you just heard this kind of song from the Chorus few minutes ago, but *that* was just entertainment, *this one* is nice and pertains to the facts of this play'.

In any case, Aristophanes might be explaining the dramaturgical meaning of his choices in composition at a moment in the play where the lyrical pieces could be misunderstood by the audience, i.e. just after a choral interlude which was disconnected from the plot and which represented one of the formal innovations of the Athenian theatre in that period. In fact, from this scene of *Ecclesiazusae* we

can infer that, among other things, 'metatheatre' can be defined as a dramaturgical technique created – or at least used – in an original and comic way by the poet for speaking, through his characters, about his own compositional process. In this way Aristophanes could be guiding his audience through the complex mechanics of the dramaturgy, the music, and/or the assembly of scenes.

As pointed out at the beginning of this article, the aim of these pages is not to provide definitive solutions but to re-open a dialogue on this passage by focusing attention on the scene and placing more importance on the voice of the author at a very delicate moment within the play, and within ancient Greek comedy as a whole.

Mimes

Anne Duncan

‘Mime and Metatheatre’

Alone among the theatrical genres of the ancient Greco-Roman world, mime was performed unmasked, and by female as well as male actors. These two facts are probably linked.

At the risk of belabouring the obvious, I would like to linger for a moment over the logic of masked drama in the ancient world. Regular Greek drama – that is, the scripted, institutionalized drama of comedy, tragedy, and satyr play – employed masks. There are two reasons conventionally advanced by scholars to explain the custom of masked acting in the ancient world; we feel this convention needs explanation, since we do not share it. One reason often put forth is ritual: masked acting maintained the ritual connection with the worship of Dionysos, which employed masks as well.[1] The other reason is practical: masks enabled spectators sitting far away from the stage to recognize different characters.[2] A third reason that is less often discussed is ideological: masks made it ‘possible’ for male actors to play female characters; that is, masked acting naturalized male actors playing female characters. Greek actors were exclusively male, presumably, because the high degree of sexual segregation in Classical Athens and the emphasis on female modesty throughout ancient Greek culture made it seem impossible for women to perform onstage. This ideology seems to have carried over into Roman culture, with its proliferation of dramatic genres, although the reasoning for the ban on female actors in either culture is never made explicit.[3]

1 Jane Ellen Harrison and the ‘Cambridge School’ were ultimately behind this view of tragedy as ritual; see discussion in Csapo/Miller (2007) 1–38; Wise (1998) 61–62. Most scholars these days who discuss the religious connotations of dramatic masks do so in a more cautious way than Harrison and her contemporaries; see Wiles (2007) 1–12; Lada-Richards (1997) 96; Cartledge (1997) 8; Easterling (1997a) 37; 45; 49–52; Green (1994) 77–80. Scullion (2002b) 116–117 denies any ritual component to the Greek theatrical mask. On masks, see also Taplin pp. 24–27 and Paillard in this volume, pp. 74–76.

2 Taplin (2003) 14–15; Wiles (2007) 9–11; see also Wiles (1991) 132–133 on masked acting of Plautus’ comedies in Republican Rome, which he argues was carried over from Greek traditions.

3 Interestingly, the ancient silence on the reason for all-male acting troupes (and choruses) has produced a similar silence in modern scholarship. Some scholars acknowledge in passing that acting was restricted to men, but seem to accept it as an inevitable consequence of Athenian gender ideology; see, e.g., Storey/Allan (2014) 45–46; Lightfoot (2002) 212; Bassi (1998) 141; Cartledge (1997) 21. Zeitlin (1996) 341–374 remains a classic statement of the influence of the feminine on Classical Athenian tragedy, but does not discuss masking *per se*, or why exactly women

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For whatever reason, however, the Greco-Roman genre of mime departed from the norm of all-male theatrical troupes and employed female as well as male actors. With origins perhaps in fifth century Greece, mime spread throughout the Hellenistic Greek world, including Egypt, Sicily, and Magna Graecia, where it was likely influenced by native Italian dramatic forms to create the sprawling hybrid genre enjoyed throughout the Greco-Roman world.[4] Mime seems to have taken off in popularity in Roman-controlled territories during the late Republican period, when traditional comedy and tragedy, as well as a welter of other dramatic genres, were still being performed regularly.[5] In a world where most drama was performed by male actors who wore masks, in part, to be able to play female characters 'convincingly,' it seems that a real woman performing had to be unmasked to display her realness to the spectators. Mime actresses (*mimae*) were thus marked out as different by their apparent lack of theatrical artifice. They were also marked out, as all actors in the Roman world were, by their *infamis* social status: denied most citizen rights, and subject to corporal punishment, like slaves – 'legally branded as disgraceful,' as Edwards says.[6]

It may seem contradictory to begin a discussion of metatheatre with a consideration of a *lack* of theatrical artifice, but such was the nature of mime: contrary to 'establishment' or 'authorized' theatre, even as the different genres were performed virtually side-by-side. Mime was contrary to the traditional dramatic genres in that it encompassed a much broader range of subjects (from scripted tragic-style dramas to improvised comic burlesques of Christian sacraments), was performed in a much broader range of venues (from private homes to marketplaces), eschewed traditional conventions of decorum and dramatic restraint, and, of course, put forth female performers for men to gaze at. In this chapter, I will consider whether the sheer fact of women performing unmasked in mime functioned metatheatrically, as a way of calling attention to the theatrical

were excluded from performing. Hov (2015) 130–134 surveys histories of Western theatre, noting that they tend to ignore or downplay ancient female performers, especially when those histories focus on dramatic textual traditions rather than evidence from material culture.

4 On the history of mime, see Tsitsiridis (2011) 213–214; Panayotakis (2010) 1–2; 16–32; Csapo/Slater (1995) 369–78; Beacham (1991) 129–39. The scattered 'literary' mime authors in the tradition, such as the fifth-century BC Sicilian Sophron and the third-century BC Alexandrians Herodas and Theocritus, are part but not all of the origin story of mime, as is the performance of a mime (including a female mime performer) in Xenophon's *Symposium*, which was written during the fourth century but set in the fifth century.

5 Panayotakis (2010) 26–27 discusses the reciprocal influence of comic mime and *fabula palliata* on each other in the second c. BC; Manuwald (2010) 1–15 gives an overview of Roman dramatic genres, known playwrights, and dates.

6 Edwards (1993) 123. See also French (1998) 296–99; Richlin (1992) 99–100.

artifice of conventional, all-male, masked drama. I will also consider whether there were other ways in which mime actresses compensated for their relative exposure by concealing other parts of themselves.

We might think about the potential metatheatricality of mime actresses in the context of two fragmentary mime scripts in Koine that have come to us from Egypt on the two sides of one piece of papyrus (*P.Oxy*.413). On the *verso* is the 'Charition mime' and on the *recto*, the 'jealous mistress mime,' both of which seem to have featured lead female roles.[7] Both of these scripts have strong echoes of more 'literary' Greek texts, such as tragedy and the ancient novel, which featured prominent female characters.

The 'Charition mime' concerns a Greek woman, Charition, who is being held captive by a wicked king in India. What has survived on the papyrus is the escape scene, in which Charition has taken sanctuary in the temple of an Indian goddess, while her brother has arrived on a ship with other Greeks, including a fool, in order to rescue her. The ship's captain gets drunk, however, and the temple is surrounded by Indians. The fool farts so loudly that the noise and stench scatter the barbarians to a nearby river. The Amazon-like wives and daughters of the Indians return from a hunt and surround the temple and the fool farts again to disperse them. (These farts are clearly indicated in the stage directions on the papyrus.) The fool urges Charition to steal the temple offerings during their escape, but Charition refuses, saying that it is not right to do so. The Indians reappear after bathing in the river and the brother orders the fool to give them unmixed wine. The fool gets drunk along with the Indian King and the Chorus of Indian women, who speak in invented 'Indian'. They all dance, and the Indian king sings a solo (in perfect, metrical Greek verse). Then the king and the chorus all pass out, and the Greeks tie them up. Charition comes back out of the temple, where she remained during the festivities. Her brother orders the Greeks to set sail and all the Greeks escape. During their escape, Charition prays to the Indian goddess to save them from their pursuers.

The plot of the 'Charition mime' is reminiscent of Euripides' *Helen* and *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, in that it concerns a Greek woman, held captive by a wicked foreign king, who escapes with a party of rescuing Greeks by sea. The drunk scene recalls the Cyclops episode in Homer's *Odyssey* and Euripides' *Cyclops*. Judging by the number of characters and other textual cues, the mime was a fairly elaborate, tightly-choreographed production with a chorus of 'Indian' women and an 'Indian' king speaking an invented, nonsensical 'Indian'

7 Texts in Rusten/Cunningham (2002) 376–400. On the *Charition*, see also Skotheim in this volume.

language, as well as music (drums are indicated in the stage directions), sound effects (including the farts from the fool) and many props. The presence of stage directions and musical notations on the papyrus indicates that it was a working script of some kind.[8] Charition is presented as a respectable woman in this mime: she argues against stealing objects from a temple, does not get drunk, and behaves herself throughout. The chorus of 'Indian' women, on the other hand, may have been presented as exotic stereotypes: they threaten men with weapons, they speak and drink in public and bathe in rivers with men. To a Greek way of thinking, they are shameless – like the chorus of (male) satyrs in Euripides' *Cyclops*.

While Charition behaves with almost tragic decorum in what survives of this mime, the characters around her vigorously and enthusiastically undermine that decorum. The ship's captain, the fool, and the 'Indians' get drunk, and the fool farts – and talks about farting – constantly. It is as if Charition is a tragic heroine out of one of Euripides' escape-dramas, plunked down into the midst of an especially raunchy comedy or satyr play. The contrast between her behaviour and that of the other characters emphasizes the parody of tragedy, much like the scene in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* where Euripides and his relative pretend to be Perseus and Andromeda from Euripides' *Andromeda* while the Scythian archer, who does not understand their tragic allusions, keeps breaking the mood with crude remarks.[9] The mime sets up Charition as a representative of tragedy in a metatheatrical clash of genres.

The 'jealous mistress mime' on the other side of this papyrus is a little harder to reconstruct, because the version of the script written on the page seems to have been the working copy of the *archimima*; it has only her lines for several scenes, but ends with a group scene in which the other characters' lines are written but not hers.[10] The mime seems to have concerned the mistress of a household devising a plot to frame a male slave for rape because he spurned her sexual advances, a story which has many parallels with Euripides' *Hippolytus*.

From what has survived of the script, the plot of the mime appears to be as follows: the jealous mistress desires to have sex with her slave Aesopus, but he is in love with Apollonia, another slave in the household. The mistress orders slaves to take the lovers into the forest, bind them to trees, and kill them. Apollonia is discovered inside the house, and the mistress orders her slaves to find

8 See discussion in Tsitsiridis (2011) 187–189; 198–206; Webb (2008) 108; 110–111; 129; Panayotakis (2006) 129; Andreassi (2001) 88–158.

9 Farmer (2017) 182–88 discusses the parodic and metatheatrical elements of this scene in *Thesm*. On this scene, see also Vespa in this volume, p. 197 ff.

10 Tsitsiridis (2011) 191–97.

Aesopus and bring him back dead. When he is brought back, apparently but not actually dead, the mistress laments over his supposedly dead body; her slave Malacus comforts her and possibly becomes aroused, an assumption based on his joke name.[11] The mistress tells Malacus that she has decided to poison first her elderly husband and then the entire household and to sell off the property. At some point, Apollonia is also brought onstage, apparently but not actually dead either. When the mistress sees the (supposed) dead body of Apollonia alongside that of Aesopus, she asks the parasite to summon her husband and prepares to poison him. Malacus enters, carrying the poisoned wine, but Spinther, a loyal slave, switches the poisoned wine with regular wine. When the parasite deliberately drinks the wine (which the mistress believes is the wine she poisoned), she panics and has him carried inside so that she can find out what happens to him before her husband does. Spinther and the parasite come back onstage, while the mistress and the old master enter the house. The household slaves are all in on the plan to fool the mistress and Malacus, so when the two of them come back onstage, the parasite tells the mistress that her husband is dead, and she rejoices that her plan has worked. Then the slaves bring the (supposedly) dead body of the old master onstage, and someone (it is unclear who) mourns him, but the old master unexpectedly rises up and beats Malacus. When the old master sees the (supposedly) dead bodies of Aesopus and Apollonia, the other slaves reassure him that they are not really dead either, and presumably at some point they revive too.[12]

The plot of the 'jealous mistress mime' is one variant of the famous (or infamous) adultery mime,[13] but it is also reminiscent of Euripides' *Hippolytus*, as well as several literary accounts of slave-owning women who feel unrequited passion for their slaves (and usually come to a bad end), such as Herodas's *Mimiamb* 5, the *Life* of Aesop, and Book 10 of Apuleius' *Golden Ass*.[14] The complicated plot involving attempted murder and people who feign death evokes the almost soap-operatic plots of several Greek novels, including the *Ephesian Tale* of Xenophon and the *Aethiopian Story* of Heliodorus.[15]

11 Tsitsiridis (2011) 190.

12 See discussion in Tsitsiridis (2011) 189–197, who argues that it is the mistress who pretends to mourn the old master in the final scene, rather than Spinther or the parasite, as others have argued. See also Webb (2008) 109–112; 135; Panayotakis (2006) 129; Andreassi (2001) 88–158.

13 See n. 19 below.

14 *Mimiamb* 5 was probably titled ΖΗΛΟΤΥΠΟΣ, even though the word is not used in the text: Tsitsiridis (2011) 206; Fantham (1986) 52. Cf. the story of Potiphar's wife and Joseph in *Genesis* 39.1–20.

15 Tsitsiridis (2011) 206–09.

The role of the jealous mistress appears to have been a starring villain role, much like Phaedra or Clytemnestra or Medea in tragedy. Unlike Phaedra or Clytemnestra or Medea, however, the jealous mistress character uses obscene language twice in the extant fragments of the mime, both times in the context of her own sexuality:

[αὐ]τὸν ἵνα με βινήσηι

him so that he can fuck me[16]

πάντων οὖν τῶν ἐν τῶι ἀγρῶι ἔργων γινομέν(ων)
ὁ ἐμός σοι κύσθ(ος) σκληρότερ(ος) ἐφάνη τῶι
γυναικε(ίωι) γέν(ει) συντεθραμμ(ένωι)

So out of all the things that have to be done on the farm,
my cunt seemed harder to you,
who grew up effeminate[17]

This sort of language was unthinkable in tragedy; it is far more reminiscent of Old Comedy, a genre which, of course, made great use of metatheatrical parodies of tragedy. Indeed, the plot of this mime – a foul-mouthed Phaedra lusting after her (theoretically accessible) slave, rather than her (tragically taboo) stepson – seems to be a comic burlesque of tragedy. It removes the tragic elements (decorous language, elite social status, the machinations of the gods) to reveal a squalid truth: the woman is an immoral criminal. Put another way, the mime removes the female mask, elaborate robes, and tasteful obfuscation of traditional tragic language to reveal a real woman saying and doing nasty things.

Many female characters in the *P.Oxy.*413 scripts and in other extant mime script fragments, such as those of Decimus Laberius, display stereotypical negative female traits: lechery, greed, deceitfulness, drunkenness.[18] For example, Laberius' *The Seamstress* (*Belonistria*) contained the lines:

domina nostra privignum suum
amat efflictim

Our mistress is passionately in love
with her stepson.[19]

16 All translations are mine.

17 See Webb (2008) 109 and n. 71.

18 Panayotakis (2010) 6–7 and (2006) 124–125 cautions against reading mime scripts for real women's voices, noting that female characters in mime are 'as conventional and artificial in their behaviour as their female counterparts in the other genres of popular theatre'.

19 Panayotakis (2010) 142–146.

Both the 'jealous mistress' mime from *P.Oxy*.413 and Laberius' *The Seamstress* are scripted examples of the adultery mime, which we know could also be performed entirely improvised. Webb has summarized the adultery mime's plot succinctly: 'A clever young wife and her lover are surprised by her slow-witted husband.'[20] Endless variations were possible: sometimes the lover is discovered by the husband; sometimes the wife successfully conceals him from her husband. Because of its simplicity (only three actors were required, and minimal props), as well as its universal appeal, the adultery mime enjoyed lasting popularity across the Greco-Roman world. Undoubtedly, it played a role in associating *mimae* with shameless behavior.

If audiences tended to conflate *mimae* with the stereotypical female characters they played, this might explain why so many of our ancient sources on *mimae* assume and imply that they are prostitutes. Cicero is a veritable gold mine of slut-shaming digs against mime actresses. In a private letter to a friend, he reveals his consternation at attending a dinner party given in a respectable equestrian's house and seeing the *mima* Cytheris reclining in a place of honour just below the host (Cic. *Ad fam*. 9.26.1–2).[21]

> *accubueram hora nona, cum ad te harum exemplum in codicillis exaravi. 'ubi?' apud Volumnium Eutrapelum, et quidem supra me Atticus, infra Verrius, familiares tui. miraris tam exhilaratam esse servitutem nostrum? quid ergo faciam? (te consulo, quid philosophum audis) angar, excruciem me? quid adsequar? deinde quem ad finem? 'vivas,' inquis, 'in litteris.' an quicquam me aliud agere censes aut posse vivere, nisi in litteris viverem? sed est earum etiam non satietas sed quidam modus; a quibus cum dicessi, etsi minimum mihi est in cena (quod tu unum ζήτημα Dioni philosopho posuisti), tamen quid potius faciam, prius quam me dormitum conferam, non reperio. audi reliqua: infra Eutrapelum Cytheris accubuit. 'in eo igitur' inquis 'convivio Cicero ille, 'quem aspectabant, cuius ab os Graii ora obvertebant sua?' non me hercule suspicatus sum illam adfore. sed tamen ne Aristippus quidem ille Socraticus erubuit, cum esset obiectum habere eum Laida. 'habeo,' inquit, 'non habeor a Laide' (Graece hoc melius; tu, si voles, interpretabere); me vero nihil istorum ne iuvenem quidem movit umquam, ne nunc senem; convivio delector; ibi loquor quod in solum, ut dicitur, et gemitum in risus maximos transfero.*
>
> I had been reclining at the ninth hour when I wrote a copy of this to you on tablets. 'Where?' At Volumnius Eutrapelus', and indeed, Atticus is seated above me, Verrius below me, friends of yours. Are you astonished that our slavery has been made so cheerful? What, then, should I do? (I ask your advice, since you listen to a philosopher). Should I be troubled, should I torture myself? What should I pursue? Then for how long? 'Live in

20 Webb (2008) 105. On the adultery mime, see Panayotakis (2010) 10–11 and (2006) 128; Webb (2008) 105–112; Fountoulakis (2000) 143; Fantham (1989) 158; Reynolds (1946).

21 On Roman banquet seating, see Plut. *Mor*. 619a-b and f; Dunbabin (2003) 22–23; 39–40 and fig.21; D'Arms (1999) 313–14; Dunbabin (1991) 122–128.

> your books,' you say. Do you think that I am doing anything else, or that I can live if I did not live in my books? But of them there is not even an abundance, but a certain measure; when I departed from these people, although I have very little interest in dinner (which is one *problème* you posed to the philosopher Dio), nevertheless what I should rather do, before I take myself to bed, I cannot come up with. Listen to the rest: Cytheris reclined below Eutrapelus. You say, 'Was *the* Cicero, 'whom they gazed at earnestly, toward whose face Greeks turned their own faces,' at *this* banquet?' By Hercules, I did not suspect that she would be there. But nevertheless, not even that famous Socratic Aristippus blushed when it was brought up that he kept Lais. He said, 'I have Lais, I am not had by Lais' (this is better in Greek; you will translate if you wish). But nothing of those sorts of things ever excited me, neither as a youth, nor now as an old man. I am delighted by a banquet; there I say what comes into the sole, as it is said, and I turn a groan into the biggest laughs.

In this letter, Cicero takes pains to establish that he did not attend the party in the hopes of seeing Cytheris, and that he thought her presence there was distasteful, but that he was equal to the situation. His quotation from the philosopher Aristippus serves three functions. It compares the actress Cytheris to Lais, a famous Greek prostitute.[22] It aligns Cicero with grammatical and sexual activity ('I have Lais'), the proper domain of a Roman man, rather than passivity ('I am had by Lais'). Finally, it connects the letter writer and his addressee in an affirmation of shared, exclusive, elite status by signaling that the Latin quotation is originally a Greek quotation, which they both can read.

Cicero plays on the same class snobbery in his public speech prosecuting Verres for corruption, alleging that Verres forced the respectable wives of his army officers to mingle socially against their will with his girlfriend, the *mima* Tertia (Cic. *2 Verr*. 5.12.31):[23]

> *huc Tertia illa perducta per dolum atque insidias ab Rhodio tibicine maximas in istius castris effecisse dicitur turbas, cum indigne pateretur uxor Cleomenis Syracusani, nobilis mulier, itemque uxor Aeschrionis, honesto loco nata, in conventum suum mimi Isidori filiam venisse. iste autem Hannibal, qui in suis castris virtute putaret oportere non genere certari, sic hanc Tertiam dilexit ut eam secum ex provincia deportaret.*
>
> This Tertia, having been led on by a trick and by the greatest plots away from her Rhodian flute-player, is said to have created a great disturbance in that camp, as the wife of Cleomenes the Syracusan, a woman of noble birth, and the wife of Aeschrion, born to high rank, endured it with outrage that the daughter of Isidorus the mime had come into their company. But that *Hannibal* now, who thought that in his army there ought to be a competition of excellence, not birth, so loved this Tertia, that he transported her with him out of the province.

22 On Lais II, see McClure (2003) 55; 118.

23 See also *2 Verr*. 3.34.78; 5.16.40.

As part of his general character assassination against Antony in the *Philippics*, Cicero sneers that Antony spent his dissolute youth with his *mentem* and his *mentum*, his mind and his chin, in the laps of mime actresses (Cic. *Phil*. 13.24):

> *equidem negare non possum a Caesare Hirtium ornatum, sed illa ornamenta in virtute et in industria posita lucent. tu vero qui te ab eodem Caesare ornatum negare non potes, quid esses, si tibi ille non tam multa tribuisset? ecquo te tua virtus provexisset, ecquo genus? in lustris, popinis, alea, vino tempus aetatis omne compsuisses, ut faciebas, cum in gremiis mimarum mentum mentemque deponeres.*
>
> Indeed, I cannot deny that Hirtius was honored by Caesar, but such honors shine forth when they are bestowed upon worth and hard work. You, in fact, who cannot deny that you were honored by the same Caesar, what would you be, if Caesar had not given you so much? Where would your worth and your birth have gotten you? You would have spent your entire life in brothels, in cook-shops, in dice, in wine, as you used to do when you were laying your chin and your mind in the laps of actresses.

Cicero is not our only source for Roman attitudes about *mimae*. Horace refers to mime actresses as safe (but not respectable) sexual outlets for young men who do not want to risk committing adultery with other men's wives (Hor. *Sat*. 1.2. 55–59):

> *ut quondam Marsaeus, amator Originis ille,* (55)
> *qui patrium mimae donat fundumque Laremque,*
> *'nil fuerit mi' inquit 'cum uxoribus umquam alienis.'*
> *verum est cum mimis, est cum meretricibus, unde*
> *fama malum gravius quam res trahit.*
>
> Just as Marsaeus, the lover of Origo,
> He who gives his estate and his household gods to a *mima*,
> Says 'I don't have any dealings with other men's wives.'
> It is true that he does have dealings with *mimae*, with prostitutes, from which
> His reputation suffers more than his estate.

Mimae and *meretrices*, mime actresses and prostitutes, are equated in line 58. They are depicted as legal but disreputable sexual outlets.[24] In one of his satires, Juvenal invokes the spectre of being a member of a mime troupe as a fate worse than death (Juv. 8.196–97):[25]

24 See discussion in Richlin (1992) 174–77; she notes at 176 that the warning scenes of lovers being chased off by angry husbands in this poem 'owe their theatrical force to mime'.

25 McCullough (2008) 205 argues that Juvenal exhibits the same class snobbery in his sixth satire, when he rails against the elite woman training to be a gladiator (6.246–67); she has betrayed both her sex and her station. See also Coleman (2000) 497.

mortem sic quisquam exhorruit, ut sit
zelotypus Thymeles, stupidi collega Corinthi?

Did anyone ever fear death so much that he would be
The jealous husband of Thymele, or the colleague of the fool Corinthus?

The *zelotypus* and the *stupidus* were stock mime characters, as was the adulterous wife.[26] In this passage, Juvenal names Thymele as a *mima* who played the adulterous wife. In another satire, Juvenal refers to Thymele as having been 'handed over' (*summissa*) to one man by another as a bribe (Juv. 1.30–36):

difficile est saturam non scribere, nam quis iniquae (30)
tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus, ut teneat se,
causidici nova cum lectica veniat Mathonis
plena ipso, post hunc magni delator amici
et cito rapturus de nobilitate comesa
quod superest, quem Massa timet, quem munere palpat (35)
Carus et a trepido Thymele summissa Latino?

It is hard not to write satire! For who could be so enduring of
This wretched city, so hardened, that he could contain himself,
When the new litter approaches of the lawyer Matho,
Full of himself, and after him the informer against his noble patron
Who quickly will seize what remains from our plundered nobles,
Whom Massa fears, whom Carus coaxes
With a bribe, and to whom Thymele was handed over by quaking Latinus?

As an actress, Thymele is presumed to be sexually accessible to any man; she is a valuable bribe, a piece of property. In a neat bit of circular logic, the cultural justification for assigning actors to the *infamis* status category is their immoral behavior, and then their *infamis* status is cited as evidence of their immoral behavior. Prostitutes, of course, were also *infamis*.

According to some accounts, mime actresses were known for baring more than their heads while performing. By 173 BC, the annual festival of the goddess Flora in Rome, the Ludi Florales or Floralia, was officially given over mostly to mime performance.[27] An anecdote from Valerius Maximus affirms the connection between mime, specifically mime actresses, and the Floralia. Cato the Younger, who had a reputation for traditionalism like his great-grandfather Cato the Censor's, attended the Floralia at some point during the mid-first century BC but

26 Panayotakis (2010) 31; Webb (2008) 96; 105–07; Barton (1993) 139; Fantham (1986) 54; Reynolds (1946).
27 Ov. *Fast.* 5.327–328; Plin. *HN* 18.69.286; Tsitsiridis (2011) 213; Wiseman (1999) 196; Fantham (1989) 155.

discovered that the rest of the audience would prefer it if his inhibiting presence were not there (Val. Max. 2.10.8):

> *eodem ludos Florales, quos Messius aedilis faciebat, spectante populus ut mimae nudarentur postulare erubuit. quod cum ex Favonio amicissimo sibi una sedente cognosset, discessit e theatro, ne praesentia sua spectaculi consuetudine impediret.*
>
> In the same place the people were watching the Floralia, which Messius was producing as aedile, but they were embarrassed to demand that the mime actresses strip. When [Cato] learned this from his good friend Favonius, who was sitting with him, he left the theatre so that his presence would not prevent the customary show.

This anecdote has often been cited as evidence that mime actresses usually performed stripteases,[28] along with the story of Theodora's routine with the geese in Procopius' sixth-century CE *Secret History*. (Procopius claims that one of the future empress Theodora's mime routines involved stripping down to her panties, lying on her back, and allowing trained geese to peck barley grains off of her nearly-nude body.[29]) Webb has noted, however, that these two anecdotes constitute our only specific mentions of stripping or nudity as a regular part of mime performance.[30] Regardless of how frequently striptease was part of mime actresses' performances, their reputations were permanently associated with the *infamia* of their occupation.

So it seems quite possible that male spectators of mime performances assumed that the women performing were as promiscuous and immoral as the stereotypical adulteress characters they played unmasked. The actress' lack of mask would have encouraged the impulse to conflate the actress with the role, as it presented the illusion of authenticity or naturalness or realness to the spectators. The lack of scripts, at least for improvised mimes, and the lack of a stage, for mimes performed in the streets (or in dining rooms), might have added to that sense of 'realness'. At the same time, watching a woman or women perform in mime may have denaturalized traditional masked, scripted drama. A male actor dressed as Phaedra, with his full-head mask, man's voice, and fully robed male body, might have come across differently to a spectator who had seen an unmasked *archimima* perform the 'jealous mistress' mime, for example. A male actor dressed as Iphigenia might have come across differently to a spectator who had seen an unmasked *archimima* perform the 'Charition mime,' with its farting fool and chorus of rowdy 'Indian' women. It is

28 Panayotakis (2010) 7; Wiseman (1999) 197; Barton (1993) 169 n. 111; Beacham (1991) 129.
29 Procop. *Anecd.* 9.20–23; see Potter (2015) 27; Webb (2008) 5–6.
30 Webb (2008) 100–101. See also Hov (2015) 139–140.

fascinating that mime coexisted with traditional tragedy and comedy for quite some time. The symbolic (and perhaps literal) nakedness of mime actresses could be taken as a comic critique of the excessive trappings and smothering artifice of traditional drama.

On the other hand, many mime actresses used stage names, which reintroduces the idea of playing a character, or creating distance between performer and spectator. Some mime actresses' names that have come down to us from literary or epigraphic sources are very clearly stage names, such as Dionysia, Thymele ('Stage'), Emphasis ('Outward appearance, presentation'), Phoebe ('Radiant,' or perhaps a reference to Artemis), Eucharis ('Graceful'), Thalassia ('Ocean'), Arete ('Excellence'), Ecloga ('Eclogue'), and on the Latin side Arbuscula ('Shrub' – she was supposedly very short and very witty). Other known names of mime actresses are less certainly stage names, such as Bassilla (perhaps 'Queen') or Helladia (perhaps 'Girl from Hellas').[31] I should note that it is difficult to guess a *mima*'s ethnic origin from her stage name, in the case of a name like Dionysia, especially when performers traveled widely and, it seems reasonable to speculate, many were bilingual.[32] Bassilla, for example, may have had the full name Julia Bassilla; her funeral inscription is in Homeric-style Greek, and she was buried in Aquileia, in far northeastern Italy.[33] Stage names do not seem to have been as common among male mime actors. The male mime actor who commissioned Bassilla's tombstone was named Herakleides. Tertia, Verres' girlfriend, was the daughter of a mime actor named Isidorus.[34] Latinus frequently performed alongside Thymele.[35] One male mime actor who may have used a stage name was Protogenes ('Firstborn'), from the early third century BC.[36] Male actors in other, more prestigious genres seem to have performed under their real

31 Panayotakis (2010) 16 agrees that Eucharis, Ecloga, Cytheris, and Thalassia were stage names. On Ecloga, see also Höschele (2013) 37 and n. 3. Graf (1991) 48 notes that Dionysia is clearly a stage name. See also Sifakis (1966) 272.

32 On bilingualism (and possibly trilingualism) among performers in Republican Italy, see Rawson (1985) 101–104. On ethnicities vs. names of actors, Rawson (102–103 and n. 32) notes the case of an actor named Cannutius, whom Plutarch (*Brut.* 21.3) describes as a Greek with an Italian name.

33 *IG* XIV 2342; see Webb (2008) 22; 45–46; 94; 111; Lada-Richards (2007) 30; Prauscello (2004); Webb (2002) 301; Csapo/Slater (1995) 377.

34 Cic. *2 Verr.* 3.34.78; 5.12.31; 5.16.40; see Panayotakis (2006) 134; Wiseman (1998) 71; Garton (1964) 239.

35 Reynolds (1946) 82 and n. 2.

36 Panayotakis (2010) 16; 23–24.

names: on the Greek side, for example, we know of fourth-century BC tragic actors named Polos, Theodoros, and Thettalos; a fifth-century BC comic actor named Kallipides;[37] on the Roman side, the late Republican comic actor Roscius and the tragic actor Aesopus.[38] To what extent did these mime actresses' clearly assumed names undermine the audience's impression that they were watching real, authentic women performing without masks? Did *mimae* adopt these stage names, at least in part, to create some distance between themselves and the roles they played? Was the stage name the mask?

Acting was a socially and legally stigmatized occupation in the Roman world. Actors were legally classified as *infamis* persons, along with prostitutes, gladiators, pimps, and gladiator-trainers.[39] Greek mimes performing in Roman-controlled territories would encounter this sense of stigma from their audiences, even if acting was less stigmatized in their native Greece. *Infamis* occupations had in common that their practitioners made a living from the display and use of their own or others' bodies. As it happens, gladiators also used stage names; they adopted names that emphasized either their ferocity, like Achilles, Tiger, or Killer, or their sex appeal, like Adonis or Hermes. Female gladiators, doubly stigmatized, fought under names like Amazonia or Achilleia.[40] In thinking about who uses stage names and why, I would like to explore a modern *comparandum* briefly.

There are a number of modern occupations whose practitioners use stage names: some actors and pop singers do, on the more respectable end of the performance spectrum, as well as virtually all rappers, professional wrestlers, drag queens, strippers, porn stars, and prostitutes. Stephanie Clifford, for example, the porn star who broke her nondisclosure agreement with Donald Trump to reveal that they had an affair while he was married to Melania Trump, performs and directs under the stage name Stormy Daniels. As the sociologist Erving Goffman observed decades ago in his study *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, people in socially stigmatized occupations often adopt stage names as one strategy to 'manage' (that is, contain) the secret of what they do for a living from those they do not wish to know, such as family members and

37 On Kallipides, see Vespa in this volume, pp. 203–205.

38 Rawson (1985) 112 provides a list of Republican Roman male actors whose names seem to reflect regional origins in Italy outside Rome; none of them sounds like a stage name. Garton (1964) 239, however, lists several plausible Greek and Roman stage names of male actors, without specifying the genres in which they performed.

39 French (1998) 296–99; Edwards (1993) 123–26.

40 McCullough (2008) 199; Coleman (2000) 487; Ewigleben (2000) 127 and fig. 137; Robert (1971) 297–301; Sifakis (1966) 272.

neighbors.[41] In her excellent monograph *G-Strings and Sympathy: Strip Club Regulars and Male Desire*, Katherine Frank analyses male spectators at strip clubs from the perspectives of both a sociologist and a stripper, as she supported herself through graduate school in sociology by stripping. She notes that every stripper she worked with adopted a stage name, in order to create some distance between their onstage persona and their 'real' identity, often for the purposes of concealing the nature of their work from family or friends. Some strippers had a second stage name ready to reveal to regular customers who wanted to 'get backstage,' to learn something 'real' about the strippers they found appealing – to gain some sort of intimacy.[42] Other studies of strippers have also emphasized the use of stage names as a way of creating a bit of distance between their stripper personas and their 'real selves'. Thompson *et al.* describe how quickly strippers could move between their onstage (stage name) persona and their offstage (real name) identity, observing that when strippers were being interviewed by a sociological researcher in between dances in the strip club, they would cover their breasts as they talked in the third person about their work as 'Angel' or 'Cheyenne':

> Who am I kiddin'? That was Angel talkin'. Hell, I'm a mother. I shouldn't even be in a place like this.
>
> When I go out there on that stage I quit being me and just start being Cheyenne. I guess you could say Cheyenne is my wild side.

Then, when the interview was over, the strippers would uncover themselves, signaling the resumption of their stage personas and stage names, and leave the interviewer in order to mingle with customers again.[43]

There is some evidence that mime actresses in the ancient world felt defensive about their stigmatized occupation. The tombstones of Eucharis and Bassilla feature elaborate inscriptions emphasizing their skill. Eucharis is called *docta* and *erodita* on her first century BC epitaph (*docta, erodita omnes artes virgo*), 'trained' or perhaps 'learned'. Her epitaph asserts that she was 'the first [woman] to appear on the Greek stage before the people' (*Graeca in scaenica prima populo apparui*) (*CIL* 6.10096):[44]

41 Goffman (1963).

42 Frank (2002) 192–193. The customer's impulse to ask a stripper for her real name is apparently common enough that a second stage name is a common stratagem.

43 Thompson/Harred/Burks (2003) 565–566.

44 See Rawson (1985) 102 n. 31.

Eucharis Linciniae
docta erodita omnes artes virgo vixit an XIIII
heus oculo errante quei aspicis leti domus
morare gressum et titulum nostrum perlege
amor parentis quem dedit natae suae
ubei se reliquiae conlocarent corporis
heic viridis aetas cum floreret artibus
crescent et aevo gloriam conscenderet
properavit hora tristis fatalis mea
et denegavit ultra veitae spiritum
docta erodita paene musarum manu
quae modo nobilium ludos decoravi choro
et Graeca in scaenica prima populo apparui
en hoc in tumulo cinerem nostri corporis
infistae parcae deposierunt carmine
stadium patronae cura amor laudes decus
silent ambusto corpore et leto tacent
reliqui fletum nata genitori meo
et antecessi genita post leti diem
bis hic septeni mecum natales dies
tenebris tenentur ditis aeterna domu
rogo ut discedens terram mihi dicas levem

Eucharis Liciniae
Educated and trained in all the arts; a girl who lived 14 years
You there, as you look upon the house of death with a wandering eye,
slow your step and carefully read our inscription
which a father's love gave to his daughter
where the remains of her body are buried.
Just as my young life was blossoming and my skills
were growing and in time was ascending to glory,
the mournful ordained hour rushed upon me
and denied me any further breath of life.
I was educated and trained almost as if by the hand of the Muses.
I adorned the games of the nobles in a chorus,
and I first appeared before the people in a Greek play.
But now in this tomb the hostile Fates
have placed the ashes of my body along with a poem.
Devotion to a female patron, effort, love, praise, beauty
are silenced by my burned body and stilled by my death.
A daughter, I left behind weeping for my father,
and I preceded him in the day of my death, although born after him.
Now my fourteenth birthday is observed here
in the shadows, in the ageless house of Death.
I ask that upon departing you tell the earth to lie lightly upon me.

Bassilla's third century CE epitaph says that she displayed 'every kind of skill in the mimes' (παντοίης ἀρετῆς ἐν μείμοις) (*IG* XIV 2342):

> Τὴν πολλοῖς δήμοισι πάρος, πολλαῖς δὲ πόλεσσι
> δόξαν φωνάεσσαν ἐνὶ σκηναῖσι λαβοῦσαν
> παντοίης ἀρετῆς ἐν μείμοις, εἶτα χοροῖσι,
> πολλάκις ἐν θυμέλαις, ἀλλ' οὐχ οὕτω δὲ θανούσῃ,[45]
> τῇ δεκάτῃ Μούσῃ, τὸ λαλεῖν σοφὸς Ηρακλείδης
> μειμάδι Βασσίλλῃ στήλην θέτο βιολόγος φῶς.
> ἣ δὴ καὶ νέκυς οὖσα ἴσην βίου ἔλλαχε τειμήν,
> μουσικὸν εἰς δάπεδον σῶμ' ἀναπαυσάμενη.
> Ταῦτα οἱ σύσκηνοί σου λέγουσιν· εὐψύχει, Βάσσιλλα, οὐδεὶς ἀθάνατος'
>
> [To the woman,] Formerly in many towns and many cities
> having resounding fame onstage
> for every kind of excellence in mime, and then in dances,
> To her having died, often onstage, but never in that way,
> To her, the tenth Muse, Herakleides wise in babbling,
> A man and an actor, erected this stele to the mime Bassilla.
> But she even being dead has obtained an equal honor as in life,
> Resting her body in the Muses' ground.
> These things her fellow actors say to her: Farewell, Bassilla, no one is immortal!

These epitaphs' emphasis on training and skill, their mentions of prestigious contests and elite audiences, their references to the Muses, all push back against acting's disreputable status.

In the *Satires*, Horace says that it is enough for him if Maecenas alone applauds his work, just as 'the courageous actress Arbuscula' said about the members of the equestrian class when she was hissed by the populace (Hor. *Sat*. 1.10.76–77):

> *nam satis est equitem mihi plaudere, ut audax,*
> *contemptis aliis, explosa Arbuscula dixit*
>
> It is enough for me to please an equestrian, just as the bold Arbuscula
> said, having been hissed by the despicable crowd

Appeals to the educated elite, whether through emphasizing training, skill, performing in Greek plays (in Italy), or winning favour with the equestrians (even if not with the plebs) are all ways of staking a claim to a certain kind of respectability.

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45 Taking Prauscello's (2004) 'metatheatrical' reading of this line: she 'died' onstage many times before dying in real life (but not in the way her characters died onstage). The previous line's term χοροῖσι might be translated 'dances' or 'songs'.

For women who feel overly exposed, the stage name is a different kind of covering. It creates a theatrical persona, even in an improvised art form, as mime could be, or a nonverbal art form, as stripping usually is. The persona bears the brunt of the male gaze, and the stigma associated with exposing oneself to that gaze.[46] The unmasked mime actress promised to reveal all, to unmask Greco-Roman theatrical conventions in a comical and exciting shedding of pretension, to uncover the real body of a real woman before the public gaze – but she hid herself behind a stage name, as if behind a pair of sunglasses, or a professional detachment. In his essay on the Parisian striptease, Roland Barthes asserts that when professional striptease dancers remove all their clothes, they 'wrap themselves in a miraculous ease which constantly clothes them, affords them the icy indifference of skilful practitioners haughtily taking refuge in the certitude of their technique: their knowledge clothes them like a garment'.[47] What was the knowledge that mime actresses clothed themselves in? The knowledge that theatre is never wholly fake or wholly real; that the real woman, performing before a crowd of men who were used to seeing men in female masks, was another theatricalized woman. Mime actresses functioned metatheatrically; their performances called attention to the conventions and artifice of traditional Greco-Roman masked, all-male drama. They accomplished this metatheatrical critique in a conventionally theatrical way, however, by performing a role, living up to their stage name, becoming 'Dionysia' or 'Arbuscula', 'Angel' or 'Cheyenne'.

46 Hov (2015) 140–142 also connects the male gaze to the infamy of specifically female performance in Greco-Roman Antiquity.

47 Barthes (2013) 167.

Abbreviations

Adler	Ada Adler (ed.), *Suidae Lexicon*, Leipzig, 1928–1938, 5 vols.
Aphrodisias	Donald F. McCabe, *Aphrodisias Inscriptions. Texts and List*, Princeton, 1991.
Bethe	Eric Bethe (ed.), *Pollucis Onomasticon*, Leipzig, 1900–1937, 3 vols., (reprint Stuttgart, 1967).
BMCR	*Bryn Mawr Classical Review*.
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France.
CID	*Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes*, Paris, 1977–.
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin, 1863–.
CPG	Ernest Ludwig von Leutsch and Friedrich Wilhelm Schneidewin (eds.), *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, Göttingen, 1839–1851.
Chantry	Marcel Chantry (ed.), *Scholia in Aristophanis* Thesmophoriazusas, Ranas, Ecclesiazusas *et* Plutum. *Scholia Vetera in Aristophanis* Ranas, Leiden, 1999.
DAA	Antony E. Raubitschek (ed.) with the collaboration of Lilian H. Jeffery, *Dedications from the Athenian Acropolis: Catalogue of the Inscriptions of the Sixth and Fifth Centuries B.C.*, Cambridge (MA), 1949.
DK	Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz (eds.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, Berlin, ^{2}1959–1960, 3 vols.
EM	*Etymologicum Magnum*.
Ephesos	Donald F. McCabe, R. Neil Elliott, Allen Hilton *et al.*, *Ephesos Inscriptions. Texts and List*, Princeton, 1991, 3 vols.
Erythrai	Donald F. McCabe and James V. Browson, *Erythrai Texts and List*, Princeton, 1986.
FD	*Fouilles de Delphes*, Paris, 1909–1985.
FGrH	Felix Jacoby *et al.* (eds.), *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker (FGrHist) von Felix Jacoby*, Leiden, 1957–.
FrC	*Fragmenta Comica (Kommentierung der Fragmente der griechischen Komödie)*, Projektleitung Bernhard Zimmermann.
Hausrath	August Hausrath (ed.), *Corpus fabularum Aesopicarum*, Leipzig, 1940–1956, 2 fasc.
Iasos	Donald F. McCabe, *Iasos Inscriptions. Texts and Lists*, Princeton, 1991.
I. Cret.	Margherita Guarducci, *Inscriptiones Creticae*, Roma, 1935- 1950, 4 vols.
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae*, Berlin, 1873–.
IK	*Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien*, Bonn, 1972–.
IK Knidos I	Wolfgang Blümel, *Die Inschriften von Knidos I* (*Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* 41), Bonn, 1992.
IK Laodikeia am Lykos	Thomas Corsten, *Die Inschriften von Laodikeia am Lykos*, (*Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* 49), Bonn, 1997.
IK Priene	Wolfgang Blümel and Reinhold Merkelbach, *Die Inschriften von Priene*, (*Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* 69.1–2), Bonn, 2014, 2 vols.

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Irigoin	Jean Irigoin, Jacqueline Duchemin and Louis Bardollet, *Bacchylide. Dithyrambes; Epinicies; Fragments*, Paris, 1993.
IScM	*Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris Graecae et Latinae*, Bucarest, 1980–.
K.-A.	Rudolph Kassel and Colin Austin, see *PCG*.
Keaney	John J. Keaney (ed.), Harpocration, *Lexeis of the ten orators*, Amsterdam, 1991.
Kenyon	Frederic G. Kenyon, *Hyperides: Orationes et fragmenta*, Oxford.
Kn.	Richard Kannicht, see *TrGF*.
Kock	Theodor Kock, *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*, Leipzig, 1990, 3 vols.
Kühn	Karl Gottlob Kühn (ed.), *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*, Leipzig, 1821–1833, 22 vols.
LCL	*Loeb Classical Library*.
LSJ	Henry G. Liddell, Robert Scott and Henry S. Jones (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon: With a Supplement*, Oxford, ^{9}1996.
LW	Philippe Le Bas and William Henry Waddington, *Voyage archéologique en Grèce et en Asie mineure*, vol. 3/5 : *Inscriptions grecques et latines recueillies en Asie Mineure*, Paris, 1870.
Magnesia	Donald F. McCabe, *Magnesia Inscriptions. Texts and List*, Princeton, 1991.
MDAI(A)	*Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts. Athenische Abteilung*.
Maehler	Herwig Maehler (ed.), *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis. Pars II: Fragmenta, Indices*, Leipzig, 1989.
Müller	Karl Müller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, Paris, 1841– 1870, 4 vols.
NGSL	Eran Lupu, *Greek Sacred Law. A Collection of New Documents*, Leyde, 2005.
NP	Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider and Manfred Landfester (eds.), *Der neue Pauly*, *Enzyklopädie der Antike*, Stuttgart, 1996–2003 (online https://referenceworks.brillonline.com).
OGIS	Wilhelm Dittenberger (ed.), *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae. Supplementum Sylloges Inscriptionum Graecarum,* Leipzig, 1903–1905.
PCG	Rudolf Kassel and Colin Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci*, Berlin/ New York, 1983–2001, 8 vols.
PMG	Denys L. Page (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci*, Oxford, 1962.
Priene	Donald F. McCabe, Bart D. Ehrman, R. Neil Elliott (eds.), *Priene Inscriptions. Texts and Lists*, Princeton, 1987.
Radt	Stephan Radt, see *TrGF*.
RE	August Pauly, Georg Wissowa *et al.* (ed.), *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Stuttgart, 1893–1980.
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden, 1923–.
Syll.^{3}	Wilhelm Dittenberger (ed.), *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, Leipzig, ^{3}1915–1924, 4 vols.
TAM II	Ernst Kalinka, *Tituli Asiae Minoris, II. Tituli Lyciae linguis Graeca et Latina conscripti*, Wien, 1920–1944.
Theodoridis	Christos Theodoridis (ed.), *Die Fragmente des Grammatikers Philoxenos*, Berlin/New York, 1976.

Terian	Abraham Terian, *Philon d'Alexandrie, Alexander vel de Ratione quam habere etiam bruta animalia (De animalibus) e versione armeniaca. Introduction, traduction et notes*, Paris, 1988.
Thorikos I	Tony Hackens (ed.), *Thorikos I*, Bruxelles, 1968.
Thorikos VIII	Jean Bingen, « Inscriptions (III) », in: Herman F. Mussche, Jean Bingen *et al.*, *Thorikos VIII, 1972/1976. Rapport préliminaire sur les 9^{e}, 10^{e}, 11^{e} et 12^{e} campagnes de fouilles*, Gent, 1984, 175–187.
Thorikos IX	Jean Bingen, « Inscriptions (IV) », in: Herman F. Mussche, Jean Bingen *et al.*, *Thorikos IX, 1977/1982. Rapport préliminaire sur les 13^{e}, 14^{e}, 15^{e} et 16^{e} campagne de fouilles*, Gent, 1990, 144–153.
Tit. Calymnii	Mario Segre, *Tituli Calymnii*, Bergamo, 1952.
TrGF	Bruno Snell, Stephan Radt and Richard Kannicht (eds.), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, Göttingen, 1971–2004, 5 vols.
Wehrli	Fritz Wehrli, *Die Schule des Aristoteles. Texte und Heft VII. Herakleides Pontikos*, Basel, ^{2}1969.
West	Martin L. West, *Iambi et elegi graeci ante Alexandrum cantati*, Oxford, 1989–1992, 2 vols.

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Batchelder (1995): Ann G. Batchelder, *The Seal of Orestes. Self-Reference and Authority in Sophocles'* Electra, Lanham (MD).

Battezzato (2018): Luigi Battezzato (ed.), *Euripides:*Hecuba, Cambridge.

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Index verborum

Achilleia (female gladiator) 247
Achilles
– (hero) 39, 53, 116
– (gladiator) 247
acrobat 76, 85, 92, 96, 98 n. 44
Admetus 39 n. 40
Adonis (gladiator) 247
Adrastus 58
Aegisthus 45–46, 157
Aeschrion (iambic author) 242
Aesopus
– (mime character) 238–239
– (tragic actor) 247
Agamemnon 37, 53 et n. 92, 81, 119, 181, 185
Agathon 6 n. 32, 41 n. 50, 215
Agoratus (son of Eumares) 44, 44 n. 59
Ajax 75
akroamata 7, 95, 95 n. 29
Alcibiades 43 n. 57, 47, 233
Alcmene 57
Alexandria 99, 209
Althaia 125
Amazonia (female gladiator) 247
Amipsias 218
Amorgos 51 n. 85
Anastasius 100
Andromache 53, 54, 179
animal
– dog 196–197, 201
– fox 198–199, 206, 211
– monkey 14–15, 194–211
Anthesteria 36, 36 n. 27, 96
Antony 243
Apollo 41 n. 51, 60, 161–162, 166, 172 n. 33, 179, 218 n. 11
Apollonia (*mima*) 238–239
applause 26–27, 78
Apuleius 239
Arbuscula (*mima*) 246, 250–251
Archelaus I 43 n. 56
archimima 238, 245
Arete (*mima*) 246
Argos 59 n. 113
Aristippus 241–242
Aristogeiton 44
Artemis 45, 246
Astyanax 53–54, 181
Athena 41, 60, 173, 180
Athens 5, 7, 14, 23, 25, 29, 30, 33, 36, 40, 43–52, 55–56, 58–61, 64, 66, 68, 71, 84, 96, 114–115, 125, 177–179, 181, 186, 194, 205–206, 235
– acropolis 40, 179, 180, 186, 187
– *agora* 44
– Pnyx 36 n. 25, 223
atimia 201 n. 24
Attic demes
– Aixone 49 n. 74
– Collytus 206
Atticus 241
auditorium 22, 110 n. 17
auloidia 95
aulos 24, 78, 118, 200, 218 n. 11
autodidaktos 207
automaton 91, 99
autotragikos 207–208

barbitos 218
Barthes 13, 112, 153, 251
Bassilla (*mima*) 246, 248, 250
Blepyros 216, 223
Brasidas 47
Brecht 93, 111

Caesar 6, 72, 243
Calydon 125
Cannutius 246 n. 32
Cassandra 46, 53, 181, 186, 187 n. 30
Cato the Censor 244–245
Cato the Younger 244
Charition (mime) 16, 98, 100–101, 237–238, 245
Chios 51–52
choregos 23, 26
choreography 146, 168, 170, 174, 175
chorodidaskalos 120
Chremes 223

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110716559-016

Chremylos 219
Cicero 66–67, 241–243
Cimon 35
Circus 71, 72, 78, 90, 91, 209 n. 50
Citizen (comic character) 216
Cleisthenes 202
Cleomenes 242
Cleon 194 n. 5, 195–197
clown 96
Clytemnestra 53 n. 94, 185, 240
Comedy
– Middle Comedy 101, 101 n. 54
– New Comedy 25, 229
– Old Comedy 14, 24, 25, 52, 101, 101 n. 54, 127–128, 194, 225 n. 26, 240
comic illusion 211, 216 n. 6
competition 13, 34, 36, 70, 73, 97, 98 n. 44, 99, 242
– *agones* 4, 6, 23, 24, 25, 26, 35, 98, 177, 193
– athletic 95
– dramatic 25, 32 n. 14, 34, 43, 64, 68, 82, 83, 91, 95, 96, 154
– musical 29, 95, 96, 98, 176
coryphaeus 174, 197
costume 23, 24, 26, 85, 111, 116, 127, 141, 142, 165, 158, 173, 175, 200, 202
– chiton 37
– himation 37
Creon (as tragic character) 40 n. 46, 45
Cyclops 40, 125, 237
Cytheris (*mima*) 241–242, 246 n. 31
Cyzicus 51–52

dance 38 n. 34, 61, 77, 84, 85, 90, 92, 95, 98, 109, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120–127, 140, 140 n. 38, 170, 177, 197 n. 14, 200 204, 206, 237, 248, 250
– Bacchic dance 125
– *sikinnis* 124
dancer 74–76, 78, 80, 85–86, 95–96, 100, 141 n. 42, 201 n. 25, 206 n. 41, 251
Darius 121
Decimus Laberius 240–241
Delian festival 95
Delian League 48, 49 n. 71, 51, 178
Demodocos 116
Demophantos (oath of) 44, 44 n. 61
Demostheneia 95
deus ex machina 99
Dikaiopolis 36 n. 22, 202, 220, 224 n. 26
Dionysia (*mima*) 246, 251
Dionysia 3, 4, 6, 30, 31, 32, 34 n. 19, 36, 43, 44, 48–49, 50 n. 76, 51 n. 86, 54, 55, 56, 60, 91, 110 n. 17, 116
Dionysos 4 n. 13, 9, 15, 27, 30, 33–36, 38, 41–42, 45, 48, 54, 60, 69, 70 n. 23, 71, 75 n. 34, 107–110, 115, 117–118, 122–127, 141, 178, 187, 235
dramatic illusion 155 n. 7, 180 n. 11, 181
– theatrical illusion 1, 198
– scenic illusion 210
Duris of Samos 96 n. 37

Echo 141, 224
Ecloga (*mima*) 246
ekphrasis 116
Electra 37, 45, 85, 142–146, 156–158, 167
Emphasis (*mima*) 246
ephebes 56 n. 100
Ephesus 13, 142–143
Erinyes 38, 60, 119–120
Eteocles 122
Eucharis (*mima*) 246, 246 n. 31, 248–249
Euelpides 46

Favonius 245
fourth wall 1, 94, 111

gelotopoioi 96
gesture 12, 13 n. 46, 30, 31–33, 38–40, 45, 61, 79, 81, 100, 128, 133–147
gladiator 72–73, 76, 243 n. 25, 247
Gorgias 209
Great Dionysia 23, 29–62, 177

Harmodios 44
Hector 53
Hecuba 39, 46, 53, 178, 181–187
Helen 41 n. 52, 141, 163–165, 168–170
Heliodorus 239
Helladia (*mima*) 246

Hera 164, 180
Heracles 39 n. 40, 53, 57, 141, 145 n. 53
herald 33, 36 n. 25, 42–48, 53, 54, 55, 57, 59–60, 62, 181, 183, 185
Hermes (gladiator) 247
Hermione 45
Hestia 41, 41 n. 51
Hestiaea (Euboea) 97
Hippodamus of Miletus 55 n. 97
Hippolochus of Macedonia 96 n. 37
Hippolytus 45
Hirtius 243
histrio 72, 80, 80 n. 45
Homeric 90, 116, 179, 207, 246
Homeristai 90
hydriaphoroi 50

infamia 245
intertextuality 114, 127
intratheatre 114
Iolaos 57–58
Ion 159–167, 172–173
Ionesco 111
Ionia 3 n. 9
Iphigenia 40, 53 n. 94, 173–174, 245
Ischandros 208
Ischomachus (*mimus*) 96
Isidorus (*mimus*) 242, 246

judge 25, 35, 42, 99, 216 n. 6

Kallipides 203–205, 247
kanephoroi 51
Karion 227–228
kitharoidia 95

Lais 242
Latinus 244, 246
Lenaia 49, 51 n. 86
libation 9, 30, 33, 34–48, 54
Lichas 53
Lycus 57
Lycis 218

Macedonia 96, 96 n. 37, 205
Maecenas 250
Magna Graecia 236
Malacus (*mimus*) 239
Marsaeus 243
mask 14–16, 23–27, 61–62, 74–76, 80, 82, 85–86, 91, 93, 98–100, 111, 116, 118, 128, 142, 144, 158, 178, 181, 182, 187, 193, 200, 208, 210, 230, 235, 236, 237, 240, 245, 247, 251
Medea 45, 60, 240
Megara (tragic character) 57
Melos 177–178
Menelaos 53, 141, 146, 163–165, 167–170
mime
– adultery mimes 16, 239, 241, 243
– mime scripts 16, 72, 237, 240 n. 18, 245
mimesis 73, 112, 117, 118, 128, 137, 137 n. 24, 139, 140, 201, 204 n. 32
monody 15, 174, 215–225, 230
Muse 177, 215, 221, 249, 250
music 5, 10, 13, 31, 61, 77, 85, 92, 120, 121, 122, 124, 125, 183 n. 19, 215 n. 5, 231, 238
– musicians 78, 80, 98
– New Music 120
Mynniskos (tragic actor) 203 n. 31, 204

Naples 66, 98
neologism 14, 194, 198, 209
Neoptolemus 39, 39 n. 42, 40, 53 n. 92, 145 n. 53, 179
neurospastai 95

Odysseus 39 n. 44, 41, 181
Oechalia 53
Oedipus 37, 38, 60, 85
Oenoanda 95
Oineus 125
Oinomaos 206–207, 208
orchestra 5 n. 24, 24, 26, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 48, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 62, 78, 117, 118, 124, 125, 179, 179 n. 9, 195–196 n. 8
Oreos (Euboea) 97
Orestes 45–46, 53 n. 94, 60, 142–146, 157–158, 167, 173–174
Origo (*mima*) 243

Pan 218 n. 11
Panathenaia 51, 51 n. 83
pantomime 9, 66, 71, 72, 74, 75, 80–86, 90, 90 n. 6, 92, 95, 97, 98, 98 n. 44, 100, 100 n. 51, 101, 200, 200 n. 21, 201
pantomime libretti 72, 80–82
parabasis 194, 196 n. 8, 197, 200, 209, 210, 216 n. 6, 219 n. 15, 230
paracomedy 100–101
paraklausithyron 221
paratragedy 100–101
parodos 122, 123, 125, 220, 227–228
parody 101, 159, 218 n. 13, 224, 238
Parresiades 199–200
Parthenon 51 n. 83, 180
pathos 13, 119, 120, 121, 184
Peisetaerus 46–47, 56, 56 n. 102, 224–225 n. 26
Peisistratus 54 n. 97
Peloponnesian War 50 n. 78, 178
Pentheus 122–123, 187
performativity 109, 123, 127
Pergamon 184, 186
Pericles 179
peripeteia 111, 123
Perseus 141, 197–198, 200, 238
Persia 48 n. 71, 179
Persian Wars 222
Phaedra 146, 240, 245
Phaidros 3 n. 9
Phanodemus 36 n. 28
Phemios 116
Philip II of Macedonia 71, 205
Philocleon 141 n. 42, 220
Philoctetes 39 n. 44
Phoebe (*mima*) 246
phorbeia 24
Phrynichus 218
Phthia 53
Pindaros (tragic actor) 204
Piraeus 43 n. 57, 179 n. 9
Polos 247
Polynices 122
Polyphemus 40 n. 45, 124
Polyxena 39, 40
Poseidon 178–184, 185, 186
Pratinas 126
Praxagora 214, 216 n. 6
prohedria 22, 22 n. 4
props 6 n. 32, 42, 79, 97, 111, 127, 135 n. 15, 153 n. 3, 166–167, 175, 238, 241
prostitute 52, 74, 214, 241–244, 247
Protogenes (*mimus*) 246
Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II 201 n. 25
puppets 90, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 100, 101
purification 14, 121, 178, 187
Pylades
– (hero) 45–46, 145 n. 53, 174
– (actor) 75, 80–81

rehearsal 8, 22, 93
reperformance 8, 22, 23, 66
Rhodes 205
Rome 64, 64 n. 6, 66, 66 n. 18, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74 n. 28, 83, 235 n. 2, 244, 247 n. 38
Roscius 77, 247
Rural Dionysia 206

salpinx 185
satyr play 7, 12, 26, 67, 76 n. 38, 77, 84, 85, 95, 98, 107, 124–127, 235, 238
schema 128, 133, 134, 137, 139–142, 145–146
scripts 6, 16, 72, 134, 237, 240, 245
Scythian Archer (comic character) 197, 238
self-referentiality 12, 116–117, 123, 128, 129, 138
Sicily 177, 177 n. 4, 178, 236
silence 31, 38, 39, 39 n. 44, 54, 61, 166, 185, 187, 235 n. 3
Silenus 40, 40 n. 45, 124
skoptic song 216, 218, 227, 229, 230
slapstick 90
Socrates 4 n. 15, 6 n. 32, 41 n. 50
Solon 54 n. 97
Sparta 204
Spinther (Publius Cornelius Lentulus) 239, 239 n. 12
stage directions 12, 135, 237, 238
stage name 16, 246–248, 251
street performance 71, 72, 95, 96, 245

stripper 247–248
stupidus (mime stock character) 244

Talthybios 39, 181, 183, 185, 186, 187
Teiresias 46
Telephus 141
Tertia (*mima*) 242–243, 246
Thalassia (*mima*) 246
Thasos 55 n. 97, 59 n. 116
thaumatopoiia 95, 98, 99
theamata 95, 95 n. 29
Theatre of Dionysos 9, 34–35 n. 20, 54, 71, 125
Thebes 121, 205
Themistocles 47
Tenos 51–52
Theodora (*mima*) 245
Theodoros 89, 247
Theseus 45, 47 n. 70, 58, 59, 145
Thettalos 247
Thrasybulus 43–44
threnody 119
Thymele (*mima*) 244, 246
Tiger (gladiator) 247
Timaeus 201 n. 25
Troy 14, 46, 53, 164, 169, 177–187
trumpet 22, 181, 185–186

Verres 242, 246
Verrius 241–242

war-orphans 9, 30, 33, 34–35 n. 20, 54–60

Xanthias 218
Xerxes 36, 179
Xouthos 40, 159–163, 165–166, 172

zelotypus (mime stock character) 244
Zeus 41, 41 n. 51, 59, 97, 163, 169, 182, 184, 185, 186

Index locorum

Aelianus
De natura animalium
2.11 4 n. 16
6.1 4 n. 16
Varia historia
2.13 4 n. 15, 4 n. 16

Aeneas Tacticus
Poliorcetica
1.9.2 5 n. 18
3.5.3 5 n. 17
22.4.3 5 n. 18

Aeschines
1.23 36 n. 25
2.55 4 n. 15, 4 n. 16, 5 n. 20
2.88 206 n. 40
2.99 206 n. 40
3.66–67 23 n. 6
3.76 5 n. 20
3.154 54 n. 97
3.236 45 n. 64
Σ *ad* 2.55 4 n. 15
Σ *ad* 3.67 23 n. 6

Aeschylus
Agamemnon
69–71 39
493–494 44 n. 62
950–951 53
954–955 53 n. 92
975–1034 119
988–993 119
992 119
997 119
1039 53 n. 94
1070 53 n. 94
1395 39
Choephoroe
15 37
84–99 37
87–99 38
92 40
109 38
118 37
121 38
149 38 n. 32
Persae
202–204 40
219–220 39 n. 37
522–524 39
532–907 121
598–680 121
Prometheus
832 171 n. 30
Septem contra Thebas
842 171 n. 30
846 171 n. 30
876 171 n. 30
1030 171 n. 30
Supplices
277 171 n. 30
330 171 n. 30
980–982 39

Aesopus
Fabulae
14 199 n. 19
81 199 n. 19
83 197 n. 14

Alciphron
Epistulae
2.17 97 n. 42
4.18.10 4 n. 16
4.19.5 4 n. 14

Alexis
Gynaikokratia
fr. 42 K.-A. 6 n. 32
Kouris
fr. 107 K.-A. 229 n. 34

Anaxandrides
Odysseus
fr. 35 K.-A. 5 n. 21

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Andocides
1.96–98 44 n. 61

Anthologia Palatina
7.196 218 n. 11

Antiphanes
Dodonis
fr. 91 K.-A. 229 n. 34
Poiesis
fr. 189 K.-A. 6 n. 32

Antiphon
1.18–20 36 n. 24

Apostolius
13.66 (*CPG* II, p. 593) 204 n. 33

Archilochus
fr. 187 West 202 n. 29

Aristophanes
fr. 696 K.-A. 6 n. 32
Acharnenses
118–121 202 n. 28
120–121 194 n. 3
178–203 36 n. 22
204–236 220
263–279 220
377–378 230
415 6 n. 32
497 4 n. 15
497–500 230
502–506 49
504 49
557 ff. 228
629 4 n. 14, 4 n. 15
719 ff. 4 n. 15, 224 n. 26
881 221 n. 20
1190–1234 25 n. 13
Σ *ad* 504 49
*Amphiarao*s
fr. 31 K.-A. 230
Aves
209–222 220
218 218 n. 11
227–262 220
263–309 52 n. 88
440 194 n. 3
904–1057 224 n. 26
958 40 n. 44
1128 180 n. 12
1271–1276 46
1308–1469 224 n. 26
1360–1361 56 n. 102
1706–1765 25 n. 13
Σ *ad* 1128 180 n. 12
Ecclesiazusae
371 230
383–384 223
394–395 223
571–580 216 n. 6
580–585 216 n. 6
581–582 216 n. 6
583–688 216 n. 6
689–709 216 n. 6
729 214, 214 n. 1
730–876 214
745 223
777 216 n. 6
797–798 216 n. 6
876 214, 214 n. 1, 219, 227
877–883 214
877–1111 214
880 214, 215, 221
882–883 215 n. 5, 222
883 215, 215 n. 5, 221, 225
884 220
884–889 215
887 218, 219, 222, 227
887–889 213, 216, 217, 219
888 216, 218, 222, 223, 227
888–889 216 n. 6
889 213, 229
890–892 225
893–899 225
893–923 216, 230
900–924 226
938–945 220, 221 n. 19
952–975 220, 221 n. 19
975 220
1072 194 n. 3
1141 4 n. 15

1141–1143 216 n. 6
1144–1146 218
1155–1162 25
Σ *ad* 883 215 n. 5
Σ *ad* 918 215 n. 5
Equites
36 4 n. 15, 25 n. 12
163 47 n. 70
221 39
233 3 n. 8, 4 n. 14, 4 n. 15
288 4 n. 15
327 4 n. 15
416 194 n. 3
508 4 n. 14, 4 n. 15
887 194 n. 3
1210 4 n. 15
1318 4 n. 14, 4 n. 15
Σ *vet. Tr.* 589a 228 n. 33
Σ *vet. Tr.* 589b 228 n. 33
Gerytades
fr. 150.1–3 K.-A. 230
Lysistrata
327–331 223 n. 22
553 221 n. 20
1042 228 n. 32
1218–1220 217, 219
1247–1272 220
1279–1294 220
1296–1321 220
Nesoi
fr. 409 K.-A. 194 n. 3
Nubes
518 4 n. 15
534–535 230
537–548 219
575 4 n. 15
1096 4 n. 15
Pax
43 4 n. 15
297–298 47 n. 70
423–425 40 n. 46
431–435 39
658 4 n. 15
735 4 n. 15
736–753 219
793–795 6 n. 32
962 218
1059 41, 41 n. 52
1065–1066 194 n. 3
1102 39
1105 39
1319 39
Plutus
257–321 220
316–317 228
770 228
771 228
788–799 218
Σ *vetera et recentiora ad Ar. Plut.post* 770 228
Ranae
1–18 218
12–15 230
52 115 n. 35
219 47 n. 70
676 47 n. 70
708 194 n. 3
919 4 n. 15
920–923 6 n. 32
943 115 n. 35
947 6 n. 32
1021–1022 6 n. 32
1114 115 n. 35
1202–1204 224 n. 24
1264–1277 220
1284–1295 220
1301 215 n. 5
1309–1328 220
1331–1363 220
Σ *vetera ad* 1b Chantry 218 n. 14
Σ *vetera ad* 1202 Chantry 224 n. 24
Skenas katalambanousai
fr. 490 K.-A. 204 n. 34
Thesmophoriazusae
19 57 n. 106
100 215
149–151 6 n. 32
163 215 n. 5
391 4 n. 15
395 3 n. 10
793 39
947–1000 220
1015–1055 220
1065–1072 220

1075 224 n. 25
1126–1135 197 n. 15
Thesmophoriazusae B'
fr. 347.1 K.-A. 230
Vespae
54 25 n. 12
54–66 218
64–66 230
219 215
220 215
230–316 220
317–333 220
540–545 223 n. 22
1013 4 n. 15
1020 230
1043–1045 219
1047 230
1284–1291 194 n. 5
1287 194 n. 5
1535–1537 219, 230
Σ ad 1109 23 n. 6

Aristotle
Poetica
1448a28 6 n. 32
1448a28–29 7 n. 34
1452a22–23 123 n. 63
1455a22–1455a32 137 n. 21
1461b–1462a 203 n. 31
Politica
2.1268a6–11 55 n. 97

Athenaeus
1.19b 97 n. 41
4.129d 96 n. 37
4.157a 5 n. 21
10.452f 96 n. 36
12.518f 201 n. 25
12.524f–526d 215 n. 5
13.573b–c 215 n. 5
14.615 77
14.620e–621b 215 n. 5
14.631f 10 n. 37
14.635b 218 n. 11
14.635c 218 n. 11
14.636b 218 n. 11

Bacchylides
Paian
fr. 1.75 Irigoin 185 n. 25

The Bible
Acta Apostolorum
19.29 6 n. 30
19.31 6 n. 30
Epistula ad Corinthios
I.4.9 6 n. 30
Genesis
39.1–20 239 n. 14

Cassius Dio
Historia Romana
43.22.2 6 n. 29
52.30 95 n. 29

Cicero
Ad familiares
9.26.1–2 241
Verrines
2 Verr. 3.34.78 242 n. 23, 246 n. 34
2 Verr. 5.12.31 242, 246 n. 34
2 Verr. 5.16.40 242 n. 23, 246 n. 34
Orationes Philippicae
13.24 243

Clemens Alexandrinus
Paedagogus
2.4.40 5 n. 24
3.11.76 5 n. 24

Codices
Ravennas
429 214, 214 n. 1, 228
Venetus Marcianus gr.
474 228

Cratinus
fr. 360 K.-A. 3 n. 10

Demosthenes
18.28 4 n. 16
18.162 206 n. 40
18.180 206 n. 42

18.242 206 n. 39
19.10 205 n. 38
19.35 45 n. 64
19.189 205 n. 38
19.209 205 n. 38
19.281 75 n. 33
21.1 4 n. 16
21.7 4 n. 16
21.59 4 n. 16

Diodorus Siculus
11.27.3 45 n. 64
11.47.1 48 n. 71
14.86 5 n. 18
20.11.1 45 n. 64

Diogenes Atheniensis
TrGF 45 F 1 218 n. 11

Diogenes Laertius
1.55 54 n. 97

Diogenian
7.94 (*CPG* I, p. 303) 202 n. 27

Dionysus of Halicarnassus
Letter to Ammaeus
2.10 222

Eupolis
Poleis
fr. 245 K.-A. 51–52
fr. 246 K.-A. 51–52
fr. 247 K.-A. 51–52
fr. 256 K.-A. 51 n. 85

Euripides
Alcestis
1015–1016 39 n. 40
1159–1163 25 n. 10, 171 n. 32
1161 25 n. 11
1162 171 n. 30
1163 6 n. 32, 25 n. 10, 25 n. 11
1164 25 n. 11
Andromache
147–153 45
559–560 53
876–878 59 n. 115
1284–1288 25 n. 10, 171 n. 32
1285 25 n. 11
1287 25 n. 11, 171 n. 30
1288 6 n. 32, 25 n. 10, 25 n. 11,
1289 25 n. 11
Archelaos
fr. 241 Kn. 43 n. 56
Bacchae
81 39
81–82 45
177 39, 45
253 39, 45
313 39, 45
341–342 39
376–377 39
383–384 39
702–703 39
924 187 n. 29
1266 172 n. 34
1388–1392 25 n. 10, 171 n. 32
1389 25 n. 11
1390 25 n. 11
1391 25 n. 11, 171 n. 30
1392 25 n. 11
Cyclops
37–40 124
63–72 125
510 40
545 40
556 40
558–559 40 n. 45
Electra
343–344 59 n. 115
350 171 n. 30
496 39 n. 40
509–581 167 n. 26
511–512 40
520 156–157
520–521 158
520–546 156–157
523 157
527 158
529 158
532 157
533 157

534 158
534–535 158
539 158
543 158
570 171 n. 30
854–855 45
862 45
872 45
880–889 45
1321–1322 39 n. 40
Hecuba
224 40
527–529 39, 40
529 39
529–533 39
542 39
689 171 n. 30
Helen
412 171 n. 30
566–592 163–165
571 164–165
573 165
575 165
576 165
577 165
578 165
580 165
581 165
600 167
600–602 167, 167 n. 27
601 168
602 168
616 167 n. 27
622 168
622–623 167 n. 27, 168
622–638 168–169
624 170
627 170
630 170
635 170
638 170
648–659 169–170
650 170
652 170
654 170
657 170, 171 n. 30
1143 171 n. 30
1148 171 n. 30
1333–1334 40
1520 171 n. 30
1688 172
1688–1692 25 n. 10, 171 n. 32
1689 25 n. 11, 172
1690 172
1691 25 n. 11, 171 n. 30, 172
1692 6 n. 32, 25 n. 11
1693 25 n. 11
Heraclidae
39 57
43–44 59
168 58 n. 111
205 58 n. 111
213 58 n. 111
266 58 n. 111
307 58 n. 111
309 58 n. 111
427 58 n. 111
439 58 n. 111
467 58 n. 111
474–477 59 n. 115
574–575 58 n. 111
581 58 n. 111
698–699 57
720 57
723 57
726–728 57
738 57
Hercules furens
92 171 n. 30
329–335 57
442–443 57
451–453 57
454–455 57
525–526 57
735 172 n. 34
1017 171 n. 30
1292 172 n. 34
Hippolytus
73–74 45
82–83 45 n. 65
806–807 45
Ion
226–228 40
516 160

516–530 159–160
517 160
518 160
519 161
520 160
521 160
522 160
524 160
525 161
526 160
527 160, 161, 162
528 161
530 160, 161, 162
554–562 162–163
661–663 165
706–708 40
751 171 n. 30
823–827 210 n. 51
1175 40
1179 40
1181–1182 40
1192 40
1192 ff. 41 n. 51
1194–1195 39
1338 166
1338–1341 166, 166 n. 25
1339 166
1340 166
1342 166
1348–1355 166 n. 25
1349 166
1352 166
1355 166
1395 171 n. 30
1448 171 n. 30
1512–1519 172–173
1608 171 n. 30
Iphigenia Aulidensis
145–148 53 n. 94
500 172, 172 n. 34
599–600 53 n. 94
610–611 53 n. 94
613 53 n. 94
616 53 n. 94
825–834 59 n. 115
1101 172 n. 34
Iphigenia Taurica
159–166 40
167–168 40
328 173, 173 n. 38
388 173, 173 n. 38
722 172 n. 34
782 173, 173 n. 38
795–797 173, 173 n. 36
796 173, 173 n. 38
837–840 173, 173 n. 36
896 174 n. 40
898 173, 173 n. 38
900–903 174, 174 n. 39
1293 173, 173 n. 38
1298 173, 173 n. 38
1476 173, 173 n. 38
1495 171 n. 30
1497–1499 25 n.10
Medea
46–57 58 n. 107
784 45
786 45
789 45
947 45
977–984 45
1156–1166 45
1160 45
1415–1419 25 n.10, 171 n. 32
1416 25 n.11
1418 25 n.11, 171 n. 30
1419 25 n.11
1420 25 n.11
Orestes
96 41 n. 52
106 41 n. 52
108 59 n. 115
113 41 n. 52
215–238 142
215–216 142
217–218 143
219–220 143
220–221 146
221–222 144
223–224 144
225–226 144, 146
227–228 144

229–230 144
230 144–145
231–232 145
233–234 145
234 172 n. 34
235–236 145
237–238 145
472 41 n. 52
1187 41 n. 52
1691–1693 25 n.10
Phoenissae
93–95 59 n. 115
311 171 n. 30
856–857 46
1240–1241 36 n. 22
1275–1276 59 n. 115
1764–1766 25 n.10
Supplices
479 171 n. 30
1114 58
1114–1115 58
1142–1144 58 n. 109
1143–1144 58
1149–1151 58 n. 109
1150 58
1165–1182 58
1168 58–59 n. 113
Troades
1–2 178
4 178
4–6 179
7 179
8–9 186
13–14 180, 186
24–25 180
32–33 179
32–35 179
36 178
45 179
45–47 182
75–94 186 n. 27
170 187 n. 30
172 187 n. 30
298–303 181
307 187 n. 30
341 187 n. 30
349 187 n. 30
353–354 46
408 187 n. 30
425–461 186 n. 27
511–512 177 n. 1
568 ff. 53 n. 92
568–576 53
577 54 n. 96
614 54
615 172 n. 34
1063 40
1256 181
1260–1264 181
1266–1267 181
1267 185
1269–1271 181
1277–1280 182
1278 182, 183
1283 187
1284 187
1284–1286 183
1284–1322 188–189
1285–1132 183
1287 182
1288–1290 184
1290 183
1292 183
1294 182
1295 183
1298 183
1300–1301 183
1302–1304 183
1303 186, 187 n. 28
1305–1309 183
1310 183
1312–1316 183
1318 186, 187 n. 28
1318–1324 183
1320 183
1322 183
1323–1324 183
1324 184, 186
1325 183, 184, 186
1326 186

1330 185
1331 186
1332 183
[*Rhesus*]
161–194 43 n. 57
Vita Euripidis
TrGF V T1 IB 4 223
TrGF V T1 IB 4.53–56 224 n. 23

FGrH
325 F 12 36 n. 28
328 F 5a 36–37 n. 28
328 F 5b 36–37n. 28

Gorgias
82 B23 DK 209 n. 49

Gregory of Nyssa
Vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi
956b 97 n. 43

Harpocration
ι 25 (Ἴσχανδρος) Keaney 208, 208 n. 47
τ 21 (τραγικὸς πίθηκος) Keaney 207, 207 n. 45

Heraclides Ponticus
fr. 1 Müller 6 n. 27
fr. 149 Wehrli 54 n. 97

Herodas
Mimiambi
5 239

Herodotus
Historiae
1.54 47 n. 67
1.132 36 n. 24
6.21 3 n. 8, 4 n. 14
6.57 36 n. 24
6.67 3 n. 8
7.223 36 n. 24
8.85.3 47 n. 67
8.124.2 47
8.136 47 n. 67

Heron of Alexandria
Peri automatapoietikes
1 99, 99 n. 49

Hesiod
Opera et dies
338 36 n. 24

Hesychius
Lexicon
η 238 (ἠθολόγος) 7 n. 33
ι 501 (ἵκρια) 3 n. 10

Homer
Ilias
1.462 39 n. 44
4. 90–91 47 n. 70
9. 174–176 38 n. 35
9.189 116
16.225–227 39 n. 41
18 116
21.458–460 179 n. 8
23.243 41 n. 50
Odyssea
15.148–149 39 n. 41
16.6 184 n. 23
22.346–347 120 n. 52

Hymni Homerici
29.4–6 41 n. 51

Horace
Satirae
1.2.55–59 243
1.10.76–77 250

Hyperides
fr. 118 6 n. 27

Isocrates
6.106 5 n. 24
8.79 50
8.82 4 n. 16, 5 n. 20, 54 n. 97
8.82–83 49, 56 n. 101
8.82–84 34

12.22 4 n. 16
18.66 45 n. 64

Juvenal
Satirae
1.30–36 244
6.246–267 243 n. 25
8.196–197 243

Lexica Segueriana
η 249 (ἠθολόγος) 7 n. 33
ω 317 (Ὠιδεῖον) 6 n. 28

Lactantius
Divinae institutiones
6.21.2–3 5 n. 23

Lucian
Apologia
5–6 199–200
De saltatione
82 75
Piscator
36 199 n. 20
Symposium
17 200 n. 22

Lysias
13 44, 44 n. 59
21.11 45 n. 64
Against Theozotides
fr. 129 C. (col. i, ll. 23–47): 56

Macrobius
Saturnalia
2.7.12–13 80–81
2.7.16 75

Menander
Aspis
247–248 229 n. 34
Dyskolos
230–231 229 n. 34
967 26
Epitrepontes
169–170 229 n. 34
Perikeiromene
261 229 n. 34
Sikyonioi
fr. 908 K.-A. 26

Ovid
Fasti
5.327–328 244 n. 27

Papyri
P.Hib. i 14 a–b (= Lysias, *Against Theozotides*): 54 n. 97
P.Oxy. 413 (*Charition*) 98, 100, 237, 240, 241
P.Oxy. 1050 96 n. 38

Pausanias
1.8.6 6 n. 28
1.23.8 180 n. 12

Petronius
Satura
52 81 n. 48

Phanodemus
FGrH 325 F 12 36 n. 28

Philo of Alexandria
Alexander
46 Terian 209 n. 50

Philochorus
FGrH 328 F 5a 36–37n. 28
FGrH 328 F 5b 36–37n. 28

Philoxenus
fr. 17 Theodoridis 209 n. 50

Photius
Lexicon
δ 743 (δρᾶμα) 6 n. 32
η 64 (ἠθολόγος) 7 n. 33
ω 659 (Ὠιδεῖον) 6 n. 28

Phrynichus
TrGF 3 F 11 218 n. 11

Pindar
fr. 125 Maehler (= Ath. 14,635b)
Isthmia
6.40 39 n. 41
Nemea
4.42 172 n. 33
Olympia
3.6–7 172 n. 33
7.1–5 39 n. 41
11.8–9 172 n. 33
Pythia
4.193 39 n. 41

Plato
Alcibiades I
103a3 223
Gorgias
502d 4 n. 16
Leges
658c 99, 99 n. 48
659a 4 n. 14, 10 n. 37
701a 5 n. 22
Philebus
Σ *ad* 66d 41 n. 51
Politicus
290a 50
Respublica
396b 15 n. 50
595a 73
604e 4 n. 16
Symposium
176a 36 n. 24
194a–b 4 n. 16, 23 n. 6
222d 6 n. 32
223c 41 n. 50

Plato comicus
fr. 71 K.-A. 215 n. 5
fr. 138 K.-A. 6 n. 31
fr. 167 K.-A. 4 n. 15

Plautus
Miles gloriosus
991 71

Pliny the Elder
Naturalis historia
18.69.286 244 n. 27

Plutarch
Agesilaus
21 204 n. 33
Alcibiades
33.2 43 n. 57
Aristides
24.4 48 n. 71
Brutus
21.3 246 n. 32
Cimon
8.8–9 34, 35
De E apud Delphos
9.389a 172 n. 34
Demetrius
34 10 n. 42
35.4 172 n. 34
Moralia
42a 6 n. 27
58c 5 n. 20
63a 5 n. 20
64e 201 n. 23
71a 5 n. 19
178a 5 n. 24
183d 5 n. 24
193e 5 n. 24
348c 209 n. 49
619a–b 241 n. 21
619f 241 n. 21
655e 36 n. 27
711a 95 n. 29
850b–851f 45 n. 64
Nero
21.3 75
Pericles
13.9 179 n. 8
Solon
31.2–5 54 n. 97

Themistocles
24 47 n. 67
Theseus
25 47 n. 70

Pollux
Onomasticon
4.88 22
4.107.4–5 218 n. 11, 228
4.127 185 n. 24
9.44 6 n. 27
10.28–29 204 n. 34

Polyaenus
Strategemata
4.6 5 n. 18
5.44 5 n. 18
6.10 5 n. 18

Polybius
Historiae
30.22 77

Porphyrius Tyrius
De abstinentia
3.20.6 6 n. 29

Pratinas
TrGF I 4 F 3 = *PMG* 708 126

Procopius
Anecdota
9.20–23 245 n. 29

Pseudo-Manetho
Apotelesmatika
4.448–449 97 n. 40

Pseudo-Zonaras
Lexicon
δ 571 (δρᾶμα) 6 n. 32
η 980 (ἠθολόγος) 7 n. 33
ι 1101(ἰκρίον) 3 n. 10

Quintilianus
Institutio oratoria
11.3.178–180 81

Sophocles
Ajax
683 171 n. 30
1199–1200 39 n. 40
Antigone
430–431 40 n. 46
Electra
186 171 n. 30
269–270 39 n. 38
434 41 n. 52
Mysoi
fr. 412 Radt 218 n. 11
Oedipus Coloneus
249 171 n. 30
466–492 37
468 37
469–470 38
469–484 36 n. 28
472–473 38
475 38
477 38
479 38
483–484 38
Oedipus Tyrannus
82–83 45, 45
Philoctetes
145 n. 53
8–9 39 n. 44
10 39 n. 44
11 39 n. 44
868 171 n. 30
1032–1033 39
Trachiniae
225–228 53
400 53
673 171 n. 30

Stobaeus
4.50c.95 96 n. 35

Strabo
Geographika
6.2.6–7 73

Strattis
Anthroporraistes
fr. 1 K.-A. 6 n. 32

Suda
α 1730 (ἀμφιθέατρον) 5 n. 26
αι 35 (αἴγειρος) 3 n. 10
δ 1498 (δρᾶμα) 6 n. 32
η 156 (ἠθολόγος) 7 n. 33
θ 87 (θεατρεῖον) 5 n. 25
ι 275 (ἰκρία) 3 n. 10
π 1580 (πίθηκος) 209 n. 50
π 1581 (πίθηκος ἐν πορφύρᾳ) 202, 202 n. 27
ω 18 (Ὠδεῖον) 6 n. 28

Suetonius
De vita Caesarum. Divus Iulius
39.1 72
De vita Caesarum. Divus Augustus
43.1 72
99.1 74
De vita Caesarum. Caligula
67 73
De vita Caesarum. Nero
21.3 75

Teleclides
fr. 41 K.-A. 6 n. 32

Terentius
Hecyra (Mother-In-Law)
25–40 69

Tertullian
Apologeticus
6.2–3 5 n. 23
36.4 5 n. 23

Theophrastus
Characteres
5.7 6 n. 31
9.5 6 n. 31
11.3 4 n. 16
30.6 6 n. 31

Thucydides
1.73.2 222
1.96 48 n. 71
1.129.3 47 n. 67
1.136 47 n. 67
2.46.1 54 n. 97
4.121.1 47
6.8 177 n. 4
7.28.4 49 n. 72
8.93 3 n. 8

Titus Livius
Ab Urbe condita
39.22 69
45.43.1 77

TrGF
II F 646a (Adespota) 109
V T 1 IA 11.39–41 23 n. 6

Valerius Maximus
2.10.8 245

Xenophon
Agesilaus
3.1 36 n. 24
Cyropaedia
2.3.1 36 n. 24
3.3.40 36 n. 24
4.1.6 36 n. 24
6.4.1 36 n. 24
Hellenica
2.3.8 45 n. 64
4.4.3 4 n. 16
Symposium
2.1 95 n. 29
2.2 7 n. 33
2.7–9 15 n. 50
7.5 7 n. 33
9.1–7 15 n. 50

Epigraphical Sources
Aphrodisias 99 4 n. 13
CID 4.88 4 n. 13
CIL 6.10096 76 n. 35, 248
Ephesos 36 3 n. 9
Erythrai 21 3 n. 9
Iasos 103 4 n. 13
I. Cret. IV 64 47 n. 67
IG I^3 102 43
IG I^3 117 43 n. 56
IG I^3 125 43
IG I^3 256 bis 4 n. 12
IG I^3 258 bis 4 n. 12
IG I^3 259–290 48 n. 71
IG I^3 895 180 n. 12
IG II^2 2 43
IG II^2 20 43
IG II^2 223 3 n. 9, 4 n. 13
IG II^2 357 4 n. 13
IG II^2 389 4 n. 13
IG II^2 410 4 n. 13
IG II^2 555 4 n. 13
IG II^2 648 4 n. 13
IG II^2 682 45 n. 64
IG II^2 1202 49 n. 74
IG II^2 1263 34 n. 19
IG II^2 1273 34 n. 19
IG II^2 1282 34 n. 19
IG II^2 1297 34 n. 19
IG II^2 1325 34 n. 19
IG II^2 5021 3 n. 9
IG II^2 13293 3 n. 9
IG II^3 298 45 n. 64
IG IV^2.1 66 34 n. 19
IG XI.2 133 95 n.31
IG XI.2 142 3 n. 9
IG IX.2 257 47 n. 67
IG XII.4 1.75 3 n. 9
IG XII.4 1.129 3 n. 9
IG XII.5 1010 3 n. 9
IG XII Suppl. 549 47 n. 67
IG XIV 2342 246 n. 33, 250
IK Knidos I 74.9–15 34 n. 19
IK Laodikeia am Lykos 5 34 n. 19
IK Priene 19 3 n. 9
IK Priene 144 4 n. 13
IScM I 8 4 n. 13
IGSK Ephesos 1135 98 n. 44
LW 1652b 98 n. 44
Magnesia 32 34 n. 19
Magnesia 85 4 n. 13
MDAI(A) 66 (1941) 228.4 34 n. 19
Miletos 479 4 n. 13
NGSL 6 3 n. 7
Priene 16 34 n. 19
Priene 33 34 n. 19
Priene 35 34 n. 19
Priene 39 34 n. 19
Priene 51 34 n. 19
Priene 66 34 n. 19
SEG 26.677 34 n. 19
SEG 27.266 98 n. 44
SEG 28.46 54 n. 97
SEG 29.1118 142 n. 48
SEG 32.38 43
SEG 38.1462 95 n. 32
SEG 48.1110 34 n. 19
SEG 48.1112 34 n. 19
SEG 53.860 34 n. 19
SEG 53.861 34 n. 19
SEG 53.862 34 n. 19
SEG 57.820 59
Syll.^{3} 4 47 n. 67
Thorikos VIII 75 4 n. 12
Thorikos VIII 76 4 n. 12
Thorikos IX 83 4 n. 12
Thorikos IX 84 4 n. 12
Tit. Calymnii 64 (face B) 34 n. 19