

moron, which F. H. Fobes⁶ translated, "I could tell you, but I can't." R. Hercher⁷ emends *ἔχων οὐ λέγω*, which is paleographically plausible, makes sound sense, and is a stereotyped way of expressing complacent reticence. But *εἰπεῖν ἔχων οὐκ ἔχω* simply means, "I am able to tell you—and yet I can't bring myself to!" Philostratus is after all a connoisseur of oxymoron: he was delighted with Apollonius' prophecy about Nero and the Isthmus (*VA* 4. 24): *τετμήσεται, μάλλον δὲ οὐ*. And we have to remember that here he is defending Gorgias. He simply cannot resist a *γοργιασμός* of his own to cap the example he has just been quoting from Aeschines' *Thargelia*: *εἰς Θετταλίαν . . . Θετταλῶ βασιλεύοντι πάντων Θετταλῶν*.⁸

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6. A. R. Benner and F. H. Fobes (eds. and trans.), *The Letters of Alciphron, Aelian, and Philostratus*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass., 1949), p. 545.

7. *Epistolographi Graeci* (Paris, 1873), *ad loc.*; so now D. A. Russell, rev. of Jones, *JRS* 62 (1972): 227.

8. It is not so easy to account for *θαρσαλέωτερον τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ*. Does this expression mean "boldest of the Greeks" (Fobes, *Letters of Philostratus*, p. 545, after Hercher) or "too bold for a Greek"? Neither possibility is entirely satisfactory, but neither betrays the kind of ignorance of Plutarch required to substantiate Bowersock's argument. The whole letter has been taken up with showing that *τὸ σύμπαν Ἑλληνικόν* has accepted Gorgias: why should Plutarch be allowed to step out of line?

WHO OPPOSES THEOCLYMENUS?

Both A. M. Dale and R. Kannicht, in their recent editions of Euripides' *Helen*, return to the MSS attribution *χορός*, i.e., coryphaeus, for the figure who blocks Theoclymenus' way to the palace after he has vowed to kill his sister Theonoe (1621–26). This is in contrast with the majority of earlier editors in this century, who had identified the opposer as *θεράπων Θεονόης* or *ἄγγελος*.¹ Three difficulties, however, result from using the coryphaeus. (1) *δοῦλος*, the only term by which the opposer is actually identified in the scene, appears to be the wrong gender to use in addressing the leader of a female chorus (192 f.); Dale and Kannicht account for it by reading the king's words at 1630 (*ἀλλὰ δεσποτῶν κρατήσεις δοῦλος ὦν*) as a generalization, where the masculine predominates even when the reference is to females.² (2) Nobody has ever offered a good explanation for the coryphaeus as Theonoe's defender.³ (3) The staging requires the opposer to engage in hostile,

1. Editors are divided thus. *χορός*: A. M. Dale (Oxford, 1967); R. Kannicht (Heidelberg, 1969); *θεράπων*: G. Murray (3d ed., Oxford, 1913); G. Italie (Groningen, 1949); H. Grégoire (Paris, 1950); K. Alt (Leipzig, 1964). *ἄγγελος*: N. Wecklein (Leipzig–Berlin, 1907); A. Y. Campbell (Liverpool, 1950). Reference to Dale and Kannicht, hereafter cited by last name only, will be to the commentary found on pp. 165–66 and pp. 422–26 (vol. 2) of their respective editions.

2. Dale ultimately feels more comfortable emending *δοῦλος ὦν*; to *δοῦλος*; Xo. *οὐ . . .*; (Wecklein), though the verse is faultless. Kannicht adduces four passages to show that a masculine participle, like *ὦν*, can take a female reference. But in none of his passages is the participle attached to a substantive. In two a woman speaks of herself. In another (*Bacch.* 17, 41–45) Theseus' remark, though primarily addressed to the seven maidens sent to Crete, can also include the seven youths: see D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric Poetry* (London, 1967), p. 437. The proof for a female reference in the fourth (Eur. frag. 413) is dubious: see W. S. Barrett (ed.), *Euripides: "Hippolytos"* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 366 f.

3. See n. 10.

physical contact with another actor (1628–29), which is unparalleled for a tragedy coryphaeus, and here further complicated by the differences in sex and social status of the two adversaries.⁴ This note, then, offers two arguments in support of Theonoe's attendant as the opposer⁵ and answers three objections raised against him by Dale or Kannicht.

If it is Theonoe's attendant who opposes Theoclymenus, the confrontation distinctly recalls an incident earlier in the play. After Menelaus entered, he called out for assistance (435 f.). An old woman, acting as the palace doorkeeper, came out and blocked any move by him thereafter to enter. With a second attendant now coming out to stop the king, a close similarity, both in staging and in status of the opposer, is secured.

These two scenes, taken in conjunction, are in fact part of a schematization at work throughout the play. Each time a character *enters*, he or she becomes involved in an activity duplicated elsewhere. Helen and Menelaus begin their roles by delivering a prologue speech (1 ff., 386 ff.). Teucer and Menelaus enter in search of help (144 ff., 428 ff.), become upset at the sight of Helen (72 ff., 557 ff.), but ultimately accept her advice about the best means of continuing their journey (151 ff., 1049 ff.). The doorkeeper and Helen give Menelaus a reception that is initially hostile (437 ff., 541 ff.), but later more amicable (477 ff., 566 ff.). An offstage disappearing act (βέβηκεν . . . λιπούσα 605, 607 and βέβηκε' . . . λιπούσα 1515, 1526) twice brings on a messenger (here a chiasmus in the exploitation of appearance versus reality—the dominant theme in the play—operates: Helen's real husband, Menelaus, learns that the phantom Helen has disappeared into thin air, and Theoclymenus, who falsely imagines himself as her husband,⁶ learns that the real Helen has escaped across the sea). The likelihood that Theoclymenus will execute Menelaus and later Theonoe by the sword (cf. 864, 1561) brings the unprompted arrival of Theonoe (in the central scene) and the Dioscuri (in the exodos) to prevent bloodshed. The deception of Theoclymenus, which requires two scenes (1165 ff.: the tale of Menelaus' death; 1396 ff.: exact arrangements for the burial) to complete, is balanced by the rescue of his sister, which is also in two parts, involving an agency that is preliminarily human (1627 ff.), but ultimately divine (1642 ff.).⁷

4. Kannicht cites OC 856 f., but any similarity in language (*Hel.* 1629 οὐκ ἀφήσομαι πέπλων σῶν and OC 857 οὐτοι σ' ἀφήσω) does not translate into subsequent action; despite the coryphaeus' threat in OC, Creon moves unhindered against Oedipus. Kannicht's reference to A. Spitzbarth, *Untersuchungen z. Spieltechnik d. gr. Tragödie* (Zurich, 1964), pp. 36–37, produces nothing relevant to a coryphaeus, nor does Spitzbarth use OC 856 f. as one of her examples of "Vorgänge der Gewalt."

For a general discussion of the coryphaeus' function, which "in spoken parts of Tragedy has diminished in Euripides to short announcements and remarks," see M. Kaimio, *The Chorus in Greek Drama* (Helsinki, 1970), pp. 157 ff. The (possibly) more lively role of a satyric coryphaeus has recently been suggested by D. F. Sutton, "Father Silenus: Actor or Coryphaeus?" *CQ* 24 (1974): 19–23.

5. Rejection of the messenger as opposer has been adequately argued by the latest editors.

6. The two "husbands" are neatly juxtaposed at 1288–89 in Menelaus' advice (memorable for its irony) to Helen: τὸν παρόντα μὲν / στέργειν πᾶσιν χρή, τὸν δὲ μηκέτ' ὄντ' ἔαν.

7. The pattern is made even more striking by the way the duplicated activity constantly assumes more vigor than its original. Contrast 63 ff. with 428 ff. (need for help); 75 ff. with 546–56 (sight of Helen); 443, 450, 458, and 477 with 1628–29 (opposition); 1530–33, 1549–52, and 1577 with 1613–17 (the first messenger as observer, the second as participant); 1017 and 1023 with 1642 and 1656 (prevention of bloodshed); 1248 and 1256 (Theoclymenus' acceptance of Helen's story) with 1392 f. and 1427 (his "awkward" suggestions) and 1390, 1412 f., 1415–19, and 1431–40 (his commands); 1627–41 with 1642–87 (Theonoe's rescue, initially a failure, ultimately successful).

The construction of the play's twelve scenes in this way is a further expression of the doubling of Helen herself—the woman of flesh and blood who was spirited off to Egypt, while a phantom fashioned in her likeness from a cloud was sent to Troy. Helen and her unseen, but much imprecated, double are effectively kept in sight or in mind throughout the play.⁸ The other characters in the cast are also doubled. Each is paired with someone related by role, or blood, or both. Teucer and Menelaus are veterans of Troy who have suffered in the aftermath of its fall (94 ff., 400). The porteress and Theonoe's attendant have their place in the domestic arrangements of the palace. Each messenger reports to his own master (ἀναξ 744, 1512). Theonoe and Theoclymenus, Proteus' only children (τέκνα δισσή 8), respectfully address his tomb upon leaving (1102 f.) or entering (1165 ff.). Helen's brothers (δισσοὶ . . . Διόσκοροι 1643 f.) descend as *dei ex machina*. Even the mute attendants conform to this pattern: two (female) enter from the palace with Theonoe and are ordered to return before her (865, 868); attendants (δμῶες) carrying stage properties twice enter with Theoclymenus and are immediately told to continue on elsewhere (1169 f., 1390 f.); and twice a member of the king's bodyguard is singled out to exit on a special mission (1412, 1431). To reject Theonoe's attendant coming out of the palace in favor of the coryphaeus already standing before it destroys the totality of these two carefully worked-out aspects—among many—of duplication.⁹

The opposer's last words, when Theoclymenus threatens death (πρὸ δεσποτῶν / τοῖσι γυναιόισι δούλοις ἐκκλέστατον θανείν 1640–41), show how seriously his role has been drawn. Coming from a loyal attendant of Theonoe, this sentiment is convincing, but it is hardly so in the mouth of a captive Greek (192 f.), who previously had revealed no noticeable attachment to the sister of an imposed, foreign master.¹⁰ When Euripides wants a chorus to intervene directly in the action, he first prepares his audience; here he has not done so.¹¹ Theonoe's defense, in view of the high seriousness of her own portrayal in the agon scene, should not be left to whoever happens to be standing in front of the palace.

Criticism of the attendant rests on three points. (1) His entry coincides too nicely with Theoclymenus' sudden decision to punish Theonoe, a verdict which the

8. See C. Wolff, "On Euripides' *Helen*," *HSCP* 77 (1973): 64.

9. The play abounds in duplications, e.g., changes of clothing (1186 ff., 1382 f.), gestures involving distance (1023, 1628) and proximity (567, 1629), threats of suicide (842, 982 f.), willingness to die (993, 1639), Menelaus' δισσή φυλάξεις (503–9), even the use of direct address within a scene (597 and 700, 616 and 711, 702 and 734). For other examples, see C. Segal, "The Two Worlds of Euripides' *Helen*," *TAPA* 102 (1971): 562. I have not observed in the literature (cited by Segal, "Two Worlds," n. 35) any analysis so complete as the one developed here of the influence of duplication upon the play's structure, nor any discussion of the possible effect of duplication on the question of the opposer's identity.

10. Nobody has a good word to say for the coryphaeus, if she speaks 1040–41: K. Alt, "Bemerkungen zum Text der *Helena*," *Philologus* 107 (1963): 191 "wenig passend"; Kannicht "befremdend"; Barrett, "*Hippolytos*," p. 367 "scarcely appropriate"; Dale is silent. Dissatisfaction with the coryphaeus is not confined to this century. G. Hermann wrote of her in his edition (Leipzig, 1837), "non multum consilio plus silentio Helenam adjuvans" and described her participation as "praeter expectationem." But W. G. Clark, "Notes on Some Corrupt and Obscure Passages in the *Helena* of Euripides," *J. Class. and Sacred Philology* 4 (1858): 178, was the first to refuse her the opposer's role.

11. E.g., the pointed remarks by the *Ion* chorus in favor of Creusa (468, 566 ff., 676 ff.) before the coryphaeus intervenes (747); the attention drawn to the *IT* chorus (1056–78) in preparation for the coryphaeus' behavior later (1284–1301). *Hel.* 1030–31 (Kannicht) is not comparable.

attendant has not been present to hear. It is true that his entry is a coincidence, but, with the omniscient Theonoe in residence in the palace,¹² it should occasion no surprise if her attendant knew (as she herself earlier did) the right moment to appear in her defense.¹³ (2) No male attendants, with whom the opposer could later be identified by his costume, were present (so far as the text is evidence) when Theonoe resolved to support Helen and Menelaus in their bid to escape;¹⁴ yet the arguments with which the opposer now tries to dissuade the king obviously presuppose knowledge of Theonoe's motives given there (*εὐρέβεια* 998, 1632; *δίκη* 1002, 1633). This sort of criticism, namely, that the attendant will not do because he cannot be made literally accountable for his knowledge, is a misapplied demand for realism.¹⁵ Drama is not an exact portrayal of life, where events and situations should afford logical explanations, but a selection and shaping of certain incidents and details important to the dramatist's overall purpose, and the omission of other, inessential ones. (3) It is not Euripidean to introduce a character "unheralded and unidentified" (Dale), "so schlechthin unvorbereitet" (Kannicht). The attendant's unanticipated, but timely, entrance to prevent murder recalls the prophetess' entrance from the temple to stop Ion from killing Creusa (*Ion* 1320 ff.). The difference between the two situations is instructive. The *Ion* scene is more developed because it effects a complicated exodos; and the prophetess, who is endowed with Apollo's authority (and incidentally is Ion's foster mother), can naturally deter the normally pious youth from committing a sacrilege in the temple precincts. She herself indicates the god's responsibility for her (most opportune) appearance (1353); and, with the information given in the prologue about her original relationship with Ion (41 ff.), her identification now (1320–24) becomes easy and unforced. The *Helen* scene is much briefer. It does not lead to a complicated denouement, nor does it show anyone with the prophetess' authority encountering the king. There is no time to secure the opposer's identity beyond the incidental *δούλος* which the king uses naturally in his exasperation at so unexpected a hindrance to his movements and will.

Lack of formal identification of the opposer will seem less important, if the text is set aside for a moment to consider the staging of this scene in performance. The irruption of a figure from the palace, just as Theoclymenus turns toward it, would be enough to satisfy the viewer, caught up in the ensuing tense encounter, that the opposer could easily and naturally be Theonoe's attendant; his final statement in her defense would undoubtedly cap this impression. Is there any need for the text to spell out what is obvious to the eye?¹⁶

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12. For her prophetic ability, see 13 f., 317 f., 529 f., 823; also 145 ff., 515 ff., 1198, 1370 ff.

13. Theonoe cannot appear herself without unbalancing the play; see A. P. Burnett, *Catastrophe Survived* (Oxford, 1971), p. 97.

14. For the opposite view, see Burnett, *Catastrophe Survived*, p. 98, n. 17.

15. For a similar problem in the *Agamemnon*, see O. Taplin, "Aeschylean Silences," *HSCP* 76 (1972): 92.

16. A shorter version of this paper was read at the CAC meeting in Edmonton in June, 1975. I should like to thank Professors A. P. Burnett and P. T. Stevens for their generous criticisms of an earlier draft of the paper.