ΠΑΡΗΙΣ: A NOTE ON EURIPIDES
ELECTRA 1023

'παρῄϊδα', as Denniston pointed out in his note on the passage, 'is difficult'. Various suggestions have been made to explain it, from Kvíčala's emendation παιδὸς δέρην on the analogy of *Medea* 923, to Parmentier's note, 'la joue blanche ou claire, c'est-à-dire en sa fleur de jeunesse'; but none is altogether convincing or satisfactory. May one, then, advance the idea of retaining παρῄϊδα, as the Oxford recension does, not on the ground of *faute de mieux*, but for the sake of the very striking image it contains?

First of all, there can be no doubt that παρῄϊς and παρῄϊον refer to the cheeks or the upper part of the jaw, and Euripides, in whose plays these words frequently appear, almost invariably uses them with this meaning.[1] All the more striking, therefore, are the two apparent exceptions to this in the *Electra*. In the first passage, 1023 sq., ὑπερτείνας πυρᾶς tells us quite clearly that we are to picture the scene in much the same way as does Aeschylus in *Agamemnon* 228 sq. Iphigeneia is held, supported by various hands, stretched over the altar, and her throat is cut while she is in this position. Denniston's note on 813 is particularly useful, and an illustration given in Stengel's *Opferbräuche der Griechen* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1910), 117[2] shows a pig held over a bowl by an attendant while its throat is slit. Most interesting from our point of view is the sacrificer who holds firm the pig's snout with one hand while using his knife with the other.

Let us now recall that παρῄϊς can refer also to a cheek-piece for horses, as in *Iliad* 4. 142.[3] It was imperative during a sacrifice that no ill-omened cry should escape the victim; hence Agamemnon's order to his attendants to gag Iphigeneia (*Agamemnon* 235–7), and the firm grasp of the man sacrificing the pig. Moreover, Iphigeneia's natural, indeed almost instinctive, reaction in such a position would be to raise her head and shoulders in an effort to wriggle clear of the knife,[4] thereby compressing her throat and making Agamemnon's stroke very difficult. To force the throat outward and leave it open to the knife he would stand behind her head, grasp her face just below the jaw-line, his fingers thrusting into her cheeks, compressing them together very much like the cheek-pieces of a horse, and then use his free hand to cut her throat. The action is thus practical in that it enables the stroke to be delivered quickly and helps to gag the girl against her unfortunate and damaging protest. Aeschylus seems to have had much the same picture in mind, since he too writes of Iphigeneia's being silenced βίᾳ χαλινῶν τ', ἀναύδῳ (238). The brutality of the action is manifest more in that crushing, thrusting hand than in the simple sweeping motion of the knife. Was it this, and perhaps a memory of Aeschylus' scene, that flashed into Euripides' mind as he created, and caused him to write 'cheek' instead of 'throat'?

[1] See *Iliad* 16. 159; 23. 690; *Odyssey* 22. 404; Phrynichus, fr. 13N.; Aeschylus, *Septem* 534, *Choephoroe* 24; Herodotus 2. 121; Theocritus 2. 82; Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 2. 59, 82; *Anth. Graec.* 9. 745. 3.

[2] e.g. *Iphigeneia in Tauris* 1069, 1107; *Ion* 242, 1438; *Orestes* 961, 1429; *Bacchae* 767, 1117; *Iphigeneia in Aulis* 187, 681. *Phoenissae*

308, 1486; *Supplices* 76; *Helen* 1089, 1189; *Hecuba* 410; *Medea* 923, 1006, 1148.

[3] See also J. K. Anderson, *Ancient Greek Horsemanship* (University of California, 1961), Plates 19 and 33. Cf. Hesychius sub παρῄϊον.

[4] Notice that in Aeschylus' play she appears to have broken free for a moment, 239 sq. and Fraenkel ad loc.

Whatever the cause, the resulting picture lingered in his mind, so that he referred to it again in the same play. As Orestes describes to the Chorus how Clytemnestra pleaded with him not to kill her (1212 sq.), he refers to her hanging from his cheeks, παρῄδων τ' ἐξ ἐμᾶν | ἐκρήμναθ', a very difficult thing to do, if you are engaged with someone who is trying to kill you with a sword. Touching the cheek was the normal gesture of a suppliant, of course, and here γένυν is the word used. κρήμναμαι, however, has the sense of hanging over, beetling, suspended from an edge, and we must therefore try to imagine Clytemnestra clinging to Orestes—not indeed with her feet off the ground— but forcefully, as he recoils, so that, by keeping as close as she can, she may prevent him from wielding his sword, a manoeuvre successful, if only for a moment (ὥστε χέρας ἐμὰς λιπεῖν βέλος). Her suppliant's gesture, then, is turned into a grasp just below or behind the jaw-bone; in other words, Clytemnestra has her son by the throat, however briefly, and the word Euripides employs for this is παρῄδων—a queer transference of idea from sacrificer and victim in the first passage to victim and avenger in the second. I am prepared to suggest, therefore, that there is no need to postulate παιδός or πατὴρ δέρην to fill in a possible blank or illegible line, since παρῄϊδα, although difficult, may be shown to work perfectly well.

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AN ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THUCYDIDES 4. 4. 1

IN a recent article[1] M. H. B. Marshall discussed the problematic sentence which makes up Thucydides 4. 4. 1 and proposed the following text:

ὡς δὲ οὐκ ἔπειθεν οὔτε τοὺς στρατηγοὺς οὔτε [. . .] ὕστερον καὶ τοῖς ταξιάρχοις κοινώσας ἡσύχαζε, ὑπὸ ἀπλοίας [. . .] αὐτοῖς τοῖς στρατιώταις σχολάζουσιν ὁρμὴ ἐνέπεσε περιστᾶσιν ἐκτειχίσαι τὸ χωρίον.

This would be admirably clear and would give excellent sense, but it does entail the deletion of μέχρι as an interpolation before αὐτοῖς τοῖς στρατιώταις.[2] Marshall is aware that μέχρι is a word that is not likely to be used by an inter- polator, but still feels able to propose its deletion and gives a detailed account of the way in which an interpolator might have approached the sentence. When one attempts to read the mind of an ancient scribe, all sorts of possibilities are opened up; in this instance, it seems equally possible that a reader who, as Marshall suggests, was faced with . . . ἡσύχαζεν ὑπὸ ἀπλοίας αὐτοῖς τοῖς στρατιώ- ταις κ.τ.λ. and was not able to understand the sentence because he failed to separate ἡσύχαζεν from ὑπὸ ἀπλοίας and to see that ἡσύχαζεν was to be taken in the second οὔτε clause, would have been inclined first at least to see whether sense could be obtained by separating ἡσύχαζεν from ὑπὸ ἀπλοίας rather than to conjure up the word μέχρι. There are two further objections to Marshall's proposal, first that in itself the μέχρι . . . χωρίον clause is a perfectly clear and

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[1] *C.R.* N.S. xxi (1971), 320–3.

[2] And the deletion of τοὺς στρατιώτας as an interpolation before ὕστερον and the ac- ceptance of ἐνέπεσε in preference to the manu-

scripts, reading ἐσέπεσε. Both of these proposals seem to me entirely sensible. See my remarks on these readings, *Hermes* xcv (1967), 378.