

# EURIPIDES, *ELECTRA* 473–5

ἔ-  
σπευδε δρόμῳ λέαινα χα-  
λαῖς Πειρη-  
ναῖον ὀρώσα πῶλον.

It seems surprising that this text—or others similar—(emending the manuscript reading  $\theta'$  ὀρώσα found in both L and P) has been accepted without any serious search for a more meaningful alternative. Even if it be thought that Euripides was capable of adding χαλαῖς, in an unusual sense producing an awkward tautology, to ἔσπευδε δρόμῳ, surely this should only be accepted in the absence of a more credible emendation which departs no further from the manuscripts?

Is there such an alternative? In the corresponding last line of the strophe we have -ας ἀγροσῆρι κούρω: the first syllable of ἀγροσῆρι is doubtful; there seems to be no convincing metrical objection to its being a long syllable here. This at once suggests the maintenance of the manuscripts'  $\theta'$  ὀρώσα to maintain the metrical balance.<sup>1</sup>

Now if  $\theta'$  is correct, the only possible emendation to produce grammatical sense is from χαλαῖς to χαλάς (accusative plural). Would this present a more significant picture? The χαλάς are now part of a hendiadys and are Pegasus' hoofs. And this is precisely what the lioness would see as she looked up into the sky at Pegasus swooping down. The palaeographic change is smaller than any of those in the texts which reject  $\theta'$ , while the picture presented is precise (the first meaning of χαλάς), significant, and colourful. Short of maintaining that the more meaningless reading is always the better one, it would seem to me difficult to maintain the probability of any previously accepted versions.

*Wolverhampton Grammar School*

B. H. POLACK

<sup>1</sup> For the metrical scheme see Denniston, 219. After the iambo-choriambic dimeters in 460 ff. = 472 ff. there seems to be no objec-

tion to a clausula starting with an iambic metron rather than a choriambus.