

THE PRAGMATIC FUNCTION AND TEXTUAL STATUS OF EURIPIDEAN οὐ πον AND ἦ πον

1. οὐ πον IN EURIPIDES¹

A description of the particle combination οὐ πον, which in classical Greek could introduce questions or question-like statements, has to take into account several puzzling facts. A *TLG* search reveals that, unlike similar-looking collocations such as ἦ πον, οὐ τί πον and οὐ δή πον, οὐ πον is confined to Euripides.² Even within this corpus, οὐ πον is spread unevenly over the textual record: it is transmitted in a small number of papyrus texts,³ but otherwise only in L's text of the Alphabetical plays. Moreover, in six of its eleven occurrences in L, οὐ πον is corrected above the line to ἦ πον by Triclinius;⁴ and a seventh instance attested in L is quoted by a 2nd-c. A.D. authority with ἦ πον, not οὐ πον.⁵

Observing that οὐ πον and ἦ πον seem to be in competition with one another, scholars have posited an 'uncertainty' in the transmission,⁶ or a 'purist grammatical doctrine' in favour of ἦ πον,⁷ that warrants critical intervention; and accordingly, οὐ πον has frequently been restored to the manuscript tradition of the Select plays

¹ In what follows, frequent reference will be made to: J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford, 1954²); and C.M.J. Sicking, 'Devices for text articulation in Lysias I and XII', in id. and J.M. van Ophuijsen, *Two Studies in Attic Particle Usage: Lysias and Plato* (Leiden and New York, 1993), 3–66.

² Although Plato frequently has οὐ γάρ πον (but never οὐ πον), this usage – which Denniston (n. 1), 493–4 discusses among 'fortuitous collocations', not under οὐ πον – will be left out of the present discussion: it appears to match the usage of Euripidean οὐ πον closely, but as I point out below (§ 6), its textual status is different.

³ *Med.* 1308 ~ *P Harris* 38, 2nd c. A.D. (= *IT*⁸ Diggle, with ον corrected to η: cf. below p. 336); *Or.* 844 ~ *P Mich* 3735c, 1st c. B.C. (= *IT*⁹). Cf. also *Telephus* fr. 727a54 *TGrF* (= *P Oxy* 27.2460, 1st c. A.D.) ο]ῦ πον.

⁴ At *El.* 235 and 630, οὐ πον stands uncorrupted and uncorrected; at *IT* 930, *Hel.* 575, 600 and 791, it stands uncorrupted with ἦ written above the line. At *Hel.* 135 and *Supp.* 153, although οὐ πον is corrupted to οὐπω, Triclinius wrote ἦ s.l. At *HF* 1101 and 1173, οὐ πον is corrupted (οὐπω) and uncorrected; likewise at *IA* 630 (οὐ· πον).

⁵ *El.* 235, as quoted by Dio Chrys. 13.5 [p. 180 von Arn.]. ἦ πον features in two further quotations from plays whose text cannot be checked against a direct tradition (fr. 9 ἦ πον κρείσσον τῆς εὐγενίας | τὸ καλῶς πράσσειν, and 135 ἦ πον τὸ μέλλον ἐκφοβεῖ καθ' ἡμέραν, | ὡς τοῦ γε πάσχειν τοῦτων μείζον κακόν).

⁶ So G. Zuntz, *An Inquiry into the Transmission of the Plays of Euripides* (Cambridge, 1965), 196 n.: 'There prevailed, from of old, an uncertainty which obliges the modern critic to decide by his own standards.'

⁷ So Kannicht on *Hel.* 135: 'Dieser Befund scheint nur so erklärbar zu sein, dass οὐ πον (1) in den kommentierten Dramen der Auswahl als sonst nicht belegbare, also unorthodoxe (vielleicht kolloquiale?) Partikelverbindung durch eine puristische grammatische Doktrin ausgemerzt und durch das geläufige ἦ πον ersetzt wurde und daraufhin (2) auch in den unkommentierten Dramen von Triklinios – sei es in Analogie zu dem οὐ-πον-losen Text der Auswahl, sei es aufgrund von Kenntnis der Doktrin – durch Empfehlung von ἦ (πον) supra lineam verdächtigt wurde.'

through emendation of $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$.⁸ However, before intervening in the text, we need to ask by what criterion the speaker of classical Greek opted for one collocation over the other; and this question has, to my mind, not been answered satisfactorily. All modern descriptions highlight the particles' attitudinal or speaker-oriented properties, typically diagnosing 'open-minded interrogation' (for $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$) versus 'incredulous surprise' for $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$.⁹ In what follows, I argue that $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ and $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ are best described as addressee-oriented interactional discourse markers:¹⁰ rather than disclosing the speaker's state of mind, they primarily solicit affirmation ($\tilde{\eta}$) or disaffirmation ($\omicron\upsilon$) of the proposition he or she puts forward. On this understanding of the relationship between the two collocations, it is possible to account satisfactorily for almost all transmitted instances of $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ and $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ in Euripides.¹¹ I conclude that, although it is probable that Euripidean $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ was misunderstood at some stage in the transmission of the Euripidean corpus, this misunderstanding does not seem to have significantly affected the textual record.

2. $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$, $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ AND $\omicron\upsilon$ $\tau\acute{\iota}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$

Denniston discusses $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ under $\pi\omicron\upsilon$, but presents the evidence for $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ under $\tilde{\eta}$ – an arrangement that effectively obscures the fact that $\tilde{\eta}$ and $\omicron\upsilon$ are historically, logically and pragmatically each other's opposites.¹² The key to understanding the distribution of $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ and $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ lies precisely in regarding these collocations as a structurally connected pair. In terms of discourse pragmatics, $\tilde{\eta}$ is used to signal that a proposition (p) can be challenged, either on the representational level of discourse (by saying that 'it is the case that p ') or as a speaker-oriented interac-

⁸ e.g. *Med.* 695 (Witzschel, accepted by Diggle; $\mu\acute{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ Schenkl) and 1308 (Barthold; $\mu\acute{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ Murray), *Tro.* 59 (Wecklein, acc. Diggle), *Phoen.* 1072 (Kirchhof, acc. Diggle/Mastronarde), *Or.* 435 (Paley) and 844 (Hermann). The manuscript tradition of the Select plays features four more instances of $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ (*Alc.* 199, *Phoen.* 378, *Tro.* 161 and *Hec.* 775 [the latter confirmed by Diggle's Π^8 , 3rd c. A.D.]); and there are five instances of $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ in the Alphabetical plays (*Bacch.* 939, *Hel.* 1465, *Herac.* 55, *Supp.* 153 and 762).

⁹ So J. Diggle, *Studies in the Text of Euripides* (Oxford, 1981), 57: cf. e.g. Denniston (n. 1), 286 and 492, Page on *Med.* 695, Collard on *Supp.* 153 and Willink on *Or.* 844. Mastronarde on *Phoen.* 1072 observes that ' $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ can have various tones ... but is not particularly lively. In contexts of lively concern, whether fearful or indignant, $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ is appropriate'; and Di Benedetto on *Or.* 844 diagnoses 'una differenza di sfumatura', $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ indicating a higher degree of disbelief than $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$.

¹⁰ The analytical model presupposed by this description is set out most elaborately by C.H.M. Kroon, *Discourse Particles in Latin* (Amsterdam, 1995), 7–125, esp. 61–2 (levels of discourse) and 89–95 (interactional level of discourse). Pragmatically oriented studies of Greek particles include, besides Sicking (n. 1), G.C. Wakker, 'Emphasis and affirmation: some aspects of $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ in tragedy', in A. Rijksbaron (ed.), *New Approaches to Greek Particles* (Amsterdam, 1997), 209–31; and M.P. Cuypers, 'Interactional particles and narrative voice in Apollonius and Homer', in id. and M.A. Harder (edd.), *Beginning from Apollo* (Leuven, 2005), 35–69.

¹¹ The exception is *Hel.* 575, where (as I argue in § 5) $\tilde{\eta}$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ was corrupted to $\omicron\upsilon$ $\pi\omicron\upsilon$ – and not vice versa – through a mechanical error.

¹² Cf. C.J. Ruijgh, *Autour de te épique* (Amsterdam, 1971), 94: 'à une époque antérieure à Homère [$\tilde{\eta}$ and $\omicron\upsilon$] se faisaient pendant, l'un soulignant le caractère affirmatif, l'autre le caractère négatif de la phrase'; and Sicking (n. 1), 55: '[$\tilde{\eta}$] is used for affirming as opposed to denying ... and should be understood as a kind of opposite number to a negative.' Negatives are explicitly excluded from Denniston's working definition of 'particles': Denniston (n. 1), *xl*; cf. Sicking (n. 1), 6.

tional particle (by saying, 'I affirm that *p*').¹³ Negatives can similarly function as 'challengeability markers':¹⁴ like ἦ, they can do so on the representational level of discourse ('not-*p*') as well as on the attitudinal level ('I deny that *p*'). Combining ἦ and οὐ with the particle πού ('subjectivity marker')¹⁵ results in the formation of *addressee*-oriented collocations in which the opposed values of ἦ and οὐ remain in full force, ἦ πού solliciting affirmation of *p* and οὐ πού disaffirmation.

Before we can apply this hypothesis to the Euripidean material, it is necessary to remove a common misunderstanding. Denniston's undifferentiated presentation of the evidence for οὐ πού and οὐ τί πού s.v. πού has lured several commentators into regarding οὐ πού as a shortened equivalent of οὐ τί πού.¹⁶ That this is unwarranted can be seen from the following passages:

- (1) Teucer *Αἴας μ' ἀδελφὸς ὤλεσ' ἐν Τροίᾳ θανών.*
 Helen *πῶς; οὐ τί πού σῶι φασγάνῳ βίου στερεΐς;*
 Teucer *οἰκείον αὐτόν ὤλεσ' ἄλμ' ἐπὶ ξίφος.* (Hel. 94–6)

- The death of my brother Ajax at Troy proved my undoing.
- How? Surely you did not rob him of his life by your dagger?
- He died by leaping on his own sword.

- (2) Te. *Λήδαν ἔλεξας; οἴχεται θανούσα δῆ.*
 Hel. *οὐ πού νιν Ἑλένης αἰσχρόν ὤλεσεν κλέος;*
 Te. *φασίν, βρόχῳ γ' ἄψασαν εὐγενῇ δέρεν.* (Hel. 134–6)

- You mean Leda? She is dead and gone.
- It wasn't Helen's tarnished reputation that killed her?
- So they say: she put a noose around her fair neck.

While it is possible to read into both of Helen's questions 'reluctance to believe',¹⁷ the quality of such reluctance expressed by means of οὐ τί πού is different from that expressed with οὐ πού. In (1), Helen questions what she regards as the logical implication of Teucer's words ('Ajax's death caused Teucer's disgrace' → 'Teucer killed Ajax'), because it is incompatible with what she thinks she knows about Teucer: she *cannot* believe what she has heard, and accordingly puts out a request for more information. By contrast, in (2) Helen puts forward a proposition that she does not *want* to believe ('Did my reputation kill my mother?'), not in order to

¹³ Cf. Cuypers (n. 10), 50; Wakker (n. 10), 218–23.

¹⁴ So Kroon (n. 10), 117, observing that they 'involve the rejection of an implicit option or idea'.

¹⁵ With πού, according to Sicking (n. 1), 59, 'a speaker presents his statement as a surmise whose accuracy he does not vouch for, so that disputing it need not impair the basis for an understanding between the two partners in the conversation'. Numerous examples of πού are discussed by Sicking (n. 1), 57–61, Wakker (n. 10), 357–60 and Denniston (n. 1), 490–5; cf. also Cuypers (n. 10), 41–5.

¹⁶ e.g. Kannicht on *Hel.* 135 ('eine Verkürzung der geläufigeren Verbindung οὐ τί πού'); P.T. Stevens, *Colloquial Expressions in Euripides* (Wiesbaden, 1976), 24 (οὐ πού is 'the shorter form, perhaps used by Eur. for metrical convenience'); cf. also n. 17 below.

¹⁷ So e.g. Dale on *Hel.* 95 ('οὐ τί πού of something you hope is not true, as οὐ πού in 135') and Denniston on *El.* 235 ('οὐ πού and οὐ τί πού are often used ... of something one is reluctant to believe').

be enlightened but to demand Teucer's disaffirmation ('Say that it is not Helen's reputation that killed her!').¹⁸

The element of puzzlement, occasioned by the incompatibility of newly acquired information with previously held beliefs, is a feature of all questions introduced by οὐ τί που both within and outside Euripides, and distinguishes them from οὐ που questions. For example, Strepsiades wonders who uttered the wailing he has just heard and asks:

- (3) οὐ τί που
τῶν Καρκίνου τις δαιμόνων ἐφθέγγετο; (Ar. Nu. 1260–1)

Surely it was not one of Carcinus' ghosts who made that noise?

Strepsiades can only make sense of what he has heard by assuming that he is in a Carcinus play, but he knows he is not; hence his reluctance to believe in the proposition he expresses. Similarly, at *Ion* 1113–14, the Chorus state their surprise that they have been caught in spite of their precautions:

- (4) τί λέξεις; οὐ τί που λελήμεθα
κρυφαῖον ἐς παῖδ' ἐκπορίζουσαι φόνον;

What are you saying? Surely we have not been apprehended while trying to execute our secret attempt on the boy's life?

Here the Chorus signal that they cannot reconcile the new state of affairs with their strenuous attempts at secrecy (cf. the follow-up question in 1116: ὥφθη δὲ πῶς τὰ κρυπτὰ μηχανήματα; ['how can our hidden contrivances have been noticed?']).¹⁹

In contrast to οὐ τί που questions like (3) and (4), οὐ που questions are not motivated by bewilderment, and do not ask for further information. Rather, as in (2), they typically distill a proposition (*p*) from information that is being offered, and ask the interlocutor to disaffirm *p* – because *p* is too terrible to be believed, or because the information offered previously leaves room for doubt. Thus when Menelaus finds himself confronted with a visibly perturbed but as yet inarticulate Messenger, he proffers the first explanation that comes to his mind:

- (5) τί δ' ἔστιν; οὐ που βαρβάρων συλᾶσθ' ὕπο; (Hel. 600)

What is up? Tell me that you are not being attacked by the locals?

Conversely, when Helen learns that her husband innocently knocked on the fiend Theoclymenus' door, she immediately grasps the fatal truth:

¹⁸ In her prologue speech Helen has already revealed that she is aware of being held responsible for the Trojan War (*Hel.* 54–5 δοκῶ ... | συνάψαι πόλεμον Ἑλλήσιν μέγαν) and that her reputation is tarnished beyond repair (66, καθ' Ἑλλάδ' ὄνομα δυσκλεές φέρω); and in her conversation with Teucer, as Kannicht on *Hel.* 133–6 observes, Helen is 'stets bemüht, ihre Betroffenheit zu kaschieren'. See also Kannicht's general remarks on Helen's 'Selbstentfremdung' (1.60–2) and P. Pucci, 'The *Helen* and Euripides' comic arts', *Colby Quarterly* 33 (1997), 42–75, at 42–8.

¹⁹ I discuss all other occurrences of οὐ τί που listed by Denniston (n. 1), 492 briefly in the Appendix (A).

- (6) οὐ πού προσήτευσ βίον; ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ. (Hel. 791)

Tell me that you have not begged for food? I am ruined!

The second part of (6) makes it clear that Helen is perfectly capable of believing in the proposition put forward in the first, just as in (5) Menelaus is only too eager to credit the idea of a barbarian attack: all they want is to have their beliefs gainsaid. Finally in (7) below, when the Old Man assures Orestes that no Argive will be present at the prospective site of the murder, Orestes does not express incredulity, but simply asks him to reconfirm this statement:²⁰

- (7) Old Man οὐδεὶς παρῆν Ἀργεῖος, οἰκεία δὲ χεῖρ.
 Orestes οὐ πού τις ὅστις γνωριεῖ μ' ἰδών, γέρον;
 Old Man δμῶες μὲν εἰσιν, οἳ σέ γ' οὐκ εἶδόν ποτε. (El. 629–31)

- There was no Argive there, only the household factotum.
- Tell me that no one will recognize me when he sees me, Old Man?
- There are slaves, but none that have ever seen *you* before.

In examples (5)–(7) the οὐ πού question contains a proposition that follows logically from what the interlocutor has said, and that the speaker believes in. There is no incompatibility with previously held beliefs, and no puzzlement: only a desire to have the proposition denied by the interlocutor.²¹

3. ἤ πού VERSUS οὐ πού

οὐ πού and οὐ τί πού tend to occur where the speaker is processing new information: s/he phrases a proposition in the negative, and qualifies this with πού or τί πού to elicit a particular response. οὐ τί πού questions put out a general appeal for further information: they do not invite contradiction or affirmation, and consequently we would not expect a positive counterpart *ἤ τί πού to occur – as, indeed, it does not. However, οὐ πού questions do have a positive counterpart, in questions headed by ἤ πού.

ἤ πού introduces propositions that a speaker evidently believes in (ἤ), but commits him/herself to only in so far (πού) as is reconcilable with the extent of the hearer's potential agreement.²² Thus, ἤ πού questions tend to occur in situations that demand (token) politeness, as in the following examples:

- (8) ἤ πού, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ὦ Λύσι, σφόδρα φιλεῖ σε ὁ πατήρ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ;
 (Pl. Lys. 285d5)

²⁰ At El. 631, L has the unmetrical ... οὐδ' ἐγὼ οὐκ εἶδον ('none that I have seen before'): pace D. Kovacs, *Euripidea altera* (Leiden, 1996), 105, I print Pierson's conjecture (which is adopted by Murray and Diggle).

²¹ All other οὐ πού questions in Euripides are discussed below in § 4 or in the Appendix (B).

²² Cf. Sicking (n. 1), 61–3, who distinguishes two principal uses: a) 'to confer on a statement the maximum impact short of causing irritation and provoking contradiction' (cf. example [8] below); and b) to present 'as an innocent surmise a statement of observed fact which is painful to the person addressed' (ex. [9]). As Sicking notes (61 n. 1), use a) is prevalent in Lysias' forensic speeches, where the speaker needs to make his point without appearing to overbear the jurors.

Dear Lysis, I assume your father and your mother love you very much?

(9) ἡ που πρὸς ὀρθρον σπασμὸς ὑμᾶς λαμβάνει; (Ar. *Lys.* 1089)

I assume this convulsion seizes you as soon as you wake up?

To say that ‘your parents must love you very much’ (8), or to observe that ‘you are displaying a notable erection’ (9) are – in the terminology of Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory – ‘face-threatening acts’;²³ and ἡ που can soften the potentially aggressive properties of such FTAs.²⁴ In other passages, however, politeness is not the main issue:

(10) Lys. ἀλλ’ ἔστιν ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ πρᾶγμ’ ἀνεζητημένον
πολλαῖσι τ’ ἀγρυπνίαισιν ἐρριπτασμένον.
Cal. ἡ πού τι λεπτὸν ἔστι τοῦρριπτασμένον; (Ar. *Lys.* 27–8)

- It is something I have been thinking hard about, and which I have tossed about night after sleepless night.
- Something *limp* that you’ve been tossing about, right?

In these lines, the sex-obsessed Callonice is straining to make Lysistrata’s words mean what she – Callonice – wants them to mean, ἡ που marking that the speaker seeks the addressee’s endorsement of the proposition contained in her question. Similarly, the Chorus in Euripides’ *Alcestis* interrupt the Servant’s report of the heroine’s death and express the expectation that Admetus must have reacted to this event with horror:

(11) ἡ που στενάζει τοισίδ’ Ἀδμητος κακοῖς; (Alc. 199)

Admetus must have lamented those disasters – didn’t he?

It is hardly conceivable that Alcestis’ husband might *not* have cried at his wife’s demise; yet the extraordinary situation – Admetus directly benefited from her death – makes the Chorus ask for confirmation.

To be sure, not all ἡ που questions are primarily addressee-oriented:²⁵ combining ἡ (‘challengeability marker’) and που (‘subjectivity marker’) can result in a

²³ Cf. P. Brown and S.C. Levinson, *Politeness. Some Universals in Language Use* (Cambridge, 1987), 61–9; but also R. Watts, *Politeness* (Cambridge, 2003) (critical of the concept of FTAs). Brown and Levinson’s model is applied to ancient Greek by M. Lloyd, ‘Sophocles in the light of face-threat politeness theory’, in I.J.F. de Jong and A. Rijksbaron (edd.), *The Language of Sophocles* (Leiden, 2005), 225–39. The methodological difficulties of explaining particle usage in terms of politeness theory are briefly addressed by H. Weydt, ‘What are particles good for?’, in K. Fischer (ed.), *Approaches to Discourse Particles* (Amsterdam, 2006), 205–18.

²⁴ Or not: as Sicking (n.1), 62–3 observes, a speaker’s unwillingness to commit himself fully to his/her suppositions can be disingenuous, as in e.g. Ar. *Thesm.* 63 ἡ που νέος γ’ ὦν ἦσθ’ ὑβριστής, ὃ γέρον (‘Correct me if I am wrong, old man, but you must have been pretty abusive when you were a young man’). Similarly, at Soph. *Aj.* 1229–30 Agamemnon states that, were Teucer born of a free woman rather than a slave, he would be even more offensive than he is now (ἡ που τραφεῖς ἂν ... | ὑψήλ’ ἐφώνεις κτλ.).

²⁵ Thus Denniston (n. 1), 286, distinguishing between ‘affirmative’ and ‘interrogative’ uses of ἡ που, remarks that ‘here, as often, the line between questions and statements cannot be sharply

collocation that is primarily speaker-oriented. This seems to occur only, however, in the context of soliloquies;²⁶ in dialogue, ἦ πού always functions primarily on the addressee-oriented level of discourse, and thus forms a natural counterpart to οὐ πού.²⁷

4. ἦ πού OR οὐ πού?

When we apply the hypothesis put forward above to the Euripidean occurrences of ἦ πού and οὐ πού, it appears that the scope for critical choice is much more confined than modern editors have assumed. Orestes' question, οὐ πού τις ὅστις γνωριεῖ μ' ἰδών (example [7] above), is designed to elicit the reassurance that he will not be recognised (*p*): consequently, it is naturally phrased as an appeal to the Old Man to deny *p*. Likewise, when Helen asks, οὐ πού νιν Ἑλένης αἰσχρὸν ὤλεσεν κλέος (ex. [2]), it is unlikely that she seeks assent for her justified belief that it was her own disgrace that caused her mother's death. In (5), Menelaus' belief that his ship has been attacked by barbarians (*p*) is merely the first thing that comes to mind, and putting forward *p* as an ἦ πού statement ('tell me that *p*!') would gratuitously characterize Menelaus as a paranoiac.

By contrast, ἦ πού is appropriate in Jocasta's reaction to the arrival of a Messenger:

(12) ἦ πού ξυμφορὰν ἦκεις φέρων | Ἑτεοκλέους θανάτος; (Pho. 1072–3)

You come with the bad news that Eteocles has died, haven't you?

Whereas Menelaus' question in *Hel.* 600 (ex. [5]) was a wild guess, Jocasta's belief concerning the nature of this Messenger's message (*p*) is firmly grounded in reason and observation: this is the man who used to fight at Eteocles' side (1073–4 ... οὐδ' παρ' ἄσπιδα | βέβηκας αἰεὶ πολέμιων εἵργων βέλη), and the fact that he has now left his position can only mean that Eteocles is dead. Unwelcome though it may be, *p* here concerns a belief that Jocasta knows she is entitled to hold, and an ἦ πού question is dramatically at least as effective as Menelaus' οὐ πού question in (5): accepting that disaster has struck, Jocasta asks the Messenger to confirm the bad news. I see no reason to change the manuscript reading.²⁸

drawn'; cf. also Henderson on Ar. *Lys.* 28 ('ἦ πού; – virtually a statement') and Braswell on Pind. *Pyth.* 4.87[a] ('οὐ τί πού; an incredulous half-question, in fact an exclamation'). *PV* 521 ἦ πού τι σεμνόν ἐστι ὃ ξυναμπέχεις is printed by Page and Griffith with a question mark, by West with a full stop.

²⁶ In instances of ἦ πού outside dialogue, πού qualifies the speaker's commitment (ἦ) to a belief concerning a future or hypothetical situation in so far as that situation is by its nature unpredictable. Whereas Euripides uses ἦ πού predominantly in dialogue (exc. *Hel.* 1465), all but one of the collocation's Sophoclean instances occur outside dialogue (exc. *Aj.* 1129: n. 24 above): see Appendix (C).

²⁷ K. Fischer, *From Cognitive Semantics to Lexical Pragmatics* (Berlin, 2000), 277–84 reviews the various models that have been proposed to account for the functional polysemy of discourse particles in modern languages; cf. also D.M. Lewis, 'Discourse markers in English: a discourse-pragmatic view', in: K. Fischer (ed.), *Approaches to Discourse Particles* (Amsterdam, 2006), 43–59. In the Appendix (D–E), I briefly discuss a further selection of ἦ πού questions.

²⁸ All manuscripts have ἦ πού (F in correction of οπου). Mastronarde, Diggle and Kovacs accept Kirchhoff's οὐ πού, which would yield: 'Tell me you haven't come with the news of

When Medea explains her predicament to Aegeus, her interlocutor twice asks for more clarity (691, 693); and once Medea brings herself to state the facts in concrete terms (694, *γυναιῖκ' ἐφ' ἡμῶν δεσπότην δόμων ἔχει*), Aegeus asks:

- (13) Ae. *ῆ που τετόλμηκ' ἔργον αἷσχιστον τόδε;*
 Med. *σάφ' ἴσθι· ἄτιμοι δ' ἐσμέν οἱ πρό τοῦ φίλοι.* (Med. 695–6)

- So he dared to commit such a shameful act?
- He sure did: now we, formerly his *philoî*, have no status.

All editions I have examined print Witzschel's *οὐ που* for transmitted *ῆ που*; however, it seems in line with their preceding conversation for Aegeus to convey that now, he is thinking along with Medea and asks her to confirm the unthinkable – does she really mean that Jason has abandoned her and her children? Medea's *σάφ' ἴσθι* is an apposite answer.²⁹ Again, I see no reason for intervention.

Transmitted *ῆ που* also seems appropriate at *Tro.* 59–60, where Poseidon replies to Athena's request for him to prevent the Greeks' departure from Troy:

- (14) *ῆ πού νυν, ἔχθραν τῇν πρὶν ἐκβαλοῦσα, νῦν | ἐς οἶκτον ῆλθες;*

So you have cast off your former enmity, and now are bent on pity?

The communicative context seems to demand a measure of politeness, for Athena's request is strikingly paradoxical – the former ally of the Achaeans now asks her uncle to help her punish her former protégés. For Poseidon to observe that this is so is a potentially face-threatening act, and as such can naturally be mitigated by means of an *ῆ που* question. An *οὐ που* question ('Tell me that you have not ...?') would convey a degree of sarcasm not warranted by the situation.³⁰

οὐ που questions implicitly convey the message 'You have lost me here'; and this message would be similarly out of place when Agamemnon, hearing that Polymestor has killed young Polydorus, asks Hecabe:

- (15) *ὦ τλήμων· ῆ που χρυσὸν ἠράσθη λαβεῖν;* (Hec. 775)

Poor woman! I suppose he was eager to lay his hands on the gold?

For Agamemnon to react to the information 'He killed my son' with the question, 'Surely he *did not* do it for the money?' would be quite absurd. Conversely, at *Supp.* 153 the dramatic situation dictates precisely such sarcasm. In order to

Eteocles' death?

²⁹ For *σάφ' ἴσθι* in the sense 'You bet it is!' – confirming a positively phrased proposition – cf. *Alc.* 1130, *Med.* 1362, *Bacch.* 816 and *Phaethon* fr. 773.8 (with Diggle's note on his line 52). With *οὐ που*, Aegeus would be expressing the assumption that he still does not understand what really happened, saying 'Tell me that he has not done *that*?!' (cf. ex. [16] below) – to which *σάφ' ἴσθι* does not seem to be an idiomatic answer.

³⁰ If we do feel that something like rude incredulity is needed here – mindful of the traditional enmity of Athena and Poseidon in e.g. Eur. *Erechtheus* – we should consider that the politeness of an *ῆ που* statement can be feigned: 'the speaker is not really in doubt, and to present his statement as [merely] arguable when no alternative is available to the addressee is to rub it in' (Sicking [n. 1], 62); cf. also Biehl on *Tro.* 59. Diggle and Kovacs print Wecklein's *οὐ που*, cf. Diggle (n. 9), 57.

secure Theseus' help in recovering the bodies of the Seven, Adrastus maintains that Polyneices went into exile voluntarily and was then wronged by Eteocles and co. (152, οἱ μένοντες τοὺς ἀπόντας ἡδίκουν). Theseus, however, is not taken in:

(16) οὗ σου σφ' ἀδελφὸς χρημάτων νοσφίζεται;

Don't tell me his brother was after his possessions?

In keeping with his general scepticism regarding Adrastus' claims,³¹ Theseus invites his interlocutor to retract, given the absurdity of the idea of harming those who are not there (→ 'What did he do: steal his money?!'); an ἡ σου question – 'You mean his brother ...?' – would imply more sympathy for Adrastus' account than Theseus is ready to give at this stage of the play.

In examples (12)–(16) it is relatively easy to gauge the speaker's state of mind, and consequently to ascertain whether it is more appropriate for him/her to use an οὗ σου or an ἡ σου question. The transmitted text does not require emendation in any of these cases.³² The less we can say about what it is that the speaker wants to achieve, however, the more difficult it becomes to decide whether οὗ σου or ἡ σου is appropriate. Thus, when Iphigenia hears that Menelaus is now king at Argos and Orestes exiled, she draws the logical conclusion from the words of her interlocutor:

(17) οὗ σου νοσοῦντας θεῖος ὕβρισεν δόμους; (IT 930)

Don't tell me the uncle committed violence against the ailing house?

A choice between (transmitted) οὗ σου and (possible) ἡ σου here involves assessing what is foremost in Iphigenia's mind: the wish to reject unwelcome news, or readiness to believe the worst. In the first case, οὗ σου is appropriate, conveying the signal 'You have lost me here' (→ 'I have a belief that I want you to help me get rid of before we can proceed'). In the second, we would expect an ἡ σου question to convey that 'I am thinking along with (or ahead of) you'.

A similar ambivalence pertains to *Med.* 1308, where Jason (having just learned about the death of his new bride) asks, on being informed by the Chorus that he has not yet heard the worst of his troubles:

(18) Ja. τί δ' ἔστιν; ἡ σου καὶ ἀποκτεῖναι θέλει;
Cho. παῖδες τεθνήσκει χειρὶ μητρῶναι σέθεν. (Med. 1308–9)

- What do you mean? So she wants to murder *me* too, doesn't she?
- Your children have died by the hand of their mother.

³¹ e.g. *Supp.* 151 σοφὴν γ' ἔλεξας τήνδ' ἐκούσιον φυγὴν – cf. 157, 159, 161.

³² Thus at *Supp.* 762 the Herald reports that Theseus has recovered the corpses of the Seven and buried a number of their fallen soldiers, and Adrastus inquires about the other bodies: ἡ σου πικρῶς νιν θέραπες ἦγον ἐκ φόνου; ('Surely it was gruesome for the servants to remove them from the carnage?'). An οὗ σου question ('Tell me it wasn't gruesome ...?') would be absurd. In addition to the passages discussed above, I would regard transmitted ἡ σου as dramatically appropriate at *Alc.* 199 (= ex. [12] above) and *Phoen.* 378 (both Select plays) as well as in *Hel.* 1465, *Bacch.* 939 and *Heracl.* 55: these passages are all discussed in the Appendix (C–D).

In an *οὐ πού* question – ‘Tell me that she is not planning ...’ – we can choose to read either genuine dismay or sarcasm: while the former would be psychologically understandable, the latter would be consistent with Jason’s attitude towards Medea throughout the play. The *ἦ πού* question transmitted in the manuscripts, on the other hand, precludes sarcasm and instead highlights Jason’s naive egotism, which makes the Chorus’s revelation in the subsequent line all the more shocking.³³ Both are dramatically effective, so that it is hard to decide which is preferable.

This question apparently already exercised the scribe of *P Harris* 38 (2nd c. A.D.), which has *οὐ πού* in the text but *ἦ* written above the line.³⁴ This could be taken as a simple correction, the copyist having had *ἦ πού* in his exemplar but *οὐ πού* in his mind, and later realizing his mistake: such seems to be the assumption of most recent editors, who all print *ἦ πού* as transmitted in the manuscripts. However, since *οὐ πού* was a rare collocation (and possibly, as we shall see, not even part of living usage at all: § 6 below), it seems unlikely that it would have spontaneously replaced *ἦ πού* in the copyist’s mind; and *οὐ πού* may well be what Euripides wrote here, the annotation *ἦ* being due to conjecture rather than correction. Given that considerations of psychological and dramatic probability do not decisively favour either of the two collocations, ancient evidence should surely prevail over mediaeval.³⁵

5. *οὐ πού* IN THE TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION

On the interpretation of *οὐ πού* and *ἦ πού* presented here, none of the transmitted instances of these collocations needs to be emended by conjecture – with one exception, yet to be discussed. There remains, however, the secondary evidence presented in § 1: apart from Triclinius’ corrections, Dio quotes *El.* 235 with *ἦ πού* rather than L’s *οὐ πού* (see n. 5 above); and at *Supp.* 153 (ex. [16]), L transmits a gloss *ἀρα* (*sic*), suggesting that someone at this point in the text read a straightforward query, not a sarcastic one. Conceivably, both Dio (who was probably quoting from memory) and the anonymous glossator misinterpreted an actual *οὐ πού* question, reading it as a straightforward question introduced by the negative and consequently requiring – like *ἀρα* questions, and like *ἦ πού* questions – a positive answer. This

³³ Pace Page on *Med.* 1308, who laconically states ‘*ἦ πού*: interrogative, ‘I expect ...?’, here perhaps sarcastic’; cf. Kannicht on *Hel.* 135 (p. 55 n. 29).

³⁴ This is Diggle’s *II*⁹. The papyrus contains various corrections, both in the hand of the scribe who wrote the main text and in a second hand; the *ed. princ.* ascribes the superscript *ἦ* to the first hand.

³⁵ Similarly in the case of *Or.* 844, where all recent editors print the manuscript reading *ἦ πού*, versus *οὐ πού* in *P Mich* 3735c (1st c. B.C.; confirming a conjecture by G. Hermann). Electra, reappearing for the first time since 315 and having just noticed her brother’s absence, enquires of the Chorus: *οὐ πού τῶνδ’ ἀφώρμηται δόμων | τλήμων Ὀρέστης θεομανεῖ λύσση δαμείς* (‘Don’t tell me that Orestes left the house in a fit of madness ...?’); the manuscript text, by contrast, makes Electra plump straight for the horrible truth (‘He has left ..., hasn’t he?’) – possible, but not compelling. Other passages in which *οὐ πού* and *ἦ πού* both fit the bill are *Hel.* 791 (= ex. [6] above), *El.* 235 and *IA* 670 (where the manuscript reading is *οὐ πού*); as well as *Or.* 435 and *Tro.* 161 (which have *ἦ πού*). These passages are briefly discussed in the Appendix (E).

scenario would also account for the Triclinian annotations in L, as well as for the annotation ἦ in *P Harris* 38 cited above.³⁶

As we have seen, the absence of οὐ πού from the manuscript tradition of the Select plays has suggested to modern editors a more or less systematical substitution of ἦ πού for οὐ πού in this tradition. However, ἦ πού never occurs where particle usage or dramatic consistency requires οὐ πού, but only where ἦ πού is needed (examples [12]–[14], and the two instances mentioned in n. 32), or where the parameters for pragmatic ambivalence are favourable: only four of the instances of ἦ πού transmitted in the Select plays could have ousted original οὐ πού in the first place (example [18], plus the three ἦ πού instances mentioned in n. 35).

For two of these, papyrus evidence indeed suggests that the mediaeval evidence is in error; in the other two cases, it is merely *possible* that an editor (like the other secondary witnesses) wrongly took οὐ πού questions as questions desiring a positive answer, and emended or glossed accordingly. Given the rarity of οὐ πού, it is hardly justified to assume that it must have been distributed evenly over Euripides' dramatic output; and given that οὐ πού is wholly absent from the text of two of the Alphabetical plays (*Heracl.*, *Ion*), its eleven occurrences in the remaining six versus its non-occurrence in the ten Select plays are not figures upon which a solid statistical argument can be built.

There remains a single passage that, according to my interpretation, requires emendation: *Hel.* 575. The context is as follows. The information that Helen has been in Egypt, not in Troy, for the duration of the Trojan War (471) is acutely puzzling for Menelaus: he cannot reconcile it with his belief that he has just left her in a cave by the sea; and accordingly, he persuades himself that there must be *two* women named Helen (503–9).³⁷ With this provisional solution firmly entrenched in his mind, Menelaus enters the recognition scene at a disadvantage. Helen, by contrast, soon realizes that she is facing none other than her husband, and does her utmost to convince him that she is really and truly his wife (571–4). Though Menelaus still clings to the erroneous belief that his wife is where he left her, and that consequently his interlocutor must be another woman altogether, he is struck by the physical resemblance of the two women:

(19) οὐ πού φρονῶ μὲν εἶδ', τὸ δ' ὄμμα μου νοσεῖ; (*Hel.* 575)

The transmitted text translates as 'Tell me that it is not the case that, on the one hand, I am sound of mind while on the other my eyes deceive me'. This cannot be what Menelaus wants to say: at this point he believes that he is sound of mind (p^1), and in order to safeguard that belief he holds on to the thought that he might not be seeing correctly (p^2). To request disaffirmation of ($p^1 + p^2$), by means of an οὐ πού question whose scope extends over the whole μέν ... δέ clause,³⁸ thus runs counter to what he wants to achieve.

³⁶ I owe this suggestion to Albert Rijksbaron. On questions headed by οὐ and desiring a positive answer, cf. K–G 2.523.

³⁷ Pace Diggle and Kovacs, I regard *Hel.* 503–9 as genuine and essential to the plot; cf. Kannicht on *Hel.* 484–514.

³⁸ This is how e.g. Dale, Kannicht and Burian explain the construction (Kannicht translates "es ist doch nicht möglich, dass ich bei Sinnen bin und nur falsch sehe?!"); to confine the scope of οὐ πού to the μέν clause only ("Don't tell me I am sound of mind; my eyes must deceive me") yields better sense, but contorted Greek.

The belief that Menelaus wants to save from the accumulating evidence to the contrary is the belief that his reason is superior to his vision: ‘surely it must be so ($\rightarrow \eta \piου$) that I am sound of mind ($\muέν$), and {that} my *vision* deceives me ($\deltaέ$) ...?’ In response, Helen tries to convince her husband that sensory perception is the only way towards true *doxa* (576–80),³⁹ but Menelaus retorts that his problem is precisely that ‘his wife is someone else’ (581 $\acute{\epsilon}κεί νοσοῦμεν \acute{o}τι δάμαρτ’ \acute{\alpha}λλην \acute{\epsilon}\chiω$). Evidently, his belief in his soundness of mind remains unimpaired.⁴⁰

If $\eta \piου$ is what Euripides wrote at *Hel.* 575, its corruption to $οὐ \piου$ in the tradition represented by L is understandable in view of the numerous instances of verse-initial $οὐ(\kappa)$ in the immediate vicinity (570, 571, 574, 576); and given the complications involved in interpreting Menelaus’ words, the survival of the corruption alongside other cases of $οὐ \piου$ in the same tradition is unsurprising.

6. $οὐ \piου$, $οὐ \deltaή ποτε$ AND $οὐ \deltaή που$

One question remains: why is $οὐ \piου$ confined to Euripides? To answer this question, it is necessary to take into account a number of other collocations. Euripidean $οὐ \piου$ shares its rarity with the collocation $οὐ \deltaή (ποτε)$, which appears only in Sophocles.⁴¹ Moreover, in several – if not all – of its occurrences, the pragmatics of Sophoclean $οὐ \deltaή$ are comparable to Euripidean $οὐ \piου$. Thus Electra, on being addressed by the as yet unrecognized Orestes, asks:

- (20) $οἴμοι τάλαιν’, οὐ \deltaή ποθ’ \etaς \etaκούσαμεν$
 $φήμης φέροντες ἐμφανῇ τεκμήρια;$ (S. *El.* 1108–9)

Oh misery! Don’t tell me that the rumours I have heard are confirmed by incontrovertible evidence?

Like the $οὐ \piου$ questions discussed in § 2, $οὐ \deltaή ποτε$ here introduces a proposition in which Electra has clearly invested belief, while she hopes against her better judgement to elicit its disaffirmation.⁴²

³⁹ In this respect, the recognition scene plays an intriguing variation on the exchange between Helen and Teucer in the play’s prologue: there, Teucer is willing to grant that his *sight* might have deceived him into thinking that the woman who boarded Menelaus’ ship at Troy was Helen; but he stubbornly upholds the claim that his *reason* cannot have been thus deceived (121 $\kappaαὶ \acute{o} νοῦς \acute{o}ραϊ$). If *Hel.* 121–2 are out of place where they are transmitted, their transposition before 119 (well argued by D. Sansone, ‘Euripides, *Helen* 115–123’, *CQ* 32 [1982], 56–8) is preferable to Ribbeck’s commonly accepted excision (acc. Dale, Diggle, Kovacs; Kannicht and Allan defend the manuscript text).

⁴⁰ The text and order of the verses in this passage are disputed; like Diggle and Allan, I have more confidence in the transmitted order than Kannicht (on *Hel.* 571–82) and M.L. West, ‘Tragica V’, *BICS* 28 (1981), 61–78 at 66; but a discussion of the complications lies outside the scope of this paper.

⁴¹ Denniston (n. 1), 223 discusses – without differentiation, and without reference to $οὐ (\tauί) \piου$ – the collocations $οὐ \deltaή$, $οὐ \deltaή ποτε$ and $οὐ \deltaή που$, noting that ‘the idiom seems to be peculiar to Sophocles’. This claim seems to be correct for $οὐ \deltaή$ and $οὐ \deltaή ποτε$, if not for $οὐ \deltaή που$ (which can hardly be distinguished from $οὐ \deltaή που$: see below).

⁴² Similarly, at Soph. *Phil.* 900–1 Philoctetes, faced with Neoptolemus’ reluctance to take him aboard, asks $οὐ \deltaή σε δυσχέρεια τοῦ νοσήματος | \acute{\epsilon}πεισεν \acute{o}στε μή μ’ \acute{\alpha}γειν ναύτην \acute{\epsilon}τι$; – like Electra, Philoctetes proposes a cherished belief (cf. 307–13) in the hope that it will be disaffirmed. The same goes for Soph. *Trach.* 668 ($οὐ \deltaή$) and 876 ($οὐ \deltaή ποτε$), where the

Partial pragmatic overlap can also be established between Euripidean οὐ σου and the common collocation οὐ δήπου (Denniston [n.1], 267–8). When Antigone is brought on stage, the Chorus ask:

- (21) τί ποτ'; οὐ δήπου σέ γ' ἀπιστοῦσαν
τοῖς βασιλείοισιν ἄγουσι νόμοις; (S. *Ant.* 381–2)

What is happening? Don't tell me that *you* have been caught breaking the laws of our king?

The Chorus respond to an unwelcome observation by first inferring what must have happened, and then asking for a disaffirmation of that inference.⁴³

With δήπου, as Sicking ([n.1], 63) observes, 'the dictum is offered as being self-evident, yet it is at the same time implicitly acknowledged that its self-evidence is only surmised and might be called in doubt'. On this description, we can see how (speaker-oriented) δήπου functions side by side with (addressee-oriented) ἡ σου, which signals that a belief held by the speaker is none the less up for discussion. Moreover, it is unsurprising that *ἡ δήπου does not occur in classical Greek: in situations where ἡ σου and δήπου are at home, the need to mark *p* as a belief (ἡ) and the need to present *p* as self-evident (δή) cancel each other out.⁴⁴

It is understandable, on the other hand, that οὐ δήπου does occur with some frequency, if this collocation can function in contrast with ἡ σου as well as in contrast with δήπου. Compare the following examples:

- (22) τίς ἔσται; οὐ δήπου Βλέπυρος ὁ γειννῶν; (Ar. *Eccl.* 327)

Who is that? Surely it is not my neighbour Blepyrus?

- (23) οὐ γάρ δήπου τινὲ καλλίονι ἐνέτυχες ἄλλωι; (Pl. *Prot.* 309c2)

Surely you haven't met a more handsome man?

chorus elliptically distil an unstated consequence from the words of their interlocutor. Different, on the other hand, and not readily comparable to Euripidean οὐ σου questions, are Soph. *El.* 1180, οὐ δὴ ποτ', ὦ ξέν', ἀμφ' ἐμοὶ στένεις τάδε; ('Surely, stranger, it is not *me* you are lamenting now?') and ibid. 1202, οὐ δὴ ποθ' ἡμῖν ξυγγενὴς ἦκεις ποθέν; ('Surely you are not our kinsman who has come from far away?'): in these passages, Electra expresses only incredulity – she cannot see the reason why Orestes behaves the way he does.

⁴³ The same sentiment, *mutatis mutandis*, applies at Ar. *Av.* 179 (οὐχ οὗτος οὖν δήπου 'στὶν ὄρνιθων πόλος;); and compare e.g. Pl. *Symp.* 194b6–7 τί δέ, ὦ Σώκρατες; ... οὐ δήπου με οὕτω θεάτρου μεστὸν ἡγήι ὥστε κτλ. More difficult is Soph. *OT* 1472–3, where the blinded Oedipus hears his daughters' voices, understands why they are there, and expresses with οὐ δὴ ... σου his unwillingness to credit Creon's magnanimity: an appeal to be told that this unexpected alleviation of his total misery is not actually forthcoming? Different, again, are such instances where the speaker uses οὐ δήπου to dispose of an allegedly unlikely supposition or accusation: e.g. Antiph. 1.28, 5.63, Lys. 7.23 & 26, 10.8.

⁴⁴ Thus, while ἡ δή and its counterpart ἡ μήν are quite frequent, ἡ δὴ σου occurs only at *Il.* 23.583 (ἡ δὴ σου μάλ' ἐολπας ἐνὶ φρεσὶ). The frequency of ἡ δήτα (Denniston [n.1], 271) versus the non-occurrence of *ἡ δήπου reflects the functional differentiation in classical Greek between δήπου and δήτα (vis-à-vis simple δή), a differentiation that can be readily appreciated from the fact that unlike δήπου, the particle δήτα frequently occurs in combination with interrogative pronouns (πῶς, τί etc.; cf. Denniston [n.1], 270).

Both these passages bear out Sicking's description cited above. The positive counterpart to example (23) is found close by:

(23a) σοφωτάτῳ μὲν οὖν δῆπου τῶν γε νῦν, εἴ σοι δοκεῖ σοφώτατος εἶναι
Πρωταγόρας. (ibid. 309d1)

Surely the cleverest man in our generation, I dare say – if in your opinion the wisest man is Protagoras.

But the positive counterpart to example (22) would be *τίς ἔστιν; ἦ που ὁ Βλέπυρος; ('It is *p*, isn't it?'), not *τίς ἔστιν; ὁ Βλέπυρος δῆπου; ('Isn't it self-evident that *p*?').⁴⁵ So, if οὐ δῆπου can be the negative counterpart to ἦ που as well as δῆπου (examples [22]–[23]), and if οὐ δῆπου can be used as the equivalent of οὐ που (ex. [20] with n. 43) – then we have progressed some way toward an explanation of the rarity of the Euripidean collocation and of Sophoclean οὐ δῆ (ποτε): having οὐ δῆπου, classical Greek had no need for οὐ που.

But why, having οὐ δῆπου, did Euripidean drama have a need for οὐ που? My suggestion would be that (οὐ) δῆπου was felt to be too colloquial for tragedy. Set against its frequency in Aristophanes (26 instances), Lysias (11) and Plato (over 200), the absence of δῆπου from Euripides, its rarity in Sophocles and its single appearance in the Aeschylean *PV* are remarkable. It is likely that the inherent semantical tension between the component parts of δῆπου – 'self-evident, yet liable to be called into doubt' – may have been perceived as more jarring in rarified tragic conversation than in real or realistic dialogue; and the few tragic contexts in which δῆπου does occur all seem to verge on the colloquial.⁴⁶ If tragic diction dispreferred οὐ δῆπου as the negative counterpart of ἦ που then both Euripidean οὐ που and Sophoclean οὐ δῆ (ποτε) may have been coined or adopted for the purpose of standing in for it.

In Platonic dialogue, οὐ γάρ που occurs frequently at the head of (purportedly) scandalized, perplexed or amused questions; questions that are distinguishable from Euripidean οὐ που questions only by their different embedding in the dialogue.⁴⁷ Unlike Euripides, however, Plato freely avails himself of the collocation οὐ δῆπου, so that the status of οὐ (γάρ) που in the Platonic corpus is quite different from that of Euripidean οὐ που. Given the ready availability in living speech of (οὐ) δῆπου, it is not unlikely that Euripides' use of οὐ που soon came to be regarded

⁴⁵ The expression – undoubtedly idiomatic – is actually found only in the negative: cf. *Ar. Ach.* 122 ὁδὶ δὲ τίς ποτ' ἐστίν; οὐ δῆπου Στράτων; and *Av.* 269 τίς ποτ' [*sc.* ὄρνις] ἐστίν; οὐ δῆπου ταῶς;

⁴⁶ A more or less informal δῆπου could be interpreted as dramatically effective at *Soph. Ant.* 381 f. (= ex. [21]) and *OT* 1472–3 (n. 43 above); cf. also the Chorus' indignant οὐ γάρ δῆπου | τοῦτό γε τλήπον παρέσuras ἔπος at *PV* 1064–5. At *Soph. Trach.* 418 the Messenger's acid reference to Iole (τὴν αἰχμάλωτον ... | κάτοιισθα δῆπου;) may well be intentionally blunt; and a dismissive tone also suits the Messenger's τῶν Λαίου δῆπου τις ὀνομάζετο at *OT* 1042. The presence of δῆπου (δῆ που) in epic need not be an argument against its 'colloquial' status (cf. Denniston [n.1], 267).

⁴⁷ Thus, once Euthyphro has defined 'the sacred' as 'serving the gods', Socrates objects (*Euthyphr.* 13a2–5): οὐ γάρ που λέγεις γε, οἰαίπερ καὶ αἱ περὶ τὰ ἄλλα θεραπέαι εἰσιν, τοιαύτην καὶ περὶ θεοῦ ...; ἦ γάρ; Socrates' first question invites his interlocutor to say 'No, I would not say that'; the second, after a brief pause, expresses his realization that a retraction is not forthcoming ('You would say so?'). For οὐ γάρ που in Plato, cf. *Euthyphr.* 2a3–4, 4b5, 13a2, 14e2, etc.

as an elevated mannerism.⁴⁸ This, in turn, may account for its susceptibility to being misunderstood;⁴⁹ a susceptibility amply attested in various stages of the textual history of the Euripidean corpus.⁵⁰

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APPENDIX

Whereas scholars, following Denniston, have often assumed that the collocations οὐ τί πού, οὐ πού and ἦ πού cannot be rigidly distinguished from one another, I have proposed sharp differentiations between οὐ τί πού and οὐ πού, and between οὐ πού and ἦ πού. In the following five sections I briefly review the examples collected by Denniston (and one or two more), in so far as they have not been discussed in the main text.

A. οὐ τί πού

Unlike οὐ πού, οὐ τί πού always expresses bewilderment – genuine or pretended – caused by the incompatibility of newly acquired information with previously held beliefs:

Pind. *Pyth.* 4.87: On Jason's first appearance in Iolcus, the crowd asks: οὐ τί πού οὗτος Ἀπόλλων; ('Surely he can't be Apollo?'). The crowd's inference that the stranger must be a god is conventional (cf. Braswell on *Pyth.* 4.87–92) and not far-fetched (in *Pyth.* 4.80–3 Pindar emphasizes Jason's likeness to Apollo); but it is incompatible with their knowledge that one does not normally encounter divinities in the marketplace.

***Carm. conviv.* 894 PMG:** In the opening line Page is probably right in reading φίλαθ' Ἀρμόδι', οὐ τί πώ τέθνηκας κτλ., against οὐ τί πού in the majority of the testimonia (otherwise H. Fabbro, *Carmina Convivalia Attica* [Rome, 1995], 150): the fact that Harmodius is dead can hardly be considered a matter of surprise for the speaker.

Pl. *Th.* 146a: With heavy irony Socrates professes surprise that, apparently, his φιλολογία has caused his interlocutors to fall silent, while all he intended to do was get a conversation going: τί σιγάτε; οὐ τί πού ... ἐγὼ ὑπὸ φιλολογίας ἀγροικίζομαι, προθυμούμενος ἡμᾶς ποιῆσαι διαλέγεσθαι ... ; ('Why do you fall silent? Surely I have not been rude in my eagerness for conversation ...?').

Soph. *Phil.* 1233: When it becomes clear that Neoptolemus is going to hand over the bow to Philoctetes, Odysseus asks: ὦ Ζεῦ, τί λέξεις; οὐ τί πού δοῦναι νοεῖς; The οὐ τί πού question indicates that in the light of their previous working relationship, Odysseus cannot believe that Neoptolemus is not going to deliver.

Eur. *HF* 965–7: After his cold-blooded slaying of Lycus, Heracles abruptly changes his demeanour: Amphitryon asks, τί πασχεις; τίς ὁ τρόπος ξενώσεως | τῇδ'; οὐ τί πού

⁴⁸ By contrast, Kannicht, loc. cit. (n. 8) and Stevens (n. 16), 24 assume that οὐ πού is a colloquialism.

⁴⁹ Like Euripidean οὐ πού, the Sophoclean collocation also appears to have been misunderstood at some stage in the transmission. At Soph. *El.* 1108, a number of manuscripts read ἦ δὴ ποθ' for οὐ δὴ ποθ' – probably on the same reflex that caused some witnesses to the text of Euripides to turn οὐ πού into ἦ πού (§ 5 above) – and at Soph. *El.* 1180 the scholiast appears to have read τί δὴ ποτε for οὐ δὴ ποτε.

⁵⁰ I am indebted to Albert Rijksbaron, Gerry Wakker and the other participants of the 6th International Colloquium on Ancient Greek Linguistics, to CQ's referee and to my ἡδιστος συνεργός for helping to improve this paper, which was written in the context of the NWO-funded project 'The Limits of Language' (360–30–090).

φόνος σ' ἐβάκχευσεν; ('... surely the killing has not driven you out of your mind ...?'). οὐ τί που indicates that the speaker is unable to reconcile his son's former clear-headedness with his present behaviour.

Eur. Hel. 475: When Menelaus is told by the doorkeeper that Helen is at this moment in Theoclymenus' palace, he fails to assimilate this information to his belief that Helen is safely tucked away in a cave by the sea, and asks πότε; οὐ τί που λελήσμεθ' ἐξ ἄντρων λέχος; ('When was she here? Surely we left her ...?'). Menelaus' puzzlement over this incongruity occupies him over the next 40 lines.

Eur. Hel. 541–2: Helen discerns the dishevelled Menelaus, and exclaims ἔα, τίς οὗτος; οὐ τί που κρυπτεύομαι | Πρωτέως ἀσέπτου παιδὸς ἐκ βουλευμάτων; ('... Wasn't I hidden from view ...?'). Her certainty that at Proteus' tomb she is safe from Theoclymenus' plottings is controverted by the appearance of her as yet unrecognized husband.

Eur. Or. 1510: As in Pl. *Tht.* 146a (quoted above), the tone here is ironical, but the question expresses genuine puzzlement: when the fugitive Phrygian claims that he 'values his life', the homicidal Orestes answers that he regards this claim as incompatible with the fact that the Phrygian has just betrayed the conspiracy to Menelaus and the Argives: οὐ τί που κρανγὴν ἔθηκας Μενέλεω βοηδρομεῖν; ('So you mean it *wasn't* you who called for help, then ...?').

Ar. Ran. 522–7: When Xanthias suddenly addresses Dionysus with 'Hey, slave!', his wronged master pretends not to understand – only to be mercilessly parodied by his interlocutor: (Di.) οὐ τί που σπουδὴν ποεῖ, | ὅτιγ' σε παῖζων Ἡρακλέα 'νεσκεύασα; ... (Xa.) τί δ' ἐστίν; οὐ τί που μ' ἀφελέσθαι διανοεῖ | ἄδωκας αὐτός; ('Surely you don't take it seriously, when I deck you out as Heracles just for a joke?' → 'Surely you don't intend to take away from me what you have just given?').

B. οὐ τί που

οὐ τί που questions typically distil a proposition (*p*) from information that is being offered, and ask the interlocutor to disaffirm *p* – because *p* is too terrible to be believed, or because the information offered previously leaves room for doubt.

Eur. HF 1101–3: Heracles, who has just come to his senses, only to find himself among corpses and cast-off weapons, initially leaps to the conclusion that he is back in Hades, before realizing that this is not the case:⁵¹ οὐ τί που κατήλθον αὖθις εἰς Αἴδου πάλιν, | Εὐρυσθέως δίαυλον εἰς Αἴδου μολών; | ἀλλ' οὐτε Σισύφειον εἰσὼρῶ πέτρων ... ('Tell me that I am not back in Hades once more, on a second journey for Eurystheus? No, that cannot be; for I do not see Sisyphus' boulder ...'). As ἀλλά shows, the impossibility of his having returned to Hades strikes Heracles only, on closer inspection of his surroundings, at 1103–5; οὐ τί που at 1101 indicates not that he *cannot* believe he is back there (which would require an οὐ τί που question), but that the belief is *insupportable* to him, so that he appeals to Amphitryon, who is near at hand, to disabuse him.

Eur. HF 1172–7: Theseus, arriving at Thebes for the purpose of aiding Heracles against Lycus, is confronted with the sight of corpses, and concludes that he has come too late: οὐ τί που λείμμαι καὶ νεωτέρων κακῶν | ὕστερος ἀφίγμαι; The dismayed appeal to be told that this is not so is directed at Amphitryon, but before it can be

⁵¹ Here and at HF 1173 (cited below) L reads οὐπω ('never'), which does not make sense: a discourse particle is required, and οὐ τί που is printed by all modern editors. There is a textual problem at 1102 (Diggle prints οὐ τί που κατήλθον εἰς Αἴδου πάλιν | Εὐρυσθέως δίαυλον εἰς Αἴδου μολών;): on the MS reading, 1102 must mean 'having returned there on a second journey for Eurystheus' (so more or less Wilamowitz), while with Bothe's ἐξ Αἴδου we get 'after coming back from there on the return leg of Eurystheus' errand'.

answered, the sight of children's bodies causes him to realize that something other must have happened than he initially surmised (ἀλλ' ἄλλο πού τι καινὸν εὐρίσκω κακόν).

C. ἦ πού outside dialogue

Outside dialogue, the speaker's choice to qualify his/her commitment to proposition *p* with ἦ πού is not motivated by the desire to present *p* in a certain light to his/her interlocutor, but primarily marks *p*'s status vis-à-vis verifiable reality. This usage is predominant in Sophocles (six out of seven instances),⁵² whereas I count only one in ten Euripidean instances.

Soph. Phil. 1130–3: Philoctetes in a private moment addresses his stolen bow: ἦ πού ἐλευνὸν ὀράεις, φρένας εἴ τινας | ἔχεις, τὸν Ἡράκλειον | ἄθλιον ὠδε σοι | οὐκέτι χρήσομενον ('You must most likely feel pity for me ...'). The bow is not a real interlocutor, and ἦ πού appears to mark Philoctetes' awareness of this ('... assuming of course that you can feel at all'). Similarly, at **Soph. Aj. 382**, Ajax vicariously addresses Odysseus with the supposition that he will laugh at him (ἦ πού πολὺν γέλωθ' ὕφ' ἡδονῆς ἄγεις), with ἦ πού marking the speaker's recognition that his interlocutor is not really present, and that the 'dialogue' is fictive.

Soph. Aj. 621–6: The Chorus predict – with certainty (ἦ) but without pressing the point further than their limited perspective allows them to do (πού) – how Ajax' mother will react to the news of her son's tainted glory (ἦ πού ... μάτερ γόον ἥσει – 'His mother will most likely ...'). At **Aj. 850–1**, Ajax himself echoes this prediction: ἦ πού τάλαίνα τήνδ' ὅταν κλύῃ φάτιν | ἥσει μέγαν κωκυτόν. At **Aj. 1008–9**, it is Teucer's turn to predict Telamon's reaction to the news of Ajax' death (ἦ πού με Τέλαμον ... | δέξαιτ' ἂν κτλ.). At **Trach. 844–8**, the Chorus express similar, unverifiable but logically compelling, suppositions concerning Deianira's reaction to Heracles' suffering: τὰ δ' ἂπ' ἀλλόθρου | γνώμας μολόντ' | δλεθρίαισι συναλλαγαῖς | ἦ πού ὁλοὰ στένει, | ἦ πού ἄδινῶν χλωρὰν | τέγγει δακρύων ἄχραν).

Eur. Hel. 1465–8: In their farewell song, the Chorus envisage a happy ending (ἦ), but qualify their commitment to this belief (πού, optative with ἂν): ἦ πού κόρας ἂν ποταμοῦ | παρ' οἶδμα Λευκιππίδας ... ἂν λάβοι | χρόνῳ ξυνελθοῦσα χοροῖς κτλ.⁵³ they have no way of knowing for certain how things will turn out in Sparta.

D. Euripidean ἦ πού: certain instances

In the following three passages, the speaker uses ἦ πού questions in order to dominate the conversation: an οὐ πού question ('Say it isn't so ...') would be out of place.

Eur. Phoen. 378: on his first encounter with his mother, Polynices enquires after Oedipus and his sisters, and urges Jocasta to confirm that the whole family lamented his exile: ἦ πού στένουσι τλήμονες φυγὰς ἐμάς.

Eur. Bacch. 939–40: Dionysus seeks to make Pentheus recognize their changed relationship: 'You will see that you will come to regard me as your best friend (ἦ πού με τῶν σῶν πρῶτον ἡγήσῃ φίλων), once I have disabused you of your main prejudice against the Bacchantes'.

Eur. Heracl. 55–6: The Herald invites his interlocutors to confirm his negative verdict on their request for asylum (ἦ πού καθῆσθαι τήνδ' ἔδραν καλὴν δοκεῖς | πόλιν τ' ἀφίχθαι σύμμαχον κακῶς φρονῶν – i.e. 'You will agree that you are wrong to think that ...').

⁵² On *Aj.* 1229–30, cf. above n. 24. At *Aj.* 176 (*recc.* ἦ πού) and *OC* 1059 (all codd. ἦ πού, acc. Dawe), Lloyd-Jones and Wilson print ἦ πού; wrongly, I believe, but even with ἦ πού these passages conform to the observation stated above.

⁵³ λάβοι in 1466 is Pflugk's conjecture (acc. Diggle) for cod. λάβοις.

E. ἦ που or οὐ που?

In the following passages, the speaker is genuinely troubled by the proposition s/he puts forward (*p*), but the context does not decisively dictate either an *ἦ που* or an *οὐ που* question.

Eur. *El.* 235: when it is hinted that her brother has spent the previous years in exile, Electra perceives the truth (*οὐ που σπανίζων τοῦ καθ' ἡμέραν βίου*; 'Surely he doesn't go without his daily necessities?'); but is she asking for affirmation or disaffirmation of her surmise?

Eur. *Or.* 435: when Orestes claims that his life is under a threefold threat, his interlocutor asks, 'Who is the third? *ἦ που τῶν ἀπ' Αἰγίσθου φίλων*;' ('you mean, allies of Aegisthus?').⁵⁴ Paley suggested *οὐ που* ('you *don't* mean ...?'), which is not impossible: Orestes' reply (*οὐτοί μ' ὑβρίζουσι*) fits both question types.

Eur. *IA* 670: Agamemnon obscurely hints that his daughter will soon embark on a long voyage, unaccompanied by her parents; she responds, *οὐ ποῦ μ' ἐς ἄλλα δώματ' οἰκίζεις*;. On the transmitted reading, Iphigenia asks her father to disaffirm her apprehensive suggestion; with an *ἦ που* question she would demonstrate that she is thinking along with Agamemnon ('It's because you are settling me in another house, isn't it?'). Much the same goes for **Eur. *Tro.* 160–1**, where, when Hecabe observes that the Greek captains are about to convey the captive women to the ships, the Chorus ask ... *τί θέλουσ'*; *ἦ που μ' ἤδη ναυσθλώσουσιν πατρίας ἐκ γᾶς*;. In both cases, it is hard to say whether *ἦ που* or *οὐ που* would be more apposite.

⁵⁴ *τῶν ἀπ' Αἰγίσθου φίλων* 'one of Aegisthus' allies' is dubious Greek, cf. Willink ad loc.; but the general sense of the line is not in doubt, and the corruption does not seem to extend to *ἦ που*.