

### III.—The Third Stasimon of Euripides' *Helena*

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The object of this paper is to demonstrate that the third stasimon (1301–68), generally considered irrelevant, is actually an integral part of the *Helena*. The argument is summarized in the last two paragraphs.

It is generally assumed that the third stasimon of Euripides' *Helena* (1301–68) relates the story of Demeter and Kore and therefore has no connection with the plot or subject-matter of the *Helena*. I give below a summary of the ode:

The mountain-mother of the gods (ὄρεϊα μάτηρ θεῶν) rushed forth in search of her lost daughter. Loudly the Bacchic castanets (κρόταλα Βρόμια) rattled as she sped in her chariot yoked to wild beasts (θηρῶν ζυγίους σατίνας) to seek the maid. But Zeus willed otherwise.

The mother, failing to find her child, in anguish cast herself down on the peaks of Ida's nymphs (Ἰδαίαν Νυμφᾶν σκοπίας). In her grief she stopped all harvests. Men and beasts died, and no sacrifices were offered to the gods.

Thereupon Zeus, to assuage the mother's anger, sent the Graces and Muses to banish grief from the heart of Deo (Δηοῖ). Cypris seized the cymbals native to that land (χαλκοῦ αὐδὰν χθονίαν) and the drums (τύπανα βυρσοτενῇ). Then the goddess smiled and in her hand took the deep-toned flute (βαρύβρομον αὐλόν), pleased with its music.

You wedded sinfully and have angered the great mother by neglecting her sacrifices, my child. Mighty are the fawn-skin, the sacred thyrsus twined with ivy, the whirling tambourines, the streaming tresses for the revelry of Bromius, and the vigils of the goddess by moonlight (μέγα τοι δύναται νεβρῶν παμποίκιλοι στολίδες κισσοῦ τε στεφθεῖσα χλόα νάρθηκας εἰς ἱεροῦς, ῥόμβων θ' εἰλισσομένα κύκλιος ἑνοσις αἰθερία, βακχεύουσα τ' ἔθειρα Βρομίῳ καὶ παννυχίδες θεᾶς, εὐτέ νιν ὄμμασιν ἔβαλε σελάνα).<sup>1a</sup>

Decharme finds all attempts to reconcile this choral ode with the play ingenious but unconvincing, and labels it an *embolimon* in the true sense of the word.<sup>1b</sup> In a passage in the *Poetics* (18.7), Aristotle defines an *embolimon* as a choral song pertaining no more to the subject of the piece than to that of any other tragedy. He

<sup>1a</sup> Text of Paley; see below, notes 8 and 67.

<sup>1b</sup> P. Decharme, *Euripides and the Spirit of his Dramas* (transl. by James Loeb; New York, 1906) 314 ff.

adds that this practice of introducing choral interludes was begun by Agathon and was common among the later poets. At the same time he indicates his preference for the earlier practice of regarding the chorus as an integral part of the whole play, but praises Sophocles above Euripides.<sup>2</sup> From this it is reasonable to conclude that Aristotle did not regard as *embolima* those stasima which were related to the subject or plot of a tragedy, albeit tenuously. Indeed, his criticism that Sophocles was more skilful in maintaining the proper choric role than Euripides can hardly be interpreted to mean that Euripides employed *embolima* or choral odes irrelevant to his plays, though some scholars have so construed this passage. Aristotle expressly states that *embolima* were characteristic of the later poets. While indicating his preference for Sophocles' technique, he appears to name Euripides with Sophocles in contrast to these later poets.

Hartung found even this criticism of Euripides on the part of Aristotle so unjustified that he assumed the text was corrupt and suggested *ὡς παρ' Εὐριπίδῃ ἢ ὡς παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ* for the reading: *μὴ ὥσπερ Εὐριπίδῃ ἀλλ' ὥσπερ Σοφοκλεῖ*.<sup>3</sup> Actually in three of the seven of Sophocles' plays that have come down to us, there are stasima which are only slightly motivated by the dramatic situation. In this class are the stasima in the *Antigone* on the inventive spirit of man (334–375) and in honor of Bacchus (1115–1152); in *Oedipus Tyrannus* (863–910) on man's impiety and audacity. Is not the famous eulogy of Athens in the *Oedipus at Colonus* (663–719) tenuously connected with the play? It can be stated with confidence that, except for the third stasimon of the *Helena*, there are in Euripides no odes more irrelevant than those cited above from Sophocles' plays. If this third choral ode is truly irrelevant, it is the sole example in extant Greek drama of an *embolimon* in the sense in which Aristotle used the word. It is, however, difficult to believe that Euripides would have inserted one totally unrelated ode in a play in which the chorus plays so active a role.<sup>4</sup> Aristotle

<sup>2</sup> Because there is so much controversy regarding this passage in the *Poetics* (18.7), it seems best to quote the pertinent lines in full (1456a25–32): *καὶ τὸν χορὸν δὲ ἓνα δεῖ ὑπολαβεῖν τῶν ὑποκριτῶν, καὶ μόριον εἶναι τοῦ ὅλου καὶ συναγωνίζεσθαι μὴ ὥσπερ Εὐριπίδῃ ἀλλ' ὥσπερ Σοφοκλεῖ. τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς τὰ ῥέδμενα <οὐδὲν> μᾶλλον τοῦ μύθου ἢ ἄλλης τραγῳδίας ἐστίν. διὸ ἐμβόλιμα ᾄδουσιν πρῶτον ἄρξαντος Ἀγάθωνος τοῦ τοιοῦτου.*

<sup>3</sup> J. A. Hartung, *Euripides Restitutus* (Hamburg, 1843–44) 2.370.

<sup>4</sup> The chorus in the *Helena* plays an active role throughout and is intimately connected with the drama, except for the vexing third stasimon. The passage from

not only does not accuse Euripides of using *embolima* but also implies that the later poets composed all (and not merely one) of the choral odes of a play as interludes.

While Decharme is willing to accept the third stasimon of the *Helena* as the unique example of the *embolimon* and believes that all scholarly ingenuity has failed to explain its relationship to the play, I prefer to disagree, albeit cautiously, in the hope of demonstrating that this choral ode is concerned, not with the cult of Demeter and Kore, but with that of Helen and her mother Nemesis. If this can be proved, the third stasimon can be shown to have a *bona fide* connection with the *Helena*, and the unity of the play may be preserved.

A number of theories have been advanced to explain this ode, but only a few deserve consideration. Verrall's thesis is based upon his interpretation of the *Helena* as Euripides' apology to women for having slandered them in his other plays. Since Aristophanes ridiculed the *Helena* in his *Thesmophoriazusae*, Verrall assumes that the *Helena* was presented at this women's festival and that the third stasimon, though not concerned with the *Helena*, would have been suited to the occasion.<sup>5</sup>

While the ode is assumed to refer to Demeter (who is, however, mentioned by name *only* in Canter's emendation of  $\delta\eta\iota\omega$  to  $\Delta\eta\sigma\iota$  [1343]), the rites and attributes of the mother-goddess as described

164 to 254 is a *commos*, in which the chorus commiserates with Helen. The *parodos* begins at line 179. In lines 306-385, the chorus persuades Helen not to believe Teucer's report of Menelaus' death and advises her to enter the Egyptian palace and consult the prophetess Theonoe. There follows shortly an *epiparodos*, which is identical with the first stasimon (515-527) in which the chorus announces the oracle. In the second stasimon (1107-64) they sing of Helen's woes and the sufferings of the Greeks and Trojans. What Helen finds most difficult to bear is that she is unjustly considered a treacherous wife and godless woman. In addition, war is decried as a method of settling disputes. While the third stasimon (1301-68) is apparently irrelevant, I believe it can be shown to be concerned with the cult of Helen. The fourth stasimon (1451-1511) is an ode in which the chorus wishes Helen a safe return and calls upon the Dioscuri both to guide her ship and to clear their sister's honor.

<sup>5</sup> A. W. Verrall, *Essays on Four Plays of Euripides* (Cambridge, 1905) 61 ff. and "Appendix." Verrall can be summarily refuted. Aristophanes parodied in the *Thesmophoriazusae* not only the *Helena*, but the *Andromeda* and *Palamedes* of Euripides as well. Verrall's hypothesis that the *Helena* was produced privately at a Thesmophorian festival (to which the third stasimon would be relevant) seems completely unsupported by evidence; e.g. he argues that it would be necessary for the *Helena* to be produced privately before being shown in the state theater because its theme is so different from the Homeric account that people would be confused. We need only glance at Hdt. 2.112-21 and recall Stesichorus' palinode to realize Helen's apologists had no mean literary tradition.

are more appropriate to Cybele than to Demeter.<sup>6</sup> Musgrave has suggested that since the cult of Cybele had been introduced at Athens shortly before the *Helena* came out in 412 B.C., Euripides seized the opportunity to celebrate her rites.<sup>7</sup> Yet it is a bit far-fetched to assume that Euripides introduced an *embolimon*, one ode spoiling the symmetry and violating the conventional form, for this purpose.

The general critical attitude toward this stasimon has been summarized by Paley, who calls the ode beautiful in itself but unconnected with the *Helena*.<sup>8</sup> Jerram,<sup>9</sup> Pearson,<sup>10</sup> and Decharme<sup>11</sup> agree.

## I

The main obstacle to understanding this stasimon, in my opinion, has been the emendation of *δηίω* to *Δηοῖ* (1343) by Canter.<sup>12</sup> It is advisable at this point to emphasize that *Deo* is the shortened form of *Demeter*, used in poetry.<sup>13</sup> In a later edition of Canter, there is a note on the emendation which reveals that the commentator

<sup>6</sup> There can be little doubt that the rites and attributes of the mother-goddess in this ode are those of Cybele. We may glance at the key words and phrases which are enclosed within parentheses in the summary of the ode at the beginning of this paper. 'Ορεία μήτηρ θεῶν (1301-2) designates Cybele. Cf. L. R. Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford, 1907) 3.291. See also Schwenn in *RE s.v.* "Kybele" 2258 for references to Cybele as μήτηρ ὀρεία (*Phoronis*, frag. 2 Kinkel; *Soph. Philoct.* 391, *Eur. Hippol.* 143, etc.). P. Decharme, *Mythologie de la Grèce antique* (Paris, 1886) 365, refers to Cybele as "essentiellement la déesse montagnaise." As lines 1310-11 indicate (*θηρῶν ζυγίους σατίνας*), Cybele was often represented in a chariot drawn by lions. Cf. *Anth. Pal.* 6.51: Φρυγίων θρέπτειρα λεόντων; *Soph. Philoct.* 400: ταυροκτόνων λεόντων ἔφεδρος. The orgiastic nature of the worship herein described is most fitting to Cybele's cult, which was famed for its ἐνθουσιασμός. Cf. Schwenn in *RE s.v.* "Kybele" 2259-61. The cult instruments and the association of the worship with Dionysus (1308 κρόταλα Βρόμια, 1346 χαλκοῦ αἰδάν χθονίαν, 1347 τύπανα βυρσοτενῇ, 1351 βαρέβρομον αὐλόν, 1358-67 μέγα τοι δύναται . . . ὑπέρβαλε σελάνα) also call to mind Cybele's cult. Cf. Schwenn, *loc. cit.*, 2259 on drums, cymbals, castanets, and flutes as cult instruments and Decharme in *DS s.v.* "Cybelé" 1683 on the close association of the orgiastic worship of Cybele and of Dionysus. On the orgies by night (1365-7 παννυχίδες . . . σελάνα) characteristic of Cybele's worship, cf. *Eur. Troades* 1071-76.

<sup>7</sup> S. Musgrave in Beck's *Euripidis Tragoediae, Fragmenta, Epistolae* (Leipzig, 1778-88) 3.564. Cybele's cult was established at Thebes in the time of Pindar (*Pind. Pyth.* 3.77 *et seq.*). About that time it was introduced at Athens and a temple was raised in Cybele's honor, the Μητροῶν. Cf. Decharme, in *DS s.v.* "Cybelé" 1683.

<sup>8</sup> F. A. Paley, *Euripides* (London, 1874) 2.204.

<sup>9</sup> C. S. Jerram, *Helena* (Oxford, 1892) 113 f.

<sup>10</sup> A. C. Pearson, *Helena* (Cambridge, 1903) 165.

<sup>11</sup> P. Decharme, *Euripides* 315.

<sup>12</sup> G. Canter, *Euripidis Tragoediae XIX* (Antwerp, 1571) 657.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Jessen in *RE s.v.* "Deo" 227.

confused Demeter, Ceres, and the Phrygian goddess Cybele.<sup>14</sup> Since the attributes and rites of the mother-goddess in this ode are those of Cybele, and since the only mention of Demeter occurs in Canter's emendation, we may question the hitherto general acceptance of his emendation. Though it is excellent palaeographically, it has the unfortunate effect of rendering the third stasimon irrelevant. It seems best, therefore, to examine the possibility of a different emendation, which, even if palaeographically inferior, would permit reconciling the choral ode with the play.

The lines (1342-5), which Canter emended to include a reference to Demeter, appeared in both manuscripts as follows:<sup>15</sup>

ἴτε τὰν περιπαρθένω  
 δηῖω θυμωσαμένα  
 λύπαν ἐξαλλάξατ' ἀλαλᾶ.

Canter's emended text reads:<sup>16</sup>

ἴτε τὰν περὶ παρθένω  
 Διοῖ θυμωσαμένα  
 λύπαν ἐξαλλάξατ' ἀλαλᾶ.

He translates these lines thus:

Ite propter (amissam) virginem  
 Iratae Cereris  
 Moerorem eximite sonitu.

In commenting upon the emendation of *δηῖω* to *Διοῖ*, Tischer agrees with Canter, suggesting that the copyist intended to write -οῖ but wrote -ῖω instead.<sup>17</sup> Rather than explain the corruption by assuming that for ΔΗΟΙ the copyist wrote ΔΗΙΟ, which then became ΔΗΙΩ, one might propose as an alternative that the original reading was ΔΑΙΑ, meaning 'wretched' and agreeing with ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩ. The scribe, failing to realize that ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩ, which immediately precedes ΔΑΙΑ, was a feminine noun with a masculine termination, tried to make ΔΑΙΑ "agree" with ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩ, writing ΔΑΙΩ. Ulti-

<sup>14</sup> Cf. G. Canter, *Euripidis Tragoediae Quae Extant* (Geneva, 1602), "Gaspari Striblini in Euripidis Tragoedias . . . Annotationes," 191. His note on this ode reads: Festa Cereris intellegit, quae miris ceremoniis & magna solennitate olim in Phrygia celebrabantur.

<sup>15</sup> Both mss, L (Codex Laurentianus 32, 2) and P or G (Codex Abbatiae Florentinae 172), have this reading.

<sup>16</sup> G. Canter, *Euripidis Tragoediae* (1602) 595. Musgrave further emended τὰν to τᾶ. Cf. G. Murray, *Euripidis Fabulae* (Oxford, 1902-1909) 3, "*Helena*" 1342-5.

<sup>17</sup> P. Tischer, *Illustratio loci Euripidis Helenae* (Glogau, 1876) 97.

mately ΔΑΙΩ became ΔΗΙΩ. While it is true that my suggestion is inferior palaeographically, it eliminates the irrelevance of the ode and makes an explanation of the stasimon at least possible. I suggest:

ἴτε, τᾷ περὶ παρθένῳ  
δαῖτα θυμωσαμένα  
λύπαν ἐξαλλάξατ' ἀλαλᾷ.

The meaning of these lines would then be: "Go, and with loud noise remove grief from the goddess angry about her wretched daughter." Δάϊος is used in tragedy in the sense of 'wretched,' and seems appropriate here.<sup>18</sup>

As far as I know, no one has questioned the appropriateness of Canter's emendation. Farnell, for example, suggests that Euripides' association of two goddesses differing so widely in legend and ritual should not surprise us, for Euripides was given to such *θεοκρασία*.<sup>19</sup> It seems to me that Farnell's explanation borders upon rationalizing what he apparently believed to be the text. The note in Canter's edition is evidence that the commentator confused Demeter with the Phrygian mountain-goddess,<sup>20</sup> two deities "whose ritual and legend were so widely different."<sup>21</sup> To recapitulate, Cybele was referred to as the mountain-mother of the gods,<sup>22</sup> while Demeter was to the ancients always an earth-mother.<sup>23</sup> Euripides himself is explicit on the meaning of Demeter to him.

Δημήτηρ θεά,  
γῇ δ' ἔστιν, ὄνομα δ' ὀπότερον βούλει κάλει.<sup>24</sup>  
Δαμάτηρ θεά, πάντων γὰρ τροφός.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Aesch. *Pers.* 280-2: ἕως' ἄποτμον Πέρσαις δυσαιανῇ βοᾶν δάοις, ὥς πάντα παγκάκως ἔφθισαν. Cf. also Soph. *Ajax* 784: ὦ δαῖτα Τέκμησσα and Eur. *Androm.* 837.

<sup>19</sup> Farnell, *Cults* 3.31.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. note 14 above.

<sup>21</sup> Farnell, *Cults* 3.31.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Decharme in *DS s.v.* "Cybelé"; idem, *Myth. de la Grèce ant.* 365. See note 6 above.

<sup>23</sup> Γῇ μήτηρ (Δᾶ μάτηρ in Doric), as B. B. Rogers, *Thesmophoriasuzae* (London, 1904) ix, points out. Cf. Cic. *De Nat. Deor.* 2.26: Mater autem est a gerendis frugibus Ceres; a Graecis Δημήτηρ quasi Γῇ μήτηρ nominata est. Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge, 1922) 271 f., indicates that modern scholars find this etymology unsatisfactory, for Demeter was not goddess of the earth in general, but only the Grain-Mother. But some ancient writers considered Demeter an earth-mother as contrasted with the great mountain-mother of all. Cf. Eur. *Phoen.* 685; *Bacchae* 275.

<sup>24</sup> *Bacchae* 275.

<sup>25</sup> *Phoenissae* 685.

Moreover, Demeter was worshipped by austere and dignified rites, while the ritual described in this chorus (orgiastic dancing in the moonlight, accompanied by castanets, tambourines, cymbals, and flutes) immediately calls to mind Cybele.<sup>26</sup> We may glance at the following lines from the *Bacchae* (76-82):

ἐν ὄρεσι βακχεύων  
 ὁσίοις καθαρμοῖσιν·  
 τὰ τε ματρός μεγάλας ὄρ-  
 για Κυβέλας θεμιτεύων  
 ἀνὰ θύρσον τε τινάσσων  
 κισσῶ τε στεφανωθείς  
 Διόνυσον θεραπεύει.

The resemblance of these lines to our chorus is marked.

The usual sequel to the myth of Demeter, the restoration of the daughter and the bargain with Pluto, is not included. Another noteworthy feature of this stasimon is that neither the mother, nor the daughter, nor the abductor is named (unless we accept Canter's emendation *Δηοῖ*). There seem to be good reasons for assuming that this chorus does *not* refer to Demeter and therefore for rejecting Canter's emendation. It is, of course, possible that Euripides originally wrote *Δηοῖ* and confounded the two vegetation goddesses. But, again, we would have to explain why Euripides violated the dramatic proprieties to the extent of inserting an irrelevant ode in the middle of a play, always bearing in mind that Aristotle does not accuse him of using *embolima*.

## II

Assuming, then, that the ode does not concern Demeter and Kore, we must ask to whom it does refer and how it is connected with the *Helena*. The most satisfactory explanation is to see in it a version of a myth pertaining to the cult of Helen. It is frequently overlooked that Helen was not originally an epic heroine but a pre-Greek vegetation-goddess, whose peculiarity it was to be carried off. It is significant that both Helen and Kore-Persephone were abducted by Theseus and Peirithous. Helen was also carried off by Paris, and Kore by Pluto. Nilsson has emphasized the parallel between Helen and Kore, suggesting that Helen was

<sup>26</sup> Cf. note 6 above.

replaced by Kore in the sacred hieratic myth of the rape of a vegetation-goddess.<sup>27</sup> Helen, however, retained her divine character in Sparta even in historical times.<sup>28</sup> Since the deification of Helen is mentioned by the Dioscuri at the end of the play (1666–9), Euripides must have had her role as a goddess in mind when he wrote the play; and presumably when he composed this choral ode concerning the theft of a vegetation-goddess, he was referring to Helen's cult. Additional support for this argument may be found in the very version of the myth of Helen which Euripides employs in the *Helena*; namely, that Helen was transported to Egypt while her *εἰδωλον* went to Troy. This version, which contradicts the celebrated account of Homer and occupies but a subordinate place in mythology, was motivated by the desire of the goddess Helen's worshippers to clear her of any responsibility for the Trojan War and uphold her moral character.

Stesichorus is said to have followed Homer's account of Helen. Struck blind by the goddess, he regained his sight by writing a recantation of this false legend. Plato even contrasts the blinded Homer with Stesichorus, who was able to regain his sight by retracting his slander of Helen.<sup>29</sup> Herodotus offers the fullest account (2.112–21). He believed the temple of the Stranger Aphrodite at Memphis to be Helen's. The Egyptian priests told him that Paris had brought the abducted Helen to Egypt, that Paris' servants had told the Egyptian king, Proteus, how Paris had violated Menelaus' hospitality, and that Proteus had decided to keep Helen safe until Menelaus could come for her. Herodotus adds that he believes Homer knew this version, but found the other better suited to epic poetry. Troy, however, was sacked because the Greeks did not believe Paris when he said Helen was in Egypt.

Euripides seems to have had this myth in mind over a period of several years, for in lines 1280 *et seq.* of the *Electra* (413 B.C.) the Dioscuri refer to the Stesichorean legend that Helen did not go to Troy but to Egypt, while in 412 Euripides based the entire *Helena* on this version and mentioned her deification in lines 1666–9.

<sup>27</sup> M. P. Nilsson, *The Mycenaean Origin of Greek Mythology* (Berkeley, 1932) 75 f., 170 f.; idem, *Homer and Mycenae* (London, 1933) 252 ff.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. (among other references) Hdt. 6.61; Isocr. *Hel.* 63; Theocr. 18.42–8; Paus. 3.15.3, 19.9.

<sup>29</sup> Plato, *Phaedr.* 243A, *Rep.* 586BC; cf. also Isocr. *Hel.* 64; Dio Chrysos. *Orat.* 11.40–41; *Vit. Apollon. Tyan.* 4.16; Eustath. *ad. Il.* 397.40.



Again in the *Orestes* (408 B.C.), Apollo explains (1637 *et seq.*) that Helen has been made immortal like her brothers Castor and Polydeuces.

The plot of the *Helena* is based on a combination of the account of Herodotus and the poem of Stesichorus. Certain writers became apologists for Helen because her pre-Greek character as goddess survived even in historical times. Her cult was celebrated at Therapne, near Sparta. Her sanctuary there, the Menelaion, is mentioned by Pausanias (3.15.3). A festival, the *Heleneia*, was celebrated in her honor, but no details are known.<sup>30</sup> Another festival, the 'Ελενηφόρια, is mentioned by Pollux.<sup>31</sup> A plant called the ἐλένειον is further proof of her divinity and connection with a vegetation cult, just as ὕακινθος is both a god and a flower.<sup>32</sup> Herodotus (6.61) describes Helen as a goddess who was able to transform an ugly child into a beauty. Isocrates is most emphatic in stating that Helen was worshipped by the Spartans, not as a heroine, but as a goddess.<sup>33</sup> And her power to blind Stesichorus for slander and restore his sight when he made amends also testifies to her divinity.

Jane Harrison has pointed out that the rape of Helen was a popular subject in archaic art, represented not only on vases but also on the throne of Apollo at Amyclae.<sup>34</sup> "Helen had not only a sanctuary and a tree, but a very ancient image," writes Miss Harrison.<sup>35</sup> She describes the scene on a lekythos<sup>36</sup> of the seventh century B.C., showing a large female figure in the center. At the right two men advance upon her (Theseus and Peirithous) and at the left are the two horsemen Castor and Polydeuces. Miss Harrison continues:

"It is important to note that Helen is here more image than

<sup>30</sup> Cf. M. P. Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion* (Lund, 1927) 457.

<sup>31</sup> Pollux 10.191: ἔστι δὲ καὶ 'Ελένη πλέκτον ἀγγείον σπάρτων, τὰ χεῖλη οἰσύνων, ἐν ᾧ φέρουσιν ἱερὰ ἄρρητα τοῖς 'Ελενηφόροις. Cf. Nilsson, *Myc. Orig. Greek Myth.* 73 and note; idem, *Min.-Myc. Relig. and Survival*, 458.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Nilsson, *Min.-Myc. Relig. and Survival*, 458; idem, *Myc. Orig. Greek Myth.* 76. Hyacinthus was an old vegetation god, "killed" and superseded by Apollo, with whose cult he is concerned.

<sup>33</sup> Isocr. *Hel.* 62: . . . ('Ελένη) καὶ (Μενέλαον) θεὸν ἀντὶ θνητοῦ ποιήσασα σύνουκον αὐτῇ καὶ παρέδρον εἰς ἅπαντα τὸν αἰῶνα κατεστήσατο. *Ibid.* 63: ἔτι γὰρ καὶ νῦν ἐν Θεράπναις . . . θυσίας αὐτοῖς ἀγίας καὶ πατρίας ἀποτελοῦσιν οὐχ ὥς ἤρωςιν ἀλλ' ὥς θεοῖς ἀμφοτέροις οὖσιν.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Paus. 3.18.15.

<sup>35</sup> J. Harrison, *Prolegomena* 323.

<sup>36</sup> Published by M. L. Couve in *RA* 32 (1898) 213, Figs. 1, 2.

living woman, and since the discovery of the early image of the Mycenaean goddess with uplifted hands, it will be seen that the gesture is hieratic rather than human. This early seventh century document suggests that the rape of Helen was originally the rape of a *xoanon* from a sanctuary rather than of a wife from her husband."<sup>37</sup>

This supposition that Helen was originally an abducted vegetation-goddess has since been considerably strengthened. A Minoan sacred myth told of the rape of the goddess of vegetation by the god of wealth. There were several versions of this motif. We know of the rape of Helen, of Ariadne, and of Kore-Persephone, all by Theseus.<sup>38</sup> There is a decided parallel between the rape of Helen and of Kore, if we remember that Helen too was originally a vegetation-goddess. As Nilsson has said:

"In the myth of Theseus there is an apparent doublet: he and his friend Peirithous try to carry off Persephone, who is identified with Kore. This may be better understood if there was a reminiscence that Helen was originally akin to Kore."<sup>39</sup>

Nilsson goes on to explain that the invading Greeks, attributing the cause of the Trojan War to the theft of a beautiful woman, called this woman Helen, the name of the goddess whose cult was declining and who was known to have been carried off. Thus a vegetation myth was secularized by the Greeks, who did not understand its religious significance.<sup>40</sup> It is, furthermore, characteristic of Laconian mythology that old gods tended to become heroes rather than vice-versa. Helen apparently was replaced in cult legend by Kore, who was not drawn into heroic mythology.<sup>41</sup> Helen, however, remained Queen of Sparta, where she was most venerated, and was eventually carried off by an Asiatic prince of the Trojan cycle.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>37</sup> J. Harrison, *Prolegomena* 323.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Nilsson, *Homer and Mycenae* 252 ff.

<sup>39</sup> Idem, *Myc. Orig. Greek Myth.* 75, 170 f.

<sup>40</sup> Idem, *ibid.* 73, 75-6, 170-171.

<sup>41</sup> It is not known exactly how and when Kore entered the legend of Demeter. Farnell, *Cults* 3.116 f., believes that Pausanias' account of Demeter's worship (2.35.4-9) indicates that in the oldest stratum of the local worship the earth-goddess was still a single person. Furthermore, her relation to the god of the underworld is that of sister, not wife. Again, in the Temple of Demeter Eleusinia in South Laconia, Kore had no shrine, but was brought from time to time from nearby Helos (Paus. 3.20.6-7).

<sup>42</sup> It is worth while to include in a note several instances of a sacred myth told with variations in name and plot. There are several parallels in the myths of Helen

Helen was connected with a tree-cult.<sup>43</sup> Pausanias mentions her sanctuary at Rhodes, where the cult of Helen Dendritis was celebrated (3.19.10). He recounts an aetiological myth in which Helen is said to have fled to Rhodes after Menelaus' death. There Polyxo had her hanged on a tree. Theocritus' epithalamium for the marriage of Helen and Menelaus sheds some light on Helen's cult.<sup>44</sup> Helen's tree-cult, her features in common with Ariadne, and her temple at Therapne on a Mycenaean site are all evidence that the Minoan tree-cult survived in her.

Helen was portrayed as a goddess not only in archaic art but on Spartan reliefs of the second century B.C. An image of Helen is shown standing between the Dioscuri, in which she is represented as a stiff *xoanon*.<sup>45</sup> Nilsson has suggested that the fillets hanging from her wrists are like those hanging from the hands of the image of Hera on Samian coins.<sup>46</sup>

I can think of no better summary than the following quotation from Nilsson:

"We found reason to assume that the rape of Ariadne and the rape of Helen are secularized forms of a Minoan hieratic myth, the carrying off of the vegetation goddess, and are identical in origin with the carrying off of Kore by Pluto."<sup>47</sup>

and Ariadne. Both were Mycenaean goddesses, both were raped by Theseus, and both (according to one version) were hanged on trees — indicating a connection with a vegetation cult. Cf. Nilsson, *Min.-Myc. Relig. and Survival* 454, 456. Helen's temple at Therapne was in existence in the Mycenaean age. Cf. *Ann. Brit. School Athens* 15 (1908) 108 ff. Another example is that of the Minoan sacred myth of the Divine Child born of Earth but not reared by its mother. It is told of Zeus (in Crete only), Ploutos (Eleusis), Erichthonius, Dionysus, and Hyacinthus. Cf. Nilsson, *Min.-Myc. Relig. and Survival*, "The Divine Child." Again there is the myth of the mother goddess and male consort, told of Cybele and Attis, Ishtar and Tammuz, and Aphrodite and Adonis. Just as the vegetation withers when Demeter is deprived of Kore, so it does when Ishtar goes down to the underworld to seek her love. These examples illustrate how the same myth may be told with variations in plot and names.

<sup>43</sup> Kore, too, interestingly enough, was a divinity of trees. Cf. Firm. Mat. *De Error.* 27: In Proserpinae sacris caesa arbor in effigiem formamque virginis componitur, et cum intra civitatem fuerit inlata, quadraginta noctibus plangitur, quadragesima vero nocte comburitur.

<sup>44</sup> Theocr. 18.42-8. Cf. Kaibel, in *Hermes* 27 (1892) 249-259, who compares the tree-goddess Helen to the tree-god Dionysus. Cf. also Nilsson, *Min.-Myc. Relig. and Survival* 457.

<sup>45</sup> M. N. Tod and Á. J. B. Wace, *A Catalogue of the Sparta Museum* (Oxford, 1906) 158, Nos. 201-3, Figs. 38, 39.

<sup>46</sup> B. V. Head, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Ionia* (London, 1892), Pls. xxxvi, 5; xxxvii, 1, 2, 6; xxxviii, 1, 2.

<sup>47</sup> Nilsson, *Myc. Orig. Greek Myth.* 185.

## III

But it may be asked, if Helen can fill the role of the abducted daughter in the ode, who was the mother? Though it may seem surprising at first, Nemesis can be shown to qualify. We usually think of Nemesis in her later role of an abstract personification, not realizing that she was a vegetation goddess, worshipped especially at Rhamnus (near Athens) and at Smyrna.<sup>48</sup>

In mythology, Helen is described as the daughter of Nemesis<sup>49</sup> or Leda.<sup>50</sup> The author of the *Cypria* is the first to tell how Zeus overpowered Nemesis in the form of a swan. Nemesis then gave birth to the egg, from which Helen sprang.<sup>51</sup> This version formed the plot of a comedy of Cratinus. In his *Nemesis*, Hermes took the egg to Sparta, ordering Leda to care for it.<sup>52</sup> This is corroborated by the account of Pausanias who describes the sculpture in the temple of Nemesis at Rhamnus (1.33.2 and 7). On the base of the cult statue was a scene showing Leda, the foster-mother, leading Helen to Nemesis. This cult statue at Rhamnus (by either Phidias or Agoracritus) is a vivid witness to the reality of the cult. In one hand she held a spray of the apple tree, symbolic of Aphrodite, while on her head was a crown ornamented by stags, sacred to Artemis. Farnell believes that Nemesis was a primitive goddess of Rhamnus, who bore the title "Nemesis." She may have been a form of Artemis Aphrodite.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Paus. 1.33.2 and 7, 9.35.6. Cf. H. Herter in *RE* s.v. "Nemesis."

<sup>49</sup> *Cypria*, frag. 6 (Kinkel); Isocr. *Hel.* 59; Eratosth. *Cataster.* 25, etc.

<sup>50</sup> *Il.* 3.238. Helen here says that she has the same mother as Castor and Polydeuces. Cf. Eur. *Helena* 19.

<sup>51</sup> It is not clear from the verses in *Cypria*, frag. 6, in what relationship Leda stood to Helen, but Nemesis is clearly the mother.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Eratosth. *Cataster.* 25 and Cratinus *ap.* Athenaeus 9, 373E (= *CAF* 1.108 Kock). Cf. also for this version Lycophron, *Alexandra* 88 (and Schol.), Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.7. The egg was said to be in the temple of Hilaëira and Phoebe (the Leucippidae) by Pausanias (3.16.1-2). Cf. Farnell, *Cults* 2.675: "In the legend told by Hyginus (*Fab.* 197), the egg that fell from heaven was hatched by the dove, and from this Aphrodite . . . and the divinities of Syria were born. The egg became an emblem of the Semitic goddess, but never . . . in Greece; but this Oriental fable about the birth of the goddess from the egg plays its part, not only in the widespread myth of Helen's birth from Nemesis or Leda, but also in Laconian worship, as Pausanias speaks of the sacred egg in the temple of Hilaëira and Phoebe, at Sparta; and Helen is probably one of the many 'doubles' of Aphrodite."

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Farnell, *Cults* 2.488 ff. He believes Nemesis was a goddess of birth and death, with power in the underworld, like Aphrodite. In *CIA* 3.289, Nemesis is called "Ourania," the epithet of Aphrodite (*ἑλέως Οὐρανίας Νεμετέως*). She may also have been an ancient Artemis, akin to the Brauronian. Then the epithet *Nemesis* was

It was at Rhamnus that Zeus overpowered Nemesis, according to the legend. She must have been a real goddess, not merely a personification of retribution. The *Nemesia*, an Athenian festival of the dead, was consecrated to her.<sup>54</sup> She was the mother of Helen Aphrodite, a goddess of birth and death, and had deep roots in local worship.

Pausanias also describes the temple of Nemesis at Smyrna. When the city was rebuilt, in the time of Alexander the Great, a second goddess, also named Nemesis, was added. But in the earlier period there was but one (Paus. 7.5.3). According to Pausanias, in Nemesis' new temple, archaic statues of the Charites by the sculptor Boupalus were placed above Nemesis' head (9.35.6). The Charites, who were represented as Nemesis' attendants in her temple, it will be recalled were sent by Zeus in our chorus to comfort the mother-goddess.

The plane-tree was consecrated to her, as to Helen. Nemesis was represented as drawn in a chariot by griffins, animals of Oriental cult.<sup>55</sup> The mother-goddess in the third stasimon is described as drawn by *θηρῶν*. An Attic inscription dating from the third century B.C. suggests that Nemesis may have been associated with Dionysus in cult.<sup>56</sup>

But can Nemesis, goddess of vegetation and mother of Helen, be identified with the great mother of the gods, whose rites and attributes are described in this chorus? I think she can. Nemesis was often identified with Adrasteia, and Adrasteia was a cult name of Cybele.<sup>57</sup> We first know of the identification of Nemesis and Adrasteia towards the end of the fifth century B.C., from Antimachus, the epic poet.<sup>58</sup> In the drama of the fifth century, in

detached and worshipped. Artemidorus (*Oneir.* 2.37) applied Artemis' epithet 'Αριστοβούλη to Nemesis, and Solinus actually says that the Rhamnusian statue is one of Diana (*Coll. rer. Memorab.* 7.26: Rhamne quoque in qua . . . Phidiacae signum Dianae). Farnell, *Cults* 2.495, suggests that just as Ge became Ge Themis and ultimately Themis alone, so perhaps Artemis became Artemis Nemesis and ultimately Nemesis.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Farnell, *Cults* 2.490. See Demosth. 41 (Πρὸς Σπουδ.) 11: εἰσενεγκούσης τῆς ἐμῆς γυναίκος εἰς τὰ νεμέσεια τῷ πατρὶ μῶν ἀργυρίου. Cf. also Soph. *El.* 792: "Ἄκουε, Νέμεσι τοῦ θανάτου ἀρτίως. I. Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca* (1814-21) 282.32: Νεμέσια πανηγυρίς τις ἐπὶ τοῖς νεκροῖς ἀγομένη, ἐπεὶ ἡ Νέμεσις ἐπὶ τῶν ἀποθανόντων τέτακται.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Farnell, *Cults* 2.493; B. V. Head, *Historia Numorum* (Oxford, 1911) 510.

<sup>56</sup> Farnell, *Cults* 2.493. Cf. *CIG* 3161 (Smyrna, third century B.C.): ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ, τὰς Νεμέσεις Μελίτων ἀνέθηκε θεῷ Βρησεῖ Διονύσω.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Farnell, *Cults* 2.499 ff.

<sup>58</sup> Antimachus *ap.* Strabo 13.12, 588: 'Ἀντίμαχος δ' οὕτω φησὶν· ἔστι δὲ τις Νέμεσις μεγάλη θεός, ἣ τὰδε πάντα πρὸς μακαρῶν ἔλαχεν· βωμόν δὲ οἱ εἴσατο πρῶτος Ἀδραστος,

New Comedy, in the Anthology, and in Lucian, they are not easily distinguished from one another. Callimachus, referring to Helen's parentage, calls her Ἑλένη Ῥαμνουσίδη (*Hymn* 3.232); while Athenagoras refers to Helen as τὴν Ἑλένην Ἀδράστειαν, by which he means (according to Otto) Helen, daughter of Nemesis.<sup>59</sup>

Adrasteia was originally independent of Nemesis. Her cult was celebrated especially at Priapus, Cyzicus, and the Troad, where Cybele's cult was strongest. In a fragment of the *Phoronis*, she, described as a mountain-goddess attended by the Idaean Dactyli (not unlike the goddess in the third stasimon), can hardly be distinguished from Cybele.<sup>60</sup> Other writers, particularly the Orphics, upheld her close relationship to Cybele.<sup>61</sup> She was worshipped at Athens as early as the Peloponnesian War, probably in connection with Cybele and Bendis.<sup>62</sup> It is tempting to find a possible syncretism between Nemesis-Adrasteia and Cybele-Adrasteia, to reconcile the mother of Helen and the mountain-goddess. We can readily agree with Posnansky: "dass diese Göttinnen, Nemesis, Adrasteia, Artemis, und Kybele, nie hätten in diese nahen Beziehungen zu einander treten können, wenn sie nichts Verwandtes in ihrem Wesen gehabt haben."<sup>63</sup>

In the period of religious syncretism, Nemesis of Rhamnus was considered one of the manifestations of the Great Mother. Both Apuleius and Lucian so recognized her.<sup>64</sup> But in earlier times as

ποταμοῖο παρὰ ῥοὴν Αἰσῆποιο ἔνθα τετίμηται τε καὶ Ἀδρήσθεια καλεῖται. Cf. also Harpocration, s.v. Ἀδράστειαν: οἱ μὲν τὴν αὐτὴν λέγουσι τῇ Νεμέσει.

<sup>59</sup> For Athenagoras, cf. Jülicher in *RE* s.v. "Athenagoras" 2021. In the first chapter of his *Supplicatio*, addressed to M. Aurelius and Commodus in 177 A.D., he refers to Helen as τὴν Ἑλένην Ἀδράστειαν. Otto's interpretation is cited by Bethe in *RE* s.v. "Helene" 2825 f.

<sup>60</sup> Schol. Ap. Rhod. 1.1129 (frag. *Phoronis*): ἔνθα γόντες Ἰδαῖοι Φρύγες ἄνδρες ὀρέστεροι οἰκί' ἔναιον, Κέλμυς Δαμναμενέως τε μέγας καὶ ὑπέρβιος Ἀκμων, Εὐπάλαμοι θεράποντες ὀρείης Ἀδραστείας. Cf. also Strabo 588: ἐκαλεῖτο δ' ἡ χώρα αὕτη Ἀδράσθεια καὶ Ἀδραστείας πεδῖον . . . φησὶ δὲ Καλλισθένης ὑπὸ Ἀδράστου βασιλέως, ὃς πρῶτος Νεμέσεως ἱερὸν ἰδρύσατο καλεῖσθαι Ἀδράστειαν. See also Aesch. *Niob.* frag. 155: Βερέκυντα χώρον ἐνθ' Ἀδραστείας ἔδος; Strabo 575 (near Cyzicus): τὸ ἀντικείμενον ὄρος δὲ καλοῦσιν Ἀδραστείας. Cf. Charax in *FHG* 3.637, frag. 2 (Müller): ἔστι δὲ καὶ Τρωάδος Ἀδράσθεια τόπος ἀπὸ Ἀδραστείας θνηατρὸς Μελίσσου τοῦ Ἰδης.

<sup>61</sup> Procl. *Theol. Plat.* 4.16, 206: παρ' Ὀρφεί καὶ φρουρεῖν (Ἀδράσθεια) τὸν ὄλον δημιουργὸν καὶ χάλκεα ῥόπτρα λαβοῦσα καὶ τύμπανον αἰγῆκης.

<sup>62</sup> *CIA* 1.210: Ἀδρ[αστείας] καὶ Βε[νδίδος] ἐγκυκλ[ί]ου καρποῦ ἐκ [τῶν] ἱερῶν.

<sup>63</sup> H. Posnansky, *Nemesis und Adrasteia* (Breslau, 1890) 26.

<sup>64</sup> Apul. *Metam.* 11.4: Inde primigenii Phryges Pessinuntiam deum matrem, hinc Autochthones Attici Cecropiam Minervam, illinc fluctuantes Cyprii Paphiam Venerem, Cretes sagittiferi Dictynnam Dianam, Siculi trilingues Stygiam Proserpinam, Eleusini vetustam deam Cererem, Junonem alii, Bellonam alii, Hecatom isti, Rhamnusiam illi

well, Nemesis was styled *μεγάλη θεός*.<sup>65</sup> An inscription testifies to her identification with the mother of the gods.<sup>66</sup> In an Orphic hymn (No. 61) Nemesis is called *βασίλεια μεγίστη*.

Nemesis-Adrasteia can more easily be associated with Cybele-Adrasteia at this period, I believe, than Demeter with Cybele. The attributes of the mother-goddess of this choral ode fit both Adrasteia and Nemesis, but not Demeter. Since the rites of Cybele had been but shortly before introduced at Athens, Euripides may have been interested in the relationship between the Rhamnusian deity, mother of Helen, and Adrasteia, who was so closely associated with Cybele. He was certainly interested in Helen as a goddess, and presumably in her cult. We must remember that he knew many more myths than we and that he had access to legends now obscure.

#### IV

It seems plausible to conclude that the third stasimon pertains to the cult of Helen. The alternative lies in assuming that this choral ode is irrelevant. It is surely illogical, however, to find an *embolimon* in a play in which the chorus has so active a part. There is no extant play in which all the choral odes are irrelevant. There is no other extant play in which any ode is completely irrelevant. We may repeat that Aristotle does not say that Euripides used *embolima*, but merely indicates his preference for Sophocles' manner of handling the choric role. The most satisfactory solution, therefore, lies in finding the choral ode relevant to the *Helena*, as I have indicated above.<sup>67</sup>

My argument may be summarized as follows: (1) the third stasimon does not refer to Demeter and Kore; (2) the emendation *Δηοί* by Canter can be rejected; (3) Helen was originally an abducted

. . . appellant. Cf. Lucian, *De Dea Syria* 32: 'Ἡ δὲ Ἥρη σκοπέοντί σοι πολυειδέα μορφήν ἐκφάνκει· καὶ τὰ μὲν ξύμπαντα ἀτρεκέι λόγῳ Ἥρη ἐστίν· ἔχει δὲ τι καὶ Ἀθηναίης καὶ Ἀφροδίτης καὶ Σεληναίης καὶ Ῥέης καὶ Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ Νεμέσιος καὶ Μοιρέων.

<sup>65</sup> Antimachus *ap.* Strabo, 588. Cf. also *CIG* 393, 4683d, etc.

<sup>66</sup> *CIL* 6.532: Μεγάλη Νέμεσις ἡ βασιλεύουσα τοῦ κόσμου[ου].

<sup>67</sup> There is one other small problem; namely, the genuineness of verses 1352-7. The passage seems hopelessly corrupt. It cannot refer to Helen, for the play explains that she did not *wed* Paris or go willingly with him. Moreover, she never reached Troy. G. Hermann (*Euripidis Tragoediae* [Leipzig, 1837] vol. II part 1, 136 and note) is probably correct in saying that actors probably changed it to make it applicable to Helen; not, however, the Helen of this play, but the Helen of the epic.

vegetation-goddess and was worshipped as a goddess in historical times; (4) her mother was Nemesis, who can be identified with Cybele through Adrasteia; (5) the stasimon is then relevant, for it is suitable to the Stesichorean version of Helen's myth on which this play is based, and to the divine role of Helen which Euripides had in mind when he wrote the *Helena*. Thus the unity of the play may be preserved.