

THE MUTE ANDROMACHE

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The great Shakespearian scholar, Granville-Barker, once remarked: "I remember a most intelligent reader of a modern play missing the whole point of a scene through which the chief character was to sit conspicuously and eloquently silent." With Euripides' *Andromache* we have a directly similar situation. By insufficiently visualizing the stage action, even those critics who have perceived the presence of Andromache throughout the final scene have missed the point.¹

My purpose is to discuss three related aspects of the play essential to its interpretation: first, the controversial question of Andromache's and Molossos' presence as *kôpha prosôpa* throughout the final 240 lines of the play; second, Peleus' stage action with regard to Andromache and Molossos; third, the epiphany of Thetis in the light of one and two above. I should state at the outset that I agree with Wilamowitz, and others, that stage directions are embedded in the text. This is not peculiar to Greek tragedy, but appears to be typical of drama composed for a stark stage, as in Elizabethan or medieval French drama where word and gesture are expressly designed to augment one another.²

¹ An earlier form of this paper was presented to the American Philological Association (New Orleans 1980). A more extensive treatment of the subject under discussion here can be found in the second section of my doctoral dissertation, *Euripides' Andromache: A Study in Theatrical Idea and Visual Meaning* (Yale University 1983).

² This appears to be typical of theaters in which the playwright is not only a practical man of the theater, but his own director as well. The frequency of metrical change or audible heightening of tone, just before or at the moment some significant or emblematic stage action takes place, makes the augmentative relationship of word and gesture on the Greek stage almost a dramatic fact. One could almost say axiomatically (as Oliver Taplin has already done, cf. *Greek Tragedy in Action* [California 1978] 17; cf. also Wilamowitz, *ed. maj.* xxxiv: "*acerrime contendo, e verbis poetarum satis certe colligi actionem . . .*") that if a stage action is significant, attention will be drawn to it by the words. This is all the more compelling if one takes into account the emblematic significance of not only action, but physical position, and even posture on the Greek stage. "Stage directions" is something of a misnomer. A "compositional integrity of word and gesture" might be more apt. Compare Taplin's discussion of the Greek dramatist's relationship to his stage in *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford 1977) 12-39, esp. 28-39: "I do not know of a single stage action in Greek tragedy which is essential to the play and yet has to be assumed without

The presence of the *kôpha prosôpa* in this play has exercised scholars since 1925 when Wilamowitz argued that the deictic pronoun at 1246, *καὶ παῖδα τόνδε* (and *τοῦδε*, 1247), indicated the stage presence of Moïssos.³ However, as Steidle pointed out, such demonstratives are often used of persons not actually present but of immediate dramatic relevance, as in this play at 967, where Orestes speaks of Neoptolemos who is in Delphi.⁴

But the matter does not rest there. At line 1041, the chorus offers consolation to an unnamed female, *σοὶ μόνα*. This reference has sparked the critical controversy over Andromache's presence: in two medieval codices we find in the text alongside this allusion the vocative *ὦ Ἑρμιόνη*.⁵ For this reason earlier editors attributed the feminine dative to Hermione.⁶ Steidle, comparing 789 in this play and *Medea* 1262, has argued that the chorus is reflecting on the previous scene and addresses the recently departed Hermione.⁷ Hermione has, however, as of this

any indication from the text" (30). Cf. also A. M. Dale, "Seen and Unseen on the Greek Stage," *Collected Papers* (Cambridge 1969) 119.

³ U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, "Lese Früchte" 194 (1925) reprinted in *Kleine Schriften* 4 (Berlin 1962) 373–84.

⁴ W. Steidle, *Studien zum Antiken Drama* (Munich 1968) 120; pages 118–31 are devoted to the *Andromache*. Cf. also Kühner-Gerth, 1.644 and H. Hunger, "Eine spieltechnische Beobachtung in Texten des Euripides," *WS* 65 (1950–51) 19–24.

⁵ The twelfth-century codex Vaticanus 909 and the thirteenth-century codex Parisinus 2712.

⁶ Hermann (Leipzig 1837), Matthiae (Leipzig 1814, Oxford 1825), Dindorf (Oxford 1832), and Paley (London 1838) followed in this century by Méridier (Paris 1956).

⁷ *Op. cit.*, 121–23. This view is most recently supported by P. D. Kovacs in his monograph on the play, *The Andromache of Euripides*, *American Classical Studies* 6 (Chico, Calif. 1980) esp. 42–43. Kovacs bases his argument on a sensible, but I think finally unconvincing, analysis of the shape of the stasimon as a whole. As he notes, the first stanzaic pair describes the miseries of Troy and the second mostly describes the sufferings of Greece. The second strophe treats the Argive royal house and the antistrophe treats the loss and mourning of the common people. The real adversative force seems to lie with the reiterated negatives, *οὐχί* (1041) and *οὐ* (1044): (following a description of Greece's sorrows) "No, not on you alone, nor (only) on your friends, have painful sorrows fallen" (1041–42). Next Greece is mentioned. Kovacs points out that the emphasis is on *νόσος*, twice repeated, and not on *Ἑλλάς*. But an allusion to Troy immediately follows (1044–46). I cannot agree that Troy and Greece are not compared here (that would seem to be the continuative force of *δέ* at 1044); and I would argue that the double negatives refer to persons excepted from the tragic circumstances described in the preceding lines of the antistrophe (i.e. Andromache and friends), and that the following mention of Greece is meant as an illustration (to the entering addressee, Andromache) of the Greek grief from which Andromache and Troy are naturally excepted, but in which they have now been included by the universality of tragedy expressed in the preceding lines (1041–42). The force of *δέ* must then be considered as continuative rather than adversative. Troy and Greece are not being contrasted so much as compared, included in the same universal suffering. The *δέ* puts Greece and Troy in apposition to one another, which is a common enough function of *δέ* as a continuative particle (cf. *Andr.* 248).

moment escaped with Orestes who has just disclosed his intention to murder Neoptolemus. It is difficult to imagine that the chorus is wistfully consoling Hermione who has just wilfully exempted herself from the universal grief invoked here by the chorus. Furthermore, Hermione is under no *anangkê*, and as barren woman and potential infanticide (just now abducted by a matricide) is hardly a bereaved mother.

Others⁸ have assumed that the chorus here refers to itself in accordance with common tragic usage and that there is neither mention of, nor allusion to, Hermione in the ode. Still others⁹ have followed the scholiast who perceived a reference to Troy. Though this allusion is not inconsistent with the rhetorical structure of the antistrophe, it is too imprecise to be defended and has won little support.

There is, however, still another possibility:¹⁰ that *Andromache* is the referent at 1041, and that she and Molossos are present as *kôpha prosôpa*. This view appears to have won wide currency today and is held by many recent critics.¹¹ But only Kamerbeek and Erbse have ascribed an interpretive significance to the presumed stage presence of Andromache and Molossos. They argued that Andromache's presence is a silent condemnation of Neoptolemus, that it is a sign of her moral superiority and the ultimate victory of the conquered over the conquerors.

Choruses typically greet a character's entrance by addressing the character in the second person; equally typical, in this play as elsewhere, is the choral movement from the general predicament to the particular

⁸ Musgrave (Leipzig 1837) and Bothe (Leipzig 1925).

⁹ E.g. A. W. Verrall, cf. *Essays on Four Plays of Euripides* (Cambridge 1905). But Verrall had a vested interest in allusions outside the play, believing as he did that the play could only be understood as the sequel to a lost play—a play for which we have not the slightest shred of evidence.

¹⁰ Cf. L. Parmentier, "Sur l'Andromaque," *Bull. Ac. Roy. de Belgique* (1920) 349–78; P. Friedländer, "Die griechische Tragödie und das Tragische," *Die Antike* 1 (1925) 5–35, 295–318; 2 (1926) 79–112 = *Studien zur antiken Literatur und Kunst* (Berlin 1969) 107–82; A. Y. Campbell, "Euripides' *Andromache* 1037–1046, *Troades* 380–381," *CR* 46 (1932) 197; J. C. Kamerbeek, "L'Andromaque d'Euripide," *Mnemosyne* ser. 3, 11 (1943) 63–65; H. Erbse, "Euripides' *Andromache*," *Hermes* 94 (1966) 293–96.

¹¹ By A. Garzya, the recent Teubner editor of the play, (cf. his earlier Italian editions of the play [Naples 1953, 1963] *ad loc.*) and by Ferreira in his Portuguese commentary (Coimbra 1971) *ad loc.* and supported by E. Kwaadgras, "Euripides' *Andromache*," *Lampas* 8 (1975) 15. For arguments against this view cf. Steidle (above, note 4) 118–21, 130 and Kovacs (above, note 7) 49. They argue that Peleus' *pathos* depends upon his being alone (raising other objections to the *kôpha prosôpa* as well). In my view Peleus' apotheosis depends upon the mute stage presence of Andromache and Molossos and his stage action regarding them. His plight seems to me in no way mitigated by their presence. For all intents and purposes, with the death of Neoptolemus announced, he is ruined. The hope which Andromache and Molossos hold for him is not immediately apparent. He must be brought around, by Thetis, to his senses. Then, as I argue in this paper, his stage actions (1076–84) make sense.

dramatic case. It is to the point that there is no example in extant tragedy in which the chorus addresses in the second person a principal character who is not specifically identified, unless that character is visibly on stage.¹² When Euripidean choruses engage in such conversations they characteristically use the vocative, as at 789 when the absent Peleus is addressed, ὦ γέρον Αἰακίδα. In the parodos Andromache is repeatedly addressed without ever being identified because she is there in person, huddled at Thetis' altar, her condition the focus of the ode. At 302, Andromache is addressed in the second person, σὺ . . . γύναι, though not specifically named; she is not specifically named because she is unmistakably present. In fact this antistrophe, with its theme of women abandoned and bereaved, is amplified by antistrophe B of the fourth stasimon where the problematic reference, σοὶ μόνῃ, occurs. This is especially significant given the schematic parallelism of the play.¹³ On the other hand, when an absent character is mentioned, the third person is used as at 486, ἡ Λάκαινα, followed by the apostrophe σε, πότνια. Hermione's identity is therefore securely established. Here too, however, there is evidence to suggest a mute Hermione reentering with Menelaos. Again,

¹² Entries occurring within the lyric structure are also not anomalous, cf. S. *Ai.* 895, *El.* 1432, *OC* 138, Eur. *Hik.* 798. I am grateful to Oliver Taplin for bringing these examples forcefully to my attention. I would add the line under discussion here as well as *Andr.* 491 (cf. below, note 14).

¹³ The characters, for instance, can almost be regarded as direct foils of one another. Andromache is counterpoised by Hermione. The latter's entrance speech (147–80), for example, is a verbal evocation of the former's prologue (1–55); both characters are characterized in highly emotional states by their respective metrical modes (Andromache's elegiacs, 103–16, and glyconic amoibaion, 506–36 vs. Hermione's dochmiac kommos, 825–65); Andromache is a redoubtable *mater dolorosa* whereas Hermione is a barren woman threatening to commit infanticide; both women have been abandoned by their would-be saviors (Andromache by Neoptolemus, Hermione by Menelaos) and rescued instead by unexpected late-comers (Andromache by Peleus, and Hermione by Orestes); finally both women represent opposite poles of the same experience, maternity. Menelaos is paired with (and foiled by) his counterpart in the older generation of heroes, Peleus (cf. their *agon* 547–765, and compare the *agon* between Andromache and Hermione 147–273). The absent Neoptolemus has his foil in the surprise savior, Orestes, who turns out to be his murderer and the abductor of his wife. Finally, the humanly accessible goddess Thetis is to be contrasted with the murderous Apollo described by the messenger (1147–48, 1161–65); especially since the play opens with Andromache's supplication of Thetis and a description of Neoptolemus' supplication of Apollo (49–55) and closes with the disclosure of what can be construed as Apollo's response, the bier-borne body of Neoptolemus, countermanded and indicted by the epiphany of Thetis (cf. 1239–42). The double plot is itself highly schematic. Andromache, in mortal peril, is rescued by Peleus. Hermione, believing herself to be in mortal peril, is saved by Orestes. In both "actions" a son's life hangs in the balance. In the end Neoptolemus dies, but Molossos survives as the Trojan-Greek prince who will carry on the blood line of the illustrious Peliadae: a child of Hector's wife is the sole scion of Achilles. The schematism of this play extends naturally to its poetics: e.g. the way in which each character is characterized, in part, by his/her descriptions of, or poetic relation to, water or the sea(-goddess).

in the light of the play's schematism, her entry would be a further confirmation of Andromache's reentry as mute accompanying the male principal with whom she is associated in the directly corresponding scene of the play's second action. An examination of the chorus's three attempts to console Andromache shows them holding a sympathetic, lyric conversation with her throughout. They address Hermione only once, calling her intended infanticide: ἄθεος ἄνομος ἄχαρις. The rhetorical structure of the ode in question, Andromache's greater thematic relevance at this moment as, in the play's terms, a Niobe-like monument to suffering, and the conventions of second-person choral address all argue not only for Andromache as referent at 1041, but as *kôphon prosôpon*.¹⁴

Several critics have argued that this makes no sense:¹⁵ that if Andromache is actually on stage, there is no reason for Thetis to speak of her in the third person at 1243, *γυνναῖκα δ' αἰχμάλωτον, Ἀνδρομάχην λέγω*. The argument is an appeal to common sense; but there may be *conventional* reasons for the third person address. Inspection of the epiphanies in tragedy reveals a curious feature, an observable tendency so consistently observed that, were its dramatic point clear, it could almost be termed a convention: Mute characters who cannot be formally engaged in dialogue are addressed by deities in epiphany indirectly, or in the third person. In other words they are regarded by the deity in epiphany

¹⁴ I am arguing that Andromache left the stage with Peleus and Molossos following line 765, and that she reenters with Peleus and Molossos at some point during the choral ode. She must either have entered or be about to enter by line 1041. This entrance during the stasimon is admittedly remarkable, though it would appear that a dramatically parallel entrance occurs during the second stasimon (465–93). The vocative address to Hermione (492) signals that she must in fact be, or be about to come, on stage, also as a mute. She must be mute here because Peleus will become the third actor upon his entrance at 547. In the earlier parallel scene, the chorus sees and addresses the mute Hermione first (492) and then acknowledges the entrance of the bound pair, Andromache and Molossos, which presumably follows (494). If an argument can be made for the mute presence of the one, then it can certainly be made for the other as well. As mute symbolic stage presences—Hermione led by Menelaus, herself leading on mother and son as condemned prisoners (492f.), Andromache led by Peleus, herself leading and shepherding her son—their parallel entrances would accord perfectly with, and give a further visual dimension to, the overall counterpoising of their characters.

In both cases the respective configurations of characters must be regarded as stage "groups." There is no plausible motive for having one enter before or after the other, say, Andromache at 1041 and Peleus at 1048, or Hermione at 492 and Menelaus and his prisoners at 494. For that matter, the respective choruses do not need to address all characters present as an acknowledgment of their presence; rather, only those characters within the respective "groups" that the immediate dramatic situation (or choral theme) requires they call attention to for theatrical effectiveness, as a verbal underlining of visual meaning and vice versa.

¹⁵ A. Lesky, *Die tragische Dichtung der Hellenen* (Göttingen 1956) 173, and following him Steidle (above, note 4) 120.

formally as not only deaf, but deaf-mute. Speaking characters, however, may be, and typically are, directly addressed. For example, at the end of the *Orestes* Orestes addresses the mute Pylades and Electra in the second person, as Menelaos uses the second person address for Pylades, and for the mute Helen; but Apollo addresses in the second person only the two speaking characters, and refers to the mutes, Pylades, Electra, and Helen, indirectly. Again at the end of the *Electra*, we find the Dioscuri directly addressing only Electra and Orestes, while speaking of the mute Pylades indirectly, even though Orestes himself continues to address Pylades directly. Still more closely parallel with *Andromache* 1243 is *Electra* 1249, where the Dioscuri, elsewhere addressing Electra in the second person, address her in the third person as they mandate her marriage: she, like Andromache, is to be resettled and “given” in marriage.¹⁶ Speaking characters are regularly addressed by the god or goddess in epiphany. The end of the *Suppliant Women* is a possible exception to this pattern (though no mute is involved): Athena speaks only to Theseus and the chorus of Theban boys, but not to Adrastus. Again, however, the circumstances suggestively parallel the *Andromache*: directives are issued to the character most directly connected with the deity; the other character, here a speaking character as in *Electra* above, is only indirectly referred to. The analogy, I believe, strengthens the case for Andromache’s presence. One more example might be cited. In the *Helen* and *IT* absent characters are apostrophized by the Dioscuri and Athena respectively. No mutes are involved, but Euripides calls attention to the peculiarity of this second person address by the deity to characters not actually present. Athena at 1247 proclaims that Orestes, although not present, will still be able to hear a goddess’s voice (is this, we may wonder, a typically Euripidean apology for a convention with which he feels uneasy, and therefore a clue to its existence?). It is at least arguable that Euripides may have been conventionally required to have Thetis address the mute Andromache in the third person.¹⁷

¹⁶ Cf. S. *Trach.* 1275. Presumably a mute Iole has entered (with the procession at 962ff.?). The third person references to Iole at 1220 and 1222 have exercised critics. However, the circumstances are again analogous to *Andromache*: Iole is to be “given” in marriage. Furthermore, as demonstrated above, there is nothing uncanny about third person description of a mute character. These third person allusions cannot be adduced then to tell against the entrance of Iole before these lines.

¹⁷ Oliver Taplin has cautioned against my formulation of this observable tendency as a “convention”: “A law or dramatic convention must have a point. I can see no purpose here—it looks like curious coincidence.” A possible exception to this tendency is E. *Antiope* 89–90 where Hermes is assumed to be addressing the mute Zethos. Between the second person pronoun and the dative, Ζῆθος, at 90 is a presumed lacuna (suggested by C. H. Roberts, *CQ* 29 [1935] 565–66 and accepted by Kambitsis *ad loc.*), since no plausible reading has been suggested. The exception then, in this case, proves even more tenuous than the rule.

We know that Euripides often turned theatrical clichés upside down or towards some innovative and heightened purpose, like the mule cart entry of Hecuba in the *Trojan Women*, which starkly recalls the chariot triumphs of royal figures. It is conceivable that Euripides has subtly personalized the third person address with the name followed by λέγω formula. It is often used of characters actually coming onto or just about to come on stage, as at *Bac.* 912, *Ajax* 73, or *Phil.* 1261. In the first two instances it is used facetiously to lure on the unsuspecting Pentheus and Ajax respectively. However these two examples of the formula in facetious use assure its connotation of sincerity in the third, where Neoptolemus is imploring Philoctetes' trust. At *Helen* 1662 the Dioscuri use the name + λέγω formula to apostrophize Helen, their sister: the tone is unmistakably affectionate and their message propitious.¹⁸ The third person address to a character present is, in Bains' phrase, "an appeal to witness"; judging from the linguistic evidence compiled by Svennung,¹⁹ it generally connotes respect or conversely, with a change in intonation, is inverted to express disrespect. At its simplest and most rudimentary it appears to be a regular feature in expressions of familial intimacy. There are then reasons to believe Andromache may be on stage, and that being present, convention requires the third person address. The name + λέγω formula may simultaneously emphasize her mute presence and affirm her bond with Thetis.²⁰

I come now to the lines that suggest that significant stage action is taking place, and that Andromache and Molossos are essential to it. The messenger enters at 1070 with the devastating news of Neoptolemus' murder. He addresses his remarks to Peleus and the master's φίλοι. But who are these φίλοι? The generalizing masculine plural or unmarked gender is, of course, not uncommon in tragedy.²¹ Here, however, when

¹⁸ Noteworthy is *Hec.* 736 ff., where Hecuba uses the formula to apostrophize herself. She declares her misery and pathetic vulnerability just before she visibly turns her face downwards and away from Agamemnon—a pose or posture not unlike that which I believe Andromache assumes in this play, and which forcefully dramatizes her condition.

¹⁹ J. Svennung, *Anredeformen* (Uppsala 1958).

²⁰ There is some dramatic point to the expression γυνᾱίκα δ' αἰχμάλωτον, Ἀνδρομάχην λέγω. The first part is a reminder of her present status, while the second is more like a triumphant "apostrophe," since her bondage is to be a thing of the past. She too, in her way, is about to undergo apotheosis through the hegemony of Molossos. The harsh subjugation to necessity which forced her to be αἰχμάλωτος is at last overturned as her true destiny is revealed—the *daimon* which fulfills her *ethos*—as the mother of a great dynasty. At the risk of circularity: the other examples of the name + λέγω formula invoke an absent character's presence (as at Eur. *Heracl.* 642) and involve a second person pronoun (*Bach.* 912; S. *Phil.* 1262; *Ai.* 71); whereas if Andromache is on stage there is no need to use the full form of the idiom typically used of character's being "called out." Furthermore the implications of the so-called "observable tendency" discussed above suggest the unlikelihood of a direct, i.e. vocative or second person, address by Thetis to Andromache.

²¹ Though in this play it is more often found, as elsewhere, in the first person plural, and in expressions clearly generic in character.

the chorus is addressed directly, the apposite feminine gender is used, as at 802 and 816 where forms of *φίλαι* occur.²² At 1072, the stage presence of Molossos would require the masculine form; furthermore, his presence would give dramatic point to *φίλοις*. This is suggestive, but hardly compels his presence.

And yet eight lines later, at 1079, *φίλοις* is reiterated—in point of fact the fourth occurrence of the term *φίλοις* in 40 lines (in reference to the *φίλοι* of Andromache, 1042; of Neoptolemus, 1068, 1072; and Peleus, 1079). The meaning of this scene, and of the play, is only realized theatrically. Meaning in the theater must, after all, be made theatrically visible. Try then to visualize the scene: at the messenger's news Peleus physically collapses. The chorus at 1076 and 1077, and the messenger again at 1080, exhort him to stand. The graphic *σὸν κατορθώσας δέμας* comes pointedly at the end of an arrestingly staccato, stichomythic exchange. The reason Peleus *must* stand is made clear in the conditional clause—if you desire to protect your *φίλοι*. Parenthetically one might note that the scholiast's rendering of *ἀμυνθεῖν* as “avenge” can be dismissed out of hand, since the following action never even glances at the issue of revenge. However, if Andromache and Molossos are on stage, the words are directly pertinent to the dramatic situation, and the scene comes vividly alive. Return to our visualization of the scene: as Peleus' dependents, Andromache and Molossos need some sign of proffered protection. In fact the whole scene recapitulates 717ff. where Peleus, morally victorious over Menelaos, exhorts Andromache, in strikingly similar language, to stand, *ἔπαιρε σαντήν*, and offers her and Molossos the protection of his arms, *ὑπ' ἀγκάλας*, a conventional expression doubtless accompanied by a conventional gesture of protection. There is still a further parallel: at 761 Peleus declares as a condition of their security that he is *ὀρθός*, metaphorically as well as visibly upright in his posture of power.²³ In this final scene, it is Peleus, crushed by circumstance, who is being exhorted to resume the protective posture by which he has previously identified his higher nature, *ὀρθός* in his dramatized commitment to *φιλία*. The actual theatrical tableau then would epitomize the situation: Between Peleus and the statue of the goddess to whom he is bound by marriage—a bond which he has termed at 603 *Φίλιον*—stand Peleus' dependents, his *φίλοι*, Andromache and Molossos. The link between the goddess and Peleus and those he protects is, in vivid visual terms, *φιλία*. All three of the parties stand in the relation of *φιλία*. By physically standing up to protect his *φίλοι*, Peleus embodies the spirit of the maternal, matrimonial goddess who herself enshrines the *φιλία* of human affection

²² When Andromache reproaches the serving woman for her hesitation at 87, she refers to herself as the woman's *φίλοι*. It is at least arguable (though by no means conclusive) that Molossos, while nowhere in sight, is, as the context strongly suggests, clearly indicated.

²³ Cf. Eur. *Herakleidae* 635f.

and loyalty. But this embodiment is necessarily imperfect and severely undercut by the *τὸ πραχθέν* (1080) of this play—the graphic account of the murder of Achilles' son by Orestes and the revelation of Apollo as a murderer exposed in his own shrine.²⁴

Return to our scenario: at the sight of Neoptolemus' butchered body Peleus again physically breaks down. He ends his suicidal dirge by completely dispossessing himself. He hurls to the ground the scepter, his former emblem of dignity and power. The same scepter has, of course, been employed throughout as a crutch, visible symbol of the hobbled infirmity of his condition. He entered at 546 hastening his *γηραιὸν πόδα*; and when he threatens to strike Menelaos with his scepter at 588, Menelaos retorts with a cruel pun on his name, deriding his helpless immobility with scepter/crutch raised in the air: *ψαῦσόν γ', ἔν' εἰδῆς, καὶ πέλας πρόσσελθέ μου*. Peleus, having thrown away his scepter/crutch, and with it his *πόλις*, apostrophizes Thetis and declares his proleptic fall, impending in the future tense. We must assume that he has not yet completely collapsed. At this point the action is arrested by the sudden advent of Thetis who appears, as she declares at 1231, to honor their bonds of marriage as he honored his bond of *φιλία* with Andromache and Molossos. I contend that for the first time in the play Peleus stands upright without his prop. Thetis never instructs him to stand, and it is hardly conceivable—given the emblematic significance of physical posture on the Greek stage—that a hero about to undergo apotheosis should lie crumpled on the ground.²⁵ In fact Thetis' words suggest the presence of a man visibly renewed in a manner reminiscent of Iolaos in the *Herakleidae*: he will lift his legs over the sea, *κομίζων πόδα* (1259), apparently recovering the youthful strength he invoked at 552ff.; and in his closing remark he remembers the day he first touched the goddess, as he now again rediscovers her, *κάλλιστον δέμας* (1278), still wholly alive to the flesh and blood epiphany of the goddess.

But the play is, after all, entitled the *Andromache*, and Andromache's strange silence through the final scene may be our strongest clue as to why this should be. The spectator has no way of identifying Andromache as a mute. Her silence, to the spectator unaware that Thetis will appear and that Andromache is therefore by convention mute, must seem awesomely protracted. The protraction is heightened by Andromache's loquacious eloquence elsewhere. Words are one of her defining

²⁴ The messenger specifically states that Apollo helped to accomplish the murder of Neoptolemus (*ἔδρασ'*, 1163); and the blood-curdling cry from the holy of holies, which heartened the temple guardians, could have been the voice of none other (cf. 1147–50). The messenger emphasizes the barbarousness of Apollo's revenge by reiterating the fact that Neoptolemus was there to make amends (1163; and *παῖδ'* is itself a subtly pathetic touch reinforcing the theme of infanticide which haunts this play).

²⁵ Cf. Eur. *Herakleidae* 619f.

and enabling powers, a power to which her elegiac lament at 103, transfiguring her suffering as song, amply attests. Here through silence she acquires a powerfully expressive dramatic presence further amplified by the anticipation it arouses. That Euripides can use his mutes in effective dramatic ways, and symbolically, we know well enough from the *Alcestis*, and also from Orestes' remark about the mute Pylades (*Or.* 1592), *φησὶν σιωπῶν*; being silent he speaks. "Silence," writes Oliver Taplin, "petrifies an emotional state in expressive immobility."²⁶ What emotional condition does the silence of Andromache petrify? Surely it is that of the *mater dolorosa* in terms of which she has been repeatedly characterized, and through which she is associated with Thetis, the divine prototype of the grieving mother. Her link to Thetis is thematic and theatrical: for nearly one third of the play she knelt and supplicated at the foot of the goddess's shrine. Her silent figure is a visible invocation of Thetis. At least twice explicitly²⁷ and elsewhere obliquely, Andromache describes herself as turned to stone by suffering, like Niobe, a rock springing with tears. *This* is her state of petrified emotional immobility, and I can find no justification for Kamerbeek's and Erbse's perception of her standing akimbo.²⁸ She can be said to embody both the experiences and the values Thetis enshrines. When Thetis does finally appear she speaks in some sense also for Andromache, objectifying in her epiphany the values for which Andromache has in fact stood—all those values of human affection and loyalty which the play identifies as *φιλία* and *γάμος*.

In conclusion then, the stage action of the final scene makes the goddess theatrically visible, dramatically galvanizes her epiphany. Peleus stands up for his *φίλοι*, just as Andromache, leaving Thetis' altar, stood up to save hers (414–20). So in the final scene he once again stands up to be reunited with the goddess who reveals and, both metaphorically and actually, "stands for" his own, their own, higher nature and destiny. Thetis is a goddess touched by mortal loss, and therefore subtly humanized;²⁹ but at

²⁶ *Greek Tragedy in Action* 101ff. Worth noting is Longinus' description of Aias' silence in the *Odyssey*, more sublime than any words (9.2):

ὄθεν καὶ φωνῆς δίχα θαυμάζεται ποτε ψιλὴ καθ' ἑαυτὴν
ἡ ἔννοια δι' αὐτὸ τὸ μεγαλόφρον, ὥς ἡ τοῦ Αἴαντος ἐν Νεκρίᾳ σιωπῇ
μέγα καὶ παντὸς ὑψηλότερον λόγου.

²⁷ Lines 116 and 532.

²⁸ Cf. Kamerbeek and Erbse (above, note 10). The comedy of the Euripidean criticism of Aeschylus' silent Niobe (*Ar. Frogs* 911f.) is heightened if Euripides himself recalls that particular mute with his silent Andromache. Quoting their own verses in *Frogs* the two poets indict themselves on charges leveled against the other. Euripidean reminiscences of Aeschylus are common enough. While the analogy should not be pushed too far, Euripides is as unimaginable without Aeschylus, as Aristophanes is unimaginable without Euripides.

²⁹ There are other examples of humanized, and therefore humanly accessible, divinities

the same time the corollary holds: it is through their mutual enactments of *φιλία* that they touch and enact the divinity implicit in their own humanity. And that is a true apotheosis.

in Euripides, like the Dioscuri in the *Electra* or in the *Helen*, where their fraternal sympathy is expressed (and their powerlessness to avert destiny, as less than Olympian immortals, cf. 1658–65). Or, for example, in the *Supplices*, Demeter is invoked by the chorus in terms of the loss she herself has suffered as a mother (cf. 54ff.).