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GAMOS AND DESTRUCTION IN EURIPIDES' *HIPPOLYTUS*

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for William E. McCulloh
on his Sixtieth Birthday

In the first stasimon of Euripides' *Hippolytus*, the women of Troezen reflect on the ruinous power of Eros and Aphrodite (525–64). This song occurs at a critical juncture of the play, at the end of the long episode (170–524) in which we have witnessed Phaedra's delirium, her gradual, reluctant revelation of the cause of her sickness, and her famous explanation of her actions; this is followed by the Nurse's arguments against Phaedra's intended suicide and her deception of Phaedra about her plans to ease her mistress's lovesickness.[1] This song is thus the chorus's first opportunity to reflect in lyric mode on these momentous events. The women illustrate their general statement on the destructive power of passion with two *exempla*: Heracles' passion for Iole and Zeus' for Semele led in each case to ruin. Commentators and scholars have had little to say about this song, other than that passion proves ruinous for Phaedra, just as it does in the two *exempla*.[2] In this paper I offer an interpretation of the song

[1] On the ambiguities in the Nurse's exchange with Phaedra (507ff.), see W. S. Barrett, ed., *Euripides: Hippolytos* (Oxford 1964) ad 507–8; but see also the remarks of J. W. Fitton, rev. of Barrett, *Pegasus* 8 (1967) 20–21.

[2] It is surprising, in fact, how little has been written about this song, while the second stasimon has been the subject of several excellent treatments. The standard commentaries (e.g., Wilamowitz, ed., *Euripides: Hippolytos* [Berlin 1891], H. Weil, *Sept Tragédies d' Euripide*[3] [Paris 1905], and Barrett [above, note 1]) offer little by way of interpretation; and the many studies on the play, including the thorough and influential articles of B. Knox, "The *Hippolytus* of Euripides," *YCS* 13 (1952) 3–31=*Word and Action: Essays on the Ancient Theater* (Baltimore and London 1979) 205–30, and C. Segal, "The Tragedy of the *Hippolytus*: The Waters of Ocean and the Untouched Meadow," *HSCP* 70 (1965) 117–69=*Interpreting Greek Tragedy: Myth, Poetry, Text* (Ithaca and London 1986) 165–221, although they have produced a wealth of observations on the play's imagery and themes, have provided no detailed interpretation of the song. B. Goff, *The Noose of Words: Readings of Desire, Violence and Language in Euripides' Hippolytus* (Cambridge 1990) 63, although her analysis of the ode is brief, is in general agreement with my treatment. (We differ, however, in our interpretations of the play's ending.) See also A. P. Burnett, "Hunt and Hearth in *Hippolytus*," in *Greek Tragedy and Its Legacy: Essays Presented to D. J. Conacher*, eds. M. Cropp, E. Fantham, S. Scully (Calgary 1986), esp. 171–72, who offers a different interpretation of the *exempla* from the one put forward here. Germane to my general argument is R. Seaford, "The Tragic Wedding," *JHS* 107 (1987), 106–30. But he takes on a larger topic, only touching in passing on some of the observations made in this paper, and he argues more broadly for cultural connections between the wedding and death, connections which are exploited in many of the tragic texts.

and reassess its significance for the play. I argue, in part, that Euripides here manipulates the language and τόποι of the wedding to comment on the violation of these norms within the play, and that the song thus contributes to the play's discourse on marriage. The first section offers a detailed analysis of certain features of the ode; the second explores the ramifications of this analysis.

I

The fundamental form of this choral song, at least of its beginning, is a hymn to the god of passion, Eros. The opening shows all the standard characteristics of hymnal form:[3] it starts with an invocation of the god, emphatic in its repetition,[4] followed by a participial phrase defining the god's power, and then the actual request to the god. Much of the description of Eros' power is traditional:

> Ἔρως, Ἔρως, ὁ κατ' ὀμμάτων
> στάζων πόθον, εἰσάγων γλυκεῖαν
> ψυχᾷ χάριν οὓς ἐπιστρατεύσῃ ...(525–27)[5]

The eyes are routinely described as the site of erotic desire.[6] The metaphors in ἐπιστρατεύσῃ, and also in βέλος (530) and πέρθοντα (541), conform to the common image of love as a warrior or fighter.[7] We are immediately presented with the paradox, so frequently seen in lyric poetry and alluded to by the Nurse at 348, of Eros the bittersweet:[8] the image of Eros the warrior balances the delight he brings to the eyes. Typically the gods were beseeched either to appear or to effect something from afar. The Troezenian women, however, phrase their request in the negative: μή μοί ποτε σὺν κακῷ φανείης / μηδ' ἄρρυθμος ἔλθοις (528–29).[9] Eros is imagined as a potentially destructive force, a power which needs to be averted, at least under certain conditions. This aspect of the chorus' prayer is underscored by the use of the rare word ἄρρυθμος, only here in tragedy.[10] It is this destructive aspect of Eros that the chorus fears and that is at

[3] On the characteristics of hymnal form, see the classic treatment of E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos* (rptd. Stuttgart 1956; orig. pub. 1913), 143–76.

[4] Soph., *Ant.* 781ff., to which this song is often compared, also commences with a repeated invocation of Eros, followed by a descriptive relative clause; cf. the invocation of this god at *Tro.* 841–42.

[5] The text cited throughout is that of J. Diggle, *Euripidis Fabulae* (Oxford 1984).

[6] See, e.g., *PB* 654, 902–3, Aesch., *Ag.* 418–19 (?), Soph., *Trach.* 107, *Ant.* 795. The eyes were also thought of as the source of infatuation, often imagined as sending forth shafts (for citations, see A. C. Pearson, "Phrixus and Demodice: A Note on Pindar, *Pyth.* IV. 162ff.," *CR* 23 [1909] 256–57). The beginning of this ode seems to combine and blur these two images.

[7] See, e.g., Anacreon 396. 2 (PMG), Soph., *Ant.* 781, Eur., frag. 430. 3 N^2.

[8] The notion is most famous from Sappho's epithet for Eros γλυκύπικρον (frag. 130.2); on the concept, see A. Carson, *Eros the Bittersweet: An Essay* (Princeton 1986), esp. 3–9, with many citations.

[9] For "negative" prayers, cf. *Alc.* 976–77; these are the opposite of the much more common "please come in such and such a fashion"–see Barrett (above, note 1) ad 528–29 and E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford 1957) 204n. 4, cited by Barrett.

[10] The metaphor comes from music; the scholiast glosses μὴ ἄρρυθμος ἔλθοις thus: μηδὲ ἄμετρός τις καὶ ἄτακτος ἔλθοις. ῥυθμὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ μουσικὴ τάξις.

issue in the drama.[11] The chorus then explains the reason for their fear: the shaft of Aphrodite which Eros sends forth is greater than that of fire and of the stars:

> οὔτε γὰρ πυρὸς οὔτ' ἄστρων ὑπέρτερον βέλος
> οἷον τὸ τᾶς 'Αφροδίτας ἵησιν ἐκ χερῶν
> Ἔρως ὁ Διὸς παῖς. (530–34)

The stanza concludes as it began, with Eros, here described as the son of Zeus; his name, subject of the last clause, is emphatically held off until the end.[12] Zeus' paternity seems to be Euripides' invention,[13] making this powerful god seem that much more impressive.[14] Eros is closely linked with the god who is often thought bring all things to fulfillment (see, esp., Aesch., *Ag.* 1485ff. and Soph., *Trach.* 1274, both plays where passion begets destruction) and who figures prominently in the final stanza of this song.

Whereas in the strophe the chorus expressed their concern with Eros' power, in the antistrophe they focus on mortals' folly in not honoring this god:

> ἄλλως ἄλλως παρά τ' 'Αλφεῷ
> Φοίβου τ' ἐπὶ Πυθίοις τεράμνοις
> βούταν φόνον 'Ελλὰς ⟨αἰ⟩ ἀέξει,
> Ἔρωτα δέ, τὸν τύραννον ἀνδρῶν,
> τὸν τᾶς 'Αφροδίτας
> φιλτάτων θαλάμων κληδοῦχον, οὐ σεβίζομεν,
> πέρθοντα καὶ διὰ πάσας ἰέντα συμφορᾶς
> θνατοὺς ὅταν ἔλθῃ. (535–44)

[11] The Corinthian women in *Medea* sing of Aphrodite in a similar vein :

> ἔρωτες μὲν ὑπὲρ ἄγαν ἐλθόντες οὐκ εὐδοξίαν
> οὐδ' ἀρετὰν παρέδωκαν ἀνδράσιν· εἰ δ' ἄλις ἔλθοι
> Κύπρις, οὐκ ἄλλα θεὸς εὔχαρις οὕτω.
> μήποτ', ὦ δέσποιν', ἐπ' ἐμοὶ χρυσέων τόξων ἀφείης
> ἰμέρῳ χρίσασ' ἄφυκτον οἰστόν. (627–34)

(Cf. *IA* 542ff., *Hel.* 1105–6, and the Nurse at *Hipp.* 443.) The chorus in *Med.* goes on to pray for σωφοσύνη, the greatest gift of the gods (635–36), the virtue at the center of *Hippolytus* (on which topic, see the recent article of C. Gill, "The Articulation of the Self in Euripides' *Hippolytus*," *Euripides, Women, and Sexuality*, ed. A. Powell [London and New York 1990], 76–107). On the two-fold nature of passion, leading one to virtue or folly and ruin, cf. Eur., frag. 388 N^2, and *Sthen.* 22–25 (Page). The dual nature of passion is also reflected in the separation of Aphrodite into two, *ourania* and *pandemos*.

[12] This is a less pronounced example of the practice of holding off until the end of a long colon or even entire stanza the name of a god (very commonly *Erinys*); for examples, mainly from tragedy, see E. Bruhn, *Anhang* (*Sophokles, erklärt von F. W. Schneidewin und A. Nauck* [Berlin 1899]), sec. 174, and, with bibliography, R. Kannicht, ed., *Euripides: Helena* (Heidelberg 1969) ad 1117–21.

[13] Euripides could easily make Zeus Eros' father, since Eros had no fixed parentage. His father is variously Uranus, Ares, Zephyrus; and in Plato's *Symp.* (178b), Phaedrus, citing several authorities, including Hesiod (*Theog.* 116ff.), asserts that he had no parents.

[14] In the next stanza Eros will implicitly be said to be more important than Apollo, and elsewhere in the play his powers, and those of Aphrodite, are extolled: see 1274ff.

The central contrast between the worship of Apollo and the neglect of Eros provides the rhetorical structure and pointed contrast of this stanza. Greece appeases Apollo by the controlled violence ("cattle slaughter") of ritual, while Eros, who causes (uncontrolled) violence whenever he comes, is not worshipped.[15] The pivot of the stanza is the phrase οὐ σεβίζομεν. It repeats, in negative form, the central verbal idea of the opening three lines, and it governs the three preceding and the two following ones. It also contains a key thematic element, since we have already seen Hippolytus refuse to worship Aphrodite; the destruction described in this stanza will be realized in the play.[16] Eros is called the κληδοῦχος of Aphrodite's chambers, an epithet used of priestesses and priests and protecting divinities,[17] which here, especially in conjunction with φιλτάτων, stands in contrast to the image of Eros *tyrannos*,[18] thereby creating a further image of Eros the bittersweet. Eros "holds the keys" to Aphrodite's θάλαμοι, which, especially in this context, suggests its sense "bridal chambers,"[19] a meaning which becomes most appropriate. Verbal echoes between the two stanzas are suggestive. Ἱέντα[20] (543) corresponds to ἵησιν (533) in the same metrical position: Eros who can send Aphrodite's shaft against mortals can also send them into disaster. There is also, although it involves no metrical responsion, the repetition ἔλθοις/ἔλθῃ (529/544). In the strophe the chorus prays that Eros not appear σὺν κακῷ, that he not come ἄρρυθμος; the antistrophe concludes that he causes destruction whenever he comes. His negative power is no longer qualified. Nor is he any longer addressed: the second-person forms of the strophe have been dropped and the god is not again beseeched; the song ceases to resemble a hymn. His destruction seems universal and beyond the power of prayer.

The second strophic pair has a new agent of passion as its focus and moves the ode in a different direction.[21] Eros was the god of passion beseeched in the first half of the song, while now it is Aphrodite, Eros' mother in most accounts[22] and already referred to twice in this song (532, 539), whose actions are described. Antistrophe a serves as a bridge to the second pair of stanzas, as it states as a general principle the destructive power of passion, the principle which the *exempla* of the second pair of stanzas will seek to illustrate. In

[15] While this assertion is not literally true (Eros did have some sites of worship, most famously at Thespiae–see Paus. 9.27.1 and Frazer's note ad loc.), Aristophanes, in Plato's *Symp.* (189c), is able to voice the same view without contradiction by the other symposiasts.

[16] On the connection between this song and Hippolytus, see below, 118–19.

[17] See *LSJ* s.v. κληδοῦχος I.

[18] Cf. Eur., frag. 136.1 N^2, for Eros *tyrannos*.

[19] See *LSJ* s.v. θάλαμος I.2a on this usage.

[20] Dobree's conjecture ἱέντα....θνατούς for ἰόντα...θνατοῖς of the mss. is most likely.

[21] On this type of internal structuring of stasima (two pairs of stanzas with a clear division between them), see W. Kranz, *Stasimon: Untersuchungen zu Form und Gehalt der griechischen Tragödie* (Berlin 1933) 198ff. F. Zeitlin, "The Power of Aphrodite: Eros and the Boundaries of the Self in the *Hippolytus*," in P. Burian, ed., *Directions in Euripidean Criticism* (Durham 1985) 203n. 104, briefly describes the progression in the ode, from a different perspective.

[22] Although others, e.g., Earth and Iris, are also named as his mother, Aphrodite usually is, and she is commonly associated with Eros in literature and art.

tragedy the extended use of mythological *exempla* typically occurs in choral passages,[23] since it is one way in which the chorus can provide a perspective on the dramatic events. At first glance, the *exempla* of Iole and Semele have an obvious relation to the events on stage: these two stories show how passion can be ruinous, causing the destruction of Iole's city, Oechalia, and the fiery death of Semele. The two tales, validating the general thesis put forth in the ode's first half, serve as a type of *a fortiori* argument as the greatest hero and the greatest god are involved, and hint at the destruction that will be wrought upon the play's characters.[24] But a closer look at the language of these stanzas suggests a more involved connection between *exempla* and dramatic action.

Strophe b comprises one long period and a brief exclamation :

τὰν μὲν Οἰχαλίᾳ
πῶλος ἄζυγα λέκτρων,
ἄνανδρον τὸ πρὶν ἄνυμφον, οἴκων
ζεύξασ' ἀπ' Εὐρυτίων
δρομάδα ναίδ' ὅπως τε βάκ-
χαν σὺν αἵματι, σὺν καπνῷ,
φονίοισι νυμφείοις
Ἀλκμήνας τόκῳ Κύπρις ἐξέδωκεν· ὦ
τλάμων ὑμεναίων. (545–54)

These lines resonate with wedding terms.[25] The associations of λέκτρων, ἄνυμφον, νυμφείοις[26] are obvious enough, and the yoking image, repeated, is frequently applied to a man's marrying a woman (and to other sexual unions, too).[27] The reference to the filly's swiftness may also evoke bridal associations.[28] The climax of this period is Κύπρις ἐξέδωκεν, delayed until the very end of the sentence. Ἐκδίδωμι is the *vox propria* of the bride's κύριος,

[23] See R. Oehler, *Mythologische Exempla in der älteren griechischen Dichtung* (diss. Basel 1925), 78–111, for a (slightly) annotated catalogue of mythological *exempla* in tragedy.

[24] The suggestion of Wilamowitz, (above, note 2) 211, that from these *exempla* the audience expected Phaedra and Hippolytus also to engage in sexual wrongdoing seems improbable in light of Aphrodite's proclamation of Phaedra's εὔκλεια (47) and the initial presentation of Hippolytus' character.

[25] It is a striking inversion that while a Greek wedding is often characterized in terms of violence and even rape, here a rape is characterized as a type of wedding.

[26] The mss. have φονίοις θ' ὑμεναίοις, which Barrett emends to φονίοισι νυμφείοις (accepted by Diggle); in either case a wedding term is employed. On the text, see Barrett ad loc.

[27] For ζεύγνυμι, see, e.g., *Alc.* 994, *El.* 99, *Tro.* 676, *Phoen.* 337, 1366, and cf. the use of the words ἄζυξ (e.g. at *Hipp.* 1425, *Med.* 673), ζυγόν (e.g. at *Med.* 242), σύζυξ (e.g. at *Alc.* 921), etc.; the image is used also of illicit sexual union (e.g. of Zeus and Semele at *Bacch.* 468). On these and other terms employed for marriage, see V. Magnien, "Vocabulaire grec reflétant les rites du mariage," in *Mélanges offerts à A. M. Desrousseaux par ses amis et ses élèves* (Paris 1937) 293–99. On connections in the play between the yoke of marriage and the yoke of death, see K. Reckford, "Phaethon, Hippolytus, Aphrodite," *TAPA* 103 (1972) 419–22.

[28] As examples of "swift" brides Seaford (above, note 2) 129, cites *Trach.* 857ff. (describing Iole) and Eur. *Supp.* 993 (where the text is uncertain, but the mss. have ὠκυθόαι νύμφαι; on the text, see C. Collard, ed., *Euripides: Supplices* [Groningen 1975] ad loc., and note that the image extends to δρομάς at 1000).

typically her father, handing her over to the groom.[29] What is striking here is that Cypris is the subject of this verb: it is she who gives Iole away in "marriage" to Heracles, yoking her away from her father's house,[30] her father who is her rightful κύριος and who, according to tradition, refused to give her in a legitimate marriage to Heracles.[31] It is not uncommon in art and literature to find Aphrodite or Eros in attendance at the wedding ceremony—it fact, it became something of a commonplace[32]—but for Aphrodite to take on the role of the κύριος is extraordinary.[33] Euripides' use of these words is metaphoric and significant. The many terms relating to marriage culminate in the phrase Κύπρις ἐξέδωκεν, marking a transgression in the wedding rituals; this "wedding" led to the destruction of Oechalia, and, ultimately, of Heracles himself.

The exclamation ὦ τλάμων ὑμεναίων follows the *exemplum* and concludes the stanza. One common feature of the Greek wedding song was the μακαρισμός, the declaration of happiness for the bridal couple, which is referred to several times in the tragic corpus and manipulated more than once.[34] At the conclusion of Iole's perverted "wedding" we seem to have an inverted μακαρισμός: not the happiness, but the wretchedness of the bride is proclaimed.

In the final stanza, the chorus relates the story of Semele's destruction as their second *exemplum* :[35]

> ὦ Θήβας ἱερὸν
> τεῖχος, ὦ στόμα Δίρκας,
> συνείποιτ' ἂν ἁ Κύπρις οἷον ἔρπει·
> βροντᾷ γὰρ ἀμφιπύρῳ
> τοκάδα τὰν διγόνοιο Βάκ-
> χου νυμφευσαμένα πότμῳ
> φονίῳ κατηύνασεν.
> δεινὰ γὰρ τὰ πάντ' ἐπιπνεῖ, μέλισσα δ' οἵ-
> α τις πεπόταται.[36] (555–64)

[29] Cf. *LSJ* s.v. ἐκδίδωμι I. 2a.

[30] Diggle prints Buttmann's conjecture Εὐρυτίων for the mss. ἀπειρεσίαν. Even with the mss. reading it is clear whose οἶκος Iole is removed from.

[31] See Apollodorus 2.6.1.

[32] See Seaford (above, note 2) 116–17, with nn. 114–17.

[33] I know of no exact parallel for it, but see below (note 38) on the use of νυμφεύω. Seaford (above, note 2) 129, compares Aphrodite's role at *Trach.* 860–61, but the language there does not recall the wedding rituals in any way. In this connection it is worth considering Sappho 16.12, where Aphrodite (*if* she is the subject of the verb–see D. L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* [Oxford 1955] 54) is said to have led astray (παρήγαγε) Helen. This may play on the use of ἄγω, usually in the middle, of the groom leading the bride to his house (see *LSJ* s.v. ἄγω A.I.2 and B.2). In the case of Helen, she is "led" astray (παρα-) by Aphrodite to her new wedding with Paris.

[34] It is referred to at, e.g., *Alc.* 918–19, *And.* 1218, *Supp.* 995–99, *Hel.* 639–40, *IA* 1076–79, *Phaethon* 240–44 (Diggle); it is parodied most prominently at *Tro.* 308ff.

[35] The Nurse had already employed this exemplum (and that of Eos and Tithonus) with a different interpretation and for a different purpose, persuading Phaedra that her passion for Hippolytus was nothing extraordinary (451–59).

[36] Just as in the first pair of stanzas, there are strophic correspondences in this one: φονίῳ responds to φονίοισι of the strophe, βάκχου to βάκχαν, and,

Again Cypris is directly involved in the action, and again, although less extensively, the imagery echoes wedding rituals. Cypris gave Semele as a bride (νυμφευσαμένα[37]) to the thunder. This word has a wide range of meaning within the context of the wedding,[38] and is used here to describe Aphrodite's role in this union, a union which met with disaster (πότμῳ/φονίῳ).[39] The ode ends (563–64) with the ubiquity of the goddess' power, just as the first strophic pair concluded with the pervasive power of Eros. Aphrodite's blasts are terrible and felt everywhere: the principle espoused in the song has universal application. The final simile has drawn much and varied comment over the years. The scholiast suggested that the bee's sting is obliquely referred to; others have found the image ambiguous.[40] If both aspects of the bee are called to mind, it echoes the image of Eros the bittersweet.[41]

II

The above analysis of selected aspects of this song isolates in particular its striking manipulation of the language and τόποι of the Greek wedding. I now turn to an account of other aspects of the song and offer an interpretation of the song in its relation to the larger play. Half of the song which begins as a hymn to Eros narrates *exempla* involving Aphrodite. On the one hand, this shift is reasonable in that Aphrodite is commonly Eros' mother and already in the first half connections are made between the two. But, on the other hand, the switch is striking. Eros is described as out of control 30 (ἄρρυθμος) and destructive (πέρθοντα καὶ διὰ πάσας ἰέντα συμφορᾶς θνατούς30), while Aphrodite, whose association with marriage is with proper, non-destructive marital relations, in these *exempla* participates in weddings that are no weddings. The uncontrolled destructive violence brought by her son and described in the first

although it involves no verbal link, τοκάδα occurs in the same position as δρομάδα.

[37] For the mss.' νυμφευσαμέναν, Diggle accepts Kirchoff's conjecture νυμφευσαμένα, which makes the point of Aphrodite's involvement more forcefully.

[38] The verb is used of the one who makes a betrothal, and of both the bride and the groom getting married; see *LSJ* s.v. νυμφεύω. At Eur., *Phaethon* 237 (Diggle) the verb in the sense "give in marriage" has Aphrodite as its subject, if we accept Diggle's interpretation. (See Diggle ad loc., but also the comments of H. Lloyd-Jones in his review, *CR* 21 [1971] 342=*Greek Epic, Lyric, and Tragedy: The Academic Papers of Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones*, vol. 1 [Oxford 1990] 454.) K. Alt, *Untersuchungen zum Chor bei Euripides* (diss. Frankfurt am Main 1952) 28, draws attention to both νυμφευσαμένα here and ἐξέδωκεν above, but comes to different conclusions.

[39] It should be noted that from this ruinous union Dionysus ultimately comes to birth, and this subsequent part of the myth might be called to mind by τοκάδα. But the emphasis clearly is on the destructive aspect of the union.

[40] The image of the bee also recalls the bee which travels through Hippolytus' sacred meadow (76–77).

[41] It has recently been argued (R. Garner, *From Homer to Tragedy: The Art of Allusion in Greek Poetry* [London and New York 1990] 128–29) that this simile of the bee alludes to the famous, first simile in the *Iliad* (2. 87ff.), where the Greeks gathering in assembly are compared to bees. The specific military image contained in ἐπιστρατεύσῃ (and less directly in βέλος and πέρθοντα) found at the beginning of the song are perhaps allusively echoed here.

half of the song continues in the description of Aphrodite in the second. Marriage is often described in terms of death and ruin,[42] but these common metaphors are not regularly realized. The wedding ritual itself can be looked on as the ceremony which transforms the dangers of *eros* into the controlled sexuality of marriage. The wedding rituals promoted, from the Greek point of view, the exchange of a valuable and potentially sexually dangerous property, the bride, from the control of one man's power to another. They sought to ensure the continuation and strengthening of the *polis*, by safeguarding the procreation of legitimate children. The well-known phrase ἐπ' ἀρότῳ γνησίων παίδων, found in several plays of Menander and repeating or echoing the actual words of the betrothal ceremony,[43] reflects the importance to Athenian society of legitimate children. And the violation of these rituals, the song suggests, upsets this system of exchange with catastrophic results.

The significance of the song becomes clearer when we consider the ways in which all three of the main characters, Phaedra, Theseus and Hippolytus, challenge the norms of marriage, challenges which help to bring about the ruin they suffer. Phaedra's situation is the most immediate—she has been listening at the *skene* doors as the chorus sings its song—although the way in which her situation corresponds to those in the *exempla* is oblique. Immediately upon the song's conclusion, she proclaims that she is ruined (ἐξειργάσμεθα, 565; and cf. 570, 575, and 596). She has become, or is about to become, another victim of passion's destructive force. Of course her story is not identical with those in the ode, but there is the common link of transgression against proper, ritually governed sexual union. More specifically, someone other than her κύριος, the Nurse, tries to arrange an illicit sexual union. Unlike Iole and Semele, she is already married, and thus any illicit union poses a threat to the legitimacy of her and Theseus' offspring. And unlike those cases, the union never takes place. But because she is married and so greatly values her reputation,[44] the mere threat of the proposed union becoming public is fatal: she will take her own life and bring Hippolytus down with her (725–31). She acts of course in ignorance. She did not know what the Nurse truly planned to do; her "transgression" is possible only through the Nurse's well-intentioned scheming. We should remember that Phaedra's suffering is necessary to Aphrodite's planned vengeance on Hippolytus. As the goddess herself explains (47–50), divine vengeance carries greater weight than innocent suffering. In fact, Phaedra is more than just an innocent victim of the goddess: she has already shown her piety by setting up a shrine in the goddess' honor (29–33). She is depicted as one who both recognizes the goddess' power and strives to adhere to her culturally prescribed role. At the same time, through the Nurse's intervention, she mimics the role played by the women in the *exempla* and meets with ruin. Even Phaedra cannot control the effects of her passion.

Theseus' violation of marital norms occurred ἔξω τοῦ δράματος, but it is fundamental to the basic plot, as it was his illicit union with the Amazon

[42] See Seaford, e. g. (above, note 2).
[43] See A. W. Gomme and F. H. Sandbach, eds., *Menander: A Commentary* (Oxford 1973) ad *Perik.* 1010.
[44] See, e. g., 329, 405, 419ff., 489, 719ff.

which produced the bastard Hippolytus. While it is certainly true that marital fidelity was not required of Athenian males, it does not follow that infidelity would be met with equanimity by a man's wife. Contemporary drama shows many examples of a wife who refuses to accept such adultery. Most famously, Clytemnestra in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* kills her husband on his return home in no small measure because of Cassandra (see 1438ff.). Even the understanding Deianeira in Sophocles' *Trachiniae* (see, esp., 445–49) cannot, finally, accept her husband's infidelity, and, inadvertently, brings about his death.[45] The *Hippolytus* itself makes much of Hippolytus being a bastard and he is often called the "Amazon's child," from whom, in some accounts, he derives his name, a constant reminder of the infidelity.[46] Theseus' infidelities were a common element in this story (see, e.g., frag. B Barrett [= Plut. *Mor.* 27f–28a] from the first *Hippolytus*, where Phaedra is said to blame Theseus' illicit unions [παρανομίαι30] for her passion for Hippolytus), but his union with the Amazon was not always regarded as illicit: she was originally regarded as Theseus' lawful wife.[47] Thus the play makes Hippolytus' illegitimacy a major issue, and while nowhere in the play is Theseus' explicitly faulted for his illegitimate engendering of Hippolytus (and this is not, of course, the immediate cause of his ruin), the recurrent, emphasized motif of Hippolytus' bastardy underscores the tension caused by Theseus' earlier action. Hippolytus' illegitimacy creates a tension within the *oikos*, in familial and sexual terms.[48] By Athenian law, Hippolytus as an illegitimate son would have no formal claim to Theseus' property,[49] and Hippolytus, in the *agon* with his father, dismisses the notion that he has any interest in inheritance or politics (1010–20). (Perhaps because of his status as a bastard he has dissociated himself from the standard concerns of young men of the *polis*.) But the Nurse, in trying to get Phaedra to break her silence, refers to the threat posed by this illegimate child of the Amazon: [the Amazon] σοῖς τέκνοισι δεσπότην ἐγείνατο/νόθον φρονοῦντα γνήσι', οἶσθά νιν καλῶς, / 'Ιππόλυτον30 (308–10). Phaedra's deep concern for passing on a good reputation to her children (419–27, 717) might stem in part from the threat she imagines from Hippolytus.

The potential sexual tension poses no great problem while Theseus and Phaedra live in Athens and Hippolytus is being raised by his great-grandfather Pittheus in Troezen, but when Theseus is forced to flee Athens and they all end

[45] Even Zeus, the king of gods–and the most unfaithful of all possible husbands–does not enjoy immunity from his wife's anger at his infidelity. She certainly can, and does, make life miserable for him, his paramours and his offspring.

[46] On Hippolytus' being a bastard, see, e. g., 309, 962, 1083; for the appellation "Amazon's son," see 10, 351, 581. Nowhere in the play is his mother named.

[47] *RE* Supp. 13, 1153, 22ff.

[48] Cf. S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge 1986) 127, on problems stemming from Hippolytus' illegitimacy; see also the view of G. M. A. Grube, *The Drama of Euripides* (London 1941) 184–85.

[49] See A. R. W. Harrison, *The Law of Athens*, vol. 1 (Oxford 1968) 61–68. We should also remember, however, that, although the play consistently treats them as legitimate, Theseus' children with the non-Athenian Phaedra would also, by contemporary Athenian standards, be considered νόθοι.

up under the same roof, this tension increases and is further exacerbated by Theseus' visit to Delphi. This absence is convenient from a dramaturgical point of view—it allows the first half of the play to occur more smoothly—but it also highlights the problem: the son from a previous union is now alone with his stepmother. Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae* provides many jokes based on the assumption that a wife, while her husband is away from the house, will be unfaithful. Of course, this Phaedra, unlike her counterpart in the first *Hippolytus*, will not yield to the temptation offered by Aphrodite's power, any more than Hippolytus will accept the Nurse's plan and violate his chastity. But the situation, at least in mythological terms, is marked for disaster. The pattern named after Potiphar's wife is found in Greek myth also in the story of Sthenobeia and Bellerophon, a tale dramatized by Euripides in his *Sthenobeia* and found as early as Homer (*Il.* 6, 154ff.), and in the myth of Peleus and the wife of Acastus.[50] The fact that Phaedra's passion is directed at her stepson does not alter the dynamics of the basic mythological pattern: it only complicates matters, since a father-son, not a guest-host relationship is involved.[51] Theseus' absence and Phaedra's passion, which help to bring about the play's catastrophes, are linked also on the lexical level. Aphrodite in her prologue explains that Phaedra is in love with "one who is distant" (ἔκδημος, 32) and that Theseus has to spend a year "away" (ἔκδημος, 37) in exile. At 281 the Nurse accounts for Theseus' ignorance of his wife's condition by his absence (ἔκδημος), and later Hippolytus proclaims that he will stay away from the house, where he has been defiled by hearing of Phaedra's passion (653–56), as long as Theseus is away (ἐκηδμῇ, 659).[52] When the object of Phaedra's passion is no longer "absent", Theseus is; Hippolytus' presence and Theseus' absence conspire with the Nurse's scheming and Aphrodite's planning to cause destruction.

Hippolytus' violation of marital norms seems, paradoxically, both closest to and the opposite of the violations in the ode: he transgresses marital rituals by his extraordinary refusal of them. As already observed, the pivotal phrase of antistrophe a, οὐ σεβίζομεν, points first and foremost to Hippolytus. Unlike Phaedra, he does not worship the god of passion; rather, he emphatically refuses to do so. According to Aphrodite, Hippolytus alone of the Troezenians vilifies her and refuses to worship her, worship manifest not in ritual observance but in sex and marriage (ἀναίνεται δὲ λέκτρα κοὐ ψαύει γάμων30 , 14). His disregard for Aphrodite is made clear by his intense devotion to Artemis (see esp. 73–87) and his contemptuous dismissal of Aphrodite (104–7 and 113).[53]

[50] See Hes., frags. 208–9; Pindar, *Nem.* 4.54–58; Apollodorus 3.13.3.

[51] Incest, however, is not at issue, for there is no blood connection between Phaedra and Hippolytus; cf. Daremberg-Saglio, s. v. *incestum, incestus*, vol. 3, 453.

[52] It is worth noting the relative frequency of forms of ἔκδημος/ἐκδημέω, in this play: outside of these these four occurrences in *Hippolytus*, they appear only six other times in all of Euripides.

[53] Diggle accepts Gomperz' transposition of 106–7 and 104–5 (but see Barrett's defense of the mss. order). His indifference is clear with either arrangement, and his contempt in 113, which J. Diggle, in his review of Barrett, *AJP* 110 (1989) 361, renders, "To hell with your Kypris."

(The emphasis given to his being an Amazon's child should make his sexually anomalous behavior unsurprising.)[54] This song in part offers a response to his treatment of the god and confirms Aphrodite's words in the prologue.[55] It is striking that what the goddess wants from Hippolytus is not libations or sacrifice, but his participation in her realm, the realm of sex and marriage. By his refusal to marry, he stands outside the community's most fundamental system of creating and fostering relationships which strengthen the *polis*. Whereas Phaedra, through the Nurse's agency, and Theseus threaten the norms of Eros and Aphrodite by excess, Hippolytus' violation is his shunning passion and marriage altogether.

In light of these various transgressions of marital norms and rituals, the significance of the first stasimon comes into sharper focus; the *exempla* have a richer and more complex connection to the rest of the drama. But the ode's relevance for the play is not exhausted by describing how the play's three central characters correspond, in varying ways, to the patterns lamented in the song. The next two choral songs and the play's finale also echo these wedding themes, as I will briefly outline.

In the second half of the second stasimon (752ff.),[56] the chorus, knowing that Phaedra is about to kill herself (the concluding stanza vividly describes her suicide), finds the source for her tragedy in her wedding and arrival from Crete to Athens—κακονυμφοτάταν ὄνασιν30 (757). Nautical imagery is commonly applied to weddings;[57] here the image connects her wedding voyage to Athens to her "voyage" to death,[58] the link established by the vague connective joining the two stanzas, ἀνθ' ὧν30 (764). Not only is Phaedra's wedding here described as leading to her death (and her suicide takes place in her bridal chamber, 769–70), it is also juxtaposed to the description of another union, the cosmic union of Zeus and Hera,[59] about which the chorus has just sung (748–51). Zeus' own transgressions against marital norms were notorious, one of them is the subject of the concluding stanza of the first stasimon, and he is also imagined as Eros' father in that song. Later, after Hippolytus has been banished, the chorus again turns its thoughts (in part) to marriage. In lamenting his exile, in antistrophe b, they sing of four activities that are now lost, concluding with the end of rivalry

[54] We should note that Phaedra, too, comes from a family with a bizarre sexual history and her mother engaged in an illicit, and unnatural, sexual union, and these facts are alluded to most fully at the moment when she reveals her passion for Hippolytus (337ff.). On this topic, see K. Reckford, "Phaedra and Pasiphaë: the Pull Backward," *TAPA* 104 (1974) 307–28.

[55] The choristers, of course, have not witnessed these scenes, but the audience and reader have, and can enjoy this response to them.

[56] On this song, see especially the studies of H. Parry, "The Second Stasimon of Euripides' *Hippolytus* (732–775)," *TAPA* 97 (1966) 317–26, and R. Padel, "'Imagery of the Elsewhere': Two Choral Songs of Euripides," *CQ* 24 (1974) 227–35.

[57] See Seaford (above, note 2) 124.

[58] The nautical imagery is continued in the antistrophe where the distraught, suicidal Phaedra is described as "waterlogged" (ὑπέραντλος, 767), uniquely here in the classical period applied to a person.

[59] The ode's four stanzas have a type of chiastic structure: escape, marriage, marriage, escape (in death). See the articles cited above at note 56 on the many verbal connections within the ode.

for Hippolytus as bridegroom 30 (νυμφιδία δ' ἀπόλωλε φυγᾷ σᾷ / λέκτρων ἄμιλλα κούραις30 , 1140–41). In the ode's epode the women of Troezen invoke the συζύγιαι Χάριτες (1147) to escort the innocent Hippolytus from his house. This epithet of the Charites also relates to marriage, calling to mind these goddesses' role in marriage and procreation;[60] thus the chorus' final lamentation before Hippolytus' actual death picks up on the play's concern with weddings and marriage by emphasizing his unmarried status. The more common *topos* of the lamentation of a young woman's death in terms of her unmarried state[61] is transformed and applied to Hippolytus as he goes off to exile and, it turns out, death. It should also be observed that the final, brief astrophic song which precedes Artemis' appearance (1268ff.), although it contains no wedding images, is devoted to the universal and overwhelming power of Aphrodite and Eros.

The play's ending also takes on a fuller meaning in light of the proposed interpretation of the first stasimon. One of the compensations Artemis gives to the dying Hippolytus is the establishment of a cult in his honor (1423–30): unmarried maidens will offer up to him locks of hair before their weddings and remember him and Phaedra's passion in song.[62] Hippolytus, who had stood outside the community's norms in life, will be integrated into them after his death. At the same time, the destruction stemming from (illicit) *gamos* in the first stasimon is not connected with the ritually governed *gamos* associated with this cult. The predicted death of Aphrodite's unnamed favorite, the other compensation promised by Artemis (1420–22), continues, to be sure, the destruction of the play, but it is no longer associated with sexual unions. The vengeance taken by Artemis is motivated by Aphrodite's against Hippolytus, not by any sexual transgression. Destruction takes place, but in a different and isolated context.[63] The maidens' song about Hippolytus and about Phaedra's passion will commemorate the sad events of the play, but here the destruction will be only mimetic, safely sung by the maidens as they pass to a new stage of their lives.

Weddings are often yoked to violence and death in Greek poetry. The first stasimon, with its careful manipulation of the language and τόποι of the Greek wedding, exploits these associations. It suggests not the violence and death of passion *per se*, but the destruction brought about by *eros* unregulated by worship and ritual. In the play, Hippolytus refuses sexual passion altogether,

[60] See the scholiast ad loc. and E. Bushala, "Συζύγιαι Χάριτες, "Hippolytus" 1147," *TAPA* 100 (1969) 23–29. Burnett (above, note 2) 173–74, suggests that the invocation to the Charites to escort Hippolytus resembles a farewell at a wedding.

[61] See Seaford (above, note 2), esp. 106–10, with further bibliography.

[62] Much has been written on the significance of the establishment of this cult, and a full discussion of it lies outside the scope of this paper. My observation here comes closest to C. Segal, "Pentheus and Hippolytus on the Couch and on the Grid: Psychoanalytic and Structuralist Readings of Greek Tragedy, " *CW* 72 (1978) 138–39=*Interpreting Greek Tragedy: Myth, Poetry, Text* (Ithaca and London 1986) 281. On this topic, see most recently, and with bibliography, Goff (above, note 2) 112–17.

[63] See Goff (above, note 2) 75–77, 111–12, for a different view of the violence implied by Artemis' words.

while Theseus originally made the strained sexual situation possible by his illicit engendering of Hippolytus. Phaedra, a necessary victim in Aphrodite's vengenace against Hippolytus, is also drawn into the maelstrom. Unlike the Phaedra of the first version of the play, she tries to govern her illicit passion, but is finally incapable of overcoming it, except through death. All three of the main characters, affected by passion in different ways, are tied up in the same history; all are ruined.[64]

[64] Parts of this paper were presented at the annual meetings of the Classical Association of the Pacific Northwest (April 1990) and the American Philological Association (December 1990); I am grateful to members of both audiences for helpful questions and comments. Most of the present version was written during a leave from the University of Washington in the Autumn of 1990, for which I express my gratitude. I also wish to thank my colleagues, Mary Blundell and James Clauss, the anonymous referee, and the editor for improving earlier versions of this paper with their suggestions.