Anna A. Lamari

NARRATIVE, INTERTEXT, AND SPACE IN EURIPIDES' ›PHOENISSAE‹

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by

Anna A. Lamari

De Gruyter

For my daughter Alexia,
born while this book was being written

Contents

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1
Theorizing tragic narration

> The stage began to tell a story.
> The narrator was no longer missing,
> along with the fourth wall*

More than forty years have passed since G. Genette studied the multi-farious, partly autobiographical narration of Proust[1] and came up with a systematic narrative theory.[2] By effectively putting together the previous theories of Russian Formalism,[3] French Structuralism[4] and Anglo–American New Criticism,[5] while not rejecting the theoretical basis of semiotics, Genette created a methodology, which interprets literature by decoding the generating power and inner mechanisms of narrative. His theoretical analysis established narratology as both a separate branch in literary theory and a secure method for studying the text.[6] Through diegetic criteria like focalization, the time of the story as opposed to the time of the narration, the order of the presentation of the events and the narrative rhythm, the theory of Genette presented students of literature with a full-scale guide to the labyrinthine path of narrative.

The theory of Genette was soon succeeded by other narratological approaches – mainly favorable to his theoretical model- that were not

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*   Bertolt Brecht, 'Theatre for Pleasure or Theatre for Instruction?', in J. Willet (ed.), *Brecht on Theatre*, London 1964, 71.

1   Proust (1913-1927).

2   Genette (1966); (1969); (1972); (1980). Apart from the discussions on Proust, these studies also include interpretations of the works of Stendhal, Flaubert, Robb-Grillet and Barthes.

3   On Russian Formalism, see Striedter (1989); Steiner (1995).

4   On Structuralism, see Culler (1975); (1983); Doležel (1995).

5   On New Criticism, see Jancovich (1993). Goheen (1951) and Lebeck (1971) have actually attempted to apply the theory of New Criticism to ancient Greek drama.

6   For an overview of narrative theory, see Martin (1986); Onega & García Landa (1996); Bal (1997); Prince (2003); Herman & Vervaeck (2005); Jahn (2005); Herman (2007).

restricted to the narrative of Proust, but applied to modern literature in general.[7] One of the most characteristic examples of adopting a much broader narratological perspective is the contribution of Bal, who treats as narrative and, consequently, as subject of narratology 'anything that can tell a story'.[8] Under this scope, narratological rules can be applied not just to literature, but also to painting,[9] even to music.[10] During the 1990s narrative theory enjoyed an interdisciplinary[11] boom as it expanded to unexpected fields such as politics, law, and even medicine.[12] Narratology is now going through its 'post-classical' phase, being widely considered a 'discipline', combining theories and methods and thus projecting a 'dual nature as both a theoretical and an application-oriented academic approach to narrative'.[13] Meeting the current needs for more pragmatically oriented theories, contemporary narratology is mostly being developed in terms of *contextualist* (relating narratives to particular cultural, ideological, or other contexts), *cognitive* (relating narratives to

7   See Prince (1973); (1982); Rimmon-Kennan (1976); (1983); Chatman (1978); Booth (1983); Chatman (1990); Cohn (1983).

8   'A *narrative text* is a text in which an agent relates ('tells') a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or a combination thereof' [Bal (1997) 5]. Other definitions of narrative presuppose the existence of a narrator, or of one event only, or of a sequence of at least two events [Forster (1979), de Jong (2004b)]. For a fuller discussion, see below, pp. 6 ff.

9   See Bal (1997) 66-75.

10 See Tarasti (1994), who applies narratology to the works of Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, Sibelius and Debussy. Analogous is the example of the Dutch electronic journal *Amsterdam International Electronic Journal for Cultural Narratology* (*AJCN*), which hosts narratological theories applied to any form of art. See http://cf.hum.uva.nl/narratology/index.html. For narratology applied to various media, see also Ryan (2009).

11 Interdisciplinary relations are created 'when several disciplines reflectively deploy methods form other disciplines, either because the object requires it, or because the approach is more productive when not confined to disciplinary traditions' [Bal (2008) 250].

12 Kreiswirth [(2008) 379-380] discusses relevant data, which are truly remarkable: 'in the Worldwide Political Science Abstracts database, there were 16 articles published between 1970 and 1982 with 'narrative' in the title, 35 between 1983 and 1992, and 118 between 1993 and 2004. … In the standard legal studies database, LegalTrac, the numbers jumped from 6 articles in the first decade, to 81 in the second, and then to 140; and, in the Medical Research database, PubMed, there were 28 articles published with 'narrative' in the title between 1973 and 1983, 133 between 1984-1993, and 429 between 1994-2003. Both inside and outside the humanities, researchers have become bullish on narrative in the last ten years'.

13 Meister (2009) 329.

their intellectual reception by humans), or *transgeneric* approaches (examining narration in various media).[14]

The ancients on narrative

Although narratology is a modern trend within literary theory, its origins go back to ancient Greek literary criticism. Homeric epic attracted the interest of early critics such as Plato and Aristotle, partly because of its use of different narrative modes.[15] In Plato's *Republic*, the general term 'narration' (διήγησις) is divided into (a) 'simple' (ἁπλῆ), (b) 'effected through impersonation' (διὰ μιμήσεως γιγνομένη), and (c) 'effected through both' (δι' ἀμφοτέρων).[16] According to Plato, this tripartite structure is reflected, in the three most popular poetic genres: dithyramb,[17] drama and epic respectively. With regard to epic, narration through impersonation is found in the speeches (ῥήσεις), while simple narration is located in the parts between the speeches (τὰ μεταξὺ τῶν ῥήσεων). The coexistence of those two different types of narrative leads, according to the philosopher, to the narrative superiority that has to be attributed to the genre of epic.[18]

Aristotle builds on the narratological findings of Plato. In his *Poetics*, he makes a qualitative advance by distinguishing between the poet as a real, historical, extra-textual entity and the narrator as the poet's textual representative.[19] According to the Aristotelian model, epic poetry consists of a short non-mimetic proem (where the poet reveals his poetic identity) and a long mimetic part, which includes speeches (where the poet speaks as character) and narrator-text (where the poet speaks as narrator).[20] For Aristotle, the several types of mimesis are categorized under

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14 For further discussion and bibliography, see Meister (2009) 340-341.

15 For the following discussion I am heavily indebted to de Jong (1987a) 2-14 and Nünlist (2009) 94-106.

16 Pl. *R*. 392c-394b.

17 The dithyramb Plato 'knows' and is referring to must be the 'new' dithyramb, a melic genre flourishing at the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth century BC [Fantuzzi & Hunter (2002) 19].

18 de Jong (1987a) 2-5.

19 Arist. *Po*. 1448a19-28; 1460a5-11.

20 See de Jong (1987a) 5-8. The Homeric narrative 'advantage', deriving from the use of direct speech, is, according to Aristotle, lacking from other poems (*Po*. 1460a5-11). As pointed out by Halliwell [(1986) 126] and Finkelberg [(1998) 155-156], Aristotle is specifically referring to the rest of epic poetry, which seems not to have included as much direct speech in its narrative arma-

three criteria: the 'means' (ἐν οἷς τε), the 'objects' (καὶ ἅ) and the 'manner' (καὶ ὥς).[21] Accordingly, mimesis is effectuated either in the manner of narrative or in the manner of dramatic representation.[22] In contrast to Plato, Aristotle refers to mimesis in a looser sense, since it allows it to cover any form of artistic representation, including Plato's three narrative divisions.[23] In this sense, 'every art is mimesis' and authors always 'imitate' to a greater or smaller extent events or words materialized or spoken by characters.[24] The Aristotelian theory of mimesis resembles modern literary theories in that he has noticed that 'audiences respond to *representations*' in ways that are different from how they would respond in encountering the originals'.[25] From this vantage point, the spectators of classical tragedy perceive with pleasure disastrous events, which would be tormenting for an observer in real life.[26]

A third phase in the evolution of ancient narrative theory is found in Plutarch's *De audiendis poetis*. In chapters 19a6-20c25, Plutarch analyzes evaluative characterizations in the narrator-text of the *Iliad*. He realizes that the poet uses the descriptions of the characters' emotional reactions in the narrator-text to express his personal feelings. In this light, both the narrower Platonic distinction and its Aristotelian improvement are surpassed by more thorough narratological analysis coming from Plutarch, who identifies the presence of the narrator beyond the restricted limits of the epic proems.[27]

The ancient scholars make an equally important contribution to ancient Greek narratological research. Ancient scholia focus on fields like (a) time and the distinction between the time of the story and the time of the narrative, or (b) terminology for 'narrator-text' or 'speech'. While in the first case, critics are aware of but not straightforward about such a distinction,[28] in the second case they use the terms διηγηματικόν and μιμητικόν to refer to the two categories respectively, as well as the expression μεταβαίνειν ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν in

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ture. A relevant comparison between the *Iliad* and the *Thebaid* is given by Griffin (1977) 49-50. On the differences between speech in Homer and speech in the other epics, see *id*. (1986).

21   *Po*. 1448a24-25.
22   *Po*. 1448a19-1448b3. See also Genette (1979) 16-18.
23   Nünlist (2009) 97.
24   Fantuzzi (1988) 49.
25   Ford (2002) 95.
26   *Po*. 1448b10-17 *pace* Gorg. fr. 11.56 D-K; Pl. *R*. 605c10-605d5. See also Iakov (2004) 33-34.
27   See de Jong (1987a) 8-10.
28   Nünlist (2009) 74-78.

order to indicate (c) the transition from the one narrative mode to the other.[29] Further importance is also given to (d) focalization, designated by the expression λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου[30] or (e) the distinction between first, second, and third person narrative.[31]

Towards a narratology of drama

Narratology originally sprang from the analysis of literature, while the so-called 'narrative (or narrativist) turn', i.e. the study of the narrative phenomenon regardless of the field of its occurrence, is mainly a recent trend.[32] Narratologists' initial interest was restricted to contemporary literature; the first step towards the systematic application of modern narratological principles to ancient Greek literature occurred towards the end of the 1980s by de Jong, who applied the theoretical knowledge of Genette and Bal to the *Iliad*.[33] Her work shed light on the epic narrative system, proving that modern theoretical tools can be equally effective when used for the elucidation of ancient literary works. Her seminal study inspired similar scholarly attempts, like that of Richardson,[34] who focused his attention on the role of the Homeric narrator; a second book by de Jong applied the narratological model of Genette and Bal to the *Odyssey*.[35]

Epic poetry worked as the initial vehicle for the expansion of the application of modern critical theory to ancient Greek literature.[36] Such a unanimous scholarly choice reflects epic's 'convenient' narrative structure; like many modern literary genres, epic poetry projects an explicit, external main narrator, who overtly weaves the narrative threads of the plot. The explicit presence of a governing narrative 'mind' which makes the right narrative choices, generates the appropriate narrative mechanisms and securely leads the narration to a pursued narrative end is readily found in genres where such a driving force is unquestionable. Conversely, when there is no explicit narratorial identity, scholarly

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29 Nünlist (2009) 102-106. See also de Jong (1987a) 10-14.
30 See Nünlist (2009) 116-132.
31 See Nünlist (2009) 110-112.
32 Kreiswirth (1995).
33 de Jong (1987a).
34 Richardson (1990).
35 de Jong (2001).
36 Academic interest in epic narrative never ceased: see additionally the works of Pucci (1987); Hölscher (1990); Reichel (1994), (1998); de Jong (1997), (2004a), (2007); Rengakos (2006).

objections to narratological approaches, have ranged from academic quibbling to baffled puzzlement. In this light, the exclusion of a central narrator has often served as the strongest argument against the use of narratology as an interpretive tool in drama. On the other hand, the fact that the absence of a main narrator is only due to generic conventions makes objections to narrativity less strong, as it allows for a form of narrativity manifested in non-novelistic or epic terms.

I will investigate not whether narratology can work on drama, but whether drama can be seen as an integral narrative and can therefore be examined the way other narratives are. The only way to tackle this question is to consider drama's *narrativity*. A term coined by Greimas, who yet used it in order to refer to the way narrative was operating in his semiotic model,[37] narrativity, according to Prince, designates:

> 'the quality of being narrative, the set of properties characterising narratives and distinguishing them from non-narratives. It also designates the set of optional features that make narratives more prototypically narrative-like, more immediately identified, processed, and interpreted as narratives'.[38]

The angle from which narrativity is perceived is the factor that determines the elements of which it is comprised. Accordingly, narrativity is designated either through matter or through degree, and it is applied either as a fixed concept, or in comparison of a particular to other narratives.[39]

Discussions of narrativity go back to Aristotle, in his famous definition of tragedy.[40] For Aristotle, narrativity depends not just on the qualities of the imitated action, but also on its size. Much later, Labov studied oral narratives and distinguished between 'complete' (i.e. having a beginning, middle and end) and 'more fully developed' types of narratives.[41] The latter are self-evaluated, since they contain 'the means used by the narrator to indicate the point of the narrative, its raison d'être: why it was told, and what the narrator is getting at'.[42]

Traditionally, narrative presupposes a sequence of at least two events, as in Forster's example, 'the king died and then the queen

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37 Greimas (1970) 157–160; (1987) 63–65.
38 Prince (2008) 387.
39 Abbott (2009) 309, '"narrativity" is still commonly used in two senses: in a fixed sense as *the "narrativeness" of narrative* and in a scalar sense as *the "narrativeness" of a narrative*, the one applied generally to the concept of narrative, the other applied comparatively to particular narratives'.
40 Arist. *Po.* 1449b24–28.
41 Labov (1972) 362–363.
42 Labov (1972) 366.

died'.[43] Genette defines narrative as a change from an earlier to a later state of affairs (which involve a single event),[44] while de Jong opts for the presence of a narrator as a prerequisite for narrative, thus excluding drama from the sphere of narrativity.[45] According to Stanzel, narrativity is tied to 'mediacy': the story is mediated indirectly, through a narrator ('teller mode'), or directly, through a reflector, namely a character ('reflector mode').[46] For others, the concept of mediacy from story to narrative needs to be reconsidered, since it is not necessarily narrator-oriented. According to Jahn, plays are mediated by a narrative agency, which either takes the form of a narrator inserted in the performance, or remains a vague governing authority in charge of narrative selections.[47] As Fludernik puts it, 'narrating as a personal act of telling or writing can no longer claim primacy or priority. Both acting and telling are facets of a real-world model most forcefully present in natural narrative but nevertheless disposable on a theoretical level'.[48] In her model of 'natural' narratology, experiencing is an equally legitimate mode of mediating, as is telling, reading, or viewing. Consequently, '[n]arrativity can emerge from the experiential portrayal of dynamic event sequences which are already configured emotively and evaluatively, but it can also consist in the experiential depiction of human consciousness *tout court*'.[49] From this perspective, narrativity is a feature ascribed to the narrative by the narratees, namely by its receivers.[50]

In structural terms, given that factors such as the temporality of narrative have been also treated as decisive, narrativity has been defined as 'the play of suspense/curiosity/surprise between represented and communicative time (in whatever combination, whatever medium, whatever manifest or latent form)'.[51] Such a tripartite scheme unquestionably reshapes previous findings regarding narrativity, as it leaves room for turning the focus from one aspect of the narrative to another according

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43 Forster (1979) 87, also taken over by de Jong (2004b) 6.
44 Genette (1983) 18, endorsed by Prince (1999) 43.
45 de Jong (2004b) 6-8.
46 Stanzel (1971) 6.
47 Jahn (2001) 674.
48 Fludernik (1996) 27.
49 Fludernik (1996) 30.
50 According to Fludernik's model, '[n]arrativity … is not a quality adhering to a text, but rather an attribute imposed on the text by the reader who interprets the text *as narrative*, thus *narrativizing* the text' [Fludernik (2003) 24].
51 Sternberg (1992) 529.

to generic or authorial factors. Culler also focuses on temporality, defin-
ing narrative as the temporal sequences of human actions or states.[52]

As pointed out at the beginning of this discussion, narrativity could
also be defined according to degree. Prince's theory[53] drew a line be-
tween non-narrative texts and texts with a low degree of narrativity.
According to his model, narrativity is constructed on the basis of several
criteria, such as the 'specificity of the (sequences of) events presented',
the extent to which 'occurrence [of events] is given as a fact … rather
than a possibility or probability'[54] or the extent to which the events of
the narrative 'constitute (pertain to) a whole, a complete structure with
a beginning, a middle and an end'.[55] Of equal importance is the exis-
tence of a 'continuant subject',[56] allowing the narratees to perceive
events in a sequence, or the 'point' of the narrative, i.e. the 'desire' of
the narrative on the part of the narratee.[57] Finally, according to Prince,
narrativity is marked by the existence of 'disnarrated elements', i.e. of
parts of the story that did not happen, albeit they could have.[58] Coste has
proposed different degrees of narrativity and set forth a narrativity-scale;
according to his schema, narrativity is positively influenced by factors
such as causality, specificity or avoidance of superfluous repetitions.[59]

Scholars have studied different modes of narrativity, as well as differ-
ent degrees. In this light, the 'simple narrativity' of fairy tales can be dis-
tinguished from the 'complex narrativity' of Balzac or Dumas, since in
the former, the plot evolves linearly, following the unraveling of a single
narrative thread, while in the latter the main plot lines are fused with
secondary subplots. Equally, 'figural narrativity' found in lyric, historical
or philosophical texts has to be distinguished from 'instrumental narra-
tivity' found in sermons or debates, since in the former, the story is con-
structed after universal claims, while in the latter general strategies con-
cerning the macrotextual level are mirrored in narrative structures
appearing in the microtextual level.[60]

As seen from above, narrativity is a multifarious concept, the defini-
tion of which depends on the angle of its reception. Having surveyed
the basic theoretical approaches to narrativity, we can examine the ex-

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52   Culler (1975) 143.
53   Prince (1982); (1999); (2008).
54   Prince (1982) 149.
55   Prince (1982) 151. See also *id*. (1999) 45.
56   Prince (1982) 151.
57   Prince (1982) 159.
58   Prince (1988).
59   Coste (1989) 62.
60   Ryan (1992) [after Prince (1999) 47; (2008) 387-388].

tent to which it can be applied to drama. Starting with the degree of its development, we have seen that narrativity is calculated by its completeness and self-evaluation, or *raison d'être*.[61] The concept of dramatic completeness was also a poetic prerequisite according to Aristotle's definition and it is one of tragedy's main narrative qualities; as for a play's *raison d'être*, it is inferred by the spectators, who by the end of the play are in position of problematizing fate and justice under the effects of pity, fear and catharsis. If narrativity is defined on the basis of the sequence of two events[62] or at least the change from an earlier to a later state of affairs,[63] then in the case of Greek drama that is obtained by means of complex dramatic plots. Finally, in structural terms, classical tragedy raises suspense, curiosity and surprise,[64] as it also represents the temporal sequences of human actions or states of emotion.[65]

With respect to the degree of narrativity found in drama, it can be argued that the events presented are narrated as facts (not possibilities), which constitute a whole with a continuous subject (again meeting the Aristotelian criteria). As for the requirement regarding the feeling of desire for the narrative on the part of the narratees, it could be found in the quintessential feelings of pity and fear that display the spectators' agony and mental participation in the events represented. Tragedy even hosts the alleged 'disnarrated elements', which are effectuated by means of the so-called 'negative anachronies'.[66] Likewise, classical drama insists not only on causality, but equally opts for specificity and the avoidance of superfluous repetitions.[67] Drama pertains to the category of 'complex' narration, since a play's main plot is fused with secondary subplots,

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61 See above, Labov (1972).

62 See above, Forster (1979).

63 See above, Genette (1983); Prince (1999).

64 See above, Sternberg (1992).

65 See above, Culler (1975).

66 See above, Prince (1982); 'Negative anachronies' refer to the sphere of possible actions that characters *could* perform, but did or will not. Such a narration of possible scenarios that finally did not come into being is usually communicated to the spectators through the means of negative flashbacks or flashforwards. See for example *Ph*. 344-349 and the narration of Jocasta regarding the nuptial customs in celebration of Polynices' wedding that were never performed (see below, pp. 52-53 and n. 237) or Electra's plan to kill Aegisthus in Sophocles' *El*. 951-957. Negative anachronies also resemble the so-called 'fabricated narratives' of postmodern dramas [Richardson (2001) 684-685].

67 See above, Coste (1989). Repetitions in tragedy occur in order to yield specific dramatic or narrative results. In addition, events that are referred to more than once are usually narrated by different focalizers and at different length.

while it also shares the qualities of 'figural' narratives, since its plot tackles universal questions about human fate and divine justice.[68] Consequently, Greek tragedy fulfills all the prerequisites of narrativity set out by several scholars, with the single exception of the requirement of a narrator as the medium of transmission of the communicational message. The absence of the narrator makes some scholars exclude drama from narratological research, and the analysis of such claims will be our focus in this last part of our discussion.

The first systematic attempts to analyze dramatic narration were undertaken on the basis of the theoretical model of the structuralist A. J. Greimas.[69] According to the semiotic square of Greimas, narrative reality can be classified into groups of concepts that become relevant through opposition. His semiotic analysis involves two axes, the 'paradigmatic', which provides a horizontal organization of units, and the 'syntagmatic', which organizes units vertically. Following a distinction of Propp, Greimas studied the text by means of minimal units, called 'actants', that correspond to roles performed by characters, and 'functions', that correspond to types of incidents that tend to reappear.[70] The narratological model of Greimas works as a basis on which Philippides,[71] Aélion,[72] and Mpezantakos[73] analyze a series of ancient Greek tragedies. Their findings reveal a dense net of relations between the structural elements of the plot, which sheds light on the text's meanings.

Regardless of the narratological character of the aforementioned approaches, a great 'divide' concerning the application of narratology to ancient Greek drama opened up in 1991, when de Jong published a study on the Euripidean messenger speeches.[74] By applying the theory of Genette and Bal to only the speeches of tragic Messengers, she drew a line between the 'embedded-narrative' parts (messenger speeches) and the dramatic, 'non-narrative text'.[75] Similarly, in her recent introduction to narratological theory, de Jong emphasized that due to the absence of a main narrator, drama cannot be considered a narrative. Consequently, in dramatic non-narrative texts, the internal (intra-dramatic) narrators shall –according to de Jong- be considered secondary narrators, even if

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68   See above, Ryan (1992).
69   Greimas (1966); (1973).
70   Katilius–Boydstun (1990).
71   Philippides (1984).
72   Aélion (1987).
73   Mpezantakos (2004).
74   de Jong (1991).
75   Such a distinction is also endorsed by Barrett (2002).

primary narration and narrator are nonexistent.[76] At the other end of the spectrum, scholars like Gould, Goward and Markantonatos believe that Greek drama does not consist of separate narrative parts placed in a non-narrative sequence, and see it as a coherent narrative whole.[77] Such a scholarly chasm derives from the theoretical problem concerning the absence of the narrator. Few scholars would deny that the search for a main narrator as the 'undisputed' prerequisite for the existence of narrativity has been heavily conditioned by the influence of the novel. Owing to the absence of an apparent main narrator, dramatic narration 'tells the story' via techniques that do not appear in any other literary genres. Moreover, the use of the narrator as the determining factor for narrativity is intricately linked to the way we perceive the communicative process, and greatly depends on the semiotic model of communication that one adopts.

A typical diagram of the communicative procedure includes the transmission of the message (narrative) from the *real author* to the *real reader*. In this tripartite sequence (1. author − 2. narative − 3. reader), one could insert the stages 1ª and 3ª representing the *implied author*[78] and *implied reader*[79] respectively. The communicational model would then have the form: 1. real author − 1ª. implied author − 2. narrative − 3ª. implied reader − 3. reader, with 1ª alluding to the 'persona' of the writer[80] and 3ª to the 'persona' of the reader that the real writer might wish to construct. In an even more complex form, communicational procedure is supplemented with an additional stage, that of the *fictive narrator*, situated at 1ᵇ. The fictive narrator is a creation of the real author, and in that case would appear responsible for the transmission of the message and the fulfillment of the narrative. In this complex form, the communicative model would be as follows: 1. real author − 1ª. implied author − 1ᵇ. fictive narrator − 2. narrative − 3ª. implied reader − 3. reader. The implied author (1ª) does not have to coincide with the real

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76   de Jong (2004b) 6–8.

77   Gould (2001a); Goward (1999) 9-20; Markantonatos (2002); (2008). See also Lowe (2000), who recognizes the narrative economy of ancient Greek drama, regardless of the absence of a main narrator.

78   On the *implied author*, see Schmid (2009).

79   The concept of the *implied reader* alludes in the case of drama to the concept of the *implied audience*. See Lada-Richards (2008).

80   'The implied author can be defined as the correlate of all the indexical signs in a text that refer to the author of that text' [Schmid (2009) 167].

author (1), as the fictive narrator (1ᵇ) does not necessarily coincide with the implied (1ᵃ) or the real (1) author.[81]

Different approaches to dramatic narration depend on the divergent definitions of the identity of the fictive narrator (1ᵇ). As shown by the communicative process, the presence or absence of a fictive narrator is a matter of authorial choice not of communicative necessity. This means that communication is effected in a more complex (with the additional insertion of an artificial narratorial persona) or simpler way (with no narratorial intervention, directly from the real author to the real reader). The supplementary addition of a fictive narrator derives, as its plain absence, from the will of the writer or the conventions of the genre he or she serves.

Supporters of the application of narratology to drama identify the fictive narrator with the real author,[82] while those who criticize such a possibility do not. The latter believe that such an expansion of the subject of narratology is pointless and endangers the efficacy of its methods.[83] The above analysis of the communicative process however, ought to demonstrate that the lack of an implied narrative persona in no way annuls the existence of the diegetic level (i.e. the first level of narration),[84] in which an implied narrator is or is not inserted, according to the desire of the real author. Instead of a fictive narrator who narrates the diegetic events, dramatic narrative makes use of the merits of imitation and representation; putting aside the fictive narrator and projecting the real author, the story is commuted to the spectators via the unique fusion of 'pure narrative' and 'imitation'.[85] Besides, such an 'omission' of a narrative persona is not unusual. Dramatic narration parallels that of

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81 I adapt the semiotic communicational model of Chatman (1978) 151. See also Rimmon-Kenan (1983) 86-89.

82 Goward (1999) 12; Markantonatos (2002) 5; Markantonatos (2008) 195-196.

83 de Jong (2004b) 7.

84 The first level of narration, also called 'diegetic', confirms the pre-existence of the 'extra-diegetic' or 'hyper-diegetic' narrative level, in which the real author is supposed to compose his narration. See Genette (1980) 228-229.

85 Analogously, Goward [(1999) 17-18] notes that ''pure narrative' shows us what a text might be like when a poet does not conceal his own *persona* behind another character (as in drama) and when he chooses to suppress all attempts at vivid *showing* and restrict himself instead to limited *telling*; there is no doubt that the result is lacking in vivid and lifelike detail, and that it is more distant from 'felt experience''.

cinema, where the fictive narrator is also usually absent, and has to be identified with the director.[86]

With respect to narrativity, recent studies have tried to show that drama should not be considered in different terms, especially since narrativity is not only diegetic but also mimetic. Drama's mimetic narrative qualities are evident from Aristotle's observations; in dramatic narrative, the story is communicated through the representation and not the telling of actions, while the degree of narrativity depends on the richness of the events represented. 'Diegetic narrativity, on the other hand, refers to verbal, as opposed to visual or performative, transmission of narrative content, to the representation of a speech act of telling a story by an agent called a narrator'.[87] Additionally, while mimetic narrativity focuses on the so-called 'illusion of action' or 'illusion of characters',[88] diegetic narrativity foregrounds the 'illusion of a teller',[89] i.e. of a narrator figure that highlights more the act than the content of narration and consequently gives more weight to the 'telling-' than the 'story-frame'.[90]

Drama can also demonstrate diegetic elements.[91] Dramatic narration does not confine itself to Aristotelian *mimesis*, but also displays diegetic elements, such as *metalepsis*,[92] direct address of the audience by characters, parabasis, prologue, epilogue, soliloquies, metanarrative comments, stage directions, and of course messenger reports.[93] As Nünning and Sommer neatly put it,

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86 The special character of narration in cinema (similar to narration in drama) has not been considered an obstacle to narratological approaches to cinematography. See Chatman (1990).

87 Nünning & Sommer (2008) 338.

88 Wolf (1993) 97.

89 Nünning & Sommer (2008) 339.

90 Fludernik (1996) 339-341.

91 A characteristic example of mimetic and diegetic fusion in drama is found in the so-called 'memory plays', i.e. those combining dramatic presentation and traditional story telling by involving a single speaker who narrates episodes of his or her life. For the memory plays, see Richardson (2001) 682-685.

92 *Metalepsis* is defined as 'the contamination of levels in a hierarchical structure as it occurs in narrative' [Pier (2008) 303]. For Genette, metalepsis specifically refers to the 'intrusion into the storyworld by the extradiegetic narrator or by the narratee (or into deeper embedded levels), or the reverse' [Pier (2008) 303]. See also Pier (2009). For a recent discussion of the narrative effect of metalepsis in ancient texts, see de Jong (2009), according to whom metalepsis in ancient literature enhances both the narrator's authority and the narrative's realism. For an example of metalepsis in the *Phoenissae*, see below ch. 2.1.1.

93 Nünning & Sommer (2008) 340-341.

'[i]n drama … diegetic narrativity is not resticted to such narrators who tell, and generate,[94] stories on an extradiegetic level of communication, but can occur, rather, on various levels of dramatic text: many prologues and choric narrations would be typical examples of extradiegetic narratives, while the stories told by characters … represent intradiegetic narratives which can feature a high degree of what we have called diegetic narrativity'.[95]

By fostering the distinction between diegetic and mimetic narrativity, a new horizon of narratological interpretation opens up, according to which dramatic art is not by definition deprived of any narratorial qualities, but just displays them differently. Drama's diegetic spectrum is expanded even more widely when seen under a transgeneric point of view and approached through narrative techniques used in genres whose narrativity is non negotiable. In film, where the absence of a main narrator does not contradict its narrativity, plot mediation is traced in image sequences or soundtracks. Similarly, in drama, the enactment of the plot on stage could equally be considered a type of narrative mediacy.[96] In other words, 'what is usually uttered by a single, governing voice becomes [in drama] enacted by several speaking characters'.[97] Following the findings of transmedial narratology, one cannot deny that narrative does not posit 'the occurrence of the speech act of telling a story by an agent called a narrator' as a necessary condition.[98] As in film, where visual and sound images dominate, acquire diegetic force and make the presence of a narrator optional, in drama the physical enactment of the

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94 *Generative* narrators are found in heterodiegetic narratives, where they reside in a clearly distinct level from that of the characters. For the generative narrators, see Richardson (1988) 196 ff.; (2001) 685-686. According to Fludernik [(2008) 368], the technique of the generative narrators 'enhances the willingness of the audience to see the actors as real people, rather as puppets manipulated by the stage manager'.

95 Nünning & Sommer (2008) 339.

96 Fludernik (2008) 358.

97 Richardson (2001) 683. Even in postmodern drama, where the existence of a narrator is not unusual, the narrator figure might at any moment stop performing his 'diegetic' role and allow the enactment of his story to begin. The narrator's presence or absence are part of drama's conventions and cannot affect the genre's narrative qualities. As celebrated in a well known metatheatrical narratorial confession, 'the narrator is an undisguised convention of the play. He takes whatever license with dramatic convention is convenient to his purposes' [Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*, New York 1980, scene I].

98 Ryan (2005) 2. According to Ryan's cognitive model, narrative is defined after: (i) the creation of a mental image of a world that (ii) must go through changes that cannot be fully anticipated and where (iii) physical events are related to specific mental states.

story right before the eyes of the spectators substitutes the narrator and serves as the medium of the diegesis.

In summary, classical and modern drama are narratologically accessible for two main reasons: first because the lack of narrator does not result in a gap in the communicative process –the story is transmitted through acting, not telling– and secondly because the predominance of mimetic versus diegetic elements does not affect the genre's narrativity – mimetic genres can equally share high levels of narrativity, especially when they are additionally enriched with diegetic elements, like drama is. These are some of the reasons, which have convinced a number of scholars to include drama among the narrative genres and to adopt the use of narratology for its analysis. Richardson[99] was one of the first who condemned traditional narratological credos according to which drama is a solely mimetic genre, deprived of any diegetic qualities. He has produced several studies about the narrative aspects of –mainly postmodernist– drama, showing that most of the narratological tenets that are usually applied to fiction can be also applied to drama. As Bal admits,[100] narrative is defined according to plot, so drama could not but be included in a large group of narrative genres to which narrativity was traditionally denied, such as film, cartoons, painting or music. Drama's communicative features were also studied by Pfister, who coined the terms 'perspective' and 'perspective structure', demonstrating that the concept of the point of view also exists in drama as it does in fiction.[101]

Along the same lines, Chatman[102] and Bordwell[103] applied narratological rules to cinema and never denied that an analogous possibility has opened up for the study of drama. Chatman, Bordwell and Metz[104] generally emphasize the transmediality of narrativity and discuss the importance of transgeneric narratology. This transgeneric, transmedial and interdisciplinary character of narrativity has also been projected by Fludernik,[105] Ryan[106] as well as by A. and V. Nünning,[107] in a volume study-

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99   Richardson (1987); (1988); (1997); (2001); (2007).
100 Bal (1997) 3-15.
101 Pfister (1988).
102 Chatman (1978); (1990). One of Chatman's most important contributions is his discussion of the 'cinematic narrator', a concept invented by the film critics to justify the correct use of meaningful juxtaposition of scenes, camera angle, sound, light and color. As a consequence, similar qualities should be analogously attributed to the dramatic narrator.
103 Bordwell (1985); (1989).
104 Metz (1974).
105 Fludernik (2000).
106 Ryan (2004).

ing narrativity on a wide range of genres, such as drama, lyric poetry, art, music, film and comics. According to the authors, the aforementioned 'narratively-marginalized' genres do not lack the communicative features usually ascribed to traditionally diegetic genres. Besides, according to Fludernik's natural narratology, all dramas employ onstage characters, and from this minimal prerequisite, narrativity is considered an undisputable given.[108] Most recently, Fludernik and Alber actually maintain that '[s]ince plays represent experientiality, they are narrative, irrespective of narrator figures or additional narrative techniques (such as the use of music). In other words, having a narrating character on stage, for example, is not required to bring plays within the domain of narrative'.[109] In the same book, Hühn and Sommer talk about a 'superordinate mediating instance', a kind of dramatic governing authority that shapes each play's narrative structure.[110]

I intend to treat dramas as coherent narrative units, identifying the plays' 'missing' narrators with the playwrights themselves, whose presence is evident in the plays' carefully organized plots. As an articulate narrative whole, each play can be approached by means of most of the frequently used narratological devices and thus can be narratologically analyzed in ways that in the past might have been considered impossible for the tragic genre. Since drama does not lack the communicative qualities of any other medium of transmission of stories from narrators to narratees, the invisible 'narrating mind' of the tragic narrative or else called the 'dramatic composition device'[111] manages to surpass any generic obstacles and construct an effective, multi-layered narrative, consisting of various narrative levels, diverse focalizers, as well as extended local and temporal axes.

The *Phoenissae*

I will apply modern narratology to Euripides' *Phoenissae*, aiming at a deeper understanding of the play's inner structure. As one of the most complicated plays of Euripides, the *Phoenissae* works as a fertile field for

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107 A. Nünning & V. Nünning (2002).

108 Fludernik (1996) 351–352.

109 Alber & Fludernik (2009) 185.

110 Hühn & Sommer (2009) 229. The term corresponds to what Chatman (1990) 127 would call an 'organizational and sending agency' that structures the film. See also Weidle (2009).

111 Fludernik (2008) 359.

the study of issues like the efficacy of anachronies, the multiple narrative levels, the changes in rhythm, the presentation of the same events of the story by different focalizers, but also the definition of on- and offstage space. I will also explore the intertextual web of associations that connect this play not just with the rest of Thebes-related plays, but also with the Theban epic cycle.

One of the *Phoenissae*'s most striking features is the pluralistic use of the myth. In the *Phoenissae*, the Theban saga is not simply a part of Euripides' arsenal, but its complete narration is one of his basic dramatic concerns. Putting the Theban myth under the magnifying glass, Euripides creates a narrative where the myth is presented as an entity, and the toils of the Labdacids have a specific beginning, middle and end. He includes in the *Phoenissae* a vast amount of mythical material, making the play a Theban mythical 'megatext' by itself.[112] For the first time in the Theban dramatic corpus, accounts of Theban prehistory, Laius' patricide, Oedipus' exposure, Oedipus' curse, Eteocles' and Polynices' strife, the expedition against Thebes, the fratricidal duel between Eteocles and Polynices, the suicide of Jocasta, the wedding of Antigone to Haemon, the burial of Polynices, as well as the exile of Oedipus are narrated / dramatically presented in a single play. Euripides aspires to create a Theban panorama, in which an abundance of mythical information is at the audience's disposal.

Admirably, his abundant presentation of the myth is delivered so dexterously that it can cater to all different tastes of the audience. Being well aware of previous literary treatments of the Theban myth, Euripides is both repetitive and innovative, endorsing or rejecting preceding variations. In this way he manages to create a narrative that informs those who are not familiar with all the details of the story of the Theban royal family, while he can still keep the suspense for those who are mythical experts. Resembling the narrative of modern television series, where new spectators are as welcome as older ones, the narrative of the *Phoenissae* is instructive for the new-comers as it is fascinating for those who already know the myth. I therefore characterize the narrative of the *Phoenissae* as a 'flexi-narrative', using a term initially coined to describe some television shows.[113]

In a flexi-narrative series, 'each episode contains at least two storylines that begin, develop, and are resolved within that same episode. In addition, it also includes several storylines that continue from previous

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112 The concept of the mythical 'megatext' is discussed below, n. 123 and ch. 4.2.2.

113 See Jones (2008).

episodes and go on into future ones… At the same time, the series' pri-
mary characters are involved both in self-contained and continuing
storylines, their engagement in the latter providing continuity, progres-
sion, and some suspense across multiple episodes'.[114] The similarities of
this contemporary television narrative with that of the *Phoenissae* are
striking; as in current television, the *Phoenissae* combine more than one
storylines (the strife of the brothers, the suicide of Jocasta, the burial of
Polynices, and the exile of Oedipus are only some of those belonging to
the diegetic narrative level), that either begin and end within the narra-
tive limits of the play (as for example the suicide of Jocasta), or they sur-
pass the narrative limitations by having been developed already in earlier
plays (as for example the burial of Polynices)[115] or by being left to be
developed in other, later plays, even of different authors (as for example
the exile of Oedipus). Analogously, the characters of the *Phoenissae* par-
ticipate both in self-contained stories embedded in the play and in the
main story of the diegetic narrative level. In this light, Jocasta for exam-
ple, apart from being part of several of the play's narrative levels, and
thus playing an integral role in the general dramatic development of the
plot, is also the main character in a self-contained storyline about her
own past. She is the narrator of her own story, making her narrative
intrinsically autodiegetic.[116] Similarly, Menoeceus is the main character
in the story of his self-sacrifice, as he is also part of the wider narrative
mechanism that moves the basic story forward.

The flexi-narrative of the *Phoenissae* guarantees a major narrative as-
set: by allowing small-scale storylines to enrich the basic (diegetic) narra-
tive level, Euripides can incorporate all mythical information in small
excursuses without downplaying the main story's narrative rhythm. The
play thus satisfies both those who need this extra information and those
who are mythically competent and, by extension, more demanding with
concern to the dramatic development of the main storyline. In the case
of the *Phoenissae*, Euripides' double perspective with respect to his ad-
dressing audiences of varying levels of mythical and theatrical familiarity
is connected not just with the abundance of mythical details, but also,
and significantly so, with his complex and highly sophisticated use of
multiple narrative devices that finally render a mythical cornucopia into
a fascinating unraveling of the story. It is exactly this timely combination
of details pertaining to the entire Theban myth with the sophisticated

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114 Jones (2008) 588.
115 Such a complex retrospective intertextuality involves the narrative technique
     of 'future reflexive' and is thoroughly discussed below, in ch. 4.3.1.
116 The dramatic results of Jocasta's autodiegetic narrative are analyzed below, in
     ch. 2.1.1.

narrative techniques that results in this polyprismatic play. Indeed, in the *Phoenissae*, along with the complex narrative devices, the main narrative level is uniquely innovative. By allowing Polynices to enter the orchestra and verbally confront Eteocles, as well as by endowing Menoeceus with an unprecedented dramatic role and keeping Jocasta alive to witness her sons' double murder, Euripides can be sure that his mythically trained spectators will be as satisfied as his mythically incompetent audience, to whom a Theban mythical panorama is generously offered.

Chapter 2
Retelling the past, shaping the future:
Onstage narrative and offstage allusions
(*Phoenissae* 1–689)

The procedure of incorporating the *time of the story* into the *time of the* dramatic *narration*[117] is complex, demanding, and makes this temporal duality one of drama's basic narrative concerns. The story of the *Phoenissae* sheds light on multiple aspects of the Theban myth: the wrongdoings of Laius before the birth of Oedipus (i.e. the rape of Chrysippus and the disobedience to the Apollonian oracle), the exposure of baby Oedipus in Mount Cithaeron, the patricide of Laius by Oedipus, the riddle of the Sphinx and the short-lived salvation of the city, the mutual fratricide of Eteocles and Polynices, the burial of the latter, the suicide of Jocasta and finally the exile of Oedipus and Antigone.

Euripides' narrative agenda includes *embedded narratives*[118] that spread into all three time axes and are communicated to the spectators through various *focalizers*.[119] Often, a single event may be narrated by several nar-

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117 The basic narratological distinction between *fabula* (i.e. the events of the narration in their 'real', chronological order), *story* (i.e. the events of the narration in the 'pseudo-order' of the text), and *text* (i.e. the verbal or other representation of the *story*) [Bal (1997) 5] is largely followed by classicists [see for example de Jong, Nünlist & Bowie (2004)]. The term *story* as opposed to *narrative* was coined by Genette [(1980) 27], who first made the distinction between 'the signified or narrative content' and 'the signifier, statement, discourse or narrative text itself' respectively (the French equivalents of the terms are *histoire* –for *story*- and *narration* –for *narrative*- and their translation belongs to J. E. Lewin). Consequently, the *time of the story* refers to the time supposedly needed for the fulfillment of the events of the story in real life, while the *time of the narration* refers to the 'pseudo-time' needed for the fulfillment of the narration [Genette (1980) 33-35].

118 That is, secondary narratives inserted in the main storyline [de Jong, Nünlist & Bowie (2004) xv]. Given the nature of drama, embedded narratives must be spoken by an onstage character. With respect to the time of the story, embedded narratives usually provide temporal detours to the past or to the future.

119 That is, the agent of the *focalization* or narrative viewpoint. Focalizers serve as filters through which the events and participants of a narrative are perceived [de Jong, Nünlist & Bowie (2004) xvi], while '[f]ocalization denotes the perspectival restriction and orientation of narrative information relative to some-

rators, being thus filtered through a multiplicity of perspectives. At the same time, the numerous embedded narratives in the *Phoenissae* allow the main story to host secondary plotlines and to incorporate them into the main action. Finally, embedded narratives usually generate chronological detours, which, in the form of *analepses* or *prolepses* navigate tragic narration towards the past or the present respectively.[120] Because of the very nature of dramatic narration, all temporal deviations are embedded into the main storyline. This means that text-time is not necessarily brought to a standstill in order for the anachronies to occur, but the temporal norm of the narrative remains unaffected. In contrast to film for example, where flashbacks and flashforwards are represented visually

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body's (usually, a character's) perception, imagination, knowledge, or point of view' [Jahn (2008) 173]. For Genette [(1980) 189-194], focalization is optional, while post-Genettean theory considers it inevitable [Bal (1997) 144-154, esp. 151-152; Phelan (2001)]. From the vantage point of cognitive theory, focalization opens an 'imaginary window' into the narrative world and thus controls the narratees' perception [Jahn (1996); (1999)]. In drama, focalization leaves visible marks of subjectivity on all embedded narratives, even on the apparently objective messenger speeches [de Jong (1991); Markantonatos (2002) 15].

120 An *analepsis* designates the evocation or narration of an event that has happened *before* the point of the story where we are, at any given moment. Conversely, a *prolepsis* designates the evocation or narration of an event that is to happen *after* the point of the story where we are, at any given moment. Both types of *anachronies* [Genette (1980) 35-36] can be: (i) according to their relation to the main story, (a) *internal* –when they narrate events that happen within the limits of the main story–, (b) *external* –when they narrate events that surpass the limits of the main story–, or (c) *mixed* –when they are both internal and external–; (ii) according to their content, (a) *repeating* –when they narrate events that are also narrated elsewhere–, or (b) *completing* –when they narrate events for the first time, or they fill in gaps of previous narratives–; (iii) according to the secondary story they introduce, (a) *heterodiegetic* –when they introduce a story which is different from the main storyline and creates a new narrative level–, or (b) *homodiegetic* –when they refer to the main storyline–; (iv) according to the agent who communicates them, (a) *narratorial* –when they are uttered by the main narrator–, or (b) *actorial* –when they are uttered by one of the characters– [Genette (1980) 40, 67-76; Reichel (1994) 47-98; Bal (1997) 84; de Jong (2001) xi, xvi; de Jong, Nünlist & Bowie (2004) xv, xvii-xviii]. A strictly textual conception of anachronies also treats the so-called *co-occurrences*, which are further divided into *parallel* and *simultaneous* phases; textual conventions impose the placement of a parallel phase after a given sequence of events, although in terms of fabula, the narratees are supposed to understand that the phase happened in parallel with the events. On the other hand, a simultaneous phase happens when the beginning of a sequence coincides with the end of a previous sequence, but different characters or plotlines are involved [Ireland (2008) 592].

through a moving camera that 'follows' the events, in drama theatrical frame remains fixed and anachronies are channeled to the main story without temporally or narratively stepping out of the main course of action.[121]

The present chapter aims at decoding the narrative mechanisms dominating the first part of the play, which begins with the prologue and ends with the first stasimon. The end of this first part is signaled by the exit of Polynices from the stage (and from the city of Thebes) and sets the ensuing conflict between the Argive and Theban armies as the play's narrative nucleus. The following conclusions concern the type of narration onstage characters adopt for the communication of offstage events, as well as the ways by which triple dimensioned time including past, present, and future is channeled into the present-oriented dramatic narrative. In a play with a tendency of creating a panorama of the Theban mythical past, the distinction between the 'nontemporal' myth and the 'temporal' world of the play[122] is stretched to its limits. By infusing almost every aspect of the Theban saga into the *Phoenissae*, Euripides adds to the play's pathos, as he invites his audience to 'see' past, present and future events as belonging to a continuum of time.

2.1. The labyrinthine path of myth
(Prologue, *Phoenissae* 1-201)

The *Phoenissae* starts with a sonorous mythical outburst. In addition to the initial monologue of Jocasta that exposes in full the Theban mythical substratum, the comments of the Servant in the Teichoscopia expand the mythical gaze, offering information that goes beyond the Theban saga and refers to other, non-Theban heroes. As the first part of the prologue (verbalized by Jocasta) insists on the city's remote and recent past, the second (the Teichoscopia), oscillates between the past, the agonizing present and the dubious future.

2.1.1. Jocasta and the past (1–87)

Jocasta, a narrator of the past

Any attempt to give the *Phoenissae* its position in the Theban mythical *megatext* makes more than evident the vast range of mythical variants

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121 Markantonatos (2002) 10-11.
122 de Romilly (1968) 30-32.

that Euripides had at his disposal.[123] As was the case with every Athenian tragedy, the *Phoenissae* was shaped through a complex process of selection of thematical material, which involved inclusion and exclusion of mythical variants in accordance or disagreement with previous treatments of the Theban saga. That is why tragic poets felt the need to attune the spectators to their personal narrative tone at the beginning of each performance. Besides, the disclosure to the audience of information from which the Chorus and the rest of the onstage characters are excluded is a fundamental function of dramatic prologues.[124]

In the *Phoenissae*, from the first lines of the prologue the spectators are mentally transferred to the remote past.[125] By turning the narrative gaze of Jocasta into an analepsis of a very long *reach*,[126] Euripides presents the events that precede the play's starting point.[127] Through a significant narrative leap to the city's 'pre-history' and its foundation by Cadmus, Jocasta creates an enormous gap between the time of the story and the time of the narration, which is afterwards bridged by a lively present tense (66, ζῶν δ' ἔστ' ἐν οἴκοις, 'He now lives in the palace'), reaching the *zero point*[128] between the two.[129]

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123 The term *megatext* belongs to Segal (1986) and corresponds to the texts (written or oral) that comprise a mythical tradition. The multiple connections between the *Phoenissae* and the rest of the mythical megatext, as well as the various treatments of the Theban myth before the Euripidean play, will be thoroughly discussed in ch. 4, esp. 4.2.2.

124 Goward (1999) 125.

125 On the prologues in Euripides, see Méridier (1911); Imhof (1937) 26-45; Schmidt (1971); Strohm (1977); Hamilton (1978); Erbse (1984); Segal (1992).

126 'An anachrony can reach into the past or the future, either more or less far from the "present" moment (that is, from the moment in the story when the narrative was interrupted to make room for the anachrony): this temporal distance we will name the anachrony's *reach*' [Genette (1980) 48].

127 Extended soliloquies that present the play's 'prehistory' are common in Euripides; as noted by Lloyd [(2007) 295], those analepses are sometimes so extended and their narrative is so exhaustive that the narratees have problems understanding where the main story begins. The emphasis on the previous phases of the Theban myth in this prologue has led to its characterization as 'summarizing' by Easterling [(1982) 71].

128 The *zero-point* between the time of the story and the time of the narration would correspond to absolute coincidence between the story's duration and the narrative's tempo. Although such perfect an isochrony could be theoretically found in dialogue scenes of narrative fiction, Genette [(1980) 87-88] prefers to talk about *steadiness in speed*, i.e. steadiness between the duration of the story (measured in minutes, hours, days, months, years) and the length of the text (measured in lines and pages). In drama, due to the absence of an external narrator, such a zero-degree seems easier to detect. The time of the narration

Jocasta's analepses are *external*,[130] since they involve events that do not fall within the limits of the main story, and they follow a dwindling course with respect to the gap between the time of the story and the time of the narration. Thus, the big narrative leap to the past that referred to the foundation of Thebes by Cadmus (4-5), gradually gives its place to *heterodiegetic*[131] analepses of shorter extent: the birth of Laius (7-9), the Apollonian oracle that warned him not to beget a child (15-20), the fatal meeting of father and son that led to the patricide (32-45), the self-blinding of Oedipus after the revelation of the incest (59-65), and finally the strife of the two brothers, Polynices and Eteocles.

Apart from heterodiegetic narratives of events in which Jocasta did not participate, her monologue also involves more personal narratives, in which she was seriously involved. The narrative position of the *heterodiegetic* narrator grants Jocasta a secure distance from the narrated events;[132] but in the course of her monologue, the poet frequently shifts her narrative identity from heterodiegetic to *homodiegetic*. Unlike the distance from the story provided by a heterodiegetic narrator, a homodiegetic narrator gives the narrative a tone of intimacy, especially when he or she additionally becomes *autodiegetic*.[133]

In lines 11-13, Jocasta alludes to the origins of Creon and herself. She is a homodiegetic and autodiegetic narrator, since she does not simply participate in her story, but she is also her story's central heroine. This proximity to the narrated events is however abandoned from line 14 onwards, when Jocasta begins the narrative of her marriage to Laius. Her initially autodiegetic- then turns to witness-narrative, since Jocasta

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in drama however, is still dependent on generic conventions or directorial interference [Markantonatos (2002) 8 n.17].

129 This forwarding narrative movement from the past to the present is further boosted by Jocasta's supplicating address to Zeus (85), which additionally moves the narrative from the present to the future.

130 See above, n. 120.

131 See above, n. 120.

132 A narrator is called *heterodiegetic* or *external* when he or she *does not* participate in the story he or she narrates and *homodiegetic*, *internal* or *character-bound* when he or she *does* participate in the story he or she narrates. The terms heterodiegetic / homodiegetic belong to Genette [(1980) 212-262], while Bal [(1997) 19-77] and de Jong [(2004b) 1-4] opt for the terms external / character-bound and external / internal respectively.

133 A homodiegetic and *autodiegetic* narrator plays a central / starring role in his or her story, in which he or she also generates the actions. Autodiegetic narrators are contrasted to homodiegetic but *witness*-narrators, who also participate in their stories but only as simple witnesses and not as generators of actions [Rimmon-Kennan (1983) 96].

presents the events in a way that excludes any initiative on her side. The strong emphasis on ἐγώ in line 10, ἐγὼ δὲ παῖς μὲν κλήιζομαι Μενοικέως ('I am called daughter of Menoeceus'), gives its position to a third-person external analeptic narrative, in which the subject is each time the generator of action: Laius, who begot an offspring regardless of Apollo's will (21-22, ὁ δ' ἡδονῆι ⟨ʼν⟩δοὺς … ἔσπειρεν ἡμῖν παῖδα, 'But he yielded to pleasure … and sired our child') and then pierced his baby's ankles and ordered his exposure (25, δίδωσι βουκόλοισιν ἐκθεῖναι βρέφος, '[the father] gave the babe to herdsmen to expose'),[134] the shepherds of Polybus, who handed over the exposed baby to Merope, Polybus' wife (28-30, Πολύβου δέ νιν λαβόντες ἱπποβουκόλοι / φέρουσ' ἐς οἴκους εἴς τε δεσποίνης χέρας / ἔθηκαν, 'The horseherders of Polybus picked him up, brought him to the palace, and placed him in the hands of their mistress'), and finally Merope, who presented the baby as her own (30-31, … ἡ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν ὠδίνων πόνον / μαστοῖς ὑφεῖτο καὶ πόσιν πείθει τεκεῖν, 'She had it put to the breast, the child my labor pains brought forth, and persuaded her husband it was her own').[135]

A similar coloring applies to the analepsis describing Jocasta's and Oedipus' incestuous marriage. Jocasta is a witness-narrator when it comes to Creon's offer of her hand as a reward for the man who would solve the riddle of the Sphinx (47-49, Κρέων ἀδελφὸς τἀμὰ κηρύσσει λέχη, / ὅστις σοφῆς αἴνιγμα παρθένου μάθοι, / τούτωι ξυνάψειν λέκτρα, 'my brother Creon proclaimed that he would give me in marriage to whoever solved the wise maiden's riddle'), or when she informs the spectators that it was her son, Oedipus, who answered Sphinx's question and won his way to the throne (49-52, … τυγχάνει δέ πως / μούσας ἐμὸς παῖς Οἰδίπους Σφιγγὸς μαθών, / [ὅθεν τύραννος τῆσδε γῆς καθίσταται] / καὶ σκῆπτρ' ἔπαθλα τῆσδε λαμβάνει χθονός, 'My son somehow or other managed to learn her song's meaning, [and hence became king of this land,] took the scepter of this country as his prize').

Her witness-narration culminates with the description of the incest, when she distances herself the most from the monstrosities which she narrates. She recounts her own profane past by using a third-person narration, in which the subject is Oedipus, while she is referred to by the general term ἡ τεκοῦσα and not by the personal pronoun ἐγώ (53-54, γαμεῖ δὲ τὴν τεκοῦσαν οὐκ εἰδὼς τάλας, / οὐδ' ἡ τεκοῦσα παιδὶ συγκοιμωμένη). While her analepsis includes the narration of eight

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134 To an unknown spot according to Pausanias (9.2.4). For the exposure of a baby to a meadow or a mountain as a typical literary motif, see Motte (1973) 194-197 and Huys (1995), especially 139-140 and 234-236 on the *Phoenissae*.

135 I have slightly changed the translation of Kovacs (2002).

births (those of Polydorus, Labdacus, Laius, Oedipus and the four chil-
dren to Oedipus), five of which she delivered (Oedipus, Polynices,
Eteocles, Ismene and Antigone), only once −in the narration of the four
last children to Oedipus− is the elsewhere very frequent τίκτω being
used. In all other cases, the verbs φύω (8, 9) and σπείρω (22), which
reflect more the paternal than the maternal participation to birth, are
preferred. Apart from the gender-oriented verb selection, these four last
births of the children of Jocasta are also differently colored through the
selective use of historical present.[136]

The changes of subject or the stylistic choices of Jocasta cannot be
considered haphazard. By carefully following the twists and turns in fo-
calization, the narrative of Jocasta creates a kind of 'sentimental' *metanar-
rative*,[137] shaped according to the degree of her participation in the nar-
rated story.[138] She actively participates in the narration about her family
and Creon, but she distances herself from the Apollonian oracle to Laius,
the conception and exposure of Oedipus, and of course from the wed-
ding to her son, since it was her brother who organized it. Such a wit-
ness-narration downplays Jocasta's involvement in the wrongdoings of
the past and therefore reduces her responsibility. By having Jocasta pre-
sent herself as a prey to men, such as Laius, Creon, and Oedipus, Eurip-
ides may be playing with his audience's familiarity with the image of
Jocasta as victim, since intertextual references show that Aeschylus must
have created a similar effect.[139]

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136 In contrast to τίκτω, the verbs φύω and σπείρω are in the aorist and not his-
torical present. This temporal differentiation might be taken as an extra mark
that draws a line of difference between those last four births and the previous
ones.

137 *Metanarrative* alludes to the act of narration per se, i.e. to the act of storytelling
and the procedure of the composition of the narrative by its composer, or 'to
those elements by which a narrative is constituted and communicated'
[Nünning (2008) 305]. The metanarrative level lies above the diegetic level of
the main narrative [Rimmon-Kenan (1983) 93-94]. Although the terms
metanarrative and *metadiegetic narrative level* are now widely used, the concept
was first coined by Genette [(1980) 228 and n.41] as *extradiegetic* narrative level
(with *metanarrative* referring to a secondary narrative placed within the first
one).

138 The narrative twists are so strong that they could even be perceived as inter-
pretative directions to the narratees.

139 In lines 750-756 of the *Seven*, the Chorus points to Jocasta's innocence and
describes the disobedience of Laius and the conception of Oedipus in an
analogous manner: κρατηθεὶς [Laius] ἐκ φιλᾶν ἀβουλιᾶν / ἐγείνατο μὲν μόρον
αὑτῶι, / πατροκτόνον Οἰδιπόδαν, ὅστε ματρὸς ἁγνὰν / σπείρας ἄρουραν
ἵν᾽ ἐτράφη / ῥίζαν αἱματόεσσαν / ἔτλα. According to Hutchinson [(1985)
167], '[Φ]ίλων must represent an adjective in agreement with ἀβουλιᾶν, not

The reach of each of Jocasta's analepses is shorter than the previous one. The narratees thus feel that a big step to the past is followed by other, smaller steps, which then little by little lead to the present, until they meet the point of coincidence between the narrative time and story time. Such narratives, giving the impression of defamiliarization with the narrative's *hic et nunc*, create an 'extratemporal' dimension. So while the play has begun and the time of the narration is advancing towards its end, Jocasta's long external analepses create the feeling that the 'clock', which calculates the time of the story, has not started ticking yet. The story finally begins when Jocasta's narrative abandons its past focus and reaches the present, in the zero point of line 66 (ζῶν δ' ἔστ' ἐν οἴκοις). Consequently, even if the time of the narration started counting from the moment Jocasta appeared on stage, real action begins towards the end of her monologue. This new starting point of the story is consistent even with the antithesis between her monologue's stable –even monotonous– metrical effect and the dynamism of the next scene between Antigone and the Servant.[140] Jocasta's monologue consists of accumulative analepses that develop by a series of additions; apart from creating an artificial starting point of the story, the great number of analepses shows from the outset of the play that Euripides is interested in the past and problematizes the detection of the first beginnings.

From the very first lines of Jocasta's soliloquy, the past is presented so lavishly that it is organized into multiple levels. Euripides not only opted for the 'overfulness' of his play, but he also tried to incorporate as many mythical variations as possible and additionally enrich his endeavor

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a noun denoting Jocasta. The ἀβουλίαι must be Laius' own. Cf. 802 Λαΐου δυσβουλίας, 842 βουλαὶ δ' ἄπιστοι Λαΐου'. I agree that ἀβουλιᾶν refers solely to Laius, and I take φιλᾶν as a possessive pronoun depending on ἀβουλιᾶν, contrary to Winnington-Ingram (1983) 45, who interprets φιλᾶν as a dependent genitive that puts guilt on Jocasta.

140 The monologue of Jocasta consists solely of iambic trimeters that give her speech a stable rhythm, punctuated by the steadiness and unchanging tone of a repeated pace. Her speech's monotonous flow later gives place to the rhythmic vividness of the dialogue between Antigone and the Servant. In this dialogue, the Servant speaks in iambic trimeters, while Jocasta's lines mostly consist of dochmiacs mixed with iambic, anapaestic and dactylic monometers, as well as some prosodiac and enoplian features. The spectators must thus have been able to hear the switch between the Servant's stable rhythm and Antigone's variety of dissimilar, agonizing meters. Actually, the Servant's unvarying speech is analeptic, just like Jocasta's. But in the case of the Teichoscopia, the monotony of the Servant's narrative is refined by the rhythmic verisimilitude of Antigone's lines, which express the proleptic and pseudo-proleptic allusions of the passage.

with new elements.[141] Jocasta's memories reveal such a rich mythical background that they prepare the audience for a narrative of epic dimensions. More precisely, the play's fabula incorporates episodes that could very easily form a trilogy: the strife between Eteocles and Polynices, the self-sacrifice of Menoeceus, the suicide of Jocasta, the strife between Creon and Antigone with reference to the burial of Polynices, and finally the exile of Oedipus. Such an over-abundance of material recalling epic ampleness is even more accentuated by the typically epic scene of the Teichoscopia that follows the monologue of Jocasta. Consequently, Jocasta's monologue, situated before a scene of epic proportions, unfolds the richness of a multifarious narrative past, and foreshadows the ensuing narrative polyphony. Mythical profusion works in this case as a powerful mechanism for epic overtones.

The past in the historical present

Jocasta's use of the historical present, which alternates with the past tense after line 39, is not at random, since it follows a passage of consistent use of the past tense (1-38) and occurs in the narration of one of the most crucial parts of the fabula, namely the patricide. Jocasta describes the scene by vividly reproducing the angry exchanges between Oedipus and Laius' charioteer (39). Subsequently, the historical present is reserved only for the most critical parts of the fabula:[142] the narratives about Jocasta being a trophy for the one who will save the city (47), the victory of Oedipus (49-52), the incest (53-54), the birth of the four children (55), the self-injury of Oedipus (61), the adolescence of Polynices and Eteocles (63), the curse of the father against the sons (67), the strife between the brothers and Eteocles' violation of their agreement (75-76), as well as the formation of an army against Thebes by Polynices (78-80).

Traditionally, the reasons dictating the use of the historical present are connected to the narrative need for vividness (ἐνάργεια). The author of the *On the Sublime* is the first to have discussed the historical present. In chapter 25.1-3, he describes it as a narrative technique (τρόπος) that turns simple narrative into 'vivid actuality' (ἐναγώνιον πρᾶγμα).[143] This approach is consonant with the position that the historical present is a technique that transfers the narrator back to the time of the fabula

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141 Conacher (1967) 233.

142 The same is the case with unaugmented past tense verbs occurring in messenger speeches. See Finglass (2007b) 317-318, ad S. *El.* 715. On fabula, see above, n. 117.

143 The translation is by Fyfe (1995) 247. See also LSJ⁹, s.v. ἐναγώνιος III2, πρᾶγμα II2.

where events are supposed to have happened.[144] As argued by Rijksbaron,[145] the transfer of the narratee back to the time where the events of the fabula took place creates an illusion of the present,[146] namely a 'pseudo-present' feeling, since it creates the impression that the narrator was a 'pseudo-eyewitness' of the events and narrates as a 're-porter on the spot'.[147] The historical present can be used according to the narrator's (and the author's) wish to highlight the important events of his story[148] or according to his intention to draw the narratees' atten-tion to events that are not by definition important.[149]

Euripides chooses the historical present to accentuate the events that are important not only to Jocasta's civic, but also private life, namely her marriage to Oedipus and the birth of their four children.[150] According to recent studies, the historical present is employed to emphasize those parts of the story that the narrator presents as a basic need or problem.[151] From this vantage point, in the narrative of Jocasta's monologue, Eurip-ides uses the historical present to accentuate events explaining the mis-fortunes of the house of the Labdacids (patricide, incest, curse) or em-phasizing Jocasta's current problems (fraternal strife, expedition against the city).

Apart from the narrative effects mentioned above, the historical pre-sents additionally create a feeling of extratemporal oscillation between past and present. Jocasta gives the impression that she does not remem-ber that her narrative is strictly analeptic and some times deals with it as if it referred to the present. She seems to be carried away by the inten-sity of her description, where the past is insinuated into the present and vice versa. Jocasta's report of the situation of Oedipus (66), which has been previously taken as a statement in the simple present tense ('he

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144   de Jong (1991) 39.

145   Rijksbaron (2002) 22-23.

146   Thus increasing dramatic tension according to Fleischman (1990) 75.

147   As Rijksbaron [(2002) 25, n. 4] points out, this explains the absence of histori-cal present from epic narrative; since in epic poetry narration is supposed to derive from the Muse and not from the poet, references to the narrator as eye-witness would be inappropriate.

148   See Rijksbaron (2002) 22; Fischl (1910) 54.

149   de Jong (1991) 42.

150   See Rijksbaron (2002) 22-23; (1991) 1. The most striking example of this use of historical present is line 55, 'I bear children to my child' (τίκτω δὲ παῖδας παιδί) [my translation].

151   This is why Sicking & Stork [(1997) 166] replace 'historical present' with the terms 'narrative present' or 'diegetic present'.

lives in the house'),[152] could thus be also read as a historical present. The line could be concealing the bewilderment of the analeptic narrator, as she swings between past and present. In this case, the past experience of the narrator is so strong that it is felt as present, making two otherwise parallel time axes coincide.

The temporal aspect of a verb however, derives from the verb itself and not from the context. Modern linguistics discerns two basic categories of verbs: that consisting of 'stative', 'durative' and 'unbounded' verbs on the one hand, and that consisting of 'terminative', 'bounded' and 'telic' verbs on the other.[153] As can be inferred by this terminology, verbs whose meaning does not include the concept of an ending but allude to a constant field of action ('Aktionsart') fall under the first category,[154] while verbs whose meaning contains a specific end point and do not allude to a constant field of action fall under the second category.[155] According to Rijksbaron, the historical present is used only with the verbs of the second category, making verbs like βασιλεύω, εἰμί, ἔχω, οἶδα, and ῥέω unsuitable to be used in historical present.[156] Consequently, ζῶν of line 66 refers to the narrative present and truly works as the reference point between the time of the narration and the time of the story. In addition, ζῶν may also have the meaning of a temporal epitome. Having scanned her entire life by analeptic references of decreasing reach, Jocasta elevates ζῶν to a dramatic summary of her whole existence. All in all, Jocasta's first monologue is an extensive past narrative, which is connected to the present through limited allusions. For the most part, it consists of an analeptic excursus from the narrative's *hic et nunc*, reaching the narrative present by means of only five references.[157]

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152 The translation is my own.
153 Rijksbaron (2002) 3.
154 E.g. βασιλεύω.
155 E.g. δίδωμι.
156 Rijksbaron (2002) 24, n.1.
157 ἐγώ … παῖς … κλήιζομαι Μενοικέως (10); καλοῦσι δ' Ἰοκάστην με (12); τί τἀκτὸς τῶν κακῶν με δεῖ λέγειν; (43); ζῶν δ' ἔστ' ἐν οἴκοις (66); Ζεῦ, σῶισον ἡμᾶς, δὸς δὲ σύμβασιν τέκνοις (85).

Blurring the narrative levels: metalepsis[158]
and Jocasta's metamythical authority

In line 43, in the midst of the description of the patricide, Jocasta halts
her narrative, asking herself 'why should I dwell on irrelevant troubles?'
(τί τἀκτὸς τῶν κακῶν με δεῖ λέγειν;), and thus avoids a detailed de-
scription of the event, which she then narrates in just two sentences 'the
son killed the father, took his chariot, and gave it to Polybus his foster
father' (44-45). Her embedded comment alludes to the narrative's mo-
ment of utterance although situated in the midst of an analepsis, i.e. a
purely past narrative. Her words reveal somebody who does not just
know what is relevant or irrelevant to the disaster, but also somebody
who has the authority to omit the irrelevant issues (τἀκτὸς τῶν κακῶν).
Following from that, line 43 does not simply transfer the spectators to
the narrative present, but reveals the lurking presence of the governing
narrative mind.

    In an example of metalepsis, the diegetic narrative level where Jo-
casta belongs is blurred with the metadiegetic level of the author. Jocasta
is given the narrative authority to choose whether she will continue
with all the details of the patricide, an authority she was normally not
supposed to have. By equating Jocasta's narrative identity with his own,
Euripides removes the curtain and reveals himself, albeit for a moment,
as the governing narrative mind. In the words of Jocasta, he states that
the detailed description of the patricide is meaningless. This might also
be the reason why he chooses to speed up and finally describe the event
so briefly (43-44). Jocasta's comment is also illuminating regarding Eu-
ripides' stance on the mythical tradition. Her artificially enhanced
awareness of the details of the myth as well as her reluctance to develop
them any further could express a comment on the theatrical conventions
of the prologue, or even a comment on the myth itself. If this is the
case, Jocasta's statement could be additionally characterized as *metamythi-*

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158 As coined by Genette (1980) 234-235, a *metalepsis* is 'any intrusion by the ex-
tradiegetic narrator or narratee into the diegetic universe (or by diegetic char-
acters into a metadiegetic universe, etc.), or the inverse'. For Genette (*ibid.*),
metalepsis 'produces an effect of strangeness that is either comical … or fantas-
tic', while generally its narrative results concern the disruption of the mimetic
illusion, bearing on 'metafiction and metannarrative comment, with questions
of metalanguage and metatextual functions lying in the background' [Pier
(2008) 304]. See also Pier (2009). On the types of metalepsis in ancient Greek
literature, see de Jong (2009).

cal, since she presents the Labdacids' myth in a 'deliberately self-conscious manner'.[159]

Jocasta's present narrative: 'praesens pro futuro'

Apart from the instances where the present tense is used to denote the past, Jocasta's monologue also includes some cases where the present tense alludes to the future. This 'praesens pro futuro' can highlight crucial points of the story that will occur in the future.[160] 'Praesens pro futuro' is mainly found in the language of omens and oracles, but in the case of Jocasta's monologue, it is used in a different context. In lines 86-87 Jocasta is addressing Zeus, begging him to reconcile her sons. She calls upon the god's wisdom, according to which misfortune should be distributed evenly: 'If you are a wise god, you ought not to allow the same mortal to be always in misery' (χρὴ δ', εἰ σοφὸς πέφυκας,[161] οὐκ ἐᾶν βροτῶν / τὸν αὐτὸν αἰεὶ δυστυχῆ καθεστάναι). Jocasta pleads to Zeus for help, alluding to the motif of ἄλλοτε ἄλλος,[162] according to which her sons shall not be the ones who always suffer. Her futile prayer is the first in a series of three vainly expressed prayers in hope for a friendly reconciliation.[163]

2.1.2. The Teichoscopia (88–201)

Every dramatic scene that includes a Teichoscopia is based on a fundamental narrative convention, recurring in non-mimetic genres, according to which the narratee 'witnesses' the events of the story only through imagination. Consequently, the lack of visual contact with the place where the events are happening is replaced by the creation of a

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159 Wright (2006b) 38; The term *metamythology* is coined by Wright and is defined as 'a type of discourse which arises when mythical characters … are made to talk about themselves and their own myths, or when myths are otherwise presented, in a deliberate and self-conscious manner; it is a type of discourse which seems to be designed to emphasize the fictionality of myth, as well as to signal that the myth is being discussed *qua* myth (rather than *qua* real life, as the fictional context would normally lead us to assume)' [(2005) 135].

160 Rijksbaron (2002) 25, n. 5.

161 εἰ σοφὸς πέφυκας does not question Zeus' wisdom. By means of a pious 'blackmail', Jocasta will not doubt Zeus' wisdom, if he grants her help. For the concept of Zeus' wisdom, see Lloyd Jones (1983) 161.

162 On that, see Krause (1976).

163 The second prayer is also expressed by Jocasta (467-468), while the third by the Chorus (586-587).

mental topography,[164] accessible through the narratees' imagination. In theater, imagination is activated when the narrated events are supposedly happening offstage, outside the visual range of the spectators. This antithesis between onstage and offstage worlds, between visually accessible and non-accessible events actually constitutes one of the cornerstones of theatrical narrative. However, this discrepancy is further underlined when the offstage events are as, or more important than the onstage ones. In the Teichoscopia of the *Phoenissae*, references to the onstage and the offstage worlds are distributed evenly. However, the narratees are mostly interested in what is happening outside the city gates. The generic inability to make the offstage events visible is balanced by the detailed descriptions of the characters, who present the Theban walls as bridging two different worlds: of peace and of war.[165]

The earliest example of the Teichoscopia motif comes from the third book of the *Iliad,* where Helen meets Priam at the Scaean gates and informs him about the Achaean warriors. The dialogue created between a character who gives information (Helen) and another one who receives it (Priam) is reminiscent of the dialogue between the Messenger / Scout and Eteocles in the shield scene in Aeschylus' *Seven*.[166] In that play, the narratees (Eteocles and the spectators) hear of the offstage events through the narrator (Messenger), although nobody has visual access to the offstage world. Thus, despite the significantly different structure, this scene also forms a conventional type of Teichoscopia, with dramatic results analogous to the more traditional Teichoscopia scene of the *Phoenissae*.

In the *Phoenissae*, Antigone and the Servant can see what is meant to be happening offstage. Staying closer to the Iliadic model, the two interlocutors deliver the scene standing on a high spot of the palace, while watching the Argives getting ready for battle. The eyes of the two actors

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164 On mental maps, see Ryan (2003).

165 For the importance of the Theban walls as a physical frontier separating onstage from offstage reality, see below, ch. 5.

166 The central episode of the *Seven Against Thebes* could be considered a special case of Teichoscopia, even if the two main characters (the Messenger / Scout and Eteocles) do not have visual access outside the walls. Eteocles learns about the offstage events by the Messenger / Scout, who has just returned from the battlefield. In a way, Eteocles is found in a position similar to that of the spectators, who are also invited to 'visualize' the offstage happenings according to the Messenger's descriptions. For the intertextual correspondences of the scene, see below, ch. 4.

become the mental eyes of the spectators, who gain a wide view of the Theban landscape and the imminent danger.[167]

Teichoscopia, part one: the agonizing present

The dialogue between Antigone and the Servant temporally oscillates between past, present and future. Although narrative in present undoubtedly dominates, the analeptic references of the Servant on the one hand, as well as the proleptic or pseudo-proleptic allusions of both characters on the other maintain the temporal connections with both past and future time axes. Structurally, the first part of the dialogue (103-118) is replete with the first impressions of the interlocutors as they observe the Argive army. The second part includes the specific conversation about the seven Argive generals (119-192), and is followed by a second monologue from the Servant (193-201).

The Servant tries to secure a position in the palace, from which Antigone will be able to view the Argive army without being exposed to the rest of the Theban citizens.[168] Through an internal analepsis, he explains that Jocasta gave permission to Antigone to leave the women's apartments (89-90). His past narrative provides a proleptic allusion to a dramatic shift in Jocasta's needs and desires; in lines 1264-1283 maternal permission to observe the Argive troops will become a desperate order, since Jocasta will command Antigone to join her in the battlefield and help her prevent the fratricide.[169]

Apart from a short external analepsis that justifies the knowledge of the Servant (he visited the Argive camp in order to communicate the terms of truce to Polynices, 95-97), the first part of the Teichoscopia is

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167 For the great danger threatening Thebes as one of the basic constituents of the play, see Grube (1941) 356. On 'viewing' action from a high point, see de Jong & Nünlist (2004).

168 The scene should be performed on the flat roof of the skene-building, onto which the Servant and Antigone emerge from below [Mastronarde (1990) 255-257; Mastronarde (1994) 178 *pace* Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 54, 67, 267]. Mastronarde (1990) favors the existence of a single, one story flat roof accessible by a ladder, trapdoor or crane. As discussed by Davidson [(2005) 200], the roof of the skene-building can 'be used as a way of establishing an impossible physical gulf between characters that at the same time can also symbolize a spiritual, emotional, and communicative gulf'. In this light, the separation between the stage setting of the roof and the offstage setting of the battlefield in the *Phoenissae* could also symbolize the communicative gap between Eteocles and Polynices, or Thebans and Argives in general.

169 See specifically lines 1264, ὦ τέκνον ἔξελθ' Ἀντιγόνη δόμων πάρος; 1268, εἰς θάνατον ἐκνεύοντε κωλῦσαί σε δεῖ; 1275, [Ant.] ποῖ, παρθενῶνας ἐκλιποῦσ'; [Joc.] ἀνὰ στρατόν.

dominated by references to the present. The dialogue is lively and its present qualities are further highlighted by carefully embedded stage directions.[170] Moreover, in accordance to the narrative rules of the *scene*,[171] the systematic use of present forms underscores the equation between story time and narration time.

Teichoscopia, part two: expanding the temporal spectrum

In the second part of the Teichoscopia, the temporal spectrum is expanded. The references to the seven Argive leaders are spread over all three time axes, following a stable structure: they are generated by the prompt-questions of Antigone, developed by the detailed information of the Servant, and finally terminated by Antigone's comments. Her initial questions are present-oriented, verbalized in present forms,[172] setting a vivid tone as the dialogue's background, and increasing the scene's theatrical character.[173] An analogous present-oriented atmosphere is created by the individual comments of Antigone on each Argive warrior. In that case however, present-like comments are additionally enhanced by proleptic or pseudo-proleptic references in the manner of both present tense forms and aorist optatives.[174]

In lines 152-153, Antigone, terrified by the dazzling appearance of Parthenopaeus, wishes for his death[175] at the hands of Artemis.[176] Her

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170   See for example lines 103-106, [Ant.] ὄργέ *νυν* ὄρεγε γεραιὰν *νέαι* / χεῖρ᾽ ἀπὸ κλιμάκων / ποδὸς ἴχνος ἐπαντέλλων. / [Ser.] ἰδοὺ ξύναψον, παρθέν᾽· εἰς καιρὸν δ᾽ ἔβης.

171   According to Genette [(1980) 95], *scene* is the one (of the four) basic narrative movement that 'realizes conventionally the equality of time between narrative and story'.

172   See 131, τὸν δ᾽ ἐξαμείβοντ᾽ οὐχ ὁρᾶις Δίρκης ὕδωρ; 149, πάνοπλος ἀμφέπει; 158, ὦ φίλτατ᾽, εἰπέ, ποῦ ᾽στι Πολυνείκης, γέρον; 171, … οὗτος δ᾽, ὦ γεραιέ, τίς κυρεῖ; 179-180, ποῦ δ᾽ ὃς τὰ δεινὰ τῆιδ᾽ ἐφυβρίζει πόλει / Καπανεύς;).

173   Dramatic vividness is also accentuated by the frequent use of verbs and expressions of vision: ἰδεῖν (91); φοβερὸς εἰσιδεῖν (127); οὐχ ὁρᾶις (131); ἰδών (142); προσδεδορκὼς οἶδα (144); ὄμμασι γοργὸς εἰσιδεῖν νεανίας (146-147); ὁρᾶις (161); ὁρῶ δῆτ᾽ οὐ σαφῶς, ὁρῶ δέ πως (161); εἰσιδεῖν (195). The insistence on the visual aspect of the Teichoscopia creates a synaesthetic experience for the audience, since it increases their mental ability of 'seeing' −together with Antigone and the Servant- the offstage happenings, apart from listening to their description. On the contrary, the relevant scene in the *Seven* transfers the havoc of battle only through sound and the audience is left to imagine the situation outside the walls only after the agonized outbursts of the Chorus.

174   161-162; 165-166; 190-192.

175   The uncertainty of Antigone's wish is further accentuated by an abrupt rhythmical shift: the steady flow of the initial lyrical dactyls (a tetrameter is followed

wish is proleptically confirmed in lines 1159-1162, when Parthenopaeus will be killed by Periclymenus, the son of Poseidon. Antigone also invokes Artemis asking to protect her from slavery (190-192), terrified by the threats of Capaneus (185-189). Her prayer works as a prolepsis pointing not just to Capaneus' death (1180-1186), but also to the salvation of Thebes in general. In a similarly proleptic light, Antigone expresses her hopes for a meeting with Polynices. Despite her ability to locate the rest of the Argive generals in the crowded battlefield, Antigone finds it difficult to track down her brother. As inferred from lines 161-162, the Teichoscopia was supposedly performed during the first dawn, when moon and sun coexisted and morning mist blurred the atmosphere.[177] Oddly, morning fog prevented Antigone from watching only Polynices.

Her wish to be transferred by the air, like a cloud, to her brother's arms is typical in tragic lyric and is found in cases where one wishes to escape from an intolerable situation, or to be transferred to where one cannot be:[178]

> ἀνεμώκεος εἴθε δρόμον νεφέλας
>   ποσὶν ἐξανύσαιμι δι' αἰθέρος
> πρὸς ἐμὸν ὁμογενέτορα — περὶ δ' ὠλένας
>   δέραι φιλτάται βάλοιμι χρόνωι —
>   φυγάδα μέλεον. ... (163-167)

'How I wish I could tread, in the sky, / the path of some wind-borne cloud, / go to my own brother, and cast my arms / at long last about his beloved neck, / luckless exile that he is.'

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by a lyrical hexameter) pointing to the future death of Parthenopaeus is cut short by a sequence of cretics and dochmiacs (153), hightening the pitch in a stark expression of agony.

176 Artemis is not the only virgin goddess Antigone addresses; she also calls upon Hecate (whom she refers to as daughter of Leto, 109-110), Selene (175-176) and Nemesis (191). Antigone's tendency to invoke virgin deities might also underscore her currently restrained behavior, which is going to be profoundly overturned towards the end of the play.

177 As noticed by Barlow [(1971) 59], 'the difficulty with which Antigone discerns Polynices enhances the effect of his sudden dazzling appearance when the mist clears at 167 and the sun suddenly shines full on him'. Barlow also believes (58-59) that the above opposition between light and darkness must have been influenced by the painting technique of highlighting, established in the years of Euripides.

178 See Barrett (1964) 299, 397 [also listing the examples of S. fr. 273a.1-6 (*TrGF*); *OC* 1081-1084; E. *Med.* 1296-1298; *Andr.* 862; *Hec.* 1099-1106; *HF* 1157-1158; *Ion* 796-799, 1238-1243; *Hel.* 1478-1486; *Phaeth.* fr. 781.61-64 (*TrGF*)] and Mastronarde (1994) 196.

Antigone will meet Polynices, but only after his death. Clasping the neck or embracing is, of course, a typical gesture pertaining to a meeting –or recognition scene, but Euripides may very well be playing with a rather stark patterning of this gesture as a sign of grief and lamentation. Both Homer[179] and Aeschylus[180] have occasionally 'tagged' this gesture between family members as one of unfulfilled wish or desire. Odysseus aims in vain to embrace his mother Anticleia in the Underworld, while Clytaemnestra imagines her daughter Iphigeneia embracing her dead father Agamemnon who had sacrificed her in Aulis. In this light, Euripides' spectators may have anticipated the inherent tragic irony of Antigone's prayers not only through their previous knowledge of Theban myth but also by means of the *traditional referentiality* of her words.[181] Tragic norms are thus reset, since Antigone's wish will be fulfilled, but not in time and not in the context she desires. When she finally visits the battlefield, she will not be transferred by a pleasant breeze as her wish has it, but instead she will be a mourning female figure, collecting the corpses of her siblings and suppressing any remains of maidenly modesty (1485-1494). Consequently, the spontaneous wish of line 166, invigorated by the promising confirmation of the Servant (170-171, 'He [Polynices] will come to this house under truce to gladden your heart'), serves two basic narrative techniques: prolepsis, since it refers to an event that will happen later in the story, and the creation of false expectations, since the future meeting of Antigone and Polynices is colored with enthusiastic expectations of joy only deceptively.[182]

While the comments and wishes of Antigone are present- or future-oriented, the information about the Argive leaders provided by the Servant gives a different temporal insight.[183] Although he answers Antigone's questions in the present tense, he uses temporal and spatial *deixis*[184] to allude to the past. In lines 125-126 for example, when the

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179 *Od.* 11.210-212.

180 *A.* 1555-1559.

181 See Garner (1990) 36.

182 Similarly to the way escape-form odes create pictorial associations that underscore the problems of the play [see Padel (1974)], the wish of Antigone puts her desire to meet her brother in a lyric context. The lyric vision of the meeting is though tragically different from the dramatic outcome.

183 Cf. lines 125-126; 133-134; 150; 160; 180. Although the Servant uses only the present tense or aorist with a present meaning (cf. ἔφυ, 133), his answers give the impression of a richer temporal field.

184 *Deixis* is defined as 'the function of certain words … to locate referents in place and time relative to the speaker's location' [Phelan & Rabinowitz (2008) 543]. See also Felson (2004); Hanks (2008).

Servant describes Hippomedon ('He is said to be a Mycenean by birth, and he dwells by the waters of Lerna: he is Lord Hippomedon'), he might be using the present tense (αὐδᾶται), but by referring to his origin (γένος), he invites internal (Antigone) and external (audience) narratees to be transferred to an imaginary time and space, to the past and the place of the hero's birth. Likewise, in lines 133-134, the Servant uses an aorist form with present meaning (ἔφυ), through which he alludes to the origins of Tydeus. Finally, in the description of Parthenopaeus, a present statement lays the narrative emphasis more on the past, than the present, through the use of the word γόνος (150, ὅδ' ἐστὶ Παρθενοπαῖος, Ἀταλάντης γόνος, 'this is Parthenopaeus, son of Atalanta').

It thus becomes clear that the comments of the Servant place the Argive generals in a larger temporal perspective. Regardless of the generically linear temporal sequence of the *scene*,[185] the temporal norm of the dialogue is interrupted by the embedded external analeptic allusions of the Servant. In this temporal light, each time an Argive warrior captures Antigone's attention, the forward movement of the dialogue halts and the narrative turns backwards, to the origins of the hero. By the end of the relevant description of the Servant, the regular tempo is restored, until another description of a different warrior, imposes a new analeptic perspective, a new 'zig-zag' movement.[186]

Teichoscopia, part three: the Servant's achronic advice

The last part of the Teichoscopia goes back to where it started, with a monologue by the Servant. He advises Antigone to get back in the palace because a group of women is approaching (196-197). He mainly uses the present tense, but his disparaging comments about women (198-201, 'Women by nature love to criticize, and once they have found trifling reasons to find fault, they invent still more, such is the pleasure they take in speaking ill of one another')[187] allude to a non-definable time range and thus acquire achronic value.[188]

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185 See Genette (1980) 95.

186 The term belongs to Barthes [(1989) 129], who observed a similar movement in Herodotus' *History*, where 'with each character who appears … Herodotus goes back to the newcomer's ancestors, then returns to his point of departure, in order to continue a little further –and to begin all over again'.

187 For this kind of comment on women in tragedy, see McClure (1999) 56-62, especially 59.

188 The Servant uses gnomic language, which is always a-temporal. The tone of his comments should not have taken the audience by surprise, since gnomic language corresponds to old age also according to Aristotle (*Rh.* 1395a2, ἁρμόττει δὲ γνωμολογεῖν ἡλικίαι μὲν πρεσβυτέρων, περὶ δὲ τούτων ὧν

The Servant's advice gives an epic conclusion to an inherently epic part, bringing to mind the analogous counseling of Hector to Andromache in *Iliad* 6.[189] While they are both on the walls of Troy, Hector, like the Servant, advises Andromache to return to the safety of the palace and continue with her ordinary activities. Just as the heroic ideal that Hector is endorsing regards war as improper for a woman, so the Servant argues that getting into bad company is not appropriate for a princess. Such advice on female behavior, which belongs to the traditional epic armature and can be easily drawn on, has the authority of gnomic diction, as it refers to the καθόλου (general) and not just to the καθ' ἕκαστον (particular).[190]

2.2. Surveying the history of Thebes
(Parodos, *Phoenissae* 202–260)

One of the most important narrative uses of the Parodos is to complete the dramatic representation of the basic problem of the play. The Parodos lays attention on the events already narrated. Since the Chorus are not as strongly tied to the dramatic situation as the actors,[191] they show noticeable narrative flexibility, moving freely backward and forward in time and space, thus constructing a tri-dimensional matrix upon which past, present and future are all reflected.[192]

ἔμπειρός τίς ἐστιν, ὥστε τὸ μὲν μὴ τηλικοῦτον ὄντα γνωμολογεῖν ἀπρεπὲς ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ μυθολογεῖν, περὶ δὲ ὧν ἄπειρος, ἠλίθιον καὶ ἀπαίδευτον). On the gnomai, see Tzifopoulos (1995);   (2000) 151-152; Most (2003); and below, ch. 2.3.3; 2.3.4.

189 *Il.* 6.490-493, ἀλλ' εἰς οἶκον ἰοῦσα τὰ σ' αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε, / ἱστόν τ' ἠλακάτην τε, καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι κέλευε / ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι· πόλεμος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει / πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί, τοὶ Ἰλίωι ἐγγεγάασιν.

190 Cf. Arist. *Rh.* 1394a21, ἔστι δὴ γνώμη ἀπόφανσις, οὐ μέντοι οὔτε περὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστον, οἷον ποῖός τις Ἰφικράτης, ἀλλὰ καθόλου, οὔτε περὶ πάντων, οἷον ὅτι τὸ εὐθὺ τῶι καμπύλωι ἐναντίον, ἀλλὰ περὶ ὅσων αἱ πράξεις εἰσί, καὶ ⟨ἃ⟩ αἱρετὰ ἢ φευκτά ἐστι πρὸς τὸ πράττειν.

191 Following the dramatic economy, each action coming from an actor must derive from specific dramatic necessities and must lead to specific dramatic results. On the contrary, the Chorus do not have to follow dramatic necessities so strictly.

192 '[while] actors must forward the action in strict accordance with the urgency of present events … the chorus … can revel in a freer and more leisured imagination … moving backwards and forwards through space and time, recalling past events and far-off scenes seeing into the future, wishing for a present that is different' [Barlow (1971) 17].

Within this wide temporal frame, the Parodos of the *Phoenissae* looks back at the identity and the origins of the members of the Chorus, who live the terrifying present and hope for a peaceful future at the service of Apollo at Delphi. The Parodos comes like another imaginary voyage in time and space after the extended presentation of the Argive army in the Teichoscopia. The Chorus' rhythmic song engages the audience's imagination, informing them both about the city's prehistory[193] and the trip of Cadmus, son of Agenor,[194] from Tyre to Thebes, as well as about the Phoenician maidens' final destination, Delphi. The Parodos leads to a further enrichment of the mythical panorama, since it alludes to the family bonds connecting Cadmus and Agenor, which predate the events narrated by Jocasta. In a play overburdened with a cornucopia of mythical links and ramifications, the Chorus do not just comment on the events preceding their entrance on the orchestra, but also on the older phase of the mythical continuum, leaving on the dramatic conventions of the Parodos a stark mythical imprint.

2.2.1. Between exoticism and intimacy: the Chorus and the past

The Parodos begins with the Chorus' self presentation.[195] In the manner of the long analeptic monologue of Jocasta in the prologue, the Phoenician maidens embark on an expanded, external analeptic excursus, in order to inform the spectators about the events anticipating the beginning of the story.

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193 As debated by Arthur [(1977) 163], the choral odes of the *Phoenissae* provide the strongest connection between the city's current sufferings and its foundation, being organized 'in a form of a survey of the history of Thebes'.

194 Euripides connects the Phoenician Chorus with the city of Thebes by naming the Chorus members 'Agenor's descendants' (217, Ἀγηνοριδᾶν). Although the *Phoenissae* does not illuminate the relation between Agenor and Cadmus, information can be gathered from other Euripidean plays, mainly the *Bacchae* and the *Phrixus*. In the *Bacchae* (170-172), Cadmus is the son of Agenor while in the *Phrixus* (fr. 819 *TrGF*) may have been the grandson of Agenor and son of Phoenix, 'unless Θάσος in line 9 is emended to Κάδμος' [Mastronarde (1994) 218]. As debated by Dodds [(1960) 91-92], the lines from the *Bacchae* are not just in accordance with the lines from the *Phrixus*, but they also agree with the dramatic tendency of presenting Cadmus in full detail, perhaps in order to inform a non-educated audience.

195 According to Mastronarde [(1994) 207], this prolonged self-presentation, lasting more than half the parodos, is connected to Euripides' need to justify the presence of an 'exotic' Chorus.

Euripides might have chosen a Chorus from Phoenicia[196] for many reasons. According to the ancient scholiast, the foreign Chorus would be able to disagree with Eteocles more freely,[197] while it is also possible that Euripides wished to establish a line of difference from the Chorus of the *Seven*,[198] or to give a fuller image of the house of the Labdacids. Notwithstanding the impressive visual result of the Chorus' exotic identity, it has even been suggested that Euripides used a Phoenician Chorus, because of Athenian political interest in Carthage, a Phoenician colony.[199] According to scholars who do not favor such political readings, the Chorus from Phoenicia must be viewed within the wider framework of the play's narrative and dramatic objectives.[200] It seems that Euripides uses a foreign Chorus that both sympathize and are distant from the Labdacids' fate. Finally, a Phoenician Chorus allows the playwright to take advantage of the connotations stemming from the myth of Cadmus and the foundation of the city and to enrich the story of the play with all available mythological parallels.[201] These last arguments that

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196 Their exotic origins are suggested from the very first word (202, Τύριον).

197 'ἐπίτηδες δὲ οὔκ εἰσιν ἐγχώριαι αἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ χοροῦ, ἀλλὰ ξέναι καὶ ἱερόδουλοι, ὅπως ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς ἀδεῶς ἀντιλέγοιεν πρὸς τὴν Ἐτεοκλέους ἀδικίαν' [Schwartz (1887) 276].

198 Although the *Phoenissae* and the *Seven* treat the same part of the Theban myth, their Choruses are strikingly divergent. Stemming from the different identity of the Chorus members, the most important antithesis lies in the degree of emotional involvement in the events of the story. The panicking Chorus of the *Seven* is thus replaced in Euripides by a calmer group of women, whose city is not at stake. Phoenician women sympathize with the Thebans, analogously to the spectators, who feel pity and fear. They do not get more involved, since they know that their future plans will not be easily overturned. Consequently, the Chorus of the *Phoenissae* do not increase the suspense or the audience's anxiety; they instead balance the tragic pathos. Conversely, the Chorus of the *Seven* insists on the upcoming danger and causes an emotional climax. Besides, as pointed out by de Romilly [(1958) 13], 'sous tous ses formes, la crainte joue … un rôle constant dans l'oeuvre d'Eschyle'. The Chorus of Phoenicians decreases dramatic tension, while the Chorus of the Thebans increases it. Perhaps the dramatic tension in the *Phoenissae* did not need to be increased, since a rich plot and an overfull story were powerful enough in order to raise the tragic pathos. On the contrary, in a play like the *Seven*, where the plot is much simpler, the playwright might need a Chorus that is seriously engaged in action and can thus multiply dramatic passion.

199 Rawson (1970) 112.

200 Mastronarde (1994) 208-209.

201 Such as, the need of killing a monster before settling in a city (Oedipus killed the Sphinx as Cadmus killed the offspring of Ares and Earth). See Mastronarde (1994) 208-209.

make full use of the play's complex mythical agenda, narrative syntax, and even intertextual cross-references, seem to me to be on the right lines.

By bringing into dramatic focus the repercussions of the broader mythical substratum, the Chorus both impose a kind of narrative balance, since no single character is assigned a predominant role, and enhance the narrative unity of a play whose multiple themes and characters must be held together.[202] Phoenician origin gives the members of the Chorus an ambiguous dramatic role. Their exotic look[203] bestows on them distance, while their mythological connection with Thebes avails them with intimacy.[204] As has been suggested, this type of distanced Chorus sheds light on the image of a royal family cut off from the rest of the civic body. The ancestral connections of the Labdacids with Phoenicia deepen the gap separating them from the rest of the Thebans, who – surprisingly– do not feel the need to stand up for their king as an onstage choral group.[205]

2.2.2. Singing time and place

The Parodos' juxtaposition of time and place is perfectly analogous to its strophic structure. Particularly, the voyage's departure, middle stop and arrival are narrated in structurally distinct stages. The first strophe and antistrophe (202-225) are dominated by the description of Phoenicia, the departure point of the Chorus' journey. In like manner, the epode (226-238) is devoted to their anticipated arrival at Delphi, their final destination, while the second strophe and antistrophe (239-260) provide references to the current location, Thebes itself. Each of the three narra-

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202 Hartigan (2000) 31.

203 The external appearance of the Chorus is by definition homogenous. The members of the Chorus also think of themselves as a single person, since the consistent use of first person singular is undoubtedly self-reflexive. See for example their use of first person singular in the vast majority of verbs, participles or pronouns in the parodos of the *Phoenissae* (202; 214-216; 219; 220-223; 236-239; 247-249; 256-257). For the self-referential choral use of first person singular in tragic poetry, see Kaimio (1970) 23.

204 Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 272.

205 Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 273 especially n. 46, where the identity of the Chorus is also connected with the sacrifice of Menoeceus, signaling the separation between royal family and city.

tive units has a special symbolism,[206] which alludes not only to specific points in time and space, but also to particular emotions.[207] Phoenicia stands for the past happiness of the Chorus' youth, just as Delphi reflects forthcoming religious enthusiasm. Thebes spatially represents the grim narrative present and despair of the young girls who know that war is imminent.

Phoenicia and the past

The detailed analeptic excursus of the first strophe (202-213) maps out the girls' sea journey. References to the Ionian sea (208) and Sicily (211) reveal a northwestern route, probably involving sailing on the west of Crete and Peloponnese and crossing the Corinthian gulf. Their sea trip must have stopped at Creusis, the harbor of Thespiae, from where Delphi would be reached by land. Their stop at Thebes, as well as their secure transport to Delphi were probably agreed with the Thebans in advance (283-284).[208] An external analepsis dominates the first antistrophe as well, where the girls use past tenses to narrate the events preceding their departure, namely their selection among the citizen body on the grounds of their outstanding beauty (214-215), as well as their religious dedication to Apollo (221). Through another external analepsis they also refer to the common ancestral blood connecting them to the Labdacids and justifying their middle stop at Thebes (216-219).[209] This stop however jeopardizes the fulfillment of their journey, which might not be securely completed. In line 223, through the only present tense verb in the whole of the first strophe and first antistrophe (περιμένει) the Cho-

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206 See Arthur (1977) 165: 'the juxtaposition of the three locales is significant; as the ode progresses different characteristics are associated with each, so that each place develops a separate symbolic as well as geographical meaning'.

207 Parry (1963) 65.

208 Mastronarde (1994) 209-210. It is true that the description of the journey does not clearly map out the selected sea route [Chapouthier, Grégoire & Méridier (1950) 129-131]. However, a description of a similar journey in the *Hymn to Apollo* (388-439), shows that sailing on the west of the Peloponnese was a common policy when departing from Crete and heading to the harbor of Crisa [Mastronarde (1994) 209-210]. According to Wilamowitz [(1921) 278 n. 1], the Chorus had already reached Delphi, but since they had not yet begun their service to Apollo, they visited Thebes because of their ancestral ties to Cadmus. See also Lesky (1972) 445-446, who agrees with the course proposed by Wilamowitz.

209 The Chorus are related to Cadmus, ancestor of Laius and offspring of Agenor. Although not indicated here, according to tradition Agenor, son of Epaphus, was the father of Phoenix (ancestor of the Phoenicians) and Cadmus (ancestor of the Thebans). See Craik (1988) 271 and above, n. 194.

rus refer to Dephi with doubtful hope. At the same time, the use of deictic ἔτι (222-225, ἔτι δὲ Κασταλίας ὕδωρ / περιμένει με κόμας ἐμᾶς / δεῦσαι παρθένιον χλιδὰν / Φοιβείαισι λατρείαις, 'The waters of Castalia still await me / to moisten the maidenly / luxuriance of my hair / in the service of Phoebus'), transfers the *origo*[210] from Thebes to Delphi. Dramatic *hic et nunc*, thus gives way to the anticipated arrival at the Chorus' final destination, and the attention of the audience is turned smoothly to the Delphi-oriented epode that follows.

Delphi and the future

In the epode, the poet uses deixis in order to guide his audience's imagination to Delphi,[211] where the Chorus will assume their religious duties.[212] In this light, detailed descriptions of the anticipated services to Apollo make the audience recall snapshots of Apollonian and Dionysian cultic performance. Frequent references to the Delphic surroundings (226-228, 'O cliff, shedding a twin-peaked gleam / of fire upon the lofty / sites of Dionysiac transport'; 232-234, 'O holy cave of the serpent / and mountain lookout of the goddesses, / O sacred mount overspread with snow'; 237-238, 'leaving Dirce for Phoebus' vale / at the earth's navel') create an *imagination-oriented deixis*, a *deixis am phan-*

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210 Deictic *origo* or else *indexical ground* is the 'elementary frame of reference, itself embedded in a broader setting by way of contextual or textual elements. … The result of embedding is to subordinate the deictic field to an emerging frame of relevance, which may be an activity, a narrative unfolding, taken for granted, or in dispute among the parties' [Hanks (2008) 99]. See also above, n. 184.

211 According to Felson (2004) 255, '[d]eixis –the "pointing out" and "pointing at" function of language- operates within the two dimensions that frame human cognition: time and space. If we imagine these dimensions as existing in a continuum representable in the form of a graph or grid, then the deictic operators of the language provide the means of locating events, states, or objects within this grid'. In the case of this epode, deixis transfers dramatic action to the future and to Delphi.

212 Euripides refers to the Chorus's devotion by the word δούλα ('slave') (204-205, Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου, / Φοίβωι δούλα μελάθρων). As observed by Rawson [(1970) 112], the parallelism of the religious dedication of the Chorus to slavery should be connected to the fact that in the rest of the play allusions to slavery are related to the concept of exile; Since Delphi is so distanced from Phoenicia, it could be considered a sort of exile, and consequently, slavery.

tasma,[213] where future and Delphi dominate the conception of time and space respectively.

Although the described religious service to Apollo is to be offered by the Chorus in the future, the group's references to Delphic practices could also be perceived under a diachronic time-scope, indicated by the use of the present tense. Despite the fact that the descriptions of the Delphic landscape[214] are delivered at the play's *hic et nunc*, they have a diachronic religious significance, similar to that of the Apollonian cult. In terms of narrative rhythm, since the time of narration dedicated to Delphic religious practices corresponds to no developments in the story, the narrative pace is slowed down. However, by holding the time of the story still while the narration is still ongoing, the author accentuates the desired diachronic impression. Temporal stagnation is further highlighted by a list of well chosen landmarks, whose most important characteristic is their resistance to time. The described rock (226, πέτρα), cave (232, ἄντρα), and mountain peaks (232-233, οὔ- / ρειαί τε σκοπιαί) create a framework that surrounds Apollo's cult with nature's achronic stateliness.

Shortly before the end of the epode, the Chorus wish they were 'whirling, the deathless goddess' / dancers; free from fear, / by the hollows of Phoibos in the centre of the earth / having left Dirce' (234-238).[215] Their long list of Delphic invocations is thus finally turned into an escape-wish, parallel to Antigone's escape-wish in the Teichoscopia. The Chorus desire to leave Dirce behind and be miraculously transferred to Delphi, just as Antigone wished to be miraculously placed into her brother's arms. This parallel structure is reinforced by the Chorus' persistent addresses to Apollo and Dionysus,[216] which resemble Antigone's invocations of Hecate (110), Artemis (151-153; 190-192) and Selene (175-177). In both cases, the hope of escape is accompanied by a narrative impression of movement, which is in conflict with the immobility of the girls' 'captivity'. Antigone wished to fly; the Chorus, to dance.

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213 The term was first coined by Bühler [(1990) 137-157]. *Deixis am phantasma* is opposed to *deixis* or *demonstratio ad oculos*, where the origo is directly perceived by the audience.

214 The vineyard of Dionysus (229-231), the cave of Python (232), the mountain of Parnassus (226-228; 232-234).

215 I here use the translation of Craik (1988), adapted.

216 The Chorus' addresses to Apollo and Dionysus are hinting at the syncretism of the two gods within the spatial matrix of Delphi. Interestingly enough, in the fourth century, Philodamus of Scarpheia composed a poem where Apollo has Dionysiac features, and Dionysus Apolline. See Powell (1925) 165.

Thebes and the present

The second strophe starts with a shift of origo; its first word (239, νῦν) places the narrative in space and time, namely Thebes and the dramatic present. Through a vivid description with constant use of the present tense, the terrified Chorus (256-258) report that the god of war[217] has approached (239-240, 'But now before the walls / grim Ares has come').[218] Dramatic present dominates, while future is alluded to only through a short wish (242, τᾷδ' – ὃ μὴ τύχοι – πόλει, 'for this city: may heaven avert it!').

The second antistrophe creates an even stronger impression of the present, stressing the fact that the threatening enemy has encircled the city like a dense cloud of shields (250-252). Statements in the present tense increase the imminence of the approaching danger, while the only allusion to the future is uttered in the form of worries about Polynices' and Eteocles' well-being (253-255). Enthusiasm about the Chorus' anticipated religious dedication has given way to terror and agony, since the second strophe and second antistrophe contain frequent expressions of fear and desperation.[219]

In the Parodos, the *Phoenissae* 'flirts' with the features and tone of 'escape-tragedies'. Its distinctively strong sense of place and exoticism, features generally observed in escape-plays, are though counterbalanced by the rest of the (Greek) characters.[220] The expansion of the audience's geographical gaze is analogous to the generous use of mythical information regarding the city and royal family of Thebes. By introducing a Chorus whose descriptions allude to far-off settings, Euripides accentuates his pluralistic reception of the Theban myth. The *Phoenissae* thus creates the impression of a play where anyone –even a Chorus of foreign girls- can be accommodated, yet no one can solve the myth's jig-

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217 Ares is closely attached to the mythical prehistory of Thebes through his monstrous offspring that guarded the Theban land, as well as his daughter Harmonia, whom Cadmus married.

218 The Chorus are worried about the city's future because of the common blood that connects Phoenicians and Thebans (see 243-249). Allusion to common origins here –additionally to the first antistrophe where they were first explained (217-218)- creates a ring composition that holds together the ode's frequent deictic changes of time and space. By expressing their worries, the Phoenician Chorus resemble that of the *Seven*; from the moment they admit their partly Theban identity, the Phoenician girls share the same reaction with other Theban women.

219 See ἄχη (243); φεῦ φεῦ (246); πημονὰν Ἐρινύων (255); δειμαίνω (257).

220 Contrastingly, in the escape-tragedies, the exoticism of the setting is reduced by the presence of Greek Choruses [Wright (2005) 175-176].

saw puzzle about the misfortunes of the Labdacids and their innate tendency towards the ruinous path of utter disaster.

2.3. The clash of the Labdacids
(First episode, *Phoenissae* 261–637)

The play's first episode is dominated by the encounter between the two brothers. The preceding meeting of Polynices and Jocasta paves the way for the positive presentation of the former, who is also going to be the silent winner of the agon. The emphasis on the mythical past given in the prologue and the Parodos is now replaced by an interest in contemporary ideologies, namely fifth-century concerns about the nature of exile, justice, and equality.

2.3.1. Polynices and the Chorus (261–290)

Taking sides: the positive characterization of Polynices

Polynices appears on stage in an emotional atmosphere of high expectations. Two relevant *advance notices*[221] in the prologue had foreshadowed his arrival at the city, and the description of Antigone in the Teichoscopia provided him with a positive *characterization*.[222] In the prologue, Jocasta repeated the information that she had received from a Messenger and announced that Polynices will visit the Theban palace (83). Simi-

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221 An *advance notice* is an explicit, usually narratorial, announcement of something that will happen at a later point in the story. Advance notices shall not be confused with the *advance mentions*, i.e. the proleptic narrative *seeds* that usually stay unnoticed when they occur and they become significant only retrospectively [Genette (1980) 73-77].

222 *Characterization* consists of the description of the life, actions, physical appearance or emotional identity of a character. It can be *explicit* (when information on somebody is given directly), *implicit* (when information has to be presumed by the narratees), *narratorial* (when information is given by the narrator), *actorial* (when information is given by a character), *synoptic* (when information is given all at once, often upon a character's first appearance), or *gradual* (when information is released gradually and is put together by the narratees) [de Jong, Nünlist & Bowie (2004) xv]. When characterization is left to be inferred by the narratees (gradual characterization), much depends on *reception*, since a figure's characteristics can be interpreted differently by different recipients [Bal (1997) 131]. Characterization in drama is well discussed in Easterling (1977); (1990); Gould (2001b). For characterization in tragic messenger speeches, see Markantonatos (2002) 15.

larly, the Servant assured Antigone in the Teichoscopia that Polynices will come to the palace, protected, under truce (170-171). Polynices was positively characterized in the prologue, through the focalization of Jocasta and Antigone. Jocasta described Polynices' martial qualities in epic tone (56, κλεινήν τε Πολυνείκους βίαν, 'and glorious Polynices')[223] and sided with him in her analeptic description of the events that led to the fraternal strife. According to her narrative, Polynices surrendered the throne voluntarily for the first year (71-74), but then Eteocles refused the annual exchange of power and drove Polynices in exile (74-76).[224]

Even before Polynices appears, Jocasta's descriptions credit him with fighting virtues and just behavior, while Antigone's focalization (167-169) conveys his dazzling physical appearance: his golden armor stands out in the morning mist and he shines like the dawn rays.[225] Contrary to the audience's expectations −created from previous treatments of the myth− Polynices is not an unjust, blood-thirsty, terrifying warrior.[226] The impressive presentation of Polynices also reflects Antigone's general outlook on war. By describing the battlefield in lyric tones, Antigone provides the spectators with a martial reality strikingly different from the one they will be exposed to when they hear the relevant description of the Messenger at the end of the play.

In terms of dramatic narrative, the focalizations of Jocasta and Antigone do not only positively predispose the audience before Polynices' first appearance. A 'romantic' presentation of him as offered by his sister widens the separating gap from Eteocles, whose characterization is yet only implicit (Jocasta admitted that he violated the initial agreement in

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223 Cf. the epic expressions βίη Ἡρακλῆος, ἲς Τηλεμάχοιο etc.

224 The brothers' unsuccessful attempt to peacefully share the rule of Thebes is implicitly opposed to the positively colored ἑτερημερία in Hades of the Dioscuri. Forming an example of exceptional fraternal love, the relationship of Castor and Pollux is silently contrasted with that of Eteocles and Polynices in the play's prologue and first episode. The opposition to other successful examples of fraternal cooperation was projected throughout the trilogy by means of the examples of Amphion and Zethus, and Euneus and Thoas. See also below, Appendix I: The trilogy. On the Tyndarids and their association with χάρις and μεσότης, see Finglass (2007a) 123-124.

225 Rhesus enjoys an analogously dazzling presentation (Rh. 301-313). For Rhesus, as for Polynices, the fall and destruction of the tragic hero comes after an astonishing description, like a narrative counter-balance.

226 Cf. for example the description of Polynices in the Seven (631-649), as well as the telling contrast between the meanings of the names of both brothers (Polynices −'much strife'- as opposed to Eteocles −'true glory'-).

74-76) but will become explicit upon his appearance onstage.[227] If it was not for the proleptic presentation of Polynices by Jocasta and Antigone, his hesitating entrance into the city would have lost much of its dramatic force.[228] Finally, the positive image of Polynices is also painted with more vivid colors in the last lines of the parodos, where the 'objective', non-Theban Chorus justify Polynices' expedition (258-260, '... For not unjust / is this contest toward which he presses in armour, / he who comes to recover his house') and connect their choral song to his ensuing appearance.[229]

<div align="center">Ἅμ' ἔπος ἅμ' ἔργον:
Polynices' first appearance and prolepses of short reach</div>

Embedded staging directions reveal Polynices' emotional condition. He approaches the palace warily, sword in hand,[230] anticipating treachery (261-268). His fear makes him react to random sounds (269), while his mistrust of Jocasta is stamped on one of the many oxymorons of the episode (272, πέποιθα μέντοι μητρί, κοὐ πέποιθ' ἅμα, 'Still, I trust my mother –and at the same time mistrust her'). He feels secure only near the altars, where he thrusts his sword back into its scabbard (274-276).[231]

The narrative of Polynices consists of multiple prolepses of extremely short reach that are realized almost at the moment of their utterance. Polynices leaves no breathing space in the narrative, since he announces his future actions seconds before their realization. Actually, while he uses the future tense at the beginning of his proleptic statements (268, παρέξομαι), his narrative pace is then so rapid and the reach of his prediction so short, that anticipated action becomes mere reality almost immediately and all similar prolepses that follow are ex-

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227 Euripides could also be alluding to the ideological differences that separate Eteocles and Polynices and that will become evident in the debate of the first episode.

228 Grube (1941) 357.

229 Halleran (1985) 66.

230 See Papadopoulou (2008) 93, who rightly notes that '[t]he use of a demonstrative pronoun to accompany the word "sword" (267) is an emphatic direction of the audience's gaze towards Polynices' weapon, which he brandishes on stage, and in dramatic terms it hints at the symbolic significance of the sword as a prop: it will play, albeit offstage, a fundamental role in the fratricide and is also the concrete aspect of Oedipus' curse on his sons, that is, to divide the patrimony by the iron (sword)'.

231 Polynices seems to follow a kind of 'sentimental' grammar, for he refers to himself in singular when he feels secure (267-268; 275-276), but in plural when he expresses his insecurity (269).

pressed in aorist subjunctives (276, μεθῶ; 277, ἔρωμαι). This verbaliza-
tion of his actions, almost simultaneous to their ordinary scenic repre-
sentation, resembles the quintessential technique of film-making. The
spectators 'hear' what Polynices is going to do and then 'see' him doing
it, thus acquiring the impression that they are observing a sequence of
film shots, one after the other.

Through the extended use of statements pertaining to the present
(263-266; 269; 270-271), story time and narrative time coincide. Ex-
ploiting the narrative qualities of this convergence, the poet increases the
suspense, as the story is unfolded little by little. The audience does not
know if Polynices will be trapped in an ambush, and no proleptic state-
ments peer into the future to disclose the result of his arrival at Thebes.
On the contrary, the audience waits for the narrative thread to unravel,
so as to see whether Polynices will receive a warm welcome by the
Chorus (291-300) and escape danger, at least for a while.

The temporal spectrum opens up only in lines 270-271, where
Polynices makes a generalizing comment by means of a gnomic state-
ment: 'for everything seems formidable to those who are bold, when
their step passes through enemy territory'. Given that his declaration is
expressed in general terms, it seems not to refer to a specific point in the
story time. In this case, reflecting a general belief also means justifying
Polynices' fear, since any soldier would feel insecure in a hostile envi-
ronment. Moreover, Polynices' use of the rhetorical power of a gnomic
statement prepares the spectators for his dialogue with Jocasta, which
will be full of maxims.[232]

The ensuing answer of the Chorus (280-287) summarizes the con-
tent of the parodos. Their exotic appearance is re-justified and by means
of a repeating analepsis they refer to their life in Phoenicia, their ances-
tral connection to Thebes, and the reason for their journey (280-282).
Their narrative follows the same pattern as in the parodos: starting with
the description of past events, it soon becomes proleptic, alluding to the
Chorus' service at Delphi (283-284). Finally, as in the parodos, the
Chorus describe the present situation and the attack of the Argives
(285). This second self-presentation of the Chorus emphasizes more
their Phoenician origins. The address ξέναι γυναῖκες (278, 'foreign la-
dies') used by Polynices not only highlights their foreign identity, but
also evokes the concept of exile, since it is uttered by somebody who is
also an exile, a ξένος in his own city. The audience are reminded of the
paradoxical reality that Polynices is facing: he is a ξένος in his own land,
but also a ξένος in Argos. The Phoenician Chorus may thus be a covert

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232 For the use of gnomologies in the *Phoenissae*, see below, ch. 2.3.3.

reminder or allusion to the tragic oxymoron lying at the kernel of the plot of the *Phoenissae*. Given the exile awaiting Oedipus and Antigone at the end of the play, this intricate game with land and borders is mapped on to various registers, of which myth is the most accentuated one.

As we consider Polynices' self presentation (288–290), we realize that he insists on the present, while simultaneously caring about the future. Although later in the first episode he will be setting out nostalgic analepses, his first appearance does not look back to the past; rather, the uncertainty of the present and the future dominates. A common past however, will host the only hopes for reconciliation, since the previously happy family life is the brothers' only connecting point.

2.3.2. Credible impossibilities: Polynices and Jocasta (291–354)[233]

The emotionally loaded reunion of mother and son is highlighted metrically and linguistically. Dochmiac rhythm expresses Jocasta's dirge,[234] which is also presented by her references to traditional ritual gestures such as cutting her hair and wearing dark robes (322–326). The fact that Jocasta laments, although no one has died yet,[235] has both analeptic and proleptic implications. According to her own narrative, Jocasta laments analeptically for the marriage of Polynices to a non-Theban girl.[236] However, in view of the end of the play and the tragic deaths of her sons, Jocasta's lament could act as a prelude to her final lament over her sons' dead bodies just before she kills herself.

The reason for Jocasta's grief is Polynices' wedding to Argeia, the daughter of Adrastus. As she admits, Jocasta did not perform the nuptial customs, nor did she celebrate her son's wedding as she should (344–349). By listing the ordinary wedding celebrations that she rejected, Jocasta reveals a group of possibilities that were never realized. Through *analepses by negation* or *negative analepses*, she constructs a potential subplot that remains endlessly suspended.[237] As a result, her analeptic excur-

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233 I borrow the term 'credible impossibilities' from Scodel's (1999) book title.

234 On the emotional context of dochmiac rhythm, see West (1982) 108; (1992) 143-144.

235 Cf. Andromache and her maids who lament Hector as if he was already dead in *Il.* 6.499-500.

236 For the tragic distortion of nuptial symbolisms and the frequent correspondence between marriage and death, see Seaford (1987); Rehm (1994); Segal (1999).

237 'Analepsis by negation, or negative analepsis, is often employed to alert the audience to the existence of other narrative potentialities, which may or may

sus does not include what the heroine did, but what she did not do, expressing a series of rejected narrative alternatives. The narrative thus leads to a dramatic climax, since the event of the wedding of Polynices to Argeia is not just mentioned, but implicitly evaluated, by being compared with a joyous wedding such as Jocasta would have wished for.

In her second appearance, Jocasta insists on the four basic topics of her first excursus: the self-blinding of Oedipus, the sword threatening the lives of the two brothers, the exile of Polynices, as well as his wedding to Argeia. Apart from the present statements, Jocasta thus generates a series of repeating external analepses, bringing the events that preceded the beginning of the story back into focus. A comparative table consisting of the overlapping topics of her narrative here and in the prologue would be as follows:

TOPIC	*ll.*	JOCASTA'S FIRST APPEARANCE	*ll.*	JOCASTA'S SECOND APPEARANCE
Oedipus' self-blinding	60-62	ὁ πάντ' ἀνατλὰς Οἰδίπους παθήματα εἰς ὄμμαθ' αὑτοῦ δεινὸν ἐμβάλλει φόνον, χρυσηλάτοις πόρπαισιν αἱμάξας κόρας	327	ὁ δ' ἐν δόμοισι πρέσβυς ὀμματοστερής
Oedipus' curse	68	θηκτῶι σιδήρωι δῶμα διαλαχεῖν τόδε	350	ὄλοιτο, τάδ' εἴτε σίδαρος
Polynices' imposed exile	76	φυγάδα δ' ἀπωθεῖ τῆσδε Πολυνείκη χθονός	318-319	ἔρημον πατρῶιον ἔλιπες δόμον φυγὰς ἀποσταλεὶς ὁμαίμου λώβαι
Polynices' life in Argos and the situation in Thebes	77-80	ὁ δ' Ἄργος ἐλθών, κῆδος Ἀδράστου λαβών, πολλὴν ἀθροίσας ἀσπίδ' Ἀργείων ἄγει. ἐπ' αὐτὰ δ' ἐλθὼν ἑπτάπυλα τείχη τάδε πατρῶι' ἀπαιτεῖ σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη χθονός	337-349	σὲ δ', ὦ τέκνον, καὶ γάμοισιν δὴ κλύω ζυγέντα παιδοποιὸν ἁδονὰν ξένοισιν ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν ξένον τε κῆδος ἀμφέπειν, ἄλαστα ματρὶ τᾶιδε Λαΐου τε τοῦ πάλαι γένει, γάμων ἐπακτὸν ἄταν. ἐγὼ δ' οὔτε σοι πυρὸς ἀνῆψα φῶς νόμιμον ἐν γάμοις ὡς πρέπει ματέρι μακαρίαι· ἀνυμέναια δ' Ἰσμηνὸς ἐκηδεύθη λουτροφόρου χλιδᾶς, ἀνὰ δὲ Θηβαίαν πόλιν ἐσιγάθη σᾶς ἔσοδοι νύμφας

not have materialized' [Markantonatos (2002) 47]. See also de Jong (1987a) 61-68 and above, p. 9 and n. 66.

One notices that although both the focalizer and the focalized object are the same in the prologue and in the first episode, focalization in the second case is different. Jocasta displays different narratorial interests, taking advantage of the narrative freedom provided by the passage. Contrasting the rigid structure of the prologue, where the events had to be presented without emotional outbursts, in the first episode the different conventions of lyric narrative apply, giving the narrator control over the flow or emotional intensity of her narrative. In this light, Jocasta intensifies the emotional repercussions of her diegesis.[238] In contrast to her previous narratorial desire for objectivity, as well as her previous tendency to present the events from a 'secure' distance, this appearance of Jocasta increases the tragic pathos, bringing out the emotions of a tormented mother and wife.[239]

2.3.3. The shadow of Oedipus (355–442)

The dialogue between exiled son and lamenting mother gives Euripides another opportunity for characterization. The positive image Polynices had acquired in the prologue is enhanced by his description of the perils of the exile. References to his exile allow the past to peer into a dialogue scene of strong present coloring.

Past steps into the present also through Oedipus, who although not yet onstage, lurks in the background of Polynices and Jocasta's conversation. The presentation of Oedipus as a living ghost by the characters[240] is also expressed through the narrative postponement of his appearance onstage. The descriptions of Jocasta and Polynices introduce one of the play's narrative norms, according to which every character refers to Oedipus upon his or her first appearance on stage.[241] In this way, Oedipus is notionally present though physically absent for most of the *Phoenissae*, while those initial allusions to his backstage presence will be tragically connected to the fact that Oedipus appears onstage only in order to announce his departure to exile. Thus, his description as a ghost living

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238 As observed by Craik (1988) 187, 'this second appearance of Iokaste, contrasts with her first: now emotional where she was previously rational (but with the same preoccupations expressed in similar vein)'.

239 See above, ch. 2.1.1. Repetition of content in *rhesis* and song is common in tragedy, signaling mainly a different kind of emotion. See Finglass (2007b) 173-174 ad S. *El.* 254-309, with other examples and bibliography.

240 By Polynices (376-377) and previously by Jocasta (59-68).

241 The actors' constant references to the blind, hidden king actually serve as another motif that unifies the plot.

in the dark is paralleled to his narrative existence, which although sug-
gested throughout, is brought forth only in the play's exodos (1539).

Between Argos and Thebes

Polynices' reply to Jocasta begins with a paradox (357–358, μῆτερ,
φρονῶν εὖ κοὐ φρονῶν ἀφικόμην / ἐχθροὺς ἐς ἄνδρας, 'Mother, it was
sensible of me to come to meet my enemy and also mad'), which both
embodies his feelings and alludes to the thematic nucleus of the rest of
the episode.[242] Perhaps in the context of another Euripidean narrative
game, Polynices' self-image differs from the way he is viewed by the
narratees. Although he claims to have been wronged and tricked and
thus treated as a foreigner in his own city, Polynices gives the impression
that he is truly a foreigner, closer to the Argive than to the Theban
party, since he has married the Argive princess and leads the Argive
army.[243] By beginning his speech with a paradox reflecting his emotional
upheaval and division, Polynices leaves free space for more than a single
interpretation of his character.[244]

Viewed from this angle, Polynices is presented as experiencing a
double identity that allows him neither to be fully familiarized within
the Theban environment, nor to completely change sides and treat
Thebes and the Thebans as true enemies. This oscillation between
Polynices' new and old identity and family, Argos and Thebes, as well as
Adrastus and Eteocles is one of the key themes that holds the play to-
gether.[245]

Metaleptic moments: gnomic statements and double focalization

The consistent use of oxymoronic expressions at the beginning of the
episode, gives way to the frequent use of gnomai or maxims.[246] A *gnome*
is an 'aphoristic wise saying sanctioned by the communal experience'.[247]
Every gnomic statement bears two basic characteristics: it is highly gen-

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242 The rest of the episode is full of oxymorons, while the themes of sense, reason
     and wisdom comprise its thematic backbone.
243 Such an interpretation is also reinforced by Polynices' last prayer to Hera, who
     protects Argos, just before his lethal duel with Eteocles (1365-1368).
244 Synodinou (1978) 358.
245 See Rawson (1970).
246 Cf. 358-360; 371; 374-375; 382; 396; 403; 438-442.
247 Rosenmeyer (1982) 180. Lardinois [(1995) 12] defines gnome as 'a generaliz-
     ing statement about a practical action'. See also above, n. 188.

eral, widely applicable, and usually cannot be of crucial importance for the interpretation of the passage or the play in total.[248]

Narratologically, maxims can illuminate the character who uses them, as they can also disclose metatheatrical connotations. The person who utters them is not necessarily identified with the person who focalizes. In this light, although in the first episode gnomic statements are uttered by Polynices or Jocasta, these are not the only focalizers. On the contrary, focalization is performed by all those who endorse the idea expressed by the gnome, namely a large group of citizens and spectators.

Specifically, in lines 358-360, Polynices admits his unfailing love for his country:

> … ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίως ἔχει
> πατρίδος ἐρᾶν ἅπαντας· ὃς δ' ἄλλως λέγει,
> λόγοισι χαίρει, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἐκεῖσ' ἔχει.

> '… But all men necessarily love their country. Whoever says otherwise takes joy in disputation while his true belief lies elsewhere.'

The particulars of the syntax of this statement are revealing: even in this case, where the subject of the impersonal expression (ἀναγκαίως ἔχει) is stated (ἅπαντας through ἐρᾶν), it remains as general as possible. Consequently, although the narrator is Polynices, the role of the focalizer is performed by the community as a whole. The temporal validity of this gnome is also analogously expanded. Although the verbs are in the present (ἔχει, λέγει, χαίρει), they have an a-temporal significance, exploiting at length the diachronic dimension of the present tense.[249]

Polynices then expresses another general saying:

> ὡς δεινὸν ἔχθρα, μῆτερ, οἰκείων φίλων· (374)

> 'What a dreadful thing, mother, is hatred betweeen members of one family!'

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248 Rosenmeyer (1982) 182. On the definition, classification and function of gnomic statements, see Arist. *Rh.* 1394a21-1395b22. For gnomic statements in Euripides, see also Most (2003).

249 The diachronic reach of the present tense is widely acknowledged. See Goodwin (1889) 9 §24, 'As the limits of … an action on either side of the present moment are not defined, the present may express a *customary* or *repeated* action or a *general truth*'; Smyth (1956) 421 §1877, 'The present is used to express an action that is true for all time … The present is an *absolute* tense in such sentences'; Duhoux (1991) 345 §280, 'Le présent est … susceptible d' exprimer une action verbale considérée comme observable en tous temps et en tous lieux. Il s' agit souvent de vérités proverbiales du type du français: "L'appétit *vient* en mangeant"; "Au royaume des aveugles, les borgnes *sont* rois"'.

Although the vocative μῆτερ undoubtedly adds a personal coloring, even in this case, both the focalization and its temporal validity are not specifically defined. Similarly, in the gnome of line 403, Polynices complains that 'friends vanish if your luck turns sour', expressing a widely acknowledged truth.

Polynices' last gnomic statement is especially revealing. He comments on the importance of money, the lack of which degrades men by robbing them of their nobility:[250]

> πάλαι μὲν οὖν ὑμνηθέν, ἀλλ᾽ ὅμως ἐρῶ·
> τὰ χρήματ᾽ ἀνθρώποισι τιμιώτατα,
> δύναμίν τε πλείστην τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἔχει.
> ἀγὼ μεθήκω δεῦρο μυρίαν ἄγων
> λόγχην· πένης γὰρ οὐδὲν εὐγενὴς ἀνήρ. (438–442)

> 'It was said long ago, but I will say it nevertheless: money is held in the highest esteem by mortals, and of all that is in the world of men it has the greatest power. It is to get this that I have come here with ten thousand spearmen. The nobleman who is poor is nothing.'

By specifying in its very first line that he will repeat past knowledge, Polynices says that he will become the narrator of a common belief that has been already focalized by others, in the past.[251]

Three similar gnomic statements are also expressed by Jocasta (382, 396, 406). The first one, in line 382 is reminiscent of her metaleptic statement in line 43 of the prologue ('why should I dwell on irrelevant troubles?'), since here as well, she comments on her own narrative:

> ἀτὰρ τί ταῦτα; δεῖ φέρειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν. (382)

> 'Yet why should I dwell on this? One must endure what the gods send.'

In both cases, Jocasta interrupts her narrative by commenting on the necessity of mentioning the events she has described. She thus becomes

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250 Those lines have seriously puzzled scholars, for the projected surplus-value of money is opposed to Polynices' positive characterization. In this light, the lines have been considered spurious by many, most recently Mueller-Goldingen (1985) and Diggle (1994a). I agree with Mastronarde [(1994) 271], who believes that '[f]or Eur. the dramatic interest lies, as often, not in exposing a simple hypocrisy but in unfolding the complexity of human motivations and the tragic entrapment of a character in his or her own system of beliefs. … Eur. has made Pol.'s position conventional and understandable, but not unassailable. Pol. is a "sympathetic" character, but not a saint or a sage'.

251 Admitting repetition of conventional wisdom is elsewhere found in tragedy. See S. *Aj*. 292-293; E. *Aeol*. fr. 25.1 (*TrGF*), φεῦ φεῦ, παλαιὸς αἶνος ὡς καλῶς ἔχει; *Beller*. fr. 285.1-2 (*TrGF*), ἐγὼ τὸ μὲν δὴ πανταχοῦ θρυλούμενον / κράτιστον εἶναί φημι 'μὴ φῦναι' βροτῷ.

the narrative representative of the poet, who reveals, through her, his narrative strategy.[252]

In line 396 Jocasta refers to the well-established 'store' of common wisdom (αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες[253] βόσκουσι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος, 'Exiles, they say, live on hopes'), since by using the word λόγος she implies that the maxim she utters has been established long before her times.[254] Finally, her series of proverbial statements is rounded off by a gnome that brings back into focus the motif of the love for the fatherland (406) and ambiguously justifies both Polynices' expedition and Eteocles' firm behavior.

The nostalgic gaze at the past

A significant part of the first dialogue between Polynices and Jocasta is dominated by Polynices' memories of the past. Those nostalgic analepses either shed light on his exile and new life at Argos, or have an even longer reach, going back to his childhood at Thebes. Since this is the second time Polynices refers to his identity, a crucial difference can be observed between his monologue before he met Jocasta (261-277) and his speech after their meeting (357-378). In his first appearance, Polynices presented himself as a stranger, by delivering a speech that focused on the present, and showed no interest in the past. However, after hearing the speech of Jocasta, he is presented more as a Theban, since he is moved at the sight of the ancestral halls, the altars and the gymnasia he grew up in (366-368, '… But I arrive in tears: after so long a time I look on the temples and altars of the gods, the gymnasia in which I was trained, and the waters of Dirce').

At this point, analeptic digressions do not just provide past information, but also aim at restoring Polynices' lost Theban identity. To this end, Jocasta reinforces the connections to the Theban past by bringing up the miseries of living away from one's homeland. The common past of Polynices and Eteocles is thus perceived as the only common ground for reconciliation. Conversely, the gap in communication that will lead Polynices and Eteocles to mutual fratricide also derives from the time Polynices spent at Argos. Family happiness and reciprocal love then

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252 Analogous narrative 'halts' are also found elsewhere in Euripides, cf. *Hipp.* 971-972; *Andr.* 397-398; *Hel.* 991-992.

253 The hopes Jocasta refers to are unclear. According to Kovacs [(2003) 56], she does not mean the kind of 'active' hope that leads to new plans and action, but a kind of 'passive' hope expressed through patient endurance.

254 Referring to a statement as a παροιμία or λεγόμενον highlights its old proverbial character [Strömberg (1954) 13].

ceased, and Polynices became a stranger. As a consequence, external analepses are here not just injecting the past into the present, but they are additionally providing the only connecting point for a destroyed family. In this light, Polynices' persistent analepses also work towards his positive characterization. Having highlighted the description of past family happiness as the only ground on which the two brothers could negotiate, Euripides then makes them part of Polynices' narrative only, crediting him alone with the intention of using the past as a means of reconciliation.

2.3.4. The arrival of Eteocles and the agon (443–587)

The scene begins with the first appearance of Eteocles. He is introduced by the Chorus, who also describe Jocasta as the third person who will take part in the agon (443-445). Eteocles is presented differently from Polynices from the very first lines. Polynices' hesitating entrance (261) is now opposed to Eteocles' dynamic appearance; he is impatient and demands for the agon to begin as with all speed (447), a rude demand immediately condemned by Jocasta (452-454).

The reply of Jocasta reveals not just her maternal, but also her narrative authority. She denounces the behavior of Eteocles[255] and instructs her sons to look at each other (455-458)[256] while re-establishing her narrative status by having recourse to the force of a gnomic statement (453). Her presence in the agon is connected to the narrative rules of debates, according to which a third person acts as a judge.[257] At this moment, Jocasta displays significant narrative, domestic, and judicial authority. The tripartite structure of the debate corresponds to its primarily judicial character, according to which plaintiff and defendant make their argumentation before a judge.[258]

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255 Jocasta does not accept Eteocles' anger and tries to moderate her son's behavior by a number of imperatives; See for example ἐπίσχες (452); σχάσον (454); στρέφε (457).

256 Her answer complies with the play's overall dramatic insistence on visual details, or visual perception of the offstage happenings; Notice the expressions σχάσον δὲ δεινὸν ὄμμα (454); οὐ γὰρ τὸ λαιμότμητον εἰσορᾶις κάρα / Γοργόνος· ἀδελφὸν εἰσορᾶις ἥκοντα σόν (455-456); σύ τ' αὖ πρόσωπον πρὸς κασίγνητον στρέφε (457); εἰς γὰρ ταὐτὸν ὄμμασιν βλέπων (458); εἰς ἓν συνελθὼν ὄμματ' ὄμμασιν διδῶι (462); ταῦτα χρὴ μόνον σκοπεῖν (463).

257 She is actually assigned such a role by the Chorus, who consider her capable of reconciling her sons (444-445).

258 Although this type of dramatic trial scene recalled the spectators' everyday experience, its strong connection to reality did not seem to disrupt the dra-

Eteocles signals the beginning of the debate with irritated incitement: ἀρχέτω δέ τις λόγου (447, 'Let someone begin the discussion').[259] According to Euripidean dramatic technique, the winner of the debate usually speaks second.[260] In cases, however, where dramatic or narrative needs require the winner to speak first, taking the position usually occupied by the loser, Euripides strengthens the first speech and weakens the second by introducing a third party who will oppose the loser's argument.[261] In this light, in the *Phoenissae*, although Polynices (the moral winner of the debate) speaks first, Euripides weakens the argumentation of Eteocles (who will be defeated, although he speaks second) by introducing Jocasta, who refutes Eteocles' untenable arguments.

2.3.4.1. The temporary judge: Jocasta's first rhesis (452-468)

Jocasta' main preoccupation while delivering the monologue is to reconcile her sons. To this end, she draws attention to the happy aspects of the past, and invites Polynices and Eteocles to forget their bitter memories. In this reconstruction of the past, Jocasta uses the popular wisdom of maxims to convince her sons to forget their previous dispute (461-464). Probably alluding to the political virtue of μὴ μνησικακεῖν,[262] she refers to events of the near past, namely the injustice performed against Polynices, contrary to her previous analeptic excursions where she narrated the events of the remote past, when Thebes was founded or when the Labdacids lived as a happy family. According to their reach, the analepses of Jocasta and Polynices point to happy or unhappy events. Descriptions of long reach include happy family memories, while short reaching analepses bring into focus the sad events of the brothers' strife.

Jocasta's current narrative position (that of the judge), does not allow her to express her view openly about the dispute.[263] In accordance with

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matic illusion. For the ambiguity of the lifelike dramatic representations of trials that did not disturb the dramatic illusion, see Collard (2003) 70.

259 Such a narrative warning that a debate is about to take place is frequent in Euripides, who uses words like ἀγών; ἀγωνίζεσθαι; ἅμιλλα λόγων and thus gives a formal character to the majority of his debates. See Collard (2003) 67; Lloyd (1992) 4-5.

260 See Collard (2003) 68; Schlesinger (1937) 69.

261 Schlesinger (1937) 70.

262 The political virtue of forgiving, of 'not bearing malice' (μὴ μνησικακεῖν) gained special importance initially during the first years of the Peloponnesian war (see Th. 4.74.2; 8.73.6), and then again after the expulsion of the Thirty [Mastronarde (1994) 279].

263 At this point she has to be objective, contrary to her explicit accusation of Eteocles at her first meeting with Polynices (319).

her 'judicial' role, she endorses Polynices' claims of unjust treatment, and gives him the right to speak first (465-467). Later, she dexterously moves away from her role, asking one of the gods to judge her sons (467-468).[264] In this manner, Jocasta changes her narrative role, switching identities between judge and simple spectator of the debate. When she refuses her duty as a judge, the initially tripartite structure is simplified to a bipartite arrangement. Such a narrative shift happens after the initial triple structure has attracted the audience's attention. Dramatically, the absence of a judge leads to the absence of final verdict and the debate ends without a clear victory, although the agon's moral victor is Polynices.

By playing the card of suspense and vague outcome which deprives both brothers of clear victory, Euripides sets a narrative precedent that foreshadows the outcome of the brothers' next confrontation and looks forward to the end of the play. The debate's ambiguous result proleptically alludes to the uncertain outcome of their duel, which will lead to an additional battle between Argives and Thebans (1460-1472). In the case of the agon, the hazy outcome stems from the absence of a judge. In the case of the duel, an uncertain victory takes place before hundreds of witnesses –the Argive and Theban soldiers- who had mistakenly forgotten to set the duel's specific rules beforehand.

2.3.4.2. Ἁπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας: Polynices' rhesis (469-496)

Following the fifth-century legal procedure, Polynices speaks first as the plaintiff.[265] His speech is based on a simple plan: to reproduce the events as they took place, without resorting to impressionistic rhetorical twists, sophistic innuendos and other narrative fireworks. He fluctuates between past and present, making clear that his argumentation consists of the bare truth and is therefore fair and just.[266] The cornerstone of his line of argument is the existence of absolute truth, which can be perceived in a single way and described in the simplest words. By contrast with

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264 Her address to the gods echoes her invocation of Zeus at the end of her initial monologue (85), where she was praying for salvation and reconciliation. Her short prayer just before the first speech of the debate, as well as the Chorus' vain prayer of lines 586-587 provide the narrative frame for a debate with no practical result [Mastronarde (1994) 280].

265 Craik (1988) 187.

266 He actually repeats δίκη ('justice') or its compounds five times: τἄνδιχ' (470); δίκης (490); δίκηι δίκης (492); ἔνδιχ' (496).

truth and justice, injustice can be described –according to Polynices-
only with clever tricks:

> ἁπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας ἔφυ,
> κοὐ ποικίλων δεῖ τἄνδιχ᾽ ἑρμηνευμάτων·
> ἔχει γὰρ αὐτὰ καιρόν· ὁ δ᾽ ἄδικος λόγος
> νοσῶν ἐν αὑτῶι φαρμάκων δεῖται σοφῶν.[267] (469-472)

> 'Truth's argument is simple, and justice needs no elaborate presentation: all by
> itself it shows the proper measure. But unjust argument, being diseased in itself,
> requires clever medicines.'

Polynices' argumentation is mainly past-oriented. The only non-
analeptic reference is the above gnomic statement, which has a pre-
dominantly achronic aspect. His use of maxims acquires a rhetorical col-
oring because of the way it is later overturned by Eteocles. Polynices'
choice to base his argumentation upon a gnome accentuates the impact
of those expressions of common wisdom,[268] as it also manipulates the
audience towards a negative characterization of Eteocles, who rejects the
concept of a single truth from the very first line of his speech.[269] What is
more, the telling juxtaposition of the rhetorical criteria of each brother
(widely accepted in the case of Polynices – narratively flamboyant in the
case of Eteocles) reveals Euripides' implicit proclamation of the debate's
winner.

    Conforming to the narrative policy that he had announced,
Polynices claims that his exile was initially a voluntary offer to Eteocles
in an attempt to avoid the curse of Oedipus (473-475). The preceding
description of the same events by Jocasta (71-74) makes his analepsis
repeating.[270] In this case, repetitive frequency allows the poet to ascribe
additional validity to Polynices' sayings, whose soundness is thereby
cross-checked. In another repetitive description, Polynices further speci-
fies that Eteocles violated their initial agreement, refusing to share the
throne and paternal inheritance (481-483).[271] Later on, in contrast to his
repeating analeptic description, he provides new information regarding

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267 Eteocles uses the word σοφόν (negatively colored by Polynices) in his first line
     (499).
268 See also above, pp. 55-58.
269 See also below, pp. 63-65.
270 See above, n. 120.
271 Cf. 74-76. Although the description of the reasons of the dispute is performed
     only through the focalization of Polynices, it works as an important means of
     characterizing both brothers. The reaction of the Chorus who sympathize
     with Polynices and take his side (497-498) could also be instructive with re-
     gards to the reactions of the spectators, who were probably equally moved by
     the injustice Polynices suffered.

the present situation, namely his plan, as well as a clear image of the ar-
mies outside the city walls. The account of his plan (484-487) leads to
future oriented declarations about his threat to seize the city by using
scaling ladders fixed to the walls (488-489). Towards the end of his
speech he calls upon the gods, insisting on the injustice that he has suf-
fered (491-493). This invocation is of special narrative importance, since
it solidifies the previous narratorial twist from a trial-scene debate to a
simple agon of two contestants (467-468).

The end of Polynices' speech is followed by a brief comment by the
Chorus, who are convinced by his argumentation.[272] The Phoenician
women use their foreign origins as a means of ratification of Polynices'
pledge (497-498, 'Though I was not brought up in Greece, to me you
seem to be speaking sensibly'). They emphasize that although they are
foreign narratees, unaware of the specific social and educational context,
they are persuaded by his argumentation, since his speech is shaped
upon universal principles that reach beyond a purely Greek cultural con-
text. Particularly, the Chorus refer to narratees that are not familiar with
the fifth-century philosophical views. Their comment is timely, since in
his subsequent speech (499-525) Eteocles will base his argumentation
upon sophisticated philosophical and rhetorical techniques that can be
understood only by experts among the spectators.

In a metatheatrical reading of the agon, the difference between the
Athenian (audience) and the non-Athenian (Chorus) narratees, who are
(Athenians) and are not (Phoenicians) philosophically and rhetorically
trained, could also parallel the different levels of theatrical/mythological
competency of the spectators. A part of the audience was well aware
both of the position of the *Phoenissae* in the rest of the mythical or even
performative megatext and of Euripides' complex narrative games, while
another –less theatrically/mythologically educated- part of the audience
would miss many of such connotations.

2.3.4.3. The elusive similarity of names: Eteocles' rhesis (499–525)

Eteocles' gnomic statements

Eteocles' speech is signaled by an achronic gnomic statement, following
the example of Polynices. However, in contrast to Polynices, the maxim
he employs requires special philosophical knowledge to be endorsed, or
at least, understood, being based on the existence of multiple truths:

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272 For a criticism of the reaction of the Chorus as over-enthusiastic, see Mastro-
     narde (1994) 287. For the dramatic role of analogous choral comments during
     a dramatic agon, see Hose (1990) 222.

εἰ πᾶσι ταὐτὸ καλὸν ἔφυ σοφόν θ᾽ ἅμα,
οὐκ ἦν ἂν ἀμφίλεκτος ἀνθρώποις ἔρις·
νῦν δ᾽ οὔθ᾽ ὅμοιον οὐδὲν οὔτ᾽ ἴσον βροτοῖς
πλὴν ὀνομάσαι· τὸ δ᾽ ἔργον οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε. (499-502)

'If everyone defined justice and wisdom the same way, there would be no
quarreling or strife among men. As things stand, the only similarity or equality
mortals show is in their use of word: the reality to which these refer is not the
same.'

Although both monologues begin with the idea of acquiring narrative
validity by using a gnome, the speech of Polynices seems more power-
ful, since an untrained audience can verify it. On the contrary, only nar-
ratees familiar with tenets of the sophistic movement can understand
Eteocles' statement.

The poet has skillfully made the narrative of Eteocles resemble that
of Polynices,[273] but then shift to an opposite conclusion. Although both
brothers set as their narrative goal the disclosure of truth, they try to ac-
complish it by different methods. Polynices recounts the truth, while
Eteocles, his lust for power (503-506, 'I shall speak, mother, and hold
nothing back. I would go to where heaven's constellations rise, go be-
neath the earth, if it lay in my power, in order to possess Tyranny,
greatest of the gods'). The result is strikingly different.

All Eteocles' gnomic statements could be used against him. He be-
lieves that compromising for less than one has is a sign of unmanliness
(509-510),[274] while his cynical sincerity is in accordance to the gnome of
lines 524-525, where he admits that if one decides to be unjust, it is bet-
ter to do it in the name of monarchy. Eteocles uses gnomic-like state-
ments in order to express his personal beliefs. On the contrary, the max-
ims used so far (by Polynices and Jocasta) referred to universal values,
such as love for fatherland (406), or the miseries of exile (393; 403).
Eteocles uses gnomai to justify his disinclination to share the inheritance
(509-510) or his use of unjust methods for the sake of monarchy (524-
525). His rhetorical arrogance probably derives from his strong belief in
the power of speech, as mirrored in the maxim of lines 516-517 ('speech

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273 Even the strong ἐγώ of the fifth line of Polynices' speech (473) is also situated
     on the fifth line of Eteocles' speech (503). For structural symmetry in the
     tragic debates see Collard (1975) 134; (2003) 66 ff. For the symmetry of the
     monologues in the *Phoenissae*, see Lloyd (1992) 5 ff.
274 Eteocles refers to the concept of *aidos* in a distorted manner: 'to say that it is
     anandria to give up the greater for the smaller share is to confuse greed with
     manliness, while his concern for the honor of Thebes barely conceals his re-
     luctance to give up his own privileges' [Cairns (1993) 266].

accomplishes everything an enemy's arms might accomplish').[275] Ironically, the lack of any practical solution after the end of the agon shows that 'speech' (λόγος) cannot lead to anything good. By insisting on the power of something that proves to be inadequate, Eteocles increases the tragic irony, as he reveals a 'naïve blindness' that stifles any tragic sympathy or pity the audience might feel for him.[276]

<div style="text-align:center">Arguing time: the present against the past</div>

With the exception of allusions to his future firm stance (512-514; 518-520), Eteocles' rhesis mainly refers to the past and present. Strongly present-oriented statements[277] thus alternate with analeptic echoes. His narrative gaze concerns events that either have not been or will not be realized, thus relegating his argumentation and jeopardizing his narrative authority. He insists on the truth of the present moment –Polynices is about to besiege Thebes and the Thebans have to protect it (521-522)–, leaving the past to be covered solely by 'negative' anachronies.[278]

Eteocles uses a negative analepsis (515-516, 'He [Polynices] ought not to be trying to reach an agreement by force of arms …') to describe what Polynices should not have done. His narrative choice weakens the rhetoric power of a past description, which, by contrast with the way it was used by Polynices, reveals an array of would-be scenarios that remain endlessly suspended. Eteocles' narrative plan rejects the past-oriented rhetoric of Polynices. However, in a play where the past is credited with historic accuracy and is presented as ultimately responsible for every present suffering, it is more possible that the narratees would have tended to trust the truth of the past more than that of the present. Eteocles though tries to direct his narratees' attention to the present, regarding it as the only temporal dimension that hosts the truth. The impact of Eteocles' rhesis is shown by the reaction of the Chorus. The Phoenician women condemn Eteocles' argumentation, claiming that when eloquence (εὖ λέγειν) is not used for a good cause, it is at odds

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275 See also his frequent use of expressions containing the words λόγος, ὄνομα, or their compounds (500, ἀμφίλεκτος; 502, ὀνομάσαι; 516, λόγος). Eteocles' narratorial obsession of this kind retrospectively reinforces the Chorus' approval of Polynices' plain argumentation (497-498).

276 Mastronarde (1994) 294-295.

277 πρὸς δὲ τοῖσδ' αἰσχύνομαι, 510; πρὸς ταῦτ' ἴτω μὲν πῦρ, ἴτω δὲ φάσγανα, / ζεύγνυσθε δ' ἵππους, πεδία πίμπλαθ' ἁρμάτων, 521-522.

278 See above, n. 66 and 237.

with justice (526-527, 'Men should not speak fair about ignoble deeds. That is dishonorable and hateful to justice').[279]

2.3.4.4. The reply of Jocasta (528-585)

Gaining the audience: the moral shaping of the present

By depriving Eteocles of any possibility to defend himself, Jocasta reveals once more Euripides' intention to present Polynices as the moral victor of the debate. Her speech is generally advisory, with strong gnomic coloring. She stresses the wisdom traditionally connected to old age (528-530), in an attempt to validate her argumentation in advance. In this context, the praise of equity and justice (538-545) cannot be doubted, not only because it is expressed within the authoritative framework of maxims, but also because it is voiced by a person of age. Gnomic statements have formed an indispensable and crucial part in Jocasta's idiolect since the beginning of the play. In this case though, gnomai occur mainly in the first part of her speech, namely the one devoted to Eteocles (528-568), and work as a 'silent' narrative marker towards the positive characterization of Polynices.

Jocasta embarks on a sustained accusation of Eteocles by highlighting his lust for distinction, namely his φιλοτιμία[280] (531-532), with which her address to Eteocles also ends (566-567). The pair of opposites consisting of φιλοτιμία on the one hand and ἰσότης ('equity') on the other is the backbone of Jocasta's argument, as well as the basis for the development of the antithetical pair of the opposing πλέον ('greater') and ἔλασσον ('lesser'). These two pairs, built on standard terms concerning views about citizen behavior,[281] deepen Jocasta's accusation by endowing it with a theoretical armature on a par with Eteocles' gnomic jargon.

The identifying characteristics of both 'ambition' and 'equity' are narratively depicted by an analepsis of a remarkably long reach, which

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279 The condemnation of eloquence when it is used for a bad cause was a common argument against the rhetoric of the sophists. See Dodds (1960) 129-130. Possibly Euripides believed in a similar reaction coming from the spectators, who in that case would have been satisfied by the Chorus' disapproval. Besides, it is common for the narrative of the Chorus to reflect knowledge or beliefs shared by the whole community [Fantuzzi (2010) 2-3, with additional bibliography].

280 For Mastronarde [(1994) 299], φιλοτιμία is a synonym of Tyrannis 'as is clear from the equivalence of 561 τυραννεῖν and 567 φιλότιμος'. The word acquired a pejorative meaning towards the end of the fifth century.

281 Namely, 'having more' or 'having less' (539-540; 553).

credits them with an almost mythical dimension, especially striking within the present-oriented framework of the debate. As put by Jocasta:

πολλοὺς δ' ἐς οἴκους καὶ πόλεις εὐδαίμονας
εἰσῆλθε κἀξῆλθ' ἐπ' ὀλέθρωι τῶν χρωμένων·
ἐφ' ἧι σὺ μαίνηι. ...[282] (533–535)

'Often she goes in and out of prosperous cities and houses and ruins those who have dealings with her! Yet for her you have lost your senses.'

Ambition is personified as an unjust deity that brings destruction to anyone that surrenders to her. The indefinite description, lacking temporal restrictions, leaves the narrative temporally open and gives it mythical dimensions. Such a narrative choice, highlighting the change from happiness to destruction, increases the tragic pathos and makes a concealed metatheatrical allusion to the typical characteristics of the tragic hero as well as the doomed fate of the Labdacids. Similarly, Jocasta presents analeptically the virtues of personified Equality, qualifying it with cosmological activity, such as the setting of units of weight and numbers (541-542, 'In fact, it is Equality that has established measures and weights for mankind and given them number').[283]

Jocasta's argument against φιλοτιμία and in favor of ἰσότης would have been endorsed by an honest, democratic citizen. Her failure to convince Eteocles[284] thus becomes even more striking and again projects his negative characterization. Furthermore, since the majority of the spectators would have agreed with Jocasta's claims, Eteocles is presented as belonging to a minority. This part of Jocasta's speech gives special importance to her addressees. While at some points she addresses solely Eteocles, when her tone becomes general, she implicitly expands the range of her recipients to both internal (Eteocles, Polynices, Chorus) as well as external (spectators) narratees. When Jocasta exercises her maternal authority and openly criticizes her son,[285] Eteocles is the only ad-

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282 Irrational lust for power that destructs families and cities is a traditional motif. See for example Sol. fr. 4 *IEG*; Pi. fr. 210 S-M.

283 By means of the opposition between Ambition and Equality, Euripides resumes the opposition between Δυσνομίη and Εὐνομίη, as developed in Sol. fr. 4 *IEG*.

284 In my view, the first part of Jocasta's rhesis (528-568) is undoubtedly addressed to Eteocles. Rademaker [(2005) 149] believes that these lines refer to Polynices: 'in Jocasta's speech the appeal is to arguments that are truisms for a private citizen of modest means in a democratic πόλις, but that are conspicuously unlikely to appeal to a dethroned prince of Polynices' status'. I do not see why his observations cannot fit Eteocles just as well.

285 Cf. the direct questions in second person singular: 547-548; 549-550; 559-567.

dressee, but when she uses maxims, any possible narratee could be ad-
dressed.

Negative prolepses and the impasse of the divided self

Apart from a brief analepsis referring to the recent past that denounces
both the expedition against Thebes and Adrastus' support for it (569-
570), the rest of Jocasta's speech, consisting of a sequence of negative
anachronies, refers to Polynices and directs the temporal narrative gaze
to the future.

In a manner similar to her narrative in the prologue,[286] Jocasta em-
barks on a series of negative prolepses. Although she wishes that they are
avoided, she still expresses them to reveal two possible scenarios of simi-
lar narrative structure.[287] Through this narrative policy, she tries to con-
vince Polynices that regardless of its outcome, the expedition will have
devastating repercussions. The first scenario examines the possibility of
Polynices' victory over the Thebans and begins with Jocasta's analogous
wish (571, 'Come, if you conquer this land –and heaven forbid you
should–'). Her wish generates a conditional about the victory's ambigu-
ous consequences: Polynices would be unable to 'set up trophies to
Zeus' (572), perform sacrifices (573), or 'inscribe on the spoils by the
streams of Inachus' (574).[288] Via the negative form of her prolepsis, Jo-
casta projects a narrative possibility that will not be realized and presents
as unacceptable Polynices' supposed inscriptions on spoils dedicated after
his assumed victory (575-576).

In a similar manner, Jocasta examines the opposite possibility, that of
Polynices' defeat. The negative effect of such a scenario is expressed
through the assumed comments of an anonymous Argive who connects
his misfortunes with the husband Adrastus selected for his own daughter
(580-583, 'Someone will say: O Adrastus, inflictor on us of ruinous
marriages, because of the marriage of one bride we have been ruined').

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286 Cf. Jocasta's negative analepses in the prologue, regarding the nuptial customs
     she did not perform. See above, n. 66, 237 and ch. 2.3.2.

287 The narrative of both possible scenarios starts with a wish against their realiza-
     tion (through the use of ποτέ and optative), it continues with negative prolep-
     sis expressed through direct questions, and in the second case it concludes with
     a typical 'tis-speech'.

288 The martial celebration that will *not* be performed by the waters of Inachus,
     for it is part of a negative prolepsis, inevitably brings to mind the nuptial cele-
     bration (of the wedding of Polynices) by the waters of Inachus that was not
     performed either, since it was part of a negative analepsis (346-347).

Such an imaginary, epic colored tis-speech[289] recalls the comments lev-
eled against Helen by the elders of Troy at the Scaean Gates[290] and re-
flects the justified anger of the soldiers who put themselves at risk of
death for the sake of a single person.

Both possibilities are equally harmful for Polynices, whose 'adven-
ture' is highly unlikely to have a happy ending. He is doomed to suffer
even if he wins, mainly because of his divided identity. Every time a
'part' of his divided self is victorious, the other will be defeated and
Polynices will always be trapped in a suffocating rivalry between his
Theban and his Argive selves. Throughout the play, the coexistence of
the Theban and the Argive past of Polynices constructs an emotional tug
of war which carries him along towards one direction or the other. The
striking juxtaposition of a Theban's (Jocasta's) and an Argive's (τις) reac-
tion to this war projects Polynices' conflicting sides for the first time, as
it mirrors the two opposing forces that will lead to his destruction.

2.3.4.5. A heated coda: Eteocles against Polynices (588–637)

The last section of the debate consists of a heated dialogue between
Eteocles and Polynices, with three interventions by Jocasta. Eteocles

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289 According to standard Homeric classification [Wilson (1979b); de Jong
(1987c)], tis-speeches are classified into 'real' (in narrator-text expressing col-
lective thoughts) and 'potential' or 'imaginary' (embedded in character-text,
verbalizing the inner thoughts or fears of the speaker). In drama, tis-speeches
can only be potential, as in Jocasta's monologue. Potential tis-speeches have
never been really uttered, they are only imagined by the speaker who delivers
them, usually projecting a negative thought and aiming at avoiding a given ac-
tion [Wilson (1979b) 2; de Jong (1987c) 69, 76]. Potential tis-speeches are
thus placed on a hypodiegetic narrative level, or differently put, they perform
focalization of third degree [see Rimmon-Kenan (1983) 94-95; Bal (1997) 44-
52]. As observed by Wilson [(1979b) 10], tis-speeches mainly mirror the
thoughts and feelings of the character who delivers them, for they are his or
her own creation. In this light, both of Jocasta's tis-speeches express her own
fears, the realization of which she tries to avoid. For an analogously negative
tis-speech, see *Il.* 4.176-181, καί κέ τις ὧδ' ἐρέει Τρώων ὑπερηνορεόντων /
τύμβωι ἐπιθρώισκων Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο· / 'αἴθ' οὕτως ἐπὶ πᾶσι χόλον
τελέσει' Ἀγαμέμνων, / ὡς καὶ νῦν ἅλιον στρατὸν ἤγαγεν ἐνθάδ' Ἀχαιῶν, /
καὶ δὴ ἔβη οἴκόνδε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν / σὺν κεινῆισιν νηυσί, λιπὼν
ἀγαθὸν Μενέλαον'. See also Fingerle (1939) 283-294; de Jong (1987b);
Richardson (1990) 24-25; Mpezantakos (1996) 196-205.

290 *Il.* 3.154-160, οἳ δ' ὡς οὖν εἴδονθ' Ἑλένην ἐπὶ πύργον ἰοῦσαν, / ἧκα πρὸς
ἀλλήλους ἔπεα πτερόεντ' ἀγόρευον· / 'οὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ ἐϋκνήμιδας
Ἀχαιοὺς / τοιῆιδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν· / αἰνῶς
ἀθανάτηισι θεῆις εἰς ὦπα ἔοικεν· / ἀλλὰ καὶ ὧς τοίη περ ἐοῦσ' ἐν νηυσὶ
νεέσθω, / μηδ' ἡμῖν τεκέεσσί τ' ὀπίσσω πῆμα λίποιτο'.

rounds off the narrative he had started and speaks first, admitting the
failure of the debate (588-589).[291] He desires the end of the procedure,
shows no sign of yielding and threatens to kill Polynices if he does not
leave the city immediately (590-593). By portraying Eteocles' stern be-
havior, Euripides increases the dramatic effect, which is built up by the
opposition between the 'bad' and the 'good' son of Oedipus.[292]

Handling time

In terms of time, the brothers' last dialogue is dominated by expressions
referring to the present that are combined with limited analeptic or pro-
leptic deviations. The strong present coloring is underscored by a fast
narrative pace, effected through elliptical sentences, of one line or less,
that do not move the action forward. The speedy narrative is also repre-
sented metrically, as the characters use a trochaic tetrameter catalectic,[293]
which increases the tempo much more than the iambic trimeter.[294] The
temporal span is expanded initially by two gnomic statements from
Polynices (597; 599), while brief prolepses and analepses also occur.[295]
Three out of five prolepses refer to the fratricide, with both brothers
proudly announcing their desire to kill each other (610; 622; 625),
while Eteocles' two analepses are of limited reach, referring to the very
recent past, namely Polynices' expedition (598; 607). The remote past is
the only source of joy and happiness, especially as opposed to the recent
past, which increases the gap that separates the two brothers.

The scene ends with a brief monologue from Polynices (624-635).
During his last appearance on stage, he desperately addresses the god and
his paternal land to witness his dishonorable departure that would suit a

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291 On stichomythia yielding no clear victor, see Schwinge (1968) 57-67.

292 Mastronarde (1994) 323.

293 For trochaic tetrameter in drama, see Krieg (1936); Imhof (1956); Drew-Bear
(1968).

294 According to Aristotle, trochaic tetrameter is so 'rapid' that it corresponds
more to dance than to dialogue; this is the main reason for which trochaic te-
trameter was used in the early specimens of tragic poetry, that were satyric and
more associated with dancing. See *Po.* 1449a19-24 (ἐκ μικρῶν μύθων καὶ
λέξεως γελοίας διὰ τὸ ἐκ σατυρικοῦ μεταβαλεῖν ὀψὲ ἀπεσεμνύνθη, τό τε
μέτρον ἐκ τετραμέτρου ἰαμβεῖον ἐγένετο. τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον τετραμέτρωι
ἐχρῶντο διὰ τὸ σατυρικὴν καὶ ὀρχηστικωτέραν εἶναι τὴν ποίησιν, λέξεως δὲ
γενομένης αὐτὴ ἡ φύσις τὸ οἰκεῖον μέτρον εὗρε). Trochaic tetrameter is also
used in scenes of high passion or divine intervention (Cf. E. *HF.* 855-873; *Tr.*
444-461; *Ba.* 604-641).

295 See the prolepses of lines 602, 610, 614, 622 and 625, as well as the analepses
of lines 598 and 607.

slave, not a prince (626-628, 'But I call on the land that nourished me and on the gods, to witness that I am being driven, dishonored and in misery, from the country, like a slave, not the son of Oedipus, who is my father no less than his'). By the time the subnarrative of Polynices' visit to Thebes has been completed, it becomes clear that his initial hesitations on entering the city were working as concealed prolepses. At the end of the episode, Polynices is officially treated as a stranger, forced to leave his city, and ready to fight on the Argive side.

2.4. Redetermining the city's guilty past
(First stasimon, *Phoenissae* 638-689)

The first stasimon completes the description of Thebes' mythical past, begun in the parodos. It returns to mythical themes such as the foundation of the city by Cadmus and the killing of the dragon of Ares, but in a more specific and detailed way. Such repetition redetermines the city's guilty past at a crucial point, between the brothers' failure to reconcile and Menoeceus' sacrifice. The stasimon consists of three strophes, of which the first refers to the arrival of Cadmus at Thebes and the birth of Dionysus (638-656). The antistrophe (657-675) deals with the event that followed Cadmus' arrival, namely the killing of the dragon of Ares and the self-destruction of the Spartoi.[296] Lastly, the epode asks for help from Epaphus, common ancestor of Phoenicians and Thebans (676-689).

 The city's past is dominated by the work of the gods. Apollo's oracle ordered Cadmus to stop looking for his sister Europe, follow the heifer and found a city at the point where she stopped at her own will (638-648),[297] namely the place where Semele had given birth to Dionysus (649-656).[298] At the same spot, the god Ares had set his offspring, a

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296 For choral descriptions of the past that mainly reproduce a 'community point of view' and do not claim privileged knowledge as the Messengers' descriptions do, see Barrett (2002) 48-55.

297 For the oracle of Apollo to Cadmus, see Hellanic. fr. 51 *EGM*.

298 Dionysus is here invoked as Bromius (649, Βρόμιον), an address alluding to his bestial, ecstatic nature. Arthur [(1977) 171] observes that this wild side of the god is highlighted in the following lines, where Dionysus is connected to the power of the leaves of the blossoming ivy (651-654, κισσὸς ὃν περιστεφὴς / ἑλικτὸς εὐθὺς ἔτι βρέφος / χλοηφόροισιν ἔρνεσιν / κατασκίοισιν ὀλβίσας / ἐνώτισεν). Dionysus is born by the fertile meadows of Dirce, exactly where Antigone sees Tydeus stand in the Teichoscopia. Tydeus, is also notorious for his bestial nature, and has been paralleled to a wild animal when an Apol-

dragon, as a guard (657-661), whom Cadmus killed and following the advice of Athena, sowed the beast's teeth on the ground (662-669). From the dragon's teeth, Earth gave birth to the Spartoi, who then killed each other, pouring their own blood to the land which gave them life (670-675).

The Chorus' narrative operates on three different levels. Starting with the diegetic present, namely the invocation of Epaphus, the Chorus unfold two additional narrative threads: the foundation of the city by Cadmus and the birth of Dionysus in Dirce's meadow. The first subplot consists of a sequence of three phases: (a) the revelation to Cadmus of the place where the city had to be founded (638-648), (b) the killing of the dragon and the sowing of his teeth (657-669), and (c) the birth and mutual killing of the Spartoi (670-675).

The first strophe begins with an analeptic excursion covering the first phase of the first subplot, i.e. the foundation of the city. The Chorus' description is monopolized by the description of the Theban mythical landscape, where Dionysus was born, which contrasts with the landscape of the narrative and dramatic present. The nostalgic tone will be overthrown when the narrative moves to the second and third phase of the subplot, where peace will yield to death and war.[299]

Before passing to the narrative of the Spartoi, the first subplot freezes and leaves the narrative ground to a secondary subplot, which deals with the birth of Dionysus (649-656). The description of his birth, referring to the god's initial connection to nature and the bacchic ecstatic dancing, is effected by an analepsis of a considerably longer reach. Although the foundation of the city also belongs to a remote and mythical past, the time span of Dionysus' birth is almost cosmogonic. The power of the god is described as eternal and his overarching presence covers the city's history from as early as its birth to its religious present (655-656).

After completing the narration of the second subplot, the Chorus return to the first (regarding the foundation of Thebes) and explain its phases: Cadmus killed the dragon of Ares who guarded the city's surroundings[300] and, following the advice of Athena, sowed the beast's teeth in the earth (657-669).[301] From the dragon's teeth there sprang the

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lonean oracle revealed him as one of Adrastus' sons-in-law (411, κάπρωι λέοντί θ' ἁρμόσαι παίδων γάμους). In the *Thebaid*, Tydeus gobbled the brain of Melanippus' scull (fr. 9 *PEG* = 5 *EGF* = 9 *GEF*).

299   Craik (1988) 201-202.

300   For Cadmus and the killing of the offspring of Ares, see Fontenrose (1959) 306-320.

301   On whether the intervention of Athena, apart from the sowing of the teeth, is also connected with the killing of the dragon, see Mastronarde (1994) 341.

Spartoi (Sown Men) who killed each other in civil strife (670-675). The violent atmosphere of the antistrophe, dominated by the killing of the dragon and the bloody self-destruction of the Spartoi, brings into focus the threatening presence of Ares who, although still outside the Theban walls, is jeopardizing the city's well being.[302]

The epode is strongly present-oriented and apart from the call on Epaphus for help, it is marked –as happened with the two previous strophes- by emphasis on the abundance of the Theban soil.[303] On the whole, one notices that the analepses pointing to the events before the killing of the dragon[304] reflect a happier era, while after it, events follow a disastrous sequence that will terminate in the deaths of Oedipus' sons.

In summary, with respect to time, the first stasimon vacillates between past (strophe, antistrophe) and present (epode), while with respect to narrative levels, between a diegetic and another two hypodiegetic levels. In both cases, changes are effected through the deictics ἔνθα and ἔνθεν. Thus, in the case of the changing of narrative levels from that describing the foundation of Thebes to that dealing with the birth of Dionysus, the Chorus employ ἔνθα (649), also used for the return to Cadmus and the killing of the dragon (657). Similarly, ἔνθεν (670) signals the shift from the narrative of the killing of the dragon to the narrative of the Spartoi.

In general, the first stasimon is tied both to the intratextual and intertextual context. Intratextually, the content of the ode rounds off the mythical information given in the Parodos, where the killing of the dragon had been alluded to by the reference to Apollos' sacred cave (232), the place where the god had killed Python.[305] The first stasimon looks back to the Parodos also through the reference to Cadmus' arrival from Tyre (638-639), as it looks forward (to the second stasimon) through the reference to Ares' dragon and the Spartoi. Intertextually, the first stasimon of the *Phoenissae* parallels that of the *Seven Against Thebes* (287-368), regarding the following: the invocation of the gods

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302 The change of narrative atmosphere, from the tranquil heifer and the fertile land to the murderous dragon and the bloodthirsty Earth brings to mind the prominent opposition between peaceful Phoenicia and tumultuous Thebes that the Chorus described in the parodos.

303 This is also the reason for the invocation of Demeter and Persephone (683-687).

304 For example the analepses referring to Io and Epaphus, Demeter and Persephone, even Cadmus following the heifer.

305 Conacher (1967) 246. Mastronarde [(1994) 221] also highlights the parallel between the conquest of Cadmus and that of Apollo with reference to the killings of the monsters.

for the protection of the city (happening at the beginning of the stasi-mon in the *Phoenissae* and at the end in the *Seven*), the credit to the dis-astrous strength of Ares (from 657 ff. in the *Phoenissae* and from 343 ff. in the *Seven*) and finally, the emphasis on the beauty and fertility of the Theban soil (from 642 ff. and 683 ff. in the *Phoenissae* and from 306 ff. and 357 ff. in the *Seven*).[306]

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306 Craik (1988) 202. For a detailed intertextual analysis of the play, see below, ch. 4.

Chapter 3
Violating expectations:
Offstage narrative and the play's open end
(*Phoenissae* 690-1766)

In this chapter, I focus on the narrative techniques employed in the handling of time, narrative levels and focalization. After taking the first offstage battle of Argives and Thebans as the thematic nucleus that divides the play in two parts, I will explore the narrative of the second section that begins with Eteocles' and Creon's preparations for battle (second episode) and ends with Oedipus' and Antigone's departure to Athens (exodos). By adopting a narratological reading of the second part of the *Phoenissae* I examine the ways in which Euripides plays with his audience's expectations, deviating from mythical and dramatic clichés, as well as postponing much awaited dramatic developments. In this narrative context, a new character, Menoeceus, will prove more gifted than the Eteocles of the *Seven*, while Jocasta will remain alive to witness the fratricide and then commit suicide over her sons' corpses. Moreover, every character will experience an unusual desire to leave the city and move out, to the battlefield, while Oedipus will eventually appear on the orchestra at the very end, just in order to leave it against his will.

Well-known mythical variants are supplemented by Euripides' innovative additions and the spectators are expected to reflect on, evaluate, and judge the causality of the Labdacids' disasters, as well as the play's open end. The poet challenges his audience to such an extent that he virtually welcomes (or at least invites) their giving answers to the myth's insolvable problems, though his ultimate purpose is to make them realize how difficult and controversial, if not impossible this task is, even if the entire mythical megatext is at their fingertips. After having presented an outline of the Theban saga through the analeptic excursuses in the first part of the play, Euripides dedicates this second part to the possible variations that the myth can generate. Having thus satisfied his mythically unknowledgeable audience, it is high time he satisfied his more demanding spectators who are mythically apt and wait –by means of a flexi-narrative- to be fascinated and surprised.

3.1. Sub specie *Septem*: Creon and the 'second Eteocles' (Second episode, *Phoenissae* 690 – 783)

In contrast to the unusually long first episode, the second one is of simple structure and limited length. The spectators are presented with only three new clues: the Argive encirclement of the city (710-711), the strategy of the Theban defense (720-750), and the departure of Eteocles for the battlefield (753). Dramatic interest is thus maintained mostly through the insertion of a new character (Creon), and the fuller characterization of Eteocles. The episode also develops three new narrative subplots, that will have to be effected by Creon, if Eteocles dies in the battlefield. The new hypodiegetic levels consist of the consultation of Tiresias (766-774),[307] the wedding of Antigone to Haemon (757-760), as well as the prohibition of Polynices' burial in Theban soil (775-777). Apart from Tiresias' visit, which constitutes a complete narrative unit, the other two subplots will remain unfulfilled, and the end of the play narratively open.

The episode's beginning lines are much-debated (690-696). Suspicion is based not on linguistic, but mostly on narrative grounds.[308] Eteocles, who seems to have stayed on stage for the first stasimon commands a servant to call Creon, so that he can consult with him before going in battle (690-694), but his order is cancelled right away, since Creon appears at once, approaching the palace at that very same moment (695-696, [Et.] 'But he [Creon] has saved you trouble by appearing: I see him coming to my house').[309] The dramatic convention according to which characters miraculously appear when they are needed is thus pushed to its limits,[310] as the newly introduced character justifies his or her presence convincingly (697-699). Creon claims that he has heard of the brothers' ineffectual attempt at reconciliation,[311] but how he knows all

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307 The introduction of Tiresias is actually an 'oblique invitation', as Eteocles invites the seer only through his representative, Menoeceus. Such a technique though serves a double cause, since it injects in the story not only Tiresias, but also Menoeceus [Iakov (1982) 173].

308 The lines are deleted by Willink (1990) 193-194 and Diggle (1994a), but kept by Murray (1957), Craik (1988), and Mastronarde (1994). For argumentation against the deletion, see Mastronarde (1994) 348-349.

309 Analogously artificial entrances, albeit much shorter, are also noticed in E. *Supp.* 397-398 and S. *Tr.* 58-60.

310 Such narrative techniques agree with Euripides' tendency to shock the audience through unexpected dramatic turns. For Euripides' subversive use of theatrical conventions, see Arnott (1973).

311 Cf. ἤκουσα (703).

this information is never explained.[312] Even though Creon does not reveal his source, the spectators can be sure that his informant was on Eteocles' side, because of his focalization. He calls Polynices 'haughty' (703), as he also insists on Polynices' attack against his city and not on the fact that he was previously wronged by Eteocles. Creon's focalization provides a third presentation of Polynices, since the latter was previously presented by Antigone in the Teichoscopia, and by his own self in the first episode. With the focalizer's gaze filtering Polynices' description, his image here is different from elsewhere; the romantic warrior of the Teichoscopia has been subsequently replaced by a partly insecure son fighting for a just cause in the first episode, and is here again substituted by an arrogant attacker.

The dialogue of Eteocles and Creon moves between present and future. By reporting the information of a Theban captive who tried to run away (708), Creon has an air of narrative authority, since he is the only one who can reproduce the offstage conditions of war. According to what he knows, the Argives are on the point of surrounding the Theban walls by arms (710-711). This present-oriented image is soon going to be abandoned, since both interlocutors will focus on the future defense of the city, which involves either an attack by night (724), or during meal time (728-729). While both scenarios are considered, none is finally endorsed.[313] Following the two men's final decision, Eteocles and a group of six selected warriors will protect the seven gates of Thebes, each one facing one Argive general (748-750).

The episode's crucial narrative turnabout occurs when the spectators realize that the six Thebans who will accompany Eteocles in the battle remain unknown, at least until line 1098, as in the present episode Eteocles thinks that such a listing would take up too much time:[314]

ὄνομα δ' ἑκάστου διατριβὴ πολλὴ λέγειν,
ἐχθρῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῖς τείχεσιν καθημένων. (751-752)

'To tell you the name of each man would consume too much time with the enemy encamped at our very gates.'

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312 The exact way Creon was informed is not clear; the audience could though assume that the news was spread during the first stasimon [Mastronarde (1994) 352].

313 The references to potential warfare techniques that are finally not adopted parallels the narrative technique of the negative anachronies that open a window of possible scenarios that are not materialized. On negative anachronies, see above, n. 66, 237 and ch. 2.3.2.

314 See also below, ch. 4.3.2.2.

The above lines have become the source of debate, connected to lines 1104-1140 of the fourth episode, which some editors delete as inconsistent with Eteocles' proclamation.[315] Additionally, his comment is treated as a clear metatheatrical allusion to Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, in which the detailed description of the Theban (and Argive) generals is the play's cornerstone.[316]

This kind of metatheater categorizes the play as a 'surface-play' which disrupts dramatic illusion, underscoring the gap between on- and off-stage reality, or, as Easterling calls it, between the world of the drama and the world of the theatre.[317] 'Surface plays' do not just exploit, they emphasize this gap, blurring the boundaries between dramatic (onstage) and extradramatic (offstage) events. In this light, metatheatrical allusions highlight the play's artificial nature of dramatic microstructure.[318]

Eteocles' last onstage appearance further adds to his overall characterization. He seeks Creon's advice (700); he admits strategic *aporia* (734; 740); he urges the Thebans to fight (712) before he organizes a substantial defense-strategy: all this points to his youth and martial immaturity, as criticized by Creon (713, '… Are you too young to see what you should see?'). His last onstage appearance is disappointing overall, frustrating any hope that he might display strategic vision.[319] Insecure and inefficient, he has no sound judgment regarding the city's defense. His present behavior ironically contrasts with his handling of the debate in the previous episode, since his witty sophistry is now revealed to have originated from his juvenile enthusiasm and frivolity. From a historical perspective, the opposition between Eteocles' youthful excitement and Creon's mature prudence could echo the sociopolitical situation in Athens of the late fifth century; after the disaster of the Sicilian expedition, the dynamic involvement of the younger generation in politics was put

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315 For a full discussion, see below, ch. 3.5.1 and Appendix II: The text.

316 For the Euripidean tendency to reveal poetic consciousness, see Scodel (1990).

317 Like every dramatic composition, Greek tragedy includes two different dimensions: the 'world of the theatre' and the 'world of the drama', corresponding to the *hic et nunc* of the performance and the artificial space and time of the story respectively [Easterling (1991) 49-50].

318 Dobrov (2001) 14; 20; 22. For metatheatricality in Euripides, see also Arnott (1973); (1982); Winnington-Ingram (2003).

319 This disappointment becomes even stronger if Euripides' Eteocles is compared to his Aeschylean counterpart. In the *Seven*, Eteocles is presented as a confident leader, capable of dealing with both a significant external threat and the terror of the women of the city, while in the *Phoenissae*, Eteocles is in constant need of the help of Creon, and is presented as incapable of managing the situation by himself.

into doubt. For many Athenians, the solution to the city's political problems was the return from youth to maturity, from son to father.[320]

Lastly, Eteocles' monologue is metatheatrically colored by the intertextual allusion (751-752) to the *Seven*. Apart from an obvious difference in the structure of the two narratives –Aeschylus presents the generals early on in the play, while in Euripides the description is delayed–, the audience are invited to compare the *Phoenissae* and the *Seven* using Eteocles' characterization as a yardstick. In the *Seven*, Eteocles emblematizes power, both narrative and dramatic: he manipulates the Messenger's report, organizes the defense of Thebes, and is presented as a capable leader, who does what is best for his city. His strategic capacity is overtly displayed both in his defensive plan and in his wise selection of champions to oppose the Argives. Even Eteocles' intention to kill Polynices is presented by Aeschylus as an inevitable collateral loss, necessary for the salvation of the city.[321] On the contrary, Euripides' Eteocles is hesitant and frightened, an image at odds with his ambitions. In the Euripidean version, Eteocles craves for a position he cannot live up to. Euripides draws a line of difference from Aeschylus with respect both to microstructure and macrostructure, by selecting a different narrative plan and by downplaying the dynamism of a chief character of the plot.

The second episode underscores Euripides' intention of creating a mythical panorama of the Theban saga. Through an alternative presentation of an established figure like Eteocles, as well as an explicit divergence from theatrical tradition, Euripides testifies to the importance of treating myth in an innovative manner. Having a serious amount of mythical information at their disposal, the audience are allowed of a wide range of interpretations, as well as an implicit metamythological comment on the myth's systemic failure to provide answers to its crucial questions. Having given his flexi-narrative an informative / educative character at the first part of the play, Euripides can now make the rest of the play mythically and dramatically challenging.

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320 Cf. the institution of the *probouloi*, a board of ten elderly men in charge of supervising the council and the assembly, established in 413 (see Th. 8.1.3-4; Arist. *Ath.* 29.2). In the post-Sicilian expedition period, the rise of many Athenian youths in politics attracted suspicion (see Th. 6.12.2; 6.13.1; 6.17.1), while many opted for a return to the old values of the *patrios politeia* (see Thrasym. D-K 85 B fr.1.15-50). See also Strauss (1993) 179-211; Lamari (2011).

321 This is not the situation in the *Phoenissae*. As observed by Mastronarde [(1994) 346], even if Eteocles' decision to fight with Polynices in the *Seven* is not considered an *Opfertod*, it is still strongly tied to the measures that need to be taken for the city's well being. Contrastingly, in the *Phoenissae*, the plan for the salvation of Thebes belongs to Creon (not Eteocles), and the only *Opfertod* is offered by Menoeceus.

3.2. A choral chronotope
(Second stasimon, *Phoenissae* 784-833)

The second stasimon's close connection to the dramatic context emerges as its most salient feature. The strophe starts with an invocation to Ares, preserving the martial atmosphere of the dialogue between Eteocles and Creon, while the antistrophe refers to Oedipus' exposure on Mount Cithaeron, recalling previous descriptions from the characters and the Chorus. The Epode offers an invocation to Earth, alluding to Earth's blood-thirst that will be satisfied by Menoeceus' sacrifice in the following episode.

Structurally, the Chorus' song consists of stylistic and thematic opposition. It therefore hosts both rich language[322] and plain triadic structures, as it presents the antithesis between two powerful gods, Dionysus and Ares, which is evident until the last lines of the epode, referring to Thebes' double foundation myth.[323] The first of the two gods connects the foundation of the city to Cadmus and therefore the god Apollo, who gave Cadmus the oracle, while the second one relates the foundation of Thebes to Antiope,[324] mother of Amphion and Zethus (822-829). The coexistence of the two mythical traditions regarding the foundation of the city abides by the mythical polyphony permeating the *Phoenissae*. In the context of the lavish presentation of mythical information on Thebes, the second foundation myth draws attention to the city's walls –built by Amphion and Zethus– and creates a contrast with the disastrous behavior of Eteocles and Polynices.

The ode follows a carefully mapped temporal blueprint, since the strophe refers to the present, the antistrophe to the recent past, while the epode to the remote past. Actually, this centrifugal narrative movement from the present (strophe) to the past (antistrophe, epode) is accompanied by an analogous centrifugal movement from the center of the city to the Theban surroundings.[325] The ode thus constitutes a Bakhtinian

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322 Note the polysyllabic epithets of 801-805; 820-821, with the three Euripidean coinages, θηροτρόφου, φοινικολόφοιο, ὀδοντοφυᾶ. See also Mastronarde (1994) 373-374; 387-388.

323 The antithesis between Ares and Dionysus was also prominent in the previous stasimon, where both gods were connected to Thebes and particularly Dirce's meadows, where Semele gave birth to Dionysus (647-650) and Ares placed his dragon (657-661).

324 Antiope is also opposed to Apollo through Niobe, wife of her son Amphion.

325 We could also characterize as 'centrifugal' the narrative movement prevailing in the second part of the play in general, since the characters abandon the center of Thebes one after the other (Eteocles, Jocasta, Antigone, even Menoe-

chronotope ('timespace'),[326] since the strophe is dominated by the deictic origo, namely the present battles by the river of Ismenus (793), while the antistrophe transfers the recipients of the narrative temporally to the past and spatially to Cithaeron (802).

Ἔρις and the fratricide: strophe and antistrophe

The strophe and antistrophe start with an address to Ares (784) and Mount Cithaeron (801–802) respectively, but they both end with references to Strife (Ἔρις) that is connected to the miseries of the Labdacids.[327] These are not the only references to Eris. Euripides connects Eris with a series of unfortunate events that tortured the royal family of Thebes. In the prologue, Jocasta presents strife as the cause of the upcoming battle (81-82), while she also creates the impression that the strife between the brothers originates from their father's curses (67-68). Similarly, in the first episode she curses those responsible for the war, whoever they might be, Strife, Oedipus or the gods (350-353). In the fourth episode, Jocasta is trying to convince Antigone to join her to the battlefield in order to 'end your [Antigone's] brothers' quarrel' (1277, συγγόνων λύσεις ἔριν). Strife is thus conceived as a condition and not as a cause or result. The last reference to ἔρις is made when Antigone accompanies onstage the corpses of her mother and brothers. Her dirge includes a tragic allusion to Polynices' speaking name, which plays with the whole chain of killings that wreaked havoc on the house of Oedipus:

ὦ Πολύνεικες, ἔφυς ἄρ' ἐπώνυμος· ὤμοι, Θῆβαι·
σὰ δ' ἔρις — οὐκ ἔρις, ἀλλὰ φόνωι φόνος —
   Οἰδιπόδα δόμον ὤλεσε κρανθεῖσ'
   αἵματι δεινῶι,
αἵματι λυγρῶι. (1494-1498)

'O Polynices, how true your name has proved: ah ah, Thebes!

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ceus –in a different way of course) to go out to the battlefield and then return to the city, alive or dead.

326 The indistinct relationship between space and time in the narrative is captured in exemplary manner by the term 'chronotope', which Bakhtin introduced to describe the close connection between space and time in the narrative of Goethe, where each event of the story or time motif has a vital relationship with the particular space in which it is assumed to have occurred [Bakhtin (1986) 42; 46-50]. Cf. Bakhtin (1982); Tuan (1990).

327 At the end of the strophe the Chorus sing that Eris is a terrible goddess who brought sufferings to Thebes (798-800), while at the end of the antistrophe although strife is not personified, it is presented as another disaster that torments the children of Oedipus (811-813).

Your strife –no strife but bloodshed upon bloodshed–
destroyed the house of Oedipus,
being brought to fulfillment in murder dread,
in murder grim.'

Antigone thus equates νεῖκος to strife (ἔρις), connecting the latter with the martial characteristics of the former.

Ἔρις is present in almost every Euripidean tragedy, and, being closely tied to war, it derives either from the morbid desires of the gods, or from the morbid behavior of the humans.[328] Different speakers (Jocasta, Antigone) use ἔρις as a prism, through which they receive reality, making its concept twofold, embracing both the cause and the result, according to the reception of each focalizer. In the *Phoenissae*, the stylistic choices that mark the antistrophe of the second stasimon (801-817), where ἔρις is referred to as δυσδαίμων (811, 'unhappy'), prefigure the last monologue of Oedipus in the exodos (1595-1624), where he uses δυσδαίμων to refer to himself (1608; 1615). By employing diction connected to the concept of strife, while also admitting his culpability,[329] Oedipus verifies the early accusations of Jocasta, according to whom the strife between Polynices and Eteocles originated from his curses (67-68). Oedipus appears onstage only when Polynices and Eteocles are dead, i.e. when the consequences of the ἔρις he spread are manifested. Following a ring-composed pattern, Euripides presents strife as deriving from the curse of Oedipus only in the prologue and the exodos, while he leaves its meaning vague in the middle of the play.

Thebes' double foundation myth: epode

The epode points to a syncretism of two separate traditions, as it contains the city's second foundation myth, according to which the Theban walls were built by the miraculous twin brothers Amphion and Zethus. According to one tradition,[330] Cadmus wanders around Greece with his mother Telephassa seeking his sister Europa, abducted by Zeus. All

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328 Wilson (1979a) 19.

329 Oedipus claims that he is the one who 'inherited' the curse of Laius and then passed it on to his children (1610-1611, παῖδάς τ' ἀδελφοὺς ἔτεκον, οὓς ἀπώλεσα, / ἀρὰς παραλαβὼν Λαΐου καὶ παισὶ δούς). According to Sewell-Rutter [(2007) 39-40], Oedipus' acknowledgement that he has played a central role in passing on the curse to his descendants underscores the different treatment of the theme of the curse in the *Seven* and in the *Phoenissae*. While in the former, such responsibility was solely put on Eteocles, in the latter it is distributed among the members of the Labdacid family.

330 For what follows see Grimal (1986) s.vv. Cadmus, Amphion; Powell (1998) 436-444.

along his trip, Cadmus built cities, which he dedicated to the gods. After many wanderings they reach Thrace, where they stay until Telephassa's death. His ineffective wanderings made him address Apollo, who instructed him to stop looking for Europa and instead follow a heifer bearing a white circle on each of her sides. When the heifer felt tired, she would stop of her own will and would thereby indicate the place where he should found a city. Following the god's advice, Cadmus started to build Thebes on a hill in Boeotia and sacrificed the heifer to Athena. While he was preparing the sacrifice, some of his comrades were sent to a spring close by, Areia, to fetch water. The spring was guarded by a dragon, an offspring of Ares, who killed most of Cadmus' companions. When he learned what had happened, Cadmus went to the spring, killed the dragon, and, following the advice of Athena, sowed the dragon's teeth in the ground. From there sprang the Spartoi, who killed each other until Athena ordered them to stop, leaving five of them alive. These became Thebes' first citizens. One of them, Chthonius, begot two sons, Lycus and Nyctaeus, who begot two daughters, Nyctaeis and Antiope. Nyctaeis married Polydorus (the son of Cadmus) and gave birth to Labdacus, the first of the Labdacids.

Antiope is the point of departure for the second foundation myth.[331] Famous for her beauty, Antiope won the admiration of Zeus, who disguised himself as a satyr and impregnated her.[332] Trying to avoid her father's wrath, Antiope left Thebes, went to Sicyon and married Epopeus. When her father Nyctaeus died, her uncle Lycus gathered an army, attacked Sicyon, killed Epopeus and captured Antiope, following Nyctaeus' last wish.[333] On their way back to Thebes, Antiope gave birth to twin sons at mountain Cithaeron, but as she was unable to carry them with her, she abandoned them in a cave. The twins were then found by a shepherd, who named them Amphion and Zethus.[334] In Thebes, Lycus left Antiope under the attention of his wife, Dirce, who tortured her. However, she received the help of Zeus and miraculously escaped,[335] finding shelter in the hut of her two sons, who recognized her. The boys took revenge for their mother's sufferings by killing Dirce in a horribly exemplary way: they tied her hair to a bull, who dragged her to

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331 This version of the myth occurs for the first time in the catalogue of Heroines in the *Odyssey* (11.260-265) and is also connected with Thebes by Pherecydes (fr. 41 *FGrHist* 3) and Apollodorus (3.5.5).

332 E. *Antiope* fr. 210 (*TrGF*); Ovid *Met.* 6.110-111. For a discussion of Antiope's identity as a bride, cf. Seaford (1990) 83-84.

333 *AP* 3.7.

334 E. *Antiope* fr. 181-182 (*TrGF*).

335 Apollod. 3.5.5; Hygin. 8.6.

death.[336] They disposed her body in the spring of Ares, which was then named after her.[337] After the intervention of Hermes, who communicated the orders of Zeus, Amphion and Zethus should build and wall the city,[338] and Lycus should give them the throne.[339] Zethus carried the stones on his back, while Amphion enchanted the stones with his music so that they assembled themselves.[340]

It has been recently maintained that the myth of Amphion and Zethus was presumably shaped during the period when the walling of a city was indicative of the polis' civilization. In this context, Amphion and Zethus were typical 'social heroes' that took care to finish Thebes with a wall and to bring it into the civilized era. When later, the heroes who walled the city were no longer seen as bringers of civilization and the concept of the 'colonization hero' began to leave its lasting imprint on the Greek socio-political thought, the Eastern myth of Cadmus came to the fore and was combined with previous tradition.[341] As the myth of Amphion and Zethus reproduced the archetypal motif about the miseries that preceded the final triumph of exposed but specially gifted twins,[342] Cadmus' story bears two archetypal characteristics also present in other Near Eastern myths: the victory of the warrior who kills the terrible dragon,[343] as well as the birth of the first inhabitants from the earth.[344] As it seems more probable, the two traditions must have complemented each other at the beginning, but when the tradition about Cadmus prevailed, two separate myths about a colonization hero (Cadmus) and two civilization heroes (Amphion and Zethus) had to come

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336 E. *Antiope* fr. 221 (*TrGF*).

337 E. *Antiope* fr. 223.80–85 (*TrGF*).

338 E. *Antiope* fr. 223.86–97 (*TrGF*).

339 E. *Antiope* fr. 223.78–79 (*TrGF*).

340 E. *Antiope* fr. 223.90–95 (*TrGF*).

341 Kühr (2006) 120–121.

342 From another angle, Amphion's effortless contribution to the city's walling, as opposed to Zethus' labor, echoes the contrast between divine and human nature [Kühr (2006) 120].

343 The most striking parallel is that attested in the *Gilgamesh* epic. In tablet V, H̬umbamba, a monstrous giant guarding the Cedar forest, is killed by Gilgameš, under the encouragement of Enkidu, Gilgameš' companion. Interestingly, while Gilgameš stabs H̬umbamba, Enkidu extracts the monster's teeth. Apart from the similarity with the killing and extraction of the teeth of the dragon of Ares by Cadmus, the two myths also share another important analogy, since both Enkidu (tablet VII) and Menoeceus suffer indirect death because of the gods' wrath after the killing. For translation and commentary of tablets V and VII, see George (2003) 466–470; 478–484.

344 Powell (1998) 444–445.

together.[345] In this light, the ancient scholiast of the *Phoenissae* explains that 'Cadmus founded Thebes, while Amphion and Zethus built its walls' (Κάδμος ἔκτισε τὰς Θήβας, Ἀμφίων δὲ καὶ Ζῆθος ἐτείχισαν).[346] In an attempt to reconcile a more recent (Cadmus) and an earlier (Amphion and Zethus) tradition about the same event (the foundation of Thebes), those three heroes were ascribed with different deeds: the foundation of the city and its fortification.

The dramatic use of the city's double foundation myth is linked to the choral ode it belongs and to the play's general narrative blueprint. The references to the city's foundation by Amphion and Zethus occur in the epode of a stasimon whose strophe and antistrophe have been already characterized by an attempt to detect and explain the first beginnings of the Labdacids' troubles. The 'choral' accusations of Cithaeron who nurtured Oedipus (801-805), the Sphinx (806-811),[347] or the Strife (811-813), reveal the Chorus' tendency to connect events of the remote past to the city's present sufferings. In this context, a full presentation of every aspect of the Theban past, even of the city's second foundation myth, seems especially relevant.

With reference to the play's larger narrative structure, such a choice is consonant with Euripides' pluralistic mythical explanations. Besides, the myth of Amphion and Zethus provides a striking opposition to the behavior of Eteocles and Polynices, especially in an *Antiope*, *Hypsipyle*, *Phoenissae* trilogy.[348] The analogy is obvious: siblings, who are heirs to the throne and are challenged by destiny to save their family (Antiope or Hypsipyle or the Labdacids), found (Amphion and Zethus) or rule (Polynices and Eteocles) Thebes. Such similarities on the level of myth are tragically overturned in Euripides' drama. Polynices and Eteocles do not save Jocasta −contrary to Amphion and Zethus who saved Antiope and Euneus and Thoas who saved Hypsipyle−, but make her commit suicide. As for the city of Thebes, not only they do not truly care for its

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345 Kühr (2006) 122.

346 Schwartz (1887) 265.

347 The analepses of the Chorus regarding the baby's exposure (801-805, ὦ ζαθέων πετάλων πολυθηρότα- / τον νάπος, Ἀρτέμιδος χιονοτρόφον ὄμμα / Κιθαιρών, / μήποτε τὸν θανάτωι προτεθέντα, λόχευμ' Ἰοκάστας, / ὤφελες Οἰδιπόδαν θρέψαι, βρέφος ἔκβολον οἴκων, / χρυσοδέτοις περόναις ἐπίσαμον) or the coming of the Sphinx (806-811, μηδὲ τὸ παρθένιον πτερόν, οὔρειον τέρας, ἐλθεῖν / πένθεα γαίας / Σφιγγὸς ἀμουσοτάταισι σὺν ὠιδαῖς, / ἅ ποτε Καδμογενῆ τετραβάμοσι χαλαῖς / τείχεσι χριμπτομένα φέρεν αἰθέρος εἰς ἄβατον φῶς / γένναν, τὰν◻ὃ κατὰ χθονὸς Ἅιδας / Καδμείοις ἐπιπέμπει) could also be considered negative, since they express wishes about the past that were never fulfilled.

348 See below, Appendix I: The trilogy.

well-being, but Polynices attempts to seize it and Eteocles defends it only to continue living there as a king. Amphion and Zethus create Thebes' fortification to protect it against enemies, but because of Eteocles and Polynices, those fortifications come close to being beaten. By providing a wide spectrum of the mythical past, Euripides plays with his audience's familiarity with the present situation, inviting them to explore and subsequently evaluate the surprising twists and turns of human fate.

3.3. Manipulating time: Tiresias, Menoeceus, and the turning point of the play
(Third episode, *Phoenissae* 834–1018)

The third episode develops on two narrative axes: the meeting between Creon and Tiresias, and the dialogue of Creon and Menoeceus, followed by the tragic self-sacrifice of the latter. Both dialogues fall under the narrative category of the *scene*, and thus follow its temporal rules, namely the coincidence between the time of the story and the time of the narrative. Complex narrative games are avoided in this episode, under the imposing sacrifice of Menoeceus, the prevailing event of the section.

Controlling the past, foretelling the future: Tiresias

Apart from the predominance of the present tense in the third episode, Tiresias' first appearance alludes to the dramatic future and specifically to Oedipus' departure from Thebes. Future implications are even created through staging, since the image of blind Tiresias being accompanied by his daughter parallels the end of the play, when Oedipus is accompanied and helped by Antigone. For the first time in the *Phoenissae* prolepsis is effected by stage setting and not through words.

Tiresias' narrative starts with an analepsis that works as a dramatic alibi for his delayed arrival. As he explains, he could not reach Thebes earlier because he was helping the Athenians defeat Eumolpus (854–857). The anachronistic use of the reference to Erechtheus[349] is triggered

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349 Euripides' *Erechtheus* was probably performed in 422 or a bit later [Collard & Cropp (2008) 366–367], and although fragmentary (fr. 349–370 *TrGF*), we are in the position of restoring its basic story. One of the play's most important preserved parts is the monologue of Praxithea, Erechtheus' wife, in which she explains her decision to heroically offer her daughter to be sacrificed in order

by the dramatic parallel between Creon, whose son is soon to be sacri-
ficed, and Erechtheus, whose daughter was also sacrificed for the salva-
tion of their city.[350] The scene leads to a fuller characterization of Creon,
who unlike Erechtheus, tried to avoid the sacrifice of his son. Addition-
ally, if one considers that a female figure, Praxithea, showed greater
bravery than Creon and conceded to the sacrifice of her daughter in a
speech of unprecedented heroism, Creon's positive characterization is
sabotaged, since it implicitly points to female bravery as one of the play's
underlying motifs. Finally, the hidden reference to the sacrifice of
Erechtheus' daughter, amounts to another proleptic reference to the
effectiveness of Menoeceus' sacrifice. In the former case, Athens was
saved, but the family of Erechtheus vanished. Praxithea was the only
survivor, a tragic figure overturning her initially glorious image. Simi-
larly, in the case of Menoeceus, Thebes is saved, but in a way equally
destructive for the Labdacids.[351]

Tiresias' analeptic tone accords with the playwright's insistence in
tracing the first beginnings of the sufferings of the Labdacids. In lines
867-869, the seer accuses Laius, who begot Oedipus against the will of
the gods, while later on the narrative lens zooms onto Eteocles and
Polynices, who mistakenly marginalized Oedipus in their futile attempt
to avoid divine anger (872-874). Tiresias then turns to the future, ex-
plaining that Menoeceus should be sacrificed in the cave of the dragon,
in order to offer libation to Ares, who is still angry with Cadmus for
having killed his offspring (931-936). According to Tiresias' explana-
tions, the benefits coming from Menoeceus' sacrifice are based on the
process of exchanging equals (in this case, blood for blood). However,
his insistence on equality (also praised by Jocasta in the agon) cannot be
very convincing or promising, since –so far in the play- the pursuit of an
equal share in Thebes and the throne has only led to destruction.[352] Yet
Tiresias' monologue does not clarify how the sacrifice of Menoeceus
will guarantee the salvation of Thebes,[353] since Ares was supposed to

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to save Athens (fr. 360). The play ends with the salvation of Athens, but with
Erechtheus, and his daughters dead.

350 O'Connor-Visser (1987) 74-75. Euripides perhaps inserted the parallel of the
sacrifice of Otionia, in order to create an opposition between her traditional
sacrifice and the unusual sacrifice of Menoeceus [Foley (1985) 134].

351 Thebes is frequently presented in opposition to Athens in many aspects. Cf.
the presentation of Thebes as 'anti-Athens' by Zeitlin (1986).

352 Kosak (2004) 176. On the destructive results of the opposition of characters
claiming to share familial/social characteristics in the *Phoenissae*, see *ibid*. 176-
182.

353 Foley (1985) 109.

have forgiven Cadmus much earlier, when he allowed him to marry his daughter Harmonia.[354]

The last lines of Tiresias' speech are in accordance to the use of his figure as the archetypical tragic sheer. Regardless of the mythical time in which a dramatic story is supposed to take place, Tiresias is the prophetic figure that always appears in the Theban dramas. Similarly, his last statements are of a strongly gnomic character as they underscore the achronic nature of his character. He refers to the difficulties of practicing the seer's craft, making those who utter the will of the gods unpleasant to those who hear it.

Menoeceus and the narrative of the sacrifice

After Tiresias' announcements Creon claims that he will not offer his son to be sacrificed for the city (963-964) and reinforces his decision by another gnomic statement (965-966, 'All men alive love their children, and no one would give his own child to be killed'). He then points to the future, declaring that he intends to send Menoeceus away from Thebes (970-972). When Menoeceus plainly states his intention to abide by his father's plan, the audience may hear him with suspicion, remembering the hardships of exile as discussed by Jocasta and Polynices in the first episode. While on stage, Creon's narrative authority is undoubtedly dominant; after his departure, Menoeceus becomes the chief figure who will be shaping the plot for the rest of the episode.

Menoeceus' speaking name generates irony, since it reflects someone who 'stays' (μένει) in the 'house' (οἶκος); regardless of his father's constant pressure, Menoeceus does not leave the royal house, but instead stands up for his name and manages to remain in the city, and through his sacrifice, in the Theban walls in particular.[355] The covert problematization with respect to his speaking name marks both a return and re-contextualization of the theme of exile. As with other themes of the

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354 Cf. the relevant reference of the Chorus, Ἁρμονίας δέ ποτ' εἰς ὑμεναίους / ἤλυθον οὐρανίδαι (822-823).

355 Menoeceus will not be exiled, but will stay at *home*. At his ultimate *home*, the dark *home of the Earth*, the dragon's cave. The cave is a kind of sacred locus, a primitive sanctuary where the self-sacrifice will take place. 'The cave, according to a familiar evolutionary schema, was man's earliest habitation, which was then retained as a burial place and finally conceived of as the house of the gods' [Burkert (1985) 24]. As an allegorical space, caves can allude to life and death, as meeting points between earth and the underworld [Heyden (1995) 127].

Phoenissae,[356] a topic used in the beginning is reiterated in reverse manner towards the end.

In the first episode, Jocasta was wondering about her son's ability to endure the 'great calamity' (388, κακὸν μέγα) of the exile, while in the third episode Creon tries to convince his son to flee, regardless of Menoeceus' view, who considers exile as a cowardly betrayal of his country and family (1003-1005). Thus exile, one of the play's basic themes,[357] is treated differently, by distinct focalizers, at the beginning and the end. In terms of personal involvement, what is a misfortune for Jocasta, Polynices and Menoeceus, is considered salvation for Creon.

Menoeceus' episode forms part of Euripides' technique of overturning traditional narrative expectations. Menoeceus' sacrifice marks a Euripidean innovation,[358] making Tiresias' prophecy a surprise for the Athenian audience.[359] His character balances the immoral actions of the rest of the heroes (Creon, Eteocles) and embodies the external intervention, the 'way' (890, μηχανή) and 'life-saving remedy' (893, φάρμακον σωτηρίας) about which Tiresias was talking and without which Thebes would have been captured. Menoeceus' presence restores the sacrifice to its initial symbolic value, namely the sacrifice of a φαρμακός, a scapegoat,[360] who heals social and mental ills.[361] Besides, Menoeceus was the only one who could fit the sacrificial pattern of the 'young, pure and undefiled'.[362] His character embodies a perfect balance between duty to others and personal concern for one's reputation and honor.[363] Euripides' desire for novelty is also apparent when the *Phoenissae* is compared to the *Seven*, since the introduction of Menoeceus as a new dramatic character could be seen as the poet's attempt to differentiate from the Aeschylean parallel. As Eteocles in the *Phoenissae* is not a heroic figure in the manner of his predecessor in the *Seven*, Menoeceus personifies the Theban hero the play is lacking. Euripides seems to inaugurate a whole

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356 See for example the theme of the marginalized / sheltered female figure displayed in the appearance of Antigone in the Teichoscopia, reversed to that of the dynamic woman displayed in the exodos.

357 Cf. Rawson (1970) 109-127.

358 Foley (1985) 133 has actually maintained that Thebes in the *Phoenissae* is saved thanks to Euripides' inventive virtues.

359 See Schmitt (1921) 88-93; O'Connor-Visser (1987) 82-87; Foley (1985) 107-108; Mastronarde (1994) 28-29.

360 For the use of φαρμακός, see Burkert (1985) 82-84.

361 Nancy (1983) 20.

362 O'Connor-Visser (1987) 83.

363 Situations that are harmful to one party but beneficial to another are a Euripidean *topos*. See Cairns (1993) 266-268.

new version of the myth[364] in order to include in the *Phoenissae* the theme of the sacrifice.

Intertextually, Menoeceus resembles Oedipus in many aspects. Menoeceus will have to be literally or metaphorically sacrificed. Literal sacrifice involves jumping off the Theban walls, while metaphorical sacrifice is proposed by Creon and concerns his son's exile. From this perspective, Oedipus too will leave the city to purify it from the pollution of the Labdacids. Both characters believe that their act of heroism is the only requirement for the salvation of the city, although in the case of Menoeceus his sacrifice was insufficient (the fratricide was still necessary), while in the case of Oedipus, Thebes was supposed to have been saved already.

The effectiveness of Menoeceus' sacrifice is mythically enigmatic. While it could be considered futile, since the city remains in danger even after the sacrifice takes place,[365] Thebes eventually escapes the danger of destruction. Besides, although the first battle ended in a draw, the one following the sacrifice resulted in Theban victory, with which Menoeceus should possibly be accredited. Nonetheless, the salvation of the city seems to be more connected with divine intervention, since in the first battle, the fighting is stopped because of Zeus' thunderbolt (1180–1188), while in the second one, Theban victory derives from the Theban 'providence' (1466, προμηθίαι), possibly representing divine will.[366]

Symmetrically framed by two stasima and placed in the middle of a ring composition, the sacrifice of Menoeceus charges the play with dramatic power. Through this mythical neoterism, Euripides organizes his narrative by means of three contrasted pairs: the verbal conflict of Eteocles and Polynices, Antigone's first appearance, and the theme of male selflessness preceding the sacrifice are respectively contrasted with the actual duel[367] of the two brothers, Antigone's second appearance, and

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364 See Mastronarde (1994) 28-29, with a list of features suggesting that Menoeceus is a Euripidean innovation.

365 The first battle of Thebans and Argives (1090-1199), the fratricide (1356-1424), as well as the second battle caused by the fratricide's doubtful outcome (1460-1475) follow as necessary prerequisites of salvation.

366 In the account of the Messenger who describes the battle, the origin of the forethought is unclear, allowing 'the audience to think either of divine guidance lurking in the background or of the operation of inexplicable chance' [Mastronarde (1994) 551]. Foley (1985) 109 does not consider divine guidance a possible explanation.

367 Foley (1985) 133.

the theme of selfishness as embodied in the figures of Creon and Eteo-cles.[368]

In terms of time, Menoeceus' speech branches off into two opposing parts. In the first, he sets out a series of negative prolepses aiming at mis-directing the internal (Creon and the Chorus) and external (audience) narratees, while in the second he annuls his pseudo-promises to Creon and reveals his true intentions. Lines 985-990 consist of the fallacious reassurement regarding Menoeceus' flight from Thebes, as well as his fake excuse of saying goodbye to Jocasta[369] in order to get Creon off-stage. It is then time for Menoeceus to reveal his real plan to both the internal (Chorus) and the external (audience) narratees. So while nega-tive analepses unfold narrative possibilities that remain endlessly sus-pended, negative prolepses create false expectations.

3.4. Deceptive appearances: from the illusory triumphs of Oedipus and Cadmus in the past to Menoeceus' victorious death in the present (Third stasimon, *Phoenissae* 1019-1066)

The third stasimon differs from the rest because it consists only of a stro-phe and an antistrophe.[370] It starts with a sonorous ambiguity, as the Chorus' first words (1019, ἔβας ἔβας, 'you came, you came'[371]) could refer to Menoeceus who just left the stage, although it turns out that they refer to the Sphinx. Verbal ambiguity is also preserved later on, since the next four lines could also refer to the dragon of Ares:

> ὦ πτεροῦσσα, γᾶς λόχευ-
> μα νερτέρου τ' Ἐχίδνας,
> Καδμείων ἁρπαγά,
> πολύφθορος πολύστονος (1019-1022)

> 'O winged one, offspring of Earth
> and of the Snake of the Underworld
> plunderer of the Cadmeans,
> killer of many, source of many tears'

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368 Rawson (1970) 125; O'Connor-Visser (1987) 86-87.

369 According to Kosak (2004) 175, Euripides' narrative invention presenting Jocasta as Menoeceus' wet nurse adds to the general sense of ill 'closeness' characterizing the Labdacids that also infects the 'pure' Menoeceus.

370 Such a structure recurs in many Euripidean late plays, where choral songs be-come smaller, but increasingly more dramatic as the plays reach their climax [Arthur (1977) 178].

371 My translation.

The dragon, who, like the Sphinx is an offspring of the Earth (γᾶς λόχευμα), has also killed the first 'Cadmeans', namely the comrades of Cadmus (Καδμείων ἁρπαγά), bringing death and mourning (πολύφθορος πολύστονος). The subject of the Chorus' address is only revealed in the sixth line of their song, when they refer to the 'half-maiden' (1023, μειξοπάρθενος), the savage monster who destroyed Thebes and its citizens.

Such a narrative choice reveals Euripides' tendency to combine more than one narrative levels and to highlight their similarities. In particular, the subplot of Cadmus' killing of the dragon resembles that of Oedipus' killing of the Sphinx. Both Cadmus and Oedipus fulfill a difficult task, which brings happiness only temporarily and results in a series of misfortunes. By killing the dragon Cadmus managed to save the rest of his comrades and found the city, just as by killing the Sphinx Oedipus rescued the Thebans. Despite these victorious accomplishments, disasters will soon follow. The victory over the dragon will cause Ares' wrath, Earth's desire for revenge and finally the death of Menoeceus, while the victory over the Sphinx will lead to the incest and consequently the deaths of Polynices, Eteocles and Jocasta.

Both narrative levels lurk in the background of the Chorus' first lines, but they become evident in the antistrophe, where the second person singular (1019, ἔβας) is turned into third person singular (1043, ἔβα) and the reference to Oedipus and then Cadmus is made explicit. The first half of the antistrophe (1043-1054) talks of Oedipus, both through repeating analepses that point at his deceptive victory (1046; 1048-1050) and through present statements that bring into focus the curse he has passed on to his children (1052-1054). The present-oriented characteristics of the ode are accentuated by means of a reference to Menoeceus' sacrifice. The Chorus express their happiness at this, since he chose to die in order to save his homeland (1054-1059). Their present happiness is a sign of the effectiveness of the sacrifice, and the well being of the Theban citizens, including the Phoenician women of the Chorus. The song ends with an invocation of Athena, who is asked to bring maternal happiness to the girls of the Chorus, as she had helped Cadmus kill the dragon.[372] The deceptive character of Cadmus' victory, which, similarly to that of Oedipus has been implied throughout the ode, here becomes evident and expressed by the Chorus (1065-1066,

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372 The Chorus' wish to have children is at odds with their plans to be dedicated to Apollo, although their service to the god could be of fixed term [Mastronarde (1994) 208; 444]. Perhaps the Chorus' frequent tendency to express ideas that could be easily endorsed by the audience here prevails over their dramatic identity [Mastronarde (1994) 444-445].

'From this deed there rushed against the land / the snatching ruinous hand of heaven').

Just as deceptively, the strophe (1019-1042) reenacts the lamentation for the victims of the Sphinx, but also prepares the ground for the lamentation for Menoeceus' sacrifice. Echo-mimetic words like ἰηΐήιον (1036; 1037) and ἐποτότυζε (1038), or words expressing sound like ἰάλεμοι (1033; 1034), ἐστέναζον (1035), βοάν (1036), μέλος (1037), βροντᾶι (1039), στεναγμός (1039), ἀχά (1040) may reflect the havock of war, but also become the accoustic background of the lamentation for Menoeceus. By reenacting the laments of the Theban women about the Sphinx, the Chorus make deceptive analeptic allusions to a past they have not really experienced.

Menoeceus is first mentioned in the middle of the antistrophe (1054-1059), between the descriptions of the deceptive victories of Oedipus and Cadmus. In contrast to the lamentatory atmosphere of the rest of the song, the Chorus's mood changes completely when they think of the sacrifice of Menoeceus. Through powerful expressions of emotion (1054, ἀγάμεθ' ἀγάμεθ', 'I marvel, marvel') the Chorus convey their gratefulness for the man who will render 'land's seven-towered fortress / glorious in victory' (1058-1059, τά δ' ἑπτάπυργα κλῆιθρα γᾶς / καλλίνικα θήσων). Καλλίνικος here alludes to the analogy between Oedipus and Cadmus, who although καλλίνικοι, had illusionary triumphs. On the contrary, Menoeceus indirectly offered Thebes a long-lasting victory, even though καλλίνικος qualifies not him, but the Theban walls.[373]

3.5. The city and the family: Theban victory and the forthcoming duel (Fourth episode, *Phoenissae* 1067-1283)

The fourth episode consists of a long messenger speech interrupted by short comments by the Chorus and Jocasta (1200-1216).[374] It begins and ends with two dialogues: Jocasta and the Messenger (1067-1089) and Jocasta and Antigone (1264-1283) respectively.[375] The Messenger ap-

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373 Although Menoeceus made Thebes victorious, he is not personally characterized as καλλίνικος (like Oedipus and Cadmus), possibly because he did not achieve any personal victory in any combat.

374 See Bers (1997) 86-88.

375 The Messenger's narrative in this episode is better regarded as a single long speech in two parts, than as two shorter speeches. See also Poe (2009) 360 n.11.

pears at line 1067, after the third stasimon. Menoeceus, who was the last to have spoken before the stasimon, left the stage (1012) having assured his external (audience) and internal (Chorus) narratees that he would kill himself. The ode thus partly 'filled-in' the dramatic time, during which the sacrifice of Menoeceus, as well as the first battle between Argives and Thebans, were happening offstage.[376]

With Eteocles having departed for the battlefield as early as the second stasimon, the suspense is increased, as the spectators know the basic outline of the myth and thus expect the final dramatic climax, namely the defeat of the Argives and the mutual slaughter of Oedipus' sons. In this light, the lack of any relevant announcement in this messenger speech might disappoint the audience's expectations.[377] Besides, by slowing down the narrative rhythm and revealing information gradually, the fourth episode keeps the audience eager to find out what will happen next. Contrary to what they might have imagined, the extended messenger speech reveals that both brothers are still alive and have decided to face each other in a personal duel.[378]

The dramatic peak of the play is constantly postponed through various narrative twists. Such postponements have been active from the beginning. In the Teichoscopia, Antigone wished to go out to the battlefield. Her wish is left in the narrative background during three episodes, working as a *seed*, which finally grows at the end of the fourth episode, where she finds herself outside the Theban walls.[379] The brothers' duel provides another example of narrative postponement. Although after the debate the duel of the brothers is considered inevitable, it is put off during the third and fourth episode, until it finally takes place offstage, while the Chorus sing the fourth stasimon. Consequently, those two narrative threads (Antigone's offstage exit, as well as the duel of Eteocles and Polynices) begin at a very early point, but are finally effected after retardation of the narrative only towards the end.

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376 The fill-in technique ('Deckszenen') has been observed in Homer [see Stürmer (1921) 600-601; Schadewaldt (1938) 77-79; Bassett (1938) 39-40; de Jong (2001) xiv]. Iakov (1982) 155 maintains that in drama, odes can act as 'curtains' that make the scene inactive and allow the spectators to imagine that long-lasting events are occurring in the offstage world.

377 Mastronarde (1994) 446.

378 According to Mastronarde [(1994) 446], this narrative twist highlights the difference between the fate of the city and that of the brothers. Euripides is trying to distinguish the fate of Polynices and Eteocles from that of Thebes also according to Saïd [(1985) 513].

379 Narrative *seeds* (or else *advance mentions*) provide information, which will become relevant only at a later stage of the story [de Jong-Nünlist-Bowie (2004) xviii; Genette (1980) 73-77]. See also above, n. 221.

Narrative postponement in the *Phoenissae* is also put into action with
reference to three other hypodiegeses: the burial of Polynices, the wed-
ding of Antigone, and the exile of Oedipus. In the first two the narrative
is never completed. Both subplots remain unfulfilled and their final out-
come depends solely on the audience's interpretation. The exile of
Oedipus by contrast is constantly delayed, giving the impression that it
will also remain incomplete as another loose end, though it is finally
carried out at the very end.

3.5.1. Messenger speech part one: the attack of the Seven (1067–1199)

The scene starts with the Messenger's entrance. Following dramatic
conventions, he calls Jocasta onstage and she appears right away. Her
first concern is to learn about Eteocles (1076). Contrary to the audi-
ence's expectations, the Messenger informs Jocasta that Eteocles is still
alive and refers to Menoeceus' sacrifice only in passing (1090-1092). His
speech is prompted by Jocasta's concern about the means by which the
Thebans repulsed the Argives (1086-1087); his rhesis falls into the cate-
gory of those messenger speeches generated by a 'how' question of one
of the internal narratees.[380]

As expected, the messenger speech is a long analepsis of the offstage
events.[381] Expressions referring to the past dominate and the Messenger's
narrative presents both time and place as standing still, just before it
switches to the intensive rhythm of the description of the actual battle.[382]
The seven generals have taken their places on the gates (1093-1094),
while the hoplites and cavalry are waiting to face the Theban horsemen
and shield bearers (1094-1096). The change from pictorial steadiness to
moving action is achieved smoothly. It begins at line 1098, where the
Messenger remembers how he and the rest of the Thebans were watch-
ing the enemy approaching (1098-1101), getting prepared to fight by
playing the paean (1102-1103).[383] However, from the moment the ar-

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380 de Jong (1991) 33, n.81. See also Finglass (2007b) 300 ad S. *El.* 679 ('[s]ince a
    messenger typically gives the main point of his news immediately … , his
    speech is normally concerned not so much with what happened as with how it
    happened'), who also cites other examples of a πῶς question generating the
    speech.

381 For the fundamental characteristics of the messenger scenes, see Poe (2009)
    360 n.11.

382 See Barlow (1971) 63.

383 For the war paean signaling the beginning of the attack, see Pritchett (1971)
    105-108; Käppel (1992) 45-46; Rutherford (2001) 42-45.

mies approach, the narrative becomes strikingly dynamic and previous steadiness gives way to the frenzied rhythm of the battle. Parthenopaeus was the first to attack at the Neitan gates (1104-1109), while the seer Amphiaraus dragged the sacrificial victims by the Proitidan gates (1109-1112). The Ogygian gates were attacked by Hippomedon (1113-1118), the Homoloidan by Tydeus (1119-1121). Finally, Polynices, Adrastus and Capaneus were situated at the Crenaian (1123-1127), Electran (1128-1133) and the seventh (1134-1138) gates respectively.

Lines 1104-1140, in which the Messenger provides a catalogue of the seven attacking Argive leaders is at odds with Eteocles' previous statement that a detailed description of the generals would be time-consuming and should be avoided (751-752, [Et.] 'To tell you the name of each man would consume too much time with the enemy en-camped at our very gates').[384] Apart from triggering serious discussion about its authenticity,[385] the scene brings into focus the discrepancy be-tween the Euripidean and the Aeschylean representation of the seven leaders in the *Phoenissae* and the *Seven Against Thebes*. An intertextual reading of the passage makes clear that Euripides did not wish to create a purely martial scene like that of Aeschylus, as he insisted more on the characterization of the leaders and less on their warlike qualities.[386] The Messenger combines his previous description of the position of the Ar-give warriors with new information about their behavior during the at-tack. Tydeus and Polynices exhorted the rest of the soldiers (1143-1152), while Parthenopaeus was fighting in frenzy up to the moment he was killed by Periclymenus (1153-1162). On the Theban side, Eteocles was organizing the defense by carefully circling the gates with his com-rade (1163-1171). Capaneus fought with remarkable rage, which the Messenger has no words to describe (1172, Καπανεὺς δὲ πῶς εἴποιμ' ἂν ὡς ἐμαίνετο;, 'How can I describe the way Capaneus raged?). His rhetoric aporia is traditionally pseudo-proleptic, since he immediately comes up with an accurate report not just of the rampant warrior, but

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384 The Messenger's description of the generals is also significantly different from the relevant description of the Servant in the Teichoscopia. Apart from the dissimilarities in style, the latter also echoes epic tradition. According to Trübe [(1952) 35-36], the first catalogue reflects Euripidean dramatic art, while the second mirrors the catalogue of the *Thebaid* so strongly, that it could even be considered equivalent to the lost epic in miniature.

385 The inconsistency between lines 751-752 and 1104-1140 is the main reason for doubting the authenticity of the latter. For a discussion of the passage, which I treat as genuine, see below, Appendix II: The text.

386 The shield scene in the *Phoenissae* works only as a literary motif and it is not given the importance that it has in the *Seven* [Mueller-Goldingen (1985) 174].

also of Zeus who killed him with a thunderbolt (1173-1186). Capaneus' overconfidence is also highlighted. The Messenger's description is reinforced by the adjective μακραύχενος with κλίμαξ (1173-1174, μακραύχενος γὰρ κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις / ἔχων ἐχώρει, καὶ τοσόνδ' ἐκόμπασεν, 'With a long-necked ladder in his hands he came on and uttered this boast'), which adds even more to his arrogant behavior.[387] He also uses distinctive language for the description of Capaneus' dead body, which dropped on the ground like Ixion's wheel (1185-1186).[388]

In a traditional verification of his knowledge, the Messenger states in lines 1139-1140 that he was the one who passed the watch-word to the Theban warriors, so he has a thorough understanding of the offstage situation. The Messenger's need to defend the accuracy of his description and present himself as a trustworthy witness is frequent in epic and historiography.[389] In this case though, such a justification is of particular narrative interest. It has been maintained that by calling the offstage action a 'spectacle' (θέαματα, 1139), the Messenger does not simply refer to his eye-witnessing. By emphasizing seeing, he temporarily overturns his narrative identity, taking up the role of the external narratees, who – through his descriptions- are viewing a drama taking place offstage, on the battlefield.[390]

The Thebans' first victory is attributed to Zeus, since both Adrastus (1187) and the Thebans (1189-1190) realized the divine favor that made the former withdraw and the latter attack with greater rage. The revelation of divine intentions is of crucial importance to the Messenger's nar-

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387 'The epithet μακραύχενος is a *hapax* in Euripides and in the whole of Greek literature that is the only instance in which it is used of a ladder. It seems to have been chosen by the Messenger in order to point out once more the self-assuredness of the ladder's owner, Capaneus' [de Jong (1991) 83-84].

388 de Jong (1991) 91-92. For Craik (1988) 237, the narrative culmination is in accordance with that created by the careful use of the tense of the verbs βάλλει (-present-1181), ἐκτύπησε (-aorist-1181), ἐσφενδονᾶτο (-imperfect-1183), εἱλίσσετ' (-imperfect-1186), πίπτει (-present-1186). For discussion regarding the authenticity of lines 1183-1185, see Mueller-Goldingen (1985) 184; Mastronarde (1994) 476-477.

389 Cf. *Il.* 2.484-487; *Od.* 8.487-491; Hdt. 2.44; 75; 148. Also cf. A. *Pers.* 266; S. *OT* 6; E. *Supp.* 684; *Tr.* 481; *IT* 901. See also Finglass (2007b) 335, ad S. *El.* 761-763. Lines 1139-1140 are also an example of *actorial motivation* (*psychologische Begründung*), since they link a specific development of the plot with the intentions of a certain character [de Jong (2001) xi; Stürmer (1921) 580].

390 de Jong (1991) 10, and n.10. As pointed out by de Jong, the word θέαμα occurs in a messenger speech five times out of its eight occurrences in Euripides as a whole.

rative, since right after it, the rhythm is accelerated (1190-1195).[391]
What is more, it allows for a safe connection with the effectiveness of
the sacrifice of Menoeceus; if the sacrifice was really a means of pleasing
Ares and Earth, then Zeus' present protection implies the end of the
gods' hostility.

Euripides takes advantage of the shield scene to echo the clamor of
war. The Messenger does not yield to poetic descriptions that would
slow down the narrative rhythm; the dramatic need of communicating
offstage action is dominant. Even the descriptions of the shields, a good
opportunity for a descriptive outburst, are significantly more limited
than in the equivalent scene in the *Seven*.[392] The Messenger's description
is still significantly detailed and specific, incorporating details that could
not have been included in other parts of the dramatic narrative.[393]

3.5.2. Messenger speech part two: preparation for the fatal duel (1200-1283)

Jocasta's worries about Polynices and Eteocles (1203) cause the Messen-
ger's hesitation in answering her questions (1207-1216). His narrative
reluctance echoes Tiresias' difficulty in revealing the need for Menoe-
ceus' sacrifice in the third episode (896-910). In both cases, a parent tries
to extract information from his interlocutor, ignorant of its tragic con-
tent.[394]

The second messenger speech describes the brothers' decision to
fight a personal duel, sparing the Argive and Theban soldiers a futile
death (1217-1263).[395] This decision was first announced by Eteocles,

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391 The speeding up of the narrative rhythm is linguistically shown in the asyn-
     detic listing of charioteers, horsmen and hoplites (1190-1191), the brachylogy
     of lines 1191-1192, as well as the asyndeton ἔθνῃσκον ἐξέπιπτον of line 1193
     [Mastronarde (1994) 479-480].
392 Cf. the tables below, p. 154. For the shield scene in the *Seven Against Thebes*,
     see Thalmann (1978) 105-135; Zeitlin (1982) 171-219; Hutchinson (1985)
     103-107, mostly 106.
393 See Poe (2009) 365, who argues that 'full and specific description of action is
     what most clearly distinguishes the messenger speech from other narratives
     couched in dramatic dialogue'.
394 Craik (1988) 238.
395 Although the announcement that the battle is going to be decided on the basis
     of a single duel between the two brothers should normally increase the sus-
     pense, this is less likely, for the spectators know that both brothers are going to
     die anyway. For a similar messenger speech in *IT* (1327-1419), see Kyriakou
     (2006) 420.

who stood on a high point of the wall and declared to the Thebans that
he will join his brother in single combat, because he does not want in-
nocent soldiers to be killed for his or Polynices' sake (1225-1235).
Polynices rejoiced and all the armies shouted in agreement (1236-1239).
The passage is of particular narrative interest because of the Messenger's
need in lines 1238-1239 to justify the soldiers' applause ('And all the
Argives and all the people of Cadmus roared their approval, thinking the
terms just'). The expression ὡς δίκαι' ἡγούμενοι (1239, 'thinking the
terms just') reveals the Messenger's narrative attempt to overcome the
'restriction of access' to his story's characters.[396]

The Messenger as primary focalizer embeds in his narrator text the
focalization of another character. Such a secondary or embedded focal-
ization recurs in cases where an omniscient narrator, in the manner of
epic, presents the story. One of the basic characteristics of the epic nar-
rator is his ability to know how characters feel. As de Jong argues, 'the
messenger's ability to read other people's minds is not in itself unrealis-
tic: he sees what is happening and can infer from another character's
words and actions how he or she views the event taking place'.[397] Seen
from this narrative angle, the Messenger tries to create a so-called '*récit
motivé*', namely a story where the motives of the actions of the characters
are constantly present.[398] The Messenger also describes the feelings of
the soldiers when they listened to their leaders' speeches; he shows no
sign of sentimental tension since, unlike the rest of those present, he had
the tranquility to observe even the tears of the moved soldiers.[399]

The Messenger's monologue is completed by two passages of
'pseudo-direct' speech,[400] which describe how the Argives and the
Thebans were exhorting Polynices (1250-1252) and Eteocles (1252-
1254) respectively. The Messenger uses a Homeric technique to sum-
marize a series of passages of direct speech, not in a narrator text, but in

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396 The term belongs to de Jong [(1991) 24], who explains that Messengers' fre-
      quent descriptions of the way the characters of their stories feel surmounts
      their usual restriction of access to the characters' feelings.
397 de Jong (1991) 25.
398 de Jong (1991) 28.
399 For Barrett [(2002) 86], the objectivity of this Messenger agrees with his use of
      the third person in his narrative.
400 The term is coined by Richardson [(1990) 82], to refer to the Homeric narra-
      tor's technique of summarizing several passages of direct speech in another pas-
      sage of direct speech (which he calls 'pseudo-direct') and not in a narrator text
      as it would be expected.

a new passage of (pseudo-) direct speech.[401] In particular, the two passages of direct speech supposedly uttered by the Argives and the Thebans to Polynices and Eteocles summarize any exhortations that could have been heard on the Argive or the Theban camp.

By the end of the fourth episode, the members of the Labdacid family have been prepared for their exit from the palace. The Messenger calls Jocasta onstage (1067-1071), who then calls Antigone (1264) and drags her to the battlefield. As the play reaches its end, Euripides brings everybody out, culminating in and perhaps capitalizing on Oedipus' exit from the palace. This last scene of the fourth episode is crucial in narrative terms because of its connection to the previous and ensuing appearances of Antigone. After her girlish behavior in the Teichoscopia, Antigone is here forced by Jocasta to adopt a more mature stance. The decisiveness that makes her follow Jocasta to the dangerous offstage world will be further intensified in the fifth episode and the exodos, where she will be as brave as to threaten Creon that she will kill his son and leave Thebes, escorting her father Oedipus.

3.6. From doomed duel to dual grief
(Fourth stasimon, *Phoenissae* 1284-1307)

In accordance with the dramatist's tendency to shorten choral parts towards the end of the play,[402] the fourth stasimon is the briefest of the *Phoenissae*. Strongly tied to the dramatic and narrative context, the Chorus proleptically lament for Eteocles and Polynices, whose deaths have not yet been announced.[403]

Like the second stasimon, the fourth is developed around the figures of Polynices and Eteocles. While the second stasimon emphasized the origin and cause of the fraternal strife, this one explores its present and future repercussions. The Chorus' *aporia* as to which should be lamented (1294-1295) makes clear that mutual death is inevitable. The fratricide is seen under a present- and future-oriented perspective, with the Chorus'

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401 Cf. the words of the Trojan elders when viewing Helen on the Scaean gates in *Il.* 3.154-160.

402 Arthur (1977) 178.

403 Embracing traditional characteristics of a threnos [cf. Alexiou (2002) 150-156], the Chorus' dirge includes the typical repetition of expressions of strong emotion like αἰαῖ αἰαῖ (1284); ἰώ μοι πόνων, ἰὼ Ζεῦ, ἰὼ γᾶ (1289-1290); τάλαιν' ἐγὼ τάλαινα (1293); φεῦ δᾶ φεῦ δᾶ (1296), or the assonances and repetition of lines 1287 (ἔλεος ἔλεος ἔμολε); 1301 (βοᾶι βαρβάρωι) and 1306 (ἄποτμος ἄποτμος) respectively.

dirge working as a proleptic bridge to the lamentation performed by Antigone, her siblings' chief mourner.[404] Since Antigone is imbued with a particularly important narrative responsibility, that of the lament, she will have the chance to show more of her character and give signs of her transition from maiden- to adulthood. In an analogous tone, the Chorus also express their pity towards Jocasta (1285-1287, '…and through my flesh / runs pity, pity for / the woeful mother'); this could proleptically allude to her suicide.

The tender outburst of pity in the strophe yields to the antistrophe's emphasis on the brothers' bestial side (1296-1307).[405] The Chorus emphasize the element of duality (1288, δίδυμα τέκεα; 1296, δίδυμοι θῆρες) which is essential not only to Eteocles' and Polynices' existence, but also to the narrative structure of the trilogy, since all plays involve the beneficial or disastrous coexistence of two brothers.[406] In this light, Polynices and Eteocles are presented as both victims and victimizers,[407] and their murderous instincts are connected with their decision to fight in single combat (1297-1300). All in all, the Chorus behave as an omniscient narrator, who knows how the story will end and laments proleptically in a clear (for Polynices and Eteocles) or concealed (for Jocasta) way.[408]

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404 On laments, see Suter (2008).
405 According to Arthur (1977) 182-184, the emphasis on the monstrous strife between the two brothers is the basic characteristic of the last stasimon, which actually fits to the dramatic context more than any other choral song of the play and thus recasts any doubts concerning the play's loose narrative structure.
406 See below, Appendix I: The trilogy.
407 Arthur (1977) 183.
408 This also explains the lack of reference to Antigone, although she could easily have formed part of the lament. The Chorus have the quasi-narratorial authority to know that she is not supposed to die in the *Phoenissae*.

3.7. Two, one, many: duel, suicide, and conflict
(Fifth episode, *Phoenissae* 1308–1479)[409]

3.7.1. Preliminaries: Creon and the Chorus (1308–1334)

The initial scene of the episode featuring a short dialogue between
Creon and the Chorus (1308-1334) had its authenticity called into
doubt with a large number of scholars considering it to be spurious.[410]
The dramatic and narrative importance of the authenticity or spurious-
ness of the passage is directly related to the character (Creon or the
Chorus) to whom the Messenger is supposed to be talking. If the scene
is spurious, the recipients of the two messenger speeches of lines 1356-
1424 and 1427-1479 turn out to be the women of the Chorus. Con-
versely, if the scene is authentic, Creon's presence on stage before the
messenger speeches provides the dramatic opportunity for at least a short
comment on the death of Menoeceus. This scene being authentic, also
adds to the creation of a feeling of multiple comings and goings, en-
trances to and exits from the scene, possibly echoing the complexity of
the story.[411]

Creon uses analeptic statements and interrupts an overall present-
oriented narrative, in order to comment on the death of Menoeceus.
The short analeptic excursus of lines 1313-1317 provides more informa-
tion concerning the death of Menoeceus, which has only been prolepti-
cally announced by Menoeceus himself. The recipients of the narrative
now learn that his body was found on the dragon cliffs and carried back
inside the city in Creon's arms. Creon's analeptic presentation of the
event emphasizes the result of his sacrifice, which is Menoeceus' post-
humous fame (1314, τοὔνομα λαβὼν γενναῖον). Different focalization
reveals different perspectives of the same event. Consequently, the sacri-
fice's practical result (namely the salvation of Thebes) was known from
as early as lines 1090-1092, when the Messenger announced that
Creon's son died to save the city (1090, Κρέοντος παῖς ὁ γῆς
ὑπερθανών). In a statement which openly confirms the previous one

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409 I divide the episodes after Mueller-Goldingen [(1985) 207] and Mastronarde
     [(1994) 511 n.1], according to whom lines 1308-1479 are more an extra epi-
     sode, than the first part of the exodos. On the contrary, Craik [(1988) 243-
     244] considers everything that follows the fourth stasimon part of the exodos.

410 Leidloff (1863), Di Benedetto (1965), Fraenkel (1963) and Diggle (1994a)
     delete the lines partially or totally, *pace* Mastronarde (1994). For a full discus-
     sion of the textual problems of the scene, see Mastronarde (1994) 512 ff. I side
     with Mastronarde, mainly on narrative grounds.

411 Mastronarde (1994) 511.

through the formulaic reuse of the same expression for Menoeceus' sac-
rifice, Creon highlights the sacrifice's moral result (1313-1314, ἐμός τε
γὰρ παῖς γῆς ὅλωλ᾽ ὑπερθανών, / τοὔνομα λαβὼν γενναῖον, ἀνιαρὸν
δ᾽ ἐμοί). He is also looking for Jocasta, since he knows that his sister will
lovingly lament the corpse of Menoeceus (1317-1319).[412] His expecta-
tions regarding Jocasta's affection towards Menoeceus underscore his
strict behavior towards Polynices. The conflicting presentation of the
two siblings is even more highlighted in Creon's following gnomology,
imbued with tragic irony, where he states that the living should respect
and honor the deceased (1320-1321, 'For the living must honor the
dead and reverence the god of the underworld'), although he will
shortly deprive Polynices of his basic burial rights.

The transfer of the action offstage becomes clear as the Chorus in-
form Creon that Jocasta and Antigone have left the palace at the news of
the brothers' forthcoming duel (1322-1323). The narrative of the duel
will dominate the rest of the episode, which consists of two long mes-
senger speeches. The entrance of the Messenger is announced by Creon,
who refers to offstage action by the word δρώμενον (1334), underscor-
ing both the Messenger's identity as an eye-witness[413] and the use of the
rhesis as another δρᾶμα, a 'play within a play',[414] namely a *mise en
abyme*.[415]

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412 Besides, Menoeceus himself had also expressed his love for Jocasta when he
      wished to see her before he killed himself (986-989).

413 de Jong (1991) 9-10. See also above, n. 390.

414 de Jong (1991) 10 n. 21.

415 '*Mise en abyme* has become the accepted shorthand for referring to any part of a
      work that resembles the larger work in which it occurs' [Nelles (2008) 312].
      In pictorial narrative, one of the most famous examples of mise en abyme is
      Van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Wedding*, where a mirror in the painting reflects the
      represented wedding from another angle, while in drama, 'The murder of
      Gonzago', the play within *Hamlet*. The term was coined by Magny (1950),
      who also observed the fundamental ambiguity of the device, namely the dis-
      ruption of the narrative that coexists with its clarification. Letoublon (1983)
      has also proposed the term *récit spéculaire*. Mise en abyme has been additionally
      studied by Dällenbach (1977); Ricardou (1981); Jefferson (1983); Ron (1987);
      White (2001).

3.7.2. The fatal news: mutual fratricide and maternal suicide (1335-1479)[416]

This part of the fifth episode starts dynamically, with the Messenger's straightforward announcements of the deaths of the two brothers (1339) and the suicide of Jocasta (1349). The repetition of πότμος, 'destiny', in emotionally loaded compounds (1345, βαρυποτμωτάτας and 1348, δυσποτμώτερα), gives additional dramatic weight to the news and may well allude to the remote origins of the Labdacid sufferings. In Aeschylus, πότμος and its compounds do not simply refer to death, but can be connected to the actions of the parent who is responsible for the death of his children.[417] In a characteristic example from the *Seven*, the Chorus accuse Oedipus of the mutual fratricide, which they connect to his curse:

> διανταίαν λέγεις δόμοισι καὶ
> σώμασιν πεπληγμένους
> ἀναυδάτωι μένει
> ἀραίωι τ' ἐκ πατρὸς
> οὐ διχόφρονι πότμωι. (895-899)

> 'You speak of them as being struck a blow
> that was fatal for their house as well as their bodies,
> struck by the silent power
> and the unambiguous doom
> of their father's curse.'[418]

The adjective δύσποτμος, which connects the deadly fate to the curse of an ancestor, is used in this episode of the *Phoenissae* not for Eteocles or Polynices but instead for Jocasta. By reading her first monologue retrospectively, one realizes that in lines 19-20, where she repeated the Delphic oracle according to which Laius should have remained childless ('if you sire a son, your own offspring will kill you, and the whole house will be embroiled in bloodshed'), Jocasta was in no position to realize that since Apollo was disobeyed, his curse was still active and was also affecting her. Creon's comments thereby connect the fate of the queen to a curse triggered by the disobedience of Laius, and generate a kind of analeptic tragic irony, which can be felt only at this late stage of the story.

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416 As with the long messenger speech of the fourth episode, I also regard the narrative of the Messenger here as a long speech falling in two parts (1356-1424 and 1427-1479) rather than two separate speeches. See also Poe (2009) 360 n.11.

417 Gerber (1988) 44.

418 The translation is by Sommerstein (2008).

As the play moves towards its end, the audience realize that the complexity of the myth is being revealed. The story thereby confirms the recipients' initial feeling that the misfortunes of the Labdacids will be connected to a tight net of past mistakes, which have yet to be punished. Jocasta's death is also connected to past events, such as Oedipus' victory over the Sphinx (1352-1353). Euripides employs all narrative means at his disposal, in order to reveal the causal relation between the wrongdoings of the past and the misfortunes of the present. By enriching his narrative with events of the recent or remote past and strongly connecting them with each other, Euripides makes sure that his recipients will be able to connect past offstage events with present dramatic happenings. Analogously, the causal connection between Oedipus' curse and the fratricide is highlighted by the fact that all stage characters are led to this conclusion. Seen from this perspective, Creon's statement that the duel of the brothers was caused by the curse of Oedipus (1354-1355), acquires its full interpretive potential, the more so since the Chorus believe that Oedipus' curse is fulfilled only after both brothers are dead (1425-1426).[419]

The first part of the messenger speech: an offstage drama

The first part of the messenger speech (1356-1424) justifies its proleptic description as a δρώμενον (a drama taking place offstage),[420] primarily through the frequent use of terms of viewing.[421] The Messenger wants to confirm that he was also a spectator of an offstage drama, which he communicates to the performance's internal (Creon, Chorus) and external (spectators) narratees. Consequently, through the Messenger's focalization, the external narratees are invited to view the performance of another play, or rather, a play within a play, featuring the duel of Eteocles and Polynices.[422]

After setting the narrative scenery and moving the deictic *origo* outside the Theban walls (1360-1363), the Messenger describes the prayers

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419   Additionally, the Messenger refers to Polynices and Eteocles as 'sons of Oedipus' (1360), bringing Oedipus and his curse into narrative focus.

420   See above, p. 103.

421   εἰδέναι (1358); βλέψας (1364, 1373); κἄβλεψαν (1371); ὄμμ' (1384); ὀφθαλμόν (1387); εἰσιδών (1396).

422   This drama is actually remarkably vivid, even if it is not enacted onstage. For the visual power of messenger speeches, see de Jong (1991) 173.

of both brothers before the combat. Polynices turns towards Argos and prays to Hera:[423]

> βλέψας δ' ἐπ' Ἄργος ἧκε Πολυνείκης ἀράς·
> Ὦ πότνι' Ἥρα — σὸς γάρ εἰμ', ἐπεὶ γάμοις
> ἔζευξ' Ἀδράστου παῖδα καὶ ναίω χθόνα —
> δός μοι κτανεῖν ἀδελφόν, ἀντήρη δ' ἐμὴν
> καθαιματῶσαι δεξιὰν νικηφόρον· (1364–1368)

'Looking toward Argos Polynices spoke this prayer: «Lady Hera, I am yours since I have married Adrastus' daughter and dwell in the land. Grant that I may kill my brother and bloody my right hand, his enemy, in victory!»'

Eteocles on the other hand, turns towards Thebes and addresses Athena:

> Ἐτεοκλέης δὲ Παλλάδος χρυσάσπιδος
> βλέψας πρὸς οἶκον ηὔξατ'· Ὦ Διὸς κόρη,
> δὸς ἔγχος ἡμῖν καλλίνικον †ἐκ χερὸς†
> εἰς στέρν' ἀδελφοῦ τῆσδ' ἀπ' ὠλένης βαλεῖν.
> [κτανεῖν θ' ὃς ἦλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν] (1372–1376)

'Eteocles, looking toward the temple of Pallas of the Golden Shield, prayed, «Daughter of Zeus, grant that I may hurl my victorious spear from my hand into my brother's chest [and kill the man who came to sack my country]!»'

The narrative accent on the brothers' gaze is not random. The different orientation of their look, accompanied by address of different divinities is meaningful in retrospect, for before the debate they avoided eye contact despite the instructions of Jocasta (454–458). Maintaining their previous rigidity, they still avoid any contact, confirming the emotional gap that separates them. Their differences are further highlighted by their final prayers that reveal their emotional closeness to either Argos (in the case of Polynices) or Thebes (in the case of Eteocles), the two rival cities which they represent in the duel.

The brothers' prayers show that the play is reaching its end, since there is no hope that the fratricide can be avoided. Narratologically, the prayers reveal the focalizing filters of the Messenger, who proves incapable of taming his Theban interests. He thus comments only on Polynices' desire for the fratricide (1369), and chooses the word ἀράς (1364) —a term involving a lexical ambiguity between 'prayer' and 'curse'- to define his prayer, although Eteocles also expressed a similar wish. The Messenger thus justifies all proleptic references concerning his identity as a spectator of an offstage drama, which he communicates on-stage without removing his own filters of reception. The Messenger is

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423 As already discussed, Polynices' address to Hera actually signals the final adoption of the identity of an Argive, who is a ξένος within the Theban citadel. See above, ch. 2.3.1; 2.3.2.

actively engaged in the events he recounts, giving himself the narrative status of a focalizing reporter, who filters the narrated events and constructs the narrative according to his emotional state.[424]

The battle narrative includes a series of typical elements with epic echoes.[425] Epic allusions are also generated by highlighting the reactions of the spectators of Eteocles' and Polynices' duel. By emphasizing the effect of the duel on its Argive and Theban witnesses, the Messenger of the *Phoenissae* strengthens his narrative authority, which involves not just simple reproduction of what he saw, but also communication of the armies' feelings.[426] He states (1370-1371) that many of the spectators burst into tears after Polynices' prayer, as he also expresses (1388-1389) the armies' anxiety that made them sweat more than Polynices and Eteocles. Likewise, the Messenger recounts the Argives' enthusiasm when Polynices' spear pierced Eteocles' calf (1394-1395), as well as the Thebans' satisfaction when Eteocles wounded Polynices' chest (1397-1399).[427]

 The second part of the messenger speech: time accredited with causality

The second part of the messenger speech (1427-1479) recounts the death of the brothers, the suicide of Jocasta, as well as the second battle between the Argives and the Thebans that followed the brothers' duel. The main characteristic of the narrative is its strong emphasis on temporal deixis.[428] Time markers here tend also to express causality, since they influence directly the development of the story. Specifically, Jocasta arrives at the battlefield late, when her sons are already fatally injured and she cannot save them,[429] and Polynices has the opportunity to refer to

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424 de Jong (1991) 77.

425 Mastronarde (1994) 528 ff. Cf. the duel of Menelaus and Paris in *Il.* 3 (esp. 340-342), as well as the prayer of Menelaus in 3.350-354.

426 Reactions of the witnesses of important events are also found in historiography. Cf. Thucydides' description of the reaction of the spectators to the battle in Syracuse harbor, 7.71.3-5.

427 The Iliadic narrator is similarly interested in the feelings of the armies watching a duel of champions. Cf. the fear of Achaeans and Trojans before the duel of Ajax and Hector (*Il.* 7.214-216), the joy of the Trojans when Hector survived the duel and returned to his camp (*Il.* 7.307-309), as well as the Achaeans' and Trojans' admiration for Menelaus and Paris before the beginning of their duel (*Il.* 3.342-343).

428 ἐπεί (1428); ὑστέρα (1432); ἔτ' (1442); ἤδη (1453); ἅμ' (1454); ὅπως (1455); κἀν τῶιδ' (1465); οὔπω (1468); ὡς (1472).

429 1428, ἐπεὶ τέκνω πεσόντ' ἐλειπέτην βίον, / ἐν τῶιδε μήτηρ ἡ τάλαινα προσπίτνει and 1432-1433, … Ὦ τέκν', ὑστέρα βοηδρόμος / πάρειμι … .

his burial since he (in contrast to his brother) can still talk when Jocasta arrives at the spot.[430] Additionally, both brothers breathe their last at exactly the same time,[431] thus fulfilling the curse of the mutual fratricide that then leads to the suicide of Jocasta. Similarly, immediately after the brothers' deaths, as the Argives and Thebans disagree over the result, the Thebans get back to their fighting positions in time and finally manage to accomplish the final victory, since the Argives had not yet taken their positions.[432] After setting the trophies, the Thebans bring the booty to the city and thus move the dramatic action back onstage.[433]

The pathos of the Messenger's description is increased by the use of direct speech. The Messenger interrupts his third-person narrative with short passages of direct speech that in some cases repeat information already given in indirect speech. For example, the Messenger reproduces Jocasta's comments on her late arrival (1432-1433), although this was already obvious from his earlier description (1428-1431).[434] One of the most touching parts of this speech consists of the last words uttered by Polynices to Jocasta. Contrary to Eteocles, who bid farewell to his mother by lovingly looking at her (1440-1441), Polynices referred to those whom he leaves behind, namely Jocasta, Antigone and Eteocles (1444-1445). His positive characterization is even more reinforced,[435] by means of expressing his forgiveness to Eteocles, who although temporarily an enemy, was always family (1446, 'My brother became my foe, but he was brother still'). In the last part of his embedded direct speech he addresses Jocasta and Antigone, asking for a proper burial, in Thebes, as a minimum exchange for the loss of the paternal inheritance (1447-1450, 'Bury me, my mother and sister, in my native soil, assuaging the city's anger, so that I may get at least this much of my native land even if I have lost my house'). Polynices' last will demonstrates narrative knowledge, which he normally should not have. The reference he makes to his burial at Thebes presupposes knowledge of Eteocles' veto, as his suspicion about the Thebans' discontent presupposes familiarity with Creon's future reactions. His comments reveal the narrative authority he has been –at least temporarily- given by the poet.

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430 1442, ὁ δ᾽ ἦν ἔτ᾽ ἔμπνους … .

431 1454, ἄμφω δ᾽ ἅμ᾽ ἐξέπνευσαν ἄθλιον βίον.

432 1468-1469, κᾄφθημεν οὔπω τεύχεσιν πεφαργμένον / Ἀργεῖον εἰσπεσόντες ἐξαίφνης στρατόν.

433 1472-1475, … ὡς δ᾽ ἐνικῶμεν μάχῃ, / οἱ μὲν Διὸς τροπαῖον ἵστασαν βρέτας, / οἱ δ᾽ ἀσπίδας συλῶντες Ἀργείων νεκρῶν / σκυλεύματ᾽ εἴσω τειχέων ἐπέμπομεν.

434 de Jong (1991) 136.

435 See Mueller-Goldingen (1985) 218.

The last battle: a glimpse of divine favor?

The last battle between Argives and Thebans is a carefully planned narrative twist, which reveals the brothers' incapability of effectively setting the terms for the duel. After the end of the brothers' combat, new strife rose between the armies, since each side was claiming victory (1460-1462, 'The soldiery rose to their feet and began to quarrel, with our side claiming victory for my master, and the other side for Polynices: the leaders were wrangling').[436] Apart from projecting the foolishness of the brothers who did not foresee such an outcome, this second battle also allows for an additional revelation of the Messenger's subjectivity, clearly oriented towards the Theban side. The battle was finally judged by a crucial attack of the Thebans who went back to their fighting positions before the Argives had time to act likewise (1468-1469).

The description of the Thebans' forethought in staying close to their arms is significant in terms of both drama and narrative (1466-1467, ... εὖ δέ πως προμηθίαι / καθῆστο Κάδμου λαὸς ἀσπίδων ἔπι, 'By some happy providence the Cadmean host had been sitting next to their shields'). Πως weakens εὖ and gives to the Theban providence (προμηθία) a vague coloring, implying divine help or inexplicable luck.[437] If we adopt this grammatical interpretation, the divine interference is connected either to Menoeceus' sacrifice (which satisfied the gods and gained their favor) or the fulfillment of the curse (which began by the disobedience of Laius and ended by the mutual fratricide).

In any case, one comes to realize that both the effectiveness of Menoeceus' sacrifice and the fulfillment of Oedipus' curse become evident only by the end of the play. However, as the Messenger does not have the narrative authority to explain the Theban victory, he connects

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436 The ambiguous outcome of a battle as well as the disagreement of the opposing sides over the winner is a typical element in both Greek and Eastern traditions. Cf. the uncertain result of the duel in *Il.* 3, as well as the almost comic outcome of the battle at Cunaxa (401 BC) as described in Xenophon's *Anabasis*. A famous example coming from the Eastern tradition is the battle of Kadesh between Hittites and Egyptians, generally dated to 1274 BC which ended with a victory of the Hittites, although the Aegyptian texts describe a triumph of the Pharaoh (see H. Goedicke, 1985. *Perspectives on the Battle of Kadesh*, Baltimore MD). An analogous occurrence is the battle of Jutland (1916) during World War I, where both Germany and England claimed victory (see G. Bonney, 2002. *The Battle of Jutland 1916*, Stroud).

437 Mastronarde (1994) 551.

it vaguely to divine power.[438] Such a narrative tendency echoes a similar technique in the *Iliad,* where whenever a character of a story lacks the knowledge of the omniscient narrator, he ascribes inexplicable events to Zeus or to another often unidentified god.[439]

The second battle between Argives and Thebans also assists the management of narrative time. In line 1465, the Messenger clarifies that while the two armies were disagreeing over the battle's result, '[a]t this point Antigone withdrew quietly from the army' (κἀν τῷδ' ὑπεξῆλθ' Ἀντιγόνη στρατοῦ δίχα). In this statement, the Messenger not only offers a narrative preparation for the next scene where Antigone will dominate, but he also engages into a 'fill-in technique' ('Deck-szenen'),[440] according to which the time needed for the fulfillment of action 'A' (namely Antigone's departure from the battlefield and arrival to the palace) is filled in by the narration of action 'B' (namely the second battle of the Argive and Theban armies). Consequently, the appearance of Antigone at the palace by the end of the Messenger's rhesis, when the bodies of Jocasta, Polynices and Eteocles are carried to the orchestra (1476-1479), is narratively justified.[441]

3.8. Lamenting the dead: Antigone and the entrance of Oedipus (Aria of Antigone and duet of Antigone and Oedipus, *Phoenissae* 1480-1581)[442]

This lyric section before the exodos includes the lament of Antigone (1485-1538) and the onstage appearance of Oedipus (1539-1581). The former is further divided into Antigone's self-presentation as a mourner (1485-1493; 1502; 1519-1522), the interpretation of the calamity (1494-1497; 1504-1507), and the rhetorical *aporia* of her *threnos* (1498-1501; 1509-1519; 1524-1529).[443] The latter section of the exode is dominated

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438 Similarly, in *Aj.* 1060, Menelaus refers to the death of Ajax by generally saying νῦν δ' ἐνήλλαξεν θεός, when the audience knows that Athena was responsible. On the tragic characters' blaming of the gods, see Parker (1999).

439 This observation was first made by Jörgensen (1904) and is thereby called 'Jörgensen's law'.

440 See above, n. 376.

441 Besides, Antigone would have also had time to return to the palace while the Messenger was narrating the offstage events.

442 Lines 1480-1581 that come after the fifth episode are equivalent to a stasimon before the beginning of the exodus in line 1582, according to Mastronarde [(1994) 511 n.1; 553 ff.], whom I follow here.

443 Mastronarde (1994) 553.

by the much expected appearance of Oedipus, whose ghostly presence inside the palace had been rumored by all characters of the play. His eerie presence is commented on even by himself, when he admits that he peeped out from behind the scene like a ghost which emerged from the abyss (1543-1545). His delayed entrance creates the narrative opportunity for an account of the events, as focalized by Antigone, who needs to inform her father.

Recasting the 'self': lament and the new Antigone

When the corpses of Jocasta, Eteocles, and Polynices are onstage (1481-1484), Antigone is ready to perform her dirge. Her lamentation offers a clear presentation of her 'new' self, as well as preparation for the narrative twist about to take place. The first image of Antigone was given in the Teichoscopia, where her girlish, maiden-like characteristics were prominent. Before the fifth episode, she had also appeared by the side of Jocasta, daring to cross the walls and stand exposed in Thebes' most dangerous area. Her present lament brings to light a woman who does not blush out of girlish restraint (1485-1488), but is presented as a Bacchant who removes the veil that covered her hair and loosens the robe that covers her chest (1489-1491).[444] Her change of behavior foreshadows her last dynamic appearance in the exodos, where she will oppose Creon, displaying a remarkable decisiveness that the male characters of the play are lacking.[445]

The timeframe of her lamentation[446] stretches both backwards and forwards, since she points to the past when referring to the beginnings of the misfortunes and to the future when admitting her inability to sing a proper dirge. Her present desperation and her rhetorically expressed fear about the proper handling of the lamentation alternate with the two indelible 'stains' of the past that work as key words: ἔρις and Σφίγξ. Strife and the Sphinx govern Antigone's analeptic references, since they are responsible for the present situation of the δόμος, the dead members of which she does not know how to lament properly. The fratricide is imputed to the fraternal strife, which destroyed the whole house of Oedipus (1494-1497, 'Your strife – no strife but bloodshed upon bloodshed- / destroyed the house of Oedipus, / being brought to fulfillment in murder dread, / in murder grim').

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444 On the custom of veil-wearing in ancient Greece, see Llewellyn-Jones (2003).

445 For the twist in Antigone's behavior as a specimen of the female dynamism the play generally projects, see Lamari (2007).

446 On lament in drama, see Kornarou (2001); Schauer (2002); Suter (2008).

Apart from the change in Antigone's behavior, there is an interesting turn in focalization when Antigone refers to the role of the Erinys (1498-1503). Although the narrator is still Antigone, the focalizers are now the vengeful spirits who rejoice at Jocasta's and the brothers' deaths (1503, ματέρα καὶ τέκνα, χάρματ' Ἐρινύος;, 'mother and sons, to gladden the Erinys?'). When Antigone takes over the focalization, the Erinys are openly connected to the destruction of the Labdacids, beginning with the solving of the Sphinx's riddle (1504-1507). Antigone's present- and future- oriented dirge is terminated after an extended rhetorical discussion of her *aporia* (1508-1529), when she calls her father onstage (1530-1538).

Oedipus' delayed entrance

Oedipus finally appears at line 1539, after consistent references recurring throughout the play. Although backstage, Oedipus was strangely 'present' from the beginning of the *Phoenissae*, subjected as he was to explicit actorial characterization,[447] expressed either through analepses dealing with the origins of the misfortunes or through references to Oedipus' present situation. His arrival takes place just before the end and agrees with the image of Oedipus, which the rest of the characters have already created. As expected, Oedipus does not appear as a powerful king, but instead as a deadly ghost emerging from the abyss.[448]

Oedipus' appearance also means a change in the narrative rhythm, which is accelerated as Antigone announces the deaths of her siblings (1546-1550) and engages in an analepsis describing the suicide of Jocasta, now presented through her focalization (1567-1581). Her analepsis is completed by a reference to the fulfillment of the curse, which —once more- is believed to have been terminated only through Jocasta's death, a detail Jocasta tragically ignored in her prologue (1579-1581).

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447 This includes information about a character of the plot that is communicated directly, by the rest of the characters. See above, n. 222.

448 In his first words he describes himself as 'a grey and insubstantial phantom, / a dead man from the nether world / or a winged dream' (1543-1545). Imagery connecting the weakness of old age to shadows, dreams, or ghosts is common in tragedy. See for example A. *A.* 79-82; S. *OC* 109-110; 1211-1248; E. *Tr.* 192-193.

3.9. Loose ends: the burial of Polynices and Antigone's marriage to Haemon (Exodos, *Phoenissae* 1582-1766)

Creon, has been onstage since line 1310 of the fifth episode, but has remained silent throughout the Messenger's speech and Antigone's dirge; he now displays his narrative authority by communicating Eteocles' last wishes. The narratees are implicitly invited to compare the way events were presented onstage without any mediation, to the way they are presented now, under the focalization of Creon. This last part of the play is narratively dominated by unrealized subplots, unfulfilled narrative threads that remain loose and subject to audience reception. In this light, themes like the wedding of Antigone to Haemon or the burial of Polynices remain blur in terms of narrative, although they have been presented clearly in previous plays. By adopting a flexi-narrative, Euripides does not develop every feature of his play in full, since at least a part of his audience is familiar with what is supposed to happen next. Full dramatic presentation of the myth is thus necessary only when Euripides wishes to distinguish his account from previous dramatic models.

Creon as a focalizer of previously performed events

Creon claims that Eteocles had given him authority to rule the city if he died (1586-1588), a statement only partially true. Specifically, Eteocles' last orders in the second episode referred to the wedding of Antigone (757-760, 'As for the marriage of my sister Antigone and your son Haemon, you must see to it if I have one of Fortune's falls. My previous betrothal of her I now confirm as I go forth') and the burial of Polynices (774-777, 'But upon you and the city I lay this charge, Creon: If I am successful, let Polynices' body never be buried in this land of Thebes, and let anyone who buries him be put to death, though it be one of his kin'), but nothing led to the secure conclusion that Creon would become the city's next ruler.[449] The narratees could have evoked the last details of the dialogue of Creon and Eteocles and detected the ruling intentions of the former. Focalization in this case is used to characterize the focalizer himself, namely Creon.

Creon also alters the statements of Tiresias, whom he presents as having imposed Oedipus' exile, although Tiresias had simply maintained that the exile would have been preferable in the past (866-890), while the salvation of the city at this point depends on Menoeceus. Once

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449 Eteocles though did imply such a change of scepter. Besides, the Messenger addresses Creon as if he is in charge of the city.

more, parts of the story represented on stage with no mediation are now re-narrated under the focalization of Creon and contribute to his characterization. Euripides' narrative technique involves repetitive narratives delivered by different focalizers to characterize the focalizers themselves.

Oedipus' monologue and the presentation of his past

Oedipus is finally given the chance to utter a long monologue in the exodos (1595-1624). His narrative is mostly analeptic, since it unfolds the story of his life from its beginning, even before he was born. From this scope, Oedipus seems to borrow the omniscience of a main narrator, who is in the position to offer a panoramic viewing of the myth. For Oedipus, misfortunes start from the moment Laius disobeyed the Delphic oracle, even before he was born (1597-1599, 'Even before I came forth into the light from my mother's womb and was still unborn Apollo prophesied to Laius that I would be my father's murderer: O the misery!').[450]

Oedipus' analepsis makes Apollo's oracle more specific and undercuts the basic narrative *ellipsis*[451] that lies in the narrative background of the whole play, namely Laius' sinful past that included the kidnap and rape of Chrysippus, Pelops' son. Although the tendency to detect the misfortunes' first beginnings was prominent from the beginning of the *Phoenissae*, the terminus post quem was always Apollo's oracle. Laius' mistake was therefore concentrated on his lust, which made him disobey the god's will. However, by emphasizing that the curse predated his existence,[452] Oedipus moves the narrative focus to the reasons that made Laius suffer such a heavy punishment, namely the reasons for which Apollo cursed him in first place.

Oedipus' analeptic excursus is mainly repetition of events already narrated by Jocasta. He refers to Laius' intention to kill him right after he was born (1600-1601), the exposure at Mount Cithaeron and his subsequent rescue to the court of Polybus (1602-1607), the patricide (1608), and the inheritance of the curse by his children (1611). The

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450 Those lines have been parodied by Aristophanes in the *Frogs* (1183-1186) and consequently work as an argument for the authenticity of the passage. See Craik (1988) 261-262 and Mastronarde (1994) 599-600.

451 An *ellipsis* is one of the four basic narrative movements [see Genette (1980) 93-95 and 106-109], which 'marks an omission at the level of the text, and thus describes the maximum possible speed of narrative acceleration. In the case of ellipsis, zero textual space corresponds to some story duration' [Markantonatos (2002) 8]. See also Bal (1997) 103-104.

452 Oedipus claims that he inherited the curse from Laius and passed it on to his children (1611, 'putting on my children the curses I received from my father').

most important narrative result of his monologue though is the allusion to the play's main narrative ellipsis, namely the reason that made Apollo so angry with Laius as to impose childlessness.[453] His analepsis briefly runs over the past and reaches the present, the dramatic *hic et nunc*, where Creon asks him to leave Thebes (1625-1626).

Creon and the 'new' Antigone

Although Creon's statement refers first to Oedipus' exile (1625-1626), he quickly frustrates narrative expectations by directing the dramatic action to a heated dialogue with Antigone. Their dialogue will bring to the narrative surface two additional subplots: the prohibition of the burial of Polynices and the wedding of Antigone to Haemon, which will both remain unfulfilled until the end of the play. At this point, Creon possesses narrative authority and tries to control the speed of action. His behavior brings to light an intertextual 'interchange' between the *Seven* and the *Phoenissae*. In the *Phoenissae*, Creon, who displays the ruling qualities Eteocles is lacking, has taken the position of the powerful Aeschylean Eteocles. Creon's threats echo Eteocles' threats in the *Seven*,[454] although Aeschylean Eteocles was striving to eliminate excessive panic and lamentation by the Chorus, and not to ban the burial of Polynices. It is the second time that such an intertextual 'interchange' of dramatic power takes place in the *Phoenissae*. Eteocles' ruling skills were also questioned in the second episode, when he was not capable of organizing the city's defense by himself. The difference is obvious. Eteocles of the *Seven* is a gifted general, who, in no need of any consultation, 'allows' Aeschylus to structure the play upon his strategic qualities. The largest part of the *Seven* concerns the way Eteocles organizes Thebes' defense. Euripides leaves this role to Creon, who organizes the defense of the city and now governs Thebes by virtue of Eteocles' last wishes.

In her intense dialogue with Creon (1646-1682), Antigone is briefly occupied with the issue of Oedipus' exile (1644) and initially focuses on the burial of Polynices (1645, 'Why legislate for a miserable corpse?'). By answering only with reference to the burial, Creon temporarily puts aside the issue of the exile and contributes to the narrative development of the issue of Polynices' burial. The dialogue of Antigone and Creon thwarts narrative expectations since it concentrates on themes that were thought to be forgotten, as the play could have very well been com-

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453 See lines 17-20.

454 Cf. *Th.* 196-199, κεἰ μή τις ἀρχῆς τῆς ἐμῆς ἀκούσεται, / ἀνὴρ γυνή τε χὣ τι τῶν μεταίχμιον, / ψῆφος κατ' αὐτῶν ὀλεθρία †βουλεύσεται†, / λευστῆρα δήμου δ' οὔ τι μὴ φύγηι μόρον.

pleted. The dialogue also includes narrative shifts in its own microstruc-
ture, with the three subplots of the exile, the wedding and the burial
introduced, withdrawn and again re-introduced.

While at the beginning the burial concerns the two interlocutors, it
is suddenly abandoned when the dialogue comes to an impasse. Specifi-
cally, Creon proclaims that he will not allow Antigone to bury her
brother (1656, 'To tell you plainly, this man shall not be buried!'), while
Antigone insists that she will bury Polynices, even against the city's will
(1657, 'I shall bury him, though the city forbid it'). Creon right away
threatens Antigone with death (1658, 'You will dig your own grave,
then, next to his'), but she still refuses to abandon the corpse (1661,
'No: I shall not let go of this corpse'). While Creon is still unyielding,
Antigone tries not to give up (1665), but she is finally not allowed even
to bathe Polynices (1667–1668) or take care of his wounds (1669–1670).
Still unresolved, the burial of Polynices is referred to for the last time in
Antigone's attempt to kiss Polynices in line 1671 ('Dear brother, I will
at least embrace and kiss you').

By advising her not to pollute her wedding with a dirge, Creon
forces Antigone to abandon the theme of the burial and begin a new
conflict regarding her wedding to Haemon (1672, 'No: you court disas-
ter for your marriage by your lamentation').[455] Her previous determina-
tion to bury Polynices is now overshadowed by her revulsion towards a
possible wedding to Haemon. She threatens to become a new Danaid
and kill Haemon on their wedding night (1675). Her threats endow An-
tigone with narrative power, since she is able to direct the narrative to
the third loose end, that of Oedipus' exile. By announcing to Creon
that she will accompany Oedipus into exile (1679, 'I will join this poor
father of mine in exile'), Antigone terminates the conflict with Creon,
who remains silent until the end of the play. The last scene of the *Phoe-
nissae*, with Antigone and Oedipus lamenting before leaving Thebes
boosts emotion, but also opens up dramatic possibilities for an intertex-
tual sequel.

Despite the fact that the end of the *Phoenissae* does not bring the
story to an end, since it leaves the subplots of the wedding of Antigone
to Haemon and of the burial of Polynices unfulfilled, the play's narrative
adds to a hypertextual mythical continuity. In an intertextual viewing of
the dramatic production, where all tragic plays are part of a wide inter-

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455 Euripides once more brings wedding and death side by side, by exploiting the
traditional ambiguity of their opposing similarities. On this, see Seaford (1987);
Rehm (1994); Segal (1999).

textual −or better intertheatrical− dialogue,[456] the end of the *Phoenissae* results in the intertextual 'response' of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, who completes the theme of Oedipus' exile. Euripides has unravelled the Theban narrative thread from the time of its genesis, which coincides with the founding of Thebes. By choosing to leave the play's end open, he sets the context, but does not give the story a definitive form. Completion of the plot is thus entrusted to anyone who treats it, through the use of the set features, which the poet himself has defined.

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456 We cannot deny or ignore the audience's theatrical knowledge and training. See Burian (1997) 195; Lamari (2009) esp. 401-402. The spectators were presumably aware of previous dramatic treatments of the myth, either by first-hand experience as spectators of specific performances, or indirectly, as readers of dramatic texts circulating among the educated Athenians of the late fifth century [Thomas (1989) esp. 19-24; (1992) 13, 23; Kovacs (2005) 379-380]. Besides, it is highly unlikely that a citizen who attended many theatrical performances was not informed about previous performances, or contemporary performances that he or she simply missed. See also below, ch. 4.

Chapter 4
Intertextuality

Greek tragedy presupposes a centuries–old mythical tradition and a well–developed mechanism of mythogenesis. Generic conventions, springing from the potent tradition of choral poetry, constitute an innovative and complex development in the history of literary genres. Tragic poetry, like any other genre, is essentially 'a record of a quest for patterns of conduct, patterns of narrative, and types of human character, a record embodied in a repertoire of stories',[457] which seems to have been completed before the first examples of Greek poetry.

This treasury of topics and techniques was equally familiar and influential to the poets of classical Athens and the spectators of dramatic contests, since it provided the former with a variety of well–known themes, subject to both alteration and preservation,[458] and offered the latter a context for the interpretation of myths, within a framework shaped by earlier tradition. Given that Greek myth generally incorporates elementary institutions, beliefs and values, Greek tragedy provides a further examination of those, by dramatizing parts of the myth where familial and social bonds are in danger.[459] Depending on the degree of differentiation from previous, dramatic or non–dramatic presentations of myth, poets were able to 'play' with the audience, either meeting or disappointing their expectations, exploiting what modern narratology has called 'suspense creating techniques'.

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457 Herington (1985) 66.

458 The tendency of the tragic poets to choose well-known myths as their basic narrative line is perhaps related to the blurring of the boundaries between myth and history in Ancient Greek thought. For more on this, see Burian (1997) 183-186. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle considered this mythical thesaurus of subjects one of the basic differentiating characteristics of drama (1451b1-5) and attributed it to the fact that it was not thought possible for events to occur unless they had already done so (1451b15-18, αἴτιον δ' ὅτι πιθανόν ἐστι τὸ δυνατόν· τὰ μὲν οὖν μὴ γενόμενα οὔπω πιστεύομεν εἶναι δυνατά, τὰ δὲ γενόμενα φανερὸν ὅτι δυνατά). Modern anthropological approaches attribute the human desire for entirely similar or slightly different narratives to people's need for particular stories, the telling of which they never find satisfyingly complete. See Miller (1995) 70-72.

459 Anderson (2005) 124.

As with the Homeric epics, in tragedy suspense relates to *how*, i.e. the way in which the narrative will proceed to usually an already well-known result. The Homeric narrator deliberately creates this kind of suspense, which, –according to the fundamental generic conventions of epic poetry- is based on the 'great divide' between the end of myth and ignorance of the narrative manner in which this end will be brought about.[460] In the case of drama, the narrative armature of the poet is strengthened by recourse to fate or to hereditary guilt, a complex but effective mechanism used to further complicate the *how* and create dramatic suspense.[461]

Analogous is the function of the –familiar for the spectators-[462] mythic substratum on which the dramatic narrative was built. There is no doubt that a fifth-century spectator would have known that a play narrating the attack by Polynices and the other seven Argives against Eteocles and the Thebans would end with the deaths of both brothers and the victory of the Theban army. What continued to rekindle interest, however, was the way in which the tradition was presented. Any deliberate deviation from earlier presentations, as might have been the case in, say, a Euripidean re-working of the myth might be taken as 'the means of forcing the audience to rethink every facet of character, motivation, and the very meaning of action'.[463]

This is also one of the basic aims of intertextuality, or, to put it differently, of the deliberate allusions which the poets incorporate into their works: to unlock a field of possible readings,[464] created by the emotional, stylistic or practical charge of themes or expressions already familiar to the audience either from their earlier general intellectual and cultural experience or from their specific dramatic knowledge. Indeed, without this interpretive participation by the audience, the allusions have no meaning at all.[465]

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460 Rengakos (2006) 32.

461 Burian (1997) 183.

462 Not every Athenian citizen, of every level of education had wholesale knowledge of the myth. In any case, Aristotle himself, discussing the usually ordinary tragic plots confesses that even the well-known is well-known only to a few, but is enjoyable for all (καὶ τὰ γνώριμα ὀλίγοις γνώριμά ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ὅμως εὐφραίνει πάντας, *Po.* 1451b25-26), which is why he insists on the importance of a well-constructed plot [on this, see Kyriakou (1995) 106-118], with an impact on its recipients [Iakov (1998) 140-141].

463 Burian (1997) 180.

464 Pucci (1987) 51.

465 Burian (1997) 195.

This dense web of allusions does not merely expand the interpretational horizon of the spectators, but also turns the poet from recipient to interpreter of the earlier tradition.[466] Both the handling of the earlier tradition on the part of the poet as well as the interpretive capacity on the part of the audience indicate that the existence of the so-called mythical mega-text,[467] i.e. the 'treasury' of mythical material, creates the necessary conditions for a continuous re-interpretation of a play. The observation that there is no primordial framework of contexts, no initial, stable matrix to which all the intertextual references can be traced, but rather a mythic storehouse generating innumerable combinations[468] leads to the conclusion that every work of literature is merely an intervention in a incessantly changing intertextual arena.[469] From this vantage point, the work of literature 'resists' all efforts at stability, since it, too, is constantly being subjected to multiple interpretations, to a variety of readings by different recipients. In this sense, every text is synchronically autonomous but diachronically dependent on its innumerable intertextual borrowings that function over time, making readers or spectators unable to pinpoint an archetypal hybrid. Following from that, the basic identity of intertextuality lies in the incapacity of any text to be interpreted in isolation from other texts.[470]

The above introduction does not purport to offer a general overview of intertextuality,[471] but rather aims to identify its various forms as they arise from the text of the *Phoenissae*, with particular emphasis on two basic fields: the intertextual dialogue initiated by references to earlier 'texts', and the intertextual associations which flow from the use of narrative techniques encountered in other works. In this light, the following analysis first seeks references in narrative texts which form part of the mythical 'mega-text', the mythical treasury from which every ancient tragedian draws and which can be called a text only on the basis of an interpretive convention, despite never having been, as a whole, the subject of a separate narrative. Additionally, what follows attempts to trace the divergent ways of presenting the mythical material, through the analysis of the narrative techniques that are encountered in the *Phoenissae*, but also used earlier by other narrators of epic or tragic poetry.

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466 Smith (1997) 9.
467 Segal (1986) 49–50. A detailed analysis of the term will follow.
468 Derrida (1977) 185.
469 Martindale (1993) 17.
470 Conte (1986) 29.
471 In this light, bibliographical references are indicative. For further reading, see especially Kristeva (1969); (1980); (1986); Hebel (1989); Plett (1991); Piegay-Gros (1996); Allen (2000); Orr (2003).

Bearing in mind that the *Phoenissae* was not composed in literary isola-
tion from earlier treatments, this kind of analysis should throw light to
the dramatic result that Euripides was attempting to achieve by tapping
in to the literary knowledge of the audience.

4.1. Myth before Euripides

The multifarious mythical tradition about the Labdacids is attested well
before Euripides' time, in archaic epic, and different genres until the
fifth century. Studying such a narrative/literary 'chain' sheds light on
Euripides' seeking of novelty, coexisting with other, more traditional
narrative intentions. Such an investigation also reveals the 'plasticity' of
the myth, which can host a vast number of versions shaped according to
the specific demands of the genres that they serve.

Thebes and the epic tradition

The first references to the Theban myth are found in archaic epic po-
etry, namely Homeric, Hesiodic, as well as the lost Theban epics of the
Epic Cycle −*Oedipodeia*, *Thebaid*, and *Epigonoi*- of which only a handful
of verses have been preserved.[472] These are followed by the lyric poetry
of Stesichorus,[473] the choral lyric of Pindar and the Aeschylean and
Sophoclean treatments of the myth. Even the slightest glimpse at this
panorama of literary treatments of Theban myth reveals a large span of
competitive versions. In the *Iliad*, it is implied that Oedipus lived in
Thebes until he died on the field of battle,[474] while the most substantial
reference to the Theban cycle occurs in the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus
recounts his adventures to the Phaeacians. In *Odyssey* 11, Odysseus
enumerates the heroes he met in his 'descent' into the Underworld,

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472 On the myth of Oedipus (as also presented in epic poetry), see Robert (1915);
     Edmunds (1984); (2006); Bremmer (1987); Cingano (1992); Markantonatos
     (2007) 43-60.

473 *Papyrus Lille* 73 and 76. The corresponding fragments can be found in Stesi-
     chorus, fr. 222b *PMGF* and Campbell (1991). On this fragment, see Parsons
     (1977); Gostoli (1978); West (1978); Thalmann (1982); Tsitsibakou-Vasalos
     (1985) 73-453; Bremer (1987); March (1987) 126-127; Burnett (1988); Main-
     gon (1989); Judet de la Combe (1996); Pavese (1997); Hutchinson (2001)
     120–139.

474 *Il.* 23.679-680. Oedipus could not have been blind in this version, thus leaves
     the feature of blindness to be exploited by the tragedians alone. For a possible
     allusion to Oedipus' blindness found in the *Thebaid*, see Mastronarde (1994) 22
     n. 3 and Papadopoulou (2008) 32-33.

among whom is Epicaste, who unknowingly married her son[475] and then committed suicide,[476] while Oedipus continued to reign in Thebes.[477] One of the passage's most important issues is the reference to Jocasta's avenging spirits who were responsible for the calamities Oedipus suffered.[478]

In the *Theogony*, Hesiod refers to the wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia, the daughter of Aphrodite and Ares, as well as their five children: Ino, Semele, Agave, Autonoe and Polydorus.[479] In the *Works and Days*, he seems to consider the Theban cycle one of the two basic mythical cycles and reports that the last representatives of the 'generation of heroes' lost their lives at the gates of Thebes in a dispute over Oedipus' fortune.[480] Hesiod also deals with the genealogy of the Theban Cycle in the *Melampodia*. According to fr. 276 M-W,[481] Tiresias, exhausted by the longevity with which Zeus had endowed him, notes that he has lived as many as seven generations, perhaps making an indirect reference to the seven generations of the Theban dynasty[482] which had begun with Cadmus and continued until Laodamas and Thersander, the sons of Eteocles and Polynices, respectively.[483] This tradition about the descendents of Cadmus, who continued until Oedipus' grandsons, seems not to have been taken up by the tragedians and was practically suppressed. In one uncertain verse of the *Seven* (828), for example, the Chorus pre-

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475 *Od.* 11.272-273, ἣ μέγα ἔργον ἔρεξεν ἀϊδρείῃσι νόοιο, / γημαμένη ᾧ υἷι.

476 *Od.* 11.278, ἀψαμένη βρόχον αἰπὺν ἀφ' ὑψηλοῖο μελάθρου.

477 *Od.* 11.275-276, ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐν Θήβῃ πολυηράτῳ ἄλγεα πάσχων / Καδμείων ἤνασσε θεῶν ὀλοὰς διὰ βουλάς. The passage leaves unclear the issue of childbearing, not specifying if the time between the marriage and the revelation of the incest was sufficient for procreation. Much debated, line 11.274 (… ἄφαρ δ' ἀνάπυστα θεοὶ θέσαν ἀνθρώποισιν) has divided scholars who either support [Heubeck & Hoekstra (1989) ad loc.] or deny [March (1987) 121 n. 3] the possibility that Epicaste had children. See further Markantonatos (2007) 44-46.

478 *Od.* 11.279-280, … τῷ δ' ἄλγεα κάλλιπ' ὀπίσσω / πολλὰ μάλ', ὅσσα τε μητρὸς Ἐρινύες ἐκτελέουσι.

479 *Th.* 975-978.

480 *Op.* 162-163. The 'Greek' race of heroes, which is placed after the bronze race, 'interrupts' the traditional catalogue of the four metal-races (the golden, the silver, the bronze, and the iron). On the particular 'Hesiodic' tone of this insertion, see Tsagalis (2009b) 146-147.

481 On the *Melampodia*, cf. particularly Löffler (1963); Cingano (2009) 121-123.

482 Vian (1963) 178.

483 The seven generations of the Theban dynasty are as follows: 1. Cadmus, 2. Polydorus, 3. Labdacus, 4. Laius, 5. Oedipus, 6. Eteocles, Polynices, 7. Laodamas, Thersander. Cf. Grimal (1986) table 29 (p. 549) and table 37 (p. 556).

sumably mourn the childless (ἀτέκνους) warriors Eteocles and Polynices, and in the *Antigone* there is no hint that either brother had a son.

In the *Oedipodeia*, the mythical thread begins very far back: from the time when Hera, furious over Laius' pederasty with Chrysippus, cursed him. Oedipus killed his father and married his mother, Jocasta, but did not have his four children until his second marriage with Euryganeia.[484] The poem also includes references to Creon and his son Haemon, who in the *Oedipodeia* is one of the Sphinx's victims.[485]

The *Thebaid* is concerned with the 'cause' of the Argive campaign against Thebes, i.e. the cause of the curse of Oedipus against his sons Eteocles and Polynices. It first combined two originally independent mythical traditions, that of Cadmus and that of Oedipus, in a unified mythic cycle, the Theban.[486] With regards to the poem's story, the two largest fragments describe Oedipus' anger over being insulted, either because his sons offered him wine in the goblet of dead Laius,[487] or because they gave him an inferior portion of meat from the pieces of the sacrifice.[488] As a result Oedipus curses them, saying that they will not be

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484 The fragments of the *Oedipodeia* provide such limited information that one can do no more than surmise, with greater or lesser reservations. For the details of the story of the poem I rely on the well-known Peisander scholion [fr. 10 (*FGrHist* 16); see also *PEG* 1, *Oedipodia*, arg.]. This fragmentary epic has led to disputed theories, according to which the birth of Oedipus' children is attributed either to his second wife, Euryganeia [March (1987) 121-124; Mastronarde (1994) 21], or to his mother, Jocasta [Davies (1989) 21]. Davies identifies all Jocasta's alternative names (Epicaste, Euryganeia, Eurykleia, Astymedousa) with only one person, whom he believes was –in all the traditions, without exception- not only Oedipus' mother, but also his only spouse, by whom he had his four children. The birth of Oedipus' children by Euryganeia is also maintained by Pausanias (9.5.11). See also West (2003) 5-6. On the Peisander scholion, see de Kock (1962); Lloyd-Jones (2005); Collard (2005) 60 n. 22.

485 *Oed*. fr. 2 *PEG* = 2 *EGF* = 1 *GEF*.

486 Vian (1963) 177.

487 *Th*. fr. 2 *PEG* = 2 *EGF* = 2 *GEF*.

488 *Th*. fr. 3 *PEG* = 3 *EGF* = 3 *GEF*. Oedipus' wrath has usually been considered unfair. Cf. the comment of Athenaeus ὁ δὲ Οἰδίπους δι' ἐκπώματα τοῖς υἱοῖς κατηράσατο (11.465e), as well as the scholion on *OC* 1375, ὃ δὲ μικροψύχως καὶ τελέως ἀγεννῶς, ὅμως γοῦν ἀρὰς ἔθετο κατ' αὐτῶν, δόξας κατολιγωρεῖσθαι. For the deeper symbolism of the actions of Oedipus' two sons, cf. Cingano (2004), who demonstrates that the behavior of Eteocles and Polynices constitutes an insult to Oedipus' royal authority, which they obviously coveted. Cingano highlights the epic motif of offended honor, which was fundamentally important in both the *Iliad* (with the story of Achilles'

able to divide their paternal fortune in a cordial way, but will always be separated by conflicts[489] so intense that they would finally die at each other's hand.[490] From this vantage point, the *Thebaid* is an epic parallel to the *Iliad*, inasmuch as they both identify the wrath of a main character (Oedipus and Achilles, respectively) as the generative cause and driving force of the epic.[491] The issues taken up in the *Thebaid* appear to be continued in the *Epigonoi*. The few verses that have been preserved contain the beginning of the epic,[492] which refers to the descendents of the *Seven* and probably continues with an account of the second campaign and the subsequent fall of Thebes, in accordance to the structural epic rule of revealing the poem's thematic nucleus in its proem.[493]

Stesichorus' 'Jocasta'

The Lille papyrus preserves fragments of a poem by Stesichorus,[494] in which the speaker is a woman who tries to dissuade her sons from beginning a civil war, proposing that one should inherit the throne and the other the paternal fortune. The obvious similarities to the corresponding Euripidean scene allude to the Theban tradition, even if scholars are divided as to whether the woman who speaks is Jocasta, Epicaste, or Oedipus' second wife, Euryganeia.[495] According to one view, the speaker is Euryganeia, inasmuch as the time difference which separates Sophocles and Euripides from Stesichorus may have allowed the former to deal in a detached manner with the subject of the shameful defilement, but made such a treatment of the myth in Stesichorus impossible, since it is unlikely that he would keep the defiled spouse alive after the revelation of the truth and at the same time present her as a wise and esteemed advisor on the city's problems.[496] On the other hand, it has been claimed that the speaker in this fragment could not be the 'blameless' Euryganeia,[497] because only the presence of an impure Jocasta

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wrath) and the *Thebaid* (with the story of Oedipus' wrath). See also Cingano (2003). For the apportioning of meat as an awarding ritual in the archaic polis in general, see Nagy (1990) 269-275.

489 *Th.* fr. 2 *PEG* = 2 *EGF* = 2 *GEF*.
490 *Th.* fr. 3 *PEG* = 3 *EGF* = 3 *GEF*.
491 Cingano (2003).
492 *Ep.* fr. 1 *PEG* = 1 *EGF* = 1 *GEF*.
493 Davies (1989) 29–30.
494 See above, n. 473.
495 This debate also involves the fragments of the *Oedipodeia*, see above, n. 484.
496 March (1987) 130.
497 The speaker is Jocasta according to Aélion (1986) 40-41; Burnett (1988) 124–125; Segal (2001) 45 n. 4.

would emphasize the degradation of Oedipus: even his familial and po-
litical presence has been replaced by that of a woman who bears (tragi-
cally, for him) the triple identity of mother–wife–queen.[498]

If the person who intervenes in order to reconcile the two sons is,
ultimately, not Jocasta, then we may be dealing with a Euripidean inno-
vation, since in all previous versions of the myth (*Odyssey*, *Seven* and
Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*), Jocasta dies *before* the fratricide of
Polynices and Eteocles. On the contrary, the opposite view points in the
direction of Stesichorean influence.[499] In any case, a determined Jocasta
who survives the disgrace of the incest must have been of particular
dramatic interest to Euripides, since he also keeps her alive in his *Oedi-
pus*, where she does not commit suicide after the revelation of the incest
and is rather bent on supporting her husband/son.[500] Lastly, apart from
the pathos of a scene presenting Jocasta as a witness of her sons' deaths,
another obvious similarity between the Euripidean and the Stesichorean
treatment of the myth concerns the Spartoi. As we learn from the an-
cient scholia on the *Phoenissae*,[501] Stesichorus appears in his *Europeia* to
have depicted Athena herself sowing the teeth of the dragon from which
the Thebans grew, a version similar to that of Euripides.[502]

Pindar's Oedipus

Pindar's second *Olympian* provides an important version of the Theban
myth. The hymn was written in 476 BC, in honor of Theron, tyrant of
Acragas, whose roots could be traced to the mythical royal family of
Thebes.[503] Because of Theron's Theban lineage, both mythological ex-
amples –which belong to the typology of triumphal odes– are based on
the Theban mythical cycle. The first has to do with the daughters of
Cadmus, Semele and Ino, and the second with Oedipus, Polynices and
Thersander, the son of Polynices. According to verses 35–38, Fate is the
prevailing power which turns human life upside down, due to its ability

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498 Burnett (1988) 124-125.

499 Judging from the plays that have come down to us in complete or fragmentary
form. This does not mean that there might have not been other treatments of
the Oedipus story, which left no trace.

500 See fr. 545a.11-12 (*TrGF*) or 9-12 [Collard & Cropp (2008)]. Euripides' *Oedi-
pus* is datable later than 415 according to the trochaic tetrameters in fr. 545 and
fr. 545a, while resolution rates point to 419-406. See Cropp & Fick (1985) 70,
85; Collard, Cropp & Gibert (2004) 112; Collard & Cropp (2008) 7.

501 ὁ μὲν Στησίχορος ἐν Εὐρωπείαι τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν ἐσπαρκέναι τοὺς ὀδόντας
φησίν, Schol. E. *Ph.* 670 = *PMG* 195 (fr. 18).

502 *Ph.* 1062-1063. See Vian (1963) 26.

503 See Willcock (1995) 133-134; 145-146.

to turn happiness into misery and the reverse. In the Pindaric version, Laius received a premonitory oracle, according to which he was to be killed by his own son.[504] Contrary to the Sophoclean treatment of the myth, Pindar presents the mutual fratricide of Eteocles and Polynices not as a result of the paternal curse, but as Oedipus' punishment by the Erinys for the patricide, which he had committed.[505] The fourth *Pythian*,[506] reveals that Oedipus' exile was an established and popular theme of the archaic tradition.[507] Finally, Pindar's narrative reaches a much later point in time, since the poet also makes mention of Thersander, who developed into a redoubtable warrior and participated in the campaign of the Epigonoi, continuing the line of Adrastus.[508]

Thebes on stage

The treatment of the Theban myth by the three tragedians began in 467 B.C. with a trilogy by Aeschylus, consisting of the plays *Laius*,[509] *Oedipus*[510] and *Seven against Thebes*, accompanied by the satyr drama *Sphinx*.[511] *Laius* most likely recounts the eponymous character's love for Chrysippus, the son of Pelops, his forced abduction, and his suicide from the guilt of his shameful pederasty.[512] In this tetralogy, Aeschylus seems to have cast his narrative gaze so far back into the mythical past that he approaches the primordial cause of the misfortunes which befell the house of Labdacids, namely Pelops' curse against it. Having established this point of departure, Aeschylus examines the calamities of the next

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504 *O.* 2.39-40.

505 *O.* 2.41-42.

506 Written for the victory of Arcesilaus IV, king of Cyrene (462 B.C.). See Braswell (1988).

507 *P.* 4.263-269. For the analogy between the peace-oriented tone of the ode and Sophocles' *OC*, see Markantonatos (2007) 51-52.

508 *O.* 2.43-45. For Pindar's references to the Theban saga (other than Oedipus), cf. also *P.* 8.41-55, where he makes mention of the descendents of the seven (Epigonoi); *N.* 9.11-27, with references to Adrastus and the seven generals; *I.* 8.10-11, where he lists the gods and heroes of Thebes, among whom are the Spartoi, Adrastus and the rest of the defeated generals.

509 fr. 121; 122 (*TrGF*).

510 fr. 387; 387a (*TrGF*).

511 fr. 235; 236; 237 (*TrGF*).

512 Laius' seduction of Chrysippus must have been the main motif of *Laius* according to Lloyd-Jones (1983) 113-121. From the only two words that survive from the actual text of the play (fr. 122), we gain reference to the practice of exposing newborn babies in pots (χυτρίζειν) [Sommerstein (2008) vol. 3, 124–125].

two generations in the remaining two tragedies of the trilogy.[513] With the patricide possibly being the dramatic climax in the *Laius*,[514] the *Oedipus* most likely included the disclosure of the incest, the self-blinding and curse of Oedipus, and perhaps even his death.[515] As with Pindar, Aeschylus also gives particular weight to the role of the Erinys, who carries out the curse which Oedipus directed against his sons.[516] Finally, verses 742-756 of the *Seven* allow us to assume that, in Aeschylus' version, Laius received a Delphic oracle warning him to remain childless long before the birth of Oedipus, which he disobeyed.[517] Euripides prefers the same version of the myth. All in all, Aeschylus gave the old myth a new, dramatic coloring. In his hands, Jocasta was not only an incestuous wife, but also an incestuous mother, and the pollution coming from her union with Oedipus was purified only when two of their offsprings suffered horrible deaths.

One of the most important Sophoclean contributions to the mythical repository, is the starring role given to Antigone. Especially in view of the spurious ending of Aeschylus' *Seven*,[518] where Antigone and Ismene are supposed to lament their dead brothers, in the *Antigone*, the heroine is imbued with novel dramatic authority that makes her a central character, while a limited but critical role is also kept for Ismene in *Oedipus at Colonus*.[519] With regard to the Apolline prohibition of child-bearing, Sophocles avoids any association between the pederasty of Laius and the ensuing patricide. In *Oedipus Tyrannus*, the Apolline oracle is presented as an entirely personal affair that concerns only the father, Laius, and his son, Oedipus, although it is not clear whether it was given before or after Oedipus' birth.[520] In any case, by placing emphasis on

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513 Segal (2001) 25.

514 Markantonatos (2007) 53.

515 Hutchinson (1985) xxvi-xxvii. See also Markantonatos (2007) 54-55; Papadopoulou (2008) 37.

516 Cf. *Th*. 720-726. The role of Erinys is also very important for Euripides in the *Phoenissae*.

517 See also above, n. 139.

518 See Hutchinson (1985) 209-211, who considers the play's final scene as a 'specimen of post-classical tragedy'. On fourth-century tragedy, see Xanthakis-Karamanos (1980).

519 Markantonatos (2007) 63-64.

520 See *OT* 711-719, χρησμὸς γὰρ ἦλθε Λαΐωι ποτ', οὐκ ἐρῶ / Φοίβου γ' ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, τῶν δ' ὑπηρετῶν ἄπο, / ὡς αὐτὸν ἥξοι μοῖρα πρὸς παιδὸς θανεῖν, / ὅστις γένοιτ' ἐμοῦ τε κἀκείνου πάρα. / καὶ τὸν μέν, ὥσπερ γ' ἡ φάτις, ξένοι / ποτὲ / λησταὶ φονεύουσ' ἐν τριπλαῖς ἁμαξιτοῖς· / παιδὸς δὲ βλάστας οὐ / διέσχον ἡμέραι / τρεῖς, καί νιν ἄρθρα κεῖνος ἐνζεύξας ποδοῖν / ἔρριψεν ἄλλων

Oedipus' defilement, Sophocles makes it the source of a deadly plague, which afflicts Thebes and reduces Oedipus' consequent exile to an act of dire necessity.[521] Besides, by transforming the road connecting Thebes to Delphi into a deadly setting,[522] he turns the Apolline oracle into a central point of the plot, since he presents the patricide as taking place immediately after its pronouncement. Sophoclean innovation also includes the motive for the exposure of the infant, to which he adds the tragic detail of the piercing of his feet.[523]

4.2. Intertextual references to earlier texts

Intertextual associations either look back to specific texts preceding the *Phoenissae*, or to the mythical megatext in general, through vague references to the Theban saga that formed part of the audience's mythical education. In the first part of this section I will discuss the relation between the *Phoenissae* and specific literary works, while in the second I will discuss the implicit interaction between the *Phoenissae* and the wider span of mythical material.

4.2.1. References to recognizable texts

4.2.1.1. Teichoscopia and description of the warriors in the *Iliad*, the *Seven*, and the *Phoenissae*

The first and most famous Teichoscopia in ancient Greek literature is *Iliad* 3.161-242, while similar scenes are found both in the *Seven against Thebes* and the *Phoenissae*.[524] A comparative study of the three Teicho-

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χερσὶν εἰς ἄβατον ὄρος. The oracle is placed before the birth for Markantonatos [(2007) 67], while Segal [(2001) 28] places it after the birth of Oedipus.

521 In general, the Sophoclean perspective offers a more 'humane' treatment of the myth. See also Markantonatos (2007) 60-70.

522 *OT* 733-734.

523 *OT* 717-719. As has been suggested, this detail was most likely intended to guarantee the revulsion and disgust of any passers-by who might have felt inclined to save the infant, and to justify the only prospect of rescue, from Polybus and Merope [Segal (2001) 29].

524 Another battle with only one spectator, the Athenian Messenger, who watches the conflict between the Athenians and Thebans (with the former the victors) from the walls of Thebes, is described in Euripides' *Suppliants* (650-730). The Messenger has accompanied the Athenians to Thebes, against which city Theseus is waging war, demanding the bodies of the seven, which the Thebans refuse to return. In this Teichoscopia, the spectator is alone, and for this reason

scopia–scenes yields the following table, which concisely conveys the narrative structure of each scene that will be analyzed in greater detail immediately below:

	Iliad	*Seven*	*Phoenissae*
Sender of message	Helen	Messenger	Servant
Mediation of second sender	Antenor	–	–
Recipient of the message	Priam	Eteocles	Antigone
Reply of the recipient	Priam's comment	Strategic advice	Antigone's comment
Narrative result	Presentation of the warriors / Helen's characterization	Presentation of the warriors/ Eteocles' characterization	Presentation of the warriors/ Antigone's characterization
Narrative authority	Priam	Eteocles	Antigone
Location	Walls of Troy	Palace of Thebes	Palace of Thebes
Spectators (internal or external narratees)	Trojan elders (internal) / listeners or readers (external)	Chorus (internal) / Athenian spectators (external)	Athenian spectators (external)

The Teichoscopia in the *Iliad* takes place by the Scaean Gates, where Helen and her faithful servants Aethra and Clymene go to watch the duel between Paris and Menelaus. The goddess Iris has instilled in Helen nostalgia for her old family, the more so since she is about to watch a confrontation that will determine which family she will ultimately spend the rest of her life with.[525] At the Trojan walls we also find the elders of Troy, who, since they are not able to fight, watch the action from above. They see Helen, but despite her acknowledged divine beauty, they wish for her to return to Sparta and spare them from further misfortunes.[526] A more positive impression is given right afterwards, when

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the scene is split into two different time phases. In the beginning the Messenger watches the conflict from the walls, but at the end he assumes the role of the interlocutor who provides the information much later, when he is back in Athens and is describing the battle to the Chorus and Adrastus.

525 *Il.* 3.130–138.
526 *Il.* 3.156–160.

Priam attributes culpability for the war to the gods[527] and asks Helen to stand by him, and to inform him about the Achaean warriors preparing for battle.[528]

The Teichoscopia in the *Iliad* is structured on a repetitive narrative sequence. Priam calls Helen and indicates the warrior in whom he is interested. Helen enlightens Priam, depending on the questions that he asks her; the narrative authority belongs to him, as he shapes the conversation and in effect chooses which warriors will be presented. One can detect a narrative paradox, which allows the narrative direction to be given by the uninformed interlocutor (Priam) rather than by the informed (Helen). The omniscient Homeric narrator has ceded his power to both Priam and Helen, yielding to the former the right to choose which warriors will be presented, and to the latter the manner of their presentation. His absence continues throughout the scene, except for the end, where he intervenes to reveal the deaths of Castor and Pollux, of which Helen is ignorant.

The seven pairs of speeches by the Messenger and Eteocles, through which the audience is given information about the seven pairs of Argive and Theban warriors in the *Seven Against Thebes*,[529] can only exceptionally be called a Teichoscopia. The two interlocutors are *not* in a place that would afford them a view of the action outside the walls, yet, in spite of that they discuss offstage events on the basis of the information provided by the Messenger, who has just returned from the battlefield.[530] The narrative-dramatic effect of such a structure is that offstage activity is imagined not only by the spectators (as in the 'conventional' Teichoscopia of the *Phoenissae*), but of the onstage heroes as well, especially of Eteocles, who is called to organize the city's defence on the basis of the Messenger's descriptions,[531] and has, like Priam in the *Iliad*, no real awareness of the characters being described. As with Priam, Eteocles is

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527 *Il.* 3.164–165.

528 Clader [(1976) 10] maintains that Helen knew the Greek warriors because these were also her suitors, thus interprets the Teichoscopia as a reminder that the Trojan War was another a competition to win her.

529 *Th.* 375–676. The passage is usually called the 'shield scene'.

530 It is, therefore, an exceptional Teichoscopia, which, however, is in unambiguous intertextual dialogue with the *Phoenissae*, and for this reason is included in this analysis.

531 On Eteocles' insistence on justifying the Thebans he chose in order to confront each of the Argive generals, see Cameron (1970) 100-101.

initially the unknowledgeable interlocutor, but he is finally the one ex-
hibiting narrative authority.[532]

The conclusion of the list of generals with the brothers' duel has
greatly occupied ancient and modern scholars with reference to the con-
scious or fateful decision of Eteocles to face Polynices. Throughout the
scene and the Messenger's description of the Argive warriors, Eteocles
does not give the impression that he realizes that he is to fight against his
brother, and thus fulfil the curse of mutual fratricide, which Oedipus
had laid on them. It is only when the Messenger informs him that
Polynices stands on the seventh gate (631-632), that Eteocles seems to
realize the tragic role of fate (653-654).

As has been maintained, despite the fact that Oedipus' curse and the
Erinys' destructive power become unambiguously evident after verses
653-654, their presence was first indicated in the prologue (69-70); their
development, however, was held back, in narrative terms, until verse
653.[533] Polynices' appearance at the end of the list of the generals brings
back into the spotlight the incontrovertible power of Oedipus' old
curse, which, with the authority of an even more ancient narrative,
downplays the narrative supremacy that Eteocles had in the rest of the
episode.[534] In the *Phoenissae*, the curse has the same devastating conse-
quences. Euripides, however, does not present it as an external factor,
which invades Eteocles' life and causes his death. On the contrary, in
keeping with the negative view of his character that dominates the
whole of Euripides' play, responsibility for Eteocles' ruin lies with his
own self, and in particular with his unquenchable thirst for power,
which Jocasta had called the worst of divinities (531-532).[535]

Like Helen and Priam in the *Iliad*, Antigone and the Servant in the
Phoenissae perform the Teichoscopia from a high point of the palace.
One further similarity with the *Iliad* sheds light on the Euripidean ver-
sion: Antigone's inability to distinguish Polynices (156-158) –even
though, earlier, she had, with great ease, made out other warriors such
as Hippomedon (119-126), Tydeus (131-138) and Parthenopaeus (145-
153)- recalls Helen's inability to see her brothers Castor and Pollux
(3.236-238). Through this intertextual allusion, the Euripidean version

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532 On Eteocles' behavior in the scene and the shield scene in general, see
     Wilamowitz (1914) 61-69; 73-78; Fritz (1962) 193-226; Schadewaldt (1961);
     Bacon (1964); Fraenkel (1964a) 273-328; Lesky (1966) 264-274; Taplin
     (1977) 149-156; Thalmann (1978) 105-135; Zeitlin (1982); Winnington-
     Ingram (1983) 29-38; and Hutchinson (1985) 103-106.

533 Kirkwood (1969) 17. Patzer (1958) also sees a similar role for the Erinys.

534 Goward (1999) 84.

535 Solmsen (1968) 118-120.

provides an indirect foreshadowing of Polynices' death. Although Anti-gone is temporarily more fortunate than Helen –the Servant will assure her that Polynices will soon visit the palace and she will see him in per-son (170-171)- their meeting will be tragically inverted, as it will take place outside the palace, on the field of battle, and with Polynices al-ready dead. Euripides handles the intertextual parallel in such a way that Antigone's initial difficulty in locating Polynices should be seen as a bad omen.

Yet another narrative similarity connects the *Phoenissae* more with the Homeric than the Aeschylean model.[536] There seems to be a kind of narrative analogy between the old men who watch the unfolding of the Homeric Teichoscopia at the Scaean Gates and the Athenian spectators who watch the Teichoscopia of the *Phoenissae*. Both are witnesses to the same process of viewing from the walls, the one group watching Helen and Priam, and the other watching Antigone and the Servant. Indeed, what in the *Phoenissae* is an extradiegetic narrative level pointing at the spectators who are following the recounted events, is in the *Iliad* incor-porated into the story through the intervention of Antenor, who, after demonstrating that he had been following the discussion of Helen and Priam, creates the narrative conditions for a *mise en abyme*, i.e. for an intra-narrative reconstruction of the narrative action.[537] The internal spectator, Antenor, is equivalent to the *Phoenissae*'s external Athenian spectators, who watch the Teichoscopia, without, of course, intervening and allowing a *mise en abyme*. Such a parallel could not, on the other hand, hold true precisely for the *Seven*, since there the Teichoscopia does not include any scene with actors who view the offstage happen-ings directly.

Comparative analysis shows that these three scenes of Teichoscopia follow the same narrative structure. In the *Iliad* and the *Phoenissae*, con-versation is initiated by the uninformed interlocutor, who externalizes his or her impressions and directs the conversation, both suggesting and choosing which heroes will be presented. Consequently, while the in-formation seems to be controlled by Helen and the Servant respectively, the narrative power belongs to Priam and Antigone. The narrative para-dox is that while Antigone and Priam should be narratively weaker,

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536 Trübe's observations on the Teichoscopia also point in this direction. Accord-ing to his study, the lists of heroes in the Euripidean and the Iliadic Teicho-scopia function in similar ways. Just as the list in the *Iliad* highlights the figure of Helen, so also in the *Phoenissae* it is intended to introduce Antigone, who will develop into a central character of the plot during the second part of the play [Trübe (1952) 33-35].

537 On the *mise en abyme*, see above, n. 415.

since they themselves are not acquainted with the offstage warriors, the omniscient narrator cedes to them more narrative power than he gives to those who seem knowledgeable. Similar narrative power is given to Eteocles in the *Seven*, where even though the initiative for the description of the seven gates is ceded to the Messenger, Eteocles is the one who will offer the solution to the problem, taking over the narrative reins, selecting in each case the most suitable Theban warrior and pushing the narrative along.

   In all three works, the Teichoscopia is introduced under the narrative pretext of the presentation of the warriors, while ultimately it is used as a means of character-drawing: Helen in *Iliad*, Eteocles in the *Seven*, and Antigone in the *Phoenissae*. By projecting Helen's acceptance by Priam, the Teichoscopia in the *Iliad* contributes to Helen's exoneration and narrative 'purgation', while in the *Seven* it reveals the strategic competence of Eteocles, who is depicted as a capable, patriotic leader. Similarly, the Euripidean version employs narrative inversion in order to bring to the forefront the figure of Antigone. Euripides' Antigone is not only incapable of giving information, an ability which Helen possessed in the *Iliad*, but is even wary of leaving the safety of the palace. Euripides uses the Teichoscopia to construct an image of Antigone that he will later overturn. The restrained girl of the Teichoscopia will give way to a mature woman at the end of the play.[538]

4.2.1.2. The motifs of 'conflict' and 'retribution' in the *Seven* and the *Phoenissae*

The *Seven* and the *Phoenissae* share an interest in the narration of conflict. According to this motif, tragic conflicts, which are unbridgeable and not susceptible to concession or improvement,[539] are caused by conscious choices.[540] Specifically, Oedipus' decision to curse his sons is intricately entwined with another narrative motif around which both tragedies are structured. The *Seven* and the *Phoenissae* are based on the 'retribution story pattern', according to which narration 'is organised around punishment for past offences'.[541] In both cases, spectators are left to guess the cause of the curse, using their knowledge of the mythical background. In the *Phoenissae* however, there is no single story pattern as a central narrative axis, since Euripides has also incorporated the

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538 See also Burgess (1987) 108.
539 Cf. Eteocles' determination to exterminate Polynices in the *Seven* or their communicational gap in the agon in the *Phoenissae*.
540 Cf. Oedipus' curse both in the *Seven* and in the *Phoenissae* [Burian (1997) 181].
541 Burian (1997) 187.

equally popular 'sacrifice pattern'.[542] As one would expect, such a narrative choice inevitably calls for intertextual association with other tragedies employing the motif sacrifice (*Hercules*, *Hecuba*), despite the fact that they do not exhibit any other thematic connections.

The dramatic effect produced by the use of these motifs is more strongly felt in cases of divergence from the main mythical plotline. By systematically creating, and even welcoming, inconsistency, Euripides was able to violate the spectators' expectations and increase suspense. His innovative approach to the standard or most widely circulating versions of a given myth, however, was not completely untraditional: after all, he had persistently tried to 'teach' Athenian audiences of his personal, perhaps idiosyncratic but also quite effective, thematic and narrative grammar. By placing his spectators within the realm of his own, Euripidean tragic universe, Euripides could expect that they would interpret appropriately his rebus-like mythical syntax.

4.2.2. References to non-recognizable 'texts': Euripides and the mythical 'megatext'

Intertextuality is effected through the interaction of allusions, referring both to earlier texts and –in the case of drama- to the broader mythical treasury, the mythical megatext. The narrative function of allusion is akin to that of the *trope*, the rhetorical device, which selects, isolates and employs semantic aspects of certain terms in new, seemingly 'inappropriate' contexts. In both cases, meaning is created by the coexistence and interaction of two distinct levels of reality,[543] which produce a new, more complex reality that evenly combines the denotative and connotative meanings of the text.[544] In such a case, the dramatist becomes the central co-ordinator who, because he is in the know, activates the connotations (intertextual in this case), of which the dramatic characters are supposed to be unaware. Consequently, all the direct or indirect intertextual references are predicated on the antithesis between the knowledge of the omniscient narrator and a knowledgeable audience on the one hand, and the 'naïve' character who effects them on the other.[545]

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542 Burian (1997) 188.

543 Tragic irony is also created through a similar mental and narrative mechanism that involves the discrepancy between two different levels of reality.

544 Conte (1986) 23.

545 This function is also reminiscent of the way in which intertextuality functions in Hellenistic poetry. In Theocritus, for example, the characters are unaware of the sophisticated and subtle intertextual references which the readers and, of course, the poet recognize [Segal (1984) 206-207].

Both audience and narrator thus participate in a complex interaction based in their shared access to the same megatext: a notional construct, a recomposed entity comprising the widest possible variety of a vast mythological storehouse, which has become an almost built-in concomitant of a society's cultural consciousness. Despite its purely 'artificial' character that is discernible even in its structuralist jargon, it formed part of ancient Greek cultural tradition and, more significantly, it operated so overtly that it almost defied recognition as a separate entity.[546] In the process of its formation, this megatext gradually attained increasing degrees of stability and fixation, mainly due to a process of regularization enhanced by literary texts that filtered and canonized its microstructure.[547] In tragedy, the megatext functions ambivalently, inasmuch as it 'simultaneously validates and disintegrates the mythical system both as a form of narrative representation and as a reflection of a coherent world order whose stable, hierarchical interrelation of parts is encoded into the myths'.[548] While promoting the established social, political and religious institutions, tragedy also reveals the tension, which binds them, creating a tug-of-war between opposing forces.[549]

In the *Phoenissae*, Euripides adopts a set of tenets stemming from the mythical megatext, while simultaneously takes pains to undo it: he appropriates the Theban myth and uses its basic narrative blueprint, while, at the same time, deviates from the mythical archetype, and creates unexpected narrative shifts. Instead of having Eteocles defend his city with the determination, bravery and prudence that the positive paradigm of a typical king demands, he presents him as incompetent and unable to organize the city's defences by himself. Along the same lines, he provides the 'sheltered' Antigone of the Teichoscopia with the typically masculine characteristics of bravery and determination.

Euripides organizes the plot of the *Phoenissae* by adopting a policy of over-inclusion of mythical material that reveals a strong metaliterary awareness, going back to archaic epic. The self-referentiality of Euripidean tragedy, which often emphasizes its artificiality, is a hallmark of Euripides' predilection for innovation, and has also been interpreted as a sign that the genre of drama is approaching its end.[550] Even before Euripides, the omniscient Homeric narrator was aware of the fact that he was moulding the mythical treasury, this early cultural encyclopaedia of

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546   Segal (1986) 50.
547   Segal (1986) 53.
548   Segal (1986) 50.
549   Segal (1986) 64.
550   Goldhill (1986) 244.

information that was not only mythic/historic, but also geographical and even religious.[551] In tragedy, the oracles, the prophecies, and the insistence on the importance of the speakers' names are irrefutable evidence of the conscious use of myth as a form of *semiosis*.[552] Seen from this angle, each literary version of a part of the megatext constitutes a *subtext*,[553] an early form of commentary on myth, promoting interpretations inherent to the megatext.

In the case of the *Phoenissae*, Euripides deals with a significant portion of the megatext, creating a subtext, which, in terms of the Theban cycle, almost constitutes a megatext *per se*, inasmuch as it presents the largest concentration of material related to this particular myth. The innovative treatment of the megatext, the rigorous intertextual dialogue with previous literary versions dealing with the Theban myth, the violation, and even frustration, of the spectators' horizon of narrative expectations, as well as the intense dramatic use of certain generic features, amply show that Euripides consciously engages in metatheatrical games that invite his audience to reconsider and re-evaluate the limits of the genre of drama.[554]

4.3. Cross-textual narrative techniques

In this section I will investigate the ways intertextual allusions provide a basis for the development of complex narrative techniques, such as the future reflexive or the intertextual deception. By taking advantage of the intertextual −or, in our case, intertheatrical- education of the audience, Euripides uses cross-textual correspondences to create narrative ellipses (and thus avoid narrating information he is not interested in), as well as to surprise his spectators by overturning their narrative expectations. The mythical megatext, apart from providing the playwright with the basic story, thus allows him to develop myth-based narrative techniques.

4.3.1. Future reflexive[555]

Intertextual association usually works retrospectively, involving a backward movement from a later to an earlier text, from the narrative text at

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551 Herington (1985) 67.

552 Segal (1986) 50-51.

553 'The texts which precede, underlie and are modified and elaborated by any given text are its subtexts (or hypotexts)' [Papadopoulou (2008) 27].

554 Goldhill (1986) 252-253; 264.

555 The term belongs to Barchiesi (2001).

hand to its literary predecessor, i.e. to the text that the author had in his mind before he created his own narrative. In this case, the earlier text is introduced into the more recent one as a type of literary recollection, which is activated and recalled *ad hoc*, upon the genesis of the new narrative.

Absolute temporal linearity exists only in the notional mythical megatext, i.e. in our own reconstructed sequence of events comprising a mythical saga. The fact that myth has no archetype but lives in the wide variety of its manifestations through art, literature, and religion, results in the creation of mythical anachronies. Since the multiple manifestations of a given myth never present the entire mythical megatext but focus on its different aspects, phases, and figures, the audience, whether viewers of a work of art, listeners to an epic performance, or spectators in the theatre, are invited to realize that earlier events are sometimes recounted after later ones, that fabula-time and story-time do not correspond.

Apart from this internal process of disruption of temporal linearity, audiences of all kinds may experience temporal anisochronies 'externally', i.e. by mnemonic recall of parts of the mythical megatext through cultural manifestation or manifestations operating on the same register. In other words, when a fifth-century Athenian looked at a recently built temple and admired a specific artistic representation of a mythical event, he/she may have recalled not just the wider mythical framework this event belonged to, but also specific representations of the same event, which he/she had also seen in other temples or monuments.[556] Recall works on multiple levels, and apart from the mental icon that is brought to mind, people tend to visualize the entire setting that mentally accompanies a single image. In the case of theatrical performance, this phenomenon may have been enhanced by several factors: going to a theatrical performance was a special event and required a great deal of attention from the individual spectator; the stage, setting, music, actors, and so on constituted a whole universe of experiences in which the average Athenian was immersed. These were, no doubt, strong experiences, and it is in this light that we may argue that spectators were prone to recall parts of the mythical megatext not vaguely but through specific performances. Cognitive psychology has, after all shown that mnemonic recall works through association and concreteness, not through abstract ideas and, in our case, general perceptions of myth. Some of the members of the audience of the Sophoclean *Oedipus at Colonus* are likely to have recalled or at least to have known –by other sources- the disclosure of the truth and Oedipus' self-blinding as presented in *Oedipus Tyrannus*.

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556 On this procedure of artistic 'recall' as generated in choral performances, see Athanassaki (2009).

What happens, however, when an earlier text has already narrated the 'future' of a mythic hero? When, in other words, the earlier text is introduced into the newer not as a literary recollection, but more as a literary prediction? The dramatic effect is then channelled in two directions: dramatic irony and self-referentiality.[557] The audience's knowledge of the story's progression helps the author increase the tragic gap between the onstage and offstage 'reality'. At the same time, it highlights the poet's self-awareness, since it allows him to let his narrative 'admit' that the future of its characters is already known through earlier narratives. This literary practice, particularly common during the Alexandrian period, has been studied by Barchiesi, who has noticed the systematic tendency in Ovid's *Heroides* to anticipate, as regards the time of the story, known narratives of the classical period.[558]

In the case of Euripides' plays, future reflexive –i.e. the narration of parts of famous stories, later points of which have already been completed narratively by earlier texts– is observed not just in a broad intertextual comparison, i.e. in relation to other writers, but also on a narrower intertextual level, i.e. among Euripides' own dramas. In this respect, the intertextual completion of the narrative concerning the expedition against Thebes, i.e. the theme of the burial of the seven Argive generals, occurs well before the narration of the first part of the story, i.e. the attack on Thebes and the fratricide of Polynices and Eteocles.[559]

Specifically, Euripides' *Suppliant Women*, which was performed somewhere near the end of the 420s[560] tells of mythic events which occurred after the *story* of the *Phoenissae*, i.e. after the conflict between Argos and Thebes and the mutual fratricide of Polynices and Eteocles. If we consider the Euripidean corpus as a unified narrative act, we will see that the narrative of the Theban mythical cycle begins with the narration of a later point of the story in 423 and then goes backwards, continuing with the earlier part of the story in 411-409. In this sense, the narrative action of the *Phoenissae* is a future reflexive narrative, since it retrospectively completes the storyline of the Theban mythical cycle, looking to the story's past even though it happens later in real time.[561]

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557 Barchiesi (2001) 106.
558 Barchiesi (2001).
559 See Lamari (2009).
560 Most likely in 423 [Kovacs (1998) 3]. Collard [(1975) 10; (2007)] also gives a date after 424 BC, considering the battle of Delium as the performance's terminus post quem. See also below, n. 585.
561 Gibbons & Segal [(2003) 185-186] also find an analogous movement of future reflexive between *Antigone* and *Oedipus at Colonus*. They actually use the term 'prequel' (from the well known cinema term 'sequel') to characterize *Oedipus*

The *Suppliants* narrates the story of the mothers of those killed during the seven generals' attack on Thebes. These mothers, accompanied by Adrastus, took refuge in Eleusis and asked for Theseus' help in allowing them to collect their sons' bodies in Thebes. At first, the Athenian king rejects their plea, condemning Adrastus for attacking first. But after Aethra's intervention Theseus is persuaded to help, even though a Theban Messenger appears on stage to warn him not to meddle. He leads the Athenian army to Thebes, and the city finds itself threatened again. The Athenian victory comes after a bloody battle and is communicated to the spectators through a Messenger's extended report. Five bodies are collected and taken to Athens,[562] while Polynices' burial in Theban territory is implied.[563] The work concludes with the appearance of Athena, who addresses both Theseus (giving him instructions on how to keep Argos friendly) and also the sons of the seven, who, she foresees, will ultimately conquer Thebes, avenge their dead parents and become the object of commemoration in many songs in future generations, as the famous Epigonoi.

Any intertextual consideration of the *Phoenissae* in relation to the *Suppliants* would be incomplete without an examination of the same future reflexive intertextual relationship that exists between the *Seven* and *Eleusinians*,[564] an Aeschylean play surviving only in fragments.[565] The *Eleusinians* narrates the story of the collection of the bodies of those who

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at Colonus, where they observe Sophocles' literary 'return' to his earlier work, *Antigone*, confirmed by the fact that at the end of work the author depicts the heroine returning to Thebes to reconcile her brothers, and potentially restart the story of Polynices' burial, even though this has already been narrated.

562 In specific, the play's setting is Eleusis, an Athenian deme in Euripides' time. For the closeness, but also remoteness of setting in 'suppliant dramas', see Goff (1995). For an extensive analysis of the dramatic geography of the *Suppliants*, see Morwood (2007) 17-23.

563 Kovacs (1998) 6. The bodies that were transported to Athens are listed by Adrastus, who, at Theseus' directions delivers the funeral oration (857-917). In his speech, Adrastus makes reference to each of the generals, describing five different characters united in a common sense of duty, παιδεία and ἄσκησις which shaped their morals [Collard (1975) 324]. Theseus realizes that Amphiaraus and Polynices are missing from Adrastus' list and their bodies are not there (925-932). As we learn, Amphiaraus was engulfed by the earth along with his chariot while he was still alive (925-927). As for Polynices, Theseus' report is not as explicit and nothing prevents us from supposing that his burial in Theban territory was a possibility that Euripides deliberately wanted to leave 'open'.

564 The following is extensively discussed in Lamari (2009).

565 fr. 53a; 54 (*TrGF*).

died in the battle between the Argives and the Thebans[566] and, even though there is not enough evidence for a conclusive date, the performance of the play is traditionally placed before the performance of the *Seven* (467 BC), around 475, with the return of Theseus' bones from Scyros to Athens being the *terminus post quem*.[567]

Intertextual comparisons between the *Suppliants* and the *Eleusinians* are also generated by Plutarch's *Theseus*.[568] According to Plutarch, Theseus, together with Adrastus, managed to effect the return of those who died in the Argive attack on Thebes either by waging war (version endorsed in the *Suppliants*), or through persuasion (version endorsed in the *Eleusinians*). Plutarch also mentions the historian Philochorus (4th-3rd c. B.C.), who was not only familiar with the event, but also referred to the libations that occurred before the removal of the dead:[569]

συνέπραξε [Theseus] δὲ καὶ Ἀδράστωι τὴν ἀναίρεσιν τῶν ὑπὸ τῆι Καδμείαι πεσόντων, οὐχ ὡς Εὐριπίδης ἐποίησεν ἐν τραγωιδίαι, μάχηι τῶν Θηβαίων κρατήσας, ἀλλὰ πείσας καὶ σπεισάμενος· οὕτω γὰρ οἱ πλεῖστοι λέγουσι· Φιλόχορος[570] δὲ καὶ σπονδὰς περὶ νεκρῶν ἀναιρέσεως γενέσθαι πρώτας ἐκείνας. ... ταφαὶ δὲ τῶν μὲν πολλῶν ἐν Ἐλευθεραῖς δείκνυνται, τῶν δ' ἡγεμόνων περὶ Ἐλευσῖνα, καὶ τοῦτο Θησέως Ἀδράστωι χαρισαμένου. καταμαρτυροῦσι δὲ τῶν Εὐριπίδου Ἱκετίδων ⟨καὶ⟩ οἱ Αἰσχύλου Ἐλευσίνιοι, ἐν οἷς [καὶ] ταῦτα λέγων ὁ Θησεὺς πεποίηται.

'He [Theseus] also aided Adrastus in recovering for burial the bodies of those who had fallen before the walls of the Cadmeia, not by mastering the Thebans in battle, as Euripides has it in his tragedy, but by persuading them to a truce; for so most writers say, and Philochorus adds that this was the first truce ever made for recovering the bodies of those slain in battle. ... And the graves of the greater part of those who fell before Thebes are shown at Eleutherae, and those of the commanders near Eleusis, and this last burial was a favour which Theseus showed to Adrastus. The account of

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566 i.e., a later stage of the myth when compared to the *Seven*.

567 Aélion (1983) 233. On the dating of the play in this period, see Hauvette (1898) 170-173; Gastaldi (1976) 50-71. Wilamowitz [(1891) 226-227] is also in favor of the *Eleusinians* being performed before the *Seven*. The dating of the work to ca. 470 is required by an amphora (Athens N.M. 18606), datable to the same period, presenting three pairs of men standing on three altars. The illustration most likely refers to a scene from *Eleusinians* [Karusu (1972)]. On the return of Theseus' bones from Scyros in 476/475, see Walker (1995) 55-61.

568 *Thes.* 29.4-5.

569 As Jacoby notes (1954a) 442, Philochorus tries to utilize the mythical background in order to strengthen and magnify the glory of the Athenian past and, of course, Theseus.

570 Philochorus fr. 112 (*FGrHist* 3).

Euripides in his *Suppliants* is disproved by that of Aeschylus in his *Eleusinians*, where Theseus is made to relate the matter as above.'[571]

Of the fallen in combat, the ordinary soldiers (ταφαὶ τῶν πολλῶν) were buried in Eleutherae, while the leaders (ταφαὶ … τῶν δ' ἡγεμόνων) were buried in Eleusis.[572] Plutarch's account regarding the geographical disparity in the burial is consistent with the information given in the *Suppliants*, where only the bodies of the generals are moved to Eleusis, while the rest of the soldiers are reckoned to have been buried by Theseus in Eleutherae:[573]

[ΑΔ.] ὧν δ' οὕνεχ' ἀγὼν ἦν νεκροὺς κομίζετε;
[ΑΓ.] ὅσοι γε κλεινοῖς ἕπτ' ἐφέστασαν λόχοις.
[ΑΔ.] πῶς φήις; ὁ δ' ἄλλος ποῦ κεκμηκότων ὄχλος;
[ΑΓ.] τάφωι δέδονται πρὸς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς.
[ΑΔ.] τοὐκεῖθεν ἢ τοὐνθένδε; τίς δ' ἔθαψέ νιν;
[ΑΓ.] Θησεύς, σκιώδης ἔνθ' Ἐλευθερὶς πέτρα. (754-759)

'[ADR.] Do you bring the bodies over which they were fighting?
[MESS.] Yes, all who stood at the head of the seven famous companies.
[ADR.] What do you mean? Where are all the rest of the dead?
[MESS.] They have been given burial by the dells of Kithairon.
[ADR.] On the Theban or Athenian side of the mountain? Who buried them?
[MESS.] Theseus – by the shady rock of Eleutherai.'[574]

The well-known story of Adrastus who, shattered by the defeat, flees Thebes, occurs first in the epic *Thebaid*.[575] In this account, however, there is no reference to his taking refuge in Athens and historians only began to engage this particular part of the Theban myth from that point onward. Herodotus, in his ninth book, is the first to give special distinction to the Athenians. As he narrates the planning for the battle at Plataea (479 B.C.), he mentions the verbal sparring between the Athenians and Tegeans, with regard to which of the two has the more glorious past (9.25-27). The Athenians' arguments reminded the Tegeans about,

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571 The translation is by Perrin (1948).

572 For the reliability of the information concerning the separate graves of the generals, see Jacoby (1954a) 444.

573 This geographic difference could, of course, also indicate the Euripidean tendency of combining two different traditions. Cf. Mills (1997) 231.

574 The translation is by Morwood (2007).

575 The *Thebaid* specifically refers to the horse Arion, son of Neptune, with which Adrastus escaped from Thebes: ἐν δὲ τῆι Θηβαΐδι ὡς Ἄδραστος ἔφευγεν ἐκ Θηβῶν εἵματα λυγρὰ φέρων σὺν Ἀρίονι κυανοχαίτηι. αἰνίσσεσθαι οὖν ἐθέλουσι τὰ ἔπη Ποσειδῶνα Ἀρίονι εἶναι πατέρα (Paus. 8.25.7 = *Th.* fr. 7-8 *PEG* = 6a *EGF* = 11 *GEF*).

among other things, the greatness they demonstrated in the case of the burial of those who had fallen at Thebes. According to Herodotus' account, the Argive soldiers remained unburied until the Athenians sent their army against the Thebans, took the dead and buried them in Eleusis:

> τοῦτο δὲ Ἀργείους τοὺς μετὰ Πολυνείκεος ἐπὶ Θήβας ἐλάσαντας, τελευτήσαντας τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἀτάφους κειμένους, στρατευσάμενοι ἐπὶ τοὺς Καδμείους ἀνελέσθαι τε τοὺς νεκρούς φαμεν καὶ θάψαι τῆς ἡμετέρης ἐν Ἐλευσῖνι. (9.27.3)

> 'Furthermore, when the Argives who had marched with Polynices against Thebes had there made an end of their lives and lay unburied, know that we sent our army against the Cadmeans and recovered the dead and buried them in Eleusis.'[576]

Pre-tragic tradition therefore provides Aeschylus and Euripides with the mythic background they need to produce their own version, according to which Adrastus, after his defeat, flees to Theseus, through whom he manages to retrieve the dead.[577] In the Euripidean version, Theseus forces the return of the dead by a war against Thebes, while in Aeschylus' account, Theseus persuades the Thebans to return the dead, thereby avoiding battle.[578] Isocrates later verifies the apparently coexisting diverse traditions regarding the burial, since he admits that he has used both versions of the myth, depending on which better 'suited' him at the time.[579] In the first century BC, Diodorus relates that Adrastus, the only one to survive the campaign, returned to Argos, leaving his warriors unburied. In the absence of anyone prepared to take the risk of burying them, the Athenians took the initiative, proving once again that they were different in terms of virtue (specifically in goodness and reverence), as Diodorus characteristically notes.[580] Less than a century later, Dionysius of

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576 The translation is by Godley (1924).

577 Jacoby (1954b) 349, n. 6.

578 Jacoby (1954a) 447, sees the Aeschylean version as the author's attempt to create an Athenian myth, or at least to rectify the negative image of Athens in epic poetry.

579 *Pan.* 172, καὶ μηδεὶς οἰέσθω μ' ἀγνοεῖν, ὅτι τἀναντία τυγχάνω λέγων, οἷς ἐν τῶι Πανηγυρικῶι λόγωι φανείην ἂν περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων γεγραφώς· ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὐδένα νομίζω τῶν ταῦτα συνιδεῖν ἂν δυνηθέντων τοσαύτης ἀμαθίας εἶναι καὶ φθόνου μεστόν, ὅστις οὐκ ἂν ἐπαινέσειέ με καὶ σωφρονεῖν ἡγήσαιο τότε μὲν ἐκείνως, νῦν δ' οὕτω διαλεχθέντα περὶ αὐτῶν.

580 D.S. 4.65.9, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἡγεμόνων ἀπολομένων πλὴν Ἀδράστου, καὶ πολλῶν στρατιωτῶν πεσόντων, οἱ μὲν Θηβαῖοι τὴν ἀναίρεσιν τῶν νεκρῶν οὐ συνεχώρησαν, ὁ δ' Ἄδραστος καταλιπὼν ἀτάφους τοὺς τετελευτηκότας ἐπανῆλθεν εἰς Ἄργος. ἀτάφων δὲ μενόντων

Halicarnassus refers to this particular achievement of Theseus' as a mark of Athenian self-promotion,[581] while Pausanias condemns the Thebans and any Theban tradition that insists that the dead were returned by the good will of the Thebans.[582]

In each case, the behavior of the Thebans is portrayed as recreant and that of the Athenians as commendable. For both Aeschylus and Euripides, the Thebans' mistake pertains to their martial behavior and particularly their refusal to hand over their fallen opponents.[583] In such a context, both the *Eleusinians* and the *Suppliants* condemned the Thebans' impious behavior.[584] The Euripidean version certainly represents a more serious indictment of the Thebans, since the latter are presented not only as not burying the seven commanders, but also as threatened by the Athenian army. A connection between this 'stricter' version and the Battle of Delium seems inescapable, especially as the Thebans had something of a record regarding their behavior towards the Athenians.[585]

τῶν ὑπὸ τὴν Καδμείαν πεπτωκότων σωμάτων, καὶ μηδενὸς τολμῶντος θάπτειν, Ἀθηναῖοι διαφέροντες τῶν ἄλλων χρηστότητι πάντας τοὺς ὑπὸ τὴν Καδμείαν πεπτωκότας ἔθαψαν.

581 D.H. 5.17.4, ἐπαίνους δὲ λεγομένους ἐπ' αὐτοῖς οὐ γράφουσιν ἔξω τῶν Ἀθήνησι τραγῳδοποιῶν, οἳ κολακεύοντες τὴν πόλιν ἐπὶ τοῖς ὑπὸ Θησέως θαπτομένοις καὶ τοῦτ' ἐμύθευσαν.

582 Paus. 1.39.2, Κρέων γὰρ … οὐ παρῆκε τοῖς προσήκουσιν ἀνελομένοις θάψαι· ἱκετεύσαντος δὲ Ἀδράστου Θησέα καὶ μάχης Ἀθηναίων γενομένης πρὸς Βοιωτούς, Θησεὺς ὡς ἐκράτησε τῆι μάχηι κομίσας ἐς τὴν Ἐλευσινίαν τοὺς νεκροὺς ἐνταῦθα ἔθαψε. Θηβαῖοι δὲ τὴν ἀναίρεσιν τῶν νεκρῶν λέγουσιν ἐθελονταὶ δοῦναι καὶ συνάψαι μάχην οὔ φασι.

583 According to the Athenians' rules of war, the return of the dead implied the admission of defeat on the part of the side that asked for it, and consequently should be granted [Jacoby (1954b) 354, n. 39]. See also *R.* 469d-e, where Plato compares the refusal to bury fallen opponents with the behavior of dogs.

584 Jacoby [(1954a) 445] maintains that Pindar's *Ol.* 6.15-16 (ἑπτὰ δ' ἔπειτα πυρᾶν νεκροῖς τελεσθέντων Ταλαϊονίδας / εἶπεν ἐν Θήβαισι τοιοῦτόν τι ἔπος) is a defence of the Thebans against the Aeschylean slur. Hutchinson [(2001) 383] opposes to such an interpretation. See also Lamari (2009) 412 n. 40.

585 For a relevant discussion, see Lamari (2009) 412-413. On the significance of the defeat at Delium, which, in combination with the defeat at Amphipolis, influenced the Athenians' desire to surrender, cf. Th. 5.14.1. See also Bowie (1997) 45, who believes that tragedy reflects very few historic events, either of almost cosmic importance –such as the defeat of the Persians- or of enormous contemporary influence –such as the battle of Delium–. For Bowie, however, the historical influence in question is not as decisive to make the drama a 'parable' based on historical fact. The poet maps out the historically inspired tragic

To recapitulate: the *Phoenissae* share the same relationship to the *Suppliants* as the *Seven* to the *Eleusinians*, for both the *Suppliants* and the *Eleusinians* narrate the myth proleptically; future reflexive in this case is 'double' and 'inter-authorial', since it works in two analogous pairs. The theme of the return of the bodies of the seven generals seems to have been a very popular mythic motif, to which there were frequent references in various literary genres, the more so since it incorporated important political, religious and social thinking.[586] The way in which Euripides distanced himself from the corresponding Aeschylean model, as well as his stronger denunciation of the Thebans are most likely connected with historical reality and the impact which the battle of Delium would have had on Euripides and, in all likelihood, the whole of the Athenian public. The contribution of the preceding analysis lies in the clarification of the two authors' narrative use of the future reflexive, i.e. the way in which Aeschylus and Euripides, in the *Seven* and the *Phoenissae* respectively, dramatically employed the fact that the later part of the myth was already known to their audiences. It appears that the two tragedians use their audiences' knowledge in order to create -in their later plays- narrative *ellipses*.[587]

Even though our knowledge of the *Eleusinians* is limited, the future reflexive in Aeschylus seems to explain one of the *Seven*'s most basic narrative ellipses, namely the absence of a description of the battle between the Argives and the Thebans.[588] As has been maintained,[589] the battle itself was probably extensively described in the *Eleusinians*, or at least in the *Argives*,[590] one of the accompanying plays of the trilogy.[591]

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plot in the prologue and then invites the spectators to compare the onstage and offstage events in progress, developing their similarities as well as their differences. Pelling's position [(2000) 165] is similar; while he recognizes that the *Suppliants* has the Battle of Delium as a historical background, it does not by any means simply reproduce the historic details. As he notes characteristically, in tragedy 'real life still matters; but it must be seen through a blurring filter, appropriate to the timeless nature of the reflections it inspires'. See also above, n. 560.

586 Higbie (2002) 187–188.

587 For Genette (1980) 95, *ellipsis* designates the part of the story which is given no narration at all. For a detailed analysis, see *ibid*. 106–109.

588 On the limited description of the battle in the *Seven*, cf. Hutchinson (1985) 173–178.

589 Aélion (1983) 233; Lamari (2009) 414–418.

590 fr. 16; 17; 18 (*TrGF*). The Greek title is attested as both Ἀργεῖοι (Argive Men) and Ἀργεῖαι (Argive Women), depending on whether the Chorus are male or female. Radt tends to favor the male version, which occurs in the Etymologicon Magnum 341.5 (Gaisford). The female title occurs in Harpocra-

Apart from depending on the knowledge of the audience, Aeschylus in the *Eleusinians* also reveals literary self-awareness, if we assume that the Chorus of mourning women, which surrounds Eteocles in the *Seven*, mirrors that which surrounds Adrastus in the *Argives*.[592] Euripides, in the *Phoenissae*, operates within the same framework; he does not seem concerned, for example, about the fact that Polynices' burial is not fully recounted, since his audience would be able to use the information from the *Suppliants* and conclude that Polynices had, in the end, been buried. Such an interpretation also explains Polynices' riddling words in the *Phoenissae*, when he talks to Jocasta and compares Tydeus and himself with a boar and a lion.[593] This enigmatic phrase becomes clear if it is read after Adrastus' account of the same story in the *Suppliants*.[594]

The future reflexive points to deep meta-theatrical literary self-awareness, relating not only to the tragedians, but also to their audiences. Euripides does not simply use the mythical knowledge to create narrative ellipses, but creates a kind of 'double' future reflexive: he composes a play (the *Phoenissae*), which interacts with his own earlier work (i.e. the *Suppliants*),[595] and intertextually 'acknowledges' the Aeschylean future reflexive pair (the *Seven* and the *Eleusinians*). This being said, I tend to agree with the view that the battle described by the Messenger in the *Suppliants* (849-917) perhaps alludes to an analogous description

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tio [306.4 (Dindorf)] and Hesychius [α.6627 (Latte)], while recently, is also preferred by Gantz (2007) 65 n. 94.

591 Aélion (1983) 233.

592 Hubbard (1992) 302.

593 *Ph.* 409-413, [POL.] ἔχρησ' Ἀδράστωι Λοξίας χρησμόν τινα. / [JOC.] ποῖον; τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας; οὐκ ἔχω μαθεῖν. / [POL.] κάπρωι λέοντί θ' ἁρμόσαι παίδων γάμους. / [JOC.] καὶ σοὶ τί θηρῶν ὀνόματος μετῆν, τέκνον; / [POL.] οὐκ οἶδ'· ὁ δαίμων μ' ἐκάλεσεν πρὸς τὴν τύχην.

594 *Supp.* 135-140, [THES.] ἀλλὰ ξένοις ἔδωκας Ἀργείας κόρας; / [ADR.] Τυδεῖ ⟨γε⟩ Πολυνείκει τε τῶι Θηβαιγενεῖ. / [THES.] τίν' εἰς ἔρωτα τῆσδε κηδείας μολών; / [ADR.] Φοίβου μ' ὑπῆλθε δυστόπαστ' αἰνίγματα. / [THES.] τί δ' εἶπ' Ἀπόλλων παρθένοις κραίνων γάμον; / [ADR.] κάπρωι με δοῦναι καὶ λέοντι παῖδ' ἐμώ.

595 Even in the limited microstructure of the *Suppliants* one can observe a kind of temporally sophisticated intertextuality, which spreads to both the past and future temporal stages. At the level of narrative structure, the *Suppliants* belongs to the 'supplication pattern' category of works. However, since it develops around the issue of prohibited burial, it follows a retrospective narrative model connected with the earlier *Antigone* of Sophocles. At the same time, the work also embraces early proleptic references to the plot of the Sophoclean *Oedipus at Colonus*, inasmuch as it involves the issue of burial in a foreign land, which proves to be more hospitable than the homeland [Zeitlin (1986) 106].

of the battle that formed part of the *Eleusinians* or the *Argives*.[596] Just as Aeschylus composed the *Seven* against the intertextual background of the *Eleusinians*, Euripides composed the *Phoenissae* against the intertextual background of the *Suppliants*. In the case of Euripides, however, we must assume that he was fully aware not only of the link between the *Phoenissae* the *Suppliants*, but also of the connection with the earlier, Aeschylean model.

4.3.2. Intertextual deception

By the term intertextual deception,[597] I mean the poet's practice of misleading his audience by relying on intertextual knowledge arising from their familiarity with the mythical megatext, or their previous theatrical experience.[598] While 'playing' with his audience's narrative expectations, the tragic poet uses their knowledge subversively and anticipates alternative narrative scenarios that may be activated in their minds, given their systematic 'education' in the school of Greek myth. In tandem with this poetic strategy, he creates credible impossibilities, potential mythical pathways for the plot that are systematically, and tellingly enough, left endlessly suspended. In this light, he even resorts to driving them to the wrong direction, so as to intensify the final dramatic result by overturning alternative plotlines. Intertextual deception in the *Phoenissae* can be found both in the incomplete narrative of Polynices' burial and in the description of the list of the seven attacking generals.

4.3.2.1. The incomplete narrative of Polynices' burial

Polynices' burial is a fundamental issue not only in the Aeschylean *Seven against Thebes*, but also in Sophocles' *Antigone* and Euripides' *Suppliants* and *Phoenissae*. Narrating the event in question either partly or completely, these four plays exhibit various narrative choices. With the exception of the *Seven*, where the Messenger communicates the decision

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596 Aélion (1983) 233 n. 16. The probable Euripidean intertextual reference to a Messenger's speech of one of Aeschylus' lost works has been noted particularly by Wilamowitz (1923) 202. See also Fraenkel (1963) 56 n. 1, and Winnington-Ingram (2003) 51.

597 On intertextual deception in epic, cf. Rengakos (2006) 77-82. On narrative misdirection in the *Iliad*, see Morrison (1992).

598 On the importance of the audience's theatrical 'education' and its role in the shaping of the tragic plots, see Burian (1997) 195, who notes that 'intertextuality depends not so much upon recollection of parallel narratives as upon the evocation of prior theatrical experience'.

of the Theban people, the denial of the right to bury Polynices is de-
cided or at least announced by Creon. It is paradoxical that 'Creon is
presented as a legitimate monarch, perfectly within his rights to issue a
decree denying burial to the traitor Polynices, but at the same time his
action is revealed to be profoundly shocking and problematic'.[599]

The tragic discord arising from Creon's decision is undoubtedly
connected with the issue of the denial of burial, which appears to have
been of great concern to ancient Greek society. The need for burial, for
the ancient Greeks, was imperative not only for practical reasons. They
believed that a corpse, on the cusp between the world of the mortal and
the world of the dead, was generally a source of defilement, a threat not
only to the family of the dead, but also the whole society.[600] If it had to
remain unburied, the corpse would have to be removed from the city to
avoid contagion. The sight of an unburied body, even outside the walls
of the city, prompted each passerby to throw a handful of dirt on the
unknown body as a minimal act of purification.[601] On the other hand,
the need for burial was counterbalanced by the equally institutionalized
denial of burial in cases of patricide, matricide, infanticide,[602] sacrilege
and treason.[603]

In such a social and moral framework, the dilemma regarding
Polynices' burial becomes more comprehensible. The diametrically op-
posed attitudes to the issue that can be observed, for example, in *Anti-*

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599 Easterling (1997) 26.

600 See Parker (1983) 32-48.

601 Oudemans – Lardinois (1987) 100.

602 In particular, in the *Laws* (873b3-9) Plato considers it necessary to not only
execute the murderer but, in order to make an example of him, to then trans-
port his body, naked, to a cross-roads outside the borders of the city, where he
is stoned by the leaders and finally left, unburied, on the city's outskirts: ἐὰν δέ
τις ὄφλῃ φόνου τοιούτου, τούτων [πατρὸς ἢ μητρὸς ἢ ἀδελφῶν ἢ τέκνων]
κτείνας τινά, οἱ μὲν τῶν δικαστῶν ὑπηρέται καὶ ἄρχοντες ἀποκτείναντες, εἰς
τεταγμένην τρίοδον ἔξω τῆς πόλεως ἐκβαλλόντων γυμνόν, αἱ δὲ ἀρχαὶ
πᾶσαι ὑπὲρ ὅλης τῆς πόλεως, λίθον ἕκαστος φέρων, ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν τοῦ
νεκροῦ βάλλων ἀφοσιούτω τὴν πόλιν ὅλην, μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο εἰς τὰ τῆς χώρας
ὅρια φέροντες ἐκβαλλόντων τῶι νόμωι ἄταφον. On the denial of burial de-
riving form public fury, treachery or robbing of temples, see Parker (1983) 45-
46 and n. 47, also citing the relevant passages.

603 Cf. X. *HG.* 1.7.22: τοῦτο δ' εἰ βούλεσθε, κατὰ τόνδε τὸν νόμον κρίνατε, ὅς
ἐστιν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἱεροσύλοις καὶ προδόταις, ἐάν τις ἢ τὴν πόλιν προδιδῶι ἢ τὰ
ἱερὰ κλέπτῃ, κριθέντα ἐν δικαστηρίωι, ἂν καταγνωσθῆι, μὴ ταφῆναι ἐν τῆι
Ἀττικῆι, τὰ δὲ χρήματα αὐτοῦ δημόσια εἶναι. See also Th. 1.138.6, τὰ δὲ
ὀστᾶ φασι κομισθῆναι αὐτοῦ οἱ προσήκοντες οἴκαδε κελεύσαντος ἐκείνου
καὶ τεθῆναι κρύφα Ἀθηναίων ἐν τῆι Ἀττικῆι· οὐ γὰρ ἐξῆν θάπτειν ὡς ἐπὶ
προδοσίαι φεύγοντος.

gone, reflect the conflicting views of this era with regard to the treatment of fallen foes, in the absence of any fixed code.[604] Not only *Antigone*, but also the other plays under discussion express a similar vacillation, revealing a variety of social and martial practices and triggering at least two possible scenarios: the possibility of Polynices' burial outside the walls and the denial of burial even outside the walls.

Beginning with the *Seven*, the ultimate punishment for Polynices is not simply denial of burial within Theban territory, but the denial of any burial at all, even outside the walls. As the two brothers lie dead in the theatre orchestra, the Messenger announces that the Thebans have decided that Eteocles, who faithfully served his fatherland by hating his enemy and respecting the holy shrines, will be buried in Theban territory (1007-1011), while Polynices, who destroyed his land and would defile the ancestral gods, was to be transported outside the city and left unburied, as prey for the dogs (1013-1019). The Messenger actually reports that no one may even touch Polynices' corpse, provide any care, or mourn (1022-1024). The ending of the play has occasionally raised serious doubts about its authenticity, with the most convincing argument being the strong linguistic similarities with the analogous scenes in the *Antigone*. The appearance of Antigone and Ismene as dramatic personae has also been called into question,[605] while a later alteration of the text under the Sophoclean influence of the *Antigone* is considered more than probable.[606] The recent editors of the *Seven*[607] also reject the authenticity of the play's last verses (1005-1078), which may have derived from post-classical tragedy, praesumably added to the authentic text under the influence of a reperformance of the *Phoenissae*, probably after 386 BC.[608] The problem concerning the authenticity of the end of the *Seven* is closely associated with the intertextual hermeneutics of the *Phoenissae*, since, if the end of the Aeschylean play is ultimately not authentic, then the tradition with regard to the burial of Polynices is only treated by Sophocles and Euripides.

Sophocles in the *Antigone* downplays the more general matter of the burial of the seven Argive leaders and instead highlights the burial of Polynices only. In contrast to the plot of the *Suppliants* and the *Eleusinians*, in which the conflict over the right of burial concerns two whole cities, in *Antigone* Sophocles opts for a more Theban-oriented plot and

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604 Cerri (1982) 123, 129.
605 Fraenkel (1964b); Taplin (1977) 176-180.
606 Gibbons & Segal (2003) 185.
607 Hutchinson (1985); West (1990a); Sommerstein (2008).
608 Hutchinson (1985) 211.

focuses on the solely internal conflict between Antigone and Creon, as well as the private ethical implications of the contrast between written laws (represented by Creon) and unwritten moral principles (represented by Antigone). Adrastus and Theseus are here replaced by Creon's own niece, a young Theban girl, with no Argive or Athenian armies to support her.[609]

The issue of denying burial to someone who has attacked his own homeland here takes center stage as early as the first scene. When the guard informs Creon that Polynices' body has been buried secretly and inexplicably, perhaps by divine intervention, Creon is at a loss to understand how it was possible for the gods to be concerned over a man who had burned their temples and was indifferent to the laws and customs of his homeland:

> πότερον ὑπερτιμῶντες ὡς εὐεργέτην
> ἔκρυπτον αὐτόν, ὅστις ἀμφικίονας
> ναοὺς πυρώσων ἦλθε κἀναθήματα
> καὶ γῆν ἐκείνων καὶ νόμους διασκεδῶν;
> ἢ τοὺς κακοὺς τιμῶντας εἰσορᾷς θεούς; (284-288)

> 'So was it they
> Who covered it because they honored him
> For his good deeds toward them? –he who came here
> To burn their country and the temples with columns
> Around them and the offerings inside,
> He who came to shatter laws and customs?
> Or in your eyes, do the gods give honor
> To persons who are evil? That cannot be!'[610]

His words express the expected reaction towards someone who had turned against his city and justify the measures, which he takes with regard to Polynices' burial. As already discussed in the context of the intertextual connection between the *Phoenissae* and the *Suppliants*, denial of burial pertains to cases of treason, but even then is considered particularly harsh. The body of the traitor usually remained outside the walls of the city and his family could bury him only there to avoid defilement.[611] When Antigone attempts to rebury the body symbolically, she is caught

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609 As observed by Griffith [(1999) 8], '[t]he main opponent of Kreon's edict is now Polynices' sister (who is thus structurally equivalent to Adrastos and/or Theseus in the traditional myth). So, while the final outcome (Kreon's humiliation) remains the same, the dynamics of the confrontation are transformed, as he is challenged not by a warrior-king backed by an army, but by his own young niece, then his son, and finally a blind prophet'.

610 The translation is by Gibbons & Segal (2003).

611 Gibbons & Segal (2003) 8.

in the act, and the dramatic intensity is transferred to the personal conflict between Antigone and Creon.

Ambiguity, one of the fundamental characteristics of the theme of Polynices' burial in the *Antigone*, is found all over the *Phoenissae* as well. In the *Antigone*, even though the threat of defilement is frequently mentioned because of the non-interment of Polynices and the ensuing reduction of his corpse to a prey for animals,[612] little information is actually given about the terms and, most importantly, the location of his burial, to the point where we conclude that Polynices' body was not moved outside Theban territory.[613] Actually, it is most surprising that no character offers to move Polynices' corpse outside the city to avoid contagion. On the contrary, the play focuses on the personal clash between Creon and Antigone, excluding even the mere transportation of the body outside the borders and thus deviating from standard fifth-century beliefs. What interests us is that even here, where the theme of burial constitutes the fundamental plotline, the conditions of Polynices' burial are not entirely clear, and dramatic weight is ceded to the personal conflict between Antigone and Creon. Sophocles subjectivizes the narrative completion of the plot, leaving much to be inferred by the spectators. This poetic strategy finds an even broader application in plays such as the *Phoenissae*, in which Polynices' burial does not stand at the kernel of dramatic action.

The narrative of Polynices' burial in the *Suppliants* and the *Phoenissae* is equally vague. The *Suppliants* focuses on the conflict between the Athenians and the Thebans over the return of the dead and leaves open the possibility that Polynices was buried inside Theban territory.[614] In the *Phoenissae*, the poet makes full use of a loose narrative. In her heated dialogue with Creon, Antigone announces that she will burry Polynices regardless Creon's decree (1656-1657, [CR.] 'To tell you plainly, this man shall not be buried! / [ANT.] I shall bury him, though the city forbid it'), and the issue is then left open, given that her additional declarations to Oedipus (1744-1746) must be spurious.[615]

The narrative theme of Polynices' burial begins to develop in the *Phoenissae* in the final instructions that Eteocles gives to Creon before the battle, decreeing that Polynices will not be allowed burial inside Theban territory and that anyone who helps him should be killed (775-777, 'If I am successful, let Polynices' body never be buried in this land

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612 *Ant.* 29-30; 205-206; 697-698; 1016-1022; 1198.
613 Easterling (1997) 27.
614 Kovacs (1998) 6.
615 The lines belong to the very end of the play, traditionally considered inauthentic. See Diggle (1994a); Mastronarde (1994); Kovacs (2002).

of Thebes, and let anyone who buries him to be put to death, though it be one of his kin'). When Eteocles leaves for the battle, the sub-narrative of the burial is temporarily abandoned and the issue returns when Creon announces the prohibition about Polynices to Oedipus and Antigone, i.e. after the fratricide and Jocasta's suicide (1628-1630). Creon recalls Polynices' attack against Thebes and threatens with death anyone who cares for or buries his corpse (1631-1633). When Antigone challenges him to reconsider, he intensifies his measures, which then call for the universal prohibition of burial, and fixes his desire for Polynices to become food for dogs (1650). Antigone determinedly expresses her intention to bury the body (1657; 1661), despite Creon's threats (1658) and the conversation is then brought to a stalemate, until the narrative inversion caused by the reference to her would-be marriage to Haemon. The narrative result is that Polynices' burial ultimately remains an unfinished sub-plot, reversing the expectations of the audience, who may have expected a development similar to that of Sophocles' *Antigone*.

4.3.2.2. The list of warriors in the *Seven* and the *Phoenissae*

The striking similarities between the basic plotlines of the *Seven* and the *Phoenissae* inevitably lead to their sharing the motif of 'warriors' description'. To some extent, the *Phoenissae* does not follow the earlier Aeschylean model, since neither the Teichoscopia nor the description of the first battle[616] bears a structural resemblance to the corresponding scene in the *Seven*. Nevertheless, Euripides' version of the myth provides an explicit intertextual reference to the Aeschylean model, taking the form of a narrative deception technique, while at the same time creating meta-theatrical associations. In the second episode of the *Phoenissae* (690-783), which consists of the meeting between Creon and Eteocles regarding the defence of the city, Eteocles announces that he will station a Theban general at each gate, but will not waste time by mentioning the name of each one of them, since the enemy is already at the gates:[617]

ὄνομα δ' ἑκάστου διατριβὴ πολλὴ λέγειν,
ἐχθρῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῖς τείχεσιν καθημένων. (751-752)

'To tell you the name of each man would consume too much time with the enemy encamped at our very gates.'

As a consequence, a thorough description of the warriors that did not happen in the Teichoscopia is here also avoided, or at least postponed until the fourth episode (1104-1140). In Aeschylus, Eteocles considers

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616 *Ph.* 1104-1199.
617 See also above, ch. 3.1.

each of the Argive generals, trying to choose the most suitable Thebans, and eventually realizes that it is up to him to face Polynices and thereby activate Oedipus' curse. The Euripidean modification of this Aeschylean model, however, does not simply provide a different treatment of the same mythical material, but actually invites hermeneutical reflection both on the deeper understanding of the Euripidean characters and also on intertextual and metatheatrical implications.

The basic difference between the two passages is Eteocles' explicit intention, in Euripides, to enter into mortal combat with Polynices, a decision that the Aeschylean character makes –according to some- less consciously.[618] It has been maintained that this was Euripides' way of showing that 'his characters consciously pursue destructive and self-destructive ends rather than struggle with destiny'.[619] According to a micro-structural interpretation of the passage, emphasis is put on Eteocles' impatience to fight and consequent indifference to the details of the military defence. In each case, Eteocles' final monologue (748-783) helps to characterize him, as it highlights his determination to kill Polynices.

Intertextually, the allusion to the *Seven* is either polite homage to Aeschylus, or an obvious rejection of Aeschylean technique. Scholars who advocate the former elaborate on the scholium of Didymus, who interprets lines 751-752 of the *Phoenissae* as an echo of Aeschylus, taking the view that Euripides 'builds' on the earlier Aeschylean work and therefore avoids information already known: πεφύλακται τὰς ὀνομασίας αὐτῶν εἰπεῖν, ὥς φησι Δίδυμος, διὰ τὸ ὑπὸ Αἰσχύλου εἰρῆσθαι ἐν τοῖς Ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβας.[620] On the other hand, a second group of scholars maintains exactly the opposite, detecting Euripides' sarcastic rejection of the Aeschylean model, which is criticized as being unrealistic.[621]

Whichever hermeneutical model we adopt, the difference between the Aeschylean and the Euripidean narratives must be related to the dramatic use of each passage. In Aeschylus, the description of the seven warriors is a fundamental theme. The absence of any other stage action allows the poet to focus mainly on offstage action, which he turns into a point of major dramatic interest. Conversely, Euripides has not let the battle scene or the preparation for it occupy more narrative space or attention than the remaining scenes of an already densely packed work.

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618 See also above, ch. 4.2.1.1.

619 Burian (1997) 196.

620 Schwartz (1887) 328.

621 For a detailed analysis of the thinking on this issue, cf. Mastronarde (1994) 360.

Consequently, the dramatic weight given to the shield scenes of the two plays varies according to the author's dramatic perspective. In the case of the *Seven*, the shields are not simply the object of a careful and exact description, but they serve as symbols or indications of the dramatic development,[622] frequently taking the form of advance mentions.[623] In the *Phoenissae*, the descriptions of the shields are obviously shorter and have clearly less dramatic weight. The following table is illuminating:

SHIELDS	*Seven against Thebes*	*Phoenissae*
Tydeus	4 lines (387–390)	1 ½ line (1120–1121)
Capaneus	3 lines (432–434)	4 lines (1130–1133)
Hippomedon	9 lines (491–498)	5 lines (1114–1118)
Parthenopaeus	6 lines (539–544)	2 ½ lines (1107–1109)
Amphiaraus	2 lines (590–591)	2 lines (1111–1112)
Polynices	7 lines (642–648)	4 lines (1124–1127)
Eteoclus[624]	5 lines (465–469)	–
Adrastus	–	4 lines (1135–1138)
TOTAL	36 lines[625]	23 lines

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622 On the symbolism of the shields in the *Seven*, cf. Zeitlin (1982), particularly 53-153.

623 The *advance mention* is a form of concealed prolepsis that sends out hints at the beginning of the narrative, but takes on meaning at the end. See also above, n. 221; 379.

624 The name Eteoclus does not appear in any other tradition before Aeschylus' *Seven*, except for an almost contemporary dedication of the statues of the seven generals which the Argives allegedly set up in Apollo's sanctuary in Delphi after their victory against the Spartans at Oinoe, 464-451 B.C. (cf. Paus. 10.10.3, πλησίον δὲ τοῦ ἵππου καὶ ἄλλα ἀναθήματά ἐστιν Ἀργείων, οἱ ἡγεμόνες τῶν ἐς Θήβας ὁμοῦ Πολυνείκει στρατευσάντων, Ἄδραστός τε ὁ Ταλαοῦ καὶ Τυδεὺς Οἰνέως καὶ οἱ ἀπόγονοι Προίτου {καὶ} Καπανεὺς Ἱππόνου καὶ Ἐτέοκλος ὁ Ἴφιος, Πολυνείκης τε καὶ ὁ Ἱππομέδων ἀδελφῆς Ἀδράστου παῖς ⟨καὶ Ἀμφιάραος⟩). Regardless of the validity of Pausanias' information, we are not in a position to know if the statues produced in the middle of the fifth century followed the Aeschylean (and for this reason included Eteoclus) or some earlier tradition [cf. Hutchinson (1985) 117-118]. At all events, Robert [(1915) 244] notes that the Aeschylean list of the seven generals follows its corresponding list in the *Thebaid*, but with Hippomedon and Eteoclus replacing the epic Adrastus and Mecisteus. Garvie [(1978) 72] believes that Aeschylus has devised Eteoclus exclusively in order to create an unexpected narrative inversion to surprise the spectators. Zeitlin [(1982) 77-78] takes the introduction of Eteoclus as an early allusion, which presages the fate of Eteocles.

625 This difference becomes even greater if we calculate that these 36 verses represent 3,3% of all lines in the *Seven* (1077 lines of transmitted text), while the

The different dramatic use of these two corresponding scenes creates, intertextually, a counterbalanced equilibrium. The *Seven* describes extensively the warriors before the battle, but not the battle itself[626] nor the fratricide, while the *Phoenissae* provides a limited description of the warriors before the battle, but a detailed analysis of the battle and the fratricide. Euripides seems to acknowledge the conventions of the genre but at the same time treats them with scepticism. As put by Collard, '[Euripides laughs] at Tragic Conventions he himself accepts'.[627] One other such interpretation talks of a kind of openly espoused Euripidean 'deception', which is readily recognized by the audience, and which occasionally strikes directly at Homer or Aeschylus.[628]

Eteocles' concern for the time that would be wasted by a detailed description of the warriors in the *Phoenissae*, is analogous to a scene from the *Suppliants*, where Theseus asks Adrastus not to mention in his funeral oration the exact location of each general or the way in which he died, because such information would be useless both for the listeners and the speaker:

> ἓν δ' οὐκ ἐρήσομαί σε, μὴ γέλωτ' ὄφλω,
> ὅτωι ξυνέστη τῶνδ' ἕκαστος ἐν μάχηι
> ἢ τραῦμα λόγχης πολεμίων ἐδέξατο.
> κενοὶ γὰρ οὗτοι τῶν τ' ἀκουόντων λόγοι
> καὶ τοῦ λέγοντος, ὅστις ἐν μάχηι βεβὼς
> λόγχης ἰούσης πρόσθεν ὀμμάτων πυκνῆς
> σαφῶς ἀπήγγειλ' ὅστις ἐστὶν ἀγαθός.
> οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην οὔτ' ἐρωτῆσαι τάδε
> οὔτ' αὖ πιθέσθαι τοῖσι τολμῶσιν λέγειν· (846–854)

'One thing I will not ask or I'd be laughed at: whom each of these men stood facing in the battle and by what foeman he was wounded. Such a recital wastes the time of both hearers and speaker: can a man stand in battle as the spears fly thick and fast before his eyes and tell us clearly who

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corresponding percentage in the much longer *Phoenissae* (1766 lines of transmitted text) is 1,3%. Aeschylus therefore dedicates almost three times the amount of text to the description of the shields, making his work more martial-like. For an extensive discussion of the shields in the *Seven* as part of a more general 'masculine' dynamic that the work projects, contrary to the more 'feminine' dynamic of the *Phoenissae*, cf. Lamari (2007).

626 On this narrative ellipsis in connection to the narrative device of the future reflexive, see above, ch. 4.3.1.

627 Collard (1975) 321.

628 Scodel (1990). A carefully planned intertextual deception seems also to have been orchestrated by the poet of the *Rhesus*, who exploited the rich texture of associations and cross-references with *Iliad* 10 in order to construct a series of narratively misleading 'parallels' [see Fantuzzi (2006)].

was brave? I could not ask for such a report nor believe anyone who ventured to give it.'[629]

Theseus believes that such a description would cause laughter (μὴ γέλωτ' ὄφλω) because such information would be entirely hollow (κενοὶ γὰρ ... λόγοι). The adjective κενός Theseus uses means 'empty, fruitless, void'.[630] However, when it refers to linguistic style, it acquires the more specific meaning of 'hollow, pretentious'.[631] It is in this sense that it is used by Dionysius of Halicarnassus for example, in order to characterize speeches of bad quality that have been attributed to Demosthenes, which, as Dionysius believes, are not by him. In particular, in *On the Style of Demosthenes*, he mentions that the Demosthenian speeches are informed with mixed language, inasmuch as the forensic speeches are not characterized by phonetic devices, nor are the panegyric speeches characterized by archaic expressions.[632] Any low quality speeches that have been attributed to him, such as for example a 'vulgar, pretentious and childish funeral oration'[633] are not actually his own creation (44.25, ὧν ἐστιν ὅ τε φορτικὸς καὶ κενὸς καὶ παιδαριώδης ἐπιτάφιος).

Apart from Dionysius' philological ability, which involves sophisticated textual criticism, what is truly impressive in this intertextual consideration of this Euripidean passage is the metatheatrical awareness of Euripides himself, who dares to play an obvious game with the conventions and limits of the genre he serves. Euripides' tendency of endorsing narrative techniques that his characters ultimately reject is clear both in the *Suppliants* and the *Phoenissae*. Specifically, in the *Suppliants*, Theseus' proscription of a long speech is somewhat belated, since the Messenger has just given an extensive description of the conflict between the Athenians and the Thebans (650-730). So the Athenian spectators have already heard the Messenger's detailed report, but the king considers a similar description a cause for ridicule, thus disparages the earlier theatrical tradition and experience of the audience. By providing ample justification for his position, he demolishes every theatrical convention concerning the objectivity of the 'war reporters', usually dramatic Messengers. He believes that it is not possible for someone to be on the battlefield, fighting for his life and ducking the arrows flying thick and

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629 The translation is by Kovacs (1998).

630 LSJ⁹, s.v. κενός 2.

631 LSJ⁹, s.v. κενός 2b.

632 D.H. *Dem.* 44.15, οὔτε δὴ τὸν ἐν δικαστηρίοις λόγον ᾤετο δεῖν κωτίλλειν καὶ λιγαίνειν, οὔτε τὸν ἐπιδεικτικὸν αὐχμοῦ μεστὸν εἶναι καὶ πίνου.

633 Referring to Demosthenes' *Funeral Oration* 60.

fast at him, yet also observing who is fighting bravely (849-852). Eurip-
ides –through Theseus- does not simply deride the authority of the
Messenger's speech, which had just been delivered, but also demolishes
the realism that the dramatic narrative generally claims.

In the *Phoenissae*, the narrative inversion begins after Eteocles' meta-
theatrical comment in lines 751-752, but is completed towards the end
of the play, in lines 1090-1199, where the battle (not just the seven
champions) is described in great detail. In this case, Eteocles' dismissive
comment about the description of the warriors, while certainly a direct
thrust against Aeschylus, functions on an intratextual level as a brilliant
narrative deception, which disappoints the audience's narrative expecta-
tions at the end of the play.[634]

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634 As maintained by Garner (1990) 158-159, '[m]ore likely, Euripides alludes to
    the catalogue in the *Seven* to confuse his audience and achieve a greater effect
    later. … Thus, this criticism of Aeschylus evaporates in exactly the same way
    as that in *Electra*, where the supposed criticism of the recognition scene in the
    Choephoroi was in fact merely a tactical move: it allowed Euripides to make the
    recognition seem to fail so that the audience would wonder what was going to
    happen instead'.

Chapter 5
Space

The most common differentiation with regard to space in drama is that between onstage and offstage space. Onstage space consists in whatever is visible to the spectators, while offstage space encompasses whatever is generated by their personal imagination or by the narratives of the onstage characters.

Dramatic space, which constitutes an integral aspect of Attic tragedy, has often attracted scholarly interest; its multiple classifications rely primarily on the bi-partite differentiation between onstage and offstage reality, enriched by additional references to the space that is bounded by the stage set. The theoretical division comes from the difference between the textual and the scenic realization of the drama. More textual approaches use the distinction between onstage and offstage,[635] while other studies recognize as equally important the interactions between the text and the locus of its theatrical performance.[636] The incorporation of scenic space into any categorization emphasizes the inbuilt theatrical distinction of ancient drama, which goes beyond the strictly textual boundaries that shape onstage and offstage activities.[637] From this perspective, space in ancient drama can be trisected into *performance space*, *dramatic space*, and *narrative space*.[638] The performance space in all ancient Greek tragedies corresponds to the physical locus of the performance, i.e. the stage on which the actors move.[639] The dramatic space refers to

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635 Cf. Scolnicov (1987) 12-17; McAuley (1999) 23.

636 Cf. Taplin (1977).

637 There is also the so-called 'semiotic' approach to the subject, which examines space in drama as a system of antithetical relationships, from which the respective meanings proceed. Cf. Ubersfeld (1977); (1981); (1996). For approaches that condemn this fragmentation of space in drama, cf. Frontier (1997); Scolnicov (1994); Melrose (1994).

638 Kampourelli (2008) 568.

639 The existence of an elevated stage in performances of classic drama is uncertain. The lack of archaeological evidence has shifted academic interest to the texts themselves, which however do not provide a clear distinction between the Chorus' level of action (the orchestra) and that of the actors (the stage). Cf. Arnott (1959) 34-41, who talks of three levels of performance (orchestra-stage-logeion). A similar tripartite division is also proposed by Hourmouziades (1965) 58-74; (2003) 75-76; Scully (1999) 71-72. Against the stage as a theat-

the textually formed space in which the production is realized, while the
narrative space refers to the space that is formed on the basis of the nar-
rative, without having a scenic 'counterpart'. Theatrical space establishes
the grounds for the interaction of different perspectives: the stage set, as
physical space, belongs to the performance space, while the story space
to which the physical space of the stage refers is the dramatic space. The
blending of the two, i.e. the stage set as a scenic depiction of the theatri-
cal illusion created by the play's story, constitutes the scenic space as a
whole, i.e. the space where two different dimensions communicate.[640]
In the case of the *Phoenissae*, the dramatic space would be the space
within the Theban walls, while the narrative space would be Phoenicia,
or the area outside the walls of Thebes, as described by the play's on-
stage characters. The following table is an attempt at a schematic repre-
sentation of the theories that have been proposed:

SCHOLARS	CATEGORIZATIONS OF SPACE		
Kampourelli 2008	performance space	dramatic space	narrative space
Carter 2006	at home	round here	out there
Rehm 2002	theatrical space	scenic space	extrascenic space
Edmunds 2002	physical space	verbally defined onstage/ non-verbally defined onstage	verbally defined offstage/ non-verbally defined off-stage

The criteria used for the classifications proposed above pertain to three
different aspects of space: i) the space that the spectators literally see, ii)
the space they 'see' metaphorically, in the context of dramatic illusion,
and iii) the space they are invited to create notionally, on the basis of the
descriptions of onstage characters. Within this framework, Kam-
pourelli[641] distinguishes between performance space, dramatic space and
narrative space, while Carter[642] designates what the spectators see as *at
home*, what it is assumed the spectators see as *round here*, and everything
offstage as *out there*. Rehm[643] has referred to the stage set as the *theatrical*

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rical space, see Wiles (1997) 63-68; (2000) 106; Scullion (1994) 65-66. See
also Rehm (2002) 38, n. 9, who details related arguments. For the Hellenistic
logeion as a likely development of the elevated stage of the classical years, see
Kampourelli (2002) 55-57.

640   Kampourelli (2008) 570.
641   Kampourelli (2008) 568.
642   Carter (2006) 145.
643   Rehm (2002) 20-21.

space and the field of stage activity as *scenic space*; he also uses the term *extrascenic space* to refer to offstage activities. Finally, Edmunds[644] calls the space that is defined by the stage construction *physical space*, also further distinguishing between onstage and offstage space. Edmunds further subdivides onstage and offstage space into two other levels, those of *verbally defined* or *non-verbally defined* representation.

In the case of the *Phoenissae*, the theatrical or performance space would correspond to the play's stage setting, while the dramatic space to the palace of the Labdacids. The imaginary space that is further created by the narratives of the onstage characters –i.e., the landscape outside the walls- would be the narrative space, which is presented purely in text. At this point it is helpful to remember the further distinction of Carter, who uses the space of the performance, i.e. the stage set, to reveal another concealed narrative dimension, that of the interior of the palace, the tragic *oikos*.[645] According to Carter, the dramatic or scenic space is identified with what happens in the city, in this case Thebes; the performance or theatrical space is identified with what happens in the oikos, i.e. the internal workings of the palace, while the narrative space is identified with the out there, i.e. what happens outside the walls of Thebes.

This chapter seeks to explore the function of the different sub-categories of tragic space by creating space distinctions according to the spectators' visual access to the events being performed or narrated. From this vantage point, space is categorized as on- or off- stage, and offstage is, in turn, further subdivided into 'nearby' or 'remote'. 'Nearby' off-stage space includes both the interior of the house, the innermost parts of the palace, and also the area on the outskirts of Thebes, i.e. the battlefield. 'Remote' offstage space is formed on the basis of narratives about areas far away from Thebes.[646] In this way, the onstage space is limited to the courtyard of the palace, while the offstage space is divided into the inside of the palace and the broader area of the walls on the one hand (nearby offstage space) and Athens and Tyre (remote offstage space) on the other.

Constructing an impressive poetic topography must have been of importance to Euripides, who is keener than Aeschylus or Sophocles on providing credible information on Thebes' locale.[647] Places like the

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644 Edmunds (2002) 114–115.

645 Carter (2006) 153-157.

646 See also Rehm's related category of 'distanced space', i.e. the space that is not directly connected with the stage, such as, for example, Corinth and Cithaeron in *Oedipus Tyrannus* [Rehm (2002) 23].

647 Mastronarde (1994) 647.

graves of Amphion and Zethus, the waters of Dirce and Ismenus or the battlefield are certainly to be located outside the walls surrounding the acropolis. For the dramatists, the seven gates are imagined as distributed around these citadel walls, while no clear reference is made to greater walls around the city's lower part, possibly a fifth-century reality.[648] The goal of the present chapter is to identify the dramatic locus of each performed or narrated action, and sketch a narrative chart of the city and outskirts of Thebes.

5.1. The Theban topography of time
(Prologue, *Phoenissae* 1-201)

The general dramatic goal of the prologue, which includes the introduction to the plot and familiarization of the audience with the basic issues of the play, is also realized in the *Phoenissae* in relation to the dramatic space, through a blurring of the on and offstage boundaries within which the plot is played out.[649] One of the fundamental requirements of a tragic prologue, i.e. to locate the play in time, is thus connected to the need to locate the work in space, since the information which shapes the play's axis of time has a specific reflection in the axis of space, too.

Jocasta's monologue reviews the foundation of the city and the history of the Labdacids and brings up two basic offstage dimensions: the environs of Thebes and the interior of the palace, i.e. what is outside and what is inside. The queen's retrospective narrative begins with an invocation of the all-seeing Sun-god,[650] who gave light even on that cursed day when Cadmus left Phoenicia and arrived in Thebes (3-6).[651] After describing the foundation of Thebes, Jocasta also sketches Phoenician Tyre, Cadmus' ancestral city, which he left in search of his sister

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648 Mastronarde (1994) 647-650. On the topography of heroic Thebes, cf. Paus. 9.8.4-7, who describes in great detail the acropolis and three of the gates of its first wall, as well as Roesch (1976); Demand (1982) 46-47; Symeonoglou (1985); Müller (1987) 584-586; Fell (2002). On the gates of Thebes, see Schober (1934).

649 For the presentation of space in Euripides, cf. Joerden (1971).

650 I reject lines 1-2.

651 The invocation to the elements of nature or the ancestral home is a traditional opening motif, especially in prologue monologues (cf. A. *Pr.* 88-92; E. *Alc.* 1; *Andr.* 1; *El.* 1), perhaps reflecting the ancient Greek tendency to call the elements of nature to share the intense passion and deep emotions, or simply to establish witnesses to the events in progress [Mastronarde (1994) 142; Barrett (1964) 272].

Europa (5-6). Remote offstage space is identified with the geographic
east, while the reference to the sun in relation to Phoenicia metaphori-
cally gives the eastern remote offstage space the hue of a place of begin-
nings.[652] Topographic prominence is clear also in the choice of terms
involving larger geographical entities, like γῆ and χθών, instead of the
more likely πόλις for Thebes or Phoenicia. Just as Thebes is integrally
connected with Cadmus and the killing of Ares' dragon, so Cithaeron
(the meadow of Hera) is indissolubly connected with the abandonment
of Oedipus (24). For the first time in the play, space is connected not
just with time, but also, with narrative causality and thus introduces a
series of analogous correspondences that flourish in the rest of the *Phoe-
nissae*.

   In the case of the city's foundation by Cadmus, which will be de-
scribed in other repeating flashbacks, time and place are so firmly bound
together that the events of the temporal axis give the impression that
were the operative forces which also activated the spatial axis. Thebes
comes into existence after Cadmus' arrival and the slaying of Ares'
dragon, while Cadmus acquired an important mythical role after the
foundation of Thebes. The city's temporally determined locality,[653]
which began ad hoc, as it were, with the killing of the dragon, is also
consistent with its ensuing 'self-sown' character, in a unique conjunc-
tion of time and space, since Thebes will be governed by the 'Sown'
aristocracy, the self-sown creatures who sprang up from the ground after
the killing of the scion of Ares.[654] Such a strong connection between
chronological events and geographical points gives a 'geographical'
rhythm to Jocasta's retrospective narrative and causes her narrative gaze

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652 Wiles (1997) 154. The references to the Sun coming from the east, as it is the
     case with the sunlight, reinforce the notion of beginning, like the beginning of
     day.

653 Such an analogy is also found in modern history, where time-marks are gen-
     erators not simply of new time eras, but also of new spatial loci. See for exam-
     ple the comment of Zerubavel [(2004) 92-93], regarding Columbus' arrival at
     America in 1492: 'the cultural entity we call "America" is commonly per-
     ceived as having been "born" on 12 October 1492. Anything that happened
     through the Western Hemisphere prior to that date can therefore only be part
     of some "pre-America"'.

654 Regarding an analogous function of the story's events in the narrative of
     Goethe, Bakhtin [(1986) 49] notes that events 'are like those creative forces
     that formulated and humanized this landscape, made it a speaking vestige of
     the movement of history (historical time), and to a certain degree, predeter-
     mined its subsequent course as well, or like those creative forces a given local-
     ity needs in order to organize and continue the historical process embodied in
     it'.

to be directed not simply from the past to the present, but also from the remote (Phoenicia) to the nearby (palace) offstage space.

The prologue also creates the basis for all future reports of onstage characters to the palace and to the marginalized Oedipus. The royal chamber is the *oikos*, in which Oedipus lives, isolated (66, ζῶν δ' ἐστ' ἐν οἴκοις, 'he now lives in the palace'), casting curses against his sons (67). Overall, the city is fashioned as a nucleus of tranquillity and safety, surrounded by two sinister nearby offstage spaces: the interior of the palace, where Oedipus lives, isolated from every political and social connection,[655] and the environs of Thebes, where the killing of the dragon and Oedipus' abandonment as an infant took place.[656]

In the last part of the prologue, the Teichoscopia, Antigone and the Servant appear on the roof of the stage,[657] climbing either an external ladder in front of the audience, or an internal one, within the stage set.[658] During the Teichoscopia, the descriptions become more specific,

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655   The socio-spatial dialectic of Oedipus' seclusion is a hint to the audience about the dark past of the myth of the Labdacids. The secluded area of the palace where the blind king is placed amounts to a time 'freezing' with respect to a particular phase or thread of the story, which will be unraveled at Euripides' will. On space and modern social theory see Soja (1989).

656   The meadow (in this case that of Hera), which is assumed to be located on an untrod mountain (in the Theban Cycle, Cithaeron), as a place for the abandonment of an unwanted infant is a traditional motif in the mythical megatext [Cf. Motte (1973) 194-197]. According to the myth, not only Oedipus, but also the twins Amphion and Zethus, founders of Thebes, had been abandoned on Cithaeron. In this case, the meadow could also refer to the union of Europa with Zeus, which occurred in a pasture, where Europa was gathering flowers and Zeus had assumed the form of a bull [Cf. Calame (1999) 154-155]. Besides, the connection between meadows and seduction was widespread. Cf. Hades and Persephone, as well as some elements (a sort of quasi-pastoral setting) of the Διὸς ἀπάτη in *Il.* 14.

657   In one of the very few instances where mortals appear on the roof. See Taplin (1977) 440-441.

658   Mastronarde (1994) 178. For the use of the roof of the stage as yet another level of performance, see Mastronarde (1990). According to Pollux, who refers to the particular passage of the Teichoscopia (4.129, ἡ δὲ διστεγία ποτὲ μὲν ἐν οἴκωι βασιλείωι διῆρες δωμάτιον, οἷον ἀφ' οὗ ἐν Φοινίσσαις ἡ Ἀντιγόνη βλέπει τὸν στρατόν, ποτὲ δὲ καὶ κέραμος, ἀφ' οὗ βάλλουσι τῶι κεράμωι), the scene presupposes a second floor (διστεγία) in the palace stage construction, which could take the form of a roof (κέραμος). Mastronarde [(1990) 255-7] debunks this interpretation, since the text is explicit that the place from which Antigone performs the Teichoscopia is not as visible, as the second floor of the palace would be. This is further supported by the Servant's obvious effort not to expose the princess to inappropriate stares, and by verse 193, in which the servant calls Antigone to come into the house (ἔσβα δῶμα),

as regards both the remote and the nearby offstage spaces. The remote offstage space in this case refers to the warriors' places of origin, while the nearby offstage space is the battlefield. With respect to spatial vocabulary, the Servant's statement about Polynices' justified attack against the Theban land (112, οὐ γάρ τι φαύλως ἦλθε Πολυνείκης χθόνα, 'Polynices has come to this land in no mean style') takes on added importance through the use of the term χθών for the homeland, as contrasted to the term πόλις for the performance space –the palace courtyard– to which the spectators have visual access (117, τά γ' ἔνδον ἀσφαλῶς ἔχει πόλις, 'the inner part of the city is safe').[659] Besides, even literally, the ἔνδον used by the Servant could be referring to the area inside the walls of the acropolis, and therefore indicate, again, the safety of the palace. During the Teichoscopia, references to remote offstage space involve the Argive warriors' places of origins as well as their position in the battlefield.[660] A broad spatial spectrum is thus created, with references to remote loci like Mycenae (125) or Aetolia (139-140). At the same time, the environs of Thebes are also described, such as, the waters of Dirce (131-134), the tomb of Zethus (145-150), and the tomb of the seven daughters of Niobe (159-160).

Through the embedding of descriptions of the broader Theban landscape, the Teichoscopia brings to mind the city's second foundation myth, that of Amphion and Zethus. Read against this mythical backdrop, the earlier, direct references to the Theban past identify Cadmus as the city's founder, while the indirect ones, happening through descriptions of the environs of Thebes, promote an alternative foundation myth with the figures of Amphion and Zethus, as well as their mythical 'satellites', Dirce and Niobe looming large.[661] In addition, Euripides' emphasis on the second foundation myth corresponds to the play's focus on a 'visual' description of the city, including its walls, built by Amphion and Zethus. Given that the Euripidean Teichoscopia is in inter-

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thereby reducing the likelihood that she was already on the second floor of the palace.

659 The verse could also mask tragic irony for Goldhill (2007) 139.

660 The references to remote offstage space are also consistent with the temporal divergences from the stable rhythm of the dialogue scene's *hic et nunc*. Each time the Servant expands the geographical horizon by commenting on the warriors' origin, he also simultaneously expands the temporal horizon, since their place of origin also points to their past. In this light, Barthes' 'zig-zag' narration (see above, n. 186) applies here not only to temporal, but also to spatial movement.

661 Euripides' emphasis on the second foundation myth may also be related to the fact that the *Phoenissae* trilogy possibly included the *Antiope*. See below, Appendix I: The trilogy.

textual dialogue with the analogous scenes of the *Iliad* and the *Seven*, Euripides' emphasis on the Theban walls may also reveal the poet's position in this dialogue.[662] Euripides seems to allude to the significance of the walls, using a kind of mythological deixis, with indirect references to the myth of Amphion and Zethus, i.e. to the 'default' narrative of the mythical construction of the city walls.

Toward the end of the Teichoscopia, emphasis is placed again on walls as the cusp between the two worlds, the stage and offstage and the dividing line between safety and danger. Capaneus, for example, tries to intrude into the safe scenic space by climbing the walls and entering the interior of the city (180-181). The Servant presents his attempt as particularly threatening, and this prompts Antigone's supplications to the gods to bring down divine punishment (182-192). Later in the play, the audience will see the Messenger describe the death of Capaneus, which literally occurred on the walls, on the border between safety and danger, and just as Antigone had requested, with a lightning bolt from Zeus (1180-1181).

To sum up, the Teichoscopia does not simply define two strongly distinguished spaces, the on- and offstage, but also lays out the way in which they are divided through frequent references to the walls and the symbolism that they invoke. The walls of Thebes constitute a highly thematized space, since they are not simply the border between what the audience can and cannot see, but also the border between safety and danger. In the *Phoenissae* however, such a division is not just bipartite. Danger dominating the area outside the walls is not simply opposed to the safety of the city, but also paralleled to the decay of the inside of the palace. The orchestra, locked in, as it were, by the two nearby offstage spaces –the polluted palace on the one hand and the dangerous battlefield on the other- functions as an exclusive nucleus of safety and peace. It is no accident that the Teichoscopia concludes with the description of Capaneus, who tries to breach this border by penetrating into the city, an attempt that is considered reprehensible. The city will be saved precisely because this barrier will not be violated and the Argive warriors will not manage to disturb its tranquillity.

The emphasis on the walls underscores their identity as an 'intermediate space', a turning point between the city and the battlefield. Given that the spectators have visual access only to the former, the insistence on the walls also creates metatheatrical allusions, endowing the actors that stand on this intermediate space (Antigone and the Servant) with

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662 It has been claimed that the importance given on the Theban walls is part of an intertextual 'rewriting' of the earlier narratives of the scene [Goldhill (2007) 138].

the narrative qualities of a narrator, who by definition, stands in distance from the story he is narrating. Through this so-called 'map strategy', Euripides creates a panoramic illusion according to which the environs of Thebes and the battlefield are presented in almost vertical projection.[663]

5.2. Out there: the distant gaze of the Chorus (Parodos, *Phoenissae* 202-260)

The parodos takes the audience to the most remote offstage space, as sketched by the narratives of the women of the Chorus. The song is in three parts and likewise spatially tripartite, since the first metrical unit (the first strophe and first antistrophe) refer to Tyre, the second (epode) to Delphi and the third (second strophe and second antistrophe) to Thebes.[664]

In the first line of the stasimon, the Chorus introduce themselves as 'leaving the Tyrian sea behind' (202)[665] and then (in the first strophe and the first antistrophe) narrate their journey from Tyre[666] to Thebes via the Ionian sea.[667] In the next metrical (and also thematic) unit, the Phoeni-

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663 'Map strategy' is coined by Ryan [(2003) 218] and refers to narratives where 'space is represented panoramically from a perspective ranging from the disembodied god's-eye point of view of pure vertical projection to the oblique view of an observer situated on an elevated point'. Analogously, de Jong & Nünlist [(2004) 65] speak of a 'panoramic standpoint', in which '[t]he narrator positions himself at a considerable distance and can oversee the totality of the events'.

664 Cf. Arthur (1977) 165-169. On the analogy between the Chorus' spatial descriptions and its emotional state, see Parry (1963) 65. See also above, ch. 2.2.2.

665 The reference to their journey's point of departure as a means for the Chorus to introduce themselves can also be seen elsewhere. Cf. A. *Supp.* 4-5, Δίαν δὲ λιποῦσαι / χθόνα; *Ch.* 22, ἰαλτὸς ἐκ δόμων ἔβαν; E. *Hec.* 99, σκηνὰς προλιποῦσ'; *Tr.* 176, σκηνὰς ἔλιπον; *Ba.* 64-65, Ἀσίας ἀπὸ γαίας / ἱερὸν Τμῶλον ἀμείψασα; *IA*. 168, Χαλκίδα πόλιν ἐμὰν προλιποῦσ'.

666 The phrase 'from Phoenicia's island city' (204, Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου), which the Chorus use in order to refer to their place of origin, has been mistakenly thought to refer to Carthage: cf. Powell (1911); Chapouthier, Grégoire & Méridier (1950). According to Kovacs [(2002) 213 n.1], Tyre is called an 'island' (cf. 6, Φοίνισσαν ἐναλίαν χθόνα; 204, Φοινίσσας ἀπὸ νάσου) because 'it was an island until the time of Alexander the Great, who joined it to the mainland by a mole'.

667 See above, n. 208.

cians turn their narrative gaze to Delphi (226-238). Anxious for the new life that the war prevents them from starting, the Chorus refer to the characteristic Phaedriades peaks[668] of the holy mountain of Parnassus (226-228) where the Bacchic dances take place,[669] combining the worship of two gods, Apollo and Dionysus[670] and highlighting the theme of victory over the chthonic forces which will dominate the rest of the play.[671]

The final thematic unit (239-260) operates on the axis of present time, beginning with the powerful demonstrative νῦν (239). The Chorus express their panic in seeing the Argive troops approaching like a thick cloud, a sign of a bloody battle (250-252). The visual image that is created emphasizes the brightness of the shields of Ares (250-251, ἀμφὶ δὲ πτόλιν νέφος / ἀσπίδων πυκνὸν φλέγει, 'about the city a thick / cloud of shields flashes'), as well as that of the flame of Dionysius and Apollo, which has already been described (226-227). During the parodos, the narrative focus widens to include the geography of the wider Greek world. The characters most distant to Thebes in the play, the young girls of the Chorus, offer the most distant descriptions, referring to the most far-flung regions. Specifically, the references made by the Theban characters of the play reach as far as the Theban environs outside the walls, while the Chorus' offstage references extend much further: to Phoenicia, Sicily, the Ionian sea, and Delphi. By assigning ex-

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668 According to Schmidt (1949), the Phaedriades peaks of Parnassus, which can be seen very clearly from Delphi, are the reason Parnassus is typically called 'twin-peaked', even though the mountain, of course, has more than two equally tall peaks.

669 Parnassus is traditionally the most famous place where nocturnal, primarily Bacchic, dances were held [Dodds (1951) 270 ff.; Burkert (1985)]. The Phaedriades peaks are the most famous setting for the Bacchic dances [Kovacs (2002) 235 n. 17].

670 The relationship between Dionysus and the rest of the Olympian gods is in general contradictory and ambiguous. The antithesis between Dionysus and Apollo is one of the most popular subjects in ancient religion [cf. Vogel (1966) and the seminal work of Nietze, *The Birth of Tragedy*] inasmuch as even though they are antithetical, the two gods often coexist in art, music and especially Delphic worship [cf. Burkert (1985) 224; Tsagalis (2009a)]. A fourth-century amphora, which depicts Dionysius and Apollo together in the Delphic sanctuary, is considered clear proof of this [Metzger (1951) pl. 25.3]. The issue of the two gods' coexistence in Delphi is much debated: cf. Jeanmaire (1970) 492-493; Arthur (1977) 166-168; Fontenrose (1959) 373-394; Burkert (1985) 224-225. On the role of Apollo in tragic narrative, see Kavoulaki (2009).

671 In lines 232-233 (ζάθεά τ' ἄντρα δράκοντος οὔ- / ρειαί τε σκοπιαὶ θεῶν) the Chorus refer to the Corycian Cave, where Apollo killed the chthonic serpent Python.

clusively proximal deixis to characters of the play and distal to the Chorus, Euripides reminds his audience of the close association between 'here' and 'how' on the one hand, and 'there' and 'before' on the other. Spatio-temporal deixis is thus anchored to the double register (characters-Chorus) of the Greek tragedy per se, inviting the audience to gaze 'chorus-like' at distant places and past time so as to comprehend what is happening *here and now*, before their own eyes. Through their 'emotional' description, the Chorus transform 'the readers / spectators into "feelers" of the emotions' the members of the Chorus had themselves perceived somewhere in the past, provoking 'the deepest emotional involvement of the audience'.[672]

5.3. Fragmented space: Thebes as a site of memory
(First episode, *Phoenissae* 261-637)

The first episode begins with Polynices emphasizing the border that separated the two distinct worlds that he needed to cross to get into the city. When the guards allowed Polynices to enter Thebes, opening the gate of the walls for him, he crossed over the difficult borderline between the off- and onstage spaces (261-262, τὰ μὲν πυλωρῶν κλῆιθρά μ' εἰσεδέξατο / δι' εὐπετείας τειχέων ἔσω μολεῖν, 'The gatekeepers' bolts have allowed me to pass easily inside the walls'). Polynices' entrance into the orchestra, i.e. to the Theban acropolis, is a crucial metatheatrical marker, when compared to its absence in the *Seven against Thebes*. In this hermeneutical context, Polynices' first words refer to what his literary predecessor -the mythical Polynices of the *Seven*- was not able to do: infiltrate the scene, i.e. become one of the tragic protagonists.[673] The comparison with the *Seven* is inevitable throughout the rest of the scene, since the main purpose of Polynices' entrance into Thebes appears to be, in the *Phoenissae*, the dispensation of justice. Consequently, the hero is presented in Euripides' work as metaphorically holding in his hands —as a kind of literary inheritance- the shield that Aeschylus attributed to him in the *Seven*, which bore the image of Justice personified.[674]

His presence in the new world, on the stage, seems to create in him a sense of awe and unease, since he fears that perhaps the city is working as a net, which will ensnare him (263-264, ὃ καὶ δέδοικα μή με δικτύων

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672 Fantuzzi (2010) 4.
673 Goldhill (2007) 139.
674 Foley (1985) 120.

ἔσω / λαβόντες οὐκ ἐκφρῶσ' ἀναίμακτον χρόα, 'And so I am afraid
that having taken me within their net they will not let me go again
without a wound').[675] The disjunction between the two worlds is in-
tense and consistent with the mental dissociation that the hero is experi-
encing, as the familiar becomes alien. The identification of the onstage
space with the feeling of safety and calm, which until then was charac-
teristic of all the stage heroes, is reversed in Polynices, since he has be-
come accustomed to the offstage space (both Argos and the battlefield)
and feels unsafe when he is found onstage (the city of Thebes). His
mental dislocation is also reflected in the partition of the spaces, which
works differently for him from all the other heroes.

    In the first description of the situation prevailing during Polynices'
absence, Jocasta illustrates life both inside the palace (the nearby offstage
space) and outside the walls (remote offstage space). The interior of the
palace in which Oedipus lives is presented as dark and out-of-the-way.
Oedipus hides in the darkness, lamenting bitterly (335-336, σὺν
ἀλαλαῖσι δ' αἰὲν αἰαγμάτων / σκότια κρύπτεται, 'With continual cries
of woe / he hides himself in the dark').[676] Using the word δόμος as a
counterpoint in the beginning (317-318, ἰὼ τέκος / ἔρημον πατρῷον
ἔλιπες δόμον, 'O my son / you have left your father's house bereft')
and the end of her speech (337-339, σὲ δ', ὦ τέκνον, καὶ γάμοισι δὴ
κλύω / ζυγέντα παιδοποιὸν ἀδονὰν / ξένοισιν ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν, 'But
you, my son, / I hear are yoked / in marriage and have the pleasure of
childbegetting / in a foreign house'), Jocasta juxtaposes the familial
home, which Polynices abandoned, with the home of the royal family
in Argos, where he took refuge. The orchestra as a scenic representation
of the city finds itself yet again at the centre of two antithetical locations:
the Theban royal house and the royal house of Argos.

    When Jocasta's monologue ends, Polynices describes the place of his
exile. As he emphasizes, his unjust banishment was followed by a miser-
able existence in a foreign city (369-370). Argos, to which Polynices
will be ultimately attached and which will be his final choice[677] is here
depicted in dark colors, as a hostile and unfriendly offstage space. Con-
trastingly, references to Thebes (closely associated to his childhood –

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675 The use of the metaphor of the net is a hint that Polynices does not recognize
     Thebes as his familiar space par excellence. It is a latent but important indirect
     acceptance of his absence from the city and his new identity.

676 For a detailed analysis of the plaintive αἰαῖ (embodied in the form
     αἰαγμάτων) in relation to ἀεὶ (and its allomorphs αἰεί, αἰέν) in tragedy, see
     Loraux (2002) 27-32.

677 Cf. Polynices' final prayer to Hera, the protector goddess of Argos (1364-
     1368).

forming again an analogy between time and space) are not accompanied by negative feelings. The Theban landscape is unexpectedly a source of sweet nostalgia, and the only common locus capable of reconciling the two brothers. For Polynices, Thebes is a place of memories, a broken part of his self which desires to be put back to its proper place. The associations, though, he reactivates will soon reveal themselves to be distant from the situation at hand. Polynices will painfully realize that he is a castaway 'thrown' by fate to an unfriendly place, a world that his brother Eteocles has changed forever. Thus Argos may be closer to his new self than his imagined notion of Thebes, which has become a site of memory, of false memory we may add. That is probably one of the reasons Euripides insists so strongly on the Thebes-Argos link in the first episode. Polynices' coming from Argos points to both a spatialization of memories and blurring of thematized spaces. The recollection of his younger years occurs through references to unnamed spaces, which are not specified as particular places, but rather define activities or phases of his upbringing (366-368, … πολύδακρυς δ᾽ ἀφικόμην, / χρόνιος ἰδὼν μέλαθρα καὶ βωμοὺς θεῶν / γυμνάσιά θ᾽ οἷσιν ἐνετράφην Δίρκης θ᾽ ὕδωρ, 'But I arrive in tears: after so long a time I look on the temples and altars of the gods, the gymnasia in which I was trained, and the waters of Dirce'). Space thereby works as drastically as time, since the familiar Theban haunts of their youth are the two brothers' point of reference, just as their common past is their only bonding link.

In the dialogue between Polynices and Jocasta, the subject once again turns to the theme of banishment and the difficult life of a fugitive, thus cyclically completing the scene and emphasizing an important aspect of the dramatic space to which the rest of the play continues to give weight. According to the description of Polynices, Adrastus married his daughters to the two foreigners and promised to help them –first, Polynices- to return to their homelands (427-429, δισσοῖς Ἄδραστος ὤμοσεν γαμβροῖς τόδε, / [Τυδεῖ τε κἀμοί· σύγγαμος γάρ ἐστ᾽ ἐμός·] / ἄμφω κατάξειν ἐς πάτραν, πρόσθεν δ᾽ ἐμέ, 'Adrastus swore to his two sons-in-law, [Tydeus and me, for he is a sharer with me in marriage,] that he would bring us both back from exile, beginning with me'). The word πάτρα, which Polynices emphasizes, is used throughout the rest of the work, together with χθών and γῆ, for all the hero's references to Thebes as his homeland, the space that marks his origin.

In the following debate, what is primarily emphasized is the narrative's *hic et nunc*. Emphasis, in other words, is given to the performance space the audience sees, as well as to the present temporal dimension. Jocasta initially addresses her two sons and emphasizes the significance of the moment, on which both Polynices and Eteocles should focus their

attention in order to end their quarrel (452-468). Polynices speaks first
and, to support his argument, transfers the narrative to the offstage
world. He relates the events that preceded his exile, and reminds the
audience that he left Thebes of his own accord. As in every statement
regarding his departure from Thebes, here he uses the word χθών to
refer to his homeland (476, ἐξῆλθον ἔξω τῆσδ' ἑκὼν αὐτὸς χθονός, 'I
left this land myself of my own accord'). The same noun is also used
when Polynices describes the situation that prevails in the narrative pre-
sent, in which the Argive army stands outside the city, but will be sent
away if Polynices gets his share of the throne (484-485, καὶ νῦν ἕτοιμός
εἰμι τἀμαυτοῦ λαβὼν / στρατὸν μὲν ἔξω τῆσδ' ἀποστεῖλαι χθονός,
'Now I am prepared, if I get what is my own, to send the army away
from this land'). His speech incorporates references to the different as-
pects of the homeland, which embraces territorial, governmental and
material-economic dimensions.

The territorial dimension of Thebes is usually mentioned in contra-
distinction to the exile and is expressed in this particular monologue
with the words χθών[678] and πατρίς,[679] while later it will be associated to
the word γῆ. The constitutional dimension of Polynices' dialogue con-
centrates on the denial of his right to rule, which Polynices denounces
through a restatement of the initial agreement between the two brothers
(477, δοὺς τῶιδ' ἀνάσσειν πατρίδος ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον, 'granting this
man the right to govern the country for a year') and Eteocles' later
breach of it (482-483, ἔδρασεν οὐδὲν ὧν ὑπέσχετ', ἀλλ' ἔχει /
τυραννίδ' αὐτὸς καὶ δόμων ἐμὸν μέρος, 'failed utterly to keep his
promises. Instead, he holds onto the kingship himself and keeps my
share of the house'). Polynices' claims to the throne are explicit, and
they are highlighted by the verb ἀνάσσω and the noun τυραννίς. An
integral aspect of the city's constitutional dimension is, of course, the
material one, which has to do with Polynices' share of the paternal in-
heritance. In these instances, Polynices refers to the palace as δώματα,[680]
δόμος,[681] or οἶκος.[682]

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678 476, ἐξῆλθον ἔξω τῆσδ' ἑκὼν αὐτὸς χθονός; 485, στρατὸν μὲν ἔξω τῆσδ'
      ἀποστεῖλαι χθονός.
679 477, δοὺς τῶιδ' ἀνάσσειν πατρίδος ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον; 488-489, καὶ μήτε
      πορθεῖν πατρίδα μήτε προσφέρειν / πύργοισι πηκτῶν κλιμάκων
      προσαμβάσεις.
680 473-474, ἐγὼ δὲ πατρὸς δωμάτων προύσκεψάμην / τοὐμόν τε καὶ τοῦδ'.
681 482-483, ἔδρασεν οὐδὲν ὧν ὑπέσχετ', ἀλλ' ἔχει / τυραννίδ' αὐτὸς καὶ δόμων
      ἐμὸν μέρος.
682 484-486, καὶ νῦν ἕτοιμός εἰμι τἀμαυτοῦ λαβὼν / στρατὸν μὲν ἔξω τῆσδ'
      ἀποστεῖλαι χθονός, / οἰκεῖν δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν οἶκον ἀνὰ μέρος λαβών.

The emphasis on the multi-faceted Thebes as a space of territorial, constitutional and legal interest (with reference to inheritance) strengthens his argument concerning the narrative of the true events, while the alternation between the on- and offstage narratives also demonstrates that Polynices is setting out all the aspects of the truth. The many-sided presentation creates for the audience a completed sense of topicality, which links particular places to particular events: the nearby offstage space (i.e. the palace) is the place where Oedipus uttered his curses, but also the focus of Polynices' nostalgic desire, while the remote offstage space reflects the difficulties of exile and the hero's ambivalence in attacking his homeland.

In contrast to Polynices' exhaustively informative speech, that of Eteocles is unclear and curtailed. He does not relate any details regarding space or time, because he is trying to cover up what really happened. He cannot be specific with his generalities regarding the multifaceted truth either spatially or temporally, because this would reveal the weakness of his argument. In this context, detailed spatial statements lend weight to the speaker's words, while spatial ambiguity masks guilt. In particular, Eteocles becomes specific only when he refers to Thebes, in order to accuse Polynices of unjustly attacking the city. He claims that he is ashamed that his brother would attack their own homeland, emphasizing the territorial character of the city and insisting, as we have often noted, on the word γῆ (510-512, … αἰσχύνομαι / ἐλθόντα σὺν ὅπλοις τόνδε καὶ πορθοῦντα γῆν / τυχεῖν ἃ χρήιζει, 'I feel shame at the thought that this man, coming with an army and trying to sack the city, should get what he wants'). Eteocles focuses on the authority of the state, which involves the safety of the city, and baldly declares that he will not cede the royal sceptre to his brother out of fear, because such an action would disgrace Thebes itself (512-514, … ταῖς γὰρ ἂν Θήβαις τόδε / γένοιτ' ὄνειδος εἰ Μυκηναίου δορὸς / φόβωι παρείην σκῆπτρα τἀμὰ τῶιδ' ἔχειν, 'This would be a disgrace for Thebes if from fear of Mycenae's spear I should yield my scepter for him to possess'). Indeed, it is the constitutional identity of Thebes that he complacently desires to monopolize for himself, since he admits that Polynices' presence in Thebes does not bother him, provided it is not accompanied by claims to the throne (518-519, … εἰ μὲν ἄλλως τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν θέλει, / ἔξεστ'· ἐκεῖνο δ' οὐχ ἑκὼν μεθήσομαι — / ἄρχειν παρόν μοι, τῶιδε δουλεύσω ποτέ;, 'if he wants to dwell in this land on other terms, he may do so. But this point I shall never willingly give up: when I can rule, shall I be this man's slave?').

Jocasta's narrative position is oriented toward Thebes in the monologue which concludes the debate. The use of the word ἄστυ shifts the

semantic centre of gravity from the material interest and the constitu-
tional dimension of the city to its core. Jocasta's expression (563-565,
ὄψηι δαμασθὲν ἄστυ Θηβαῖον τόδε, / ὄψηι δὲ πολλὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας
κόρας / βίαι πρὸς ἀνδρῶν πολεμίων πορθουμένας, 'you will see the
city of Thebes defeated and see many captive women forcibly carried off
as booty by the enemy'), focuses on the inhabited area of the city, and
in particular on its residents. In attempting to convince Eteocles to reach
an agreement, she presents the tragic consequences that his implacable
attitude could have: Thebes could be destroyed and its women taken
captive.[683]

When she turns to Polynices, she presents two possible outcomes,
trying to show him that even if his campaign is successful the result will
be equally catastrophic both to Thebes and to him. The paradox of
Polynices' achievement will be that neither he nor his fellow citizens in
Argos will enjoy their customary festal celebrations. Jocasta thus shifts
the spatial deictic origo from Thebes to Argos and the waters of the In-
achus, at which Polynices would not be able to dedicate his spoils[684]
(571-574). She then returns again to Thebes, to the siege in which
Polynices may be defeated, and presents the words of an anonymous
Argive at seeing his fellow citizens die because of his princess Argeia's
marriage to Polynices (578-582). Jocasta refers equally to Thebes and
Argos, emphasizing more than ever the hero's cruel dilemma.

Her final monologue is followed by an intense stichomythia between
Eteocles and Polynices, which again emphasizes the difference between
the 'interior' and the 'exterior', between the interior of the city and the
onstage space, and the exterior of the city and the offstage space. Eteo-
cles unequivocally declares to Polynices his demand that he should re-
move himself outside the walls of the city, and threatens him with death
(593). Their intense exchange reveals each one's demands with regard to
both the administration of royal power in Thebes and their father's ma-
terial legacy. Polynices' demand for σκῆπτρα καὶ μέρη χθονός (601)
refers to both. Χθών refers to the paternal inheritance, while δόμος,
usually the palace, is broadened to refer to both the house and the for-
tune, as well as the city, when Eteocles declares to Polynices his resolute
decision to be king of Thebes (602, ἐγὼ γὰρ τὸν ἐμὸν οἰκήσω δόμον,
'I shall manage my own house') and rejects any claim on the fortune,
which is defined by the term γῆ (603, ἀπαλλάσσου δὲ γῆς, 'Now
leave the country'). Disappointed, Polynices appeals to the local gods,

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683   Her words are reminiscent of Priam's appeal to Hector in *Il.* 22.62-65.
684   The thank-offerings of spoils took place in the temples of the local gods, since
      it was thought that they helped the local army even when it fought outside the
      city [Mastronarde (1994) 317].

from whom he asks sympathy, because he has been banished from his πατρίς (607, ἐξελαυνόμεσθα πατρίδος, 'I am being driven from my country'), while Eteocles, in a striking alliteration (609, πατρίδος … πολέμιος), refers to him as an enemy of the homeland. Πατρίς is used in these two examples both with a spatial meaning and in the sense of statehood.

5.4. A mythical landscape: geography and the double foundation of Thebes (First stasimon, *Phoenissae* 638-689)

The first stasimon concentrates on a description of the history of the city, which is why spatial deixis focuses on references to Thebes and the countryside around it. Its three-part metrical organization into strophe, antistrophe and epode conforms to thematic segmentation, which includes Cadmus' arrival in Thebes, the slaying of Ares' dragon and, finally, the emphasis on the city of Thebes itself, which Epaphus is called upon to aid.

The narrative flashback of the strophe is accompanied by a shift in the spatial deixis to outside the walls. Thus, after the debate, the Chorus shift attention to the offstage events that have preceded the story. The land of Thebes (638, τάνδε γᾶν) is the place where the mythic heifer,[685] the animal which, according to the oracle Cadmus was obliged to follow.[686] This first strophe gives a picture of the lushness of Thebes analogous to that of the description of the voyage by sea presented in the parodos. The Chorus comment on the fertility of the city and the surrounding countryside,[687] which is, in any case, the birthplace of the god Dionysus (649-654, Βρόμιον ἔνθα τέκετο μά- / τηρ Διὸς γάμοισιν, / κισσὸς ὃν περιστεφὴς / ἑλικτὸς εὐθὺς ἔτι βρέφος / χλοηφόροισιν ἔρνεσιν / κατασκίοισιν ὀλβίσας ἐνώτισεν, 'There it was that Bromius' mother gave birth to him / when she had lain with Zeus,

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685 On the oracle, see Hellanicus, fr. 51 (*EGM*). The cow symbolizes fertility, serenity and civilized life. See Arthur (1977) 170.

686 638-644, Κάδμος ἔμολε τάνδε γᾶν / Τύριος, ὧι τετρασκελὴς / μόσχος ἀδάματον πέσημα / δίκε τελεσφόρον διδοῦσα / χρησμόν, οὗ κατοικίσαι / πεδία νιν τὸ θέσφατον / πυροφόρα δόμων ἔχρη.

687 645-648, καλλιπόταμος ὕδατος ἵνα τε / νοτὶς ἐπέρχεται †γύας† Δίρκας χλοηφόρους / καὶ βαθυσπόρους γύας.

/ and about him, though still a babe, / forthwith the curling ivy[688] / with its shoots of shady green / covered him in blessedness').[689]

The first strophe transports the reader from a spatially and temporally restricted dramatic setting (the *hic et nunc* of the scene) into a broader spatial and temporal spectrum, which is constructed on the basis of the descriptions of the Chorus. This atmosphere makes the reference to Dionysus even more relevant, since, after this choral song, he co-exists with Apollo. Moreover, the brutish side of Dionysus finds its expression in the equation of Polynices to a wild beast fighting to claim refuge in Argos, and is contrasted to Oedipus' Apollonian faith in reason and truth. Thebes combines both features, as does Delphi.

The twin presence of the gods Dionysus and Apollo fits in with the model of contrasting pairs, which can be found at numerous points in the work. Apollo is contrasted to, but co-exists with Dionysus, just as the Argive co-exists with the Theban identity of Polynices, who both opposes and seeks to live with Eteocles. Such a dual identity can also be found in the case of the foundation of the city, which was attributed to two myths: that of Amphion / Zethus and that of Cadmus. Through the method of allusions (*Fernbeziehungen*),[690] the Chorus use place-names, as well as a variety of topographical designations, to construct a rich mythical geography. The Chorus thus create a connection between the gods and the city of Thebes. Apollo, Dionysus, Ares, Athena and even Demeter and Persephone, point to the fertility of the land, and function as mythical accessories which allude to various phases of the mythical pre-history of Thebes, since all of them were involved in the long history of the city.[691]

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688 On Dionysus as the god decked in ivy, see, Burkert (1985) 166; Daraki (1997) 35-37. Ivy appears at the moment when the god is born, to save him from the flames which were burning his mother. Cf. the ancient scholion on verse 651.

689 As debated by Arthur [(1977) 171], the narrator downplays parts of the myth that are only narrated in *Bacchae*, in order to create an atmosphere of harmonious coexistence of Apollo and Dionysus.

690 On the Homeric use of the term, see Reichel (1994). By means of the narrative technique of *Fernbeziehungen*, the spectators are invited to speculate upon the connection between the killing of the dragon, the birth of the Spartoi, and the necessity of Menoeceus' sacrifice.

691 Apollo is connected to Amphion and his talent in music, Dionysus was born in the Theban outskirts, Ares had his offspring guard the Theban land, while Athena instructed Cadmus on how to 'plant' the dead dragon's teeth into the Theban earth.

5.5. Reasserting duality: inside and outside
(Second episode, *Phoenissae* 690-783)

The second episode, containing the consultations between Eteocles and
Creon with regards to the defensive plan for the protection of the city,
inevitably directs the audience to the area offstage. In the first part of the
episode, i.e. the dialogue between the two characters, the emphasis is
put on the field of battle. In the second part, namely Eteocles' last
monologue before his departure from the stage, attention is transferred
both to the city (onstage) and the palace (offstage), with Eteocles ex-
pressing his interest about the state of the city and his family in the event
of his death. Creon stresses the dividing line between on- and offstage,
saying that he has been seeking Eteocles on the walls (698-699). This
boundary has been breached and their informer, a prisoner escaped from
the Argive camp, knows exactly what is going on offstage. The city-
walls, the nodal point that separates the two dramatic worlds, is also the
place where the Argives will concentrate their efforts: their army is
about to encircle the walls of Thebes and attack (710-711).

Both for Eteocles, as well as for Creon, the prime concern is the se-
curity of the city (πόλις): that is, the safety of all those within the walls.
In this episode, the use of the term πόλις is favored[692] (instead of Θῆβαι,
χθών, etc.) and directs attention towards the dramatic locus of the stage,
of what the audience is actually watching. Whatever the danger, what
had to be ensured was the security of the πόλις, the interior of Thebes,
much more so than the safety of the οἶκος or the τείχη, i.e. the closest
offstage locations. The seven gates of Thebes are also emphasized, as
alluding to the boundary between the stage setting and the offstage area.
This emphasis on the boundaries of the city comes just before Eteocles'
departure from the stage. It is then that, in essence, he first leaves the
security provided by the walls and moves out into the offstage area of
the field of the battle, which, from the beginning of the play, has been
presented as especially threatening.

His last monologue is of much more constitutional rather than loca-
tional or spatial orientation. He unreservedly expresses his desire to
come up against Polynices at the same gate and kill him,[693] as he also
prepares for the event of mutual fratricide. He enjoins Creon and the

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692 Cf. 710; 712; 734; 748. Mastronarde (1994) 359 *ad* 748 rejects the writing
πόλιν (which cannot denote the lower part of the city) and accepts the correc-
tion στόμα of Jackson [(1955) 117-118].

693 754-756, καί μοι γένοιτ' ἀδελφὸν ἀντήρη λαβεῖν / καὶ ξυσταθέντα διὰ μάχης
ἑλεῖν δορί. / [κτανεῖν θ' ὃς ἦλθε πατρίδα πορθήσων ἐμήν].

citizens never to allow the burial of Polynices in Theban soil,[694] reintro-
ducing one of the basic thematic motifs of the play and returning to the
concept of Theban land and its boundaries, as this had emerged in the
previous dialogue. Eteocles' implicit delineation of space follows the
double-faceted structure of the episode and functions as a prelude for
the future development of the plot. In the first part, the insistence on
the use of the term πόλις foreshadows the risks involved in the immi-
nent conflict, as this is projected from the point of view of Creon and
Eteocles. On the other hand, the reversion in the second part to a vo-
cabulary which implies the idea of the Theban χθών transfers the focus
of interest to the conflict between the two brothers and cryptically an-
ticipates the scene of the fratricide and the issue of the burial. A narra-
tive development such as this provided the spectators with the chance to
envisage the dramatic course the plot would take. Slowly but surely, the
safety of the city is absorbed by the dreadful prospect of mutual slaughter
on Theban soil. By making full use of these spatial indicators, Euripides
reminds his audience of the tragic cynicism of fate: the Theban earth,
the metaphorical womb of both brothers, will become a focus of con-
tention, the locus of their death and also their unquiet grave.

5.6. Moving backwards: spatial distancing and temporal remoteness (Second stasimon, *Phoenissae* 784-833)

From as early as its first verse, the second stasimon alludes to a conjunc-
tion of Ares with Dionysus, through the Chorus' parallelism between
war, which characterizes Ares,[695] and the Bacchic Dance, which is a fea-
ture of Dionysus.[696] Ares and Apollo are also associated in the play

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694 775-776, … Πολυνείκους νέκυν / μήποτε ταφῆναι τῆιδε Θηβαίαι χθονί.

695 The Chorus' reference to Ares foreshadows the imminent conflict and alludes
      to the established custom of armies to sacrifice to the god of war. Cf. Burkert
      (1985) 170.

696 Cf. Burkert (1985) 166. As Guépin has claimed [(1968) 43-44], the analogy
      between Dionysus and Ares provides the divine correspondence between the
      pairing of blood and wine. See also Burkert (1966) 116 n. 67, who notes that
      the frenzy created when committing murder, is expressed by the term
      βακχεύειν. For an analysis of the 'related' contrasts between Ares and Diony-
      sus, see Lonnoy (1985). In this stasimon, Ares becomes a Bacchic reveller and
      Dionysus a warrior. The vocabulary of the divine frenzy is common in both
      cases (μαίνομαι, ἔνθεος, ἐπιπνέω) [Zeitlin (1993) 178].

through the connection between Delphi and Thebes' history.[697] The girls in the Chorus are headed towards the Delphic oracle to serve Apollo, but have been stranded in Thebes, which is being threatened by the bloodthirsty god of war who, at the same time, is seeking revenge for the slaying of his descendant by Cadmus. The song of the Chorus has to do mainly with references to the offstage space,[698] in accordance to the choral songs' tendency to expand the narrative's marker of locality. The Chorus do not turn their narrative gaze towards the visible onstage space, nor the nearby offstage, but rather the remote offstage space which is reconstructed on the basis of the myth.

The Chorus describe the areas outside the walls where Ares is directing the war-'dance' of the Argives. Indeed, the waters of the Ismenus are mentioned as being part of the martial frenzy, changing their identity from the way in which Jocasta had presented them, i.e. as hosting wedding celebrations. The walls again form a crucial boundary protecting the city from the external mayhem of the war. Ares is presented as inspiring rage both among the Argives and the Thebans, the former attacking the walls and the latter defending them. On a metaphorical level, it is as if the offstage narrative is attempting to invade the stage,[699] or even as if the offstage space is trying to take over the onstage. The dividing line between on- and offstage cannot be crossed, however, either by the attackers or the narrative itself. Anything outside the walls is presented as a threat that must be demolished.

The antistrophe (801-817) takes us to the far away offstage space, Cithaeron, described as a place of idyllic beauty, which may, however,

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697 As frequently discussed so far, Ares is also linked to Thebes through its foundation myth. The son of Ares was a dragon which was killed by Cadmus. Cadmus then sowed the dragon's teeth in the ground and the Sown Men who sprang forth were the descendants of Ares. Harmony, the daughter of Aphrodite and Ares, married Cadmus. See Preller & Robert (1926) 107-110 and Vian (1963).

698 In the first part of the stasimon, the aquatic element dominates, while the second part of the stasimon emphasizes the agrarian environment of Eleutherae [Zeitlin (1993) 173].

699 This feeling is further reinforced by a *Hypsipyle*, *Phoenissae*, *Antiope* trilogy according to Zeitlin [(1993) 172-173]. Such an interpretation is also plausible with the trilogy that we are proposing, since again, the first two plays should be seen as expanding the local orizon of the third one. The panoramic presentation of the mythical landscape would thus be the climactic ending of a generous topographical sequence that started early enough in the trilogy. See below, Appendix I: The trilogy.

conceal the danger of wild beasts (801-802).[700] The imaginary journey
into the offstage space, which the song of the Chorus creates for us, is
much greater and complex than it initially seems. In particular, the ref-
erence to the divine abundance of flora on Cithaeron (801), hearkens
backs not only to the goddess Artemis (802), but also to Dionysus, the
god par excellence of the lush vegetation, which flourishes on the
mountains where his cult was celebrated. At the same time, the adjective
χιονοτρόφον (802, 'snow-nurturing') recalls the description of Parnassus
in the parodos (206-207, ὑπὸ δειράσι νιφοβόλοις / Παρνασσοῦ, 'un-
der Parnassus' snow-laden peaks') and therefore amounts to a reference
to the god Apollo.[701] In other words, spatial deixis does not only func-
tion literally, but also metaphorically, since the offstage space is shaped
on the basis of particular descriptions but also through a variety of meta-
phors. Lastly, the spatial references to Cithaeron generate time-related
allusions, since Cithaeron is linked to the past and Oedipus' exposure.[702]
From this perspective, spatial distancing also amounts to temporal dis-
tancing, and the descriptions of Cithaeron feel like a jump to the past.

5.7. Stepping in and stepping out: Tiresias, Menoeceus and the interplay between offstage and onstage space (Third episode, *Phoenissae* 834-1018)

The third episode begins with an 'intrusion' by the remote offstage into
the onstage space. Tiresias arrives from Athens and appears at the
Theban palace, bringing the news of the victory of Erechtheus over
Eumolpus (852-857), a topic Euripides has treated in his *Erechtheus*. The
narrative alibi, which justifies the late intervention of Tiresias in the
stalled conflict between the two brothers, adds Athens to the canvas of
remote offstage references, giving rise to indirect intertextual allusions
comparing the selfish Creon of the *Phoenissae* with the selfless Praxithea
in *Erechtheus*.[703]

   In preparing the ground for the heavy burden of the verdict he is
about to give, Tiresias emphasizes the contamination of the city and ex

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700 On Cithaeron in Greek tragedy and its 'double', Athenian and Theban 'iden-
      tity', see Taplin (2010).
701 Cf. Craik (1988) 213. Dionysus is of course also indirectly echoed. Cf. *Ion*
      711-721, where an analogous ritual is described as having been performed by
      the Thyads in honor of Dionysus Licnites during nocturnal mysteries.
702 Cf. 803-805.
703 See above, ch. 3.3.

plains the hostile relationship between himself and the sons of Oedipus (865-890). After his initial reservations and under pressure from Creon, the seer announces the only hope of salvation: the sacrifice of Menoeceus at the spot where the dragon of Ares was born, as an act of purification of the Earth from the killing of the beast by Cadmus (913-914). For the first time, the environs of Thebes, i.e. the nearby offstage space, are presented as playing a dark role. The waters of Dirce are where the birth of Ares' dragon took place, but now they were to receive the blood of innocent Menoeceus for the Earth's good pleasure.[704] Creon's attempt to avoid the seer's command further opens up the offstage space, since it alludes to exile, which is Creon's counter-proposal to his son.

The first part of Creon's plan is to help Menoeceus escape from Thebes even before the words of Tiresias have become known to the rest of the city (970-973). The vague offstage space, which is described by Creon as being the saving solution, strikes fear into young Menoeceus, who refuses to take himself off to some unknown city to live among strangers (977). Creon's plan has Dodona, in Thesprotia, as the final destination (981-982) and includes gold as guaranteeing his means of survival (985). The audience, however, will remember from Polynices' descriptions, which now acquire an additional meaning that money alone is not enough and that royal lineage counts for nothing in times of exile.[705]

Having given Creon the false impression that he is about to flee, Menoeceus sets about planning his self-sacrifice and describes to the Chorus the spot where he will kill himself. He will follow the instructions of Tiresias to the letter and, taking up position in the cave of Ares' dragon, will put an end to his life and thereby save Thebes (1009-1012). The nearby offstage space is described in horrific terms, while the same spot that held life (the dragon) but was a source of death for the Thebans, now means death for Menoeceus, but salvation for the Thebans.

Creon and Menoeceus use remote offstage space differently, because they are not focusing on the same features. The place that the father

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704 The waters of Dirce are possibly the spot where the 'Seventh (Hebdomai) gates' (as described by Aeschylus in the *Seven*) must have stood. See Berman (2007) 105.

705 See also the case of Euripides' *Hecuba*. King Priam had entrusted his young son Polydorus to Polymystor, King of Thrace, together with an amount of gold. For as long as the Achaeans had not captured Troy, Polydorus enjoyed the best of care from Polymystor. Once Troy was destroyed, however, Polymystor killed Priam's son and cast him into the sea, in order to keep his gold (*Hec.* 1-58).

thinks of as safe is a disgrace for the son, while the sacrifice in the nearby offstage space, on the walls, is catastrophic for the father, but redemptive for the son. Through Menoeceus' stance the terrifying feeling about remote offstage space that persists throughout the play is further reinforced. Onstage space, i.e. what is enclosed within the walls of Thebes, despite the defilement from which it is suffering, is considered safer than the offstage space, which proves harsher and unwelcoming. The walls of Thebes function as protection not only against entry by the Argive army, but also against intrusion by the offstage space as a whole, which threatens to upset the onstage balance.

5.8. Places of pain (Third stasimon, *Phoenissae* 1019-1066)

Immediately after Menoeceus' sacrifice and the description of the spot where the dreadful deed took place, the third stasimon describes the murky history of the city and the various monsters, which have stigmatized its past. The location of Dirce, where the dragon was born, coincides with the spot where the Sphinx was active, and so this particular spring[706] is once again colored in dark tones (1026-1031).[707] Having served as a camp for the Argive troops at the beginning of the play, from the point of Polynices' departure for the battle and thereafter, the spring of Dirce is linked exclusively with the city's abominable past.

The third stasimon also presents the city of Thebes as the backdrop to the activities of Oedipus, who at first was triumphantly victorious, but then brought disasters (1046). This paradox accompanies the general division suffered by the city, which, despite the external and internal threats, manages to remain safe. The walls undoubtedly contribute to this internal peace, since they seal off the acropolis from intrusion by any offstage turmoil. As highlighted by the Chorus, the barrier of the walls has been strengthened now by the self-sacrifice of Menoeceus, which took place on the walls and made them victorious (1058-1059, τὰ δ᾽

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706 On the mythological correlation between dragons and springs, see Fontenrose (1959) 545-549.

707 It has been maintained [Parry (1963) 150] that the lengthy description of the disasters caused by the Sphinx conforms entirely with such as might have been caused by a human enemy. It may be that this is an insinuation concerning the catastrophic results of sibling strife, which is commensurate with those caused by a monster.

ἑπτάπυργα κλῇιθρα γᾶς / καλλίνικα θήσων, 'making the land's seven-towered fortress / glorious in victory').[708]

What is primarily under threat is the nearby offstage space, the Theban area outside the acropolis walls, where all the horrible events of the past have taken place and which is now at the mercy of the enemy. On the other hand, the salvation of the space within the walls of the acropolis[709] is impressively assured, making it able to withstand any buffeting from on- or offstage. This may be why Thebes within the walls is the most sought-after point in the dramatic and narrative space and is characterized by a powerfully centripetal force. Almost every character of the play at some point wishes to intrude into the performance space, either to regain lost possessions (Polynices) or to acquire new ones (the seven attackers, Creon). Those who have put at risk the security of the performance space are threatened with enforced departure there from (Oedipus), in accordance to the city's inclination to repulse all assailants.

5.9. Sealing space: external danger, internal pollution (Fourth episode, *Phoenissae* 1067-1283)

The fourth episode not only projects the distinction between stage and offstage action, but also between the security that Thebes can offer, and the hazardous situations it can provoke. The episode begins with the Messenger, who arrives at the palace on his return from the field of battle and asks for the queen to be called onto the stage (1068). In his response to Jocasta, the Messenger stresses the role of the walls as the dividing line between danger and safety, since they have not been breached and have held off the enemy. The walls managed to protect the city, whose security is tightly bound up with that of the walls (1078-1079). Despite receiving the most powerful blows during the assault, the walls remain the effective boundary between the offstage threat and onstage tranquility.

By asking the Messenger how the Thebans sustained the attack, Jocasta goes on to make a tripartite division of the dramatic space, in which the walls are defined as the critical point of delineation: ... πῶς γὰρ Ἀργείων δόρυ / πυλῶν ἀπεστήσασθε πυργηρούμενοι; / λέξον,

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708 Menoeceus' self-sacrifice on the walls, as well as Antigone's presence in the Teichoscopia and Polynices' entry within the walls, display Euripides' narrative tendency to stage those scenes that deviate from the dominant literary tradition on the Theban walls [Goldhill (2007) 142].

709 Namely, the performance space (what the spectators have visual access to).

γέροντα τυφλὸν ὡς κατὰ στέγας / ἐλθοῦσα τέρψω, τῆσδε γῆς σεσωμένης, 'But how, when you were besieged, did you force the Argive army from the gates? Tell me so that I may go and gladden the blind old man in the house with the news that this land has been rescued' (1086-1089). The spatial concepts to which she is referring are as follows: (a) what is happening outside the walls (war) with the cusp between safety and danger being the boundary formed by the walls; (b) the interior offstage space, i.e. the inside of the palace; and (c) the city, i.e. the space which the audience has visual access to, the space between the acropolis walls and the palace, here referred to as γῆ.[710] In this tripartite division designed by Jocasta, both the purely offstage area (a), as well as the interior of the palace (b), entail death, danger and contamination. On the other hand, the performance space of the city, which the audience perceive as purely theatrical space (c) is, mysteriously, a balanced locus, despite the problems besetting it. It therefore can be seen that the walls, both those of the city and those of the palace, function as 'seals': the former blocking the entry of danger and the latter impeding the escape of contamination.

When the Messenger begins to speak, his description has an intensely local orientation. He describes most accurately the spot where Menoeceus committed suicide, the point where the enemy were sighted, as well as the geographical position of each general (1090-1199). According to the Messenger's description, what can be considered safe is again the γῆ,[711] which Menoeceus saved through his self-sacrifice (1090-1092, ἐπεὶ Κρέοντος παῖς ὁ γῆς ὑπερθανὼν / πύργων ἐπ' ἄκρων στὰς μελάνδετον ξίφος[712] / λαιμῶν διῆκε τῆιδε γῆι σωτήριον, 'When Creon's son, who died on the land's behalf, had stood on the top of the battlements and plunged the dark sword into his throat, achieving survival for this land').

After the references to the enemy forces, which left Teumesus and headed towards Thebes (1099-1101), the messenger defines the precise geographical co-ordinates of each of the generals and of the gate at which he will fight his duel. The description of the nearby offstage space

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710 This tripartite division with the walls as an intermediary space is also encountered in the episode of Hector and Andromache in *Il.* 6.

711 The term γῆ has been working as a territorial marker from the beginning of the play. See above, ch. 5.3.

712 Cf. here the similarity between the weapon used in the self-sacrifice (μελάνδετον ξίφος) and the place where it took place (μελαμβαθὴς σηκός), as Menoeceus himself described it in the third episode: ἀλλ' εἶμι καὶ στὰς ἐξ ἐπάλξεων ἄκρων / σφάξας ἐμαυτὸν σηκὸν εἰς μελαμβαθῆ / δράκοντος, ἔνθ' ὁ μάντις ἐξηγήσατο, / ἐλευθερώσω γαῖαν (1009-1012).

has provoked much literary rumination regarding the extent to which it corresponds to archaeological reality.[713] The views that have been promulgated either attribute the seven gates to the inventiveness of the poet of the epic *Thebaid*,[714] or find historical correspondences with the actual topography of the ancient Cadmeia.[715]

When Pausanias described the walls of Thebes (9.8.4-7), he referred to only three of the seven mythical gates of the city (Electran, which was in the south of the city, Proetid, which was in the north-east, and the Neistid, in the west), although he claimed that all seven gates have survived down to his time. Pausanias' elliptical narrative has stirred much philological confusion, mostly to 19th century scholars, who believed that prehistoric gates must have been in the circuit of the classical fortifications below the Theban citadel.[716] In 1917, after several years of excavations, Keramopoullos first maintained that the seven gates were around the Cadmeia, not being part of the later, lower fortifications.[717] In the 1980s Symeonoglou developed a reconstruction, according to which two rings of walls surrounded the Cadmeia, the smaller one belonging to the middle Helladic period, and the larger one to the late Helladic period.[718] By combining archaeological findings and the information coming from Pausanias and Euripides, Mastronarde has reconstructed the mythical topography of Thebes in the *Phoenissae* as follows: the so-called 'seventh' gate is situated at the north, and, in a south-west direction, the Neistid, the Crenaean and the Ogygian gates. On the east, and again going from north to south, the city is defended by the Proetid, the Homoloid and the Electran gates.[719]

The description of the positions of the generals at this point in the play differs both from the earlier description in the Teichoscopia and from the Aeschylean description in the *Seven*. The most interesting char-

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713 For a recent and extensive discussion, see Berman (2007) 87-115.

714 Wilamowitz (1891). From an analogous vantage point, Burkert (1981) identifies in the myth of the seven generals an Assyrian rite which was adapted to epic poetry in the eighth century.

715 Keramopoullos (1917) was the first to have attempted to place the seven gates around the city's acropolis. Some of Keramopoullos' archaeological assumptions were endorsed by many archaeologists. More recently, excavations led Symeonoglou (1985) to an archaeological outline of the seven gates, placed – like in literature- around the Theban citadel. In any rate, the matter is hard to decide and must be approached with skepticism and caution.

716 Forchhammer (1854); Fabricius (1890); Frazer (1913); Soteriades (1914) [after Berman (2007) 91].

717 Keramopoullos (1917) 464-484.

718 Symeonoglou (1985) 32-38.

719 See the map in Mastronarde (1994) 648.

acteristic of the narrative is the constant orientation from west to east for each pair of the facing gates. Thus the Messenger first mentions Parthenopaeus who is at the Neistid gate (west, 1104-1109) and then Amphiaraus, who is at the Proetid gate (east, 1109-1112). At the third gate, the Ogygian (west), there is Hippomedon (1113-1118), while at the corresponding level to the east we have Tydeus (at the Homoloid, 1119-1122). Starting from the west again, the Messenger describes the position of Polynices (at the Crenaean gate, 1123-1127), then moves east to the Electran to give the position of Capanaeus (1128-1133). His tour ends with a description of the single gate at the northern end of the city, the 'seventh' gate, where Adrastus will fight (1134-1138).[720]

The oaths exchanged by the generals after the agreement on the duel between Polynices and Eteocles, are taken 'in no man's land' (1240-1241, ... κἀν μεταιχμίοις / ὅρκους συνῆψαν ἐμμενεῖν στρατηλάται, 'and in the space between the lines they gave oaths that they would abide by them'). The prepositional phrase κἀν μεταιχμίοις indicates the piece of land between the two armies,[721] but also makes for a skilful play on words since no man's land could also denote land belonging to no one and therefore being 'contested'.[722] In this sense, the 'green line' where the oaths are taken indirectly refers also to the original cause of the conflict and of the oath taking, namely the mutual quest for power and local domination on the part of the two brothers.

The episode ends with Jocasta persuading Antigone to leave the palace and follow her to the field of battle, since there is no point in her remaining at home (1264-1266). The queen's suggestion is unusual, and the risk is great. Moving out into the battle area entails a transfer from the onstage space of the city to the offstage space outside it.[723] Antigone knows full well that by crossing the walls she will, in effect, go out from the ring of protection which guaranteed her safety and will therefore be exposed to an immediate danger which, until recently, was remote. The inversion of Antigone's sphere of action is accompanied by an inversion of her dramatic role, even of her actual psychological makeup. Just as, in the Teichoscopia, her social, family, and even dramatic role was within

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720   I follow the reconstruction of Mastronarde (1994) 648-649.

721   As later at 1279.

722   Cf. LSJ⁹, s.v. μεταίχμιον. *Antiope* also takes place in a no man's land between Thebes and Athens, in this case Eleutherae [Zeitlin (1993) 173-174]. Cf. also Sol. fr. 37.9-10 *IEG*, ἐγὼ δὲ τούτων ὥσπερ ἐν μεταιχμίωι / ὅρος κατέστην.

723   Jocasta's intention to go outside the walls of the acropolis and meet her sons on the field of battle recalls the attempt of Andromache to meet Hector outside the palace in the *Iliad* (6. 369-406).

the house, at this point in the plot her role is transposed not only outside the home but, in fact, outside the walls. The spatial inversion acts in parallel with corresponding social, emotional and dramatic realignments.

Taken as a whole, the episode is characterized by a centrifugal dramatic movement, since the dramatic personae on stage attempt to make their way to the offstage dramatic space, which appears to harbor their false hopes. The previously centripetal force of the drama, which was shaped by the desire of all the characters to be on stage[724] now has an inverted drive and the offstage space, for the first time, is presented in the light of positive developments: Antigone hopes to meet Polynices, Eteocles that he will return victorious, Jocasta that she can reconcile her sons. At a dramatically heightened finale, the expectations regarding a *sui generis* hospitable offstage space are tragically dashed, since the area outside the walls will abundantly confirm its dark dangerousness with the triple deaths of Jocasta and her two sons. The only person who will find peace outside the walls is, paradoxically, the only one who never wanted to leave the stage, Oedipus.

5.10. Locating beginnings: the δᾶ and the δίδυμοι θῆρες (Fourth stasimon, *Phoenissae* 1284-1307)

The fourth stasimon consists of a lament by the Chorus, which stresses the past sufferings of the city. The twin monsters (Ares' dragon and the Sphinx), which the Chorus address at the beginning of the antistrophe (1296-1297, δίδυμοι θῆρες / φόνιαι ψυχαί, 'twin beasts / murderous hearts'), reflect the monstrous action of the two brothers and pave the way for the dramatic and narrative climax of the play's finale.

Earth, which as mother of the dragon could not be absent from the final stasimon, is paired opposite Zeus (1289-1290, ἰώ μοι πόνων, / ἰώ Ζεῦ, ἰώ γᾶ, 'alas for my woes, alas Zeus and Earth'). What is not clear, however, is the extent to which this invocation is personified, i.e. how far the Chorus is addressing the goddess Earth or the actual earth as a natural element. Despite the frequent references to the term γῆ as physical space, the juxtaposition of γῆ next to Ζεῦ here makes personification more likely. The Chorus are then addressing the goddess Earth, the mother of the monster, who sought vengeance against Menoeceus, as being native to the soil of Thebes. Within this interpretive context, Euripides here identifies the ultimate cause of the catastrophe as the vio-

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724 Cf. the relative efforts by Polynices, Tiresias and Creon.

lence that characterized Thebes since its inception,[725] rather than the fraternal strife deriving from the state and political evolution of the city.[726]

5.11. Placing death: fatherland, palace, and the hope of burial (Fifth episode, *Phoenissae* 1308-1479)

The fifth episode begins with a monologue by Creon lamenting the loss of Menoeceus. His formulaic declaration οἴμοι, τί δράσω; πότερ' ἐμαυτὸν ἢ πόλιν / στένω δακρύσας (1310-1311, 'Ah, ah, what shall I do? Shall I weep and groan for myself or my city'), for the first time presents the πόλις as being at stake. In the context of the lament for Menoeceus, he uses the term γῆ as corresponding to what today we would call 'land of our fathers' (1313, ἐμός τε γὰρ παῖς γῆς ὄλωλ' ὑπερθανών, 'My son is dead, perished for his country'). His lament fashions a geographically 'enclosed' ring, which is defined by the walls, since the self-sacrifice of his son, which occurred on the walls, prevents the threatening cloud of death which has surrounded the city (1311-1312) from actually entering it. So when the Chorus tell Creon that Jocasta and Antigone have left this protective ring (1329-1331), Creon seems to sense the catastrophic consequences of such a step. He suspects that only a dreadful disaster (συμφορά) could have forced them into it and asks the Chorus to tell him what it is (1324). The Chorus metaphorically identify the palace with the reason Jocasta and Antigone have been exposed to outside danger (1325-1326, ἤκουσε τέκνα μονομάχωι μέλλειν δορὶ / εἰς ἀσπίδ' ἥξειν βασιλικῶν δόμων ὕπερ, 'She [Jocasta] heard that her sons were about to fight a duel for the royal palace'), again condemning the nearby offstage space as a source of catastrophe. So both facets of the nearby offstage space (the palace and the battlefield) are fashioned in an equally negative way. Once the Chorus have described the perilous nature of the field of battle, they attribute to the palace itself the same responsibility for causing the various calamities.

When the Messenger is called upon to describe the duel between the two brothers, he reproduces the last words of Polynices, through which he had revealed his desire to be buried in the land of his fathers (1447-1450, θάψον δέ μ', ὦ τεκοῦσα, καὶ σύ, σύγγονε, / ἐν γῆι

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725 That is, the savagery with which Cadmus killed the native guardian of the city, the offspring of Earth and Ares.

726 Arthur (1977) 185. For relevant discussions see de Romilly (1965); Finley (1967).

πατρώιαι, καὶ πόλιν θυμουμένην / παρηγορεῖτον, ὡς τοσόνδε γοῦν τύχω / χθονὸς πατρώιας, κεἰ δόμους ἀπώλεσα, 'Bury me, my mother and sister, in my native soil, assuaging the city's anger, so that I may get at least this much of my native land even if I have lost my house'). Polynices distinguishes between his fatherland and the palace (χθὼν πατρώια – δόμοι), since he asks to be guaranteed the former, having in any case lost the latter. Once again, the land of Thebes and the palace are viewed as two separate spatial entities.

The Messenger's speech and the fifth episode end with the retreat of the Argives after their defeat (1470-1472). With their departure, danger recedes and the nearby offstage space of the battlefield ceases to be a threatening locus. At the same time, the dramatic space of the orchestra is more secure than ever, and Antigone can return to the city. In order to effect the dramatic exodus that will follow, the characters who were active offstage[727] gather onstage, abandoning the now peaceful and pure offstage loci. The battleground is not a threat because the attacking forces have retreated, whereas the palace will be cleansed because tainted Oedipus will be exiled.

5.12. Coming together on stage: sons, mother, and father (Exodos, *Phoenissae* 1480-1766)

The exodos demonstrates a strange transfer of the nearby offstage space onto the stage. The bodies of the brothers and Jocasta are brought from the field of battle to the orchestra, and the moment has arrived for the appearance of Oedipus, who will venture out from the other dimension of the nearby offstage space, the palace.

Antigone, who accompanies her dead relatives, begins her lament (1481-1484) and when, a little later she calls upon her father to leave the offstage space,[728] she gives the impression that she is addressing a ghost eking out an existence within the palace.[729] The palace has by now be-

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727 Namely Antigone and Oedipus, who were in the two nearby offstage spaces, the field of battle and the palace respectively.

728 1530-1535, ὀτοτοτοῖ· λεῖπε σοὺς / δόμους, ἀλαὸν ὄμμα φέρων, / πάτερ γεραιέ, δεῖξον, / Οἰδιπόδα, σὸν αἰῶνα μέλεον, ὃς ἔτι / δώμασιν ἀέριον σκότον ὄμμασι / σοῖσι βαλὼν ἕλκεις μακρόπνουν ζόαν.

729 The emphasis on the incarceration of Oedipus within the palace may be interpreted as a technique for 'de-legitimizing' the hero, since the σκότιοι θάλαμοι recall the marginalization inflicted by the supremely feminine space of the interior of the house, which may often hold secrets (cf. for example, that the adjective σκότιος is used to denote an illegitimate child) [Ebbott (2003) esp. 29-

come a metonymy for old age, disappointment, isolation and darkness. The fact that Oedipus eventually emerges from the offstage space when there are three corpses on stage, in other words when the stage has finally been 'assimilated' to 'death' further intensifies tragic pathos. The first words of the king who has long been awaited highlight the distinction between the onstage exterior –in the light- and the offstage interior –in the darkness-. The blind hero complains at being forced to come out onto the stage like a ghost, describing the palace with vocabulary usually employed to describe the Underworld:

> τί μ', ὦ παρθένε, βακτρεύμασι τυφλοῦ
>   ποδὸς ἐξάγαγες εἰς φῶς
> λεχήρη σκοτίων ἐκ θαλάμων[730] οἰκ-
>   τροτάτοισιν δακρύοισιν,
> πολιὸν αἰθέρος ἀφανὲς εἴδωλον ἢ
>   νέκυν ἔνερθεν ἢ
>   πτανὸν ὄνειρον; (1539-1545)

> 'Why, daughter, have you brought me out
> into the light, my blind footsteps guided by a stick,
> bedridden though I am, from my dark chamber
> by your pitiable cries,
> a gray and insubstantial phantom,
> a dead man from the nether world,
> or a winged dream?'

The lament of the father and daughter is interrupted by Creon, who tells them that he will henceforth be the head of the city, since Eteocles had handed over its government as dowry for the wedding between Antigone and Haemon (1586-1588). Using the term γῆ to refer to the city, Creon declares that he will not allow Oedipus to continue to live in Thebes (1589, οὔκουν σ' ἐάσω τήνδε γῆν οἰκεῖν ἔτι, 'Accordingly I will no longer permit you to dwell in this land'). Such a prospect re-opens the issue of exile, which Oedipus describes as real death and he begs Creon not to expel him from the land (1620-1621, ... τί μ' ἄρδην ὧδ' ἀποκτείνεις, Κρέον; / ἀποκτενεῖς γάρ, εἴ με γῆς ἔξω βαλεῖς, 'Why are you destroying me so utterly, Creon? It will be my death if you ban-

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32]. According to Seaford [(1990) 89], Oedipus also deepens the darkness of the palace by recalling the incest.

730 On the metaphorical use of the word θάλαμος in the sense of 'grave' or the Underworld, see Mastronarde (1994) 580. The description of the interior of the palace in these terms and the fact that Oedipus elects to remain within may be interpreted as a kind of ultimate self-punishment, as an attempt to live in the world of the dead even before he dies. On this metaphorical return of Oedipus from the Underworld, see also Edmunds (1981) 230-231.

ish me from the country'). Having been isolated in the nearby offstage space of the palace, Oedipus takes the stage only to be faced with the possibility of being ejected not only from the palace but also from the confines of the city, i.e. into the remote offstage space. Once again, Euripides allows it to be understood that γῆ refers spatially to the city of Thebes, which Oedipus is being forced to abandon.

Oedipus' departure from Thebes also means his resignation from royal authority. It has already been made clear, however, by numerous references on the part of onstage characters, that he was already being neglected within the palace and, under pressure from his sons, had relinquished his powers of authority. It can be seen, then, that the offstage space in general, be it the interior of the palace or the outside of the city is problematic for Oedipus and relates to the deprivation of his rights as king. All in all, every parameter of offstage space is here transformed into something horrific and dark, both literally and metaphorically.[731]

Creon is adamant in the face of Oedipus' entreaties, and his reactions shed extra light on the concepts of the city (πόλις) and native land (χθών). In line 1626, Creon declares the city of Thebes to be χθόνα (ἐγὼ δὲ ναίειν σ' οὐκ ἐάσαιμ' ἂν χθόνα, 'I shall never permit you to live in this land'), affirming the narrative preference for the alternating terms γῆ and χθών –instead of the term πόλις- to refer to the area of Thebes within the walls. Besides, the notion of the homeland, of the land of one's fathers, is a unifying motive throughout the play, via the frequent references to the hardships of exile, as well as the basic episode of the play, the armed repatriation of Polynices.[732]

The term χθών is used again by Creon to exclude the possibility of Polynices' burial there. His proclamation confirms the importance given to the term, which, here also, seems to determine the city within the walls.[733] Eteocles and Jocasta, on the other hand are to receive all the requisite funeral rites. The reasoning behind the different treatment is, of course, the assault by Polynices against his homeland[734] (1628-1630),

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731 This could also have to do with the fear of the unknown, experienced both by the onstage characters as well as the audience who were unable to 'see' offstage. On the other hand, the textual indicators and inter-textual continuation of the myth paint the remote offstage space (i.e. Phoenicia and Colonus) in positive colors only. Oedipus here suffers as an ignorant character, who lacks the all-round knowledge of the omniscient narrator.

732 On the variety of thematic motifs in the *Phoenissae,* which, however, function as a unifying thread, holding together the complex plot, see Podlecki (1962).

733 1630, ἐκβάλετ' ἄθαπτον τῆσδ' ὅρων ἔξω χθονός.

734 1628-1630, ... τόνδε δ', ὃς πέρσων πόλιν / πατρίδα σὺν ἄλλοις ἦλθε, Πολυνείκους νέκυν / ἐκβάλετ' ἄθαπτον τῆσδ' ὅρων ἔξω χθονός.

which demands that he be treated as a traitor. With a great concentration of terms referring to the land of the fathers, the exodos confirms the significance of the central episode of the attack by Polynices, and also paves the way for the audience for the final scene of the drama, which will be dominated by the issue of Oedipus' exile, namely his enforced departure from the land of his fathers.[735]

In the rest of the play, the term πόλις acquires a mainly political significance, whereas χθών refers to the geographical aspect of the πόλις. So in her quarrel with Creon, Antigone uses χθών to mean the space of the city that Oedipus is being obliged to forsake (1644, τί τόνδ' ὑβρίζεις πατέρ' ἀποστέλλων χθονός;, 'why do you commit outrage against my father in banishing him from the land?'), while Creon refers to Polynices as an enemy of the πόλις (1652, εἴπερ γε πόλεως ἐχθρὸς ἦν οὐκ ἐχθρὸς ὤν, 'Yes it is: though no enemy, he became his city's enemy'). Antigone uses the same term to refer thereafter to the laws imposed by the governmental authority in the χθών (1657, ἐγώ σφε θάψω, κἂν ἀπεννέπηι πόλις, 'I shall bury him, though the city forbid it'), stressing the word πόλις as referring to the governmental character of Thebes, not its geographical nature. In particular, the word πόλις recalls the order from the governor of the city, which is preferred to the 'local' χθών and γῆ. It is also in this framework that Creon uses πόλις in verse 1668 to warn Antigone that the administration of Thebes deprives Polynices of all funeral attention (ἐν τοῦτ' ἂν εἴη τῶν ἀπορρήτων πόλει, 'that would be one of the things the citizens may not do'). Antigone, on the other hand, credits Polynices only with wanting a share of the Theban land and protests that it is unfair that he should be punished thus, when all he wanted was his due portion of his homeland (1655, τί πλημμελήσας, τὸ μέρος εἰ μετῆλθε γῆς;, 'What was his fault if he came to get his share of the land?'). The geographical nature of the city is again brought to the fore when Antigone threatens to kill Haemon on their wedding night and Creon orders her to leave the χθών (1682, ἴθ'· οὐ φονεύσεις παῖδ' ἐμόν· λεῖπε χθόνα, 'Go, you will not kill my son: leave the land'). As in all instances when mention of exile is made, χθών is the preferred word to denote the city, alluding to its spatial, and not to its administrative, entity. This final example adds to the number of indicators according to which the spatial nature of the city is emphasized in cases of exile or quest for power, while the politi-

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735 Polynices' punishment seems even harsher given that, on the one hand it is imposed post mortem and, on the other it involves a double proscription: the banning of his burial within the city limits, as well as Creon's threats for a general interdiction on his being buried at all.

cal aspect is stressed in instances regarding application or disregard of its laws.

The climax of the exodos comes with Oedipus and Antigone setting out their future. Oedipus, to all intents and purposes has realized that Apollo's oracle is coming into effect and realizes that his narrative 'future', after the end of this current drama, is fixed, for Colonus at Athens (1703-1710). Athens again acquires in the eyes of Oedipus and Antigone the image of the protector of suppliants and guardian of justice.[736] The final lament of the two characters is almost entirely dedicated to the horrors of exile and the hardships it involves. Oedipus emphasizes how hard it is for an old man to be expelled from his homeland, his πάτρα, laying stress particularly on the geographical character of Thebes (1723-1724, ἰὼ ἰώ, δυστυχεστάτας φυγὰς / ἀλαίνειν τὸν γέροντά μ' ἐκ πάτρας, 'Ah me, ah me, for me, an old man, / to wander in miserable exile from my land!'). Antigone feels keenly the disaster that has befallen her father and uses similar terminology (1734-1736, τάδε σ' ἐπέμενε μέλεα πάθεα, / φυγάδα πατρίδος ἄπο γενόμενον, / ὦ πάτερ, θανεῖν που, 'These are the miseries that await you, / to go from your land as an exile / and die somewhere, my father'). At the same time, by describing her own position in analogous terms (1738-1739, ... ἄπειμι πατρίδος ἀποπρὸ γαίας / ἀπαρθένευτ' ἀλωμένα, 'I go far from my country / to wander in no maiden fashion'), she emphasizes the fact that she is losing her homeland, as is abundantly clear from verse 1738, where she uses πατρίς as an adjective to define the land (πατρίδος γαίας). As both characters proceed towards the parodos, they emphasize the geographical nature of their homeland, marking their departure from Theban soil.

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736 On the role of Athens as protector of suppliants, see Konstan (2006); Tzanetou (2006).

Conclusions
Myth for all: the play's flexi-narrative

This book attempts to apply the basic principles of narratology to the narration of Euripides' *Phoenissae*, with the aim of achieving a deeper understanding of the internal narrative structure of the play. Some of the topics dealt with are the function of the time of the narrative as opposed to the time of the story, the dramatic effect produced by the constant use of anachronies and multiple narrative levels, as well as the significance of the alterations of the narrative rhythm or focalization. A narratological analysis highlights the special emphasis Euripides gives on myth, whose generous presentation proves to be one of the *Phoenissae's* main narrative desiderata. By aiming at creating a Theban mythical megatext that incorporates most of the versions of the Theban saga and additionally blends them with new features, Euripides constructs a complex narrative that fits all audiences: it works as a mythical panorama for those who are not acquainted with the mythical history of the Labdacids, as it also becomes more specific –or even innovative- for the spectators who are already theatrically and mythically trained. By means of a flexi-narrative, Euripides structures a play that welcomes both the knowledgeable and the unknowledgeable narratees, offering much to both.

Chapter one greets the inherent complexity of dramatic narrative and sets the interpretive tone of the book. The answer to the intrinsic 'problem' of narrative in drama, namely the absence of a main narrator, comes after a detailed presentation of the features of narrativity that traditionally endow a literary composition with narrative qualities. A discussion of narrativity as defined by various scholars in the course of years, points out that tragic narrative meets all the theoretical requirements of narrativity, having as a sole exception the absence of a main narrator. An investigation of the communicative model however shows that such an absence shall not be considered a narrative 'handicap', since the narrator exists more as an authorial choice and less as a communicative necessity. The lack of a central narrator does not violate the communicative process, even more so since the main narrator is virtually seen in the eyes of the playwright. Analogously, tragedy's mimetic features are proven not to overshadow its diegetic qualities, since mimetic

narrativity does also exist, constructing an illusion of action or characters –rather than an illusion of a teller.

Chapters two and three focus on the narrative before and after the first battle between the Argives and the Thebans respectively. I use the first military encounter between the two armies as a nodal point, the dramatic kernel of the play, around which the first and second phases evolve. It can be seen that in the narrative before the battle, the events of particular dramatic weight become the object of stage narrative or rather stage performance. Contrastingly, during the first battle and thereafter, the action is transposed to the area offstage, outside the city walls, throwing the narrative burden onto long messenger speeches. With respect to the treatment of myth, the exhausting presentation of the dramatic past, both through the characters' long *rheseis* and through the Chorus' songs, creates a panorama of the Theban myth, as it also drops hints at the play's own contribution to the mythical megatext, namely, Polynices' crossing of the walls, Jocasta's suicide after the fratricide, as well as Menoeceus' self-sacrifice.

In chapter two, attention is directed primarily to the study of anachronies and focalization, revealing interesting findings regarding both the characters and the narrative structure of the play. In her first extended monologue, Jocasta switches between the first and third person narrative mode, depending on her emotional involvement in the events described. By employing self-narrative references to relate all her pleasant memories, while using the distancing of the third person mode to describe all distressing events, Jocasta deftly manipulates time and emotion. As regards the violations of the narrative sequence, she uses flashbacks as a means for reconciling her sons, Eteocles and Polynices, whose happy family past seems to be the only thing they share. A more general consideration of time reveals that Euripides builds up an 'emotional' narrative scale: analepses pointing to the furthest past mostly have to do with unpleasant events, such as, for example, the blood-drenched foundation of the city, the sins of Laius and the exposure of Oedipus. On the other hand, analepses referring to the events after the wedding of Oedipus and Jocasta focus on the period of family happiness, which seems to have been obtained until the revelation of incest. Thereafter, the narrative of the past passes onto a third level, that of analepses of minimum duration, relating to events that occurred just before the start of the story, i.e. when Oedipus cursed his two sons. The frequent anachronies function as unifying threads that allow the combination of numerous narrative levels in an unusually rich plot. The mythical past thus unfolds either through explicit descriptions by the characters or through implicit hints by the Chorus. The Theban saga finds its most

thorough dramatic presentation, meeting the 'needs' of different audiences, and being both instructive for the mythically incompetent and innovative for the theatrically trained. It seems that for Euripides, an abundant presentation of the Theban myth is the only tool of interpretation of the sufferings of the Labdacids. His sophisticated treatment of the mythical megatext (with the *Phoenissae* almost creating a Theban megatext by itself) is dexterously leading the audience to the grim realization that even an exhaustive presentation of the myth, inclusive of most of the variants, can give no answer to its unsolvable problems, such as the burial of Polynices or the wedding of Antigone and Haemon.

Chapter three explores the narrative accentuation of the separation between on- and offstage action, expressed through the detailed messenger speeches that provide information about offstage occurrences (the sacrifice of Menoeceus, the first battle between Argives and Thebans, the fratricide and the final victory of the Thebans). The action unfolds outside the walls of the city, a location to which Antigone and Jocasta also hasten in a futile attempt to influence the outcome. The narrative expectations of the audience are continually let down. Starting with Eteocles, he proves unable to retain the mythical image of the competent general, which he had in the *Seven*. His characterization is clearly negative, creating one of the first dramatic surprises with respect to character drawing. The sense of dramatic reversals is further expanded by the narrative treatment of Menoeceus, who, on the one hand, is dramatized for the first time in the tragic corpus and on the other, confirms his *nomen omen*, 'remaining' for ever in his οἶκος through his death. Another narrative volte-face is the fact that Eteocles' refusal to tell Creon the names of the warriors in the second episode will finally be brought to pass by the Messenger in the fifth, satisfying those spectators who desired a warrior-list, and surprising those who believed (after the second episode) that such a narrative excursus would have been avoided. Even more intriguing is the play's end, leaving three narrative threads more or less open: Antigone's marriage, the burial of Polynices and the exile of Oedipus. Thus, while the play's first part provided information on the Theban saga, its second part invited the audience to draw their personal conclusions about the myth that reached deadlock, as well as the story that cannot really end. As the play approaches its completion, the poet implies that it is time for reflection. Through such a flexi-narrative, the audience are supposed to think for themselves and consider not simply the story's end, but also the myth's inherent ability –or disability- to give answers to the problems it describes.

In chapter four, the *Phoenissae* is seen within a broader intertextual framework, aiming both at the examination of the relationship of the

play with the mythical megatext and at the analysis of the narrative techniques that Euripides uses intertextually. The comparative study of the literary treatments of the Theban myth before Euripides demonstrates his dialectic relationship with the tradition, which he alludes to, employs creatively, and often reverses. Taking the example of the Teichoscopia, it is argued that despite the profound intertextual legacy (the scene is indebted both to the *Iliad* and the *Seven*), Euripides offers a new variant, which is incorporated into the theatrical action in order to serve wider narrative aims. The use of the narrative motifs of 'conflict' and 'revenge' follows a similar path: although they are incorporated in the *Phoenissae*, as in the *Seven*, in the Euripidean tragedy they are also combined with the motif of 'sacrifice', so as to lead to a different dramatic result. Mythical correspondences aside, intertextuality also concerns the use of analogous narrative techniques. The future reflexive which links the *Phoenissae* with the *Suppliants* enables Euripides to allow important dramatic ellipses, and so to concentrate on aspects of the action that he considers more crucial, as well as to reveal his metatheatrical self-awareness by alluding to both the *Suppliants* and the Aeschylean dyad of the *Seven* and the *Eleusinioi*. Additionally, the intertextual connection between the *Phoenissae* and other plays of the Theban cycle permits Euripides to play with his audience by inviting inevitable comparisons, which, in the end, he overturns. By means of a highly effective intertextual game, Euripides can remind his spectators of other treatments of the Theban myth and can subsequently imply that no matter what version of the story is endorsed, the *oikos* of the Labdacids is inherently morbid.

Chapter five examines the notion of dramatic space and attempts to offer a narrative 'geography' of the *Phoenissae*. Taking cue from the audience's ability to actually see the action, space is categorized into onstage, and nearby or remote offstage. While onstage space corresponds to the city of Thebes, offstage space designates both the palace or field of battle (nearby offstage space) and far away places (remote offstage space). In the prologue, space and time develop in parallel (in line with Bakhtin's *chronotope*) since the narrative reminiscences of the characters sketch a broader mythical geography, while from the first episode on, the Theban walls acquire added symbolism as the demarcation line between safety and danger. The city of Thebes is given a triple character (local, constitutional and material) and each aspect is expressed by means of exclusive diction. The second episode, which initially stresses the constitutional (πόλις) and then the local (χθών) dimension of Thebes, foreshadows the fratricide and the interdiction of Polynices' burial in Theban soil respectively. The sacrifice of Menoeceus projects the differ-

ent ways in which the various members of the family conceive the re-
mote offstage space (exile), both positively (in the case of Creon) and
negatively (in the case of Menoeceus). The metaphorical function of the
walls as the boundary between safety and danger is further highlighted in
the fourth episode, where Jocasta espouses an analogous distinction. As
is shown, the fifth episode ends with a great reversal of location, since,
after the defeat and withdrawal of the Argives, offstage space ceases to be
considered a threat and is allowed to 'host' the exiled Oedipus. Finally,
in the exodos, offstage space is 'transferred' onstage. The corpses of
Eteocles, Polynices and Jocasta, which were on the battlefield (nearby
offstage), are brought to the orchestra, which Oedipus also enters. Ironi-
cally though, the play ends with the tragic abandonment of the nearby
offstage space (battlefield and palace) at the moment when it ceases to
constitute a menace. When peace has been established, Oedipus exits his
gruesome locus and is then challenged to depart on another gloomy
journey, this time as an exile.

All in all, the *Phoenissae* constitutes a Theban megatext by itself, or-
chestrating time, space and intertextual associations towards an all-
encompassing presentation of the Theban saga. Given that the narrative
is structured upon analeptic digressions constantly filling in the tableau
of mythological information, the play is accessible by spectators of every
level of mythological and theatrical training. By means of a 'flexible'
narrative, the *Phoenissae* educates the mythically incompetent and subse-
quently allows them to follow a complex plot, as it also fascinates those
who are mythologically and theatrically apt, by offering them unantici-
pated mythical, narrative and dramatic innovations. After being certain
that his spectators are aware of the Theban mythical past to its full, Eu-
ripides can invite them to a persistent quest for answers to tantalizing
queries like: 'when did the disaster first start?' or 'who is right?' or 'what
are the limits of revenge?', or finally 'how exile from the city gives solu-
tion to the incest?'. The lack of rigid answers together with the absence
of a clear-cut ending shall therefore be seen as Euripides' implicit ac-
knowledgement of his 'inability' to explain the reasons of human self-
destruction.

Appendix I: The trilogy

There are two major theories regarding the plays which accompanied the *Phoenissae*, one grouping the play with the *Antiope* and the *Hypsipyle*, and the other with the *Oenomaus* and the *Chrysippus*.[737] The first hypothesis is mainly based on the scholion regarding Dionysus' mention of recently reading the *Andromeda* in *Frogs* 53 (=*TrGF* DID C15(c)), διὰ τί δὲ μὴ ἄλλο τι τῶν πρὸ ὀλίγου [sc. ante 405] διδαχθέντων καὶ καλῶν, Ὑψιπύλης, Φοινισσῶν, Ἀντιόπης; ἡ δὲ Ἀνδρομέδα ὀγδόωι ἔτει προ⟨ει⟩σῆλθεν, 'But why not another play, one of those successful plays put on a short time before [i.e. before 405], such as *Hypsipyle*, *Phoenician Women*, or *Antiope*? The *Andromeda* was put on eight years before'.[738] Apart from the grouping of the *Phoenissae* with the *Hypsipyle* and the *Antiope*, the scholion also points to a date after 412 (performance of *Andromeda* and *Helen*) and near 410 or 409 because of πρὸ ὀλίγου.[739] A trilogy *Antiope*, *Hypsipyle*, *Phoenissae* (occasionally with a different ordering of the plays) has been proposed by Webster, Kambitsis, Lesky, and Hunter.[740]

The main argument against such a grouping was provided by the analysis of the resolutions of the *Antiope* by Cropp and Fick, who put forward an early date and deal with the scholion on the *Frogs* by emending *Antiope* to *Antigone*.[741] For some scholars, however, the shared characteristics of the plots of the *Antiope* and the *Hypsipyle*, like reunion and revenge,[742] count for more than the metrical evidence, weaken the results of metrical analysis and make the above grouping still probable.[743]

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737 See Mastronarde (1994) 11-14.
738 The translation is by Kovacs (1994) 45.
739 See Mastronarde (1994) 14; Collard & Cropp (2008) 175.
740 Webster (1966); (1972) 454; Kambitsis (1972) xxxi-xxxiv; Lesky (1972) 444; Hunter (1981) 21 n. 18. According to the play's resolution rates, Zielinski [(1925) 230-231] also considers the *Hypsipyle* a late play, datable to c. 408 BC, belonging possibly to the same tetralogy with the *Orestes*. For the *Antiope* however, he finds metrical elements more puzzling, and he believes that Euripides must have worked on the play in several stages (219-221).
741 Cropp & Fick (1985) 74-76. For metrical evidence placing Euripides' *Antigone* after 412, see *ibid*. 74; 76.
742 See Collard, Cropp & Gibert (2004) 268-269.
743 Zeitlin (1993) 172-173. Hose (1995) 17; 197, Mueller-Goldingen (1985) 6-8, Kannicht [ad Eur. *Oen.* test. i (*TrGF* 5.2)], Mastronarde (1994) 14 [*pace* West

A trilogy consisting of the *Oenomaus*, the *Chrysippus* and the *Phoenissae* is suggested by a hypothesis of the grammarian Aristophanes.[744] Kirchhoff[745] restored the hypothesis to give the above grouping, which has won support from several subsequent scholars;[746] the theme of the curse has been taken as providing a connection between the plays. Mastronarde, however, makes three objections to such a trilogy: the lack of clear references to the history of the curse in the *Phoenissae*, the highly corrupt state of the Aristophanic hypothesis, and the absence of resolutions in the iambic trimeters attested in the fragments of the *Oenomaus* and the *Chrysippus*.[747]

Given the kind and amount of information available to us there can be no certainty with respect to the *Phoenissae* trilogy. The two main suggestions have both strong and weak points; at the end of the day, it is up to the individual scholar to decide where he or she stands. Our preference is based mainly on thematic grounds. Contrary to the looseness of an *Oenomaus*, *Chrysippus*, *Phoenissae* trilogy, an *Antiope*, *Hypsipyle*, *Phoenissae* grouping is thematically held together by the motif of brotherhood,[748] which is clearly brought forth in all three plays and creates thought–provoking oppositions between the beneficial or destructive coexistence of siblings. The *Antiope* and the *Hypsipyle* project the ideal of the productive cooperation of twins, who surpass their challenging childhood (both Amphion and Zethus and Euneus and Thoas were not brought up by their mothers, while their fathers –Zeus and Jason respectively– were totally or partially absent), and benefit their family (Am-

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(1990b) 312] and Collard & Cropp (2008) 175 are not as keen, but have some sympathy for this trilogy.

744 Mastronarde (1988) arg. 7, (a) ἐπιστρατεία Πολυνείκους μετὰ τῶν Ἀργείων ἐπὶ Θήβας καὶ ἀπώλεια τῶν ἀδελφῶν Πολυνείκους καὶ Ἐτεοκλέους καὶ θάνατος Ἰοκάστης. (b) ἡ μυθοποιία κεῖται παρ’ Αἰσχύλωι ἐν Ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβας πλὴν τῆς Ἰοκάστης. (c) ⟨ἐδιδάχθη⟩ † ἐπὶ Ναυσικράτους ἄρχοντος ⟨ ⟩ δεύτερος Εὐριπίδης ⟨ ⟩ καθῆκε διδασκαλίαν περὶ τούτου. καὶ γὰρ ταῦτα ὁ Οἰνόμαος καὶ Χρύσιππος καὶ ⟨ ⟩ σώιζεται. † (d) ὁ χορὸς συνέστηκεν ἐκ Φοινισσῶν γυναικῶν. προλογίζει δὲ Ἰοκάστη.

745 Kirchhoff (1855).

746 Robert (1915) 396; Chapouthier, Grégoire & Méridier (1950) 132; Snell (1971) Did. a. 410 (*TrGF* 1); Amiech (2004) 14–16; Wright (2006a) 28.

747 Mastronarde (1994) 36–38. Mastronarde also communicates the hesitations of Cropp to such a grouping, after correspondence that they had on this matter.

748 In the *Phoenissae* (71–72), Polynices is presented as younger than Eteocles, while in the *OC* (1294) he is the elder. The relative age of the brothers is blur in the rest of the tradition, while the fact that they both made claims on the throne of Thebes implies that they might have been presented as twins in other sources. See Mastronarde (1994) 27 n. 3.

phion and Zethus save Antiope from Dirce, Euneus and Thoas save Hypsipyle from Eurydice) or city (Amphion and Zethus wall Thebes). Given that the *Phoenissae* is the only play which includes the double foundation myth of Thebes (by Cadmus and by Amphion and Zethus), the dramatic result created by a trilogy that also dramatizes the mythical founders being ordered to wall and rule the city by Zeus must have been imposing. In such a trilogy, Thebes would have been presented as miraculously built (with Amphion bewitching the stones with his music and Zethus carrying them) according to divine will in the first play, and on the verge of destruction by civil strife in the third. The *Phoenissae* would thus be the climax of the entire trilogy. Thematic coherence would have increased the dramatic pathos and mythical relevance would have been used reciprocally: both to connect the plays, and to provide a Theban mythical panorama.[749]

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749 Being well aware of the fact that a trilogy consisting of three thematically similar plays was not common, I here follow Webster (1966) 96-97, who talks of a Euripidean experiment happening around 412, where the *Helen* and the *Adromeda*, also sharing important similarities, were put in the same trilogy. See also Mueller-Goldingen (1985) 8 and Wright (2006a) 28, who finds no secure evidence for or against the thematic connection of plays belonging in the same trilogy or tetralogy.

Appendix II: The text

The interpreter of the *Phoenissae* is confronted by the major problem of interpolation. Scholars treat the question of how much of the transmitted text was actually written by Euripides in widely divergent ways. If I count correctly, Amiech (2004) deletes 4 lines, Craik (1988) 12, Mastronarde (1994) 63, while Kovacs (2002) and Diggle (1994) bracket as spurious a total number of 423 and 444 lines respectively. I principally follow Mastronarde's edition; in this appendix I mostly discuss lines which I athetize, but which he treats as genuine.

Lines 123-124 were first deleted by Dindorf,[750] a change endorsed by Diggle[751] (who regards them as inept) and Kovacs. According to Mastronarde, this deletion downplays the liveliness of the dialogue.[752] He further defends the lines by taking Antigone's question (τίς πόθεν γεγώς;) as interrupting the previous sentence of the Servant, thus highlighting her enthusiasm and impatience.[753] In my view, the lines unnecessarily slow down the fast pace of the scene and I therefore prefer to treat them as spurious. Besides, the answers of the Servant in the rest of the scene are clear and straightforward; such a short and enigmatic reply here, by contrast, seems unlikely.

Diggle and Kovacs delete 448-451 (from Eteocles' first speech), Mastronarde (after Paley) posts a lacuna after τείχη of 448, while various conjectures have also been proposed. I side with Diggle and Kovacs, so that Eteocles' impolite τί χρὴ δρᾶν; ἀρχέτω δέ τις λόγου (447) can be smoothly followed by the castigating tone of Jocasta's ἐπίσχες (452), with no need of the intervening 448-451.

The authenticity of the last part of the play is a source of especial controversy. For Diggle and Kovacs, the play ends soon after the entrance of Oedipus and his short duet with Antigone, in line 1581. Both take out 1582-1766 wholesale, while Mastronarde accepts most of the lines, and brackets only 1596, 1634, 1637-1638, and 1737-1766. I am also inclined to defend the passage, accepting the deletions supported by Mastronarde, and additionally obelizing 1703-1707. Leidloff regarded

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750 Dindorf (1825).
751 Also in (1994b) 359.
752 Mastronarde (1994) 185.
753 Mastronarde (1994) 186-187.

them as a clear borrowing from Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*,[754] but Mastronarde interprets them as a Euripidean glimpse to the narrative future. I believe that proleptic allusions to the 'future' of the dramatic characters do happen, but not so straightforwardly. Given that the *Phoenissae* is a play with a vaguely open ending, I consider such an explicit reference to the extratextual future of Oedipus least possible.

I would like to dwell briefly on one of the most debated passages of the play, although here I agree with Mastronarde in defending the lines. The authenticity of the description of the Argive and Theban captains in lines 1104-1140 was first put into question[755] in 1771 by Morus, under the three basic arguments of (i) un-Euripidean writing, (ii) artistic irrelevance, and (iii) repetition of καὶ πρῶτα μέν in 1104 and 1141.[756] In 1882, Naber rejected lines 1090-1208, while his analysis included some further arguments against 1104-1140, namely (iv) repetition of information given in the Teichoscopia, and (v) inconsistency with Eteocles' comment of 751-752.[757] Walter later claimed that the scene has been interpolated because it includes no reference to Menoeceus' sacrifice,[758] while Polle also considered it an interpolated imitation of Aeschylus.[759] In his edition of 1894, Wecklein did not bracket the passage, but did not rule out the possibility of interpolation on grounds of (vi) the strong similarity to Aeschylus and (vii) the inconsistency between 1134 (where Adrastus is one of the seven chiefs) and 1187 (where Adrastus leads the whole Argive army).[760] The first editor to bracket the entire passage was Powell,[761] and his decision was later supported by Page,[762] Friedrich[763], Fraenkel,[764] Diller,[765] Erbse,[766] Dihle,[767] Mueller-Goldingen, Diggle and Kovacs.

In an article of 1977 as well as in his commentary of 1994, Mastronarde made a case for the authenticity of the passage. He claimed that (i)

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754 Leidloff (1863).
755 For what follows I have consulted Mastronarde (1978).
756 Morus (1771) 10-11.
757 Naber (1882) 148.
758 See Wecklein (1889) 392.
759 Polle (1890) 53.
760 Wecklein (1894) 13.
761 Powell (1911).
762 Page (1934) 21.
763 Friedrich (1939) 271.
764 Fraenkel (1963) 53-56.
765 Diller (1964).
766 Erbse (1966).
767 Dihle (1981) 73-84.

although the catalogue of 1104–1140 is not as good as Euripides' best work, it is still interesting and skillful, and (ii) he opposed a play with multiple themes against thematic irrelevance. He further argued (iii) against linguistic repetition by highlighting a temporal and a non-temporal use of πρῶτα μέν in 1104 and 1141 respectively, (iv) against repetition in the Teichoscopia and the catalogue by emphasizing their different functions, and (v) against inconsistency between Eteocles' comment (751–752) and the description of the catalogue (1104–1140), by underscoring the different timing of their enactment. He finally (vi) denied accusations of an Aeschylean imitation by projecting a purposeful similarity with but also divergence from the Aeschylean model, as (vii) he convincingly rejected any inconsistency between 1134 and 1187.[768]

My narratological analysis strengthens arguments (v) and (vi). In (v), my discussion demonstrates that the Teichoscopia and the catalogue are two complementary scenes, where Euripides combines old information about the position of the generals with new descriptions of their behavior during the attack. An intertextual reading of the play further accentuates the subtle connection between the catalogue of the *Phoenissae* and the shield-scene in the *Seven*. The deceitful inconsistency between lines 751–752 and 1104–1140 is actually a carefully planned narrative tactic regarding the use and simultaneous rejection of dramatic conventions of communicating offstage action. By initially condemning a technique that he is finally following, Euripides makes sure that his spectators will not miss his novel glance at Aeschylus. In these terms, the Euripidean catalogue resembles the Aeschylean shield-scene not in a way that generates suspicions of interpolation, but in a way that guarantees that a skillful intertextual game will not remain unnoticed (vi).

768 Mastronarde (1978); (1994).

Abbreviations

NOTE: For the text of the *Phoenissae*, I principally follow the edition by D. J. Mastronarde (*Euripides Phoenissae: Edited with Introduction and Commentary*, Cambridge 1994), with some minor changes (see Appendix II: The text). The translation used is by D. Kovacs (*Euripides: Helen, Phoenician Women, Orestes*, Cambridge MA 2002), unless otherwise stated. The rest of Euripides is cited from the standard edition by J. Diggle in the Oxford Classical Texts (vols. 1-3, 1981-1994). Names of authors and their works are generally abbreviated as in *LSJ*[9].

D-K	H. Diels (ed.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th ed., vols. 1-3, rev. W. Kranz, Berlin 1951-1952.
EGF	M. Davies (ed.), *Epicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, Göttingen 1988.
EGM	R.L. Fowler (ed.) *Early Greek Mythography*, 1 vol. to date, Oxford 2000–.
FGrHist	F. Jacoby *et al.* (eds.), *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin and Leiden, 1923-.
GEF	M. L. West (ed.), *Greek Epic Fragments from the Seventh to the Fifth Centuries BC*, Cambridge MA and London 2003.
IEG	M. L. West (ed.), *Iambi et Elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati*, 2nd ed., vols. 1-2, Oxford 1989-1992.
LSJ[9]	H. G. Liddell, R. Scott & H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. with a rev. supplement, Oxford 1996.
M-W	R. Merkelbach & M. L. West (eds.), *Fragmenta Hesiodea*, Oxford 1967.
PEG	A. Bernabé (ed.), *Poetae Epici Graeci: Testimonia et Fragmenta*, pars I, Stuttgart and Leipzig 1996.
PMG	D. L. Page (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci*, Oxford 1962.
PMGF	M. Davies, *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, Oxford 1991.
S-M	B. Snell & H. Maehler (eds.), *Pindari Carmina cum Fragmentis*, vols. 1-2, Leipzig 1987-1989.
TrGF	B. Snell, R. Kannicht & S. Radt (eds.), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, vols. 1-5, Göttingen 1971-2004.

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