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IV

MARCO FANTUZZI

THE MYTHS OF DOLON AND RHESUS FROM HOMER TO THE 'HOMERIC/CYCLIC' TRAGEDY *RHESUS*

The idea that the *Rhesus* is "nothing else than an *Iliadis* carmen diductum in actus", as the tragedy was authoritatively described one century ago,[1] would no longer find many supporters among modern scholars. Indeed, even in merely quantitative terms, only one-fourth of the play (1-263) can be considered a sort of dramatization of the Doloneia of *Iliad* 10, while the rest of the play's events either have no precedent in Homer, or are presented in a way essentially different from *Iliad* 10 — in particular, the author might very well have followed the premises and the source of information that in *Iliad* 10 lead Odysseus and Diomedes to the killing of Rhesus in Homer, but he did not, as we shall see. Furthermore, the dynamics of the relation of this tragedy to the Homeric texts and to the tragic conventions in terms of literary genre are by far more complex than they might initially seem.

We will see how the intention of the *Rhesus* to be a 'continuation' of *Iliad* 10 resembles the Cyclic and Aeschylean experiences in adopting a post-Homeric approach to events connected to the Trojan War. We will also see how, in spite of the conditioning of the epic model, the Doloneia of the *Rhesus* attempts to be a properly tragic piece. We will finally see how the non-

[1] CHRIST 1889, 203.

Homeric part of the *Rhesus*, which was conceived *ad hoc* for the theatrical performance and originally intended to be a piece of tragedy, displays a kind of radical epicization of the usual tragic conventions.

The motif of the arrival and death of the fabulously rich and powerful allies of the Trojans had already been featured, though marginally, in the *Iliad*, but most probably had played an important narrative role only in the epic Cycle, especially in the post-Iliadic *Aethiopis*. The *Aethiopis* was entirely devoted to the arrival on the battlefield of Penthesileia with her Amazons and the Aethiopian prince Memnon. In this poem, at least, it is easy enough to guess that the intervention of the Trojans' allies provided substantial narrative prolongation of the action by temporarily misleading the audience about the outcome of the war, which at that point had already been more or less decided in favour of the Greeks, through a series of renewed battles boosting false expectations about Troy's survival.[2] Penthesileia and Memnon were also certainly given consistent attention by the author of the *Aethiopis*. Both heroes enjoyed an *aristeia* before dying (Procl. *Chrest.* 5 and 12-13, *PEG* I pp.67-8), and both of their deaths led to a substantial reaction: Achilles killed Thersites when the latter accused him of having fallen in love with the Amazon,[3] and Eos, the mother of Memnon, prayed to Zeus and won immortality for her son (Procl. *Chrest.* 6-8 and 14-15, *PEG* I pp.68-9). Furthermore, in at least the case of Memnon, the death of this Trojan ally was in all probability treated as parallel to the death of Hector if, as seems most likely, the result of the duel between Achilles and Memnon was decided by Zeus (assisted by Hermes) in a scene of *psychostasia* comparable to that in which Zeus had decided about the duel of Achilles and Hector in *Il.* 22.209-213.[4] Last but not least, Eos' mourning

[2] Cf. WEST 2003, 9.

[3] This Cyclic episode became in the 4th cent. the subject of Chaeremon's *Achilleus Thersitoctonus* (*TrGF* 71 F *1b).

[4] That there was a *psychostasia* in the *Aethiopis* is evidenced by a few pre-Aeschylean vase-representations of the weighing of Achilles' and Memnon's souls:

for Memnon and her intervention with Zeus prove a telling anticipation of Thetis' mourning for Achilles and her escorting of him to his life of relative immortality on the island of Leuke, given that Achilles' death at the hands of Paris and the intervention of Thetis were apparently described immediately following Eos' prayer to Zeus, at the end of the same *Aethiopis* (Procl. *Chrest.* 14-16 and 19-23, *PEG* I pp.68-9).[5] This parallelism, which equates the behaviour of two divine mothers from the two opposing factions, means that it is plausible that Eos' reaction to the death of her son was related with some degree of empathy, and that the *Iliad*'s usual Greek perspective on the events would have been suspended in order to portray her grief from the point of view of the "losers": the Trojans and above all their allies.

In the *Iliad*, where scenes of mourning and lament speeches for dead Greek warriors and the Trojan Hector are all but infrequent,[6] the two most significant deaths of Trojan allies, Rhesus and Sarpedon, not only carry lesser narrative weight, but also do not lead to any kind of substantial mourning. The description of Sarpedon's death, in the 16th book, includes some hints of its pathetic reactions, and has other clear points of contact with

cf. *LIMC* VI 1 pp.451-3 (A. KOSSATZ-DEISSMANN). The parallelism between Memnon, "hero of the East" and Achilles "hero of the West" — both are sons of a divine mother, both get a shield manufactured by Hephaestus — had also been well highlighted by REINHARDT 1960, 15. In *Il.* 18.95-96 Thetis anticipates that the fatal destiny of her son Achilles "is ready soon after Hector" (αὐτίκα γάρ τοι ἔπειτα μεθ' Ἕκτορα πότμος ἑτοῖμος), though in the narrative of the actual *Iliad* Achilles does not die at all soon after Hector, and WEST 2003, 7-8 plausibly reproposes with new arguments that these lines "must reflect an earlier conception of the narrative plan... in which Achilles after killing Hector did just what Patroclus does after killing Sarpedon: forgot the advice he had been given and went on pursuing the enemy to the gates of Troy".

[5] See especially the nearness of Memnon's death to that of Achilles' in Proclus' *Chrest.* 14-16: "... Achilles kills Memnon. And Eos confers immortality upon him after prevailing on Zeus. Achilles puts the Trojans to flight and chases them into the city, but is killed by Paris and Apollo". On the parallelism between Thetis and Eos see lastly SLATKIN 1986, 1-9, who also addresses the iconography of this parallelism, most probably modelled on the *Aethiopis*.

[6] A specific discussion in TSAGALIS 2004; for a list, cf. p.28.

the pathos of Memnon's story.[7] However these responses hardly provoke a significant description of pathos, as they concern Sarpedon's father Zeus, whose sorrowful tears of blood (*Il.* 16.459-461) are quite peculiar and distant from the more pathetic level of human grief.[8] As for the human focalizers, the importance of Sarpedon for the destiny of the war and the mourning of the Trojans is presented only in *Il.* 16.548-551 through a brief and detached comment: "the Trojans were taken head to heel with a sorrow untakeable, not to be endured, since he was their city's stay (σφίσιν ἕρμα πόληος ἔσκε), always, though he was a foreigner, and many people came with him, but he was the best of them all in battle always".

Zeus' original intention had simply been to rescue Sarpedon from Patroclus' hands (16.436-438), but he later follows Hera's advice as she dissuades him from abusing his powers and transgressing the general principle of the Iliadic world and narrative: nothing is allowed to happen contrary to or beyond fate.[9] She allows Zeus only to rescue Sarpedon's body and carry it back to Lycia (16.453-457 ~ 671-675):

> αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δὴ τόν γε λίπηι ψυχή τε καὶ αἰών,
> πέμπειν μιν Θάνατόν τε φέρειν καὶ νήδυμον Ὕπνον
> εἰς ὅ κε δὴ Λυκίης εὐρείης δῆμον ἵκωνται,
> ἔνθά έ ταρχύσουσι κασίγνητοί τε ἕταί τε
> τύμβωι τε στήληι τε· τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων.

[7] It is a commonplace of especially Neo-analysis that the Iliadic narration of the death of Sarpedon derived from and was modelled on the death of Memnon narrated in the *Aethiopis* — bibliography in CLARK-COULSON 1978, 65-66. JANKO 1994, 373 suggests: "I conclude that Homer or a predecessor made Sarpedon die at Troy because that was where a great Asiatic warrior had to die, just as the *Nibelungenlied* falsely synchronizes Attila and Theoderic...; but, needing to return his body to Lycia as local cult required, the poet adapted the tale of Memnon's death". For a criticism of this perspective see DIHLE 1970, 19-20, NAGY 1990, 130-131.

[8] On the similar behaviour of Zeus vis-à-vis Athena concerning the death of Hector, and on the inevitable detachment with which gods watch human events, with the result that only human focalizers provide full expression of the pathos, cf. BREMER 1987, 42-43.

[9] Cf. JANKO 1994, 375: "if Zeus saves Sarpedon, the story fails, for then Thetis could save Akhilleus, as Hera hints; but if Zeus does nothing, he looks implausibly feeble; so he must yield to a higher power".

Indeed Zeus' concern and the intervention of his helpers Hypnos and Thanatos do not clearly inform us that Zeus provides Sarpedon with any kind of compensatory immortality, such as that which, in contrast, Eos (via Zeus) and Thetis manage to gain for Memnon or Achilles in the *Aethiopis*; Sarpedon is only granted funerary honours in his homeland. This was certainly a form of distinction, as all other Homeric warriors who fell at Troy were buried in the Troad, with Sarpedon alone receiving burial in his own land, but there is no explicit statement in the *Iliad* of Sarpedon's immortality as a hero[10] — though there may have probably been an implicit hint. The verb ταρχύειν is usually translated as "to give someone burial", both here and in the only other Homeric passage in which it occurs (*Il.* 7.85-86). Nonetheless, as Sarpedon elsewhere expressly mentions the 'divine'/heroic honours already granted him in his lifetime (*Il.* 12.310-21), it is quite plausible that, as far as Sarpedon is concerned, the verb ταρχύειν still involved the meaning 'to heroize'/'to treat as a god' (a sense inferable from one of its possible etymologies[11]), and so hinted at a tomb cult of Sarpedon that included his 'immortalization' as a hero. What is clear, in any case, is that this implicit reference would have had to be recognized through the lens of the Homeric restraint on the miraculous, as if the idea of cultic immortalization of a hero could not easily coexist with the otherwise consistent Homeric idea that immortality is the fruit of the *kleos* granted by epic song or the usual Homeric silence concerning cult-worship of heroes.[12]

[10] On the recurrence of the theme of immortality (especially cultic immortality) in the more "accommodating world" of the Cyclic poems (and of the *Odyssey*), and the *Iliad*'s greater restraint on it, cf. GRIFFIN 1977, 42-43, with the qualifications by EDWARDS 1985, 215-218; see also SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1995, chap.2 and BURGESS 2001, 168-169.

[11] For the etymology of ταρχύειν, already accepted by P. CHANTRAINE, *DELG* (but rejected by JANKO 1994, 377), and the consequent interpretation of the Homeric passage, cf. NAGY 1990, chap.5.

[12] As CURRIE 2005, 51 nicely puts it, "it might be argued that two traditional epic features lie behind the story of Sarpedon in *Iliad* 16: first, a hero cult of Sarpedon, known to be practised in Lycia; second, a traditional epic narrative which told of the immortalization of Memnon. Homer seems to have retained the

As for Rhesus, in *Iliad* 10 his role is almost entirely limited to his being the owner of the horses going to be acquired by Odysseus and Diomedes (cf. 434-441, 474-501). In only the briefest way does Homer narrate how Rhesus' cousin, Hippocoon, mourns for him at 10.518-522[13] — and not without first recognizing the absence of the horses, and the slaughter of Rhesus and the other Thracians only later! As for the Trojans, they appear simply to be indignant over the extent of the devastation provoked by the two Greek spies/commandos, with no thought at all for the importance that the loss of Rhesus might have for the outcome of the war (cf. 523-525).

The death of some of the great allies of the Trojans is on the contrary a motif that also enjoys some *Nachleben* in tragedy, after the Cycle. In the *Poetics* (23.1459 b 6) Aristotle suggests *Eurypylos* as one of the "more than eight" tragedies that can be developed from the *Parva Ilias* (Eurypylos the son of Telephus, king of Mysia, after performing great deeds at Troy, was killed by Neoptolemus, while his father Telephus had been wounded by Neoptolemus' father Achilles), and a tragedy with this title was composed by Sophocles (*TrGF* 206-222b). The *Cypria* had narrated the death of the Thracian Cycnus, the son of Poseidon, who was killed by Achilles soon after the first Greek casualty, Protesilaus, had been killed by Hector, and Sophocles' *Poimenes* (*TrGF* 497-521) — if it really was a tragedy, and not a satyr drama, as has been recently proposed[14] — featured Cycnus as protagonist (frr. 499 and 501), no less than Protesilaos, and included the description of a marching army (Cycnus'

shape of this tradition, but changed its contents in negating the cult or immortalization of Sarpedon".

[13] Cf. HAINSWORTH 1993, 206; BARRETT 2002, 171-172.

[14] ROSEN 2003. I do not know whether the evidence for comic language and tone provided by Rosen is enough to believe his interpretation of the genre. But certainly this Sophoclean 'tragedy' — as well the *Rh.* (cf. PIPPIN BURNETT 1985) — included elements of excessive boast, which might seem comic (fr. 501), and furthermore included terms which might belong to comedy.

army arriving at Troy? or the Greek army after landing?[15]) presented in narrative form by a shepherd (*TrGF* 502):

ἑωθινὸς γάρ, πρίν τιν' αὐλιτῶν ὁρᾶν,
θαλλὸν χιμαίραις προσφέρων νεοσπάδα
εἶδον στρατὸν *στείχοντα* παρ' ἁλίαν ἄκραν.

This passage may be at least vaguely echoed by the announcement of Rhesus' arrival by the shepherd-messenger in the *Rhesus* (276-277 and 290-291):[16]

ἀνὴρ γὰρ ἀλκῆς μυρίας στρατηλατῶν
στείχει φίλος σοι σύμμαχός τε τῆιδε γῆι
...
πολλῆι γὰρ ἠχῆι Θρήκιος ῥέων στρατός
ἔστειχε, κτλ.

There may have also been some description of a frightening and powerful army of Trojan allies (Cycnus and/or Memnon?) in Aeschylus, according to a passage in the parody of Aristophanes, *Ranae*, where Euripides proudly states (962-963):

οὐδ' ἐξέπληττον αὐτούς
Κύκνους ποιῶν καὶ Μέμνονας κωδωνοφαλαροπώλους.[17]

At any rate Aeschylus certainly wrote two tragedies whose protagonist was Memnon, *Memnon* and *Psychostasia*, which most likely belonged to a single trilogy — if these are not alternative titles of the same tragedy.[18] We also know that there circulated under his name the title *Cares or Europa* (*TrGF* 99-101), whose subject was the burial of Sarpedon in Lycia and his mourning

[15] The former hypothesis is favoured by WILAMOWITZ (*loc.cit.* n.10); the latter by the editors A.C. PEARSON and H. LLOYD-JONES.

[16] As was supposed by WILAMOWITZ 1877, 13. The doubts raised by RITCHIE 1964, 81 can hardly be shared.

[17] For a full analysis of Aristophanes' passage, and of the motif in Aeschylus and Sophocles as underlying the shepherd's description of Rhesus' army at 301-308 of our tragedy see PATTONI 2001 and, independently, MICHELAKIS 2002, 170 and n.62.

[18] Bibliography in *TrGF* III p.376. On *Psychostasia* see below pp. 169-170.

by Europa.[19] Recently doubts about the paternity of this tragedy have been raised,[20] but from my perspective it makes no difference whether it was written by Aeschylus or by Aeschylus' son Euphorion. It also makes no difference whether the *Cares or Europa* was combined in a trilogy with the other title(s) *Memnon* and *Psychostasia* (or *Memnon/Psychostasia*), or not.[21] In all events these Iliadic/'Trojan' tragedies would have fully balanced Aeschylus' Iliadic/'Greek' trilogy including *Myrmidones* (which staged the last phase of Achilles' *menis*, and Patroclus' death) and *Phryges* (about Priam's visit to Achilles to ransom Hector's body) + *Nereides* (the second play, if it staged the delivery of Achilles' new armour by Hephaestus, and the death of Hector, as is usually believed; the third play, if its theme was Achilles' death and Thetis' mourning[22]). The two series of tragedies thus appear to have accomplished the task of presenting the grief of the Trojan war not only from the Greek point of view, which Homer's *Iliad* had preferred, but from that of the Trojans as well. Indeed, if *Nereides* was concerned with the mourning of Achilles, then the possible *Cares-Memnon-Psychostasia* trilogy

[19] As was already suggested in the 19th cent. by Hartung and Blass (*contra* Bergk): see *TrGF* III p.217. See also METTE 1963, 110; KEEN 2005, 68.

[20] By WEST 2000, 347-350.

[21] The idea of a trilogy *Cares-Memnon-Psychostasia* has been maintained by METTE 1963, 108-112; KOSSATZ-DEISSMANN 1978, 73-4; WEST 2000, 347; *contra* GANTZ 1978/9, 303 n.82; SOMMERSTEIN 1996, 56-57. It is true, as Gantz maintains, that the arrangement *Cares-Memnon-Psychostasia* would be "more thematic than narrative in its connection", but this thematic link is especially strong: as SOMMERSTEIN 1996, 43 correctly observes, "in *The Weighing of Souls* Eos would be shown doing for Memnon what Apollo, Death and Sleep are described in the *Iliad* (16.666-683) as doing for another leading ally of the Trojans, Sarpedon". Furthermore the coupling of Memnon and Sarpedon as objects of the gods' grief in Aristophanes, *Nubes* 622 may provide evidence that the Athenians had fairly recently had cause to think of these two heroes and to link them together (anon. referee quoted by WEST 2000, 347 n.51, and KEEN 2005, 66).

[22] As suggested by WEST 2000, 341-343. It will hardly be by chance that both *Myrmidones* and *Nereides* were two of the few tragedies beginning with an anapestic parodos (the other were Aeschylus' *Persians*, *Supplices*, and most probably *Prometheus Lyomenos* [*TrGF* 190-192], furthermore Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*, whose initial anapestic dialogue has been however often doubted).

might be seen as an even more "complementary construct" to the Iliadic/'Greek' trilogy, "covering roughly the same time-span but from the barbarian side".[23] This attention of Aeschylus to the *pathe* of the barbarian losers has already been correctly compared to the perspective of Atossa and the Persian chorus in the *Persians*.[24] After all the case of Memnon and Eos suggests, as we have seen, that the "enemy's mourning", precisely in connection with the deaths of the great Trojan allies, had probably been already a major theme of the epic Cycle.

There is quite a telling difference, however, between *Memnon* and/or *Psychostasia* on one side, and *Cares or Europa* on the other. In the former case Aeschylus had been developing a subject and a point of view already found in his epic model, the *Aethiopis*. As for Sarpedon, on the other hand, the *Cares* had 'continued' a myth of which Homer's *Iliad* had only narrated the beginning, namely the death of Sarpedon and the conveyance of his corpse to Lycia by Hypnos and Thanatos. We do not know how much of the story of *Iliad* 16 was retold in the *Cares or Europa* (e.g. in the form of a report by some witness or messenger, as in the *Persians*, since the scene is in Caria[25]), but *TrGF* **99 — a long fragment of 23 lines from a *PDidot*, most probably from the initial part of the tragedy, in which Europa thinks back over her relation with Zeus and mournfully presents her fears about Sarpedon's life — leads us to infer with some confidence that at least this beginning chronologically overlapped with the Homeric events: it is quite reasonable that in order to highlight the usual tragic lack of knowledge of reality this monologue will have been pronounced by an Europa still unaware of what was happening to Sarpedon on the battlefield, or just after this fatal event had taken place, with the effect of anticipating/duplicating the pathos of the actual event

[23] See, most recently, WEST 2000, 350.

[24] See, e.g., KOSSATZ-DEISSMANN 1978, 65-66.

[25] Caria, and not Lycia as in Homer, or Caria=Lycia (cf. STRAB. 14.3.3 p.665). The mention of Mylasa, the capital of Caria, in *TrGF* 101 makes the first hypothesis more probable: cf. WEST 2000, 348 n.54.

of Sarpedon's death, in a similar way to the dream of the charioteer in *Rh.* 780-788 (see below). The most pathetic arrival of Sarpedon's body to Lycia, carried by Hypnos and Thanatos (the last Iliadic image concerning Sarpedon: 16.682-683), probably formed part of the scenic action (of course by means of the *mechane*), as it is plausible to suppose in the light of three extant vases datable from about 430 to 380 BC, which have probably been influenced by the text of the *Cares*, and focus on the carrying of the body by Hypnos and Thanatos.[26] The *Cares* would then have moved on to focus on the more typically tragic tale of the pathetic reaction of Sarpedon's mother to the news of her son's death. In the *Rhesus* as well, the Doloneia of the first two hundred lines deals primarily with the story of *Il.* 10, but the tragedy also goes into much more detail concerning the death of Rhesus,[27] through the report of the driver (756-803), where the device of the dream duplicates the description of a scene of terror and death; it also adds the 'new' mourning of his corpse by the Muse and the prophecy about his future survival as a hero in Thrace (962-973).[28] Some sort of parallelism is thus evident in the genesis of the *Cares or Europa* and the *Rhesus*: both tragedies consist in the continuation of an Iliadic episode whose tragic aftermath of pathetic maternal grief had not been exploited by Homer, via the Cyclic deployments of this motif. Incidentally, if the *Cares or Europa* also celebrated Sarpedon's death as an *aition* of the heroic cult that existed around the

[26] Cf. most recently ROBERTSON 1988, 113-114 and KEEN 2005, 68-69. That this scene was featured in the *Cares* was already proposed by H. WEIR SMYTH back in 1926.

[27] About *Il.* 10, see above, p. 140.

[28] THUM 2005 has managed to show that the author of the *Rh.* has lost many an opportunity to develop pathetic possibilities of his plot, and reasonably criticized Xanthakis-Karamanos' emphasis on the pathetic features which would make the *Rh.* and Astydamas' *Hector* closely comparable as 4th cent. pieces. But to prove that some chances of pathetic exploits were disregarded does not mean that the *Rh.* did not exploit other ones — and as a fact Thum appears to understate such episodes of the *Rh.* as the report by the charioteer or the Muse's mourning, which unquestionably are pathetic 'additions' to Homer.

tomb of Sarpedon,[29] the analogy should be even stronger, since the Muse of the *Rhesus* (962-973) anticipates Rhesus' heroic immortality — this latter hypothesis, however, although plausible, can be nothing more than just that, owing to the absence of support from the fragments.

The *Rhesus* may also challenge an older, Cyclic model for the pathetic treatment of Rhesus' death and the Muse's reactions, namely the *Aethiopis*. As we have already seen, it is possible to infer from the *immediate* narrative contiguity of the deaths of Memnon and Achilles that in this Cyclic poem the parallelism between Eos' and Thetis' reactions to the loss of their sons was emphasized. It is also sure that in the *Aethiopis* the Muses were recorded to be present in the mourning over Achilles' corpse, together with Thetis (Procl. *Chrest.* 20, *PEG* p.69):

> καὶ Θέτις ἀφικομένη σὺν Μούσαις καὶ ταῖς ἀδελφαῖς θρηνεῖ τὸν παῖδα.

The participation of the Muses in Achilles' funerals had been also briefly reported in *Od.* 24.58-62:

> ἀμφὶ δέ σ' ἔστησαν κοῦραι ἁλίοιο γέροντος
> οἴκτρ' ὀλοφυρόμεναι, περὶ δ' ἄμβροτα εἵματα ἕσσαν.
> Μοῦσαι δ' ἐννέα πᾶσαι ἀμειβόμεναι ὀπὶ καλῇ
> θρήνεον· ἔνθα κεν οὔ τιν' ἀδάκρυτόν γ' ἐνόησας
> Ἀργείων· τοῖον γὰρ ὑπώρορε Μοῦσα λίγεια.

Though the slay of Rhesus is all but close in time to Achilles' death (differently from the deaths of Memnon and Achilles in the *Aethiopis*), a new parallelism between Rhesus' and Achilles' deaths is established by the Muse of the *Rhesus*, who also prophesies her and her sisters' participation in Achilles' funerals (974-979):

> ῥᾴιον δὲ πένθος τῆς θαλασσίας θεοῦ
> οἴσω· θανεῖν γὰρ καὶ τὸν ἐκ κείνης χρεών.

[29] Cf., e.g., *OGIS* 552; App. *BCiv.* 4.10.78-79; Philostr. *Her.* 14; *Schol. ad* Hom. *Il.* 16.673; Kossatz-Deissmann 1978, 63-65 and 74.

θρήνοις δ' ἀδελφαὶ πρῶτα μὲν σ' ὑμνήσομεν,
ἔπειτ' Ἀχιλλέα Θέτιδος ἐν πένθει ποτέ.
οὐ ῥύσεταί νιν Παλλάς, ἥ σ' ἀπέκτανεν·
τοῖον φαρέτρα Λοξίου σώιζει βέλος.

I suggest that by means of these words this final prophecy of the *Rhesus* emphatically reproposes the same kind of parallelisms in maternal-divine grief that was narrated in the *Aethiopis*. As is well known, all of the extant tragedies of Euripides, with the exceptions of *Alcestis*, *Trojan Women*, and possibly *Phoenician Women*,[30] conclude with a prophecy.[31] Usually delivered by a speaker with privileged knowledge of events outside the play, such as a god (in most cases a *deus ex machina*), this sort of prophetic ending "helps to create or reinforce a distinction between the end of the dramatic performance and the continuity of events portrayed".[32] Our case is rather special. The prophecy in the *Rhesus* not only predicts future events (the night of Rhesus' death chronologically precedes Achilles' death) but also recounts the pre-existing text of the *Aethiopis* that had narrated at least one of these events (the participation of the Muses in the mourning for Achilles), and had pointed to another parallel grief of divine mothers for mortal children (Eos and Thetis for Memnon and Achilles). Therefore the words of the *Rhesus*' Muse constitute a gesture that at the same time recalls the most probable role of the *Aethiopis* as model for the divine mourning in the last part of the tragedy, and enhances the net of parallel mournings described by this very model, extending the continuity not of the events, as usually in the final tragic prophecies, but of the griefs: the future parallel funerals and the mourning

[30] *Phoenician Women* is of course an exception only for the critics who remove the entire *exodos* or those who delete 1703-1707, but is not anomalous for those who retain these lines along with some other portions of the *exodos*. For a most persuasive defence of the authenticity of 1703-1707, see MASTRONARDE 1994, 626.

[31] The *Rhesus* may well not be by Euripides (so I believe), though in its mannerism it imitates Euripides from several perspectives.

[32] Cf. DUNN 1996, 66-67.

of the Muses narrated in the *Aethiopis* come to have a longer past after the *Rhesus*.

The Muse's prophecy may also otherwise 'compete' with the model of the *Aethiopis*. Indeed it reshapes in a slightly different way the function of the Muse within the future events which were already narrated by *Aethiopis*.[33] I will not insist on the challenging comparison with Thetis' mourning which the Muse may be drawing at *Rh.* 974-975, if we accept Musgrave's and Valckenaer's ῥᾶιον instead of βαιόν (as I think we should). Apart from this textually uncertain case of explicit challenge, the Muse expresses an implicit challenging stance towards Athena: not only my son will die, but also Thetis' son in spite of Athena's protection. We cannot rule out that in the Cyclic poem as well the Muse may have already evoked her grief for her own child, before mourning for Achilles, though I am much more prepared to believe that this was an innovation of the *Rhesus* — no hint of this sense of revenge and challenge can either be detected in *Od.* 24.57-62 or plausibly supposed in the *Aethiopis*' extended narrative, as it is too strongly connected with the proximity of the death of Rhesus, and the consequently resentful atmosphere of the speech by the *Rhesus*' Muse, to exist separately from them.[34] Furthermore even the Muse's reference forward to Apollo as the slayer of Achilles in *Rh.* 978-979 quoted above might be understood as an explicitly threatening and vengeful reconception of the role of Apollo in *Iliad* 10, which is oriented in the same direction as the implicit taunt against Pallas con-

[33] "If the text is asked to provide an analogy for its intertextual origins, one could say that the *past* is the most natural site for any form of intertextual recall... But what happens when the older tradition enters a new text as a view of the *future*? The idea that the characters can have a future that has already been written down is much less natural, and calls for constant negotiation between author and reader. A certain alignment is now broken" (BARCHIESI 1993, 333-334 = 2001, 105).

[34] VATER 1837, p.CXLVII (*Vind.* v.viii) suggested to understand the Muse's mention of the death of Achilles by supposing that the next tragedy of the trilogy featuring the *Rhesus* would have dealt with the death of Achilles: a too simplistic explanation, which relies on the unknown.

cerning Achilles' funeral. In *Il.* 10.511 Athena had warned Odysseus and Diomedes to return immediately to the ships, in order to avoid that some other god might stir up the Trojans (μή πού τις καὶ Τρῶας ἐγείρησιν θεὸς ἄλλος), and four lines after Apollo was actually stirring up awareness of the death of Rhesus among the Trojans, and woke up Hippocoon (10.515-522). Instead of a thoroughly epic action with simultaneous or adjoining divine interventions, in the *Rh.* Apollo's hostility to Athena is postponed to the future and gains from this a great aggressive power, acquiring the role of a real tit-for-tat revenge by the Muse on Athena for the death of Rhesus.

* * *

My second point has to do with how the Doloneia of the *Rhesus*, in spite of its obvious Homeric precedent, is made to conform to the generic features of tragedy. This section will be far more a brief summary of a few examples than an exposition, since I have recently already addressed this subject.[35] The author of the *Rhesus* appears, in his treatment of the Doloneia, to be concerned mainly with 'staging' the anxiety (especially the fear of being tricked by enemies) along with the lack of real knowledge and self-deception that misleads all of the characters; he makes this section of the piece a real 'tragedy of errors'. This is evident not only from the play's emphasis on the idea of *phobos* (Hector's personal *phobos* concerning the general *phobos* of the soldiers, i.e. the military panic), and the reciprocal accusations of a failure to acknowledge reality exchanged between the chorus and Hector and between Hector and Aeneas, but also from the fact that the Trojans' satisfaction with Aeneas' plan of sending a spy rather than mobilizing the army is indicative of general self-deception. The Trojans' decision to send a spy-mission will of course turn out to be the cause of their utter ruin: had the Trojan camp not been asleep, Odysseus and Diomedes

[35] FANTUZZI 2006.

would never have killed Rhesus. In addition, the author of the *Rhesus* misdirects the spectators by means of allusions that ascribe to the Trojans behaviour and actions that had belonged to the Greeks in *Il.* 10, or in other cases by attributing to Trojans speeches that had, in the *Iliad*, actually been delivered by different Trojan characters.

A few examples of this intertextual misdirection will suffice.[36] The Doloneia of the *Iliad* begins with a series of awakenings in the Greek camp: Agamemnon goes to wake Nestor for advice; the two decide to hold an assembly and so Nestor goes to wake Odysseus and Diomedes. The *Rhesus* begins with an analogous action: the sentinels go to wake Hector. The re-use of the motif would in this case establish an ideal continuity between the *Rhesus* and the *Iliad*, and would do so without disorienting the spectator but on the contrary by directing him to the model and thus the guideline to be followed for understanding the tragedy. But the *Rhesus* does not limit itself to adopting the motif, and stages it in such a way as to disorient, rather than orient, the audience. At 7-8 the guards entreat Hector to wake up with the words:

ὄρθου κεφαλὴν πῆχυν ἐρείσας,
λῦσον βλεφάρων γοργωπὸν ἕδραν, κτλ.

As a marginal note in cod. Vatic.gr. 909 has already pointed out, having just awoken, the Hector of the *Rhesus* performs exactly the same gesture with which Nestor awoke when Agamemnon had roused him from sleep in *Il.* 10.72-81. At 80 the Iliadic Nestor wakes up:

ὀρθωθεὶς δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' ἀγκῶνος, κεφαλὴν ἐπαείρας.

Again, in the *strophe* of the first choral song of the *Rhesus*, the watchmen press for general mobilization of the army and think of the various requirements necessary for making this happen. After having solicited Hector to alert his division and the allies, the chorus reminds him that it will be necessary to rouse the

[36] For a fuller analysis see FANTUZZI 2006.

most distinguished leaders, of whom they name two (*Rh.* 28-29):

> τίς εἶσ' ἐπὶ Πανθοΐδαν
> ἢ τὸν Εὐρώπας, Λυκίων ἀγὸν ἀνδρῶν;

In both cases, the two illustrious Trojan leaders are not cited by name; the first is referred to rather by his patronymic and the second by his matronymic (in the first case they are speaking of Euphorbus or Polydamas, in the second of Sarpedon). It is difficult to attribute this formality of designation to chance, given that, in *Iliad* 10, Agamemnon had asked Menelaus to wake all of the warriors he came across as he went through camp, taking care to be especially polite by addressing them with their patronymics (10.67-70):

> φθέγγεο δ' ἥι κεν ἴηισθα καὶ ἐγρήγορθαι ἄνωχθι
> πατρόθεν ἐκ γενεῆς ὀνομάζων ἄνδρα ἕκαστον
> πάντας κυδαίνων· μηδὲ μεγαλίζεο θυμῶι,
> ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοί περ πονεώμεθα, κτλ.

In the *Iliad* Agamemnon's suggestion that Menelaus use the patronymic was appropriately motivated by the need to show the greatest respect possible (69) in a dramatic situation in which everyone, the highest leaders included, had to present himself as a participant in responding to a common cause for concern (70).[37] In the *Rhesus*, apart from the generic deference the watchmen show towards the leaders (a deference that accounts for the use of the patronymic, but not for the unnecessary absence of the name), there is no motivation for this other than intertextuality (as Agamemnon had instructed Menelaus, so Homer has instructed the author of the *Rhesus*): the chorus of Trojan watchmen truly seem to put into practice, as regards

[37] Cf. RABEL 1991, 286: "Book 10 dramatizes the multiplicity of needs engendered in the Achaean army as a result of Achilles' rejection of the embassy. The effect of this setback is revealed most critically as a heightened need of co-operative endeavor on the part of the Achaean army, as if in compensation for the tension and disruption caused by the secession of its greatest hero".

the Trojan leaders, the admonition in *Iliad* 10 that Agamemnon directs at Menelaus!

And even when it was a Trojan who had uttered phrases in the *Iliad* that a Trojan character of the *Rhesus* will happen to repeat, in the tragedy the identity of the speaker will change. After the dialogue with the chorus in which Hector, after some difficulty, accepts the proposal for an immediate attack, he must have a confrontation with Aeneas who, more effectively than the chorus, advises against the night attack and proposes instead a spy-mission. Aeneas begins by telling Hector that he is not skilled enough when it comes to deliberation, but on the other hand excuses him, citing the *topos* that not everyone can do everything (105-108):

> εἴθ' ἦσθ' ἀνὴρ εὔβουλος ὡς δρᾶσαι χερί.
> ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸς πάντ' ἐπίστασθαι βροτῶν
> πέφυκεν· ἄλλωι δ' ἄλλο πρόσκειται γέρας,
> σὲ μὲν μάχεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ βουλεύειν καλῶς.

Precisely this same assessment of Hector had been made by Polydamas in *Iliad* 13 (726-734), according to the same rhetorical strategy that seeks to justify Hector's lack of deliberation by the fact that he instead excels in warfare. There too the argument had been made in preface to a discourse that would eventually conclude with precise strategic counsel, in that case during a very difficult moment for the Trojans, the battle at the ships that Polydamas himself had advised them to suspend in *Il.* 12.216-229, following the omen of the eagle and the serpent. Cf. *Il.* 13.726-731:

> Ἕκτορ, ἀμήχανός ἐσσι παραρρητοῖσι πιθέσθαι.
> οὕνεκά τοι περὶ δῶκε θεὸς πολεμήϊα ἔργα
> τοὔνεκα καὶ βουλῆι ἐθέλεις περιίδμεναι ἄλλων·
> ἀλλ' οὔ πως ἅμα πάντα δυνήσεαι αὐτὸς ἑλέσθαι.
> ἄλλωι μὲν γὰρ ἔδωκε θεὸς πολεμήϊα ἔργα,
> ἄλλωι δ' ὀρχηστύν, ἑτέρωι κίθαριν καὶ ἀοιδήν, κτλ.

The audience was thus, from the first moment of the tragedy, subject to a series of minor pitfalls concerning the identifica-

tion of the place and characters of the tragic action. This misleading intertextuality could also have most effectively compelled a prompt understanding of the changed perspective on events: it is no longer Homer's mostly Hellenocentric perspective on the events, but a purely Trojan point of view, in accordance with the Cyclic focusing on the false hopes of the losers regarding the seemingly powerful and victorious Trojan allies, which we have considered in the previous section. But this was also a way for the author to cause the audience to experience some minor form of that lack of understanding of reality that the protagonists of the tragedy would have been enacting on the stage. Tragic stories are usually tales of grave mistakes in the acknowledgement of reality, in the two different forms of plots of intrigue and of plots of *hamartia*, the active or reflexive deception that the protagonists purposely or inadvertently practise on others, or suffer in the form of self-delusion. Both the *Rhesus*' staging of the anxiety about the enemies' *doloi* and of the generalized misunderstanding of reality, and the formal, minimalistic *dolos* of the misleading intertextuality make clear to the audience just how far the Doloneia of the *Rhesus* is from being a mere dramatization of the Doloneia of *Iliad* 10. It also underscores just how cleverly the author selected the only section of the *Iliad* concerned with the *doloi* of an ambush and a treacherous raid as an homage to the poetics of tragedy, a genre that privileged actions involving *doloi* and atmospheres of misunderstanding or lack of knowledge of reality, and how expertly he succeeded at making the deceitful intertextual identification of his own characters and places a cooperative enhancement to these atmospheres.

* * *

I will now address the way in which the *Rhesus* would have also reminded the audience of the epic origins of its myth in the parts, following the Doloneia, that had no precise Homeric model and thus were most likely conceived of by the tragic

author as original elements for the tragedy.[38] This second part of the tragedy is from several points of view presented as a new beginning of the action.

As soon as Dolon leaves the Trojan camp, the glory of his mission is celebrated with bitter tragic irony in a short choral song. At its end (*Rh.* 263) the Doloneia proper is concluded, since the author does not deal with the encounter of Diomedes/Odysseus and Dolon, which had been described in detail by *Iliad* 10 (338-468), and only later hints very briefly at it (573, 575) and just indirectly at Dolon's death (*Rh.* 591-593, 863-866), possibly because Rhesus' death will now become the real focus of the second half of the tragedy. At this point a long section begins in which Rhesus' arrival at the scene of the war, and thus his participation in the action of the tragedy, is introduced. But this very introduction unexpectedly problematizes and delays Rhesus' participation for almost three hundred lines: the second and third *epeisodia* see the right of Rhesus to concrete participation in the war, and thus in the tragedy, first hotly opposed and later at least challenged by Hector. In his dialogue with the messenger-shepherd (264-341), Hector initially seems to refuse Rhesus, whom he considers too much of a late-comer, interested only in sharing in the profits of the war. After the pressure exerted by the messenger and the chorus, Hector is temporarily inclined to accept Rhesus but only as a guest, not as an ally (336-337). And finally, in his subsequent dialogue with Rhesus, which will result in Hector permitting Rhesus to camp near the Trojans, Hector again accuses the Thracian king of ingratitude (406-412) and of lazy self-indulgence (418-419).

Iliad 10 does not at all problematize Rhesus' participation in the action of the war. The Thracians are listed among the Tro-

[38] The idea that the tragedy relied on a Cyclic model, besides if not more than on *Iliad* 10, was suggested by FENIK 1964, and has had some scholarly favour, but it is completely hypothetical: cf. DIHLE 1970, 34-41; FANTUZZI 2005.

jan allies in the catalogue (*Il.* 2.844-845), but Rhesus is not mentioned as their leader; they are also referred in books 4 and 5, though nowhere later before *Il.* 10, and Rhesus never; therefore when Dolon first mentions Rhesus in *Il.* 10 he might be imagined as either having been camped alongside the Trojans very recently, or as having just arrived. A different tale appears in Pindar, Fr. 262 Maehler (*ap. Schol. ad* Hom. *Il.* 10.435), where Rhesus clearly fought for one day, and showed what a danger he could be for the Greek enemy (μίαν ἡμέραν πολεμήσας πρὸς Ἕλληνας μέγιστα αὐτοῖς ἐνεδείξατο κακά). The author of the *Rh.* is however very clear about stressing that the Thracian king had just arrived in Troy the night he was slain, and thus appears to follow at least in part a third version of the myth, attested by *Schol.* D *ad* Hom. *Il.* 10.435:

> ἔνιοι δὲ λέγουσιν νυκτὸς παραγεγονέναι τὸν Ῥῆσον εἰς τὴν Τροίαν, καὶ πρὶν γεύσασθαι αὐτὸν τοῦ ὕδατος τῆς χῶρας φονευθῆναι. χρησμὸς γὰρ ἐδέδοτο αὐτῶι, φασιν, ὅτι εἰ αὐτός τε γεύσηται τοῦ ὕδατος καὶ οἱ ἵπποι αὐτοῦ τοῦ Σκαμάνδρου πίωσι καὶ τῆς αὐτόθι νομῆς, ἀκαταμάχητος ἔσται εἰς τὸ παντελές.[39]

In our tragedy Rhesus is thus neither the ephemeral character who is irrelevant in the *Iliad*, nor the Pindaric hero who thanks to his single day of action "could have dressed his fate in a full and classic solemnity", but Athena's words of alarmed praise of Rhesus at 598-605 do provide him with a sort of virtual epic greatness[40] — though it is a greatness which is never

[39] "In part", because there is no hint at all in the tragedy at the oracle-promised invulnerability of Rhesus, though it may be dissimulated in Rhesus' boast at 447-450 (ἐμοὶ δὲ φῶς ἓν ἡλίου καταρκέσει / πέρσαντι πύργους ναυστάθμοις ἐπεσπεσεῖν / κτεῖναί τ' Ἀχαιούς· θατέραι δ' ἀπ' Ἰλίου / πρὸς οἶκον εἶμι, συντεμὼν τοὺς σοὺς πόνους) and in Athena's alarmed prediction at 600-604 (εἰ διοίσει νύκτα τήνδ' ἐς αὔριον, / οὔτ' ἄν σφ' Ἀχιλλεὺς οὔτ' ἂν Αἴαντος δόρυ / μὴ πάντα πέρσαι ναύσταθμ' Ἀργείων σχέθοι, / τείχη κατασκάψαντα καὶ πυλῶν ἔσω / λόγχηι πλατεῖαν ἐσδρομὴν ποιούμενον).

[40] The quotation is from PIPPIN BURNETT 1985, 32. I do not agree, however, with her stress in this page on the idea that the *Rh.* has univocally and purposefully opted for the Iliadic, un-heroic version about the destiny of the hero. Her position is more nuanced at 182 n.60, 184 n.74 (see below).

shown in action, as it belongs to the superior omniscence of the goddess to know it, and also to annihilate.[41] In conclusion, the leader of the Trojans, Hector, appears not at all to trust the importance of Rhesus' contribution to the war and the two Greeks who are about to kill him, Odysseus and Diomedes, do not even know of his existence until a short time before Athena leads them against him. The only character who knows the crucial relevance of Rhesus, and unveils it, thus promoting the action which will focus on his elimination, is Athena herself.

As soon as Hector officially assents to Rhesus' participation in the war (and so in the tragic action), the sentinels of the chorus begin a new song (527-564), in which they express their anxiety about the lateness of Dolon's return (556-562), thus reminding the audience that by that time Dolon should be already dead. The stage is eventually set for the action to begin. But, again, the start is extremely slow. At the very beginning of the tragedy the sentinels of the chorus — whose behaviour and movements (they had abandoned their guard posts 17-18) drive Hector to suppose that they are affected by φόβος (37, 52, 80[42]) — emphatically assert their identity as members of a specific watch (5-6). Their progression towards both the bivouac of Hector and Hector himself had already been described: after the opening self-apostrophe of the chorus (1), which apparently takes place far away from the bivouac, the sentinels encounter Hector's squires, address them, introduce themselves as one of the watch of the fourth part of the night, and thus also define

[41] As PIPPIN BURNETT 1985, 184 aptly states, "the dramatist has selected his motifs so as to leave the fate of Rhesus as open as possible, while he yet reminds his audience of the alternative possibilities offered by the lyric and the epic traditions. The flexibility of Rhesus' fate is emphasized by another detail as well, when Athena tells Odysseus and Diomedes that they may not kill Hector or Paris, because their deaths are fixed... When she goes on to tell them that they should kill Rhesus, the natural conclusion is that his death is not so precisely fixed, and we therefore feel that we are watching divinity as it constructs 'what is' by conflating divine will with 'what had to be'".

[42] Cf. FANTUZZI 2006.

the time of the night.[43] Only from l. 7 do they begin to apostrophize the sleeping Hector. See 1-7:

> Βῆθι πρὸς εὐνὰς τὰς Ἑκτορέους·
> τίς ὑπασπιστῶν ἄγρυπνος βασιλέως
> ἢ τευχοφόρων;
> δέξαιτο νέων κληδόνα μύθων,
> οἳ τετράμοιρον νυκτὸς φυλακὴν
> πάσης στρατιᾶς προκάθηνται.
> ὄρθου κεφαλήν, κτλ.

Right in the physical middle of the tragedy, the chorus identifies the nature of its watch in connection with the time of the night, with a chronological specification which is even more clearly reminiscent of *Il.*10.252-253 than *Rh.* 5, and attempts to wake the other sentinels who ought to be on guard duty (528-533):

> τίνος ἁ φυλακά; τίς ἀμείβει τὰν ἐμάν; πρῶτα
> δύεται σημεῖα καὶ ἑπτάποροι
> Πλειάδες αἰθέριαι·
> μέσα δ' αἰετὸς οὐρανοῦ ποτᾶται.
> ἔγρεσθε· τί μέλλετε; κοιτᾶν
> ἔξιτε πρὸς φυλακάν.

A few lines later, another series of details is provided to the audience that would also give them the impression of a new beginning. Odysseus and Diomedes, who had just appeared on stage at 565, move towards Hector's bivouac — once again it is Hector's bivouac, just as it had been at the beginning,[44] and once

[43] In a way which may be reminiscent of the chronological specification of the third part of the night in *Il.* 10.252-253: in particular τετράμοιρος νυκτὸς φυλακή in *Rh.* 5 may be an attempt to concentrate in a single phrase Odysseus' words in *Il.* 10.252-253, just before the arming scene with which the expedition by Odysseus and Diomedes starts: (ἄστρα δὲ δὴ προβέβηκε,) παροίχωκεν δὲ πλέων νύξ / τῶν δύο *μοιράων*, τριτάτη δ' ἔτι *μοῖρα* λέλειπται.

[44] The space in front of Hector's bivouac permanently is in the *Rh.* the place of the scenic action (or rather the place of the reports about the action, as almost nothing happens within it): cf. STROHM 1959, 266 and PÖHLMANN 1989, 105-106). But it is at the beginning and at this point in the middle of the tragedy that the author concentrates on its description.

again they are affected by φόβος (569).[45] The two Greeks first acknowledge the absence of Hector's soldiers (575), then see that Hector is not there either — once again, this slow approach recalls the sentinels' coming progressively closer to Hector's tent at the beginning of the tragedy (574-581):

'Οδ. εὐνὰς ἐρήμους τάσδε πολεμίων ὁρῶ.
Δι. καὶ μὴν Δόλων γε τάσδ' ἔφραζεν Ἕκτορος
κοίτας, ἐφ' ὥιπερ ἔγχος εἴλκυσται τόδε.
'Οδ. τί δῆτ' ἂν εἴη; μῶν λόχος βέβηκέ ποι;
Δι. ἴσως ἐφ' ἡμῖν μηχανὴν στήσων τινά.
'Οδ. θρασὺς γὰρ Ἕκτωρ νῦν, ἐπεὶ κρατεῖ, θρασύς.
Δι. τί δῆτ', 'Οδυσσεῦ, δρῶμεν; οὐ γὰρ ηὕρομεν
τὸν ἄνδρ' ἐν εὐναῖς, ἐλπίδων δ' ἡμάρτομεν.

The parallelism between the presentation of the sentinels at the beginning and now of Odysseus and Diomedes approaching toward Hector's tent could not stress in a better way, at the level of what we might call 'verbal scenography', the transition from the first to the second section of the play, namely the 'new beginning'. But for the tragedy to begin, the sentinel of the chorus had to find Hector in his tent, whereas Odysseus and Diomedes do not; hence the second part of the tragedy is unable to start in the way the two Greeks have planned (with the task of killing Hector), but appears to have reached an impasse, as Diomedes' last words to Odysseus in the dialogue quoted above make especially clear.

Indeed Odysseus and Diomedes seem completely unaware of the new task of killing Rhesus and capturing Rhesus' horses, the mission they will shortly complete, thanks to Athena's intervention and advice. This task is so far from their minds that they think nothing of the "iron clash made by halters striking the rail of the chariot" — a noise which is described at length

[45] Cf. PIPPIN BURNETT 1985, 37: "the killers of the Doloneia were matter-of-fact and effective, the sort that makes use of darkness as an advantage (*Il.* 10.251), but these two are baffled by the night, obstructed by error, and soon acquainted with failure and panic".

here in the *Rh.*, possibly with no aim other than to emphasize that the still unidentified "horses" (567, 569) that were its source were tethered to the chariot but not yoked, as was normal for night-time, and therefore could be captured more quickly and easily. It is clear that these easily available horses which Odysseus and Diomedes do not, for the moment, care about are designed to anticipate the horses of Rhesus' chariot, which will later become the aim of the two Greeks' action:[46] but at the beginning (namely before Athena's epiphany) Odysseus and Diomedes are so exclusively concerned with the danger represented by the enemies and with the need to get back to their camp in one piece that for them the noise from the halters and the chariot-rail falls into the category of κενὸς ψόφος, "senseless noise" (565). Furthermore, just before Athena's intervention, they appear to be completely in the dark about what they should do: they had intended to kill Hector, but did not find him in his bivouac, to which they had been directed by Dolon (575-579). Diomedes would have liked to try some other exploit, and to attack Aeneas or Paris (585-586), but Odysseus, who was content with having killed Dolon and wants to get back to the ships safely, finally persuades his companion to agree to his more prudent plan (591-594). From the human perspective of the two protagonists, the mission (and the second part of the tragedy) would not seem to be starting again, but to have already concluded, by this point.

The same impression of impasse would also be strenghtened among the audience up until the very beginning of Athena's epiphany, thanks to the audience's Homeric memories. Athena

[46] Rhesus' chariot will be introduced by Athena as being ἐγγύς "near" (613) the spot where the two Greeks are now speaking, and indeed the Thracian camp, "separate from where the rest are stationed" (613-614), is near Hector's tent, which Odysseus and Diomedes have just left (cf. BATTEZZATO 2000, 368); furthermore the δεσμά of the horses are said to be tied to the chariot precisely in the way the horses of Rhesus will be later said to be "tethered to the chariot" at 616-617. Finally, the uncommon adjective πωλικός, used of these δεσμά at 567, will become the epithet for referring to Rhesus' horses in the rest of the tragedy (see 621, 784, 797).

also appears in *Iliad* 10 with advice for the two Greek spies, at a moment of the action when, after Diomedes has killed Rhesus and Odysseus has conquered his horses, Diomedes is pondering whether they should stay and kill some other enemies — more or less the same vehement proposals as in *Rh.* 585-590. See *Il.* 10.503-506:

> αὐτὰρ ὃ μερμήριζε μένων ὅ τι κύντατον ἔρδοι,
> ἢ ὅ γε δίφρον ἑλών, ὅθι ποικίλα τεύχε' ἔκειτο,
> ῥυμοῦ ἐξερύοι ἢ ἐκφέροι ὑψόσ' ἀείρας,
> ἦ ἔτι τῶν πλεόνων Θρηικῶν ἀπὸ θυμὸν ἕλοιτο.

But in *Il.* 10, quite differently from what is going to happen in the *Rhesus*, Athena appears on Diomedes' side and tells him to promptly return to the Greek camp (10.508-510):

> ἐγγύθεν ἱσταμένη προσέφη Διομήδεα δῖον·
> νόστου δὴ μνῆσαι μεγαθύμου Τυδέος υἱέ
> νῆας ἔπι γλαφυράς, κτλ.

This intertextual precedent stresses in the most effective and surprising way how in the *Rh.* it is only Athena's intervention that restarts the action that will lead to the killing of Rhesus. While Odysseus is persuading Diomedes that they should retreat, her appearance is so immediate that she seems to have been eavesdropping on the two Greeks: she apostrophizes them with a phrase, 595-598: "Where are you going, departing from the Trojan ranks, heartsick that the god did not permit you to kill Hector or Paris?", which clearly presupposes Odysseus' insistence on the necessity of a prompt retreat, as well as the previous conversations of the two Greek spies about attacking Aeneas or Paris, or not (585-586).

As she radically changes the course of the action, Athena plays a role formally comparable to the divinity who quite often appears, mainly *ex machina*, at the end and sometimes at the beginning of tragedies; her intervention here also especially resembles, and as we will see is possibly modelled on, the hostile tone and intentions against Ajax that Athena (once again) had adopted in her epiphany to Odysseus (once again) at the

beginning of Sophocles' *Ajax* — though the latter epiphany was, because of its initial position, quite more in tune with the conventions of tragedy. Indeed, it is quite exceptional that a divinity appears on stage not at the beginning or the end, but in the middle of a tragedy (for Iris and Lyssa in Euripides' *Heracles*, see below). Furthermore, divine influence on human action quite often takes place in tragedy, and a play like Euripides' *Hippolytus* features a kind of 'coexisting' influences of two divine powers, by virtue of the sense of presence of the two presiding/conflicting deities, Aphrodite and Artemis. But the coexistence of two divine epiphanies in the *Rh.* is totally unparalleled for what we know or can reconstruct of Greek tragedy, as Athena's intervention in the middle of the tragedy coexists with the epiphany of the Muse at the end — though this final appearance of the Muse is itself much more predictable, according to the practice of the Euripidean endings.[47]

In *Iliad* 10 Athena had let her assistance be made known to Odysseus at the beginning of the mission through the omen of the heron at 274-295, and as we have seen at the end she had advised the pair to retreat back to the Greek camp after the killing of Dolon. The *Rhesus*, by contrast, may have relied more openly on the Pindaric version of the myth, according to which κατὰ δὲ πρόνοιαν Ἥρας καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς ἀναστάντες οἱ περὶ Διομήδεα ἀναιροῦσιν αὐτόν (scil. Rhesus; *Schol.* bT *ad* Hom. *Il.* 10.435 ~ Fr. 262 Maehler, already quoted above). It is Athena who informs Odysseus and Diomedes about the necessity of killing Rhesus (*Rh.* 595-607; in *Iliad* 10 Dolon had informed them about Rhesus' great horses); she also prevents Diomedes from killing Paris, who had been entering the scene during their dialogue (*Rh.* 627-635); finally she disguises herself as Aphrodite, in order to entertain Paris, and to prevent him from raising the alarm among the Trojans (637-674). In the tragedy, consequently, 1) Rhesus dies because of Athena's instruction, and not, as in Homer, because of the information provided by

[47] Cf. above p.146.

Dolon (in the *Rhesus*, before being killed, Dolon had on the contrary given directions to reach Hector's quarters, besides providing the password to enter the Trojan camp); 2) because of her order Paris also does not die, and 3) Odysseus and Diomedes are not discovered.[48] Her intervention in the tragic action could therefore not be more decisive. Even more importantly in terms of poetics, Athena actually appears in some way on the stage. How, exactly, she appears — whether she was at stage level, or was visible only to the audience, possibly on high in the *theologeion*, or was an offstage disembodied voice[49] — has long been a matter of scholarly dispute, in this case as well as in the case of the Athena's epiphany at the beginning of Sophocles' *Ajax* (see below, pp.165-6). At any rate this voice is in dialogue with Odysseus and later with Paris, and therefore the goddess is unquestionably integrated into the action of the stage.[50]

[48] As STROHM 1959, 261 effectively synthesised, "Im Drama sind Freund und Feind nichts als Marionetten Athenes". The different importance of Athena's role in the action has been used to maintain that the author of the *Rhesus* relied primarily on a pre-Iliadic text of a Cyclic character that would also have underlain the Pindaric narration: cf. FENIK 1964, 23-25. I find this argument weak, and believe that the Pindaric precedent may have been more than enough for the *Rhesus*' greater emphasis on the goddess; this emphasis, as I will try to show, may also have been a poetologically relevant initiative by the author of the *Rhesus*, intended to challenge through an over-epicization of the role of Athena both the Iliadic model and the tragic form he was dealing with.

[49] As maintained, most recently, by TAPLIN 1977, 366 n.1 and BURLANDO 1997, 81-82. The opposite position was maintained by HEATH 1987, 166, according to whom Athena "should be at ground level, since this would facilitate her rather complex interaction with the human characters and express more clearly in terms of theatrical space the controlling presence which enables her to direct the sequence of human movements". But see the agnosticism on Athena's visibility at stage level by MASTRONARDE 1990, 274-275, which I share. MINGARELLI 1995, 128 interestingly suggests that epic, where the convention that gods in their epiphanies could be visible only to some characters and not be seen by others (e.g. *Il.* 1.198), or invisible and understandable only through the voice (e.g. *Il.* 2.182), had made "il ricordo dell'invisibilità e del riconoscimento attraverso la voce... caratteri imprescindibili della dea che li mantiene anche nelle sue apparizioni sulla scena teatrale... quindi, quando Odisseo (nell'*Aiace* e nel *Reso*) e Diomede (nel *Reso*) si trovano davanti alla dea nella rappresentazione scenica, il pubblico non aveva nessuna difficoltà a immaginarla invisibile, sebbene fosse in scena con gli attori".

[50] Therefore the role of Athena had necessarily to be played by a fourth actor, as has been observed by BATTEZZATO 2000, 371.

This kind of divine appearances and influence in the course of the human action was not at all common in Greek tragedy. A passage from Aristotle's *Poetics* (15.1454 a 37-b 7) explicitly criticizes the use of divine appearances as a device to rescue a plot which had reached an impasse:

> clearly the denouements of plots should issue from the plot as such, and not from the μηχανή, as in the *Medea* and the scene of departure in the *Iliad*. The μηχανή should be employed for events outside the drama — preceding events beyond human knowledge, or subsequent events; for we ascribe to the gods the capacity to see all things. There should be nothing irrational in the events; if there is, it should lie outside the play, etc.[51]

Aristotle's main emphasis is on drama in this section of the *Poetics*, but the term μηχανή appears to be employed here not only apropos of the use of the crane for the dramatic *skene*, but of all divine interventions, including those for which the concrete μηχανή was not used, such as Athena's appearance and dispensation of advice to Odysseus in *Il.* 2.166-181 (the advice because of which Odysseus persuades the other Greeks not to reembark and go home).[52] According to Aristotle's idea of the perfect plot, divine appearances are something like a technical convenience for supplying more-than-human information at the beginning or at the end — in any case, at the margins — of the action. Aristotle elaborated this principle from a historical fact: it is true that the extant plays of the Tragedians present gods announcing the future *at the beginning or end* of the action, rather than intervening in the sequence of events, whereas epic poetry had always presented the intervention of the gods *at any point* of the heroes' actions. As we have seen,[53] the 'second' part of the *Rh.* is introduced as a new beginning, and, as Athena's intervention takes place within this new beginning of the 'second' part of the tragedy, it may thus have

[51] Translation by S. HALLIWELL, with modifications.
[52] See LUCAS 1968, 163-164.
[53] Pp.153-157.

been less disruptive of the usual poetics of the tragic action. It hardly finds, however, precise parallels in what survives of Greek tragedy.

The epiphany of Iris and Lyssa in Euripides' *Heracles* (815-873), who are most probably deposited by the crane on the roof of the palace,[54] has rightly been invoked as a point of comparison,[55] since it is the single sure parallel in tragedy for a divine intervention that truly drives forward the action of the plot from a point somewhere in the middle.[56] However neither of these goddesses actually converses with the human characters onstage in *Heracles* (they only speak to the chorus), and consequently the protagonist (Heracles) neither knows nor accepts that his actions are directed by gods — whereas this direct conditioning is, in the *Rh.*, what appears to stand in contrast to the extremely consistent ideology and praxis of tragedy. We also know that in Aeschylus' *Xantriai* and *Semele or Hydrophoroi*, respectively, Lyssa and Hera appeared to the chorus (once again, probably only to them), and Hera was disguised as a prophetess;[57] but hardly anything more can be said of these lost pieces.[58]

Differently from Euripides' *Heracles*, in the *Rhesus* Athena does engage in a dialogue with the protagonists, far more in accordance with epic than with tragic practice, as Odysseus and Diomedes are willing to embark on a course of action advised or rather imposed by her. Furthermore, by appearing to Paris as Aphrodite, Athena also assumes one of those protective disguises which are quite rarely adopted by tragic gods, but had been often featured by the gods in Homer — for instance when Hermes takes the form of a young nobleman so that he may assist

[54] Cf. MASTRONARDE 1990, 269.

[55] Cf. RITCHIE 1964, 120-122.

[56] "The entry of Dionysus at *Ba.* 604 (after his cries off stage during the earthquake scene) has the atmosphere of a divine epiphany, but he is a character in the play and is on the same level as Pentheus at 645 (προνώπιος)": Euripides. *Heracles*. With Introd. and Comm. by G.W. BOND (Oxford 1981), 279.

[57] Cf. LLOYD-JONES 1957, 566-571; TAPLIN 1977, 427-428.

[58] In general on divine epiphanies in tragedy, cf. SOURVINOU-INWOOD 2003, 459-511.

Priam's passage through the Greek camp to Achilles' tent: *Il.* 24.339-348.

Athena's epic behaviour in this scene is not only explicitly reminded in Odysseus' first words to the goddess (*Rh.* 608-610):

> δέσποιν' Ἀθάνα, φθέγματος γὰρ ἠισθόμην
> τοῦ σοῦ συνήθη γῆρυν· ἐν πόνοισι γὰρ
> παροῦσ' ἀμύνεις τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἀεί ποτε

by its clear textual connection with the analogous though not strictly epiphanic passage of *Il.* 10.278-279, where at the beginning of the spy mission a heron sent by Athena is heard in the night, and Odysseus prays to her as the one ἥ τέ μοι αἰεὶ / ἐν πάντεσσι πόνοισι παρίστασαι, but also probably highlighted by an emphatic intertextual marker, συνήθη, through which Athena's epiphany in the *Rh.* is connected to the long story of Athena's epiphanies to Odysseus and, in all probability, specifically to the similar apostrophe by Odysseus to Athena at the beginning of another epic/Cyclic tragedy, Sophocles' *Ajax.*[59] At the moment in the Iliadic story when the night of the stories of Dolon and Rhesus takes place, the Odysseus of the *Iliad* appears to have been visited by an epiphany of Athena only once, in 2.167-182 (precisely in the passage, quoted above, which Aristotle singled out to exemplify divine interventions in mid-course and not at the margins of the plot). Therefore συνήθη of *Rh.* 609 can hardly be understood just in connection with the past of Odysseus up to that moment of the Trojan war, but will refer to the whole story of Odysseus as a mythical character,[60] and

[59] Some of the formal connections between the epiphanies of Athena in the *Ajax* and in the *Rh.* had been emphasized by NOCK 1930. The practice of stressing the epic derivation of the scene through precise reminiscences of the Homeric epic would be in tune with Sophocles' presentation of a similar epiphany of Athena at the end of the *Philoctetes*, as analyzed by PUCCI 1994, 23-38.

[60] Only in the *Odyssey*, 13.300-301 and 20.47-48, can she practically and deservedly claim to have granted Odysseus assistance ἐν πάντεσσι πόνοις. "Athena's reputation for μῆτις developed *pari passu* with her favouritism for Odysseus. Both are embryonic in the *Iliad*. Odysseus is visited and aided by Athena, but not as frequently as other heroes. He is not yet marked out as a unique favourite... In

also possibly point to the literary dimension of other narratives concerning him, as it may recall the lexicon of memory which Greek and Latin poets often used to indicate the learnedness intended by their borrowings from previous authors.[61] These words uttered by the tragic Odysseus thus establish a direct connection between his present experience and the previous ones of his literary past, namely the many epiphanies that the goddess made to him and more broadly the many occasions on which the goddess had offered him her help in the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, Sophocles' *Ajax*, etc. In the light of one verbal and one thematic point of contact (Athena's voice being called φθέγμα, and Odysseus' statement about his acknowledging the goddess' voice), I am attracted by the idea that these first words by Odysseus to an Athena who is going to shortly fool Paris (*Rh.* 637-674) echo and challenge the way another tragic Odysseus, namely the Odysseus of Sophocles' *Ajax*, had evoked his epic acquaintance with Athena in his first words (14-17) at the beginning of a tragedy which stages the fooling of a hero by the goddess:[62]

> ὦ φθέγμ' Ἀθάνας, φιλτάτης ἐμοὶ θεῶν,
> ὡς εὐμαθές σου, κἂν ἄποπτος ἦις, ὅμως
> φώνημ' ἀκούω καὶ ξυναρπάζω φρενί,
> χαλκοστόμου κώδωνος ὡς τυρσηνικῆς.

Given the references to the goddess being ἄποπτος ("invisible", "out of sight", or "seen afar off"), at least for Odysseus,[63] though visible to the audience[64] — possibly on the high[65] —

the *Doloneia* we see Athena's patronage of cunning, and her connection with Odysseus, both somewhat further emphasized": POPE 1960, 123-124.

[61] HINDS 1998, 3-4.

[62] The connection between the deceit of Paris and the deceit of Ajax has been already drawn: cf., e.g., STROHM 1959, 261.

[63] Cf. BUXTON 1980, 22, nn.1-2; CALDER III 1965, 115; PUCCI 1994, 19. TAPLIN 1977, 116 untypically maintains that the goddess is visible (ll.14-17 "say that Odysseus knows Athena so well that he can recognize her by her voice alone even when she is not visible — unlike the present occasion").

[64] Cf. GARVIE 1998, 124.

[65] As suggested by CALDER III 1965, 115-116; MASTRONARDE 1990, 278.

and above all to Odysseus' being promptly able (εὐμαθές) to infer the presence of the goddess based on the sound of her voice, the Odysseus of Sophocles' *Ajax* appears to be especially reminiscent of the two Iliadic passages *Il.* 2.182 = 10.512 ὣς φάθ', ὃ δὲ ξυνέηκε θεᾶς ὅπα φωνησάσης , in which the goddess' intervention had been acknowledged by Odysseus based only on her voice.[66] One of these two cases had occurred at *Il.* 2.182, which (as we have seen) was also the only epiphany of Athena that Odysseus had experienced in the *Iliad* before the night of *Il.* 10. The second belongs to *Iliad* 10 and concerns, as we have also seen (above, p.159), the last advice that the goddess gives to the couple of Greek spies Odysseus and Diomedes, when she recommends Diomedes to stop looking for new deeds of bravery against the Trojans, and to go back to the Greek camp. Since the Cyclic Odysseus of the *Ajax*, at the end of the war for Troy, might be thought of as relying on a long agenda of multifarious epiphanies and instances of aid given by Athena, in the text of Sophocles we can hardly presuppose an intertextual semantic motivation for the fact that Odysseus recalls the voice-epiphany of Athena of these two Homeric intertexts. But a clear and specific motivation would of course underlie an allusion to both these passages in the *Rhesus*, as the first one is the only epiphany of Athena to the Iliadic Odysseus before the night of *Iliad* 10, and the second is precisely the epiphany of Athena, in the night of *Iliad* 10, which 'corresponds' to her intervention in the *Rhesus*. Therefore I suggest that the words of the Odysseus of the *Rhesus* might include a "window reference",[67]

[66] There are other epiphanies of just the divine voice in the *Iliad* (often in the *Iliad* and usually in the *Odyssey* gods do appear to human in full bodies, though almost always in disguise: cf. KULLMANN 1956, 105; CLAY 1974 and 1983, 160-169). However in two of the other Iliadic epiphanies of the voice the acknowledgement of the voice by the humans is not stressed (11.195-209, 15.236-261); different is the case of Apollo appearing to Hector in *Il.* 20.380 (... ταρβήσας, ὅτ' ἄκουσε θεοῦ ὅπα φωνήσαντος), where the second hemistich of *Il.* 2.182 = 10.512 is re-used.

[67] The window reference "consists of the very close adaptation of a model, noticeably interrupted in order to allow reference back to the source of that model:

behind the *Ajax*, to these two most relevant Iliadic appearances of Athena.

Furthermore, when Paris appears on stage, Diomedes promptly expresses his wish to kill him (*Rh.* 633), but Athena stops him with the motivation (634-637):

> οὐκ ἂν δύναιο τοῦ πεπρωμένου πλέον·
> τοῦτον δὲ πρὸς σῆς χειρὸς οὐ θέμις θανεῖν.
> ἀλλ' ὥιπερ ἥκεις μορσίμους φέρων σφαγάς
> τάχυν'·

These words may easily have recalled the statement on the unchangeability of the πεπρωμένον formulated in Hera's speech to Zeus about the destiny of Sarpedon in *Il.* 16.441-443, and repeated by Athena to Zeus about the fate of Hector in *Il.* 22.179-181:

> ἄνδρα θνητὸν ἐόντα πάλαι πεπρωμένον αἴσηι
> ἄψ ἐθέλεις θανάτοιο δυσηχέος ἐξαναλῦσαι;

I do not mean that the *Rhesus* includes here a specific allusion to the two Iliadic passages — the single linguistic trait d'union πεπρωμένον would be too weak (though this rare word only occurs in Homer in these two passages with the developed sense of αἶσα[68]) and above all the idea of the unchangeable fate is too much of a topos. I think rather that Athena's words about not attacking Paris but going to kill Rhesus for fate's sake may have evoked the role as assertors/'guardians' of the destiny which Hera and Athena had in these two passages of the *Iliad*. If I am correct, this reminiscence may also have involved some emphasis on the greater articulation the narrative function of Athena has within this tragedy than in *Iliad* 22 or than Hera's role in *Iliad* 16. Indeed Athena does not appeal here to the πεπρωμένον just to restrain the acting characters and remind them that events should take their destined course — this is her role in the

the intermediate model thus serves as a sort of window onto the ultimate source, whose version is otherwise not visible": THOMAS 1986, 188 = 1999, 130.

[68] Cf. JANKO 1992, 249.

case of Paris, who must not be killed. She also manages to 'help' fate along and nudge other events toward their destined course. In the case of the *Rhesus*, she is still the only one who knows that the σφαγαί of Rhesus are μόρσιμοι "destined", or rather makes them μόρσιμοι with her intervention (see above, p.167): as we have seen, the two future killers still do not know at all, before she speaks, that they "had come to accomplish the destined slaughter" of the Thracian king, and at least the oracle recorded by a version of Rhesus' myth did include the opposite possibility of an 'open' fate for Rhesus, becoming eternally invincible/invulnerable (ἀκαταμάχητος ... εἰς τὸ παντελές). In conclusion, the destiny of Rhesus, which Athena claims to forward, mainly is a 'textual' fate — the fate which is especially decided for a literary character belonging to the prototypical and most authoritative text of Homer — rather than the really lopsided destinies some other characters had within less 'open' myths. Were it not for Athena, were it not for the *Iliad*, in our tragedy as well as in myth the scene was set for Rhesus to possibly survive that first night and acquire his invulnerability, though of course in that case the *Iliad* would have had to be 'rewritten' — a daunting prospect, which the author of the *Rhesus* did not choose to face. Once again, here as well as in *Iliad* 2, to which we have shown that our passage is most probably looking back, Athena is the 'guardian of the plot', as she prevents the textual events from taking a different course than the single one they necessarily have to take in order for the plot to be forwarded, and the tragedy not to stop or to continue in contrast with the hardly changeable model of Homer.

Athena's appearance is thus at the same time an innovative divergence from the Homeric model of *Iliad* 10 (since in Homer's Doloneia Athena does not have this extremely important role), and an epic feature which is strongly in tune with Athena's role, more broadly, in the *Iliad*, but is anomalous to the praxis of tragic tales.[69] "Very rare", but possibly not unique.

[69] In a poet of the middle comedy, Amphis, Zeus appeared disguised as

A passage by Plutarch, *How to study poetry* 2, 16 F-17 A, which illustrates how poets fabricate or inherit false πλάσματα to be imparted to the readers, quotes four lines from Homer, *Il.* 22.210-213 (the scene where Zeus puts the lives of Achilles and Hector on his scales), and adds that "Aeschylus has fitted a whole tragedy to this story, giving it the title *Psychostasia*, and has placed besides the scales of Zeus on one side Thetis and on the other Dawn, entreating on behalf of their sons who are fighting". From this testimony, and other passages that agree in ascribing the *psychostasia* to Aeschylus' tragedy, it has usually been inferred that Zeus, appearing on the *theologeion*, would have intervened in the fight between Eos and Thetis, and initiated, as a *dramatis persona*, the ensuing action that consists in the final duel between Achilles and Memnon. It has been argued that Plutarch was wrong (and that the other testimonies are misinformed or misleading), or that he reflected a post-Aeschylean imitation of Aeschylus, which means that Zeus would not have appeared on stage in Aeschylus' tragedy (indeed Zeus hardly ever took part in a tragedy as a character elsewhere): the *psychostasia* would thus have been just reported within the tragedy in a narrative form.[70] At all events, unless Plutarch (and the other sources) were completely mistaken,[71] we would have had already in Aeschylus another Trojan play where another case of 'epicization' of a tragedy took place via a strong personal intervention of a god in the action, which would fully parallel the

Artemis (*PCG* II p.234, Fr. 46) in his attempt at seducing Callisto, the fellow nymph of Artemis (cf. HENRICHS 1987, 262); the same scene may have already taken place in the earlier *Callisto* by the comic poet Alcaeus (*PCG* II pp.8-9, Fr. 17-18), if this comedy dealt with the nymph, and not with a famous prostitute with the same name. In Euripides' satyrical drama *Cyclops* 581ff., the drunk Polyphemus takes the Satyrs to be Charites and Silenus to be Ganymedes, but this is in no way a concrete disguise by Silenus, *pace* PIPPIN BURNETT 1985, 40. The anomaly of Athena's intervention has been recently stressed by ZANETTO 1998, 152.

[70] Both ideas are by TAPLIN 1977, 431-433. Cf. already BETHE 1896, 153.

[71] For a sound criticism of this perspective, cf. SOURVINOU-INWOOD 2003, 463-464.

epiphany of Athena in the *Rhesus* — though it is plausible that in Aeschylus the *psychostasia*, even should it not have been presented in a narrative form, did not take place in the middle of the action, as in the *Rhesus*, but, more expectably, in the prologue.[72] Therefore the abrupt interruption and reopening of the scenic action in the *Rhesus* was probably even more striking and unusual than it was in Aeschylus, but we might perhaps speak of a broader trend toward allowing the interventionist Homeric gods to have an especially relevant role in the tragic re-workings of episodes from the Trojan war.

The balance between epic and tragic forms or contents of the *Rhesus* is a matter of fact which needed to be highlighted. We might perhaps venture to speak of a poetic of the 'Homeric/Cyclic tragedy', which purposefully narrated the Trojan myths by means of a combination of epic and tragic conventions, and extended, beyond the text of our tragedy, to include at least the *Cares* and the *Psychostasia* of Aeschylus as well. If we knew, for instance, something more about the *Hector* of Astydamas, which had a special fortune,[73] or the Ἕκτορος λύτρα of Dionysius, or the *Achilles* by Astydamas, Carcinus, Cleophon, Evaretus, we would be able to ascertain if this poetic extended into the 4th century, to which in several scholars' opinions the *Rhesus* should be dated.

My paper, however, mainly intended to be a specific attempt at defining the literary strategies of the *Rhesus*, which is the only surviving testimony of this poetic, and at pointing to its possible parallels, independently on the date it was composed — whether it was a juvenile work by Euripides immediately reflect-

[72] WILAMOWITZ 1914, 58-59; NESTLE 1930, 36; METTE 1963, 112; WEST 2000, 345.

[73] If *TrGF* I 60 F**1h and i, from a *PHibeh* and a *PAmherst* of the 2nd cent. BC, really belong to Astydamas' tragedy, it would prove that this text was still read more two centuries after it was staged: cf. SNELL 1971, 140-141. A set of terracotta masks from Lipari (about 350 BC), representing Priam, Hecuba, Hector, Paris, Deiphobus and a nurse, may be related to this play: cf. XANTHAKIS-KARAMANOS 1980, 169 n.7.

ing the Iliadic tragedies by Aeschylus, or it was a 4th century piece which archaeologically presupposed them and/or shared the Iliadic experiences of the contemporary tragedians.[74]

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DISCUSSION

A. Rengakos : The model for the parallelism between Rhesus' and Achilles' deaths in *Rh.* 974-979 is, apart from the *Aethiopis*, the *Iliad* itself with Thetis' lament in Book 18 about the mourning Achilles. This 'anticipated' lament foreshadows her lament for his death which will occur later — after the end of the *Iliad*.

M. Fantuzzi : I fully agree that Thetis' participation in the funeral of Patroclus, and her contemporary pain for the future death of her son in *Il.* 18, is of course a kind of anticipation, within a funeral, of a future mourning, which may have re-used the description of Achilles' funeral in the *Aethiopis* (in neo-analytical terms) and provided a model for our passage. Indeed I believe that for the author of the *Rh.* and his audience presupposing the Iliadic mourning of Thetis may have been a "window reference" (see above n.57) to the *Aethiopis*, and also vice versa. But of course the Muse(s) mourning for Achilles in the *Aethiopis* is an uniquely close parallel for the *Rh.*, as in the former poem, as well as in our tragedy, they are presented as sharing the grief for a Greek, after mourning the death of the Trojan ally Rhesus.

G. Danek : Ich glaube, wenn Dolon in *Il.* 10 über Rhesos spricht, bildet das eine deutliche Anspielung auf die in den Scholien referierte Version, dass Rhesos in der Nacht in Troia ankommt und aufgrund des Orakels noch in derselben Nacht getötet werden muss: Dolon bezeichnet die Thraker in *Il.* 10, 434 als νεήλυδες ἔσχατοι ἄλλων und erklärt damit, warum sie abseits lagern.

M. Fantuzzi: I agree with you that the text of the *Iliad* presupposed that Rhesus' Thracians have only arrived very recently

to Troy, namely just before the night or in the night when Rhesus is killed. After all, there is no hint in the *Iliad* at any participation of Rhesus in the war, the day before the night in which he is slain by Odysseus and Diomedes.

Therefore it is probable, or at least possible that Homer knew of the oracle-version concerning Rhesus' invulnerability and unavoidable triumph (had he lived enough to let his horses drink Scamander's water, etc.). What I maintain simply is that the author of the *Rh.* very clearly *stresses* that the Thracian king had just arrived in Troy the night he was slain — the whole *rhesis* by the shepherd is dedicated to the description of the arrival of Rhesus' army (*Rh.* 264-316) and Hector's doubts about his participation in the war, and the settlement (or not) of his quarters take more than one hundred lines (388-527). The author of the *Rh.* thus more clearly implies the oracle-version (though even he only implies, and does not explicitate it); the author of *Il.* 10 does not even clearly imply it.

G. Danek: Wenn Odysseus in seiner ersten Rede zu Athene sagt, sie stehe ihm immer bei, haben wir eine klare strukturelle Parallele zu der Stelle in der *Dolonie*, wo Odysseus in seinem Gebet zu Athena nach der Erscheinung des ἐρωδιός sagt: ἥ τε μοι αἰεὶ / ἐν πάντεσσι πόνοισι παρίστασαι (*Il.* 10, 278f.). Beide Stellen bilden die Mitte der Handlung von *Dolonie* / *Rhesus* und markieren den Übergang von der ersten zur zweiten Hälfte der Handlung. Vielleicht wird damit auch (sowohl in der *Dolonie* wie im *Rhesus*) die entscheidende Rolle zitiert, die Athene in der Orakel-Version des Mythos haben musste, wo sie die Griechen über die Gefahr des neu angekommenen Rhesos informieren musste.

M. Fantuzzi: I take your interesting point on *Il.* 10.278-279 as a possible model for *Rh.* 609b-610. I had not emphasised the Iliadic passage, because this very quasi-intervention of Athena in the Iliadic Doloneia takes place via the heron, and thus is an only indirect manifestation of the divine presence. I would be

inclined to think that *Rh.* 608-609a (the epiphany of the voice, which is the focus of my analysis) had its main model in Sophocles, *Ajax* 14-17, whereas *Il.* 10.278-279 provided the model for the 'proleptical' readiness of Athena to help Odysseus, which is expressed in *Rh.* 609b-610.

Chr. Tsagalis: The 'replacement' or 'substitution' of the Iliadic Polydamas by Aeneas may be connected to the fact that the poet of the *Rhesus* desired to have a 'first-rank' hero as Hector's opponent. Moreover, he was not bound by the *Iliad*'s tendence to downplay Aeneas' importance, as a second Hector.

P. Chuvin: Je suis tout à fait d'accord avec Christos Tsagalis pour penser que si Enée reçoit le rôle d'opposant au projet d'Hector, c'est parce que dans l'*Iliade* il représente précisément la figure de l'opposant. J'ajouterai aussi que Polydamas est une figure beaucoup moins connue du public qu'Enée. Or, à l'évidence, l'auteur du *Rhésus* a voulu mettre en scène des figures illustres, héros ou dieux. Il me semble que ces deux considérations suffisent à expliquer la substitution de personnages.

M. Fantuzzi : I fully agree with you, Christos. Why the poet of the *Rhesus* decides to eliminate the character of Polydamas, diffracting his character between Aeneas and the professional soothsayers, is an authorial choice for which one could conjecture various motivations.

In my 2006 paper I have suggested that the author of the *Rhesus* tests here a future development of the Trojan leadership, or compares the Iliadic and the post-Iliadic leaders of the Trojans, and thus presents his Aeneas playing a sort of dress-rehearsal of the role as a leader he will often play in post-Iliadic poems of the epic Cycle.

This problem of why he choses Aeneas, however, is not the problem that interests me now. The problem on which I focused is why he replaces the character AB with the character CD, but

on the other hand the Iliadic material of the 'advice of AB' is so attentively and recognizably redistributed between Aeneas and the soothsayers, that the audience of the tragedy might seem to 'remember' Polydamas behind Aeneas's words and the soothsayers' action (had Aeneas been a protagonist of importance in the *Rhesus*, one could more easily imagine that it was only out of mechanical reuse that the tragic poet had attributed to this important character the words of an Iliadic one, Polydamas, but as a fact, after dissuading Hector from the night attack, Aeneas does not reappear any longer in the whole tragedy!).

Indeed the replacement of a character within a well known story 'canonized' by the authority of Homer is not a banal initiative at all: the ancient literary culture was for the most part one of retelling mythology rather than creating fiction, and this was especially true of the literary genre of ancient drama, itself only born after the long elaboration of mythology by epic, both Homeric and cyclic, and lyric poetry. This initiative either was intended to, or had the result to heighten the disorientation of the readers who remembered that Hector's adviser *par excellence* in the *Iliad* was Polydamas and not Aeneas, and/but found out that Aeneas, not Polydamas, in conversation with Hector, sustained the arguments affirmed by the Iliadic Polydamas.

M. Fusillo: I completely agree with your interpretation in terms of interaction between tragic and epic elements, and with the identification of tragic with the δόλος-theme. I only find a little bit awkward to put on the same level the thematic, tragic δόλος, and "the formal minimalistic *dolos* of the misleading intertextuality".

M. Fantuzzi : For sure I do not put on the same level the authorial adoption of *dolos*-themes, and the misleading allusion.

In my 2004 paper (publ. 2006), to which I have also referred in the text, I have sought to show how the clearly recognizable details of character, behaviour and place from *Iliad* 10 and the

preceding and the successive books about the battle at the wall protecting the Greek ships are displayed, though 'renamed', by the author of the *Rhesus*. Some events or narrative details (the fires, e.g., or the definition of the reward for the spy mission), or narrative functions of these elements (e.g. the fires cause alarm in both cases in the opposite camp, and in both cases the definition of the award highlights the characterization of the future Trojan spy), or many pieces of behaviour of the characters are the same, though the camp where their actions are fulfilled changes. The connotations remain the same, but the identity is altered. The ancient spectator of these first two hundred or so lines of the *Rhesus* would have, as is obvious, recognized (thanks to the names of the characters) that the scene was set in the Trojan camp. But, so I believe, just as much a spectator with Homer present in his mind was led more than once by his Homeric memories to have, at least for a moment, the impression that the scene was instead in the Greek camp, or that Aeneas was not Aeneas but rather Polydamas, or had to wonder why Hector was behaving with Dolon in the same way as Agamemnon with his promises to Achilles.

It is the norm of intertextual practice that situations, actions, words and places characterizing Person X in the model can very well, in a new work that tells a completely different story, be attributed through allusion to a different Person Y without the new work's audience feeling misled. The public itself, guided by the author of the alluding work, acknowledges the combination of the character of the new work and a character from a preceding story or work, and is content to recognize the analogy, even if (or really because) the character of the new, allusive work and the character of the model-work being alluded to have two different identities. The allusive strategy of the *Rhesus* is however much more demanding and disorienting for the audience, because for the Trojans it stages pieces of behaviour and settings of places that are clearly reminiscent of behaviours and places already present for the Greeks *in exactly the same story* within the Iliadic model, thereby collapsing the difference between the

Greek characters and setting of the *Iliad*, and the Trojan ones of the *Rh.* The audience is naturally imbued with the expectation that these analogous 'containers' hold the same identities. When instead such identities prove to be different — and at the beginning of the *Rh.* this is often the case — a sort of marginal disorientation may have descended upon the audience.

Within the most common practice of allusion in Greek and Latin poetry the presence of the preceding text that is evoked for allusion very often reveals, or rather displays, its non-pertinent relationship to the new discourse in which the allusive text is stretched and/or finalized. But the author of the *Rh.* consistently makes a completely distinctive use of such 'impropriety', at least in the opening of the play which should serve to inform of its 'setting'. I dare suggesting that we might call this use 'deceptive', and that it is in tune with the selection of a series of events from the *Iliad* in which the actualization of *dolos* predominates.