The Athenian Dramatic Chorus in the Fourth Century BC

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Abstract

This thesis tackles a conspicuous absence in current scholarship on ancient theatre. Amid the recent scholarly interest in the rapid expansion of the theatre industry from the late fifth century BC onwards, no study has been made of a central, defining even, element of ancient Greek drama at that time – the chorus. Instead, what we find is a widespread assumption concerning the fourth-century dramatic chorus, particularly with regard to the comic chorus, still prevalent in today's scholarship: 'The history of the dramatic chorus is one of decline both quantitatively and qualitatively', states one of the more detailed recent reviews of the evidence for dramatic choral culture in the ancient world (Csapo and Slater 1995:349).

The thesis focuses on the literary sources available to us concerning fourth-century dramatic choruses in Athens. The material is divided into three sections. The first section addresses the important testimony of Aristotle concerning the choruses of his day, particularly the *Poetics* (chapter one). The second section analyses the choral text in the (probably fourth-century) *Rhesus* (chapter two), the interpolated choral passages in the *Iphigenia at Aulis* and *Seven Against Thebes* (chapter three), and the choruses of Aristophanes' *Assemblywomen* and *Wealth*, as well as extant fragments of fourth-century comedy (chapter four). The third section is a survey of how the chorus is used in a wide range of fourth-century texts (chapter five), and gives special attention to Plato's somewhat idiosyncratic presentation of the chorus in his works (chapter six).

These analyses show 1) that ‘decline’ is an inappropriate term to describe the development of the chorus and 2) the creativity with which the chorus is used and thought about in fourth-century drama and society. The thesis aims to provide an elucidation of dramatic choral activity in the fourth century and to provoke further interrogation of the assumptions commonly held about the development of both the ancient chorus and ancient drama as a whole.

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Abbreviations, Citations and Transliteration

Names of ancient authors and titles of their works are abbreviated as in *LSJ.* Other abbreviated titles are as follows.

CGFPR	Austin, C. (1973), *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta in Papyris Reperta.* Berlin and New York.
DK	Diels, H., and Kranz, W. (1951-2), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 3. vols. Berlin.
Dindorf	Dindorf, W. (1863), *Scholia Graeca in Euripidis tragoedias,* 4. vols*.* Oxford.
TrGF	Snell, B., *et al.* (eds.) (1971 –), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. Göttingen.
K-A	Kassel, R., and Austin, C. (eds.) (1983 –), *Poetae Comici Graeci*. Berlin and New York.
PMG	Page, D. L. (1962), *Poetae Melici Graeci*. Oxford.
Wehrli	Wehrli, F. (1967-9), *Die Schule des Aristoteles: Text und Kommentar*. 10. vols. Basel.
FGrHist	Jacoby, F., *et al.* (eds.)(1923 –) *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Berlin and Leiden.

Citations are from the Oxford Classical Text where possible, from *TrGF* for tragic fragments and K-A for comic. Otherwise the edition used is stated in the footnotes. I refer to plays by the names they are most commonly known e.g. *Frogs* rather than *Ranae*, *Aspis* rather than *The Shield.* When in doubt I have used the version of the play name given in the *OCD*. In general I have stuck to Latinised transliterations (*coryphaeus* rather than *koryphaios*) but again when a more familiar term can be used (e.g. *choregoi* rather than *choregi*)*,* use it I do. All dates are BC unless otherwise stated, although in the interests of clarity in one instance when both BC and AD items are being discussed, I have specified both BC and AD.

Introduction

In the fourth century, theatre across the Greek world was booming. New engineering techniques were being adopted in the building of stone theatres, increasingly elaborate monuments commemorated victories in festival *agones*, and, if the prize money, fees and distances travelled are anything to go by, the celebrity of actors, auletes, citharodes and poets reached unheard of heights.[1] Extensive institutional and financial arrangements supported the dramatic performances at the festivals in Athens and its demes.[2] Similar or modified institutions for the funding of theatrical productions were being deployed in Sicily, Boeotia and Macedonia. By the time of the conquests of Alexander towards the end of the century, the theatre had come to define the shared identity of peoples across the Greek world – such was its status as a kind of cultural *koine*.[3]

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[1] Easterling 1993:559-69 and 1997:211-227, LeGuen 1995:59-90, Wilson 2008:88-127, Csapo 2010a *passim*, Junker 2010:131-48. The forthcoming volume *Greek theatre in the fourth century BC* (edited by Csapo, Götte, Green and Wilson) gives a superlative rehabilitation of the theatre industry during this 'postclassical' century. For the internationalisation of theatre see Easterling 1994:73-80, Revermann 1999:25-8, Taplin 1999:33-57 and 2007:5-15, Allan 2001:67-86, Bosher 2006 *passim*, Wilson 2007a:351-77. On professionalisation of theatre at the end of the fifth century into the fourth see Easterling and Hall 2002 *passim*, Csapo 2004:53-76 and Csapo 2010a *passim*. The peak of this process of professionalisation is often presented as the guild-like organisations of professional actors, musicians and choreuts known as the Artists of Dionysus, on which see the book-length treatments by Roueché 1993, LeGuen 2001, and Aneziri 2003. For a sceptical interpretation of third-century sources for professional choreuts see Slater 1993:189-99.

[2] It is mostly likely during this century that steps were taken with the 'Theoric Fund' to ensure as many citizens as possible were able to attend theatrical performances at Athens, see Csapo and Wilson *forthcoming*.

[3] Hall 2007:285-6.

Yet, amid the recent scholarly appreciation of the fourth century's powerful theatre machine, no study has focused on one particular, central element of ancient Greek drama, perhaps its defining element – the chorus. This is even more remarkable in light of the fact that studies of contiguous performance genres and institutions have received significant attention in the past two decades.[4] Wilson's comprehensive survey of the institution of the *choregia* in Classical Athens has illuminated the historical presence and political role of the dramatic, 'circular'[5] and pyrrhic choruses *qua* products of the choregic system.[6] Non-dramatic choral genres have had some attention, in particular the dithyramb, as well as the contexts for choral performance outside of the festival.[7] The texts of the (probably chorally performed) hymns inscribed on stone such as Philodamus' paean to Dionysus and Isyllus' paean to Apollo and Asclepius have received scholarly attention.[8] We might add to these the recent analyses of lyric compositions from the fourth century,

[4] For those who study the ancient chorus, 2013 was something of an *annus mirabilis*, with the publication of two edited volumes dedicated to the chorus in drama (Billings, Budelmann and Macintosh 2013, Gagné and Hopman 2013), a further volume on the dithyramb (Kowalzig and Wilson 2013), another on the theoria, in which the chorus had a significant role to play (Rutherford 2013) and one other focusing on one of the key ancient sources for ancient choral culture, Plato's *Laws* (Peponi 2013b).

[5] 'While the dominant context of performance, the Athenian City Dionysia, hosted twenty choroi for Dionysos that some ancient and virtually all modern scholars are happy to label 'dithyrambs', no single item of contemporary evidence unambiguously does so', Kowalzig and Wilson 2013:2. I acknowledge the difficulty of defining the dithyramb but continue to use the term in the commonly used sense, except when referring to the competition that took place at Athenian festivals, where I use the term 'circular chorus'.

[6] Wilson 2000. See also Wilson 2007a:351-77, 2007b:125-32 and 2011:19-44.

[7] Dithyramb: Grande 1946, Sutton 1989, Zimmerman 1992, Ieranò 1997. Paean: Käppel 1992, Schröder 1999, Rutherford 2001. Pyrrhic: Ceccarelli 1998 and 2004:91-117. However, these studies tend to have a broad chronological scope rather than focusing on the fourth century specifically.

[8] Philodamus: Vollgraff 1924, Vallois 1931, Sokolowski 1936, Marcovich 1975, Rainer 1975, Stewart 1982, Croissant 1996, Strauss Clay 1996, Neumann-Hartmann 2004, Vamvouri Ruffy 2004. Isyllus: Sineux 1999, Molinos 2002, Schröder 2006 and Kolde 2003 and 2010.

which has expanded our comprehension of the literary and artistic qualities of both monodic and choral lyric.[9] The literary qualities and immediate receptions of the fourth-century dramatic chorus – a polyvalent, polymorphous body made up of citizen performers, included in every dramatic performance that took place at Athens' multiple dramatic festivals – remain almost entirely unexamined.

Limits of the enquiry

The range of material now available for deployment in any study of fourth-century social history provides a plethora of potential avenues to explore. Works that have drawn on multiple source types (visual, epigraphic and literary) have fundamentally altered for the better how the topic of fourth-century theatre is approached.[10] Support for more focused investigations is provided by these broader, comprehensive studies, and scholars are now in a position to build on and nuance the picture that has emerged from this essential cross-disciplinary work by narrowing the field of enquiry. For example, one current project concerns itself purely with the epigraphic record (a body of evidence that is growing on a yearly basis) for the dramatic chorus in the fourth century, and already has a compelling story to tell.[11] In order to satisfy the constraints of both space and time, a closely defined topic and data set is called for in the current scholarly venture.

[9] Power 2010, Ford 2011 and LeVen 2014.
[10] See most recently Csapo et. al. *forthcoming.*
[11] Csapo and Wilson (*forthcoming*), *Historical Documents for the Greek Theatre down to 300 BC* (Cambridge).

While recognising the important advances that have been made by drawing on the full range of source types, I have chosen to set to one side epigraphic and visual evidence,[12] and confine myself to what might categorised as the 'literary' sources available to us concerning fourth-century dramatic choruses (tragic, comic and, where at all possible, satyric). These include both the texts of what choruses sang and spoke and the fourth-century texts that talk about choral performance. The reason for this narrowing of source type is practical and deliberate; for it is the 'literary' sources that have, to a great extent, shaped our perceptions of the quality and activity of dramatic choral performance during this time. One cannot divorce choral performance as an aesthetic entity from choral performance as a component in a historical, festival context, but a more heuristic distinction may be made for the purposes of limiting the current enquiry. What is more, this 'literary' source material remains critical for the study of the fourth-century chorus; it is in the manuscripts and papyri of play texts, the treatises of thinkers like Plato and Aristotle, and speeches of the orators Isaeus and Demosthenes that we see the ancient chorus being presented as a contested, celebrated or suppressed aesthetic and cultural entity. This thesis seeks to investigate both the activity and function of the chorus as part of a prominent industry during the fourth century and the role the chorus plays in that century's contemporary social and intellectual discourse.

As already mentioned above, the focus of the argument will be on the activity and quality of the dramatic chorus in the fourth century, here defined as the years 400 – 309/8. The periodisation of Greece's literary history is such that 'Classical

[12] For a recent assessment of iconography of choruses see Csapo 2010a:1-82 and Csapo 2010b:79-130. See also Taplin 2007a:177-96.

drama' is traditionally rendered a purely fifth-century phenomenon, despite the fact that so much of the evidence, external to the dramatic texts themselves, comes from fourth-century sources. Orators such as Aeschines and Isaeus, writing in the middle of the fourth century, provide important information concerning the legislation and procedures that, we presume, formed the festival context for fifth-century drama. Plato's *Laws* and its presentation of the social function of the chorus is used to shed light on the broader social function of both dramatic and non-dramatic odes such as those of Pindar and Bacchylides. Aristotle's *Poetics*, written in the latter half of the fourth century, is adduced in discussions of the tragic choruses of the mid-fifth century.

In having the year 400 as the upper chronological limit of the enquiry, the arbitrary nature of a commonly held periodisation is foregrounded whilst, at the same time, it becomes possible to maintain a fairly rigid focus on material that is often classed as not belonging to Athens' 'Golden Age'. For the same reasons, I use the term 'Classical' to denote both the fifth *and* fourth centuries, 'later Classical' of the fourth century alone, and 'postclassical' of that period perceived as after the alleged 'Golden Age'. The abolition of the *choregia* in Athens (traditionally believed to have occurred in 309/8) and its replacement with the *agonothesia* acts as a helpful semi-colon in the history of Greek theatre, although the changes that came with this replacement may not be as fundamental as has previously been assumed.[13]

The fourth century also has a particular significance for how we understand the world of Classical theatre more generally, and this justifies my chronological

[13] See Csapo and Wilson 2012:300-21.

focus on a second count. In the first place, it is during this century that the city appears to have been consciously appropriating its literary pedigree, while the institution of reperformances of tragedy in 386[14] and comedy in 339[15] and the so-called 'Lycurgan recension'[16] of the dramatic texts of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides kick-started the process of canonisation. Indeed, it is during this time that the myth of a Golden Age of theatre in Athens is invented and propagated.[17] Secondly, the study of an expanding theatre industry and the effect that expansion had on choral performance in drama has prompted some intriguing suggestions regarding dramatic development at the time, but the full weight of the literary evidence has so far not been brought to bear on the issue.[18] Thirdly, as mentioned above, most of our sources, and in particular our literary sources, for theatre production in the Classical period come from the fourth century. By uncovering what we can tell about how the chorus was being used by dramatists at that time, we may become more conscious of how chronologically particular the pictures of choral culture rendered in the speeches, dialogues and treatises of contemporary authors are, and how that might change our current understanding of dramatic choruses from other periods of ancient history.[19]

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[14] *IG* II^2 2318, col. viii.

[15] *IG* II^2 2318, col. xii.

[16] See below p.118-20 on the Lycurgan recension.

[17] 'In assuming the vast superiority of fifth-century theatre, we are accepting, too often without question, a fourth-century judgement', Csapo *et. al.* (*forthcoming*). See also Scullion 2003:390-2 and Hanink 2010:39-67.

[18] Most recently Taplin 2012:226-50 although he does not look at Athens specifically.

[19] For the same reason, there is little reference to what authors such as Plutarch have to say about choral performance; there are too many factors that complicate what he says, and why, to provide reliable enough evidence for a temporally specific study such as this.

The focus on Athenian choruses is essentially pragmatic. To a greater or lesser extent, all authors considered in this thesis (i.e. those who provide contemporary reflections on the choral culture of the period) were either Athenian or lived in Athens for considerable periods of time. Added to this, the supporting evidence from epigraphic sources for the historical presence and participation of choruses in dramatic culture in the fourth century comes from and is about Athenian culture. The fact that Athens is recognised as the epicentre of the expanding theatre industry from as early as the 470s and Aeschylus' first trip to Sicily and the court of Hieron is also important.[20]

In recent years, scholars have sought to illuminate the ways in which dramatic culture was far from confined to Athens but increasingly, throughout the fifth and fourth centuries, a Panhellenic phenomenon. A demand for drama outside of Athens was recognised by playwrights who seem to have been aware of the potential for their plays' export.[21] My focus here on Athenian choruses to some extent goes against this recent move away from the traditional Athenocentric approach. Regarding the chorus, however, there is much that transcends any strict geographical delineation. Ever since the very first tragedies, it could be argued that the choral component of tragedy was in some aspects Panhellenic, drawing as it did

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[20] Aspiring authors would leave their hometowns to try to gain fame and fortune in the city's pre-eminent dramatic contests, e.g. Alexis from Thurii (*Sud.* α 1138) and Antiphanes from Cius, Smyrna or Rhodes (*Sud.* α 2735). On Aeschylus' trip to Sicily see *Vita Aeschyli* 8-11 Radt.
[21] See n.1 above.

on genres of choral performance that were shared across the Greek world such as the paean or the epinician.[22]

When talking of 'Athenian' choruses, then, I use the term in its broadest and most inclusive sense, whereby any connection via author, content or association with Athens is considered satisfactory for inclusion in an enquiry that is, essentially, led by the available choral texts. For this reason, the suggestion made by Liapis that the *Rhesus* may have had its first performance in Macedonia at the court of Philip II, sometime between 350-330 (an intriguing idea in its own right, but built by necessity on some fairly unstable grounds), will not mean the choral text of that play will be discounted from the current enquiry.[23] There is too great a connection with fifth-century Attic tragedy and its conventions, connections Liapis himself emphasises,[24] for the work to be regarded as divorced from Athenian dramatic culture.

We might expect that as the industry of theatre expanded, a diversification of choral practice occurred, dependent on factors such as local audiences' tastes and experiences or practical capacities (e.g. for the provision of appropriate stage spaces, resources for masks, musicians and teachers). Athens, a city that enshrined the provision of time and money for its choruses in law,[25] had all such resources, as well

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[22] Plato famously criticises the tendency in his own day to mix genres in choral performance, *Laws* 700d3-e4.

[23] See Liapis 2009:71-88. The suggestion of a Macedonian first performance is based on 'a remarkable reflection of the historical conditions, the institutions, the mentalities and even the material culture that obtained in the northern regions of the Greek peninsula…' (72).

[24] Liapis 2012:liii-lxiv and *passim*. Further strengthening the play's connection to Athenian dramatic practice, Liapis (*ibid*:lxxii-v) has tentatively suggested the author of our *Rhesus* is none other than Athenian actor Neoptolemus.

[25] See MacDowell 1989:65-77.

as the cultural tradition and expectation, readily available to provide and stage choruses in all dramas. An investigation into what we can tell about the nature of diversified choral practice across the Greek world would be difficult but certainly possible and, indeed, extremely illuminating, but it seems reasonable first to establish what we know about the choral culture in an area where we have a concentrated data-set before moving further afield.

The focus on the dramatic chorus is closely tied to a particular trend in modern scholarship (particularly in the last 150 years or so) that I seek to problematise.[26] While the presence of dramatic choruses in the fourth century has been affirmed in historical studies of the period (using epigraphy in particular), scholars who concern themselves with the literary evidence, the source type that will be the focus of this enquiry, have been more likely to address the issue of the quality of the chorus' contribution to the drama, and have done so with more or less universal condemnation.

This notion of 'decline' is a key concern in this thesis and it will be helpful to set out the *status quo* here in the introduction. To be clear, no scholar could maintain that the number of dramatic choruses decreased in number during the fourth century, so obvious is the evidence to the contrary. But regarding all other aspects of dramatic choral performance – activity, number of choreuts performing, interaction with actors and plot, melic quality, dramatic importance – there is a clear sense from most secondary literature that, even amongst sensitive scholars, 'decline' is still a good one-size-fits-all term for the way the chorus developed.

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[26] The debate about the role of the chorus in tragedy goes back even earlier to Dacier's 1692 translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, see Hall and Macintosh 2005:183-204 esp.198-202.

The comic chorus has been described in these terms most clearly. "It is well known that in the fourth century the comic chorus went through a period of decline, which ended with its standardisation into a group of drunk youths, who invariably appeared in all plays of New Comedy'.[27] There has been significantly less discussion about the fourth-century tragic chorus, but the conceptions of the fourth-century tragic choral contribution that do exist are at least partly informed by judgments of the comic chorus. 'It is indisputable that from the beginnings of tragedy to the end the rôle and importance of the chorus [in tragedy] steadily declined, but there is no reason to suppose that it ever fell so low as was the case in New Comedy'.[28] The sentiment still has a place in scholarly thinking today: 'The history of the dramatic chorus is one of decline both quantitatively and qualitatively';[29] 'il coro ha ormai perduto non tanto il *suo* ruolo ma *ogni* ruolo nel drama, cioè nel IV secolo';[30] 'We are

[27] Sifakis 1971:416. See also Maidment 1935:8; Arnott 1972:65 – 'This vivid, lively and functional chorus [*Frogs*] is replaced in Menander by only a dim shadow: a κῶμος of tipsy young men who have no function whatever in the plot, who serve merely to entertain the audience in the intervals between the five acts with a song-and-dance routine whose words are not preserved and possibly were not even specially composed for the play by its author'; Perusino 1986:71 - 'I testi ora esaminati autorizzano a concludere da una parte in favore di una progressiva esautorazione del coro come personaggio attivo e operante nel contesto drammatico; d'altra parte non si può disconoscere che la sua presenza e la sua partecipazione fossero costantemente assicurate, anche se in forma marginale rispetto all'azione'; Ireland 2010:352 – 'By the end of the fifth century, however, the parabasis was clearly in decline, and with it the odes too began to fade. By Menander's time the chorus had become no more than the provider of interludes within the body of plays, included simply because they had been associated with drama from the very beginning, a group of revellers, usually drunk (if references to them at the end of act I in *Aspis, Dyskolos, Epitrepontes and Perikeiromene* are representative of the genre as a whole), whose entry is signalled by the characters on the stage only at the end of act I.'

[28] Flickinger 1918:148-9. See also Capps 1895:288 'The prevailing view seems to be that both tragedy and comedy underwent a sudden change shortly after the Peloponnesian war, and that a throng of worthless or distinctly inferior poets succeeded the old masters; as for the chorus, that in tragedy it rapidly waned during the fourth century, soon became a mere appendage and at last disappeared, while in comedy it did not long outlive the Peloponnesian war.'

[29] Csapo and Slater 1995:349.

[30] Scattolin 2010:176, author's italics.

probably dealing with a number of factors in the early fourth century: (1) the decline of the chorus, already noticeable in tragedy, on which the vigorous comedy of Aristophanes depended…'.[31] Although manifestly more nuanced in approach than those scholars who pronounce decline as a self-evident fact, 'decline' is still used by the (few) scholars today who do seek to elucidate how the chorus developed in the later Classical period: 'There undoubtedly was to some degree, as Aristotle complains, a decline in the dramatic and poetic significance of the chorus'.[32] This narrative of decline is key in any discussion of how the chorus developed from the fifth into the fourth century and its continued prevalence in scholarship justifies the focus in this thesis.

Narratives of Decline

The alleged decline of the dramatic chorus in fourth-century theatre is but one of a number of other narratives of decline constructed around the fourth century. These other narratives feed into and strengthen the notion that an exhausted Athens could no longer support the dramatic chorus financially, technically or spiritually. The year 404 has been viewed as both a historical and literary watershed, arguably since the first performance of Aristophanes' *Frogs* where Dionysus complains that there are no decent poets left anymore, only bad

[31] Storey 2011:xxxi-ii.
[32] Taplin 2012:241.

ones (δέομαι ποιητοῦ δεξιοῦ./ οἱ μὲν γὰρ οὐκέτ' εἰσίν, οἱ δ' ὄντες κακοί, 71-2).[33] In the fourth century, writers' talents were evident in non-dramatic genres, as Seidensticker notes: 'nach dreihundert Jahren… steigt die Muse…vom Wagen und geht fortan zu Fuß. Die Prosa tritt ihren Siegeszug an'.[34] Both in terms of history and literature, scholars today are, perhaps, less willing to accept the Muse of poetry 'stepped from her carriage and went on foot', and the artificiality of such crude generic periodisation has been challenged and highlighted.[35] However, vestiges of the notion that creativity was exhausted in Athens after the city's defeat by Sparta do linger and may still exert some pressure on readings of fourth-century poetic texts.

Also strengthening the idea of dramatic choral decline is the ideologically-charged, ancient debate concerning the direction that poetic composition, choral or otherwise, was taking during our period. We can be certain that, from around the 420s, there were significant changes made in the style of lyric composition among some well-known poets that were to be described as revolutionary. The 'New Music' appears to have consisted of certain technical advances (e.g. the invention of new instruments) and a change in traditional composition practices (e.g. musical pitch was matched to word pitch).[36] These technical changes may well have interacted with social changes, in particular a revival of interest in the cult of Dionysus[37] and a

[33] Croiset 1929:390-403, Rose 1934:71-2, Hadas 1950:108-9, Lesky 1971:630-40, Beye 1987:175, Dihle 1994:223-8, Seidensticker 1995:175-98. Cf. Antiphanes fr.189 for a watershed of a different kind.
[34] Seidensticker 1995:175.
[35] See Webster 1956:45, Csapo 2000:124, Hall 2007:264-88.
[36] See D'Angour 2006:264-83, Csapo and Wilson 2009:277-93 and LeVen 2014.
[37] Csapo 2008:262-90.

greater desire on the part of audiences for elaborate musical structures. The social and political import of the New Music was considerably amplified by the critiques of comic poets[38] and of Plato and Aristotle, both of whom saw the changes as having a detrimental effect on audiences.[39] Here too, a notion that a 'Golden Age' of choral performance was slipping away at the end of the fifth century and descending into something cheap and decadent, showy and unworthy of Athens' great heritage, has a part to play in the narrative of decline. The partiality of this view may be recognised by scholars today[40] but its impact on the broader story of choral decline still lingers.

Narratives of decline, then, have been variously applied to different aspects of Athens' political and musico-poetic history, aspects that are related to Athenian choral performance. The alleged political and economic exhaustion of Athens after the city's defeat at Arginusae and capitulation to Spartan hegemony, the innovations in musico-poetic technology and practice, the shifting tastes of the audiences and the increase in the number of those audiences, experimentation with dramaturgical convention – all these have been fed into the way the development of the dramatic chorus has been sketched out in scholarship. No wonder, then, that the narrative is hard to dismiss, so extensive and insidious is its reach.

[38] Most famously by Pherecrates fr.155 but also Plato Comicus fr.138, quoted by the fourth-century philosopher Chamaeleon (fr.42 Wehrli). See Zimmerman 2011:433 on this fragment as part of a more extensive criticism of the New Music.
[39] Athenaeus, through whom we get much of our information on the style of the New Music, also has a part to play in the way that the New Music has been conceived of in modern scholarship, unpicked by LeVen 2010:35-48.
[40] See Power 2010:514-6 who argues for 'a shift in the popular perception of the professional citharode' (515).

The Problem of 'Decline'

It is important to state at the outset that I believe the term 'decline' (with regards to choral development in the fifth and fourth centuries) should be relegated to the scholarly dustbin.[41] It does both too much and not enough work, conforms to an unhelpful teleological or 'Darwinian' model of choral development,[42] admits all too easily anachronistic attitudes towards the role of the chorus in drama and, above all, is misleading in its impreciseness. Some of the problems with the use of 'decline' rhetoric can be outlined quickly and easily. Despite the variety of choral practice apparent in the available sources, 'decline' prompts a monolithic view of its development. This has encouraged scholars to discount certain pieces of evidence or label them as exceptional when they do not fit this single trajectory. It is not only the variety in the ancient source material that is minimised by the term 'decline', but the considerable range of scholarly opinion too:[43] in its indeterminacy 'decline' allows for a proliferation of misreading, misinterpretation and outright error in both ancient and modern texts.[44]

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[41] This conscious positioning is as methodologically sound as one that assumes some kind of decline from the outset, but in its contrarianism is better placed to shed new light on old texts.
[42] E.g. Sifakis 1963:32 'The tragic chorus never reached the final stage of evolution which we know from New Comedy'.
[43] This range of scholarly opinion is set out below.
[44] For example, if the existence of performing dramatic choruses is generally recognised, what do statements such as 'the chorus waned and in the fourth century disappeared' (Beye 1975:135) really mean? Csapo and Slater describe the choral role as 'marginal' in later tragedy (1995:349). Considering these same scholars confirm a choral performance of some kind, these kinds of statements would seem to be either hyperbole or self-contradiction. Ferrari 1948:184 and Ussher 1969:29-30 suggest that the chorus becomes more like an actor and so is 'reduced' in the sense that it loses its unique role in the drama. See also Lape 2006:89-109 for a similar suggestion that the chorus in Menander becomes a *komos*.

For example, some scholars pinpoint changes in dramatic practice to 404 or 400, tying those changes to the end of the Peloponnesian war and the supposed financial and political constraints placed on drama.[45] Others, charting the development of the comic chorus specifically, see the change coming later, heralded or pushed forward by Aristophanes himself and visible to us in his last two plays *Assemblywomen* (392/1) and *Wealth* (388).[46] Others, speaking of both tragic and comic choruses, place the turning point before the very end of the fifth century, either to the early career of Agathon, alleged inventor of the *embolimon*, perhaps in the 410s, or even earlier to the first plays of Aristophanes himself.[47] More recently, others have seen the point at which significant choral change began as being with the birth of the industry of theatre, something that necessitated material changes to the format and form of dramatic performance more generally.[48]

In order to put significant pressure on the modern scholarly use of the term, the notion of decline with respect to the dramatic chorus in Athens will receive a thorough and systematic interrogation in this thesis. The influential reach of the decline narrative can be foregrounded by noting the language used to describe later choral odes. Clarification is needed as to what is meant and affected by the use of the

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[45] Haigh 1889:261 and Handley 1985:355-425. Against which see e.g. Rothwell 1992:209-225 and Luraghi 2012:353-76.
[46] Dover 1972:194-5 and Russo 1994:220.
[47] Capps 1895:320. Pickard-Cambridge 1946:160-1, Pöhlmann 1977:69-81 and Rothwell 1992:209-225 are inclined to see a continuity of choral practice until the beginnings of New Comedy, itself a fuzzy chronological term.
[48] Exactly when this began is debatable, but an early significant event would be Aeschylus' trip to Sicily to the court of Dionysius I, see n.20 above.

very words 'decline', 'Zurücktreten', or 'riduzione'.[49] Terms such as intermezzo, entr'acte, Zwischenaktmusik, and interlude[50] carry strong connotations of modern theatrical practice and expectations. Implicit (by use of the translation 'intermezzo' or 'entr'acte') and explicit comparisons are made with the much, much later practice of including spectacular musico-dramatic pieces in between the acts of Italian dramas in the Renaissance and their equivalents, which became increasingly common dramatic practice.[51] Such anachronism is neither necessary nor helpful and should be consciously removed from interpretations of the passage of Aristotle's *Poetics*. In particular, it is the emphasis on 'inbetweeness' in all these terms that subtly reinforces the assumption that what the chorus sang and danced was trivial, for both the producer of the drama and the audience, in comparison to dramatic plot and individual characters.

There remain some more substantial pieces of evidence that might suggest the role of the dramatic chorus in the fourth century was truly challenged on a practical and/or ideological level, and these warrant a more sustained discussion. In comparison to the fifth century, we have only a very small amount of choral text from fourth-century dramas. The relative paucity of choral text is made all the more conspicuous by a particular, regular feature in some of our earliest papyri and manuscript traditions of drama. Often, when a chorus is approaching the stage or

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[49] Flashar 1967:154, Nesselrath 1990:52 'reduzierte', Zimmerman 1998:187 'akttrennendes Intermezzo', Perusino 1986:64 'quantitativamente e qualitativamente ristretta', Imperio 2011:130.
[50] These are, on the surface, all acceptable translations of the traditional interpretation of Aristotle's term *embolimon*; see further below.
[51] See s.v. 'intermezzo' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 1980. It is less common in modern scholarship to make explicit comparisons to post-Renaissance drama (e.g. Flickinger 1918:147 Gudeman 1934:327) but the form and nature of the early modern 'interlude' or operatic 'intermezzo' nevertheless still clearly underpin modern ideas about *embolima*.

about to perform, or when one section of the drama seems to be coming to a close, instead of a choral ode we find the words χοροῦ or χοροῦ μέλος – 'song of the chorus'.

The tendency among scholars has been to read these words not as indicating something about the way plays were transformed from stage to page, or how plays were transmitted in book form or the textual tradition more generally, but rather as an indicator of the quality of the choral text, namely that the odes were 'perceived as being dispensable by those preserving the plays on papyrus'.[52] The inference frequently made, then, is that the quality of choral song and dance in these dramas was almost offensively poor, for if the quality of the choral song had been good (say, as good as the choral odes of Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles and fifth-century Aristophanes), then they would have been preserved for us in textual form.[53] This inference is as problematic as it is widespread in scholarship today and will be addressed fully in chapter four.

Just as influential in the shaping of attitudes towards the dramatic chorus[54] from the fourth century onwards is a passage from Aristotle's *Poetics*.

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[52] The *communis opinio* as characterised by Marshall 2002:4. Capps (1895:320) says something similar, 'the χοροῦ of the MSS. is probably an indication of the loss of the original odes of an intermezzic character', and despite over a century of scholarship, this opinion has remained largely unaltered.

[53] We might read the apparent shift in focus from chorus to aulete in the iconography from around the 430s in the same light. While Csapo (2010a:ix) is surely right to see the partiality of the iconographic evidence as a boon, we should be wary of granting the 'selection and distortion' of material portrayed by the ancient artists' too great an authority.

[54] Although Aristotle is concerned primarily with the genre of tragedy in this portion of the *Poetics*, the passage has been used in support of scholars' constructions of choral development in other genres as well.

> καὶ τὸν χορὸν δὲ ἕνα δεῖ ὑπολαμβάνειν τῶν ὑποκριτῶν, καὶ μόριον εἶναι τοῦ ὅλου καὶ συναγωνίζεσθαι μὴ ὥσπερ Εὐριπίδῃ ἀλλ' ὥσπερ Σοφοκλεῖ. τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς τὰ ᾀδόμενα οὐδὲν μᾶλλον τοῦ μύθου ἢ ἄλλης τραγῳδίας ἐστίν· διὸ ἐμβόλιμα ᾄδουσιν πρώτου ἄρξαντος Ἀγάθωνος τοῦ τοιούτου. καίτοι τί διαφέρει ἢ ἐμβόλιμα ᾄδειν ἢ εἰ ῥῆσιν ἐξ ἄλλου εἰς ἄλλο ἁρμόττοι ἢ ἐπεισόδιον ὅλον; 1456a25-32

In this text, one of the most important thinkers and philosophers in the ancient and modern world implies that the odes of every tragedy after Sophocles were unconnected to the plot and possibly in comparison to the three recommendations he gives for correct choral function in tragedy (καὶ τὸν χορὸν... συναγωνίζεσθαι) were deficient in all other aspects. These few lines have provided a serious basis for the idea that the choruses of Aristotle's day were of a lesser quality than those of the fifth century.[55] And yet, so much is unclear in this oft-cited passage, from the meaning of specific words (e.g. συναγωνίζεσθαι, 'have a share in the contest'/ 'help win the contest'), phrases (e.g. μόριον εἶναι τοῦ ὅλου, 'part of the whole') to what the precise nature of an *embolimon* may be. The difficulty in interpreting the passage will be discussed more fully below in chapter one, but what is important to note at this point is the fact that, for all its hermeneutic challenges, this passage forms an important foundation for the theory of decline, not just for tragic but also comic choruses, still present, either implicitly or explicitly, in the scholarship of today.

There would be no problem, of course, in a discussion of choral development in citing Aristotle, together with recognition of the fact he is talking about one

[55] 'It is now well established that the Νεά usually employed a chorus that took no part in the action of the piece but merely appeared to furnish entertainment between acts'. Flickinger 1912:25 (interestingly, with no direct citation of this passage of Aristotle). See also e.g. Kranz 1933:252; Maidment 1935:8; Mullen 1982:53-4; Perusino 1986:66 and Taplin 2012:241 (quoted above).

particular genre, tragedy, and that the meaning of the passage is opaque at best. He was, after all, a resident of Athens for many years and would have witnessed many performances of tragedy, comedy and satyr play during the city's festivals each year. What is problematic, however, is the fact that most, if not all scholars approaching the topic of choral development in the later Classical period will have read this passage before reading the choral texts that survive and, by not questioning its validity or previous scholars' interpretations of the passage, begin looking at the source texts with an already embedded assumption of both choral function and a postclassical choral decline.

Recognising the importance of Aristotle's testimony whilst remaining critical of its meaning will be of serious concern in the first chapter, but we should note that we have good cause to question the common reading of the *Poetics* passage quoted above. We can confirm from the fragments of fourth-century tragedy that choruses not only had a part in the drama, but that they could also have varied fictional identities[56] and have dialogue with characters.[57] These traits are obvious in the chorus of the (probably) fourth-century tragedy *Rhesus.* The continued performance of satyr play at the Dionysia too would hardly have been possible without its chorus in all its integrated glory.[58] In addition, the reperformances of 'Old tragedy', instituted at the Dionysia in 386, would have included choruses, and in some cases

[56] Antiphon *Meleager*? *TrGF* 55 fr.2 (οἱ ἔκκριτοι Αἰτωλῶν'), Adesp.fr.662 (Χ̣[ορός] αἱ̣ γ̣υ̣ν̣α̣ῖ̣κες Ἀνδ[ρομ…), Adesp.fr.664 (ΧΟΡΟΣ [ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ?]).
[57] *TrGF* Adesp.fr.649, see Taplin 1977a:126.
[58] Pickard-Cambridge 1946:161.

the choral parts seem to have been enlarged.[59] In the context of choral culture more generally (i.e. including dithyrambic/'circular', pyrrhic, cultic choruses), the idea that choral performance could not be supported in terms of teaching, talent or manpower is likewise far-fetched.[60] In fact, Lycurgus in the 330s was responsible for increasing the number of annual choral performances as part of what seems to have been a cogent program of re-invigorating a post-Chaeronea Athens, demonstrating the continuity of valued choral performance in Athens after the fifth century.[61] The potential for high-quality choral lyric, too, is evidenced in the lyric compositions that have recently been re-appraised in modern scholarship, including one poem by Aristotle himself.[62]

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[59] See chapter three on additions made to the *Iphigenia at Aulis* in reperformance (cf. Kovacs 2003:77-103) including an enlargement of the choral parts and the addition of a second chorus at lines 590-7.

[60] In one of the more recent attempts to quantify what the levels of Athenian participation in choral activities would have been, Revermann has produced the figure of between 2-4% of the male population taking part in fifth/fourth-century festivals (2006b:108-9). However, Revermann confines himself to the choral activities of the Great Dionysia and the picture of choral participation in any given year in Athens is altered a great deal by taking into consideration the other festivals that included choral competition i.e. the Rural Dionysia, the Lenaia, the Thargelia, Little Panathenaea and, perhaps, the Prometheia and Hephaistia (see Wilson 2000:35). From the following (very rough) figures we might conservatively estimate (taking into account the fact that only males over the age of c. seven years old would take part) between 7-10% of the Athenian male population participating in choral performances in any given year during the fourth century (range dependent on the estimated total population of Athens during the fourth century, see Garnsey-Scheidel 1998:197-8 and Hansen 1985:8-17 for the higher population estimate of c. 29 000): City Dionysia – 36 for tragedy/satyr play, 120 for comedy, 1000 for circular choruses (total: 1156); Lenaea – 24 for tragedy/satyr play, 120 for comedy (total: 144); Rural Dionysia – 24 for tragedy/satyr play, 48 for comedy (total: 72 per rural Dionysia); Thargelia – 500 for circular choruses; Little Panathenaea – 500(or 1000?) for circular choruses, 90-270 for pyrrhic choruses (total: 590-1270). During a Panathenaic year when there would have been between 500 and 1000 participants in the circular choruses and up to nine pyrrhic choruses (conservative estimate of participants, total: 90), the percentage of choral participation goes up to between 8-13%.

[61] He is reported to have set up a new festival to Poseidon including three circular choruses, Ps-Plu.*Mor*.842a. See Humphreys 2004:77-110 for further details of Lycurgan measures at this time.

[62] Ford 2011, LeVen 2014.

Arguments have begun to emerge that seek to explain the development of a chorus from un-Aristotelian first principles.[63] The research on the fourth-century theatrical world more generally has prompted some other explanations for a shift in the use of the dramatic chorus: professionalisation of the theatre industry, the internationalisation of drama and its export out of Athens, and a progression of interest in 'realism' on stage.[64] There is a need then, to clear away the debris after the recent shifts in attitudes towards the fourth century and its theatre in order that these new assertions may be debated on firmer ground.[65] It is a not inconsiderable task and this thesis makes no claim to completing the clear-up. What is sought is to begin that process: to provoke, to open up new avenues for enquiry and challenge attitudes that no longer have a place in the study of Classical Greek drama.

Defining Decline in Scholarship

One of the problems that was pointed out in the previous section is that the term 'decline' has been used to describe various aspects of an choral development without any further exact definitions of what is actually meant to have 'declined'. As a means of demonstrating further the unhelpfully nebulous quality of the term 'decline' it is worth reviewing the way in which the term has been used during the

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[63] Csapo 2000:115-34, Taplin 2012:226-50.

[64] Handley 1985:398, Rothwell 1992:209, Nervegna 2009:1-7, Junker 2010:131-48, Csapo 2010a:117-39.

[65] For now, we might note that an audience's desire for 'realism' in their actors need not extend to their desire for realism *tout court*; there are examples of modern theatre where hyper-realism and stylisation comfortably (and powerfully) sit side-by-side. Foley has observed (2007:357) the problem of the non-naturalistic chorus on the modern stage for example is, in fact, a 'red herring'.

past century or so, and establishing precisely where current (published) opinion lies. In terms of presence and action, scholars are now near-unanimous in affirming that choruses appeared, sang and danced in tragedies, satyr plays and comedies down to the end of the fourth century and beyond.[66] There has been a strong tradition of believing otherwise, however, and the traces of this opinion can be found in handbooks even today.[67] Scholars who have suggested a purely musical performance[68] or a dance without singing or words[69] or even an absolute absence of a choral component[70] either did not know of or did not take into account certain key pieces of evidence. Prose texts clearly indicate song and dance as essential components of choral performance in the fourth century (e.g. Aristotle *Poetics* 1456a27-9 - τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς τὰ ᾀδόμενα ούδὲν μᾶλλον τοῦ μύθου ἢ ἄλλης τραγῳδίας ἐστίν) and, likewise, the play texts themselves (e.g. *Wealth* 760-1 ἀλλ’ εἶ’, ἀπαξάπαντες ἐξ ἑνὸς λόγου/ ὀρχεῖσθε καὶ σκιρτᾶτε καὶ χορεύετε, or 1209 δεῖ γὰρ κατόπιν τούτοις ᾄδοντας ἕπεσθαι).

In terms of the quantity of choral performance, there is a general consensus that it was in some way reduced, though it is rare to find any precise account in modern treatments of the topic of what, exactly, was being reduced. Most readily,

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[66] See more recently, Xanthakis-Karamanou 1980:10, Marshall 2002:9 and Revermann 2006a:277-8. So little evidence remains of satyr drama that further study is even more difficult than for tragedy and comedy. Pickard-Cambridge 1946:160-1 affirms the continuity of satyr drama throughout the fourth century.

[67] E.g. ‘Such evidence as there is suggests, in fact, that the [comic] chorus had become nonorganic, totally detached from the stage action, and in many respects hardly more relevant than the advertisements that today punctuate television programmes’, Ireland (2010:352).

[68] No doubt projecting Roman theatre practice onto the fourth century, see Haigh 1889:261. See Maidment 1935:11n.2 and 4 for older bibliography stating this view.

[69] Holzinger 1940:125, Beare 1955:51, Russo 1994:232-233 (*contra Laws* 654b3-7) and Gelzer 1993:95.

[70] Ussher 1969:29-30 and Ireland 2010:352. Flashar 1967:155n.5 prefers to profess ignorance.

some will point to the percentage of choral lines within the play as a whole as a straightforward indicator of a reduced role.[71] Csapo and Slater have set out this line of argument most clearly, comparing the proportion of 40-50% of choral lines in Aeschylus with Euripides' *Orestes* chorus, which makes up only 10.5% of the lines. They admit two 'wrinkles' in the picture: Euripides' *Bacchae* (27%) and Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* (22%). However, if one adds the (probably) fourth-century *Rhesus* to that picture (28.5%), the 'systematic' trend begins to look more like a dip.[72] In addition, Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis* contains 21.7% choral lines. The fact that some of the choral lines have been interpolated, probably in the fourth century, strengthens the challenge to the notion of quantitative decline in the tragic chorus if anything .

In comedy, despite only having the plays of one author, the statistics as set out by Csapo and Slater seem to support a significant reduction of choral lines in that genre too, with plays containing a fairly consistent proportion of choral lines (25%) up until the last two plays of Aristophanes extant today, *Assemblywomen* and *Wealth*. The problems with applying such techniques to our extant texts of comedy are more obvious here than in tragedy, since we do not have most of the choral odes

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[71] See e.g. Mastronarde 2010:88. And yet it seems unnecessarily reductive to insist that the number of lines in the text of a play is an indicator of value or importance in a production, as Mastronarde does, although it is one indicator to be sure. We can point to the silent or near-silent characters who are of vital importance in Aeschylus (e.g. Pylades). More modern examples of wordless action (particularly important in comedy) might be Gromit in *Wallace and Gromit*, George Smiley in *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, the waiter in *One Man, Two Guvnors*, the woman in black from *The Woman in Black* or 'the Lovely Samantha' in *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*.

[72] See Csapo 1999-2000:399-426 on the changes in Euripides' choral odes that can be tracked by quantitative analysis of the chorus' and actors' sung and spoken lines and his suggestion that the proportion of choral lines in the later plays of the fifth century are due to an alternative performance locations.

from those last two plays of Aristophanes, nor do we know what their length would have been. In Csapo and Slater's analysis, an arbitrary limit of 10% has been placed on the proportion of choral involvement in *Assemblywomen* and *Wealth*, even once the excised odes have been accounted for. They state that, after the parodos of *Wealth,* 'they deliver no more than thirteen lines at six different intervals in the action', based, it must be assumed, on the notion that comedies could not exceed a certain length.[73] Questionable statistics such as these form the foundation of many scholars' evaluations of the later choruses of both tragedy and comedy.[74]

The quality of the choral odes in later Classical drama has received the most attention, although extensive (or chorally focused) analyses are less frequent than the instances of two-sentence summaries of the individual scholar's own view with little or no recourse to source citation. This is no doubt due to the perceived consensus as to the later chorus' qualitative decline. Interrogating that notion will be the subject of many discussions throughout this thesis, but for now it is worth noting that there is a good deal of variance within that scholarly consensus.

A great many critics have seen the lack of the chorus' engagement with the characters and themes of the plot or the actors on stage as definitive of the fourth-century chorus, both in comedy and in tragedy and, simultaneously, as a clear indication of qualitative decline.[75] The fact that the one tragedy that we do have from the fourth century (probably), the *Rhesus*, must be dubbed 'exceptional' on

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[73] 1995:349.

[74] Often cited as evidence for a reduced chorus in terms of number of participants is Aristotle *Politics* 1276b1-7, but inaccurately so, see e.g. Sifakis 1963:33-6, Rothwell 1992:217.

[75] E.g. in comedy: Flickinger 1918:148-9, Kranz 1933:262, Ferrari 1948:177-87, Sifakis 1967:113, Dover 1972:194-5, Rothwell 1992:209, Zimmerman 1998:173-89. In tragedy: Xanthakis-Karamanou 1980:8 and Mastronarde 2010:88-152. Some scholars move (very easily) between the two genres.

account of its highly involved chorus, highlights one problem with such an argument: on what evidence is this assertion of fourth-century disconnectedness based?[76] The answer, as is so often the case, is those three short sentences in Aristotle's *Poetics* and perhaps the echoes of Aristotle in the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* and scholia.[77] Drawing on Aristotle's clear criticism of 'the other poets' (τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς, 1456a27-8) for their alleged practice of taking choral odes from one play and 'fitting' them to another (ἐξ ἄλλου εἰς ἄλλο ἁρμόττοι, 1456a31), interpreters have presented the convention of replacing choral odes in the performance texts of plays with χοροῦ as a result of the transferability (and hence irrelevance) of the odes. The fact that the charge of irrelevance in fourth-century choral odes has something akin to an illustrious pedigree in scholarship regarding Euripides' later choral odes makes it harder to question (a further example of multiple narratives of decline feeding into and bolstering that of the fourth-century dramatic chorus). It is a narrative that is invitingly neat: a shift in dramaturgical technique towards the end of the fifth century, as exemplified by Euripides, is then carried on into the fourth century, as attested by Aristotle. It is also a narrative we have cause to question.

Firstly, it seems rather lax to base one's historical narrative of choral development on a single view, a view that for all Aristotle's brilliance is cryptically expressed, as opposed to drawing first conclusions from the dramatic texts available,

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[76] We can also add the choral text from fourth-century reperformances of plays e.g. *Iphigenia at Aulis* where the choruses are most certainly 'involved' in the action.

[77] *Poetics* 1456a25-32, with further influential passages *Prob*.922b10-27 and perhaps, Σ.*Phoen*.202 are clearly apparent in most scholars' arguments but less often cited explicitly.

such as the *Rhesus*.[78] Secondly the notion that because an ode might be used in more than one play means that the choral performance was irrelevant to the dramatic structure or impact of a play is far from persuasive, channelling as it does a decidedly Aristotelian attitude towards the primacy of plot.[79] To take an ancient example, the so-called 'Ode to Man' in Sophocles' *Antigone* does not need to make direct reference to the plot, nor move the action forward in any way for it to be appreciated as a valuable part of that play and its own choral plot.[80] With that recognised, we should also note that it could quite comfortably sit in any number of tragedies where the topic of mortal fallibility is explored.[81] However, it should be pointed out and emphasised that, in our extant fourth-century choral texts, the odes do not approach the kind of disconnectedness found in some odes of Sophocles and Euripides, and so this initial qualitative criticism of those later choral odes founders on both counts.

A majority of scholars also focus on the lack of authenticity of the odes, namely the proposal that the poet himself did not write the odes that the fourth-century chorus performed.[82] The evidence for this is shaky at best. While inferences

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[78] Nor should the usual interpretation that Aristotle means the odes are irrelevant be accepted without question, see p.61-9 for a different interpretation that renders Aristotle's charge τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς τὰ ᾀδόμενα ούδὲν μᾶλλον τοῦ μύθου ἢ ἄλλης τραγῳδίας ἐστίν as having nothing to do with irrelevance.

[79] Csapo (2000:126) has hinted at different ways of viewing the choral contribution to a comedy aside from direct participation.

[80] I.e. the 'use of choral experience in the construction of tragic scenarios', Murnaghan 2013:161.

[81] On the incompatibility with Aristotle's comparison of choral technique between Sophocles and Euripides see Halliwell 1986:244-6. Mastronarde seeks to reconcile our extant tragedy and Aristotle 2010:145-52, not without difficulty. I hope to give a more thorough critique of Mastronarde's excellent analysis of the Euripidean chorus elsewhere.

[82] Flickinger 1912:33-4, Webster 1953:59n.1, Sifakis 1963:31, Arnott 1972:65, Handley 1985:400, Rothwell 1992:219, Zimmerman 1998:187, Sidwell 2001:78-84, Slater 2002:316n.30. Sutton

from Aristotle preside once more on this matter, it is likely that the comment in Platonius' *On the Difference of Comedies* also plays an undeserved part in forming scholarly opinion.[83] In that work it is reported (twice, 27-8, 35-8) that Aristophanes' *Aiolosikon*, one of the poet's last plays and allegedly produced by his son, had no choral odes. This statement is demonstrably false as proved by the two fragments from the chorus of that play (frgs.8-10).[84] Once this false information is consciously removed from our reasoning, there is, in fact, no further evidence for poets not writing choral odes for tragedy and comedy. Indeed, we can only imagine how difficult this might be in the composition of a satyr play whose chorus must have remained integral to the drama and plot.[85]

While a conclusive counter-argument cannot be given, we can note that at least some comic choruses had odes particular to the production. For example, two fragments from Eubulus' *Garland Sellers* (frgs.102 and 103), produced in either 350 or 320,[86] are in dactylic hexameters and indicate the play's eponymous chorus sung a kind of 'makarismos', addressing characters in the play. Likewise, it seems strange that a poet such as Agathon, renowned for his lyric skill (and presented in action in Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria*) would not have wanted to display that

1990:92 argues for the odes of *Assemblywomen* being specially written on the strength of the shortness of the play without them, while *Wealth*, being long enough, would not have had specially-written odes.

[83] See Perusino 1989 for text and commentary.

[84] See Sommerstein 2009:275 n.17, noting lyric trochaics in fr.8, aristophaneans in fr.9 and choriambs in fr.10.

[85] We have a fragment from Lycophron's satyr play *Menedemus the Satyr* (*TrGF* 100 fr.2) where Silenus is addressing 'the satyrs', most likely the chorus.

[86] Webster 1953:61 cf. Hunter 1983:195-8.

capability in his dramas.[87] There seems more reason than not then, to believe that poets did write the choral odes of drama in the fourth century.[88]

On the subject of the aesthetic quality of choral lyric there has been a move towards recognising the metrical variety in the extant choral text. Over a century ago, Capps pronounced a decline in 'melic quality' (1895:323) but, as seen in Hunter's detailed analysis of all fragments definitely or potentially performed by a comic chorus, this judgement is no longer tenable.[89] Some have preferred to remain ambivalent on this point despite the eupolideans, cretic-paeonic tetrameters, glyconics, dactyls, choral anapaests and other indeterminate metres in evidence from even our small sample of comic choral text from the fourth century.[90] The quality of the comic chorus has also been faulted for not performing a parabasis in plays of the latter half of the fourth century, but this is far from certain.[91]

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The first subject to tackle, then, is the prominence of Aristotle in modern constructions of the development of the dramatic chorus. Part I challenges the usual readings of Aristotle's *Poetics* 1456a25-32, and gives an alternative reading that breaks free of unhelpful and circular arguments. Once modern readers' possible prejudices (to use Gadamer's provocative term) have been analysed and examined it is possible to turn to the choral texts themselves with keener eyes.

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[87] Σ.Ar.*Thesm*.100 with *TrGF* 39 T19 and 20.

[88] The fact these two recurrent elements in scholars' estimations of the later chorus (a lack of engagement and a lack of authenticity) map fairly directly onto the *Poetics* passage is not, I think, without significance.

[89] Lape 2006:90.

[90] E.g. Rothwell 1992:223.

[91] See Revermann 2006a:278-80 and p.186 for further discussion.

In comparison to what we have from fifth-century drama, there is only a small amount of fourth-century dramatic choral text. However, there is more than is often assumed. In chapters two, three and four ('Part II'), I bring together all available choral text from the period in question: the choral odes from the (probably) fourth-century tragedy *Rhesus* and the two Aristophanes comedies *Assemblywomen* and *Wealth*. Added to these I adduce a new source; the sections of choral text in our received fifth-century tragedies that were added for fourth-century reperformances of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* and Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis*. Far from being a sign of 'damage' to the texts of fifth-century plays, these additions act as evidence for fourth-century choral tastes. Together with the fragments of fourth-century tragedy, satyr play and comedy,[92] there is a significant corpus of text to analyse and evidence for the activity and valuation of the dramatic chorus in the fourth century.

In the fifth and sixth chapters ('Part III'), the manifest variety of choral performance in drama is set in the context of how contemporary writers viewed and used the chorus outside the choral performances themselves. The images in chapter five range from the sedate and orderly movements of stars, to a 'maiden' chorus of lambs' entrails, and are found in oratory, philosophy, history, comedy and lyric. The sixth chapter looks at one author in particular, Plato, who takes a manifest interest

[92] A review of the choral fragments of fourth-century tragedy is currently so methodologically fraught that a sustained treatment cannot be given here. The methodological problems may become easier either when more choral text is found or (the more pressing if more intractable problem) when new methods are developed for dating and identifying choral fragments beyond arguments relying on the supposedly paradigmatic language and tone of our extant fifth-century choruses. The review of fourth-century comic choral fragments is exceptional in being the subject of a number of scholarly treatments during the past hundred years: Maidment 1935:1-24, Sifakis 1971:410-32, Hunter 1979:23-38, Imperio 2011:97-159. See further chapter four.

in the chorus both as a metaphor for communicating ideas but also as a means of creating societal harmony through choral culture.

Looking at both the texts of fourth-century choral performance and the contemporary writers and thinkers who viewed them allows us to see more clearly what the place of the dramatic chorus was in fourth-century Athens. Furthermore, the choral text, the best evidence for choral activity, indicates interesting and varied choral practices. The thesis as a whole brings together all contemporary literary evidence for the dramatic chorus in the fourth century, and uses it to demonstrate the creativity with which it is used and thought about in drama and in society.

PART I:

READING ARISTOTLE'S *POETICS* 1456a25-32

1.

Reading Aristotle's *Poetics* 1456a25-32

> *In some fourth-century tragedies the choral parts had apparently become mere interludes dividing the "acts" (eventually the canonical "five acts") in which the named characters performed their scenes without any interaction with a chorus, and such unrelated songs or* embolima *(as Aristotle termed them) had, so far as we know, no relation in content to the actors' scenes.*
>
> D. J. Mastronarde *The Art of Euripides* 2010:88

We saw in the introduction to this thesis some of the more obvious reasons to challenge the current scholarly opinion regarding the fourth-century chorus. The idea that choruses were of little value or interest within tragedy, drama or his contemporary culture, becomes even more difficult to countenance when we turn to Aristotle and his school. In a number of passages, Aristotle shows a clear awareness of the practicalities of rehearsal and performance of a chorus. In *Metaphysics* 1018b26-29 Aristotle refers to the *coryphaeus* as a fixed point within the choral body (τι ἓν ὡρισμένον), from which point one can establish priority in terms of order – τάξις – within the chorus.[1] Similarly focusing on the *coryphaeus*' practical role in the performing chorus, Aristotle uses the chorus as an example in a description of how a state, a household or an animal may be made up of different parts of varying levels of virtue (*Pol.*1277a6-12). Both of these passages suggest that Aristotle had personal and practical knowledge of the internal workings of the

[1] Although we do not know if Aristotle had a particular kind of chorus in mind in this passage, we might infer that such an arrangement in choruses was common. On Aristotle's familiarity with theatrical practice see Burkert 1975:67-72. A concern with practicalities is also evident in the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* (901b1-3, 901b30-1, 918b13-29, 921a19-21) and a number of scholia, see Lord 1908:19.

choral performances he will have seen rehearsing and performing in Athens. Further to the familiarity he had with day-to-day choral culture, we see how he also appeals to the paradigmatic unity of the chorus as Plato and many other thinkers did before him.[2] It is difficult, then, to accept the sentiment of some modern commentators who state ‘the chorus may have been obsolete by A[ristotle]'s own time, which would explain to some extent his lack of interest in it’.[3]

Aside from Aristotle's awareness of practicalities of contemporary choral performance, we might also point to a very clear technical and historical interest in choral matters both within Aristotle's works and in those of his pupils at the Lyceum.[4] In the list of works attributed to Aristotle (D.L.5.22-27), there are several other treatises in which the chorus would have had a place, in addition to the *Poetics* as we have it: in particular the two works titled Περὶ μουσικῆς and one named Περὶ τραγῳδιῶν.[5] Others at the Lyceum are also reported to have made λόγοι περὶ χορῶν. Plutarch lists ‘Aristotle and Theophrastus and Dicaearchus and Hieronymus’ as ‘enthralled by discussion of choruses and the production of plays…’

[2] The tendency of Aristotle to include *realia* and received opinions about things is well noted, see Guthrie 1981:41-44 and Shields 2007: 24-7. Halliwell 1986:337-43 has considered the way Aristotle's interest in performed theatre can be identified in *Poetics*, even if it is not a key focus for Aristotle in that particular work. For Aristotle as a learned reader of poetry in general, see Ford 2011:138 and *passim*. On Aristotle's interest in competition, such as choral competition, within cities see Skultety 2009:44-68.

[3] Lucas 1968:194. Similarly Scattolin 2011:176.

[4] The interest in choruses was to continue, particularly in authors of the so-called Second Sophistic although the choruses on which they were commenting will probably have been text-based rather than performance-based. See e.g. Dio Chrysostom's 52nd oration is a comparison of three treatments of the Philoctetes myth including a discussion of how the use of the chorus compares in each (cf. in particular 3-9).

[5] On the strength of the fact that references to choruses appear in such extant works as *Metaphysics, Politics, Problems* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, we may be certain that similar references may be found in any of the works listed by Diogenes. See also Janko 2000:315-540 on the fragments of Aristotle's *De Poetis*.

(Plu.*Mor*.1096a4-10). Aristoxenus too is thought to have written a work named 'On choruses' or 'On tragic dancing'.[6] Chamaeleon wrote on the chorus but seems to have focused more on choruses of the fifth century[7] and several other authors were clearly interested in the history and traditions of the chorus, both in Athens and beyond.[8]

This interest in the form and function of the chorus had a manifest impact on aspects of thinking in the Peripatos. Plato is conspicuous for his 'thinking chorally', that is, exploring concepts or alluding to certain understood states of being by means of choral metaphor.[9] We find similar kinds of choral metaphor – choral thinking – in the works of Aristotle and his school. The fundamental quality of a chorus as a harmonious and unified entity is deployed in a passage of the *Politics.* Discussing the practice of ostracism, Aristotle wants to stress the need for a kind of harmony, similar to that of a chorus, in the city – and calls for a similar reaction should any member of that city not strive for the total harmony.

> And this is also clear in the field of the other arts and sciences; a painter would not let his animal have its foot of disproportionately large size, even though it was an exceptionally beautiful foot, nor would a shipbuilder make the stern or some other part of a ship disproportionately big, nor yet will a trainer of choruses allow a man who sings louder and more beautifully than the whole chorus to be a member of it.[10]
>
> *Politics* 1284b7-14

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[6] Frgs.103-112 Wehrli.

[7] Frgs.34, 41 and 42.

[8] E.g. Heraclides Ponticus fr.157 (Wehrli) tells of the first choruses instigated at Delphi.

[9] See chapter five.

[10] δῆλον δὲ τοῦτο καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων τεχνῶν καὶ ἐπιστημῶν· οὔτε γὰρ γραφεὺς ἐάσειεν ἂν τὸν ὑπερβάλλοντα πόδα τῆς συμμετρίας ἔχειν τὸ ζῷον, οὐδ' εἰ διαφέροι τὸ κάλλος, οὔτε ναυπηγὸς πρύμναν ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τι μορίων τῶν τῆς νεώς, οὐδὲ δὴ χοροδιδάσκαλος τὸν μεῖζον καὶ κάλλιον τοῦ παντὸς χοροῦ φθεγγόμενον ἐάσει συγχορεύειν.

The comparison of a chorus to a city is familiar from the works of Plato.[11] Aristotle here demonstrates a comparable use of the city/chorus paradigm, but adds some characteristically practical detail in bringing in the role of the χοροδιδάσκαλος and his actions in response to the choreut who stands out from the crowd. The trope continues, as we see from a metaphorical use of choral language, found in a fragment of Xenocrates, the successor of Plato as head of the Academy in Athens. There, a group of philosophical followers is described as a χορὸς τῶν ὁμιλητῶν, showing a continuation of the kinds of imagery found in Plato's *Protagoras* and *Theaetetus*.[12] Phaeneas, a distinguished pupil of Aristotle at the Lyceum also engaged with the tradition of using choral imagery to describe the movements of the cosmos.[13] We see an image very similar to that in *Politics* 1284b7-14 in a fragment of Clearchus, another pupil of Aristotle.[14] In the light of the evidence for choruses not only having a continued, well-funded role in Athenian society well into the late fourth century, but also being subject to continuous and sustained philosophical reflection throughout the century, the idea that the quality and activity of choruses in fourth-century drama were 'of no interest' to either poet, producer or philosopher seems highly unlikely. We must find an alternative explanation for what Aristotle says (and how little he says).

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[11] See e.g. *Gorgias* 482b7-c2.

[12] Xenocrates fr. 11.13-8 (Parente 1982). For the chorus as philosophical coterie see *Protagoras* 315b2-8. For a more abstract use of χορεία as a description of the philosophical life see *Theaetetus* 173b4-c3.

[13] Plu.*Mor.*422b3-9.

[14] Fr.15 (Wehrli). See Bartol 2004:292-6 for a demonstration of Clearchus' considerable abilities as evidenced in a withering description of Philoxenus.

The difficulties inherent in the text of *Poetics* 1456a25-32, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, are also an important factor in justifying the proposed reassessment of the passage. When scholars have attempted to push the text for meaning, or to discover why Aristotle talks about the chorus in the way he does, the questions that follow do not admit easy answers.[15] What precisely does Aristotle mean by his prescription that the chorus be 'part of the whole'? How are we to understand the qualities of the odes that he labels as *embolima*? Aside from the usual scholarly endeavour of better understanding all ancient texts, these and other questions have become increasingly vital as our understanding of fourth-century dramatic culture deepens and the inconsistencies between Aristotle and the historical evidence become more apparent.

In order to provide any reading of the passage, some external information (e.g. the dramatic context of the time) has to be supplied. It will be obvious that the reading of *Poetics* 1456a25-32 set out below reflects the goals of someone who seeks to destabilise an entrenched narrative. It may not persuade all readers. And yet, such a reading serves an important purpose in foregrounding the difficulties for any interpretation of this crucial passage from antiquity (as far as studies of the ancient chorus are concerned) and provoking a discussion that moves our understanding of this text's place in the construction of fourth-century dramatic choral history forward. What can be said in favour of the reading below is that it not only allows for Aristotle having a coherent opinion on the chorus but also draws out some further information about Aristotle's contemporary dramatic choral culture.

[15] See Else 1957:551-8, Halliwell 1986:241-52, Martina 2003:461-510 and Scattolin 2011:161-251.

This chapter first interrogates certain texts that are close to Aristotle's *Poetics*, which have influenced our reading of the passage. The passage itself is then thoroughly analysed in terms of its constituent parts and past readings. Finally, I supply my own interpretation of the passage, producing a reading that situates his brief précis of the choral role in tragedy within what we know of choral culture in Aristotle's Athens.

Early Reflections Of and On the *Poetics*?

Before turning to look at the passage of *Poetics* in more detail, it is essential to recognise how other interpretations of this passage have shaped and continue to shape modern readings.[16] A complete history of how these few lines of Aristotle have been understood still waits to be written, but in the first instance a brief excursus into some of the immediate receptions (i.e. the late fourth and third centuries) of Aristotelian thought will set more modern readings of the passage in an illuminating context.[17] We shall see later how the comments made by pupils and followers of Aristotle continue to be echoed in the evaluations of some modern scholars in their treatments of the dramatic chorus in the Classical period.[18]

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[16] Such necessary caution is noted by Cave 2001:202-3.

[17] For the *Nachleben* of the *Poetics,* particularly from the Renaissance onwards, see Halliwell 1992:409-424 (a slightly modified version of Halliwell 1986:286-323). See also Cave 2001:197-214 for a theoretical approach to reading Aristotle in light of the afterlife of the *Poetics*.

[18] Outside the remit of my focused excursus here, but important in some modern discussions is the influence of the later practice of *contaminatio*, referred to explicitly in the prologues of Terence's dramas, in the interpretation of Aristotle's reference to *embolima* (1456a27-29), see Gentili 1979:21n.24 (*contra* Gallavotti 1974:167), Sidwell 2001:79 and 78-84 generally, and Scattolin

These immediate receptions are but one part of a web of receptions that includes any number of prominent thinkers from Aristotle's time to our own and I do not wish to ignore or simplify the complicated process of how Aristotle has been and continues to be read. To give but one example of how difficult it can be to trace any clear lines of 'influence': post-Renaissance scholars were (and are) often as familiar with Horace's *Ars Poetica* as Aristotle's *Poetics* and the two works, with their different understandings of what a chorus constituted, have inevitably been read in concert.[19] The placing of the two works side by side in this way has had the effect of reducing the differences and lessening the individuality of each work and hence any clear sense of 'Aristotelian' as opposed 'Horatian' influence in understanding Aristotle's *Poetics*. By way of further complication, we might note the *Ars Poetica* is in fact thought to be engaging heavily with a peripatetic philosopher writing in the third century, Neoptolemus, who, in turn, would have been familiar with Aristotle's *Poetics* but need not have necessarily followed the work's strictures to the letter.[20] This example of Horace's reception of not only Aristotle but of a different possible reception of Aristotle in Neoptolemus' work, and the consequent receptions of Horace, serves to demonstrate that influences are multiple and can work chronologically in both directions. Recognising the complexity, even if it

2011:200. The unwarranted assimilation of *contaminatio* and *embolima* will be treated more thoroughly below.

[19] Halliwell has drawn attention to the complexity regarding the reading of the *Ars Poetica* side by side with Aristotle's *Poetics* – 'we are left not only with the impossibility of defining the transmission of Aristotelian ideas to Horace with any precision, but also with the paradox, so full of significance for the status of the *Poetics* in Renaissance literary theory, that while the *Poetics* as such was certainly not widely known in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, Horace's poem stands out as a major document which incorporates and reworks much that had originally been formulated in the *Poetics*' 1986:288.

[20] Brink 1971:254-60.

cannot be charted here, will be of use in destabilising an entrenched (mis)reading of *Poetics* 1456a25-32.

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In the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems*, we find a discussion of the appropriate modes for tragic choral song (922b10-27).[21] It is stated that some modes (the Hypodorian and the Hypophrygian) encourage us to act (κατὰ δὲ τὴν ὑποδωριστὶ καὶ ὑποφρυγιστὶ πράττομεν, 24-5) while others like the Phrygian and Bacchic are thought only to rouse an emotion in listeners as opposed to motivating them to action. This distinction between acting and feeling is paralleled, according to the *Problems*, in the very natures of the heroic characters and the chorus respectively. 'For the chorus is a concerned friend incapable of action', the writer goes on, 'since it merely offers goodwill to those who are present [on the stage]' (ἔστι γὰρ ὁ χορὸς κηδευτὴς ἄπρακτος· εὔνοιαν γὰρ μόνον παρέχεται οἷς πάρεστιν, 26-7).[22]

This assertion that the chorus is not to do or act (πράττειν) anything but only be affected by the events unfolding before them and offer εὔνοια to the heroic characters, has been used by those wishing to illuminate the obscure *Poetics* passage where the choral role in tragedy is also discussed. In particular, this statement by

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[21] All text of the *Problems* is from Louis 1993.

[22] I use here the translation given by Mastronarde 2010:146. Frequently κηδευτής is (in my opinion, mis-) translated as 'attendant', following the fourth-century AD usage of the word, see Mastronarde 2010:146n.166. Flashar 1962:169 translates κηδευτής as 'Beobachter' but, as Scattolin rightly points out (2011:188n.53), Flashar seems to have been influenced by Schlegel's (also frequenlty mis-interpreted) 'ideal spectator' (on which see Goldhill 2013: 35-52 and Billings 2013:133-150). ἄπρακτος has a more general sense of 'without profit' in other fourth-century authors (D.9.40, Lys.7.6) and only in the *Problems* is it alleged (in LSJ) to have a stronger more technical sense of 'not taking part in the action'.

an unknown writer of Aristotle's school has been brought to bear on discussion of what Aristotle means by the verb συναγωνίζεσθαι, with what seems to be an unjustified confidence.[23] The reading of the two texts in tandem is appealing. If we read Aristotle in light of the *Problems*, what we might understand συναγωνίζεσθαι to mean is delineated a little more clearly, confined as the chorus is to having an emotional connection to the characters without having any practical action within the play. Is such a move justified? Contrary to the superficial agreement between the two passages, the idea of the chorus as a κηδευτὴς ἄπρακτος seems at odds with Aristotle's earlier prescription that the chorus be treated like one of the actors (τὸν χορὸν δὲ ἕνα δεῖ ὑπολαμβάνειν τῶν ὑποκριτῶν).[24] The fact that the preceding discussion in the *Problems* labours to distinguish between heroic characters and chorus would also seem to separate the standpoints of Aristotle and the writer(s) of the *Problems*.[25]

It would seem safer to treat them as representatives of two different approaches to theorising the choral role in tragedy rather than assuming a concordance between the two and compelling any modern readings to conform to

[23] καὶ τὸν χορὸν δὲ ἕνα δεῖ ὑπολαμβάνειν τῶν ὑποκριτῶν, καὶ μόριον εἶναι τοῦ ὅλου καὶ **συναγωνίζεσθαι** μὴ ὥσπερ Εὐριπίδῃ ἀλλ' ὥσπερ Σοφοκλεῖ. 1456a25-6. Thus Gentili 1984:34, 'il senso di ciò che Aristotele vuol dire [with the verb συναγωνίζεσθαι] è che il coro deve dare il proprio contributo, collaborare, ma senza intervenire direttamente nell'azione' and Louis 1993:116, 'car le choeur est un témoin qui n'agit pas'. See below p.58-9 on the verb συναγωνίζεσθαι.

[24] See Sifakis 1963:41 'So the *Problems* are not in agreement with the *Poetics*, where Aristotle demands that the chorus should be treated as one of the actors (*Poet*.1456a, 26)'. As Ford 2011:74-80 discusses, the end of the fourth century into the third is a time when scholars are beginning in earnest to categorise lyric poetry (among other things), a fact that leads to a certain amount of conservatism in the scholiasts' criticism. The confinement of the chorus' role, as described in *Problems* could well be a product of this stricter schematisation, rather than a reflection of a universally acknowledged truth concerning choral practice.

[25] For further differences between the two passages see Scattolin 2011:188-9.

that assumption. The tone of the *Poetics* is more prescriptive than that of the *Problems*, and may be describing the author's perception of the chorus' role in tragedy in his day. What is more, it is believed that the *Problems* was written and compiled by students of Aristotle's, during and shortly after his lifetime.[26] Taking into account the various other treatises on choral practice that we know about, it is not unreasonable to suppose disagreements and discrepancies in the evaluation of the choral role in tragedy arose in the Lyceum from Aristotle's time onwards. We might place the passage from the *Problems* within the context of these discussions and need not be overly concerned at the presence of a contrasting opinion, interesting in its own right, to that suggested in the *Poetics*. It is necessary to recognise the differences between the two works, and move forward in our readings of Aristotle's *Poetics* accordingly.

In pointing out how scholars have sought to reconcile the *Poetics* with the *Problems* the focus so far has been predominantly on the ἄπρακτος element of the sentence. The activity or lack of activity of the chorus is being discussed in these modern readings, and in doing so justifies how the *Problems* passage has been brought into discussions of Aristotle's conception of the tragic chorus' role in drama (to act or not to act?). But what of the description of the chorus as a κηδευτής? The choice of this word is just as interesting and perhaps more suggestive than its counterpart ἄπρακτος.[27] Indeed, it is the element in the *Problems* passage that

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[26] Barker 1989:85. For the relationship of books eleven and nineteen (those that discuss the chorus among other things) to Aristotle's *De Anima* and *De Sensu*, as well as the Peripatetic *De Audibilibus* (preserved by Porphyrios, see Düring 1966:67-77) see Flashar 1962:535 and Barker 1989:98.

[27] Outside of this passage κηδευτής is only used in authors in late antiquity. Neither κηδευτής or the related forms κηδεστής or κηδεμών are common in extant fifth-/fourth-century tragedy.

points towards a shared opinion, not necessarily with Aristotle, but with those near-contemporaries of the scholars at the Lyceum, the early scholiasts.[28] Many times in the comments of the scholia, we see a focus on explaining the chorus' relation to those on stage and justifying their entrance in the first place. That the chorus be well-disposed to at least one of the characters seems to remain important in early literary criticism.

The comments of these early scholars are often seen as valuable in the reading of Aristotle's *Poetics,* providing as they do possible reflections and refractions of Aristotle's literary critical thought. These reflecting waters, though, are by turns murky and dazzling, and it is always difficult to distinguish what the relationship is between Aristotelian thought as represented in the *Poetics* and the scholiasts' writings. But by sketching out how the next generation of literary critics might have conceived of the choral role in tragedy, it is possible to clarify what we can take from Aristotle alone, and what has been understood to be from Aristotle, in light of these later scholia.[29] Again, a detailed treatment of the relationship between the early scholia and Aristotle's writings is not possible or necessary here. However, we can use the link between one element from the *Problems'* evaluation of the

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[28] My focus on earlier scholia has mean that, following Lord 1908, I have used Schwartz 1887 rather than Dindorf 1863 for the Euripidean scholia. For Sophoclean scholia: Christodoulou 1977 (*Ajax*) Papageorgius 1888 (*Antigone* and *Oedipus Tyranos*). For Aristophanes' *Acharnians,* Jones and Wilson 1975.

[29] Lord's analysis of Aristotle's influence on the scholia (1908:66-81) finds that the influence is minimal. Meijering 1985:99 sees the scholiasts engaging in a practical criticism founded on 'a basically Peripatetic theory of drama', while Easterling 2006:1588 concurs that the scholiasts' thought was governed by the Peripatetics 'if not Aristotle himself'. In the most recent discussion of the *Poetics* passage, Scattolin states the necessity of looking with care at the scholia and the traces of Aristotelian influence in discussions of the choral role, and particularly the scholia (2011: 187-8, 191n.58). My intention in this part of the chapter is to highlight how it is equally important to note the scholiasts' influence on 'Aristotle' as we read him.

choral role in tragedy and some key concerns that emerge from the scholiast's evaluation of the choral role in fifth-century tragedy as a jumping off point for a brief re-evaluation of the scholia in the discussion. In this way we can better understand the diachronic development of thought concerning choruses and hence provide a balancing view to the more usual synchronic assimilation of scholia, peripatetic scholars and Aristotle into one homogeneous group of critics with a universal judgement of choral matters.[30]

An echo of the 'kedeutic' quality of choral identity in tragedy is found in a number of scholia and their prominent concern with plausibly explaining their identity, their reasons for entering the stage in the first place and their continued involvement in the plot. Meijering in a thorough review of the dramatic scholia infers from the style of Aristophanes of Byzantium's *hypotheses* that explaining the relationship of the chorus to the characters was a key concern.[31] A similar concern is expressed in a number of scholia e.g. 'πιθανῶς αὐτῷ ὁ χορὸς ἐσκεύασται ἀπὸ Σαλαμινίων ἀνδρῶν… ού φὰρ πιθανὸν ἐξ Ἀχαιῶν εἰσάγειν', Σ.S.*Aj*.134a. A comment made on the first line of the parodos in Sophocles' *Antigone* also stresses credibility in the motivation of the entrance of the chorus.[32] This seems to have been a key strand in the early scholarship surrounding fifth-century choral practice.

Both Sophocles and Euripides have their detractors and defenders in this respect. The praise of the motivation and identity of the chorus in Sophocles' *Ajax*

[30] The fact that some key interpretations of the dramatic chorus in the fourth century have clearly been influenced by assimilating the *Problems*, comments of the scholia and the *Poetics* justifies the following discussion, see e.g. Gentili 1984:33-4.
[31] Meijering 1985:91-7. See Σ.E.*Or.*93, 5-7 and *Alc.*215, 4-5.
[32] ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰς προφάσεις τῆς εἰσόδου τῶν χορῶν πιθανὰς εἶναι δεῖ. Σ.100.

(Σ.134a) is often cited.[33] The tone of the scholia on the first stasimon of his *Oedipus Tyrannos* on the other hand seems to imply the content of that ode had been criticised by some ancient scholars.[34] Meanwhile, Euripides' choral technique[35] was similarly criticised for a lack of credibility in terms of identity (cf. Σ.Ar.*Ach*.443)[36] but it is important to note his choices found defenders elsewhere in the scholia (Σ.E.*Phoen*.202).[37]

The requirement, then, that the chorus be a κηδευτής is supported by the opinions held by many of the commentators and so a concurrence of thought between the writer(s) of the *Problems* passage and a number of scholiasts seems reasonable. And, while there may be difficulties in mapping the individual opinions of scholiasts and the *Problems*-writer onto what Aristotle says in *Poetics* 1456a25-32 about the choral role in tragedy, the two 'diachronic layers' are not entirely

[33] Some recent discussions of some of the relevant dramatic choral scholia are Meijering 1985:91-102, Foley 2003:22, Martina 2003:461, Easterling 2006:1585-97, Mastronarde 2010:145-8 and Scattolin 2011:189-99.

[34] άκόλουθά είσι τὰ τοῦ χοροῦ πρὸς τὰ προειρημένα, νῦν δὲ ούκ ἔστιν αύτοῖς εύπρόσωπον άναλογίζεσθαι περὶ ὧν εἶπεν ὁ μάντις διὸ άνατρέχει έπὶ τὸ μάντευμα τοῦ θεοῦ· ὁ δὲ νοῦς, τίς έστιν οὗτος ὄντινα έμφανίζει τὸ μαντεῖον; ἢ οὔτω, τίς έστιν οὗτος ὃν κατώπτευσεν ἡ Δελφὶς πέτρα οἷον ὁ μὴ λαθὼν τὸ μαντεῖον τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος; Σ.463.

[35] More often a subject of discussion in modern scholarship than Sophocles' or Aeschylus', see the recent full treatment of the topic by Mastronarde (2010:88-152).

[36] οὗτος γὰρ είσάγει τοὺς χοροὺς οὔτε τὰ άκόλουθα φθεγγομένους τῇ ὑποθέσει, άλλ' ἱστορίας τινὰς άπαγγέλλοντας, ὡς έν ταῖς Φοινίσσαις, οὔτε έμπαθῶς άντιλαμβανομένους τῶν άδικηθέντων άλλὰ μεταξὺ άντιπίπτοντας. It is important to recognise that this scholiast's criticism of Euripides' choral technique is in response to a comment made by Dicaeopolis who is in the process of aping Euripides' character Telephus. The *Telephus* was first performed in 438, long before Euripides allegedly began to write more disconnected, 'dithyrambic' stasima. The scholiast, however, clearly has in mind that strain of criticism of Euripides' late choral odes in explaining the (we might note, highly typical) criticism by Aristophanes. Once more, we can see here an example of the way in which prior and later texts have an influence on both past and future readings.

[37] The defence made regarding the chorus of *Phoenissae* is based on the fact that any subjects of Thebes would not have been able to criticise Eteocles. And yet, as others have pointed out, the chorus of *Medea* do not remain loyal to their king in keeping Medea's secret, see Σ.*Med*.823.

incompatible. Clarifying these layers allows us to see how later appreciations of the choral role in tragedy differed significantly in focus and that we should not let the ideas expressed in the *Problems* control our responses to the *Poetics* passage.

This circumspection becomes particularly important in light of some scholiastic comments that have been unduly influential in the shaping of modern approaches to the tragic chorus and to the interpretation of Aristotle's *Poetics* 1456a25-32. One of these is found in *Phoenissae*. The scholiast writes at line 1019 of that play, the beginning of the third stasimon: 'No relevance. The chorus ought to pity the death of Menoeceus or to show approval for the young man's courage. But they talk about Oedipus and the Sphinx, things we have heard about many times already'.[38] Clearly, the commentator has judged Euripides negatively here.[39] It is possible to see that the ancient commentator at this point of the *Phoenissae* is thinking primarily about the effect the ode might have had in the theatre if the chorus had made a point of rousing *pathos* from the audience. But this is not to say that the ode is irrelevant *tout court*. And yet, the rhetoric of the scholiast is resonant with that used to describe Aristotle's *embolima* and one might justifiably suggest that the scholiast's attitude appears to have exerted some influence on how our passage of the *Poetics*, particularly with reference to the translation of *embolima,* has been understood.

We might detect in the way this scholion has been used repeatedly in

[38] πρὸς ούδὲν ταῦτα· ἔδει γὰρ τὸν χορὸν οίκτίσασθαι διὰ τὸν θάνατον Μενοικέως ἢ άποδέχεσθαι τὴν εύψυχίαν τοῦ νεανίσκου. άλλὰ τὰ περὶ Οίδίπουν καὶ τὴν Σφίγγα διηγεῖται τὰ πολλάκις είρημένα. Σ.E.*Phoen.*1019.

[39] As Mastronarde points out in his own commentary on the play 'In fact, the chorus does express pity (1057) and welcome the bravery of the youth (1054-5, 1060-1), and the familiar story is 'narrated' mainly to set up an interpretation of the past and present in the antistrophe' (1988:435).

discussions of choral development from the late fifth century onwards the old prejudice of choral decline. Indeed, it is for this very reason that scholia such as this must continue to play a part in the discussion of the history of the tragic chorus. For in casting Euripides' choral technique in a negative light, drawn from selectively chosen scholia and later criticism, scholars have been in a position to set up a bridge between the supposed perfect choral form of Sophocles and the degraded, irrelevance of the choral odes in the fourth century.[40] The criticism of irrelevance in Euripides' odes has had a long history but, in the light of Mastronarde's sensitive treatment of the topic among others, it is a strand of discourse that may soon cease to be relevant in modern scholarship. If we, with Mastronarde, see a shift in technique in Euripides' later choral practice,[41] as opposed to an inexorable lessening of choral integration necessitated by choral practice at large, the keystone in the narrative of decline, the bridge that allows a straightforward progression from valued, integrated chorus to irrelevant, 'thrown in' odes, is removed.[42]

What we have seen in this section is that there are certain concordances of thought between the writer of *Problems* 922b10-27 and many of the scholia that comment on the form and function of the chorus in fifth-century tragedy. In turn, these ideas about the chorus might be said to have only minimal interactions with the thoughts expressed in *Poetics* 1456a25-32. However, it is difficult for any

[40] Concern with the suspicious linearity in choral development has been noted in Pickard-Cambridge 1968:232, and Scattolin 2011:179. The presence of choruses in Roman tragedy (e.g. Ennius, Pacuvius, Accius) and comedy are often footnoted by scholars, but have failed to have any impact on the general consensus that the dramatic chorus had all but disappeared by the time of New Comedy.

[41] See Mastronarde 2010:145.

[42] Mastronarde himself is committed to the orthodox view that choral decline did happen, see 2010:88. The *Bacchae*, a play with numerous lengthy odes is recognised either explicitly or implicitly as exceptional.

modern scholar to escape the influence of previous readings of scholia in approaching Aristotle. What has been possible here is to highlight some examples of comments of those writing *after* Aristotle and, in doing so, it will be possible to move on to our analysis of *Poetics* 1456a25-32 aware of the possible prejudices, fostered by those previous readings of *Problems* and scholia.

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Related to the question of how interpreting our passage of the *Poetics* is affected by factors extraneous to the text are two 'absences'. First, a near-absence, is the discussion of the tragic chorus' role in the drama being confined to three sentences in the *Poetics*; second, the excision of choral text from many of the manuscripts of fourth-century drama that survive. The vacuum left by these absences of text is usually explained, as already noted, by largely unexamined assumptions (it was not worth talking about/analysing/committing to written form) and a projection of more modern attitudes about the chorus. However, if read in their philosophical, generic and contemporary contexts these absences become understandable and hence, can relax their stranglehold on the discussion of the development of dramatic choruses. The second of these factors – the excision of choral odes and the use of the marker χοροῦ μέλος – will be discussed in greater detail in chapter four.[43] A short discussion of why Aristotle does not expound at any length on the chorus (an aspect of tragedy that modern scholars now recognise as

[43] The usual interpretation of the substitution has been that it was used 'to indicate a song of which the words were irrelevant to the action of the play and (presumably) were not composed by the poet' (Dover 1968:208). Scholars have been quick to link a lack of choral text in the manuscript tradition of comedy to the *embolima* of tragedy that Aristotle refers to in the *Poetics*, taking both to be indicative of an enervated tragic chorus from the late fifth-century onwards. The wholly unexamined but universally assumed link between *embolima* and χοροῦ deserves some scrutiny (see below p.149-51).

central to the production and performance of drama in Athens) will be helpful before we turn to the passage itself.

It is something of a disappointment that Aristotle has only a limited amount to say about the choral culture of his contemporary society in the *Poetics*.[44] The genre of tragedy gave rise to some of the most sophisticated choral performances of the century and one might expect Aristotle to give this element of the drama a substantial treatment.[45] His relative silence has led many to believe that there was either little or no choral culture on which Aristotle could comment.[46] As seen from the brief sketch of choral activity above, this inference seems to be implausible. But the lack of a substantial discussion in the texts continues to be used to fuel an idea of diminished importance of the chorus.

Two explanations may be given. The first is that the *Poetics* was not considered the appropriate forum for a lengthy discussion of the chorus.[47] As we saw above, there were a number of other works in which it is likely the topic of choruses was explored in more depth. In addition, the *Poetics* as a whole, while

[44] Halliwell identifies two passages in the *Poetics* but 'These passages apart, there is scarcely anything in the *Poetics* which declares or implies a positive view of the tragic chorus', 1986:241.

[45] Again Halliwell, '…not one of his nearly forty citations of particular plays tells us anything at all about the dramatic significance of the chorus in these works', 1986:241. He later compares the lack of reference to choral lyrics in the *Poetics* to the abundance of choral quotation in Aristophanes' *Frogs* 1248-1363.

[46] In some editions, the problematic sentences on the chorus are not even commented on e.g. Höffe 2009. Schmitt 2008:568-79 does not discuss the text of the passage in detail but uses it to discuss the role of the chorus in fifth-century tragedy in a general way (e.g. he asks [571-3] 'Why does tragedy have a chorus?').

[47] I put this forward in the same way that Heath questioned whether the *polis*, a political entity in some ways akin to the institutional choruses of Athens, would have been relevant in the *Poetics*, despite modern scholarship's consternation at such an absence. See Hall 1996:295-309, who posed the question in the first place and Heath 2009:468-85 for his reply. For longer discussions of Aristotle's philosophy and the place of poetry in it, see in particular Ford 2011 *passim*, Nussbaum 2001:378-94.

taking into account the facts of practical performance, is focused towards the composition of a tragedy and in particular the shaping of its plot.[48] As Halliwell has pointed out, the business of theatre at the time when Aristotle was writing may have, in general, created a greater distance between the composition of tragedy by writers and the production of tragedy by producer-figures, actors and *choregoi*.[49] The practice of regular reperformance of 'old' tragedy and its place as a separate event at the Athenian Dionysia, from at least as early as 386 for tragedy and 339 for comedy, effectively removed the poet from some productions. Meanwhile, those who acted as producers for reperformance, often actors themselves, began to play an increasingly important role in the growing industry of theatre in the fourth century. The art of writing tragedy and the art of producing tragedy no doubt still overlapped.[50] However, the idea of Aristotle's focus being towards the former art form alone is supported by this greater division between poet and producer in contemporary Athens. It also means we are justified in setting Aristotle's comments in a particular context that is at a slight remove from the practicalities of dramatic production in all their aspects.

Furthermore, the greater number of dramatic texts in circulation from the end of the fifth century onwards gave rise to a new kind of audience for drama, i.e. a reading audience.[51] Aristotle's statement that 'the effect of tragedy does not depend on its performance by actors' (ἡ γὰρ τῆς τραγῳδίας δύναμις καὶ ἄνευ ἀγῶνος καὶ

[48] See Halliwell 1986:337–43.
[49] See Hall 2002:3-38, Wilson 2002:39-68 and Csapo 2010a:83-116.
[50] See chapter three on choral interpolations in 'old' tragedy that indicate the ability to write choral lyric would be coupled with an eye for changing the shape and emphasis of the tragedy as a whole for reperformance.
[51] Turner 1952.

ὑποκριτῶν ἔστιν, 1450b18-19) could have spoken to those who often read plays,[52] but it need not indicate that Aristotle entirely dismissed aspects of tragedy that could only be realised in performance. He explicitly states that *opsis* is 'attractive' and has a power to affect the audience (ψυχαγωγικός, 1450b16-17), but that it has nothing to do with the making of poetry (ἥκιστα οἰκεῖον τῆς ποιητικῆς, 1450b17-18).

Akin to the art of crafting choruses, the art of song-making (*melopoiia*) he calls the 'greatest of the other elements that enrich tragedy' (τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν ἡ μελοποιία μέγιστον τῶν ἡδυσμάτων, 1450b15-16) and yet there is no substantial discussion of that aspect. We might be justified in including *melopoiia* in those aspects which found their fullest effect in performance and hence not relevant to Aristotle's focus in this dialogue. Even though *melopoiia* is in some sense the province of the poet, the intrinsic link to music, mode and movement for a coherent performance means a comprehensive treatment of this aspect of tragedy is justifiably missing from Aristotle's poet-centred discussion.[53] Similarly the art of costuming is highlighted as something that has nothing to do with the art of the poet (ἔτι δὲ κυριωτέρα περὶ τὴν ἀπεργασίαν τῶν ὄψεων ἡ τοῦ σκευοποιοῦ τέχνη τῆς τῶν ποιητῶν ἐστιν, 1450b19-20).

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[52] While there may be a joke in Dionysus saying he was reading on board ship in Aristophanes' *Frogs* 52-4 (for which see Turner [1952:23], who suggests the mere word βιβλίον could guarantee a laugh in Aristophanes - 'the practical man sneering at the littérateur'), what he says about the reading of a play being able to inspire strong feelings (however dubious those feelings may be) must have been understandable to the audience for the image to work.

[53] At the beginning of chapter 19, Aristotle says that all aspects have already been talked about apart from diction (*lexis*) and thought (*dianoia*), although there has been no discussion of *melopoiia* or *opsis*. We are left to infer that these aspects have been covered in the discussion of the chorus 1456a25-32. See Halliwell 1986:238-40.

Further to recognising the inappropriateness of a lengthy choral discussion to the focus of the work, we might also suggest that, for Aristotle, the structure of events is the centre and heart of the tragic genre (μέγιστον δὲ τούτων ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων σύστασις, 1450a15); we need not assume this was universally agreed, or even the opinion of a majority. We can also note that Aristotle secularises tragedy to some extent in his presentation of the genre in the *Poetics*. Divine inspiration in the creation of poetry is ignored as a concept and the contribution of the gods in tragedy is significantly and almost certainly deliberately downplayed.[54] The chorus as a component of society that was intrinsically linked to the celebration of a city's gods might well be thought less compelling an instrument to someone like Aristotle. We have here, then, some explanations for why so little is said about the chorus in the *Poetics* without having to assume that his silence was a consequence of a barren contemporary choral culture.

Interpreting *Poetics* 1456a25-32

We have seen the extent to which modern responses to this passage of Aristotle have been shaped by later comments, possibly influenced by Aristotle, in the *Problems* and a number of scholia. Further to this, some alternative suggestions as to why Aristotle seems to have so little to say on the matter of the chorus in

[54] '[The] compound emphasis on action and causality makes highly problematic, and may even exclude, the scope of choral lyric within tragic drama', Halliwell 1986:249 (see also 202-237 and in particular 233n.42 for further bibliography on Aristotle's attitude towards the divine). For Aristotle's characteristic recognition of a concept in the wider world, without agreeing with it himself see e.g. *Poetics* 1460b23-61a9.

tragedy have been made. We now turn to the passage of the *Poetics* itself and put some further pressure on the meaning of its crucial terms.[55] There are, in fact, six elements in the passage that can be identified as problematic in terms of our understanding of their significance and our reconciling their apparent meaning with what we know of the tragic chorus from other sources: 1) how we are to understand 'to treat the chorus as one of the actors'; 2) how broadly we are to take the injunction for the chorus to be 'part of the whole'; 3) what the verb συναγωνίζεσθαι means; 4) what the role of the comparison of Sophocles' and Euripides' choral technique is; 5) the meaning of μῦθος; 6) what an ἐμβόλιμον actually is and how we are to understand Aristotle's attribution of early *embolima* to Agathon. In the following analysis, the difficulties for interpretation are set out and the unstable qualities of many of these terms exposed. In the next section it will be possible to make use of the new potential readings opened up by putting pressure on these elements in the passage. By adducing what we know of musico-poetic discourse throughout the fifth and fourth centuries, we are in a better position to suggest a coherent reading that does justice to what we know of Aristotle and of his social context, and avoids any unnecessary projection of anachronistic constructions of tragedy or drama.

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[55] In particular need of examination is the word ἐμβόλιμα, which is only rarely considered as a term invented or redefined by Aristotle in *Poetics*.

More than any other work of Aristotle's, the *Poetics* has been subject to considerable emendation throughout the course of its transmission.[56] It is a text that continues to be notoriously difficult to interpret on account of its 'cryptic concision'[57] and use of such terms as *mimesis* that seem to require or rely on a definition external to what is provided in the work itself.[58] That being said, Kassel's text at 1456a25-32 can be judged a firm enough basis for this analysis, despite the uncertainty concerning some of the words or phrases.[59]

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[56] Modern textual criticism relies on four 'primary witnesses' to the text: the tenth-century codex *Parisinus Graecus* 1741, the codex *Riccardianus* 46 dated somewhere between the twelfth and fourteenth century, the Medieval Latin translation by William Moerbeke and a Syro-Arabic translation. For a recent detailed treatment of the transmission of *Poetics*, see Tarán and Gutas 2012:3-128.

[57] Mastronarde 1998:69.

[58] Lucas' dryness is salutary in the face of such difficulties: 'There is no lack of sentences which can be made to appear intrusive, and editors have made the discovery that, if much of the book is left out, the rest becomes easier to explain', 1968:xi. On understanding *mimesis* see Tsitsiridis 2005:435-46 and Halliwell 2001:87-107.

[59] In addition to Kassel's text, see Tarán and Gutas 2012 (referred to here as *TG*), Scattolin 2011:161-215, Halliwell 1986 and 1987, Lucas 1968, Else 1957, Gudeman 1934, Bywater 1909, with further bibliography listed in Scattolin 2011:161. Scattolin and Halliwell (and on some issues, Else) are the only comprehensive treatments of the problems in this passage and so feature prominently in the following discussion. Martina 2003:461-510 covers many of the issues raised by the passage but does not seem to move the debate beyond the views of those cited. Regarding the text, in line 25 the agreement of both Π and Σ render the already implausible χρόνον (found in B) impossible. Some commentators print ὑπολαβεῖν but I follow *TG* in preferring the MSS. B and Φ to A. The *ypocritas* for τῶν ὑποκριτῶν found in the Latin MS. is agreed to be a scribal error. An emendation in the Aldine edition has ὥσπερ ⟨παρ'⟩ Εὐριπίδῃ … ὥσπερ ⟨παρα⟩ Σοφοκλεῖ in line 27 to make sense of the datives corresponding to συναγωνίζεσθαι (cf. Th.5.109 and X.*Cyr.*4.5.49), a change revived by Gudeman but now generally dismissed. As Lucas points out (1968:193), in light of A.*Thesm.*1060, the dative is 'quite natural'. The Syriac tradition has πολλοῖς for λοιποῖς in line 28, based perhaps on a misunderstanding of the nominative ᾀδόμενα. In any case, Σ confirms that the initial A must have been read for Δ to produce MS. Ξ's variant. MSS. Π and Σ agree on ἄλλης τραγῳδίας as opposed to B's ἄλλως τραγῳδία. The uncertainty about τοῦ τοιούτου is insoluble; the Latin text is suspect and there is evidence for placing τοῦ τοιούτου either before Agathon or as printed at the end of the sentence (*TG* deem it 'idiomatically superior to placing it before Ἀγάθωνος, 281). Gudeman's suggestion that this is a corruption of a marginal note τοῦ ποιητοῦ incorporated into the text is possible but cannot be confirmed. The small discrepancies in 31 (εἰ in Π, εἰς in B and Σ) similarly cannot be decided on definitively. The fact that ἢ ἐπεισόδιον ὅλον is omitted in the Arabic version has led some editors to

The passage falls into two parts: a prescription for the ideal choral technique (καὶ τὸν χορὸν…ὥσπερ Σοφοκλεῖ) and description of the (roughly) contemporary reality when Aristotle is composing *Poetics* (τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς…ἐπεισόδιον ὅλον).[60] The emphasis in Aristotle's prescription appears to be on the integration of the chorus into the whole enterprise (ἕνα… τῶν ὑποκριτῶν, μόριον… τοῦ ὅλου, συναγωνίζεσθαι), although the nature of that integration remains unclear. An attempt at clarification seems to be made by the reference to the differing choral techniques of Sophocles and Euripides, but modern readers are left unilluminated by the comparison as, from our extant texts at least, Sophocles and Euripides do not differ to any great degree in terms of 'integrating' their choruses.[61] The positive example is contrasted with a negative one: the choral technique of τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς, the 'other poets'.[62] Aristotle ends with a rhetorical question, a kind of *reductio ad*

bracket this last part of the sentence. Despite their number, the discrepancies are small enough so as to have relatively little impact on my interpretation set out here.

[60] On the date of the composition of the *Poetics* see Burkert 1975:175 (suggesting it cannot have been written after 335) and Halliwell 1986:324-30. The third quarter of the fourth century seems the most likely date for the work.

[61] Halliwell 1986:244-6 sets out the problems well.

[62] Those who choose to read this as referring to choreuts as opposed to poets ignore the fact that Agathon, a poet, is highlighted as someone who began such practices, hence making χορευταί an extremely unlikely subject of ᾄδουσιν, Scattolin 2011:181-2. λοιπός has a strong sense of referring not only to 'others' or 'the rest' but also to the future (cf. D.59.46), a further layer of meaning that enriches the way it is used here. We are to understand, then, 'the other poets after Euripides and Sophocles'. Certainly we cannot understand it to mean 'all other poets except Sophocles and Euripides', since this would include a tragedian like Aeschylus. The inclusion of Agathon (c.448-400) among these 'others' (the founder of the new kind of choral technique described in the lines that follow) means we cannot take it in the strict sense of '*only* after Sophocles and Euripides'. This kind of looseness not only fits with the fact the work seems to have been based on lecture notes, but also on the sketchy nature of this whole passage, suggesting only rough adumbration of choral ideas rather than drawing on a worked out theory on Aristotle's part.

absurdum[63] argument, that if the practice of the λοιποί with regard to their choral odes were satisfactory, the same would go for interchangeable speeches or episodes.

We should note that this brief passage could well have been as mystifying for Aristotle's audience, or at least any reader keen to produce a tragedy that Aristotle would approve of, as it is for us. Even if we recognise this fact i.e. that the passage has only a superficially comprehensible point to make but no profound significance for the understanding of either fourth-century Athenian approaches to the chorus or Aristotelian practical models of choral production in tragedy, modern readings of the passage gain something. By clarifying how practical (or not) these statements are, and how connected they are to the dramatic choruses of Aristotle's Athens, we are able to begin to reassess the place of the *Poetics* in the construction of choral history.

(1) τὸν χορὸν δὲ ἕνα δεῖ ὑπολαμβάνειν τῶν ὑποκριτῶν

Comparing the use of the verb ὑπολαμβάνειν with its usage a few lines after this at 1456b15 and again 1461a35, we can safely translate it along the lines of 'to conceive of' and, in light of the focus in the *Poetics* as a whole towards the creation rather than production of drama, we might understand the subject of the verb as 'the poet'. Despite these relatively clear aspects for interpretation, precisely how the chorus is to be conceived of as one would an actor is mysterious. After all, a

[63] Aristotle, after all, is believed to be the first to discuss the hypothetical proof of ἡ είς τὸ ἀδυνάτον ἀπαγωγή, see *Pr.An.*I.23.21-46.

distinctive element in Greek tragedy is the inbuilt tension between individual and collective, yet Aristotle appears to ignore this distinction.[64]

Both Scattolin and Halliwell rightly dismiss the idea that Aristotle is talking about the chorus here as an interlocutor during 'scenes' on the basis that the reference in the second sentence to τὰ ᾀδόμενα strongly implies choral odes.[65] It has also been suggested that we are to understand two different choral elements in the first two sentences, the first being the chorus as interlocutor ('[the]phrase… would scarcely be intelligible applied outside the act'[66]) the second being the chorus as singer of choral odes (τὰ ᾀδόμενα). The connective δέ in τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς, however, is difficult to explain away if one attempts to separate the subjects of the first and second sentences. It is more likely that the topic of both the first and second sentences is τὰ χορικά in tragedy, as defined at 1452b14-18.[67]

A reading that construes Aristotle as exhorting poets to have the chorus intervening in the action and shaping the plot as an actor is problematic but no alternative reading seems possible. The problem with such a reading lies in the fact that a prescription for the chorus to interact significantly in shaping the plot seems to be contradicted by the comparison to Sophoclean choral technique where the chorus, as in most of our extant tragedy, has no such role. Many scholars have avoided this reading bearing in mind the *Problems* passage stipulating inactivity on

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[64] Halliwell 1986:247 'we are left with an unexplained challenge to the fundamental distinction between the chorus and the actors of tragedy'. See also Mastronarde 2010:89.

[65] Halliwell 1986:245-6, Scattolin 2011:187. See Scattolin 2011:161-8 for a discussion of the meaning of χορικόν in chapters 4 and 12 of *Poetics* as showing the term includes both choral song on its own and with actors, but excludes *kommos* and monody (although S. concedes there is a certain amount of flexibility within this structure).

[66] Heath 1989:46-7.

[67] Scattolin 2011:187n.51.

the part of the chorus (a κηδευτὴς ἄπρακτος), but in light of my arguments above I hope to have shown that we should be extremely wary of projecting the later *Problems* into this passage. Scattolin has suggested Aristotle is compelled to describe the chorus in this way in order to make it compatible with his over-arching emphasis on narrative in tragedy.[68] If this is so, we should recognise that Aristotle's first prescription, and perhaps the two prescriptions that follow, are at odds with general choral practice and not only the choral practice of his contemporaries. This notion will be strengthened by our analysis of the second and third recommendation Aristotle makes in this passage.

(2) μόριον εἶναι τοῦ ὅλου

That the chorus should be 'part of the whole' is even more obscure in meaning than the previous prescription though some might see it as broadly in line with it. The emphasis in the rest of the *Poetics* on co-determinate interdependency (1451a30-35) and the technical sense of 'the whole' defined in chapter seven (1450b25-7), might make the case for a 'strong' reading of the phrase more persuasive, i.e. that the chorus should take up an essential role in the progression of the plot. Yet such a reading, which seems to 'prescribe (if taken seriously) no mere thematic pertinence, but indispensable involvement in the action of the plot',[69] is unlikely, once again, in light of the comparison to the choral technique of Sophocles, as was the case in the previous prescription for the chorus to be treated as an actor.

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[68] Scattolin 2011:177 with *Poet.*1450a38-9.
[69] Halliwell 1986:243.

On a second count, then, the prescriptions of Aristotle might appear to apply to an imagined mode of choral production in tragedies rather than one connected to any practical *exempla*, either from his own day or the fifth century.

The alternative reading would be that the phrase is not related to the concepts of 'the whole' explored earlier in the *Poetics*, but is rather intended to strengthen the force of the other two prescriptions without having any significant meaning in and of itself. Indeed, it is arguable that the chorus by virtue of its performing during a tragedy (or comedy for that matter) is automatically 'part of the whole'. Neither the 'weak' nor 'strong' readings of this particular phrase are particularly attractive. The potential for either one will nevertheless be helpful in our reassessment of the use of the passage of the *Poetics*.

(3) συναγωνίζεσθαι

By far the greatest controversy in discussions of this sentence centres on how to understand and translate this verb. The use of the verb in *Women at the Thesmophoria* (1060) has led some to interpret the verb as meaning 'help in the contest'[70] and, given the emphasis in the preceding lines on creating a tragedy that will be successful in the theatre (1456a18-19), such an interpretation might seem likely. Once again, what form this 'help' might take is obscure. Others prefer the sense of the verb as used in Thucydides and Xenophon, i.e. 'take a share in the action

[70] Gentili 1984:34, Lucas 1968:193-4, Else 1957:552-4 although cf. Scattolin 2011:185-6.

[of the drama]'.[71] As has been the case in the previous two phrases, there is room for a reader to project their own ideas of what might constitute 'helping the contest' or 'sharing in the action', and the superficiality of Aristotle's prescription perhaps does not demand greater specificity.

(4) μὴ ὥσπερ Εὐριπίδῃ ἀλλ' ὥσπερ Σοφοκλεῖ

It is unclear whether the final qualification in this first sentence is meant to be taken only with the prescription for the chorus 'to help in the contest/action' or with the two preceding points also, and clarification remains impossible.[72] It has been noted that Aristotle's prescriptions for a chorus that is 'treated like one of the actors' and 'part of the whole' are most clearly suited to Aeschylus' use of the chorus rather than Sophocles' or Euripides'. We might explain the absence of Aeschylus in Aristotle's précis of ideal choral technique by pointing to the philosopher's commitment to a teleological picture of tragedy's development and hence a downplaying in general of the poet on account of his seminal role in the earlier developments in tragedy.[73] In addition, the infrequency of reperformances of Aeschylus' plays in Athens may have impacted on how Aristotle uses or does not use

[71] Th.5.109 and X.*Cyr.*4.5.49. See above n.59 for the difficult grammar here. In these cases, παρά lends an apparently necessary force in creating such a meaning. The Aldine manuscript contains a παρά, but this may have been an addition of a later scribe who believed this meaning of συναγωνίζεσθαι to be what Aristotle intended.
[72] Scattolin 2011:184.
[73] 'Aristotle was committed to regarding Aeschylus, so it appears from *Poetics* ch.4, as working with a still less than perfectly mature dramatic form', Halliwell 1986:247.

his works as *exempla*.[74] That Euripides and Sophocles were contemporaries and therefore apt for comparison might be a significant factor in Aristotle's choice here, but in light of the number of authors and texts that he had access to (and refers to throughout the *Poetics*), this contemporaneity of Euripides and Sophocles could hardly have been unique amongst potential authors that he might compare.

Aside from the absence of Aeschylus, and as already mentioned, it is very difficult to reconcile Aristotle's comparison of Euripides and Sophocles with the criteria he lays out, i.e. the chorus being treated as one of the actors, being part of the whole and helping in the contest/action. Both later poets contain comparable ranges of choral 'involvement' both in terms of plot intervention[75] and fictional identity.[76] Attempts to understand the three points (one of the actors, part of the whole, help in the contest/action) by looking at the differences in extant Sophoclean and Euripidean choruses, while interesting, have not been especially illuminating in terms of Aristotle's meaning.[77] In addition, this approach tends towards circularity as readings of these choral odes, particularly regarding a putative irrelevance in the odes of Euripides, themselves often depend on readings of the *Poetics* and early scholars, readings that still warrant some scepticism.[78] One point of difference that

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[74] See Hanink and Uhlig (forthcoming).

[75] E.g. Sophocles' *Philoctetes* or Euripides' *Ion*. Conversely minimal choral plot intervention may be seen in e.g. Sophocles' *Electra* or Euripides' *Andromache*.

[76] Sophocles' *Ajax* or Euripides' *Suppliants*. Euripides is well known for the unexpected identities of his chorus in relation to the circumstances of the plot e.g. *Phoenissae* or *Iphigenia at Aulis*. That being said, we have more than double the number of Euripidean plays than Sophoclean, so we cannot be certain that the identity Sophocles' choruses was always related to the plot.

[77] See Halliwell 1986:143-49 and Mastronarde 2010:145-52 for particular emphasis on Euripides' choral technique in light of Aristotle's censure.

[78] Scattolin justifies the use of the comparison to Euripides' and Sophocles' choral technique on account of Aristotle's experience of contemporary theatre, where, according to Scattolin, 'le parti

is clear for modern scholars, and was clear to ancient scholars too, is Euripides' evident interest in the so-called 'New Music' and his use of imagery and metre typical of that development in *mousike*.[79] This distinction is of vital importance for making sense of this passage.

(5.) μῦθος

We move to the second sentence, remaining for the moment without any definitive reading of the first. Both τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς and τὰ ᾀδόμενα can be read relatively securely.[80] However, μῦθος is not so clear-cut in terms of what it signifies. In the *Poetics* it is used in both a general and a semi-technical sense: the general meaning is close to our word 'myth' or 'story', the kind of which formed the basis for many tragedies.[81] The more technical connotes what we understand as 'plot' i.e. the arrangement of events (ἡ πραγμάτων σύστασις, 1450a15), and this technical sense is introduced at 1450a3-5.[82] The technical sense is usually preferred in modern

corali erano ridotte a intermezzi' 2011:185. If one removes the assumption that the choral odes were 'intermezzi' then comparison of Euripidean and Sophoclean technique needs reinterpreting.

[79] Csapo1999-2000:399-426.

[80] See n.62 above for τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς. Bywater (1909:254-5) compares τὰ ᾀδόμενα with [D.]60.9 where it's used to describe lyric poets (cf. also Pl.*R*.398D), but the context confirms that the subject is choral, rather than monodic song.

[81] See 1451b24 (where Aristotle is talking about particular tragic dramas [τραγῳδίαι], that either do or do not use παραδεδομένοι μῦθοι, 'traditional stories') and 1453a18 (where μῦθοι appear to be equated with stories about famous households). See also 1450a32-3 where μῦθος seems to signify something more than the technical 'arrangement of events'. Very close to our passage at 1456a25-32 we find ὁ τῆς Ἰλιάδος μῦθος (1456a13) with a meaning that is neither strictly technical nor wholly general. The word remains fairly flexible.

[82] ἔστιν δὲ τῆς μὲν πράξεως ὁ μῦθος ἡ μίμησις, λέγω γὰρ μῦθον τοῦτον τὴν σύνθεσιν τῶν πραγμάτων. See Else 1957:243-50 for discussion of this new sense of μῦθος in the context of ch.6.

translations of the passage considered here.[83] A reading of the general sense of μῦθος may, nevertheless, be possible and could have a significant impact on how we understand the nature of what Aristotle refers to as ἐμβόλιμα.[84]

(6.) ἐμβόλιμα and Agathon

The term *embolimon* is one of the most frequently used words in connection with the dramatic choral odes of the fourth century. The fact that (as far as we know) it is first used as a noun and first used of choral odes in this very passage of the *Poetics* is less well known. It has no parallel in the rest of Aristotle's works, and he seems to be using the word with a new, more technical sense (as he did with μῦθος, see above).[85] *Embolimon* appears here as a newly-defined term (apparently of Aristotle's invention) and consequently we should be sensitive to the reasons why Aristotle chose this word and this particular image; the decision will have been bound up with the author's personal attitude to what he was describing.

The third and final sentence of the passage discussed in this chapter seems to cast a definite, negative light on the quality of the *embolima*: καίτοι τί διαφέρει ἢ ἐμβόλιμα ᾄδειν ἢ εἰ ῥῆσιν ἐξ ἄλλου εἰς ἄλλο ἁρμόττοι ἢ ἐπεισόδιον ὅλον. Despite its clear rhetorical tone, many have interpreted it as unambiguously, saying that there

[83] E.g. Halliwell 1995, Guastini 2010 ('la trama').

[84] See Capps 1895:291 who also translates μῦθος in the general rather than particular sense. It may be significant that this opinion is voiced before the discovery of the χοροῦ-filled Cairo Codex of Menander, after which time (see e.g. Flickinger 1912:24-34) the practice of χοροῦ becomes firmly associated with the *embolima*, affecting how the entire *Poetics* passage is understood. See further p.149 below on the effects the discovery of the Cairo Codex had.

[85] Suggested by Scattolin 2011:206.

was no difference between putting an *embolimon* in a play and putting in a whole speech (ῥῆσις) from another, or even an entire 'episode' (ἐπεισόδιον).[86] Authors after Aristotle, no doubt picking up on the negative aspect of the term in this passage of the *Poetics*, take a stronger meaning and use the word for 'interpolation'.[87] Aristotle's negative judgement is echoed, too, in the most prevalent translation of *embolimon* today, 'interlude/intermezzo'.[88] This common modern reading of Aristotle's *embolima* has, then, been motivated by three factors: a lack of comparable usage of the term by Aristotle or in works previous to the *Poetics*; the clearly negative opinion on the part of Aristotle about these *embolima*, exhibited in the *Poetics* 1456a25-32 itself; and modern (or Aristotelian?) conceptions about choral performance as unnecessary for plot progression and therefore irrelevant. This last factor, and its concomitant negative value judgement, built on Aristotle's own negativity, has often obscured a critical evaluation of the nature of these *embolima.* However, Aristotle himself gives us some clues as to the nature of these *embolima*, seemingly prevalent in his day, and it is worth exploring this question of what is signified by the term *embolimon* in greater depth.

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[86] E.g. Sidwell (2001:83) paraphrases the passage thus: 'Embolima are a bad thing. Everyone knows about the practice of altering old plays by inserting speeches or episodes into them from other plays. This practice is universally condemned and has been recently the subject of legislation. Embolima are no different'.

[87] Hsch. s.v. has: ἐμβόλιμα ἔπη· τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν γραμματικῶν ὡς ἀλλότρια καὶ νόθα ἀθετούμενα. Cicero (*Ep.ad.Q.Fr.*3.1.24) uses the word similarly: itaque mirificum **embolium** cogito in secundum librum meorum temporum includere, dicentem Apollinem in concilio deorum, qualis reditus duorum imperatorum futurus esset, quorum alter exercitum perdidisset, alter vendidisset.

[88] Donini 2008 translates the word, as most Italian translations do, as 'intermezzi' but notes, 'letteralmente <inserimenti>'. Else 1957:551-8 translates as 'imported', but this is very much governed by his own somewhat idiosyncratic argument concerning how we are to understand the verb συναγωνίζεσθαι. Gudeman has 'Einlage', 1934:329. Sidwell 2001:78 has 'inserted lyrics'. Bywater 1909:254 and Flickinger 1918:144 opt for 'intercalary'. See above p.15-6 for the anachronism of the use of 'intermezzo'.

Before Aristotle, the word is used in Herodotus with reference to months added into the calendar (1.32 and 2.4) and it still had this meaning in Cassius Dio's time (c.150-235AD).[89] The 'intercalarity' of the month tells us something about its quality, i.e. that it is self-contained and able to be interposed as an entity into the calendar year. It also tells us something about the 'journey' of the month, i.e. that it is placed into the calendar year. What is, perhaps, most significant about the intercalary month (as opposed to an ordinary month) is that it affects the year as a whole, i.e. makes it longer. What changes when a month is labelled 'intercalary' is how we view that month as an agent of making the year, as a whole, longer.

Building on this earlier meaning of the word, I suggest that two non-mutually exclusive readings of *embolimon* are possible in the context of the *Poetics*. The *embolima* are odes that can be inserted and, in addition, can be seen as making 'the whole' (here, the drama) longer. Also important is the quality of self-containedness which, as with the intercalary month, can be understood as intrinsic to the *embolimon*. It is by bringing out the second of these readings that it may be possible to gain a greater idea of how Aristotle saw the choral odes of the 'other poets' affecting the drama. The use of the new term *embolimon* conveys information about both the journey of the ode and its effect on the play as a whole. His own emphasis on the 'whole', visible in the first sentence of this passage, also seems to encourage us to read *embolimon* as indicative of an affected 'whole' (drama) as opposed to purely reflecting the way the ode 'travels' into the play.

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[89] LSJ also cites a fragment of Eupolis (fr.112), but Kassell-Austin print ἐκβόλιμοι. The use of ἐμβόλιμος in inscriptions, always in the context of the calendar and always adjectival (see e.g. IG II^2 358, 458, 471 – all from the late fourth century), connote the insertion of a month but also the creation of order by doing so.

Scattolin[90] suggests 'canti riempitivi', a translation that coheres with the second interpretation suggested above.[91] In making such a suggestion, Scattolin raises the possibility that Aristotle saw these self-contained lyrics not as things that were only 'placed in', but as things that 'expanded' or made a whole longer. In support of such a reading, we can point to Aristotle's own censure of Agathon for having too much material in his plays (1456a15-19) as well as the evidence from the interpolated version of *Iphigenia at Aulis* where the parodos was doubled in length by the interpolator and a second chorus added.[92] The notion that Aristotle is criticising 'the other poets' for having choral parts that included a range of material that was not necessarily germane to the plot, but ranged wide in their subjects, is attractive.

Pushing a little further on the question of what is signified by the term *embolimon*, we can take some further steps. Two qualities of *embolima* are frequently assumed: first, that they bear no relation to the play into which they are placed and second, that they are not written by the author of the rest of the play. It is possible to put some pressure on both of these assumptions using the text of the *Poetics*. First, the question of relevance to the μῦθος. As already outlined above, Aristotle shifts between two senses of the word μῦθος. By understanding the word in our passage to be meant more generally than particularly,[93] we might read the passage as 'but the other poets make choral odes that have no more to do with the

[90] 2011:200n.76.
[91] Scattolin makes no justifications for this translation, although I believe it to be a good one, and does also use 'intermezzi', which carries unhelpful and anachronistic associations, even (or especially) in Italian on account of Italy's performance history, see p.16 above.
[92] See chapter three below.
[93] See above p.61-2 on the general and particular sense of μῦθος.

myth than [the myth of] any other tragedy'. Such a reading draws on the understanding that fourth-century Athenians conceived of myth in discrete 'streams' that had a related chronology in the age of heroes but were ultimately separate from one another. Thus, an ode that drew on tales from the Trojan cycle of myth would be an *embolimon* if found in a tragedy concerning the house of Cadmus. However, for a poet wishing to demonstrate virtuosity, there might be much to gain from drawing on multiple streams of myth in any one play.[94]

That being said, there are reasons to sidestep the question of 'relevance' entirely since it imposes an anachronistic expectation of drama. As is demonstrable from any number of fifth-century tragedies, the choral odes do not rely on their relevance to the plot for their dramatic and thematic significance. We might compare the practice, found in four Euripidean plays (*Alcestis, Andromache, Helen* and *Bacchae*), of adding the gnomic coda to the end of the play. Regardless of where and when it was first used, the parting words of the chorus in these plays will make their own individual contribution to the performance as a whole. Taken together, it is easier to see why scholars have been quick to disparage the lines as sententious, but in performance they can take on quite a different complexion.[95] The kind of interpretation that renders *embolima* as 'entirely non-functional choral pieces' is untenable among scholars who are aware of the nature of performance in practice.[96]

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[94] *Poet.*1456a15-19.

[95] The choral 'coda' of *Medea* is almost the same, although with some variations. See Roberts 1987:51-64, Dodds 1960:242 on *Bacchae,* Mastronarde 2002:386-7 on *Medea*, Allan 2008:346 on *Helen*, Barrett 1964:417-20 on *Hippolytus*. Cf. also a victory-prayer coda found at the ends of *IT, Phoenissae* and *Orestes*.

[96] Golden and Hardison 1968:239. More sensitive scholars note that even pauses (as opposed to 'time-fillers' may have dramatic purpose e.g. Flickinger 1918:148.

The second quality that is often attached to the *embolimon* is that of inauthenticity. This can be argued against with less certainty but no less justification. The majority of scholars who analyse the passage at some length take the etymology of the word ἐμβόλιμον as a sign the choral ode must be 'thrown in' from another source, as is suggested by ἐξ ἄλλου εἰς ἄλλο ('from one play to another') in the final sentence.[97] It has been noted, however, that this cannot have been the case universally. Agathon, the alleged instigator of the choral technique of *embolima*, was well known for his skill as a writer of choral lyric and so it is extremely unlikely that he would not write his own choral pieces.[98] Indeed he is presented in Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria* composing lyrics not just for a chorus, but for a chorus that is interacting with an individual character (101-29).[99] If Agathon's manuscripts had no choral odes written out in them, but a marker like χοροῦ, Aristotle may not have had any experience of the poet's choral technique but merely assumed they cannot have been particular to the play.[100] The fact that the scenario envisaged by Aristotle in the final sentence of our passage of the *Poetics*, of poets taking parts of 'other' plays and fitting them together does not cohere with our existing evidence of

[97] Flickinger 1912:34, Else 1957:555n.122 builds on Hesychius' definition (see n.87 above) as well as the etymology of ἐμβόλιμον in arguing 'the decisive criterion is that the verses or songs in question are somebody else's work, not the poet's' *contra* Gudeman 1934:329. Scattolin 2011:205-207 argues from the grammar of the passage and, *contra* Gallavotti 1977:157-62, sees a clear implication that the odes must be from another tragedy. See for a summary of opinions Martina 2003:464-5.
[98] Ar.*Thesm*.99-100 with Σ on 100. See also *TrGF* 39 T19 and 20.
[99] This is a fact strangely omitted from Leveque's book on Agathon (1955). The contradiction between Aristotle and Aristophanes on whether Agathon wrote choral lyrics is noted by a number of scholars e.g. Xanthakis-Karamanou 1980:10, Dearden 1976:103 and Scattolin 2011:182n.41.
[100] Flickinger 1918:146, Scattolin 2011:183. See p.146-55 below for further discussion of the evidence for this kind of 'textual positivism'.

fourth century tragedy means we should take this parting shot of Aristotle's more as hyperbole than accurate description.

We should also be wary of assuming, based on what we know of later practice that the *embolima* were necessarily written by someone other than the poet. A familiarity with so-called *contaminatio*[101] amongst all scholars of ancient drama has predisposed many to assume that it is to this process that Aristotle is referring in the *Poetics,* despite the vastly altered contexts for dramatic composition and performance.[102] There is, beyond the *Rhesus* (the choral lyrics of which we have no reason to suppose were written by someone other than the poet), unfortunately no positive evidence to prove that poets continued to write their own odes. However, once we recognise the hyperbole of this *Poetics* passage and anachronistic tendencies in previous readings of it, there is just as little evidence to suggest that such a momentous change in the practice of tragic composition occurred either at the end of the fifth century or any time during the fourth.

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[101] Explicitly mentioned in the prologues of Terence's dramas, where scenes and speeches from Greek New Comedy were often translated wholesale and put together, making new plays. See e.g. *Girl from Andros*: 'Id isti vituperant factum; atque in eo disputant, **contaminari** non decere fabulas. Faciuntne intelligendo ut nihil intelligant. Qui quum hunc accusant Naevium, Plautum, Ennium accusant, quos hic noster auctories habet. 15-19.

[102] Scattolin 2011:200 sees it as prefiguring the later practice of *contaminatio* (una retrodatazione al teatro postclassico della *contaminatio*). Gentili 1979:21-2 sees a reference at 1450a29-33 to the practice of performing 'anthologies' and so believes that something akin to *contaminatio* was current during Aristotle's lifetime. However, Nervegna 2007:14-42 has shown, there is no evidence for the anthologies, found in the manuscript tradition, corresponding to a performance tradition. Without this, there is little reason to read 1450a29-33 as alluding to a contemporary trend of anthology performance, and Gentili's case collapses. Sidwell 2001:78-84 reads the final sentence with reference to the kind of substantial interpolation seen in *Seven Against Thebes*, but it is very difficult to see how any of the interpolated choral parts in that play could be described as *embolima* as it is usually translated. For analysis of the play and the connected interpolated final scene, see chapter three.

It is suggested, then, that the *embolima* Aristotle refers to are choral odes that are self-contained (although this might apply to many fifth-century choral odes) and that they served to expand the drama as a whole with content that was as likely to have been written by the poet as not. The significance of the modifications in how we understand the term *embolimon* will become clearer in the next section where a new reading of the passage as a whole is set out.

Reading *Poetics* 1456a25-32

In the previous two sections we have seen how later readings of this passage have had an unjustifiably strong influence on how the *Poetics* passage has been understood, and how the meaning of much of 1456a25-32 is unstable and opaque. In this last section I suggest an alternative interpretation of the passage that builds on the potential alternative readings suggested in the previous section and, significantly, reconciles previous inconsistent elements in the picture of fourth-century choral culture, of which the Aristotle passage is but one part.

An appreciation of Aristotle's intellectual setting is crucial for this re-interpretation.[103] As with most of the writers we have from the fourth century

[103] See Ackrill 1981:1-23, Barnes 1995:1-26, Bouchard 2012:183-213, Ford 2011 *passim*, Guthrie 1981:18-45, Lynch 1972 *passim*, Nussbaum 1986:378-94 and Webster 1956:57-69. We should also note that Aristotle has a decidedly negative view of the *choregia* and repeatedly criticises it as something of minor importance in society, explicitly calling it a 'useless liturgy' (1309a15-21), see also *EN*.1123a23 with Sifakis 1971:410-32 for choregic profligacy and Arist.*Pol.*1299a15-28 for the *choregia* being regarded as something less than a magistracy. It is possible, therefore, to imagine that Aristotle viewed contemporary choral technique as determined more by the desire of the *choregoi* to win the approval of the audience than its dramatic duty of contributing to the production itself. The call for the chorus, then, to 'participate in the contest/plot', is a call for the chorus to be determined

Aristotle was a member of an elite. Justice cannot be done here to the variation and nuance apparent in his works regarding his broad political outlook, but Aristotle's affinity with a generally conservative view, particularly as regards *mousike,* is clear.[104] With the idea that Aristotle's general position is characteristic of many elite writers from the Classical period and beyond, particularly when it comes to cultural discourse (e.g. his account of music in education is typical of a conservative approach[105]), we can turn back to the passage of the *Poetics* and reassess his words.

I argue the criticism of τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς is in line with a recurrent strand of criticism from conservative thinkers of the fifth and fourth centuries, which appeals to an idealised standard in the past and denigrates a dissolute present. An example of such an attitude on Aristotle's part is found in his detailed discussion of harmony and rhythm in book eight of the *Politics* (1341b19-42b34). There he recognises two types of spectator; one educated and the other 'drawn from the class of vulgar workers', who appreciate 'deviant harmonies and melodies involving strain and poor ornamentation', a clear reference to the so-called 'New Music'.[106] If we read Aristotle's dismissive reference to τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς as reflecting the trend among new

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by its function as part of a tragedy, as opposed to its function as part of a political, extra-dramatic contest. Aristotle's concern in the *Poetics*, as he sets out early on, is to do with the making of tragedy and of ποίησις, not on how to gain political benefit from funding a tragic chorus.

[104] See e.g. Ford 2004:309-336.

[105] *Politics* 1340b20-41b18 with Kraut 1997:199-202.

[106] διὸ ταῖς μὲν τοιαύταις ἁρμονίαις καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις μέλεσιν ἑατέον <χρῆσθαι> τοὺς τὴν θεατρικὴν μουσικὴν μεταχειριζομένους ἀγωνιστάς· ἐπεὶ δ' ὁ θεατὴς διττός, ὁ μὲν ἐλεύθερος καὶ πεπαιδευμένος, ὁ δὲ φορτικὸς ἐκ βαναύσων καὶ θητῶν καὶ ἄλλων τοιούτων συγκείμενος, ἀποδοτέον ἀγῶνας καὶ θεωρίας καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις πρὸς ἀνάπαυσιν· εἰσὶ δὲ ὥσπερ αὐτῶν αἱ ψυχαὶ παρεστραμμέναι τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἕξεως—οὕτω καὶ τῶν ἁρμονιῶν παρεκβάσεις εἰσὶ καὶ τῶν μελῶν τὰ σύντονα καὶ παρακεχρωσμένα, ποιεῖ δὲ τὴν ἡδονὴν ἑκάστοις τὸ κατὰ φύσιν οἰκεῖον, διόπερ ἀποδοτέον ἐξουσίαν τοῖς ἀγωνιζομένοις πρὸς τὸν θεατὴν τὸν τοιοῦτον τοιούτῳ τινὶ χρῆσθαι τῷ γένει τῆς μουσικῆς. *Pol*.8.1342a16-28. Translations of *Politics* from Kraut 1997. Cf. Plato *Laws* 700d3-701a3. See also Power 2010:83-4.

poets of including complex and unorthodox modulation and melody in choral odes (as well as in monody, of course), his criticism of fourth-century choral technique can no longer be understood as a purely aesthetic critique. Such were the political resonances of the New Music in musico-political discourse from the end of the fifth century onwards, the critique in the *Poetics* becomes similarly politically charged. Rather than the problem being that the chorus was side-lined in tragedy after Euripides and Sophocles, we might reasonably read Aristotle's view as spoken against contemporary trends which saw the chorus' function (as he saw it) being high-jacked and expanded by irresponsible, crowd-pleasing poets.

The suggestion of 'odes that expand [the play]' as a translation for *embolima* would coalesce with the idea that choral odes in particular were crowd-pleasers in the fourth century and one of the *loci* for the popular 'New Music'/ theatrical music. Producers and poets, aware of what would gain the greatest positive response from an audience, might make the most of any opportunity to fill their plays with such popular modes of musical performance. The higher profile of the music in contrast to the words might also explain Aristotle's charge that the choral parts have 'nothing more to do with the myth than any other tragedy' (1456a28-9). The fusion of music and text that would have been apparent in performance has meant that we, confined as we are to viewing only the text of a choral ode, are more sensitive to a detachedness in choral lyrics when it occurs.[107] For Aristotle or his contemporaries sitting in the theatre, however, the effects of the odes on account of the style of

[107] See Mastronarde 2010:145-7 on the perceptible detachedness in the text of some of Euripides' odes.

music would have had every capability of being viewed as connected to the 'whole' of the tragedy.

The more subtle criticism of Euripides in the *Poetics* passage is also explained by foregrounding Aristotle's generally conservative standpoint. Although part of the recognised canon of Athens' three tragedians and one of the most popular playwrights in terms of reperformance, Euripides was subject to considerable criticism, during his own lifetime and beyond, regarding his choral technique and is known to have used the New Music in his choral odes.[108] The relationship between Aristotle's positive strictures for choral technique and his preference for Sophocles over Euripides with respect to their choral technique has been recognised by a number of scholars as difficult in light of our selection of extant tragedy.[109] If we are to see Aristotle as identifying Euripides with a kind of choral technique that had begun to embrace the New Music, the qualification of 'not as in Euripides but as in Sophocles' becomes more political than technical and, simultaneously, reflects a difference between the two poets that is clear to us. Sophocles' choral technique is to be preferred because it did not take part in the trend for 'deviant harmonies and melodies involving strain and poor ornamentation'.[110] Such an approach would provide a means of explaining the puzzling disconnect between what Aristotle calls for in a chorus, and what we find in the plays of his exemplary author Sophocles and, to a lesser extent, Euripides. The avoidance of the New Music, a key concern for

[108] For Euripides and the New Music see Csapo 1999-2000:399-426, 2008:262-90 and Mastronarde 2010:151n123.
[109] Halliwell 1986:143-49 and Mastronarde 2010:145-52.
[110] *Politics* 1342a23-5. See Hanink 2008:115-35 and 2010:39-67 for the conscious project within the *Vitae* of the three tragedians to marginalise Euripides and Aeschylus and 'Athenize' Sophocles, perhaps under the influence of Aristotelian criticism.

Aristotle as evidenced elsewhere in his works,[111] is to be preferred and hence Sophocles is considered worthier of emulation than Euripides.

With the weight of the comparison to Sophocles' and Euripides' choral technique set in this context, we finally come to consider how we are to understand the three positive strictures. Setting himself up in opposition to much (if not all) contemporary choral practice, it seems plausible that Aristotle's three points - that the chorus be treated as one of the actors, be part of the whole and help in the contest/action – are made in reaction to that contemporary practice. I would suggest that we read them as inversely representing the tendencies in the choral practice that Aristotle knew. Thus we might rephrase Aristotle in the following way: 'the chorus should not be treated differently than an actor (as it is today) nor should it stand out from the whole (as it does today), nor should it perform any other function than plot development'.

*

The interpretation of *Poetics* 1456a25-32 that I suggest here, then, is the following: we read it as representative of a strand of elite thought current in the late fourth century but connected to a much longer tradition of cultural conservatism in musico-poetic discourse. In a few sentences Aristotle invokes an ideal (and idealised) way of thinking about a chorus where the words are of greater importance than the music and the chorus itself is free from the dubious connection to the extra-dramatic choregic contest. A clear preference for odes that do not

[111] We might also point to *Poetics* 1461b29-32 where his distaste for the performance of a dithyramb by Timotheus, a key poet in the New Music movement, is manifest.

dabble in the practices of the New Musicians is given by an endorsement of Sophocles over Euripides. The contemporary poets are guilty of expanding or puffing up their odes (something that we indeed find in the interpolated parodos of the *Iphigenia at Aulis*) with words to make them longer and the New Music to make them more sensational. Agathon, well known for his musical virtuosity, but a poet whose choral texts were not transmitted with his plays, comes to be thought of as the first serious practitioner of puffed-up odes. With a distaste for the sensational and popular music, Aristotle suggests a hyperbolic and rhetorical comparison of adding in extra words to a speech in order to display an actor's virtuosity or, while we're at it, lengthening tragedies even more in order to extend the spectacle and feed the desires of a misguided and vulgar audience.

Bringing the social and intellectual context to bear on the *Poetics* passage has the potential to alter our reading of it radically. It also has the advantage of explaining the inconsistencies in the passage and suggesting some new ways of understanding the obscure terms Aristotle uses in his brief summation of the choral role. As discussed both in this and the previous section, the context of the work within Aristotelian thought in general is able to explain why so little of the *Poetics* is dedicated to the topic of the chorus in tragedy. Through this explanation, modern readers can be released from a paradoxical conclusion that there cannot have been choruses worthy enough of comment in Aristotle's time, despite knowing that choral culture had a varied and vibrant place in Athenian society throughout the fourth century.

Much needs to be supplied in any reading of Aristotle's lacunose sketch of the chorus' function in tragedy. The advantage of my reading is that it awards a credible and consistent attitude to Aristotle as regards his view of the chorus, while managing to explain the many apparent inconsistencies that scholars have found in these three sentences. The distance of Aristotle's view from the view of most theatre-goers (which Aristotle himself admits in the *Politics* - 1342a16-28) enables modern scholarship to construe the passage appropriately and place it to one side in reconstructing the history of the chorus in the late Classical period, whilst recognising its value as representative of conservative cultural thought at that time. As a final point we can note that in its combative stance regarding the function of the chorus in drama (Aristotle vs. the 'vulgar class of workers'), we see clearly that the chorus was a source of contention in the late Classical period and anything but consigned to irrelevance or obscurity, either on or off stage.

PART II:

CHORAL PERFORMANCE

2.

The Chorus of the *Rhesus*

The *Rhesus* is a singular play, attributed to Euripides but now commonly thought by scholars to be our sole example of a complete fourth-century tragedy and our only complete example of a tragedy not written by Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles.[1] Others have noted that despite this singularity of date and authorship, as well as its many intriguing challenges to our conception of Athenian tragic stagecraft, the discussion of the play has been surprisingly narrow.[2] The question of the play's authenticity (for which the play's date is a central issue) has been either a central focus or a powerful influence on how the work has been interpreted.[3] The external evidence is not definitive.[4] Much must be assumed or supplied in constructing the process by which a non-Euripidean play might have come to be incorporated into a tradition of transmission that preserved some of his other works.[5] Research seeking to decide the issue by using internal evidence (that is, the text of the play itself) is often governed by expressions of disapproval or

[1] See Liapis 2009:71-88 for the suggestion it is also our only extant tragedy to have been written and performed outside of Athens. See introduction p.8 on the play's Athenian quality.

[2] Arguably as true now as when observed by Strohm (1959:17) nearly sixty years ago – 'Die ausschließliche Orientierung auf die Echtheitsfrage hat, wie es scheint, die Perspektiven verengt und die Diskussion zeitweise zu einem ebenso eifervollen wie subjektiv befangenen Gegeneinander-rechnen der 'Schwächen' und der 'Stärken' des Dramas werden lassen'.

[3] On authenticity and the related issue of date see Geffcken 1936:394-408, Ritchie 1964, Fraenkel 1965:228-41, Ebener 1966:20-23, Pagani 1970:30-43, Bryce 1990:144-49, Willink 2002:21-43, Poe 2004:21-33, Feickert 2005:41-57, Liapis 2009:85-88. Burlando 1997: 105-127 gives an excellent account of the *status quaestionis* pre-Liapis.

[4] Ritchie 1964:1-59 remains the best comprehensive discussion of all external evidence.

[5] Constructions of how we get a non-Euripidean *Rhesus* in Liapis 2001:313-26, 2003:19-22 and 2009: 85-88.

approbation: of the play's manifest interaction with earlier or contemporary literary works;[6] of its deviation from or adherence to the supposed conventions of fifth-century of stagecraft;[7] or more generally of the author (whether he was thought to be Euripides or an unknown poet) and his efforts.[8]

The evaluation of the choral role in the drama, too, has frequently been framed by the debate of authenticity. However, even if one puts considerations of how Euripidean (or not) this chorus is to one side,[9] the play and its chorus can be used as a case study for exploring the choral techniques that were being used in the later Classical period. It will be clear that I (with Burlando and others)[10] believe the chorus to be dramatically potent and integral to the dramaturgy of the play. Even if one chooses to see the choral technique displayed in this play as deficient or even absurd,[11] the differences that are exhibited in comparison to what we know of fifth-century choral technique are worth examining. In general, I aim to steer away from discussions of quality and focus instead on the technical aspects of what we can

[6] Interaction with literary works: Tragedy: Nock 1930:173-4, Macurdy 1943:408-16, Webster 1954:306, Björk 1957:7-17, Conacher 1960:188, Ebener 1966:22-3, Burnett 1985:13-51, Albini 1993:82-3, Thum 2005:207-31, Liapis (*forthcoming*). Myth: Fenik 1964, Bernacchia 1990:40-53, Bond 1996:255-273, Zanetto 2005:184-94, Fantuzzi 2006a:241-63 and 2006b:135-76, Plichon 2009:229-40, . Iconography: Giuliani 1996:71-86, Taplin 2007:160-5 Comedy: Ritchie 1964:2-4, Burnett 1985:13-51, Kuch 1993:548-50.

[7] Setting and stagecraft: Pöhlmann 1989:52-5, Battezzato 2000:367-73, Walton 2000:137-47, Poe 2004:21-33, Perris 2012:151-64.

[8] An additional strand of discourse connected to the *Rhesus*, mostly independent of the authenticity debate, concerns the play's engagement with aspects of orphic and mystic cult. See Plichon 2001:11-21, Markantonatos 2004:15-48, Liapis 2007:381-411.

[9] See below for my rationale for believing the play to be non-Euripidean.

[10]See Burlando 1997:8 – 'Il presente lavoro tenta di dimostrare…che esistono soluzioni drammaturgiche possibili e anche plausibili'. In particular, the importance of the chorus for 'bringing on stage' the various locations of action in the play is highlighted by Pöhlmann 1989:52-5.

[11] The rhetoric of some scholars is unapologetically negative, see e.g. Kitto 1977: 317-350, Burnett 1985:13-51 and Liapis 2012 *passim*.

gather about this choral performance. There can be no way of knowing how prevalent these techniques were across all fourth-century tragedy (although there are some comparisons to be made with comedy and what we know of choruses in reperformed drama) yet the fact that apparent innovations can be identified will, nevertheless, move forward our understanding of the possible capabilities of dramatic choruses in the fourth century. Indeed, placing ourselves in the position of the poet/producer of the drama, we begin to view the chorus as a vital dramatic tool with an increased number of dramaturgical capabilities.

A brief outline of the date controversy will set out my rationale for believing the play a) to be written by someone other than Euripides and b) written during the fourth century. It will then be possible to discuss three aspects of choral technique that may act as examples of potential changes in fourth-century uses of the chorus: the individualised speech of the chorus, the strikingly independent character displayed by the chorus and third, the way that separated strophic pairs are used within the structure of the play. What these three broader observations show is that, taken together, the choral body in this play has a remarkably different consistency to those of extant fifth-century tragedy, a consistency created by increased flexibility in how the chorus is used dramaturgically. Whilst still retaining its archetypal characteristics of unity, at times these characteristics are replaced by seemingly contradictory behaviours, more akin to a group of individuals.

Date

The question of the authenticity of *Rhesus* famously goes back to antiquity,[12] and the debate that was revived once more in the seventeenth century has not been able to settle the matter.[13] Ritchie's thorough analysis of the question from a variety of angles, and argument for authenticity, while invaluable for its numerous insights, prompted the most recent consensus amongst scholars that the play was not, in fact, written by Euripides. Despite their arguments being nearly fifty years old, Ritchie and Fraenkel in their respective accounts of the authenticity issue remain definitive on certain key points.[14] Ritchie is admirable for his transparency regarding the inescapable subjectivity required for constructing any kind of scenario from the meagre evidence we do have. While it is certainly in the interest of this enquiry into later dramatic choruses for the play to be dated to the fourth century, the consensus of the majority of scholars – scholars who have no such agenda – is of considerable advantage.[15]

The external evidence for authorship and date – that is, the four hypotheses, the scholia and literary references – are famously unhelpful for providing any definitive answer to the question. However, these obscure (and potentially

[12] The debate goes back to the anonymous hypothesis (b) (Diggle): τοῦτο τὸ δρᾶμα ἔνιοι νόθον ὑπενόησαν, Εὐριπίδου δὲ μὴ εἶναι· τὸν γὰρ Σοφόκλειον μᾶλλον ὑποφαίνειν χαρακτῆρα. See Liapis 2012: lxviii-lxx.

[13] See Burlando 1997:112-21 who traces the modern debate back to Scaliger 1600:6-7.

[14] Ritchie 1964 and Fraenkel 1965. See Liapis 2009:71n.3 for a comprehensive bibliography on the issue of authenticity up until Fraenkel's review. See Liapis 2012:lxvii-lxxii for his judicious treatment of the ancient sources.

[15] The reasons for believing the play to be fourth-century vary: see Wilamowitz 1926:284-5, Ebener 1966:18-20, Kuch 1993:548-50 and Liapis 2009:75-88.

misleading) documents, together with the little we know of ancient scholarship between the fourth and the first century, can at least provide the rudiments of a timeline for the transmission of the *Rhesus* text. In argument (b) (Diggle) we are told this play was entered into the *didaskalia* (ἐν μέντοι ταῖς διδασκαλίαις ὡς γνήσιον ἀναγέγραπται), presumably referring to those records of all plays entered into dramatic contests from the time of Pisistratus onwards, and collected by Aristotle sometime between 335 and 323. In these records, the play is entered as 'legitimate' – 'γνήσιον' i.e. it was thought to be written by Euripides. We can safely extrapolate from this statement that Euripides did write a *Rhesus* even if we cannot know whether it is the play we have or not. In addition, a scholiast's note on line 529 records a criticism made by the astrologer Crates of Euripides' presentation of the cosmos at lines 528ff.[16] Crates is reported by the scholiast to attribute the poet's misunderstanding of the heavens and their movements to his youth – 'διὰ τὸ νέον' - a fact that allows us to date a Euripidean *Rhesus*, if not our *Rhesus*, to the early part of his career. His first production was the *Peliades* in 455, so it is possible to conjecture a first performance of a Euripidean *Rhesus* to around 450, and certainly before 445.[17]

The inferences from hypotheses and scholia outlined above have received universal acceptance. But what seems to be the key point of contention is how the rest of argument (b), by far the most provocative and troublesome passage of the

[16] 'Κράτης ἀγνοεῖν φησι τὸν Εὐριπίδην τὴν περὶ τὰ μετέωρα θεωρίαν διὰ τὸ νέον ἔτι εἶναι ὅτε τὸν Ῥῆσον ἐδίδασκε'. Σ.*Rhes.*529 (Dindorf). The rough date for the Euripidean *Rhesus*, given to us by Crates, is relatively certain (despite some attempts to discredit Crates' testimony, see Liapis 2012:lvi n.174), see Liapis 2012:61 and 218-9.
[17] Ritchie 1964:16-17.

four, should be interpreted. Specifically, scholars disagree on whether we should understand from this passage that Dicaearchus, pupil of Aristotle and scholar of the late fourth century, wrote the summary, quoted in this hypothesis, about the *Rhesus* we have or a different *Rhesus*.[18] Secondly, we cannot be sure how much of Dicaearchus' summary and opinions are quoted by argument (b) and how much the writer (most likely writing in the third or second century) is providing from other sources, or indeed, his own head.[19] Ultimately, it is impossible to be sure.

The first possible reading is that Dicaearchus possessed the Euripidean *Rhesus*, composed in the mid-fifth century. In support of this interpretation is the fact that the line quoted as the first line of the play by Dicaearchus – Νῦν εὐσέληνον φέγγος ἡ διφρήλατος – would be incompatible with the setting of our *Rhesus* and must therefore belong to the Euripidean play. The alleged incompatibility, however, relies on the suggestion that the feminine noun agreeing with διφρήλατος would probably be Ἠώς (Dawn), thus setting the time for the beginning of the play as shortly before Dawn is to appear and dispel the 'moon's fair light'. Since our play is set entirely at night, with Dawn only appearing at the very end (985), it seems Dicaearchus must be quoting the prologue of a different play, i.e. the Euripidean *Rhesus*. And yet, the suggested Ἠώς is pure conjecture, as Kovacs in his Loeb edition admits.[20] One could just as easily supply Νύξ as agreeing with διφρήλατος and thereby eliminate the incompatibility of timing with our *Rhesus*.[21]

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[18] Liapis 2001:313-26, however, argues that Dicaearchus had access to both plays.
[19] For the clearest exposition of the possible readings, see Ritchie 1964:29-37.
[20] Kovacs 2002:455. See also Mastronarde 2004:17.
[21] See Fries (*forthcoming*). Liapis 2012:63-5 somewhat dogmatically believes the line must have belonged to the earlier *Rhesus* and not the one we have.

However, the scenario for Dicaearchus knowing the play that we now have seems to be the more likely as there would be very little time and opportunity for a genuine play of Euripides' (known to Dicaearchus) to be replaced by a non-Euripidean *Rhesus* in the time between Dicaearchus' work, and the work of the Alexandrian scholars who were to collect and confirm the ancient tragic corpus.[22] Dicaearchus is believed to have died around 287 and the collection of the tragic texts for the library of Alexandria began in around 285. From there it is unlikely a mix up could have been made before Aristophanes of Byzantium, writing between 230 and 185, made his edition of the *Rhesus* which most certainly did deal with the *Rhesus* we have today, and is the ancestor for our current text.[23] If Dicaearchus knew only the text of the *Rhesus* that we have, there is a suitably substantial gap between the first performance of Euripides' *Rhesus* and the writing of Dicaearchus' summary, a gap within which the Euripidean version may have been lost and superseded by another play.[24] Once Dicaearchus has this different play and ascribes it to Euripides, no doubt relying on Aristotle's *didaskalia*, the alleged Euripidean authorship becomes cemented as the text is passed on to Alexandria and subjected to scrutiny and scholarship there for the next two centuries.

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[22] See Poe 2004:21-2, Ebener 1966:21-2, Strohm 1959:273n.2 for further bibliography.

[23] We can be certain the argument of Aristophanes ([c] in Diggle) is talking about our text because he describes the chorus as 'performing the prologue' – ὁ χορὸς συνέστηκεν ἐκ φυλάκων Τρωικῶν, οἳ καὶ προλογίζουσι.

[24] Ritchie 1964: 21-4 believes that the presence of multiple prologues suggests the play that was known to Dicaearchus was reperformed throughout the fourth-century, something that might make the misattribution of authorship difficult. From what we now know about the volume of performance (of new and old texts) during this time, there must have been multiple opportunities for a *Rhesus* to be said to be by Euripides amid the confusion of modified or alternative performance texts proliferating in the period (or at least up until the Lycurgan recension, reported in Ps-Plu.*Mor*.841f8-12).

The options for interpretation, then, are: 1) Dicaearchus knew the Euripidean *Rhesus* and this is the one that we have today, minus the prologue that began with the line quoted by Dicaearchus. 2) Dicaearchus had our *Rhesus* and attached the date found in the Aristotelian *didaskalia*, the real Euripidean *Rhesus* having been lost some time at the beginning of the fourth century. Although both options are possible and there is no way of knowing for sure which is correct, we are able to take from the external evidence the choice of two possible dates for our *Rhesus*: either it is an early work of Euripides produced around 450, or it is the product of another poet[25] and was probably written some time before Dicaearchus.

It is the play itself that provides the most convincing argument for the later of these two dates. Although Ritchie discusses a range of factors that may provide clues as to the play's date (plot and characters, dramatic technique, vocabulary and syntax, style, metre and analysis of the structure of the lyric parts), many of these are just as inconclusive as was the case for the external factors.[26] The single most persuasive justification for a late date is provided in Fraenkel's review, where he lists numerous (but not all) similarities of expression found in the *Rhesus* and in

[25] For the theory that the author was a tragic actor, specifically the tragic actor Neoptolemus, see Liapis 2012:lxxii-v and Liapis (*forthcoming*).

[26] For example, Ritchie 1964:261-87 shows how the rate of resolution within iambic trimeters (8.1 resolved feet per 100 lines) places the *Rhesus* early in the Euripidean corpus, although following the trajectory of other plays' rates of resolution, the *Rhesus* might be placed in between the *Hippolytus* (4.3) and the *Andromache* (11.3). Yet if one supposes that the play is not by Euripides in the first place, the statistics that focus only on the Euripidean corpus, do not obtain. Furthermore, taking into consideration the apparent self-consciousness of dramatic technique in this play (see below), it seems likely that an earlier and more conservative style might well be emulated by a later author. Thus, even statistics can be moulded to what an individual deems likely, once again frustrating the attempt to find any firm answer.

other Euripidean works,[27] with the bulk of the resonant passages being found in the later plays of Euripides, almost all after 420.[28] In short, either we believe that Euripides coined a number of these expressions early in his career and then waited twenty years or so before using them again, or we see the allusions made to the late Euripidean corpus as conscious emulation by a later poet. We only have likelihood but the latter option does seem to be more probable.

That Euripides did not write the *Rhesus* we have today is likely. In addition, we can be reasonably sure that the *terminus ante quem* for the play's first performance lies some years before the time when Dicaearchus was writing, around the end of the fourth century. With these two data points in mind, it is possible to turn to the play's text and treat it as an example of fourth-century tragedy.

The Speech of Chorus and Choreuts

One of the most unusual characteristics of the *Rhesus* chorus is that, as far as we can tell, it delivered certain sections of choral speech more like a group of individuals than a collective.[29] This has not been noted or discussed to any significant degree in scholarship until now. We begin with the most certain of these instances of individualised speech. The fourth stasimon (692-727) follows on from the epiparodos of the chorus at 675, an exciting and breathless passage where

[27] Fraenkel 1965:234.

[28] The exception is the undated *Electra* although this too could have been first performed after 420, see Zuntz 1955: 68-71.

[29] This suggestion is built on the indications in the manuscripts i.e. the *paragraphoi* markings in conjunction with the sense of the words themselves. Liapis 2012:222-7 and 254 sees the opportunity for between four and fifteen choreuts speaking individual lines.

Odysseus is almost caught, but manages to get away. The energy of the chorus is maintained in a strophic pair of iambic-dochmiacs. Strophe and antistrophe are both followed by passages of iambics and bacchiacs (704-9 and 722-7), the first of which appears to require three separate voices.

- ἆρ' ἔστ' Ὀδυσσέως τοὔργον ἢ τίνος τόδε;
  εἰ τοῖς πάροιθε χρὴ τεκμαίρεσθαι· τί μήν; 705
- δοκεῖς γάρ; - τί μὴν οὔ;
- θρασὺς γοῦν ἐς ἡμᾶς.
- τίν' ἀλκὴν τίν' αἰνεῖς; - Ὀδυσσῆ.
- μὴ κλωπὸς αἴνει φωτὸς αἱμύλον δόρυ.

The question introduced in line 708 – 'Whose bravery are you praising?' – seems to indicate a new speaker into the conversation while the answer 'Odysseus' surely precludes the questioner from taking part in the previous few lines, since they would already know who was being talked about. This is the key instance where three individual speakers are clearly evident. Although there are no indications as obvious as this one in the other passages of divided speech, it seems likely that at least the corresponding passage 721-7 might employ a similar technique.[30]

There is a suggestion in some of the manuscripts (the earliest of which is dated to the twelfth century) that the three different speakers here would be semi choruses as opposed to individuals. We do know of at least one play that had a

[30] Page 1937:94-9 demonstrates the rarity of irregularly corresponding speaker division within strophic pairs in fifth-century tragedy. As it happens, one of the exceptions to his rule is found elsewhere in the *Rhesus* (538-41 = 557-61). However, the fact that we see in 704-709/ 721-7 speaker division that corresponds exactly, as indicated by the MSS. markings, strongly suggests that in performance three corresponding speakers would be given these lines to deliver.

chorus split into three groups during an epiparodos, Sophocles' *Trackers*.[31] But unlike the chorus of *Trackers,* and indeed all other instances of divided choral speech in extant tragedy, the divisions in the *Rhesus* do not occur in a parodos or exodus as is the case with all other examples of speech performed by semi choruses.[32] In addition, these other divided groups within a chorus tend to represent opposing 'types', points of view, or locations onstage (e.g. East/ West), something that is absent from the *Rhesus* passages.[33]

We can never be certain about how these lines were delivered in performance, but a parallel can be found in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* that seems to suggest that individual choreuts performing lines would be perfectly possible. After the king's death cries are heard from within the house, the chorus discuss their possible courses of action (1346-1371).[34] The individualisation of the chorus in these lines has been described as bold and unique in extant tragedy and the fact that there are exactly the right number of lines so as to give each choreut a pair to deliver (with the *coryphaeus* performing the first and last pair) strongly suggests individual, rather than collective, delivery. While recognising the precedent for individual choral speech, seen in the *Agamemnon*, it is important, too, to recognise a significant difference between that passage and the *Rhesus* passage. Since each member of the chorus in the *Agamemnon* has their own pair of lines, the profile of

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[31] *TrGF* fr.314.100-123.

[32] Although the fourth stasimon of the *Rhesus* follows on from the epiparodos, it is not part of that epiparodos.

[33] A.*Sept.*1066-1078 (although this ending may be interpolated), S.*Aj*. 866-78, *Tr.*863-70, E.*Alc.*77-111, *Supp*.598-633, *HF.*815-821, *Tr*.153-189, *Ion*.184-218. Division of choral speech in parodos, epiparodos and exodus: *Seven Against Thebes, Ajax, Alcestis, Trojan Women, Ion*. Division into 'types', points of view or location: *Suppliant Women, Alcestis, Ajax, Orestes, Ion*. See Lammers 1931:145-7.

[34] See Fraenkel 1950:633-4.

each choreut remains equal. The appearance of three or more voices from within a chorus of fifteen, as seems to be the case in the *Rhesus*, has a different effect and points towards a different kind of chorus.[35]

Strengthening the case for a different kind of choral sound-scape in this fourth-century tragedy, one can adduce the unique instances of antilabe also found at 540, 706, 708, 724 and 726.[36] This technique is frequently used in tragedy and often at times of high emotion or for swift exposition between characters and often between a named character and the chorus.[37] However it is only in the *Rhesus* that we find antilabe being used amongst chorus members themselves and sometimes in circumstances that do not constitute high tension. The fact that the choral interlocutors are, again, not representing opposing points of view, but expressing themselves more as individuals in conversation, is suggestive. We begin again with the clearest example.

— τίς ἐκηρύχθη πρώτην φυλακήν;
— Μυγδόνος υἱόν φασι Κόροιβον.
— τίς γὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῶι; — Κίλικας Παίων 540
στρατὸς ἤγειρεν, Μυσοὶ δ' ἡμᾶς.
— οὔκουν Λυκίους πέμπτην φυλακὴν
βάντας ἐγείρειν
καιρὸς κλήρου κατὰ μοῖραν;

[35] Only some have accepted the notion of individual choreuts performing these lines. Murray went as far as to suggest that the energetic entry of the chorus might also have been divided among individual choreuts, an attractive but unsubstantiated suggestion (see Murray 1913, followed by Ebener 1966).
[36] For antilabe in Greek and Roman drama see Grimm 1856. For a focus on Greek tragedy see Takebe 1968:38-54 and Bonaria 1991:173-88. Antilabe is defined by Dale as 'a change of speakers, occurring freely at any point in the line' or, in lyric metres, 'a change of speakers in the middle of a metrical phrase' (1968:28 and 113).
[37] 'Senza dubbio l'ἀντιλαβή è un mezzo stilistico particolarmente efficace per sottolineare la tensione drammatica e psicologica di determinati momenti dell'azione scenica, specialmente quando è impiegata in modo non isolato', Bonaria 1991:187.

Here the chorus are discussing the orders of the watch in anapaests.[38] This discussion is placed between a strophic pair that conjures the quiet of night. Images of the setting Pleiades, the Eagle flying through the sky, the shining moon and the approaching dawn (528-36) are swiftly put to one side for the list of companies on watch that night, quoted above. This rather routine exchange is then swept away by a sound – the cry of the nightingale (546-50) – and we are elevated once more to the world of myth and transported to the idyll of Ida and its sheep-pasturing herdsmen. Just as it seems the chorus will drift off into sleep (θέλγει δ' ὄμματος ἕδραν/ ὕπνος, 554-5) the practicalities of keeping watch break in on the reverie and, as one would expect of a company on night watch, the soldiers question each other to keep awake (556-64) – a thoroughly pragmatic move.[39] The presence of intra-choral antilabe at line 540, interestingly not re-iterated in the corresponding passage of anapaests,[40] is strange in light of the traditional uses of antilabe in tragedy. The intrusion of a second speaker from the chorus in answer to the question, τίς γὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῶι; (540) is, perhaps, deliberately unexpected, as would be the absence of a corresponding antilabic line in 559.

Similarly when we look to the other instances of choral antilabe in tragedy, the tone of this *Rhesus* passage is remarkable. Compare the lines the chorus share with Philoctetes in Sophocles' play of that name, where the lamed hero is quickly changing his mind and threatening to kill himself (1173-85), or the chorus'

[38] 'Chanted rather than sung', Liapis 2012:218.
[39] Macurdy 1943:409 sees this alternation as 'suited to the confusion and tumult accompanying the changing of the guard'.
[40] See n.30 above.

exchange with Teucer shortly after finding the body of Ajax (981-85) in *Ajax*. In the *Rhesus*, the chorus are discussing the order of the watch, the actions of Odysseus and the anger of Hector that they will have to face. Although there is a certain amount of tension throughout the play as the soldiers wait for the next day, the mood here is in no way comparable to the extremes of emotion found in many other instances of antilabe. Indeed in the *Rhesus* itself, the frenetic re-entrance of the chorus chasing Odysseus (683-9) provides an example of a more conventional use of this technique. The line break at 540, taken together with the content of the surrounding anapaests and the likely single voices saying the lines, seems to represent the possibility for a somewhat conversational and unstylised form of choral communication, closer to ordinary speech and further away from the more familiar tragic tenor.

We find an additional moment where a traditional choral wholeness or integrity is, however momentarily, challenged earlier in the play when a figure emerges from their number and goes on to become a named and important character. After suggesting an initial and rash plan to attack the Greek camp immediately, Hector is persuaded by Aeneas to send a spy to find out what the situation is across the lines. He calls to those within hearing (οἳ πάρεισιν ἐν λόγῳ, 149) for a volunteer to undertake the mission. The call is answered by Dolon (154), and he goes on to discuss with Hector what the reward will be for completing the mission (158-94). Scholars have argued about how this moment would be staged and, due to the implausibility of the actor playing Dolon emerging from the *skene* which represents the tent of Hector throughout the play, and the impossibility of the

actor making a swift enough entrance via one of the parodoi, it is most likely that Dolon arrived on stage with the chorus and has remained undistinguished among their number for more than 150 lines.[41] This construal of the stagecraft here is supported by the dramatic potential of having an individual emerge from the chorus.[42]

We might point to a parallel instance from a fourth-century comedy. In Aristophanes' *Assemblywomen*, at a point when the chorus has mostly entered, a woman comes forward from the stragglers who, it becomes evident, is not a choreut but an actor, playing the role of 'second woman' (41-56). There too, then, we see how there was dramatic potential in incorporating an actor with the chorus and having them emerge from the number. The potential for an individual within a choral group to break away from the collective compels the audience to question the integrity (in the sense of wholeness) of the choral body and, to some extent, undermines that integrity. While we see choruses 'individualised' elsewhere,[43] a single or limited number of individuals coming out of the choral body to prominence seems to be a much stronger break with the idea of choral unity.

I suggest that the fragmenting of the choral voice into individualised speech, as seen above, has a similar effect of challenging the inherent collectivity of the chorus. It should be noted, however, that there would still be a substantial amount

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[41] On the staging question see Ritchie 1964:113-5, Burlando 1997:55-6, Poe 2004:26, Perris 2012:157-8. Liapis 2012:106-7 points to the comparable long silences in tragedy. As Perris (2012:158) points out it would be extremely odd for Dolon to enter in a hurry and not make any comment or explanation about his haste.

[42] See e.g. Murray 1913. It is unclear what this might mean regarding the number of choreuts and perhaps keen observers in the audience might be able to spot one extra 'choreut' at their entrance.

[43] See p163n.43 and 166n.49 below.

of speech and action in unison; in the parodos, the first two stasima and the lyric parts of the third and fourth odes. Choral speech and action has not been utterly fragmented nor has its collective vocal timbre been abandoned. Rather, the potential for the chorus in the *Rhesus* to be flexible and behave at times as a traditional chorus and at others more like a group of individuals, is increasingly clear.

Choral Independence

The way that the chorus characterises itself through its interaction with the individuals of the play also supports the idea that it is subtly different from other extant choruses. In some respects, the chorus of night watchmen has a very recognisable role and relationship with the main characters. They focus on certain individuals, as many choruses do, in the first two stasima, praying for help for their spy and praising the bravery of Dolon (224-263) and then turning to Rhesus, celebrating his divine parentage and anticipating his success as their future saviour (343-379, 455-66).[44] They also greet Rhesus as he enters on stage (380-387), just as we see the chorus greeting their king in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (783-5).[45] We see also the chorus performing the role of counsellor, persuading an individual, in this case Hector, to pursue a certain course of action. When Hector understands the watchmen's report, his immediate plan is to attack the Achaean camp before they

[44] Some scholars have read the chorus' celebration of Rhesus in this way as indicative of a kind of barbarism and blasphemy in that they hymn a mortal, (see e.g. Geffcken 1936:405-6). As Liapis 2009:83 points out, however, we see the word 'barbaros' being used (at 404-5 and 833-4) in a positive, or at least neutral, way.
[45] See also E.*El*.988-997.

can flee, but the chorus advises caution that, together with Aeneas' advice, persuades Hector not to attack. The role of the chorus in his change of strategy is explicitly mentioned– νικᾷς, ἐπειδὴ πᾶσιν ἀνδάνει τάδε, 'you win, since these plans are pleasing to everyone' (137) referring to the chorus' endorsement of Aeneas' plan (131-7).[46] Once again, when Hector is planning to reject the help Rhesus might be able to offer, the chorus persuade their general to use Rhesus as an ally (327-339) and Hector concedes – σύ τ' εὖ παραινεῖς, 'your advice is good' (339).

In these respects the chorus appears to be very much in line with what is found in fifth-century tragedy. A choral focus on military leaders is particularly apparent in *Ajax* and *Philoctetes*, plays that are comparable to *Rhesus* in setting and in terms of the identity of the chorus and its relationship to a military superior. In *Ajax*, the very first words of the chorus in the parodos establish how linked the fate of the chorus is with the fate of their leader Ajax (136-40) and the reciprocal responsibility of both leader and led is highlighted throughout (e.g. fear on behalf of Ajax, 254-6, prayer on Ajax's behalf, 185-6, and attempts to control Ajax's behaviour 344-5, 362-3, 377-8, 386, 483-4). Throughout, their wellbeing is defined by the fate of Ajax, both in life and death. Similarly in the *Philoctetes* the chorus, although apparently older than their master (they address him as τέκνον, 141) have a clearly reciprocal relationship with Neoptolemus. They are to follow his lead (148-9) and do so literally in a strophe (391-402) echoing Neoptolemus' complaint about the arms of Achilles being handed over to Odysseus. They reproach (522-3), persuade

[46] Liapis 2012:102 wonders if Hector's capitulation to public opinion is a reflection of Macedonian soldiers' right to free speech. Whether a reflection or not, the rhetoric Hector uses is revealing about his relationship to the chorus, public and in some sense to Aeneas (i.e. he does not want to appear to bend to Aeneas' will alone).

(507-525), are appealed to by Neoptolemus (974) and profess loyalty to him in return (1072-3). Does the *Rhesus*, then, fit into this model of dependent and interdependent relations with main characters? The focus on individuals in the two stasima and the interaction with Hector detailed above might suggest, initially, yes. However, what the comparison to the two Sophoclean plays above brings out is a relative but nevertheless distinct *lack* of concern in the chorus for the fate of those figures they variously praise and interact with.

Looking closer at the chorus' interaction with characters, we find a more varied picture than at first glance. Hector himself is not put in the way of any danger and therefore there is perhaps not the opportunity to caution and support in terms of prayer and praise as is the case of Ajax in Sophocles' play. Although Neoptolemus is not being threatened with the wrath of the Atreidae and Achaean army, as Ajax is, he *is* responsible for the decisive move that will result in the fall of Troy and thus the stakes are raised, thereby justifying the chorus' concern and involvement in their master's actions. But in the *Rhesus* too, we are at a pivotal moment when the Achaean army has suffered severe loss and a Trojan victory is within the soldiers' grasp (as Hector is keen to point out 59-62). Yet the chorus do not align themselves with Hector and in the same way as the choruses of the *Ajax* and *Philoctetes* do, something that should make us examine the choral relationship with its leaders more closely.

Rather than being concerned for the fate of their superiors, the chorus here are more concerned with the end of the war and a release from their duties.[47] It is perhaps for this reason, rather than any sense of allegiance that they first praise Dolon and pray for his success in the first stasimon, and then to a greater extent laud the coming Rhesus, a potential saviour who has more than a wolf's disguise to help the Trojans win their war. While Dolon is still abroad, they show concern for his safe return (556-561), but once Rhesus' death is revealed, we hear no more about the unlucky spy and he is not mourned for. In contrast to the extravagant praise Rhesus receives before and during his entry on stage, the chorus leave the mourning to his mother the Muse, saying only ὅσον προσήκει μὴ γένους κοινωνίαν/ ἔχοντι λύπης τὸν σὸν οἰκτίρω γόνον (904-5). One wonders whether the correlative ὅσον is a deliberate sign that the chorus display only the bare minimum of sorrow in the face of their own private disappointment at having lost a potential champion for Trojan victory.[48] Although viewed by some as unbelievable, the difference between the chorus' attitude towards Rhesus before and after his death seems to indicate something concrete about the character of the chorus and just how invested they are in their superiors, as opposed to the chorus' own potential safety.[49]

The focus of the chorus on their own welfare is clear from the number of other small but significant signs which serve to distinguish this chorus in terms of

[47] Feickert 2005:12 has noted in the chorus' character a particular and strong desire to be subordinate. Liapis 2009:79-80 links the 'rambunctious character' of the chorus to the Macedonian practice of ἰσηγορία in the army. Pace 2004:247-277 sees the chorus as decidedly disloyal to Hector in comparison to Dolon and Rhesus.

[48] See 983 – an abrupt switch from apparent mourning to preparing for the coming day's battle.

[49] Fantuzzi 2007:193-4 suggests the chorus' restraint reflects 'modern' attitudes towards acceptable grief in public. Liapis 2012:311 sees it as 'slovenly dramaturgy'.

their disconnectedness from their leaders. For example, they justify their arrival at Hector's tent in the middle of the night thus, σοὶ δ', ὑποπτεύων τὸ μέλλον,/ ἤλυθον ἄγγελος ὠς/ μήποτέ τιν' ές έμὲ μέμψιν εἴπηις (49-51). It is because they 'fear what is about to happen' that they come to Hector, specifically because they fear being rebuked if they do not (see also 722-3). Contrast this with the opening of the *Ajax* parodos, or indeed the sentiments expressed by the chorus of Corinthian women in Euripides *Medea* – ἔκλυον φωνάν, ἔκλυον δὲ βοὰν… ούδὲ συνήδομαι, ὦ γύναι,/ ἄλγεσι δώματος (131-7). Similarly the men of the chorus agree with Aeneas' plan, not because it is necessarily the best thing to do but because they want to keep safe themselves – σφαλερὰ δ' ού φιλῶ στρατηγῶν κράτη (132). When the Muse has revealed the murder of Rhesus and the divine causation of all, the chorus' response picks up only on the fact that they were not the ones responsible for the murder – μάτην ἄρ' ἡμᾶς Θρήικιος τροχηλάτης/ ἐδέννασ', Ἕκτορ, τῶιδε βουλεῦσαι φόνον (950-1). During the considerable amount of time that the chorus are alone onstage, they continue to be mostly concerned with their own condition – they recount the orders of the watch (537-541), they discuss their fears (560-1, 722-3) and act on the basis of their discussion (562-4). Finally, one might point to the image painted by the chorus as their ideal of peace found in the second stasimon (360-69):

ἆρά ποτ' αὖθις ἀ παλαιὰ Τροΐα 360
τοὺς προπότας παναμερεύ-
σει θιάσους έρώτων
ψαλμοῖσι καὶ κυλίκων οίνοπλανήτοις
έπιδεξίοις ἀμίλλαις
κατὰ πόντον Ἀτρειδᾶν 365
Σπάρταν οίχομένων
Ἰλιάδος παρ' άκτᾶς;

ὦ φίλος, εἴθε μοι
σᾶι χερὶ καὶ σῶι δορὶ πρά-
ξας τάδ' ἐς οἶκον ἔλθοις

Here the chorus list all the elements of a symposium (drinking health 'προπότας', drinking contests 'κυλίκων...ἁμίλλαις', the Bacchic revel 'θιάσους', the passing around of wine 'οἰνοπλανήτοις ἐπιδεξίοις', song 'ψαλμοῖσι' and desire 'ἐρώτων'), whereas in other choral prayers for peace or remembrance of happier times, one might find the evocation of a choral performance i.e. an activity that reinforces the community (e.g. A.*Ag*.22-4 or E.*IT*.1143-52).[50] Although the symposium too is a communal activity, one could say that the chorus' prayer for peace in the form of sympotic pleasure is less universal in scope than is often the case and in keeping with their more self-centred presentation.

It should be noted there is none of the reciprocal concern from the individuals towards the chorus here either. Hector is their main interlocutor (Dolon has a brief conversation with the chorus about his disguise at 204-23, but Rhesus has no interaction at all with the chorus) but does not betray any concern for the men other than anger at the watchmen's failure to catch the Achaean spies (808-19).[51] Indeed we might modify what was said above about the chorus' persuasive power by noting that Hector's response at 339-41 seems to attribute his change of heart about accepting Rhesus as an ally specifically to the messenger and not the chorus – ὁ χρυσοτευχὴς δ' <u>οὕνεκ' ἀγγέλου λόγων</u>/ Ῥῆσος παρέστω τῆιδε σύμμαχος χθονί (340-1). These points should not outright contradict the more traditional

[50] See Liapis 2012:164 for the extent to which we might see the suggestion of 'all-day drinking contests' as the kind of behaviour attributed to barbarians.
[51] Cf. Euripides *Andromache,* in which no named character addresses the chorus.

aspect of choral interaction with named characters mentioned above, but it is important to note that, in contrast to many if not most other extant tragedies, there are some remarkable moments of choral independence from any ties of concern with those characters.

It is true that nowhere in the play do we hear who these watchmen are, though we know the provenance of the first, second, third and fifth watches of the night (539-45) and perhaps one should not assume that they are Hector's men but rather representatives of the army as a whole.[52] The chorus' first words in fact suggest they are not Hector's men – Βῆθι πρὸς εὐνὰς τὰς Ἑκτορέους·/ τίς ὑπασπιστῶν ἄγρυπνος βασιλέως/ ἢ τευχοφόρων;' (1-3). The watchmen differentiate themselves from those men permanently with Hector, as the Salaminian soldiers might be with Ajax, calling for one of *them* to summon Hector. And yet, even in plays where the chorus has a somewhat tenuous rationale for being present at times of crisis e.g. the Phoenician women of Euripides' play, the chorus invest in the fates of the main characters all the same.[53] One should not forget that the identity of the chorus is always at the poet's discretion and therefore we should assume that this disengagement with the characters is a deliberate effect.[54]

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[52] Liapis 2009:77 with n.34 and 2012:73 reads the call to Hector's ὑπασπισταί in line 2 as referring to the ὑπασπισταὶ οἱ βασιλικοί who were the official guardsmen of the Macedonian king (Arr.*An*. 1.8.4 and 5.13.4. and Plu.*Alex*.51.6), something that, if true, sets up the watchmen's relationship to Hector as subjects, but no more closely connected than that.

[53] For this in *Phoenissae*, the third stasimon (1018-1066) is a highly charged and explicit account of the emotional involvement of the maidens in the unravelling fates of the royal household.

[54] Björk 1957:14 suggests that the setting of the play leaves the author little room for choosing his chorus' identity – 'the chorus *must* be composed of Trojan soldiers' (author's italics). However, we might compare the setting of *Iphigenia at Aulis* and the evident potential for tragic choruses to have unexpected identities. For many other critics, the author's choice of chorus is indicative of his poetic deficiency e.g. Liapis 2012:xli, 71-2, 253-5.

We have seen here, then, how the chorus' distinct lack of concern for their leader figures contrasts with the close relationship between chorus and at least one leading figure seen in so many tragedies – a contrast that, again, points to a very different type of choral body. Rather than an embodiment of 'the collective' supporting or reacting to certain individuals, this chorus is speaks, acts and reacts more as a group of individuals, with their own individual concerns.

The Separated Strophic Pairs

Finally, we turn to a more puzzling aspect of the *Rhesus* chorus but one that can be added to the growing list of characteristics that mark the chorus out as subtly but significantly different to our extant fifth-century choruses. The separation of corresponding strophic pairs in choral song is relatively unusual within our extant corpus of tragedy, but not unheard of.[55] For example, in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* there are three separated strophic pairs (417-21 = 452-56, 481-5 = 521-5, 563-7 = 626-30), the six sections dividing up the messenger's account of the seven Argive generals at Thebes' seven gates, and Eteocles' assignment of a Theban general to face them. In this case the separation of the three strophic pairs serves to link the speech of Eteocles and the messenger, and contributes to the building of tension before the inevitable revelation that Eteocles must face his own brother Polyneices at the seventh gate. Perhaps more remarkable is the separation of strophe and antistrophe in Euripides' *Hippolytus* where the chorus first sing of the

[55] Ritchie 1964:330-1.

newly revealed unholy love of Phaedra for her stepson (362-72) but then the responding antistrophe, over three hundred lines later, is sung by Phaedra (668-79,[56] lamenting her sealed fate now that her love has been revealed to Hippolytus himself. Despite the interval between corresponding strophe and antistrophe, one that includes a choral ode as well, both passages are clearly connected in terms of their sense. Both strophe and antistrophe react to recently revealed news, both contemplate the imminent death of Phaedra (ἄσημα δ’ οὐκέτ’ ἐστὶν οἷ φθίνει τύχα/ Κύπριδος, ὦ τάλαινα παῖ Κρησία, 371-2, τὸ γὰρ παρ’ ἡμῖν πάθος/ πέραν δυσεκπέρατον ἔρχεται βίου 677-8) and both mourn for her fate (ὦ τάλαινα τῶνδ’ ἀλγέων 366, κακοτυχεστάτα γυναικῶν ἐγώ 679).[57]

In the *Rhesus* we find not one but two[58] separated strophic pairs (131-6 = 195-201 and 454-66 = 820-31), the second of these spanning around three hundred and fifty lines and framing not only two other choral odes but also an epiparodos of the chorus (565-674). Furthermore, unlike the multiple separated pairs of the *Seven*, or the *Hippolytus*, there is no obvious link between the two sections in sense. Rather, in all four of the passages, the content seems to be governed by immediate events. The strophe at 131-6 is a reaction to Aeneas’ advice for caution in the light of the Achaean’s night fires, while the antistrophe provides a somewhat restrained response to Dolon’s intended night sortie. One could perhaps see a link in the chorus’ approving action that ensures their own safety, but even then, the connection is

[56] Or the Nurse sings this antistrophe, see Barrett 1964:225.
[57] Wilamowitz 1921:443 and Ritchie 1964:331.
[58] Not including 23-51, separated by seven anapaestic lines spoken by Hector.

tenuous.[59] It is interesting therefore to find a number of aural correspondences in the first separated strophic pair, beyond what one might reasonably consider accident.

τάδε δοκεῖ, **τάδε** μεταθέμενος νό**ει**.	**μέγας**[60] ἀγών, **μεγά**λα δ' ἐπινοεῖς ἑλ**εῖν·**
σφαλερὰ δ' ού φιλῶ στρατηγῶν κράτη.	μακάριός γε μὰν κυρήσας ἔσηι.
τί γὰρ ἄμεινον **ἢ** ταχυβάταν νεῶν	πόνος ὅδ' εὐκλε**ής**· μέγα δὲ κοιράνοι-
κατόπταν μολ**εῖν**	σι γαμβρὸν πέλ**ειν**.
πέλας ὅτι ποτ' ἄρα δαΐοις	τὰ θεόθεν ἐπιδέτω Δίκα,
πυρὰ κατ' ἀντίπρωι-	τὰ δὲ παρ' ἀνδράσιν
ρα ναυστάθμων δ**αίεται**	τέλειά σοι φ**αίνεται**.
131-6	195-201

Similarly in the second separated strophic pair, there is no clear sense link between strophe and antistrophe.[61] The first celebrates Rhesus' coming in the hope of decisive victory with his aid. The second is a reaction to Hector's anger at the watchmen allowing spies to enter the Trojan camp, and is wholly focused on defending themselves. Once more however, there are striking aural resonances.

ἰὼ ἰώ.	**ἰὼ ἰώ,**
φίλα θροεῖς, φίλος Διόθεν εἶ· μόνον	μέγας ἐμοὶ μέγας ὦ πολίοχον κράτος
φθόνον ἄμαχον ὕπατος	τότ' ἄρ' ἔμολον ὅτε σοι
Ζεὺς θέλοι ἀμφὶ σοῖς λόγοισιν εἴργ**ειν**.	ἄγγελος ἦλθον ἀμφὶ ναῦς πύρ' αἴθ**ειν·**
τὸ δὲ νάιον Ἀργόθεν δόρυ	ἐπεὶ ἄγρυπνον ὄμμ' ἐν εὐφρόναι
οὔτε πρίν τιν' **οὔτε** νῦν	

[59] Note the dochmiacs used here (see Dale 1983:150). The 'affinità tematica' suggested by Pace (2001:25) of both stanzas reflecting on the plan to send a spy is weak.
[60] Although the 'τάδε' and the 'μέγα' of the first lines do not correspond exactly in terms of vowel sound, the repeated pair 'τάδε…τάδε' with 'μέγας…. μεγάλα' produces a similar effect.
[61] Liapis 2012:193 sees a connection between the 'hopeful anticipation of Rhesus' feats of arms and the contrasting antistrophe where the chorus' implore in utter consternation not to be held responsible for the infiltration of the Trojan camp…'.

ἀνδρῶν ἐπόρευσε σέθεν κρείσσω. πῶς **μοι**
Ἀχιλεὺς τὸ σὸν ἔγχος ἂν δύναιτο,
πῶς δ’ Αἴας ὑπομεῖναι;
εἰ γὰρ ἐγὼ τόδε γ’ ἦμαρ
εἰσίδοιμ’, ἄναξ, ὅτωι πολυφόνου
χειρὸς ἄποιν’ ἄροιο σ**ᾶι** λόγχ**αι**
454-66

οὔτ’ ἐκοίμισ’ **οὔτ’ ἔ**βριξ’,
οὐ τὰς Σιμοεντιάδας παγάς· μή **μοι**
κότον, ὦ ἄνα, θῇς· ἀναίτιος γὰρ
ἔγωγε πάντων.
εἰ δὲ χρόνωι παρὰ καιρὸν
ἔργον ἢ λόγον πύθηι, κατά με γᾶς
ζῶντα πόρευσον· οὐ παρ**αι**τοῦμ**αι**.
820-31

The importance of this apparent effort on the part of the poet to connect separated strophic pairs in sound, but not necessarily in sense comes into focus by a comparison to the separated strophic pair of the *Hippolytus* where very little aural responsion may be found.[62]

In discussing this second of the separated corresponding pairs, Ritchie suggested that the words are of secondary importance and that the fact that the two odes respond is enough to draw a comparison between the hope of the strophe and the despair of the antistrophe.[63] However, it is worth noting that the majority of separated strophic pairs in fifth-century tragedy act as connecting links between different parts of the play and remind audiences of a mood or sentiment from earlier in the play, either reinforcing or contrasting with later events specifically through the antistrophe’s words. But in this example of fourth-century tragedy, the use of separated strophic pairs seems to be predominantly about the connection in and of itself, without reinforcing any implied comparison with the content of the antistrophe. One wonders perhaps whether the echo of ἰὼ ἰὼ in 454 is meant to link

[62] Similarly slight responsion seen in S.*Ph.*391-402 = 507-518 and E.*Or*.1353-1537.
[63] ‘This fact does not need to be made explicit in the words of the chorus; the reminiscence of the ode is enough in itself to underline the contrast between the former confidence and the present confusion and despair’ Ritchie 1964:331-2.

up with the chorus' greeting ' ἰὼ ἰώ, μέγας ὦ βασιλεῦ' at 380 before, even though there is no metrical link between the two odes. Perhaps aural pointers such as the repetition of ἰὼ ἰώ or strophic response are used here as a more utilitarian way of structuring the drama.

There must be more to say about this technique and its effect has clearly been somewhat lost in transmission, but we might fairly class this use of separated strophic pairs as an innovation that subtly shifts how we view the dramatic structure of the tragedy. On the other hand, it should still be noted that corresponding strophic pairs are seen in the parodos and first two stasima.[64] The innovation in the use of separated strophic pairs is not universal within the drama but rather seems to be an additional way of using lyric response in drama as a more developed structuring tool.

Conclusion

The picture of the chorus in the *Rhesus* constructed above may seem to be full of contradictions. Although sometimes some members of the chorus seem to speak individually, there is no reason to think they did not still perform the majority of their lyrics in unison. Although the technique of antilabe is used at unconventional times (540) i.e. not a time of high emotion, sometimes antilabe *is*

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[64] See Liapis 2012:78, defending the strophic pair of the parodos at 23-51, separated by recitative anapaests at 34-40: 'the strophe imparts the alarming news in an excitedly unclear fashion; in response to Hector's queries (34-40), the antistrophe at last provides the relevant factual information'. Analysis of the first stasimon 224-63, see Liapis 2012:128-9. On the second stasimon 342-79 see Feickert 2005:187-8.

used at tense moments (e.g. 683-9). Although self-centred, the chorus do, at times, also focus on individuals. Although the two separated strophic pairs (131-6 = 195-201 and 454-66 = 820-31) do not have a clear sense link, there are exemplary instances of strophic responsion in the two stasima. To reconcile these apparent contradictions in choral technique, one need only adduce the tendency, seen across poetic genres throughout much of antiquity, to build on and use familiar or traditional elements, and combine them with more innovative modes of expression.

In this way, the points of continuity that can be established by comparison to fifth-century tragedy may not indicate only that conventional elements in choral technique remained in later tragedy, but also that they had an active part to play. The frequency of textual imitation and replication has led some scholars to believe the poet of the play to be second-rate and unimaginative,[65] but one could just as easily frame these allusions as sophisticated and catering for a tragedy-literate audience.[66] A conscious emulation of elements regarded as traditional would account for both the recognisable and innovative elements in the way the chorus is presented. One can observe similar contrasts between traditional and more innovative theatrical practices in the rest of the play as well e.g. the appearance of a *deus ex machina*, but one that both speaks and sings in lyric.[67] Because of the distinctive nature of choral speech, however, the contrast of traditional and innovative modes of choral performance in the *Rhesus* is particularly clear.

[65] See most recently Liapis 2012:lxxii-v and *passim*. See also Liapis (*forthcoming*).
[66] Easterling 1993:568-9 suggests the suitability of more positive language in light of the general shift in attitudes towards poetic production after 400. See also Fantuzzi's analysis (2006a and 2006b) of the *Rhesus'* inversion of expected motifs and narratives, well known from book ten of the *Iliad.*
[67] Fantuzzi 2007:173-199.

Recognising the potential for the chorus in ancient Greece to act as a 'mediating principle' provides a further way to frame these conclusions.[68] From what the *Rhesus* shows, it seems that the chorus has extended the remit of its mediatory capability. From the juxtapositions listed above, that the chorus not only mediates between 'there' and 'here', 'then' and 'now', 'them' and 'us' but also it is the most obvious vehicle for travel between 'old' and 'new' tragedy.

A further mediation may be found when considering the persistently fragmented choral voice. The chorus in its traditional guise is capable of mediating between single and collective voices in that it can be both 'one' (one identity, one voice – perhaps sometimes embodied by the chorus leader – and unison movement against which irregular movement is the exception) and 'many' (reflecting the audience itself in terms of collectivity and anonymity). But this collectivity in the traditional chorus is different to the multiplicity of voices portrayed at certain points in this play as indicated by this chorus' fragmented voice. The speech of individual chorus members, as well as the conversation between chorus members must surely have created, at times, a plural voice as opposed to the recognisable 'collective' voice of many tragic odes. As well as conjuring up the abstract idea of 'the people' (as Hector does at 137 by referring to the chorus as 'everyone') the chorus in the *Rhesus* also evokes the groups of individuals seen every day in councils and meetings.[69] This, then, is a further mediation between collective and plural voices.

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[68] For the chorus as a 'mediating principle' see Nagy 1994:49 and now Gagné-Hopman 2013:1-28. For the principle in practice see also Kowalzig 2007 *passim*, Kurke 2007:63-101.

[69] We can note that the stagecraft of the play encourages us to believe much of the action occurred away from whatever raised stage there was in front of the *skene* and predominantly in the *orchestra* (see Liapis 2012:69-70). The flexibility of stage space is noted by Perris (2012:151-64) and might

What we see in the *Rhesus* is not only an example of the kind of dramatically integral and effective chorus that could well have been current in tragedy of the fourth century, but also an expansion of the chorus' broader dramaturgical capability. Greater demands were being made on every element in tragedy in the fourth century to maximise its potential to entertain. It seems that the chorus was viewed as one more part of tragedy, along with its actors and auletes, that was expected to contribute to the brilliance of the drama, which it did in an increased variety of modes.

serve to underline the way in which choral unity is variously interrupted by individuals speaking from their number.

3.

Interpolated Choral Texts:

Iphigenia at Aulis and *Seven Against Thebes*

In the last chapter we examined the evidence for the development and impact of the chorus in the (probably) fourth-century tragedy *Rhesus*. There we saw how, in that example of fourth-century drama, the chorus sings high-quality lyrics, has varied dramatic functions and engages with earlier tragedians' choral technique. At the same time we saw how the *Rhesus* provides us with examples of the chorus being used in new ways, aurally, visually and dramaturgically. In this chapter we shall turn to a different source for the investigation of fourth-century dramatic choral practice, one that has been overlooked until now: the choral text found in fifth-century tragedies, added for fourth-century reperformances.

Traditionally, the additions made to texts such as Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* and Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis* have not been favourably viewed.[1] From the viewpoint of one seeking the best possible comprehension of the first performances of these poets' plays, the removal and addition of material is certainly an obstacle. However, for one who seeks to understand aspects of the theatrical culture of a later era, one that saw the performances of the text as we have it now, these additions are a boon and provide a vital window into that later theatrical culture.

[1] These additions are usually referred to as 'damage' or 'corruption'. Csapo and Slater (1995:1) gives a typical view: 'Paradoxically, the popularity of the tragedians in the 5th and 4th c. B.C. both ensured the survival of their works at this critical period and led to the massive corruption of their texts'.

We can take such choral interpolations as examples of how producers of reperformed drama sought specific visual and thematic effects from a chorus within that reperformance. Unlike the relatively simple process necessary for a single actor to add a line or speech into a performance, substantial choral additions to a text for reperformance required considerable deliberation on the part of the person responsible for producing that reperformance. By closely analysing what choral text is added to a performance, we can begin to uncover an unexplored resource for how the chorus was viewed and used by producers of reperformances after the fifth century.

We have good grounds for claiming the choral additions discussed below were composed and performed in the fourth century. The institution of reperformed tragedy at the Athenian Dionysia in 386 ushered in an era of revivals and while tragedy, comedy and satyr play would have travelled to other parts of Greece before that date, it is most likely that grand scale alterations of the kind seen in the *Iphigenia at Aulis* were made for the high-profile and well-funded Dionysia festival.[2] Later in the fourth century, the freedom to alter the plays of Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles appears to have been curtailed by a decree attributed to the Athenian politician Lycurgus.[3] Dating the interpolated choral text with any more accuracy is difficult. However, the relative certainty of these two milestones provides the best basis for a time frame within which substantial portions of text could have been incorporated into the textual tradition.

[2] See below p.132-3 for a sceptical review of the common belief that Aeschylus' plays were reperformed in Athens in the fifth century.

[3] See below p.118-21 for a discussion of Lycurgus and the passage of pseudo-Plutarch that tells of the alleged recension of tragic texts.

In recalibrating our attitudes towards interpolated text and viewing such additions as sources of fourth-century dramatic practice in their own right (as opposed to wanton disregard of an author's creation) the methods for identifying interpolation must be addressed. The following analysis of interpolations takes close textual analysis into account but remains sensitive to the highly subjective criticism, less persuasive today than was previously the case, which deems anything 'poor' in the text to be a later addition. Recent recognition of the lyric variety in fourth-century compositions means that something like the quality of choral lyric cannot be used as a criterion for dating material.[4] In addition to literary criticism, an awareness of dramatic structure and possible deviations from that structure has an essential and complementary role in considering what may have been added at a later date. Combining these two approaches, and applying them on a case-by-case basis, we can be cautiously optimistic that the material analysed constitutes a set of examples of fourth-century dramatic choral practice.

What we shall see from this analysis is the kinds of rationale apparent in a producer's choice to increase the role of a chorus or even, as in the case of the *Iphigenia*, to create a secondary chorus. Just as was seen in the *Rhesus*, the way the chorus is used gestures towards the choral techniques of the previous century while at the same time exploring new uses and theatrical capacity. Various capabilities specific to a chorus are deployed in these reperformed texts, a fact that vindicates the suggestion that dramatic choral practice continued strong in the fourth century.

[4] The assumption that good choral lyric was non-existent after the end of the fifth century is apparent in Page's analysis see e.g. 1934:192.

Early Textual Transmission

In Page's seminal volume on interpolation it is taken for granted that actors' scripts played an important role in the formation of the Alexandrian text.[5] The assumption has been questioned in more recent debates on early textual transmission.[6] We know so little about the process that some assumptions have to be made and the likelihood of any given scenario should be assessed carefully and its premises set out clearly.

The sketched history that is usually adhered to is that a text of each tragedy as it was first performed existed and was copied or used by actors and book sellers in the fifth and fourth centuries. Some time in the 330s, Athenian politician Lycurgus decreed that official copies of all the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides were to be made. These 'authorised' copies were maintained by the Athenian state until Ptolemy borrowed them for his new library at Alexandria and never returned them.[7] In this way the line from a play's first performance to the textual ancestors at Alexandria of our extant manuscript tradition and fragments of papyri has been drawn.

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[5] He refers to a 'well-grounded suspicion' that this is the case in his brief account of how plays went from stage to page (1934:106-115), but rightly flags this account as 'mere conjecture' (115 n.2).
[6] For some important considerations on this see Mastronarde 1988:39-40 and Revermann 2006a:67-87, esp. 81-5 on tragic texts. Although R. is looking mainly at comedy, some points obtain for tragedy. For the early textual transmission of tragedy more generally (in addition to the works cited above) see Barrett 1964:45-57, Zuntz 1965:249-61, Allan 2008:82-5, Hägg 2010:115. For written transmission see Turner 1952:16-23.
[7] For the Lycurgan 'recension' our only source is the Ps-Plutarch (*Mor.*841f8-12). The idea of an authoritative text created by Lycurgus is confirmed by Galen, who provides the information on the Ptolemaic thieving (Gal.*Comm.Hipp.Epid.*2.4).

Such a sketch skips over a number of problems pertinent to the questions I here address. A fuller scenario of how plays got from the fifth to the third century is required. Drawing on scholarship that asks similar questions and deals with similar problems, I hope to give here one such scenario – one that cannot claim to provide new and authoritative answers, but perhaps will clarify my own approach and set out our options in arguing for interpolations in fifth-century tragedy acting as a source for fourth-century dramatic practice.

The beginning point of 'transmission' is often taken to be the first instance of a complete written text.[8] This rests on two assumptions: first that once in written form, the text is 'finished' or fixed in some way (and that all textual activity after this point is 'corruption', 'meddling' or 'damaging'[9]); secondly that a 'first text' exists at some point relatively close to the composition of the work. This is the first of many areas that we cannot pronounce on with any certitude, but it is helpful to reassert the possibility that plays and poetic works began, not with a text, but with performance.[10] Furthermore, the early transmission of these performances may well have depended not on a complete text to convey what the work was but could have been transmitted relying on oral transmissions at least to a greater extent than might first be thought. In the scenario I am creating, this removal of the concept of 'the text' (as synonym for 'the work' or 'the performance') is central.

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[8] See Reynolds and Wilson 1974:1. More recently the thought has been echoed by West (2001:3) among others.

[9] Csapo and Slater 1995:1.

[10] The First Text as a starting point for studies of transmission has been questioned in Homeric and Shakespearean scholarship too, see Haslam 1997:55 and Stern 2004:34-61. Throughout the following treatment of early textual transmission, I draw parallels with these two authors – not on the understanding that the circumstances are so similar that comparison might provide answers, but more to open up new avenues of enquiry.

How then might tragedy have been transmitted at first? And who would have been responsible for recording those performances in some way? Similar questions are often asked regarding the early transmission of Homer, although the circumstances are obviously different in some key respects and the parallel works as provocation for fresh thinking as opposed to a serious comparison. Epic of this type was originally composed orally and suited spontaneous oral performance, the form allowing for embellishment, and the metre aiding memory, while its stichic composition maintained a degree of simplicity. It is certainly possible to conceive of these early epics being passed on orally from one performer to another.[11] And yet it is possible that the early transmission of Homer was not completely devoid of the written word. There are also the reported instances of a Homeric 'recension' some time towards the end of the sixth century which may or may not have involved the writing down of the epics in full, perhaps for the first time.[12]

The persons responsible for continuing the performances of Homer are thought to have been a group called the 'Homeridae', and also perhaps a secondary group named the 'Creophylidae'.[13] According to the ancient sources, they were descended from Homer himself and were the authorities on the biographical and performance tradition of Homer. It has been suggested that these groups were the source for the collation of texts,[14] but the emphasis in terms of the groups' specialisations is clearly on performance of the poems. It could well be that sections

[11] The seminal works on oral transmission and oral poetry are Parry 1987 and Lord 1981.
[12] The bibliography discussing the sources on this is extensive. For these main sources and some critical evaluations of the alleged recension see Allen 1924:225-48, Davison 1955:1-21, 1962b:216-9, Janko 1992:29-32, West 2001:18, Graziosi 2002:224n.16, Fowler 2004:224n.16.
[13] See Graziosi 2002:202-28.
[14] Lycurgus of Sparta apparently got his copies of Homer from the Creophylidae (Plu.*Lyc.*4).

of the poems written down would have been important *aides memoires* for these performers (as well as valuable commodities).[15] Early transmission of Homer, then, seems to have been the care of a group related to the poet and appears to have been accomplished by a combination of both oral and written media.

In the case of drama, the situation is potentially similar. In terms of oral transmission, we know that the lyric parts of tragedy might be learnt and reperformed in a private setting, or away from the theatre.[16] It might also have been that actors who had learnt a particular part might 'pass it on' to another actor, just as a Homeric performer might teach another, or, as is still the case today in Japanese Noh theatre, a part might be passed on to another actor once a performer can no longer play the role himself.[17]

In terms of the written word, complete 'scripts' may not necessarily have been made after the first performance, but it is likely that the different parts would exist in written form, perhaps as a collection of parts rather than a complete scroll. We should also note here that papyrus, although used fairly frequently in the second half of the fifth century and increasingly so in the fourth, was still expensive and so it may be that, as was the case in Shakespeare's time, drafts of speeches and lyric

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[15] It is said that a written copy of Homer's *Sack of Oechalia* was given to Creophylus as thanks for his excellent hosting, and there is another story of Homer bequeathing the *Cypria* as a dowry gift for his daughter (*Oechalia Halosis* T3 and *Cypria* T1 Davies 1988).

[16] A classic example of this, though not fourth-century, is found in Plu.*Nic.*29 (talking about events from the end of the fifth century) when the inhabitants of Sicily glean knowledge of Euripides from Athenians that stray to their shores, and indeed, where the singing of a Euripidean ode can save you your life.

[17] In the Plutarch passage of the previous note, this practice of passing on parts of Euripides' plays via oral transmission is clear – 'μάλιστα γὰρ ὡς ἔοικε τῶν ἐκτὸς Ἑλλήνων ἐπόθησαν αὐτοῦ τὴν μοῦσαν οἱ περὶ Σικελίαν, καὶ μικρὰ τῶν ἀφικνουμένων ἑκάστοτε δείγματα καὶ γεύματα κομιζόντων ἐκμανθάνοντες ἀγαπητῶς **μετεδίδοσαν ἀλλήλοις**' (Plu.*Nic.*29.3-4).

might have been kept by a poet, rather than thrown away, just in case they were needed.[18] This picture of a somewhat disorganised collection of drafts and written speeches as the means by which play texts were transmitted in their early history may be thought unnecessarily obtuse, but I think it is a picture worth painting in order to broaden our conception of what the practicalities of early textual transmission might have been and how open the process was to incorporating changes made in performance. It seems particularly useful when facing odd moments in the play texts as we have them today. As we shall see, the *Seven Against Thebes* contains large portions of interpolated text, some of which seems contradictory to the flow of the dramatic action. If an editing process incorporated different versions or alternative scenes, this might go some way to explaining a situation such as we find in Aeschylus' play.

Of course, the plays did exist in some kind of written form, if we are to believe the testimony regarding the existence of books and booksellers from the fifth century onwards.[19] Once again though we are in the dark as to where the sources for the text made by the sellers of books came from. In the early modern period, the author had very little control over his play once it had been performed. He was under no obligation to publish his play text and stood to gain very little if he

[18] On the keeping of rough drafts in Shakespearean times see Stern 2004:146.

[19] The sources usually given for this assertion are; Eup.fr.327, Ar.*Ran.*52-4 and Pl.*Ap.*26d6-e2. For the existence of books in the Classical period more generally see Herington 1985 Appendix VI and Turner 1952. On the subject of literacy in ancient Greece (with particular reference to early textual transmission) see Davison 1962a:141-56, Havelock 1986:286-90, Harris 1989:65-115 esp. 84-8, Thomas 1992:117-127.

did, since sources other than the author could be (and frequently were) used.[20] In archaic and Classical Greece too, a poet's rights concerning ownership of his own material, or indeed his name in connection to his poetry, was far less strict than the copyright laws of today allow.[21]

Still, the book trade must have been an essential component of early transmission of drama, since the libraries of Alexandria would not have had half so many plays on record if transmission had relied solely on a play's popularity in reperformance. Indeed since the Lycurgan decree only makes provision for texts of three tragedians, there must have been other sources for the Alexandrians for all those other playwrights that we know competed and were popular in the fifth and fourth centuries.

Aside from the booksellers, the likely candidates for keeping the papers and play texts of poets after they had died are the families of those poets. Sutton has shown how there are discernible 'dramatic families' who seem to have passed on the craft of dramatic composition from one generation to the next, just as one might pass on skills in any other craft.[22] We might cautiously identify these two groups as the caretakers of plays. Transmission of drama, then, could have been a combination

[20] E.g. it is thought that 'bad' quartos of Shakespearean texts were drawn from the memory and invention of audience members, presumably for financial reasons, see Stern 2004:46.

[21] There is a story concerning one of the Homeridae, Cynaithos, that the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* was in fact written by this poet and ascribed to Homer (*FGrHist* 568 fr.5) implying a greater fluidity in attribution than is the case today. For a critical evaluation of this story see West 1999:368-72.

[22] Sutton 1987:9-26. Again there are some helpful comparisons to be made with the Homeridae and Creophylidae, mentioned above. Although one cannot say for certain that the Homeridae were blood decedents of Homer himself, one might term their actions as those of a professional 'clan'. See Fowler 2004:231 on the Homeridae and further bibliography.

of textual and oral, conducted by actors, by family members connected to the poet and by those disseminating a play text in book form.[23]

It is important to note that none of these groups would have any automatic desire for the dramas they disseminated to be exactly what had first been performed. Booksellers had no disincentives to produce divergent texts. Furthermore, a dramatic family's archives may have contained multiple versions of parts of plays (assuming that the poet would have kept earlier drafts) and when members of a poet's family might reperform the plays of their fathers or uncles, they might well want to alter the play to suit modern tastes or put their own personal stamp on them.[24]

This fact of frequent reperformance of plays is often underestimated. In a recent survey of our evidence for the extent (both in terms of number and also geographically) of reperformance, Revermann has demonstrated how Classical Greece may be viewed not just as a performance culture but also as a 'reperformance culture'.[25] Aeschylus is thought to have been reperformed from the last quarter of the fifth-century onward.[26] There is evidence that plays might be premièred in the deme theatres before coming to the City Dionysia. Plays may even

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[23] For what these books might have actually been like see Reynolds and Wilson 1974:2-5, but also Turner 1952:7, who points out that what is frequently taken to be a paradigm of books from the fourth century (the papyrus of Timotheus' *Persians*) with its user-unfriendly form, is not necessarily typical.

[24] The play *Prometheus Bound* may be a substantially reworked Aeschylean play produced by his son Euphorion. See Scodel 2007:141 for bibliography. The same suggestion has been made concerning the final scene of *Seven Against Thebes*, see Bergk 1884:300.

[25] 2006:74. For the visual record see Taplin 2007:2-46 and Csapo 2010a:83-116.

[26] *Life of Aeschylus* (1.48f, Radt), Ar.*Ach*.9-11 (performed in 425), Ar.*Ran*.808 (first performed 405), Quint.*Inst.*10.2.66. See Hutchinson 1985:xlii-iv for a strong denial of fifth-century reperformance of Aeschylus, and further discussion below.

have been composed with 'touring' in mind.[27] With the increasing opportunities for plays to be reperformed, in a wide variety of locations and to audiences with diverse tastes, we are sensible to assume that plays were changed frequently and perhaps quite drastically in (re)performance.[28]

Many (including Revermann) have played down the effect reperformance would have had on the transmission of tragedy and hence the texts that find their way to the Alexandrian libraries.[29] And yet, no one has been able to get away from the fact that there are suspected parts in our modern texts of fifth-century dramas.[30] Divorcing a reperformance tradition from the textual tradition relies too heavily on a) the booksellers getting their texts from a source as close to the author as possible b) a generally held sense of priority for the 'authorial text', and hence a commitment to provide a version that has an authority by virtue of its being 'authentic'.

The extent to which the audiences of fifth and fourth-century tragedy recognised authorial 'ownership' of a play is a contentious question. Suffice for the moment to suggest that it would be *possible* for those concerned with poetry in the fifth and fourth centuries not to conceive of an 'authentic' or 'authorial' creation, but

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[27] See Dearden 1999:222-48, Taplin 1999:33-57 and 2012:226-50, Allan 2001:67-86.

[28] One must also add in here the possible changes made by the much-maligned actors, who we know could have considerable weight in dramatic decisions. See Arist.*Rh*.1403b31-5 and Revermann 2006a:77n.41 and 42. For a valuable corrective to the impression given by the scholia that actors are responsible for many of the suspected lines in fifth-century drama, see Hamilton 1974:387-402.

[29] As well as Revermann (2006a:84-5), Mastronarde posits a parallel tradition of 'actors' texts' and 'booksellers' texts' (1988:39-40). See also Hamilton (previous note) regarding passages deemed suspicious by the scholia. We might also note that the popularity of certain playwrights for reperformance did not effect which tragedians were (allegedly) selected by Lycurgus. For the apparent unpopularity of Aeschylus in the fourth century, see Scodel 2007:130-3.

[30] As Page succinctly puts it with regard to actors' interpolations specifically, 'on the one side, we find what we conceive to be actors' interpolations; on the other, we read that actors did in fact interpolate' 1934:70. Kannicht (1997:69-71) has also noted the relationship between the frequency with which Euripides was reperformed, and the frequency of what seem to be interpolations in our modern texts.

rather of a performance and interpretation.[31] Therefore, revised portions or added sections to tragedies may have been included in a dramatic family's archive, or the source for a booksellers' text may have incorporated the changes made in a recent reperformance.[32] That substantial changes might be made to a performance (as evidenced by certain large-scale interpolations, discussed below) supports such a conception of ancient attitudes to poetic creations. Our evidence suggests that when changes were made for reperformance, it involved the addition of fairly large and frequently self-contained chunks rather than single lines, and also that the plot and characters essentially remained the same.[33]

The above scenario of multiple versions and multiple voices contributing to the early textual transmission of fifth-century drama may appear somewhat anarchic, but it seems to be closer to the truth than the oversimplified version that is commonly appealed to. From a positive standpoint, the above uncertainties provide us with more possibilities for what our current texts can tell us about dramatic practice throughout the fifth and fourth centuries.

There is one key piece of evidence for supposing that the changes I believe have been incorporated into the transmitted text come from the fourth century. As

[31] A similar shift away from the more modern concern with 'authenticity' has been part of Shakespearean criticism. Stern (2004:160-1) has noted that 'decentering' textual authority, both by pointing out that it is not there, and by redistributing it more broadly around the various people who put together a published play text, reopens, excitingly, questions about what 'Shakespeare' really can be said to be.

[32] Even Aristophanes of Byzantium, one of the first textual critics, did not erase entirely lines that he suspected in his copies of Homer, preferring only to note his suspicion (Reynolds and Wilson 1974:9-10

[33] This is thought to be the guiding principle in the early performances of Homer when the poem was in a pre-fixed state (in contrast to the relatively minor discrepancies in papyri from the third century onwards, see Haslam 1997:56). Book ten of the *Iliad*, the *Doloneia*, is arguably our largest example of just such an alteration – see West 2001:10 for further bibliography.

mentioned above, the Athenian politician Lycurgus is thought to have passed a decree calling for the textualisation of the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides in the 330s. The evidence for this edict is slight and merits close examination.

> τὸν δέ, ὡς χαλκᾶς εἰκόνας ἀναθεῖναι τῶν ποιητῶν, Αἰσχύλου Σοφοκλέους Εὐριπίδου, καὶ τὰς τραγῳδίας αὐτῶν ἐν κοινῷ γραψαμένους φυλάττειν καὶ τὸν τῆς πόλεως γραμματέα παραναγινώσκειν τοῖς ὑποκρινομένοις· οὐκ ἐξεῖναι γὰρ <παρ'> αὐτὰς ὑποκρίνεσθαι. Ps-Plu.*Mor.*841f8-12

The wording of the passage hinders our understanding of what the aim of the decree was, what the decree entailed, and how and if it was enforced.[34] However, there are a number of other pieces of information about Lycurgus that make such a decree likely and can illuminate the reasons for the decree in the first place. He was of aristocratic birth (his grandfather was well known enough to be mocked by Aristophanes[35]) and therefore would have undergone a thorough education in all the great poets of the fifth century. During his years in office he was particularly focused on reforms that would connect the contemporary Athens to the glorious Athens of the Periclean age – rebuilding and completing important architecture, boosting the profile of the training and performance of the city's young men (the

[34] ἐν κοινῶι may have the sense of 'for the public/ general interest' or a more locative sense of 'in the public treasury' (cf. LSJ s.v. IId). 'φυλάττειν' may have military overtones or could be more used in the sense of preservation and value (cf. use at *Il.*16.30 of χόλος, or Isoc.17.20 – 'φυλάττειν τὰς συνθήκας'), rendering the word as 'cherish' rather than 'guard'. Elusive too is the meaning of παραναγινώσκειν, often meaning 'to compare' or 'to collate' but here might make more sense meaning 'to read publicly'. Most frustrating is the need to supply 'παρα' in order to make sense of the final sentence. See Sickinger 1999:134-5.
[35] Ar.*Av.*1296.

potential fighting force) and incorporating more occasions for ritual performance into the calendar.[36]

Although the sense of the passage implies that there was a practical aim to the decree (i.e. to prevent actors from substantially altering the texts of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides), the symbolic importance of the decree might be seen to play an equally, if not more, important role.[37] In light of what appears to be a fairly coherent programme for the invigoration of Athens post-Chaeronea by harking back to her celebrated past, a decree paying tribute to three outstanding examples of Athenian artistry makes a great deal of sense. The historicity of the decree is by no means definite, but when considering the host of similarly themed measures being carried out at the same time, we can be cautiously confident.[38]

We might therefore suppose that the next step in the suggested scenario for early textual transmission is valid, i.e. that copies of the three poets' plays *were* made and maintained by some Athenian official,[39] perhaps the city Archon

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[36] For a detailed account of Lycurgus' actions at this time see Humphreys 2004:77-129.

[37] The fact that the decree makes no mention of regulating the book trade with regard to these poets can be taken to support the idea that performance was still the primary means of transmission at the end of the fourth-century. For 'the social meaning of establishing a public text' Scodel 2007:129-52.

[38] As a point of interest we might note the similarities of the Lycurgan decree with the alleged Pisistratid 'recension'. Here too the performers of a given author were restricted in what version they might use, and the measure was enacted by a leader attempting to boost Athens' morale. Perhaps coincidence is the similar length of time between these poetic works being introduced into public festivals and a decree enacted for the regulation of those performances – the Panathenaeic performances of Homer are believed to have begun with the festival in the 570s, while the Pisistratid restriction was perhaps introduced in 522; the reperformance of an 'old' tragedy at the City Dionysia was instituted in 386 and again fifty years later, a decree is enacted curbing the license some performers had clearly been taking.

[39] It is sometimes supposed that the Metroon was the place where such play texts were kept, together with the accounts and legal decrees. Sickinger 1999:134-5 has shown that the wording in Ps-Plutarch and the lack of an article before 'κοινωι' avoids indicating a specific location. Rather the emphasis is a

responsible for selecting poets and actors for the City Dionysia. However we must note that this decree and its effect of 'fixing' the dramatic text would only have applied to Athens, and would only have applied to those three poets. Continued reperformance of plays by poets other than these three might have meant plays were often altered and added to. However, since the texts I am here analysing are from these three poets and I am happy to limit myself to dramatic practice in Athens, these limits to the scenario of textual transmission are acceptable.

Iphigenia at Aulis

The potential instances of choral interpolation in Euripides' unfinished play are numerous. Taking dramatic and linguistic factors into account, the following sections of choral song and speech are likely to have been added after the first performance:[40] the second half of the parodos (231-302); two speeches at the beginning of the second episode (590-97 and 598-606); a section of the epode in the second stasimon (773-80); perhaps the chorus' speech in answer to Iphigenia's final speech (1510-31) (although a deletion of 1470-1499, Iphigenia's lines, could be an alternative to supposing the chorus' lines were the ones added later); and lastly, the choral interjections in the final scene where Iphigenia's disappearance is recounted by a messenger (1613-4, 1619-20 and 1627-9). The added choral lines from the final scene (and perhaps also the choral interjections from a suspected section in the

contrast with the texts being in the hands of the State, as opposed to the state of affairs prior to the decree when the play texts were only to be found in private collections.

[40] The five editors I refer to are West 1981, Günther 1988, Stockert 1992, Diggle 1994 and Kovacs 2002.

third episode – 975-6), most will say would have been spoken by a chorus leader[41] rather than the whole chorus and therefore they are of less interest in this enquiry.

However, although most scholars would agree a number of sections of the *Iphigenia* were altered or added for a revised reperformance in the fourth-century, the only parts that the five more recent editors of the text are all in agreement about as regards inauthenticity (i.e. 598-606, 1613-14, 1619-20 and 1627-8) are those that are commonly labelled 'Byzantine' on account of their disregard for rules of prosody and metre.[42] The remaining choral passages (231-302, 590-97, 773-80 and 1510-31) are subject to divided opinion and I set out the possibilities and problems below before evaluating their possible contribution to our knowledge of fourth-century dramatic choral practice.

The first section to consider is the second half of the parodos – 231-302. Page states his reservations most strongly, pointing to its unparalleled, unusual metaphors and numerous repetitions[43] and monotony of metre (trochaic generally - most lines end in lekythia).[44] Further points can be made relating to the nature and tone of the second half, supported by the change in complexity of metre (164-231,

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[41] The existence of a *coryphaeus* figure is by no means certain. See Wilson 2000:353n.92 'Even the habit of assigning the lines of spoken dialogue to an individual leader rather than the whole group rests on no more than an assumption about the collective's need for a 'spokesperson''. Marshall, however, believes it to make practical sense to have an individual speaking some of these lines, see Marshall 2004:34. I will use 'chorus/*coryphaeus* figure' in order to destabilise the assumption that this figure always featured.

[42] As Page notes, even if these lines were originally based on either a first performance, or revised speech, they are unrecoverable from what has been transmitted to us. See West 1981:74-5 for a more precise dating to the 4th-7th c. AD.

[43] In particular, note the number words deriving from the stem ναῦ- at 231, 238, 248, 249, 252, 254, 258, 260, 263, 266, 267, 278, 287, 293, 294 and 300.

[44] Page 1934:142-6. Perhaps it is fanciful to note Aristophanes' mockery of Euripides for a preponderance of just this type of ending, cf. *Ran.*1205-1250. Whether this makes it more or less likely that a reviser would purposely use such an ending, we cannot know.

by contrast, are in a mixture of aeolic metres, mainly glyconics and pherecrateans with some variations) marking the second half out as distinct from the first half.

Most other editors are less certain. Kovacs remains ambivalent on this issue, noting that while there is no reason to have expanded the parodos beyond the accepted strophe, antistrophe and epode (164-230), the theme explored in lines 231-302 *is* appropriate for the 'First Performance' text (cf. in particular 1259-60).[45] Diggle deems these lines to be a later addition, awarding them the third mark of interpolation, although he does not discuss his reasons.[46]

Günther on the other hand follows Wilamowitz in defending the lines, although, again, with no discussion.[47] Yet Wilamowitz's inclusion of the lines in the 'authentic' first performance text is far from conclusive: 'Ob uns dies Experiment behagt, ist eine Sache für sich: ein Zwang ist auch nur lieber dem jüngeren Euripides zuzuweisen, ist nicht vorhanden'. He is no more positive than that. Kranz, also cited by Günther, has observed that, as with a number of later Euripidean plays (e.g. *Phoenissae*) this half of the ode displays the tendency for tragedy's interaction, or as Kranz puts it 'Wetteifer' (rivalry) with epic, but we could say that this is also a tendency for postclassical tragedy also (cf. discussion of *Rhesus*). Stockert in his edition has produced the most comprehensive defence of these lines, picking up on the considerations of style and providing his own justifications for the metrical and linguistic oddities.[48]

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[45] Kovacs 2003:83-4.

[46] He takes exception to one particular phrase †μείλινον† ἀδονάν, on which he notes 'quorum hic saltem locutionem tam putidam Euripidei non imputat'.

[47] Wilamowitz 1921:282.

[48] Stockert 1992:232-3.

I maintain it is possible to argue these lines were added after the first performance for two reasons: first, the sharp contrast in tone between the two halves of the ode; and second, the unusual length of the parodos. Upon their entry, the chorus introduces itself (as is common for a choral entrance), and the women provide some key information about their identity – where they are from (Chalcis), that they are married (176) and the reason for their coming (171) – but we are also provided with a description of the heroes from a manifestly subjective point of view: the point of view of swooning, awestruck young women. Their blushes, indeed the very reason for their coming shapes the way we understand the narrative. This subjectivity, however, fades very swiftly in the second half. In between the two clumps of self-references at 231-4 and 295-302, there is only one first person verb used (εἰδόμαν at 254) i.e. once in sixty lines.[49] Compare this with the previous section, where their self-reflexive references are spread throughout, with the largest gap being twenty-six lines.[50] The emphasis throughout this second half is on describing the visual details of the collected forces in a distinctly impersonal way.

Stockert rightly points out that this contrast of tone may be found in Euripidean odes and he uses the example of the first and second stasima of Euripides' *Phoenissae*. The first ode in that play (638–689) begins in a detached way, telling the history of Thebes (Κάδμος ἔμολε τάνδε γᾶν…), while the second (784-833) is a prayer to Ares, emotionally charged and with much emphasis on the experience of the choral speakers (in particular their prayers ὦ πολύμοχθος Ἄρης, τί ποθ' αἵματι/ καὶ θανάτωι κατέχηι Βρομίου παράμουσος ἑορταῖς; 784-5). But the

[49] References to themselves are found at 231, 234, **254**, 295, 299, 301 and 302.
[50] 164, 168, 171, 176, 187, 192, 218.

juxtaposition of the two modes of choral speech within the same ode as in the parodos of *Iphigenia*, as opposed to the two separate odes in *Phoenissae*, is striking and grounds to suspect the section has been interpolated.

Secondly, we should note that this is one of the longest choral odes in extant tragedy (and the longest from the Sophoclean and Euripidean corpus). This can initially be taken as a further indication that the ode is an addition to the first performance text.[51] But it might also be an example of a particular effect that a reviser was aiming for, namely emulation of those long choral odes from tragedies in the time of Aeschylus. An aim of this nature would explain why a triadic ode was expanded to almost double its original length. Not only does the producer of the reperformance seek to emphasise the quantity as well as the quality of the army at Aulis, but also may be consciously recalling the style of earlier tragedy, characterised as it was by extended choral lyric.

The quality of the writing, although questioned by some, has an undeniable power.[52] By providing a more detailed backdrop of the mighty forces gathered at Aulis, as the enumeration of the armed forces in this second half of the parodos does, the chorus is able to intensify the difficulty for Agamemnon in making his decision,

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[51] Stockert 1992:232-3 denies that the length can be used as an argument for inauthenticity, citing other long and late odes found in *Bacchae* (64-166) and *Phoenissae* (202-260), but this comparison is valid in form only (i.e. one triad of aeolics followed by a trochaic song). The *IA* parodos at 138 lines long (164-302) is exceptional and must be recognised as such.

[52] For the appropriateness of the catalogue in these lines see Wilamowitz 1921:282, Kranz 1933:257, Mellert-Hoffmann 1969:23-24, Stockert 1982:21-30 and 1992:232-33 and Michelakis 2006:12-13 (with chapters 3 and 6). To the arguments of these scholars I would add that the shift of emphasis from quality of the heroes, something that is magnified by the identity of the chorus as blushing married women who should know better, to quantity of the forces, where the identity of the chorus is less useful for communicating the effect, creates a more comprehensive picture of the indomitable and intractable Greek army.

and it is this decision upon which the entire drama hangs. The fleet cannot be brought on stage and so the chorus' ability to delineate space beyond the immediate dramatic bounds is picked up by the later writer and exploited to the full.[53] Argument for how this second half coheres with and enhances the impact of the rest of the parodos should not, as I have pointed out above, automatically indicate authenticity. Rather we might award these added lines credit in their own right. The second half of the parodos can thus be seen to display some irregularities of language and length that, combined with the sharp change in tone, might point to a time of writing other than that of the majority of the play. Yet this additional half of the parodos performs a characteristic choral function in providing a backdrop that intensifies a pivotal element in the play (Agamemnon's dilemma) and enlarges the dramatic space via the description of the forces at Aulis.

The next section of choral song I shall deal with can be judged as a later addition with a bit more certainty on dramatic grounds. Kovacs has shown how the inconsistency regarding the knowledge of Calchas' prophecy, as well as the unusual use of the chariot make it a virtual certainty that the beginning of the second episode (590ff) where Clytemnestra, Iphigenia and baby Orestes arrive in a chariot, was added for a fourth-century reperformance.[54] Just before Clytemnestra speaks from the chariot there are two speeches, both by choruses, one of which (598-606) is certainly an interpolation from the late antique period[55] but it is also clearly

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[53] On this capability specific to the chorus see Wiles 1997 *passim*.

[54] See Kovacs 2003:77-103. For the spectacular effect of chariots onstage in Aeschylus and the later use of the chariot as an archaising stratagem see Taplin 1977b:77.

[55] See n.42 above.

meant to be spoken by the chorus of Calchian women, since they refer to themselves as 'Χαλκίδος ἔκγονα θρέμματα' (598).

The speakers of the other choral passage (590-7) cannot be the same group[56] (the chorus of Calchian women) for two reasons. First, the speakers' envy of Iphigenia and Clytemnestra's 'considerable fortunes' (595) and calling them οἵ ὀλβοφόροι, ('those bringing-bliss', 596) does not suit the Calchian women of the chorus, since they know of the fate that awaits Iphigenia, and such irony would be surprisingly and strangely cruel. Second, they address Iphigenia as 'ἄνασσαν ἐμήν' ('my mistress', 592) which most agree would be incongruous with their fictive identity – they are Calchian women, not Argive women.[57] When taken with the incongruous sentiment of their speech, this address has led some to conclude that a secondary chorus must have been introduced (just as we get a secondary chorus in a number of tragedies e.g. Euripides' *Hippolytus*). There does not seem to be any other way of explaining the above two difficulties if one insists on the Calchian women speaking these lines.

It is true there are examples of a chorus using particularly pointed ironic speech; Kovacs suggests Euripides' *Electra* 988-97 for a situation when an irony in choral speech *is* warranted, a passage that has, as it happens, often been cited as the

[56] Clytemnestra's separate addresses first to one group - ἀλλ' ὀχημάτων/ ἔξω πορεύεθ' ἃς φέρω φερνὰς κόρηι/ καὶ πέμπετ' ἐς μέλαθρον εὐλαβούμενοι - and then later to the Calchian women ὑμεῖς δὲ νεάνιδές νιν ἀγκάλαις ἔπι/ δέξασθε καὶ πορεύσατ' ἐξ ὀχημάτων clearly indicates two different groups, and the plural 'ὑμεῖς' affirms that the speaker of 590-97 is, indeed, a plural one.

[57] Some have argued that this address should not be taken as indicating allegiance (therefore requiring and Argive speaker e.g. 'ἄνασσαν ἐμήν sei eine feierliche Form der Anrede und dürfe nich "gepresst" werden', Stockert 1992:376, echoing Lammers, 'eine feierliche Art der Anrede', 1931:104.

text copied by the creator of 590-97 in this play.[58] We might use, then, this unusual similarity in vocabulary as a further indication that this secondary chorus was added into the play by a later hand, since such intertextuality is unparalleled (as far as we know) within the same authors' corpus.[59] It is clear a second chorus would contribute to the spectacle of a chariot entering and would magnify the words of praise through the altered timbre of choral speech – and sheer aural volume if nothing else. Here, then, is a bolder still addition made by a reviser: the addition of a second chorus.

The third passage (773-84) to be discussed is different again, being a section of choral speech from within what is in all likelihood an epode (although arguments have been made for a corresponding strophic pair) in the second stasimon. Suspicion has been roused on linguistic grounds but primarily on account of its altered tenor. Placed amid the progressive shifts of perspective throughout the ode from the arriving Achaeans in the strophe, to the waiting Trojans in the antistrophe, and finally to the perspective of the captured women in the city, as imagined by the chorus itself (785-9), these lines are seen as something of an intrusion[60] and the section has no clear subject (we must assume Ares is). Various other small points

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[58] Cf. ἰώ, in *Electra* with ἰὼ ἰώ· in *IA*; παῖ Τυνδάρεω with τὴν Τυνδάρεω τε Κλυταιμήστραν, πλούτου with ὀλβοφόροι; μεγάλης τ' εὐδαιμονίας with the opening invocation in 590, μεγάλαι μεγάλων/ εὐδαιμονίαι.

[59] A possible comparison is Aristophanes quoting himself in the parabases of two different plays *V.*1030-1 and *Pax* 741-3.

[60] Or perhaps a 'bridge' see Stockert 'diese Verse offensichtlich einen Versuch darstellen, den abrupten Übergang zwischen der Antistophe… und der Epode zu überbrücken, dies uns plötzlich in die Endphase des Krieges', 1992:425, following England 1891:80.

encourage the judgement of these lines as a later addition e.g. that 785 has the air of the beginning of a final epode.[61]

Once again we have a reviser seemingly augmenting a choral ode. In itself this, once again, shows that the chorus in fourth-century reperformances not only continued to have a role but was also a tool for a producer to innovate with. To make these lines work a little harder, we might speculate about why these lines were added. England (1891:80-1) presumed that the interpolator had found the shift from before the war to the destruction of Troy too abrupt and therefore wanted to create a few lines that might make the transition easier. If one were to accept this, we might say that this tells us something about the production of a reperformance, or a particular producer, namely that in spite of the canonical status of poets like Euripides, later dramatists nevertheless felt they could improve or emend 'mistakes'. However, if one were to consider what the producer meant by adding these lines of choral song, it might produce some interesting results to imagine the reviser had innovation, rather than correction, in mind.

Aside from such tentative speculation, we might note a detail regarding the metre of these lines that is significant for the purposes of this enquiry. It has not been drawn attention to enough that 773-83 are in recognisable (if not faultless) aeolics[62] and, it has been noted, partially correspond to the strophe. This would seem to indicate that producers of fourth-century reperformances were capable of composing lyric metres to a high standard. The fact that the composer of these lines

[61] See Kranz 1933:312. For full textual discussions of these lines see Stockert 1992:424-7, West 1981:71, Page 1934:170-1, Wilamowitz 1921:261 and England 1891:80-1. While Page does not deem the lines interpolated, he admits that 'a faint suspicion abides'.
[62] For the colometry see Stockert 1992:419, Günther 1988:64-5 and Dale 1971:150.

emulated the rhythms of the strophe is perhaps unable to bear serious weight, but one could tentatively suggest that this would provide the continuity necessary so the added lines would not be jarring, and might also help in the training of the chorus, who would not have to learn too different a pattern of rhythm, music and/or steps. The potential for sensitive lyric composition by fourth-century revisers is something that has received little formal approbation by scholars, but this passage would seem to suggest it is worth recognising.

Finally, I turn to the choral song at 1510-31, athetised by Page, strongly suspected by Diggle but defended by Kovacs.[63] There has been no definitive argument for the lines of Iphigenia (1471-1499) being preferred as from the first performance to the chorus' recapitulatory speech at 1510-31. It is unlikely that both were already in existence before a reperformance, but it is near impossible to be certain which one was added. Kovacs has made a case for the choral speech being part of the first performance text, pointing to Iphigenia's instruction at 1467-9 for the young women to sing a paean to Artemis, which, if Iphigenia's speech were removed, they would duly proceed to do (1510-31).[64] However, it need not automatically indicate an inconsistency if Iphigenia herself was to sing before the maidens' called-for paean. Characters frequently say they are about to do something but delay actually doing it for several lines, sometimes more.[65]

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[63] Other editors either make a decision with no discussion or abstain from judgement. See Stockert 1992:617-8, Page 1934:191-2 and West 1981:73-6.
[64] Kovacs 2003:98-100.
[65] E.g. Cassandra in the *Agamemnon* (1313) says she will go into the house, but remains onstage for a further twenty lines. There may well have been some stage business here to justify Iphigenia's speech, but it is not necessary.

He also argues that the linguistic errors in the choral speech are less serious than those found in Iphigenia's monody and therefore suspicion should fall more heavily on the latter, and that the phrases that are repeated, 'the worse member of the pair belong to [the monody]' (98). His treatment of the language is comprehensive but should one not be utterly convinced by his evidence – and I am suspicious of justifying interpolation purely on linguistic grounds in general – one might add this choral passage to the others discussed here as 'choral interpolations'. If so, it should be noted that, once again we have convincing lyric composition from a producer of tragedy in the fourth century.[66]

As a final point regarding the motivations of revisers, I might suggest that beyond magnifying the individual parts for the highly paid actors in the later Classical period and beyond, there may have been a practical reason for inserting extra speeches (as we have seen, for both actors and chorus). When originally performed at the Dionysia or Lenaea in groups of four (whether they be linked thematically or no), there may have been a necessary limit on the length of each play. However when an individual play was taken on its own it may have been felt the piece must be made more substantial in order to satisfy the theatre-hungry audience. As a single, reperformed play, the *Iphigenia at Aulis* could provide evidence that this suggestion is plausible.

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[66] Page, maintaining his conviction that lyric composition was not possible after the fifth century or early fourth century, is compelled to argue the interpolation is early (1934: 191), but this need not be the case. For discussion of the colometry, see West 1981:73, Günther 1988:167 and Stockert 1992:611.

Seven Against Thebes

i. The Question of Reperformance

It is usually believed that the plays of Aeschylus were reperformed in Athens at various points throughout the second half of the fifth century.[67] The evidence cited for this belief is, at first glance, strong, consisting as it does of both contemporary source material[68] and of an unchanging story told in the biographical tradition.[69] Consequently, the alterations made to the ending of the *Seven Against Thebes* might be thought to come from a fifth-century reperformance of the play.[70] Recently, this scholarly consensus has been seriously and convincingly called into question.

Biles has taken both the contemporary and biographical sources and demonstrated how they do not, in fact, provide any good grounds for the belief Aeschylus was reperformed in the fifth century.[71] In the case of the joke made in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (9-11), he has shown that the joke lies not in Dicaeopolis' disappointment at seeing a play by Theognis rather than Aeschylus, but the fact that

[67] Easterling 1993:564-6, Revermann 2006a:71-2, Nervegna 2007:15-18. Hutchinson 1985:xlii-iii gives a succinct dismissal of the idea of Aeschylean reperformance.
[68] Ar.*Ach.*9-11, performed in 425, and *Ran.*868, first performed 405.
[69] Ar.*Ach.* Σ.10c (Jones-Wilson), *Ran.*Σ.868, Quint.*Inst.*10.1.66, Philostr.*VA*.6.11.128-32, *Life of Aeschylus* 12 Radt, Alciphr.3.12.1-2.
[70] For a suggestion of a more exact date see Lech 2008:661-4, who compares two passages of Aristophanes, one from *Lysistrata* and one from *Frogs*, and finds that a more exact knowledge of *Seven* can be found in *Frogs* thus providing a window for the reperformance of the play between 411 and 405. On the records of fourth-century reperformances see now Millis-Olson 2012:15-17 and 59-75. Other fifth-century reperformances of other authors have also been noted (e.g. Telecleides' *Sterroi* in 431/0 and Aristophanes' *Frogs*, possibly in 404) but the grounds for asserting these plays were reperformed is tenuous, see *IG* XIV 1098a (= *IGUR* 215) with Csapo and Slater 1995:12 no.19, Millis and Olson 2012:225-9.
[71] Biles 2006-7:206-42, anticipated in some ways by Hutchinson (n.26 above).

he expects to see an Aeschylean drama at all; he has not been to the theatre for such a long time and is so out of touch with the events in the city, he expects to see a play by a poet long-dead.[72] Undermining the force of the evidence from the biographical tradition, Biles notes that the consistency of information in sources across antiquity is, in itself, suspicious and points to 'a single line of transmission' one that 'may originate with a source that is as likely to be misleading as truthful'.[73]

Following Biles, then, and returning then to the (slightly) more certain data points mentioned in the introduction, namely, the instigation of reperformances in Athens in 386 and the Lycurgan decree in the 330s, it is possible to posit with greater probability that the interpolated text discussed below may have been created for fourth-century reperformances. For those who insist that the text could stem from a fifth-century reperformance, and the interpolations conceived by a fifth-century author/producer, the following analysis will, at least, demonstrate how large-scale changes were made to previously performed plays and the artistic integrity of those responsible for such changes.

ii. The Text

Although fragmentary, it is possible to identify a certain amount about the plot of Aeschylus' Theban trilogy.[74] We know the plays' titles, *Laius, Oedipus, Seven*

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[72] Biles' discussion of *Frogs* 865-69 and Aeschylus' statement that his tragedies did not 'die' with him (227-8) is, perhaps, the weakest part of the argument, but his arguments, taken cumulatively, convince.
[73] Biles 2006-7:210. On different kinds of second performance, see Biles 2011:173-5.
[74] Related fragments are collected with notes and apparatus in Hutchinson 1985:xvii-xxiii.

Against Thebes and *Sphinx*, and can infer from these the main events that occurred in each play.[75] Hutchinson has shown convincingly that the events of the previous two plays are 'suppressed' in the first half of *Seven* building up to the moment when Eteocles places himself opposite his brother, where 'the past breaks in suddenly on the present'.[76] The power inherent in this sudden foregrounding of the curse of Oedipus is in its destructive and absolute effect. Therefore the references we find later to the 'Epigonoi' (i.e. the descendants of Polyneices and Eteocles who will war once again and this time Thebes will be utterly overthrown) are somewhat jarring with what we can tell of the progression of the rest of the trilogy.[77] Many have concluded that it was unlikely that the first performance of the *Seven Against Thebes* would have included Antigone and Ismene, visible proof of the continued family line of the Labdacids, nor would it have taken such an unexpected and unprepared for turn with the introduction of the decree against burial, and Antigone's doomed defiance. I therefore proceed on the basis that all things that indicate a continuation of the house of Laius and his curse[78] are likely to have been added after the first performance in its trilogic context.

This broad approach to the question of identifying interpolation primarily relies on what makes dramatic sense but it is also reinforced by the consensus of textual critics. Combining dramatic and linguistic factors in judging what is an interpolation, it is possible to identify two choral passages in this play that are likely

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[75] Hutchinson 1985: xxiii-xl and Sommerstein 2010:84-90.
[76] Hutchinson 1985:xxxi.
[77] For the references to and potential means of removal of the Epigonoi, see Dawe 1967:19-20.
[78] As opposed to Oedipus' curse which entails the destruction of his sons alone. For the two curses in action in *Seven,* see Stehle 2005:101-122.

to have been composed after the first performance: 861-74 and 1054-78.[79] And while it has been suggested that these lines are not necessarily the creation of the same person, exactly who wrote the lines is of little importance to the present enquiry. What is clear is that these passages were added later and therefore can shed some light on how later choruses could be used in drama.

The first passage to discuss is a section of choral anapaests that follow on from the maidens stating they will begin to lament (ἀλλὰ γόων, ὦ φίλαι, κατ' οὖρον/ ἐρέσσετ'', 853-5). In this passage, they are initially prevented from doing this by the entry of the sisters (861) who the chorus imagines have come to lament (οἶμαί σφ' ἐρατῶν ἐκ βαθυκόλπων/ στηθέων ἥσειν, 864-5). The women state their right to sing first (πρότερον, 866), and after a brief apostrophe to the sisters, profess the sincerity of their grief (873-4).

Besides the assertion that lines 861-74 were added after the first performance, very little else can be said with certainty. It is incredibly difficult to understand how these lines are not intrinsically awkward. A statement of intention may be given and not followed through in tragedy, but the intentions of both the chorus and the sisters are diverted or delayed three or four times in this short passage and this has led most scholars to suspect the lines. The following options

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[79] In addition we can note the interpolated line 903 – κτέανα τοῖς ἐπιγόνοις which certainly and specifically invokes the continuation of the curse via the Epigonoi. For the meanings and associations of Epigonoi, see Lloyd-Jones 1959:90 and further discussion in Hutchinson 1985:903n. For the main detailed discussions of linguistic problems and rarities, see Pötscher 1958:140-54, Lloyd-Jones 1959:80-115, Fraenkel 1964:58-64, Erbse 1974:169-98, Brown 1976a:6-21, Dawe 1967:16-28 and 1978:87-103, Lupas and Petre 1981, Hutchinson 1985, West 1990:119-125, Barrett 2007:322-50. For discussion of matters dramatic (as opposed to linguistic) see Brown 1976b:206-19, Taplin 1977b:169-91, Winnington-Ingram 1983:16-54 and Sommerstein 2010:90-93. Thalmann 1978 has no discussion of the ending.

may be possible solutions to this awkwardness: 1) that these lines may have been a draft of a linking choral passage which would introduce the sisters but provide some reason for their silence while the chorus began the lament;[80] 2) similarly, in these lines we have a collation of possibly performed parts that could have been used variously for different performances, depending on the exigencies of the individual production – the stichic nature of these anapaests could allow for any of the transmitted lines being put in or be replacing other lines, e.g. were a producer to decide to have mute actors playing the sisters for the purposes of pathos (cf. the entry of the daughters in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* 1480ff), lines 861-2 and 870-4 could easily be inserted into a performance; 3) it could be that we are to imagine a certain amount of stage business going on during these lines which then make the need to hold the sisters back from launching into their lament obvious to the audience (similarly this might explain the odd apostrophe to the sisters at 870-2 when the chorus has just stated their intention to mourn the brothers); 4) that this points to the enactment of some other ritual tradition known to the audience and irrecoverable for us today. What really went on in the performances during these lines must remain elusive.

Most obviously, these lines show that passages of choral lyric were composed for reperformances. One might note that non-responsive anapaestic lines are more easily written and inserted, but there is no evidence to suggest that later producers would be incapable of writing lyric passages. The anapaestic and iambic metres are

[80] See above p.113-4 for the suggestion that draft speeches could well have found their way into the textual tradition.

the most commonly used in semi-choruses[81] and therefore is an appropriate metre to use at this juncture to introduce a long lyric *amoibaion*.

Secondly, these lines indicate that, for some reason unknown to us, it was δίκη for this chorus to lead off the lament. The conventions of lament are difficult to pin down with certitude. The sumptuary decrees that can be used as sources for what *did* go on at funerals give us only the extreme cases and there is also more generally a great variety in the stages of lamentation and in the people responsible for beginning the lament.[82] Lloyd-Jones suggested a parallel for the lamentation of the brothers in the lamentation of Hector in book 24 of the *Iliad* where male hired singers are placed next to the body to lead it off and then the family join the lament afterwards:[83]

> οἳ δ' ἐπεὶ εἰσάγαγον κλυτὰ δώματα, τὸν μὲν ἔπειτα
> τρητοῖς ἐν λεχέεσσι θέσαν, παρὰ δ' εἷσαν **ἀοιδοὺς**
> **θρήνων ἐξάρχους**, οἵ τε στονόεσσαν ἀοιδὴν
> οἳ μὲν ἄρ' ἐθρήνεον, ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες.
> τῇσιν δ' Ἀνδρομάχη λευκώλενος ἦρχε γόοιο
> Ἕκτορος ἀνδροφόνοιο κάρη μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχουσα·
>
> *Iliad* 24.719-24

Using this as a paradigm, the chorus of *Seven* would be acting as the ἀοιδοὺς θρήνων ἐξάρχους and the sisters would therefore be justified in staying silent until it was their turn to lead the lament, as Andromache does at 723. However this is not necessarily the usual order in the Homeric epics, or indeed in funeral rituals of the Classical period. When Hector is brought into the city just a few lines prior to the

[81] See Lammers 1931:146.
[82] On this see Alexiou 1974:4-23 (particularly 11-14) and before her, Reiner 1938:11-18.
[83] Lloyd-Jones 1959:101-2.

passage quoted by Lloyd-Jones the order of lamentation is wife, mother and then the crowd of people.[84] Similarly variant, during the mourning of Patroclus, it is Briseïs who mourns first, with the women following (ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες – 19.301).

Alexiou has noted that there are no strict rules of order in lamentation, and as 24.719-24 shows, beginning the lament need not be an indicator of importance. And yet the language used by the chorus, namely that it is δίκη for the women to make their ἐχθρὸν παιᾶνα (not εἰκός or πρέπει or other such words indicating propriety or expediency) does award them some primacy. Although unclear to us, these lines show a conscious design in having the chorus sing first, indicating that they were performing a function that another character could not perform. In reperformance, then, the chorus seems to have maintained a monopoly on certain ritual functions.

Finally, these anapaests reveal the power that the chorus holds within this dramatic situation. The women see the sisters come onstage and reasonably suppose that they are about to begin to lament for their brothers, but they stop the sisters from doing this, pointing out the justice in *their* beginning the lament. Whether this indicates the ritual importance of choral lamentation or not, one must admit that the chorus is controlling the dramatic situation here and is granted that authority by the reviser of the play. As shall be seen later, the chorus displays a remarkable autonomy in its decision-making, curtailed up until this point by the vaunted authority of Eteocles, ruler of Thebes. With that ruler gone, the chorus' independence (hinted at in their earlier, somewhat defiant, exchange with Eteocles,

[84] See *Il*.24.707-15.

230-63) shows itself clearly here. Although independent and actively autonomous choruses are not unheard of in Greek tragedy (e.g. Aeschylus' *Eumenides*), they are demonstrably rare. Here then, the chorus does control the action, delaying the lament of the sisters, providing a reason for that delay, and supporting its decision by an appeal to δίκη.

What, then, of the second section of choral speech believed to have been added after the first performance of the play; what is the impact of the final choral anapaests (1054-78)? Speculative though it may be, it should be noted that the chorus could easily have spoken a few lines of conclusion before exiting with the body of Eteocles in accordance with the new decree about burial. This ending too might have had some drama in it. In light of the dismissive way the ending of the *Seven* is often talked about, it is perhaps worthwhile emphasising that these final anapaests have been composed and added to the play with some definite dramatic purpose in mind.

From the chorus' initial lament over the bodies of Eteocles and Polyneices (875-960/1004), we can see that, in this play at any rate, there are not any clear distinctions made between Labdacid house and the city of Thebes, and hence little distinction between civic and familial responsibilities.[85] In 900-2 the performed lamentation of the chorus is implicitly equated with the cries sounding throughout the entire city (διήκει δὲ καὶ πόλιν στόνος) and then, more boldly, the chorus assimilates themselves with the very towers of Thebes (στένουσι πύργοι) and the

[85] Compare this with *Phoenissae* and the separation of city and royal family. In that play the citizens are only minimally represented: the characters are all members of the royal family and the chorus is 'imported'.

man-loving soil (στένει/ πέδον φίλανδρον). Just as a γόος can be described as a living creature,[86] so here the στόνος is raised by the chorus and then goes on to take control of the city itself.[87] Similarly in 915-21 (despite the severe corruption in 915) the γόος is likely to belong to the house (δόμων, 915) and is also linked to the chorus (ἐτύμως δακρυχέων/ ἐκ φρενός, ἃ κλαιομένας μου μινύθει,/ τοῖνδε δυοῖν ἀνάκτοιν). We might also note a strong affiliation between royal house and Theban land implied by the speakers of 994-5 ([α] ἰὼ πόνος [β] ἰὼ κακὰ/ [α] δώμασιν [β] καὶ χθονί).[88]

It is important to recognise how closely the chorus identifies with the fate of the royal house and of the city (and that those two, house and city are themselves presented as interdependent) because this justifies the chorus' somewhat unexpected response in the final anapaests. Unlike other treatments of the story surrounding the unlawful burial of Polyneices, here the chorus sees itself as inextricably implicated in the dilemma. They ask πῶς **τολμήσω** μήτε σε κλαίειν/ μήτε προπέμπειν ἐπὶ τύμβῳ; (1058-9). Because of this, there is a vastly different dramatic effect. We the audience are prompted to respond in a slightly different way than to the decision of Antigone to bury her brother alone. In that situation we admire her heroism in being solitary and steadfast in action. Together with

[86] See Hutchinson 1985:917n.

[87] For similar imagery of lament raised by a chorus then moving on to inhabit the land, see *Pr*.397-435, noted by Hutchinson 1985:900n.

[88] A lack of distinct boundaries between house, city, family and representatives of the city has caused some concern although there are parallels. 'It is illogical that this chorus of citizen maidens should speak in the name of the bereaved, mourning palace', Sommerstein 2008:251. He goes on 'but the chorus of Argive elders in *Agamemnon* do likewise' (*Ag*.1481-4, 1532, 1565-6).

admiration, there is also an implicit disapproval in her going against the general response to the edict, i.e. obedience, in spite of reservations.

Now, as in their initial lament over the bodies of Eteocles and Polyneices at 875-960 (or 1004), in these final lines it is indicated that the chorus divides, clear from the adversative sense of ἡμεῖς γὰρ… ἡμεῖς δ[ε] (1068-1072) and supported by various markings in our manuscripts.[89] With the division of the city, represented here by the divided chorus, we are pointed towards polis-wide civic strife and one that goes beyond family ties. The horror we feel at this ending is, in a way, more serious. No matter how piteous Antigone's plight, with her acting alone the city still stands. With the division of the whole city, Thebes itself must fall. This shift in emphasis can also be seen to counter the frequently made suggestion that the ending of the play as it was first performed was changed by a later producer under the influence of Sophocles' *Antigone* or to bring the story into line with the mythical sequence of events that was supposedly made orthodoxy post-Sophocles' play (the Argive attack on Thebes, the unlawful burial of Polyneices, the death of Antigone and continued Theban curse, ending with the city's destruction at the hands of the Epigonoi). Although Antigone is used to provoke the dilemma, ending with the chorus' response and consequent action puts the emphasis firmly on civic, rather than inter-familial, strife. This is no rip-off of Sophocles, but an innovation that should be credited as such in its own right.

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[89] Ἡμιχ. appears in M before the extra metrical φεῦ φεῦ and before 1072, with *paragraphoi* before 1057, 1062 and 1066. There is some variation though: some have the whole chorus 1054-6, Ismene or Antigone 1057-9, Ἠμιχ before 1062 in most MSS. and the same at 1066 and 1072, with the whole chorus sometimes given lines 1072-8.

The chorus' division is not only in action but also in outlook. Although somewhat opaque, the phrase one semi-chorus uses καὶ πόλις ἄλλως/ ἄλλοτ' ἐπαινεῖ τὰ δίκαια (1070-1) seems to point to a markedly different approach to government. This contrasts with the second semi-chorus' answer, ἡμεῖς δ' ἅμα τῷδ', ὥσπερ τε πόλις/ καὶ τὸ δίκαιον ξυνεπαινεῖ (1072-3), implying a more dogmatic approach to obeying the commands of those who govern. In addition to the power of this divided chorus, divided in intention and more general political outlook, we must add the impact of the visual spectacle of a divided chorus and its leaving as two separate parties carrying the two bodies to two different locations.[90] Building on the intrinsic connection of the chorus to 'a community' and hence a single entity, this civic body departing in two separate directions carries a great deal of cultural weight, untranslatable perhaps to cultures of post-antiquity.[91]

While certain aspects of the chorus certainly remained, such as this link to the idea of representing a city and its community, it must be noted that the chorus of the final anapaests is very unusual in its autonomy. Although one half places more importance on the ritual duties of the woman to mourn than obedience to a ruler, they should not be seen as simply an extension of Antigone.[92] We see them discuss

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[90] It is likely that the chorus remained split following the bringing on of the corpses at 848. This must certainly be the case at any rate at 1062-3 where the speaker contrasts σύ with κεῖνος, indicating that they are stood nearer the body of Eteocles than Polyneices.

[91] Taplin 1977b:190 recognises the dramatic impact, but does not discuss the scene in any detail. Lloyd-Jones, despite seeing the chorus as leaving the stage divided, believes the bodies are to be buried in the same place. Brown 1976b:213-4 and Taplin *loc. cit.* rightly reject this. Separate exits, together with their clearly stated intentions, must entail separate burials, lawful and unlawful.

[92] *Contra* Hutchinson (1985:1069-71n.) who compares this with *Pr.*1063-70 where a chorus' decision reinforces the resolution of the protagonist. Yet in *Seven* we have an immediate contrary statement from the other half of the chorus and therefore *Prometheus* does not provide a straightforward comparison.

what course of action they will take and see that decision being made, rather than their immediate agreement or disagreement with a protagonist they have formerly identified themselves closely with (e.g. the chorus' reaction to Medea's intention to kill her children). That Polyneices may only be buried by his sister is still possible at 1063-5 (κεῖνος δ' ὁ τάλας ἄγοος/ μονόκλαυτον ἔχων θρῆνον ἀδελφῆς/ εἶσιν) but this prospect seemingly prompts the defiance of one semi-chorus - ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἴμεν… (1068f), a spontaneous and independent reaction and decision.

These two sections of choral speech and song in *Seven* are rich in possible details regarding later dramatic choral practices. Most clearly we have seen that the chorus was not only included and considered carefully in the production of reperformance, but could constitute a focus for a producer in creating specific dramatic effects, with serious political and ritual ramifications in the drama. The bold, divided exit of the chorus in this reperformance also signals that new themes and fresh perspectives can be cast over 'old' plays in these reperformances, indicating something about the artistic integrity of Athens' reperformed plays as well as those performed for the first time.

Conclusion

The choral text added to fifth-century plays for fourth-century reperformances constitutes a new and suggestive resource for building a picture of the dramatic chorus in the fourth century. Beyond testifying to the obvious quality and quantity of the choral contribution in tragic reperformances of the era, these

fragments of fourth-century choral text, transmitted in the text of earlier tragedies, point to a range of choral potential on the later-Classical stage. Regarding recognised choral techniques, familiar from fifth-century tragedy, a degree of continuity is clear. Within the choral interpolations, the chorus enacts traditional ritual functions, as seen in its appropriation of the right to lament for fallen leaders in *Seven* (861-74). It performs potent choral lyric (*Iphigenia at Aulis* 773-83). It describes in rich detail a location offstage that has significance for the drama that ensues (*Iphigenia at Aulis* 231-302). Its intrinsic connection to the body politic can be activated at moments of strife and civic crisis (*Seven* 1054-78).

Embedded as these interpolations are in an older form of tragedy (an identity made explicit in these revivals being performed under the rubric of the παλαία τραγῳδία), it has also been possible to identify aspects of choral performance that have been added into the plays, a fact that suggests producers of these revivals valued the chorus as a unique tool to achieve certain effects. The divided final exit of the chorus in *Seven* is unparalleled in all of extant tragedy, comedy and satyr play and its powerful representation of imminent civic strife relies on the political resonances of choral performance in particular. The addition of a secondary chorus in *Iphigenia at Aulis* (590-7) shows how the visual impact of a character's entrance with attendant chorus continued to be valued by producers (and must have justified the added expense in costumes alone). The expansion of the choral parts throughout that play, too, suggests that choral performance in tragedy satisfied a desire in audiences for choral musico-poetical performance within drama.

The picture of later choral dramatic practice created by these interpolations is a positive one. Although impediments to our comprehension of the plays as products of the fifth century, they provide a valuable, if partial, glimpse at the theatre culture that institutionalised the reperformance of those earlier tragedies. In adding these texts to the *Rhesus*, we gain a better picture of dramatic choral performance in the fourth century, but we are also able to see what choral functions were carried over from the fifth into the fourth century, and what was still valued by the producers and audiences of Athenian tragedy in the later Classical period.

4.

The Fourth-Century Comic Chorus

In searching for evidence of the activity and quality of the fourth-century comic chorus, one finds a conspicuous absence of choral text. Not only do we contend with the usual paucity of complete extant dramas post-400 but we also find in the play fragments that do survive the word χοροῦ, a mark in papyri and manuscripts that draws attention to our deficit of choral text. As a consequence, the main focus in over two millennia of scholarship has been on 'reading' this absence rather than reading and interpreting the scraps of 'positive' (in the sense of their providing choral text or indications of choral activity) evidence. Often the visibility of the absence has affected how the positive evidence has been read. Most accounts tend to subscribe to what we might describe as a 'textually positivist' assumption that any absence in the textual rendition of a dramatic performance indicates a similar absence in the dramatic performance itself. In light of this assumption, indications of choral performance that do survive are frequently and dogmatically construed as exceptional rather than the norm.

What I set out in this chapter is a way to re-frame the discussion of the comic chorus. The amount of material one can use to construct any positive picture of this genre's chorus has not changed dramatically in the past few decades, but attitudes in scholarship towards the nature of performance and fourth-century theatre more generally have certainly shifted. Building on this shift in attitude and highlighting

the problems with previous readings of our evidence for the fourth-century comic chorus, it will be possible to look at the choral text that we do have in a new light.

First I shall set out how the vestigial text of these choral performances has traditionally been read and discuss the reasons why a re-evaluation of such readings is essential. Next we turn to the choral text that does survive and see how the picture of the fourth-century comic chorus is a great deal more diverse than is often reported. Finally, we return to the χοροῦ mark and provide an alternative way of reading the absence it draws attention to.

Ways of Reading Absence: χοροῦ and Scholarship

The significance of the χοροῦ mark in many of the papyri has traditionally been taken to be self-evident: the odes were not included in the text of the play either because the choral songs were not unique to the work, because their quality was manifestly poor and not worth the papyrus they were (or would be) written on, or because they did not exist in the first place. This tradition of reading a χοροῦ mark as indicative of an absent chorus goes back to ancient scholarship, a fact that makes the removal of such an assumption from modern readings particularly challenging. Platonius states in *On the Difference of Comedies* that Aristophanes' *Aiolosikon* had no choral odes (27-8, 35-8), a statement we know to be false since we have two fragments of that play which contain parts of the parodos, performed by a

chorus of women (frgs. 8 and 9).[1] It is likely that in order for him to make such a mistake, the text that he had access to did not contain the odes written out, or had χοροῦ markings where the choral odes were, and so he made the textually positivist assumption that there had been no choral performance of any kind.[2]

Indeed, Platonius goes on to substantiate his claim by giving an explanation for this apparent absence of the chorus, adducing the altered economic circumstances (25-7, 45-51, 66-9) and restrictions on political lampooning (39-43) in Athens from the early fourth century.[3] Despite the fact that Platonius' works contain statements that are recognised as factually inaccurate (such as that concerning the choral odes of *Aiolosikon*), the idea that the political and economic changes that were alleged to have taken place at the turn of the century led to the removal of the chorus from comedy is one that has persisted.[4] At any rate, Capps in 1895 was in a position to state that the prevailing view at the time he was writing was that the chorus 'in comedy…did not long outlive the Peloponnesian war'.[5]

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[1] While we have little idea when Platonius was writing, the reference to seeing Menander performed (Platon.*Diff.Com.*79-81) indicates a pre-Byzantine date, see Sommerstein 2009:273-4. Perusino attempts to redeem some of what Platonius says by arguing that by choral song (τὰ χορικὰ μέλη) he doesn't mean the chorus *per se* nor the parodos or the exodus – an argument I do not find convincing, see Perusino 1989:51.

[2] Sommerstein (2009:275) suggests that Platonius was transposing contemporary concerns onto the past.

[3] On the continuation of criticism of politicians and politics in comedy, see (recently) Luraghi 2012:371 who argues political lampooning continued even after Athens' capitulation to Macedonia – 'se la libertà greca era morta a Cheronea, qualcuno si era dimenticato di dirlo agli Ateniesi'.

[4] 'This melodrama of the poet, the city, and the genre, all sitting together on the stoop of the fourth century blubbering over lost glory, has had surprising appeal', Csapo 2000:124. See Arist.*EN*.1128a22-5 for the alleged change in comedy from using obscenity (ἡ αἰσχρολογία) to innuendo (ἡ ὑπόνοια).

[5] Capps 1895:288 who cites Haigh 1889:169.

Capps was to argue against the notion that the chorus disappeared entirely in comedy and other scholars, too, around this time began to foreground the evidence for some kind of choral performance where χοροῦ marked the spot in the play texts: it may have been 'materially curtailed' but it was there.[6] However, with the discovery of the so-called Cairo codex at the beginning of the twentieth century and the slew of χοροῦ marks in those papyri of Menander's plays, came the suggestion and apparent confirmation that these marked absences were linked to this feature of fourth-century tragic composition described by Aristotle in his *Poetics* i.e. *embolima*.[7] By connecting the two, scholars asserted an opinion that has now become orthodoxy: the comic chorus did indeed perform but it no longer had any part in the narrative of the play, its songs were in no way connected to the plot and the songs they did sing were not written by the poet. All the weight of previous (mis)readings of Aristotle's *embolima* were now brought to bear on χοροῦ, without there being any real evidence to support the claims being made.[8]

Further to the demonstrable differences between Aristotle's *embolima* and χοροῦ markings (the term *embolimon* is used by Aristotle to describe the quality of some choral parts of tragedy, whereas the χοροῦ mark is used as a textual shorthand by editors of both tragedy, comedy and possibly satyr dramas too), there are two pieces of evidence that suggest the choral odes displaced by the χοροῦ mark

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[6] Capps 1895:289-324 and Körte 1900:81-9.

[7] Flickinger 1912:31.

[8] For some scholars, this opinion has extended to how choruses were staged, in that they believe the choral group to have made multiple entrances and exits in between choral songs e.g. Lefki 2002:73-92. We cannot know for sure, but in light of the size of many theatres such repeated entrances and exits would take up a considerable amount of time. Such a suggestion seems more suited to the modern stage set up where a chorus might wait 'in the wings' rather than slog up and down the *eisodoi* of an ancient theatre.

could both be written by the author and be specific to the play in question. A third-century BC papyrus (P. Sorb 2252), published in 1962, contains lines 1-57 and 73-106 of Euripides' *Hippolytus*, while the ode the chorus sings (with the three lines of introduction from Hippolytus himself) has been excised from this particular text.[9] The fact that a play we know had connected choral odes exists in textual form without its choral odes clearly demonstrates that an absence of choral text does not mean an absence of choral performance specific to the play. Nor, in the light of this papyrus, can we assume that the displaced text was written by someone other than the author.

Another papyrus provides a further intriguing piece of information, which might suggest that χοροῦ acted as shorthand for a (choral) text copied down elsewhere. A second-century BC papyrus fragment from an Achilles drama of unknown authorship has at the bottom of one of the columns of text ἄλλα ὀπίσω χοροῦ μ[έλος (P. Köln 20270-9, A Col.II.28).[10] Pöhlmann and West have taken this as an indicator that the choral text must have been written on the other side of the papyrus.[11] They also note a parallel with another papyrus from the third or second

[9] See Cadell 1962:25-36. Barrett (1964:438-9) suggests of the gap of two lines 'ubi si quid scriptum fuerat (velut χορου vel χορου μελος) papyro abscissa periit', a suggestion followed by Pöhlmann 1977:70. Taplin (1976:49) does not admit the possibility of the blank space containing χοροῦ μέλος on the grounds that there was no *embolimon* at this point, but a choral ode. If we reject the idea that χοροῦ μέλος is indicative of the content or quality of the ode (something that is only achieved by assuming an *embolimon* signified the same thing as χοροῦ), then Barrett's suggestion that χοροῦ μέλος may be in the manuscript is entirely unobjectionable. See below for further discussion of the variety in earlier papyri (3rd-1st c. BC) of χοροῦ marks.

[10] Such is the suggestion of Grönewald (1987: 6-7, 8-9, 20) from the visible letters:]…..σω χ.ρου [. Grönewald's reading is dependent on the assumption that postclassical tragedy always contained χοροῦ/*embolima*, but the letters remain suggestive of the practice of splitting choral text and non-choral text.

[11] Pöhlmann-West 2001:22-5.

century BC (P. Ash. inv. 89B/31, 33), which contains musical fragments (with 'the appearance of tragic lyric') on one side and iambic and anapaestic portions of a tragedy on the other.[12] We can therefore reasonably suggest that χοροῦ need not be indicative of the quality of the choral ode it replaces but rather the mark tells us something about the (possibly technological) factors that were at play in the making of early texts of dramatic performance. Both these examples are for tragedies, rather than comedy, and yet they demonstrate that χοροῦ markings need not signify an unimportant musical interlude or traditional ditty sung by the chorus.

We might add to these two instances the fact that in our version of Aristophanes' *Wealth* we see clear signs that an ode has been removed or missed out at some point in the process of textual transmission. Following directly on from a manuscript mark of ΚΟΜΜΑΤΙΟΝ ΧΟΡΟΥ, at line 771 Wealth says καὶ προσκυνῶ γε πρῶτα μὲν τὸν ἥλιον…, 'More than that, I make obeisance to the sun…'. The Greek strongly implies this sentence is in reply to something someone else has said and the most likely candidate for that interlocutor is the *coryphaeus*/chorus figure.[13] Here then, the ode (which has been signposted already in 760-1, ἀλλ' εἶ', ἀπαξάπαντες ἐξ ἑνὸς λόγου/ ὀρχεῖσθε καὶ σκιρτᾶτε καὶ χορεύετε) must have contained not only a celebratory bout of song and dance, but also some direct question to one of the actors, removed together with the lyrics. Whether the imagined first copy of this play had the choral question and choral song written out,

[12] For the fragments from this Sophoclean *Achilles* see West 1999:43-53 and on the lyric nature of the fragments (possibly a lament?) 48-53. If we imagine this papyrus, as with the Köln papyrus, to have had ἄλλα ὀπίσω χοροῦ μ[έλος then that would indicate the lyrics are indeed choral lyrics. The parallel is made tentatively, but it is suggestive nonetheless.

[13] Sommerstein 2001:185 dismisses the special pleading of some scholars, emphasising the effect of the combination of καί…γε, *contra* Denniston 1934:158.

we cannot say. What we can assert, however, is that we see once again how χοροῦ markings need not indicate isolated or inauthentic choral parts in comedy. In the *Wealth*, an ode has been removed to satisfy the demands of the intended readers of the copy, the makers of the copy, or both.

We can be relatively certain too that the text of choral songs did exist in circulation, albeit on a smaller scale than the more prevalent 'reading texts' which seem to have been the ancestors of the copies we have today. In the second century AD, authors such as Aelian, Athenaeus and Hephaestio were all able to quote choral passages from the comic poets such as Anaxandrides (fr.10 K-A, tetrameters), Anaxilas (fr.13, aeolics), late Aristophanes (fr.9, possible bacchic dimeters), Autocrates (fr.1, non-specific lyric), Eubulus (frgs.102-3 and 137, non-specific lyrics) and Plato Comicus (fr.96, non-specific lyric).[14] The existence of collections of choral lyrics (e.g. P. Strasb W.G. 304-7) similarly demonstrates the fact that texts which transmitted only lyric and choral parts were in existence and had a (perhaps limited) circulation throughout antiquity.[15]

There are a number of other observations that can be made that complicate our understanding of the χοροῦ markings, when and why they were used, and how they may have been (mis)read in the past. The confusion in the manuscripts of *Wealth,* further to the excision noted above, serves to show how uncertain we are

[14] For discussion of the likelihood that these passages are indeed choral see Maidment 1935:12-14, Webster 1953:59-62, Hunter 1979:33-8, 1983:195-8 and 228, and Rothwell 1995:217, 219-20. The fact that these poets were believed to have been particularly active in the first half of the century might indicate something about when the shift into separate choral/non-choral texts occurred.
[15] Photius in the ninth-century was able to quote choral passages from Plato Comicus (fr.167).

about who was responsible for creating the texts we rely on today.[16] The χοροῦ markings show a remarkable variety. Particularly enlightening on this issue is a pair of articles (Handley 1953 and Beare 1955) focusing on the occurrence of XOPOY and the variant KOMMATION XOPOY, mentioned above. These markings are variously found in the middle of the column of text, or to the left and the right, something that demonstrates the degree of flexibility ancient editors had in how they chose to present their texts. The term XOPOY is sometimes abbreviated and shortened versions in the margin are thought to be versions of a different original placement of XOPOY or of a note by an original scribe or scholiast.

More significantly than this superficial variety in χοροῦ-practice, Handley and Beare show how editors ancient and modern might be responsible for adding a χοροῦ mark where there had been none before. The insertion of a χοροῦ mark where a later editor thought the stage would be empty is clear between lines 252-3 in *Wealth*. As Handley points out, 'there must be a pause at 252-3 while Carion joins the old men… But there can be no question of a choral performance at this point: the absurdity would be that the chorus must perform in order to give Carion time to meet it off stage, and then enter with him from the country'.[17] Clearly for the editor who added the χοροῦ mark at this point the word indicated a pause of some kind, rather than a performance, despite the fact that a performing chorus in that play is evident in the parodos.[18] Finally, as Beare recognises, 'in deciding to print XOPOY editors have been guided not so much by the manuscript evidence as by their own

[16] Similar debates exist regarding the text of Aristophanes' *Clouds* and *Assemblywomen*.
[17] Handley 1953:59.
[18] See Imperio 2011:135.

sense of what is fitting' and he includes himself within that tradition.[19] This recognition of the disconnectedness of how χοροῦ markings find their way into texts and what may have been performed is essential in destabilising any assured or uncomplicated 'reading' of this visible marker of choral absence.

Pöhlmann's article assessing all the χοροῦ markings in manuscripts and papyri known at the time of writing has also pushed forward the reassessment of the significance of choral absence in these texts.[20] However, despite his setting the χοροῦ marks in the context of an unstable tradition of textual transmission, he downplays the variation that is found in some of the earlier papyri. He includes the Sorbonne papyrus, discussed above, despite the fact that there is no discernable trace of an actual χοροῦ mark, only a gap of two lines. In a first-century AD papyrus fragment of Menander's *Carthaginian* (P. Colon. 4 inv. 5031 = *CGFPR* 159) we find a further variant, the interlinear marking 'XXXX', thought to be signalling an omission of some kind, perhaps a choral ode.[21]

Similarly opaque are the traces of ink at the edges of another papyrus fragment of the first century BC (P. Berlin 9767 = *CGFPR* 162) from Menander's *Citharistes*; a case could be made for their being connected to a χοροῦ mark but in light of the possible alternative as presented in the *Carthaginian* fragment, we cannot be sure. What these small variants (no χοροῦ, XXXX etc.) demonstrate is that, within the editorial tradition in antiquity, the practice of writing χοροῦ where a choral ode would have been does not necessarily stem from a first performance text

[19] Beare: 1955:49.
[20] Pöhlmann 1977:69-81 and also 1988:132-144.
[21] See Arnott 1996:100-1.

but is dependent on one particularly strong strand of textual transmission dominating our perception of the tradition as a whole. What is more, the inconsistency undermines Pöhlmann's suggestion that Menander himself wrote χοροῦ in these first texts of his plays, and with that assumption destabilised, we might start to reassess the likelihood of Menander writing his own choral odes.[22]

So little is known about how plays were transferred from stage to page and what alterations were made in the process. Such was the proliferation of performance and reperformance, the variety of ways in which plays were committed to textual form and then copied or passed down through dramatic families, through book sellers, through schools, through bibliophiles and libraries is, potentially, very wide indeed. In setting out the variation in χοροῦ practice I hope to have given the foundations of current orthodoxy (one supporting the commonly held view of the significance of the χοροῦ) a vigorous shake.

The Comic Chorus

I begin this section with an analysis of the choral parts from Aristophanes' two last plays, *Assemblywomen* (first performed 392/1)[23] and *Wealth* (388),

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[22] Pöhlmann 1977:80. It has been suggested to me that the sharp increase in the number of plays that poets such as Menander were composing on a yearly basis (see *TGrF* T 42) supports the idea that they no longer had the time to compose special songs for these plays, but this is to impose an arbitrary notion of compositional capabilities. We might point to a figure like Schubert who, in the twenty or so years of his career, wrote a staggering number of works including over 600 songs, as well as numerous other musical works.

[23] See Sommerstein 1998:1-7 for this suggested date in relation to the historical and political background of the period. Although 392/1 is the most likely date, we do not know for certain when and where the play was first performed.

demonstrating that, even from the partially preserved choral narrative in these plays, their comic, dramatic and political import is clear. We can identify continuity with fifth-century comic choral practice but also some potential departures from what we know of the genre's choral technique. Next, the traces of choral activity in Menander's plays are examined, together with the more fragmentary evidence from so-called Middle[24] and New Comedy. This review of the fragments primarily serves to make the picture of the fourth-century comic chorus more complex, showing how, even from our meagre evidence, elements of a traditional choral component can be identified.

ii. The Chorus of Assemblywomen

In many ways Aristophanes' *Assemblywomen* has a very typical chorus. It appears on stage early on in the play after a prologue speech, and traditional parodos language is used (ὥρα βαδίζειν, 30), just as the choruses of *Acharnians*, *Wasps* and *Peace* do.[25] They have a particular connection to one of the characters, here Praxagora,[26] as is also frequently the case for many choruses in Aristophanes' comedies.[27] They complain and criticise the state of affairs nowadays (301-310) as

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[24] For those who doubt the existence of Middle Comedy as a distinct subset of the genre, see Nesselrath 1990:3-27.

[25] ὥρα βαδίζειν, 30. Cf. *Ach.*204, *V.*230, *Pax.*301. See also *Lys.*254 and 321 and Sommerstein 1998:140 for a more comprehensive and inclusive list.

[26] The chorus call her their *strategos* 491 and 500, and admire her skill 516.

[27] Philocleon and the chorus of wasp-ish old men in *Wasps*, the old women in *Lysistrata* and indeed the chorus of citizens and Chremylus in *Wealth*. As often as not in the comedies extant today the chorus has a connection to an individual but the relationship is adversative rather than supportive

many comic choruses do. In more formal terms, they speak at customary points in the dramatic action, performing a lyric to encourage Praxagora ahead of an easily identifiable *agon* scene (571-582), appealing to the judges to favour the current production (1155-62) before rounding the play off with a vigorous song and dance (1163-83).[28]

As yet the unique contribution to the play made by its chorus has not been foregrounded in scholarly literature nor given any comprehensive treatment.[29] Studies have tended to focus on the political aspects and ramifications of the 'utopia' suggested by Praxagora, on questions of gender, on the elements of the play that might exemplify the changes in Athens supposedly brought about by their defeat in 404 at the hands of the Spartans, on the straightened economic circumstances, stagecraft and changes in audiences' taste.[30] While the choral elements in this play certainly contribute to how these issues of politics, gender and recent Athenian history are discussed within the play, the impact of the chorus remains to be explicated in scholarship. Here, I focus on some overlooked ways in which the chorus is used within the dramatic, comic and political frames of the drama and show how this play clearly contradicts the notion of decline post-400. Further, it will be possible to analyse how the handling of this chorus might inform our

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e.g. Dicaeopolis and the Acharnian men in the play of that name or the chorus of birds and Peisetaerus in *Birds*.

[28] *Ach.*1231ff, *Nu.*1510ff, *V.*1516, *Lys.*1316ff.

[29] Discussions usually focus on the marked absence of the text of the choral odes at lines 729/30 and 876/7, e.g. Russo 1994:220-24. For the high likelihood of these excised odes were of the sort familiar from earlier Aristophanic tragedy, see Sutton 1990:92.

[30] *Assemblywomen* is often paired with other Aristophanic comedies - with *Lysistrata* and *Women at the Thesmophoria* (the 'women' plays, see Saïd 1979:33-69, Foley 1982:1-21) or with *Wealth* (the 'late' plays, see Flashar 1967:154, David 1984:5, Pütz 2007:66). On 'Politics', see Rothwell 1990, Ober 1998:122-155 and DeLuca 2005:69-124. On 'Stagecraft', see Ussher 1969:22-37.

understanding of the uses and attitudes towards the comic chorus at the beginning of the fourth century.

One gets the feeling that more than usual is lost in the transmission of the text of *Assemblywomen* from stage to page.[31] True, critics have noted the excellence of the passage of tragic parody where an as yet unnamed female character appears on stage and appeals to the very homely object of a lamp.[32] The silent appearance of the chorus, however, does not lend itself to an easy or immediate interpretation.

The real coup of the opening scene lies in the unusual (and comically potent in performance) act of double transvestitism the chorus perform. The play opens with a chorus of women, played by citizen men, trying their utmost to look and act like (male) Athenian citizens, which of course, the choreuts are in real life. It is from their entrance that we get the first slapstick of the play, of which there are traces in the text itself (e.g. τὴν Σμικυθίωνος δ’ οὐχ ὁρᾷς Μελιστίχην/ σπεύδουσαν ἐν ταῖς ἐμβάσιν; 46-7).

We have every reason to believe that the first gender switch (male citizen to female Athenian) would in itself be unproblematic, even for a chorus of non-professional citizens.[33] There are enough instances of female choruses in tragedy to suggest that a certain level of teaching and convention existed to allow such gender-shifts to be ‘bought’ by the audience.[34] To act the second gender-switch, however, and have men pretending to be women pretending to be men, and make that

[31] Modern productions also fail to exploit the comic potential in the text, casting women as members of the chorus when, in fact, there is much humour to be capitalised on in the multiple transvestitisms of the play.
[32] See Slater 2002:208-9.
[33] Revermann 2006a:88.
[34] See Green 2001:37-64 for the representation of women on pottery in the fourth century.

performance funny as opposed to merely shambolic, would require some quite serious training and skill on the part of the chorus. Similarly, readers of the text of the play are left without the aural humour in the scene, something that often seemed to have had a role to play in such transvestitisms[35] and is here further complicated by the falsely high voices being 'suppressed' during the choral song at the end of the scene at lines 289-310. The choreuts even draw attention to this aural dexterity: σαυτῷ προσέχων ὅπως/ μηδὲν παραχορδιεῖς ὧν δεῖ σ' ἀποδεῖξαι (294-5). The statement works just as well outside of the fiction of the play as inside, encouraging members to remember when they're supposed to act male, and when female.

In an illuminating chapter on the use of metatheatre in the *Assemblywomen*, Slater has described how the silent entry of the chorus and the way the women are shown practising their roles constitutes comedy's first 'rehearsal scene'.[36] Here, Aristophanes has crafted a series of episodes where the audience are transported 'back-stage'. The members of the chorus enter the stage space singly, carrying their costumes or wearing parts of them ('they have not yet put on their characters', Slater 2002:210), preparing for their roles and rehearsing the performance they are about to give.[37]

Whilst there are other comparable 'rehearsal' scenes in extant comedy the impact of the opening scene of *Assemblywomen* must have been heightened because,

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[35] ἢν λαλῇς δ', ὅπως τῷ φθέγματι/ γυναικιεῖς εὖ καὶ πιθανῶς Ar.*Th.*267-8. See also Halliwell 1990:69-79.

[36] Slater 2002:207-34.

[37] The inversion of inside and outside is continued after the chorus' first exit when Praxagora's husband Blepyrus comes on stage to relieve himself: οὐ γάρ με νῦν χέζοντα γ' οὐδεὶς ὄψεται, 322. This may also be parodying the way in which some tragedies signalled to the audience that the proceedings were occurring in the dark e.g. the opening scene of *Rhesus* or Sophocles' *Lacaecae,* see Walton 2000:137-47.

rather than an individual preparing for a role (as is the case in *Acharnians* where Dicaeopolis dresses as Telephus or *Women at the Thesmophoria* where the In-law must act the part of a woman, 214ff), an entire chorus of twenty-four are all engaged in such activities.[38] But it is possible to see this metatheatrical device of staging a rehearsal as drawing on more inherent qualities of dramatic choruses than Slater allows. In fact, the scene shall be shown to be not only a humorous metatheatrical conceit, but also a parodic picture of contemporary dramatic practice in Athens.

Building on Slater's observation of the 'rehearsal scene' that has been set up at the beginning of the play, it is not too far a leap to see it acting as a caricature of the kinds of rehearsal scenes that many citizens would have taken part in themselves where a group of citizen non-professionals would be taught how to move and act the opposite gender by a theatre professional. The fact that Praxagora would have been played by a professional actor mirrors her quasi-professional status as orator and male imitator within the play, while the chorus of women-imitating-men whom she chides and trains are in a similar position to those choruses (including the chorus of this comedy) who would have had to be trained how to be men-imitating-women.[39] What is more, we may be cautiously confident that this element of training choruses was familiar to Athenian audiences and had a

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[38] What is more, 'this is not just improvisation in character but a preconcerted narrative' Slater 2002:316n36. See Revermann 2006a:87-95 on the rehearsal process.

[39] It is likely however that the chorus of *Assemblywomen* were, in fact, far from complete beginners as regards dramatic choral performance. The demands made of them, even in the choral text that has been preserved, are considerable and would have required some virtuosity on their part. This can be seen perhaps most clearly from the 98-syllable word, an invention of twenty-eight dactyls, describing the food at the feasts at the end of the play, which could have been performed by the chorus en masse (1169-75).

place in the associative world of theatre.[40] The inversion has extra bite in this respect since participation in the choruses of Athens was strictly regulated and was only permitted for citizens, which the women manifestly are not.

Aristophanes' audience would certainly have recognised such a parody of this necessity for chorus members to rehearse acting another gender, so often required in tragedy, satyr play and comedy. Throughout the first scene, the political parody of ritual and rhetoric in the Assembly is certainly uppermost, but this additional strand of metatheatre, which draws on audience awareness of similar 'rehearsal' scenes they themselves may have participated in, is nevertheless clearly present.

The inversion of on and off stage, signalled by the rehearsal elements that Slater highlights, extends beyond the first scene. Indeed, the chorus is the prime means by which the inversion is created and shaped in the first half of the play. The first choral song proper of the play (285-310) clearly marks itself out as a parodos by virtue of their exhortatory statements (ὥρα προβαίνειν, ὦνδρες, ἡμῖν ἐστι, 285; χωρῶμεν είς ἐκκλησίαν, ὦνδρες, 289) that, similar to that discussed above at line 30, frequently mark the beginning of a choral entry song.[41] However, the chorus, rather surprisingly, perform a song suitable for a parodos as they exit the stage space, instead of entering it. In doing so, they invite the audience to imagine that as they exit they are, in fact, entering into a parallel theatrical space off-stage. Just as the Athenian citizens would have put on their costumes and been rehearsing their

[40] See, for example, the Boston pelike, which depicts two men in the process of dressing up as women. Pickard-Cambridge 1968 fig. 39.

[41] In addition Parker 1997:529, citing Whittaker 1935:184, notes that the passage of ionics preceding (285-8) the stichic tellesileans 289ff, is also typical of some comic parodoi.

female mannerisms before coming on stage to perform Aristophanes' *Assemblywomen*, so the chorus of women within the play have been shown putting on their costumes (60-77, 118-9, 121,124-7, 149-50, 268-279) and rehearsing their male mannerisms (87-97,153-9, 163-8, 189-91, 263-7) before 'entering' what is for them a different kind of theatrical space i.e. the assembly. Using the parodos as a marker, and relying on its recognisability as a component of dramatic structure signalling the point at which the citizen chorus enter a stage space, Aristophanes skilfully collapses the political and dramatic spaces by having an imagined political space off-stage being approached as if it were a theatrical space, and the stage space of the actual theatre the play was being performed in being treated as if it were a political space.

Further strengthening this idea that the chorus of women are playing the part not just of citizen men but, at the same time, are self-consciously playing the part of 'a citizen chorus', the chorus of Aristophanes *Wasps* offers a nice parallel. In that play we find the chorus leader exhorting members of the choral body by name: ὦ Κωμία, βραδύνεις.... νυνὶ δὲ κρείττων ἐστί σου Χαρινάδης βαδίζειν./ ὦ Στρυμόδωρε Κονθυλεῦ, βέλτιστε συνδικαστῶν,/ Εὐεργίδης ἆρ' ἐστί που 'νταῦθ' ἢ Χάβης ὁ Φλυεύς, 230-4. In a similar way, we see the chorus calling to its own members in the *Assemblywomen* again using individuals' names: ἀλλ', ὦ Χαριτιμίδη/ καὶ Σμίκυθε καὶ Δράκης,/ ἕπου κατεπείγων, 293-4.[42]

While the naming of individual choreuts isn't a radical break with convention (as far as our extant sources go), it is rare nonetheless. It could be suggested that

[42] See Kanavou 2011:83-5 and 173-6 on the generic nature of these names.

Aristophanes, then, is parodying himself (or building on the parodies of others) in having the women-dressed-as-men exhorting themselves to hurry to the political spaces of the city in the same way as his chorus of wasp-ish old men did.[43] The fact that both these choruses are on their way to political spaces (the 'wasps' to the courts, the women to the Assembly) ties the two closer together and marks the inversion of the parodos in *Assemblywomen* as even more powerful. Alternatively, both *Wasps* and *Assemblywomen* may be drawing on a recognised technique in choral performance, whereby the partial naming of individuals within the group may suggest that it has not yet achieved choral unity i.e. it is not *yet* a chorus.[44] This, too, supports the notion that the audience is being presented with a 'backstage view' of a chorus entering the political/dramatic space. Once the chorus of women have thus signalled that they are going "on-stage" during their exit song from the actual stage, their re-entry might naturally be viewed as a kind of exodus from that off-stage 'stage' space. This is supported in the first instance by what the women immediately do which is to divest themselves of their 'costumes' (496-9, 501-3, 506-9), just as real choreuts might do after their performances in the theatre.

Viewed through the frame of the significance in Athens of choral participation, it is worth noting that when the women-dressed-as-men remove their male costumes, they reveal themselves as citizens, in accordance with the recent

[43] *Wasps* was first performed in 422, around three decades before the first performance of *Assemblywomen*. Yet even from our small sample of evidence, the level of inter-text in plays that have similar temporal distance (for their first performances at least) shows that these kinds of jokes would have found an audience even if they would not have been recognised by the whole audience.
[44] Budelmann 2013:91 notes the rarity of partial naming of choruses (citing *PMG* 1.39-40, Ar.*Ach*.609-12 and *Lys*.254 and the Pronomos vase) and suggests it may be linked to the creation of a pre- or post-performance space.

vote in the Assembly (454-9). It is tempting to recall the arguments made two decades ago concerning the role of choral participation in the city's festivals as an important kind of rite of passage for Athens' young men. While the arguments made by Winkler in particular have generally been put to one side now in scholarship,[45] the potential for choral activity to carry a resonance, at the very least, of rituals of maturation would have certainly had a place in Athens.[46] The parody of choral participation in drama, propelled and carried by the chorus in *Assemblywomen* through their inverted 'parodos' and 'exodos', can thus be seen to tie in with the plot progression. While their participation in the 'drama' off-stage was entered into as non-citizens, the chorus of women emerge from their performance in the Assembly as fully-fledged participants in the running of Athens, a transformation that is then tested and explored in the remainder of the play.

Brief but indicative, too, is the gargantuan word made up of twenty-eight dactyls that describes the food to be served at the feast at the end of the play (1169-1175. The length of the word, ninety-eight syllables, is unparalleled in extant drama. However, Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, first performed only seven or eight years earlier, contains a passage of twenty-six dactyls, also spoken by the chorus (228-34) and it seems more than likely that the passage in *Assemblywomen* was parodying

[45] Wilson 2000:77-78.

[46] The question of the resonances of choral performance requires a much greater discussion than space here allows. However, we can initially point to the evidence found at the cult sites of Halai and Brauron that suggests Athenian youths, both male and female, would regularly participate in choral activities as part of a series of rituals focused on the transition from childhood to adulthood. For discussion of the archaeological evidence from these two sites, see Bathrellou 2012:156-61. We might also point to the participation of boys and young men in their tribe's circular choruses as a kind of pre-political civic performance (see D.39.23-4 and Wilson 2003:163-96).

this aural effect.[47] In doing so, Aristophanes' chorus not only show they can match the virtuosity of a tragic chorus, but can also make fun of the stylisation by using the heightened tone to describe 'limpets and saltfish and sharksteak and dogfish…' etc.

What these inversions, parodies and metatheatrical moments all serve to show is that Aristophanes has his chorus playing with recognisable choral elements in drama, the choruses of previous comedy and choral conventions more generally. The same must have also been the case throughout the rest of the play where, unfortunately, the words the chorus would have sung have not been preserved.[48] Even from the text that remains, we can infer how the physical presence of the chorus on stage throughout demonstrates the female dominance in the city under the new order. And further to that, it falls to the chorus to embrace metatheatre once more in the closing lines of the play when the chorus/*coryphaeus* appeals to the judges not to forget the intelligence and humour of the piece, just because this play drew what was apparently the short straw of performing first (1155-62).

It is difficult to argue for any more concrete effects as so much depends on the unspoken activity of the chorus in the second half of the play (as is the case in many of Aristophanes' comedies). And yet, it has been possible to draw out further dramatic significance from the chorus in *Assemblywomen* by recognising its traditional functions within comedy and Aristophanes' manipulation of those functions. That being said, there are some remarkable breaks with convention in

[47] See Parker 1997:5.

[48] Sutton has noted that the unusually low line-count in *Assemblywomen* and the fact that some of the odes have been transmitted, seems to suggest that two odes were taken out of the manuscript, 1990:92. Cf. also Pöhlmann 1977:75.

this play too. Following Praxagora's opening speech, a figure[49] appears from one of the *eisodoi* and says 'Time to move! Just now, as we were on our way, the Herald crowed a second time…' (30-1). As seen above, this is exactly the kind of statement that marks the beginning of a choral entry song in comedy. However, before the expected parodos can proceed, Praxagora interrupts, berating the figure's tardiness and she immediately turns to knock on her neighbour's door (33-5). A woman, mostly likely one of the actors, emerges from the stage building, making her own excuses and she and Praxagora start to identify by name other women approaching the stage (41-53).[50] The end of the chorus' entry on stage is indicated by the words of the latecomer who speaks the lines at 54-6. The women sit down and the 'rehearsal scene' begins. The possibility of a traditional parodos song is suggested in *Assemblywomen* at 30-1 only to be interrupted and delayed, in a way unparalleled in extant comedy.

As well as serving to confound the expectations of the audience by cutting off the parodos initially signalled at line 30, the fact that at least one of the actors seems to have come on stage with the chorus (54-6) and emerged from their number as a regular speaker, goes some way to destabilising the conventional boundary between

[49] The assignment of lines in the opening scene is difficult and, as Ussher has recognised (1969:26), who one believes to have said what is unavoidably subjective. See also Sommerstein 1998:140.
[50] This kind of silent choral entry is also found in Aristophanes' *Birds* (268ff) and, according to Papachrysostomou 2002:389-90, also in *Frogs*. In tragedy too we find silent entrances of the chorus in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (they too leave the stage space during the course of the play) and Euripides' *Suppliant Women*. Another play where some of the members of the chorus are given names, other than *Wasps* (see above) is Timocles' *Orestautokleides* (fr.27), first performed in the 330s or 320s. See also Wilson 1977:278-83 on the fairly common occurrence of individualising the chorus in old comedy.

actor and *coryphaeus*/chorus.[51] Praxagora's request that the women be seated - κάθησθε τοίνυν, ὡς <ἂν> ἀνέρωμαι τάδε/ ὑμᾶς, ἐπειδὴ συλλελεγμένας ὁρῶ, 57-8 - again brings the two actors playing the characters named in most editions as 'Woman A' and 'Woman B' closer to the chorus.[52] Indeed, Woman A and B are never seen without the chorus and so might legitimately be viewed as both part of the chorus and simultaneously separate. The stage picture, in choral terms, presents Praxagora as a leader-figure, a role she assumes and maintains with ease and with the approbation of the choral body that surrounds her.[53] From this choral picture we move to another, perhaps equally recognisable, choral picture where Praxagora remains leader and the two anonymous women act almost as deputies, both taking turns to speak. The choral body, meanwhile, is marked off as separate, perhaps spatially but definitely by virtue of their silence (from lines 46 to 279 or 285).

The silence does not seem to be merely incidental. When Praxagora asks if all the women have brought their beards with them (ἔχετε δὲ τοὺς πώγωνας, οὓς εἴρητ' ἔχειν/ πάσαισιν ὑμῖν, ὁπότε συλλεγοίμεθα;/...ὑμεῖς δὲ τί φατε; 68-72), instead of a

[51] For the idea that there need not necessarily have been a *coryphaeus* see Wilson 2000:353n.92 and Wiles 2000:135, recently challenged by Marshall 2004:34. There is always the possibility that choral speech could have been a lot more fragmented than is traditionally thought. Cf. *Rhesus* where Dolon possibly emerges from the chorus of soldiers (p.90-1).

[52] Slater suggests that Praxagora's order that the chorus sit down when they come on stage, making them a theatrical audience, is in line with the apparent stronger division of theatrical space and connected decline in choral contribution in drama (2002:214). There is no evidence for such a separation of stage space until the Hellenistic period and the fact that even when a high stage was introduced, this did not seem to prevent choral interaction (see Sifakis 1967:Appendix 1 and esp. 130); it seems that the ghost of Schlegel's 'ideal spectator' lurks behind such a statement, see again on 214: 'Now, as the theater space breaks up, we see that both bodies become spectators primarily, divided from the action by an invisible but growing gap'.

[53] After the failed attempts of Woman A and Woman B to address the 'assembly', Praxagora takes to the stage at 170. Approval for her ability and counsel is voiced by actors and chorus at 189, 204, 213, 241-2 and they elect her as στρατηγός 246-7.

choral/*coryphaeus* reply, one of the actors replies on their behalf - φασί· κατανεύουσι γοῦν (72). Why are the chorus prevented from speaking in this way? Ussher's explanation for this apparent awkwardness is that some of the spectators in the theatre would be too far away to see the chorus nodding their heads.[54] But this does not address the question of why the chorus itself, when directly asked by Praxagora, does not reply. Slater has suggested that the chorus enter and remain silent as they have not yet found their political voice, but this does little to explain the immediate impact of the chorus being spoken for in this way.[55] We cannot know for certain the reason for the choral silence here (although some kind of visual gag could be possible e.g. attempted speech being smothered by the beards, choking fits etc.), but this relatively minor point does seem to signal something about hierarchy. This is borne out by the hierarchy of actors and chorus within theatrical practice more generally, but may be elucidated by two passages of Aristotle that are of some relevance to this stage picture of a three-tier chorus: leader-figure, two deputies and choral body. In both the *Politics* and the *Metaphysics* Aristotle, writing around fifty years after the first performance of *Assemblywomen*, refers to a figure called a *parastates* (παραστάτης), which in the context of the Aristotelian passages connotes 'the one who stands next to the *coryphaeus*'.[56] These references are, perhaps, especially useful because of the incidental way in which Aristotle provides these details, suggesting that such figures would have been fairly recognisable. The presentation of the internal structure of a chorus (if we allow that the audience

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[54] Ussher 1973:84.

[55] Slater 2002:210.

[56] Arist.*Met.*1018b26-29 and *Pol.*1276b40-1277a12. In the *Metaphysics,* Aristotle also mentions the τριτοστάτης, a sort of third in command.

would view the collective of women *in toto* as a chorus) builds on the self-conscious quality of the play's first scene, making a visual comment on the chorus' own chorality.

We have seen how Aristophanes seems to be using his chorus in some very traditional ways but also how he plays on his audience's expectations in order to subvert and foreground those traditions in surprising ways. As well as being interwoven in the play's political themes and dramatic structure, we are also able to identify some of the new ways in which the poet appears to use his chorus. Particularly striking is the flexibility with which the chorus interacts with the actors. They begin holding one of the actors in the number, the woman who speaks from the entering chorus at line 54-6, move on to act as subordinate to Praxagora and two deputies, Woman A and Woman B; they then act as a chorus proper, performing the parodos as they go off-stage. When they return the chorus is divided more clearly into leader-figure and choral body by virtue of the fact Praxagora singles out one of the women to get the others organised (509), in which recognisable choral form (i.e. leader and choral body) they remain until the end of the play when the chorus address the audience directly, almost in the manner of a parabasis, and ask for the judges' favour in the contest (1155-1162).

If we had the two odes that have been excised the choral plot in this play would be much easier to discern.[57] As it is, we have been able to take discrete sections of that choral plot and show its dramatic, thematic and comic impact.

[57] At the very least, their presence allows for some coherence throughout the play and particularly once Praxagora leaves at 727; the chorus, closely allied with Praxagora, in effect can stand in for her.

ii. The Chorus in Wealth

The process of textual transmission has been particularly unkind to Aristophanes' *Wealth* in removing nearly all of its choral odes. All that remains of the choral contribution to the play is its entrance (257-89) and a lyric exchange with the slave Cario (290-321). Something that has been recognised by many scholars is that this lyric exchange is clearly parodying an apparently famous dithyramb by the poet Philoxenus, *Cyclops* or *Galataea*.[58] Here, then, we see this latest of Aristophanes' extant plays continuing to engage in parody of contemporary literary works as he does to a greater or lesser extent in all of his plays. Despite the manifest sophistication in terms of literary parody, what has less frequently been recognised in scholarship is precisely how this passage passes comment, and perhaps even challenges, recent musico-political developments. In addition, as we shall see, far from the lyric exchange being a 'set piece…only tenuously connected to the plot',[59] the ideological and status-related issues raised by the choral performance prepare for and contour themes that will continue to run for the rest of the play. With so partial a view of the choral contribution to the comedy, it is difficult to draw hard and fast conclusions about its role in the play. However, even from this small amount of text that has been preserved, we see clear indications of the potential directions a dramatist could go in deploying his comic chorus for parodic, ideological and political purposes.

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[58] See *PMG* frgs.815-824 for Philoxenus' poem. Sommerstein (2001:156) lists three further works by comic poets that may have parodied this particular dithyramb (Nicochares' *Galatea*, Antiphanes' *The Cyclops* and Alexis' *Galatea*).
[59] Parker 1997:555.

When Cario reveals to the chorus that his master has managed to obtain the divine personification of Wealth and intends on sharing him/it with his hardworking friends (284-7), the chorus/*coryphaeus*, are overjoyed and declare their desire to dance (ὡς ἥδομαι καὶ τέρπομαι καὶ βούλομαι χορεῦσαι/ ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς, εἴπερ λέγεις ὄντως σὺ ταῦτ’ ἀληθῆ. 288-9). But before they can carry out their intended choral dance of joy and thanksgiving, Cario initiates a different kind of performance. Shifting into lyric iambics he assumes the quasi-dramatic role of the Cyclops, casting the chorus in the role of his sheep and goats (290-95). The chorus rejects the role, choosing instead to be the companions of Odysseus and threatening to blind the ‘Cyclops’ (Cario) with a wooden stake (296-301). Turning to a different story from the *Odyssey*, Cario then takes on the role of Circe who famously transformed Odysseus’ companions into pigs; the chorus once more is cast in an animal role. Rejecting this too, the chorus opts instead to play Odysseus (τὸν Λαρτίου μιμούμενοι, 311)[60] but soon break character (although maintaining the metre and vocabulary of the previous strophe) and finish up their ‘turn’ in this game of literary capping by threatening Cario once again with a most unpleasant punishment (312-15). A sore loser, Cario abandons the ‘game’ and calls for them to turn to a different form of dance (ὑμεῖς ἐπ’ ἄλλ’ εἶδος τρέπεσθ’, 317), which they do.[61]

Early commentators on the *Wealth* were able to identify lines and phrases in this choral exchange lifted from Philoxenus’ dithyramb. The refrain ‘θρεττανελο’

[60] So too in Philoxenus’ poem, an actor might play the Cyclops and the chorus would play Odysseus, Power 2013:238.
[61] χοροῦ, 321/2.

seems to have been used by Philoxenus' Cyclops (*PMG* fr.819). Line 292 (ἀλλ' εἶα, τέκεα, θαμίν' ἐπαναβοῶντες/ βληχωμένων τε προβατίων, also *PMG* fr.819) is noted as a direct quotation, while elements of line 298 are also identified in Philoxenus (*PMG* fr.820). The concentrated metrical resolution in line 292 is (as expected) echoed in the corresponding line in the antistrophe (298), aurally emphasising the allusion to the dithyramb and its predilection for fast-paced, heavily resolved metres.[62]

However the parody is not of the linguistic features of the Philoxenus' dithyramb alone. Rather, this lyric exchange places itself firmly within politico-literary discourse of the period and engages in some competition with not one but two other genres of poetic performance. First we must consider the innovations Philoxenus, author of the clear inter-text in the lyric exchange, is believed to have made in creating his dithyramb before we can turn to Aristophanes. As Power has recently noted, it was no doubt seen as somewhat startling for Philoxenus to have made his central figure, the Cyclops, 'act' the role of the sophisticated and fashionable citharode, as indicated by the Cyclops' use of the onomatopoeic 'threttanelo' (imitating the sound of the cithara), and this seems to have signalled some kind of generic contest between nome and dithyramb. Power suggests Timotheus, 'the mimeticizing, dithyrambizing, *kitharoidos* himself' is, in fact, an object of parody in Philoxenus' *Cyclops* or *Galatea*.[63] In Power's persuasive reading, the Cyclops is not modelled (as suggested by some ancient commentators) on

[62] On the character of the New Music see Csapo 2004:207-48, D'Angour 2006:276-80, Power 2010:500-7.
[63] Power 2013:251.

Dionysius the Sicilian tyrant (at whose court Philoxenus spent some time) but is in fact modelled on Timotheus, in the same way as e.g. the leather merchant in Aristophanes *Knights* is seen as Cleon.[64] Such a parody on the part of Philoxenus maps well onto what we know of the high-profile inter-generic competition both during the time of these two lyric poets, but also within the traditions of Greek poetry more generally.[65] The comparison is clearly not meant to be flattering for the citharode.

When this generic contest is then incorporated into Aristophanes' play, the potential resonances and poetic recriminations are doubled: lines 290-321 are, in fact, a parody of a parody. Within this three-way, literary tussle for poetic and generic supremacy, Aristophanes, as far as we know, had the last laugh, managing to deploy the associations of a literary critique of a 'dithyrambizing' citharode and to build on that in order to critique both the citharode and the dithyrambic poet.[66] He does this implicitly by absorbing the inter-generic contest between nome and dithyramb into his own genre, comedy.

There is a second strand to Aristophanes' critique in this lyric exchange. Here he comments on the inter-generic contest (as well as both genres of lyric performance) by re-framing Philoxenus' dithyramb as a contest between collective (the chorus) and individual (Cario) performers.[67] Animosity between chorus and

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[64] See *PMG* frgs.816 and 819.

[65] Generic interaction/competition is, of course, present in our earliest works but for the generic competition between dithyramb and *citharoidia* see Power 2013:242-50.

[66] 'The spectacle of a slave playing the Kyklops playing the *kitharoidos* playing the Kyklops cleverly elaborates Philoxenus' ludic critique of the distortion of the noble Apollonian art', Power 2013:255.

[67] For the suggestion that satyr play also is being alluded to in the chorus' parodos, see Imperio 2011: 128-9.

Cario has already been established while the old men are getting on stage (253-89) and the insults flung back and forth escalate in the lyric exchange.[68] In the dialogue, the chorus/*coryphaeus* rather weakly threatened the slave with a beating or the stocks (272-6). In the lyric exchange, however, they pick up the situation, register and vocabulary that Cario has used in the strophe and proceed to 'cap' his strophe with an antistrophe that overturns his dominance as leader and renders him figuratively blind.[69] In the second strophic pair, sexual and scatological insults become yet more intricate and obscene.[70]

In addition to providing some typical, comic obscenity, the manifest animosity between the two parties colours Aristophanes' interaction with Philoxenus' dithyramb and the on-going competition of genre. In his emulation of the citharode, Cario draws attention to his (alleged) control of this particular performance, using imperatives (ἕπεσθ', 295; ἕπεσθε μητρὶ χοῖροι, 308; ὑμεῖς ἐπ' ἄλλ εἶδος τρέπεσθ'· 317) and emphasising his own role (καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ βουλήσομαι—θρεττανελο—τὸν Κύκλωπα/ μιμούμενος... ὑμᾶς ἄγειν, 290-2; ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν Κίρκην

[68] Rogers 1907:33-4 talks about the exchange as a kind of rustic game, but very little comment is made elsewhere on the overtly adversative nature of this parodos, although see Olson 1989:195-6 and Dobrov and Urios-Aparisi 1995:169-71. This passage is yet one more counter-example to the belief (in e.g. Dearden 1976:104) that this kind of antagonism between chorus and individual characters had no place in later comedy. See Lape 2006:104-5 for the competition of status between chorus and individual in New Comedy. A comparable example of a contest between chorus and individual is found in *Ran.*209-68 and, perhaps, *Lys.*430-66 where three old women (from the chorus) verbally abuse the Magistrate.

[69] The chorus' mention of a σφηκίσκος 'stake' in line 301 might point to some kind of visual parallel to the end of Cario's verse (295), since both focus on phallic objects near the face. On capping more generally see Rosen and Marks 1999, Collins 2004 *passim,* Ruffell 2002:138-163 and Hesk 2007:124-160.

[70] See Sommerstein's note of explanation on αὑτὴ δ' ἔματτεν αὑτοῖς (305) which renders the allusion as a typically Aristophanic dense combination of wit and obscenity 2001:158-9. The reference to Aristyllus (314), also mentioned in *Assemblywomen* (646-8), was apparently able to summon allusions to coprophilia (Sommerstein 2001:159).

γε…302; μιμήσομαι πάντας τρόπους, 306; ἐγὼ δ' ἰὼν…318). We hear elsewhere of individuals who are nominally 'in charge' of choruses, but these individuals are not always presented positively. Aristotle deprecates the aulos player who 'drags his chorus leader around' in Timotheus' *Scylla* (*Poetics* 1461b31-2). The fourth-century historian Callisthenes is also said to have described a particularly uppity aulos player by the name of Phaon who claimed to 'have a chorus in Megara'.[71] Cario's imperious tone towards the chorus, in addition to his assumed identity as citharode/Cyclops (and both of these identities could be construed negatively in the minds of an Athenian), combine so that the slave in this context is able to enact a clear, and negatively framed, subjugation of choral performance. We might even be tempted to suggest that Cario's ἕπεσθε μητρὶ χοῖροι (308) might be heard as 'follow your mother, piggies' but also ἕπεσθε μητρὶ χοροί, 'follow your mother (i.e. solo performance, perhaps?), choruses'.[72] The patronising tone, bolstered by the allusion to a human/animal interaction (Circe and pigs) would certainly fit the characterisation of Cario as a representative of a genre, at the centre of which lay a skilled, individual performer, that some (perhaps Aristophanes) felt was becoming uncomfortably dominant.

It is suitable and elegant that Cario's attempts to subjugate the chorus/choral performance are foiled in part by the form of the lyric exchange itself – the strophic

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[71] *FGrHist* 124 fr.59(3). The punch line to the joke reported by Callisthenes is that, in fact, the chorus in Megara 'has' Phaon - ἐκεῖ μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἔχεις, ἀλλ' ἔχει. See D'Angour 2006:271 on how many aulos players were also citharodes.

[72] Cf. *Ran.*334-7 where a similar pun of χορείαν and χοιρείων is deployed. See Dover 1993:237-8 for the probable obscene allusion to χοῖρος (slang for female genitalia) in the *Frogs* passage, an allusion that would also be appropriate in this passage from *Wealth*.

structure, one that is especially associated with choral performance.[73] The chorus is compelled to follow the metre of the strophe, but they turn this to an advantage by reusing phrases and rhythms set up by Cario in its antistrophes. Their aggressive ripostes act both within the fiction of the play, but also in the broader cultural landscape where choral performance may have been viewed as threatened by the increasingly acquisitive genres of nome and dithyramb and their appropriation of other genres' tropes.[74] Within a choral structure and representing choral performance, the chorus of *Wealth* enact a cultural battle that was on going at the time of first performance. It need hardly be pointed out that it would be impossible for anything other than a chorus to represent 'choral performance' in this way.

In addition to the literary and musico-political battle being staged, we can also read an ideological battle. It is within this ideological contest, enacted during the chorus' exchange with Cario, that we can identify a key theme that will recur throughout the play. We might frame the lyric exchange as a contest being fought between the 'lowbrow' individualist for whom individual advantage is a priority, and the (significantly idealised) traditional and stalwart everyman who struggles on following traditional values and keeping to traditional practices. Cario has clearly been portrayed as the former: Chremylus calls him 'my most trustworthy and most larcenous slave' (27); he touts the view that 'in our age, the key to real success is to

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[73] Even if this is only at the level of etymology: 'strophe' and 'antistrophe' refer to the direction and then reversing of direction of choral performance, see Mullen 1982:225-30 on the sources for this appreciation of choral movement from later sources.

[74] Philoxenus is as engaged in this kind of generic appropriation as Timotheus (and indeed Aristophanes himself), particularly if, as Sutton argues, his *Cyclops* or *Galatea* contained dialogue between two actors within what was broadly conceived of as a choral genre, hence its reputation as a 'quasi-dramatic' dithyramb, see Sutton 1983:37-43.

avoid every wholesome practice' (49-50); when he and Chremylus are pointing out to Wealth all the things that men cannot have too much of, the master lists cultured things such as ἔρωτος…μουσικῆς… τιμῆς… ἀνδραγαθίας… φιλοτιμίας… στρατηγίας, while the slave Cario mentions less lofty items such as ἄρτων… τραγημάτων… πλακούντων… ἰσχάδων… μάζης… φακῆς (190-2). In addition he is identified with a New Musician such as Timotheus and therefore takes on the associations of the New Musician, both good (extremely popular and well-paid) and bad (foreign and well-paid). The men of the chorus meanwhile provide a social group of 'righteous people who've gone without their daily bread' (219) and 'lovers of hard labour' (254); in other words, an idealised majority of Athenian citizens, hounded and hard done by politicians, tax-collectors and informers.[75] Without doubt, an audience would happily identify with both parties, but this need not negate the idea that an ideological battle between (very broadly) 'old' and 'new' is being waged on stage.

The use of the chorus as representatives of an 'everyman' figure is naturally apt, deploying as it does the already understood link between the city's choruses and its population.[76] The fact that the lyric exchange between Cario and the chorus invokes a form associated with the civic 'circular chorus' makes the ideological conflict between individual and collective all the more pointed. In the rest of the play we see how the 'utopia' suggested at the beginning, created by returning Wealth's sight so that he may avoid the wicked (95-6) and visit the just (97), is

[75] There can be no doubt that Athens' involvement in the Corinthian War had placed a significant on the city's finances and there was a greater gap between rich and poor during this time, see David 1984:4, 14-20 and French 1991:24-40.

[76] Again, the suggestion that the chorus' role in *Wealth* is only as interlocutor (e.g. Ferrari 1948:183) is categorically disproved on this account. The fact that the lines are spoken by a chorus, as opposed to an individual, carries crucial cultural power.

undercut and ironised at many points. For example, Chremylus claims that he first went to Apollo for the sake of his son (32-8), about whom we hear nothing once Wealth has entered his house.[77]

However, it is only by establishing a sharp (although by no means original in Aristophanes' plays) dichotomy between old and young, traditional and dangerously innovative that the episodes that make up the rest of the play may be undercut in this way. The role of the chorus in the parodos and lyric exchange with Cario is to reassert the power of the *demos*, the power and primacy of the traditional choral performance, as well as the everyman figure, and justify their claim to Wealth over those low-brow, self-seeking, fast-buck-making individuals represented by Cario.[78] The identity they create for themselves here allows their presence throughout the play (they continue to be referred to by characters despite the fact their songs have been removed, see 322, 487-8, 627, 802, 959) to act as a counterpoint to the experiments within the new order.

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[77] Or again, Chremylus' line just before Wealth does enter the house, 'Well, why would anyone lie to you?' (252), is heavy with irony in light of the preceding discussion.

[78] Cario is a negative *exemplum* in more ways than one. It is indicated early on that he has only recently become a slave, perhaps because of his own extreme poverty – 'in my case, it was for small change that I lost my freedom and became a slave' (147-8). Thus he acts as a representative of the possible future destitution of the people (although, as Athenian citizens, they would not be reduced to slavery). See Olson 1989:193-99.

iii. Traces of the Chorus in Menander and the Fragments

The fragments, by their very nature, are unable to support a definitive argument concerning the role of the chorus in fourth-century comedy.[79] While Hunter's call for an 'honest profession of ignorance'[80] regarding many aspects of the later Classical comic chorus remains as valuable today as it was in 1979, there is still more that can be done with the available evidence, particularly in the light of the change of attitudes towards fourth-century drama. What the following brief review is able to do is complicate the picture of choral development and provide some idea of the potential variety of choral practice in the later Classical period.[81] The dates of many of the fragments are uncertain and scattered across the full span of the century. However, the relative anarchy of the evidence becomes an advantage in the attempt to display how choral practice in the fourth century was anything but uniform and, as we might expect, was continually shifting, as well as varying from author to author.

The attempt to complicate current assumptions about the fourth-century chorus is particularly challenging in the case of the playwright Menander. The belief that he did not write choral odes and that, even if he did, these would be entirely irrelevant to the plot, remains entirely unchallenged in modern scholarship. As has

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[79] See Nesselrath 2010:423-53 for sobering discussion of the factors involved in the transmission and text of comic fragments.

[80] Hunter 1979:23.

[81] 'The little evidence we have is contradictory and indicates that what happened at one place did not happen at others', Sifakis 1963:35, perhaps as we might expect during a century of expansion in the theatre. For evaluation of most of the fragments discussed here in light of the question of choral development see Webster 1953:58-63 and Hunter 1979: 23-38.

been pointed out above, I would certainly challenge both the assumptions of irrelevance and/or inauthenticity of choral content, primarily because they seem to be drawn to a great extent from an extrapolated (mis)reading of what Aristotle means by the term *embolima*. It is significant that if we set Aristotle's words to one side and counter the temptation for scholars to read χοροῦ as an indication of the quality of the ode (against which, see above), there is little to suggest irrelevance or inauthenticity in Menander's odes. The absence of any real evidence to support the idea that Menander did not write his own odes is, perhaps, unexpected in light of the certainty among most scholars that the Menandrian chorus made a minimal impact on the drama. However, it is important to highlight, once again, that this certainty is based on textual positivism in the case of χοροῦ and one popular (mis)reading of Aristotle's *embolima*. It is hoped that the variety displayed in fragments will support a more sceptical approach to the orthodoxy regarding Menander's choral technique.

We see an example of how misleading it is to view Menander as a representative writer of New Comedy in looking at the issue of choral identity. The fact that the plays of Menander often appear to have choruses of a similar identity, introduced in a formulaic way by the characters on stage,[82] has been used to support the argument that the chorus was standardised and lacking in unique qualities in all later comedy.[83] However, this notion that all Middle or New comic choruses had roughly the same identity may be dispensed with easily as, outside of the texts of Menander, there is plentiful evidence for the variety of choral identity

[82] Arnott 1978:18-19.
[83] E.g. Ireland 2010:352.

during the fourth century. In Aristophanes' *Aiolosikon* (first quarter of the century) we see a chorus of women, as we do in Alexis' *Gunaikokratia* (fr.42) – first performed some time between c. 350-300 – and Autocrates' *Tympanistai* (fr.1). Antiphanes, one of the most prolific comic poets of the so-called 'middle' period of comedy, whose work spans the fourth century down to c.330, gives us a chorus of Scythians in a play of that name (frgs.197-9)[84] and knights in his *Knights* (frgs.108-9). Anaxilas' *Circe* (frgs.12 and 13), performed some time during the middle of the fourth century,[85] had a chorus of Odysseus' companions.

A play by Heniochus, performed at some point during the fourth century, seems to have had a chorus of individualised cities (fr.5). [86] Timocles' *Orestautokleides* (frgs.27-8), one of the plays we can date to the last third of the fourth century,[87] could well have had a chorus of Furies and it may be that the list of names we have (fr.27) are of those Furies.[88] Choruses of 'tipsy revellers' meanwhile are far from apparent outside of Menander;[89] we only have Alexis' *Kouris* (fr.112), which we are told had a group of *komastai*.[90] The use of plural play names from

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[84] See also Antiphanes fr.199 for a description of a group 'all wearing tunics and trousers', possibly a chorus, with Webster 1953:62.

[85] Anaxilas is said to have ridiculed Plato and so is thought to have been writing during his lifetime, see Diog.Laert.3. 28.

[86] Maidment 1935:14 and Webster 1953:59, comparing Eupolis' *Demes*.

[87] Timocles won first prize at the Lenaea sometime between 330 and 320, *IG* II^2 2325.158

[88] Maidment 1935:13 and Rothwell 1995:217. Pickard-Cambridge 1946:163 argues against these being the names of the furies.

[89] *Asp.*245-6, *Dys.*229-32, *Epit*. 168-71, *Pk*.261-66.

[90] In addition, even within Menandrian scholarship this standardisation of identity and what it signifies about the later comic chorus has been called into question. Marshall 2002:3-17 has re-evaluated the chorus of *Dyskolos* in light of its metatheatrical capabilities, thus 'rather than being a superfluous holdover from earlier drama, Menander shows the chorus becoming part of an arsenal of metatheatrical devices used by the playwright' 2002:4. Marshall also demonstrates how the chorus may be seen as a character and integrated into the plot, 2002:15. Lape meanwhile has emphasised

fourth-century comedy e.g. Posidippus' *Builders* (fr.10) or *Women Choreuts* (fr.28), both performed at the very end of the fourth century or early third, or even a play such as Epicrates' *Chorus* (fr.8), might also provide a further, though more unreliable, body of evidence for variety in choral identity during this time.[91]

Even in Menander where our extant texts suggest a preference on his part for young male revellers, there is room for diversity within that broad category.[92] In his *Hero* the chorus is a band of huntsmen.[93] Nor should we be too wedded to the idea that his choruses were always a *komos* rather than a chorus in all its polyvalent potential, as has recently been suggested by Lape.[94] A fragment (Adesp.1147) possibly of Menander, possibly from his *Twice Deceived*, refers to χορός τις (line 127, not *komos*) appearing, two lines before a χοροῦ mark in the manuscript.[95] While culturally there is some overlap between the *komos* and the chorus, the two bodies are distinct enough to warrant a note that here too Menander is varying from what is believed to be a standardised choral identity.

With a variety of identity comes a variety of dramatic purpose and the potential for significant interactions with the characters of the plot. Despite the

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the *komos*-chorus of Menander as an embedded choral genre that can be used in the play's visual narrative, Lape 2006: 89-109. P. Köln 20546, a 3rd c. BC papyrus fragment, has a chorus being announced before a χοροῦ, an echo of the Menandrian formula though no mention of drunkenness, see Grönewald 1987:52-60.

[91] See Körte 1900:89:n.2.

[92] It is now recognised that the *Dyskolos* chorus of 'Pan-singers', or perhaps 'paian-singers', is of significance to the play's themes and a *locus* for some variation in terms of choral identity, see Marshall 2002:10n.33, Gomme-Sandbach 1973:172-3. We can also note that the consistent identity (to a degree) of the chorus in satyr play does not detract from its contribution to the drama.

[93] See Gomme-Sandbach 1973:397, Arnott 1996:38-9.

[94] Lape 2006 argues for Menander's *komos* being a significant part of the play's structure and exploration of themes, but we cannot rule out the idea he did not always frame his chorus as a *komos*.

[95] = P. Köln 243 a+b.16. See Nünlist 1993:258-70.

‘nothing to do with the plot’ rhetoric, there are a number of strong indications that actors did engage with the chorus and vice versa in comedy throughout the fourth century. Most well known, perhaps, is a reference in Aeschines to an actor, Parmenon, saying something ‘to the chorus’ (πρὸς τὸν χορόν), in a speech delivered in 346.[96] But there are more numerous indications of actor/chorus interaction in the plays themselves. In a fragment of Antidotus (writing in the third quarter of the fourth century), an individual addresses a group of men standing nearby, something which gestures towards integration: κατὰ τὴν στάσιν δὴ στάντες ἀκροάσασθέ μου (fr.2.1). We have good reason to believe the character is talking to the chorus. The reference to ‘standing in order’ is wholly appropriate for a chorus, a body that is defined by just such an orderly formation on stage. Secondly, the name of the play is Πρωτοχορός; the title cannot be translated with certainty but nonetheless supports the idea that the chorus of the play featured in its plot as well as its spectacle.[97]

Nor is the fragment of Antidotus an isolated instance of a character talking to a chorus. In fact, we can be fairly certain from the traces that have survived that this was a regular feature of comedy. Two fragments of Eubulus also seem to demonstrate continued choral integration in Middle and New Comedy: in the *Ankulion* a character addresses a plural group of women: εἶεν, γυναῖκες (fr.2)[98] and

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[96] Aeschin.*Tim.*157.

[97] E.g. the title could refer to an individual who is ‘first in the chorus’ i.e. a leader-figure, or could refer to a chorus that performs first in a competition, or wins first prize.

[98] Hunter (1983:88) argues that the individual could be addressing women inside the house; a possibility, but Hunter frequently seeks to downplay the potential involvement of the chorus.

in his *Stephanopolides*, an individual, Αἴγιδιον, is addressed by name (fr.103), and it is generally agreed that he is a member of the chorus.[99]

In Menander's *Aspis*, a probable address to the chorus has been overlooked on the strength of the assumed lack of involvement in plot progression on the part of the chorus. In line 486 (in a passage where we have either half of the trimeter line or less) we find the 2nd person plural pronoun ὑμῖν. What we know of the plot at this point in the play supports the idea that this is a direct address to the chorus. From the partial remains of the play text, Arnott concludes, 'it looks as if this is the moment when the news of Chairestratos' feigned death finally but expeditiously reaches Smikrines'.[100] It is unlikely that ὑμῖν refers to the interlocutor responsible for telling the news to Smikrines; indeed we can note a 2nd person singular pronoun a few lines later in 490 (ἐναντίον σου…) which would most likely be addressed to that interlocutor. Meanwhile, the chorus who have, after all, arrived in the centre of the action as a rowdy *komos* in order to celebrate a wedding – a wedding that it appears cannot go ahead now the groom is dead – as a plural body on stage would be the most apt object of Smikrines' address in 486.[101] The fact that the chorus would have been on stage, that in the fiction of the play they will be affected by the recent news of the death of the bridegroom, that there is an apparently unexplainable 2nd person plural pronoun, are all factors that strongly suggest (even in the highly fragmentary portion of text) Smikrines must surely be appealing to the chorus and interacting with them.

[99] Hunter 1983:198.
[100] Arnott 1979:83.
[101] See 101-48 for the goddess Chance's outline of the plot and account of the imminent marriage.

There is, in addition to these, a fragment that contains a line actually spoken by the chorus – a rare find in our evidently heavily edited texts. A papyrus from the third century[102] has a group of men being referred to by one of the speakers and called on as witnesses (Adesp.1032.18, 26), and a plural speaker, most likely the chorus, replying - ἅπ]αντες ἡμεῖς γ' οἱ παρόντες ἐνθαδε/ νομίζ]ομέν σε παρανομεῖν εἰς τὴν θεόν (24-5). The clear participation of the chorus in the action of this comedy has caused some commentators to rule out Menandrian authorship, but in light of a recalibrated approach to the later comic chorus, this need not be the case. The date of the play's first performance is unknown, but these findings are suggestive in building up the picture of choral integration nonetheless.[103]

Variety of identity, address to and speech by the chorus are clear from the evidence reviewed above. Further to this, there are fragments that suggest a continued lyric component and the continuation of the parabasis. Concerning the lyric fragments, Hunter, always erring on the side of scepticism as to the potential for lyric variety in fourth-century comedy, has, nevertheless, identified a range of

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[102] = P. Berol.1171.

[103] Some have also adduced the groups of characters in Plautus' plays as indicative of the active role in some Greek New comedies: the lawyers in his *Carthaginian*, the fishermen in *Rope* and slave-overseers in *Captivi (*Flickinger 1912:26n.2). As long as the prevailing modern attitude towards Roman Comedy consisted of framing those plays as copies of Greek 'originals', the argument that such groups must have been present in that original in order to explain their presence in the chorus-less comedy of Republican Rome, seemed logical. However, with a recognition of the originality of authors such as Plautus and their skilful handling of Greek material (but by no means their lack of originality in the way they use that material) it is far less certain to what extent these plural groups (all of which could be played by other actors not required on stage at the time, see Marshall 2006:112) do in fact stem from Greek originals. The most comprehensive statement of this is Lowe 1990:274-97. See also Maidment 1935:23, Hunter 1979:37-8, Rosivach 1983:83-93, Arnott 1994:67-8 and 2004:63n.10 (against his own thoughts in 1996:284-7). There may be a case to be made; it is interesting to note, for example, that the tone of the initial speeches of both the fishermen and the slave overseers in *Carthaginian* and *Prisoners* respectively has a certain moralising, general quality to it which, perhaps for a Roman Republican audience, was typical of a Greek chorus.

metres.[104] Some have preferred to remain ambivalent on this point despite the various metres in evidence from even our small sample of comic choral text from the fourth century.[105]

The quality of the comic chorus has also been faulted for not performing a parabasis in plays of the latter half of the fourth century but, as Revermann has refreshingly pointed out, it is, in fact, extremely likely that the parabasis did continue in later comedy citing two fragments of Alexis (frgs. 209, in eupolideans and 239), the second of which also includes an insult aimed at Boiotians and an instruction to strip, and a fragment from Astydamas' *Hector*, a satyr play (*TrGF* 60 fr.4) written in eupolideans and containing parabatic content.[106] The evidence is slim but, once again, we have no reason to believe that comic choruses did not perform a parabasis just because we don't have the text to prove it.[107]

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[104] Anaxilas *Circe* frgs.12 and 13, Alexis *Trophonoios* fr.239, Aristophanes' *Aiolosikon* frgs. 8 and 10, Eubulus frgs. 102, 103, 111, and 137, and Plato Comicus fr.167. See Hunter 1979:23-38.
[105] E.g. Rothwell 1992: 223.
[106] Astydamas' *Hector*, a satyr play (*TrGF* 60 fr.4), although with Barbieri 2002:121-32 we should recognise the fact that one level of humour is related to musical innovation; Alexis *Trophonoios* (fr.239), where a group are told to strip 'lest they look entirely Boiotian'; Alexis (fr.209); Anaxandrides *Gerontomania* (fr.10). See Revermann 2006a:278-80.
[107] Flashar 1967:154-75 and Ireland 2010:78-84. Dover 1972:195 suggested there were no parabases because of the need for comedy to be exportable while Schmid 1946:442 sees the political circumstances of the time as responsible for curtailing comedy's parabatic liberty. There is, perhaps, a further strand of argument to explore within the fragments of fourth-century comedy. Marshall has highlighted how Menander seems to have used the chorus for deliberate meta-theatrical effects in the *Dyskolos* (Marshall 2002:15-17). Lape, too, as identified metatheatrical moments in Menander's *Aspis* where Daos is able to appeal to the chorus (νοῦν ἔχετε, 287) in order to support and heighten the paratragedy of the situation and his own words (Lape 2006:99). We might add a third instance of Menander's deployment of the chorus in order to make a metatheatrical point. In his *Sicyonians*, a character (Sm[ikrines?]) enters after a χοροῦ mark in the manuscript (149/50) saying, ὄχλος εἶ φλυάρου μεστός, ὦ πόνηρε σύ. It is clear that the character's speech is directed at another individual (εἶ…σύ) entering the stage at the same time. However, considering the presence of the chorus, often referred to elsewhere in Menander as an ὄχλος (e.g. *Dys.*432), we are justified in reading a second meaning in this exclamation and have the character addressing the chorus too. A more detailed

The argument of likelihood can only take us so far, but it has still been possible to highlight the ways in which choruses were created with a specific role within the plot and that the dialogue they shared with characters, although lost for the most part, can be uncovered in some of the fragments. What now remains is to draw together the suggestions that have been made in this analysis of fourth-century comic choral text, and construct an alternative way of reading the regrettable absence of choral texts from the fourth century.

Conclusion: Reading χοροῦ

When dealing with a range of source texts as fragmentary and opaque as those for the fourth-century comic chorus are, some assumptions about theatrical norms are necessary and inevitable. For example, when faced with a fragment of a comedy which has an actor using a second person plural, one must already have some idea about the possibility of the object of address being a pair or a group, or the address being made to someone present on stage or inside the stage building. This idea of what the object of address is may be shaped by other textual details within the text of the fragment itself, or by an assumption about the likelihood of their being a choral group on stage at this point in the play. In analyses of comic fragments the options are often weighed one against the other but more often than not the determining factor will be the individual scholar's ideas about the broader dramatic and historical narrative that constitutes the fragments' context.

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investigation into the metatheatrical poetics of Menander's choruses than can be afforded here would clearly be worth pursuing, although on metatheatre in Menander see Gutzwiller 2000:102-37.

Emphasis on the importance of individual assumption in constructing any picture of dramatic development, particularly when based primarily on fragmentary material, is both obvious but at the same time essential to foreground. What has allowed this chapter to push back on traditional tracings of choral history is a decision (based on thorough scrutiny of previous scholarship's assumptions and rationale for supposing decline to be a fact) to begin this new narrative from a completely different starting place i.e. an assumption that there was no decline in quantity and quality of the comic chorus throughout the fourth century. In doing this, there is no difference to those scholars who begin their analysis of the fragments with the opposite view. As has been seen, beginning from the assumption that poets continued to use the chorus in a similar way to those of the fifth century, fresh perspectives on old texts (and absences of text) can, and have, come to light. Of course, it would be an equally reductive approach to insist that there was no change at all and it is in the description of those changes, innovations (in as far as we can tell) and developments that a recalibrated picture of the fourth-century comic chorus comes into view.

But first we can state the clear continuities of comic choral practice. In terms of dramatic structure and basic action, the comic chorus has remained unchanged: it is present, sings and dances at multiple points throughout the play, addresses and is addressed by individual characters and can still be responsible for some biting personal invective. In terms of what the chorus performs, as far as can be told from our partial texts, they spoke as characters integrated into the plot and setting of the play, engaged in literary parody, made use of the potential for metatheatre specific

to dramatic choral performance and self-consciously played with the broadly political connotations intrinsic to choral identity (e.g. relationship between dramatic choral performance and Athenian citizenship). The changes that we can identify can only be cautiously set out; our sample of material is so slim that comparison to dramatic or choral 'norms' of the fifth century is almost guaranteed to be partial or incorrect. What we have identified, particularly clear in Aristophanes' *Assemblywomen*, is the potential for poets to play with choral structures, and make the metatheatre that relies on audience awareness of choral conventions (both on and off stage) more sophisticated and overt.

With this positive, multi-faceted picture of choral culture in mind, the reading of χοροῦ that was outlined in section one above might seem all the more persuasive. The χοροῦ mark should be read as indicative of the demands of readers of these texts as opposed to being representative of what was being performed on stage. So long and obscure is the history of textual transmission that we cannot even say with any certainty which readers these kinds of texts were intended for, if indeed there was only one reading audience. We know that some choral text was recorded separately from the spoken sections of comedies but the demands of the market for such copies were such that they did not circulate widely. Reading χοροῦ as an indication of the displacement of text, rather than the non-existence of text and/or performance is, therefore, preferable to current orthodoxy.

Theories as to the motives of the figures of 'book-sellers' or anthology makers can quickly become so speculative as to render them more unhelpful than helpful. However, with the recognition that the demands of those requiring texts

were entirely separate from the demands of an audience or the desires of the poet, we are able to move beyond the negative readings of χοροῦ and see the choral text that does survive in a clearer light.

PART III:

CHORAL DISCOURSE

Introduction to Part III:

Choral Discourse

In the first part of this thesis, the focus of enquiry has been the evaluation of the activity and function of the dramatic chorus in fourth-century Athens with the enquiry set against a backdrop of the 'narrative of decline' that characterises constructions of dramatic choral development to this day in scholarship. The second part of the thesis takes a different approach to the question of how we might view the dramatic chorus in fourth-century Athens. Here we shift focus from the dramatic choruses to the images[1] of the chorus in texts written by fourth-century figures. The topic of choral imagery and its rhetorical or associative effects is relatively unexplored (or executed on an *ad hoc* basis) in contemporary scholarship and there remains much to be uncovered in the metaphors and similes that call an image of a chorus to the ancient mind. While some choral references may function as purely poetic ornamentation or as familiar visual parallels for the audience, many act as a conduit for shared social, poetic and political ideas. The range and number of ritual, literary and historical locations for choral performance mean that any one image may resonate in a number of areas. It is by being sensitive to the potential for choral references to summon multiple resonances that further levels of meaning in a text can be unlocked.

[1] I use the term 'image' as shorthand for references to imagined ('metaphysical') or real ('physical') choruses, similes and metaphors.

In this latter part of the thesis, then, I make some inroads into a more systematic elucidation of choral images. Aside from more generally increasing our understanding of fourth-century texts by appreciating the potency of the choral image, by taking a closer look at these choral images and the way that they are framed in different authors and works it will be possible to gain a better idea of how choruses were viewed and valued in the fourth century. In this way, the discussion that follows adds to one of the overall aims of this thesis by implicitly raising the following question: if these contemporary authors, writing throughout the fourth century, reached as frequently as they do for choral images, can the notion that fourth-century dramatists were not able or did not want to do the same with performing choruses be sustained?

Plato is a key figure in all this, not only as a result of the uniquely substantial discussion of the chorus in his *Laws* but also because of his importance in many modern discussions of the chorus in antiquity more broadly.[2] However, it is important to recognise that he is one of many authors in the fourth century engaging with choral imagery and its related nexus of associations. The next chapter covers the range of authors in the fourth century that deploy choral images. As already mentioned, this is a rich area for future study and the chapter confines itself to exploring three kinds of association explored by fourth-century authors. After that, I turn to Plato's works in particular and pursue a wide-ranging (but by no means comprehensive) review of his choral strategy, highlighting some of the factors that seem to shape his presentation of the societal role of the chorus.

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[2] Mullen 1982:53-7, Lonsdale 1993:21-43, Kowalzig 2004:39-66, and now Prauscello 2011:136-55 and 2013:257-77 and Peponi 2013b *passim.*

The primary function of this second section, then, is to provide a nuanced picture of the intellectual engagement with choral discourse taking place at the same time as the creation and performance of the dramatic choruses analysed in the first part of the thesis. But there is a secondary purpose in this second half, already alluded to above in the form of a question raised by the juxtaposition of part one and part two. We can recognise that the choral imagery of fourth-century literature differs from the choral imagery found in works written much later in (for example, the literature of the so-called 'Second Sophistic') by virtue of the fact that we can be certain 'real-life' choral performances were frequent throughout this period, and the institutional support given for their production considerable. The way fourth-century authors use choral imagery, then, can legitimately be set alongside a vigorous choral culture and the readings of those images can help nuance our understanding of what that 'real-life' choral culture was like.

The implicit question of the relationship between (to put it fairly crudely) the choral 'imaginary' and choral 'reality', however, needs some careful handling. While the influence of contemporary dramatic choruses must certainly have contributed to the nexus of choral imagery and associations (and there are some concrete examples of this, e.g. Pl.*Prt.*315b2-8), we must be wary of suggesting that the testimony from the authors in this second part might have a direct bearing on how we can construct the historical activity of the dramatic chorus. Rather, this exploration of choral associations and images demonstrates how a reassessed anti-decline model of choral development fits with an intellectual culture that is clearly deploying the chorus as a potent idea. It is enough to place both kinds of enquiry

side-by-side and allow new readings of these texts, some familiar and some less familiar, to raise questions about some of the assumptions (necessary when dealing with a period that lacks significant bodies of source text) made about dramatic choral culture in the fourth century.

In order to accommodate a wider view of fourth-century choral culture, some parameters of the enquiry from parts one and two of the thesis can be relaxed. The two boundaries that emerge as acceptably permeable with respect to this section's aims are geography and genre. As regards the way the chorus was viewed and thought about in Athens, it would be absurd to suggest only Athenian choruses exerted an influence on authors' conceptions of 'chorus', even for authors such as Plato, who were born in the city and lived there for most of their lives.[3] As recognised in the introduction to this thesis, choral performance was in some ways a Panhellenic phenomenon. Even in the choral texts themselves we can identify the influences of a variety of choral genres from various parts of the Greek world.[4] In terms of the geographical breadth of Plato's choruses, the influence from beyond Athens is, at times, obvious. Clearest of all is the adoption of Spartan practices in the building of Magnesia's choral institutions in the *Laws*.[5] Also identifiable is the impression made on Plato by Egypt, particularly with reference to its ability to

[3] This is demonstrably not the case, see Morrow 1960:17-73.

[4] On fifth-century tragic choral texts' interaction with lyric genres see Swift 2010 *passim*.

[5] The issue of the importance of a leader-figure will be discussed below, (see p.238-48 and 263-8) but at this point we can note how a particular emphasis on a chorus' leader is apparent in many of Plato's choral images, seemingly echoing a similar preoccupation evident from, admittedly much earlier, Spartan lyric poetry. We know considerably less about Cretan culture and the same goes for its role in Plato's presentation of choral culture in Greece. The similarities highlighted by the characters in the *Laws* between Crete and Sparta in terms of outlook (particularly in their focus on war) and insularity seem to suggest that we might take the two nations as, broadly, analogous. See Morrow 1960:17-73. For detailed account of the influence of Sparta in the *Laws* see Powell 1994:273-321.

maintain stability over the course of thousands of years. In broadening the focus of enquiry, then, we are justified in accepting that the images that are reviewed draw on geographically diverse models.

In addition, many images of choruses are impossible to categorise generically, a fact that necessitates the relaxation of the second parameter in this part - genre. In performance, the context would have defined to a greater or lesser extent the genre of chorus in question and this frame would have shaped audience responses accordingly.[6] Time and time again a reference is made simply to 'a chorus' in the literary sources below and our only recourse is to allow for the existence of a generically 'unmarked' chorus that represented a set of characteristics common to all choruses. This kind of 'unmarked' chorus and what characteristics it might represent is an important part of choral culture as presented to us by ancient sources. That being said, it is one of the aims of this thesis to highlight the variety of choral genre in society and so, where possible the genre of chorus will be foregrounded. In this way it will be possible to demonstrate that the variety in the choral culture of Athens was echoed in its literary choral discourse.

[6] See Ford 2011:87.

5.

Images of the Chorus in the Fourth Century

In this chapter we see how a chorus can be deployed by authors in three ways. First we see how a reference to a chorus in a speech, a work of history or of philosophy appears to draw on the chorus' central place in ritual activities. The consequent attitudes of a kind of reverence that come with such a role in society are seen to be used for a rhetorical impact. Next we see how choral images interact with a tradition of literary motifs, exploiting both the linguistic resonances of connecting with that tradition (and in some cases, subverting it) and also drawing on more substantial motifs that exist in archaic literature. Lastly, we can observe how choral images can remind audiences of shared experiences connected to taking part in choral performances, or of observing the visual spectacle of those performances, and using that shared experience to activate or elicit particular responses.

The Image of the Chorus and Ideas of Reverence

The suggestion that some choral performance was viewed within a clear religious framework is uncontroversial.[1] It will be unsurprising, then, to note that a

[1] See Martin 2009:5-10 for a measured appraisal of how we might talk about 'religion' and related concepts of sacrosanctity and Kowalzig 2007:1-12 for an outline of the various religious resonances of the chorus. It has been rightly pointed out that many aspects of festival culture should not be automatically described or thought of as 'religious'. Scullion (2012:217-45) has used a number of fourth-century sources to argue against the notion of choral sacrosanctity with regard to the *choregia*. The problem with Scullion's approach is that he equates the attitudes towards the institution of

fundamental purpose of choral performance as a means of divine communication and worship on behalf of a community, a role that is highlighted in our earliest sources, is confirmed in a number of fourth-century texts. In cultic hymns of the fourth century, there was a continued value in using a technique that is seen in some of the Homeric hymns, namely the invocation of a divine chorus and either an implicit or explicit comparison with the choral dance the singers of the hymn were currently engaged in. We see it clearly in Aristonous' *Hymn to Hestia*,[2] performed some time between 350 and 325: the first half of the hymn gives a picture of Apollo surrounded by the gods that is then echoed in the final lines by the singers of the hymn referring to themselves in the first person, promising to continue dancing around Hestia's throne. Similarly, Philodamus' *Paean to Dionysus*, performed for the Delphic festival of the Theoxenia in 340/339, is filled with self-reflexive choral language (8-9, 19-20, 58-62, 131-6, 144-7) binding the invoked divine choral performance to that of the singers.[3]

Less certain is the extent to which the cultic function of some choruses transferred itself so as to give any chorus the potential to be cast as ideologically 'sacrosanct' in some way, and what responses that transferred sacrosanctity might

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choregia and attitudes towards choral performance *tout court*. Even as he points out the rhetorical lengths Demosthenes goes to in likening the role of *choregos* to a sacred duty similar to that of a magistrate, Scullion himself is persuaded by Demosthenes' arguments that *choregos* and chorus are indistinguishable entities and objects for view in fourth-century Athens. While the *choregia* surely had an impact on how the choruses of festival were viewed by audiences, it is certain that many aspects of choral performance remained entirely distinct from the associations of the *choregia*. While the *choregia* may not have been viewed as a sacred office (as is indicated in Demosthenes' *Against Leptines* 26-7), choral performance seems to have maintained strong associations with the sacred (on this strong sense of 'the sacred' see Scullion 2005:112-115).

[2] Furley-Bremer 2001:I.116-8, II.38-45.

[3] Furley-Bremer 2001:I.121-8, II.52-84.

have elicited. And yet, we see fourth-century authors appealing to the potential for this kind of extension of sacrosanctity to choruses beyond those specifically described as celebrating and communicating with the divine. Significant shaping of the ideological import of the chorus as a sacred offering to the gods is clear in Demosthenes' *Against Meidias*. What is more, the orator highlights the possible practical impact of this sacrosanctity, something that provides us with an example of how we should see Athenians generally viewing and valuing the chorus.

One of the key difficulties that Demosthenes faces in this speech is that he is prosecuting Meidias for a crime that is not, in fact, strictly codified in law. As Demosthenes was taking up his place in the theatre as *choregos* at the City Dionysia in 348, Meidias appears to have accosted him and punched him in the face. At the meeting of the Assembly that followed the festival, Demosthenes tells us he raised the matter and secured from the people a judgement in his favour that condemned Meidias' behaviour.[4] Demosthenes has to deploy considerable rhetorical strategy in order to justify a prosecution that could all too easily be viewed as purely the concern of two private individuals and nothing to do with the *demos*. One of the ways he does this, as has been noted by a number of scholars, is to equate the status of the *choregos* with that of the chorus,[5] an equation that perhaps was not a natural

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[4] On the procedure of προβολή and Demosthenes' presentation of it, see MacDowell 1990:13-23. On whether this speech was actually delivered or merely drafted, see MacDowell 1990:24-8, Ober 1994:90-2 and Wilson 2000:357n.37.

[5] 'Demosthenes attributes a bigger role to religion than was required by the charge', Martin 2009:16. For Demosthenes' likening of the *choregos* to magistrates and priests, as well as choreuts, and his gradual introduction of the crime of impiety, see Martin 2009: 22-25 and more generally on the role of religion in the rhetoric of the speech (15-48).

one in fourth-century Athens. To that end, the orator reminds his audience of the place choruses hold in their society:

> You know of course that you hold all these performances of choruses and hymns for the god, not only in accordance with the laws about the Dionysia, but also in accordance with the oracles, in all of which you will find it ordained for the city, from Delphi and from Dodona alike, to establish choruses in accordance with tradition, to make streets smell of sacrifice, and to wear crowns.[6]
>
> *Against Medias* 51-2

The oracles that are then read out call for the establishment of choruses not only for Dionysus, but also for Zeus (Διὸς ὑπάτος), Heracles, Apollo Protector (Ἀπόλλων προστατήριος), for Apollo of the streets (Ἀπόλλων ἄγυιος), Leto and Artemis (52-3). By setting out the sacrosanctity of choral performance in this way, emphasising the variety of gods in whose honour the choruses will be set up, Demosthenes is able to begin the process of magnifying the crime of assault committed against him by Meidias, framing as he does the role of *choregos* as a religious one and thus making the assault by Meidias a crime of impiety (a γραφὴ ὕβρεως or ἀσεβείας). Scholars have rightly judged the connection between *choregos* and religious office that Demosthenes strives for (particularly at 54-5) to be highly suspect and unlikely to have convinced an Athenian audience. However, the sacrosanct quality of the chorus that Demosthenes highlights in the first part of his speech cannot be suspected in the same way, as it forms the basis for the less convincing claims he goes on to make.

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[6] ἴστε γὰρ δήπου τοῦθ’ ὅτι τοὺς χοροὺς ὑμεῖς ἅπαντας τούτους καὶ τοὺς ὕμνους τῷ θεῷ ποιεῖτε, οὐ μόνον κατὰ τοὺς νόμους τοὺς περὶ τῶν Διονυσίων, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ τὰς μαντείας, ἐν αἷς ἁπάσαις ἀνῃρημένον εὑρήσετε τῇ πόλει, ὁμοίως ἐκ Δελφῶν καὶ ἐκ Δωδώνης, χοροὺς ἱστάναι κατὰ τὰ πάτρια καὶ κνισᾶν ἀγυιὰς καὶ στεφανηφορεῖν. All translations of *Against Meidias* from MacDowell 1990.

If his audience did not believe the chorus to be a sacrosanct activity in the first place, there would be no rhetorical purpose in beginning his argument with establishing that fact. The connection from the oracles, too, seems to be clear.[7]

In terms of the possible practical impact of this sacrosanctity, Demosthenes relates two anecdotes that are relevant. In these he seeks to demonstrate how a choral performance in Athens had an inviolable quality to it, in that once begun the performance should and would not be interrupted, even when there might be good cause to do so. It is well known that, for most of Athens' competitive choral performances, the members of the chorus had to be citizens,[8] but these rules were, apparently, sometimes disregarded, as Demosthenes describes. First he gives the example of Sannion, a particularly experienced tragic chorus trainer and dancer but a man who had been convicted of evading military service (58-9). As someone who had suffered disenfranchisement, Sannion would not have been allowed into any of the sacred precincts, including the theatre of Dionysus. The competing *choregoi* would have been well within their rights to perform an *apagoge*, arresting the man themselves.[9] Similarly, one Aristeides of the tribe Oineis had suffered *atimia* and yet continued to act as a leading choral dancer in his tribe's circular choruses (60). In both cases, Demosthenes points out how neither man's performances were

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[7] The genuineness of the oracles is affirmed by their less-than-perfect connection to Demosthenes' arguments: 'The fact that they are only marginally relevant helps to reassure us that the texts are genuine, since a forger inventing oracles for this speech would have composed texts which fitted the speech more exactly', MacDowell 1990:270.

[8] At the Lenaea concessions might be made for non-Athenian *choregoi* and choreuts; see Wilson 2000:80-81, and 340n.131 for the possible relationship between the professionalisation of theatre and tighter legislation on foreign choreuts.

[9] For what we can discern about the procedures for imposing fines and/or interrupting a choral performance, see MacDowell 1989:72-7.

interrupted, 'so great is the forbearance arising from piety which may be seen in every one of you' (τοσοῦτον τῆς εὐσεβείας ἐν ἑκάστῳ τις ἂν ὑμῶν ἴδοι τὸ συγκεχωρηκὸς, 59).

Elsewhere, in a Spartan context, Xenophon's inclusion of the detail of choral performance encourages the reader to infer something about the Spartans' attitudes towards festival and toward choral performance particularly, namely that, like any religious act, it should not be interrupted. In the *Hellenica*, he describes how the messengers bearing the news of Sparta's defeat at Leuctra happened to arrive in the middle of a choral performance at the festival of Gymnopaediae.[10] Despite over half of the Spartiate fighters being killed in this one battle, the choral performance was not stopped and the women were ordered not to cry out.[11] The parallel with what Demosthenes describes would strongly suggest that choral inviolability during performance was a resonance that could readily be elicited by authors in the fourth century.

In terms of whether we assume such scruples would be observed in all instances of choral performance (certainly in the fourth century, if not beyond) as opposed to being an ideal mode of behaviour that held little weight in 'real-life', it may be wise to admit some scepticism. Xenophon may mean to emphasise the piety of the Spartans in not allowing their overwhelming grief to mar a festival

[10] Γενομένων δὲ τούτων, ὁ μὲν εἰς τὴν Λακεδαίμονα ἀγγελῶν τὸ πάθος ἀφικνεῖται γυμνοπαιδιῶν τε οὔσης τῆς τελευταίας καὶ τοῦ ἀνδρικοῦ χοροῦ ἔνδον ὄντος· οἱ δὲ ἔφοροι ἐπεὶ ἤκουσαν τὸ πάθος, ἐλυποῦντο μέν, ὥσπερ, οἶμαι, ἀνάγκη· τὸν μέντοι χορὸν οὐκ ἐξήγαγον, ἀλλὰ διαγωνίσασθαι εἴων. καὶ τὰ μὲν ὀνόματα πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους ἑκάστου τῶν τεθνεώτων ἀπέδοσαν· προεῖπαν δὲ ταῖς γυναιξὶ μὴ ποιεῖν κραυγήν, ἀλλὰ σιγῇ τὸ πάθος φέρειν. *Hell.*VI.4.16.1-8

[11] See below p.220 for a further resonance in this choral image, one that plays on the juxtaposition of festival and war, and Gray 2011:197, who focuses on the impact this has on the reader's impression of the Spartan leaders.

celebration. Demosthenes, too, wishes to heighten Meidias' crime by demonstrating its singularity and impiety, even though instances of interrupting choral performance may have been more common than we can know. However, the potential for authors to play on the idealised quality of sacrosanctity is clear. We can adduce an example of this tactic in Plato's *Laws* and the Athenian stranger's description of festivals in Athens.

> But it is hardly an exaggeration to say that in our corner of the world this is exactly what happens in pretty nearly every state. When an official has performed a public sacrifice, a chorus – or rather a mob of choruses – arrives and takes up position not far from the altar and sometimes right next to it. Then they swamp the holy offerings with a flood of absolute blasphemy. With words and rhythms and music of the most morbid kind they work up the emotions of their audience to a tremendous pitch…[12] *Laws* 800c5-d4

The power of the image is remarkable, not only because of the juxtaposition of a sacred site (a festival) and unholy, blasphemous speech, but because the agents of the blasphemy are the festival choruses themselves. As we have seen, the understanding that choruses played a key role in mortals' worship and communication with the gods was deeply held in ancient Greek society, and it is by playing on this understanding that the image becomes far more violent than if the Athenian were to describe a single actor or perhaps even a priest performing a similar kind of 'blasphemy'. The chorus had a unique power in festival celebration to attract the beneficial attentions of the gods and the enactment of the opposite

[12] Ἐν τοίνυν τοῖς παρ' ἡμῖν τόποις τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ταῖς πόλεσι γιγνόμενον ὡς ἔπος είπεῖν σχεδὸν όλίγου πάσαις· δημοσίᾳ γάρ τινα θυσίαν ὅταν άρχή τις θύσῃ, μετὰ ταῦτα χορὸς ούχ εἷς άλλὰ πλῆθος χορῶν ἥκει, καὶ στάντες ού πόρρω τῶν βωμῶν άλλὰ παρ' αύτοὺς ἐνίοτε, πᾶσαν βλασφημίαν τῶν ὶερῶν καταχέουσιν, ῥήμασί τε καὶ ῥυθμοῖς καὶ γοωδεστάταις ἁρμονίαις συντείνοντες τὰς τῶν άκροωμένων ψυχάς, All translations of Plato are from Cooper 1997 (ed.).

function is particularly potent when performed by the traditionally sacrosanct choral body.[13] Once again, then, we see how the use of a chorus in an image activates associations of particular sanctity and the way in which an author can utilise these evoked associations in order to make a strong rhetorical point.

There are occasions when the reference or image of the chorus is so brief we can only gain an impression of its effect, although to Plato's audience that effect may have been felt more easily. One image that is particularly perplexing is found in book eight of the *Republic*. In the discussion of various political constitutions, there is an extended image where the transformation of oligarchy to democracy is described as if the soul were a city being captured and corrupted (559e2-561a5). Those who propel the action of overthrow in this description are the 'boasting arguments' (οἱ ἀλαζόνες λόγοι). Socrates describes how these λόγοι remove all virtues from the soul of the oligarchic man/city via means of 'great and costly rites' (μεγάλοισι τέλεσι), after which point these same λόγοι lead home a host of vices attended by a chorus who sing encomia and call these vices flattering names.

> Having thus emptied and purged these [virtues] from the soul of the one they've [the λόγοι] possessed and initiated in splendid rites, they proceed to return insolence, anarchy, extravagance, and shamelessness from exile in a blaze of torch-light, wreathing them in garlands and accompanying them with a vast chorus of followers.[14] *Republic* 560d8-e4

[13] We see a comparable example from the very end of the fourth century in the descriptions in Demochares and Duris of the honours awarded to Demetrius Poliorcetes. The horror of the new ruler's instigating something akin to ruler cult is made all the more abhorrent by including the detail that he set up choruses for himself, see *FGrHist* 75 fr.4(2) with Parker 1996:258-63 and Wilson 2003: 182 and 192n71, and *FGrHist* 76 fr.10(27) with *PMG* fr.845.

[14] Τούτων δέ γέ που κενώσαντες καὶ καθήραντες τὴν τοῦ κατεχομένου τε ὑπ' αὐτῶν καὶ τελουμένου ψυχὴν μεγάλοισι τέλεσι, τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο ἤδη ὕβριν καὶ ἀναρχίαν καὶ ἀσωτίαν καὶ ἀναίδειαν λαμπρὰς μετὰ πολλοῦ χοροῦ κατάγουσιν ἐστεφανωμένας, ἐγκωμιάζοντες καὶ ὑποκοριζόμενοι.

The language at first might suggest mystical initiation; the soul of the young man is 'held' (κατέχομαι), a word used for inspiration, while both τελουμένου and τέλεσι allude to mystic initiation rites themselves. While a chorus can sometimes have a role in the performance of such a ritual,[15] I would argue that it is the chorus' understood connection to celebration that is being exploited.[16] Not only is the city suffering a terrible defeat but that defeat is being celebrated with an honour i.e. choral performance, that is sacred. The incongruity is decidedly pointed, and made so by the utilisation of a choral image.

The Image of the Chorus and Literary Motifs

The ubiquity of choral images in archaic and Classical literature means that we are able to frame many of those found in fourth-century literature as engaging with a traditional literary trope. The image of heavenly bodies engaged in harmonious cosmic choral dance (χορεία) fits into this tradition, and is something we find in fragments of archaic pottery, poetry and prose,[17] as well as in the fourth-century *Timaeus* of Plato (40c3-d3) and also in the *Epinomis* (982e3-6), a pseudo-Platonic work possibly written shortly after Plato's death in the early 340s by one of

[15] Cf. *Euthyd.*277d-e, *Phdr.*250b-c, *Smp.*210a.

[16] See Heath 1988:180-93. For an alternative interpretation see Seaford 2013:270-1.

[17] See e.g. a 'knuckle-bone' vase (*astragalos*) from the workshop of Sotades that depicts a chorus of ten young women dancing in a circle on the upper register of the vessel (British Museum E 804. c.460-450) with Ferrari 2008:2-7. In prose see e.g. Petron DK 16[6] and Philolaus DK 44 A16. For the 'cluster' of star-chorus images in the choral odes of fifth-century tragedy (S.*Ant.*1146-53, E.*El.*365-7, *Ion* 1074-86, *Phaethon* 66; Critias *TrGF* 43 fr.4; *TrGF* Adesp.fr.89a) see Csapo 2008:267-80. For the history of the cosmic dance up until the time of Plato see Miller 1986:19-55, Whitmarsh 2004:388-91 and Franklin 2006:53-63.

his pupils, Philip of Opus.[18] In this sense, the use of choral images may simply be a way of looking back and gesturing to a literary tradition.

Some choral images that we find in Middle and New Comedy do not only engage with that literary tradition but also subvert it for comic effect. In two plays of the comic poet Diphilus we find choral images that, at first reading, edge towards the surreal.

ἄριστον <u>ἐπεχόρευσεν</u> ἐκλελεγμένον, εἴ τι νέον ἢ ποθεινόν· ὀστρέων γένη παντοδαπά, λοπάδων παρατεταγμένη φάλαγξ…	A choice lunch danced in, including Everything that's unusual or desirable: every variety Of shellfish; casserole-dishes drawn up in battle-order... [19]
	Diphilus fr.43.1-3

{Α.} τὸ δειπνάριον ἀνθηρὸν ἦν, γλαφυρὸν σφόδρα, φακῆς κατ' ἄνδρα τρύβλιον μεστὸν μέγα.	**A.** The little dinner was splendid, very elegant: A big bowl full of lentil soup for each man.
{Β.} πρώτιστον οὐκ ἀνθηρόν. {Α.} ἐπὶ ταύτῃ γέρων εἰς τὸ μέσον ἐπεχόρευσε σαπέρδης μέγας…	**B.** For starters, that's not very splendid. **A.** After this, A big *saperde* [fish] abruptly danced into our midst…[20]
	Diphilus fr.64.1-4

The application of choral language to the entrance or exit of food is moderately baffling. It may be that the oddity of the image of one's lunch or a giant fish entering a room as if dancing in a chorus was to be a source of humour in itself. It may also be that the reference to choric movement plays on the idealised, sublime kind of movement seen in cosmic choral images, and hence fits in with a more general trend

[18] On the authorship and date of *Epinomis* see Tarán 1975:3-19, 115-139 and Brisson 2005:21-3.
[19] Trans. Olson 2008
[20] Trans. Olson 2006.

of poets like Diphilus using elevated language for comic effect.[21] The fact that a poetic metaphor of a choral dance was used to describe a *saperde*, apparently a rather coarse and unpleasant fish,[22] adds to the impact of the incongruously elevated tone.[23]

We see a similar technique of deploying a choral image as part of a parodic description in a fragment from earlier in the fourth century.

> ἄλλοι δὲ καὶ δὴ βακχίου παλαιγενοῦς
> ἀφρῷ †σκιὰ καὶ† χρυσοκόλλητον δέπας
> μεστόν, κύκλῳ χορεῦον, ἕλκουσι γνάθοις
> ὀλκοῖς ἀπαύστοις, παντελῶς ἐστραμμένον
> τἄνω κάτω δεικνύντες.
>
> Others use jaws that never cease to work
> To drain a goblet inlaid with gold, which dances in a circle
> And is full of ancient-born, Bacchic liquid
> With foam †and a shadow†, and exhibit it turned
> Completely upside-down.[24] Antiphanes fr.234

In this fragment of Antiphanes (who is alleged to have begun his career as a comic poet in the late 380s),[25] we see familiar elevated language to describe a feasting scene, but the choral image seems to be applied impressionistically to the shimmer

[21] This technique is noted by Gomme-Sandbach 1973 on *Dyskolos* lines 946-53, who also cite earlier comic poets and their descriptions of scenes of feasting or drinking e.g. Plato Comicus fr.205, Antiphanes fr.55. See Hunter 1983:166-7 for comedy's indiscriminate use of 'paratragic' and 'paradithyrambic' elements.
[22] On this fish's famous pungency see Olson-Sens 2000:93 and 165.
[23] We also see a similar juxtaposition of choral language and baser foodstuffs in a satyr play by the Hellenistic tragic poet Lycophron: ὅ τ' ἀλιτήριος/ καὶ δημόκοινος ἐπεχόρευε δαψιλής/ θέρμος, πενήτων καὶ τρικλίνου συμπότης, 'And the criminal and plentiful common lupine, which drinks with poor men at their parties, came dancing in' *TrGF* 100 fr.2.8-10.
[24] Trans. Olson 2009.
[25] Antiphanes *TrGF* T2.

of a gold-spangled goblet.[26] The density of the image and the absence of context makes interpretation difficult, but the vision of a sparkling goblet performing some kind of choral dance as it is passed around the diners is clear.[27] The function of the choral imagery here, then, is to tie the tenor of the description to a recognisable high-poetic oeuvre and subvert that allusion by applying it to an account of comic revelry.

Such choral references, used in line with a tradition of using choral imagery (and occasionally playing with that tradition) do not resonate only on a linguistic level. References to a traditional motif of divine choral performance might carry with it a number of other resonances. Although often summoned as a means to evoke divine harmony and happiness, the image of a chorus of one or more divinities has the potential to act as a less light-hearted paradigm. In archaic literature, the happiness of choral activity can often be the site for the seizure of a beautiful *parthenos* from the midst of her contemporaries e.g. Aphrodite in the guise of a Phrygian princess in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (117-20), just as is also seen amongst heroic mortals e.g. *Iliad* 16.179–83.[28] The victim is often marked out by superior beauty, skill and stature, qualities that act as justifications for the

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[26] See also Antiphanes fr.172.4-5, εἶτ' ἐπεισῆγεν χορείαν ἢ τράπεζαν δευτέραν,/ καὶ παρέθηκε γέμουσαν πέμμασι παντοδαποῖς, 'Then after that he'd bring in a choreia or a second table and he'd set it beside us, loaded with pastries of all kinds' (trans. Olson 2011). What χορεία refers to here is obscure, but it is interesting that this fragment contains both trochaic tetrameters and dactylo-epitrites, see Hunter 1993:19.

[27] We might possibly see that the cup as choreut shares its choral association with those drinking from it, engaged as they are in a kind of sympotic χορεία.

[28] Frequently mortal choreuts are compared to divine counterparts e.g. Hom.*Od*.6.102-8, B.*Dith*.17.

perilous gaze of admiration.[29] The frame of choral dance, then, traditionally carried a secondary association with the vulnerability of choral leader-figures on account of their prominence in performance.[30] What is interesting is that the potential for the occurrence of rape in a choral setting, exemplified in myth, is picked up and employed with significance in many New Comedies of the fourth century.[31] Not only is the ancient paradigm implicitly and explicitly alluded to, but the connected associations with the rape motif are brought to bear on the construction of the world of New Comedy as well as the themes of the individual plays.[32]

In *The Arbitration* (*Epitrepontes*), a young man named Charisios has returned home from a short trip to find Pamphile, his wife of five months, pregnant. Assuming the child cannot be his, Charisios has moved to his friend's house. Through the machinations of his slave Onesimos, the truth eventually comes out that at the last celebration of the Tauropolia, Charisios had raped his wife-to-be, and the child is, in fact his. Choral dance is foregrounded as the context for the rape that takes place[33] and, furthermore, Menander alludes to the archaic rape motif paradigm by having Charisios' mistress Habrotonon describe Pamphile in the same way as epic and lyric poets describe the leaders of the chorus who are potential or actual victims of

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[29] See Calame 1997:72-4 for the typical attributes of choral leaders. For paradigms of the archaic choral rape motif see Lonsdale 1993:228-32.

[30] This threat to prominent individuals is, interestingly, also found in connection with a different kind of leadership, the Athenian *choregos*; see Thompson 1950:337 for three names of ostracised men who may have acted as *choregoi*, one of which (Socrates of Anagyrous) is certain.

[31] On how we are to understand the term 'rape' in the context of Ancient Greece see Harris 2004:41-83. This resonance might also be read in the early sections of Plato's *Phaedrus* where reference is made to Oreithyia's rape by Boreas (229b5-7) – perhaps from a chorus, see 230b9-c1 – shortly before the chorus of cicadas are described (230c3). On the importance of the setting, and a reading that brings the relevance of the chorus of cicadas to the fore, see Ferrari 1987: 1-34.

[32] See below p.220-1 for further discussion of historical aspects of the choral references in Menander.

[33] *Epitrep.*1117–22. Similarly, choral dance is the location for the rape in *Phasma* 93–104.

rape.[34]

> **Ἀβρ.** ούδὲν οἶδα· πλὴν ἰδοῦσά γε
> γνοίην ἂν αὐτήν. εὐπρεπής τις, ὦ θεοί·
> καὶ πλουσίαν ἔφασάν τινα. **Ον.** αὕτη 'στιν τυχόν. 485
> **Ἀβρ.** ούκ οἶδ'· ἐπλανήθη γὰρ μεθ' ἡμῶν οὖσ' ἐκεῖ,
> εἶτ' ἐξαπίνης κλάουσα προστρέχει μόνη,
> τίλλουσ' ἑαυτῆς τὰς τρίχας, καλὸν πάνυ
> καὶ λεπτόν, ὦ θεοί, ταραντῖνον σφόδρα
> ἀπολωλεκυῖ'· ὅλον γὰρ ἐγεγόνει ῥάκος. 490
>
> **Habrotonon** I don't know anything – except I'd recognise
> Her if I saw her. Gods! She's pretty, and
> Rich, too, they said **Onesimos** Perhaps it's *her*.
> **Habrotonon** I don't know.
> She was there with us, and wandered off.
> Then all at once she ran up by herself,
> Tearing her hair and sobbing. Gods! Her cloak,
> So filmy and so lovely, was quite ruined,
> All torn to rags. [35]
>
> *The Arbitration* (*Epitrepontes*) 483 - 490

Habrotonon highlights the victim's beauty, wealth and fine clothes – all familiar markers for female chorus leaders and rape victims.[36] What the inclusion of a choral context for the rape does, then, is to connect Pamphile's rape to a paradigm, familiar from epic, which serves to assure us of a traditional (divine, even) sanction on the events. For all its domestic detail, the comedy of Menander relies on a near mythical adherence to certain elements of plot structure.[37] One of these elements is the common, expected ending of a play consisting of the marriage or reunion of a young couple. The sanction on the rape motif in New Comedy, provided by the allusion to

[34] See Hom.*Od*.6.15-16, *PMG* 1.54-9, 3.68.
[35] Translations of Menander all from Arnott 1979-2000 with minor modifications.
[36] See Bathrellou 2012:173-4.
[37] On convention and variation in New Comic plots see Zagagi 1994:15-45, and Hunter 1985:59-82 and 59-61 on the *Epitrepontes* and its Roman 'version' the *Hecyra*.

an epic paradigm, acts within that quasi-mythical world where Fate is a ruling factor and human aberration (in New Comedy, abandonment of proper self-control on the part of the men) is foretold and, sometimes, seen to be almost inevitable.[38]

There is a yet more sophisticated allusion to the archaic choral rape motif in *The Girl with Shaven Head* (*Perikeiromene* 820–24), which contains a description of a particular item of clothing worn by the rape victim, which depicts a girls' chorus.

> **Πα.** ἔχοις ἂν είπεῖν; **Γλ.** [πορφυρ]ᾶ ζώνη τις ἦν. 820
> **Πα.** ἦν γάρ. **Γλ.** <u>χορός τε παρθένων</u> ἐνταῦθά τις.
> **Μο.** οὔκουν συνῆκας; **Γλ.** δ[ιαφαν]ές τε χλ[ανί]διον
> χρυσῆ τε μίτρα. πάντα [καθ' ἓ]ν εἴρηκ̣ά̣ σ̣[ο]ι̣.
>
> **Pataikos** Could you say what they were? **Glykera** There was a [crimson] belt –
> **Pataikos** There was **Glykera** <u>With a chorus of girls</u> embroidered on it.
> **Moschion** Doesn't that clinch it? **Glykera** A [see-through] cloak, a golden
> Frontal. I've listed every single one for you
>
> *The Girl with Shaven Head* (*Perikeiromene*) 820-23

The luxurious, crimson item described marks the victim out in the same way that Pamphile is notable for her beauty in *The Arbitration* and, in a superbly reflexive way, actually depicts a typical context, the female chorus, for the rape that she suffers. Once more, then, we see how an archaic motif is evoked in fourth-century choral imagery, and the resonances of that motif used to enrich the world of the drama.

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[38] See Lape 2004: 13-17, 92-3 (with further bibliography at n.76) on politics and the democratic context of rape in New Comedy, Rosivach 1998:30-32 on the rape in *Epitrepontes*, 13-50 on the rape motif in comedy more generally and 42-6 for the argument that the primary source of the rape motif is from Euripides. It will be clear that I think both Euripides and the poets of New Comedy are interacting with a much broader and older tradition of the rape motif.

One of the most complex extant examples of comedy's use of choral language is found in a fragment of Eubulus, a poet of Middle Comedy.

> ὁμοῦ δὲ τευθὶς καὶ Φαληρικὴ κόρη
> σπλάγχνοισιν ἀρνείοισι συμμεμιγμένη 5
> πηδᾷ, χορεύει, πῶλος ὣς ἄπο ζυγοῦ.
> ῥιπὶς δ' ἐγείρει φύλακας Ἡφαίστου κύνας,
> θερμῇ παροξύνουσα τηγάνου πνοῇ.
> ὀσμὴ δὲ πρὸς μυκτῆρας ἠρεθισμένη
> ᾄσσει. μεμαγμένη δὲ Δήμητρος κόρη 10
> κοίλην φάραγγα δακτύλου πιέσματι
> σύρει, τριήρους ἐμβολὰς μιμουμένη,
> δείπνου πρόδρομον ἄριστον.
>
> And at the same time a squid[39] and a Phalerian girl[40]
> Coupled with the sheep entrails
> Leap and dance like a colt escaping the yoke.
> A fan rouses up Hephaestus' watchdogs,
> Stimulating the warm breath of the frying pan;
> And the smell, stirred up, rushes toward
> The nostrils. The kneaded daughter of Demeter
> Has a hollow cleft made in her by a finger's
> Pressure so that she resembles a trireme's ram,
> And is the best prelude to a dinner.[41]
>
> Eubulus fr. 75.4-13

Here too we observe the kind of linguistic bombast already seen earlier in the fragments of Diphilus and Antiphanes. However, in this fragment we can observe more than lyric parody alone. Not only are various foodstuffs (the squid, the Phalerian 'maiden' i.e. a sprat, the lambs' entrails) described as participants in a choral dance, the fragment also makes clear allusions to a particular kind of chorus – a maiden chorus no less – and in doing so engages with and exploits motifs familiar

[39] See Thompson 1947:260-1, Davidson 1997:211-12, and Olson-Sens 2000:204.
[40] A 'sprat', see Hunter 1983:168.
[41] Trans. Olson 2006.

from a maiden song such as Alcman *PMG* fr.1.[42] Here we have two potential female leaders, the squid and the sprat, comparable perhaps to the figures of Agido and Hagesichora in the Alcman fragment. The erotic desire felt by those singing the maiden song for their choral leaders is echoed in the Eubulus fragment in the verb συμμείγνυμι, which can connote sexual activity.[43] Hunter does not see this double entendre as 'either inevitable or desirable', but in the context of the allusion to a maiden song, the double entendre in my opinion becomes both inevitable and desirable, undermining as it does the elevated poetry of the *partheneia* with some typical comic ribaldry.[44] The comparison to a colt echoes similes commonly used to describe unmarried girls. Less clear is how the obscene image of dough being kneaded by a finger that is, in turn, compared to the manifestly phallic 'battering-ram' (τριήρους ἔμβολος) should be read.[45] In light of the female choral imagery just before it, the rape of Persephone does not seem to be an entirely inapposite continuation of the metaphor.

Aside from demonstrating the complexity of choral allusion that was possible in comedy of the fourth century, the complex allusion to maiden songs found in this fragment of Eubulus indicates that comic poets could rely on their audiences being able to recognise and appreciate a range of sophisticated choral metaphors and allusions. Parody of a high poetic style, as seen in the fragments of Antiphanes and Diphilus above is combined with a grotesque parody of a particular genre of choral

[42] Erotic desire amongst the maiden chorus: 'H. wears me out with love' (77). The unyoked horse as image for an unmarried girl: *PMG* 3.57-9, Anacr.75.1, E.*Hec.*142, E.*Hipp.*546, Cratin.87, Epicr.9. The rape of Persephone: *h.Hom.Dem.*1-14.
[43] Cf. Antiphanes fr.55 for a potentially similar undertone.
[44] Hunter 1983:168.
[45] See Anderson 2008:175-81.

performance, the maiden song, and is used to enrich a stock trope in comedy – the description of food.

The majority of these examples show the potential for choral imagery to engage with certain literary motifs and, in doing so, give us information about the potential resonances in archetypal or ideal choruses rather than contemporary choral activity. We have one example, however, that points towards the possibility that choral images in some authors might gesture to a more immediate 'real-life' chorus. In Plato's *Protagoras* Socrates describes a group walking behind the famed sophist as a χόρος and goes on to describe them in the following way:

> There were some locals also in this chorus, whose dance simply delighted me when I saw how beautifully they took care never to get in Protagoras' way. When he turned around with his flanking groups, the audience to the rear would split into two in a very orderly way and then circle around to either side and form up again behind him. It was quite lovely. [46] *Protagoras* 315b2-8

Some have read this picture as portraying those following Protagoras in a negative light, arguing that because the followers are called a 'chorus' there are presented as 'servile'. [47] However, such a reading is not supported by what we know of ancient reactions to choral performance and seems to rest on a more modern attitude towards this kind of behaviour in evidence. Far from such choral aesthetics being judged negatively, there would be considerable value awarded to a group performing in this way. Xenophon provides a nice example of this in the

[46] ἦσαν δέ τινες καὶ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων ἐν τῷ χορῷ. τοῦτον τὸν χορὸν μάλιστα ἔγωγε ἰδὼν ἥσθην, ὡς καλῶς ηὐλαβοῦντο μηδέποτε ἐμποδὼν ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν εἶναι Πρωταγόρου, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ αὐτὸς ἀναστρέφοι καὶ οἱ μετ' ἐκείνου, εὖ πως καὶ ἐν κόσμῳ περιεσχίζοντο οὗτοι οἱ ἐπήκοοι ἔνθεν καὶ ἔνθεν, καὶ ἐν κύκλῳ περιιόντες ἀεὶ εἰς τὸ ὄπισθεν καθίσταντο κάλλιστα.
[47] E.g. Chiesara 2010:109n.47.

Oeconomicus. Ischomachus, talking to his wife, outlines what makes watching a chorus pleasurable:

> A chorus is a combination of human beings; but when the members of it do as they choose, it becomes mere confusion, and there is no pleasure in watching it; but when they act and chant in an orderly fashion, then those same men at once seem worth seeing and worth hearing.[48] *Oeconomicus* 8.3-4

He later returns to the image, as a way of demonstrating the necessity for the keeping of household utensils in an orderly fashion:

> There is nothing, in short, that does not gain in beauty when set out in order. For each set looks like a chorus of utensils, and the space between the sets is beautiful to see, when each set is kept clear of it, just as a circular chorus is a beautiful spectacle in itself but also the free space looks beautiful and clear.[49] *Oeconomicus* 8.20-1

For Xenophon, the chorus acts as a paradigmatic form for aesthetic order and beauty, even as it is recognised that such perfect order is not always in evidence in choruses.

The corroboration of attitudes towards perfectly ordered choruses aside, the characterisation of Protagoras in the dialogue is such that we can be certain that the description at 315b2-8 is ironic in some way. Yet, far from merely indulging in some characteristic irony, it has been suggested that Plato is alluding here to a particular scene from Old Comedy where Protagoras, or a figure like him, is followed around

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[48] Trans. Marchant 1923. καὶ γὰρ χορὸς ἐξ ἀνθρώπων συγκείμενός ἐστιν· ἀλλ’ ὅταν μὲν ποιῶσιν ὅ τι ἂν τύχῃ ἕκαστος, ταραχή τις φαίνεται καὶ θεᾶσθαι ἀτερπές, ὅταν δὲ τεταγμένως ποιῶσι καὶ φθέγγωνται, ἅμα οἱ αὐτοὶ οὗτοι καὶ ἀξιοθέατοι δοκοῦσιν εἶναι καὶ ἀξιάκουστοι.,

[49] τὰ δὲ ἄλλα ἤδη που ἀπὸ τούτου ἅπαντα καλλίω φαίνεται κατὰ κόσμον κείμενα· χορὸς γὰρ σκευῶν ἕκαστα φαίνεται, καὶ τὸ μέσον δὲ πάντων τούτων καλὸν φαίνεται, ἐκποδὼν ἑκάστου κειμένου· ὥσπερ καὶ κύκλιος χορὸς οὐ μόνον αὐτὸς καλὸν θέαμά ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ μέσον αὐτοῦ καλὸν καὶ καθαρὸν φαίνεται.

by an actual dramatic chorus. Two plays in particular have been noted as possible inspirations: Eupolis' *Flatterers* and Ameipsias' *Connus*.[50] Protagoras was definitely a character in Eupolis' play[51] but the chorus in Ameipsias', a group of 'deep thinkers' (φροντισταί), might suit this scene in *Protagoras* better than the chorus of flatterers in Eupolis'. Both plays, perhaps, may have come to mind during this description, supported by a number of other comic aspects of the image's immediate context.[52] It is helpful to recognise that even in the realm of literary allusion, a choral image could interact with more immediate cultural memory as well as traditional motifs.

The role of the choral image in this passage of the *Protagoras* may have further significance, one that builds on and exploits the associations of the chorus as positive force, socially and in terms of religious observance, in society. The whole opening scene in Callias' house is meant to provoke the reader and ready them for enquiry concerning the subject of teaching and nature of knowledge.[53] It is clear that

[50] See Storey 2003: 184-92 and n.25. The fact that both these plays had first performances in the late 420s, when Plato was still under ten years of age, might imply they had been recently reperformed in Athens. The reliance on visualising the movement in order for the allusion to have its full impact is certainly key.

[51] See Eupolis fr.157.

[52] The trouble that Socrates and Hippocrates have getting past the doorman of Callias' house is also reminiscent of comic scenes. See also *Prot.*327d6 for a reference to another chorus of a comedy by Pherecrates, this time made explicit.

[53] There are two further groups in the courtyard of Callias' house, both surrounding other celebrated sophists, Hippias and Prodicus (315c1-316a2). Amongst these groups and their audiences are future oligarchs, exiles (implicated in sacrilege of the herms of 415), poets and musicians, not to mention Alcibiades, one of the most brilliant and duplicitous figures in Classical Athenian history. We see Eryximachus, a doctor implicated in the sacrilege of 415; Phaedrus, exiled having been implicated in the sacrilege of 415; Andron, a member of the oligarchic government of 411; Agathon the poet as a young man; Adeimantus, also implicated in the sacrilege of 415 and later accused of treachery in 404; Agothocles and Pythocleides the musicians and music teachers. Here, then, we have a full range of inhabitants of what we might term 'the world of perception', where the transient things that *seem* to be are the basis for action and teaching as opposed to things that 'are'. That many of these individuals are misguided in their teaching and learning is clearly implied by their respective failures and falls from political favour that the audience is able to supply. See Denyer 2008:80-81.

Plato means for us to judge those in the scene as negative *exempla*, both of ἀρετή but also of its so-called teaching.[54] By introducing something like a chorus, universally acknowledged as beneficial, and placing at its head an individual such as Protagoras, Plato is deliberately subverting that picture of choral beneficence here, in much the same way as we saw above in the passage of *Laws* (800c5-d4). What may seem to be a pleasure-giving (ἤσθην, 315b3) and well-ordered chorus (καλῶς ηὐλαβοῦντο... ἐπειδὴ αὐτὸς ἀναστρέφοι καὶ οἱ μετ' ἐκείνου... ἐν κόσμῳ περιεσχίζοντο... ἀεὶ εἰς τὸ ὄπισθεν καθίσταντο, 315b3-7) is framed so as to invite the reader to question the reality of its goodness.[55] Plato's deployment of a choral image at this point in the introduction is able to tap into a deeply held assumption regarding choral performance and to undermine that assumption by juxtaposing the chorus with a number of other questionable persons and the values they represent.

We might put this tactic in line with Plato's tendency to incorporate familiar genres or genres of discourse in order to use the genre's socio-political context and even to parody it in a new, redefined context.[56] So too, with regard to the chorus, a general assumption about its qualities is invoked i.e. that they are good or beneficial, only then to be questioned and held up for discussion. In the case of the *Protagoras* we might easily say this appropriation of the chorus does become parody, just as the

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[54] Such a conclusion is supported by the two references to the *Odyssey* placed before the description of each group (315b9 and 315c8) that invoke the setting of the underworld in this bustle of activity in Callias' house. For a discussion of Plato's use of Homer in Protagoras see Segvic 2006:255-7, in particular, 'the three sophists appear as shadowy figures... Theirs is a different world – a world of εἴδωλα, images or appearances' Segvic 2006:257.

[55] As readers we have been prepared for our 'first meeting' with Protagoras and an attitude of suspicion has been recommended by Socrates. Before he and Hippocrates arrive at Callias' house, Socrates has questioned his friend about why he is so eager to see Protagoras and warns him of the dangers of 'buying' learning from people like Protagoras (311a8-314b4).

[56] See Nightingale 1995 (esp.5-12) for a thorough treatment of this kind of dialogue between genres.

florid style of a tragic poet is parodied in the *Symposium* in the character of Agathon, or Lysias' rhetoric appropriated and counteracted in the *Phaedrus*. This tactic of taking familiar elements about which shared opinions are generally held and then showing how they may not be as they seem is a recurrent element in Plato's writings. What has become apparent is that he seems to use references to the chorus in the same way.

The Chorus and Shared Ritual and Civic Experience

We have seen, then, how fourth-century authors' use choral images to produce resonances with sacrosanct, ritual practice, or linguistic convention and literary motifs. Yet arguably the most powerful resonance for Athenian readers and audience members would come from their own experience of taking part in choruses. In a number of images, we see how the author uses a reference to a chorus as a means of reminding the audience of that common experience of dancing in the city's choruses, shared by citizens, and hence a shared civic or political affinity.[57] In Xenophon's *Hellenica*, we see this shared experience being explicitly appealed to. Following the civic strife of 404, Cleocritus, a κῆρυξ τῶν μυστῶν and a democrat, reminds those fighting for the oligarchs of their shared history in order to encourage an end to the current conflict.

> For we never did you any harm, but we have shared with you in the most solemn rites and sacrifices and the most splendid festivals, we have been companions in the

[57] Also in certain ritual contexts, shared by adolescent Athenian girls. See Bathrellou 2012:156-64 on the archaeological evidence for cult rituals for female adolescents at Brauron.

chorus (συγχορευταί) and schoolmates and comrades in arms, and we have braved many dangers with you both by land and by sea in defence of the common safety and freedom of us both.[58] *Hellenica* 2.4.20.4

For Xenophon's readership, the memory of the relationships forged during the rehearsal period for the city's choruses (as well as during their childhood and military service) would engage their emotion, in exactly the same way as the emotion and memory of experience would be engaged by Cleocritus' appeal to his fellow Athenians. The passage demonstrates how participating in choruses was a near universal experience but also one that was seminal for an Athenian in forging real and ideological relationships with his fellow citizens.

The ubiquity of choral performance at festivals means that for any Greek, not just for Athenians, a choral image could recall for him (or her) the experience of participating in choral activity, most likely in a setting of celebration and holiday.[59]

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[58] Trans. Brownson 2001 ἡμεῖς γὰρ ὑμᾶς κακὸν μὲν ούδὲν πώποτε έποιήσαμεν, μετεσχήκαμεν δὲ ὑμῖν καὶ ἱερῶν τῶν σεμνοτάτων καὶ θυσιῶν καὶ ἑορτῶν τῶν καλλίστων, καὶ συγχορευταὶ καὶ συμφοιτηταὶ γεγενήμεθα καὶ συστρατιῶται, καὶ πολλὰ μεθ' ὑμῶν κεκινδυνεύκαμεν καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν ὑπὲρ τῆς κοινῆς άμφοτέρων ἡμῶν σωτηρίας τε καὶ έλευθερίας. Commenting on this passage, Wilson has noted that 'shared participation in *khoroi* continues to stand readily beside participation in the ranks of the city's army as a means for actively instantiating citizenship, and for expressing solidarity as citizens' (Wilson 2003:186). We might compare another passage of Xenophon in the *Anabasis* where choral language is used to highlight the civic strife in a tribe of non-Greeks, the Mossynoecians (*Anabasis* V.4.1-18 and especially 12 and 18). For a different example of choral participation 'actively instantiating citizenship', see D.39.1.24-5 from a trial disputing the parentage of one Boiotus, where the accused is said to have only recently begun to dance in his alleged father's tribe's circular choruses, previously having danced in the boys' choruses for his mother's tribe, Hippothontis (άλλὰ πρὶν ἡμέτερος φάσκειν συγγενὴς εἶναι, είς Ἱπποθωντίδ' έφοίτα φυλὴν είς παῖδας χορεύσων).

[59] The rationale for festivals given in Plato's *Laws* (653c9-d5) seems to suggest this view: θεοὶ δὲ οίκτίραντες τὸ τῶν άνθρώπων έπίπονον πεφυκὸς γένος, άναπαύλας τε αύτοῖς τῶν πόνων έτάξαντο τὰς τῶν ἑορτῶν άμοιβὰς τοῖς θεοῖς, καὶ Μούσας Ἀπόλλωνά τε μουσηγέτην καὶ Διόνυσον συνεορταστὰς ἔδοσαν, ἵν' έπανορθῶνται, τάς τε τροφὰς γενομένας έν ταῖς ἑορταῖς μετὰ θεῶν. Non-festival choruses such as the theoric or wedding chorus may have had similar resonances. The funeral chorus is no doubt an exception but does not alter the idea that choral participation in general was connected to cheerful festival experience.

In the account of how the Spartans learned of their defeat at Leuctra, as described by Xenophon (*Hell.*VI.4.16.1-8, see above), we can recognise a further resonance beyond that of the citizens' piety in not interrupting the choral performances at the festival of Gymnopaediae. By including the detail of choral activity at the moment when the news of a disastrous defeat is announced creates a bittersweet and experientially concrete image (not just for Athenians but for all Greeks) that juxtaposes festival and war.

The experiential resonances of choral imagery in fourth-century literature can evoke a more particular context than we have seen in the two Xenophon examples above. Returning to the rape motif of New Comedy, we can note that the festival context of the rape is significant and highlights a specific festival and choral performance as a place of shared experience.[60] In a recent article, Bathrellou has shown that all the festivals referred to in each play of Menander's where rape takes place contain rituals associated with young men and women on the cusp of maturity.[61] From the archaeological evidence available, the activities at cult sites such as Brauron appear to have focused on preparing the youths for the transition into adulthood. Choral re-enactments of imperfect transitions (such as rape) are also understood to have taken place and acted as a means of neutralising the

[60] Fragments from seven extant plays of Menander contain the plot device of rape, all of which (in as much as the fragments allow us to tell) take place at a festival: *The Apparition* (*Phasma*), *The Arbitration* (*Epitrepontes*)*, The Girl from Samos (Samia), The Farmer (Georgos)*, *The Hero (Heros)*, *The Lyre-player (Kitharistes)* and *The Necklace (Plokion)*. See Bathrellou 2012:153-5 and 152n.4 on the almost total lack of previous comment on the festival context.
[61] Tauropolia at Halai in *Epitrepontes*, an Ephesian festival in honour of Artemis Daitis in *Kitharistes*, Adonia in *Samia*, Brauronia in *Phasma*. On previous attempts to link the Tauropolia to initiation rituals for either boys or girls, see Bathrellou 2012:155-6 n.14-16. See 2012:169-70 for Bathrellou's persuasive reconstruction of the Tauropolia.

potential for such an imperfect situation to arise by anticipating its occurrence in the safety of ritual song and dance.[62] The way Menander presents the rape of his female heroines seems to be designed to recall the audience's knowledge, and perhaps experience, of the cultic choruses beyond the theatre.

Here we find a second strand to the impact of deploying an allusion to the archaic choral rape motif. Menander is able to activate the associations of the extra-dramatic cult and bring them to bear on the underlying themes of the painful but necessary transition to adulthood that are so common in his comedies. Further, audiences would have undoubtedly come into contact with the archaic choral rape motif whilst engaged in the ritual activities at the cult sites such as Brauron, where it is believed re-enactment of mythical stories such as the rape of Persephone (*h.Hom.Dem.*1-14) formed an important component. Appreciating the audience's knowledge of a) the archaic choral rape motif in literature, b) their awareness of cult ritual activity that re-enacted this motif and c) their own experience observing or taking part in such an enactment at cult sites like Brauron, deepens our understanding of the subtlety of Menander's choral references. It also tells us something important about the manifold ways in which a choral reference or image could trigger responses from the audience on both a literary and experiential level.

Choral images in fourth-century literature can also rely on an audience's knowledge of the dynamics within a performing chorus. In the context of choral dance, obedience to a leader-figure was paramount, and it is this particular dynamic between chorus leader-figure and choreut in the chorus that can be invoked by

[62] See Lonsdale 1993:169-205. Bathrellou 2012:162-6.

fourth-century authors as a kind of cultural shorthand. Thus in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* when Socrates is arguing that fear makes men more attentive, he uses an example of sailors on board ship during a storm or an enemy attack and describes them as watching for the word of command, 'like choreuts' (ὥσπερ χορευταί, 3.5.6-7). The obedience to one's leader, learnt in the chorus, is paradigmatic for Xenophon's Socrates, and would be something Xenophon's audience presumably would be able to remember from their own choral training.

As well as obedience, an Athenian would also be trained in the pursuit of honour in the chorus. The experience of how this *philotimia* was inculcated throughout the rehearsal process is another aspect of choral performance used by authors.[63] In a discussion with his father about how best to train his soldiers, Cyrus suggests that setting up various contests for his men and offering prizes would be beneficial, to which his father agrees and says 'for if you do that you may be sure that you will see your companies performing their proper parts like choruses' (τοῦτο γὰρ ποιήσας, σάφ' ἴσθι, ὥσπερ χοροὺς τὰς τάξεις ἀεὶ τὰ προσήκοντα μελετώσας θεάσῃ, X.*Cyr.*1.6.18). Here it is not the physical activity of participating in choral dance that will serve his soldiers, but developing their desire for victory, something that one also developed in choral performance as we can infer from the choral simile used by Cyrus' father. Again, we might read Xenophon's subtle use of choral imagery as a way of engaging his audience and communicating meaning by drawing on shared experiences of choral rehearsal and performance, as well as

[63] On honour-loving in Athens see e.g. X.*Mem.*3.3, *Eq.Mag.*1.26.5. D.18.257. For a Spartan parallel see *Rep.Lac.*4.2. See also Wilson 2000:144-97 and esp. 187-94.

shared attitudes towards the nature and purpose of choral participation more generally.

The practice of such obedience and honour-loving is, of course, not unique to choral activity. In the images noted above, the applicability of the chorus as a metaphor for certain aspects of military activity is particularly appropriate and one can quite easily imagine a very similar practical training for some aspects of both. One might suggest, then, that the choral imagery in these passages allows certain shared characteristics to be highlighted and mutually reinforced, as opposed to bringing specifically choral characteristics to bear on the object of comparison, as we saw, for example, in the choral metaphors in comedy's description of foods.

The proximity of these two spheres of activity is even more marked in some choral images that use a combination of military and choral language in order to highlight the visual characteristics of what is being described. In one of the fragments of Diphilus seen above, the language of both activities is used:

ἄριστον ἐπεχόρευσεν ἐκλελεγμένον,
εἴ τι νέον ἢ ποθεινόν· ὀστρέων γένη
παντοδαπά, λοπάδων παρατεταγμένη
φάλαγξ...

A choice lunch danced in, including
Everything that's unusual or desirable: every variety
Of shellfish; casserole-dishes drawn up in battle-order...

Diphilus fr.43.1-3

In Plato's *Phaedrus,* a work of a very different genre, the movements of a divine chorus, too, are couched in military terms: 'After him there follows an army of gods and divinities… of the rest, all those who have their place among the number of the twelve take the lead as commanders in the station given to each…For jealousy is

excluded from the divine chorus' (τῷ δ' ἕπεται στρατιὰ θεῶν τε καὶ δαιμόνων… τῶν δὲ ἄλλων ὅσοι ἐν τῷ τῶν δώδεκα ἀριθμῷ τεταγμένοι θεοὶ ἄρχοντες ἡγοῦνται κατὰ τάξιν ἣν ἕκαστος ἐτάχθη…φθονός γὰρ ἔξω θείου χοροῦ ἵσταται. 246e6-247a7). The effect of the combined force of military and choral imagery in this case may have been deliberately deployed in order to help Plato's audience visualise the highly abstract conception of gods, mortal souls and the universe.

The overlap in military and choral imagery in both these passages may perhaps be attributed, as we have already observed with choral imagery, to a literary tradition. Comparisons between choral performance and military activity are visible in some of our earliest literature,[64] and so the use of choral imagery to describe military manoeuvres and vice versa may in part be drawing on that convention. And yet, the importance of the visual aspect, highlighted in these same two passages might point towards a more immediate, experiential resonance.[65] The Aristotelian *Athenian Constitution* indicates that, in Athens at least, the same performance space was sometimes used for both choral and military display, something that would have created an immediate and powerful equation between the two kinds of performance, both visually and perhaps ideologically too.[66] When

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[64] Perhaps most famously articulated by Socrates (as reported by Athenaeus, 628f3-4), Οἵ δὲ χοροῖς κάλλιστα θεοὺς τιμῶσιν, ἄριστοι ἐν πολέμῳ, 'Those who show the gods the finest honours in choruses are the best in war'. A late sixth-century Attic column krater (Antikenmuseum, Basel, B5 415) depicts a choral group from a tragedy in military dress; see Foley 2003:11-13, 17-19 for further discussion of tragic choruses of soldiers. See also Hom.*Il.*7.238-41 (but also in opposition 24.261), Ar.*V.*1060-62 and Pl.*Lg.*796c2-4. Post-fourth century see e.g. Dio.Chrys 2.55-61, Luc.*Salt.*14. On the presumed relationship between military and choral performance in modern scholarship see e.g. Wheeler 1982:223, Nagy 1994:43-4, Ceccarelli 1998:19, Lech 2009:356.

[65] We might also note that military and choral comparisons are very close in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* 8.3-6, where the way the visual formation of household utensils is emphasised.

[66] τὸν δ' ὕστερον ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ γενομένης, ἀποδειξάμενοι τῷ δήμῳ τὰ περὶ τὰς τάξεις…

choral/military imagery is used, then, we might see the author as wanting to bring to mind the memory of viewing choruses and/or military manoeuvres, something that we know took place in Athens and must have had a powerful visual impact.

The frequency of military and choral imagery being used together in fourth-century literature, at least, might be taken to mirror a real-life proximity between military and choral activity in Athens. On one level the two activities overlap within a larger nexus of activities that centred around civic display; a means to display a tribe or city's excellence in 'honour-loving', a display of physical strength to rouse the blood before battle and scare the enemy, or a display of citizenship. But looking more closely, we can interpret these 'real-life' overlaps of choral and military activity as being adopted into the language of fourth-century authors. This in turn might demonstrate a further way in which choral imagery was embedded not only in intellectual and literary culture, but also in the contemporary choral activity that surrounded fourth-century authors.

[Arist.]*Ath.Pol.*42.4, discussed Winkler 1990:22. Dillery (2002:462-70) challenges the idea that the performance space was the theatre of Dionysus. Dillery's first argument concerning the impossibility of this kind of military display in the theatre of Dionysus relies on the inaccurate supposition that the orchestra of that theatre would not be big enough for the maneouvres Aristotle describes, on the strength of the fact that the largest chorus to perform in the space was a comic chorus, numbering twenty-four. The largest chorus to perform in the theatre would have been fifty for the circular choruses at the Great Dionysia. On the basis of Habicht 1997:24, there would be 500 ephebes in a given year during the fourth century and so, if split into groups of fifty, the ephebic display described by [Arist.] *could* have taken place in the theatre of Dionysus. Dillery's argument about the language used by Aristotle, however, (2002:464-6) stands as a strong suggestion that the site for this ephebic display was, indeed, not the theatre of Dionysus.

Conclusion

This exploration of the ways in which the chorus can be used in images and metaphors has been more discursive than incisive in nature. In light of the range of texts, authors and cultural spheres in which these choral images are found, this is not surprising. What has been shown quite clearly, however, is that the rhetorical and emotional effects that such images could have had on audiences are many and demonstrate the currency of this kind of choral discourse in the fourth century.

As to whether it provides a credible backdrop against which we can place a continuing and creatively used dramatic chorus, there are two conclusions we can draw. First, the multiple resonances evoked by many of the passages discussed above strongly suggest that audiences of all kinds were able to identify a range of choral allusions during this period. In the case of the Menandrian rape motif, the plural allusions to mythical and real choruses, cultic re-enactment and tragic, actual rape at festivals are indicative of how familiar all these ways of conceiving of choruses are at the very end of the fourth century. This kind of choral competence (to build on Revermann's idea of audience competence)[67] in terms of the various contexts for choral performance – mythic, literary, contemporary and cultic – apparently expected of audiences of Menander seems to point towards the very real and present function of at least some genres of chorus in Athenian society throughout the fourth century. For those who might argue that this kind of choral competency has no bearing on how we understand the dramatic chorus as used by

[67] Revermann 2006b:99-124.

authors and producers, the clear discrepancy between the dramatic chorus and broader choral culture needs to be explained.

The second conclusion to be drawn from this exploration of fourth-century choral imagery highlights the need for caution in bringing together the, often idealised, presentation of choral form and function, and contemporary 'real-life' attitudes towards performing choruses. We are allowed a glimpse of how great the distance between the two may be in a brief reference to choral activity, found in Demosthenes' *Against Meidias*, which highlights this potential disjuncture between ideal and real-life attitudes towards the chorus. Towards the end of his speech against Meidias he says the following:

> I imagine that he [Meidias] will not shrink to accuse neither the people nor the assembly, but that which he dared to say when the charge was first brought, also now he will say, that <u>those who need to go out and stayed, that those who had gone having left their posts, those had spoken in the assembly, **and choreuts,** foreigners and such kind as these had condemned him.</u>[68] *Against Meidias* 193-4

The implication from the passage, whether Meidias really said it or would have said it or not, is that those participating in choruses are to be numbered among those who impact the civic community negatively and specifically, those who evade military service.[69] The fact that most of the potential audience of this speech would have themselves taken part in a chorus means that we should take this as deliberate

[68] Οἶμαι τοίνυν αὐτὸν οὐδὲ τοῦ δήμου κατηγορεῖν ὀκνήσειν οὐδὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἀλλ' ἅπερ τότ' ἐτόλμα λέγειν ὅτ' ἦν ἡ προβολή, ταῦτα καὶ νῦν ἐρεῖν, ὡς ὅσοι δέον ἐξιέναι κατέμενον καὶ ὅσοι τὰ φρούρι' ἦσαν ἔρημα λελοιπότες, ἐξεκλησίασαν, **καὶ χορευταὶ** καὶ ξένοι καὶ τοιοῦτοί τινες ἦσαν οἳ κατεχειροτόνησαν αὐτοῦ.

[69] On the possible laws that allowed choreuts exemption from military service, see D.39.16-17, 21.15 with MacDowell 1989:65-77. For a qualification of the force of the law see Christ 2004:33-43.

slander, placed in the mouth of Meidias by Demosthenes, in order to rouse the ire of the listeners against him.

The reference is an extremely unusual instance of choral activity being framed negatively and even if it is an insult to choreuts ventriloquised into the mouth of Demosthenes' enemy, the possibility for choreuts to be talked about in the same breath as deserters and foreigners must have had some traction in Athens.[70] It may be that we can link this insult to the apparently growing industry of professional or semi-professional choreuts. A shift from citizen choreut to someone who might avoid other duties of a citizen in order to engage in choral activity would certainly not fit into the choral ideal, set up by Cleisthenes and perpetuated in the rhetoric of fifth and fourth century authors.[71] While appreciating the choral imagery of fourth-century authors as an interesting source for contemporary attitudes towards choruses of all kinds, the need to treat this evidence with care is confirmed by the potential, as seen in *Against Meidias*, for the distance between idealised and 'real life' choruses to be great.

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[70] See MacDowell 1990:403-4nn.193-204. 'The argument is ventrioloquised by Demosthenes as an unacceptable slander, but whether or not used by Meidias it has suggestive implications for the possible public representation of Dionysian *khoreia*' says Wilson (2000:340n.125). Suggestive indeed, and not just for Dionysian *choreia* but also for all adult male choreuts engaged in choral activity during the campaign season, c. 2500 every year, see p.20n.60 above.

[71] Fourth-century sources that indicate semi-professional choruses were emerging or had already emerged: D.21.58-60, Thphr.83.1.6. The inclusion of 'χορευταὶ' in a list of other professional groups in *Republic* (373b2-c1) seems to indicate that there existed a group of people whose full-time occupation was participating in choruses. The proximity of the 'actors, contractors and craftsmen of props' to the mention of choreuts might be inferred to mean Plato is referring to dramatic choreuts specifically, which would accord with what we know of the complexities of dramatic choral performance and the stamina required. See Wilson 2003:165-98 on the political importance of the circular chorus and Cleisthenes' role in setting up civic harmony through choral competition.

6.

Plato and the Chorus

Plato has long been considered and used as an invaluable source for the choral culture of Classical Greece. A third of his works contain references to the choral culture of Athens, Sparta and beyond, as well as images of the chorus used as examples or illustrations. It is in the *Symposium* (173a5-7) that we hear how choreuts would celebrate with a victorious poet the day after the competition finished. In the *Laws* we hear of the strict diet that choral dancers were expected to adhere to, a practice uncomfortable enough to make choral performance an unthinkable activity for those over fifty (*Laws* 655b-e). The author reveals such details almost incidentally and in the cases just mentioned we can be fairly confident in taking them as indicators of some practicalities of choral performance in Plato's Athens. Despite what may be suggested in his dialogues about ideal philosophers holding themselves at a remove from contemporary political life,[1] it is obvious that Plato was familiar with the living choral culture of his day, just as he was familiar with the city's political and legislative processes.[2] Furthermore, the details rendered in the choral images and references also indicate he was aware of the practical aspects that went into organising a choral performance.

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[1] E.g. *Tht.*173b-d.

[2] 'The extent and accuracy of his knowledge is apparent, not only from a multitude of casual and passing references whose significance is clear only when we understand the political and legal practices of his time, but also in his own code of laws', Morrow 1960:6.

That being said, more than usual caution should be employed when turning to Plato as a source for choral culture. There is, of course, the fact that he was not writing to record faithfully the form and function of choruses in his contemporary world and his presentation of the chorus will be affected by his personal worldview as well as his rhetorical and philosophical goals. It is tempting, also, to put to one side the philosophical aspects of Plato's writing when approaching him as a historical source; the amount of secondary literature that one could refer to in conducting a fully philosophically contextualised reading of the works is immense. And there is a further factor to consider. A review of Plato's numerous choral images very quickly shows an incredible variety in the types of chorus he refers to: a chorus in a comedy by Pherecrates, choruses as a key means of communication with the gods, a chorus as representative of festival organisation procedure, the abstract 'choral dance' of philosophical enquiry or of the stars.[3] Thus, any given reference to a chorus will have an understood performance context (drama, festival etc.), and carry a particular cultural resonance that may change how that chorus is presented in Plato's text, and in case of some performance contexts, affect how Plato interacts with or uses that choral image.

As was the case in the previous chapter, the general aim of the discussion that follows is exploring the ways the chorus is viewed and used by an author. And, just as we saw in the previous chapter, there are instances when appreciating the potential resonances of the choral image deepens our understanding of these texts. For Plato, however, the use of choral imagery is often significantly and uniquely

[3] *Protagoras* 327d4-e1, *Symposium* 197d1-3, *Republic* 386c1-5, *Theaetetus* 173b3-c5, and *Timaeus* 40c3-d5, respectively.

loaded, and the chorus becomes a tool for discussing his ideas within a very specific framework. Time will be spent in this chapter elucidating that framework and recognising the specificity of Plato's choral imaginary.

I begin this analysis of Plato's presentation of the chorus by setting out the generic and geographic breadth of the author's choral imagery (Section I), with the double aim of giving an overview of the presentation of the chorus in his works, but also making clear that Plato as a source often transcends any generic, geographic or conceptual boundaries. By way of a complement to this general survey of Plato's choral imagery, I then describe briefly the apparent development of Plato's choral thought visible from his extant works. In Section II I set out how the presentation of the chorus in image and metaphor (predominantly in the latter half of Plato's works) generally puts a particular emphasis on the role of the leader-figure in a way that differs from many other accounts of choral practice in ancient Greece. In Section III, we observe how the metaphorical images of the chorus turn into practical paradigms for the creation of an ideal city in the *Laws*, and the peculiarities in Plato's choral model that justify the central place of choral performance in the city of Magnesia. Not only are the less well-known aspects of Plato's choral thinking brought out, but we are also able to appreciate further the complexity of using him as a source for choral culture, fourth-century or otherwise.

Choral Images in Plato's Works

i. Choral Variety in the Works of Plato

There is a tendency in some modern scholarship to link, either implicitly or explicitly, the discussions of *choreia* in Plato to a particular genre (often tragedy) or strand of debate (frequently that concerning Plato's attitudes towards 'art' and/or *mimesis*). The proximity of choral performance and poetic creation throughout Greek literature encourages us to view 'the chorus' and 'tragedy', or 'the chorus' and 'lyric choral performance', as synonymous in Plato's thinking and, in practice, this is then often applied to the thinking of Greece in general.[4] We find in Plato's works seven instances where choral performance and poetic performance are strongly linked, and so some semantic affinity between the two cannot be dismissed out of hand. Twice, Plato uses the phrase 'to give a chorus' in the context of a discussion about the civic value of tragedy in the ideal city.[5] In addition, a tragic/satyric chorus is mentioned celebrating with its author, Agathon, in the *Symposium*.[6] There is one allusion and one reference to comic choruses, both found in the *Protagoras*.[7] The

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[4] E.g. Carter 2011:58, 'This claim [that tragedy is a kind of rhetoric], even if we might disagree with it or the assumptions behind it, must have had a certain plausibility for Plato's fellow Athenians in the fourth century (and, by extension, the fifth)'. Carter's statement is not necessarily objectionable in terms of what it argues, but it demonstrates the ease with which aspects of Plato are assimilated with the attitudes in an uncritically constructed 'ancient Athens'. We find a similar problem in Calame's use of Plato in his seminal (and consciously structuralist) work of 1977.

[5] *Republic* 383c1-5 and *Laws* 817d4- 8. The phrase 'to give a chorus' (χορὸν δοῦναι) is also found in a fragment of Cratinus (fr.17). Aristotle in the *Poetics* (1449b1-2) uses the phrase with reference to a comic chorus.

[6] 173a5- 7.

[7] See above p.214 for further discussion of this image. The second reference is to a chorus of misanthropes in a play by Pherecrates, 327d4-e1.

choral medium is presented as practically one and the same thing as dithyrambic poetry in the *Gorgias*.[8] We might also include the passage in the *Republic* where the lovers of sights and sounds are described as 'having rented out their ears to every chorus, they run off to all the Dionysiac festivals, missing neither those in the towns or villages' where the mention of Dionysiac festivals can be understood as pointing to tragic or comic poetry, or the poetry of the circular choruses.[9] However, there are some seventy references to or images of the chorus in Plato's works, and we should underline that only the seven mentioned here can be definitely linked to tragic, comic or dithyrambic poetry.

Peponi has sought to highlight that, despite current scholarly conceptions of tragedy, comedy, satyr play and dithyramb as 'choral' genres, Plato in his *Laws* seems to treat choral performance and dramatic performance very differently.[10] While there is much discussion in the *Laws* of the need for correctly phrased poetry, the choruses that will fill the calendar of the colony of Magnesia are located in non-

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[8] Τί δὲ ἡ τῶν χορῶν διδασκαλία καὶ ἡ τῶν διθυράμβων ποίησις; ού τοιαύτη τίς σοι καταφαίνεται; ἢ ἡγῇ τι φροντίζειν Κινησίαν τὸν Μέλητος, ὅπως ἐρεῖ τι τοιοῦτον ὅθεν ἂν οἱ ἀκούοντες βελτίους γίγνοιντο, ἢ ὅτι μέλλει χαριεῖσθαι τῷ ὄχλῳ τῶν θεατῶν; 501e8-502a1.

[9] ὥσπερ δὲ ἀπομεμισθωκότες τὰ ὦτα ἐπακοῦσαι πάντων χορῶν περιθέουσι τοῖς Διονυσίοις οὔτε τῶν κατὰ πόλεις οὔτε τῶν κατὰ κώμας ἀπολειπόμενοι. 475d5-8. Although not mentioning choruses themselves, the Spartan poet Tyrtaeus, believed to have composed poems that were quasi-choral in character, also receives some attention from the discussants in the *Laws* 629a4- 630d2. Here might be one further example of choral performance and poetic performance being addressed at one and the same time.

[10] Murray 2013:310 (summarising Peponi 2013a), 'Theatre and *choreia* obviously merge if theatrical performance is envisaged as choral, but Plato seems not to represent tragedy in this way'. Peponi 2013a:212-39 construes this difference through Plato's shifting focus from the spectator of a dramatic genre like tragedy to the performer in a choral performance. I will be avoiding the discussion of Plato's attitude towards dramatic/poetic performance as there are many issues connected that have only a partial bearing on choral performance (at least, as far as Plato presents it). Recent treatments of this 'old quarrel' include, Murray 2013:294-312, Laks 2010:217-31 and Mouze 2005 *passim*.

specific (albeit competitive) festival contexts. Looking, then, to the rest of the Platonic corpus, it is worth noting that that the majority of references are, in fact, located in a neutral, abstract context or an actual but non-specific festival context. For example, the chorus' role in the celebration of gods, together with feasts and sacrifices, is taken as read in the closing of Agathon's encomia to love in the *Symposium* (197d1-3). The images of the divine chorus found in the *Phaedrus,* too, remain independent of Plato's concerns with the creation of poetry although the conceit of a divine chorus is, itself, a trope familiar from Archaic and Classical poetry. References to Bacchic and Corybantic initiation rites in conjunction with a choral element provide a further non-dramatic context for choral culture as presented in Plato's works (although it could be argued that the association with Dionysus provides *some* link to dramatic choruses).[11] It may be an obvious point to some, but nonetheless it will be worth emphasising that Plato's use of the chorus is not confined to his interest in the problems of poetic creation. By recognising how the author's presentation of the chorus touches aspects of choral performance beyond the concerns of poetic performance, it is possible to open up the applicability of Plato as 'evidence' for a broader range of choral culture, rather than confine it to the debate surrounding 'art', *mimesis* or 'poetry'.[12]

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[11] *Euthydemus* 277d6- e3, *Laws* 672b3- 7 and 790d2-e4.

[12] While *mimesis* has a part to play in Plato's presentation of forms and functions of choral culture (see e.g. Stalley 1983:125-30, Lonsdale 1993:32-3, Halliwell 2002:65-71 and Prauscello 2011:148), that part is limited to the chorus *qua* medium for mimetic display and it is the question of what can be imitated that concerns Plato (and later scholars). My focus on the medium (the chorus) rather than the content of choral performance means that an extensive discussion of *mimesis* is not germane to be argument. For treatments of this concept in Plato see e.g. Murray 1992:27-46, Janaway 1995:106-57 and Halliwell 2002:37-71. There have been a number of very recent chapters on Plato's *Laws* and *choreia* (Prauscello 2013, Peponi 2013a, b and c, Folch 2013a and b) with which it has not

ii. The Development of Plato's Choral Thought

It is generally acknowledged that any strict chronology of Plato's works, even once the sophisticated techniques of stylistic analysis are applied, is impossible. We are utterly ignorant of how the works were first published or performed, and even then, there is evidence that Plato would have made revisions to earlier dialogues during the course of his life.[13] Any kind of chronology must be relative and handled with care. However, even by drawing on what consensus there is about the relative dates of Plato's dialogues, it is possible to trace an intriguing development in the way in which he used the chorus.[14] It appears that the author looked to the chorus as a means of elucidating his ideas in increasingly complex and concrete ways. I hasten to say that this development is not one of straightforward change, with previous uses of the chorus being supplanted by others. Rather, the variety of ways and the complexity increases as Plato's career and teaching continues.

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been possible to engage fully in the chapter that follows. It has been possible to ascertain that the line of argument I pursue remains unappreciated in current scholarship, although all seem to agree that Plato is constructing a choral model that is in some respects strange and counter-cultural.

[13] See Irwin 2008:75-77 for a careful and succinct overview of how impossible it is to confirm definite dates for Plato's works and the whole chapter gives a clear and level argument for the justified recourse (however tentative) to chronology in identifying developments in Plato's style and thought.

[14] For the chronology of Plato's works based on stylometry see Brandwood 1992:90-120. I use the chronology given by Irwin 2008:78-9, divided into seven groups (dialogues with references to choruses are underlined): (1) *Apology, Laches, Charmides, Lysis, Euthyphro*, *Hippias Minor, Ion* and *Crito*; (2) *Protagoras, Gorgias* and *Euthydemus*; (3*) Meno, Cratylus, Hippias Major, Phaedo* and *Symposium*; (4) *Republic*, and *Phaedrus*; (5) *Parmenides* and *Theaetetus;* (6) *Sophist, Politicus*, and *Timaeus*; (7) *Philebus* and *Laws*. I include the *Alcibiades I* in this discussion also, and on the understanding that it is an early work. For the discussion of authenticity and date of the *Alcibiades I* see Denyer 2001:14-26.

Early Platonic works hardly mention the chorus. There is one brief image in the *Ion*, where choreuts and their teachers are imagined as metal rings, hanging from each other (in order of importance, one imagines) and gaining their magnetic/poetic strength ultimately from the Muse.[15] If we place the *Alcibiades* I early in Plato's corpus, we may add a further, similarly brief, image of the chorus, once again as a representative of a kind of hierarchy within choral culture.[16] In the second group of early-middle dialogues, the *Euthydemus, Gorgias, Protagoras* and *Symposium* (generally agreed to have been written around the time of his first trip to Sicily) all the references to the chorus are to performing choruses such as would have been seen in festivals and competitions of the author's contemporary world.[17] Here then we see how, for Plato, the chorus has gained a greater role in acting as a familiar entity by which to elucidate certain points of argument.

It is only when we get to the middle period of Plato's thinking[18] that the image of the chorus is mobilised in a more metaphorical way, and applied to abstract or imagined choruses: a chorus of cicadas, a chorus of evils, a chorus 'led' by the god Wealth, the *choreia* of the philosophical life or of the stars.[19] Such choral images seem to draw on universal aspects of choruses, rather than picking up on the strictly practical and actual resonances with performing choruses at festivals.

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[15] *Ion* 535e7-536d3.
[16] *Alcibiades* I 125d1-4.
[17] A Corybantic chorus and chorus conducted by their *didaskalos* in *Euthydemus*; a dithyrambic chorus in *Gorgias*; an allusion to a seemingly well-known comic chorus in *Protagoras*; a choral celebration with its poet and a ritual chorus in celebration of a god in *Symposium*.
[18] See Annas 2002:1-23 for a critique of the standard chronologically defined 'middle' period of Plato's thought. We can note that she does still allow that a relative 'middle' period is justifiably referred to.
[19] *Phaedrus* 230c3, *Republic* 490c3-8, *Republic* 554b5, *Theaetetus* 173b3-c5, and *Timaeus* 40c3-d5.

Furthermore, it is among these more complex images that we begin to find clear signs of a bias in Plato's presentation of the chorus. As shall be seen, the images in *Republic*, *Phaedrus* and *Theaetetus* place a subtle but substantial emphasis on the leader-figure of the chorus and simultaneously play down the agency of the choral dancers themselves.

It is tempting to note that it is also in this middle period that certain other shifts in Plato's thought were occurring, most notably his articulation of the theory of Forms.[20] Even if, with those who question a straightforward development of Plato's thought,[21] we reject the idea that Plato was substantially altering his philosophical approach during this time, there is something to be drawn from the fact that his choral images, at least, become ever more complex and disassociated from the strictly social context of contemporary choral performance here. In one of Plato's last works, the *Laws*, we see how the metaphorical images of the chorus are put, effectively, into practice. Rather than appealing to the chorus as an illustrative tool, Plato puts the chorus (as he constructs it) to work in a new ideal city, complete with a distinct emphasis on the important role of the leader-figure.

This rough chronological sketch of Plato's choral thought is provocative rather than instructive and some may wish to reject any idea that we can trace this kind of intellectual development. What we can now appreciate, however, is how Plato sought to engage his audience with the familiar component of festival and was increasingly able, perhaps, to push the universally held assumptions about the

[20] We might also note that it is in these middle dialogues that we find a definition of 'philosophy', see Nightingale 1995:17n.11.
[21] See Annas 2002:1-23 for careful critique of the developmentalist approach.

chorus in his use of abstract choral constructs. The clear break in tactic between the *Laws* and the rest of the dialogues is helpful for prompting caution in approaching that text as a straightforward source for common assumptions about contemporary choral culture. The fact that there is a back-story to the presentation of the chorus in the *Laws* and, what is more, signs of clear preference or tendency in the way that Plato had been constructing and using the chorus as image previously, means that we are right to question his use of the chorus in his works.

Leading and Being Led: Plato's Choral Metaphors

We now turn to a more detailed analysis of Plato's presentation of the chorus. In approaching Plato as a source for fourth-century Athenian choral culture, *what* he says about the chorus may be fairly familiar.[22] An analysis of the information rendered to us about the chorus in Plato would make for somewhat uninspiring reading, if only because many of the 'facts' we take for granted about choral culture in antiquity are drawn from Plato's writings. More revealing are the questions of *how* and *why* he refers to the chorus when he does; these are the questions that will guide the analysis of Plato's presentation of the chorus in what follows.

In the previous chapter we have already taken some first steps along these lines in exploring some of the ways Plato uses choral imagery. Aside from being an accepted element embedded in society and playing a role in the general cultural context of the dialogues, we often find the chorus being used as a convenient and

[22] For summaries of what Plato says with regard to *choreia* in the *Laws*, see Morrow 1960:302-18, 352-77, Stalley 1983:124-127 and Lonsdale 1993:21-33.

familiar referent charged with culturally specific associations, which is then used for powerful rhetorical ends. But Plato's engagement with the chorus as image is not limited to its associative potency. After close analysis of the choral images and metaphors in Plato it becomes clear that a striking number are used to explore a bigger question and a theme with which many of the texts are concerned: the qualities of the leader-figure and how those who follow are affected by their leader.[23]

The chorus lends itself well as a tool for such an exploration, being a paradigm, familiar to everyone in ancient Greece, where an individual or individuals must be responsible for the action of a larger group. Xenophon also frequently uses the image of a chorus to elucidate something about the dynamic between a leader and his/her followers.[24] The applicability of the paradigm, e.g. in military and political contexts, broadens the types of issues that could potentially be discussed by means of choral metaphor. What becomes clear, as shall be seen, is that within this paradigm of leader and led (and to a greater extent than in Xenophon) the author places a particular emphasis on the importance and agency of the leader. This Platonic leader is represented as having a much greater influence over the character and action of the chorus it leads, to the extent that the agency of the choral body is all but denied and the leader becomes sole focus. It is within the framework of the relationship between leader and follower that the following analysis of Plato's choral imagery will be conducted. At moments when a choral image or reference to

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[23] It should be noted that Plato is not concerned so much with the abstract quality of 'leadership' (as someone like Xenophon manifestly is, see e.g. Gray 2011:179-245) as the delineation of what kind of person is fit to lead (e.g. the Guardians in the *Republic*).

[24] *Mem.*3.3-5, 4.4.16, *Cyr.*3.3.70, *Hie.*9.4.

a chorus seems unwarranted on purely associative and/or rhetorical grounds, a sensitivity to the overarching concern of Plato to delineate and prescribe the nature of the leader through choral imagery produces some rewarding insights.

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In book six of the *Republic,* following the famous parable of the ship of state, Socrates turns to describing the nature of the truly philosophic man and potential guardian:

> Well, then, will such a person have any part in the love of falsehood, or will he entirely hate it?" "He'll hate it." "And if truth led the way, we'd never say, I suppose, that a chorus of evils could ever follow in its train." "How could it?" "But rather a healthy and just character, with moderation following it." "That's right." "What need is there, then, to marshal all over again from the beginning the members of the philosophic nature's chorus in their inevitable array? Remember that courage, high-mindedness, ease in learning, and a good memory all belong to it."[25] 490b9-c11

In this passage we see Socrates construct a figurative chorus with truth, ἀλήθεια, as its leader and good people (or rather, definitely *not* κακοί) as followers, such as the young man just described. The portrayal of this potential guardian as a choreut is prepared for around twenty lines earlier, when truth is said to lead him - ἡγεῖτο δ' αὐτῷ, εἰ νῷ ἔχεις, πρῶτον μὲν ἀλήθεια, ἣν διώκειν αὐτὸν πάντως καὶ πάντῃ ἔδει, 'Truth before all else, if you recollect, leads him. Truth he was to seek always and altogether', (490a1-3). As well as perhaps drawing on a well-known choral trope where a particular god (here 'truth') is honoured and celebrated by a chorus, Plato

[25] All translations from Cooper (1997, ed.) unless otherwise stated. Τί οὖν; τούτῳ τι μετέσται ψεῦδος ἀγαπᾶν ἢ πᾶν τοὐναντίον μισεῖν; Μισεῖν, ἔφη. Ἡγουμένης δὴ ἀληθείας οὐκ ἄν ποτε οἶμαι φαμὲν αὐτῇ χορὸν κακῶν ἀκολουθῆσαι. Πῶς γάρ; Ἀλλ' ὑγιές τε καὶ δίκαιον ἦθος, ᾧ καὶ σωφροσύνην ἕπεσθαι. Ὀρθως, ἔφη. Καὶ δὴ τὸν ἄλλον τῆς φιλοσόφου φύσεως χορὸν τί δεῖ πάλιν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἀναγκάζοντα τάττειν; μέμνησαι γάρ που ὅτι συνέβη προσῆκον τούτοις ἀνδρεία, μεγαλοπρέπεια, εὐμάθεια, μνήμη·.

alludes to a close relationship between a leader and those who follow by implying that only a particular kind of character (ἦθος) could follow this leader. In effect, the leader is presented as defining the character of those that follow.

We see a very similar kind of presentation a little later in the *Republic*. Adeimantus and Socrates are analysing oligarchy and its analogue, the oligarchic man. The man and the constitution resemble each other first of all in their prioritising of money as the greatest good (554a3-4). Socrates notes that the reason for such 'drone-like appetites' is the fact that he has not come into contact with παιδεία (554b6-c1), to which Adeimantus adds the following image of a chorus led by the god Wealth: Οὐ δοκῶ, ἔφη· οὐ γὰρ ἂν τυφλὸν ἡγεμόνα τοῦ χοροῦ ἐστήσατο καὶ ἐτίμα μάλιστα, 'Not in my view, for, if he did, he wouldn't have chosen a blind leader [Wealth] for his chorus and honoured him most'.

Just as before, here we see the nature of the man (his drone-like appetites) is connected to the leader of his chorus (οὐ γὰρ ἂν τυφλὸν ἡγεμόνα τοῦ χοροῦ ἐστήσατο). And, just as in the previous example where the man is believed to pursue Truth in every way (…ἣν διώκειν αὐτὸν πάντως), the man here appears to be choosing his leader, if we are right to read the verb ἐστήσατο as connoting a conscious choice. And yet in both these passages the agency of the choreut is downplayed and the 'leader' of the chorus determines the character and action of the one who follows.[26]

[26] Cf. *Laws* 870a6-b2 for the same link between a desire for wealth and lack of παιδεία: τῆς δὲ ἀπαιδευσίας ἡ τοῦ κακῶς ἐπαινεῖσθαι πλοῦτον αἰτία φήμη πρὸς τῶν Ἑλλήνων τε καὶ βαρβάρων· πρῶτον γὰρ τῶν ἀγαθῶν αὐτὸ προκρίνοντες, τρίτον ὄν, τούς τ' ἐπιγιγνομένους λωβῶνται καὶ ἑαυτούς.

The idea of the nature, ἦθος, of a choreut being discussed and analysed through the prism of his chorus' leader is something of a departure, resting as it does on an essential assumption that there is absolute identification between choral dancer and choral leader. Nor are these isolated instances in Plato's works of a chorus leader acting as a defining principle for those who follow. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato contrasts the followers (variously ὀπαδός, θεραπευτής and χορευτής) of different gods:

> If the man who is taken by love used to be an attendant (ὀπαδός) on Zeus, he will be able to bear the burden of this feathered force with dignity. But if it is one of Ares' troops (θεραπευτής) who has fallen prisoner of love – if that is the god with whom he took the circuit – then if he has the slightest suspicion that the boy he loves has done him wrong, he turns murderous, and he is ready to make a sacrifice of himself as well as the boy. So it is with each of the gods: everyone spends his life honouring the god in whose chorus he danced, and emulates that god in every way he can...[27]
>
> 252c3-d2

Once more we see how the character of the follower is very much defined by the god he is led by. And while it may be perfectly reasonable to suppose that a chorus would display a certain style under the leadership of one or another chorus-teacher, chorus-leader or poet, it seems significant that Plato is presenting that top-down influence to a much greater degree, even (or perhaps especially) in a highly figurative context.[28]

The frequency of this particular emphasis on a leader in choral metaphor in the later works of Plato (from the *Republic* onwards) seems less abrupt when we

[27] Τῶν μὲν οὖν Διὸς ὀπαδῶν ὁ ληφθεὶς ἐμβριθέστερον δύναται φέρειν τὸ τοῦ πτερωνύμου ἄχθος· ὅσοι δὲ Ἄρεώς τε θεραπευταὶ καὶ μετ' ἐκείνου περιεπόλουν, ὅταν ὑπ' Ἔρωτος ἁλῶσι καί τι οἰηθῶσιν ἀδικεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐρωμένου, φονικοὶ καὶ ἕτοιμοι καθιερεύειν αὐτούς τε καὶ τὰ παιδικά. καὶ οὕτω καθ' ἕκαστον θεόν, οὗ ἕκαστος ἦν χορευτής, ἐκεῖνον τιμῶν τε καὶ μιμούμενος εἰς τὸ δυνατὸν ζῇ...

[28] See also *Theaetetus* 173c6-8 for another instance of the leader being the focus of the inquiry, while those who dance in the 'chorus' of philosophy are described as doing so 'ordinarily' (φαύλως).

look back at some choral images from his earlier works and are able to identify a similar emphasis in the presentation of the chorus, albeit a more subtle one. In the *Protagoras* image (315b2-8) in the previous chapter, we saw how the sophist was surrounded by a large group of people. The fact that we are told this chorus is made up mostly of foreigners (πολὺ ξένοι ἐφαίνοντο, 315a7) mixed up with a few Athenians might indicate, based on the connection we have seen between the ἦθος of the leader and his chorus, we are meant to use this information in our response to Protagoras himself. In Athens it was a common (although not universal) requirement for choruses to be made up of citizens, excluding foreigners from the city's choral culture. The incongruity of foreigners within a framework that, at least some of the time, had associations of citizenship (and the performance of citizenship) may have struck readers as disconcerting.

Perhaps further influencing our impression of Protagoras, Plato tells us there is also present in the chorus a man who is studying to become a sophist himself (ὅσπερ εὐδοκιμεῖ μάλιστα τῶν Πρωταγόρου μαθητῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τέχνῃ μανθάνει, ὡς σοφιστὴς ἐσόμενος, 315a4-5), a desire that Hippocrates himself has said is something he would be ashamed to admit (312a). I would suggest we are to understand these details about the composition of the chorus as designed to affect our perception of Protagoras, indicating perhaps that he lacks the necessary scruples in terms of what his teachings might lead to. Here, then, we might identify a preoccupation with leaders in Plato's thought, and how we might read more from his choral images by suggesting the emphasis on leaders effects how we might read

(or are meant to read) those images, to some extent. The choral body is used as a reflecting surface 'up' on to the choral leader.

Similarly in the *Ion*, believed to be one of Plato's early dialogues, we can see how the ability of a leader-figure to influence those who are (here, literally) dependent on him, is prefigured. Once again, we might note, no reciprocal exchange is made from lower to higher rank.

> And you know that this spectator is the last of the rings, don't you – the ones that I said take their power from each other by virtue of the Heraclian stone [the magnet]? The middle ring is you, the rhapsode or actor, and the first one is the poet himself. The god pulls people's souls through all these wherever he wants, looping the power down from one to another. And just as if it hung from that stone, there's an enormous chain of choral dancers and dance teachers, and assistant teachers hanging off to the side of the rings that are suspended from the Muse.[29]
>
> 535e7-536a7

The picture of a kind of choral hierarchy, envisaged on the magnetised rings that hang from the Heraclian stone, alludes to a quality that is most strong in the highest ring, ultimately a divinity, and is then passed down via the poet and chorus-teacher to the choreut himself. Although there is no explicit leader in this image, the idea that a chorus would take on the quality of those responsible for it and for there

[29] Οἶσθα οὖν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ θεατὴς τῶν δακτυλίων ὁ ἔσχατος, ὧν ἐγὼ ἔλεγον ὑπὸ τῆς Ἡρακλειώτιδος λίθου ἀπ' ἀλλήλων τὴν δύναμιν λαμβάνειν; ὁ δὲ μέσος σὺ ὁ ῥαψῳδὸς καὶ ὑποκριτής, ὁ δὲ πρῶτος αὐτὸς ὁ ποιητής· ὁ δὲ θεὸς διὰ πάντων τούτων ἕλκει τὴν ψυχὴν ὅποι ἂν βούληται τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἀνακρεμαννὺς ἐξ ἀλλήλων τὴν δύναμιν. καὶ ὥσπερ ἐκ τῆς λίθου ἐκείνης ὁρμαθὸς πάμπολυς ἐξήρτηται χορευτῶν τε καὶ διδασκάλων καὶ ὑποδιδασκάλων, ἐκ πλαγίου ἐξηρτημένων τῶν τῆς Μούσης ἐκκρεμαμένων δακτυλίων.

being no reciprocal exchange, feeds into the series of other images found in Plato's works and discussed above.[30]

It is possible to build on recognising Plato's unique view of a leader's definitive capability within his choral images and indeed use it to solve interpretative issues. One of the more puzzling references to the chorus in Plato is found in the *Euthydemus*. Socrates is beginning to question his interlocutor, the young Cleinias, on how to prosper (εὖ πράττειν) in life (278e2ff). He points to the generally held opinion that to fare well, one needs to have many good things (πολλὰ κἀγαθά). Among the goods they list together are wealth, health, beauty, good birth, power, honour in one's city, temperance, justice and courage. "Well then", continues Socrates, "where in the chorus shall we place wisdom? Among the goods? What do you say?" (τὴν δὲ σοφίαν ποῦ χοροῦ τάξομεν; ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς, ἢ πῶς λέγεις; 279c1-2). The language surrounding the question highlights that this is a crucial point in the dialogue. Just prior, Socrates presses Cleinias to be sure that he would consider, as most do, that these things are indeed good, and he suggests that it is possible some may disagree with their conclusions so far (279b4-8). Just after Cleinias assents to Socrates' suggestion they place wisdom among the goods, there is another pause while the questioner asks Cleinias once more if he's forgotten anything ('take heed that we do not pass over any of the goods that may deserve mention', 279c2-4). These are dramatic pauses in the flow of questioning which signal that the point about wisdom is a crucial one for Socrates. This is confirmed as

[30] This kind of interaction, with someone of a higher rank imparting a particular quality to those lower ranked, will become even more significant for the discussion of how Plato envisages 'education' in choruses (see below).

the *elenchus* continues and it is shown that none of the listed goods can provide any benefit without wisdom (279d6-281e1).

How to understand the question τὴν δὲ σοφίαν ποῦ χοροῦ τάξομεν initially appears to be straightforward. The question 'where' points to the ranging of choreuts for performance with its best performers more prominently placed than those less gifted.[31] In this sense, Socrates is asking what value Cleinias places on wisdom in relation to other things i.e. whether it is a worthy companion for the allegedly good things already mentioned. The image is complicated, however, by the follow-up question, ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς; 'among the goods?'.[32] Socrates appears to be asking "Shall we place wisdom among the good bit of the chorus [of all things], along with those goods that we've just listed i.e. temperance, courage, wealth" etc. To extrapolate further meaning along these lines would mean positing that Socrates is applying the image of a chorus to the class of things that either cause one to fare well or fare badly. They have been concentrating on the goods and hence their focus is on the 'good' part of the chorus, to which wisdom is now to have a part. Yet this idea of virtues and vices all making up one 'chorus' – although a suitable allegory for the human soul,[33] filled as it is with all kinds of vice and virtues all vying with each

[31] This is attested in Aristotle (Ar.*Met.*1018b26-29) and a fragment of Menander (fr.130 with Pickard-Cambridge 1968:241-2) for the choreuts themselves and not just a division of leader-figure and the rest of the chorus. Together with the likely considerations of aesthetics (i.e. producing the best looking chorus), we can be fairly sure that this practice was commonly accepted and need not rely on the often-quoted passage in Aelius Aristides (*On behalf of the Four* (III) 154 cf. Dindorf 2.535ff), written almost five hundred years later.

[32] Canto describes the confusion thus: 'L'expression est surprenante car, si les biens forment un choeur, sans doute leur ensemble doit-il être homagene et complet, comment est-il possible en ce cas d'y ajouter un autre bien?' Canto 1987:129.

[33] For a comparison of chorus and soul, see *Gorgias* 482b7-10. For the chorus as a practical place to resolve and harmonise internal tension between music and gymnastics see *Republic* 412b3-6. For a

other with respect to their concomitant appetites – is not picked up again by Plato, nor is it developed further in this dialogue.

To understand the purpose of this choral image in the first question (together with its modifying second question), it is necessary to alter slightly our reading of the question - 'shall we place it among the goods?'. What emerges later in the dialogue is that wisdom, far from being one of many goods, is in fact *the* good without which all other qualities of courage, beauty or health can serve no purpose for someone who has them (281d2-e1). Applying what we have seen about Plato's construction of the leader in choral situations, wisdom appears best placed to take that role, defining as it does all the other alleged goods listed by Socrates and Cleinias and conferring on them an aspect of goodness.

Returning to the choral image with this later outcome in mind, the question, 'where in the chorus do we place wisdom' seems to be slightly misleading. Wisdom, in being essential for the correct use of all those elements that are counted among good things (health, wealth etc.), should not be placed *within* a chorus but should be understood, perhaps, as one would a leader, performing the function of a central point to which all other 'goods' are to look towards. The role of wisdom within this so-called chorus is shown to be essential and definitive for all those other goods that make up the chorus (281d2-e1), and so seems to be identifiable with the leader-figure that has emerged from other choral metaphors in Plato's works. Therefore it seems that we are to read the second question not as 'among the *goods*?' (as opposed to among the bad things), but as '*among* the goods?' as opposed to placing

metaphor equating the chorus and the government (again, we might assume, on account of their multiple 'moving' parts) see *Republic* 580b5-7.

wisdom over and above the other virtues. The fact that there are no explicit verbal pointers to this emphasis on ἑν as opposed to the ἀγαθοί should not be troubling since, on first reading, we the reader are, with Cleinias, meant to misunderstand. Indeed, this is the kind of subtle crafting of word and image that Plato regularly employs and was no doubt designed to benefit the re-reader of Plato.

The Chorus in Action

From the choral images we have seen here, we are able to discern certain qualities in Plato's presentation of the chorus in metaphor (and traces of these qualities can be found earlier). Already we can identify a gap between this one author's presentation of the chorus and a choral model in evidence in lyric and dramatic performances, as well as the model seen in other authors' choral images. First of all, we can note that, while Plato focuses the reader on to the leader-figure in these choral metaphors, the performing chorus, familiar to all inhabitants of Greece from an early age, would have commanded the primary attention of the viewer (even when the choral body slips between identities or builds up layers of identities: the poet, a fictional character or the 'community').[34] The choral body in performance, then, provides an immediate, if intuitively understood, alternative presentation of the chorus where the body is viewed as primary mover/agent, and

[34] Within studies of both the lyric and dramatic chorus, the question of who and what is being represented has been central, see e.g. Nagy 1990:339-81, Lefkowitz 1991 *passim*, D'Alessio 1994:117-39, Henrichs 1994-5:56-111 (esp. 56-60 and 65-73), Mastronarde 1998:55-80, Foley 2003:2-12, Kurke 2005:81-130 (esp. 104-119), Bierl 2009:24-47.

the leader-figure (be it a poet, trainer or *choregos*) as secondary and only partially visible agent.

Plato's picture of the relationship between leader and led in the chorus runs counter to presentations of the chorus elsewhere in literature. We can note the stark contrast with the way a certain kind of reciprocity is shown in poetry e.g. between the chorus of Sophocles' *Ajax* and the eponymous hero.[35] Even in Xenophon, whose choral images are the closest to those of Plato in terms of their function within a discussion of leaders and leadership (in the *Memorabilia* in particular), the focus on agency and activity is shared between both leader and led in a way that is far from prominent in Plato's images.[36]

The gap between Plato's choral model and that of other authors grows significantly wider in the *Laws,* where Plato's unusually unbalanced presentation of the relationship between leader and led is put to practical use and justified repeatedly, in various ways and at some length. The choral images seen so far have

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[35] Most clearly at lines 160-1 – μετὰ γὰρ μεγάλων βαιὸς ἄριστ' ἂν/ καὶ μέγας ὀρθοῖθ' ὑπὸ μικροτέρων. Further indications of the chorus' reciprocal responsibility to look after their leader just as he looks after them may be inferred from their exhortation for Ajax to leave his hut (192), their expectation that the sight of them will cause Ajax to feel shame (345) and their attempts to control his grief (362-3, 377-8, 383, 386, 483-4). The reciprocity of responsibility and control that is highlighted in this chorus of Sophocles' is also present in our archaic models. The maidens of Alcman's first *partheneion* allude to the Sirens, only to point out their leaders *cannot* be compared to those goddesses (ἀ δὲ τᾶν Σηρην[ί]δων/ ἀοιδοτέρα μ[ὲν οὐχί,/ σιαὶ γάρ', 'She may not sing sweeter that the Sirens, for they are goddesses', *PMG* fr.1.96-8). Their prayer to the gods on behalf of their leader (82ff) will benefit their leaders (the chorus hope), but also highlights the chorus' ability to command the attention of the gods and, hence, provide benefits for their leader. For further discussion of the control of an individual in and thorough choral song, see Lonsdale 1993:193-205 and Kurke 2007:63-101.

[36] See e.g. *Mem*.3.3.12013 where it is the *philotimia* of the Athenians in general that mean that whenever choruses are sent to Delos, the Athenians are pre-eminent. We should note that, in general, Xenophon's choral images tend towards the illustrative or associative as opposed to Plato's where the application of choral imagery to abstract concepts allows the chorus to shape and affect the discussion to a greater degree.

been included in the discussions as illustrations and help to clarify an aspect of the topic of conversation by referring to a familiar type of social structure. In sharp contrast, what we find in the *Laws* is a sustained picture of the actual and practical role choral culture might play in an ideal city.[37] In this work there are very few choral images and no choral metaphors used, unlike his use of choral imagery in previous works. This clear shift in practice may be connected to the shift from theoretical discussion to a more practical application of previous philosophical discussion, but it nevertheless places Plato's chorus within the realm of effective social structures as opposed to affective choral images.[38]

As part of Plato's justification for so prominent and politically loaded a choral culture in Magnesia, the qualities specific to choral performance are explored and set out as theoretically and philosophically justifiable rationales, predominantly in books two and seven. It is striking, but perhaps not surprising, that a quality we identified above as unusual in Plato's presentation of the chorus in metaphor and image – the predominantly one-way influence from leader to follower – is essential in this discussion of the practicalities of choral culture. As shall be seen, in the *Laws* we are presented with a picture of choral culture that has been developed in the choral images and metaphors of previous dialogues, put into the context of practical politics.

[37] The city created in books 4-12 of the *Laws* (Cleinias does not mention that he is one of ten Cretans charged with founding a new colony until 702b-d) is famously described by the Athenian Stranger as the 'second best' city (739e). The first three books are a kind of preparation for the particular focus of founding the colony but many of the concepts discussed there are transferred directly into the Cretan colony of Magnesia – one of these being the basic three-tier structure of choral song and dance in the city. The practical benefits of *choreia* are briefly recognised in *Republic* (412b).

[38] For the similar shift from theory into practice in a range of other aspects of Plato's philosophy see Scolnicov and Brisson 2003 *passim*.

The following section shows how the importance accorded to the leader-figure within a choral framework is set out in the *Laws* and why we are justified in qualifying many of the statements found in that work (ἀπαίδευτος ἀχόρευτος among them) in light of the decidedly counter-cultural construction of choral culture.

i. The Chorus in Action I: Choral Dance and the Irrational

The first quality that has a significant part to play in the choral culture of the *Laws,* already identified in Plato's metaphorical choruses, is the peculiar receptivity or passivity of the choral body itself. As the choral experience is described and theorised at some length in the *Laws*, its (intrinsic, if we take up Plato's cues) lack of agency becomes clear. Despite the focus in this work on the experience of the choreut, the picture of a choral body entirely dependent on its leader is not altered. It is strengthened rather, as we see the Athenian's justifications by presenting the choral body as particularly malleable and choral performance a forum for creating a perfectly responsive and receptive group that requires a knowledgeable leader to guide its action.

In the theoretical discussion touching on the chorus and related genres in books two and seven, we are able to trace a pattern of associations that help shape the reader's perception of the chorus' role in the city, as well as our understanding of the nature of the choral body in Plato's construction of choral culture. Through subtle allusion, or tellingly revealing but unconscious slippages, Plato presents a

picture of the choral body that is underpinned by two analogic states of being: the state of childhood, and the state of ritual frenzy or drunkenness. Through repeatedly associating the choral experience with these two states of mind, Plato presents the choreut as without rational thought and entirely dependent on the sensations of pleasure and pain.[39] The significance of this shall be seen towards the end of this section when we consider upon whom the singing, dancing population of Magnesia is to rely for the benefits of choral dance, as defined in this way.

The tracing of associations between childhood and choral dance begins with the initial adumbration of the sociological origin and function of the chorus in an ideal society. It follows on from the expanded definition of παιδεία as the right training (ὀρθῶς τρεφεῖν) of pleasures and pains, first mentioned in book one (653a-c).

> Ath: Now these forms of child-training, which consist in right discipline in pleasures and pains, grow slack (χαλᾶται) and weakened (διαφθείρεται) to a great extent in the course of men's lives; but the gods, in pity for the human race thus born to misery, have ordained the feasts of thanksgiving as periods of respite from their troubles; and they have granted them as companions in their feasts (ξυνεορτασταί) the Muses and Apollo the master of music, and Dionysus, that they may at least set right again (ἐπανορθῶνται) their modes of discipline by associating in their feasts with gods. We must consider, then, whether the account that is harped on (ὑμνεῖται[40]) nowadays is true to nature? What it says is that, almost without exception, every young creature (τὸ νέον) is incapable of keeping either its

[39] See Belfiore 2006:207-11 for the relationship between *choreia*, corybantic frenzy and the description of the soul in the charioteer image in the (*Phaedrus* 246a-257b). The related debates concerning rational persuasion in the *Laws* (and hence individual agency) and Plato's use of pleasure and pain cannot be done justice in this discussion. The emphasis on lack of reason for citizens participating in Magnesia's choruses should, however, have a greater place in these discussions. For some recent treatments of the issue see Laks 2007:130-52 and 2010:217-31, Bobonich 1991:365-88 and 1996:249-82, and Bravo 2003:103-15.

[40] For this sense of the verb ὑμνέω being preferable to 'hymned' in a Platonic context see *Prt.*317a, *Rep.* 329b, 364a and 549e, *Tht.* 174e.

body or its tongue quiet, and is always striving to move and to cry, leaping and skipping and delighting in dances and games (οἷον ὀρχούμενα μεθ' ἡδονῆς καὶ προσπαίζοντα), and uttering, also, noises of every description. Now, whereas all other creatures are devoid of any perception of the various kinds of order and disorder in movement (which we term rhythm and harmony), to us men the very gods, who were given, as we said, to be our fellows in the dance (συγχορευταί), have granted the pleasurable perception of rhythm and harmony, whereby they cause us to move and lead our choruses, linking us one with another by means of songs and dances; and to the chorus they have given its name from the "cheer" implanted therein. Shall we accept this account to begin with, and postulate that education owes its origin to Apollo and the Muses?

Clin: Yes.

Ath: Shall we assume that the uneducated man is without chorus-training, and the educated man fully chorus-trained?

Clin: Certainly.[41] 653c7-654b2

It is surprising how obliquely the chorus is introduced into the discussion, especially considering the key role it will have to play in the colony of Magnesia. Indeed the whole passage appears logically lacunose.[42] We are not told why choral dance in particular (as opposed to solo song and dance, perhaps) is picked up as the means by which both the young and adults are able to train or retrain their pleasures and pains. We are left to infer that the ability to perceive harmony and rhythm enables children to harness their natural energy and provides a suitable activity for the

[41] Trans. Bury 1984.

[42] Kurke (2013:130-31) recognises that this is a 'sneaky' passage. In the first half there is no mention of choral dance, only the 'training' (τροφή) that children receive and the discipline that may be regained at festivals. Only after the natural state of the young (τὸ νέος) is described as one of perpetual movement and making noise does the description of the gods shift from 'companions in the feast' (ξυνεορτασταί) to 'companions in choral dance' (συγχορευταί); this is the first explicit mention of choral dance in book two. The perception of rhythm and harmony (which, we presume, facilitates a kind of training of the movements of the young, see *Timaeus* 47d2-e2 for rhythm and harmony as means for creating harmony within the soul) is linked to mankind's desire to set up and, peculiarly, to **lead** choruses, and this in turn is meant to explain how the relevant gods – the Muses, Apollo and Dionysus – might be described as responsible for *paideia* (for Apollo's traditional connection to the Muses, and the Muses' connection to Dionysus, see Schöpsdau 1994:259-60). See below p.270 for the impact the preceding passage has on our understanding of the quotable and oft-quoted ἀπαίδευτος ἀχόρευτος.

training of their pleasures and pains (παιδεία),[43] while the re-enactment of this kind of movement in later life at festivals allows men to remember the training they received as children - but these conclusions are left for the reader to draw.[44]

It is likely that Plato is able to sketch this rough aetiology of the chorus in the way he does because he is drawing together things (festival, *paideia*, choral dance and divine companionship at festival) that were already familiar and closely associated in the minds of his audience. But even if Plato's audience did not have as much difficulty in tracing how the logic of the passage proceeds as we do, this should not obscure the fact that the associations made between childhood (the inability to cease from moving and making noise) and choral dance, and the apparent return to childhood, inherent in festival celebrations, have an important impact on our understanding of the choral experience. Further passages confirm that this association between childhood and choral dance is essential for Plato's own construction of choral culture in the ideal city and acts as one of a number of associations that encourage our impression of a particularly receptive choral body.

We find a less equivocal fusion of states of childhood and *choreia*, in addition to further associations with Bacchic frenzy and a lack of reason, in the conclusion to the argument for the social and educational benefit of wine and drinking institutions - now newly christened 'the chorus of Dionysus'.

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[43] Scholars have been happy to fill in the gaps e.g. Lonsdale (1993:24) who compares the process described here with Bourdieu's description of social habituation (*habitus*). For a philosophically focused treatment see Kamtekar 2010:127-48.

[44] See Schöpsdau 1994:259 on 653d1-2 for festival as a time to relax from the travails of life being a conventional thought, citing Th.2.38.1, Arist.*EN*.8.11.1160a24-5. We will see later in the *Laws* the citizens will not have to work (806d, 835d-e, 846d) and so this justification doesn't apply in quite the same way, as Schöpsdau points out.

> There is a little-known current of story and tradition which says that Dionysus was robbed of his wits by his stepmother Hera, and that he gets his revenge by stimulating us to Bacchic frenzies and all the mad dancing that results; and this was precisely the reason why he made us a present of wine. This sort of story, however, I leave to those who see no danger in speaking of the gods in such terms. But I am quite certain of this: no animal that enjoys the use of reason in its maturity is ever born with that faculty, or at any rate with it fully developed. During the time in which it has not yet attained its characteristic level of intelligence, it is completely mad: it bawls uncontrollably, and as soon as it can get on its feet it jumps about with equal abandon. Let's think back: we said that this situation gave rise to music and gymnastics. [45] 672b3-c6

The importance of the myth is highlighted by the Athenian's professed ignorance of its truth (ἐγὼ δὲ τὰ μὲν τοιαῦτα τοῖς ἀσφαλὲς ἡγουμένοις εἶναι λέγειν περὶ θεῶν ἀφίημι λέγειν – if he thought the myth irrelevant, why include it?). It is in this myth of Dionysus' vengeance that we find the connection between Bacchic frenzy (possibly inspired by wine) and the loss of one's rational capacities. We can infer this from the fact that the rites are introduced as appropriate vengeance for Hera's robbing Dionysus of his own soul's judgement (τῆς ψυχῆς ἡ γνώμη). The gift of wine, Bacchic rites and *choreia* are all linked in this initial myth. The Athenian then goes on to strengthen those connections, first between the state of childhood and lack of reason (πᾶν ζῷον, ὅσον αὐτῷ προσήκει νοῦν ἔχειν τελεωθέντι, τοῦτον καὶ τοσοῦτον οὐδὲν ἔχον ποτὲ φύεται) and then this reasonless state of childhood with

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[45] Λόγος τις ἅμα καὶ φήμη ὑπορρεῖ πως ὡς ὁ θεὸς οὗτος ὑπὸ τῆς μητρυᾶς Ἥρας διεφορήθη τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν γνώμην, διὸ τάς τε βακχείας καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν μανικὴν ἐμβάλλει χορείαν τιμωρούμενος· ὅθεν καὶ τὸν οἶνον ἐπὶ τοῦτ' αὐτὸ δεδώρηται. ἐγὼ δὲ τὰ μὲν τοιαῦτα τοῖς ἀσφαλὲς ἡγουμένοις εἶναι λέγειν περὶ θεῶν ἀφίημι λέγειν, τὸ δὲ τοσόνδε οἶδα, ὅτι πᾶν ζῷον, ὅσον αὐτῷ προσήκει νοῦν ἔχειν τελεωθέντι, τοῦτον καὶ τοσοῦτον οὐδὲν ἔχον ποτὲ φύεται· ἐν τούτῳ δὴ τῷ χρόνῳ ἐν ᾧ μήπω κέκτηται τὴν οἰκείαν φρόνησιν, πᾶν μαίνεταί τε καὶ βοᾷ ἀτάκτως, καὶ ὅταν ἀκταινώσῃ ἑαυτὸ τάχιστα, ἀτάκτως αὖ πηδᾷ. ἀναμνησθῶμεν δὲ ὅτι μουσικῆς τε καὶ γυμναστικῆς ἔφαμεν ἀρχὰς ταύτας εἶναι.

the frenzy and physical movement found in Bacchic rites (ἐν τούτῳ δὴ τῷ χρόνῳ ἐν ᾧ μήπω κέκτηται τὴν οἰκείαν φρόνησιν, πᾶν μαίνεταί τε καὶ βοᾷ ἀτάκτως). The final reminder of the previous discussion of the origins of music and gymnastics[46] carries the echo of the association established there too of childhood and *choreia* (653d7-654a5).

Although not specifically tied to *choreia* we see elsewhere the effect of wine described as making one feel younger and at the same time making the drinker more malleable: 'when this takes place, the souls of the drinkers turn softer, like iron, through being heated, and younger too; whence they become ductile, just as when they were young, in the hands of the man who has the skill and ability to train and mould them' (ὅταν γίγνηται ταῦτα, καθάπερ τινὰ σίδηρον τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν πινόντων διαπύρους γιγνομένας μαλθακωτέρας γίγνεσθαι καὶ νεωτέρας, ὥστε εὐαγώγους συμβαίνειν τῷ δυναμένῳ τε καὶ ἐπισταμένῳ παιδεύειν τε καὶ πλάττειν, καθάπερ ὅτ' ἦσαν νέαι; 671b8-c2).[47] Wine then simulates in the old what comes naturally to those who are young, namely, a kind of malleability. This ductile quality may be added to the matrix of analogous states that touch on or are introduced around the presentation of choral performance.

Later in book seven we find a similar description of these analogous states of being in the early stages of the Athenian's prescriptions for early childcare.

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[46] We might safely read *choreia* as what is being referred to here, see 672e5-673a10. See also *R.*3.412a-b where *choreia* is included as one of a number of modes to employ both music and gymnastics to produce harmonious souls.
[47] See also 666b2-c2.

> And I suppose you know what a mother does when she wants to get a wakeful child to sleep. Far from keeping him still, she takes care to move him about, rocking him constantly in her arms, not silently, but humming a kind of tune. The cure consists of *movement*, to the rhythms of dance and song; the mother make her child '*pipe down*' just as surely as the music of the *pipes* bewitches the frenzied Bacchic reveller.[48]
>
> 790d5-e4

Once more, the Athenian blends the state of childhood (here very young children) and Bacchic[49] frenzy, and shows how *choreia* might act as a medium to affect their agitated state. It is significant that we are reminded in this way (at the beginning of book seven where the systematic program for choral training and *paideia* is to be set out) of the potential vulnerability of those in states of mind analogous to that of choral performance.

We can note the effect of featuring the child-like state so prominently in the passages cited above, in that it allows, even encourages, a dynamic between the choral body any potential leader-figure of a parent or teacher and child. The childlike energy and engagement of emotion during choral dance is essential for choral performance to function as a paideutic[50] tool (as shall be demonstrated more fully below), but such a childlike state also opens the choral performer up to particularly strong influence from the content of the choral piece or the leader-

[48] ἡνίκα γὰρ ἄν που βουληθῶσιν κατακοιμίζειν τὰ δυσυπνοῦντα τῶν παιδίων αἱ μητέρες, ούχ ἡσυχίαν αύτοῖς προσφέρουσιν άλλὰ τούναντίον κίνησιν, έν ταῖς άγκάλαις άεὶ σείουσαι, καὶ ού σιγὴν άλλά τινα μελῳδίαν, καὶ άτεχνῶς οἷον καταυλοῦσι τῶν παιδίων, καθάπερ ἡ τῶν έκφρόνων βακχειῶν ίάσεις, ταύτῃ τῇ τῆς κινήσεως ἅμα χορείᾳ καὶ μούσῃ χρώμεναι.

[49] And/or Corybantic frenzy. See Linforth 1946:129-133 on the potential differences and similarities between the two rites.

[50] I choose to use 'paideutic' as opposed to 'educational' to mark clearly the difference between the concept of education according to Plato (something more akin to our 'upbringing' or the German *Bildung*) and our modern concept of education. What is promoted by choral dance, as presented by Plato, is a kind of homeostatic process, where the values of a society are repeated and thereby reinforced within that society, see Lonsdale 1993:19. On the differences of *paideia* in the *Republic* and the *Laws*, see Cleary 2003:165-73. For the importance of 'play' in this kind of *paideia*, see Jouet-Pastré 2000:71-84 and 2006 *passim*. For the difference in theories of 'education' in *Republic* and the *Laws* see Mouze 2000:57-69.

figure of the performance. Similarly suggestible is the state of Bacchic frenzy and drunkenness.[51] By adducing these analogous states in the initial description of choral culture in an ideal city and firmly associating that choral state with a kind of vulnerability to suggestion, the receptivity and malleability of the choral body is emphasised.

To dance in the chorus, then, is to return to childhood, to lose one's sense (νοῦς or γνώμη), to enter an initiation and to give oneself up to emotion. The highly emotional and reason-less state of mind of the choral dancer seems to deny the ability of the choral dancer to reason for herself or gain any agency within choral performances in the ideal city.

ii. The Chorus in Action II: the 'Benefits' of Choral Malleability

The state of mind any choral dancer will find themselves in is of particular value to the Athenian. *Paideia* is emphasised in book one to be a key concern and a prerequisite for any discussion of a city's laws (641d7-9). And indeed it is for the purposes of *paideia* that the choral experience is courted by the Athenian and placed at the very core of the ideal city. The connection between choral malleability and *paideia* is principally worked out in the Athenian's explicit analysis of the function of choral dance in book two. Very early on it is made clear that the emotional

[51] Most accessible for us is the story of Agave's madness and her consequent murder of her song Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae,* but these types of narrative would have abounded in all kinds of media.

engagement of the individual within a choral performance is not just inevitable, but vital for the best kind of training in *choreia* and *mousike*.

> Now then, take a man whose opinion about what is good is correct (it really *is* good), and likewise in the case of the bad (it really *is* bad), and follows this judgment in practice. He may be able to represent, by word and gesture, and with invariable success, his intellectual conception of what is good, even though he gets no pleasure from it and feels no hatred for what is bad. Another man may not be very good at keeping on the right lines when he uses his body and his voice to represent the good, or at trying to form some intellectual conception of it; but he may be very much on the right lines in his feelings of pleasure and pain, because he welcomes what is good and loathes what is bad.[52] 654c3-d3

The potential for a choreut to sing and dance perfectly well and yet not feel the necessary emotions of pleasure and pain at what he is enacting is recognised and shown to be of less value (for Plato) than someone who may be less physically or vocally skilled, yet responds emotionally to the things that he should feel pleasure and pain towards. This is not to say that outward appearance and inward emotion are entirely separate in Plato's conception of the choral experience. A little later, the Athenian points us towards the connection between a cowardly soul and the postures attached to that state of being, or a courageous soul and its concomitant postures (654e9-655b6, 815e4-816a3). Nevertheless, the emotional response to the choral song and dance is clearly of central importance in this presentation of the chorus. The Athenian therefore sees the ideal choral performance as being useful

[52] Τί δ’ ἂν τὰ καλά τε ἡγούμενος εἶναι καλὰ καὶ τὰ αίσχρὰ αίσχρὰ οὔτως αύτοῖς χρῆται; βέλτιον ὁ τοιοῦτος πεπαιδευμένος ἡμῖν ἔσται τὴν χορείαν τε καὶ μουσικὴν ἢ ὃς ἂν τῷ μὲν σώματι καὶ τῇ φωνῇ τὸ διανοηθὲν εἶναι καλὸν ἱκανῶς ὑπηρετεῖν δυνηθῇ ἑκάστοτε, χαίρῃ δὲ μὴ τοῖς καλοῖς μηδὲ μισῇ τὰ μὴ καλά; ἢ ’κεῖνος ὃς ἂν τῇ μὲν φωνῇ καὶ τῷ σώματι μὴ πάνυ δυνατὸς ᾖ κατορθοῦν, ἢ διανοεῖσθαι, τῇ δὲ ἡδονῇ καὶ λύπῃ κατορθοῖ, τὰ μὲν ἁσπαζόμενος, ὅσα καλά, τὰ δὲ δυσχεραίνων, ὁπόσα μὴ καλά;

for *paideia* primarily via the stirring up of correct emotion in the performer. Within the choral performance, pleasure and pain are not to be inevitable by-products of a particular state of mind, but are rather utilised to shape the individual choreut.

However, the benefit of this kind of stirring up and training of emotion within choral dance is dependent on the correct guidance of those emotions. What is important in this part of the Athenian's argument is the opening sentence, which puts the emotional engagement of the choral dancer under the condition of knowing what are τὰ καλά and what are τὰ αίσχρά. And as the Athenian is quick to point out, many people differ in their opinions of what is good (with respect to choral dance, here) and what is bad (655b9-c8).[53] Consequently, the possible criteria that people might use for judging what is bad and what is good is explored. Most people are shown to use pleasure as their prime motivator for calling anything (choral or otherwise) good or bad (657d-659d, 667b-671a), but this is shown to be deficient and the Athenian points to the example of the theatres in Sicily and Italy as evidence of this (659b-c). Instead, the Athenian entrusts knowledge of what makes a good or bad choral dance to those in the ideal society with the most experience and hence wisdom on the subject (657d-659d, 664e-665d, 668d-671a). Indeed, the Athenian flatly denies that expertise in the matters of good and bad choral dances may be found in more than a few members of society. In no uncertain terms, the choral dancers are said to be acting in utter ignorance:

> The belief of the general public, that they can form an adequate judgment of merit and demerit in matters of harmony and rhythm, is laughable (γελοῖος): they have only been drilled (διηναγκασμένοι) into singing to the pipes and marching in step,

[53] Here too, then, is an important and often ignored proviso to the sound bite ἀπαίδευτος ἀχόρευτος.

> and they never stop to think that they do all this without the smallest understanding of it (δρῶσιν ταῦτα ἀγνοοῦντες).[54] 670b8-c2

At the same time, the Athenian adduces the reasons why the choral dancer cannot know what is good and bad in the dance. There is of course the statement earlier on that the process of training pleasures and pains in children is necessary because they cannot grasp logic (653b1-c4). But the Athenian also cites the mimetic quality of choral performance as a reason for a partial judgement of the content on the part of the performer.

> Performances given by choruses are representations of character, and deal with every variety of action and incident. The individual performers enact their roles partly by expressing their own characters, partly by imitating those of others. That is why, when they find that the speaking or singing or any other element in the performance of a chorus appeals to their natural character or acquired habits, or both, they can't help applauding with delight and using the term 'good'. But sometimes they find these performances going against the grain of their natural character or their disposition or habits, in which case they are unable to take any pleasure in them and applaud them, and in this case the word they use is 'shocking'.[55] 655d5-e5

In choral performance, the performer's opinion of the goodness or badness of the piece will depend upon his own nature (φύσις) and his habits (ἔθος). If the performance imitates his own opinions, sprung from natural inclinations or the habits acquired over the years, then the performer will approve of the piece

[54] Γελοῖος γὰρ ὅ γε πολὺς ὄχλος ἡγούμενος ἱκανῶς γιγνώσκειν τό τε εὐάρμοστον καὶ εὔρυθμον καὶ μή, ὅσοι προσᾴδειν αὑτῶν καὶ βαίνειν ἐν ῥυθμῷ γεγόνασι διηναγκασμένοι, ὅτι δὲ δρῶσιν ταῦτα ἀγνοοῦντες αὑτῶν ἕκαστα, οὐ συλλογίζονται.

[55] Ἐπειδὴ μιμήματα τρόπων ἐστὶ τὰ περὶ τὰς χορείας, ἐν πράξεσί τε παντοδαπαῖς γιγνόμενα καὶ τύχαις, καὶ ἤθεσι καὶ μιμήσεσι διεξιόντων ἑκάστων, οἷς μὲν ἂν πρὸς τρόπου τὰ ῥηθέντα ἢ μελῳδηθέντα ἢ καὶ ὁπωσοῦν χορευθέντα, ἢ κατὰ φύσιν ἢ κατὰ ἔθος ἢ κατ' ἀμφότερα, τούτους μὲν καὶ τούτοις χαίρειν τε καὶ ἐπαινεῖν αὐτὰ καὶ προσαγορεύειν καλὰ ἀναγκαῖον, οἷς δ' ἂν παρὰ φύσιν ἢ τρόπον ἤ τινα συνήθειαν, οὔτε χαίρειν δυνατὸν οὔτε ἐπαινεῖν αἰσχρά τε προσαγορεύειν.

whereas a performance that requires him to imitate someone or something that represents values contrary to his natural or habitual inclination, will incur his disapproval. The Athenian goes on to point out that sometimes the φύσις and ἔθος can be at odds with one another, and in this case correct emotional engagement is impossible on account of one inclination undermining the other (655e5-656a5). Presented in this way, it seems very difficult for the choral performer to approve correctly of a performance, especially since both his natural inclination (φύσις) *and* his habits (ἔθος) must, apparently, be in harmony in their judgement. If this is not the case, it would not matter if their natural inclination regarding what was good or not was correct since the judgement they acquired by habit would undermine that inclination, we assume making the emotional involvement of the performer somewhat less than whole-hearted and therefore deficient.

In addition to preventing impartial judgement on the content of choral performance, the imitative nature of choral performance has a more active function in its power to affect that habitual inclination of the performer.[56] If the content is not, in fact, good, the performer will suffer a kind of incorrect training, since the mimetic nature of choral performance serves to assimilate the performer with what is performed. The Athenian persuades his interlocutors of this by means of a comparison to a man living with the bad habits of wicked men (τις πονηροῖς ἤθεσιν συνὼν κακῶν ἀνθρώπων, 656b2). There, even if a man is vaguely aware that he should be ashamed to be associated with such habits, by a process of assimilation after time, he will grow to approve of these habits (656b1-7). We see the power of

[56] See Stalley 1983:127-9 for a summary of the various kinds of *mimesis* referred to in *Republic* and what bearing they have on the mimetic aspect of choral performance as described in the *Laws*.

choral performance to shape the opinion of the performer once more, summed up in riddling style when the Athenian identifies the use (χρεία) of choral performance in the following way: 'we rejoice whenever we think we are prospering, and, conversely, whenever we rejoice we think we are prospering' (χαίρομεν ὅταν οἰώμεθα εὖ πράττειν, καὶ ὁπόταν χαίρωμεν, οἰόμεθα εὖ πράττειν αὖ; 657c5-6). The relationship between action and the effect on the person performing the action is seen as mutually reinforcing. And indeed this potential for choral performance by virtue of its mimetic quality to improve the performer (and audience too) is shown (659c, 664bc-c). Later in books eight and twelve we will see how this choral capability for positively reinforcing opinions through action is used for the benefit of society with regards to training for war (830c-831a and 942d2-e1).

In the construction of the choral experience and its function within society as essentially dependent on the content of choral performance, rather than the performers themselves, Plato needs to present us with a particularly receptive choral body. What we have not yet considered is who is to determine the content of choral performance and it is to this pivotal topic that we now turn.

iii. The Chorus in Action III: Plato's Choral 'Leaders'

Who is the leader of chorus in the ideal city of the *Laws*? There are numerous candidates for this role in the broader choral culture of Classical Greece, dependent on both the genre of the chorus and, perhaps, the requirements or exigencies of the context. What characterises the leader-figure in lyric and tragedy is some form of

superiority: aesthetic superiority (beauty, luxurious adornment, wealth, nobility), 'cosmic' superiority (compared to cult figures, deities or celestial bodies, hierarchy within a group) and a privileged position spatially (either at the centre of a group or holding a ritual object/performing ritual task).[57] The *Louvre Partheneion* (*PMG* fr. 1) famously invokes two individuals as leaders (χοραγοί). Aristotle is the first to use the term *coryphaeus* for a leader in a choral performance but this figure will have a slightly separate set of associations to the ideologically charged leader-figure of lyric in particular.[58] There are the rich citizen *choregoi* responsible for funding and housing the festival chorus in Athens. An aulete could be said to 'have a chorus' according to the fourth-century historian Callisthenes,[59] and in *Against Meidias* it is the aulete that ends up being responsible for training the chorus. Also invoked as leader-figures are the *didaskalos* and/or *chorodidaskalos* when these roles were not performed by the poet himself (although the image in Plato's *Ion* distinguishes choreuts, choral teachers, assistant choral teachers, and the poets, 535e7-536a7).

In the *Laws* Plato sidesteps all these potential leaders and reduces the *choregos*, poet, aulete and chorus-trainer to technical functionaries.[60] Instead, full

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[57] Calame 1997:43-73 and Murnaghan 2013:155-63.

[58] See Arist.*Metaph*.1018b26-29, *Pol.*1276b40-1277a12, *Poet.*1461b29-32. The first uses of the word κορυφαῖος in Herodotus connote a chief or leader in a general sense (3.82.12, .159.5, 6.23.24, 6.98.11), similarly in Aristophanes' *Wealth* (953). Xenophon uses it in a discussion about nets where κορυφαῖος means 'the top' (*On Hunting* 10.2). The word appears once in the entire extant corpus of Plato, in the *Theaetetus* (173c) where it too can be straightforwardly translated as 'leader'. Despite the common gloss in D.21.80, ἡγέμων is not usually used of leaders of choruses, see Slater 1997:97-106.

[59] *FGrHist* 124 fr.5(3).

[60] E.g. ταὐτὸν δὴ καὶ τὸν ποιητικὸν ὁ ὀρθὸς νομοθέτης ἐν τοῖς καλοῖς ῥήμασι καὶ ἐπαινετοῖς πείσει τε, καὶ ἀναγκάσει μὴ πείθων, τὰ τῶν σωφρόνων τε καὶ ἀνδρείων καὶ πάντως ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν ἔν τε ῥυθμοῖς σχήματα καὶ ἐν ἁρμονίαισιν μέλη ποιοῦντα ὀρθῶς ποιεῖν, *Laws* 660a3-8. See also 656c1-7, 670e4-71a3 and 802b1-c4.

responsibility for the correct performances of choruses will lie with the city's leaders – the archons or, in the earlier books of the *Laws*, a group of experienced elders (τοῖς νεωτέροις ἡγεμόνες 670d9-e1) who will control the content of choral song and dance and judge the performances in competition. The preparation for presenting the leader-figure of choruses, and indeed all institutions, as significant is made in book one of the *Laws* and I would argue this early discussion provides an important frame for the rest of the *Laws*. The Spartan Megillus has just been criticising the practice of holding symposia in Athens, whereupon the Athenian stranger suggests that the unseemly behaviour often seen during and after symposia should not be a reason for criticising the institution itself, but rather a reflection on the leader (ἄρχων) of the symposium in question (636e4-639e3). Having gained agreement from his two interlocutors that one would be unjustified in criticising the members of a group if the leader is ignorant or non-existent, the Athenian stranger expands this method to judging institutions (κοινωνιαί) in general (639c1-6). Although accepting this new method of evaluating institutions (i.e. evaluating them by their leaders), Cleinias questions what difference a well-ruled institution makes if it is, of itself, not a beneficial institution to the city.

> But the next step is for you to tell us what conceivable benefit this custom of drinking parties would be to us, given proper management. For instance, to take our example of a moment ago, if an army were properly controlled (εἰ στράτευμα ὀρθῆς <u>ἡγεμονίας</u> τυγχάνοι), its soldiers would win the war and this would be a considerable benefit, and the same reasoning applies to our other instances. But what solid benefit would it be to individuals or the state to instruct a drinking party how to behave itself (συμποσίου δὲ ὀρθῶς παιδαγωγηθέντος)?[61] 641a3-b2

[61] τούπὶ τῷδε δ' ἡμῖν λέγε, τί ποτε, ἂν γίγνηται τοῦτο ὀρθὸν τὸ περὶ τὰς πόσεις νόμιμον, ἀγαθὸν ἂν δράσειεν ἡμᾶς; οἷον, ὃ νυνδὴ ἐλέγομεν, εἰ στράτευμα ὀρθῆς ἡγεμονίας τυγχάνοι, νίκη πολέμου τοῖς ἑπομένοις ἂν γίγνοιτο, οὐ σμικρὸν ἀγαθόν, καὶ τἆλλ' οὕτω· συμποσίου δὲ ὀρθῶς παιδαγωγηθέντος

By focussing on the element of benefit to society (introduced at 639c2), Cleinias turns the conversation in a new direction. Up until this point in the discussion, the word for ruler has predominantly been ἄρχων or its cognates. In this speech of Cleinias', however, there is a shift in terminology. Instead of ἄρχων we find ἡγεμονία and the verb παιδαγωγέω. ἡγεμονία is suited to political or military leadership but παιδαγωγέω connotes the ability to educate, train or manage like a child, which obviously is somewhat different to the responsibilities of a military commander or political leader, or the leaders that have been considered in the discussion up until this point.

In reply to this question the Athenian stranger (significantly) picks up on the connotations of the verb παιδαγωγέω and abandons, for now, the *archon*.

> Well, what solid benefit are we to say it is to the state when just one lad or just one chorus of them has been properly instructed? If the question were put like that, we should say that the state gets very little benefit from just one; but ask in general what great benefit the state derives from the training by which it educates its citizens, and the reply will be perfectly straightforward. The good education they have received will make them good men, and being good they will achieve success in other ways, and even conquer their enemies in battle.[62] 641b2-c2

What occurs in these two passages is a subtle shift in, or rather, assimilation of terminology: to rule is to train like a child. It is therefore, by virtue of being ruled

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τί μέγα ἰδιώταις ἢ τῇ πόλει γίγνοιτ' ἄν; Schöpsdau notes there might be some derogatory undertone in Cleinias' use of παιδαγωγηθέντος, but is not convinced 1994:216 on 641b1.

[62] Τί δέ; παιδὸς ἑνὸς ἢ καὶ χοροῦ παιδαγωγηθέντος κατὰ τρόπον ἑνός, τί μέγα τῇ πόλει φαῖμεν ἂν γίγνεσθαι; ἢ τοῦτο οὕτως ἐρωτηθέντες εἴποιμεν ἂν ὡς ἑνὸς μὲν βραχύ τι τῇ πόλει γίγνοιτ' ἂν ὄφελος, εἰ δ' ὅλως ἐρωτᾷς παιδείαν τῶν παιδευθέντων τί μέγα τὴν πόλιν ὀνίνησιν, οὐ χαλεπὸν εἰπεῖν ὅτι παιδευθέντες μὲν εὖ γίγνοιντ' ἂν ἄνδρες ἀγαθοί, γενόμενοι δὲ τοιοῦτοι τά τε ἄλλα πράττοιεν καλῶς, ἔτι δὲ κἂν νικῷεν τοὺς πολεμίους μαχόμενοι.

(well), and therefore being subject to good *paideia* that an institution is beneficial to society, as the Athenian stranger argues, and it is the ruler who is absolutely responsible for that ruling/ *paideia*. The mention of a chorus just at this crucial point in the assimilation of ruling and educating is suggestive, perhaps acting as a way to illustrate for the reader what the leader/paideutic figure might look like in the context of a city's institutions.

This initial argument for a justified focus on the leader of institutions proves to be a vital frame for the discussion of founding cities, establishing early on the essential and defining role played by the ruler or rulers and asserting, furthermore, that it is the wisdom of the rulers that justifies their position (639c). These ideal leaders are shown to be essential for the correct functioning of choral culture in the city, ensuring as they do that the performers first are trained with the correct responses to the good and the ignoble and second can improve themselves by performing good tunes and postures with the correct emotional engagement with those good postures.

We should note, however, that the chorus leaders in metaphor and image, no matter how abstract they may have been (e.g. 'truth') were imagined as performing their role in close proximity to those that followed. The leader-figures for choruses in Magnesia, however, have very little to do with the performance itself, but rather are responsible for the content of the city's choral song.[63] The leader-figures of the choruses in Magnesia, as defined by the initial discussion of what it is to be a ruler in

[63] At first, it will be the responsibility of the eldest of the three choruses, the chorus of Dionysus, to regulate choral song and dance 665d1-5, 670b1-4. See also 671a3-5, 802a6-c4. Later, once a more formal structuring of the choral culture has been initiated, there will be official *archons* (764c5-e3) charged with the organisation and moderation of the various choruses.

book one, are not practically involved in choral production but rather are embodiments of 'right rule'. We must assume that it is on the basis of the higher education that they gain this knowledge of what is noble or ignoble, but this is a practicality that does not concern Plato in this dialogue (as opposed to the *Republic* say, where the acquisition of knowledge is one of the central questions discussed).[64] The fact that this central element in the correct functioning of choral culture in Magnesia, the leader-figure, is left as an abstract concept or an ideal (however realistic the processes for electing the individual – 765a4-b5) may have a bearing on how we interpret the presentation of the chorus in this dialogue as a source for actual functioning choral cultures.

This, then, is the dynamic between choruses and their leaders that we are presented with in Plato. The chorus, when engaged in choral song and dance is given over to emotional response and is particularly susceptible or malleable in this state, just as a child or someone in a bacchic frenzy is suggestible. The leader, one who has attained knowledge (a quality explicitly denied to the 'mass of citizens' – the πολὺς ὄχλος), is entirely responsible for eliciting the correct emotional responses from the chorus and shaping their on-going, lifelong, choral *paideia*.[65]

[64] See Cleary 2003:165-73 and Saunders 1992:464-492, esp. 468-9: 'Plato formulates [in the *Laws*] a set of proposals in such a manner as he feels sure, from a combination of experience and philosophical reflection, he would have to formulate them, if only he did in fact have a full understanding of the Forms. The *Laws*, on this view, is a work written on the basis of an incomplete understanding…[it] is not a work that suggests its author is confident about everything'.
[65] The rhetoric of the noble few against the unruly many is not unusual in Plato, see e.g. *Gorg*.474a, *Symp*.216b, *Phae.*65a.

Conclusion

One of the key aims of this chapter has been to analyse some of the ways in which Plato utilises the chorus in his dialogues, and his various motives for doing so. What I hope has emerged is that, in this very variety, we see how previous approaches to Plato as a source for ancient choral culture have, perhaps, tended to be too narrow, either assuming the evidence in his dialogues to be of relevance to a particular generic or temporal context, or over-simplifying the variety within choral culture that is reflected in the dialogues. Choral images in Plato can call to mind the everyday or the eternal aspects of *choreia*, the poetic or parodic, Athenian, Spartan or the Panhellenic.

Further to foregrounding the variety in Plato's presentation of the chorus, the analysis given above has provoked some significant insights by locating Plato's thinking in the context of some of his broader philosophical motives. First, we can now observe that there exists in Plato's conception of the chorus a leader-figure, whose importance is central to the choral body as a whole and whose wisdom is a *sine qua non* for a chorus' correct function in society. Second, the participants of choral dance are represented as either fundamentally linked to the person or abstract that 'leads' them and, in the *Laws*, are shown to be in a malleable, one might say vulnerable, state of mind during choral training and performance. The benefit to society and to the choreuts themselves is wholly dependent on the perfect creation of appropriate content to sing and dance by the city's *archons*.

Recognising this fact undermines the easy way that Plato is cited as representing typical Greek attitudes in his recognition of the importance of choral performance for society. In Plato's construction of choral culture as set out in the *Laws* it is, in fact, perfectly possible for a choreut who has performed in many choruses to be ἀπαίδευτος if they have been singing and dancing impious, damaging *choreia*. We cannot rule out the notion that the phrase ἀπαίδευτος ἀχόρευτος may have had some purchase in Plato's contemporary society as a means of defining Greek from non-Greek, perhaps. However, the potential for choral experience for every male (and possibly every female) citizen in the form of the tribal, circular choruses or ritual, festival choruses throughout the year, would indicate that very few Athenians, at least, would be ἀχόρευτος. Who, then, would be the target of the negative judgement in such an axiom? It is likely that the familiarity most Athenian citizens had with choral performance robs the phrase of any discernible force (unless it was aimed at only the very young who had not yet participated in the boys' or girls' choruses). We are better advised to see ἀπαίδευτος ἀχόρευτος as primarily setting up the Athenian's next argument that emphasises the crucial, qualitative restrictions on the content of *choreia* i.e. that there is a need in an ideal city for strict control of what is sung and danced in the chorus.

It is necessary to emphasise the peculiarities in Plato's presentation of choral culture in any argument that draws on his works to elucidate the role and function of the chorus in Athenian society. In doing so we are able to see how, although indubitably drawing on current and familiar aspects of choral dance, Plato's chorus is fundamentally at odds with certain other constructions of the chorus. Added to

this and regarding the other authors whose works are included in the current enquiry, there is one further way in which Plato stands out. While the engagement with a contemporary and potent choral culture in authors such as Eubulus and Menander, as seen in the previous chapter, has not been recognised in most treatments of the chorus in the fifth and fourth centuries, the choral model established in Plato, and in particular in his *Laws*, has been readily adopted by scholars as more or less indicative of Greek choral culture. As I hope to have demonstrated above, there is a need for care when handling Plato's choral model, precious and particular as it is.

The hostility felt by the author towards contemporary choral practice (see e.g. *Laws* 800c5-d4) might suggest that he, like Aristotle, is presenting a reactionary model of choral culture. Looking to Plato and his choral model with this cultural conservatism in mind, we are better able to contextualise the choral model and culture he suggests. What is of particular use in the context of this thesis is the fact that Plato's (apparently reactionary) re-appropriation of the chorus, both in metaphor and in the culture of an ideal city, seems to suggest that, as a cultural institution, the form and function chorus was very much a subject of contention in the fourth century.

We should point out that the Athenian's (re-)appropriation of choral culture, as set out in the *Laws*, does not consist only in setting out a central place for choral performance in his society. Rather, it is the qualitative aspects of contemporary choral culture, in drama and beyond, that he and thinkers such as Aristotle appear to be fighting for. One may choose to conceive of this contest for the qualitative and

aesthetic role of the chorus as one that exists primarily in the realm of choral images, as opposed to practical choral performance. And yet, even if one seeks to remove the contest from the realm of fourth-century 'reality', the fact that such a contest is in evidence does not sit happily alongside the idea that dramatists, poets, writers and philosophers of the fourth century were letting the chorus, its cultural potency spent, fall by the wayside.

After Decline

The relative silence in scholarship on the dramatic chorus in the fourth century up until now might be taken as an implicit admission that detailed study of the topic would be either unrewarding or impossible. What I hope to have demonstrated in this thesis is that the opposite is the case: that this is a topic worth studying and in need of further scholarly attention. The dramatic choral texts, collected here, point us towards the range of choral capabilities that were still sought after by poets and producers of fourth-century drama. Furthermore, the evidence indicates that whilst its cultural and dramatic value was never called into question, the chorus of the later Classical period was being contested, discussed, censured and celebrated by virtue of its engagement with contemporary musico-poetical trends. By factoring in this more positive, vibrant picture of the chorus in the fourth century, fresh insights may be gained about its particularity, its continuity with fifth-century choruses, and its relationship to the choral culture of the Classical period more generally.

The ancient discourse concerning the chorus has been shown to be suggestive, although its connection to dramatic choruses specifically shouldn't be forced. I have shown here that contextualising the presentation of the chorus in Plato and Aristotle within the broader intellectual discourse of the time necessitates a recalibration of how we understand what these two superlatively influential fourth-century thinkers are saying. As for the references to choruses and choral performance found in the full range of fourth-century texts, there remains much to

be done in tracing how choral discourse and historical culture interact. Further study of how something like the chorus might be talked about, thought with, and consciously shaped in intellectual discourse may render a more nuanced appreciation of the chorus' practical role in society. In order to do this, the straightforward way that sources such as Demosthenes and Plato can be used needs closer scrutiny, while neglected sources such as the texts of New Comedy need to be brought into the discussion and feature more prominently in constructions of the choral picture after 400.

A large portion of this thesis has been concerned with pointing to traditionally held reasons for believing that the dramatic chorus declined from the fifth to the fourth century. These reasons have been shown to be either over-stated or drawn from sources that have been read uncritically. But more has been achieved here than a vindication of the initial call for notions of the 'narrative of decline' to be set aside. If broader narratives are sought, we might better describe the picture of the fourth-century chorus, as presented in fourth-century sources, as one of a constantly self-enriching component of drama, of professionalisation, of diversification and of a valued element in Athens' culture and society.

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