ABSTRACT

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THE GREEK HERO PERSEUS: MYTHS OF MATURATION.

Owing to a certain fascination with the Gorgon and its origins, past scholarship has given less consideration to Perseus as a heroic figure in his own right than might be expected. He is generally thought of as colourless in comparison with heroes such as Heracles, Theseus and Jason. As a body, his myths have in any case received little attention in the last thirty years, and the thesis attempts to redress the balance, to 'parse' Perseus by 'construing' his myths. He is indispensable to all the myths. The initiatory schema, in terms both of a general rite of passage, and more specifically of 'ephebic' motifs, is central, and is established in the introductory chapter (I). The movement of the hero from *οἶκος* to *πόλις*, is coextensive with his maturation. The remaining chapters (II–V), on Acrisius, the Gorgon, Andromeda and Dionysus, follow through the process of Perseus' maturation, from his anomalous birth, exposure, his youthful exploits, acquisition of a wife, to his return to and defence of the *πόλις*, Argos, from Dionysus and his *θίασος*. He returns to Argos with divine sanction despite all mortal attempts to prevent him: the preservation of the *οἶκος*, and by extension the *πόλις*, is key to the characterization of Perseus. His myths are a particularly potent example of the tendency, and imperative for, Greek values of civilization, as represented by the *οἶκος* and *πόλις*, to be perpetuated. In this sense, Perseus is a 'political' hero. An appendix on the fragmentary Perseus dramas performed in antiquity confirms his popularity throughout the whole of the fifth century and beyond, and shows that, contrary to what the relatively skeletal sources might suggest, he was not simply a cipher, but a fully characterized figure in the Greek imagination.

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THE GREEK HERO PERSEUS:
MYTHS OF MATURATION.

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty
of Literae Humaniores, Trinity 1989. [Re 1990] HT

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Acknowledgements

My greatest debt is to my supervisor, Dr. Angus Bowie, for his diligent, patient and always helpful guidance and criticism during the course of my research, and to Dr. Robert Parker, who on two occasions acted in this same capacity. In the course of the thesis I acknowledge my debt to both of them for specific points, but, of course, their influence has been far greater than this might suggest. I am also most grateful for the teaching and encouragement I enjoyed as an undergraduate at the University of Bristol, where Richard Buxton first sparked my interest in Greek mythology. The British Academy funded my graduate studies with a three year Major State Studentship. Thanks are owed also to Prasenjit Saha for unwisely offering to help me with the computerised type-setting of this thesis using TEX, and to Mary Starkey, for proof-reading it. Lastly, to all my friends in Oxford, and especially to my parents, without whose support my task would have been all the more difficult to fulfil, I give my thanks.

Abbreviations

ABV J.D.Beazley, *Attic Black-figure Vase Painters*, Oxford, 1956.

ARV J.D.Beazley, *Attic Red-figure Vase Painters*, second edition, Oxford, 1963.

CAF T.Kock, *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*, 3 vols., Leipzig, 1880–88.

CGF C.Austin, *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta in Papyris Reperta*, Berlin, 1973.

CIG A.Boeckh, *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, Berlin, 1828–71.

CPG E.L. von Leutsch and F.G.Schneidewin, *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, 2 vols., Göttingen, 1839.

CVA *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*, 1921– .

FCG A.Meineke, *Fragmenta Comicorum Graecorum*, 4 vols., Berlin, 1839–57.

FGrHist F.Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der Griechische Historiker*, Berlin/Leiden, 1923–58.

FHG C. and T.Muller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, 5 vols., Paris, 1841–72.

IG *Inscriptiones Graecae.*

LIMC *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, Zurich, 1981– .

LSJ H.Liddell, R.Scott, H.S.Jones (and R.McKenzie), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, ninth edition, with Supplement, Oxford, 1968.

OLD *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 8 fascicles, Oxford, 1968–82.

PCG R.Kassel, C.Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci*, Berlin, 1983– .

PHamb P.M.Meyer, *Griechische Papyrusurkunden der Hamburger Stadtbibliothek*, vol. 1, Leipzig &c, 1911–24.

PLG T.Bergk, *Poetae Lyrici Graeci*, 3 vols, Leipzig, 1914–23.

POxy *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, London, 1898– .

PR L.Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*, fourth edition, ed. C.Robert, Berlin, 1894–1926.

PSI *Papiri greci e latini*, Florence, 1912– .

RE *Realencyclopädie der classichen Altertumswissenschaft*, Stuttgart, 1893–1980.

RML W.H.Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, Leipzig, 1884–1937.

SEG *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden, 1923– .

SIG W.Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, third edition, 4 vols., Leipzig, 1915–23.

TDA A.Audollent, *Defixionum Tabellae quotquot innotuerunt*, Paris, 1904.

TF A.Klotz, *Tragicorum Fragmenta (Scaenicorum Romanorum Fragmenta, vol. 1)*, Monaco, 1953.

TGF A.Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, second edition with Supplement by B.Snell, Hildesheim, 1964.

TLL *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, Leipzig, 1900– .

TrGF B.Snell, R.Kannicht, S.Radt, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, Göttingen, 1971– .

Abbreviations of ancient authors and works follow those in *LSJ* and *OLD*. Journals are abbreviated as in *Année Philologique*.

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of Greek mythology has been plagued by theories. From the earliest allegorical researches of Theagenes to the spectacular nature theories of the last century and beyond, the aim often has been to explain all myth by a single idea. This long tradition of exegesis is as old as myth itself, and thus in a sense part of myth: new interpretations can in turn become new versions of a story.[1] Myth is 'polysemic', or 'multi-valent', both because its motifs and themes can be combined in many ways, and because any one combination can be interpreted differently by different interpretors.[2] Accordingly, the question of what a myth 'means' seems to raise difficulties. If there are indeed several, or many ways of understanding a myth, how many need to be identified before one can claim to have 'interpreted' it? That myth is polysemic is not only the problem, it is an important part of the answer. The only really interesting question that can be asked about myth, and that can be answered at all, is not 'what does it mean?', but 'what did it mean to particular people at a particular place and time?'. In other words, myth must above all be considered in its various social and historical contexts. It is important to begin, therefore, by avoiding the illusion that to identify a myth's origin is to understand its meaning at a later time.

'Interpret' suggests, often misleadingly, that myth is by definition arcane; however, the word at least fosters the idea that myth is a kind of language. The concept of myth as language is structuralism's particular contribution to its study. This thesis is structuralist in the sense that its primary concern is to 'parse' Perseus by 'construing' his myths. Richard Buxton has stated the problems, and his own approach to them, well, and is worth quoting at length:

> Greek mythology is like a language—a set of conventions enabling meaning to be created and communicated. In order to comprehend how this language worked, we should like to be able to reconstruct its state at a whole series of different dates, and then describe in detail how one state changed into another over time. Unfortunately, the paucity of the evidence puts these objectives quite beyond our reach. So we are faced with a dilemma. If we try to recover the state of the

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[1] See, for example, psychoanalytical interpretations of the Gorgon: Freud 1955, 273–4 (written in 1922, only published posthumously in 1940), Slater 1974.

[2] 'Polysemic': Sourvinou-Inwood 1988, 171. 'Multi-valent': Burkert 1979, 4–5.

> language of myth as it was in (say) 400 B.C., and if we refuse to include stories which are known to us only from sources dating from after 400 B.C., then we shall have the satisfaction of being philologically impeccable, but we shall not get very far in compiling a vocabulary—let alone writing a grammar—of Greek myth. On the other hand, if we welcome into one, undifferentiated, quasi-synchronic picture mythical items from early epic to Oppian, then we run the risk (though, of course, some structuralists see it rather as an opportunity) of producing an account of a language which exists only in the mind of its grammarian.
>
> In practice, the matter does not present itself as a cut-and-dried choice between 'chronology' and 'structure'; it is rather a question of *how much* to privilege chronological considerations at the expense of structural ones, or vice versa...The feasibility of this approach depends upon the fact that there are a lot of regularities in Greek mythological narratives, regularities which occur in authors of widely differing dates...If we build up our grammar by gathering together the most prominent of these structures—without pretending that we shall be able to accomodate *every* version, since our knowledge will certainly be inadequate to cope with many local 'idioms'—then we may hope to make headway.[3] .

Each of the chapters that follow will focus upon one of the myths of Perseus (that is, the myths of Acrisius, the Gorgon, Andromeda, and Dionysus). The purpose of the thesis is to examine the myths while bearing in mind that, whatever they owe to the *γοργόνειον* for their origins, the common link between them all is not the Gorgon, Andromeda or Acrisius, but the figure of Perseus himself. Each chapter, therefore, will be concerned always to illuminate Perseus. Major themes central to Greek social and political patterns of thought will be seen to be shared by all the myths, and it is their presence which is an important reason for these particular stories being successful as myths (i.e., so that they were told and retold, generation after generation). The intention is not to claim that such themes are unique to Perseus. On the contrary, they are central to all Greek hero myths. The general method of the thesis will, therefore, be a structuralist one: the only way to establish the character of the Perseus myths is to compare them with other, similar myths, and to examine their themes in the context of Greek thought. It will become apparent, however, that there are significant differences between Perseus and the other major figures of heroic mythology. A major conclusion will be that, although not lacking in ambiguity, Perseus is one of the most successful of all Greek heroes in his exploits.

There has been no extended examination of the Perseus myths for thirty years

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[3] Buxton 1980, 26. See also his first two paragraphs on p.33. See also Peradotto 1983–84, 'Myth and other languages'.

or more. Even then, the primary concern was with iconography.[4] A fundamental explanation for this absence is that the power of fascination which Medusa exercised on her victims (a power attributed in more modern times to witches, hypnotists, and most significantly the cobra) has remained undiminished: the Gorgon and its origins has tended to dominate nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarship on the myths.[5] Equally, the popularity of the rescue of Andromeda in later antiquity and in the European tradition turned Perseus into a 'romantic' hero, an anachronism when reapplied to his persona in the archaic and classical periods.

There is often a tacit assumption that Perseus became associated with the Gorgon only (sic) to explain the existence of the *γοργόνειον*, which was ubiquitous in the Greek world throughout the historical period, and in some form or other, well before. This belief partly explains why Perseus himself has made few substantial appearances outside the mythological dictionaries, in contrast with heroes such as Heracles and Theseus: he has tended to be referred to in passing. Furthermore, he has figured less frequently than might be expected in the indices even of recent works on Greek mythology. Many of the developments in the study of mythologies have passed him by, including, inevitably, structuralist approaches.[6]

A second reason for this absence is that Perseus seems at first sight to be a relatively colourless figure, because it is his misfortune that no Greek tragedy of his myths survives in any form other than the fragmentary.[7] Nor is there any evidence for a *Perseid* in any period. However, his first appearance in Greek literature is in Homer, the mention of his name in the *Iliad*, and no more; but he is the son of Zeus and

> *Δανάης καλλισφύρου Ἀκρισιώνης,*
> *ἣ τέκε Περσῆα πάντων ἀριδείκετον ἀνδρῶν.*[8]

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[4] Schauenburg 1960, and Howe 1952. On iconography and the other plastic arts depicting the Perseus myths, see especially now *LIMC s.v. Akrisios*, *Andromeda*, *Danae* and *Gorgo*; cf. Brommer 1976, 380–403. For architectural use of the *γοργόνειον*, see Belson 1981.

[5] The best summaries of modern theories regarding the origin of the Gorgon, and Perseus, are in Hopkins 1934, Howe 1954 (based on Howe 1952), and Hughes–Bernades 1985, 59–69.

[6] 'Structuralist approaches' rather than 'structuralism', since it has been said that there have been as many types of structuralism as scholars who have applied it.

[7] For which, see Appendix.

[8] *Il.* 14.319–20. He is also referred to in his turn as the father of Sthenelus (*Il.* 19.116, 123),

Moreover, he is the great-grandfather of Heracles, so that his appearance on the pseudo-Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles* is as much in his capacity as an ancestor, as it is as an exemplum of heroic action.[9] Of all Greek heroes, it was Heracles and Perseus (and Dionysus) that Alexander the Great chose as his ancestors.[10] Indeed, the Scholiast on *Iliad* 14.319 commented

> *τινὲς δέ φασι πλείονα Ἡρακλέους αὐτὸν* [sc. *Περσέα*] *εἰργασμένον οὐ τυχεῖν δόξης, ὅτι Διόνυσον ἀνεῖλεν εἰς τὴν Λερναίαν ἐμβαλὼν λίμνην.*

The myths of Perseus' encounters with Dionysus, and Acrisius, are as important as the Gorgon and Andromeda myths for an examination of his heroism, and will be considered duly below.

The implicit and unstated significance of the link between Perseus and the *γοργόνειον* (which, though unmentioned in Homer, dated from the archaic period according to the vase evidence) is that Perseus was thus responsible for the existence of all the *γοργόνεια* in the world. Tetradrachms bearing the *γοργόνειον* were the earliest civic emblems of Athens, minted in c.520–18; the first owls date only from c.517–15.[11] The very ubiquity of the *γοργόνειον* ensured that the name of Perseus enjoyed panhellenic renown.

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indication that already he was established in Argive genealogy. On the importance of Perseus' children's children in Argive myth, cf. *PR* II.1, 242–3.

[9] Hes. *Scut.* 216–36.

[10] Plu. 332A–B. He went to the oracle of Ammon in Egypt because Perseus and Heracles had (Str. 17.1.43, Arr. 3.3.1). Xerxes too was said to have been descended from Heracles and Perseus (Hdt. 7.150, Schol. Lyc. 1442).

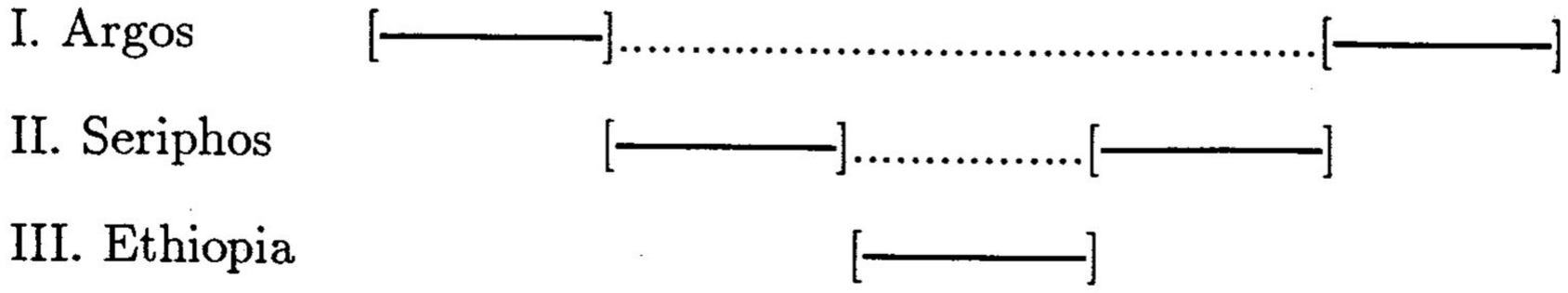
[11] Kroll 1981.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE MYTHS: FROM OIKOS TO POLIS

It is no innovation to recognize that the Perseus myths together exhibit the pattern discerned eighty years ago by Arnold Van Gennep in his seminal study *Les rites de passage*.[12] However, it is this pattern, and the idea that the rite of passage is by definition initiatory (in both a general, and sometimes more specific sense), which is fundamental to the myths and so to this thesis. For this reason, the rest of this introductory chapter will be concerned with establishing in detail the initiatory nature of the myths, by reference both to overall narrative structure, and to specific initiatory motifs.

1. The Rite Of Passage

Recently, Rachel Aélion has applied a Proppian schema to the myths of Perseus (and of Bellerophon), analysing them in terms of story components ('functions'): 'preparatory episode', 'designation of the hero', 'qualification of the hero', 'success of the hero', 'safety of the hero', and 'glorification of the hero'.[13] Aélion claims profitably to have modified the schema by taking some account of the criticism made of it by hard-line structuralists such as Lévi-Strauss, Greimas and Bérard, who insist that the narrative line of a myth (i.e. the story) is not to be taken into account when looking for its meaning. To counter this 'excessive linearity', Aélion divides each function into four sections: 'beginning of episode', 'episode', 'conclusion of episode' and 'transition to next episode'. However, her approach remains essentially Proppian, and as will become clear, the narrative line is itself an important part of the myths' meaning.[14] The tables for Perseus can be expressed in diagrammatic form:[15]



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[12] Published in 1909 in French, not published in translation until 1960.

[13] Aélion 1984.

[14] Cf. Aélion 1984, 205–6 for her tables of the functions and episodes of the Perseus myths.

[15] Aélion 1984, 207.

The diagram illustrates how the myths fold one around the other, and that each myth is a complete sequence of Perseus' heroism.[16] In each place he is sent away to die, but always returns to defeat his adversary.

The myths comprise a series of expeditions and returns: Perseus is continually in transition. One of Gennep's conclusions is particularly relevant here, namely that 'the passage from one social position to another is often identified with a territorial passage'.[17] However, Aélion's diagram is misleading in two ways. First, although the increasing marginalization of the hero to *τὸ ἔσχατον* during the stages of his rite of passage is clear (from mainland Greece (Argos), to a Greek island (Seriphos), to a non-Greek land (Ethiopia)), the fact that Perseus leaves the inhabited world altogether during the Gorgon (i.e. Seriphos) phase (travelling to or beyond Oceanus) is not.[18] Secondly, by having Ethiopia apparently at its centre, the diagram fails to convey the essential idea that all of Perseus' energies are directed towards returning to Argos and his ancestral home. He could, but does not, stay with his new wife in Ethiopia, or with his mother in Seriphos. Argos is the real centre of the myths, where Perseus has his birth and accession to kingship.[19] This contrasts with another Argive hero, Bellerophon, who leaves Argos never to return. Perseus regains his original *οἶκος* and becomes king:[20] like an initiand, he moves from *οἶκος* to *πόλις*.

Perseus has the opportunity of becoming a king on no less than three occasions, each time following the defeat of his enemies: in Ethiopia, Seriphos, and Argos.[21] It is only in the last instance that it is proper for him to rule, since it is his birthplace.[22] The clearest parallel for this pattern of heroic exile and return being used to provide

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[16] Aélion 1984, 204, 207, 209.

[17] Gennep 1960, 192.

[18] He travels to Oceanus (Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11, Apollod. 2.4.2, Tz. Lyc. 838), over Oceanus (Hes. *Th.* 274), to Ethiopia/Libya/Egypt (Hdt. 2.91), and to furthest Africa in the vicinity of Mt. Atlas (Serv. *Aen.* 6.289; in one myth, he lithifies Atlas (Polyidus *PLG* III, p.632, Ov. *Metam.* 4.627–62, Serv. *Aen.* 4.246, Lucan 9.654f)).

[19] In E. *Ἀνδρομέδα* fr.123, Perseus is described as *πρὸς Ἄργος ναυστολῶν*, even though, strictly speaking, he is going back to Seriphos: Argos is his goal.

[20] *πρόμος Ἀργείων* (Nonn. 47.584).

[21] Aélion 1984, 207.

[22] For the motif of repeated *ἀγῶνες* of a hero (e.g. Heracles), see Fontenrose 1959, 321–64, cf. Weiler 1974.

the πόλις with a major hero is that of Theseus and his journey from Troezen back to his father in Athens. This point stresses all the more that Perseus is the product specifically of Argive mythopoiesis, or at least was perceived by Greeks to be so. The importance of Argos in the myths will become apparent particularly in Chapter II (in which Acrisius is seen trying to save his own life effectively by denying the πόλις a new king), and in Chapter V (in which Perseus saves Argos from the invading Dionysus by killing him). However, the importance of οἶκος and πόλις (both individually and as a dichotomy) in Greek ideology is reflected in all the Perseus myths, and accounts in great part for their transmission in the archaic and classical periods: the myths above all express the tendency, and also the need for, Greek values to be perpetuated in the face of seemingly overwhelming odds. The rite of passage schema is suitable for the expression of this ideology because, by depicting the hero largely in transition, it emphasizes all the more the significance of his goal. Transition *per se* is meaningless without a point of departure and of arrival. To become a member of the οἶκος and the πόλις, the initiand must first be excluded from both.

The hero is thus victimized, and his victimization is expressed in terms of what he lacks: a stable, or any, οἶκος, a wife, children, and most particularly, ready access to his πόλις on his own terms. He wanders from one ἔσχατον to another, and is accorded only the status of ξένος. The strong association between πόλις and hero, expressed in myth in terms of withdrawal followed by reintegration, is undoubtedly a reflection of the origin and nature of the Greek hero. Emily Kearns has suggested that the development of the Greek πόλις necessitated the creation of a new form of patron, one who would supply 'some sort of symbolic yet concrete definition of who was included [in the πόλις] and who excluded'.[23] Perseus seems to have been used expressly for this purpose in Argos. There are no myths extant that describe his activities as a mature man in his native place. The only exception, indeed, is the story of Perseus and Dionysus, in which Perseus' role is precisely to defend the πόλις of Argos, from the catastrophic effects of Dionysiac religion. (This myth remained, for the most part, local to Argos. It should not be forgotten that there may have been other such local myths set in the period of his kingship. In addition, considered as a whole, the main body of Perseus' myths as they existed by the classical period

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[23] Kearns 1983, 296.

possesses a sense of completeness, the full cycle of Perseus' 'initiation'. It is not strange, therefore, that no other Perseus stories became panhellenic.)

Hughes and Fernandez Bernades have also seen the Perseus myth as initiatory and based on the same rite of passage schema.[24] However, their conception of the initiatory pattern is not as formalized as Aélion's, and so does not suffer from the use which the latter makes of non-Greek terminology to define the myths' structure (i.e. 'preparatory episode', 'designation of the hero', etc.).

2. Initiatory And 'Ephebic' Motifs

It is important to clarify what is, and is not meant by 'ephebic'. Perseus may be 'ephebic' for part of his myths, but he is not an *ἔφηβος*, a word which strictly ought to be used only with reference to the 'ephebeia' as it existed in Athens after 338 (certainly, if not before), although the ideology upon which it was based existed long before this.[25] 'Ephebe' was the name given to young Athenian males entering upon a period of military training after their entry to the deme.[26] Similar systems of training existed earlier in other parts of Greece. The equivalent Spartan institution, the 'krypteia', though not identical in all details, served a similar function, and operated broadly on the same assumptions. There is evidence of similar practices in Crete.[27] Because in all cases the concern is to facilitate a change in the status of an individual, or group, from adolescence to adulthood, all such systems of training are 'initiatory', and so they share initiatory motifs. Thus 'ephebe' has come to be used to refer to any figure who is ephebe-like, 'ephebic'.

The most significant notion of Vidal-Naquet's important work on this subject

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[24] Hughes–Bernades 1981, 69–71.

[25] On the history of the ephebeia, see Reinmuth 1952, Pélékidis 1962, Rhodes 1981, 493–510 (the briefest, and clearest statement of the facts), Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 1981b, 1986, Burkert 1985, 251 and his n.12.

[26] Vidal-Naquet 1981b, 176. Vidal-Naquet's concern that the Athenians of Aristotle's day would not have regarded the ephebeia as 'a period of isolation preparatory to integration in to the civic community' seems overstated (cf. Pucci 1971, 117 n.15). Whatever the Greeks of that time thought of it, the military service was still an essential part of the process, even if the ephebe had already been made a member of the deme before the service began.

[27] See Jeanmaire 1913, 131 (and *passim* for a comparative approach to Spartan initiatory practices), Bremmer 1980, 282–7 (comparing the initiatory significance of Spartan and Cretan paederasty), Vidal-Naquet 1981b, 177, Willetts 1962, 46–7.

is that the aim of the ephebe is to become a hoplite warrior (i.e. a fully functioning citizen, capable of defending the πόλις in war), and that the ephebe is to be made to come to an understanding of the hoplite's role by being made to act unlike a hoplite in his training.

> What was true of the Athenian hoplite *at the level of myth* is true of the Spartan *kruptos in practice*; the *kruptos* appears in every respect as an antihoplite.[28]

Thus the ephebe, both in reality and in myth, is characterized in terms of the ephebe–hoplite polarity. Most recently, R. Osborne has stated this polarity in describing ephebic training in a border garrison as the antithesis to hoplite fighting, which takes place in the plain. War policy in Greek states of the archaic and classical periods was based firmly on protecting the plains, which in turn demanded the preservation of the borders. Training of the citizen soldier therefore involved stressing the importance of the marginal land at the edge.[29]

The ephebic oath, taken at the beginning of the two year garrison duty on the frontiers of Attica, seems actually to have been referred to in one of the tragedies on the Perseus myths, Euripides' *Δίκτυς*:[30]

> *εἰ δ' ἦσθα μὴ κάκιστος, οὔποτ' ἂν πάτραν*
> *τὴν σὴν ἀτίζων τήνδ' ἂν ηὐλόγεις πόλιν·*
> *ὡς ἔν γ' ἐμοὶ κρίνοιτ' ἂν οὐ καλῶς φρονεῖν*
> *ὅστις πατρῴας γῆς ἀτιμάζων ὅρους*
> *ἄλλην ἐπαινεῖ καὶ τρόποισιν ἥδεται.*

The man who favours another state above his own is not merely *κάκιστος*, but also not of sound mind—*οὐ καλῶς φρονεῖν*; and he 'fails to hold in proper regard the boundaries of the land his father was born in'. Characterizing a man who is unpatriotic by his disregard of his country's borders is consistent with the oath:[31]

> *ὅρκος ἐφήβων πάτριος ὃν ὀμνύναι δεῖ τ-*

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[28] See Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 154–5, 1981b, 174–5, 180–5.

[29] Osborne 1987, 145–51. Many wars fought by Greeks used a border conflict as a reason for fighting, even if it was only a pretext (Osbourne 1987, 138–41). The military aspects of the Gorgon-killing will be discussed in Chapter III.

[30] *TGF* fr.347.

[31] *ὅροι τῆς πατρίδος*... For the fourth century inscription of the oath see Robert 1938, 302–307; cf. Merkelbach 1972. The 'boundaries' are also mentioned in Plutarch's version of the oath (*Alc.* 15.4). Merkelbach 1972, 282 cites two other inscriptions (both of the latter part of the second century) that refer to ephebes' border-duty (*IG II*^{2} 1006, 25, 1011, 15).

οὐς ἐφήβους...οὐκ αἰσχυνῶ τὰ ἱερὰ ὅπ-
λα οὐδὲ λείψω τὸν παραστάτην ὅπου ἂν σ-
τοιχήσω· ἀμυνῶ δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἱερῶν καὶ ὁσ- 8
ίων· καὶ οὐκ ἐλάττω παραδώσω τὴν πατρίδ-
α, πλείω δὲ καὶ ἀρείω κατά τε ἐμαυτὸν κα-
ὶ μετὰ ἁπάντων· καὶ εὐηκοήσω τῶν ἀεὶ κρ-
αινόντων ἐμφρόνως, καὶ τῶν θεσμῶν τῶν 12
ἱδρυμένων, καὶ οὓς ἂν τὸ λοιπὸν ἱδρύσω-
νται ἐμφρόνως· ἐὰν δέ τις ἀναιρεῖ, οὐκ ἐ-
πιτρέψω κατά τε ἐμαυτὸν καὶ μετὰ πάντ-
ων· καὶ τιμήσω ἱερὰ τὰ πάτρια. ἵστορες 16
θεοὶ Ἄγλαυρος Ἑστία Ἐνυὼ Ἐνυάλιος Ἄρ-
ης καὶ Ἀθηνᾶ Ἀρεία Ζεὺς Θαλλὼ Αὐξὼ Ἡγε-
μόνη Ἡρακλῆς ὅροι τῆς πατρίδος πυροὶ
κριθαὶ ἄμπελοι ἐλᾶαι συκαῖ.

Having sworn to defend the *πατρίς* in battle and to obey its laws, the ephebe calls as the last witness to the solemnity of his oath '...the boundaries of the fatherland, wheat, barley, vines, olives and fig-trees'. The man who 'disregards the boundaries' breaks the oath. *ἀτιμάζων* in the Euripidean fragment may be a verbal echo of it; in the last part of the oath, the ephebe says *...καὶ τιμήσω ἱερὰ τὰ πάτρια*; so too in the version of the oath given by Stobaeus,[32] *καὶ ἱερὰ τὰ πάτρια τιμήσω*, and in Pollux,[33] *καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ τὰ πάτρια τιμήσω*. Furthermore, the use of *ἀτιμάζων* and *ἀτίζων* together seems formulaic. Evidence for the ephebeia as a codified institution in Attica is all generally considered to be of the first half of the fourth century or later. However, some scholars have suggested that the oath in this form dates back at least to the fifth century if not earlier.[34] Indeed, the epigraphical version of the oath contains certain linguistic elements that are archaic.[35] Fr.347 would tend to support the antiquity of the oath, suggesting that the oath actually existed in 431 (when Euripides' *Δίκτυς* was produced), in a form similar to that of the fourth century following the reforms of c. 335/4.[36] It is the *ὅροι* of the ephebe that Perseus

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[32] Stob. 43.48 (Wachsmuth and Hense).

[33] Poll. 8.105–6, where ephebes are called *περίπολοι* (for which term, cf. Aeschin. *Embassy* 167, Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 148, 1981b, 177).

[34] Reinmuth 1952, 50, Pélékidis 1962, 77–79.

[35] Siewert 1977, 109–111.

[36] For other verbal traces of the oath in fifth-century literature see Siewert 1977: Thuc. 1.144.4,

is repeatedly forced not only to retreat to, but to pass far beyond: in myth, the patrolling of boundaries becomes the crossing of successive boundaries, until there are no more to cross.

The point at which Perseus becomes, and ceases to be, ephebic, is clearly signalled. In Pherecydes, Polydectes conceives his lust for Danae just at the time when *Περσέως ἐν Σερίφῳ μετὰ τῆς μητρὸς διάγοντος παρὰ Δίκτυι καὶ ἡβησάντος.*[37] At an *ἔρανος* Perseus is enticed into claiming that he can bring the Gorgon's head to Polydectes, and then he withdraws *ὀλοφυρόμενος τὴν συμφορὰν εἰς τὸ ἔσχατον τῆς νήσου*, where he is met by Hermes.[38] This period of withdrawal ends when he has surrendered his magical accoutrements (*ἅρπη*, *κίβισις*, *πέδιλα*, *κυνέη* and *γοργόνειον*) to his divine patrons.[39] He leaves Seriphos a youth, and returns with physical proof of his maturation: the *γοργόνειον* and Andromeda, his wife. To fulfil the task of retrieving the *γοργόνειον*, that is, to live, Perseus must act in classic ephebic fashion. For his is one of those stories in which the hero is set an impossible task so that he should be killed.[40]

The Acrisius myth characterizes Perseus with the same pattern of withdrawal, maturation and return, but on a longer time-scale, beginning before his birth with the oracle which leads to his and Danae's exposure, and ending with Acrisius' death, the oracle's fulfilment. Thus the ephebic structure, delimited by one cycle of Perseus' 'withdrawal' and 'return' (from Seriphos, to Seriphos), is only a part of the rite of passage that informs the myths as a whole, the culmination of which is Perseus' becoming king in Argos, the movement from *οἶκος* to *πόλις*. Accordingly, it is in the period between Perseus' departure from and return to Seriphos that most of the characteristic ephebic (as opposed to general initiatory) motifs are found.

Exposure of an infant is an appropriate start for the initiatory schema, since it

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2.37.3, S. *Ant.* 663–671, A. *Pers.* 956–962.

[37] *ἠνδρωμένου* (Apollod. 2.4.2), *ἀνδρωθένος αὐτοῦ* (Schol. Pi. *P.* 10.72).

[38] Cf. Odysseus on the sea-shore of Phaeacia, meeting his guide and helper, Nausicaa; and meeting Athene on the shore of Ithaca.

[39] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11.

[40] Kirk 1970, 76.

begins the pattern at birth and makes the hero's whole life one of exile and return.[41] In Perseus' case, an oracle marks him as a killer even before his birth, so that his exposure becomes analogous to the exile of a homicide. Danae's seclusion in the tower or chamber of bronze predates Perseus' conception, and so he begins his life as an anomaly: he would not have been born at all, if Acrisius had succeeded in his contraception; even then, he is the son of Zeus and is thus to be no ordinary man. The λάρναξ in which Perseus and Danae are 'exposed' reflects the beginning of their marginalization from normal 'Greekness', and even from life itself: λάρνακες could be used for inhumation; the Etruscans used them to exile hermaphrodites.[42] In all, the λάρναξ

> offers us the image of a rite of passage complete with liminal, sexual, sòcial, and metaphysical categories—in the transmigrational death that leads to another life, and in the rite of passage that results in the transference of kingship.[43]

The λάρναξ also occasions the very first of Perseus' encounters with the sea and the sea-shore. He and Danae are rescued on Seriphos by Dictys ('Net'); he then meets Hermes on the sea-shore, flies to Oceanus where the Gorgons live, and finally sees Andromeda on the coast of Ethiopia and kills the κῆτος there. Every sea-shore is in itself τὸ ἔσχατον, and each one that Perseus visits is in turn further and further away from his starting place, Argos.[44]

Fosterage is a common feature of heroic initiation. Once on Seriphos, Perseus is brought up by Dictys. Dictys' role may be equated with that of the centaur Chiron, the παιδοτρίβης of many sons of a god and mortal women, such as Achilles, As-

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[41] See Chapter II *passim* on exposure in myth, and p.36 on the λάρναξ used to hide and protect precious objects. (Cf. Gernet 1981, 80 on precious objects being washed up on the sea-shore, such as the shoulder-blade of Pelops, possession of which was necessary to secure the fall of Troy (Paus. 5.13.4–6), and the statue of Theagenes (Paus. 6.11.8).)

[42] Napier 1986, 85. Cf. Schauenburg 1960, 7 n.46.

[43] Napier 1986, 85. Dionysus and Semele, Tennes and Hemithea are also put into the sea in a λάρναξ. Napier is inaccurate when he continues that 'the Gorgon's death and the hero's use of her visage...lead directly to the fulfilment of the oracle's prophecy and the ascension of Perseus to the throne'. As will be clear in Chapter II, Perseus does not use any of his magical accoutrements to kill Acrisius.

[44] For the sea as an essentially hostile environment, and the sea-shore as kind the meeting-place of the mortal and non-mortal world, cf. Achilles meeting Thetis, Menelaus Proteus, n.38 above.

clepius, Jason, Aristaeus, Dionysus, Actaeon, Heracles and Teiresias.[45] Like Pelion, the remote mountain on which Chiron lives, Seriphos is hard, rocky and remote.[46] According to a Hesiodic fragment, the Gorgons, *αἰνὰ πέλωρα*, were born and lived on the island of Sarpedon, *ἐν ὠκεανῷ βαθυδίνῃ νῆσον πετρήεσσαν*.[47]

The fosterage theme appears in Aeschylus' satyr play *Δικτυουλκοί*, in which Danae and the infant Perseus are washed up on Seriphos. The satyr Silenus addresses the infant at length as his new 'father', and outlines his future among the animals in the wilds which he and his satyrs inhabit:[48]

ὦ φίντων, ἴθι δε[ῦρο, str.
(ποππυσμός)
θάρσει δή· τί κινύρῃ;
δεῦρ', ἐς παῖδας ἰώμεν, ὡς τ[άχιστα.
ἵξῃ παιδοτρόφους ἐμά[ς,
ὦ φίλος, χέρας εὐμενής,
τέρψῃ δ' ἴκτισι καὶ νεβρο[ῖς
ὑστρίχων τ' ὀβρίχοισ[ι,
κοιμήσῃ δὲ τρίτος ξὺν
μητρὶ [καὶ π]ατρὶ τῷδε.
ὸ πάπα[ς δ]ὲ παρέξει antistr.
τῷ μικκῷ τὰ γελ[οῖ]α
καὶ τροφὰς ἀνόσους, ὅπως π[οτ' ἰσχὺν
ἀλδὼν αὐτὸς ἐν οὔρ[ε]σιν
χαλᾷ νεβροφόνο[υ] ποδὸς
μάρπτων θῆρας ἄνευ δ[ορὸς
θῶσθαι μητρὶ παρέξεις,
κ]ηδεστῶν τρόπον οἵσιν
ἔ]ντροπος πελατεύσεις.

Perseus will take on satyr ways, and will hunt in the mountains, *χαλᾷ νεβροφόνο[υ] ποδὸς*, 'with the claw of [his] fawn-killing foot'; he will catch wild animals without a spear, i.e. not like a human at all, but like an animal himself. Both the motif of 'hunting a wild animal without weapons', and the assimilation of a youth to a wild animal are initiatory (see below).

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[45] A.R. 1.554–8, Pi. *P.* 3. Cf. Jeanmaire 1939, 283–307 on divinities as *κουροτρόφοι*, 290–1 on Chiron.

[46] Cf. Str. 10.5.10, Cratinus *PCG* IV, fr.225, Ar. *Ach.* 542.

[47] Fr. 21 (Kinkel) of the Cyprian poems (see Schwartz 1960, 525–6).

[48] On this fragment, cf. Werre-de Haas 1961, ch.7.1. For the other fragments, see Appendix.

In Hyginus, Perseus is fostered to the temple of Minerva, which is appropriate for the role she is to take later in his life.[49] Temple service, another initiatory motif, is related to fosterage, since the child is 'fostered' to the god.[50] There is some evidence that Perseus was connected with the temple of Hera in Argos,[51] and in Nonnus, it is Hera who is Perseus' divine patron in his battle to save Argos from Dionysus and his army of women and satyrs.[52] On the whole, however, Athene is Perseus' patron (with assistance from Hermes), a role which she fills for other heroes and which is consistent with her appearance in historical evidence for temple service.[53] However, her association with Perseus is special, in that it is highly unusual for a hero to furnish a goddess (or god) with one of her most distinctive accoutrements, the *γοργόνειον* for the *αἰγίς*.[54]

Vidal-Naquet has noted that a double name for a hero, such as Paris-Alexandrus, or Pyrrhus-Neoptolemus, has ephebic significance.[55] The second name in each case indicates that the individual has reached the stage in his life at which he is becoming or has become a warrior: Paris (the etymology of which is uncertain)[56] becomes *Ἀλέξανδρος*, 'defender of men'; Pyrrhus, the 'red-haired' boy becomes a 'new warrior'.[57] Perseus[58] has a similarly appropriate second name, *Εὐρυμέδων*, 'widely-ruling': the exiled youth kills a queen (*Μέδουσα*) and becomes a king. *Εὐρυμέδων*

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[49] Hyg. *F.* 63.

[50] Cf. Burkert 1985, 263–4; Bremmer 1984, 123: 'we know that in Greece young boys and girls had to work in the temple in the beginning of their initiation, such as the Athenian Arrephoroi and the Brauronian "bears" '.

[51] A pottery vase relief found there, depicting the pursuit of Perseus by the Gorgons, dates from the mid-sixth century: see Hersom 1952.

[52] Nonn. 47.534–67. For the battle, see Chapter V. For Perseus in Nonnus, see Gigli 1981.

[53] Bremmer 1984, 121, finds evidence for ten historical examples of such temple service Leucippides (a Spartan hero), Poseidon of Troizen, Artemis *Τρικλαρία* of Patrae, Athene of Siris (in Sicily), Zeus in Aegion, Athene of Elateia, Athene Tegea, Artemis of Aegeira, Artemis Cnagia (Crete), and Artemis Cnaceatis near Tegea.

[54] See Chapter III.

[55] Vidal-Naquet 1986, 136. Cf. Bremmer 1978, 7–8.

[56] *ΕΜ—ΠΑΡΙΣ*: *παρὰ τὸ παριέναι τὸν μόρον, τουτέστιν ἐκφυγεῖν τὸν θάνατον· ἢ παρὰ τὴν πήραν, ὃ σημαίνει τὸ μαρσίπιον· ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν τῇ ποιμαντικῇ πήρᾳ ἀνατραφῆναι.*

[57] Jason (from *ἴασις*, Schol. Pi. *P.* 4.211a), called so by Chiron who was a *ἰατρός*, was also called Diomedes, 'counselled by Zeus': cf. Howe 1960, 749.

[58] Etymology also unclear: cf. Chantraine 1968–80, *s.v. Περσεύς*.

implies great power, and also wisdom, since it was applied also to Poseidon and to Chiron himself.[59]

The *ἔρανος* is a more specific indication of 'ephebic' maturation, since wine-drinking is an essential part of full participation in it. It is a place of boastings and wagers,[60] and here that Perseus' 'ephebic' initiation begins. Wine defines man: women and children tend not to drink it. The giving of a cup confers on the individual the right to take part in the banquet, and so access to wine represents the final accession to adulthood.[61] It was at the Oenisteria that ephebes had their long hair cut off and entered the final stage of their initiation, offering a cup to Heracles and giving a drink to their contemporaries.[62] There was even a cup called the *ἔφηβος*, suggesting special intermediary status between exclusion from, and inclusion in, the company of the *ἔρανος*.[63] The comic poet Stephanus made a pun on *τοὺς ἐφήβους τοὺς δυσχερεῖς*, the 'ephebes' that are 'difficult to handle', a reference to the awkward design or size of the cup, but also to the fact that ephebes as a social class can be a disruptive force, as shown in myth. Athenaeus gave *ἐμβασικοίτας* as an alternative name for the cup. *LSJ* gives *ἐμβασίκοιτος* as cognate, used of shepherds 'sleeping on the ground?'[64] The implication is that it was the kind of cup that ephebes used in the field, when they were living rough, like shepherds, on their frontier duty before returning to full membership of the *ἔρανος*. Hermes is thus an appropriate guide for Perseus when he fetches the *γοργόνειον* from Oceanus not only because he is a god who escorts mortals across boundaries, but more specifically because he is the god

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[59] Poseidon: Pi. *O.* 8.31. Chiron: Pi. *P.* 3.4. Perseus: Euphorion (*EM* 687, 35)—*ὀθνεῖον Πέρσῃ τελέων γάμον Εὐρυμέδοντι·* Hsch.—*Εὐρυμέδων· ὁ Περσεύς·* an epic fragment in Orus (*EM* 665), 45—*τὸν μὲν Περσῆα μετεκλήϊσσαν Ἀχαιοὶ, οὕνεκεν ἄστεα πέρθεν ἀπειρεσίων ἀνθρώπων·* A.R. 4.1513–14—*εὖτε γὰρ ἰσόθεος Λιβύην ὑπερέπτατο Περσεὺς Εὐρυμέδων—καὶ γὰρ τὸ κάλεσκέ μιν οὔνομα μήτηρ.*

[60] Gernet 1981, 156.

[61] Cf. Sergent 1984, 27, Bremmer 1980, 286 (on the importance of wine in the symposium and sacrifice), Gernet 1981, 27–8 on the *ἔρανος* as an assembly. As often, exceptions are instructive: cf. the young Achilles being given wine at a banquet by his *παιδοτρίβης*, Phoenix (*Il.* 9.485–91).

[62] Bremmer 1980, 285, Gernet 1981, 154.

[63] Ath. *Deipn.* 469A.

[64] Manetho 4.247 (Koechly): *κτηνῶν δ' ἀγρονόμων σημάντορας ἐμβασικοίτους.* For ephebes referred to as *ἀγρονόμοι* in Plato *Lg.* 760E–761A, see Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 148, 158.

concerned with increasing the size of the herd/flock by stealing, at night, out in the wilds.[65]

The association between maturation and hunting is also relevant to Perseus. A Macedonian noble was not allowed to recline at a couch at a banquet until he had killed a boar without the aid of nets.[66] Similarly, among a Scythian-Amazonian tribe of women, the Sauromatae, a woman was not allowed to marry until she had killed a man in battle; those who did not kill a man grew old and died in spinsterhood.[67] So Perseus has to kill the Gorgon (whose tusks of the Archaic period derive from the boar, and whose features at that time are more often theriomorphic than anthropomorphic),[68] if he is to save Andromeda from his rival suitor, Phineus, and to return to the ἔρανος on Seriphos. Oppian lists Hippolytus as the inventor of hunting with nets, Orion of hunting by night,[69] and Perseus as the inventor of hare-hunting.[70] In the *Odyssey*, νέοι ἄνδρες are said to hunt wild goats and deer and hares with the aid of dogs.[71] In other words, this type of hunting is not adult hunting, since the hunter uses no weapons, and his prey is harmless (especially relative to boar or other such dangerous animals). It might seem odd that the Gorgon-killer should also be an archetypal hare-killer, but it is consistent with the contradictory nature of his initiand status that this should be so.[72] Indeed, an Attic black-figure

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[65] On the aspects of Hermes, see Brown 1947, Kahn 1978, Vernant 1983, 128–30, and his ch.5 *passim* ('Hestia-Hermes: the religious expression of space and movement in ancient Greece'), Burkert 1985, 156–9; on Hermes and 'acquisitive individualism', see Brown 1947, 41, 60–2, 79–82. Cf. E. *El.* 463, where Perseus is accompanied by Hermes, ἀγροτῆρι κούρῳ; on Hermes as a patron of hunting, see Kahn 1978, 89–93. Note also that the identification of Perseus as an ephebic figure is strengthened by the fact that, as 'Perseutes', he became the patron hero of Kourion, city of Apollo, in Cyprus during the fourth and third centuries, replacing 'Koureus': see Dietrich 1986, 125–6.

[66] Ath. *Deipn.* 18A. Cf. Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 159–60, 1986, 127.

[67] Hdt. 4.117.

[68] See *LIMC s.v. Gorgo*, Stern 1978, 9.

[69] Cf. Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 160–1.

[70] Opp. *C.* 2.8–13.

[71] *Od.* 17.294–5.

[72] Note an Etruscan vase which, uniquely, depicts Perseus chasing the Gorgons, rather than vice versa: Compareale 1966. On hunting as proving the valour of the initiand, see Schnapp 1979; as preparation for war, Meuli 1975, vol.2, 699–729. On its initiatory significance, cf. Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 158f and his n.36, Brelich 1969, 175, 198–9, Piccaluga 1974, 77–94, Bremmer 1978, 14, Rubin-Sale 1983; on the hunter as a possessor of μῆτις, see Vernant-Detienne 1978, 30–4, 43–6. For the other heroic inventors of hunting, see Brelich 1958, 178–9.

bowl in Berlin implicitly likens Perseus to a hare being hunted.[73] The central band of decoration on one side shows the two Gorgons chasing Perseus and Hermes, a favourite scene on archaic and classical vases. More unusually, however, on a narrower band directly above the first, are shown two dogs chasing a hare. Each dog is placed above a Gorgon, and the hare over Perseus, all six running in the same direction. The hare is almost proverbially difficult to catch, because of its speed and alertness.[74]

As noted briefly above, the ephebe not only hunts wild animals, he can even become assimilated to one. In the only extant fragment of Aeschylus' *Φορκίδες*, Perseus is described entering the Gorgons' home (merely a cave, not any man- or god-made place, i.e. 'wild'):

> *ἔδυ ἐς ἄντρον ἀσχέδωρος ὡς.*[75]

ἀσχέδωρος is an Italian word for 'wild boar' (*σύαγρος*), learned by Aeschylus during his sojourn in Sicily, according to ancient commentators.[76] Athenaeus and Eustathius cite the fragment in discussing the meaning of *ἀσχέδωρος*, and Eustathius elaborates:

> (*ἰστέον...*) *ὅτι σῦς ἀσχέδωρος εἰρῆσθαι δοκεῖ, οὐχ ὁ ἁπλῶς, οἷον ὁ σίαλος ἢ ἡ* [*καὶ* (Nauck)] *ἀγελαῖος, ἀλλ' ὁ μονιὸς, ἤδη δὲ καὶ ὁ χλούνης, ὁ καὶ χαλεπὸς καὶ ἄλκιμος.*[77]

A pig is called *ἀσχέδωρος*, '...not a fattened [i.e. domesticated] hog, or belonging to a herd, but solitary, and *χλούνης*, dangerous and strong'. *μονιός* is used specifically of male animals driven from the herd,[78] and as a substantive means 'a solitary wild boar'.[79] *χλούνης* as a substantive means simply 'wild boar', but as an epithet has

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[73] Statliche Museen F1753, Schauenburg 1960, pl.9.2 and his n.305.

[74] See Opp. *C.* 1.514–18, 165, 3.153, 4.425–38. Cf. Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 156–8 on the Oschophoria, and for evidence that running a race in ritual and in myth is sometimes initiatory: e.g. a youth leaving the Cretan *ἀγέλη* to become a man is said to be 'running out' (*ἐγδραμεῖν*); cf. Nagy 1979, 326–7, on the direct correlation in Homer between speed of foot and a hero's *βίη*.

[75] *TrGF* III, fr.261. See Appendix.

[76] Ath. *Deipn.* 402B, Eust. *Od.* 211.11ff (Stallbaum), Synag. 457.21 (Bekker) = Phot. *Lex.* a.3042 (Theodoridis); cf. Hsch. a.7973 (Latte).

[77] Eust. *Od.* 211.23–4 (Stallbaum).

[78] Call. *Dian.* 84, *A.P.* 7.289.

[79] Hsch. *s.v. μονιός*.

been glossed as 'castrated' (hence bigger and more ferocious), 'solitary', 'foaming at the mouth', 'crouching in grass', or 'robber';[80] it is cognate with *χλοῦνις*, 'virility'.[81] This fragment is without context, and no appeal can be made to parallels, since Aeschylus makes no other references to 'wild boar' in the extant plays (or fragments). However, the simile is highly appropriate for describing a youthful hero carrying out his exploit. It characterizes him by his isolation, his dependence upon his own strength, his ferocity, and his resorting to thieving.[82] The likening of a youth to a wild animal constitutes in itself an initiatory motif in myth and in ritual: for males, transformation, for example into a wolf, and for females, most famously, into a she-bear. Other instances also testify to an association between the wild boar and the initiation of young men. According to one tradition, Chiron fed the young Achilles on the entrails of lions and wild boars, and on the marrow of bears. There is also the Macedonian boar-hunting ritual mentioned above, which itself finds mythical parallels in the Caledonian boar-hunt won by Meleager, and the boar-hunt on which the youthful Odysseus (*ἡβήσας*) acquired the scar on his leg.[83]

Thus it is when a youth is becoming a man, that in myth he becomes 'wild', a threat to his enemies. A fragment of Euripides' *'Ανδρομέδα* reads,

νεότης μ' ἐπῆρε καὶ θράσος τοῦ νοῦ πλέον.[84]

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[80] Cf. *LSJ s.v. χλούνης.*

[81] Cf. Chantraine 1968–80, *s.v. χλούνης.*

[82] On theft as practised in the Spartan *ἀγωγή*, see Vidal-Naquet 1981b, 183.

[83] Transformation of males into wolves, in the ritual of Lycaean Zeus (Paus. 8.2.6): see Buxton 1987, esp. 65, 68ff. Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1988, 168–77, suggestively entitled, 'Son against father: the wolf-minded ephebe [Lycophron]'. Buxton 1987, 63 cites Alcaeus 130.16–25 (Lobel and Page) writing of a person in exile who says of himself, 'I live a life in the wilds, longing to hear the agora...I am in exile, living on the boundary...here I settled alone as a *λυκαιμίαις*', a word which seems to mean 'wolf-thicket man'. See also Dolon in *Il.* 10.314ff, E. *Rh.* 208ff; Gernet 1981, 125–139; compare Actaeon's transformation into a deer. Transformation of females into she-bears, in the ritual of Artemis at Brauron near Athens: see Schol. Ar. *Lys.* 645, Zen. *Ath.* 1.8 (in Miller 1868, 350), Paus. Att. e 35 (in Erbse 1950, 177f); Sale 1975; cf. Deubner 1966, 207–8, Jeanmaire 1939, 259–61, Brelich 1969, 241–90. (These references are given by Burkert 1985, 407 n.27, and 449 n.34.) For the 'wildness' of youth, cf. the Spartan *ἀγελαί*, and the 'herd' of ephebes at Dreros (*SIG*^{3} 527, Osborne 1987, 147). For education and marriage as 'taming', see Calame 1977, vol.1, 372–8, 411–20, Vidal-Naquet 1981b, 174, and Sourvinou-Inwood 1987 (most of these references are given by Bowie 1987, 124 n.67). Achilles: Apollod. 3.13.6; cf. Stat. *Ach.* 2.96–100 (and 101–67 on his education), Philostr. *Her.* 2.2, *EM s.v. 'Αχιλλεύς*. Meleager: *Il.* 9.529–599. Odysseus: *Od.* 19.386–466.

[84] *TGF* fr.149.

These words were spoken perhaps by Andromeda's foiled suitor Phineus, rather than by Perseus (especially since lack of *νοῦς* is not what might be expected of Perseus as a successful ephebe), but is in either case further indication that youth can be the catalyst of violent action. Just as Penelope's suitors determine to kill Telemachus now that he is *μέγας* and has reached the 'measure of his youth', so Polydectes, Danae's suitor, determines to kill Perseus.[85] Fr.344 of Euripides' *Δίκτυς*, spoken perhaps by Perseus himself, is also characteristic of the youthful Greek hero coming to manhood, young but driven by his extremity to live, contrary to the last fragment, on his wits:

νέος, πόνοις δέ γ' οὐκ ἀγύμναστος φρένας.

Perseus kills Acrisius 'at the height of his youthful powers',[86] at the *ἀγὼν νέων* at Larisa.[87]

The characterization of the Graeae as *προφύλακες* also suggests that Perseus is a lone initiand operating by night in the boundary area: to reach his goal, Perseus has first to get past the 'advanced guard' by depriving it of its essential quality, of vision. *φυλακή* is used especially to mean guarding 'by night'.[88] The same motif of dark *ἔσχατα*, perpetually dark because of their extremity, is suggested also by a passage in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*. Prometheus tells Io where her wanderings are going to take her:

ὅταν περάσῃς ῥεῖθρον ἠπείροιν ὅρον, 790
πρὸς ἀντολὰς φλογῶπας ἡλιοστιβεῖς,
πόντου περῶσα φλοῖσβον ἔστ' ἂν ἐξίκῃ
πρὸς Γοργόνεια πεδία Κισθήνης, ἵνα
αἱ Φορκίδες ναίουσι, δηναιαὶ κόραι
τρεῖς κυκνόμορφοι, κοινὸν ὄμμ' ἐκτημέναι, 795
μονόδοντες, ἃς οὔθ' ἥλιος προσδέρκεται
ἀκτῖσιν οὔθ' ἡ νύκτερος μήνη ποτέ·
πέλας δ' ἀδελφαὶ τῶνδε τρεῖς κατάπτεροι,
δρακοντόμαλλοι Γοργόνες βροτοστυγεῖς,

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[85] Penelope to Telemachus: *νῦν δ' ὅτε δὴ μέγας ἐσσὶ καὶ ἤβης μέτρον ἱκάνεις...* (*Od.* 18.217). Cf. Otus and Ephialtes, who would have succeeded in their plan to overthrow the Olympians, *εἰ ἤβης μέτρον ἵκοντο* (*Od.* 11.317).

[86] *...καὶ ὁ μὲν οἷα ἡλικίᾳ τε ἀκμάζων...* (Paus. 2.16.2).

[87] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12.

[88] *LSJ s.v. φυλακή.*

ἃς θνητὸς οὐδεὶς εἰσιδὼν ἔξει πνοάς. 800

The Graeae (the '*Φορκίδες*', daughters of Phorcys), and thus the Gorgons (also '*Φορκίδες*'), live beyond the light of day and even of night. Having surmounted the difficulty of reaching such a place (which Io reaches only under the cruel compulsion of the goddess Hera), Perseus must then achieve what no mortal has achieved (or ever will again), that is, the killing of a Gorgon. In this passage of Aeschylus, then, Perseus' exploit is implicitly referred to as unique in its purpose and unprecedented in its danger and difficulty. That the Gorgons have the Graeae as their guards is an indication that the Gorgons are not monsters who threaten the world of mortals, and that Perseus' killing of Medusa is not an civilizing act. The Gorgons pose no threat to any man, and even have to be protected from them. It took Ovid's relentless logic of the grotesque, and his fascination with art to turn the Gorgons' homeland into an apocalyptic art gallery, populated by rank upon rank of stone people and animals who lived nearby and had suffered lithification because of their proximity.[89] Unlike Heracles or Theseus, who have myths in which they make safe the world frequented by humans outside the *πόλις*, Perseus leaves the inhabited world altogether. If anything, he brings monstrosity into the world by importing the *γοργόνειον*. However, his monster-killing too brings order, in as much as he uses the *γοργόνειον*'s power to restore order in Ethiopia and Seriphos.[90]

Alexander the Great's emulation of Heracles, Perseus and Dionysus is specifically with reference to their having travelled to the ends of the world and having brought order. He claims, '*Ηρακλέα μιμοῦμαι καὶ Περσέα ζηλῶ, καὶ τὰ Διονύσου μετιὼν ἴχνη*, because it is his aim to

> *τὰ βαρβαρικὰ τοῖς 'Ελληνικοῖς κερᾶσαι...καὶ πᾶσαν ἤπειρον ἐπιὼν ἐξημερῶσαι, καὶ πέρατα γῆς ἀνερευνῶν καὶ θαλάττης ὠκεανῷ Μακεδονίαν, καὶ τὴν 'Ελλάδος σπεῖραι καὶ καταχέασθαι γένους παντὸς εὐδικίαν καὶ εἰρήνην.*[91]

Perseus will operate in the frontier regions, he will use trickery and ruse (*δόλος*

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[89] Ov. *Metam.* 4.779–81. Cf. Barkan 1986, 52, on Perseus in Ovid *Metamorphoses*: 'his essential qualities are versatility, mobility, canniness, making him precisely apt to wield the power of metamorphosis'.

[90] See Chapter III on the analogous use made by gods of the *γοργόνειον* as it appears on the *αἰγίς* in Homer.

[91] Plu. 332A–B.

and *ἀπάτη*) as opposed to brute force (stealing the Graeae's eye and tooth, creeping up on the Gorgons as they sleep, then flying away in retreat).[92] He will fight on his own, not in a group, and at night, since the Gorgons live in perpetual night; Hermes, god of trickery and of thieves and the night is an ideal guide; Perseus himself will be blacker than black, for he is invisible, invisibility being part of the symbolism of liminality found in many cultures.[93] Young men can be referred to as *σκότιοι*,[94] and the youth of the Oschophoria called *ἐσκιατραφημένοι*, 'brought up in the dark'.[95] The *κυνέη*, the cap of Hades, holds the terrible, dark cloud of night (*νυκτὸς ζόφον αἰνὸν ἔχουσα*),[96] and is also 'a sign of power and...a mark of investiture'.[97] Compare the Apaturia myth, in which Melanthus, the 'black', fights Xanthus, the 'fair', at Melainai, defeats him with the help of Dionysus *Μελάναιγις*, and becomes king of Athens.[98] Together with his winged *πέδιλα*, the *κυνέη* is vital to ensure Perseus' escape:[99] to succeed, he must run away. That the *ἅρπη* and *πέδιλα* given to Perseus are sign of maturation is paralleled by Theseus' sword and sandals, left under a rock for him at Troezen by his father, and which he could retrieve only when strong (and old) enough to do so. Perseus' accoutrements, however, are more specifically tailored to his exploits, and are returned to their keepers after the decapitation of the Gorgon and the killing of the *κῆτος*: they are thus particularly ephebic.[100]

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[92] Cf. Ov. *Metam.* 5.10, where Phineus accuses him of stealing Andromeda; 5.246–7, where Polydectes accuses him of lying when he says that he has killed Medusa. Nonnus' account of his fight against Dionysus at Argos is particularly full of these motifs: see Chapter V. Note, however, Wheeler 1988, who has examined 'Strategy and the vocabulary of military trickery', 25–49 on Greek vocabulary, 93–110 on the fact that *ἀπάτη*, *δόλος* and their cognates are neutral in tone and not necessarily pejorative. The point is perhaps not simply that the ephebe uses trickery because the hoplite does not, but that the ephebe, as a future hoplite, needs to know what trickery is if he is to recognize it in an enemy. Cf. Hirsh 1985, ch.2 ('Trust and deceit in the Anabasis'), and Walcot 1977.

[93] Turner 1969, 95, chs. 3 and 5, 1974, ch.6.

[94] Schol. E. *Alc.* 989: *σκότιοι: οἱ μὴ γνήσιοι ὄντες τῶν θεῶν παῖδες ἀποθνήσκουσιν, οἱ μὴ ὄντες ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων θεῶν.*

[95] Cf. Plu. *Thes.* 23, Procl. *Chr.* 89. See Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 158.

[96] Hes. *Scut.* 227.

[97] Gernet 1981, 130, and 137 n.59 for origins and significance of the *κυνέη*. Cf. Dolon at *Il.* 10.334–5, wearing a ferret-skin *κυνέη* and a wolf-skin.

[98] Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 152–3.

[99] Phinney 1971, 451.

[100] For further discussion of Perseus' accoutrements, see Chapter III, pp.107–10.

3. Perseus and the Hyperboreans

The association between *τὸ ἔσχατον* and youthful heroic action examined in the two previous sections is of central importance to the story of Perseus' visit to the land of the Hyperboreans, 'beyond the north wind'.[101]

θεὸς εἴη 21
ἀπήμων κέαρ· εὐδαίμων δὲ καὶ ὑμνη-
τὸς οὗτος ἀνὴρ γίνεται σοφοῖς,
ὃς ἂν χερσὶν ἢ ποδῶν ἀρετᾷ κρατήσαις
τὰ μέγιστ' ἀέθλων ἕλῃ τόλμᾳ τε καὶ σθένει,

καὶ ζώων ἔτι νεαρόν 25
κατ' αἶσαν υἱὸν ἴδῃ τυχόντα στεφάνων Πυθίων.
ὁ χάλκεος οὐρανὸς οὔ ποτ' ἀμβατὸς αὐτῷ·
ὅσαις δὲ βροτὸν ἔθνος ἀγλαίαις ἁ-
πτόμεσθα, περαίνει πρὸς ἔσχατον
πλόον· ναυσὶ δ' οὔτε πεζὸς ἰὼν ⟨κεν⟩ εὕροις
ἐς Ὑπερβορέων ἀγῶνα θαυμαστὰν ὁδόν. 30

παρ' οἷς ποτε Περσεὺς ἐδαίσατο λαγέτας,
δώματ' ἐσελθών,
κλειτὰς ὄνων ἑκατόμβας ἐπιτόσσαις θεῷ
ῥέζοντας· ὧν θαλίαις ἔμπεδον
εὐφαμίαις τε μάλιστ' Ἀπόλλων 35
χαίρει, γελᾷ θ' ὁρῶν ὕβριν ὀρθίαν κνωδάλων.

Μοῖσα δ' οὐκ ἀποδαμεῖ
τρόποις ἐπὶ σφετέροισι· παντᾷ δὲ χοροὶ παρθένων
λυρᾶν τε βοαὶ καναχαί τ' αὐλῶν δονέονται·
δάφνᾳ τε χρυσέᾳ κόμας ἀναδήσαν- 40
τες εἰλαπινάζοισιν εὐφρόνως.
νόσοι δ' οὔτε γῆρας οὐλόμενον κέκραται
ἱερᾷ γενεᾷ· πόνων δὲ καὶ μαχᾶν ἄτερ

οἰκέοισι φυγόντες
ὑπέρδικον Νέμεσιν. θρασείᾳ δὲ πνέων καρδίᾳ
μόλεν Δανάας ποτὲ παῖς, ἀγεῖτο δ' Ἀθάνα, 45
ἐς ἀνδρῶν μακάρων ὅμιλον· ἔπεφνέν
τε Γοργόνα, καὶ ποικίλον κάρα
δρακόντων φόβαισιν ἤλυθε νασιώταις
λίθινον θάνατον φέρων· ἐμοὶ δὲ θαυμάσται

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[101] The story is found only in Pindar (*P.* 10.21–54). The passage is one of the few extant pieces of classical literature which treat any part of the Perseus myths at length, and for this reason alone merits some attention. The other noteworthy example is the so-called 'Danae's lament' of Simonides: for text see now Fuhrer 1976, 163–4.

θεῶν τελεσάντων οὐδέν ποτε φαίνεται
ἔμμεν ἄπιστον. 50
κώπαν σχάσον, ταχὺ δ' ἄγχυραν ἔρεισον χθονὶ
πρῴραθε, χοιράδος ἄλκαρ πέτρας.
ἐγκωμίων γὰρ ἄωτος ὕμνων
ἐπ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλον ὥτε μέλισσα θύνει λόγον.[102]

In view of the importance of *τὸ ἔσχατον* for the ephebe, the question of Hyperborea's 'actual' location, one sought by inquirers both ancient and modern,[103] is the least important one for a consideration either of Pindar's use of the country in this ode, or of its significance in myth.[104] Should he be envisaged as returning from Ethiopia to Argos, or as being on his way from Argos to Larisa in Thessaly? Or is he making a separate journey?[105] The question is irrelevant since it implies the application to myth of the temporal and spatial criteria of history. As Pindar himself makes clear,[106] Hyperborea is one of two corresponding 'poles' of the world, being opposite and corresponding to the source of the Nile in the far south.[107] In *Isthmian* 6, the remoteness of these two places is evidently proverbial, since Pindar says by way of praise that the victor's ancestors the Aeacidae travelled even beyond (*πέραν*) these regions.[108] Herodotus relates that the northernmost tribes of the world have their own stories about fantastical races of beings living towards the north wind:[109]

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[102] Pi. *P* 10.21–54.

[103] Hdt. 4.17ff, Bieler 1931, 123–4, Picard 1927. Cf. Tümpel 1887–88, trying to locate the 'Ethiopia' of the Andromeda myth.

[104] See, however, Bieler 1931, 126 and Bernadini 1985, 152 on links between Hyperborea and Thessaly, the homeland of the victor of the ode.

[105] Wilamowitz 1922, 469, considered that the *τε* of l.46 implies that the Gorgon episode is in the past. Farnell 1932, 218–19, disagreed, placing the Hyperborean visit before the Gorgon-killing, arguing that if Perseus had already killed Medusa and settled with Polydectes, he would not be wandering about with Athene. Burton 1962, 9, thought that l.46–8 did not necessarily imply that the Gorgon-killing was on the same expedition.

[106] Pi. *I.* 6.22–3.

[107] For the existence of four such 'poles' related to the rising and setting of the sun, and consequently their shift from solstice to solstice, as influencing Greek conceptions of direction, see Ballabriga 1986.

[108] Pi. *I.* 6.23.

[109] Hdt. 4.17ff.

men with goat's feet,[110] one-eyed men and gold-guarding griffins.[111] However, these tribes know nothing about a 'Hyperborean' people.[112] Homer and Hesiod mention them, he says, but it is the people of Delos who tell stories about them much more than anyone else does.[113]

All of this tends to indicate that Hyperborea is a Greek invention to symbolize a remote place. That the Hyperborean episode appears only here is consistent with its being used consciously for a particular purpose: unless the myth existed in other sources but simply has not survived, then Pindar himself invented it for this ode. The association between Hyperborea and Delos hinted at by Herodotus confirms not only that Hyperborea did not exist, but that it was a mirror reflecting notions about the nature of man, specifically, Greek man, and his place in the cosmos. Thus the Hyperboreans are idealized. Herodotus reports that of the northernmost tribes such as the Scythians and Arimaspians, only the Hyperboreans do not make war upon their neighbours.[114] Secondly, there came to be a strong element of Golden Age imagery associated with Hyperborea, which is exploited in *Pythian* 10.[115] Extreme remoteness coincides with close association with the gods. Apollo takes particular pleasure in attending the celebrations of the Hyperboreans (1.33–6): they are his servants.[116] Four Hyperborean virgins are buried on Delos, an island otherwise wholly free from the pollution of death.[117] In ritual Apollo is summoned annually back to Delphi from Hyperborea.[118]

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[110] Hdt. 4.25.

[111] Hdt. 4.27.

[112] Hdt. 4.32.

[113] Hdt. 4.33.

[114] Hdt. 4.13.

[115] Cf. Hes. *WD* 109–120. However, the Hyperboreans are meat-eaters, since they are sacrificing a hecatomb to Apollo when Perseus comes among them.

[116] Pi. *O.* 3.16: *δᾶμον Ὑπερβορέων...Ἀπόλλωνος θεράποντα.*

[117] Hdt. 4.34–5. On the Hyperborean maidens, cf. Nilsson 1950, 611–14, Santerre 1958, and Picard 1927 (though he is wrong, on p.354, to imagine that *Pythian* 10 provides evidence that the Gorgon exploit happened in Hyperborea). Cf. Poseidon's visits to the Ethiopians, *ἔσχατοι ἀνδρῶν*, who live both at the sun's rising and its setting, a polarity which confirms the idealization of geographical mythopoiesis (*Od.* 1.22–5); on Ethiopia, and the same inexactness of its location, see Ballabriga 1986, 214.

[118] Cf. Burkert 1985, 146 and his n.35.

As Burton noted, the myth of the Hyperboreans in the context of *Pythian* 10 illustrates ideas expressed earlier in the poem.[119] This race of people is a realization (albeit a remote one) on earth of the life which is led by the gods on Olympus (see 1.21–2). Perseus himself is an idealization of youthful heroic action that is based on physical prowess (1.23–4, refering to Phricias, the father of the victor, and prefiguring his young son's success), *τόλμα* and *σθένος* (1.19), and on divine favour (1.45, where Athene is said to be Perseus' guide).[120] A possible reason for using Perseus in particular is that the victor who is being praised has won the foot-race. Hyperborea can be reached neither by foot nor ship (1.29). By this account, Perseus is the only hero capable of travelling so far, apart from Heracles (see *Olympian* 3.16) or perhaps Bellerophon on Pegasus, since he alone has winged shoes. He is the foot racer *par excellence*, running as swiftly as thought itself,[121] faster even than Achilles, who can run only as fast as a hawk or a dog.[122]

One of the most important reasons for using Perseus in the poem is his status as ancestor of Heracles,[123] who figures strongly in Thessalian descent.[124] Furthermore, Acrisius died at Larisa, and had his *ἡρώιον* in the temple of Athene there; there was even a tradition that he had founded the city.[125] A final reason, which appears to have been overlooked by commentators on this ode, for mentioning Hyperborea at such length must be, simply, that the victory which the ode is celebrating occurred at the Delphic games, i.e. under the patronage of Apollo himself: the victor is being favourably compared not only with Perseus, but with the Hyperboreans, who of all peoples enjoy the favour of the god.

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[119] Burton 1962, 7–8.

[120] Burton 1962, 7–8. Cf. Pi. *N.* 10.3–4, where the killing of Medusa is implied to be one of Argos' *ἀρεταῖς μυρίαις ἔργων θρασέων*; the whole poem is described as a song in recompense for *πόνων*; cf. Pi. *P.* 12.18–19, where Athene frees Perseus from his *πόνων*, because he is a *φίλον ἄνδρα* to the goddess.

[121] Hes. *Scut.* 222.

[122] *Il.* 22.139–40. Cf. a rationalizing interpretation of Perseus' winged shoes (Heraclit. *Incred.* 9), saying that in reality he was just a very fast runner; cf. his being likened to a hare, an archetypally swift animal, pp.16–17 above.

[123] Kirkwood 1982, 235.

[124] Pi. *P.* 10.1–3.

[125] Hellanic. *FGrHist* 4 F 91.

It was misleading for Burton to suggest that, having made the basic contrast between mortal life and the untroubled existence of the Hyperboreans, Pindar is then

> free to indulge his delight in storytelling and to depict a scene of music, feasting, and lasting happiness as a background to the festivities at Thorax's court.[126]

The implication of 'indulge' is that the Hyperborean myth contributes no subtlety of meaning either to the ode as a whole, or to an understanding of Perseus. On the contrary, the myth emphasizes all the more the contrast between a blessed existence and the lot of mankind. Lines 33–4 must be taken as likening life in Hyperborea to that in Thessaly (although the muse is perhaps more welcome in the former place—a sly comment on Thorax's attitude to the arts?); lines 41–4, however, show how distanced in every sense are the Hyperboreans, suffering neither sickness nor old age, labour nor war. Hence there is no need for *ὑπέρδικον Νέμεσιν*.[127]

> More important, lines 44–8 are not tacked on simply as an
>
> appendage to the myth...best accounted for by the poet's desire to round off the story of Perseus by adding his most famous exploit,[128]

despite the fact that by the usual convention, Pindar's declaration (l.51–4) implies that he has wandered from the point. On the contrary, the inclusion of *λίθινον θάνατον* of the Seriphians is the climax of the myth in the poem: Pindar's remark at lines 48–50 refers directly to the lithification, the ultimate expression of Perseus' potency as a hero. The lithification jolts the listener/reader back from the blissful Hyperboreans into the reality of the victor's (and even Perseus') mortal existence, where there is toil, death and ageing, all of which rob the victor of the vitality that allows him to perform his athletic feats.

The sense of the myth then runs as follows. Perseus alone has been able to reach the land of the Hyperboreans; no other man, not even a victor in the Pythian games, can ever emulate his heroic deed; victory in the games is the *ἔσχατον πλόον*

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[126] Burton 1962, 8.

[127] Cf. Canter 1937, 132: Nemesis contains the idea of combined displeasure (of divinities) and just retribution; 'in general terms [it] expresses a feeling of blame for and displeasure toward the violation of all that is conveyed by the word *νόμος*, that is, by the violation of moral and written law'. It appears usually in the context of offence and punishment.

[128] Burton 1962, 9.

that a mortal man can achieve, and is paralleled by Perseus' deed; the land of the Hyperboreans is supremely blessed, being free from toil, war, disease and old age, and it is thus especially loved by Apollo; therefore victors in the Pythian games are similar to the Hyperboreans in having Apollo as their patron, but even they will never attain such happiness themselves in this age; finally, there is no Nemesis among the Hyperboreans (l.43–4), but (*δὲ*) Perseus managed to reach them, and (*τε*) he killed the Gorgon, and (*καὶ*) he brought death to the Seriphians (l.45–8); with the gods' help anything can be achieved (but there are some things that even the gods will not help mortals to do now). The myth thus ends with the stark juxtaposition between Nemesis and Perseus' heroic deed (i.e. killing the Gorgon and the Seriphians): Nemesis is superfluous for the Hyperboreans, but there is an all too desperate need for it on Seriphos. Perseus becomes the agent of Nemesis, and so is identified with 'right action'. By implication, Polydectes' actions are immoral and unworthy of emulation.[129]

Just as Perseus is the only mortal to reach the land of the Hyperboreans, so he is the only one to have visited the land of the Gorgons. Both are equally distant, at the edge of the world; but while the Hyperboreans inhabit a place that any mortal might wish he could have lived in, the Gorgons' is a desolate, dark world where no mortal could ever live, even if he wanted to. As an initiand, then, preparing to enter the world of mortals as an adult, Perseus visits both an ideal land and an uninhabitable one. The world he returns to where he will live as a man—mainland Greece—lies somewhere between these two.

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[129] Pindar invites us to identify here an implicit reference to Polydectes and the Seriphians by referring to the Seriphos episode allusively with *νασιώταις*.

II. PERSEUS AND ACRISIUS

One of the major preoccupations of those who consult an oracle in myth is with marriage and the production of children. This is generally considered to be a reflection of historical fact.[1] Though doubtless prepared for disappointment, few of these hopeful ἄπαιδες will have expected to receive so unsettling a response as did Acrisius and several other mythical figures, in reply to the simple enquiry *περὶ παίδων γονῆς*. In myth, the oracle predicts the death of the enquirer at the hands of a future son or grandson.[2]

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the way in which the Acrisius myth can be understood in terms of a typically Greek preoccupation with the importance of the *οἶκος* and its survival from one generation to the next. The basic structure of the myth—that of an oracle predicting the death of the *κύριος*—means that at the very start of the story Acrisius is faced with a dilemma particularly dreadful for a Greek: in order to save himself from death, he must kill his only heir. Perseus is thus faced with a corresponding dilemma, that to succeed Acrisius he must become a parricide. The acuteness of these dilemmas suggests that the myth is being used to 'think' with: such unwelcome replies of an oracle *περὶ παίδων γονῆς* are restricted to the realm of myth; for there are no historical examples of them (as distinct from the application of the mythical pattern to historical figures);[3] nevertheless the Greeks told myths about them. The centrality to the Acrisius myth of the need to provide the *οἶκος* with an heir is corroborated by the fact that the commonest theme by far in the fragments of Greek tragedies on the Perseus myths is the importance of having children.[4]

Perseus' role in the Gorgon, Andromeda and Dionysus myths is that of a heroic

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[1] Parke–Wormell 1956, vol.1, 298. Cf. for example, *SIG*^{3} 1160.

[2] For the oracles, see Fontenrose 1978, L17, (Laius), L23 (Acrisius), L12 (Pelias, Jason's second cousin), and L84 (Aleus, predicting the death of his brothers). For sources see n.41 below.

[3] For which, see pp.46–51 below.

[4] See Appendix, p.242. Although the few Homeric references to Perseus are often used to suggest that there was no link between Perseus and the Gorgon at the time of the *Iliad's* transcription, it is usually overlooked that the reference to Perseus, son of Danae, the daughter of Acrisius (*Il.* 14.319–20) implies that the myth of Perseus and Acrisius was indeed current at that time.

monster-killer and rescuer of women. However, these exploits are marginal to the Acrisius myth. Instead, Perseus becomes a parricide, but care is taken to palliate the impiety associated with it by the circumstances of the killing. It is an accidental killing, of a peculiar kind: death by a discus-blow to the foot.

A. THE ACRISIUS STORY

Acrisius enquires at Delphi, *περὶ ἄρσενος παιδός*. He receives in reply the unambiguous information that he will have no son, but that his daughter will (i.e. that his grandson will be his heir instead); this child, however, will kill him.[5] He attempts to prevent the fulfilment of the oracle by incarcerating his daughter, Danae, in a bronze chamber or tower. But Zeus comes to her disguised as a shower of gold, and Perseus is conceived and born. When Acrisius discovers this, mother and child are shut up in a *λάρναξ* and cast adrift in the sea. Later, when Perseus has grown up, he returns to his native Argos and meets his hostile grandfather, who runs from him in fear at first, but is finally reconciled with him. Soon afterwards, Perseus kills him by accident and becomes king in his place.

Because the stories which we know as 'The Perseus Myths' share this one hero, it is tempting to regard the above series of events as a kind of mythological 'ring-composition'. From this point of view, the oracle story serves as a convenient framework for Perseus' heroic exploits. Thus Parke and Wormell regard the oracle simply as a device to initiate the action of what is (by their implication) the main story.[6]

However, this view is misleading. Although the Acrisius story did indeed come to serve this 'framing' function, it is in fact a myth in its own right; and the oracle's significance is greater. First, Acrisius was a hero with an identity of his own. He had a *ἡρώιον* in the temple of Athene in Larisa (on the Peneius in Thessaly), and one tradition maintained that he founded Larisa; another asserted that he administered

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[5] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 10. Fontenrose 1978, 364–5, considered the prediction to have become associated with Delphi in the sixth or fifth century, perhaps. Ps.-Euripides' *Δανάη* 11–16 (*TGF* fr.1132) has Acrisius being told that he will have no son, but a daughter who will bear a winged lion destined to take the throne: 'this is without doubt the poet's invention, constructed out of the traditional legend' (p.365). This new version makes explicit the fact that Perseus will succeed Acrisius as king.

[6] Parke–Wormell 1956, vol.1, 309.

the earliest Delphic amphictyony.[7] Sophocles wrote an *Ἀκρίσιος* and a *Λαρισαῖοι*, and Euripides a *Δανάη*, in which Acrisius was a protagonist.[8] Secondly, the sources themselves make it clear that the Gorgon and Andromeda stories do not impinge on the Acrisius story, and that in it Perseus plays a different role. When grandson and grandfather meet for the second (and last) time at Larisa, there is no sign that Perseus is anything other than a normal young man. The *γοργόνειον* has been surrendered to Athena;[9] the strange sickle-shaped *ἅρπη*, the magic cap of invisibility, the mysterious bag (*κίβισις*) in which the severed head of the Gorgon was carried, and the flying-sandals have all been returned to their respective owners and keepers.[10] In no case does Perseus use the *γοργόνειον* to kill Acrisius.

In other words, in the Acrisius story Perseus is not a monster-killing figure, but a grandson and finally heir. Furthermore, the element of hostility apparent between Perseus and his other opponents[11] is absent between him and Acrisius. (All versions contain the motif of their reconcilation.) On a conscious level at least, Perseus neither needs nor desires to kill his grandfather. Reconciliation replaces retaliation: it is at that very moment, when family harmony seems to have been restored at last, that Perseus kills Acrisius, by accident.

One of Hyginus' accounts of the Perseus story actually excludes all reference to his heroic exploits, as if the only myth about Perseus is the one in which he kills Acrisius.[12] There is no mention of Athena, Hermes, Gorgons, or any other monsters and maidens. The change of emphasis is facilitated by Seriphos, the island to which Danae and Perseus drift in the *λάρναξ*, becoming a refuge for them rather than a place of persecution: Perseus is brought up in the temple of Minerva, and Danae

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[7] *ἡρώιον*: Clem.Al. *Protr.* 13.23. Larisa: Hellanic. *FGrHist* 4 F 91. Amphictyony, Str. 9.3.7.

[8] See Appendix.

[9] A local version maintained that the head had been buried in the agora of Argos (Paus. 2.21.6), and perhaps was envisaged as being apotropaic. Cf. the graves of the *Ἅλιαι* there, and of the Amazons in Athens: the female threat to the male-dominated *πόλις* is defeated and incorporated into ritual. See Chapter V, pp.183–4.

[10] One result of Perseus' lack of accoutrements will be seen to be that it is all the more grimly ironic when he kills Acrisius without them: Acrisius is no Gorgon.

[11] Polydectes, Medusa, Cepheus, Phineus, Dionysus and the *Ἅλιαι*.

[12] Hyg. *F.* 63, cf. *F.* 273, where Perseus is said to have established funeral games for Polydectes, his 'guardian', on Seriphos.

is married to Polydectes, who acts not as his step-son's enemy, but as a foster-father. Hearing that his daughter and her son are alive on Seriphos, Acrisius goes there to reclaim them (*repetitum eos profectus est*). Presumably, *repetitum* in this context bears a hostile connotation, since in this version Polydectes, in all other sources opposed to Perseus, has to intercede on his and Danae's behalf (*pro eis deprecatus est*). This lack of hostility between Polydectes and Perseus obviates the killing of Medusa and the rescue of Andromeda, since these exploits occur in the usual version when Polydectes wants Perseus dead (so that he can marry Danae). Instead, Hyginus' version takes a 'short-cut'. The result of Polydectes' intercession is the reconciliation of Perseus with Acrisius. Perseus swears an oath not to kill his grandfather (*fidem dedit se eum numquam interfecturum*). Acrisius is delayed from returning (alone) to Argos by a storm, during which time Polydectes dies. At the funeral games, a discus thrown by Perseus is diverted by the wind (*quem ventus distulit*) and hits Acrisius on the head.[13] Thus Perseus kills Acrisius and the oracle is fulfilled. After a second funeral, Perseus returns to Argos in his place and becomes its ruler.

This version of the story is not simply a rationalization of the myth intended to expurgate supernatural elements (including Perseus' fantastical Gorgon- and κῆτος-killing). For the oracle predicting Acrisius' death remains potent. Furthermore, there is no attempt to discredit Zeus' paternity of Perseus, by substituting for the shower of gold story the version in which Danae's uncle Proetus, or some other man, seduces or rapes her.[14] In fact, it will become clear that the manner of Perseus' conception is closely related to the oracle and to Acrisius' death: the birth of his killer, just like his eventual death, is something which Acrisius can neither foresee nor prevent.

It is not likely that the apparently abridged condition of our MSS for Hyginus is responsible for the absence of Perseus' other exploits: the omission seems

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[13] The motif of the wind blowing the discus off-course does not appear in any other source for Acrisius' death, and is no doubt copied from the Hyacinth myth (see below p.59 and n.147).

[14] Schol. *Il.* 14.319 (where the story is attributed to Pindar), Apollod. 2.4.1. The 'double paternity' motif is not generally developed in the Perseus myths. For the motif, see Brelich 1958, 297, Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, 18–21.

deliberate.[15] These exploits are related in full elsewhere in Hyginus,[16] without the author being concerned about the contradiction inherent in having Polydectes as Perseus' friend and protector here. Lack of concern for contradiction between different versions is a feature of ancient mythography, and in this case indicates that this version of the myth is concerned with a particular aspect of the Perseus stories.[17] The essential structure of the myth is in all versions that of oracle, exposure, return of child and death. This structure has been privileged above any others in this version of Hyginus, and the Perseus myth becomes one of an 'oracle fulfilled'; but the oracle is of a particular kind, *περὶ ἄρσενος παιδός*: it is an exposure myth.

B. INFANTILE EXPOSURE

A comparison between the reality of Greek exposure with how it is portrayed in myth indicates that there is a preoccupation with illegitimacy as its main cause, both in reality and in the main body of exposure myths (that is, those without an oracle). However, in the small sub-group of exposure myths with an oracle ('prophesied exposure'), illegitimacy is not nearly so prominent: Perseus and Telephus are illegitimate, but Oedipus and Paris are not; nor are any of the three historical figures to whom the 'prophesied exposure' myth pattern was applied. Instead, the same problems posed by illegitimacy (of inheritance and the stability of the *οἶκος*) are examined, but they are expressed in a starker form by substituting for it the death-predicting oracle as the primary motive for exposure of the child.

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[15] Grant 1960, 1 on the MSS; *ibid.*, 8 on the general lack of fantastical elements in Hyginus.

[16] *F.* 64, 244, *Astr.* 2.12.

[17] It may also be evidence of the variegated authorship of the works of Hyginus; or that he is abbreviating different works.

1. Exposure In Reality

In a general comment on all the examples of infantile exposure which he adduced, Binder concluded:

> In Wirklichkeit wurden vermutlich weder in Griechenland noch anderswo so viele Kinder ausgesetzt wie es uns die Aussetzungsmythen—würde man sie rein vom vordergründigen Geschehen her beurteilen—glauben machen könnten.[18]

Lacey, discussing the Athenian evidence, confirms the likelihood of this conclusion.[19]

Of those exposures that did occur, the majority were motivated probably by illegitimacy. However, it was not the case that illegitimacy automatically, or even usually, led to exposure. There must have been illegitimate offspring who were not exposed, significant in number,

> 'for the [Athenian] law was not likely to have recognized a bastard as a legal status unless there were in fact people living who could properly be so described'.[20]

Economic grounds are considered to have comprised the other chief explanation for exposure, namely, having too many sons, too many daughters, or deformed children.[21]

Both reasons for exposure indicate that its purpose was to serve the interests first of the *οἶκος*, that is, to preserve it, and then of the *πόλις*, to provide it with (sound, male) citizens. Illegitimacy presupposes jeopardy of the integrity of the *οἶκος*, since it removes control of the provision for its heirs from its head, the *κύριος*: it is for the *κύριος* to decide whom his daughters will marry. In Athens bastards were excluded from inheritance (though not necessarily from citizenship).[22] As to economic grounds, too many sons could cause inheritance difficulties in the form

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[18] Binder 1964, 151. Cf. Binder in Ranke 1977, 1048–66, for summary and some corrections and additions to Binder 1964.

[19] Lacey 1968. 166: 'it might indeed be the case that very few healthy legitimate citizen-children were in fact exposed, although there may have been some change in the climate of opinion in the fourth century, as there certainly was in the period after Alexander'.

[20] Lacey 1968, 167, and 308 n.89 for evidence.

[21] Lacey 1968, 164–5. For the compulsory exposure of deformed children in Sparta, see Plu. *Lyc.* 16.1–2, cf. Garland 1985, 81–2. On the influence of received ideas on modern scholarship's examination of the exposure of children, and the problems these cause in the handling of the ancient evidence, see Oldenziel 1987.

[22] Hansen 1985, appendix 2, 'Bastards as Athenian citizens'.

of fragmentation of the *οἶκος*, while too many daughters and/or deformed children might represent too great a burden on its resources.

In addition, illegitimacy represents a breakdown in the relationship between father and daughter. The daughter who has a bastard has either been seduced (for which penalties in Athens were severe for a woman, since it presupposes conscious betrayal of her *οἶκος*), or raped (less severe, since there is no conscious betrayal); in either case, she is held responsible for the existence of any resulting child.[23] Our myths suggest that the offspring of such sexual congress could be exposed. At the same time, the illegitimate child represents a failure on the part of the girl's father to look after his daughter's best interests. The proper context for the birth of children is that of marriage, in order to stabilize and perpetuate the *οἶκος* and thereby the *πόλις*.[24]

2. Exposure In Myth

(a) General

There are many examples in myth of the exposure of children. Either the daughter exposes the child herself in fear of discovery by her father;[25] or he does it in anger at or fear of the bastard.[26] On the whole, such children survive but do not grow up to kill their own kin. Essentially, most exposure myths illustrate the social reality that a daughter should give birth in the house of her husband, and not of her father. It is especially appropriate that two particularly extreme examples of convoluted sexual relationships within the *οἶκος* should lead to exposure.[27]

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[23] MacDowell 1978, 124–5.

[24] On the interrelationship between *οἶκος* and *πόλις*, see Humphreys 1983, chs.1 and 2, Lacey 1968, chs. 1, 3 and 4, particularly on the *οἶκος* as an institution of the *πόλις*.

[25] Pelopeia exposes Aegisthus, Rhoio Anius, Evadne Iamus, Acacallis Miletus, Creusa Ion, Polymede Jason (in fear of his uncle), Pitane Evadne, Alope Hippothoon, Scamandrodice Cycnus, Phylonome the twins Lycastus and Parrhasius, Tyro the twins Pelais and Neleus. For the sources of these and all exposure myths discussed here, see Binder 1964.

[26] Acrisius Perseus, Aleus Telephus, Laius Oedipus, Priam Paris, Astyages Cyrus, Iasus Atalanta, Alcimedon Phialo and her son Aechmagoras, Crotopus Psamathe and her son Linus, Cycnus Hemethea and her son Tennes, Desmontes the twins Aeolus and Boeotus, Lycus (uncle) the twins Amphion and Zethus, Carcinus Agathocles, and Lagus (step-father) Ptolemaeus I Soter. Antilochus, Cydon, Melampus, and the twins Phylacides and Philandrus are also exposed, motives unknown.

[27] Aegisthus is the progeny of the incest between father and daughter; Tennes and Hemithea are

In some of the myths, as in the Acrisius myth, the mother of the child is exposed together with her child.[28] This motif is an expression of the breakdown of the relationship between father and daughter implied by the birth of an illegitimate child (as noted in the previous section). The daughter is removed form the *οἶκος* of the father, but not relocated in that of a husband. Similarly, the mother of Aeolus and Boeotus is blinded by her father for the birth; the twins later avenge their mother on him.

One story, that of Evadne and her encounter with Apollo, suggests that if the father of a daughter in the 'unprophesied exposure' myths were to know that the child in fact has a god for a father, then he would be content.[29] In this case illegitimacy is acceptable because it is of divine origin. Yet despite the fact that nearly every exposed child exposed in myth has an immortal father, the worst is usually assumed to be the case.[30] or the question is irrelevant. Rather, the high coincidence of exposure with divine parentage suggests that there is significance in the child's divine origin: in 'unprophesied exposure' myths, to be exposed, a child must have a divine father.

Concurrent with the idea that the exposure of an infant is intended to kill it is the feeling that such an action in fact protects the child from danger, as in the cases of Zeus, Agathocles and Cypselus. This is so particularly in those cases in which a daughter has a child without her father's knowledge.[31] The story of Thoas confirms this notion, and also illustrates the basic principles of exposure in general by means of inversion. He is the only man left alive on Lemnos, because of his

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exposed when Tennes is falsely accused by his step-mother of attempted rape.

[28] Phialo and Aechmagoras, Psamathe and Linus, Hemithea and Tennes (in a *λάρναξ* in the sea like Danae and Perseus).

[29] Evadne conceives and her angry guardian Aeyptus goes to Delphi to enquire about the pregnancy (Fontenrose 1978, L10). He discovers Apollo is the father and that the child, Iamus, will become a great seer. Meanwhile, Evadne has hidden the infant out in the wilds where she gave him birth with the help of Apollo. Aeyptus is satisfied with the oracle and so Iamus and Evadne are reintegrated into the *οἶκος*.

[30] Cf. Oedipus' initial reaction to the revelation that he is not the son of Merope, but in the worst instance a *τρίτης μητρὸς τρίδουλος* (S. *OT* 1062–3). In New Comedy, if not before, 'son of Zeus' became synonymous with 'bastard', e.g. Men. *Sam.* 593–607, of Danae and Perseus. This rationalization of the divine birth motif in Perseus' case fostered the version in which his real father is said to have been not Zeus, but Proetus (see p.31 above).

[31] See n.25 above.

daughter Hypsipyle's loyalty to him. She puts him into a λάρναξ and into the sea. He survives the journey and lands on the island of Oenoe. This is a classic inversion of normality: the women take political power, the father is exposed by the daughter, exposure equals safety. The myth could simply have had Thoas escaping from Lemnos. Instead, the motif of exposure is used to signal the importance of the loyalty of the daughter to the father, which itself contrasts with those myths in which the father exposes the daughter and her child to rid himself of them. The essential point of the λάρναξ motif is that the mother and child are exposed together.[32] Central to the myth is the notion that to be safe, Thoas must be hidden: in other versions, he is disguised by his daughter as a bacchant,[33] hidden in the temple of Dionysus and then taken to the sea disguised as the cult statue,[34] or just 'hidden'.[35] In the Thoas myth, therefore, exposure is a synonym for being 'hidden'.[36]

Although illegitimacy as a cause of exposure is strongly reflected in the 'unprophesied exposure' myths, purely economic reasons are not. A king may have twin grandsons, which might cause problems of inheritance,[37] or like Aleus, three sons and a daughter. But in the royal families of myth, lack of wealth is irrelevant to any decision concerning the exposure of a child. However, most kings who expose a child have only one son, or just a daughter. There is no example of a deformed child being exposed in myth. The myth of Atalanta is the only one in which a female infant is exposed because her father had desired a son.[38]

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[32] Danae and Perseus, Hemithea and Tenes, and Dionysus and Semele.

[33] But he is discovered and killed, and Hypsipyle sold into slavery (Apollod. 3.6.4). Sources: Binder 1964, 145–6.

[34] Val.Fl. 2.242–310.

[35] Apollod. 1.9.17.

[36] Cf. Athene hiding the infant Erichthonius in a λάρναξ to keep him secret so that she might make him immortal (Apollod. 3.14.6, and Frazer's (1921) note). For other references, see Caduff 1986, *s.v.* λάρναξ.

[37] Cf. the strife between Polyneices and Eteocles, and between Acrisius and Proetus.

[38] Exposed, Atalanta takes on the attributes of the majority of exposed (i.e. male) children, becoming in time a hunter and an athlete. But she cannot transcend her gender and so fails to return from the wild, contracting a 'wild' marriage with Melanion: see Sourvinou-Inwood 1987, 152–3. Harpalyce is not exposed, but follows a similar pattern. Suckled by animals under her father's guidance following the death of her mother, she is brought up as a fighter. On her father's death (which is the equivalent of the abandonment of exposure), she runs wild in the country as a cattle-rustler until caught and killed by herdsmen.

In fact, the overwhelming majority of children exposed in myth is healthy, nobly born and, with the exception of Atalanta, male. Furthermore, in myth exposure never works: it does not cause the death of the child. The child grows up, sometimes returning, though often not, in which case he may become the king of another city. Thus the myths of exposure do not exist as a reflection of real life, either in motive, or (if one accepts the view that exposure was rare in reality)[39] in actual occurrence. No Greek would expose his sole male heir.[40]

(b) Prophesied Exposure

These are the myths of Acrisius and Perseus, Laius and Oedipus, Priam and Paris, Aleus and Telephus, and among historical figures, of Astyages and Cyrus, Carcinus and Agathocles, and the Corinthians and Cypselus.[41] They are a sub-group of the main body of exposure myths. Exposure follows upon a threatening oracle or dream.

The alliance of the death-foretelling prophecy (whether oracle or dream) with the exposure motif emphasizes the role of the father—the father of the child in the case of Oedipus, Paris, Agathocles, and of the girl in that of Perseus, Telephus and Cyrus. The father-daughter-grandson type will be the main topic of discussion, since the Acrisius myth is of this kind. However, father and grandfather are equivalent in that in the myths each tries to prevent the succession of the heir. (The 'grandfather' myth carries further implications, which will be discussed below.)[42]

Exposure because of illegitimacy fades into the background of the Perseus and Telephus myths (although is still present, inasmuch as both heroes have a divine father),[43] but disappears altogether in the Oedipus and Paris stories (since each has a mortal father, who is the king who exposes the child). Instead of illegitimacy, the threatening oracle or dream becomes the motive for exposure, thereby heightening

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[39] See p.33 above.

[40] 'There can be little doubt that the first child of a marriage (whichever its sex) was never exposed if it was healthy (or appeared to be), though it might be repudiated...' (Lacey 1968, 164).

[41] For the oracles, see n.2 above. For sources, see Binder 1964, 132–3 (Perseus), 142–4 (Oedipus), 130–2 (Telephus), 144–5 (Paris), 17–28 (Cyrus), 149–50 (Agathocles), 150–1 (Cypselus).

[42] See pp.54–8 below.

[43] See n.109 below, for Acrisius questioning Perseus' parentage.

for the *κύριος* the dilemma of whether or not he should expose his heir.

In this sub-group of exposure myths, there is the same antipathy between father and daughter (or father and child in the case of Oedipus and Paris), so that the father of the girl exposes the child, and sometimes the girl too. Correspondingly, this disruption is reflected in the child acting in a hostile way towards his grandfather (or father). However, the disruption is dramatized further here by the fact that the child is to kill his grandfather/father, i.e. to become a parricide. Thus even before the birth of the child, the father of the girl is induced by the prospect of his own death to attempt to avoid fulfilling a prime obligation towards her, that of arranging a suitable marriage.[44] This is a common motif in myth which is not restricted to exposure stories. Oenomaus initiates the process of his daughter Hippodameia's marriage by organizing a chariot race to select a husband; but it is only a mock selection: he never intends that anyone but himself should win the race, because of an oracle predicting his death at the hands of his future son-in-law. One version of the myth even suggests that Oenomaus wishes to keep Hippodameia for himself, i.e. incest, itself an inversion.[45]

The wider social implication of the father's failure to marry off his daughter is the obstruction of the exchange of women upon which Greek society depended. In that case, in those exposure myths in which the father exposes or punishes his daughter for having an illegitimate child by a god, criticism of the father for not having acted in the interests of the *οἶκος* may be implicit. This is even more likely in the 'prophesied exposure' myths, where the father acts only to save his own life, which necessitates that he should engineer the death of his heir by exposure, thereby

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[44] Acrisius shuts Danae away, Aleus makes Auge priestess of Athene (to keep her a virgin). Cf. Polycrates of Samos (Hdt. 3.120–5), who threatens to keep his daughter a virgin (*παρθενεύσεσθαι*), with her approval, if it will save his life, when she warns him not to go to Magnesia. He does not heed her and is killed. The theme is loyalty of the daughter to her father in spite of the father. Cf. Antigone, Iphigeneia (cf. Hypsipyle). The story in which Atalanta institutes a race with her suitors represents the opposite, a father trying to fulfil his obligations, but the daughter's refusal to comply.

[45] Incest: Apollod. *Epit.* 2.4, Schol. E. *Or.* 990, Tz. Lyc. 156. Cf. Eurytus, father of Iole, holding an archery contest with Heracles to determine if Heracles will marry her. The institution of the athletic contest in myth often, as here, has a significance completely opposed to its model in reality. In the real world, *ἀγῶνες* are intended to produce a worthy victor, but in myth to frustrate him. Hence Perseus is sent to fetch the *γοργόνειον*; cf. Heracles, Jason, Bellerophon, Peleus: on mythical *ἀγῶνες*, see Weiler 1974.

depriving the *οἶκος* of its future *κύριος*. For the *κύριος* was not simply the owner of the *οἶκος*, but to an extent only its present custodian: thus, for example, it was considered disgraceful to sell off ancestral land.[46] However, this would only be one aspect of such myths. Even if no criticism is implied, still the myth dramatizes a conflict between the interests of the father and those of the *οἶκος*, as expressed by what happens to the daughter and her son.[47]

Two sets of myths will now be considered: first, of the prophesied exposure of Zeus, Oedipus, Telephus and Paris; and secondly, of Cyrus, Agathocles and Cypselus, in which the pattern of the prophesied exposure has been applied to historical figures. Examination of the first group establishes the general pattern and themes of the myth-type; examination of the second corroborates the idea that, given the identity of the figures to whom the myth-type was applied, that is, great monarchs, a central concern of the pattern is a general failure to transfer power within the *οἶκος* that results from the actions of the *κύριος*. In general, the prophesied exposure of an heir to the *οἶκος* leads to the destruction of that *οἶκος*, the only two exceptions being the exposure of Zeus and of Perseus. Similar stories surrounding the historical figures Cambyses and Croesus will also be discussed since, although they are not of the 'prophesied exposure' type, they offer confirmation of the central preoccupations of all these myths. The relevance of the myths to Acrisius and Perseus will be discussed in the remainder of the chapter.

(i) Zeus

The primordial prototype of the 'prophesied exposure' myth is the account of the birth and accession to power of Zeus.[48] An oracle predicts the subjugation of Cronus by Zeus, father by son, and an attempt is made to frustrate it.[49] The child matures

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[46] Lacey 1968, 23 and his notes.

[47] Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, 15: patricide myths reflect social principles—a son is dependent on his father for name, wealth, citizenship, life, and 'for society to go on, sons must destroy (replace) their fathers'. Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1988, n.15: 'The motif [of the inescapable oracle] represents (among other things) the notion that it is inescapable that fathers die and are replaced by their sons'.

[48] See Fontenrose 1959, 291, Burkert 1985, 125–31. On the motif of heroic ordeal as a preface to succession to the throne, cf. Gernet–Boulanger 1932, 83–90.

[49] Cronus swallows a stone instead of the infant Zeus. From a purely narrative viewpoint, it is more vivid to have the last of several sons as the vanquisher of an oppressive father. Also, the

(on Crete) away from his father's influence as it might be outside the *οἶκος*, and life-threatening behaviour, and later returns, grown to adulthood, to subjugate and replace the father.[50]

It is appropriate therefore that Perseus, a son of Zeus, should re-enact his own father's experience as a child who returns to overthrow his persecutor and to become king in his place. However, the immortal prototype contrasts with the experience of mortals. Zeus' analogous experience puts mortals' attempts to prevent succession into a wider, cosmic context. Like Acrisius and Laius, Zeus in his turn receives an oracle that a son of his (by Thetis) will overthrow him; but unlike his mortal counterparts, Zeus is able to prevent it using his foresight (*μῆτις*), which he uniquely possesses (having on his succession swallowed the goddess Metis rather than his children).[51] He therefore avoids Thetis and gives her to the mortal Peleus (who then fathers Achilles). There is, accordingly, in Zeus' case no expectation that another younger god will usurp him as head of the Olympian *οἶκος*: he holds sway forever, because he is immortal, the strongest of the gods, and because he has *μῆτις*.

Mortal fathers possess none of these qualities, and so any effort to attain similar (quasi-divine) domination by repressing their heirs must fail: they attempt to circumvent the death-predicting oracle *περὶ ἄρσενος παιδός*, but cannot. However, mortal fathers die and are superseded not because of the oracle foretelling their death, but because of death itself. The oracle is a narrative expression of the inevitability of the succession of one generation to the next.

Another contrast between Zeus' and these mortals' succession myths is that Zeus overthrows his father intentionally, while the mortals do so unintentionally. Furthermore, in all mythical cases the mortal heir has to become a parricide to overthrow his *κύριος*. Oedipus kills his father unwittingly, Perseus his grandfather by accident, Telephus his maternal uncles (although the sources do not reveal how—

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method of oppression in this instance—swallowing the infants (though not eating them)—necessitates that it should be the last-born who escapes the process first and ultimately frustrates it.

[50] Although Cronus underwent a similar process, engineering the fall of Uranus, he simply took his father's place without changing the *status quo*. Zeus is the first, and so the last father-god-dynast who does not automatically imprison or maltreat his children.

[51] Hes. *Th.* 886–900. Cf. Vernant–Detienne 1978, 108–9, and ch.4 *passim*, 'The union with Metis and the sovereignty of the sky'.

by accident, it might be expected), and Paris his father (indirectly, by bringing about the fall of Troy).[52] The accidental nature perhaps palliates the parricide.[53] More importantly, it creates a strong irony, whereby the son succeeds his father despite both himself and his father. This irony, and the violence with which this succession is accomplished in myth, is a dramatization of mortality, mortality which renders futile any pretence to unnaturally prolonged personal domination of the *οἶκος*. Each generation sows the seed of its usurpation.

In real life, old age and natural death generally ensure that such violent transitions from generation to generation are the exception rather than the rule. However, these myths' function here is to think about these problems via the 'unthinkable', and so in them the tension between age-groups within the *οἶκος* becomes explicit.[54] Myth expresses the tension as follows: for a son to succeed his father is to kill him.[55]

(ii) Oedipus

J.Bremmer has recently analysed the Oedipus myth[56] and expressed its narrative in the following terms: fosterage, parricide, conquest of monster (the Sphinx), kingship.[57] He finds the same progression in the Theseus myth, but in a slightly different order: fosterage, conquest of monster (the Minotaur), 'parricide',[58] kingship.[59]

On Bremmer's model, the Perseus-Acrisius myth can be expressed in similar terms, although the 'parricide' is of the grandfather rather than the father: fosterage (on Seriphos), conquest of monster (the Gorgon, the *κῆτος*), parricide, kingship. However, our analysis would suggest that this model, although basically correct,

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[52] Cf. Meleager, who kills his maternal uncles in the heat of the battle over the skin of the Calydonian boar, and is in turn killed by his mother: Bacchylides 5.127–35, *Il.* 9.565–7.

[53] See below pp.56–7, 58–62.

[54] As has been observed elsewhere, in myth in general, hardly anyone dies of natural causes.

[55] Paris does not succeed. It is his failure to do so which thus causes not only the death of his father, but the fall of the *πόλις* itself. See below.

[56] Bremmer 1987a, 41–59, 'Oedipus and the Greek Oedipus Complex'.

[57] Bremmer 1987a, 48.

[58] In inverted commas because Theseus does not actually kill Aegeus, he causes his suicide by failing to display the white sail on the ship bringing him back from the labyrinth on Crete.

[59] Bremmer 1987a, 47–8 notes a similar pattern in the often cited South American Bororo Indian myths of Geriguiguiatugo: hunting feats, parricide, culture heroism.

does not give enough prominence to the role of the oracle. Secondly, it follows from our earlier discussion of the version of the Acrisius myth given by Hyginus[60] that the 'conquest of monster' phase is not an indispensable part of the pattern. To include this phase as if the pattern were an indivisible unit of myth, or 'mytheme', is misleading. In fact, Bremmer's pattern is a conflation of at least two patterns: 'monster-killing' constitutes a pattern in its own right.

> Bremmer describes the Oedipus myth as one that relates
>
> the story of a *perverted* succession—the incest [between Oedipus and Jocasta] being the narrative expression of society's disapproval of parricide: Oedipus is a model of how not to succeed to the throne.[61]

The motif of 'perverted succession' is at the heart of the Acrisius myth. However, the incest motif is not linked to the parricide in such a direct way. The parricide motif is indispensable to the myth-type, as has been seen above. The incest motif is additional only, and constitutes further expression of the convolution of the relationships within the *οἶκος*. The motif in fact carries the same 'message' as the parricide does, and reinforces it. For in both cases (in committing both parricide and incest), Oedipus replaces his father. In Sophocles the notion of replacement implicit in the motif of parricide becomes explicit in the language used to refer to the incest.[62]

There is, however, an important difference between Sophocles' Oedipus and Acrisius. Oedipus succeeds his father but, unlike Perseus, then loses the kingship; and in the long term his curse on his sons brings the male bloodline of his *οἶκος* to an end. In the Homeric version in *Odyssey* 11, Oedipus stayed as king of Thebes even after the death of his mother-wife, but there too will not live happily.[63] It will become clear below that Perseus' is the only 'prophesied exposure' myth in which the transition from one generation to the next is assured unproblematically for generations to come.

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[60] Above, pp.30–2.

[61] Bremmer 1987a, 53.

[62] S. *OT* 1255–7, sowing where his father sowed (*διπλῆν ἄρουραν*); cf. 459–60, 1245–8, 1403–8, 1496–9.

[63] *Od.* 11.271–80: he rules on, *ἄλγεα πάσχων...θεῶν ὀλοὰς διὰ βουλάς*· there is the hint that his *ἄλγεα* are caused by the *Ἐρινύες* of his mother.

(iii) Telephus

The Telephus myth exists in two forms, with and without the oracle. Comparison of the two versions helps to illustrate more clearly how in all 'prophesied exposure' myths the oracle poses in a far more potent form the questions embodied in the 'non-prophesied' myths about the need to perpetuate the *οἶκος*. The oracle brings its very survival into question.

The oracle in this myth differs from that of Acrisius or Laius, in that it predicts the death not of the grandfather or father of the child, but of the child's maternal uncles, his grandfather's sons. (However, the maternal grandfather is to an extent analogous to the maternal uncle.)[64] The significance of the oracle version is therefore slightly different, but it is still concerned with the *οἶκος*: like all these stories, the myth portrays the imperative of perpetuation of the *οἶκος*; this particular myth, however, portrays this imperative by showing, not the survival of the *οἶκος* despite everything, but its destruction. Having killed his maternal uncles, Aleus' heirs, Telephus abandons his ancestral *οἶκος* to establish a new one outside Greece.

In most sources, the pattern is that of the majority of exposure myths. There is no oracle, and in this form the story is a foundation myth. Telephus is conceived when Heracles is entertained one night in Tegea in typical fashion: he becomes drunk and sleeps with Auge, daughter of Aleus.[65] Aleus exposes Telephus and Auge or sends them abroad, never to return to their home city of Tegea. Instead, the myth brings the hero to Mysian Pergamum, in Asia Minor, where he was of religious and political importance.[66] In Hesiod, he was said actually to have been born in Mysia.[67] In the version of Hecataeus and in one of Euripides', Aleus has mother and child put in a *λάρναξ* and into the sea, whence they arrive in Mysia and come under

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[64] Below, pp.54–5.

[65] Heracles is just as irresistible a force as Zeus in his impregnation of mortal women, each having his own *modus operandi*: Zeus metamorphoses, and Heracles, often, gets drunk.

[66] See Binder 1964, 131 on the importance of Telephus to the Attalids. Cf. Parker 1983, 375–6, on exile in myth necessitated by killing often as being a purely structural device to make a hero travel abroad to satisfy genealogical requirements. This is certainly not always the case, as the Perseus myth shows.

[67] Hes. fr.165 (Merkelbach and West).

the protection of king Teuthras.[68] In Sophocles, another play of Euripides, and the majority of mythographers, Telephus is exposed on Mt. Parthenius, and Auge sold to Teuthras; later, Telephus grows up and finds his mother in Mysia.[69]

The 'prophesied exposure' version was current in the classical period.[70] Aleus receives an oracle that if he gets a grandchild from his daughter, his sons will be killed by the child. He makes Auge priestess of Athene to prevent her conceiving, saying that if she loses her virginity he will kill her.[71] Heracles comes by and, inebriated by being entertained by Aleus in the temple, impregnates Auge. When Aleus discovers the pregnancy, he gives Auge to the ferryman Nauplius to expose on the sea. On the way Auge gives birth on Mt. Parthenius and Nauplius, without telling Aleus, gives mother and child to the Mysian king Teuthras. Teuthras, being childless himself (ἄπαις), marries Auge and adopts Telephus as his son.

Alcidimas does not say how Telephus killed the sons of Aleus, since he quotes the story mainly to mention Nauplius, father of Palamedes. However, Hyginus mentions the murder;[72] so too a Greek proverb writer:[73]

Τήλεφος γὰρ ἀποκτείνας τοὺς τῆς μητρὸς ἀδελφοὺς νέος ὢν, ἔφυγεν ἐκ Τεγέης.

Then he is told by the Delphic oracle to 'sail to *τὸ ἔσχατον* of the Mysians', where he finds his mother and becomes king.[74] This seems to have been the version used by Sophocles in the *Μυσοί*, in which Telephus came speechless to Mysia from Tegea.[75]

The 'prophesied' version of the myth preserves the essence of the more usual version, in that Telephus and Auge are exposed and reach Pergamum in Mysia. The oracle means that the *οἶκος* of Aleus assumes greater importance, its survival being

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[68] Hecat. *FGrHist* 1 F 29; E. *POxy.* 2460 and *TGF* fr.696. See also St.Byz. *s.v. Τευθρανία*, Schol. Pi. *O.* 9.108a, 3.52a.

[69] S. *Ἀλεάδαι*, *TrGF* IV frs.77–91; E. *Αὐγή*, *TGF* frs.265–281.

[70] Recorded by Alcidamas, a rhetorician of the fifth or fourth century: Alcid. *Od.* 14–16 (to be found in Blass' edition of Antiphon, pp.187–8).

[71] See above, n.44, on Polycrates of Samos and his daughter.

[72] Hyg. *F.* 244, the murder of Hippothous and †Nereus.

[73] *CPG* vol.1, 412 (not 212, as Frazer 1921 vol.1, 254 has it).

[74] The story is cited to explain the proverb, *ἔσχατος Μυσῶν πλεῖν*. Note that he is *νέος*.

[75] Arist. *Po.* 24 p.1460a32, cf. *TrGF* IV fr.409–18. His silence too was proverbial because, as Athenaeus says (*Deipn.* 224E), he was a homicide.

brought into question. Because it was evidently felt to be important that Telephus should reach Mysia and not return to his homeland,[76] the oracle now dramatizes not the perpetuation of the *οἶκος* despite everything, but the abandonment of one *οἶκος* for another. The death of Aleus' sons is the death of his heirs and thus of the *οἶκος*. However, the end of one *οἶκος* is the making of another. Telephus becomes the heir of the childless Teuthras, establishing Spartan ancestry in Asia Minor. But having destroyed his native Greek *οἶκος*, rather than saving it as Perseus does, Telephus leaves Greece for *τὸ ἔσχατον*, from which he never returns, a journey for which he was proverbial. Mythically speaking, to destroy an *οἶκος* is to abandon it, and the agent of its destruction is beyond the pale.

(iv) Paris

Like Oedipus and Telephus, Paris presides over not the perpetuation of his *οἶκος*, but its destruction. He does not even live to inherit, but dies before his father, having assured the latter's death. But Paris goes one stage further even than Oedipus and Telephus by causing the downfall not only of this *οἶκος*, but of the whole city.

The prediction of the future is here in the form not of an oracle, but of a dream. Hecabe dreams of a firebrand burning above the city. Priam's son, Aesacus, interprets the dream as meaning that Hecabe's next child will destroy Troy, and recommends it be killed on birth. Priam entrusts the task to his servant, Agelaus, who duly exposes the child on Mt. Ida. Days later Agelaus finds the child unharmed, for it had been suckled by a she-bear. He takes the child as his own and names him Paris. Paris grows up among shepherds in the mountains. Then he takes part in games in Troy and his true identity is discovered because of his looks and abilities.[77]

The 'Judgement of Paris' sets in motion the destruction of Troy. Paris' rejection of the rewards offered by Athene and Hera explicitly expresses his antipathy to the values upon which the *οἶκος* and the *πόλις* are based, and foreshadows his destruction of both: he rejects Athene's offer of success in war, and Hera's of kingship. His choice is Aphrodite—sexual love, and adultery. He denies the *πόλις* by refusing kingship

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[76] See n.66 above on Parker.

[77] Cf. Cyrus, below.

and the means to retain it, and the *οἶκος* by choosing Aphrodite.[78]

(c) Historical Figures

The application of the 'prophesied exposure' story pattern to three historical figures—Cyrus, Agathocles, and Cypselus—confirms that a major concern of the other, mythical examples is indeed the nature of power and its acquisition: the oracles of these figures predict, not that they will kill their fathers, but that Cyrus will overthrow his to become king, and that Agathocles and Cypselus will become tyrants and cause great harm to the cities that they are to rule. These figures were powerful rulers: Cypselus the seventh-century tyrant of Corinth, Agathocles the fourth-century tyrant of Syracuse, and Cyrus the great Persian king. Binder concluded that the attribution of an exposure story to a historical king (while living, or after his death) constituted an indication of divine approval,[79] or at least, of divine recognition. The attribution of a 'prophesied exposure' story consolidates the claim to monarchy, since the myth projects such a claim back to infancy: a man is born to be king, with divine sanction. Equally, the historical figure is assimilated to heroic status.

The Cyrus birth myth is the closest of the three to the Acrisius myth. The other two stories (of Agathocles and Cypselus) are not strictly exposure myths, since in them the child is hidden (in a chest and a jar, respectively)[80] to protect it from those who seek to frustrate an oracle predicting the downfall of a dynasty. Perhaps because these three figures were historical, it was felt to be important that none of them should be depicted as being illegitimate, so that the identity of their (mortal) father should be known (as in the cases of Oedipus and Paris). Thus it is the oracle, or dream, alone which leads to their exposure, rather than the fear that they are illegitimate.[81] Agathocles and Cyrus are reconciled to their father and grandfather

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[78] Cf. Prodic. *de Herc.*, where he has to decide, as he passes *ἐκ παίδων εἰς ἥβην*, whether to take the road of *ἀρετή* or of *κακία* (Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.21–34).

[79] Binder 1964, 71.

[80] Cf. Thoas and the *λάρναξ*, above pp.35–6.

[81] This contrasts with the two 'unprophesied exposure' myths attached to historical figures, in which illegitimacy is the motive for exposure. Philip, father of Alexander the Great, married his daughter off to the Macedonian noble Lagus who, discovering his new wife was pregnant, exposed the child at birth. The child survived because it was protected and fed (on blood)

(respectively), like Paris and Perseus, at an early age, as if they had never been exposed; Cypselus is not actually 'exposed', but is analogously hidden in a chest by his mother to protect him from Corinth's assassins. These deviations do not mean, however, that the stories are in any way true, or even based on a kernel of truth.[82] But they are connected with historical fact in that they reflect the actions of these three men in later life and their basic antipathy towards their political opponents.

(i) Cyrus

Herodotus tells the story, in which the exposed child returns to his *οἶκος* and deposes his grandfather.[83] Astyages, king of Media, has two dreams (compare Hecabe's dreams) featuring his daughter Mandane which are interpreted as meaning that her son will rule the country instead of him. His reaction to the first dream is fear; and, curiously unlike his mythical counterparts, he marries his daughter off—the last thing to do considering that children are the natural aim and consequence of marriage. Mandane is married off to a foreigner, the Persian Cambyses. This carefully chosen marriage implies a belief on the part of Astyages that he retains control over Mandane and any children she might produce; it also contrasts with the uncontrolled pregnancies caused by gods in myths associated with non-historical figures. It is as if Astyages were relying on the fact that in myth it is the illegitimate (Perseus and Telephus), and not legitimate, children of unmarried girls who are dangerous to their maternal relatives. However, the marriage is more likely to be an indication of historical fact,[84] that is, a real marriage incorporated into the myth, because allowing the marriage to take place is contrary to the mythical pattern: Cyrus had to be a legitimate heir. In any case, Astyages reconsiders, and having placed guards over his daughter at the birth of her son Cyrus, attempts to have the child exposed: the

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by an eagle (the symbol of Zeus which also became the symbol of Macedonian power), and grew up to become Ptolemaeus I Soter. The other figure was Hieron II of Syracuse. The same story recurs as an explanation for the coat of arms of the Earls of Derby, after which the Oxford pub, 'The Eagle and Child', takes its name. A framed 'inscription' in front of the bar recounts the story: 'surely one of the more bizarre names of Oxford pubs, the Eagle and Child derives its name from the crests of the Earls of Derby. The legend goes that an early member of the family found and adopted a child fostered by an eagle in Latham Park'.

[82] Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1988 for an example of this process in Herodotus.

[83] Hdt. 1.107–130.

[84] *Pace* Sourvinou-Inwood 1988.

pattern of pure myth reimposes itself. He entrusts the task to his most loyal servant, who cannot bring himself to carry it out, knowing that it will lead to the death of the infant.[85] The servant characterizes his master as being out of his senses and raging mad,[86] and the exposure as a *φόνος*, a kin-killing. He also makes it clear that Astyages is an old man and without a male heir. Cyrus grows up with foster-parents, and returns to the household of his grandfather at the age of ten, when Astyages mistakenly believes that the action foretold by his dreams has been fulfilled: Cyrus plays the 'king' game with some other children.[87] Later, Cyrus deposes him, and that which was predicted in the dreams comes to fruition: Cyrus becomes king.

The significance of the reconciliation motif is clarified here. The *κύριος* accepts the exposed child, previously rejected, as his heir, believing the oracle to have been circumvented. (So Acrisius accepts Perseus upon his oath not to kill him.) Killing following close upon reconciliation underlines the disorder which the killing signifies. As often, there is a myth which is opposite in significance, thus confirming the pattern. Tennes, exposed by Cycnus, king of Colonae, later becomes the eponymous ruler of Tenedos. Cycnus then sails to Tenedos, desiring reconciliation on discovering that he exposed Tennes on a false pretext. Tennes rejects him by cutting his ship free from its moorings. Having founded a new *οἶκος*, like Telephus Tennes rejects his old one.[88]

(ii) Cambyses and Smerdis

Herodotus relates another story in which the same themes appear: Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, attempts to suppress the heir of the royal *οἶκος*, in response to a threatening prophecy. However, the structure of this story is different, making it a complementary exposition of the same problems. Cambyses succeeds in his suppression of heirs, while Acrisius and the other *κύριοι* fail. Cambyses' action leads to childlessness and disaster for the *οἶκος*, while Perseus survives to perpetuate his *οἶκος* despite Acrisius. The story is concerned with rivalry for power, but within

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[85] Pure myth: cf. S. *OT* 1142–81.

[86] Hdt. 1.109: *παραφρονήσει...μενέεται κάκιον*. Cf. Chapter I, p.9, on the man who dishonours his country as *οὐ καλῶς φρονεῖν*.

[87] Cf. Paris, above p.45.

[88] Sources: Binder 1964, 138–9.

the same generation (i.e. between brother and brother) rather than between father/grandfather and son. However, the problem for the individual to be usurped is the same in either case, as is his response, which is effected on the assumption that the problem prophesied can in fact be solved.

Cambyses dreams he is told by a messenger that Smerdis is on the throne of Persia and that his head is touching the sky. On the strength of this dream, Cambyses has his brother Smerdis killed. His own downfall occurs later when two of the Magi take power in Susa in his absence, one of the Magi also bearing the name of Smerdis and pretending to be his royal namesake. Cambyses realizes the futility of his action and laments the murder of his brother. Within moments of this *ἀναγνώρισις*, the fulfilment of a second prophecy (given by the oracle at Buto) is enacted and comprehended by Cambyses. Leaping onto his horse, he impales his thigh on the point of his own sword (just in the place in which he once stabbed the sacred Apis-calf). Believing the wound to be fatal, he asks where he is, and learns that it is Ecbatana (in Syria). He recalls that the oracle that had predicted his death would be in Ecbatana, and that he had assumed that a Median town of the same name had been meant. However, he lays upon his followers an obligation to prevent the Medes from gaining dominion over the royal house; and he threatens them with a curse of sterility, loss of freedom, and his own miserable fate if they do not act on his command. He dies of gangrene. The extended account of his life, downfall and death ends with the bare statement, 'He had no children, either sons or daughters'.

The disaster for the *οἶκος* is complete. Cambyses dies, but not before having killed his only brother. In addition, Cambyses has already killed his wife and heir, simultaneously: in anger he kicks his pregnant wife, and she miscarries. Mother and child die together: this is analogous to the exposure of mother and child in the myths, except that Cambyses succeeds in killing them and so goes one stage further than Acrisius.[89] He is left without successor, and his own death follows soon upon this realization. The curse on his followers, of sterility, loss of freedom and death is

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[89] Hdt. 3.32. Cambyses' anger is provoked by his wife crying at the sight of a puppy helping a litter-mate fight off a lion cub, and by her saying that it reminded her that Smerdis could no longer perform the same service for Cambyses. In the other version of her death, also given by Herodotus, she is executed for telling Cambyses that he has stripped bare the house of Cyrus: the 'message' in both versions is the same.

effectively the curse he has suffered himself. His injunction upon them is an implicit restatement that there is no avenger within his own *οἶκος*, since his brother is dead. The final comment by Herodotus on Cambyses' childlessness is a natural conclusion to an account of his life, summing up his failure to look after his *οἶκος*.

Another important aspect of the Cambyses story is that the reader is intended to be shocked by his actions, not only because Herodotus appears to be, but also because Cambyses himself comes to be.[90] They are the actions of a tyrant, who perverts ancestral law (committing incest, murder and sacrilege), rapes women, and kills without trial.[91] His fear of losing his kingship causes him to kill Smerdis, a legitimate successor.[92] It is fear of Danae giving birth to a son who will kill him that makes Acrisius take steps to prevent it.[93]

H.R.Immerwahr wrote of Herodotus' account of the life of Cambyses, that he

> derives both his greatness and his decline from the idea of legitimate succession. Loyalty to his dynasty and respect for custom...are Cambyses' original attitudes. He reverses both, and his end is due to his disrespect for Egyptian custom [killing the Apis-calf], while the end of his family's rule is caused by his murder of relatives.[94]

Immerwahr also noted the importance of the destruction of children in the story, and that Herodotus underlined this motif by adducing in Book Three many stories dealing with it.[95]

All these *κύριοι* try to suppress their heirs, but where Acrisius and the others fail despite themselves, Cambyses alone succeeds. This would suggest that the 'message' implicit in the Cambyses story is contrary to that of Acrisius'. Cambyses' story shows how fatal it can be to try to alter the natural order of things (incest being one of the symptoms of the disorder which he brings to his household), an attempt

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[90] Hdt. 3.65: *ἐξεργασθέντος δὲ κακοῦ τοσούτου ἀδεῶς διαιτώμην, οὐδαμὰ ἐπιλεξάμενος μή κοτέ τίς μοι Σμέρδιος ὑπαραιρημένου ἄλλος ἐπαναστατίη ἀνθρώπων.*

[91] Hdt. 3.80, Immerwahr 1966, 169.

[92] Hdt. 3.65: *δείσας δὲ μὴ ἀπαιρεθέω τὴν ἀρχὴν πρὸς τοῦ ἀδελφεοῦ ἐποίησα ταχύτερα ἢ σοφώτερα.* Cf. 3.30: *δείσας...*

[93] *δείσας* (Apollod. 2.4.1). *δεδοικὼς τὸν χρησμόν* (Apollod. 2.4.4).

[94] Immerwahr 1966, 167–8. Immerwahr seems to miss the ambiguity in Croesus' comment to Cambyses—that Cambyses is not like his father (Cyrus), 'since you have as yet no son such as Cyrus left behind in you' (Hdt. 3.34).

[95] Immerwahr 1966, 168 n.57.

which leads to the complete destruction of the *οἶκος*. Acrisius' story suggests that an attempt to prevent the natural progression of the *οἶκος* is again fatal in that, as in Cambyses' case, it leads to the death of the *κύριος*, but that this time, on the contrary, the *οἶκος* perpetuates itself despite the attempt. However, Cambyses' last words indicate that the two stories are complementary manifestations of the same themes: he could be speaking for Acrisius too when he says,

> *...ἐν τῇ γὰρ ἀνθρωπηίῃ φύσι οὐκ ἐνῆν ἄρα τὸ μέλλον γίνεσθαι ἀποτρέπειν.*[96]

(iii) Croesus and Atys

The story of Croesus and Atys is also complementary, consisting in the prophesied death of an heir and destruction of an *οἶκος* despite the actions of its *κύριος*.[97]

Croesus dreams his son Atys will be killed by a spear of iron, and so marries him off and keeps him in the house.[98] Atys complains that both of these actions prevent him from taking part in warfare and hunting—i.e. from acting as a young man should—and lead to a charge of cowardice. The Mysians request the help of Atys in killing a rampaging wild boar, and he is allowed to go on the hunt when he reasons that he will not die there because a boar has tusks of ivory, not of iron. On the hunt a misthrown spear kills him. Thus the dream is fulfilled.

The disorder of the *οἶκος* is underlined by the killer, Adrastus, being Croesus' guest, having been purified by him of his own brother's murder (a comparable deed of *οἶκος*-disruption).[99] It is symptomatic that Croesus' attempt to circumvent the oracle to save his heir should take the form of denying his son a proper adolescence.

As in the cases of Acrisius and Laius, the death is both unforeseen and accidental, thereby emphasizing its inevitability. Indeed, part of Herodotus' characterization of Croesus is his repeated failure to comprehend the meaning of prophecies, leading to his final defeat by Cyrus and the end of his rule, a defeat foreshadowed in

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[96] *...παντὸς δὲ τοῦ μέλλοντος ἔσεσθαι ἁμαρτὼν ἀδελφεοκτόνος τε οὐδὲν δέον γέγονα καὶ τῆς βασιληίης οὐδὲν ἧσσον ἐστέρημαι* (Hdt. 3.65).

[97] Hdt. 1.34–45.

[98] Cf. Agathocles and Cypselus, above pp.46–7, both of whom are kept in the house to protect them.

[99] Cf. Cambyses.

Herodotus' opinion by the death of Atys.[100]

C. ACRISIUS

1. The Survival Of The *Οἶκος*, And The Oracle

The distinction between the demands of the *οἶκος* and the inclinations of its *κύριος* is thus found in several myths. The *κύριος* finds himself in conflict with an oracle or dream predicting his demise. His reaction is to expose the child. His decision to expose is therefore not based as it was in reality, '...on the assumption that the needs of the *οἶκος* [are to be] regarded as paramount in making the decision whether or not to rear an infant'.[101] That the myth is concerned to highlight the dilemma of the *κύριος* is suggested further by the fact that the child exposed is usually his only heir: if Acrisius had had other sons of his own, his situation would not have been problematic. However, repeatedly in such stories the *κύριος* is placed in an ambivalent position by the oracle: he has no son, only a daughter, and her son (and his heir) will kill him. The disparity between what seems to be the best course of action, and what really is for the best, and recognition of it (as especially in the case of Cambyses, Oedipus and Croesus), is therefore a central motif in these myths.

At first, Acrisius acts as a responsible *κύριος* should. His question *περὶ ἄρσενος παιδός* arises out of traditional and proper concern both for his own welfare in old age, and for the continuity of the *οἶκος* after his death: self-interest and the good of the *οἶκος* combine. However, with the oracle, self-interest and the good of the *οἶκος* diverge. The irony central to this type of story is that the anxious petitioner of the oracle gets exactly what he wants—for Perseus is a worthy heir—but at the cost of his own life.[102]

In contrast to these 'prophesied exposure' myths which result in a negative

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[100] Hdt. 1.46–56, 71, 78, 85–91.

[101] Lacey 1968, 167.

[102] Cambyses and Astyages do not receive their prophecies by actively petitioning an oracle, but clearly the same question of childlessness is involved. In both cases Herodotus is careful to point out that, like Acrisius, neither has a son, or grandson, to succeed him. Like Cambyses, Acrisius has a brother, Proetus, but not one he wants as his successor. The Cambyses story makes it particularly clear that fraternal strife is another symptom of unwillingness to look to the best interests of the *οἶκος*.

disturbance in the *οἶκος*, the Ion myth as it appears in Euripides' play makes ironic use of the oracle *περὶ ἄρσενος παιδός*. Xuthus gains an heir who is not in fact his son by blood. Instead of the oracle causing the exposure of a child, an oracle given by Apollo to Xuthus leads to the reincorporation of an already exposed child into his *οἶκος*.[103]

Another paradox underlies all stories of death foretold by an oracle, which forms an interesting comment on ancient Greek religious belief. The individual believes implicitly in the oracle's authority, while believing simultaneously that it can be falsified or rather, prevented from being verified. The Acrisius story offers a variation of this theme. In Hyginus, Perseus swears not to kill Acrisius.[104] In the other sources too one finds that Perseus (very unlike Cyrus, but like Oedipus and Paris), has no hostile intentions towards his unfriendly *κύριος*: instead of trying to avoid meeting the terrified Acrisius (as Oedipus does his putative father Polybus), Perseus follows him to Larisa, with the intention of 'showing Acrisius kindness in word and in action',[105] or simply seeing him,[106] or pardoning him and persuading him to return to Argos.[107] With the reconciliation Perseus at last becomes Acrisius' son and heir.[108] It is then, when Acrisius thinks that he has finally circumvented the oracle, that it is fulfilled.

Perseus and Acrisius entertain a mistaken attitude towards the oracle. Their reconciliation is irrelevant to whether or not Perseus is going to kill Acrisius. Each identifies the oracle with Perseus' conscious, or actual, intentions towards Acrisius. His death has no such rational explanation. The oracle is not itself the cause of his death: it is not prescriptive, only descriptive. There is generally no attempt made explicitly to explain his death as a punishment.[109] The interest in such stories lies

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[103] See E. *Ion* 517–62.

[104] Hyg. *F.* 63.

[105] Paus. 2.16.2.

[106] Tz. Lyc. 838.

[107] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12.

[108] On the reconciliation motif, see above p.48. On adoption of an heir if there is no son, see Bremmer 1983a, 174.

[109] One possible explanation for Acrisius being punished would be, for example, his failure to recognize the semi-divine parentage of a mortal child (cf. Dionysus and the chastisement of

not so much in the valid but bland *γνώμη* 'Call no man happy until he is dead', but in the way in which the protagonists act and react.[110] The Acrisius myth is not simply an illustration of the arbitrary nature of 'fate' and of human existence. For the pattern of that story, rooted as it is in a preoccupation with problems of kinship and inheritance, is found repeatedly in Greek mythology. The fact that there are no similar stories in which it is a woman who is predicted to be the killer of her *κύριος* is another indication that this pattern of kin-killing is especially bound up with issues involving the male, as opposed to the female: birth is the concern of men.[111]

2. The Maternal Grandfather And Grandson Relationship

Not only is kinship an important motif of the Acrisius and other myths, but a particular sort of kinship. In a recent article on the importance of the maternal uncle and grandfather in ancient Greece and early Byzantium, Jan Bremmer has noted,

> it is a striking fact that in many patriarchal and patrilineal societies a special relationship exists between a mother's brother and his sister's son, and between the mother's father and the daughter's son.[112]

Bremmer gives examples from mythic and quasi-historical sources of this phenomenon, citing Perseus as the best known Greek case which reflects the right of the daughter's son to the throne, and also Cyrus, Romulus and Remus, Gilgamesh and Habis.[113] There are also cases where the grandson succeeds even when the grand-

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Thebes, E. *Ba.* 26–42). In Pherecydes (*FGrHist* 3 F 10), Acrisius refuses to believe Danae when she swears on the altar of Zeus *Ἕρκειος* that Zeus is the father. That she should swear by Zeus *Ἕρκειος* is doubly appropriate, first, because he is Perseus' father, and second, because as *Ἕρκειος*, he is the main tutelary deity of every household and its possessions: in disbelieving Danae's oath, Acrisius questions the very basis of his *οἶκος*. In Ovid (*Metam.* 4.607–14), Acrisius is to be punished for denying the divine paternity of both Perseus and Dionysus.

[110] Note the popularity of the Perseus myths in Greek tragedy: see Appendix.

[111] Clytemnestra, though a husband-killer and not a parent-killer, is relevant here because of the role she takes upon herself, like Acrisius and the others, of reorganizing the family tree to her own satisfaction. One of the implied criticisms of her man-like womanhood is that she rearranges the line of inheritance to the detriment of her own son and daughter by Agamemnon. Orestes' killing of his mother restores the line. Although her death is not foretold by oracle, it is sanctioned by the same source in that Orestes is told by Apollo at Delphi to kill her, and her death is prophesied by Cassandra (A. *Ag.* 1279–85).

[112] Bremmer 1983a, 173.

[113] Bremmer 1983a, 175–6.

father has a son of his own already. Bremmer infers 'provisionally that a Greek's relationship with his daughter's children was better than with his son's children'.[114] Similarly, a good relationship is apparently usual between the mother's brother and his sister's son, probably including an educational and initiatory role.[115] However, the relationship with the paternal uncle is poor.[116]

The reasons for this contrast are sociological:

> The secret of the close relationship lies in the close relationship between a sister and her brothers. Through her marriage a woman leaves her own family and in a way surrenders herself to the mercy of her in-laws. In this situation her father and especially her brothers are her only support against the potential difficulties with her husband and kin. The care extended to the sister also extended to her children, and thus the sister would return to her brother when the husband had passed away.[117]

In contrast, the relationship between a son and his father (and his side of the family) was one perhaps of obligatory respect rather than affection.

> However the [mother's father and her brother] were somewhat outside the family and were therefore able to develop an affectionate relationship with the children of their daughter or sister.[118]

Furthermore, the young age at which girls married would mean that her brothers would be closer in age to her son than would her husband's brothers. Finally, 'the [mother's father and her brother] were probably also the only males who would have access to the women's quarters when the children were young'.[119]

Bremmer then quotes Pausanias, as noted above,[120] with the purpose of showing that Perseus was indeed well-disposed to Acrisius despite his treatment of him. However, the significance of the Perseus myth to Bremmer's general thesis is greater than he allows. The myth does dramatize the strength of the bond between a mother's father and a daughter's son, but by showing an inversion of that relationship: Perseus kills his maternal grandfather. So Cyrus deposes his maternal

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[114] Bremmer 1983a, 177.

[115] Bremmer 1983a. 178–80. The main example is Odysseus and Autolycus (*Od.* 19.392–465).

[116] Bremmer 1983a, 177, 182.

[117] Bremmer 1983a, 182–3.

[118] Bremmer 1983a 183.

[119] Bremmer 1983a, 184.

[120] Above, p.53.

grandfather; and Telephus kills, not his grandfather, but his maternal uncles. By the same token, Acrisius' action is also an inversion: he is forced by the oracle to act contrary to Greek custom, in a hostile fashion towards his daughter's son.[121]

This inversion goes beyond simply drawing attention to the importance of the relationship. A myth portraying friction between maternal grandfather and grandson is also a reflection of another kinship problem, namely, that Acrisius has no son of his own. Bremmer observes that the mother's father was 'somewhat outside the family [of his son-in-law]' and therefore likely to be able to establish bonds of affection with his daughter's son. But as soon as Acrisius establishes the fact that he will have no son and heir of his own, tension arises between maternal grandfather and grandson. Since the father–son relationship is conducted more coolly and with less affectionate contact,[122] the relationship between Perseus and Acrisius gains a new resonance: Perseus becomes the son Acrisius will never otherwise have, and ceases to be a favourite grandson. The myth therefore portrays the rejection of Perseus as a grandson, and the acceptance of him by Acrisius as a son. The transfer of status and the change in relationship is expressed in mythological terms by the threat from the younger to the life of the older, followed by rejection and final acceptance. The killing of Acrisius by Perseus confirms irrevocably his new status as heir.

This difference in the relationship of an heir with his father, and with his maternal grandfather is perhaps reflected in the different responses of Oedipus and Perseus to the oracle that each will kill his *κύριος*: Oedipus exiles himself from Corinth, so as to distance himself from the man he believes to be his father, while Perseus returns to Argos eager to see Acrisius. Each, by doing what custom demands, unknowingly facilitates the murder which he is seeking to avoid.

The paradigmatic value of the inheritance motif in the 'prophesied exposure' myth may account for other aspects of the Acrisius story. It is important, first, that the obsolescence of the old generation should be seen to be in keeping with the natural course of events, and not simply as the result of usurpation involving

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[121] One should note, however, a unique white-ground Attic lekythos which portrays Acrisius as a very old man mournfully sitting on a cenotaph bearing Perseus' name, in accordance perhaps with the customary relationship (*LIMC* I.1, 451, no.10).

[122] Bremmer 1983a, 183 and his n.52 for studies relating to the father–son relationship.

the application of irresistible force (which Perseus of all men is capable of). Hence the death of Acrisius is predicted by the oracle. Secondly, the death of the old king is not to be the result of overeagerness on the part of the new one to accede to power too soon. Hence the death is accidental, particularly in the sense that it was 'unintentional' (that is, the last thing Perseus wanted), and 'indirectly' caused by a discus blow. It is evidently felt to be appropriate that the man who kills a king should succeed him. (By contrast, no one kills Cambyses, because his supposed rival, Smerdis, is dead. The fact that there is no one to kill him signals the end of his *οἶκος*: his fatal wound is self-inflicted.)[123] Thirdly, the essential confrontation of the old by the young is not to be by force of arms in civil disorder. Hence the death takes place in the context of games, in which the expression of *ἀρετή* can occur without disruption to the stability of the *πόλις*. The motif of the death of a king and the succession of his heir is further stressed by recurrence: it is during the funerary celebrations for the old king of Larisa by his son (or Perseus for Polydectes, his foster-father on Seriphos) that Acrisius dies and so is himself buried and mourned. Thus not one, but two kings die to be buried and succeeded by their male heirs. But here too there is a contrast pointing up the inversion inherent in Perseus' accession: Teutamides did not kill his father, who has on the contrary died a death that is natural (and therefore unforetold by oracle or dream). Fourthly, the motif of the inescapable oracle gains added force when it is worked out in opposition to the will of all the mortals involved.[124] Thus Perseus becomes king not through ambition, but both through his position as heir and in the natural course of events, which Acrisius tries unsuccessfully to thwart. Acrisius' death is unusual, but not therefore unnatural, in the sense that the oracle places it in the context of the larger order of the cosmos known to the gods.

One of Binder's conclusions was that in myth, a child who is exposed and does not then go on to great things would be not only unthinkable, but also meaningless.[125] He also noted that as a consequence, several of these figures go on to become

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[123] Cf. Aegeus, who kills himself and ends his *οἶκος*, so he thinks, because he believes Theseus to be dead.

[124] I owe this fourth point to Dr. Parker.

[125] Binder 1964, 120.

not just kings, but founders of dynasties or states.[126] The same applies to Perseus (alone of all the 'prophesied exposure' figures): his son Perses gives his name to Persia,[127] and his grandson Achaemenes, to the Persian Achaemenids.[128] In fact, the story of the accession of Perses embodies the ideal of the maternal grandfather–grandson relationship, in sharp contrast with that of Acrisius and Perseus. When Perseus leaves Ethiopia with Andromeda to return at last to Argos, he leaves the young Perses with Cepheus, his mother's father. When Cepheus dies, Perses becomes king in his place, and thereafter king of the Persians.[129] Perseus' link with the Persian race is nothing less than a highly successful perpetuation of his *οἶκος*, which, unlike Telephus, he is able to secure without abandoning the city of his forefathers.

3. The Death Of Acrisius

It has already been suggested above that it is significant that Perseus kills Acrisius by accident. Hyginus related a version in which Perseus' discus hit Acrisius on the head, in which case it is not to be thought surprising that Acrisius should die. In most versions, however, the blow is not to the head, but to the foot, an apparently nonsensical detail to which Hyginus' version may be a rationalizing reaction. The purpose of this section is to show, first, that the fatal blow being dealt by a discus emphasizes absence of premeditation by Perseus; and secondly, that the blow being to the foot rather than any other part of the body also lessens Perseus' guilt, but moreover may reflect a central theme of the entire myth, *περὶ παίδων γονῆς*.

At Larisa, Perseus competes in young men's games,[130] or funeral games;[131] or he demonstrates publicly his invention, the discus, 'at the peak of his youthful powers'.[132] In the funeral games he throws in the pentathlon,[133] or, in a separate

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[126] Binder 1964, 63–8: Zeus, Anius, the Emperor Constantine, the Persian Frêdun.

[127] A. *Pers.* 80, Hdt. 7.61, 150, Apollod. 2.4.5, St.Byz. *s.v.* *Ἄρταια*, and *χαλδαῖοι*. Schol. Lyc. 838, Schol. D.P. 1053.

[128] Nic.Dam. in *EM* 180, 43.

[129] Hdt. 7.61, Schol. D.P. 1053.

[130] *ἀγὼν νέων*, Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12.

[131] Apollod. 2.4.4, Tz. Lyc. 838.

[132] Paus. 2.16.2.

[133] Apollod. 2.4.4, Tz. Lyc. 838.

event.[134] His cast hits Acrisius on the foot so that he dies instantly;[135] or he dies subsequently of his wound (like Cambyses),[136] the discus having rolled along the ground before hitting him (adding to the accidental nature of the death, making it seem unlucky and not premeditated). Perseus buries him outside the city,[137] and the Larisans make a *ἡρώιον*;[138] or he is buried in Athena's temple on the Larisan acropolis.[139] Thus is the oracle fulfilled.[140]

Then Perseus founds Mycenae[141] and Mideia,[142] or fortifies both;[143] or he returns directly to Argos.[144] In Tzetzes, he exchanges cities with king Megapenthes (son of Proetus and so Perseus' cousin), Argos for Tiryns, ashamed to inherit from the man he has killed.[145]

In Hyginus too, the death is at funeral games.[146] However, the motif of the wind blowing the discus off-course appears only there, and is probably copied from the Hyacinth–Apollo story, in which usually it plays an essential part.[147] Elsewhere, Hyginus again mentions funeral games for Polydectes on Seriphos and Acrisius' death from a blow of some kind inflicted by Perseus.[148]

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[134] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12 is particular on this point.

[135] Apollod. 2.4.4, Tz. Lyc. 838.

[136] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12.

[137] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12, Apollod. 2.4.4, Tz. Lyc. 838.

[138] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12.

[139] Clem.Al. *Protr.* 13, 23.

[140] Paus. 2.16.2, Apollod.2.4.4.

[141] Paus. 2.16.3.

[142] Tz. Lyc. 838.

[143] Apollod. 2.4.4.

[144] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12.

[145] Tz. Lyc. 838.

[146] Hyg. *F.* 63, 273.

[147] Apollod. 1.3.3., 3.10.3 and Frazer's (1921) notes.

[148] Hyg. *F.* 273. Hyginus says that Perseus *luctatur* with Acrisius, which ought to mean 'wrestles' and then *percussit*. *luctatur* can also carry the more general sense of 'compete' (cf. *TLL s.v. luctor*). It is more likely that Hyginus has made a mistake than that a version of Acrisius' death had him die in a wrestling match.

(a) The Discus

The discus blow to the foot constitutes the main tradition. In Greek mythology the discus is generally associated with accidental killing. There are four discus stories: Acrisius is killed by Perseus, Hyacinth by Apollo, Thermius or Alcidocus by Oxylus, and Phocus by Peleus and/or Telamon. In the first two myths, death is always accidental, although versions in which the West Wind blows the discus thrown by Apollo towards Hyacinth imply premeditation by the West Wind, in order to spite Apollo, his rival in love for Hyacinth; in which case Apollo is further exonerated. In Pausanias Acrisius actually walks into the path of the discus.[149] In the third example death is generally accidental. Pausanias calls it a *φόνος ἀκούσιος*, and Apollodorus simply a *φόνος*, without elaborating who was killed or how, except to say that Oxylus was returning to Aetolia after one year's exile (a period consistent with a nominal punishment for accidental homicide).[150] The fourth story, however, usually consists in premeditated murder committed by Peleus, or Telamon, or both, for various motives. Only once is the killing unambiguously accidental.[151]

Of the four deaths, Acrisius' is unique in being predicted by an oracle, resulting in the paradox that his death is accidental but inevitable. In light of this paradox and of the four criteria for Acrisius' demise outlined above,[152] the discus as a means of inflicting death will be seen to be ideal. Perseus is the last person who ought to kill Acrisius, but is also the only one who can kill him with impunity. Above all, the discus emphasizes the oracle's role—Acrisius' death is accidental, even unlucky, but it is foretold—which leads back to the stated theme of the myth, *περὶ ἄρσενος παιδός*.

A fragment of Sophocles' *Λαρισαῖοι* illustrates how in one version of Acrisius' death the flight of the discus was altered:[153]

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[149] Paus. 2.16.2.

[150] Cf. Parker 1983, 112–16 on the laws governing the punishment of involuntary homicides by purificatory exile.

[151] As 'accidental' deaths, all these homicides appear in the substantial lists of Brelich 1958, 69–70, and Parker 1983, Appendix 7.

[152] Above, pp.56–7.

[153] *TrGF* IV, fr. 380.

καί μοι τρίτον ῥίπτουτι Δωτιεὺς ἀνὴρ
ἀγχοῦ προσῆψεν Ἔλατος ἐν δισκήματι.

Perseus is in competition, in the process of throwing (the exact meaning of *τρίτον* is debatable), when someone impedes his arm. The event occurs in a natural situation which is explicable in human terms and is another lessening of his 'guilt'. Again, the oracle does not imply supernatural causation or 'predestination'. The motif of an unexpected means of death (as contrasted with unexpected death alone) is consonant with the motif of an oracle fulfilling itself in an unforeseen way.[154]

The very nature of the discus corresponds with absence of premeditation and unexpected means of death. The discus is the product of *τέχνη*, being of special shape and material, thus requiring a certain degree of *τέχνη* in its user. Philostratus mentions that it was considered to be particularly difficult to use.[155] Lucian elaborates, citing its weight and smoothness as making it hard to hold.[156] It is neither a weapon nor, on the other hand, a primitive club or stone. It is in fact a training device used to develop strength:[157] it should not kill, but in myth the discus never injures, it only kills, further indication that myth is making special use of the discus. In these myths of accidental killing, therefore, the awkwardness of the discus and its not being a weapon, first, correspond with the death being accidental and so unexpected; second, they reinforce the irony that Perseus is killing someone he should not, with something that should not.[158]

Ideally the discus ought to imply the non-violent exercise of *ἀρετή*, sanctioned

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[154] On *τρίτον*, see Harris 1974: it ought to mean 'as I was making my third throw'. In Epic, only one throw per competitor is usual. An inscription from Rhodes suggests that in historical times, five throws were allowed (*SEG* 15.501). At the Olympic Games, three discuses were used (Paus. 6.19.4), which might imply three throws per competitor (or three different weights). Alternatively, *τρίτον* 'is the only Greek ordinal between "first" and "fifth" which scans at the place in the line'. Contrary to Harris, who said that 'dramatically it does not matter in the least in which round of the competition the incident occured', it would be 'dramatically' appropriate for Acrisius to be killed by Perseus' last throw, in view of the tension which is established in the myth by the motif of their reconciliation.

[155] Philostr. *Gym.* 3, cf. Orib. 6.14, 12.

[156] Luc. *Anach.* 27.

[157] Luc. *Anach.* 27.

[158] Castiglione 1967 examined the discus as originating in an agrarian rite to promote fertility, primarily because of his identification of the discus with the solar 'disk'. Even if this is the case, the Greeks were unaware of it. On the techniques of discus throwing see Harris 1964, 85–92, Sweet 1987, 40–5 (sourcebook).

by the community as a mode of competition between young men of aristocratic birth.[159] But death caused by sporting activity was a hazard acknowledged in antiquity: 'hence the law exempted fatal accidents from a charge of homicide'.[160] Making Perseus the inventor of the discus, and its first demonstration a disaster, is an expression of the qualities of the discus and the nature of athletic competition.[161] All this is further amelioration of Perseus' parricide, which nonetheless would have shocked a Greek (hence the detail in Tzetzes of Perseus' shame and the subsequent exchange of Argos for Tiryns; in most versions, he goes straight to Argos).[162]

(b) Acrisius' Foot

It has been shown that in Greek myth, death inflicted by a discus blow usually implies accidental death. However, in Acrisius' case there is the unique detail, found in most versions, whereby the discus hits him on the foot, so that he dies instantly or subsequently of his wound. Why should he die from a blow to the foot? The detail may have originated in some aspect of his cult at Larisa, but there is no way

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[159] Lévêque 1982, 10, 12, on the imitation in games by the aristocracy of their heroic ancestors; Raubitschek 1980, 1–5 on mythical games as heroic; Roller 1981, 5 on the aristocratic overtones of funeral games for historical persons up to the early fifth century, and *ibid.* 11–12 for mythical figures and on the role of 'games held as part of a civic festival [stressing] the cohesion of a community honouring a local hero'.

[160] Finley-Pleket 1976, 40.

[161] It is not uncommon for myth to portray the invention or discovery of a new cultural artefact as ambiguous, bringing benefit at a cost, because its arrival represents a confrontation between mortal and divine. Cf. the introduction of wine causing the death of Icarius and Erigone (Apollod. 3.14.7 and Frazer's (1921) note); the theft of fire by Prometheus, bringing the wrath of Zeus upon men in the form of Pandora and evil in the world (Apollod. 1.7.1 and note)—Zeus tells Prometheus, *τοῖς δ' ἐγὼ ἀντὶ πυρὸς δώσω κακόν, ᾧ κεν ἅπαντες τέρπωνται κατὰ θυμὸν ἑὸν κακὸν ἀμφαγαπῶντες* (Hes. *WD* 57–8), *αὐτίκα δ' ἀντὶ πυρὸς τεῦξεν κακὸν ἀνθρώποισιν* (Hes. *Th.* 570); the killing of the tortoise by Hermes to make the first lyre (*H.Merc.* 24–61), and the subsequent maiming or death of mortal musicians who clash with gods—Thamyris with the Muses (Apollod. 1.3.3 and note), the satyr Marsyas with Apollo (Apollod. 1.4.2 and note), cf. Linus, killed with a lyre by Heracles (Apollod.2.4.9 and note); the death of Asclepius, killed by Zeus who feared he might go too far and use his healing skills to raise the dead (Apollod. 3.10.3–4 and note); cf. the death of Icarus (Apollod. *Epit.* 1.12–13 and note).

[162] By contrast, in one tradition Oedipus suffers much more. In Sophocles, blinded and exiled he is the object of social and religious prohibition. His suffering accords with the greater damage inflicted by him on his *οἶκος*, by parricide compounded with incest. He is no longer king; he has daughters whom no one will marry (S. *OT* 1492–1502), and his sons by his own mother will kill each other without issue (S. *OC* 1370–96, E. *Ph.* 66–8).

of knowing.[163] Foot wounds in the *Iliad* are never fatal in themselves.[164] Achilles' death was associated with his heel, the only vulnerable part of his body.[165] Talus the man of bronze dies when Medea drives him mad with drugs so that he grazes his ankle on a rock, or when she promises to make him immortal and takes the nail from his heel so that all the ἰχώρ drains away.[166] But the foot, unless it is a reference in Achilles' case to his running ability, seems an arbitrary choice: Ajax too was invulnerable, except for his armpit.[167] However, there are three associated myths in which a hero's life depends on a single object, Meleager's on a fire-brand, Nisus' on a single purple hair on his head, and Pterelaus' on a single golden hair on his head. Meleager's mother Althaea is told at his birth that when the brand on the hearth is completely burned up, he will die. She keeps it safe until, in anger at her son's killing of her brothers, she rekindles it and so Meleager dies instantly.[168] 'Nisus perished through his daughter's treachery. For he had a purple hair on the middle of his head, and an oracle ran that when it was pulled out he should die; and his daughter fell in love with Minos and pulled out the hair'.[169] While Pterelaus lived, Amphitryon could not capture his island of Taphos. 'But when Comaeltho, the daughter of Pterelaus, falling in love with Amphitryon, pulled out the golden hair from her father's head, Pterelaus died and Amphitryon conquered all his lands'.[170]

In other words, one weakness in otherwise invulnerable figures acknowledges

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[163] For example, the preferred offering to Apollo at Curium on Cyprus was the right hind leg of a goat (Dietrich 1986, 133).

[164] Diomedes is shot in the foot and forced to withdraw from battle (*Il.* 11.369–400). Diores is hit on the ankle with a stone and then finished off by the sword (*Il.* 4.517–26), cf. Mydon's elbow, *Il.* 5.580–9.

[165] Apollod. *Epit.* 5.3 and Frazer's (1921) note.

[166] Apollod. 1.9.26 and Frazer's (1921) note. In another version, Poeas shoots him in the ankle.

[167] Aeschylus fr.292 (Mette 1959, 105).

[168] Apollod. 1.8.2, and Frazer's (1921) notes. Note that his story is also an inversion of the normal good relations that might be expected to exist between a son and his maternal uncles (cf. Telephus).

[169] Apollod. 3.15.8 and Frazer's (1921) note. For betrayal by a daughter of her father, cf. Chapter IV, pp.156–7 (Medea and Ariadne).

[170] Apollod. 2.4.7, Tz. Lyc. 932, 934. I thank Dr. Stephen Kershaw for bringing this myth to my attention. Poseidon gave Pterelaus the hair. The fact that Pterelaus' hair is of gold suggests that Nisus' hair is purple as a symbol of its value. Note that Amphityron killed Comaeltho for betraying her father. Cf. Samson and Delilah.

their mortality: Achilles, Ajax, Meleager, Nisus and Pterelaus die from wounds that would not kill a normal man; Talus' body may be bronze and hardwearing, but his life is not: Medea will kill him,

> καὶ εἰ παγχάλκεον ἴσχει
> ὂν δέμας, ὁππότε μή οἱ ἐπ' ἀκάματος πέλοι αἰών.[171]

However, in Acrisius' case, there is no narrative tension established whereby he is expected to die because of the vulnerability of a particular part of his body. Similarly, Eurydice dies by a snake-bite to the foot, because she treads on the snake. So too Munitus.[172] One of the Calydonian boar-hunters dies from a tusk blow to his foot (note that Odysseus survives a similar injury).[173] Pholus the Centaur dies when he drops an arrow on his foot, but not because it is his foot, but because the arrow is dipped in poison: he dies despite the arrow falling only on his foot.[174] Perhaps the point, therefore, of Acrisius' death by a blow to the foot is, as in the myths of Achilles, Ajax, Meleager, Nisus and Pterelaus, to stress that there is more to the death than the injury itself. Acrisius should not die from such a blow but he does; he dies because the oracle has said he will. Once more, Perseus' responsibility for the death is lessened.

This does not account for why it is Acrisius' foot that is struck: it might have been his leg, arm or shoulder, perhaps. However, the foot may after all be of particular relevance. What follows is more speculative. Hippocratic models of the body's blood-vessels explicitly associate damage to the foot with impotence. According to one such anatomical model, one set of blood-vessels runs from the head down the legs to the ankles.[175] Cut at the ankle, a man becomes ἄκαρπος, impotent.[176] Looking again at Talus, and at Philoctetes, both vulnerable in the foot, some of the epithets

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[171] A.R. 4.1655–6.

[172] Eurydice: Apollod. 1.3.2 and Frazer's (1921) note. Munitus: Lyc. *Alex.* 499–500.

[173] Lyc. *Alex.* 491–3 (ἄκρον ὀρχηστοῦ σφυρόν). The Scholiast says it was Ancaeus; cf. Apollod. 1.8.2, where Hyleus and Ancaeus are said to have been killed by the boar.

[174] Apollod. 2.5.4 and Frazer's (1921) note.

[175] Hp. *Oss.* 16.2–17.3 (Littré), dating approximately from the early part of the second half of the fourth century (Silk 1974, 84). Cf. Harris 1973, 39ff and figs. 2–4 on ancient conceptions of the various systems of bloodvessels; cf. Duminil 1983.

[176] Hp. *Loc.Hom.* 3.31 (Littré), of similar date.

applied to them now become ambiguous, acquiring sexual connotations: as his *ἰχώρ* ebbs away, Talus becomes *ἀμενηνός*, 'weak';[177] Philoctetes calls himself *χωλός*,[178] is said by the chorus to suffer *ἄπορα πάθη*,[179] implies himself that he is *ἄπορος*,[180] and says he is *ἀκράτωρ ὁ τλήμων*.[181]

Fulgentius, in his *Mythologies*, echoes this anatomical detail concerning the route of the body's large veins. He connects Achilles' heel with his love for Polyxena:

> ...But his heel alone Thetis did not dip in the Styx, as much as to show the physical fact that the veins which are in the heel connect with the faculties of the kidneys, thighs[182] and sex-organs, and that from them other veins run to the great toe; for doctors treating women for inducing childbirth open the veins in the legs at this same place; the covering plaster, which Africanus the teacher of medicine called *stisidem*, he taught should be applied to the big toe and heel. Orpheus himself demonstrates that this is the chief seat of lust (*principalem libidinis...locum*),[183] and that in these same intestinal localities they teach that cauterizing must be effected. Thus he shows that human power (*humana virtus*), though protected, is subject and open to all blows of lust (*libidinis ictibus*)...Then Achilles dies of love for Polyxena, and because of his lust is killed through his heel (*et amore Polyxenae perit et pro libidine per talum occiditur*).[184]

The link between the foot and sexual potency is implied also in the Melampus myths. Caught trying to steal the kine of Phylacus (to win the daughter of Neleus for his brother Bias), Melampus ('Blackfoot') is offered his freedom and the kine if he can say how Iphiclus, Phylacus' son, might father children. He discovers the cause of the impotence and cures it. (As a boy Iphiclus had been scared by the sight of a bloodied gelding knife, and Phylacus had stuck the knife into a sacred tree.) Iphiclus has a son call Podarces: thus 'Blackfoot' produces 'Swiftfoot'.[185] In another

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[177] A.R. 4.1688.

[178] S. *Ph.* 486, 1032.

[179] *Ibid.* 854.

[180] Neoptolemus: *οὐκ οἶδ' ὅποι χρὴ τἄπορον τρέπειν ἔπος.* Philoctetes: *ἀπορεῖς δὲ τοῦ σύ· μὴ λέγ', ὦ τέκνον, τάδε* (*ibid.* 897–8).

[181] *Ibid.* 486. The Scholiast says that *ἀκρᾶτωρ* means *ἀσθενής, κρατεῖν ἐμαυτοῦ μὴ δυνάμενος.*

[182] Cf. Cambyses' fatal wound to the thigh, above p.49.

[183] This may refer to Eurydice.

[184] Fulg. *Myth.* 3.7, translated by Whitbread 1971, 91, who notes, p.92, that the belief in a link between heel and genitals recurs in Spenser (*Shepheardes Calender, March Eclogue* 95ff), and Boccacio (*Genealogia deorum gentilium* 12.52). *Per talum*: the name 'Talus' is significant, therefore.

[185] Apollod. 1.9.12 and Frazer's (1921) note. Cf. *πόδαργος*, and *ποδάργης*, 'swift-footed' or even

myth, Melampus cures the daughters of Proetus at Argos of the Dionysiac madness which drives them to kill their children and leave the *οἶκος* and even the *πόλις* for the wilds. He chases them with a band of 'the strongest youths', cures them, becomes king and marries one of the women.[186] There also is a hint of the same opposition between black and white.[187] In both of the myths, Melampus restores order to the *οἶκος* and provides it with children.

More explicit evidence of the equation between damage to the foot and destruction of a male heir is offered by the Lycurgus myth. In one version in which Lycurgus tries to cut down the vines of Dionysus with an axe, he cuts off one of his own feet, and then kills his wife and son.[188] In another, he does not kill his son, but he cuts off his feet, or even both his legs: in other words, the two motifs are interchangeable.[189]

Lameness can be a mythical synonym for sexual ambivalence: Pleisthenes, father of Agamemnon and Menelaus, 'was hermaphrodite or lame'.[190] In addition, there is a version of the Anchises myth in which it is explained that he is carried from Troy on Aeneas' back because he is lame.[191] Boasting of his conquest of (by?) Aphrodite, Anchises incurs the wrath of Zeus. Zeus casts down a thunderbolt but Aphrodite, because she loves Anchises, deflects the full force of the impact onto his feet, so that instead of being killed, he is lamed. Divine punishment of a mortal's offence to the gods always ensures, at the very least, that the individual in question will be unable to reoffend. In which case, Anchises' punishment demonstrates the same synonym: to be lame is to be impotent.

In the *Iliad* there is an implicit association between vigour and the knee, so that to be alive and conscious is to have knees that 'move swiftly' and are 'supple', and

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'white-footed' (Aret. *SD* 2.13, Hsch. *s.v.* *λευκόπους*).

[186] See Burkert 1983, 171–2.

[187] Burkert 1983, 175–6, that 'blackfoot' differentiates male from female, since the women chased by Melampus are led by Leucippe ('Whitemare').

[188] Hyg. *F.* 132. Cf. Cambyses.

[189] Serv. *Aen.* 3.14, Myth. Vat. 1.123. Cf. an Icelandic myth in which a giant is killed by having his foot or feet cut off (Thompson 1955–58, G.512.6).

[190] Hesiod (Schol. *Exeg. in Iliadem* 1.122), cf. Vernant 1982, 27.

[191] Myth. Vat. 2.195, cf. Serv. *Aen.* 2.649, Hyg. *F.* 94, Myth. Vat. 1.217. I thank Dr. Michael Dewar for drawing my attention to this myth, and for providing the references.

to faint or die is to have one's knees 'loosed'.[192] It is consistent with our analysis that there is a whole series of Indo-European myths in which birth of a child occurs from the male thigh and knee.[193]

In a recent article, Vernant has examined the related themes of lameness, tyranny and incest.[194] His central conclusion is that lameness in myth is often associated with the failed or bad dynast. The last Battus of the dynasty of the Battiatids was *χωλός τε ἐὼν καὶ οὐκ ἀρτίπους*.[195] Lameness is a physical defect implying a deficiency which marks out its sufferer as heading for disaster and destruction. The prime example in myth is the line of the Labdacids. An individual who is physically lame can also be mentally 'lame', so that he does not 'think straight'. There is also some equivalence between lameness and illegitimacy.[196] Cypselus is the child of a lame woman, 'Labda', who returns to bring down the family which rejected his mother and himself.[197] But Cypselus' line fails too, like Oedipus', with his son Periander.[198] Thus there is a parallelism between the mythical Labdacids of legendary Thebes and the Cypselids of historical Corcyra, because Herodotus' narrative often follows the patterns of myth,[199] and

> because in the Greek 'imagination' the figure of the tyrant, as it is sketched out in the fifth and fourth centuries, adopts the features of the legendary hero, at once elect and cursed.

The tyrant puts himself outside communal life, and myth reflects this in various distortions of the norms:

Lameness, tyranny, power gained and lost, the continuous or blocked sequence

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[192] Cf. Heuzé 1985, 36–8, and below, p.90.

[193] See Bremmer 1978, 13 for references, cf. Dionysus' birth from the thigh of Zeus (E. *Ba.* 96–8). Cf. Aegeus being told by Apollo, if he wants children, *ἀσκοῦ με τὸν προύχοντα μὴ λῦσαι πόδα...πρὶν ἂν πατρῴαν αὖθις ἑστίαν μόλω* (E. *Med.* 679–82): he does 'loose the foot', of a wine-skin, and later through inadvertence Theseus causes his father's death. As in the case of Acrisius, a foot is the occasion of an indirect parricide.

[194] Vernant 1982, 19–26 on Oedipus and the Labdacids, 26–33 on the Cypselids. (This article has now appeared as ch.10 in Vernant–Detienne 1988, substantially the same.)

[195] Hdt. 4.161, Vernant 1982, 20.

[196] Vernant 1982, 21–2. Cf. Melampus, who was exposed.

[197] Vernant 1982, 27.

[198] Vernant 1982, 30.

[199] Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1988.

> of generations, straight or indirect succession, straightness or deviation in sexual relations, agreement or misunderstanding in the communication between fathers and sons, or among sons, presence of mind or forgetfulness.[200]

The *πεδίλα* used by Perseus were noted in Chapter I to have initiatory significance, a gift without which his exploits would be incapable of fulfilment.[201] A single sandal, moreover, is also a motif of marginality.[202] Hence it can appear in a specifically ephebic context, as in the classic example of Jason returning to his native city from the tutelage of Chiron. In addition, it automatically makes its wearer, artificially and temporarily, into a limper, since one leg becomes longer than the other.[203] Lycurgus also was represented wearing only one sandal, as he held the axe above the vines.[204] Perseus, in one version of the Gorgon-killing myth, wears only one winged-sandal instead of the usual two,[205] and according to Herodotus, he left one of his sandals at his cult-centre in Egypt, Chemmis.[206] Just as the oracle tells Pelias to beware a man wearing one sandal, Jason, so Acrisius fears Perseus.

Acrisius' myth began with a statement of impotence: he resorted to the Delphic oracle because he had no son. In light of the link between the foot and sexual potency, it is appropriate that the story should end as it began, with a reference to his inability to produce a son and heir. The spot that is 'open to all blows of lust' is also susceptible to the blow of a discus.

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[200] Vernant 1982, 33.

[201] Above, p.21.

[202] See Brelich 1955–57 for a comprehensive discussion of the single sandal motif.

[203] On the single sandal being the equivalent of imperfection of the lower limbs, see Brelich 1955–57, 483.

[204] *A.P.* 16.127.

[205] Artemid. *Oneir.* 4.63.

[206] Hdt. 2.91. See Brelich 1955–57, 470, 482 on Perseus.

D. THE ROYAL OIKOS AND THE POLIS

The exposure myths offer a paradigm illustrating the tendency for the *οἶκος* to perpetuate itself, in spite of the mortality of its *κύριος*. Furthermore, the *οἴκοι* of the myths are always royal. Therefore the myths constitute a model for the perpetuation not only of the *οἶκος*, but also of the *πόλις* and Greek civilization in general. For in myth the royal *οἶκος* is often identified with the condition of the *πόλις*: the very origin of the *πόλις* is the *συνοικισμός*, which often is attributed to a single powerful ruler or king;[207] when the *πόλις* is in danger, the self-sacrifice of a member of its royal *οἶκος* often saves it;[208] or the royal *οἶκος* can affect the *πόλις* adversely—Oedipus' parricide and incest cause Thebes to become plague-ridden and sterile, and Paris' devotion to Aphrodite leads to Troy's destruction;[209] the royal *οἶκος* can represent the positive values of the *πόλις*—thus Theseus becomes the mythical embodiment of Athenian virtues. A royal *οἶκος* which survives from one generation to the next becomes a dynasty, and a dynasty implies continuity of political and cultural identity. In his accounts of Cyrus and his son Cambyses, Herodotus depicts the rise and fall in two generations of a royal *οἶκος*. He clearly identifies the fortunes of a whole country with the actions of its king. A royal succession is a particularly forceful expression of the importance of the perpetuation of the *οἶκος* as an institution, and therefore the *πόλις*, expressed in terms of human problems of inheritance and childlessness.

The oracle and the accidental death ensure Perseus receives the inheritance that was denied him by Acrisius: he becomes king without becoming a tyrant. As for all the 'prophesied exposure' figures, the oracle makes Perseus' life one of exile and return, and Acrisius' death signals at last his reintegration into Argos. From the Argives' point of view, Perseus' return is itself unexpected and almost epiphanic: after years of being 'dead', he returns to become their new king. Burkert observes that in a ruler cult it is never a citizen who is worshipped, but a victor and a saviour who comes from outside: '...the community creates its solidarity through

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[207] Lacey 1968, 51–2. So Theseus for Attica (Th. 2.15.2). Cf. Polignac 1984, ch.4 'Le héros et l' élaboration politique de la cité', especially pp.132–40.

[208] See Chapter IV.

[209] Cf. Cambyses' curse of sterility upon his followers.

the veneration of one who does not belong to it'.[210] The 'prophesied exposure' motif means that Argos achieves the best of both worlds in its king: an outsider who was in fact born an Argive.

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[210] Burkert 1985, 260. Cf. the ironical use made of this concept in S. *OT*, especially in the opening scene (l.35–6, 46–8 etc.).

III. PERSEUS AND THE GORGON

It is generally held that the Gorgon is the raison d'être, and so the oldest element of the Perseus myths, because the *γοργόνειον*, whether in origin a ritual mask or apotropaic symbol, predates the myth in which Perseus cuts off Medusa's head.[1] By this account, Perseus' origin and so his role in the myth seem clear: he was invented, or adopted as the beheader of the Gorgon when a need was felt to 'explain' the existence of the *γοργόνειον*.[2] The Gorgon was, for Greeks, 'the archetypal apotropaic beast'.[3] The apotropaic mask or face is indeed a very ancient motif, but one which manifested itself in Greek religion and myth in several forms, of which the Gorgon was only one.[4]

The important article of S.L.Hughes and J.A.Fernandez Bernades on the meaning of the Gorgon has gone further, taking some account of the importance of the Perseus–Gorgon myth as an aetiology for the *γοργόνειον* as a marker of the boundary between 'sacred' and 'profane' (appearing particularly on doorways to temples).[5] The article contains one of the best summaries of past interpretations of the Gorgon,[6] and stresses the Gorgons' association with underworld mask figures and death. It also identifies Perseus as an initiand figure, because of the myth's structural similarity with Gennep's rites of passage schema, comprising separation, transition and reintegration.[7] However, the initiatory motifs of the myth are not examined in the

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[1] *RE* XIX, 989–990; Hughes–Bernades 1981, 62, 67, 69; Nilsson 1932, 40; Milne 1945–46, 128–9, citing Halliday 1933, 113ff.

[2] If Burkert 1987a, 26–8 is correct in identifying a Near Eastern iconographical prototype as the origin of Perseus and the Gorgon myth (see below pp.76–7), then the Gorgon (i.e. with a body, not just as a head) and Perseus probably appeared simultaneously in Greek culture; see Belson 1981, vol.1, 187–192 on the possibility that whole Gorgon appeared very early, associated with female nature deities, as contrasted with the Gorgon of myth, first depicted in first half of seventh century.

[3] Napier 1986, 83.

[4] See Harrison 1922, 187–8, Vernant 1985, 65–9 on Praxidice and Demeter *Κιδαρία*; Vernant 1985, 11–13, 25–30 on Artemis and Dionysus, Croon 1955, 13–16.

[5] Hughes–Bernades 1981.

[6] *Ibid.* 58–69.

[7] *Ibid.* 70–71.

article.[8]

The most recent extended monograph on the nature of apotropaic mask figures, by Vernant, contains a justifiably thorough study of the *γοργόνειον*.[9] To look the Gorgon in the face is to confront 'une altérité radicale', 'la mort dans les yeux', the antithesis of all human aspiration.[10] However, this work too serves ultimately to direct attention towards the Gorgon: it has very little to say about Perseus.[11] The Greeks themselves, however, did not think Perseus a secondary figure. It is abundantly clear that by the early part of the archaic period, Perseus was regarded by the Greeks as a major heroic figure, but never as a hero without context: in the art and literature of the period he was above all the killer of the Gorgon. It is futile to try to understand the nature of the *γοργόνειον* without reference to Perseus, and vice versa.

The aetiological aspect of the myth is duly reflected in the narrative. Perseus' task is not simply, if at all, to kill a monster. One of the earliest sources, Pherecydes, specifies Polydectes' order: it is to bring back the head of the Gorgon.[12] In this sense, the actual killing of the Gorgon is merely a corollary of the acquisition of the *γοργόνειον*. Thus Perseus' monster-'killing' is to be distinguished from much of that of Theseus or Heracles. In this myth at least, he is not a civilizing hero, since the Gorgons pose no threat to human civilization.[13] They live not in Greece but at the very edge of the world, by the streams of Oceanus where no man ever goes. Rather, Medusa is dangerous only to the ephebe who seeks her out: she is a specifically 'ephebic' monster. Her lithifying gaze makes Perseus a hero not of brute strength

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[8] For these motifs, see above, Chapter I. The overall attempt of Hughes and Bernades to characterize the Gorgons as 'guardians of the sacred' does not succeed, because in the myth they guard nothing. Rather, they themselves are guarded, by the Graeae; and crucially, they do not occupy any boundary that is to be crossed, since they live at the edge of the world: the aetiology of the myth does not mirror closely enough the use of architectural *γοργόνεια*; this is not to deny that the latter functioned as markers of boundaries.

[9] Vernant 1985.

[10] *Ibid.* 81.

[11] Cf. *ibid.* 75–9.

[12] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11.

[13] See Chapter IV, however, for the importance of a threat to the *πόλις* in the mythical paradigm upon which the Andromeda myth is based, and Chapter V on Perseus' defence of Argos against Dionysus.

but of cunning, an employer of the indirect, devious techniques of the ephebe, which require elaborate equipment and the presence of gods: Perseus cannot obtain the *γοργόνειον* by engaging Medusa in a fight face to face.

The purpose of this chapter is to illuminate the figure of Perseus by acknowledging fully the aetiological function of his decapitation of Medusa, by relating the exploit to the *γοργόνειον* in the context in which it appears in Greek myth outside the Perseus story, that is, on the *αἰγίς* of the Homeric battlefield (and of the Gigantomachy). This military aetiology was established early in the history of the Perseus myths: Perseus gives the *γοργόνειον* to his tutelary goddess, Athene (who accompanies him equipped with the round shield, helmet, breast-plate and spear of the hoplite soldier), and she places it on the *αἰγίς*.[14] In a discussion of Orestes, F. Zeitlin noted that one of the initiatory motifs of that myth is the presence of a male authority figure as a guide.[15] Perseus has Hermes as a guide, but it is the female warrior-goddess Athene who is his primary patron. In other words, the kind of death with which the *γοργόνειον* is associated in the Perseus myth is of a specific kind, namely, violent death in battle. The first major part of the chapter (**B**), therefore, will comprise an examination of the Homeric evidence relating to the nature of the *αἰγίς*.

In the second substantial part of the chapter (**D**), attention will return to Perseus, with the suggestion that as a consequence of (**B**), he is an archetypal ephebic figure associated with conquest of the contagious panic and fear of death of massed-rank, hoplite warfare which the *γοργόνειον* on the *αἰγίς* represents. He is thereby an anti-, pre-, or proto-hoplite figure, acting in a typically 'ephebic' fashion, i.e. markedly unlike a hoplite. For the Perseus myths share many of the motifs associated with other mythical ephebes.[16] In addition, Perseus and Athene are involved in the aetiology of the Pyrrhic dance performed by young warriors training to be hoplites: Perseus' aversion of his head to avoid Medusa's gaze, his grabbing of her

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[14] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11, Apollod. 2.4.2: the aetiology is probably as old as Perseus' association with the Gorgon.

[15] Zeitlin 1978, 8.

[16] Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 1981b, 1986. See Chapter I, pp.8–21, for an exposition of the motifs as concerns Perseus.

hair, and his headlong flight to the sound of the *αὐλός* music of Athene are motifs which are refracted in the Pyrrhic. The passage of Greek youth into adulthood was enacted above all in a military context, the ability to fight in battle for the *πόλις* being integral to the Greek concept of citizenship. So in myth, Perseus manufactures and arms himself with the *γοργόνειον*, defeats his enemies, and becomes a full citizen (by returning to and becoming king of the *πόλις* of his birth).[17] Finally, it will be suggested that Perseus was the model for the Hellenistic personification *Καιρός*, an unmistakably ephebic figure.

Juxtaposition of archaic evidence, particularly Homer, with the term 'hoplite' and its cognates might be considered anachronistic. The generally accepted view is that 'hoplite' warfare proper (i.e. hoplite panoply and tactics to match) appeared in late eighth to early seventh century.[18] It is in this period, or soon after, that Perseus became associated with the *γοργόνειον*.

Interpretation of certain Greek mythical figures as ephebic is not a new phenomenon, as has already been acknowledged. However, it is an insight which has yet to be applied in any detail to the Perseus myths. When it is applied, the motifs associated with the ephebes of myth are indeed found in Perseus; but it shows also that it is misleading to class a particular hero of a group of myths as initiatory without detailed examination. Perseus' 'initiation' in the Gorgon myth is centred on the attainment of the *γοργόνειον*, marking his recognition of and coming to terms with the fear of hoplite battle, and on the subsequent manufacture of the *αἰγίς*, marking the universalization of his experience. But his restoration of the integrity of his *οἶκος*, by the rescue of his mother, the winning of a wife, and the defeat of/reconciliation with Dionysus, are also central aspects of his heroic nature, and 'initiatory' in another, wider sense.

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[17] On the connection in myth between restoration of cultural order and successful initiation, see Bremmer 1978, 21–22.

[18] Most recently, see Wheeler 1987, 169, disagreeing in his n.54 with Pritchett 1985, 43–4, who has asserted that there is no literary evidence for this conclusion, and that hoplite-type fighting existed as early as the thirteenth century.

A. THE NATURE OF THE GORGON'S MONSTROSITY[19]

The danger to mortal life which monstrous beings in myth represent (with the exception perhaps of the Sirens who, like Medusa, kill their victims without touching them, by the sound of their voices) generally presupposes violent physical contact resulting in injury or death.[20] The threat posed by the Gorgon is much more uncannily insidious, and operates on a level far removed from that of the wild boar, whose tusks she possesses, of the snakes which wreathe her head in coils as a substitute for hair, and of the lion, whose facial features she often borrows.[21] Monsters such as the Erymanthean Boar, the Lernean Hydra and the Nemean Lion are simply potent examples of their species. The Gorgon's monstrosity, however, is composite and, furthermore, greater than the sum of her parts. Her ability to lithify any living creature whose eyes meet hers (and plants which are touched by her) sets her apart from all other monsters of the Greek cosmos: the trauma inflicted by her gaze is instantaneous, and catastrophic. Her power to lithify is barely hinted at when her head, the *γοργόνειον*, appears on the *αἰγίς* in Homer, but it will be seen that the power of her eyes as found in the aetiological myth of Perseus is vital to the functioning of the *αἰγίς*. It will also become clear that the motif of 'the petrifying gaze' finds meaning only when considered together with the implied response to its essentially apotropaic nature, i.e. the need 'to look away'.

From the earliest period the iconography of the *γοργόνειον* and the Gorgon reflects their 'apotropaic' nature: the head is usually shown frontally.[22] The earliest representations are of the *γοργόνειον* alone.[23] Only later, in the period between

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[19] A note on terminology: on occasion, there is inaccuracy in the terms employed to refer to the Gorgon; Perseus kills 'the Gorgon', who is called 'Medusa'. It is a mistake, therefore, to refer to her as 'the Medusa'; the ancients refer sometimes to 'Gorgo', which is both name and species of the monster killed by Perseus; the severed head carried by Perseus is the '*γοργόνειον*'; the *αἰγίς* is not just the *γοργόνειον*, but the entire apparatus of the *γοργόνειον* as set on the goatskin by Athene or Zeus.

[20] On the Sirens having the same father as the Gorgons (Phorcys), see Garcia Fuentes 1973.

[21] See Napier 1986, 113ff for his ingenious and convincing explanation of the three dots on the forehead of many Gorgons as having their origin in feline superciliary hairs.

[22] On 'frontality', Vernant 1985, 31–2.

[23] See Howe 1954, 213–14. There is, however, important new evidence that the *γοργόνειον* as a Greek iconographical type is at least as old as the Minoan civilization: Warren 1981, 155, see below, pp.77–8.

640–35 and 620–15 do we see the full figure of Medusa, or Perseus and Medusa together. This is borne out by Homer: the Gorgon's head is mentioned four, and Perseus three times, but the two are never linked; in Hesiod, however, they are.[24] From the middle of the fifth century, the Gorgons begin to be shown in profile and three-quarter views,[25] thus losing the 'frontality' with which they first confronted the viewer in art.[26] Phinney noted with some justification that as soon as Medusa has been transformed in iconography from a savage-looking monster into a beautiful courtesan (the result of a trend in her development beginning in the fifth century, and coinciding with loss of frontality),[27] the whole point of her death apparently is circumscribed.[28] However, 'beautiful' *γοργόνεια* too probably could be apotropaic,[29] which suggests that the essential power of the *γοργόνειον* lay, or came to lie, in its eyes rather than in its horrific appearance.[30]

The motif of petrifying gaze seems to have been a Greek invention, though possibly under the influence of the Near East. Near Eastern influence on the Perseus–Gorgon myth has been well documented.[31] Most recently, Walter Burkert has considered two 'orientalizing' periods—the fourteenth to thirteenth, and eighth to seventh centuries.[32] In the case of Perseus and the Gorgon, the influence exerted itself especially through iconography, and their first appearance together in Greek art and literature coincides with the second orientalizing period. The scene of Perseus killing the Gorgon with Athene's assistance had at least one prototype in the iconographical pattern of Gilgamesh and Enkidu slaying Humbaba: Gilgamesh's helper wears

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[24] Hes. *Th.* 276ff.

[25] Stern 1978, 13.

[26] On the *γοργόνειον* as a protective symbol, see McKeon 1983, Belson 1981, vol.1, 46, 191–2, Karnezis 1978, 248, Hughes–Bernades 1981, 73.

[27] Stern 1978, 14–15.

[28] Phinney 1971, 452–3.

[29] Belson 1981, vol.1, 17 n.15.

[30] Cf. Hopkins 1934, 341.

[31] Hopkins 1934, Goldman 1961, Croon 1955, Combaz 1945, Kantor 1962, Karagiorga 1970, Lambert 1987, 44, 47–8, 51–2.

[32] Burkert 1987a, 26–8; 1984, 29, 81–4, 115, especially 82ff on Perseus and the Gorgon. Cf. Schauenburg 1960, 132ff; cf. also, for the Asiatic links as revealed by the Gorgon's genealogy, Moreau 1986, 1–15.

a longer garment and, Burkert conjectures, to the Greek mind this figure suggested a female helper, i.e. Athene.[33] The scene was adopted by the Greeks, preserving the essential idea of two anthropomorphic figures fighting a wild animal. 'But it is clear that this transference of a mythical scene does not constitute a transmission of myth':[34] there are differences. Gilgamesh is a cultural hero, while the Perseus story

> has clear characteristics of an initiation myth: the hero travels to marginal areas to get his special weapon [the ἅρπη] that commands death. The most striking detail, the hero turning his face away from the enemy, proves to be a creative misunderstanding: on the oriental prototype the hero is looking for a goddess who is about to pass him a weapon; Greek imagination has a monster instead with petrifying eyes.[35]

'Looking away' is a purely iconographical motif in the Mesopotamian tradition: it does not appear in any of the texts of the Gilgamesh epic.

The new creation, for the Greeks, is an iconographic sign without special ties to rituals, or local groups, to be used freely in an 'apotropaic' sense on pediments, shields, or in other contexts, a terror to scare away mischiefs from temples or warriors.[36] Belson's comprehensive survey of architectural *γοργόνεια* in antiquity confirms both the motif's ubiquity and the freedom with which it was adapted in different regions and periods of antiquity.[37] In general, non-Greek and Roman usage of the *γοργόνειον* in architecture was greater and more varied than the Greek, in part because many of the non-Greek areas had their own earlier traditions of disembodied heads, whether human or monstrous: disembodied heads appeared in non-Greek architecture as early as the second millenium.[38]

The earliest Greek example of a *γοργόνειον*-like design appears on a Late Minoan I B cup (c.1450) found at Cnossos. A point to note for future reference is that this *γοργόνειον*'s context is military: the cup is decorated with

> a frieze of alternating figure of eight shields and perhaps stylized boars' tusk helmets...The device...was a grotesque roundel, similar to a *γοργόνειον*, with

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[33] Burkert 1987a, n.73, fig.2.1 (seal from Nuzi), fig.2.3 (seal from Cyprus), and fig.2.2 (Perseus, Athene killing the Gorgon).

[34] Burkert 1987a, 27.

[35] Burkert 1987a, 27.

[36] Burkert 1987a, 27, cf. Vernant 1985, 31.

[37] Belson 1981, vol. 1, ch.6.

[38] Belson 1981, vol. 1, 166, 163.

> wild staring eyes, large lolling tongue, prominent teeth and hair over the face and standing out all round its edge.[39]

B. THE LOCUS CLASSICUS OF THE GORGON'S HEAD: THE *ΑΙΓΙΣ*.

What does it mean for Perseus to cut off the head of a monster, and then to hold it up so that his enemies all die by being turned to stone? It is essentially an *ἀπόδειξις*, a display, of a severed anthropomorphic head. The implication of this for the origin of the *γοργόνειον* will be discussed below, but first there is the *αἰγίς* to consider.[40]

1. The *Αἰγίς* In Homer

The Gorgon's head appears on the *αἰγίς*—

> *Γοργείη κεφαλὴ δεινοῖο πελώρου*
> *δεινή τε σμερδνή τε, Διὸς τέρας αἰγιόχοιο,*

—together with *πάντῃ φόβος*, *ἔρις*, *ἀλκή* and *κρυόεσσα ἰωκή*.[41] The *αἰγίς* is undecaying and immortal,[42] trimmed with golden tassels.[43] It is *δεινή*,[44] an adjective connected in Homer particularly with the senses of sight and hearing.[45] The Gorgon's head crowns the display. It is not itself a personification of terror or fear, but a symbolic example of it, surrounded by and to an extent partaking of *φόβος*,

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[39] Warren 1981, 155 and his n.3.

[40] This section had its own origins in the association established by Vernant and Detienne between the thunderbolt of Zeus, Athene as a bronze-clad warrior-goddess, the 'voice of bronze' (i.e. the deafening clash of battle) and the shining armour and eyes of Athene and of the mortal warrior wreaking havoc in the heat of battle: Vernant–Detienne 1978, 78 and especially ch.6, 177–183 ('The eye of bronze'), and Vernant 1985, 41–2 and ch.4 *passim* ('Une face de terreur'). The following section develops this complex by examining the significance of the disembodied head as an aspect of the *αἰγίς*, and as always, by relating any conclusions to Perseus, in his capacity as one of its inventors.

[41] *Il.* 5.739–42.

[42] *Il.* 2.447.

[43] *Il.* 2.448–9. The tassels on the *αἰγίς* explain why in Hes. *Scut.* 223–4 the *κίβισις*, in which Perseus is carrying the *γοργόνειον*, is uniquely said to have golden tassels: the *κίβισις* has been partially assimilated to the *αἰγίς*, an assimilation which strengthens the link being established between Perseus and the *γοργόνειον* on the *αἰγίς*.

[44] *Il.* 5.739.

[45] *Il.* 1.49, 3.342, 10.254, 11.10, 15.13, 20.56; *Od.* 11.608, 12.260 (of Charybdis), 22.405.

ἔρις, ἀλκή, and ἰωκή. Similarly, on the middle of Agamemnon's shield is shown a Gorgon's head[46] —περὶ δὲ Δεῖμός τε Φόβος τε.[47]

In essence, the αἰγίς functions apotropaically, throwing the enemy into panic and confusion. By the same token, it emboldens the side whose patron god possesses it: Athene urges on the Achaeans with it;[48] Apollo is given the αἰγίς by Zeus (who himself received it originally from Hephaestus ἐς φόβον ἀνδρῶν),[49] to terrify the Greeks with, and he duly leads the Trojans into battle with it:[50] 'as long as Phoebus Apollo held the αἰγίς still (ἀτρέμα) in his hands, the battle raged equally';[51]

> αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ κατενῶπα ἰδὼν Δαναῶν ταχυπώλων
> σεῖσ', ἐπὶ δ' αὐτὸς ἄυσε μάλα μέγα, τοῖσι δὲ θυμὸν
> ἐν στήθεσσιν ἔθελξε, λάθοντο δὲ θούριδος ἀλκῆς.

When wielded by Zeus, the αἰγίς is the portent of decisive victory,[52] or of complete annihilation;[53] similarly, Athene holds it about Achilles' shoulders as he prepares to enter battle after Patroclus' death.[54] The αἰγίς also protects: Apollo places it over Hector's body as it is dragged around the walls of Troy, saving it from mutilation.[55]

In the Odyssey (and the Homeric hymns and Hesiod), αἰγιόχος, *-οιο* is invari-

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[46] *Il.* 11.36–7.

[47] Cf. a Corinthian hydria (Louvre E643) c.550, of Nereids mourning for the dead Achilles, with his round, hoplite shield (decorated with a large γοργόνειον) leaning against his funeral bier. Note also, for example, that in satirizing Lamachus as the archetypally bellicose Athenian, Aristophanes describes him as having a shield decorated with the γοργόνειον (Ar. *Ach.* 963–6); cf. D.Chr. 67.26, where disgust is expressed at cowards who have Γοργόνας ἐπὶ τῶν ἀσπίδων as a sign of bravery, and who then run away at the first sight of danger. For other examples, and on shield devices in general, see Chase 1902, Catalogue cxix–cxxv, and *passim*; cf. Zeitlin 1982. The shield of Argos, carried by Danaus in his youth and then consecrated in the temple of Hera, possessed the apotropaic power of the γοργόνειον, and protected the city in wartime: one glimpse of it put the enemy to flight (Serv. *Aen.* 3.287); it also gave its name to the games at Argos, or perhaps to one of the events in them (Pi. *O.* 7.83); cf. the shield of Aristomenes (Paus. 4.32.5–6); Gernet 1981, 82.

[48] *Il.* 2.447ff, cf. *Il.* 5.738–42 when she puts it over her shoulders as she arms for battle.

[49] *Il.* 15.309–10.

[50] *Il.* 15.229ff.

[51] *Il.* 15.320–22.

[52] *Il.* 17.593f—to the Trojans.

[53] *Il.* 4.166f—of the Trojans.

[54] *Il.* 18.204f.

[55] *Il.* 24.20f.

ably used of Zeus.[56] Only at two points is the *αἰγίς* actually wielded, both times by Athene. On the famous occasion in the megaron of Odysseus' palace, the *αἰγίς* is *φθισιμβρότη*, a blight upon every mortal thing; it takes the suitors' wits away, and sets them stampeding about the hall.[57] Ovid, in his version of Perseus' fight with Andromeda's suitors, exploits to the full his Homeric model by making the *αἰγίς* lithify, rather than simply terrify, Phineus and his followers.[58] The panic-inducing *αἰγίς* held by Athene in the *Odyssey* beomes in Ovid the original Gorgon head from the aetiological myth, still with its power to lithify: like pseudo-Hesiod,[59] Ovid makes explicit the identification of the *γοργόνειον* of the Perseus myth, with the *γοργόνειον* of the Homeric *αἰγίς*. On the second occasion, Athene wields the *αἰγίς* in the Gigantomachy, in order to urge on her chariot horses.[60]

In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* then, the appearance of the *αἰγίς*, the centre-piece of which is the Gorgon's head, on every occasion directly precedes and so portends mass-killing, without itself being the cause of death. Its association with battle is maintained in the Gigantomachy where, carried by Athene, it plays an important role in victory of the Olympians:[61] hence Zeus is described repeatedly as the master of the *αἰγίς*.

The myth of Sterope and Cepheus, king of Tegea, confirms that the *γοργόνειον* as wielded by Perseus was felt to be an aetiology for the apotropaic capability of the *γοργόνειον* in a military context, in this case even when not on the *αἰγίς*. Cepheus is reluctant to join Heracles' expedition against the Spartans, fearing that in his absence the Argives will sack his city. Heracles has a bronze jar, given him by Athene, in which is kept a lock of the Gorgon's hair (*βόστρυχον Γοργόνος*). He gives it to Sterope, the daughter of Cepheus, with the instruction that if an enemy attacks the city, she should hold up the lock three times from the walls, and if she

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[56] See Prendergast 1962, *s.v.* *αἰγιόχος*. In Hesiod, there are nineteen occurences of *αἰγιόχος*, and four references to the *αἰγίς*, in each case carried by Athene.

[57] *Od.* 22.297ff.

[58] Ov. *Metam.* 5.30ff.

[59] Above, n.43.

[60] Hes. *Scut.* 343–4.

[61] E. *Ion* 208–211.

does not look in front of her (*προϊδούσης*), the enemy will be routed (*τροπὴν τῶν πολεμίων*). All this comes to pass.[62] According to Pausanias, there was in Tegea a sanctuary of Athena *Πολιᾶτις*, called *Ἔρυμα*, because Cepheus received from Athene the assurance that Tegea would never be captured by an enemy; she gave him a lock of Medusa's hair to guard the city (*ἐς φυλακὴν τῆς πολέως*).[63] Sterope uses the hair of the Gorgon, just as Perseus uses the *γοργόνειον* itself in Ethiopia and Seriphos, and so must look away, but also as a god uses the *αἰγίς* in Homer, leading to rout.[64] An important corollary of the analogy between the *γοργόνειον* as Perseus uses it, and as it is used on the *αἰγίς*, is that Perseus uses it to bring order in Ethiopia and on Seriphos, when he kills those who are plotting against his life. So too in battle, the *αἰγίς* ultimately brings order from disorder, in the sense that it brings victory in battle, making peace out of war.

2. The Head In Homer

Κεφαλή in the *Iliad* bears a variety of meanings, concerned essentially with vitality, individuality and possession of power. When in the heat of battle the threat is made, though never actually fulfilled, to cut off the head of an enemy, it becomes clear that a severed human head is to be thought of as the product of an absolute peak of violence and violation to which few mortals aspire, and only in moments of great anger and grief or fear for a *φίλος*. The vitality which the *κεφαλή* of a mortal has in life is lost in death. But its analogue, the disembodied *κεφαλή* on the *αἰγίς*, retains its power: it is monstrous, but also anthropomorphic, a recognisably human face, though one distorted both by the savagery of the boar, the snake and the lion, and by its grimace, protruding tongue and shining eyes. The *αἰγίς*, manufactured by Athene and Perseus, becomes a token which threatens sudden and vicious death.

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[62] Apollod. 2.7.3.

[63] Paus. 8.47.4. Cf. E. *Ἐρεχθεύς*, *TGF* fr.351: *ὀλολύζετ', ὦ γυναῖκες, ὡς ἔλθει θεὰ χρυσῆν ἔχουσα Γοργόν' ἐπίκουρος πόλει.*

[64] Cf. Two pictures, of Hera and of Perseus, the sight of which gave protection to the viewer: Stat. *Theb.* 7.417.

(a) The Meaning Of Κεφαλή

When Achilles says to Hector, 'There is no one who can hold the dogs off from your *κεφαλή*', he is referring to the dogs which eat corpses.[65] *κεφαλή* here seems to mean literally 'head'. However, *κεφαλή* often means figuratively 'an individual in his entirety', as when used as an affectionate and respectful form of address: Agamemnon to Teucer—'Telamonian Teucer, dear *κεφαλή*, o lord of your people...'[66] In this form it can also refer to a dead person, as when Achilles addresses Patroclus' ghost as *ἠθείη κεφαλή*.[67] Accordingly, *κεφαλή* can explicitly mean that part of an individual which survives death: Zeus was minded to send down to Hades 'a multitude of strong heads'.[68] When Ajax says to Menelaus, 'My fear is not so much for the corpse (*νέκυος*) of Patroclus...as for my own *κεφαλή*, in case it should suffer something',[69] there is a distinction being made between the body and the *κεφαλή*—*κεφαλή* is not a synonym for body. Achilles tells Thetis that he loved Patroclus beyond all his companions, and as much as his own *κεφαλή*.[70] So when Achilles implies that he is going to kill Hector because he is the 'destroyer' of a *φίλη κεφαλή* (Patroclus), it is not to say that the *κεφαλή* does not survive death, but that to cause someone's *κεφαλή* to go to Hades is to kill him. And when Agamemnon is said to have a *κεφαλή* which is *ἐχθρή* to Achilles,[71] it means more than that Achilles cannot bear the sight of him: he wishes him dead. The literal, figurative and metaphysical meanings of *κεφαλή* combine.

Homer twice talks of 'spoils/ransom to be given for the *κεφαλή* of Hector'.[72] In this case, it might appear that *κεφαλή* cannot mean that which survives death, since the ransom cannot restore Hector's life. However, in light of the last paragraph, the ransom is to be understood as being not just for the return of Hector's *κεφαλή* (in

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[65] *Il.* 22.348.

[66] *Il.* 8.281.

[67] *Il.* 23.94.

[68] *Il.* 11.55.

[69] *Il.* 17.240–242.

[70] *Il.* 18.82.

[71] *Il.* 16.77.

[72] *Il.* 24.276, 579.

a literal sense), but also as 'compensation for' the taking of his life (*κεφαλή* in the figurative and metaphysical senses).

Ghosts and dreams appear by one's *κεφαλή*.[73] This seems unusual if, as is often said, perception and emotion in the Homeric view are seated not in the head but in the diaphragm and heart. Rather, the figurative meaning of *κεφαλή* is implied.

Hera swears a most solemn oath to Zeus, by *γαῖα*, broad *οὐρανός*, the waters of Styx, by his *ἱερὴ κεφαλή*, and by their marriage bed.[74] It is with an inclining and aversion of the *κεφαλή* that Zeus physically gives and withholds his assent to supplication. The gesture occurs at several moments at which it is determined what is to happen to mortals in the poem.[75] In this instance the head figuratively becomes an expression of Zeus' inviolable power, whilst remaining as concrete as Styx, earth, sky and the marriage bed.[76]

(b) The Κεφαλή In Battle

Thus *κεφαλή* possesses a range of related meanings which span the boundary between physical and metaphysical, mortal and immortal, and life and death.[77] To keep one's *κεφαλή* unharmed means essentially 'to be alive': a *κεφαλή* is *φίλη* because life itself is *φίλος*.[78] The head, like the eyes (and the knees), is used to convey the essential vitality of mortals. Even in those few contexts where it appears to signify literally 'head', the presence of its figurative meaning, i.e. an individual's essence, is always felt. In battle therefore, the *κεφαλή* becomes a vehicle for the physical expression (in the 'shining eyes' of the hero—see below) of heroic capacity to kill; and so in turn the ultimate aim of the hero in the heat of battle is to obtain his enemy's *κεφαλή*, in both its literal and figurative sense. It has a similar range

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[73] To Agamemnon (*Il.* 2.20, cf. 59); Hermes to Priam (*Il.* 24.682); cf. the king of the Thracians, who has a bad dream and is killed in his sleep (*Il.* 10.496).

[74] *Il.* 15.36ff.

[75] Zeus assents to Thetis to honour Achilles by giving *κράτος* to the Trojans (*Il.* 1.528–30). Correspondingly, Zeus nods his head and makes Achilles' armour fit Hector, so that *Ἄρης* enters into him, and *ἀλκή* and *σθένος* into his body (*Il.* 17.209–12). Cf. *Il.* 8.245–6.

[76] Cf. Vernant 1985, 65–9 on Praxidice and Demeter *Κιδαρία*, both mask goddesses, as guarantors of oaths.

[77] Cf. Vernant 1985, 79–82.

[78] Hence *φίλος* can mean 'own'.

of meaning in the *Odyssey*.[79]

Severing of the *κεφαλή* appears in two forms. First, from Book 10 onwards, several warriors are killed by decapitation.[80] However, killing by decapitation in the course of fighting is to be distinguished from the deliberate threat to mutilate a corpse by decapitation. Threatening to sever the *κεφαλή* of a corpse appears a number of times, as means of revenge for the death or near death of a *φίλος*, and as proof that an enemy is truly dead.

Agamemnon has predicted that the Trojans will pay with their *κεφαλαί* (i.e. lives), and with their women and children for the treacherous wounding of Menelaus in Book 4:[81] the threat is not fulfilled literally. When severed, the *κεφαλή* is to become proof of an enemy's death, and in the case of *Il.* 18.176, explicitly a *τρόπαιον*. Euphorbus tells Menelaus,

> *εἴ κεν ἐγὼ κεφαλήν τε τεὴν καὶ τεύχε' ἐνείκας*
> *Πανθόῳ ἐν χείρεσσι βάλω καὶ Φρόντιδι δίῃ.*[82]

Hector strips off Patroclus' armour, intending to decapitate him and give the body to the dogs of Troy.[83] This threat directly expedites Achilles' re-entry into battle: Hera tells him to come quickly, because the one thing which Hector wishes to achieve is to haul the body of Patroclus away, 'since the anger within him is urgent to cut the *κεφαλή* from the soft neck and set it on sharp stakes...'.[84] Corresponding to Hector's threat, Achilles apostrophizes the dead Patroclus:[85]

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[79] Cf. *Od.* 11.633–5, often quoted to support the idea of the *γοργόνειον* being apotropaic: Odysseus leaves Hades because he fears that Persephone will send up a *γοργείην κεφαλὴν δεινοῖο πελώρου*, and, presumably, that he will be lithified. *δεινοῖο πελώρου* also appears at *Il.* 5.741, in the description of the *γοργόνειον* on the *αἰγίς*. Note that in Hades, a 'head' is a simulacrum of a whole being: Hades is populated by *ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα*—heads (*Od.* 11.29, 49, 10.536)—exactly the kind of thronging mass that the *αἰγίς* thrives on. On the similarity between the *γοργόνειον* and the dead in *Od.* 11, see Vernant 1985, 41–2.

[80] *Il.* 10.455–7, 11.144–7, 261, 14.492–500, 16.339–41, 20.481–3. On decapitation as part of the theme of mutilation in the *Iliad*, see Segal 1971, 20–5; cf. Xen. *Anab.* 3.4.5, when the Greek soldiers mutilate the bodies of the dead 'of their own accord, so that the sight of them would cause great terror among the enemy'. Cf. a fifth century Attic black-figure lekythos showing warriors dancing as they hold severed heads (Vermeule 1979, 107 fig. 24).

[81] *Il.* 4.162.

[82] *Il.* 17.39–40.

[83] *Il.* 17.126–7.

[84] *Il.* 18.176–7.

[85] *Il.* 18.334–5.

οὔ σε πρὶν κτεριῶ, πρὶν Ἕκτορος ἐνθάδ' ἐνεῖκαι
τεύχεα καὶ κεφαλήν, μεγαθύμου σεῖο φονῆος.

In this context, it is as if to make sure that Achilles' threat has not been carried out that, when Hector's body is finally returned to Troy, Andromache and Hecabe run up and touch the *κεφαλή* of the corpse.[86] Defilement of Hector's 'lovely hair and head, "beautiful before"[87] is parallel with [the ultimate defeat and defilement of] the civilized grace of Troy, as it was "before" '.[88] For the head can figuratively convey the idea of an individual in his entirety, and by an extension of the analogy, of the community of which he is head. The introduction of the theme of threatened decapitation occurs only after the death of Patroclus (with the exception of Agamemnon's threat of *Il.* 4.162, which is in any case not addressed to a specific individual). As Segal concluded, this theme is an index of the escalation of violence following the onset of Achilles' wrath at the death of his friend.[89]

That the decapitation of an enemy is an extreme act of savagery in the Homeric context, is suggested by the fact that in no case is it ever said to have been carried out as a deliberate attempt to mutilate a body. Deliberate decapitation as mutilation is threatened as an ultimate sanction, but it is one that even Achilles in his wrath does not resort to. In confirmation, Herodotus makes clear the disgust which, as a Greek, he felt at the action of Xerxes after the battle of Thermopylae: the Persian king had the head of the dead Spartan general Leonidas cut off and impaled. The action was a transgression of *νόμος* (*παρενόμησε*), and an indication of 'Xerxes' anger at Leonidas above all men, while he was alive'.[90] Herodotus also records the Scythian (i.e. barbarian) custom whereby

ἐπεὰν τὸν πρῶτον ἄνδρα καταβάλῃ ἀνὴρ Σκύθης, τοῦ αἵματος ἐμπίνει, ὅσους δ' ἂν φονεύσῃ ἐν τῇ μάχῃ, τούτων τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀποφέρει τῷ βασιλέι. ἀπενείκας

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[86] *Il.* 24.712. Strictly speaking, however, the touching of the head is probably an expression of deeply felt, ambiguous emotion (especially, it seems, of a woman towards the man of her *οἶκος*) at a moment of recognition or greeting: cf. *Od.* 19.471–3, where Eurycleia recognizes Odysseus and, like a suppliant, takes hold of his beard, feeling *χάρμα καὶ ἄλγος*; *Od.* 22.498–501, where Odysseus' female servants kiss his head, shoulders and hands; *Od.* 23.207–8, where the weeping Penelope throws her arms round Odysseus' neck and kisses his head.

[87] *Il.* 22.403.

[88] *Il.* 22.156: Segal 1971, 42.

[89] Segal 1971, 20.

[90] Hdt. 7.238.

μὲν γὰρ κεφαλὴν τῆς λητης μεταλαμβάνει τὴν ἂν λάβωσι, μὴ ἐνείκας δὲ οὔ.[91]

In addition, according to Herodotus, the Asian Tauri (who lived near the Scythians) struck their prisoners of war on the head with a club and then decapitated them and set the head on a long pole above their houses; 'the heads are supposed to act as guardians (*φυλακούς*) of the house over which they hang'.[92] In all three cases, decapitation is of a military enemy, but only by barbarians: by implication, it is an ungreek action. Decapitation by a Greek puts him beyond the pale: fatally wounded in the expedition against Thebes, Tydeus is given the head of an enemy and eats the brains; Athene, about to heal his wounds and give him immortality, sees him and, in disgust, leaves him to die.[93]

3. Lithification And 'Shining Eyes'

In the myth there is ambiguity as to what part of the *γοργόνειον* causes lithification: from Pherecydes, Apollodorus and Ovid it seems that seeing the face is sufficient—as *Il.* 5.741–2 implies—while Phinney assumed that the concept of the 'Evil Eye' is operating.[94] Only in the world of Perseus does the *γοργόνειον* literally petrify: the lithification is aetiological, just as the Perseus–Gorgon myth itself is aetiological. Outside the Perseus myth the *γοργόνειον* causes panic, terror and rout on the battlefield by virtue of its being seen to be *δεινός*. The victim has to see the *αἰγίς*: lithification emphasizes that the *γοργόνειον* on the *αἰγίς* works through being seen. The importance of the eyes of the Gorgon is reflected by their 'frontality' in iconography, but particularly by the observation that the eyes of monumental *γοργόνεια* frequently were painted red, and that bronze *γοργόνεια* often had inlaid or unnat-

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[91] Hdt. 4.64.

[92] Hdt. 4.103. So too Oenomaus the heads of his daughter's suitors (Apollod. *Ep.* 2.5, Hyg. *F.* 84). Cf. below, p.125, on a similar practice of clubbing of prisoners of war followed by decapitation in Egyptian iconography; cf. pp.96–7, the Maori custom of heads on houses, and Combaz 1945 for the architectural use made of Humbaba and another Assyrian demon, Pazuzu.

[93] Apollod. 3.6.8 and Frazer's (1921) note. Cf. Detienne 1979, ch.3 ('Gnawing his parents' heads').

[94] The face: cf. Fontenrose 1959, 286 n.20, Phinney 1971, 451. Cf. the myth of Sterope and Cepheus, above pp.80–1, in which the Gorgon's hair alone is apotropaic.

urally painted eyes.[95] The *γοργόνειον* in the myth also parallels the *αἰγίς* in being used expressly in situations of extreme, hostile confrontation: Perseus lithifies only those intent on his murder.

In the *Iliad* a link exists between the eyes of the *γοργόνειον* and those of the hero in the heat of battle. First, there is a bare hint of lithification in an especially appropriate context. Poseidon causes the Trojan Alcathous to be killed by Idomeneus:[96]

> *τὸν τόθ' ὑπ' Ἰδομενῆῐ Ποσειδάων ἐδάμασσε*
> *θέλξας ὄσσε φαεινά, πέδησε δὲ φαίδιμα γυῖα*
> *οὔτε γὰρ ἐξοπίσω φυγέειν δύνατ' οὔτ' ἀλέασθαι,*
> *ἀλλ' ὥς τε στήλην ἢ δένδρεον ὑψιπέτηλον*
> *ἀτρέμας ἑσταότα στῆθος μέσον οὔτασε δουρὶ*
> *ἥρως Ἰδομενεύς, ῥῆξεν δέ οἱ ἀμφὶ χιτῶνα*
> *χάλκεον, ὅς οἱ πρόσθεν ἀπὸ χροὸς ἤρκει ὅλεθρον.*

Only then does he make a sound, a mighty cry.[97] In charming the 'flashing eyes' of Alcathous, Poseidon deprives him of that which such eyes signify: the ability to fight and kill, to retreat or advance. Thus Alcathous dies.

In the rest of the *Iliad* *φαεινός* tends to be used of weapons or armour:[98] glints of reflected light are an essential part of Homer's vision of the battlefield.[99] The next most popular substantive used with *φαεινός* is 'eyes', describing an individual god's or hero's eyes shining in anger.[100] 'Eyes shining terribly' is one of Athene's chief characteristics.[101] Shining eyes are characteristic too of a hero's *ἀριστεῖα*.[102] Sharper eyesight is a quality of better warriors.[103] Eyes disordered in some way signal the inability of a hero to fight (filled with tears,[104] Patroclus' eyes spinning

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[95] Belson 1981, vol.1, 12 and n.7, 13, 28, 34–35, n.55–56.

[96] *Il.* 13.434–440, see Vernant–Detienne 1978, 77.

[97] Cf. the charioteer at *Il.* 13.394–401, struck witless and then killed.

[98] Prendergast 1962, *s.v.* *φαεινός*.

[99] See for example *Il.* 19.362–4.

[100] *Il.* 13.3, 7, 14.236, 16.645, 17.679, 21.415.

[101] *Il.* 1.200, 21.415. See especially Vernant–Detienne 1978, 180–3.

[102] Hector: *Il.* 12.466, 15.605–10. Menelaus: 17.679. Achilles: 19.16–17, 365–6.

[103] *Il.* 23.477.

[104] *Il.* 17.695–6.

just before his death).[105] Death is often described in terms of darkness enveloping the eyes.[106] Finally, 'the hero's eyes shining in anger' has a doublet in the phrase *ὑπόδρα ἰδών*, used five times of Achilles,[107] and variously of Odysseus, Diomedes, Zeus, Hector, and Glaucus, all great warriors, and always descriptive of their rage.[108]

Eyes in the *Iliad*, then, are one means by which Homer conveys not only emotion, but also intention and physical condition. A hero's *μένος* and his potential to kill are shown in his eyes. The gleaming intensity which they emit is a measure of his *μένος*. Only another hero can endure to look into such eyes, while those who cannot flee in panic. Glaucus' criticism of Hector makes explicit the idea that to look in the eyes of an enemy during his *ἀριστεῖα* is the action only of a brave man:[109]

> *ἀλλὰ σύ γ' Αἴαντος μεγαλήτορος οὐκ ἐτάλασσας*
> *στήμεναι ἄντα, κατ' ὄσσε ἰδὼν δηίων ἐν αὐτῇ,*
> *οὐδ' ἰθὺς μαχέσασθαι, ἐπεὶ σέο φέρτερός ἐστι.*

Hector's response is to give Glaucus an angry look (*ὑπόδρα ἰδών*).[110] The gleam of bronze given off by armour and weapons in battle is synonymous with the hero's glare, and has a similarly unmanning effect:[111]

> *ὄσσε δ' ἄμερδεν*
> *αὐγὴ χαλκείη κορύθων ἄπο λαμπομενάων*
> *θωρήκων τε νεοσμήκτων σακέων τε φαεινῶν*
> *ἐρχομένων ἄμυδις. μάλα κεν θρασυκάρδιος εἴη,*
> *ὃς τότε γηθήσειεν ἰδὼν πόνον οὐδ' ἀκάχοιτο.*

Even the Myrmidons, Achilles' own men, are afraid to look upon his new armour:[112]

> *ὣς ἄρα φωνήσασα θεὰ κατὰ τεύχε' ἔθηκε*

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[105] *Il.* 16.792.

[106] *Il.* 4.461, 503, 526, 5.82–3, 310, 6.11, 11.356, 453, 13.575, 14.438–9, 519, 16.316, 325, 333–4, 17.136, 20.393, 471, 476–7, 21.181–2.

[107] *Il.* 1.148, 20.428, 22.260, 22.344, 24.559.

[108] *Il.* 2.245, 4.349, 411, 5.251, 888, 10.446, 12.230, 14.82, 15.13, 17.141, 169, 18.284, 20.428. Cf. *Od.* 13.401, where Athene dims Odysseus' eyes that have been so attractive, so that he will be unprepossessing *ἀεικέλιος* to the suitors, Penelope and Telemachus: his gaze is one of his most handsome features. Cf. Alexander the Great, *γοργὸν ἐμβλέψας ὥσπερ λέων* (D.Chr. 2.29, cf. 4.14).

[109] *Il.* 17.166ff.

[110] *Il.* 17.169.

[111] *Il.* 13.340–44.

[112] *Il.* 19.12–18.

πρόσθεν Ἀχιλλῆος· τὰ δ' ἀνέβραχε δαίδαλα πάντα.
Μυρμιδόνας δ' ἄρα πάντας ἔλε τρόμος, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη
ἄντην εἰσιδέειν, ἀλλ' ἔτρεσαν. αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς
ὡς εἶδ', ὥς μιν μᾶλλον ἔδυ χόλος, ἐν δέ οἱ ὄσσε
δεινὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάρων ὡς εἰ σέλας ἐξεφάανθεν·
τέρπετο δ' ἐν χείρεσσιν ἔχων θεοῦ ἀγλαὰ δῶρα.

His anger (*χόλος*) is aroused by looking at the armour, which is *δαίδαλα* and *ἀγλαά*, and he is glad (*τέρπετο*); his eyes shine out like *σέλας*, as if they are reflecting the light from the weapons—in fact, the simile indicates that the light actually comes from within his eyes: sight of the shining weapons of war combines with anger to intensify that anger, and Achilles' resulting condition is one of *τὸ τερπνόν*, exultation. He is ready to fight, and is the paradigm of the Homeric martial spirit, since he is the paradigmatic Homeric hero.[113]

The first of the three references to the Gorgon in the *Iliad* says that its *κεφαλή* is on the *αἰγίς*, and that the *κεφαλή* is *δεινή τε σμερδνή τε*.[114] The other two references, however, confirm that it is especially through the eyes of the *κεφαλή* that the Gorgon's power to terrify is expressed. The first of these is the Gorgon head on Agamemnon's shield:[115]

τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργὼ βλοσυρῶπις ἐστεφάνωτο
δεινὸν δερκομένη, περὶ δὲ Δεῖμός τε Φόβος τε.[116]

Secondly, at the climax of his *ἀριστεῖα* in Book 8, Hector drives the Greeks back inside their defences. He is seen whirling through the midst of the action (*ἀμφιπερι-στρώφα καλλίτριχας ἵππους*);[117] he is described simply as *Γοργοῦς ὄμματ' ἔχων ἠὲ βροτολοιγοῦ Ἄρηος*:[118] the glare of the hero's eyes, expressive of pure man-killing battle-spirit ('Ares') becomes synonymous with the Gorgon's gaze, and his enemies

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[113] Cf. A. *Pe.* 356, *γοργωπὰς σέλας*; A. *A.* 302, *γοργῶπιν φάος*; *Anacreonta* 17.12–14 (Cambell), *μέλαν ὄμμα γοργόν...ἐξ Ἄρηος*; *A.P.* 7.493, *γοργός Ἄρης*.

[114] *Il.* 5.741–2, above p.78.

[115] *Il.* 11.36–7.

[116] Cf. Schol. B *Il.* 5.741: *φησὶ δ' Ἀριστοτέλης ὅτι μήποτε ἐν τῇ ἀσπίδι οὐκ αὐτὴν εἶχε τὴν κεφαλὴν τῆς Γοργόνος, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ τὴν Ἔριν οὐδὲ τὴν κρυόεσσαν Ἰωκήν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐκ τῆς Γοργόνος γιγνόμενον τοῖς ἐνορῶσι πάθος καταπληκτικόν.*

[117] *Il.* 8.348.

[118] *Il.* 8.349.

react with appropriate panic.[119]

By the same token, the eyes of the Gorgon, as it appears on the *αἰγίς*, express and are paradigmatic of an ultimate enemy. The eyes of the Gorgon/angry hero are subsumed by absolute hostility, rage, savagery, defiance (as revealed in taunts and boasts), and the threat of imminent death of the most vicious kind. The employment of the *γοργόνειον* as a shield device is thus intended to create an imitation *αἰγίς*. For the same reason, *γοργόνεια* appear in places which require special protection.[120] They are sometimes found incorporated in greaves, over the knee. For in the *Iliad*, the knees, like the *κεφαλή* and eyes, are an index of heroic vitality. A conscious, active hero requires knees that 'move swiftly beneath him', are 'supple'; an unconscious, fainting or dying hero has his knees 'loosened beneath him'; and the hero whose knees feel weak through the fear of death in battle symbolized by the *αἰγίς*, protects them by means of the same token.[121] At the same time as charming Alcathous' 'shining eyes', Poseidon also 'binds his *φαίδιμα γυῖα*', so that he can neither advance nor retreat.[122]

Twice in the *Iliad* a warrior about to embark on his *ἀριστεῖα* is said to have divinely-kindled light radiating from him. Athene gives Diomedes strength and courage to gain glory in battle, and she makes *ἀκάματον πῦρ*, like the light of the brightest star in the late summer sky (Sirius), shine from his helmet and shield, and so from his head (*κράτος*) and shoulders.[123] Secondly, prior to rejoining the fighting, Achilles goes to the Greek rampart to show himself to the Trojans. Athene sets the *αἰγίς* on his shoulders, and a golden cloud about his *κεφαλή*, and kindles from it a far-shining flame (*σέλας*), the intensity and power of which are the subject of the

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[119] Aristophanes called the Gorgons *ὀψοφάγοι* (Ar. *Pax* 810). Cf. Adamantius Judaeus, 1.16—*ὀφθαλμοὶ γοργὸν βλέποντες δεινοί· οἱ μὲν γὰρ ὑγρὸν βλέποντες θυμοειδεῖς, ἄλκιμοι, ἀρειμανέες εὐθυεπεῖς...· 2.32*—eyes that are *ὑγροὺς χαροποὺς γοργοὺς φῶς πολὺ ἔχοντας ἐν ἑαυτοῖς· 2.44*—*βλέμμα ὑγρὸν γοργόν.*

[120] For their prophylactic significance in architecture, see Belson 1981, vol.1, 189, 192, Hughes–Bernades 1981, 73.

[121] *Il.* 8.452–3: *σφῶιν δὲ πρίν περ τρόμος ἔλλαβε φαίδιμα γυῖα, πρὶν πόλεμόν τ' ἰδέειν πολέμοιό τε μέρμερα ἔργα.*

[122] Cf. *Il.* 4.469, 5.122, 6.27, 7.12, 16, 215, 11.260, 20.44 etc. (cf. Prendergast 1962, *s.v. γυῖα* and Heuzé 1985, 36–8).

[123] *Il.* 5.1–8.

simile that follows. The Trojans flee at his shout and when they see the *ἀκάματον πῦρ δεινόν* above his *κεφαλή*.[124] On both occasions Athene is the presiding goddess. The light which she bestows on Achilles and Diomedes is part of the same complex of associated images of the complex identified by Detienne and Vernant and outlined above.[125]

It is with reference to this complex that three rare vases of Perseus may be explained. On three fifth-century Attic vases—a pyxis in the Louvre, a red-figure pelike by Polygnotus in New York, and a black-figure vase in Kiel—Perseus is shown with rays emanating from his head.[126] On the New York and Kiel vases, Perseus is seen running away, having cut off Medusa's head. On the Louvre vase too he is running, urged on by Athene and Hermes; but he is running towards the sleeping Gorgon (who lies in a pose very close to that on the pelike). Apart from Helius and associated light-divinities, Perseus is the only figure in prehellenistic mainland Greek art to have such rays. The motif occurs also on later Italiot vases, used generally of figures like Helius (a reference to the sun's rays), of Ganymede and Thalia (with reference to their transportation to Olympus), Andromeda (a reference to her catasterism), Thetis (a reference to one of her metamorphoses when trying to escape Peleus), of Proteus (similarly, trying to escape Menelaus), and others who, like the Gorgon, bring terror, such as Lyssa, a sphinx, a griffon,[127] An Italian kalyx krater of c.420 shows Bellerophon with halo of rays round the upper half of his body, as he kills the chimaera, again, seen as a reference to his constellation, or to the Homeric model.[128] But as Schauenburg pointed out, later use of the motif need have no bearing on its significance in an earlier period. He doubted that Perseus'

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[124] *Il.* 18.203ff.

[125] See above, n.40.

[126] Pelike: New York 45.11.1, c.450–430, Schauenburg 1960, pl.6.1, cf. Milne 1945–46. Pyxis: Louvre *MNB* 1286, Dumont 1878, pl.2, slightly earlier than the pelike (Milne 1945–46, 126, Schauenburg 1960, 37: mid fifth century). Kiel vase: Kiel Universität B41, Schauenburg 1960, pl.14.

[127] See Schauenburg 1960, 64–5.

[128] Cf. Milne 1945–46, 129, Beazley 1947, 37–9.

rays are to explained with reference to Homer,[129] contrary to Nock.[130] The date of the three Perseus vases is certainly consistent with that of the recognition of his constellation in the Greek night sky.[131] Why should Perseus alone be marked out in this way, especially as he is barely mentioned in Homer? Even the Homeric evidence hints at a celestial connection: the light which shines from Diomedes involves a simile likening him to a star. The fact that all three vases are of similar date and schema suggests that two of them were inspired by the other, or all three by some other single artefact or notion. In view of Perseus' aetiological role in the creation of the *αἰγίς*, of Athene's particular association with both its creation and its use, of the occurrence of the ray motif with other monstrous beings, and of the Homeric complex of 'shining eyes', *κεφαλή* and battle, it would be appropriate after all for Perseus to be depicted with the intense light of Homeric battle-fury shining from his own *κεφαλή* at the very moment at which he cuts off the *κεφαλή* of the Gorgon, with Athene looking on. In which case, the Bellerophon vase would be a precise parallel for this light appearing at the instant of a hero's greatest feat of arms.

In addition to the Perseus vases, an anomalous fragmentary Attic red-figure vase in Naples fits this conclusion very well.[132] It depicts the initial stages of the Gigantomachy, as the Gigantes attempt to break through into Olympus with a rock. Above them, some Olympians prepare for the fight. A youthful figure crouching behind the Gigantes in the bottom left hand corner carries a round (hoplite) shield which bears a protruding *γοργόνειον* with tusks and staring eyes. The *γοργόνειον* has six rays emanating in relief above and below. Salis identified the youth as Enceladus, one of the Gigantes.[133] However, this figure is unlike the other Gigantes. They wear animal skins and are armed with pickaxes, while he goes naked, and bears not only the shield, but sword and helmet too. His crouching posture suggests that he is stealing up to make an attack on the Gigantes from the rear. Each of

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[129] Schauenburg 1960, 130.

[130] Nock cited by Milne 1945–46, 130.

[131] Perseus' catasterism featured in S. *'Ανδρομέδα* (Schol. S. Arat. 188). and E. *'Ανδρομέδα* (Eratosth. *Cat.* 15).

[132] Naples 2883, illustration in Salis 1940, 91, 121 fig.17, cf. 92 n.3; see Schauenburg 1955, 60 n.184.

[133] Salis 1940, 92, 121.

these details identifies him very clearly as an ephebe. That he should have a flashing *γοργόνειον* as a shield device is highly appropriate given his status and activity: the rays are clearly related to the 'flashing eyes' of the Gorgon. His arms and lack of clothes make him identical to a Pyrrhic dancer,[134] and the tactic of creeping up from behind is also very ephebic.[135] However, the literary sources offer no clue as to the identity of this figure. It may be Hermes, or perhaps Apollo, since both of these gods are habitually depicted as youths.

Schauenburg thought it unlikely that a fragmentary medallion in Bonn represented a *γοργόνειον* with ray-halo.[136] The ray crown of the *γοργόνειον* on a Campanian relief undoubtedly had its model in Isis-head jewellery of eastern influence.[137] He concluded that the archaic *γοργόνειον* was unconnected with solar imagery.[138] However, it is clear from our discussion that a *γοργόνειον* with rays might be tolerated as an iconographical topos, and that a *γοργόνειον* of an earlier period with rays need not have its origin in solar imagery.

Looking one's opponent in the eye is, as Glaucus implies, a necessary part of fighting in battle:[139] those who cannot do this flee in terror. The Gorgon defies a man to look her in the eye, not to be a coward. However great the hero, the *γοργόνειον* on the *αἰγίς* is irresistable. Thus in the aetiological myth, the only way for Perseus to approach the Gorgon is with his gaze averted.

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[134] For which, see pp.112–20 below.

[135] See pp.100–107 below.

[136] Schauenburg 1955, 24 and his n.184.

[137] *Ibid.*

[138] Schauenburg 1955, 34.

[139] *Il.* 17.166ff.

C. THE PRIMAL ORIGINS OF THE GORGON

The *γοργόνειον*, a severed *κεφαλή*, is a symbol of power, whether carried by Athene or Perseus, or appearing on shield, armour or building. Heracles' appropriation of the skin of the Nemean lion is analogous. The lion's head which rises above Heracles' own is a symbol of his prowess as a hunter-killer which is not to be disregarded or ignored with impunity.[140] The features of the *γοργόνειον* are those of the wild animals which are so often hunted in myth, the lion and the boar. In other words, the *γοργόνειον* has some association with the hunting trophy, the central concern of which is *ἀπόδειξις*, display: when the daughters of Danaus have carried out their father's order to kill their new husbands, they cut off the head of each corpse to show (*ἀπόδειξιν*) him.[141]

The setting up of bones in a ritualistic context reaches at least as far back as Middle Palaeolithic times.[142] In a Greek context, a well-known gold ring from Mycenae depicts a 'row of animal skulls [bordering] the procession of the seated goddess';[143] another trace of such ritual *σύνθεσις* is the 'stylized pair of horns [which are] the common and omnipresent symbol of Minoan-Mycenaean culture'.[144] Display of hunting trophies, such as horned skulls and especially skins, on a stake, is a sign of victory.[145] This point is nicely illustrated in Homer, when the story is told of how Meleager and the Couretes fight over the head and skin of the Calydonian boar.[146]

The fear of a severed head, as found in the *Iliad*, is also perhaps a reflection

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[140] See, for example, what happens when centaurs try to steal his wine (Apollod. 2.5.4), and when he kills Augeas on being refused his reward for cleaning out the cattle-yard. Cf. Silk 1985, especially 8 and n.43 for 'monstrosity being necessary to defeat the monstrous'.

[141] Paus. 2.24.3. The heads were said to be buried next to the acropolis in Argos. Cf. the Gorgon head, which Argive tradition held to be buried in the agora (Paus. 2.21.6). Cf. Oenomaus, who set up as trophies the heads of the defeated suitors of his daughter (Apollod. *Ep.* 2.5, Hyg. *F.* 84); see Gernet–Boulanger 1932, 84, for the same motif in the stories of Evenus, Antaeus, Phorbas, Diogenes and Cycnus.

[142] Burkert 1983, 12–13.

[143] Burkert 1983, 14 and his n.9.

[144] Burkert 1983, 14: cf. Call. fr.96, V. *Aen.* 9.40, and Meuli 1967, 159–60.

[145] Cf. D.S. 4.22.3, where an animal head is fixed to a tree by a hunter in order to show his skill. He should in fact have dedicated it to Artemis, and as a result of this *ὕβρις* the skull falls from the tree onto his head and kills him.

[146] *Il* 9.547–9.

of primal instinct. Experiments carried out at the Yerkes Laboratory of Primate Biology concluded that of all the objects, both primate and non-primate, shown to chimpanzees, a shop manikin's head, the severed head of a monkey, and above all the sight of a monkey's skull induced in them the greatest panic and fear.[147] By this account, the *γοργόνειον* is a manifestation of a primeval instinct in humans. In which case, it seems justifiable to speculate that the Gorgon's grimace and staring eyes may be related to those of the human skull.[148] A severed head brings home to the beholder his own mortality in a brutal way. At the risk of appearing gruesome (though no more than Homer does in his battle descriptions), the pursuit of this kind of approach might lead one to enquire into the pathology of human decapitation. In a study of the history of the Guillotine as a method of execution, André Soubiran cited a number of eye-witnesses to the effect that the severed head 'grimaces horribly',[149] and that the eyes are '...fixed, dilated, almost out of their sockets'.[150]

The motif of 'shining eyes' also has primal origins. Burkert makes the following comment on the subject of the 'evil eye', or *βάσκανος*:

> Genetically...the anxiety about a staring eye surely goes back to the anxious alertness of higher animals toward eyes, particularly the spying eye of the predator.[151]

Fear of the 'staring eye' is indeed expressed at the level of the gene. Many kinds of butterfly illustrate the point:

> The lepidopteran wing frequently consists of bands of contrasting colors on which are superimposed localized spots of concentric colorings ('wing-spots' or 'eye-spots') that in their most developed form resemble the vertebrate eye, down to such details as slightly off-center pupils, shading to suggest depth and even highlights to mimic the pattern of light reflection off the corneal surface...The defensive function of such eye-spots is well-established.[152]

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[147] Howe 1965, especially 489. (Howe, *ibid.* 489 n.1, wrote that the article was to be part of a forthcoming book called *Background for Myth.* I have been unable to find any evidence that the book was ever completed and published.)

[148] Cf. Benoît 1969, 81–2 on the talismanic value of the human head, though he would have been wrong to imply a link between the *γοργόνειον* and the motif of the mantic power of the human head (e.g. Orpheus), since the *γοργόνειον* has no mantic power.

[149] Soubiran 1964, 159, 161, 163.

[150] Soubiran 1964, 164–5.

[151] Burkert 1979, 73, and his n.8.

[152] Caveney 1985, 363–4. Cf. Blest 1952, Linsenmaier 1972, 44–5, and figs., on eyespots, which he too (cf. Burkert) calls 'startling eyes'.

The 'shining eye' thus represents the threat of violent death, but more important, possession of one's own 'eye' can ward it off. The eyes of the dead too are disturbing, so that the first requirement after death is for the eyes to be closed, a practice evident in Homer as it still is in Greece today, and in our own society.[153] The eyes of the *γοργόνειον* remain open, dead yet deathless, and deadly. Death could be gentle,[154] but the *γοργόνειον* symbolizes violent death. The story of Medusa and Perseus has its origins in such primeval fear, and is a means of expressing and thereby coming to terms with its existence. Thus Perseus is essential to the myth, not at all simply to account for the *γοργόνειον*'s existence, but to represent the conquering and rational employment of it to bring order where there is disorder, on Seriphos and in Argos. It is ironic that the attempts from antiquity onwards to explain the myth of Medusa are in fact rationalizations of what is itself a rationalization.

The universality of human instinct accounts for the appearance of similar masks in other cultures widely separated by space and time. A comparison to be drawn between the Homeric evidence and some features of the Maori war customs in New Zealand is irresistible. The traditional facial expression of a warrior, both in the war-dance (*haka*) and in battle itself, is strikingly Gorgon-like: the hair stands on end, the eyes become round and staring, and the tongue is stuck out.[155] The *taiaha*, a type of war-club, incorporates the same features. It was a long weapon,

> of light wooden shaft, blunted at one end and pointed at the other. The blunted end was slightly heavier, and the pointed end [which formed the blade] consisted of a carved face [with round, wide-opened eyes, and] with a long tongue out-thrust forming the point...The protruding tongue showed defiance.[156]

The face and the 'tongue' of the weapon were often covered with intricate line designs, presumably in imitation of the facial tatoos which Maoris wore.[157] The

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[153] Garland 1985, 23. Cf. Déonna 1965 on the motif of the eye in antiquity. The latter work is not as useful as it might have been, since it lacks an index. More seriously, Déonna often mixes sources of different periods with scant regard for the diachronic.

[154] Vermeule 1979, 145–78 on the kinship of Death and Sleep.

[155] Phillipps 1966, 101, fig.96.

[156] Cf. Phillipps 1966, fig.97, and on the tongue as apotropaic in the mediterranean tradition, Lesky 1969.

[157] The lines are also reminiscent of the typical iconography of the face of the Assyrian demon Humbaba (a near eastern precursor of the Gorgon), which traditionally was drawn in one continuous line: Hopkins 1934, 346, 348–9, Howe 1954, pl.36 fig.5.

same 'tongue face' appears as the blade of canoe-paddles,[158] as the figure-head on the prows of canoes,[159] as carved heads (*koruru*),[160] which in turn appear on houses on the apex of the roof.[161] All such carving related to the *haka*.

> The *haka* was for the most part a posture dance, vigorously performed by men, originating from the many gestures of defiance and contempt hurled at an enemy on the eve of battle.[162] It was with the frenzy of the finale of the *haka* that the Maori warrior became a distorted though living being. The tongue was thrust out to its limit, the eyes opened wide and rolled in their sockets and every muscle became taught with emotion.[163]

D. PERSEUS AS AN ARCHETYPAL EPHEBE

Perseus is an archetype, and his decapitation of the Gorgon an aetiology. He is sent out alone to conquer the Gorgon and the fear of violent death in battle which her gaze symbolizes in Homer. By his action the power of the Gorgon is transplanted from the remote, non-Greek borderlands travelled only by the ephebe, into common experience, and is universalized on the *αἰγίς*, the natural 'habitat' of which is massed conflict on the plains of Greece. Perseus himself becomes invincible, by making the *γοργόνειον* his weapon and his shield, just as Athene makes it hers: in the *Iliad*, the side that is led by a god wielding the *αἰγίς* is always victorious. His acquisition of the *γοργόνειον*—the result of the successful employment of ephebic techniques—is initiatory, since it is the main factor guaranteeing his transition from outcast ephebe to adult warrior-king: possession of the *γοργόνειον* secures him a wife, and his mother's safety; its surrender to Athene marks the end of his ephebic career and the start of Argive citizen- and kingship.

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[158] Phillipps 1966, 110 and fig.109.

[159] Phillipps 1966, 112, figs. 112, 113.

[160] Phillipps 1966, 123–5, and fig.122.

[161] Phillipps 1966, 86, and figs.80–1; cf. akroterial *γοργόνεια* in Greek architecture, see Belson 1981, vol. 1, appendix 2. Cf. the Asian Tauri, above p.86.

[162] Phillipps 1966, 167.

[163] Phillipps 1966, 118. A man's head was *tapu* (taboo), not to be touched with impunity. Similarly, as seen above, a Greek's head was to be touched only at moments of great importance, such as supplication, and death.

1. The Gorgon As An Ephebe's Opponent

As seen above, the Gorgon on the *αἰγίς* is the scourge of the hoplite phalanx: the *αἰγίς* thrives on massed fighting (implied by the presence of *ἔρις*, *ἀλκή* and *ἰωκή*), producing panic accompanied by *φόβος* and *δεῖμος*, and confusion leading to rout. Each member of the phalanx must stand and fight, looking straight at the enemy: once rank is broken, even by one man, the battle can be lost.[164] And on the spot where the rout (*τρόπαιον*) begins the battle-trophy is erected by the victorious side.[165] The *αἰγίς* seems to have had its origin in the *τρόπαιον*, as the hoped-for conclusion to the *σφάγια*, when the skin of a goat sacrificed before battle was made into a trophy after victory.[166] Thus *τρόπαιον* and *αἰγίς* form a dichotomy. The *τρόπαιον* marks the place of the rout, and the *αἰγίς* is the symbol of the forces which caused the rout to take place. The *αἰγίς* therefore symbolizes not only the fear and panic of the defeated army, but also the conquering of that fear by the victors. The *τρόπαιον* was dedicated to a god:[167] Perseus gives the *γοργόνειον* to Athene, and the hunting-trophy becomes a battle-trophy. The distinction between battle and hunting trophies is that pieces of men are not part of the former, whereas pieces of animal are integral to the latter. However, when, in the form of the *γοργόνειον* on the *αἰγίς*, the battle-trophy becomes a recognisably anthropomorphic head, its power to terrify is greatly magnified.

(a) Perseus As An 'Anti-hoplite'

The aetiological association between the Perseus-Gorgon myth and the *αἰγίς* means that the myth contains motifs that reflect and refract the function and nature of the *αἰγίς*. The Gorgon that Perseus has to fight cannot be defeated by hoplite tactics or equipment, which evolved defensively to afford each hoplite warrior the greatest possible protection from harm by means of his own armour and his neighbour's

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[164] The phalanx was typically several ranks deep to prevent fragmentation and rout: Garlan 1975, 124.

[165] The *τρόπαιον* comprises a helmet, shield and spear set up as a monument to the enemy's flight: Burkert 1983, 66 and his n.35.

[166] Burkert 1983, 66–7, Garlan 1975, 62–4, Pritchett 1974, 246–75 ('The battle-field trophy'), 1979, 83–90, Vernant 1985, 24.

[167] Pritchett 1974, 270.

shield.[168] For the Gorgon is an enemy against whom no amount of armour can protect since it exercises its power through its eyes. Furthermore the hoplite phalanx fights its enemy face to face and hand to hand, but the Gorgon has eyes that turn a man to stone, and hands of bronze. If the Gorgon of the *αἰγίς* of pitched battle cannot be defeated by massed forces of men fighting hand to hand in broad daylight on the open plain, it can be dealt with by the ephebe—who is yet to become a hoplite—for whom it is an ideal opponent. Of ephebic training, R. Osborne has concluded that the world of the ephebe was not the real world of the hoplite or farmer-citizen of the *πόλις*: 'The ephebes were made to live out a fantasy'.[169] The Perseus-Gorgon story is a mythical, paradigmatic embodiment of this fantasy.

There has already been some discussion of Perseus' ephebic status, and the antithesis of ephebe to hoplite.[170] The ephebe fights alone instead of with others in a phalanx, lightly armed instead of bearing hoplite arms, by night instead of by day, on the borders of the land instead of on the cultivated plains, using *ἀπάτη* to get the better of his opponent. Perseus bears the hallmark of the ephebe, sent on his dangerous mission when he is *ἠνδρωμένος*, fighting in a cave by Oceanus on the far-off margins of the world beyond civilization, a region of perpetual Night, dressed in black.[171] The ambiguities and inversions of normality—which are a chief characteristic of many rituals and not only of initiation—are carried even further.[172] Perseus' task is to fight against a monstrous, female enemy, instead of one that is human, male and Greek;[173] an opponent whom he cannot see (because it is dark,

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[168] Garlan 1975, 124, Osborne 1987, 141–3. Most of the hoplite's equipment is for his protection.

[169] Osborne 1987, 149.

[170] Chapter I, pp.9–11.

[171] *ἠνδρωμένος*: the process of becoming a man is not instantaneous—*τέχνην δὲ τίνα ποτ' εἶχες ἐξανδρούμενος*; (Ar. *Eq.* 1241). Cf. E. *Ion* 52–5—*νέος μὲν οὖν ὢν ἀμφὶ βωμίους τροφὰς ἠλᾶτ' ἀθύρων· ὡς δ' ἀπηνδρώθη δέμας, Δελφοί σφ' ἔθεντο χρυσοφύλακα τοῦ θεοῦ ταμίαν τε πάντων πίστον...νεανίαν* (l.57): note that the first job for the young Ion is being a guard.

[172] Inversion in ritual: cf. for example the Thesmaphoria, when women leave the *οἶκος* not only all day, but all night too (Burkert 1985, 242–6); the Skira, when women threaten to take over the state (Burkert 1985, 230); and the Kronia, when slaves feast with masters (Burkert 1985, 231–2). In general, see Turner 1969, ch.5 ('Humility and heirarchy: the liminality of status elevation and reversal'), and ch.3 ('Liminality and communitas').

[173] Traditionally, a large part of Greek warfare (that is, seasonal invasions over the borders into neighbouring territory), was a matter of Greek versus Greek, rather than Greek versus barbarian (Osbourne 1987, 138).

and because he must look away), and who cannot see him (because he wears the *κυνέη* of Hades, and because she is asleep); and he has gods for helpers and magical accoutrements. His victory lies in *ἀπάτη*, in creeping up in his enemy while she sleeps, and while he looks away, and then in running away.[174]

Some recent work on the composition, function and methods of the Greek hoplite phalanx provides evidence for the sharpness of the hoplite-ephebe antithesis in two respects, which in turn are refracted in the Perseus-Gorgon myth: the surprise attack, and fighting by night.[175] Herodotus expressed the essence of hoplite fighting:[176]

> *ἐπεὰν γὰρ ἀλλήλοισι πόλεμον προείπωσι, ἐξευρόντες τὸ κάλλιστον χωρίον καὶ λειότατον, ἐς τοῦτο κατιόντες μάχονται, ὥστε σὺν κακῷ μεγάλῳ οἱ νικῶντες ἀπαλλάσσονται· περὶ δὲ τῶν ἐσσουμένων οὐδὲ λέγω ἀρχήν· ἐξώλεές γὰρ δὴ γίνονται.*

In a well-known passage, Polybius condemns the *κακοπραγμοσύνη* ('treacherous dealing') of Philip of Macedon, comparing it unfavourably with the practice of the ancients:[177]

> *οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀρχαῖοι πολύ τι τοῦ τοιούτου μέρους ἐκτὸς ἦσαν· τοσοῦτο γὰρ ἀπηλλοτρίωντο τοῦ κακομηχανεῖν περὶ τοὺς φίλους χάριν τοῦ τῷ τοιούτῳ συναύξειν τὰς σφετέρας δυναστείας, ὥστ' οὐδὲ τοὺς πολεμίους ἠροῦντο δι' ἀπάτης νικᾶν, ὑπολαμβάνοντες ⟨οὐδὲν⟩ οὔτε λαμπρὸν οὐδὲ μὴν βέβαιον εἶναι τῶν κατορθωμάτων, ἐὰν μή τις ἐκ τοῦ προφανοῦς μαχόμενος ἡττήσῃ ταῖς ψυχαῖς τοὺς ἀντιταττομένους. διὸ καὶ συνετίθεντο πρὸς σφᾶς μήτ' ἀδήλοις βέλεσι μήθ' ἐκηβόλοις χρήσασθαι κατ' ἀλλήλων, μόνην δὲ τὴν ἐκ χειρὸς καὶ συστάδην γινομένην μάχην ἀληθινὴν ὑπελάμβανον εἶναι κρίσιν πραγμάτων. ᾗ καὶ τοὺς πολέμους ἀλλήλοις προύλεγον καὶ τὰς μάχας, ὅτε πρόθοιντο διακινδυνεύειν, καὶ τοὺς τόπους, ⟨εἰς⟩ οὓς μέλλοιεν ἐξιέναι παραταξόμενοι. νῦν δὲ καὶ φαύλου φασὶν εἶναι στρατηγοῦ τὸ προφανῶς τι πράττειν τῶν πολεμικῶν.*[178]

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[174] While she sleeps: Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11 (*κοιμωμένας*), Apollod. 2.4.2 (*κατέλαβε..κοιμωμένας*). While he looks away: Pherecyd. *ibid.* (*ἀπεστραμμένον*); running away, Apollod. 2.4.3 (*ὀπίσω πάλιν ἐχώρει*)—'he retreats'. Vernant (1985, 65), in his comparison of the *γοργόνειον* with Praxidice and the mask of Demeter *Κιδαρία* at Eleusis, notes that both punish with madness those who break an oath. If it is correct to see Perseus as an ephebe who acquires the *γοργόνειον* and helps to invent the *αἰγίς*, then it would be unsurprising if the *γοργόνειον* too were discovered to have have been associated with an oath, the most appropriate one being the hoplite oath. However, there is no direct evidence for this suggestion.

[175] Pritchett 1974, 156–76.

[176] Hdt. 7.9, cf. Garlan 1975, 122–4.

[177] Plb. 13.3.2–7.

[178] Walbank 1967, commenting on this passage, cites as a parallel Liv. 42.47.5 and 8, and Plb. 36.9.9–11. In the latter, it is said that the Romans, as a civilized people, are described by some as having taken pride in conducting their wars *ἁπλῶς καὶ γενναίως*, using neither

Even allowing for idealization of the past in order to condemn contemporary practice, and more particularly Philip, the passage can be characterized as an expression of the dichotomy of hoplite warfare and use of trickery. As Herodotus indicated, tradition and the tactics of the phalanx necessitated the use of an open battleground, so that the heavy infantry could get a decisive result. The homogeneity of the phalanx, which was its great strength, denied it the flexibility necessary to execute a surprise attack. Pritchett's detailed investigation into Greek warfare has revealed '...the infrequency of surprise attacks on Greek hoplite armies and in particular on Greek camps...'.[179] Attacks by night are equally rare. It is difficult to have a battle in the dark, particularly a hoplite one. Fighting normally ended at nightfall,[180] and there is no example of a night assault on an encamped enemy by a Greek hoplite army previously drawn up on a plain in pitched-battle formation.[181] Darkness hinders the recognition of one's own side and of the enemy's, and leads to the sort of general confusion which can bring disaster.[182] Thucydides described a disastrous night attack on Syracuse made by the Athenians during the Sicilian expedition.[183] It was 'the only night battle that occurred in the war between large forces'. Because of the darkness the Athenians 'could not trust in their recognition of their own side'; they regarded as hostile whoever came from the direction of the enemy, and so sometimes fought each other. In the confusion the enemy easily discovered the Athenian password, and so were able to escape attack. At the very start of the war, the Thebans entered Plataea by night.[184] Similarly, the Plataeans first reaction was to surrender, since they imagined that the Theban force was stronger than it actually was, because in the night they could not see clearly what had happened (*οὐ γὰρ ἐώρων ἐν τῇ*

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night-attacks (*νυκτεριναῖς*) nor ambushes (*ἐνέδραις*), nor *ἀπάτη* nor *δόλος*, although Polybius implies that this was not always the case: cf. Walbank 1967, 416 for his comments, and *ibid.* on Str. 10.1.2, quoting an inscription in the sanctuary of Artemis near Eretria recording an agreement forbidding the use of *τηλεβόλα*. (On the inscription, see now Wheeler 1987, who concludes that the agreement was not historical and was invented in the fourth century for propaganda, to make Philip II's use of new artillery disreputable.) Cf. Wheeler 1988.

179 Pritchett 1974, 156, see 174–6 and ch.8 *passim.*

180 Pritchett 1974, 163.

181 Pritchett 1974, 171.

182 Pritchett 1974, 163ff.

183 Th. 7.43–44.

184 Th. 2.1–4.

νυκτί). Later that night, the Plataeans ascertained the true size of the enemy and waited until just before dawn to attack, so that the Thebans would be *φοβερώτεροι*. Because of the darkness and the unfamiliarity with the city, the Thebans were all but massacred.

A mythical exemplum of night battle and its dangers is found in the story of another ephebe, Jason.[185] Jason and the Argonauts are driven at night by a storm back onto the island of the Doliones, where previously they have been well received as guests. In the darkness, however, they are mistaken as hostile by the inhabitants. Cyzicus, their king, and host to Jason and his crew, is killed in the battle. When the Argonauts first came to the island, it was night also, but their arrival had been forecast by an oracle given to Cyzicus. The implication of their second, disastrous visit is that anyone who is active at night must be assumed to be up to no good (like thieves, and Hermes, who is one of Perseus' two divine helpers). By night, friend can become enemy. Polybius is helpful once more, grouping the night attack 'with the type of fraudulent and petty operations employed by the cowardly Cretans'.[186] The Persian king Cyrus defeated the Massagetae by tricking them with a drug, *φαρμάκῳ δολώσας* (wine).[187] Night attack is an un-Greek procedure, employed not only by barbarians,[188] but also by Greek ephebes such as Jason and Perseus. The *locus classicus* for anti-hoplite night-fighting is the *Doloneia* (of which the name Doliones is a striking reminiscence) in *Iliad* 10,[189] in the course of which Odysseus and Diomedes infiltrate enemy territory by night and encounter *Δόλων*, the 'Trickster', who is dressed in a wolf-skin. (Even though Odysseus and Diomedes are not themselves ephebes, they adopt a set of practices which are in fact ephebic).[190] Similarly, Perseus

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[185] A.R. 1.936–1077. Cf. Graf 1987, 97–9.

[186] Plb. 4.8.11, cf. Pritchett 1974, 171.

[187] Hdt. 1.211–12. Cf. Odysseus blinding the Cyclops in his cave by night, using wine (*Od.* 9.345–566: I owe this comparison to Dr. Bowie).

[188] Cf. Cyrus' use of unmixed wine and *δόλος* to defeat the army of Babylon, and his subsequent death (Hdt. 1.207, 211–14).

[189] *Il.* 10.204ff.

[190] There are other initiatory elements in the story, such as the clothing and weaponry of Odysseus and Diomedes. See Gernet 1981, 125–39, Buxton 1987, 64. For brief summary of the main discussions of the wolf in Greek thought, cf. Bowie 1987, 120–1 and his nn. 48 and 52.

wears the *κυνέη* ('dog-skin hat') of invisibility.[191] And in a fragment of Aeschylus' *Φορκίδες* the assimilation of ephebe to animal is completed, when Perseus is likened to a wild boar as he enters the Gorgon's cave.[192] Surprise attack under the cover of night is a technique ideally suited to the ephebe. In the myth of Perseus this method is indeed the only one by which he can defeat his opponent, on account of her unique and deadly form.

(b) Perseus In Nonnus

Bearing in mind these contrasts between hoplite and ephebe, a passage in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* in which Perseus is compared unfavourably with Dionysus is particularly interesting for its choice of criticisms of the Argive hero second only to Heracles.[193] The passage is a poetic conceit intended to glorify Dionysus. The picture of Perseus which emerges stresses the very points upon which the antithesis between the ephebe and the hoplite relies. He is portrayed as a cowardly sneak-thief, attacking an unarmed pregnant female, and running away, and not a proper heroic figure, who ought to fight in open battle at the head of an army:[194]

τί δὲ πλέον, εἰ σφυρὰ πάλλων
ξείνην εἰρεσίην ἀνεμώδεϊ νήχετο ταρσῷ,
ὅττι βαθυνομένης παλάμης ληίστορι καρπῷ
Φορκίδος ἀγρύπνοιο λαβὼν ὀφθαλμὸν ἀλήτην,
ἄψοφον ἀκροπόρων πεφυλαγμένος ἅλμα πεδίλων,
ὄγμον ἐχιδνήεντα μιῆς ἤμησε Μεδούσης,
ἧς ἔτι κυμαίνουσα γοναῖς ἐθλίβετο γαστὴρ
Πήγασον ὠδίνουσα, καὶ ἔγκυον αὐχένα νύμφης
Γοργόνος Εἰλείθυια μογοστόκος ἔθρισεν ἅρπη,
αὐχένος ἱπποτόκοιο θαλύσιον; ἀπτολέμου δὲ
Περσεὺς ὠκυπέδιλος ἐκούφισε σύμβολα νίκης
ἄπνοα, Γοργείης ὀφιώδεα λήια χαίτης,
αἱμαλέῃ ῥαθάμιγγι κατάρρυτα λείψανα κόρσης,
ἡμιτελὲς σύριγμα νεοτμήτων ἀπὸ λαιμῶν
λεπτὸν ὑποτρίζοντα· καὶ οὐ στίχεν ἄρσενι χάρμῃ,
οὐ τότε χερσαίης ἐνοπῆς κτύπος, οὐδ' ἐνὶ πόντῳ
Περσέι μαρναμένῳ πολεμήια λαίφεα νηῶν

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[191] See below, pp.109–10.

[192] *TrGF* III fr.261, see Chapter I, pp.17–18.

[193] Or even greater, according to Schol. *Il.* 14.319.

[194] Nonn. 25.33–65.

ἐγρεμόθοις ἀνέμοισιν Ἄρης κολπώσατο ναύτης,
οὐ φονίῃ ῥαθάμιγγι Λίβυς φοινίσσετο Νηρεύς,
οὐ νέκυν αὐτοκύλιστον ἐδέξατο λοίγιον ὕδωρ·
ἀλλὰ δρακοντείης τρομέων συριγμὸν ἐθείρης
Σθεννοῦς μαινομένης πτερόεις ἐλελίζετο Περσεύς,
καὶ κυνέην Ἀίδαο φέρων καὶ Παλλάδος ἅρπην,
καὶ πτερὸν Ἑρμάωνος ἔχων καὶ Ζῆνα τοκῆα,
ὠκυτέρῳ φύξηλις ἀνηώρητο πεδίλῳ,
Εὐρυάλης μύκημα καὶ οὐ σάλπιγγος ἀκούων,
συλήσας Λιβύης ὀλίγον σπέος· οὐ στρατὸν ἀνδρῶν
ἔκτανεν, οὐ φλογόεντι πόλιν τεφρώσατο δαλῷ.

Dionysus on the other hand...

ἀλλ' οὐ τοῖος ἔην βρομίου μόθος οὐ ποσὶν ἕρπων
βάκχος ἐθωρήχθη δολόεις πρόμος, οὐδὲ λοχήσας
φρουρὸν ἀκοιμήτοιο μετήλυδα κύκλον ὀπωπῆς
Φορκίδος ἀλλοπρόσαλλον ἀμειβομένης πτερὸν Ὕπνου
ἤνυσε θῆλυν ἀέθλον ἀθωρήκτοιο Μεδούσης...

Perseus' killing of Medusa and of the κῆτος was nothing but a βαιὸν...πόνον γαμψώνυχι χαλκῷ (1.102); and it is fully in keeping with this portrayal that he kills Ariadne in his battle with Dionysus:[195]

Σατύρων δὲ φιλεύιον Ἄρεα φεύγων
θυρσοφόρῳ βρομίῳ δρεπανηφόρος εἵκαθε Περσεύς,
καὶ δόρυ θοῦρον ἔπεμπε μαχήμονος ἀντὶ Λυαίου
οὐτιδανὴν ἀσίδηρον ἀκοντίζων Ἀριάδνην·
οὐκ ἄγαμαι Περσῆα μίαν κτείναντα γυναῖκα,
εἵμασι νυμφιδίοισιν ἔτι πνείουσαν Ἐρώτων.

Perseus is himself the product of ἀπατήλιον ὄμβρον[196] (the golden shower with which Zeus disguised himself in order to seduce Danae), of a βαιῆς κλεψιγάμου,[197] and also of τέχνη: Zeus comes to his women ἀεὶ δὲ μετὰ τέχνης ἀλλ' οὐ μετὰ βίας.[198]

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[195] Nonn. 25.107–12.

[196] Nonn. 25.121.

[197] Nonn. 25.116.

[198] This is Isocrates referring to Alcmene, Danae and Leda (Isoc. *Hel.* 59). According to one story, Picus Zeus taught Perseus all the μυστικὰς φαντασίας (John of Antioch *FHG* IV, 467, fr.3); cf. Ov. *Metam.* 5.181, where one of Perseus' opponents mocks his acquisition and use of the γοργόνειον as *miracula*.

In a typical, not to say Ovidan, elaboration, Nonnus goes on similarly to belittle the heroic deeds of Heracles, Minos, Achilles and Hector.[199]

An important characteristic of the period of ephebic training is the time during which the ephebe has to live on his wits, stealing and cheating to survive.[200] Perseus takes the one eye of the Graeae with the *λητστορι καρπῷ* of his *βαθυνομένης παλάμης* (1.35). *παλάμη* means 'hand', but also 'cunning', or 'trick'. He approaches Medusa silently on tip-toe (1.37). (A scholiast on Lycophron *Alexandra* 846 relates how Perseus acquires the eye of the Gorgons (sic) by 'coming up from behind' (*ἐλθὼν ἐκ τοῦ ὀπίσω*). Eratosthenes tells how in Aeschylus' *Φορκίδες* Perseus watched out for the moment when he could intercept the eye as it was being passed round—*τηρήσας...ἐν τῇ παραδόσει*;[201] Ovid says he took it *sollerti furtim.*)[202] He is *δολόεις πρόμος...λοχήσας* (1.62). Stealing is a particularly revealing initiatory motif: it is supremely antisocial, since it denies the central Greek concern for reciprocity in human relationships. Furthermore, monomachy is part of the process of initiation: Perseus fights neither with a group (1.47–52), nor against a group (1.59–60).[203] His opponent is neither numerous (though she is manifold) nor male, but one (1.38), a monster who is female. The sex of the Gorgon is used to convict Perseus of cowardice. She is described innocuously as *νύμφης* (1.40), pregnant (1.39f), and her head a *θῆλυν ἀέθλον ἀθωρήκτοιο Μεδούσης* (1.65): his is a victory without a fight, an *ἀποπτολέμου νίκης* (1.42–3).[204] The killing of Ariadne is used to similar effect (1.109–112). Finally he runs away from his 'victory' (1.53f)—*ἐλελίζετο* (1.54) (even when he has the gods' help and is himself a son of Zeus, implies 1.55–6), *φύξηλις*

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[199] Nonn. 25.142–263. The poet, as is clear from 25.267–70, likens himself to a warrior fighting for Dionysus by means of such poetry.

[200] Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 154–5, 1981b, 181, 183.

[201] *Oculum intercepisse—Catast.* 22, cf. Hyg. *Astr.* 2.12, Arat. 249 p.196, 7 (Martin), and German. BP p.82, 12 and 15 (Breysig).

[202] Ov. *Metam.* 4. 776.

[203] For monomachy, cf. Melanthus and Xanthus, of the Apaturia myth. Cf. Pritchett 1985, 17–20, where he gives a list numbering seventeen in all, e.g. Eteocles and Polyneices, Phemius and Hyperochus, Echinus and Hyllus; cf. Oakley 1985, especially 407–8, on the motif of the small man defeating the larger (e.g. Odysseus and Polyphemus, David and Goliath).

[204] The *γοργόνειον* is referred to ironically as a battle trophy, an irony picked up in 1.59, when Perseus is said to have 'despoiled a small Libyan cave'. On the *γοργόνειον* as having its origin in the battle trophy, see above, p.98.

(l.57), *φεύγων* (l.107), *εἴκαθε* (l.108).[205]

As seen above in the *Iliad*, decapitation is an act of war, the culmination of hand to hand fighting, and the head a prize to be stripped like armour from the body of the defeated opponent. Pindar uses *συλάω* to describe it:[206]

εὐπαράου κρᾶτα συλάσαις Μεδοίσας.

In the context of a fight between a youth and a monstrous being, who is yet *εὐπάραος* (and so by implication female), this military metaphor represents the subversion of hoplite reality, particularly since, as noted in Homer, the deliberate threat to decapitate an enemy is never actually carried out.

All of these motifs combine so that the monomachy of the ephebe is implicitly both likened to, and yet contrasted with, hand to hand massed hoplite fighting. The centrality to the myth of these motifs is illustrated further by the fact that they are retained even in rationalized versions which seek to normalize or defantasize the fantastical parts of the story. In one such version, the Gorgons become a warlike army (but still of women) by Lake Triton in Libya, with Medusa as queen; Perseus attacks by night and kills the leader.[207] The presence of Athene is also preserved, obliquely: *Τριτογένεια* is an epithet of hers in Homer and Hesiod; one explanation of the epithet is that she was born at Lake Triton.[208] Retention of motifs indicates that the rationalization carries the same 'message' as the original myth. This is the irony of rationalization of myth. A great part of the original myth's significance lies not in the fantastical *per se*, but in the oppositions and inversions inherent in fantasy. A rationalization becomes another version of the myth, since it remains the same 'structurally'.

Accordingly, running away, and killing of women are interpreted by Nonnus as signs of cowardice, just as Polybius condemned night attacks as being typical of

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[205] Note also that the *ἅρπη* is said to be Athene's (l.55), rather than Hephaistus', a reflection of how closely Athene supervises Perseus.

[206] Pi. *P.* 12.16.

[207] Dionysius Scytobrachion (*ap.* D.S. 3.52.4, 3.54.3). Cf. Paus. 2.21.6–7, in whose version, also rationalized, Medusa is *δολοφονηθῆναι νύκτῳ*. Cf. Ath. *Deipn.* 221B–E, where Marius' troops in Libya are obliged to ambush and kill from a distance a 'Gorgon', a wild animal native to the Libyan desert.

[208] *Il.* 4.515, 8.39, Hes. *Th.* 895, 924, E. *Ion* 871–3, A. *Eum.* 292–3, Hdt. 4.180.

the 'fraudulent and petty operations' of the cowardly Cretans.[209] However, these two themes are both part of the process of inversion which is involved in initiation. Running away is in fact an essential part of Perseus' success, and is inversely analogous to the rout of the hoplite, which on the contrary means disaster. This theme of victory in retreat, or escape, using *ἀπάτη* is therefore especially ephebic. The physically weaker hero wins by using other devices to make up for the disparity in strength. Theseus uses the thread,[210] a stratagem devised by Daedalus, a master of *τέχνη* and *μῆτις*, and he stoves in the Cretan ships to prevent pursuit.[211] Jason uses the wiles and magic of Medea together with the help of Hera and Athene,[212] and the treacherous murder and dismemberment of Apsyrtus.[213] Perseus uses the *κυνέη*, the *κίβισις*, the winged shoes, the *ἅρπη* and the counsel of Athene and Hermes—the first three of which are cunning devices particularly appropriate to his victory over his uncanny opponent. The effeminacy of some ephebes, another initiatory inversion, gives rise to misinterpretation similar to Nonnus' treatment of Perseus.[214]

(c) Perseus' Accoutrements

It is Perseus' accoutrements which give him the ability to perform exactly those actions for which he is criticized in Nonnus. The winged shoes are vital for his escape from the winged and vengeful sisters of Medusa.[215] Perseus' wings differentiate him from the other flying creatures in the myth: the gods Athene and Hermes can fly at will, being Olympians; the Gorgons and Pegasus, offspring of Medusa, have large ornithomorphic wings on their shoulders.[216] (Note that the wings made by Daedalus imitate nature in being large and attached to the shoulder.) Perseus' wings, however,

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[209] Above p.102.

[210] Apollod. *Epit.* 1.9 and Frazer's (1921) note.

[211] Plu. *Thes.* 19.

[212] A.R. 3.83ff. Medea is *δολόεσσα τέτυκται*; Athene devises a *δόλον* to help the Argonauts.

[213] Apollod. 1.9.24, though the usual tradition seems to have been simply the treacherous murder of Apsyrtus, without the dismemberment: A.R. 4.224ff, 303–481, S. *Κολχίδες* (Schol. A.R. 4.228, see *TrGF* IV, 316–20), cf. E. *Med.* 1334.

[214] See below, pp.118–19.

[215] Cf. Schauenburg 1960, 118–21 for Perseus' winged shoes, or hat.

[216] Cf. Harpies, Sirens, Sphinxes, divine horses, and personifications of Death, Sleep, Victory and Dawn.

are small, detachable, and fixed to his feet: taken in context, they are a reminder that he is only a man.[217]

The nature of the *κίβισις* was not clear even to the Greeks, who did no more than think of it as the bag given to Perseus expressly for the purpose of carrying the *γοργόνειον* in safety. The ancient etymology which derived it from *κεῖσθαι* and *ἠσθής*—meaning that it was used to carry clothes and food—was dismissed by Frazer as absurd.[218] Chantraine[219] concluded that its true etymology is unknown, but cited Lewy, who claimed a Semitic origin for it.[220] Liddell and Scott commented that 'it was like a gamekeeper's [i.e. hunter's] bag, as represented on vases',[221] a comment removed from the new (ninth) edition of 1940.

The *ἅρπη* was a later development: Aeschylus mentioned it, but earlier vases show a straight, Greek sword.[222] Its oriental provenance[223] may mean that for the Greeks it represented further their assimilation of Perseus, as an ephebic figure, to the wild and the barbarian, and a reflection of his links with Persian royalty. The *ἅρπη* is sometimes identified with the sickle given as a *δόλος*[224] by Gaea to Cronus to castrate Uranus with, a tradition which, together with the *κυνέη*, links the Perseus story to the myths of primeval succession of generations of the gods; it was also sometimes considered to be the same weapon with which Hermes killed Argus.[225] As if to confirm the peculiarity of this weapon, it appears in place of the sacrificial knife or axe in an anomalous sacrifice during the summer festival of Demeter *Χθονία* at Corinth. A cow was let loose in the sanctuary and shut in with four old women,

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[217] Cf. Reckford 1972 for images of adolescent flight as the evasion of sexual maturity: clearly, this is not so in Perseus' case.

[218] Apollod. 2.4.2, Frazer 1921, vol 1, 157 n.2.

[219] Chantraine 1968–80 *s.v. κίβισις*.

[220] Lewy 1895, 91: linked with Hebr. *qābaṣ*, 'collect, gather', and so a conjectured form **qēbeṣ*, whence **qibṣ*.

[221] E.g. Catalogue of *BMus* vases, nos. 548, 641.

[222] Schauenburg 1960 121–2.

[223] Schauenburg 1960, 123–4.

[224] Vernant–Detienne 1978, 78, although they give no ancient reference to that effect.

[225] Vat Myth. 2.323, cf. Ov. *Metam.* 5.176, Tz. Lyc. 838, Apollod. 2.1.3. On the *ἅρπη*, cf. Burkert 1983, 290–1.

all of whom tried to kill it with a ἅρπη; three other cows suffered the same fate, and each had to fall dying on the same side of their body as did the first.[226]

The κυνέη of Hades, the 'dog-skin hat' of Death is responsible for Perseus' invisibility, and plays a particularly important part in his ἀπάτη. 'Wearing it he saw those he wanted to see, but was not seen by them'.[227] He wears it to bring death, and goes unseen because Death itself is Ἀίδης,[228] unseen and unforeseeable, a darkness that accepts the dead.[229] Why a hat of dog-skin? In the *Odyssey*, only Odysseus and the dogs of Eumaeus are able to see Athene, who remains invisible to all other mortals.[230] Cerberus the three-headed dog guards the approach to the house of Death; the dog is the animal of Hecate;[231] and Hecate is the daughter or granddaughter of Perseus.[232] There are other possible associations with the Underworld in the Perseus myth. One of the most suggestive is that the name of Perseus' persecutor, Polydectes, is also an epithet of Hades (which is not to say that Polydectes is Hades).[233] The κυνέη is more than a magical device such as those used by Jason or Theseus;[234] it is a symbol and prime instrument of Death's domain over the Underworld: it was given him by the Cyclopes at the same time as they gave

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[226] Paus. 2.35.4. Anomalous features: the ἅρπη, having more than one sacrificer, having old women as sacrificers, having the sacrifice in an enclosed space even though it is in the open air, the chasing of the victims round the sanctuary, the victims' fall. See Bremmer 1987b on the significance of old women in Greek society, the main conclusion being that their age allowed them far greater freedom than younger women because, being past the age of childbearing, they no longer needed to be watched over so carefully.

[227] Apollod. 2.4.2. For two other invisible men, Gyges and Midas, see Déonna 1965, 93f and his n.4. The motif of invisibility is an example of how the iconographical representation of a myth can differ from its literary/oral one. The Greeks could only show Perseus wearing the κυνέη, they could not show him invisible. On the κυνέη and invisibility in the Homeric poems, see Roeger 1924.

[228] Cf. Hyg. *Astr.* 212, referring to Perseus' hat as the hat of Ἀίδης: see Roeger 1924.

[229] Vermeule 1979, 145ff. On Hades as a god, see Garland 1985, 52ff.

[230] *Od.* 16.160–3.

[231] Burkert 1985, 65, Garland 1985, 54.

[232] Apollod. *FGrHist* 244 F 109. Schol. *Od.* 10.139. A.R. 3.467, 478, Lyc. *Alex.* 1175. Cf. Burkert 1983, 210, for Hecate, Perseus and fish-sacrifice.

[233] See Gernet 1981, 44 n.152, cf. Vernant 1985, 47–50.

[234] Note, however, that in Bacchylides, Theseus wears one on his way to Athens: *ὀμμάτων δὲ στίλβειν ἄπο Λαμνίαν φοίνισσαν φλόγα· παῖδα δ' ἔμμεν πρώθηβον, ἀρηίων δ' ἀθυρμάτων μεμνᾶσθαι πολέμου τε καὶ χαλκεοκτύπου μάχας* (B. 17.50–60).

the thunderbolt to Zeus and the trident to Poseidon,[235] each being the equivalent of the king's sceptre; with these the Olympian gods defeated Cronus and the Titans and established their own everlasting order in the cosmos. The *κυνέη* both symbolizes and confers great power. The *κυνέη* strengthens the bond between Perseus and Athene, but also is another element in the association between Perseus and hoplite warfare. In the *Iliad*, it is Athene who dons the *κυνέη* to enter battle unseen against another god:

> *αὐτὰρ Ἀθήνη*
> *δυν' Ἄιδος κυνέην, μή μιν ἴδοι ὄβριμος Ἄρης.*[236]

All of Perseus' accoutrements are a reminder that he is a mortal, out of place in the world of gods and monsters, and that his presence there is by divine dispensation, and temporary.

(d) The Multiplex Form Of The Gorgon

That the Gorgon is an especially awkward opponent to kill is suggested by her multiplex form, which is an expression of her provenance as a sea deity. Vernant and Detienne's analysis of fishing and hunting in Oppian[237] centres on the notion that sea-creatures and some land animals were considered by the Greeks to be exceptionally well-endowed with *μῆτις*, 'cunning intelligence'. It is manifest in the suppleness and subtle multiplicity of their forms (which are *ποικίλος*, *αἰόλος*, like the snake and the octopus), and by the skill needed by the fisherman/hunter to catch them.

> Menelaus can only seize Proteus, the polymorphic god, by resorting to ambush and disguise. Heracles can only triumph over Periclymenus, the elusive warrior with a thousand forms, with the aid of Athena and all her *μῆτις*.[238]

Metis is the daughter of Tethys and Oceanus.[239] The Gorgon is by genealogy a sea-creature, and the consort of Poseidon.[240] In modern Greek folklore, 'Gorgon' is the

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[235] Apollod. 1.2.1.

[236] *Il.* 5.844–5.

[237] Vernant–Detienne 1978, ch.2, cf. ch.5 on the links between Thetis and Metis.

[238] Vernant–Detienne 1978, 30.

[239] Vernant–Detienne 1978, 142–3.

[240] Daughter of Phorcys and Ceto: Hes. *Th.* 270–6, Pi. *P.* 12.13. Consort of Poseidon: Hes. *Th.* 278–9.

generic term for all sea-nymphs.[241] Nearly all sea-creatures have the gift of prophecy, to some extent,[242] as do the Graeae for Perseus, but the Gorgon does not. However, she looks as though she ought to possess some sign of *μῆτις*. She is multiform, being made up of different animals (and also multiple, there being three Gorgons). Her serpent hair makes her a creature of not just one, but many maws, a symbiotic community of ravening mouths, and a vivid embodiment of her multiplicity.

Thetis, Proteus and Metis all posses the power of metamorphosis, employed to frustrate mortals trying to acquire oracular knowledge.[243] To escape the grip of Menelaus, Proteus changes first to a lion, then snake, leopard, boar, water, and tall tree.[244] The choice of forms is determined by the fact that all are things which are difficult or dangerous to catch and hold, and which are liable to slip through the hands, whether because of their savageness, size, or suppleness. The Gorgon partakes of three of these forms, the snake, the boar and the lion.[245] She, however, does not shift from one form to another, but embodies them simultaneously. It is as if she is herself frozen in the middle of the process of metamorphosis, or rather, is constantly metamorphozing. In other words, her physical appearance is a reflection of the flux and multiplicity that is the special characteristic particularly of some sea deities. Furthermore, the insidious and uncanny way in which her gaze affects those with whom it comes into contact is perhaps also a kind of *μῆτις*, like the song of the Sirens (also daughters of Phorcys and Ceto).[246] Pindar describes her death thus:

> *ἔπεφνέν*
> *τε Γοργόνα, καὶ ποικίλον κάρα*
> *δρακόντων φόβαισιν ἤλυθε νασιώταις*

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[241] Fontenrose 1959, 284. The Gorgon even became the Gorgon Virgin Mary of the sea in a nineteenth century Greek icon: Vermeule 1979, 196, fig.20.

[242] Vermeule 1979, 190f.

[243] Vernant–Detienne 1978, 304–5.

[244] *Od.* 4.383ff. Cf. the story of Thetis, changing into a lion, snake, and fire in an attempt to escape marriage with Peleus: Paus. 5.18, Pi. *N.* 3.35, and Schol., *N.* 4.62 and Schol., see *RE* XIX, 2884ff.

[245] Cf. a sixth-century bronze shield blazon found at Olympia, of the Gorgon as a lion-sea-monster: Vermeule 1979, 195 fig.19.

[246] As are the Graeae, the Hesperides, Nux, Thoosa, Scylla and Echidna: see *RE* XX, 535–6. Cf. the Chimaera (part lion, part snake, part goat) and the Sphinx (part lion, part woman), both offspring of the nymph Echidna (Hes. *Th.* 319–26).

λίθινον θάνατον φέρων.[247]

Her power of lithification is the effect on mortal of a *ποικίλον κάρα*.

2. Perseus And The Pyrrhic Dance

The identification of Perseus as an archetypal ephebe of especially military significance is strengthened by parallels between his decapitation of the Gorgon and Pyrrhic dancing, which was part of the process by which young men acquired and rehearsed the skills of the hoplite.[248] The mythical inventor of the dance was usually said to be Neoptolemus-Pyrrhus, a particularly ephebic figure.[249] Also credited with its invention were the eponymous Pyrrhichus, or Achilles (father of Neoptolemus-Pyrrhus), or Athene herself.[250] The Cretan Couretes were said to perform it;[251] according to Pollux, Pyrrhichus was Cretan;[252] according to a Laconian tradition, Pyrrhichus was himself one of the Couretes;[253] Strabo reported that the Couretes invented the dance and that Pyrrhichus gave it his name.[254] Athenaeus wrote that Aristoxenus (a historian of the late second century) noted Pyrrhichus as the inventor of the dance, but that now only the Spartans still used it as a *προγύμνασμα τοῦ πολέμου*, a 'preparatory drill for war'.[255]

Perseus' association with the Pyrrhic dance is inferred initially from the 'turning aside of the head' which features in it. Plato describes the appearance and purpose

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[247] Pi. *P.* 46–9.

[248] Ridley 1979, 545–7; Garlan 1975, 172–4, Pritchett 1974, 217–218, 1985, 61–2 n.189 on dances and initiation rites; Ridley cites Séchan 1930, ch.4; cf. Ridley 1979, 546 on armed dance at the Great Panathenaea (Th. 6.56), and the Pyrrhic dance at the Panathenaea (Lys. 21.4 performed by 'beardless Pyrrhichists'), and Isaeus (5.36) on the role of the choregos of such a group. Cf. Wheeler 1982.

[249] See Vernant–Vidal-Naquet 1981, 175–99, and 1988, 161–79 ('Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and the ephebeia').

[250] D.H. *Ant.* 7.72.7.

[251] D.Chr. 2.61, Nic.Dam. (fr.103aa, *ap.* Stob. 4.2.25), cf. Anon.Vat. 64; cf. Borthwick 1970, 329, 331; Jeanmaire 1939, 427–444 on Cretan dances and initiation.

[252] Poll. 4.99.

[253] Paus. 3.25.2.

[254] Str. 10.4.16, 10.3.8.

[255] Ath. *Deipn.* 631A.

of the dance in *Laws*:[256]

> *τάς τε εὐλαβείας πασῶν πληγῶν καὶ βολῶν ἐκνεύσεσι καὶ ὑπείξει πάσῃ καὶ ἐκπηδήσεσιν ἐν ὕψει καὶ ξὺν ταπεινώσει μιμουμένην, καὶ τὰς ταύταις ἐναντίας, τὰς ἐπὶ τὰ δραστικὰ φερομένας αὖ σχήματα ἔν τε ταῖς τῶν τόξων βολαῖς καὶ ἀκοντίων καὶ πασῶν πληγῶν μιμήματα ἐπιχειροῦσαν μιμεῖσθαι.*

Study of armed dancing in Attic vase painting from c.520 to 460 has distinguished two basic forms, the *ἐνόπλιος* and the Pyrrhic.[257] Poursat's analysis of the vase evidence for the two dances showed clearly that the Pyrrhic was danced by one or two ephebes, and the *ἐνόπλιος* by a group of adult hoplites. Both dances were performed to the accompaniment of the *αὐλός*: on most vase scenes, both Pyrrhic and *ἐνόπλιος*, an *αὐλός*-player stands in the centre, a shared characteristic which suggests that the two dances are closely related; but then the two forms diverge. The Pyrrhic was danced originally by an individual and not a chorus (although by the time of Lysias, if not long before, it clearly could be performed by a chorus).[258] Even if in practice it was performed by a chorus, the ideal was the individual dancer, naked, and armed with the helmet, round shield and spear of the hoplite (and sometimes with greaves, which appear occasionally on the vases).[259] It is also clear from the background detail of a number of vases that the dance was performed not only in the Panathenaic procession, but also in the palaestra.[260] By contrast, the *ἐνόπλιος* was performed by armoured, clothed warriors in a group, carrying hoplite weapons. The Pyrrhic dancer carries some hoplite weaponry, but is naked and alone, in other words, a protohoplite. The other dancers are full hoplites, clothed, armoured, and dancing together, that is, as a phalanx. Ridley noted[261] that Pyrrhic dancing has been thought to have started as a fertility rite in early spring, presumably because of the dance's association with the Panathenaea. If the dance was especially associated with this part of the year, the association probably owed more to the imminence of

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[256] Pl. *Lg.* 815A.

[257] Poursat 1968 (cited by Ridley 1979, 545).

[258] See n.248 above.

[259] Poursat 1968, 578.

[260] I.e., as Plato's description suggests, the Pyrrhic was a training method.

[261] Ridley 1979, 545.

the new campaigning season than to ideas of fertility.[262]

Borthwick's article[263] took as its starting-point Athene's patronage of the Pyrrhic dance. The most visible expression of her patronage is the dancer's weaponry, the same helmet, shield and spear wielded by Athene herself.[264] The legible part of *POxy.* 2738 cites the teaching of *πυρριχίζων, τὸ σχῆμα τῆς Ἀθήνης*, in three Old Comedies.[265] The head-turn appears also on twelve of the twenty vases. Borthwick suggested that it would be consistent for the head-turn to take its significance from Athene, and that in fact the movement mimics Athene killing the Gorgon (in what he surmised was an Attic tradition).[266] It is clearly stated in Pherecydes, the main fifth-century source, and in Apollodorus that Perseus turns his head away as he kills the Gorgon. The aversion of his gaze, if not always of his head, appears on all vases on which the scene is depicted. A detail of the mid-fifth-century red-figure Polygnotus pelike, on which rays are seen to emanate from Perseus' head as he kills Medusa,[267] suggests that the head-turn was a motif so well established that it could be employed as the vehicle for an artistic conceit. On the vase, Perseus looks back over his shoulder as he reaches out to decapitate the sleeping Gorgon. He wears a winged cap, but it seems to be back to front: although his head is turned in the opposite direction, the cap's wings are orientated correctly relative to his body, which faces forward (i.e. the wing-tips point backwards). Milne thought that the artist had 'absent-mindedly made the wings of his cap point in the wrong direction'.[268] The conceit is that logically, Perseus should indeed be wearing his winged cap back to front, because he has had to keep his head turned back throughout his approach:

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[262] Cf. Pritchett 1979, 163–8 on the problems of relating particular Greek festivals to the agricultural calendar.

[263] Borthwick 1970.

[264] Cf. Poursat 1968, 581.

[265] *...πυρριχίζων, ἐν δὲ Αἰξὶν Εὐπόλ[ιδος] τὸ μαλακὴν κε[λ]εύειν τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν ποιεῖν. σκλη[ρ]ῶς ποιοῦντο[ς] τοῦ ἀγροίκου τὸ σχῆμα τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ὁ διδ[ά]σκαλος ἐκέλευσεν μαλακῶς αὐτὸ ποιεῖν. ὡς οὖν ὁ Ἀρ[ισ]τ[ο]φ[ά]νη[ς] τῷ Τριτογένεια μόνῳ ἐπιθέτῳ ἠρκέσθη καὶ ὁ Κρατ[ῖ]νος τῷ Γοργο[δ]ρακον[τ]οδόκα (?) ἠρκέσθη τ[ὸ] αὐτὸ δηλοῦντ...πρᾶγμα, ὅτι ἀποκλιν...[τ]ῇ κεφαλῇ θε[ο]ῦ σχῆμα πο...*

[266] Athene killing the Gorgon, see E. *Ion* 989–997, D.S. 3.70.2–4.

[267] See above, pp.91–2.

[268] Milne 1945–46, 126.

to fly forwards, he has to wear his winged cap backwards.[269]

However, Borthwick was not wholly convinced that the gesture of the dance originated in the myth. His suspicion is partly supported by comparing the Pyrrhic vases with the contemporary iconography of Perseus killing the Gorgon: unlike the dancer, Perseus is usually clothed (or at least partially covered by his *χιτών*); and he generally carries no spear, and no shield (though when he does have a shield, it is the conventional round, hoplite shield, but used in an unconventional way, as a mirror in which Perseus is able to view the Gorgon with impunity).[270] However, Athene usually stands at his side, carrying her own hoplite shield and spear, looking on as he decapitates the Gorgon, and even guiding his hand.[271] She then runs beside him as he makes his escape from the two pursuing Gorgons. It is at this very moment that she invents the art of *αὐλός*-playing,

> *τέχνᾳ, τάν ποτε*
> *Παλλὰς ἐφεῦρε θρασειᾶν Γοργόνων*
> *οὔλιον θρῆνον διαπλέξαισ' Ἀθάνα.*[272]

This is the music to which the Pyrrhic is danced, and to which Perseus runs away.[273] The goddess of the hoplite warrior, and the protohoplite Pyrrhic dancer, provides the same patronage for Perseus. In turn, the significance for the Pyrrhic dancer of Athene's guiding of Perseus' hand, as he turns his head way at the crucial moment of his exploit, is that the young warrior must trust in his instinct and skill if he is to make a good fighter.

Borthwick's doubt as to the relation of the Perseus myth to the dance seems unfounded, but he did not go on to propose the other possibility: the myth may not have influenced the dance, but the dance may have influenced the myth. In other words, the motif of the head-turn may derive from the Pyrrhic dance. This would be

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[269] Cf. Lucan 9.665–70, where Athene orders Perseus to fly backwards over Libya so that the *γοργόνειον* will not lithify any inhabitant who happens to look up as he flies by.

[270] Spear and shield in iconography, see Schauenburg 1960, 124; on the mirror-shield see Phinney 1971, 453–63.

[271] Apollod. 2.4.2—*κατευθυνούσης τὴν χεῖρα Ἀθήνας*. Perhaps the implication is that it is Athene's shield that Perseus uses.

[272] Pi. *P.* 12.6–8. See Köhnken 1976.

[273] Cf. the *αὐλός* player on most of the Pyrrhic and *ἐνόπλιος* vases.

highly appropriate given the role of Athene in both contexts as patronness of a young warrior. However, Burkert's interpretation of the Mesapotamian iconography[274] suggests that the head-turn is a very old motif. Accordingly, the motif will have entered the myth and the dance separately, but still constitutes a link between the two. In helping Athene to make the *αἰγίς* and to invent the music of the Pyrrhic dance, Perseus becomes an archetypal figure in Greek warfare.[275]

The association between the ability to dance and the ability to avoid death in battle appeared as early as the *Iliad*: Aeneas is unable to kill Meriones because he is a dancer.[276] In the heat of battle Menelaus characterizes peacetime as satiety, sleep, love and dancing;[277] on the Shield of Achilles, the Couroi of the town dance, 'spinning' to the music of *αὐλοί* and *φόρμιγγες*:[278] dancing is an activity of peace.[279] But Couroi who indulge in such activities at the expense of going to war are condemned accordingly, in terms of those activities. Priam complains after Hector's death in war that the sons left to him in Troy are cowards:[280]

> *τὰ δ' ἐλέγχεα πάντα λέλειπται*
> *ψεῦσταί τ' ὀρχησταί τε, χοροιτυπίῃσιν ἄριστοι,*
> *ἀρνῶν ἠδ' ἐρίφων ἐπιδήμιοι ἁρπακτῆρες.*

Lying and cheating, as well as dancing, are ephebic traits. This was seen to be particularly evident in Nonnus' portrayal of Perseus.[281] In peace, ephebes dance in expectation of war, and in war they fight. But ephebes who dance and no more are ephebes manqués, failed ephebes, who remain mere 'liars and dancers'.[282]

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[274] Above pp.76–7.

[275] Cf. the famous passage of Thucydides, in which is described the Spartan custom of marching into battle to the sound of massed *αὐλοί*, to keep the men in step: Th. 5.70; cf. Plu. *Lyc.* 21.4–7, 22.2–3, Ath. *Deipn.* 630F. See Lazenby 1985, 37.

[276] *Il.* 16.617. Ridley 1979, 546–7.

[277] *Il.* 13.636–9.

[278] *Il.* 18.494–5.

[279] See P. *P.* 1.1ff, on the power of music to bring peace, and l.1–6 on the *χρυσέα φόρμιγξ*, which can quench even the thunderbolt of Zeus.

[280] *Il.* 24.260–2.

[281] See above pp.103–7.

[282] Cf. one of the Calydonian boar-hunters, killed by the boar and referred to as *ὀρχηστοῦ*: above, Chapter II, n.173.

A parallel for the institution of a dance to mimic a heroic exploit is provided by Theseus. On his way back from Crete to Athens, he put in at Delos, where he invented the Crane dance round an altar made of horns, still performed there in Plutarch's time. The dance was

> *μίμημα τῶν ἐν τῷ Λαβυρίνθῳ περιόδων καὶ διεξόδων, ἔν τινι ῥυθμῷ παραλλάξεις καὶ ἀνελίξεις ἔχοντι γιγνομένην.*[283]

Attacked by a mob at Delphi, Neoptolemus seizes sword, helmet and shield to ward off a shower of deadly missiles, and is described as *γοργὸς ὁπλίτης* (l.1122), his movements the *δεινὰς πυρρίχας φρουρουμένου βέλεμνα παιδός* (l.1146).[284] He stands amid a storm of fighting, *φαεννοῖς στίλβων ὅπλοις*:[285] it is clear from the evidence presented above[286] that *φαεννοῖς* is more than just 'a conventional epic epithet for weapons and armour'.[287] The visible manifestation of the Homeric heroes' battle-fury is applied to this fighting/dancing ephebe in his last and most intense Pyrrhic performance. He is not only a *ὁπλίτης*, but a *γόργος ὁπλίτης*, like Hector, *Γοργοῦς ὄμματ' ἔχων ἠὲ βροτολοιγοῦ Ἄρηος*.[288] His isolation accords with the Pyrrhic being an individual's dance. This confrontation between the lone ephebe and a mass of his enemies is very like that between Perseus, on his return to Seriphos, and the assembled court of Polydectes. Perseus can use the *γοργόνειον* to kill them all in a moment. Neoptolemus, the 'New-warrior', has no *γοργόνειον*, and so is killed, because ephebic skills in the context of a massed (i.e. non-ephebic, hoplite) battle are useless without the support of others: as a *γόργος ὁπλίτης*, like a Homeric warrior performing his *ἀριστεῖα*, he is alone.[289] However, the messenger reporting the scene implies that Neoptolemus died gloriously, though treacherously, dancing the Pyrrhic.[290]

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[283] Plu. *Thes.* 21.

[284] E. *Andr.* 1122–46. Cf. Borthwick 1970, 320, Ridley 1979, 547.

[285] *Ibid.* 1146.

[286] Above, pp.87–93.

[287] Stevens 1971, 233.

[288] *Il.* 8.349, above p.89. *γοργὸς ὁπλίτης* is used by Andromache of Menelaus earlier in the play (l.458).

[289] See below, pp.126–7, on Spartan warriors as being *γόργος*.

[290] On the death of Neoptolemus-Pyrrhus, cf. Nagy 1979, 118–41. Cf. E. *Hel.* 1315–16:

The initiatory cast of the Pyrrhic explains why it could be performed by women, and why it is shown on vases being danced not only by women but by satyrs too.[291] Ephebes can be identified with women because ambiguity of sexual status in myth and ritual is an aspect of initiatory status: Strabo reported that the Aetolian Couretes 'wore women's clothes'.[292] And they can be identified with satyrs because they are 'wild', just as satyrs are wild.[293]

A fragment of Bacchylides refers to the 'soft, graceful, pretty, luxurious' (*ἁβρόν*) dance for Athene *Ἰωνία* of the golden *αἰγίς*.[294] In his discussion of *POxy.* 2738, Borthwick saw the fragment as a reference to the Pyrrhic. He preferred, however, to read *ἁδρός* for *ἁβρός*, thinking *ἁβρός* inappropriate to a dance performed by warriors, since the word is used most commonly of women, effeminates and orientals, often pejoratively.[295] But *ἁβρός* is highly appropriate to a dance performed by male figures who are marginal to the citizens of the *πόλις*.

A description of the dance in Athenaeus confirms that *ἁβρός* is the correct reading. The Pyrrhic is said to be performed by *παίδες ἔνοπλοι*, to foster the speed required to pursue the vanquished enemy in battle; it is added, apparently laconically, that the same speed could be used 'to flee without shame at being a coward'.[296] This latter phrase is an allusion to the oracle given to Croesus in Herodotus:[297]

> *ἀλλ' ὅταν ἡμίονος βασιλεὺς Μήδοισι γένηται,*
> *καὶ τότε, Λυδὲ ποδαβρέ, πολυψήφιδα παρ' Ἕρμον*

Ἄρτεμις...ἔγχει Γοργῶπις πάνοπλος. In addition to its use as a description of the intensity of expression of the eyes of the warrior, *γοργός* came to be used as a special term in rhetoric, of *λόγος*, or *λέξις*: Anon. in *Rh.* 184, 194; cf. Eust. *Il.* 1.566, 27, 1.603, 5–7, 1.756, 11–13 (Van der Valk) etc.; Hermog. *Id.* 2.1 (*γοργότητι γὰρ ἐναντίον τὸ ἀνειμένον καὶ ὕπτιον*); on *γοργότης* in rhetoric, as defined by Hermogenes, see Hagedorn 1964, 54–6. *LSJ* gives 'vehemence, vigour' for *γοργότης*: for clarity, one might add 'intensity'.

[291] Women: Xen. *Anab.* 6.1.5ff, Poursat 1968, 586–609. Satyrs: Poursat 1968, 583–6.

[292] Str. 10.3.8. Cf. Achilles dressed as a girl by Thetis to prevent him being taken to Troy (Apollod. 3.13.8 and Frazer's (1921) note). Theseus, on his arrival in Athens at the temple of Apollo *Δελφίνιος*, was ridiculed as a girl until he threw off his long *χιτών* and threw the sacrificial bull into the air (Paus. 1.19.1), cf. Burkert 1985, 261 and n.8; Theseus took two youths disguised as girls with him to Crete to fight the Minotaur (Plu. *Thes.* 23).

[293] Cf. on A. *Φορκίδες* fr.261, Chapter I, pp.17–18.

[294] Bacchyl. fr.11 (Jebb).

[295] Borthwick 1970, 325–7.

[296] Ath. *Deipn.* 630D–631B.

[297] Hdt. 1.55, quoted also in Pl. *R.* 566C.

φεύγειν μηδὲ μένειν, μηδ' αἰδεῖσθαι κακὸς εἶναι.

Athenaeus quotes only the third line in order to make an explicit association between Pyrrhic dancers and 'running away'. However, the link established above between Pyrrichists and effeminacy is also implied by this allusion: Croesus is called *ποδαβρός*. The attribution of effeminacy to anyone who runs away is a typically Herodotean slur, aimed at the Persians. But it is a slur also found within the *πόλις*: Eupolis wrote a play called either *'Αστράτευτοι* ('Citizen Draft-dodgers') or *'Ανδρογύναι* ('Men-Women').[298]

Secondly, an epigram addressed to a boy by his would-be *ἐραστής* explicitly links the Pyrrhic with pre-pubertal males:

ἄχρι τίνος ταύτην τὴν ὀφρύα τὴν ὑπέροπτον
Μέντορ, τηρήσεις, μηδὲ τὸ χαῖρε λέγων,
ὡς μέλλων αἰῶνα μένειν νέος, ἢ διὰ παντὸς
ὀρχεῖσθαι πυρίχην; καὶ τὸ τέλος πρόβλεπε,
ἥξει σοι πώγων, κακὸν ἔσχατον, ἀλλὰ μέγιστον·
καὶ τότ' ἐπιγιώσῃ τί σπάνις ἐστὶ φίλων.[299]

The association between Pyrrhichists and running away is consistent with the general process of ephebic inversion of hoplite reality. Ephebes are depicted as effeminate, because hoplites are male, and as running away (so too Perseus), because that is the one thing that the hoplite must never do. However, the relevant part of the hoplite oath (which the ephebes took on their entry into the deme, but before their two years garrison service) comprised the promise 'never to bring reproach on my hallowed arms, nor to desert the comrade at my side'.[300] It is not so much the idea of retreat which was loathsome, rather than the idea of betrayal by the individual anxious to save his own life at the expense of others': it was for the throwing away of his shield that Aristophanes ridiculed Cleonymus, not for disengaging the enemy;[301] Socrates' brave withdrawal at the retreat from Delium (the army was in flight—

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[298] *PCG* V 314–20, frs.35–47.

[299] *A.P.* 12.186. Cf. Taran 1985, 96–7. Note *ἔσχατον*: the temporal limit reached by the Pyrrhic dancer is paralleled by the spatial limit reached by Perseus. See also below on *Καιρός* as *ἅβρός*.

[300] Cf. Chapter I, pp.9–10.

[301] Ar. *V.* 15–27, 592, 822–3, *Nu.* 353–4, *Pax* 444–6, 673–8, 1295–1304, *Av.* 290, 1473–81.

φυγῇ ἀναχώρει), when the Athenians were defeated there by the Thebans in 424, was considered to be greatly to his credit.[302]

The relevance of the particularly ambiguous nature of the Pyrrhic and Pyrrhichists to Perseus is that, as one of those associated with its invention, he shares in its ambiguity. This association between hero and dance tends to confirm that the fact that Nonnus' unprecedentedly extensive characterization of Perseus as a 'cunning ephebe' is not an anachronism when related to the figure of Perseus of the archaic and classical periods.

3. The *Αἰγίς* As An Ephebic Device: The Apaturia

It was suggested above that the *αἰγίς* represents the fear of violent death in battle from which all but the greatest heroes must run. In the present section, it has been suggested that the Perseus-Gorgon myth owes several of its most distinctive motifs to the fact that it was an aetiology for the *γοργόνειον*, particularly in its military context on the *αἰγίς*: Perseus' acquisition of the *γοργόνειον* and his part in the invention of the *αἰγίς* represents a victory for the ephebe/protohoplite over the fear that he will encounter in the battles he is to fight as a hoplite warrior. Perseus' role in the definition of what makes an ephebe into a hoplite is corroborated by his association with the Pyrrhic dance.

It is significant, then, that the *αἰγίς* should appear in another, quintessential ephebic context, namely the aetiological myth of the Apaturia, one of a series of summer's end festivals marking the return of young warriors from the year's campaigns. The myth forms the core of Vidal-Naquet's seminal account of the Athenian ephebeia.[303] In the course of a monomachy on the border between Attica and Boeotia, Melanthus tricks Xanthus and, having gained the advantage, kills him. The motif of the trick (*ἀπάτη*) derives from the (false) etymology of Apaturia. (The true etymology indicates the true nature of the festival, which was concerned with admission to the phratries.)[304] In some versions of the myth, Xanthus is distracted either

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[302] Pl. *Symp.* 221A. For Delium see Th. 4.76, 89–106. In Athens, throwing away one's shield was punishable by *ἀτιμία*: Bowie 1987, 121 and his n.55.

[303] Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 1986.

[304] Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 151. *Ἀπατούρια* derives from *Ὁμοπατόρια*, and is not of the same root

by Zeus *Ἀπατήνωρ*, or Dionysus *Μελάναιγις*, 'of the black *αἰγίς*', so that he can be killed.[305] The *αἰγίς* plays its familiar role of depriving a warrior of his ability to fight, but here it is the black *αἰγίς* of Dionysus.[306] Vidal-Naquet identified 'black' in the myth as an initiatory motif: Melanthus, the 'Black', triumphs over Xanthus, the 'Fair'.[307] It is while wearing the *κυνέη* of Hades, the hat of impenetrable blackness, that Perseus decapitates Medusa and obtains the *γοργόνειον* for the *αἰγίς* wielded by Athene and Zeus.

4. Perseus And Hair-grabbing As A Fighting Technique

(a) Hair In A Military Context

When Perseus kills Medusa as she sleeps, he grabs her hair with one hand and cuts off her head with the sword or *ἅρπη* in the other. Perseus *κατέλαβε* the Gorgons while they slept:[308] *καταλαμβάνειν* can mean 'to come upon', but also 'to seize'. A parallel to this method of monster-killing in myth is a version of the death of the Minotaur. Theseus finds the monster asleep and, catching it by the hair, he sacrifices it to Poseidon.[309]

The motif of hair-grabbing strengthens the link between Perseus and the military context of the *αἰγίς*. The hair-grabbing is similar to, and is perhaps a refraction of a particular archaic, pre-hoplite fighting method, which young warriors take special steps to frustrate, by wearing their hair short at the front to deny the enemy a hand-hold.

G.Ahlberg[310] examined fighting scenes in Geometric art, and showed that most

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as *ἀπάτη*.

[305] See Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 151. Cf. *Ἀπατήνωρ* used of Dionysus, Call. fr.36; *Μελάναιγις* used of the Erinyes, A. *Th.* 699.

[306] As will be seen in Chapter V, Perseus is not to be defeated by Dionysus.

[307] For full account, see Vidal-Naquet 1981a.

[308] See above n.174.

[309] Plu. *Thes.* 19, cf. Schol. *Od.* 11.332, Schol. *Il.* 18.590, Eust. *Od.* 420.43ff (Stallbaum); the same story was told in Pherecydes, according to Schol. *Od.*, and the killing of a monster as sacrifice parallels the version of the Perseus myth in which Medusa is killed by Perseus for Athene, for competing with her in beauty (Apollod. 2.4.4), or by the goddess herself (above n.266).

[310] Ahlberg 1971, cited by Pritchett 1985, 30 and n.93.

sword scenes illustrate striking with a slashing blow rather than with a thrust,[311] and that the blow of the sword is to the head. The vases depict a technique by which the helmet-crest or head of the opponent is held onto by one hand, while a blow is dealt to the head with a sword (and not a thrust by a spear) by the other.[312] Some groups of warriors are said to have worn their hair short at the front to frustrate this tactic. Homer refers to the Abantes in battle as *ὄπιθεν κομόωντες*.[313] The most notable Greek example is the Couretes, who according to the historian Archemachus, let their hair grow long behind but short in front to deny their enemy a hand-hold.[314] For similar reasons Alexander the Great insisted that all Macedonian soldiers should be clean-shaven,[315] which suggests that the beardlessness of Lysias' Pyrrhichists at the Panathenaea[316] owed itself not only to their youth (and so perhaps their inability to grow a beard), but also to a requirement of their status: for a youthful warrior, not having a beard serves the same function as having hair short at the front. There are many examples of the motif in art later than the Geometric period. On a Parthenon metope, a Lapith grabs a Centaur by the beard; on another, a Centaur holds a youthful Lapith by the top of his head.[317] In another example, on an Attic amphora in the Louvre depicting the Gigantomachy, a youthful, clean-shaven figure with winged hat grabs a bearded giant by the hair and prepares to strike with his sword; Salis identified the youth as Hermes, but the parallel with Perseus is clear.[318] Other vase paintings show the schema with Heracles killing Nessus,[319] Orestes, short-haired, killing long-haired Aegisthus,[320] Aegisthus

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311 Ahlberg 1971, 46.

312 Ahlberg 1971, 46–7, 80.

313 *Il.* 2.542.

314 Str. 10.3.6: *...ἐπειδὴ οἱ πολέμιοι τῆς κόμης ἐδράττοντο τῆς ἔμπροσθεν καὶ κατέσπων αὐτούς, ὄπισθεν κομῶντας γενέσθαι, τὰ δ' ἔμπροσθεν κείρεσθαι.*

315 Plu. *Thes.* 5, Polyaen. 4.32; see Pritchett 1985, 64.

316 Above, n.248.

317 Brommer 1979, pls.13, 33. For several other examples on the metopes, cf. pls.9–12, 14, 20–1, 24, 30, 35–6.

318 Salis 1940, fig. 20, and *RE* Supp. III, 696f.

319 March 1987, pls.18 and 25.

320 *Ibid.* pls.29 and 31.

killing Agamemnon,[321] and Achilles killing Troilus.[322] As often, social anthropology provides a parallel from another culture: the Maori combat by champions, conducted on a 'no holds barred' basis, which might include throwing sand in the opponent's face, and pulling his hair.[323]

According to Plutarch, Theseus wore his hair long at the back and short at the front, like the Abantes.[324] The one-sandalled Jason arrives in Iolcus at the start of his ephebic exploits with his uncut hair streaming over his shoulders.[325] The cutting of hair could be an explicit requirement of initiation. On admission to a phratry during the Apaturia, on the day called *Κουρεῶτις*, a youth would cut his hair and dedicate it (just as Theseus had done when he instituted the festival), and, having later been admitted to the deme, he would then be eligible for the two year ephebeia.[326] At the Oenisteria, a youth was given a wine-cup in recognition of his coming of age, and he cut off his long hair.[327] Correspondingly, the growth of facial and body hair at puberty became a homoerotic motif in the *Greek Anthology*. As in the case of the epigram quoted in the previous section, the would-be *ἐραστής* whose love has remained unrequited, warns the boy whom he wants for his *ἐρώμενος* that puberty will put an end to his youth and desirability.[328] Thus maturation both social and physical is marked by the growth and cutting off of hair.

Dio Chrysostom complained that the Euboeans he had met did not have the long hair Homer had ascribed to them (the Abantes being the ancient inhabitants of Euboea). He describes meeting a Euboean,

> *κυνηγέτην ἀπὸ τῆς ὄψεως καὶ τῆς στολῆς, τὰ γένεια ὑγιῆ κομῶντα οὐ φαύλως οὐδὲ ἀγεννῶς ἐξόπισθεν, οἵους ἐπὶ Ἴλιον Ὅμηρός φησιν ἐλθεῖν Εὐβοίας, σκώπτων,*

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[321] *Ibid.* pl.32.

[322] *Ibid.* pl.34.

[323] Oakley 1985, 400.

[324] Plu. *Thes.* 5. Plutarch expressly compares him with the Abantes, who were *πολεμικοὶ καὶ ἀγχέμαχοι*, 'close-fighters'.

[325] Pi. *P.* 4.83–4: *οὐδὲ κομᾶν πλόκαμοι κερθέντες ᾤχοντ' ἀγλαοί, ἀλλ' ἅπαν νῶτον καταίθυσσον.*

[326] Cole 1984, 233–5. Cf. Burkert 1985, 263 and n.29–30, and *ibid.*, 70 and n.29 on boys and girls cutting their hair on entering adulthood; Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 149–50, Brelich 1961, 59.

[327] Bremmer 1980, 285 and Gernet 1981, 154. See Chapter I, p.15.

[328] *A.P.* 12.186, above p.119. Cf. *A.P.* 11.51, 12.30, 1239, 12.33: Taran 1985.

> *ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν, καὶ καταγελῶν ὅτι τῶν ἄλλων Ἀχαιῶν καλῶς ἐχόντων οἵδε ἐξ ἡμίσους ἐκόμων.*[329]

But there is no suggestion in Homer that the Abantes are being ridiculed, as they swiftly pursue Elpenor so that their hair streams out behind:

> *τῷ δ' ἅμ' Ἄβαντες ἕποντο θοοί, ὄπιθεν κομόωντες,*
> *αἰχμηταί, μεμαῶτες ὀρεκτῇσιν μελίῃσιν*
> *θώρηκας ῥήξειν δηίων ἀμφὶ στήθεσσιν.*[330]

Strabo even commented on the excellence of Euboeans as close-combat fighters in Homer.[331] When in *Iliad* 1 Athene intervenes to stop Achilles killing Agamemnon, it is not his sword arm that she grasps, but his hair:

> *ἕλκετο δ' ἐκ κολεοῖο μέγα ξίφος. ἦλθε δ' Ἀθήνη*
> *οὐρανόθεν· πρὸ γὰρ ἧκε θεὰ λευκώλενος Ἥρη,*
> *ἄμφω ὁμῶς θυμῷ φιλέουσά τε κηδομένη τε·*
> *στῆ δ' ὄπιθεν, ξανθῆς δὲ κόμης ἕλε Πηλείωνα*
> *οἴῳ φαινομένη, τῶν δ' ἄλλων οὔ τις ὁρᾶτο·*
> *θάμβησεν δ' Ἀχιλεύς, μετὰ δ' ἐτράπετ', αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω*
> *Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην· δεινὼ δέ οἱ ὄσσε φάανθεν.*[332]

Grabbing Achilles by his hair is a certain way of attracting his attention since, as has been seen, hair-grabbing is a prelude to killing—hence Athene's eyes 'shine terribly', just as a warrior's do in the heat of battle. A second implication is that Achilles is grabbed from behind because he too has hair long at the back and short at the front. Finally, Achilles is surprised not only, if at all, by the divine intervention, but because it is a novel experience for the greatest warrior of the *Iliad* to have his hair grabbed as if he is about to die: only a god could do this with impunity.[333]

In addition, Ahlberg noted that in early fight scenes in oriental art hair-grabbing

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[329] D.Chr. 7.4.

[330] *Il.* 2.542–4.

[331] Str. 10.1.13, cf. Plu *Thes.* 5.

[332] *Il.* 1.194–200.

[333] Cf. Locrian Ajax, whose anger against Agamemnon and Menelaus is partly expressed by the movement of his hair, and by the shining of his spear: *οὐδὲ δουλεύσειν ποτὲ ἑκὼν, οὔτ' ἂν Ἀτρείδαις, οὔτ' ἄλλῳ οὐδενὶ, ἐς ἂν ἥδε ἀστράπτῃ, τὴν αἰχμὴν δεικνὺς ταῦτα ἔλεγε γοργὸν βλέπων καὶ ἀναχαιτίζων τὴν κόμην ὑπὸ τοῦ τῆς γνώμης ἑτοιμοῦ* (Philostr. *Her.* 706, 12–14); cf. *Il.* 2.527–30, where Ajax is armed with a spear. On Achilles' *ξανθὴ κόμη*, cf. Meletius 133, where *ξανθὴ χολὴ* is described as being *γοργοτέραν ἢ θρασυτέραν.*

is common,[334] whereas in the Greek version of the motif as represented in Geometric art the helmet is held (although we have noted many examples of hair-grabbing in the classical period). This may be further reflection of the influence of the Near East on the Perseus myths as a whole, since Perseus grips Medusa's hair. However, in the Greek context the main implication is that such a technique is one typically employed by a warrior when an ephebe (like Perseus), who then adopts short hair at the front of the head as an appropriately devious countermeasure.

The motif of holding an opponent's head prior to killing him is found in Egyptian iconography in abundance. The decoration of the Narmer palette, which dates from the early dynastic period (c.3100) commemorates the union of Upper and Lower Egypt. On one side Narmer stands holding his rival, the ruler of Lower Egypt, by his top-knot (as he kneels before Narmer), and prepares to club him on the head. On the other side of the palette, Narmer inspects his defeated enemy, ten of whose decapitated bodies lie on the ground, each with his head placed between the knees.[335] In another example, on a block carved in relief of the nineteenth dynasty (c.1320), Ramses II holds many prisoners, their top-knots gathered altogether into one hand. A painted grey granite relief, also of the nineteenth dynasty, depicts king Meremptah, son of Ramses II, holding three prisoners by their top-knots, and preparing to strike them with a broad-headed (blade-like) club. The facial detail of each prisoner is of a different racial type, to show how widely the kings' power has been secured by his victories in war. Finally, on the left half of the first pylon of the temple of Ramses III at Karnak, the king is shown holding in one hand four prisoners of war by their top-knots and about to strike them with the club held in his other hand; he is dedicating them to the god Amun Re, who stands facing him, holding out in return the curved sword symbolizing victory.[336] The motif symbolizes the power of the king in war, and is not an indication that the Egyptians practised

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[334] Ahlberg 1971, 80, and pls.62, 66–71, 73–87.

[335] Cf. The Asian Tauri, above p.86. Cf. an ivory label in the British Museum, showing Den, fifth king of the First Dynasty, about to kill a man in the same way: *BMus* 55586, see James 1979, 42, fig.11.

[336] Cf. the ἅρπη, and above pp.76–7 on the oriental prototype for the Gorgon-killing cited by Burkert 1987a, in which the hero turns his head away to look for the weapon which his divine helper is going to give him.

human sacrifice: in reality their captured enemies were enslaved.[337]

Several of the motifs discussed in this chapter appear together in Xenophon's account of the military equipment said to have been devised by Lycurgus for the Spartan hoplites.[338] They were to wear a red cloak, because it had least in common with women's clothing, and so was most warlike; the shield was to be of bronze, because it was quick to polish up (and so shine), and slow to tarnish; finally

> *ἐφῆκε δὲ καὶ κομᾶν τοῖς ὑπὲρ τὴν ἡβητικὴν ἡλικίαν, νομίζων οὕτω καὶ μείζους ἂν καὶ ἐλευθεριωτέρους καὶ γοργοτέρους φαίνεσθαι.*[339]

Thus the long hair of the youthful warrior, like his staring eyes and facial expression, makes the *γοργὸς ὁπλίτης* even more 'gorgonlike', an expression of his *μένος*, his intention to inflict homicidal violence.[340] The Spartan hair-style is above all a mark of warrior status, to contrast with other social groups (just as their red cloak marks them off from women). Before the battle of Thermopylae, a Persian scout observed some of the Spartans exercising, and others combing their hair. 'For it is a *νόμος* of theirs: when they are about to risk their lives, they arrange their heads (*τὰς κεφαλὰς κοσμέονται*)'.[341] (In that battle, one of the Spartan tactics was to pretend to run away, and then to turn suddenly on the pursuer to devastating effect.)[342] Vernant cites a parallel passage describing the Spartan style, to the effect that it is new warriors who have just ceased to be ephebes, who grow their hair long to make them more effective in battle:

> *τότε δὲ καὶ τοῖς νέοις τὰ σκληρότατα τῆς ἀγωγῆς ἐπανιέντες, οὐκ ἐκώλυον καλλωπίζεσθαι περὶ κόμην καὶ κόσμον ὅπλων καὶ ἱματίων, χαίροντες, ὥσπερ ἵπποις,*

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[337] The Palette of Narmer: Cairo Museum. The carved block relief of Ramses II: Cairo Museum, room 14, block numbered 69306. The granite relief of Meremptah: Cairo Museum, no.206. The Ramses III pylon: ***in situ*** at Karnak. I thank Mr. George Hart, Keeper of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum, for bringing this motif to my attention, and discussing it with me, on a visit to Egypt in November 1988.

[338] Xen. *Lac.* 11.3, cf. *Cyr.* 4.4.

[339] On the Spartan hair-style, see above all Vernant 1985, 42–6. Cf. the description of Hector as *ἀμφιπεριστρώφα καλλίτριχας ἵππους* (*Il.* 8.348).

[340] See above, p.117, on Neoptolemus. Cf. Xen. *Symp.* 1.10, where those possessed by gods other than *Ἔρως* are said *γοργότεροί τε ὁρᾶσθαι καὶ φοβερώτερον φθέγγεσαι καὶ σφοδρότεροι εἶναι*. Cf. Eust. *Od.* 442, 19–20 (Stallbaum): *ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι τε καὶ πᾶς ἄγριος ἀνὴρ καὶ φοβερὸς λέγοιτο ἂν γοργείῃ κεφαλῇ δεινοῖο πελώρου.*

[341] Hdt. 7.208–9.

[342] Hdt. 7.211.

> *γαυριῶσι καὶ φρυαττομένοις πρὸς τοὺς ἀγῶνας. διὸ κομῶντες εὐθὺς ἐκ τῆς τῶν ἐφήβων ἡλικίας, μάλιστα περὶ τοὺς κινδύνους ἐθεράπευον τὴν κόμην λιπαράν τε φαίνεσθαι καὶ διακεκριμένην, ἀπομνημονεύοντές τινα καὶ Λυκούργου λόγον περὶ τῆς κόμης, ὅτι τοὺς μὲν καλοὺς εὐπρεπεστέρους ποιεῖ, τοὺς δὲ αἰσχροὺς φοβωτέρους.*[343]

Vernant also draws parallels between the tawny manes of war-horses and young warriors' hair, and also observes that long hair on a male is girl-like and therefore initiatory. He concludes that for the ephebic youth, at the height of his powers before marriage, long hair is a sign of full virility.[344]

Another Herodotean battle report provides further evidence for the meaning of short hair in a military context, and is an aetiology for the Spartan hair-style.[345] Picked men from the armies of Argos and Sparta fought at Thyreae, to restrict the numbers of dead. Fighting lasted until two Argives, and one Spartan survived. The two Argives ran back to Argos to report their victory, but the Spartan stayed to strip the bodies of dead Argives. There was disagreement over who had won the battle, the Spartans claiming that the Argives had run away. A full-scale fight ensued, from which the Spartans emerged victorious.

> *Ἀργεῖοι μέν νυν ἀπὸ τούτου τοῦ χρόνου κατακειράμενοι τὰς κεφαλάς, πρότερον ἐπάναγκες κομῶντες, ἐποιήσαντο νόμον τε καὶ κατάρην μὴ πρότερον θρέψειν κόμην Ἀργείων μηδένα, μηδὲ τὰς γυναῖκάς σφι χρυσοφορήσειν, πρὶν Θυρέας ἀνασώσωνται. Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ τὰ ἐναντία τούτων ἔθεντο νόμον· οὐ γὰρ κομῶντες πρὸ τούτου ἀπὸ τούτου κομᾶν.*

The fact that no Argive woman is to wear gold suggests that the head-shaving is analogous to a punishment, since the part of the penalty inflicted on an adulteress according to Solon's law was prohibition of her wearing jewellry or any self-adornment in public.[346] The style of both Spartans and Argives is related to a military context, but most important, is seen to have meaning in each case only in contrast with, first, the normal hair-style of their own people, and second, in contrast with their

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[343] Plu. *Lyc.* 22, cf. Vernant 1985, 43.

[344] Vernant 1985, 46. Cf. Luc. *D. Meretr.* 15, where, in the course of a brawl, a soldier called *Δεινόμαχος* drags out *Γόργος* by the hair and beats him up. Cf. also Luc. *Asin.* 8, where it is implied that becoming *γοργός* is the result of ephebic activities (in this case, wrestling, with an erotic overtone): *καὶ χρὴ σε νῦν ἐπιδεῖξαι εἶ γέγονας ἐν τοῖς ἐφήβοις γοργὸς καὶ παλαίσματα πολλὰ ἔμαθές ποτε.*

[345] Hdt. 1.82. Cf. Vernant 1985, 45, Vidal-Naquet 1981a, 162.

[346] Lacey 1968, 69.

enemy. There is an equivalence of *long hair:victory::no hair:defeat:*[347] if long hair is kept in victory, then all hair (not just that at the front) is cut off in defeat because a defeated warrior is not a good warrior. There is no suggestion of hair-grabbing in the story. Whether or not the battle actually occurred, the story is consistent with the long hair of the youthful and successful warrior, a type clearly idealized in myth by such figures as Achilles and Theseus, and in the Spartan warrior hair-style recorded in Xenophon.[348]

Herodotus reported a belief which may underlie the cutting of the hair for military purposes. The Egyptian skull was thicker than the Persian. For the Egyptians shaved the *κεφαλή* from childhood, and so caused the bone to be strengthened by the heat of the sun. The Persians, however, protected the *κεφαλή* from the sun with a cap, thereby denying the bone the chance to thicken.[349] This anecdote is consistent with the existence of the Egyptian top-knot motif: Egyptians catch their enemies by their (long) hair, but cannot be so caught by their enemies, because they have a different hair-style (just as the Argives have a hair-style different from that of the Spartans, their enemies).

To return to Perseus and the Gorgon, why is it that the hair-grabbing motif should appear in this myth? There is no evidence that Perseus has the ephebic hair-cut. But he certainly was ephebe-like, like Theseus and Jason. Polydectes wants to dispose of Perseus so that he can rape Danae. Perseus is in the process of 'becoming a man', and so Polydectes invites him to a banquet (cf. the Oenisteria), where Perseus boasts that he can fetch the Gorgon's head. When he finds her he grabs her by the hair as if he is fighting another warrior. When he has cut off the head and resolved his problem with Polydectes, he gives the *γοργόνειον*, to Athene, who then fixes it onto the *αἰγίς*. The *locus classicus* of the *αἰγίς* is above all a military one, in the battle scenes of the *Iliad*, the final battle with the suitors in the

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[347] Vernant 1985, 45.

[348] The story may be a reflection of a ritual battle: see above n.203 for mythical examples of this and of monomachy. Cf. Hdt. 4.180, on two tribes living on the shores of the Tritonian Lake in Libya—where the Gorgons lived, according to some versions, and where a festival of Athena was held: the Machyles, who wore their hair long behind, and the Auseans, who wore it long in front. Each year, the women of each tribe fought against the other. Any woman who died from her wounds was said to have been a false virgin (*ψευδοπαρθένους*).

[349] Hdt. 3.12.

Odyssey, and in the Gigantomachy, when a god (not only Athene) uses it to throw enemy soldiers into panic and rout. In other words, it is appropriate that the way in which the *γοργόνειον* was obtained should refract the context in which it most characteristically appears in Greek literature and art. Perseus acts out the fighting technique of hair-grabbing when he cuts off the head of the Gorgon.[350]

(b) Καιρός

A parallel for grasping the hair of a *ἁβρός* ephebe to prevent his escape is provided by the figure of *Καιρός*, the personification of 'Time' (in the sense of the 'Right Time' or 'Opportunity'). In the middle to late fourth century the sculptor Lysippus created a famous statue of *Καιρός*, a statue subsequently much written about and copied. Poseidippus composed an epigram on it:[351]

α. Τίς πόθεν ὁ πλάστης; β. Σικυώνιος. α. Οὔνομα δὴ τίς;
β. Λύσιππος. α. Σὺ δὲ τίς; β. Καιρὸς ὁ πανδαμάτωρ.
α. Τίπτε δ' ἐπ' ἄκρα βέβηκας; β. Ἀεὶ τροχάω. α. Τί δὲ ταρσοὺς
ποσσὶν ἔχεις διφυεῖς; β. Ἵπταμ' ὑπηνέμιος.
α. Χειρὶ δὲ δεξιτερῇ τί φέρεις ξυρόν; β. Ἀνδράσι δεῖγμα,
ὡς ἀκμῆς πάσης ὀξύτερος τελέθω.
α. Ἡ δὲ κόμη, τί κατ' ὄψιν; β. Ὑπαντιάσαντι λαβέσθαι.
α. Νὴ Δία, τἀξόπιθεν δ' εἰς τί φαλακρὰ πέλει;
β. Τὸν γὰρ ἅπαξ πτηνοῖσι παραθρέξαντά με ποσσὶν
οὔτις ἔθ' ἱμείρων δράξεται ἐξόπιθεν.
α. Τοὔνεχ' ὁ τεχνίτης σε διέπλασεν; β. Εἵνεκεν ὑμέων,
ξεῖνε· καὶ ἐν προθύροις θῆκε διδασκαλίην.

Other authors described Lysippus' *Καιρός* as *παὶς...ἡβών*,[352] *παῖδα τὸ εἶδος ἁβρόν*,

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[350] At a very late stage in the preparation of this thesis, my attention was drawn to two brief notes on the warrior hair-style—Austin 1972, and Boardman 1973—in which it is shown that there was also a style known as the *Ἑκτόρειος κόμη*. It is exactly the same as the 'ephebic' style: see Lyc. 1133 and Schol., Eust. 1276.29 (on *Il.* 22.401f), Anaxilas (*ap.* Poll. 2.79, *FCG* III, 355), Timaeus (*FGrHist* 566 F 54), Hsch. *s.v.* *Ἑκτόρεοι κόμαι*. Boardman suggests that the style had no relevance once the hoplite weaponry came into general use by the end of the seventh century, since the helmet covered the front and sides of the head. However, the practice clearly persisted in ritual (in the Koureotis), played an important part in the development of the Hellenistic personification *Καιρός* (see below), and was still relevant to the Macedonian soldiers in the time of Alexander. Furthermore, in addition to Ahlberg's Geometric examples, we have adduced many examples of hair-grabbing in classical art.

[351] A.P. 16.275.

[352] Callistr. *Stat.* 6.1–4.

τὴν ἀκμὴν ἔφηβον.[353] Lysippus has employed the archaic motif of ephebic hair-pulling in a startlingly innovative fashion, as Poseidippus' surprise at the statue (*Νὴ Δία*) confirms. The strangeness of *Καιρός*' hair on the statue is probably what led Pliny to claim that Lysippus' particular contribution to the techniques of bronze statuary was his depiction of hair.[354] But as has been seen, it is not unusual for an ephebe to have a peculiar hair-cut. Indeed, *Καιρός*' hair is an exact reversal of the normal ephebic style, which makes it likely that his hair is an innovation based on the older ephebic hair-pulling tradition. This reversal elucidates further the practical military ideology which produced the ephebic hair-cut so that it should not afford the enemy a hand-hold. Once those who meet *Καιρός* are confronted with his back, they can never grab him as he runs away. But the ephebe who in a real battle presents his back to the enemy will be grabbed by the hair. Thus the ephebe's hair-cut has a double significance: it reassures the young warrior that he will be safe from a particular fighting tactic if he faces his enemy with courage; but by the same token, it reminds him of what may befall him if he turns and runs away in cowardice.

Καιρός is an allegorical figure, but one made up of older motifs. He seems first to have emerged in the middle of the fifth century, when Ion of Chios composed a hymn in his honour, calling him the youngest son of Zeus.[355] Curtius sought to associate *Καιρός* with Hermes;[356] Cook implied that Hermes provided the model for *Καιρός*.[357] According to Pausanias, there was an altar of *Καιρός* next to that of Hermes, at the entrance to the stadium at Olympia.[358] Later, in Imperial times, his name seems to have become confused with that of *Χρόνος*, and so *Κρόνος*; the confusion is reflected in the iconography, where *Καιρός* acquires the latter's beard and sickle,[359] in addition to a pair of scales (sometimes balanced on the razor), a

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[353] Him. *Or.* 14.1. I owe the hair-pulling parallel of *Καιρός* to Dr. Stephen Kershaw, and thank him for allowing me to make use of his unpublished Bristol Ph.D. thesis. For these references see Kershaw 1986, 3/33, 35, 37, 50.

[354] Plin. *NH* 34.65.

[355] Cook 1914–40, vol.2, 859, *RE* X, 1509–10.

[356] Curtius 1875 (not 1876 as Frazer said); cf. *RE* X, 1509.

[357] Cook 1914–40, vol.2, 859 n.8.

[358] Paus. 5.14.7.

[359] Sickle and beard, see Cook 1914–40, vol.2, 861, figs 796–8, and n.5 for five Hellenistic gems

wheel, wheels under his feet, and a ball).[360]

However, contrary to Kershaw's account of the development of this figure, a far more obvious model than Hermes (or perhaps even than *Χρόνος* and *Κρόνος*, with regard to the beard and sickle) for Lysippus' *Καιρός*—described by Poseidippus as the wing-footed, 'all-conquering' ephebe who cannot be caught, flying as fast as the wind, carrying a blade in his hand—presents itself in one of the most popular images of archaic Greek vase painting:[361] Perseus running away after the decapitation of Medusa. The visual identification is close, and there are literary parallels to the same effect. In pseudo-Hesiod's 'Shield', Perseus flees the Gorgons:[362]

> *ἐν δ' ἦν ἠυκόμου Δανάης τέκος, ἱππότα Περσεύς,*
> *οὔτ' ἄρ' ἐπιψαύων σάκεος ποσὶν οὔθ' ἑκὰς αὐτοῦ,*
> *θαῦμα μέγα φράσσασθ', ἐπεὶ οὐδαμῇ ἐστήρικτο.*
>
> *ἀμφὶ δὲ ποσσὶν ἔχεν πτερόεντα πέδιλα.*
>
> *ὃ δ' ὥς τε νόημ' ἐποτᾶτο.*
>
> *ταὶ δὲ μετ' αὐτὸν*
> *Γοργόνες ἄπλητοί τε καὶ οὐ φαταὶ ἐρρώοντο*
> *ἰέμεναι μαπέειν.*

Having Perseus as the dominant model for *Καιρός* offers the best explanation for *Καιρός*' three most distinctive features: his winged feet, his razor and his hair. Perseus predates Hermes in being consistently depicted in art wearing winged sandals and 'running' in the so-called 'Knielaufen' posture.[363] *Καιρός* carries a blade, like Perseus, a blade with which at least one source says he is 'armed', whereas Hermes carries a staff: i.e. the razor is here a weapon, like Perseus' *ἅρπη*, rather than an allegorical symbol.[364]

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showing *Καιρός* like this; cf. Kershaw 1986, 3/42–3.

[360] The razor may be a further sign of his effeminacy: Dr. Kershaw has suggested to me that the razor was typically associated not with men, but with courtesans and homosexuals—cf. Agathon and his razor in Ar *Th.* 215ff; similarly, cf. for example, the ball-game played by Nausicaa and her maid-servants (*Od.* 6.99-116).

[361] Stern 1978, 9.

[362] Hes. *Scut.* 216–218, 220, 222, 229–230.

[363] Gialouris 1953, 295, and *passim*; on 'Knielaufen', Schmidt 1908.

[364] Him. *Or.* 14.1, *σιδήρῳ τὴν δεξιὰν ὡπλισμένον*. I owe this point to Dr.Kershaw.

The close association of Hermes with both Perseus and *Καιρός* is consistent with Perseus being a model for the latter. In Pherecydes, Hermes is the first of the gods to come to Perseus' aid;[365] in Euripides' *Electra*, Perseus and Hermes fly together on the shield of Achilles, a scene appearing on many vases.[366] It may even be the case that the figure of *Καιρός* in turn influenced interpretation of Perseus: in a rationalization of the story that Hermes gave Perseus his winged sandals, Perseus is said to have excelled at foot-racing, of which Hermes was the patron (and with which *Καιρός* was intimately concerned in the Olympic, athletic context).[367] It remains likely that *Καιρός* was confused with *Χρονός* and *Κρονός*, but if Perseus was the main model for Lysippus' statue, then it is possible that the sickle is a reflection of Perseus. In fact, in some sources, Perseus' sickle is itself identified with that of *Κρονός*.[368] Even *Καιρός*' beard is paralleled in the iconography of Perseus. It was a feature of Corinthian sixth-century vase paintings of Perseus' escape that, instead of being a beardless youth, he wears a full-grown beard.[369]

The parallel of *Καιρός* as an ephebic figure who has to be caught by the hair finally brings us back to Perseus. *Καιρός* is clearly an ephebe, like Perseus, his model. There is no direct link between Perseus pulling Medusa's hair, and *Καιρός* having his pulled, but the two motifs are connected via the military context with which this chapter began in its consideration of the *αἰγίς*. *Καιρός*' hair is clearly connected with warrior hair-styles, and he is to be grabbed just as Perseus grabs Medusa. However, the most striking point arising from the parallel between Perseus and *Καιρός* remains the motif of running away. One of the icons of the archaic period was Perseus in retreat. But it is clear that this action is in full accord with Greek ideology surrounding the ephebe. He runs away with the *γοργόνειον*, only to arrive in Seriphos and to confront his enemies with his new accoutrement: a personification of imminent, violent death.

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[365] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11.

[366] E. *El.* 456–63. See Schauenburg 1960, 16–17.

[367] Heraclit. *Incred.* 9.

[368] See p.108 above.

[369] Schauenburg 1960, 117–118, and n.817.

IV. PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA

The Andromeda myth, like those of Acrisius, Dionysus and the Gorgon, reflects the diverse origin of the Perseus myths. Like the Gorgon story, it had Near Eastern parallels.[1] However, it appears to have been secondary to the Acrisius-Gorgon myth at least until the middle of the fifth century. The Homeric poems betray no awareness of Perseus beyond referring to the son of Danae, *Περσῆα πάντων ἀριδείκετον ἀνδρῶν*,[2] so that it is no surprise when Andromeda goes unmentioned in them. It is more significant that both Hesiod and Pindar, while displaying canonical knowledge of the Gorgon episode, make no reference to Andromeda. The first extant literary reference to her is in the sixth-century Pseudo-Hesiod *Catalogue of Women*, alluding to the birth of Perseus, his marriage to Andromeda and the birth of their children.[3] She makes an elliptical appearance in Pherecydes, when Perseus is said to have taken her back to Argos after killing the Gorgon and rescuing Danae; no mention is made of the sea-monster episode.[4] Somewhat earlier than Pherecydes were Phrynichus' tragedy *Ἀνδρομέδα*, and the *Κηφεύς* and/or *Κηφάλαια* and/or *Περσεύς* of the early fifth-century comic playright Phormus of Syracuse, dramas surviving in title only. Herodotus refers to the marriage of Perseus and Andromeda without telling the story, while Sophocles and Euripides dramatized the myth in full.[5]

The first appearance of the story in art is an anomalous one on a Corinthian vase of the second quarter of the sixth century, showing an unfettered Andromeda helping Perseus to drive away a wolf-, dog-, or boar-headed *κῆτος* with stones; the next portrayal comes over a century later, which is likely to have been directly

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[1] Ugaritic: Yam, god of the sea, demands tribute, Astarte is given to him, and Seth rescues her—see Erman 1923, 218–220; Gaster 1952, 82–85; Morenz 1962, 307–309. For a Hittite counterpart see Friedrich 1949, 230–254.

[2] *Il.* 14.319.

[3] Hes. fr.135 (Merkelbach and West). For the *Catalogue's* origins, in Boeotia and Thessaly during the late sixth century (or perhaps earlier in some form), see Schwartz 1960, 524, and 609, and West 1985, ch.3.

[4] *FGrHist* 3 F 12. The ellipsis probably owes more to the nature of our source (a scholiast of A.R. 4.1091) than to Pherecydes.

[5] Dramas, see Appendix. Hdt. 7.61, 150.

related to the production of Sophocles' *Ἀνδρομέδα*.[6] It was in later antiquity, most notably in South Italian vase painting, rather than in the high classical period, that the Andromeda myth achieved its greatest popularity in proportion to the other Perseus myths.[7]

The myth's independent origin is shown not only by the existence of oriental prototypes, but also by the transfer of details from the Gorgon to the Andromeda myth: only in later versions does Perseus use the *γοργόνειον* to kill the *κῆτος*.[8] In iconography too, the *ἅρπη* does not appear in the *κῆτος* story until long after its first employment in the Gorgon scenes.[9] In addition, while several rationalizations of the Gorgon myth arose, only one such rationalization exists for Andromeda.[10] The Hellenistic interest in the motif of heroic love and the myth's relative lack of fantastical elements precluded the need for complicated interpretation such as the Gorgon myth excited:[11] the freeing of Andromeda is very common in iconography from the Hellenistic period onwards, with correspondingly few scenes of Perseus fighting the *κῆτος*.[12]

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[6] *LIMC* I.1, 787. On the iconography of the *κῆτος*, see Brommer 1955, Milne 1956 (her review of Brommer), and Boardman 1987. On the iconography of Andromeda, Schauenburg 1960, 55–77, and *LIMC* I.1, 774–90. On myths in which heroes fight dragons on land as well as on sea, see Fontenrose 1959, ch.11. On the origin of the stones on the Corinthian vase, as misunderstanding (or reinterpretation) of *stars* on an oriental prototype, see Burkert 1987a, 28.

[7] Schauenburg 1960, 55, 74, Blanckenhagen 1987, 85. On the particular importance of E. *Ἀνδρομέδα* in this process, remembering that it was produced at the end of the fifth century in 412, see Appendix, n.142, Billault 1981, 69–74. See Schauenburg 1960, 74–75 on other reasons, apart from Euripides' play, for the popularity of Andromeda in art, such as the general interest in the fourth century in woman's psyche and beauty, in Italy above all; the funereal symbolism in Italy of the rescue of a girl from death; the employment of Perseus and Andromeda on gems given as wedding presents; and not least, the influence of Nicias' painting of Perseus and Andromeda.

[8] The first occurrence in literature is Luc. *DMar.* 14, *Dom.* 22, then Lib. 8.55, 56, Nonn. 25.81, Tz. Lyc. 836 (where, as in Lucian, Perseus both stabs and fossilizes it). However, the date for the appearance of the fossilization of the *κῆτος* is put back slightly by two Pompeian wall-paintings depicting it (see *LIMC* I.1, 779, nos. 38,40) and three others implying it (*LIMC* I.1, 781, nos 67–69).

[9] Milne 1956, 301 and Tümpel 1887–88, 129.

[10] It describes the rescue of Andromeda by Perseus from the ship (called *κῆτος*) of Phineus, her kidnapper: Conon, *FGrHist* 26 F 40.

[11] Cf. Euhemerus (Hyg. *Astr.* 2.12), Dionysius Scytobrachion (D.S. 3.52–5), Paus. 2.21.6–7, Palaeph. 32, Fulg. *Myth.* 1.21, Heraclit. *Incred.* 1.

[12] Schauenburg 1960, 127–8.

At the same time, other details indicate that certainly by the mid-classical period, and probably as early as the end of the sixth century, the Andromeda myth had been incorporated in the narrative continuum of the Perseus myths, placed after the killing of the Gorgon when Perseus is on his way back to Seriphos and thence to Argos: this is implied in Pherecydes, and made explicit in Euripides' *Ἀνδρομέδα*.[13] And as early as Euripides at least (though not as early as the sixth-century Corinthian vase, perhaps), Perseus used his winged sandals (a central motif in the Gorgon episode) to expedite the death of the *κῆτος*.

The development of the figure of Perseus which is implied by this shift in popularity and transferral of motifs is an example of what Brelich called the 'organic transformation' of the hero.[14] The purpose of this chapter is to quantify the Andromeda myth's contribution to this development, by identifying the paradigmatic mythical basis of the Andromeda myth (that is, the death of a human victim to secure the safety of the *πόλις*), and then by examining the ways in which the myth both matches and contrasts with that paradigm to produce a 'modified paradigm'. This modified paradigm will be seen to be a suitable means of allowing the hero to acquire a wife, because the same qualities which make Andromeda an ideal victim also make her an ideal virginal figure, and so an ideal bride.

A. STRUCTURE AND THEMES

Cassiopeia (or Cassiepeia) compares her own beauty (or Andromeda's) with that of the Nereids, and for this slight Poseidon sends against the kingdom of Cepheus the *κῆτος*, to ravage the land (*διαφθεῖραι τὴν χώραν*).[15] A human victim must be offered in appeasement.[16] Flying over the coast, Perseus sees Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus and Cassiopeia, set out on the shore as a sacrificial victim to the *κῆτος*.

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[13] Frs.123–4, 134. See Appendix, p.228.

[14] Brelich 1958, 310.

[15] Eratosth. *Cat.* 16.

[16] For Ethiopia (Libya), Joppa in Palestine, or the Atlantic coast (or even India, Babylon or Persia) as the location of Cepheus' kingdom, see *LIMC* I.1, 774. In any case, it's a foreign, distant land. Cf. Ballabriga 1986, *passim* but particularly 67–73, on the need to be wary of the belief that if an author named a place, he must have known where it was (cf. Buxton 1988 for a review of Ballabriga).

He determines to kill the *κῆτος* on the condition that he can marry Andromeda, an arrangement to which Cepheus gives his sworn agreement.[17] Perseus, borne aloft on his winged sandals, kills the monster with his sword.[18] After the killing, Phineus, uncle and suitor of Andromeda, attacks Perseus, and is lithified together with his followers; or Perseus kills Cepheus and Agenor (also Andromeda's former suitor, an alternative for Phineus).[19] In one version Perseus and Andromeda remain in the kingdom of Cepheus long enough for their son Perses to be born, whom they leave with Cepheus to be his heir and the eponymous ancestor of the Persians.[20] In another version, Perseus remains in Persia, and, quarrelling with Cepheus, turns the *γοργόνειον* on him; since Cepheus is blind through old age, he is unscathed, but Perseus, believing the *γοργόνειον* to have lost its power, looks at it and is lithified.[21] In the commonest version Perseus immediately takes Andromeda with him back to Seriphos, thence to Argos.[22]

1. The Mythical Paradigm

The theme at the heart of the Andromeda story-type, found repeatedly in Greek myth, is the death of an individual human to secure the survival of the *πόλις*. In the paradigm, the *πόλις* is threatened with annihilation by plague, famine, or invasion. The cause of the threat is often left unclear, but usually an oracle dictates the necessary course of action. The paradigmatic 'victim' is aristocratic (usually royal, but a child of the king and not the king himself, who lives on to rule the *πόλις*),

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[17] Apollod. 2.4.3, Ov. *Met.* 4.695ff, cf. Manil. *Astron.* 568–580.

[18] Apollod. 2.4.3, Eratosth. *Cat.* 36, Ov. *Met.* 4.706ff, Manil. *Astron.* 5.580–612. For the lithification of the *κῆτος* with the *γοργόνειον* as a later version, see above n.8.

[19] Lithification of Phineus: Apollod. 2.4.3, Ov. *Met.* 5.180ff, Narr.Fab. 5.1, Myth.Vat. 1.73, Tz. Lyc. 838. Cepheus and Agenor: Hyg. *F.* 64.

[20] Hdt. 7.61. See Chapter II, pp.57–8 for the significance of this adoption as an example of the special relationship between a man and his daughter's son.

[21] John of Antioch *FHG* IV 544 fr.6 nr.18. This is the only story in which Perseus fails to complete the Gorgon-killing exploit, since in this case he has not returned to Seriphos or Argos, nor given the *γοργόνειον* to Athene: the failed initiand dies in a fashion appropriate to his unfinished exploit. The only other source narrating the death of Perseus is Hyg. *F.* 244, where Megapenthes kills him 'because of the death of his father' (Proetus, brother and adversary of Acrisius).

[22] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 12, Apollod. 2.4.4.

παρθένος or *ἠίθεος* (virginal and youthful), usually female, and a volunteer. The criterion of voluntariness makes the restitution an act of self-sacrifice, or personal dedication.[23]

This pattern is exemplified by the following mythical figures: the daughters of Erechtheus, who save Athens from the Eleusinians and Thracians;[24] Aglaurus (or Agraulus), daughter of Cecrops or Actaeus, who saved the city from attack;[25] the daughters of Antipoenus, who save Thebes from the Athenians;[26] the daughters of Orion, who save Orchomenos from plague;[27] the daughters of Leos, who save Athens from plague or famine;[28] Polycrite of Naxos, who saves the city of Naxos from the Milesians and Erythraeans;[29] Anchurus the son of Midas, who saves Celaenae in Phrygia from destruction in an abyss full of boiling waters;[30] and Menoeceus the son of Creon, who saves Thebes from invasion.[31]

The myths are related to the ritual expulsion of a human *φαρμακός* ('scapegoat'), in which an individual *φαρμακός*, *περίψημα*, *κάθαρμα* or *περικάθαρμα*[32] is expelled as an 'offscouring' in order to purify the community.[33] Parker has commented[34] that the many myths

> which make military success or the safety of a city dependent on the sacrifice or voluntary self-oblation of a person of especially high value...might in origin be a quite distinct conception [from the *φαρμακός* ritual] since death rather than expulsion is here essential; but if so, a contamination of the two forms seems early

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[23] Cf. Roman self-sacrifice in a military context, *devotio*.

[24] Apollod. 3.15.4–5. Sources, see Frazer 1921, vol.2, 111 n.2. It is an 'old' myth: Carrara 1977, 18ff.

[25] Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 105. See Merkelbach 1972, 280–1.

[26] Paus. 9.17.1. On Theban mythical expiatory human sacrifice, cf. Vian 1963, 214–5.

[27] Ov. *Met.* 13.685–701, Ant.Lib. *Met.* 25.

[28] Sources, *RE* XII, 2000–2001; cf. Kron 1976, 195–200 and her n.947.

[29] Sources, see Bremmer 1983b, 303 n.24.

[30] Ps.-Callisth. *FGrHist* 124 F 56. Cf. Reinach 1915, 326ff.

[31] E. *Ph.* 997ff. Cf. Foley 1985, 106–146, Burkert 1981, 119–20.

[32] Bremmer 1983b, 304 for these terms.

[33] On the myths and practice of the *φαρμακός* ritual see Nilsson 1967, 107–10, Bremmer 1983b, Burkert 1985, 82–4, Parker 1983, 24–6, 258–71. Note particularly Parker 1983, 25: that the *φαρμακός* ritual has little to do with fertility, but more simply with purification.

[34] Parker 1983, 259.

> to have occurred.

Indeed, the idea of 'one' suffering for 'many' is central both to myths of self-sacrifice, and to those of expulsion of the *φαρμακός* (where the victim is carefully assimilated to voluntary, and even royal, self-oblation).[35] Without a concept of 'community', the ritual is meaningless. Thus the ritual should be regarded primarily as a 'political' institution. In its myths, therefore, the *πόλις* is of central importance.

These myths are exemplary of the Greeks' fascination with human sacrifice, much evident in mythology. None is necessarily evidence of actual human sacrifice in Greece.[36] Even if it was practised, it had died out by historical times. To take myths and rituals literally is to negate their structural and symbolic value. A.Henrichs argued that

> the Greeks clearly preferred the fiction of human sacrifice to its reality, and that most mythical and legendary reports are narrative personifications of rituals involving animal sacrifice: Greeks had a strong tendency to identify human sacrifice with either their mythical and distant past or, more often, with barbarous nations.[37]

However, most of the myths of human *self*-sacrifice are set in *mainland* Greek cities, which implies that if barbarians sacrifice humans, then it is an act of supreme civilization to sacrifice oneself, since only Greeks tend to do so in order to preserve their *πόλεις*. Above all, the myths of human sacrifice examined below offer an exemplum for each citizen, to be prepared to give up even his life for the sake of his *πόλις*.[38]

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[35] On assimilation of the lowly real-life *φαρμακός* to temporary high, 'royal' status, his/her feasting at public expense, and expulsion beginning from the prytaneum, see Bremmer 1983b, 303–7. 'Elimination from the community started from the heart of that community': Bremmer 1983b, 313.

[36] For a possible example at Archanes in Minoan Crete, see Burkert 1985, 31, 37, cf. Warren 1981: knife marks found on children's bones found may point to human sacrifice; they may, however, have been dead already, the marks then being the result of funerary ritual. In the ritual for Artemis *Ταυροπόλος* at Halai Araphenides in Attica, a man had his throat scratched with a knife (Burkert 1985, 59): it begs the question to say that this preserves the memory of an older tradition of human sacrifice. The Greeks were aware of the symbolism of the ritual: its mythical aetion was Iphigeneia's return from the barbarian land of Taurica, bringing the image of Artemis with her (E. *IT* 1449–61), which also implies that human sacrifice was considered to be ungreek. It is not necessary to assume that for a ritual to be symbolic it must have existed previously in a 'real' (sic) form.

[37] Henrichs 1981, 195, cited and paraphrased by Poliakoff 1987, 189 n.3. See Henrichs 1981 *passim*, Poliakoff 1987, 149–157, and Foley 1985, 38.

[38] *Ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλις* (Th. 7.77.7). Cf. Pericles' funeral speech (Th. 2.35–46): *περὶ τοιαύτης οὖν πόλεως οἵδε τε γενναίως δικαιοῦντες μὴ ἀφαιρεθῆναι αὐτὴν μαχόμενοι ἐτελεύτησαν, καὶ*

Most recently, Helen Foley has surveyed modern study of Greek sacrificial practice as a preliminary to examining human sacrifice in several Euripidean contexts.[39] She draws particular attention to the importance of public sacrifice in defining the structure, values and membership of the πόλις.[40] The myths of human self-sacrifice are comprehensible in part as the giving up of a πόλις-member to preserve the πόλις. Thus the mythical victim is as far as possible made to embody the πόλις at the deepest level, that is, genetically (by her ancestry).[41] The proper performance of ritual in general is a sign of order and civilization.[42] Conversely, the perversion of ritual in myth is a sign of disorder and barbarism (as Foley shows abundantly in her discussion of Euripides' *IA*).

Accordingly, the Andromeda myth and its two cognates, the myths of Hesione and of Iphigeneia, will be seen to constitute a perversion of the paradigm because, crucially, the victims are not voluntary. Disorder is initiated by an offence to a god (in contrast with the paradigm, in which the cause of the threat to the πόλις is often left vague). The lack of voluntariness turns human self-sacrifice for the πόλις into a perversion of animal sacrifice, reflecting the break-down in communication between men and gods. The victims are saved from death and the father suffers instead. The Theseus-Minotaur myth will also be discussed, since it illustrates the differences between the paradigm and modified paradigm by employing elements of both.

In the Andromeda myth, however, this modified paradigm of human sacrifice for the πόλις is in turn subordinated to the narrative drive of the Perseus myths as a body: the modified paradigm is abandoned and the survival of πόλις and father abruptly fades from view in favour of the marriage of Perseus to Andromeda and their departure for Argos. By establishing the characteristics of the victim in the paradigm, it will be possible to see not only how Andromeda differs from it, but also how, by her similarity to it, she constitutes an ideal wife, thus accounting for the

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τῶν λειπομένων πάντα τινὰ εἰκὸς ἐθέλειν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς κάμνειν (Th. 2.41.5).

[39] Foley 1985, 26–56.

[40] Foley 1985, especially 30–46.

[41] Cf. the integration of the *φαρμακός*, above n.35.

[42] Foley 1985, 39–40.

subordination of the modified paradigm to the marriage motif.

2. The Paradigmatic Victim

First and most important, the victim is human. The myth of Anchurus makes explicit the logic underlying all the myths of human sacrifice.[43] When Midas was king of Celaenae in Phrygia, Zeus *Ἰδαῖος* cleft open an abyss of boiling waters, which engulfed many houses and people. An oracle told to the king said that the abyss would close up if he cast into it man's most precious possession. Gold, silver and jewels were poured in to no effect. Anchurus alone understood the oracle, and rode on a horse to his death in the abyss: for nothing is more precious to man than life itself. The safety of an entire *πόλις* can be bought off only at the highest price, namely a human life.[44]

The victim is always a *παρθένος*, or *ἠίθεος*, both terms normally associated with premarital youth and virginity, but which also contain a degree of ambiguity. In at least one context (Attic, third or second century), *ἠίθεος* is used to mean 'the ghosts of those who die unmarried'.[45] The Indo-European etymology of *ἠίθεος* possesses the same negative quality, connoting 'being deprived', and being linked with feminine words meaning 'widowed'.[46] A similar ambiguity is found in Hesychius, who defined it as meaning 'unmarried', or 'married and childless'.[47] In the case of Menoeceus, Teiresias implies it is essential that the victim be *ἠίθεος*, when he rules out Creon's son Haemon as unsuitable because he is betrothed and so no longer *ἠίθεος*.[48] *παρθένος* is closely related[49] and similarly ambiguous, referring to a young girl or young wife. Together with *κόρη* and *νύμφη*, *παρθένος* does not connote virginity in a simple way. 'The terms oscillate between ['unmarried' and

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[43] Sources, above n.30.

[44] Bremmer 1983b, 304–5.

[45] *TDA* 52.7. *ἠίθεος* has no connection with *θεός*, Chantraine 1968–80, *s.v. ἠίθεος*.

[46] Chantraine *ibid.*: I.E. **ἠϝιθεϝος*, Sanskr. *vidávā*, cf. Slav. *vĭdova*, Pruss. *widdewū*, Irish *fedb*, Latin *vidua*.

[47] Hsch. *s.v. ἠίθεος*.

[48] E. *Ph.* 945.

[49] Cf. Hdt 3.48: *χοροὺς παρθένων τε καὶ ἠιθέων*; Plu. *Thes.15*: *ἠιθέους ἑπτὰ καὶ παρθένους τοσαύτας*; Chantraine *ibid.*

'married girl'] and their meaning is really fixed in an intermediate concept'.[50] It is not that virginity is not an essential quality of *παρθένος* when used of an unmarried girl. Rather, as Hesychius' definition of *ἠίθεος* suggests, the ambiguity arises from deciding what constitutes unequivocal proof that virginity has been lost, i.e. the production of children. Above all, both *παρθένος* and *ἠίθεος* are words conveying social status, to which the victim must conform. The requirement of virginity has its correlate in normal Greek sacrificial practice, in which the (animal) victim must be 'without blemish', and 'unyoked'. The *φαρμακός* of myth must of itself be pure in order to bear impurity. Aglaurus, daughter of Cecrops, was not only a *παρθένος*, but also a priestess of Athene.[51]

The youth of the human victim enhances the value of the sacrifice. Death of a child before its parents was shocking, a cutting-short of life threatening the future of the *οἶκος*.[52] The Achillean paradigm of a life that is brief, but thereby glorious and conferring immortality in terms of fame and cult, is relevant here.[53] Like the heroes of Homer, the victim becomes the object of cult after death.[54] The brevity and glory of their life are associated with their potency, and are the genesis of cult. However, the victim is almost always female. The loss to the *πόλις* by her death is counted in the children she might have borne had she lived. The daughters of Orion, Metioche and Menippe, died for the people (*pro populo*), and consequently were given a public funeral; from the ashes of the pyre were born two youths, so that the victims' family line would not perish with them.[55] The death of Menoeceus might seem to be a greater loss than that implied by a female victim, because although he saves his

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[50] Gernet 1981, 23 and his n.111.

[51] 'Perfect victim': *Laws of Solon* (fr.82 Ruschenbusch) in Poll. 1.29; Arist. *Fr.* 101. Aglaurus: Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 106. See Burkert 1985, 56. Cf. Plu. *Pel.* 20–2, where to win the forthcoming battle of Leuctra, Pelopidas dreams he must sacrifice a *παρθένον ξανθήν*, who turns out to be a filly (*πῶλος*) with a fire-red mane (Vian 1963, 215). Note that a horse, like a girl, is an unusual sacrificial victim (cf. Anchurus' horse).

[52] Garland 1985, 22, 77–8.

[53] Cf. Priam *Il.* 22.71–6 on the contrast between the fitting death of a youth in battle, and the shameful death of an old man; cf. Tyrt. *Eunomia*, especially fr.7 line 30 (Diehl).

[54] See below pp.142–3.

[55] Ov. *Met.* 13.685–701. On the production of children as an essential consequence of marriage, see Lacey 1968, 110–113. Cf. E. *Med.* 249–51 on the equivalence of child-bearing and warfare: i.e. men protect the *πόλις* by fighting, women by giving birth to children.

πόλις from invasion, he simultaneously deprives it of a future king—himself. But he too is marginal in the sense that Creon has another male heir, Haemon.[56]

The victim is always aristocratic, because her nobility implies a purity of descent which links her ideally with the very origins of the community. The individual possessing the most impeccable ancestral ties with their πόλις is best fitted to die in order to save it.[57]

There is also the sense that the victim is dying not only for the πόλις, but in place of the king, her father. In the case of the daughters of Antipoenus,[58] the oracle specifies that victory against Athens will be assured if the citizen of most illustrious birth consents to die by his own hand. Antipoenus is the noblest of the citizens (*τῶν ἀστῶν ἐπιφανέστατος κατὰ γένους*);[59] therefore (*οὖν*) it was not sweet (*ἡδὺ*) for him to die for the community (*δήμου*); so his daughters offered themselves willingly, and Thebes won the war.[60] The use of *οὖν* makes his nobility the reason for his unwillingness to die: on the contrary, because he is the noblest citizen he must live. The daughters of the noblest citizen are an acceptable substitute. The daughters of Leos, in dying for their father, die literally for 'the people'.[61]

In other words, one of the victim's qualities is that she is dispensable; her death will enable the πόλις to continue as before. In this sense she is 'marginal'.[62] However, although an unmarried aristocratic girl is peripheral to ἡ πολιτεία (the actual daily functioning of the πόλις), her death, as seen in the case of Metioche and Menippe, has its cost in terms of the loss of future citizens. Equally, she embodies the identity of the πόλις by virtue of her descent. Thus, by dying for the πόλις, she moves into

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[56] Cf. Foley 1985, 106–10, where she questions the efficacy of Menoeceus' self-sacrifice.

[57] See especially on Menoeceus, below pp.144–5.

[58] On the significance of which name, see below p.148.

[59] Note the use of *ἀστοί*: the victim can be male or female, as long as she/he is born of citizen parents, citizen parentage being the definition of *ἀστός* (Arist. *Pol.* 1278a.34). By contrast, the *πολίτης* was also an *ἀστός*. but furthermore had a share in *κρίσις καὶ ἀρχή* (Arist. *Pol.* 1275a.22–4); ὁ *ἀστός* was the opposite of ὁ *ἀγαθός* (Pi. *P.* 3.71, cf. Isoc. 3.21). Hence, unlike *πολίτης*, *ἀστός* had a feminine form (*ἀστή*), and is marginal to ἡ *πολιτεία*.

[60] Paus. 9.17.1.

[61] In antiquity, *Λεώς* was linked, incorrectly, with *λέων*: see Kron 1976, 194, 197–8.

[62] Cf. Bremmer 1983b, 303–4 on the 'marginality' of the *φαρμακός*. On women being outside the framework of the Greek *πόλις* as an institution, cf. Gould 1980, 43–6, Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, 53 and her n.32.

the public realm by becoming the object of public cult. The daughters of Erechtheus, in Euripides' *Ἐρεχθεύς* at the command of Athene, are to be honoured,

> *θυσίαισι καὶ σφαγιαῖσι [βουκ]τόνοις*
> *κοσμοῦ[ντας ἱ]εροῖς παρθένων [χορεύ]μασιν.*[63]

Aglaurus, who died by throwing herself over the walls of Athens, has a shrine built to her at the gates of the city, at which the ephebes swear their oath before going out to war: she dies *ὑπὲρ τὴν πόλις...ἐκοῦσα*, as they do.[64] The daughters of Antipoenus are honoured in the sanctuary of Artemis *Εὔκλεια* at Thebes.[65] The daughters of Orion are given a public funeral,[66] and a sanctuary at Orchomenos built in their honour by all Aonians.[67] The daughters of Leos were connected with the *Λεωκόρειον* in Athens, a shrine often named in ancient sources, and at which boys and girls made expiatory offerings.[68] Over the place of the death of Anchurus an altar (to Zeus) was built.[69] Polycrite was honoured with sacrifices during the Thargelia, the Ionian festival in which a *φαρμακός* ritual was included.[70]

Finally, the victim is voluntary. This feature too is analogous with Greek sacrificial practice, whereby the animal victim is made to nod its head as if giving its consent to its own death.[71] Voluntariness implies that the community is worth saving: the victim is not suicidal, but self-sacrificial. Moreover, voluntariness on the whole implies self-oblation, as the myths show, as distinct from consenting to *be* sacrificed by another. This in turn implies that the community is not guilty of coercion

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[63] Fr.18.79–80 (Carrara 1977).

[64] Philoch. *FGrHist* 328 F 105. Her name appears in the list of deities named in the ephebic oath, one of the *ἱερὰ τὰ πάτρια*. *Ἄγλαυρος* was also an epithet of Athene (Harpocrat. *s.v.*), and she was in this capacity a *κουροτρόφος* (*IG II²* 5152). For the oath, see Merkelbach 1972, 277–8.

[65] Paus. 9.17.1.

[66] Above n.141.

[67] Ant.Lib. *Met.* 25. Marginalia say the same story was told in Nic. *Met.* 4, and by Corinna in her *Eroia* 1.

[68] Kron 1976, 197–200.

[69] Above n.30.

[70] Above n.29.

[71] Burkert 1985, 56; 1966, 107 n.43, Bremmer 1983b, 307, citing Karl Meuli on sacrifice and the 'comedy of innocence'.

or pollution by causing the death. The act of self-sacrifice emerges ideally (i.e. in myth) from an intense recognition of and feeling for the need for the community to survive.[72]

Euripides' portrayal, in the *Phoenissae*, of Menoeceus' self-sacrifice for Thebes bears out much of the above. It is of particular interest, because it provides in detail the reasons for the action from the mouth both of the seer Teiresias and the victim, and of the *πόλις* itself (in the form of the chorus).[73]

The invasion of Thebes is the revenge of Ares for the death of the earth-born dragon killed by Cadmus at the place where he founded the city (l.931ff). 'Blood for blood' is required to cancel out the killing (l.937f), the blood of a pure descendant from the Spartoi, the first, autochthonous inhabitants of Thebes (born from the dragon's teeth 'sown' by Cadmus). Only Creon and his two sons qualify. Teiresias says that Haemon is to be married, and so cannot die, since he is no longer *ἠίθεος*. The possibility of Creon sacrificing himself is not even mentioned, since he too is no longer *ἠίθεος*. The choice is between the survival of Menoeceus and of the *πόλις* (l.952). Killing himself, Menoeceus can save his *πατρῴαν γαῖαν* and make Thebes *κλεινάς*. Creon cannot bear to kill his own son, and tells him to leave the city in flight. For Menoeceus, however, there is no dilemma: to him, *πόλις* and family, through their shared descent from Cadmus and the Spartoi, are identical. He resolves the problem, and seals Creon's tragedy, by planning to kill himself voluntarily, because he cannot, above all, become the betrayer (*προδότην*, l.996) of his *πόλις*: for such betrayal could never be forgiven (l.997–1002, 1009–1018):

ὡς οὖν ἂν εἰδῆτ', εἶμι καὶ σώσω πόλιν

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[72] Compare the Athenian liturgy as 'aristocratic self-sacrifice', suggested to me by Dr. Bowie; cf. Gernet 1981, 285, 334. Voluntariness of the *φαρμακός* may explain why at the *ἔρανος* of Polydectes on Seriphos Perseus apparently brings upon himself the task of fetching the Gorgon's head: see Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11, Apollod. 2.4.2, Tz. Lyc. 838, Schol. Pi. *P.* 10.72; on the *ἔρανος*, see Gernet 1981, 156. The most compelling parallel to the self-sacrificial victim is Jesus Christ, the son of God, King of Kings, virgin, and volunteer who dies for mankind to purify it of sin (and whose death is re-experienced annually in the Easter festival). The striking difference, of course, is his resurrection. For the iconographical link between Danae and the infant Perseus rescued by fishermen on Seriphos, and the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus visited by the Wise Men, see Fink 1962 (who also gives further examples of Greek iconographical influence on the Christian tradition).

[73] Cf. especially Foley 1985, 106–46 for a very full discussion of the place of Menoeceus' sacrifice in E. *Ph.* Cf. also Burkert 1981, and O'Connor-Visser 1987, 73–98.

ψυχήν τε δώσω τῆσδ' ὑπερθανεῖν χθονός.
αἰσχρὸν γάρ· οἱ μὲν θεσφάτων ἐλεύθεροι
κοὐκ εἰς ἀνάγκην δαιμόνων ἀφιγμένοι
στάντες παρ' ἀσπίδ' οὐκ ὀκνήσουσιν θανεῖν,
πύργων πάροιθε μαχόμενοι πάτρας ὕπερ.

ἀλλ' εἶμι καὶ στὰς ἐξ ἐπάλξεων ἄκρων
σφάξας ἐμαυτὸν σηκὸν ἐς μελαμβαθῆ
δράκοντος, ἔνθ' ὁ μάντις ἐξηγήσατο,
ἐλευθερώσω γαῖαν· εἴρηται λόγος.
στείχω δέ, θανάτου δῶρον οὐκ αἰσχρὸν πόλει
δώσων, νόσου τε τήνδ' ἀπαλλάξω χθόνα.
εἰ γὰρ λαβὼν ἕκαστος ὅ τι δύναιτό τις,
χρηστὸν διέλθοι τοῦτο κἀς κοινὸν φέροι
πατρίδι, κακῶν ἂν αἱ πόλεις ἐλασσόνων
πειρώμεναι τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχοῖεν ἄν.

He is an ideal victim, a volunteer, *ἠίθεος*, and an aristocrat, who will save the *πόλις*. Moreover he is the only possible victim, since he is the only direct descendant of the Spartoi who is still *ἠίθεος*. 'Aristocratic' is synonymous with oldest and purest (as in the case of the autochthonous Erechtheids), confirming that the noble birth of the victims in all the other myths of self-sacrifice guarantees that she (he) embodies the essence of her (his) *πόλις* as it was at its creation.[74]

As the ultimate indication of his desire to save the *πόλις*, Menoeceus kills himself on the city wall, a public sacrifice, letting his blood run down outside the city.[75] He marks with his blood the boundary which no enemy shall pass. The location of his death finds a parallel in the Phoenician practice of sacrificing children on the city wall in order to keep the enemy at bay (*molchomor* sacrifice): the survival of the city is to be secured by a public sacrifice.[76]

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[74] On Athenian autochthony (Cecrops and Erichthonius/Erechtheus), see Loraux 1981, 35–73, Parker 1987, 193–5.

[75] E. *Ph.* 1009–13, 1090–92. Cf. Stat. *Theb.* 10.756–82: *sanguine tunc spargit turres et moenia lustrat* (l.777).

[76] On *molchomor* as parallel to Menoeceus, see Versnel 1981, 140 n.2, referring to Rebuffat 1972. Cf. as a general feature of Greek sacrifice, the sacrificial practice of splashing blood on the altar (*αἱμάσσειν*) (Burkert 1985, 56), and vase paintings depicting 'the white-chalked sides of...altars...always shown splashed with blood in testimony to the sacred work' (Burkert 1985, 59). Cf. Astyanax, cast from the walls of Troy (E. *Tr.* 725, 1119–22), perhaps an ironically appropriate death for the prince of a defeated *πόλις*.

3. The Modified Paradigm

(a) Andromeda

Andromeda conforms with the victim of the paradigm inasmuch as she is a *παρθένος*, aristocratic, and dying, ostensibly, to save her *πόλις*.[77] *Prima facie* she is an ideal victim. However, she is not a volunteer: this is the motif which signals the breakdown of the paradigm. The unwilling nature of the victim is an indication that the royal *οἶκος*, and so the *πόλις*, is to be severely disrupted.

Lattimore suggested that the pattern of self-sacrifice (which he referred to as *devotio*) was the basis of Sophocles' and Euripides' respective *'Ανδρομέδας*;[78] O'Connor-Visser doubted whether the decision to perform an act of *devotio* came into Euripides' play.[79] This can be put more firmly. It is plain from the Euripidean fragments that she is an unwilling victim.[80] So unwilling is she that she has to be tied up as *βορά* or *φορβά*, 'food', for the *κῆτος*, a monster of the god.[81]

Fr.126 of Sophocles' *'Ανδρομέδα* hints that her sacrifice is improper:

†*ἡμιουτὸν*†*κούρειον ἠρέθη πόλει·*
νόμος γάρ ἐστι τοῖσι βαρβάροις Κρόνῳ
θυηπολεῖν βρότειον ἀρχῆθεν (?) γένος.

Whatever Sophocles wrote for †*ἡμιουτὸν*†, the meaning of the first line is something like: 'It has been chosen as a sacrificial victim for the city'. The second and third lines indicate that the victim is to be a human one, Andromeda. *Κούρειον*, however, has a specific meaning, namely, the animal sacrifice (accompanied by the cutting of the initiand's hair) made to mark the entry of a youth into the phratry at the feast of *κουρεῶτις* during the Apaturia.[82] In itself, the substitution of a human victim for an animal one represents a perversion of Greek practice, and thus is an aspect of the characterization of Cepheus and his people as barbarians; in which case, it is

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[77] *πάτρας ὑπερθανεῖν*, E.*'Ανδρομέδα* fr.120.

[78] Lattimore 1964, 47–8.

[79] O'Connor-Visser 1987, 18 n.1; 8–9 citing Lattimore.

[80] See Appendix, pp.230–1.

[81] *βορά*: E. *'Ανδρομέδα* fr.122, Apollod. 2.4.3, Eratosth. *Cat.* 15. *φορβά*: E. *'Ανδρομέδα* fr.121; *θοινάματα*, *ibid.* fr.145. (See n.107 and p.158 below on Theseus.)

[82] *Κούρειον*: Cole 1984, 233–5, Labarbe 1953, Burkert 1985, 255–6. Cf. Chapter III, p.123.

appropriate that Perseus, a Greek, should frustrate the sacrifice.[83]

Fr.128a confirms that Andromeda is an ideal victim (she is 'guiltless') but that her sacrifice is improper:

ἡ δυστυχὴς ἀθῷος ἐκκρεμωμένη.[84]

That she is tied up is an immediate sign that she is not a volunteer. More than this, however, it characterizes the sacrifice as barbaric. Herodotus recorded the Scythian (i.e. quintessentially barbaric) method of sacrifice, differing from normal Greek procedure: the sacrificer binds the victim's forelegs together and, invoking the god, throws it to the ground; he then garottes it, without having lit a fire or having made any propriatory offering or libation.[85]

The *βορά* motif, combined with the binding motif, clarifies the way in which the intended death of Andromeda is to be regarded as a grotesque inversion of normal sacrificial practice. A human is to be sacrificed, eviscerated, and eaten, still for a god (Poseidon), but by an monstrous animal. Victim and sacrificer have changed places. Andromeda (like Hesione) is to be killed not under the controlled conditions which a domesticated animal victim enjoys, in a precinct with a priest officiating, nor even by a knife wielded by human hand. Nor is she to die like the paradigmatic victim within or upon the walls of the *πόλις* she is ostensibly to save,[86] but on the wild sea-shore, torn by the teeth and claws of a savage monster. There is a strong tradition of myths concerning mortals being eaten, by creatures wholly monstrous, like the *κῆτος*, by semi-monsters like the Minotaur, by anthropomorphs such as the Laestrygones and Polyphemus, and most disturbing, by humans (though always unintentionally, e.g. Thyestes). However, even Polyphemus' victims were not eaten alive.[87] The death of the paradigmatic victim (who is like an animal blood victim

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[83] Cf. E. *Ἀνδρομέδα* fr.124: *Πε: ὦ θεοί, τίν' εἰς γῆν βαρβάρων ἀφίγμεθα...*; *TrGF* gives *ἀρχῆθεν γένος* in preference to *ἄχραντον γέρος* (*TGF*). The reading in *TrGF* would be more appropriate, in light of the discussion in the previous section: the ideal victim for the *πόλις* is the one with the purest ancestry—Andromeda is of the original founding stock.

[84] Cf. E. *Ἀνδρομέδα* fr. 127: *κρεμαμένην.*

[85] Hdt. 4.60–1. I owe this parallel to Dr. Bowie.

[86] The daughters of Orion cut their own throats with their shuttles over their looms, i.e. actually in the *οἶκος*.

[87] He dashes their brains out first: *Od.* 9.288–90.

in purity and voluntariness), is 'sacrificial' in a loose sense, rather than an actual sacrifice: with the exception of the first daughter of Erechtheus (who was sacrificed by her father, and followed in death by the suicide of her sisters) and the daughters of Leos (in a later version),[88] all the paradigmatic victims save their city not by being literally sacrificed, but by killing themselves, as a natural consequence of their resolution. Andromeda is to be made a meal of: this is the logical culmination of her perverted sacrifice, since it is the fate of the animal victim to be eaten.

Her unwillingness is linked with the idea that she has become a victim not simply because of an external threat to the *πόλις*, but because her parent (the mother, rather than the father, as it is in the myths of Hesione and Iphigeneia) has caused the threat by offending divinities (the nymphs and Poseidon), thus jeopardizing the whole community.[89] The grotesque inversion inherent in the intended sacrifice of Andromeda is a symptom of the disorder caused in the *πόλις* by the offence to the gods by its queen.[90]

By contrast, in the paradigm presented above the question of the responsibility for, and cause of the phenomenon afflicting the *πόλις* is either ignored or, as in the case of Erechtheus and his daughters, left vague; in which case it is the duty of the royal family as the pinnacle of the aristocracy to resolve the problem. In the Antipoenus myth, the cause of the war is not an issue: the self-sacrifice of his daughters is expressly to gain victory for Thebes as opposed to defeat; the name 'Antipoenus' is a refraction of this idea of 'recompense' or 'balancing out' (*τά ἀντίποινα*).[91] In the Orion myth, the plague is caused by the wrath of the underworld gods, but again, the cause of their wrath is not an issue: Orion's daughters sacrifice themselves to save Orchomenos from destruction. Zeus *Ἰδαῖος* is responsible for the abyss which threatens Celaenae, the city of Midas, but the cause is not mentioned. In sacrificing themselves to save Athens from plague or famine, the daughters of *Λεώς* die simultaneously for their father and the 'people'. The imprecision with which the

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[88] *RE* XII, 2000–1.

[89] Cf. Myths in which a specific offence to a god causes a community to suffer: Comaeltho and Melanippus, Ajax and Cassandra, Auge. See Parker 1983, 258, 264, 173, Canter 1937. On the pollution of an individual affecting the community, cf. Parker 1983, ch.9.

[90] Above p.139 on Foley 1985, 39–40.

[91] Vian 1963, 214.

sources identify the affliction indicates that the essential concern is that the πόλις is in danger, rather than the exact nature or cause of that danger. The identification of the cause of the threat to Thebes that leads to the death of Menoeceus is unusual in its precision.

(b) Hesione

The closest parallel to the Andromeda myth is the story of Heracles and Hesione. King Laomedon of Troy refuses to give Apollo and Poseidon their promised reward for building the first defensive walls of his city. Apollo sends plague, and Poseidon a κῆτος to ravage the city. Laomedon is informed by an oracle that the gods' wrath can be assuaged by exposing his daughter Hesione to the monster. However, Heracles happens by and agrees to save Hesione if in return Laomedon gives him the mares of Zeus (given to Laomedon in compensation for the abduction of Ganymede). Hesione is saved but Laomedon fails once more to keep his word. Heracles declares that he will make war on Troy, which he later does with devastating success.[92]

The earliest extant allusion to the Laomedon story is in the *Iliad*, predating that of Andromeda by some three hundred years.[93] However, Hesione is not mentioned there. In the oldest source which does mention Hesione, the mares of Zeus are still the promised reward, and not marriage to Hesione.[94] The same is true in the majority of later sources. In Diodorus, Hesione chooses to marry Heracles, but she is left behind in Troy together with the mares. In Hyginus, Heracles gives Hesione to Telamon. Heracles' fight with the κῆτος may be earlier than Perseus', but the motif of fighting the κῆτος to win a bride is central only to the Perseus myth. For Heracles, the episode is assimilated to his labours, so that the mares are his goal. It may be significant, then, that Hesione is absent from one of the sixth-century vase-paintings of Heracles killing the κῆτος.[95] By contrast, on the earliest vase showing

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[92] *Il.* 5.640–3, cf. *Il.* 21.441–57; Hellanic. *FGrHist* 4 F 26b, Apollod. 2.5.9, 2.6.4, D.S. 4.42, Val.Fl. 2.451–578, Hyg. *F.* 89. Cf. *Il.* 12.1–35, when Poseidon and Apollo destroy the Greek rampart long after the end of the war.

[93] *Il.* 20.144–8, 21.441–57, 5.640–3.

[94] Hellanic. *FGrHist* 4 F 26b.

[95] Caeretanian hydria (H35); see Isler 1983, pls. 1--9. However, she plays an active role on the earliest vase (Corinthian Column-Krater, Boston MFA 63.420, c. 570--60), and is present on an Attic black-figure Cup (Taranto 52153, c. 540). See Brommer 1984, 61--2 for all three vases.

Perseus and the *κῆτος*, Andromeda does appear.[96] The fact that Valerius Flaccus' account of the fettered Hesione imitates the opening of Euripides' *'Ανδρομέδα* is also symptomatic of this important difference between the two myths.[97]

As in the Andromeda myth, a royal parent of the girl to be exposed has provoked divine displeasure (Poseidon again) and must appease it by offering his daughter as *βορά* to a creature of the god. The importance of the fate of the *πόλις* is strongly signalled, as in the paradigm: the object of the mortal-immortal dispute is the defence wall of Troy itself. Although Heracles frustrates the gods' revenge by killing the *κῆτος*, he then fulfils it himself by sacking the city despite its wall. In the case of Andromeda, however, the fate of the *πόλις* fades quickly from view. The oracle and so Poseidon's revenge are frustrated by Perseus, but no more is said of either. Instead, the proposed union of Perseus and Andromeda is focused upon, by the threat posed to it by the plot of Phineus. The rivalry of Phineus for Andromeda confirms that the killing of the *κῆτος* is a competition for a bride (such as those undertaken by Pelops and Melanion) and not a saving of a *πόλις*.[98] Heracles acquires his mares, and Perseus Andromeda. Thus in the Andromeda myth, the modified paradigm is itself modified.

(c) Iphigeneia

Despite important differences of emphasis, the Iphigeneia myth exhibits a pattern similar to that of the Andromeda and Hesione stories. The father insults a god, and so the community under his command (in this case the Greek fleet at Aulis) is threatened with destruction, until the father sacrifices the daughter.

Before Aeschylus, the usual version of the story ended with Iphigeneia being rescued, like Andromeda and Hesione: Artemis is offended, a virgin is demanded in sacrifice, an animal is substituted by the goddess and the virgin saved.[99] It is

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[96] Corinthian vase (Berlin F1431, also second quarter of the sixth century): Schauenburg 1960, 56.

[97] Val.Fl. 2.451–495, E. *'Ανδρομέδα* fr.114–135. For a comparison between Ovid's Andromeda, and that of Valerius Flaccus, see Burck 1976.

[98] Pelops, Apollod. *Epit.* 2.4–7; Melanion, Apollod. 3.9.2. Burnett 1971, 30 n.6 is justified in classifying E. *'Ανδρομέδα* with his 'rescue' plays.

[99] This is the version Euripides used in *IT*. See Henrichs 1981, 198–208, 'Iphigeneia and animal

important to remember that in the usual version, Iphigeneia too was an unwilling victim: it was Euripides who reinterpreted the sacrifice as self-sacrifice.[100] Henrichs has warned that the motif of animal substitution should not be considered to reflect a historical development or civilizing of crude human sacrifice.[101] The present analysis suggests that the presence of the motif of animal substitution in this story is indeed the result of a mythical pattern, in which the girl is saved because her father is personally guilty of offending a god.

The sacrifice of Iphigeneia, like that of Andromeda, is an improper one. Aeschylus makes particularly clear the dilemma faced by Agamemnon, and the responsibility that follows upon his 'putting on the yoke of necessity'.[102]

> *βαρεῖα μὲν κὴρ τὸ μὴ πιθέσθαι,*
> *βαρεῖα δ', εἰ*
> *τέκνον δαίξω, δόμων ἄγαλμα,*
> *μιαίνων παρθενοσφάγοισιν*
> *ῥείθροις πατρώιους χέρας πέλας βω-*
> *μοῦ· τί τῶνδ' ἄνευ κακῶν;*[103]

The sacrifice is a *θυσία ἄνομος* because it is *ἄδαιτος*, 'not able to be apportioned' for human consumption.[104] The sources for the Andromeda and Hesione myths do not survive in such detail. Cepheus and Laomedon may well have been portrayed as facing such a dilemma. However, Euripides' *Ἀνδρομέδα* began with her already tied up awaiting her death, which may suggest that any doubts Cepheus felt had been overcome by the time the action of the play began.[105] Agamemnon's action is further highlighted by the fact that he has to sacrifice his daughter in a way analogous to normal blood sacrifice (i.e. on an altar, with a knife). In this sense, the Iphigeneia myth is far more chilling than the fantastical *κῆτος* death contemplated by Andromeda and Hesione. However, the same distortion of the father–daughter

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substitution'.

[100] Henrichs 1981, 204f, Foley 1985, 40.

[101] Henrichs 1981, 204.

[102] A. *A.* 218–20.

[103] A. *A.* 206–11.

[104] A. *A.* 150. On the sacrificial nature of *δαίς*, and 'apportionment' and 'division' as notions inherent in it, see Nagy 1979, 56–7, 127–8.

[105] See Appendix, p.228.

relationship is inherent in the Andromeda and Hesione myths, and is mirrored in the similar perversion of sacrificial practice which is implied by the nature of their intended deaths.

Finally, because she is carried away by Artemis rather than by a hero, Iphigeneia becomes a priestess and not a wife. It is typical of Euripides' sense of irony in his use of myth that in *IT*, Iphigeneia in turn is rescued from her service to the goddess, only to function as Artemis' priestess in Attica; and that, in *IA*, she is to be enticed to the sacrifice by the prospect of marriage to Achilles. Unlike Andromeda, Iphigeneia will never marry: in her case, the damage done to the *οἶκος* is not to be repaired by the marriage of the daughter. Having been sacrificed, even if her place was taken at the last moment by an animal victim, Iphigeneia remains an ideal victim permanently, a virgin.[106]

(d) Theseus

Essentially, the myth of the killing of the Minotaur by Theseus is akin to the modified paradigm. Involuntary victims are saved by the hero for the *πόλις*. However, the myth also possesses elements which are closer to the paradigm, and others unique to itself. Thus, while in *(a)–(c)* above it is clear that the unwilling nature of the victim is a sign of the severe disruption that will result for the royal *οἶκος* and so the *πόλις*, Theseus is a rather different case.

Androgeus, son of Minos, is treacherously murdered either by Athenians jealous of his athletic prowess, or by Aegeus, worried by the threat of Cretan influence in Attica. Plague and famine, or drought afflict Athens, and an oracle advises that restitution be made to Minos. Fourteen victims chosen from the flower of the city's youth, seven youths and seven girls, are sent unarmed as *βορά* for the Minotaur every year, or every nine years.[107]

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[106] (E. *IT* 1462–7). In most versions she remains a priestess, and does not get married. This mythical priesthood contrasts with the historical service to Artemis of the girls at Brauron (the 'Bears') who, unlike Iphigeneia, end their service and later get married (Burkert 1985, 151 and his n.27; on the arkteia, see now Sourvinou-Inwood 1988b). On the sacrifice of Iphigeneia in E. *IA*, cf. Foley 1985, 65–105, and O'Conner-Visser 1987, 99–121.

[107] *βορά*: Apollod. 3.15.8, D.S. 4.61.1–4, Schol.Pl. *Min.* 321a, cf. Serv. *Aen.* 6.14, Lact. Stat. *Achil.* 192. Every year: Apollod., Schol.Pl. *Min.*, Serv. *ibid.* Every nine years: D.S. 4.61.3, Plu. *Thes.* 15. Cf. Apollod. *Epit.* 1.7: no period specified, but every year implied, perhaps.

As in the modified paradigm, the victims are to be *βορά*, and are involuntary (effectively—see below), and the cause of the affliction to the *πόλις* is unambiguous. However, the number of victims and the periodic repetition of the sacrifice contrasts with both the paradigm and the modified paradigm. The large number of victims, both male and female, suggests that the modified paradigm has itself been adapted to suit the requirements of ritual, of the sixth day of Munichion, and the Oschophoria (on the seventh or eighth of Pyanopsion), days on which were commemorated the departure to and return from Crete of Theseus and the other victims.[108] However, the myth is an imperfect reflection of the ritual.[109] A further elaboration is the selection of victims by lot, *ἐπὶ τὸν κλῆρον οἷς ἦσαν ἠίθεοι παῖδες*,[110] which, since it does not occur in any other of the sacrifice myths (either paradigm or modified paradigm, with the exception of Hesione), and since it is taken by the fathers, may show the influence of Athenian democratic tradition. Although lots appear in Homer, it is contrary to the paradigm of self-sacrifice to have the victim selected by lot: in other words, selection by lot is not a preclassical motif in this myth-type. The victims are no longer involuntary, they are proto-citizens called upon to serve the state as any *βουλευτής* might be. However, they are not voluntary in the fullest sense of the word: Theseus alone, like the paradigmatic victim, volunteers (though not in all sources).[111] He also, like all victims, is young, aristocratic and *ἠίθεος*. Ultimately, he confounds the distinction between the paradigm and the modified paradigm still further by being both victim and rescuer, so that as a *φαρμακός*, he does what no *φαρμακός* should ever do: he returns.

This elaborate combination of elements may suggest that an earlier version of the myth existed in which either Theseus did not feature, or was not voluntary (because of the *βορά* motif, which signals that the victim is unwilling). It is more likely that the presence of Theseus and democratic motifs in the myth came about

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[108] Theseus and Munichion: Deubner 1966, 201. Oschophoria: Deubner 1966, 146.

[109] Jeanmaire 1939, 244–5.

[110] Plu. *Thes.* 17, Schol. ad *Il.* 11.322, Eust. *Od.* 420.45–421.2 (Stallbaum).

[111] Schol. *Il.* 18.590, that the lot fell to him with the other victims; Hellanic. (Plu. *Thes.* 17), that Minos himself came to Athens to select them, and that Theseus was the first to be chosen. Cf. D.S. 4.42 on the Hesione myth, that a lottery was held to determine the victim, and that it fell on Hesione anyway.

during the sixth-century Athenian mythopoiesis of self-aggrandizement (to which Theseus was central), when the basic pattern of the mythical paradigm was fused with democratic elements and Theseus.[112] This conjecture is supported by the story which prefaces the sending of victims to the Minotaur:

> In the first instance the Athenians acted in accordance with an ancient oracle by slaughtering at the tomb of the Cyclops Geraestus the daughters of Hyacinthus, Antheis, Aegleis, Lytaea and Orthaea. But because this was no help, they asked the oracle about deliverance. And the god told them to give to Minos whatever retribution he chose...[113]

A fragment of Euripides' *Ἐρεχθεύς* reveals that the dead Erechtheids who gave their lives for Athens were worshipped there under the name of the *Ὑακινθίδες*.[114] The Erechtheid myth, a prime and ancient example of successful human sacrifice for the *πόλις*, has been used to preface the Minotaur myth. But in the new version, the old expedient of sacrificing girls fails to resolve the problem. A new hero appears who actually volunteers to kill the Minotaur, not because of *ἔρως*, like Perseus or Heracles, but for the city.[115]

B. THE BRIDE OF PERSEUS

By her noble birth, beauty and virginity, Andromeda contitutes a type of ideal female. These qualities make her as much an ideal bride as an ideal victim: ceasing to be victim she becomes bride, and the myth culminates in Perseus' acquisition of a wife, who will bear him several children.[116] The prime function of the Andromeda myth is to provide Perseus with a wife.

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[112] On the development of Theseus, see Jacoby 1949, Nilsson 1953 (cited by Loraux 1986, 65 and her n.293); cf. Loraux 1986, index *s.v. Theseus* for discussion of his part in the creation of the Athenian funeral oration.

[113] Apollod. 3.15.8.

[114] Fr.18.74 (Carrara 1977).

[115] Perseus too acts in defence of his *πόλις*, when he defends it against Dionysus and his maenads. The Aegeus-Theseus-Minotaur myth is very like the Erechtheus-Eumolpus-Poseidon myth: Eumolpus, son of Poseidon, attacks Athens (hence the sacrifice of the Erechtheids to save the city); however, Erechtheus then kills Eumolpus in battle, and so is himself killed by Poseidon (Apollod. 3.15.5). Aegeus causes the death of Androgeus and dies, just as Erechtheus caused the death of Eumolpus and died.

[116] Alcaeus, Electryon, Mestor, Heleius, Cynurus, Gorgophone and Perses. Cf. *RML* III, 1991, 2022–4.

The pattern of the myth mimics that of the Greek marriage ceremony. Betrothal (*ἐγγύη*), in which the father of the girl secures his son-in-law by giving him the precious gift of his daughter, for whom there has been competition, is followed by consummation (*γάμος*): thus Perseus is promised Andromeda in return for killing the *κῆτος*, then has to compete with Phineus for her, and finally takes her away to his own home in Argos. The myth reflects dramatically the transfer of the daughter's loyalties from father to new husband, by characterizing the father–daughter relationship (Cepheus and Andromeda) in terms of oppression and disintegration, and the husband-wife relationship (Perseus and Andromeda) in terms of the integration initiated by *Ἔρως*.[117] Near the beginning of Euripides' *Ἀνδρομέδα*, Andromeda asks her attendant women to lament her with a song not of marriage, but of imprisonment, by her father.[118] She is pitied in her fetters by Perseus, and, in return for release, offers to serve him as his wife or servant.[119] Greek marriage required the consent of the girl, even though some of the elements of the ceremony make it seem like rape:[120] Perseus carries Andromeda off with her consent. Her physical release is followed by escape from Ethiopia into fruitful marriage in Argos.[121]

If there is any 'message' concerning women in the Perseus myths as a whole, it is that a good woman is submissive and compliant, without independence and self-will perhaps, who requires the protection of a good man to keep her from abuse by bad men. This type of ideal passive femininity of Andromeda and Danae is strongly contrasted by the (female) Graeae and Gorgons. Both Andromeda and Danae are forced to comply with the wishes of their father, even risking death, and both have to be rescued from the near-fatal positions into which they are forced.

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[117] For *Ἔρως* in E. *Ἀνδρομέδα*, see fr.136, 138. Motif of Perseus and 'love at first sight', cf. fr.125.

[118] Fr.122, 6–8: *γαμηλίῳ μὲν οὐ ξὺν παιῶνι, δεσμίῳ δέ, γόασθέ μ'*.

[119] Fr.127–9, 132. Cf. the motif or marriage as the taming, or domestication of the woman by the man: Sourvinou-Inwood 1987, 137–9 and *passim*, Seaford 1987, 106; cf. the Brauronian 'Bears' (Seaford 1987, 108).

[120] These elements only come in after the bride has given her consent at the 'uncovering' (*ἀνακαλυπτήρια*) (Redfield 1982, 191–2), e.g. the *θυρωρός, ὁ ταῖς θύραις ἐφεστηκώς, καὶ εἴργων τὰς γυναῖκας βοηθεῖν τῇ νύμφῃ βοώσῃ* (Poll. 3.42).

[121] 'A happy couple characteristically disappears from view', Redfield 1982, 181–2; cf. for example, Odysseus and Penelope. For the observations on the marriage ceremony in this paragraph, see Redfield 1982, *passim*, including bibliography.

Thus Andromeda's marriage was represented by Euripides in positive terms, as a liberation from the exigencies of a pitiless father, and as a movement from the threatened darkness of Hades to the celestial light of her catasterism,[122] through her rescue by Perseus, the hero who actually flies in the heavens.[123]

Perseus is at variance with most heroes in having only one lover,[124] because he acquires an ideal wife. His choice of Andromeda distinguishes him from Theseus and Jason, who both contract flawed marriages. The female passivity of Andromeda remarked upon above as a positive quality is not found in either Ariadne or Medea. In both cases, the girl actively betrays her father in order to escape with her lover. Daughters are meant to leave their fathers, but not to betray them. The betrayal is of a devious kind, spurred on by ἔρως, and accomplished through the 'womanly wiles' by which Euripides' Medea complains women are unfairly characterized. Ariadne gives Theseus the thread, the Daedalean device enabling him to kill her half-human half-brother the Minotaur and then to emerge unscathed from the labyrinth. Medea provides Jason with the magical drug that renders him invulnerable to the fire-breathing bronze bull and the serpent which guards the golden fleece. To add to her transgression of kinship ties, Medea connives in the treacherous murder and butchering of her brother Apsyrtus. Furthermore, Medea also becomes Theseus' step-mother, and tries, but fails, to incite Aegeus to kill him with her poisons; she is chased from Attica as she is from Corinth.[125] Andromeda, then, is an important exception to the structuralist formula used to describe disruptive women in myth, according to which *women:men::nature:culture.*[126]

Having betrayed their male kin, both women obtain husbands who in their turn

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[122] Her catasterism in Euripides: Eratosth. *Catast.* 17.

[123] E. *Ἀνδρομέδα*: 'pitiless father', fr.120; 'lawless sufferings caused by her kinsmen', fr.122, 11; contrast between light and Hades, fr.122.12–13, 20–23; Perseus flying 'through the middle region of the *αἰθήρ*', fr.124. For characterization in art of Andromeda as a 'bride of Hades', see Schauenburg 1960, 67, and *LIMC* I.1, 789 and figs.11, 17, 18, 20, 55; compare Alcestis, Antigone, Iphigeneia (and others: Seaford 1987, *passim*). For the position of (Athenian) women in society, and the use made of them in myth, see above all Gould 1980.

[124] Schauenburg 1960, 16.

[125] Ariadne's thread, or crown of light: *PR* II.2, 680–7. Medea and Jason: in Colchis, *ibid.* II.3, 792–3; in Iolcus and Corinth, *ibid.* II.3, 865–75. Medea and Theseus: Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, 22–8 for sources and discussion. Medea and *μῆτις*: Detienne 1978, 189, 193.

[126] Redfield 1982, 185–6.

fail them. In Euripides' version, Jason takes Medea back to mainland Greece, but then abandons her, so that she kills his children, his new bride and father-in-law, and then leaves him, just as she did her own father and brother.[127] Theseus leaves Ariadne on Naxos/Dia to Dionysus through 'forgetfulness', by the order of Athene, or because Dionysus takes her. Later he is instrumental in Phaedra's death, and has to be rescued from the Underworld by Heracles when his attempt to carry off Persephone fails. That Theseus loses Ariadne, and Jason Medea, accords with the Heracles-Hesione myth, in that the girl is incidental to the main consideration—which for Heracles is the acquisition of the mares of Zeus and the destruction of Troy, for Theseus, the saving of Athens, and for Jason, the retrieval of the golden fleece.

By contrast, Perseus and Andromeda live 'happily ever after'.[128] Perseus was largely considered to have married a Greek, even though Andromeda is from a distant, foreign country. In Greek art Andromeda generally wears Greek clothing, as distinct from Attic art, in which she has oriental clothes, a reflection probably of Sophocles' *Ἀνδρομέδα*,[129] and a trend which disappeared by the middle of the fourth century.[130] Philostratus described her as pale-skinned: *ἡ κόρη δὲ ἡδεῖα μέν, ὅτι λευκὴ ἐν Αἰθιοπίᾳ, ἡδὺ δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ εἶδος.*[131] Her 'Greekness' is a sign that her union with Perseus is to be thought of as sound, as comparison with Medea and Ariadne shows. From the second half of the fifth century on, probably after the production of Euripides' *Medea*, Medea is often, though not always, shown in Attic art wearing oriental dress.[132] However, in her case oriental dress is combined with the literary characterization of her as a 'dangerous oriental sorceress' who uses intrigue

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[127] For Euripides' adaptation of the traditional myth for his *Medea*, see Page 1938, 21–30.

[128] The only exceptions to this are in John of Antioch and Hyginus, above n.21. Other historians of later antiquity record other successful expeditions by Perseus to the Near East. Cf. Cephalion *FHG* III 626 fr.1 , Paus.Dam. *FHG* IV 467 fr.3, and John of Antioch *FHG* IV 544 fr.6 nr.18.

[129] Schauenburg 1960, 75. It was not a feature of E. *Ἀνδρομέδα*: *LIMC* I.1, 778.

[130] *LIMC* I.1 778. Only in later Roman representations is she shown naked.

[131] Philostr. *Im.* 1.29. Cf. the iconography of Memnon, another Ethiopian: on a series of black-figure amphorae c.550–525, his Ethiopian warriors are black-skinned, with negroid features, wearing loin cloths and armed with primitive clubs; but Memnon is shown as a white-skinned Greek hero complete with hoplite weaponry (Ballabriga 1986, 212).

[132] Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, 33–4.

to attack Athenian law and justice, as represented by Theseus.[133] While Medea's perceived eastern origin is used to make her a threatening figure, Andromeda's is not. It seems instead only to have been used by Sophocles, and served perhaps to emphasize how far from Greece Perseus travels in the course of his exploits. Ariadne begins as a model Athenian bride. In the most popular scene from the Minotaur myth on early red and black-figure Attic vases, the fight between Theseus and the Minotaur, she looks on, dressed as a young Athenian woman in *πέπλος*, or *χιτών* and *ἱμάτιον*, often with a fillet or diadem in her hair. But towards the end of the fifth century, in the scenes of her 'rescue' on Naxos/Dia, she too becomes unsettling in her appearance: she is Dionysiac.[134] Finally, in some versions of the Perseus-Dionysus myth, it is Ariadne who leads the women of Dionysus in the *θίασος* which attacks Argos: she is killed by Perseus.[135]

Without the assistance of his lover, neither Theseus nor Jason would have survived to complete his exploit. But it is Perseus who rescues Andromeda, not vice versa. This contrast underlines both Andromeda's passivity, and the full extent of Perseus' success as a youthful initiand undergoing rites of passage.[136] His success in rescuing, defending and controlling the women of his *οἶκος*, in marked contrast with Theseus on Naxos/Dia, also underlies his striking encounter with Dionysus, when he halts the progress of the god whose advent on the Greek mainland is marked most characteristically by the conversion of the women of the *πόλις* to maenadism. Perseus is in this sense a more 'successful' hero than either Theseus or Jason, but lacking some of their ambiguity, because he always wins. He could never have been the tragic hero of a *Hippolytus* or a *Medea*, or the anti-hero of the *Argonautica* of Apollonius; epics were written about Theseus and Jason, but there is no evidence for a *Perseid*.[137]

The theme of the death of Medusa had been fully explored in archaic and

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[133] Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, 53–4, and her n.32.

[134] *LIMC* III.1, 1066–67.

[135] See Chapter V, pp.165–6.

[136] Andromeda's experience is an initiation parallel to Perseus': 'Marriage is to the girl what war is to the boy': Vidal-Naquet 1981b, 184.

[137] Davies 1986, 97–8.

classical art. Non-Attic and later artists, and particularly the Romans, were less interested in the episode.[138] If Perseus entered the classical period as the Gorgon-killer, then he left it primarily as killer of the κῆτος and rescuer of Andromeda. The killing of the κῆτος, like that of the Gorgon, represents a victory over primeval forces of the sea. However, following upon the discussion of the Gorgon in Chapter III, it is now apparent that each monster-killing is of a different significance for Perseus.

The Gorgon has been described above as an 'ephebe's ideal opponent'. Living by the springs of Ocean, far outside the realm of mortals, and never threatening to encroach upon that realm, the Gorgons have to be sought out to be killed, and even have to be protected from harm;[139] and indeed, only one of them, the mortal Medusa, can be killed. 'κῆτος', by contrast, is a generic title for the type of 'sea-monster' which inhabits the deep sea, but which is likely to invade mortal territory and threaten land and limb. The κῆτος is the marine equivalent of the Erymanthean boar, or the Nemean lion, and its appearance marks an incursion into the community that only heroic action can terminate. The κῆτος (like the Gorgon) has a multiplex body, combining the tail and body of a fish with the head of a monstrous animal, which indeed, early on in its history appears as leonine, canine, reptilian, or more pointed and fish-like (in contrast with the essentially anthropomorphic, though distorted, face of the Gorgon).[140] Laomedon contracts Heracles to kill the κῆτος to forestall the destruction of his city. Cepheus does the same with Perseus. By an extension of the principle of protection of the πόλις by heroic monster-killing, the central concern of the Andromeda myth becomes the protection not of the πόλις of Cepheus, but of the future οἶκος of Perseus. And because Perseus' οἶκος is also the royal οἶκος of Argos, the πόλις that Perseus saves by killing the κῆτος and rescuing Andromeda is not that of Cepheus, but Argos itself. It is significant to recall here that the first extant appearance of Andromeda in literature was in Pseudo-Hesiod *Catalogue of Women*,[141] and that she is mentioned there only as the mother of Perseus' children.

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[138] See n.7 above.

[139] The Graeae are their προφύλακες: A. *Φορκίδες*, *TrGF* III fr.262.

[140] Boardman 1987, 78–80. The fins of the κῆτος are sometimes shown as wings (Boardman 1987, 74), which might suggest that the wings of the Gorgon are derived not from any kind of bird, but from the fins of fish, with which as a daughter of Phorcys, she has such close kinship.

[141] Above n.3.

In addition, the prevalent theme of the fragments of the Sophoclean and Euripidean Perseus dramas is children.[142] Andromeda is rescued primarily to be the mother of Perseus' heirs.

Finally, the notion of voluntariness, which has been central to this chapter, is as relevant to Perseus as to Andromeda. Like all heroic exploits, in the course of which it is intended that the hero should die, the fetching of the *γοργόνειον* is forced upon Perseus. He takes it on, *ὀλοφυρόμενος τὴν συμφοράν*.[143] Theseus' volunteering to kill the Minotaur was an innovation indeed, and the reason for it was to give Athens a bolder hero to protect and save it in difficult times. The *κῆτος*-killing too is a voluntary action which represents a positive development in Perseus' persona, to contrast with the often negative and ambiguous character of the initiand. The Gorgon-killing was not a civilizing action, while the rescuing of Andromeda is an affirmation of both the *οἶκος*, and, by implication, the *πόλις* (of Perseus, not Cepheus).

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[142] This may say more about the preoccupations of the excerptors of some of the fragments. For example, Stobaeus made lists of quotes under headings such as *περὶ ἀνδρίας*, and *περὶ παίδων*. However, it seems to be valid at least for E. *Ἀνδρομέδα*, the fragments of which are numerous. See Appendix, p.242.

[143] Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11.

V. PERSEUS AND DIONYSUS

The existence of a story which tells of a confrontation between the Argive hero Perseus and the god Dionysus, newly arrived on the Greek mainland, has been noted by several scholars. However, little has been made of the story either because of its apparently late sources; or it has simply been overlooked.[1]

When it has been mentioned, it has usually been seen as analogous to the stories of Pentheus, Lycurgus, the daughters of Proetus, the daughters of Minyas, and Butes (brother of Lycurgus),[2] all of which follow the same pattern: arrival of Dionysus, opposition to him, and the eventual punishment of his antagonists. These accounts are almost invariably taken as evidence of historical resistance to the arrival of the cult of the god in mainland Greece from abroad, either overland via Thrace and Phrygia, or oversea, or both.[3] Thus the Perseus story is examined really only in terms of the light it throws on Dionysus: apart from the mythological dictionaries, the story is discussed for the most part in works concerned primarily with the god.[4]

In spite of the late sources many scholars are inclined to suggest an early date for the origin of the story, if only because they wish to see it primarily as evidence for opposition to the arrival of orgiastic cult which they believe to be 'very ancient'. That the story could be very old indeed is now apparent from the appearance of Dionysus' name on the Linear B tablets from Pylos.[5] But this recent discovery also suggests very strongly that Dionysus was a native Greek in origin. In fact, myth has always shown that he was indeed Greek: he was born in Thebes. Thus his myths of arrival are in fact myths of return, and must be regarded not as some kind of

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[1] For instance, it is surprising that Detienne 1979 makes no mention of it.

[2] D.S. 5.50.

[3] Cf. Kerenyi 1976, 176, that the stories of Lycurgus, and of Perseus and Dionysus are essentially the same, both representing the cult of Dionysus as intruder. This is correct, but it does not go far enough. Otto 1965 preferred to see the myths as reflective of the epiphany of the god. Burkert 1983, 177–8 notes that the myths of Lycurgus and Pentheus are not attesting to a historical conflict, but are concerned with 'the polar tension between divine madness and human order as acted out in a single ritual'. However, even Burkert, in his discussion of the Agrionia makes scant mention of Perseus in connection with Dionysus (p.176 only).

[4] Otto 1965, Kerenyi 1976.

[5] Schauenburg 1960, 139–140, Burkert 1985, 162.

historical record, but as having some other meaning for his divine nature and place in the Greek pantheon.

There has in any case been little consideration of this episode as a coherent part of the mythical exploits of Perseus (with the exception of Dugas).[6] It is an episode which is significant in several ways.

First, it portrays a mortal fighting, even killing a god and, unusually if not uniquely, surviving, in acute contrast to those mortals who accept Dionysus and suffer death despite offering no resistance to him (Icarius and Erigone).[7] The importance of this fact has been overlooked in the past because of scholars' preoccupation with the story as a *post factum* 'explanation' of the Argive Agr(i)ania, which in turn is related to the Boeotian Agrionia, festivals of Dionysus which seem to have centred on the idea that the god has disappeared and needs to be found or recalled.

Secondly, it may be possible to see in this episode a classic example of a polarization of, and 'mediation' between the stable, yet incomplete, πόλις which Perseus may be seen in some ways to represent, and the external threat of orgiastic religion as championed by Dionysus: the myth then becomes a means of expressing the way in which the enormous destructive power of the Dionysus of Euripides' *Bacchae* is sublimated or synthesized with the πόλις into a new, more complete entity of the sacred and the 'political'. The wild invading god becomes a city god for all Ionians in the festival of Anthesteria and, in Athens in particular, the Great, City Dionysia and the Catagogia, the advent of the god instituted in the sixth century.[8] If it is indeed the case that the myth is associated with the development of the πόλις in Greece, then it will be possible to suggest that the myth had its origin in that period of Greek history in which the πόλις began to develop, i.e. from the tenth century onwards, and more particularly, that it was linked with Argos, Perseus' city.[9] Argos, once powerful in the Bronze age, fell into decline by the end of the thirteenth

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[6] Dugas, 1956.

[7] Icarius: Apollod. 3.14.7; on the fatal consequences of introducing wine into Attica, cf. Frazer 1921, vol.2, 96 n.2.

[8] Burkert 1985, 166, cf. *ibid.* nn.38–40 for evidence (consisting mainly in Attic vases, but also some literary references).

[9] On the origins and development of the πόλις see Ehrenberg 1969. On Argos see Tomlinson 1972.

century (as did many Bronze age communities). But it began to grow again from the eleventh to tenth centuries under the control of its new, Dorian masters.[10] This association between Perseus and πόλις may then be of great importance in the origins of Perseus himself, since it is in the same period that he seems to have become a mythological figure with a more or less coherent body of myths to his name.

This episode is not a simple analogue to that of Pentheus or Lycurgus, but is in fact radically different, in that it represents an important stage of development in the perceived 'history' (as expressed in myth) of Dionysiac religion, of the πόλις, and of Perseus as a mythological figure associated with Argos. In fact, the story is a good example of the way in myth can be used to 'think'. Thus the study of the story must go beyond the view which sees it merely as an adjunct to the Argive Agr(i)ania, and examine what it has to say vis-à-vis Dionysus as a mythological and religious figure, as a hero-god. In sum, one is compelled to ask why this story shows Dionysus being stopped dead in his tracks, and why Perseus is the hero to do it.

A. THE LITERARY SOURCES

The oldest literary source is Dinarchus ('the poet, not the orator'). Little is known of him except that he was from Delos, lived before the time of the orator Dinarchus (i.e. at least before the second half of the fourth century), and wrote poems on Dionysiac topics.[11] In the case of this myth he was aware that that Perseus killed Dionysus in battle and that his grave was at Delphi:

> *Διονύσου πράξεις καὶ τὰ περὶ Ἰνδούς, Λυκοῦργόν τε καὶ Ἀκταίωνα καὶ Πενθέα, ὅπως τε Περσεῖ συστὰς εἰς μάχην ἀναιρεῖται, ὥς φησι Δείναρχος ὁ ποιητής, οὐχ ὁ ῥήτωρ·*[12] *τῷ δὲ βουλομένῳ πάρεστιν ἰδεῖν αὐτοῦ τὴν ταφὴν ἐν Δελφοῖς παρὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα τὸν χρυσοῦν...καὶ οὕτω γράφεται θηλύμορφος διά τε ἄλλας αἰσχρὰς αἰτίας καὶ διὰ τὸ μιξόθηλυν στρατὸν ὁπλίζειν· ὥπλιζε γὰρ σὺν τοῖς ἄρρεσι τὰς θηλείας, ὥς φησιν ὁ Φιλόχορος ἐν δευτέρῳ.*[13]
>
> *ὁ γάρ τοι Δείναρχος, ποιητὴς οὐκ ἄσημος ὤν, τὰς Διονύσου πράξεις ἀφηγούμενος ὅσα τε αὐτῷ πεπόνηται περὶ τῶν Ἰνδῶν, καὶ μὴν καὶ Ἀκταίωνα καὶ*

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[10] See Tomlinson 1972, chs.5 and 6, and *passim*, and Jeffery 1976, ch.9, 133.

[11] Demetrius of Magnesia, quoted in D.H. *Din.* 1, Cyril *Contra Iul.* 10.341–2.

[12] *FGrHist* 399 F 1a, quoted by Eusebius. *FGrHist* 399 F 1b records a version in which apparently Dionysus fled Lycurgus too, and died and was buried in Delphi: this is probably a confusion arising from the Perseus–Dionysus myth.

[13] Philochorus *FGrHist* 328 F 7a.

Λυκοῦργον ὅπως εἴη πεφονευκώς, εὖ μάλα διειρηκώς, ἀνῃρῆσθαι καὶ αὐτὸν ὑπὸ Περσέως διατείνεται, καὶ κηδεῦεσθαί γε μὴν ἐν Δελφοῖς παρὰ τὸν Χρουσοῦν καλούμενον Ἀπόλλωνα.[14]

Euphorion mentions that Dionysus sacked the city of Eurymedon;[15]

(discussing the meaning of *πρηνίξαι*)...*ὁ δὲ Εὐφορίων οὐκ ὀρθῶς λέγει περὶ τοῦ Διονύσου, ὅτι ταῖς γυναικείαις τάξεσιν ἐγκελευσάμενος ἐπρήνιξε τὴν τοῦ Εὐρυμέδοντος πόλιν, τούτεστι τὸ Ἄργος. Εὐρυμέδων δέ ὁ Περσεὺς ἐκαλεῖτο.*

Scholium T on Homer *Iliad* 14.319 also quotes Euphorion.[16] Commenting on *Δανάης* it says:

> *τινὲς δέ φασι πλείονα Ἡρακλέους αὐτὸν εἰργασμένον οὐ τυχεῖν δόξης, ὅτι Δίονυσον ἀνεῖλεν εἰς τὴν Λερναίαν ἐμβαλὼν λίμνην.*

This opinion reappears later as an explanation for the relative scarcity of source material for the story: Dugas echoed the idea that the Perseus–Dionysus story was little mentioned in the sources because of its sacrilegious nature, or because it was not particularly appropriate to glorification of Dionysus.[17]

Eustathius also refers to the myth, in his scholium on *Iliad* 14.320:

> *...καὶ ὅτι τὸν τοιοῦτον Περσέα πλείω Ἡρακλέους ἀγαθὰ κατεργασάμενον οὐ τυχεῖν δόξης φασί, διότι Διόνυσον ἀνελὼν εἴς τινα λίμνην ἐνέβαλεν.*

He goes on to liken it to the myth of Lycurgus:

> *οὗτος δε ὁ μῦθος οὐδὲν ἀπέοικε τοῦ κατὰ τὸν Λυκοῦργον ὃς διώκων τὸν Διόνυσον ἠνάγκασε κατὰ θαλάσσης ἄλασθαι.*

But he does not mention the difference: Lycurgus later dies because of his opposition to the god.

The newest addition to the sources is now to be found in a manuscript of Aratus' *Phaenomena*. A scholiast tells how Dionysus has an army of both women and men

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[14] Cyril *Contra Iul.* 10.341–2. For Dionysus buried at Delphi cf. Dinarchus *FGrHist* 399 F 1b, and Philochorus *FGrHist* 328 F 7b, Plu. 365A, Call. fr.643, 517; at Thebes, cf. Ps.Clem. *Recogn.* 10.24, cf. Lobeck 1829, 574ff.

[15] *EM* 687.33. Cf. Chapter I, pp.14–15 and n.59 for *Εὐρυμέδων* as another name for Perseus.

[16] Erbse 1974, vol. 3, 641 classes the scholium as one of the 'exegetical', most of which date from the late Hellenistic/early Roman period, in general reflecting the terminology and views of the first century and the first two centuries A.D. (N.J.Richardson, cited by Kirk 1985, 40).

[17] Dugas 1956, 13.

in which he commands the men, while Ariadne, trained in war by him, leads the women:[18]

> *...ἦν δὲ ἄριστος στρατηγὸς καὶ στράτευμα πολὺ ἔχων. τὰς γὰρ θηλείας ἅμα τοῖς ἄρρεσιν ἐστράτευε. διά τοι τοῦτο μιξόθηλυν αὐτόν φασι καὶ γράφουσι. καὶ ἐπαίδευε καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν Ἀριάδνην τὰ τοῦ πολέμου, ὡς ἡγεῖσθαι μὲν αὐτὴν τῶν θηλειῶν, αὐτὸν δὲ τῶν ἀρρένων. ἐν ᾧ ἐπιτηδεύματι καὶ θανάτῳ ἐδυστύχησεν. ἐν γὰρ τῷ πολέμῳ τῷ πρὸς Περσέα ἐν τῇ Πυθίᾳ τρωθεῖσα ὑπὸ Περσέως τέθνηκε καὶ ταύτην ἀμύναι θέλων ὁ Διόνυσος ἀνῃρέθη ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ Περσέως, καὶ μνῆμα ἐν τῷ Πυθίῳ ἱερῷ ἤγειρον αὐτοῖς περικαλλὲς οἱ στρατιῶται.*

Both Dionysus and Ariadne are killed by Perseus at Delphi, and not Argos. The reason for the change in location is the existence of the story in Delphi that Dionysus was buried there. Accordingly the scholiast relates that both are buried there and honoured by soldiers with a monument.[19] The story is given as an explanation for why Dionysus was represented by artists as *μιξόθηλυς*. (Thus the scholiast is somehow related to Dinarchus as quoted by Eusebius, and probably copied Eusebius or a common source, since Dinarchus says that Dionysus was shown as *θηλύμορφος*, because his army was *μιξόθηλυς*.)

A fragment of Apollodorus of Athens implicitly links Perseus with the death of Dionysus:[20]

> *προτερεῖν ἄρα Μωυσῆς ἀποδείκνυται τῆς μὲν Διονύσου ἀποθεώσεως ἔτη ἑξακόσια τέσσαρα, εἴ γε τῆς Περσέως βασιλείας τῷ τριακοστῷ δευτέρῳ ἔτει ἐκθεοῦται, ὥς φησιν Ἀπολλόδωρος ἐν τοῖς Χρονικοῖς.*

Ovid has Pentheus refer to a conflict between Dionysus and Argos, except that it is Acrisius who opposes Dionysus (again, successfully); Acrisius continues to keep the god out of the city, but later repents, and receives his cult.[21]

Cephalion alludes to conflict between Perseus and Dionysus, in which Perseus is beaten and driven with one hundred ships to Assyria:[22]

> *καὶ ἀφικνεῖται Περσεὺς ὁ Δανάης...ναῦς ἄγων ρ'. ἔφευγε δὲ Περσεὺς Διόνυσον τὸν Σεμέλης υἱέα.*

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[18] Salamanticensis 233; cf. Martin 1963, and 1974, 108.

[19] Note the aetiological function of the myth at Delphi, as at Argos.

[20] *FGrHist* 244 F 87.

[21] Ov. *Metam.* 3.559f, 4.607ff.

[22] *FGrHist* 93 F 1.

Pausanias refers to the confrontation between Perseus and Dionysus, and he links it expressly to monuments in Argos. When in Argos, he records the presence by the temple of Hera of the graves of the *Ἄλιαι*, the 'Sea-women',[23] Dionysus' female followers slaughtered by Perseus, and of the grave of Choraea, particularly honoured among them, who was buried by the temple of Tyche:[24]

> *τὸ δὲ μνῆμα τὸ πλησίον Χορείας μαινάδος ὀνομάζουσι, Διονύσῳ λέγοντες καὶ ἄλλας γυναῖκας καὶ ταύτην ἐς Ἄργος συστρατεύσασθαι, Περσέα δέ, ὡς ἐκράτει τῆς μάχης, φονεῦσαι τῶν γυναικῶν τὰς πολλάς· τὰς μὲν οὖν λοιπὰς θάπτουσιν ἐν κοινῷ, ταύτῃ δὲ—ἀξιώματι γὰρ δὴ προεῖχεν—ἰδίᾳ τὸ μνῆμα ἐποίησαν.*
>
> *τῆς δὲ Ἥρας ὁ ναὸς τῆς Ἀνθείας ἐστὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ τῆς Λητοῦς ἐν δεξιᾷ καὶ πρὸ αὐτοῦ γυναικῶν τάφος. ἀπέθανον δὲ αἱ γυναῖκες ἐν μάχῃ πρὸς Ἀργείους τε καὶ Περσέα, ἀπὸ νήσων τῶν ἐν Αἰγαίῳ Διονύσῳ συνεστρατευμέναι· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Ἁλίας αὐτὰς ἐπονομάζουσιν.*

He knows nothing of the death of the god at Perseus' hands, saying instead that Dionysus overcame his enmity and received high honours from the Argives:[25]

> *...μνῆμα καὶ Διονύσου ναὸς Κρησίου. Περσεῖ γάρ πολεμήσαντα αὐτὸν καὶ αὖθις ἐλθόντα ἐς λύσιν τοῦ ἔχθους τά τε ἄλλα τιμηθῆναι μεγάλως λέγουσιν ὑπὸ Ἀργείων καὶ τέμενός οἱ δοθῆναι τοῦτο ἐξαίρετον· Κρησίου δὲ ὕστερον ὠνομάσθη, διότι Ἀριάδνην ἀποθανοῦσαν ἔθαψεν ἐνταῦθα. Λυκέας δὲ λέγει κατασκευαζομένου δεύτερον τοῦ ναοῦ κεραμέαν εὑρεθῆναι σορόν, εἶναι δὲ Ἀριάδνης αὐτήν· καὶ αὐτός τε καὶ ἄλλους Ἀργείων ἰδεῖν ἔφη τὴν σορόν.*

Ariadne too is buried in his sanctuary there, though Pausanias does not mention how she died. In each of the sources in which she is mentioned, she is reported as having been killed by Perseus.[26] In the Scholium on Aratus she is Dionysus' direct counterpart and protégée, versed by him in the arts of war, leading the women against Perseus while Dionysus leads the men. In Pausanias it is said simply that she is buried in the temple of Dionysus *Κρήσιος* in Argos, but one may conjecture that the story of how she died was current in Argos, since the context of Pausanias' comment on her grave is the attack of the *Ἄλιαι*.

The fullest, and the latest, account is in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*,[27] where Perseus, with the support of Hera, the most prominent goddess of Argos, fights the invading

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[23] Cf. the Gorgons, and the Graeae as daughters of Phorcys, the ancient sea-god.

[24] Paus. 2.20.3, 22.1.

[25] Paus. 2.23.8.

[26] Nonn., Schol. Arat.

[27] Nonn. 25.105ff, 47.470ff.

Dionysus and his army of maenads and satyrs. Hermes eventually reconciles the two, just as Dionysus is about to annihilate his mortal opponent. (Aside from Cephalion, this impending triumph for Dionysus rather than Perseus is unique to Nonnus, whose concern was, after all, to glorify the god.)

Thus the extant literary sources begin in the fourth century. The myth also appeared in vase painting at the end of the sixth, and in the first quarter of the fifth centuries.[28] Combined, these two groups of sources are relatively few in proportion to those which mention the other parts of the Perseus myths, which suggests that the myth never became widely known and essentially remained local to Argos. For in the main the story is set at Argos and is linked to specific funereal monuments in the city. In addition, it is known that there were two temples of Dionysus in the city.[29] The substitution of Delphi for Argos in one version does not alter the fundamental opposition between Dionysus and the king of Argos (whether Perseus or, as in Ovid, Acrisius). The association between Dionysus and Argos goes back at least as far as Hesiod, who knew of the madness of the daughters of Proetus the Argive king.[30] Another possible link is the suggestion in an Aeschylean fragment that Semele, mother of Dionysus, was born not in Thebes but in Argos.[31]

The main thrust of the tradition shows that Perseus, whether he kills Dionysus or is reconciled with him, is victorious against him in battle.[32] Cephalion's version which has Perseus defeated and driven to Assyria with a hundred ships would appear to be a part of the tradition which seeks to justify a link between Perseus and Persia and the East. It is a tradition which goes back to Herodotus at least, and his contemporary Hellanicus, and which appears amplified particulary in the later historians, Deinias of Argos, Pausanias, and John of Antioch.[33]

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[28] See below pp.171–6.

[29] Paus. 2.23.1, 7.

[30] Fr.131 (Merkelbach and West). In the same fragment, Acusilaus is said to have told the version in which the Proetides were driven mad by Hera.

[31] See *TrGF* III, fr.168 (line 16 refers to the Argive river Inachus). This could be Aeschylus' own version: compare his transfer of the Orestes myth from Mycenae to Argos. Other places claimed to be Dionysus' birthplace too: Naxos, Icaros, Eleutherae, Teos, and Draconon. Cf. Nilsson 1955, 336–340, 337, Burkert 1983, 170 n.12.

[32] Din., Philoch., Schol. Arat., Paus., Schol. *Il.*, Eustath., Apollod.

[33] Hdt. 6.54, 7.61. Hellanic. in Steph.Byz. cf. Tümpel 1887–88, 155. Deinias, in Photius 25

B. THE DATING OF THE PERSEUS–DIONYSUS MYTH

Most of the scholars who have discussed the myth of Perseus and Dionysus consider it to be very old (i.e. archaic or pre-archaic), by association with the Argive Agr(i)ania, which they say is ancient. The myth does indeed date from at least the mid-sixth century, as the iconographical evidence shows. But, however old either story or cult is, the evidence for both (which is late relative to the antiquity claimed for them) has tended to mean that any such dating is based entirely on assumption.

One more recent example of this is Schauenburg, who reasons as follows:[34] (i) the three Dionysus myths must be a historical reflection of the coming of the Dionysus cult; (ii) on the face of it, the Perseus myth seems as old as those of Pentheus and Lycurgus (i.e. at least Homeric); (iii) a story in which a god is killed by a hero could not have arisen in a time in which the god's cult was widely accepted (i.e. in later antiquity). It has already been mentioned above that the idea that the Dionysus myths represent a historical arrival of cult in Greece is no longer as obvious as it once was. Otto was the first to see these myths not as myths of arrival, but of epiphany.[35] Certainly it is widely accepted now that many myths need not be related in any straightforward way to historical events. The distinction must also be made between that which is historical, and that which is perceived to be historical:[36] myths of origin naturally talk of people arriving; and there is no necessity for the Perseus story to be contemporaneous with the 'arrival' of the Dionysus cult, if indeed this did 'arrive' in such an obviously historical fashion. Schauenburg's (ii) is not an objective assessment. In any case, a late sixth-, early fifth-century origin would not be an unrespectable one. His (iii) depends on a religious ideology and concept of mythology that are not Greek. The death of Dionysus is not like a man's: unlike a man, Dionysus returns. Mythology is not monolithic, in the sense that even well-known stories may spawn versions that vary considerably in detail according to time

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p.443a, 13. Paus. in *FHG* IV, 467 fr.3. John of Antioch: *FHG* IV, 544 fr.6,18.

[34] Schauenburg 1960, 139.

[35] Otto 1965, 53, and *ibid.* ch.4, 'The myth of his epiphany'.

[36] See especially Burkert 1985, 162. Cf. Graf 1985, ch.5 *passim*, 'Mythos, Heiligtum und Fest', for the development of Apollo's myths and their relation to his cults on Delos: scholars seem to have been less keen automatically to 'historicize' Apollo in the same way they have Dionysus. Against the tendency to relate myth to history, and to try to find the 'core' of a myth, see Sourvinou-Inwood 1988.

and place. The Perseus–Dionysus myth could have been modelled later on the other opposition myths (of Pentheus and Lycurgus), and its strong association with Argos might suggest a deliberate political mythopoesis in the sixth century, such as the one practised upon Theseus in Athens in the same period (even though in theory the extreme antiquity of the Dionysus cult would allow the myth to be Mycenaean at least). The relatively poor state of the sources are not therefore suggestive of a 'late' origin, but of the fact that the myth was created in, and remained specific to Argos.

Thus Dugas accounts for the lack of evidence for the Perseus–Dionysus myth as owing to the fact that it was a story local to Argos to explain local remains;[37] and that as hero there Perseus had a role analogous to that of Theseus in Attica, but that the defeat of Dionysus was too alien to the Athenian view of the god as, for example, god of the theatre. It seems unlikely that the eclecticism of the classical poets was so great that Athens could hear of and fully assimilate the other episodes of Perseus' story and leave no trace, not even a disapproving mention of the story in which the hero opposed one of the most important Athenian gods with impunity. Cults of Dionysus and the story existed side by side in Argos, and so may have done in Athens. Since Pausanias culled the story in Argos, it would seem that there the story of reconciliation between Perseus and Dionysus was current, so that there would be nothing to prevent an Athenian author mentioning the reconciliation version, even if he could not go so far as to put it on the tragic stage (the fragments of Perseus dramas bear no trace of such a play). It is not as if the god suffers dismemberment at the hands of Perseus as he does in the myth of Dionysus *Ζαγρεύς* and the Titans: in it, the god is killed (dismembered and cooked by Titans sent by Hera), only to rise again. The myth was pre-Hellenistic.[38] The scantiness of its sources is very like that of the sources for the Perseus–Dionysus myth. On the *Ζαγρεύς* myth, Burkert concludes that

> one should therefore concede that the myth of the dismemberment of Dionysus is

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[37] Dugas 1956, 13–15.

[38] The oldest certain reference is Call. fr.643; cf. 'Orphicorum Fragmenta' (Kern 1922) fr.60–63. It was referred to by Xenocrates, pupil of Plato, on Pl. *Phd.* 62b, and hinted at by Plato himself, *Crat.* 400c, *Leg.* 701c. Herodotus' silence on the sufferings of Osiris, with whom Dionysus was identified, is also suggestive. Cf. Burkert 1985, 298 and his notes 17–24, and 1983, 224–6 and his note 43.

> relatively old and well known among the Greeks but was consciously kept secret as a doctrine of mysteries. The obligation to secrecy will have been made more compelling because of the uneasiness of speaking in the light of day about the death of a god.

The same conclusions may very well apply to the Perseus–Dionysus myth, and would explain why only later literary sources refer to it in full detail.[39] For the Argive Agr(i)ania, at which the god is summoned from the bottomless waters of the Lernaean lake, offers the same reassurance that ritual can reverse myth: Dionysus can reappear intact from Hades just as do Theseus, Heracles, Odysseus, and as he does himself in Aristophanes' *Frogs*.[40] However, there is always the possibility that our myth was mentioned, but not in the extant material.

A comment of Diodorus' in another context might serve here: since the poets have told '*καὶ πολλοὺς καὶ τερατώδεις λόγους* [about Dionysus], it is a difficult task to give clear account of the birth and deeds of this god'.[41]

C. THE ICONOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

A study of the few vase paintings associated with the Perseus–Dionysus story provides positive evidence of conflict between Perseus and Dionysus as early as the end of the sixth century. Secondly, there is some indication of an association between Perseus and satyrs outside the myth.

Schauenburg has collected all the available vase evidence that is thought to indicate such an association.[42] There are three basic configurations: (i) Perseus killing women with a sword; (ii) Perseus with satyrs, with the latter joining in with

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[39] The only other death of a Greek god, as opposed to banishment to Tartarus (or being swallowed by Cronus), is the death of Zeus, as indicated by his grave on Mt.Yuktas in Crete. The 'grave' existed probably to allow him to be 'reborn' each year in ritual, as he was on Mt.Ida. For full archeological references see Burkert 1985, I.3.3 note 18; on Ida, *ibid.* note 16; on both, *ibid.* 127.

[40] On ritual as forming a logical consequence of actions which form a mythological narrative see Calame 1986, 164. Another explanation for the non-appearance, in a Greek tragedy, of the death of Dionysus at the hands of Perseus may be that such a death would not conform to the 'rules' which Aristotle states in the *Poetics*: for the *περιπέτεια* of a tragedy, cf. Arist. *Po.* 1452 b.34ff. For those who consider Aristotle's theory marginal to the workings of Greek tragedy, note at least that it is unprecedented in extant tragedy for a god to be so treated by a mortal.

[41] D.S. 3.62.2.

[42] Schauenburg 1960, 93–103.

the Gorgons' pursuit of him; (iii) Perseus frightening satyrs with the *γοργόνειον*. However, it will appear that only (i) is a clear representation of the Perseus–Dionysus conflict.

1. Perseus And Pentheus, With Women Of Dionysus

Four black-figure amphorae show Perseus attacked by women in the service of Dionysus.[43]

The first is in Würzburg (dating from after 480), the second in the Gallatin collection in New York (c.500), the third in Heidelberg (also early fifth century), and the fourth of location unknown (but of similar design and date).[44] All show a youth, bearded, wearing *πέτασος*, *κίβισις* and winged shoes, with sword drawn, between two girls who are running away to the left and the right. As Schauenburg notes,[45] the motif must have been fairly widely distributed by this time, because each amphora is painted by a different artist.

The *κίβισις* and winged shoes allow the youth to be identified as Perseus. He also wears a *χλαμύς*. On his left arm can be seen the straps of the *κίβισις*. The woman on the right is running away to the right, hands raised; Perseus holds her with his left hand and is about to thrust his sword into her. The woman on the left is running left, head turned back to watch. Each woman wears a long *πέπλος*.

Kretschmer's interpretation holds good,[46] that the women are not Gorgons. His

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[43] The fifth vase suggested by Schauenburg (*ABV* 209.4 Nicole 1911, no.928, pl.12f, Inv.12584) does not in my view depict Perseus and maenads. The usual identification is that the two pictures on the vase, of similar content, show the rape of Thetis by Peleus. Each picture shows a man and three women, who may be maenads, or companions of Dionysus. If they are maenads, then the man is more likely to be Pentheus than Perseus, since he has no accoutrements, except for a sword which, as in the usual Pentheus iconography, is undrawn. The presence of a ram on B being held or tossed by one of the women may indicate Dionysiac *σπαραγμός*. Each woman holds a snake, which is very Dionysian (cf. E. *Ba.* 698–9, and 1330ff where Dionysus announces that Cadmus and Harmonia are to be changed into snakes). There is a vine in the background. On A the man is not trying to rape the blonde-haired woman, but to supplicate her for his life, i.e. the blonde woman is Agave, and the other women her sisters.

[44] (i) *ABV* 395.6, Langlotz 1932, pl.40,213. (ii) *ABV* 373.174, *CVA* Gallatin Coll. 2, pl.38.2, Howe 1954, pl.36 fig.7. (iii) *CVA* Heidelberg 1, pl.35.5. (iv) cited by J.D.Beazley *JHS* 54 (1934), 91 (reviewing Langlotz 1932, 213); Beazley refers to the vase as 'another that was on the market'; apparently it is, or was, very close to (i) in composition and treatment.

[45] Schauenburg 1960, 94.

[46] Kretschmer 1892, 32ff.

reason was that they are not monstrous. In fact, this would not be sufficient on its own. The process whereby Medusa ceased to be portrayed as monstrous and instead became a beautiful woman began in the early fifth century: Pindar already refers to her as *εὐπάραος*.[47] However, in these pictures, Perseus is trying to stab a woman, not to decapitate her as he did Medusa. Further, it is Perseus who is chasing the women, not vice versa. Finally, the two sisters of Medusa are immortal and cannot be killed. The women cannot be Graeae (because they have two eyes each, not one between them, and they are not old). Nor are they the nymphs who give Perseus the cap, *κίβισις* and winged shoes (because Perseus would hardly be trying to kill them). They are certainly not spectating figures. Nor are they Amazons, for they are unarmed. The only alternative is that they are maenads,[48] or at least, companions of Dionysus: T.H.Carpenter's analysis of the iconography of Dionysus negates the concern that specific 'maenadic' traits are lacking.[49] Furthermore, Schauenburg suggests that the reason for the lack of maenadic features is that the women are 'Sea-women' of Dionysus, and so are more like Nereids in iconography.[50] Corroboration of this identification is provided on the first three amphorae (and presumably the fourth), on which, behind the three figures, is shown ivy, the plant of Dionysus.[51] And on the second amphora another scene is shown on the other side: Dionysus with satyrs.

On this evidence, Schauenburg, like Dugas, concludes that the Perseus–Dionysus story was indeed an ancient one, dating it from at least the fifth, if not the sixth century. However, there is further evidence which both strengthens this conclusion and, more interestingly, helps to quantify the significance of this scene vis-à-vis Perseus.

First, the Perseus scene is not an unprecedented one: the iconographical topos of a youth attacking a woman with a sword on archaic Attic vases is paralleled by

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[47] Pi. *P.* 12.16.

[48] This view: Kretschmer 1892, 32ff, Howe 1954, 220, Dugas 1956, 11, Kleiner, 1955, 17, Schauenburg 1960, 94.

[49] Carpenter 1986.

[50] Schauenburg 1960, 95.

[51] For ivy iconography, see Carpenter 1986, pls. 8, 10, 11, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24–28, 30, 32. On some of these, ivy appears with the vine: the two are not to be confused.

several pictures of Theseus attacking his mother Aethra, and his step-mother Medea, and also of Odysseus threatening the sorceress Circe with a sword.[52] In each case the hero is retaliating against a threat to his life: the topos is not depicting gratuitous violence.

Secondly, a comparison with the iconography of Pentheus shows not only that the women are indeed women of Dionysus, but also confirms that the story referred to on the four amphorae is specifically that of Perseus' opposition to Dionysus rather than just an encounter with women of the *θίασος*. A pyxis in the Louvre dating from the fifth to fourth century has two pictures on it.[53] On A, Dionysus stands, long-haired, with headband and *θύρσος*, with two women, each of whom wears a long loose *πέπλος*, long-haired, running away left and right, the one on the left holding a *θύρσος* in her right hand; Dionysus' right hand is lifted slightly as if in dismissal. On B, there are three figures, one man between two women; the women are unarmed, similarly clad, but with short hair; the woman on the left holds the man's right arm; the woman on the right holds his left arm and leg, so that he is suspended between them; he wears a sword on his left side, undrawn, with the strap running over his right shoulder; his garment is hanging loose off his left shoulder; he is unbearded.

The whole vase is thus unified, showing the dismissal of maenads by Dionysus, sent to dismember a man, undoubtedly Pentheus. The similarites between B of this pyxis, and the youth and the women on the Perseus amphorae are striking, with respect to their clothing, and their position in relation to each other; in addition, on the other side of both the Pentheus and the Gallatin vase is Dionysus, on the pyxis sending his maenads to find Pentheus, and on the amphora waiting with his retinue of satyrs to discover the outcome of their mission against Perseus. The essential difference, however, between the two pictures (though there are others, for which see below), is of course the fate of Perseus and the fate of Pentheus. On the pyxis, the two women face inwards, while pushing themselves apart again with the strength of their legs, effecting a *σπαραγμός*. On the amphorae, it is as if they have run to either side of Perseus in order to tear him apart, but have met with his sword and strength, far greater than they expected, so that they fly apart again, facing

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[52] See Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, *passim*, especially the plates, and Sourvinou-Inwood 1987.

[53] *RML* III, 1932 fig.1, Hartwig 1892, 157, pl.5.

outwards in attempted escape.

Other vases confirm that the essence of the Pentheus iconography is maenads closing in on and overwhelming him. A red-figure, Attic vase in Naples, c.500, shows a scene almost identical to B of the Pentheus pyxis in the position of the figures, except that the woman on the left is disarming Pentheus of his spear, and that the woman on the right carries not only a *θύρσος* in one hand, but a sword in the other; this time Pentheus is bearded. An Italian vase in Munich shows no less than six maenads closing in on Pentheus, the latter once more almost naked, his garment over his shoulder. This time his sword is drawn, but to no avail.[54]

The way in which the two heroes are seen on these vases corresponds precisely with what we know of their myths, and points up some central motifs in the mythic persona of each, demonstrating how differently each responds to an identical situation. Dionysus sends maenads to dismember each one of them. Perseus remains clothed, uses his sword and has his winged/magic cap, shoes, and *κίβισις* to mark simultaneously his identity and his potency as a hero (rather than to indicate that he fights off the maenads actually by flying or becoming invisible): he is very much Perseus the Gorgon-killer, who can fly and become invisible at will. Pentheus on the contrary is practically naked, his *χλαμύς* falling to the ground or draped over his arm. He is submissive, overcome by the women he went to spy on. His sword represents his maleness, but usually remains undrawn. Although it is not unusual for a hero to be shown naked in vase painting, male nakedness in this case contrasts with the fully dressed female figures, and is symptomatic of the inversion of male and female which is found in both Pentheus' and Perseus' myths, where women threaten men. Seaford observes that Pentheus, in the *Bacchae* undergoes mock/partial initiation to the *θίασος*.[55] But Perseus goes openly as a man and monster-killing warrior seeking not to join the *θίασος*, but to destroy it.

Pentheus is a deeply ambivalent figure, but he is almost characterless, or rather, a figure who operates in one myth only. He is known only as the king of Thebes

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[54] Naples: *RML* III, 1937 fig.4. Heydemann *Mus. Nazion.* nr.2562, *Mus. Barb.* 16,11. Munich: *RML* III, 1935 fig.3 and Jahn 1841, pl.2a. Cf. a bowl in Ruvo: *RML* III, 1937, Jahn 1841, pl.1a. Cf. also Dilthey 1874, 7.3, a drinking bowl.

[55] Seaford 1984, 44. On rites of passage in the play see too Segal 1982, ch.6 ('Arms and the Man: Sex Roles and Rites of Passage').

who opposed Dionysus. Perseus is a king and much more. Perseus drives the maenads apart—a *σπαραγμός* of a kind perhaps, but different to that which they were expecting—while Pentheus can only cry out ineffectually to his crazed mother and aunts.[56] Perseus' accoutrements, his *κίβισις*, winged shoes and cap mark his divine patronage and his success as Gorgon-killer, and are the reason why he succeeds where Pentheus fails, semi-naked and incapable of defending himself. Perseus remains in control, with his heroic attributes intact and enhanced, while Pentheus is stripped first of his dignity and then of his life.

Certain coins issued in Macedon add to the evidence of an association between Perseus and the women of Dionysus.[57] The *ἅρπη* of the hero Perseus first appears on copper coins issued by Philip V (between 221 and 179) who also put the hero's head on his coins, and named his son after him. A gold stater from Amphipolis has the hero's head on one side and the club of Heracles (the national hero of Macedonia) on the other.[58] Each nominal type of King Perseus' silver coins has the head of the king on the obverse, and various motifs on the reverse. On tetradrachms appears an eagle flapping its wings, standing on a thunderbolt (an ancient symbol of the Macedonian monarchy);[59] on drachms, a club (of Heracles); and on didrachms, a *ἅρπη*, the weapon of the hero Perseus.[60] That this identification of the hero with the king Perseus was deliberate is confirmed by a coin from Philip V's reign which shows his son as the hero.[61] W.P.Wallace recorded four groups of tetrobols issued by King Perseus from 178 to 168, three of which have a maenad's head on the obverse, and the common symbol of a ship's stern, sometimes with a star and the inscription *MAKEDONWN* on the reverse.[62] In addition, Head gave no record of any Bacchic

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[56] Cf. the 'fifth vase' (n.43 above).

[57] Mamroth 1928 provided most of the evidence, but did not draw these conclusions.

[58] Gold stater: Jenkins 1972, nos.520, 521, 222.

[59] Mamroth 1928, 2 n.1. The eagle also appears on diobols of Archelaus (413–399), and on coins of Alexander the Great.

[60] Mamroth 1928, 2.

[61] Jenkins 1972, no.542, and 221–2 for comment.

[62] Wallace 1962, 17–22.

motifs on coins from Macedon, until a silver maenad head of circa 185–168.[63] So, although there are other examples of such motifs from other areas of Greece (for example, Histiaea),[64] the motif of the maenad's head seems to have occurred in Macedon itself notably in the reign of King Perseus. This suggests that the maenad head motif may refer, not merely to a cult of Dionysus, but also to a link between Perseus, the hero as identified with the king, and the women of Dionysus whom he kills. Such a reference would have constituted a powerful symbol of the king's determination to resist invasion by the Romans and the Aetolians.

2. Perseus Accompanied By Satyrs

The oldest vase painting of this scene is on a mid-sixth-century black-figure bowl[65] showing Perseus pursued by two Gorgons accompanied by two satyrs; two other figures, though not characterized, are identified by Beazley as Hermes and Athena, because they are Perseus' helpers in the Gorgon-killing myth. The scene appears to be a variant of the pursuit of Perseus after the decapitation of Medusa, which is very common in seventh- and sixth-century art.

Schauenburg voices the common view, that this vase has nothing to do with the Perseus–Dionysus myth.[66] Indeed, there is no need for this painting to refer to our myth. Satyrs on archaic vases do not necessarily have Dionysiac associations. One of Carpenter's conclusions is that 'satyrs appear on Attic vases a decade or so before they appear with Dionysus...'[67] 'They also continue to appear in other scenes without the god'.[68]

The significance of the presence of satyrs in such a context is uncertain, but the topos may derive from satyr plays. Satyrs in archaic vase scenes depicting hero stories are not unprecedented, but they are rare. Beazley cites two other examples, from Attic vases as early as the end of the archaic period. On a red-figure Louvre

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[63] Head 1911.

[64] See Wallace 1962.

[65] Beazley 1934–35, 113.

[66] Schauenburg 1960, 93.

[67] Carpenter 1986, 125, on the François vase (Florence 4209), pl.1B, 4A, painted shortly after 570.

[68] Carpenter 1986, 76.

cup dating from the first half of the fifth century is shown Theseus chasing the Bull of Marathon. A satyr holds the bull by the horns, thus helping the hero in his exploit. Similarly, on the red-figure Florence vase, there are two such pictures. On A are Heracles, Nemean lion and satyrs. On B are Theseus, bull and satyrs. It is very likely that the pictures on both of these vases were inspired by satyr plays (as Pottier says of the Louvre cup).[69]

Is it possible that the Perseus–satyr picture did not originate from a satyr play? The satyrs are not included for extra decoration, since they are fully integrated into the scene of pursuit. However, they are hardly needed to convey any extra sense of pursuit or monstrosity, because the two Gorgons are usually sufficient for this in most representations of the chase. The satyrs are there for a reason, and not through some whim of the artist. Yet nowhere do they appear in the literary sources for the pursuit. One is constantly aware of the fact that there are not always literary sources to account for every heroic vase painting that has survived, the best-known example being the board-game played by Achilles and Ajax. However, it is too big a conclusion to jump to, to say that the presence of satyrs in the pursuit of Perseus by Gorgons on a sixth-century vase, with no contemporary corresponding literary sources, is a reference to the Perseus–Dionysus clash. It is possible, however, for a vase painting of Perseus with satyrs to be an iconographical by-product of the Perseus–Dionysus fight, without itself being a depiction of it. The pursuing satyrs may have had their origin in the iconographical tradition only. An artist knowing of the story of Perseus and women of Dionysus might very well have then manufactured a scene in which Perseus encounters the other members of the *θίασος*, the satyrs. Alternatively, the earlier tradition of Perseus pursued by satyrs may have spawned the Perseus–Dionysus myth, the first appearance of which on vases has been seen to have occurred some fifty years later, c.500.

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[69] Cup in Louvre, G 265, Pottier 1922, 217 and pl.133; cup in Florence, V 58, *ABV* 413.24. The Nearchus aryballos cited in this connection by Schauenburg (1960, 93), does not constitute a link between Perseus and satyrs, as Schauenburg himself states.

3. Perseus Frightening Satyrs With The *Γοργόνειον*

There is a second category of vase evidence which links Perseus with satyrs. However, once again the presence of satyrs with Perseus does not imply a reference to the Perseus–Dionysus fight.

A late fifth-century Apulian bowl shows Perseus holding up the *γοργόνειον*, and on either side of him two satyrs flee, their faces turned away to avoid the deadly gaze. Again, Perseus is the central figure in a fully integrated scene. Two Italian vases of similar date have the same scene. In all three cases Perseus is the hero who can make his enemies run away, this time without even having to attack them in any conventional sense: the threat of the Gorgon's glare is enough.[70]

Schauenburg[71] noted that most scholars believe this iconographical topos goes back to a satyr play,[72] and that the scenario is fully appropriate—a story in which Perseus throws his companions into a panic, but without harming them, since they are shown turning away from the *γοργόνειον* without suffering petrification.[73] The *Δικτυουλκοί* of Aeschylus is one example (though the only certain one) of a satyr play on the Perseus myth, but deals only with the arrival of Danae and the infant Perseus on the island of Seriphos. Its satyr chorus is rowdy, libidinous, but ultimately harmless. This vase type may thus refer to satyr plays which, however, are not extant.[74] Schauenburg also suggested the possibility of the existence of a purely iconographical tradition, an expansion of the appearance together on a vase of a silen and the Gorgon.

However, there is a strong possibility that these scenes are entirely serious. For the *γοργόνειον* does not have to kill in order to fulfil its 'apotropaic' role. In these scenes, Perseus holds it up just as in the *Iliad* Athena holds up the *αἰγίς* on which the *γοργόνειον* is fixed, the intention being to throw the enemy into confusion and

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[70] Apulian bowl: *CVA* Taranto 1 pl.4–5, Dugas 1956, 12. Italian vases: Jahn 1868, pl.1.2, and 1.3, *ABV* 57.111, Howe 1954, pl.36 fig.8, p.220 n.62, Dugas 1956, 12.

[71] Schauenburg 1960, 103.

[72] Wuillenmier 1933, 8f, Levi 1947, vol.2, 136 n.103, Cook 1914–40, vol.3, 996, Dugas 1956, 12.

[73] Cf. a humorous Perseus figure on stage c.420, on a chous from Anavyssos: Pickard-Cambridge 1968, 210f, fig.76, and his note 3; *ARV* 1215.1; Schauenburg 1960, 97.

[74] On satyrs in drama see Seaford 1984, 144. On *Δικτυουλκοί*, see Appendix, pp.209–12 below.

terror, not to petrify them with Medusa's glare. Hence in its classic usage, that of an 'apotropaic' mask to deter the ill-willed—as found on temples, coins, treasuries, armour—the *γοργόνειον* is selective, just as Perseus is careful to whom he shows it (as Athena is with the *αἰγίς*), so that, as it were, the true worshipper may enter the temple, the treasurer the treasury, but the profane and the thief is rebuffed.[75]

Thus the vase scene does not need to be comical, or even less than serious simply because the satyrs are represented as not dying. Quite the opposite, they are responding to the head in exactly the way our earliest source, Homer, visualized.[76] It is very likely that the scene is no older than the fifth century. It may have arisen from a satyr play, or again from knowledge of Perseus' association with the women of Dionysus, or from the earlier scenes in which satyrs chase Perseus, or perhaps by analogy with Heracles or Lycurgus with satyrs.[77] However comic or serious it was intended to be, the scene is consistent both with the functioning of the Gorgon's head as weapon, and of Perseus as the triumphant Gorgon-killer and *θίασος*-scatterer.

4. Women Of Dionysus, Satyrs And The *Θίασος*

Carpenter has recently examined the relationship between satyrs, nymphs/maenads, and Dionysus in black-figure vase painting.[78] He concludes that Dionysian imagery, of the wild god surrounded by the *θίασος*, is a sixth-century Attic invention. Earliest pictures (c.580) show the god as a rather solitary figure in the procession of Olympian

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[75] On the *γοργόνειον* as a marker of boundaries, such as that between living and dead, see Hughes–Bernades 1981, 53–73. On the *γοργόνειον* as an antefix in Greek architecture, see Belson 1981, vol.1, 'Conclusions'. On the apotropaic value of the mask in Greek religion, see Vernant, 1985. On the apotropaic value of the Dionysus mask, see Frontisi-Ducroux 1984. Cf. Chapter III.

[76] Cf. *Il.* 5.738–42: the *αἰγίς*—*ἣν πέρι μὲν πάντῃ φόβος ἐστεφάνωται* (l.739); *Il.* 11.36–7—*τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργὼ βλοσυρῶπις ἐστεφάνωτο δεινὸν δερκομένη, περὶ δὲ Δεῖμός τε Φόβος τε*. Cf. *Il.* 5.740ff. Cf. *Od.* 11.633–5—*ἐμὲ δὲ χλωρὸν δέος ἴρει, μή μοι Γοργείην κεφαλὴν δεινοῖο πελώρου ἐξ Ἄιδος πέμψειεν ἀγαυὴ Περσεφόνεια*. Is the etymological similarity of Perseus and Persephone entirely fortuitous here? Or rather, the way Homer chooses to express himself, associating *Perse*phone with the *γοργόνειον* and having *Perse*us in mind in that connection? Persephone, like Perseus, controls the *γοργόνειον*. If this notion were true, it would be the only link between Perseus and the Gorgon in Homer and thereby the earliest in Greek literature.

[77] Perseus has close affiliations with Heracles (see Chapter I, p.4). There was even a story of Perseus encountering Atlas (doubtless modelled on the labour of Heracles), in which he lithifies the Titan. Dugas 1956, 5 traced it back to the end of the fifth or early fourth century, when it was treated of by the dithyrambic poet Polyidus (*PLG* III, p.632); see Ov. *Metam.* 4.627–662. As to Lycurgus, cf. Aeschylus' satyr play *Λυκοῦργος* (*TrGF* III, frs.124–6).

[78] Carpenter 1986, ch.5 'Companions of Dionysus', and 124–6 'Summary'.

deities. Maenads appear only fifty years later, and, as noted briefly above, satyrs, 'his other traditional companions...develop independently before they appear with him'.[79] Nymphs, rather than maenads are Dionysus' first female companions,

> and it is likely that the nymphs, who appear with the satyrs in pre-Dionysian scenes, enter the Dionysian repertory as companions of the satyrs rather than companions of the god. The nature of the female companions of the god changes, however, during the course of the sixth century, as they become linked with him rather than with satyrs...Maenads carrying *θύρσοι* are a red-figure invention, and the *θύρσος* itself only appears on very few black-figure vases, all from the fifth century.[80]

Our four amphorae are thus consistent with the fact that nymphs, and not maenads, are Dionysus' first female companions.

If the iconography is a direct reflection of oral and literary sources, then one must assume that stories in which Dionysus and the *θίασος* kill Pentheus and Lycurgus are no older than the early to middle sixth century. This is not contradicted by the fact that the story of Lycurgus appears in Homer, when Dionysus is driven from the land into the sea where he takes refuge with Thetis.[81] For there is no *θίασος* in Homer.[82] The women of our four amphorae are clearly not 'maenadic' but, as Schauenburg noted, nymph-like. However, they are fully Dionysian in the violence that they are shown to be capable of.

In art, satyrs and women of Dionysus do not appear together in connection with Perseus.[83] The fact too that in the iconographical tradition Perseus deals with women with his sword, but the satyrs with the *γοργόνειον*, also suggests that the two scenes, though both part of the same Perseus tradition, differ from one another both in origin and significance. The later literary tradition (of satyrs) complements

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[79] Carpenter 1986, 124.

[80] Carpenter 1986, 125.

[81] *Il.* 6.135f.

[82] On satyr iconography see also Furtwängler 1912, vol.1, 134–185, Brommer 1937, 1959. On maenads, in addition to Carpenter 1986, cf. McNally 1978.

[83] The sole exception is on a fourth-century bronze cista from Praeneste (see Hill 1977, 9–14): satyrs and maenads process left to right, towards a scene depicting the dying Medusa and a Gorgon pursuing Perseus, who runs away to the right towards Hermes. The *θίασος* is not pursuing Perseus, nor is he fighting them. The scene is therefore an extension of the 'Perseus accompanied by satyrs' topos, i.e. it does not depict the Perseus–Dionysus myth.

the earlier iconographical tradition (of women). Howe noted[84] that in Pausanias and in most of Nonnus,[85] Perseus kills with the sword or sickle, and in another part of Nonnus, with the *γοργόνειον* as well.[86] In Pausanias, women alone—the *Ἄλιαι*—are mentioned as being in Dionysus' army, while Nonnus tells of an army of maenads and satyrs (and in Schol.Aratus and Philochorus, women and men) in both passages. In the myths of the Argive Agr(i)ania and Boeotian Agrionias, which are associated with the resistance to Dionysus of the daughters of Proetus and Minyas, women alone, and no satyrs or men appear.

Women appear alone on the four amphorae, and satyrs alone on the early black-figure and several late red-figure vases. But in the literary sources we find women alone,[87] but satyrs only with women. Thus the women of the vases and the literary sources always constitute a reference to the Perseus–Dionysus fight, and are essential to the whole story of opposition in mainland Greece to the 'arrival' of Dionysus. The satyrs of the iconographical sources do not refer directly to the myth, while the satyrs (and men) of the literary sources always do. In other words, women are always in the myth (in art and literature), while satyrs appear only in later literary sources because by that time they are essential members of the *θίασος*. At this point it becomes clear that opposition of male to female was important in the Perseus–Dionysus myth, and that the women are to be seen as parallel to other warlike all-female groups, such as the Lemnian women and the Amazons, and that it is their femaleness which is an essential component in the threat which they pose to the normality of the Greek *πόλις*.[88]

Thus in the literary and iconographical traditions there are two separate, yet complementary groups of Dionysians: women of the sea, and later, satyrs, each group with its own way of being dealt with. If there were any satyrs accompanying Pausanias' *Ἄλιαι*, it seems that they must have been merely frightened off, cowardly creatures that they are, while the maenads were killed and buried—the super/sub-

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[84] Howe 1954, 220.

[85] Nonn. 25.102, 106–7, 47.504, 538, 557, etc.

[86] Nonn. 47.551–4, 665–6.

[87] Paus., Plu., E. *Ba.*; daughters of Proetus, Minyas.

[88] See below, pp.183–5.

human turned away by the apotropaic power of the *γοργόνειον*, and the human destroyed, but honoured in death.

D. PERSEUS, LYCURGUS AND PENTHEUS

Comparison with the Pentheus and Lycurgus myths reveals that the central quality of the Perseus myth is the unpunished resistance by a mortal to the god who has previously overcome all who opposed his arrival in mainland Greece, and seen them severely chastized.[89]

It is difficult to determine which of the myths of opposition to Dionysus came first. The Lycurgus episode occurs ~~in complete form~~ as early as Homer; Perseus is referred to obliquely in Homer,[90] but is not linked to the *γοργόνειον*, let alone Dionysus; the earliest mention of Pentheus is at the end of the sixth century. In art, Lycurgus appears killing maenads or his family in the fourth century; Perseus pursued by Gorgons is common in the seventh and sixth centuries; Pentheus' first appearance, on a red-figure vase, is in the late sixth century.[91] That they influenced each other in some details may be the case (cf. the similarites between Lycurgus and Pentheus below, and similarities between Perseus and Pentheus in their iconography above). What one can be sure of is that the story of a mortal opposing Dionysus appears in Homer as a *μῦθος*, and thus was perceived to be very old, anterior even to the heroic world of the *Iliad.* And certainly, by the classical period, all three myths were current, making it possible that Perseus' successful resistance to Dionysus became, in Argos at least, part of a complete and coherent mythology describing the arrival of the god in mainland Greece.

Although the chasing into the sea of Dionysus by Lycurgus[92] has been much compared with Perseus throwing him into the Lernaean marsh, the essential differ-

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[89] Lycurgus: Apollod. 3.5.1, *Il.* 6.130ff with Scholia, S. *Ant.* 955ff, Tz. Lyc. 273, Hyg. *F.* 132, Serv. *Aen.* 3.14, Vat. Myth. 1, 122. Pentheus: E. *Ba.*, Hyg. *F.* 184, Ov. *Metam.* 3.511ff, Vat.Myth. 2, 83.

[90] *Il.* 19.116, 123, 14.319.

[91] Pentheus: see *RE* XIX, 542ff. Lycurgus: see *RML* II, 2196—this date is uncertain. Perseus: Schauenburg 1960, 19ff, *RE* XIX, 979f.

[92] *Il.* 6.130ff.

ence lies in Lycurgus' subsequent suffering. In Homer, he is struck blind by Zeus;[93] indeed the story is used by Diomedes as a paradigm of what happens to the mortal who fights the immortal gods.[94] In addition, Dionysus merely takes refuge in the sea, from which he soon returns,[95] while in Argos he is thrown into the water and dies.

Lycurgus and Pentheus are characterized together as typical opposers of Dionysus.[96] Other details indicate motifs in their stories which are not present in the Perseus story: for example, the madness of Lycurgus and Pentheus; the punishment of death at a relative's hand;[97] the king's loss of control over his subjects and essential powerlessness;[98] in more detail, the motif of sudden release from imprisonment;[99] death by dismemberment.[100]

The most notable difference perhaps is the way in which in the Perseus myth Argos as a whole remains immune to maenadism: Danae and Andromeda have no part in the Bacchic rites. There is no response from within the *πόλις*. The threat is purely external, since Dionysus arrives with his *Ἄλιαι* and his satyrs already converted to his cause, a wild and rampaging army.

The *Ἄλιαι* are a close analogue of the Amazons who attack Athens and are defeated and buried there by Theseus. Each group of women is anomalous: the Amazons are women of the battle-field (which is the domain of men), and the *Ἄλιαι* are 'of the sea' (the domain of no-man, a chaotic and trackless area). Battle and sea alike endanger the lives of the men who traverse them: both groups of women kill

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[93] *Il.* 6.139.

[94] *Il.* 6.128–133.

[95] Apollod. 3.5.1.

[96] D.S. 3.65.4, 4.3.4 — *ἐπιφανεστάτους δὲ Πενθέα καὶ Λυκοῦργον.*

[97] Pentheus killed by his mother Agave, Lycurgus kills his son (Apollod. 3.5.1).

[98] Pentheus' death at the hands of his own women, Lycurgus imprisoned by his own people (S. *Ant.* 955ff), or killed by them (Apollod. 3.5.1).

[99] Apollod. 3.5.1, E. *Ba.* 614ff.

[100] Pentheus by frenzied humans (E. *Ba.* 1043ff, Apollod. 3.5.2), Lycurgus by horses (Apollod. 3.5.1). Cf. Other mortal transgressors against an immortal torn up by animals: Hippolytus, Actaeon. For an explicit comparison between Pentheus and Actaeon, see E. *Ba.* 337–342, Luc. *De Salt.* 41, Philostr. *Imag.* 316.8, Sen. *Phoen.* 13, cf. Paus. 9.2.3; and between Lycurgus and Actaeon, see Dinarchus (*ap.* Cyril *Contra Iul.* 10.341–2).

men; and both groups are foreign, just as Dionysus is perceived to be foreign. All three represent a potent threat to the stability of the πόλις, and all three, having been defeated by the king of the πόλις are buried within it, the Amazons in Athens, Dionysus in Delphi, and the 'Sea-women' in Argos. Fighting in battle for one's πόλις is an expression of citizenship. Since the Greek woman was not a citizen in a political sense, the appearance of women on the battle-field of myth carries the implication of female usurpation of male political power. Pausanias explicitly states that the Argives too, as well as Perseus, fight and defeat the Ἄλιαι.[101] Dionysus' female soldiers, and particularly Ariadne as his female general, represent an inversion of the normal order of the πόλις which Perseus, who has a male army, fights to defend.[102]

Thus Perseus does not play a part directly analogous to that of Pentheus or Lycurgus. In fact, his is an inverted role. He is a hero with a mythological existence in his own right, the killer of the Gorgon, and of the κῆτος, the rescuer of Andromeda, the agent of Nemesis (in Seriphos and in Argos), and a founder of cities and of cult. Pentheus and Lycurgus, on the contrary, find their greatest fame in a single episode, and it is a renown which is negative, arising from failure and their own destruction. Like the minor battle victims of the *Iliad*, it is as if they are brought to life for the express purpose of being killed. The parallel between Perseus, killer of the Ἄλιαι and Theseus, killer of the Amazons suggests that Perseus is particularly to be seen in this episode as the champion of the πόλις, as both the guarantor and representative of its stability. For Theseus' killing of the Amazons, one of his greatest exploits, saves Athens and makes him a 'political' hero par excellence.[103]

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[101] Compare also the Lemnian women, who actually kill all their own menfolk and live on without them (Hdt. 6.138, A.*Cho.* 634, A.R. 1.609ff, Pi. *P.* 4.252, E. *Hec.* 887 etc.).

[102] Matriarchy is not a historical reality in these myths, but the product of a logical inversion which 'thinks the unthinkable'. 'Whether we are talking about the Amazons or the Lycians, it is the Greek πόλις, that male club, which is being defined...in terms of its opposite': Vidal-Naquet 1981c, 190 (and *passim*), where he cites in particular Pembroke 1965, 1967, and 1970. Cf. Graf 1984, 254: 'fighting women gain their semantic value through the opposition to ordinary life, where women were almost totally absent from the male world of war'. Cf. Shapiro 1983, on the use made of the Amazonomachy as a prototype for particular historical events, even before the post-Persian invasion years.

[103] Sourvinou-Inwood 1979, 48.

E. THE ARGIVE AGR(I)ANIA.

1. The Ritual

Hesychius mentions the *ἀγράνια—ἑορτὴ ἐν Ἄργει ἐπὶ μιᾷ τῶν Προίτου θυγατέρων*, and the *ἀγριάνια—νεκύσια παρὰ Ἀργείοις*. *νεκύσια* identifies it as a festival of the dead.[104] The two festivals are usually considered to be one and the same. In addition, because of the 'daughter of Proetus' and the myth of the madness of the daughters of Proetus, and because Plutarch also refers to Dionysus as *ἀγριώνιος*,[105] the Argive practice of summoning Dionysus from a lake with trumpets is identified with the Agr(i)ania:[106]

> *Ἀργείοις δὲ βουγενὴς Διόνυσος ἐπίκλην ἐστίν· ἀνακαλοῦνται δ' αὐτὸν ὑπὸ σαλπίγγων ἐξ ὕδατος, ἐμβάλλοντες εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον ἄρνα τῷ Πυλαόχῳ· τὰς δὲ σάλπιγγας ἐν θύρσοις ἀποκρύπτουσιν, ὡς Σωκράτης ἐν τοῖς περὶ Ὁσίων εἴρκεν.*

Plutarch calls this rite 'the Argives' Dionysia'.[107] The lake in question is usually identified with Lerna,[108] with which Dionysus is connected by Schol. *Il.* 14.319: *...Διόνυσον ἀνεῖλεν εἰς τὴν Λερναίαν ἐμβαλὼν Λίμνην* [*Περσεύς*];[109] Lerna is also identified by Pausanias, and by the Scholiast on Lycophron[110] as the entrance to the underworld (NB *Πυλαόχῳ*) by which Dionysus retrieved his mother Semele.[111]

On this basis the summoning of Dionysus from the water at Argos has come to be considered to be an important part of the Argive Agr(i)ania. In addition, parallels have been drawn between the Argive Agr(i)ania and the Boeotian Agrionias

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[104] *νεκύσια*: Artem. 4.81, Eust. 1615.2, *PLond.* ined. 2309r.21, *Bull.Soc.Arch.Alex.* 7, 67. Best summary of the evidence is Schachter 1981, 179–181 for Agrionia at Orchomenos, 185–92 at Thebes; see also Otto 1965, 103–4. The most stimulating discussion is Burkert 1983, 168–179; he discusses all the evidence for Argive and Boeotian Agrionias, but prefers to see the Argive rite as being to do rather with Hera. He makes little of Perseus' involvement.

[105] Plu. *Anton.* 24.

[106] Plu. 364F.

[107] Plu. 671E.

[108] Cf. Farnell 1896–1909, vol.5, 183.

[109] Cf. Eust. *Il.* 3.653.19–20 (Van der Valk).

[110] Paus. 2.37.5, Schol. Lyc. 211ff.

[111] Cf. also Ar. *Ra.*, where Dionysus goes to Hades to retrieve Euripides via *λίμνην μεγάλην...πάνυ ἄβυσσον* (137–8) (probably Acheron), cf. 471 and *Hypothesis* I 34, III 3, cf. Arnobius *Adv. Nationes* 5.28; Jeanmaire 1951, 343. For Semele as a goddess on Olympus cf. Hes. *Th.* 940–2, Pi. *O.* 2.25–6. For Semele story see also Boyancé 1966, 79ff, Bérard 1974, 146ff.

of Chaeronea and Orchomenos, because of similarity of name, and the common feature of Dionysus. At Chaeronea women search for Dionysus and return with the news that he has fled to the Muses and is hiding with them. Thus ritual complements myth and vice versa: Lycurgus drove the god into the sea to hide with Thetis. At Orchomenos the priest of Dionysus (pretending to be Lycurgus?) pursues women with a sword, and is allowed to kill any he catches. The women are identified with the daughters of Minyas, who were driven mad by Dionysus and killed some of their own children.[112] Agrionia is given as the name of the festival of Dionysus at Thebes (though only the agonistic part of it), as celebrated in the Hellenistic period and later.[113]

The time of year at which each of the festivals took place is unknown, and any attempted reconstruction of them as spring 'rites of renewal', or as a parallel to the Athenian Anthesteria must remain tentative.[114] One of the most suggestive correspondences is that at Athens the Anthesteria was celebrated at the precinct of Dionysus *ἐν Λίμναις*, 'in the marshes' (even though there does not seem actually to have been a marsh there),[115] while the Argive rite of summoning Dionysus from the water was celebrated at the Lernaean *Λίμνη*. Aristophanes' frogs in the marshes (*λιμναῖα κρηνῶν τέκνα*)[116] by the Lake of the Dead claim to sing in the Anthesteria, *ἐν λίμναις*.[117] This joke may point to an association between Dionysus' sanctuary *ἐν λίμναις* and the entrance to the Underworld: both marsh and entrance to the Underworld are liminal. The idea of the return of the god Dionysus might point to spring, as in the Anthesteria (which in Athens was also called the 'Older Dionysia').[118] Compare the yearly withdrawal from and return in spring of Apollo

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[112] Chaeronea: Plu. 717A, see Schachter 1981, 173–4. Orchomenos: Plu. 299F, Schachter 1981, 179–181; cf. Farnell 1896–1909, vol.5, 285 nn.35aff.

[113] Schachter 1981, 189–91.

[114] 'Rites of renewal': Farnell 1896–1909, vol.5, 183f. Anthesteria: Nilsson 1906, 271f, who had doubts himself.

[115] Burkert 1985, 237, cf. *ibid.*, 85, and his n.6, for temples *ἐν λίμναις* as a trace of 'the ancient practice of sacrifice by sinking or drowning'.

[116] Ar. *Ra.* 211.

[117] Ar. *Ra.* 216–217.

[118] Burkert 1985, 237ff.

to Delphi (from the land of the Hyperboreans), and to Delos (from Lycia).[119]

There is in fact no conclusive link between this Argive rite of summoning Dionysus from Lerna and the Agr(i)ania festival, since the mention of one of the daughters of Proetus is not sufficient to make the Agr(i)ania at Argos a festival of Dionysus. Despite the similarity of name and aetiological myth between the Argive Agr(i)ania and the Boeotian Agrionia (which clearly was a festival of Dionysus), Hera too appears in early sources as the instigator of the madness of Proetus' daughters at Argos;[120] other sources identify Dionysus as the culprit.[121] In other words, the Argive ritual in which Dionysus is summoned from the lake perhaps was not always associated with the name Agr(i)ania until later; or at least, the presiding deity of the Argive Agr(i)ania may not always have been Dionysus. However, the mythical core of the Agr(i)ania (the madness of the Proetides) will have remained constant. Plutarch was probably more correct in refering to the water ritual as part of the Argive Dionysia.

It is not crucial, however, if the rite of summoning Dionysus from Lerna with trumpets was not part of the Agr(i)ania. The rite is still parallel to the Boeotian Agrionia, at Chaeronea especially, where Dionysus has been driven into the sea by Lycurgus. The significant fact here is that Perseus killed Dionysus by throwing him into the lake, and that a corresponding ritual enacted the recalling of the god from the lake and from death. Dionysus withdraws, dies and returns, is reborn when summoned by trumpets. Death and rebirth is a common symbol in many rites of passage.[122]

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[119] Burkert 1985, 146f.

[120] Bacchyl. 11.40–58, 82–112, Acusilaus *FGrHist* 2 F 28, Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 114. Cf. *RE* XXIII, *s.v. Proitides.*

[121] Hes. fr.131 (Merkelbach and West), D.S. 4.68.4, Apollod. 1.9.12.

[122] In myth, cf. Odysseus, Heracles, Theseus, Pirithous and Orpheus, who all journey to and return from the Underworld. Burkert 1985, 260–4, 277; Gennep 1960, 189, Jeanmaire 1939, 152; Turner 1969, 95. On this symbolism in the Mysteries of Eleusis, see Burkert 1985, 285ff. In 1987b, 100, Burkert describes the myth of the death of Dionysus at the hands of the Titans as 'some kind of initiation scenario'. He concludes, however, that although there is a polarity between life and death in pagan mysteries, there is nothing as explicit as the death and spiritual rebirth of Jesus in the New Testament (see also *ibid.* 166 nn.60 and 70).

2. Perseus, Lycurgus, Dionysus, and the Agr(i)ania

Whatever the name applied in Argive cult to the summoning of Dionysus from the water, the ritual nevertheless sits nicely with our story of Perseus' resistance to Dionysus, the myth apparently explaining the rite and vice versa. Whether rite or myth came first does not matter for our purposes, once both are in existence. The close interdependence of the two in this particular case could be one explanation of why the Perseus–Dionysus story never became as popular as the other Perseus myths, instead remaining closely connected with Argos and not becoming widely known elsewhere. Although a lot of myths, like the Lycurgus myth, were known far away from their rituals, the Perseus–Dionysus story was not.[123]

The similarity between the throwing of Dionysus into Lerna by Perseus, and the driving of Dionysus by Lycurgus into the sea to hide with Thetis is striking. However, it is not enough simply to note the recurrence of 'Dionysus and water' as a motif and to assume that it has the same significance in these two myths.

In the Lycurgus myth, 'the sea' is for Dionysus a place to which he (re)turns for protection, sheltering with Thetis. It signifies essentially a retreat, going back the way he came. Even then, he comes back again to preside over the defeat and death of Lycurgus. He comes from the sea in a double sense: he is a sea-traveller, but is also of the sea. He is *πελάγιος*, *ἀκταῖος*:[124] hence his women, buried at Argos, killed by Perseus, are *Ἅλιαι*, 'Sea-women'.[125] In other words, for Dionysus the sea is a place in which to endure temporary absence from the land of mortals. His withdrawal reveals his immortal nature: men can pursue him on land but not into the sea, into the depths of which he disappears as mysteriously as he arrived. Mortals jumping[126] or falling[127] into the sea die. Dionysus' aunt Ino jumps into the sea and becomes

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[123] A myth comparable with that of Perseus and Dionysus in this respect would be, for example, the aetiological myth of the Athenian Apaturia, above pp.120–1.

[124] Dionysus, in Pagasae: Theopomp. *FHG* I, 332, fr.339; in Chios *CIG* II, 2214c; cf. *PR* I, 678.

[125] For Dionysus and the sea, see also the story of his encounter with the pirates, and the famous Exekias eye cup (Munich 8729), 'in whose coral-red bowl Dionysus sails through a sea where dolphins play, the mast of his ship twined with a grape-bearing vine' (Burn 1987, 268–9, reviewing Carpenter 1986, and noting the absence from there of this vase).

[126] E.g. Sappho, *Ἐνάλος*, Ino/Melicerte, Leucade.

[127] E.g., Theseus is thrown in by Lycomede, or falls in by accident on Skyros; Sciron, Theseus' first victim, throws travellers into the sea. Cf. Nonn. 47.454 where Ariadne 'casts into the

a goddess and lives in it, while aunts Agave and Autonoe are numbered among the Nereids.[128] Thus there is a polarity between land and sea, and between mortal and immortal.

In the Perseus story the Lernaean lake expresses the same marginalization by withdrawal, but rather than being a protection or retreat for Dionysus, it becomes the place of his death. He is cast from the land of the living into the bottomless pool of the dead. Thus the polarity by which 'land' is associated with 'mortality' (i.e. death), and 'water' with 'immortality' (i.e. life par excellence) in the Lycurgus episode becomes 'land'-'life' and 'water'-'death' here. That part of the god which paradoxically is mortal is expressed mythologically by his 'leap' into the lake, especially this particular lake, gateway to the world of the dead.[129] He is also Dionysus *Λιμναῖος*, *Λιμναγενής*; his oldest Athenian sanctuary was *ἐν Λίμναις*:[130] i.e. the lake too is a home to Dionysus, but when he is there he is 'dead to the world'.

The driving of Dionysus into the sea from which he came is thus explicable. Nilsson's dismissive explanation of the myth of Perseus driving Dionysus into the sea as a 'contamination' from the one which describes the Dionysus cult as coming from the sea[131] is a distorted way of describing the relationship between the two myths. The pursuit of Dionysus by Perseus and Lycurgus, hounding him to death (however impermanent) is structurally an inversion of the normal Dionysiac practice in myth whereby Dionysus' victims, Pentheus and Perseus, are chased by women of the god.[132] By calling him back to life, the Argive lake ritual recognizes that Dionysus is a god, but a god who can also die, a fact which is expressed mythologically in two ways. First, his mother is only a mortal. Secondly, he is the 'god' whom

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sea the memory of Theseus', now she is to be the bride of Dionysus. Cf. Jeanmaire 1939, 326.

[128] Ino: Myrsilus *FHG* IV, p.459,10; *Od.* 5.333. Agave, Autonoe: *Il.* 18.39ff, Hes. *Th.* 240ff, Apollod. 1.2.7.

[129] Cf. the sacrifice of a lamb to the *Πυλάοχος* in the Argive rite of summoning Dionysus from Lerna (Plu. 364F).

[130] *Λιμναῖος*: Ath. *Deipn.* 465A. *Λιμναγενής*: Hsch. *s.v. Λιμναγενής*. *'Εν λίμναις*: Ar. *Ra.* 216–217.

[131] Nilsson 1967, 613–14.

[132] Cf. the Agrionia at Orchomenos when the priest of Dionysus chases women, itself a ritual inversion of myth, when women should be doing the chasing.

the daughters of Cadmus deny,[133] whom Lycurgus, Pentheus, and Perseus refuse to acknowledge, at first. For all three, even Perseus, do acknowledge him, but in the case of the first two, too late to save themselves and their cities from violent disruption. Perseus follows the same path, but his story ends differently. The death of Pentheus and Lycurgus and, in ritual, the punishment of the daughters of Minyas and Proetus, are the resolution of the confrontation between πόλις and Dionysus. But the resolution of Perseus' conflict is found in the ritual of summoning the god back from the Underworld into which he cast him.

The ritual is not to be seen as a simple confirmation or re-enactment of the Perseus myth, as the rituals of the Boeotian Agrionias are of their myths. Rather, the Argive ritual continues and completes the narrative of the myth at the level of ritual. It attempts to reverse the action of the hero in throwing Dionysus into the lake, to accept the god and not to reject him. The lamb thrown to the gatekeeper is thus a substitute, one life in return for another. It seems to be central to the myth that Perseus and Argos accept and honour Dionysus after a period of violent opposition.[134] Perseus' conflict with Dionysus thus marks a perceived development in the god's arrival on the mainland, in terms of his place in Greek ritual. The conflict of his epiphany—the opposition and inevitable madness and destruction which engulfs Lycurgus and Pentheus, and even Icarius, the god's benefactor—is resolved.

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[133] E. *Ba.* 26f.

[134] Paus. 2.23.7, Nonn. 47.668–741. Augustin, *De. Civ.* 18.13, was puzzled to note that Dionysiac rites were established even after Perseus defeated or killed the god: *aliqui sane et victum scribunt istum Liberum et vinctum; nonnulli et occisum in pugna a Perseo, nec ubi fuerit sepultus tacent; et tamen eius velut dei nomine per immundos daemones Bacchanalia sacra vel potius sacrilegia sunt instituta....* The establishment of rites, however, is crucial to the Perseus–Dionysus myth: only after the god has been defeated can he be incorporated into ritual; equally, it is because he has been defeated that he must be called back.

3. The Ritual, The *Πόλις*, And Dionysus

In destroying Lycurgus and Pentheus, each the king of his community, and their families, Dionysus confounds the world of the *πόλις*, drawing it into the maelstrom of his influence, eventually leaving it in confusion when he has passed by. Consider the tearing apart of Pentheus, and its analogue, the dispersal of the family of Cadmus at the end of the *Bacchae*; the physical collapse of the royal palace;[135] the transformation of Cadmus and his wife into serpents;[136] the prophecy that he will raise a barbarian army and march on and sack many cities—thus operating just as Dionysus himself has; and the murder of his own family by Lycurgus. The human controllers of the *πόλις* are overthrown at the advent of Dionysus.[137] But the *πόλις* itself remains, though severely disrupted, needing a new guiding hand.

Here is found one reason why there is need for a myth in which a mortal finally puts an end to this process by which *πόλις* after *πόλις*, dynasty after dynasty is left shattered and leaderless: it is in order to show the regularization of those Dionysiac forces which threaten the city from within and without; to make them part of the civilization which they threaten; to institutionalize them; to establish rites which allow disorder to exist within order; to guarantee the continuing existence of the whole, to allow these two mutually destructive impulses (of civilization, of 'natural' forces) to coexist, or rather, to form a new synthesis. In this way civilization may continue, where wine is mixed with water, and the appearance of Dionysus restricted to certain days of the year. Dionysus becomes a city god: he had two sanctuaries in the city of Argos itself, one of which was of 'Cretan' Dionysus—a distant place over the sea.[138]

This explains why Perseus and his family do not suffer the punishment of Cadmus and Thebes, of Lycurgus and Edonia. He survives against the general prece-

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[135] See Dodds 1960, on lines 576–861 for discussion of whether we are supposed to think that the palace actually suffers an earthquake. He believes that we are, and I agree. He adds that the earthquake was probably not the invention of Euripides, 'but a traditional feature of Dionysiac plays (see Introd.p.xxxii)'.

[136] E. *Ba.* 1330f.

[137] Note, however, the *compositio membrorum* of Pentheus at the end of the *Bacchae*, signifying at least some kind of restoration of order, even in the death of Pentheus.

[138] See n.29 above.

dent which involves punishment for the mortal who opposes the immortal, so that Diodorus can say of Dionysus,[139]

> *καὶ τὸ σύνολον συλλύοντα τὰ νείκη τῶν ἐθνῶν καὶ πόλεων ἀντὶ τῶν στάσεων καὶ τῶν πολέμων ὁμόνοιαν καὶ πολλὴν εἰρήνην κατασκευάζειν.*

One may compare the parallel myth of Eleuther,[140] who, after his daughters have opposed Dionysus, founds Eleutherae and the cult of Dionysus *'Ελευθέριος*, whose statue was brought each year from Eleutherae to Athens, and in whose honour the City Dionysia was instituted. The myth is a cult aetion describing the initial rejection of the god, his revenge and ultimate acceptance.[141] In one version, Dionysus explicitly becomes a god who guarantees the existence of the *πόλις*, after his violent 'epiphany': Diodorus relates how Dionysus, in gratitude to his homeland of Boeotia, frees all the cities and himself founds a city in freedom's name, Eleutherae.[142] The date of the origin of the City Dionysia is unknown, but it began to become important in the sixth century.[143] The Argive rite may date from the same period, which is consistent with the earliest vase evidence for the Perseus–Dionysus myth. As in the case of Perseus, reconciliation in myth is followed by the establishment of a new (in myth) cult. As in an initiation in which the idea of death followed by rebirth features,[144] in the Perseus myth Dionysus enters a new phase of his 'life': his arrival is over, his occupation begins. Thus is born Dionysus *'Ελευθέριος*, the City god. Ritual as a response to death is central to Greek religion, and found expression in many myths. One such is the myth associated with the Anthesteria at Athens. The shepherd Icarius, the first mortal to handle wine, gave some to his companions who, mistaking the symptoms of inebriation for those of poisoning, killed him. His daughter Erigone hanged herself in grief. The death of both, an expression of the ambivalence of wine as a *φάρμακον* was countered by a ritual in the Anthesteria

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[139] D.S. 3.64.7.

[140] Hyg. *F.* 225.

[141] Cf. Schachter 1981, 174–5.

[142] D.S. 4.2.6—*καὶ κατὰ μὲν τὴν Βοιωτίαν ἀποδιδόντα τῇ πατρίδι χάριτας ἐλευθερῶσαι πάσας τὰς πόλεις, καὶ κτίσαι πόλιν ἐπώνυμον τῆς αὐτονομίας, ἣν 'Ελευθερὰς προσαγορεῦσαι.*

[143] See Burkert 1985, 166 (above n.8), Pickard-Cambridge 1968, 58.

[144] See n.122 above.

involving swings, an expiation for the hanged Erigone,[145] intended to prevent other girls from hanging themselves as she did. Another example comes at the end of Euripides' *Hippolytus*, when Artemis prophesies the establishment of a cult for the dying hero as recompense for his suffering.[146]

Finally, D.Konstan,[147] in a study of Euripides' *Cyclops* concludes that in the play Dionysus unites the civic and ecstatic principles, creating harmony between the communal festiveness represented by the satyrs, and the ordered relations of men. This is essentially the same 'message' as that of the Perseus–Dionysus myth and its associated ritual, i.e. the integration of Dionysus with the *πόλις*. C.Bérard[148] identifies the same dichotomy of civilized–uncivilized, political–apolitical in the transformation of man into satyr under the influence of Dionysus. R.Seaford[149] sees the play as the conclusion of the Euripidean tetralogy to which it belonged with 'the triumph of Dionysus, the god of the *θίασος and* [my italics] City Dionysia'.

Perseus is not an arbitrary choice as the mortal who, in opposing Dionysus, proves to be the exception to the rule that 'ceux qui resistent sont diversement, mais également et toujours sévèrement, punis'.[150] Close parallels in terms of motif exist between Perseus and Dionysus which do not appear between Pentheus and Lycurgus, and Dionysus. They are half-brothers, each born of a mortal woman to Zeus. Both were hidden as babies for their own protection. Both were born twice, as it were: Perseus in Danae's prison in secret, then revealed to Acrisius and the light of day; Dionysus from his dead mother, Semele, then from Zeus' thigh. Both had a *παιδοτρίβης* (Dictys for Perseus, and Chiron for Dionysus).[151] Both rescue a woman on the sea-shore (Andromeda, Ariadne). The life-story of each is characterized by a movement of exile and return.[152] Two stories not in the Argive version also indicate

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[145] Burkert 1983, 223–4. Expiation: Hyg. *Astr.* 2.4.

[146] E. *Hipp.* 1424–30.

[147] Konstan 1981, 89–103.

[148] Bérard 1983, 43–54.

[149] Seaford 1984, 59.

[150] Jeanmaire 1951, 67.

[151] For Chiron as *παιδοτρίβης* of heroes, see Chapter I, pp.12–13.

[152] Cf. Nagy 1979, 62, 142–4, on the similarity between a god and the hero who tries to kill him,

the affinity between them. At Brasiae on the Argive gulf, it was said that Dionysus, like Perseus, was cast adrift in a chest with his mother.[153] At Tanagra it was told how Dionysus slew a *κῆτος* that attacked some of his female followers who were washing their Bacchic garb by the sea-shore.[154]

Accordingly, we find in Nonnus a Pelasgian telling a Bacchant why Argos has no need of the invading Dionysus, since it has Perseus already:[155]

οὗτος ὁ βότρυν ἔχων, διφυὲς γένος· ἄξιον Ἥρης
Ἄργος ἔχει Περσῆα καὶ οὐ χατέει Διονύσου·
ἄλλον ἔχω Διὸς υἷα καὶ οὐ Βάκχοιο χατίζω.
ποσσὶ πολυσκάρθμοισι πατεῖ Διόνυσος ὀπώρην·
ἴχνεσιν ὑψιπόροισιν ἐμὸς γόνος ἠέρα τέμνει.
μὴ κισσῷ δρεπάνην ἰσάζετε· καὶ γὰρ ἀρείων
Βάκχου θυρσοφόρου δρεπανηφόρος ἕπλετο Περσεύς·
εἰ στρατὸν Ἰνδὸν ἔπεφνεν, ἀέθλιον ἶσον ἐνίψω
Γοργοφόνῳ Περσῆι καὶ Ἰνδοφόνῳ Διονύσῳ·
εἰ δὲ πολυκλύστοιο παρ' Ἑσπέριον κλίμα πόντου
ὁλκάδα λαϊνέην Τυρσηνίδα πῆξε θαλάσσῃ,
κῆτος ὅλον περίμετρον ἐμὸς πετρώσατο Περσεύς.
εἰ δὲ τεὸς Διόνυσος ἐρημονόμῳ παρὰ πόντῳ
ὑπναλέην ἐσάωσεν ἐπ' ἠιόνων Ἀριάδνην,
δεσμοὺς Ἀνδρομέδης πτερόεις ἀνελύσατο Περσεύς,
ἄξιον ἔδνον ἔχων πετρώδεα θῆρα θαλάσσης·
οὔ πως Ἀνδρομέδην Παφίης χάριν, οὔ ποτε Περσεὺς
Θησέος ἱμείρουσαν ἑὴν ἐρρύσατο νύμφην·
ἀλλὰ σαοφρονέοντα γάμον λάχεν. ὡς Σεμέλην δέ,
οὐ Δανάην πυρόεντες ἐτεφρώσαντο κεραυνοί·
ἀλλὰ πατὴρ Περσῆος Ὀλύμπιος ὄμβρος Ἐρώτων
χρύσεος εἰς γάμον ἦλθε, καὶ οὐ φλογόεις παρακοίτης.
οὐκ ἄγαμαί ποτε τοῦτον ἐγὼ πρόμον· ἐν παλάμῃ γὰρ
ποῖον ἔχει δόρυ θοῦρον Ἀρήιον; ἴσχεο, Περσεῦ·
Γοργοφόνῳ δρεπάνῃ μὴ μάρναο θήλεϊ κισσῷ·
μὴ σέο χεῖρα μίαινε γυναικείοισι κοθόρνοις·
μὴ κυνέην Ἀίδαο θεοῖς κροτάφοισι τινάξῃς
στέμματος ἀμπελόεντος ἐναντίον· ἢν δ' ἐθελήσῃς,
Ἀνδρομέδην θώρηξον ἀθωρήκτῳ Διονύσῳ·
χάζεό μοι, Διόνυσε, καὶ ἵππιον Ἄργος ἐάσας

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e.g. Achilles and Apollo, Neoptolemus and Apollo. Perseus succeeds where even Achilles fails.

[153] Paus. 3.24.3.

[154] Paus. 9.20.4.

[155] Nonn. 47.498–532.

> *Θήβης ἑπταπύλοιο πάλιν βάκχευε γυναῖκας·*
> *κτεῖνε νέον Πενθῆα· τί Περσέι καὶ Διονύσῳ;*
> *Ἴναχον ὠκυρέεθρον ἀναίνεο· καί σε δεχέσθω*
> *Θήβης Ἀονίης ποταμὸς βραδύς· οὔ σε διδάξω*
> *Ἀσωπὸν βαρύγουνον ἔτι ζείοντα κεραυνῷ.*

The two figures may have characteristics in common, but if Perseus has one thing more it is that he has already 'returned', has completed the heroic cycle of 'exile and return', whereas Dionysus is still in the process of returning, unstable, unsettled and unsettling.

Thus any surprise that Dionysus, an Olympian deity, dies in myth should be tempered with the realisation that he is perhaps the most 'heroic' of the Olympians: in this sense it is appropriate that he should be killed by another hero in an *ἀγών*. The essential duality in a hero of man and god[156] is found in him in a particularly vivid form. He is of divine and mortal parentage, and so possesses magical powers, and yet he dies (the hero's grave being the centre of his cult and power): Dionysus had the temples of a god and the grave of a man;[157] or he disappears (over Naxos, with Ariadne),[158] like Oedipus. Dionysus lives, but only after many have died for him, including Ariadne, his female counterpart and leader of the women. In his heroic descent to and return from Hades, he appears like a god in heroic form,

> ...un dio, cioè, che—in virtù della sua immortalità (che non gli impedisse di morire)—rappresenta continuamente l'essenza perenne dell' 'eroismo' come l'hanno voluto concepire i greci. Kerenyi ha perciò ragione di dire esplicitamente: 'Dionysus *war* unter der Götter der Heros'.[159]

As has been seen, his death is not final.[160]

Dionysus' heroic nature styles him as a future object of Greek cult, despite the fact that his cult is perceived by Greeks as being very un-Greek. Similarly, there is an even closer affinity between Dionysus and many of his opposers: he is related

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[156] Otto 1965, 77.

[157] Kearns 1983, 28.

[158] D.S. 5.51.4. In this version, Theseus leaves Ariadne because Dionysus threatened him: note the contrast with Perseus' response.

[159] Brelich 1958, 368. This heroic quality in Dionysus led Otto 1965, 77 to identify it as the reason for Greek tragedy arising from his cult (cf. Brelich 1958, 368).

[160] See especially Brelich 1958, 365–8. Cf. an alternative restoration to life, when Dionysus is ritually awoken at Delphi by the Thyades (Plu. 365A).

to them—Agave his aunt, Pentheus his cousin, Perseus his half-brother and the daughters of Proetus his cousins. Both Dionysus' closeness to the royal families of the *πόλεις* that he disrupts, and his heroic qualities are factors which temper the foreignness of his cult and which clear the way for his integration within the Greek *πόλις* itself. So although he comes from the outside, he is Greek; and although he is the god of disorder and is apparently antithetical to the normal order of the *πόλις*, he is related by blood to its rulers. Dionysus is the true heir of the *πόλις*.

Although Heracles is the greatest hero of the Argolid, Perseus is Argos' most potent political hero.[161] For Heracles, though spending his childhood there, lives the greater part of his life and labours in exile, while Perseus, exiled as a child, returns home to the city at the peak of his heroic abilities, fresh from killing the Gorgon and the *κῆτος*, in order to save the place of his birth from destruction. And unlike Heracles, Perseus does not suffer from the enmity of Hera.[162] Homer refers to Perseus as *Περσῆα πάντων ἀριδείκετον ἀνδρῶν*.[163] The Scholiast noted,

> *τινὲς δέ φασι πλείονα Ἡρακλέους αὐτὸν [Περσῆα] εἰργάσμενον οὐ τυχεῖν δόξης, ὅτι Διόνυσον ἀνεῖλεν εἰς τὴν Λερναίαν ἐμβαλὼν λίμνην...*[164]

But it is the very act of killing Dionysus that saves the city of Argos and makes Perseus a 'political' hero. Consequently, his story is linked to Argive monuments: a mound in the agora said to contain Medusa's head,[165] the graves of his daughter Gorgonphone,[166] and of Ariadne,[167] and the tombs of the *Ἅλιαι* in Argos itself; fortifications and/or foundations at Mycenae, Mideia and Tiryns,[168] and his *ἡρώιον*

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[161] Heroes attested for the Argolid besides Perseus and Heracles are: Amphiareus, Baton, Hyrnetho, Asclepius (Paus. 2.23.2–3), Argus (Hdt. 6.78), Linus (Paus. 2.19.7), and Temenus (Paus. 2.38.1).

[162] Cf. Nonn. 47.534ff, where Hera is opposed to Dionysus, and so is Perseus' patronness. Cf. Hersom 1952 on a pottery vase relief of Perseus found in the temple of Hera at Argos, dating from the mid-sixth century.

[163] *Il.* 14.320.

[164] Schol. *Il.* 14.319.

[165] Paus. 2.21.6.

[166] Paus. 2.21.8.

[167] Paus. 2.23.7.

[168] Paus. 2.15.4, 16.3, E. *IA* 1500, Chrysermus *FHG* IV 361, fr.1, Apollod. 2.4.4.

just outside Mycenae by the side of the road to Argos.[169]

E.Kearns has shown that often the Attic hero is a uniter of his community, possessing the essential qualities of the group,[170] '...supplying some sort of symbolic yet concrete definition of who was included and who excluded'.[171] Perseus acts for Argos in a similar way, as a particularly reliable proto-citizen who, unlike some Greek heroes, embodies many positive values, especially those of the family. His two great exploits, against the Gorgon and the *κῆτος*, are performed directly to protect his womenfolk—his mother, whom he saves from rape or enforced marriage by killing the Gorgon and returning to Seriphos, and his wife-to-be.[172] With the death of Acrisius, he thereby re-establishes a stable future for the *οἶκος* in his ancestral land, to which he has finally returned, only to face the threat of Dionysiac domination from within and without. The idea of protecting the women and therefore the future of the *οἶκος* is continued in the Dionysus episode, in the sense that Dionysus has a tendency to 'misappropriate' women from the very heart of the *οἶκος*, to make them the instruments of the violence which is an essential part of his cult and myth. Thus Perseus' opposition is thematically consistent with the rest of his myths. This consistency may imply that the Argives thought of all the Perseus myths as forming a complete and coherent narrative, with the Dionysus episode as the last of his exploits. There is no need to insist that this was necessarily the case. In fighting Dionysus, Perseus acts as the protector and king of Argos, a position which he can assume only after he has killed Medusa, the *κῆτος* and Acrisius. However, in Chapter II it became clear that Perseus kills Acrisius not as the killer of the Gorgon and the *κῆτος*, but as his adopted son and heir. Similarly, Perseus kills Dionysus in his role as defender of Argos, not with *γοργόνειον* or *ἅρπη*, but by throwing him with his own strength—i.e. there is a clear distinction between Perseus' roles in his various myths.

The graves of the women are a constant reminder to the citizens of the *πόλις* of

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[169] Paus. 2.18.1, a c.500 inscription refering to 'priests of Perseus' (*CIG* IV, no.493, cf. Howe 1954, 218), and two imperial inscriptions (*IG* IV, 586, 606).

[170] Kearns 1983, 289.

[171] Kearns 1983, 296.

[172] Cf. Chapter IV, pp.154–6, on Andromeda as a type of ideal woman.

the external threat which has been overcome, and serve thus to strengthen the idea of the common identity and solidarity of the *πόλις* in the eyes of its citizens. More than this, the graves together with their aetiological myth reinforce sexual roles, since women of Dionysus are women who have been allowed to break out of the confines of the *οἶκος*, with disastrous consequences: to save his own women, Perseus must kill other women. The Argives would then be able to boast of their victory, as they would have done of their possession of the *γοργόνειον*, just as the Athenians did of the defeat of the Amazons,[173] to assert their existence as a 'political' entity. This victory over the Sea-women is in direct contrast with the fate of Pentheus' Thebes, Lycurgus' Edonian kingdom and other Boeotian cities, where the women of the *πόλις* subverted the fabric of their civilisation from within.

The perceived history of Dionysiac religion (i.e. the mythical account of its development) is thus bound up with the perceived history of the *πόλις*. More than simply being saved from destruction, the *πόλις* acquires a new god, and a new ritual mechanism (the Agr(i)ania) symbolizing and re-enacting new-found stability. If the myth is seen at least on one level as an expression of the mediation between the *πόλις* and orgiastic cult, then Schauenburg's insistence[174] that the reconciliation between Perseus and Dionysus was a later addition to the main story is unnecessary. For the idea of victory for Perseus in the myth, balanced out and complemented by the ritual of recalling the god, is fully compatible with the honour which Pausanias says the hero established for the god in Argos. The version of the myth current in Argos (as recorded by Pausanias and used by Nonnus), in which Perseus and Dionysus are reconciled without the death of the god, carries the same mythical 'message'. Equilibrium is restored between mortal and god by means of ritual.

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[173] Hdt. 9.27.

[174] Schauenburg 1960, 139.

F. CONCLUSION

Thus the importance of the death of Dionysus for his cult is expressed in a myth such as the one in which Perseus kills him. It has been seen that the traditions, both literary and iconographical, almost unanimously insist upon the fact that Perseus, the hero and defender of Argos, should oppose, repel, and reconcile himself with Dionysus; or kill him, in which case the reconciliation between *πόλις* and orgiastic cult is guaranteed by cult established by the *πόλις* itself, in summoning and honouring the dead god who comes back to life.

In either case, whether Dionysus is simply rebuffed or actually killed, Perseus acts with impunity. The explanation for this fact has been seen to have several components. Perseus is hero with a full and successful heroic life, with proven ability to overcome the most difficult task through his own qualities and with the help of the supernatural. He plays a vital part of the process of assimilation of the Dionysus cult, and so must survive to recognise and institute it, and continue to foster it by living on. It is not enough for him to recognise Dionysus' power and to die like Pentheus or Lycurgus.

Perseus' role in the Dionysus myth also reflects a certain consistency in the relationship between his own myths. Perseus, having undergone his own initiation in the Gorgon and Andromeda myths, is an appropriate figure to 'civilize' Dionysus. The Perseus–Dionysus myth accordingly represents a development not only for Dionysus, but for Perseus too. Perseus now fights at the head of an army, and not alone, defending the city of his birth. He uses no magic against Dionysus. Instead he throws him into the lake using his own strength. Perseus is also appropriate in that he is a hero associated particularly with fighting 'mask' figures: first the Gorgon, and then Dionysus, whose worship is specifically linked with masks. They share a common characteristic. The statue of Dionysus *Αἰσυμνήτης* in Patrae was kept in a chest, and anyone who opened it was immediately driven mad on seeing it. Perseus is used to dealing with such phenomena.[175]

In addition, the god is a hero too, whose death is central to his cult and necessary

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[175] Cf. Graf 1985, 107–108 for the Dionysus statue; cf. Dionysus *Γόργυρος EM* 238,40; see Burkert 1985, 161, 166–167, Vernant 1985 *passim*.

for his continued influence, so that he dies like a hero at Perseus' hands.

Perseus is more suited to the task than Heracles, because the latter, though Argos' most famous son, does not represent the stable qualities of the πόλις. Heracles spends his life wandering in exile, and is in fact closely associated with the anarchic, untamed Dionysus because of his liking for too much strong wine. His propensity for outbursts of madness and drunkenness makes him particularly ineligible, if we are correct in seeing the entire fight of Perseus and Dionysus not as a plain analogue of the myths of Lycurgus and Pentheus, but as a progression in the perceived (not neccessarily the actual) history of the cult of the god on the Greek mainland.

In the myth, the stable, hearth-centred world of the πόλις as represented by Perseus meets, overcomes and finally assimilates the civilization-threatening, invading cult of Dionysus. The result is the evolution of a new synthesis of state and cult, restoring stability to the πόλις while adding to it a new dimension of spiritual life, presided over by the mortal king, and no longer susceptible to the mysterious, irregular and disastrous attacks of 'Dionysiaca'. 'Dionysiaca' remain but, confined to the yearly Agr(i)ania, they are embedded in the religious basis of the πόλις, and are thus restricted to regular and controllable ritual. Perseus' victory over Dionysus is the culmination of his successful transition from οἶκος to πόλις.

Appendix
ANCIENT DRAMAS ON THE PERSEUS MYTHS

No single Greek drama dealing with the Perseus myths survives today in a form which even begins to approach completeness. The evidence ranges in size from the minuscule (the title of the play), to the merely inadequate (single words), to the tantalizing (substantial fragments of several lines in length). There have been several attempts during the last century or so to reconstruct the content of particular Perseus plays, at least in the case of the Three Tragedians, and in Aeschylus' case, to reconstruct the tetralogy to which they belonged.[1]

Oliver Taplin has made some salutary remarks on the latter attempts:[2]

> A favourite pastime of Aeschylean scholars has been the tabulation of the titles of his lost plays into tetralogies, trilogies, and dilogies: but most of this has been self-indulgent speculation. We know for certain of only three connected tetralogies [i.e. the *Oresteia*, *Lycurgeia*, and the Oedipus plays of 467]; and we know that in 472 there was little or no connection between the four plays...For all we know the great majority of Aeschylus' 'tetralogies' were unconnected, like that of 472. If more than one lost tragedy is drawn from the same group of myths this does not prove a trilogy. Other dramatists returned to the same myths in different years, and there is no reason why Aeschylus should not have done so.

Despite these comments, this particular scholarly pursuit of reconstruction continues today, though perhaps with more restraint and evenhandedness[3] than was once the case. The concentration of scholars upon the Perseus plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides is due not only to their being virtually the only ones to survive in anything more than name, but also to the attractive possibility of drawing upon the text of their extant plays to suggest the possible form and content of the lost plays. The most recent substantial studies of the Perseus fragments are Howe[4] and Webster.[5] Both attempted reconstruction of the Perseus plays, Howe of Aeschylus,

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[1] For a survey of past scholarship on the tetralogy question, see Gantz 1978–79, and 1980. There is no standard method of referring to the fragmentary plays discussed in this chapter, and so the full Greek title will be given in each case. Extant plays, however, will be cited in the transliterated latinate form, in full in the text, and as abbreviated in *LSJ* in footnotes.

[2] Taplin 1977, 195–6, and his notes.

[3] As practised by Gantz 1978–79, and 1980.

[4] Howe 1952, chs.7, 8 and 9; 1959.

[5] Webster 1967a.

Sophocles and Euripides, Webster of Euripides, in detail often unjustified by the evidence. Though to an extent valid and on occasion successful, this pursuit has tended to obscure the simple fact of the popularity of Perseus as a theatrical figure, and the significance of this fact for the way in which he was perceived as a mythical figure. References to their discussions are included below at the appropriate points. The purpose here is first of all to establish the extent of the popularity of the Perseus myths as a source for classical and later drama; concentration on the three tragedians has tended to mask this point. The fragments, such as they are, will then be discussed play by play, with a view to identifying themes and commenting on particular points of interest, rather than attempting comprehensive reconstruction.

A. THE PLAYS

The following dramas can be assumed to have dealt with some part of the Perseus myths.

1. Tragedy

Aeschylus: *Πολυδέκτης*, *Φορκίδες* (and a satyr play *Δικτυουλκοί*).[6]

Sophocles: *Ἀκρίσιος*, *Λαρισαῖοι* (identified by some scholars with *Ἀκρίσιος*), *Δανάη* (identified by some scholars with *Ἀκρίσιος*), *Ἀνδρομέδα* (identified by some scholars with *Αἰθίοπες*).[7]

Euripides: *Ἀνδρομέδα*, *Δανάη*, *Δίκτυς*.[8]

Lycophron: *Ἀνδρομέδα*.[9]

Phrynichus: *Ἀνδρομέδα*.[10]

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[6] *Πολυδέκτης*: *TrGF* III, 302. *Φορκίδες*: *TrGF* III, 361–4, frs.261–2. *Δικτυουλκοί*: *TrGF* III, 161–74, frs.46a–47c; but for reconstruction of the text of the latter, and commentary and discussion see Werre-de Haas 1961.

[7] *Ἀκρίσιος*: *TrGF* IV, 136–40, frs.60–76. *Λαρισαῖοι*: *TrGF* IV, 334–6, frs.378–383, indentified with *Ἀκρίσιος*, *ibid.* 334. *Δανάη*: *TrGF* IV, 173–5, frs.165–70, identified with *Ἀκρίσιος*, *ibid.* 173. *Ἀνδρομέδα*: *TrGF* IV, 156–60, frs.126–36, identified with *Αἰθίοπες*, see *ibid.* 157.

[8] *Ἀνδρομέδα*: *TGF* 392–404, frs.114–56. *Δανάη*: *TGF* 453–9, frs.316–30 (cf. Ps.-Euripides' *Δανάη*, *TGF* 1132, of the Byzantine period). *Δίκτυς*: *TGF* 459–464, frs.331–48. For the fragments of Euripides, until the publication of *TrGF* V, see *TGF* and also Mette 1967–68, 1973–74, 1981–82.

[9] *TrGF* I, 275, 1c.

[10] *TrGF* I, 323.

Pratinas: *Περσεύς* (in a tetralogy with *Τάνταλος* and *Παλαισταί* (satyr play)).[11]

Livius Andronicus: *Andromeda*, *Danae*.[12]

Naevius: *Danae*.[13]

Ennius: *Andromeda*.[14]

Accius: *Andromeda*.[15]

There is no other *Δικτυουλκοί*, but compare the *Δίκτυες*, a comedy by Epicharmus.[16]

2. Old Comedy

Apollophanes: *Δανάη*.[17]

Phormus: *Κηφεύς* or *Κηφάλαια*, *Περσεύς*.[18]

Sannyrio: *Δανάη*.[19]

Cratinus: *Σεριφιοι*.[20]

3. Middle Comedy

Antiphanes: *'Ανδρομέδα*.[21]

Eubulus: *Δανάη*.[22]

Heniochus: *Γοργόνες*.[23]

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[11] *TrGF* I, 80 T2.

[12] *Andromeda*: *TF* 25. *Danae*: *TF* 26.

[13] *TF* 32–4, frs.1–11.

[14] *TF* 58–60, frs.1–8.

[15] *TF* 207–10, frs.1–15.

[16] *CGF* 52, no.81, l.17.

[17] *CAF* I, p.797.

[18] See Pickard-Cambridge 1962, 289 n.2, 231.

[19] *CAF* I, 794–5, frs.8–9, *CGF* p.204.

[20] *PCG* IV, 233–39, frs.218–32. Cf. *CGF* 45–7, no.74 for the fragments of a Perseus comedy, possibly the *Σεριφιοι*.

[21] *CAF* II, 23, fr.32.

[22] *PCG* V, 202–3, fr.22.

[23] *PCG* V, 552, fr.1.

See also Hesychius: †περισχαδόν†—*τὸν ὑποκρινόμενον τὸν Περσέα ὡς πτωχὸν καὶ †φησίμορφον†ψίαθον ἐν ᾧ περιειλοῦσι τὰς ἰσχάδας.*[24]

There was also a *Φινεύς* by Theopompus, which may refer to the Phineus who is Andromeda's suitor. However, it seems more likely to have been to do with the Phineus who is plagued by the Harpies.[25]

4. Satyr Plays

In addition to the *Δικτυουλκοί* of Aeschylus, there was a second *Φορκίδες*.[26] Some vases exist which probably depict scenes from satyr drama on the Perseus myths.[27]

In sum perhaps as many as thirteen tragedies or more (plus five in Latin), at least eight comedies, and two or more satyr plays were written on the Perseus myths: well over twenty dramas, and probably more, were performed with Perseus on the stage in Athens during the fifth and fourth centuries, from the first production of Aeschylus' possible tetralogy in perhaps c.490[28] and the *'Ανδρομέδα* of Phrynichus, to the comedies of Eubulus and Antiphanes and Lycophron's *'Ανδρομέδα*.[29] This figure may have been augmented in the fifth century by the reperformance of the Aeschylus Perseus plays.[30]

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[24] *FCG* IV, 702.

[25] Cf. the *Φινεύς* of Aeschylus (*TrGF* III 359–61, frs.258–60), and two *Φινεύς* plays by Sophocles (*TrGF* IV, 484–89, frs.704–717a), all three of which were concerned with the Phineus of the Harpies myth.

[26] See pp.212-13 below.

[27] See Webster 1967b, 169–70; Brommer 1959, *s.v. Perseus*, 74 no.36, and on *Δικτυουλκοί*, 81 no.165; Schauenburg 1960, 97–103, pls.33–5 and his nn.678ff; Jahn 1868. See below pp.235–6.

[28] Howe 1952, 171ff; Schauenburg 1960, 9ff; Howe 1959, 150–165, and her n.3 (citing Pickard-Cambridge *CR* 53 1939, 37); and Howe 1953, 269–75.

[29] Eubulus *flor.* c.376–2 (*Suda*, see *PCG* V, 188), Antiphanes died c.334–1 (*Suda*, see *FCG* I, 304), Lycophron born c.330–25 (Mair 1955, 303).

[30] Ar. *Ra.* 868 and Schol., Schol. Ar. *Ach.* 10, Vit.Aesch.p.5, 6 (Wil.).

B. RECONSTRUCTION AND ITS PROBLEMS

Attempts to reconstruct any of these plays from their fragments (if they have any) tend to rely heavily upon external evidence. Sometimes there is a summary of the plot naming the play: for example, for Sophocles',[31] and Euripides' *'Ανδρομέδα*,[32] and the latter's *Δανάη*.[33] Or, more generally, a standard narrative version such as is found in Apollodorus, Hyginus or Pherecydes testifies to a play.[34] This tends to blur any detail which may make the fragments specifically Aeschylean, Sophoclean or Euripidean, although sometimes Hyginus may be quoting a particular dramatist.[35] It also allows one to forget how flexible was myth in the hands of the poets, and how each may have altered even quite major parts of the story.[36] Thirdly, appeal may be made to other extant plays by the same author, and to vase paintings, wall paintings and sculpture.

Use of art is perhaps the most problematical of all the methods of reconstruction. When a series of vase paintings depicting a part of the Perseus myths is known to date from a period contemporary with a drama, it is likely that the vases have been inspired in some part by that play. Most recently, Webster produced a general catalogue of Attic tragedies and satyr plays and corresponding artefacts.[37] Howe in

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[31] See p.217 and n.97 below.

[32] See p.226 and n.144 below.

[33] See p.220 and n.113 below.

[34] Apollod. 2.4.1ff, Hyg. *F.* 63–4, 244, *Astr.* 2.12, Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 10–12.

[35] See Grant 1960, 3 on the difficulty of this approach: Hyg. *F.* 4 and 8 are called summaries of plays of Euripides' (*Ino*, and *Antiope*), but *F.* 120—a summary of the *IT*—has a starkly un-Euripidean reference to the priest Chryses. See also Grant's comments on *F.* 63, 64 and *Astr.* 2.9–12 ('Cepheus', 'Cassiepeia', 'Andromeda' and 'Perseus'), suggesting that Euripides ended his *'Ανδρομέδα* with a prophecy of catasterism.

[36] For example, several versions say that Dictys brought Perseus up (Pherecyd., Apollod., Tz. Lyc. 838); another says that Polydectes did (Schol. *Il.* 14.319), while Hyginus (*F.* 63) says that Polydectes actually *marries* Danae and that Perseus is brought up in the temple of Minerva on Seriphos. Pherecydes, Apollodorus and Tzetzes say Polydectes fails to marry Danae. Compare a version given by Servius (*Aen.* 7.372), in which Danae and Perseus do not reach Seriphos at all, but drift to Italy, where King Pilumnus marries Danae and founds with her the city of Ardea (so too Pliny *NH* 3.56, Schol. Stat. *Theb.* 2.220, Myth.Vat. 1.157, 2.110).

[37] Webster 1967b, to be used, as Webster recommended, in conjunction with Séchan 1926, and Brommer 1959, since Webster did not always repeat items from these books 'where illustrations inspired by a particular play are conveniently grouped together in one of [these two] sources'.

particular made extensive use of vase evidence in her treatment of the Perseus plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.[38]

The clearest correspondence between a play and visual art is provided by Euripides' *Ἀνδρομέδα*.[39] Many vase and wall paintings after 412 (the date of the play's first performance) depict Andromeda chained to a cliff or bound in front of a cave, details which probably reflect Euripides' original staging. In contrast, a group of four earlier vases[40] show her in Eastern dress and tied to a post or posts, rather than a rock, reflecting probably Sophocles' *Ἀνδρομέδα*.[41] References will be given below with each play to their associated iconography.

However, in most cases the link between drama and vase painting is not so clear cut. L.Séchan, in the single most important book on the relationship between Greek theatre and visual art, stressed the difficulty of the subject, but also the necessity of studying it.[42] The relationship between the two traditions is not one way (i.e. not just a case of dramatists influencing the visual artists), but reciprocal. In addition, no painting is a direct reflection of a play, because the painter is himself an artist who makes his own interpretation subject to the conventions of the iconographical tradition. In his concluding chapter, Séchan states:[43]

> On voit donc que, dans la majorité des cas, nous devons supposer quelque intermédiaire entre le drame et nos peintures et que, même lorsque les céramistes ont pu recevoir directement l'impulsion du théâtre, leurs créations restent toujours fortement conditionnées par les nécessités de leur technique et les traditions propres à leur art.

Finally, the title of the play itself is usually taken as indicative of its subject-matter, though this too has its difficulties. To take an extreme example: the *Ἀκρίσιος* of Sophocles might be held to refer either to the first part of his myth, that is, the exile of Danae and the infant Perseus,[44] or to his death at the end

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[38] Howe 1952, chs.7–9, 1959.

[39] For art deriving from this play, see below n.142.

[40] c.450–40.

[41] Webster 1967b, 147. See Chapter IV, p.157.

[42] Séchan 1926, ch.2 of his Introduction.

[43] Séchan 1926, 575.

[44] Jacobs 1795, 122q.

of the story, at Larisa.[45] Similarly his *Δανάη* might have related the conception of Perseus and Danae's exile, or her experience on Seriphos, or both. Brunck suggested that the *Ἀκρίσιος* was the same play as the *Λαρισαῖοι* (or at least had the same subject-matter).[46] However, Casaubon held that *Ἀκρίσιος* was not to be identified with *Λαρισαῖοι*, while Ahrens and Bothe, and Jacobs tentatively, argued that the *Ἀκρίσιος* and the *Δανάη* were the same play.[47] However unsatisfactory this conflict of views may be, scholars have largely agreed that the *Δανάη* of Sophocles dealt with the part of her story that takes place in Argos, namely, the conception of Perseus and their exile by Acrisius (as in Euripides' *Δανάη*, of which considerably more lines are extant).[48] One may note that unless one considers any or all of these plays of Sophocles to have been performed together (as Zieliński did),[49] there is no need to regard any two titles as referring to the same play. For an author might compose more than one play with the same title or leading figure.[50]

Most of these problems are unlikely to trouble the reconstruction of any play called *Ἀνδρομέδα*, since her part in the Perseus myths is enclosed within a single episode. However, Webster noted that even the relatively copious fragments of Euripides' version do not answer all our questions: as well as the rescue of Andromeda, the play may have contained an unsuccessful murder plot (like *Ἀλέξανδρος*, and *Ion*), staged by Phineus, the frustrated and faint-hearted suitor, or an intrigue such as those in *IT* or *Helen*.[51]

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[45] Brunck 1786, vol. 2.3, 5.

[46] Brunck *ibid.*

[47] Casaubon 1600, 307, 36–40, Ahrens 1842, 330, Jacobs 1795, Bothe 1846 (*ap. TrGF* IV, 173). Cf. Webster 1968, 204; Howe 1952, 198ff.

[48] See Webster 1967b, 94; Howe 1952, 289.

[49] Zieliński 1925, 289.

[50] See Taplin 1977, 196. Sophocles wrote two plays called *Φινεύς* (see n.25 above), two called *Ἀθάμας* (*TrGF* IV, 99–102, fr.1–10); Euripides wrote two *Ἰφιγένεια* plays, and two called *Ἀλκμέων* (*TGF* 379–385, fr.65–87). Cf. Theseus in E. *Hipp.* with Theseus in E. *HF* and *Supp.*; cf. Odysseus in S. *Phil.* and *Aj.*; cf. the death of Heracles in S. *Tr.* with his death in *POxy.*27, no.2454.

[51] Webster 1967a, 198 on Phineus. See, however, below n.160, and Lesky 1983, 316.

C. THE FRAGMENTS

1. Phrynichus, Lycophron And Pratinas

Of the *Ἀνδρομέδα* of Phrynichus, and of Lycophron, only the title remains, in each case cited in the *Suda* by Hesychius. Although the influence of Phrynichus' play on later tragic poets cannot be gauged, nevertheless the possibility of such influence should be noted. Aeschylus, Phrynichus' younger contemporary, appears not to have dealt with the Andromeda myth at all. So if Sophocles and Euripides were influenced by any earlier drama when it came to their own *Ἀνδρομέδα*, it is likely to have been the play by Phrynichus rather than any by Aeschylus. Lycophron's *Ἀνδρομέδα* was written over one hundred years after Euripides'.

Of Pratinas' *Περσεύς* only the title remains. However, it is known to have won the second prize to Aeschylus' Theban tetralogy in 467.[52] Again, the possibility that this play influenced Sophocles and Euripides in the production of their Perseus plays must be acknowledged.

2. Aeschylus

(a) Πολυδέκτης[53]

Of Aeschylus' *Πολυδέκτης* only the title remains. Roughly, it must have been concerned with the part of the myths in which Polydectes, the king of Seriphos, attempts to cause the death of Perseus (by sending him to kill the Gorgon) so that he can marry Danae. Perseus returns, however, and kills him.[54] Whether the play stressed the departure of Perseus or his return is impossible to say. But those who adopt the tetralogy theory choose according to whether they believe *Πολυδέκτης* came before, or after (this being the generally accepted view) *Φορκίδες*.[55]

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[52] See n.11 above.

[53] *TrGF* III, T78, 15b. Plot: Howe 1952, 190. Two vases showing Perseus and Polydectes: Webster 1967b, 144 (cf. Howe 1952, 188–190).

[54] One must remember, however, the version in Hyginus (*F.* 63), in which Polydectes does marry Danae.

[55] Before: as a possibility, see Gantz 1980, 151. After: Pfeiffer 1938; Hermann 1877, 175–7, (in Fritsche, *Opuscula* 8, not 7 as Gantz says 1980, 150 n.61); Wecklein 1896, 607–8; Séchan 1926, 107–113; Wilamowitz 1914, 154; Howe 1952, 185, cf. 171ff. Cf. Mette 1963, 155–161; Ferrari 1968, 313–37. (Most of these references are cited by Gantz 1980 notes 60–65.) For

(b) Δικτυουλκοί[56]

The Aeschylean Perseus play about which most is known is the *Δικτυουλκοί*, 'Net-drawers'. The catalogue of Aeschylus' plays has the title *Δικτυουργοί*,[57] but other testimonia give *Δικτυουλκοί*.[58] The play tells of the arrival in Seriphos of Danae with the infant Perseus, her rescue by Dictys and Silenus, and the latter's frustrated attempt to 'marry' her.[59] It is a satyr play, and the plight of Danae is at its heart.

Eighty-nine lines of text survive, in two groups. The first is of twenty-two lines[60] and heavily restored in places, but the content is clear. It is part of a scene early in the play. Two characters, perhaps Dictys and an Old Man, have noticed an unidentified heavy object caught in their fishing nets. They speculate as to its identity, and call for help in hauling it up onto the shore:

Γ. Γέρων
Δ. Δίκτυς

Γ. ξυνῆκ[ας ;
Δ. ξυνῆκα [δή· καὶ τοῦτό νυν φύλασσέ μοι.
Γ. τί σοι φυλάσσω [μηδὲν ἐνθάδ' εἰσορῶν;
Δ. εἴ που θαλάσσης [καινὸν ἐννοεῖς τί μοι.
Γ. ἄσημα; λεῖος πόν[τος ἐστὶ πανταχοῦ.
Δ. δέρκου νύν ἐς κευ[θμῶνα τῆς πέτρας, ἐκεῖ.
Γ. καὶ δὴ δέδορκα, τῷδε τ[
ἔα·
τί φῶ τόδ' εἶναι; πότερ' ἀ[λός τι κιώδαλον,
φάλαιναν ἢ ζύγαιναν, ... ἢ κι[βώτιον;
ἄναξ Πόσειδον Ζεῦ τ' ἐνά[λιε, σύμφορον
δ]ῶρον θαλάσσης πέμπε τ[οῖς πονουμένοις.
Δ. τί σοι θαλάσσης δίκτυον δ[ῶρον φέρει;
Γ. π]εφυκί[ω]ται δ' ὥστε μ' ἀγνο[εῖν τί δὴ
γένοιτ',] ἔναιμον, ἢ [τ]ι χ[ρῆμ'] ἐν [δικτύῳ·

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interpretation of the fragments and vase evidence for Aeschylus' Perseus plays as a whole, see Howe 1952, ch.7.

[56] Plot: Werre-de Haas 1961. Three vases: Webster 1967b, 319; also cited, by *TrGF* III, 162, are Trendall–Webster 1971, 30f, Simon 1969a, 792, and 1982, 139, Oakley 1982b, 111ff, Pfeiffer 1938, 2, 19.

[57] *TrGF* III, T78, 4b, where it has been restored to *Δικτυουλκοί*.

[58] Cf. *TrGF* III, notes on fr.47, 47a, l.818.

[59] In addition to Werre-de Haas 1961, cf. Taplin 1977, 418–20; Sutton 1978–79, 22–5; Lesky 1983, 102–3; Mette 1963, 155.

[60] *PSI* 1209a, Werre-de Haas 1961, ch.3.

] γέρων νησαῖος . ϙ . [
μάταιόν] ἐστι τοὔργον; οὐ χωρεῖ πρόσω.
Δ. τοιγὰρ β]οὴν ἵστημι τοῖσδ' ἰύγμασιν·
[ἰώ· ἰώ·]
π]άντες γεωργοί, δεῦτε, χἀμπελοσκάφοι,
βοτήρ τ]ε ποιμήν τ' εἴ τίς ἐστ' [ἐ]γχώριος,
]οι τε καὶ μα[ρ]ε[ιλ]ευτῶν ἔθνος
]ἐναντιωτάτης.

The second fragment[61] comprises a continuous passage of sixty-seven lines, which were in fact lines 765–832 of the play. By this time, Dictys has left the stage and Danae and the infant Perseus are at the mercy of the lecherous Silenus and a chorus of satyrs. Silenus is telling Danae how he plans to act as their *πρόξενος*, *εὐεργέτης* and *προπράκτωρ*, their protector, benefactor and representative:[62]

Σ. τοιγὰρ θάλασσ]αν καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρομαι
κλύειν ἃ νῦν ἅ]παντι κηρύσσω στρατῷ.
σὺ δ' ὦ κόρη τὰ] πάντα πᾶσ' ἂν ἐφθάρης,
εἰ μὴ μάλ' εὐτυ]χο[ῦ]σα πρόξενόν θ' ἅμα
εὐεργέτην θ' ηὕρ]ου με καὶ προπράκτορα,
τοῦ παιδίου] τε μαῖαν ὡς γερασμίαν,
ἢ κοιμίσει νιν] ἠπίοις προσφθέγμασιν·
ὄλβος δὲ νῦν σ' ἄπαυστο]ς ἐν χρόνῳ μενεῖ.

Danae responds unfavourably, fearing Silenus' intentions; and yet she cannot escape. She calls on Zeus:[63]

ΔΑΝ. ὦ παγκρατὲς Ζ]εῦ καὶ γενέθλιοι θεοί
τί νῦν τελευτ]ὰς τάσδε μοι πόνων τιθεῖς;
ἦ δῆτα τοῖσ]δε κιωδάλοις με δώσετε;
ἔργοισι καὶ] λόγοισι λυμανθήσομαι,
ἄφερτα δ' αἰχ]μάλωτος ὢ[ς] ἔξω κακά,
ἀναίνο]μαι γοῦν· ἀγχόνην ἄρ' ἅψομαι,
ἀτιμί]ας τεμοῦσα κωλυτήριον
ἡμᾶς δ' ὅπ]ως μὴ ποντίσῃ τις αὖ πάλιν
ὠμῆς δι' ὀρ]γῆς ἧ πατήρ· δέδοικα γάρ.
Ζεῦ, πῶνδε] πέμπ' ἀ[ρ]ωγόν, εἰ δοκεῖ, τινα·
σὺ γὰρ μετ]είχες αἰτίας, τῆς μείζονος,
μέρος, δίκη]ν δὲ πᾶσαν ἐξέτεισ' ἐγώ.

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[61] *POxy.*2161.

[62] l.765–772, Werre-de Haas 1961, ch.4.

[63] l.773–785, Werre-de Haas 1961, ch.5.

τἀληθὲς] *εὖ σ' ἔλεξα· πάντ' ἔχει*[*ς*] *λόγου.* 785

Silenus responds in lyric, trying to ingratiate himself with Danae by playing up to the infant Perseus, *ὁ μικκός*,[64] *ὁ νεοσσός*:[65]

Σ. *ἡδ*]*ὺ γελᾷ μου προσορῶν*
οὗτο]*ς ὁ μικκὸς λιπαρὸν*
καὶ μ]*ιλτ*[*ό*]*πρεπ*[*το*]*ν φαλακρόν.*
]*εισ . πάπας τις ἀρεσ-*
]*μ . .* [.] *ὦ ποικιλόνω-* 790
[*τοι*]
] . . . *λαις μοι*
] . . *σμος*
]*πιδεκη*
]*ποσθο*(*σ*)*φιλὴς ὁ νεοσσός* 795
δ]*ερκόμενος*
]*σιον*
]*υται*
εἰ μή σε χαίρω π[*ροσιδών,*
ὄλοιτο Δίκτυς κρ[*υερῶς* 800
τῆσδέ μ' ἄγρας μ[*ὴ μεταδούς.*

Silenus then addresses the baby at length as his new 'father'.[66] The chorus prepare to leave with Danae and Perseus:[67]

ΞΟ. *ἀλλ'*] *εἶα, φίλοι, στείχωμεν ὅπως* ? str.
γά]*μον ὁρμαίνωμεν, ἐπεὶ τέλεος*
καιρὸς ἄναυδος τάδ' ἐπαινεῖ.
καὶ τήνδ' [*ἐ*]*σορῶ νύμφην ἣ*[*δ*]*η*
(*καὶ*) *πάνυ βουλομένην τῆς ἡμετέρας* 825
φιλότητος ἄδην κορέσασθαι.
καὶ θαῦμ' οὐδέν· πολὺς ἦν αὐτῇ antistr.
χρόνος ὃν χήρα κατὰ ναῦν ὕφαλος
τείρετο· νῦν δ' οὖν
ἐσορ]*ῶσ' ἦβην τὴν ἡμετέραν* 830
γηθ]*εῖ, γάνυται, νυμφ*[*ί*]*ον* [*το*]*ῖον*
δαι]*σὶν λαμπραῖς τῆς Ἀ*[*φ*]*ροδ*(*ε*)*ίτης.*

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[64] l.787.

[65] l.795. For l.786–801 see Werre-de Haas 1961, ch.6.

[66] For l.802–820, see Chapter I, p.13.

[67] l.821–832, Werre-de Haas 1961, ch.7.2.

In the last part of the play, probably, Dictys returns and saves Danae from her captors.

(c) Φορκίδες

(i) Satyr Play Or Tragedy?

It has been, and still is commonly assumed that the extant titles, *Πολυδέκτης*, *Φορκίδες*, and *Δικτυουλκοί* were part of a tetralogy.[68] Accordingly, a fourth play, for which there is no evidence at all, has been conjectured.[69] Before the latest fragments of *Δικτυουλκοί* came to light, it was thought that the *Φορκίδες* was the satyr play, because of an inscription mentioning a satyric drama of that name:[70]

——*ῃ*, *ὑπε(κρίνετο) Νεοπτό[λεμος]*
[ὑπο(κριτὴς) Θε]ττα̣λὸς ἐνίκα·
[ἐπὶ Θεο]φράστου· σα̣τυ[ρι]
.....Φορκίσ[ι]·
[παλαιᾷ· Νικ?]όστρ[ατος]
.....Εὐ]ριπί[δου]·

Now it is thought not to have been a satyr play, simply because *Δικτυουλκοί* is. This is the right conclusion, but one which has been reached for the wrong reasons. It is a point which needs clarification, since as recently as 1987 one scholar has referred to '[*Φορκίδες*]...the satyr play...by Aeschylus'.[71]

It seems likely that there were at least two *Φορκίδες*, one a tragedy, and one a satyr play (as Nauck implied).[72] The inscription cites the satyr play, author unknown, performed in 340/39 more than a century after Aeschylus' death, a date

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[68] Most lately by Gantz 1980, 149f. See *TrGF* III, 361 and *TRI* B XIII. *Φορκίδες* in art: three vases and an Etruscan mirror, see Webster 1967b, 144; cf. Schauenburg 1960, 97–98, Howe 1952, 180, and 1953, 270, Séchan 1926, 107–113.

[69] Howe 1952, 172–176 cites four vases of c.490 which depict Acrisius having Danae and Perseus placed in the *λάρναξ* for their exposure at sea. Howe suggests that the vases were inspired by the missing play of Aeschylus' 'tetralogy'. If Aeschylus' Perseus plays were not in a tetralogy, then there is no reason to create a play to fit the vases. There is in fact an extant piece of contemporary literature highly appropriate to the scene: Simonides' poem from which the so-called 'Lament of Danae' has survived (for the text of which see Fuhrer 1976, 163–4) (Simonides' dates being c.556–468).

[70] *IG II²* 2320.28–33.

[71] Halliwell 1987, 194, commenting on Arist. *Po.*1456a2, 'we have no reason to identify [the *Φορκίδες* mentioned by Aristotle] with the satyr play [sic] of the same name by Aeschylus'.

[72] *TGF* 83.

which suggests that he was not its author; however, we know that his plays were reperformed, so that it is technically possible that the *Φορκίδες* listed in the fourth century was Aeschylus'.[73] However, Aristotle too, in the *Poetics*, mentions a *Φορκίδες*, but it is a tragedy, as the context makes clear: he cites it, together with a *Prometheus*, as belonging to his fourth type of tragedy, but again no author is mentioned.[74] That Aeschylus wrote a *Φορκίδες* is attested in the catalogue of his plays, but the genre is not specified.[75] However, given Aristotle's bracketing together of the tragic *Φορκίδες* and *Prometheus* (assuming that it is the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus), it is likely that Aeschylus' play was that tragedy.

(ii) The Play

Eratosthenes summarized the plot:[76]

> *δοκεῖ δὲ* (*sc. Περσεὺς*) *καὶ ἅρπην παρὰ Ἡφαίστου λαβεῖν ἐξ ἀδάμαντος. ὡς δὲ Αἰσχύλος φησὶν ὁ τῶν τραγῳδιῶν ποιητὴς ἐν Φορκίσιν, Γραίας εἶχον προφύλακας αἱ Γοργόνες. αὗται δὲ ἕνα εἶχον ὀφθαλμὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἀλλήλαις παραδίδοσαν κατὰ φυλακήν. τηρήσας δὲ ὁ Περσεὺς ἐν τῇ παραδόσει λαβὼν, ἔρριψεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν Τριτωνίδα λίμνην, καὶ οὕτως ἐλθὼν ἐπὶ τὰς Γοργόνας ὑπνωκυίας ἀφείλετο τῆς Μεδούσης τὴν κεφαλήν.*

Aeschylus' version differed from that of others. In Apollodorus, Perseus acquires his *ἅρπη* not from Hephaestus, but from Hermes. More significantly, in the extant tradition the Graeae are generally not explicitly referred to as the *προφύλακες*, 'guardians', of the Gorgons. Rather, they tell Perseus where to find the Gorgons, and he then returns their eye (and tooth), instead of throwing them away.[77]

There remains one fragment only, describing Perseus himself:[78]

ἔδυ δ' ἐς ἄντρον ἀσχέδωρος ὥς.

This fragment survives only because of the strangeness of the word *ἀσχέδωρος*.[79]

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[73] See n.30 above.

[74] *Po.* 1456a2.

[75] *TrGF* III T78, 17d.

[76] Eratosth. *Catast.* 22, cf. Hyg. *Astr.* 2.12, Schol. BP German. p.182, 15 (Breysig), Philodem. *De Piet. Pap. Hercul.* 242 I 2ff.

[77] Apollod. 2.4.1–2, Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11.

[78] *TrGF* III, fr. 261.

[79] See Chapter I, pp.17–18.

Howe cited two tragic fragments (a and b) from a single papyrus as belonging to Aeschylus' *Φορκίδες*.[80] C.Robert and R.Carden,[81] alone of all the editors of the text, considered fr.a to refer to Medusa. Robert assigned frs.a and b to *Φορκίδες*, and Carden tentatively to Sophocles' *Ἀνδρομέδα*. The papyrus is very difficult to read even in those parts in which it is intact, since it is by an unpractised hand, as a result of which Robert's and Carden's interpretations depended on variant readings. The fragments appear now in *TrGF* II,[82] where the views of scholars adduced make it plain that the majority have considered fr.a to refer not to Medusa but to Niobe, and fr.b to Tantalus. However, even this is uncertain. In any case, even if Robert was correct in concluding that fr.a refers to Medusa, the ascription of the fragments to Aeschylus' *Φορκίδες* is arbitrary: they might equally be from Phrynichus' *Ἀνδρομέδα*, or Pratinas' *Περσεύς*.

(d) Other Aeschylean References To The Perseus Myths

In *Prometheus Bound*, Prometheus prophesies to Io (like Danae a victim of Zeus' lust) how extreme her own wanderings are to be, and refers to the Graeae and the *δρακοντόμαλλοι Γοργόνες βροτοστυγεῖς*.[83]

Further evidence of how Perseus may have been portrayed in Aeschylus is found in *Choephori*. Orestes is twice identified with Perseus. In the first instance, the identification is explicit. Orestes is exhorted by the chorus to kill Clytemnestra, the 'Gorgon', in order to protect his *φίλοι*:[84]

> *Περσέως δ' ἐν φρεσὶν*
> *καρδίαν⟨ ⟩σχεθὼν*
> *τοῖς θ' ὑπὸ χθονὸς φίλοις*
> *τοῖς τ' ἄνωθεν πρόπρασσ' ὧν χάρις,*
> *Γοργοῦς λυγρᾶς ⟨τοῖς⟩ ἔνδοθεν*
> *φόνιον ἄταν τιθείς, τὸν αἴτιον*
> *δ' ἐξαπόλλυ' εἰσορῶν.*[85]

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[80] *POxy.*213 (a and b); Howe 1952, 184.

[81] Robert 1914, Carden 1974, nr.10.

[82] F700.

[83] A. *Pr.* 790–800, see Chapter I, pp.19–20.

[84] A. *Ch.* 831–837.

[85] Cf. Garvie 1986, 271–4 on the parallelism of Perseus killing the Gorgon and Orestes killing Clytemnestra.

In the second passage, from the end of the play, the same identification is implicitly recalled when the serpent imagery which is so prevalent in the *Oresteia* as a whole recurs in connection with the freeing of the city of Argos:[86]

Χο. *ἀλλ' εὖ γ' ἔπραξας, μηδ' ἐπιζευχθῇς στόμα*
φήμῃ πονηρᾷ μηδ' ἐπιγλωσσῶ κακά· 1045
ἠλευθέρωσας πᾶσαν Ἀργείων πόλιν
δυοῖν δρακόντοιν εὐπετῶς τεμὼν κάρα.

Orestes is to 'cut off the head' of the two serpents (Clytemnestra and Aegisthus), although he will not actually kill them in this way. Clytemnestra is 'gorgon-like', and so her Furies are too;

Ορ. *ἆ, ἆ,*
δμοιαὶ γυναῖκες αἵδε Γοργόνων δίκην
φαιοχίτωνες καὶ πεπλεκτανημέναι
πυκνοῖς δράκουσιν· οὐκέτ' ἂν μείναιμ' ἐγώ. 1050

The main point of the comparison of Orestes' task to that of Perseus is the difficulty and danger associated with it, and the idea of saving Argos. Orestes is to become a monster-slaying hero in order to kill his mother.[87]

3. Sophocles

The most revealing aspect of scholarship dealing with the Sophocles fragments is the number of times it has been suggested that certain combinations of two of the titles refer to one and the same play.[88] In addition, it has been thought that the *Ἀνδρομέδα* was a satyr play, and that the *Δανάη* was one too.[89] Such varied opinions show how scanty and malleable is the evidence, and how fragile the conclusions. As Howe commented, of the Sophoclean Perseus titles only the *Ἀνδρομέδα* is certain.[90]

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[86] A. *Ch.* 1044–1050.

[87] Cf. Garvie 1986, 343–6.

[88] See above pp.206–7.

[89] *Ἀνδρομέδα*: Schol.Theoc. 4.62, cf. Casaubon 1605, 357 (addenda), Lloyd-Jones 1963, 437. *Δανάη*: Welcker 1839–41, 349; Meineke 1863, 275.

[90] Howe 1952, 198. Yet this does not prevent her (and others) from being too confident in the assumptions (which are by the nature of the material general) upon which her reconstructions are based. For example, see *ibid.* 202f, 204f, 206f, where terms such as *σωφροσύνη*, *ὕβρις*, and 'fate' are used rather too freely.

(a) Ἀκρίσιος[91]

No plot summary exists. There are seventeen fragments, the majority surviving by being quoted by Hesychius (eight) and Stobaeus (seven). Six consist in one word, three in two words, seven in one or two lines, and one in four lines.

The longest fragment perhaps reflects conflict within the *οἶκος*, between Danae, the 'Argive girl', and her parent Acrisius:[92]

> *ῥῆσις βραχεῖα τοῖς φρονοῦσι σώφρονα*
> *πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας καὶ φυτεύσαντας πρέπει,*
> *ἄλλως τε καὶ κόρῃ τε κἀργείᾳ γένος,*
> *αἷς κόσμος ἡ σιγή τε καὶ τὰ παῦρ' ἔπη.*

This theme of young against old is raised to the level of *γινώμη*, with reference perhaps to Acrisius as an old man who loves life too much:[93]

> *τοῦ ζῆν γὰρ οὐδεὶς ὡς ὁ γηράσκων ἐρᾷ.*
>
> *τὸ ζῆν γάρ, ὦ παῖ, παντὸς ἥδιον γέρας·*
> *θανεῖν γὰρ οὐκ ἔξεστι τοῖς αὐτοῖσι δίς.*

Although the *Ἀκρίσιος* may have dealt in theory either with the oracle given to Acrisius predicting his death and the birth of Perseus, or with his actual death in Larisa (but not with both parts of the story, since they are set years apart), the conflict of young against old, and particularly of daughter (rather than son or grandson, i.e. Perseus) against father, might favour the first of these two options.

(b) Δανάη

There are six fragments, three of which are of one word only. The longest is a comment, probably made by Acrisius to Danae:[94]

> *οὐκ οἶδα τὴν σὴν πεῖραν· ἓν δ' ἐπίσταμαι·*
> *τοῦ παιδὸς ὄντος τοῦδ' ἐγὼ διόλλυμαι.*

Acrisius is referring to the oracle given him at Delphi, predicting his death at the hands of his daughter's son. The statement in fr.165 makes explicit a stark contrast,

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[91] Vases connected with Acrisius and Danae: Webster 1967b, 147, *LIMC* I.1 452, Jucker 1970, 47ff; cf. Howe 1952, 212–215.

[92] Fr.64.

[93] Frs.66, 67. Cf. Pheres, father of Admetus, refusing to die for his son, E. *Alc.*629–731.

[94] Fr.165.

and Acrisius' only certainty: Perseus' very existence means his own death.

Howe used the fragments both of the *Ἀκρίσιος* and the *Δανάη* to reconstruct one drama.[95] The procedure itself is legitimate once it has been proven that the two titles do indeed refer to the same play. But the process can never be sound when it is founded on so little evidence, the same evidence in fact which leads one scholar to conclude that *Ἀκρίσιος/Δανάη* was one drama, and another, *Ἀκρίσιος/Λαρισαῖοι*. As has been seen, the fragments of these two plays are paltry indeed. There is the possibility that the *Δανάη* and the *Ἀκρίσιος* dealt with the same part of the myth without them being the same play, since, as Taplin has observed, a playwright might produce two different plays using the same characters and primary mythic material.[96]

(c) Ἀνδρομέδα

The testimonia give a plot summary:[97]

> *Κασσιεπείας. ταύτην ἱστορεῖ Σοφοκλῆς ὁ τῆς τραγῳδίας ποιητὴς ἐν Ἀνδρομέδᾳ ἐρίσασαν περὶ κάλλους ταῖς Νηρηίσιν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸ σύμπτωμα. καὶ Ποσειδῶνα διαφθεῖραι τὴν χώραν κῆτος ἐπιπέμψαντα, δι' ἣν πρόκειται τῷ κήτει ἡ θυγάτηρ.*
>
> *Κήτους. τοῦτό ἐστιν ὃ Ποσειδῶν ⟨ἐπ⟩έμψε Κηφεῖ διὰ τὸ Κασσιέπειαν ἐρίσαι περὶ κάλλους ταῖς Νηρηίσιν· Περσεὺς δ' αὐτὸ ἀνεῖλε, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο εἰς τὰ ἄστρα ἐτέθη ὑπόμνημα τῆς πράξεως αὐτοῦ. ἱστορεῖ δὲ ταῦτα Σοφοκλῆς ὁ τῶν τραγῳδιῶν ποιητὴς ἐν τῇ Ἀνδρομέδᾳ.*

There are twelve fragments, one of three lines, four of one line, one of two words, five of one word, and a garbled papyrus fragment of eight lines (with only four letters per line surviving).[98]

Fr.126 is the fullest fragment, but uncertain:

> *†ἡμιουτὸν† κούρειον ᾔρέθη πόλει·*
> *νόμος γάρ ἐστι τοίσι βαρβάροις Κρόνῳ*
> *θυηπολεῖν βρότειον ἀρχῆθεν (?) γένος.*[99]

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[95] Howe 1952, 198–200.

[96] See above, n.2 and n.50. On Danae's imprisonment, cf. S. *Ant.*944–954, below pp.219–20.

[97] Eratosth. *Catast.* 16, 36. See also Schol. S. Arat. 188 (p.175,3 Martin), Schol. AP German. p.215a8 (Maas), p.257a8 (Maas), Hyg. *Astr.* 2.10.

[98] Vases: Webster 1967b, 147—four vases c.450/40; Séchan 1926, 148–155; Howe 1952, 222–226.(See also, as cited in *TrGF* IV, 157, Schauenburg 1967, 1ff, Müller 1907, 59 n.49, Trendall–Webster 1971, 5, 63ff, 117 (IV1); cf. Phillips 1968, 1ff, and Simon 1972, 33.)

[99] See Chapter IV, p.146 on this fragment.

Fr.128a also refers to Andromeda:

ἡ δυστυχὴς ἀθῷος ἐκκρεμωμένη.[100]

Fr.127 suggests that Perseus' ability to fly featured in the play, if it is he of whom it is asked:

ἵπποισιν ἢ κύμβαισι ναυστολεῖς χθόνα;

The answer would have been that he came by neither horse nor ship, but by flying.

(d) Λαρισαῖοι[101]

Six fragments survive, the longest being of four lines. There is no plot summary, but the opening line of the play was:[102]

Λάρισα μήτηρ προσγόνων Πελασγιδᾶν.

Frs.378 and 380 refer to an athletic contest and a misthrow of the discus, confirming that the play dealt with Acrisius' death at funeral games:

πολὺν δ' ἀγῶνα πάγξενον κηρύσσεται (sc. *'Ακρίσιος*)
χαλκηλάτους λέβητας ἐκτιθεὶς φέρειν
καὶ κοῖλα χρυσόκολλα καὶ πανάργυρα
ἐκπώματ', εἰς ἀριθμὸν ἑξήκοντα δίς.

καί μοι τρίτον ῥίπτοντι Δωτιεὺς ἀνὴρ
ἀγχοῦ προσῆψεν Ἔλατος ἐν δισκήματι.

Fr.380, spoken probably by Perseus,[103] refers to his fatal misthrow of the discus that killed Acrisius.[104] Given therefore that the *'Ακρίσιος* is likely to have dealt with the birth of Perseus in Argos, the *Λαρισαῖοι* is not to be identified with the *'Ακρίσιος*.[105]

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[100] See Chapter IV, p.147 on this fragment.

[101] No vases. Howe, 1952, 215–218.

[102] Fr.379.

[103] Ahrens 1842, 333, Harris 1974: see *TrGF* IV, 335.

[104] For fr.380, and on the death of Acrisius, see Chapter II, pp.60–1.

[105] See above n.7.

(e) Other Sophoclean References To The Perseus Myths

There are only two other references. The first is a periphrasis for Athene, *ἡ Διός γοργῶπις ἀδάματος θεά*.[106] The coining is modelled on her Homeric epithet, *γλαυκ-ῶπις*, and reflects her martial aspect, as represented by the *γοργόνειον* which she wears on the *αἰγίς*.[107]

The second reference is *Antigone* 944–954, the first stasimon of the choral ode in which Antigone is likened implicitly to three mythological figures associated with imprisonment in caves, Danae, Lycurgus and Cleopatra.[108]

Χο. ἔτλα καὶ Δανάας οὐράνιον φῶς str.
ἀλλάξαι δέμας ἐν χαλκοδέτοις
αὐλαῖς· κρυπτομένα δ' ἐν
τυμβήρει θαλάμῳ κατεζεύχθη·
καίτοι ⟨καὶ⟩ γενεᾷ τί-
μιος, ὦ παῖ παῖ,
καὶ Ζηνὸς ταμιεύε-
σκε γονὰς χρυσορύτους.
ἀλλ' ἃ μοιριδία τις
δύνασις δεινά·
οὔτ' ἄν νιν ὄλβος οὔτ' Ἄρης,
οὐ πύργος, οὐξ ἁλίκτυποι
κελαιναὶ νᾶες ἐκφύγοιεν.

Danae's position is one of helplessness in the face of indomitable power (of Zeus and of fate). This is consistent with Danae in *Δικτυουλκοί*, Sophocles' *Ἀκρίσιος*, and Euripides' *Δίκτυς*.[109] However, this account of Danae's story is here also tailored specifically to *Antigone*. Together with the stories of Lycurgus and Cleopatra it conveys the ambivalence of Antigone's position. In one sense she is as innocent and as oppressed as Danae; in another (and in Creon's view), she is as mad as Lycurgus (imprisoned because he has been driven mad by Dionysus); but she is

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[106] S. *Aj.* 450–1.

[107] Athene is associated with the death of the Gorgon from an early date, as Perseus' patron goddess (in Pherecyd. *FGrHist* 3 F 11 Perseus gives her the *γοργόνειον* to set on her shield), or as the killer herself (E. *Ion* 987–1017, see below p.232). In the rationalized version of Euhemerus too, Athene killed the Gorgon herself (Hyg. *Astr.* 2.12).

[108] S. *Ant.* 944–987. Cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1989a, on this ode, and for a bibliography of past scholarship concerned with it, and Sourvinou-Inwood 1989b.

[109] *Δικτυουλκοί* 773–785; S. *Ἀκρίσιος* fr.64; E. *Δίκτυς* frs.332, 343, 337.

also like Cleopatra, since (in her view) she suffers for her family through another's vindictiveness.[110]

4. Euripides[111]

(a) *Δανάη*[112]

In contrast to the *Δανάη* of Sophocles, there is no ambiguity as to which part of the story Euripides treated. The testimonia preserve a summary of the plot:[113]

> *περὶ ἧς ἐμυθολόγησεν Εὐριπίδης ὁ σοφώτατος ἐν τῇ συντάξει τοῦ αὐτοῦ δράματος ἐν κιβωτίῳ τινὶ βληθεῖσαν καὶ ῥιφεῖσαν τὴν Δανάην, ὡς φθαρεῖσαν ὑπὸ Διὸς μεταβληθέντος εἰς χρυσόν.*

The chorus was female.[114] There are sixteen fragments, the majority of which are four lines or more in length. All of the fragments survive from one author, Stobaeus.[115]

Several themes appear. First, there is the theme of the joy of having children in the home, and of the necessity of having them:[116]

> *γύναι, καλὸν μὲν φέγγος ἡλίου τόδε,*
> *καλὸν δε πόντου χεῦμ' ἰδεῖν εὐήνεμον,*
> *γῆ τ' ἠρινὸν θάλλουσα πλούσιόν θ' ὕδωρ,*
> *πολλῶν τ' ἔπαινον ἔστι μοι λέξαι καλῶν·*
> *ἀλλ' οὐδὲν οὕτω λαμπρὸν οὐδ' ἰδεῖν καλὸν*
> *ὡς τοῖς ἄπαισι καὶ πόθῳ δεδηγμένοις*
> *παίδων νεογιῶν ἐν δόμοις ἰδεῖν θάλος.*
>
> *καὶ νῦν παραινῶ πᾶσι τοῖς νεωτέροις*
> *μὴ πρὸς τὸ γῆρας ἀναβολὰς ποιουμένους,*
> *σχολῇ τεκνοῦσθαι παῖδας· οὐ γὰρ ἡδονή,*

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[110] Cleopatra was imprisoned by Phineus her husband, together with her sons who had been blinded by Eidothea, Phineus' new wife.

[111] On Euripides, see Howe 1952, ch.9, Webster 1967a, 94–95 (*Δανάη*), 61–64 (*Δίκτυς*), 192–199 (*Ἀνδρομέδα*); Lesky 1983, 329 (*Δανάη*), 228 (*Δίκτυς*), 307, 316 (*Ἀνδρομέδα*). On 'rescue actions' in tragedy, see Burnett 1971, 30 n.6, cf. 29 n.5; *ibid.* 30ff on *Ἀνδρομέδα*, comparing it with the *Ἡσιόνη* and the *Alcestis* as 'rescue drama'; 33, as a 'sacrifice drama'. See Norwood 1954, 28, as a 'rescue drama', citing also W.Schmid on *Δανάη*. See Vellacott 1975, 92, 95–6.

[112] Vases: Webster 1967b, 157—two fourth-century vases; cf. Howe 1952, 252–253, who says no vases.

[113] Jo.Mal. p.34, 19: see *TGF* 453.

[114] Poll. 4.111.

[115] Fr.330a is in *TGF* Supplement.

[116] Frs.316, 317.

γυναικί τ' ἐχθρὸν χρῆμα πρεσβύτης ἀνήρ·
ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστα. καὶ γὰρ ἐκτροφαὶ καλαὶ
καὶ συννεάζων ἡδὺ παῖς νέῳ πατρί.

More specifically, there is the role of male children as protectors of ancestral values and the change of a woman's loyalties on marriage:[117]

γυνὴ γὰρ ἐξελθοῦσα πατρῴων δόμων
οὐ τῶν τεκόντων ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ λέχους·
τὸ δ' ἄρσεν ἕστηκ' ἐν δόμοις ἀεὶ γένος
θεῶν πατρῴων καὶ τάφων τιμάορον.

There is a contrast between men and women, a physical division,[118]

συμμαρτυρῶ σοι· πανταχοῦ λελείμμεθα
πᾶσαι γυναῖκες ἀρσένων ἀεὶ δίχα.

which leads to a difference in the approach to life of the two sexes:[119]

ἦν γάρ τις αἶνος, ὡς γυναιξὶ μὲν τέχναι
μέλουσι, λόγχῃ δ' ἄνδρες εὐστοχώτεροι.
εἰ γὰρ δόλοισιν ἦν τὸ νικητήριον,
ἡμεῖς ἂν ἀνδρῶν εἴχομεν τυραννίδα.

Ἔρως, which draws men and women together, is associated with physical beauty and 'being in one's prime':[120]

ἔρως γὰρ ἀργὸν κἀπὶ τοιούτοις ἔφυ·
φιλεῖ κάτοπτρα καὶ κόμης ξανθίσματα,
φεύγει δὲ μόχθους. ἓν δέ μοι τεκμήριον·
οὐδεὶς προσαιτῶν βίοτον ἠράσθη βροτῶν,
ἐν τοῖς δ' ἔχουσιν ἡβητὴς πέφυχ' ὅδε.

Gold has power too:[121]

ὦ χρυσέ, δεξίωμα κάλλιστον βροτοῖς,
ὡς οὔτε μήτηρ ἡδονὰς τοίας ἔχει,
οὐ παῖδες ἀνθρώποισιν, οὐ φίλος πατήρ,
οἵας σὺ χοἱ σὲ δώμασιν κεκτημένοι.
εἰ δ' ἡ Κύπρις τοιοῦτον ὀφθαλμοῖς ὁρᾷ,
οὐ θαῦμ' ἔρωτας μυρίους αὐτὴν τρέφειν.

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[117] Fr.318.

[118] Fr.319.

[119] Fr.321.

[120] Fr.322.

[121] Frs.324, 325, remembering that Zeus turned into a shower of gold to reach Danae.

κρείσσων γὰρ οὔτις χρημάτων πέφυκ' ἀνήρ,
πλὴν εἴ τις· ὅστις δ' οὗτός ἐστιν οὐχ ὁρῶ.

Its power is so great that wealth and worldly prosperity are often wrongly equated with goodness—the *ὄλβιος* man with the *ἀγαθός*—and with wisdom:[122]

ἆρ' οἶσθ' ὀθούνεχ' οἱ μὲν εὐγενεῖς βροτῶν
πένητες ὄντες οὐδὲν ἀλφάνουσ' ἔτι,
οἱ δ' οὐδὲν ἦσαν πρόσθεν, ὄλβιοι δὲ νῦν,
δόξαν φέρονται τοῦ νομίσματος χάριν
καὶ συμπλέκοντες σπέρμα καὶ γάμους τέκνων;
δοῦναι δὲ πᾶς τις μᾶλλον ὀλβίῳ κακῷ
πρόθυμός ἐστιν ἢ πένητι κἀγαθῷ,
κακὸς δ' ὁ μὴ ἔχων, οἱ δ' ἔχοντες ὄλβιοι.

φιλοῦσι γάρ τοι τῶν μὲν ὀλβίων βροτοὶ
σοφοὺς τίθεσθαι τοὺς λόγους, ὅταν δέ τις
λειτῶν ἀπ' οἴκων εὖ λέγῃ πένης ἀνήρ,
γελᾶν· ἐγὼ δὲ πολλάκις σοφωτέρους
πένητας ἄνδρας εἰσορῶ τῶν πλουσίων
καὶ ⟨τοὺς⟩ θεοῖσι μικρὰ θύοντας τέλη
τῶν βουθυτούντων ὄντας εὐσεβεστέρους.

But it is *αἰθήρ* which has the greatest influence on mortals' life, and not wealth. *αἰθήρ* brings heat and light, and cold and darkness, growth and decay, life and death:[123]

ἐς ταὐτὸν ἥκειν φημὶ ταῖς βροτῶν τύχαις
τόνδ' ὃν καλοῦσιν αἰθέρ', ᾧ τάδ' ἔστι δή.
οὗτος θέρους τε λαμπρὸν ἐκπέμπει σέλας,
χειμῶνα τ' αὔξει συντιθεὶς πυκνὸν νέφος,
θάλλειν τε καὶ μή, ζῆν τε καὶ φθίνειν ποεῖ·
οὕτω δὲ θνητῶν σπέρμα τῶν μὲν εὐτυχεῖ
λαμπρᾷ γαλήνῃ, τῶν δὲ συννέφει πάλιν,
ζῶσίν τε σὺν κακοῖσιν, ὃι δ' ὄλβου μέτα
φθίνουσ' ἐτείοις προσφερεῖς μεταλλαγαῖς.

All the fragments of the play have survived by being excerpted by Stobaeus, which confirms the presence of these themes in the play. For the plan of his *Anthology* is the quotation of ancient works under separate thematic headings. Frs.316 and 323 come under the heading *περὶ παίδων*; frs.317, 319 and 321 under *περὶ γάμου*,

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[122] Frs.326, 327.

[123] Fr.330.

and fr.318 under both; fr.320 is also quoted in connection with marriage, *γαμικὰ παραγγέλματα*, and fr.322 under *περὶ Ἀφροδίτης πανδήμου καὶ περὶ ἔρωτος τῶν κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἡδονῶν*; frs.324–328 are under *περὶ πλούτου* or a connected theme.[124] (However, this method of preservation means that the fragments may tell us more about Stobaeus' concerns, rather than allowing us to gain a balanced view of what stress was laid on any one theme in the play.)

The theme of the importance of children (frs.316–318) accords with Acrisius' role in the story as it appears in our other sources. The oracle he receives suggests that his position in this play was ambivalent: he wants, and custom demands, that he have a son and heir, and yet he cannot have one without dying himself. The conflict between men and women (frs.319, 321) therefore would refer to the conflict between Danae and Acrisius, with Danae eager to be married and to give her husband sons, while Acrisius opposes her. His fear of death may therefore have been expressed in his paying excessive regard to earthly possessions, symbolized by gold.

(b) Δίκτυς

The *Δίκτυς* was one in a tetralogy of unconnected plays, with the *Medea*, *Philoctetes*, and *Θερισταί* (satyr play), performed in 431.[125] There are nineteen fragments, seven of four or more lines in length, two of three lines, four of two lines, five of one line, and one of a single word.[126] There is no plot summary, but the fragments make the story clear. Fr.330b confirms the setting of the play to be Seriphos:

> *Σέριφος ἅλμῃ ποντίᾳ περίρρυτος.*

Perseus, sent by Polydectes to fetch the Gorgon's head, has been given up for dead. Dictys thus addresses Danae as she grieves for her son:[127]

> *δοκεῖς τὸν Ἅιδην σῶν τι φροντίζειν γόων*
> *καὶ παῖδ' ἀνήσειν τὸν σόν, εἰ θέλοις στένειν;*
> *παῦσαι· βλέπουσα δ' εἰς τὰ τῶν πέλας κακὰ*

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[124] Fr.329 is under *περὶ ἀνδρίας*, in a section dealing with the vagaries of fortune, *ὅτι ἀλόγιστος ἡ φορὰ τῆς τύχης*, which helps to give it some context: *φεῦ, τοῖσι γενναίοισιν ὡς ἁπανταχοῦ πρέπει χαρακτὴρ χρηστὸς εἰς εὐψυχίαν.*

[125] Argument of E. *Med.*. Vases: Webster 1967b, 152—two vases, both dubious.

[126] Fr.330b is in *TGF* Supplement.

[127] Fr.332. Plutarch (106A) prefaces the fragment thus: *ὁ δὲ παραμυθούμενος, τὴν Δανάην δυσπενθοῦσαν Δίκτυς φησί...*

ῥᾴων γένοι' ἄν, εἰ λογίζεσθαι θέλοις
ὅσοι τε δεσμοῖς ἐκμεμόχθηνται βροτῶν
ὅσοι τε γηράσκουσιν ὀρφανοὶ τέκνων,
τοὺς δ' ἐκ μέγιστον ὀλβίας τυραννίδος
τὸ μηδὲν ὄντας· ταῦτά σε σκοπεῖν χρεών.

Τὰ τῶν πέλας κακὰ is a reference to Polydectes, who wants to marry Danae (much as Silenus does in *Δικτυουλκοί*), and will now try to do so in the belief that Perseus will be unable to help his mother.

In fr.336 is raised the question of what makes a man *εὐγενής*. It is to do not with high birth, but with whether or not he is *δίκαιος*:

εἰς δ' εὐγένειαν ὀλίγ' ἔχω φράσαι καλά·
ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐσθλὸς εὐγενὴς ἔμοιγ' ἀνήρ,
ὁ δ' οὐ δίκαιος κἂν ἀμείνονος πατρὸς
Ζηνὸς πεφύκῃ, δυσγενὴς εἶναι δοκεῖ.

There is conflict between *τὸ δίκαιον* and someone or thing, since somebody says:[128]

θάρσει· τό τοι δίκαιον ἰσχύει μέγα.

There is conflict too between the power of the king and the actions of individuals who oppose him:[129]

μὴ νεῖκος, ὦ γεραιέ, κοιράνοις τίθου·
σέβειν δὲ τοὺς κρατοῦντας ἀρχαῖος νόμος.

One character is likened to a tyrant:[130]

τυραννικόν τοι πόλλ' ἐπίστασθαι λέγειν.

Begetting offspring is a universal *νόμος*:[131]

εἷς γάρ τις ἔστι κοινὸς ἀνθρώποις νόμος
καὶ θεοῖσι τοῦτο δόξαν, ὡς σαφῶς λέγω,
θηρσίν τε πᾶσι, τέκνα τίκτουσιν φιλεῖν·
τὰ δ' ἄλλα χωρὶς χρώμεθ' ἀλλήλων νόμοις.

Love between a father and his children is a fine thing:[132]

ἐγὼ νομίζω πατρὶ φίλτατον τέκνα

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[128] Fr.343.

[129] Fr.337.

[130] Fr.335.

[131] Fr.346.

[132] Fr.345.

παισίν τε τοὺς τεκόντας, οὐδὲ συμμάχους
ἄλλους γενέσθαι φήμ' ἂν ἐνδικωτέρους.

But even this is subject to the gods' intervention:[133]

πατέρα τε παισὶν ἡδέως συνεκφέρειν
φίλους ἔρωτας ἐκβαλόντ' αὐθαδίαν,
παίδας τε πατρί· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ αὐθαίρετοι
βροτοῖς ἔρωτες οὐδ' ἑκουσία νόσος.
σκαίον τι δὴ τὸ χρῆμα γίγνεσθαι φιλεῖ,
θεῶν ἀνάγκας ὅστις ἰᾶσθαι θέλει.

There is a threat to the stability and integrity of an *οἶκος*:[134]

ὄντων δὲ παίδων καὶ πεφυκότος γένους
καινοὺς φυτεῦσαι παῖδας ἐν δόμοις θέλεις,
ἔχθραν μεγίστην σοῖσι συμβάλλων τέκνοις.

Κύπρις can pose a similar threat:[135]

Κύπρις γὰρ οὐδὲν νουθετουμένη χαλᾷ,
ἢν τ' αὖ βιάζῃ, μᾶλλον ἐντείνειν φιλεῖ,
κἄπειτα τίκτει πόλεμον· εἰς δ' ἀνάστασιν
δόμων περαίνει πολλάκις τὰ τοιάδε.

Wealth is equated with the man who is *κακός*:[136]

μή μοί ποτ' εἴη χρημάτων νικωμένῳ
κακῷ γενέσθαι, μηδ' ὁμιλοίην κακοῖς.

A man who is *κακός* cannot beget a son who is *χρηστός*:[137]

φεῦ φεῦ, παλαιὸς αἶνος ὡς καλῶς ἔχει·
οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο χρηστὸς ἐκ κακοῦ πατρός.

The man who is *ἐσθλός* has to live among those who are *κακοί*:[138]

πολλοῖς παρέστην κἀφθόνησα δὴ βροτῶν
ὅστις κακοῖσιν ἐσθλὸς ὢν ὅμοιος ᾖ,
λόγων ματαίων εἰς ἅμιλλαν ἐξιών.
τὸ δ' ἦν ἄρ' οὐκ ἀκουστὸν οὐδ' ἀνασχετόν,

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[133] Fr.339.

[134] Fr.338.

[135] Fr.340.

[136] Fr.341.

[137] Fr.333.

[138] Fr.334.

σιγᾶν κλύοντα δεινὰ πρὸς κακιόνων.

Someone praising a *πόλις* other than his own is accused of not loving his *πάτρη*, and so is *κάκιστος*.[139] Apart from fr.332, which characterizes him as dead, the only other direct reference to Perseus in this play is fr.344. It was spoken perhaps by Perseus himself, since it describes some of the qualities of the young Greek hero coming to manhood, young but driven by his extremity to live on his wits:

νέος, πόνοις δέ γ' οὐκ ἀγύμναστος φρένας.[140]

As in the case of Euripides' *Δανάη*, Stobaeus preserved most of the fragments of the *Δίκτυς*, most notably fr.347 under the heading *περὶ πατρίδος*, and fr.344 under *περὶ νεότητος*. The only heading which provides more than one fragment of this play is *ὁποίους χρὴ εἶναι τοὺς πατέρας περὶ τὰ τέκνα*.[141]

(c) 'Ανδρομέδα

Euripides' *'Ανδρομέδα* is perhaps the most famous play of antiquity not to have survived to the present day.[142] A scholiast of the *Iliad*[143] was able to quote the opening line of the play and to refer simply to 'the *'Ανδρομέδα*', without having to mention the author's name. The main plot was the rescue of Andromeda by Perseus, and prophecy of their catasterism at the end of the play. Eratosthenes gave a summary:[144]

Κηφεύς· ἦν δέ, ὡς Εὐριπίδης φησίν, Αἰθιόπων βασιλεύς, 'Ανδρομέδας δὲ πατήρ· τὴν δ' αὐτοῦ θυγατέρα δοκεῖ παραθεῖναι τῷ κήτει βοράν, ἣν Περσεὺς ὁ Διὸς διέσωσε, δι' ἣν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖς ἄστροις ἐτέθη 'Αθηνᾶς γνώμῃ.

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[139] Fr.347. See Chapter I, pp.9–11 for this fragment and for a discussion of the possibility that it refers to the ephebic oath.

[140] See Chapter I, p.19 on this fragment.

[141] Frs.338–339, 345–346.

[142] Vases: Webster 1967b, 154–155, Séchan 1926, 256–273; cf. Howe 1952, 253–262. But see also *LIMC* I.1, 787–790 (Schauenburg). On the popularity of the play, see Billault 1981, esp. 69–74.

[143] Schol. TV *Il.* 24.12.

[144] *Catast.* 15, 17. See also Schol. German. Caes. Arat. p.77.7, p.78.13, p.137.14, p.138.12, p.139.23, p.140.4, Hyg. *Astr.* 2.9–11; Eratosth. is followed by Apollod. 2.4.3, Ov. *Met.* 4.662ff, and Hyg. *F.* 64. On the catasterism of the Perseus myth see Goold 1977, xxviii, xxii, and 1959, Schauenburg 1960, 65ff, 131, *RE* XIX, 992ff. The catasterism seems to have originated in the fifth century (Goold 1977): Euripides may have invented it himself; but if not, he was certainly an important factor in its propagation.

> *'Ανδρομέδα· αὕτη κεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἄστροις διὰ τὴν 'Αθηνᾶν τῶν Περσέως ἄθλων ὑπόμνημα, διατεταμένη τὰς χεῖρας, ὡς καὶ προετέθη τῷ κῆτει· ἀνθ' ὧν σωθεῖσα ὑπὸ τοῦ Περσέως οὐχ εἵλετο τῷ πατρὶ συμμένειν οὐδὲ τῇ μητρί, ἀλλ' αὐθαίρετος εἰς τὸ "Αργος ἀπῆλθε μετ' ἐκείνου εὐγενές τι φρονήσασα. λέγει δὲ καὶ Εὐριπίδης σαφῶς ἐν τῷ περὶ αὐτῆς γεγραμμένῳ δράματι.*

The *'Ανδρομέδα* was considered to be one of the most beautiful of Euripides' plays, in his own lifetime and throughout antiquity.[145] Aristophanes parodied and quoted extended passages in *Thesmophoriazusae*,[146] and quoted it in *Frogs*,[147] *Lysistrata*,[148] and *Birds*;[149] it was while reading the play that Dionysus conceived his sudden desire to go down to Hades to fetch Euripides.[150] It was said to have been particularly admired by Alexander the Great.[151] Lucian describes how a recital of *'Ανδρομέδα* by the actor Archelaus compounded the fever of the inhabitants of Abdera so that 'they went mad with tragedy'.[152] Perseus appeared with the Gorgon-head in the play, since Lucian says that 'the *'Ανδρομέδα* kept haunting their memory, and Archelaus' Perseus with Medusa's head still flitted round [*περιπετομένου*, like Perseus] everyone's brain'.[153] The popularity of the play is perhaps the biggest single factor in the propagation of the Perseus tradition as a whole. The *'Ανδρομέδα* was produced in 412, together with the *Helen*.[154] The chorus was female.[155] The number of fragments (there are forty-seven,[156] the majority of which are between one and four lines long) outstrips that of any other Perseus play, and is in itself a sign of the play's popularity.

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[145] Schol. Ar. *Ra.* 53.

[146] Frs.114, 115, 117, 118, 120, 122–5, 127, 128, 139.

[147] Fr.144.

[148] Fr.116.

[149] Fr.121.

[150] Ar. *Ra.* 52–4.

[151] Nicobulus (*ap.* Ath. *Deipn.* 537D): *ὅτι ἐν τῷ τελευταιῷ δειπνῷ αὐτὸς ὁ 'Αλέξανδρος ἐπεισόδιόν τι μνημονεύσας ἐκ τῆς Εὐριπίδου 'Ανδρομέδας ἠγονίσατο.* Cf. Chapter I, pp.4, 20 on Alexander's emulation of Perseus (and Heracles and Dionysus).

[152] Luc. *Hist.Conscr.*1.

[153] Translated by Kilburn (Loeb); cf. fr.123.

[154] Ar. *Th.* 1060 and Schol., Schol. Ar. *Ra.* 53. See Dale 1967, xxiv.

[155] Frs.117, 118.

[156] Four are in *TGF* Supplement.

As before, the most extensive expositions of the fragments are to be found in Webster and Howe. According to their reconstructions, the play ran as follows. It opens with Andromeda chained to the sea-shore waiting to be devoured by the *κῆτος*.[157] Perseus flies over the coast of Ethiopia,[158] sees and falls in love with Andromeda, and extracts a promise of marriage from her in return for her life.[159] Having killed the *κῆτος* and freed the girl, Perseus' marriage to her is opposed by Cepheus, and probably Cassiopia too.[160]

Of all the Perseus plays, the fragments of the *'Ανδρομέδα* offer the fullest picture of this hero's characterization in any one play. He is already a proven monster-killer when he arrives in the kingdom of Cepheus:[161]

> *Περσεὺς πρὸς Ἄργος ναυστολῶν τὸ Γοργόνος*
> *κάρα κομίζων.*

He has thereby won fame appropriate to his exploits:[162]

Πε. *εὔκλειαν ἔλαβον οὐκ ἄνευ πολλῶν πόνων.*

As in Aeschylus he is operating in the *ἔσχατα*, in a barbarian land:[163]

Πε. *ὦ θεοί, τίν' εἰς γῆν βαρβάρων ἀφίγμεθα*
> *ταχεῖ πεδίλῳ; διὰ μέσου γὰρ αἰθέρος*
> *τέμνων κέλευθον πόδα τίθημ' ὑπόπτερον.*

He falls in love:[164]

Πε. *σὺ δ' ὦ θεῶν τύραννε κἀνθρώπων Ἔρως,*
> *ἢ μὴ δίδασκε τὰ καλὰ φαίνεσθαι καλά,*
> *ἢ τοῖς ἐρῶσιν εὐτυχῶς συνεκπόνει*
> *μοχθοῦσι μόχθους ὧν σὺ δημιουργὸς εἶ.*
> *καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δρῶν τίμιος θεοῖς ἔσῃ,*

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[157] Frs.114–122.

[158] Frs.123, 124.

[159] Frs.125–132.

[160] Frs.142, 141. Phineus, contrary to Webster 1967a, 198, was probably not in Euripides' *'Ανδρομεδα*, since he does not feature in any of the Italiot vase paintings related to the play: Howe 1952, 258, 269. But cf. Accius' *Andromeda*, below, in which he may well have figured, and now *LIMC* I.1, which says he was in E. *'Ανδρομέδα*.

[161] Fr.123.

[162] Fr.134.

[163] Fr.124, cf. fr.139, and S. *'Ανδρομέδα* fr.126, above p.217.

[164] Frs.136, 125, 129, 132, 138.

μὴ δρῶν δ' ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ διδάσκεσθαι φιλεῖν
ἀφαιρεθήσῃ χάριτας αἷς τιμῶσί σε.

Πε. ἔα, τίν' ὄχθον τόνδ' ὁρῶ περίρρυτον
ἀφρῷ θαλάσσης; παρθένου τ' εἰκώ τινα
ἐξ αὐτομόρφων λαίνων τυκισμάτων
σοφῆς ἄγαλμα χειρός.

Πε. ὦ παρθέν', εἰ σώσαιμί σ' εἴσῃ μοι χάριν·

Αν. ἄγου δέ μ', ὦ ξεῖν', εἴτε πρόσπολον θέλεις
εἴτ' ἄλοχον εἴτ' δμωίδ'...

Πε. ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς ἔρωτα πίπτουσιν βροτῶν,
ἐσθλῶν ὅταν τύχωσι τῶν ἐρωμένων,
οὐκ ἔσθ' ὁποίας λείπεται τόδ' ἡδονῆς.

The ideal for the best of men is a good marriage:[165]

τῶν γὰρ πλούτων ὅδ' ἄριστος
γενναῖου λέχος εὑρεῖν.

And the product of such a marriage is legitimate children:[166]

ἐγὼ δὲ παῖδας οὐκ ἐῶ νόθους λαβεῖν·
τῶν γνησίων γὰρ οὐδὲν ὄντες ἐνδεεῖς
νόμῳ νοσούσιν· ὅ σε φυλάξασθαι χρεών.

As in Euripides' *Δανάη*, there is a contrast between being wealthy, and being fortunate:[167]

χρυσὸν μάλιστα βούλομαι δόμοις ἔχειν·
καὶ δοῦλος ὢν γὰρ τίμιος πλουτῶν ἀνήρ,
ἐλεύθερος δὲ χρεῖος ὢν οὐδὲν σθένει.
χρυσοῦ νόμιζε σαυτὸν εἵνεκ' εὐτυχεῖν.

χρήμασιν γὰρ εὐτυχῶ.
ταῖς συμφοραῖσι δ', ὡς ὁρᾷς, οὐκ εὐτυχῶ.

Of fr.149, Webster suggested that it was spoken by Andromeda's former suitor in mitigation of his failed plot to revenge himself on Perseus:

νεότης μ' ἐπῆρε καὶ θράσος τοῦ νοῦ πλέον.

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[165] Fr.137.

[166] Fr.141.

[167] Frs.142, 143.

It is possible that Perseus himself spoke these words, since *νεότης* and *θράσος* are two of the qualities of the hero in myth.[168] This would contradict fr.344 of Euripides' *Δανάη*, in which Perseus admits of his youth, but declares that he keeps his wits about him. However, such a contradiction obviously need carry no weight, since the two fragments are from different plays.

As discussed in Chapter IV, Andromeda has sometimes been considered to belong to a group of mythological royal 'scapegoat' (*φαρμακός*) figures who offer themselves up to die in order to save their country from catastrophe.[169] Fr.120 indicates that Andromeda is indeed dying for her country, *πάτρας ὑπερθανεῖν*. It is clear, however, from Euripides' play that Andromeda is not a willing victim. She has to be chained up;[170] Perseus sees her 'hung up';[171] she endures unlawful sufferings;[172] she laments her approaching death;[173] she has obtained an evil fate;[174] she is cursed;[175] she calls herself *τὴν παννάθλιαν* and begs Perseus to free her,[176] in return for which she is willing to be his servant, wife or even slave;[177] as if to emphasize her helplessness, she is likened in a brutal image to 'fodder for the sea-monster'.[178] Cepheus is said to be *ἄνοικτος*, 'ruthless', 'pitiless', the implication being that it was he who forced Andromeda into her 'self-sacrifice'. He fails to fulfil a prime duty to his daughter, which is to marry her to a good husband. Thus Andromeda calls on the chorus of women to lament her, *γαμηλίῳ μὲν οὐ ξὺν παιῶνι, δεσμίῳ δέ*:[179] instead of being married, she is going to die.

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[168] See Chapter I, pp.18–19 on this fragment.

[169] See Chapter IV, p.146.

[170] Fr.122: *ἐν πυκνοῖς δεσμοῖσιν ἐμπεπλεγμένη*.

[171] Fr.127: *κρεμαμένην*—cf. vases of Andromeda tied up to a rock or in front of a cave, Webster 1967b, 154–155.

[172] Fr.122: *ἄνομα πάθεα*.

[173] Frs.118, 119.

[174] Fr.122: *πάθος ἀμέγαρτον ἐπὶ κακῶν παρουσίᾳ*. Fr.115: *κακῶν μέρος*. Fr.127: *πάθος*.

[175] Fr.122: *κατάρατος*.

[176] Fr.128: *λῦσόν με δεσμῶν*.

[177] Fr.132.

[178] Fr.121: *κήτει φορβάν*; fr.122, *κήτει βορὰ*; fr.145, *τὰ παρθένου θοινάματα*.

[179] Fr.122.

That it is correct to see the Andromeda story as a perversion of the pattern of self-sacrifice is supported by the observation that successful operation of the pattern is common in other Euripidean plays.[180] Euripides shows the ritual to be fraught with difficulty, as in the case of Andromeda: although Agamemnon does in some versions (as in Euripides') sacrifice an Iphigeneia who is willing to die, further disturbance within the *οἶκος* follows upon her death (between Clytemnestra and Agamemnon), as a direct result of the compromising of the father–daughter relationship. Euripides explores the ambivalence inherent in the ritual (i.e the benefit to the community as opposed to the human cost of the ritual) by allowing the *φαρμακός* himself/herself to comment upon his/her part in it. A similar disruption between father and daughter is embodied in the Acrisius-Danae myth.[181] In each case the myth carries the implicit 'message' that an inversion of the ideal relationship is undesirable: for, despite Acrisius, Danae lives to return to Argos, and despite Cepheus, Andromeda lives and marries Perseus. Andromeda asks Perseus for the pity that she should have got from her merciless father,[182] and he pities her.[183]

(d) Other Euripidean References To The Perseus Myths

Euripides refers often to the *γοργόνειον*, on armour[184] and as a description of hostile facial expression.[185] In addition, the act of killing the Gorgon appears as a metaphor. In *Phoenissae* Jocasta tells Eteocles to look Polyneices in the face, since Polyneices is

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[180] Macaria in *Heracl.*, Polyxena in *Hec.*, Menoeceus in *Ph.*, Iphigeneia in *IA* , the daughter of Erechtheus in *Ἐρεχθεύς*, and other characters who are prepared to kill themselves, Alcestis in *Alc.*, Phrixus in *Φρίξυς*, Evadne in *Supp.*, Laodameia in *Πρωτεσίλαος*, Megara in *HF*, Andromache in *Andr.*: see O'Connor-Visser 1987.

[181] See Chapter II on Acrisius. Cf. Naevius' *Danae* fr.8 (p.238 below), when Danae refers to herself as *innocens*.

[182] Fr.128.

[183] Fr.127.

[184] E. *Rh.* 306–308, of the bronze flashing Gorgons on the forehead of Rhesus' horses; *El.* 459–463, the *γοργόνειον* carried by Perseus on the rim of Achilles' shield; *El.* 1254–1258, the Gorgon on Athene's shield. Cf. Hes. *Scut.* 216–237, where Perseus appears in a very similar way on the shield of Heracles.

[185] *Or.* 260–261, 'Gorgon-faced' used of Clytemnestra's Furies, cf. above p.215 on A. *Ch.* 1044–1050; *Rh.* 8, of Hector's eyes; *HF* 131–132, of Heracles and his sons, *HF* 868, 990 of Heracles in his madness; *HF* 1266, of the serpents Heracles killed as an infant; *Hel.* 1316, *Ion* 209–210 of Athene.

not a Gorgon but his brother.[186] In *Alcestis* Admetus takes the veiled Alcestis from Heracles unwillingly, and so he stretches out his hand as if beheading the Gorgon.[187]

In *Ion*, Euripides makes particular use of the Gorgon and her blood. He uses, apparently for the first time in Greek literature, a version of the story in which Athene herself killed the Gorgon in the Gigantomachy;[188] Perseus is not mentioned. This is an example of how flexible tragic treatment of myths could be, and acknowledges the strong association between Athene and the *αἰγίς*.

Euripides also makes genealogical and geographical references to the myths.[189]

In *Electra* 855–8, Orestes is implicitly likened to Perseus, just as he was by Aeschylus in *Choephori* 1044–1050. A messenger describes Orestes bringing out a head to show Electra, the head not of the Gorgon but of Aegisthus:

> *ἔρχεται δὲ σοὶ*
> *κάρα 'πιδείξων, οὐχὶ Γοργόνος φέρων,*
> *ἀλλ' ὃν στυγεῖς Αἴγισθον· αἷμα δ' αἵματος*
> *πικρὸς δανεισμὸς ἦλθε τῷ θανόντι νῦν.*

Finally, returning to *Electra* 459–463, Perseus appears on the rim of Achilles' shield:

> *Περσέα λαιμοτόμα ὑπὲρ*
> *ἁλὸς ποτανοῖσι πεδί-*
> *λοισι φυὰν Γοργόνος ἴ-*
> *σχειν, Διὸς ἀγγέλῳ σὺν 'Ερμ-*
> *ᾷ τῷ Μα-*
> *ίας ἀγροτῆρι κούρῳ·*

The picture is one of the *δείματα* on the shield designed to terrify the Trojans in battle.[190] The passage also provides another example of characterization of Perseus as an 'ephebic' figure.[191]

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[186] *Ph.* 454–459.

[187] *Alc.* 1119.

[188] *Ion* 987–1017, 1052, 1264–1265.

[189] *Ἀχελῷος* (*PHamb* 118), a genealogy of the kings of Argos, mentioning Perseus, Acrisius and Danae; *Alc.* 509, Heracles as child of Zeus and of Perseus' blood; *HF* 3, Perseus as the grandfather of Amphitryon, and great-grandfather of Heracles; *IA* 1500, the 'city of Perseus', i.e. Mycenae; *Hel.* 769, 'the watchtowers of Perseus', on the Nile Delta, referred to also by Hdt. 2.15.

[190] E. *El.* 956–957.

[191] See Chapter I, n.65.

5. Comedies And Satyr Plays

Of the comedies little more than the titles remain, or perhaps only a vase painting of comic or satyric Perseus figure.[192]

(a) Old Comedy[193]

(i) Apollophanes' Δανάη

Only the title remains, cited in the *Suda* and by Eudocia.

(ii) Phormus' Κηφεύς or Κηφάλαια, and Περσεύς

The titles, cited in the *Suda*, may refer to one, two or three plays. No fragments survive.

(iii) Sannyrio's Δανάη

There is one fragment, the last line of which quotes Euripides' *Orestes*, and a citation. In the fragment, Zeus ponders the best way for him to reach Danae in her seclusion, not yet as a shower of gold, but as a mouse perhaps:

> *τί οὖν γενόμενος εἰς ὀπὴν ἐνδύσομαι;*
> *ζητητέον· φέρ' εἰ γενοίμην μυγαλῆ.*
> *ἀλλ' Ἡγέλοχος οὗτός με μηνύσειεν ἂν*
> *ὁ τραγικὸς ἀνακράγοι τ' ἂν εἰς ἐχθροὺς μέγα*
> *ἐκ κυμάτων γὰρ αὖθις αὖ γαλῆν ὁρῶ.*

The joke is at the expense of the actor Hegelochus, who in Euripides' *Orestes* should have said *ἐκ κυμάτων γὰρ αὖθις αὖ γαλήν'* ('calm') *ὁρῶ*, but instead came out with *γαλῆν* ('weasel') *ὁρῶ*.[194]

In the citation, another scholiast[195] says that in the *Δανάη* Sannyrio made a joke about Archinus and Argurrius, two *ῥητόρες* who complained about the fee which comic playwrights received for putting on their plays.

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[192] See n.27 above, and below pp.235–6.

[193] See nn.17–20 for references.

[194] Schol. E. *Or.* 279, cf. Ar. *Ra.* 303–4.

[195] Schol. Ar. *Ra.* 367.

(iv) Cratinus' Σερίφιοι

There are more substantial remains of this comedy than any other, fifteen fragments, of which nine are direct quotes (from two words to three lines long), and six offer some detail of the play. Of the quotes, six remain enigmatic.[196]

Fr.225 confirms Seriphos as the setting:

χαίρετε πάντες ὅσοι πολύβωτον ποντίαν Σέριφον.

'Fertile Seriphos' is highly ironic, since Seriphos was a byword for everything barren or rocky, made so by the Gorgon head's power of petrifaction.[197]

Fr.222 refers to Perseus flying to Syria (either before or after killing the Gorgon), and features a pun on *Συρία*, which also means 'shirt' or 'cloak':

ἐς Συρίαν δ' ἐνθένδ' ἀφικνῇ μετέωρος ὑπ' αὔρας.
Πε? ἱμάτιον μοχθρόν, ὅταν βορρᾶς καταπνεύσῃ.

Fr.223 is perhaps part of Perseus' itinerary, in Asia Minor, and so perhaps part of the same speech as fr.222:

εἶτα Σάβας ἀφικνῇ καὶ Σιδωνίους καὶ 'Ερεμβούς,
ἔς τε πόλιν δούλων ἀνδρῶν νεοπλουτοπονήρων,
αἰσχρῶν, 'Ανδροκλέων †Διονυσοκουρώνων†.

A scholiast[198] explains that Androcles was a slave and a beggar (who was presumably well known for this). The first line of the fragment is reminiscent of Menelaus describing part of his wanderings, in the *Odyssey*:[199]

Αἰθίοπάς θ' ἱκόμην καὶ Σιδονίους καὶ 'Ερεμβούς.

Fr.223 may be a conscious misquotation of this, omitting the Ethiopians for a more subtle comic effect.

Three of the fragments reveal three more of the targets of Cratinus' satire: a pauper called Telenicus,[200] a *συκοφάντης* called Amynias,[201] and Cleon himself.[202]

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[196] Frs.218–221, 224, 226.

[197] Str. 10.5.10, Ar. *Ach.* 542.

[198] Schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1187.

[199] *Od.* 4.84.

[200] Fr.232.

[201] Fr.227.

[202] Fr.228.

The most vividly poetic fragment is perhaps fr.231, according to which Andromeda was referred to as *δελεάστραν*, 'a baited trap', for Perseus perhaps, or for the *κῆτος*;[203] or it may be ambiguous.

(b) Middle Comedy[204]

(i) Antiphanes' 'Ανδρομέδα

Only a single word survives: *λείψας*, for *λίπων*, the citation of which is also the only evidence for the play's title.

(ii) Eubulus' Δανάη

There is a single fragment:

> †*ἐκεῖνος δ' ἦν ἰσχυρὸς σφόδρα*
> †*καὶ ἀτεράμων, ὅς με κλάουσαν τότε*
> *οὐκ ἠλέησε.*

Kassel and Austin suggest that this is Danae complaining of Zeus' advances towards her. An alternative subject for complaint might be Acrisius' treatment of her, paralleled by Cepheus and Andromeda.[205]

(iii) Heniochus' Γοργόνες

There is one fragment, of three almost complete lines, describing a drinking cup:

> *πιεῖν πιεῖν τις ἐγχείτω λαβὼν*
> †*πυριγενῆ κυκλοτερῆ βραχύωτον παχύστομον*
> *κώθωνα παῖδα φάρυγος.*

(c) Satyr Plays

The *Δικτυουλκοί* is the only Perseus satyr play for which there is any substantial evidence. There was also probably a satyr *Φορκίδες*,[206] author unknown.

The other evidence for satyr plays is vase painting. Webster[207] listed six vases. The first, an Attic lekythos of c.475–50 depicts a satyr in possession of Perseus' *ἅρπη*

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[203] Cf. Luc. *DMar.* 14.1: *ὁ Κηφεὺς καθάπερ δέλεαρ προθεὶς τὴν κόρην.*

[204] See nn.21–3 for references.

[205] Cf. E. *'Ανδρομέδα* fr.120—*ἄνοικτος ὃς τεκών σε...μεθῆκεν "Αιδᾳ.*

[206] See above pp.212–13 on Aeschylus' *Φορκίδες.*

[207] Webster 1967b, 169–170.

and *κίβισις*. The second, a Lucanian vase, c.380–60, shows Perseus frightening satyrs with the *γοργόνειον*, as Athene looks on. The third, a Lucanian volute-krater, c.400, also has Perseus frightening satyrs with the *γοργόνειον*. The fourth, a Lucanian panathenaic amphora, c.350–25, has Perseus with the *γοργόνειον*, the Gorgon's body, and a satyr sitting nearby. The fifth is a southern Italian bell-krater, c.380–60, showing Perseus holding up the *γοργόνειον* to a satyr who covers his eyes. The sixth is also a south Italian bell-krater, c.370–50, showing Hermes, Perseus, Athene holding the *γοργόνειον*, and a satyr who is turning away.[208]

These vases are not connected with the myth of the conflict between Perseus and Dionysus.[209] The predominating view of scholars has been that the scenes originated in satyr plays.[210] Schauenburg also suggested the possibility that the scenes became a purely iconographical tradition, the initial stimulus of which was a Perseus satyr play. On this model, then, the earliest vase would be contemporary with the production of Pratinas' tragedy *Περσεύς* in 467, and would date from c.475–50, during which time Aeschylus' Perseus plays may well have been performed. This vase is consistent therefore with the possibility, or even probability that a satyr play burlesquing the tragic *Περσεύς* of Pratinas or Aeschylus will also have been performed by this time. The rash of fourth-century vases of Italian provenance depicting this type of scene may suggest a single original stimulus of a satyr drama performed c.380. However, if the vases do range in date from 380 to 325, then the scene did become a purely iconographical topos, as part of the Italiote Perseus-Andromeda iconographical tradition.

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[208] Webster 1967a includes references to Brommer 1959, and Schauenburg 1960.

[209] See Chapter V, pp.176–9 on Perseus and satyrs.

[210] Schauenburg 1960, 103, 98. Howe 1954, 220, thought the contrary.

6. Latin Perseus Plays

Although the five Latin Perseus plays—two *Danaes* and three *Andromedas*—owed much to their Greek prototypes,[211] they will not necessarily have been direct translations of a single drama. However, it is no coincidence that three of the five plays are called *'Ανδρομέδα*. This fact is no doubt a reflection of the continuing popularity of Euripides' play in the West in the third century.

Little emerges from the fragments. However, frs.4–8 of Ennius' *Andromeda* were evidently part of a description of Perseus' fight with the *κῆτος*, a description which must have featured in the *'Ανδρομέδας* of Sophocles and Euripides but is not extant in the fragments of these latter two plays. The very existence of the plays indicates that the Perseus myths entered Latin literature early. Many of the fragments survive only because thay are quoted by Nonius, the fourth century A.D. lexicographer and grammarian, in order to illustrate specific linguistic points. This process of selection means that it is often difficult to deduce the context or speaker of a particular fragment, although Nonius helps us to understand any unusual meanings of difficult words.[212]

(a) Livius Andronicus[213]

(i) Andromeda

There is a single fragment, referring to the floods sent by Neptune to punish the Ethiopians for the boasting of Cassiopeia that she or Andromeda was more beautiful than the Nereids:

> *Confluges ubi conventu campum totum inumigant.*

(ii) Danae

There is one fragment of dialogue:

> *Etiam minitas? mitte ea quae tua sunt magis quam mea.*

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[211] Cf. the Ennius' *Andromeda* fr.1 with the opening lines of E. *'Ανδρομέδα*, below p.239.

[212] All of the following Latin fragments are from *TF*, but Warmington 1935–40 contains notes and comments on them, in addition to a translation.

[213] See n.12 above for references.

(b) Naevius' Danae[214]

There are eleven fragments, mostly of one line, and all quoted by Nonius.

Fr.1 refers to Juppiter, or perhaps to Acrisius:

Omnes formidant homines eius valentiam.

The *virginis* of fr.2 must be Danae:

Contemplo placide formam et faciem virginis.

Frs.3, 7 and 10 remain enigmatic:

Excidit orationis omnis confidentia.

Quin ut quisque est meritus, praesens pretium pro factis feras.

Manubias suppetat pro me.

In fr.4 Acrisius says of Danae, or is told of her:

Eam nunc esse inventam probris compotem scis.

Danae, perhaps, in fr.6, complains of woman's lot:

Desubito famam tollunt, si quam solam videre in via.

Fr.5 is highly poetic, and so perhaps was spoken by Danae:

Auri rubeo fonte lavere ⟨me⟩ memini manum.

Fr.8 is spoken by Danae of her expulsion by Acrisius from Argos:

Indigne exigor patria innocens.[215]

Frs.9 and 11 both refer to the thunderbolt of Juppiter, which may refer to his epiphany to Danae and the conception of Perseus:

...quae quondam fulmine icit Iuppiter.

Suo sonitu claro fulgorivit Iuppiter.

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[214] See n.13 above.

[215] Cf. the 'innocence' of Andromeda in Euripides, above p.230.

(c) Ennius' Andromeda[216]

There are eight fragments of a line or so in length. Fr.1 is strongly reminiscent of the first lines of Euripides' *Ἀνδρομέδα*:[217]

...quae cava caeli signitenentibus conficis bigis.

Fr.2 is perhaps Andromeda agreeing to marry Perseus:

Liberum quaesundum causa familiae matrem tuae.

In fr.3 Andromeda addresses Cassiopeia:

Filiis propter te obiecta sum innocens Nerei.[218]

Fr.4 describes the sea-monster, but not after it has been petrified, since frs.5 and 8 (below) make it clear that in this play Perseus used his *ἅρπη* to fight with, and not the Gorgon's head:

Scrupeo investita saxo, atque ostreis squamae scabrent.

Fr.6 indicates its size:

Circum sese urvat ad pedes †a terra quadringentos
caput.

Frs.5, 7 and 8 describe the fight with the monster:

Corpus contemplatur inde corporaret vulnere.

Rursus prorsus reciprocat fluctus feram.

Alia fluctus differt dissupat
Visceratim membra, maria salsa spumant sanguine.

(d) Accius' Andromeda[219]

There are fifteen fragments, mostly one line long.

Frs.1 and 5 are enigmatic:

Quot luna circulos annuo in cursu institit.

Muliebre ingenium, prolubium, occasio...

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[216] See n.14 above.

[217] *TGF* fr.114: *ὦ νὺξ ἱερά, ὡς μακρὸν ἵππευμα διώκεις ἀστεροειδέα νῶτα διφρεύουσ' αἰθέρος ἱερᾶς τοῦ σεμνοτάτου δι' Ὀλύμπου.*

[218] See n.215 above.

[219] See n.15 above.

Fr.2 mentions troubles sent from heaven:

Cum ninxerint caelestium molem mihi.

Fr.3 is spoken perhaps by Andromeda to Perseus:

Nisi quid tua facultas nobis tulat opem,

or perhaps by Andromeda or Cepheus to Phineus, who answers in fr.4:

Nec qui te adiutem invenio: hortari piget, non
prodesse id pudet.

In fr.6 Cepheus perhaps admonishes Phineus for trying to reclaim Andromeda as his betrothed:[220]

Namque ut dicam te metu
aut segnitate adire dubitare haut meum est.

Fr.7 is addressed either to Andromeda or Cassiopeia, perhaps by Perseus or Phineus:

Multi iniquo, mulier, animo sibi mala auxere in malis
quibus natura prava magis quam fors aut Fortuna obfuit.

Fr.8 describes Andromeda:

Misera obvalla saxo, senio praedore alguque et fame.

Fr.9 is spoken perhaps by Andromeda, describing further her surroundings:

Qui neque terraest datus nec cineris causa umquam
evasit vapos.[221]

Similarly fr.10:

Immani tabe templum obvallatum ossibus.

In fr.11, Cepheus refers to Andromeda, speaking perhaps either to Phineus or Perseus:

Alui educavi: id facite gratum ut sit seni.

In fr.12 perhaps Perseus thanks Cepheus for his consent to marry Andromeda:

Quod beneficium haut sterili in segete, rex, te
obsesse intelleges.

In fr.13 Andromeda speaks to Perseus:

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[220] That Phineus is being addressed is suggested by the parallel offered by Ov. *Met.* 5.22–23.

[221] 'She refers to some of the unburied relics which lie around her', Warmington 1935–40, vol.1, 351.

Donec tu auxilium, Perse, tetulisti mihi.

Fr.14 refers perhaps to the bond between Perseus and Andromeda:

Nosque ut sevorsum dividos leto offeres.

Finally, fr.15 refers perhaps to Andromeda's childhood, or even Perseus':

Nam postquam parvos vos oppressit famulitas.

D. CONCLUSION

The large number of plays of the classical period on the Perseus myths is an important corrective to the impression given by the often fragmentary and late literary sources for his myths. His strong presence in the drama of the period matches his importance in contemporary iconography. The fact that no Perseus drama survives complete is a reflection not of lack of his importance, but of the vagaries of the literary tradition: if the 'alphabetic' plays of Euripides had not survived, Heracles would not appear in extant drama (apart from in Sophocles' *Trachiniae*). With the exception of his encounter with Dionysus (a myth originating in Argos and remaining local to it), all major parts of the Perseus myths were dramatized in the fifth century, in all three genres of the classical theatre—tragedy, satyr-play and comedy. Moreover, the Perseus plays were performed throughout the century, from the beginnings of Greek tragedy to its end with the death of Euripides, and beyond. Euripides' *Ἀνδρομέδα*, contrary to the primacy which its popularity has given it, was by no means the first Perseus play.

Perseus is the killer of the Gorgon, the *κῆτος*, Acrisius and Polydectes: when Orestes kills Clytemnestra, in both Aeschylus and Euripides it is to Perseus the Gorgon-killer that he is likened; it is notable also that most Euripidean references to the Perseus myths (outside the Perseus plays) are to the killing of the Gorgon. However, the dramatization of all parts of the myths, the plurality of the plays' protagonists, and the variety of thematic content indicate that Perseus was far more than simply the killer of the Gorgon. Of all the plays, only one is called *Περσεύς* (Pratinas' play). The majority bear the names of the other figures in the myths. This is a reminder that thinking of the myths as 'the myths of Perseus' is misleading: in the *Δικτυουλκοί*, the *Δανάη*s (and probably in Sophocles' *Ἀκρίσιος*), Perseus

was only an infant, and not a protagonist, although his future monster-killing and homicides (especially of Acrisius) will have been important in these plays.

Of the tragedies, only the plays by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides remain in anything more than title. Although these three playwrights furnish most of the fragments, it must not be forgotten that other fifth-century playwrights also dramatized them: Phrynichus in his *Ἀνδρομέδα*, and Pratinas in his *Περσεύς*. The influence of these two plays on Sophocles and Euripides cannot be gauged, but must be acknowledged as a possibility

Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides returned again and again for inspiration to Perseus, producing three or more plays each. The only Aeschylean tragic remnant is the single line of the *Φορκίδες*. The fragments of Sophocles are more numerous, while the Euripidean fragments easily outnumber all the others. It is often difficult precisely to assign speaker and context to many Sophoclean and Euripidean fragments, but several themes are apparent. The most common is the importance of children[222] (and marriage).[223] Next comes the contrast of worldly prosperity with true happiness and what is good.[224] Love is also often mentioned, particularly in Euripides' *Ἀνδρομέδα*.[225] There is also a number of themes associated with various kinds of conflict, centred particularly on the *οἶκος*: conflict between age and youth,[226] men and women,[227] and especially between parent and child.[228] There is also conflict on a political level.[229] Although such themes are common in tragedy, and although in many cases the fragments' survival arises from the predilections of the excerptors, some impression has been gained of the themes which are important in the myths

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[222] S. *Δανάη* fr.165, E. *Δανάη* frs.316–318, E. *Δίκτυς* frs.333, 338, 339, 345, 346, E. *Ἀνδρομέδα* fr.141, Accius' *Andromeda* fr.1 5.

[223] E. *Ἀνδρομέδα* fr.137.

[224] E. *Ἀνδρομέδα* frs.142, 143, E. *Δανάη* frs.323, 327, 330, E. *Δίκτυς* frs.334, 336, 341, 343.

[225] E. *Ἀνδρομέδα* frs.125, 129, 132, 136, 138, E. *Δανάη* fr.322, E. *Δίκτυς* fr.340.

[226] S. *Ἀκρίσιος* frs.66, 67.

[227] E. *Δανάη* frs.319, 321.

[228] Between Acrisius and Perseus, S. *Ἀκρίσιος* fr.64, *Λαρισαῖοι* fr.380; between Acrisius and Danae, Naevius' *Danae* fr.8, cf. S. *Ant.* 944–954; between Cepheus and Andromeda, S. *Ἀνδρομέδα* frs.126, 128a, Accius' *Andromeda* fr.11; between Danae and Polydectes, E. *Δίκτυς* fr.332.

[229] Tyrant: E. *Δίκτυς* frs.337, 335. Political loyalty: E. *Δίκτυς* fr.347.

themselves. It is the examination of these themes of familial and 'political' tension that has been the central concern of this thesis.

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