

fung des Asklepios, der einen Todgeweihten wider dessen Schicksal retten wollte²⁵), beweist dies hinlänglich.

Insgesamt zeigen diese Überlegungen, daß die völlige Ablehnung einer Internistik in der frühgriechischen Heilkunde relativiert werden muß. Die moderne Trennung von Chirurgie und Internistik ist keineswegs kompatibel mit der alten Vorstellung von solchen Krankheiten, die die rationale Heilkunde heilen kann, und anderen, die aufgrund ihrer göttlichen Herkunft nicht in das Feld der rationalen Heilkunde fallen.

Vossenack

Peter Cordes

Krankheiten nicht unbedingt von den Göttern gesandt würden, womit er rückblickend das Fehlen der Internistik bei Homer belegen will.

25) Pind. P. 3,55 ff.

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΑΥΤΟΝ. SOCIAL SELF-KNOWLEDGE IN EURIPIDES' *ION*

Despite a certain amount of defence of the play by the critics over the past twenty years, *Ion* of Euripides generally remains an undervalued work of art¹). Usually regarded as either an outright attack on Olympian religion, or as a sophisticated game played between playwright and sceptical audience, the play has been denied its full force²). The play has many strands, but one, which has, I think, not been fully explored before, is the relationship between a set of provident Olympians and the Athenians, the

1) I am grateful to Professor J. Jory, Professor J. Willis, and Dr. J. R. Melville Jones of the Department of Classics, University of Western Australia, to Dr. M. G. Carroll, Ms. V. Chryssanthopoulou, and to Professor G. Gellie, of the Department of Classical Studies, University of Melbourne for helpful comments on previous drafts of this paper.

2) At least, so it seems among English students of the play. B. Seidensticker, *Palintonos Harmonia: Studien zur den komischen Elementen in der griechischen Tragödie* (Göttingen 1982) 212, briefly reviews the tendency to trivialise this complex play. G. Gellie, *Apollo in the Ion*, *Ramus* 13 (1984) 93–94, for current trends in the criticism of *Ion*.

recalcitrant and xenophobic beneficiaries of divine benevolence who, despite themselves, are led by the gods to a social self-knowledge.

1. *The Character of Apollo*

In *Ion* Apollo presides unseen over the action, working out his closely coordinated and benevolent plan for the future glory of Athens, which he does through the agency of Hermes and Athena. This Apollo, however, is still frequently regarded as the product of Euripides' supposedly uniformly hostile approach to Olympian religion. Before we see Apollo as the coordinator of a smoothly-running and successful plan, therefore, we have to spend a little time dealing with the still frequently hurled charges to the effect that, one way or another, Apollo is a "liar, brute and bungler"³).

Nobody, within or without the play, doubts that Apollo actually exists, and only the perverse and anachronistic rationalism of Verrall could reduce Apollo to the creation of the corrupt and scheming cardinals of Delphi⁴). One way of dismissing the play was to treat it as a sophisticated intellectual joke on the part of the playwright for a sophisticated and rationalistic audience who disbelieve in Delphi and its god⁵). Among some critics who accorded the play more weight, the idea was, and still is, current that Apollo stands revealed by the play as lecher, seducer and neglectful father, and that this was considered condemnation enough by the somewhat Victorian-minded Euripides⁶). This idea has been replaced by a less anachronistic notion which states that *Ion* is a tragedy written to criticise the myth it narrates. Euripides is supposed to be concerned here with the contradiction, which the Greeks of the fifth century faced, inherent in regarding the traditionally amoral

3) Still frequently hurled in some form or another, that is, by English-speaking critics. German-speakers now seem to be less harsh on the god. For example, A. Lesky, *Greek Tragedy* (London 1965) 186–197, sees the alteration to Apollo's plans as the result not of the god's incompetence, but of his subjection to the power of Τύχη. H. Erbse, *Studien zum Prolog der euripideischen Tragödie* (Berlin 1984) 74–75, is at pains to emphasize Apollo's care for his child and its mother, and the degree to which the future kingship of Athens depends upon the plans of the god. That Apollo is a "liar, brute and bungler" was the magisterial opinion of Gilbert Norwood, quoted by A. P. Burnett, *Human Resistance and Divine Persuasion in Euripides' 'Ion'*, *CJPh* 57 (1962) 89.

4) A. W. Verrall (Ed.), *Euripides Ion* (Cambridge 1890) xi–lxii.

5) H. D. F. Kitto, *Greek Tragedy* (London 1961) 321–331.

6) As noted by Burnett (n. 3) 90–91. This view appears in J. Ferguson, *A Companion to Greek Tragedy* (Univ. of Texas 1972) 364.

gods as the source of justice and a moral code worthy of respect and obedience by men⁷). We hear echoes of this dilemma in other Euripidean dramas⁸), but not, I think, here.

Briefly stated, this notion of *Ion* as a tragic critique of myth rests upon several points; upon the charges thrown by Creusa against the god, which are supposed to condemn his violence and sexual incontinence, as well as his disregard for the welfare of his child and its mother; upon the cruelty that the god is supposed to have displayed in causing Creusa to suffer so long in ignorance of the truth; and upon the words of Ion. At one point (ll. 438–451), Ion upbraids Apollo for neglecting a child he has fathered, and, at another point (ll. 1312–1319), Ion cannot understand why the god wishes to shelter an apparently common murderer. This line of criticism also draws support from the charge that Apollo is an incompetent prophet and a liar.

Creusa's chief complaint is that Apollo fathered a child on her, which he apparently then neglected. This charge she repeats four times (ll. 340–361, 384–389, 896–922, 952–956). She is echoed by the chorus, who condemn the lust displayed by men and gods and celebrated by the poets (ll. 1090–1105). Creusa condemns what seems to be a further perfidy of Apollo, who appears now to favour the foreigner Xuthus and his supposed bastard, Ion (ll. 912–914). What disturbs Creusa is not the sexual violence and intimidation committed by her divine rapist, so much as his subsequent neglect of the child and its mother. She mentions the rape in her monody (ll. 887–895), and afterwards, when she is telling the paedagogus about the episode (l. 942), but in neither case does she dwell upon any sordid sexual violence.

By the end of the play, when all the muddle created by the mortals has been disentangled, Creusa has very little to complain of, and in fact, complains of nothing⁹). Apollo has ordered all things well, as Athena is at pains to tell us (ll. 1595–1600). All of Creusa's charges were made in ignorance, when she still thought her child had been lost. Now that she knows, and is satisfied with the truth, she does not even take the opportunity to reproach the god for having left her for so long in ignorance. Indeed the god has behaved better than we could hope. Apollo, as is pointed out both at the beginning and the end of the play (ll. 14–16, 1596), was

7) B. Vickers, *Towards Greek Tragedy* (London 1973) 328–337.

8) e. g. El. 1301–1302, *Hippol.* passim.

9) Burnett (n. 3) 91.

careful to hide the traces of the pregnancy of Creusa, and did so well enough to fool the Paedagogus (l. 944). This care was not something that the god bothered to bestow on all his women. In the poetry of Pindar, we find him behaving in a considerably more cavalier, though ultimately benign fashion, together with Poseidon. Pindar faced the dilemma of reconciling amoral gods with morality and justice by rejecting legends that attributed base deeds to the gods¹⁰). In the Sixth Olympian, however, Poseidon fails to help Pitane conceal traces of the pregnancy for which he is responsible and Apollo fails to help her daughter, Evadne, over the same problem, allowing her to provoke the suspicion of her stepfather, Aepytus¹¹). In Pindar, Apollo's divine providence ensures that all goes well in the end, and that nobody gets into trouble. Nevertheless, this Apollo does not display the same delicacy as Euripides' Apollo, who does not allow Creusa even to run the risk of falling into familial hot water over any extra-marital pregnancy.

Both of Ion's charges are also made from positions of varying degrees of ignorance. The accusation of lack of forethought which Ion casts against Apollo (ll. 448–449) is ironic, considering that Ion casts it from the depths of his then total ignorance of Apollo's intentions. The other charge (ll. 1312–1319) is made in near-total ignorance. It is true that Ion fleetingly expresses himself in the language of sceptical disbelief, in much the same way as the chorus fleetingly use the language of the criticism of poetry that promotes the deeds of amoral or morally defective gods (ll. 1090–1105). Underlying both these expressions of contemporary scepticism, however, is the ignorance of the speaker. The chorus, under the impression that Creusa has been betrayed by first Apollo, and, then, Xuthus, are busy singing a hymn of hate. When Ion makes his second charge against Apollo, he sees at this point only the confusing outlines of Apollo's purpose, whose fragmentary appearance as yet makes no sense to him in his still partial ignorance¹²).

The charge that Apollo is an incompetent god of prophecy rests on the contradictions between what Hermes, in the prologue, tells us will happen, and what, in fact, does happen. According to Hermes, Ion will go to Athens, after Xuthus has received the false oracle that Ion is his son. At Athens, Ion will be recognized by Creusa, and Creusa's coupling with Apollo will, therefore, remain

10) C. M. Bowra, Pindar (Oxford 1964) 54–98.

11) Pindar Ol. 6.29–38.

12) Vickers (n. 7) 334.

hidden. Certain details are purposely left unclear, for Euripides does not want his audience to be deprived of all suspense. It is not clear from Hermes' words whether Ion will be recognized by Creusa as her son by Apollo, or as Xuthus' son and heir, nor is it made clear from whom the coupling will remain hidden. In the event, Creusa recognizes Ion at Delphi as her son by Apollo, and the chorus do learn of Creusa's rape by Apollo.

It is not clear what Apollo is up to in his projected plan. He seems to want stealth and discretion, which, considering how the Athenians behave later, is a sensible idea. His plan, however, whatever its original intention, is bent slightly by the force of Athenian xenophobia. This, had Apollo not acted, would have destroyed Ion and the benevolent plans of Apollo. As it is, Apollo's purpose is hardly deflected by the failure of this small detail¹³).

The charge that Apollo is a liar rests upon the false oracle which, as Hermes tells us (ll. 69–71), Apollo gives to Xuthus (ll. 534–541). Xuthus is told that the first person he meets on leaving the temple of Apollo will be Xuthus' son. Assured that he has found his son in Ion, Xuthus then plans to insinuate his supposed child into the royal family of Athens, deceiving Creusa over his intentions until the time is right to break the truth gently to her (ll. 650–667). Apollo's intentions from the first are, moreover, considered suspect on the grounds that he makes use of Hermes, the notorious flyboy of Olympus¹⁴). Unable to face the consequences of his lies, Apollo is also considered too spineless to face the music, and so sends Athena along to cover up for him.

It is true that Xuthus' good-hearted but hasty and limited nature makes us less inclined to take him seriously. Of all the major characters, he matters least¹⁵). Moreover, Apollo, the prophetic god, seems to have enough insight into both the future and Xuthus' character to have foreseen the harmless dishonesty that Xuthus now plans. Apollo would, sooner or later, make the truth known at least to Creusa. After his hand has been forced by the Athenians, Apollo neutralises in advance the clumsy machinations that Xuthus plans. Apollo lets everybody except Xuthus, while they are still at Delphi, into the truth. It has also been pointed out that, whatever the morality of this lie of Apollo, everybody goes away from Delphi with more than they expected¹⁶). As for the

13) Burnett (n. 3) 93–94, and see n. 3 above.

14) Vickers (n. 7) 328.

15) Burnett (n. 3) 91–92.

16) Burnett (n. 3) 92.

moral character of Hermes, he is the natural choice for a job that requires certainly discretion, with or without honesty. He is the messenger and fixer of the gods, as well as brother and frequent associate of Apollo in the extended Olympian family¹⁷).

As regards Athena, her presence at the end of the play is natural. Over the course of the play, the Athenians have shown themselves capable of saying and doing anything, however murderous and blasphemous. Apollo is well-advised to keep out of their way to avoid provoking any more blasphemy, to which, as an Olympian and well-wisher of Athens, he might regretfully be forced to react. Athena's presence is natural for more compelling reasons, however. The power of Apollo has been demonstrated throughout the play, and needs no more emphasis. Athena's appearance and prophecies point the way to the coming events in and around the city over which she presides. The destiny of Athens has moved back from the safekeeping of Apollo to the hands of its patron goddess.

2. *Divine Links between Athens and Delphi*

Apollo, then, knows what he is doing. Let us now look at how he cooperates with his divine agents, and at the links between Athens and Delphi. The divine cooperation is close and well coordinated. The benevolent presences of Hermes and Athena frame the unseen doings of Apollo, assuring us that all takes place with the full foreknowledge and guidance of the gods¹⁸). As for the setting of the play, Euripides apparently made an innovation in moving the scene of the piece from Athens to Delphi¹⁹), but he is careful immediately to link the two cities. As soon as Hermes has set the scene in the prologue, he turns to Athens (1.8), which is introduced to us as the city of Παλλάς. Our attention is drawn to the cave under the Acropolis. This is the hill of Athena, the very heart of Athens (l. 12), where Creusa, the daughter of Erechtheus, was raped by the god of Delphi, and conceived Ion, the future king of Athens. Athena's care for Ion begins here. A brief aetiology explains how Athena set two snakes over the baby Erichthonius,

17) Apollo and Hermes together: W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods* (London 1950) 91–93.

18) C. Wolff, *The Design and Myth in Euripides' 'Ion'*, HSCP 169. Erbse (n. 3) 74.

19) A. P. Burnett, *Catastrophe Survived: Euripides' Plays of Mixed Reversal* (Oxford 1971) 103.

the ancestor of Creusa. Creusa puts her own baby under the protection of Athena, by placing two gold serpents into the cradle before she casts the baby away (ll. 18–27). From the heart of Athens, Hermes then carries the baby directly to the temple of Apollo in the heart of Delphi, where Apollo makes sure that Ion is found and raised by the priestess (ll. 28–51).

The other major piece of divine collaboration occurs when Ion is about to return back into the city of Athens. Athena's appearance, which providentially turns aside a tactlessly aggressive enquiry from Ion to Apollo, is heralded by the production of the tokens that Creusa once hid in the cradle of Ion. Each of these tokens, which Hermes in the prologue had grouped together as *χλιδήν* (l. 26), is brought carefully out for our inspection. First comes the piece of weaving, depicting the Gorgon, which is likened to an aegis, and then the twin snakes, symbols of Athena's protection. Finally comes the branch cut from Athena's olive tree on the acropolis (ll. 1421–1436), which accompanies the goddess here, as it does on the west pediment of the Parthenon²⁰). Ion's green and flourishing branch is, however, often considered as some sort of red-herring or giveaway by those who see the play as proto-whodunit²¹). We should not be surprised at the green and fresh appearance of the branch. Herodotus noted the supernatural toughness and speed of growth displayed by Athena's olive tree, and it is not surprising that a branch plucked years ago from this divinely-protected plant should still be unwithered²²). An eternally young and green shoot is, moreover, the perfect talisman to accompany the young scion of Athens and Apollo.

Euripides' Delphi, the backdrop to this drama, is decorated with sculpture and painting that express the sympathy of its god for Athens. When the chorus of Athenian women, the attendants of Creusa, enter at the parodos (ll. 184–246), they immediately and excitedly note the links between the two places. Remarking that Athens is not the only place that is decorated with religious statuary and architecture, they point to the temple of Apollo and the sequence of statues depicting Heracles and Iolaus killing the Hydra (ll. 190–200), Bellerophon killing the Chimaera (ll. 201–205), and, finally, Athena among the other Olympians in a gigantomachy (ll. 206–207).

20) e. g. N. Yalouris, *Classical Greece: The Sculpture of the Parthenon* (London 1960) xiii.

21) As Ferguson (n. 6) 363 does.

22) Herodotus 8.55.

Whether or not this elaborate ensemble of statuary was represented on stage is simply not known²³). The point for our purposes is not really important. Euripides, in the only surviving example of such a detailed description in tragedy²⁴), is, as we have said, choosing to highlight certain features of these statues. In the case that these statues, like Shakespeare's moors and battlefields, relied entirely upon the imagination of the audience for their substance, this strengthens the attention that we should give to an unusually elaborate description.

Such descriptions, when they appear in epic, are presented so as to demand our careful attention and wonder. Euripides' tone may be light here, but, I think, his intentions are serious²⁵). Here the Athenian women stare at the statuary, in a mood of wonder and thoughtfulness, which we are encouraged to share, for Euripides, in what may be an experiment that he does not repeat in any other work of his we possess, holds them up to us as clearly as possible so that we take good note. This statuary, at which they stare, reverberates with visual echoes of well-known of contemporary Athenian art.

The three sets of sculpture are united by the theme of the conquest of destructive and chthonic powers, and, as such, are, of course, appropriate decoration for the place where Apollo conquered the Python. Moreover, two of the three subjects are found in prominent examples of fifth century Athenian public art. The Labours of Heracles, including the fight with the Hydra, are the subject of sculpture on the metopes of the Hephaisteion, a work of art that attracted Euripides' attention elsewhere²⁶). A gigantomachy involving the Olympians decorated the east metopes of the Parthenon itself, and the interior of the shield of the statue of Athena Parthenos, in the Parthenon²⁷). Such sculpture was an

23) P. D. Arnott, *Greek Scenic Conventions in the Fifth Century B. C.* (Oxford 1962) 67.

24) Wolff (n. 18) 179.

25) Presentation and reception of ἐκφράσεις in Epic: Wolff (n. 18) 179–180, Lesky (n. 3) 183. The mood of this parodos has been seen as near-comic (Seidensticker 220–222), but here, as elsewhere, this should not detract from the fundamental importance of the Chorus' words.

26) J. Carrière, *Art et lyrisme. Une galerie des métopes dans un chœur tragique*, Pallas 22 (1975) 13–22.

27) Hephaisteion, Pedimental Sculpture: H. A. Thompson, *The Pedimental Sculpture of the Hephaestion*, *Hesperia* 18 (1949) 230–268. Sculpture of Metopes: C. H. Morgan, *Hesperia* 31 (1962) 211–219. Parthenon, east metopes: e. g. Yalouris (n. 20) x. Parthenon, interior of the shield of Athena Parthenos: N. Leipen, *Athena Parthenos: A Reconstruction* (Royal Ontario Museum 1971) 46–50.

expression of Athens' self-appointed role as the defender of civilization against the powers of barbarism²⁸). Bellerophon and the Chimaera is not an especially popular subject in 5th century Athenian art²⁹), but it does appear on an artifact of great ideological importance, the Panathenaic πέπλος³⁰).

Euripides repeats his dramatic experiment at another crucial point in the play, when he presents us with a ἔκφρασις, of a type so far unique in Classical poetry. Under the impression that they are father and son, Xuthus and Ion go off to celebrate a feast at which Xuthus intends publicly to declare his liking for Ion, so as to prepare the way for Ion's eventual reception into the royal family of Athens (ll. 650–654). The Messenger later describes Ion's preparations. Ion erects a tent to hold πάντα Δελφῶν λαόν, for the whole of Delphi was to witness this important event (l. 1140). For the roof of the tent, Ion uses a tapestry dedicated by Heracles from the spoils of the Amazons and depicting the sun, moon, and various constellations. The walls of the pavilion are made up from tapestries depicting both a naval fight between Greeks and barbarians, and wild and unnatural monsters. By the door of the tent, Ion has placed a statue of Cecrops, the dedication of some Athenian (ll. 1161–1166).

The echoes of epic are even clearer here. The constellations on the tapestry are the same as those on the Shield of Achilles (Iliad 18. 483–489), whilst the feast has a Homeric atmosphere (especially ll. 1168–1180). The request by the dramatist to regard the description in an epic, contemplative frame of mind is even stronger. The feast is given by Xuthus, the king of Athens, in recognition of Ion, the child of Apollo, in the presence of all Delphi, although, of course, only the god is aware of the full implications of the feast. The heavenly bodies, who inhabit the realm of Apollo, preside over the feast, in the shape of the dedication given by Heracles, whose importance for Athenian art we have already noted. Heracles acquired this offering as plunder from the expedition against the Amazons, in which he was assisted by Theseus, whilst the Amazons, of course, later invaded Attica. Behind the description of the sea-battle presumably lies the battle of Salamis. No depiction from the fifth century of this battle is

28) Ideology of the Parthenon: e.g. C. M. Bowra, *Periclean Athens* (London 1971) 112–118.

29) Bellerophon: e.g. J. Heule, *Greek Myths: A Vase Painter's Notebook* (Indiana Univ. Press 1973) 100–101.

30) *Peplos*: A. S. Owen (Ed.), *Euripides Ion* (Oxford 1939) 84.

recorded. The battle of Marathon, however, now receding into the heroic past, appeared on the walls of the Stoa Poikile, of about 460, and the battle of Plataea may appear on the frieze of the temple of Athena Nike, dated to 427–424, only a few years before *Ion*³¹). We cannot, I think, load the wild horses, deer and lions with any direct symbolism (ll. 1161–1162), but centaurs, the *μυξόθηρας φώτας* (l. 1161), occur in the west pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia, a building which has been seen as thank-offering for the victory of the Greeks over the Persians³²), and of course, in the south metopes of the Parthenon³³). The presence of Cecrops, of the royal family of Athens, provides a glancing touch of irony, as here one descendant of Cecrops, Creusa, will try to murder another descendant of Cecrops, *Ion*.

31) Owen (n. 30) 147 (note on l. 1160) says that, because the Persians could not have dedicated at Delphi a picture of a Persian defeat, this tapestry must depict a Persian victory, such as Lade. *Ion*, on the hand, is not likely to decorate the walls of his marquee with a picture of a Greek defeat. Representation of Marathon on Stoa Poikile: M. Robertson, *A History of Greek Art* (Cambridge 1975) 244, 348. On the identification of frieze of Temple of Athena Nike as depiction of Plataea: E. B. Harrison, *A New Fragment from the North Frieze of the Nike Temple*, *AJA* 76 (1972) 195–197.

32) e.g. R. Tomlinson, *Greek Sanctuaries* (London 1976) 61.

33) Parthenon, south metopes: e.g. Yalouris (n. 20) x. For another, quite different, interpretation of the walls of *Ion*'s tent: H. R. Immerwahr, 'Αθηνοϊκῆς Εἰκόνης στὸν Ἴωνα τοῦ Εὐρυπίδη', *Ἑλληνικά* 25 (1972) 291–294. – How far this sympathetic treatment by Euripides of Delphi reflects relations of the time between the real Athens and Delphi is hard to say. Historical evidence for the relationship between Athens and Delphi is never very full or explicit. Nevertheless there seems to have been a certain rapprochement between the two from the Peace of Nicias to, at least, the Sicilian Expedition (H. Parke, D. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* Vol. 1 [Oxford 1956] 193–199). Not even Euripides can have ventured upon a play in which Delphi and its god hold such an important position, and are shown in such a good light, and still have hoped to win the prize, if relations between Athens and Delphi were positively bad. Whatever the state of relations may have been, however, we must beware of searching for reflections of current international tensions in the eternal mythical world of tragedy. Tension between Corinth and Athens did not stop Euripides in 431 presenting a version of the myth of Medea which incidentally exonerates the Corinthians of the murder of Medea's children (D. L. Page [Ed.], *Euripides Medea* [Oxford 1938] xxiv–xxv). Nor does it stop Sophocles' Theseus in 406–405 from carefully dissociating the evil Creon from the Thebes that produced him, at a time when the real Thebes was bitterly anti-Athenian (Oed. Col. 919–923).

3. *The Nature of the Athenians*

Euripidean Delphi thus expresses its sympathy for one aspect of the ethos of Athens. The Athenians, on the other hand, do not always seem to be worthy of this divine allegiance. The Athenians and their royal family display a violence and a destructive xenophobia that has generally either been ignored or pardoned by commentators³⁴). The background of the royal family is dark and disturbing. Autochthonous, they are born of the same earth that threw up the gorgons and giants (ll. 987–991). Behind the matronly figure of Creusa hang violent legends, as she reveals in response to Ion's questions (ll. 267–282). After Athena had made over the baby Erichthonius to the daughters of Cecrops with instructions not to look at the child, they disobeyed this injunction, and paid for it with their blood. Another legend has it that Erechtheus sacrificed his daughters, except Creusa, and was himself destroyed by Poseidon.

This capacity of the Erechthids for violence and murder is acted out before our eyes, when the Paedagogus and Creusa plot together to destroy Ion (ll. 970–1048). Creusa tells us how the royal family of Athens came to hold the two phials of Gorgon's blood. Athena destroyed the earth-born Gorgon in a gigantomachy up in Pallene. After the battle, she gave Erichthonius the gift of the two phials of Gorgon's blood, one to work good, and the other, evil. Creusa intends to use the phial of poisonous blood to destroy Ion.

Euripides has conflated two stories involving different Gorgons, the earth-born Gorgon, who is slaughtered by Athena, and the Gorgon slain by Perseus. The Paedagogus has apparently heard of the slaughter of the earth-born Gorgon, but not the continuation of the story involving the gift of the two types of blood (ll. 999–1000). Diodorus Siculus gives a version of the legend of the gigantomachy and Gorgon, but changes the location and sequence of events. Otherwise, Euripides' version remains, so far as we know, unparalleled³⁵).

The point of Euripides' adaptation is to give an insight into the nature of the Erechthids. Athena performed the great and good deed of ridding the earth of monsters, and gave the fruit of that

34) e. g. Owen (n. 30) xxii. Seidensticker (n. 2) 238 places a welcome emphasis on this understressed aspect of the Athenians.

35) Diodorus 3.70. U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (Ed.), Euripides *Ion* (Berlin 1926) 131–132.

deed to Erichthonius to protect himself. The gift of the goddess is now misused by one of the descendants of Erichthonius, to kill another of his descendants. The means for Ion's destruction lie deep in the heart of the Erechthid family.

The xenophobia displayed by the royal family is shared by the Athenian populace at large. The insularity of the Chorus is evident from the first words of the parodos, and their fears and resentments cause them later to make misleading replies to Creusa's enquiries (ll. 725–807). The xenophobic Paedagogus, moreover, gives direction to the unformulated resentment of his mistress (ll. 808–858). As we have seen, the force of their xenophobia is so strong that it even dents the divine plans of Apollo. Their hostility towards the bumbling, but unmalevolent, Xuthus is especially harsh, in view of his service towards Athens (ll. 57–60, 296). The scene of this service Euripides has shifted from Eleusis to Euboea, thus recalling memories of the Athenian victory of 446, and thereby increasing our sympathy for Xuthus³⁶). Ion knows what the Athenians are like, as his long speech makes very clear (ll. 585–646). Apollo shows what he thinks of the Athenians' preoccupations by insinuating into their royal family his own son (one who, incidentally, according to contemporary citizenship laws, would not himself have been an Athenian citizen, as one of his parents was an alien).

4. *The Journey to Self-Knowledge*

This pronounced xenophobia of the Athenians is something more than a passing target for Euripides. It has its place within the framework of the themes of ignorance and self-knowledge that run through the play. *Ion* charts the progress of Ion and Creusa as they move from ignorance of their own identity to a full knowledge of their position in relation to family, society and the divine. They attain to this knowledge only under the coaxing guidance of the presiding deity and his divine agents, and are themselves not possessed of any heroic desire for self-knowledge³⁷). Ion was once curious about his parentage, and his curiosity has not altogether died when Creusa appears, but he has resigned himself to the

36) Owen (n. 3) xv (on l. 294).

37) C. H. Whitman, *Euripides and the Full Circle of Myth* (Harvard 1974) 77, notes the similarities and divergences on the theme of the quest for knowledge between the actors of *Ion* and of *Oedipus Tyrannus*. General similarities between the two plays are noted at Seidensticker (n. 2) 235, 235 nn. 131–132.

thought that he can find out nothing, and has allied himself to Apollo (ll. 109–111, 139–141, 316–329, 359). Ion's quest for self-knowledge is narrowly confined to establishing that he is not the child of a slave. To this end, Ion cross-questions Xuthus quite ruthlessly (ll. 544–556), and is willing to dodge the possibility of discovering whether his mother was a slave, by the expedient of re-dedicating his cradle to Apollo (ll. 1380–1383). It is true that Ion is intending to ask Apollo who his father is when Athena appears, but by this stage, given Creusa's open admission that she was raped, it is hardly likely that the rapist will turn out to be a slave. The narrow limits of Ion's quest, although his fears might seem perfectly reasonable to an audience deeply concerned with racial purity, are an ironic commentary on his (and the audience's) narrow preoccupations. Afraid that he might turn out to be the result of a liaison between king and kitchen-maid, Ion discovers a truth unimaginably different and greater than he could have imagined.

Nor is Creusa particularly concerned with the quest for the truth. She allows herself to be swept away by the Chorus' replies (ll. 752–802), when they reveal the oracle given to Xuthus, and allows herself to be directed by the Paedagogus.

Let us now follow the near-parallel paths trodden by Ion and Creusa on their journey to social self-knowledge. Ion first appears in the second part of the prologue (ll. 82–183). We have heard the outlines of the coming events, and can thus judge, unhindered by ignorance, from a viewpoint of superior knowledge, the actions of the ignorant actors. Ion is displayed to us after the prologue, with a typically Euripidean contrast, as thoroughly ignorant of who he is. Ion, the servant of Apollo's shrine, declares first that he has no father, and then that his father is Apollo (ll. 136–137). Equally ironic is Ion's stressing of his sexual purity (l. 148), which, though, of course, a normal requirement for one entering or serving in a temple³⁸), is ironic, given that Ion is later revealed as the product of the sexual activity of a vigorous god. Ion, although he is aware of the fact of divine rape (ll. 444–447), does not seem to be completely aware of the full nature of Apollo, and certainly not aware of the full intentions of the god.

In the last part of the monody, Ion busies himself with shoo-

38) Ignorance of actors: R. F. Willetts, *Action and Character in the "Ion" of Euripides*, *JHS* 93 (1973) 206. Erbse (n. 3) 78. Seidensticker touches on the irony implicit in relations between a god of self-knowledge, and ignorant humans. *Sexual purity in temple ritual*: W. S. Barrett (Ed.), *Euripides Hippolytus* (Oxford 1964) 172–173.

ing away the birds from the temple of Apollo (ll. 154–183). Ion shakes his bow at the eagle of Zeus and the swan of Apollo. The god himself is more charitable to birds, despite their nasty habits around the shrine, for he tolerates the doves that later come to save Ion's life. In other literature, Apollo protects as suppliants the birds who nest in his temple at Branchidae, whilst it is in general extremely dangerous to shoot any animal under the patronage of a god, as Agamemnon found to his cost. Ion's desire to expel the birds from his clean and self-contained world, beautiful as this world is, is confirmation that his view of the divine is in general too narrow and intolerant³⁹).

What was given to us in lyrical form in the monody is made explicit in the first episode, when Ion meets Creusa for the first time (ll. 237–451). The gentle but relentless fashion in which Ion extracts information about what turns out to be his own birth, and the closeness the pair come to a mutual recognition⁴⁰) is an ironic comment on his social self-knowledge (ll. 255–306). When Ion has finished probing Creusa's background, he reiterates that he is ignorant of his own origin, and makes explicit his utter dependence on Delphi and its god for his material survival (ll. 306–329).

Yet it is in this first episode that Ion, still in the depths of ignorance, is disturbed by the first tremors of what turns out to be the truth (ll. 339–400). He is disturbed enough by Creusa's condemnation of Apollo (ll. 384–389), to remonstrate with the god (ll. 437–451) over Apollo's apparent lack of concern for his offspring and their mothers. During the second episode, the outlines of Ion's true position in society, although they are still very sketchy, begin to emerge from the sands of ignorance. His utter ignorance has been replaced by the notion that he is the natural son of Xuthus by an as yet unknown mother. This, in itself, is false, but is somewhat nearer the truth. Ion has begun to gravitate towards the royal family of Athens, albeit by a path that soon turns out to be false.

Creusa and the Paedagogus make their attempt upon Ion's life. Ion pursues his mother through the temple precincts, and moves thereby towards an expanding knowledge of himself. By this time (ll. 1275–1281), Ion, fulfilling the verdict of the judges of Delphi in a spirit of joyous personal revenge, is ready to commit

39) Apollo at Branchidae: Herodotus 1. 159. Agamemnon: Sophocles *El.* 566–633; J. Denniston, D. Page (Ed.), *Aeschylus Agamemnon* (Oxford 1957) xxiv–xxvii. Idealization of Delphi in Ion's monody: Erbse (n. 3) 77.

40) Erbse (n. 3). Handling of themes of recognition throughout play: Seidensticker (n. 2) 213–214.

murder in the temple precincts that he had once considered served only by purity and sanctity, thereby revealing to himself and the world at large an important truth about his character. Ion is thwarted and, ignorant as he still is, can see only the baffling laws of the gods, rather than the emerging plan of Apollo.

The revelations of the Pythia and the mutual recognition of Ion and Creusa place Ion in his immediate familial and domestic context. As Creusa explicitly states, mother and son have found each other, the family is restored and the land of Athens has its rightful rulers (ll. 1456–1467). The divine dimension to Ion's social relationships is then confirmed and expanded upon by Athena. By the end of the play, Ion has discovered his true position in relation to family, city and gods.

As for Creusa, her words in the first episode (ll. 246–389) are as much an unconsciously ironic commentary on her ignorance as they are upon Ion's. As the details of Creusa's circumstances emerge, so does her conviction that her baby son was lost through neglect by Apollo.

Creusa next appears at the beginning of the third episode (l. 725), after the Chorus have heard the false oracle delivered to Xuthus. The oracle, gradually and misleadingly revealed, causes the Paedagogus to weave a fantasy, perfectly rational and logical in its methods and conclusions, but disastrously rationalistic and limited in its premises⁴¹). According to the deductions of the Paedagogus, Xuthus is supposed to have begotten Ion after his wedding to Creusa, and this spurs Creusa on to deliver her second ignorant condemnation of Apollo (ll. 859–922). This is cast in the form of a bitter parody of a hymn, ironic, and, as it turns out, unjustified and blasphemous, in view of Apollo's care and foresight⁴²).

After the emotional outburst of the monody, with its impassioned accusations against Xuthus. Ion and Apollo, these charges are repeated in more reasoned form in the ensuing iambics. The allegations are made in an atmosphere of ignorance and hostility so profound as to spark the Paedagogus off into a mad suggestion to burn down the temple of Apollo (l. 974), and then into the plan to destroy Ion (ll. 985–1047). While Creusa and the Paedagogus are discussing their plan, Creusa reveals an ignorance of the capacities

41) Wolff (n. 18) 184.

42) Hymnic elements in monody of Creusa: J. LaRue, *Creusa's Monody: Ion 859–922*, TAPA 94 (1963) 126–136.

of her character exactly parallel to Ion's blindness to his own nature. The Paedagogus asks whether the blood in the two phials on Creusa's wrist mixes (l. 1016). Creusa, the woman who plans to kill the unknown usurper, but who will soon welcome her long-lost son into her arms, abruptly rejects the notion that good and evil could possibly mix (l. 1017).

So Creusa finally comes, more abruptly than her son, to see her full position in society and in relation to the gods, at the same time as her son (ll. 1456–1467). The very structure of the play emphasizes the mutual ignorance and mutual dependence between the two main actors. In the first episode, Ion and Creusa encounter each other in the depths of their ignorance about themselves and each other. The second episode involves Xuthus misleading Ion, the third episode, the Paedagogus and Creusa misleading each other, and the Paedagogus acting upon the results of the ignorance of Ion and Xuthus. In the exodos, Ion and Creusa confront each other again, and then learn the full truth.

When Euripides chose to examine not only son, but also mother, and to put them in a carefully worked-out symmetrical framework, his aim was presumably to emphasize their ignorance of the interdependency of this closest of all possible relationships. The limits of ignorance on Creusa's part, however, have been expanded to take in the Athenians, who share her prejudices in an even more virulent form.

5. *Conclusions*

The xenophobia displayed by all of the Athenians is their chief obstacle to social self-knowledge. By the end of the play, Apollo has removed this impediment, so that the Athenian populace also knows its true position in the scheme of social and divine things. Thus the relations between Athens and Delphi, or more precisely, between the royal family and populace of Athens, and the patron god of Delphi and his divine agents, are subsumed into a larger theme, that of ignorance and knowledge of one's social and divine position. For those making this trip into social and personal self-knowledge, Delphi and its god are the perfect patrons. The play implicitly recommends adherence to the caution enjoined by all of the Delphic dicta, but it is most of all an acting out of the recommendation to know thyself, in the social sense understood

by the fifth century⁴³). Apollo, in his benevolence, gives his gift of a semi-divine son to Athens, to ensure her glorious future. He also gives the Erechthids, and the Athenians in general, an insight into their true social and religious position, which is more dependent upon the gods than the Athenians thought when they undertook the journey to Delphi.

University of Western Australia Andrew Farrington
Nedlands

43) Delphic dicta: Pausanias 10.24.1. J. G. Frazer Pausanias' Description of Greece Vol. 5 (London 1913) 248–349. Meaning of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in 5th century and after: U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Reden und Vorträge (Berlin 1926) 2,171.

DER STAATSENTWURF DER NOMOI ZWISCHEN IDEAL UND WIRKLICHKEIT*) Zu Plato leg. 739a1–e7 und 745e7–746d2

Carl Werner Müller zum 60. Geburtstag

I

Die Regelung der Eigentumsverhältnisse im 5. Buch der platonischen *Nomoi* beginnt mit einer Grundsatzüberlegung (739a1–e7), die dem Maßstab gilt, an dem sich die beabsichtigte Regelung zu orientieren hat. Diese Überlegung vollzieht sich in zwei Schritten: zuerst (A) entwickelt der das Wort führende Athenener in a1–b7 das einzuschlagende Verfahren, das dann (B) in b8–e7 auf die Eigentumsregelung angewandt wird¹).

*) Bei dem folgenden Beitrag handelt es sich um den leicht überarbeiteten und durch Anmerkungen ergänzten Vortrag, der am 12. 1. 1990 in Mainz auf dem Symposium der klassischen Philologen der Universitäten Frankfurt, Gießen, Heidelberg, Mainz, Mannheim, Marburg, Saarbrücken und Trier gehalten wurde.

1) Text und Zeilenzählung im folgenden nach der Ausgabe von J. Burnet (Platonis opera tom. V, Oxford 1907 und Nachdrucke).