

**THE BASTARDS OF EURIPIDES: ILLEGITIMACY IN THE
HIPPOLYTUS, THE *ANDROMACHE*, AND THE *ION***

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By JAMES NICHOLAS EDWIN SÜLTER

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The Pericles Citizenship Law of 451 made citizenship contingent on an individual man having Athenian blood on both his father and mother's side. Men with foreign mothers were denied any rights to the key institutions that conferred Athenian belonging, such as deme and phratry membership, as well as, of course, citizenship. When, however, the Peloponnesian War began in 431, the population of Athenian citizens was quickly diminished by military conflict and plague and they sought a solution to repopulate their numbers with as little change to the original law as possible. The result was an amendment in 429 allowing citizens with no living legitimate (γνήσιοι) heirs to legitimise their bastards (νόθοι) in their place.

A year after this, Euripides wrote the *Hippolytus*, a play that deals very closely with the issues of bastardy, bastards' place in the *polis* and the *oikos*, and their treatment by those who are legitimate. As the war went on, he proceeded to produce two other plays containing bastard characters, the *Andromache* (c.425) and the *Ion* (c.413), in which he similarly explored the consequences of illegitimacy. In all three plays his attitude towards bastards is overwhelmingly sympathetic and the way he chooses to present their situations suggests his disagreement with the arrogance and antipathy that continued to push many of these often very worthy individuals to the fringes of society.

This thesis seeks to examine Euripides' presentation of bastards through a close reading of the relevant texts, in order to understand how the plays reacted to the contemporary circumstances of and what comments they are making.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction: research questions

In the year 451 Athens' leading statesman, Pericles, introduced a dramatic new law concerning qualification for Athenian citizenship.¹ The Pericles Citizenship Law (PCL) made dual Athenian parentage a requirement for becoming a citizen, and denied it to anyone born from a 'metroxenik' union between an Athenian man and a foreign woman. Consequently, all of these children, called μητρόξενοι, were disqualified from being citizens and were classed as νόθοι/νόθαι, bastards, regardless of whether or not their parents had been married. It was a sweeping piece of legislation and had an enormous effect on Athenian notions of belonging, in large part because the PCL made into law the views of many powerful Athenian citizens seeking to elevate their status by privileging their lineage. What it did was to place a premium on blood-purity and reinforce the simplistic equivalence between status and worth.

Some twenty years later, when the Athenians became involved in the Peloponnesian War, a generation-long conflict with Sparta and its allies, the law would prove itself to be viable only for the dominant and imperialist *polis* that had instituted it at the time. The war, which began in 431, put massive pressure on Athens that did not let up until the city's eventual capitulation in 404. By this point, it had cost Athens its political and economic hegemony of the Greek world that it had developed after the Persian Wars. Its most acute loss, however, was the persistently high fatality rate of its population. The total number of fatalities from combat and from the plague that ravaged the city between 430 and 426 was incredibly high and it was this, among various other factors, which resulted in the partial easing of the PCL.

This process was instigated by Pericles himself in 429, when he undercut his own legislation by requesting that his own bastard be legitimised to take the place of the two legitimate heirs he had lost to the plague. We know that the request was granted in this case and his bastard was legitimised and made a full citizen. Most likely, though, this was not because the Athenians made an exception for their most trusted leader, but rather because the law itself was changed so

¹ Unless otherwise stated, all three-digit dates are to be taken as BCE.

that a father without any living legitimate (γνήσιοι) sons could legitimise his bastard as his heir and be granted citizenship. These alterations to the law had consequences for many different people throughout the city's power structures and, though it was only one of the many concerns that the war brought, it came to be reflected in the art of the time. In spite (or perhaps because) of the fact that Athens suffered greatly from the privations of the war, the persistent vitality of its cultural and artistic spheres remained relatively intact. The influence on the citizen body of sophistry and Socrates' radical rejection of many *polis*-centric beliefs appear to be considerable and these ideological innovations, as well as reactions to the shared suffering, fed the imaginations of the Athenian dramatists. These poets functioned much like the city's conscience, employing the stage to probe and suggest solutions to the problems facing Athenian society during that trying time.

Of the wartime dramatists whose work survives, Euripides is the only one with a noteworthy focus on bastardy and of his seventeen surviving plays three, the *Hippolytus*, the *Andromache*, and the *Ion*, feature characters that are overtly referred to as illegitimate.² The bastards in the *Hippolytus* and the *Ion* are the eponymous characters, while in the *Andromache* he is the young child of Andromache and Neoptolemus, traditionally named Molossus.³ From the beginning it becomes fairly obvious that there are a number of features shared by the three characters. They are all male, all at some stage of youth,⁴ and all born to unions between unmarried parents of contrasting origins and unequal statuses. Perhaps most significantly, however, is that they share the distinction of being the only surviving Euripidean characters labelled with the Greek term for

² A case could be made for Heracles in *HF* being a bastard since, "he is not called a *nothos* directly in Euripides' tragedy, but the play opens with Amphytrion describing himself as the man who "shared his wife" with Zeus, introducing a suggestion of adultery and the question of who is the father of Alcmene's son" (Patterson 1990: 49). See also Ogden 1996: 199. Even if Heracles is considered a bastard, however, the play's narrative and the lack of an overt reference to his birth-status as a bastard distinguish it from these three plays.

³ The child is left unnamed in the play, as is typical in tragedy (notable exceptions are Astyanax in Euripides' *Trojan Women* and Eurysaces in Sophocles' *Ajax*). He is, however, given the name Μολοσσός in the *dramatis personae* of the Mss. and at Σ^{309, 709} of the play, as well as in Apollodorus, *Epitome* 6.12. Here he will be called Molossus throughout. For children in Greek tragedy, see Griffiths 2020.

⁴ Molossus is a pre-pubescent παῖς (*And.* 50). *Ion* (*Ion* 57, 316, 1132, 1218) and *Hippolytus* (*Hipp.* 43), while both called νεανίας, are not the same age: the latter appears to be a few years older given his political designation as a πολίτης and the expectation that he should already be married (11-13). The differences between age groups is a difficult subject: for good overviews, see Davidson 2007: 71-98; Beaumont 2012: 17-24, and Griffiths 2020: 19-21. For children and childhood in general, see Golden 2015.

an illegitimate child—νόθος, or its variant νοθαγενής.⁵ This link between Hippolytus, Molossus and Ion is the best place to begin tracking down Euripides' views on bastardy since these are likely clustered around bastardy-related words. Classification as a νόθος had very real political, religious, social and domestic consequences for individuals during the period of the plays' production (c.428-413), so analysis of the word's use in the plays gives an opportunity to compare known realities of Athenian bastards with Euripides' representation of them on the stage and judge his views by the choices he makes in their portrayal.

In this thesis I attempt to arrive at a clearer understanding of what being a bastard actually meant for an Athenian man and go on to explore the discourse between bastardy-related elements in Euripides' and his context. Close reading of the texts and a solid understanding of historical events makes it possible to conclude that many, if not all, of Euripides' dramatic representations and interrogations of illegitimacy were responses to the circumstances of Athens just before and during the Peloponnesian War.

1.2 *The νόθος*

Tracking the history of bastardy in Greek antiquity can be difficult. The legal and social meanings of bastardy-related words, as well as the representation of illegitimacy in art, were subject to change over the centuries and the piecemeal evidence available to us is, inevitably, very contested. Nevertheless, to examine bastardy in Euripides, the words most intimately connected with illegitimacy need to be clarified, in particular of νόθος and what is generally taken to be its antonym, γνήσιος.⁶ So important is the elucidation of these words that in the introduction to his influential 1996 book *Greek Bastardy in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods* Ogden writes that "it might be said that the whole of this study is devoted to a closer understanding of the Greek terms relating to bastardy" (14).⁷

⁵ The two words are treated as synonymous in the plays and are equally so in their English translations as 'bastard' and 'bastard-born'. See LSJ, s.v. νόθος 1, νοθαγενής 1, and MGS, s.v. νόθος A, νοθαγενής A.

⁶ There are a number of other, less important and uncommon terms also connected with bastardy, the most interesting of which are the metaphorical παρθένιος, "the son of an unmarried girl" (LSJ, s.v. 1.2 and MGS, s.v. A), and σκότιος, "of love, secret, stolen" (LSJ, s.v. 1), or "of persons illegitimate, bastard" (MGS, s.v. B). For more on these and other terms, see Ogden 1996 18-21.

⁷ Ogden's work is almost certainly the most comprehensive work on illegitimacy in Greek antiquity and it is difficult to find anything to do with the subject that has not been addressed by him.

He reviews the timeline of our understanding of the word as follows:

it was generally assumed that *nothos* was basically equivalent to the English term ‘bastard’ in denoting a child produced by any two people that were not married to each other, in any of the circumstances in which this can come about, from passing transient sexual encounters between unmarried, through concubinal relationships, to adultery. If any question mark hung over this simple assumption, it was the possibility that in classical Athens after Pericles’ 451 citizenship law the term could have been applied to children that were indeed born of marriages, but marriages between a citizen man and non-citizen woman, with the result that they were not entitled to citizenship or succession (1996: 15).

The same sort of definition is found in two different lexicons from either end of the last century or so: Liddell and Scott (1903), who gloss the word *vóthos* as “illegitimate, born out of wedlock” or, metaphorically, “spurious, counterfeit, adulterated” (s.v. 1, 2) and Montanari (2015), who gives “illegitimate *by birth*, bastard” or “corrupt, counterfeit, false, not genuine” (s.v. A, B, emphasis in original). Even so, the simplification necessary in a lexical definition means that it can never quite encapsulate a word’s complex history, but only provide the closest contemporary English equivalents. It has, as a result, been disputed whether these modern English words are accurate rendering of the Greek originals and even if they can ever be accurately expressed in their English (or any) translation.⁸

The most vehement argument against the equivalence between *vóthos* and ‘bastard’ is made by Patterson (1990), who argues that, while the terms share many aspects, they are not the same thing. She writes:

vóthos, while contrasted with *γνήσιος* (“legitimate,” “well-born”), is not equivalent to the terms “illegitimate” or “born out of wedlock.” A closer look suggests a more specific meaning. In general, a *nothos/ē* is a child born of a mixed or unequal

⁸ For more on the difficulties of translation and the uncertainty of lexicons, see Clarke 2010: 120-133.

union—in the sense that the transfer of the woman (mother) to the husband (father) was not contracted by socially equal partners—who retains a recognized relationship with his or her father. Typically, the *nothos/ē* is the child of a concubine [παλλακή] and is known and acknowledged as such by his or her father. Thus, the *nothos* can have a patronymic but is not a legitimate (*gnēsios*) offspring. Understanding νόθος in this way helps clarify the status of *nothoi* as marginal family members excluded formally in Classical Athens from the essential and interconnected privileges of family and polis, but retaining social position at the margins of Athenian society (1990: 41).

This conclusion that the νόθος was typically the child of a παλλακή, or ‘concubine’,⁹ does not, however, match up with the available evidence.¹⁰ It is certainly true that recorded cases of νόθοι are most often connected to children of ‘amphimetric’ households, in which the father has a legitimate wife, as well as a παλλακή with whom he can have children.¹¹ Yet this is understandable, so Ogden counters, as only these children “had in practice some prospect of being reared” and having their existence and origins recorded, while those bastards who were “the ‘fatherless’ children of women,” without paternal recognition, had far less of a chance (1996: 15).¹² He provides a number of examples of νόθοι who were neither products of concubinal relationships, nor recognised by their fathers, but were born instead from a variety of different extramarital unions. These include:

- νόθοι born of unmarried parents, such as Ion in the play of the same name, who refers to himself as “νόθον...παρθενεύμα” (1473) [the bastard of an unmarried woman];

⁹ This translation of the word has, like νόθος, been subject to the criticism that the position of the concubine as understood in our contemporary Christianised Western world is not the direct equivalent of παλλακή. See especially Budin 2002: 148-159 for a review of the arguments and the most likely meanings of the word.

¹⁰ For a clear and incisive explanation of the evidence and arguments associated with the παλλακή in general and their offspring in particular, see Sealey 1984: 111-133. He references early studies of the subject such as Harrison 1968: 13-15, 61-68 and Macdowell 1976: 88-91.

¹¹ As is the situation in the *Andromache*.

¹² The problem of defining the paternal relationship of the νόθος is later encountered in Roman jurisprudence which took on the word *nothus* as “illegitimate, bastard, born out of wedlock (but of a known father; contra, *spurius*, of an unknown father: legitimus: born in wedlock)” (GH s.v.). As the evidence given by Ogden shows, this is not the simplistic distinction that it at first seems, but it does seem to indicate that paternal recognition remained an important part of delineating the subtleties of children’s birth-status.

- “adulterine bastards” such as Leotychides (claimant to the Spartan throne in 400) who was a νόθος because he was the child of his noble mother’s extramarital affair with Alcibiades (Ogden 1996: 16);
- the products of unequal unions where the mother, rather than the father, is socially superior, such as in Demosthenes 23, where “the mercenary leader Charidemus” was a νόθος “on the ground that he had a citizen *mother*” (Ogden 1996: 16);
- children born as the product of rape, like Ion, who calls himself “νοθαγενής” (593) [bastard-born] when he believes he has “been sired on a known father on an unknown mother in a rape (a woman that could not therefore be considered a concubine)” (Ogden 1996: 16).

With these counter-examples to Patterson’s argument, Ogden concludes that rather than restricting the meaning of the word only to concubinal children, “we should continue to understand *nothos* as referring, in its fundamental sense, to any child born outside marriage” (Ogden 1996: 16-17).

The same problem extends to the definition of the word γνήσιος, commonly translated ‘legitimate’ which, it has been argued, “is not the simple complement, the equal and opposite of *nothos*” (Ogden 1996: 17). Instead it is believed to have a broader, less binary meaning of legitimacy and illegitimacy, with a stronger sense of racial, social, or familial membership. Liddell and Scott interpret it with this implication as “belonging to the true race” but also give the translation “legitimate” (s.v. γνήσιος 1); likewise, Montanari offers “belonging to the race, genuine, legitimate,” specifying that it is “usually of children” (s.v. γνήσιος A). For all this, however, in the evidence we have, the word is almost always used in a binary with νόθος, indicating that, while there may have been some cases of individuals (such as adopted children) who were neither γνήσιοι nor νόθοι, it more commonly stood in opposition to ‘illegitimate’ and can be translated as ‘legitimate’.¹³ The racial undertones can also be explained by inverting the

¹³ Take, for example, the line from the *Hippolytus* in which the Nurse describes Hippolytus to Phaedra as “νόθον φρονοῦντα γνήσιον” (309) [the bastard who thinks himself legitimate]. In this instance it seems quite clear that there is a dichotomy being created between the two ideas—Hippolytus’s attempts to present himself as a legitimate child (γνήσιος) transgress his true nature as an illegitimate one (νόθος).

argument: it is not that γνήσιος is more connected to community and belonging than νόθος, but rather that νόθος has much stronger connections to community and belonging than we realise.

The basic meaning of νόθος, therefore, is an ‘extramarital child’ and it is for all practical purposes equivalent to the English words ‘bastard’ or ‘illegitimate’. It also stands in direct opposition to the word γνήσιος, which can be translated as ‘legitimate’. These meanings are put to work in the next section, which explores the legal implications of being a νόθος in Athens from the city’s earliest history onwards.

1.2.1 *The νόθος in Athenian law*

The Athenian *polis* had always had a strong legal interest in bastardy, because of its important role in the constitution and continuance of the state’s power structures.¹⁴ Laws were used throughout Athens’ history to accept or reject citizens based on their birth-status, allowing the elite greater control over the distribution and limitation of power. The controversial PCL is almost certainly the best documented example of this in action and has been seen as a direct attack on bastards since antiquity. While the PCL was perhaps Athens’ most radical legal action against bastards (especially children born from foreign mothers, or μητρόξενοι), legislation concerning legitimacy had a long history stretching to the Archaic period (c.650-480). Many of these earlier laws lived on into the Classical period and early legislation on matters of inheritance and civic rights were at the core of the PCL. As is typical with such early periods, we are hindered by a shortage of the evidence for the laws and their effects and what we have is gleaned from later Classical and Hellenistic sources. Nonetheless, it remains possible for us to draw a few conclusions about the position of bastards during the pre-Classical era.

The earliest evidence we have of laws concerning bastards are found in Demosthenes and attributed to Draco, the seventh-century Athenian legislator. The law was not, in fact, concerned with bastardy, but was a homicide law concerned with the justifiability of murdering a man caught having sex with a woman from another man’s *oikos*. Among these women is included one described as “παλλακῇ ἣν ἂν ἐπ’ ἐλευθέροις παισὶν ἔχῃ” (23.53) [a concubine who is kept for the

¹⁴ For Athenian laws in general, see Harrison 1968; for ancient sources, see Phillips 2013.

bearing of free children]. A woman of this sort occupied a privileged place in the *oikos*, as compared to other slaves, but, whether or not she was enslaved or free, her children would always be bastards. These children themselves would not be slaves but be considered as part of their father's family and be "viewed as comparable at least in some respects to legitimate offspring" (1996: 33). The question of whether or not these kinds of bastards were citizens remains uncertain, since we have very limited knowledge of citizenship in the Archaic period, where in any case there was a different understanding of the concept and qualifications to the Classical period.¹⁵ From evidence in the *Athenaion Politeia*, it does seem that they would have been recognised by the state, since freedom was the only requirement necessary for a man to be a πολίτης. At this stage, at least, it appears that a νόθος was a paternally recognised, free-born child of a παλλακή, with some share in the *polis*, who was not equal in status to his father's legitimate children.¹⁶

In the sixth century, Solon instituted a number of bastardy-related laws for which we have some evidence. From a section of Aristophanes' *Birds*, in which Heracles' birth-status is questioned, the hero is told that, according to one of Solon's laws: "νόθος δὲ μὴ εἶναι ἀγχιστείαν παίδων ὄντων/ γνησίων. ἐὰν δὲ παῖδες μὴ ᾗσι γνήσιοι, τοῖς/ ἐγγυτάτῳ γένους μετεῖναι τῶν χρημάτων" (1664-1666) [A bastard may not have the participation-right-of-close-relatives if there are legitimate children. But if there are not legitimate children, the estate is to be shared by the nearest kin].¹⁷ Humphreys (1974) and Ogden (1996) both claim that this 'law' is in fact two separate laws (one an earlier Draconic law, the other Solon's) that have been combined for comic effect. The positive implication of the first half of the law, that a νόθος might have a claim to the ἀγχιστεία¹⁸ of his father if there were no legitimate heirs, "fits better with the spirit of the [Draco's] homicide law," as it recognises the bastard's "personal relationship with their father" (Ogden 1996: 36). On the other hand, the second part seems to align better with another piece of Solon's bastardy legislation found in Demosthenes (43.51) and Isaeus (6.47): "νόθος δὲ μηδὲ νόθος μὴ εἶναι ἀγχιστείαν μήθ' ἱερῶν μήθ' ὁσίων ἀπ' Εὐκλείδου ἄρχοντος" [Neither male bastard

¹⁵ For citizenship from the Archaic to the Classical periods, see Blok 2018: 79-102 (esp. 94), Duploux 2018: 11-14, Ismard 2018: 145-160, and van Wees 2018:103-144.

¹⁶ This is very similar to the picture painted in Patterson 1990: 40-73.

¹⁷ See above n.2.

¹⁸ The translation of ἀγχιστεία as 'participation-right-of close-relatives' can be found in Ogden 1996: *pass.*

nor female bastard may have the participation-right-of-close-relatives in the sacred and holy rites from the archonship of Euclides]. With this law Solon cut bastards off from important religious rituals and “limited in some way the family and inheritance rights of nothoi, even if by simply codifying customary disabilities of nothoi” (Patterson 1990: 51).

Classification of legitimacy was also the subject of another law attributed to Solon, which shows what constitutes a νόθος through inversion: “ἥν ἂν ἐγγυήσῃ ἐπὶ δίκαιοις δάμαρτα εἶναι ἢ πατὴρ ἢ ἀδελφὸς ὁμοπάτωρ ἢ πάππος ὁ πρὸς πατρός, ἐκ ταύτης εἶναι παῖδας γνήσιους” (Dem. 46.18) [Whichever woman her father or brother born of the same father or paternal grandfather should betroth on a just basis to be a wife, from her children are to be legitimate]. If we take γνήσιος to be the opposite to νόθος, then marriage and its essentially familial and racial nature are clearly interconnected with legitimation and all extramarital unions produce illegitimate children.

In the case of a bastard born to a woman who was not a wife but was recognised by his father, Solon seems to have further restricted his rights within the *oikos* by limiting the amount which he could inherit upon his father’s death to 1000 or 500 drachmas.¹⁹ This law was somewhat balanced, however, by the decree that a bastard could be exempt from having to care for his parents. Although the potential advantages of this seem evident, Ogden quite rightly points out that these two laws together “aimed at breaking the bond between father and nothos” in order to further Solon’s ideal of the democratic family form (1996: 39).²⁰ Whether or not these bastards were considered citizens is unclear, but on the face of it they appear to have been generally excluded from citizen rights because of the separation between them and their father (and consequently his *oikos*).

Over the course of the century following Solon’s reforms, the legal position of bastards became an important instrument of power for Athens’ rulers. It is under the tyrant Pisistratus that we first see μητρόξενοι gradually being integrated into the category of νόθοι, with both denied citizenship. The grounds on which they were disqualified is, according to the considerably later *Athenaion Politeia*, that they were “οἱ τῷ γένει μὴ καθαροί” (AP, 13.5) [not pure in descent].

¹⁹ For this law, see Harpocration, s.v. νοθεία; Suda, s.v. ἐπικληρος; and Schol. Aristophanes, *Birds* 1655-1656.

²⁰ See Lape 2003: 117-139.

This premium on blood-purity is evident in the PCL and became a crucial factor in the presentation of legitimacy as a share in the ancestral history of Athenian autochthony.

Another piece of evidence for the status of bastards from the tyranny of Pisistratus is the Philochoran Phratry Decree.²¹ This fragment of Philochorus claims that it was compulsory for phratries to admit both ὀργέωνες, or “a citizen from every δῆμος who had performed certain sacrifices,” and ὁμογάλακτες, or “persons suckled with the same milk, clansmen,” called γεννηταί (LSJ, s.v. ὀργέωνες 1, s.v. ὁμογάλακτες 1, and MGS, s.v. ὀργέωνες A, s.v. ὁμογάλακτες A). In the context of phratry membership as a necessary qualification for citizenship, this seems to indicate that early on those born to two citizen parents were privileged for sharing in the purity of their clan’s bloodline.

Under Cleisthenes there was an instrumental overhaul of social divisions. He divided the land into 139 or 140 demes, each of which was part of a three-deme τριτύς (‘triad’), of which there were thirty.²² Membership of a deme was, like membership of a phratry, a requirement for citizenship and, because legitimacy was a requirement for all three, bastards seldom got the chance to gain membership to any. Demes soon became important centres of Athenian belonging (as Cleisthenes intended) and the ban on bastards sought to protect the *polis* and all of its subdivisions from the introduction of what was regarded as potentially tainted blood.

1.2.2 The PCL

Our two most important ancient sources for the PCL are the *Athenaion Politeia* (AP), spuriously attributed to Aristotle, and Plutarch’s *Life of Pericles*, written more than four centuries after the law was passed. Both write of the requirements for dual Athenian parentage, but do not offer the

²¹ The phratries were key Athenian institutions from archaic and pre-archaic times until the Late Roman Period. They were essentially ‘brotherhoods’ (*phrater* is cognate with the Indo-European root of ‘brother’), induction into which was inherited through the male line (as with deme membership). The phratries were discrete from one another and, unlike the demes which were to arrive under Cleisthenes (c 508), they were less connected to land than they were to blood. Membership was compulsory for citizenship in the Classical period and “phratries apparently all required that their members be legitimate” (Ogden 1996: 152). It was one of the first obstacles that a bastard would find in his way and one of the chief ways of stopping bastards from elevating themselves. See Lambert 1993 on phratries in general; see Ogden 1996: 110-120, 152-153 for bastards and phratry membership.

²² See Lambert 1993: 2-3.

same explanation for why the law was put in place. The *AP* claims that it was made “διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πολιτῶν” (26.3) [because of the large number of citizens], while Plutarch explains that the law was distinctly “περὶ τῶν νόθων” (37.2) [about bastards].²³ In the period before the institution of the PCL bastards appear not to have been citizens any way, with very limited rights of succession, so what it really achieved was the solidification of Pisistratus’s earlier identification of μητροξένοι as νόθοι. This blanket delegitimation would have led to a sudden increase in the total number of bastards and a reduction in the size of the citizen body. Plutarch estimates that the number excluded from citizenship totalled “ὀλίγω πεντακισχλίων ἐλάττους” (Per. 37.4) [a little less than 5000], though, given ancient writers’ tendency to numerical exaggeration, this is highly improbable.²⁴

What prompted the PCL is a much debated topic that is heavily reliant on the interpretation of the evidence from the *AP* and Plutarch. Blok (2009) deals well with the different arguments and begins by analysing what exactly the *Athenaion Politeia* means by “the large number of citizens” (37.3). She writes that “it is not easy to see what ‘too many’ in an absolute sense might be” and so “we should look for ‘too many’ in a relative sense” (Blok 2009: 148). The first basic interpretation is that it is referring to the whole citizen population. Implied in this is that the citizenry’s large size was placing strain on the resources necessary for Athenian citizenship, especially the allowance (μισθός) which was granted to each member of the citizen Assembly and Council. It has also been said that land in Attica (which only Athenian citizens could own) may have been running short at the time, too. Neither of these seems a likely explanation since the payment given to the Assembly and the Council remained the same regardless of population size (each body was made up of a standard and unchanging number of citizens), and there is no evidence for the shortage of land among the propertied classes.

The second interpretation of what ‘the large number’ refers to is the possible increase in the number of metroxenic citizens, born from marriages between Athenians and ξένοι (in particular metics) prior to the institution of the law. Several scholars agree that there appears to have been

²³ All translations from the Greek are my own unless stated as otherwise.

²⁴ Ogden claims that “It is extremely unlikely that those expelled from citizenship, whether or not then sold into slavery, amounted to 5000 in number, and similarly that any significant proportion of the illegally registered were such *qua nothoi*” (1996: 60, n.118).

an increase in such marriages following the end of the Persian Wars.²⁵ As Athens became the centre of power from which the Ionian and Aegean colonies were governed, it is easy to understand how the allure of Athenian culture and wealth can have led to an increase in the immigrant population and growth in the number of marriages between Athenians and foreigners.

On its own, Plutarch's comment on the law tells us little except that the people affected were νόθοι, though it fails to qualify the term. A more logical picture of the PCL is only possible if the two explanations are not thought of as necessarily in conflict with one another: the citizen body may have grown because of the increased number of μητρόξενοι who were citizens through their fathers, though with foreign mothers. To the oldest and most powerful families, this influx of foreign blood into Athenian circles of power must have been repugnant and they were searching for a way to reassert their ethnic identity and rid themselves of foreign influence. Thus they struck on the disenfranchisement of μητρόξενοι, which would simultaneously limit the citizen population and reassert an Athenian identity with a sense of "autochthonous pride" (Ogden 1996: 66).

The autochthonous ideal held that Athenians had always been resident in Attica and were descended from Erichthonius/Erechtheus, who had been born from its soil. For a long time autochthony had been a source of pride for Athens and was something that they repeatedly held over other Greeks they considered less ethnically pure. This proposal that a renewed sense of autochthony was behind the PCL is supported by a number of scholars, who point to the history of the mutual influence between ideas of racial purity and Athens' success.²⁶ As the Athenian Empire grew in power and size, and moved, as metropolises often do, towards cosmopolitanism, the citizens needed to clearly distinguish Athenians from non-Athenians and an emphasis on pure-blooded autochthonous origins was an especially effective way of achieving this. It could simultaneously reinforce the singularity of Athenians and act as a collective way to differentiate them from the other Greeks, especially the Spartans and their allies, as well as foreigners. The image of Erechtheus and the origins of Athenian autochthony were very quickly established in the Athenian imagination and are regularly found in political and forensic oratory, as well as art,

²⁵ Rhodes 1981: 331-35, Walters 1983: 316-320, and Raaflaub 1998: 15-41.

²⁶ See Hignett 1952: 345-347, Harrison 1968: i. 25, Davies 1978:111-112, 118, 121, and Ogden 1996: 66.

of that period and later. Whether or not the children of two Athenians, who were unmarried, were to be excluded from citizenship, even though they were both part of the distinguished descent group, is unclear. The law itself does not explicitly exclude these cases from citizenship, but whether or not the ruling against mixed marriages was attached to other legislation which denied citizenship to children of unmarried parents, as suggested by Aristotle at *Politics* 1278a 26-34, cannot be verified.²⁷

By the beginning of the war, two decades after its inception, the PCL had become firmly entrenched and it was the standard that “citizens were those who were male; were sons of a citizen father; were born from a woman who was the daughter of a citizen father; were born from a woman who was ‘pledged’ (ἐγγυητή); and had been accepted as members of their father’s (phratry and) deme” (Davies 1978: 105).

1.2.3 *The νόθος in Greek literature*

There are only a handful of literary representations of bastards predating the second half of the fifth century. The earliest examples are all in Homer, where the word νόθος appears ten times in the *Iliad*,²⁸ and there is a scene touching on bastardy in the *Odyssey*.²⁹ As is often the case, the Homeric attitudes towards bastards and the stereotypes associated with them³⁰ appear to be the germination point of those that came late. There do, however, remain essential differences, not least in the apparent lack of the blatant marginalisation seen in later literature and law. There is little else written prior to Euripides’ composition of the *Hippolytus* that focuses on bastards except for brief mentions in Herodotus and Sophocles’ *Ajax*. Both deal at least in part with some

²⁷ Regarding the possible denial of citizenship to bastards born to unmarried Athenians and those of ‘mixed’ parentage Carawan notes that, “the evidence is slim, and it is more reasonable to insist that *nothoi* of the other sort—sons of two Athenians without enguetic marriage—were citizens though barred from inheritance.” (2008: 387). Arguments for this same view include Paoli 1930: 273-274, Harrison 1968: 65-66, and de Ste. Croix 2004: 234-239. Those against include Wolff 1944: 76-77 and Ogden, who argues very strongly for the view that “bastards of two Athenian parents were denied citizenship after Pericles’ citizenship law because they were denied it beforehand, from as early as Solon and because the citizenship law did not change their status. Rather, it included others in their status” (1996: 43).

²⁸ Homer *Iliad* 2.727, 4.99, 5.70, 8.284, 11.102, 103, 490, 13.694, 15.333, 16.738. Also used are the terms παρθένιος (16.180) and σκότιος (6.24).

²⁹ Homer *Odyssey* 14.109-213

³⁰ Such as excessive femininity, strong maternal connections, refusal of traditionally masculine roles, infantilism, and antagonism towards stepmothers.

issues of bastardy, but only in Sophocles do we find anything close to the detailed interest shown in bastardy by Euripides.

1.2.4 *Bastardy in Homer*

All of the bastards mentioned in Homer's *Iliad* share certain basic features: all are the children of famous men, "typically a hero or king," all are warriors in the Trojan War, and all have cameo roles involving a limited degree of either authority or success (Patterson 1990: 47). For the most part, the word νόθος is used as something appellative, usually in a patronymic that describes simultaneously the bastard's relationship with his father and his father's with his mother. The νόθος in each case is quite obviously a child who has been recognised as a son by his father, but who was born to "a woman other than his wife, typically a bought or captured concubine living within the household" (Patterson 1990: 47). In Homer, as later, the condition of bastardy is predicated on a bastard's paternal *and* maternal relationships, often reflected by the introduction of a matronymic alongside the patronymic.

One such example is Medōn, the captain of the Argive forces in the *Iliad*, who is introduced in the catalogue of ships: "ἀλλὰ Μέδων κόσμησεν Ὀϊλῆος νόθος υἱός, τόν ῥ' ἔτεκεν Ῥήνη ὑπ' Ὀϊλῆϊ πτολιπόρθῳ" (*Iliad* 2. 727-728) [but Medōn, the bastard son of Oileus, was in charge: he, whom Rhene bore to city-sacking Oileus]. Here we can see that both parents are mentioned in combination with the designation as νόθος in order to leave no doubt about the situation within this particular *oikos*: he the son of the noble "city-sacking Oileus" but he is the child of Rhene, who is not Oileus's wife. In fact, in this case we find one of the first instances of the stereotyped antagonism between bastard and step-mother, as a quarrel between Medōn and Oileus's legitimate (γνήσια) wife, Eriopis, has forced him from his father's home and led to his captaincy of the Argive contingent in Troy.³¹ It is important to note that Medōn's exile was not caused by a disconnection between him and his father and the patronymic continues to be used. He remains,

³¹ He slew one of Eriopis' relatives. See Homer *Iliad* 13.694-697: ἦτοι ὁ μὲν νόθος υἱὸς Ὀϊλῆος θείοιο/ ἔσκε Μέδων Αἴαντος ἀδελφεός· αὐτὰρ ἔβαιεν/ ἐν Φυλάκῃ γαίης ἄπο πατρίδος ἄνδρα κατακτάς/ γνωτὸν μητρυιῆς Ἑριώπιδος, ἣν ἔχ' Ὀϊλεύς [Indeed Medōn, brother of Aias, was the bastard son of godlike Oileus; but he lived in Phylakē, far from the land of his fathers, having killed a kinsman of his stepmother Eriopis, whom Oileus had [as a wife]].

like the majority of bastards mentioned in the *Iliad*, connected to his paternal lineage, even if he will always be inferior to any children his father has with Eriopis.

Another Homeric example of this sort of amphimetric *oikos* comes from *Odyssey* Book 14, in which Odysseus, attempting to keep his identity a secret on his arrival at Ithaca, pretends to be a bastard and gives this account of his fictional upbringing.

ἐκ μὲν Κρητῶν γένος εὖχομαι εὐρειάων,
ἀνέρος ἀφνειοῖο πάϊς· πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι
υἱέες ἐν μεγάρῳ ἡμὲν τράφεν ἡδ' ἐγένοντο
γνήσιοι ἐξ ἀλόχου· ἐμὲ δ' ὠνητὴ τέκε μήτηρ
παλλακίς, ἀλλὰ με ἴσον ἰθαγενέεσσιν ἐτίμα
Κάστωρ Ὑλακίδης, τοῦ ἐγὼ γένος εὖχομαι εἶναι
ὃς τότε ἐνὶ Κρήτεσσι θεὸς ὥς τίετο δῆμῳ
ὄλβῳ τε πλούτῳ τε καὶ υἰάσι κυδαλίμοισιν.
ἀλλ' ἦ τοι τὸν κῆρες ἔβαν θανάτοιο φέρουσαι
εἰς Αἴδαο δόμους· τοὶ δὲ ζῶν ἐδύσαντο
παῖδες ὑπέρθυμοι καὶ ἐπὶ κλήρους ἐβάλλοντο,
αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ μάλα παῦρα δόσαν καὶ οἰκί' ἔνειμαν (Murray 2003)

I claim that I was born in broad Crete,
the son of a wealthy man: many other sons
were born and were cared for in his hall,
legitimate from his wife. Yet, though a bought concubine
mother bore me, still Castor, son of Hylax, honoured me
equally to his true-born children. I say that I am of the family
of a man once honoured as a god on Crete by the people
for his luck and his wealth and his renowned sons.
But then death came and bore him to the house of
Hades: then his haughty children got into his livelihood and cast lots.
They allotted me a house but gave me little else (Hom. *Od.* 14.199-210).

The circumstances of the tale suggest that the situation described must have been normative to some degree, since it would be unlikely that the crafty Odysseus would try to convince the Ithacan Eumaeus of a backstory that was wholly implausible. Rather, he chooses to set his Cretan origins within a familiar sort of domestic structure that does not occasion any comment. That Odysseus's Cretan thinks it normative is suggested by the acknowledgement of a man's right to own an ὠνητὴ...παλλακίς (14.202-203) [bought concubine] as well as a legitimate ἀλόχος (14.202) and to have children by both, raised together in the same household. However, although Odysseus claims he was treated ἴσον ἰθαιγενέεσσιν (14.205) [equally to his true-born children], the limited stake he was given in his father's inheritance indicates that he still inhabits an inferior position to his legitimate siblings. Nevertheless, his claim that “ἡγαγόμην δὲ γυναῖκα πολυκλήρων ἀνθρώπων” (14.211) [I married a wife from a prosperous family] does imply that his birth-status does not outright disqualify him from integrating himself into society.

The most famous of the Homeric bastards, and perhaps one of the most famous bastards in all Greek literature, is Teucer, the bastard son of Telamon, who is also Ajax's half-brother. He is referred to as a νόθος in the *Iliad* by Agamemnon who addresses him:

Τεῦκρε φίλη κεφαλή, Τελαμώνιε κοίρανε λαῶν
βάλλ' οὕτως, αἷ κέν τι φόως Δαναοῖσι γένηαι
πατρί τε σὺ Τελαμῶνι, ὃ σ' ἔτρεφε τυτθὸν ἐόντα,
καί σε νόθον περ ἐόντα κομίσσατο ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ·
τὸν καὶ τηλόθ' ἐόντα ἐϋκλείης ἐπίβησον. (Murray 2003)

Dear friend Teucer, son of Telamon, king of the people,
strike out thus, so that you might be a light to the Danaans
and for your father Telamon, who raised you as an infant
and cared for you in his house though you are a bastard,
achieve glory, even though he is far away (Hom. *Il.* 281-285).

Once more we have the same picture of the amphimetric *oikos*, in which a bastard is recognised by his father and raised in his house alongside his legitimate siblings. In this, as in Odysseus' case, though, there is no mention of maternity like we find with Medōn.

What is most interesting about the situation is the relationship of Teucer with his half-brother Ajax, between whom, despite the tendency of amphimetric houses to foster hostility, there is no fraternal strife. It must be recognised that they can in no way be considered as equals, no matter how close they are, and there are clear expressions of Teucer's inferiority to Ajax in the *Iliad*, many of which correspond to the stereotypical characteristics that came to be closely associated with bastards later on. The most important description of the brothers occurs in *Iliad* Book 8, in which they are described fighting together during a pitched battle.

Τεῦκρος δ' εἵνατος ἦλθε παλίντονα τόξα τιταίνων,
στῆ δ' ἄρ' ὑπ' Αἴαντος σάκει Τελαμωνιάδαο.
ἐνθ' Αἴας μὲν ὑπεξέφερεν σάκος· αὐτὰρ ὃ γ' ἦρως
παπτήνας, ἐπεὶ ἄρ' τιν' ὀϊστεύσας ἐν ὀμίλῳ
βεβλήκοι, ὃ μὲν αὖθι πεσὼν ἀπὸ θυμὸν ὄλεσσεν,
αὐτὰρ ὃ αὖτις ἰὼν πάϊς ὥς ὑπὸ μητέρα δύσκεν
εἰς Αἴανθ'· ὃ δέ μιν σάκει κρύπτασκε φαεινῷ. (Murray 2003)

Teucer came ninth, drawing his arching bow,
and he stood under the shield of Ajax, Telamon's son.
Then Ajax raised his shield up and out; however, the hero,
when he had looked about, shot and hit someone
in the crowd, and that man having fallen there lost his life.
Yet Teucer, like a child retreating behind his mother,
returns to Ajax, and he hides him with his shining shield (Hom. *Il.* 266-272).

A clear image is given here of a smaller (and presumably weaker) bastard who is being assisted and protected by his legitimate brother: he is dependent on the shield³² of Ajax both as a means of keeping himself safe and as cover for his archery. Teucer is almost physically marred by his birth-status: his size suggests some sort of innate weakness inherited from his unmarried mother, while the legitimacy of Ajax's birth has conferred on him superiority of stature and status. Ajax is not only cast in the role of brother but is interestingly turned into the figure of a mother, too. The comparison makes Teucer child-like, or "recessive", and his attempt to seek out maternal safety and aid is closely linked to the crucial role of maternal identity in a bastard's parentage (Ebbott 2003: 43).³³

Ajax's protection is not only needed because Teucer is weaker, but also because he is an archer. Archery, particularly in Homer, appears to be linked in a number of ways to femininity and cowardice, just as bastardy often is. In the *Iliad* Paris is disparaged by Diomedes, whom he has just shot, for being an archer; Diomedes describes the attack: "ὥς εἴ με γυνὴ βάλοι ἢ παῖς ἄφρων/ κωφὸν γὰρ βέλος ἀνδρὸς ἀνάλκιδος οὐτιδανοῖο (Hom. *Il.* 389-390) [As if a woman or a mindless child harmed me, for the arrow of a feeble worthless man is blunt]. The implication for Teucer, the bastard who is an archer, therefore, is that he is subject to double condemnation for his lack of masculine bravery, or may, conversely, be only an archer because of his birth-status.³⁴ On the whole, though, it seems that for a relationship between legitimate and illegitimate brothers raised in the same house, although it is unequal, it is remarkably strong.³⁵

1.2.5 *Bastardy in Sophocles*

Sophocles' *Ajax* looks in greater detail at this relationship between the titular hero and Teucer, building on the Homeric myth to echo the attitudes of the post-PCL Classical world.³⁶ Teucer is

³² The fact that Teucer is hiding behind Ajax's shield is significant, because throughout the *Iliad* "Αἴαντος δεινὸν σάκος ἑπταβόειον" (7.246, 7.266) [Ajax's fearsome shield of seven ox-hides] is used to symbolise him as a man and warrior, regularly being used in his epithets. It is one of the key manifestations of his masculine identity. See Ebbott 2003: 40-41

³³ For bastards and the idea of perpetual childhood, see Ebbott 2003: 9-36.

³⁴ For more on bastardy and archery, see Ebbott 2003: 47-49.

³⁵ Ebbott 2003:42-44 draws a parallel between this pair of brothers and another, Castor and Polydeuces, whom she sees as subject to similar relations, although based on a mortal/immortal rather than legitimate/illegitimate binary.

³⁶ The *Ajax* is Sophocles' oldest play and can be dated to 442/441. See Finglass 2011: 1-11.

engaged as an intermediary between the Greek commander and Ajax, who has slaughtered all of the Greeks' livestock in a divinely inspired madness, under the illusion that the animals were these same commanders. What makes this work particularly relevant is that it contains the first clear evidence of a pejorative reference to bastardy: during an interaction towards the end of the play, Menelaus says to Teucer, “οὐ μαθῶν ὅς εἰ φύσιν” (Soph. *Ajax* 1259) [you do not know who you are by birth]. Use of bastardy as an insult is not found in Homer, and it appears as if bastardy was not used derogatively in daily life until the late Archaic or early Classical periods. It is in this period that “our single piece of evidence for the concept of bastardy being employed in general abuse in the Greek world: the phrase ‘Go to Cynosarges (*es Kynosarges*) was first used ‘as abuse and as a curse’, the equivalent of the common ‘Go to the crows [sc. as carrion]’” (Ogden 1996: 201-202, quoting the scholiast to Plato’s *Axiochus* 364a).³⁷

Its use in this play is not surprising when we remember the legal and social negativity directed at bastards which steadily worsened in the post-PCL era. The insult here is about Teucer’s mother, who, since he has been recognised by Telamon as his son and Ajax’s half-brother, is the reason for his inferiority. In fact, Teucer is fully aware that his mother was the Trojan princess Hesione “ἥ φύσει μὲν ἦν/ βασίλεια, Λαομέδοντος” (Soph. *Ajax* 1301-1302) [She who was born into royalty, daughter of Laomedon], who was Telamon’s second wife.³⁸ No matter how legitimate the circumstances of their marriage and Teucer’s birth, the fact that she was a Trojan made it a metroxenic match and the product was automatically a bastard, especially while Ajax lived. It is this that Menelaus, in contrast to his brother in the *Iliad*, can attack by degrading Teucer for his bastardy, discounting his paternal recognition and the maternal nobility of a legitimately wed man and wife.

1.3 Euripides and bastardy

Now that we have a firmer grasp on the history of the word νόθος in law and literature, it will be possible to turn our attention to Euripides and the bastards that he presents in the *Hippolytus*, the

³⁷ The Cynosarges was a gymnasium and temple complex in Athens attended solely by bastards and dedicated to Heracles (who, as a divine bastard himself, was their informal patron). For clear reviews of the primary evidence available to us about the establishment and those who attended it, see Humphreys 1974: 88-95 and Ogden 1996: 199-203.

³⁸ For the myth, see Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 2.5.9.

Andromache, and the *Ion*. This can only be attempted by working out the relationships that exist between their characterisation, their circumstances, and their bastardy, as we can only understand the role of bastardy in Euripides if we examine how the bastards behave and how their behaviour relates to their status in both *oikos* and *polis*.

1.3.1 *Bastard characterisation*

The principal characteristic shared by all three characters who are labeled νόθοι is, of course, the basic dynamic of their parents' relationship. In the cases of Hippolytus and Molossus, it is commonly known that their parents were unmarried at the time of their conception and were not of the same ethnicity.³⁹ Ion differs in that he is ignorant of his true origins, but is nevertheless as concerned about the legitimacy of his parents' relationship because of its impact on his birth-status. It is this anxiety that he expresses when he asks Xuthus if he was conceived in “νόθον τι λέκτρον” (544) [a bastard bed].

As well as the state of their parentage, another characteristic all three bastards share is the relationship each has to his mother and father. To begin with, all are the sons of absent fathers, with whom they have difficult relationships. In the *Andromache* and the *Ion* neither of the fathers, Neoptolemus and Apollo, makes an appearance alive on stage, while in the *Hippolytus* Theseus's presence serves only to highlight the difficulties in their relationship through the unsympathetic and careless attitude he has towards his son.⁴⁰ This paternal distance, however, is generally balanced by another shared characteristic: the natural intimacy each bastard has with his mother, regardless of whether or not she is alive or appears on stage. Hippolytus, although his mother is dead, is repeatedly linked to the dead Antiopē both by others and in his own longing,

³⁹ I have elected to refer to 'Amazon' as an ethnicity, in line with Herodotus “Οἱ δὲ Σκύθαι οὐκ εἶχον συμβαλέσθαι τὸ πρῆγμα· οὔτε γὰρ φωνὴν οὔτε ἐσθῆτα οὔτε τὸ ἔθνος ἐγίνωσκον, ἀλλ' ἐν θώματι ἦσαν ὁκόθεν ἔλθοιεν” (4.111, own emphasis) [But the Scythians weren't able to comprehend the matter, for they did not understand their language or their clothes or **their ethnicity**, but wondered where they might have come from...].

⁴⁰ Whatever resolution is reached in the final scene comes too late to fix the problems evident in this earlier interaction, caused by Hippolytus's ideology..

references to her.⁴¹ Understandably, the young child Molossus is only on stage in Andromache's presence, but the strength of their connection extends beyond his brief time on stage and the play is deeply concerned about the nature of their interdependency, while Ion is gripped by an almost innate desire to discover his mother and has a natural sympathy with Creusa even before he knows her true identity. So strong is this maternal connection that in the cases of at least two of them (Hippolytus and Ion), it is the *absence* of the mother rather than the *presence* of the father that appears to have the most impact on their characterisation.

As a consequence of Molossus's age and the limited role he plays in the *Andromache*, Hippolytus and Ion tend to have more in common with one another than with him, since both are older and have much bigger parts. While, for instance, all three are young (that is, either on the cusp of adulthood or younger), the closeness in age between Hippolytus and Ion means that the matters of sexual and spiritual purity are of much greater importance than they could ever be to a παῖς like Molossus. The older bastards are also better able to express themselves and appear to have greater agency in the choices they make.⁴²

One such choice is the extraordinary dedication they show to individual gods. Both Hippolytus and Ion conceive of Artemis and Apollo respectively as a central part of their identity and the true location of their 'family'.⁴³ Hippolytus removes himself from the *oikos*, sacrificing his familial obligation to marry and bear children in order to spend time hunting alongside Artemis, treating her and her followers as an adoptive family. Similarly, Ion, ignorant of the true situation, cares for Apollo's shrine in recompense for the care which it has shown him, much as would be expected of a child for his parents and household: "ὥς γὰρ ἀμήτωρ ἀπάτωρ τε γεγώς/ τοῦ

⁴¹ Euripides does not give any name to Hippolytus's mother in the play (she is only ever referred to either as 'the Amazon' or 'mother') but she has typically been called either Antiopē or Hippolytē, both "traditional Amazon names" (Barrett 1964: 8 n.3). It is most likely that she was originally Antiopē (the legendary warrior queen) and the names of the mother and son came to correspond and she was called Hippolytē (from whom Heracles stole the magic girdle). I will use the name Antiopē here.

⁴² The matter of agency in these plays and tragedy in general is heavily debated. For the issue of agency, fate, and psychological determinism in *Hippolytus*: see Rankin 1974: 71-94 and Gill 1990: 76-107; and in *Ion* especially: see Wassermann 1940: 587-604, Burnett 1962: 89-103, Conacher 1967: 20-39, and Giannopolou 2000: 257-271.

⁴³ It can be argued that Ion has no choice in his dedication to Apollo, though it is he who chooses to reject Xuthus's offer to return to Athens in favour of remaining at the god's Delphic temple (517-675, esp. 585-657). It matters little either way as these 'choices' are only available to them because of their age.

θρέψοντας/Φοίβου ναοὺς θεραπεύω.” (109-111) [for being both motherless and fatherless I care for Phoebus’s shrines which nourished me].⁴⁴

There are many ways in which the two bastards and their narratives differ, of course, and these can be as informative as those features that connect them. In the first place, while both young men live a life of extreme piety, worshiping a god who takes the place of family and *oikos*, they have fundamentally different reasons for doing so. Ion is a devotee of Apollo because he grew up in the Delphic temple, where his father had him brought after Creusa exposed him. Hippolytus, however, has made something like a conscious choice to disown his home in favour of dedication to Artemis.

Another thing that distinguishes all three bastards, is that, despite sharing parentage with the same basic dynamic, they each have very distinctive circumstances. Hippolytus is the illegitimate child of Antiopē, a now dead Amazonian queen, whom his father Theseus had taken to Athens as a concubine after the Greek conflict with the Amazons. He also has the role of stepson to his father’s new legitimate wife, Phaedra, and of half-brother to that union’s legitimate children. In the *Andromache* as in the *Hippolytus*, the bastard Molossus is the child of the war-won concubine and the royal-born Trojan Andromache, and of her master Neoptolemus (the son of the man who killed Andromache’s husband Hector). He is positioned as the potential heir to Neoptolemus and usurper of the inheritance of legitimate children yet to be born to his father’s wife, Hermione. Lastly, in the *Ion*, the eponymous character is, like the others, the product of violence, though in this case it is through the god Apollo’s rape of Creusa, the pure-blooded queen of Athens and heir to the superiority of Athenian autochthony. Importantly, however, he has no knowledge at all of his parentage.

1.3.2 Previous scholarship on Euripidean bastardy

⁴⁴ It is notable, too, that the deities in question are the divine twin children of Zeus and Leto, who, though opposite in many ways, have spheres of influence that intersect at numerous points. Both, for instance, might be said to be connected to the ideas of self-control and purity, Apollo in his role as the god of music, poetry and prophecy, Artemis in hers as the eternally virgin goddess. The case might also be made that they are also *vóthoi*, since they come from an unmarried union: the gods, however, as we see in Ion’s case, have their own rules. For Apollo and Artemis in Euripides, see Hartigan 1991.

Scholars have tended to look at bastardy in the three works within the isolated contexts of the individual plays, rather than study them in relation to one another and Euripides' overall canon.⁴⁵ Many have dismissed it as a subject of minimal importance, while others, even those investigating aspects of the plays which seem clearly connected to it, have avoided looking at bastardy altogether. Overall, very few detailed and unambiguous conclusions about bastardy in any of these plays have been suggested. In two separate works, 'Shame and Purity in Euripides' Hippolytus' (1970) and *Euripides and the Poetics of Sorrow: Art, Gender, and Communication in Alcestis, Hippolytus, and Hecuba* (1993), Segal demonstrates this unwillingness to address the effects of bastardy on Hippolytus and argues that his attitudes towards sex and purity are problems in themselves and not connected to his birth-status.

Ebbott (2003) makes one of the most detailed examinations of bastardy in tragedy in a chapter on the *Hippolytus* from her book *Imagining Illegitimacy in Classical Greek Literature* (85-107). Disappointingly, the conclusions to which she comes, although many are informative, are limited to the *Hippolytus* and do not look more at Euripides' body of work. Allan's *The Andromache and Euripidean Tragedy* (2000) is a brilliant close-reading of the play but he looks at Molossus's bastardy only briefly (180-181) and directs the reader to Seaford (1990) for more commentary on the issue in the *Andromache*, and to Ogden (1996) for bastardy in general. Ogden makes great use of Euripides, especially these three plays, and he perhaps comes closest to providing some sort of coherent idea about Euripides' attitudes towards bastards. Many of these more specific studies have been useful as interpretations of bastardy in each of the plays and are foundational to this broader examination of the portrayals of bastardy in Euripides and his intentions behind them.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Close-reading and New Historicism

⁴⁵ For comments on the *Hippolytus*, see Barrett 1964: ll.304, 962-3, and 1082-3, and Berns 1973: 165-187; for the *Ion*, see Gunther 2018: ll.1468

The main body of this thesis is a qualitative analysis of the texts, consisting of close readings of the occurrences of the word νόθος and other bastardy-related terms. To these are added examinations of other aspects of the plays (structural, linguistic, or historical) that can add to our understanding of Euripides' views of bastardy during the period. The two key questions I ask are these: a) how does Euripides portray bastards and bastardy? and b) how do these presentations relate to their historical context? It is to answer the first of these questions that the Greek of the plays is looked at so closely: our only evidence for Euripides' views is contained in the texts. This method of analysis is taken largely from the school of New Criticism, but is used in a way quite contrary to its original purpose.⁴⁶

This thesis is, in fact, fundamentally an exercise in New Historicism, which holds that it is not enough just to read a text closely but that this reading must be informed by a clear understanding of the text's literary and historical context.⁴⁷ Establishing this context requires a comprehensive review of all available evidence, literary and non-literary and in this instance involves examining the situation in Athens during the early period of the Peloponnesian War. This sort of methodology has long been common in the scholarship of classical literature because, "given the scarcity of the transmitted material, it has always been considered a matter of course to include texts which do not belong to "high" literature (such as grammatical or medical textbooks, documentary papyri or inscriptions, anthologies and anecdotes) in our analyses" (Schmitz 2002: 172).

About how much Euripides' plays reflected the Athens in which they were written, and the extent to which they critique the *status quo*, opinions have varied. Griffin (1998) sparked new debate with his article 'The Social Function of Attic Tragedy,' in which he argues for a strictly limited connection between the socio-political context of the age and drama. Tragedy, he claims, was performed because of "that special tragic pleasure" that was gained from the ritualistic and aesthetic spectacle (1998: 60). He was compellingly countered by Seaford (2000) and Gregory

⁴⁶ Close-reading as formulated by the New Critics "encouraged the illusion that any piece of language, 'literary' or not, can be adequately studied or even understood in isolation [from its historical and literary context]" (Eagleton 1996: 38). For its application to Classics, see Schmitz 2002: 91-94.

⁴⁷ For New Historicism in the Classics, see Pelling 1997 and 1999, and Schmitz 2002: 159-174. For New Historicism and tragedy, see Hall 1997: 93-126, Debnar 2005: 3-22, and Kelly 2015: 61-92. For New Historicism in general, see Hamilton 1996, Brannigan 1998, and Gallagher & Greenblatt 2000.

(2002), who both point out that “so long as we do not posit an exact correspondence between tragedy and real life it is...justified to enlist the tragic texts as evidence for contemporary attitudes toward questioning authority, whether in the domestic, military, or civic spheres” (Gregory 2002: 147).⁴⁸ This thesis is premised on the same belief of these latter two scholars: Euripides’ plays can indeed engage with prevailing social and political attitudes and events of his time, and he may well have deliberately used the theatre to address and critique contemporary problems within that context.

1.4.2 Gender and sexuality

As well as these methodologies, it is also necessary to be conversant in the scholarship of classical sex and gender theory, especially the extensive work done on women in antiquity.⁴⁹ Without an appreciation for the complexities of gender within the patriarchal society of classical Athens, a great deal of essential contextualisation would be lost, as well as an invaluable lens through which to investigate key cultural values. In fifth-century Athens, the power structures of the *polis* and *oikos* were almost wholly predicated on the patriarchal dominance of men over women. At the extra-domestic level the organisation and administration of the *polis* were solely in the hands of property-owning male citizens (πολίται), whereas all women were disenfranchised as political entities (as evidenced by the lack of a feminine form of the word ‘πολιτής’ during the latter half of the fifth century), and at every stage of life remained under the control of some male relative, brothers and husbands. Perhaps the freest of the women in Athens were the *ἐταίραι* (courtesans) and *παλλακαί* (concubines), who tended to be better-educated foreigners accustomed to intimate and more equal interactions with men.⁵⁰ With the exception of

⁴⁸ Other works that deal with the problem include Goldhill 1997: 54-68, Pelling 1997, and Allan-Kelly 2013: 78-79.

⁴⁹ Scholarship on sex, gender, sexuality and women in antiquity is extensive. A few important works on fifth-century Athens include Pomeroy 1975, Gould 1980: 38-59, Just 1989, Foxhall 1989: 22-44, 2013, Cohen 1991, Loraux 1995, Dillon 2002, Van Nortwick 2008, Gilhuly 2009, McCosky and Zakin 2009, and Silver 2018. Regarding tragedy specifically, see Powell 1990, Wohl 1998, and Mossman 2005: 352-365.

⁵⁰ LSJ, s.v. *ἐταίρα* 2 and MGS, s.v. *ἐταίρα*; LSJ, s.v. *παλλακή* and MGS, s.v. *παλλακή*. Many recent studies on *ἐταίραι* and *παλλακαί* have appeared in the last few years, such as Blazeby 2011:86-105, Cohen 2015 and Kapparis 2018. Older works include Sealey 1984, Pomeroy 1975: 57-119, Roy 1997: 16-18, and Budin 2003: 148-159.

religious tradition and ritual, the *oikos* was the sole institution in which a woman could hold limited sway over those inferior to her, in this case children and slaves, but she was never free from the power dynamic of her marriage.

Women were at the centre of the private household and were expected to run it efficiently; as women, the management of the household (its finances, supplies and slaves) constituted much of their normative duties.⁵¹ As wives, however, their most important duty was to bear their husband's children, preferably boys, and to rear them until puberty. This responsibility meant that, during perhaps the most formative period of their lives, boys were cared for almost exclusively by the women they would later go on to have total power over. It is reasonable to expect that these mothers would have had enormous influence in their sons' lives, although it is impossible ever to know to what extent.

It is important to understand that for the Greeks, as for many societies, issues of gender were at the root of their attitudes towards bastardy. Bastardy has already been shown to be grounded on the essentially gendered relationship between a bastard's mother and father, as well as his own connection with each parent (something greatly affected by theirs with one another). It was also something that was inherently legal and political in its expressions because it was defined by men who, as the sole holders of legal and political power, could use it "to regulate sex and procreation within the social community" to suit their ideals (Ebbott 2003: 2). These, like almost all the laws, were governed by and in turn came to govern the gendered dichotomy of masculine and feminine, and their implementation was part of the normalised patriarchal power structures.

1.5 *The Peloponnesian War and amendment to the PCL*

By the time Euripides composed and produced the *Hippolytus* at the City Dionysia in 428, the Peloponnesian War had been underway for almost three years. The situation had deteriorated markedly since the war had begun in 431 and Athens was suffering significant losses on and off the battlefield. The military campaign waged by the Spartan king Archidamus against Attica had not abated since the war's start (it would not reach a resolution until a decade later in 421) and

⁵¹ For a woman's role in the home, see Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, esp. 7.35-37.

the Athenian people were still for the most part confined to the city limits, where, at the behest of Pericles, they had retreated to safety from the original Archidamian raids.⁵²

As Pericles had planned, the port of the Piraeus served a dual purpose. Firstly, it created a channel into the city for the influx of essential resources brought from Athens' colonies around the Aegean, Ionia and the Black Sea. Secondly, it was a safe and manageable base from which to maintain their powerful navy. Very soon, however, in 430 the access to the wider world granted by the Piraeus proved to come at a great cost, when a particularly deadly and virulent plague brought, so Thucydides claims, from North Africa, spread through the harbour into the city.⁵³ The proximity of the Athenian population within the city walls and the limited access to fresh water led to its rapid proliferation and the fatality rate was so high that, according to various calculations, over the period 430-426 an estimated 25% of the population died, equivalent to 75 000-100 000 people.⁵⁴

Like many in Athens at the time, Pericles, the city's foremost statesman and *de facto* leader, suffered tragic losses to his immediate circle, succumbing almost inevitably to the disease himself in 429. Plutarch relates this in his *Life of Pericles*, writing that “ἀπέβαλε δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν ὁ Περικλῆς τότε καὶ τῶν κηδεστῶν καὶ φίλων τοὺς πλείστους καὶ χρησιμωτάτους πρὸς τὴν πολιτείαν” (36.4) [At that time Pericles lost both his sister and the most part of his relations and friends and of those who were most valuable for governing of the city]. Of the many deaths that occurred among those close to him, however, perhaps the most devastating loss to Pericles was that of his two sons, Xanthippus and Paralus. Products of his first marriage, the former was “ὁ γὰρ πρεσβύτατος αὐτοῦ τῶν γνησίων υἱῶν” (Plu. *Per.* 36.1) [the eldest of his legitimate sons]

⁵² See Thucydides 2.10-54.

⁵³ ἤρξατο δὲ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον, ὡς λέγεται, ἐξ Αἰθιοπίας τῆς ὑπὲρ Αἰγύπτου, ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ ἐς Αἴγυπτον καὶ Λιβύην κατέβη καὶ ἐς τὴν βασιλέως γῆν τὴν πολλήν. ἐς δὲ τὴν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν ἐξαπινάϊως ἐσέπεσε, καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἐν τῷ Πειραιεῖ ἤψατο τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὥστε καὶ ἐλέχθη ὑπ' αὐτῶν ὡς οἱ Πελοποννήσιοι φάρμακα ἐσβεβλήκοιεν ἐς τὰ φρέατα· κρῆναι γὰρ οὐπω ἦσαν αὐτόθι. ὕστερον δὲ καὶ ἐς τὴν ἄνω πόλιν ἀφίκετο, καὶ ἔθνησκον πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἤδη. (Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 2. 48) [It first began, so it is said in the part of Ethiopia above Egypt and then it came down into Egypt and Libya and into most of the land of the [Persian] king. It then fell unexpectedly upon Athens, and it first took hold of the people of the Piraeus (so that it was said by them that the Peloponnesians had put poison in the reservoirs, for there were as yet no wells there) and afterwards it arrived in the upper part of the city and then the number of deaths became much greater].

⁵⁴ For the calculation of Athens' population and the effect of the plague, see Morens and Littman 1992: 286-291. A number of theories have been propounded as to the nature of the disease, ranging from measles and typhus to smallpox and polio. For more on its identification, see Wylie and Stubbs 1983: 6-11, Morens and Littman 1992: 274-286, Retief and Cilliers 1998: 50-53, and Manley 2014: 393-397.

and the latter “τὸν περίλοιπον αὐτοῦ τῶν γνησίων υἱῶν” (Plu. *Per.* 36.4) [the last surviving of his legitimate sons]. Both died within a short time of one another in 429, leaving Pericles, who would die later that same year, without any legitimate heirs and with no legal option for legitimating his bastard son by his foreign mistress Aspasia. His own citizenship law of 451 prohibiting the legitimation of metroxenic children stood in his way and so, in 429, Pericles approached the Athenians with the request that, since he had no remaining legitimate sons, his bastard son be granted citizen and inheritance rights and be accepted into one of the Attic phratries. The Athenians granted his wish and his son, newly named Pericles after his father, was endorsed as a full Athenian citizen.

Whether or not this was a one-off request or actually a revision of the original legislation is not entirely certain, though it seems likely that the latter was the case, and a policy change seems more probable than an exception being granted to a single citizen (even one so eminent). Carawan presents perhaps the strongest case for the legitimation of Pericles the Younger being part of “an amendment to the law of 451/0, affecting all families that found themselves in the same predicament: a father who had no surviving *gnēsioi* was allowed to adopt a *nothos* and thus sustain his house and name” (2008: 403). Considering the effect of the war and the plague on the population of legitimate Athenian young men and the need to repopulate the citizen body (which would require legitimate citizens), it is understandable how the need for the law’s alteration first arose as a compromise made by the aristocratic elite to retain power but increase numbers. As the war went on there seems to have been a general liberalisation of the law, so that by the time the oligarchic regime was installed in 411 bastards’ position had improved to the point where they were fully enfranchised with limited succession rights.

Shortly after this amendment to the PCL, its originator died, but did so knowing that he had a son (bastard or not) to be his heir.⁵⁵ Over the next decade or so other citizens too were given the same unwished-for chance to take advantage of the law’s alteration, as Athens continued to struggle with the return of the plague, the yearly Spartan devastation of Attic land, and a number of severe military defeats. The excerpt from Aristophanes’ *Birds* 1664-1666 (produced in 414),

⁵⁵ Pericles the Younger was later made a στρατήγος and was one of the six military leaders executed following the Battle of Arginusae in 406. See Xenophon, *Hellenica* 1.6.1-36.

referred to previously, seems to suggest that over this period and up to the failed Sicilian expedition, the change made in 429 remained “the only loophole” that existed in the PCL (Carawan 2008: 403).

In the years following the production of the *Ion*, between the fall of the brief oligarchy in 411 and the forceful reinstitution of the PCL by the Thirty in 403, the rights of bastards seem to have improved even more. Bastards were now more commonly citizens (even while having legitimate brothers) and there was lessening control over bastardy rights by the Athenian power structures.⁵⁶ Looked at practically, the situation reveals correlation between the state of the Athenian citizenry and the laxity of its citizenship laws. By the end of the war, there was such a severe shortage of fighting men that at the Battle of Arginusae in 406 they were apparently desperate enough to offer slaves citizenship in exchange for their military service.⁵⁷

This is precisely the sort of alteration to the originally rigid system of social, civic and domestic positions that was one of the chief outcomes of the war. The size of the losses from the plague and the battlefield meant that the population of Athens was severely lacking in younger legitimate men, who had their place at the top of the socio-political hierarchy. The destabilising effects of this must have been felt at both a *polis* and an *oikos* level, where the normative standards could no longer function effectively without some changes being made. The binary of legitimate/illegitimate was only one of the many standards of social definition that proved malleable and ended up changing under the pressures of the context. Once thought to be permanent and inviolable, many of the key societal limitations, such as gender, citizenship and religion, were redefined and remade: this is reflected in the art of the period, especially drama.

1.6 Conclusion: Method of proceeding

The hypothesis of this thesis is that the presentation of bastardy in Euripides’ three plays, the *Hippolytus*, the *Andromache*, and the *Ion*, can be attributed to the circumstances of Athens over the period of their composition, particularly the institution (451) and subsequent revocation (429)

⁵⁶ Evidence for this comes from Demosthenes 57.30 and Lysias 13.58-60.

⁵⁷ See Aristophanes *Frogs* 33, 190-191, 693-699.

of the PCL and the cumulative cost of being on the losing side of a protracted and bloody war. I have tried above to address the background of bastardy in general, as well as its position in Athens. The word νόθος, it has been shown, though found to be flexible in its contemporary socio-political meaning, almost always had a meaning “basically equivalent to the English term ‘bastard’ in denoting a child produced by any two people that were not married to each other” (Ogden 1996: 15). The variations of its meaning in legal terms have also been examined, and show what looks like a gradual decline in bastards’ rights from Draco onwards that culminated in the PCL. It was only the pressures of the Peloponnesian War that brought about a rapid and effective change in policy towards bastards, who proceeded to gain better status until the reinstitution of the law after the war. in 403.

It is now necessary to examine methodically the three Euripidean plays in question, beginning in chapter two with the earliest, the *Hippolytus* (428), then moving on to *Andromache* (425) in the third, and ending in the fourth with the latest, the *Ion* (411). Using the knowledge gained from this close-reading of the plays, it is possible in the fifth chapter to conclude that there is an intimate link between the context and the Euripides’ presentation of bastards in the plays.

CHAPTER 2: THE *HIPPOLYTUS*

2.1 Introduction

The *Hippolytus* has always been a popular, if inscrutable, play and in its long existence it has drawn considerable academic attention.⁵⁸ Such interest has meant that the body of scholarship on the *Hippolytus* is greater than that on any other play studied in this thesis. Additionally, a bigger proportion of that scholarship is focussed on bastardy, because of the narrative choices about the main character that Euripides makes: unlike the *Ion*, the action takes place within an *oikos*, but, unlike the *Andromache*, it is an *oikos* in which the bastard is old enough for self-expression.⁵⁹ Hippolytus is thus not only more certain of his own bastardy than either of the others, but has better opportunities to exhibit its effects on his character.⁶⁰

He is a young man who has rejected the rules of the dominant *polis*-culture, particularly those regarding the prescribed gender roles for a man of his age. In their place he has put what will be called his personal ‘ideology,’⁶¹ founded on the worship of Artemis and belief in the moral superiority of sexual purity that is attainable only by the total denunciation, in thought and deed, of anything related to sex. This embodies itself as an aggressive misogyny—an amplification of the long-standing characterisation of women as inherently more lascivious than men—as well as a refusal to participate in domestic or civic life. Instead of a man’s customary duties (many of which remain open to him in the world of the play despite his bastardy), Euripides’ Hippolytus spends his time in the intensive worship of Artemis and as her companion in the hunt. According to this ideology, the virgin Hippolytus is morally superior to others and rejects their judgments because they are made with an invalid morality. Nevertheless, these judgements have been and

⁵⁸ Artistic attention too: the narrative of Hippolytus and Phaedra was the inspiration for Ovid’s *Heroides* 4 (c.25-16 BCE, see Knox 1995: 3), Seneca’s Latin Tragedy *Phaedra* (c.54 CE, see Coffey & Mayer 1990: 5-6) and the French dramatist Jean Racine’s *Phèdre* (1677).

⁵⁹ Following the title, I consider Hippolytus to be the play’s central character. I do, however, recognise that there is some debate concerning this. See, for instance, Hutchinson 2004.

⁶⁰ On his self-expression, see Gill 1990: 76-107.

⁶¹ By ‘ideology’ I mean the unique set of beliefs, moral and social, that distinguish Hippolytus as atypical in his context. These include his obsession with sexual purity, his misogyny, his rejection of behavioural norms, and his idealised belief in his own innate moral superiority.

continue to be made and the consequences of Hippolytus's reactions to them constitute the central narrative of the play.

Criticism of the *Hippolytus* in the last sixty years has been heavily focussed on diagnosing the causes of the protagonist's ideology and many have touched on bastardy as a contributing factor. Work on the subject has tended to the opinion that bastardy does play some part in the formulation of his beliefs, although there has been great disagreement about how big a part this is.⁶² In many ways, as Davies notes, the problem epitomises "how hard it can be to decide on the relative weight of a feature mentioned in a drama" (2000: 68). Various critics have tried to determine this by examining the play through different theoretical lenses, each of which has looked at a variety of pieces of evidence in the text to support their idea.⁶³ This chapter seeks to examine this evidence and, using the knowledge covered in the first chapter, to decipher how bastardy relates to Hippolytus's characterisation. A comprehension of this will make it easier to hypothesise about Euripides' attitude to bastards and establish a base from which to recognise if it changes in the other two plays. Before a review of the evidence or any sort of analysis can be done, however, two additional contextual elements need to be addressed.

2.1.1 Euripides' other Hippolytus

The *Hippolytus* that is the subject of this chapter was not the first play of that name that Euripides composed. The relationship between the play produced in 428 and this 'other' earlier *Hippolytus*, often called *Hippolytus Veiled*,⁶⁴ is disputed.⁶⁵ This is largely because it is the only extant example of a playwright using the exact same subject matter twice and "the evidence available for the reconstruction of the lost first play is inadequate and uncertain" (Roisman 1999:

⁶² See Grube 1941: 182, n.17, Rankin 1974: 76-79, Smoot 1976: 42-48, Griffin 1990: 137, Ogden 1996: 207-208 and Ebbott 2003: 85-108. Only Waldock disagrees, writing, "Is there the slightest clear suggestion in the drama that Hippolytus, because of his bastardy, has suffered? Every indication points precisely the opposite way" (1951: 53). He occupies the most extreme position.

⁶³ Perhaps the two most prominent theoretical positions have been historicism (see Grube 1941, Ormand 2015: 258, 258 n. 72, and Kokkini 2013: 67-83) and psychoanalysis (see Rankin 1974: 71-94 and Smoot 1976: 37-61).

⁶⁴ It is called 'Veiled' because he apparently covers his head when Phaedra propositions him. See especially Roisman 1999: 407-409.

⁶⁵ See Barrett 1964: 10-15, Gibert 1997: 85-97, Roisman 1999: 397-409, and Hutchinson 2004: 15-28.

397).⁶⁶ One of the most important pieces of evidence for the first play is the hypothesis by Aristophanes of Byzantium, which claims, “ἔστι δὲ οὗτος Ἰππόλυτος δεύτερος, ὁ καὶ στεφανίας προσαγορεύομενος. ἐμφαίνεται δὲ ὕστερος γεγραμμένος· τὸ γὰρ ἀπρεπὲς καὶ κατηγορίας ἄξιον ἐν τούτῳ διώρθωται τῷ δράματι” (Barrett 1964: 96) [This is the second Hippolytus, the one also called ‘garlanded’].⁶⁷ It appears to have been written afterwards. For it made amends for the unseemliness and warranted abuse of this [first] play].

Besides these few sentences, there is little else available on the structure and nature of the first *Hippolytus*, though a number of attempts to reconstruct the play’s plot and characterisation have been made. We do not, however, have any concrete evidence for what exactly the Athenian audience found so shocking. The common argument, drawn from contemporary sources and extrapolation from the second version, is that Euripides portrayed Phaedra simplistically as a particularly evil woman and that this was for some reason frowned upon by the *polis*. Some, such as Devereux (1985) and Griffin (1990), have argued that the reason was primarily aesthetic: an artistic improvement of a play which won him only third place at the festival. Others, such as Gibert (1997) and Roisman (1999) are less committed to any opinion given the short supply of evidence, though they do admit that Phaedra’s characterisation might possibly have been a contributing factor.⁶⁸

2.1.2 *The hero-cult of Hippolytus*

It is also important to recognise the religious significance that the mythological figure of Hippolytus had during Euripides’ time and after. In Troezen there was a hero-cult dedicated to him, although information on it is scarce. Pausanias writes that “Ἰππολύτῳ δὲ τῷ Θεσέως τέμενός τε ἐπιφανέστατον ἀνεῖται καὶ ναὸς ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἄγαλμά ἐστιν ἀρχαῖον... Τροιζηνίοις δὲ ἱερεὺς μὲν ἐστὶν Ἰππολύτου τὸν χρόνον τοῦ βίου πάντα ἱερώμενος καὶ θυσίαι καθεστήκασιν ἐπέτειοι” (2.32.1) [A very famous precinct is dedicated to Hippolytus, son of Theseus, and in this

⁶⁶ For a review of the evidence, see Gibert 1997: 85-97.

⁶⁷ This is presumably because Hippolytus is garlanded on his entrance at 58 (see lines 73-74) and later offers this garland to Artemis at 82-84.

⁶⁸ There is the possibility that both Ovid and Seneca may have based *Heroides* 4 and the *Phaedra* at least in part on the earlier version of the play, “but how closely we cannot say” (Barrett 1964: 37). See Flygt 1934: 507-516, Barrett 1964: 29-45, Segal 1984: 311-325 and Murgatroyd, *et al.* 2017: 43-55.

is a temple and an ancient statue...The Troezenians have a priest of Hippolytus, who holds the position for his whole life, and yearly sacrifices have been established]. He also describes the following ritual: “ἐκάστη παρθένος πλόκαμον ἀποκείρεται οἱ πρὸ γάμου, κειραμένη δὲ ἀνέθηκεν ἐς τὸν ναὸν φέρουσα” (2.32.1) [Every maiden cuts off a lock of hair before marriage and, having cut it, brings it to the temple and dedicates it]. The significance of a bridal ceremony to Hippolytus is not explained by Pausanias and there could be a variety of explanations.⁶⁹ The play indicates that the Troezenian cult was established by Euripides’ time and he post-rationalises its initiation at the end of the play by having Artemis institute it in Hippolytus’s memory (1423-1430).

The cult had far less public religious significance in Athens than it did in Troezen. In Athens Hippolytus was a single cult hero amid the eclectic pantheon of Athenian worship, while in the parochial context of Troezen he was a “major figure of a local cult” (Barrett 1964: 6). At the beginning of the *Hippolytus* (31-33) Euripides locates the Athenian cult’s τέμενος⁷⁰ and temple on the southern side of the Acropolis and Pausanias’s account agrees with this, but adds that, as well as his altar, the precinct contained Hippolytus’s grave mound (1.22.1.) In both cities the cult centres also contained temples to Aphrodite, in Troezen to Ἀφροδίτη Κατασκοπία [Aphrodite the Watcher]⁷¹ and in Athens to Ἀφροδίτη ἐν Ἰπολυτείῳ, or ἐπὶ Ἰπολύτῳ [Aphrodite against Hippolytus].⁷² How early the Athenian cult was formed is unknown, but it need not have been imported from Troezen and even Troezen need not have been the original home of the hero-cult. What matters most in this instance is recognising that the figure of Hippolytus had at least some religious associations for Athenians, who would have been familiar with his story and perhaps with his cult.

2.2 Textual Evidence: *Hippolytus* as νόθος

⁶⁹ For further discussions on the cult and its significance, see Segal 1986: 281 and Halleran 1991: 120-121.

⁷⁰ “A piece of land dedicated to a god, the sacred precincts” (LSJ, s.v. τέμενος, 2); “sacred precinct, sacred land, sanctuary” (MGS, s.v. τέμενος B).

⁷¹ It was from here that Phaedra had first seen Hippolytus. See Pausanias 2.32.3.

⁷² Each place also had associations with several precincts of Asclepius, with whom hero cults were often linked. See Barrett 1964: 3-6.

The number of clear and unambiguous references to bastardy in the *Hippolytus* is limited to three uses of the word νόθος and one of γνήσιος. The words and their contexts constitute the majority of the best evidence pertaining to bastardy in the play. Additional pieces of evidence can be found, however, elsewhere in the text, but these are disputable to varying degrees. Of these, the four references to Hippolytus's foreign matrilineal descent stand out as the most convincing and valuable. He is repeatedly characterised by his mother's ethnicity throughout the play and reflects her Amazonian heritage in a number of ways. As well as these, there are also several possible pieces of evidence of bastardy's effects visible on his characterisation, chief among which is a kind of femininity inherent in his obsession with the virtue of σωφροσύνη interpreted narrowly as 'sexual restraint'.

It is, of course, incontestable that Hippolytus is a bastard, as each time the word νόθος occurs it does so in reference to him. It is used in several different contexts throughout the play and much of this examination involves interpreting how each occurrence relates to the situation in which it is used. Of all these contextual considerations, however, the identity of the speaker and their relationship with Hippolytus is of most significance.

2.2.1 Nurse: 304-309⁷³

Lines 304-309 contain the first use of the word νόθος in the play. This passage occurs in the first *episodion* (176-324), following Phaedra and the Nurse's entrance (176), the former's delirious utterances (208), and the Chorus's inquiry into her unidentified illness (267). It is the rhetorical conclusion to the Nurse's speech (284-309), in which she laments her ignorance of the source of Phaedra's deteriorating health and tries one last ploy to persuade her to divulge it. Her strategy is to introduce Phaedra's children into the argument in order to appeal to her maternal instincts. She, as Barrett puts it, "plays her last card" by trying to convince Phaedra that if she should die, then Theseus's bastard son Hippolytus would replace her children as his heir (1964: *ad loc.*). The immediate purpose of the Nurse's introduction of bastardy is to remind Phaedra of the contrast between the birth-statuses of her children and Hippolytus and, in so doing, to emphasise to her

⁷³ 'Speaker of word: line numbers of passage'. This will be the format for the titling of all sections in the thesis concerning an occurrence of a bastardy-related word.

mistress just how unworthy Theseus's bastard is to be an inheritor. Phaedra's death in this scenario would, she argues, be a betrayal of her legitimate children, not only because their rightful place would be usurped, but because the usurper would be a bastard.

Tr. ἀλλ' ἴσθι μέντοι—πρὸς τάδ' αὐθυστέρα
 γίγνου θαλάσσης—εἰ θάνῃ, προδοῦσα σοὺς
 παῖδας, πατρώων μὴ μεθέξοντας δόμων,
 μὰ τὴν ἄνασσαν ἱππίαν Ἀμαζόνα,
 ἢ σοῖς τέκνοισι δεσπότην ἐγείνατο,
 νόθον φρονοῦντα **γνήσι'**, οἷσθ' αὖτις νιν καλῶς,
 Ἴππόλυτον (ed. Barrett 1964).

Nu. Nevertheless, know this—then you can be
 more stubborn than the sea—if you die, you'll have betrayed
 your children, as they will have no share in their father's house.
 No, but by the horsy Amazon queen, she who
 bore a master to lord it over your children,
 the **bastard** who thinks himself **legitimate**—you know him well:
 Hippolytus (*Hipp.* 304-309).

The Nurse's argument centres on a conditional clause, with “εἰ θανῇ” (305) as protasis and “προδοῦσα σοὺς/ παῖδας” as apodosis (305-306), which shows that Phaedra's betrayal will lie in the denial of paternal inheritance to her children, leaving them “πατρώων μὴ μεθέξοντας δόμων” [not having a share in their father's house].⁷⁴ She makes sure that her meaning is unambiguous and that she gets the message across to her mistress, as well as the audience. We know what is at stake because she uses δόμος metonymically for that which is to be inherited and πατρώος to specify that it is Theseus's. We are also sure that the Nurse is talking specifically about Phaedra's children because the participial μὴ μεθέξοντας is in agreement with παῖδας. Then she inverts the focus suddenly to Hippolytus in the next line by use of the emphatic positive particle μὰ, used commonly for protestations and oaths.

⁷⁴ For this interpretation of the conditional clause, see Barrett 1964: *ad loc.*

Some scholars have questioned the Nurse and Phaedra's understanding of inheritance rights shown in this section. As discussed above, the law as it stood in 428 would have denied succession rights to a νόθος like Hippolytus, unless there were no living legitimate heirs. In the play, however, there are legitimate children born to Phaedra and Theseus and so Hippolytus would have had no claim to his father's inheritance, whether or not Phaedra died.⁷⁵ The reasoning behind the Nurse's version of inheritance is unclear and should be noted, but debating whether or not she may be lying, confused, or, in fact, correct is fruitless. Although Euripides interrogates the subject of bastardy in the play, he does not necessarily mirror the PCL and its alteration, especially its minor points, nor is he obliged to. Further evidence of this is the fact that both Antiopē and Phaedra are foreigners, and so, in accordance with the PCL, either union with Theseus should have produced illegitimate children, incapable of inheritance. Yet Phaedra's children are legitimate, while Hippolytus is not: clearly various nuances of contemporary legal and political standards are being ignored in this narrative, as is common in all tragedies.⁷⁶

Rather than elucidating the letter of a contemporary Athenian law, the Nurse's introduction of Hippolytus's bastardy into the narrative is as much an explicit reminder of his birth-status to the audience as it is to Phaedra. So unequivocal is she trying to be that the Nurse's phrase "νόθον φρονοῦντα γνήσια" (309) [a bastard who thinks himself legitimate] not only calls him a νόθος but creates the standard binary by placing it in antithesis to γνήσιος. It also provides a fresh insight into Hippolytus's characterisation: he is a νόθος but either considers himself to be γνήσιος, or acts as if he does, or both. The condemnatory speech thus ends by stressing to Phaedra the disjunction between Hippolytus's appearance and reality, between his outward

⁷⁵ See MacDowell 1976: 88-91, Lane Fox 1985: 208-232, Patterson 1990: 40-73, Maitland 1992: 26-40, Ogden 1996: 7, Carawan 2008: 383-406, and Blok 2009: 141-170.

⁷⁶ As Barrett puts it "the heroic world has of course no such nationalist restrictions on legitimacy; nor did Athens itself before 451—Kleisthenes and Kimon, for instance, had foreign mothers" (1964: l.304). This does not, however, invalidate the idea that the play is reacting to contemporary issues, since the subject matter and treatment would chime with the audience, all of whom would have knowledge of the plague, the PCL, and Pericles' legitimation of his bastard. See Barrett 1964: l21-122.

attitude and his innate status, and between his φύσις, or nature, and his νόμος, or his customary behaviour.⁷⁷

This dissonance is perhaps the chief flaw in his character because he, in the words of Barrett, “does not know his place, has ambitions [that are] above his station” (1964 *ad loc.*). His marginalised position as half-Amazon bastard will always limit his choices and he is expected to recognise these limitations. However, he has openly rejected his prescribed position and developed a wholly different ideology of moral worth and social status. Earlier we saw this conflict between the individual and society belief systems in the conversation between Hippolytus and the Servant (88-113) and this is the second clear example.

The scholiast on the *Hippolytus* interestingly suggests that the Nurse is criticising his behaviour “καθὸ φιλοσοφίαν ἤσκει, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐλευθέρων” (Σ³⁰⁹) [because he practices philosophy, which is only for the freeborn].⁷⁸ If, as seems reasonable, we take the scholiast’s “φιλοσοφία” to refer to Hippolytus’s ideology, the comment becomes more understandable because this links it better to pretensions to legitimacy. The ability to practice philosophy and to possess philosophical agency—to live one’s life according to principles arrived at through careful consideration—was something mostly available only to Athenian citizens, who had leisure, power and wealth enough to enable them to pursue a contemplative life.⁷⁹ As such, the right to question and refigure the boundaries of behaviour was limited to those holding citizenship, all of whom were (at least those born after 451) *a priori* legitimate. The logic of the scholiast thus runs: as illegitimacy precludes citizenship, it also precludes the practice of philosophy; if Hippolytus’s ideology is considered philosophy, then he is incorrectly practicing something reserved for the legitimate.

As a first expression of bastardy, this occurrence of the word νόθος is intentionally emphatic. Its juxtaposition with γνήσιος and the implicit characterisation of Hippolytus’s pretensions to

⁷⁷ For the theme of appearance and reality, see particularly Knox 1952: 3-31, Goff 1990: 1-26, and Zeitlin 1985: 52-111. For φύσις and νόμος, see Berns 1973: 165-187. See LSJ, s.v. φύσις, 1 and MGS, s.v. φύσις A; LSJ, s.v. νόμος, 1 and MGS, s.v. νόμος A.

⁷⁸ By ἐλευθέρων I do not understand that the scholiast is calling Hippolytus a slave, but simply using it as metonymy for citizenship.

⁷⁹ See the numerous aristocratic characters in Plato’s dialogues, such as Alcibiades, Phaedrus, Lysis, Charmides, and Meno.

legitimacy are both clear indicators of the Nurse and other hostile characters' attitudes throughout the play, condemning him for antisocial behaviour. How Hippolytus feels about his birth-status is unknown at this stage and whether or not he recognises himself as a bastard has not been made clear.⁸⁰

2.2.2 Theseus: 947-963

It is quite a while later, at lines 947-963, that we find the second use of the word νόθος, spoken by Theseus during his *agōn* with Hippolytus in the third *episodion* (776-1102). Phaedra's suicide letter has convinced Theseus that his son is her rapist (and the reason for her death) and he proceeds to denounce Hippolytus (936). He unleashes a sarcastic tirade that criticises Hippolytus's character and probes the numerous immoral reasons he might have for wishing Phaedra dead. By intentionally emphasising the brazen abnormality of his son's ideology, Theseus characterises him by the same conceited pretensions to superiority that the Nurse does in her earlier statement. He especially mocks him for calling himself “σώφρων καὶ κακῶν ἀκήρατος” (349) [prudent and untainted by evils] and compares his strange ideology with the Orphics, long associated with the religious fringe.⁸¹

Θη. σὺ δὲ θεοῖσιν ὥς περισσὸς ὢν ἀνὴρ
 ξύνει; σὺ σώφρων καὶ κακῶν ἀκήρατος;
 οὐκ ἂν πιθοίμην τοῖσι σοῖς κόμπους ἐγὼ
 θεοῖσι προσθεῖς ἀμαθίαν φρονεῖν κακῶς.
 ἤδη νυν αὖχει καὶ δι' ἀψύχου βορᾶς

⁸⁰ We do not actually learn this until much later in the play when he says the lines “ὦ δυστάλαινα μητέρα, ὦ πικραὶ γοναί-/ μηδεὶς ποτ' εἴη τῶν ἐμῶν φίλων νόθος” (1082-1083) [Oh, ill-fortuned mother, oh bitter birth: May none of my loved-ones be a bastard!]; and “τοιῶνδε παίδων γνησίων εὖχου τυχεῖν” (1455) [Pray that your legitimate children be as such]. For more, see below.

⁸¹ I do not, as some do, believe that Euripides is saying that Hippolytus actually *is* an Orphic. It is simply an extrapolated comparison between two marginalised sets of beliefs. See Barrett 1964 *ad. loc.*, Lucas 1946: 65-69, and Zieske 2012: 23-29. For more on Orphism, see Guthrie 1952, Edmonds 2013, Betegh 2014: 149-166, and Meisner 2018.

σίτοις καπήλευ' Ὀρφέα τ' ἄνακτ' ἔχων
βάκχευε πολλῶν γραμμάτων τιμῶν καπνούς·
ἐπεὶ γ' ἐλήφθης. τοὺς δὲ τοιούτους ἐγὼ
φεύγειν προφωνῶ πᾶσι· θηρεύουσι γὰρ
σεμνοῖς λόγοισιν, αἰσχρὰ μηχανώμενοι.
τέθνηκεν ἦδε· τοῦτό σ' ἐκώσσειν δοκεῖς;
ἐν τῷδ' ἀλίσκη πλεῖστον, ὧ κάκιστε σύ·
ποῖοι γὰρ ὄρκοι κρείσσονες, τίνες λόγοι
τῆσδ' ἂν γένοιτ' ἄν, ὥστε σ' αἰτίαν φυγεῖν;
μισεῖν σε φήσεις τήνδε, καὶ τὸ δὴ **νόθον**
τοῖς **γνησίοις** πολέμιον πεφυκέναι·
κακὴν ἄρ' αὐτὴν ἔμπορον βίου λέγεις,
εἰ δυσμενεῖα σῇ τὰ φίλτατ' ὤλεσεν. (Barrett 1964)

Th. Oh indeed, are you the gods' consort since you are so remarkable a man? You, so prudent and untainted by evils? I could never be so convinced by your boasts as to think wrongly by attributing stupidity to the gods. Even now you plume yourself, some barterer of a vegetable diet, and with Orpheus as your lord hold mysteries, honouring the smoke and mirrors of his many scribblings. Now you have been caught. I order everyone To avoid men like this: for they snare their prey with pious words, all the while devising shameful things. She over here is dead: do you think that this will save you? In this you are convicted all the more, most vile man. What sort of oaths, what sort of words could be stronger than this for you to flee from the blame? Will you say she hated you, and that the **bastard** is by nature the enemy of the **legitimate**? You claim she is an evil trafficker in life

if she destroyed the most precious thing for hatred of you (*Hipp.* 948-963).

This violent condemnation of Hippolytus serves very little function in the narrative structure, as his fate has already been sealed with his father's curse at lines 887-890. Instead, the gradual loss of inhibitions brought about by their anger provides Euripides with an ideal chance to develop both characters.⁸² The process creates a scene of great tragedy, with especially strong pathos in the futility of the words' cruelty against the background of the end already put into motion without Hippolytus's knowledge.

From the beginning of his speech Theseus asserts his authority and gives Hippolytus no room to respond. His argument is systematic in its criticism and attacks as much of his son's character and as many of his beliefs and behaviours as the audience have been shown so far. One target of these attacks is his illegitimacy and Theseus's introduction of it is the first instance of νόθος being used in Hippolytus's presence. As with the Nurse, we find the antonymous γνήσιος (961) included in opposition to νόθος, reminding both Hippolytus and the audience of the total binary between the words, between the illegitimate Hippolytus and his legitimate half-siblings. This anti-bastard sentiment is also reflected in the hypothetical phrasing of the question, which uses tropes about amphimetric households and their conflicts in order to cast Hippolytus in the stereotyped role of the vengeful bastard. The natural hatred between stepmother and stepson was a standard *topos* in Greek literature going back to Homer but Theseus's ironic expression suggests that the argument claiming that mutual antipathy is inherent to both parties is by now only a hackneyed excuse.

In fact, this is not a wholly unsuitable characterisation of the hostile relationship between them at the time of Phaedra's death. It does not, however, encapsulate the true state of affairs, which saw Phaedra's intense love eventually turn, if not exactly to hate, then to resentment. She does seek revenge on him, as a stepmother is expected to, but the anger motivating her does not appear to be innate, nor is it directed towards Hippolytus because of his bastardy, as Theseus claims is the convention. Her true reasons for incriminating him in her suicide letter are personal in nature:

⁸² The dynamic between the father and his son in this scene is recognisable in two other tragedies: between Creon and Haemon in Sophocles' *Antigone* (635-780) and Pheres and Admetus in Euripides' *Alcestis* (611-740).

she is taking vengeance on Hippolytus for his conceited disdain towards her and the desire she could not control “ἵν’ εἰδῇ μὴ ᾽πὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς/ ὑψηλὸς εἶναι” (729-730) [in order that he might know not to be haughty about my misfortunes]. Moreover, rather than some sort of innate antagonism towards him as a bastard, Phaedra also appears to be motivated by a concern for her personal reputation, which would suffer should Hippolytus reveal her desire to his father.⁸³ Similarly, if Hippolytus appears to hate her, it is not necessarily because of their relative position to one another in the domestic power structure, but simply because she represents for him “κίβδηλον ἀνθρώποις κακὸν/ γυναῖκας” (616-617) [women, the deceitful evil for mankind]. Theseus does not yet understand the complexities of the situation and his stock depiction of the relationship between stepmother and stepson is in many ways far less warped and tragic than the reality.

Theseus’s contemptuous attitude towards his son’s birth-status is quite clear in this passage. The rapid succession of ironically phrased rhetorical questions breaks down any of the possible excuses Hippolytus could make and none of these defences, including that there is a hostility essential to his relationship with PHaedra, would be adequate. The truth according to Theseus is that this has occurred simply because Hippolytus is “κάκιστος” (959) [most vile] and his attitude of moral purity is nothing but a smokescreen for an inherent violence and evil. While Theseus does not explicitly claim that this is solely because of Hippolytus’s bastardy, the specification of his birth-status at this stage at the very least implicates it in his wicked characterisation.

2.2.3 *Hippolytus: 1080-1085*

The word νόθος occurs for a third time in the same *episodion* as the previous example and this passage of responding couplets contains Hippolytus’s sole use of the word in the play. It is part of the exchange that follows each of their speeches (Theseus 936-980, Hippolytus 983-1035) and is spoken just before Hippolytus leaves Troezen as an exile.

Θη. πολλῶ γε μᾶλλον σαυτὸν ἥσκησας σέβειν

⁸³ Phaedra is, at this stage, ignorant of the oath which the Nurse made Hippolytus swear in the house (see lines 609-662).

- ἢ τοὺς τεκόντας ὅσια δρᾶν δίκαιος ὢν.
- Ἰπ.* ὦ δυστάλαινα μήτερ, ὦ πικραὶ γοναί·
μηδεὶς ποτ' εἴη τῶν ἐμῶν φίλων **νόθος**.
- Θη.* οὐκ ἔλξετ' αὐτόν, δμῶες; οὐκ ἀκούετε
πάσαι ξενοῦσθαι τόνδε προυννέποντά με; (Barrett 1964)
- Th.* It was reverence for yourself you practiced far more
than performing your obligation to your parents, as ought a just man.
- Hi.* Oh, ill-fortuned mother, oh bitter birth:
May none of my loved-ones be a **bastard**!
- Th.* Drag him out, servants! Didn't you hear me
earlier declaring him an exile? (*Hipp.* 1080-1085)

This use of νόθος (1083) gives us our first clear indication of Hippolytus's self-recognition as a bastard. Until this point, it has not been certain whether or not he sees himself as a bastard, and how much he recognises the characterisation assigned to him by society. Throughout this interaction, Hippolytus avoids giving any direct reply to Theseus's accusations and does not try to defend himself from his father's slander. Instead, his outbursts are purely emotional reactions and he appears to have opted out of the quarrel to focus solely on his own anguish. This egocentric outlook is consistent with the characterisation of Hippolytus so far and is most recently evident in Hippolytus's response when Theseus asks him at 1065 why he has not yet departed from Troezen. The question about his exile prompts not a reply but rather a vocalisation of Hippolytus's own fears about his future: “ποῖ δῆθ' ὁ τλήμων τρέψομαι; τίνοξ ξένων/ δόμους ἔσειμι, τῆδ' ἐπ' αἰτιᾷ φυγών.” (1066-1067) [Where will a wretch like me turn? To what foreigner's house will I go, in flight from this fault?]. Likewise, at 1072-1073, Hippolytus ignores Theseus to address the silent house in hope of its support: “ὦ δώματ', εἴθε φθέγμα γηρύσαισθέ μοι/ καὶ μαρτυρήσαιτ' εἰ κακὸς πέφυκ' ἄνῆρ” (1074-1075) [Oh house, if only you might give some utterance and bear witness if I am an evil man!].

It is with the same emotionally charged self-concern that lines 1082-1083 are spoken, with only a tangential connection between Theseus's words and Hippolytus's response. The supplication of

Antiope appears to be a reaction to the mention of “τεκόντας” (1081) [parents] by his father and the resulting lines give an important insight into his feelings towards his mother. Until this point Hippolytus’s personal emotional connection with her could only be gleaned by inference, while here he plainly expresses his reverent private ideal of her. His words are the sort of entreaty that might be made to a deity, as if he thinks that Antiope is capable of an intervention like Aphrodite’s rescue of Aeneas in the *Iliad*. But they also show that he is clearly concerned with the suffering which his mother endured during her mortal life.⁸⁴ Echoing Phaedra’s earlier address to her own mother and sister as “ὦ τλήμων” (337) and “τάλαινα” (339), respectively, he calls to the dead woman with equal sympathy, “ὦ δυστάλαινα μητηρ, ὦ πικραὶ γοναί” (1082) [oh ill-fortuned mother, oh bitter birth].⁸⁵ For Hippolytus there are immediate links between his mother, her suffering, his bastardy, and his suffering.

His wish for the legitimacy of his φίλοι is almost certainly a lament for the adversity of his own situation, rather than a moment of goodwill towards his very limited group of loved-ones. Like the whole argument, this moment is not crucially significant to the action of the play (except in that it leads up to Hippolytus’s exile), since the central crisis has already been put in motion. Instead it is a chance to gain more insight into the character of Hippolytus. Barrett summarises the effect of the line best when he writes:

Euripides’ purpose is to throw subtle light on Hippolytus’ psychology for its own sake, to suggest this feeling of inferiority, of otherness, as what lies behind his urge to establish himself in compensation as a paragon of virtues that common man cannot share. (1964: *ad loc*)

⁸⁴ *Iliad* 5.311-356.

⁸⁵ The exact meaning of ‘γονή’ is debatable, since it can mean ‘offspring’, ‘race’, ‘womb’ or ‘childbirth.’ Each meaning provides a slightly different understanding of Hippolytus’s words, depending on whether he is referring to himself as her child, the race she comes from, her womb as metonymy for her, or his actual birth. Reading any of these as the translation would not alter the play in any way, but it is the reading of ‘childbirth’ which I believe most likely. It does not seem to be a reference to himself, since his following statement refers to a general statement on illegitimate birth status, nor, when other options are available, does ‘race’ seem applicable. As a metonymic reference to his mother it seems a little more likely, considering the preceding address to her, but the line that follows suggests that the word refers specifically to his birth by her. His words are a lament for his own birth, since he has been born a bastard, and the sense is closer to ‘oh that bitter moment when I was born’. See LSJ, s.v. 1, 1.ii, 2.ii, 3 and MGS, s.v., A.

What makes these lines so important, therefore, is that they are the clearest evidence we have that Hippolytus, although he pretends to dismiss the power of the social constructs around him, is in fact acutely aware of them. Despite his resolute effort to construct a reality shorn of these oppressive ideals, he is revealed to be always conscious of his lowly status as the bastard child of an Amazon. The fact that he is cognisant of his birth-status and laments his situation bitterly only provides more insight into the motivations for his ideology. At the least, it shows that Hippolytus's bastardy is a deeply rooted part of his personality and that he can openly conceive of himself in terms of his illegitimacy.

2.2.4 *Hippolytus*: 1454-1455

The play's final overt reference to bastardy is Hippolytus's use of the word γνήσιος in line 1455 during the *exodos* (1282-1461). In this scene Artemis explains the truth of Phaedra's death to Theseus, confirms Hippolytus's innocence, and then helps reconcile him with his father. These lines also contain the play's only example of γνήσιος being used independently of νόθος,⁸⁶ and provide more nuance to our understanding of the relationship between the two words in Hippolytus's mind.

Θη. ὦ φίλταθ', ὥς γενναῖος ἐκφαίνει πατρί.

Ἰπ. τοιῶνδε παίδων γνησίων εὖχου τυχεῖν. (Barrett 1964)

Th. Oh my dearest, how noble you seem to your father.

Hi. Pray that your **legitimate** children be as such (*Hipp.* 1454-1455).

Like line 1085, the first thing that line 1455 shows is that Hippolytus is not only fully aware that he is a νόθος, but that the circumstances of his birth haunt him, regardless of the moral supremacy he manufactures for himself. Despite the fact that, a few lines earlier, he has forgiven his father for bringing about his death (1449), and has just been granted the rights of a hero-cult by Artemis (1424-1430), his bastardy continues to encroach on his thoughts. It is impossible for

⁸⁶ cf. Lines 304-9 and 947-963 examined in sections 2.2.1.1-2 above.

him to remove the “consciousness of his otherness” that has followed him his whole life and stimulates this response to his father’s words (Barrett 1964: *ad loc.*).

Hippolytus most likely reacts to Theseus’s use of the word γενναῖος, which is directly connected to issues of legitimacy. It is the adjectival form of the word γέννα,⁸⁷ and its earliest uses in Homer are all familial in reference, such as “true to one’s birth or lineage” (LSJ, s.v. γενναῖος 1) and “suitable to one’s birth or descent” (MGS, s.v. γενναῖος A). Through to the late-fifth century, the only change the word underwent was its growing applicability to objects, which we most often translate as “notable” (LSJ, s.v. γενναῖος 2), “of good quality,” or “excellent,” (MGS, s.v. γενναῖος B). Its primary use, however, remained a descriptor of γένος and of behaviour suitable to that γένος. As a result, it never lost its strong associations with the family and was always an obvious marker of legitimacy when applied to someone.⁸⁸ The play’s other uses of the word carries this same meaning. At 206, the Nurse tells Phaedra to bear her illness “γενναίου λήματος” [with well-bred courage], that is, courage fitting for a woman of her lineage. Later, too, Phaedra describes the first adulteress as being “ἐκ γενναίων δόμων” (409) [from a well-bred family] to describe her social position and contrast her reprehensible behaviour with it.⁸⁹

In his response, Hippolytus shows the attitude we have come to expect from him throughout the play. Though softened by the circumstances, we see his usual pious conceit when he neither refutes Theseus’s characterisation of him as γενναῖος, nor allows it to pass without a comment on his birth-status. Even though they are not necessarily spoken maliciously, Hippolytus’s words are still a reminder to Theseus of how much he has suffered because of his bastardy, in much the same manner as his earlier outburst bemoaned the treatment of bastards (1083). Conversely, the reversal in Theseus’s opinions between his denunciation (947-963) and this symbolic bestowal of legitimacy is extreme. The attitude that brought on the mockery and abuse of Hippolytus, as a person and a bastard, has been forgotten and replaced by something approaching paternal love.

⁸⁷ Various translatable as “descent,” “birth,” “origin,” “offspring,” “race,” or “family” (LSJ, s.v. γέννα and MGS, s.v. γέννα). cf. γίγνομαι.

⁸⁸ While this would have been understood at once by the Athenians, our standard English translation of the word as “noble” is perhaps no longer the best option for implying this. Although it continues to have connotations of breeding and ancestry, these are no longer as strong in the twenty-first century as they previously were, and a better translation might be “well-bred.”

⁸⁹ For other examples see, among others: *Alcestis* 166, *Andromache* 1279, *Medea* 762, *Electra* 26, 369.

Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether Theseus is ascribing to him the actual characteristic of γενναῖος, or only the semblance of it. The distinction between whether the word describes reality or only its appearance is crucial to our understanding of Theseus's line and Hippolytus's response. The meaning turns on the interpretation of the auxiliary verb attached to ἐκφαινέσθαι.⁹⁰ The root word, φαίνομαι (and its various forms) is capable of expressing both scenarios, depending on whether a participle or an infinitive is used. When it is used with the participle of the verb 'to be' (ὄν), φαίνομαι stands in the place of the indicative of that verb and suggests that what is spoken of is reality. When, however, it is used with the infinitive (εἶναι), it tends to mean that something is so only in appearance.⁹¹

In this situation, the auxiliary verb has been elided from the sentence and there is no certainty about which Euripides meant. Though both could be used, what best suits the tenor of the play so far is to take the statement with an infinitive, to mean that Hippolytus only has the appearance of being γενναῖος. It is unlikely that even in this last moment, after Hippolytus has been repeatedly characterised by a disconnection between his behaviour and his birth-status, Theseus would suddenly accept him as a legitimate son. However much his actions resemble those of someone γενναῖος, Hippolytus cannot change how his bastardy is defined and judged by others, which means that he can never escape it. Therefore, it is likely that Theseus is only describing his son's behaviour as γενναῖος, rather than his true nature, and that Euripides uses an elided infinitive with ἐκφαινέσθαι.

Hippolytus shows in his response that he is fully aware that his bastardy disqualifies him from becoming properly γενναῖος, as he advises Theseus to pray that his legitimate children may be in appearance as γενναῖος as he. These children, unlike Hippolytus, have the chance to be accurately described with this adjective, because they are legitimate and can immediately be counted as part of the γένος. They only have to exhibit the right behaviour and they will be both γνησίοι and γενναῖοι. Nature and behaviour, φύσις and νόμος, must be in accord with one another for an individual to be labelled as γενναῖος. From Hippolytus's perspective at least, the

⁹⁰ "to shew oneself, shine forth, come forth to view" (LSJ, s.v. ἐκφαινέσθαι, 1); "to become seen, appear, be displayed, be revealed, be shown" (MGS, s.v. ἐκφαινέσθαι, 2).

⁹¹ Called the *quod sum* and *quod non sum* constructions.

instruction might as soon be to pray that his γενναῖοι children happen to be born γνησίοι, as to pray for his γνησίοι children to turn out γενναῖοι.

2.3 Textual evidence: the Amazon mother

The next collection of textual evidence to be interpreted consists of four references to Hippolytus's mother and her heritage. In three different appellatives (10, 351, 583) he is described as "the son of the Amazon" and there is one non-appellative reference to Antiopē (307). All four instances are potentially important pieces of evidence and can be scrutinised profitably, but only if it is taken as read that they have some connection to Hippolytus's bastardy. Links between a bastard and his mother in both law and literature have been discussed already and it has been shown that bastardy is primarily defined by the mother's identity, most commonly her ethnicity. However, before these parts of the text can be looked at, there are a number of contextual elements that require explanation.⁹²

2.3.1 Mythological background

The complicated mythology of the Amazons has been assembled from various pieces of literary and artistic evidence going back to at least the Archaic period. From these it is possible to get a general understanding of the sort of attitudes the Greeks had towards Amazons, though it is more difficult to uncover evidence of the specific preconceptions of the late-fifth century.⁹³ In general terms, there are two discernible parts to the Greek idea of the Amazons and their strange place in the order of the world.

⁹² Although in Euripides' *Hippolytus*, the eponymous character is the son of an Amazon, this seems not always to have been so. Barrett, who attributes a purely Trozenian origin to the myth believes that, "the Amazon is probably an Attic importation into Hippolytus' ancestry," possibly as an extrapolation of another Attic legend, Theseus's expedition against the Amazons and their subsequent assault on Athens (1964: 8, n.3).

⁹³ For ancient prose sources, see particularly Herodotus *Hist.* 4.110-117, Isocrates, *Panegy.* 68-70 & *Panath.* 193, Lysias *Funeral Oration* 18, Plutarch *The.* 26-28, and Strabo *Geog.* 11.5.1-3. For poetry, see Pindar *Ol.* 3 & *Nem.* 3, Aeschylus *Prom.* 410-415, 724 & *Supp.* 287. For a comprehensive modern introduction see Dowden 1997; for other more detailed investigations see, among others, the books by Tyrrell 1984 and Mayor 2014, and articles by Bisset 1971: 150-151, Hardwick 1990: 14-36, and Stewart 1995: 571-597.

Firstly, Amazons (possibly more than almost any other mythical race) appeared to exist on the very margins of the Greek imagination and were regularly used as an “emblem of Otherness” (Blok 1995: vii).⁹⁴ Secondly, the characteristics ascribed to the Amazons are, so far as we can tell, fictions of the Greeks’ own making. That is to say that, although there are recorded cases of female warriors in the Scythian steppe whence Amazons are said to come,⁹⁵ the Greeks conceived of a unique mythology without witnessing them, or incorporating their characterisation from another culture’s mythology. The answer to the question Stewart asks, “What could the Amazons say about otherness that Trojans, Giants and the rest could not?”, is likely that, as a uniquely Hellenic creation, the Amazons acted for Greeks as a shared reference point from which to contrast multiple facets of life (1995: 572). More importantly, the contrast they offer is sharper than that of either the Trojans or Giants: Trojans are often made a foil to the Greeks, at least in Homer,⁹⁶ and Giants exist on the divine more than the mortal spectrum. Amazons, however, are humans who have a culture independent of the Greeks, with the major differences being that they are “a war-like society of women, living on the borders of the known world, renowned for archery and riding skills” (Hardwick 1990: 14).

Aside from geography, gender is the principal area of contrast between the Greeks and the Amazons, who represented a total distortion of traditional Greek gender ideals. In the first place, their society was made up exclusively of women, which meant that it was wholly matriarchal and lacked the straightforward binary at the foundation of gender-based divisions of labour, space, and agency. However, Amazons are not characterised by the Greeks only as women who live without men, but as women who are enough like men not to need to. Their way of life, in other words, is an essentially masculine way and their pursuits and customs are essentially masculine too. And yet, despite this, they are still women.

This dissonance between their appearance and the reality is what Homer emphasises in one of the earliest descriptions of the group, describing them as ‘ἀντιάειραι’, which is variously

⁹⁴ For the otherness of the Amazons, see Brown & Tyrrell 1984: 1-22, Blok 1995 (esp. 1-19), and most recently Man 2018.

⁹⁵ As Mayor 2014: 63-246 and Man 2018, in the light of newer evidence, argue, contra the older argument of Blok 1995: 21-143.

⁹⁶ For more on the comparison between Trojans and Greeks see Dowden 1992: 67, Taplin 1992: 110-5, Richardson 1993: 16, and Heath 2005: 531.

translated as “a match for men” (LSJ, s.v. ἀντιάνεια 1), “the equal of men” or “masculine, manly” (MGS, s.v. ἀντιάνεια A).⁹⁷ Any of these definitions can be used with some accuracy, as each contains at least some element of how Amazons were conceptualised by the Greeks. Their primary defining features, therefore, were that they were exceptionally masculine women, who deliberately existed outside of male control. This independence led to their strong preoccupation with nature and the wilderness, which in the patriarchy of the Greeks equated to the opposite of the refined and cultured order of the *polis*.⁹⁸ In glaring contrast to the upper-class Greek woman sequestered in her γυναικῶν, the Amazon has almost always been portrayed in the wild, riding or hunting.⁹⁹ The nomadic group was also strongly opposed to domestic cohabitation with men, in contravention of the patriarchal *oikos* system where legitimacy is ensured and protected.¹⁰⁰ This is what Ortner (1974) would see as an active effort to avoid the acculturating power of men within the home and it let the women maintain their essentially wild nature. They did not allow themselves to be ‘tamed,’ but continued to live what was seen by the Greeks as an uncontrolled and feral existence.¹⁰¹

Hippolytus’s mother, Antiopē, was an Amazon queen brought back to Athens by Theseus, although there was some disagreement in antiquity about whether she came as his war slave or his wife and whether their sexual union was rape or not. Plutarch suggests that she was an unwilling participant, taken either as Theseus’s αἰχμάλωτος in the share of the war booty, or as the sole Amazon captive, but he also mentions how she goes on to become his ally in the subsequent conflict between the two sides.¹⁰² The Byzantine hypothesis appended to the play, on the other hand, uses the word “γαμεῖν” to describe their relationship, though there is uncertainty about whether this ought to be read literally as ‘to marry’, or as a euphemism for ‘to have sex with’ (*Hypothesis* 2).¹⁰³ In his commentary on lines 304ff., Barrett asserts that the marriage never happened and that Antiopē “will have lived with him not as a wife but as a concubine, a παλλακή” (1964: 216). The fact that the matter is not made clear in the play itself, even though

⁹⁷ *Iliad* 3.189, 6.186. See also Stewart 1995: 576.

⁹⁸ For more on the binaries of masculine/feminine and culture/nature, see Ortner 1974: 68-87 and Walcot 1984: 37-47.

⁹⁹ For the artistic evidence, see *LIMC* 1.1 ‘Amazones’.

¹⁰⁰ For their nomadism, see Herodotus 4.114.

¹⁰¹ See Ortner 1974: 68-87.

¹⁰² *Theseus* 26-28. See LSJ, s.v. αἰχμάλωτος 1 and MGS, s.v. αἰχμάλωτος A.

¹⁰³ See Barrett 1964: 96.

there existed these two different versions of the story, is perhaps an indication that Antiopē, whether as an ἀχμάλωτος or a παλλακή, was not married to Theseus legitimately. Whatever the details, the fact of the matter is that, as Mayor puts it, as soon as she reached Athens she was “no longer a headstrong warrior huntress, whether she was kidnapped, captured, or went of her own free will...Antiopē in her wedded life stands in stark contrast to the notorious sexual independence of the Amazons” (2014: 268). She would, in fact, have suffered from the dissonance between her φύσις and her νόμος as her son and glimpses we have of this help to interweave the theme of appearance and reality even more into the narrative.

Hippolytus’s mother’s identity has been the single most impactful element in his life. Not only was he born the bastard son of a foreign concubine but the concubine in question was an Amazon queen, an embodiment of contradictions to Greek normativity. How greatly this affected his public image is neatly summed up by Dowden:

“Amazons are not part of the local, genealogical traditions: how could they be? They are sexually unavailable to conventional city states (whatever their arrangements for self-perpetuation in historicising mythology). Hippolytus is more than a rare exception: he is paradoxical precisely because he is ‘son of the Amazon’— we are perhaps insufficiently shocked by this description” (1997: 98-99).

In the light of this background to the Amazons, it is now possible to begin an analysis of the four passages in question.

2.3.2 *Aphrodite: 10-19*

In Aphrodite’s opening prologue (1-57), as often in Euripides, the most salient pieces of backstory are explained to the audience. In it she identifies the source of the play’s central conflict (Hippolytus’s arrogant dismissal of her rites), contextualises it, and predicts its outcome, before giving brief but insightful summaries of some of the characters. The reference to Hippolytus’s mother occurs at line 10 during Aphrodite’s exposition of “the essential information about his antecedents” and his current circumstances (Barrett 1964: *ad loc.*). She

begins her speech in general terms, describing in lines 1-8 her customary practice of punishing those who do not honour her, before concentrating on the narrative of Hippolytus at line 9: “δείξω δὲ μύθων τῶνδ’ ἀλήθειαν τάχα” [but I will soon show the truth of what I have said]. Then she tells the story:

Αφ: ὁ γάρ με Θησέως παῖς, **Ἀμαζόνος τόκος**,
 Ἴππόλυτος, ἀγνοῦ Πιτθέως παιδευμένα,
 μόνος πολιτῶν τῆσδε γῆς Τροζηνίας
 λέγει κακίστην δαιμόνων πεφυκέναι·
 ἀναίνεται δὲ λέκτρα κοῦ ψαύει γάμων,
 Φόβου δ’ ἀδελφὴν Ἄρτεμιν, Διὸς κόρην,
 τιμᾷ μεγίστην δαιμόνων ἡγούμενος,
 χλωρὰν δ’ ἀν’ ὕλην παρθένῳ ξυνὼν ἀει
 κυσὶν ταχείαις θήρας ἐξαιρεῖ χθονός,
 μείζω βροτείας προσπεσὼν ὁμιλίας. (ed. Barrett 1964)

Aph: For the son of Theseus, **the Amazon’s child**
 Hippolytus, educated by holy Pittheus,
 alone among the citizens of Troezen’s land
 says that I am by nature the worst of the gods:
 he spurns sex and won’t even touch marriage,
 but rather, considering her the greatest of the gods
 honours Phoebus’s sister Artemis, daughter of Zeus.
 In the green woods, consorting with the maiden,
 he clears the land of wild beasts with swift dogs,
 having fallen into a friendship more than mortal (*Hipp.* 10-19).

The first characterisation of Hippolytus begins with a description of his parentage, calling him “ὁ... Θησέως παῖς, Ἀμαζόνος τόκος/ Ἴππόλυτος” (10-11) [the son of Theseus, the Amazon’s child Hippolytus].¹⁰⁴ The use of the patronymic for introducing characters is a typical feature of

¹⁰⁴ On Hippolytus’s appellation as ‘child’ and his self-proclaimed manhood, see Mitchell-Boyask 1999:53-54.

tragic appellatives and it is no surprise to find Hippolytus referenced using one.¹⁰⁵ The presence of the matronymic, however, is far rarer and it is this rarity that makes the line noteworthy. At the very beginning of the play and placed right before his name, we find the same basic format for introducing bastards that we found in our previous examination of the earliest mentions of bastardy in Homer.¹⁰⁶ It appears that this convention remained unaltered into the late-fifth century so that even though the audience has not yet been told outright that Hippolytus is a bastard and even if they were somehow totally ignorant of the myth, this double identification of both mother and father would likely have been enough to all but confirm it. What, in the end, does confirm it is Aphrodite's elision of Antiopē's name in favour of a specification of her ethnicity. The overt labelling of Hippolytus's mother as an Ἀμαζών, would likely have eliminated the possibility of any sort of legitimacy from the audience's thoughts. A generation under the PCL had been long enough for the place of μητρόξενοι in the power structure to be accepted and, as was the case with Pericles' son by Aspasia, Hippolytus would have been recognised immediately as a bastard because of his foreign mother. To this, however, is added the inheritance of stereotypes commonly associated with the Amazons, whose all-round abnormality would have negated his legitimacy outright. It is clear, then, that from the first, characterisation of Hippolytus is as a bastard, since introduction by an Amazonian matronymic would have immediately confirmed that.

Aphrodite follows this introduction by summarising the situation of Hippolytus's upbringing, describing him as “ἀγνοῦ Πιτθέως παιδεύματα” (11) [the pupil of holy Pittheus]. From this small piece of information we are able to grasp several important facts about Hippolytus's place within his father's *oikos*. First and foremost, it suggests the sort of relationship that he might have with Theseus because Hippolytus's teacher is not his father (as we might expect it to be) but rather his father's maternal grandfather Pittheus. This is mirrored in the structure of the text which through the proximity of these two names brings them into greater contrast, strengthening the discrepancy between Hippolytus as “Θησέως παῖς” (10) [son of Theseus] and as the παίδευμα

¹⁰⁵ There are examples in all three tragedians such as, among others, Agamemnon (Aesch. *Ag.* 785), Creon, (Soph. *Ant.* 156), and elsewhere in Euripides, as *Amphitryon* (Eur. *HF.* 2-3).

¹⁰⁶ *Iliad* 2. 727-728. See above, section 1.2.2.1.

“Πιτθέως” (11) [of Pittheus].¹⁰⁷ The truth is that he has been separated from his father and parcelled off to this older patriarchal figure in Troezen to be brought up and educated.

In these lines, besides the intimation of his bastardy, we also find our first suggestion of perhaps the central element of Hippolytus’s self-characterisation. He is described as being educated by Pittheus, who is regarded by Aphrodite as ‘ἄγνός’, a word in general translatable as ‘pure’, ‘chaste’ or ‘holy’.¹⁰⁸ Its connotations are chiefly religious, particularly because of its association with the word ‘ἄζειν’, which can variously mean “to stand in awe of, dread of the gods” (LSJ, s.v. ἄζω 1) or simply “to respect, venerate, fear” (MGS, s.v. ἄζω A). As well as this, it has a strong undertone of spiritual purity manifested in concrete things. Its use here to describe Hippolytus’s first major childhood influence preempts its important implications for the play. Later, we see Hippolytus use the same word with which Aphrodite describes his great-grandfather, in order to describe his own body, “λέχους γὰρ εἰς τόδ’ ἡμέρας ἄγνὸν δέμας” (1003) [For until this day my body has been pure from sex]. In just this sort of substantial way is it used to describe religious objects such as a τέμενος¹⁰⁹ and a βωμός¹¹⁰ in the *Andromache* (253, 427), and a πῦρ¹¹¹ in the *Electra* (812).

Aphrodite then goes on to explain the reasons for her opposition to Hippolytus and, in the process, discloses several pieces of important information about him, beginning with his political status. In her description she refers to him as being “μόνος πολιτῶν τῆσδε γῆς Τροζηνίας” (12) [alone among citizens of Troezen’s land], which, if we go by the contemporary understanding of the word πολίτης, would seem to suggest that Hippolytus is a free citizen of the *polis*.¹¹² We are thus presented with an intriguing situation in which Euripides, despite the recognised

¹⁰⁷ As well as this there is the repetition of the word παῖς and its cognates.

¹⁰⁸ LSJ, s.v. ἄγνός 1 and MGS, s.v. ἄγνός A. For more on purity in the play, see Segal 1970: 278-299.

¹⁰⁹ See n. 70.

¹¹⁰ “a raised place for sacrificing, an altar” (LSJ, s.v. βωμός 2 and MGS, s.v. βωμός 2)

¹¹¹ “fire” (LSJ, s.v. πῦρ 1 and MGS, s.v. πῦρ, A).

¹¹² The word means “a member of a city or state, a citizen freeman” (LSJ, s.v. πολίτης 1). See also MGS, s.v. πολίτης A. Its meaning is also suggested by the piece from the *Athenaion Politeia* about the PCL being instituted “διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πολιτῶν” (26.3) [because of the large number of citizens]. Recognising that between 451 and the late-fourth century the word continued to have the same meaning, it seems likely that Euripides has given Hippolytus his citizenship. See above, section 1.2.1. Barrett simply takes it to mean that Hippolytus “is permanently resident in Troezen” and gives no views on its political repercussions (1964: *ad loc.*) Other commentators, such as Harry 1904 and Ferguson 1984, do not even acknowledge it. For residency, citizenship and for discussion of πολίτης see Lape 2010: 12, Blok 2017: 147-186, and Cohen 2000: 49-52.

discordance between citizenship and bastardy, chooses not to implement the same system in the play. The quandary, as with that of the Nurse's familiarity with the nuances of inheritance law, is one that can only be interpreted and not solved. The politics of the heroic world in which the tragedy is set are not those of reality and, even if there are similarities, the extent of their mutual influence is impossible to confirm. All that we can say is that in the play the requirements for citizenship in the semi-monarchical democracy of Theseus's Athens seem not to have taken into account bastardy or ethnicity as a means of outright disqualification. What Euripides is saying about bastardy is not delivered through the direct replication of the PCL or any other clear legislation within the narrative, but by showing the treatment of bastards by others.

In the lines which follow, Aphrodite explains the reasons for Hippolytus's inclusion among the latter of the two groups mentioned in her earlier claim “τοὺς μὲν σέβοντας τὰμὰ πρεσβεύω κράτη/ σφάλλω δ' ὅσοι φρονοῦσιν εἰς ἡμᾶς μέγα” (5-6) [I honour those who respect my powers but trip up all who think proud thoughts against me]. She begins by indicating how patently blasphemous Hippolytus's attitude is by claiming that he calls her “κακίστην δαιμόνων πεφυκέναι” (13) [By nature the worst of all of the gods]. The negative superlative is compounded by the use of φύειν in place of εἶναι because the former has the implications of something being inherent and unchangeable: Aphrodite is not just κακίστη at times, but has been and always will be.¹¹³ Hippolytus, she explains, “ἀναίνεται δὲ λέκτρα κοῦ ψάυει γάμων” (14) [spurns sex and won't even touch marriage], believing that these two areas of Aphrodite's concern are as innately immoral as she is. Euripides employs verbs here specifically chosen for the vehemence they imply in his rejection. Ἀναίνεσθαι, for instance, is most commonly used in a stronger sense meaning “to reject with contempt” or “to refuse with disdain” (LSJ, s.v. ἀναίνομαι 1 and MGS, s.v. ἀναίνομαι A).¹¹⁴ Similarly, the litotic “οὐ ψάυει” is a powerful phrase, suggesting repulsion so strong that even an action as seemingly innocuous as touching is anathema.¹¹⁵ The latter phrase is, as Harry puts it “equivalent to ἀναίνεται” in meaning, “a common tautology in Euripides” which he uses to emphasise his point (1904: *ad loc.*).

¹¹³ As a goddess, this insult may have less of an impact on her than it might on a mortal, but it is nevertheless obvious to see that these lines are spoken in anger.

¹¹⁴ It is, as Ferguson notes, a Homeric word, “not in Sophocles, and not common outside Homer.” (1984: *ad loc.*). In Homer 9.510 it is used in a way very similar to its use in the *Hippolytus*, as the action of those who disdain the gods and upon whom comes Ate.

¹¹⁵ “to touch” (LSJ, s.v. ψάω 1 and MGS, s.v. ψάω A).

The word for a bed, λέκτρον, despite its common use as a metaphor for sex, generally has the connotations of a material and especially marital bed.¹¹⁶ Hippolytus's rejection of both this and γάμος, meaning in post-Homeric Greek 'marriage,' suggests not only censure of Aphrodite's realms of influence, but an antipathy towards the authorised, socialised institution of marriage akin to that of the Amazons.¹¹⁷ Hippolytus is, in fact, condemnatory of all sexual activity, whether inside or outside of marriage.

Aphrodite moves from this depiction of the ways in which he neglects and ignores his obligations to her to an outline of the sort of behaviour he exhibits. Instead of her, Aphrodite claims that he “Φόβου δ’ ἀδελφὴν Ἄρτεμιν, Διὸς κόρην,/ τιμᾷ μεγίστην δαιμόνων ἡγούμενος” (15-16) [rather, considering her the greatest of the gods, honours Phoebus's sister Artemis, daughter of Zeus]. This is the first mention of Artemis in the play and, mirroring the placement of the statues on stage, she is immediately placed in opposition to Aphrodite by the formula of her introduction.¹¹⁸ The words “τιμᾷ μεγίστην δαιμόνων” (16), located as they are at the beginning of the line, are a direct syntactical echo of the earlier negative “λέγει κακίστην δαιμόνων” (13). Not only is she placed in opposition to Aphrodite, however, but she is associated with Hippolytus through the reference to her parentage in her appellative as “Διὸς κορὴν”. This sort of introduction is common when invoking a god and yet, as Barrett notes, “on Aphrodite's lips the words take on a tone of contempt: little she cares for these titles of her rival which to Hippolytus mean so much” (1964: *ad loc.*).

This contempt is revealed again when, at lines 17-19, she gives a vivid description of the relationship between Hippolytus and Artemis. The complex image that Aphrodite creates is of the pair cavorting through the wilderness, in a way reminiscent of the roaming Amazons, already linked to Hippolytus by the earlier reference to his mother's ethnicity. Euripides expresses the vitality and movement of the scene effectively, specifying the lushness of the “χλωρὰν...ῥῆλην” (17) [green woods], in which Artemis and her devotee do not just hunt together but are said to

¹¹⁶ This is not to say that there was no crossover of meanings: the word could commonly mean 'marital sex'. See LSJ, s.v. λέκτρον 1 and MGS, s.v. λέκτρον A.

¹¹⁷ LSJ, s.v. γάμος, 2 and MGS, s.v. γάμος A.

¹¹⁸ For more on the statues on stage, see Barrett 1964: 154.

“κυσὶν ταχείαις θήρας ἐξαιρεῖ χθονός” (18) [[clear] the land of wild beasts with swift dogs]. All of these energetic activities in this fertile place, however, are also sexualised by Aphrodite’s use of “συνεῖναι” to describe their relationship (17).¹¹⁹ As with its English translation the word can simply mean ‘to be with’, but also has the potential meaning of ‘to have sex with’,¹²⁰ or the tamer ‘to live with a husband’.¹²¹ Moreover, this implicitly erotic word is juxtaposed strongly with the description of Artemis as a παρθένος (‘maiden’, ‘virgin’).¹²² As a result, Aphrodite’s explanation of Hippolytus attitudes towards sex, followed by the suggestive relationship he has with Artemis, means that when she says they have “μείζω βροτείας προσπεσὼν ὁμιλίας” (19) [fallen into a friendship more than mortal], there is a re-emergence of the theme of the opposition between sex and chastity.

2.3.3 Nurse: 304-309 and Phaedra: 583-584

Lines 304-9 have already received attention above for containing the word νόθος and the insight they offer into Hippolytus’s ideology. They also, however, contain valuable information concerning the prejudiced characterisation of Antiopē and her son, which the Nurse uses rhetorically to help convince Phaedra. Her objective is to isolate Phaedra as the only one who can decide her children’s fate and to do this, as the *Scholia* comments, “κνηστικοῖς αὐτὴν λόγοις ἐρεθίζει” (Σ³⁰⁴) [she provokes her with itching/scrapping/gnawing words]. The ‘gnawing’ words that the Nurse uses here are those that will worsen Phaedra’s potential betrayal of her children by emphasising Hippolytus’s unworthiness to replace them as Theseus’s heir. As discussed above, the words νόθος and γνήσιος at line 309 are two such examples of these, because they immediately remind Phaedra of Hippolytus’s birth-status, seeking to trigger some decisive action from her. However, the oppositional relationship between the legitimate and illegitimate children caused by calling Hippolytus a “νόθον φρονοῦντα γνήσια” (309) [the bastard who thinks himself legitimate], is only one of several such binaries the Nurse employs, including that between Phaedra herself and Hippolytus’s Amazonian mother at line 307.

¹¹⁹ For its sexualisation, see Lambert 2019: 135-136.

¹²⁰ LSJ, s.v. συνεῖναι 1 and MGS, s.v. συνεῖναι A.

¹²¹ LSJ, s.v. συνεῖναι 2 and MGS, s.v. συνεῖναι B.

¹²² LSJ, s.v. παρθένος 1 and MGS, παρθένος A.

Tr. ἄλλ'ἴσθι μέντοι—πρὸς τάδ' αὐθεστέρα
 γίγνου θαλάσσης—, εἰ θάνῃ, προδοῦσα σοὺς
 παῖδας, πατρώων μὴ μεθέξοντας δόμων,
 μὰ **τὴν ἄνασσαν ἵππιαν Ἀμαζόνα**,
 ἣ σοῖς τέκνοισι δεσπότην ἐγείνατο,
 νόθον φρονοῦντα γνήσι', οἷσθ' ἄ νιν καλῶς,
 Ἴππόλυτον (ed. Barrett 1964)

Nu. Nevertheless, know this—then you can be
 more stubborn than the sea—if you die, you'll have betrayed
 your children, as they will have no share in their father's house.
 No, **but by the horsy Amazon queen**, she who
 bore a master to lord it over your children,
 the bastard who thinks himself legitimate—you know him well:
 Hippolytus. (*Hipp.* 304-309)

In this instance, as opposed to line 10, Antiopē is not simply used as a descriptor for Hippolytus, but is mentioned separately from her son as “τὴν ἄνασσαν ἵππιαν Ἀμάζονα” (307) [the horsy Amazon queen]. The first mention of her, apart from its interest as a matronymic, has been shown as notable specifically because it refers to her only as an Amazon and nothing else: Euripides does not mention her name, or her status, and relies solely on the general mythological knowledge of the audience to characterise her. Here, the Nurse characterises her by her ethnicity, but in addition she also defines her by her social rank and an allusion to her cultural norms. These characteristics, even though they are not here descriptors of Hippolytus, are nevertheless transferred to him through the link he shares with his mother, as introduced by Aphrodite at line 10.

The Nurse's recognition of Antiopē as an ἀνάσσα is primarily made to draw comparisons between Phaedra and the Amazon, and so to emphasise to the latter how superior she and her

children are to such a foreign concubine and her bastard son.¹²³ She is not, significantly, comparing Antiopē to Phaedra according to the position of Theseus’s wife and queen, in order to show the latter how much better she is in that position specifically. We have already discussed Antiopē’s relationship with Theseus and it seems clear that she was not his wife; even if she had been legally married to him, there is no other indication that she was made his queen, and that scenario seems most unlikely. In fact, the word is used for precisely the contrary reason: the Nurse brings up royalty because it situates Hippolytus’s mother at the very pinnacle of Amazon society and, thus, as an Amazon *par excellence*. In other words, by positioning his mother as the embodiment of the Amazon nature, the Nurse casts Hippolytus as the direct inheritor of her anti-Hellenic essence.

The adjective ἵπιος follows ἀνάσσα and only succeeds in marginalising Antiopē yet more, and is at least one piece of evidence that her son has inherited her Amazon disposition.¹²⁴ The close bond between Amazons and the natural world is perhaps most embodied by their notorious passion for the essentially masculine pursuit of horsemanship. Horses appear to have been always closely associated with Amazons, whose customs of hunting and fighting brought the two into continual contact.¹²⁵ This link between them, however, is not equivalent to that between the free Athenian citizen and the horses on which he hunts and fights; it is, rather, presented as being abnormally strong, as is their connection to nature in general. Artistic representations of Amazons often emphasised their wild, animalistic character by depicting them on horseback in a way that sometimes made them appear like centaurs, as though they and their beasts were one.

By this stage we have already seen that Hippolytus has taken on his mother’s close identification with horses. If one uses Antiope’s other name, Hippolyta, his name originates from her own,

¹²³ “a queen, lady, mistress” (LSJ, s.v. ἀνάσσα 1 and MGS, s.v. ἀνάσσα A). ἄνασσα is the feminine form of the masculine ἄναξ, a word which seems to be older (at least in literature) than βασιλεία or βασιλεύς. Even if in meaning the two words are roughly similar, it is interesting to note that Phaedra is specified as βασιλεία earlier in the play at line 175, which might suggest an inherent difference between the two. The variety may also, of course, simply reflect metrical and stylistic reasons.

¹²⁴ They are almost always depicted by Herodotus as riding on horseback, and are said to have seized horses to raid the lands of Scythia (4.110), and contrast the women of this country who ride in wagons (4.114).

¹²⁵ See, for instance, Strabo’s comment on their activities in his *Geography*: “τὸν μὲν ἄλλον χρόνον καθ’ αὐτάς, αὐτουργούσας ἕκαστα τὰ τε πρὸς ἄροτον καὶ φυτουργίαν καὶ τὰ πρὸς [p. 708] τὰς νομὰς καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἵππων, τὰς δ’ ἀλκιμωτάτας κυνηγεσίαις πλεονάζειν καὶ τὰ πολέμια ἀσκεῖν”, 11.5.1-2 [they spend most of the time on their own, each attending to her individual occupation of ploughing, sowing, looking after the herds, and most of all, of horses, though the bravest engage more in hunting and warfare].

which translates loosely as ‘horse-loosener’, and this shared designation links him to her. When he first enters, he has come from riding, as evidenced by the end of his discussion with the servant, in which he orders his horses to be properly cleaned and exercised (109-112). He says,

Ἴπ. χωρεῖτ', ὀπαδοί, καὶ παρελθόντες δόμους
 σίτων μέλεσθε· τερπνὸν ἐκ κυναγίας
 τράπεζα πλήρης· καὶ καταψήχειν χρεῶν
 ἵππους, ὅπως ἂν ἄρμασι ζεύξας ὑπο
 βοῤῃς κορεσθεῖς γυμνάσω τὰ πρόσφορα.
 τὴν σὴν δὲ Κύπριν πόλλ' ἐγὼ χαίρειν λέγω. (Barrett 1964)

Hi. Go, servants, go into the house and
 take care of the food: a full table is
 a pleasure after the hunt. You must rub down
 the horses too, and when you've yoked them from the chariots
 and they've eaten their fill, exercise them appropriately.
 And as for your Kypris—I bid her a good day.¹²⁶ (*Hipp.* 108-113)

His devotion to the animals is clear and he issues specific instructions to his servants as to how they should be cleaned, fed and exercised. The implications for Hippolytus's characterisation remain constant: a link is formed in the play's prologue between his own interest in horses and his mother's ethnicity. Later on, horses will feature in the play when they drag him over the beach fleeing in terror from the bull from the sea (1182-1254). In this latter section from the Messenger's speech to Theseus, Hippolytus is described as "...ἰππικοίσιν ἤθεσιν/ πολὺς ξυνοικῶν..." (1219-1220) [well acquainted with the ways of horses]. Although horsemanship was a predominantly masculine pursuit in the world of myth (and solely so in Athenian reality), it is not right to say that Hippolytus is only expressing some element of conventional masculinity through his association with horses. There is plenty of evidence from the play that suggests that his equine interests pull him further away from his masculine duties of procreation and politics,

¹²⁶ The meaning of "πόλλ' ἐγὼ χαίρειν λέγω" is in fact derisive, closer to 'goodbye and good riddance'. See Barrett, who says, "to wish someone a very good day, is to want to have no more to do with them" (1964: *ad loc*).

since he spends his time hunting with Artemis instead. That it is linked to his maternity is also fairly obvious given the emphasis placed on it in describing Antiopē.

Horses also feature regularly in sexual metaphors, with the obvious associations of ‘taming’ and ‘riding’. The images of a man as a colt or a stallion and of a woman as a filly or a mare are common from Homer onwards and are often used to imply sexual potency, insatiability, or virginity.¹²⁷ When used for men, horse metaphors tend to be focussed on strength, size and virulence, as well as a certain restless energy.¹²⁸ Women, however, tend to be compared to fillies, young female horses needing to be ‘tamed’ by a man;¹²⁹ one of the Greek words for a wife, δάμαρ, in fact comes from the verb δαμάζω, which means “to tame” when applied to animals (LSJ, s.v. δαμάζω 1 and MGS, s.v. δαμάζω A).¹³⁰ It is noteworthy that Hippolytus should be portrayed as closely linked to horses, since horse imagery is exceedingly sexual. His obsession with the equine is something inherited from his mother and it is used, it seems, to introduce an undercurrent of sexuality into his activities with Artemis. The idea that his hunting and riding is in some way a sexual act helps in characterising it as abnormal: all of Hippolytus’s repressed sexual energies are being spent on these, rather than on settling down in an *oikos* (one of the constituent building blocks of the *polis*) and procreating with a real wife.

To return to the passage under discussion. The line before the Nurse’s introduction of bastardy (308) is designed like the others to trigger a response from Phaedra by indicating what a betrayal it would be to allow a person of Hippolytus’s status to take her children’s place. Here she creates the image of Hippolytus as her children’s δεσπότης, or ‘master’, and links it back to his mother through the relative pronoun “ἥ”. The imagery is of course wholly contradictory to what the case ought to be, with the superior social status held by Phaedra’s children over Hippolytus. Notably, the Nurse mentions this aspect of Hippolytus last. This may well be incidental, but it nevertheless carries some weight as the final piece of the spiteful picture she creates of Hippolytus, the final and perhaps most manipulative detail that she can use to convince Phaedra to live.

¹²⁷ For horse metaphors, gender and sexual appetite, see Griffith 2006b: 319.

¹²⁸ See, for instance, Homer’s descriptions of Paris and Hector at *Il.* 6.503-514 and 15.263-270.

¹²⁹ See, for instance, Anacreon *PMG* 417.

¹³⁰ For the use of this word, see Griffith 2006b: 325.

The Nurse's portrayal of Hippolytus concludes with her climactic use of his name at 309, hearing which, Phaedra exclaims, “ἀπόλεσάς με, μαῖα, καί σε πρὸς θεῶν/ τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς αὖθις λίσσομαι σιγᾶν πέρι” (311-312) [You have ruined me, my Nurse, and I beg you again for the gods' sake to keep silent about this man!]. Until this point, Hippolytus has not been spoken of directly by either character, and Phaedra's reaction to his name is taken by the Nurse as a positive response to her recent speech. At this stage, she has little suspicion that the cause of her mistress's suffering is her love for her stepson and thinks that Phaedra is simply antagonistic towards him because of his position in the *oikos*.¹³¹ As we know, the inverse is the case and Phaedra's reaction only really makes sense in the light of her hidden yearning for Hippolytus. Very quickly she recognises that her words have given something away and she tries to mislead the Nurse by claiming, “...ἄλλη δ' ἐν τύχῃ χειμάζομαι” (315) [I am storm-tossed by some another fate]. Nevertheless, this excuse does nothing to stop the Nurse from determinedly continuing to interrogate Phaedra to discover once and for all the root of her illness.

Phaedra's answers to the questions put to her are intentionally vague and it is clear that she is trying to avoid having to tell the Nurse the truth. When, for instance, the latter asks at 316 if her mistress is polluted by some spiritual impurity (possibly murder) Phaedra obscurely answers, “χεῖρες μὲν ἀγναί, φρήν δ' ἔχει μίασμά τι” (317) [My hands are pure, but my mind has some sort of *miasma*].¹³² After this, when the Nurse inquires if the illness has been caused by an enemy, Phaedra responds with the equally enigmatic line, “φίλος μ' ἀπόλλυσ' οὐχ ἐκοῦσαν οὐχ ἐκὼν” (319) [A loved one destroys me, though neither he nor I willingly]. Phaedra's tactic does, in a sense, work, since the Nurse overlooks the manifold interpretations of φίλος and, quite naturally, assumes that she is talking about Theseus. Trying to keep up any pretence of this sort is unmanageable and unimaginable to Phaedra, and so she equivocally denies any wrongdoing by Theseus and says “μὴ δρῶς' ἔγωγε κεῖνον ὀφθεῖν κακῶς” (321) [May I never be seen to treat that man badly!]. This too, however, is an obscured answer because her use of the passive ‘ὀφθεῖν’ intentionally casts her wish as one of appearance rather than reality—Phaedra doesn't

¹³¹ The Nurse in fact believes that Phaedra is beginning to come around, though still has far to go. She says to her: “...φρονεῖς μὲν εἴ, φρονοῦσα δ' οὐ θέλεις/ παῖδας τ' ὀνῆσαι καὶ σὸν ἐκσῶσαι βίον” (313-314) [You are thinking correctly, but in your thinking you still do not wish to profit your children and save your life].

¹³² “stain, defilement, the taint of guilt” (LSJ, s.v. μῖασμα 1); “stain, contamination, pollution, impurity” (MGS, s.v. μῖασμα A).

hope that she may never do wrong to Theseus, only that she might not be seen to do so.¹³³ Her mistress's desperate concealment of the truth through obfuscation leads the exasperated Nurse to fall to Phaedra's feet as a suppliant, grasp her hand and beg her to disclose more. Phaedra agrees but her answers appear just as opaque as before; she makes the paradoxical assertion that the cause of her suffering is itself a potential source of honour: "ἐκ τῶν γὰρ αἰσχυρῶν ἐσθλὰ μηχανώμεθα" (331) [For from shameful things we might fashion noble ones]. Quite reasonably, the tireless Nurse enquires why, if this is so, she keeps it hidden and here at last it seems as if the truth is to come out. Phaedra shakes the Nurse off of her arm and prepares to talk, saying, "δώσω· σέβας γὰρ χειρὸς αἰδοῦμαι τὸ σόν" (335) [I will give it: for I respect the reverence of your hand].

However, as surprising as her original outburst to Hippolytus's name, Phaedra makes a short lament for the women in her family. First, she apostrophises her mother Pasiphaë with the line, "ὦ τλῆμον, οἶον, μήτηρ, ἡράσθης ἔρον" (337) [oh wretched mother, what sort of love it was which you loved]. Then, disregarding the Nurse's question about her mother's morbid sexual history (338), she calls to her sister Ariadne, abandoned on Naxos by the homeward-bound Theseus and subsequently rescued and married by Dionysus (339).¹³⁴ And finally, she talks of herself, saying, "τρίτη δ' ἐγὼ δύστηνος ὡς ἀπόλλυμαι" (341) [and so am I, the third ill-fortuned one, being destroyed]. She has in mind here some sort of familial misfortune which she and her sister have inherited from their mother, akin in many ways to the dynastic 'blood-curse', as seen in the Theban and Atreid mythologies.¹³⁵ Phaedra has seen her women kinsmen fall victim to a ruinous inheritance and knows that its source lies in the unknown past: "ἐκεῖθεν ἡμεῖς, οὐ νεωστί, δυστυχεῖς" (343) [We have been ill-fortuned from long ago, not just lately]. Pasiphaë was ruined by her divinely-inspired lust for a bull,¹³⁶ Ariadne by her love of Theseus, and now Phaedra, just like her mother, by an insurmountable desire for a forbidden entity. In love and sex, she believes, the women of Minos' house have long been cursed by misfortune.

2.3.4 Phaedra: 347-352

¹³³ She knows full well that her feelings toward Hippolytus have already wronged Theseus and that there only remains the possibility of their staying hidden.

¹³⁴ For the myth of Ariadne, see Apollodorus, *Epitome* 1.8-10, Catullus 64, Propertius 1.3, and Ovid *Heroides* 10.

¹³⁵ For miasma and the inheritance of guilt, Parker 1983: 190.

¹³⁶ This lust, like Phaedra's, was engineered by a god, in Pasiphaë's case by Poseidon. See Apollodorus *Bib* 3.1.4

The third mention of Hippolytus's Amazonian lineage occurs at lines 347-352, concluding the section of stichomythia from 309-351 that is bookended by the Nurse's use of Hippolytus's name.¹³⁷ Phaedra is the third character to reference Antiopē, but her intentions differ from those of either Aphrodite or the Nurse. Like the former, she uses Hippolytus's mother's ethnicity as a matronymic for him, but here as a euphemistic replacement of her stepson's name. It is the last in her series of attempts to avoid divulging the truth in the intervening section 309-351 and, it may be said, the least likely to succeed.

Φα. τί τοῦθ' ὃ δὴ λέγουσιν ἀνθρώπους ἐρᾶν;
Τρ. ἥδιστον, ὦ παῖ, ταῦτ' ὀν ἀλγεινόν θ' ἄμα.
Φα. ἡμεῖς ἂν εἴμεν θατέρῳ κεχρημένοι.
Τρ. τί φῆς; ἐρᾶς, ὦ τέκνον; ἀνθρώπων τίνος;
Φα. ὅστις ποθ' οὗτός ἐσθ', **ὁ τῆς Ἀμαζόνης**—
Τρ. Ἴππόλυτον αὐδᾶς;
Φα. σοῦ τάδ', οὐκ ἐμοῦ, κλύεις. (ed. Barrett 1964)

Ph. What is the thing they mean when they say that people love?
Nu. The greatest pleasure, my child, and just as much pain too.
Ph. It will be the second sort then which is mine.
Nu. What are you saying? Are you in love, my child? With which person?
Ph. He, whom you mentioned before, **the Amazon's son**—
Nu. Are you talking of Hippolytus?
Ph. You heard this from yourself, not from me (*Hipp.* 347-352).b

The passage begins with Phaedra's sudden interruption, “τί τοῦθ' ὃ δὴ λέγουσιν ἀνθρώπους ἐρᾶν;” (347) [What is the thing they mean when they say that people love?]. Not only is it conspicuous as an interruption but its phrasing is also distinctive. Rather than ask the Nurse for an objective definition of ‘to love’, Phaedra concretises and specifies the type of love she wishes

¹³⁷ Harry is the only commentator to note this specifically, exhorting us to “observe the symmetry” of the lines (1904: l. 352).

to know about by using the neuter singular “τί τοῦθ’ ὅ” as a referent for ‘to love’ other than the word ‘ἐρᾶν’. Similarly, the word ‘λεγοῦσι’ and its consequent accusative infinitive “ἀνθρώπους ἐρᾶν;” identify it with one of its potential forms, namely what the concept of ‘people are in love’ means *when people talk about it*. The implication is that the open expression of the concept alters its meaning—something silent, once voiced, cannot be the same as before.¹³⁸ The Nurse does not seem able to distinguish Phaedra’s idea of articulated Love from a more general definition, but her response is in many ways a definition of both sorts: “ἡδιστον, ὦ παῖ, ταῦτόν ἀλγεινόν θ’ ἅμα” (348) [the greatest pleasure, my child, and just as much pain too]. Love, it seems, is defined by a contradictory dualism, simultaneously powerful as a source of both joy and pain.¹³⁹ The self-contradictory is a common theme throughout the play—things which, while thought of as single concepts, contain within them conflicting aspects.¹⁴⁰ We have seen, for instance, that Hippolytus’s piety has two sides to it. His piety towards Artemis is unimpeachable (as the goddess herself recognises from 1394ff.)—but it is also the cause of Aphrodite’s charge of irreverence. His holiness, though a single righteous concept to him, has contradictory results—faith in the gods causes him to keep his oath to the Nurse and so ensures that he dies.

Phaedra articulates this theme very neatly when she speaks of the concept of Shame a little later on:

Φα. αἰδώς τε· δισσαῖ δ’ εἰσίν, ἡ μὲν οὐ κακή,
ἡ δ’ ἄχθος οἴκων· εἰ δ’ ὁ καιρὸς ἦν σαφής
οὐκ ἂν δύ’ ἦσθην ταῦτ’ ἔχοντε γράμματα. (Barrett 1964)

Ph. And shame: there are two kinds, the one that isn’t bad
and the other which is a burden on a house. If what was correct was clear,
then there wouldn’t be two things having the same letters. (*Hipp.* 385-387)

¹³⁸ For more on these sorts of binaries in the play (seen/unseen, hear/unheard, spoken/silent), see Goff 1990: 1-26.

¹³⁹ The theme of double-edged or bittersweet love is found in Greek literature from early lyric onwards and was utilised by many later Latin writers. See, for instance, Sappho 31, fr 130; Posidippus *AP* 5.134; Catullus 51, 68 85. See Goff 1990: 27-30 (on the *Hipp.*), Calame 1992: 14-19, Gutzwiller 2015: 23-44 (esp. 29), and Horn 2016: 1-21.

¹⁴⁰ For other instances of dualistic meaning in Euripides, see McDermott 1991.

Phaedra knows full well that her love is doomed, just as she is herself—she cannot escape her inherited misfortune and she cannot escape the deity whom she is vaguely aware is the cause of the entire situation.¹⁴¹ It is with a sense of resigned certainty that she responds to the Nurse’s double definition of Love, “ἡμεῖς ἂν εἶμεν θατέρῳ κεχρημένοι” (349) [It will be the second sort then which is mine]. This declaration is her most concrete answer to the cause of her decline yet and stimulates the Nurse to ask a flurry of blunt questions: “τί φῆς; ἐρᾷς, ὃ τέκνον; ἀνθρώπων τίνας;” (350) [What are you saying? Are you in love, my child? With which person?]. It is here that Phaedra uses Hippolytus’s Amazon mother to describe him. The relative phrase “ὅστις ποθ’ οὗτός ἐσθ’” (351) [he, whom you mentioned before] does not clearly designate the object of Phaedra’s desire beyond those men who have been spoken of and so she seems forced to clarify. For shame she cannot, however, give voice to Hippolytus’s name and so, using Aphrodite’s earlier expression, calls him “ὁ τῆς Ἀμαζόνης” (351) [the Amazon’s son]. So unwilling in fact is she to name him that when the Nurse does, she lays the responsibility for this at the Nurse’s feet: “σοῦ τάδ’, οὐκ ἐμοῦ, κλύεις.” (352) [you heard this from yourself, not from me].

2.3.5. *Phaedra: 583-584*

The fourth and final reference to Antiopē’s ethnicity occurs in the second *episodion*, while Phaedra and the Chorus listen at the door to the Nurse’s conversation with Hippolytus. The Chorus has asked what the matter is and Phaedra gives them this as a reply, pre-empting Hippolytus’s entrance on stage some fifteen lines later. Its use here cannot be euphemistic, since Phaedra later says his name, so it must be assumed that it is used for the same reason of characterisation as the second example.¹⁴²

Φα. ὁ τῆς φιλίππου παῖς Ἀμαζόνης βοᾷ,
Ἴππόλυτος, αὐδῶν δεινὰ πρόσπολον κακά. (Barrett 1964)

Ph. **The child of the horse-loving Amazon** is shouting,

¹⁴¹ There is always some indication that the characters are aware of some divine cause to Phaedra’s plight. The Nurse, when she originally questions her about the reason for her suffering, says “τάδε μαντείας ἄξια πολλῆς, ὅστις σε θεῶν ἀνασειράξει/ καὶ παρακόπτει φρένας, ὃ παῖ” (236-238) [This is worth much divination, [to find] whichever god pulls you back and strikes your senses aside, child].

¹⁴² It is also probably more metrically convenient.

Hippolytus, saying terrible things to the servant (*Hipp.* 583-584).

Here we have another adjective specifying the Amazons' connection to horses, 'φίλιππος' or 'horse-loving', which is given as a description of Hippolytus's mother.¹⁴³ The Amazonian association with horses has already been discussed above, as has the earlier use of the word ἵππιος at 307.¹⁴⁴ We have already encountered references to horses and Hippolytus's obsession with hunting or outdoor pursuits in general at lines 15-18. What is significant about this reference is that it prefigures Hippolytus's angry outburst (616-668), in response to the Nurse's assault on his sexual chastity. That Phaedra should explicitly connect his shouting and obvious lack of control (and of σωφροσύνη), with his mother as 'φίλιππος', and, in addition, that she should identify him with this particular matronymic to the chorus of women of Troezen, who have already sung their exquisite song to Sexual Desire, raises important questions about gender and sexual identity, which I have already hinted at, but will now discuss in full.

2.4 Textual evidence: gender and sexuality

Bastardy had an enormous effect on the gender and sexual identity of the bastard. Under the PCL, an illegitimate child could only produce illegitimate children, rendering bastards sexual non-entities so far as the *polis* and *oikos* were concerned. This failure to fulfil masculine duties has been discussed above, but the subtler parts of Hippolytus's sexuality and gender as Euripides portrays it need to be examined further. What bastards' sex lives were like in late fifth-century Athens is uncertain, as are many conclusions about what sort of sexuality they were stereotyped as having. Hippolytus's attitudes toward sex, sexuality, and gender and how these exist in dialectic with his bastardy are complicated and do not necessarily help us to appreciate how Euripides was interacting with the contemporary position of bastards when he characterises Hippolytus as being essentially sexually abnormal. That Hippolytus's views *are* abnormal, however, both within the logic of the play and the socio-cultural milieu of the time, has generally been agreed.¹⁴⁵ His vehemently held ideology is premised on the maintenance of virginity as a

¹⁴³ LSJ, s.v. φίλιππος 1 and MGS, s.v. φίλιππος A

¹⁴⁴ LSJ, s.v. ἵππιος 1 and MGS, s.v. ἵππιος A.

¹⁴⁵ See Barrett 1964:n.79-81, Segal 1970: 279, North 1977: 37, Zeitlin 1985: 52-111, Mitchell 1991: 97-122, Cairns 1997: 51-75, and Kokkini 2013: 67-83. For attempted rebuttals, see Vickers 1973: 147, and Davies 2000: 66.

moral and religious imperative; this clearly contradicts the Greek sexual, moral and religious conventions for a young man at the time of the play's production. Hippolytus is able to control his sexuality so completely because, he claims, he has the quality of σωφροσύνη. The word and the concept which it defines is an essentially feminine virtue and understanding how this is related to Hippolytus's bastardy, sexuality, and gender is the focus of the following section.

2.4.1 σωφροσύνη

The Greek concept of σωφροσύνη (adjectivally σώφρων and verbally σωφρονεῖν) is, as North puts it, one of “the most multifaceted of Greek virtues” (1977: 35).¹⁴⁶ In English, it is commonly translated as something like ‘self-control’, ‘moderation’ or ‘temperance’ but these have tended to be seen as “hopelessly flat”, since they imply not the presence of a positive attribute but rather the *absence* of a negative one (Barrett 1964: 172-173).¹⁴⁷ While Barrett's ‘virtue’ at least has the advantage of this implication, a further problem with any simple English translation of σωφροσύνη is that it inevitably lacks the Greek original's strongly gendered connotative distinctions.

In the earliest examples from the *Iliad* (21.462) and the *Odyssey* (4.158, 23.13) “there is nothing specifically masculine or feminine” about σωφροσύνη (North 1977: 37). It is only during the seventh and sixth centuries, and continuing into the fifth, that we begin to find the implications of σωφροσύνη for men and women aligned with each gender's social, political and domestic roles. For both the basic concept of σωφροσύνη remained centred on ideas of self-knowledge, self-control and self-inhibition but the parts of oneself which are known, controlled and inhibited

¹⁴⁶ Although the concept of σωφροσύνη is certainly still debatable, scholarship on it has been dominated by Helen North, whose 1966 book *Sophrosyne: Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek Literature* sets out at length its different uses and meanings throughout the course of Greek literature. The thoroughly evidenced definitions offered in her study have remained for the most part uncontested and, as such, most of my own understanding of the subject has been gleaned from or is influenced by North's.

¹⁴⁷ There are two proposed etymologies of *sōphrosynē*. The first, offered by Barrett in his *Hippolytus* commentary, is that it is “the condition of one whose φρένες are σῶν”, that is, one who is in possession of their own mind (1964: 172). The second is given by North who writes that it is “a compound derived from the *ō*-grade of *-phrēn* (“mind”) and the Homeric *saos*—Ionian-Attic *sōos*, *sōs* (“healthy, safe, sound”)—plus the suffix *-synē*, which forms a feminine abstract noun from the earlier adjective *saophrōn*.” See LSJ, s.v. σωφροσύνη 1, 2 and MGS, s.v. σωφροσύνη A, B.

differ according to the person to whom they are applied.¹⁴⁸ On the one hand, models of moderation and temperance began to be heavily foregrounded in religious ideas over the period of the sixth and seventh centuries, coming to be “congenial to Apolline morality with its emphasis on restraint, self-knowledge, and the acceptance of limits” (North 1977: 37-38).¹⁴⁹ On the other hand, the general shift away from dynastic autocracy towards a *polis*-culture based on popular rule saw a general emphasis on the welfare of the *polis* and the maintenance of moderation for the sake of state, rather than personal, interests.¹⁵⁰ The ideal of σωφροσύνη was particularly absorbed by the aristocracy and the elite, who espouse the virtue as a part of their *physis*.¹⁵¹

The social and domestic roles of men and women set the basic boundaries for the distinctions of σωφροσύνη. For men it came to be something specifically linked to the *polis* and in particular to issues surrounding class, wealth and public standing.¹⁵² Regarding sexual self-control, σωφροσύνη seems generally to only have been used of men when they were adolescents as a guiding virtue in their relationships with potential *erastai*.¹⁵³ For the sexual and moral conduct of mature men it “never ranks very high, in this sense, in the table of masculine virtues” (North 1977: 37).¹⁵⁴ As a feminine virtue, however, it was entirely focussed on sexual and domestic concerns, most notably marriage and the maintenance of wifely virtue for the sake of the

¹⁴⁸ For the rise in importance of the concept of moderation, see particularly Dodds 1951: 75.

¹⁴⁹ This is perhaps most neatly evidenced by the appearance of the proverbs of the Seven Wise Men, the two most famous of which, γνῶθι σαυτὸν [know yourself] and μὴδὲν ἄγαν [nothing in excess], exemplify very well some of *sōphrosynē*’s central tenets.

¹⁵⁰ See Aristotle *Politics* 7.4.2-6.7. Also, see Cohen 2000: 11-39.

¹⁵¹ Evident especially in the poetry of Theognis, Bacchylides and Pindar.

¹⁵² See North 1966: 13.

¹⁵³ For pederasty and σωφροσύνη, see Kokkini 2013:72, and Skinner 2014: 163-167.

¹⁵⁴ As democracy developed, it did begin to be seen as one of the defining features of Athenian masculinity, but without the emphasis on sexual behaviour that it has for women. Later on, in Socratic literature, such as Plato’s *Charmides*, it is connected to sexual temperance. It was given as one of the four (Christianised as ‘cardinal’) virtues by Plato along with φρόνησις [thoughtfulness, prudence], ἀνδρεία [manliness, courage] and δικαιοσύνη [righteousness, justice] (*Republic* 427e, *Protagoras* 330b). Ferguson, whether ironically or not, writes of *sōphrosynē*, “It has been called the characteristic Greek virtue but, on the contrary, they were exhorted to it because they did not characteristically possess it” (1984: n.80). For more debate on this issue, see Dover 1974: 66-69, and Skinner 2014: *pass.* (esp. 113).

husband. It came eventually to be almost synonymous with the virginity of young women, their marital loyalty and their sexual chastity.¹⁵⁵

2.4.2 *Hippolytus's σωφροσύνη*

Euripides' *Hippolytus* conceptualises of σωφροσύνη as an extreme form of the feminine virtue of virginal purity, which he in turn equates to moral purity.¹⁵⁶ His understanding of his own σωφροσύνη, however, casts it not as something which he has gained through instruction, but rather as an aspect innate to his φύσις—he believes that he is *naturally* sexually pure and, therefore, *naturally* morally pure. This inherent purity is what grants Hippolytus the unique privilege of a relationship with Artemis that is “μείζω βροτείας” (19) [more than mortal], as well as the right to condemn anyone (mortal or god) who does not keep the same standards of σωφροσύνη. It is this that alienates him from his *oikos* and that causes the Nurse to label him as “νόθον φρονοῦντα γνήσια” (308) [the bastard who thinks himself legitimate].

¹⁵⁵ From as early as the late-seventh century BCE, in the poetry of Semonides of Amorgos, these are the attributes of σωφροσύνη outlined in the description of the ‘Bee woman’, whom he describes as the only desirable type of wife. She stays loyally with her husband into old age, has children with him and avoids even talking about sex.

τὴν δ' ἐκ μελίσσης· τὴν τις εὐτυχεῖ λαβών·
κείνη γὰρ οἴῃ μῶμος οὐ προσιζάνει,
θάλλει δ' ὑπ' αὐτῆς κάπαέζεται βίος,
φίλη δὲ σὺν φιλέοντι γηράσκει πόσει/
τεκοῦσα καλὸν κῶνομάκλυτον γένος.
κάριπρεπὴς μὲν ἐν γυναιξὶ γίνεται
πάσησι, θεῇ δ' ἀμφιδέδρομεν χάρις.
οὐδ' ἐν γυναιξὶν ἥδεται καθημένη
ᾧκου λέγουσιν ἀφροδισίους λόγους.
τοίας γυναῖκας ἀνδράσιν χαρίζεται
Ζεὺς τὰς ἀρίστας καὶ πολυφραδεστάτας· (ed. West 1998)

And then there is she from the bee: he who has her is happy. For it is to her only that no folly clings, and life flourishes and prospers through her and lovingly she grows old with her loving husband, bearing offspring beautiful and famed. She is distinguished among all women, and holy grace surrounds her; nor does she enjoy sitting with women when they talk about sex. Zeus graces men with wives like this, the best and wisest (Semonides, fr. 7.83-95).

¹⁵⁶ For other examinations of σωφροσύνη in the *Hippolytus*, see Segal 1978: 129-148, Zeitlin 1985: 52-111, Cairns 1997: 53-58, Kokkini 2013: 72-79, and Mitchell 1991: 116-117.

The morality of σωφροσύνη lies at the heart of Hippolytus's ideology and is, in many respects, the most impactful consequence of his illegitimacy.¹⁵⁷ In the first place, it allows him to create his own reality in which he can judge the world by standards that exclude legitimacy. That, however, might be the outcome no matter what personal morality Hippolytus adopted, so long as his bastardy was disregarded. The significance of σωφροσύνη is found in the manifold ways it links to his bastardy.

Σωφροσύνη, in this narrow sense of sexual chastity, is a fundamentally feminine virtue and, as such, his obsession with it connects to the characteristic feminisation of bastards. In fact, this understanding of σωφροσύνη is not only a feminine virtue, but one specifically associated with παρθένοι, young, unmarried girls, whose virginity was one of their defining features. It is, importantly, almost the direct inverse of the virile masculinity expected of citizen men, from which Hippolytus's birth-status disqualifies him. Within the narrow limits prescribed to παρθένοι, he finds the chance to surpass the patriarchal society and people that are directly responsible for his suffering as a bastard.

This suffering was initiated by his parents, the illegitimacy of whose sexual union was passed on to Hippolytus, along with an intense aversion to anything remotely sexual. The virginal meaning of σωφροσύνη for him is not necessarily premised on the same protection of virtue as would be for a παρθένος, but rather on an attitude of *anti*-sexuality.¹⁵⁸ In this he mirrors Artemis, his patron goddess and rejects Aphrodite, whom he connects with the external 'hyper-sexuality' which he sees everywhere (but particularly in Phaedra's desire).

Euripides does not introduce the virtue of σωφροσύνη and its associations with Hippolytus's bastardy into the play by any overt method, but builds it up through repeated references. There are, in particular, two important passages that need to be studied in order to uncover the extent to which σωφροσύνη is a part of Hippolytus's ideology and what precedents might be responsible for this.

¹⁵⁷ Barrett calls it Hippolytus's "cardinal virtue" (1964: 172).

¹⁵⁸ For Hippolytus's anti-sexuality, see Cairns 1997: 57 and Kokkini 2013: 75-83.

2.4.3 *Hippolytus*: 73-87

Lines 73-87 occur at the beginning of the play, following the hymn which Hippolytus and his companions sing to Artemis on their entrance at the end of Aphrodite's prologue (1-57). Hippolytus has entered at line 58, urging his companions to praise Artemis, which they proceed to do from lines 61-71. He then approaches the statue of Artemis on stage and offers her a coronet which he has woven of cuttings from a meadow sacred to her.

Ἴπ. σοὶ τόνδε πλεκτὸν στέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτου
 λειμῶνος, ᾧ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω,
 ἔνθ' οὔτε ποιμὴν ἀξιοῖ φέρβειν βοτὰ
 οὔτ' ἦλθέ πω σίδηρος, ἀλλ' ἀκήρατον
 μέλισσα λειμῶν' ἡρινὴ διέρχεται
 Αἰδῶς δὲ ποταμίαισι κηπεύει δρόσοις,
 ὅσοις διδακτὸν μηδέν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει
 τὸ **σωφρονεῖν** εἵληχεν εἰς τὰ πάντ' αἰεί,
 τοῦτοις δρέπεσθαι, τοῖς κακοῖσι δ' οὐ θέμις.
 ἀλλ', ᾧ φίλη δέσποινα, χρυσέας κόμης
 ἀνάδημα δέξαι χειρὸς εὐσεβοῦς ἄπο.
 μόνῳ γάρ ἐστι τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ γέρας βροτῶν·
 σοὶ καὶ ζύνειμι καὶ λόγοις ἀμείβομαι,
 κλύων μὲν αὐδῆς, ὄμμα δ' οὐχ ὀρῶν τὸ σόν.
 τέλος δὲ κάμψαιμ' ὥσπερ ἡρξάμην βίου. (Barrett 1964)

Hi. To you I bring this woven garland, oh mistress,
 fashioned from an undefiled meadow,
 wherein no shepherd is worthy to pasture his beasts
 nor into which iron has yet come—rather, through
 the undefiled meadow flies the springtime bee,
 while Shame cherishes it with river waters
 for those untrained, who are allotted

perpetual virtue in all things
to take cuttings from—the sordid have no right to it.¹⁵⁹
But now, oh beloved mistress, receive from
my reverent hand this crown upon your golden tresses!
For this is my privilege alone among mortals:
I consort with you and answer you with words,
when I hear your voice but do not see your face.
May I end life’s race just as I began it! (*Hipp.* 73-87)

This passage has received a fair amount of scholarly attention.¹⁶⁰ It gives us the first expression of Hippolytus’s understanding of σωφροσύνη and makes use of sexual subtexts to reference the importance of sexuality to the play. It seems that Euripides makes a metaphorical correspondence between the meadow and Hippolytus, and there are aspects shared by both which connect them closely with Artemis.¹⁶¹ Additionally, the meadow is a literary *topos* associated with sexual encounters and particularly “sexual innocence about to be violated” (Cairns 1997:62).¹⁶² They also flesh out the basic characterisation given by Aphrodite (10-19) and help to inform our understanding of his motivations later in the play.¹⁶³

Hippolytus’s lines here are permeated with the disconcerting feeling that distinguishes the hymn which precedes them. His entrance at 58 is accompanied by the jubilant exhortation “ἔπεσθε ἄιδοντες ἔπεσθε/ τὰν Διὸς οὐρανίαν/ Ἄρτεμιν, ἣ μελόμεσθα (58-60) [Follow, follow, singing of Zeus’s child, the heavenly Artemis, by whom we are cared for] which starkly contrasts in tone and meaning Aphrodite’s darkly prophetic final lines, “...οὐ γὰρ οἶδ’ ἀνεωγμενας πύλας/ Ἄιδου, φάος δὲ λοίσθιον βλέπων τόδε” (56-57) [For he does not know that the gates of Hades stand

¹⁵⁹ Lines 79-81 are difficult to translate, in part because the text is corrupt and there is uncertainty about how to punctuate it. See Barrett 1964 *ad loc.*

¹⁶⁰ See Berns 1973: 165-187 (esp. 165-8), Bremer 1975: 275-280, Goff 1990: 58-75, Mitchell 1991: 116-117, 51-75, Cairns, 1993: 314-340, 1997: 51-75, Craik 1998: 33-34, Deacy 2013: 399 n.17, and Kokkini 2013: 72-73.

¹⁶¹ See Berns 1973: 165-187, Bremer 1975: 268-280, Cairns, 1993: 314-340, Cairns 1997: 51-75 (esp. 51-52), Craik 1998: 30-31, Kokkini 2013: 74.

¹⁶² Meadows and flowers are often associated with sexual encounters, though many of these are violent and without consent. Examples include *Hom. Hymn to Demeter* 414-433, Archilochus fr196a, Sappho 2, and Euripides, *Ion* 887-890. On the subject, see especially Deacy 2013: 395-413

¹⁶³ For the characterisation given by this section, see Cairns 1997: 51-75. For metaphor as a means of characterisation in tragedy, see Gould 1978:43-67.

open and this is the last day he will see].¹⁶⁴ By introducing Hippolytus into the play with these lines Euripides solidifies Aphrodite's initial characterisation and does so in a manner which emphasises the central conflict between sex and chastity. The abruptness of the shift in feeling is disquieting and this persists throughout the hymn into Hippolytus's dedication. Visually, this uneasiness would only have been reinforced by the contrast between the energy of Hippolytus and his band around Artemis' statue and the stillness surrounding Aphrodite's.

With the hymn over, Hippolytus begins his monologue, which is divided into two parts. The first (73-81) consists of the description of the meadow from which the flowers have been cut and identifies the sort of people who are permitted to enter it. The second (82-87) concentrates on Hippolytus himself and his relationship with the goddess Artemis.

Hippolytus opens his speech by drawing attention to the garland which he brings to Artemis and tells us that it has come “ἐξ ἀκηράτου/ λειμῶνος” (73) [from an undefiled meadow]. This first description of the meadow specifies its purity by using a word with sexual connotations. ‘ἀκήρατος’, the privative adjective of the verb κεράννυναι ‘to mix’, and it has the sense of something to which an action has *not* been done, and therefore remains in its original state.¹⁶⁵ The meadow, so Hippolytus clarifies, remains undefiled because it has never been subjected to human influence: “ἐνθ’ οὔτε ποιμὴν ἀξιοῖ φέρβειν βοτὰ/ οὔτ’ ἤλθέ πω σίδηρος...” (75-76) [wherein no shepherd is worthy to pasture his beasts/ nor into which iron has yet come]. Domestication and metallurgy have been kept from it and it remains in its natural state. The only interaction with mortals that it has had, is with devotees of the goddess whose sacred land it is and, as he will go on to say, even these are the most exceptional of people.¹⁶⁶

He then moves from negative definition (what the meadow is not) to positive (what it is). The only change to the meadow is brought about by the seasons, themselves unchanging in their

¹⁶⁴ There is some debate about the attribution of lines in this hymn. I follow Barrett 1964: *ad loc.* (contra. Harry 1904: *ad loc.*) who gives 58-60 to Hippolytus and 61-71 to Hippolytus and the chorus of attendants.

¹⁶⁵ LSJ, s.v. ἀκήρατος 1, 2 and MGS, s.v. ἀκήρατος A, B.

¹⁶⁶ Barrett writes that “land sacred to a god seems commonly, and naturally, to have been taboo to human use; prohibitions of the pasturing of animals, the felling or gathering of timber, etc. are common in inscription...This λειμῶν evidently is sacred to Artemis herself...; that a votary should gather a garland there for the goddess herself was presumably no infringement of the taboo” (1964: *ad. loc.*).

predictability: it is the “μέλισσα...ἡρινή” (77) [the springtime bee] which flies through it. This image has been recognised as essentially erotic, as the specification of springtime links the image with the vitality and fecundity of the season, reinforced by the dynamism of the bee which passes through it.¹⁶⁷ The meadow is tended by Αἰδῶς which is the force which “prevents a man from breaking the taboo,” and often translates as simply ‘shame’ or ‘reverence’ (Barrett 1964: *ad. loc.*).¹⁶⁸ By means of river waters (a natural source of purification, very often used in rituals), this personified abstract, so Hippolytus says, is responsible for keeping the meadow in its natural condition. There is, from as early as the *Odyssey*, a link between αἰδῶς and σωφροσύνη, particularly regarding the shyness of youth, very often towards things of a sexual nature.¹⁶⁹ Like σωφροσύνη, αἰδῶς informs people’s propriety, signifying to them the suitability and (perhaps more often) the unsuitability of actions and pushing them towards the correct course.¹⁷⁰

The following two lines qualify the type of people, for whom αἰδῶς tends the meadow: namely, those who have σωφροσύνη “ἐν τῇ φύσει” (79) [in their nature]; that is, who have not been educated in what it is, but are among the select who from birth simply *know* it. It is to these that the right has been given to pick flowers from the meadow because their fate has “εἵληχεν” (80) [allotted] it to them.¹⁷¹ Anyone who has not been granted the innate knowledge of σωφροσύνη is unavoidably κακός, a word imbued with a variety of meanings, ranging from the aesthetic (‘ugly’), through the social (‘ill-born’, ‘ignoble’), to the moral (‘evil’, ‘wicked’, ‘cowardly’)—these, Hippolytus claims, must keep away from the goddess’s meadow.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁷ See Rankin 1974: 75-84, Goff 1990: 59, Rabinowitz 1993: 182, Craik 1998: 36, Roisman 1999: 29, and Lambert 2019: 135-136. On bee imagery, see also n.155 above.

¹⁶⁸ LSJ, s.v. αἰδῶς 1 and MGS, s.v. αἰδῶς A.

¹⁶⁹ Telemachus at *Od.* 3.24 and 4.158-160 could easily have both of these characteristics, while “the closest parallel to Hippolytus in the Euripidean corpus...[is] the youthful Achilles of the *Iphigenia at Aulis* whose *aidōs* and *sōphrosynē* are especially active in the sphere of coyness and propriety vis-à-vis the opposite sex” (Cairns 1993: 315).

¹⁷⁰ For the link between αἰδῶς and σωφροσύνη, see Cairns 1997: 55-57.

¹⁷¹ “The Greeks thought of a man’s native qualities or destiny as assigned to him in an inscrutable distribution: his destiny is his μοῖρα (part, share), it is given him by a δαίμων (apportioner), and he himself λαγχάνει it, ‘receives it as his lot or portion’ by a power responsible for his destiny” (Barrett 1964:172). This, however, does not seem to apply (or at least is atypical) of moral purity: “his insistence that the purity must be innate would be extraordinary even then” (*Ibid.*).

¹⁷² See LSJ, s.v. κακός and MGS, s.v. κακός

This claim, of all of those made by Hippolytus in this speech, would have opposed contemporary fifth-century thought most strongly. Barrett comments,

“Now this [requirement of innate moral purity] by ordinary standards is a quite astonishing claim: normal 5th-century practice required, certainly, that the man who entered a sacred place or took part in a sacred ritual should be ἄγνός [pure, clean], but this ἄγνεία was a purely formal affair of observing taboos” (1964: 172).

The issue of innate versus taught σωφροσύνη has been argued over since antiquity; however, Hippolytus’s version of it extends far beyond any contemporary conceptions of it.¹⁷³ His requirements are impossible to fulfil for any but himself, since he believes himself alone to do so. Euripides has formulated an understanding of virtue which privileges Hippolytus above others and, importantly, lacks any social or political requirements. The aristocracy had long professed a belief in their natural right to σωφροσύνη, but their version of it, unlike Hippolytus’s, lacked the religious and moral exclusivity which he now claims. He does not, it should be noted, claim that it is impossible to teach σωφροσύνη, as his wish at line 667 that “...τις αὐτὰς σωφρονεῖν διδάξάτω” [some should teach them [women] to be σώφρων] shows. It is something which can be taught and we might assume that he himself has instructed his own followers in its features; his own σωφροσύνη, however, is superior because he has it naturally.

2.4.4 Hippolytus: 993-1006

The second passage comes from the third *episodion* at lines 993-1006. It is found in Hippolytus’s response to Theseus’s speech (936-980) in which he confronts his son about Phaedra’s death and her allegation of rape. Hippolytus has entered and found his grieving father unresponsive to his

¹⁷³ See Berns 1973: 166-167. Barrett (1964: 172) notes that moral purity as a religious requirement may have been evident in the beliefs of the Orphics and mystery cults, but these did not advance a version of ‘original’ purity, and neither were so intolerant and exclusive about their initiates.

questions: he does not tell his son the reason for his grief and gives a speech in which he wishes that men had two voices, one for truth and one for lies. Hippolytus then gives a speech in reply.

Ἰπ. ...εἰσορᾷς φάος τόδε
 καὶ γαῖαν· ἐν τοῖσδ' οὐκ ἔνεστ' ἀνὴρ ἐμοῦ,
 οὐδ' ἦν σὺ μὴ φῆς, **σωφρονέστερος** γεγώς.
 ἐπίσταμαι γὰρ πρῶτα μὲν θεοὺς σέβειν
 φίλοις τε χρῆσθαι μὴ ἀδικεῖν πειρωμένοις
 ἀλλ' οἷσιν αἰδῶς μήτ' ἐπαγγέλλειν κακὰ
 μήτ' ἀνθυπουργεῖν αἰσχροῖς τοῖσι χρωμένοις,
 οὐκ ἐγγελαστὴς τῶν ὁμιλούντων, πάτερ,
 ἀλλ' αὐτὸς οὐ παροῦσι κάγγυς ὢν φίλοις.
 ἐνὸς δ' ἄθικτος, ᾧ με νῦν ἔχειν δοκεῖς·
 λέχους γὰρ εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας ἀγνὸν δέμας.
 οὐκ οἶδα πρᾶξιν τήνδε πλὴν λόγῳ κλύων
 γραφῇ τε λεύσσω· οὐδὲ ταῦτα γὰρ σκοπεῖν
 πρόθυμός εἰμι, παρθένον ψυχὴν ἔχων. (Barrett 1964)

Hi. ...You see this sunlight
and this land: there is no man in it,
(not even if you deny it) **more virtuous** than I.
For first and foremost I believe in honouring the gods
and in keeping friends who do no wrong
but instead think it shameful to demand wicked things
of their companions and return villainy for kindnesses.
I am not one who mocks his companions, father,
but am the same to friends both present and absent.
And I am untouched by one thing, that by which you think you now have me:
for to this very day my body has remained pure from sex.
I know nothing of the deed except from what I've heard

and the pictures I have seen: and even these I have no urge
to look upon—for I have a virgin's soul. (993-1006)

The lines are imbued with a feeling of similar disquiet to lines 73-87. Not only do they retain the tension built during Theseus's preceding attack on Hippolytus but, since they occur *after* the latter has been cursed by his father (893-898), there is a futility to them that is touching. Just as in the first passage Hippolytus enters joyfully in his ignorance of Aphrodite's preceding words, so too, here, his proud self-defence appears futile in the light of his predicted doom.

Hippolytus, while he is not joyful here (as with his dedication to Artemis), does not, however, match the viciousness of his father's anger but instead speaks with an indignant sense of superiority. His opening denial of his own oratorical skill, “ἐγὼ δ' ἄκομψος εἰς ὄχλον δοῦναι λόγον” (986) [I am unskilled in speaking before a crowd]¹⁷⁴ is belied by its eloquence and is spoken with, as Barrett puts it, “a peculiar priggishness” (1964: *ad loc.*). This tone persists throughout the speech, which comes across less as an outburst of vexation and more as a forensic argument.

Hippolytus gives this précis of his virtuous character as a rejoinder to the ironical and spiteful attacks Theseus makes of it. Repeating Hippolytus's own words from his dedication to Artemis his father asks him the rhetorical questions, “σὺ δὲ θεοῖσιν ὥς περισσὸς ὢν ἀνὴρ/ ζύνει; σὺ σώφρων καὶ κακῶν ἀκήρατος;” (948-949) [Oh indeed, so you consort with the gods since you are so remarkable a man? You, who is so virtuous and undefiled by evils?]. Although asked sarcastically, Hippolytus responds in the only way he knows how: by reiterating and reinforcing these claims to exclusive virtuousness which he has been reciting throughout the play.

He begins by contextualising his remarks, giving them the same generalised sense which his qualification of the people who might enter the meadow has at lines 79-81. The group from which he distinguishes himself encompasses all mortals, all who are looked upon by the sun or walk on earth. Of all of these, there is no one “σώφρονέστερος” (995) [more σώφρων] than

¹⁷⁴ A “commonplace of the Athenian law-courts (e.g. Lysias 12.3, 19.2; Isaeus. 8.5, 10.1; Demosthenes 27.2, 55.7) as a means of securing the jury's sympathy” (Barrett 1964: *ad loc.*).

Hippolytus, no one who possesses such σωφροσύνη as he does. His claim here is more forthright than the one he makes in the meadow speech. The other is implicit in his handing over the garland, which, if his description of the meadow is correct, means he *must* be innately σώφρων; here he states it outright and immediately discounts any counterargument which Theseus might give.

His definition of his σωφροσύνη then commences and again is far more blatant than it was previously. Its first feature, he claims, is “θεοὺς σέβειν” (996) [to honour the gods]. This is not an aspect which he says outright in the meadow speech, but is certainly implied by his actions: he is saying the things he is while honouring Artemis. The irony, however, exists in the following interaction with his servant when he claims, “οὐδεὶς μ’ ἀρέσκει νυκτὶ θαυμαστὸς θεῶν” (106) [no god worshiped by night is pleasing to me]. Here, the irony is just as strong, as we have had time to see the vehemence of his hatred of sex and its patron goddess Aphrodite. His intensity of belief, as so often with fanatics, is plagued by hypocrisy.

Secondly, he describes the sort of companions which a man, who is σώφρων, should have and how he should treat them. They themselves must, like him, be morally virtuous, that is think it ‘αἰσχρὸς’ [shameful, disgraceful]¹⁷⁵ to do wrong, to ask their friends to do wrong and who do wrong in exchange for right. This statement echoes the servant’s description of the νόμος has set down for mortals: “μισεῖν τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ τὸ μὴ πᾶσιν φίλον” (93) [to hate pride and not hate that beloved by all]. Hippolytus himself claims that this is what he does, and is constant in his friendships regardless of whether his friends are there or not.

His third feature is the most important of the three. It is the δέ clause which corresponds to the “πρῶτα μὲν” of line 996, so the sense is, ‘These are two of the features of σωφροσύνη, *but* here is what it really is.’ It is, of course, virginal purity. Hippolytus focusses on himself here, claiming that he is ἄθικτος (1002), ‘untouched’, and that he is totally ignorant of sex but for what he has seen in paintings and what people have told him—even these he does not want to know about. These words seem connected to his statement towards the end of his misogynistic speech (616-668): “ἀγὼ ῥυτοῖς νασμοῖσιν ἐξομόρξομαι/εἰς ὧτα κλύζων” (653-654) [I will purge these things,

¹⁷⁵ “shameful, distasteful” (LSJ, s.v. αἰσχρὸς 2 and MGS, s.v. αἰσχρὸς A).

washing out my ears with flowing waters]. Even so much as *hearing* about sex, admittedly here sex with his stepmother, is too much for him and he desires to be cleansed with water, as the meadow is said to be earlier (78).

The matter of σωφροσύνη is raised once again by Hippolytus at the very end of the same speech with Theseus. He says,

Ιπ. ἐσωφρόνησε δ' οὐκ ἔχουσα σωφρονεῖν,
 ἡμεῖς δ' ἔχοντες οὐ καλῶς ἐχρώμεθα" (Barrett 1964)

Hi. She did a prudent thing, though she had no prudence
 and I, who have it, did not use it well. (1034-1035)

At first paradoxical, these lines are in fact provide one of the most interesting illustrations of Hippolytus's conception of σωφροσύνη as an innate characteristic and how it can manifest itself. Phaedra, he claims, was not inherently σώφρων as he is, but she managed to commit a single act of σωφροσύνη by deciding to kill herself rather than have the shame of her lust for him exposed. Here we are shown for the first and only time Hippolytus admitting that it is possible for people who lack σωφροσύνη to display it on occasion, even if it is only incidental. This belief does not necessarily contradict his beliefs about it as a human aspect: in his description of the meadow, as we have seen, he does not specifically deny that those who do not have it as part of their φύσις are wholly incapable of showing it. Rather, what disqualifies them from entry into the sacred space is that they have been defiled by any act they have committed without σωφροσύνη. He, of course, is allowed entry because he has never done such a thing and remains pure.

However, at 1035 we have our only glimpse that the results of being σώφρων, so far as Hippolytus conceptualises it, are not automatically positive, but can be incidentally unfortunate. Although he never claims that he has not had σωφροσύνη at all times, he is willing to admit that "οὐ καλῶς ἐχρώμεθα" (1035) [I did not use it well]. What he seems to be saying in this is that his disgust at the thought of anything sexual and his rejection of his stepmother's advances is evidence that he has σωφροσύνη innately, but that his violent and abusive reaction, in which he

threatens to tell Theseus, was perhaps not the best choice. It is the only time we see him admit to a mistake like this and is therefore an interesting example of how being σώφρων, usually regarded by him as rigidly binary, in fact has a fair amount of nuance to it.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the issue of bastardy in the *Hippolytus* and analysed the ways in which Euripides has chosen to interweave it into the text and depict its effects on the formation of Hippolytus's character. This has been done, for the most part, through a close-reading of specific sections of the play, most notably those containing instances of bastardy-related words, references to Antiopē, and mentions of σωφροσύνη. From this it is possible to see that Euripides makes a concerted effort to interconnect Hippolytus's ideology with his birth-status and it can be argued that the development of his fanatical rejection of sexuality and the normative roles he is expected to fill in both *polis* and *oikos* stems in large part from his being a bastard. I have also tried to show clearly that his bastardy is the direct result of his mother's ethnicity and that the frequent references to her Amazonian origin link the pair together, with the outcome that Hippolytus's bastardy is emphasised. In addition, it is possible to see in his preoccupation with horses and the wild, excessive devotion to Artemis, and rejection of heteronormative marriage constructs, the Amazonian culture of his maternal lineage. While the exact intentions behind Euripides' depiction of bastardy in the play can never be entirely certain, on the strength of the evidence available, I am able to suggest various promising possibilities.

Euripides' commentary on illegitimacy and its effects is most evident in Hippolytus's characterisation of himself and others of him. He is by no means a likeable character (he is in many ways thoroughly unpleasant) and the basic premise of the play is his punishment for the extremity of his ideology. Nevertheless, Euripides encourages our sympathy for him by interconnecting these contrarian beliefs with the obviously traumatic effects of his birth-status. The classification of bastardy is emphasised as something which comes from outside of the individual, enforced upon him by society and perpetuated throughout his life by constant reminders of his marginality. Our knowledge of how he is viewed comes initially from comments made by the Nurse, Phaedra and Theseus, which give special prominence to his

bastardy and especially to the ideology which it produces. Hippolytus is the victim of his circumstances and his uncompromising and egocentric ideas about purity and morality are his method of escaping from the judgements that others make of him for the sole reason that he is a bastard. His warped sense of selfhood is the cause of his downfall, but, since this nonconformity is only a reaction to his marginalisation by others, there is the suggestion that the ultimate cause of the tragedy is society's categorisation and treatment of bastards. That he is not deserving of this treatment is revealed at the end, where his final reconciliation with Theseus and vindication by Artemis seem to indicate that he has been unfairly victimised. It is made clear that Hippolytus's nobility and worth do exist despite his birth-status, but that the extremity of his self-affirming ideology, itself a reaction to bastardy, and the general attitudes of society have caused them to be obscured.

When examined from the perspective of a war-torn Athens in 428, the central themes of the play and Euripides' concentration on bastardy's effects seem to fit the general concerns of the city at the time. The alteration to the PCL in 429 was a reaction to the war and the plague that had ravaged the population of legitimate males and had led to a reassessment of bastards' place within the *oikos* and the *polis*. The topic was thus extremely pertinent to the time, as the long-standing power of the PCL was undermined and an alternative route for bastards to achieve legitimisation was opened up, in essence negating the idea that an individual's worth as an heir and a citizen was a result of the purity of his bloodline. Euripides' presentation of the effects of bastardy on the bastard suggest that he is commenting on the necessity for a change in the understanding of legitimacy as a qualification for participation and that the continued marginalisation of bastards would lead to the creation of men whose attitudes were set against the city, because they were denied a part of it. The pressures of the war meant that it was no longer feasible to maintain the same inflexible notions about social classifications and that there was little space left for the former attitudes about class, gender, inheritance, marriage and legitimacy.

In the following chapter I move on to the *Andromache*, which was performed roughly three years later in 425. This play, as with the *Hippolytus*, indicates a strong sympathy with the plight of the bastard, but does so mostly through the depiction of the bastard's mother, who suffers under the

effects of marginalisation through ethnicity and class. Euripides also tackles the problems of war, which would have been highly pertinent to the audience of the time.

CHAPTER 3: THE *ANDROMACHE*

3.1 Introduction

The *Andromache* stands out from the plays studied in this thesis because, unlike either the *Hippolytus* or the *Ion*, the bastard that draws our attention is not the central character. Andromache's son Molossus has, in fact, little more than a cameo role and no significant characterisation, either to do with his bastardy or not. Rather, concerns about illegitimacy are woven into the *Andromache* almost exclusively through the speeches and dialogues of the main speaking characters, Andromache, Menelaus, Hermione, and Peleus. Their relationships to one another are defined according to the abnormal structure of the amphimetric house and, as a result, much of what is said between them is pertinent to bastardy and its associated themes. These interactions, therefore, provide us with the majority of our textual evidence for bastardy in the play.

Despite the fact that Molossus does not directly refer to his birth-status at all in the narrative, the *Andromache* in fact contains more words related to the subject than either of the other two plays. The word νόθος occurs four times (224, 636, 638, 928), νοθαγενής twice (912, 942), and γνήσιος three times (193, 638, 941). While these are not all direct references to Molossus, because they are all spoken in relation to the domestic situation, they nevertheless comment, directly or indirectly, on bastardy and its effects in an amphimetric household. This chapter, like the preceding one, consists primarily of a focussed analysis of the occurrences of these bastardy-related words and their contexts, in order to understand what Euripides is attempting to say about bastardy in the play. Such is the structure of the play, however, that the textual evidence of this chapter is more effectively examined according to the relative *episodea*, rather than by looking at the instances of bastardy-related words separately. Before it is possible to begin this examination the problematic nature of the play necessitates an overview of previous scholarship on it.

3.2 *A problem play*

Since antiquity, the *Andromache* has gathered neither the same level of general appreciation, nor of scholarly attention as the *Hippolytus*. In fact, the prevailing opinion has been that it is an unconventional play and, accordingly, also a bad one. Nevertheless, it has received its fair share of interest from scholars trying to understand the tragedy's peculiar structure, the mythological background of the plot, and what the intentions of Euripides' innovations were. Critics have also paid a great deal of attention to the depiction of women and gender in the play, which, like many of Euripides' works, is focussed on the treatment of women, both by men and by other women.¹⁷⁶

3.2.1 *Unity and intention*

The second-century hypothesis to the *Andromache*, ascribed to Aristophanes of Byzantium, states that it is “τὸ δρᾶμα τῶν δευτέρων”¹⁷⁷ [a drama of the second kind], and, when it is interpreted through an Aristotelian lens, this assessment of the play seems justified.¹⁷⁸ Its central fault has always been the marked lack of narrative ‘unity’ caused by the absence of a clearly defined protagonist and the disjointedness of the tripartite plot-structure. Although *Andromache* gives the play its title and is the central figure of the first-half, she leaves the stage at the end of the third *episodion* (765) and, whether or not she returns, does not speak again. Instead, the focus shifts in the fourth *episodion* (802-1008) to Hermione's fearful anticipation of Neoptolemus's return from Delphi and her subsequent ‘rescue’ by Orestes. Finally, in the *exodos* (1047-1288), the focus shifts again, this time to Peleus, his grief at Neoptolemus's murder and the subsequent resolution brought about by Thetis's *ex machina* appearance. How these three seemingly distinct

¹⁷⁶ In particular, the *Andromache* shares the same interest in noblewomen fallen into captivity that we see a year later in *Hecuba* (424 BCE), and later still in the *Trojan Women* (415, in which *Andromache* also appears) and the *Phoenician Women* (408). For the captivity of women in these plays, see Dué 2006: 91-162.

¹⁷⁷ An ambiguous phrase, generally thought to mean ‘a second-rate play’, rather than ‘a play that won second prize’. See Erbse 1966: 276, Stevens 1971: 27-28, Brown 1987:427-431, Mossman 1996: 143, and Torrance 2005: 39.

¹⁷⁸ Aristotle, for whom a coherent plot is the basis of a good tragedy, claims that “τῶν δὲ ἀπλῶν μύθων καὶ πράξεων αἱ ἐπεισοδιώδεις εἰσὶν χεῖρισται· λέγω δ’ ἐπεισοδιώδη μῦθον ἐν ᾧ τὰ ἐπεισόδια μετ’ ἄλληλα οὔτ’ εἰκὸς οὔτ’ ἀνάγκη εἶναι.” (1451b 34-35) [Of simple plots and actions, the episodic ones are the worst: I say that an episodic plot is one in which the episodes follow each other without reason or necessity]. The *Andromache* falls firmly into this category. For Aristotle, see Finkelberg 2006: 60-72. For Aristotle and the *Andromache*, see Kyriakou 1997: 7-8.

sections relate to one another has been the main area of dispute and, over the last century, nearly all scholarship on the *Andromache* has in some way attempted to expose the play's single unifying element, or at least offer some vision of Euripides' intentions behind the structure.

The foremost point of contention has been whether or not Andromache and her son appear on stage in the final section of the play.¹⁷⁹ As there are no stage directions, evidence for their presence has had to be interpreted from the text itself and this has led inevitably to divisions of opinion. If they do return to the stage, the issue of unity between the play's beginning and its end eases somewhat, since her presence bookmarks the action. However, we are then faced with the task of understanding why Euripides chose to return her to the stage at the end of the play, while keeping her totally silent.¹⁸⁰

Two pieces of textual evidence have been used consistently to support the idea of Andromache and Molossus as κωφὰ πρόσωπα [mute presences] on stage during the final scene. The first is the Chorus's use of the words “σοὶ μόνῳ” (1041) [for you alone], which some have thought to be a direct reference to the present Andromache.¹⁸¹ It is, we can assume, referring to *someone*, but there are various alternative referents, the most popular being that the Chorus is referring to Hermione.¹⁸² The second piece of evidence is the use of the deictic pronoun in “παῖδα τόνδε” [this child] at line 1246, which is presumed to be a reference to Molossus.¹⁸³ As evidence, however, this is not convincing, since there are more than enough counter-examples in Euripides of deictic pronouns being used for absent characters. Arguments for Andromache and Molossus's presence together in the last scene have also tried to justify their return by looking at various thematic concerns and maintaining that it is consistent with Euripides' overall thematic

¹⁷⁹ For reviews of the arguments, see Golder, 1983: 123-125, Storey 1989: 16-27 and Allan 2000a: 74-85. Those *for* her appearance include Kamerbeek 1943: 47-67, Garzya 1951: 109-138, Erbse 1966: 276-297, Golder 1983: 123-133, and Allan 2000a: 74-85; those *against* include Verrall 1905: 1-43, Stevens 1971: 5-15, Mastronade 1979: 100 (esp.10-12), Kovacs 1980: 43-45, and Conacher 1967: 53-56.

¹⁸⁰ Paradoxically, this argument may support the opposing theory of Andromache and Molossus's absence at the end of the play. If argued that they are present, not only does it need to be firmly established that they in fact *are* present, but a clear interpretation of Euripides' intentions for their disappearance and then return needs to be argued too. If, however, we accept that they leave the stage at 765 and do not return, there is no hindrance to the argument that the narrative is apparently broken up into distinct parts, which are conjoined by a common thematic concern. In other words, the motivation for their absence seems far clearer than their presence.

¹⁸¹ See Kamerbeek 1943: 47-67, Garzya 1951: 109-138, Erbse 1966: 276-297, and Golder 1983: 123-133.

¹⁸² For Hermione, see Norwood 1954: 43 and Steidle 1968: 118-131.

¹⁸³ See Golder 1983: 124.

intentions for the play, whatever these might be. The importance of their presence or absence is such, therefore, that whichever theory one supports can completely alter how the unifying feature in the play is interpreted.

As far as this unifying feature goes, there have been a number of different proposals supported by an assortment of textual evidence and these have mostly followed two sorts of methodology. The first has sought to discover the play's main character, or any individual on whose fortunes the narrative can be said to centre. These arguments have for the most part been split between those who believe that the principal figure is Andromache,¹⁸⁴ and those who believe it is Hermione.¹⁸⁵ The latter argument is the rarer of the two and, as Stevens puts it in his introduction to the text, struggles to validate its claim that "the heart of the drama is a study of feminine psychology as exhibited in Hermione's relations with her husband and her husband's mistress, in her plot against her rival, its failure, and her despair and remorse" (1971: 9). On similar lines, Kovacs (1980) broadens the unifying factor beyond an individual character to encompass the whole of the House of Peleus, which he says unites the play through its presentation of the fortunes of three generations of Aeacids. Perhaps the most interesting (though in no way conclusive) idea of all, however, is Judith Mossman's assertion in a 1996 paper that none of the speaking characters is the play's central figure, but rather that it is actually the absent Neoptolemus.¹⁸⁶ His characterisation, she argues, is effectively envisioned in the other characters' utterances to the extent that he becomes a recognisable and sympathetic figure, while his absence and the expectation of his arrival is what motivates the action of the plot.

The second popular method for finding the play's unity has been to pin it to a consistent and coherent theme or motive that runs through all three sections and links them together. These interpretations have asserted that, although there is certainly an apparent disconnection in the play's tripartite structure, when each scene is looked at closely it becomes apparent that they are

¹⁸⁴ See Kamerbeek 1943: 47-67, Erbse 1966: 276-297, and Torrance 2005: 39-40.

¹⁸⁵ See Garzya 1951: 109-139 (esp. 127-128) and Norwood 1954: 43.

¹⁸⁶ This idea is not originally Mossman's, as she admits, and was proposed by various German critics before her. It was first touted by Hartung as far back as 1844 and later taken up by Friedlander (1926), Lesky (1947) and Friedrich (1953). Mossman's piece, however, is not only the most recent to examine the point but also the most compelling of its expressions in English. Her paper is most scholars of the Anglo-American school's first contact with the idea and she can, therefore, be credited with its modern revival.

all addressing the same issue. This interpretation foregoes the necessity for a single central character and is greatly disputed perhaps for that very reason. Some have claimed that *Andromache* was first and foremost a reaction to one or more effects of the war and that war is a theme running through it. In this historicist vein, Stevens suggests that the chief concern of the play is “the Trojan war, the ἀρχὴ κακῶν, and the bitter consequences for victors and vanquished alike” and that this reflects contemporary fears (1971: 13).¹⁸⁷ Kitto claims that it was written to be a virulently anti-Spartan work, showing “in particular three Spartan qualities, arrogance, treachery, and criminal ruthlessness” (Stevens 1971:11).¹⁸⁸ From a more philosophical standpoint, Boulter writes that, as with the earlier *Hippolytus*, Euripides “is concerned with definitions of *sophia* and *sōphrosynē*” (1966: 53). Rabinowitz, looking at the play structurally from the perspective of the various relationships which are explored in it, constructs a number of ‘triangles’ (such as Neoptolemus-Hermione-Andromache and Hermione-Neoptolemus-Orestes) which are based around the “object status of women” (1984: 117). This she also links back to the wartime context, claiming that Euripides sets out to interrogate “problems inherent in the institution of marriage and to underscore the connections between sexual relations and war” (1984: 112). Storey, on the other hand, believes that the play is an examination of “the theme of domestic disharmony or ‘domestic dislocation’, in which the tragedian explores the motif of the *oikos* (or *domos*) disjointed” (1989: 17).

Building on Storey’s basic idea that the household is somehow disrupted and dysfunctional, Phillippo (1995: 355-371) examines the emphasis on familial connections implied by patronymics. She is, however, one of the first to make the suggestion that “it may be more fruitful to approach the question of theme less absolutely: to explore the ways in which certain overall themes and authorial interest may be involved in the texture of the play, without insisting that any of these forms the *raison d’être* of the action” (355). She refers to Heath, who had, in his

¹⁸⁷ He notes the frequency with which the war is referred to in the play, not only by the characters, but also in the choruses. In this he cautiously aligns himself with Aldrich (1961), who “may be right in holding that here, as perhaps in *Hecuba* and in *Troades*, the real theme of the play is the disastrous war, its trivial origin, and its tragic aftermath” (1971: 13). He tempers his views, however, by stating that while it may have been Euripides’ primary focus, “there were times when other interests were admitted and given disproportionate emphasis” (1971:14-15).

¹⁸⁸ See Kitto 1961: 230-236. He sees the Trojan Andromache trapped in the conflict between the Houses of Atreus and Peleus as Euripides’ attempt to further undermine public opinion of Sparta (which, given the context of its production, wouldn’t have taken much). “The real drama”, he claims, “is the Spartan mind, not the exciting story of Andromache and her son” (1961: 234). It is thus, in his opinion, a primarily *political* play, designed with an almost propagandist purpose.

Unity in Greek Poetics (1989), posited the idea of a ‘centrifugal’ aesthetic in Greek literature, which tends towards diversity of, for instance, themes, styles and modes of representation, rather than uniformity. Furthermore he makes special mention of the *Andromache*, in which, he claims, the search for a unity of theme or action is futile.

It is this more inclusive attitude towards the play which has become predominant over the last three decades or so.¹⁸⁹ We find in Mossman (1995), Kyriakou (1997) and Allan (2000a) a reluctance to attribute to the play one aspect that ties it together, and Torrance, agreeing with them, makes the statement that “no Euripidean play has a *single* unifying theme” (2005:40, author’s italics). Instead it has become common practice to avoid any sort of overstatement of a theme’s importance in favour of a more cautious approach, focussed on select recognisable themes, none of which is claimed to be the central one. Cairns, for example, specifically states that his paper “seeks to broaden and deepen understanding of the *Andromache*’s political purposes and their workings” but avoids making claims that this can definitively reveal the entire purpose of the play (2012: 31). This chapter discusses the *Andromache* with this in mind, recognising that the search for a *single* defining feature of the play runs contrary to the multifocal nature of Euripides’ work.

3.2.2 Euripides’ mythology

The plot of the *Andromache* is an amalgam of two different mythological traditions concerning the events following Andromache’s capture in Troy, to which Euripides has also added several of his own innovations.¹⁹⁰ The general background to the action is recognisably the traditional Trojan cycle and Stevens notes that “the chief characters in *Andromache*, apart from Hermione, are familiar figures in epic tradition” (1971:1). Andromache is, of course, the devoted wife of the Trojan prince Hector from the sixth book of the *Iliad*, in which her displays of wifely virtue are her defining feature. Neoptolemus, although he does not actually appear in either epic, is mentioned in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as Achilles’ son and, in the latter, we hear brief

¹⁸⁹ Although it should be recognised that Aldrich as early as 1961 noted the difficulty of the endeavour, writing: “When one or another aspect of the play is brought into sharp focus for the purpose of establishing it as a unifying factor of the whole drama, other parts seem correspondingly to go out of focus” (22).

¹⁹⁰ For more on the combined, altered and innovated mythology of the play’s plot, see Aldrich 1961: 10-14, Conacher 1967: 166-170, Stevens 1971:1-5, Sorum 1995: 371-388, Dunn 1996: *pass.*, and Allan 2000a: 4-39.

accounts of his bravery at Troy (11.506-36), return to Phthia (3.189) and betrothal to Hermione (4.5). Hermione is less well accounted for in the tradition and is only mentioned twice in the *Odyssey* (4.4-14) as the child of Menelaus and Helen, who is set to marry Neoptolemus. “The remaining characters, Menelaus, Peleus, and Orestes,” so Stevens writes, ‘are of course famous legendary figures,’ well-known from the epic cycle, as well as the mythology of the House of Atreus, most famously represented by Aeschylus’s *Oresteia* (1971:3).

Euripides forms the plot from a combination of two different myths about Neoptolemus: his marriage to Hermione and enslavement of Andromache.¹⁹¹ With these as a basis it seems that he proceeded to extrapolate the consequences of these two events coinciding, inserting pieces from each tradition to suit his purposes. The novelty of his story also gave him the freedom to alter whatever parts of the received narratives he thought unnecessary and to introduce those that he wished to. The most pertinent of these changes to us is that, although in some traditions Andromache and Neoptolemus reputedly had three children, the presence of their bastard child in the home is a Euripidean innovation. Hermione’s barrenness, too, seems to have been an invented part of the myth, which Euripides took from Pherecydes.¹⁹² Neoptolemus’s first journey to Delphi in order to confront Apollo for his father’s death “may be a fifth-century invention,” but the second visit during which he is killed is almost certainly fabricated by Euripides (Stevens 1971:6).¹⁹³ Though Neoptolemus was supposed to be buried at Delphi, Euripides also adds the return of his body to Phthia, “though it must later be sent back again to Delphi...” (Stevens 1971: 6).¹⁹⁴

Euripides wove the plot of the *Andromache* from a unique combination of these traditional narratives and his own inventions. Of the greatest importance here is not necessarily where he sourced every part of the story, but rather why he chose to use the parts that he did in the way that he did. As a piece of narrative fiction it is unique, but is also representative of the innovation

¹⁹¹ Of Sophocles’ *Hermione* “practically nothing survives” and there is no evidence as to whether it was produced before or after Euripides’ *Andromache* (Stevens 1971: 3-5).

¹⁹² Pherecydes of Syros was a sixth-century theologian and mythographer. For details, see Granger 2007: 135-163.

¹⁹³ The story goes that Neoptolemus, on an earlier visit to Delphi, denounced Apollo as his father’s murderer and demanded satisfaction from him for it. His second journey was undertaken in order to make reparations for this previous rash behaviour. References to Apollo’s part in Achilles’ death occur at 53, 1002-1003, 1194-1196, and 1211-1212. See also Aldrich 1961:10, 1996: 149, and Allan 2000a: 247-249.

¹⁹⁴ On his burial at Delphi, see Pindar *Nemean Ode* 7.62 and Pausanias 10.24.5.

so common in Euripides' work. As Stevens puts it, "It is characteristic of Euripides to take a bald fact in the epic tradition, such as the handing of Andromache to Neoptolemus as his slave, and to imagine what her feelings would be and ask what effect the introduction of such a woman into the household might have" (1971:9).

3.3 *Andromache's past and present*

Andromache's position within the power structure of the *polis* and the *oikos* is the result of so many interlinked and reciprocally impactful factors that it is difficult to separate them from one another. Her motherhood of Molossus is a direct result of her concubinage, which is itself a consequence of her ethnicity—were she not a Trojan, and the virtuous wife of Hector too, she would likely not have been taken back to Phthia by Neoptolemus or, if she had, would not have held the same position in his *oikos*. It is possible, therefore, to draw a causal link between her privileged situation in the past and her inferior (but not wholly disadvantaged) status in the present. Throughout the play, the contrast between past and present is brought up repeatedly and is one of the central themes of the play.¹⁹⁵ Torrance puts it very well when she writes,

In the *Andromache*, Euripides explores the juxtaposition of the past and the present in a way which can only really be afforded by the figure of Andromache. Not only does he explore her present situation against the canvas of her Homeric past, he presents us with a Homeric Andromache deformed by circumstance (2005: 62).

She is the human embodiment of the tension between past and present and is constantly grappling with memories and habits from her now lost past in Troy. This has led to a conflict in her identity and she can characterise herself both as a war-slave of Neoptolemus and Hector's wife, Astyanax's mother, and a former Trojan noble.

The other characters similarly define her according to the relationship between what she was and what she is. Hermione and Menelaus, in particular, try to justify the latter by the former: to them

¹⁹⁵ On the contrast between these scenarios, see Stevens 1971: 5-15, Sorum 1995: 376-377, Kyriakou 1997: 7-26, Allan 2000a: *pass.*, and Torrance 2005: 39-66 (esp. 61-66) .

she is first and foremost a Trojan by birth and marriage, which automatically makes her an enemy deserving of servitude. Since, however, Andromache has a past that is not a slave's and she is of noble, if foreign, birth, she cannot fully submit to this role, which in turn makes others persecute her for behaving in a way contrary to her current position, itself the result of her former one.

3.3.1 *Amphimetric oikoi: Andromache and Antiopē*

Like most tragedies, the *Andromache* is chiefly concerned with the depiction of a conflicted and disorderly *oikos*.¹⁹⁶ The domestic situation is much like that seen in the *Hippolytus*, where conflict and disorder stem from the household's amphimetric structure where one man has, or could have, children by two different women (a wife and a concubine) raised in the same *oikos*. Parallels between the two households can also be drawn by a comparison between the concubines in question, Andromache and Antiopē. Both women are noble-born foreigners from beyond the borders of the Hellenic and 'civilized' world, as well as helpless captives of war, forced into concubinage and motherhood. These characteristics they share create a link between them, as well as one between their children, who are both bastards because of them.

The two women nonetheless differ greatly in their background and characterisation. They do not, for instance, share equivalent positions in their native social hierarchy, Antiopē being a queen of the Amazons and Andromache a Trojan princess by marriage. Similarly, while Priam's Troy was always within the realm of possibility, the Scythian homeland of the Amazons was wholly shrouded in mystery and existed on the very edge of the Greek conception of reality. Most important, however, are the differences in their current positions. In the amphimetric household of the *Hippolytus* the concubine predates and predeceases the wife, leaving only her bastard son as evidence of the illegitimate relationship. In the *Andromache* both wife and concubine are still alive and forced to inhabit the same *oikos*, yet only the concubine has managed to conceive any children with Neoptolemus.

¹⁹⁶ What Storey calls "the *oikos* (*domos*) disjointed" (1989: 18).

These similarities and differences lead to an interesting relationship between the two plays, because, in many ways, they present different perspectives of the same basic narrative. The *Andromache* depicts an earlier stage in what may be considered the development of a typical amphimetric household, in which the war-captive has been brought into the home as a concubine and has a young child born to her captor. In the *Hippolytus*, however, the concubine is dead and her bastard son has grown to maturity. They each give a glimpse into the amphimetric *oikos* at two different stages in its progression, one from the viewpoint of the concubine mother and the other from that of the bastard son. The *Andromache* gives us some indication of what Antiopē's life might have been like in the *oikos* of Theseus when she first arrived, just as the *Hippolytus* lets us see what sort of future may be in store for Molossus.

3.4 Textual evidence: the expression of bastardy in the *Andromache*

In the *Andromache* Molossus is only a child and so lacks a full comprehension of his position as a bastard. He is not yet old enough to exhibit more of his own character than is typical of children in tragedy and the few lines he has in the lament with Andromache (501-536) have little to offer in terms of characterisation.¹⁹⁷ The only possibly significant line is his address to Neoptolemus, “ὦ πάτερ,/ μόλε φίλοις ἐπίκουρος” (508-509) [Father, come, protect your loved ones]. It is a direct recognition of his paternity and the sentiment of the wish seems at least to show that there is some sort of relationship between the father and son. Molossus refers to himself and Andromache as Neoptolemus's ‘φίλοι’, which word, though it does not necessarily mean one's family, definitely has connotations of familial connection.¹⁹⁸ Its use suggests some sort of paternal bond that the child can recognise, but beyond this it is impossible to say anything.

Molossus is characterised mostly by others' expressions about the sort of man he is to become. What we are left with is not a picture of who Molossus *actually* is as a bastard or, in fact, how

¹⁹⁷ For the closest parallel to this, see Euripides, *Alcestis* 393-404, 408-415, in which the child Eumelus laments his mother's death but lacks any characterisation beyond a superficial recognition of his own youth. For other appearances of children and their limited characterisation, see Euripides, *Medea* 1271-1279, Sophocles, *OT* 1471-1523, and *Ajax* 545-582. For children in Greek tragedy, see Sifakis 1979: 67-80, Golden 2015: 39-41, and Griffiths 2020: *pass.*

¹⁹⁸ See, for instance, Menelaus's characterisation of himself and Neoptolemus as φίλοι joined by marriage at lines 376-377. See also LSJ, s.v. φίλος, 1 and MGS, s.v. φίλος A.

this illegitimacy has expressed itself in the formation of his character, but only an outline of his presumed fate as understood through the prejudices and hopes of the adults who surround him. He is therefore characterised potentially, which allows others to see whatever future they conceive of for him. These futures are often quite different, but share the same attribute of being extrapolated from his maternal Trojan heritage, rather than either the Greek half of his background or the possibility of his own agency affecting the outcome of his life.

His connection to Andromache's ethnicity is clearly the prominent factor in his bastardy and informs what others see him becoming. The final result of the marginalisation this causes comes in Thetis's prophetic vision of their settlement in Molossia so that "...βασιλεά δ' ἐκ τοῦδε γρῆ/ ἄλλον δι' ἄλλου διαπερᾶν Μολοσσίας..." (1247-1248)) [his descendants must rule over Molossia from generation to generation]. This future removes him from the source of stigma against him by placing him within a new context where he might redefine himself.¹⁹⁹

3.4.1 Prologos (1-55)

Andromache's prologue from lines 1-55 establishes the primary causes of the subsequent events and introduces the play's major themes. From the very outset we are alerted to her fascination with the past and in particular her position within the Trojan royal family through her legitimate and honourable marriage to Hector. Notably, she begins by describing her wedding procession from her homeland of Thebe to the city of Troy:

...Θηβαία πόλι,
ὄθεν ποθ' ἔδνων σὺν πολυχρύσῳ χλιδῇ
Πρίαμου τυράννον ἐστίαν ἀφικόμην
δάμαρ²⁰⁰ δοθεῖσα παιδοποιὸς Ἑκτορι (Stevens 1971)

¹⁹⁹ The founders of foreign lands often tend to be bastards, such as Pergamus, the founder of Pergamum and another supposed son of Neoptolemus and Andromache (See Pausanias 1.11.1), as well as Ion, who will be discussed in the following chapter.

²⁰⁰ The word δάμαρ is an interesting choice in this instance since its origin in the verb δαμάζω, 'to overpower,' 'to tame, break in,' 'to make subject to a husband', means that it has undertones of unwillingness (LSJ, δαμάζω 1 & 2;

The city of Thebe,
whence once with the golden luxury of a dowry
I arrived at the royal hearth of Priam
given as wife to Hector for the creation of children (*Andr.*1-4)

This reminiscence of the past is cut short by the sudden introduction of the present in the assertion that “νῦν δ’, εἴ τις ἄλλη, δυστυχεστάτη γυνή” (6) [but now, as if someone else, I am a most ill-fated woman]. The temporal shift then leads naturally on to a description of her current situation as a slave in Neoptolemus’s *oikos*. She relates that she is “...τῷ νησιώτῃ Νεοπτολέμῳ δορὸς γεράς/ δοθεῖσα λείας Τρωκῆς ἐξαίρετον.” (14-15) [A war-gift given to the islander Neoptolemus, a choice prize from the Trojan plunder]. Interestingly, she uses the passive “δοθεῖσα” (2) [given] in this instance, just as she did in the description of her marriage to Hector, which emphasises her lack of agency in both situations that are utterly different.

Andromache’s opening monologue positions her within the *oikos* structure and so sets up her relations with the other characters. She calls herself a “δούλη τῶν ἐλευθερωτάτων/ οἴκων νομισθεῖσα” (12-13) [slave, once regarded as being of the freest house]---a free royal Trojan house into which she was legitimately married, as she has already mentioned, and from which she was ripped when Troy fell. She is not, however, a menial slave but a favoured concubine and she is considerably closer to her former wifely status within the domestic hierarchy than if she were in fact equivalent to the old servant whom she calls her “σύνδουλος” (64) [fellow slave]. Her noble Trojan lineage and especially her previous position, which she refers to repeatedly, seems to have elevated her in her new Phthian *oikos* (at line 56 the Trojan slave calls her ‘δέσποινα’), even if the other household slaves disdain to help her.²⁰¹ In this regard, Andromache and Hippolytus suffer from much the same condition, namely, the juxtaposition of their inner worthiness with the negative attitudes of the outer world. More than anything, however, what really threatens the structure of the *oikos* and privileges Andromache most is that she is

MGS, δαμάζω). Nevertheless, perhaps for the very reason of its passive implications the word has “some stress on the dignity of a lawful spouse and mistress of the house”, which is to say legitimacy (Stevens 1971: *ad loc.*)

²⁰¹ For her position as a privileged slave within the *oikos* and her threat to Hermione as a wife, see Aldrich 1961: 23-27, Rabinowitz 1984: 111-123, Seaford 1990: 169, Allan 2000a: *pass.*, and Torrance 2005: 43-47.

Molossus's mother, as she explains: “ καὶ γὰρ δόμοις τοῖσδ' ἄρσεν' ἐντίκτω κόρον/ πλαθεῖσ' Ἀχιλλέως παιδί, δεσπότη γ' ἐμῷ” (24-25) [and in this house, having slept with Achilles' son, my master, I bore a male child]. She is mother to Neoptolemus's only son and, in the absence of legitimate sons, this makes Molossus his heir, according to the contemporary understanding of the rule, though whether the heroic Greece of the play maintains the same principle as fifth-century Athens is disputable. On the one hand, Hermione's anxiety about childlessness seems to indicate that Molossus could qualify as Neoptolemus's heir;²⁰² but on the other, the picture that Andromache paints of Molossus's future entirely rules out his acceptability as his father's successor.²⁰³

Hermione, the daughter of Helen and Menelaus, is the young bride married to Neoptolemus by her father, in fulfilment of a promise made during the war.²⁰⁴ In this *oikos*, however, it is the Trojan concubine who bears the man's child, rather than the legitimate Greek wife. Hermione's struggles to conceive by Neoptolemus consolidate her hatred, and she finds in Andromache the ideal enemy on whom she can lay all of the blame. The barbarian slave, she claims, is the cause of her barrenness and her husband's rejection: Andromache has exercised strange eastern magic, some “φαρμάκοις κεκρυμμένοις” (32) [secret potions/charms],²⁰⁵ to bewitch Neoptolemus and curse Hermione, in the hope of replacing her as the mistress of the household.²⁰⁶ Hermione, who later claims self-defence (“ἔγωγ' ἡμυνάμην” (910) [I defended myself]), plans to get rid of these threats to her and her unborn children's futures, in order to secure her position as the legitimate wife in a normative *oikos*. Her opportunity to implement this plan comes about when Neoptolemus departs the house on a journey to Delphi, leaving Andromache and their child alone and vulnerable to the machinations of his legitimate wife. Andromache sends Molossus off in secret to another household for protection and goes to the shrine of Thetis where she will be afforded the safety of a suppliant on holy ground. This is the situation at the commencement of the action, which Andromache explains in her speech.

²⁰² See 33, 612, 714, 904-905.

²⁰³ See 200-204.

²⁰⁴ The promise is recounted at *Odyssey*, 4.5-7 and Orestes touches on it later in the play at 966-981.

²⁰⁵ For more on barbarian women and supernatural powers, see Hall 1989 : 201-210.

²⁰⁶ Allan recognises the heavily gendered nature of the amphimetric strife when he says that “Hermione's charge of poisoning (157-8) illustrates how female characters can criticize other women using stock arguments— ultimately derived from male-generated stereotypes” (2000a: 179).

This is followed by the interaction with her ex-slave, during which we have confirmed for us the fact that “τὸν παῖδα σοῦ μέλλουσιν, ὧ δύστηνε σύ,/ κτείνειν” (68-69) [they intend to kill your son, oh you poor woman] and see how much loyalty she continues to command from this woman, despite being a slave. Once the old servant has left on her errand to call Peleus, Andromache concludes the prologue with a short speech in which she bewails her current situation and reflects on the circumstances of the Trojan War that have brought her to this point. In this, the only extant example of an elegiac lament in tragedy, she grieves for “πόλιν πατρώαν τὸν θανόντα θ’ Ἑκτορα/ στερρόν τε τὸν ἐμὸν δαίμον’ ὃ συνεζύγην/ δούλειον ἡμαρ εἰσπεσοῦς’ ἀναξίως” (97-99) [the city of my fatherland and my dead Hector and my fixed fate to which I am yoked, having fallen into slavery unworthily]. This is the first indication that Andromache, for all that she says she is σύνδουλος with the recently departed slave, believes herself to be ἀναξία [unworthy] of her servile position presumably because of the nobility of her lost city and husband. She then describes the process of her capture: “αὐτὰ δ’ ἐκ θαλάμων ἀγόμαν ἐπὶ θῖνα θαλάσσης/ δουλοσύναν στυγερὰν ἀμφιβαλοῦσα κάρα” (109-110) [And I for my part was led from my bedchamber to the seashore, throwing hateful slavery about my head]. The description tracks Andromache’s movement from her bedroom, the central point of her life as a wife, mother and princess, to the shore where the Greek ships waited to take her away to a life of slavery. We are reminded that she has been brought to Phthia as a slave, but that her origins are both foreign and noble.²⁰⁷ Following this is the *parados* in which the Chorus of Phthian women show an unexpected sympathy for Andromache but encourage her to “γνῶθι τύχαν” (126) [know [her] fate] and leave the temple of Thetis (117-146).

3.4.2 Episodion 1 (147-273)

The first two instances of bastardy-related words appear in the first *episodion* (147-273) and consist of one use of γνήσιος (193) and one of νόθος (224). This section of the play is comprised

²⁰⁷ It is surprising that Euripides, apart from the brief mention of her origin at Thebe, does not refer at all to Andromache’s original paternal family, who themselves were killed by Achilles in the course of the war (*Iliad* 6.414-428). They are, of course, not strictly necessary to the plot and Andromache’s memories do not extend beyond her marriage into the Trojan royal family. By cutting them off at this point, Euripides tries, in the words of Kyriakou, “to present Andromache as a woman whose whole existence is determined, almost absorbed by her marriage and the subsequent fate of her family and homeland” (1997: 10).

of an *agōn* between Hermione and Andromache in which each woman presents an argument to explain and defend her position. The former contends that she is an aggrieved wife justifiably protecting herself from the threat that another woman poses to her in the *oikos*. The latter disputes the possibility that she could ever compromise Hermione's situation as a legitimate spouse and claims that she is only an unfairly victimised concubine, who has been unwilling throughout. In this scene we are given a clear example of the play's fundamental conflict which has been outlined for us in the *prologos* (1-116). It reveals the tensions within the amphimetric household and very noticeably presents Andromache and Hermione as foils to one another by simultaneously locating their strife within the same gendered position as potential mothers for Neoptolemus's children, while emphasising their present social, domestic, ethnic, and political differences. Additionally, Euripides manages to accentuate the juxtaposition of their similarities and differences with stylistic resonances of vocabulary, phrasing, and imagery.

The *episodion* begins with Hermione's grand entrance at line 147 which instantly contrasts her with Andromache by both her outward appearance and the words she speaks. She is attired in her most costly clothes, which are representative of her legitimate marriage: “κόσμον μὲν ἀμφὶ κρατὶ χρύσεας χλιδῆς/ στολμόν τε χρωτὸς τόνδε ποικίλων πέπλων...” (147-148) [a diadem of costly gold about my head, and this multi-coloured dress of myriad materials]. The line intentionally echoes Andromache's earlier description of her marriage to Hector “ἔδνων σὺν πολυχρύσῳ χλιδῇ” (2) [with the gold luxury of a dowry] in order to highlight the differences not only between the positions of the two women, but also the demise in Andromache's fortunes. Hermione's current position of wealthy legitimate wife and victorious Greek is placed beside Andromache's servile helplessness, and everything is set against the background of her origins and the Trojan defeat that brought her to Phthia.

Hermione specifies that these ornaments do not originate from her husband or his *oikos*, but rather come from her father, the Spartan King Menelaus (she emphasises his Laconian origin). He gave them to her, she claims, “πολλοῖς σὺν ἔδνοις, ὥστ' ἐλευθεροστομεῖν” (153) [together with a large dowry, so I can speak with a free tongue].²⁰⁸ This emphasis on her wealth existing

²⁰⁸ During the fifth century a bride's dowry was “the basis of her maintenance and livelihood” paid out by her father upon her marriage and was her “patrimonial inheritance” equivalent to that received by citizen men upon their

outside of her marital relationship is not only the first insight we have into Hermione's dependence on her father, but also the first of many attacks on the illegitimacy of Andromache and Neoptolemus's relationship. We have already been shown an example of how the legitimacy of a marriage is in large part dependant on a dowry (as a material representation of the father's consent), by Andromache at the very beginning of the play (1-5). Here it is flaunted by Hermione in order to indicate her power over Andromache and the legitimacy of her marriage to Neoptolemus and we are able to see again how the essentially patriarchal instrument of a dowry has been used to emphasise the legitimacy of a marriage.

The possession of a paternal dowry, Hermione asserts, permits her the rights of both freedom of speech and the speech of a free person.²⁰⁹ Her use of the word “ἐλευθεροστομεῖν” (153) [to speak freely] allows us to see that her position as both a legitimately born child and a legitimately married wife grants her some superiority over Molossus and Andromache, who between them are neither of these.²¹⁰ Andromache is a self-confessed δούλη and Molossus, though he might not be a slave, is nevertheless a bastard and cannot really be counted among those with the right ἐλευθεροστομεῖν.²¹¹ This same link between the binaries of free/enslaved and speech/silence is found later, in Andromache's reply, when she fears that her “τὸ δουλεύειν” (186) [enslavement] will make her words count for less against someone free. The fact, however, that Andromache continues to speak as though she were a free woman in spite of her being a slave is her direct refusal to behave in accordance with her enforced position, which causes Hermione to level spurious accusations against her. This is much the same complaint that the

father's death (Foxhall 1989: 32). A dowry was practically the only material property any married woman could own and that was not solely in the hands of her husband. Nevertheless, it would have been unusual and highly impudent for a wife to flaunt her dowry, especially at the expense of her husband's own wealth, in the way that Hermione does in this scene. For the importance of the dowry to Hermione's marriage see Seaford 1990: 162, Kyriakou 1997: 11-12, and Allan 2000a: 171- 172, 178 . For Athenian dowries, see Foxhall 1989: 22-44, Pomeroy 1994: 58-61, and Pritchard 2014: 180. For dowries in general, see Goody and Tambiah 1973 and Anderson 2007: 141-174.

²⁰⁹ See Aldrich 1961: 29, Boulter 1966: 52, Rabinowitz 1984: 112-113, Kyriakou 1997: 11-12, and Allan 2000a: *pass.* (esp. 58-59 and 130-131).

²¹⁰ This is a difficult word to translate, since the subtle differences in meaning are both applicable. See Rabinowitz 1984:112-113 and Allan 2000a: 58, 130, 178.

²¹¹ The connection between the binaries free/enslaved and speech/silence is something we find in the *Hippolytus*. Phaedra fears for her ἐλεύθεροι (421) [free] children's “παρησία” 422 [free speech between equals (see Barrett 1964: *ad loc.* and Goff 1990: xiv, 7, 23, 117)] because her shamelessness might enslave them (using the optative “δουλοῖ” 424).

Nurse and Theseus make of Hippolytus: that there is a dissonance between his behaviour and the restrictions of his social position as a bastard.

Hermione, having ignored her throughout her ostentatious entrance speech, now attacks Andromache with the following lines:

σὺ δ' οὔσα δούλη καὶ δορίκτητος γυνή
δόμους κατασχεῖν ἐκβαλοῦς' ἡμᾶς θέλεις
τούσδε, στυγοῦμαι δ' ἀνδρὶ φαρμάκοισι σοῖς,
νηδὺς δ' ἀκύμων διὰ σέ μοι διόλλυται·
δεινὴ γὰρ ἡπειρώτις εἰς τὰ τοιάδε
ψυχὴ γυναικῶν· (Stevens 1971)

You, a mere slave and spear-won woman,
wish to cast me away and control this house;
I am made hateful to my husband because of your potions
and my barren womb is ruined because of you.
For the minds of Asian women are skilled
in such things (*Andr.* 155-160).

This address touches on most of the issues already introduced in the prologue. Characteristically, Hermione first mentions Andromache's socio-political position as a “δούλη καὶ δορίκτητος γυνή” (155) [slave and a spear-won woman], so as to situate her firmly in the role enforced on her by society before accusing her of having evil intentions. She then makes the spurious charge that Andromache wishes “δόμους κατασχεῖν ἐκβαλοῦς' ἡμᾶς” (156) [to cast me away and control this house] and so implicates her as a concubine who has overstepped her limits within the *oikos*. The two schemes through which she has, apparently, chosen to achieve her intentions are to alienate Hermione from Neoptolemus and to make her barren. Even though the allegations are false, they indicate quite clearly the two main areas of Hermione's life which Andromache most threatens: her position as a wife and her position as mother to her husband's heirs, the foundations of fifth-century feminine gender ideals.

Within these lines is also the first on-stage example of Andromache's ethnicity being stereotyped and criticised by another character. Hermione finds in Andromache's Trojan origin something she can use to validate her accusations, because, by playing on beliefs about easterners, she is able to identify a commonly recognised means by which Andromache might accomplish her designs. She is called an easterner and accused of using “φάρμακα”,²¹² ‘potions’, to induce Neoptolemus's hatred and to prevent Hermione from having his children.²¹³ Her ethnicity is brought up once more later on, when Hermione berates her for sleeping with Neoptolemus, who, as Hector's murderer's son, is the most inappropriate of partners. However, this should occasion no surprise, she claims, since “τὸ βάρβαρον γένος” (173) [the barbarian race] is well known for its depraved sexual practices (especially incest). Hermione is, of course, under the illusion that Andromache was a willing partner in her union with Neoptolemus, but she has already been taught to believe that eastern women are sexually lascivious by nature. What is happening in Neoptolemus's *oikos* is wholly antithetical to Greek society's model of domestic norms and it is part of this morality that “...οὐδὲ γὰρ καλὸν/ δυοῖν γυναικοῖν ἄνδρ' ἔν' ἡνίας ἔχειν” (178) [it is not right that one man (holds) the reins of two women] in a “Ἑλλάς πόλις” (169) [a Greek city].

Andromache begins her lengthy reply to this abusive speech (183-232) by voicing her apprehension that her slavery will negate anything she has to say. However, she specifies that the decision of hers to speak in contravention of her place in the power structure has been made by the inherent part of her that is still a noble woman, born with the right of free speech. It is this part of her that Andromache refers to when she says, “ὅμως δ' ἐμαυτὴν οὐ προδοῦς' ἀλώσομαι” (191) [Nevertheless, I shall not be found guilty of betraying myself]. The words she goes on to speak contain the play's first bastardy-related words:

Αν. εἶπ', ὦ νεᾶνι, τῷ σ' ἐξεγγύῳ λόγῳ
 πεισθεῖς' ἀπωθῶ **γνησίῳ**ν νυμφευμάτων;
 ὥς ἢ Λάκαινα τῶν Φρυγῶν μείων πόλις,

²¹² LSJ, s.v φάρμακον 1.2 and MGS, s.v. φάρμακον D. cf. Pindar *Pythian* IV.223 in which Medea is “παμφάρμακος ξείνα” [the foreigner skilled in charms].

²¹³ Eastern women were very often stereotyped as witches: a consequence of the extension of geographical marginalisation into the metaphysical. For the representation of the powerful barbarian east in Tragedy, see Hall 1989: 204-210.

τύχη θ' ὑπερθεῖ,²¹⁴ κᾶμ' ἐλευθέραν ὀρᾷς;
 ἢ τῷ νέῳ τε καὶ σφριγῶντι σώματι
 πόλεως τε μεγέθει καὶ φίλοις ἐπηρμένη
 οἶκον κατασχεῖν τὸν σὸν ἀντὶ σοῦ θέλω;
 πότερον ἴν' αὐτὴ παῖδας ἀντὶ σοῦ τέκῳ
 δούλους ἐμαυτῇ τ' ἀθλίαν ἐφορκίδα;
 ἢ τοὺς ἐμούς τις παῖδας ἐξανέξεται
 Φθίας τυράννους ὄντας, ἣν σὺ μὴ τέκης;
 φιλοῦσι γάρ μ' Ἑλλήνες Ἑκτορός τ' ἄπο;
 αὐτὴ τ' ἀμαυρὰ κοῦ τύραννος ἦ Φρυγῶν; (Stevens 1971)

Tell me, young one, by what trust-worthy argument
 was I convinced to push you from your **legitimate** bed?
 Is it because Sparta is a lesser city than Troy,
 and outdoes it in fortune, and that you see I am free?
 Or that emboldened by a young and healthy body
 and the greatness of my city and my loved ones I should wish
 to possess your house in your stead?
 Or that I bear children in your stead,
 slaves who are a wretched burden for me?
 Or that anyone will tolerate my children to be
 Kings of Phthia, should you not bear any?
 Do the Greeks love me for Hector's sake?
 And was I obscure and not one of Troy's royal house? (*Andr.*192-204)

Andromache's aim in this passage is to clarify that she is neither willing nor able to take the place of Neoptolemus's wife by any means. She starts with a burst of rhetorical questions contrasting the two women in position and power. She argues that her position as an older Trojan

²¹⁴ There is great disagreement about what this phrase means and what emendations might relieve what seems like a harsh change of subject. The different arguments are summarised by Stevens 1971: *ad loc.* For a further note on lines 192-204, see Kovacs 1979: 111-124.

slave precludes her from ever becoming Neoptolemus's wife, especially since Hermione, as a young, rich, powerful Spartan, has every advantage over her.

Andromache begins her rhetorical interrogation by asking the question at the core of her argument: “ἐῖπ’, ὦ νεᾶνι, τῷ σ’ ἐχεγγύῳ λόγῳ/ πεισθεῖς’ ἀπωθῶ γνησίων νυμφευμάτων (192-193) [Tell me, young one, by what reliable argument was I convinced to push you from your legitimate bed?]. She stresses the legitimacy of Hermione's marriage to Neoptolemus, which is undoubted (indeed it is deliberately demonstrated by the costume that the bride is wearing on stage), and so frames the larger issue in these terms. In each of the questions that follows Euripides examines an aspect of Andromache or her son that in some way excludes them from legitimacy.

As the cause of her situation and that of her child, Andromache's Trojan ethnicity is the common thread running through her questions. Her first question immediately establishes a contrast between Sparta and Troy (or, more generally, Greece and the East) and is another one of the powerful references she makes to past events like the Trojan War, the fall of Troy, and Andromache's capture. We are once more reminded of who won the war and what has happened to her Trojan life. She sarcastically asks if “...ἢ Λάκαινα τῶν Φρυγῶν μείων πόλις” (194) [Sparta is a lesser city than Troy], and pointedly asks if she is a free woman. The answer to both is of course no: Andromache is as enslaved and as destitute as Troy is, just as Hermione is as free and triumphant as Sparta.

In her next question Andromache moves on to a superficial comparison between herself and Hermione's beauty, while also managing to make another reference to her Trojan origins. Her point is that, as an older and mistreated woman, she cannot hope to be more attractive than a young wife like Hermione. Andromache also accentuates her youth by calling her, “ὦ νεᾶνι” (192) [oh young one] and “...τῷ νέῳ τε καὶ σφριγῶντι σώματι” (196) [young and healthy in body]. Similarly, in her new position, she no longer has the support of “πόλεως τε μεγέθει καὶ φίλοις...” (197) [the greatness of my city and my loved ones] but is instead an aging slave in a hostile *oikos*.

Having outlined her own unsuitability as a wife, Andromache then focuses on motherhood, Hermione's other main area of concern. All of her children, she claims, regardless of having Neoptolemus as a father, would be “δούλους ἐμαυτῇ τ’ ἀθλίαν ἐφολκίδα” (200) [slaves who are a wretched burden for me], neither free nor loved. The reasoning behind this has been questioned, since there is disagreement about the accuracy of her claim. Once more we see how Euripides has inserted something that differs from the contemporary legal situation regarding the bastards of citizens and slave-women, who, although they were denied citizenship, were not enslaved because of their mothers. Additionally, although Molossus is a bastard, there is no indication that he is, like Andromache, a slave. On the contrary, the recognition of his paternal relationship which we find in his utterances would seem to show that he is at least free: it is highly unlikely that Neoptolemus would allow his children to remain slaves. It is most likely an exaggeration, but one that is not wholly unreasonable: Molossus seems to have inherited so much from his mother that slavery would simply be an additional burden.

Her final three questions conspicuously return to the matter of her Trojan past and the mixed ethnicity of her child. Andromache knows that her children as well as being marginalised within the microcosm of the *oikos*, would also be unacceptable to the *polis*. They would never be able to succeed their father as “Φθίας τυράννους” (202) [Kings of Phthia], because the Phthians would never allow anyone of mixed Greek and Trojan blood to rule, even if there were no legitimately born pure-blooded alternatives. In the last two questions she gives force to this point by citing the Greeks' violent hatred of Trojans; how much worse must it be for her, she implies, when she is “...τύραννος ἢ Φρυγῶν” (204) [one of Troy's royal house] and the former wife of Hector (the epitome of the Trojan man, slayer of Patroclus, and symbol of anti-Hellenism).

This series of rhetorical questions deals decisively with Hermione's argument that Andromache is capable of ruining her marriage and is attempting to do so by means of witchcraft. Having cleared herself as the scapegoat, Andromache goes on the offensive, disparaging Hermione for her own wifely failures and dissecting the real reasons for Neoptolemus's hatred. It is not the result of magical interference, she says, but rather “ἀλλ’ εἰ ξυνεῖναι μὴ ᾽πιτηδεῖα κυρεῖς” (206) [because you happen to be unfit to live with]. The truth about being a wife is that “...οὐ τὸ κάλλος.../ ἀλλ’ ἀρεταὶ τέρπουσι τοὺς ξυνευνέτας” (207-208) [it is not beauty... but virtues that

please husbands].²¹⁵ This particular line of criticism is anticipated in lines 195-197, in which Andromache subtly censures Hermione's fixation on the superficial features of a legitimate wife. She is young and foolish if she esteems attractiveness above wifely virtues, which Andromache, because of her experience as a noble wife, still possesses despite being a slave. Regardless of the fact that their marriage is legitimate and Hermione is well-born and wealthy, she lacks the inherent qualities of a legitimate wife.

Piece by piece, Andromache builds up a picture of Hermione as a failed wife. Her first failure is a contravention of the gendered power-dynamics of the *oikos*, namely that she boasts about the ways in which she is superior to her Neoptolemus. We have already heard from her the repeated self-affirming claim that she is a princess of Sparta, whose father's wealth and nobility exceed her husband's. This attitude towards a husband, however, Andromache makes quite clear is unbecoming of a wife; she ought “στέργειν ἄμιλλαν τ'οὐκ ἔχειν φρονήματος” (214) [to love him and have not pit her pride against his] even if he happens to be a bad person. Her duty to respect her husband extends even to the point where, should a husband take more than one wife, as some Thracian kings do, it is unvirtuous for her to feel jealousy or make a complaint about it. This, Andromache argues, is an exhibition of crude sexuality and lust, both of which are “αἰσχρόν” (220) [shameful]. It is a wife's duty to keep this side of herself concealed, she says, since “...καίτοι χεῖρον' ἀρσένων νόσον/ ταύτην νοσοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν καλῶς” (220-221) [in fact, we women suffer from this disease worse than men do, but we hide it well].

The second bastardy-related word occurs when Andromache contrasts her own behaviour in her legitimate marriage to Hector with Hermione's shortcomings as a wife. She apostrophises him, saying:

ὦ φίλταθ' Ἑκτορ, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὴν σὴν χάριν
σοὶ καὶ ξυνήρων, εἴ τί σε σφάλλοι Κύπρις,
καὶ μαστὸν ἤδη πολλάκις νόθοισι σοῖς
ἐπέσχευ, ἵνα σοι μηδὲν ἐνδοίην πικρόν.

²¹⁵ See Stevens 1971: *ad loc.*, in which he writes, quoting from the Scholia, “ἀρεταί: the proper qualities of a wife. Σ explains ἀρετὴ δὲ γυναικὸς ἢ πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα ὁμόνοια [The goodness of a wife, which is concord with her husband].” See also Boulter 1966: 51-58.

καὶ ταῦτα δρῶσα τῇ ἀρετῇ προσηγόμην
πόσιν (Stevens 1971)

Oh beloved Hector, I even gave you help with
your own affairs, if Kypris tripped you up somehow
and even then often held your bastards to my own
breast, so that I might not betray any bitterness to you.
And by doing this I attached myself to my husband
by being a virtuous [wife] (*Andr.*223-225).

The image of Andromache nursing Hector's bastards is something completely unattested in any other literature and is clearly a Euripidean innovation to deepen the contrast between the two women's behaviour as much as possible. According to this example, Hermione is required to accept her husband's decisions, even should that be to the detriment of her own position and her children's. In her description, the Trojan Andromache proves herself so virtuous a wife that she does not even lay the blame too firmly on Hector, but puts his extramarital trysts down to Aphrodite and accepts them as part of her lot. The situation now, of course, resonates with her because she is in the same position as these other women and her child is a bastard, as theirs were.²¹⁶ It is not then just Hermione's behaviour in general which fails to live up to the standards of a wife, but specifically how she treats Andromache and Molossus.

In the section that follows, Andromache warns Hermione not to try "...φιλανδρίᾳ.../ ...παρελθεῖν" (229-230) [to surpass in wifely jealousy] her mother, Helen. Euripides here reintroduces the important theme of children's parental inheritance. Molossus, for example, has inherited Andromache's Trojan ethnicity (rather than Neoptolemus's Greek one) and this disqualifies him as a suitable ruler of Phthia—Hermione, she suggests, may have inherited her mother's notorious sexual indecency and like her is proving to be a bad wife.

3.4.3 Episodion 2 (309-463)

²¹⁶ Stevens (1971) notes that it is "perhaps suggested by *Il.* 5.70 where Theano is said to have reared a bastard son of her husband Antenor *χαρίζομένη πόσει ᾧ* [by which she pleased her husband]."

Although there are no instances of bastardy-related words in it, the *agōn* between Andromache and Menelaus in the second *episodion* nevertheless reinforces many of the thematic concerns connected with the subject and its causes. In this section, Menelaus enters at line 309 and, without any preamble, reveals to Andromache that he has found her son and taken him as a hostage, with the threat of killing him in her place if she does not leave the sanctuary of Thetis's temple (309-318). He has come to the house, he says, to revenge “ἀμαρτίας.../ ἦν εἰς ἐμ’ ἕς τε παῖδ’ ἐμὴν ἀμαρτάνεις” (317-318) [the wrongs you have committed against myself and my daughter], giving us another glimpse of the intimacy between himself and Hermione that is intimated in the latter's earlier statements.

Andromache's response is a personal indictment of Menelaus's reputation as a great warrior, which she claims is only a cover up for the fact that he is a weak and petty man. As with his daughter earlier, she criticises him for being too proud of himself and his Spartan ethnicity and reiterates that she presents no threat to his daughter's position in the house. She says to him:

Αν. ὅστις θυγατρὸς ἀντίπαιδος ἐκ λόγων
τοσόνδ’ ἔπνευσας, καὶ γυναικὶ δυστυχεῖ
δούλῃ κατέστης εἰς ἄγων’; οὐκ ἀξιῶ
οὔτ’ οὔν σε Τροίᾳς οὔτε σοῦ Τροίαν ἔτι. (Stevens 1971)

An. You are the sort of man who, by your childish daughter's own words, is proud and are you entering into conflict with an unfortunate slave-woman? I do not think that you are worthy of Troy, nor yet is Troy of you (*Andr.* 326-329).

Menelaus, according to this description, is “ὧδε φαῦλος” (325) [so petty] that he chooses to wield his power against a defenceless slave, despite the fact that he has been lauded for his part in the downfall of Troy. This contradiction, Andromache claims, clearly shows that his role in defeating Troy cannot be what it is thought to be, because a man of Menelaus's pettiness could never have had a part in taking such a great city.

Just as she does in the conversation with Hermione, Andromache wishes to expose the futility of Menelaus's and Hermione's fear about her and Molossus by bringing reason to the argument, saying to him, "Μενέλαε, φέρε δὴ διαπεράνωμεν λόγους" (333) [Come now, Menelaus, let us discuss this matter properly]. As well as this, she refers to the threat that Neoptolemus might pose to him and his daughter if the persecution of her continues, since their actions have been taken without his knowledge or consent and therefore contradict Neoptolemus's right to total power over his *oikos*. Even if she is the cause of Hermione's barrenness, her punishment must be decided by her master "...οἷσιν οὐκ ἀλάσσοινα/ βλάβην ὀφείλω προστιθεῖσ' ἀπαιδίαν" (359-360) [to whom I owe no less retribution for making him childless] and not by Menelaus.

Menelaus justifies his actions by claiming that it is his right as a father to protect and assist his daughter by saving her from the situation of an amphimetric household, where everything is at stake for the wife. He also grants himself the liberty of inserting himself into Neoptolemus's affairs because he believes that "φίλων γὰρ οὐδὲν ἴδιον, οἵτινες φίλοι/ ὀρθῶς πεφύκασ', ἀλλὰ κοινὰ χρήματα" (376-377) [nothing is private among kin who have become kin correctly, but common property]. The word ὀρθῶς here has undertones of legitimacy to it: only when a marriage has been done correctly, that is legitimately, can the bond of common property be made between families. It is another reminder of the differences between Neoptolemus's relationships with Hermione and with Andromache, and stresses the latter's solitary position, in which she has no legitimately connected φίλοι to defend her.

The reply that Andromache gives following this is once more full of references to Troy and her past marriage to Hector. In the absence of allies and having been given the ultimatum that between her and her child "δυοῖν δ' ἀνάγκη θατέρῳ λιπεῖν βίον" (383) [one of the two must leave this life], she turns to the lost world of her Trojan past, where her troubles began. The suffering she endures at this moment reminds her of the previous trauma, including Hector's "σφαφὰς τροχηλάτους" (399) [chariot-dragged death], the razing of Troy, and her enslavement by the Greeks. She also goes over again how "φονεῦσιν Ἑκτορος νυμφεῦδομαι" (403) [I was married to Hector's killer] and bore Molossus, whom she describes as "μοι λοιπὸς ὀφθαλμὸς βίου" (406) [my remaining sight of life]. Then Andromache proves her devotion to her son

when, at 411, she leaves the altar to die in his place, exhorting Molossus to remember her sacrifice and to ensure that Neoptolemus knows of it too.

Of course, Menelaus has lied to her and neither of them is likely to survive: Molossus will be given to Hermione “...ἢν θέλῃ, ...κτανεῖν” (442) [to kill if she wishes]. This betrayal starts Andromache off on her final speech, in which she rails against Sparta for producing people capable of such cruelty, designating them as “ψευδῶν ἄνακτες” (447) [the lords of lies]. Despite this, however, she once more affirms her innate loyalty to Troy and her past, claiming: “...ἐμοὶ μὲν θάνατος οὐχ οὕτω βαρὺς/ ὥς σοι δέδοκται· κεῖνα γὰρ μ’ ἀπώλεσεν,/ ὅθ’ ἡ τάλαινα πόλις ἀνηλώθη Φρυγῶν” (453-455) [death is not so heavy for me as you might suppose: for I died when the wretched city of Phrygia was destroyed]. She goes on to end her speech by referring to her ethnicity again and uses this to affirm her internal nobility, saying: “ἐπεὶ σὺ μὲν πέφυκας ἐν Σπάρτῃ μέγας,/ ἡμεῖς δὲ Τροίᾳ γε” (461-462) [since you are by nature great in Sparta, so I am in Troy].

3.4.4 *Episodion 3: 501-756*

The next three uses of bastardy-related words occur in a single short passage spoken by Peleus in the third *episodion*. The old man, Neoptolemus’s grandfather and the current ruler of Phthia, enters at line 545, having finally received Andromache’s calls for assistance. He arrives after Andromache’s and Molossus’s anapaestic lament, which is followed by the latter’s attempt to urge Menelaus to spare him: “...ἄνες θανάτον μοι” (531) [cast death from me]. These pleas, however, are unable to alter the violent attitude of the Spartan king and he has just restated to Molossus that “Ἄιδην χθόνιον καταβήσῃ” (544) [you will descend to Hades’ land], when the Chorus say they see Peleus as he “σπουδῇ τιθέντα δεῦρο γηραιὸν πόδα” (546) [hurries here on aged feet].

On his entrance, we find that Peleus is not entirely sure about the details of the events occurring in his house, beyond the fact that the lives of Andromache and Molossus are in danger from Menelaus, and he enters with the order, “Μενέλα’, ἐπίσχες” (550) [Menelaus, stop!]. It is Andromache who explains to him what has happened since Neoptolemus left for Delphi, before

she falls to her knees in supplication, though she remains incapable of touching him because her hands are bound. Peleus reacts with immediate fury, demanding that she be cut free and confronting Menelaus with open hostility.²¹⁷ The Spartan's excuses are much the same here as those he gave in the preceding *agōn* with Andromache: he claims that, through his daughter's marriage, he has a share in the property of Neoptolemus. In his reply, Peleus accepts the basic premise that marriage can bond families in this way, but qualifies it by adding “δρᾶν εὔ, κακῶς δ’ οὐ, μηδ’ ἀποκτείνειν βίᾳ” (586) [to treat well, not badly, nor to kill using force].

As well as containing three references to bastardy, the speech that follows this brief stichomythia (583-589) also has a number of similarities with Andromache's earlier speeches. Just as she attacks Hermione for failing as a wife, so Peleus attacks Menelaus as a husband and a man, criticising him for being unable even to maintain the dignity of his own *oikos*. Peleus reminds him that “ὅστις πρὸς ἀνδρὸς Φρυγὸς ἀπηλλάγης λέχος,/ ἄκληστ’ ἄδουλα δώμαθ’ ἐστίας λιπὼν” (592-593) [you are he who was deprived of a wife by a Phrygian man, having left your house's halls unlocked and unattended by slaves]. He is to blame for thinking that Helen was ever a “γυναικα σώφρονα” (594) [prudent woman], though Helen's infidelity, Peleus believes, is interconnected with the Spartan custom of allowing girls to exercise alongside boys.²¹⁸ It is for this reason, one that is very specific to this ethnicity, that they do not raise “γυναῖκας σώφρονας” (601) [prudent women]. Peleus blames Menelaus's inability to control his domestic affairs for the Trojan War, which the rest of the Greek world had been forced into.

In blaming Menelaus for the Trojan War, Peleus also makes a number of interesting remarks about its effects as they were felt by the parents of those who fought and died.

Πε. ψυχὰς δὲ πολλὰς κἀγαθὰς ἀπώλεσας

²¹⁷ Although Menelaus is overshadowed by his brother Agamemnon in the *Iliad*, he is consistently portrayed as violent, cowardly and unpleasant in tragedy. See Euripides' *Helen*, *Orestes*, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, and *The Trojan Women*, as well as Sophocles' *Ajax*. For his characterisation in the *Iliad*, see Sammons 2014: 1-27.

²¹⁸ In antiquity Helen's agency in the origins of the Trojan War and its consequent suffering was disputed and “ancient authors excuse or palliate Helen's behavior as often as they censure it” (Blondell 2013: x) . Sappho, for instance, in fr. 16 casts her as the errant seducer of Paris, while Herodotus sees her as an unwilling victim (1.3.2). Gorgias of Leontini's *Encomium of Helen* is the most comprehensive defense of her. See Hughes 2005: *pass.*, Austin 2008, and Blondell 2013. Earlier in the play Andromache blames Helen for Achilles' death (248).

παίδων τ' ἄπαιδας γραῦς ἔθηκας ἐν δόμοις,
πολιούς τ' ἀφείλου πατέρας εὐγενῆ τέκνα.
ὦν εἷς ἐγὼ δύστηνος... (Stevens 1971)

Pe. You destroyed many good souls,
 and left old women childless of children in their homes,
 And you took noble children from grey-haired fathers.
 I am one of those who suffered (*Andr.* 611-614).

Peleus's perspective of war is that of a father, someone who has lost his son and heir. However, it is not hard to imagine him as only one of the many parents grieving for their lost children, especially if you remember the extent of the slaughter in the *Iliad*.²¹⁹ From what we know of his own loss and from the poem, his use of the phrase “εὐγενῆ τέκνα” (613) [noble children] in relation specifically to “πολιούς...πατέρας” (613) [grey-haired fathers] would suggest that he is thinking specifically of aristocratic children who were the heirs to their father's legacy, most of whom would have been legitimately born, or the only remaining son.²²⁰ As Achilles was Peleus' only legitimate son, his death deprived Peleus of a direct successor and indirectly led to Neoptolemus's rule of Phthia and the current conflict in the play.²²¹ What makes Menelaus so despicable on top of this, however, is that, while so many lost their lives and the lives of their children for his needless cause, he returned unscathed. Peleus rails at him: “ὅς οὐδὲ τρωθεὶς ἦλθες ἐκ Τροίας μόνος,/ κάλλιστα τεύχη δ' ἐν καλοῖσι σάγμασιν/ ὅμοι' ἐκεῖσε δεῦρό τ' ἤγαγες πάλιν” (616-618) [You are the only one who returned from Troy uninjured, and with your fine armour in its fine wrappings, you came back again, the same here as there].

The similarities between the situation described by Peleus and what Athens was going through at the time of the play's first performance would seem to be obvious. We have seen how the

²¹⁹ There are, in total, 240 death scenes described by Homer, 188 Trojan and 52 Greek. See Garland 1981: 53 and Morrison 1999: 129-144.

²²⁰ The dynamic of the brothers Teucer and Ajax as presented in the *Iliad* and in Sophocles' *Ajax*, as mentioned above, indicates the expected paternal preoccupation with legitimate rather than bastard children.

²²¹ Achilles was of course the product of Peleus's marriage to Thetis, at whose wedding the seeds of the Trojan War were sown. For their marriage, see Rabinowitz 1984: 121-122.

population of legitimately born successors was affected by losses to both the plague and the war, and, as with the *Iliad*, it is not difficult to extrapolate the suffering that these parents underwent. Of course, these are the consequences of any war and there are always those left behind when soldiers march off, but with the situation as it was in 425 BCE it is difficult to imagine Euripides not having the mourning parents of Athens in mind when he composed these lines.

Looking ahead to his comments about Molossus as a bastard and bastardy in general, Peleus brings up Hermione, whom he calls a “κακῆς γυναικός” (621) [evil woman], citing her as a clear case of a legitimate child inheriting her “μητρῷ’ ὀνειδῆ” (622) [mother’s disgraces]. Hermione, like Helen, is not σώφρων, and is totally unsuitable as a wife: it is necessary for men who are looking for a wife “...έσθλῆς θυγατέρ’ ἐκ μητρὸς λαβεῖν” (623) [to take the daughter of a good woman]. Menelaus is, therefore, not only immoral for marrying a κακὴ γυνή but of fathering one too. And his depravity does not stop there: instead of killing her, he took Helen back into his house as his wife after, as Peleus puts it, “...έσεῖδες μάστον.../...προδότιν αἰκάλλων κύνα/...ῆσσαν πεφυκὼς Κύπριδος...” (629-631) [you saw her breast...fawning on the treacherous bitch because you were by nature worsted by Kypris]. As was the case with her mother, Hermione inherits from her father the “ἀπληστίαν λέχους” (218) [lust for sex], which Andromache attributes to her.

In the passage that follows, Peleus continues to examine the inheritance of goodness (that is, behaviour typically suited to the noble) but switches his focus from the case of Hermione to that of his great-grandson Molossus. Even though he is a bastard and, as Andromache says, could never in all likelihood rule Phthia, Peleus continues to have a vested interest in the heredity of the child. He says to Menelaus:

Πε. κάπειτ’ ἐς οἴκους τῶν ἐμῶν ἐλθὼν τέκνων
 πορθεῖς ἀπόντων, καὶ γυναῖκα δυστυχῇ
 κτείνεις ἀτίμως παῖδα θ’, ὅς κλαίνοντά σε
 καὶ τὴν ἐν οἴκοις σὴν καταστήσει κόρην,
 κὲι τρὶς νόθος πέφυκε. πολλάκις δέ τοι
 ξηρὰ βαθεῖαν γῆν ἐνίκησε σπορᾷ,

νόθοι τε πολλοὶ γνησίων ἀμείνονες. (Stevens 1971)

Pe. And then, having come into my child's house,
you ravage it while he is away and dishonourably
kill this poor woman and her child, who will make you
and that daughter of yours inside the house suffer,
even if he is a bastard three times over. Often, in fact,
poor land is better in its seeding than the deep-soiled,
and many bastards are better than legitimate children (*Andr.*632-638).

These lines are almost certainly the most unambiguous and definitive expression of any attitude towards bastardy in all tragedy. On a purely statistical level, the passage contains the closest clustering of bastardy-related words, three words over three lines, but more important than that, it expresses sentiments which contradict the idea that bastards are worse than legitimate children by nature. We have already encountered the belief that “νόθοι τε πολλοὶ γνησίων ἀμείνονες” (638) [many bastards are better than legitimate children] in our earlier examination of the *Hippolytus*, in particular during Hippolytus's dying moments at lines 1454-1455. Peleus's words, however, express this belief more clearly and have more impact as a result.

The premise of the belief is that the traditional equation between legitimacy and merit is invalid, as is its inverse, illegitimacy and immorality. Peleus's earlier complaints about Hermione's wickedness have been leading to this point, but these lines represent a logical reversal of her situation: instead of an evil legitimate child, we are offered the image of a good bastard. We have already seen how Hippolytus is granted nobility of character by Theseus and Artemis at the end of the play, despite his birth-status, and the notion here is that Molossus has the potential to be noble in character too.

Peleus first outlines the crimes committed by Menelaus and casts Molossus as their avenger. Revenge is a common theme in tragedy and in the case of two different families joined by marriage it is not surprising to hear Peleus claim that there will be repercussions for the wrongs

done to him in his *oikos*.²²² What matters most in this characterisation of Molossus, however, is the very fact that he is chosen, even though he is a bastard. Peleus calls him “ὅς κλαίνοντά σε/ καὶ τὴν ἐν οἴκοις σὴν καταστήσει κόρην,/ κεί τρις νόθος πέφυκε” (634-636) [he who will make you and that daughter of yours inside the house suffer, even if he is a bastard three times over] and the fact that he emphasises his bastardy so greatly seems to suggest that his choice is abnormal. This is especially so, considering what Andromache has already told us regarding Molossus’s rights to succession and his position in the *oikos*.

Accordingly, Peleus has to justify why his half-Trojan bastard great-grandson deserves an honour that essentially violates the purity of his lineage: “...πολλάκις δέ τοι/ ξηρὰ βαθεῖαν γῆν ἐνίκησε σπορᾷ,/ νόθοι τε πολλοὶ γνησίων ἀμείνονες” (636-638) [Often, in fact, poor land is better in its seeding than the deep-soiled, and many bastards are better than legitimate children]. He phrases it first in terms of an agricultural metaphor, in general a common form of talking about reproduction, in which children are the seeds and their parents are the land in which they are planted.²²³ The fertility of the land, presumably, represents the status of the parents, with noble free Greeks considered to be especially fertile, “βαθεῖαν” (637) [deep-soiled], and any other type, “ξηρά” (637) [poor]. Stevens claims that “the comparison is curiously inapt, since there is no necessary connection between bastardy and inferior stock, and in this instance both parents are royal”, but in this comment he ignores what we have already looked at regarding bastards and their stock, as well as the fact that Andromache’s Trojan nobility is one of the very reasons that Molossus is a bastard and thus not an advantage (1971: *ad loc*).

The question that needs to be asked, however, is whether or not Peleus is being sincere here. Regarding his sincerity, the agonal context of the expression might suggest that his view of bastards is being used only as a rhetorical device, designed to make Menelaus and his daughter seem all the worse by comparison. Depending on how we take the phrase “τρις νόθος” (636), our view of Peleus’s motivations and justifications alters. If we take it to mean ‘a third-generation bastard’ “like τρίδουλος ‘third-generation slave’ in S. *OT* 1062” then it may well not be such a

²²² For revenge in tragedy, see Kerrigan 1996, Burnett 1998, McHardy 2004: 92-114, and Allan 2013: 593-615.

²²³ Agriculture is a common metaphor for sex and reproduction in Greek literature, as it is today. The word τὸ σπέρμα is used to mean both a seed planted in the ground and sperm, of which it is the origin. See LSJ, s.v. τὸ σπέρμα 1, 2 and MGS, s.v. τὸ σπέρμα A & B.

surprising thing to say (Stevens 1971: 172). Counting inclusively, this would mean that Neoptolemus, born to Achilles and Deidamia on Skyros while they were little more than children, was also a bastard and the acceptance that Peleus has given him is simply transferred to Molossus. If, on the other hand, it is simply taken to be a prefix which emphasises a state, “as in τρισμακάριος, τρισκακοδαίμων, and the like” (Stevens 1971: *ad loc.*) then it brings Peleus’s justification into question. It could well be nothing more than a rhetorical tool designed to support his diatribe against Menelaus and his daughter, both of whom have brought trouble into his home.

Menelaus in his reply picks up on the matter of inheritance and turns it against Molossus by claiming that he is inherently antagonistic to Greeks because of his Trojan heritage. He points out to Peleus that there is more than enough reason for the latter to hate Andromache and drive her from his home instead of protecting her and allowing her to stay. Menelaus says:

Με ὅτ’ ὦν σὺ Πηλεὺς καὶ πατὴρ κλεινοῦ γεγώς,
 κῆδος συνάψας, αἰσχρὰ μὲν σαυτῷ λέγεις
 ἡμῖν δ’ ὀνειδίη διὰ γυναῖκα βάρβαρον,
 ἣν χρῆν σ’ ἐλαύνειν τήνδ’ ὑπὲρ Νείλου ῥοᾶς
 ὑπὲρ τε Φᾶσιν, καμὲ παρακαλεῖν ἄμα,
 οὔσαν μὲν ἠπειρώτιν, οὔ πεσήματα
 πλεῖσθ’ Ἑλλάδος πέπτωκε δοριπετιτὴ νεκρῶν,
 τοῦ σοῦ δὲ παιδὸς αἵματος κοινουμένην.
 Πάρις γάρ, ὃς σὸν παῖδ’ ἔπεφν’ Ἀχιλλέα,
 Ἕκτορος ἀδελφὸς ἦν, δάμαρ δ’ ἦδ’ Ἕκτορος.
 καὶ τῇδὲ γ’ εἰσέρχῃ σὺ ταῦτόν εἰς στέγος
 καὶ ξυντράπεζον ἀξιοῖς ἔχειν βίον,
 τίκτειν δ’ ἐν οἴκοις παῖδας ἐχθίστους ἑᾶς. (Stevens 1971)

Me. When you, being Peleus and born of a famous father,
 bound in marriage to me, say things shameful to yourself
 and reproachful to me, all because of some barbarian woman,

whom you ought to drive beyond the river Nile,
beyond the Phasis, and always call me to your side.
since she is from Asia where so many men
of Hellas fell, dying by the spear,
and she shares guilt in the spilling of your son's blood.
For Paris, who slew your son Achilles,
was Hector's brother, and this is Hector's wife.
And yet you go into the same house with her,
and think it worthy to have her at your table
and allow her to bear in your house a most hostile child (*Andr.*647-659).

Menelaus claims that there is something “ἐχθίστος” towards Greeks in Molossus's φύσις which, should Peleus continue to allow him and his mother into his house, will lead to disaster. Although he is born after the Trojan War has ended and could have had no hand in the death of Achilles, he has still inherited guilt for this death, by the somewhat circuitous route of Andromache being his slayer's sister-in-law. This makes Peleus's attitude to Menelaus all the more reprehensible, claims Menelaus, since not only does he accept this woman and her son, but blatantly protects them against the ‘help’ which Menelaus and Hermione are attempting to give. As a Greek, it is Peleus's duty, Menelaus claims, to “κάμὲ παρακαλεῖν αἰεῖ” (651) [call me to your side always], not to reject his assistance. Thus Peleus, whom Menelaus emphasises is “πατὴρ κλεινοῦ γεγώς” (647) [born of a famous father] and has pure Greek heritage, is a traitor to his people because he has allowed someone innately opposed to Greeks in his house.

3.4.5 Episodion 4 (802-1008)

The majority of the fourth *episodion* is taken up with a conversation between Hermione and Orestes, who has lately arrived in Phthia to take her away, having arranged for Neoptolemus to be killed in Delphi. During this scene, bastardy-related words are used three times, but their presence is less important for our understanding of the concept in the play than is the general impression we get about Hermione's predicament and Orestes' solution. The concerns which she voices give us a deeper look into her characterisation, but they also create an even stronger

contrast between her and her rival Andromache. The section begins with an interaction between Hermione and her Nurse, in which the young wife is clearly in a state of frantic anxiety, having realised that her persecution of Andromache will lead to consequences from Neoptolemus when he returns. She is, of course, not aware that he is already dead, but learns so in the exchange with Orestes that follows (881-1008).

Orestes marks his entrance by referring to his lineage, answering the Chorus's question about his identity by saying that he is “Ἀγαμέμνωνός τε καὶ Κλυταιμνήστρας τόκος” (884) [the child of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra]. He excuses his arrival by saying that he simply wants “...ξυγγενοῦς μαθεῖν περὶ/ γυναικός” (887-888) [to learn about his kinswoman], that is his cousin Hermione, even though he knows full well that he has murdered her husband and plans to take her away from Phthia to be his own wife. The deception allows him to enquire into the situation in the household, especially since he can see quite clearly that something is the matter. Hermione falls at his feet, replicating the suppliant pose of Andromache to Peleus in the previous *episodion* and, when asked, explains the situation in a stichomythic interrogation that uncovers the facts of the case so far as she sees them.

- Ὅρ ὦ Φοῖβ' ἀκέστορ, πημάτων δοίης λύσιν.
 τί χρήμα; πρὸς θεῶν ἢ βροτῶν πάσχεις κακά;
- Ἐρ τὰ μὲν πρὸς ἡμῶν, τὰ δὲ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ὅς μ' ἔχει,
 τὰ δ' ἐκ θεῶν του· πανταχῇ δ' ὀλώλαμεν.
- Ὅρ τίς οὖν ἂν εἴη μὴ πεφυκότων γέ πω
 παίδων γυναικὶ συμφορὰ πλὴν εἰς λέχος;
- Ἐρ τοῦτ' αὐτὸ καὶ νοσοῦμεν· εὖ μ' ὑπηγάγου.
- Ὅρ ἄλλην τιν' εὐνὴν ἀντὶ σοῦ στέργει πόσις;
- Ἐρ τὴν αἰχμάλωτον Ἴκτορος ξυνευνέτιν.
- Ὅρ κακόν γ' ἔλεξας, ἄνδρα δίσσ' ἔχειν λέχη.
- Ἐρ τοιαῦτα ταῦτα. κατ' ἔγωγ' ἡμυνάμην.
- Ὅρ μὲν εἰ γυναικ' ἔρραψας οἷα δὴ γυνή;
- Ἐρ φόνον γ' ἐκείνη καὶ τέκνω **νοθαγενεῖ.**
- Ὅρ κάκτεινας, ἢ τις συμφορὰ σ' ἀφείλετο;

Έρ γέρων γε Πηλεΰς, τοὺς κακίονας σέβων.
 Όρ σοὶ δ' ἦν τις ὅστις τοῦδ' ἐκοινώνει φόνου;
 Έρ πατήρ γ' ἐπ' αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀπὸ Σπάρτης μολών.
 Όρ κᾶπειτα τοῦ γέροντος ἡσσήθη χερί;
 Έρ αἰδοῖ γε· καὶ μ' ἔρημον οἴχεται λιπών.
 Όρ συνῆκα· ταρβεῖς τοῖς δεδραμένοις πόσιν. (Stevens 1971)

Or. Oh Phoebus the Healer, deliver us from these ills.
 What is the matter? Do you suffer troubles from gods or mortals?
 He. Partly from myself, and partly from my husband,
 and partly from the gods: I am completely ruined!
 Or. What hardship might a woman who has not borne
 children have, except one to do with her marriage?
 He. That is just where I am afflicted: you're one step ahead.
 Or. Your husband loves another woman in your place?
 He. He's bedding the spear-won captive, Hector's wife,
 Or. What evil you speak of: for one man to have two women.
 He. Just so: and so I protected myself.
 Or. So did you devise some plot against her, as women are wont to do?
 He. Yes, to kill her and her **bastard** boy.
 Or. And did you kill them, or did something thwart you?
 He. The old man Peleus, respecting the weaker side.
 Or. And was there anyone who joined you in this killing?
 He. My father, who came from Sparta for this very purpose.
 Or. So then he was worsted by an old man's strength?
 He. Out of respect for his age of course: and then he left, leaving me all alone.
 Or. I'm with you: you fear your husband for these things you've done(Andr.900-919).

Hermione's explanation to Orestes at this point is in part a justification for her actions and she claims that when she attacked Andromache and Molossus, she says, “ἔγωγ' ἡμυνάμην” (910) [I protected myself]. Her concerns come across as understandable at this point, given not only her

character as a young and inexperienced wife but also Molossus's position as son and primogenitor. Orestes for his part accepts what she tells him as true and can recognise that the issues she speaks of are deeply concerning for someone in Hermione's position. We have already seen a similar example in *Hippolytus* as Phaedra expressed her concerns about the usurpation of her legitimate children's rights by Hippolytus and how this comes to play a part in her decision to implicate him in her suicide. In the *Andromache*, we have the portrayal of a comparable scenario but at an earlier phase; it presents the legitimate wife's concerns about her husband's male bastard and his paternal inheritance, even before she has her own children to worry about. Once more, Molossus is defined by his *potential*, not by his reality, and the attitudes toward him show a glimpse of the conceptualisation of his barbarian φύσις which will reveal itself in the long run.

Orestes' immediate understanding of Hermione's motivations is expressed through his pre-emptive questions, which suggest that there is at least some sort of established order for a wife to deal with in an amphimetric household. He claims that it is evil "...ἄνδρα δίσσω ἔχειν λέχη" (909)[for one man to have two women] and appears to support Hermione in the actions she takes. He takes it for granted that she created some plan to deal with the problem, as might be expected of a woman and that she is justified in taking this course. Orestes, of course, knows all about domestic strife, especially where extra-marital affairs are concerned: not only did his mother Clytemnestra have an affair with Aegisthus but Agamemnon, like Neoptolemus, brought home a concubine from Troy, Cassandra. The compromised *oikos* structure in both cases warrants particular action, which would not normally be acceptable.

Hermione next expresses the depth of her fear for her own safety and brings up the matter of Neoptolemus's imminent return from Delphi, at which point she believes that he will seek to kill her or, it seems, force her to live with the situation she is currently in.

Ερ. εἰ δ' ἤξει πάρος
 Φοίβου λιπὼν μαντεῖον εἰς δόμους πόσις,
 κτενεῖ μ' ἐπ' αἰσχίστοισιν· ἢ δουλεύσομεν

νόθοισι λέκτροις ὧν ἐδέσποζον πρὸ τοῦ. (Stevens 1971)

He. If my husband comes
soon, having left Phoebus's oracle to return home,
he will kill me for my shameful deeds: or I will be enslaved
to the **bastard** beds I was once queen of (*Andr.* 925-928).

Hermione's description of the "νόθοισι λέκτροις" (928) [bastard beds] implies that Andromache's affair with Neoptolemus has defiled their whole marriage, sullyng their legitimate bed with its illegitimacy. The domestic structure inherent within a legitimate marriage is that there is a single woman who occupies her husband's bed. But when a concubine is introduced into the marriage the entire system is altered and, in a case like this one where there is a bastard child born to the other woman, the assured position of the wife comes into question. This distortion of domestic normalcy is reflected in Hermione's fear of being 'enslaved', which wholly inverts her position and Andromache's. She will here take on Andromache's role as the slave, since Andromache, mother to Neoptolemus's only heir, will become his wife. Of course, as we are soon to see, Hermione realises now that there is no chance of this actually happening, but this is how she interprets the situation at this moment.

In her final comments, she for the first time admits that Andromache's children would never have been able to supplant her own, since they would have only been slaves and bastards. However, while she does admit that some of the blame should be hers, her main fault was only that she lacked σωφροσύνη by listening to women who made her bitter towards Andromache and Neoptolemus.

Ἐρ. κακῶν γυναικῶν εἴσοδοί μ' ἀπώλεσαν,
αἷ μοι λέγουσαι τούσδ' ἐχαύνωσαν λόγους:
Σὺ τὴν κακίστην αἰχμάλωτον ἐν δόμοις
δούλην ἀνέξῃ σοὶ λέχους κοινουμένην;
μὰ τὴν ἄνασσαν, οὐκ ἂν ἔν γ' ἐμοῖς δόμοις
βλέπουσ' ἂν ἀγὰς τᾶμ' ἐκαρποῦτ' ἂν λέχη.

κάγὼ κλύουσα τούσδε Σειρήνων λόγους,
[σοφῶν πανούργων ποικίλων λαλημάτων,]
ἐξηνεμώθην μωρία. τί γάρ μ' ἐχρῆν
πόσιν φυλάσσειν, ἧ παρῆν ὅσων ἔδει;
πολὺς μὲν ὄλβος· δωμάτων δ' ἠνάσσομεν·
παῖδας δ' ἐγὼ μὲν **γνησίους** ἔτικτον ἄν,
ἢ δ' **ἡμιδοῦλους** τοῖς ἐμοῖς **νοθαγενεῖς**. (Stevens 1971)

He. The visitations of evil women have ruined me,
Who derailed my wits with words such as these:
'Would you seriously allow some evil war-won
Slave in your house to share your bed?
By the queen,²²⁴ not while she still had life
would she enjoy my bed in my house'.
And I, listening to these Sirens' words
[of clever, wicked, tricky chatterboxes],
I was puffed up by folly· for why did I need
to keep watch over my husband,
when I had everything that I needed?
Great wealth, and control over a whole palace:
and I would have borne legitimate children too,
while hers were half-slave to mine and bastard-born (*Andr.* 930-942).

The women of whom she speaks are *κακαί*, the same descriptor which Peleus earlier used to describe both her and her mother (621) because they have convinced her to concentrate her energies on destroying Andromache, when she ought to be focussing on being a good wife. They are much the same as the women whom Hippolytus complains of in his misogynistic rant (*Hipp.* 616-668): these women are also *σοφαί*, like Hermione's (937), meaning by this 'clever', rather than *σώφρων*.²²⁵ In that play, it is the Nurse who has acted as the bad influence on Phaedra and

²²⁴ "Presumably Hera, goddess of sanctity of marriage" (Stevens 1971: *ad loc.*).

²²⁵ Although the line may be a later addition. See Stevens 1971: *ad loc.*

we have seen her attempts to convince her mistress to commit evil acts; we do not see how Hermione is influenced and by whom, but her sentiment is very much the same. It appears that Andromache was correct in her earlier speech to Hermione that to concern herself overmuch with her husband's sex-life exceeds a woman's spousal duties, since it clearly implies that she is not modest enough.

Hermione has obviously forgotten or abandoned her earlier accusations of magic potions being used to make her barren and forcing her husband to hate her and lays the blame on these unidentified women. She had, she claims, money, power and the ability to bear legitimate children, which ought, to a woman with σωφροσύνη, have been enough for her. However, she let a married woman's obsession with sole rights to her husband's bed dominate her mind, leading to the ἔρις that Orestes talks about (960). The amphimetric home, it seems, is likely to cause strife, but a woman if she is σώφρων enough will not succumb to the petty jealousies that Hermione has.

Euripides' commentary on women and the home in this scenario would seem to suggest not only the above idea that a concubine's presence leads to difficulties, but also that the company which a woman keeps is able to tempt her into actions which she normally wouldn't do. He confirms the notion that there is no way in which a concubine can take a wife's place. The dynamics of a marriage are shaped and controlled by the man and his wife, so long as her customary position and power within the *oikos* is not actually threatened (as Hermione's isn't, except from a sexual point of view); consequently, she ought not to involve herself in her husband's sex life if she is legitimately married.

3.4 *Wifely σωφροσύνη*

The above speech of Hermione's is one of the clearest examples of one of the essential differences between Andromache and Hermione---their σωφροσύνη.²²⁶ As has been touched on in regard to the *Hippolytus*, σωφροσύνη, when used of women, is focussed on sexuality and encapsulates the expected rectitude of a woman's behaviour as maiden, mother and then,

²²⁶ For σωφροσύνη in the *Andromache*, see Boulter 1966: 51-58.

notably, wife. In their earlier confrontation, Hermione attacks Andromache for what she characterises as her anti-σωφροσύνη: her apparently willing acceptance of a concubine's relationship with Neoptolemus, her wicked jealousy and use of magic, her inability to recognise her true position in the *oikos*. Andromache, in turn, rebuts these accusations and turns them back on Hermione: she appears to be immodestly concerned with sex, seeks (contrary to her limitations as a wife) to control her husband, humiliates him by constant mention of her father's Spartan wealth, and generally lacks a wife's appropriate qualities.

The following interaction between the two illustrates each of their ideas about their own and the other's version of σωφροσύνη:

- Ἑρ. τί σεμνομυθεῖς κεῖς ἀγῶν' ἔρχῃ λόγων,
 ὥς δὴ σὺ σῶφρων, τὰμὰ δ' οὐχὶ σῶφρονα;
Ἀν. οὐκουν ἐφ' οἷς γε νῦν καθέστηκας λόγοις.
Ἑρ. ὁ νοῦς ὁ σὸς μοι μὴ ξυνοικοίη, γύναι.
Ἀν. νέα πέφυκας καὶ λέγεις αἰσχρῶν πέρι.
Ἑρ. σὺ δ' οὐ λέγεις γε, δρᾶς δέ μ' εἰς ὅσον δύνῃ.
Ἀν. οὐκ αὖ σιωπῇ Κύπριδος ἀλγήσεις πέρι;
Ἑρ. τί δ'; οὐ γυναιξὶ ταῦτα πρῶτα πανταχοῦ;
Ἀν. [ναί]
 καλῶς γε χρωμέναισιν· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐ καλά.
Ἑρ. οὐ βαρβάρων νόμοισιν οἰκοῦμεν πόλιν.
Ἀν. κάκεῖ τά γ' αἰσχρὰ κἀνθάδ' αἰσχύνῃν ἔχει.
Ἑρ. σοφὴ σοφῇ σύ· κατθανεῖν δ' ὅμως σε δεῖ. (Stevens 1971)

- He. Why do you moralise and get into an argument with me,
 As if you were the paragon of self-control and I am not?
An. Well, you're not, not in light of the arguments you have just made.
He. Then may your idea of sense never lodge with me, woman!
An. Young you are and yet you speak about shameful things.
He. Well, you don't just speak them—you do to me whatever you can.

- An. Oh, won't you suffer your sex problems in silence?
- He. Why should I? Aren't these of the first importance for women everywhere?
- An. [Yes,]
Of course, for those women who practise them well; if not, they are not good.
- He. We do not live in some city governed by barbarian laws!
- An. Both here and there shameful matters are still shameful.
- He. Oh clever, clever you—but yet you must die (*Andr.* 234-245).

Hermione, either because she is unwilling or incapable, does not attribute any form of σωφροσύνη to Andromache, and believes that she herself is σώφρων. This is presumably because of her jealousy and hatred; this, however, seems to be channelled through her xenophobic ideas about barbarians. She implies that their argument is pointless because Andromache is speaking to her; she says, “ὥς δὴ σὺ σώφρων, τὰμὰ δ’ οὐχὶ σώφρονα” (235) [As if you were the paragon of self-control and I am not].

The problem is that, in Hermione's mind, she is being σώφρων and her adversary is not because she has established her own ideas about σωφροσύνη which are different to Andromache's. The latter recognises this and expresses it in the answering line, “οὐκ οὐν ἐφ’ οἷς γε νῦν καθέστηκας λόγοις” (236) [Well, you're not, not in the light of the arguments you just made]. She can see that the two of them are talking from differing perspectives, each with their own ideas about what constitutes self-control in a woman—but she herself is as rigid in her views as Hermione and can cast her as a shameful woman according to her own version of σωφροσύνη.

Hermione's biggest flaw is that she does not moderate her sexuality as is expected of a woman and wife but gives in to her jealousy, which is a sign of lust for her husband. As Andromache has already mentioned (218-221) women are prone to these feelings and they are, as a result, certainly “...πρῶτα πανταχποῦ” (241) [of the first importance everywhere]. What distinguishes women is their *reaction* to these inevitable urges and they must be σώφρων enough to overcome them; if they do not, they are not good women. It is this idea of σωφροσύνη, the solid knowledge of how to exercise self-control in the face of obstacles, that Andromache says she has, because it is held by Trojans, even though they are classified by Greeks like Hermione as barbarians.

Hermione's response is immature and *ad feminam*, mocking Andromache's superiority: "σοφῇ σοφῇ σύ..." (245) [oh clever, clever you].

The implications of this section of stichomythia, picking up on the tenor of their agonal speech, clearly show that there are two conflicting versions of σωφροσύνη and its related aspects. As in *Hippolytus*, the area of friction is primarily sexual and just as in *Hippolytus* it revolves around the rejection of sexuality. As its distinct meaning for women may feminise Hippolytus, so Andromache's idea of and adherence to σωφροσύνη grant her a special position as an archetypal woman and wife.

Both characters, although marginalised in their contexts by their origins, uphold self-control (moderation) as best they can. Both contradict their social designation, Hippolytus as a man and Andromache as a slave, but the latter does not claim outright that she is σώφρων by *physis*, but only lets something similar be intimated as she continues to display the virtuousness of her former life as a Trojan princess and Hector's wife. The point here is that her self-control is inherent in her from her past nobility and that it has not been relinquished by her suffering. All of this while she is, in the eyes of Hermione and her father, a barbarian, generally characterised by lack of self-control and moderation.²²⁷

3.5 Conclusion

The bulk of this chapter has consisted of close-readings of various passages from the *Andromache* that contain bastardy-related words and it has been possible from these to establish the role that bastardy plays within the *oikos* and how it reflects itself in the attitudes and behaviours of the characters. Of all the sections in the play, however, it is the *exodos* (1047-1287) that offers the clearest impression of his views on the subject through its depiction of the ultimate consequences that these various approaches to bastardy have for the play's central figures. This fact is in many ways unsurprising, since any chance of unity and overall intention within the episodically structured work is considerably more likely to be found in the *dénouement*, which offers the authoritative judgements of the gods and presents what Thetis

²²⁷ See *Andr.* lines 346, 365, 594, 596, 601, 643, 686, 1165.

claims are “...Ζηνὶ...δοκεῖ τάδε” (1269) [the things Zeus decrees], than at any other point. In her *dea ex machina* appearance, Thetis outlines the divinely willed rewards and punishments meted out for the various characters, which, when viewed in relation to the behaviour and treatment of these same characters throughout the play, give us a good idea about what Euripides is attempting to say regarding bastardy. The destinies of Andromache, Molossus, and Peleus are all optimistic and in some way connected to marriage and descent, with the overall impression being that the judgement of worth based on legitimacy is an invalid attitude. Thus it becomes possible to say that Euripides is not only sympathetic to bastards in his conclusions about legitimacy in the *oikos*, but undermines the whole concept as unfeasible and cruel. Instead he presents a view of marriage that, when it is made for the right reasons, is an institution of reconciliation and creation regardless of the identities of the participants, rather than a means to marginalise others by using it to assess their relative worth.

The primary consequences of Thetis’s speech are that those characters, who have rejected the condemnation of bastardy and exhibited worthiness, despite not being in the *oikos* legitimately, are granted hopeful and elevated futures. In particular these futures are built around the establishment of happy marriages and the potential proliferation of descendants. Andromache, the “γυναῖκα αἰχμάματον” (1243) [war-won woman], has suffered more than any of the other characters and was subject to the violence and abuse of Hermione and Menelaus because of her Trojan ethnicity and the illegitimacy of her relationship with Neoptolemus. The picture of her future, however, far from being the tragic ruination that she is said to deserve, is “Μολοσσίαν γῆν...κατοικῆσαι.../ Ἐλένῳ συναλλαχθεῖσαν εὐναίοις γάμοις” (1244-1245) [to settle the land of Molossia [and] to be joined to Helenus in wedded marriage]. The Trojan Andromache has been granted a new Greek land to live in, as well as a proper marriage to a man who is a Trojan himself: in the eyes of the gods her foreignness and social status are not impediments to her, nor is the matter of bastardy even mentioned. In fact, in a inversion of the earlier scenario, in which he was denied his father’s inheritance and rejected as a potential ruler because of his birth-status and origin, Molossus is recognised as the “...τῶν ἀπ’ Αἰακοῦ μόνον/ λελειμμένον” (1246-1247) [the only remnant of Aeacus’s line]. His bastardy is not referred to and he is accepted as the heir to the heritage of Neoptolemus and his forefathers. In addition to this, it is ordained that “...βασιλέα δ’ ἐκ τοῦδε χρῆ/ ἄλλον δι’ ἄλλου διαπερᾶν Μολοσσίας/ εὐδαιμονοῦντας” (1247-

1249) [he must reign over the kingdom of Molossia in happiness from generation to generation]. Both mother and son, in short, deserve a happy future in the eyes of the gods, whose wisdom and authority surpass those of the mortals who condemned them both to death for who they happened to be.

As for the remaining Greeks, Neoptolemus is to be transported back to Delphi where he will be duly buried, while Peleus, an old man now bereft of his son and grandson, is to become a “ἀθάνατον ἄφθιτόν τε...θεόν” (1256) [deathless and immortal god]. His reward, however, is not simply immortality but, so Thetis tells him, “κάπειτα Νηρέως ἐν δόμοις ἐμοῦ μέτα/ τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη θεὸς συνοικήσεις θεᾷ” (1257-1258) [then you will live with me, a god with a goddess, forever in the house of Nereus]. His formerly semi-divine marriage has not only thus been restored, but has been elevated to a wholly divine union, to which Thetis has added the blessing that “τὸν φίλτατον σοὶ παῖδ’ ἐμοί τ’ Ἀχιλλεῖά/ ὄψῃ δόμους ναίοντα νησιωτικούς...” (1260-1261) [you will see your and my beloved son Achilles, dwelling on his island home]. The integrity of their family structure is to be restored and their marriage has reconciled them in the divine world.

Peleus’s response to Thetis’s words is first of all to thank her for the boon which she has granted him and to promise no longer to mourn for his dead grandson. In a not unrelated but still unexpected vein, he goes on to address the issue of marriage as he did earlier in the scene (1186-1196). In these concluding lines of the play, he repeats his previous warning against bad marriages, but adds to this concise guidance on how a man should get married. He says,

Πη. κᾶτ’ οὐ γαμεῖν δῆτ’ ἔκ τε γενναίων χρεὼν
 δοῦναί τ’ ἐς ἐσθλούς, ὅστις εὖ βουλεύεται,
 κακῶν δὲ λέκτρων μὴ ‘πιθυμίαν ἔχειν,
 μηδ’ εἰ ζαπλοῦτους οἴσεται φερνὰς δόμοις;
 [οὐ γάρ ποτ’ ἂν πράξειαν ἐκ θεῶν κακῶς.] (Stevens 1971)

Pe. So ought not a man, who resolves to be smart, marry someone
 from a noble family and give his children to those who are good,
 and never have a desire for evil marriage-beds,

even if she will bring into his house a rich dowry?

[For they will never suffer ills at the gods' hands] (*Andr.*1279-1283).

That he is referring in particular to Hermione is obvious, but the sentiments are spoken in a general way and meant to be taken as such. Men should think about the women whom they are to marry and consider their nobility, as well as whether they are worthy individuals. What they should avoid is being seduced by the twin evils of sex (he specifically uses the word λέκτρον in line 1281) and money. Notably, he does not mention anything to do with bastardy or ethnicity, but focuses instead on the worth of the family and the women with whom the man is to be united. It is from this beginning that happy marriages develop and from which noble lineages can spring. Hermione, though noble, is an evil woman obsessed with her material wealth and she turned out to be the worst possible match for Neoptolemus. Andromache, on the other hand, is of noble birth, but low status, and her virtue as a wife to Hector and inherent worth has proven itself in her behaviour, as well as the future prophesied for her child. His bastardy, in short, is not of any importance.

What drove Euripides to compose this play in the way he has, with a focus on the issues of marriage and bastardy can never be certain, but it is possible to suggest a number of contextual factors that may have influenced his decisions. It deals first and foremost with the tragic consequences that rigid standards of legitimacy and status can have for an *oikos*. The PCL and its idea of marriage and purity is clearly rejected in his reimagining of marriage as neither necessarily being a guarantor of legitimacy, nor of legitimacy being the standard by which a marriage is judged a success. What is of importance, however, is the moral worth of individuals involved, which can be found in people otherwise marginalised by the dictates of the PCL. In c.425, following the plague and a number of serious military defeats, the war had begun to cause serious cracks in the foundations of the basic assumptions and beliefs of the *polis*. Athens, like Neoptolemus's household, would have to deal with the devastating consequences of the war eventually and especially its effects on the population of legitimate males. The play seems to be saying that, in the face of the crumbling patriarchally-endorsed standards of gender, sexuality, childbirth, marriage, and citizenship, and often the dire need for repopulation of the propertied citizen class, bastardy in wartime becomes an irrelevancy.

CHAPTER 4: THE *ION*

4.1 Introduction

Euripides' *Ion* was produced considerably later than either the *Hippolytus* or the *Andromache*, most likely in the period following the failed Sicilian expedition (415-410).²²⁸ The young man Ion is its main character and has numerous qualities resembling those of the two bastards already examined above, yet the nature of the plot and the differences in the relationships between the characters mean that there are several points of contrast too. In the *Hippolytus* we encounter a bastard who is fully aware of his birth-status and who seeks to redefine himself in order to escape its stigma. In the *Andromache* our attention is on the bastard's mother and we encounter the complexities arising from the introduction of a foreign, noble-born concubine into an *oikos* that lacks a legitimate heir. All the characters in both of these plays are conscious of Hippolytus and Molossus's bastardy and this knowledge fundamentally affects the narrative's key relationships. In the *Ion*, however, the characters are ignorant of their true identities and relationships to one another and the discovery of these is what the plot is based on. As a result, whatever fears Ion feels about bastardy do not stem from his actually being a bastard, but from an internalisation of the societal judgments of illegitimacy that have caused him to live in fear of his true identity. In other words, his anxieties do not arise from his position within a pre-existing domestic structure, but instead are revealed through the difficult process of his insertion into one.

This chapter begins with a summary of the play and its main themes in order to clarify what is a fairly convoluted and relatively unknown plot. This is then followed by a brief look at the debate surrounding its problematic generic definition. Then there is a review of the research on Euripides' presentation of Athenian identity, which has dominated scholarship on the *Ion*, examining in particular whether or not he seeks to problematize and critique ideas of

²²⁸ The exact date of *Ion* has been hard to pinpoint, but is generally accepted as postdating the Sicilian expedition, "sometime between 415 and 410 B.C." (Jones 2019: 727). Through the analysis of the play's metrical, structural and contextual elements, various suggestions have been: 415-13 (Lee 1997: 40), c.414/3 (Lesky 1983: 316), c.413 (Diggle 1981) and sometime after 412 (Burian 1996: 3; Martin 2010: 651). Owen (1939: xli) seems exceptional in his proposition of 418/7, as does Vickers (2014: 303) in suggesting c.409.

autochthony. Finally, the main body of this chapter will consist of a detailed analysis of all the occurrences of bastardy-related words and their contexts.

4.2 *The plot*

Of Euripides' plots the *Ion*'s is almost certainly one of the most elaborately formulated. It is set before the temple of Apollo at Delphi and concerns the exposure of Ion's Athenian origins. The impetus of the narrative comes largely from the characters' ignorance or misunderstanding of their true relations with one another, caused in part by their genuine unawareness, and in part by a false (or at least obfuscated) oracle of Apollo. This collective on-stage confusion is countered by the audience's awareness of pertinent facts about preceding events to which none of the characters are privy. This dynamic creates the sense of dramatic irony that directs the play's tension, as we witness the characters struggle from a position of ignorance and misinformation to a full awareness of the facts known to the audience all along.²²⁹

Hermes' prologue (1-81) establishes the audience's knowledge by outlining Ion's origins and the events prior to the play's opening. Ion is the child born from the god Apollo's rape of the maiden Creusa, the sole surviving daughter of Erechtheus and the last direct descendant of the autochthonous founder of Attica, Erichthonius.²³⁰ She, having exposed the infant at birth, has thought him dead ever since.²³¹ In truth, he had been saved by Hermes himself at Apollo's request and transported to the safety of Delphi where he has been raised by the Pythia and has grown up to become its "...χρυσοφύλαξ τοῦ θεοῦ/ ταμίας τε πάντων πιστός..." (54-55)

²²⁹ Dramatic irony occurs when the audience has vital knowledge that the characters on stage do not. See Segal 1995: 162, and Goldhill 2009: 21-52.

²³⁰ Erechtheus often takes the place of Erichthonius in the early sources (see Hom. *Il.* 2. 546-551 and Herod. 8.55) but by the end of the fifth century they were generally seen as separate identities. Erichthonius was conceived when Hephaestus's attempted rape of Athena led to his sperm falling to the Earth, whence he was born. Athena took charge of him, placing him in a basket and putting him in the care of the daughters of Cecrops. Erechtheus "usually takes the form of the autochthon as an adult" and his mythology remains very much his own, without being given over to Erichthonius (Loraux 1993: 24). Euripides' *Ion* differs from earlier texts in asserting the individuality of the two entities. Why the distinction is made between them is debatable, but one reason, presumably, is to extend the lineage of the Athenian royal family and to link Ion with an even earlier generation of autochthons. For evidence of the distinction, see Plato, *Critias* 110a, Apollodorus, *Bibl.* 3.14.6 and Pausanias 1.2.6. For more on the identification of Erichthonius and Erechtheus, see Burkert 1983: 143-149, Kearns 1989: esp. 160-161, Loraux 1993: *pass.* (esp.46-49), and Cohen 2000: 84-87.

²³¹ On infant exposure in Classical Athens, see Patterson 1985: 103-123, Laes 2014: 365-369, and Golden 2015: *pass.*

[guardian of the god's gold and trusted dispenser of everything]. Ion is, of course, ignorant of his true identity and in a lengthy monody at his entrance he characterises himself only as Apollo's servant, "...ἀμήτωρ ἀπάτωρ τε γεγώς" (109) [being both motherless and fatherless].

In the intervening period, Creusa has married the Achaian Xuthus, an Athenian ally granted the stewardship of Athens for services rendered in the city's war against the Chalcedonians (58-64).²³² The union has so far remained "ἄτεκνος" (65) [childless] and so husband and wife have journeyed to Delphi to consult the oracle "ἔρωτι παίδων" (67) [because of their desire for children]. It is at this point that the main action of the play begins, with a meeting outside of the temple between Creusa, attended by her entourage of Athenian women (the Chorus), and Ion.

In quite familiar tragic style the plot is designed as a succession of revelations, some of them true, others only thought to be so, which form the central concern of each *episodion*. The disordered and miscalculated way that this happens causes misconstrued conciliation and unnecessary conflict between the only partially-informed characters.²³³ The end result, however, is the recognition of the proper relations between the characters.²³⁴

The first *episodion* (237-451) centres on the meeting of Ion and Creusa and their gradual disclosure to one another of who they think they are and why they are in Delphi. During this interaction, Creusa tells the story of her rape by Apollo and the uncertainty about the resulting child but hides the truth behind the familiar excuse that this 'happened to a friend.' At the end of this section Xuthus arrives with the news that the oracle of Trophonius has prophesied that they will arrive back in Athens "...οὐκ ἄπαις" (408) [not without child]. He then descends to consult the Pythia and Creusa leaves.

²³² "The obvious propagandic advantage of this is that the founders of the Dorian and Achaean races now appear as Athenian born and sharing, through Creusa, in the autochthonous Athenian stock" (Conacher 1959: 26). For Xuthus's mythological history, see Conacher 1959: 23-26, Walsh 1978: 310-314, and Cole 2008: 313-315.

²³³ For the structure of the *Ion*'s plot (and six other Euripidean works) as one of 'mixed reversal' in which the different scenes contribute in their turn both positive and negative elements resulting in the narrow avoidance of catastrophe, see Burnett 1971: 101-129.

²³⁴ The *Ion* most closely resembles Euripides' *Electra* in this regard, but various other plays have recognition scenes, including *Iphigeneia in Tauris* and *Helen*. On 'recognition' in Euripides' plays, see Kim On Chong-Gossard 2006: 27-48 and Mueller 2010: 365-402.

The second *episodion* (510- 675) begins with Xuthus's revelation to Ion of Apollo's oracle that the young man has been given to him as his son. Ion is at first unbelieving and dismisses Xuthus, claiming that he has misinterpreted the god's prophecy. When, however, the situation is interrogated and it seems likely that Ion was conceived during a drunken Bacchic revel in Delphi attended by Xuthus during his youth, they recognise each other as father and son. Ion reacts to his new father's desire that he come to Athens to take up his position as heir by asserting that his life as a servant at Delphi is preferable to one in Athens as a foreign bastard. Xuthus does not answer this directly, but instead gives Ion the name (661) by which he is known to us, and the two leave to perform the relevant birth rites neglected up till then and to celebrate the 'reunion' at a feast for all the town.

Creusa and an Old Man, the former tutor of Erechtheus, are the focus of the third *episodion* (725-1047), in which the childless wife of Xuthus learns from the chorus (in contravention of their master's earlier command to keep silent) that Apollo has given her husband Ion to be his son, but that she will remain childless. The Old Man,²³⁵ tries to convince Creusa that Xuthus has meant this to happen all along and has brought her to Delphi to reclaim his son because “τυραννίδ' αὐτῷ περιβαλεῖν ἔμελλε γῆς” (829) [he intended to embrace him as ruler of the land (Athens)] (Owen 1939: xxx). Creusa responds with a long monody (859-922) in which she reveals the cause of her suffering, namely her rape by Apollo and the loss of her child. It is after this that, by instigation of the Old Man, the plan is concocted to poison Ion at the feast about to be held.

The story of how this plan is attempted and thwarted is told in the fourth *episodion* (1106-1228) through the messenger speech (1122-1228). The messenger is a servant loyal to Creusa and has come to warn her that she is suspected of the attempt on Ion's life, but finding only the Chorus, he narrates to them the series of events that leads to the discovery of the plot. The Old Man, he says, managed to insinuate himself into the party but when, by the machinations of Apollo, the wine is revealed to have been poisoned, the scheme is uncovered and Creusa sought as its instigator.

²³⁵ He is acting in much the same role as the Nurse does with Phaedra. The fact that he is a man, however, contrasts with the Nurse in the *Hippolytus* and the unidentified women in the *Andromache* who are blamed for corrupting Phaedra and Hermione, respectively.

Creusa returns on stage for the *exodos* (1250-1622), where she takes sanctuary at the altar of Apollo to protect herself from the infuriated Ion who soon arrives with the intention of killing her. The tension between them is broken by the appearance of the Pythia who reveals to the young man the crib he was found in and its various trappings. Creusa recognises this as the same vessel in which she abandoned her own child and by correctly naming the various items inside reveals her true connection to Ion. Although they are reconciled, Ion doubts the story of Apollo's paternity until Athena (sent by that god as his proxy) explains the truth of the matter and sends them off to Athens with her blessing (1553-1617).

Taken as a whole, the plot is remarkable for its manipulation of tension, which builds steadily from Creusa's discovery of Apollo's oracle until the *exodos* where, with her life in the balance, it reaches its peak. It is then eased by the Pythia's entrance and the consequent revelation of their true relationship, leading to a strong sense of relief and sympathy for the two characters, both of whom have been on the brink of the other's murder. This ending, however, has caused difficulties in the play's interpretation and a variety of proposals have been made on how it ought to be defined as a work of drama, as well as what Euripides' intentions behind the play were.

4.3 *Another problem play*

4.3.1 *Genre and Definition*

The *Ion* shares with the *Andromache* the problem of generic ambiguity, because the ending is positive in a way which few other Euripidean works can match. It has generally been classed as a tragedy but, although tragic endings are certainly approached, they are never actually reached. As Martin neatly puts it, "a poisoned pigeon remains the only fatality, and the ending is more than just happy" (2018: 11). For this reason, it has most often been compared to works like *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, the *Helen*, and the *Orestes* (to which I would also add the *Alcestis*).²³⁶

²³⁶ For comparisons with other plays by Euripides, see Burnett 1971: 101-129 and Kim On Chong-Gossard 2006: 27-48 (esp. 39-44).

It is not, however, the happy ending alone that confuses the play's genre but also "the pervasive irony which plays over the whole" (Conacher 1959: 20). For the most part, the source of the dramatic tension is the incompleteness of the characters' knowledge of their true relations to one another. And yet there are moments in the play when this irony borders on the comedic. Like New Comedy, with which it has been compared, the plot is founded on incidents of misidentification and misunderstanding, and even those points that are closest to violence and tragedy cannot be said to be akin, for example, to Hippolytus's death scene, or even Peleus's grief.²³⁷ Some scholars have redefined it as a 'tragicomedy' or a 'romance', while others have fervently maintained that it *is* a tragedy.²³⁸

4.3.2 *The Myth*

Owen, in his 1939 commentary on the play, states that "Ion does not belong to the earliest mythology of Greece. He is invented as the eponym of the Ionian race, and his name is merely derived from theirs" (ix).²³⁹ In the same vein, Martin also notes that "Pre-Euripidean pictorial evidence of Ion does not exist," suggesting that the story had no obvious mythological history until at least the mid- to late-fifth century (2018: 15).²⁴⁰ The myth of Ion and his place within the autochthonous Athenian genealogy was, therefore, relatively novel at the time of the play's production. In conjunction with the contemporary political desire for Athenocentric representation, this novelty may well have allowed Euripides to transform the narrative more easily than if it were one of the older, more 'traditional' Panhellenic myths. It may be contestable that "Euripides' will to innovate is nowhere more evident than in the *Ion*," but it cannot be denied that there is a high degree of originality in the story he has created (Cole 2008: 313). Even if he was not wholly responsible for all of the apparent changes to the story and there were

²³⁷ For comparisons with New Comedy and Hellenistic literature in general, see Wassermann 1940: 590, Knox 1979: 257-270, Mastronade 1975: 163, and Cole 2008: 313.

²³⁸ Arguments in favour of a non-tragic definition have been made by, among others, Conacher 1959: 20-39, Kitto 1961: 311-29, Knox 1979: 257-27, Seidensticker 1982: 241, Troiano 1985: 51, and Thornburn 2001: 221-236, who use the happy ending and comedic moment as their primary evidence for its redefinition. Those in support of the *Ion* as a tragedy include Wolff 1965: 169-194, Mastronarde 1975: 163-176, Gould 1978: 43-67, Zacharia 1995: 45-63, and Martin 2018: 12.

²³⁹ On these sorts of ἐτύμολογοί in Athenian tragedy, see Buxton 2013: 53-71 (for *Ion*, see 54).

²⁴⁰ He does not find the evidence from the c.460 vase (Vatican 17951) convincing, as Shapiro 1998: 127-151 does. See Jones 2019: 727-762 for a more detailed analysis of both the pre- and post-Euripidean representations of the Ion myth.

mythological precedents, it is at the very least significant that he chose to produce a play based on less commonly known and unconventional versions, when he might have used more established ones.

Euripides' first important alteration to Ion's mythology is the changes he makes to the traditional account of Hellenic and Athenian ancestry. According to the standard genealogy, Xuthus, along with Dorus and Aeolus, were the three sons of Hellen. Xuthus, in turn, married Erechtheus's daughter, Creusa, and they had two sons, Ion and Achaeus.²⁴¹ In this version of events, all of the Greek races (Dorian, Aeolian, Ionian and Achaeae) are accounted for through the line of Hellen. In Euripides' version of the story, however, two major changes seem to have been made. Firstly, the god Apollo replaces Xuthus as Ion's father and, secondly, Athena prophesies that Xuthus and Creusa will be the parents of Dorus and Achaeus (1589-1594).²⁴²

The replacement of Xuthus as Ion's father with Apollo is, if not "the main political purpose of the play," then at least representative of its overall political intentions (Wassermann 1940:588). It was "a radical departure" from the established myth and has implications far more significant for the position of Athens in the Hellenic world than Xuthus's paternity ever could (Cole 2008: 313). Xuthus, as well as being politically and culturally handicapped by being a foreigner in Athens, is also genealogically disadvantaged, because any children he might have by Creusa, although legitimate, will dilute the blood of Erechtheus's autochthonous line. The divine Apollo, however, has no such impediment and instead only *adds* further nobility to an already noble family tree. He does not compromise the inheritance of the autochthony realised by Erichthonius because he has no impediments to introduce into its genealogy. By this innovation the Athenians can claim a descent from Erichthonius that is *wholly* autochthonous and to which Apollo's pedigree is added.

²⁴¹ For ancient sources about these myths, see Hesiod *Catalogue of Women* fr. 9 and 10a 20-24, Herodotus 7.94 and 8.44.2, Pseudo-Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 1.7.3, Strabo 8.7.1, Pausanias 1.31.3 and 7.1.2-4, as well as Euripides himself in a fragment of *Wise Melanippe* (481 N). For modern appraisals of the stories and Euripides' treatment of them see, among others, Owen 1939: xiv-xvii, Wassermann 1940: 597-600, Conacher 1959:22-26, Cole 2008: 313-314 and Martin 2018: 13-20

²⁴² There is an obvious contradiction in this statement since Hermes tells us at the outset of the play that Xuthus is "Ἀχαιός" (64) [Achaeae], which demonym cannot pre-exist its namesake Achaeus. Nevertheless, this inconsistency does not seriously affect the play, nor is it a particularly unusual feature of tragedy.

Euripides further changes the myth by relegating Dorus from the position of Xuthus's brother to his son by Creusa. Not only is the racial purity of the Athenians maintained by eliminating any non-Athenian blood from its lineage, but they are simultaneously given genetic primacy over the other Greek tribes.²⁴³ Consequently, the traditional fraternal distinction between the Ionians and Dorians tribes is nullified, because they are both descended from Creusa and "the privilege of autochthonous ancestry is transmitted through the maternal line" (Mueller 2010: 366).²⁴⁴ Dorians are therefore not separate to the Ionian-Attic line, but part of it, though subordinate to the divinely engendered descendants of Apollo and Creusa. The change also helps to reinvigorate the link between the Athenians and Ionians, since they both share in the autochthonous descent of Ion.²⁴⁵ These are the immediate consequences of the alterations made by Euripides to the traditional myth; but the exact socio-political reasons *why* he chose to institute them are widely debated.

Given the wartime context of the play's production, the propagandistic value for Athens of the reinforcement of the Ionian-Athenian relationship and the relegation of Dorian (and so Spartan) ethnicity seems obvious.²⁴⁶ Opinions have varied, however, on whether the play is, in fact, so cut-and-dried an example of ethnic propaganda, or whether it presents a subtler picture that questions or even criticises the self-aggrandising image that the Athenians had of themselves.

²⁴³ On the altered descent of the Greek tribes in the play, see Wassermann 1940: 594-595, Conacher 1959: 26, Walsh 1978: 310-311, and Martin 2018: 11, 14.

²⁴⁴ See also Cohen 2000 who writes that "Euripides traumatizes Athenian norms by deriving the "autochthonous" line through maternal, not paternal, filiation" (87).

²⁴⁵ For the tribal relationships here, see Hall 1997: 56.

²⁴⁶ If we accept the broad ranging dates 415-410 BCE as the time of *Ion*'s production (see n.1 above), we are faced with a number of different possible interpretations for its political intentions. Although this would put it in the context of Athens dealing with the fallout from the failed Sicilian expedition (415) and the defection of a number of Ionian allies (412), there was also, as Martin points out, "a period of optimism after several military successes (especially at Cynossema in 411 and Cyzicus early in 410)" which may well have continued into the period of Alcibiades' return in 408 (2018: 31). There seems, at the very least, an attempt in the work to reinforce links between Athens and its Ionian allies in the East, to which its focus seems to have shifted after the troubles in the West. The evidence is scanty and ambiguous; metrical data shows that it "is not an early play," but what the exact context of its later performance was has been prone to obfuscation and post-rationalisation (Owen 1939: xxxvii). What seems most likely to me is Martin's conclusion that "the most interesting and nuanced reading probably points to a date after the desertion of the allies in 412: a time when the importance of Ionian and Hellenic ties became particularly important. This case does not rest on allusions to specific events but rather explains the motifs against the general background, mood, and problems of the time" (2018: 32).

4.3.3 *Ethnic Purity and Propaganda*

During the second half of the fifth century, Athens and its citizens seem, in general, to have become intently focused on the idea of their own ethnic purity. The end of the Persian Wars (479 BCE) and the formation of the Delian league (478 BCE) led to the rise of Athenian dominance among the Greeks, which in turn resulted in an emphasis being placed on the qualifications necessary for a claim on Athenian identity.²⁴⁷ As discussed above, this attitude was solidified by the PCL of 451, which legalised the necessity for ethnic purity among Athens' citizens. This seems to have led to the city developing a strong sense of superiority over those other Greeks who were not of Athenian blood and stressing the importance of ethnic purity. The speech which Thucydides puts into the mouth of Alcibiades on the eve of the Sicilian expedition provides a useful example of this sort of attitude:

καὶ τὸν ἐς τὴν Σικελίαν πλοῦν μὴ μεταγινώσκετε ὥς ἐπὶ μεγάλην δύναμιν ἐσόμενον. ὄχλοις τε γὰρ ξυμμείκτοις πολυανδροῦσιν αἱ πόλεις καὶ ῥαδίας ἔχουσι τῶν πολιτῶν τὰς μεταβολὰς καὶ ἐπιδοχάς. καὶ οὐδεὶς δι' αὐτὸ ὥς περὶ οἰκείας πατρίδος οὔτε τὰ περὶ τὸ σῶμα ὅπλοις ἐξήρτυται οὔτε τὰ ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ νομίμοις κατασκευαῖς· ὅτι δὲ ἕκαστος ἢ ἐκ τοῦ λέγων πείθειν οἶεται ἢ στασιάζων ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ λαβὼν ἄλλην γῆν, μὴ κατορθώσας, οἰκήσιν, ταῦτα ἐτοιμάζεται. καὶ οὐκ εἰκὸς τὸν τοιοῦτον ὄμιλον οὔτε λόγου μῆ γνώμῃ ἀκροᾶσθαι οὔτε ἐς τὰ ἔργα κοινῶς τρέπεσθαι· ταχὺ δ' ἂν ὥς ἕκαστοι, εἴ τι καθ' ἡδονὴν λέγοιτο, προσχωροῖεν, ἄλλως τε καὶ εἰ στασιάζουσιν, ὥσπερ πυνθανόμεθα. (Jones and Powell 1942)

Regarding the expedition to Sicily, do not change your mind because you think that the expedition will be against a great power. For the cities there are populated by motley masses and changes and additions among the citizens are easy. And because of this, no one is equipped with weapons for protecting his person, nor with permanent implements for cultivating the land, as he might be if he cared for his

²⁴⁷ The literature on the period between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars and Athens' ascent to power is extensive but some general introductions include Meiggs 1943: 21-34 and 1972, Rhodes 1985: 1-29, Finley 2008:14-40, and Everitt 2016.

home country. Rather, each person provides himself with whatever he thinks he can get from the collective, either by persuasive rhetoric or by political faction fighting, knowing that if he is unsuccessful he can go and live in another land. And it is not likely that a group like this would listen to reason with unanimity of purpose or turn themselves as one to actions: but each, if something were said that was agreeable to them, would come forward readily, particularly if they are involved in civil unrest, as we have learned they are (6.17.2-3).

The implications of this view of the Sicilians seem quite clear: peoples who are not connected ethnically and civically are weaker than those who share a group identity, because they neither care for their adopted country nor are they able to work together. Athens, by inversion, represents exactly the sort of city that flourishes because of its shared heritage and united patriotism. One result of this attitude is that Athens could not allow anyone who was not purely Athenian into its ranks, or the Athenians would potentially suffer the dysfunctionality attributed by Alcibiades to the Sicilians. If, however, we accept the general view that the play was produced after the Sicilian expedition, it has to be interpreted in the light of the expedition's failure and how exactly the result undermined the sentiments embedded in Alcibiades' speech.

Athens, of course, was not capable of total self-sustenance and it had long had a large population of foreigners integral to the running of the city and the maintenance of its diplomatic relations. These metics (μέτοικοι, or 'resident aliens')²⁴⁸ lived and worked in Athens but did not enjoy any of the civic privileges granted to true-born Athenians. That is to say that they did not 'share' in the state in the same way as those who were citizens did.²⁴⁹ Metics were not necessarily treated as 'ξένοι', total outsiders to the city, but nor were they treated as insiders. Instead they inhabited a liminal space which did not distinguish them from one another (although there was a wide

²⁴⁸ LSJ, s.v. μέτοικος 3, and MGS, s.v. μέτοικος B. For further discussion on the meaning of μέτοικος, see Whitehead 1977: 6-10.

²⁴⁹ Wijma, arguing against too rigidly defined divisions between different 'types' of Athenian residents, notes that there was no independent authority equivalent to the modern state, which could make these definitions and writes that, "the concept of rights was completely alien to the Greek poleis. Instead, Aristotle and many before him refer to 'sharing in' and 'participating in' (μετέχειν) or 'being in a position to' (ἐξεῖναι) when describing the status of citizenship, a status which one did not possess but embodied" (2014: 14-15).

range in their economic positions) but considered them as part of a whole: aliens who, out of necessity, had been accepted into the city.²⁵⁰

4.4 *Intention and innovation.*

There has been much discussion (and little agreement) about how Ion's insinuation into the royal house of Erechtheus was achieved and how it would have been viewed by the play's first audience. It stands out among Euripides' works for its portrayal of Athenians as prone to violence, yet it also remains the only depiction of the *polis* foundation mythology in extant tragedy. These two elements need not be in opposition, though. Proposals have tended towards either end of a spectrum. On the one side, the play is seen as propaganda intent on establishing Athenian primacy among the Hellenes and reasserting the citizens' autochthonous identity.²⁵¹ On the other, it has also been seen as a criticism of the narrow-minded xenophobia inherent in this mode of Athenian self-conception. The disparity of opinion in the scholarship is due to the ambiguity of three particular aspects of the play: 1.) the presentation of autochthony, 2.) the characterisation of Apollo, and 3.) the play's ending and resolution of Ion's character.

4.4.1 *Autochthony*

Euripides' vision of autochthony and in particular the superiority that Athenians believe it confers upon them has been subject to various interpretations. Generally, it has been agreed that he does offer a critical view of the matter, but there has been disagreement about how far he goes in his critique. Two of the most divisive elements of the play in this regard are the intolerant and xenophobic attitudes of the Athenian characters and the terms on which Ion can return to Athens.

Some have found that the ending of the play resolves many of the disputes between Athenian and foreigner, as well as other conflicts of heritage and identity pertinent to the wartime audience. Walsh, for example, claims that the "resolution of the play is designed to render these

²⁵⁰ Early works on the position of metics in the late-fifth century include Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1887: 107-128 and Clerc 1893. There have been a number of works on metics in Athens, but in the last 50 years it has been Whitehead 1977 and Wijma 2014 that have provided the most important contributions.

²⁵¹ For more extensive examinations of Athenian views of Autochthony, see Rosivach 1987: 294-306, Loraux 1993 and 2000 (esp. 13-28), and Saxonhouse 1986: 257-273.

controversies moot by constructing a world in which finally there is no occasion for controversy” (1978: 313). Zeitlin, too, finds the ending a satisfactory conclusion to all of the issues with Ion’s ‘foreignness’ and thinks that it resolves the Athenian antipathy towards his insinuation into the autochthonous house of the city’s rulers. She writes,

The result, in conclusion, is that Athens may have it all ways: a child of divine parentage, a certified product of autochthonous lineage, a legitimised son of the proper social standing. Imported from Delphi, Ion brings his ‘purity’ of upbringing to merge with the ‘purity’ of the other sort which Athens claims (1989: 182).

Farrington also claims that the happy ending of the play resolves the “violence and a destructive xenophobia...[of]...the Athenians and their royal family” because, he writes, “Apollo shows what he thinks of 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)” (1991: 130-131).

A more subtle approach is Westra’s (2006), which compares the play’s presentation of autochthony on the one side and birth from woman, or filiation, on the other. These two methods of engendering are at odds with one another, he writes, and “in the *Ion*...autochthony is both asserted and problematized, as is its counterpart, birth from woman/filiation which is shown to be correlated with an overvaluation of blood relations, whereas (Athenian) autochthones drastically undervalue their blood relations” (2008: 278). However, for all of this criticism, “in the end, autochthony emerges triumphant, or at least irreducible, as Lévi-Strauss claimed it was” (2008: 279).

Of all of the commentators Kasimis believes most strongly in Euripides’ outright condemnation of the narrow Athenian self-identity that leads, in the end, to Ion’s forced concealment of his origins. She writes,

No resolution to the play is ever reached, in my view, because the tragedy’s central political conflict lies elsewhere—not over characters’ blood ties themselves but in

the problems that a premium on blood causes membership. Ion is actually made to reconceal the news of his Athenian blood as the *condition* of his return to Athens, its future as a democratic hegemony, and its colonization of Ionia (2013: 233, author's emphasis).

Of these prominent views on the matter of Euripides' examination of autochthony and Athenian identity in the play, I would tend towards a subtler approach like Zeitlin's. There is, I believe, some resolution at the end of the play and the playwright tries to offer a picture of a functional system that at once affirms the autochthony of the citizens, while minimising its sense of xenophobia. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that there are questions being asked of various issues of Athenian ethnic identity and from their depiction it is reasonable to see some form of criticism of the extremist views of, for example, the Old Man and the Chorus, which lie at the heart of the conflict and cause the biggest problems for the plan of Apollo.

4.4.2 *Apollo*

Apollo's introduction into the mythological genealogy of the play is, as we have already seen, crucial to its interpretation, and yet the Apollo whom Euripides presents seems to be characterised by a curiously un-godlike lack of control over the action. Consequently, set against the background of the patriotic autochthony theme, the further ennoblement of the Athenian bloodline offered by Apollo's replacement of Xuthus is seemingly undermined by the god's ignoble representation. As Conacher comments, "the chief paradox of the *Ion* lies in the contrasting effect of its 'national-dynastic' theme and of its treatment of Apollo, the deity supposedly presiding over its fulfilment" (1959: 22).²⁵²

To begin with, Apollo is a rapist and, as Zeitlin puts it, "rape and violence lie at the heart of the drama and is the obsessively reiterated tale from which all else follows" (1989: 175). While the rapacious male god is hardly a novelty in the Greek mythological imagination, Apollo is not exempt from the censure of his most devoted Delphic servant and the result of the union, Ion. His son reproves his behaviour and then asks the reasonable question "πῶς οὖν δίκαιον τοῦς

²⁵² See also Buxton 2013: 137-139.

νόμους ὑμᾶς βροτοῖς/ γράψαντας αὐτοὺς ἀνομίαν ὀφλισκάνειν;” (442-443) [How is it just that, having written the laws for mortals, you yourselves incur the charge of unlawfulness?].²⁵³ Aside from this ‘moral’ defect, the most curious feature of Apollo is his apparent lack of control over the events in the play, which in many ways subverts his divinity and its introduction into the Athenian lineage.

In his review of Owen’s 1939 commentary Norwood characterises Apollo as “a brute, a liar, and a bungler” and this interpretation, in one form or another, has been proposed, questioned and discounted by various scholars over the last century and a half (1942: 113). To some it seems that Apollo does not have a very firm grip on the action of the play and that his powers do not extend to unfailing control of human affairs.²⁵⁴ In particular, despite his prophetic associations, there appears to be a lack of foresight regarding Creusa’s attempted murder of Ion and the latter’s retaliation. It is only by quick improvisation that Apollo manages to resolve his error.²⁵⁵ He also undercuts the validity of his own infallible (if ambiguous) oracle with the lie he tells Xuthus about Ion being his child, suggesting that his prophecies cannot be implicitly trusted.²⁵⁶

As a result of this scepticism of Apollo’s power, there have been several suggestions about the identities of the forces (both divine and mortal) that govern the functioning of the plot. Some, such as Giannopoulou, have suggested τύχη²⁵⁷ as a prominent element in the formation of the action and that “Euripides is depicting the power of the unexpected and accidental to alter even divine plans” (2000: 263). Others have seen Apollo in a struggle against the unpredictable and intractable nature of human will, which upsets his plans and forces him to adjust them to achieve his desired result.²⁵⁸ Yet others still have disregarded the importance of Apollo’s apparent failings by simplistically interpreting the play as mere entertainment, in which the supposed

²⁵³ For the fifth-century struggle to understand the contradictory issue of moral governance by immoral deities, see Vickers 1973: 328-37.

²⁵⁴ For this characteristic, see Verrall 1880: *pass.*, Rosenmeyer 1963: 103-152, Wolff 1965: 169-194, Mastronarde 1975: 163-176, and Giannopoulou 2000: 257-271.

²⁵⁵ For an interesting take on the necessary adaptations Apollo is forced to make to his plan, see Thornburn 2001: 221-236. Thornburn views Apollo as a playwright figure, who is forced by the action of his ‘characters’ to change his original plans in order to achieve the happy ending he desires.

²⁵⁶ For the ambiguity of the oracle, see Kindt 2007: 1-30.

²⁵⁷ “fortune, chance” (LSJ, s.v. τύχη 2), and “chance, lot, destiny” (MGS, s.v. τύχη B).

²⁵⁸ On the struggle with human will, see Mastronarde 1975: 163-176 and Thornburn 2001: 221-236.

‘commentary’ made on the divinity is nothing but an aid to the amusement for which the *Ion* is intended.²⁵⁹

The distinction between those above who argue that Apollo works reactively to human actions and those that are outright defences of Apollo is in fact very narrow. Wassermann (1940) defends him against the charge of rape by appealing to fifth-century attitudes towards women and religion, and argues that, since the desired ending is achieved, it cannot be said that he is inadequate as a deity. For the god Apollo “will and action coincide” and no sooner has the desire for Creusa arisen than he has forced himself upon her; this action, Wassermann writes, “preserves the primitive violence inherent in the relations of the sexes from a time when woman was little more than property” (1940: 589-590). Burnett (1962), Farrington (1991) and Lefkowitz (2016) all have much the same attitude towards the position of the god in the play, focusing instead on the result rather than the method.

A better assessment of the situation is Martin’s that “the reading as either an attack on the god or an apologia comes to nothing, since it is the poet himself who designed this version of the myth” (2018: 9). There is a struggle in the play between the human and the divine and Apollo is forced by the decisions that the characters make to alter his plans accordingly. Euripides’ god mostly has an ending in mind, but is not prescient in the same way as other gods in other works of literature. The Chorus’s decision to tell Creusa of Apollo’s oracle (regardless of whether it is a lie or not) sets off a chain of events that eventually leads to the arrival of Athena to clear up the mess. What Thornburn calls the “triple *deus*” (2001: 221), namely the bird who dies of the poison intended for Ion, the Pythia who arrives with the basket, and finally Athena herself, all clearly emanate from Apollo (who is, in fact, often referred to as the one directing the events)²⁶⁰ as a response to a human decision which jeopardises his plans.

Finally, it is important to remember that the Apollo whom Euripides has in mind when he casts him as a progenitor of the Ionians is almost certainly Apollo Patrōos, not the Delphic Apollo

²⁵⁹ On the play as entertainment, see Kitto 1961: 313-29 and Conacher 1959: 20-39.

²⁶⁰ *Ion*, lines 68, 1118, 1565, 1609-1610.

Loxias.²⁶¹ Just as Zeus was patrōos to the Dorians, so too was Apollo to the Athenians: he presided over the archonship²⁶² and acted as the patron of the ten Cleisthenic tribes.²⁶³ His presentation in this play is as much an exploration of the origins of this element of the *polis* structure as it is of the Ionian race.

4.4.3 *Ion's bastardy*

The semi-divine nature of Ion's conception means that the standard criteria by which illegitimacy is decided and judged are not entirely valid for designating his birth-status. Hippolytus and Molossus are both born to unmarried mortal parents and can be judged by mortal standards of legitimacy. Ion, though he is born out of wedlock, has immortal paternity, which raises questions about how he should be classified. What is of far greater importance than what the reality of his actual birth status might be, however, is his personal attitude towards his own potential bastardy, which he judges by society's criteria for illegitimacy. Ignorance about his parentage leads Ion to the conclusion that he is most likely a child born out of wedlock and a bastard. His position as Apollo's Delphic servant largely seems to protect him from the external societal judgments of illegitimacy that would otherwise be made of him. Yet, because he knows what these are and has internalised them, he is afraid that he will be their victim regardless of the reality of his parentage. Thus, the possibility of his bastardy haunts him and exhibits its effects throughout the play.

²⁶¹ Plato gives the following account of the role of Apollo Patroōs for the Athenians: εἴτα τοῖς ἄλλοις, ἔφη, Ἀθηναίοις οὐκ ἔστιν Ζεὺς ὁ πατρῷος; οὐκ ἔστιν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, αὕτη ἡ ἐπωνυμία Ἰόνων οὐδενί, οὔθ' ὅσοι ἐκ τῆσδε τῆς πόλεως ἀπωκισμένοι εἰσὶν οὔθ' ἡμῖν, ἀλλὰ Ἀπόλλων πατρῷος διὰ τὴν τοῦ Ἰωνος γένεσιν· Ζεὺς δ' ἡμῖν πατρῷος μὲν οὐ καλεῖται, ἔρκειος δὲ καὶ φράτριος, καὶ Ἀθηναία φρατρία. ἀλλ' ἄρκεϊ γ', ἔφη ὁ Διονυσόδωρος· ἔστιν γάρ σοι, ὡς ἔοικεν, Ἀπόλλων τε καὶ Ζεὺς καὶ Ἀθηνᾶ. πάνυ, ἦν δ' ἐγώ. οὐκοῦν καὶ οὗτοι σοὶ θεοὶ ἂν εἶεν; ἔφη. πρόγονοι, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, καὶ δεσπότες. (*Euthydemus* 302c5-d5) ["Then," he said, "is there no ancestral Zeus for the other Athenians?" "This is not the title any of the Ionians give him," I said, neither those who have left the city and settled elsewhere, nor us. Rather they have an ancestral Apollo because of Ion's descent. For us Zeus is not called ancestral, but 'domestic' and 'tribal', and there is also a tribal Athena." "That is enough," said Dionysodorus, "for you have, it seems, an Apollo, a Zeus, and an Athena." "Indeed," I said. "And so then these are your gods?" he asked. "My ancestors," I said, "and my masters."]. On the Apollo of the play being Apollo Patroōs, see Walsh 1978: 310-12, Dougherty 1996: 261-62, Zacharia 2003:44, and Jones 2019: 729-734. cf. Cromeey 2006: 41-69.

²⁶² See *Ath. Pol.* 55.4.

²⁶³ These tribes were each named after different heroes whose statues stood in the Agora: Erectheis, Aegis, Pandianis, Leontis, Acamantis, Oeneis, Cecropis, Hippothontis, Aeantis, Antiochis. For more on the Cleisthenes tribes, see Bradeen 1955: 22-30, Lewis 1963: 22-40, and Traill 1975: 1-24.

The word νόθος (as well as the variant νοθαγενής) appear four times in the play, and, in three of the four cases are used by Ion to describe himself. All of these occurrences provide clear expressions of the fears he has about his birth-status but are only the most blatant manifestations of a deep-seated insecurity that is communicated through other parts of his characterisation. The most obvious and frequent of these is Ion's obsessive search for his mother's identity and the thematic importance of maternal identity throughout the play. Euripides weaves into the play the theme of bastardy's tendency towards unusually close associations between mother and son (that we also find in the *Hippolytus* and the *Andromache*), through Ion's pursuit to discover the truth about this relationship.

Ion's bastardy is also reflected in his focus on both spiritual and sexual purity. As with Hippolytus, the issue of remaining καθαρός in both body and soul is important to Ion and also arises for the most part from his traumatic displacement from both the domestic and civic spheres. He also shows the same mistrust and rejection of traditionally masculine institutions that we have seen in Hippolytus, finding fault with political power in particular, which he views as innately hostile to someone of his position. His activities to his mind are inferior to others and, in order to protect himself from the inevitable persecution because of his bastardy, he avoids them in favour of religious pursuits.

In the analysis that follows, the four occurrences of the word νόθος will act as the basic guideline for scrutinizing how Ion's character is formed by the internalisation of society's definitions of illegitimacy and the means by which the bastard is oppressed within this system. They will also allow for a generalised examination of the ways in which Euripides has interwoven into the play various themes associated with bastardy and how these are in a discourse with Ion's individual fear for his potential birth-status.

4.5 Textual Evidence

4.5.1 *Ion*: 539-547

The word νόθος first appears in the second *episodion* at line 545, during the interaction between Xuthus and Ion that follows the revelation of Apollo's oracle. Although issues of Ion's parentage and birth-status have been raised several times already, notably during Ion's monody (82-183, especially 109-111 and 136-140) and his conversation with Creusa (237-401, especially 308-328), the blatant classification of the young man as a 'bastard' has not yet been made. It is Ion who first uses the word when he enquires into the identity of his mother, looking to establish the nature of the union that conceived him. His use of the term is interesting in and of itself, since it confirms the already implicit themes of genealogy, bastardy and birth-status. However, that it is first employed in a question asked by Ion himself concentrates these thematic concerns on the anxieties which characterise him. It is not, as in Hippolytus's case, initially used as an insult spoken by another character to denigrate the young man in question, but spoken by the bastard himself, stimulated by interior fears and expressive of his own negative conception of illegitimacy and its effects. That this is the case is supported by the context in which it appears.

Xuthus approaches Ion with an almost comic ebullience and is sure of the honesty of the oracle he has received from Apollo.²⁶⁴ His warmth and enthusiasm are not, however, returned by Ion, who believes that Xuthus is making sexual advances to him.²⁶⁵ This reaction of the pious temple servant is understandably negative, as he declares, “παῦε, μὴ ψάσας τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ στέμματα ῥήξης χειρὶ” (522) [Stop! Lest by touching the god's garland with your hand you break it.] and then, more violently, “οὐκ ἀπαλλάξῃ, πρὶν εἴσω τόξα πλευμόνων λαβεῖν;” (524) [Let go, before you take an arrow in the side!]. His complaining and threatening are soon brought up short, though, when Xuthus makes the ambiguous claim that, if Ion should harm him, he will be then harming his father. With progressively more seriousness the confused youth begins to investigate these claims.

²⁶⁴ For Xuthus's comedic role in Apollo's plot, see Knox 1979: 257-270 and Thornburn 2001: 224-227.

²⁶⁵ For the eroticism implicit in this exchange, see Knox 1979: 260, Hoffer 1996: 295, and Lee 1996: 85-109.

Ion's immediate reaction to Xuthus's assertion is to charge him with misunderstanding the oracle.²⁶⁶ It is inconceivable to Ion that Apollo should ever give false prophecy and his opening questions are all concerned with verifying what Xuthus has told him, to understand exactly what the god has said, so that it can be interpreted properly. Apollo, he is told, has prophesied that whoever Xuthus should first meet upon leaving the temple would be his son and that, paradoxically, this child would be “δῶρον, ὅντα δ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ” (537) [a gift, but born from me]. The devout young man accepts this, but, although its ‘truth’ has been established, he does not exhibit the pleasure we might have expected at discovering his father.

His first reaction, rather than an expression of joy, is to question his new-found father about the identity of his mother. This response allows us some insight into his chief anxieties and, as in his earlier conversation with Creusa (264-368), it is his maternity rather than paternity that concerns Ion most. Just as it dominated that earlier stichomythic exchange, so it becomes the focus here. By repeating the importance of this matter to Ion's self-characterisation, Euripides re-emphasises the centrality of maternal identity to him.

- Ιω.* ἔα. τίνοσ δέ σοι πέφυκα μητρός;
Ξο. οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.
Ιω. οὐδὲ Φοῖβος εἶπε;
Ξο. τερφθεῖς τοῦτο, κεῖν' οὐκ ἠρόμην.
Ιω. γῆς ἄρ' ἐκπέφυκα μητρός.
Ξο. οὐ πέδον τίκτει τέκνα.
Ιω. πῶς ἂν οὖν εἶην σός;
Ξο. οὐκ οἶδ', ἀναφέρω δ' ἐς τὸν θεόν.
Ιω. φέρε λόγων ἀψώμεθ' ἄλλων.
Ξο. ταῦτ' ἀμείνον', ὦ τέκνον.
Ιω. ἦλθες ἐς **νόθον** τι λέκτρον;
Ξο. μωρία γε τοῦ νέου.
Ιω. πρὶν κόρην λαβεῖν Ἐρεχθέως;

²⁶⁶ A common issue with oracles: see, for example, Herodotus 1.53.3-1.56.1. For this issue in the *Ion*, see Kindt 2007: 1-30. For misinterpretation of oracles in general, see Kindt 2006: 35-37, Eidinow 2007: 10-25, and Stoneman 2011: 40-54.

Ξο. οὐ γὰρ ὕστερόν γε πω.
 Ιω. ἄρα δὴτ' ἐκεῖ μ' ἔφυσας;
 Ξο. τῷ χρόνῳ γε συντρέχει. (Owen 1939)

Io. Aye! I was born to you by what mother?
 Xu. I can't say.
 Io. Did Phoebus not say?
 Xu. I was so gladdened at this that I didn't ask that.
 Io. Then the mother I was born to was the earth.
 Xu. The ground does not bear children.
 Io. So how then might I be yours?
 Xu. I don't know, but I ascribe it to the god.
 Io. Come, let's engage in some different reasoning.
 Xu. That's better, my son.
 Io. Did you get into some **bastard** bed?
 Xu. Well, yes, in the folly of my youth.
 Io. Before you married the daughter of Erechtheus?
 Xu. Yes, but never have I done so since.
 Io. Is it then *there* that you begot me?
 Xu. The times do coincide... (539-547)

To Ion's disappointment, Xuthus has failed to ask Apollo who Ion's mother is and seems to be only marginally concerned about the answer. Prompted by this ignorance, Ion makes what Martin calls a "potentially ironic or even sarcastic" statement: γῆς ἅρ' ἐκπέφυκα μητρός" (542) [then the mother I was born to was the earth] (2018: *ad loc.*). This proclamation may well be meant as a sardonic comment on Xuthus's ignorance but carries with it an additional element of dramatic irony within the greater narrative of the discovery of the Erechtheid heir. It is an unwitting reference to his true heritage as the (great-) great-grandson of Erichthonius, the man who was born from the soil of Attica to become the original autochthonous ruler of Athens. There is even the suggestion that this noble lineage is so ingrained in the young man, so much

part of his φύσις, that it reveals itself in his speech and action without his knowledge and in contradiction of his apparent status.²⁶⁷

Such a natural intimacy with the very roots of Athenian identity is starkly contrasted with Xuthus's dismissive response, “οὐ πέδον τίκτει τέκνα” (542) [the ground does not bear children]. This reaction to the Athenian foundation myth seems to portray the attitude characteristic of an outsider to Athens, someone who does not share in the autochthony of its people. Such a dismissal is made all the worse because, even though Xuthus is unaware of Ion's true heritage, he is not ignorant of his wife's and it “reveals his indifference to and underestimation of Creusa's and the chorus's sensitivities” (Martin 2018: *ad loc.*). Euripides here appears to be stressing the differences between the characters of the ‘father’ and ‘son’ which have already been hinted at in Ion's reactionary rebuff of Xuthus's first advances. These only help to augment the contrast between them implied in the previous *episodion*, in which the tenor of Xuthus's cheery entrance at line 401 immediately jars with the sincere and sympathetic mood of Creusa and Ion's interaction .

Ion's next question, “πῶς ἂν οὖν εἶην σός;” (543) [So how then might I be yours?], directly confronts Xuthus's apparently blind acceptance of the oracle and his obliviousness to the importance that the mother's identity could have for him and his new-found child. His response reinforces this attitude while simultaneously providing yet another example of the dramatic irony which the characters' collective ignorance causes throughout the play: he says, “οὐκ οἶδ', ἀναφέρω δ' ἐς τὸν θεόν” (543) [I don't know, but I ascribe it to the god]. Euripides has made this statement intentionally ambiguous, implying both that Xuthus leaves the responsibility of answering Ion's question to Apollo, as well as that Apollo is the one who has brought their relationship into being. Both are true, of course: it is through Apollo's agents, the Pythia and Athena, that Ion's mother is revealed to him, and thus the story of how he has come to be ‘given’ to Xuthus, but it is also the god himself who has fabricated the connection between the unrelated ‘father’ and ‘son’.

²⁶⁷ The resonance between the *Ion* and the mythology of the Erechtheids' foundation of Athens has been dealt with, among others, by Mastronade 1975:164-171, Rosivach 1977: 284-294, Walsh 1978: 301-315, Zeitlin 1989: 151-152, Farrington 1991: 130-131, Loraux 1993: 184-236, Westra 2006: 274-277, Cole 2008: 314, and Mueller 2010: 380-396 who note various similarities between Ion's story and that of the Athenian founders.

Xuthus seems not only ignorant but also unconcerned about the mother's identity and the impetus behind discovering it comes from Ion alone. He recognises that their current method of blind conjecture is unhelpful, so he begins to direct the conversation towards a more rational process of deduction by saying “φέρε λόγων ἀψώμεθ’ ἄλλων” (544) [Come, let's engage in some different reasoning].²⁶⁸ He shows a strong propensity for logical reasoning, as his questions move neatly from the general to the specific: in order, he tries to establish the possibility, time, place, and manner of his conception. Xuthus, to emphasise his unconcern with the discovery of Ion's mother, misunderstands the “λόγων ἄλλων” to mean not ‘a different reasoning’ but ‘a different topic’ and, pleased because he believes this to be the end of Ion's inquiry, says, “ταῦτ’ ἀμείνον’, ὦ τέκνον” (544) [that's better, my son]. Once more we find an instance of the evident lack of sympathy in the fraudulent relationship between the ‘father’ and ‘son’.

His attempts to extract information from Xuthus have proven fruitless and so, to begin, he asks quite simply whether Xuthus slept with women before his marriage to Creusa. Establishing this point is the logical first step in discovering his mother's identity but Ion's phrasing foregrounds his potential illegitimacy: “ἤλθεσ ἐς νόθον τι λέκτρον;” (545) [Did you get into some bastard bed?]. Any child of Xuthus born to a woman who was not Creusa would by default be a bastard, since he would have been conceived out of wedlock. By Ion's line of reasoning, therefore, establishing this point is the main step in discovering his birth-status and will help lead to the identity of his mother.

The answer is, of course, in the affirmative: Xuthus “μωρία...τοῦ νέου” (545) [in the folly of youth] slept with women and there remains the chance that he may have conceived a child by one of them. Ion's bastardy is now confirmed (in his mind at least), but he methodically moves on to establishing a more exact sense of the timing: was it before Xuthus was married to Creusa and could one of these encounters have occurred when he was still in his homeland of Phthia (if

²⁶⁸ This line is potentially difficult to translate because of the numerous possible understandings of λόγος in this context. Ion seems to be suggesting that they look at the matter from another angle and try to deduce the identity of the mother from episodes in the past. Xuthus, however, as his reaction shows, thinks that Ion is saying that they should change the subject of the conversation. I have chosen to translate it in accordance with the former interpretation since it is Ion's words which are of most importance at this point. See Martin 2018: *ad loc.*

this is what he means when he uses the word “ἐκεῖ”)?²⁶⁹ Again, the answer is affirmative: given Ion’s age, one of the incidents which Xuthus is remembering could well have been the one they are looking for. The problem with this answer, however, is that it raises the question of how Ion came to be found by the Pythia in Delphi. Ion’s perspicacity is notable in this whole exchange and no more so than in his logical conclusion that the conception need not have happened in Phthia, but could well have occurred in Delphi itself. In the following exchange of questions and answers, Ion is very quickly able to discover that, at much the same time, Xuthus was also in Delphi for the festival of Dionysus and “Βακχίου πρὸς ἡδοναῖς” (553) [in the pleasures of Bacchus] he slept with one or more Delphian girls.²⁷⁰

Incapable of doubting Apollo’s oracle, Ion is convinced by these coincidences that he was fathered by Xuthus and has deduced the likely time, place, and circumstances of his conception. Xuthus, who has contributed nothing of substance to the methodical inquiry, once more demonstrates the separation between himself and Ion by appearing totally satisfied with its conclusion. As he did earlier at line 544, he attempts to bring the conversation to a close with the meaningless words “ὁ πότμος ἐξηῦρεν, τέκνον” (554) [fate has found it out, son]. Similarly, just as he accepted the oracle without question, here too he displays a phlegmatic confidence in providence, which he sees at work in this cursory discovery of Ion’s origins.

The final piece of information which Ion seeks is one that means a great deal to him but which Xuthus cannot provide: how did he come to be found at the temple of Delphi? This question is rooted in Ion’s anxiety about maternal rejection—if he was found at the temple then it is reasonable to assume that his mother put him there—and he is principally asking: Why did my mother abandon me? He asks, not necessarily of Xuthus, but rather more generally, “πῶς δ’ ἀφικόμεσθα ναούς;” (555) [but how did I come to the temple?] and receives in reply the most plausible conclusion given the context of his conception, that he was “ἐκβολον κόρης ἴσως ” (555) [a young girl’s outcast].” If Xuthus impregnated a Delphic girl and the baby Ion was discovered at the temple it is reasonable to assume that she, because she was a young unmarried κόρη, left him there.

²⁶⁹ See Owen 1939: *ad loc.*

²⁷⁰ For an analysis of the pervading significance of Dionysus in the play, see Zeitlin 1989: 164-5.

This conclusion to Ion’s analytical inquiry manages to give some comfort to him, who, as Walsh puts it, is “exquisitely sensitive about the questions of origin” (1978: 302). At the very least he is relieved to learn that he is free-born and not, as he had feared, the child of slaves, which leads him to exclaim “ἐκπεφύγαμεν τὸ δοῦλον” (556) [I have escaped from slavery].²⁷¹ Nevertheless, even as he accepts Xuthus as his father and the distinction in social position this brings, he is unable to shake off the presiding concern of his life: the absence of his mother. Though, as he says, he ought not to want more “ἢ Διὸς παιδὸς γενέσθαι παῖς” (559) [than to be the child of Zeus’s child],²⁷² he cannot help but return to the issue of his mother’s identity and wonder where she might be. She is so important to him that he even apostrophises her with language more affectionate and intense than we have seen him use for his new-found father, calling her “ὦ φίλη μητέρα” (563) [Oh beloved mother]. Although he knows that he is still, despite Xuthus’s nobility, a bastard and that he cannot be anything else, his desire to know his mother’s identity is as powerful as ever. What matters to him most, it seems, is the *knowledge* itself, which will hopefully bring with it the genuine maternal care he has sought all his life.

4.5.2 *Ion*: 587-594

The next occurrence of a bastardy-related word is found at line 592, in the section of the second *episodion* that directly follows that examined above. Most of these lines, 569-667, consist of set speeches given by Xuthus and Ion reminiscent of typical tragic *agōnes*, but lacking the usual mood of hostility and symmetry of line distribution.²⁷³ Xuthus’s first speech (569-584) tries to convince Ion that he must give up his servile position in Apollo’s temple and come to Athens where “σ’ ὄλβιον μὲν σκηπτρον ἀναμένει πατρός” (578) [your father’s blessed sceptre awaits you]. Ion’s response (585-645)²⁷⁴ outlines the reasons why he would prefer to remain at Delphi, especially the challenging position he would find himself in at Athens compared with the ease of his current temple life. Xuthus’s abrupt response (650-667) cuts Ion short, so that his father can

²⁷¹ cf. Ion’s doubt about this fact at line 1382.

²⁷² “Literally read, the genealogy skips one generation. It is incidentally (and ironically) right for Ion’s true relationship with Zeus through his father Apollo” (Martin 2018: *ad loc.*).

²⁷³ See Owen 1939: *ad loc.* and Martin 2018: *ad loc.*, both of whom note well the differences between this, as Martin calls it, “aborted *agōn*”, and the form traditional to tragedy.

²⁷⁴ For notes on various issues with this section of the text, see Kovacs 1979:116-124.

give him his name and decree a feast in celebration of their reunion. The *episodion* ends with another vow from Ion about discovering the identity of his mother (668-675).

In the preceding exchange examined above, Xuthus and Ion have established the likely circumstances of his birth and abandonment at the temple and have accordingly accepted each other as father and son. The ensuing ‘debate’ (569-667) probes the consequences of this discovery for each of them. Xuthus naïvely sees the unearthing of Ion’s identity as his chance to overcome his and Creusa’s difficulties in conceiving a child by providing an heir to the Athenian throne. Ion, on the other hand, while he is pleased to have found something more concrete in which to ground his identity, recognises that as the bastard child of a foreign woman he cannot simply establish himself within the inward-looking social system of the autochthonous Athenians. His insecurities about his birth-status and the nature of the Athenian *polis* mean that he cannot so easily accept the fanciful image which Xuthus presents to him and, at the centre of all of it, remains the anonymity of Ion’s mother. Without knowing her identity he can never truly know where he is situated within the political and domestic system even if he will always be a bastard.

Xuthus continues to exhibit the same fancifulness and lack of guile that has been his defining characteristic from the beginning. The situation as he sees it is overwhelmingly positive and little stands in the way of Ion’s coming to Athens and taking his place as his heir. He, however, still considers this whole business to have been manufactured by Apollo to provide him with a child. Nevertheless, Xuthus is not wholly oblivious of the significance that Ion’s mother’s identity has for his new-found child. Not even he can fail to recognise this when he hears Ion say, “ὦ φίλη μητέρα, πότ’ ἄρα καὶ σὸν ὄψομαι δέμας;/ νῦν ποθῶ σε μᾶλλον ἢ πρίν, ἥτις εἴ ποτ’, εἰσιδεῖν” (563-564) [Oh beloved mother, when is it that I will see you too? Now I yearn to know you more than before, whoever you are], in response to Xuthus’s happy announcement that finding Ion “μακαρίον γ’ ἔθηκε μέ” (562) [has made me blessed]. For all that he may recognise this, however, he remains unable to see the cost that Ion’s uncertainty will have on his chances for success in Athens and can only offer him the compensation of assistance in finding his mother and the uncertain optative platitude that “χρόνῳ δὲ δόντες ταῦτ’ ἴσως εὔροιμεν ἄν (575) [trusting to time perhaps we may discover these things].

This misapprehension of the inevitable Athenian disapproval of Ion's insinuation into the political power structure seems the direct result of Xuthus's non-Athenian status: he believes that it should be enough for Ion that "...οὐδὲ θάτερον νοσῶν/ δυοῖν κεκλήσῃ δυσγενὴς πένης θ' ἄμα/ ἄλλ' εὐγενὴς τε καὶ πολυκτῆμων βίου" (579-581) [you will not be called ignoble and poor, suffering from either of the two illnesses, but you will be both noble and prosperous in life]. He has a predominantly material understanding of success as the appearance of nobility and wealth, both of which will be Ion's if he becomes Xuthus's heir. Nevertheless he is incapable either of understanding the true importance to Ion of knowing his origins or the character of the *polis* of which he is custodian. Just as he so easily dismissed the truth of Erichthonius's autochthonous birth, so too he can here dismiss any impediment to Ion's succession. He is therefore able to state "ἄλλ' ἐκλιπὼν θεοῦ δάπεδ' ἀλητεῖαν²⁷⁵ τε σὴν/ ἐς τὰς Ἀθήνας στεῖχε κοινόφρων πατρί" (576-577) [but leave your life as a wandering stray in the god's quarters and come, like-minded with your father, to Athens], as if to do so were that simple. Ion's reply to his 'father' is characteristically perceptive and well-reasoned:

Ιω. ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν μὲν συμφορὰν ἀσπάζομαι,
πατέρα σ' ἀνευρών· ὦν δὲ γινώσκω, πάτερ,
ἄκουσον. εἶναί φασι τὰς αὐτόχθονας
κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας οὐκ ἐπέισακτον γένος,
ἴν' ἐσπεσοῦμαι δύο νόσω κεκτημένος,
πατρός τ' ἐπακτοῦ καὶ τὸς ὦν **νοθαγενής**.
καὶ τοῦτ' ἔχων τοῦνειδος, ἀσθενὴς μὲν ὦν...
[μηδὲν καὶ οὐδὲν ὦν κεκλήσομαι.] (Owen 1939)

²⁷⁵ ἀλητεία: an uncommon and contested word. The line is accepted as above by both Owen 1939: *ad loc.* and Martin 2018: *ad loc.*, though they disagree about its translation. Owen takes it to mean 'homelessness' while Martin claims this interpretation is "unattested" (*ad loc.*) and that 'erring', 'painful exile' are not wholly accurate either. He gives no translation. Ridgeway (1888) believes that the line should properly read "ἄλλ' ἐκλιπὼν θεοῦ δάπεδα λητεῖαν τε σὴν" translated as 'Having left the pavements of the god and your ministrations'. "A noun λητεία," he writes, "would be as analogous to λητήρ, as ληστεῖα to ληστήρ" (1888: 225). This unattested form is apparently from 'ληίς', epic for 'λεία' "booty," "spoil," "cattle," "plunder" (LSJ, s. v. λεία 1 and MGS, s.v. λεία A). I see no reason why 'wandering' is unacceptable, especially in the context of Ion's return to what Xuthus believes is his 'home'.

Io. While I welcome the event, having
 found you as my father; yet listen, father,
 to what I am thinking. They say that illustrious Athens
 is autochthonous, the people not some alien race,
 and this is where I will go, possessed of two diseases:
 the child of a foreign father and born a **bastard**.
 And having this disgrace I am powerless...
 [I will be nothing, be called a nobody.] (587-594)

As with his earlier interrogation of the facts of his birth, Ion matches Xuthus's jovial complacency with an ordered and methodical approach to the issue at hand, making an effort to avoid causing any offence. It is with gladness that he welcomes "τὴν...συμφορὸν" (587) [the event] but he begs his father listen to exactly "ὧν...γγινώσκω" (588) [what I think]. He goes on to outline exactly how he will be rejected in Athens and how his life there would be inferior to the one he currently lives.

The problem, as Ion lays it out, is the discrepancy between the innate quality of the Athenian people and someone like himself. Athens, he states, is "αὐτόχθοναί" (589) [autochthonous] and its people do not have "ἐπείσακτον γένος" (590) [some alien lineage]. The children of Attica, therefore, possess something intrinsically Athenian about them, which can only be inherited from parents who themselves possess it because they were born in Athens. Those who do not possess it cannot be Athenian in the proper sense. Ion plays on Xuthus's earlier claim that "...οὐδὲ θάτερον νοσῶν/ δυοῖν κεκλήσῃ δυσγενὴς πένης θ' ἅμα" (579-580) [suffering from neither of the two diseases will you be called ignoble and poor] and claims that he is in fact handicapped by "δύο νόσω" (591) [two diseases], whose cause is far deeper than a low social status or poverty. The two diseases Ion claims he has acquired are "πατρός τ' ἐπακτοῦ καὶ τοῦ ὄν νοθαγενής," (592) [being the child of a foreign father and born a bastard]. The two are inherently interconnected, as we have seen in the cases of both Hippolytus and Molossus, and he is disqualified from legitimacy because of his foreignness, which denies him a secure place in *polis* or *oikos*.

Ion then elucidates consequences of his introduction into each of these spheres, beginning with his political position within Athens. Since he is a foreigner and a bastard he says, “μηδὲν καὶ οὐδὲν ὧν κεκλήσομαι” (594) [I will be nothing, be called a nobody]²⁷⁶ and from the very beginning he will be seen as worthless. If, however, he should attempt to establish himself in the city and somehow succeeds, he says, “...τῶν μὲν ἀδυνάτων ὕπο/ μισησόμεθα...” (596-597) [I will be hated by those who are not able (sc. to be successful)]. In short, his life “ἐν πόλει φόβου πλέα” (601) [in a city full of fear] could not be a happy one, since he would constantly be under threat from his political opponents. He sums up his feelings about the danger of political power by stating that “οἱ τὰς πόλεις ἔχουσι κάξιώματα,/ τοῖς ἀνθαμίλλοις εἰσὶ πολεμιώτατοι” (605-606) [those who control a city and have reputations are the fiercest enemies to their rivals]. Even though he does not couch it in the terms of citizenship, Ion’s conception of the legal qualifications for Athenian belonging replicate the equivalence between Athenian heritage and political rights seen in the PCL. He knows that his foreignness, most likely on both his maternal and paternal sides, absolutely disqualifies him from the rights of true-born Athenians, such as phratry membership and enfranchisement. His message to Xuthus is that, if he makes the unilateral decision to install Ion as his heir, he would be in total contravention of the customs of the *polis* and its autochthonous population.

The second area of security is, of course, Ion’s position within Xuthus’s *oikos*, which he shares with the barren Creusa, “...ἣ κοινουμένη/ τὰς συμφορὰς σοι προύθεν” (608-609) [she who previously shared misfortunes with you]. It is, to Ion, neither safe nor moral to insert himself into such a situation. He fears that Creusa, fuelled by bitterness, may well use “φάρμακα θανάσιμα” (616) [deadly poisons] against the young intruder, a fear that turns out to be justified later on.²⁷⁷ But he also has sympathy for her and does not think it morally right to inflict this cruelty on her. He says to Xuthus, “ἄλλως τε τὴν σὴν ἄλοχον οἰκτίρω, πάτερ,/ ἄπαιδα γηράσκουσιν· οὐ γὰρ

²⁷⁶ Line 594 in the MSS. reads ‘οὐδὲν ὧν’. Since it is then metrically defective, numerous conjectures have been made about what the rest of the line might be or whether it is in fact an interpolation. Various editors have offered alternative readings but no consensus has been reached. Owen writes that “the line probably is not genuine, but inserted to fill a supposed gap” (1939: *ad loc.*). Martin conjectures “<πῶς οὐ τὸ> μηδὲν κοῦδένων κεκλήσομαι” which differs very slightly in meaning from Owen’s given line (2018: *ad loc.*). On this, see also Kovacs 1979:117. Whether or not the line is an interpolation and what form exactly it might take does not in the overall context of the passage make a great deal of difference. Most reconstructions have maintained the same basic meaning given above and there is no reason here either to reject it outright, or to make too much of it.

²⁷⁷ For a study of the archetype of the ‘evil stepmother’ in Classical Greece, see Watson 1995.

necessitates the acquisition of πονηροὶ φίλοι rather than the ἐσθλοὶ who should be far more desirable.²⁷⁸

The sentiments shown here are nearly identical to those expressed by Hippolytus in his *agōn* with Theseus in the second *episodion* of the *Hippolytus*. Accused of seeking to usurp his father's position as king, the young man says:

Iπ. ἀλλ'ὥς τυραννεῖν ἡδὺ τοῖσι σώφροσιν;
 ἥκιστά γ', εἰ μὴ τὰς φρένας διέφθορεν
 θνητῶν ὅσοισιν ἀνδάνει μοναρχία.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἀγῶνας μὲν κρατεῖν Ἑλληνικοὺς
 πρῶτος θέλοιμ' ἄν, ἐν πόλει δὲ δευτέρως
 σὺν τοῖς ἀρίστοις εὐτυχεῖν ἀεὶ φίλοις
 πράσσειν τε γὰρ πάρεστι, κίνδυνός τ' ἀπὼν
 κρείσσω δίδωσι τῆς τυραννίδος χάριν. (Barrett 1964)

Hi. But is ruling as a king a pleasure to those who are prudent?
 Not at all, unless monarchy is delightful
 to the minds of those mortals whom it has corrupted.
 I would like to come first, winning victory at
 the Greek Games, but second in the city,
 being ever-fortunate with noble friends:
 for it is in my power to do this, and danger's absence
 gives a joy better than that of royal rule (*Hipp.*1013-1020).

The similarities between the two statements are obvious and their meanings are basically the same: it is better to live a happy life with good friends and little desire for power than to be a king and live in fear.²⁷⁹ Both young men thus “distrust the life of the politician as an obstacle to

²⁷⁸ Other examples of this characterisation of kings and kingship include Herodotus's “χαίρει δὲ (ὁ τύραννος) τοῖσι κακίστοις τῶν ἀστῶν” (380) [kingship comes to cities' worst people] and Aristotle's “πονηρόφιλον ἢ τυραννίς [ἐστίν]” (*Pol* 5.11.12) [kingship is fond of bad men].

²⁷⁹ For this attitude towards kingship in the *Ion*, see Walsh 1978: 305.

virtue” and in doing so counterintuitively exhibit their own inherent worth (Walsh 1978:305). Both, as bastards and exceptionally pious individuals, reject the standard definitions of happiness as the accrual of power and glory (although Hippolytus retains a wish to win at the games). As Hippolytus desires to stay in communion with Artemis, to cast off the idea of masculinity (simultaneously expected of him as a male, but denied him as a bastard), so Ion wishes to stay in Delphi and serve Apollo because “δίκαιον εἶναί μ’ ὁ νόμος ἢ φύσις θ’ ἅμα/ παρεῖχε τῷ θεῷ” (643-644) [both custom and nature together have made me do justice to the god]. Between the enmity of the *polis* and *oikos* and the comfort of the temple, the choice for the devout bastard is an easy one.

Xuthus cuts off Ion’s argument brusquely by ordering him to “παῦσαι λόγων τῶνδε” (650) [stop this conversation]. Having already taken it for granted that Ion will come with him to Athens and be accepted domestically and politically, he claims that “χρόνῳ δὲ καιρὸν λαμβάνων προσάξομαι/ δάμαρτ’ ἔαν σε σκῆπτρα τᾶμ’ ἔχειν χθονός” (659-660) [and in time, seizing the right moment, I will urge my wife to let you have my rule over the land]. He has not heard Ion’s words and does not share his convictions, but gives another exhibition of the dissonance between the two of them and his lack of understanding of Athens.

4.5.3 Chorus: 1099-1105

The second occurrence of the word νόθος is spoken by the Chorus at line 1105, during the third *stasimon*, following Creusa’s and the Old Man’s decision to kill Ion with the poison taken from the blood of the Gorgon and just before the arrival of the Messenger at line 1106. The context of its use by the Chorus at this point serves to confirm the validity of Ion’s earlier expectations for the Athenian reaction to his insinuation into their *polis*. Their loyalty to the Erechtheid bloodline and its current leader, their mistress Creusa, generates a malicious desire for violence in the Athenian Chorus, expressed as a harsh condemnation of an illegitimate foreigner entering into the Athenian royal house and a desire for the murder’s success.²⁸⁰ This disapprobation they extend to Apollo, whom they reproach for giving the young man to Xuthus and whose overactive interest in sex they see as a source of shame. From the opening appeal to “Εἰνοδία θύγατερ

²⁸⁰ For more on the presentation of the violence of the Erechtheids, see Farrington 1991:130-135.

Δάματρος” (1048) [Einodia, daughter of Demeter], a Thessalian name for Hecate, “patroness of witchcraft and poison,” a menacing tone is produced that is only heightened by the striking references to Creusa’s suicide (1061-1068) and such frantic imagery as the wild dancing and “δυσκέλαδος” (1098) [discordant] hymns (Martin 2018: *ad loc.*).

Ch. δείκνυσι γὰρ ὁ Διὸς ἐκ
παίδων ἀμνημοσύναν,
οὐ κοινὰν τεκέων τύχαν
οἴκοισι φυτεύσας
δεσποίνα· πρὸς δ’ Ἀφροδί-
ταν ἄλλαν θέμενος χάριν
νόθου παιδὸς ἔκυρσεν. (Owen 1939)

Ch. For the offspring of Zeus
shows ingratitude,
not having sired for the house
a fortune of children shared
with my mistress: for giving another
favour to Aphrodite he has found
a **bastard** son (*Ion* 1099-1105).

Until now the shame of bastardy has been examined according to the earlier occurrences of the word νόθος and νοθαγενής: that is, as something felt personally by Ion. In particular, it has been noted that the apprehensions he feels about his birth-status originate from his own internalisation of the definitions and deprecations of illegitimacy which are prevalent in the society around him. The Chorus’s use of νόθος at 1105, however, is the first use of a bastardy-related term by another entity in the play. Significantly, it is not just any character that articulates these views but the Chorus of Creusa’s Athenian attendants. Like the Nurse in the *Hippolytus*, and the Old Man, they are all servants rather than citizens, though this does not preclude them from holding patriotic and xenophobic views. It would be unusual (even for a playwright as theoretically anti-establishment as Euripides) for lower-class characters to be shown to speak against the power

structure of which they form the lowest class. Their indoctrination into the morality of the empowered, which works for the continued entrenchment of that power, would naturally lead them to side with their superiors, whose views on blood purity and Athenian belonging they would parrot.

Importantly, the Chorus consider themselves to be Athenians, insofar as they fit into a designated role in the power structure of Athens. The importance of this identity for their judgement of Ion's birth-status is highlighted by repeated references in the build-up to their use of the word νόθος, of Creusa, the house of Erechtheus, and the nobility of both. The Chorus contrasts their mistress's Athenian purity and status with Ion's unfitness to take up the sceptre of Athens---as a foreigner, slave and servant of Apollo. Ion is morally vilified for his audacity in trying this and is called thief by the Chorus, or “τῷ τῶν Ἐρεχθεϊδῶν/ δόμων ἐφαπτομένῳ” (1056-1057) [the one laying hold of the house of the Erechtheids]. All the while Creusa and her house are given noble genealogical epithets such as “εὐγενέτης” (1060) [well-born] and “εὐπατρίδης” (1073) [of noble ancestry].

Ion's strong but servile associations with Apollo, the “πολύμνος θεός” (1074-1075) [much-hymned god], are also attacked by extrapolation from the Chorus's rebuke of that god and his ways. The Chorus draws attention to Ion's connection with Apollo by calling the former “ὁ Φοίβειος ἀλάτας” (1089) [the Phoebeian wanderer]²⁸¹ and implicate him in their reproach of the Delphic rituals and the sort of sexual behaviour allowed. The Chorus of women complains of the hymns sung about “ἀμέτερα λέχεα καὶ γάμους/ Κύπριδος ἀθέμιτας ἀνοσίους...” (1092-1093) [our sex-lives and the unlawful impious unions of Kypris] which are committed by and possibly result in “ἄδικον ἄροτον ἀνδρῶν” (1095) [an unjust tillage of men].

This use of νόθος in this place in the play serves to confirm the attitude towards bastards which Ion has all along feared and which he spoke about to Xuthus. The Chorus's reaction to the idea of his taking any place in the household of the Erechtheids is one of disgust and disapprobation since he is a foreigner, a devotee of Apollo and, at the nexus of all of the issues, a bastard. Of course, the irony that pervades the whole play is felt as strongly here as anywhere. The fact is

²⁸¹ ἀλάτας: cf. 576 (ἀλητεία) and discussion above.

that, although the Chorus attempts to insult and discredit Ion by contrasting his lowly and illegitimate birth with Creusa's nobility and lineage, their ignorance of Ion's mother's true identity invalidates their criticisms.

4.5.4 *Ion*: 1468-1477

At 1473, towards the end of the *exodos*, the final usage of the word *vóthos* occurs. The word is used by Ion in a question asked to Creusa, following the recognition of their true relationship and is one of the last times before the revelation of Apollo's paternity in which we can clearly see the extent of Ion's concern for his potential illegitimacy. Unlike the previous examples that show his fear for his birth-status, the situation has been inverted because Ion is aware of his mother's identity but not of his father's. He has until now, understandably, assumed that he is Creusa's child by Xuthus and, as Martin suggests, "implies that he counts as legitimate if Xuthus is his father, even if the parents have married after his birth" (Martin 2-18: *ad loc.*). However, the revelation that he is another man's child removes the chance of even a post-dated marriage union and, therefore, of his legitimacy.

The sudden rekindling of Ion's worries about his birth-status is made all the worse because of the certainty of Creusa's maternity. When earlier in the play Xuthus 'reveals' himself as Ion's father, the circumstances are completely different and the evidence that seems to be required to 'prove' the god's oracle is minimal. As the declaration of his paternity issues from Apollo himself, both parties are more willing to believe its truth and Ion is convinced by Xuthus's hazy recital of circumstantial evidence. His methods for discovering the truth of what Creusa claims, however, are more comprehensive: not only does he not have the validation of a divine oracle to support him, but the importance of the identity of his mother necessitates increased caution. In particular, when the woman claiming maternity is the same one who has just made an attempt on his life and whose own life he has threatened, Ion seems to require a more rigorous investigation.

What convinces Ion of Creusa's true identity is also Apollo-inspired, though in this instance it is the production of substantial evidence contained in the cradle. The drunken memories that characterised his conception by Xuthus are here replaced by hard physical evidence and first-

hand observation of Creusa's recognition of it. The Pythia brings the cradle on stage at line 1320 as a sort of *dea ex machina* that reprieves Creusa from the tragic fate of matricide.²⁸² It is not wholly irregular that the Pythia should take on this role: she is, after all, Apollo's proxy at Delphi and it is the god who has compelled her to stay Ion's hand and reveal the cradle until now kept secret from him. She confirms Apollo's part in the play from its very beginning, saying to Ion, "ἐνθύμιόν μοι τότε τίθησι Λοξίας.../...σῶσαι τόδ' εὔρημ' ἐς τὸν ὄντα νῦν χρόνον" (1347-1349) [Loxias then put the inspiration in me...to save this discovery until this time now]. The god is working through the Pythia, as he did before in the 'revelation' of Xuthus, though here the situation is far more convincing.

Creusa identifies herself as Ion's true mother by detailing the contents of the cradle, but she only hints at the circumstances of his birth until he calls for his father's inclusion in the happy events. She tells him "τέκνον, οὐκ ἀδάκρυτος ἐκλοχεύη,/ γόοις δὲ ματρὸς ἐκ χειρῶν ὀρίζη" (1458-1459) [child, you were not conceived without tears, and it was with wailing you were separated from your mother's arms], but does not tell him more. Instead she brings up what has been as much a concern to her as she has been to Ion: the continuation of her lineage. She exclaims,

Kr ἄπαιδες οὐκετ' ἐσμέν οὐδ' ἄτεκνοι·
 δῶμ' ἐστιοῦται, γὰρ δ' ἔχει τυράννους·
 ἀνηβᾷ δ' Ἐρεχθεύς,
 ὃ τε γηγενέτας δόμος οὐκέτι νύκτα δέρκεται,
 ἀελίου δ' ἀναβλέπει λαμπάσιν. (Owen 1939)

Kr. I am no longer childless, no longer heirless:²⁸³
 my house is established, and my land has its rulers.
 Erechtheus has risen up,
 and the earthborne house no longer looks upon darkness,
 but gazes up at the sun's light (*Ion* 1463-1467).

²⁸² On the triple *deus ex machina* in the play, see Thornburn 2001: 221.

²⁸³ ἄπαιδες...ἄτεκνοι: both Owen (1939) and Martin (2018) note the double formulation and agree that, considering the emphasis on an heir in the following lines, we may translate either ἄπαις or ἄτεκνος as 'heirless'. Martin claims that ἄπαις is the most appropriate since "ἄτεκνος is not used in forensic speeches" dealing with inheritance (2018: *ad loc.*).

For Creusa the desire for this outcome has ironically been the primary motivation for her attempt on Ion's life. Inspired not only by jealousy of Xuthus and the pain of her barrenness, but by a patriotism that baulks against the idea of foreign rule, she has tried to kill Ion; yet with the discovery of his actual identity all the concerns she has had are removed. Importantly, Creusa herself is not concerned by Ion's bastardy because she is aware that his father is a god and this fact appears to overshadow the traditional definitions of legitimacy which we have seen the Chorus use.²⁸⁴ Ion, however, is unaware of this and wants to know the truth.

Ιω. μη̐τερ, παρών μοι καὶ πατήρ μετασχέτω
 τῆς ἡδονῆς τῆσδ' ἧς ἔδωχ' ὑμῖν ἐγώ.
Κρ. ὦ τέκνον,
 τί φῆς; οἶον οἶον ἀνελέγχομαι.
Ιω. πῶς εἶπας;
Κρ. ἄλλοθεν γέγονας, ἄλλοθεν.
Ιω. ὦ μοι· **νόθον** με παρθένευμ' ἔτικτε σόν;
Κρ. οὐχ ὑπὸ λαμπάδων οὐδὲ χορευμάτων
Ιω. ὑμέναιος ἐμός,
 τέκνον, ἔτικτε σὸν κάρα.
Ιω. αἰαῖ· πέφυκα δυσγενῆς. μη̐τερ, πόθεν; (Owen 1939)

Io. Mother, my father should be here to share in
 the joy which I have given to you.
Kr. Oh child,
 What are you saying? The things, things of which I am convicted!
Io. What do you mean?
Kr. From someone else—you were born from someone else.
Io. Ohmoi! Did your maidenhood bear me as your **bastard**?
Kr. Neither with torches, nor dancing
 did my wedding, child,

²⁸⁴ See Aristophanes *Birds* 1646-1670.

bring your self to birth.

Io. Ayay! I am of low-birth. From whom, mother? (*Ion* 1468-1477)

When Creusa tells him “ἄλλοθεν γέγονας, ἄλλοθεν” (1472) [from someone else, you were born from someone else], Ion naturally assumes that the ‘other’ in this case is a mortal man and the illusion of legitimacy given by his belief in Xuthus’s paternity is thereby shattered. His first thought, as a result, immediately returns to his birth-status and he asks, aghast: “ὧμοι· νόθον με παρθένευμ’ ἔτικτε σόν” (1473) [Did your maidenhood bear me as your bastard?]. Ion knows that the same situation applies to Creusa as Xuthus: they have only been married to each other, so if either bore him to another man or woman, he is immediately a bastard. She confirms that he was conceived while she was unmarried and in her “παρθένευμα” (1473) [maidenhood], thereby confirming Ion’s position as a bastard, but is unwilling to bring up any details of that event.

Once more he has been shown to be a bastard and, much as he did earlier, he now wonders about his social status. Fearing the worst, the distraught young man assumes that his father must have been of a lowly station crying in despair, “αἰαῖ· πέφυκα δυσγενής. μήτερ, πόθεν;” (1477) [ayay! I am of low birth. From whom, mother?]. He says to Creusa “φίλον μὲν οὖν σ’ εὔρημα, μήτερ, ἤυρομεν,/ καὶ τὸ γένος οὐδὲν μεμπτόν, ὥς ἡμῖν, τόδε·” (1518-1519) [you are a beloved discovery I have found, mother, and I think this lineage is not to be scorned], suggesting that he is relieved to find that his mother at least is noble (as he was when he discovered Xuthus’s nobility (559)). Nevertheless, the fear he expressed to Xuthus at line 580, that one part of him may be “δυσγενής” is even stronger here, since the identity of a man’s father was (generally) far more important than that of his mother.

When Creusa explains to him who his true father is, he is unwilling to believe her and assumes that her story of Apollo is only a cover-up for some youthful error that resulted in his birth. He says to her,

Io. ὄρα σύ, μήτερ · μὴ σφαλεῖς ἃ παρθένοις
ἐγγίγνεται νοσήματ’ ἐς κρυπτοὺς γάμους,

ἔπειτα τῷ θεῷ προστίθης τὴν αἰτίαν,
καὶ τοῦμὸν αἰσχρὸν ἀποφυγεῖν πειρωμένη,
Φοίβῳ τεκεῖν με φῆς, τεκοῦς' οὐκ ἐκ θεοῦ; (Owen 1939)

Io. Look here, mother: didn't you slip into a secret
union, a disease for virgins,
then place the blame on the god
and contriving to escape my shame,
claim that you bore me to Phoebus,
when you didn't bear me to a god? (1523-1527)

This accusation is not, on the face of it, wholly illogical, especially since Ion has already been lied to about Apollo before now. It is also informed by his own conservative attitude toward sexual purity and this leads him to see in the story of his conception much the same image given by Xuthus's explanation of his youthful folly at Delphi. Ion's disapproval is visible in his characterisation of this sexual union as “κρυπτούς” (1524) [secret] and a “νοσήματα” (1524) [disease]. The expression, however, is slightly ambiguous in its relation to himself. His words could either mean that the ‘shame’ of it is placed onto himself, or he could be calling it ‘the shame I brought you’. Either interpretation is possible, since, while it is certainly something that Creusa must feel ashamed about, it is also the source of Ion's shame as a bastard.

All of these anxieties are allayed by the arrival of Athena, who confirms the truth of Creusa's statement about Ion's paternity. She has come “...Ἀπόλλωνος πάρα” (1556) [for Apollo's sake] as his proxy in order to avoid the direct confrontation with the god that Ion is planning. This third and final *dea ex machina* brings about the end of the play and attempts to provide a neat conclusion to the major issues at the heart of the work. Most importantly, it endorses Ion as the heir to the Athenian throne, as Athena says, “...ἐκ γὰρ Ἐρεχθέως γεγώς/ δίκαιος ἄρχειν τῆς γ' ἐμῆς ὅδε χθονός” (1573-1574) [for being of Erechtheus's stock he will justly rule my land]. She also provides a clear vision of Xuthus and Creusa's future children who will become the founders of the other tribes of Greece, relegating them (as discussed above) to the inferior positions of mortal-born siblings of Ion.

4.6 Conclusion

The *Ion*, while in many ways a distinctly different play from either the *Hippolytus* or the *Andromache*, nevertheless explores many of the same ideas of legitimacy and domestic and political belonging. So far as differences are concerned, narratively it is most distinct for not being set within an *oikos*, which changes the source and nature of its conflict. The main source of conflict in the other plays is the presence in the domestic structure of illegitimate entities who pose, or are thought to pose, a threat to the position of those who are legitimate. Hippolytus, among his many anti-establishment attributes, is seen as a potential threat to Phaedra's children who, as Theseus's legitimate children, are his heirs. Likewise, both Andromache and Molossus threaten the security of Hermione's position in the *oikos*, as well as those of any children that she might have. In the *Ion*, though, the hostility that is eventually resolved in the *exodos* does not predate the beginning of the play but is actually established through the action of the first half. It is only once Creusa learns about Xuthus's decision to install Ion as his successor that the central conflict becomes clear: up to this point the most contentious elements are Creusa's backstory and Ion's concern for his maternal identity.

This concern about the identity of his mother has been one of the focal points of this chapter, in part because of the insight it gives us into Ion's conception of bastardy. His anxiety about who his mother is, her origins and status, preoccupies him far more than does the identity of his father, even before Xuthus's revelation of the oracle, largely because of the effect that he knows a person's birth-status can have on him. The process by which he eventually comes to learn his parentage is fraught with the fear that he is illegitimate and, therefore, that he will be treated as he knows bastards often are. His autochthonous Athenian blood and semi-divine heritage are only really brought into focus at the very end of the play, when he learns of Apollo's paternity. Up until this point, he is always concerned not just that he might be a bastard, but what sort of bastard he might be.

Euripides, through his depiction of Ion, as well as the violent xenophobia of the Athenians in the play, seems to question the validity of perpetrating the prejudices enshrined in the PCL, which have left many young metroxenic men out of the functioning of the *polis*. That Ion is in fact of the purest Athenian blood and more than worthy of a position within the city is an important fact, since it indicates that the superficial judgements made about his birth-status and origins are a threat to the future of the city. Who he is, therefore, is not who he appears to be, as we can assume many of the Athenian bastards with great potential were.

This is not, however, to say that the play is an outright condemnation of the Athenians: it is still an account of one of their foundation myths and the alterations which Euripides has made to the genealogy maintain Athens' pre-eminence among the Greeks. It is rather a critique of the closed-mindedness that can accompany autochthony and, especially, the concern for purity of descent. Importantly, Euripides does not go so far as to introduce any foreign blood into the Athenian ancestry (quite the opposite); it is, however, his method of resolving the issues that arise from too much a preoccupation with this that contain his commentary on bastards and their place within a *polis* under the constant pressure of depopulation and rapidly diminishing power. It is, particularly, the rhetoric of autochthony, as seen in the Old Man's speech, that causes the danger, since he is able to convince Creusa to take fatal action against someone who in fact least deserves it.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 *Revisiting the research questions*

The central purpose of this thesis has been to examine the ways in which Euripides represents bastardy and to establish how these representations may have reflected the wartime contexts in which they were produced. The three plays studied, the *Hippolytus*, the *Andromache*, and the *Ion*, have been chosen because they stand out from Euripides' works for the emphasis they put on bastards and their positions within the *oikos* and the *polis*. It seems logical, therefore, that they are able to provide us with more insights into the contemporary attitudes towards bastardy than any of the other plays that Euripides produced over the course of the Peloponnesian War. It is this war and the suffering it wrought on Athens that forms the crucial background to this investigation, since we know that, during this period, the political, legal and social attitudes towards bastards were of particular importance and may well have been at the forefront of the public consciousness. This final chapter aims to summarise what has been concluded in the previous chapters, as well as to suggest some answers to the questions that have been asked about what inspired Euripides to depict bastardy as he has, and what he intended to achieve by these depictions.

5.2 *Revisiting the chapters*

5.2.1 *Chapter 1: introduction*

In the introduction, we began by considering the basic features that appear to distinguish Hippolytus, Molossus and Ion as bastards and examined some of the relevant scholarship relating to their birth-statuses in the plays. From the first, it has been obvious that the three bastards share many of the same characteristics and that these contribute to their joint designation as νόθοι. In the first place, all three were born to unmarried parents, whose unions consisted of distinctly unequal power-dynamics. In all three cases, the mothers were at a considerable disadvantage to the fathers and underwent some form of violence at their hands in the begetting of these children.

Antiopē and Andromache were both victims of war, captured and enslaved by Theseus and Neoptolemus, respectively, and removed from their eastern homeland to the *oikos* of their new masters. Creusa's immediate suffering was short-lived, lasting only as long as it took Apollo to rape her in a cave on the Acropolis; however, the long-term trauma of this event clearly continued to haunt her.

The children born of these unions are all, importantly, male children and, in all three cases represent a threat to the inheritance of the children whom the legitimate wife of the *oikos* has borne or might bear, or at least appear to. Hippolytus is Theseus's eldest son, which gives him an advantage over Phaedra's young children, and though he has no intention of usurping their place, nevertheless has the potential to do so. Molossus and Ion are, or seem to be, the only male children of Neoptolemus and Xuthus, respectively, and thus inspire Hermione and Creusa's anger and hostility. It is not important that Creusa is Ion's mother all along, since her reaction against him occurs when she is ignorant of this, thinking him to be Xuthus's bastard.

Additionally, all three bastards are portrayed as having markedly strong connections to their mothers and have inherited various maternal characteristics. Hippolytus is the most obvious of the three and it is immediately apparent that the beliefs and appetites he has are particularly Amazonian in nature: they are a curious combination of antipathy towards masculine gender roles and an obsession with the typically masculine pursuits of hunting and riding, commonly associated with the Amazons. Because he is without characterisation, it is through the views of others that we get the impression that Molossus is the inheritor of Andromache's Trojan ethnicity, which comes with a natural opposition to the Greek side of his lineage. Similarly, Ion shows himself to have a natural affinity with Creusa, assuming the nobility that his mother's heritage is defined by and unconsciously drawing parallels between himself and his mother. Just as their maternal associations are strong, however, so are their connections to their fathers weak, and Theseus is the only one of the bastards' fathers who actually makes an appearance on stage. Even in this appearance, however, he is highly antipathetic to his son, causes his death by cursing him and is only reconciled to him through divine intervention at the end of the play. Neoptolemus is absent throughout the play (except for his brief appearance as a corpse) and, although there is the suggestion that he has some sort of relationship with the bastard Molossus,

his absence does little to alleviate the sense of his paternal distance. Finally, Ion's father, Apollo, although his hand is seen at work in the play, is never actually seen and it is only by inference and precedent that we know him to have some interest in his son's life. Of course, Ion and Hippolytus share more similarities with each other than Molossus, as has been mentioned, but their most obvious connection is that they have especially pious natures. They see the world through their respective deities' preoccupations and inhabit these divine spheres as a replacement for the material and hostile world into which they are born, so as to elevate themselves to positions where they can no longer be subject to its judgements.

Following this, the meanings and implications of the word νόθος were explored, along with its history in Athenian law and Greek literature. In general, the word has tended to mean much the same as its common English translation 'bastard': namely, the child of two unmarried parents. Its antonym, γνήσιος, is likewise almost equivalent to the word 'legitimate,' though it has been argued that a direct equivalence is not accurate. In Athens, in particular, the word νόθος seems to have been used to indicate any child born outside of wedlock, but the term always had strong associations with the purity of a person's connection to Athenian autochthony. As a result, bastards had an unstable relationship with the phratries and the *polis*; their inheritance rights were limited and citizenship was difficult to attain. However, their positions within the *oikos* and *polis* were most significantly altered by two events: the establishment of the PCL in 451, which required citizens to have dual Athenian parentage, and the alteration made to it in 429, allowing bastards to be legitimised in cases where there were no living legitimate heirs.

The first of these occurred during the height of Athens' preeminence in the Greek world, when, following victory over the Persians in 481, the city grew to become the centre of Hellenic power and culture and attracted many foreigners seeking a share in the spoils of the empire. It seems likely that the PCL came into effect to counter this growing cosmopolitanism by elevating the distinction of the Athenian citizenship and reinvigorating autochthonous pride within the citizen body through an emphasis on ancestral purity. The requirement of dual Athenian lineage made any children born to foreign mothers, bastards, and acted to further rarify the privileges of citizenship. The second event was initiated by the statesman Pericles' request to legitimise his bastard son and invalidated in part the very law which he himself had introduced. This alteration

to the law gave bastards a back route to citizenship and inheritance, and helped somewhat to raise their political status. It was triggered by the Peloponnesian War which, beginning with the first Archidamian raids in 431 and followed by the devastations of the plague that raged from 430 until 426, had led to the deaths of thousands of Athenians, including all of Pericles' legitimate children. His bastard son by the foreigner Aspasia was, therefore, his only hope of continuing his line and it was in order to achieve this that he sought an alteration to the law. The fact that it appears to have been a change made to the law itself rather than an exception made for Pericles suggests that there were more than a few Athenian citizens in much the same position, since death from battle and plague had led to a general dearth of heirs. It is at this point, at the City Dionysia in 428, that Euripides staged the first of the plays, the *Hippolytus*, and began to interrogate the city's attitudes towards and treatment of bastards under the pressures of the war.

5.2.2 Chapter 2: the *Hippolytus*

Bastardy is narratively and thematically central to the *Hippolytus* and Euripides interweaves it together with numerous important aspects of the play. The most blatant references to the bastardy of the eponymous main character are the four instances in which he is called or calls himself a νόθος; however, there are several other ways in which the issue presents itself. Chief among these are the multiple references made to his mother's foreign ethnicity, which is used to alienate him from his father's Greek lineage and reflects the tendency to view bastards in especially maternal terms. While foreign maternity would have been understood by the contemporary audience as a disqualification for legitimacy, as with many things in Greek drama, it has been pushed to its extreme. Antiopē was not just any foreigner, but queen of the Amazons—the archetype of entities who were about as exotic and marginal as it was possible to be to the Greek imagination. Similarly, Hippolytus is a character of extremes, as his wholesale rejection of sexuality, along with everything to do with the beliefs and activities expected of a young nobleman, shows. He has spurned nearly all of the patriarchal conventions of sex, marriage, and procreation and replaced them with an excessive virginal piety focussed on the worship of Artemis. According to these novel standards of moral purity, which he conceives of

as a sort of σοφροσύνη, he is uniquely superior to everyone and unflinchingly judges the world according to these standards.

On the whole, the *Hippolytus* is the best example in Greek tragedy of the psychological effects that society's exclusionary attitudes towards bastards can have on an individual labelled with the term. Through the depiction of Hippolytus's anti-establishment ideology, Euripides also illustrates the potential danger that this unwarranted marginalisation can present both domestically and politically. The young man's abnormal set of morals originates in his resentment towards and rejection of the society that oppresses him because of his birth-status, thus not only depriving the *oikos* and *polis* alike of his potential value, but also creating the possibility of a threatening presence opposed to the established structures that govern them. This ideology is the primary cause of the tragedy in the play: not only does it set Aphrodite against Hippolytus by causing her to inspire Phaedra's lust, but it leads to both of their deaths. Phaedra commits suicide from the fear that her stepson's ideology will compel him to expose her desires to Theseus, while it is precisely these beliefs that cause Hippolytus to keep his oath to the Nurse and restrain him from explaining the true situation. Despite this, however, the conclusion of the play suggests that the suffering might have been avoided, had his internal worth (as explained by Artemis) been recognised and accepted earlier. Instead, so Euripides seems to be saying, because of Hippolytus's treatment as a bastard, two people have died and a man's potential has been squandered.

5.2.3 Chapter 3: the *Andromache*

The *Andromache* contains the most direct references to bastardy of the three plays, but in many ways the broader narrative and its domestic setting provide us with the most valuable insights into Euripides' intended commentary on bastardy in the play. His focus shifts from the suffering of the bastard to that of his mother and in particular her anomalous position as a second woman within an *oikos* that is structured to contain only a single woman legitimately established in the roles of wife and mother. The fact that Andromache is a foreigner, of eastern ethnicity, is the primary cause of her presence in the house and her persecution at the hands of other members of the *oikos*. It is because she is a Trojan that she finds herself in the household in the first place,

since the violence and destruction caused by the Trojan defeat by the Greeks were what saw her enslaved and transformed from the noble wife of Hector (very much the embodiment of Trojan virtue) to Neoptolemus's concubine in Phthia's royal house. Throughout the play we are reminded of the fact that she is Trojan and the connection between this fact and her position as a "δοῦλη" (12) [slave] and a δορίκτητος γυνή (155) [spear-won woman]. As a consequence, she is superficially inappropriate as a partner for Neoptolemus, being foreign and a slave. Likewise, Molossus (who is characterised chiefly by what others say about him and his mother) is also defined by his Trojan, rather than his Greek, heritage: this, it is emphasised, is what makes him a bastard, as well as an unsuitable heir to Neoptolemus. Both, as a result, can be described as illegitimate, since neither conforms to the ideals that make either a mother or a son legitimate.

The conflict between Andromache and Hermione that defines the play can thus be described as one between illegitimacy and legitimacy. Hermione is the daughter of two Greeks of royal birth and, as she repeatedly mentions, was married to Neoptolemus in a legitimate ceremony and with the requisite dowry supplied by her father. Andromache, therefore, not only presents a threat to her as a sexual rival, but makes it all the worse by being totally antithetical to the noble legitimately wed wife that Hermione knows herself to be. This is compounded by the contrast in their apparent fertility: the older enslaved concubine has managed to bear a child, while the young free wife remains barren. In Molossus, Hermione already has a rival to her as yet unborn children, and one just as unsuited to the position as Andromache is to her own. In short, she and her father Menelaus consider mother and son to be illegitimate and, as a result, worthless. This sort of belief, however, is precisely what Euripides is attempting to undermine by writing the play as he has. The repeated illustrations of Andromache's feminine worth despite her servility and alienness, and in particular the quality of σωφροσύνη which she has, are consistently contrasted with the legitimate Hermione's own shortcomings. It is invalid, so Euripides seems to be suggesting, to equate virtue and worth with legitimacy and all of the implied social and political qualities that come with that designation. The conclusion to the play confirms and clarifies this by providing Andromache and Molossus, who have been persecuted for their illegitimacy, as well as Peleus, who has supported them, with a happy future. In contrast, their tormentors have got their just deserts. Firstly, Menelaus returns to Sparta like a coward, in fear of Neoptolemus, and proves himself to be as ineffective and selfish as Peleus accuses him of being.

Then Hermione elopes with Orestes, marrying a man who is the very embodiment of domestic strife and violence, not to mention emphasising her lack of σοφροσύνη by willingly committing the very error which she earlier accuses Andromache of doing by joining herself to her husband's murderer.²⁸⁵

5.2.4 Chapter 4: *the Ion*

Both narratively and thematically, the *Ion* differs quite noticeably from either of the other plays. In the first place, the story which Euripides tells is not, like the *Hippolytus* or the *Andromache*, one primarily concerned with the victimisation of the illegitimate presence in the *oikos*. Because of the intentions behind both plays, Hippolytus and Molossus are by necessity not pure-blooded: both share noble Greek paternity, but one is half-Amazon, the other half-Trojan. It is this fact (that they genuinely *are* metroxenic bastards) that ultimately looks for our sympathy, otherwise there could be no emphasis on worth despite birth-status. The *Ion*, however, is about a young man's discovery of his genuinely noble heritage and the bastardy he fears is only a potentiality. He may have been conceived out of wedlock and so, semantically, a νόθος, but the two sides of his lineage, his immortal father's and autochthonous mother's, are so manifestly pure in their Hellenicity that it is impossible to call Ion by anything we might the two metroxenic bastards. Instead, the audience is aware of his pure-blooded origins and so in instances where he shows his fear of bastardy there is a strong sense of dramatic irony, since we have his nobility emphasised by inversion through references to his possibly illegitimate birth-status. The commentary made on bastardy in the play is, thus, slightly different to that of the others, but nevertheless interrogates the negative effects of bastardy on people, their homes, and their cities.

What Euripides is trying to comment on is the same autochthonous impulse which seems to have inspired the PCL when it was instituted in 451. Post-dating the Sicilian Expedition in 415, it appears that the issue of Athenian autochthony and, presumably, the premium placed on blood purity that naturally accompanied it was still something prevalent among the citizens. All in all, from the original devastations of the Archidemean raids and the first appearance of the plague, it

²⁸⁵ Hermione claims that Andromache intentionally slept with Neoptolemus, Achilles' son, because she is imprudent and a foreigner (*Andr.*170-176).

had taken Athens over fifteen years and the Peace of Nicias (421-415) to repopulate its armies to the point where they might pose any real threat to their enemies. At this stage, or so it seems from Alcibiades' speech in Thucydides (6.17.2-3), a preoccupation with Athenian ethnic purity had once more arisen within the citizenry. When, however, the Athenians were on the way to Sicily, the patriotic Alcibiades abandoned his fellow Athenians and fled to Sparta, emboldening the Sicilians and their Spartan allies and ensuring one of the most deadly and certainly the most embarrassing defeat of the war.²⁸⁶ We know that the defeat in Sicily crushed Athenian morale and it seems likely that it would have been natural for a playwright like Euripides to question the arrogance and danger of a fixation on blood-purity. This attitude towards Athenian autochthony seems to have contributed to the citizens' decision to break the Peace of Nicias and send a hostile fleet out to the distant island, which would make it an obviously important topic.

In the play, Euripides examines the relative meaninglessness of the word 'bastard', concluding that it is nothing more than an arbitrary title and does not describe any innate defects. Ion's purity of blood means that his concern for his potential bastardy and its effects on the bastard is not based on any connection between his character and his birth-status. His belief that he is Xuthus's bastard son prompts Ion to decline his father's offer of heirship, since he sees himself as he knows that others will see him too, as inherently unsuitable because he bears the stigma of the designation *vóthos*, bastard. He is, of course, the true heir to Erechtheus's throne, which he has shown subconsciously, yet would be unfairly persecuted as a bastard if he were designated as one. In short, just as we see the meaninglessness of bastardy as a description of innate moral worth in the *Hippolytus* and the *Andromache*, so we see it as yet more meaningless in this instance where the title alone might be enough to invalidate genuine noble heritage, so little is its meaning truly connected to the value of the people it characterises. In the play's conclusion a compromise is attempted between the dangers of autochthony's exclusionary and intolerant elements, and its benefits as a means of affirming identity and creating a sense of community. The changes that Euripides makes to mythology and the genealogy of the Greek tribes strongly favour Attic Greece as the originator of Hellenic culture, and it was off of this that the other tribes had branched. While Athenian is touted as the best thing to be, simultaneously we see how the very foundation of that identity, autochthony, can lead to near destruction. It would, it seems,

²⁸⁶ See Thuc. 6.1-105, and Plut. *Alcibiades* 22.1-23.8.

have been impossible for Euripides to end this play tragically, since he would never have been allowed to undermine Athenian autochthony so strongly. Instead, he attempted to make a compromise, which means that it is possible to see both intentions in the *Ion*, and to read the play either as a critique, or a reaffirmation of Athenian autochthony, or, more likely, an ambiguous blend of both.

5.3 Euripides' representation of bastardy

Euripides' representation of bastards in these three plays suggest very strongly that his attitude towards bastardy in them is largely sympathetic. In all three, his characterisation of bastards and their mothers within a metroxenic *oikos* and the inability of the word νόθος to describe accurately its referent's φύσις, indicate his recognition of the complexity within these scenarios. Euripides clearly lays out an argument for abandoning the strictures of legitimacy by undermining the established link between the two binaries of legitimate/illegitimate and worthy/worthless that leads to the unjust victimisation of good men. This sympathy for the bastards' lot is also continually reinforced by the deliberate vilification of those characters and actions that have been its cause. The antagonists tend to have a superior social and domestic status and often justify their hostile attitudes and behaviour by asserting the apparently inalienable rights granted to them as people both free and legitimate. Acting as avatars of the *polis* and the *oikos*, they present bastardy as in total conflict with the patriarchal systems that govern these spheres and categorise bastards as solitary individuals, whose deviation from normative behaviour means they do not belong to either. In reality, the three bastards are all young men of proven or potential worth who have become the victims of the inflexible prejudice that governs the treatment of illegitimate people.

Bastardy is thus the subject of a complex moral inquiry into how those in power marginalise and punish those who diverge from the system that they impose. We are forced in these three plays to examine the power-dynamics that define illegitimacy and to question how they relate to the characters' self-conceptions and behaviours. In an inversion of appearance and reality, an effort is made to stress the contradiction between the professed superiority of the empowered

persecutors and their ignoble actions. Similarly, bastards are shown to surpass the powerful in their moral worth or potential, despite the aristocratic conception that illegitimacy negates value.

This is the idea that fuels the criticisms other characters make of Hippolytus's arrogant claims to virtuousness, which they take as nothing but a bastard's pretensions to some sort of legitimacy, rather than genuine reflection of his worth. They react against him under this illusion and, after the chance to avoid tragedy has passed, it takes nothing short of divine intervention to convince the narrow-minded to see Hippolytus's true worth and that he was justified in the high estimation of his own virtue because, as Artemis says, of the "...εὐσεβείας καγαθῆς φρενὸς χάριν" (1419) [grace of (his) pious and upright heart].

Likewise, in the *Andromache*, Molossus's potential to be morally worthy in spite of Menelaus and Hermione's claims to the contrary is supported by his great-grandfather Peleus, and mimicked in the way that Andromache, the illegitimate concubine and slave, proves herself to be more σώφρων than Neoptolemus's legitimate Spartan wife. For much the same effect, in the last section of the play, Euripides makes sure not to touch on illegitimacy when Thetis hands out her rewards to the mother, her son, and Peleus, their sole defendant (apart from the Chorus). We are told that the futures ordained for these three are the will of Zeus and Thetis's command that Andromache and Molossus establish a happy and flourishing colony in Molossia is what they actually deserve for who they truly are, so proving that the gods favour meritocracy over mortal judgements of worth. The illegitimate pair has been offered this chance to found a new people, in whose eyes they will one day embody the Molossian conception of hereditary purity and legitimacy.

Lastly, in the *Ion*, the protagonist is beset with fears about his birth-status and the danger that it would pose to his image and position in society. He discovers very quickly just how incredibly dangerous his possible bastardy is, when Creusa attempts to poison him, as he suspected she might. All the while, of course, he is no common bastard and in fact the one most worthy of the Athenian throne, the purity of which she was trying to protect. In all three we are faced with people who are judged to be innately unworthy and degenerate, but who prove instead to possess nobility and virtue that belies the stereotypes of society's labels for them.

Another good indication of Euripides' attitude towards bastardy is that, in all the plays, it nearly always has negative consequences for the *polis* and *oikos*, as well as the bastard: this means that it plays an important role in the narrative structure. In all three, the central tragedy, or as close as they come to true tragedy, is in some way connected to the persecution of bastards for their illegitimacy. Hippolytus's ideology is the primary cause of the play's strife, because it has stirred Aphrodite's hostility towards him, which she avenges by punishing the whole household and causing instability in the royal *oikos*. As his anti-establishment ideology is the root of the tragic action, so it has its own root in his bastardy. Being the illegitimate half-Amazon son of the king has resulted in the critical and prescriptive treatment of Hippolytus as someone who does not have a place either in or out of the *oikos*. This, in its turn, has spurred his resentment and the determination to subscribe to a wholly original and abnormal type of normative morality. By changing the rules, as it were, he is able to drown out the surrounding intolerance of his bastardy and background with the self-affirming repetition of his innate and unequalled virtuousness.

Since Molossus's illegitimacy is inherited from his mother, both are targeted by those in power for the same reason: being a foreign presence in the *oikos*. He has a share in Andromache's punishment that is perhaps greater than his characterisation suggests and which comes down to their being Trojan. His bastardy is the reason for his concealment just before the beginning of the play and it is his discovery by Menelaus and the cynical use he is put to that enables one of the play's most tragic moments: the betrayal of Andromache by Menelaus after she has decided to leave the safety of the altar, for her son's sake. In that moment she proves her virtue beyond any doubt, and gives one of the most convincing arguments for the abandonment of the unjust and simplistic equivalence between worth and lineage. Of course, whether or not both characters appear at the end and what this might mean would have an enormous impact on our view of the narrative structure, but even if we were to take them as present it would only reflect the importance of bastardy in the plot and Euripides' ideas about it all the more.

Lastly, in the *Ion*, the potential for bastardy that he fears is largely what drives Ion's preoccupation with discovering his mother's identity and eventually leads to him finding his true heritage. His bastardy is also crucial to achieving the narrative's happy ending---as one of the

key reasons for Creusa's attempt on Ion's life that leads in the end to the revelation of the truth and the reunion guaranteeing the continuance of pure Athenian autochthony and its accompanying superiority.

5.4 *War and the genealogy of morals*

The above exposition of Euripides' attitude towards bastardy allows us to begin interrogating what connects his representation of them with the contexts of their composition. This process is primarily inspired by the philosophy of the genealogy of morals and, through this, leads to the conclusion that the plays reflect the pressure that the Peloponnesian War placed on pre-war morality which led to compromises being made to ensure the security of the *polis*. The values enshrined in the PCL were no longer viable if the city was to survive, as they ran counter to the immediate need for the repopulation of the citizenry and would lead to the rejection of many potential candidates with foreign mothers. Pericles' alteration to the law created one way for bastards to become citizens, but there would have been many circumstances (such as the bastard who still had a legitimately born half-brother) in which the specificity of the new law would have continued to deny bastards their civic rights. It was most likely the plight of these bastards and the obvious effects of the war that pushed Euripides to defend the potential worth of bastards and foreigners, while attacking the meaninglessness of legitimacy and the danger that it can pose to the state and its constituent *oikoi*. Each play is, to some extent, another contribution towards the prolonged debate about φύσις and νόμος that was (for much the same reasons) a key subject in contemporary Athenian philosophy.

When we zoom out from the plays as individual works and see them together, we can recognise that they represent three different perspectives on three different times of the war. Legitimacy links all three of them and changes in its presentation coincide with changes that were forced in the prevailing moral system. As the world altered, so general ideas about right and wrong and their associations with status were pressured into altering too. It is this procedure of change that Euripides is presenting to us as a sort of chronicle of the processes that are central to the core tenets of the genealogy of morals.

5.4.1 *Moral Genealogy*

Minson gives the following definition of the term ‘genealogy of morals’ and the thinkers who subscribe to its philosophy:

At the most general level, genealogy of morals may be defined as an attempt to debunk current highly esteemed ethical/personal values and, perhaps especially, their philosophical or religious justifications, by demonstrating their historical contingency (1985: 18).

Its central belief is, essentially, that morals and values are primarily the result of their context. It was first used by the nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) in his 1887 book *On the Genealogy of Morality: a Polemic*. This text was written as a continued reflection on the subject of his previous work, *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), and in it he sought to assess the origins of morality and to argue that values in any society are historically contingent and did not spring from some collection of universal rules. The French thinker Michel Foucault (1926-1984), writing nearly a century later, built his philosophy of morality on Nietzsche’s, focussing even closer on the logic of its various aspects in many works, including *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), *Discipline and Punishment* (1975), and *The Will to Knowledge* (1976). He paid particular attention to how the powerful try to develop systems of punishment as mechanisms of control and used this to help him develop his ‘cratology,’ or theory of power. This provides him with the lens that he then uses to examine the dynamics of power in sexuality.

5.4.2 *Nietzsche*

To use the insights of Nietzsche as a philosophical lens through which to reflect on Euripides’ intentions in these three plays is not surprising, considering the influence of the classics, and

particularly Greek tragedy, on him and his work.²⁸⁷ The system of moral origination which he first explored in *Beyond Good and Evil* was, from the beginning, intimately connected with his own understanding of Greco-Roman values and is in part a reckoning with the differences that Nietzsche thought existed between these classical morals and those of Judeo-Christianity. His attitude towards morality was founded on the desire to bring nuance back to a subject which he believed Christianity had warped into a simplistic binary system. The concepts of good and evil, he argues, do not in reality exist in contradiction to one another in the ways we have been told and he encourages us to go “beyond thinking them [good and evil] as exclusive and all-encompassing opposites” (Burnham 2007: 12). This means that they ought not to be considered as objective truths, but instead, as he argues, they are “a historically constituted product or effect” (Allison 2001: 201). These basic assumptions about moral origination had begun to appear in Nietzsche’s earlier work *Human, All too Human* (1878), in which he first suggests that morality derives from the prevailing power-relations of the two main social classes, the empowered and the powerless.

Following this and then *Beyond Good and Evil*, in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche expanded on these ideas in three essays in which he analyses the roles of class, wealth, race, and religion in the determination of moral expectations ultimately favourable to the most powerful.²⁸⁸ He first confronts the conclusions of earlier thinkers on morality, and claims that “daß ihnen der historische Geist selber abgeht” (25) [the historical spirit itself is certainly lacking in them]. In particular he disagrees with the Judeo-Christian idea favoured by the utilitarians that moral deeds spring from feelings of altruism, which can be called ‘good’, and that some objective ‘bad conscience,’ or guilt, is what makes us punish one another and tells us what can be called ‘evil.’²⁸⁹ Good/evil, he argues, is in fact only one of the two contingent binaries that define this sort of morality, the other being ‘good/bad’.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁷ His ‘The Birth of Tragedy’ first appeared in 1872.

²⁸⁸ The three essays are “‘Good and Evil,” “Good and Bad”, “‘Guilt,” “Bad Conscience,” and the Like’, and ‘What is the Meaning of Ascetic Ideals’, of which the first is most important here.

²⁸⁹ Nietzsche shows especial disapprobation towards “Diese englischen Psychologen” [these English psychologists], who (although he does not identify them specifically) he claims are wrong in seeking the origin of morality within peoples’ psyches but ignoring the broader context. Here he is referring to the works of British philosophers such as David Hume (1711-1776), Jeremy Bentham (1758-1842), and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873).

²⁹⁰ He pays particular attention to the various terms that denote moral worth as they appear in “the Greeks, Romans, Goths, Saxons, and Indo-European cultures in general” (Allison 2001: 202).

The first of these is the basic opposition that can be used to define quite simply the core principles of a moral system, while the second is a definition of material power and social class. According to this latter binary, the aristocracy define themselves as ‘good’ and then go on to define those who are opposite to them, namely the poor and dispossessed, as ‘bad’. This binary of good/bad then becomes equated with that of good/evil and the social advantages of the elite become their moral advantages too. In this way a society striates itself both materially and morally, according to the power relations. Nietzsche writes that those who call themselves good design a system of moral values to suit themselves by casting themselves as the moral ideal. Being in control of the very system which justifies their claim to goodness necessitates that the good find a group of people to contrast themselves with on both the moral and social planes: those who are ‘evil’ and ‘bad.’ The differences in their meanings, as with the two types of ‘good,’ become elided and the words are synonymised: social inferiority morphs into a symbol of moral inferiority and vice versa. Those who are defined as bad develop what Nietzsche calls *ressentiment*, or a hostility towards those powerful people (and the power structures they control) who oppress them and stimulate in them feelings of impotence and inferiority.²⁹¹ Thus we have the opposition created between the morality of the powerful, which Nietzsche calls ‘master morality,’ and the morality of the powerless, called ‘slave morality.’ In the former the two meanings of ‘good’ are equivalent, and ‘bad’ becomes the same as ‘evil,’ while the latter is the result of the powerful enforcement of the authority’s moral value on its subjects.

The natural consequence of all of this is that what is considered moral at any given time is based almost exclusively on the contemporary structure of a society, which is a system defined by the relations between those in power and those who are subject to their power. By taking morality to the level of history and culture, Nietzsche is thus able to cast doubt on the reasons we follow one set of morals rather than another. As he reflects at the beginning of this work,

Fortunately I learned in good time to divorce the theological prejudice from the moral and no longer to seek the origin of evil *behind* the world. A certain amount of historical and philological training, together with a native fastidiousness in

²⁹¹ He considered *ressentiment* to be a product of Judeo-Christian morality and does not find it present in antiquity.

matters of psychology, before long transformed this problem into another, to wit, “Under what conditions did man construct the value judgments *good* and *evil*?” And what is their intrinsic worth? Have they thus far benefited or retarded mankind? Do they betoken misery, curtailment, degeneracy or, on the contrary, power, fullness of being, energy, courage in the face of life, and confidence in the future? (1956: 151).

5.4.3 Foucault

Foucault’s studies of human morality and the forces that shape it, in particular systems of punishment and reward, are the natural successor to Nietzsche’s in *Beyond Good and Evil* and *On the Genealogy of Morals*. In *Discipline and Punishment* (1975) Foucault examines the continuing practice of penitentiary punishment first established at the turn of the eighteenth century. The development of this method of punishing those who have not lived up to the moral conditions of the society, he claims, is only explicable according to the events of the time, namely “the putting into practice of reforms proposed by critics of the regime of punishment associated with French Absolutism” (Minson 1985: 19).²⁹² He provides an in-depth analysis of the contemporary situation and is able to draw clear parallels between the attitudes of the time and the development of these punitive versions of morality.

Foucault draws on much the same theory in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), in which he attempts to explain the origin and functioning of power-structures, as well as the power of historical events to generate very particular systems of knowledge. The study of the creative features of power structures, which he condenses into the word ‘cratology,’ is developed later in *The Will to Knowledge*, the first volume of his *The History of Sexuality*, first published in 1976. In this work, Foucault sets out to examine the discourses on the body, sex and sexuality produced by the various epistemes (knowledge systems) that are themselves shaped by power structures

²⁹² By French Absolutism is meant the absolute monarchical rule that existed in France until the revolution in 1789, after which the Republic began to introduce jails as punitive measures.

across different historical epochs.²⁹³ The definition of sexuality he offers in *The Will to Knowledge* reveals how Foucault conceptualizes the relationship between power and discourses on sex:

Sexuality must not be described as a stubborn drive, by nature alien and of necessity disobedient to a power which exhausts itself trying to subdue it and often fails to control it entirely. It appears rather as an especially dense transfer point for relations of power: between men and women, young people and old people, parents and offspring, teachers and students, priests and laity, and administration and a population (1998: 103).

He goes on to argue that sexuality is “capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategies” (1998: 103) that can be used in investigations of the world, whether directly related to the dynamics of sexual politics between and within the two sexes in different age groups and social classes, or not. This strategic deployment of sexuality, he argues, is closely related to his cratology. According to this theory, power is not seen to be hierarchical (as, for instance, in the linear model of the Great Chain of Being or Divine Order),²⁹⁴ nor is it necessarily repressive, but instead exists everywhere in a vast and complex network of human relations, across and between social and economic classes.²⁹⁵ Foucault’s beliefs are characterised by two phrases which are often repeated in various ways in his work: ‘le pouvoir est partout’ [power is everywhere] and ‘le pouvoir vient d’en bas’ [power comes from below]. It is the latter that is especially important, because it erases the binary between ruler and ruled and encapsulates the essence of Foucault’s thought about the nature of power.

Power is not repressive, but creative: it naturally creates points of resistance and division within the body politic (1998: 94). In his subsequent volumes in *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault

²⁹³ For example, the Greek, Roman and early Christian periods. He died before he could complete the work.

²⁹⁴ This conception of power sees the universe as entirely hierarchical and with everything arranged in a metaphysically logical order from the most powerful (god/gods) to the utterly powerless. We are all positioned somewhere on this scale and have no ability or right to rise higher than our allotted station. It shares much with the taxonomical impulse behind Aristotle’s *Historia Animalium* or Linnaeus, although these have a far less metaphysical intention. See Lovejoy 1936, Kuntz and Kuntz 1987, as well as the articles in Watkins 2013, for more about the Divine Order and Chain of Being.

²⁹⁵ See Foucault 1998: 94-95.

turns his attention to ancient Greek and Roman discourses on sexuality and puts into practice his attempts to interrogate the epistemes which underpin discourses, written almost entirely by men, on sex, the body and sexual morality in different eras. How these discourses, ranging from the legal and political to the dramatic and historical, impinge on and shape the lives of women, children, foreigners, slaves, and all those outside the privileged circle of educated, literate men reveals what Foucault means by the strategies that the powerful employ to entrench themselves and that end up generating resistance against them.

5.4.4 Euripides' bastards and the genealogy of morals

The theory of power that Nietzsche and Foucault (his philosophical successor) posit is, I would argue, patently visible in the Athenian power structures before and during Euripides' composition and production of the *Hippolytus*, the *Andromache*, and the *Ion*.²⁹⁶ From the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, Athens suffered from dangers both intentional and accidental and these multiplied with such remarkable speed that it did not take long until the city's survival was in doubt. Shortages in certain key resources quickly led to the untenability of the power structures designed for prosperous pre-war Athens and these were forced to change in order to counter the losses. The most impactful result of the war was the great number of citizens who had died, whether from plague or combat. It seems logical that, because bastardy is greatly interlinked with the nexus of social, political, and domestic ways of belonging, that the pressure of the rapid depopulation manifested itself in the concurrent relaxation of the legal and moral proscriptions on bastard citizenship and inheritance.

More than anything else, however, there was the purely practical concern of the sheer numerical impossibility of forming an effective war machine with so rapidly diminishing a population of Athenian males. This shrinkage of an already small group was a threat to their power, and the amendment which was made sought to ensure that their numbers grew in as 'pure' a way as possible. The solution, as Pericles first showed when he suggested the change, was to legitimise those bastard children of citizens, who were without living legitimate heirs: this ensured both

²⁹⁶ In Classical scholarship, Foucault has found admirers and detractors in almost equal measure. See, for instance, Richlin 1998: 138-170, who berates him, from a feminist standpoint, for his use of masculinist, sexist discourses, and Skinner 2014: 317-322, who is more guarded in her advice.

that the number of citizens grew a little, but also that the paternal lineage and, importantly, family inheritance was given a future. How many bastards were in this position and were legitimised is not clear, though I would argue that the number (if the rule was enforced rigidly) would be relatively small. Regardless, the event is important, whatever the numbers were, as an example of the malleability of law, morality, and power, all three of which, as Athens was put under more pressure by the war, we see altered further and further from their legal, moral, and cratological origins in the once normative PCL.

This piece of legislation was, in many ways, the legal and ideological bedrock of the contemporary attitudes towards bastardy. It came about as the result of the propertied aristocracy's stranglehold on the distribution of power in the *polis* and their equivalence between power-worthiness and Athenian pure-bloodedness. It was a method of entrenching power among a very small group of men and their families (the *καλοὶ κ'ἀγαθοί*), whose rights to it were guaranteed provided that the man was an ethnically autochthonous, legitimately born, wealthy, member of a phratry and deme, as well as a citizen. These men ruled over the substantially larger population of the disempowered by forcing them to believe that whatever the powerful said was to be considered a moral order; and any deviation from or resistance to this morality was punishable by marginalisation and persecution.

Despite Cleisthenes' democratic reforms, certain families (like the Alcmaeonids) had continued to hold disproportionately more power and the morality professed by that power remained influential until Euripides' time. Foucault's idea of the creativity of power and the resistance it generates specifies that it occurs within the same dominant group of power relations and we see a possible illustration of this in the Alcmaeonid blood shared by Cleisthenes, Pericles and Alcibiades. The first man resisted the perpetuation of oligarchy by reordering the voting tribes and undermined its exclusionary grounding by enfranchising bastards and giving them "complete equality with *gnēsioi*" (Patterson 1990: 43). Pericles and Alcibiades, on the other hand, seem to be the remnants of an older Alcmaeonid aristocracy hanging on to notions of their place at the pinnacle of Athenian society and continuing to exert influence through marriage alliances and the implementation of laws that shore up their elite social and moral status. Although their influence continued to suffer from the growth in demagoguery during and after the war, they

nevertheless remained powerful entities, who always sought to protect and entrench whatever power they had or could have.

To men like this, the vilification and marginalisation of bastards was only one of the many strategies that the empowered used to retain and perpetuate the belief in their unique right to power. Its effects, however, were especially impactful mostly because of the role that the equation of noble birth with nobility of character, legitimacy, power, and fame played in defining it. The basic equation is one of the foundational characteristics of society, according to Nietzsche, and manifests itself within every power dynamic and strategy of oppression. In Athenian reality, it was most clearly visible in the strict divide between the empowered patriarchal citizenry and the powerless women, children, slaves, and foreigners, all of whom were forced into accepting the morality established by the empowered. It had all of the properties required for the creation of what Foucault would call the ultimate 'punitive' society, in which resistance to the 'natural' order of things laid out by the noble-born themselves is frequently punishable by death. While bastardy was not a capital crime in Athens, it occupied a central place in the most important social, political, and moral questions about status and belonging. It was a phenomenon with an extensive effect and it was understood that the stakes tended to be high when bastards were involved.

This comes out in the plays which, although they are set in a heroic world that is naturally one of extremes, give us insight into the attitude that bastardy was inherently dangerous. Apart from the fatal or near-fatal situations that all three works put illegitimate characters in, there are also a number of stereotypes which would have resonated with contemporary Athenian perceptions: bastards are in danger because they are a threat to their fathers, siblings, and stepmothers. The repetition of the trope about stepmothers' poisonous resentment of the bastard, at the very least, illustrates a popular view that bastards were dangerous to themselves and others. The conflict of the plays would, for Nietzsche, be primarily due to the *ressentiment* that Euripides so clearly builds into the psychology of the bastards and their supporters: the impotence that they feel in their oppressed positions causes them to resist the power of the oppressors by formulating a different 'slave morality' and rejecting the limitations prescribed by the powerful. This rejection

is nowhere more evident than in Euripides' arguments against the equation between status and worth.

Although the situation in Athens varied greatly over the course of the war, at the time of each production (428, 425, c.413) Athens was in a similarly precarious position. In the early years the Archidamian war was at its most oppressive and the plague ravaged the Athenian population trapped within the city walls; this period produced two plays, the *Hippolytus* and the *Andromache*, that addressed its chief concerns, namely Athens' repopulation and restoration. Later, in the time following the debacle of the Sicilian Expedition (415) and when Athenian morale was at one of its lowest ebbs, Euripides wrote the *Ion*. In this he displays a sympathetic attitude towards bastardy consistent with his earlier plays, but does not interrogate exactly the same concerns they do. It is a critique of the dangers that arrogant autochthony can cause through the unjust subordination of deviant people, such as bastards, but it is simultaneously also an almost propagandistic monumentalisation of the Attic-Ionian aetiology. So, all three plays support the cause of bastards and illustrate the problems inherent in their persecution, but differ in their specific intentions.

5.5 Conclusion

When Euripides' wrote the *Hippolytus*, the *Andromache*, and the *Ion*, Athens was facing the greatest threat to its existence since its occupation during the Persian Wars. The city and its people had been under immense strain since the start of the Peloponnesian War and the suffering they withstood took an enormous toll on resources and morale. Consequently, the power structures and dynamics of Athens were forced, because of depopulation from the war and the plague, to change. The wealthy ruling men of the *polis*, led by Pericles, who was desperate for an heir, made a change to the PCL of 451 and opened their ranks to receive the noble-born bastards of citizens who were without living legitimate sons. This choice, though of limited immediate effect, nevertheless showed the Athenian people the true malleability of laws and the morals that are their impetus. As the situation worsened, therefore, there appears to have been a growing feeling that the rejection of bastards on the grounds that they were innately inferior to pure-blooded Athenians was detrimental to the *polis*. It was, in the first place, blatantly hypocritical as

it was applied only to some bastards (those without legitimate siblings) and not to others. And secondly, it meant that those bastards with talent were disallowed from fulfilling their potential so as to be beneficial to the state in a time of crisis.

Behind the PCL and the continued rejection of bastards as citizens lay the long standing belief in Athenian superiority, fuelled by the idealism of autochthony. Those with pure Athenian blood were, in their own minds, inherently better than those with only partial Athenian ancestry and they saw any infusion of foreign blood into their number as a devaluation of citizenship. They had made a compromise in allowing some metroxenic bastards into their number, but the purpose of that change was mainly so that citizens without heirs could still be able to hand on their legacy. Overall, the situation remained the same for the majority of bastards throughout the war and they continued to be denied citizen and inheritance rights to the city's own loss.

The dealings of the *polis* with bastardy just before and during the Peloponnesian War were disapproved of by Euripides. He saw the power dynamics of bastardy as unjust and unhelpful and he wrote three plays each looking at how the morality determined by the powerful worked to oppress bastards. It is likely that the progress of the war was his main motivation for addressing the issues around bastards, whom he saw as potentially valuable additions to the citizenry who had charge over Athens' role in the war. Most of all, he argued against the elite's view that status and worth were equivalent to one another: bastards, being of a particularly low social status were thought to be naturally immoral and without ability. Like Nietzsche, on whom he was a great influence, Euripides sought to interrogate conflation of the binaries 'good/bad' and 'good/evil' and the effects that it has on those who, just happening to be lower status, were oppressed and rejected by the *polis* and the *oikos* alike. In his works he seems to be saying that, not only are people of worth being rejected from positions of power, but their constant maltreatment can lead them to develop an antagonist attitude towards the institutions of the state and home.

All of this has been gleaned from an in-depth analysis of the three plays and the context they were created in. The *Hippolytus* reveals the detrimental consequences that can come from the oppression of bastards, especially through their resistance to their oppressors, and quite clearly expresses his disapprobation of the elitist and eugenic principles behind it. The *Andromache*, too,

explores the unfair treatment of bastards and other illegitimate presences in the house but pays even greater attention to the invalidity of the equation between status and worth through the depiction of Hermione and Menelaus. The play also has a far greater focus on the impacts of war on the city, especially as it manifests itself within the *oikos*. Lastly, the *Ion*, produced somewhat later, concentrates even more on the Athenian confidence in autochthony and tries to communicate how destructive an extreme belief in the importance of blood-purity can be.

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