



**Homer, Tragedy
and
Beyond**

**Essays in honour of
P. E. Easterling**

edited by
Felix Budelmann
and
Pantelis Michelakis

'The rock of the nightingale'

Kinship diplomacy and Sophocles' *Tereus**

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Introduction: the myth

The powerful Tereus myth has attracted poets of all periods, from Aristophanes to Shakespeare, Matthew Arnold, A.C. Swinburne, T.S. Eliot and Ted Hughes.¹ In its simple form it goes as follows: Tereus king of Thrace marries Prokne, daughter of Pandion, king of Athens. Prokne, removed to Thrace, pines for her sister Philomela and asks Tereus to arrange for Philomela to visit her. Tereus brings Philomela from Athens but then rapes her, cuts out her tongue and locks her away. Philomela weaves her story into a tapestry and contrives that it should reach Prokne, who rescues her. The sisters then take revenge on Tereus by killing Itys and serving him up to his father to eat. When Tereus finds out what he has been eating he kicks over the table and pursues the sisters with an axe. The gods, however, take pity on all of them, and turn Prokne into a nightingale, permanently mourning her dead son, the tongueless Philomela into a chattering swallow, and Tereus into a hoopoe (or hawk).

The fullest ancient account of the story is in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* but the great and definitive original, and Ovid's likely ultimate source – despite the different use he made of it, as Burnett now rightly insists – was the lost *Tereus* of Sophocles; the myth was, however, already old when Sophocles got to work on it.² Sophocles' play will be the subject of this paper, but first a brief word is needed

* This paper is offered to my former thesis supervisor Professor Pat Easterling. Though my thesis (in revised form, my forthcoming book) was on a different playwright, Euripides, and, in particular, on his *Ion*, my M.A. thesis was on Sophocles' *Antigone* and was also supervised by Pat. I think it more appropriate for the present purpose to offer a paper on the dramatist whom Pat favoured in her writings, and on a fragmentary play which we had both independently singled out as being specially intriguing and appealing in a graduate workshop on ancient Greek drama that we co-organized in July 1996. The *Ion* appears in the title of the present paper (the 'rock of the nightingale' is taken from line 1482 of that play) and is also the subject of a separate section, which thus has additional and personal appropriateness as a reminder of my rewarding doctoral years with Pat. The present paper was first delivered in Pat's honour and presence in March 1999 at the Institute of Classical Studies, London. A fuller version of this paper was also read at Yale University in October 1999, at the University of Chicago in early January 2000 and at UCLA in late January 2000. I thank Carolyn Dewald and Simon Hornblower for their astute comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

¹ Aristophanes: *Ar. Birds*. 97ff.; see also Shakespeare, *Cymbeline* II.2.44ff.; Matthew Arnold, *Philomela* in Allott (1985) 180; A.C. Swinburne, *Itylus*, in Dobrée (1961) 39-41, and 17 (the first stanza of 'When the hounds of spring...'), from *Atalanta in Calydon*; T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* lines 96ff.; Ted Hughes, *Tales from Ovid* in Hughes (1997) 229-45.

² For the fragments of the Sophocles' play, see *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* 4. 435-45; note especially the ancient summaries at Radt 435-6 (Tzetzes; *P.Oxy.* 3013); for (still valuable) commentary on the fragments, see Pearson (1917) 221-38; more briefly, Lloyd-Jones (1996) 291-301. Other literary allusions to the Tereus myth in tragedy: Aesch. *Suppl.* 60-7, *Ag.* 1142ff.; Soph. *OC* 668-719, see Zeitlin (1993) 147-82, esp. 164; Eur. *HF* 1021-3; *Hec.* 337; *Hel.* 1107-13 (μελωδὸν ἀηδόνα,

about the myth itself. It has been recently and convincingly analysed in terms of the breakdown of family order.³ Metamorphosis into a bird is often associated, in Greek myth, with the most polluting sort of crime, that which violates family order: the change into a bird represents a move from civilization to extreme wildness. The cannibal meal of Tereus is an example of a well-attested relation between food and sex: Tereus' incest is a form of greed in that he is not satisfied with just one sister, and this greed is symbolized by the meal in which he eats his own son.⁴ The literary critic John Carey has remarked *à propos* a novel by Arnold Bennett (*Hilda Lessways*), that there is a connection between bigamy and second helpings.⁵ Tereus was not exactly a bigamist but Forbes-Irving, who here follows Lévi-Strauss, is surely right to identify Tereus' crime as a 'sort of taking possession or greed'.⁶ The table, which in Ovid's account Tereus kicks over (*Metam.* 6.661, *Thracius ingenti mensas clamore repellit*) stands for family order which has been upset.

Sophocles' *Tereus* is 'lost' in the sense that it does not survive complete, but amongst his fragmentary plays it is the one we have most information about. In the present paper I do not offer close analysis or conjectures about the individual fragments; still less do I offer an attempt at a detailed reconstruction of the play, always a hazardous and vulnerable undertaking. My aim is rather to apply modern understanding of the mythical dimension of ancient Greek diplomacy, so as to re-interpret the exotic and outré themes of a play whose Sophoclean outline is reasonably certain from the ancient summaries (see n.1). But naturally I shall draw on particular extracts where their state of survival permits, and I now briefly summarize this direct evidence. There are seventeen fragments, of which two consist of just one word each (*fr.* 594, ἀΐγλη, 'glitter', and 595a, λίβανον, 'incense'); one famous fragment consists of only two words (κερκίδος φωνή, 'the voice of the shuttle',

1110; Prokne's nightingale song for her son Itys); *Phaethon*, lines 67-70 Diggle with Diggle's note (mention of the nightingale and Itys), cf. Barlow (1971) 23-4 n.32. Cf. *Hom. Od.* 19.518 (Prokne's metamorphosis; χλωρηϊς ἀηδών); Hes. *Erg.* 566 (nightingale, daughter of Pandion; cf. Sappho *fr.* 135 Page), 568 (Philomela's metam.; ὀρθογόνη ... χελιδών). Later versions: Apollod. 3.193ff. (εὐχονταί ἀπορνεωθήναι); Ovid, *Metam.* 6.424ff. (Prokne and Philomela are called Kekropids, 667); Hyg. *fab.* 45 (Tereus); Paus. 10.4.8. (sisters' revenge). Hourmouziades (1988) tries to make Tereus into a tragic figure, relying on Hyginus, whom however he acknowledges (p. 138) to be 'perhaps the least reliable of our sources'. See now Burnett (1998) 180, for the differences between Ovid and Sophocles. On this book, see further below.

³ Forbes-Irving (1990) ch. 4.

⁴ See Ovid, *Fasti II: et soror et Procne, Tereusque duabus iniquus / et quicumque suas per scelus auget opes*, 'both Prokne and her sister, and Tereus cruel to both of them, and whoever increases his wealth by criminality'. In the love feast of Caristia celebrated in February, Tereus and the sisters are excluded because of their shocking violation of kinship ties, and – in the case of Tereus – criminal greed. I thank Carole Newlands of UCLA for supplying me with this reference.

⁵ Carey (1992) 176.

⁶ Forbes-Irving (1990) 104, citing Lévi-Strauss (1969) 58. See, too, Burnett (1998) 188 for some lively remarks on cannibalism as 'dietary incest', though she does not mention Forbes-Irving or Lévi-Strauss.

much exploited in feminist interpretations of the play, see below). Six other fragments (582, 584-8) are very short, one or two lines each. They include (585) advice to Prokne from an unidentified speaker, telling her that 'though this is clearly painful, we are mortals and must put up with what the gods send us',

ἀλγεινά, Πρόκνη, δῆλον· ἀλλ' ὅμως χρεῶν
τὰ θεῖα θνητοῦς ὄντας εὐπετῶς φέρειν.

In *fr.* 584 someone (Prokne addressing the chorus?) says 'I envy your life in many respects, but most of all because you have no experience of a foreign land',

πολλὰ σὲ ζηλῶ βίου,
μάλιστα δ' εἰ γῆς μὴ πεπεύρασαι ξένης.

The foreign milieu of *Tereus* is further explored in two other 'one-liners', *fr.* 582, possibly but not certainly the first line of the whole play,

Ἥλιε, φιλίπποις Θρηζῖ πρόσβιστον σέλας

O Sun, whose flame is much honoured by the horse-loving Thracians

and *fr.* 587,

φιλάργυρον μὲν πᾶν τὸ βάρβαρον γένος

For the whole barbarian race loves money

which obviously recalls *Ant.* 1055 (Kreon on greedy seers).

Fr. 586 describes a woman 'hurrying, and in a coloured cloak...',

σπεύδουσαν αὐτήν, ἐν δὲ ποικίλῳ φάρει

which has been ingeniously interpreted (see Radt's note) as a reference to Prokne dressed as a bacchanal; for the Dionysiac theme, see below p. 108.

Of the remaining fragments, the somewhat corrupt five-line *fr.* 589 says that he (clearly Tereus) was mad (ἄνους), but seems to continue with the thought that his violent punishers (Prokne and Philomela, evidently) were madder still, just as medicines may be worse than the disease. *Fr.* 590 (which perhaps gives the closing lines of the play) expresses the familiar and Pindaric sentiment that 'mortals must think mortal thoughts' (*cf.* Pind. *Isthm.* 5.16), but interestingly continues that nobody except Zeus can be 'steward of the future' (ταμίας τῶν μελλόντων); this, as Pearson rightly remarks, finds a nice parallel in Thucydides (6.78.2, the Syracusan Hermokrates at Kamarina, *cf.* Alcibiades at 18.3). *Frr.* 592 and 593 con-

tain *sententiae* about the destruction, by evil counsel, of the wealth that brings happiness, and the disastrous changes effected by cunning (*fr.* 592; six lines), and about the blindness of tomorrow (*fr.* 593; two lines).

The most substantial fragments are *fr.* 581, 583 and 591. *Fr.* 581, disconcertingly but surely wrongly assigned to Aeschylus by Aristotle, is a lengthy (ten-line) description of the hoopoe, which looks at his own misery (there is a pun here, ἐπόπτην ἔποπα), the brightly coloured bird of the rocks, bold and in full armour, θρασὺν πετραῖον ὄρνιν ἐν παντευχίαι. The bird is Tereus after his 'ornithification', and the reference to armour suggests the savagery of the warlike Thracian king. The fragment concludes with a prediction (the corrupt line 9) that the bird will 'get clear of these places' (τῶνδ' ἀπαλλαγείς τόπων, Heath's emendation, accepted by Lloyd-Jones, for τῶνδ' ἀπ' ἄλλον εἰς τόπον; for another possibility, δαυλόν, 'thick', 'shaggy', see below p. 105); and then says (line 10) that it 'will settle in deserted woods and mountains':

δρυμοὺς ἐρήμους καὶ πάγους ἀποικιεῖ

The remarkable *cri de cœur fr.* 583 is, like 595 (see above), of great interest from a feminist point of view. Prokne – surely – exclaims that 'I am nothing on my own, νῦν δ' οὐδέν εἰμι χωρίς; this is the nature of women as I have often noticed: we are nothing. We live the happiest life of all mortals as children in our father's house, for thoughtlessness always rears children in happiness. But then when we reach an age of understanding and vigour, we are pushed out and sold, far from our ancestral gods and our parents, some to foreign husbands, some to barbarians, αἱ μὲν ξένους πρὸς ἄνδρας, αἱ δὲ βαρβάρους, some to mirthless or fault-finding homes, ἀγηθῆ δώμαθ' αἱ δ' ἐπίρροθα. After a single night has yoked us, we have to praise our lot and regard it with favour.'

Finally, there is *fr.* 591, which I shall exploit below: 'mankind is one tribe; one day in the lives of our father and mother brought us all to birth; none of us was born superior to any other. But a wretched fate rears some of us, a prosperous fate rears others, and yet others are held down by a yoke of necessity',

ἐν φῦλον ἀνθρώπων, μί' ἔδειξε πατρὸς
καὶ ματρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀμέρα τοὺς πάντας· οὐδεὶς
ἔξοχος ἄλλος ἔβλασταν ἄλλου.
βόσκει δὲ τοὺς μὲν μοῖρα δυσσαμερίας,
τοὺς δ' ὄλβος ἡμῶν, τοὺς δὲ δουλεί-
ας ζυγὸν ἔσχεν ἀνάγκας.

The interpretation of this passage is not easy; Jebb (quoted by Pearson) thought it was from the first stasimon of the play, and sung by the Thracian chorus, 'affirming a principle which belonged to the spirit of the Dionysiac cult – the freedom and

equality of men'. This, given what follows (different fates await people of the same origin) seems likelier than that Sophocles here speaks like Pindar at the opening of the Sixth Nemean Ode, 'there is one race of men, another of gods, but we draw breath from the same mother', ἐν ἄνδρων, ἐν θεῶν γένος· ἐκ μιᾶς δὲ πνέομεν ματρὸς ἀμφοτέρω, where the idea is that Gaia is the mother of gods as well as of men. If a chorus of Thracians is indeed affirming the common kinship of men of different races, that has interesting implications to which I shall return, though I am aware that the ensuing *sententia* about different fates is conventional enough.⁷

These specifically attributable fragments can be supplemented not only from Ovid's narrative account (see above) but also from fragments of the Roman dramatist Accius, who is also thought to have based his work on the Sophoclean play.⁸ Unfortunately the date of Sophocles' *Tereus* is not certain, but a date in the 20s or early teens of the fifth century is generally accepted.⁹ The play has been intensely worked on in recent years, with valuable results. Most of this work has been inspired by feminist insights. The focus of such readings has generally been the final and very short *fr.* 595, κερκίδος φωνή, 'the voice of the shuttle', a striking phrase which well illustrates Sophocles' capacity to encapsulate in half a line the core of a character, as commented on in the ancient *Life of Sophocles* (para. 21): 'he knows how to arrange the action with such a sense of timing that he creates an entire character out of a mere half-line or a single expression' (ἐκ μικροῦ ἡμιστιχίου ἢ λέξεως μιᾶς).¹⁰ This phrase has given its name to several modern articles.¹¹

Although I admire and have learnt from the feminist readings of the fragments, I shall not be following this path, but I will look at the play from a different angle. That angle is kinship diplomacy, a term I shall be explaining in due course. This too has been richly and intensely worked on recently, but it has not been applied to the *Tereus* in any systematic detail. It is, for instance neglected altogether in the most recent full analysis of the *Tereus*, namely ch. 7 of Anne Pippin Burnett's Sather lectures, *Revenge in Attic and Later Tragedy*, published in 1998.¹² This is a valuable book; it is remarkable that the *Tereus*, which gets a chapter to itself, is the only fragmentary ancient play so to be treated: the other chapters all deal with surviving tragedies. This implies a high and I would say correct view of *Tereus*' importance. I particularly like Burnett's discussion of the symbolism of the tongue: the Sophoclean revenge, she points out, 'called for ... an answering use of the villain's

⁷ The interpretation and even translation of the Pindar passage is highly controversial, as is its intertextual relation to Sophocles *fr.* 591. Space does not permit more than a dogmatic statement of my view, but for a good recent discussion of both questions, see Gerber (1999) 43ff.

⁸ See Sutton (1984) 127-32, and Kiso (1984) 59.

⁹ See Radt, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* 4. 436. It is definitely pre-414 because of the obvious references in *Ar. Birds*, esp. line 100; on this passage, see below p. 109.

¹⁰ See Easterling (1985) 298.

¹¹ Hartman (1970) 337-9; Kleindienst Joplin (1991).

¹² Burnett (1998) ch.7 (pp. 177-91), 'Child-killing mothers: Sophocles' *Tereus*'.

tongue in the tasting of his punishment'.¹³ Burnett's conclusion, roughly, is that the revenge deed of *Tereus* is 'one in which Athenians struck back against foreign injury'.¹⁴ There is obvious truth in this: as we shall see, *Tereus*' behaviour is represented as archetypically barbarian, and the shuttle, as Burnett demonstrates, is by contrast specifically Athenian. But the issues are more complicated and interesting than that, because as I shall try to show in this paper the Thracians were perceived as akin to the Athenians, a mythical kinship connection which reflected a close but profoundly uneasy historical reality. I would add that Burnett, though she is aware of the uncleanness and pollution that attaches to *Tereus*,¹⁵ does not address the fascinating issues raised by Forbes-Irving (1990); that is, she does not discuss ornithification as an appropriate outcome for crimes of the worst, most polluting type which overthrow family order: birds are felt to be far more alien and distant from the human species than, say, bears or other animals with reassuringly human characteristics. I hope to explore this further elsewhere; in the present paper kinship diplomacy is my main theme.

My paper is arranged as follows: I shall first talk about the crucial issue of the location of the myth ('The dramatic location of Sophocles' *Tereus*'). We shall see that a myth originally situated in Megara, Phocis or even Boeotia was transferred wholesale to Thrace only in the classical period and we shall be looking at the reasons for this transfer, which may, as Wilamowitz believed (see below, p.102), have been the contribution of Sophocles himself. The next section ('The historical background') is historical and deals with the relations between Athens and Thrace from the Pisistratids to the end of the Peloponnesian War and the dramatic date, so-to-speak, of Xenophon's *Anabasis* at the turn of the fifth and fourth centuries BC (i.e. 399). Next, I discuss kinship diplomacy and its multiple bearing on the *Tereus* ('Kinship diplomacy'). We shall see that the Megarian element was of great importance alongside the Thracian.

In the next, most tentative, section ('The daughters of Pandion and Euripides' *Ion*'), I shall suggest that Sophocles' *Tereus* interestingly resembled Euripides' *Ion* in that both plays sought to provide a kind of charter for Athenian colonizing activity, general in the case of the *Ion*, specifically Thracian in the case of *Tereus*. I shall further suggest that at the level of poetic vocabulary the parallel was reinforced by a shared allusion to the sufferings of the nightingale located firmly on the Athenian Acropolis.

I conclude by asking and attempting some answers to such questions as: What kind of play was *Tereus*? Is there anything to be said for Burkert's essentially Dionysiac approach to the myth in terms of the Agrionia and Pandia festivals?¹⁶ Why was the myth not dramatized more often but confined on the whole to lyric

¹³ Burnett (1998) 184-5.

¹⁴ Burnett (1998) 190.

¹⁵ Burnett (1998) 188-9.

¹⁶ Burkert (1983) 179-85.

passages? Does the intrinsic violence of the myth explain why it tends to feature in choral odes but rarely constitutes the subject-matter of entire plays? Or should we rather seek the explanation in the crudeness of the metamorphoses?

The dramatic location of Sophocles' *Tereus*

That Sophocles' play was located in Thrace is perhaps implied by the specific reference to Thrace in *fr.* 582 and by the reference in *fr.* 583 to married women being taken off to barbarian husbands, as was Prokne herself. More important, the Oxyrhynchus hypothesis, if it relates to Sophocles' play as Parsons and Haslam believe, confirms, in Parsons' words, 'that the standard story of the mythographers goes back to Sophocles; and especially that the play took place in Thrace and not in Daulia'.¹⁷ Pausanias (Paus. 1.41.8; *cf.* 10.4.9) connects the myth with Megara in ways we shall examine later, and he reports a Megarian tradition according to which Tereus was actually king in the Megarid at Pegae, though Pausanias himself prefers the version which had Tereus as king of Phokian Daulis near Chaeronea. Thucydides (2.29.2-3) emphatically prefers this Phokian version, rejecting any link between the historical Teres, king of Thrace, and the mythical Tereus; he does not, however, reject the association between Tereus and Thrace entirely but thinks that Tereus was from a 'different' Thrace, namely 'Daulia in the land which is now called Phokis but which was then inhabited by Thracians'. Finally, there is a persistent and intriguing Boeotian dimension to the myth. In Apollodorus (3.193ff.), Tereus helps Pandion against Labdacus, and Zethus, the king of Thebes, substitutes for Tereus in one of the earliest versions of the myth, that in *Od.* 19.518, supplemented by Pherekydes. Hanell¹⁸ sees this as one of many cultic connections between Megara and Boeotia.

It has been ingeniously suggested that Tereus was originally a Megarian, i.e. a Greek, but had to be 're-classified' as a barbarian Thracian in the fifth century, when the concept of the barbarian acquired strongly negative connotations: the suggestion is that only a barbarian could be guilty of or associated with such extreme and taboo-breaking behaviour as rape, the tearing out of the victim's tongue, a mother's murder of her own child, and cannibalism.¹⁹ This is ingenious, and there may be something in it; but the uncomfortable fact remains that of these four horrors, the child-murder is committed, and the cannibalism arranged, by two Athenian princesses. In any case we have just seen that the choice for Tereus' location is not simply between Greek (i.e. Megarian) and barbarian (i.e. Thracian), because we have to reckon with the more complex version which made him a ruler of Thracians inhabiting what was later a Greek region (Phokis).

¹⁷ *P. Oxy.* 3013, vol. 42 (1974) 46-50. Haslam (1975) 150 n. 3; *cf.* 154 n.20; 172 n. 79.

¹⁸ Hanell (1934) 38.

¹⁹ *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn., s.v. Barbarian, apparently following Hall (1989) 104ff.

The historical background: Athens and Thrace from the Pisistratids to the Peloponnesian War

The relationship between Thrace and Athens in the archaic and classical periods was close but violent, like that between Tereus and Prokne. The attested links go back to the sixth century when Pisistratus finally established himself as tyrant with the help of Thracian mercenaries, whom he had recruited when he retreated to Thrace (Rhaikelos) after an earlier attempt at a tyranny.²⁰ These troops were paid from the precious metals which he obtained from the rich mines of the Pangaion region (ancient Philippi, modern Kavala). These minerals, together with timber and other resources, made Thrace supremely desirable to imperial Athens.²¹

After Pisistratus' 'short-lived settlement',²² Athenian efforts to establish themselves in this region centred on the area round the future Amphipolis, the so-called Nine Ways. Thucydides, in the context of Brasidas' assault on Amphipolis in 424/3 BC, traces attempts to colonize the region.²³ These attempts started with the Milesian Aristagoras after the failure of the Ionian Revolt (500-494 BC), continued with the disastrous episode when 10,000 Athenians were wiped out by Thracians at Drabeskos in (probably) the mid 460s, surely a traumatic and long-remembered event; and ended with the successful Amphipolis venture. The Athenian oikist of Amphipolis was Hagnon, the father of Theramenes, and something of a Thracian expert,²⁴ and the venture exploited the cult of relics, a device familiar from Spartan and earlier Athenian imperialism.²⁵ The relics which guaranteed the success of Amphipolis were the bones of the Thracian hero Rhesus, brought back from Troy to Amphipolis by Hagnon.²⁶

There were several prominent Athenians whose detailed knowledge of the Thracian region could be drawn on by the city: the historian Thucydides himself, Nikias,²⁷ and Hagnon. There is a good chance that Thucydides, whose father's name Oloros was a royal Thracian name, was himself a member of a mixed Thracian-Athenian family like some of the mythical unions we shall be considering. The name Oloros has come down to us as part of the pedigree of one of the greatest families of late archaic Athens: Herodotus says that Miltiades, the oikist of the Thracian Chersonese, married the daughter of a Thracian king called Oloros.

²⁰ Hdt. 1.64; *Ath. Pol.* 15, cf. 14.4.

²¹ Th. 4.108.1.

²² Rhodes (1993) 207.

²³ Th. 4.102.

²⁴ Th. 2.58.

²⁵ The bones of Orestes (see Hdt. 1.65) and of Theseus.

²⁶ Polyainos 6.53 (Polyainos is 2nd c. AD, but uses Ephorus, a historian who wrote in the 4th c. BC and was very much interested in heroic genealogies); this item is discussed by Parker (1994) 340 and Borgeaud (1991).

²⁷ For Nikias and the north, see Th. 5.83.4, and the advice he gives at 6.10.5.

The alternative explanation, for this and other such occurrences of foreign names in Athenian families, is ritualized friendship (*xenia*); such *xeniai* are almost as strong evidence for closeness as is actual intermarriage: the classic text on this point is Thucydides' explanation of the occurrence at Athens of the Spartan name Alcibiades.²⁸

Soon after the Peloponnesian War began (431 BC), the Athenians tried to win over the Thracian king Sitalkes, son of Teres, to an alliance, and to this end they appointed Nymphodorus of Abdera as their proxenos. This is the occasion for the important Thucydidean excursus to be discussed shortly.²⁹ There was a big scare in central Greece shortly afterwards when it looked as if Sitalkes might come south with an army of 150,000, but the force dispersed.³⁰

Athenian use of Thracian mercenaries led some years later to an extremely violent, though small-scale, episode in Thucydides' history: the slaughter carried out at Boeotian Mycalessus by a returning group of Thracians whom the Athenians had decided they could not afford to pay.³¹ This happened in 413 BC. Modern discussions rightly put some responsibility on the Athenian commander Diitrephes and on the Athenians themselves.³² The incident prompts Thucydides to a comment on the extreme savagery of the Thracians when roused.³³ But we should remember the Athenian responsibility for the affair: bloodshed and money always characterized the Athenian marriage with Thrace. It is against this background that we should set *fr.* 587, φιλάργυρον μὲν πᾶν τὸ βάρβαρον γένος, 'for the whole barbarian race loves money'.³⁴ And we can now note that the Thracians are brilliantly attested as silver-loving in the most literal sense: the gold and silver bowls and plates from Rogozen in Bulgaria, found in the 1980s, carry the names of Thracian rulers and one remarkable bowl seems to depict the myth of Heracles and Auge.³⁵ Tereus was, then, the mythical prototype of historical Thracian rulers who ate off splendid tableware made of precious metal. Before we leave Mycalessus, we should note the immediate sequel. As in a tragedy, the Thebans took advantage of the Thracians' inability to swim and exacted a revenge which was almost equally bloody (they did not, however, kill children). Altogether they killed 250 Thracians out of a total of 1300.

²⁸ Hdt. 6.39.2 (Miltiades); for *xenia* and its effect on naming see Th. 8.6.3 (Alcibiades), with Herman (1987) 19 and n. 33, 20 and n. 36, 148; Mitchell (1997) 13; Habicht (2000) 119-20.

²⁹ On Th. 2.29, see below pp. 101-3.

³⁰ Th. 2. 95-101.

³¹ Th. 7.27, 29-30. Quinn (1995) 571-3.

³² Archibald (1997) 100. See also Dover *et al.* (1970) 410.

³³ Th. 7.29.4.

³⁴ For Thracian greed, *cf.* already Archilochus *fr.* 93a West.

³⁵ See Fol *et al.* (1986), catalogue no. 4, colour illustration opp. p. 32. The Heracles/Auge bowl is also illustrated and discussed by Boardman (1994) 184-5 and fig. 6.1.

Religion forms a suitable bridge to my next heading, which will be kinship diplomacy. Robert Parker has recently stressed, against earlier views, that the popularity at Athens of specifically Thracian cults like Bendis is not a Peloponnesian War phenomenon but goes back to the sixth century at least.³⁶ As for Greek gods shared by the Thracians, Herodotus singles out three particularly wild gods, Ares, Dionysus and Artemis, as the three main recipients of Thracian cult, though he adds that the kings paid particular attention to Hermes.³⁷ The myth of Ares' Thracian origins is already present in Homer, though Fritz Graf warns that this has no historical value and is no more than a way of expressing hateful Ares' position outside the ordered world of the polis.³⁸ We can add that when Apollodorus makes Tereus son of Ares, he is making Tereus an outsider in the same way; so too the ornithification in the myth relegates all parties to permanent limbo outside the civilized order (see above, p. 92).

Sophocles, naturally, carries over the Homeric conception of Ares as Thracian; thus in the difficult final section of the fourth stasimon of *Antigone* he has 'neighbour Ares' witnessing Eidothea blind her two step-sons with a shuttle. These are the sons of Thracian Boreas' half-Athenian daughter Cleopatra by Phineus king of – again – *Thracian Salmadessus*.³⁹ There are obvious parallels here to the *Tereus* myth, as well as some obvious differences. The parallels are the various Athenian–Thracian marriage connections, the female violence against the children of these mixed marriages, and the cruelty of the two Thracian kings (Sophocles hints at the version of the Phineus myth which had Phineus himself blinded by the gods for his cruelty, that is, his complicity in the first blinding). As for Tereus, explicit allusions to his extreme violence cannot be directly extracted from the fragments, except perhaps from the description of the bird's 'full armour', παντευχία, in *fr.* 581; but the likelihood is that Sophocles' version strongly influenced both contemporary and later iconography: Tereus is sometimes represented with a dagger as in Thucydides' description of the Thracian peltasts at Mycalessus, 7.27, and in *Ar. Lys.* 563ff., ἕτερος δ' αὖ Θραίξ πέλτην σείων κάκόντιον, ὡσπερ ὁ Τηρέυς, ἐδεδίττετο τὴν ἰσχαδόπωλιν, 'a Thracian, brandishing his small shield and his javelin, like Tereus, terrified the woman on the fig stall'; Tereus wields an axe as he pursues the sisters on a Campanian fragment in Dresden.⁴⁰ The differences are that there is no rape, i.e. the female violence is not obviously revenge; the murderous

³⁶ Parker (1996) 174 and n. 76.

³⁷ Hdt. 5.7-8.

³⁸ *Iliad* 13.301; *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn., s.v. Ares.

³⁹ *Soph. Ant.* 970.

⁴⁰ On Tereus pursuing the sisters on the Dresden fragment, see Bieber (1925) 11-18. Note also the Würzburg actor in Thracian dress clothing, who may be inspired by *Soph. Tereus*; Beazley (1963) 472.211. Prokne and Itys appear in a marble group on the Acropolis, c 430 BC sculpted and dedicated by Alcamenes: see below, n. 59. See also below n. 75, for Tereus on a skyphos fragment and the sisters killing Itys on a clay metope.

wife, unlike the first wife Cleopatra, is not an Athenian; and there is no metamorphosis. The gods do intervene to close the cycle of violence, but they do so not by turning all the surviving parties into birds but by inflicting a second and reciprocal blinding on the guilty male (Phineus). Sophocles seems to have treated this theme at least twice more, in two fragmentary plays both called *Phineus*.

It is time for us to turn to kinship diplomacy, always keeping in mind this bloody background to the mythical and historical symbiosis between Athenians and Thracians.

Kinship diplomacy

Kinship diplomacy between Athens and Thrace

'Kinship diplomacy', the exploitation for political purposes of supposed mythical links, συγγενεῖαι, between one city or *ethnos* and another, is a topic on which interesting and important work has been done recently⁴¹, stimulated above all by the discovery some ten years ago of a long third-century BC inscription from Lycian Xanthos.⁴² But this hellenistic skew to the evidence is largely the product of the chances of epigraphic survival: literary texts from the time of Sophocles show the phenomenon was well known in the fifth century. To take a simple example from Thucydides, Perdikkas of Macedon in 418/17 BC contemplates breaking away from his Athenian alliance because he has seen that the Argives had done so and he himself is of ancient Argive origin.⁴³ This is a reference to the romantic myth, set out fully in Herodotus, that the Macedonian kings were descended from Temenos via the supernaturally favoured Perdikkas I, and came from Argos.⁴⁴

We have noticed, in a Thracian connection, one sort of Athenian appropriation of a myth for political purposes: the exploitation of the relics of Rhesus.⁴⁵ Thucydides devotes to this myth what for him is a most unusual digression, surely motivated not only by a characteristic desire to chastise error (*cf.* 1.20, 6.54-9) but specifically by the desire to assert his own superior local knowledge of Thrace; we can add that here, as elsewhere, he is impatient of the religious motif while show-

⁴¹ See above all the excellent recent monograph by Jones (1999), esp. 30ff. for Thrace, the Tereus myth, and Sophocles; I owe to this book the felicitous expression 'kinship diplomacy', which I have used in the title of my paper. *Cf.* also, for the classical Greek period, Hornblower (1992) 173-5; Hornblower (1996) 61-80, and Curty (1995). But note already the valuable short book Nilsson *Cults, Myths, Oracles and Politics in Ancient Greece* (1951) [for Tereus as 'ennobled' by insertion into Greek mythology, see pp. 46, 98]. See also, on this general theme, Bickerman (1952) 65-81.

⁴² Recording the elaborate mythologically framed appeal to Xanthos for financial help by Kytention in Doris (central Greece); *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* 38. 1476. All such *syngeneia* inscriptions, mostly of hellenistic date, have now been collected by Curty (1995).

⁴³ Thuc. 5. 80.2.

⁴⁴ Hdt. 8. 137.

⁴⁵ See above, pp. 98-101.

ing himself well aware of the weight which others attached to it.⁴⁶ He vehemently denies, by a polemical 'presentation through negation',⁴⁷ that there is any connection between Teres, the historical king of Thrace and father of Sitalkes, and Tereus, the husband of Prokne daughter of Pandion (Thucydides characteristically does not name 'the woman'). Who or what is he getting at here? The key lies in the *Anabasis* of Xenophon, where the surprising claim that the Athenians and Thracians were kin, *syngeneis*, is put into the mouth of the Thracian prince Seuthes.⁴⁸ Evidently the myth of Athenian/Thracian *syngeneia* was current in classical times and this is what Thucydides is at pains to reject, partly on the grounds that the names Teres and Tereus are not quite the same. In question are possible positive aspects of the mythical marriage tie between Thrace and Athens. We shall see that in the fourth century, very different use could be made of the same myth, by emphasizing not the marriage but the heroic revenge taken by the Athenian women on the hubris of the barbarian king.

Where Sophocles placed the emphasis in *Tereus* is of course impossible to say confidently, given that the play is fragmentary; but Wilamowitz suggested⁴⁹ that Sophocles was the first to locate the action in Thrace as opposed to Megara. If so, the Thracian aspect was played up (as in *fr.* 583 about the daughter's separation from the father's house), though we do not know if Sophocles stressed *syngeneia*, or violence, or – more likely – both. Is there any direct support in the fragments for the idea that Sophocles explored the notion of Thracian–Athenian *syngeneia*? I would draw attention to *fr.* 591, ἐν φῶλον ἀνθρώπων, 'mankind is one tribe', supposedly sung by the Thracian chorus who assert the unity of mankind through shared parentage. I do not wish to claim that the fragment by itself attests kinship between Thrace and Athens; on the contrary, the stress on universal parentage might be thought actually to reduce the likelihood that a particular *syngeneia* was here meant. It is, however, easy to see how the poet could have moved from the universal to the particular a little later in a choral ode which contained, or perhaps was inaugurated by, so clear and striking a statement of the kinship motif.

Still on the subject of *syngeneia*, there is a comparison to be drawn with Boreas and Oreithyia, the Thracian wind-god and the Athenian princess whom he abducted. Alan Griffiths has ingeniously suggested that what we have here is a 'kind of

⁴⁶ Th. 2.29. For the 'superior local knowledge' motive, see Parker (1996) 176 n.24, following Hornblower. For Th.'s attitude to religion, see Hornblower (1992).

⁴⁷ For this idea, see Hornblower (1994) 152, drawing on de Jong.

⁴⁸ Xen. *Anab.* 7.2.31, 7.3.39, with Parker (1996) 174 and n.76 and Jones (1999) 31; see also 30, where he observes that the alliance between Athens and Sitalkes was mediated by Nymphodorus of Abdera (a colony of Ionian Teos), who 'seems to have exploited the myth of Tereus and Prokne as a precedent for Sitalkes' alliance with Athens, the mother city of the Ionians'. Parker notes that the connection between the Thucydides and Xenophon passages was seen long ago by Krüger (1824) 33. See also Z. Archibald, *Cambridge Ancient History* 6² (1994) 451, on these 'legendary genealogical links' which she calls 'a useful formal device'.

⁴⁹ Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1931) 52 n.2.

justificatory reverse *aition*' for the marriage of Miltiades to Olorus' daughter, Hegesipyle.⁵⁰ The rape of Oreithyia was a new popular subject for vase-painters in the 480s,⁵¹ and she features in the new Simonides not long afterwards.⁵² Boreas wrecked the Persian fleet at Artemisium (480 BC); in the myth a Thracian king abducted an Athenian princess and so, as a relative, helped the Athenians at a crucial point in the Persian Wars, according to Herodotus (7.189; *cf.* n.68). Alan Griffiths suggests that the popularity of this subject derives from the association with Miltiades, an Athenian 'king' (= tyrant of the Thracian Chersonese), who married a Thracian princess, Hegesipyle.

These various Thracian–Athenian marriage ties based on or resulting in violence Prokne–Tereus, Oreithyia–Boreas, Cleopatra–Phineus, and the general kinship claim asserted in Xenophon and denied by Thucydides, suggest deep tensions between the two peoples. How often and at what social level the mythical marriages mirror real-life marriages of the Miltiades–Olorus' daughter type is an interesting question: we should recall the generalizing tone of Prokne's poignant complaints about foreign and barbarian marriages in *fr.* 583. In this connection it would be good to know more about the surely xenophobic background to the Periclean citizenship law of 451 BC, which in effect denied the offspring of such mixed marriages the right to that by now very valuable commodity, Athenian citizenship. But the law did not actually outlaw mixed marriages, which surely went on; thus half a century after the law was passed we find Seuthes dangling before Xenophon himself, admittedly an *exiled* Athenian, the possibility of a marriage with Seuthes' own daughter, with property attached.⁵³

The Megarian aspect

Pandion was king of Athens, but also king of Megara, where he had a *herōon* (Paus. 1.41.7). Emily Kearns has shown how the story of his son Nisus was grafted onto the family of Pandion to bolster Athenian claims to the Megarid.⁵⁴ This was polemical because another myth made Boeotia the mother-place of Megara via the oikist Megareus from Boeotian Onchestos.⁵⁵

There is a further aspect, which brings together my Thracian and Megarian headings. Megara was a polis with strong Pontic connections via its colonies in the

⁵⁰ *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn., s.v. Boreas. Though there is no separate evidence that Sophocles wrote a *Boreas* or an *Oreithyia*, the brief fragment 768 Radt is thought by some scholars to refer to Boreas; see Morris (1992) 322-4.

⁵¹ Brommer (1980) 11-16. See also *LIMC* III s.v. Boreas 133-42; Tsiafakis (1998) 135-64; Tsiafakis (2000) 383-6.

⁵² See *P. Oxy.* 3965.

⁵³ Xen. *Anab.* 7.2.38 with Archibald, *Cambridge Ancient History* 6² (1994) 450.

⁵⁴ Kearns (1989) 115-17 and 188. Another son of the Athenian Pandion, Lykos, supposedly gave his name to the Lykians, Hdt. 7.92. Is this evidence for Athenian claims on Lykia? *Cf.* Thuc. 2.69 for Athenian attempts to collect money from Lykia during the early part of the Peloponnesian War.

⁵⁵ Hellanikos *FGrH* 4 F78 with Hanell (1934) 24-35.

Black Sea region.⁵⁶ The Athenians put pressure on all these Megarian *apoikiai* in the Peloponnesian War period and earlier. The fullest account we have is of an episode during the war itself (424 BC) when, as Thucydides tells us, Lamachus operated in the Black Sea area; but some years before that, and before the start of the war (438–432 BC) Pericles himself had made a famous expedition to the Black Sea.⁵⁷

So far I have treated Tereus as if he were straightforwardly Thracian, but in Pausanias' version, the myth brought Tereus as well as Pandion to Megara, indeed the same chapter that tells us that Pandion's *herōon* was in Megara goes on to say (1.41.8) that the tomb of Tereus, husband of Prokne, was also in Megara. In Megarian tradition, Pausanias says, Tereus was king of Megarian Pegae, though Pausanias prefers the version which made him ruler of Phokian Daulis, a version also known to Thucydides (2.29.3; see above). Pausanias was not at all troubled by this alleged Thracian presence in central Greece, merely commenting that 'in ancient times barbarians were settled in many parts of what is now called Greece'.⁵⁸ But despite his preference for the Daulian version of Tereus' Greek realm, Pausanias does accept that it was in Megara that Tereus died, by his own hand on this account, and that he now receives Megarian cult. 'And they say', Pausanias continues, 'that the hoopoe was first seen here', but he goes on to say that the daughters of Pandion arrived in Athens and he implies that it was in Athens that their metamorphosis took place. Recently E. La Rocca has tried to link some of all this with a famous dedication on the Athenian Acropolis by the sculptor Alkamenes, described by Pausanias earlier in Book 1.⁵⁹ The sculptural group depicted Prokne preparing to kill her son Itys. La Rocca, whose study is unfortunately not noticed by Burnett, is surely right that the Megarian angle may have something to do with the dedication, made in the preliminaries to the Peloponnesian War when the Megarian decrees were being passed, and we should remember that historical Megara had links with historical Thrace (the Black Sea connection). In the surviving fragments, the only possible allusion to Megara is at the end of *fr.* 581, where *πάγους* and *δρυμούς* in line 10 (quoted above, p. 94) may hint at the Megarian place-names Pagae and Drymos, while Daulos has been introduced by emendation for *ἄλλον* in line 9.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ The most famous of these colonies were on the south shore of the Black Sea, e.g. Herakleia and Kalchedon. These places were actually neighbours of some Thracians, but the Thracians in question were Bithynian Thracians. On the western shore of the Black Sea, that is the Thracian coast proper, there was a Megarian presence also, notably Megara's grand-daughter city Kallatis, founded by Herakleia and thus itself Megarian.

⁵⁷ Thuc. 4. 75; Plut. *Per.* 20, with Stadter (1989) 216ff.

⁵⁸ Paus. 1.41, *cf.* Thuc. 2.29.1.

⁵⁹ La Rocca (1986) 153-66; Paus. 1.24. For the dedication see Boardman (1985) fig. 135.

⁶⁰ Mayer (1892) 492f.; see the apparatus in the eds. of Radt and Pearson.

The tendentious genealogies of the Athenian mythographers

Pandion gave his name to Pandionis, one of the ten Cleisthenic Athenian tribes; it was the third in the official order of precedence after Erechtheis and Aegeis, and one of four tribes which took their names from Athenian kings before Theseus (Erechtheus, Aigeus, Pandion, Kekrops). Pandionis was also the tribe of Pericles and the great admiral Phormio, so it must have enjoyed unusual prestige in the early years of the Peloponnesian War and in the immediate pre-war period. Athenian tribes were not only functional civic units; they were also foci for emotion and vehicles for patriotic appeals. Thus Nicias before the final battle at Syracuse addresses individual trierarchs by their fathers' names, their own names, and by the names of their tribes.⁶¹ Such powerful emotional and religious symbols surely offered rich possibilities for exploitation in terms of *syngeneia*. And indeed a simple sort of kinship diplomacy was certainly effected by at least one of the ten tribal names: it is generally accepted that Aiantis, named after Salaminian Ajax, is there as some sort of gesture towards Salamis, which was not integrated into the regular deme system.

There are clear traces of this sort of approach in Euripides' handling of Ion. Ion, however, gives his name not to a tribe (the tribes conjured up at the end of the play are the three pre-Cleisthenic ones) but to the entire Athenian civic presence overseas ('colonization'), conceived as an *apoikia* sent out by Athens *qua* Ionian metropolis. Similarly Sophocles' Pandion, by giving his daughters to a Thracian king, can be seen as engaged in a kind of attempted colonization, corresponding to the historical reality – the Athenian attempts to gain a foothold in the Thraceward region.⁶² We may compare Alan Griffiths' suggestion about Oreithyia and Boreas, as an allusion to the Athenian social presence in Thrace; while the role of the daughters of Pandion, sent out to Thrace to further Athenian interests to their own cost, may recall the work of Emily Kearns and Joan Connelly on sacrificed daughters who 'save the city'.⁶³ Such colonization is *syngeneia* in its purest form: the kinship metaphor contained in 'metropolis' ('mother-city') was never lost sight of in Greek thinking.

It may seem fanciful to suppose that when Athenians heard the word Pandionis used as a tribal name it automatically brought to mind thoughts of Thracian rape and infanticide, hoopoes, swallows and nightingales. But in fact there is evidence in a fourth-century orator which justifies us in making exactly that connection. The *locus classicus* for the associations conveyed by the ten Cleisthenic tribes is the Funeral Speech attributed to Demosthenes, and supposedly delivered after the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC. This battle was fought against Philip II, the barbarian as Athenian orators depict him, though as we have seen he could more politely and

⁶¹ Thuc. 7.69.2.

⁶² In this connection it would be good to know whether an allusion to colonization really does lie behind the corrupt ἀποικίαι at the end of *fr.* 581, but, in any case, there is no direct allusion here to Thrace; on the contrary, we have seen that Sophocles may be playing on Megarian place-names.

⁶³ Kearns (1990); Connelly (1996).

favourably be painted as a thoroughly well-connected Argive. Demosthenes goes through the tribes in official order, picking out one mythical story for each of the *eponymoi*, and when he comes to Pandionis, he says that the Pandionidai have had it handed down to them how the daughters of Pandion did not allow the hubris of the barbarian to go unpunished. They themselves, i.e. the present-day Pandionidai, would think it shame not to punish similar barbarian hubris, i.e. presumably the excesses of Philip.⁶⁴ I alluded to this interesting passage above, when I pointed out that the Tereus story was politically malleable: if you wished you could stress the element of *syngeneia*, but at the same time it was open to you to paint the murderous daughters as heroes, doing their patriotic bit against hubristic barbarians. For this reason Burnett⁶⁵ is absolutely right to stress that the Sophoclean play could not simply have condemned the excessive revenge of Prokne and Philomela, rather as Herodotus says the gods disapproved of the excessive revenge taken by Pheretime (4.205): after all, one-tenth of the audience had, so to speak, a stake in the behaviour of the two murderous girls. However, Burnett's view is perhaps a little too simple: if you took the line that the girls were patriotic heroes you would do better not to dwell on the details of the infanticide; you would merely speak of justified revenge, which the Greek proverb said was sweetest of all.⁶⁶ And this is in fact exactly what Demosthenes does. A similar positive evaluation of the hoopoe's victims is perhaps already hinted at in Aristophanes' play of 411 BC, *Lysistrata*: a bogus oracle says there will be an end of ills when the swallows gather in one place fleeing from the hoopoe.⁶⁷ The 'one place' is the Athenian Acropolis, to whose possible associations with the daughters of Pandion I now turn.

The daughters of Pandion and Euripides' *Ion*

I have already drawn a general parallel between the *Ion* and the *Tereus* when I suggested that both plays may have explored the concept of kinship through colonization. There is a further analogy, namely between the ravished Philomela in the *Tereus* and Kreousa in the *Ion*, where, however, the violence is muffled and situated far in the past (Apollo's rape). Kreousa's sufferings are emotional and spiritual, their only current physical symptom is her temporary barrenness. In the final and speculative part of this paper, I should like to argue that Euripides is explicitly and deliberately drawing on symbolism evocative of the famous Prokne myth. There is no specific reference to names (contrast Erichthonios and Erechtheus), but note the striking phrase *παρ' ἀηδόνιον πέτρων* at line 1482: Kreousa says her rape occurred at Athens 'near the rock of the nightingale'. Are nightingales by themselves enough

⁶⁴ Dem. 60.28.

⁶⁵ Burnett (1998) 190.

⁶⁶ Thuc. 7. 68.1.

⁶⁷ Ar. *Lys.* 770ff.

to guarantee an association with the daughters of Pandion? Kreousa's phrase occurs at a very late point in the play, in her report to Ion after their mutual recognition. Now for the first time she particularizes the location of the rape in this way (but *cf.* line 936, 'the rocks of Cecrops'), although hitherto the play has been exceptionally rich in topographical allusion and the rape has been described several times before. So it is tempting to think that the particularization is significant. In the *Ion*, I argue in my forthcoming book, the word σκόπελος, 'rocky crag', is used metonymically for the whole of the Acropolis hill, Athena's sacred precinct (lines 871, 1578, *cf.* 273, 1434, 1479), in much the same way that ὀμφαλός, 'navel', stands for the sacred vicinity of Apollo's temple in Delphi; the word πέτρα, on the other hand, refers to specific localities, as in the phrase Μακρὰς πέτρας, 'Long Rocks' (lines 10-13, *cf.* 283, 494, 937, 1400), the northward-facing cliffs on the Acropolis. Such references would have been understood as indicating real places on the Acropolis. Are we to infer then that there was a space in the Acropolis sacred to the daughters of Pandion? If so, a parallel might be the localization of the Oreithyia rape by Boreas at the Ilissos.⁶⁸ Or does the 'rock of the nightingale' have a purely lyric function, namely to merge the stories of Prokne/Philomela on the one hand and of Kreousa on the other? If so, then Kreousa would be invoking the song of the nightingale as a way of evoking her own previous laments for the son she had exposed and thought she had lost. At an interpretative extreme, she might be thought to be accusing herself of virtual infanticide.⁶⁹

Conclusion: What kind of play was *Tereus*?

We have seen that the Tereus myth has attracted poets and lodged itself in the European imagination precisely because of its appalling character – appealing because appalling – and because of the deep prohibitions which get violated in the course of the myth and which result in condign metamorphosis. This goes some of the way towards explaining why Sophocles, the poet of the incestuous Oedipus story, chose to handle it. There are other considerations as well: a Thracian subject would have been attractive to any dramatist.⁷⁰ The Thracian setting could have been appealing because of opportunity provided for (a) special sorts of music,

⁶⁸ In Plato's *Phaedrus* 229a, Boreas had an altar at the Ilissos near Agrai, where he was said to have carried off Oreithyia (it is very likely that Oreithyia was also worshipped there); they were both invoked for favourable winds by the Athenian fleet in extraordinary circumstances off Euboea, Hdt. 7.189. Oreithyia was the daughter of Erechtheus. She was carried off by Boreas, either from beside the Ilissos or from the Areopagos (see Plato, above); or she was sent by her father as *kanephoros* to Athena Polias and then carried off, Akousilaos, *FGrH* 2F30.

⁶⁹ The link between murder and colonization is well established; see Dougherty (1993) and Dougherty (1996) 258.

⁷⁰ Other plays with a Thracian colour are the *Hecuba* and *Rhesus* of Euripides and the fragmentary *Bassarai* of Aeschylus.

lyrics, costume etc.; cf. Tereus' summoning the birds in Ar. *Birds*;⁷¹ and (b) stunning choreography (Thracian dances are mentioned in Xenophon, see *Anab.* 6.1 for the ballad of Sitalkes danced in full armour). It is therefore surprising that Sophocles' play seems to be one of only two full-length tragic treatments; the other, a tetralogy called the *Pandionis*, was by Aeschylus' nephew Philokles, and was later than and perhaps derivative from Sophocles' play; only one short fragment survives, an invocation to the 'lord of all', who is probably the Sun.⁷² In addition there are a couple of comic plays called *Tereus*. The myth is alluded to by Aeschylus and Euripides,⁷³ but the references tend to feature glancingly in choral odes. Similarly, the theme is not a common one in art. One of the earliest visual representations is the one on a clay metope from the temple of Apollo at Thermos in Aetolia;⁷⁴ from the time of the play itself there is a skyphos fragment which depicts Tereus.⁷⁵

Does the intrinsic violence of the myth explain this phenomenon, or should we rather seek the explanation in the crudeness of the metamorphoses? Perhaps the second phase of the tale, which involves female revenge by *Athenian* princesses (not barbarian women like Medea⁷⁶ or Hecuba), was unsuitable for staging at an Athenian festival. (Pearson gets round this by the suggestion that the terrible revenge exacted by the Athenian women 'shows the effect upon their character of alien surroundings and barbarous treatment'). But Demosthenes shows that the murderous act of the women could be viewed positively, provided the detail of infanticide was suppressed; a detail that feminist readings would also be eager to suppress.

Is there anything to be said for Burkert's essentially Dionysiac approach in terms of two Athenian festivals, the Agrionia and Pandia festivals? (see above, n.16). Perhaps: from Accius' reference to Dionysus (*fr.* 647), it seems reasonable to suppose that the Dionysiac festival mentioned by Ovid (*Met.* 587ff.) did indeed feature in the Sophoclean original; and we have seen that the 'coloured cloak' of *fr.* 586 has been interpreted as Bacchic.⁷⁷ But Burkert himself admits that we know virtually nothing about the Pandia, so that explanations in terms of festivals are likely to be circular. And Burnett has now pointed out further implausibilities in

⁷¹ See Dunbar (1995) on 209-16, see Dover (1972) 148f.; also, *Ach.* 135f. (see Archibald, *Cambridge Ancient History* 6² (1994) 451).

⁷² *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* 24.

⁷³ See above n. 2.

⁷⁴ This metope represents Philomela and Prokne killing Itys: see Hampe and Simon (1980) 66ff., fig. 107.

⁷⁵ Trendall and Cambitoglou (1978) 1.8-19 pl. 3.2. See also above n.59 on the marble group on the Acropolis also from the 430s BC. And for other iconographical evidence, see above n.40. A review of all vase-paintings representing the myth of Tereus is conveniently provided by Tsiafakis (1998) 189-97, 223-4.

⁷⁶ See Jason's bitter recognition in Eur. *Med.* 1339-44 that no Greek woman would have dared such deeds, but a monster wilder than Scylla.

⁷⁷ See Sutton (1984) 129-31.

Burkert's account.⁷⁸ As she says, the Agrionia ritual is nocturnal and set outside in the wilds, whereas the cooking of Itys was in appallingly domestic daytime context; and the nightingale is associated with 'grief and song ... not with madness or cannibalism'.

The puzzle about the infrequency of the myth in literature and art remains, but I claim to have shown that 'kinship diplomacy' helps us towards greater understanding of a powerful lost play. Any conclusions must be provisional and conjectural, in the present state of knowledge; we can only hope that more of the play will be recovered on papyrus from Egypt.⁷⁹ But one thing is clear from the fragments we already have: this play was very different from the seven fully surviving plays of Sophocles; the parallels I have drawn are with Euripides' *Ion*.⁸⁰ The 'ornithification' in particular is quite unlike anything in the surviving Sophoclean plays. I do not mean to imply that Sophocles actually represented this on stage, despite Aristophanes' *Birds* (line 100), where a rueful Tereus amusingly blames Sophocles for his enormous beak. As Sommerstein says in his note on the *Birds* passage,⁸¹ Sophocles *fr.* 581 announces the metamorphosis only as a future event, 'alluding to his crest and beak only with the one word hinting at it by the word *παντευχία*, "full armour" [...]'. (Burnett⁸² perversely refuses to assign this fragment to Sophocles; I do not follow her on this point. The poet is *pace* Burnett careful to avoid comic explicitness about the ornithification which in any case placed, as she admits, in the future). Horace, in his famous warning (*Ars Poetica* 185-7) against showing atrocities on stage, takes the Tereus myth as one of his four examples: after the celebrated line *ne pueros coram populo Medea trucidet*, 'Medea should not slaughter her children in public', he goes on with a reference to Atreus, and then says *aut in avem Procne vertatur; Cadmus in anguem*, 'nor should Prokne be turned into a bird or Cadmus into a snake'. It is surely unlikely that Sophocles can have done what

⁷⁸ Burnett (1998) 187 n.37.

⁷⁹ Cf. the great and welcome increase in our knowledge of Euripides' *Erechtheus* since the early 1960s: see Austin (1968); Collard *et al.* (1995) 148-94.

⁸⁰ See also above n.70. For speculations about Sophocles' own early interest in Thrace, as attested by some other fragmentary plays, see Cerrato (1985) 167-74 at 170. On the *Antenoridai*, see Zacharia (forthcoming).

⁸¹ Sommerstein (1987) 205; so too Dunbar (1995) on line 101. For a different and interesting but less plausible suggestion (the metamorphosed characters perhaps displayed on the ekkyklema), see Dobrov (1993) 210ff. This article appeared too late for consideration by Sommerstein or Dunbar. A survey of scholarly attempts to identify the speaker of *fr.* 581 is offered in Fitzpatrick (2001) 98-100. Fitzpatrick suggests Apollo as the *deus ex machina* and speaker of *fr.* 581. He cites as supporting evidence the address to Helios in *fr.* 582; in this he would like to see an identification between Helios and Apollo as in the fragmentary Aesch. *Bassarai* and Eur. *Phaethon*. Also he cites the medical metaphor of *fr.* 589 as supporting evidence because of a possible allusion to Apollo's attribute as the healer. The occurrence of the word *ἀποικέ* in line 10 of *fr.* 581, if indeed spoken by Apollo, would recall the god's well-known association with colonization (see n. 62 above). In general, Apollo as *deus ex machina* would fit snugly with the kinship diplomacy case I am making in the present article.

⁸² Burnett (1998) 183 n.22.

Horace expressly forbids. Nevertheless, the sombre and outré subject-matter of *Tereus*, the political kinship motif I have argued for, and indeed most of what we know about the play, is startlingly dissimilar from what we think we know about Sophocles.

Naturally, one can find familiar themes, thus the relationship between Prokne and Philomela may well have conformed to an established Sophoclean pattern of sisterly closeness (Antigone/Ismene; Electra/Chrysothemis). And the revenge of the sisters in *Tereus* can be compared not only to the *Electra* – the most obvious Sophoclean revenge play – fully treated by Burnett,⁸³ but perhaps even more appositely to the ghastly posthumous revenge of the centaur Nessus in *Trachiniai*. My final point, then, is that it is a serious error to generalize about Sophocles without taking the fragmentary plays into account. The point may seem obvious, but it is surprising how many monographs on Sophocles take the form of a chapter on each of the surviving plays followed by a Conclusion. *Tereus* alone should be enough to warn against such implied complacency. To inquire into the principles which have determined what plays have come down to us and what have not would be a fascinating project, but one which would take me beyond the scope of this paper. We should have to make allowance for Aristotelian criteria for approval, and for the diminishing post-classical appeal of plays with purely or primarily Athenian subject-matter.

In conclusion, it has been the thesis of this paper that *Tereus* is an intensely political play, which bears in a very direct manner upon a political theme of the first importance, namely, the close and sanguinary relations between the Athenians and their rich but terrifying neighbours in Thrace. I have shown that the play is best understood in terms of kinship diplomacy, and that it is this concept which provides the bridge between the appalling myth and the often no less appalling historical reality. In these respects, the play was evidently quite unlike any of Sophocles' fully surviving tragedies, and deserves to be taken far more seriously by scholars attempting to reconstruct Sophocles' view in its entirety.

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⁸³ Burnett (1998) ch. 5.

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