

EURIPIDES

PHOENISSAE

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION
AND COMMENTARY

BY

DONALD J. MASTRONARDE

Professor of Classics, University of California, Berkeley



1966, *Ion* 24, *Phoen.* 43, 322 (causal/temporal?), perhaps 1065, *Or.* 816 (temporal?), 995, 1001, *IA* 587. For *θεν* introducing an etymology in a context never suspected of interpolation, cf. Aesch. fr. 313 *Χλιδών τε πλόκαμος ὥστε παρθένους ἄβρας: ἔθεν καλῆν Κουρήτα Λαόν ἤνεσαν.* (d) For *viv* in consecutive verses, cf. *Hec.* 265-6, *Hel.* 537-8, *Andr.* 1031-2 (lyric), and twice in three verses *Andr.* 294-6, *Ba.* 286-8, etc. (e) The name was given by Merope, and *ὀνομάζω* is oddly used, according to Valckenaer. But *ὀνομάζω* with collective noun as subject means 'call by the name of', 'know by the name of' (*Held.* 87, *IT* 1452, *IA* 281), not 'assign the name' (as in 58 below, *Ion* 661, etc.), and 'Ελλάς = 'Ελληνες is attested at *Held.* 219, *Andr.* 304, 681 (note *δντες* in 682 agreeing *κατὰ σύνεσιν*), *Her.* 222, etc. (on the metonymy see K-G 1.12; Breitenbach 177-8). (f) Valckenaer's question why the Corinthians are not the subject of *ὀνομάζω* rather than Hellas may imply some disquiet about the imperfect tense, which at first glance seems more suitable if Oedipus is dead or if the line is an annotation; but see below. For anyone still inclined to delete, the line must have entered the text earlier than Diodorus' use of the prologue (4.64.1).

27 *Ελλάς* Oedipus was famous throughout the Greek world (*OT* 8); cf. *ἐπιδεδίξας 'Ελλάδι* (871n.).

ὀνόμαζεν either the imperfect has the force 'knew him by the name Oedipus (when he was famous as conqueror of Sphinx and king of Thebes)' (Diggle), or this is an extension of the special imperfect of naming ('assign the name') used where we might expect an aorist. For the latter cf. Fraenkel on *Ag.* 681, Lloyd-Jones, *CR* 15 (1965) 242 n.1 on *Soph.* *Inach.* fr. 269c.18 (σ' ἔρπον); *Naupactia* fr. 1; Pindar, *P.* 2.44; *Eur.* *Su.* 1218, *Cycl.* 692, *IA* 416, fr. 2. *Held.* 87 has a similar imperfect: 'By what name did the people of Mycenae call you (when you were living there)?' or simply 'By what name did they call you?' For another unusual imperfect, cf. *ἐτίκτε* 289n.

28 *ἱπποβουκόλοι* perhaps a Eur. coinage, since several ancient sources who explain the word cite Eur. (Pollux alone cites *Soph.*, perhaps in error: fr. 1149a). Since Hesych. glosses the acc. pl., this will not have been the only appearance of the word. It is a mark of royal wealth to have herds of horses (cf. *El.* 623), and I follow the usual view that *ἱπποβουκόλοι* are horse-herders (the *-βου-* being frozen or generic); Craik believes they are cowherds on horseback, Greek 'cowboys'.¹

¹ The literary and epigraphic evidence for ancient 'cowboys' is post-classical in date and refers only to rodeo-style stunts (jumping from horseback to tackle a bull by the horns: *ταυροκαθάμια*); the earliest artistic evidence for the stunt is on Thessalian coins of the last third of the fifth century (C. M. Kraay, *Greek Coins* (London 1966) pl. 148, no. 466). See P.

Πολύβου a figure known in myth mainly for the marriages of his daughters and for his role in the Oedipus-legend: *RE* 21 (1952) 1584-92. Both his city and the name of his wife are variously reported, and Eur. here avoids identifying either by name.

30 *τὸν ἑμὸν ὠδίνων πόνον* *ἑμὸν* for *ἐμὸν* by a frequent form of enallage involving a possessive adj.: cf. K-G 1.263; V. Bers, *Enallage and Greek Style* [Mnem. Supp. 29 (Leiden 1974)], 23. Perhaps *ὠδίνων πόνον* is viewed as a single concept, 'labour-pain-product' = 'child' (but Bers, 5, criticizes such explanations). See also the commentators cited by Diggle on *Phaethon*, p. 177. It is unclear whether *ἑμὸν* in the mss is Moschopolus' emendation or a reading discovered by collation and properly adopted in his circle: *Textl. Trad.* 90. *πόνος* is sometimes used as abstract for concrete to mean the thing produced through hard work: *μελίσσαν ... τρητὸς πόνος* (honey-comb) Pindar, *P.* 6.54; *τεκτόνων πόνον* Aesch. fr. 357, *Or.* 1570, *Pers.* 751-2 *πλούτου πόνος οὐκ ἔστι* (in *Ag.* 54 *πόνον ὀρθαλχών δάεσσαντες* is best taken as abstract). Eur. here extends the usage to a child, with the precedent *ὠδὴς* = 'child' *Ag.* 1468, cf. *Her.* 1039-40 *ἐπτερον ... ὠδὴν τέκνον*, etc. The whole phrase carries a muted emotion, for it implies that another woman knew the pleasant toil of nursing the baby which Jocasta should have had (cf. *Ion* 961-3). In tragedy, esp. Eur., it is customary to evoke the emotional bond between mother and child by referring to the pain of childbirth and the act of nursing: e.g. *Ag.* 1418, *Chor.* 896-8, *Eur.* *Su.* 920, *Ion* 319, *Phoen.* 355, 1434, 1527, 1568.

31 *ὀφειρο* use of the middle for a human mother's nursing is an adaptation of Homeric active *ὀφίημι* = 'put young (animals) to the mother's teat' (*Od.* 9.245, 309, whence Theocr. 4.4) and is not attested elsewhere.¹

πόνον πεῖθει τεκῆεν 'persuaded her husband that she had given birth (to my child)': for indirect discourse inf. after active *πέθω* = 'convince that' cf. *Hdt.* 3.155.4, 4.154.2, Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.49, *Rhet.* 838. As in many such stories, the adopting mother has herself just given birth,² either to a child who dies (*Hdt.* 1.112) or to a female which she is willing to exchange for a male, and the substitution may be made without the husband's

Vigneron, *Le Cheval dans l'antiquité gréco-romaine* 1 (Nancy 1968) 216-18. There is no evidence for the practical use of horses in routine herding of cattle, but if this existed, it was presumably in the open plains of Thessaly and not in southern Greece.

¹ I doubt that *ὀφειρόμενον* used of supposititious children is based on this image, as LSJ suggest.

² Craik thinks instead of lactation without previous parturition, needlessly, I think, and implausibly (this phenomenon will have been just as rare or impossible in the ancient world as it is in the modern world).

knowledge: cf. Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* rev. edn (Bloomington, Ind. 1955-8) K 1920ff. ('substituted children'), esp. 1923.5; also L 100ff. ('unpromising hero') for nurturing a maimed child. Wondering how the woman could pass off the injured baby as her own without the husband's knowledge, Nagel proposed *τρέφειν*, needlessly removing the folklore-motif. Eur. is free to give as little detail as he wishes about such a matter, and if the audience troubles itself (as it normally does not do) to fill in other details of the story, it must do so in some way which respects the details provided. For other cases of scholarly worry about the details Eur. did not give, cf. 51-2n. and 62n.

32 *παρσαῖς γένυσται* the first growth of a Greek youth's beard is typically referred to as *παρσός* (Gow on Theoc. 6.3); cf. 63n.

ἑξανδροῦμενος as a factitive verb (*ἀντ-*) /(*ἐξ-*) *ἀνδρῶς* is more common in aorist or perfect (Schwyzer 1.727 §13; Ernst Fraenkel, *Griechische Denominativa in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung und Verbreitung* (Göttingen 1906) 108). If the present here has the expected progressive or inceptive meaning, the sense is 'when my son was already beginning to be marked by the yellowish-red cheeks of early manhood' (cf. Hdt. 1.123.1 'as Cyrus was coming to manhood?'). But the part. may be 'timeless', equivalent to *ἑξηνδρωμένος*, as apparently in Arist. *Knights* 1241 *τέχνην δὲ τίνα ποτ' εἴξες ἑξανδροῦμενος* (cf. Soph. *El.* 1344 *τελουμένων εἴποιμ' ἄν*, 'after the deed is done'; Stevens on *Andr.* 998).

33 The polar contrast *τινός μασθὼν πάρα* lends retrospective precision to *γνοῦς* so that it conveys ἄφ' αὐτοῦ *γνοῦς*. Vagueness about the motivation puts the emphasis on the result itself, which contributes to the impression that the human agents are willy-nilly fulfilling a divine scheme (cf. 49 and 413n.).

34 *φύσαντας* *οἱ τεκόντες* is far more common in Eur. than *οἱ φύσαντες*; hence Posidonius' (or Strabo's) *τεκόντες* is a trivialization.

36 *μαστρεύων μασθεῖν* the parallelism (with *variatio*) with *ἐκμαθεῖν θέλων* 34 is deliberate. Like Pindar, Eur. uses for metrical convenience either *μαστρεύω* (*Hel.* 754, *Hel.* 597, and in anapaests *Telephus* 147 fr. 1, 8 and 11 Austin) or *μαστρεύω* (Soph. has the latter only; for Aesch. cf. West's Teubner *praefatio* xlviii). *μαστ-* is often corrupted to *μαστ-*: 416 below, *Ag.* 1094, etc. The origin of the error *ιδεῖν/ιδῶν* is unclear.

37 *ἐλ μνηστέρ' μή* appears in indirect questions with *ἐλ* here, *Eum.* 468, 612 (both *ἐλ ... εἴτε μή*) and in Arist. (prose uses both *μή* and *οὐ*).

ξυνάπτετον πόδα here only 'X and Y meet', elsewhere *συνάπτεται τι* πόδα is 'X meets Y'; the same flexibility of usage is found in *συνάπτεται μάχην* (*Alc.* 502 vs. *Held.* 831) and *συνάπτεται λέκτρα* (*Phoen.* 49 vs. *Her.* 1316-17). Eur. is fond of the verb in any case, but repetitions within this play seem significant (673n.).

38 *ταῦτ' ὅν ἔμφω* juxtaposition of semi-redundant words to give rhetorical weight to a contrast (esp. a quantitative one) is a favourite device of Greek style (Fraenkel on *Ag.* 1455, Kannicht on *Hel.* 731-2; Fehling, 281).

Φωξίδος probably adj. with *ὀδοῦ* rather than partitive gen. noun (sc. *γῆς*) in locative use (as Schwyzer II.114). The 'Split Way' (or 'Triple Crossroads', *OT* 730) of Phocis connects Daulis (NE), Delphi (W), and Lebadeia, Thebes, etc. (SE); see Paus. 10.5.3-4 with Fraser's comm. (v.231-2 and map X in vol. vi); Robert, *Oidipus* 1.82-92. The partitive gen. *ὀδοῦ* indicates that the name applies to the neighbourhood of the crossroad (cf. *OT* 800-1 *τρίπληξ δ' ἡ κελεύθου ... πέλας*). Cf. 42n.

40 *Ω ξεῖνε* although this address is polite enough, the brevity of the command and the dignified allusive plural *τυράννοις* (K-G I.18; not quite 'the royal entourage', as Craik translates) suggests an imperious tone which, coming from a driver, might offend a young prince. The line-initial dactylic-shaped word or word-group is very rare in Aesch., Soph., and early Eur., but not uncommon in late Eur. (cf. Cropp and Fick, 32-5, shapes 2.1aD and 2.2aD); in *Phoen.*, in addition to the four instances with proper name (3n.), cf. 576, 776, 887, 984, 1179, 1314, 1619, 1639, 1701.¹ *μελέστας* present rather than aorist imperative solely for metrical reasons, as in *Alc.* 1122; on aspectual distinctions in the imperative cf. 1530n.

41-2 *νῦν ... τένοντας* object of the whole and of the part: see Wilam. and Bond on *Her.* 162.

τένοντας ... ποδῶν since the horses wound the back of Oedipus' ankles (for *τένοντες* = 'Achilles' tendon' cf. *Il.* 22.396, *Med.* 1.166, *Ba.* 938, *Cycl.* 400; the gloss of M *τὰ ἐπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ποδῶν* is incorrect), it is clear that Laius, travelling more swiftly in a chariot, overtakes Oedipus, who is going in the same direction. Eur. does not (and need not) tell us by what route Oedipus has reached this point. In *OT* 794ff. Oedipus has already received his oracle and, leaving Delphi, meets Laius head-on. The difference of Eur.'s version heightens the participants' ignorance, making Oedipus' action more plausible psychologically and the fateful meeting itself more pathetic. The specific wound mentioned here is, I think, intended to recall the earlier wounding of Oedipus by Laius.

¹ Some of these lines are suspected by various critics; it is interesting that the same metrical characteristics occur both in the unsuspected and suspected portions of the play. If Fraenkel's deletions were accepted, the remaining text of *Phoen.* would be rather stricter than its contemporaries in this phenomenon.

ἐξεφθίνισσον a rare compound, also found in *IT* 259 (which I would retain, emending 258) and later in [Aristot.], *Physiognom.* 812a37.

43 τ(. . . δεῖ λέγειν; a rhetorical gesture which emphasizes the unpleasantness of the story in the eyes of the speaker (cf. *Or.* 14, 16).

τάντρος τῶν κακῶν some take κακῶν as object of τάντρος ('that which lies outside the sad issue' – Pearson; cf. Craik's 'matters irrelevant to the disaster'), but for that sense I would expect the singular τοῦ κακοῦ. Others assume, rightly I think, a partitive gen.: τάντρος κακά would include the brawl and the killing of Laius' attendant(s); Jocasta views the whole episode as one of κακά but will mention only the essential point of patricide. For such use of τάντρος cf. Theocr. 10.9 τῶν ἔκτοθεν (Gow: 'matters unconnected with his work' (i.e. with the specific function of the ἐργάτης)) and ἔκτρος = 'foreign, external' (LSJ s.v. II).

44-5 presentation of the spoils to Polybus is also in Antimachus, *Lyde* fr. 70 Wyss (from Σ44) and Peisander (Teubner, arg. 11); τροφοί implies that the gift is payment of τροφοία (θρεπτήρια in Antimachus). The detail may derive from an epic source, but it is also typical of Eur. to attend selectively to small details to project a sense of realism (Oedipus could not arrive in Thebes with Laius' chariot).

45 ἐξεζάψει apparently 'attack, vex', for we cannot be sure exactly what this word meant to Eur. *Rhes.* 441 (ἐξεζάπει restored with certainty for ἐνεζάτει) makes it probable that the verb itself has a violent sense (here reinforced by modal ἀποργαῖσθαι). The word must have been extant in at least a third passage, since Hesych. glosses the form ἐνεζάρηκεν.¹ The ancient theory that the word is Arcadian (Eust. 381, 19ff. and 909, 28ff., Hesych. s.v.)² is not supported by analogy: ζέρεθρον = βάρκαθρον and ζέλλειν = βάλλειν would support ἐπιζάρεω not ἐπιζαρέω (M. Lejeune, *Traité de phonétique grecque* (Paris 1947) §138; Hoffmann, *Gr. Dialekte* 1.102). The etymology provided in Σ (ζάρος ὄρνεν ἔστι ἀρπακτικόν) is probably a scholiastic fabrication.³

46 ἀρπαγαῖσι cf. 1021, 1066.

47 The reason for the intrusion of δ' (already Π12) is unclear (a mere slip ΔΑΔ for ΑΔ?), but the text without δ'/τ' is likely to be correct. Apodotic

¹ Herwerden conjectured ἐπιζαρέει in *IT* 987.

² For a rare dialect-word used in trimeters, JD points to *El.* 625 ἔπορνυ (alleged to be Aeolic or Cyprian).

³ Chantraine and Frisk leave the word unexplained; J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* 1 (Bern 1959) 501, follows Hoffmann's suggestion of a root related to ζήλος, ζώπος, etc. (*erragt sein, bestrafen, rächen*).

δέ and repeated δέ after an ἐπει-clause are very rare in tragedy (Denniston, *GP*² 179, 183; Dawe, *Studies* 1.258-9), and the few examples are not closely parallel: δέ at the start of a new stanza after a long temporal clause (*Ag.* 205 (*Septem* 750 variant)); δέ with a resumptive demonstrative (δὴτιπερ . . . ὠσαύτως δέ Soph. *El.* 27, *Trach.* 116, as in prosaic examples).

κηρύσσει two constructions are combined: (1) 'proclaim publicly' with object λέχῃ, the prize (as in invitations to a sale or contest, e.g. *Aj.* 1240); (2) 'announce', here with indirect statement object ὁρτῖς . . . τοῦτωι ξυνάγειν λέκτρα (cf. *Hel.* 1491ff. κορύσσει ἄγγελον . . . ὅτι) rather than the more usual inf. of command.

48 σοφῆς . . . παρθένου both cleverness and unmarried status are standard allusive clues in reference to the Sphinx (806, 1023, 1042, 1506, 1730-1; *OT* 1199). Eternal virginity is probably a token of her dreadful appearance and powers (as for the Erinyes, *Eum.* 69-70, *Aj.* 835).

ἀνίγμια . . . μάθοι cf. 50 μούσας . . . μάθων, 1506 μέλος ἔγνων, 1731 ἀνίγμ' . . . εὐρώων, *OT* 393-4 ἀνίγμ' . . . διατρίβειν; to understand, recognize, discover, or tell fully a riddle is to solve it because ἀνίγμια includes both the riddling statement and its hidden meaning; only a person who has the correct interpretation really knows the riddle.

49 πῶς another event essential to the fulfilment of the family's fated ruin is presented in language which seems to deny full recognition by the human character of the destined pattern (cf. 33n.). τυγχάνει itself need not imply chance or randomness (Gomme-Sandbach on Men. *Mis.* 230), though such periphrasis frequently has the effect of denying to the subject a full intentionality or full awareness of the ramifications of the action conveyed by the participle (e.g. *Andr.* 76 πατήρ ἐτ' ἐν Δελοφοῖσι τυγχάνει μένων: Neoptolemus is unaware that his remaining absent is so harmful to his son).

50 μούσας in the mss the prosaic ἀνίγμ' has ousted the truth. The riddle was in verse (hexameter in the known versions: Introd. IV), and the poets often allude to the Sphinx as singer: 807 ὠιδᾶς, 1028 μούσαν, 1506-7 μέλος . . . δοῖδου; *OT* 36 σκληρὰς δοῖδου, 130 ποικιλωιδός, 391 βαυλωιδός . . . κύων, 1200 χρησμωιδόν.

51-2 Fraenkel deletes both lines (as already von Leutsch (1870) 447, *Phil/Anz* 8 (1877) 478-9). Line 53 could easily follow 50, but the argument that the kingship is not explicitly mentioned in 47-9 proves nothing against mention of kingship between 50 and 53: the audience will easily infer not

¹ The ὁρτῖς-clause can be taken ἀπὸ κοινοῦ with κηρύσσει, as in *El.* 33 χρυσὸν εἶψ' ὅς ἄν κτάνηι.