

THE YOUNG OF ATHENS: RELIGION AND SOCIETY IN *HERAKLEIDAI* OF EURIPIDES

Philostratos records¹ that the ephebes of Athens wore a black χλαμύς to commemorate their murder of Kopreus in defence of the Herakleidai.² Both the Herakleidai and a herald of Eurystheus³ appear in *Herakleidai* of Euripides, but the murder of the herald is not at issue, nor indeed is there any reference to ephebes or ephebic practice.⁴ This state of affairs will cause no surprise, for tragedy regularly selects its story-line from the wider range of the myth, and later uses to which that myth may be put have no necessary bearing on the play. It is however the contention of this article that the religious and social context of *Herakleidai* has been neglected, and that careful reconstruction of that context from later sources, restoring to us the associations that Euripides could assume in his own day, is an essential prerequisite to any aesthetic or dramatic interpretation of the play.⁵

I

I consider first four aspects of the play which are presented in an apparently incomplete way:

(i) The location is Marathon, but the chorus and choral odes are clearly Athenian:⁶ why is Marathon used at all?

(ii) Makaria, the daughter of Herakles, is not named in the play;⁷ honours paid to her are not given in detail;⁸ and no mention is made of the spring Makaria which is later associated with Eurystheus.⁹

(iii) Few details are given of the burial of Eurystheus: later sources link the burial of his head with the spring Makaria.¹⁰

(iv) Herakles and Theseus appear to be significant figures, but they are only mentioned occasionally and allusively.

¹ VS 550. Cf. IG ii². 2029 = Dittenberger, *Sylloge*³ 870.

² This is not the only ancient account of the black cloaks, or even the most probable. See C. Pélekidis, *Histoire de l'éphébie Attique* (Paris, 1962), pp. 15–16, G. Thomson, *Aeschylus and Athens* (London, 1941), p. 100, P. Roussel, *REA* 43 (1941), pp. 163–5, P. Vidal-Naquet, *PCPS* 14 (1968), p. 54 and *PCPS* 32 (1986), 126–44, P. G. Maxwell Stuart, *PCPS* 16 (1970), 113–16, A. Brelich, *Paides e Parthenoi* (Rome, 1969), p. 219.

³ The herald is named as Kopreus in the margin of L and P, but not in the text itself. The name is a later addition.

⁴ The ephebeia is not explicitly named in fifth-century literary sources: see Pélekidis (n. 2), ch. 1. For the Attic ephebeia in general see Pélekidis and O. W. Reinmuth, *The Ephebic Inscriptions of the Fourth Century BC* (Leiden, 1971).

⁵ Much of the evidence considered here was treated, to rather different effect, by Wilamowitz in *de Euripidis Heraclidis commentatiuncula* (Greifswald, 1882 = *Kleine Schriften* (Berlin, 1971), i. 62–81). A second article, *Exkurse zu Euripides Herakliden* (*Hermes* 17 (1882), 337–364 = *Kl. Schr.* i. 82–109), which impugns the integrity of the play, has proved the more influential.

⁶ See G. Zuntz, *The Political Plays of Euripides*² (Manchester, 1963), pp. 97–104.

⁷ The circumstances are as those for Kopreus: cf. n. 3.

⁸ Contrast the hypothesis: ταύτην μὲν οὖν ἀποθανοῦσαν εὐγενῶς ἐτίμησαν.

⁹ Cf. Paus. 1.32.6, Str. 8.6.19.

¹⁰ Cf. Str. 8.6.19 τὸ μὲν ἄλλο σῶμα Γαργεττοὶ ταφῆναι, τὴν δὲ κεφαλὴν χωρὶς ἐν Τρικυρίνῳ, ἀποκόψαντος αὐτὴν Ἰολάου, περὶ τὴν κρήνην τὴν Μακαρίαν ὑπὸ ἀμαξιώτῳ. καὶ ὁ τόπος καλεῖται Εὐρυσθέως κεφαλὴ, Σ. Aristoph. *Thes.* 898, Σ. Pind. *P.* 9.145, Isoc. *Paneg.* 60, *Panath.* 194.

(i) *Location at Marathon*

A scene in the Stoa Poikile, Pausanias informs us,¹¹ depicted the presiding gods on the Athenian side at the battle of Marathon: the hero Marathon, Theseus emerging from the ground, Athena and Herakles.¹² The importance of Herakles at the battle¹³ is further made clear by the report in Herodotos¹⁴ that the Athenian army camped in the Herakleion at Marathon before the battle and in the Herakleion at Kunosarges afterwards. The Herakleion at Marathon was ancient, vast in area, and, with Kunosarges, the most important Herakles site in Attika outside Athens.¹⁵ To this military significance of Herakles in the area may be added the importance (increased after the battle) of the Herakleia as a meeting of Panhellenic standing.¹⁶ This, together with the claim of the people of Marathon to be the first to recognize Herakles as a god,¹⁷ clearly accounts for the location of a Herakles play in Marathon:¹⁸ that claim however postdates the action of the play, one of whose concerns it is to prove the divinity of Herakles. On arrival the Herakleidai appeal for supplication not to Herakles but to Zeus.¹⁹ At lines 9–10 Iolaos says of Herakles *κατ' οὐρανὸν ναίει*, but nowhere²⁰ is he appealed to for help until Iolaos asks for rejuvenation from Herakles and Hebe at 851–2 and is granted it.²¹ Alkmene now accepts Herakles' divinity,²² and the chorus confirms it in song.²³ This process of confirming the divinity of Herakles appears to be important.²⁴

¹¹ Paus. 1.15.3. Cf. E. Kearns, *The Heroes of Athens* (London, 1989), ch. 3.

¹² On the distinction between Theseus the hero and Herakles the god (clear in Pausanias, with Theseus emerging from the ground and Herakles noted in the same passage as first receiving divine honours at Marathon) see below, pp. 332–3.

¹³ Herakles appeared in many battles: see W. K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War* (Berkeley, 1979), iii. 11. That does not diminish his significance here.

¹⁴ 6.108.1 and 116.1 *ἐστρατοπεδεύσαντο ἀπυγμένοι ἐξ Ἡρακλείου τοῦ ἐν Μαραθῶνι ἐν ἄλλω Ἡρακλείῳ τῷ ἐν Κυνοσάργει*.

¹⁵ See e.g. S. Woodford, 'Cults of Heracles in Attica', in D. Mitten (ed.), *Studies presented to G. M. A. Hanfmann* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 211–25, pp. 217–18, Kearns (loc. cit. n. 11).

¹⁶ Cf. Pind. *O.* 9.89–90. On problems of location and interpretation see Woodford (loc. cit. in n. 15), J. A. G. van der Veer, *Mnem.* 34 (1982), 292f.

¹⁷ Cf. Paus. 1.15.3, 32.4, D.S. 4.39, Aristid. 40.11, L. R. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 95ff.

¹⁸ The defence of the Herakleidai and the battle of Marathon are the principal incidents in Pausanias' description of Marathon (1.32.3–7). The two events are often associated: see Isoc. *Paneg.* 194–5, Lys. 2.11–26.

¹⁹ *Hkld.* 42, 70; cf. 766–7.

²⁰ Iolaos' description of the daughter of Herakles as *σπέρμα τῆς θείας φρενὸς | πέφυκας Ἡράκλειον* (Hartung: *Ἡρακλῆος* L) also implies Herakles' divinity: see Pearson ad loc.

²¹ On this passage see n. 113.

²² 871–2 *καὶ παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν πρόσθεν οὐ δοκοῦσ' ἐγὼ | θεοῖς ὁμιλεῖν νῦν ἐπίσταμαι σαφῶς*.

²³ 910–12 *ἐστιν ἐν οὐρανῷ βεβαλκῶς ὁ σὸς γόνος, ὡ γεραιά (ὁ σὸς Wecklein: θεὸς L)*.

²⁴ The split site between Marathon and Athens was seen as a major problem by Wilamowitz (*Kl. Schr.* i. 62f.); cf. Zuntz (loc. cit. n. 6). The location is Marathon at 32 and 80–1, Athens at 38; the chorus are Athenian (69); Demophon's palace is at Marathon (340–3); the Panathenaic procession on the Athenian acropolis is celebrated at 777–83. The invading army waits on the borders of Megara (278) but the battle is located at or near Pallene (848–9). Eurystheus though is pursued to the Skironian cliffs (860). Eurystheus' tomb will be at the temple of Athena Pallenis. The difficulties have been exaggerated. (i) Attika is attacked, and Marathon is seen as the principal military target because it is the seat of Theseus/Demophon's power and the Herakleidai have appealed to him there. For the importance of Theseus in the Tetrapolis and neighbouring Aphidna see e.g. Plut. *Thes.* 13–14 (Marathon), 32–4 (Aphidna). Note especially 33.1 *ἐχομένων δ' οὖν τῶν Ἀφιδνῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν ἄστει δεδιότων*... In this respect *Hkld.* differs from e.g. S. *OK* and E. *Supp.* where Theseus comes to Kolonos and Eleusis from his palace in Athens. (ii) Athens plays no strategic role, though her cults of Athena are important (see below,

(ii) *The daughter of Herakles*

In line with the glorification of Herakles is the iteration that the children must live up to their father's name²⁵ (as must Demophon live up to his father's name). To this end much stress is placed upon *εὐγένεια*. The daughter of Herakles meets these requirements preeminently. She is *εὐγενής*, meeting the requirement of 409 and 490²⁶ literally, and in spirit at 540–1 and 533. The young woman volunteers to die in a series of speeches which draw on the rhetorical patterns and motifs found in Euripides' other plays of voluntary self-sacrifice.²⁷ Some elements of the self-sacrifice plays are not found here:²⁸ there is no report of the noble death, for example. These elements may be absent because this play is Euripides' first experiment with voluntary self-sacrifice, or for other reasons.²⁹ Euripides may for example have considered the reference to proper dying at 560–5 and formal burial later (588)³⁰ as sufficient.³¹ Furthermore, she receives warm, if brief, praise for her death in the antistrophe at 621–8. Literary considerations aside, the daughter of Herakles dies for important religious and military reasons: she dies to save her kin and the foreign city which will defend her kin in war.³² For the Athenians she is a saviour of the city who is an outsider.

(iii) *Eurystheus*

With the failure to name 'Makaria', to refer to her tomb (or to the proverb *βάλλ' ἐς Μακαρίαν*)³³ or to the spring Makaria³⁴ there is a concomitant silence on the beheading of Eurystheus, the burial of his head in the road and the linking of his head with the spring.³⁵ The daughter of Herakles and Eurystheus are linked, however, but

pp. 335–6). (iii) Reference to Athens or Athenians may be taken to include all of Attika. Note that *Ἀττικός* does not occur in Euripides' extant plays, and that *Ἀθῆναις* is used both of Athens (*Ion* 11–13) and of Attika (*IT* 1450). (iv) If Eurystheus' blessing is for all of Attika, it is for Marathon in particular, hence the burial at Pallene. (v) Pallene and the Skironian cliffs are both attested as locations of the tomb of Eurystheus (the latter at Paus. 1.44.10). In adopting the former location, Euripides perhaps discounts the latter. The religious significance of these locations is perhaps reinforced by the absence of place-names for troop movements where they are expected (393ff., 799ff.: cf. e.g. *Supp.* 650ff.).

²⁵ 484–5, 509–10, 540–1, 563.

²⁶ 409 *ἥτις ἐστὶ πατὴρ εὐγενοῦς*, 490 *ἥτις εὐγενής*.

²⁷ See Joanna Schmitt, *Freiwilliger Opfertod bei Euripides* (Giessen, 1921).

²⁸ Under the influence of Wilamowitz, Schmitt censured *Hkld.* for its rhetorical deficiencies as she saw it.

²⁹ Discussed in my 'The State and the Individual: Euripides' Plays of Voluntary Self-sacrifice' in *Euripides, Women and Sexuality* (London, 1990).

³⁰ 586–8 *κἂν ἀπαλλαγὴ πόνων | καὶ νόστος ὑμῖν εὐρεθῇ ποτ' ἐκ θεῶν, | μέμνησθε τὴν σώτειραν ὡς θάψαι χρεῶν*. The delayed burial is extraordinary. Comparison with *Erekhth.* is instructive: the Erekhtheides are sacrificed, buried, their tomb honoured, and they go not to Hades but to the aether (*Erekhth.* fr. 65.65–89). Here, the daughter of Herakles is *not* buried, but *Eurystheus* has a tomb (1040–3: for the special conditions cf. n. 115), and *Herakles* escapes death and goes to the heavens (910–12).

³¹ 819–22 cannot refer to the sacrifice of the daughter of Herakles: see Pearson.

³² 491 *εἰ χρὴ μὲν ἡμᾶς, χρὴ δὲ τήνδ' εἶναι πόλιν, 506 παρὸν σφε* [sc. τοὺς Ἀθηναίους] *σώσαι* (Nauck: *σεσώσθαι* L), 622 *ἀ μελέα πρὸ τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γὰς*.

³³ The phrase derives not from *Hkld.* but from *Hek.* 517f.: see Wilamowitz, *Kl. Schr.* i. 63f.

³⁴ The failure to name the daughter of Herakles in part precludes this.

³⁵ See Wilamowitz, *Kl. Schr.* i. 68f. It is impossible to determine the antiquity of these associations and therefore fruitless to speculate on whether Euripides omitted them or simply predated them. Equally difficult to date is the story of the voluntary self-sacrifice of Marathon (Plut. *Thes.* 32.5) during the invasion of Attika by the Tyndaridai, and of the Spartans sparing the Academy because of the Tyndaridai (Plut. *Thes.* 32.3). *Hkld.* appears to be unaware of the

in a rather different way. At first victim and persecutor respectively, they both become saviours of Athens³⁶ dying³⁷ for a foreign city and leaving injunctions on the living.³⁸ Their deaths are different, to be sure, one a voluntary self-sacrifice in the manner of Aglauros or the Erekhtheids (see below, p. 333), the other the death of an enemy hero³⁹ repaying a city for his honourable reception in the manner of Orestes in *Eumenides* or Oedipus in *Oedipus Coloneus*. But both are σωτήρες of Athens. In the economy of the play, then, there are fighting for Athens, or at least promoting her future security, Herakles (a god), Athena (on whom see pp. 335–6), Eurystheus (a presiding hero like Marathon or Theseus), and the daughter of Herakles, whose action appears to be for the moment but may have had a more lasting effect in the unlikely event of a lost scene or messenger speech in the middle or at the end of the play.⁴⁰

(iv) *Herakles, Theseus and the young of Athens*

The role of Herakles in the play, if it derives anything from the significance of the Marathon location outlined above, is very much understated. Even more so is the role of Theseus. In Euripides' version Demophon receives the Herakleidae.⁴¹ His attention is frequently drawn to his father's example: like the Herakleidae he must consider εὐγένεια, living up to his father's standard,⁴² and he must recognize his συγγένεια with Herakles.⁴³ Demophon and Akamas,⁴⁴ then, are concerned, just as are the Herakleidae, to live up to the name of their famous father, to Theseus the hero (implicit at 320f.) and to Herakles the god. I believe there is more to this than the moral aspect outlined by Avery.⁴⁵ The youth of Demophon and of the Herakleidae is often noted;⁴⁶ and these young people are to live up to their fathers' reputations. We must consider the relation between Attic youth in general and these divinities, Theseus the Attic hero and Herakles, in fact an ancient hero and god at various places in Attika, perhaps first fully formulated as a god in the sixth century,⁴⁷ but for the play's purposes a god in the making. The play gains much from this arrangement: the children must look to themselves rather than to Herakles; the impressive faith of Iolaos is demonstrated; the apotheosis of Herakles coincides with his significant marriage to Hebe. (The apotheosis from the pyre first appears in this play, at 912f.,⁴⁸

story that the Spartans spared the Tetrapolis because of the reception of the Herakleidae (n. 105). Does the death of Eurystheus replace, predate or post-date that story? Details of the death of Eurystheus may have been lost in the lacuna after 1052 (see below, pp. 338–9).

³⁶ 506, 622, 1032.

³⁷ Kearns (n. 11) speaks of the 'quasi-sacrificial death of Eurystheus as expiatory victim'. Whatever the truth at the end of the play, Eurystheus probably was killed (cf. 1045–51).

³⁸ 586f., 1040f.

³⁹ On enemy heroes see Margaret Visser, 'Worship your Enemy: Aspects of the Cult of Heroes in Ancient Greece', *HTR* 75 (1982), 403–28.

⁴⁰ On possible lacunae see below pp. 338–9.

⁴¹ Cf. [Pherecydes] *FGrHist* 3 F 84 (= Anton. Lib. 33). In other versions, Theseus receives the suppliants: see Paus. 1.32.6, D.S. 4.57.6. On Theseus and the Herakleidae see *RE* Suppl. xiii. 1210.

⁴² 320–7.

⁴³ 205–13, 229.

⁴⁴ On the two see H. Avery, *AJPh* 92 (1971), pp. 544f.

⁴⁵ Op. cit. 539–65.

⁴⁶ E.g. 39f., 120, 239, 381.

⁴⁷ See Gruppe, *RE* Suppl. 3.923–4, Kearns (n. 11). Woodford (n. 15), pp. 211–13 notes that 'Heracles was widely worshipped throughout Attica, so much so that the abundance and ubiquity of his cults seem to have taken the Athenians themselves by surprise.' See also n. 105: cults of Herakles' associates in Attika may also predate the play.

⁴⁸ Cf. P. E. Easterling, *Sophocles: Trachiniae* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 17.

but the marriage to Hebe is ancient.)⁴⁹ At the beginning of the play the Herakleidai arrive in Athens as defenceless suppliants protected by the ἀχρεῖος δύναμις (58) of Iolaos. Themselves too young to fight, they number among them a daughter of Herakles who, inheriting his θεία φρῆν (540), brings safety to them and to Athens. In the battle against Eurystheus, Iolaos prays to Hebe and Zeus for rejuvenation (851), displays νέων / βραχιόνων... ἡβητὴν τύπον (857–8), and captures Eurystheus. The epiphany of Herakles and Hebe is asserted (856–7), and their marriage confirmed at 915–18. In his apotheosis and marriage to Hebe Herakles confirms the actions of his young daughter and his rejuvenated kinsman. They take him as their model (in the first instance through the medium of εὐγένεια), and he in turn associates with, and acts on behalf of youth.

II

In the painting of the battle of Marathon in the Stoa Poikile, Theseus rises up from the ground as a hero and Herakles is a presiding god with Athena. The Athenians win the battle, and the dead become heroes.⁵⁰ In *Hkld.* these Marathon divinities are lived up to a little differently. There is a battle, but the focus of the play is not on adult fighting males: it is on a female representative of males (and females) too young to fight and on an old man beyond fighting age. In dying for her brothers and sisters and for Athens, the daughter of Herakles is both a paradigm for communal patriotic action, doing what women can,⁵¹ and a young person sacrificing herself for the young.⁵² Elsewhere in Attic mythology we find daughters of kings acting in a similar way, Aglauros and the daughters of Kekrops,⁵³ the Hyakinthides, the Erekhtheides⁵⁴ and perhaps the Leokorides.⁵⁵ In these cases, in cult, the young women clearly have links with the youth of Athens: they protect young girls and children in general;⁵⁶ and they oversee young fighting men. In the sanctuary of Aglauros the ephebes took their oath,⁵⁷ and from the temenos of the Hyakinthides the ephebes set out on manoeuvre.⁵⁸ It has recently been demonstrated by Emily Kearns⁵⁹ that these women have a function both as σώτραι of the city, and as *kourotrophoi*.⁶⁰ In view of the prominence of youth in *Hkld.* and of other indications,⁶¹ it is likely that the daughter of Herakles should be seen in a similar light. Whether or not the invention of the

⁴⁹ See H. *Od.* 11.603, Pind. *N.* 1.71, *I.* 4.61–6, and West on Hes. *Theog.* 950–4: no marriage to Hebe could take place prior to Herakles' deification.

⁵⁰ Paus. 1.32.4 σέβονται δὲ οἱ Μαραθῶνιοι τούτους... οἱ παρὰ τὴν μάχην ἀπέθανον ἥρωας ὀνομάζοντες.

⁵¹ Cf. *Erekhth.* 50.14–27.

⁵² 579f., 589f.

⁵³ For Aglauros see Philokhoros, *FGrHist* 328 F 105, Plut. *Alcib.* 15.4. Aglauros is the first goddess cited in the ephebic oath from Akharnai (see p. 334).

⁵⁴ Hyakinthides and Erekhtheides are identical at *Erekhth.* 65.73–4.

⁵⁵ For the Leokorides see *RE* xii. 2000–1.

⁵⁶ For young girls and children see Kearns (n. 11), ch. 2.

⁵⁷ See. W. Burkert, *Homo Necans* (Berkeley, 1983), pp. 65–6.

⁵⁸ *Erekhth.* 65.81f. Note that Aglauros and the Hyakinthides act both as *kourotrophoi* in the strict sense of nourishers of children and in an extended sense as sustainers of young fighting men. In *Hkld.* the daughter of Herakles protects her young siblings, but her support of fighting men is for Athenians in general, not explicitly young (ephebic) Athenians. Young Athenians were probably not specified at *Erekhth.* 65.81f. either (the papyrus is mutilated).

⁵⁹ Kearns (n. 11), ch. 3.

⁶⁰ For the Hyakinthides in *Erekhth.* as equivalents of nurses of Dionysos see Kearns (n. 11), H. Jeanmaire, *Couroi et Couretes* (Lille, 1939), p. 288, Burkert (loc. cit. n. 57).

⁶¹ On Athena μᾶτηρ see p. 335.

poet,⁶² she functions, as a young Heraklid, as an equivalent of the young kourotropic deities of Athenian cult.

We must now turn to Iolaos. Rejuvenation is a common theme in fifth-century literature:⁶³ there is frequent reference in Aristophanes to the conflict between the generations;⁶⁴ the figure of the incongruous old man is seen elsewhere in Euripides.⁶⁵ There is, however, in the context of the play, a greater significance in the arming scene of Iolaos⁶⁶ and in his rejuvenation under the patronage of Herakles and Hebe. Herakles presides over the young in Athens (see below): his presiding here over the miraculous rejuvenation of his old comrade should perhaps be seen as a paradigm of his inspirational force.⁶⁷

The ephebeia

The ephebeia, well established in Athens towards the end of the fourth century, relied heavily on Theseus as a mythical paradigm, and to an incalculable, but perhaps lesser extent, on Herakles also. Theseus provided another *aition* for the black cloaks,⁶⁸ and at his Theseia presided over the good of the ephebes. To a large extent Theseus and the ephebeia were identified with each other.⁶⁹ As for Herakles, in a general way he presided over athletics for the young at Kunosarges and the Akademy with the interesting group of Hebe, Iolaos and Alkmene.⁷⁰ Whether or not this quartet was recognized in the fifth century is impossible to say⁷¹ but the association is significant and there can be little doubt in the case of Herakles at least, in view of the Herakleia at Marathon and the Olympic games. Elsewhere, Herakles received a libation at the *οἰνιστήρια*⁷² from the ephebes, at what looks like, in its ritual cutting of hair, an equivalent of koureotis at the Apatouria.⁷³ Particularly interesting is Lonis' reconstruction⁷⁴ of a passage in the ephebic oath of Akharnai⁷⁵ in which Herakles was invoked. At very least Herakles is a divinity with an interest in ephebes. If Lonis is right however in seeing significance in Herakles' association with Thallo, Auxo and Hegemone, and a probable kourotropic function in all three nymphs (one an Hour, the others Kharites)⁷⁶ then perhaps Herakles had a function approaching that of

⁶² She is not attested before Euripides, but neither is Eurystheus in his capacity as an enemy hero.

⁶³ And earlier: see e.g. H. II. 4.313f., Thgn. 1009f.

⁶⁴ See e.g. Nub. 1410–29.

⁶⁵ Ba. 170f., a scene, as here, where an old man recognizes the god before others do so.

⁶⁶ Iolaos took his arms from the temple of Zeus (695f.): Herakles took arms from a Herakleion before the battle of Leuktra (Xen. Hell. 6.4.7).

⁶⁷ Note that in an alternative version (Σ. Pind. P. 9.137a) Iolaos was brought back to life from the dead.

⁶⁸ See Roussel (n. 2), Pélékidis (n. 2), IG ii². 3606 (from Marathon, incidentally), Plut. Thes. 22–3.

⁶⁹ See Jeanmaire (n. 60), pp. 307–24, Pélékidis (n. 2), pp. 225f.

⁷⁰ Paus. 1.19.3. On Alkmene and Iolaos see below, nn. 101, 105.

⁷¹ J. Delorme, *Gymnasion* (Paris, 1960), pp. 339f. is doubtful, but see R. Lonis, *Guerre et Religion en Grèce à l'époque classique* (Paris, 1979), p. 217.

⁷² See Athenaeus 494f., Photius s.v., Hesych. s.v. Photius quotes Eupolis, *Demoi* fr. 135K, but caution on a source of this date is urged by Pelekidis (n. 2), pp. 63–4. Iolaos, in what appears to be a similar ritual, received dedications of hair from young men at Agurion in Sicily (D.S. 4.24.4).

⁷³ On the Apatouria and interpretation of the day koureotis see L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Hildesheim, 1969), pp. 232–4.

⁷⁴ Lonis (n. 71), pp. 199f., and esp. 216–18.

⁷⁵ Text and details at Tod ii no. 204. Cf. R. Merkelbach, *Aglauros*, *ZPE* 9 (1972), 277–83.

⁷⁶ Cf. e.g. Pind. P. 9.60, Aristoph. Thes. 295–300, Jeanmaire (n. 60), pp. 308–9, Lonis (n. 71), p. 299 n. 259.

kourotrophos.⁷⁷ This is not the place to reexamine the date of the inscription or its possible relevance to the fifth century.⁷⁸ As in the case of the *οἰνιστήρια*, the associations of the god are to be noted; the possibility that they all arose in the fourth century may be taken as unlikely;⁷⁹ and these or equivalent associations may be posited for the fifth century.⁸⁰

Herakleidai

In Athens, then, Aglauros and Herakles were overseers both of young children and of ephebes (notes 60, 77). In *Herakleidai* the daughter of Herakles has a similar function (too little is said of Herakles to judge in his case). Kourotrophia in the play may also be associated with Athena. At lines 771–2 she is invoked as *μάτηρ δεσποινά τε καὶ φύλαξ*. Athena *μάτηρ* has given rise to much discussion:⁸¹ if we take the invocation at its full strength⁸² we might argue, as have to some degree Herington⁸³ and Simon,⁸⁴ that although Athena is preeminently the virgin goddess, she retains, especially in association with Aglauros and Pandrosos, a kourotrophic function⁸⁵ analogous to that seen in Athena in other states, and in Artemis.⁸⁶ If this is the case, Athena is referred to in slightly different aspects in the play. First, she is the war goddess Pallas⁸⁷ in the bellicose ode following 352;⁸⁸ then she is kourotrophic⁸⁹ city-saving Athena⁹⁰

⁷⁷ For the kourotrophic function of Herakles himself see T. H. Price, *Kourotrophos* (Leiden, 1978), pp. 128 and 192, Kearns (n. 2), ch. 2. They cite inter alia a mother's dedication to Herakles on her children's behalf (*IG* ii². 4613) and the worship of Herakles, Alkmene, Iolaos, Kourotrophos and Maia at Porthmos (Salaminiot decree: W. S. Ferguson, *Hesperia* 7 (1938), 1ff. (lines 85f.)). For male kourotrophoi in general see Jeanmaire (n. 60), pp. 283ff., Price (n. 77), pp. 70–2.

⁷⁸ See Tod (n. 75).

⁷⁹ *Hkld.* provides ready support for the association of Herakles and ἥβη with the military in the fifth century: 740–2 ὦ βραχίων, οἷον ἡβήσαντά σε | μεμνήμεθ' ἡμεῖς, ἡνίκα ξὺν Ἑρακλεῖ | Σπάρτην ἐπόρθεις, σύμμαχος γένεοί μοι. Note also that the daughter of Herakles gives her ἥβη for war (579–80): cf. Burkert (n. 57), pp. 65f.

⁸⁰ On the problems of dating ephebes, note *Erekhth.* 65.81 where the 'later' ephebic practice seems to be foreshadowed in Euripides: see Kearns (n. 11), Burkert (n. 57), 66 n. 33.

⁸¹ See e.g. Wilamowitz, *Kl. Schr.* i. 100–3, Zuntz (n. 6), pp. 120–2. In view of the argument which follows it may now be possible to see Athena *μάτηρ* in Elis (Paus. 5.3.2) as equivalent, and Ge as analogous to Athena *μάτηρ* here.

⁸² We are not obliged to do so. The phrase could serve a rhetorical purpose similar to 229–30 γενοῦ φίλος | πατήρ ἀδελφὸς δεσπότης. Nevertheless *μάτηρ* is a most striking address to Athena Polias.

⁸³ C. J. Herington, *Athena Parthenos and Athena Polias* (Manchester, 1955), pp. 43f.

⁸⁴ E. Simon, *Festivals of Attica* (Madison, 1983), p. 106.

⁸⁵ For Athena as a fertility goddess see Roscher i. 683–4. The nursing of Erikhthonios in art and in literary sources is sometimes performed by Athena, sometimes by Aglauros and Pandrosos: see N. Loraux, *Les Enfants d'Athéna* (Paris, 1981), pp. 61f., Kearns (n. 2), ch. 2, Lonis (n. 71), pp. 203–6. The earliest literary source is H. *Il.* 2.544f.

⁸⁶ Cf. Athena Apatouria at Troezen (Paus. 2.33.1), Lonis (n. 71), pp. 200f., C. Calame, *Les Chœurs de Jeunes Filles en Grèce Archaique* (Rome, 1977), i. 232–41 (on Athena), 174ff. (on Artemis), 209ff. (on Hera, including Hera Parthenos).

⁸⁷ See Herington (n. 83), p. 12.

⁸⁸ Are 375–6 a reference to the ἔγχος and ἰτέα of Athena?

⁸⁹ If it is objected that Athena *μάτηρ* is simply too rare to be credible in a literary source, we may compare H. *Il.* 23.738: no unease is felt in comparing the care of Athena with a mother's care. And we may add with Herington that Athena Parthenos was particularly dominant in fifth-century Athens and may have obscured ancient qualities and attributes of the goddess.

⁹⁰ The boys and girls dancing at the Panathenaia (777–83) should be seen as the city's youth celebrating the city's strength with their protecting goddess. So Calame (n. 86), i. 235ff. Cf. Heliod. *Aith.* 1.10, L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Hildesheim, 1962), p. 24.

in the ode preceding⁹¹ the battle. If a kourotrophic function is accepted in some form for Athena in this play, then there is a similarity in saviour-function between the daughter of Herakles, Athena the protector, and the enemy hero Eurystheus at the end of the play. Seen in this light, further mention of the daughter of Herakles may be superfluous,⁹² her function now merging with Athena's.⁹³

III

Whether or not the detail of the argument above is accepted, the underlying importance of youth (I would prefer to see youth in some form of *ephebeia* or *proto-ephebeia*) in the play seems to be beyond question. As demonstrated above,⁹⁴ stress is placed upon the youth of the Herakleidai and of Demophon. The Herald's arguments against the suppliants are based on their youth (162–74) and on the taunt *κακῶς γὰρ Ἀργεῖοισιν οἷδ' ὠπλισμένοις μάχονται ἂν ἡβήσαντες*.⁹⁵ The play proceeds to show in the daughter of Herakles the triumph of ἡβη acting for ἡβη in voluntary self-sacrifice in the manner of Aglauros.⁹⁶ Her speech at 574ff. is the great climax of her part, and essentially of the part played by all the Herakleidai save Hyllos, for she and they are barely mentioned thereafter.⁹⁷ This is a successful youthful challenge to the taunt of the herald at 171–2. In the second part of the play⁹⁸ Iolaos takes up his role: scoffed at by his servant and by the chorus at 702f., his new-found youth is nevertheless triumphant, and reinforced by Herakles and Hebe. Finally, off-stage,⁹⁹ Hyllos shows the triumph of young armed warriors against Argos. At this point, however, another thread of the play has become prominent, the adverse aspects of the kinsmen of Herakles. The apparent split in the play, at 629, is probably to be accounted for in the division of the kinsmen of Herakles into good and bad elements, that is those who support Athens,¹⁰⁰ and those who will later attack her, as Spartans. Up to this point, the Herakleidai, represented by Iolaos and the

⁹¹ Why does the Pallas ode not precede the battle? It may be because of the close association of the self-sacrificing young woman with setting out to war. The kourotrophic aspect of Athena is the aspect appropriate at this point.

⁹² See below, p. 337.

⁹³ Is the daughter of Herakles to be associated in any way with Persephone to whom she is sacrificed? (See Kearns (n. 2), ch. 3.) It is difficult to determine whether Persephone is important as a goddess in her own right or whether she represents in a more abstract way the nether powers who demand a life (on which see H. S. Versnel, 'Self-sacrifice, Compensation, Anonymous Gods', in *Le Sacrifice dans l'Antiquité* (Geneva, Fondation Hardt, 1981), pp. 135–94. The position is probably similar in *Erekhth*, where the daughter of Erekhtheus is sacrificed to Persephone (according to Demaratos, *FrGrHist* 42 F 4).

⁹⁴ See n. 46.

⁹⁵ There is a case for the retention of *ὠπλισμένοι* (L) against *ὠπλισμένους* (Schenkl, adopted by Diggle). The Herald's argument is that the strength of the Argives is such that even if the Herakleidai were armed (and we can assume that the *Argives* are already armed) and were of fighting age, still they would be ineffective. The Herakleidai, as the play demonstrates, meet the point on age in the daughter of Herakles, and on fighting under arms in Iolaos and Hyllos. For the unequal distribution of participles cf. S. *El.* 652–3, *Ant.* 926, Pearson on fr. 806.

⁹⁶ σοὶ παῖδες ἔσμεν, σαῖν χεροῖν τεθράμμεθα· ὀράῖς δὲ καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν ὥραν γάμου | δίδουσαν, ἀντὶ τῶνδε καθανουμένην.

⁹⁷ The removal of the Herakleidai from prominence after 629 is a point little stressed by those looking for more on the daughter of Herakles in the second part of the play.

⁹⁸ For the two parts of the play see Wilkins (n. 29).

⁹⁹ Hyllos plays a minimal role in the play: because Euripides chose not to take on his Peloponnesian connections?

¹⁰⁰ Kearns (n. 11), ch. 3 thinks a spring to Makaria unlikely, or a saviour-cult in Attika, because she died for her kin. But the death is for Athens also (cf. n. 32), and the play appears to claim the young woman for Athens.

daughter of Herakles, have been on the side of Athens and her goddess: later, the Herakleidai, split into two groups, some diverging with Alkmene,¹⁰¹ some remaining true to Athens.¹⁰² The latter group comprises Iolaos, the daughter of Herakles who died *πρό τ' ἀδελφῶν καὶ γᾶς* (622)¹⁰³ (in neither case though is their future role after they leave the stage spelt out) and Herakles now manifest as a full god and consort of Hebe. To this group is also added, by a great *coup de théâtre*, another kinsman, Eurystheus, who emerges, contrary to expectation earlier in the play, as an enemy hero to protect Athens.¹⁰⁴ The play, then, consolidates long-standing Attic associations with Herakles and possibly his children¹⁰⁵ and sets him as a patron of youth beside that other great patron, his kinsman Theseus; and it places him in his own locality of Marathon.

IV

Herakleidai has long been recognized as a praise of Athens, as Euripides' version of a topos of funeral speeches,¹⁰⁶ and as a statement of the city's moral rectitude.¹⁰⁷ (Others though have interpreted the actions of Athens in a hostile light.)¹⁰⁸ No interpretation will stand unless it considers fully the daughter of Herakles in the light of other saviour-heroines in Athens and Eurystheus as enemy-hero. Each character undergoes a form of death of great ritual significance, though in neither case is the ritual described in detail. I have attempted to set out the importance of Herakles as an Attic god, his possible kourotrophic function, his function as a paradigm for the young and the way he shares with his patron Athena in the religious, social and military life of Attika. Yet Herakles too, even though he informs the action in most scenes in the play, is treated in a way that is fleeting and lacking in detail. The ritual action of the play is powerful and striking: the manner of presentation curious and puzzling.

¹⁰¹ Euripides' treatment of Alkmene differs from her role in cult. In the play she represents the adverse side of the Herakleidai, the side that Eurystheus helps to bring out. This treatment is doubtless determined by the presentation of Eurystheus as an Attic hero. In Attic cult, Alkmene is found with Herakles, Hebe and Iolaos at Kunosarges and the Academy (cf. n. 70); at Aixone there was a priest of the Herakleidai and a priestess of Hebe and Alkmene (*IG* ii². 1199); in the Thorikos calendar, Alkmene receives an offering in the same section as Herakles, or as the Herakleidai if R. Parker's supplement is accepted (*ZPE* 57 (1984), 59). In the painting by Apollodoros in the Stoa Poikile (*Σ. Aristoph. Plut.* 385) Alkmene was portrayed with the Herakleidai and a daughter of Herakles (*sic*) (Iolaos is not mentioned).

¹⁰² For a very different interpretation of the relation between Athens and the Herakleidai see Anne Burnett, 'Tribe and City, Custom and Decree in the Children of Heracles', *CP* 71 (1976), 4–26.

¹⁰³ *γᾶς* must refer to Athens, not to the young woman's own land, wherever that may be.

¹⁰⁴ See Visser (n. 39), *passim* for the generally unexpected ways in which enemies became heroes.

¹⁰⁵ Parker (n. 101) points to the prominence in cult of the Herakleidai in eastern Attika. They are not mentioned in the Tetrapolis calendar (*IG* ii². 1358). This may or may not be significant. Iolaos however is recorded as receiving a sacrifice with Kourotrophos, Ge and Zeus Hupatos (compare Iolaos and Kourotrophos in association at Porthmos, n. 77 above). There was an *εἰσάγρα* of the Herakleidai at Porto Rafti (*IG* ii². 4977). The Spartans spared the Tetrapolis because of the Herakleidai (D.S. 12.45, *Σ. S. OC* 701). They received a sheep at Erkhia (*SEG* xxi 541 B 42, G. Daux, *BCH* 87 (1963), 683f.). They may have received a victim at Thorikos (so Parker).

¹⁰⁶ For the Herakleidai in funeral and panegyric speeches see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1396a, Hdt. 9.27, Lys. 2.7–15, Isoc. 4.54–60, 5.34, Dem. 60.8, Plat. *Menex.* 239b, Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.47. The extent, if at all, to which the story was a topos in funeral speeches at the time of the play is unknown.

¹⁰⁷ See e.g. Zuntz (n. 6), Avery (n. 44).

¹⁰⁸ See e.g. C. Nancy, 'φάρμακον σωτηρίας' in *Théâtre et Spectacle dans l'Antiquité* (Strasbourg, 1983), pp. 17–30, P. Vellacott, *Ironic Drama* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 178f.

Those who judge *Herakleidae* to be a literary or dramatic failure have often based that perception on a comparison with *Hekabe*:¹⁰⁹ there is no messenger speech to report the death of the daughter of Herakles; Iolaos acquiesces in the young woman's death more readily than does Hekabe in the case of Polyxene.¹¹⁰ If we bring the religious context to bear, comparison should rather be made with *Erekhtheus* (cf. note 30). (i) The daughters of Herakles and of Erekhtheus are sacrificed *πρὸ γαίας*¹¹¹ while Poluxene is a sacrifice in honour of the dead Akhilleus.¹¹² (ii) Erekhtheus and Eurystheus become Attic heroes. (iii) The *katasterismos* of the Erekhtheides is analogous to the appearance of Herakles and Hebe as *ἀστέρε*¹¹³ and to Herakles' journey to the heavens.¹¹⁴ (iv) There is to be restricted access for sacrifice to Eurystheus and to the Erekhtheides/Hyakinthides.¹¹⁵ In the case of *Erekhtheus* these features relate to Erekhtheus and his daughters; in the case of *Herakleidae*, these features are more diffuse: sacrifice of the daughter of Herakles, the journey to heaven for Herakles, and heroic status for Eurystheus, the family's persecutor.¹¹⁶ This is perhaps to be explained in political terms: *Herakleidae* portrays *ξένοι* who put themselves forward of their own accord as saviours of the city, at Athena's service as it were. Athena is prominent in her reception of them.¹¹⁷ In the process, the home city of the *ξένοι* is weakened.

Explanation in ritual or political terms does not however account for *Herakleidae* in dramatic terms. It is beyond the brief of this article to treat the dramatic anomalies in full. Suffice it to say that of the two most canvassed proposals, a lacuna after line 629 (Kirchhoff) and a lacuna after 1052 (Hermann), the second is the more probable. I have alluded above to the supposed lost report of the death of the daughter of Herakles¹¹⁸ and consider objections against the play as it stands to be met by Euripides' treatment of the daughter of Herakles in association with Iolaos, Alkmene and Eurystheus as set out above. The arguments in favour of Hermann's lacuna are

¹⁰⁹ A natural comparison: the ancient transmission of the phrase *βάλλ' ἐς Μακαρίαν* (cf. n. 33) illustrates a confusion arising from comparison of the two plays.

¹¹⁰ See for example Wilamowitz, *Kl. Schr.* i. 82f, J. Schmitt (n. 27).

¹¹¹ *Hkld.* 622, Erekht. 50.39.

¹¹² While in a sense Polyxene, the daughter of Herakles and the daughter of Erekhtheus are similar in being offered as *σφάγια* to the dead or gods of the dead (to Akhilleus, Persephone, and probably Persephone respectively) an explicit demand for honour by Akhilleus is to be distinguished from the less specific demand for the blood of *σφάγια* (human or animal) before battle: see Versnel (n. 93), pp. 171–9.

¹¹³ The epiphany in *Hkld.* is distanced by a double disclaimer in the messenger speech (853–7), but I would not interpret this as a mark of scepticism since the divinity of Herakles is accepted by Alkmene and the chorus. For a different interpretation see R. Guerrini, *Athenaeum* 50 (1972), p. 63.

¹¹⁴ Cf. *Hkld.* 912–16 *φεύγει λόγον ὡς τὸν "Αἰδα δόμον κατέβα, πυρὸς | δειναί φλογὶ σῶμα δαισθεῖς: | Ἥβας κτλ.* with Erekht. 65.71–2 *ψυχὰι μὲν οὖν τῶνδ' οὐ βεβᾶσ' Ἀἰδὴν πάρα, | εἰς δ' αἰθέρ' αὐτῶν πνεῦμ' ἐγὼ κατώικισα.*

¹¹⁵ Cf. Erekht. 65.87–9 with *Hkld.* 1040–3. It is not clear in the latter passage whether the Spartans alone are to be excluded from making libations to Eurystheus or whether no one, Athenians included, is to make an offering. The Erekht. passage may incline us to the former interpretation, but the latter appears a more natural way to understand the text.

¹¹⁶ Eurystheus is of course a relative of Herakles: see 987–8, Apollod. 2.4.5. This is not emphasised in the play, though from a political point of view Euripides may have had an interest in presenting the *Herakleidae* as a family divided, to be contrasted, e.g. with the Erekhtheidae. For the presentation of eponymous heroes of tribes as setting an example to their tribe as if to a family cf. Dem. 60.27–30, a passage which includes the Erekhtheidae.

¹¹⁷ Athena and the *Herakleidae*: 347–80; Athena and Iolaos: 849–50; Athena and Herakles: 920–3; Athena and Eurystheus: 1030–1. For enemies and *ξένοι* becoming heroes and saviours see Visser (n. 39).

¹¹⁸ See also p. 331.

stronger. It is incredible that Alkmene's proposal to give Eurystheus' body to the dogs (1050–1) should be accepted by Athens (1053–5): heroes' bodies are not treated in that way by the city who benefits.¹¹⁹ The lacuna may be of only a few lines. It is conceivable though that Euripides wrote a speech *ex machina* for Athena or Herakles where was set out explicitly the significance for Athens of the death of the daughter of Herakles,¹²⁰ the loyalty of Iolaos, the importance of Herakles at Marathon, and perhaps further comment on Eurystheus, the one figure treated at the end of the play as transmitted. This article has attempted to treat only the transmitted text of the play, and to demonstrate that the play is written with close reference to the religious and social thought of fifth-century Attika.¹²¹

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¹¹⁹ See Visser (n. 39), *passim*.

¹²⁰ Even in this case there would be no necessity for her to be named: compare for example reference to the heroines or to ἄλοχος in the Erkhia calendar. For those who see the Herakleidae set against Athens at the end of the play (e.g. Burnett (n. 102), Nancy (n. 108)), the final lines appear less problematic. 'Ironical' or not, *κυσὶν δοῦναι tout court* demands serious consideration.

¹²¹ I am grateful for comments on earlier drafts from Nicola Mackie, James Diggle, Emily Kearns and Richard Seaford.