SOPHOCLES' *TEREUS*

Tereus is one of the more substantial fragmentary tragedies in the vast lost Sophoclean corpus.[1] It has attracted a fair amount of scholarly attention in comparison to Sophocles' other lost tragedies, and it was recently observed that 'as much as may be reasonably expected in the way of reconstruction and thematic analysis has been done'.[2] However, some persistent areas of difference in the reconstruction of its plot merit a further restatement and reassessment. This first part of this paper examines what is known about the myth before Sophocles turned it into a drama[3] and the second considers five aspects of the plot which have generated conflicting views. It concludes with a proposal for the outline of the plot.

1. THE MYTH BEFORE SOPHOCLES

The evidence shows that two versions of the myth, both aetiologies explaining the nightingale's song, existed from an early period.[4] One is referred to by Homer (*Od.* 19.518–23) and Pherecydes (3 F 124), and the other, which was followed by Sophocles, can only be pieced together from some literary references and iconographic material. The name of the child suggests that the two versions developed from the same source. It is Itylus in Homer and Pherecydes, but Itys is the established form by the time of *Tereus*.[5] The earliest evidence for the version followed by Sophocles is a metope, dated to the last third of the seventh century B.C., in the temple of Apollo at Thermon, together with Hesiod fr. 312 MW. This evidence shows that the future nightingale and swallow were always partners in the murder of Itys, although the sleeping patterns of the birds described by Hesiod indicate that the main responsibility for killing Itys lies with Aedon/Procne.[6] This fragment also mentions the

[1] Discussions cited in this paper by author's surname alone are F. G. Welcker, *Die griechischen Tragödien mit Rücksicht auf den epischen Cyclus* 1 (Bonn, 1839); W. M. Calder, 'Sophocles' *Tereus*: a Thracian tragedy', *Thracia* 2 (1974), 87–91; D. F. Sutton, *The Lost Sophocles* (New York and Lanham, 1984); A. Kiso, *The Lost Sophocles* (New York, 1984); N. C. Hourmouziades, 'Sophocles' *Tereus*', in J. H. Betts *et al.* (edd.), *Studies in Honour of T. B. L. Webster* 1 (Bristol, 1986), 134–142; G. Dobrov, 'The tragic and the comic Tereus', *AJPh* 114 (1993), 189–243; A. P. Burnett, *Revenge in Attic and Later Tragedy* (Berkeley, 1998). The fragment numbers are those of S. Radt (ed.), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* 4, *Sophocles* (Göttingen, 1977).

[2] Dobrov, 197–8.

[3] The production date of *Tereus* is uncertain. But Ar. *Av.*, which was produced in 414 B.C., is the *terminus ante quem* and not 431 B.C., the production date of Eur. *Med.*, as stated by Dobrov, 213. His chronology is intended to deny that the Sophoclean play, in which the infanticide is an established part of the myth, was influenced by Eur. *Med.*, where the infanticide is an innovation.

[4] The literary evidence is Hom. *Od.* 19.518–23, Hes. *Op.* 586 and fr. 312 MW, Pherec. 3 F 124, Sappho fr. 135 LP, Aesch. *Supp.* 58–67 and *Ag.* 1140–51. The iconographic evidence is discussed, with some reproductions, by E. Touloupa in *LIMC* 7 under 'Prokne et Philomela'.

[5] As the name Itys appears on two red-figure cups which depict the different versions of the myth (Munich 2638 and H. Cahn 599), it complements the argument that the versions develop from the same source. However, the presence of the name Itys on the Munich cup is not mentioned by Touloupa (n. 4), but it is said to be there by J. E. Harrison, 'Itys and Aedon: a Panaitios Cylix', *JHS* 8 (1887), 439–45, at 442, and T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources* (Baltimore and London, 1993), 240.

[6] Some have thought that a red-figure cup (Louvre G147) shows Chelidon/Philomela taking the initiative in killing Itys, e.g. Hourmouziades, 141, n. 28, and Gantz (n. 5), 240. Although

'impious meal in Thrace' but as this falls outside the *oratio obliqua* governed by 'Hesiod says', it may be not safe to attribute this to Hesiod. It is possible that the paedophagy was a part of the early myth[7] and that Sophocles was innovating when he set his tragedy in Thrace.[8]

The evidence suggests that Sophocles inherited a coherent and established form of the myth, but there are some serious gaps in what can be recovered from the early material. For example, there is no evidence for Tereus' treatment of Chelidon/Philomela, either the rape or the tongue removal.[9]

2. RECONSTRUCTING THE PLOT OF *TEREUS*

The nature of the surviving fragments frustrates attempts to reconstruct the action.[10] A great deal is known about the myth from post-Sophoclean sources, but this has been a hindrance rather than a help in the attempt to recreate the plot of Sophocles' tragedy. The publication in 1974 of a papyrus fragment (*P.Oxy.* 3013) with what appears to be a Hypothesis to Sophocles' play should have focused attention on the differences between the various later versions of the myth.[11] The Hypothesis does suffer from some corruption. The right-hand side of the second of the two columns is completely lost. Nevertheless, it is possible to retrieve an overall reading in which important features are not in doubt because the Hypothesis is similar to several other summaries of the story.[12] These sources contain a sequence of events from which a recreation of the tragedy can be plausibly undertaken.

Many scholars have been distracted by versions of the story in later mythographers,[13] and, in particular, the narrative in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (6.424–674) is a ubiquitous presence in most reconstructions. It is generally thought that Ovid followed

Chelidon/Philomela assists in the killing of Itys, the main horror is that of a mother killing her son and in no known version is the killer anyone else. If the cup depicts this myth, then the figure on the left must be Aedon/Procne on the verge of killing her own son because the woman with the sword must be the actual killer.

[7] The earliest certain evidence is a vase dated to the 460s (Villa Giulia 3579). Aesch. *Ag.* 1144 may be the first literary reference to the paedophagy. As the line follows Cassandra's allusion to the murder of kin and cannibalism in the house of Atreus (1090–2), this interpretation is a strong possibility. It is complemented by Page's emendations of the text at 1145–6 which have not, however, been followed by subsequent editors: see J. Denniston and D. Page (edd.), *Aeschylus: Agamemnon* (Oxford, 1957), 173–5.

[8] See Thuc. 2.29. The Thracians were firmly established in the Athenian consciousness as a stereotypical barbaric race; cf. E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-definition through Tragedy* (Oxford, 1989), 104–5 and 126.

[9] There may be some implicit evidence for the tongue-removal. The twittering of swallows was a traditional metaphor for people, particularly non-Greeks, who spoke inarticulately or unintelligibly: cf. N. Dunbar (ed.), *Aristophanes: Birds* (Oxford, 1995), 736–7 and K. Dover (ed.), *Aristophanes: Frogs* (Oxford, 1993), 202. As Philomela is transformed into a swallow in the myth, it is possible that the removal of her tongue explains the twittering song of the swallow.

[10] Almost one-third of the surviving lines consists of choral verses which do not assist reconstruction of the plot. Another third are fragments of one or two lines. There are three fragments of five lines or more and three single-word fragments.

[11] P. J. Parsons (ed.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. 42 (London, 1974), 46–50.

[12] These are Tzetzes (on Hes. *Op.* 566) and two Aristophanic scholia (on *Av.* 212). D. F. Sutton, 'Evidence for lost dramatic hypotheses', *GRBS* 29 (1988), 87–92, at 90, n. 13, thinks that the version in Tzetzes is indebted to the Aristophanic scholia which in turn had followed the Hypothesis. The text of Tzetzes, which is reproduced in Radt (n. 1), 435, concludes with the line 'Sophocles writes about this in the drama *Tereus*'.

[13] Hourmouziades, 138, proposed the inclusion of the Dryas episode mentioned in Hyginus, *Fabula* 45. Hyginus says that Tereus, having been warned by divination that a relative would kill

the tragedy of Sophocles closely but this is no more than supposition and cannot be substantiated in any detail. Ovid may have been influenced by the versions of the Roman dramatists Livius Andronicus and Accius. Little remains of Livius' version of the story (frs. 24–9 Warmington), but the remains of the *Tereus* by Accius are more substantial (frs. 639–655 Warmington). It is possible that one of these dramatists followed the Sophoclean version closely but the view held by Dobrov that the fragments of Livius are less dependent on Sophocles than Accius is not sustainable.[14] The assertion seems wholly arbitrary and is impossible to determine either way with any certainty. The *Tereus* of Accius appears to have been quite popular. Some references in Cicero mention a posthumous production in which the audience's reaction implied support for the conspirators who had assassinated Caesar.[15] At any rate, it is not safe to reconstruct the plot of Sophocles' play by using the fragments of either Roman dramatist. The Sophoclean tragedy may have been a definitive moment in the development of the myth which provided a general framework that inspired the versions by later writers. The exiguous nature of the fragments has made scholars over-reliant on the Roman material when reconstructing Sophocles' plot and greater sensitivity is needed to the possibility of variations and innovations in later authors. It is wrong to impose every scene from later authors on the Sophoclean tragedy.

The subsequent discussion examines the significant fragments in the context of five problematic aspects of previous plot recreations, principally the prologue, chorus, internment of Philomela, recognition scene, and *deus ex machina*.

2.1 The prologue

Welcker thought that fr. 583 came from the prologue.[16] He attributed it to Procne and put it in a dramatic situation where she is awaiting the return of Tereus from Athens. The attribution is undoubtedly correct, but this possible dramatic situation has led to regular comparison with Deianeira's monologue at the beginning of *Trachiniae*.[17] A closer examination of the situation in both tragedies renders this comparison specious. The bitter comment about the position of women in relation to the institution of marriage in fr. 583 does not really correspond to the attitude of Deianeira who is devoted to her husband. The comparison has been exaggerated because of the supposed absences of both husbands at the time of the respective speeches. Deianeira is anxiously awaiting the return of Heracles, but Procne is clearly referring to something more sinister. Her description of herself as 'I am nothing' (583.1) reflects an acutely tragic sense of desperation. It conveys neither simple loneliness, nor, as Hourmouziades has suggested, a neutral situation before the return of Tereus.[18] Furthermore, if the fragment is to be located before the return of Tereus,[19] it is more

his son, suspected and murdered his brother, Dryas. But Dobrov, 202, n. 34, observes that if it were a feature of Sophocles' tragedy, it would have been cited in more post-Sophoclean sources.

[14] Dobrov, 199, n. 25. Similarly, Kiso, 59, has described Accius' version as 'a faithful translation of Sophocles'.

[15] Cic. *Att.* 16.2, 16.3 and *Phil.* 1.36.

[16] Welcker, 377. Followed by Calder, 89; Kiso, 63; and Dobrov, 202.

[17] For example, Calder, 87, included a Nurse in the opening scene and is followed by Kiso, 63. Similarly, Dobrov, 202, suggests 'the presence of a trustworthy character (nurse?)'.

[18] Hourmouziades, 136. Neither the Hypothesis nor Ovid suggest that Procne was unhappily married. They simply say that she wished to see Philomela. In fact, an opening *rhesis* by a happy Procne would provide an ironic opening comparable to the confidence of Oedipus in the prologue of *O.T.*

[19] Dobrov, 201, has proposed that fr. 583 belongs in an opening monologue by Procne after the

reasonable to expect Procne to be in a good mood. Tereus is bringing Philomela to Thrace, so Procne should be full of happy anticipation because of her sister's imminent arrival, and not of morbid brooding. Nothing in fr. 583 suggests the tone of an opening speech such as reference to characters or the location of action. There is no similar sequence of almost twelve lines in the prologue speech of any other extant tragedy in which a character concentrates on a generalisation.

Buchwald suggested that fr. 582 was the first line of the tragedy and attributed it to a speech by Procne in which she complained about the misery of her married life.[20] But, as the Thracians were associated with sun-worship, Buchwald's context of an unhappy Procne makes it unlikely that she spoke this line in such a way. A foreigner who is unhappy in Thrace would probably not call upon the god of her oppressors, but upon the deity of her native city. Such an idea is implicit in the sentiment of fr. 583.7–8. Nevertheless, there is good reason to suppose that fr. 582 was the first line of the tragedy, although this suggestion has had little affect on Welcker's influential view. He placed it at a later stage in the plot, when Tereus realizes that he has dined on the body of Itys.[21] The meal has been consumed within the palace and the assumption is that Tereus rushes from the palace door in pursuit of Procne and Philomela. On entering from the *skene*, Tereus is imagined to make a speech which begins with fr. 582. The fragment is seen as 'an indignant outburst upon Helios as a witness to an extraordinary event'[22] and as such an appropriate line with which to begin a narration of the recent gory events. This seems to be a persuasive argument but the fragment can also be seen as serving a different function. It confirms that the action of the tragedy is located in Thrace and the normal place for giving such information is the prologue. Two features of the fragment suggest this introductory capacity. Firstly, there is the invocation to Helios.[23] The Thracians were associated with sun-worship,[24] so the invocation could be a conventional address by a Thracian to their deity and not a cry to Helios as the All-Seeing One. Secondly, the epithet 'horse-loving Thracians' is in fact a familiar description. It is present in Homer (*Il.* 10.436–7) and persists in tragedy, most notably in Euripides' *Hecuba*, a tragedy involving another treacherous Thracian.[25] This juxtaposition of a Thracian deity together with a familiar epithet about Thrace makes it an appropriate line to use in an introductory context indicating the general location, as opposed to some later context when the Thracian milieu has been firmly established in the audience's mind.

While fr. 582 might belong to the start of a *rhesis* by Procne, it could also be given to a Thracian character.[26] The only certain Thracian *dramatis persona* is Tereus him-

return of Tereus. This addresses a serious problem with dramatic time caused by the inclusion of the internment of Philomela, a feature which I argue in section 2.3 does not belong in Sophocles' tragedy.

[20] W. Buchwald, *Studien zur Chronologie der attischen Tragödie 455 bis 431* (Diss. Königsberg, 1939), 36.

[21] Welcker, 383. Followed by Kiso, 71; Hourmouziades, 139; and Dobrov, 208–9.

[22] Hourmouziades, 136.

[23] Five of the extant tragedies (*Aj.*, *Ant.*, *O.T.*, *El.*, *O.C.*) have a vocative in the first line, although the initial speakers in these tragedies address other characters. Buchwald (n. 20), 36, thought that the first line of Philocles' tetralogy on the myth imitated Sophocles' opening invocation.

[24] The evidence is discussed in section 2.5.

[25] In the opening monologue, Polydorus clearly states that the action is located in Thrace and highlights this by using the phrase 'horse-loving' (9).

[26] Buchwald (n. 20), 36, thought that the combination of Helios and horse-loving Thracians

self,[27] but there are some complications in giving him the opening line of the play. If Tereus spoke the first line of the play, then one must presume either that Tereus has already returned from Athens or that the play begins at the moment of his return. The latter is preferable, but it would be an unusual for a tragedy in which a hero will unwittingly return to disaster, such as Agamemnon in *Agamemnon* and Herakles in *Trachiniae*, to begin with the hero's entrance. In both of these tragedies, a herald enters ahead of the returning hero to announce his arrival. The fragment could be given to a Thracian, possibly a herald of Tereus who has arrived ahead of his king or a palace servant who is awaiting his return.

2.2 The chorus

In some reconstructions of the tragedy, the chorus has been identified as male. Three arguments have been put forward by Calder to support this.[28] One is that the choral lyrics which make up frs. 590–3 are only appropriate for a male chorus. Another is that Sophocles wished to emphasize Procne's isolation by making her share the acting space with a chorus of Thracian men. The third relies upon the supposedly male chorus in the *Tereus* of the Roman dramatist Accius.

There is no compelling reason why 'the philosophical sentiments of the preserved choral utterances'[29] make these lyrics inappropriate for a female chorus and only suitable for men. Webster observed a 'close correspondence both of metre and thought between the choric fragments of the *Tereus* and the *parodos* of the *Trachiniae*' which is sung by a chorus of young maidens.[30] Furthermore, one of the choral fragments is a *topos* which can be found in the mouths of both male and female choruses. Fragment 590 is probably the final lines of the tragedy[31] and its sentiment may function as a marker for the end of the play.[32]

The simple desire to have Sophocles emphasize the isolation of Procne through contrast with a male chorus is not a sound argument for its identity. It is based on the narrative in Ovid.

The view that the speaker who addresses Procne as *mulier* in a fragment from Accius' *Tereus* (frs. 643–4 Warmington) confirms a male chorus, is wrong. It is thought to be inappropriate that a female chorus would address another woman in this manner. The equivalent form of this address in Greek is γύναι and, although this is frequently used by both sexes when addressing a woman, it is often given to a husband addressing

suggests that it was spoken by a non-Thracian character. But Hourmouziades, 136, rightly observed that this argument can be reversed.

[27] There is some evidence for another male character in the play. The evidence is fr. 588, in which the masculine participle λέγων is used of the addressee, and a vase, which may depict a scene in the play (Louvre CA 2193). This vase is discussed in section 2.4.

[28] Calder, 88. He is followed by Kiso, 61, and Dobrov, 199–200.

[29] Calder, 88.

[30] T. B. L. Webster, *An Introduction to Sophocles* (Oxford, 1936), 4, who conjectured a female chorus.

[31] Welcker, 385; Hourmouziades, 137, and H. Lloyd-Jones (ed.), *Sophocles: Fragments* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 297.

[32] See D. H. Roberts, 'Parting words: final lines in Sophocles and Euripides', *CQ* 37 (1987), 51–64. The sentiment of fr. 590 is reflected in the endings of *Trach.*, *Aj.*, and *Ant.* Euripides also appears to have always concluded his tragedies with a choral tailpiece, and several endings reflect those of the Sophoclean passages. Many scholars, however, follow W. S. Barrett (ed.), *Euripides: Hippolytos* (Oxford, 1964), 417–8 on 1462–6, in thinking these Euripidean tailpieces to be spurious.

his wife.[33] If these lines from Accius are based on the Sophoclean tragedy, then this admonition may have come from Tereus himself.[34]

The idea that the chorus consisted of Thracian men poses a serious problem when one considers their likely reaction to Procne's plan of revenge. Either the plan was concocted off-stage away from the chorus, or it was devised on stage.[35] To maintain that the plan is devised off-stage loses the effect of Procne actually revealing her intention to kill her son before the audience, but it is unlikely that Sophocles himself would pass up the opportunity of presenting such a shocking moment. If the chorus of Thracian men were present during the planning, then Procne must have sworn them to secrecy. It would be usual in such circumstances for the chorus to be sympathetic towards the protagonist but likely to object to the proposed course of action. However, this seems an inconceivable arrangement for a chorus of Thracian men.[36] Such difficulties are overcome if the chorus consisted of women who could be sympathetic with Procne as fellow-women, and two fragments suggest this.

If fr. 583 is not from the prologue, then it could be something uttered in the presence of the chorus. The sentiment of this passage, a bitter comment on the social position of women who are married to foreigners, does not seem an appropriate one to be uttered by an Athenian princess in the presence of a chorus of Thracian men. Furthermore, Procne also speaks in the first-person plural, something which increases the likelihood that she is in the presence of women. Fragment 583 has been compared to the first speech of Medea in Euripides' tragedy, where she makes a bitter comment on the position of women in relation to marriage (214–66).[37] Medea spoke in the presence of a sympathetic chorus of women to whom she was a foreigner and her husband's betrayal corresponds to the predicament of Procne. If the chorus in *Tereus* did consist of Thracian women, then it is easier to imagine their reaction to the infanticide by considering the horror of the Corinthian women in Euripides' *Medea* at the proposed infanticide (811ff.).

Fragment 584 is unanimously attributed to Procne and placed in the same general context as fr. 583. For those who think it belongs in Procne's prologue *rhesis*, it is an exclamation to the absent Philomela.[38] A more likely location is an exchange between Procne and a female interlocutor, the identity of whom may be the chorus or its leader.[39] This increases the likelihood that the chorus consisted of Thracian women because fr. 584 is not an appropriate sentiment to address to Thracian men, who may very well have had foreign experiences.[40]

[33] See E. Dickey, *Greek Forms of Address from Herodotus to Lucian* (Oxford, 1996), 86–7.

[34] Cf. *Aj.* 293. One can easily imagine a confrontation between Tereus and Procne in which such lines would have been appropriate and fr. 587 could belong in a situation where Procne is condemning Tereus. The allusion to the rapaciousness of barbarians corresponds to the character of the Thracian Polymestor in Eur. *Hec.* and notably in her *rhesis* Procne talks about being sold in marriage (fr. 583.6).

[35] A third possibility, that Sophocles removed the chorus for this reason, is very unlikely. It would create the need to establish a motive for their temporary exit and also their return.

[36] Calder, 89–90, offers two possibilities, firstly that 'the enormity of Tereus' revealed crime turns the chorus to Prokne's side', and secondly that 'a ruse is used'. Dobrov, 208, follows the former but it seems more appropriate to have a chorus with a reasonably consistent attitude. In regard to the ruse, Calder does not elaborate on what he means.

[37] For example, Hourmouziades, 136, and F. Angio, 'Sofocle, *Tereo*, fr. 583 R.', *Sileno* 17 (1991), 207–13.

[38] Thus Welcker, 378, and Calder, 89. Dobrov, 203, n. 35, has Procne 'speaking in general of the woman fortunate enough to marry close to home'.

[39] Cf. Hourmouziades, 136.

[40] H. Bacon, *Barbarians in Greek Tragedy* (New Haven, 1961), 88, had difficulty with the idea

2.3 The internment of Philomela

There is no evidence in the early myth for Tereus' treatment of Philomela. Later sources fill in the narrative about the journey from Athens to Thrace. All agree that Tereus raped Philomela and cut out her tongue. The narrative in Ovid is the first to include what is called here 'internment'. It has Tereus not only cutting out Philomela's tongue but also shutting her up in a hut in the countryside (*Met.* 6.519ff.).

There are a variety of different details relating to the internment in the subsequent sources, but all agree that it facilitates the excuse which Tereus gives Procne for returning without her sister. Although the internment allows Tereus to say that Philomela has died, it is ultimately designed to prevent her from revealing the truth. The inclusion of both the internment and Tereus' return from Athens poses a serious problem for establishing a performance which has a semblance of continuity of action within a day.[41]

Most recent studies of the play have shown that the internment motif is the heart of this problem but there is no agreement on how it was arranged in the Sophoclean tragedy; was it part of the action or not? Dobrov retains the internment by making Tereus' return to Thrace without Philomela an event before the beginning of the play.[42] This is reasonable but, as argued earlier, it loses the effect of having Tereus return home from Athens to disaster. Burnett excludes the internment and has Tereus return during the play without Philomela saying that she died on the journey.[43] However, a close reading of Burnett's position shows that it is only nominally a rejection of the internment. She is still dependent on Ovid in thinking that Philomela weaves the *peplos* and sends it to her sister from some location in the wilds. The best solution to this problem has been the suggestion by Hourmouziades that Tereus returns to Thrace with Philomela.[44]

Hourmouziades' position is influenced by the Hypothesis. As the internment is not mentioned in the Hypothesis, it provides some reason to doubt its inclusion in Sophocles' tragedy. In fact, the Hypothesis and its derivatives are quite clear on what happened on the journey from Athens, why it happened, and what occurred subsequently. Parsons, who published the Hypothesis, translates the relevant part as follows: 'as a precaution in case she should tell her sister, he cut out the girl's tongue. On arriving in Thrace, and Philomela being unable to speak her misfortune, she revealed it by means of a piece of weaving.'[45] On this evidence, Hourmouziades has also argued that glossectomy and internment are mutually exclusive and suspects that the tongue-removal, an innovation to underline Tereus' savagery, remained in later sources because of a reluctance to omit what was such a striking feature in Sophocles' tragedy. While this is stretching the evidence too far, nevertheless Hourmouziades is absolutely correct to emphasize that the internment motif may reflect a later tendency

that the chorus consisted of Thracian women and suggested a chorus of Greek women by referring to Eur. *I.T.* and *Hel.* It is plausible to imagine that Procne took some Athenian female attendants with her to Thrace after her marriage. This is certainly a more realistic situation than the corresponding circumstances in *I.T.* and *Hel.* where the protagonists are whisked to another part of the world by some deity and happen to land among a group of their compatriots. However, if, as I believe, fr. 584 is addressed by Procne to the female chorus, then an identification of them as Athenian is ruled out.

[41] See the remarks on the semblance of the continuity of action by O. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford, 1977), 290–4 and 377–9.

[42] Dobrov, 201. [43] Burnett, 180–1. [44] Hourmouziades, 134–5.

[45] Parsons (n. 11), 50.

to rationalize what were considered less plausible aspects of the Sophoclean treatment.[46]

2.4 The recognition scene

Recognition or *anagnorisis* in Greek drama, as defined by Aristotle in *Poetics*, includes not only the recognition of one person by another, which is what we usually think of when we use the term, but also the recognition of facts or circumstances. The presence of a recognition mechanism in *Tereus* is attested by fr. 595 which actually comes from the *Poetics* (1454b 30). The 'voice of the loom' refers to the manner in which Philomela informs Procne of her ordeal at the hands of Tereus.[47] Philomela revealed all by weaving her experience into a piece of embroidered work after arriving in Thrace and so the *anagnorisis* in *Tereus* is of the kind in which a character recognizes the facts and truth of a particular circumstance. Two aspects of the recognition are problematical in a reconstruction.

One problem concerning the recognition mechanism has been effectively addressed already, if the argument in the previous section against the inclusion of Philomela's internment is accepted. All who include the internment suppose a recognition along the lines of the narrative in Ovid (*Met.* 6.577ff.). A woman is sent by Philomela from her incarceration to bring the embroidered artefact to Procne in the palace. Procne withdraws to examine the work in the *skene* and emerges later to reveal the new development. The exclusion of the internment disposes of two undesirable aspects to the recognition scene as envisaged in such a reconstruction. These are the separation of Procne and Philomela at the very moment of the recognition of truth and the failure to acknowledge the potential of the embroidered work as an important prop.[48] Aristotle's juxtaposition of the κερκίδος φωνή (fr. 595) in *Tereus* with the letter in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, as examples of artificial means of recognition, may hint at the arrangement of the scene in the lost tragedy. As Euripides' play involves the presence on stage of the characters and the method of recognition, perhaps the *anagnorisis* in *Tereus* involved the presence on stage of the embroidered artefact and the sisters.[49]

Another problem associated with the recognition scene concerns the nature of Philomela's embroidered work. Recently, Burnett has declared that it does not matter whether Philomela wove pictures or letters.[50] While certainty about the nature of Philomela's weaving is impossible, nevertheless the weight of argument appears to be in favour of a text.[51] A pictorial representation risks the serious possibility of discovery

[46] Hourmouziades, 134–5. In *Titus Andronicus*, the revelation of the truth by Lavinia, who has had her tongue and hands removed, is delayed for several scenes until Shakespeare wants his character to reveal what has happened.

[47] A similar situation was imagined by Dickens in *A Tale of Two Cities* where Madame Defarge records the wrongs inflicted by the aristocrats on herself, her family, and her neighbours in Saint Antoine in the form of knitting. She knits neither pictures nor a text but a code of secret symbols because of the ubiquitous presence of government spies. In one scene (2.16) a spy admires her work and its pretty pattern as she knits his personal details into it.

[48] Other notable Sophoclean props are Hector's sword in *Aj.*, the urn in *El.* and the bow in *Phil.* See C. P. Segal, 'Visual symbolism and visual effects in Sophocles', *CW* 74 (1980–81), 125–42.

[49] Once again Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* may provide some illumination on the arrangement of this scene because, in the build up to the revelation of the truth, Marcus and Titus describe Lavinia's movements.

[50] Burnett, 186, n. 34.

[51] Only J. Cahill, *Her Kind: Stories of Women from Greek Mythology* (Ontario and Hadleigh, 1995), 29–30, n. 8, has developed the argument for a pictorial representation at length.

by Tereus himself or one of his loyal servants. One might even ask how much graphic detail Philomela included in the depiction of her horrific experiences, whereas, in contrast, a text need only include several significant words.[52] Literacy may have been an aspect of a theme dealing with the antithesis between Greek and barbarian. The illiterate Tereus believes the removal of Philomela's tongue is sufficient to prevent the revelation of his actions. However, the literate Philomela is able to counter this by writing the event under the guise of the domestic activity of weaving.

A third aspect of the recognition scene may have been preserved on a Lucanian bell crater (Louvre CA 2193) dated to the second decade of the fourth century. In his catalogue of Lucanian red-figured vases, Trendall has attributed the scene to Euripides' *Medea*[53] but there are cogent reasons against this identification and most scholars who have considered Sophocles' *Tereus* believe that it represents the recognition scene there.[54] It depicts four people but unfortunately none of them is specifically identified on the crater. If it does represent *Tereus*, then three of the figures can be confidently named. Moving from left to right they are Tereus, Procne, who is wearing a diadem, and Philomela, who is holding the embroidered *peplos*. The fourth figure, a male, is difficult to identify. The objective of the scene appears to be to convey the power of the *anagnorisis* scene in the play. The artist has probably composed a representation which merges several separate scenes from the play.[55] As a result it has Tereus conversing with Procne totally unaware of what is about to unfold, while Philomela approaches her sister and is about to reveal the truth by the embroidered work. It seems obvious from the worried expression on the face of the unidentified male that he knows the truth of the situation. He may have been a character in the tragedy from whom Procne sought confirmation about the truth of the message contained in the weaving.[56]

2.5 The deus ex machina

There is unanimity among scholars that the exodos of *Tereus* had a *deus ex machina*.[57] Two fragments concern the *deus*. Fragment 581 describes the meta-

[52] In *Titus Andronicus* Lavinia, holding a staff in her mouth because of her disability, writes on sandy ground, 'Stuprum–Chiron–Demetrius', to reveal the identity of her rapists (4.1.77). Cf. Eur. *Theseus* fr. 382 Nauck where an illiterate peasant describes the letters which spell the name Theseus.

[53] A. D. Trendall, *The Red-figured Vases of Lucania, Campania and Sicily* (Oxford, 1967), 100. For a reproduction of this vase, see *LIMC* 6.2 under Kreousa 2.1.

[54] For references see Dobrov, 209, n. 47.

[55] Of course great caution is needed when considering the relationship between a vase painting and a tragic performance. The depiction cannot necessarily be taken as a single moment in the play. It is impossible to unravel the precise nature of the dramatic scene from this image. Dobrov, 205, assumes a scene in which Tereus was present during the presentation of the *peplos*. His interpretation identifies the woman holding the *peplos* as a servant of Philomela but this is inspired by the narrative of Ovid. The youth of the woman presenting the *peplos* suggests that it might be Philomela. This encourages my interpretation that Philomela gave Procne the embroidered work on stage. However, even the generally accepted view that the vase is evidence that a man confirmed the truth is open to criticism. The man could be an invention by the artist which acts as a clue to the identity of the scene—this is not the simple presentation of a gift but something more sinister. See the remarks by O. Taplin, *Comic Angels and other Approaches to Greek Drama through Vase Paintings* (Oxford, 1992), 21–9. See also C. Collard *et al.* (edd.), *Euripides: Selected Fragmentary Plays* 1 (Warminster, 1995), 3–4.

[56] Fragment 588, in which a man is urged to tell the truth, might belong in this context.

[57] Hourmouziades, 138, has described the ending as 'a feebly motivated epiphany', but this is

morphosis of Tereus into a hoopoe.[58] Fragment 589 is generally considered to have an appropriate tone for a god commenting on the action that has taken place.[59]

Sutton has said that the speaker of fr. 581 may be either a mortal or divine character.[60] However, it is highly unlikely that a mortal could include the predictive details concerning Tereus' metamorphosis which are present in fr. 581.[61] In fact, it must be stressed that the god who is responsible for the metamorphosis in fr. 581 is not the god who appears at the end of the play.[62] There is a need to identify two gods. It has often been supposed that Hermes is the *deus ex machina* who announces the will of Zeus,[63] although there have been some dissenting voices. Burnett thinks that the *deus ex machina* was Athena because of Procne's 'cult association with the goddess', but she does not attribute fr. 589 to the goddess.[64] Calder thinks that the appropriate god to appear on the roof of a Thracian palace is 'the father of the belligerent, reigning monarch, the Thracian Ares',[65] but the tone of fr. 589, which specifically condemns the violence, does not seem appropriate to the belligerent Ares.[66] Nevertheless, there is a Thracian deity who suits the tone and sentiments of fr. 589.

As argued earlier, fr. 582 might be a Thracian character calling upon his favoured deity, Helios. The cult worship of Helios in Thrace appears to be well established in the minds of fifth-century Athenians through the myth of the Thracian king, Orpheus. Although earlier evidence is thin, several references in tragedy show that the myth was known by the time of Sophocles' play.[67] An important piece of evidence, Ps.-Eratosthenes, *Catasterisms* 24, is later than the fifth century but states that its source is a play, unfortunately unspecified, of Aeschylus.[68] The passage describes how Orpheus, discontinuing his worship of Dionysus after his trip to the underworld, considered Helios the greatest of gods and equated him with Apollo. Dionysus punished Orpheus by sending the Bassarae, the Thracian equivalent of maenads, to tear him apart on Mount Pangaeus where he had gone to witness the rising of the sun. A fragment from Aeschylus' *Bassarae* hints at this latter episode (fr. 23a Radt).[69] The earliest certain identification of Helios and Apollo is Euripides' *Phaethon* (fr.

wrong. There is no possible resolution to the action on earth as Tereus pursues the sisters to exact full revenge. Furthermore, metamorphosis was an established part of the myth by the time of the tragedy. Since Sophocles appears to have been the first tragedian to put this story on the stage, an epiphany need not be an example of an easy solution to a difficult dramatic situation.

[58] This fragment is preserved in Arist. *Hist. An.* 633a17 who attributed it to Aeschylus. No other substantial evidence exists to show that Aeschylus ever wrote about this subject, and fr. 581 has generally been accepted as Sophoclean since the attribution was first proposed by Welcker, 384. Burnett, 183, n. 22, rejects this and thinks the fragment unworthy of either Aeschylus or Sophocles. The only other tragedian known to have dealt with the myth was Philocles, but only the first corrupted line of his tetralogy, *Pandionis*, survives. It may be significant that he was a nephew of Aeschylus because this family connection could conceivably explain Aristotle's error.

[59] Sutton, 129, simply attributes the utterance to 'some observer', while Burnett, 182, gives this fragment to a servant reporting the infanticide.

[60] Sutton, 130.

[61] Thus Calder, 88. Euripides sometimes uses mortals in such a capacity, cf. *Med.* 1378–9, *Hcld.* 1026ff. and *Hec.* 1259ff., but the situation in *Tereus* is not really identical to these ones.

[62] Sutton, 130, has suggested, *inter alia*, that the deity responsible for the metamorphosis may be the *deus ex machina*, but fr. 581 is clearly the description of another's action.

[63] Welcker, 383–4, who is followed by Kiso, 62–3, and Dobrov, 212.

[64] Burnett, 183, n. 34. [65] Calder, 88. [66] Cf. Dobrov, 200, n. 28.

[67] For example, Aesch. *Ag.* 1629–32 and Eur. *Alc.* 357–62.

[68] S. Radt (ed.), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* 3, *Aeschylus* (Göttingen, 1985), 138.

[69] The plot of *Bassarae* is uncertain and the corrupt nature of this fragment prevents clarity. It may belong in a messenger scene relating events on Mount Pangaeus, or in a choral ode where the Bassarae sing about Orpheus' story to warn Lycurgus about failure to worship Dionysus. See

781.11–13 Nauck),[70] and the brief nature of the allusion to the dual identification there suggests that the Athenian audience would have been familiar with it. This in turn gives more substance to the idea that had Aeschylus deal with this dual identification in one of his tragedies.[71]

This evidence is strong enough in itself to support Apollo as the *deus ex machina*. Fragment 589 provides further strength for this proposition. The fact that the attempt to achieve some balance amid all the violence is expressed with a medical metaphor strengthens the likelihood that Apollo is the speaker of this fragment. In Euripides' *Hecuba* the Thracian Polymestor calls upon Helios to heal his blindness and this may imply that Euripides is here equating Helios with Apollo the Healer.[72]

If Apollo is accepted as the *deus ex machina*, then it remains to determine the identity of the god whose action Apollo describes in fr. 581. All scholars appear to assume that Zeus is responsible for the metamorphosis, although only Dobrov has pointed to the specific mention of Zeus by the chorus in the final lines of the tragedy (590.3).[73] Fragment 581 only describes the metamorphosis of Tereus although it is clear from τοῦτον δ' that a description of the transformations of Procne and Philomela, into the nightingale and swallow respectively, preceded it. These transformations of the women are an established part of the myth, but the metamorphosis of Tereus into a hoopoe was probably a Sophoclean innovation because Aeschylus suggests that Tereus became a hawk (*Supp.* 60–2). Significantly, Sophocles has the god who transforms Tereus retain this detail by making the hoopoe display features of a hawk for part of the year (581.5). The description of the hoopoe as 'a bird in full armour' (581.3) may correspond to the violent nature of Tereus as portrayed in the tragedy.[74] Calder may have been right to see a role for Ares in the exodos of the play. Perhaps he is the god responsible for the metamorphosis of Tereus. After all he is the belligerent father of Tereus and the hoopoe retains a bellicose appearance. Certainty is impossible, but this suggestion need not obviate a role for Zeus because Apollo may have indicated Zeus' influence in the tragic action.[75]

3. CONCLUSION: THE PLOT OF SOPHOCLES' *TEREUS*

The following outline of the plot of *Tereus* is based on the preceding discussion. It describes some of the main scenes and avoids the attempt to break the tragedy down into specific episodes, something that has been attempted without success on several occasions.

Radt (n. 68), 140, for references to discussions which tend to make the metre of the fragment iambic trimeter and so increase the possibility that it is from a messenger speech.

[70] Thus J. Diggle (ed.), *Euripides: Phaethon* (Cambridge, 1970), 147, and Collard *et al.* (n. 55), 234. The production date of *Phaethon* is generally accepted as around 420 B.C. or soon afterwards, a date probably after Sophocles' *Tereus*. The date is based on metrical resolutions in the dialogue trimeters. For references see Collard *et al.* (n. 55), 203.

[71] Cf. Diggle (n. 70), 147. Although Diggle is cautious about the connection between *Catasterisms* 24 and Aeschylus, he believes that there is a reference to the dual identification in *Supp.* 212. But this depends on an emendation of the text, changing ὄρνιν to ἶνιν, so that Helios is to be identified as Zeus' son and not his bird.

[72] Cf. C. Collard (ed.), *Euripides: Hecuba* (Warminster, 1991), 188 on 1067–8. It is possible to see other associations for Apollo in the wider aspect of the myth. The hawk was Apollo's sacred bird: cf. Dunbar (n. 9), 354. The nightingale's song was associated with Apollo: see Dunbar, 207 on 217. In Aesch. *Ag.* 1140–9, the fate of Cassandra, the prophet of Apollo, is associated with the nightingale.

[73] Dobrov, 212.

[74] Cf. Ar. *Lys.* 563.

[75] Cf. Aesch. *Eum.* 616–18.

The play begins with a monologue by a Thracian servant of Tereus (fr. 582). Tereus returns in the early stages of the play with Philomela and lies about her muteness to Procne (fr. 585). In the *anagnorisis*, Philomela presents the embroidered artefact to Procne on stage (fr. 595). An *agon* between Procne and Tereus follows the revelation of the truth (fr. 587). Before revealing her plan of revenge, Procne laments her predicament caused by marriage to a barbaric foreigner (frs. 583–4). After the meal and Tereus' pursuit of the sisters, Apollo enters (frs. 581, 589).[76] The play concludes with an observation from the chorus of Thracian women (fr. 590).[77]

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[76] Dobrov, 202, 210, has proposed the use of the *ekkyklema* during the *rhesis* of the god. He suggests that tokens representing each character appeared on the *ekkyklema* to symbolize the metamorphoses. In tragedy, the *ekkyklema* is used to represent a scene inside the *skene*. As Dobrov's reconstruction has the three characters leave by an *eisodos* before their transformations, the proposed use of 'the *ekkyklema* in a tableau involving subtle tokens of metamorphosis' is utterly unconvincing.

[77] Earlier versions of this paper were presented at a meeting of the Midlands Classical Seminar in the University of Keele on 5 November 1997 and the Classical Association AGM at Lampeter in April 1998. My thanks to all who were present at these meetings for their instructive reaction. An especial word of thanks goes to Prof. Alan Sommerstein, Prof. Chris Collard, and the anonymous referee. Their advice and comments on previous drafts of this work have led to many improvements.