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**[201]THE OPTIMISTIC RATIONALIST IN EURIPIDES:**

**THESEUS, JOCASTA, TEIRESIAS**

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Near the end of Act 3 of Corneille's *Oedipe* of 1659, Thésée delivers a ringing denunciation of fatalism:<sup>1</sup>

Quoi? la nécessité des vertus et des vices  
D'un astre impérieux doit suivre les caprices,  
Et Delphes, malgré nous, conduit nos actions  
Au plus bizarre effet de ses prédictions?  
L'âme est donc toute esclave: une loi souveraine  
Vers le bien ou le mal incessamment l'entraîne,  
Et nous ne recevons ni crainte ni désir  
De cette liberté qui n'a rien à choisir,  
Attachés sans relâche à cet ordre sublime,  
Vertueux sans mérite, et vicieux sans crime.  
Qu'on massacre les rois, qu'on brise les autels,  
C'est la faute des Dieux, et non pas des mortels.  
De toute la vertu sur la terre épandue,  
Tout le prix à ces dieux, toute la gloire est due;  
Ils agissent en nous quand nous pensons agir;  
Alors qu'on délibère on ne fait qu'obéir;  
Et notre volonté n'aime, hait, cherche, évite,  
Que suivant que d'en haut leur bras la précipite.  
D'un tel aveuglement daignez me dispenser.

This defence of free will has been taken to be a profession of faith by Corneille himself, relevant to contemporary religious debate.<sup>2</sup> In the light of the entire play, however, this profession is certainly paradoxical. Although Corneille spices his version of the discovery of Oedipus' crimes with sub-plots of love (Dircé and Thésée) and of dynastic rivalry (Dircé, as legitimate heir of Laïus and Jocaste, [202]is jealous of Oedipe, an outsider whom she maligns as *tyran* and *usurpateur*), and although there is a

suggestion in the play that the shedding of royal blood under any circumstances is an unspeakable crime,<sup>3</sup> in the end, when the truth is revealed, there is general agreement that Oedipe is not blameworthy and that his life has been cruelly directed by *l'ordre du ciel*.<sup>4</sup> The speech of Thésée seems to offer us a seventeenth-century example of the inorganic intrusion of the dramatic poet's voice questioning or contradicting the traditional basis of his plot. It has often been assumed that Euripides, because of a personal scepticism about the "truth" of traditional mythology and religious beliefs, similarly allowed professions of personal faith to appear in his dramas. The most famous and controversial example in Euripides is surely *Heracles* 1341-1346. T.C.W. Stinton has tried to make a case for reading these lines as an organic expression of Heracles' disapproval rather than of a disbelief which would jar with the assumptions of the plot; but Stinton himself confesses doubts about his own claim.<sup>5</sup> In response, A. L. Brown has recently argued that the passage is nothing more than an (inorganic) authorial pronouncement, and he goes on to suggest that in an analogous case (*IT* 380-391) "we may be fairly sure that this reasoning appealed to Euripides himself."<sup>6</sup> In his recent commentary on *Heracles*, G. W. Bond adopts an intermediate position: lines 1341-1346 seem to him adequately motivated as "what the rhetoric of the situation demands", but he nevertheless states that they "may well represent Euripides' own considered view."<sup>7</sup>

In this essay I hope to show why we should not be content either with the excuse of "the rhetoric of the situation"<sup>8</sup> or with the admission of inorganic intrusion of the poet's personal beliefs when we interpret passages such as *Heracles* 1341-1346 or *IT* 380-391. To do so, I shall consider three longer and (in general) less controversial speeches which make a positive assessment of the workings of the universe and the role of the gods in the order of the world: Theseus' speech to Adrastus at *Supplices* 195-249, Jocasta's appeal to her sons at *Phoenissae* 528-585, and Teiresias' defense of Dionysus to Pentheus at *Bacchae* 266-327. In contrast to the Euripidean figures who reflect contemporary intellectual culture in such a way as to arouse shock and disapproval (e.g., Jason in *Medea*, Helen in *Troades*, Eteocles in *Phoenissae*, Orestes in *Orestes*), these figures seem to succeed in combining traditional values and intellectual modernity. They are what I would call "optimistic rationalists": they believe that the world is orderly and comprehensible and that there are elements in that order which have been fashioned for the good of man. Compared with a Jason or an Orestes, these are basically sympathetic figures; but I wish to argue that it is too simple, and so misleading, to be satisfied with such a reaction to them. In each case, it seems to me, the overall context undermines the position of the optimistic rationalist and renders it sometimes futile and irrelevant, sometimes poignant, sometimes even tragic.

The greater part of Euripides' *Supplices* presents a fairly typical story-pattern of political supplication.<sup>9</sup> The wronged parties supplicate a more fortunate state; an internal obstacle is overcome; an external opposition to reception of the [203]suppliants is first expressed in threatening words and then acted out in an armed conflict off-stage; but the

protecting state wins and receives appropriate thanks. All or most of these features can be found in Aeschylus' *Supplikes* and (with modifications) *Eumenides*, Euripides' *Heraclidae* and *Supplikes*, and Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*. It is not by chance that in four of the five cases the protecting state is Athens, for the Athenians prided themselves on their generous acceptance of refugees and suppliants, even those who had no particular claim to Attic protection.<sup>10</sup> It is especially noteworthy that in *Heraclidae* the sons of Theseus have no hesitation in taking the suppliants' side at once (the difficulty of the oracle comes later as a surprise) and in *Oedipus Coloneus* Theseus almost grants Oedipus' request before hearing it. What happens in Euripides' *Supplikes* must be viewed against the background supplied by such examples.

The guidance provided by the pithy tag "Encomium of Athens" in the hypothesis to *Supplikes* has been accepted by many critics, who believe that there is a straightforward confidence and optimism suitable to encomium conveyed by this play and that the positive attitude toward Athens is matched by a simple favourable attitude toward its ideal king, Theseus. Some go so far as to read Theseus' first long speech as the profession of a deep personal faith held by the poet himself.<sup>11</sup> Theseus' view is that the workings of the world are fully intelligible, that the gods have provided all the resources necessary for human success and happiness, that the course of human failure and misery can be simply analyzed and fault clearly ascribed. For Theseus (at this point in the play) there is a clear separation between good and bad men, prosperous and wretched men; citizens in a state can be neatly divided into three distinct groups. Theseus thus combines traditional respect for the gods and their ways (note in particular the rejection of trying to be "wiser than the gods" at 216-8 and the maxim on the contagion of sinfulness at 226-8, which echoes Aeschylus *Sept.* 602ff.)<sup>12</sup> with the modern view of human progress and a modern-sounding analytic clarity. It is perhaps natural that this implied profession of faith, taken by itself, wins sympathy and approval from many readers and critics, even though such confidence in the intelligibility of the world may be deemed non-tragic.<sup>13</sup>

The speech of Theseus does not, however, exist in a vacuum. It is artistically located in a complex drama, and, as Collard points out,<sup>14</sup> the initial movement of the drama is designed to evoke sympathy for the unfortunate Argives and the scene which follows Theseus' impressive speech reasserts the claims of sympathy and brings a very rapid change of mind. What is more, the suppliant-plot pattern itself, the pretensions of patriotic Athenians myths, and the very stature of Theseus as symbol of Attic unity, civilization, and service to mankind render Theseus' coldly rational refusal a surprising, even shocking, development. Some hesitation in the protector or a minor hindrance imposed from outside may be an expected part of a suppliant-drama, but no one would have expected such a direct and swift refusal from the Athenian king himself. The dramatic context tells us, therefore, that Theseus' speech, optimistic and rational though it is, is undercut by irony and shown to be inadequate to the realities of the tragic world.<sup>15</sup> Beyond [204]this general irony, there are also reversals of specific statements and

positions. Aethra provides a more traditionally tragic view of the cyclical workings of human fortune (331). The debate between the Theban herald and Theseus goes further by having the herald echo elements of Theseus' earlier speech and Theseus now take an opposite view. It is the herald who now asserts a simple division between what is good and what is bad, criticises the control of the assembly by the skilful tongue of a villain (423-5, cf. 243), accuses Theseus of aiding bad men and ignoring the judgment of the gods (486-505), and refers to "rashness" and "youth" as causes of disaster in war (508, 580). Theseus, for his part, now speaks differently of the classes of men in a city (408, 433-7; cf. 420-5) and refers to the sufferings of humanity in a manner closer to that of Adrastus (549-555, cf. 176-9).<sup>16</sup> Later in the play, the encomium of the dead warriors (855-917) casts another ironic sidelight on Theseus' initial position. Theseus himself asks for and then supplements the encomium (841-5, 925-931); and the gist of Adrastus' speech is that these men were not, after all, simply bloodthirsty men of sin and violence, but also men of moderation, bravery and public-spiritedness. So complex is the nature of man and the course of man's fortune.

Some critics might be tempted to say that Theseus' positions in *Suppl.* 195-249 are out of harmony with his positions elsewhere either because they are merely due to "the rhetoric of the situation" and the dramatic demands of the immediate moment and have no wider relevance or because they are not in fact Theseus' but Euripides' own beliefs. The latter explanation make Euripides just as clumsy as Corneille. More important, either explanation ignores a major thrust of Euripidean drama: the presentation of a dialectic of ideas which shift and alternate, leaving no firm ground to stand on. In Euripides the universe and man's soul are portrayed as fragmented and unstable, but one of the most characteristic achievements of Euripidean man is his power of analysis and his will to construct an order for himself, to impose intelligibility and often morality on the world he experiences. But this is also Euripidean man's most tragic achievement: we, the audience, should not be misled by a character's analytic skill, optimism, and general high-mindedness into accepting that the construct offered is adequate and that the faith professed is anything but futile, if in fact the drama as a whole points to inadequacy and futility.

The second speech by an optimistic rationalist which I wish to consider is that of Jocasta in the *agôn*-scene of *Phoenissae* (446-737). Jocasta has the longest speaking/singing role in the play and she dominates the first third of the play. The prologue introduces her in a narrative of subdued emotion as the long-suffering but selfless center of the doomed family. Like Teiresias and the chorus later, she there conveys some sense of the weight of the past which leads up to the present fatal day, but her loyalty to her family makes her ever hopeful that a means of salvation can still be found. Her initial address to the sun (3-5), with its implicit sense of exposing one's woes to the open sky for relief, and her concluding prayer to Zeus in his bright heavenly dwelling, with its mildly "nouthetic" element,<sup>17</sup> lend her role a special dignity. In her

next appearance, by contrast, [205]she begins with pure lyric (and orchestric) emotion (301-354) before settling down into dialogue with her exiled son. Jocasta's impossible position is foreshadowed in the stichomythia with Polyneices which leads up to the *agôn*: even as she brings out Polyneices' love for his fatherland (in preparation for the appeal she will make to him in 568 ff.), she simultaneously evokes all the ills of exile which drive Polyneices to insist upon his rights.

In the *agôn* itself Jocasta is caught between the opposing beliefs and stances of her two sons: Polyneices, an utterly conventional man in his love of kin and country and in his acceptance of aristocratic values,<sup>18</sup> presses the undeniable justice of his claim, while Eteocles, a child of sophistic amorality, presents a flashy but ultimately selfish and emotional argument for retaining power at all costs. There is virtually no common ground between the brothers,<sup>19</sup> but Jocasta makes a valiant attempt at persuasion, addressing the two in separate appeals in chiasmic order and spending more time (as appropriate) reacting to Eteocles' position. Like Theseus, she combines traditional wisdom with sophisticated theorizing about the order of the universe. She values experience (529) and the moderate man's contentment with a sufficiency (554), rejects reckless ambition (531, 567) and greed for more (552-3) and tyranny (549) and assumes the existence of standards of *dikē* and *nomos* (523, 548, 549; 538).<sup>20</sup> All of this is quite orthodox and traditional.<sup>21</sup> But there are an equal number of modern or philosophic/sophistic elements in her speech: the prosaic<sup>22</sup> abstraction *Philotimia* as a goddess and, more strikingly, the personification of *Isotes*; the universal law stated in 539-540; the emphasis on number and measure; justice in relation to the order of the universe; the connection of night and day with measure and justice; the oxymoron *ἀδικίαν εὐδαίμονα*; the form of the question τί δ' ἔστι τὸ πλεόν (557); and the hint of the *ergon/logos* antithesis in ὄνομα (557).<sup>23</sup> The most important aspect of the speech for our purposes, however, is that it conveys a construct of an orderly and intelligible universe in which divine powers not only provide man with examples but even give him the tools of order. Equality has given man measure and number, and equality is the binding element in nature as well as society. The balance structured into night and day is a service to man, that is, both as an example (which Eteocles refuses to follow, 547-8) and as guarantor of the seasons, the order of nature is provided by divine powers for man's good. Man in turn should feel that he is a temporary guardian and user of what is ultimately the gods' (555-7).

Jocasta's speech forms an impressive and intellectually exciting climax of the debate. She surely is meant to win the audience's approval and admiration, just as Hecuba is meant to when she counters the excuses of *Helen* in Tro. 969-1032. But it is quite mistaken to say, as is often done, that in a Euripidean *agôn* the second or final speaker "wins" the debate. Hecuba's "victory" in *Troades* is a bitterly empty one, for everyone knows that Helen will seduce Menelaus and be restored to the wifely status she enjoys in the *Odyssey*. Likewise, to say that Jocasta "gets the better of her argument"<sup>24</sup> with Eteocles is to ignore the context. Just as the prayers to Zeus (84-87) and the gods (467-8,

586-7) are futile requests [206] for reconciliation and salvation, so Jocasta's lofty beliefs and impassioned argument are without effect, and that is a major tragic point of the scene. In his speech Eteocles blindly asserts: "Not with arms should Polyneices have come to make a settlement, for speech accomplishes everything that the iron weaponry of enemies can do" (516-7); but both brothers are impervious to persuasion, and at the end of the debate Eteocles says bluntly but more accurately: "No longer is the contest one of words, but the time we spend waiting for battle is wasted in vain: your zeal accomplishes nothing" (588-9). Jocasta's attempt at reconciliation not only fails, but leads to an argument in which the brothers first broach the idea of deliberately seeking each other in battle (621-4). The context and outcome of her speech render Jocasta the most tragic of our three optimistic rationalists and probably the most tragic figure in *Phoenissae*.

Our third optimistic rationalist is the Teiresias of *Bacchae* 266-327. It is obvious that he shares with Theseus and Jocasta the faith that the gods and the workings of the world can be understood and explained and that mankind is the beneficiary of the divine dispensation. Just as Jocasta assumed that from long experience she could refute Eteocles with wiser words (*Phoen.* 528-530), so Teiresias assumes that wisdom and good speaking can be usefully combined, and the implication is that he himself is doing so in refutation of the rash and mindless eloquence of Pentheus (266-271). As is natural to his encomiastic purpose, Teiresias looks only to the benefits which can be attributed in one way or another to Dionysus. Dionysus supplies the wet principle to balance Demeter's dry; he affords the only cure for cares and troubles; he mediates between man and the other gods; he is even credited with prophecy and helpful panic. The intellectual or sophistic element in Teiresias' speech is displayed especially in his playing with names. Minor evidence of this trait is present in the free choice between the names "Demeter" and "Earth" and the implied etymological connection between  $\mu\alpha\upsilon\acute{\nu}\iota\alpha$  and  $\mu\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\iota\varsigma$ . But the most sophistic language-play is an integral part of the rationalizing account of the story of Dionysus' birth (286-297).<sup>25</sup> After its modernist features, however, the speech turns toward traditional warnings to Pentheus to recognize the limitations of being human (310-2, 325-7). Like Jocasta, Teiresias can combine traditional values with sophisticated theory.

The dramatic effect of Teiresias' disquisition is hard to gauge. Critics are not agreed about whether or not the preceding Cadmus-Teiresias scene is humorous and, if it is, how humorous and with what purpose: the answer to these questions must affect an audience's reception of the next scene. Within the speech itself, the ingenuity may be too apparent and too labored to produce the impression of loftiness or sincerity which the speeches of Theseus and Jocasta make. What can be said is that the chorus endorses Teiresias' effort and that the speech is another element in a spectrum of opinions of what Dionysus is and means. This spectrum includes the chorus' joyous, unreflecting acceptance of Dionysus' ecstasy and power (including belief in the tale which Teiresias tries to explain away: 94-98, 523-5); Cadmus' more matter-of-fact worship<sup>26</sup>; Teiresias' intellectualist interpre-

tation of the god; the first messenger's acceptance after witnessing wonders: [207]Pentheus' maligning suspicions and rejection; and Cadmus' and Agave's final resentment and disapproval. The play as a whole may suggest that the nature of Dionysus justifies many of these attitudes, but that every human effort to come fully to grips with the god is doomed to the failure of partiality or blindness. Whether Teiresias strikes an audience as sympathetic or not, as impressive or not, his viewpoint shares with those of Theseus and Jocasta the feature of inadequacy: Teiresias is not so blind as Pentheus, but the course of events in the play proves that his understanding is not adequate to the harsh realities of Dionysus' power. He too is an optimistic rationalist who is tragically wrong.

The three optimistic rationalists considered here are not alone in the Euripidean corpus in their fervent impulse to impose an intelligible construction upon human experience. It is a major aspect of a good deal of Euripidean tragedy that man's apparently highest achievements in rationality, analytic ability, and control of language are not tools toward success and true understanding, but sources of illusion, delusion and disaster. Admetus and Alcestis are convinced (with the deceptive help of Apollo's gift) that a sacrifice of one life for another can ensure a happy future for the survivor. Jason is coolly confident that he has reasoned his way to a secure and prosperous position. Phaedra eloquently expresses a doomed certainty that she understands how men fail and that she can guard herself from the process. Hippolytus places an unquestioning trust in his perception of good and bad, of the pious and the impious. These are all cases where characters live and often die by the constructs they have fashioned to understand and control their worlds. Blindness and delusion are of course familiar tragic themes. But Euripidean man is more articulate and self-conscious in voicing his interpretation of the way the world works, more assertive in his willingness to say how the world ought to work (the familiar Euripidean tendency toward *mempsimoiria*), and he is easily tempted to slide from articulating a rational construct to assuming that it applies and trying to live by it. This fatal step is the tragedy of the optimistic rationalist. Despite all the modernity of Euripides' language and rhetoric and of the issues of his plays, he remains, in most of his work, a poet of the traditional tragic genre, a genre which carries on the pessimistic emphasis on man's limits and frailties which characterizes much of archaic Greek literature and myth. To whatever extent there was a humanistic "enlightenment" in the late fifth century, Euripides was not its straightforward follower or proponent, but its critic, a sympathetic one perhaps, but one alive to its ironies.<sup>27</sup>

Two of our three optimistic rationalists are less centrally involved in the sufferings of their respective plays than characters like Jason or Phaedra. Jocasta is quite directly involved and suffers greatly, although her ultimate suicide over the bodies of her sons has its impact diluted by the sheer quantity of death and unhappy exile in *Phoenissae*. Nevertheless, all three suffer from the same sort of error I have ascribed to major figures like Jason or Phaedra, an error about the ability of man to understand and to control himself and events. Theseus, Jocasta and Teiresias pretend in addition to comprehend

something about the gods and the order of the universe, and it is this pretension or (mistaken) faith which links *[208]*them to a figure like Heracles in his controversial speech at Heracles 1341-1346.<sup>28</sup> A major dynamic of the *Heracles* is the shifting and reversal of interpretations of the gods' role in justice and in the success or failure of human endeavour. When things are bleak, Amphitryon is almost sure that Zeus will never give the aid he ought (by Amphitryon's lights) to give, and even when Heracles returns and revenge is in sight, the chorus finds fault with the gods' "understanding and wisdom" (655-656) and thinks that the course of time serves (unjust) wealth, not virtue. When Heracles has killed Lycus (and Zeus seems fully vindicated), the gods are glorified as guarantors of law, time as punisher of wrongdoers. The problem of understanding human fortune and the role and nature of the gods is thus already an issue long before Heracles' speech, and his speech must be read as part of a complex sequence and must be judged (like the other claims) in the light of the whole context. Theseus stirs Heracles from his unreflecting and mute determination to commit suicide and forces him to use speech and argument. In the end, the content of the arguments seems less important as therapy than the process itself. When Theseus uses examples that show divinity in a bad light, however, Heracles is stirred to protest and to voice his profession of idealistic faith. The famous lines do not merely express disapproval, they express a willful (and wishful) rejection, what I would interpret as the psychological reflex of a good man defiantly insisting on imposing an ideal order and morality on experience. It seems to me significant that this reflex of self-assertion marks the boundary between the Heracles committed to suicide and the Heracles ready to live on. We can admire the sentiments (and I suspect that Euripides wanted his audience to do so), but we must not accept them as true (the world of the play, a world created by Euripides himself, refutes them, and Heracles himself soon implicitly retreats from them), nor is there any reason to think they are "Euripides' own considered view." The play as a whole is Euripides' "own considered view", and if it seems to preach confusion and uncertainty, this is not a surprising view for a tragic poet.

In a lighter vein, *Iphigenia in Tauris* presents a similar confusion among the human characters about what the gods want, whether they uphold morality, and how men can interpret prophecy and dreams. Iphigenia's doubts about a bloodthirsty goddess (380-391) are subject to an irony of context just as much as Heracles' profession is: Artemis both does and does not demand human sacrifices, not only in a savage hinterland, but in Greece itself (at Aulis). Later Iphigenia reverses herself: she is unsure whether Artemis will consent to leave the Taurians. There is a comparable reversal in the use of several crimes of the Tantalids as "tokens" of recognition (812-826) despite Iphigenia's earlier rejection of the credibility of the first crime of the family (386-8). The speech at 380-391 is therefore not the last word on mythic history or on divinity, but a personal profession of a forlorn maiden who has convinced herself that her last hope, Orestes, is dead and who thus starts by condemning the situation she is trapped in but in

the end rebounds to impose upon the world, willfully and wishfully, a lofty ideal of pure divinity.

[209]The similarities between the positions of the optimistic rationalists and the briefer manifestos of a Heracles or an Iphigenia convince me that the dramatic functions of such statements are also comparable and that Euripides was a more consistent, and more tragic, poet than the Corneille of *Oedipe*.

## NOTES

This essay is dedicated with affection and respect to Desmond Conacher, who directed my Toronto dissertation in 1972-1973. The example he provided then—of prompt and judicious comment in person and in writing, on my every chapter (and there were too many)—has proven hard to match in my own experience as a teacher. If the view of Euripides argued for in this essay differs from that in his valuable book, I know that he will, in his usual humane and scholarly manner, treat such disagreement with attention and respect.

1. Lines 1149-1167. I quote from Corneille, *Oeuvres complètes*, préface de Raymond Lebègue, présentation et notes de André Stegmann (Paris 1963).
2. Cf. Stegmann's note 27, *ibid.* 580.
3. Cf. Dircé's speech (658-662): "Mégare, tu sais mal ce que l'on doit aux rois. / Un sang si précieux ne saurait se répandre / Qu' à l'innocente cause on n'ait droit de s'en prendre, / Et de quelque façon que finisse leur sort, / On n'est point innocent quand on cause leur mort."
4. Although in 1758-78 Phorbas is bitterly blamed for his role in saving Oedipe and keeping him ignorant, this reasoning is soon dropped and Oedipe himself (1825-40, 1991-4), Dircé (1819, 1843-4) and Dymas (1968, 1979) all assume Oedipe has been a victim of destiny.
5. T.C.W. Stinton, "Si credere dignum est: Some expressions of disbelief in Euripides and others", *PCPS* 22 (1976) 60-89, esp. 82-83 and 89 nn. 56, 57.
6. A.L. Brown, "Wretched Tales of Poets: Euripides, *Heracles* 1340-6", *PCPS* 24 (1978) 22-30, esp. 29.
7. G.W. Bond (ed.) *Euripides: Heracles* (Oxford 1981) 399-400.
8. For a recent discussion opposing a too quick dismissal of the relevance of the rhetoric of Euripidean *agôn*, see D.J. Conacher, "Rhetoric and Relevance in Euripidean Drama", *AJP* 102 (1981) 3-25.
9. On suppliant-drama see especially J. Kopperschmidt, *Die Hikesie als dramatische Form. Zur motivischen Interpretation des griechischen Dramas* (diss. Tübingen 1966); also J. Gould, "Hiketia", *JHS* 93 (1973) 74-103.
10. In both *Heracidae* (205-213) and *Supplices* (263-4) the claim of kinship is a secondary and reinforcing issue, not the primary motive of the request or the acceptance; contrast Aeschylus' *Supplices*, where the daughters of Danaos first establish a special claim to acceptance by Argos before clinching their case with the threat that their suicide will bring the wrath of Zeus Hikesios. Athenian pride in aiding suppliants is attested by the fact that the aid to Argive and Heraclid suppliants is a topos of the epitaphios: Lysias 2.7-16; Plato, *Menex.* 239b; [Dem.] 60.8; Hyperides 6.5. One may relate to this the Athenian pride in *ponoi* and in doing *polla* (cf. Collard on *Supplices* 577).
11. The most recent critic to do so is S. Melchinger, *Die Welt als Tragödie* (Munich 1980) 2.148.

12. Further parallels for this notion and parallels for other ideas in Theseus' speech are well presented in Collard's commentary.
13. For such a view of the non-tragic nature of optimistic rationalism (identified with the Socratic position) see the stimulating, if overschematic, book of H. Rohdich, *Die Euripideische Tragödie: Untersuchungen zu ihrer Tragik* (Heidelberg 1968).

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14. Collard 131-2 and 184-5 on lines 87-262 and 286-364 respectively.
15. Stinton (above, n. 5) 72 indicates a similar reading of Theseus' speech in context, but also says that "it is likely enough that the account of human progress he [Euripides] puts into Theseus' mouth was endorsed by himself"—a speculation which needs to be qualified inasmuch as the account enunciated in *Supplikes* is inseparable from Theseus' faith in divine benevolence, and the latter Stinton agrees is not endorsed by Euripides.
16. One index of the reversal of Theseus' position is the striking use of *τροφάω* in 214 and 552: in 214 men are criticized for their ingratitude to the beneficent gods, in 552 the *daimôn* has things easy because men are utterly dependent on his fickle favour.
17. For the term "nouthetic" see A.M. Dale, "Note on Euripides: *Helena* 1441-50", *Maia* 15 (1963) 310-3. Although we find unanswered prayers later as well (*Phoen.* 467-8, 586-7), there is no further reference in the play to the "wisdom" of Zeus. Therefore the conditional *εἰ σοφὸς πέφυκας* (86) seems to me more a token of Jocasta's moral seriousness than an indictment of the gods' moral levity (contrast the more biting examples in Euripides, such as *Hipp.* 117-120, *El.* 971-972, *Heracles* 339-347).
18. Polyneices' insistence that, despite his marriage with a princess, he is a nobody if he cannot share in his patrimony and the independent wealth it affords should not be viewed as an admission which unmasks greed, but as evidence of a value-system which has not even dissociated nobility from wealth—"the old ultra-aristocratic view" in the words of the excellent discussion of Greek ideas of wealth, nobility and virtue by Denniston on *El.* 253.
19. One might say that both brothers are equally concerned with the wealth of their inheritance, but even here a difference of attitude is conveyed in their language. Eteocles never uses the words *χρήματα* and *πλοῦτος*, but rather *τὸ πλεόν* (509), which he identifies with ruling. Polyneices frequently uses *χρήματα* and *μέρος* and related expressions (395, 401, 439, 483, 601, 603). Moreover, both Jocasta and Polyneices use *χρήματα* and *πλοῦτος* in describing Eteocles' position in their own terms (555, 566, 597; cf. 552).
20. I agree with Pearson that in 538 *νόμιμον*, the reading of the mss. and some indirect witnesses, should be retained against *μόνιμον* of part of the indirect tradition. I add here in passing that I believe (and shall argue elsewhere) that the *agôn*-scene of *Phoenissae* has not suffered any major interpolations. Within Jocasta's speech, I would bracket only line 558, though I consider 548 subject to serious suspicion. I do not accept the proposal of D. Kovacs, *GRBS* 23 (1982) 42-45, that 549-567 be deemed spurious.
21. Some parallels for traditional aspects: *Rejection of tyranny*, Archilochus fr. 19 West; Solon, fr. 32, 33, 34 West; Herodotus 5.92; see also D. Young, *Three Odes of Pindar* (*Mnem. Suppl.* 9, 1968) 1-26 on *Pyth.* 11. *Ambition's disastrous consequences for house and city*, Solon fr. 4 West; Pindar fr. 210 Snell-Maehler. *Equality as creating peace and unity, equality as just*, Solon fr. 36.18 West (cf. G. Vlastos, "Solonian Justice", *CP* 41 [1946] 65-83; "Equality and Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies", *CP* 42 [1947] 156-178). *Wealth insubstantial, divine control of wealth and poverty*, Theognis 133-4, 165-6, 719-728.

22. In serious poetry φιλοτιμία occurs in Pindar fr. 210 Snell–Maehler (it has been doubted, however, whether the fragment is a verbatim quotation), here in *Phoenissae*, and in *IA* 527. Sophocles does not use either this noun or the adjective φιλότιμος, and Aeschylus has only the latter, twice in non-pejorative senses. The pejorative sense of φιλοτιμία seems to be a prosaic development of late fifth-century political thought.
23. Some parallels for these aspects of the speech: *Universal laws*, Thuc. 5.105.2; [Xen.] *Ath.pol.* 1.4-5, 3.10. *Number and measure*, Pythagorean tenets in general; Aesch. *PV* 459-60, *Palamedes* fr. 303 Mette (= fr. adesp. 470). *Justice and the order of the universe*, Plato *Gorgias* 507e-508a. *Night and day and justice*, Heraclitus B94 DK; Parmenides, B 1.11-14, B9.3-4 DK (cf. Vlastos, *CP* 42 [1947] 156-178); cf. Soph. *Ajax* 669-677 for alternation in nature as a model for *sôphrosynê*. “*Happy/prosperous injustice*”, Plato *Gorgias* 470d. For Jocasta’s whole argument to Eteocles compare in general Anon. *lamb.* DK 89B 3.6, 6.1-7.16.
24. So Bond on *Heracles* 633-6.

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25. For this kind of exploitation of the hypothesis of altered pronunciation, cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 244c-d and the etymologies in the *Cratylus*.
26. I believe Cadmus’ worship is sincere: I interpret *Bacch.* 333-6 as an *ad hominem* appeal suited to Pentheus’ scepticism, not endorsed by Cadmus himself (note ὡς σὺ φῆς 333, and compare the force of the same phrase in *Phoen.* 467 and in fr. 451).
27. Cf. the exemplary essay of K. Reinhardt, “Die Sinneskrise bei Euripides”, *Neue Rundschau* 68 (1957) 615-646, repr. *Tradition und Geist* (Göttingen 1960) and in E.-R. Schwinge (ed.), *Euripides* (Wege der Forschung, 89: Darmstadt 1968).
28. In passing I mention that I follow Wilamowitz rather than Bond in interpreting the defective and difficult verse 1340 which precedes this speech: “Oimoi! What I am going to say is merely peripheral to my sufferings, but I do not believe . . . .”