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Source: *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (April 2007), pp. 81-169

Published by: [University of California Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/ca.2007.26.1.81>

Accessed: 14/06/2011 21:00

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## Gender, Class and Ideology: The Social Function of Virgin Sacrifice in Euripides' *Children of Herakles*

This paper explores how gender can operate as a disguise for class in an examination of the self-sacrifice of the Maiden in Euripides' *Children of Herakles*. In Part I, I discuss the role of human sacrifice in terms of its radical potential to transform society and the role of class struggle in Athens. In Part II, I argue that the representation of women was intimately connected with the social and political life of the polis. In a discussion of iconography, the theater industry and audience I argue that female characters became one of the means by which different groups promoted partisan interests based on class and social status. In Part III, I show how the Maiden solicits the competing interests of the theater audience. After discussing the centrality (as a heroine from an aristocratic family) and marginality (as a woman and associated with other marginal social groups) of the Maiden's character, I draw upon the funeral oration as a comparative model with which to understand the quite different role of self-sacrifice in tragedy. In addition to representing and mystifying the interests of elite, lower class and marginal groups, the play glorifies a subordinate character whose contradictory social status (both subordinate and elite) embodies the social position of other "marginal" members of Athenian society. The play stages a model for taking political action to transform the social system and for commemorating the tragic costs of such undertakings.

The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, supplant the criticism of weapons; material force must be overthrown by material force. But theory too will become material force as soon as it seizes the masses.

Karl Marx, *Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*

τὸ μὲν σφαγήναι δεινόν, εὐκλειαν δ' ἔχει·  
τὸ μὴ θανεῖν δ' οὐ δεινόν, ἡδονὴ δ' ἔστι.

Euripides *TrGF* F 854

There are many ways to approach the representation of women in drama. Indeed, the study of female characters is one of the main sites of struggle in classical scholarship. A vast amount of scholarly attention has produced various models with which to understand the role of women in drama and the more general

relationship between gender and the polis. However, less attention has been paid to the ways in which gender and class overlap in Athenian culture. The purpose of this paper is to explore how gender can operate as a disguise for class and thus to contribute to our understanding of how female characters functioned in Athenian society. To do so I examine the self-sacrifice of the Maiden in Euripides' *Children of Herakles* and discuss how her role engages with social relations. I argue that the shifting perspectives and identifications engendered by the Maiden have real political implications for competing classes and other social groups in fifth-century Athens. In Part I, I discuss the role of human sacrifice in tragedy in terms of its radical potential to transform society and then consider the role of class struggle in Athens. I briefly sketch the basis for using the concepts of class, status and ideology from within a Marxist paradigm in order to set up my reading of the female sacrifice in the play. In Part II, I argue that the representation of women was intimately connected with the social and political life of the polis. Both in iconography and in the theater industry female characters became one of the means by which class as well as status consciousness was promoted by different groups. The specter of a new kind of theater professional and the increasing use of female characters to showcase their talent had great appeal to a mass theater audience fundamentally divided in terms of class and status. As I argue, not just elite citizen males, but slaves, foreigners, metics, working class Athenians and women were present in the theater; such fragmentation in the audience is reflected in part by the set of competing social ideologies presented in drama. Part III focuses on the role of the Maiden and her self-sacrifice. Building upon the earlier parts of the paper, I show how the play's representation of her addresses a complex series of social relationships designed to solicit the competing interests of the mass theater audience. After discussing the play's representation of the Maiden's character in terms of its central and dominant significance (as a heroine from an aristocratic family) as well as its marginality (as a woman and associated with other marginal social groups), I draw upon the funeral oration as a comparative model with which to understand the quite different role of self-sacrifice in tragedy. In the conclusion, I explore some of the (simultaneously) contradictory ways in which the role of a self-sacrificing *parthenos* could serve as a model for different groups in the audience. In addition to representing and mystifying the interests of elite, lower class, and marginal groups in Athens, the play (on a more radical reading) glorifies a subordinate character whose contradictory social status (both subordinate and elite) embodies the social position of other "marginal" members of Athenian society (e.g., lower class males and females, metics) present in the theater audience. The play presents us with a character whose role can be shared with or (more importantly) performed by marginal members of society, thus staging a model for taking political action to transform the social system and for commemorating the tragic costs of such undertakings.

PART I: "YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION?"  
SACRIFICE AND CLASS STRUGGLE IN ATHENS

There are numerous ways to understand sacrifice and its role in drama. Whereas earlier models inspired by sociological analysis emphasized the communication between the sacred and the profane, evolutionary approaches have stressed the origins and historical development of sacrifice as a type of ritualized killing: aggression and communal violence are effectively *aufgehoben* through sacrifice. Thus for Walter Burkert, "civil life endures only by giving a ritual form to the brute force that still lurks in men."<sup>1</sup> Structuralist approaches to sacrifice view it as part of a larger symbolic system, in which the boundaries among men, animals and gods are clearly demarcated; sacrifice articulates the contours of social space.<sup>2</sup> There is, nonetheless, a conservative undercurrent in these approaches. The quest for origins does not provide an explanation for a particular culture's continued use of ritual, and the resolution of a *human* crisis through the sexualized violence of human sacrifice can also obscure the real social antago-

1. Earlier versions and sections of this paper were delivered in January 2005 at the APA in Boston; in 2005 at the conference, "Class Struggles in Ancient Greece," at Scripps College; in 2006 at Brooklyn College; and in 2007 at New York University. I am grateful to those audiences for their comments and criticism. I would like to thank in particular Eric Csapo and Mark Griffith, who have been generous with their time and knowledge at various stages of this project, as well as Peter Rose for providing much support and sharing with me his forthcoming work. A debt of gratitude is also owed the two anonymous readers, who gave me much critical advice and many helpful suggestions. I have tried hard to take all of their suggestions into account but alone remain responsible for the final product.

In their early discussion Hubert and Mauss [1899] 1964: 97 suggest that sacrifice "consists in establishing a means of communication between the sacred and the profane worlds through the mediation of a victim, that is, of a thing that in the course of the ceremony is destroyed." See Green 1975 and Kirk 1981 for discussion of earlier theories of sacrifice. The work of Burkert demonstrates the value and limits of evolutionary approaches (quotation from Burkert 1983: 45). Burkert argues (1983: 33) that the function of ritual is "to dramatize the order of life, expressing itself in basic modes of behavior" and 1966: 112 "society is built on the impulses of aggression controlled by ritual." See now Csapo 2005: 134–80 for critical discussion of Burkert and "ritual theories" of myth; for helpful discussion of the evolutionary model see Foley 1985: 46–56, Mack 1987: 22–32. The controlling of aggression can have the (perhaps) intentional effect of maintaining the status quo: Foley 1985: 59 (see further 1985: 60–61 and Pucci 1977) comes close to this position in her assertion that Euripidean drama insists on a "restoration of ritual to a central place in the politically and socially unstable world he creates."

2. Foley 1985: 30: "A structuralist analysis stresses the way sacrificial procedures turn the killing of an animal into a legitimate act that renders the meat of domestic animals acceptable for men and defines in specific ways the relation between god and men and among men in a Greek polis." Detienne 1989; Durand 1986, 1989; and Vernant 1991 have eloquently represented the view that the violence of sacrifice is that which the community must expel in order to maintain itself; see Durand and Schnapp 1989: 54: "The human order guaranteed and required by the gods is thus established around a dangerous act which contains within it the seeds of a violence that could destroy that very order. This violence, then, must be kept at a distance to prevent it from contaminating or insinuating its way into the ritual practice." The dissimulation of violence was not, however, always dominant (or the only meaning) in representations of ritual practice: see Bonnechere 1999, Peirce 1993. The establishment of "human order" in the structuralist approach finds further expression in sacrificial rituals that mark transitions.

nisms that fuel unrest and anxiety. Although there are some liberating aspects to structuralism's approach (e.g., its insistence on the constructed nature of social forms), it uncovers a system so overdetermined that there is no space from which to "opt out or even criticize the system."<sup>3</sup> It is difficult to imagine a thought more heartening to a conservative critic.

Similarly conservative readings have explained the rites of the *pharmakos*—a figure intimately related to the themes of ritual and sacrifice.<sup>4</sup> James Frazer viewed the *pharmakos* as a representative of the god of vegetation slain annually and thus ensuring his rebirth; on this view the mysteries of the gods thus preserve the proper functioning of society.<sup>5</sup> Building upon an ancient understanding of the *pharmakos* preserved in a scholiast's remark on Aristophanes' *Knights* 1136 that the victims purify the city by offering their blood, Ludwig Deubner argued that the "scapegoat" ritual removed the impurities of the community.<sup>6</sup> René Girard's view of the scapegoat's sacrifice springs from man's (innate) "mimetic desire" issuing in reciprocal violence that is only remedied by the sacrifice of an arbitrarily chosen surrogate victim. This functionalist view of the sacrifice of the *pharmakos* comes down to aligning it with protecting "the community against its own violence"—thus sustaining the status quo of the social order.<sup>7</sup> Whereas Emily Kearns notes that the *pharmakos* can also be viewed as asserting the claims of non-citizen groups to form part of the city, she emphasizes that at the same time the *unlikely* salvation of the city by such marginalized groups "suggests an unpredictability usually associated with the divine, an unpredictability which actually re-examines the norms which are to be followed by human beings and which supports the effectively unequal organization of authority."<sup>8</sup> More recently, David Rosenbloom has argued that Old Comedy

3. Csapo 2005: 276; he goes on to argue (280) that, "With no allowance for diversity within the system there was neither room for ethical choice nor any leverage for generating historical change. Historical change could only come from outside the system, randomly and mechanically, in the form of asteroids, plagues, or barbarian invasions."

4. Common to several Greek cities, the ritual act of expelling *pharmakoi* was designed in part to cleanse or purify the city; for evidence and discussion see Bonnechere 1994: 297–99, Bremmer 1983, Burkert 1979: 59–77, Parker 1983: 257–80. In light of this ritual function references to *pharmakos* could also be used to characterize an opponent as "accursed" in Attic oratory: see e.g. Lysias 6.53, Demosthenes 25.80. For additional references to *pharmakos* ritual in Athens see Hughes 1991: 149–56; in his discussion of the scholiasts' suggestion that *pharmakoi* were in fact killed, Hughes argues that there is little evidence for such practice in the Classical period.

5. Frazer 1913: 252–73; Burkert 1979: 67: "The unquestioned effect of the procedure is salvation of the community from evil and anxiety, which disappears with the doomed victim."

6. Deubner 1932: 192–98; see Bonnechere 1994: 298 for discussion of the scholiast's passage.

7. Girard 1977: 292; see also Burkert 1983: 46: "The gruesome 'evil' at work in the ritual fulfills a function, i.e., to preserve a social structure over the course of generations." For discussion of Girard's theory see Foley 1985: 49–56, Mack 1987: 7–22. See Henrichs 1981 for discussion of the (negative) role of human sacrifice in terms of its prohibition and as punishment by the gods.

8. Kearns 1990: 343–44; Hall 1997 offers a related discussion of tragedy's support for the status quo subordinating the non-male citizen alongside its egalitarian form that gives equal democratic rights to women and slaves. In his study of human sacrifice Henrichs 1981: 217–18 notes the

presents the fifth-century Athenian demagogues or “new politicians” as ritual scapegoats: the expulsion of these *ponêroi* leaders ends their oppression of the “genuine elite of wealth, talent and military leadership.”<sup>9</sup> Comedy’s politics of expelling demagogues as *pharmakoi* strive for the reestablishment of the traditional rule of the conservative elite.

Despite this emphasis on the conservative function of the *pharmakos* and the related multiculturalist logic of incorporating “new groups of men [women, foreigners, etc.] into the pre-existing form and structure” of society, contained within the unpredictability outlined by Kearns is the potential for the radical social transformation of “its fundamental form of relationships.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, Terry Eagleton has recently suggested that the sacrificial role of the *pharmakos* is “to recognize in it the uncanny power to transform the system itself.”<sup>11</sup> Viewed as separated out from society yet armed with the power utterly to change it, the sacrificial victim offers a striking parallel to Karl Marx’s discussion of the dynamics of a revolutionary class: there must be formed a “class with radical chains . . . a social group that is the dissolution of all social groups . . . a sphere that has a universal character because of its universal sufferings and lays claim to no particular right, because it is the object of no particular injustice but of injustice in general. . . . In a word, it is the complete loss of humanity and thus

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expendability of the “social outsider”; he also argues for the “alien status” of sacrificial victims (e.g., the Persians reportedly sacrificed by Themistokles at Salamis, Plut. *Them.* 13.2–5) as well as human sacrifice as non-Greek (218, 233–34). S. P. Morris 1995 (esp. 237–38) argues that human sacrifice was part of Semitic religion that influenced and was translated into Greek culture.

9. Rosenbloom 2002: 329–39 and passim (citation from 338); the *pharmakos* of the *ponêros prostatês* is a (319) “ritual of exclusion, which fortifies bonds among citizens and renews the community’s heroic past. The exclusion of the *ponêros prostates* symbolically repairs the *kosmos* of city damaged by politicians who ‘shake it up’ in order to extract profit from wealthy citizens.” The possibility that there are some members of the community who do not support the values of the conservative elite is not entertained in Rosenbloom’s interesting study; see further Rosenbloom 2004b: 332–39 (esp. 337) for related discussion of Hyperbolos and his ostracism as a kind of *pharmakos* ritual.

10. Williams 1966: 76; see further Zizek 2000 on the refusal of multiculturalism to *politicize* capitalism.

11. Eagleton 2003: 288; in what I take to be a rallying call for classical scholars, he further argues (295–96) for the relevance of “polluted kings and ancient fertility cults” to today’s society for their embodiment of “revolutionary zeal” instead of some form of pragmatism or multiculturalism: “The structure of a world increasingly governed by the greed of transnational corporations is one which has to be broken in order to be repaired. If this is the lesson of the *pharmakos*, it is also the faith of political revolution.” In this respect his approach is similar to Williams (1966: 66–77): unlike his notion of “liberal” tragedy, which separates “ultimate human values and the social system” and focuses on the individual, who embodies “all ultimate values, including . . . divine values,” a “socialist” theory of tragedy provides a justification for revolution, the crisis point at which social transformation becomes not only visible but possible. It is important to remember that for Williams (and indeed for Benjamin) the “normal” operation of society was *disorder* and suffering. Williams 1966: 80–81 suggests that modern society has inverted the meaning and function of “revolution” and “disorder”: “we have identified war and revolution as the tragic dangers, when the real tragic danger, underlying war and revolution, is a disorder which we continually re-enact.”

can only recover itself by a complete redemption of humanity.”<sup>12</sup> This approach to the sacrificial victim forms part of an alternative tradition that views tragedy in terms of its potential for social action, while acknowledging the human suffering involved in such change. In *Modern Tragedy*, Raymond Williams elaborates the notion of revolution for “full social equality” in terms of tragedy and sacrifice; revolution is not to be perceived as the single “crisis of violence and disorder” but rather in terms of “its necessary context as part of a whole action.”<sup>13</sup> The view of revolution itself *as* the crisis often disguises partisan interests that only become clear from taking a broader view of the *conditions* that give rise to it and result from it. Human suffering is neither to be attributed to revolution alone nor is it (or has it been) always possible to achieve social justice without atrocious losses; for Williams it is necessary to “see actual liberation as part of the same process as the terror which appalls us. I do not mean that the liberation cancels the terror; I mean only that they are connected, and that this connection is tragic.”<sup>14</sup> As Eagleton notes, Williams succeeds in translating “one of the most ancient of tragic idioms—the idea of sacrifice—into the most pressingly contemporary of terms”; to view sacrifice in terms of politics is “not to trade human lives for the prize of a more just social order, but to trust that some forms of anguish will finally bear fruit in a more peaceable, fulfilled society. . . .”<sup>15</sup> Marx’s notion of a revolutionary class as “complete loss of humanity” that can only redeem itself through “complete redemption of humanity” highlights the

12. From Marx’s *Towards a Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction* cited in McLellan 2000: 81. Eagleton 2003: 288; (cf. Williams 1966: 75) refers to this passage in his argument for the connection between Marx’s revolutionary class and the *pharmakos*: “This conundrum of a class which is not a class, at once the supreme expression and total dissolution of class society as such, is suspended like the *pharmakos* between the identity and non-identity, symbolic like the scapegoat of universal wrong and thus with the secret power to repair it. The process which Marx describes here is a classically tragic one.”

13. Williams 1966: 77, 65–66; he further notes (76–77) that “a society in which revolution is necessary is a society in which the incorporation of all its people, *as whole human beings*, is in practice impossible without a change in the fundamental form of relationships. . . . The reality of full membership is the capacity to direct a particular society, by active mutual responsibility and co-operation, on a basis of full social equality. And while this is the purpose of revolution, it remains necessary in all societies in which there are, for example, subordinate racial groups, landless landworkers, hired hands, the unemployed, and suppressed or discriminate minorities of any kind.” Williams’ analysis addresses modern society and its drama, but as I hope to show his approach can help illuminate social conditions in Athens which were also in need of adjustment.

14. Williams 1966: 82. See also Eagleton 2003: 59: “Here then is the typical tragic dilemma for the modern age—that we can neither discard the values of justice and democracy, nor brush aside their appalling historical cost in the name of some triumphalist teleology. There is no tragedy in this sense (though there may well be in others) for the conservative or liberal, the former of whom may be less than zealous about such questions as social justice, while the latter appears to believe that it can be realized without major upheaval.”

15. Eagleton 2003: 59–60. As part of his two-fold meaning of tragedy Benjamin 1998: 107 suggests that alongside an “atoning sacrifice to the gods who are upholding an ancient right” there is a “first sacrifice in the sense of the representative action, in which new aspects of the life of the nation become manifest.”

contradictory role of sacrifice. The value and preciousness of the sacrificial victim resides in its active engagement for the regeneration of society, but the victim (or the *pharmakos*) also represents the abject of society who nonetheless bear the responsibility for cleansing the city. The victims of human sacrifice in tragedy are often presented in terms similar to the *pharmakos*: the (re)building of a new order of society often comes at the cost of human life. The willingness to sacrifice that which is most dear in the hope (however at times fleeting) of attaining something of greater value and the sense of outrage at the necessity of such costs provide valuable commentary on the nature of sacrificial victims in tragedy.

Classical scholarship has eschewed this more radical interpretation of sacrifice and has generally viewed it from a more conservative perspective. One group stresses the positive implications of the victim's heroic choice to die, but the emphasis often lies in the elite values embodied by the brave and noble gesture of the victim: the grand gesture manifests a heroic display of free will in a time of uncertainty.<sup>16</sup> Most scholars, however, have argued in various ways for the negative implications of human sacrifice. Thus for Nancy Rabinowitz the corrupt male world is redeemed (or given a new lease on life) by the sacrificial woman, and the motif of self-sacrifice serves to mystify the "exchange of a young woman and her objectification."<sup>17</sup> Philip Vellacott stresses the poet's critique of political corruption in these plays and views such sacrifices as "an epitome of man's *hybris*, of his misrule of the world and his own society"; he suggests that Euripides had frequent recourse to the theme in order to voice his own criticism of the dangers of patriotism used to justify criminal acts and to show that women

16. For helpful discussion of tragic self-sacrifice see Burnett 1971: 22–26, Foley 1985, Kron 1999, O'Connor-Visser 1987, Schmitt 1921, Wilkins 1990a; see Bonnechere 1994, Hughes 1991 for discussion of the ritual and archaeological evidence for human sacrifice. For positive interpretations of self-sacrifice in drama see, e.g., Conacher 1967, Sansone 1991, Snell 1968, Strohm 1957: 50–63. Schmitt 1921: 1–2 believes that the myths of self-sacrifice encouraged the "fervent patriot" Euripides to create new scenes during the Peloponnesian War; Wilkins 1990a: 189 argues for a positive interpretation of the self-sacrifice of the Maiden in *Children of Herakles*, but does not "resist an ironic interpretation" of subsequent plays. A late Archaic sarcophagus found in Asia Minor with a relief depicting the sacrifice of Polyxena on one side and a funerary banquet with dancing soldiers on the other side suggests that some members of the Archaic elite identified with human sacrifice: Sevinç 1996.

17. Rabinowitz 1993: 37–38; despite her acknowledgment (12) that tragedy "was not monolithic" and could "inscribe resistance," Rabinowitz's readings of the plays nonetheless posit a rather univocal ideological function; she further restricts the function of female sacrificial victims to women alone (cf. e.g., 36: "Is there anything for women as such in this [Euripides'] sacrificial model?"). Closely related to this emphasis on the dominant patriarchal order, the men in the audience are presented as a homogenous group; see now Wohl 1998 for the incorporation of resistance in the portrayal of female characters in tragedy. For discussion of the theater audience see below. Scodel 1996 provides helpful discussion of "normative" ritual roles for women, but she ends (119) that human sacrifice "perverts sacrifice into impiety." Henrichs 1981 emphasizes the active construct of accounts of human sacrifice among the Greeks, but nonetheless provides a conservative explanation in suggesting sacrifice functions "to forestall greater disaster" (224, cf. 215).



are often the victims of such patriotic action.<sup>18</sup> With an emphasis on the gap between traditional heroic ideals and fifth-century society Helene Foley suggests that “even the uplifting voluntary sacrifices of Euripidean youth are made to seem deceptive and wasteful in the shabby world in which they are performed.”<sup>19</sup> A third group approaches the discrepancy between the relative lack of evidence for human sacrifice in Attic ritual and the proliferation of human sacrifice in literature, particularly in drama. These scholars emphasize the symbolic value of human sacrifice; Pierre Bonnechere thus argues that these myths serve to elaborate the foundation of initiation rituals in terms of the symbolic death of the youth.<sup>20</sup> In contrast with these more conservative approaches, Seaford has presented a complex historical argument for viewing the sacrifice of the lone royal victim as a necessary prelude to the creation of civic ritual and stability. Aristocratic rule is thus seen as giving way to a more communal outlook and salvation through *polis* ritual.<sup>21</sup> As will become apparent, I am sympathetic to this model but view the

18. Vellacott 1975: 182, cf. 178–204 (esp. 203–204); he connects the *Children of Herakles* (which he believes was produced in 427 or 426) with the Spartan attack on Plataia: the negative (or “ironic”) view of sacrifice that he sees in the play serves as the poet’s direct commentary on the war; sacrifice is (204) “without reason and ultimately self-destructive.” For related “negative” views of human sacrifice see also Hömann 1996, Mendelsohn 2002, Nancy 1983. O’Connor-Visser 1987: 210 suggests that Euripides became “progressively more concerned with the growing selfishness of the political leaders of Athens, as well as with the way in which so many young lives were being wasted”; the *Children of Herakles* is an exception, however, as it was “written in a patriotic spirit.” In his discussion of the relationship between Aiskhylos’ *Agamemnon* and Euripides’ *Hekabe* Thalmann 1993: 138 argues that Euripides “explores and makes explicit the full brutality to which an uncritical acceptance of the heroic worldview can lead—a world-view that was still an important element of the ideology of contemporary warfare.”

19. Foley 1985: 60; cf. 78–84, 102. Foley suggests (62) that Euripides was drawn to the theme of human sacrifice “to exploit its potential ironies. Here the ritual experience of women and children, who are excluded from political participation, offers an apparent cure for the political crises produced by men and forges unexpected links between public and private worlds.” The image of “social unity and order” (62) offered by the play, however, seems to come at the cost of avoiding the social ills that gave rise to the crisis (102): “when politics are irredeemable, ritual and poetry offer a timeless scenario for a positive and necessary deception.” Unlike the tragic view of revolution put forward by Williams (in terms of Marx’s “total redemption of humanity”) Foley suggests (23) that Euripides’ understanding of ritual sacrifice is similar to Durkheim’s notion of the need to reassert order in the face of the world’s instability.

20. Bonnechere 1994; he nonetheless emphasizes the negative aspects of human sacrifice in Euripides (e.g., 272: “la condamnation la plus grave sans doute qu’il pouvait adresser à la politique athénienne”); see also Georgoudi 1999, Henrichs 1981, Hughes 1991. Not all victims of human sacrifice are presented as young in Greek myth (*unlike* tragedy), a fact that Bonnechere tends to downplay: Georgoudi 1999: 72.

21. See Seaford 1994 (esp. 311–18, 344–67) for the destruction of the royal household as contributing to the foundation of civic cult (344): “Tragedy dramatizes cult aetiology, but in a specific manner, tending to introduce into the movement from crisis to resolution (or to select myths which already contain) a *historical* transition—from the self-destruction of the ruling family, marked by reciprocal violence and perverted ritual, to the communal cohesion of polis ritual”; he also stresses (rightly) the (346) “*present* tensions within democratic Athens and its ambivalent relationship with the heroic past.” For some criticism of Seaford’s interpretations, which at times generalizes the model observed in Euripides’ *Bakkhai*, see Friedrich 1996; Scullion 1999–2000 argues that many

sacri cial victim as a more dynamic site of struggle for competing classes in the polis. My approach, drawing on the tradition of Williams' *Modern Tragedy*, builds upon these studies and attempts to preserve some of the active engagement of the members of the audience (with their competing interests and class sympathies) in Athenian social and political life.<sup>22</sup> The excessive costs of human sacri ce are indeed outrageous, but they are (sometimes) nonetheless necessary to bring about social and political change.<sup>23</sup>

My analysis of the Maiden's self-sacri ce also overlaps with the larger question of women in drama. An earlier generation of classical scholarship addressed some of the contradictions between women's roles in drama and their roles in Athenian public life and history. Values expressed in drama were frequently viewed solely as the author's social commentary, and the role of the audience in dramatic production was ignored.<sup>24</sup> Beginning in the 1980s the use of structuralist and poststructuralist models provided a significant advance on the understanding of the representation of women in drama.<sup>25</sup> Foley and Froma Zeitlin, in particular, have eloquently explained how the representation of women could embody concerns directly applicable to an audience of Athenian men.<sup>26</sup> In the alterity model of self and other employed by these scholars, women are assigned to the category of the other in order to analyze the gendered role they played in defining the male self. But in treating the category of men, however, as an unmarked group (and disregarding the likely presence of women in the

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aetiological stories in tragedy are literary creations by the poets. I would also stress that Seaford's emphasis on the salvation of the polis through the destruction of the royal family (e.g., 347) overlooks the fact that the royal family (comprising elite, heroic characters) often *does* continue on albeit with one less member.

22. Emphasizing the potential for female spectators to reject the prescribed gender roles that she uncovers in Euripidean drama, Rabinowitz (1993: 38) also suggests that this audience could "read against the text" and resist "the illusion that they too can achieve subjectivity or even heroism if they identify with the sacri ce." As I will argue below, the likely presence of lower class women in the audience allows for the possibility that they identified with the class position of the family rather than their own gendered place in Attic society; as such, the model of the Maiden in acquiring such a position of authority may have been quite welcome. These victims thus lose none of their uplifting social value for the lower classes. For others in the audience, these characters could serve to mystify social relations while also validating the values of the elite. Although the illusions of subjectivity and authority can be tools of domination, they also have a transformative potential.

23. It should be clear that I do not endorse the idea that sacri ce is a supreme value of humanity or that violence for its own sake is good, but current political options such as pragmatism and multiculturalism can only bring limited change that ironically often ends up supporting the dominant and corrupt social order (see further Eagleton 2003). For helpful discussion of postmodern politics see Zizek 2000.

24. See e.g. Gomme 1925; for useful discussion of earlier approaches see Blok 1987, des Bouvrie 1990: 11–33. More recently Seidensticker 1995 has argued for the close relationship between women in drama and their "muted" role in society.

25. The bibliography on the question of the function of women in drama is legion. For orientation see Foley 1981, 2001; Wohl 1998, 2005. See Rose 1993 for a useful attempt to situate the study of women within a Marxist perspective.

26. See e.g. Foley 2001; Zeitlin 1990, 1996 (and n. 147 below); see also Bassi 1998. Griffith 2001, however, observes that the female characters often do not speak only as "women."

audience), these studies effectively bracket social differences of class and status, both within and outside the citizen body (e.g., metics), and treat the men in the theater audience as if they were a homogeneous group. A similar problem arises in recent work building upon Zeitlin's model. Laura McClure argues that the dangers of rhetorical skill portrayed in drama reside in the possible blurring of class lines, where "speakers of low birth" could get the upper hand over the "aristocrats," and that "women provide the perfect vehicle for conveying this contemporary political crisis."<sup>27</sup> Indeed, in this model drama comes off as a vehicle for elitism. By breaking down the category of "males" to include the lower classes (among others), however, we can also see that the power of seductive rhetoric could be appealing to some members of the audience in light of the popular "new politicians" such as Kleon, Hyperbolos and Kleophon.<sup>28</sup> It is not obvious why these "demagogues" and their supporters in the audience would have responded negatively to the image of speakers of "low birth" usurping traditional elite prerogatives. The complex interactions of different social groups in Athenian society suggest that there was no one stable, homogeneous "self"—a construct that elides males of different status groups and classes. The category of the "other," as I will argue below, was also less homogeneous and was not limited to women. Slaves, foreigners and the lower classes could all serve as the "other." By erasing these other groups from the analysis of Athenian society, the alterity model deprives the "other" of agency, and as I have suggested it is not only women who are denied agency and erased from history. One might rightly question the heuristic value of the alterity model.<sup>29</sup>

My use of "class" is deliberate, as I often have the feeling that for many the idea of class struggle collapsed along with the Berlin Wall (if not sooner).<sup>30</sup> To

27. McClure 1999: 28. The notion that tragedy can have an elitist bias is not without merit: see e.g. Citti 1996; Griffith 1995, 1998; Wohl 1998. However, while I am sympathetic to the uses of female characters to articulate political issues of elite males, unless we acknowledge the existence of other social groups in the audience (e.g., based on class, status, or gender), the interests of the *mass* audience can only be understood as the interests of the ruling (elite) male citizens (see McClure 1999: 5n.10 for the assumption that the plays addressed "a notional audience of men"). Rosenbloom 2002 comes close to McClure's elevation of the part of society that supports the demagogues by suggesting that the "theater" opposed the "new elite's wealth" while supporting the traditional elite (this strikes me rather as an argument for theater as propaganda).

28. See Roselli 2005 for a nuanced view of the role of dramatic performances in soliciting the interests of a divided audience through the staging of market people and demagogues.

29. The Marxist notion of ideology adopted below necessitates the adoption of the values, concerns, anxieties and aspirations of marginalized groups (whether by status, class or gender) into the ideas and practices that support the dominant group and their subjugation of others; thus within a successful dominant ideology the voices of the marginalized can be discerned. For the problems of the self/other binary in constructing identity Said 1994 is fundamental; Moyer 2002 critiques the alterity model as applied by scholars to Herodotus and offers a valuable example for reconsidering the agency of the other.

30. Current cultural trends suggest that there is, or was until a few years ago, a growing middle class. However an article from the *Guardian* a few years ago points out ("How we left the working class and joined the middle class" by A. Travis, 12.29.99) that the widening gap between rich and

be sure, the very idea of class constitutes something of a battle field.<sup>31</sup> G. E. M. de Ste. Croix's well-known study, *Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*, thoroughly explored the concepts of class and class struggle as well as their relevance to a study of ancient Greece. Deriving his approach to class directly from Marx, Ste. Croix defined class as a relationship based on the social relations of production: "the collective social expression of the fact of exploitation, the way in which exploitation is embodied in a social structure."<sup>32</sup> Such exploitation may be direct—in the case of wage-laborers, slaves, tenant-farmers or debtors—or more indirect—in the case of taxation.<sup>33</sup> Although Ste. Croix's model is heavily materialistic and thus emphasizes the role of the economic base in determining society and culture (i.e., the superstructure), in keeping with his Marxist approach Ste. Croix does define class in terms of its relational nature—namely, that a class

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poor has resulted not in a sharpened class consciousness but in the paradoxical consensus that "we are all middle class now." Is *this* not an ideological ruse? In May 2005 the *New York Times* launched a series of articles on the topic of class in the USA, but their analysis of class was woefully inadequate; the concept of class was little more than a (descriptive) classification system with no relationship between rich and poor. See Aronowitz 2003 for a neo-Marxist discussion of the ways in which the category of class can be rethought in light of the current social and cultural climate, but the tendency in his model to make significant concessions to the current political world order remains problematic. For thoughtful discussion of (Western) Marxism see Anderson 1979, 1984; Jameson 1971. More recently Bensaïd 2002 argues for the relevance of Marx *after* the collapse of Stalinism; see Harvey 1989 for lucid explanation of the continued role of class in a postmodern age. My discussion of class struggle in Athens is intended only to sketch out the parameters necessary for this paper; nearly all the issues discussed here are contested (see e.g., Rose 1997, 2006). A fuller study of class in the Classical period is a *desideratum*.

31. In the field of Classics, the debate has mostly revolved around Finley's (1985) appropriation of the category of "status" (derived from Weber, who nonetheless also spoke of a "Klassenlage") and Ste. Croix's use of the Marxist category of class; see Nafissi 2004 for recent treatment of this debate. Many of Finley's views of the ancient economy have been refuted or reined in recent years: see e.g. Bresson 2000 and Harris 2001. Earlier attempts to explain changes in ancient Greece applying Marxist models in a vulgar fashion present a series of problems: Wason 1947 is marred by sweeping generalizations without documentation, a lack of any discussion of ideology (the analysis is overtly materialist and determinist), and its rigid ahistorical framework (e.g., the rise of a merchant class in Greece much like the transition from feudalism to capitalism); the work of Thomson (e.g., 1955) likewise creates an ancient class of "traders" based directly on analogies from modern bourgeois social structure, treats Athens as a homogenous body (e.g., 1946: 350, 383), and employs a naïve analysis of ancient texts. For a more sophisticated application of a Marxist approach to class in ancient Greece see Rose 1992, 1997, forthcoming; Thalmann 1998; Vernant 1974b.

32. Ste. Croix 1981: 43; he continues: "A class," then, "is a group of persons in a community identified by their position in the whole system of social production, defined above all according to their relationship (primarily in terms of the degree of ownership or control) to the conditions of production (that is to say, the means and labour of production) and to other classes."

33. In his definition of class Lenin managed to combine the distribution of wages, the division of labor as well as the relation to the means of production (1965: 421): "Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labor, and consequently by the dimensions of the share of social income of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it." One might note that Lenin's definition does not require members of a class to be completely identical to each other; they need only share a sense of solidarity in terms of their opposition to another class (or other classes).

exists only in opposition to another class (or other classes).<sup>34</sup> Thus in Athens whereas one group comprising the (mostly conservative) elite defined themselves against a larger group consisting of peasants, urban laborers and merchants, this larger group at times defined themselves against the wasteful extravagance of the wealthy; both groups in turn defined themselves against slaves and foreigners. As Frederic Jameson has argued, “each class is at once a way of relating to and of refusing the others.”<sup>35</sup> It is thus somewhat perverse to ask what is *a* class, since a class only exists in relation to other classes. This opposition between or among classes is founded on the attempt to gain control of the surplus, which derives from the productive labor of society (often the exploited labor of a particular class), and the means of production. The resultant conflict among the contending classes issues in class struggle. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels declare that opposed classes carry on “an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes.”<sup>36</sup> Their emphasis on

34. On account of its heavily materialistic leanings (the economic base determines the cultural, legal and political superstructure), Ste. Croix’s conceptualization of ideology tends to be rather poor and often is synonymous with propaganda. For discussion of Marx’s more complex formulation of materialism and its relation to ideology see Hawkes 2003: 89–109, Williams 1977: 76–89; for useful discussion of class see Day 2001. Although Marx (and Engels) did write about the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie and proletariat under capitalism, it should be kept in mind that an analysis of the class structure of any given society (i.e., the task of historical materialism) requires a study of that society in terms of the dialectical relationship between its material as well as ideological components, a point well made by Lukács 1971: 58 and suggested by Marx’s brief discussion of class at the end of Volume 3 of *Capital*, where the question of how many classes exist is informed by considerations of historical context; McLellan 1972: 156 rightly notes that “Marx had many criteria for the application of the term ‘class’ and not all of them apply all the time. The two chief criteria are relationship to the prevailing mode of production and a group’s consciousness of itself as a class with its attendant political organization.” To dismiss class struggle from a study of the Athenian economy on the grounds that miners and stone-cutters did not aim at a “classless society of the kind which the modern bourgeoisie imagined . . . or of the kind which is demanded by socialist ideology” (Austin and Vidal-Naquet 1977: 22) is to thrust in a rather vulgar fashion Marx’s nineteenth-century discussion of society onto the ancient world without taking into account the need for historical analysis (*precisely* what Lukács warns against). Those who dismiss Marxist analyses out of hand also tend to forget that his notions of class and class struggle were the product of several generations of thinkers and activists beginning in the Enlightenment (and arguably in the ancient world): see Corcoran 1983 for the relevant modern texts and Harvey 2004 for discussion of modernity’s ejection of the traditions of class struggle with the successful rise of the bourgeoisie.

35. Jameson 1971: 380; he further suggests (381) that “So it is that each class implies the existence of all the others in its very being, for it defines itself against them and survives and perpetuates itself only insofar as it succeeds in humiliating its adversaries”; cf. Jameson 1971: 84 (also 288–92): “For Marxism . . . the very content of a class ideology is relational, in the sense that its ‘values’ are always actively in situation with respect to the opposing class, and defined against the latter: normally, a ruling class ideology will explore various strategies of the *legitimation* of its own power position, while an oppositional culture or ideology will, often in covert and disguised strategies, seek to contest and to undermine the dominant value system.”

36. Marx and Engels cited in McLellan 2000: 246. The sentence is also noteworthy for its emphasis on the open-ended results of class struggle: nothing is guaranteed in the process; it is also important to note that the text immediately continues with reference to status groups as well

*hidden* as well as *open* class conflict is important and points to the actions taken by members of a class lacking in class consciousness.<sup>37</sup> But class struggle implies not only fights over the surplus and its distribution, but also the management of ideas and cultural production. As Marx and Engels argue in *The German Ideology*: “The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, for the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force.”<sup>38</sup> However, before turning to the role of ideology in class struggle, I want first to set out some evidence for class relations in Athens.

Although there were forty to sixty thousand citizens and perhaps a somewhat smaller number of metics in Athens around 430, only a tiny fraction of them would have had sufficient wealth to perform liturgies.<sup>39</sup> The majority of the

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(“Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another. . .”). For discussion of the development of the concept of class in Marx (with select passages) see McLellan 1972: 151–66; for more recent reappraisals of class emphasizing the role of culture in class formation (emphasizing the work of Max Weber) see the essays in J.R. Hall 1997. Vernant 1974b: 13 discusses the conflicts in ancient Greece between citizens as revolving around such questions as “Who should benefit from the redistribution of surplus by means of the institutions of the city-state? The mass of citizens, whatever the diversity of their economic status, were polarized into two opposed camps. Those who had nothing or very little sought to use the structures of the state to tax the rich as much as possible, while the owners—whatever the origins of their fortunes—were determined to resist this.” Vernant’s elaboration (1974b: 2–3) of a fundamental contradiction (masters vs. slaves) and a principle or dominant contradiction (rich vs. poor) is dismissed by Ste. Croix (1981: 63); although these two contradictions separate the issue of slavery from class conflict, it nonetheless has the value of directing attention to the otherwise forgotten lower class laborers in the polis (see Golden 1984).

37. In his discussion of class struggle in France after Louis Napoleon seized power (1851) Marx considers the vast mass of peasants that form the French nation “much as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes” (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* cited in McLellan 2000: 347): “In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests, and their culture from those of other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond, and no political organization among them, they do not form a class.” Hidden class conflict appears as an important expression of an exploited group in terms of its emerging recognition of its role in society. See Forgacs 1988: 333–34 for Gramsci’s notion of “contradictory consciousness” possessed by the “active man-in-the-mass”; this notion elaborates some of the problems in forming a “consciousness of being part of a particular hegemonic force.”

38. Marx and Engels cited in McLellan 2000: 192. They go on to suggest that “The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas.” Subsequent elaboration of the role of ideas in class struggle (e.g., in the work of Gramsci and Williams) theorizes different strands of thought caught up within the dominant ideas (see discussion below).

39. Discussion and estimates of the fifth-century population: Patterson 1981: 66–68; Hansen 1988: 11–28, 1991: 52–54; Jones 1957: 76–81; Ober 1989: 28–29, 127–31; Raabe 1998: 26–30; van Wees 2001. However, even lower estimates of the citizen body (20,000–30,000) would not greatly affect my argument here; for wealthy liturgists would have still made up only a tiny fraction of the citizen body: 300–400 liturgy paying citizens, 1200–2000 *eisphora* payers (Davies 1971: xx–xxx, 1981: 5–37; Ober 1989: 127–29; cf. Rhodes 1982 who argues for slightly higher estimates: 1200 liturgy paying citizens, 2000 subject to *eisphora* payments). Some argue that there were perhaps another 7000 or so citizens with assets of around 2000 dr. (Ober 1989: 129, Jones 1957: 142n.50), but

population was poor and lived either on a small, perhaps intensively farmed parcel of land (rented or owned) or in the city as craftsmen or hired laborers.<sup>40</sup> But it is important to note that much if not most of the land in Attica was owned by those who belonged to the top three Solonian *telê*, whereas many of the *thêtes* owned no land; there were, for example, five thousand citizens who did not own land in Athens in 403 (Lysias 34): many of these citizens surely numbered among the wage-laborers and craftsmen who worked in the city.<sup>41</sup> Archaeological surveys have shown that land holdings were fragmented and many of the units of land were small. It is unlikely, however, that this evidence can be used to justify the notion that all Athenians owned a more or less equal portion of land. It seems rather that wealthy landowners owned many plots of land, some (or perhaps most) of which was outside Attica; some of the poorer *thêtes* would have farmed on only one small unit.<sup>42</sup> Concerns over redistribution of the land in the fifth and fourth centuries point to the ongoing struggle between the holdings of wealthy landholders and poorer citizens. The forswearing of any such *anadasmus gês* immediately upon the eponymous arkhon's taking

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as Patterson 1981: 177 notes, such estimates are based on Diodorus (18.18.4–5) and the assumption of a “hoplite franchise” under Antipater; these estimates are thus more speculative than acknowledged. The difficulty in defining the liturgical class in Athens in light of the ability of the wealthy to convert visible into invisible wealth (see Gabrielsen 1986, 1994) suggests a practical response from the wealthy to the demands of the radical demos; the existence of a group of liturgy-paying Athenians does not, however, necessarily imply any cohesion or homogeneity in terms of social values or class allegiance (see below for discussion of Gramsci's notion of intellectuals).

40. See Jones 1957 for discussion of the population in terms of poor farmers and craftsmen; and Jones 2004 for rural labor (including metics) and the urban view of it. In addition to the 10,000 citizens working in “non-agricultural jobs” Harris 2002: 70 posits a fourth-century population in which there were roughly 10,000 citizens (and 19,000 metics) working as craftsmen, suggesting that “citizens who did not work as farmers may have comprised as much as 50 percent of all adult males (citizens, metics, and slaves).” See also Mattingly and Salmon 2001 for the role of manufacturing and commercial activities in the ancient economy. The recent studies of Rosenbloom (2002, 2004a, 2004b) insist on the significant role of farmers but downplays the existence (and values) of urban laborers in Athens; cf. also Ste. Croix 1981: 179 who stresses the role of slaves (unfree labor) in generating the surplus and argues for the very limited role of wage-labor.

41. See van Wees 2001 for recent study of the percentage of land owned by the four Solonian classes. He argues that in 431 the top three *telê*—*zeugitai*, *hippeis*, *pentakosiomedimnoi*—comprised between 9% and 22% of the population and owned 46% to 67% of the land; the *thêtes* comprised 78% to 91% of the population and owned 33% to 54% of the land. The range in the percentage of the population is based on estimates of 40,000 and 60,000 citizens; if there was a reduction in the zeugite census from 200 to 150 *medimnoi* (van Wees 2001: 53, 56) the percentage of the *zeugites* naturally increases so that the top three *telê* make up 11.7% to 30% of the population and own 50% to 75% of the land; the *thêtes* would make up 70% to 88.3% of the population and own 25% to 50% of the land. Other studies of the ownership of land suggest that less than 10% of the population owned 30% to 35% of the available land (and perhaps controlled an additional 10% through leases): Foxhall 1992, 2002: 211; Osborne 1988, 1992; cf. Hanson 1995, Morris 1994b. Foxhall 2002: 220 rightly concludes that, “The way in which the control of large amounts of land and the labour to work it validated high status manifests a deep structure of Greek society which not even the power of radical democracy was able to overcome, though it succeeded in ring-fencing it to some extent.”

42. For analysis and discussion of the fragmented land holdings see Foxhall 1992, 1993, 2002 (with additional bibliography).

o ce (*Ath. Pol.* 56.2), a pledge strengthened by the addition of not allowing private debts to be cancelled in the heliastic oath (Dem. 24.149), attests Athenian anxieties about open class warfare (as well as the ongoing maintenance of property rights benefiting the wealthy minority) and points to the “hidden” conflicts noted by Marx.<sup>43</sup>

Xenophon’s suggestion that the demographics of the Assembly had changed—full as it is now of cobblers, tradesmen, fullers and the like (*Mem.* 3.7.6)—underscores the role of lower class urban laborers in the administration of the polis and the perceived threat posed by these citizens to the conservative elite.<sup>44</sup> The problem of the urban laborers and their (radical) political interests for the elite is also evident in Aristotle’s *Politics*, where he associates extreme democracy with the admission of laborers to state offices (1277b1–3; especially when aided by state pay, 1293a2–11); he further notes that the urban labor force finds it much easier to attend the Assembly and advises that assemblies not be held *without* the dispersed rural crowd (1319a26–39). According to one recent study, the fifth-century population in Athens changed dramatically with the number of *thêtes* having “grown out of all proportion in the post-Persian War period.”<sup>45</sup> The increased size of the *thêtes* and the presence of greater numbers of the urban labor force in the civic body likely contributed to the emergence of specialization based on profession and to a new level of “class consciousness.” The values of industry and labor were not simply rejected by aristocrats in their bid to denigrate

43. See also Plato *Rep.* 566e which refers to the demagogues’ promise of redistributing land; Aristophanes’ *Ekklesiazousai* and *Ploutos* (the first version of which was produced at the end of the 5th century, c. 408) exploit concerns over economic inequality in the construction of a comic fantasy of a communist utopia for all (*Ekklesiazousai*) or economic redress (*Ploutos*). For discussion of the redistribution of land see Burford 1993: 27–29; Ste. Croix 1981: 298 (with n.55). Phantokles’ amendment to the decree establishing a colony at Brea (c. 446–445) limiting the colonists to the *thêtes* and *zeugitai*—the two lowest Solonian classes—perhaps preserves an attempt by the poorer citizens to acquire more land (Meiggs and Lewis 1988: no. 49); Foxhall 2002: 214 suggests that this may have been an attempt to “block efforts of wealthier men to dominate in terms of both landholding and political power.” For discussion (and skepticism) of the meaning of the Solonian property classes in the fifth and fourth century see now Gabrielsen 2002.

44. Hansen 1991: 125 argues that the Assembly was dominated by common people. Testimonia for different craftsmen and market trades: Wycherley 1957: 185f. See Ste. Croix 1981 for discussion of three groups of laborers in Athens: hired laborers (179–86); peasants (208–26; the analysis of fifth-century Athens is, however, very weak); and independent producers, such as craftsmen and manual laborers (269–75). See now Harris 2002 for discussion of specialization of urban labor in Athens (with a catalogue of non-agricultural laborers); he suggests (2002: 70) that “the citizens who did not work as farmers may have comprised as much as 50% of all adult males (citizens, metics, slaves).”

45. Raab 1998: 30. Patterson 1981: 40–81 (esp. 70–71) suggests that the population increase was fueled in part by the admission of foreigners into the civic body. See also Strauss 1986 who discusses some of the changes in demographics in terms of economics; he rightly notes the differences in casualties among the hoplites and the *thêtes*: after c. 413 the *thêtes* seem to have suffered heavier losses and thus (1986: 81) “By 405, a good part of the political power of the thetic class was at the bottom of the Aegean.” Such losses would have been countered in part by the enfranchisement of the slaves who fought at the battle of Arginusai: Hunt 2001. See Kron 1999 for useful discussion of urban laborers and the (alleged) prejudice against traders and commercial activity in elite sources.



those who had to work for a living, these values are also increasingly invoked to praise workers and to denigrate them against an undeserving elite. Funerary reliefs, for example, begin to depict both males and females as “working class” professionals, among whom we find actors and musicians.<sup>46</sup>

In light of this uneven distribution of wealth among a mixed population it should not surprise that the theme of class struggle appears frequently in our sources. In his *Fourth Philippic* Demosthenes raises the specter of open class struggle in Athens in a defense of the theoric fund while trying to maintain the delicate balance of interests between the rich and the poor.<sup>47</sup> While the wealthy may oppose the distribution of public funds to poor citizens, unaided by the state the poor might seek to take matters into their own hands, which the wealthy property-holding citizens feared (10.45). Demosthenes argues that for the wealthy “to deprive one of necessities is to make many men join forces united by their displeasure with the political state of affairs (κοινῇ κακόνους ἔστι ποιεῖν πολλοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοῖς πράγμασι, 10.42); I would also counsel the poor to remove the grounds the wealthy have for being discontent with the matter at hand and justly assailing it.”<sup>48</sup> According to Demosthenes the specter of open class struggle lurks just beneath the surface of Athenian society.<sup>49</sup> A similar threat of revolution

46. The presence of wage-laborers and craftsmen in Attic iconography became more pronounced as working men asserted themselves as “working class” professionals. See Desmond 2006 for the praise of labor in Athenian (as well as other) sources. As Himmelmann 1994 has shown, there was an increase in “realism” in depictions of *banausoi*; see also Csapo and Miller 1998: 116. With their emphasis on the (lower) class nature of their labor the images of *banausoi* represented a radical departure from the normative iconography of Athenian citizens (for which see Bergemann 1997). Representation of laborers: Kosmopoulou 2002, Vidale 2002; see also Brock 1994. Funerary reliefs of actors and musicians also represented them as professionals: see Wilson 2002: 49. For the pride of metic professions and the “personal satisfaction of the laborer” see also Burford 1993: 185–86, 192.

47. See Harris 1994 for discussion of this oration and additional examples of the balance between material benefits for the poor and property rights for the rich; Harris rightly notes (72) Demosthenes’ “shrewd observation that the wealthy acceded to the demands of the mass of citizens partly out of fear that a refusal might result in bloodshed.”

48. In Lysias’ speech *On Overthrowing the Democracy*, delivered after the fall of the Thirty, the speaker hints that wealthy men like himself might favor an oligarchy *once again* and underscores the dangers of class antagonism in Athens after the war (25.8). The speaker thus promotes the idea of recognizing personal advantages *shared by a group with similar economic interests* and their political power.

49. Demosthenes thus provides another example of Marx’s “hidden” class conflict. Open class warfare was, however, a regular occurrence in ancient Greece (and perhaps of some significance in light of the international make-up of the theater audience at the City Dionysia; the sizable number of metics in the audience should also not be forgotten). On Samos in 412 the *demos* rose up and overthrew the oligarchic government (Thucydides 8.21). Thucydides describes the *stasis* in Epidamnus (1.24) as the result of the expulsion of the *dynatoi*, who were in power, by the *demos* (1.24.5). The class component of this *stasis* is suggested not only through the expulsion of the *dynatoi*—the ones who controlled the *polis*—but also through Thucydides’ use of *demos* in a factional sense (e.g., 3.47.1; 47.3 for Diodotos’ remarks on a divide between the *demos* and the *oligoi*, who revolt from Athens); see further Ober 1998: 70–71 for recent discussion and additional examples. In Argos (c. 370) the *demos* revolted against the “wealthy citizens of property and reputation.” After an abortive oligarchic counter coup, “the democracy without a thorough investigation put to death all those

surfaces in Plato's *Republic*, where Sokrates describes what happens when the poor come into contact with the rich. The sun-burnt working man cannot help but think of revolution as he looks at the fat, rich man standing next to him in the line of battle; these poor laborers mutter to themselves: "These men are ours, for they are nothing" (556c-e). For Plato such class antagonism brings about radical democracy. The two oligarchic coups at the end of the fifth century certainly gave expression to open class warfare. Thucydides describes the oligarchic supporters in 411, formed from small upper class clubs or "sworn bands" (8.54.4; Andokides 1.38), as saying publicly "that no pay should be given except to persons serving in the war and that not more than 5,000 should share in the government, and those such as were most able to serve the state in person and resources" (Thucydides 8.65; *Ath. Pol.* 29.5, Lysias 20.13); among their first acts was the assassination of popular leaders (8.65.2). The specific class content of state pay, as Aristotle suggests, was that it was considered a means of allowing the urban laborers with their democratic sympathies to acquire political power. The introduction of state subsidies such as jury pay (*Ath. Pol.* 27.4) and the theater dole attributed to Perikles (Plutarch *Per.* 9.1-3) as well as Agyrrhios' introduction of assembly pay after Athens' defeat (*Ath. Pol.* 41.3; *Ekkkl.* 183-88, 289-310) and the institution of the *diôbelia* by Kleophon (*Ath. Pol.* 28.3) suggest an increasing demand by the poorer members of the *demos* for a redistribution of the surplus (another form of hidden class conflict); the lowering of property qualifications for public office in 457/6 (*Ath. Pol.* 26.2) and the likelihood that such restrictions were in fact not always observed in the fifth century (as they were not later in the fourth century) attest the rising political authority of an increasingly larger pool of citizen males as well as the elite politicians' recognition of the power of the people.<sup>50</sup> After the war Theramenes declared to Kritias that he was "forever at war with those persons who do not think there can be a good democracy until the slaves and

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who were accused and confiscated their property"; in the end, the mob killed 1200 wealthy men. Interestingly, when the demagogues began to hedge their bets and stopped accusing wealthy men, the *demos* turned on them (Diodorus 15.58.2-3). For Diodorus, such blood-letting was cathartic—after this, the *demos* came to its senses.

50. For the *diôbelia* see Loomis 1998: 222-23; however, I disagree with his interpretation of *Frogs* 141 (222n.13) as a reference to the *diôbelia* (see note 112 below). The *eisphora* imposed on wealthy Athenians (e.g., Thucydides 3.19.1, Lysias 21.3) provides another example of what I would term "hidden" class conflict (see Ste. Croix 2004: 57-60, Ober 1989: 202-204). The relationship between Kleon and the *hippeis* likewise seems to have involved a curtailing of public support for the knights: see Aristophanes *Knights* 774-75, 225-26 (with the scholia ad loc.). For discussion of the introduction and implications of state pay, which Ste. Croix (1981: 289) refers to as "much the most important reform" enabling "even the poorer citizens to play a real part in the political life of the city," the earlier discussion of Böckh (1886: 274-315) remains useful; see also Loomis 1998 (esp. 9-31, 220-31); Markle 1985; Ober 1989: 79, 81, 98; Todd 1990. Rose 2006: 109-110 notes that Agyrrhios' proposal to institute Assembly pay serves as an example of Marx's hidden class warfare. The prohibition against the *thêtes* holding office was not observed in the fourth century (*Ath. Pol.* 7.4) but interestingly remained a formal legal exclusion; Ste. Croix 2004: 9 notes the absence of any mention of "telos-membership" in the discussion of the sortition of the *pôlêtai* and the Eleven in *Ath. Pol.* (47.2, 52.1).

those, who on account of poverty would sell the state for a drachma, share in the government” (Xenophon *Hellenika* 2.3.48). The apparent problems associated with an enfranchised group of poor laborers (as well as a large population of slaves) also surfaces in a section of a speech by Lysias, the speaker of which attacks the proposed restrictions of the franchise not only on the basis of property but by birth as well (34.3). Around the time of the revision of the laws in 403 we also hear murmurs of a demand for the cancellation of debts (Andokides 1.88).<sup>51</sup> These struggles attest an increasing level of class consciousness and rising class antagonism—hidden and open—in fifth-century Athens.<sup>52</sup>

To Athenian eyes class antagonism involved the rich, the poor and sometimes a “middling” group. According to the Old Oligarch (and presumably his audience) it was assumed that the interests of the wealthy *chrēstoi* and the poorer *ponēroi* were specific and very different (e.g., 1.4, 6, 13); the mobilization of the *oligoi* supporting Thucydides, son of Melesias, in his political battle with Perikles and the demos suggests that political leaders could rely on some form of organized supporters (Plut. *Per.* 11.1–3).<sup>53</sup> Plutarch relates that the Athenian demos was hostile to the wealthy (*Nik.* 11) and that Perikles oversaw the sending of kleruchs from Athens in an attempt to relieve the conditions of the urban poor (*Per.* 11.5). In addition to the rich and the poor ancient Greeks also spoke of a “middling” group. In Euripides’ *Suppliants*, for example, Theseus proclaims that there are three divisions in the citizen body: the rich, the poor (dispossessed and destitute) and the one “in the middle” (ἡ ’ν μέσῳ, 244); this middle group not only saves cities

51. The call for a cancellation of debts is perhaps more significant than it may at first appear. The frequent assertion that the few demands for the redistribution of land in Athens entailed an absence of class conflict (*pace* Finley 1983, Ober 1989; cf. Rose 1999 who rightly considers the role of imperialism in tempering class struggle in Athens) ignores the rising numbers of urban laborers, for whom the cancellation of debts may have been more pressing; the 5000 landless Athenians (Lysias 34), many of whom likely worked as urban laborers (Harris 2002), may have been more interested in debt relief for their economic enterprises.

52. The influential model proposed by Ober 1989 (see also Christ 1998, Finley 1985) allows for open class warfare *or* the successful mediation of class tensions: hidden class conflict is thus not considered. In addition to the issue of increase in state pay as noted above, there is something striking about Andokides’ claim that a verdict against sycophancy will benefit the demos, not just wealthy men like him; for the alternative, Andokides claims, is that the wealthy may decide to leave Athens (1.105; cf. Lysias 20.31). Such threats attest a continuously contested and fragile relationship between the interests of different classes (see also Harris 1994). Or consider a speaker’s claim on behalf of the wealthy banker Phormio that sycophants should not be allowed to “take the property of those wage-laborers” (*Dem.* 36.58). The bold and outrageous attempt to depict Phormio as a wage-laborer seems to be designed to counter the expected hostility of the jury to the wealthy litigant; the anticipated response of the jury was one of hostility towards members of the elite, since such poorer citizens would be expected *as a group* to be opposed to their wealthy neighbors.

53. The Oxyrhynchus historian also describes postwar Athenian politics as a struggle between the “populist (*dēmotikoi*) many” and the “noble (*epieikeis*) possessors of property” (1.3); see further Ste. Croix 1981: 120–33. Rosenbloom 2002: 310 rightly notes that “*ponēros* and *chrēstos* are status designations that contain assumptions about class,” but his study downplays the role of class struggle in old comedy by viewing it a tool of propaganda for the conservative elite. See Rhodes 1986 for the possibility of political leaders mobilizing supporters in light of the ancient sources.

but protects whatever order (*kosmos*) the city assigns. Relying on some remarks in Aristotle, some scholars have argued that there was a general rise of hoplites in ancient Greece that led to balanced “middling” forms of government and that there was “no radical inequality in the holding of rural property, and, by extension, no extremely rich or poor citizens in the polis.”<sup>54</sup> As noted above, the archaeological evidence does not support this view; furthermore, in the *Politics* Aristotle not only associates hoplites with the “rich” and the “oligarchic” (1289b30–40, 1321a6–14), he also states that oligarchy and democracy are the most common forms of government, precisely because *to meson in these states is small* (1296a23–26). Aristotle may praise *to meson* (1295b1–4) but according to his own argument most states are in fact divided into two factions—wealthy property-holders and the *demos*: depending on which faction is dominant, oligarchy or democracy arises. Despite the reference in Euripides’ *Suppliants* to the “middle” group that “saves cities,” it seems to promote a general group mentality, designed apparently to promote common interests yet supportive of the status quo (e.g., with a refusal of land redistributions or the cancellation of debts); the idea of a “middling group” could thus be useful by offering a pleasing illusion of a community lacking in or reconciling class antagonism.<sup>55</sup>

To the Athenian concepts of rich, poor and *to meson* can be added the distinction between economic class and social class.<sup>56</sup> Economic class (akin to a traditional Marxist definition) can be defined in terms of ownership of property

54. Hanson 1995: 182; see also Morris 1996, 2000: 109–91 (esp. 114–21). In Aristotle’s *Politics* further problems with the existence of a middle class surface: he explains that the middle form of constitution *never comes into existence or only seldom and in few places* (1296a38). In another passage Aristotle asserts that every *polis* consists of quality—freedom, wealth, education, good birth—and quantity—the superior numbers of the masses (*Politics* 1296b17). Again, there is little room between the poles of rich and poor. One also needs to consider the fact that Aristotle’s notion of the hoplite franchise seems closer to “hoplite ideology” with hoplites restricted to elite male citizens rather than the reality of hoplite service with poorer members of the community including *thêtes*; for discussion see van Wees 2004. The variegated and motley make-up of hoplites and their likely lack of any strong bonds of social cohesion (van Wees 2002) make conclusions of Athenian social structure based on military service dubious at best. For the reality of unequal land-ownership in terms of the Solonian *telē* see note 41 above.

55. Patterson 1981: 184–85 suggests that Aristotle’s *mesoi* “have no special economic or class characteristics,” but she understands Thucydides’ description of Aristogeiton as *mesos politēs* (6.54.2) as indicating he was “satisfied with a moderate but certainly comfortable property.” See Di Benedetto 1971: 193–211 for discussion of “la classe media” in Euripides. He argues for an evolving and differentiated political thrust to Euripidean drama, leading ultimately to the poet’s more apolitical position, and that Euripides’ valorization of the “middle class” (avoiding the extremes of the oligarchs and the demagogues) was an impossible policy in light of Athenian politics; however, I do not share di Benedetto’s confidence in identifying specific opinions of the poet in the plays (the role of the mass audience is thus occluded) and would argue that Euripidean drama did not speak so univocally.

56. See Harris 1995: 181n.2 for brief discussion; cf. the more skeptical assessment in Patterson 1981: 186–93 who follows Finley in viewing civic membership as the most important social group. See Wilson 2000: 109–43 for the wealth associated with liturgical service and the self-presentation of *chorēgoi* as *aristocrats* in particular; Jones 1997: 91–112 discusses both the concepts of class and status (or “rank”) in Athens.

and workshops that enabled the exploitation of the productive labor of others, i.e., the surplus. Social class can be defined rather in terms of attitudes, dress, behavior and “lifestyle.” It is thus closer to Weber’s (and Finley’s) concept of status. Often economic and social class overlapped—the *kaloi k’agathoi* offer a nice example. But we should not overlook the fact as Lukács argued that status consciousness can mask class consciousness, “in fact it prevents it from emerging at all”; internal class differences mediated by the role of status could more easily allow members of one economic class to act against their own interests and view themselves as belonging to a different class or no class at all.<sup>57</sup> It is in light of status consciousness that I suggest we understand the fundamental opposition between free and slave in Athens. Perikles’ citizenship law of 451/0 promulgated privileges and prerogatives that defined the Athenian citizen against foreigners and slaves, despite their at times shared economic inequalities; the difference in status between citizen and slave could also be viewed as part of a “general ideological discourse” that promoted common (civic) values and gave cohesion to the citizen body by cutting across class interests.<sup>58</sup> In the face of the glaring *economic* gulf separating the poor citizens from the wealthy, poorer citizens could still define themselves in opposition to slaves, despite the fact that many citizens had to take jobs working for someone else—a condition that was equated with slavery by the elite.<sup>59</sup> The ideal of self-sufficiency, which ideologically separated wage-laborers (*thêtes*, *misthôtoi*) from both large and small property owners,

57. Lukács 1971: 58; in his discussion of pre-capitalist societies, in which class consciousness tends to assume “natural or religious forms or else political and legal ones,” Lukács writes that when an estate (i.e., status group) breaks down, “even when its members *have been absorbed economically into a number of different classes*, it still retains this (objectively unreal) ideological coherence. For the relation to the whole created by the consciousness of one’s status is not directed to the real, living economic unity but to a past of society as constituted by the privileges accorded to the estates.” (In this light, one might fruitfully compare Williams’ notion of the residual element of society, as discussed above and in the conclusion below.) For the role of political status in “mediating” class interests see Vernant 1974b: 10–11. Some lower class citizens nonetheless attempted to present themselves as part of the elite: Plutarch (*Aristeides* 1) relates that so-called “poor but good men” borrowed money to perform liturgies, an expenditure traditionally reserved for the wealthy (see Wilson 2000: 53, 205).

58. Economic inequalities in Athens: Foxhall 2002, Raab 1996; see also Burford 1993: 27–29. Some magistracies and priesthoods remained the prerogatives of the wealthy: Aleshire 1994. See DuBois 2004 (esp. 117–30) for slavery as the “other for the ideology of the free citizen.” Csapo 2005: 301–305 offers useful discussion of the discourse of freedom in terms of a “general ideological discourse” and the various “subgroup” ideologies.

59. Eutheros claims that he could not stand being a slave in response to Sokrates’ suggestion that he take a permanent job working for someone else (Xenophon *Memorabilia* 2.8.3–4). Nonetheless, Sokrates’ exchange with Eutheros points to the existence of such labor; there is also evidence for seasonal work (e.g., olive picking) under the man who pays his wages (*Wasps* 712; cf. Demosthenes 18.51, 57.45; Plato *Rep.* 371d–e). The treatment of the *pelatês* in Plato’s *Euthyphro* suggests that dependent laborers were subject to abusive treatment as slaves (bound and thrown in a ditch: 4c); for discussion see Harris 2002: 424, who further shows the continuance of debt-bondage in fifth-century Athens.

further contributed to blurring of the divisions between rich and poor in terms of their “independent” status; for this view of labor aligned the wealthy and poor landowners, who were thus not hired laborers.<sup>60</sup>

Composed of these urban laborers, poor farmers, and merchants with at times conflicting, at times united interests, the “mass” was no more monolithic than the “elite.” Indeed, the recognition that Athenian society was defined in part by class and status enables us to jettison the reductive and misleading notion of “mass and elite.” The so-called demagogues were vilified for representing the will of the *demos*, since such empowerment of the people was traditionally opposed by the conservative elite in Athens, like Kimon and Kritias, and their supporters. These conservative leaders thus need to be differentiated from the likes of Kleon and Hyperbolos.<sup>61</sup> Antonio Gramsci’s elaboration of the notion of intellectuals, viewed as engaged with the organizing and leading of others, can help define more precisely not only elite political leaders but the complex function of the Maiden’s character. For Gramsci, there was no “critical self-consciousness” without a clearly articulated theoretical framework by a group of people “specialized in conceptual and philosophical elaboration of ideas.”<sup>62</sup> In this light, Gramsci’s model of the “organic intellectual” consciously engaged with a particular class breaks down an impossibly homogeneous view of the “elite” by differentiating

60. For discussion of the ideal self-sufficiency see Burford 1993: 186–93, Fouchar 1997: 121f., Seaford 2002, Wood 1988: 68; Ste. Croix 1981: 181 suggests that “a good many quite humble men” would have agreed with Eutheros (see previous note) but rightly adds that “of course a really poor Greek, even a citizen might sometimes have been glad to find such a post, but only, I think, as a last resort.” In contrast with *thêtes*, independent laborers are sometimes referred to as *banausoi* or *tekhnitês*, but the distinctions are not always observed: Ste. Croix 1981: 182–83. Aristotle *Politics* 1319a32–39 (cf. 1296b25–30) suggests that the political views of poorer farmers are opposed to the more radical politics of the urban labor force; wealthy and poor farmers are presented as sharing similar political and economic positions.

61. See Ober 1989 for treatment of “mass and elite” in fifth- and fourth-century Athens. For the politics and representation of the “demagogues” see Connor 1971; Wohl 2002: 73–123. Rosenbloom 2004a, 2004b discusses the changing social and political conditions in the polis that led to Hyperbolos’ ostracism and the reception of the “new politicians.” Whereas Rosenbloom stresses (2004b: 344) the “lessening of ideological resistance to non-landed bases for wealth among the citizen body” in the fourth century, I would note that many members of the elite as well as the urban labor force engaged in commercial activity in the fifth century and that hostility to commerce arises in a select number of conservative texts (see Harris 2002, Kron 1999). I view old comedy’s attacks on the “demagogues” partly as mockery of this conservative critique, partly as an appeal to these conservatives (Roselli 2005). I find problematic the idea that (2004b: 330) “Solidarity between the *demos* and the *chrêstoi* was a hallmark of Athenian culture—as opposed to the economy, legal system, and government—after the death of Perikles. . . . Hyperbolos’ ostracism reaffirmed hegemony in Athenian society as a bond between the *demos* and the *chrêstoi* . . . even though this bond was undermined by the institutions and practices of democracy.” Athenian culture was more fragmented and complex despite attempts by conservative critics to promote a single value system that allied the *demos* and the elite as such.

62. Gramsci in Forgas 1988: 334; for discussion of the role of intellectuals see further 301–11; Femia 1988: 130–33. See now Rose 2006 for useful discussion of Gramsci’s notion of the intellectual in terms of Athenian politics.

its members according to class allegiance.<sup>63</sup> In terms of fifth-century Athenian society, the “organic intellectuals” of the *demos* arose on the basis of an emergent class and confronted both “organic intellectuals” of the conservative elite and “traditional intellectuals,” who represented the dominant social order but saw themselves as independent of it.<sup>64</sup> The so-called “new politicians” in Athens could thus be viewed as both drawing on and organizing an emerging social group, in which the poor and the wage-laborers attempted to arrogate to themselves more political power and a greater share of the collective surplus. The proponents of the radical democracy and those of the conservative elite may not have divided neatly along class lines, but we should not lose sight of the fact that increasing the share of the economic surplus among the lower classes and the political power that enabled such a redistribution benefited peasants, market-vendors and laborers in the city. In terms of the possible models of action and consciousness that drama offers in performance and the class relations I will trace in *Children of Herakles*, tragedy can be seen as staging leaders or in Gramsci’s terms organic and traditional intellectuals. In short, Gramsci’s notion of the intellectual can help specify the different functions of the Maiden’s character and to track its possible reception in Athens.

Gramsci’s attention to the role of intellectuals derived in part from his belief that class struggle did not only take place at the level of economic structures: “men acquire consciousness of structural conflicts on the level of ideologies.”<sup>65</sup> He

63. According to Gramsci (in Hoare and Nowell-Smith 1971: 330) organic intellectuals of the working classes are those who must have “worked out and made coherent the principles and problems raised by the masses in their practical activity, thus constituting a cultural and social bloc.”

64. Gramsci in Forgas 1988: 301–11. In Thucydides’ description of *stasis* on Kerkyra in 427, two factions are stressed—the *demos* and the *dynatoi*. The *demos*, however, is interestingly augmented by the presence of slaves (who were persuaded to join the *demos* rather than the oligarchs), and the assistance of women, who pelted the oligarchs with roof tiles from above (3.73–74). Caught in the middle of this struggle, Thucydides explains, the *mesa* of the citizens perished (3.82.8). Yet in addition to those who were governed and treated with insolence and those who resolved to escape their accustomed poverty and desired their neighbors’ goods, another group is mentioned: those whose attacks were not inspired by greed but who “were on the same level as their victims [i.e., the *dynatoi*] and were carried forward savagely and implacably through lack of restraint on their passion” (3.84.1). The section, 3.84, is possibly interpolated, but Thucydides’ narrative (3.82–83) supports much of the generalizations in this passage. The *demos* is presented as motivated by a redistribution of resources and revenge. This other group, however, is presented as members of the *dynatoi*, which acts, nonetheless, in the economic interests of the *demos*. There is no elaboration here, but it is possible that these *dynatoi* sided with the *demos* and perhaps served as its leaders. We can perhaps see in Thucydides’ narrative that the “organic intellectuals” of the *dynatoi* are those who ruled over the *demos* with *hybris* rather than *sôphrosynê*. The “organic intellectuals” of the *demos* sided with the *demos* against the *dynatoi* in Kerkyra.

65. Gramsci in Hoare and Nowell-Smith 1971: 365; see also Hawkes 2003: 113–16. In his *Preface to a Critique of Political Economy* Marx writes: “With the change of the economic foundations the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men

rightly rejected a crude materialism that viewed an economic base as determining consciousness; for Gramsci the “realm of ideology thus becomes a field of class conflict.”<sup>66</sup> In an oft-cited passage Jameson writes that “ideology is designed to promote the human dignity and clear conscience of a given class at the same time that it discredits its adversaries; indeed the two operations are one and the same.”<sup>67</sup> But in order for an ideology effectively to be devised and accepted by a society divided by class, members of one class must craft an ideology that is capable of integrating within itself and promoting *a sufficient amount* of the hopes and desires of its adversaries; in brief, ideology must persuade.<sup>68</sup> When a contradiction

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become conscious of this conflict and fight it out” (cited in McLellan 2000: 425–26). See further Gramsci in Forgas 1988: 189–221 for his elaboration of the important role of ideology in class society.

66. Hawkes 2003: 114; Gramsci used the term “hegemony” to refer to the combination of ideological and material forces operative in society. “Popular beliefs” can become “material forces,” and thus in addressing class conflict the role of ideas is paramount (Hoare and Nowell-Smith 1971: 165). It is in this respect, however, that Ste. Croix’s account of ideology is inadequate, for he tends to associate ideology with propaganda (e.g. Ste. Croix 1981: 411); see also Rose 2006: 104. Golden 1984 provides a useful review and discussion of Ste. Croix. Whereas a crude materialist determinism explains all ideologies as a product of the economic base, a more dialectical approach allows for the productive role of ideologies: see further Lukács 1971: 83–209.

67. Jameson 1971: 380. For helpful discussion and application of Marxist models of ideology (including Jameson’s) to Archaic and Classical Greek literature, see Rose 1992, 1997, 2006, forthcoming and Thalmann 1998. More problematic is Croally’s definition of ideology (1994: 44, 46) as “the authoritative self-definition of the Athenian citizen” that would have necessitated some degree of “self-examination”; in an appendix (259–66) Croally expands upon this notion by noting that in his model *by definition* (265) “ideology only applies to the dominant group.” The group of Athenian citizens is presented as impossibly monolithic and opposition to this dominant group is suppressed. A similar problem haunts the study of Goldhill, who notes (2000: 43) that the term ideology “is a highly slippery one” and focuses instead on how “the notion of difference is inscribed within social performance”; he goes on to argue (45) that, “The recuperative power of ideology is found in its ability to define dissent and difference as well as success within its own terms; to project opposition, and to determine, comprehend, inform it.” Although this is *one* function of ideology—to incorporate enough of the values of the opposition *within* itself to make it a “dominant” ideology—to effect real alternatives to the dominant ideology can also imply the elevation of the marginal and the abject. There is thus no “outside” of democratic ideology (a position Kritias would not likely have shared), whence one might gain some traction for historical change. The stance taken by Goldhill (as well as Croally) is somewhat similar to contemporary “neoliberal” politics in terms of the reluctance to acknowledge a viable alternative to capitalism (for which see Harvey 1989, Žižek 2000; cf. also Williams 1977: 114: “Thus cultural process must not be assumed to be merely adaptive, extensive, and incorporative”). It should also be noted that Attic tragedy was susceptible to appropriation to societies other than democratic Athens: Euripides’ *Archelaos* seems to have been written and performed for King Archelaos in Macedonia; Euripides’ *Children of Herakles* was likely performed in Doric Heraklea (associated with the pro-Spartan Taras in South Italy) at the end of the fifth century (Allan 2001b). Some tragic poets, like Kritias, were staunch opponents to the democracy: see Centanni 1997, Wilson 2003. I follow Rose (2006: 102) who, in stressing the relational nature of a Marxist notion of ideology, notes that “what generates ideology is a perceived threat to the interests of one class from the aspirations of a class opposed to it.”

68. After all, it is beneficial for the ruling class to persuade the majority of the community of its own class position. On the role of persuasion see Rose 2006: 103: “This emphasis on persuasion in ideology implies that one’s opponents’ needs, desires, and values are not simply ignored, they are somehow redefined or mystified in terms acceptable to those opponents or shown to be by their nature



arises between lived experience and ideology (or when ideology fails to persuade), the ideals and values of the dominant class become contested and thus sites of struggle (often by an attempt to redefine the terms of the dominant ideological discourse). It is this dialectical operation that distinguishes ideology in a Marxist sense from the rather static definition of ideology as a “set of ideas. . . common to most citizens.”<sup>69</sup> This dialectical aspect of ideology derives from its fragmented nature—ideology is rarely pure and unitary (this rather is what I call propaganda). Although the very success of an ideology resides in its ability to co-opt divergent, opposed and contradictory values, it should not be forgotten that an ideology also primarily serves the interests of a given class. Ideology is thus by definition fragmented and heterogeneous, and its relationship with class is complex; but understanding this relationship is nonetheless vital for the study of Athenian society.<sup>70</sup> One of the main advantages of taking into account different classes in the theater audience for a study of ancient drama is that it allows precisely for the conceptualization of different social and political values while providing a motor for historical change that contributes in turn to our understanding of developments in theater production—this is a dialectical process.

As a working model, I propose to view fifth-century Athens as defined by *demokratia*, which in Williams’ terminology we could call the “dominant” element. The Athenian *demos* was broadly construed as including equally *all* adult males born of Athenian parents in the political system (after Perikles’ citizenship law in 451/0) in the face of glaring economic disparities. I would thus define the “democratic” thrust in late fifth-century in terms of this rarefied view of the *demos*—perhaps best expressed as the “noble *demos*,” of which Perikles’ funeral oration offers a clear example.<sup>71</sup> But Athenian culture was not exclusively “democratic,” and even within this democratic dominant (commonly described as “civic ideology”) there existed opposition, which in Williams’ terms are called “residual” and “emergent” elements.<sup>72</sup> The residual element would

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‘impossible’ of fulfillment. Thus in the very heart of a dominant ideology, there are discernible, if distorted, *traces* of the alternatives against which the ideology is deployed. Ambiguity is, therefore, a central feature of a dominant ideology since . . . it is designed to sustain the positive self-conception of the dominant group and, at the same time, to co-opt, silence, or neutralize the perceived opposition.”

69. Ober 1996: 114. Ober’s view of ideology is derived from Finley 1983: 122–41, whose model is allied more closely to the work of Weber than Marx (see Ste. Croix 1981: 91–95).

70. For discussion of the fragmented and heterogeneous nature of ideology see Eagleton 1991 (esp. 133–36), Hawkes 2003: 88–188.

71. For the “democratization of birth privilege” see Ober 1989: 81, 259–66; he notes (261) that “the citizen population of Athens was collectively a political elite vis-à-vis noncitizens, and a citizen’s political status was normally inherited.” For discussion of the appropriation of elite institutions in part by the *demos* see Loraux 1986, Csapo and Miller 1998; Fisher 2000; Herman 1987; Kallet-Marx 1998; see Grits 2005: 177–86, Wohl 2002: 30–72 for discussion of the implications of the “aristocratized” *demos*.

72. Williams 1977: 120–27. See Rose 1997 for a useful discussion of the *Iliad* in terms of Williams’ triad (among other Marxist models). For discussion of civic ideology see now Rhodes 2003 (with additional bibliography). Recent work on Athenian culture has rightly emphasized the

comprise the conservative elite—those aristocrats like Kimon, who were opposed to Perikles’ policies of “giving the people what was theirs,” or Kritias, whose tomb allegedly had a relief depicting Oligarkhia attacking Demokratia with a torch.<sup>73</sup> For despite the diminution of the sixth-century aristocratic dominant as political rights were extended to an increasingly larger (i.e., non-elite) part of the community, elite values and signs of class distinctions persisted even if somewhat more cautiously.<sup>74</sup> For the emergent element, I propose a more radical view of the demos, one best represented by the policies of the demagogues and the “unruly mob” in the eyes of the conservative elite.<sup>75</sup> This radical demos presents “the coming to consciousness of a new class, and within this, in actual process, the (often uneven) emergence of elements of a new cultural formation.”<sup>76</sup> We should understand the oligarchic revolution in 411 partly as the response of an active residual element to a more radicalized demos.<sup>77</sup> These opposed forms of consciousness provided the means by which to conceptualize political change; to paraphrase Marx, these were the ideological forms in which men became conscious of class struggle and fought it out.<sup>78</sup> Williams’ notion of the dynamic relations of a given culture as composed of dominant, residual and emergent

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role of competing social groups within the city: see e.g. Csapo 2002, 2004a; Csapo and Miller 1998; Eder 1997; Gri th 1995, 2002; Miller 1997; Raab 1994, 1998; Rose 1992; Roselli 2006; Wilson 2000; Wohl 2002.

73. Williams 1977: 122: “The residual, by definition, has been effectively formed in the past, but is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present.” For Kritias’ tomb (schol. *ad Aiskhines* 1.39) see the discussion in Bultrighini 1999: 316–19.

74. For discussion of the continued role of elites in Athenian society despite the shift from aristocratic to democratic dominance see Csapo and Miller 1998; Daverio-Rocchi 1978; Davies 1981; Eder 1997; Raab 1983, 1990, 1994; Miller 1997, 1999; Morris 1996; Wohl 1996, 2002; Wilson 2000 (esp. 109–43), 2003. For discussions focusing on drama: Gri th 1995, 1998, 2002, 2005; Rose 1992; Wohl 1998.

75. As Forgas notes in his introduction (1988: 300) to Gramsci’s discussion of intellectuals, “In order for the working class to challenge that existing order, and become hegemonic in its turn without becoming dependent on intellectuals from another class, it must create ‘organic’ intellectuals.” Although Gramsci’s analysis is based on modern society, I would argue that the notion of an emergent class requiring its own “organic” intellectuals is not without merit in an analysis of the demagogues in Athens.

76. Williams 1977: 124. As part of this emergent element, I would also point to the increase in representations of professional, working men and women in Attic iconography (see note 46 above). In the theater, we also have evidence for conservative criticism of the increased realism and imitation of lower class mannerisms in acting styles promoted by professional actors: Csapo 2002.

77. The dominant ideology would thus be similar to “civic ideology” in providing cohesion to Attic society in terms of the general support for the continued existence and safety of the polis. Unlike the traditional understanding of civic ideology, however, the dominant ideology presented the interests and values (mostly of the elite) in universalizing terms; it presented particular class interests as universal polis interests. For civic ideology likely cut across the distinctions that I explore in this paper: its function was to relate the different elements of society and to unite them with a common set of values.

78. From Marx’s *Preface to a Critique of Political Economy* (see note 65 above). For the importance of ideologies as a site of struggle see Gramsci in Forgas 1988: 189–221; see also Williams 1977: 108–14.

elements offers a hermeneutic tool with which to analyze the contradictions in the play arising from the interests and values of competing classes.

In the next part of this paper I sketch out the representations of women in funerary monuments and vase-painting as well as different aspects of the theater (e.g., comedy and popular acting styles) in terms of the relationship between gender and class in Athens. The large audiences that assembled for the various dramatic festivals and the composition of these audiences made drama an apt site to reproduce and contest class relations. My argument is that gender can sometimes operate as a disguise for class in Attic culture, perhaps especially but not exclusively in the later fifth century, when class conflict became increasingly problematic.

## PART II: SPECTACLE AND SOCIETY IN ATHENS: WOMEN, ACTORS AND AUDIENCE

The function of women in drama is but one part of a much broader and more complex cultural development in fifth-century Athens. In terms of funerary display, the dominance of the elite male in Archaic monuments gave way to the dominance of women in Classical monuments.<sup>79</sup> It is likely that Perikles' citizenship law of 451/0 introduced changes in the fifth-century practices of commemoration. For representing the genealogy of one's family became an important means to prove one's claims to belong to the citizen "ingroup"—thus the emphasis on family tombs for the purposes of determining civic status—and, strikingly, Attic society used images of women to stake these claims to citizenship.<sup>80</sup> Funerary practices are likely to be responses to the expanded notion of female citizenship, and these changes likely fostered an increased awareness of the role of citizen women in Athens.<sup>81</sup> But images of women could also be used to promote class distinctions in funerary monuments and vase painting.<sup>82</sup> For

79. Discussion of Archaic monuments: D'Onofrio 1982, 1988; see Clairmont 1993 for Classical monuments. For quantitative analysis of funerary monuments with female figures (as well as white-ground lekythoi) see Osborne 1997. See Roselli 2006 for further discussion of the rise of women in Attic art that I sketch out here and for additional bibliography.

80. For discussion of the citizenship law see Boegehold 1994; Patterson 1981, 2005. Role of tombs in establishing citizenship claims: Bergemann 1997: 28–34; Nielsen et al. 1989; images of women as means of establishing citizenship: Osborne 1997; Stears 1995, 2000. Family tombs were often cited as proof of citizenship: see e.g. *Ath. Pol.* 55.3; Demosthenes 57.28, 40, 70; for discussion see further Humphreys 1983: 83–84. The funerary monument and the ways in which funerary rites were carried out could also be used to provide evidence of good character (Isaeus 2.35–36, 8.25) as well as the status of a woman's family (Isaeus 6.64–65).

81. See Patterson 1986, 2005 for discussion of female citizenship in Athens; see Cox 1998 (esp. 68–129), Go 2004 (esp. 160–226) for the authority and prestige granted women in the private sphere and ritual; women's economic activity: Schaps 1979, Foxhall 1989.

82. Bazant 1987 also discusses the increase in images of women in terms of the relative displacement of the elite male from Attic iconography; his model, however, downplays class conflict in Athens and argues for a "depoliticized" interpretation of images of women. The increase in the

example, as Margaret Miller has demonstrated, Athenian women were the chief agents of the conspicuous consumption of Eastern luxury goods, the display of which was one of the ways in which the Athenian elite signaled their class position and, one might suggest, revealed their class consciousness.<sup>83</sup> Images of women attended by (sometimes exotic) slaves were also used to signify the distinction and wealth of the elite family by marking these women as “women of leisure.”<sup>84</sup> The ritual role of the *kanêphoros* allowed for the daughters of the elite to don expensive and elaborate garments as they were paraded before the community: the *kanêphoros* “was celebrated as the perfect girl, a symbol of society at its best.”<sup>85</sup> The attack on Harmodios’ sister was thus also an attack on the economic status of the family; according to Thucydides’ interpretation, Harmodios was the victim of elite *hybris*.<sup>86</sup> Other young women from elite families were represented on reliefs as well as in vase-painting with back mantles advertising the family’s social class and privilege through economic superiority.<sup>87</sup> The point that I wish to emphasize here is that fifth-century Attic iconography increasingly employed images of women to symbolize not only civic status but also class distinctions.

Developments in the Athenian theater conceptually linked together women and class. Old Comedy increasingly drew on female characters and choruses to critique social problems; market women in particular articulated the concerns and grievances of the lower classes. When Lysistrata summons one of the female “soup and vegetable sellers” and “hawkers of bread and garlic” (*Lys.* 456–59), she enters complaining of a long-haired cavalry captain on horseback in the *agora* terrifying the market women (561–64).<sup>88</sup> That such complaints could embody class antagonism is suggested by a similar remark made by a lower class soldier about

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number of metaphoric scenes of labor (often with women) could suggest that representations of labor were displaced onto images of women thus creating an ideal (male) leisure society; see Vidale 2002 for recent discussion of the representation of labor.

83. Miller 1992, 1997; images of “Booners,” reveling men dressed in Eastern garments, offer an exception to the preference in Attica for female agency: see Kurke 1992, Miller 1999. Such expressions of elite distinction by males seem to have been considered less acceptable to the demos in the late fifth century. Aristotle also notes the use of women as class markers for oligarchs and the inability of the poor to emulate such practices (*Politics* 1300a4–8); he further emphasizes the role of women in promoting class identity (1322b38–23a7).

84. See Miller 1997: 209–17 for the role of conspicuous slave labor in scenes with women; see also my brief discussion of the iconography of women in Athens and the *stêlê* of Hegeso (with her attendant) in Roselli 2006 (with additional bibliography). On elite leisure in Classical Athens see Fisher 1998, Johnstone 1994.

85. Roccas 1995: 665; see also Dillon 2002: 37–42.

86. Thucydides 6.54–59, *Ath. Pol.* 18.

87. Roccas 2000. The *arrêphoros* would also have been the center of attention in the spectacle of the *pompê*: Miller 1992; Dillon 2002: 57–60.

88. See Henderson 1987b: 140 *ad* 563–64 for discussion of the passage; Henderson 1987a: 121 notes how market women can “represent the urban poor and the attitudes of the radical democracy”; see also Henderson 2000: 141–42. We also find a garland-seller, whose husband was killed in battle, complaining that her income has been drastically cut and that she cannot feed her children on account of Euripides’ teachings that the gods do not exist (*Thesmophoriazousai* 445–58). See now Roselli 2005 for discussion of market women and the radical politics associated with the demagogues.

Xenophon's traveling on horseback; as Soteridas points out to Xenophon, they are not equal (οὐκ ἕξ ἴσου ἐσμέν) for Xenophon rides on horseback while he is a foot soldier. Dressed in his best armor and riding an expensive horse, Xenophon immediately agreed to trade places with Soteridas, until the rest of the soldiers forced him to take back his shield from Xenophon and to give back the horse (*Anabasis* 3.4.47–49).<sup>89</sup> In *Wasps* another market woman, a bread seller, Myrtia, attacked by Philokleon (who is taking lessons in elitist behavior), complains about lost revenue as a result of Philokleon's disregard for her commercial activity (1388–91). In *Ekklesiazousai* citizen wives are readily confused with lower class males. For after returning from the Assembly, Khremes gives a description of the assembled women disguised as male citizens. He states that the citizen "men" in the Assembly looked like shoemakers (πάντες σκυτοτόμοις ἠγάζομεν, 385) on account of their pale complexions. The description presents citizen women as urban laborers, thus also assimilating lower class males to women.<sup>90</sup> The support for gynocracy expressed by the shoemaking crowd (τὸ σκυτοτομικὸν πλῆθος, 432) is further contrasted with the more conservative reaction of the country folk (οἱ δ' ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν, 432).<sup>91</sup> It is precisely *this* group of urban laborers/women that advances a radical political agenda of communism. Comedy's use of women relied upon a theater audience accustomed to female characters taking sides in class conflict.

Changes in the theater industry further developed the connection between gender and class.<sup>92</sup> In the late fifth century female characters served the interests

89. Soldiers would have been equipped for battle according to their resources and desire to be conspicuous: van Wees 2002, 2004: 48–60.

90. In Xenophon's *Oikonomikos* (4.2–3) there is a related argument that banausic crafts "spoil the bodies of the workmen and the foremen, forcing them to sit still and live indoors and in some cases to spend the day at the fire. The feminization of the body involves a serious weakening of the mind." The *banausoi* are not just presented as women, the passage goes on to argue that such "men" are unfit to participate in social groups centered on the ideals of friendship and citizenship: *banausoi* are thus effectively removed from the male civic body.

91. See also Aristophanes fr. 706 for the contrasting of an urban with a rural dialect. Previous studies have interpreted the women in *Ekklesiazousai* in terms of gender: Taafe 1993: 103–33; Saïd 1979: 39: "On ne peut donc à aucun moment les prendre pour des vrais hommes. . . . Tous les efforts de Praxagora n'aboutissent qu'à la faire prendre pour une éminé"; similarly Zeitlin 1999: 170 stresses that the need for women to cross-dress as men points to the failure of "masculine politics" as well as "manliness itself."

92. Another area of fifth-century Athens in which we can observe a close relationship between gender and class is *mousikê*. For changes in the culture and politics of *mousikê* further associated women with a new kind of specialized labor. The gradual displacement of elite "gentlemen" musicians and conservative hostility to "working class" pretensions of New Music were accompanied by an increasing reliance upon the feminine as a vehicle with which to promote itself (see Csapo 1999–2000, 2004a esp. 235–45). As Csapo 2004a: 237–38 has argued, the "elite cultural superiority was threatened by the rise of professionalism," which thus "was the object of the most particular contempt: it was a touchstone of vulgarity to play an instrument 'too well,' or for money, or for theater audiences"; for the role of the *aulos*, the instrument *par excellence* of the New Music, and the (frequently foreign) professional *aulêtês* in these developments see Csapo 2004a: 216–21; Wilson 1999, 2004. The powerful emotions evoked by the new style of music with its self-conscious

of the emerging group of professional actors, who were, starting in the 420s, the object of elite censure for their “hireling” status.<sup>93</sup> A rising class of popular theater professionals increasingly favored female characters in their performances; as Anne Duncan has recently suggested the fourth-century star actor Theodoros specialized in female roles.<sup>94</sup> In addition to the creation of an actor’s prize, the number of dramatic festivals increased with the construction of deme theaters. Both developments contributed to the conditions that allowed actors to acquire notoriety, and as a result actors acquired the means of earning a livelihood—thus allowing some to become professional (even “star”) actors.<sup>95</sup> The brilliance of the reception of these actors can be measured in part in the late fifth century by the evidence of terracotta *gurines*, which have been found throughout Greece and many of which represented female characters.<sup>96</sup> Attention to the actual performers

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freedom and release from traditional forms were criticized by its critics as unmanly and understood in terms of radical politics; yet the response of new musical performances was only to emphasize its feminine qualities and imagery. For criticism of New Music in light of gender lines see Csapo 2004a: 230–32. New Music’s increasingly mimetic and emotional content that would showcase the singer as well as the aulos player encouraged poets to develop female roles ideally suited for the expression of emotionally charged music. In Euripides the receptivity to New Music can be observed in the choral odes as well as in the actor’s monodies; as a result, New Musical female roles became associated with a new kind of “working class” musical performance. See Damen 1989 for discussion of the combination of roles assigned to one actor by the poet. According to his *Vita* (6) Sophokles composed roles with the actors’ talents in mind. In his discussion of New Music and Euripides Csapo 1999–2000: 425 argues that a female chorus (and by extension monodists who tend to be women and foreigners; see also Hall 1999) “licensed female *Ausgelassenheit*. A female chorus was more plausibly suited to the emotional abandon and uncontrolled vicissitudes of the music. . . . Admittedly there is some sort of identification gap, assuming that the notional or actual ‘core’ of the audience is citizen male, but this gap is arguably there *precisely to allow* the audience to receive emotional outpourings which it would have found unseemly in a chorus of citizen males, and to increase the emotional temperature of the music and ease receptivity.” In light of the likely presence of (elite and lower class) women as well as foreigners (among others) the reckless abandon of a female chorus could also instill a sense of (political) solidarity with these minority members of the audience, particularly in response to the hostile criticism of the conservative elite. In his discussion of the “otherness” of the chorus, Gould 1996: 224 suggests that it can express an alternative to the heroic characters and express the “values of the excluded, oppressed, and the vulnerable.” It should be emphasized, however, that New Music also continued to use male characters (e.g., Timotheos’ *Persians*, the Phrygian Slave in Euripides’ *Orestes*), but the adult Greek male citizen was less frequently the agent. In a separate study in progress I address the role of New Music in the development of human sacrifice in tragedy.

93. Scorn for theater professionals: Csapo 2004a, 2004b: 68. See Sutton 1987 for the theatrical families (mainly elite) in the earlier fifth century and Chaniotis 1990: 94–95 for the Hellenistic period.

94. Duncan 2005; Aristotle’s censure of Kallippides’ portrayal of lower class women (see below) might also suggest a degree of specialization.

95. The tragic actor’s prize was instituted c. 449 at the City Dionysia and c. 432 at the Lenaia: Csapo and Slater 1995: 221–38. See Csapo 2004b for discussion of deme theaters and the rise of new kind of “specialized labor” (acting) in the theater. For the spread of Attic drama outside Athens see Darden 1999, Taplin 1999; for the rise of actors see also: Easterling 2002, Scodel 2001, Wallace 1995.

96. See Green 1994: 34–38 for discussion of the evidence of terracotta *gurines*; Csapo 2001 provides an overview of the representations of the theater from scenes of myth to “performance.”

of drama rather than the mythological characters they played became increasingly popular in the late fifth century; representations of the theater thus became more “realistic” in terms of depicting performance. It was at this time, as Aristotle notes, that actors became more important than poets (*Rhetoric* 1403b31–35); in a word, actors became heroes.<sup>97</sup> One such “star” actor, Kallippides, performed lower class female roles with the mannerisms of the lower classes.<sup>98</sup> Aristotle (*Poetics* 1461b26–62a14) in turn censured Kallippides’ for his imitation of these gestures—and for that matter he censured subsequent actors for similar “déclassé” performances: namely, the imitation of the *phauloi*. Associated with the decadent Alcibiades, mocked by Aristophanes and Strattis, and insulted by the Spartan King Agesilaus, Kallippides was apparently also guilty of imitating the wrong kind of people. What is striking is Aristotle’s criticism: the gestures of lower class *women* used by the star actor rankle conservative sensibilities. This apparently popular acting style staged the mannerisms of the lower classes (*phauloi*), from which female characters were singled out by Aristotle for their vulgarity (1461b27).

The emotionally wrought role of the self-sacrificing Maiden in *Children of Herakles* was ideal for an emerging group of professional performers. In effect such roles provided an optimal way to showcase the professional and technical skills of this new kind of specialized theater laborer. Produced in the years following the start of the Peloponnesian War, *Children of Herakles* is one of Euripides’ first plays in which a character (normally a female) willingly sacrifices herself for the family and the broader community.<sup>99</sup> Unlike *Alkestis*, in which the heroine willingly dies for Admetos, *Children of Herakles* explicitly involves the needs of society; the victim willing gives herself for the good of the community and not exclusively the *oikos*. A number of Euripides’ plays dating to the time of the Peloponnesian War elaborate the theme with increasing detail and *pathos*: *Hekabe* (c. 424), the fragmentary *Erechtheus* (c. 424–422), *Phoinissai* (411–409), *Iphigenia in Aulis* (c. 405), and the two highly fragmentary *Phrixos* plays

97. For the representation of the theater see Green 1991, Small 2005, Taplin 1993; for a useful collection of images and discussion of the relevant plays see Trendall and Webster 1971. In his discussion of artistic representations of the theater, Csapo 2001 views the reluctance to “depict performance as performance” as a lingering part of Archaic culture and its seeing “archetypal and mythic realities beneath the surface of events, and its feeling that the actor, like the poet, is merely a conduit for the Muse”; it was precisely in the late fifth century (in S. Italy and Athens), when it became more common to “contemplate the phenomenal world than to look through and beyond it,” that we begin to see more “realistic” illustrations of drama as performance.

98. Fifth-century debate over acting styles in Athens: Csapo 2002; Csapo and Slater 1995: 256–74; Sifakis 1979: 205, 1995 has helpful discussion of the professional status of the protagonist and his “hired” assistants. For evidence and discussion of Kallippides see Braund 2000, Csapo 2002, Stephanis 1988 no. 1348. Kallippides won the actor’s prize at the Lenaia in 418: *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 2319; see Csapo and Slater 1995: 136, 227 for the victory lists and discussion. Kallippides may also have won at the Lenaia in 424: see Ghiron-Bistagne 1976: 53 on *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 2325. Wallace 1995 emphasizes the star quality of actors like Kallippides.

99. For the dating of the play see Allan 2001a: 54–56, O’Connor-Visser 1987: 19–21, Wilkins 1993: xxxiii; 429–427 are the most likely dates based on Cropp and Fick 1985: 23.

(*Phrixos I*, 455–416; *Phrixos II*, ?425–417).<sup>100</sup> These plays increasingly allot more songs to these sacrificial characters and thereby allow the actor increased scope for innovative, New Musical performance techniques: whereas the Maiden in *Children of Herakles* outlines her willing sacrifice in iambic trimeter, Polyxena in *Hekabe* (197–215) and Iphigenia in *Iphigenia in Aulis* (1279–1335, 1466–1509) sing of their tragic situation in emotionally wrought odes. Iphigenia's role in *Iphigenia in Aulis* shows how the figure would be later developed: the role of the victim is greatly expanded and given extensive new musical arias. The number of plays dealing with willing human sacrifice increased during the war, and this suggests a close connection between the impact of war on Athens and its cultural production. But this is not the only relevant connection to be made. For this is also the time during which the demands of the radical democracy were threatening to become dominant in Athens, and New Music was becoming increasingly popular. Although the Maiden in *Children of Herakles* does not sing, the striking development of this character in Euripides does at least suggest that around the start of the Peloponnesian War both the poet and the performers, as well as *chorêgoi* and the *arkhon* "granting the chorus," were beginning to recognize the dramatic (and later musical) possibilities of the sacrificial maiden. Subsequent productions were explicit about the connections among gendered roles, professional performers, and the "people's music" that is still in its embryonic stages in *Children of Herakles*.

In light of the wide recognition of the popularity of these innovations in the theater, it seems clear that those responsible for dramatic performance and production understood the audience to be eager for such roles.<sup>101</sup> The composition of this audience, however, is anything but clear. Although the debate has revolved primarily around the question of women in the audience, the evidence for the presence of women ironically suggests a pointed *lack of interest* in the idea.<sup>102</sup>

100. In *Phrixos I* Athamas seems to have led Phrixos to the altar for sacrifice; in *Phrixos II* Athamas refuses the sacrifice, but Phrixos seems to have claimed that he would willingly sacrifice himself (see *TrGF* 5.2 76 and 77). For the likely dating of *Phrixos* plays see Cropp and Fick 1985: 88–89. The theme of human sacrifice is also present in *Iphigenia in Tauris* (10–29, 361–71), *Electra* (esp. 1018–29), and *Orestes* 1603 (Hermione as a sacrificial victim before the battle). Euripides' *Andromeda* included a perhaps unwilling sacrificial victim; see now Collard et al. 2004: 133–68 for text and discussion; Andromakhe's willing sacrifice of herself for the life of her son (*Andromakhe* 384–420) has a closer parallel in Alkestis' decision. For discussion of the development of Euripides' dramatic technique see Schmitt 1921, Strohm, 1957: 50–63. It is likely that Euripides invented the character of the Maiden in *Children of Herakles*: Schmitt 1921: 84–88, O'Connor-Visser 1987: 31, Wilkins 1993: xii.

101. See now Revermann 2006 for discussion of the competency of the mass audience; popular reception of New Music in the theater: Csapo 2004a.

102. Henderson 1991, O'Higgins 2003: 135–38, Podlecki 1990 argue for the presence of women; Schnurr-Redford 1996: 225–40 (esp. 236–40) suggests that very few women would have been present in an analysis that is sensitive to economic condition of their families. Other critics who entertain the presence of women tend to argue that they either identified with the views of the dominant male audience (e.g., Pelling 2000: 197, Winkler 1990, Wohl 1998) or that they might have viewed the



In one passage from Plato's *Gorgias*, which is frequently featured in this debate, Sokrates argues that poetry and rhetoric—unlike philosophy—aim at pleasure not education. Poets practice rhetoric in the theaters and this kind of rhetoric is directed at a demos composed of children, together with women and men, slave and free (502d). Plato aligns women with slaves (and children) and then uses the presence of women to assimilate tragic poetry and rhetoric to a type of demagoguery.<sup>103</sup> Other passages suggest that Plato uses the category of women for similar purposes. Thus in *Timaios* men who were worthless cowards (*deiloi*) and spent their lives unjustly are transformed at their second incarnation into women (90e6–91a1).<sup>104</sup> Plato's grouping together of women and slaves (as well as lower class males) in his discussion of drama forms part of a broader discourse among conservative critics concerning the role of the lower classes in the theater. For Plato theorized the demise of theatrical production on account of an increasingly corrupt theater "mob" that is contrasted with a now defunct aristocratic golden age;<sup>105</sup> the Old Oligarch had little sympathy with the demos' enjoyment of watching the ridicule of the rich, noble and powerful in comedy (2.18).<sup>106</sup> The remarks of the conservative

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play "against the grain" and found a sense of liberation in the prominent female characters onstage (Rabinowitz 1993). Goldhill 1994 treats the theater as a political event and downplays ritual aspects that might otherwise suggest the presence of women (see also Wilson 1982, who rejects the presence of women). For a useful collection of much of the evidence see Csapo and Slater 1995: 286–305 (cf. 287: they stress the "conceptual invisibility of women in the theater" not their "actual exclusion"), Pickard-Cambridge 1988: 264–65. I believe that there would have been some women among the seated audience (likely women from wealthy families) and that other (lower class) women would have been able to watch from further up on the slope of the Acropolis "from the poplar." See my discussion below.

103. Goldhill 1994 argues that this "slice of life" image is used to attack a type of rhetoric that confuses and confounds social categories, for it can only appeal to the mixed audience's (base) pleasures; he rightly notes (1994: 349) that, "It is a passage better glossed by reference to the Old Oligarch than to the history of theater."

104. See also the discussion of the censorship of lament among the Guardians in Plato *Rep.* 387e9–88a2: "So we would be right in taking out the wailings of renowned men and we would give them to women—but not to the noble ones (*spoudaiais*)—and to all the base (*kakoi*) men, so that the men we say that we are rearing for the guardianship of the country will not be able to stand doing things similar to those such people do." The discussion of *mimêsis* engages women and lower class males against the ideal, elite male. By giving lamentations to people of inferior status—non-elite women and lower class males (*kakoi*)—the Guardians will be discouraged from performing them, as they will not withstand the performance of "baseness." At 395d5-e3 the Guardians, who are "good" (*agathoi*) men, are prohibited from playing the roles of women; when democracy is compared to a *poikilon* cloak that looks fairest to boys and women, the idea is that male citizens who favor democracy are like women and boys (577c4–9), i.e., no longer citizens.

105. In *Laws* 700c-701a Plato explains how in contrast with earlier times, the audience foolishly claimed knowledge of good and bad music, and instead of an aristocracy in music a degenerate theatocracy came into being.

106. For discussion of this passage see Henderson 1998; Csapo 2000: 132 relates elite dissatisfaction evidenced in this passage to criticism of political comedy: "It is clear that elites felt alienated by the political style of comedy and consoled themselves by ascribing its features to the vulgarity and indiscipline of a degenerate democracy." See also Aristotle's *Politics* 1342a18–28 for the splitting of the audience into two social classes—the wealthy and wage laborers—as a means to justify the inferior contests and festivals designed to please the latter group.

elite attest their anxieties concerning not only the increased professionalization in the theater but also the role of the mass audience in its production. Situating Plato's remarks on the theater audience in this broader social discourse, his references to women in the audience seem designed to characterize the theater audience as lower class. Despite Plato's testimony it is, however, most likely that some women did watch the performances, but this question needs to be framed in terms of the social status of the audience members.

Ancient sources do provide good evidence for citizen and non-citizen males of different classes in the audience.<sup>107</sup> Metics, slaves, generals and foreign dignitaries, who were granted *prohedria*, watched the performances.<sup>108</sup> The financial sponsors of the chorus, wealthy *chorêgoi*, would have also been present.<sup>109</sup> The significance of this diverse audience is suggested in turn by its size. The traditional view is that the Theater of Dionysus in the late fifth century held fourteen to sixteen thousand spectators. This view has been contested by recent studies suggesting that the *theatron* (seating area) held only four to seven thousand spectators.<sup>110</sup> A consideration of public access to the theater can clarify the vast gulf separating these two estimates. There were two spaces from which specta-

107. While some scholars (e.g., Goldhill 1997, Sommerstein 1997, Wilson 1997) have argued that the theater audience for the most part represented the demos as a whole, the implications of a mass audience *divided* by *competing* interests and values has not received as much attention. Thus Sommerstein argues that there was a conservative bias in the fifth-century audience during the Peloponnesian War (1997: 68: "distinctly right-wing"); in terms of class, he argues 1997: 67: "on average they will have certainly have been more affluent economically than the citizen population as a whole. On average, too, they will have been better educated." See also Dawson 1997 for a small (3700 spectators) but elite audience. Sommerstein 1997: 67 does, however, allow for a greater presence of metics in the audience, since they will have been more "cash oriented" (thus with cash on hand to purchase a seat). Part of the evidence for the "right-wing" bias cited by Sommerstein includes attacks on prominent politicians in Old Comedy; yet such attacks need not indicate the audience's (or the poet's) political sympathies, rather their appreciation of the staging and mocking of conservative criticism directed at the "new politicians"; for discussion see Roselli 2005.

108. Metics: Aristophanes' *Acharnians* 501–508; Aiskhines makes much of the fact that Demosthenes did not invite an embassy to *prohedria* except when an embassy from Philip of Macedon was in Athens (*Ktesiphon* 76). Theophrastos' "Shameless Man" (9.5) brings his son and pedagogue in the place of his foreign guests; see also Plato's *Gorgias* 502d (discussed above); generals: Theophrastos 5.7; *Knights* 573–77, 702–704. There is also good evidence that the slaves who served on the ships at the battle of Arginusai were freed (e.g., *Frogs* 33–34, 190–91; see Hunt 2001); it is likely that some of them also made their way to the theater (as e.g., Theophrastos 9.5).

109. Phokion's wife is reported to have been in the theater audience (and only with one slave!): Plutarch *Phokion* 19.2–3. While present in the theater during the festival, Alkibiades struck a fellow *chorêgos*, Taureas: Andokides 4; for discussion of the episode in terms of elite competition and display before the demos see Wilson 2000: 148–55.

110. In comparison with the fourth-century theater, the *theatron* in the fifth century was much smaller. Excavations by Dörpfeld revealed a road cutting across the south slope (1896: 30–31) about 10 meters south (below) the *peripatos* of Lykourgos; see also Goette 1995: 28–29. The traditional estimate of 14,000–17,000 spectators in the *theatron* based on, e.g., Pickard-Cambridge 1946: 141 (thus, e.g., Croally 2005: 62, Davidson 2005: 208, Goldhill 1997: 47, Kocur 2001: 274, Moretti 1999–2000) has been subject to revision: Csapo forthcoming, Dawson 1997, Korres 2002, Revermann 2006: 168n.117, Travlos 1971: 540–41.

tors could watch the performances: they either sat on the *ikria* in the *theatron* or took a space on the south slope of the Acropolis further up the hill from the *theatron*. The 5th-century *theatron* was made of wood and was likely constructed for each festival by entrepreneurs who leased the theater from the state (*theatropôlai* or *theatrônai*).<sup>111</sup> Pollux (7.199) cites the term *theatropôlês* from Aristophanes *Phoinissai* (fr. 575), which is dated to the late 5th/early fourth century (cf. Theophrastos 30.6: *theatrônai*). A number of sources (e.g., Philochoros *FGrH* F33, Ulpian on Dem. *Olynthiac* 1.1) connect the introduction of the theater dole with costs for a seat; Plutarch claims that Perikles instituted the *theôrikon* (*Per.* 9).<sup>112</sup> According to Ulpian the theater dole was created by Perikles to alleviate the disadvantages of the poor in purchasing theater seats, but the funds were available to all citizens—both rich and poor (Dem. *Philippic* 4.38); other sources (e.g., Photios) attribute its introduction to fighting between citizens and foreigners.<sup>113</sup> Interestingly, these sources describe the fight for space between different social groups based on class and civic status. The fact that normal business in the city was suspended on festival days, thus impeding the ability of urban laborers to earn a daily wage, may have further justified the need for a theater dole as replacement income. In light of the Athenian practices of leasing the *theatron*, the attestation of a theater-lessee in the late 5th or early fourth century, and the connection of costs for a seat with a theater-dole, it seems likely that poorer citizens aided by state funding could have paid for a seat and sat in the *theatron*.

111. See Csapo forthcoming for an excellent discussion of the construction and leasing of the *theatron*. A fourth-century inscription from the Peiraeus provides evidence for theater leasing practices (Walbank 1991: L13; Csapo and Slater 1995: 296–97). Wood benches or *ikria*: see e.g. *Thesmophoriazousai* 395, Kratinos fr. 360. Pickard-Cambridge 1946 and Dinsmoor 1951 held that the theater of Dionysos in the 5th century was made of stone; the stone theater, however, is now dated to the fourth century (see Goette 1995: 29, Kalligas 1963, Dörpfeld and Reisch 1896: 28–30, Travlos 1971).

112. Ruschenbusch 1979, who develops an observation of Beloch (1922: 343; but cf. 1884: 178) and is in turn followed by Sommerstein 1997, argues for a mid-fourth-century date (Euboulos) for the introduction of the *theôrikon*; see also Rhodes 1981: 514; cf. Faraguna 1992: 189–94. Buchanan 1962 suggests an early fourth-century date. These discussions do not, however, consider the evidence from the practice of leasing out the theater and assume that the theater dole was called *theôrikon* in the 5th century; the issue needs further study. The attested cost of a theater seat is two obols: Demosthenes 28.5; in *Frogs* Dionysos' mention (141) of the "power of the two obols" likely refers to the costs of a seat (or perhaps the theater dole); for discussion of the passage Sommerstein 1996: 168 ad loc. For general discussion of the evidence see Csapo forthcoming, Csapo and Slater 1995: 287–88, Pickard-Cambridge 1988: 265–68.

113. Fighting between rich and poor: Scholion to Lucian *Timon* 49; fighting between citizens and foreigners: Photios s.v. *theôrikon kai theôrikê*. Ulpian on Demosthenes *Olynthiacs* 1.1 states that both class and citizenship were a factor. Wilson 2000: 167 suggests that "The introduction, perhaps c. 420, of the *theorikon*, the 'money for the spectacle' distributed by the polis to Athenian citizens to cover the cost of the entry-charge to the festival, is likely to have had as one of its motivations a desire to maintain *eukosmia* in a theater increasingly subject to disruption"; Wilson 1997 emphasizes the civic aspect of the *theôrikon*, which effectively separated the citizens ideologically, who were eligible to receive the theater dole, from foreigners who were not; cf. Sommerstein 1997: 66n.19.

But Ulpius also points out that some recipients of the theater dole used the funds for other purposes. Undoubtedly not all poor citizens used the funds to buy a spot on the *ikria*. Although there were costs for sitting in the *ikria*, there was a spot for eager theater-goers to watch for free. If you could not afford a seat or were not able to get one but still wanted to attend, you simply took a spot further up on the south slope of the Acropolis. Ancient lexicographers refer to a certain poplar tree from which those without a seat watched the performances. Kratinos (fr. 372) mentions the location, the proverbial status of which was suggested by Eratosthenes (preserved by Hesychios and later sources) who called the spot the “view from the poplar.”<sup>114</sup> In light of the limited number of wealthy Athenians in a citizen population of forty to sixty thousand, there would have been a high proportion of poor residents watching the performances: the relatively small size of the *theatron* and the limited number of seats would have paled in comparison with the larger number of poorer residents who watched from the poplar. These residents would have included citizens from all classes as well as metics, slaves and women. As suggested above, Plato’s reference to women forms part of a broader discussion on the mass audience in the theater; passages in Old Comedy also refer to women’s presence in the audience, but this evidence has proven remarkably amenable to widely divergent opinions.<sup>115</sup> Whereas traditional (often elite) values of female seclusion seem to render women’s presence in the theater problematic, the abundant evidence for women from poorer families traveling outside the home strongly suggests that the “view from the poplar” at any rate would have been occupied by many female residents.<sup>116</sup> The traditional estimate of

114. In his study of these sources, Scullion 1994: 57 concludes that, “Before the construction of the Lykourgan theater the audience were accommodated on wooden seats built on the slope of the Akropolis as far up as a certain poplar, in the vicinity of which there was standing-room providing a cheap but distant view.” Although a few sources do refer to the “cheaper” view from the poplar (e.g. Eustathios ε 64), this seems to be the result of some confusion in the lexicographers about the practices of theater-leasing. The theater-lessees charged for space on the *ikria* that they brought into the theater and set up. In the Piraeus inscription on the leasing of the theater (see note 111) there is explicit reference to the work on the stage-building, the tile and wood the lessees may provide, and the furnishing of benches. There is no suggestion that they charged for space beyond their wooden seating, and the sources discussing the theater dole and costs for a seat do not mention a charge for any other space than in the *theatron*.

115. In a frequently cited passage from Aristophanes’ *Peace* (962–67), when Trygaios’ slave throws “barley” (*krithai*) to the audience, Trygaios remarks that the women did not get any. Instead, the slave notes, their husbands will give it to them at night. The pun on “penis” (*krithē*) is the point. The passage does not depend on the presence or absence of women in the audience, although it has been taken to support the presence (Henderson 1991: 141f., Podlecki 1990: 33) and absence (Wilson 1982: 159) of women; Goldhill 1994: 349 remarks on the inadequacy of the argumentation for either position. While the passage seems to revolve more around the presence or absence of a penis, Aristophanes is also making a joke about sex while parodying the ritual practice of throwing barley groats at a sacrificial animal and the comic practice of throwing nuts and dried fruit to the audience: Csapo and Slater 1995: 291, 301–302.

116. Goldhill 1994 approaches the question of women in the audience by setting up the theater as a political rather than a ritual event; on the analogy of the courts, the assembly and the gymnasium, where women were generally not to be found, Goldhill argues that as a socio-political event the

around sixteen thousand spectators may in fact be correct, but the social status of the audience is occluded by consideration of size alone. It seems that the majority of the audience watched for free, while four to seven thousand spectators paid for a seat. This implies an audience tilted heavily in favor of urban laborers, peasants and market-vendors (both citizen and metic).

If the fifth-century audience of the theater was diverse but mostly non-elite, the characters of tragedy nonetheless exhibit a rather different tendency. Royal princesses and princes, despots and kings are of course part and parcel of the ancient genre.<sup>117</sup> Lower class (non-heroic, non-elite) characters are also present, but the genre exhibits some interesting developments in terms of their differentiation from elite characters.<sup>118</sup> In Aiskhylos' *Oresteia* lower class characters (e.g., Watchman, Nurse) tend to be characterized through their speech "partly by colloquial expressions, partly by touches of naïveté, garrulity, or sententiousness."<sup>119</sup> These characters tend to ally their sense of security with the well-being of the royal house while also providing a closer "fit" than many of the elite characters with most of the members of the audience.<sup>120</sup> Thus the Watchman in *Agamemnon* may be performing some type of military service (2), in which case the soldierly ideals of obedience and submission to his leaders circumscribes any authority he may possess; he also refers to Agamemnon as master (32) and king (35). The Guard in

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theater is unlikely to have had women in the audience (but cf. Patterson 1986, 2007 for women's share in the *polis* and their gendered form of citizenship). Although Goldhill stresses that he is not trying to show that women attended or not, his essay clearly undermines any arguments in favor of women in the theater. See Katz 1998 for useful discussion of the historiographical issues involved in the debate; Schnurr-Redford 1996 provides discussion of the economic status of women in the audience. If, as seems likely, there were costs to sit on the *ikria*, it is probable that women from poorer families watched from the poplar in greater numbers than women from wealthy families (who may have been more invested in ideals of female seclusion). See my discussion below of the Maiden's entrance into the public realm for references to women working outside the house.

117. Griffith 1995, 1998. Knox 1964 explores the aristocratic mentalité of the Sophoklean hero.

118. Representation of lower class characters: Citti 1996, Griffith 1995, Hall 1997, Kuch 1974, Sommerstein 1997, Synodinou 1977.

119. West 1990: 5; see also Griffith 1995: 80, Fraenkel 1950: 25–26. Stevens 1945: 95 notes that 60 percent of the colloquialisms in Aiskhylos are spoken by lower class characters. The speech of lower class male characters prior to the *Oresteia*, however, tends to be similar (i.e., more formal) to that of the elite characters. Aiskhylos' *Persians* provides an early example of foreign or barbarian speech; thus class and ethnic "others" would appear to receive particular characterization through speech in Aiskhylos. See also Seidensticker 1982 on the more "realistic" portrayal and expressions of these lower class characters in Aiskhylos.

120. See Griffith 1995: 75–81, 107–24 for discussion of the incorporation of the perspective of the lower classes in the *Oresteia*. One might also compare the Herald (*Agamemnon* 503–82), who provides an account of the poor conditions of the soldiers yet also voices a degree of optimism (573–79). This lower class character offers a critical perspective of army life from the view of a common soldier but nonetheless affirms the honor due the generals (580–82). His status is circumscribed by soldierly ideals of obedience to those in positions of authority. An interesting aspect of the audience's potential identification with such characters as the Watchman is that they tend to be assimilated to slaves and/or subordinated members of society: see Griffith 1995: 79n.64; he further notes the representation of Hermes' "indeterminate status" in *Prometheus Bound* (see e.g. 941, 942, 954, 983, 966, 987).

Sophokles' *Antigone* provides another salient example of a clearly marked lower class. The "comic" overtones of his character further separate him from the elite characters onstage: his concern to avoid the smelly corpse of Polyneices smacks of a comic or "low" detail (409–12).<sup>121</sup> Lower class characters in Sophokles and Aiskhylos tend to be differentiated through sociolect as well as comic elements.<sup>122</sup> The resultant view of society with marked social differentiation may thus be viewed as more "realistic" by offering a clear idea of the social divisions in the play.

In contrast Euripides levels off social distinctions between elite and lower class characters. This is often spoken of in terms of the plays' less heroic mold.<sup>123</sup> This tendency to stage lower class characters did not go unnoticed by Aristophanes, who parodies the access of slaves, women, mistresses, maidens and old women to speech in Euripidean drama (*Frogs* 947–50) and explicitly defines this development as a democratic act (*Frogs* 952).<sup>124</sup> The significance

121. Griffith 1999: 195 *ad* 409–12. Comic overtones of the Guard: Seidensticker 1982: 78–85; Griffith 1999: 55–58, 164–65; Petrovic 2003. Like the Watchman in *Agamemnon*, the perspective of Sophokles' Guard easily merges with that of the audience and its participation in the drama of the elite characters; see Griffith 1998: 74 n.170: "That is precisely the deal to which we agree when we enter the theater: to participate in bringing someone we care about (someone 'better than ourselves') into trouble, while resting assured that we ourselves will 'escape' and enjoy a pleasurable 'salvation.'" See also Griffith 1999: 164 *ad* 223–331 for further discussion of the character of the Guard; he is variously named as Guard and Messenger in the manuscripts, perhaps suggesting the problematic social status of messengers; for discussion of the character's title see Griffith 1999: 164–65. See also Griffith 2005 (esp. 177–86) for the audience's identification with abject and servile satyrs.

122. Seidensticker 1982: 88 argues that neither Aiskhylos nor Sophokles present drastically comic characters (the Guard in *Antigone* is the most explicitly "comic" role in both Aiskhylos and Sophokles), rather they realistically portray "kleine Leute," who are more familiar from comedy. Whereas Seidensticker emphasizes the "comic relief" of such scenes as a means of providing contrast to tragic *pathos*, comic elements in Aiskhylos and Sophokles also serve to reveal social distinctions within the citizen body.

123. See e.g., Michelini 1987: 63–66 for Euripides' "antiheroic" tone and 3–51 for discussion of the interpretive history of Euripides.

124. Stevens 1945: 97, 1976; cf. Gregory 2005: 256–57 who stresses that colloquialisms are rare even in Euripides but does not note the kinds of characters to whom colloquialisms are applied by different poets. Blaiklock 1952 discusses the different types of male characters in Euripides but ignores class as a category. See Csapo 2002: 140–43 for discussion of the representation of "sociolect" in drama; he (144) suggests that the tendency to "social realism" was conditioned by the perspective of the democratic citizen: "diversity of language within the polis was misrepresented as a homogeneous common speech without social distinctions." The same tendency to social leveling can also be observed in Aristophanes (see Colvin 1999, Willi 2003: 198–225 for characterization of foreigners through speech). In the *Comparison of Aristophanes and Menander*, Plutarch notes (853c–e) that Aristophanes fails "to assign appropriate and suitable language to individual characters—grandeur to a king . . . prosaic words to an ordinary man, vulgarity to a street-lounger. Instead he assigns to his characters as if by lot such words as happen to turn up, and you could not tell whether the speaker is a son or father, a farmer or god, or an old woman or a hero." Menander, by contrast, assigned the appropriate language to different character types; thus the language of slaves and "working class characters" is marked with "obscenity, frequent oaths, vivid, colorful colloquial or technical language, and, especially in the case of poor rustics, laconic, syntactically disjointed or rhetorically inept speech." In his discussion of this text Hunter 2000: 272 notes that Plutarch's comments on the lack of Aristophanes' uniformity of language is related to a conception

of this charge is stressed by the more conservative character, Aiskhylos, who responds that he should be put to death for such audacity. Euripides also uses more “comic” elements in the representation of *both* lower class *and* elite characters.<sup>125</sup> The character of the Peasant in *Elektra* provides an example of the confusion in social categories. He is shocking to the elite (royal) Orestes, for he is poor yet noble. As the Peasant tells the audience, he is descended from Mycenaean royalty—he is distinguished with respect to his lineage—but poverty has marred his nobility (35–38). So *is* he noble? Indeed, this poses a problem for Orestes’ social categories. The so-called Euripidean “kings in rags,” such as Telephos or Alexandros, present a clear example of the pointed confusion of royal king with working class and “mouthy” laborer (Telephos) or royal prince with lower class herdsman (Alexandros). If some social distinctions become murky with an obscuring of the differences between elite and lower class male characters in terms of speech and perhaps costume, there is nonetheless a marked increase in the attention paid to gendered speech in drama.<sup>126</sup> Much of this recent work has studied sex-specific oaths and obscenities, forms of address, and genres such as gossip and lamentation associated with women. The tendency to level characters in terms of social status in Euripides has a counterpoint in the attention paid to female characters. In the next section, I explore the representation of the Maiden in *Children of Herakles* and in particular how the role of a self-sacrificing female character draws upon the interests of different social groups in Athens.

### PART III: THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF VIRGIN SACRIFICE

As a result of the tragic convention of not staging human sacrifice, tragedy represents it through a narrative (often a Messenger speech) emphasizing its emotional and social implications. Discussion of human sacrifice in the plays focuses on the response of the different groups involved: (1) the victims, their families and friends; (2) the agents of the sacrifice; and (3) a somewhat more

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of the audience and the political climate in Athens—namely the unordered *demos* of the radical democracy.

125. For text and commentary on Euripides’ *Telephos* see Collard, Cropp and Lee 1995: 17–52; on *Alexandros* see Collard, Cropp and Gibert 2004: 35–104. Elite characters presented in a comic light include Kadmos, Teiresias, Pentheus (*Bacchai*); Xouthos (*Ion*); Menelaos (*Helen*); Orestes (*Orestes*); lower class characters include the Old Servant (*Ion*), the Phrygian Slave (*Orestes*): see Seidensticker 1982: 89–241; cf. Gregory 1999–2000: 74 who maintains that the “seriousness is vouched for” in Euripidean “comic” scenes. The comic portrayal of Iolaos in *Children of Herakles* (680–747) undercuts his claims of nobility (thus leveling down the male characters in the play) while assimilating him to the lower class; see my discussion below.

126. Tragic costume: Green 1991, 1994, 2002. The diminishing of “tragic grandeur” suggested by Euripidean kings in rags (e.g., the Mysian King, Telephos, mocked in Aristophanes’ *Acharnians*; or Menelaos in *Helen*) as well Aristophanes fr. 490 concerning the star actor, Kallippides, suggest an ongoing debate in the theater concerning the leveling of social differences represented onstage; see Csapo 2002. Characterization of women through speech: see Chong-Gossard 2006; Griffith 2001; McClure 1995, 1999; Mossman 2001; Sommerstein 1995; Willi 2003: 157–97.

dependent chorus typically in the role of captive women, old men or soldiers. This focus allows tragedy to explore the social and political dynamics of sacrifice beginning with its demand and continuing through to the reception of the act.

Tragedy does, nonetheless, develop the theme of human sacrifice in different ways. Aiskhylos' *Agamemnon* presents a rather gruesome sacrifice of an unwilling (i.e., held up like a goat over the altar and gagged, 232–36) victim. Unlike later plays involving human sacrifice, this portrayal is almost completely negative; still *Agamemnon* does explore the economic and social relationships between the aristocratic family and the community through the description of the sacrifice. The sacrifice of Iphigenia sets in motion a series of murders, starting with Agamemnon's at the hands of Klytaimestra on account of the sacrifice (1414–20) that affects the *oikos*, the city of Argos and eventually Athens. In the chorus' description of Agamemnon's difficult choice between disobedience (becoming a deserter of the fleet and disappointing his allies) or sacrificing his daughter (206–16), Agamemnon is reported to describe her as a *δούων ἄγαλμα* (208). The designation of the sacrificial virgin as an *agalma* is significant. As Louis Gernet noted *agalмата* “are the *medium of aristocratic intercourse*. They are classified implicitly as different from another sort of goods which are both inferior in nature and distinct in function.”<sup>127</sup> Recently Victoria Wohl has argued that *Agamemnon* turns Iphigenia into an *agalma* and that “Agamemnon does not exchange his daughter, choosing instead to hoard her for himself.”<sup>128</sup> Agamemnon's use of the *agalma* has wider economic and political value: “The result . . . is an undemocratic withdrawal of aristocratic wealth from the *polis*. . . . He transforms his wealth into a type of possession that is inaccessible to the *demos*. Economically as well as genealogically, the sacrifice of Iphigenia represents an anti-democratic hoarding of aristocratic resources.”<sup>129</sup> According to Wohl the sacrifice of Iphigenia is thus

127. Gernet 1981: 113; see also Vernant 1974a. In the Archaic period an *agalma* frequently describes seated sculptural groups, sculptures of horses, riders, and chariot groups: see e.g. Raubitschek 1949: #40, 64, 155, 235, 273, 295, 336, 374; beginning with the Classical period, however, “*agalma* customarily designates the statue of a god” in inscriptions: Lewis and Stroud 1979: 193. Although subsequent Euripidean plays depict the victim of human sacrifice as highly prized and valuable, only Talthybios in *Hekabe* (557–65) explicitly describes Polyxena as an *agalma*.

128. Wohl 1998: 74; cf. 1998: 81: “Instead of giving his daughter to another man as a wife, Agamemnon keeps her for himself: the woman is pure and loyal, but only at the cost of extreme violence and an incestuous economics whereby the *oikos* is preserved, but it is unable to reproduce.” Although there was undoubtedly anxiety among the elite in terms of the reproduction of its social class, it is unclear how the notion of incest emerges from Agamemnon's act of sacrifice. Wohl 1998: 71–82 seems to connect the daughter's affection for her father with an incestuous relationship in light of the structural homologies between the hero's wife and daughter and on the basis of the eroticism of the sacrifice that turns the sacrifice (73) “not only into an incestuous penetration, but also a sort of gang rape.” See Sailor and Stroup 1999 for critical discussion (in part) of Wohl's argument.

129. Wohl 1998: 82. Scodel 1996 notes Agamemnon's abuse of precious objects both in his dealings with Iphigenia and in the carpet scene; for discussion of these scenes in terms of *potlatch* see Crane 1993, Wohl 1998: 68–71.



presented as a failed exchange between demos and the elite.<sup>130</sup> Others argue that Agamemnon's sacrifice is predicated on a decision to further solidarity among international elites.<sup>131</sup> For them Agamemnon does not hoard a prized possession: his representation of Iphigenia as *domôn agalma* enables her to be exchanged between fellow aristocrats, but his decision to sacrifice her (and thus to privilege his military authority and elite identity) defines him as an "opponent against the *oikos*."<sup>132</sup> Nonetheless, the presentation of Iphigenia as an *agalma* forms part of the chorus' version of the sacrifice; it is thus part of an active process that serves to construct the value of the virgin and Agamemnon's act *from their perspective*. In this regard, the chorus' subsequent acknowledgement that he committed the sacrifice in order to embolden his men (803–804) would seem to suggest an attempt to whitewash his behavior. Despite the Watchman's (and perhaps the audience's) sympathy with Agamemnon, his decision to sacrifice Iphigenia appears corrupt. Whereas subsequent plays develop the themes of politics, economics and the *oikos* so forcefully presented in *Agamemnon*, the evaluation of human sacrifice changes in tandem with social conditions in the city.<sup>133</sup>

With Euripides' *Children of Herakles* we can observe the complex functions of human sacrifice that address some of the (rather different) needs of the *polis*

130. Cf. Wohl 1998: 82: "The sacrifice of Iphigenia represents a failed exchange at many different levels: as an aristocratic potlatch, it fails to consolidate the aristocratic group or to define a hierarchy within it; as a marriage, it fails to unite two houses; as an attempt to maintain genealogical purity, it is a strategy ultimately disastrous for both democracy and aristocracy. Rather than creating community, this catastrophic exchange results in an antisocial and incestuous hoarding."

131. Sailor and Stroup 1999: 156: "Iphigenia is sacrificed to the interests of her father's relations of reciprocity with the House of Priam." See Rose 1992: 185–265 for the negative portrayal of the oligarchic class in the trilogy; in stressing the costs of this class' "retribution justice" to the community he suggests (211) that the sacrifice of Iphigenia represents the "inherent excessiveness of aristocratic justice, its fatal tendency to destroy the innocent along with the guilty."

132. Sailor and Stroup 1999: 156–57; they further argue that Agamemnon's "use of this word [*agalma*] at the very moment that he conceives of his subsequent action . . . is meant to indicate his sudden and full realization of her potential worth as an explicitly given object" (my italics). Yet as Wohl rightly notes (1998: 79) the account is the "chorus' fantasy." The chorus' remarks would thus also be implicated in their attempt to rescue their leader's reputation: see Griffith 1995: 85, 111.

133. Although the slaughter of Iphigenia is presented as an outrage, the fact that the sacrifice is required by Artemis (Ag. 144) certainly gives the audience some leeway with which to appreciate the difficult situation Agamemnon faces. The Watchman's prologue certainly describes the absent King as much longed for by the community; an audience identifying with this image of Agamemnon might well sympathize with the horrifying choices that he faces. In the fifth century the sacrifice of Iphigenia exhibits different dramatic explanations. It is likely, however, that the final play, *Proteus*, revealed that Iphigenia was safely rescued and thus not sacrificed: Griffith 2002: 237–50. In *Iphigenia in Tauris* Iphigenia refers to her sad death (26), her father's atrocity (211), and recalls the evils of that day (361), namely how she was deceitfully taken to her death (371); she ascribes human sacrifice to barbarians (390–91). In Euripides' *Elektra* Klytaimestra states (1024–26) that if Agamemnon had killed their daughter for the sake of the city or the family then it would be forgivable. *Iphigenia in Aulis* presents a more favorable view of the sacrifice (although not without some reservations as expressed notably by Klytaimestra). Sophokles' *Elektra* includes Klytaimestra's outrage at Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia, denying any possible grounds of justification (530–48); Elektra, in contrast, explains his necessary choice as an attempt to appease Artemis (566–84).

around the time of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. The play focuses on the plight of Iolaos, Alkmene and the younger children of Herakles who have taken refuge from Eurystheus and seek asylum in Marathon; they are *xenoi* (77, 92, 189) who have come as *hiketai* (101, 123). The young boys are at the altar onstage, whereas the girls are in the temple off stage. When the Argive Herald enters and attempts to drag them from the altar, the chorus of old men from Marathon arrive onstage followed by Demophon and Akamas. Once the Athenians refuse to hand the children over to the Argives, war is declared. The prophets, however, demand a sacrifice of a noble virgin to the daughter of Demeter in order to ensure an Athenian victory. The problem is a lack of a suitable and willing victim.

In response to the demands of the oracle Demophon refuses to murder one of his own children or to compel a citizen to do the same; he asks, “Who would be so foolish as to give away of his own will the children he loves beyond all else?” (413–14).<sup>134</sup> In explaining his position, he refers to the “crowded meetings” (415) and the divided opinions about his decision: whereas some say that his decision to protect foreign suppliants was just, others accuse him of folly. According to Demophon, if he were to demand a human sacrifice, civil war (*οἰκεῖος πόλεμος*, 419) would break out immediately. The dangers posed by the opposed groups in the *polis* and the dire prospect of sacrificing an Athenian are paramount. Demophon seeks a solution that addresses the salvation of the Herakleidai, Athens and his own estimation in the eyes of the citizens (421–22), but he is unable to find an acceptable way out. In his closing remarks, Demophon notes that his authority is not like that of the barbarians: by acting justly he will be treated justly (423–24; cf. 497). The implication is that human sacrifice is a barbarian not an Athenian custom.<sup>135</sup> The chorus expresses the dilemma: how is it the god does not allow Athens to protect strangers needing help, although it is eager (*πρόθυμον*) to do so (425–26)? The city is presented with a complex problem, the solution of which appears to require the unacceptable costs of human sacrifice.

For Iolaos the refusal of Demophon to kill his citizens’ children is forgivable (435). Although his hope for salvation has been dashed (it now appears as “cruel”), Iolaos maintains that his gratitude (*χάρις*, 438; cf. 220) to Demophon has not been lost. At first Iolaos seems to understand that Demophon’s refusal of a human sacrifice means that they will be handed over to the Argives (442); he stresses

134. Nancy 1983: 21 uses Demophon’s response to argue that, “le sens de ce sacrifice ne peut en être renvoyé qu’à une *perte*, la perte de l’idéal qui supportait l’histoire légendaire de la Grèce et fondait sa représentation”; it is this context that signals clearly “la fin de l’ère épique”; see also Hömann 1996: 267, Michelini 1987: 180. Yet this is a partial understanding of the function of human sacrifice in the play: Demophon certainly expresses a negative view of the sacrifice, but Iolaos, the Maiden, and the Chorus provide a positive evaluation. The presence of (at least) two opposed views is not surprising. After all, the entire mass audience was unlikely to have readily accepted Demophon’s one-sided view with its simultaneous dismissal of the idea of self-sacrifice popularized in funeral orations and the notion of elite benefaction.

135. For the idea of Greece’s aversion to human sacrifice and its ascription to barbarians see Bonnechere 1994: 229–43, Hall 1989: 145–48, Miller 2000, Morris 1995: 238.

that it was fated (χρῆν χρῆν, 449), as it now seems, that they be captured and die a shameful death. Iolaos bemoans the additional suffering the family is soon to undergo; he claims that not all hope of salvation (452, σωτηρίας) is lost. He then proposes a possible solution: he volunteers to hand himself over to the Argives in place of the children (453–55). Iolaos thus attempts to become a source of salvation.

The chorus' response to Iolaos' suggestion is noteworthy. They understand his offer as tantamount to accusing the city of betraying strangers (461–62; cf. 763–64), a reproach that Iolaos had attempted to forestall (435–37). Iolaos' offer, if accepted, would undermine the patriotic self-image of Athens. Demophon further points out that this is a noble (γενναῖα, 464) but impossible suggestion: Eurystheus protests not from the death of an old man.<sup>136</sup> The concern is rather for noble offspring demanding vengeance. As Demophon explains, it is the prerogative of noble children to exact vengeance for dishonorable treatment of their father:

δεινὸν γὰρ ἐχθροῖς βλαστάνοντες εὐγενεῖς,  
νεανίαί τε καὶ πατρὸς μεμνημένοι  
λύμης· ἃ κείνον πάντα προσκοπεῖν χρεῶν.  
468–70

A terrible thing for enemies is the birth of noble children, when they grow up to be young men and remember the outrage committed against their father. Eurystheus must consider all these things.

Iolaos makes a generous offer, but in the calculated reasoning of Demophon (and, as he suggests, of Eurystheus) it is the children that pose the greatest threat—but not just any children as Demophon makes clear; later in the play Eurystheus himself attests the potential threat of Herakles' children to his safety (1000–1004). The particular value of “noble” offspring would seem to reside not only in their suitability for performing the role of a sacrificial victim but also in their capacity to exact revenge.

The actions of Iolaos and Demophon in their attempts to resolve the crisis contrast with the successful self-sacrifice of the Maiden. Although Iolaos does not ignore the gratitude he feels for Demophon, he foregrounds the threat to the children and directs attention away from the dangers faced by the *polis*. His language and dedication to “blood and birth,” as suggested in his language of honor and kinship (6–11), and his reliance upon personal debts of gratitude owed to the children in his successful attempt to persuade Demophon to accept the

136. The subsequent sacrificial value of the Maiden is emphasized through the exclusion of Iolaos' willing self-sacrifice. A similar restriction on the age of the sacrificial victim is made in the *Hekabe* (389–90) where Odysseus denies the suitability of the Trojan queen for sacrifice. See Burnett 1976 for the transformation of Herakles' family from a passive to active role. The character of Iolaos consistently attempts to assert himself into roles that he appears to be incapable of fulfilling: later in the play he will express concerns that he is a cowardly avoider of hoplite service (700); see more below.

children as suppliants (205–25) have led some scholars to emphasize Iolaos' heroic and aristocratic view of the world centered on the *genos*.<sup>137</sup> Critics have also argued that Iolaos' refusal to enter into the palace at the behest of Demophon following the declaration of war and his preference to stay at the altar (340–47) demonstrates Iolaos' Archaic mentality, his setting of the *genos*' "ancestral values" before the demands of the *polis*.<sup>138</sup> However, if such privileging of the elite family rankles some members of the audience, it is precisely this sense of superiority or entitlement that the play recuperates. For the Maiden's act of voluntary sacrifice will mark the family both as intrinsically more valuable than others yet also beneficial (as well as necessary) for the well-being of the polis. However, Iolaos' successful appeal to aristocratic conventions also implicates Demophon. For he recognizes the claims of *kharis* and kinship ties as grounds to accept Iolaos' request for protection (236–46). But Demophon is also the leader of Athens (114–15) and demonstrates his concern for the opinion of the demos as a determining factor in his decisions unlike Iolaos. If Iolaos appears as a strong supporter of the elite *genos*, Demophon appears as a pragmatic, constrained, even small-minded Athenian politician.<sup>139</sup> The opposed (but not exclusive) emphases on the family and the *polis* stand in stark contrast to the subsequent response of the Maiden, who is able to represent the interests of these different groups and to take decisive (and effective) action.<sup>140</sup>

Up to the Maiden's entrance, the entire play builds toward a seemingly unsolvable crisis. Why does it fall to an unnamed female character to provide resolution? Most critics have viewed such a crisis precipitating human sacrifice as symptomatic of the political *aporia* in the fifth-century *polis*.<sup>141</sup> Some have emphasized the inability of Demophon and Iolaos to resolve the crisis and

137. Burnett 1976 ("blood and birth," 14), Fitton 1961; more recently Mendelsohn 2002: 65–73 writes of Iolaos as representative of aristocratic and "predemocratic paradigms." Iolaos' words of encouragement to Demophon stressing the role of the gods (Pallas will not endure being defeated by Hera, 352) may have epic (or archaic, hence "predemocratic" for Mendelsohn) overtones, but they also formed part of a broader phenomenon of divine epiphanies (see Wilkins 1993: 94 *ad* 347; Allan 2001: 159 *ad* 347–52).

138. See Burnett 1976: 15: she notes that his refusal to leave the altar "strongly suggests that the city will not, in the end, be the savior of this tribe" and suggests that the emphasis on *genos* overrides the demands of the *polis*. See also Burian 1977: 15.

139. See Fitton 1961: 454 for Demophon's response and contemporary Athenian political morality; see also Nancy 1983, Vellacott 1975. The emphasis on (elite) kinship ties between the families of Herakles and Theseus used so effectively by Iolaos to persuade Demophon does evoke a rather aristocratic network (see e.g. Mendelsohn 2002), but as I will argue these elite family relations also depict the Maiden's self-sacrifice as a kind of marriage exchange between the two families (see more below).

140. According to the chorus, her glorious death was undertaken on behalf of her brothers *and* the land (621–22). Iolaos later stresses the joined salvation of the family *and* Athens (491), and in her farewell speech the Maiden enjoins the family to treat with honor Iolaos and their mother as well as their hosts (e.g., the Athenians, 586).

141. See e.g. Foley 1985, Masaracchia 1983, Mendelsohn 2002, Nancy 1983, Schmidt 1999, Scodel 1996. Mossman 1995: 146 invokes the fact of the "greater vulnerability of women to the

related their failure to the more general problems of tragedy in terms of the accommodation of the (elite) heroic model to the democratic *polis*: women in drama point to the incompleteness of masculine heroism.<sup>142</sup> The feminine in this model is used to redefine the heroic male: Iolaos is “feminized” and thereby learns the valuable democratic lesson of self-sacrifice for the good of the polis. In this way, Daniel Mendelsohn has recently argued, Euripides’ “subtle feminizing redefinition of key terms in the political vocabulary suggests that the feminine and all it represents is indispensable in modulating and disrupting the *archaic*, masculine, and monolithically unitary modes that were the state’s inheritance from the heroic and aristocratic systems.”<sup>143</sup> There are problems with this model. One part of it goes back to the influential work of Jean-Pierre Vernant, who argued that there was a crisis between the heroic mentality and the developing civic personality that found expression in the tensions and ambiguities in tragedy.<sup>144</sup> In this analysis, however, the unbridgeable distance between the “Archaic” heroic past and the civic present elides any notion of synchronic (class) conflict: class tensions in Athens are bracketed *at the very moment of the tragic production*.<sup>145</sup> Vernant’s crisis was also part of the historical shift from an elitist (or “aristocratic”) to a democratic dominance in Athens, and as noted above not everyone was “democratic” in fifth-century Athens: the oligarchic coup in 411 and the rule of the Thirty after the Peloponnesian War attest to a sizable group of avowedly anti-democratic interests in the city. Emphasis on the *archaic* aristocrats (heroes) offers a rather static model for social change *within* the polis at the time of the play’s production.<sup>146</sup> Another problem with Mendelsohn’s model derives from its

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violence of men” and the resultant *pathos* in the “contrast between victim and sacrificers” to explain the prevalence of female victims.

142. Mendelsohn 2002: 89 argues that in the face of this dilemma (my italics), “It is *then* to a decidedly unheroic figure that Euripides *must turn* in order to defuse the potentially explosive ‘tensions and ambiguities’ between the heroic past and the democratic present”; he further (90) adduces the notion of a “mythological surfeit of doomed virgins that has motivated Euripides to make the vehicle for salvation in this play not that *eugenes* king of Athens, but a *eugenes* young virgin who chooses danger over life.” Yet there was no requirement placed on any poet to use any one mythological tradition; moreover several prominent women such as Antigone, Medea and Klytaimnestra only come into their own in tragedy and this *despite* the relative lack of interest paid to them in prior mythological treatments: see Foley 1981. For discussions of the problems and incompleteness of masculine heroism in tragedy see, e.g., Bassi 1998; Mendelsohn 2002; Zeitlin 1996, 1998.

143. Mendelsohn 2002: 230–31 (my italics). Archaic society, however, was not monolithic: see e.g. Rose 1992, 1997, forthcoming; Morris 2000; Stein-Hölkeskamp 1989.

144. Vernant 1988a, 1988b; for a similar diachronic model see Gregory 1991: 8 who writes of the problems between the “Archaic hero” and “democratic Athens.”

145. Wohl 1998 likewise argues for understanding Vernant’s “heroic” and “civic” as a product of synchronic conflict. See Rose 1992 for a model derived from Jameson’s double hermeneutic that allows precisely for such synchronic conflict in the polis.

146. See, e.g., Foley 1985: 84 who is sensitive to the view of Iphigenia’s death in *IA* as a type of epic *aretê*, but in her argument the epic world that is presented in the choral odes offers an idealistic vision that no longer relates to the world of tragedy; as such, she views Iphigenia’s transformation as an example of “unworldliness.”

theorizing of the function of gender in drama. It derives from Zeitlin's influential idea that "the woman is assigned the role of the radical other" and that female characters are "designed primarily for exploring the male project of self-hood in the larger world."<sup>147</sup> The model of alterity used by Zeitlin assumes a homogeneous group of males. But as I have noted above, Attic society and the theater audience were more diverse, its social structures more complex than this. Furthermore, the notion that "tragedy arrives at closures that generally assert *male*, often *paternal* structures of authority" elides other structures of political or economic authority based on class or social status.<sup>148</sup> In contrast with the models of Vernant and Zeitlin, I want to explore the possible relationships between contemporaneous social tensions, practices and anxieties shared by competing and at times opposed groups in the city on the one hand; and the role of the Maiden, the way that the play represents her and her impact upon other characters, on the other hand. The Maiden's gender both makes her a member of the political community and limits that membership. As relatively enfranchised and possessing a degree of citizenship, women were perhaps an ideal vehicle with which to explore the fault lines of Attic society in tragedy.<sup>149</sup>

The relationship between tragic scenes of human sacrifice and contemporary politics was one that was felt to be important to ancient audiences. For the self-sacrifice of a female character could be used as a way to comment on Athenian politics. Lykourgos provides a clear example of this. In his speech *Against Leokrates*, he cites part of Euripides' *Erechtheus* (fr. 360) that deals with Praxithea's decision to sacrifice her daughter for Athens, because her speech offers the finest example of civic behavior. After stressing the model of bravery offered by the sacrificial virgin, he claims that "if *women* dare to do this, indeed *men*

147. Zeitlin 1996: 346, 347; Zeitlin notes (346n.13) that there are "other 'others,' to be sure, on the Athenian stage (e.g., barbarians, servants, enemy antagonists, and even gods), but the dialectic of self and other is consistently and insistently predicated on the distinctions between masculine and feminine. . . ." Gender appears to be the master category that renders other social divisions in the plays (or the audience) superfluous, and as a result important social, cultural, ethnic and class differences are ignored.

148. Zeitlin 1996: 364. The rather static notion of "male" and "paternal" forms of authority further downplays changes in fifth-century Attic demography (from the time of Aiskhylos' early plays to Euripides and Sophokles at the end of the fifth century) and their impact on the role of gender in the *polis*; the rather homogeneous audience envisioned by Zeitlin (e.g., 1996: 343n.5) further contributes to this static view of gender in drama.

149. For the complexities of women's civic status see Patterson 1986, 2005; see also Patterson 2007: 169: "Women in Athens did have some political rights and a form of citizenship was extended to them after Perikles' citizenship law; the Athenian conception of citizenship as 'sharing in the polis' had both a male and a female aspect; the shares of men and women were different but nonetheless shares, distinguishing those who held them, both men and women, from the non-shareholders, the non-citizens and *xenoi*. That citizenship—i.e., community membership—was gendered in Periclean Athens should come as no surprise; few social ideas or institutions were not." Kearns 1990: 337 (cf. 340–42) suggests that the "dual position of a woman, both set apart as a member of the group of females, and as having also some particular status applicable also to men, is nicely demonstrated in the most typical myth of the female saviour."

must keep their devotion for the fatherland unsurpassed” (101).<sup>150</sup> In light of the problems of “draft-dodging” in Athens such female victims also provided an ideal image of the male soldier’s response to the demands of conscription.<sup>151</sup> Since male soldiers were not, however, all elite citizens, these aristocratic female characters were understood to provide a model for males of different classes (and of different social status).<sup>152</sup> Lykourgos’ belief that the daughter of Praxithea could appeal in a very specific way to such a diverse group of men is instructive and offers some additional support for my study of the appeal and social function of the role of the self-sacrificing Maiden. As I argue, her appeal for the audience is in part a product of the character’s contradictory traits: the Maiden’s character is constructed as aristocratic and noble, while also displaying less elitist elements. It is precisely the simultaneous promotion of elite practices and ideals as well as the values of marginal social groups (e.g., urban laborers, metics) that gives form to the interests of the mass audience in a city with a rising level of class antagonism.

The prized value of the sacrificial victim receives repeated emphasis in the play.<sup>153</sup> When Demophon relates that the Argive army has arrived, he explains that despite the many points of divergence among the prophecies there is one point on which they all agree—a certain sacrifice:

καὶ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων διάφορ’ ἐστὶ θεσφάτοις  
 πόλλ’· ἐν δὲ πᾶσι γνῶμα ταῦτὸν ἐμπρέπει·  
 σφάζει κελεύουσίν με παρθένον κόρη  
 Δήμητρος, ἧτις ἐστὶ πατρὸς εὐγενοῦς,  
 τροπαῖά τ’ ἐχθρῶν καὶ πόλει σωτηρίαν.

406–10

Concerning other things there are many differences in the oracles. But one and the same judgment is conspicuous in them all: they bid me to

150. Hughes 1991: 76; see also Wilkins 1990a, Wilson 1996. For similar exhortations to citizen males on the basis of the bravery of the Leontidai see Dem. 60.29. In her discussion of the figures of salvation in the *polis*, Kearns 1990: 338 notes that Aglauros, for example, “corresponds to real-life demands on the ephebes by substituting . . . improbable, fantastic elements for normal ones, and the heroine’s sex is of course one of these elements: she would have been a model for males, not females.” Mythological accounts of this daughter of Kekrops are divided. In one version she throws herself off the Acropolis on account of *mania* in punishment for disobeying the orders of Athena not to lift the covers on the basket containing the serpentine Erikhthonios, but in another version of the myth preserved by Philokhoros (*FrGH* 328 F 105) she threw herself from the Acropolis in order to save the city during a war between Athens and Eumolpos of Eleusis. It is on the basis of the second version of the myth that the cult of Aglauros came to be associated with the oath of the ephebes; for discussion see Bonnechere 1994: 74f.; Burkert 1983: 150f.; Kearns 1989: 24f., 1990: 330f.

151. See Christ 2001 on the problems of conscripting hoplites; the Maiden’s willingness to die corresponds closely to the idealized representation of the soldier in funeral orations: Christ 2004.

152. For the social composition of Athens’ military see Hunt 1998; van Wees 2001, 2002, 2004.

153. For examples of the theme of *eugeneia* in Euripides’ places of self-sacrifice see O’Connor-Visser 1987: 204–208. See Versnel 1981: 143–45 for discussion of the high value of the victims in self-sacrifice narratives. The same requirements for a “noble” victim also apply in the case of animal sacrifice: see e.g. Henrichs 1981: 217, Loraux 1987: 32.

sacri ce a maiden to the daughter of Demeter, a maiden daughter of a noble father, to rout the enemy and save the city.

Salvation for the polis (and Herakles' family) is a product of victory that can only be achieved through the sacri ce of a daughter of a noble father (πατρός εὐγενοῦς); later when the Maiden instructs her family to remember she should be buried, she in fact explicitly refers to herself as "savior" (σώτειραν, 588). The demands of the oracles provide divine sanction for the sacri ce; their unanimous request for a "daughter of a noble father" to "save the city" bestows heavenly honors not only on the act but also on the elite family in its role as guarantor of the salvation of the polis.<sup>154</sup> If the Maiden was in fact honored in association with a cult of Kore, as Kearns has suggested, or perhaps a separate cult, the play's presentation of the Maiden's self-sacri ce would provide an explanation for the community's ritual celebration of the daughter of an elite family.<sup>155</sup>

The Maiden herself explains her self-sacri ce in terms of her elite identity. Cowardice and "clinging to life" (519) would render the suppliants *kakoi* (520). A refusal to agree to the sacri ce would be beneath her:

οὐκ οὖν θανεῖν ἄμεινον ἢ τούτων τυχεῖν  
ἀναξίαν; ἄλλη δὲ κἄν πρόποι τινὶ  
μᾶλλον τάδ' ἥτις μὴ 'πίσημος ὡς ἐγώ.  
525–27

Is it not better to die than to win a fate I do not deserve? These things would be more fitting for someone else [a female] who is not as prominent as I am.

Although her words may strike some as a bit priggish, it is important to remember that the Maiden has just expressed her unwillingness to let Athens defend the Heraklidai, while they flee from danger when they could in fact save the city (503–506), and acknowledged that without the guarantee of victory the potential defeat of Athens means death for her (511–14) as well as her brothers (520); even if she could survive, should she not offer herself up willingly, the death of her siblings would dash any chances she has for happiness (521). She expresses concern not only for the city that has agreed to accept the family as suppliants but also for her siblings; but the outspoken and unproblematic manner in which she

154. See Schmitt 1921: 3–4 for discussion of the oracles' demand for a noble daughter; she compares the Maiden's entrance to a *deus ex machina*; Foley 1985: 66 suggests a similar function for Iphigenia in *IA*. See Plutarch *Themistokles* 13.2–5 for a divinely sanctioned human sacri ce: on the eve of the battle of Salamis, the *mantis* interprets an omen as a sign that the sacri ce of the three aristocratic Persian youths would "bring salvation (*sôtêria*) and victory to the Greeks." For discussion of this passage see Bonnechere 1994: 256, 288–89; Hughes 1991: 111–15; Henrichs 1981: 208–24.

155. See Kearns 1989: 58–59, 182, who is however skeptical about a savior cult for the Maiden, Makaria; for cults of the Heraklidai in Attica see Kearns 1989: 108, 166–67; Wilkins 1990a: 193n.43.



declares her elite identity is striking. In the explanation of her choice, she herself repeatedly refers to her noble lineage (509–10, 513, 539–40, 563) and her “most beautiful” death (κάλλιστον, 534).<sup>156</sup> She rejects the charge of cowardice and invokes her desire to appear worthy of her social position (503–10): it would be worthy of mockery for those descended from their great father to show themselves to be base—“How can this be fitting in the eyes of the noble/useful (ἐν χρηστοῖς, 510)?”<sup>157</sup> A similar elitist bias surfaces in Aristotle’s remark in *Nicomachean Ethics* (1169a-b) on the moral obligations of the *spoudaios*, whose conduct is guided by the interests of his friends and his fatherland: just as the noble man forgoes wealth and power for the pursuit of nobility, so too those who die on behalf of others (*huperapothnēskousi*) choose great nobility for themselves. As the Maiden declares the impropriety of inaction in the face of the oracle’s demand for a noble sacrificial victim, she bases her decision on the protocols of elite birth and behavior while making clear her priority of ensuring the salvation of her family and the polis.

The distinctive value of the Maiden is further elaborated through her rejection of a cornerstone of fifth-century democratic politics in Athens—the lottery.<sup>158</sup> When Iolaos suggests that it would not be right for the Maiden to die without a lottery, the Maiden rejects this offer in no uncertain terms:

οὐκ ἂν θάνοιμι τῇ τύχῃ λαχοῦσ' ἐγώ·  
 χάρις γὰρ οὐ πρόσεστι· μὴ λέξις, γέρον.  
 ἀλλ', εἰ μὲν ἐνδέχεσθε καὶ βούλεσθέ μοι  
 χρησθαι προθύμω, τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν ἐγὼ  
 δίδωμ' ἐκοῦσα τοῖσδ', ἀναγκασθεῖσα δ' οὔ.

547–51

I shall not die by the chance drawing of lots. For there is no gratitude in it. Do not suggest it, old man. Rather, if you accept and desire to make use of my eagerness, I give my life willingly to my brothers here, but not if I am forced to do so.

156. The idea of the “beautiful death” is related to both the virgin sacrifice (see e.g. *IA* 1385; *Hekabe* 378) as well as the funeral oration; see my discussion below.

157. The term, *chrēstos*, can however also convey a less elitist sense, as in “serviceable” or “useful.” This usage of the term is often found on the funerary markers of slaves: see e.g. Bergemann 1997: 147–50. In light of the Maiden’s complex characterization that I trace here, her use of the term may also be designed to hint at both her elite and common traits.

158. On the role of the lottery in democratic ideology see, e.g., Old Oligarch *Athenaion Politeia* 22.5, 24.3, 27.4; Aristotle *Politics* 1279b21–22; Herodotos 3.80; Aristophanes *Wasps* 661–62; Andokides 1.96. The use of the lottery at *Children of Herakles* 36 to describe the allotment of Attika to Demophon and Akamas from among the descendants of Pandion mixes democratic and more elitist elements from Homeric epic: see Allan 2001a: 135 *ad* 36, Wilkins 1993: 53 *ad* 34–37. Sinclair 1988: 17 suggests that “The use of the Lot rejected the claims both of monarchy and aristocracy”; see also Hansen 1991: 230–33, Ostwald 1986: 82–83. Rhodes 2003: 109 rightly notes the actual use of sortition in both oligarchic and democratic regimes. The particular way in which the Maiden denies her refusal to be selected by the casting of lots, however, invests her role with a certain elitism.

The Maiden's refusal to have a lottery select the victim highlights the willingness of her sacrifice: it must be represented as a *voluntary* benefaction.<sup>159</sup> By denying the possibility that just *anyone* could fulfill this role, the Maiden asserts her own supreme (elite) value. The reference to *kharis* (548) defines the Maiden's distinctive quality. For *kharis* is essential in the construction of an elite identity; it informs the relations of reciprocity between elite benefactors (e.g., performers of liturgies) and the public that benefits.<sup>160</sup> Iolaos picks up on this notion of benefaction in his response to the Maiden's declaration that she will give herself willingly:

ὄδ' αἴ τοι λόγος σοι τοῦ πρὶν εὐγενέστερος,  
καὶ κεῖνος ἦν ἄριστος· ἀλλ' ὑπερφέρεις  
τόλμη τε τόλμαν καὶ λόγῳ χρηστῶ λόγον.  
οὐ μὴν κελεύω γ' οὐδ' ἀπεννέπω, τέκνον,  
θνήσκειν σ'· ἀδελφοὺς <δ'> ὠφελεῖς θανοῦσα σοὺς.  
553–57

This speech is more noble than the last, and the last was most noble. You surpass daring with daring and speech with noble/useful speech. I do not command you to die, nor yet do I forbid you, child. But if you die, you benefit your brothers.

Both Iolaos and the Maiden imbue her act with *kharis*, and ultimately both accept the idea of a voluntary benefaction.<sup>161</sup> For Iolaos the Maiden serves to benefit (ὠφελεῖς) her family, and according to the oracles her sacrifice will ensure an Athenian victory (410). Her *kharis* is here cast along the lines of an elite benefactor of the public. Much like the rhetoric of benefaction in speeches written for liturgy-paying citizens, the Maiden places great emphasis on the “giving” of herself willingly (551); she further notes the fact that she was “unbidden” (501), will die “of her own free will” (559) and holds her life willingly (έχοῦσα κοῦκ ἄκουσα, 531) at the disposal of the city.<sup>162</sup> The description of her “eagerness” (προθυμία 410; cf. 550) emphasizes the readiness with which she holds herself in the service

159. Mendelsohn 2002: 101 suggests that the rejection of the lottery reveals the Maiden's “democratization” of Iolaos' elitism: she “actively” seeks death to preserve her family and the community like the “citizen hoplite.” Yet the rejection of the lottery *also* underscores the Maiden's rejection of the cornerstones of Athenian *demokratia*. In a similar scene of human sacrifice, Klytaimnestra notes that the lottery was rejected in determining whose daughter was to be sacrificed (*IA* 1197–1202)—a move that likewise emphasizes the special and unique value invested in Iphigenia. The warrior ethic of the elite presented them as voluntarily defending the community, but volunteerism in military service was also a prerogative of the *thêtes*; for discussion see Gabrielsen 2002, van Wees 2002.

160. See e.g. Davies 1981, Kurke 1991, Wilson 2000: 92, 135. Its frequent deployment in fifth- and fourth-century oratory highlights its determinant status in the rhetoric of expenditure.

161. See also Euripides *Erechtheus* fr. 360.1–2 where Praxithea relates her act of giving her daughter to be sacrificed to the notion of benefaction and *kharis*. The willingness of the Maiden to give herself (551) for the good of the polis suggests the voluntary benefaction of liturgists as well as the voluntary service of the hoplite: see Christ 2004 (hoplite), Wilson 2000 (liturgist).

162. As Davies 1981: 92 has noted, a “*deliberate* investment in the goodwill of public opinion” is essential to the role of *kharis* (italics mine); see also Kurke 1991: 67: “*Kharis* designates a willing and precious reciprocal exchange” and 1991: 174: “In the ‘gratitude’ of the Athenian people we

of her family and the city; this particular aspect may further evoke the language of honorary decrees for non-Athenians who have served the city.<sup>163</sup> The rhetoric of gift-giving and noble birth used by the daughter of Herakles embodies elite values; the effect of this characterization promotes the unique and supreme value of the elite family in its willingness to sacrifice itself for the polis.

The play's emphasis on the materiality of her benefaction describes in part the reward for such values. For it is through the act of sacrifice that the Maiden amasses prestige goods for her family. Her deeds become a kind of treasure:

οὐ γὰρ ἐνδεῆς  
 ὑμῖν παρέστην ἀλλὰ προύθανον γένους.  
 τάδ' ἀντὶ παίδων ἐστὶ μοι κειμήλια  
 καὶ παρθενείας, εἴ τι δὴ κατὰ χθονός.

589–92

For I was not deficient to stand by you but died on behalf of the *genos*.  
 These deeds I have as treasures in place of children and in compensation  
 for my virginity, if indeed there is any thing beneath the earth.

Human sacrifice acquires a materiality (i.e., κειμήλια) that replaces children and makes up for her maidenhood, which she would normally have given up in marriage. Her sacrificial act is thus presented as a private (elite) treasure. In light of the stress placed on the nobility of the father, the claim to have died on behalf of the *genos* allows for her family to be viewed as one of those exclusive clans whose claims to nobility were based on birth.<sup>164</sup> The reference to κειμήλια also provides a means for the theater audience to evaluate the meaning of the sacrificial act. For those in the audience who may have been ambivalent about the meaning of the sacrifice, the Maiden here makes its value quite clear. She

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see again the transformation to the public domain of an element of gift exchange. . . . [It is this] *kharis* that binds together aristocratic exchange partners.” In a similar scene from Euripides’ *IA* Iphigenia explicitly refers to herself as a “benefactor” of Greece (1446).

163. See Veligianni-Terzi 1997: 195–98, 267–68 for the use of *πρόθυμος* and *προθύμως* in Attic decrees. Earlier in the play the chorus explains that the city is eager to protect the strangers but the god does not allow it to do so (*πρόθυμον*, 425); the Maiden also encourages Iolaos to be eager to save the lives of the other children (*πρόθυμος*, 577); the Slave contrasts Iolaos’ ability with his eagerness (*πρόθυμος*, 731). The Maiden’s eagerness thus parallels Iolaos’ subsequent miraculous rejuvenation (853–60) as a successful act of service; cf. Wilkins 1993: 125 *ad* 577.

164. Bourriot 1976: 228–36 and Roussel 1976: 51–87 argue that *genos* was not an aristocratic group that controlled the community in the Archaic *polis* but rather the product of Classical *citio*n; fourth-century *gennetai* created aristocratic pedigrees for themselves (Bourriot 1976: 694–710). Morris 2000: 122 argues that such posturing “made little impression on the dominant discourse”; but these fictive lineages are evidence of a real rival to the dominant civic ideals in Athens; see Ober 1989: 252–59 for fourth-century uses of the term. The existence of the *eupatridai* (*Ath. Pol.* 13.2) as well as Aiskhines’ claims for his father’s nobility by birth (2.147) attests to the perception of *genos* as related to class (see also Thucydides 1.13.1); the invented traditions surrounding *genê* are likely the expressions of a beleaguered elite. See Geourgoudi 1999: 72–73 for the importance of the *genos* in representations of human sacrifice in myth.

e effectively defines her act: through her sacrifice the needs of the *polis* are met, and the elite family receives its “treasure” for taking decisive political action.<sup>165</sup> Whereas both Demophon and Iolaos failed to resolve the crisis, the Maiden finds not only the means of salvation for the community but also a stage upon which to display the very elitism that simultaneously makes explicit the compensation owed to the family.

The network of kin relations along with the reference to debts of gratitude between the families of Herakles and Theseus provides additional resonance for the Maiden’s elite quality and value. As *xenoi*, who have come to Athens seeking refuge from Eurystheus at the altar (33) of Zeus Agoraios (70), the children of Herakles have some claim to protection as suppliants by Athens.<sup>166</sup> This question whether they will be accepted by Athens as *hiketai* (101, 123) or taken back to Argos (17–22, 153–57) informs the drama of the early part of the play. Iolaos claims that there is nothing in common between his family and the Argive Herald: they no longer have a share in Argos (184–85). But after praising Athens for its valuation of honor over life (200–201), Iolaos turns to Demophon and sets forth a lineage that connects Herakles and Theseus, Demophon’s father: they are children of first cousins (205–12; cf. 37); Demophon is related to the children of Herakles by descent (*genos*, 213). This family connection is stressed by Iolaos (συγγενεῖς, 224, συγγενής, 229) in his attempt to persuade Demophon to receive them as suppliants. In addition to claims of kinship Iolaos recounts two incidents that demonstrate the debt of *kharis* owed to the children. The first example concerns the quest for the Amazon queen’s girdle (217), however the precise debt owed to Herakles is unclear on account of a lacuna in the text.<sup>167</sup> But Iolaos does invoke the reciprocal bonds of their “spear-friend” relationship: for he once sailed along with Theseus (216), serving as a shield-bearer for Herakles (cf. 320–27). The second example is quite clear: the rescue of Theseus from Hades by Herakles (218). All of Greece, according to Iolaos, was a witness to this event, on account of which the children of Herakles now request that the favor be returned (ὧν ἀντιδοῦναι σ’ οὔδ’ ἀπαιτοῦσιν χάριν, 220).

The appeal to *genos* and the debt of *kharis* are effective; Demophon accepts Iolaos’ appeal and gives three reasons for doing so: Zeus, at whose altar the suppliants sit (238–39); the bond of kinship (συγγενής) and the earlier obligation

165. As discussed above, Aiskhylos’ *Agamemnon* similarly asserts the value of the victim by calling her an *agalma* (208). For the fundamental role of compensation in the representation of self-sacrifice see Versnel 1981.

166. I would stress that the agent of the benefaction who ultimately saves the city is *not* Athenian. It is not only a woman who rescues the city from this crisis; both she and Iolaos (as well as the other children) are *xenoi*. But as the chorus specifies the Maiden dies for her brothers and the land (622)—i.e., Athens. I am indebted to Mark Griffith for highlighting the significance of kin-relations in the play to my study. Mendelsohn 2002: 65–73 discusses Iolaos’ extensive language of the family and *genos* but stresses that such language marks Iolaos’ “Archaic” custom of relying on “pre-democratic” networks that stand in contrast with praise of the communal ideology of the Classical polis in oratory.

167. See Wilkins 1993: 79 *ad* 215–19, Allan 2001a: 149 *ad* 215–19 for discussion of the text.

(προυφείλειν, 240); and finally a sense of honor that compels Demophon to protect the altar and the suppliants from a hostile force of a foreigner (242–46). The content of Iolaos' claim on Demophon—the debt of *kharis*, the bonds of the *genos*, and the reciprocity of the spear-friend relationship—and the resultant social relations between the two families suggest a thoroughly elitist sphere that has wider implications for the Maiden's sacrifice.<sup>168</sup> For in light of the “bride of death” topos in the play (and in tragedy generally), the Maiden's self-sacrifice, her dedication to Kore (601), functions as a kind of dynastic “exchange” between elite families that assures the mutual benefit for them (as well as Athens). The Maiden's choice of self-sacrifice over marriage makes this connection clear (579–80); her claim that the sacrifice is a form of treasure (*keimêlia*, 591) in place of children and in compensation for her virginity reinforces the connection between sacrifice and the elite family. Much like an exchange in marriage, the Maiden forges an alliance between the two families. As Vernant has written: “As a daughter offered in marriage to a foreign *genos*, she fulfils the role of wealth put into circulation, weaving a network of alliances between different groups, just as do the *agalмата* exchanged at the wedding. . . .”<sup>169</sup> In contrast with Eurystheus' brute power politics conveyed by the Herald (155–57), who threatens Athens with war (265) and encourages them to take the better (i.e., Myceneans) rather than the worse (i.e., children of Herakles) as friends (*philous*, 176–78), the exchange of the Maiden derives its success from the relations of kin and *kharis* between the two families.<sup>170</sup> The dynamic of the exchange of the *parthenos* trumps Eurystheus' brute power politics and his attempt to persuade Athens to accept Argos as an ally, but we should not simply assimilate her self-sacrifice to marriage exchange.

A major difference with the marriage parallel, where the daughter is given as well as chosen by others, is of course the fact that the Maiden willingly gives herself in self-sacrifice. The Maiden's political contribution on behalf of the polis (and family) proposes a radically different politics, for although presented as a product of elite networks of exchange the political system is thereby revealed to be subject to certain readjustments: the play allows for the possibility of modifying the make-up of the political system by representing the Maiden as having the power to exercise some agency over her life and the political crisis. The *agalματα* mentioned by Vernant as a parallel for the exchange of elite women could not, however, be farther removed from the reality of the more passive and generally victimized members

168. See Griffith 1995 (esp. 68–72, 81–104) for discussion of these dynamics of elite relations in the *Oresteia*.

169. Vernant 1974a: 62 (see also 49, 54); on the exchange of women in tragedy see Wohl 1998 (esp. 60–67), Rabinowitz 1993. For the topos of “bride of death” (which informs scenes of self-sacrifice in tragedy) see Foley 1985, Rehm 1994.

170. The theme of marriage surfaces in Iolaos' musings on *eugeneia* in 299–301 (γαμείν or with Musgrave γάμων, 299), but these lines have been regarded as an interpolation (see Wilkins 1993: 88 *ad* 297–303, Zuntz 1955: 110–11 for discussion). The reading γαμείν might further suggest the context of marriage for the elite exchange of the Maiden; if the lines are interpolated, a subsequent performance may have emphasized the dynamic of her exchange as part of the bride of death topos.

of society. To ally the Maiden solely with *agalмата* elides part of her role. For the dedication of the Maiden to Kore involves both an implied dynastic marriage that cements an alliance between two aristocratic families and an act of self-sacrifice that can accommodate a segment of society broader than the elite through the explicit element of volunteerism. Marriage exchange and self-sacrifice serve as practices that embody the different social values represented by the Maiden's role. On the one hand, the representation of her sacrifice as a kind of exchange of a virgin daughter among elite families helps to disguise the Maiden's political contribution as a dynastic marriage. On the other hand, whereas the marriage imagery keeps the sacrifice within elite circles, the emphasis on the self-sacrifice opens up society to its marginal, more subordinate members of society. The topos of the "bride of death" in this scene of self-sacrifice (with its close relationship to the logic of the *pharmakos*) incorporates a social contradiction between an exclusive, aristocratic and a more inclusive, democratic notion of effective political agency.<sup>171</sup>

The Maiden's entrance provides some evidence for her unexpected agency and marginality. Iolaos had earlier indicated that the reason for keeping the women *within* the temple and thus out of sight had to do with a sense of shame before exposing the young girls to the crowd: νέας γὰρ παρθένους αἰδούμεθα / ὄχλῳ πελάζειν ἀπιβωμιοστατεῖν ("For we feel shame at maidens approaching the crowd and standing at the altar for protection," 43–44). The Maiden's presence before the crowd removes her from Iolaos' ideal type of seclusion, thus bringing her into contact with a broader segment of society.<sup>172</sup> When the Maiden justifies her entrance, she breaches the sense of *aidôs* put forward by Iolaos on the grounds that the plight of her family is a greater concern:

ζένοι, θράσος μοι μηδὲν ἐξόδοις ἐμαῖς  
προσθῆτε· πρῶτον γὰρ τόδ' ἐξαίτησομαι·

171. Male sacrificial victims in tragedy operate with a different but not unrelated dynamic: the young men sacrificed tend to be described as youths and often virgins: they are thus not represented as full male citizens. Although the fragmentary nature of the *Phrixos* plays prevents much discussion of the male victim, Menoikeus in *Phoinissai* offers a clear example. Much like female victims, who are explicitly referred to as *parthenoi*, Menoikeus' similar status is clear. Haimon is an unacceptable victim, as Teiresias tells Kreon, οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἦθεος (945). The related ideal of ritual purity in the terms, ἦθεος and παρθένος, is suggested by Herodotus (3.48.3; see Plato *Laws* 840d5 for ἦθεος as "unmated"). Both Polyxena and Menoikeus are called πῶλος (*Hekabe* 142, cf. 205, 206; *Phoinissai* 947), which as Mastronarde 1994: 418 *ad* 947 points out commonly refers to an unmarried girl, the taming of whose "wildness" through marriage is a desideratum. The play stresses (946) that it is the imminent marriage that precludes the choice of Haimon over Menoikeus as sacrificial victim. Greek history and mythology are rather full of *male* sacrificial acts—e.g., Leonidas or the soldiers celebrated for their decision to die for the *polis* in the funeral oration—but the prominence of elite *female* victims in tragedy suggests a specific function within the genre that draws upon the contradictions in Attic culture concerning the role of women and the representation of the *pharmakos*. Heroic sacrificial acts: Bremmer 1983; Kearns 1989: 96f., 1990; Kron 1999; Loraux 1986; some *pharmakos* rituals (e.g., in Massalia) required a male victim.

172. This emphasis on the victim and the crowd appears in other plays involving human sacrifice; see *IA* 735, 1030, 1338, 1546; *Hekabe* 605 for a similar usage of the term *okhlos* to describe the lower classes vis-à-vis the aristocratic virgin daughter (and the royal family).

γυναικί γάρ σιγή τε καὶ τὸ σωφρονεῖν  
 κάλλιστον εἶσω θ' ἤσυχον μένειν δόμων.  
 τῶν σῶν δ' ἀκούσασ', Ἴόλεως, στεναγμάτων  
 ἐξῆλθον, οὐ ταχθεῖσα πρεσβεύειν γένους·  
 ἀλλ', εἶμι γάρ πως πρόσφορος, μέλει δέ μοι  
 μάλιστ' ἀδελφῶν τῶνδε κάμαυτῆς πέρι,  
 θέλω πυθέσθαι μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς πάλαι κακοῖς  
 προσκείμενόν τι πῆμα σὴν δάκνει φρένα.

474–83

Strangers, please attribute no boldness to my coming out: this is the first thing I shall ask. For a woman silence and modest behavior are the most noble/beautiful thing, as well as staying quietly in the house. But since I heard your groans, Iolaos, I have come out. I have not been designated to stand at the head of the family, but since I am in some way acting and I care greatly about my brothers here and myself, I wish to find out whether some new misfortune on top of our old troubles is gnawing at your mind.

The Maiden herself plainly states her marginal status in the family: οὐ ταχθεῖσα πρεσβεύειν γένους (479). By declaring the ideals of women's silence and seclusion indoors, the Maiden evokes a common line of thought in tragedy (as well as other Greek texts).<sup>173</sup> The Maiden's remarks, when taken together with those of Iolaos (to whom she seems to offer a response), betray the social norms governing women's absence from the masculine world of the assembly or the military. The fact that women were prominent in the sphere of ritual could justify in part the Maiden's public role, but the play's emphasis on status and class cannot be explained by recourse to ritual alone.<sup>174</sup> Indeed, the need for a woman to leave the *oikos* and take action might also be conditioned by the household practices of families from different classes. For according to Aristotle those families without property lacked slaves, and as a result the poor had to use their wives and children as assistants (*Politics* 1323a5–7); some families thus depended on their female members to perform work that would otherwise be done by slaves. The office of the Superintendent of Women (*gunaikonomos*) and any magistrate charged with similar kinds of supervision are features of an aristocratic form of government: it is neither democratic—for “how is it possible to keep the wives of the poor from going out of doors?”—nor oligarchic—for the wives of oligarchs are luxurious (*Pol.* 1300a4–8). The ideal of keeping the women of the *oikos* secluded and away from

173. Ajax, for example, explains to Tekmessa that silence brings beauty (*kosmon*) to women (*Ajax* 293); on the significance of gender in public and private space see Easterling 1987, Foley 1981, Gould 1980. O'Connor-Visser 1987: 27 suggests that the Maiden “is effectively explaining and justifying her deviance”; see also McClure 1999: 25, Rabinowitz 1993: 62.

174. Women's ritual roles could also be determined by economic and social class; for helpful discussion of the ritual role of women in Athens see Dillon 2002, Foley 2001, Go 2004, Osborne 1993, Sourvinou-Inwood 1996. O'Higgins 2003 argues for women's active ritual role in producing culture (and dissenting from the organization of a male dominated society).

the view of non-family males would thus pose more of a problem for poor households. Old Comedy (e.g., *Thesm.* 443–58, *Wasps* 1388–1412) and oratory (e.g., Demosthenes 57) both refer to poor women forced by financial constraints to be laborers outside the house; funerary reliefs representing women as laborers reveal a recognition of the importance of industry and work for some families.<sup>175</sup> Staying indoors was a gendered ideal promoting the privileges of wealthy households while discrediting others too poor to afford slaves and forced to have its women engage in labor (often outside the house). But not all families (both citizen and metic) shared this ideal: some commemorated their female members as workers.

Despite this (elite) ideal of female “seclusion” Athenian women did take action in the public realm, even in politics. Whereas after Perikles delivered a funeral oration c. 440 the women of Athens greeted him like a victorious athlete, Elpinike rebuked him for engaging in a battle with Samos, thus contrasting him with her more conservative brother, Kimon, for not fighting against the Persians but one of Athens’ allies (Plutarch *Per.* 28). The likelihood that the anti-war activists, Lysistrata and Myrrhine, in Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* represent real contemporaneous priestesses (Lysistrata as Lysimakhe, Priestess of Athena Polias, and Myrrhine as the eponymous priestess of Athena Nike) may reflect the poet’s attempt to harness the (perceived) opinions of these priestesses for a very public statement.<sup>176</sup> Comedy’s portrayal of “women on top” engages both political and economic problems. More modest households in *Ekklesiazousai* unite around economic needs: Blepyros’ and Khremes’ concerns about their lost three-obols from Assembly pay and thus the lost purchases (380–93) are answered by Praxagora’s economic reforms (590–600). Public intervention by Elpinike and Praxagora’s comic example, as well as the public honors paid to Athenian priestesses, suggests that some (citizen) women performed civic roles; these examples also reveal that the behavior and political action of some women could be to a certain extent defined by the family’s class position and social status. The Maiden’s entrance speech signals her assumption of a “male” role (not unlike Praxitheia’s daughter in *Erechtheus*) in the political and military worlds of the play (all the while hoping to save her siblings from death), while she declares her subordinate status in terms of Athenian gender norms. However, class relations in the city would also condition the audience’s understanding of the Maiden’s behavior.

175. For the ideal of female “seclusion” (some forms of which can also be related to the wealth of the household) and the reality of life in Athens see Cohen 1989, Schnurr-Redford 1996 (esp. 140–60). For women’s labor in Athens see Brock 1994, Jones 2004: 59–64, Kosmopoulou 2002 (all with additional bibliography). Although Kosmopoulou provides valuable discussion of “female professionals” in Attic funerary sculpture, I would disagree with her contention that all residents of Attica attached little or no esteem to laborers (female *or* male). This notion replicates elite ideals while eliding the interests of (non-elite) laborers.

176. For the public roles of citizen women see e.g., Patterson 1986, 2007 (who further notes that public monuments were erected in honor of both Lysimakhe and Myrrhine), Dillon 2002, Foley 2001, Lewis 1955 and Schnurr-Redford 1996.



The Maiden is not, however, represented subordinate solely in terms of gender.<sup>177</sup> The status of the family itself is questioned. Earlier in the play the Argive Herald refers to the children of Herakles as runaways (δραπέτας, 140), a term associated with runaway slaves.<sup>178</sup> Demophon's pledges that the Argives will not lead the suppliants away "by force" (286; cf. 256) and the Herald's remark that Athens is the place for *kakoi* to see (259) further evoke the family's debased status. In her justification for agreeing to the sacrifice, the Maiden in turn contrasts the status of the family (born from a noble father) with *kakoi* (510; cf. 519). While the meaning of *kakos* can have a moral force, it also has a social force used to refer the lower classes and to denigrate their social status.<sup>179</sup> This social meaning is made clear by the Maiden's explicit contrast of the children of a noble father (509, 513) with the threat of being seen as *kakoi* (510). The subordinate social position of the family and the Maiden is also suggested through reference to their exile (ἀλητεύσω, 515; cf. 224); the desperate condition of the family forced to "wander" may also evoke the more dire conditions of beggars.<sup>180</sup> The Maiden's description of herself as not deficient (ἐνδεής) but one who died on behalf of the family (589–90) evokes the specter of a subordinate and inferior status that she contests.<sup>181</sup> The play's treatment of the Maiden's role as a "savior" also undercuts her status. For whereas there is explicit mention of Eurystheus' hero cult (1026–44), there is no mention of the cult of Herakles' daughter, a fact that is partly explained by the anonymity of the Maiden; the play thus seems to shift the honors due to the Maiden onto Eurystheus.<sup>182</sup> The Maiden's at once central

177. The question of social status for victims of human sacrifice is a common trait: Polyxena in *Hekabe* emphasizes her prestige and elitist credentials (349–56) before commenting on her marginality and new status as a slave (357–66); Menoikeus in *Phoinissai* (1003–1005) presents only two options for himself: to die nobly or to be base (*kakos*).

178. See e.g. Herodotos 6.11. Iolaos had earlier used the verb ἐξέδραμεν (14) to describe their departure from Argos; the verb might also suggest runaway slaves (see Mendelsohn 2002: 80), although ἀποδιδράσκω seems more common in this context. For the Herald's language see Allan 2001a: 144 *ad* 139–40. Although required by the theme of supplication, the contrasting social positions of the family have the additional function of articulating class politics in Athens.

179. See Roselli 2006: 148–49 for discussion of *kakos* used in class warfare in Sophokles' *Antigone*.

180. This use of ἀλητεύω to describe beggars is found in Homer (*Od.* 17.501) as well in Hellenistic literature (Leonidas *A.P.* 9.12). The use of ἀλητεύω (131) and ἀλήτης (139) in Euripides' *Elektra* to describe Orestes as an exile is further expanded by Elektra: μέλεος ἀλαίων ποτὶ θῆσσαν ἐστίαν (205). Orestes' wandering (as an exile) is here presented as a voyage to the world of the lower classes.

181. The term is used by Isokrates (4.105) to refer to the poor: ταῖς οὐσίαις ἐνδεεστέρους. The use of the term by the Argive Herald (170) provides an example of its more generic meaning: he describe the inferior order of the Herakleidae to that of the Argives.

182. The earliest attestation of the name of Herakles' daughter, Makaria, seems to be in the play's *hypothesis*; the name is likely connected with the eponymous stream in Marathon (Pausanias 1.32.6). See Allan 2001a: 31–32; Wilkins 1990b: 331, 1993: 111 *ad* 474 for discussion. For Eurystheus' hero cult see Kearns 1989: 49–50, 164; Seaford 1994: 126–29; Wilkins 1990b: 331–32. See Wilkins 1990a: 193n.61 for the suggestion that the lack of *aitia* (related to the Maiden's anonymity in the play) points to the importance of the "ideology of civic voluntary sacrifice." The problems that

and marginal role for the community that she saves evokes the *pharmakos*, the figure par excellence of this paradox. Of particular interest here are these central yet marginal groups, “those who in a sense belong to the city yet are not exactly citizens.”<sup>183</sup> Women, slaves, wage-laborers and craftsmen—that is, all but the ideal male citizen—tend to be *pharmakoi*, who paradoxically stand at the edges of the *polis* in the eyes of elite males and yet are frequently found to occupy a central position in the salvation of the community. Still not all such victims were drawn from the lower classes or from outside the citizen body. Thus the mythical king of Athens, Kodros, sacrificed himself on behalf of the city, yet strikingly in some version of his sacrifice he disguised himself as a lower class beggar.<sup>184</sup>

The contradictory nature of the Maiden’s character—elite but also marginal and subordinate—has a significant impact on the reception of her role by others. This dynamic of reception is represented by the social leveling of male characters and the sharing of the agency embodied in the Maiden’s role as guarantor of *sôtêria*. Consider what happens to the Maiden once she is led on stage. Despite the Maiden’s self-presentation as the savior (σώτειραν, 588) and Demophon’s assertion that the virgin victim will bring *sôtêria*, Iolaos refers to Hyllos’ servant (πενέστης, 639; cf. 678, 725) as a “savior from harm” (σωτήρ βλάβης, 640) moments after the Maiden leaves the stage.<sup>185</sup> Later in the play Eurystheus presents himself as a metic (1033) who will save the city with the benefaction of his death (πόλει σωτήριος, 1032).<sup>186</sup> The Maiden’s self-sacrifice also inspires Iolaos to fight

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past scholars have read into the condition of the text do not require us to posit a lacuna in which a messenger scene announced the Maiden’s cult (see note 205 below).

183. Kearns 1990: 323. On the rites of the *pharmakos* see Bonnechere 1994: 293–308, Bremmer 1983, Hughes 1991: 139–65, Kearns 1990, Parker 1983: 257–80. See Seaford 1994: 312–18 for the close relationship between the *pharmakos* and the (generally) elite victim of human sacrifice.

184. Kings could be viewed as marginal inasmuch as they were not one of the democratic male citizens and non-existent in fifth-century Athens. For Kodros’ dressing as a lower class male see Burkert 1979: 169–70 for references. Kearns 1990: 335 notes the relative lack of slave *pharmakoi* (and the absence of Helots as *pharmakoi* in Sparta).

185. Although the term πενέστης can also be used to refer to a poor man (*Wasps* 1274), the fact that Hyllos’ servant refers to his masters as δεσπότης indicates his slave status; cf. Wilkins 1993: 133 *ad* 639. At line 640 Kovacs in his Loeb edition prints ἦκετ’ ἄρα σῶν κάτερ βλάβης (Willink’s correction of Kovacs’ earlier suggestion, ἦκεν ἄρα σῶς κάτερ βλάβης; see Kovacs 1988: 122–23, 1996: 12). Kovacs has two main objections to the transmitted text: first, the safety is restricted to two people; second, he notes an anomaly in the treatment of the servant as a savior. At this point in the play, Iolaos is onstage with the chorus (who have just sung the second stasimon), when the servant enters. Iolaos could thus be referring to himself and the collective chorus or perhaps himself and Alkmene (who enters a few lines later). Kovacs assumes that the second person plural “embraces both the Servant and Hyllos’ company,” but it is not unlikely that the Servant enters alone, provides information to the characters and then engages in the comic arming scene with Iolaos; alternatively one could envision Iolaos addressing only the servant. The reference to the servant as *sôtêr*, as I argue here, is not anomalous but functions as part of the social leveling of the male characters and the dissemination of the Maiden’s glory. See Wilkins 1993: 133 *ad* 640 for additional discussion of the text.

186. Eurystheus’ later fate at the hands of Alkmene at the end of the play is best viewed as a contrast to the sacrifice of the Maiden: the two deaths are motivated by a completely different set

in the service of the state—further displacing the value of *her* gesture onto a male hoplite (ὀπλίτης, 694; cf. 800). The transference of the Maiden’s glory to the Servant is particularly striking, for Iolaos compares the act of the elite daughter and the salvation she guarantees with that of the (likewise unnamed) Servant. Although Eurystheus is by no means a civic everyman, as a metic his status was beneath that of a male citizen; the Maiden’s role is, nonetheless, extended to non-citizens in Athens. It is Iolaos’ attempt to join the battle that offers the most interesting example. Over the protests of the Servant (682), the chorus (702–708) and Alkmene (709–19), Iolaos insists upon fighting. His willingness and eager desire to stand by his friends and help, a mission Alkmene tells him is tantamount to death, presents us with a heroic act modeled on the Maiden’s performance.<sup>187</sup>

This scene has been discussed in terms of its “comic” elements.<sup>188</sup> The stumbling, aged Iolaos continually refers to his actions as if they were signs of prowess, but the Servant repeatedly debates his optimistic understanding of his abilities with ironic rejoinders targeting his inability on account of old age (720–47). From the start the Servant emphasizes that it will not be the mere sight of Iolaos but his blows that will injure the enemy; the Servant’s language may in fact suggest comic wordplay.<sup>189</sup> The Servant’s suggestion that he will lead

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of circumstances (see Burian 1977: 4, Wilkins 1993: xxix, Zuntz 1955: 51). Still Alkmene’s demand for vengeance need not simply invert the glory and honor achieved by the Maiden’s sacrifice: in his response to Alkmene the Servant (968) states that Hyllos should have killed Polymestor; the chorus (1021) states that Alkmene’s plan is best.

187. There are a number of connections with the Maiden’s heroic act: the Slave describes him as *prothumos* 731, much like the Maiden’s “eagerness” (410, 550; cf. 577); the charge of foolishness in taking a difficult stance (709; cf. 413); Iolaos’ stated desire to stand by their friends and help (680–81; cf. the Maiden’s desire to protect her family and the city: e.g., 480–81, 503–506, 550–51); Alkmene chides him with leaving her bereft and stresses that his is a suicide mission (710; cf. the Maiden’s acknowledgement of her choosing death: e.g., 501–502, 559); in his earlier attempt to resolve the crisis Iolaos claims he must not “cling to his life” (οὐ φιλεῖν δεῖ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν, 455) much like the Maiden’s claim (μὴ φιλοψυχούσ’ ἐγὼ, 533; cf. 518). Cf. however Mendelsohn 2002 for a different understanding of the impact of the Maiden on Iolaos.

188. See Allan 2001a: 183–85, Seidensticker 1982: 92–100; cf. the skeptical assessment of “comic” elements in Euripides in Gregory 1999–2000. Wilkins 1993: 137 *ad* 680–701 prefers to emphasize the faith of the believer (Iolaos) in contrast to the perceptions of the non-believers (slave, chorus, Alkmene); his model derives from St. Paul’s remarks to the Corinthians (1.17f.). Seidensticker emphasizes the contrast (98–99) and comic relief (98) provided by Iolaos’ comic dressing as a hoplite and argues that the scene serves as the turning point from the rejuvenation and heroic act of Iolaos to criticism and irony; the movement thus undercuts Iolaos’ act and prevents it from being taken seriously. Although I tend to agree with Seidensticker’s identification of such scenes as “comic,” in my reading of this scene (as noted above) “comic” elements or, perhaps better, particularizing details (see below) also serve as a means by which Euripides levels down social distinctions among the male characters. Whether or not such scenes made the audience laugh, the shift in tone and characterization affect the character’s sociology.

189. Zuntz 1955: 29 comments on the comic tone and suggests a parallel with *Knights* (“culminating in almost Aristophanic ridicule”): the Slave’s assertion that Iolaos may strike a blow but may fall down beforehand (θένοις ἄν, ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν αὐτὸς ἂν πέσοις, “You may strike, but you may sooner fall [should you strike],” 686) suggests comic language (ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἂν μαχέσαιτο· χέσαιτο

the “hoplite” Iolaos as if he were a child (730) underscores the silliness of the proposition. It is precisely this gap between Iolaos’ hope for action and the reality of the inermity of old age that the Servant notes (735). This “comic” moment is not, however, simply an instance of tragedy borrowing from “low” genres. The presentation of Iolaos with “particularizing” comic elements also aligns him more with foreigners, slaves, and the urban poor. Indeed, the closest parallel for Iolaos’ arming scene is the Old Servant’s attempt to climb up to the temple in *Ion* (741–46). Such “individualization” was reserved for low genres and lower class characters. As Eric Csapo and Margaret Miller suggest, “the greater the *ethopoeia*, the further down the social scale the object of imitation.”<sup>190</sup> The use of comic elements in the characterization of Iolaos may have been humorous, but it also lowers his social position and thereby levels social differences between himself and the Servant. The sharing of the Maiden’s role of “savior,” which her spectacular self-sacrifice has earned her, with a servant and a metic, and the use of her act as a model of action for a “low” or “comic” Iolaos suggest that this role can be shared with and performed by other characters. But if the play allows them to appropriate her role for themselves, at the same time the play insists on leveling out the social differences among these male characters. While the Maiden’s character explicitly embodies both elite and low elements, her agency, quite effective in achieving results, is presented in the play as a role that is capable of being occupied or performed by other “others”—the lower classes, metics, and slaves. Through this dynamic of sharing the role of “savior” among a broader spectrum of characters Euripides facilitates the adoption of the Maiden’s role by the mass (i.e., predominantly lower class) audience; the play not only allows but also encourages them to share her perspective and her subjectivity.

The chorus gives us a similarly complex model for the reception of her act. Praise by these old (120) men from Marathon (80) contributes to the construction and understanding of her act as an elite benefaction for the community while providing a broader civic (and perhaps more democratic) view of the reception of her sacrifice. The choice of Marathon for a location evokes the patriotic self-presentation of Athens and their defeat of the Persians in 490.<sup>191</sup> According to Pausanias (1.15.3) the Stoa Poikile contained a scene in which the hero, Marathon,

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γάρ, εἰ μαχέσσαιτο, “But she cannot fight; for she would shit should she fight,” *Knights* 1057); see also Burian 1977: 11.

190. Csapo and Miller 1998: 120; they go on to suggest that such details tend to particularize foreigners and slaves, but the exception to this rule is the urban poor, “creating within the citizen class an ‘Internal Other.’” In *Poetics* 1451b14 comedy and iambic poetry are described as dealing with particulars. By way of contrast, in funeral orations, where the motley group of soldiers is celebrated under the sign of the (noble) hoplite, there is no concern with particular, individualized details (see more below).

191. Nonetheless, the location of Marathon is often fused together with Athens in the play: Wilkins 1990b: 330, 1993: 52 *ad* 32. For discussion of patriotic elements in the play see further Wilkins 1990a and Zuntz 1955.

as well as Theseus, Athena and Herakles stood on the side of the Athenians at the battle of Marathon.<sup>192</sup> The home of this chorus of aged citizens (i.e., Marathon) evokes one of the seminal moments in Athenian history that was crucial for the city's self-identity (a theme not without value in such a patriotic play). Their responses to the plight of the suppliants and the Maiden's sacrifice are thereby a valuable guide to the (or at least one) civic reception of her act. Upon first hearing the plight of Iolaos, the chorus is immediately moved to pity (129). In his debate with the Herald, Iolaos voices his expectation that the chorus and by extension the city of Athens (197–200) will defend the children from Eurystheus and be willing to die for their cause (200): he explains how a sense of honor is greater than life among good/elite men (ἔσθλοῖς, 201). The chorus' response to Iolaos' speech again expresses their pity for the fate of the Herakleidai; in particular, they emphasize the nobility of the family and the undeserved misfortune of the children of a noble father (232–35). Once the Maiden comes onstage and proclaims her decision to sacrifice herself, the chorus is awestruck at the bravery of the Maiden; they ask what mortal could ever utter sentiments more noble (535–38). In the second stasimon, after the Maiden is led off to the sacrifice, the chorus sings an ode of sympathy and praise with its dactylic meter providing a solemn, even heroic air alongside elements familiar from laments and funerary commemoration.<sup>193</sup> In the *strophe* (608–17) they sing of the instability of human fortune. The same house undergoes a series of fortunes; fate settles one man from high to low, another man it makes successful.<sup>194</sup> In the *antistrophe* they attempt to console Iolaos before singing of the Maiden's glorious death and the fame she will possess in exchange for it (618–29).<sup>195</sup> According to the chorus, she "has a share in death that is glorious, a death on behalf of her brothers and the land. . . . Excellence (*aretê*) advances through toils" (μόχθων, 625); and this labor is undertaken (willingly and freely, 559) for the salvation of the land (622) as well as the pursuit of glory (621, 623; cf. 534). This is a nice example of how the play, in using traditional *gnômai*, levels social differences (in the *strophe*) while emphasizing the social distinction of a female character (in the *antistrophe*). The civic reception of the Maiden's sacrifice proposed by these old men from

192. For brief discussion of the painting see Kron 1999: 62–64 (with additional bibliography); she notes the tradition of the hero, Marathos, who sacrificed himself before the Dioskouroi invaded Attica to rescue their sister, Helen, and thus ensured victory; on this hero see also Kearns 1989: 45.

193. See Allan 2001a: 177 *ad* 608–29, Wilkins 1993: 129 *ad* 608–28.

194. There is a problem in the text: at 614 the manuscript has ἀλήταν, which does not scan; see Allan 2001a: 178 *ad* 613–14, Wilkins 1993: 130 *ad* 614 for discussion. Although Boeckh's proposal, τὸν δὲ πλάνητ', explains how the gloss could have entered the text, Elmsley's suggestion, τὸν δὲ πένητ', provides a clearer contrast with the previous line. In the context of the social dynamics I trace in the play, this rhetoric also provides an albeit hackneyed but pertinent comment on the elevation of the lower classes through their identification with the elite Maiden: for the lofty man is brought low just as the poor man is made prosperous (613–14).

195. Reciprocity functions in the other scenes of human sacrifice as well; see e.g. *Hekabe* 573–80: the Greeks give gifts to Polyxena for her sacrifice; Iokasta remarks that Menoikeus' death is fortunate for the city but a private source of pain for Kreon (*Phoinissai* 1206–1207).

Marathon (with their strong patriotic overtones) underscores their sympathy for her and celebrates her act as a civic benefaction but in rather elitist terms (cf. *eugeneia* 626).<sup>196</sup>

The chorus' praise is an important guide to the reception of her act by a rather idealized representative of the *polis*. In addition to the Maiden's self-claimed beautiful death and nobility, the chorus' favorable estimation of her role is likely facilitated through her self-presentation as a male warrior. For after instructing Iolaos and the city of Athens not to fear the Argive spear any longer (and *before* she is ordered to do so), she claims to be ready to die and to "stand by" the sacrifice (*παρίστασθαι σφαγῆ*, 502). Critics have noted the Maiden's odd expression and sought to explain it in part as an allusion to hoplite warfare.<sup>197</sup> In the ephebic oath, where the young soldiers swear that they will fight and die with honor, there is an explicit pledge never to abandon their *parastatês*: οὐδὲ λείψω τὸν παραστάτην ὅπου ἂν στείχησω.<sup>198</sup> The Maiden's similar pledge to die willingly and "stand by" is thus suggestive of her appropriation of the world of the male warrior. But she is not only represented in specific terminology that suggests her assimilation to a hoplite, her entire ethic of willing self-sacrifice glorifies the decision of the soldier giving his life for the polis. The favorable comparison between the male soldier and the female sacrificial victim is, in fact, one made explicit by Euripidean tragedy itself. For in her comparison of the role of male soldiers and female sacrificial victims in Euripides' *Erechtheus* (fr. 360.23–37) Praxithea states that if she had given birth to a crop of male children she would not refuse to send them out to do battle; indeed, she expresses her hatred for women who choose life rather than virtue for their sons. But as it is she has a daughter who will sacrifice herself for the salvation of the city.

196. By limiting the meaning of female characters strictly to questions of gender the significance of the civic (and democratic) praise of elite benefaction is lost. See e.g. Rabinowitz 1993: 64: "By making Makaria a model of nobility, the text simultaneously holds out the false promise that women can achieve success on the male model and supports the value system that demands the death of maidens so that men can wage appropriate wars."

197. Mendelsohn 2002: 94; he further suggests (2002: 104) that: "The Virgin's self-identification as a *parastates* facing death, then, would have been the same as that of the Athenian hoplite in the same circumstances"; see also Loraux 1986: 87. For the use of *parastatês* as evocative of hoplite warfare in tragedy see Sophokles' *Antigone* 671 (Grieth 1999: 238 *ad* 663–66 [668–71]); Wilkins 1993: 115 *ad* 502 compares τῷ πολέμῳ παρέστησαν (Dem. 22.15). Van Wees 2004: 195 notes that those men standing in line were likely to be "a kinsman, friend or lover"; see Dover 1989: 189 for a fourth-century, elitist use of *parastatês* by Ephoros to describe a pair of male lovers (I thank one of the anonymous referees for this use of the term). See now Christ 2004: 47 for the use of sacrificial victims in tragedy to explore the tensions between being "enlisted by force or willingly" among male soldiers. Wilkins 1990 discusses the (non-ironic) patriotic issues associated with the Maiden's sacrifice and relates such scenes of self-sacrifice with that of the hoplite.

198. See Rhodes and Osborne 2003: 440–48 (#88) for text and discussion. The formal institution of the *epêbeia* dates to the fourth century, but its structure and practices date to an earlier period; Siewert 1977 provides a number of parallels between the ephebic oath and fifth-century literature. As van Wees 2004: 93–94 notes, there is a development from a fifth-century amateur to a more professional organization in the fourth century.

A comparison of the tragic portrayal of the Maiden (presenting herself as a male warrior) with the funeral oration is instructive for the differences in the promotion of social values, particularly in terms of the attempt to project an image of the city in the *epitaphios* as a homogeneously elite group and thus void of social distinction. Much like Praxithea's praise of her daughter as well as other scenes of human sacrifice in tragedy, the decision of male soldiers to sacrifice themselves is eulogized in the funeral oration. Thus Perikles' oration in Thucydides highlights the soldier's choice to die (e.g., 2.39.4, 42.4; Dem. 60.1, 25–28), and in Lysias' *epitaphios* the decision by the men at Marathon to die is tied to their immortal fame (2.23).<sup>199</sup> Perikles claims that bravery in battle serves to cover a man's other failings; by blotting out the base/lower class (*kakon*) with the good/noble (*agathon*) the fallen soldier is a benefit for the community rather than a detriment on the basis of his own qualities (Thucydides 2.42.3). The city celebrated in the *epitaphios* is void of the urban poor and working class professionals in the military: since the fallen soldiers have demonstrated their excellence as manifest in their choice to die (2.42.4), *all* the soldiers could therefore be assimilated to the noble (*agathoi*). The funeral oration offers us a vision of the community that incorporates all soldiers under the sign of the elite citizen hoplite. Not only is there no explicit reference to other military men (e.g., peltasts, sailors, archers) in these eulogies—*unlike* the lists of the war dead—the presence of lower class soldiers serving as hoplites is systematically suppressed.<sup>200</sup> In this way, the ideal of the elite hoplite army is maintained, despite the presence of other kinds of soldiers and the fact that the *thêtes* made up from one to two thirds of the hoplite forces. For wealthy as well as relatively poor hoplites fought side by side; hoplites were *not* a homogeneous, elite group.<sup>201</sup> In its suppression of the active participation of lower class males the *epitaphios* presents a view of the “noble demos” that alienates the poor from their own interests, for as Wohl has

199. Loraux 1986: 101 argues apropos of the *epitaphios* that “The eulogy is addressed above all to a decision, which is a choice: the dead have chosen between their lives . . . and the city.”

200. On the ideological exclusions made by the *epitaphios*: Longo 1977, Loraux 1986; for the presence of lower class men among the hoplites see Gabrielsen 2002, van Wees 2001, 2002; cf. the skeptical assessment of Hanson 1995, Strauss 2002. The names of foreigners as well as slaves appear on the lists of the war dead (see Bradeen 1969; although the archers not explicitly designated as “barbarian” may in fact be Athenian); the appearance of *hoplitai* on Agora 17.23 might further suggest a form of commemoration according to the kind of military service performed.

201. Some hoplites were able to afford expensive bronze armor and traveled to battle on horseback, others were able only to afford the most basic spear and shield: Van Wees 1995, 2001, 2002, 2004: 47–85; Gabrielsen 2002. The ideal hoplite state espoused by conservative elite critics like Aristotle (e.g., *Politics* 1297b2–6) and Plato (e.g., *Laws* 706c), as well as the restrictions in 411 on the franchise to the 5,000 wealthiest hoplites who could most benefit the city with their possessions and persons (Thucydides 8.65.3), should serve as a reminder of the contested nature of hoplite status as a marker of class. A fundamental distinction is to be made between the reality of different classes serving as hoplites and the fantasy of the hoplites as self-sufficient and suitably wealthy citizens (van Wees 2004); for the elaboration of the hoplite “ideal” see Hanson 1995. Despite the promotion of the hoplite fantasy in Athens the effectiveness of the light-armed seems to have been acknowledged by generals: see e.g. Xenophon *Hellenika* 2.4.15–17.

argued, in Perikles' funeral oration "the ideal of *philokalia* and *philosophia* both occludes the fact of economic inequality and also subjects the poor to an ethic that even while it 'ennobles' them will always find them (morally, as socially) *aiskhroi*."<sup>202</sup> In the funeral oration, potential tensions among the rich and poor soldiers (and their families) are thus redirected onto a single image that would have been acceptable and mystifying for the poorer families but nonetheless serving to promote the values of the elite as the supreme values of the polis. Social distinction within the citizen body is muted, as the funeral oration seeks to inscribe elite values among the public that is encouraged to misrecognize itself as a united and elite civic group.<sup>203</sup> The rather vague ideal of patriotism and commemoration of the war dead (then as now) thus becomes a means to distract the public from the problems of class struggle through the propagation of national duty and honor.

The Maiden's ambiguous position in the play (i.e., elite and central yet subordinate and anonymous) can be related to the hoplite imagery in her rhetoric. For in the funeral oration the collective, *anonymous* body of Athenian hoplites is praised; but these nameless (elite) hoplites also stand in for lower class soldiers, light-armed, and sailors.<sup>204</sup> Indeed, in the play the Maiden is never named but simply referred to as *parthenos*, *pais* and *teknon*—words that only highlight the character's anonymous and also subordinate status. Her (elite) individuality is thus *in some respects* denied by the play.<sup>205</sup> The effacement of her individual character from the play (literally, as she is sacrificed) as well as the equal sharing

202. Wohl 2002: 43.

203. Loraux 1986; see also Wohl 1996 for the promotion of elite values in the polis at the Panathenaia. Cf. however Ober 1989 for the notion of the "ideological hegemony" of the masses; see Harris 1994, Kallet-Marx 1994, Rose 2006 for a critique of Ober's work. The ideal of self-sacrifice could also have real political implications and serve to promote the interests of the ruling classes. Longo 1977: 6–7 has argued that such patriotic ideologies could serve to perpetuate "sotto le mentite spoglie del 'dovere' e dell' 'obbedienza,' la soggezione che il sistema assegna alle classi subalterne, per estrarre dalla guerra un profitto che andrà ad esclusivo vantaggio di pochi." The idea of the communal need of and approbation for the soldier's sacrifice is present already in Kallinos, where the "little" man and the "great" man alike mourn the soldier who is compared to the gods (fr. West 1.16–18): the social unity of the community requires the combination of the interests of the *ὄλιγος* and the *μέγας*.

204. Loraux 1986: 101: "The noble death assumes submission of the whole community and homogeneity among members of the ingroup"; Longo 1977: 13: "È solo all'acme dell'età della polis, allorchè l'ideologia della città celebra i suoi maggiori trionfi, che l'epitaffio collettivo s'impone come celebrazione comunitaria, nella quale sono obliterate le distinzioni individuali." The *polyandron* provides a physical manifestation of the ideal of social integration.

205. The statement in the hypothesis that the Maiden is praised for dying nobly (*ταύτην μὲν οὖν εὐγενῶς ἀποθανοῦσαν ἐτιμῆσαν*) has led some scholars to posit a lacuna after 629, in which the Maiden's death was reported; however the Maiden *is* praised both while she is onstage and by the chorus. For textual discussion see Allan 2001a: 35–39, 178 *ad* 608–29; and Wilkins 1993: xxvii–xxx (with additional bibliography). There are also some fragments attributed to the play by ancient scholars; their attribution cannot, however, be confirmed or denied in most cases. For discussion see Allan 2001a: 225–27, O'Connor-Visser 1987: 33–43, Wilkins 1993: xxvii–xxxi. The state of the text as well as the fragments attributed in the *florilegia* to the play strongly suggest that theater



of her role (and thus glory) among the male characters provides a corollary to the logic of the *epitaphios*. But whereas the funeral oration levels everyone up, *Children of Herakles* levels out the social differences among the male characters while insisting upon the elitism *as well as* the marginal status of the Maiden. It is worthwhile to note that none of the male characters, who receive a share of the Maiden's honor, are represented in such overtly elitist terms as the Maiden. Furthermore, the chorus' praise of the Maiden's self-sacrifice (621–29) may evoke themes common to the *epitaphios*, but their eulogy is focused exclusively on one elite individual. But particularly striking is the assimilation of the Maiden's role of savior to Hyllos' servant as well as Iolaos' lower class, "comic" presentation and Eurystheus' metic status. The effect of the dissemination of her glory and agency is to soften the reception of the Maiden's elitism and perhaps to render it more acceptable to the mass audience. For the fact that her honors are shared among characters represented as "low" (slaves, metics and the lower classes) unites the Maiden with these groups. Whereas in the funeral oration it is the elite hoplite who stands in for all military men serving as hoplites (rich and poor, peltasts and sailors), the Maiden's own clearly marked marginal identity in terms of social status (i.e., a foreign *parthenos*) places her in a subordinate position not unlike non-elite (or socially leveled out) characters. By presenting the Maiden as relatively subordinate and as a quasi-hoplite Euripides stresses the potential for the radical agency of other "others" in the city.<sup>206</sup> The assigning of agency to a marginal character in the play rather than insisting upon assimilating all social groups to the elite male warrior offers a very different model than the operation in the *epitaphios*. The Maiden's hoplite rhetoric does not so much mark her as transgressive or suggest a failure of masculine heroics, as it helps the chorus and the audience to understand her action as representative of their own. The ambiguity of the hoplite figure facilitates the reception of the Maiden's role among different social groups with competing interests.

The Maiden may serve as a popular model (within the play at least), but her honor far exceeds that of any soldier. As noted above, in Euripides' *Erechtheus*, Praxithea explicitly compares the death of her daughter with soldiers fighting for the city. The crucial difference, however, lies in the honorands and the honors bestowed on them: whereas soldiers *en masse* receive a common tomb and an equal share of glory, her daughter alone will be crowned for giving herself on behalf

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professionals recognized the potential appeal of the play's themes and adapted it to suit the needs of particular performances.

206. The aspect of social leveling among Hyllos' slave, Eurystheus, and Iolaos can also be extended to Demophon in terms of elite expectations. For the Maiden could in fact be viewed as usurping his role to a certain degree: his behavior is not that of Kodros. Her ability to resolve the crisis contrasts sharply with the overtly pragmatic basis of Demophon's decision not to allow anyone from his family or the city to be sacrificed. Thus through his exercise of leadership Demophon may reveal himself to be a rather small-minded democrat and subject to a somewhat different (and more negative) process of social leveling. I thank one of the anonymous readers for highlighting this point.

of the city (fr. 360.23–37).<sup>207</sup> The end of the play seems to have incorporated commemoration of the daughters of Erekhtheus in the rituals of the *polis*—thus further situating the elite family at the center of the community.<sup>208</sup> In *Children of Herakles*, the focus on the *parthenos* making the ultimate sacrifice for the salvation of the community is partly the point of the Maiden’s conspicuous entrance: the play marks her presence onstage as a spectacle.<sup>209</sup> In a similar fashion her rejection of the lottery only highlights the elite’s consciousness of their central and unique role in the community.<sup>210</sup> By not clinging to life (μη φιλοψυχοῦσα, 533) she makes the most beautiful (534) discovery of how to die gloriously; her death can be compared with the “beautiful death,” a notion central to the funeral oration.<sup>211</sup> Loraux notes that when the orator “exalts Athens through the Athenians, the citizens are already dead”; it is through this process that glory is transferred: it is the city that “builds its ideality over these abstract dead. Through this transference of glory, Athens enters into the timelessness of nobility; and democracy, which is praised constantly by the orators, finds its principle in *arete*, the conspicuously aristocratic quality of excellence.”<sup>212</sup> Loraux rightly emphasizes the aristocratic pretensions of the city and the “transference of glory,” which provides a parallel to the transference of the Maiden’s title of “savior” to others. But the presentation of her self-sacrifice contrasts again significantly with this image. For the Maiden receives much praise from Iolaos as well as the chorus *while still alive*: unlike the funeral oration in which the glory of the “abstract dead” is transferred to the Athenians, *Children of Herakles* depicts a circuit of praise and glory that originates in a living and marginal member of an elite family before the broader public can “enter into the timelessness of nobility.” The spectacle of her performance before

207. See *Phoinissai* 1017–18 for the similar sentiments of Menoikeus. Although Mastronarde 1994: 431 *ad* 1013–18 does suggest ways in which these lines *could* be understood in their present form, he argues for their excision.

208. Referring to the noble daughters of Erekhtheus as the Hyakinthidai, Athena (*Erekhtheus* fr. 370.65–80) says that the young women who pledged to sacrifice themselves with their sister are to be lodged in the heavens, to have a renowned name throughout Greece and to receive annual sacrifices of oxen replete with sacred dances of maidens; for text and discussion see Collard, Cropp and Lee 1995: 191. See Seaford 1994: 124–28 for the institution of hero cult in *Erekhtheus* as a form of “communal solidarity” (138).

209. As in other tragic depictions of human sacrifice, the Maiden goes out of her way to assimilate her act to a spectacle in which the elite “perform” benefactions for the audience both within the play and in the theater; see e.g. *IA* 425–34, 1378–84. For the element of spectacle in scenes of sacrifice see Rabinowitz 1993, Scodel 1996, Wohl 1998 (esp. 59–82).

210. Loraux 1986: 99–101 observes, however, that the soldier’s death “should be accepted and not sought”; she also suggests (1986: 100) that, “in according praise only to the dead, the city is more demanding of its members than the epic or aristocratic ethic was of the noble.” Human sacrifice in tragedy would seem to smuggle in some of the elitist sentiments from Pindar’s praise of victorious athletes or Homer’s praise of the elite warrior.

211. See Loraux 1986 *passim* and 2002: 27: the beautiful death is “the death of the worthy warrior who finds immortality in glory.” Wilkins 1993: 119 *ad* 533 provides additional examples of Euripides’ use of φιλοψυχεῖν and φιλόψυχος in plays involving human sacrifice.

212. Loraux 2002: 27.

a mass audience provided a rather rare forum for the uncontested praise of elite families in fifth-century Athens. But it also offers a model of agency for marginal social groups. The appropriation of the Maiden's role is thus in some respects still "up for grabs" for these different groups in the audience.

One group that seems to have assimilated itself with the Maiden's role is the group of performers. For the play's focus of the audience's attention on the Maiden and the transformation of her decision to sacrifice herself into a spectacle cannot be considered outside of the conditions of performance. With the character of the Maiden the actor plays an awe-inspiring role in an age in which the rise of theater professionals was beginning to change the shape of theater production.<sup>213</sup> In light of the nascent professionalism in the theater, the paradoxical combination of marginality and prestige that I have been locating within the character of the Maiden has a material corollary in the role of the (non-elite) professional actor playing the role of the noble daughter. As strongly suggested by the shift in vase-painting from representing dramatic scenes in terms of mythological narrative to their performative context, audience members may have increasingly related themselves more to the struggles of the new kind of professional laborer in the theater—the actor. The popularity of terracotta figures of actors in the late fifth century further suggests the affinity of the audience with performers. The subsequent popularity of self-sacrifice in late fifth-century tragedy (particularly in Euripides) further attests to the expected popular reception of these scenes. It is difficult to imagine actors increasingly willing to perform such roles unless they had the potential to appeal to the audience and serve as vehicles for the actors' careers.

The composition and politics of Attic society itself provides another suggestion for a non-elite reception. The "working folk" from the farms (οὐργάτης λεῶς, *Peace* 632), many of whom moved within the walls during the Spartan invasion of Attica, the "top-bank rowers who save the city" (θρανήτης λεῶς σωσίπολις, *Ach.* 162–63), or the "poor folk" (πένης λεῶς, *Knights* 224) may have been understandably more worried about work, food and the hope of making a drachma than the immortal glory won by the Maiden, although there is no need for these concerns to be mutually exclusive particularly in light of the play's pointed interest in sharing the Maiden's role among non-elite males. The development and expansion of plays dealing with human sacrifice indicate that the (predominantly non-elite) audience was eager for such performances. There are some other potentially appealing and hopeful aspects that may have encouraged the lower classes to see themselves in the Maiden's act. The praise of her decision while she is still onstage presents the power and authority of the agent as supremely valuable; unlike the *dead* soldiers in the *epitaphios*, who are spoken

213. See now Hall 2005: 16–59 for the identification of actors with characters and the cultural significance of dramatic roles; she further explores the "role" of the childbearing woman in the ancient theater (60–98).

for, the Maiden elaborates the significance of her own act and has the ability to manage the act itself. For her insistence on dying of her own free will (ἐλευθέρως, 559) as befitting someone from a “free” and noble family, her instructions for her death (560–65), and in particular her explicit refusal of the drawing of lots reveal a significant degree of agency. The Maiden is the noble daughter of Herakles, but the lower classes may still have identified with a relatively disenfranchised and unnamed character, whose dedication to family and city receives recognition and honor.<sup>214</sup> The mass audience’s identification with the actor/Maiden is also suggested in the civic lessons Bdelykleon gives to Philokleon (*Wasps* 666–85). The poor (represented as “slaves”), who earn from their own labor (685) three obols as jury pay, are the ones who do battle on land and at sea (678). Whereas the lower classes who run the greatest risks are not adequately remunerated, corrupt officials draw salaries and receive gifts. Critique of the unequal distribution of state funds from the perspective of laborers is expressed by Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians*. He contrasts the state pay drawn by Lamakhos and those who serve on state embassies with workers in the charcoal business (608–12; cf. 65–67): although the old Marilades is a sensible laborer (σώφρων κάργᾶτης, 611), he has never served as an ambassador. The representation of the Maiden’s role incorporates the demands of the poor workers to redefine society and its values; the glory and praise for her act would have resonated with much of the lower class crowd by offering them a positive appraisal of their own unacknowledged sacrifices. It also may have solicited their desire to play a more active role in making changes in Athenian society.<sup>215</sup>

214. In his discussion of the theme of self-sacrifice Versnel 1981: 177 argues that, “The fortunate should pay in order that his happiness should not be disturbed or given to another . . . the unfortunate must pay in order to buy improvement.” In light of the manifest class antagonism in Athens (as discussed above) Versnel’s perceptive remarks can also be understood as addressing the opposed class positions of different members of the audience as well as their views of the self-sacrifice as represented by the Maiden. See Easterling 1997: 25 (critiquing Griffith 1995) for the notion of “heroic vagueness” that offered “something for everyone in the audience,” since (24) “heroes could serve as paradigms for anyone to identify with.” The fact that the children are Argive *xenoi* may have struck a welcome chord as well with the metics in the audience. The status of her father, Herakles, may shed some additional light on her representation in the play. For as Csapo (2005: 304–15) has shown, Herakles was represented as both an aristocratic hero and a working class laborer. Herakles freely undertakes work for glory and gains immortal *aretê*, but he also labors for necessity and for gain; he was famous for his glorious exploits as well as his labor (*ponos*)—Aristotle calls him a serf (*E.E.* 1245b39), in Sophokles’ *Trachiniae* he is a lackey (35), in Aiskhylos’ *Agamemnon* a slave (1040–41). The ambiguities and contradictions surrounding Herakles appear transferred onto the Maiden in the play.

215. I would suggest that Old Comedy’s critical references to the various forms of pay for public office do not necessarily equate with condemnation (as in Aristophanes’ *Wasps*; see e.g. Rosenbloom 2002: 322–24) but rather support the idea that the demos deserves *more* state pay. In terms of the hope for a better future, in which resides the value of the Maiden’s sacrifice, certainly changes in the acting profession would develop significantly in the fourth and third centuries with the organization of theater guilds (Csapo and Slater 1995: 239–55, Le Guen 2001); the *Fasti* record that in 386 the “tragedians” produced and gave an “old drama,” suggesting already a degree of organization and professionalization (see Csapo 2004b: 69). See now DuBois 2006 on ancient utopias; apropos of

Later tradition assigned to the nameless character of the Maiden in Euripides' *Children of Herakles* the name of "Makaria," the "blessed" or "prosperous" one—a name that evokes both the themes of marriage and death so common in scenes of sacrifice as well as the family's membership in the upper classes.<sup>216</sup> In terms of the ancient reception of the character, the commemoration of the Maiden straddles public anonymity and elite distinction: a nameless (and disenfranchised) female yet blessed, both in terms of happiness and wealth. The play, itself, also points to this interpretation. The Maiden's rather vague declaration that she is in some way suitable (πρόσφορος, 480) provides a delicious irony, as she seems not yet to know the precise reason for Iolaos' groans. But her suitability is predicated on her paradoxical position in the play: marginal yet central to the well-being of the community, elite yet assimilated to subordinate social groups. Her role is the product of ideological struggle in Athens.

#### CONCLUSION: THEATER, SACRIFICE AND POLITICS

Representations of women performed a series of complex functions in Athenian culture. Within the theater industry, female characters and the "feminine" were associated with working class professionals. I have argued that the *Children of Herakles* can be viewed as revealing and taking sides in social struggles represented through the varying social positions of individual characters and the often competing social values embodied by them. The mass audience created a demand for such performances and supported the efforts of this emerging group of theater professionals.<sup>217</sup> The active role of the audience in theater production and the working out of class issues both in terms of the social status of the performers and the sociology of dramatic characters made the theater a prime venue for class struggle on an ideological plane. In light of the play's social leveling of its male characters, the celebration of the Maiden's sacrifice renders her a site (if not *the* site) of struggle for different groups vying to appropriate her act and its glory for their own purposes: the value and glory associated with her character's self-

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revolutionary moments she writes (14, citing Jameson): "It is easy for us to disregard such moments, since nothing came of them, and remembering them, retrieving them, is nearly impossible; utopia's function is perhaps not in imagining a better future, 'but rather in demonstrating our utter incapacity to imagine such a future . . . so as to reveal the ideological closure of the system in which we are somehow trapped and confined.'" It should be noted that the kind of consciousness I am ascribing to the lower classes does not contain the demand for or an apparent interest in the emancipation of slavery (cf. Aristophanes' *Ekklesiazousai*); in this respect, these laborers seem to accept the dominant view of class struggle as between opposed factions within the citizen body.

216. For *makarios* as an indicator of wealth, see e.g. Pindar *Pythian* 5.46, Plato *Men.* 71a, Aristotle *EN* 1157b21, Menander *Kith.* fr. 1, Polybius 3.91.6. Her name may also evoke the tradition whereby friends and kin pronounce the bride to be "blessed," for which see Garland 1990: 221.

217. As emphasized above, Euripides' *Children of Herakles* offers an early example of the kind of character that would later find favor with professional actors. Do we have here the "birth" of a new kind of "starring role?" The likely dating of the play to 429–427 is about the time at which we begin to see the rise of a theater business in Athens.

sacrifice is up for grabs while the play unfolds. Plato's sun-tanned laborer (*Rep.* 556d) looking upon the rich man standing next to him in the line of battle is likely to have thought very differently than Plato himself about the role of the Maiden in Euripides' play, but both would have been able to identify in part with her character. Her ability to appeal to the interests and concerns of different classes was in fact necessitated by the mass audience with its competing sympathies and class allegiances. As a model for salvation the Maiden also plays a leadership role, to which the spectacle of her performance and the emphasis placed on her *unique* ability to resolve the crisis greatly contribute. Thus spectators could relate to the Maiden both as one of them and as a leader, who is like them. To be sure, some lower class members of the audience may not have sympathized with the values and interests in her articulation of self-sacrifice. Likewise not all wealthy citizens would have sided with the conservative views of Kritias or Plato in their interpretation of the play. But just because ideology can cut across different classes does not mean that we can simply jettison the concept of class.<sup>218</sup>

In order to articulate the ways in which the play engages with the ideological fault lines of Attic society, I refer back to Gramsci's notion of the intellectual and Williams' analysis of the dynamic interrelations of society with its tripartite structure of dominant, emergent and residual elements. Whereas Gramsci's model suggests a useful way to relate the Maiden's ability to resolve the crisis in Athens with different (elite) leaders promoting the interests of different classes, Williams' triad offers a useful hermeneutic tool for understanding the series of identifications engendered by the Maiden in a society that was comprised of competing factions and values that were, in turn, related to interests of class and status. Both Gramsci and Williams offer valuable ways of determining *how* tragedy functioned in a society with increasing levels of class and social antagonism. What these models help to clarify is the function of the contested and contradictory elements of the Maiden's character in a performance before a mass audience, the majority of which (as I have suggested) was working class but also included wealthy citizens, foreigners, metics, women and even slaves.

The fifth-century *demos* could envision itself as "ennobled" and did successfully arrogate to itself many aspects of elite culture and politics. This is the very *demos* that could identify with the elitist portrayal of itself on the Parthenon frieze. I suggest that this was the dominant way of conceptualizing Attic society at the time of the play's production. Tragic sacrifice could thus contribute to the fantasy of the masses as the "noble *demos*" by staging an elite figure espousing the supreme value of self-sacrifice for the good of the polis and representing the decision of the city's soldiers. By definition most of the audience would have viewed the Maiden's self-sacrifice in terms of the dominant ideology—namely as the sacrifice made by every citizen for the good of the community as promoted

218. Finley 1985: 38 comments on the ability of ideology to cut across class lines but uses this insight to construct a monolithic (and flawed) model of the ideology of wealth.

in the funeral oration. To identify with the Maiden in terms of her ability to evoke the ideals of the noble demos, however, is also to accept the elite values she promotes, the prime beneficiaries of which were not the poorer members of society. Pride in being a member of this ennobled demos would have allowed status consciousness to mask these audience members' class consciousness—perhaps to prevent it from emerging at all. In keeping with the dominant idea of the noble demos the play's presentation of the Maiden as a hoplite would operate more at the level of hoplite *ideology*, which promoted the ideal of the homogeneous make-up of the hoplite ranks by relatively wealthy citizens, rather than the reality of *thêtes* serving as hoplites. As an outspoken leader in the play and representative of the noble demos, her ability to resolve the crisis in the polis could be further related to Gramsci's figure of the traditional intellectual. For the members of the audience who viewed her simply as an embodiment of the noble demos would see in her a model citizen independent of class: civic ideology trumps class divisions. However, the crucial aspect is the adoption of elite values in accordance with the model of the noble demos: some members of the mass audience could misrecognize themselves with the Maiden through their personal investment in the idea of the noble *demos*, but their endorsement of elite values would nonetheless provide support to those values and the organization of society to which they give rise. As such there is little possibility or hope for transformations in society and its class structure.

A more radical perspective is afforded by a consideration of the emergent elements of Attic society promoted by the Maiden. Unlike those in the audience who accepted the view of the Maiden as embodying the noble demos and adopted the values of the elite, some lower class males and females could view her as representing *their struggles* (or those of their families) and see themselves *in the character of the Maiden*: they could identify with the Maiden in terms of the successful bid of a marginal and anonymous member of the community to bring about political change.<sup>219</sup> This model would look forward to a different social organization, one in which the radical demos and its values were unique, capable of taking decisive political action and worthy of fame. Such praise in the play is articulated albeit in elite terms, but this was precisely part of the struggle—to capture these terms (and the Maiden's glory) for the promotion of the ideals of enterprise and labor as some working class men and women were beginning to do on funerary reliefs. For these members of the audience the Maiden could present a model of the organic intellectual of the demos. Although the political authority of non-elite males and their role in the redistribution of state funds gradually increased over the course of the fifth century, the rise of the so-called

219. Williams 1977: 124 discusses the presence of a "social basis for elements of the cultural process that are alternative or oppositional to the dominant elements" and locates one such basis in "the formation of a new class, the coming to consciousness of a new class, and within this, in actual process, the (often uneven) emergence of elements of a new cultural formation."

“new politicians” following the death of Perikles would more stridently work towards meeting these demands. The demagogues’ ability to garner the support of the urban poor, much to the chagrin of the more traditional elite, would have depended on the (developing) consciousness of the urban poor as a political body capable of instituting change. Athenian history would be viewed as being shaped by their agency. Unlike those who saw the Maiden as a figure supporting the values of the noble demos, these radical audience members could view her portrayal as a hoplite in terms of hoplite *reality*—where poor *thêtes* served as hoplites and gave their lives for the city. The fact that males represented as marginal (Hyllos’ servant, “comic” Iolaos as lower class and Eurystheus as metic) become the possessors of her immortal glory and even act as agents inspired by her self-sacrifice (Iolaos) offers a more radical view of the Maiden’s role. For on this model it is no longer a question of the marginal (e.g. lower class) members of Attic society misrecognizing elite values as their own, rather the play elaborates a self-willed and successful representative of their own interests.

Tragedy may offer a model in which lower class males can envision themselves as the saviors of the community, but it also offers a model for the accommodation of elite leadership within the democratic polis. If the lower classes can identify with the Maiden, either misrecognizing elite values as their own (i.e., as the noble demos) or viewing her as asserting their own rightful place in society, the elite could also misrecognize the (democratic) polis of Athens as the only arena for the demonstration of economic and cultural superiority and the values to which it gave rise.<sup>220</sup> The celebration of the Maiden’s sacrifice and the elite ideals she promotes would thus serve as support for the continuance of elite privilege and the maintenance of the idea of the worthiness of their values; the community in turn celebrates the glory of the Maiden (here viewed as a particular expression of elite values), and this celebration of the elite requires the mass audience to look up to them as the saviors of the polis. This residual element looks back to the domination of the Archaic and early Classical polis by the conservative elite and reflects the disaffection of this elite group in the later fifth century. The play can thus also be seen as conforming to the fantasy of the elite in the democratic city in its promotion of residual elements of Attic society. Whereas in the dominant and emergent elements allusions to the hoplite construct a model in which the audience views the Maiden as an equal (the former in terms of hoplite ideology, the latter in terms of hoplite reality), some elite members of the audience could view these allusions rather as civic support for *their* leadership role (i.e., it is the hoplite who emulates *them*) in terms of a residual element repressed or opposed

220. According to the speaker of Lysias 25.8 it is the responsibility of the democratic regime to encourage as many people as possible to prefer democracy. The speaker’s attempt to define political preferences as motivated purely by self-interest in this passage serves his rhetorical aim of having his activities during the oligarchic regime excused and is elsewhere refuted by reference to “partisan” interests (e.g., Lysias 30.13, Thucydides 8.65) based on shared values about society and the shape of the economy.



by Athenian (democratic) society.<sup>221</sup> In this process the elite are anchored to the civic geography of the polis. For members of the audience favoring this model the Maiden's role is that of an organic intellectual of the elite—elaborating the values of the elite and making their principles coherent. Of course not all members of the audience would necessarily have understood tragedy to function in this way. The two oligarchic revolutions suggest that some members of the elite in Athens were not persuaded to accept a democratic Athens as the sole arena for the exercise of elite prerogatives. Such members of the audience could identify with residual elements in the play that support the elite family to the exclusion of everyone else. For them the Maiden would perhaps represent an Archaic *agalma*, and the *keimêlia* or “stored up treasure” that she claims as compensation for children and virginity (591–92) would allay some of their anxieties in the face of the rising power of the radical demos; indeed, she claims this treasure as recompense for dying on behalf of her *genos* (προῦθانون γένους, 590), a term perhaps intentionally used to capture some of their aristocratic hankerings. These more conservative aristocrats may have been eager for a return to the good old days of elite domination, during which explicit expressions of male elitism were unproblematic. However, not all who favored the residual elements in the play would have been elite. To be sure, not all craftsmen and laborers would have identified with the emergent elements supportive of a transformation of society favorable to the radical democracy. Many in fact might have simply understood the Maiden's behavior as a magnanimous benefaction bestowed upon the city by the elite family in return for civic praise and glory. These conservative laborers would support the traditional role of elite authority in the polis and thus economic interests opposed to their own.

It is perhaps a function of the awareness of the ongoing struggle among these different groups to co-opt the Maiden and the values she represents that the play so carefully elaborates and assigns the agency and honor amassed by her. Such praise for the elite family's sacrifice becomes even more prominent in *Hekabe* and *Iphigenia in Aulis*, while references to lower class labor and slavery are more explicit.<sup>222</sup> A comparison with the scathing portrayal of the sacrifice

221. For Williams 1977: 122 the residual elements, while including older forms of culture, are not, however, to be confused with the “archaic,” namely “that which is wholly recognized as an element of the past, to be observed, to be examined, or even on occasion to be consciously ‘revived,’ in a deliberately specializing way”; he further elaborates (1977: 123–24) the residual in terms of a “reaching back to those meanings and values which were created in actual societies and actual situations in the past, and which still seem to have significance because they represent areas of human experience, aspiration, and achievement which the dominant culture neglects, undervalues, opposes, repressed, or even cannot recognize.” Although I have argued that the elite comprised a small percentage of the audience, their significant role as the financial sponsors of dramatic choruses (*chorêgoi*) and in political office (*stratêgoi*) justifies in part the poets' taking into account their concerns and interests.

222. Although the *exodos* of *IA* from 1578 is most likely interpolated (see Stockert 1992: 79–87, esp. 84–87), the subsequent relationship established between Iphigenia and the gods (e.g., 1604–

of Iphigenia in Aiskhylos' *Agamemnon* demonstrates how much the evaluation of such scenes could change. Beginning with the Maiden in *Children of Herakles*, this development in the role of the sacrificial victim was fostered in part by the growing recognition of the significant part that the lower classes were capable of performing in Athenian politics, the military and in the theater. For it was precisely the lower classes that acquired additional political rights throughout the fifth century and stood to benefit most through the redistribution of state funds. They also made up the majority of the theater audience. Whereas the more radical members of the *demos* were in the process of reorganizing Athenian society with previously marginalized groups like urban laborers now exercising greater political agency, the oligarchs would later respond to this state of affairs with much violence and bloodshed. The Maiden's radical renewal of society offered a complex and difficult model for this "tragic" project.

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1606) points to a reception of her self-sacrifice not unlike the Maiden's. The interpolated lines of the Messenger's speech may also provide evidence for the reception of the sacrifice of Iphigenia.

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