46. For a discussion of the dream of endogamy and its contradictions see Vernant, "Hestia-Hermès" (note 26 above), and J. Pitt-Rivers, *The Fate of Shechem or the Politics of Sex* (Cambridge 1971) esp. 71–93.
47. On *Medea* see especially Knox (note 18 above) and P. Pucci, *The Violence of Pity in Euripides' Medea* (Ithaca and London 1980).
48. For a discussion of such passages (esp. IV. 145, VI. 137–140) see Dewald in this volume and Gould (note 5 above) 54–55.
49. Shaw, note 41 above.
50. B.M.W. Knox, *The Heroic Temper* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1964) 76–90.
51. For a more detailed discussion see my forthcoming paper, note 41 above. The polarity *oikos/polis* does not necessarily correspond precisely with the more general distinction domestic/public. I have chosen to explore the issue in terms of the former polarity because it is the one made by Attic authors. The larger distinction is more complex and would require a thorough exploration of prose texts and non-literary evidence as well as a broader study of the limits between public and private (/idios and /koinos) in Attic literature. As Pauline Schmidt has emphasized to me, the major and pervasive role of women in cult makes their supposed confinement to the /oikos more theoretical than actual.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.* On the identity of Lysistrata see D.M. Lewis, "Notes on Attic Inscriptions II, XXIII. Who Was lysistrata?", *ABSA* 1 (1965) 1–13. See now also Jeffrey Henderson, "Lysistrate: the Play and its Themes", *YCS* 26 (1980) 153–218.
55. Translated by Denys Page, *Select Papyri* III (Cambridge, Mass. 1962) 113–114.
56. For this interpretation of the end of the play see C.P. Segal, "Mariage et sacrifice dans les *Trachiniennes* de Sophocle", *AC* 44 (1975) 30–53.
57. On male–female relations in the *Seven* see especially H. Bacon, "The Shield of Eteocles", *Arion* 3 (1964) 27–38, Caldwell (note 20 above), S. Benardete, "Two Notes on Aeschylus' *Septem*", Part I *WS* 80 (1967) 22–30, and F.I. Zeitlin, "Language, Structure, and the Son of Oedipus in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*. A Semiotic Study of the Shield Scene", forthcoming in *Filologia e Critica*, Editione di Ateneo e Bizarri (Roma).
58. Benardete, note 56 above.
59. The end of the *Seven* may not be genuine. I end my interpretation with the mourning by the chorus of the death of the brothers.
60. See Foley, note 41 above.
61. For modern Greek and Mediterranean concepts of honor see Pitt-Rivers, note 16 above, Bourdieu, note 43 above, and J. Peristiany, ed., *Honor and Shame: the Values of Mediterranean Society* (Chicago 1965).
62. C. Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (Boston 1969) 496.

Travesties of gender and genre in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae*

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> Equal of opposites, evolved by a onesame power of nature or of spirit . . . as the sole condition and means of its himundher manifestation and polarized for reunion by the symphysis of their antipathies.
>
> James Joyce
>
> The sexes were not two as they are now, but originally three in number; there was man, woman, and the union of the two, having a name corresponding to this double nature, which had once a real existence but is now lost, and the word "Androgynous" is only preserved as a term of reproach.
>
> Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium*

Three of Aristophanes' eleven extant comedies use the typical comic device of role inversion to imagine worlds of topsy-turvydom in which women are "on top".[1] Freed from the social constraints which keep them enclosed within the house and silent in the public realms of discourse and action, women are given a field and context on the comic stage. They issue forth to lay their plans, concoct their plots, and exercise their power over men.

The *Lysistrata* and the *Ecclesiazousae* stage the intrusion of women nto the public spaces of Athens — the Acropolis and Agora, respecively — as an intrusion into the political and economic life of the city. The *Thesmophoriaszousae*, however, resituates the battle of the sexes in another domain — that of aesthetics, and more specifically, hat of the theater itself. Instead of the collective confrontation of nen and women, the play directs the women's actions against a single male target — the tragic poet, Euripides. Like the better known *Lysistrata*, performed the same year (411 B.C.), the *Thesmophoriazousae* (or the *Women at the Festival of the Thesmophoria*) is set on the Acropolis; this time it is not appropriated by the women as the crucial and outrageous strategy to further their plans, but is granted to them in accordance with the rules of their annual festival, which reserved this sacred space for the exclusive use of women in their fertility rites, dedicated to Demeter and Persephone.

Criticism has not been generous to this play. Studies of role inversion, even in more recent feminist perspectives, have focused on the other two plays because of their implications for the political and economic problems which are the city's dominant interests.[2] The *Frogs* has claimed almost exclusive attention with regard to literary questions, both because of the formal structure of the contest between Aeschylus and Euripides in the play and because of the emphasis on the role of the poet as teacher and "savior" of the city in its time of need.[3] Judgments on the *Thesmophoriazousae*, on the other hand, while admiring its ingenuity and wit, generally dismiss it as a "parody play", a trifling interlude in the comic poet's more significant and enduring dialogue with the city and its institutions. Some critics look for simplistic equivalences between transvestism, effeminacy, and Euripides' newer forms of tragedy, and all find difficulties with the plot, especially with Euripides' apparently sudden reconciliation with the women at the end.[4]

But the *Thesmophoriazousae* is a far more complex and more integrated play. It is located at the intersection of a number of relations: between male and female; between tragedy and comedy; between theater (tragedy and comedy) and festival (ritual and myth); between festival (the Thesmophoria) and festival (the Dionysiac, which provides the occasion for its performance and determines its comic

essence); and finally, between bounded forms (myth, ritual, and drama) and the more fluid "realities" of everyday life. All these relations are unstable and reversible; they cross boundaries and invade each others' territories, erase and reinstate hierarchical distances, ironically reflecting upon each other and themselves.

I intend to take another look at this play from the joint perspectives of the theme of "women on top" and that of the self-reflectiveness of art concerned with the status of its own mimetic representation. However satirically the play may represent Euripides' "unnatural" and "unmanly" concern with *eros* and with women, with female sexuality and female psyche, it poses a more necessary and intrinsic connection between the ambiguities of the feminine and those of art, linked together in various ways in Greek notions of poeties from their earliest formulations. The setting of the play and the progress of the plot are constructed not only to make the most of the perennial comic value of female impersonation, but also to use the notions of gender in posing questions of genre and to draw attention to the problematics of imitation and representation which connects transvestism of costume with mimetic parody of texts. Transvestism works on the visual level; parody, on the verbal level. Together they expose the interrelationship of the crossing of genres and the crossing of genders; together they exemplify the equivalence of intertextuality and intersexuality.

My plan is to examine these different issues under the rubric of mimesis — the plot, transvestism, parody, myth and ritual — to uncover the "secret" logic of the text which illuminates a play that works through the fusion of festival, theater, and gender, and finally, to offer some speculations on the relation of the feminine itself with the principles of imitation.

I MIMESIS: GENDER AND GENRE

"There are those who want a text (an art, a painting) without a shadow, without the "dominant ideology" but this is to want a text without fecundity, without productivity, a sterile text.

Roland Barthes

In this brilliant and ingenious play, the contest between the genders must share the spotlight with the contest between the genres, comedy and tragedy. Along with the parody of other serious forms of discourse within the city (judicial, ritual, political, poetic), *paratragodia*, or the parody of tragedy, is a consistent feature of Aristophanic comedy.[5] Figures of poets and philosophers and other intellectuals are often found too on the comic stage, along with politicians and other prominent figures which comedy, in its license for abuse, delights in demoting from high to low. But the effect of placing a tragic poet as the comic protagonist in a comic plot and of elevating parody to the dominant discourse of the play modulates the contest between the sexes into another key, one that reflects not only the tensions between the social roles of men and women, but also focuses on their theatrical representation as tragic and comic personae on the stage.

In the privacy of their ritual enclosure, the women have determined to act in their own defense — to exact vengeance from the tragic poet, Euripides, whom they charge with the offenses of misogyny and slander in his dramatic representation of women. He has made their lives intolerable, they complain, for they can no longer have the freedom at home which they once enjoyed. Their husbands come home from the theater all fired up with suspicion at every gesture, every movement the women make, and keep them locked up in the house. Euripides himself appears at the opening of the play to devise his counter-plot and to rescue himself from this clear and present danger which will determine his fate this day, whether he will live or die.

Euripides tries and fails to persuade the effeminate tragic poet, Agathon, to go in woman's dress to infiltrate the women's rites and to argue in the poet's defense, and must finally send his old kinsman instead. Dressed as a woman with costumes from Agathon's own wardrobe, shaved and depilated on stage, the kinsman, Mnesilochus, makes his way to the Acropolis to mingle unnoticed with the other women and to carry out the mandates of the master plotter. He is ultimately unmasked and his true sex revealed both by the nature of his defense of Euripides and by the information of Cleisthenes, the effeminate politician, and friend of woman, who comes to warn them of the interloper in their midst. While Cleisthenes goes off to bring back the Scythian policeman to remove the malefactor, the poor kinsman has recourse to elaborate parodies of Euripidean drama. In his increasing desperation, he tries now one tragic role then another in his efforts to save himself, bringing Euripides finally on stage, not once but twice, to impersonate the characters in his own plays who might rescue the kinsman. When this strategy fails, Euripides at last reconciles himself with the women and, dressed now as an old procuress, he succeeds in diverting the Scythian policeman with a comic, not a tragic, ploy — the perennial dancing girl — so that he and the kinsman can make their escape.

The meeting of the poet and the women complicates both the typical *topos* of "women in charge" and the role and stance of the comic hero himself. The launching of the great comic idea, which is the heart and soul of the comic plot, is divided between the women whose decision to prosecute Euripides is taken before the play actually begins, and the poet hero, who cannot initiate action in the free exercise of his own imaginative vision of the world. Instead, as comic protagonist, he must employ all his professional techniques to extricate himself from a situation in which he is not only hero, but potential victim.

Similarly, the device of staging the women's presence on the Acropolis has a double edge. On one level, their occupation of civic space maintains the transgression which their exhibition upon the public stage implies, and the ritual regulations which put women in charge offer, as in the other cases, the rich comic possibilities for women's use and misuse of male language in their imitation of the typical male institutions of tribunal and assembly. Moreover, the *topos* of role inversion gives the women, as always, an opportunity to redress the social imbalances between male and female in an open comic competition with men for superior status, here especially in the *parabasis*.[6] But on another level, their legitimate presence at their own private ritual also reverses the direction of the transgression; now men are forced to trespass on forbidden space and they penetrate the secret world of women for the purpose of spying upon them and disclosing their secrets to open view.

Another paradox is evident as a result of the confrontation of the

poet and the women. To the women the scandal of Euripides' theater lies in his exhibition of erotic heroines upon the tragic stage who openly solicit men, like the unhappy Phaedra with her Hippolytus and the wanton Sthenoboia, who, like Potiphar's wife, shamelessly tempted the young Bellerophon. The kinsman's defense, however, claims that Euripides exercises restraint: he could have told other stories, worse than these (473–75).[7] His charge of misdoing leveled against all women incurs the women's anger at their supposed betrayal by one of their own within their very midst, a betrayal that will serve, in part, to unmask the female impersonator. Yet the anecdotes he tells of adultery and supposititious babies come straight out of the typical male discourse of the comic theater and the women he depicts as overly fond of wine and sex conform to the portrait of the comic woman, who displays her unruly Dionysiac self (even in this play) in the spirit of carnival and misrule. As the comic male character in the comic play, the kinsman then is only playing true to form. And if he defends the tragic poet in the comic way, he makes "unspeakable" what comedy has always claimed as its right to speak. Is tragedy taking the fall for comedy? Is the kinsman's defense, in fact, the defense mounted by comedy against the trespass on its ground by Euripidean tragedy?

The speech in which the kinsman corroborates Euripides' intimate familiarity with women's secrets, repeats and replicates Euripides' transgression of tragic decorum, a transgression which is also spatialized in dramatic form as the violation itself of the sacred enclosure reserved for women at their ritual. Having penetrated earlier into a world which he was forbidden to enter, he now penetrates it again through the kinsman's infiltration of the Thesmophoria, an act which profanes the pieties again, now on two accounts. In comedy, these revelations of women's "nature" cause no indignation among the spectators, but rather laughter. It is in the tragic theater that the mimetic effects of representation work with such realism and such persuasiveness that drama overtakes and invades the real world, sending the husbands away, wild with anxiety, to look to their womenfolk at home.

At the heart of this repeated violation is the transgression of the distance which normally maintains the fiction of theater with relation to the "real" world to which it refers and in which it registers its effects of pity and fear. Tragedy is "the imitation of a serious action", as Aristotle tells us. Designated as the genre which holds up a more heroic and more mythic mirror to the society of its spectators, who come to learn its lessons and to participate in its imaginative *mise en scène*, tragedy must depend upon the integrity of its fictions within its own theatrical conventions and generic norms. The violation of that integrity is focused on the issue which for the society of men bears the greatest psychological charge — namely, the integrity of their households, and above all, of their women.[8] The violation of women's sexual secrets therefore can stand not only as the actual subject for complaint, but as the metaphorical representation in social terms of the poet's trespass of aesthetic modes.

At stake in this theatrical tug of war between tragedy and comedy is the nature of mimesis itself. The *Thesmophoriazousae* wants it all ways — dramatizing and exploiting up to their furthest extremes the confusions which the notion of imitation suggests — as to whether art is a mimesis of *reality* or a *mimesis* of reality, whether it conceals its art by its verisimilitude or exposes its fictions in the staging and testing of its own illusions.

Consider the complications of the mimetic process when character and poet are conflated in the personage of Euripides, when the comic character (the kinsman) is designated as the actor who is to carry out the plot which Euripides has devised within the comic play. Then, once his "true" identity is revealed, the kinsman must transform himself into the theatrical actor of the Euripidean parodies whose lines he now self-consciously and incongruously renders with reference to his comic role.

Moreover, the play as a whole takes its cue from and sets as the condition of its plot the offense of Euripides in having tilted his dramas too far in the direction of a mimesis which exceeds the boundaries of the theater. For, given the comic stage as the ground of "reality" in the play, the "real" women, who resent being "characters" in his drama, put him in a "real" situation in which he himself must live out for himself the mimetic consequences of his own mimetic plots. As others have noticed, Euripides is not a character in a typical comic scenario; rather he plays the hero/victim in a parodic ver-

sion of his favorite type of tragic drama — the intrigue-rescue play which often includes a recognition of a lost loved one. From the beginning the hero/heroine faces overwhelming danger and only reaches the desired salvation (often after that recognition with another has taken place) through a series of clever intrigues.[9] What better comic version of tragic justice than to turn the tables on Euripides? Yet what better stage than this for Euripides, the man of a thousand plots (927), a stage upon which to display all his *mēchanai* and to turn at last from victim to savior of himself and the kinsman? He plays first in the tragic mode, at the end, in the comic mode, when Aristophanes, cleverer than he, puts him squarely on the "real" ground of the comic play.

From the beginning, Euripides must act the part of the playwright within the play to devise his own plot, to direct the actor to play his appointed part, next, to furnish him with the texts from which to read, and eventually, to intervene as actor in the parodies of two plays which he has already composed. The comedy can never, therefore, escape the metatheatrical implications of play within play and all the variations and permutations of the device. As the comedy progresses, as the kinsman's own improvisations founder and he is "unmasked", the temple and the altar of the Thesmophorion conveniently serve as the "theatrical" space within the play on which to stage those parodies of Euripidean theater.[10] By the last paratragic scene, the comedy draws upon all its theatrical resources, from within and from without. The Scythian policeman's cruel fastening of the kinsman to the punishment plank suggests the cast, the setting, and the prop for Euripides' poor Andromeda, bound to the rock in far off Ethiopia, awaiting her fate from the sea monster who is to devour her. But then Euripides himself as Perseus flies by on the "real" theatrical device of the *mēchanē* and cues the kinsman as to the role he intends to play. Thus, as the play moves on to the end, as Euripides, in fact, assumes not only one but two parts in the *Andromeda*, the *Thesmophoriazousae* exposes more and more the obvious inconcinnities between theater and "reality", to the apparent detriment of the former, even as it implicitly conspires, as we shall see, to validate those same dramatic fictions.

II MIMESIS: TRANSVESTISM

Everyday, precious, . . . m'm'ry's leaves are falling deeply on my Jungfraud's Messongebook . . .

James Joyce

The feat is to sustain the mimesis of language (language imitating itself), the source of immense pleasures, in a fashion so radically ambiguous (ambiguous to the root) that the text never succumbs to the good conscience (and bad faith) of parody (of castrating laughter, of the "comical that makes us laugh").

Roland Barthes

The theme of mimesis is specifically set, in fact, in the prologue of the play, the first attested technical use of the word, mimesis, and the first demonstration, albeit ludicrous, of the mimetic theory of art which will later figure so largely in Plato's and Aristotle's aesthetic theories.[11] Agathon, the tragic poet, for whom Euripides is searching, is wheeled out the house on the *ekkyklēma*, the stage device used in the theater to bring an interior scene outside, singing sensual hymns that send the kinsman into an erotic swoon (130–33). Androgynous in appearance, Agathon wears women's clothing and an incongruous assortment of accessories (134–40). In reply to the kinsman's questions as to his identity and his gender, Agathon now replies:

> I wear my garb according to my thought.
> The poet, you see, must shape his ways
> In accordance with the plays to be composed.
> If someone is composing women's plays,
> His body must needs share in women's ways
> If plays of men, he has already what it takes.
> Whatever we don't have, we must capture by mimesis.
>
> (146–52) (tr. Hansen)

So far, so good. The poet is a versatile fellow who must dress the dramatic roles he creates. But Agathon then declares that a beautiful poet wears beautiful clothes and writes beautiful dramas — and vice versa for the ugly poet. One must compose in accordance with one's nature (159–72). The clue to this apparent confusion between

mimesis as impersonation, as investiture, and mimesis as a harmony of body, soul, and poetry, lies in the comic fact that Agathon is indeed by nature an effeminate man, just the type whom Aristophanes always love to mock.[12] Hence, what Agathon imitates (female appearance) is indeed harmonious with his nature and his ways. And this is precisely the reason why he must refuse to go as a spy among the women — because he fits the role too well. As a poet, he is second only to Euripides (187); as a "woman", he passes so well that he claims the women at the Thesmophoria would resent him for unfair competition in stealing away their nocturnal lovers (204–05); the sample of his poesy, the choral hymns he sings, beginning with an invocation to the two goddesses, Demeter and Persephone, and ending with an appeal to Leto, the mother of Apollo and Artemis, are all too much in tune. In short, he is the unnatural "natural" for the part, the pathic well adapted for tragic pathos, as the kinsman wryly observes (199–201). How could Agathon defend Euripides against the charges which are leveled against his fellow poet? He is as much or more a friend to women, "mad for women" (*gynaikomanēs*), their kindred spirit, as the effeminate Cleisthenes declares of himself when he enters into the women's festival to denounce the male imposter in their midst (574–76).

No, Mnesilochus, the bushy kinsman, all male, must go instead; he must be dressed on stage in a woman's costume; he must be shaved of his beard and raise his rump in full view of the audience to have it singed with a flame, as women do, in accordance with Greek standards of female beauty, when they depilate their genitals. With this prologue scene, in the interchange between Agathon and Mnesilochus, Aristophanes has accomplished a real *coup de théâtre*. For he has managed with artful economy to introduce his *topos* of "women on top" in a way which exposes its implications to the naked eye. Making Mnesilochus into a woman exactly reproduces in advance the inevitable result of the inversion of gender roles — when women are in a position to rule men, men must become women.[13] In the miniature reversal played out between Agathon and Mnesilochus, Mnesilochus, as the comic character, first indulges in all the witty obscenities to which he is entitled at the expense of the effeminate poet. But the transfer of Agathon's persona

to him returns against the kinsman the full measure of that social shame which the breach of gender norms poses to identity, manhood, and power. Comedy's scandalous privilege to expose those parts and functions of the body which decorum keeps hidden — physically, in the padded leather phallos which the comic actor wears, verbally, in the obscenities and sexual jokes which are licensed by the Dionysiac festival — takes on a double twist here. For in exposing Mnesilochus, the lusty comic male, only in the process of becoming a woman, the comedy is playing with the extreme limit of its own promiscuous premises where all can converge in the ambiguities of intersexuality.

But transvestism in the theater, and especially in this scene, has yet another function in addition to exposing the natural facts of the body which the social conventions keep off stage[14] and away from public notice, namely, the exposing of the secret artifices which theatrical conventions keep off stage to maintain the fictions of its mimesis. Mnesilochus is, after all, dressing as a woman because he is to play the part of a woman, carrying out the clever stratagem of Euripides.

In this theatrical perspective, taking the role of the opposite sex invests the wearer with the power of appropriation, of supplement, not only loss. Androgynous myths and transvestite rites speak to this increased charge in symbolic terms even as androgyny and transvestism incur the shame of deviance within the social code. Thus the depilation of Mnesilochus is balanced by the putting on of women's clothing, for in this ambivalent game of genders, the female is not only a "not", but also an "other".[15] When the women in the *parabasis* examine the comic contradictions of misogyny and put the superiority of men to the test, they joke in terms of attributes common to each: we women have still kept safe at home our weaving rod (*kanōn*) and our sunshade (*skiadeion*), while you men have lost your spear shaft (*kanōn*) and your shield (*skiadeion*) (821–29). The play with castration is appropriate enough to the inversion of roles, but the ambiguities of role playing involve both this and that, even for Mnesilochus who plays so ill, and by his misplaying, exposes, when the women expose him, the limits of mimesis.

Since all female roles in the Greek theater were played by men,

he exhibitionist donning of female costume focuses the problem of himesis at its most ambiguous and most sensitive spot, where social nd artistic rules are most in conflict with each other: impersonation ffects the whole creative process from the poet to the actor and de-ermines its aesthetic success, but feminization attracts to itself all he scorn and abuse which the culture — and comedy — can muster. To reverse the terms, in fact, it first unmans those whom the culture would scorn and abuse, those it would lay open to aggressive vio-ence, and finds the point of entry through which to master the other. Just so in this play, Aristophanes makes mock of Euripides at the end by finally putting a female dress on him, but yet grants him the stage on which to display with ultimate impunity the repertory of his mimetic range.

The contradictions inherent in the mimetic process, as adumbrated by Agathon, between what you play and what you are, are tested again and again from within the play itself, as it uncovers the dissonances between the fictive theatrical device and the comic ground of "reality". Twice Mnesilochus is put up against a "true" effeminate, once with Agathon and once with Cleisthenes, as if to pose a theatrical distance between one actor in women's clothes and another, and let us not forget that the women of the Thesmophoria are, of course, played by men. Mnesilochus himself, in the instability of his dual roles, in his male discomfort with his female role, is best suited to reflect ironically upon his position during the course of the play. Still disguised, he indignantly asks Cleisthenes, the "true" impersonator, "what man would be such a fool as to allow himself to be depilated?" (592–94). Yet when his first two theatrical parodies of Euripides fail, parodies in which he plays male roles in female costume (another inversion), he has a new and happy idea: "Why, I'll play Helen, the new version — I've got the female dress I need." (850–51). In the next stage, when the magistrate whom Cleisthenes has summoned comes and orders the poor Mnesilochus to be bound to the punishment plank for breaking the city's laws and invading the secret rites of women, he begs: "At least, undress me and bind me naked to the plank; I'm an old man, sir; please don't leave me dressed up in feminine fripperies! I don't want to give the crows a good laugh as well as a good dinner." (939–42). Now that the masculine world of authority has intruded into the play, Mnesilochus expresses well the full reversal from mastery to subjugation his position as a male has taken. When the magistrate reports the council's decree that it is precisely in woman's costume that he is to be bound to the plank in order to exhibit his villainy to all as an imposter, here is the point that he most fits the role of the pitiful Andromeda which he now will play. Yet at the same time he offers the last and best incongruity between himself, an old man, and his persona of the beautiful maiden.

III MIMESIS: PARODY

> Parodic writing can be defined as triangular desire — the desire of a subject (parodist) only projected into a text (parodying) by the detour of another text (parodied).
>
> Claude Leroy

Just as the comic actor's discrepancies between character and costume threaten his mimetic integrity, so does parody, in more complex and more extended fashion, address the critical questions of mimesis in the service of a fictive reality. The transvestite actor might succeed in concealing the tell-tale sign that marks him as an imitation with a difference, but parody, by its nature and its definition, is the literary device which openly declares its status as an imitation with a difference. In the rhetorical logic of the play, the exposure of the kinsman's intersexual game appropriately brings parody fully out of hiding to play its intertextual game with comedy and tragedy. Given the thematic logic of the play, the first defense of Euripides, misconducted by the kinsman in the comic mode, is properly transferred to the parodies of the plays that will eventually bring Euripides on stage to play the tragic roles he has composed. It is also consonant with the narrative logic of the plot that the kinsman have recourse to Euripidean parodies. For with the *peripeteia* in his comic situation, he is now truly imitating the typical Euripidean plot of danger-recognition-intrigue-rescue. The sequence of the four plays might read as a chronological survey of Euripidean drama —

the *Telephus* of 438, already parodied in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*(425), the *Palamedes* of 415, and the *Helen* and the *Andromeda*, both presented the year before in 412.

The parodies themselves then function as the new intrigues of the kinsman (and later of Euripides), invoked in suitable response to each new exigency of his plight. But these are also intrigues now carried out fully on the theatrical plane, whose comic success depends upon their ability as specimens of tragic art to deceive the comic audience within the play with their mimetic credibility. Read as successive intrusions into the text, the parodies function like metatheatrical variants of the series of different imposters who come to threaten the comic hero's imaginative world and which, like those figures, must be deflated and driven out. If we read the parodies as a sequence, however, we see that the kinsman most move further and further into the high art of mimesis with increasing complications and confusions as the comic spectators on stage, whom he would entice into performing in his plays, move further and further down the scale of comprehension, ending with the barbarian Scythian policeman, who speaks only a pidgin Greek. In the course of their development, the parodies play again with notions of gender and genre, with costume and character, with comic and tragic, and orchestrate a medley of variations on the theme of mimesis itself.

Some have judged these parodies as opportunistic displays of Aristophanic skill, which take over the play and resign the conflict of the women and Euripides to the sidelines. Others respond to the discontinuous leaps from one text to another as signs of the failure of Euripidean tragedy in each case to maintain the necessary mimetic illusion which would effect the rescue of the kinsman. And the success, in turn, of Euripides' last plot, a comic not a tragic strategy, only confirms the opinion that Aristophanic parody is remaining true to its usual vocation as aesthetic critique of another's work. Certainly, Euripides' scandalous novelties in the theater lend themselves as ideal targets for the satirist's broad brush. It is also true that, on the surface level, comedy seems to be indulging its license for dispensing with strict dramatic coherence. But such judgments overlook the fundamental ambiguities which arise from "the taking in and taking over"[16] of another's text to generate what has been called "a poetics of contradiction"[17] (at what price imitation?). And they do not perceive that comedy can deliberately call upon its looser forms of structure to work through paratactic arrangements which imply rather than state. In the artful composition of the second part of the play, the parodies, I suggest, serve double and discrepant purposes — as framed disruptions of its narrative continuity and as integral and integrating elements of the entire plot. The outer and inner surfaces of the texts play off each other, with and against each other, as sequence and/or juxtaposition. Furthermore, each parody has a double allegiance — the comic context in which it now is situated and the tragic context of the play from which it is drawn. Thus each parodic scene conveys multiple messages, including each time some reflection of its status as a theatrical artifact.

A. *Telephus*

In the *Telephus* of Euripides, Telephus, the Mysian king, who has been wounded by Achilles on a Greek expedition which went to Mysia instead of Troy, and advised by an oracle that only the one who wounded him could cure him, dresses as a beggar and comes to Agamemnon's court. In the safety of his disguise, he argues in his own defense, but fails to persuade all the Greeks. Then identified by Achilles, who makes a late entry upon the scene, he snatches up the baby Orestes and takes refuge at an altar, threatening to slay the infant if he does not attain his cure, and the play ultimately reaches a satisfactory conclusion.[18]

In the comic parody, the kinsman, once unmasked by Cleisthenes, who departs to fetch the magistrate and the policeman, snatches up the baby of a woman nearby and threatens it with Orestes' fate. The woman and the kinsman play the paratragic scene up to the hilt — with a difference. For the child is named as a daughter, not a son, and once undressed by the kinsman, turns out to be a wineskin, four or five pints old, conceived at the last Dionysiac festival, whom the "mother" will go to any lengths to save. And the kinsman, unlike Telephus, makes good his threat and slays the Dionysiac "child" with a sacrificial bowl to catch every last drop, accompanied by the mother's lament that she has lost her "*korē*"

(maiden/maidenhead) (689–761).

The kinsman, we should remember, is playing a male role in female costume. Given the earlier coincidences of the comic scene between the kinsman and the women with the dramatic details of the *Telephus* (disguise, infiltration, speech of defense), we realize retrospectively that the kinsman has indeed been playing a specific male role in woman's garb from the beginning of the scene whose underlying plot the open parody has now at last explicitly exposed.[19] Now his identity has been revealed, the verbal insults with which he had assailed the women turn into an open masculine show of force against them, although this scene with its wine-happy women would seem to confirm everything he has already said about them in his earlier defense of Euripides. But it should also be noted that the exposure of the male is exactly matched by the exposure of the "female child", and the mimesis of the transvestite male is exactly symmetrical with the mimesis of the "transvestite female". The genders of the roles are reversed between the comic and tragic versions, but comic character and tragic role turn out to be fully consonant with each other.

B. The *Palamedes*

The *Palamedes*, which is set in the Greek camp at Troy, has as its plot the treachery of Odysseus against Palamedes, the wisest of the Greeks, the man who invented writing and many other skills beside. Odysseus, the wiliest of the Greeks, probably envious of the higher prestige of Palamedes, contrives the conviction of Palamedes on a charge of treason with fabricated evidence — a forged letter from King Priam and Trojan gold planted in his tent. In the trial which intervenes between the letter and the search for the gold, the innocent Palamedes gives a strong and eloquent defense of himself, the noble man unjustly accused, but he is condemned on the false evidence and put to death. In the aftermath, Oiax sends news of the death of his brother, Palamedes, to their father Nauplius in a novel way, and this is the scene which is parodied here. For the kinsman, in despair at the comic-tragic end of his tragic "Telephic" scheme, resolves in his isolation to send a message to Euripides, but how?

"I'll find a way from the *Palamedes*", he claims, and determines, like Oiax, to transmit word of his fate by writing his message on oars and casting them into the sea. No oars, of course, are to be found, but wooden votive tablets from the altar will do and he carves out the letters of Euripides' name to the accompaniment of a lyric apostrophe to his hands which are tracing the furrows of the letters with slow and painful toil (765–84). In rewriting this text in parodic form, the kinsman is playing the proper role from the proper play with the right gender, but still the wrong costume.[20]

C. *Parabasis*

This section of the play is closed by the *parabasis*, the formal convention of comedy, which allows the chorus to step forward and speak directly to the audience. In their tripartite appeal, they defend themselves against the slanders heaped upon women and prove their worth, this time in public and political terms. They speak first to the illogic of misogyny (if we are such a bane, why lock us up and not let us out of your sight? If we are such an evil, why do those of you outside always try to get a peep at us? (785–99)) and move on to the verbal play with the semantics of male and female discourse (*Kanon/skiadeion*: 821–29). This last is an addendum to their version of the theme of mimesis which rules the play. In reduced and absurd form, they introduce the theory of imitation which Cratylus will make famous in Plato's dialogue, according to which names imitate the natures of those who bear them, are the true marks of their being. The women intend to meet the men on their own ground of war and politics and go one better: "No man can compete with Nausimache (battle at sea), Aristomache (best in battle), Stratonike (victory of the army), and Euboule (good counsel), or with Salabaccho", they add, forgetting etymology and tossing in the name of a famous courtesan. And, in pointed contrast to this comic literalism, they end with vaunting their role as mothers of useful citizens, officials and generals, mothers whom they reward at their own festivals by giving them the seats of honor, in contrast to the usurious mother of Hyperbolos, who is equally at fault with her two products — the in-

terest (*tokos*) she begets and her son (*tokos*) (830–45).

I will return to this claim of theirs again, but would point out here that the *parabasis* serves as a specific closure to the theme of defense which has dominated the play from its beginning. It was extended, at length, of course, in the comic confrontation between the disguised kinsman and the women, with its latent parody of the *Telephus*, and continued in yet another key in the *Palamedes*. For while this last play is represented on stage in Oiax's ingenious graphic stratagem, its reference, I would suggest, also evokes the most famous and most dramatic aspect of the play — the trial and defense by Palamedes himself of his innocence — Palamedes, the wisest of men, the inventor of writing.

On the other hand, the women's defense of femininity opens up the play to its next developments. Here marks the turning point from male roles in the tragic theater to those of women — Helen and Andromeda, from the kinsman's solo performance to the duet with Euripides. Here marks too the shift, as I will argue, from a position of explicit to implicit defense now that the kinsman in the theatrical costume which he donned so long ago must fully enter into his female role to gain his rescue, must, in fact, "live through" the female experience.

D. *Helen*

The *Helen* holds the center of the play; it is carefully framed on one side by the *parabasis* and, on the other, by the brief removal of the transvestite imposter from the stage for the first time in the play, an event which leads the women to reinaugurate their festive dance and song. The parody of the *Helen* is the last direct appeal to the women of the Thesmophoria, for the *Andromeda*, the final parody scene in the series, is addressed now to a new audience — the barbarian Scythian archer.

The new Helen whom the kinsman will play refers not only to the recent production of the play the year before, but to the new representation of Helen in a new role as the chaste and virtuous wife. In this version (which has precedents in the mythological tradition),

the true Helen never went to Troy, but was transported to Egypt, and an *eidolon*, a cloud-like imitation of herself was sent in her stead to Troy. She has remained for ten years in isolation, faithful to her husband and her ideas of purity, while the "phantom" Helen remained at the center of hostilities at Troy where Greeks and Trojans fought with each other and fell in battle — for her sake. In Euripides' play, the old king Proteus who had protected her has died, and his impious son Theoclymenus, equally smitten by her beauty, determined to impose a forcible marriage upon her. Theoclymenus has, in fact, vowed to slay all Greeks who come to his shores in order to keep Helen safe for himself.

Menelaus, now that the war is over, is returning home with his crew and with the phantom Helen he imagines is his real wife whom he has rescued from Troy. Storm and shipwreck drive him to Egypt where he confronts the "real" Helen. Once their complicated recognition is accomplished, the reunited couple plan their escape with a false story of Menelaus' death and a false promise by Helen to marry Theoclymenus if she can first perform funeral rites by the sea for her "dead" husband. The success of their fictions depends upon the cooperation of the prophetess Theonoe, the virgin sister of the king, whose purity of intellect and spirit stands in radical opposition to her violent brother. No synopsis can do justice to the brilliant energy of this romantic play which combines the themes of *eros* and *thanatos* with a philosophical testing of the categories of illusion and reality, of name (*onoma*) and fact (*pragma*), name (*onoma*) and body (*soma*), mind and body, truth and falsehood.[21] For our purposes, however, Aristophanes' parody is significant in two respects.

First, the audience in the comic parody is Critylla, the woman guarding Mnesilochus, whom they would convince with the dramatic fiction of their happy reunion as husband and wife so that Euripides can indeed rescue Mnesilochus from his/her plight. But Critylla doesn't know how to play, either as spectator or as Theonoe, the daughter of Proteus whose part the kinsman finally assigns to her ("By the gods, if I am not Critylla, the daughter of Antitheos from Gargettos and you are an evil wretch", 897–99). She knows where she is, not in Egypt, but in the Thesmophorion (877–80). This can't be the house of Proteus, for the man Proteus whom she knew

has been dead for ten years (874–76; 881–84). As for the kinsman's insistence that his name is Helen, she rightly replies: "Have you become a woman again, before you have paid the penalty for that other 'womanization'' (*gynaikesis*) of yours?" (863–64). And when the kinsman claims to Euripides/Menelaus that he is being forced into a marriage with Proteus' son, she scolds the kinsman for deceiving the poor stranger with this and other lies (890–94).[22]

To Critylla, whose comic realism insists on literal readings, there is no Helen, only the scoundrel kinsman, and the stranger who has entered the scene is the innocent outsider whom she must enlighten until she recognizes their Egyptian intrigue for what it is and identifies the stranger/Menelaus as a co-conspirator, who must be driven off. Only once does she a make a concession to the theatrical mimesis — a wrong one. For correcting the kinsman's tale of forced marriage, she replies that he has come in truth to steal the women's gold (893–94) — clearly, a conflation of the comic situation at the Thesmophoria and the parody of the *Palamedes* which has just been played.

On the level of the comic plot, the parody of the *Helen* functions explicitly as the kinsman's lure to bring Euripides on stage to save him (846–51), and all its effects seem to be directed to this pragmatic end. But in this brief and absurd scene, all the issues which characterized the novelty of the original play are present, but wonderfully deflected through the comic travesty as a dissonance between the two levels of reference — the comic fiction of the play and the paratragic rendition. In the counterpoint of the text which sets the recognition scene from the *Helen* against Critylla's misrecognition of the identity of the parody, the questions of illusion and reality, of truth and falsehood, of mimesis and deception, are reframed in metatheatrical terms.

In this new key, the problem of the name as a guide to identity is transposed exactly in reverse to its Euripidean model. For in the *Helen*, the epistemological confusion lies in the possibility that the same name may be distributed to more than one (e.g., two Helens), but in the parody, the theatrical confusion lies in the refusal to allow the same character/actor to bear more than one name, to say nothing of more than one gender. The costume can never conceal what

the naked truth has exposed and serves here as the focal point at which to test the mimetic premises of the theater in general, and the premises of this romantic play, in particular. The *eidolon* of Helen, not seen and not mentioned in the parody, nevertheless, as the personification of illusion itself, hovers over the scene.[23]

In the split perspective in which the incongruities of the comic and tragic fictions are made most evident, the failure of the tragic parody to persuade lies as much with the comic spectator, who entertains no illusions, as it does with those characters who are trying to create them. And in the relation of the parody to its larger comic matrix, we can note another set of reversals which come to play through the silent juxtaposition of different texts, reversals which are both thematic and theatrical. We may remember that the original basis of the women's complaint was the hyperrealism of Euripidean drama, its failure to create the proper distance between fiction and life. Now we see the opposite — a play, whose plot places it directly in the mode of the fabulous, the magical, and the exotic — in short, a mimesis in the service of the theater itself. And instead of the "bad" women whom Euripides has shamelessly put upon the stage, he has shown us a woman, who, against all odds (and credence), has never betrayed her husband, but has waited for him with true and faithful trust. When the women asked the kinsmen earlier why Euripides had never put any Penelopes upon the stage, he replied that Penelopes were nowhere to be found any more (547–50). Yet here he stages the myth of another Penelope, like her, besieged with importunate suitor(s). Best of all, Helen is not Penelope, but in the normative tradition, her exact opposite, the woman who ran off with another man, the woman whose beauty caused the Trojan war. Helen, in fact, is the "baddest" of women, who through the poet's art, is recreated as the best of them.

By reversing the myth of Helen, Euripides has indeed reversed the terms, and in playing the part of Menelaus, he has turned from the maligner of women to their potential redeemer, a role which he will play once again, in even better form, as Perseus to the kinsman's Andromeda.

E. *Andromeda*

The *Helen* and the *Andromeda* are doublets of each other, both presented by Euripides at the City Dionysia in the preceding year. Both imagine similar situations — an exotic locale (Egypt/Ethiopia), a woman in captivity and in danger, a dramatic rescue. But in the *Andromeda*, the situation is more extreme. Andromeda is immobilized, bound to a rock. She does not have to outwit a lustful suitor, but can only await death from a monster of the deep. No reunions or recognitions for her, but rather a handsome stranger, Perseus, who, flying by with the Gorgon's head tucked in his pouch, falls in love with her — irrevocably — at first sight. This play, unfortunately lost to us except for fragments, was famous in antiquity for the seductiveness of its erotic fantasy.[24] In the *Frogs*, Dionysus, who is in the Underworld to bring Euripides back to Athens, claims as the reason for his mission the sudden desire (*pothos*), the overwhelming passion (*himeros*) which struck at his heart while he was reading the *Andromeda*, a passion not for a woman but for a clever (*dexios*) poet, Euripides (51–56, 59). Euripides' Helen, rehabilitated and "revirginized", stands as the middle term between the whores that were his Phaedras and his Sthenoboias, and this purest of all pure virgins, Andromeda. If the *Thesmophoriazousae*, in a sense, traces out the career of Euripides as it moves from one extreme to another, from hyperrealism to seductive fantasy, the woman in her two faces — carnal sexuality and romantic eroticism — serves not only as the subject, but also as the essential metaphor for the art of mimesis as it is represented in two modes.

The parody of the *Andromeda* is addressed to two different audiences and provokes two different reactions. On the theatrical level, the *Andromeda* is not a critical success. The policeman spectator, far from being enraptured by its performance, can hardly understand a word of what's going on, and therefore unwittingly and fittingly plays the role of the sea monster. But the parody might well have been a thematic success with the women. The ensuing choral song that begins with the invocation to the virgin unyoked maiden Pallas Athena of the city and ends with the two goddesses of the Thesmophoria (1136–59), might only refer to the chorus' joy at the triumph of the policeman over the violator of their ritual, and this is a point to which I will return. But it cannot be a coincidence that immediately after, Euripides offers terms of peace to the women: "Never again will I slander women, this I promise" (1160–64), and adds: "If I can take away this kinsman of mine who is bound to the plank, never again will I speak ill of you. If you don't give in, I'll reveal everything you do at home to your husbands when they come back from the army" (1166–69). The women accept the offer, but the male world has taken matters out of their hands; Euripides must persuade the barbarian too (1170–71).

The appearance of the Scythian policeman who ties the kinsman to the punishment plank sets the stage for the performance of the *Andromeda*, but, at the same time, his entry creates the maximum distance between the romantic nature of the play itself and the one who is meant to fall under its spell. For the Scythian policeman belongs fully to the conventions of the comic theater, as do all barbarians and others whose outlandish language, gestures, and costumes offer, it would seem, a dependable source of laughter. The first scene of the *Telephus*, played between the kinsman and the mother of the "child", was played "straight", according to paratragic rules, which encourage comic characters in dire comic circumstances to resort to mock-tragic expressions of their plight. In the *Helen*, the comic already intrudes more directly in the intervention of Critylla, but in the *Andromeda* the parody takes on a double focus by playing both to the tragic and the comic: it exploits the props and scenery for its tragic setting and the intrinsic comic properties of the Scythian archer.

"Double exposure" rules this last and grandest finale and the perplexities of gender and genre reach their furthest extremes. Once Euripides, flying by on the machine, has given him the cue, the kinsman plays two roles (himself and Andromeda) and in two modes (as solo and duet), both with increasing skill and independence. His opening monody of lament is a wonderful mixture of the details of his own comic situation with those tragic ones of Andromeda, and now he shifts from one voice to the other, now he merges them together (1015–55). Euripides himself plays two roles, one, female — Echo, and one, male — Perseus. What is more, as Echo, Euripides plays a double role, first tormenting the kinsman with his abusive

repetitions and then the Scythian policeman.

Echo itself is the doubling of another's voice; it is also the purest representation of mimesis itself as the imitation of another's words. Retrospectively, the two preceding parodies each bear this metatheatrical charge — the *Palamedes*, in the art of writing which imitates speech; the *Helen*, in its intimations of the *eidolon* which imitates the human form, and now Echo as the mimesis of the voice. And let us now also include the *parabasis* with its names whose etymologies mimetically represent the inner quality of the women who bear them.

What distinguishes Echo from the others is its paradoxical status as both nature and artifice. As the one example of a mimesis in nature itself, the mimetic reproduction of echo itself on the stage translates the imitation of nature into an artificial theatrical effect. In turning his parodic skills on Echo, Aristophanes has, in fact, singled out the most radical innovation in Euripidean art. By giving it a run in all its possibilities, he succeeds in exposing it as the highest example of conscious mimetic illusion. But it is also significant for the theme of mimesis in general that Echo, its mythic figuration, is not an "it", but a "she". She is the voice that imitates in both her myths, one that relates her to Narcissus (Ovid, *Met.*3. 356–401) and the other to Pan (e.g., Longus, 3.23). Euripides, the male, must dress as a female in order to imitate Echo who herself is the principle of imitation. Echo as the embodiment (more properly, disembodiment) of mimesis is also the focal point for the concept of the feminine which can never be grasped as primary and original, but only as the one who is imitated or the one who imitates and yet as such, is therefore also empowered as the mistress of imitation.

I will want to return to this connection between the feminine and mimesis later (in part VI). Here it is important to note that the exposure of Echo as played by Euripides who brings her out from behind the scenes, turns the tragic to comic, or better, mixes the tragic with the comic. Echo, in fact, might stand as the mediating figure between tragedy and comedy, divided between them and yet bringing the genres together, as the artful device of the original model and the slapstick cliché of the comic theater. If this is no longer a true contest between the women and Euripides, it is now fully a contest

between the comic poet and his rival whom the comic poet imitates.[25] Imitation retains to the end its ambiguous status, its "poetics of contradiction". For in his last theatrical act, Euripides turns finally and fully to the comic stage. Dressed as an old procuress, he offers the Scythian policeman a dancing girl to distract him while he hustles the kinsman and himself off stage.

The play began with a tragic poet in drag and ends the same way, or does it? Is Euripides brought down to the comic level, his affinity for comedy revealed at last? Or is Euripides, with this plot — the expert ending to a comic play — led to imitate his imitator, but, by that imitation, allowed to take over the comic stage? This is a comedy, after all, and comedy ends with signs of unimpeded libido, most typically with a lusty man and a dancing girl. But on the grounds of the comic plot, the end, abbreviated as it is, means that the play of "women on top" has brought the female back to her normal place.

Yet the motif of "women on top" has not altogether disappeared; it is distilled and defused in the name Euripides adopts for his role as the old procuress — Artemisia, the Carian queen, who "manned" a ship during the Persian Wars and put up a brilliant fight, to the Greeks' undying shame, as they note again and again, that they had to do battle with a woman who was an equal of a man. In his accommodation to a comic ending, one that brings about his own salvation and that of the kinsman, Euripides has reverted back to the purely sexual mode. Already the barbarian has dispelled the erotic enchantment of the *Andromeda* with his crude and obscene interruptions, and Euripides meets him on his own terms. But he has kept his promise to the women — displacing as far as possible from the world of the married women of the Thesmophoria the open sexuality which the comic world demands as its program. Yet the Thesmophoria too is a festival, a sacred event, and it too has as its program a renewal of fertility. Thus, when the play draws to a close, comedy, tragedy, and festival have all converged together for a common purpose.

Euripides, by his cunning inventions and his myriad schemes for salvation, has rescued the kinsman and has redeemed himself of his impiety, more directly, I will argue, than we have recognized. For Euripides, despite his innovations on this stage and on his own, has

ıot invented everything himself. He has perhaps reinvented, ealigned his plots with more traditional paradigms. There are two secrets" which lie at the heart of the text, secrets which integrate ıe ritual and aesthetic elements of the play, and which explain still ıore cogently, I will suggest, the women's willingness to accept Eur- ides' tender of peace. If, at one level, the parodies display their atus as "mere" fiction which pretends to represent "reality" and) cause an effect in the real world, on another level, these fictions e essential to the mystifying properties of myth and poetry which e necessary for the revitalization of the ritual world and for the ef- ct of the comic and tragic alike. The sottish Scythian policeman istakes the name of the Gorgon which Perseus/Euripides carries, that of Gorgias, the fifth century Sophist, for whom the power of agedy resides precisely in its deception (DK fr. 23):[26] "Tragedy de- ives by myths and the display of various passions; and whereas the agic poet who deceives is juster than he who does not, the deceived also the wiser than the one who is not deceived".

/ MIMESIS: FESTIVAL — DIONYSUS/DEMETER

is not the earth that imitates the woman in the matter of conception and birth, it is the woman who imitates the earth.

Plato

yth is speech stolen and restored. Only, speech which is restored is no longer quite at which was stolen; when it was brought back, it was not put exactly in its place

Roland Barthes

ıe *Thesmophoriazousae*, organized as a dialogue between comedy d tragedy, draws attention to and explores the inconstant rela- ns between the realities of everyday life and the fictive arrange- ents of the theater. But there is a third term to be considered — at of the cultic dimension, which is integrated into the play as its ene and its context, but yet stands outside the fictional structures its marked form as ritual.

At one level, the ritual center of the play serves as the intermediate

and mediating borderland between the events of everyday life and those of the theater. The ritual space of the Thesmophorion, as suggested earlier, is analogous to the domestic space of the women at home so that the kinsman's intrusion into their ritual enclosure replicates the impious intrusion of Euripides' theater into that forbidden female domain.[27]

But on another level, the literal fact of that ritual identity invites us to reverse these terms to consider the import of the underlying mythos of the Thesmophoria and its dialectical relation with that other mythos which always and everywhere presides over the theater. More generally still, the focus on cult reminds us that the theater, after all, is an imitation with a difference of mythic and ritual forms. These provide the latent structuring patterns over which and with which drama plays out its variations and deviations in new and different keys.

Rereading the play in cultic terms brings to center stage a dialogue between Demeter and Dionysus, each representing a mode which defines the feminine and each furnishing a mythic mode which can be related to both genres of comedy and tragedy. The ritual space sacred to women invokes Dionysiac as well as Demetrian associations. Its trespass by men therefore also recalls the founding plot of the theater itself, best known from Euripides' late play, the *Bacchae*. The Dionysiac has a tragic and comic side: tragic, as the serious consequences of violating ritual taboos, when the male, who comes to spy on women's secrets, arouses their Bacchant madness and suffers *sparagmos* at their hands. The other, the comic side, has, as its carnivalesque license, even duty, to refuse all taboos. It therefore delights in sacrilege and in violating ritual solemnity and thus deflects a potential Dionysiac tragedy into comic farce.

On social grounds, the occasion of the Thesmophoria legitimates the women's intrusion into public space. But in ritual terms, the festival is, in a sense, an intrusion on to the comic stage, for this is its most solemn day, the Nesteia, when the women abstain from food in imitation of Demeter's mourning for her lost daughter. The Thesmophoria then answers to the role of anti-festival, as Lent is opposed to Carnival, for fast rules instead of feast and chastity replaces sexual indulgence. The women's intention which generates the comic plot

hen entirely consonant with the spirit of this ritual day — the trial
punishment of one who has inappropriately exposed their sex-
selves in a serious art form. The kinsman, therefore, performs
ouble function: as the representative of Euripides, he goes to de-
d tragic art, but as the comic character, he rightly disrupts the
emn proceedings by the terms of his defense — the further expo-
e of women's sexual secrets. This ambiguity also means that
women must, in turn, play a double role, as followers of Demeter
/as Bacchants of Dionysus.

Theater encompasses both modes of drama and both modes of
lt. It can use one to test the other, as it already does in the prologue
ene with Agathon. For Agathon is more than tragic poet. His
metic theory which attributes his transvestite dress both to art
himesis) and to nature (effeminacy) is itself a mixture of manner
d modes. His ritual entrance, which sacralizes the calling of his
t by its invocations and prayers, also offers in advance a private
rsion of the Thesmophoria.[28] Yet his costume evokes from the
nsman a quotation from Aeschylus' *Edonians* that describes
ionysus himself, which suggests that this man-woman (*gynnis*) is
ndeed the god of the theater (or a mimesis of him, which, according
Agathon's theories, amounts to the same thing).

In the dramatic plot, Agathon refuses to infiltrate the Thes-
nophoria because he would play his part too well. In the Dionysiac
enario, he refuses to go, for as the sacral figure in transvestite garb,
e stands outside the action as the spirit of theater itself. The one
who "plays at playing and visibly reduplicates the act of acting"[29]
has the power instead to transform others — to provide them with
their costumes and their roles for the play that is about to begin.

The robing of the kinsman on stage with articles from Agathon's
wardrobe functions within the mythic plot exactly like the robing of
Pentheus in the *Bacchae* — for precisely the same purpose — the infiltra-
tion of women's mysteries — and with precisely the same attitude — mis-
ogyny. What the kinsman, in fact, brings out of hiding, once his own
identity has been exposed, is the Dionysiac which lurks beneath the
Demetrian façade of the women — the wineskin that masquerades
as a baby and which was "conceived" at the last Dionysia, the baby
whose "mother", Mika, calls upon another woman, Mania (Mad-

ness) for help (728, 739).

By slaying the wineskin, the kinsman indeed turns tragedy into farce, but he also puts an end, so to speak, to the Bacchic plot. The situation now no longer conforms to the Dionysiac pattern in which the women would themselves overpower the male and do him violence. Instead, he becomes again the violator of women and, given the nature of his act, he makes the transition to the Demetrian plot.[30] While the abduction of the baby follows the plot of the *Telephus* where the king, disguised as a beggar, takes Orestes hostage among the men at Agamemnon's court, we note that the scene fits, but the genders are reversed. The "baby" whom the kinsman abducts from the women and consigns to "death" is a "female" baby, whose abduction and violation have deprived the "mother" both of her *Korē* (virginity) and her *Korē* (daughter) (760–61). These acts, I suggest, reactivate the scenario of the Thesmophoria which begins with the abduction of the maiden Korē-Persephone that takes her down to the Underworld. The Nesteia is located temporally at the midpoint of the Thesmophoria and at the midpoint of the myth, in the liminal time after the loss of Korē and before her salvation and return. Now that the kinsman himself will require rescue and salvation, he begins to reenact stages of Euripides' rescue dramas which can and should be correlated with the ruling mythos of salvation in the story of Persephone. In broadest terms, the mythos of Dionysus gives the pattern for transgression, but the Demetrian the pattern for redemption, both linked, of course, in their own way, to the larger theme of liberation.

The Dionysiac impulse is synchronic, divided in the same action between tragic and comic moods, like Dionysus Lysios himself, who destroys or redeems. But the Demetrian mode is diachronic: its scenario always passes through the spectrum from tragedy to comedy, from death, captivity, and mourning to return, recovery, and joy. The Demetrian plot exemplifies, in fact, the salvational motif, not only for the Themophoria in its invocation of fertility but, above all, in the Eleusinian mysteries. In this play, the Thesmophoria provides the ritual background for Euripides' rescue dramas, but in the *Frogs*, where Dionysus descends into Hades to rescue the poet who will save the city, his quest is properly accompanied by the songs

of mystic initiates from Eleusis. The Demetrian plot mixing with the Dionysiac can bring together the genres of tragedy and comedy and can join the comic theater in a mutual celebration.

Once the kinsman is made captive, the parodies seem to meet with failure in their immediate reception. But, at the same time, they are increasingly invested with the unspoken power of mimesis, which "insists on the reality of the moment, even while practicing its own form of 'deceit' ".[31] This mimesis exposes theater as "mere" illusion, but reinstates it under the name of a higher mimesis. The kinsman thus moves *down* the scale of male potency to his last humiliating role as a woman. But the theatrical experience itself moves *upward* through the mythic plot as it converts the male who has abducted the Korē into the Korē herself whose story promises that she will be redeemed.

In this double perspective, the parodies stand out in high relief against the choral background of ritual songs, a contrast which places ritual and theater at opposite ends of the spectrum. In one sense, the increasing validation of the festival mood (which combines the fast with celebration), can be correlated with the deteriorating situation of the male intruder — first, after his temporary removal from the stage by the policeman, and then after the parody of the *Andromeda* scene which leaves the Scythian still in charge of his captive. But a closer look at the content of these songs shows a subtle series of responses on the part of the chorus to the underlying mythic tenor of the parody scenes.

The *Helen* scene, framed in its context, as already observed, by the *parabasis* on one side and the choral song on the other, is the focal point for this conversion both of the kinsman and the chorus. The last part of the *parabasis* which extols for the first time, although in comic terms, their roles as worthy mothers in the city rather than errant wives, introduces this turning from their Dionysiac to their Demetrian personae. The *Helen* scene, itself, with its conversion of Helen from the adulterous wife into the faithful spouse, in larger terms, from the whore to the virgin, is followed by a choral dance which turns around in a circle and then around again (*kuklos, tropos, ana-strepho, torneuo*, etc. in 959–1000). For the first time, the motif of legitimate marriage connected with Hera Teleia appears in their

song (973–76), as if in response to the evocation of marriage in the parody of the *Helen*. In this festive mood, the chorus proclaims the sanctity of their rites at which it would now be inappropriate to slander men (962–64), and they offer a long invocation to the gods — to the Olympians, to Artemis, Apollo, Hera, Pan, and the Nymphs — inviting them all to dance. Now the chorus includes Dionysus himself in his idyllic setting on the mountain as he sports in lovely song and dance among his nymphs (987–1000).

That the *Helen* earns this response is consonant with Euripides' general treatment of Helen, but the connection with his play is still more intrinsic. For in the drama itself, the motif of Persephone is evoked over and over again and shapes the mythic frame of the play.[32] Helen, in fact, several times even likens herself to Persephone (E. *Hel.* 175, 244 ff.). Egypt is envisioned as the underworld, the place that threatens death to Greek sailors who touch upon its shores, while the lustful king who keeps Helen captive in anticipation of a forced marriage easily fills the role of Hades. At the critical moment of the play, when Helen and Menelaus have devised their rescue plot, the chorus sings an elaborate ode to the Great Mother, as she turns from grief at the loss of her daughter to laughter and joy through the consolation of dance and song (E. *Hel.* 1301–68). In the mythic plot, the laughter of Demeter marks the restoration of the mourning mother to life, laughter that echoes in this choral song of the *Thesmophoriazousae* (979).

But only the pure virgin Andromeda can properly evoke at last the theme of the maiden. The chorus first calls upon the city's Pallas Athena, the "unyoked virgin maiden" (*parthenon azuga kourēn*, 1139) to bring the peace that loves festivals (*phileorton*, 1147). In the previous chorus, Hera Teleia was invoked as she who holds the keys of marriage (976); now the virgin Athena is summoned as the holder of power, the keeper of the keys of the city (1141–42).[33] And appropriately in this choral song that now addresses only female deities, the women end by inviting the two goddesses to come with kindness to these sacred rites, forbidden for men to see, so that with their torches they might make manifest an immortal vision (*ambroton opsin* 1136–59). The women themselves whom "Andromeda" now addresses as her maiden chorus (1015) are virgins again, and "An-

dromeda" herself, repeatedly called *korē* and *parthenos*, laments the fate that binds her to death instead of her marriage couch (1034–36; cf. 1122).

In the division of the actors' roles between the kinsman and Euripides, the kinsman stands in for the poet and speaks in his name. But Mnesilochus assumes the transgressive role in both Dionysiac and Demetrian plots until he takes on the opposite role of the maiden who needs to be saved. Euripides himself, however, is reserved for the role of potential rescuer, introduced on stage to bring liberation to the Dionysiac figure of comedy and salvation to the "Korē" heroine of his plays. At the comic end, Euripides assumes at last the female role himself, and with it finally the role of redeemer. This time he is the old woman who brings relief with laughter, thereby bringing Demeter and Dionysus together in incongruous harmony.

But this harmony is not, in fact, incongruous. The Nesteia, the day of the fast at which the women imitated the mourning of Demeter, ended with *aischrologia*, obscene ritual banter, in commemoration of the woman, Iambe, who met Demeter at the crossroads and with her scurrilous jokes made Demeter laugh and so turned the world around. Thus in the Thesmophoric ritual, *aischrologia* has its place as it does in the cult of Dionysus, elsewhere and in the comic theater.[34] The *Andromeda* parody, played out as a mixture of erotic lyrical pathos and obscene sexual jests, belongs then as much to the cult of Demeter as it does to that of Dionysus. Within this ritual frame, Euripides at last redeems himself — now of the *two* charges which the women had earlier brought against him — his slander of femininity (which has been discussed in detail) and his general impiety in creating characters who claimed that the gods do not exist (450–51). (See note 27.)

V MIMESIS: ART AND THE LITERARY TRADITION

My language is the universal whore whom I have to make into a virgin.

Karl Kraus

The *Helen* is the ritual "secret" within the text; the *Helen* is also the stage for the discovery of another "secret", one that belongs to the

domain of art and literary tradition. The kinsman's impersonation of the "new" Helen, I have suggested, introduces a new role for women in Euripides' plays which serves implicitly to counteract the charges of slander which the women of the Thesmophoria have brought against the poet. A new positive version of the feminine is offered in place of the old, and its representation forecasts the renunciation Euripides is to make of his earlier errant ways. In this respect, the *Helen* functions within the thematic terms of the play as Euripides' *palinode*, the song that reverses its former position, the song that "takes everything back" (palin-ode). More precisely still, that reversal is located within the *Helen* itself, since the play offers a revised version of the traditional Helen. In this, Euripides is not the inventor of the "new" plot of the *Helen*, but follows another earlier poet of the sixth century, Stesichorus, who was the first to compose a palinode. The subject of Stesichorus' palinode was, in fact, Helen herself and it introduced the original motif of the *eidolon*. The story goes that Stesichorus, having slandered Helen, was blinded for his blasphemy. But being a wise poet, he recognized the cause of his blindness and composed another song which began: "That story was not true; you did not go within the well-oared ships, nor did you come to the walls of Troy", and as a result he regained his sight (Plato, *Phaedrus* 243b).

The story has been interpreted as a reflection on the double and contradictory role of Helen — as goddess, daughter of Zeus, and as woman, the adulterous wife of Menelaus. The case of Stesichorus has been referred to the violation of the cultic norms of Sparta where Helen was indeed worshipped in a cult role as a goddess. The palinode, in its creation of the *eidolon*, therefore unequivocally confirmed her divine status. Generally, in the mythic tradition, the *eidolon*, the cloud-image, is appropriately the creation of Zeus, the cloud-gatherer, most often used as a substitute for a goddess whom a mortal man has attempted to ravish, as in the myth of Ixion who grasped at Hera, but found Nephele (cloud) instead.[35]

The *Thesmophorizousae*, in terms of its development, suggests a model of the female who veers between the profane ("bad woman") and the sacred ("pure virgin"), but Stesichorus' diptych of ode and palinode seems to propose a more radical division between the two

categories of the female, separated by the fine but firm line which divides mortal and immortal. But if we look back at Stesichorus now in the light of the *Thesmophoriazousae*, the question of the two Helens might be posed differently. The fault for Stesichorus may not lie with the received mythos of Helen itself (i.e., that Helen went to Troy), but in its mode of poetic representation which violated Helen by violating the norms of poetic decorum.

Having revealed too much of the mortal Helen, i.e., her sexuality,[36] Stesichorus turns in repentance to the other extreme — untainted erotic beauty, which is preserved through the figure of the pure Helen who never went to Troy and her imitation, who played her traditional part. With his palinode, Stesichorus now avoids altogether the problem of the woman as morally "good" (respectable) or "bad" (shameless), but rather raises another question with regard to the feminine. This new eros that Helen incarnates divides itself from within to establish another set of opposites — the false illusory *eidolon* and the true figure of the divine — opposites which, however, are now both equally unattainable. One is a false imitation of the other, which itself (as divine) can never be grasped by mortals in a "real" state, but only in the empty form which is inevitably substituted for the original. Helen, as the darling of Aphrodite in any form and for all time, embodies in herself the irresistible principle of the erotic, perpetually desirable and desired by all. But Stesichorus' story also suggests that eros is not divided from poetics. The poet slandered Helen and to atone, he fabricated a fictive *eidolon* in her place and openly declared the original version as a fiction (*ouk etumos*). Helen, whose "true" (i.e., traditional mythos) may be denied as a fiction, therefore may also personify poetics even as she embodies eros. For as fictive *eidolon*, Stesichorus' Helen acquires the capacity to impersonate herself and to draw attention to the notion of imitation as a conscious poetic creation.

Stesichorus uses Helen, as it were, to assert his role as a poet. Working within a received tradition which he alters in two different ways (the "blasphemy" in the first version and the recantation in the second), he raises the notion of fictionality as a possible attribute of mythic texts in order to account for his own innovations, and in the process, he invents a new generic form — the palinode. In the process, he inaugurates a new tradition, establishes a new paradigm upon which Aristophanes can draw in the construction of his own piece by which the Helen of Euripides can serve to exonerate the poet from the charge of blaspheming against women. And this paradigm, reproduced in the Euripidean play itself, can serve at the same time to raise these questions of fictionality and imitation. Others have noted that Euripides' play itself shows a consciousness of its status as a piece of the theater, that Helen and Menelaus, when they contrive their fictions for escape, also strive *not* to imitate the clichés of other tragic plots. In satirizing Euripides' theatrical innovations in the *Helen* and in presenting a parody with metatheatrical dimensions, Aristophanes reaffirms, as it were, through the tradition that goes back to Stesichorus, the perennial utility of Helen as the figure upon whom can be focused the poetic problems of imitation itself.

One might call Stesichorus' *eidolon* a proto-theatrical and proto-mimetic representation insofar as the poet precedes the fifth-century developments of the theater and of theories of mimesis. Yet although Stesichorus invented the *eidolon* of Helen, he is not the first to associate Helen with questions of imitation. A longer tradition stands behind her that begins with her first appearance in Greek epic which is worth exploring briefly here in order to understand better the paradigmatic value of Helen for the particular aesthetic problems which are posed in the time of Aristophanes and Euripides. This exploration will serve in turn to shift the discussion now to my final area of concern, that is, the categories of Greek thought which associate the feminine with mimesis, whether figural or poetic.

VI. MIMESIS: EROS AND ART

In dreams, a writing tablet signifies a woman, since it receives the imprint of all kinds of letters.

Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica*.

Already in the *Iliad*, Helen, as the erotic center of the poem, is connected with the art of poetry when she weaves a tapestry of double fold, depicting on it "many contests of horse-taming Trojans and

bronze-mailed Achaeans, which they suffered on account of her" (*Il.* 3. 125–28), as if she was "weaving the very fabric of heroic epic".[37] Better still, in the fourth book of the *Odyssey*, when Telemachus visits Sparta and finds Helen and Menelaus reunited as a married pair, they each tell a tale of Helen and Odysseus from the days when she was still at Troy. In her story, Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, comes secretly into the city as a spy. She alone recognizes him and does not betray him, but cares for him and rejoices that her homecoming will soon be at hand (*Od.* 4. 240–64). Menelaus, on the other hand, tells another story of Helen, one that puts her in a very different light: on the night in which the Trojan horse stood within the gates of the city, Helen, now the wife of Deiphobus, the brother of Paris, came down, and by imitating all the different voices of their wives, tempted the Greeks who were hidden inside to betray their presence, a ruse which would have succeeded had it not been for Odysseus' discerning prudence (*Od.* 4. 266–89). Two stories are juxtaposed, each the same characterization of Odysseus, but each a different version of Helen. She is the mistress of many voices, the mistress of mimesis, linked in both stories to secrecy, disguise, and deception.[38]

Even more, Helen is the mistress of ceremonies, who stages the mood and setting of the tales, when to counteract the grief which their sad memories of Odysseus had stirred up, she casts a drug into their wine, a *pharmakon* (from Egypt) which takes away pain and brings forgetfulness of sorrows. And she bids them to delight themselves with stories (*mythoi*), which she herself will begin, narrating a plausible (appropriate) tale (*Od.* 4. 220–39). These *pharmaka* belong to the poetics of enchantment, which seduce the hearer with tales of deception, tales of impersonation in costume and speech, which summon up the best memories of Odysseus for an evening's recollection. As tales of Helen, they are told without comment, as tales from a past that seems to have been forgiven, transmuted into a play of symmetrical reversals that charm instead of dismay.[39]

Yet the ordering of the two stories also makes clear that the second story, as a story of Helen, is indeed an implicit comment on the first story, a second version, which like a proto-palinode (but in reverse) revises the first. Menelaus' tale operates on two levels: on the first, it undermines the fidelity of Helen's earlier version, a version which represents her fidelity to the Greeks, in favor of a version which shows she can imitate many different voices, each time with the intention to seduce and betray. On the second level, within this setting ruled by the enchantment of the *pharmakon*, the story functions as a self-reflective comment on the nature of fiction and mimesis which Helen embodies. Menelaus' story thus intimates the status of Helen's earlier story as fiction and suggests in the process that Helen and story telling might be one and the same thing — the imitation of many voices in the service of seduction and enchantment. Helen is the figure, who by her imitation of the different voices of different men's wives, links *eros* and poetics together under the rubric of mimesis. This mimesis, it is worth noting, is appropriately divined as a fiction from within this story of Menelaus by the master story teller himself, Odysseus — the man of many turns.

Menelaus' story can only hint at the difference between fiction and truth. But another story is more precise in this regard, the one which Menelaus recalls the next day, that of his experience with Proteus, the old man of the sea, after he left Troy and came with Helen to Egypt. Proteus is the master of lies and truth; better still, he is the figure of the shifting nature of truth, which Menelaus can grasp as one and true, only if he grasps Proteus himself, who will change his shape from one creature to another, until, under Menelaus' unremitting grip, he will return to his single original form. Menelaus' success depends upon the advice of a female, Proteus' daughter, and note how she fulfills her feminine role. She betrays the existence of Proteus, the secrets of his powers, and the means of overcoming him — a mimetic disguise and a secret ambush (*Od.* 4. 351–570). The story of mimesis practiced by Helen can never escape the ambiguities of its telling, but the mimetic repertory of Proteus has a limit which will result in the revelation of an absolute truth. Here that truth is the future of Menelaus — his homecoming and his ultimate fate — not death, but eternal sojourn in the Elysian Fields, the paradisiac islands to the West, "because Helen is yours and you are son-in-law therefore to Zeus" (4. 561–70). Helen in the end rules both tales of mimesis — as divinity, connected through her genealogy to truth (and immortality), beyond the reaches of fiction (or

perhaps the supreme fiction) and earlier, as mortal, skilled in the arts of mimesis and seduction.

For the *Odyssey*, this ultimate "truth", whether the translation of Menelaus to the permanence of the Elysian Fields, or the "truth" of the recognition between Odysseus and Penelope, grounded on the fact that Penelope has truly been "true" to him, suggests the alternatives to the ambiguities of poetics and erotics which the two stories of Helen and Menelaus propose. In the light of this reunion on Ithaca, these ambiguities are not only recollections of a past which belong to Helen and Menelaus, but potential forecasts for Penelope. This future depends upon Penelope's choice of one of the two possible roles which the two stories offer her — that of the faithful woman who receives the beggar in disguise and welcomes him, or that of the woman who, surrounded by men (read suitors for Greeks), practices the wiles of seduction, although another man's wife. Penelope is no teller of stories; quite the contrary. She is worn out with hearing the false tales of Odysseus which travellers have brought to her over the years and with meeting the false imposters of Odysseus himself. She has become skilled at testing the fictions of another's words which have no power to seduce her with a false truth. Yet she is the mistress of one fiction — and that to preserve her "true" self for Odysseus — one "story" which she tells again and again and never finishes, weaving and unweaving the fabric of Laertes' shroud, until Helen's story of herself, not that of Menelaus, becomes her very own.

The *Odyssey*, by virtue of its Penelope, can afford its Circes, Calypsos, Sirens, and Helens, whom Odysseus encounters in various ways. But the *Odyssey*, as the repertory of all stories, all fictions, adumbrates, even in the ambiguities of Odysseus himself, the ambivalence which Greek thought will manifest with increasing articulation towards the mimetic powers of the verbal and visual arts to persuade with the truths of their fictions. This ambivalence is not incongruent, at some level, with the increasing ambivalence with which the city's male ideology views its other gender, an attitude which serves to connect the feminine still more closely with art and artifice.[40] Thus the two Helens, the daughter of Zeus and the fictive *eidolon*, might exemplify in the erotic sphere the hesitation in the aesthetic domain between an art that is divinely inspired and a craft

that makes counterfeits of the real.[41] But while the *eidolon* can be separated from the real Helen as an insubstantial likeness of herself, as no more than a figment of the imagination, the *eidolon* as a seductive *objet d'art* cannot be separated from the generic image of the feminine. For the "real" woman could be defined as a "real" *eidolon*, created as such from the beginning in the person of the first woman, Pandora.

Instead of the ambiguity maintained in the dual genealogy of Helen as mortal and divine, Pandora is from the outset, in Hesiod's text of the *Theogony*, a fictive object, a copy, not an original. Fashioned at the orders of Zeus as punishment for Prometheus' deceptive theft of celestial fire for men, the female is the first imitation and the counterpart to the first deception. She is endowed by the gods with the divine traits of beauty and adornment which conceal the bestial and thievish nature of her interior. Artefact and artifice herself, Pandora installs the woman as *eidolon* in the frame of human culture, equipped by her "unnatural" nature to seduce and enchant, to delight and deceive. More specifically, as has been argued, the origin of Pandora coincides in the text with the origin of language:

> Because of her symbolic function and, literally, because of her ornaments and flowers, her glamor and her scheming mind, Pandora emblematizes the beginning of rhetoric; but at the same time she also stands for the rhetoric of the beginning. For she is both the 'figure' of the origin and the origin of the 'figure' — the first being invested with symbolic, referential elements. The text implies both the human dawn unmarked by imitation and rhetoric and a turning point that initiates the beautiful, imitative rhetorical process. In this way, the text reproduces the split between a language identical to reality and a language imitative of reality.[42]

This reading of Pandora is suggested by the implicit terms of the text, for rhetoric in Hesiod's time (c. 700 B.C.) has not yet been invented. But his negative view of Pandora, which arises naturally from his peasant's instrumental view of nature and culture, can still serve as a preview of the later philosophical thought which, in testing the world of physical appearances, finds it deceptive precisely in the spheres of physical eros and of artistic mimesis, and very specifically in the art of rhetoric itself.

It should therefore not surprise us that Gorgias, the historical figure most closely identified with the development of rhetorical

theory in fifth-century Athens, should, in fact, have composed an encomium on Helen which is as much a defense of his art of the *logos* as it is a defense of Helen. I invoke this last example to return, after this long detour, to the text and context of Aristophanes, since Gorgias is very much present, I suspect, in the *Thesmophoriazousae*, and not only as the possible garbled reference to him by the barbarian policeman who confuses Gorgon with Gorgias. For the *Palamedes* and the *Helen*, while they serve, of course, as parodies of Euripides' plays, are also titles of the two specimens of Gorgias' epideictic oratory in which the rhetorician himself speaks for Helen and Palamedes speaks in his own defense. More broadly, Gorgias' theories owe much to the theater — to the psychological effects which it produces in the spectators and in the aesthetic effects which it employs.

Gorgias, having accepted the premise that the phenomenal world cannot be grasped as real, is free to embrace the shifting world of appearances, of *doxa* (opinion), in its deceptions and its fictions, and hence is also in a position to embrace Helen. The mastery of that world can only come about through the installation of the *logos* as its master, which, through the techniques of persuasion, manipulates the sense impressions and emotions of its auditors. For Plato, who is to stand directly on the other side of the divide, Gorgias (as the other sophists) will, like a painter, "make imitations which have the same names as the real things and which can deceive . . . at a distance". The sophists, who practice not the plastic arts, but those of the *logos*, can exhibit "spoken images (*eidola*) of all things, so as to make it seem that they are true and that the speaker is the wisest of all men in all things." (Pl. *Sophist* 234b–c).

For Gorgias, the *logos* is real, akin to a physical substance and possessing the magico-medical quality of the *pharmakon*. Hence its power (*dynamis*), like that "of the incantation, mingles together with the *doxa* (opinion) of the *psyche* and charms it and persuades it and changes it by enchantment". The force of persuasion, when added to the *psyche*, can make an impression, can stamp (*typos*) the *psyche* which responds, in turn, to its manipulation with the appropriate emotions. Persuasion of the *logos* affects the *psyche* of the one who hears; similarly, sight (*opsis*) affects the *psyche* of the one who sees, "stamping (*typos*) it with its sensations of objects", "engraving in the mind the images of the things one sees", if fearful causing fear, if beautiful, bringing pleasure, "like the sculpting of statues and production of images which afford the eyes divine delight; thus some things naturally please or pain the sight, and many things produce in many men love and desire for many actions or bodies".[43]

Gorgias' defense of Helen reverses the image of the seductive and deceptive woman by portraying a Helen overmastered by irresistible forces whether by the gods, by physical violence, by the persuasion of the *logos*, or by the power of *eros*. It is here that *opsis* (sight) enters into the discourse in order to propose a theory of *eros* and Gorgias can therefore query: "If Helen's eye was so entranced by Alexander's (Paris') body, and she delivered up her soul to an eager contest of love, what is so strange in that?" Since the entire discourse is a *logos* which is meant to persuade, the demonstration within the piece of the persuasive power of the *logos* gives the *logos* the dominant position in the piece. As the *megas dynastes*, the *logos* even proves to overmaster the other categories whose indisputable claims to power it appropriates for itself.

Stesichorus' and Euripides' excuse of the *eidolon* has, of course, no place in Gorgias' argument. But the aesthetics of the image remain, now interiorized within the body as the *psyche* which *logos* or *opsis* molds, as an artist shapes and molds his product. The *psyche*, in turn, responds to the physical body whose visual impressions it receives as a spectator who gazes upon an object of art. By treating the *psyche* as a corporeal entity and in endowing *opsis* and *logos* with physical properties, Gorgias introduces a set of tactile relations that somatizes psychology as it psychologizes aesthetics. *Opsis* is already invoked in the cause of *eros*, but *logos* behaves like *eros*, which takes possession of another's body to penetrate its interior and to work its effects. The relation between rhetor and auditor, therefore, is not unlike that between a man and a woman, even as the writing tablet, as Artemidorus tells us, signifies a woman to the dreamer, "since it receives the imprints (*typoi*) of all kinds of letters." (*Oneirocritica* 2. 45). Thus if Helen is the subject of the discourse, she is also the object within it. She is the auditor,who, seduced and persuaded by the deceptive rhetoric of Paris, is re-seduced (and therefore exonerated) by the rhetoric of Gorgias who claims as the *truth* of his discourse the

demonstration of the power of rhetoric to *seduce* and *deceive*. For the outside auditor, the artful beauty of the text, with its persuasive *logos* about persuasion, operates as the rhetorical equivalent of the godlike beauty of Helen, which Gorgias mentions at the beginning of the text, to describe its irresistible erotic effect upon the suitors who came to her from all parts of Greece.

Moreover, the seduction of this *logos* works a double pleasure of the text — for the auditors it masters within and without the discourse — and for Gorgias himself, which he acknowledges when he concludes: "This speech is a plaything (*paignion*) for me, but an encomium for Helen", who, in his terms, is worthy not only of defense but also of praise. This ending explains perhaps best of all the choice of Helen for his discourse, beyond that of an unpopular case which he wishes to win by his rhetorical skill. Helen, as the paradigm of the feminine, is the ideal subject/object of the discourse; first, in sexual terms, as the passive partner to be mastered by masculine rhetorical persuasion, and second, in aesthetic terms. Helen, as the mistress of mimesis and the object of mimesis, is a fitting participant in the world of make-believe, the anti-world which reverses the terms in mimetic display and reserves the right under the name of play to take everything back. Seduction, like rhetoric, is a game, a *paignion*, and both *eros* and *logos* are now invested with a new power that is precisely the power of play, a delight in the aesthetic capacity to seduce and deceive. This point of view, I would submit, must inevitably invoke and rehabilitate the feminine whom Greek thought represents as the subject/object of eros (nature) and artifice (culture). In her corporeal essence, she functions both as the psychological subject and as the aesthetic object, and the artist needs her to substantiate his own conception of his art.

Thus for both Gorgias and Euripides, the woman has a place, a place that the end of the fifth century makes for her more and more to Aristophanes' comic chagrin: and this, from two points of view First, in the domain of art itself which is discovering a sense of its capacities for mimesis as an explicit category of the fictive, of the make-believe. This discovery takes place in the various verbal arts which, in turn, are influenced by the earlier advances in illusionist painting. In this development which includes the other plastic arts,

theater too played no small role, as Aristophanes' play itself attests. Second, in the social world, as the war dragged on to its unhappy close, attention began to shift away from masculine values of politics to the private sphere — to the domestic milieu at home, to the internal workings of the psyche, and to a new validation of eros, all of which the feminine as a cultural category best exemplifies. This new focus will receive further emphasis in the next century with the emergence in sculpture of the female nude as an art form and in the literary genres of New Comedy, mime, romance, and pastoral. It is worth remarking here that Old Comedy comes to an end with Aristophanes whose last productions already make the transition to Middle Comedy, while Euripides, who scandalized his Athenian audiences again and again, winning only four first prizes in his lifetime, will become the theatrical favorite of the next era and thereafter.

In this "feminization" of Greek cultuure, Euripides was, above all, a pioneer, and so Aristophanes perhaps correctly perceived that Euripides' place was indeed with the women (as that of Socrates in the *Clouds* was with the men). In a second *Thesmophoriazousae*, which is lost to us except for a few fragments and testimonia, the same cast of characters (more or less) seem to have been involved (Agathon, Euripides, Mnesilochus). This time, our information (from an ancient life of Euripides, which seems to refer to this piece) states explicitly that the women because of the censures he passed on them in his plays, attacked him at the Thesmophoria with murderous intent; but they spared him, first because of the (his) Muses, and next, on his undertaking never to abuse them again. These Muses are perhaps still to be found in the play we have, hidden behind the noisy laughter of Aristophanic parody.

Notes

1. For this term, see Natalie Davis' "Women on Top" in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford 1975) 124–51. More generally, I am indebted to the members of the Aristophanes seminar at Princeton University, Spring 1980, who contributed more to this essay than I can acknowledge here.
2. Excellent work is now being produced on the *Lysistrata* and the *Ecclesiazousae*. See the studies of Michèle Rosellini, Suzanne Saïd, and

Danièle Auger in *Les Cahiers de Fontenay* (*Aristophane: Les femmes et la cité*) 17 (December 1979): 11–32, 33–70, 71–102, respectively. See also Nicole Loraux, "L'Acropole comique" in *Les enfants d'Athéna. Idées athéniennes sur la citoyenneté et la division des sexes*, in press (Paris 1981), and Helene Foley, "The Female Intruder Reconsidered: Women in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* and *Ecclesiazousae*", forthcoming in *Classical Philology* (1982). For a historian's view, see E. Lévy, "Les femmes chez Aristophane", *Ktema* 1 (1976) 99–112.

3. For example, Rosemary Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism Before Plato* (London 1969) devotes half a page to one passage from the *Thesmophoriazousae* and Bruno Snell makes no mention of the play at all in his chapter, "Aristophanes and Aesthetic Criticism", in *The Discovery of the Mind: The Greek Origins of European Thought*, tr. T. Rosenmeyer (Cambridge, Mass. 1953), 113–35.

4. There is virtually no extended treatment of this play as a play. Cedric Whitman comes the closest with half a chapter in *Aristophanes and the Comic Hero* (Cambridge, Mass. 1964) 216–27, which generally takes a negative view of the play: "the parody here is without venom, and the plot, or fantasy, is without reference to very much beyond its own inconsequential proposition . . . The art of tragedy is shown to be on the wane, but any deeper implications that might have been involved in that fact are saved for the *Frogs*." 217. For him the play has "little of the theme of fertility or life", 216, and, continuing in this vein, he says: "Somehow . . . femininity, whether real or assumed, is under a somewhat morbid cloud; by contrast, there is something genuinely refreshing about the masculinity of Mnesilochus, however coarse, and of the Scythian archer, whose main male attribute plays an unblushing role in the solution of the play." 224. Hardy Hansen, "Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae*: Theme, Structure, and Production", *Philologus* 120 (1976) 165–85, follows Whitman's interpretation, but pays attention to matters of theatrical presentation. He is the only critic, as far as I know, who sees the importance of the Thesmophoria as a setting in the play, but, unfortunately, does not seem aware of the structures and functions of ancient cult.

5. On paratragodia, see R. Rau, *Paratragodia. Untersuchung einer komischen Form des Aristophanes* (Munich 1967) with appropriate bibliography. For other forms of parody, see, W. Horn, *Gebet und Gebetsparodie in den Komödien des Aristophane* (Nurnberg 1970), and A.M. Komornicka, "Quelques remarques sur la parodie dans les comédies d'Aristophane", *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 3 (1967) 51–74.

6. The parabasis is a peculiar and distinctive feature of Old Comedy, a section of about 100 lines (when complete), in which the chorus can break the dramatic illusion and address the audience directly on topical matters of the day. In the *Thesmophoriazousae*, the parabasis is actually integrated into the action insofar as the chorus remains the women at the festival and responds to the themes of the play. The parabasis will be discussed in more detail below. For a brief summary of the complex formal structure of the parabasis, see K.J. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1972) 49–53.

7. All line numbers of the *Thesmophoriazousae* will be cited from the Budé text, *Aristophane*, vol. 4, ed. Victor Coulon (Paris 1954).

8. Cf. the interchange between Aeschylus and Euripides in the *Frogs*, where Aeschylus reproaches the other for having put on stage Phaedras and Sthenoboias who behaved like whores (*pornai*, 1043). "And how did my Sthenoboias harm the city?" inquires Euripides. "By persuading noble wives of noble men to drink hemlock because they were so ashamed by your Bellerophons", replies Aeschylus. "But", asks Euripides, "didn't I tell a true story about Phaedra?" "Yes, indeed, but the poet must conceal what is wicked and not introduce or teach/produce (*didaskein*) such things . . . but only the good" (1049–56).

9. On connections of the comic plot with Euripidean patterns, see C. Russo, *Aristofane, autore di teatro* (Florence 1962), 297, Rau, *Paratragodia*, 50, and "Das Tragödienspiel in den 'Thesmophoriazusen' " in *Aristophanes und die alte Komödie, Wege der Forschung*, vol. 265, ed. H.-J. Newiger (Darmstadt 1975) 349. On the importance of the motif of salvation in Euripidean drama, see Antonio Garzya, *Pensiero e tecnical drammatica in Euripide: Saggio sul motivo della salvazione* (Naples 1962).

10. See Russo, 297.

11. For a discussion of mimesis in antiquity with bibliography, see G. Sorbōm, *Mimesis and Art* (Uppsala 1966). See also J.-P. Vernant, "Image et apparence dans la théorie platonicienne de la *mimésis*", *Journal de Psychologie* 2 (1975) 133–60. (= *Religions, histoires, raisons*, "Naissances d'images", 105–37, Paris 1979.) For useful surveys of aesthetic theory and criticism before Plato, see Herriott and also T.B.L. Webster, "Greek Theories of Art and Literature Down to 400 B.C.", *Classical Quarterly* 33 (1939) 166–79.

12. Critics miss the point of this confusion, especially R. Cantarella, "Agatone e il prologo della 'Tesmoforiazuse' ", in *Komoidotragemata* (Amsterdam 1967) 7–15, who is most often cited on this prologue, and who imagines that since Agathon is effeminate, he is somehow no longer a male.

    It should be noted that poets, beginning with Thespis, did, in fact, act in their own plays in the earlier years of the Greek theater before acting became a more professional specialty. Aeschylus most probably did so and Sophocles also in the beginning of his career. See Sir Arthur Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, 2d ed., rev. J. Gould and D.M. Lewis (Oxford 1968) 93–94.

13. "Feminine power is by nature abnormal . . . but this abnormality can take two forms which are rigorously opposed to each other and involve either a *virilization of women*, if women are adapting themselves to the nature of power, or, on the contrary, a *feminization of power*, if the women adapt power to their own nature and put the domestic domain over the political one." Saïd, 36.

14. We may remember that obscene, *ob-scaenum*, in its usual etymology, means "off stage", i.e., off the "serious" stage.

15. See now the excellent distinctions made by Sandra M. Gilbert, "Costumes of the Mind: Transvestism as Metaphor in Modern Literature", *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1980) 391–418.

16. For this formulation I am indebted to Susan Stewart, *Nonsense: Aspects of Intertextuality in Folklore and Literature* (Baltimore and London 1979) 20. I have profited from her work more than I can indicate in this essay.

17. I have borrowed this definition of parody from Margaret A. Rose, *Parody//*

Metafiction (London 1979) 185. In addition to Rose and Stewart, a very useful treatment of parody can be found in Claude Abastado, "Situation de la parodie", *Cahiers du 20e Siècle* 6 (1976) 9–37.

18. The *Telephus* has not survived except in fragments. For an extensive treatment see E.W. Handley and J. Rea, *The Telephus of Euripides, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplement* no. 5 (London 1957) and see also T.B.L. Webster, *The Tragedies of Euripides* (London 1967) 43–48.
19. On the *Telephus* in this play, see H.W. Miller, "Euripides' *Telephus* and the *Thesmophoriazousae* of Aristophanes", *Classical Philology* 43 (1948) 174–83 and Rau, *Paratragodia*, 42–50, and *Tragödienspiel*, 344–46.
20. For a reconstruction and interpretation of the *Palamedes*, which, like the *Telephos*, is known to us from fragments and other testimonia, see now Ruth Scodel, *The Trojan Trilogy of Euripides, Hypomnemata* vol. 60 (Göttingen 1980). For the parodic treatment of Aristophanes, see Rau, *Paratragodia*, 51–53, and *Tragödienspiel*, 347–48.
21. On Euripides' Helen, see the excellent articles of Friedrich Solmsen, "*Onoma* and *Pragma* in Euripides' *Helen*", *Classical Review* 48 (1934) 119–21, Ann Pippin (Burnett), "Euripides' *Helen*: A Comedy of Ideas", *Classical Philology* 55 (1960) 151–63, Günther Zuntz, "On Euripides' *Helena*: Theology and Irony", in *Euripide, Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique* 6 (Geneva 1960) 201-27, Richard Kannicht, Introduction to *Euripides, Helena* (Heidelberg 1969) 2 vols. (edition and commentary), Christian Wolff, "On Euripides' *Helen*", *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 77 (1973) 61–84, and Charles Segal, "The Two Worlds of Euripides' *Helen*", *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 102 (1971) 553–614.
22. On the parody of the *Helen* in Aristophanes, see the technical analysis of Rau, *Paratragodia*, 53–65, and *Tragödienspiel*, 348–50. See also the useful discussion in Frances Muecke, "Playing with the Play: Theatrical Self-Consciousness in Aristophanes", *Antichthon* 11 (1977) 64–67.
23. Rau assumes in both of his analyses that all these significant motifs have dropped out of the parody, and concludes that Aristophanes is just playing for laughs at the lowest level of humor.
24. On Euripides' *Andromeda*, see Webster, 192–99, and the references in Rau, *Paratragodia*, 66, n. 111. For the parody itself, see Rau, *Paratragodia*, 66–89, and *Tragödienspiel*, 353–56. Rau sees this parody as redundant of the *Helen*, motivated solely by comic opportunism, not by dramaturgical need.
25. This rivalry is, in fact, attested in ancient texts. A fragment of Aristophanes' older contemporary, Kratinos, reads: " 'And who are you?', some clever theater goer may ask: 'some subtle quibbler, an idea-chaser, a euripidaristophanizer?' " (K fr. 307) and the scholiast to Plato's *Apology*, who quotes these lines, observes: "Aristophanes was satirized for imitating Euripides through his mockery of him". That same scholiast continues with a quotation from Aristophanes himself: "I use his rounded elegance of style, but make the thoughts less vulgar than his" (K fr. 471/ schol. *Plat.* Clark. 330 Bekker).
26. It should be mentioned that the reference to "Gorgo the scribe" may refer to another contemporary and not to the famous sophist, but Aristophanes

mentions Gorgias several times in his comedies and Plato's *Symposium*, 198c, contains a word play between Gorgias and Gorgon. See further B.B. Rogers, *The Thesmophoriazousae of Aristophanes* (London 1904) 119, commentary on l. 1102.

27. This link between invasion of domestic privacy and trespass against ritual piety can be supported from the text itself in still another way, so as to allow the women to make both charges when they complain of the negative effects which Euripides' plays have had upon their lives. Two women speak against Euripides, each with a different story. The first describes what has already been discussed in detail — suspicious husbands and curtailment of women's freedom. The second woman, however, asserts that she has lost her livelihood, that of selling garlands to the faithful, because Euripides has made characters who claim that gods do not exist (443–58).
28. On this point, see H. Kleinknecht, *Die Gebetsparodie in der Antike* (Stuttgart and Berlin 1937) 101 and Horn, 101–02.
29. Leo Salingar, *Shakespeare and the Traditions of Comedy* (Cambridge 1974) 94. Two new studies suggest that Dionysus himself in the *Bacchae* stages and directs the proceedings of the play from within, functioning both as a character within the drama and as the god of the theater. See Helene Foley, "The Masque of Dionysus", *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 110 (1980) 107–33, and Charles Segal, "Metatragedy: Art, Illusion, Imitation", forthcoming in *Dionysiac Poetics and the Bacchae* (Princeton 1982). The *Thesmophoriazousae* precedes the *Bacchae* by about seven years, a fact which provokes speculations as to the relationship of the tragedy to the comedy.
30. This opposition between Dionysiac and Demetrian modes is not as stable as I suggest for the purposes of this analysis, since any situation which places women "on top", even for legitimate cultic purposes, invokes the anxiety that women will do violence to men in the Bacchant or the Amazonian way. Two historical anecdotes, in fact, tell such a tale of men who infiltrated the mysteries of the Thesmophoria, one in Cyrene and the other in Laconia. See further, M. Detienne, "Violentes 'eugénies', en pleines Thesmophories: des femmes couvertes de sang", in M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, eds., *La cuisine du sacrifice en pays grec* (Paris 1979) 183–214.
31. Salingar, 104.
32. For Helen as the Korē, see J.-P. Guépin, *The Ritual Paradox* (Amsterdam 1968) 120–22, 128–33, 137–42. The motif is also treated by Wolff and Segal.
33. Strictly speaking, Pallas Athena has no place in the rites of the Thesmophoria, but it is entirely in keeping with the political orientation of Old Comedy that she have the pride of place as the virgin figure, par excellence, in the city. Similarly, the myth of the Thesmophoria involves a relationship between a mother and daughter (Demeter-Korē), but the women, in the parabasis, when they boast of their maternal function, refer to the hoplite sons they have borne for the city. I am indebted to Nicole Loraux for raising this issue.
34. On the nature and types of *aischrologia*, see Hanns Fluck, *Skurrile Riten in griechischen Kulten* (Endingen 1931). For further discussion of the issue within the social and cultural parameters of women's lives, see my piece, "Cultic

Models of the Female: Rites of Dionysus and Demeter", forthcoming in *Arethusa*, Spring 1981.

35. On Stesichorus (and especially in relation to Euripides' *Helen*), see the discussion with bibliography in Kannicht, 26–41. Some recently discovered papyri suggest the possibility of a second palinode, but Kannicht persuasively argues for one.

36. We learn from ancient testimony that in Stesichorus' version, Tyndareus, the father of Helen and Clytemnestra, had forgotten to sacrifice to Aphrodite while giving worship to other gods. The goddess, angered by his neglect, predicted that his daughters would be twice-wedded (*digamoi*) and thrice-wedded (*trigamoi*), i.e. that they would experience an excess of Aphrodite to compensate for their father's underestimation of the goddess and her power. The slander of Helen, then, perhaps lay in the lubricious sexuality attributed to her, a trait which now belonged to her by "nature", as it were, rather than to the circumstantial facts of the myth itself. See further, Kannicht, 39–41.

Euripides himself may be said to have composed a "palinode" when he offered a second version of the *Hippolytus* in circumstances which resembled those of Stesichorus. The first *Hippolytus* (known to us from fragments and other evidence) caused a scandal in Athens because of its shameless Phaedra, to whom Aristophanes, in fact, refers in the *Thesmophoriazousae* and in the *Frogs* (see note 8). In response, Euripides revised his representation of Phaedra to that of a noble woman who struggles heroically to suppress the fatal passion with which Aphrodite has afflicted her.

Stesichorus' blindness may be a "sacralized" version of Euripides' violation of literary decorum. Blindness is a punishment for mortal men who mingle with goddesses or who view them naked at their bath, but blindness is also an attribute of poets and prophets.

37. L.L. Clader, *Helen: The Evolution from Divine to Heroic in Greek Epic Tradition* (Leiden 1976) 8.

38. Helen's skill may be compared with that of the Delian maidens whose extraordinary talents are related to us by the Homeric Hymn to Apollo: "And there is this great wonder besides — and its renown shall never perish — the girls of Delos, hand-maidens of the Farshooter (Apollo); for when they have praised Apollo first, and also Leto and Artemis . . . (i.e., sacred hymns), they sing a song calling to mind men and women who lived long ago (i.e., epic) and thus they charm the tribes of men. Also they can imitate the tongues of all humankind (*anthropoi*) and their chattering speech. Each one would say that he himself were uttering the sound, so well is the beautiful song fitted to them." (*HH Ap.* 156–64). The mythic Echo is relevant here, especially the version of her relationship to Pan (Longus 3. 23). See the interesting feminist discussion of Echo by Caren Greenberg, "Reading Reading: Echo's Abduction of Language", in S. McConnell-Ginet *et al.*, eds. *Women and Language in Culture and Society* (New York 1980) 300–09.

39. For two excellent but different treatments of these stories, see Roselyne Dupont-Roc and Alain Le Boulluec, "Le charme du récit", in *Ecriture et théorie poétiques* (Paris 1976) 30–39, and Ann L.T. Bergren, "Helen's 'Good Drug', *Odyssey* iv 1–305", *Contemporary Literary Hermeneutics and the Interpretation of Classical Texts*, ed. Stephen Kresic (University of Ottawa Press 1981) 201–14.

40. Space does not allow a more detailed discussion of the ambiguities of persuasion and the *logos* in connection with the feminine and with *eros*. See further, P.L. Entralgo, *The Therapy of the Word in Classical Antiquity*, ed. and tr. L.J. Rather and J.M. Sharp (New Haven and London 1970) 51–69, M. Detienne, *Les maîtres de vérité dans la Grèce archaïque* (Paris 1973) 51–80, and L. Kahn, *Hermès ou les ambiguités de la communication* (Paris 1978) 119–64. For art and literature, see also J. Svenbro, *La parole et le marbre: aux origines de la poétique grecque* (Lund 1976), and Zoe Petre, "Une âge de la représentation — artifice et image dans la pensée grecque du VI^e Av. N.E.", *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire* 2 (1979) 245–57.

41. The more perjorative notion of art as a counterfeit imitation of the real owes more, of course, to Platonic aesthetic theories. Craft includes and even gives first priority to artisanal skill. But this is a category which is not without its ambiguities for Greek thought in which the artistic product is far more admired than the artist who produces it. Poetry claimed a higher status than representational art, but greater consciousness of the poet as *poiētēs* (maker) introduces comparisons with artisanal activity. The *Thesmophoriazousae* itself reproduces, in fact, the two opposing notions of poetic composition in its comic presentation of Agathon, where the sacred, as discussed above, is juxtaposed with technical terms drawn from the more homely métiers (52–57).

42. P. Pucci, *Hesiod and the Language of Poetry* (Baltimore and London 1977) 100–01.

43. Citations from Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, fr. 11 in Diels-Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, vol. 2 (Dublin and Zurich 1966) 288–94. Relevant work on Gorgias includes M. Untersteiner, *The Sophists*, tr. K. Freeman (Oxford 1954) 101–201, T. Rosenmeyer, "Gorgias, Aeschylus, and *Apate* (Deceit)", *American Journal of Philology* 76 (1955) 225–60, Charles Segal, "Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos", *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 66 (1962) 99–155, J. de Romilly, "Gorgias et le pouvoir de la poésie", *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 93 (1973) 155–62, and relevant sections in Entralgo and Detienne.