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### An Exemplary Heroine in the Hippolytos

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## An Exemplary Heroine in the *Hippolytos*

τὰ δὲ ἐς τὴν Πρόκριν  
καὶ οἱ πάντες φέδουσιν.

Pausanias 10.29.6

In this paper I examine the link between cultic and dramatic heroes, and more particularly the status of cult heroes as exemplary figures for protagonists in tragedy. A hero in ancient Greek cultural terms is a human being who becomes heroized after death, a figure of cult, that is, who requires worship and sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> Heroes are also central to epic and tragedy, yet because of the local nature of hero cults, heroes' status as objects of worship is rarely explicit in poetry. Poets typically avoid references to particular local practices, and focus instead on the figure of the hero before his or her heroization, telling their deeds and remembering their lives. This is also true of tragedy, which rarely alludes to the cultic status of its protagonists, and usually depicts them before their transformation into cultic beings.<sup>2</sup> In this paper I explore allusions to cultic figures in Euripides' *Hippolytos*. Euripides foregrounds Phaidra's tragedy by contrasting her to cult heroines throughout the play: the chorus alludes to Iole (and hence Deianeira) and Semele. Yet, it is another heroine, I suggest, who is the role model for Phaidra:<sup>3</sup> another tragic wife, local figure of cult in Attica, who betrays and is betrayed and eventually killed by her husband, the Athenian cult heroine Prokris.

<sup>1</sup> For a survey of heroes in the broader context of Greek religion, see Burkert (1985) 3, see also 203-213.

<sup>2</sup> On the ways in which epic can implicitly refer to hero cults, see Nagy (1979) 9-11; Nagy (2001) XV-XXXV. A striking exception is Oedipus, who is portrayed as both still alive and a figure of cult in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*. On this and other few exceptions when a hero is depicted as both alive and a figure of cult, see Pache (2004) 4-5. By contrast, the cult for Hippolytos in Euripides' play is mentioned before the hero's death, but Artemis makes it clear that the cult will only be established after his death.

<sup>3</sup> The notion of Phaidra herself as a model for Hippolytos, and the subsequent reversal of the male's story becoming a model for the female, has been explored by Zeitlin (1996) 219-284. For the role of heroines as exemplary, see Lyons (1996) 35-42.

Early in Euripides' *Hippolytos*, the nurse attempts to comfort Phaidra by comparing her situation to that of heroes from the past:

ὄσοι μὲν οὖν γραφάς τε τῶν παλαιτέρων  
 ἔχουσιν αὐτοὶ τ' εἰσὶν ἐν μοῦσαις ἀελ  
 ἴσσοι μὲν Ζεὺς ὡς ποτ' ἠρόσθη γάμων  
 Σεμέλης Ἴσσαι δ' ὡς ἀνήρπασέν ποτε  
 ἢ καλλιφεγγῆς Κέφαλον ἐς θεοὺς Ἔως  
 ἔρωτος οἴνεκ'· ἀλλ' ὁμως ἐν οὐρανῷ  
 ναῖουσι κοῦ φεύγουσιν ἐκτοδῶν θεοὺς  
 στέργουσι δ'· οἴμαι, συμφορᾷ νικώμενοι.

Now those who know the *graphai* [depictions?] of the ancients and themselves are constantly engaged in poetry, they know how Zeus once desired a union with Semele, and they know how beautiful-shining Eos once snatched Kephalos up into the company of the gods, because of love; but still they dwell in heaven and do not flee out of the way of the gods, but they endure, I think, with being conquered by misfortune.

Eur. *Hipp.* 451-458

As many have pointed out, the examples the nurse chooses are problematic at best: should Phaidra identify with the mortals or the gods involved? With Semele or with Eos? The nurse praises the gods' endurance, but Phaidra has none of their divine options (indeed the nurse is just about to betray her confidence and bring about her ruin), and the two human lovers hardly provide good models to follow since their love affair with a god is a prelude to their destruction and eventual heroization (or apotheosis in the case of Semele).<sup>4</sup> While the nurse evokes these stories as examples and predecessors for Phaidra, the allusion also raises interesting questions about the relationship between poetry and cult.

We might assume that the two myths the nurse uses to comfort Phaidra were commonly known by Euripides' audience, yet she describes them as the special province of »those who have or know the depictions of the ancients, and who themselves are constantly engaged in poetry.« The central problem of this passage lies in the meaning of *graphai* and *en mousais*. I use »depictions« as my working translation of *graphai*, in order to reflect the

<sup>4</sup> Goff (1990) 91.

ambiguity of the Greek term, which can refer to either writing or painting<sup>5</sup>. This phrase is difficult to interpret and it also encapsulates fundamental questions about the ways in which heroes' stories are remembered and told.

In his commentary on Euripides' play, Barrett translates the phrase as »All those who have the writings of those of old and are themselves ever concerned with poetry.« He argues that the nurse thus specifically refers to »written works as a source of what one might have thought to be popular knowledge.« To him, those who own books are essentially readers who are by definition interested in all things poetic. This emphasis on books and readers leads him to conclude that the stories of Semele and Zeus, and of Eos and Kephalos were not widely known in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, a suggestion that can easily be disproved by looking at the literary and archaeological evidence, as I will do briefly below. Barrett also considers the possibility that *graphai* might refer to paintings, especially vase-paintings, but rejects this explanation because the reference to *τῶν παλαιτέρων* seems more appropriate to poets than to painters.<sup>6</sup> Barrett thus understands the sentence as emphatic – those who both literally own the writings of those of old in the form of books and who are themselves concerned with poetry as readers. Sommerstein takes issue with Barrett's interpretation and notes that the »*te ... τε*« construction indicates that the nurse characterizes these people in two different ways. Sommerstein sees a contrast between the first half of the statement, »those who own books« and the second half, αὐτοὶ τ' εἰσὶν ἐν μοῦσαις, which he understands as »those who compose poetry« with *autoi* linking the new poets with those of old (*palaieteroi*) »whose books they possess«. Are those who read and compose poetry then the only ones who really know myths? Sommerstein dismisses this notion: the nurse, he argues, cites the poets not as the only source of information for these stories, but as guarantors of their truth.<sup>7</sup>

While both Barrett and Sommerstein argue for the authority of a tradition based on knowledge of written works, I understand *graphai* in a broader way, as »depictions« or »inscriptions« in the broad sense of the term, and

<sup>5</sup> Easterling (1985) 6 n. 26 argues that *graphē* here and at line 1005 refers to painting. See also McClure (1999) 137-8 argues that the word is ambiguous at 451 but refers exclusively to painting at 1005.

<sup>6</sup> Barrett (1964) 241-242.

<sup>7</sup> Sommerstein (1988) 29.

referring more particularly to visual representations of myths.<sup>8</sup> Despite the problem of interpreting the precise meaning of the nurse's words, there is another way to approach the question of how the nurses' examples would have been understood. The nurse may be naïve in her use of these particular stories as models for Phaidra, yet there is no doubt that both the stories of Zeus and Semele and of Eos and Kephalos must have been well-known to the audience. Athenians would have known these myths through a variety of local traditions, including poetry, cult vase-paintings, and sculpture on monuments – in short, they would have had the kind of comprehensive understanding of the myth that eludes the nurse.

Above I suggested that the nurse's examples raise interesting questions about the relationship of poetry and cult. The nurse mentions two liaisons between mortals and immortals, which both evoke spectacularly unsuccessful love affairs. Pindar already alludes to Semele's trials, which were also the subject of a lost tragedy by Aeschylus.<sup>9</sup> Semele was also the object of several cults, including one centered on her bridal-chamber and tomb at Thebes, as well as in Troizen at the spot where Dionysos rescued her from the Underworld.<sup>10</sup> The two strands of the stories surrounding Kephalos, which we will examine in more detail below, make him a particularly interesting example for Euripides' *Phaidra*: while the nurse purportedly evokes an example of a successful love affair between a hero and a goddess, she also alludes to a story of marital unfaithfulness and betrayal leading to a wife's death, an allusion the more poetically inclined among the audience would have no doubt recognized. As the nurse points out, Kephalos is well-known as a lover of the goddess Eos. And indeed we find the story of Eos and Kephalos already in Hesiod's *Theogony*, where the poet makes clear the goddess's predilection for multiple partners (*Theogony* 984-991). When we

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, the distinction between written and visual sources made in Eur. *Ion* 265-271 where stories are described as being »told« or »depicted« *en graphêi*; for a discussion of this passage in terms of the difference between words and images, see Zeitlin (1994) 155.

<sup>9</sup> See Gantz (1993) 473-478.

<sup>10</sup> Semele's bridal-chamber; see Paus. 9.12.3; tomb; Paus. 9.16.7; a temple and altar at the place where Dionysos rescued Semele from Hades in Paus. 2.31.2. Semele was also the recipient of cult at a festival in Delphi, the *Herois*, which commemorated her return from the Underworld, Plut. *Quaest. Gr.* 12. 203c-d. The scholia to Ar. *Ran.* 479 alludes to a cult of Semele at the Lenaia, and Semele also receives a goat sacrifice according to the calendar of Erchia; see Kearns (1989) 197. See also Lyons (1996) 47, 48, and 116.

turn to Homeric epic, we find other lovers: Tithonos, Kleitos, and Orion, but no mention of Kephalos. Yet, despite Homer's silence, Kephalos's presence in the catalogue of goddesses at the end of the *Theogony* establishes that he is already a traditional lover of Eos in the archaic period.<sup>11</sup> We also find the story of Eos and Kephalos in post classical sources, such as Apollodoros' *Library*, Antoninus Liberalis' *Metamorphoses*, and Hyginus's *Fabulae*, three mythographers who could be described as *en mousais*, or »concerned with poetry.« In Apollodoros, we learn that Eos's promiscuity is a consequence of Aphrodite's anger and jealousy at Eos sleeping with Ares (*Library* 1.4.4). Apollodoros also tells the story of Eos falling in love with and carrying off Tithonos, as well as Kephalos.

In Attica, Kephalos was not only a figure of the mythic past, but a local cult figure still very much present, as I will show below, in the civic landscape. Kephalos would also have been familiar to the Athenian theater audience as the eponymous hero of the *genê* of the *Kephalidai*. We also know that Eos and Kephalos were extremely popular on Attic vases in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. We find a few examples of Kephalos alone, but the vast majority of depictions shows him alongside Eos, and, of all the representations of »Heterosexual Pursuits and Abductions« catalogued by Andrew Stewart, Eos and her lovers are by far the most popular.<sup>12</sup> Stewart and others convincingly show that such images can help reveal cultural assumptions about gender and sexuality. Stewart, for example, argues that these representations are »male fantasies, produced by and mainly for men in the context of the symposium« and »masculine wish fulfillment.«<sup>13</sup> Vase paintings sho-

<sup>11</sup> Archaic poets are sensitive to the contexts in which the story of Eos and her lovers appear, and different catalogues are used to stress different aspects of the motif: when Aphrodite herself, for example, lists the lovers of Eos in the *Homer's Hymn to Aphrodite*, her catalogue is particularly appropriate to the circumstances: she evokes the Trojans Ganymede and Tithonos, both objects of desire for the gods, and she emphasizes their family connection with Anchises, the mortal whom she wants to seduce.

<sup>12</sup> See Stewart (1995) 87 table 1. »Divine pursuits and abductions«; there are, for example, 76 vases from between 500 and 400 BC showing Eos and Kephalos while there are only 19 depictions of Zeus and Europa; there are 49 representations of Zeus with an unidentified woman, 6 of Zeus and Aigina, and 1 of Zeus and Io for the same period. Tithonos is at his most popular between 475 and 425 BC, while Kephalos takes the lead in 450-425 BC; for survey of secondary literature on rape and abduction scenes, see 78-79. See also Kaempf-Dimitriadou (1979) 81-109, who also notes that there is a surprising abundance of images of Eos and her lovers – more than any other god, male or female. On the iconography of Kephalos, see also Simon (1990) and Simantoni-Bournia in LIMC s.v. »Kephalos«.

<sup>13</sup> See Stewart (1995) 74, 84.

wing Eos and Kephalos fall into two broad categories, which we can describe as pursuit and abduction. The first focuses Eos's pursuit of Kephalos, who is depicted as averse to the goddess's attention, as on a krater at the Cabinet des Médailles from around 450 BC, where Kephalos is shown in full flight.<sup>14</sup> The second category focuses on the moment of success as it were when the goddess carries off her lover in her arms.<sup>15</sup> While these images make sense in terms of Stewart's analysis of their social function, images of Eos and her lovers were not confined to the domestic setting of the symposium. Eos and Kephalos were also popular as a subject for sculptors, and the couple was very much part of the civic and cultic landscape at Athens and elsewhere in the Greek world. Adorning civic and religious buildings, Eos and her lover are often seen in conjunction with other well-known heroic scenes.

Eos and Kephalos are found depicted on buildings and monuments in Athens and elsewhere in the Greek world, and these depictions invariably privilege the moment of abduction. For example, Pausanias describes a building in the agora, the *stoa basileios*, where the king sits when he is in office, which is decorated with terracotta images of Theseus throwing Skiron into the sea, and Hemera carrying off Kephalos, »whom they say was loved and snatched away by Hemera because he was very beautiful«. <sup>16</sup> The story of Theseus and Skiron is well-known from other sources; it is one of the many heroic deeds Theseus performs on his travels to reclaim his kingship in Athens, when he gets rid of a robber who is an affliction for the people of Megara. Thus on the *stoa basileios* Theseus' strength and courage is equated with Kephalos's beauty and his being snatched up by the goddess Hemera. According to Pausanias again, Kephalos snatched up by a goddess was also depicted on the Throne of Amyklai, dated to the second half of 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, which makes this the earliest instance of the motif. Here again,

<sup>14</sup> Krater, c. 450 BC, Paris, Cabinet des Médailles 423 (= *ARV<sup>2</sup>* 1035, 72), with Eos and Kephalos inscribed. There are many variations on this theme; see for example, the amphora in the Berlin museum (Berlin F 2352 = *ARV<sup>2</sup>* 1107, 1); cf. Kaempf-Dimitriadou (1979), cat. 104. Kephalos is also sometimes shown fighting Eos with a rock in his hand, as on a krater from the British Museum (Krater, c. 430 BC, London E 466).

<sup>15</sup> E.g. LIMC: 274, Cup, c. 430 BC, Berlin F 2537 (*ARV<sup>2</sup>* 1268, 2, 1269).

<sup>16</sup> Pausanias 1.3.1. It is difficult to know what to make of Pausanias' description of the goddess as Hemera – Hemera and Eos have distinctive genealogies in the *Theogony*, but the two goddesses do become assimilated already in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. See Nicholls (1970) 115–138 for plates. For excavation report, see Broadbent (1968) 253. See also Hill (1953) 41 ff., about fragments of terracotta depicting Kephalos and Eos.

as on the *stoa basileios* in Athens, the goddess is identified by Pausanias as Hemera, and the scene of the goddess abducting her mortal lover was shown side by side with other scenes depicting gods and heroes.<sup>17</sup> The couple of Eos and Kephalos is also a popular motif for temple decoration: we find it on a terracotta akroterion at the temple of Gaerc, on a terracotta relief from the sanctuary of Demeter Malophoros at Selinous, and on a relief from Gela.<sup>18</sup> Eos and Kephalos are also depicted on a marble akroterion from the Temple of the Athenians at Delos.<sup>19</sup> We have seen that Eos and Kephalos become popular on Attic vases in the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, and that they also are represented on civic buildings (such as the *stoa basileios*) as well as on temples, in Athens and elsewhere, starting in the late 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Yet we must also consider the religious dimension of these images, which have much to tell us about how the Greeks conceived of both their gods and their heroes: depictions of Eos and her lovers commemorate a moment of transformation when the goddess's love transforms her lover from mortal into hero. Kephalos becomes such a central figure in Athens and the Greek world because of his close bond with the goddess and his status as recipient of worship.

Those in tune with the local tradition would certainly have made the link between Eos and Kephalos, and the story of Kephalos and his wife Prokris, to which I now turn. The tale of Kephalos and Prokris in turn evokes a complex nexus of themes familiar to the Athenian audience: a goddess whose irrepressible desire leads to tragedy, a doomed marriage, and a love triangle that ends with the death of a wife. Although none of the extant literary sources link the myth of Eos and Kephalos with the story of Kephalos and Prokris before Apollodoros, we know from the scholia to Homer that Pherekydes (456 BC) already included the story of Kephalos and

<sup>17</sup> For discussion and various reconstructions of the throne of Amyklai, see Faustoferri (1996) 119–120, 242.

<sup>18</sup> Terracotta akroterion with Eos and Kephalos from Gaere, Berlin Staat. Mus. TC 6681.1, usually dated to the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC; see Bloch in LIMC (s.v. Thesan 29), who dates the akroterion to 550 or 530–520 BC. *Contra*, see Goldberg (1987), 606 who argues for 460–450 BC. Terracotta relief from sanctuary of Malophoros at Selinous, c. 500 BC. (Palermo, Mus. Reg.) Eos and Kephalos at Gela, ca. 500–475.

<sup>19</sup> On the marble akroterion from the Temple of the Athenians at Delos, c. 420 BC (Delos A4282), see Hermary (1984), who suggests that the two scenes of Eos and Kephalos on the west side, and Boreas and Oreithyia on the east side highlight Athenian heroes' special bond with the gods, perhaps to be understood in the context of Athens' imperialistic ambitions.

Prokris in his works in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>20</sup> The version recorded by the scholia, is a twisted form of the *Odyssey* paradigm: Kephalos decides to test his newlywed wife Prokris by leaving her for eight years while she is still a virgin (*eti numphên*). After eight years, he goes home in disguise and brings her jewelry. He persuades her to accept the gift and sleep with him, which she accepts to do on account of both the gift's beauty and the stranger's good looks. After they go to bed, Kephalos reveals himself to his wife and blames her for her infidelity. After this, he goes hunting often and Prokris suspects that he meets another woman. She asks one of the servants who tells her that he saw Kephalos on the top of a mountain repeating »O Nephela, come«. Prokris follows her husband to the mountain and hides, until she hears him call out and she runs to him. But, startled, Kephalos throws his spear and kills his wife. Then he calls for Erechtheus and gives Prokris a funeral. And this story, the scholia go on, is found in Pherekydes.<sup>21</sup>

The one element that is conspicuously absent from Pherekydes' account is the story of Kephalos's love affair with the goddess Eos, but a stay with the goddess could explain the eight-year long absence, and reflect Odysseus's seven-year long stay with Kalypso in the *Odyssey*; and at any rate, we know that the story of Eos's love for Kephalos, as we find it represented on vase paintings and monuments, was already inscribed on the Athenian landscape by the time of Pherekydes' *Histories*, much as the false story of Phaidra is inscribed in the *deltos* she attaches to her wrist before killing herself.<sup>22</sup> We have to turn to much later sources to fill in the blanks in Pherekydes' account.<sup>23</sup> Hyginus' *Fabula* 189 tells how Aurora sees Kephalos in the

<sup>20</sup> Apollodoros mentions that Kephalos was married to Prokris, the daughter of Erechtheus, and gives a different genealogy to the Kephalos who marries Prokris than to the one abducted by Eos (1.9.4). Some have argued that the link between the story of Eos and Kephalos and that of Prokris and Kephalos did not exist early on, e.g. Simantoni-Bournaia in LIMC s.v. Kephalos argues that the story of Eos and Kephalos »has been contaminated in later times with the myth of Prokris«. I disagree with this view.

<sup>21</sup> Ἡ δὲ ἱστορία παρὰ Φερέκυδην ἐν τῇ ζῆ. See K. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum* (FHG) 1, 1841-1870, 70-99; vol. 4, 639.

<sup>22</sup> See Loraux (1978) 51-57 on the notion of *graphê* as both painting and »trace de l'écriture«.

<sup>23</sup> Ovid also provides us with a Latin version of the events, but his version stresses the innocence of husband and wife in a way that reflects none of the extant Greek sources. See Segal (1978) 175, where he argues that »[w]hat in the Greek sources is a lascivious interplay of carefully balanced and symmetrical seductions becomes in Ovid, from whom we have our fullest version, a tale of high pathos and tragic misunderstanding«.

mountains and falls in love with him. Kephalos is a reluctant lover on account of his new wife, Prokris. Aurora suggests he test her fidelity, a test Prokris fails miserably as she is seduced by her own husband in disguise in Hyginus (or by a servant who bribes her with gold to sleep with a stranger in Antoninus Liberalis). She takes refuge in Crete where she becomes one of Artemis's companions, while in Antoninus Liberalis, we get a different version involving Minos's inability to have children because of a sexual dysfunction: ejaculating snakes, scorpions, and millipedes, Minos invariably kills the women he has intercourse with. Prokris is able to devise a cure (with a goat bladder used to collect the animals before Minos impregnates his wife Pasiphaë). In Antoninus Liberalis, Minos rewards Prokris for her help by giving her a spear and a dog that always reach their targets. In Hyginus, Artemis gives Prokris a spear that never misses and a dog, Lailaps (»Hurricane«), who never flees.

Antoninus Liberalis and Hyginus also differ on what happens next. In Hyginus, Prokris – disguised as a young man – goes back to Kephalos and challenges him to the hunt. Kephalos is so keen on obtaining the spear and the dog that he promises to give her anything she wants and even agrees to what he thinks will be a homosexual encounter. Prokris eventually discloses her real identity, gives him the spear and dog, and reconciles with her husband. But the story of course, does not end here. Prokris remains jealous of Dawn, and in a moment of suspicion, follows Kephalos and hides behind a bush. Kephalos hears a noise, and he throws the spear that never misses and kills his wife.

Now let us go back to Euripides and the nurse's choice of Eos and Kephalos as the example she uses to comfort Phaidra in the context of performance of the play in Athens. Those »who are themselves ever concerned with poetry«, to use Barrett's phrase, would also have remembered that in the underworld episode in *Odyssey* 11, Phaidra and Prokris appear side by side.<sup>24</sup> Prokris and Phaidra indeed were also linked in an actual painting (*graphê*): Polygnotos's *Nekyia* in the Knidians' *leskhe* in Delphi, where, according to Pausanias, the Delphians used to meet for both serious conversations as well as stories (*muthôdê*, 10.25). Polygnotos's painting in the

<sup>24</sup> Homer, *Odyssey* 11.321-322. Ariadne, Prokris and Phaidra, these »three unhappy heroines of Attic legend« who made Wilamowitz suspect an Athenian interpolation are the next to last group of heroines Odysseus meets in Hades; see Heubeck 1989 ad 321-5. On the iconography of Prokris, see Simon (1957) 36-42 and Simantoni-Bournaia in LIMC s.v. Prokris.

Knidians' *leskhē* does not survive, but we have Pausanias' detailed description.<sup>25</sup> The painting included episodes we know from the Homeric epics, such as the sack of Troy and Odysseus' visit to Hades, but it also included figures who do not appear in Homer. Pausanias mentions the poets Leskhos and Stesikhoros as the inspiration for some of Polygnotos's representations and adds that the painter must have come up with some of the characters and names he depicts on his painting (10.25-6). On the right as one enters the building, the sack of Troy was shown; on the left, the descent of Odysseus into Hades:



Figure 1. Polygnotos's *Nekyia*. Reconstruction of the north wall. (line drawing from Stansbury-O'Donnell 1990)

While Polygnotos was creating his own version of this episode, as Stansbury-O'Donnell argues, the *Odyssey* remains useful to explain some of the groupings in the painting.<sup>26</sup> On the north wall, we find the so-called heroines:<sup>27</sup> in the center of the lower level, Ariadne sits on a rock, watching towards the left of the painting, towards her sister Phaidra on a swing.

Pausanias remarks on the sight's beauty and sadness, with its evocation of Phaidra's death by hanging (10.29). After telling the various versions of Ariadne's story, Pausanias continues his description: Chloris and Thuis stand on the left of Phaidra, looking towards her; next is Prokris, Erechtheus's daughter, also looking towards Phaidra and standing back to back with Klymene, who married Kephalos after Prokris's death.<sup>28</sup> The story of Prokris. Pausanias adds, everybody sings (10.29.6). So well-known it is that Pausanias does not retell it here as he goes on to describe the rest of the women on the north wall, Megara the wife of Herakles, the daughter of Salmoneus, Tyro, and Eriphyle, who indeed are all well known for their own misfortunes.

All these heroines have rich genealogies and histories; each of them evokes a number of stories associated with them, and they also have interesting connections to each other. The heroines depicted on Polygnotos's painting, as well as the ones included in Odysseus's catalogue of heroines in *Odyssey* 11, are often flawed: victims of bribes and seduction, many of these women lied, betrayed, and caused much harm.<sup>29</sup> Yet, as others have pointed out, Odysseus plays down the negative aspects of the heroines' deeds. The same can be said of Polygnotos's *Nekyia*, where the heroines are not shown committing any of the wrongs they are associated with (with the exception, perhaps, of Eriphyle, whom Pausanias describes as having her hand under the fold of her dress, perhaps touching the necklace that is the cause of her betrayal).<sup>30</sup> Yet the heroines are included in these catalogues, visual or poetic, because of the tragic events that shaped their lives. Catalogues by definition have an exemplary function: heroines provide examples of behaviors. While Homer and Hesiod do not explicitly refer to the cult of these figures, we know that they also are the foci of cults across the Greek world.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Probably painted between 458 and 447 BC. I follow Stansbury-O'Donnell's reconstruction of Polygnotos's *Nekyia* and am much indebted to his study; see Stansbury-O'Donnell (1990) 213-235. See also Buxton (1994) 40-44 for discussion of this passage and the function of *leskhē*.

<sup>26</sup> Stansbury-O'Donnell (1990) 217-8, note 19.

<sup>27</sup> The heroines in Odysseus' catalogue are Tyro, Antiope, Alkmene, Megara, Epikasta, Chloris, Leda, Iphimedeia, Phaidra, Prokris, Ariadne, Maira, Klymene, and Eriphyle. Nine of the heroines on the north wall of Polygnotos's *Nekyia* overlap with the Homeric catalogue, with a tenth, Maira, depicted on the west wall.

<sup>28</sup> See Gantz (1993) 182. In the *Nostoi*, Kephalos was married to Klymene, fr. 5 PEG, while elsewhere in the epic cycle, Kephalos is married to Prokris, *Epic* fr. 5 PEG; as Pausanias records it, it might be a matter of marrying one after the other rather than conflicting stories. Gantz argues that this Kephalos, son of Deion, is a different figure from the Kephalos who is snatched up by Eos, although the two figures later become merged. It is clear from the account of Pherekydes and the iconography of Kephalos and Eos that, in Athens, the conflation between the two figures occurs early on. For more on the figure of Kephalos, see also Fontenrose (1981) 86-111.

<sup>29</sup> This is, of course, also true of male heroes, who in Greek cultural terms, do not have to be «good» to be considered heroes. See Pache (2004) 1-5.

<sup>30</sup> For Eriphyle's necklace, see Hom. *Od.* 11.326-327.

<sup>31</sup> On heroine cults, see Larson (1995) and Lyons (1996).

Euripides, I suggest, challenges the most sophisticated among his audience to make a link between the nurse's miniature catalogue of the gods' lovers and the eventual fate of Phaidra. The nurse's example of Eos and Kephalos implicitly evokes the story of Kephalos's wife, Prokris, a figure who is often paired, as we have seen, with Phaidra in poetry and visual sources.<sup>32</sup> When we turn back to Athens, we find that Prokris is named, alongside her husband, Kephalos, on the Thorikos calendar.<sup>33</sup>

Κεφ-  
άλωι οἶν κριτόν: Πρόκριδι τράπεζαν.

For Kephalos  
a choice sheep; for Prokris a table

Prokris thus becomes a figure of cult in Attica alongside her husband Kephalos. Whether or not, as some have suggested, Kephalos and Prokris were portrayed on the right hand corner of the west pediment of the Parthenon, the point remains that they both became important cult figures in Attica.<sup>34</sup>

Phaidra herself points to another link between the two heroines, when in a state of mental confusion, she longs to be in the places where Hippolytos spends his time, the meadow, the mountains and the beach. As Barrett notes, she expresses her wish in lyric form, as she imagines herself going to the mountain:<sup>35</sup>

πέμπετέ μ' εἰς ὄρος· εἶμι πρὸς ἕλαν  
καὶ παρὰ πεύκας, ἵνα θηροφόνοι  
στείβουσι κύνες  
βωλιαῖς ἐλάφοις ἐγχρημιτόμεναι.  
πρὸς θεῶν ἔραμαι κισοὶ θωύξαι  
καὶ παρὰ χαιταν ξανθὰν ῥύψαι  
Θεσσαλὸν ὄρακ'· ἐπιλογχὸν ἔχοισ'  
ἐν χειρὶ βέλος.

<sup>32</sup> Sophocles wrote a tragedy *Prokris*, dated to 460 BC. *TGf* 4 F 533. Sophocles also wrote a *Phaidra*, of unknown date, perhaps between the two *Hippolytos* of Euripides. Prokris is also mentioned in Euripides' *Hippolyte* (Liv. 1-9), dated to 407 BC; see Bond (1963).

<sup>33</sup> The calendar is dated to from c. 440-430 BC. See Daux (1983) 150-174. See also Kearns (1989). A votive relief from c. 440 BC may also depict Kephalos as a hero receiving an offering (Athens Nat. Mus. 1460).

<sup>34</sup> Figures V and W on the west pediment. This suggestion was made in 1930; see Lethaby (1930) 4-19; cf. Brommer (1963). See also Palagia (1993) 50 note 190.

<sup>35</sup> Phaidra speaks in anapaests, but uses the lyric *σ* instead of the Attic *ρ* throughout this speech; see Barrett (1964) 200-201.

Bring me to the mountains! I *will* go to the mountains!  
Among the pine trees where the huntsmen's pack  
trails spotted stags and hangs upon their heels.  
God, how I long to set the hounds on, shouting!  
And poise the Thessalian javelin drawing it back –  
here where my fair hair hangs above the ear –  
I would hold in my hand a spear with a steel point.

Eurip. *Hipp.* 215-222 (Greene transl.)

To hunt for a woman, and especially for a woman in love, is always fatal.<sup>36</sup> In the story of the death of Prokris, we find an echo of Phaidra's desire to go to the hunt. Prokris actually goes to the mountain to seek her husband, a place where she finds death; the only javelins women hold in the hunt are the ones that kill them.<sup>37</sup>

The nurse's horrified reaction to Phaidra's wish to go hunting, as well as Phaidra's own reaction when she recovers her senses, also highlights the destructive aspect of this transgressive yearning. For Phaidra, bewildered by her emotions, the question becomes not how to survive such fatal desire, but how to retain her good reputation (*eukleēs*) despite it and beyond death (486-490).<sup>38</sup> Phaidra's concern for her good *kleos* echoes Aphrodite's prophecy at the beginning of the play: Phaidra will die, but she will die with her *kleos* intact (*eukleēs*, 47). Artemis exhibits a similar concern for Hippolytos's reputation when she tells his father what happened so that Hippolytos may die with a good reputation (*eukleia*, 1299). Phaidra and Hippolytos ultimately become linked in the *kleos* they both acquire in death, and subsequently in the cult that joins them at Troezen.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> For a discussion of the motif female hunters, see Barringer (2001) 125-127.

<sup>37</sup> See for example the depiction on London, BM E 477; see *ARV2* 1114, 15; LIMC s.v. Kephalos 26 (= Erechtheus 55). For a discussion of the death daimon flying over Prokris, see also Kron (1976) 348.

<sup>38</sup> Phaidra expresses concern for her *kleos* elsewhere in the play; see, e.g. her statement about how important it is for Athenian citizens to have a good reputation from their mother (423), her fear of dying after having lost her good reputation (687), her plan to restore good reputation for her children (*ruklea men paisin prostheinaí bion*, 717), and her choice of death and a good reputation (*eudaxon*, 774).

<sup>39</sup> On the tomb of Phaidra, located near the *mnēma* of Hippolytos at Troezen, see Paus. 2.32.1-4. See also Larson (1993) 59, 79. On the *kleos* of Phaidra and Hippolytos, see Zeitlin (1996) 267-268 with note 92. According to Pausanias 1.22.1, Hippolytos also had a *mnēma* in Athens, an *IG I<sup>3</sup>* 255.7 mentions a *trapeza* for Hippolytos; see Sourvinou-Inwood (2005) 126 and Pirenne-Delforge (1994) 40-46.



When the nurse mentions Semele and Zeus and Kephalos and Eos as models for Phaidra, she gives us a multiplicity of perspectives through which to think about the story of Phaidra. The implied tale of Prokris, about which the nurse remains silent, points towards Phaidra's own role as a cult heroine after her death and would have been especially meaningful in the Athenian context to the audience, familiar with the figure of Kephalos inscribed on the Athenian landscape. Kephalos and his wife Prokris were also the recipients of cult. The nurse's example thus evokes the figure of Prokris, and the similarities between Prokris' and Phaidra's fates. Those familiar with poets and painters would have been reminded of Prokris and Phaidra side by side in Homer's Underworld and Polygnotos's *Nekyia*. By referring to *graphai*, the nurse also evokes the link between poetic and visual (including dramatic) representations of heroines and the complex ways in which heroes and heroines are memorialized. Like Prokris, Phaidra is remembered as a tragic wife and a heroine through a variety of poetic, visual and cultic traditions that inscribe her story and her *kleos* in memory. Prokris thus functions as a model for Phaidra in Euripides' *Hippolytos*, and Prokris and Phaidra together become models of wives overcome by *eros* who venture, really or metaphorically, in the male realm of the hunt, to find their own death.

### Abbreviations

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