

Ways of Hearing in Sophokles:
Auditory Spaces and Social Dynamics in the *Elektra*,
Philoktetes, *Trachiniai*, and *Oidipous Tyrannos*

by

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Abstract

It has long been known that sight was a crucial component of the fifth-century Athenian theatre. And while that is true, it can also be argued that aurality, the ability to hear and be heard, is an equally important aspect of Athenian drama. This dissertation strives to reclaim a place for hearing in studies on tragedy generally and on Sophokles in particular. Adopting terms from radio theory and media theory, I suggest that Athens was both an acoustic space and an aural community. In the course of an examination of four tragedies, I engage with the following question: how do the characters in these plays hear? Analyzing each play in turn, I show how hearing can occur physically, socially, publically and politically respectively. For *Elektra*, hearing is a physical and psychic blow; for *Philoktetes*, hearing is how he connects with the world around him and how he tries to reconnect with people; for *Deianeira*, hearing is a dangerous phenomenon capable of overturing her own predictions and capable of causing her to lose control of the final shape of her aural reputation; for *Oidipous*, hearing is an expression of his political status and ultimately a cause of his fall from power. The results of this study show that, in each case, the act of hearing is an invasive process in which the sonant object,

mobile and semi-autonomous, can intrude upon new spaces, stage and body alike. This dissertation contributes to a growing body of literature on aurality in tragedy and enhances our understanding of the interconnections between hearing, society, politics, and the individual.

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Introduction

Aurality and the Theatre of Sophokles

The title of this dissertation is *Ways of Hearing in Sophokles* because it engages with the question, in what ways do the characters of Sophokles' plays listen. Through examinations of the *Elektra*, *Philoktetes*, *Trachiniai*, and *Oidipous Tyrannos*, the following chapters study the physical, social, public, and political dynamics at play when any one character hears. These are the ways that the characters in those plays hear. And in each of these ways of hearing, there are similarities between the way auditor and sound interact; these correspondences are related to the concepts of mobility, intrusion, violence and community.

The pin at the theatre of Epidauros is a well-known anecdote. I myself have heard it dropped in the center of the orchestra from the top tier of the stands and can well attest to the veracity of the anecdote. This common experience among tourists to Greece has made the acoustics of the ancient Greek theatre something of a legend. And while the theatre of Sophoklean drama was hardly the stone wonder now made famous by Epidauros, the acoustics would still have been remarkable.¹ Many argue that the orchestra of the theatre of Dionysos in the time of Sophokles was probably rectilinear, like the deme-theatre in Thorikos, though others suggest that the orchestra was circular.² The stage, probably a meter high with steps coming up the centre from the orchestra, and stage building would have most likely been wooden. In the hillside were set seats of hard earth in something of a semi-circle; though the ends probably fanned out slightly more. According to Goette, the theatre's slope, where the seats were, was limited to 10 meters

¹ For a comparison of the acoustics at Epidauros and those at the Theatre of Dionysos Eleutherios in Athens, see Hunningher 1956: 313. For the acoustics at Oinades, see Kampourakis 2009. On the potential limits of the acoustics, see Meier 1993: 59. He suggests "that the plays can have been properly comprehensible for ten thousand spectators at most." For a comprehensive account of the history of scholarship on the theatre in Athens and an argument for a circular space, see Wiles 1999: 44-52. Wiles, in passing, refers to acoustics in order to support his position when he says that "we have to think of the acoustic requirement that there should be no spillage, no reverberation and maximum proximity" (51).

² See Roselli 2011: 66-7; Goette 1995: 28, 2007: 116-118; and for a discussion of the evidence leaning towards a circular space, see Revermann 1999. Though this thesis will not engage with the long-debated discussion, refer to Revermann's work (1, fn. 1) for important bibliography on the topic.

by a northern boundary indicated by a cut in the hill and by the Odeion in the east. The western dimensions remain uncertain. Given the evidence, Goette argues that the capacity of the theatre was probably limited to somewhere between five and six thousand auditors.³

Still, to have created a space in which sound could reach all the furthest ends and so many auditors was a feat. Arnott notes that the Greeks were self-taught in their acoustic design, “working empirically and with no foundation of theoretical understanding.”⁴ The importance of sound and good acoustics cannot be overstated for the Athenian theatre. Hunningher, for example, suggests that the origin of the *skene* lies not in the need for a pictorial backdrop to indicate place, but rather in the acoustic benefits of a wooden wall that could reflect back sound waves and thus amplify the actor’s voice.⁵ Why was such importance placed on acoustics? In the first place, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the audience was in a far better position to see than to hear. Hence, the acoustics benefits of Hunningher’s walls or the later resonant stone theatre of Epidauros are clearly designed to enhance the auditors’ capabilities. And secondly, the audience of the theatre was one that was highly practiced in the art of listening; experience with the courts and assembly prepared the auditor of tragedy to listen.⁶ Arnott draws attention to an interesting anecdote that demonstrates the acuteness of the Athenian ear: “[o]ne of the favorite jokes of the fifth-century theatre concerned the actor

³ Goette 2007: 118-119. According to Hunningher, by contrast, actors faced an auditorium measuring 240 feet from the lowest to the highest tier in the centre, though the distance was considerably smaller on the right and left sides (1956: 309). On the nature of the theatre audience and its makeup as well as for an argument on the political leanings of such an audience, see Sommerstein 1998 and 2010: 118-142. For an alternative view and a discussion of the likely size of the audience, see Dawson 1997. Dawson suggests a size of 3,700 (7) and argues that the audience was composed of more affluent members of the community and quite likely women (6-10). For the potential of extra, free standing-room only ‘seating’ that would increase the numbers and diversity of the audience, see Roselli 2011: 72-75. On the composite nature of the audience members, cf. Roselli 2011: 51-54. Finally, for a review of the evidence of women in the theatre, see Podlecki 1990: 27-43.

⁴ Arnott 1989: 74-5. For an apt review of ancient treatises on the acoustic design of the theatre, see Hunningher 1972: 310-314.

⁵ Hunningher 1956: 314-316. Cf. Puchstein 1901 and Bulle *et al.* 1928. Other features that might have aided the acoustics have been proposed but remain unproven and, in some cases, improbable. For example, Carlo Anti (1952) and August Frickenhaus (1917) suggested, independently, that there was some form of ditch in front of the *skene* as well as hollow spaces underneath to promote acoustics. The mask was once also thought to contribute to the volume of the actor’s voice (Dingeldein 1975); but such a theory is no longer accepted (Pickard-Cambridge 1953: 194).

⁶ On the competence of the Athenian playgoer, see Revermann 2006b. He argues for a model of decoding that recognizes the multiple layers of competence that different auditors may possess whilst still arguing for a rather high basic level of theatrical competence so that all are included but few get it all.

Hegelochos...who played Euripides' Orestes. In line 271 of the play, instead of 'after the storm I see a calm (*galen' horo'*), he recited 'after the storm I see a polecat (*galen horo*).'⁷ The audience was able to pick up on the minor blunder of an accentual difference. But for the Athenian auditor listening was more than a simple capability, it was a necessity:

In the context where more could be heard than seen, where the ear was sharper than the eye, and where the voice was the actor's principal instrument, the playwright was accustomed to convey in language things that in more intimate theatres would be left to visual effects.⁸

Scenery, identification of characters, and even action were much more heavily dependent on description than on depiction.⁹ Whether the primacy of sound over sight was the cause of this or whether the venue created the seeming primacy of sound over sight, the result is the same: the action of tragedy depended on listening and, therefore, the theatre was designed, by trial and error, to promote hearing.

The reality of the importance of acoustics and hearing in the architecture of the Greek theatre brings to the fore an aspect neglected in most modern approaches to fifth-century Athenian tragedy and Sophoklean tragedy. We are, and the Ancient Greeks were, part of very visual cultures; and the language used of the ancient Athenian *theatre* as well as modern scholarly approaches to ancient Athenian theatrical performance and experience has been influenced by

⁷ Arnott 1989: 81. Cf. Suidas, s.v. Ἡγέλοχος. See also Revermann 2006a: 112-113.

⁸ Arnott 1989: 88. On the voice of the actor and hearing, see earlier in the same chapter ("the actor heard") where Arnott states that "[t]his combination of superb acoustics and an alert, aurally receptive audience produced actors who knew that they could rely on the spoken word. Throughout the history of Athenian theatre, a good actor and a good voice were synonymous." Aristotle defined acting as being "concerned with the voice, and how it should be adapted to the expression of different emotions" (*Rhetoric* III 1403b 33). Similarly he conceived of the appreciation of acting as being purely a matter for the ear (*Poetics* 1462a 5, 12) (79). Cf. Hunningher 1956: "[i]t seem[ed] to [Aristotle] that sound and the voice turned the scales here. We have seen how immense the space was for which the actors had to perform and how apart from the *skene* [sic] no single expedient could help them make themselves understood by the far off majority of those fourteen to seventeen thousand spectators. It all depended on the strength and intensity of their voices" (328). For the fallibility of the eye in the Athenian theatre, see the Arnott's "The actor seen" (44-73).

⁹ Arnott 1989: 93. A point of contrast can be found in the tradition of Noh theatre, in which visibility is improved by the relative smallness of the theatre and in which the importance of the visual codes of costuming and stylized movement seem to outweigh the importance of verbal codes (See Revermann 2006a: 52).

this ocularcentrism.¹⁰ We might even say they have been limited since the ancient Athenian tragic experience and performance was just as much aural as visual.¹¹ Not only did the *audience* listen to the actors, but from the standpoint of the audience, the characters on stage were seen as bodies listening. And when the so-called spectators left the theatre, they would have preserved the memory of the performance verbally and aurally.

But the role of hearing in Athenian and Sophoklean tragedy has often taken a back seat to studies on the role of vision. Thus, many studies of Athenian tragedy have engaged with the occularcentric view, exemplified most clearly by David Seale,¹² that Sophoklean tragedy is permeated most notably by the language of sight; such studies, which have clearly provided valuable insights, have unfortunately ignored the abundance of vocabulary related to and staging dependent on the dynamics of hearing in Sophoklean tragedy.¹³ This thesis offers an interpretation of what can generally be called listening, as it exists in Sophokles' tragedies. By taking an aural approach, this dissertation complements works on the visual dimension of tragedy. This focus on the way that listening is represented in the play and how it effects the way the play is interpreted, both in terms of meaning and theatrical experience, broadens the often too-limited use of perception in current arguments on the reception and production of meaning in Sophoklean tragedy. I focus on the tragedies of Sophokles with comparanda drawn from a variety of other relevant ancient sources in an exploration of the ways in which hearing –

¹⁰ Walter Ong (1967; 2002) and Marshall McLuhan (esp. 1962) argue for, perhaps construct, an epistemological shift, beginning in the Enlightenment (though some suggest the shift stems from the Renaissance and the birth of perspective painting) and completing itself in the course of the nineteenth century, away from the idea that knowledge could be gained by such seemingly unverifiable methods as theology and philosophy and towards the use of the visible, tangible proof of the Scientific Revolution that has resulted in the present ocularcentrism of the modern western world. For an interesting counter-argument to the “great divide” theory, see Schmidt 2003. Schmidt argues that this ocularcentric view of the enlightenment is the product of later ocularcentric writers such as Ong and McLuhan; Schmidt’s work provides a multi-sensory re-interpretation of the past. See further Erlmann 2010; Smith 2007: 41-58. Smith argues that “virtually all of the evidence by historians of aurality and hearing of the modern era points to a continued importance of hearing and, implicitly at least, discounts the effect print had on diluting aurality in favour of sight” (48). Perhaps the most interesting part of Smith’s discussion of the history of hearing, though, is his discussion of silence in the modern era and the, particularly Victorian, movement towards controlling hearing as a way of establishing class (52-56).

¹¹ For an influential work that calls for a “democracy of the senses” in order to account for the totality of human experience, see Berendt 1988.

¹² Seale 1982.

¹³ Select examples of further studies on vision in Sophokles are Rehm 2002, Murray 1997, and Moscovici 1991.

as a bipartite process that begins with the utterance of sound and “ends” with perception of that sound – interacts with tangibles such as characters and intangibles such as space, time, and even political power. A key question is how listening, both when it is made explicit in a play’s vocabulary and when it is implicit in its staging, is able to create a sense of community and how the dynamics of listening are able to interact with, reinforce and challenge that community.

1.1 Classics, Radios, and Theatres

Classical scholars have only recently and sporadically begun to take up investigations in the fruitful and relatively unexplored field of listening either in tragedy or other genres.¹⁴ A recent paper by Sean Gurd develops the notion of “auditory aesthetics” in Aischylos’ *Persai* in order to discuss inarticulate noise and resonance within the play. He argues that “sound is given an affective power on its own and language is slowly stripped away from the utterances of the principal characters.”¹⁵ He focuses on the disruptive quality of sounds, which penetrate the Persians in combat and the Persian court represented on stage and suggests that the resulting lamentation is equally disruptive and correspondingly pierces the stage in such a way that it takes over, or resonates, on stage.¹⁶ Sarah Nooter has recently published on the soundscape in Sophoklean tragedy. In her book *When Heroes Sing: Sophocles and the Shifting Soundscape of Tragedy*, she argues that the main characters in the works of Sophokles, with the exception of the

¹⁴ For a discussion of the conceptually fragmented “field” of sound studies in music, communication and media studies, see Sterne 2003: 4.

¹⁵ Gurd 2013. This paper was presented at a workshop on the senses in February 2013 in Montréal.

¹⁶ Worth noting as well is Maurizio Bettini’s *Le Orecchie di Hermes* and its more recent revision and translation, *The Ears of Hermes*. The original *Le orecchie di Hermes* was published in 2000 and included a chapter on *Oidipous Tyrannos* entitled ‘Il detective è un re: anzi, un dio: A proposito dell’*Edipo re* di Sofocle’ (107-124), but the recent English translation (2011), *The Ears of Hermes*, cuts this chapter as well as a number of others due to a focus on Latin literature and Rome. Bettini’s (2000) discussion of *Oidipous*, however, focuses little on the ears or hearing; rather, he argues that “[l]a su riformulazione in intreccio tragico la trasforma infatti nella storia di un uomo che non solo ha compiuto i peggiori misfatti proprio mentre si sforzava di non compierli, m è lui stesso a farsi artefice della scoperta di sé. La fabula viveva sommersa nell’ignoranza dei suoi personaggi” (124). Bettini begins, in both the Italian original and the English translation, with an examination of Hermes’ epithets (2000:6-19), a consideration of the social implications of the Roman saying *lupus in fabula* (20-33), and among other things, a discussion of the ears as the seat of memory (47-51). Bettini’s discussion of the proverb *lupus in fabula* places considerable importance on the power dynamics of hearing in a communal setting in that he suggests that the proverb (like “speak of the devil”) almost creates a silencing power over the group (esp. 27). Bettini also suggests a sort of presence engendered by hearing that becomes problematic when the actual body (of the individual spoken of) appears, thus creating a crisis expressed by the proverb (30, 32-33). This discussion, however, seems particularly geared towards Roman hearing. Of note, too, is Scharffenberger’s 2006-2007 article on the depiction of Aischylos’ peculiar sound in Aristophanes’ *Frogs*.

Antigone, differ in respect to their sonic quality from other characters within each play:

...their voices are inflected with lyrical markers, features that are found in monodic and choral poetry from the archaic and classical periods. Such lyrical markers are not only aesthetically affecting, they also influence audiences' perception of the heroes: they confer on the heroes a poetic identity.¹⁷

A soundscape is an "acoustic [environment] that include[s] both natural and human-made sound. Soundscapes are experienced by hearing, rather than by seeing."¹⁸ The heroes and heroines of Sophokles sound different and, as such, they create a different sonic experience for the auditors, who can hear that they are acoustically different from other characters on stage. That is, they sound poetic and such a sounding changes the way that the auditors perceive these protagonists.

Günther Wille's *Akroasis: Der akustische Sinnesbereich in der griechischen Literatur bis zum Ende der klassischen Zeit*, although written in 1958, can be considered part of this recent wave of work on Greek aurality, as it was published in 2001. Wille's work includes a discussion of the sense of hearing, *akroasis*, in every literary genre from Homer till the end of the Classical period and, therefore, examines medical, philosophical and military perspectives on *akroasis*. He devotes well over a hundred pages of his multivolume work to "Die akustische Sphäre in der Sprache und Technik der griechischen Tragödie."¹⁹ Wille's long work deals with the diction and general nature of hearing in all three tragedians at the same time and provides short references from each in order to support his various points. While the long interval between completion and publication means that many of Wille's *foci*, such as that on silence, have been eclipsed by

¹⁷ Nooter 2012: 1.

¹⁸ Ferrington 2003. Cf. Schafer 1994 and Giansante 1970. The term "soundscape" was invented by a Canadian composer named Schafer, who also became the founder of the *World Soundscape Project* and the "soundscape movement" (1977).

¹⁹ Wille 2001: 201-349. As in all his chapters, Wille studies such varied topics as the function of the acoustic sense in tragedy (esp. 204-217), its ability to structure and give meaning (218-224, 1070), the relationship of the aural and visual areas (317-331) and even the effect of noise and silence on humans (241-242, 272-277); in particular, Wille's discussion of the interrelation of structure and hearing focuses solely on the Sophoklean corpus (218-224). On the function of the acoustic sense in tragedy, Wille says the following: "Vergleicht man den griechischen Wortlaut mit dem, was man unter gleichen Umständen im Deutschen setzen würde (und was Übersetzungen auch verwenden, sofern sie die in dem Unterschied zum Ausdruck kommenden psychologischen Verschiedenheiten vernachlässigen), so er gibt sich, daß für griechisches Denken das Funktionale da im Vordergrund steht, wo das Intellektuelle überwiegt, und daß erst die Aufnahme des gesprochenen Worts im vernehmenden Subjekt ihm seine volle Gültigkeit verschafft" 217).

modern scholarly work,²⁰ his focus on both the physiology of acoustics²¹ and the psychology of sound and, therefore, his proposition that *akroasis* is the bodily reception and experience of acoustic phenomena have produced valuable insights that I will return to where appropriate.

Theorists working with modern drama, too, have recently begun to notice and turn towards hearing and its role in the theatre as an appealing new area of study. In a special issue of *Theatre Journal* in 2006, a number of scholars present studies on hearing in the theatre. The opening of this issue, written by Jean Graham-Jones, calls these “examples of ways in which theatre and performance scholarship can more substantively integrate notions of aurality.” The papers presented range from examinations of audio tours in Central Park to a study on the impact of Jazz in the 1920’s on theatre.²² Likewise, Stephen Di Benedetto, as recently as 2010, tackles the subject of hearing in contemporary theatre by charting the shift towards highlighting and playing with listening in twentieth century artists such as John Cage, Josphe Pujol Le Petomane, and Ryoji Ikeda.²³ Cage’s *4’33”* (1925) is likely the most famous piece; a performer sits at the piano for four minutes and thirty-three seconds of rests thereby challenging the auditor to rethink both what exactly they are listening to — is it the silence? The increasingly disturbed members of the audience? — and the act of listening itself.²⁴

This dissertation builds on studies such as these, but will distinguish itself from the previous work on hearing in both the ancient Athenian and modern theatre by its focus on hearing as generative of community. Because the study of hearing in ancient and modern drama is relatively recent, this field is under-theorized. Nooter turned towards music and music ethnology

²⁰ Montiglio’s *Silence in the Land of Logos* (2000) comes to mind.

²¹ Wille 2001: esp. 1083, 1088.

²² The former is Marla Carlson’s 2006 “Looking, Listening, and Remembering: Ways to Walk New York after 9/11”; for the latter, see Savran’s 2006 “The Search for America’s Soul: Theatre in the Jazz Age.” Another notable contribution is Kanta Kochhar-Lindgren’s “Hearing Difference across Theatres: Experimental, Disability, and Deaf Performance.”

²³ Di Benedetto 2010: 125-165. Le Petomane, a Parisian performer performing at well-known places such as the *Moulin Rouge* at the turn of the century, illustrated his stories with farts. Ryoji Ikeda is a Japanese sound artist concerned primarily with sound in a variety of “raw” states (sine tones and noise); he often uses frequencies at the outer limits of the range of human hearing.

²⁴ Cage’s work is theatrical, or at least related to opera, by its setting: a stage. For a discussion of his work as sound art and of how it relates to various other artistic approaches to sound, see Kim-Cohen 2009: 1-30, 149-174.

in her consideration of soundscapes.²⁵ By contrast, radio theorists such as Allen S. Weiss and Antonin Artaud have heavily influenced Jean Graham-Jones, the editor of the above volume on hearing theatre in modern drama. Likewise, I turn to radio theorist Alan Beck for insight into the nature of listening to drama and have chosen to draw on useful concepts and terms from his work in the avant-garde field of radio studies.²⁶ A key term for this dissertation on how hearing relates to and is even generative of community is drawn from Beck's discussion of listening to radio dramas: aurality.²⁷

Beck coined the term "aurality" in reference to radio dramas as a counterpart to the "specularity" of visual mediums.²⁸ It has three aspects: the "listening-to-ness" of radio reception, the "heard-of-ness" of the broadcast speaker and other sounds, and, finally, listening itself. Listening, as a key term, is to be distinguished from hearing, which is a physiological process. Listening, on the other hand, is the "psychological process by which meaning is given to aural input."²⁹ In this

²⁵ See p. 5 and fn. 17.

²⁶ Such a focus is in line with some recent trends in modern drama scholarship, as exemplified by a special issue of *Theatre Journal* dedicated to "hearing theatre" (see below). That issue opens with Allen S. Weiss' "Ten Theses to Subvert a Work" (2006), a manifesto calling for theatre to move "from trompe l'oeil to trompe l'oreille." This manifesto was originally written for his work *The Theatre of the Ears* (Novarina and Weiss 1996). See below for more on modern drama theory. Alan S. Weiss is in fact a theorist on radio art rather than modern drama. Interestingly, there is a precedent for comparing Athenian tragedy and radio drama. Arnott (1989), in his chapter on the importance of hearing and the spoken word in Athenian tragedy, notes that the radio scriptwriter provides an apt parallel for the Athenian playwright (95). Arnott is referring to the similarity in the ways that the Athenian playwright and the radio scriptwriter are dependent on description to reveal action rather than visual depiction. He does not take the parallel any further.

²⁷ There are, of course, other terms that might be helpful to note: aural event, soundscape, *sontage*. The term aural event describes anything from hearing a sudden noise like a bell or thunder to listening to an entire tragedy. On soundscapes, see p. 5 and p. 5, fn. 18. "*Sontage*" refers to a sequence of aural events created for condensing space, time, and information.

²⁸ Beck 1998: Section 1.5. The relation and differences between radio drama and Athenian tragedy are similar to those Beck points to between radio and film: "[b]ut whereas sight and sound work simultaneously in film, radio is confined to sound alone, the blind medium. The recorded human voice is not fleshed out, radio does not share in film's 'surplus of reality' and it is even less the 'presence of an absence'. Radio plays must speak for themselves and create their own sound spaces specific to the medium, uniquely differing from the representation of time and space in plays in other media" (Beck 1998: 2.2)

²⁹ Ferrington 1994a: 67. For the same idea, see Beck 1998: 10.2. He says there that "the director [of a radio drama] has to turn the potential confusion of 'hearing' (the perception of many bits of aural information) into active radio 'listening' (retaining and interpreting, and busy use of short-term memory storage which becomes especially engaged in dialogue and narrative)." For an extended description of the development of listening capabilities, as opposed to the natural ability to hear generally possessed from birth, cf. Ferrington 1994b: 52. For an instantiation of this argument outside of radio theory, see Smith 1999: 6. There Smith argues "[w]hat we hear when someone speaks is a stream of constantly changing sounds in which consonant sounds merge with vowel sounds merge with

work, the term “listening” is reserved for the specific psychological process outlined above. “Hearing” on the other hand, will be used frequently to refer to both the physiological and psychological processes generally or unscientifically.³⁰ “Listening-to-ness” refers to the audience and describes the fact that they are listening; it is, to put it in clearer terms, the state of (the audience) listening to the aural event.³¹ At the same time, this term suggests the actual act and not just the state of listening. Therefore, Beck’s “listening-to-ness” covers both the passive recipient state of the auditor, who must await the sounds striking on his ears, and also the dynamic process of actively listening and even constructing information on the basis of incomplete aural information.³² The “heard-of-ness” of the broadcast speaker refers to the complementary side of the “listening-to-ness” dynamic. There are two parts of this dynamic: the audience and the broadcast speaker. While the concept of “listening-to-ness” recognizes the role of the auditor as both passive and active, it is the concept “heard-of-ness” that finally acknowledges the role of the speaker in this dynamic. The speaker is heard; therefore, much like the listener, the speaker is both active and passive in the process of listening. The novelty of Beck’s term “aurality” is clearest in his recognition of the speaker’s role in hearing.³³ For Beck

consonant sounds merge with vowel sounds, according to a principle speech physiologists call ‘coarticulation.’ What we listen for when someone speaks is a series of discrete, recognizable sounds. Hearing is a physiological constant, listening is a psychological variable.” On the other hand, for a review of the ways in which the physiological process of hearing and the psychological process of listening have become increasingly conflated as our knowledge of the ear develops, see Schwartz 2003: 488.

³⁰ For example, the term hearing will be used when referring to ancient theories in general and Sophoklean diction, for both of which it is difficult to make the modern distinction between “listening” and “hearing.”

³¹ Beck 1998: Section 1.5.

³² Beck 1998: 1.7. Beck says that “[t]he radio listener is active. An analogy could be drawn with what visual scientists term ‘filling-in’ and ‘perceptual completion’ in real-life interaction (the Lifeworld) - the brain jumping to a conclusion.” He elaborates by saying “the point is that in some ways, as radio listeners, we fill-in or complete details such as faces, gestures and movements of the radio performers, and also the aural ‘mise en scène’ they inhabit” (Beck 1998: 19.9). Cf. Ferrington 1994a: 63 and also Ferrington 1994b: 53-4. In the latter, Ferrington describes the entire process of listening from isolating sound, to identifying, interpreting, interpolating, and finally determining if a personal response is required (introspection).

³³ Beck’s understanding of aurality is logocentric. For the purposes of my argument, this does not present any difficulties, as my focus is on the human voice in hearing, whether articulate or not, rather than on sound effects or music. Difficulties would arise in the description of “heard-of-ness” as both passive and active if the sound comes from an inanimate object, but perhaps simply restricting the definition to instances of aurality between human beings would suffice. On the anthropocentric nature of the concept of “hearing,” see Sterne 2003: 11.

aurality means both the active and passive parts for both speaker and listener of what we generally call hearing. There is ancient precedent for such a view of hearing; in the *De anima*, Aristotle writes ἡ δὲ φωνὴ καὶ ἡ ἀκοὴ ἕστιν ὡς ἓν ἐστὶ (voice and hearing are as it were one and the same, 426a27-8). The aural process, modern and ancient, can only be considered bipartite: consisting of both the spoken and heard word.³⁴

Such are the key terms and concepts derived from radio theory. It is important to note about the above use of radio theory and its terms as well as about the following argument that they are all logocentric in a number of ways.³⁵ Firstly, because of its interest in communication and community, my argument is truly logocentric in its focus on the spoken word. The sung and spoken word, which have been very well explored by Sarah Nooter, as well as music, metre and other relevant sound-objects go relatively unexplored both in the interest of space and in order to focus more readily on moments where hearing can reveal the relationship between auditor and community.³⁶ By contrast, I focus on unexpressed moments of hearing, as when one character silently listens to another, or expressed moments of listening, as when a character or messenger describes listening, or even moments when one character demands of another that he/she should

³⁴ See further my discussion on ch. 3 fn. 18. Pliny the Elder, too, makes the association between speaking and hearing explicit: *auditus cui hominum primo negatus est, huic et sermonis usus ablati, nec sunt naturaliter surdi, ut non iidem sint et muti* (for whomever the sense of hearing is from the first denied, to this one the use of speech is also taken away, nor are there those naturally deaf so that these same ones not also be mute, *HN* 10.69). Cf. Heracl. 17 (Kahn). For a fifth-century tragic parallel, cf. *Soph. Ant.* 757. Haimon asks βούλη λέγειν τι καὶ λέγων μηδὲν κλύειν; (Do you want to say something and after you've said your piece, hear nothing in reply? [all texts of Sophokles are from Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990. All other texts will be noted individually by editor when necessary. Translations are my own]). There is a basic connection here between the concepts of speaking and hearing as reciprocal acts in communication, to the extent that Kreon's actions seem a violation of the proper process. On this line as indicating a failure in "Ausreichender Sammlung und Aufmerksamkeit," see Wille 2001: 214.

³⁵ On this term, see Sonnenschein 2001: 74. For ancient precedent for logocentricity in examinations of hearing, see *Pl. Chrm.* 168 d: οἶον ἡ ἀκοή, φασμέν, οὐκ ἄλλου τινὸς ἦν ἀκοή ἢ φωνῆς. Cf. Beare 1906: 107.

³⁶ Both are important parts of the acoustic world, but my focus on hearing and the community necessitates an emphasis on hearing as a bipartite process shared among community members and best represented in language and, at times, inarticulate cries. The music of the theatre would be an important topic for the study of hearing in Sophokles or any of the tragedians. I will, however, leave this rich topic for musicologists and ethnomusicologists; see for example the work of J.C. Franklin 2002 and 2005 or D'Angour 2007. For a survey of musical acoustics in terms of mathematics, physics, physiology, psychology and philosophy, see the edited volume *The Second Sense* by Burnett, Fend and Gouk. For the voice and music in ancient aesthetics, see Porter 2010: 308-404. For an interesting work on the value of studying music from the "viewpoint" of the ear, see Attali 1977. For the importance of music in Aristotelian tragic theory, see Scott 1999. On metre in Sophoklean lyric, see Pohlsander 1964. For the role of sounds, especially inarticulate noises, Sean Gurd's recent work on and interest in ancient sound culture is particularly useful (cf. p. 6-7).

listen.³⁷ Hearing is a constant element of the theatrical experience. Every action within the course of the plot requires hearing, both for continued interaction between the actors and for creating a connection between stage and audience.³⁸ Therefore, the entire play may itself be considered in terms of aurality; every action is on some respect an aural action, which creates forward momentum within the plot by means of aurality.

Secondly, my argument is logocentric in its persistent recourse to the diction of hearing in Sophokles' works. The use of such diction creates specific moments within each tragedy where listening is foregrounded in the very dialogue of the characters. When figures such as Oidipous declare in the highest moment of tension just prior to the revelation of the truth that "one must hear" (ἀκουστέον, *OT* 1170), hearing is no longer white noise, the constant but somewhat forgotten element of the tragedy. With the diction of hearing, Sophokles underlines the role of hearing at particular and often key moments.

In Sophokles, the diction used to convert generic hearing from white noise to attention-demanding moments is varied. Verbs that express the dynamic of listening are a common and easily identifiable way of creating awareness of hearing. Two verbs, in particular, dominate the Sophoklean corpus: ἀκούω and κλύω.³⁹ Nouns often indicate hearing in roundabout fashion by suggesting not hearing itself but the thing heard; for example, Sophokles' tragedies are replete with nouns such as πάταγος "a crash," μῦθος "speech," φήμη "utterance," κέλαδος "a clamour or din," βάζις "inspired utterance," and αὐδή "a voice."⁴⁰ Both the λόγος ἀρχαῖος (1) of Deianeira's opening speech and Philoktetes' φίλτατον φώνημα (234) serve as examples of diction that express hearing in a roundabout fashion. Deianeira has heard this λόγος ἀρχαῖος, while Philoktetes' evocation indicates not only a moment of hearing but his sheer delight in hearing the sound of Neoptolemos' voice. Adjectives related to hearing often share their roots

³⁷ The audience as a listening subject will also be treated, but not in as much detail as it could be.

³⁸ On words in tragedy as an action, see Poe 2003: 424.

³⁹ For a catalogue of these verbs in all three tragedians, see Wille 2001: 206-16.

⁴⁰ For πάταγος, see Soph. *Trach.* 518; for μῦθος, see Soph. *Trach.* 67, *Aj.* 188 and 770, *Ant.* 11, 272 and 1190, *OC* 357; for φήμη see Soph. *Phil.* 846, *Trach.* 1150, *El.* 65 and 1109, *OT.* 43, 86, 158 and 723; for κέλαδος, see Soph. *El.* 737; for βάζις, see Soph. *Trach.* 87; and for αὐδή, see *Phil.* 1410, *El.* 1282 and *OT* 1326. As noted, all Sophoklean line references refer to Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990.

with the verbs of hearing ἀκούω and κλύω; consequently, these adjectives are often closely connected to the act of hearing itself. Such is the case with Oidipous, who proclaims “one must hear” (ἀκουστέον, *OT* 1170). In addition to such obvious diction as the above, there are forms that evoke the dynamic of hearing more subtly. κλέος, often translated as “rumour,” “tidings” or “glory,” shares its root, *klu-*, with the verb κλύω, which means “to hear.”⁴¹ This particular piece of diction, then, evokes “listening” in a less obvious way than those examples above; yet it is equally enlightening in an investigation of listening and shall be considered at various points within the thesis.

1.2 Aural Communities

An investigation of aurality in Sophokles has much broader-reaching results than might initially be expected. Why? My dissertation proposes that in a semi-literate and therefore semi-aural culture, especially one that is participating in an almost entirely oral medium such as tragedy, what it means *to hear* is far more important than in a completely literate community because an oral culture necessitates an aural culture: “aurality is indeed a driving force in many cultures around the world.”⁴²

Marshall McLuhan, who took an aesthetic approach to criticism in the field of communication and the media of communication, developed a categorization of media that revolved around the senses; certain media engaged different senses and, depending on which sense was engaged, a different environment would be produced: either a visual or acoustic space.⁴³ The interest here is in the concept of an acoustic space, which is characterized not by an engagement of the ear

⁴¹ Georg Autenrieth, *A Homeric Dictionary for Schools and Colleges*, s.v. κλέος. We might compare the term *butu* in the language of the Trobriands (a Massim language), which means both “fame” and “sound”/ “noise” (Howes 2004: 241).

⁴² Classen 2005: 148. This quote is taken slightly out of context since Classen’s article will actually explore the sensory worlds of oral cultures that centre themselves around thermal dynamics, odour, and colour. Yet Classen is not negating the value of aurality at all; rather she wants to challenge the idea engendered by Ong and Marshall (see p. 4, fn. 10) that a culture *must* be either visual or aural (see further her 1993 work on the primacy of sound for the indigenous Andeans). Despite my strict focus on hearing in the fifth-century Athenian theatre, I heartily agree with Classen. She argues that we must attune our investigations of the sense worlds of other cultures because “[s]ensory models are conceptual models, and sensory values are cultural values” (161). I will endeavour to show that aurality and aural cultures are relevant and enlightening areas for discussion in the plays of Sophokles.

⁴³ Media, according to McLuhan, covered everything from cars, speech and language to newspapers, television and radio, which are more commonly thought of as media.

alone but by an engagement of a “sensorium” of multiple senses interacting with each other at the same time.⁴⁴ McLuhan argued that oral cultures, like the Ancient Greeks, existed in an “acoustic space” because their primary means of communication was audio-verbal.⁴⁵ This space was “a sphere without fixed boundaries, space made by the thing itself, not space containing the thing. It is not pictorial space, boxed in, but dynamic, always in flux, creating its own dimensions moment by moment.”⁴⁶ For McLuhan, this is the key difference between the visual and the acoustic space. A visual space is ordered in the way that the eye must order space.⁴⁷ By contrast, “[t]he man who lives in an aural world lives at the center of a communications sphere, and he is bombarded with sensory data from all sides simultaneously.”⁴⁸ This is a fitting description of the space of the Athenian fifth-century stage and classical Athens in general. It was an acoustic space.

⁴⁴ The term “sensorium” is adopted from Thomas Aquinas. See Babe 2000: 280. Technically, the concept of aural or acoustic space was originally coined by Carl Williams, a psychologist who worked with McLuhan in the creation of a journal entitled *Explorations* (see Williams 1955-6: 16; cf. Carpenter 2001: 241). Williams referred to auditory space, which McLuhan adopted as acoustic space and developed (Carpenter 2001: 241). The ideas behind acoustic space may be connected to T.S. Eliot’s conception of “auditory imagination” (“...the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back...,” 1933: 118-119).

⁴⁵ McLuhan 1962: 19 (a paraphrasing of an earlier work, itself a paraphrasing of Williams; cf. Carpenter and McLuhan 1960: 67 and Williams 1955-6: 17). In his later work, McLuhan also says “[t]he Greeks, whether ancient or Byzantine, clung to much of the older oral culture with its distrust of action and applied knowledge” (27).

⁴⁶ Carpenter and McLuhan 1960: 67. On ways of conceptualizing the space of the theatre, see Rehm 2002: 1-37; Wiles 1999: 1-86, 133-186; and Revermann 2006a: esp.108.

⁴⁷ McLuhan and Parker 1968: 10. See also Ong (2002), who points out that “[b]ecause in its physical constitution as sound, the spoken word proceeds from the human interior and manifests human beings to one another as conscious interiors, as persons, the spoken word forms human beings into close-knit groups. When a speaker is addressing an audience, the members of the audience normally become a unity, with themselves and with the speaker. If the speaker asks the audience to read a handout provided for them, as each reader enters into his or her own private reading world, the unity of the audience is shattered, to be re-established only when oral speech begins again. Writing and print isolate. There is no collective noun or concept for readers corresponding to ‘audience’. The collective ‘readership’—this magazine has a readership of two million—is a far-gone abstraction. To think of readers as a united group, we have to fall back on calling them an ‘audience’, as though they were in fact listeners” (72).

⁴⁸ McLuhan and Parker 1968: 6. See also Ong (2002), who says “[s]ight isolates, sound incorporates. Whereas sight situates the observer outside what he views, at a distance, sound pours into the hearer.... Vision comes to a human being from one direction at a time: to look at a room or a landscape, I must move my eyes around from one part to another. When I hear, however, I gather sound simultaneously from every direction at once: I am at the center of my auditory world, which envelopes me, establishing me at a kind of core of sensation and existence” (70).

In such a space, aurality serves as an important cultural unifier in a kind of aural network, a mechanism for creating the sense of belonging.⁴⁹ For the purposes of this dissertation, an aural network or community is the real or imagined area in which hearing could have operated, that is, the broader social grouping in a defined – even if only loosely defined – acoustic space in which “that which is heard” was expected to move about.⁵⁰ The definition of an “aural community” here is inspired by Benedict Anderson’s definition of a nation. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson hypothesizes that a nation “is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even *hear of them* (my italics), yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”⁵¹ Anderson’s form of nationalism is geared towards a literate culture, especially since he considers the development of nations the result of the fall of Latin, the symbol and unifying element of sacred communities, as well as the subsequent though gradual fragmentation, pluralization and territorialization in Western Europe.⁵² An adaption for an oral/aural culture necessitates some modifications. A major difference lies in the treatment of “hearing.” I propose that in an aural community hearing and “hearsay” function as unifiers in a group, as autonomous phenomena capable of transmitting information and cementing “belongingness” to a specific social or national grouping.

But how does the psychological process of listening create belongingness? Firstly, hearing in fifth-century Athenian tragedy is specifically a shared action because it occurs in a communal setting. With this in mind, Oddone Longo argues that, while the individual spectator may identify with the tragic protagonist on a personal level, there is also a level of identification that

⁴⁹ A point of comparison is the early years of radio in Britain. The BBC, for example, was “conceived of as a social glue, holding together society and excluding no segment, [but] the system soon evolved into a paternalistic one, favouring the capital cities in which such services were centred, with events and culture portrayed as it affected London or Stockholm: broadcasting from the centre of power to the rest of the country.” See Dunaway 1998: 92. On the collective nature of the radio audience, see Graham-Jones 2006: i-ii.

⁵⁰ For a cross-cultural discussion of the power of sound to establish the limits of a community, see Hibbits 1992: 889-891. For an excellent discussion of how sound and “soundways” were able to create, regulate, and arrange social hierarchies in early America, see Rath 2003: esp. 51-2, 56-7, 104-106.

⁵¹ Anderson 2006: 6.

⁵² *ibid.*: 12-19.

emerges implicitly, if not explicitly, from the collective experience of going to the theatre.⁵³ David Roselli's comments on the "communal" nature of the theatrical experience are worth quoting:

theatre is a communal and social event, notwithstanding the influential emphasis on the individual's emotional responses to it in Aristotle's *Poetics* and subsequent attention to the tragic hero in modern discussions. The response and behavior of the isolated individual in the audience are influenced by the wider group(s) in which the spectator is but one member: there is a tendency towards integration and the subsuming of the individual into a broader group.⁵⁴

For both Roselli and Longo, the audience members, much like the chorus, listened as a group just as much as they listened as individuals.

Secondly, hearing is the process by which individuals can participate in community. A community is "an interacting population of various kinds of individuals (as species) in a common location."⁵⁵ "Interacting" is a key feature of community; it is what allows individuals to function in groups. But in order for people to interact they must communicate: share information or ideas through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviour. For fifth-century Athens and its trade, business, politics and general life, this is mainly oral communication. But oral communication is just as dependent on hearing as it is on speaking. The vast array of sounds that contribute to language are useless if one cannot hear them.⁵⁶ Therefore, in so far as it is essential to the act of communication, hearing plays a role in binding communities together.

⁵³ Longo 1990: 19. Cf. Padel 1990: 339. She says that "[a]udience and players shared the festival; they entered by the same route. The chorus in the *orkhêstra*, composed of citizens was in several senses halfway between the audience and the actors."

⁵⁴ Roselli 2011: 3. On seating arrangements and how they contributed to social cohesion, see Winkler 1990: 37-42. He suggests that seating was arranged by tribe and that this arrangement was a version of the body politic. While tribes would cheer by section, particularly for their own tribal dithyrambic choruses, the presence of a regulating body (the *boule*) in the centre served as a mediating and subordinating force. In this way Athens presented both individuals willing to compete with one another for excellence and a community subordinated to a legitimate authority and ready to fight for their city as a whole (42). In contrast, Csapo and Slater (1994) argue that while there is evidence of tribal division and an obvious benefit for it at the dithyrambic competitions "there is, however, no reason to think that this division was ever strictly maintained or even voluntarily observed for drama, which had no tribal basis" (289-90). For a discussion of the intersections of spatial practices and culture in the fifth-century Athenian theatre, see Wiles 1999: 19-21.

⁵⁵ Merriam-Webster, s.v. "Community."

⁵⁶ See Ch. 1 fn. 34.

Friedrich Nietzsche has said that, “[t]he Athenian went to the theater in order to hear beautiful speeches.”⁵⁷ They were listeners; the actors were speakers. And the roles could reverse as well. Auditors spoke, hissed, clucked, banged their heels and were generally noisy; actors and poets had to listen and even leave the theatre as a result.⁵⁸ The theatre of Athens and Athens itself constituted an aural community as well as an oral community. In that aural community hearing served as a social unifier allowing the individual citizens of Athens to experience theatre as a group. Aural communication was also how Athenians participated in their community. This sketch of the importance of hearing within the oral and political community of Athens provides a framework for my exploration of the ways that hearing can be seen as an important and meaningful act.

1.3 A Way of Hearing Sophokles

The purpose of this dissertation is to ask the question: in what way did Athenian theatre audiences hear? In my examinations of Sophokles’ *Elektra*, *Philoktetes*, *Trachiniai*, and *Oidipous Tyrannos*, I posit that the characters of these plays hear in a variety of ways: physically, socially, publically, and politically. What unites each of these “ways of hearing” is that hearing is a mobile, effective force. After a brief survey on ancient and modern ideas regarding the physiology and psychology of hearing in chapter one, both the remainder of that chapter, which consists of a comparison of theories of hearing with actual hearing in the *Elektra*, and all subsequent chapters draw on the ideas and implications of aurality and aural communities and highlight them in different ways in the different plays. But comparisons and background information will be drawn from other sources where appropriate. While the evidence for the conceptions of aurality and aural communities in the Greek world is limited and indirect, as we shall see in both the plays and comparanda, such a theoretical approach opens up a window to a new and exciting kind of dynamic at work with the plays, one that challenges many of the precepts modern scholars bring into their work, especially those about the preeminence of sight and the uses of space.

⁵⁷ Nietzsche 1974: 135.

⁵⁸ For the noisiness of the audience, see Roselli (2011: esp. 48-51) for a good compilation and discussion of sources.

In chapter one, “βάλλει δι’ ὠτῶν: ‘Impinging Missiles’ on the Acoustic ‘Innards’ of the Stage in Sophokles’ *Elektra*,” I begin with a close reading of hearing and spatial relations in Sophokles’ *Elektra*, comparing this play to the corpora of Greek physiological writers. I argue that sound, for the Greek natural philosophers and physiologists, is a violent intrusion from outside the body to inside the percipient’s body. The same kind of forceful movement can be mapped onto the dynamics of hearing in the *Elektra* as well. In particular, I analyse both the final cries of Klytaimnestra and Elektra’s opening cries, both of which invade the acoustic space of the stage, a space analogous to the inner void where hearing occurs within the percipient’s body, from an ambiguous “outside” space behind the façade. These two moments of hearing are strikingly similar; as a result, Elektra and Klytaimnestra become comparable, as has been often noted. But I hope to show that Elektra’s terrible similarity to her murderous mother here is not entirely her own choice. She is acted on by the violence of hearing her own mother’s cries with the result that she becomes like her mother.

After my discussion of space and the ability of sound to violently penetrate different spaces even across the so-called boundary of the façade, I turn in the second chapter, “Oh Dearest Sounds! Philoktetes and the Aural Community,” to an engagement with the topics of aural communities and aural connections in the *Philoktetes*. That the *Philoktetes* is a play of frustrated exits and failed attempts to persuade the recalcitrant Philoktetes to exit to Troy rather than his home in Greece is a well known fact. But three entrances—Philoktetes’, Neoptolemos’ and Herakles’—are equally important. When he enters the stage, Philoktetes (219-231) articulates his yearning to reintegrate himself aurally into a Greek community by imploring Neoptolemos to converse with him (230-1); both the re-entrance of Neoptolemos (1221ff) and entrance of Herakles at 1408 mirror the entrance of Philoktetes and reveal through comparison the importance of aural connections. In light of the importance placed on creating aural bonds upon entering the stage in those scenes, it becomes possible to reevaluate the conclusion of the tragedy. In particular, I argue that the first and second conclusions are not the result of two different narrative directions; instead, both “endings” are linked together and to the entrance of Philoktetes by the theme of aural connections.

Chapter three, “Whispered Words Heard Afar: λόγος to κλέος and ‘Being Heard Of’ in The *Trachiniai*,” builds on both the concept of aural communities and the idea that hearing can destroy boundaries by envisioning the bipartite process of hearing as one “where what is heard

said” becomes a mobile and semi-autonomous phenomenon. In the diptych play, *Trachiniai*, κλέος as “what is heard” serves an integral role in the advancement of the plot because of the importance of stories and storytelling to the characters. This κλέος, a type of rumour, is a “kind of social phenomenon that a similar remark spreads on a large scale in a short time through chains of communication.”⁵⁹ As a result of the quick spread over a large and a largely distanced aural community, κλέος is quite autonomous and uncontrollable. Deianeira, however, attempts throughout the play to control her aural reputation with a series of counter-λόγοι, personal and personally constructed speeches designed to control her fate. Hearing, however, is a bipartite process consisting of both “speaking” and “listening.” Deianeira’s attempts to control her fate through λόγοι are, therefore, inherently flawed since the process must always complete itself and the spoken word must become the heard word.

In addition to their aural reputations, politics and power struggles were an important concern among members of the audience; the fourth and final chapter, “One Must Hear: The Power Dynamics of Hearing in The *Oidipous Tyrannos*,” applies the concepts of aural communities and autonomous hearing to the *Oidipous Tyrannos* of Sophokles. This play examines the social and political aspects of aurality and questions the nature of the social and political aural community by probing how the relations between a community and its individual members functioned. Oidipous, for example, begins the play by adopting the stance of a *tyrannos* who, like a father over his children, has complete control over the aural community. But, by the end of the tragedy, Oidipous’ position reverses, not just from *tyrannos* to common man or beggar, but also from subject in control of hearing to object acted on by sound.

The argument set out in the above chapters is cumulative in the sense that the order is designed to progressively persuade the reader about mobility of hearing and the existence of aural communities in which “what is heard” can move. Yet, I believe that each chapter can stand on its own as a valid approach to the dynamics of hearing in the individual plays. Overall, in this thesis, I have attempted not to write out the importance of other senses, especially sight, in the fifth-century Athenian theatre, though they receive little to no attention here, but have merely tried to show that an analysis of hearing and sounds can provide new evidence to answer old

⁵⁹ Kawachi *et al.* 2008: 57. On rumour/gossip in ancient Athens, cf. Hunter 1990.

questions as well as new perspectives. When Klytaimnestra in the *Elektra* cries out in words that echo the death throes of Agamemnon in Aischylos, how does that change our opinion of Elektra herself, who gleefully takes on the role of murderess in Sophokles' play? Why does Philoktetes agree to return to Troy at Herakles' request when he has adamantly refused Neoptolemos' entreaty to do so? What does it mean when Deianeira silently enters the house to commit suicide? And how do we interpret the final exit of the blinded Oidipous and the relative position of the new leader, Kreon? The answer, or at least one way of conceiving answers, to these questions lies in the aurality of the respective plays; for these questions essentially come down to: how do we hear? How do they hear? What effect does hearing have on or in a community? What effect does it have on the individual? Hearing was a crucial and influential part of the theatre, whether we are considering the role of actor or audience, the play world or the real world. Hearing was omnipresent. Accordingly, I strive to reclaim the place for aurality in the thematics and dynamics of the theatre of Sophokles.

βάλλει δι' ὠτων:
 “Impinging Missiles” on the Acoustic “Innards”
 of the Stage in Sophokles’ *Elektra*

Most of us do not think about our hearing on a regular basis; it is simply there. The fact that we hear tends not to jump out at us until sound itself jumps out at us: the blare of a horn on the street you’re driving down, the loud bark of a dog behind a fence beside you, the sudden bang of a branch against your window in the dead of night. At moments such as these we realize, perhaps not consciously, the intrusiveness of sound on our own bodies. We reach up to cover our ears, we jerk away, or we twist almost unwillingly in the direction of the sound. The horn, the bark, the bang pierce us, a force from outside somewhere that pierces us, inescapable. Wille, while discussing passages on ears in 5th century Athenian tragedy, formulated it as follows: “Was gar das Ohr durchdringt wie ein Geschoß, nach dem für den Schall verwendeten Bild, muß ohnehin eindringend und laut genug sein.”¹ Likewise, Ruth Padel, writing on 5th century Athenian tragedy, has suggested “hearing is also [like the body in medical theories] vulnerable to the outside world, especially the social world. We are vulnerable through our ears to other people and their words.”² She connects this to the ways that hearing seems to strike on the ears in fifth-century Athenian tragedy, pointing to the words of the chorus in the *Choephoroi*: δι’ ὠτων δὲ συν- / τέτραινε μῦθον ἡσύχῳ φρενῶν βάσει (Bore through the ears her story, with a quiet restfulness of soul, 451-2).³ One might also point to the words of Eurydike in the *Antigone*: με φθόγγος οἰκείου κακοῦ / βάλλει δι’ ὠτων (the sound of an evil for the house strikes me through my ear, 1187-8);⁴ Or we could point to the arrival of Philoktetes, whose φθογγά strikes (βάλλει)

¹ Wille 2001: 295. For a catalogue of passages on ears in fifth-century Athenian tragedy, see Wille 2001: 293-298 (esp. 294, where Wille refers to the “rezeptive Funktion des Ohrs”).

² Padel 1992: 64. Cf. Sterne (2003), who notes “that elusive inside world of sound—the sonorous, the auditory, the heard, the very density of sonic experience—emerges and becomes perceptible only through its exteriors” (13).

³ *Ibid.* She also refers to Soph. Fr. 858 (Radt); Eur. *Hipp.* 568, 572-3, 577, 582.

⁴ We might consider the words of the comic poet Eupolis, who says of Perikles that he left a sting (τὸ κέντρον τοῖς ἀκροωμένοις) in the ears (Eup. fr. 94, 11.5-7 [Kock]). While the context is unclear, and the use of τὸ κέντρον may point more towards an idea of how Perikles’ πειθῶ might have goaded his auditors to action in his favour, the sense

at the chorus (βάλλει βάλλει μ' ἐτύμα / Φθογγά, 205). In each case, sound "...is intrusion from outside, through the ears, into innards."⁵

If, as Padel has argued, fifth-century Athenian tragedy engages the violent invasiveness of hearing, that violence is particularly vivid in Sophokles' *Elektra*. There is a vivid representation of the movement of sound between inside and outside acoustic spaces of the theatre; though, perhaps the stage's "innards" are what we normally consider the "outside" space of the theatre.⁶ In particular, the first scene and the murder-scene share an intense incursion of sound from behind the *skene* into the acoustic space of the *orchêstra*. In the former, the prologue ends because Elektra is heard offstage, a hearing that forces Orestes and Pylades to leave so that she can enter the acoustic space of the stage, mourning. In the culmination of the murder plot, Orestes enters the house and the murder of Klytaimnestra is heard through the *skene*. Klytaimnestra cries out from behind the *skene* ὄμοι πέπληγμαι (1415) and, after Elektra encourages another blow, ὄμοι μάλ' αἰθις (1416), suffering that second blow. Sound intrudes upon the stage; sound that in itself and because of what it represents is violent. In this chapter I argue the following: (1) that the violence and mobility were understood to be part of the act of hearing by contemporary Greek physiologists and philosophers—whose writings serve as the evidence behind Padel's theory about hearing's invasiveness—and (2) that the views of the contemporary Greek physiologists and philosophers inform the way that sound operates in the *Elektra*.⁷ As a result, the acoustic space of the stage becomes a metaphor for the "innards" of the human body in hearing; though, as we shall see, this metaphor is neither complete nor uncomplicated.

of a violent intrusion on the listener's body through the ears is still clear. Cf. also Democr. 135.56-7 (τὴν γὰρ φωνὴν εἶναι / πυκνουμένου τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ μετὰ βίας εἰσιόντος [Diels & Kranz]).

⁵ Padel 1992: 64.

⁶ On hearing quite generally and the structure of the play, see Wille 2001: 221-222.

⁷ While I will not be directly engaging with the scholarly divide between "light" and "dark" readings of this play, my conclusions about the staging of the climatic murder of Klytaimnestra and Elektra's "likeness" to her mother do suggest a "dark" reading. For "dark" readings, see esp. Seaford 1985; Segal 1966; Seale 1982; Blundell 1989; Wright 2005. For a recent reiteration of the long-standing "light" reading, see March 2001. For an extensive discussion of the history of these two kinds of readings, see Wright 2005: fn. 1, fn. 3.

Before turning to the Sophoklean tragedy, which was written some time after 413 BCE, it is important to establish the intellectual background, the understanding of hearing in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, in order that to show that, as physiologists posited sound as a violent intrusion, so too fifth-century Athenian tragedy conceives of sound as acoustic movement between the inside and outside portions of the tragic space. A consistent theme throughout Greek accounts of hearing is movement.⁸ Sound is something that moves from the outside space, where it happens, to the inside space of the body where it is interpreted, often by the soul. Alkmaion of Kroton, who was an early Greek medical writer and philosopher-scientist and who was likely active between 500 and 450 BCE, is said to have conceived of sound as traveling on soniferous air-waves into the vacuum, κενόν, of the inner ear by way of the hollow of the outer ear.⁹ Once within the inner vacuum, the sonant stimulus is caught up and transferred, or rather echoed, to the seat of thought and perception: the brain.¹⁰ Hearing for Alkmaion is the result of movement by progressive stages from outside to inside. This important concept informs the way that sound works in the *Elektra*, as we shall see momentarily.

Before turning to the play, however, it is necessary to find corroborating evidence in other physiologists in order to show that movement and penetration were wide-spread ideas that could have easily affected the general understanding of how sound worked outside of the small group of physiologists actually writing on the topic. Empedokles of Sicily, a fifth-century philosopher, also thought soniferous air-waves struck and caused oscillation in some form of cartilage within the actual ear.¹¹ Empedokles called this cartilage a “fleshy bone” (σάρκινον ὄζον, Theophr. *Sens.* 9) like a bell or mouth of a trumpet (ὥσπερ γὰρ εἶναι κώδωνα, *ibid.*).¹² Soniferous air-

⁸ I would like to thank Dr. Albert Mudry, an editor of Adam Politzer's *History of Otology*, who shared some of his thoughts and work with me on the subject of hearing among the ancient Greek physiologists and philosophers. The most useful resource on ancient theories about the way that hearing physically took place is Theophrastos' *De Sensibus* (Stratton). See Diels' (1879) *Doxographi Graeci*. But see also Stratton (1964) for another edition with introduction.

⁹ Diels *Dox.* 506 frag. 23; and Theophr. *Sens.* 25. Though the term τὸ κοῖλον is also used (*ibid.*).

¹⁰ Alkmaion 5 (Diels-Kranz). Cf. Beare 1906: 94. On the role of the brain in Alkmaion's psychology, see Lo Presti 2009.

¹¹ Diels *Dox.* 406a-b for Plut. *Epit.* iv 16 and Stob. *Ecl.* 53. For a confirmation of Beare's interpretation, see Long 1966: 265.

¹² Beare 1906: 95. It is unclear what exactly Empedokles is referring to; Beare, however, argues convincingly that Empedokles was referring to something within the inner ear, though he admits that Empedokles betrays no

waves were created by ἀπόρροιαί (flowings-off of sound), which he argued entered the air from the object and, thereafter, entered into the πόροι (access passages or pores) of the perceiver.¹³ Once the ἀπόρροιαί entered the ears, Empedokles felt that perception was a case of like being interpreted by like.¹⁴ Beare, a classical translator of one the more important treatises on the senses to come down to us from antiquity (Theophrastos' *de Sensibus*, which gathered now lost works like Empedokles'), extrapolates that in the case of hearing this meant that when the ἀπόρροιαί of sound waves in the air entered into the "pores" of the ear, the air from outside (like) met the air that was inside the ear (like), the meeting of which must have somehow been responsible for the resonance of the gong.¹⁵ Likewise, according to Demokritos of Abdera, an atomist philosopher born approximately 460 BCE, sound (φωναί, Theophr. *Sens.* 55), which he conceived of as a stream of atoms, was given off by the sonant body with the result that it then caused the atoms in the air that were similar in shape and size to move with the atoms from the sonant body. From there, the sound atoms and the like atoms from the air were carried through the air to the ear where the atoms came into contact with the atoms of the soul.¹⁶ Finally,

awareness of the specific structure of the inner ear, as it is known today (95). Cf. Stratton (1964), who argues that the term should be read as a "trumpet-bell" (167). On Empedokles' use of simile to explicate the process of hearing, see Baltussen 2006. Empedokles never explains how the internal sound – the one from the gong – is heard.

¹³ Andriopoulos 1972: 290. Cf. Theophr. *Sens.* 8 for the term ἀπόρροιαί. The ἀπόρροιαί that entered the πόροι had to be the appropriate size; they had to match the size of the πόροι in order to be perceived. If the former were too small, they would get lost within the πόροι and not be perceived; if they were too large, they would not fit within the πόροι and would not be perceived.

¹⁴ Theophrastos classifies Empedokles' theory as operating on the principle of like-by-like in his *de Sensibus*. Cf. Long 1966: 259. According to Theophrastus, Parmenides too attributed cognition/sensation to the general theory of "like-by-like" (*Sens.* 3-4). Aryeh Finkelberg (1986) argued convincingly that in Parmenidean doctrine this concept, like-by-like, reflects the general Parmenidean dualism, that the universe is unchanging and that the universe is a mixture of two forms: night and light. Parmenides demonstrated that a man cognizes the true unchanging nature of the universe, of Being, when the ratio of night and light in the man is the same, just as it is in the universe. This is the proper cognition/sensation based on like-by-like, as the man's ratio of light and night is like the universe's. When, however, the ratio is different, a man perceives the mixture and not the unchanging nature of the universe. Consequently, he knows and perceives incorrectly. On the connection between Theophrastos' description of Empedokles' theory and his reconstruction of Parmenides', see Laks 1990.

¹⁵ Beare 1906: 98.

¹⁶ Theophr. *Sens.* 19, 55. Baldes (1975) suggests, however, that "Theophrastus' account of the teaching of Democritus on hearing at *De Sensibus* 55...is only really concerned about what goes on at the percipient in this process of hearing, not about how the sound travels to the ear. We need to rely on other sources of information for an account of Democritus' teaching on the transmission of sound to the percipient," (99, n. 11). On the meaning of "stream of atoms," see Beare 1906: 102. On the atoms of sound engaging with those of the soul, see English 1917:

according to Diogenes of Apollonia, a fifth-century theorist, hearing is the result of an external impression, given off by the sound object, which enters and starts in motion the air of the ear; this air then transmits the motion to the brain.¹⁷ The air in the ear was especially important in Diogenes' conception because he felt that this air was the "[...] real agent in perception—being a tiny fragment of divinity."¹⁸ Though the details of each theory vary, it is clear that to all these theorists, sound is carried, sound moves from the outside to the inside of the body for these theorists just as, I hope to show, it does within the tragic space of the *Elektra*.

But hearing is more than simply dynamic movement; it is an intrusive movement from outside to inside. In every case, sound entered the body; in Alkmaion, sound entered the κενόν, in Empedokles, the gong, in Demokritos, the soul and in Diogenes, the brain. According to Padel, though, hearing is not only an invasive movement; it is an attack to which the listener is vulnerable through their ears. This too, this forcefulness can be seen in the ancient physiologists as well. Already in the thought of Empedokles, hearing is caused by a strike on the ear forceful enough to cause the gong to oscillate. Plato explained that in sense-perception perceptive awareness is directed towards both the effect of sensation on the body and towards what such an effect reveals about the external object.¹⁹ In other words, sensation arose when "impinging

21-2. On the ontological status of the atoms, see O'Keefe 1997. The atomist view of Demokritos is the result of his belief that touch was the universal sense; all sense-perception was, at its core, the result of contact (English 1917: 217, 221). For a catalogue of passages in fifth-century Athenian tragedy that connect the ears and the soul, see Wille 2001: 299-309 (in particular, Wille points to Soph. *OT* 726 on p. 300 and *Trach.* 1044 on p. 304).

¹⁷ Theophr. *Sens.* 40. Cf. Beare 1906: 105; Diels 1879: 406. See Beare for the possibility that Theophrastos inserted the idea that the brain was the final destination of the movement; Beare suggests that Diogenes would have conceived of the movement being taken up by the air vessels in the brain and then transmitted to the heart, which Diogenes believed was the seat of thought and perception (1906: 105). On the similarities between Demokritos' and Diogenes' atomism, see Tasch 1949. Anaxagoras of Klazomenai, a fifth-century natural scientist and philosopher who lived in Athens, envisaged the process of hearing as one in which sound entered into the brain; the brain, in turn, was imagined as a large cavity enclosed by bone (Theophr. *Sens.* 27-8). On Theophrastos' presentation of Anaxagoras, see Warren 2007.

¹⁸ Stratton 1917: 101-103. Cf. Theophr. *Sens.* 40-42.

¹⁹ Plato's main account of the senses is found in the *Timaeus* 67a-c. Theophrastos' summary of Plato's account is, therefore, based on the *Timaeus*. But, unlike the other philosophers discussed, Plato's work survives on its own and is, thus, not represented solely in the later work of Theophrastos. For a discussion of the discrepancies between Plato's *Timaeus* and Theophrastos' account of it in *de Sensibus*, see McDiarmid 1959. See further Long 1996; he suggests that in some places the accounts are similar, but that in others Theophrastos is unclear and even misleading.

external bodies” caused *pathê* or physical changes in the body of the perceiver.²⁰ Plato argued that “hearing [arises] through the operation of vocal sound, for vocal sound is a shock [πληγή], communicated by the air through the ears to the brain and blood, till it reaches the soul;²¹ and the motion [κίνησις], caused by this shock, proceeding from the head to the liver, is hearing.”²² Sound is a *πληγή* that causes *κίνησις*.²³ The air Plato speaks of is given off by a sonant body and moves like a projectile towards the ear.²⁴ These projectiles, these “impinging external bodies,” are reminiscent of the *ἀπόρροιαί* of Empedokles and Democritus’ stream of atoms. We can easily read “violence” and “intrusion” into the descriptive diction “impinging” and “changes,” especially given that the choice of *πληγή* to describe the action of these sounds highlights the violence of the sonant stimulus. Finally the use of *κίνησις* to describe the impinging missiles is suggestive once again of an intrusive movement into the body from the outside space that has characterized all the theories of hearing investigated. I shall argue below that violence is an important characteristic of the movement of hearing in the *Elektra* as well.

Though a little outside the appropriate timeline, two more theorists provide excellent support for this principle of forceful intrusion in hearing. Aristotle proposed that hearing was the result of a

²⁰ Ganson 2005: 1. Cf. Plato’s *Tht.* 186c, *Ti.* 42a, 67b, *Phlb* 33d. For the Plato’s approach to the senses in the Socratic dialogue *Tht.*, see Lee 1999, Day 1997 and Modrak 1981. For a discussion of the sense object in Plato’s conception of perception, see Yolton 1949.

²¹ For the role of the ears in Plato, see Burnyeat 1976: 29, 33, 40, *et passim*. Burnyeat argues that, for Plato, one did not hear with but through the ears: “[t]he ears, for one, are naturally treated as apertures or orifices in the body through which sounds are heard and naturally described in terms which bring out the spatial force of the preposition *dia*/-a simple example is Plato speaking of a flute pouring music into the soul through the ears as if through a funnel (Rep. 411 a; cf. Aesch. Cho. 56, 451, Soph. O.T. 1386-7, frag. 773 Nauck, Pl.Phdr. 235d, Soph. 234c)” (40).

²² Beare 1906: 106. Cf. Pl. *Ti.* 67b. For Plato, the soul perceives via the sensory organs (cf. Beare 106). In particular, while it was the body that contained the power of perception, the actual act of perception belonged to the mind (on this, see further Cooper 1970).

²³ Pl. *Ti.* 67b: τὴν ἀκοήν, δι’ ἧς αἰτίας τὰ περὶ αὐτὸ συμβαίνει παθήματα, λεκτέον. ὅλως μὲν οὖν φωνὴν θῶμεν τὴν δι’ ὧτων ὑπ’ ἀέρος ἐγκεφάλου τε καὶ αἵματος μέχρι ψυχῆς πληγὴν διαδιδόμενην, τὴν δὲ ὑπ’ αὐτῆς κίνησιν, ἀπὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς μὲν ἀρχομένην, τελευτῶσαν δὲ περὶ τὴν τοῦ ἥπατος ἕδραν, ἀκοήν (Burnet).

²⁴ On this idea, see Nakhnikian 1955/56. The speed at which the air moved was relative to the acuteness of the sound as the more acute the sound the faster the projected air moved (Beare 1906: 109-10). There is a distinct objectification inherent in the Greek physiologists of sound, which we might compare to the objectification of sound by the invention of sound recording machines. This is the subject of Sterne’s work (2003: 10-13).

blow (πληγή) struck and carried by the air to the ear.²⁵ The ear, in turn, had a chamber or air-cell built into it; there was also a space in the occiput, to which a direct channel from the ears existed, and which was also full of air.²⁶ Sound, carried by air, moved along this channel from the ear to the occiput where hearing took place. Similarly, the early fourth-century philosopher Theophrastos, who has already been mentioned, held that hearing involved three stages: “first a blow (a necessary element of the process [...]) occurs which shapes the air near the ear...next a movement is passed on through the medium of the outside air to the air inside; and finally the movement is interpreted by the sensitive part of the soul.”²⁷ Unique to Theophrastos’ conception is the correspondence of the motion of the inner air to the motion of the outer air by means of which one perceives.²⁸ In sum, the physiology of hearing for the Ancient Greeks physiologists and philosophers was bound up with the idea of movement and the violent intrusion of sound as some kind of blow upon the “innards” of the body.

Hearing in the ancient philosophers, especially in Plato and Aristotle, is a violent *πληγή*, a *pathê*-inducing blow, which strikes into the body and is never stopped. The ears are simply a *πόροι* through which air directs the sonic assault. Sound strikes (*βάλλει*) and drives (*τέτραινε*) through the ears (*δι’ ὠτων*) leaving the auditor stricken (*πέπληγμαι*). Sounds moves into the *κενόν*, the invisible innards, of the body.²⁹ Here, we need to turn from an engagement with the ancient physiologists to one with fifth-century Athenian tragedy and, ultimately, the *Elektra*. For those components and movements are mimicked in fifth-century Athenian tragedy in the binarism between inside and outside and in the points of contact between them, such as the *skene* doors or

²⁵ Beare 1906: 112. Aristotle dealt with hearing in a number of works: *Tim.*, *De an.* 2-3, *Hist. an.*, *Part. an.*, *Sens.* and [*De audib.*]. Of particular interest to Aristotle was how we perceive that we perceive. On this, see Osborne 1983.

²⁶ Cf. Arist. *Part. an.* 656b.

²⁷ Baltussen 2000: 85. Stratton (1964) suggests that Theophrastos’ view of hearing was similar to his view of smell because both had some connection to the air; in smelling, the air changed and became mixed, while in the case of hearing, the air had taken on some form or figure (33). Theophrastos lived between approximately 370 BCE and 279 BCE (Baltussen 2000: 11). On the influence of Aristotle on Theophr. *Sens.*, see Mansfeld 1996.

²⁸ Stratton 1964: 34.

²⁹ For an alternative view of fifth-century Athenian tragedy as engaging with the voice as a form of distancing from the body, see Murnaghan 1987-1988. The conceptual distance between oft ignored body and substitute voice might be negated by a consideration of the voice’s impact on the body through the ears.

the *eisodoi*. Tragic scholarship has often examined the dichotomy of outside and inside.³⁰ The area behind the *skene*, which often represents a home of some kind, is the “inside” space; the *eisodoi* lead to the “outside,” which includes the *polis*; and the stage itself is the κενόν where these dichotomous forces collide.³¹ The door to the façade, consequently, serves as an ear-like threshold through which sound can pass, even when visually closed and barring any visual contact between these two spaces.³² And, with the façade seen as a barrier between stage and inside, the *eisodoi* become what connects the stage to the “outside.”

The tensions between inside and outside are a subject taken up by D.M. Carter in his investigation of the *oikos* / *polis* dichotomy.³³ He shows that the dichotomies of *oikos* versus *polis* as well as those of *oikos* and *polis* as opposed to “the outside world” are reflected in the structure of the stage.³⁴ The door separates the *oikos* and the *polis*, while the *oikos/polis* is marked off from the “outside world” by the *eisodoi*. Therefore, dramatic characters who appear from the stage building or the *eisodoi* are moving from one sphere, be it domestic, private, public or political into another and, in the process, they convey certain messages from these scenic arrangements.³⁵

Though the contrast between inside and outside need not necessarily be based on the *oikos* and *polis* opposition and, in fact, Easterling argues the inside and outside contrast in the *Elektra* is

³⁰ A particularly good discussion on the inside/outside dichotomy is found in Padel 1990. An account of the history of this discussion can be found in Wiles 1999: 166-168. Wiles prefers to—and argues that tragedy after Aeschylus’ *Oresteia* prefers to—focus on the significance of the centre (esp. 174).

³¹ For a discussion of the performance space, see Reverman 2006a: 107-115.

³² Cf. Padel 1990: 354-56; Taplin 1978: 33-5, 46-7, 105, 136. For a discussion of entrances generally, see also Reverman 2006a: 132-39.

³³ The inside/outside opposition is often formulated as one between the *oikos* and *polis*, and this, in turn, has often been the subject of scholarly investigation. On politics and the stage, see further Ober and Strauss 1990; Knox 1983; Carter 2007; Winkler 1990; von Reden 1998. Cf. Zeitlin 2009; C. Segal 1981: 152-206, 207-48; Rosivach 1979; Hogan 1979; Goldhill 1986: ch. 3-4, 7-8. The *oikos*, generally represented by the façade on stage, is generally considered the woman’s domain. Xenophon, in fact, made it a biological imperative for women to stay indoors, one designed by the gods so that mankind could have, maintain and protect the shelter that it required to survive (See *Oec.* 7.18-26. See also Arist. *Pol.* I.1260a; Aesch. *Sept.* 181-20). But in fifth-century Athenian tragedy, women come onto the stage and bring the world of the *oikos* with them into conflict with the outside world.

³⁴ Carter 2007: 74.

³⁵ *Ibid.*: 74. In particular, Carter suggests the political message that “the city is the perennial survivor” (78) of the violent acts of fifth-century Athenian tragedy, which are always acted off stage.

not based on a political division; the important point is that a potential, and perhaps generically inevitable, conflict is built into the very structure of the theatre.³⁶ The stage cannot help but become a locus for collision between the forces of outside and inside because the stage is designed in such a way that all entry and exit ways, *eisodoi* and skene door, lead to or from it. One of the actions or forces that moves through the threshold or along the *eisodoi* is hearing; for hearing serves as a suitable model and mechanism for this almost unconscious mobility and forcefulness because hearing itself is both mobile and forceful. We need only consider the voice of an arriving character, as the titular Philoktetes calls out at line 251, or the cries of agony, as Klytaimnestra screams out in this very play, to understand that these are all effective moments of aurality, wherein the sonant stimulus is travelling from one space to another, to the stage where characters can *hear* and react to the sounds that meet them.³⁷ The physiologists conceived of the sonant stimulus as a forceful movement through a brain-door, the ears, to the seat of perception in a way strikingly analogous to the way that Sophokles does. Thanks to the fact that the spatial layout of the stage and the ancient physiology of hearing are homologous, Sophokles is able to use the stage as a metaphor for the human body and the process of aural perception. Both the body and the tragic space are characterized by movement, especially acoustic, between the inner and outer spaces.

Yet, the *Elektra* reverses the conventional spatial associations at key points. What should be outside is inside; what should be inside is outside.³⁸ Behind the *skene*, in the inside space of the *oikos*, exists the external source of hearing. Sounds, like the cries of Klytaimnestra, often escape from behind the façade, sourceless save for a vague sense of direction that tells us that these noises came from “out there.” And they pierce from out there into the *orchêstra*. If the space behind the façade, though, is “out there,” how do we conceive of the space onstage? The stage is generally considered a kind of “outside” in opposition to the interior of the house and is even designed to be conceived that way; it is the outside of the façade. In the Sophoklean *Elektra*, the opening speech of the Paidagogos defines this stage and surrounding area as outside:

³⁶ Easterling 1987: 21.

³⁷ On *Phil.* 251, see p. 65.

³⁸ On inside and outside space in the *Elektra*, see Easterling 1987: 19 ff. Easterling points to the inside/outside contrast as one that points not to an “exploration of gender distinctions or the relation of *oikos* and *polis*” but to the physical positioning of the heroine vis-à-vis the house and its evils (21).

τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν Ἄργος οὐπόθεις τόδε,
τῆς οἰστροπλῆγος ἄλσος Ἰνάχου κόρης;
αὕτη δ', Ὀρέστα, τοῦ λυκοκτόνου θεοῦ
ἀγορὰ Λύκειος: οὐξ ἀριστερᾶς δ' ὄδε
Ἦρας ὁ κλεινὸς ναός: οἱ δ' ἰκάνομεν,
φάσκειν Μυκήνας τὰς πολυχρύσους ὄραν
πολύφθορόν τε δῶμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε (4-10).

Here, the ancient Argos you desire, the hallowed precinct of the gad-fly stung daughter of Inachus; and there, Orestes, the Lykeian market of the wolf-slaying god; on the left, this here is the famous temple of Hera; here where we've come, believe that you see Mykenai, rich in gold, and here the house of Pelopids, utterly ruined.

This is a space from which you can look towards the Lykeian Marketplace, the temple of Hera and *to* the house, drenched with blood and representative of the “inside.”³⁹ But that is the visual relationship of the stage to the façade; the aural relationship is different. I am arguing that, if the sounds, particularly those of Klytaimnestra's death, escape onto the stage, then, following the acoustic model of contemporary physiologists they must come from an “outside” space to an “inside” space. This inside space is actually the stage, which functions in an analogous fashion to the inside space of the body in receiving sound. In other words, the stage is the κενόν, the empty space within the body, where the perceptive mind or soul awaits in order to process that sound. If true, then, the perceptive character on stage, whoever is listening to those sounds, becomes a physical representation of the act of perception when he or she or they enact the process of listening and understanding. They become the invaded ear and the reciprocating mouthpiece for the acts of perception that occur on stage and, perhaps, in the audience. This, in turn, allows the playwright to demonstrate the effects that the violent intrusions of sound's impinging missiles have on the perceptive body.

As noted, there are two key moments in Sophokles' *Elektra* where this spatial reversal reflects the violent intrusion of hearing and allows, unconsciously, an awareness of the effect and impact

³⁹ For an alternative reading of the way *Elektra*'s voice defines this space—as one that is both the house and chthonic—, see Nooter 2012: 109-110. For a rejection of the idea that space can be abstracted, see Wiles 1999: 168. In response to but also in support of this theory, Wiles argues of Aeschylus' trilogy that “[t]he house cannot be construed as a symbol for part of the self in the *Oresteia* because it has its own material and animate identity, as vividly rendered as any of the ‘characters’ played by masked actors” (169). Yet he also notes the fluidity of the associations between specific places and concepts such as “inside/outside” in his treatment of Euripides' *Elektra* (169-170). For the way that Sophokles creates and confuses the audience's expectations with this scene-painting speech, see Dunn 2006: 184-200.

sound has on the inside space of the body: the entrance of Elektra and the death of Klytaimnestra. As the prologue comes to a close, the Paidagogos, Orestes and the audience hear Elektra approaching: καὶ μὴν θυρῶν ἔδοξα προσπόλων τινὸς / ὑποστενούσης ἔνδον αἰσθέσθαι (in truth I think I perceived some groaning girl among the servants within, from the doors, 78-79).⁴⁰ Ringer has noted that the mute presence of Pylades up to this point and his speaking roles in other versions of the tragedy might cause the audience to assume “that all three actors are presently engaged onstage as the three men plot their intrigue in the orchestra. Elektra’s offstage cry at 77 startles the spectators.”⁴¹ One actor, Elektra, is still within the house, not yet outside but already announcing her presence aurally.⁴² Her cries reach the acoustic space of the stage, emptying into the κενόν, the void, of the stage where Orestes, Pylades and the Paidagogos are ready to enact the process of listening as that perceptive part of the body that exists only within the void. Ringer suggests that because Elektra is linked with birds through the figure of Itys,⁴³ her opening cries are somehow representative of empty sounds, a verbal pattern of emptiness suggestive of the meaninglessness of words.⁴⁴ We might infer from this a reflection of the common theory of perception: like-by-like.⁴⁵ The void into which the empty sounds of Elektra escape is empty space. Though the sounds are empty of sense and the stage of people, still it can be argued that the hearing here is like-by-like: empty sounds enter emptiness as Elektra’s sounds cause the men to leave, leaving the stage physically “empty,” bereft of a listening body. Whether

⁴⁰ Cf. Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 78: “θυρῶν is perhaps best taken as denoting the quarter whence the sound strikes the ear.” For a catalogue of cries from within, see Wille 2001: 228-229. On the use of the “noise-convention” to indicate the arrival of another character in fifth-century Athenian tragedy, see Poe 1992: 134-135. On these cries and the response as a manner of orientating the geographic space acoustically, see Wille 2001: 287-88, fn. 879.

⁴¹ Ringer 1998: 143.

⁴² Kells (1973) notes that “[t]he sound [of Elektra’s cries] contrasts vividly and dramatically with the prosaic iambic trimeters that have preceded and are to follow” (*ad* 77-120). For the lines as spoken rather than sung catalectic anapaestic, see Finglass 2007: *ad loc.*

⁴³ On Elektra’s sounds and the birds, see Nooter 2011: 404. She also notes that Elektra’s use of “ἠχώ (“sound, echo”) is the same...used in Philoctetes by the chorus (*Phil.* 189) when they imagine echoes as the sole pathetic answer to Philoctetes’ bitter cries of grief [and that] Electra experiences a similar sense of solitude, but she does not construe ἠχώ as an answer to her voice, so much as her voice itself” (405). If Nooter is correct and Elektra’s voice is itself an echo, the sense of the emptiness of her “sound” is strengthened by the sourceless reverberations in empty space of that echo.

⁴⁴ Ringer 1998: 145. For more on the birds, see Segal 1966: 492.

⁴⁵ See ch. 1 fn 14.

we are willing to infer so much, it remains true that there, in the κενόν of the stage, the empty sounds of Elektra's lament all but strike at the perceptive Orestes.⁴⁶

Orestes is pierced by the sound and propelled into contemplation of her cries the way a sudden noise behind you can force your head to turn and wonder about the source: ἄρ' ἐστὶν ἡ δύστηνος Ἠλέκτρα; θέλεις / μείνωμεν αὐτοῦ κάπακούσωμεν γόων; (Is it perhaps wretched Elektra? Should we wait here and listen to her laments? 80-81).⁴⁷ Nooter argues that “the sound of Elektra precedes the greater part of her speech and has a notable effect on its onstage listeners” and that “...her first cry (ἰὼ μοί μοι δύστηνος “ahh, wretched me!” 77), heard (presumably) from offstage, is enough to throw Orestes from the plan he outlined only moments ago.”⁴⁸ The offstage location from which these cries arrive is the first thing that the Paidagogos notes (μὴν θυρῶν, 78). In fact, καὶ μὴν θυρῶν is the first thing the Paidagogos says; the placement at the beginning of the line highlights their importance. The implicit violence of this scene is discernable in the male characters' flight.⁴⁹ That is to say, the sound of her cry, pushing past the façade onto the stage, is an intense infringement on Orestes, Pylades, the Paidagogos, their planning and the space in which they do it.

The implicit *violence* of Elektra's cries and the violence they can enact on the perceptive beings on stage is further reinforced by the content of those cries. Nooter relates the sound of Elektra's laments to the modern Greek tradition of antiphonal lament. Seremetakis' description of antiphonal lament is worth noting.⁵⁰ Seremetakis refers to “the *violence* [my italics] of singing

⁴⁶ Ringer 1998: 145.

⁴⁷ Finglass (2007) discusses the reading of the verb ἐπακούω here and notes that this verb is oft used as “overhear” in fifth-century Athenian tragedy, “which is exactly the sense we require” (*ad* 81). I might, however, suggest that the use of this verb to indicate listening generally is another possible reading of this line. Cf. Aesch. *Cho.* 725 and Soph. *OT* 708. On the history and uses of γόος, see Alexiou 2002: 102-103.

⁴⁸ Nooter 2011: 403.

⁴⁹ Nooter (2012) has commented on this scene as follows: “Elektra's voice alone has the power to maintain the past as a threatening present...” (106). The threat inherent in Elektra's cries is aimed more at Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos than Orestes, yet the violence done by her cries affects all. The resulting movement off-stage or her aural action is hardly an uncommon connection, as Poe (2003: 426-9) in his exhaustive study on action and words in fifth-century Athenian tragedy has shown. Words are constantly connected with the physical movement of the actors.

⁵⁰ Seremetakis (1991) is the basis for Nooter's understanding of antiphonal lament. But see also Foley 2001. On antiphonal lament, its structure and uses, cf. Alexiou 2002: 131-160, esp. 132.

becom[ing] too dangerous for the singer” and suggests that the result of this violence is a consolatory lament, in which “the consoling singer attempts to establish an antiphonic relation to the *acoustic violence* [my italics] of the first singer.”⁵¹ As in the case of retaliatory violence for *hybris* suffered, the violence of the Elektran lament forces a reciprocating and consolatory lament on the part of the chorus according to Nooter.⁵² But before the chorus even arrive on stage, Orestes, Pylades and the Paidagogos are affected by the violence of her cries. The violent content of these cries intensifies their aural assault. So they flee before a *pathê*-inducing πληγή can strike at them (βάλλει), before her laments can drive through their ears (τέτραινε...δι’ ὄτων) and cause them to change their course of action; for such an aural onslaught would destroy their hopes of νίκη (85) and perhaps place them, if we wish to push the analogy so far, in the place of the defeated Klytaimnestra of the play’s finale: struck dead (πέπληγμαι, 1415).⁵³ Victory for these men is in striking the blow, not in being struck. The result of this aural transgression and violation of both characters and space, then, is their being—as Nooter phrased it—“thrown” from the innards of the stage.

Before continuing, it is important to elaborate on the nature of the “implicit” violence of Elektra’s cries; for this, I will turn to the effect her cries have on Aigisthos and Klytaimnestra.⁵⁴ The Queen, on her first entrance on stage, complains that Elektra is outside voicing her complaints to *many* people:

καίτοι πολλὰ πρὸς πολλούς με δὴ
 ἐξεῖπας ὡς θρασεῖα καὶ πέρα δίκης
 ἄρχω, καθυβρίζουσα καὶ σὲ καὶ τὰ σά:
 ἐγὼ δ’ ὕβριν μὲν οὐκ ἔχω, κακῶς δέ σε
 λέγω κακῶς κλύουσα πρὸς σέθεν θαμά (520-24).

And yet you have said of me many times and to many people that I am rash and rule outside the law, violently abusing you and yours. But I have no *hybris*; I speak badly of you *because* I have heard wicked things about myself so often from you.

⁵¹ Seremetakis 1991: 119.

⁵² Nooter 2011: 407-8. On antiphonal lament and the chorus’ roles, cf. Nooter 2012: 110-111, 114.

⁵³ On the murder of Klytaimnestra, see p. 37.

⁵⁴ For an alternate view of the mourning of Elektra as something inflicted on Elektra by her enemies, see Seaford 1985: 319.

Elektra's public displays, her complaints to many people, are a type of *hybris* (καθυβρίζουσα).⁵⁵ *Hybris* is a sort of wanton violence that is often connected to pride of strength, passion, or insolence. In his article "Hybris in Athens," MacDowell described *hybris* as follows:

The characteristic results are...eating and drinking, sexual activity, larking about, hitting and killing, taking other people's property and privileges, jeering at people, and disobeying authority both human and divine. The causes are ones which produce energy or make a person, as we say, 'full of himself', and inclined to indulge his own desires and wishes without respecting the wishes, rights, and commands of other people. The results are actions which are, at the best, useless, and in most cases definitely wrong. Hybris is therefore having energy or power and misusing it self-indulgently.⁵⁶

For MacDowell, this characteristic excess energy or power is the mindset from which acts of *hybris* arise.⁵⁷ But *hybris* is also "the title of a legal action that can be brought by 'anyone who wishes' (*ho boulomenos*), under the so-called *graphe* procedure, and is a charge which carries any penalty which a jury cares to impose."⁵⁸ One of the most common types of resulting offences that can be tried by the "*graphe* procedure" was aural: verbal insults. This is the type of *hybris* that Elektra displays.⁵⁹

According to MacDowell "...numerically the most frequent sense of *hybris*...in Sophokles [is] 'jeering' or crowing over an enemy."⁶⁰ In Athens and Attic law "abusive words (*λοιδορία*) made

⁵⁵ On the connotations of this line, see Hogan 1991: *El. ad* 521-23.

⁵⁶ MacDowell 1976: 21. For a comparison of MacDowell's and Fisher's (1992) views on *hybris*, see Cairns 1996: esp. 32. Fisher (2005) argues for an intimate connection between *hybris* and bodily violence in sexual contexts that could reinforce by analogy the connection between verbal abuse and bodily violence in *hybris*.

⁵⁷ MacDowell (1976) reviews the evidence on *hybris* and determines that it manifests itself in animals with high spirits like donkeys and horses, that it is associated with youthfulness in humans, and that it is related in some fashion to excessive eating and drinking, satiety (*koros*), excessive wealth, sexual lust, larking about, fighting and doing physical harm to people, robbing people of possessions—especially due honours—, and "[a] further category of *hybris*...in which the offence consists purely of words or noise [my italics]" (20). Cf. Cairns 1996: 24-5; Fisher 1992: 91-93, 137.

⁵⁸ Fisher 1992: 36. See further Carey 1998: 95, 100. As Woodard (1964) has noted "[t]he language of the interchange seats us in the law courts; and the whole scene ultimately turns not so much on questions of substantive justice as on an examination of the debating process and of the use of speech as a mode of action" (183).

⁵⁹ For a description of the *hybris* of Elektra and Klytaimnestra in this play, see Fisher 1992: 298-302.

⁶⁰ MacDowell 1976: 22.

the speaker liable to a small summary fine (ἐπιβολή);”⁶¹ in particular, the term ἀνδροφόνος, referring to a manslayer such as Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos, is among the ἀπόρρητα or “forbidden abuses” for the use of which the penalty was 500 drachmas.⁶² Clay, who wrote on *hybris* in his article “Unspeakable Words in Greek Tragedy,” argues that such words are unacceptable and that tragic characters like Oidipous avoid their use, except in the height of emotional distress, because “[i]n Greek, words, even those expressing the truth, could be felt as sticks and stones...”.⁶³ Thus Elektra’s unspeakable words (ἀπόρρητα) are a reproach and offense that constitute a form of verbal attack or *hybris*, like sticks and stones. Previously, Klytaimnestra has responded to hearing (κλύουσα πρὸς σέθεν) these words about herself with words of her own (κακῶς δέ σε λέγω). The interplay of exchanging aural blows and the connection of these to *hybris* continues and strengthens the connection between violence and hearing within the play and reflects back on the opening scene, where the violence of Elektra’s sounds are equally applied to Orestes and those perceptive beings onstage with him and where the acoustic violence, which has imposed itself on the plotters, is perceptible in the almost forced flight of the men from the κενόν.⁶⁴

The second key scene that displays a violent movement of sound from the outside space behind the *skene* into the acoustic innards of the stage is the off-stage death of Klytaimnestra.⁶⁵ After

⁶¹ Smith s.v. “HYBRIS.” For the law (*graphe*) concerning *hybris*, see Demos. 21.47. For the connection between *hybris* and verbal actions, see Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1378b. See further, MacDowell 1976: 129-32.

⁶² Smith s.v. “APORRHE’TA.” Cf. Isoc. *Lochit.* 5; Dem. 23.50, Dem 21.32. See also Fisher 1992: 93. Technically, Klytaimnestra only claims that Elektra says πατήρ γάρ, οὐδὲν ἄλλο σοὶ πρόσχημ’ αἰεὶ / ὡς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τέθνηκεν (Your father—there’s no other pretext for you, just this—that he was slain by me, 525-6). Lysias 10, however, makes an interesting case for the idea that skirting around the use of the ἀπόρρητα is just as liable as slander containing the ἀπόρρητα (10.2-15). See further, MacDowell 1976: 126-9; Wallace 1993: 112-113 (fn. 15 & 16), 115-123.

⁶³ Clay 1982: 292-3; Cf. *Ibid.*: 277-84.

⁶⁴ The Paidagogos rejects the idea of staying (ἦκιστα, 82) and calls on them to leave, preventing a premature reunion. For a different distribution of lines in which Orestes rather than the Paidagogos calls on them not to listen, see Sandbach 1977: 71-3; for a discussion of the distribution that prefers the former, see Finglass 2007: *ad* 80-5. Goward (1999) says that “Orestes seems to intuit that it is his sister and suggests waiting to hear her lament, exactly as in *Choephoroe*. But his suggestion is in the form of a question, to which the Paedagogus’ resonant answer is *hékista*.” If they had stayed, such a scene would have been a reverse of the ending, where Elektra does stay and listen.

⁶⁵ On the “traditional” parts of an off-stage cry, see Arnott 1982: 38. He identifies 7 main parts: (1) the cry from behind the *skene*, (2) an onstage character or the leader of the chorus calls attention to the cry, (3) the cry is repeated, (4) the crier is identified, (5) somebody refers to the accomplishment of the violence, (6) the chorus may suggest

Orestes, the Paidagogos, and Elektra enter the house and cross the visual boundary of the *skene* to kill Klytaimnestra, Elektra suddenly and surprising returns to the stage. Her return and function mirrors an earlier scene: the Paidagogos' return. She will keep watch at the liminal threshold of the door to try to trap the sounds of Klytaimnestra's death and prevent Aigisthos from learning about the plot before he too is trapped (φρουρήσουσ' ὅπως / Αἴγισθος <ἡμᾶς> μὴ λάθῃ μολῶν ἔσω, 1402-3).⁶⁶ Unlike the Paidagogos, however, Elektra's positioning will place her on the stage, in the κενόν, instead of behind the *skene*.⁶⁷

It is important to take a moment to consider the earlier return of the Paidagogos in order to facilitate a comparison with the off-stage death of Klytaimnestra. When Orestes returns to the stage, he is disguised as a Phokian bearing an urn supposedly filled with Orestes' ashes. Now Orestes will finally face the aural scene the Paidagogos delayed at the opening of the tragedy when he urged Orestes and Pylades off the stage at the aural approach of Elektra. The result is a public lamentation (1126 ff) at the sight and the sound of which Orestes reveals his true identity; the recognition scene follows.⁶⁸ Once Elektra is convinced of the truth of Orestes' words, she continues to make noise.⁶⁹ This time, she is celebrating rather than mourning, but the resulting din is the same. In response, Orestes attempts to silence her: *πάρεσμεν: ἀλλὰ σῖγ' ἔχουσα πρόσμενε* (we are here together; but be quiet and wait, 1236).⁷⁰ He is afraid that his *νίκη* will be lost if he is overheard within the house: *σιγᾶν ἄμεινον, μὴ τις ἔνδοθεν κλύῃ* (It's better to be silent so that no one inside hears, 1238).⁷¹ The spatial relations of “inside” and “outside”

intervention and (7) somebody confirms the death of the crier. The *Elektra* of Sophokles is unique for its manipulation of the “standard form” through staging.

⁶⁶ Kells (1973) suggests that there are military overtones to φρουρέω (*ad* 73f); if this true, then the use of this terminology is another way in which Elektra is co-opted into the masculine world.

⁶⁷ Cf. Goward 1999: 34. She notes that her position, nearer the stage building than the chorus, allows her to pass on whatever she might hear.

⁶⁸ For an excellent reading of her lament as one that is able through a variety of means to overwhelm Orestes, see Nooter 2012: 113-117.

⁶⁹ See Nooter (2012: 118-119) for a discussion of her joy as “an exact transposition of her lamentation” (118).

⁷⁰ On this type of aural scene generally, see Wille 2001: 227.

⁷¹ See p. 44.

acoustic space in this scene are obviously not as clear as those in the off-stage murder. They are, at least partially, opposite—a fact I will address later. After his continued failures to silence Elektra, Orestes suddenly hears the sound of someone within the *skene* (σιγᾶν ἐπήνεσ' ὡς ἐπ' ἐξόδῳ κλύω / τῶν ἔνδοθεν χωροῦντος, 1322-3).⁷² For just a moment there is a foreboding sense of dread that Orestes' plans are ruined because the “impinging missiles” of Elektra's cries have pierced the house and will result in the violence of defeat.⁷³ He is going to be caught and killed; Elektra is going to be exiled and entombed. It is not until the Paidagogos speaks that the threat of violence passes. It is a dramatic moment.

When the Paidagogos does speak, he too articulates his concern over the noise that Elektra and Orestes have been making on stage. He warns them that the only reason that they have not been caught is his vigilance: ἀλλ' εἰ σταθμοῖσι τοῖσδε μὴ κύρουν ἐγὼ / πάλαι φυλάσσων, ἦν ἂν ὑμῖν ἐν δόμοις / τὰ δρώμεν' ὑμῶν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ σώματα (But if I had not long been guarding and in charge of these here doors, your actions would have been in the house long before your bodies, 1331-3). The Paidagogos guards the ear-like πόρος of the door, intercepting the ἀπόρροιαι of Elektra's cries and Orestes' words.⁷⁴ He is an acoustic buffer, who positions himself in a key space between the actors on stage and the threat posed within.⁷⁵ According to Aristotle, sound waves are not, like light, confined to straight lines in their movement.⁷⁶ They are able to be deflected and to take indirect paths, thus diffusing and becoming weaker. The Paidagogos' self-positioning then creates an obstacle in the path of their sounds; but his position merely deflects and weakens them before they reach Klytaimnestra rather than blocks them entirely. To put it

⁷² On the ambiguity over who speaks these lines (1322-5), see Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990: *ad* 1322-5. They suggest that it is likely but not certain that chorus speak these lines. Jebb (1892-1900), however, argues that “[a]lthough it is usually the Chorus that announces a new comer, it is best to follow the MSS. in ascribing these words to Orestes, who has already so often enjoined silence (1236, etc.). The ‘ἀντιλαβή’ in 1323 confirms the MSS., since a trimeter is seldom divided between the Chorus and another speaker” (*ad* 1322-1323). For support of Jebb's position, cf. Finglass 2007: *ad* 1322-5.

⁷³ Cf. Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990: *ad* 1322-5. They note that “the antilabe at 1322 is not surprising, for the announcement that someone is emerging from the palace creates a momentary tension.”

⁷⁴ And, as Jebb (1892-1900) notes, he watches the doors like “the watchers at the door of the armoury,” drawing attention to the similarity of this phrasing to *Od.* 22. 181 (τῶ δ' ἔσταν ἐκάτερθε παρὰ σταθμοῖσι μένοντε).

⁷⁵ Cf. Finglass (2007), who notes that “the partial rhyme sharpens the antithesis” (*ad* 1333).

⁷⁶ On sound moving through the air, see Arist. [*Pr.*] XI 49. The Paidagogos' role here seems to be in opposition to the norm of half-heard dialogue when characters are exiting or entering, though this is probably due to the fact that he is stationary inside the door, not moving through it (cf. Mastronarde 1979: 28-29).

another way, he is just an intermediate void between the source and the destination of the cries. As a result, the Paidagogos is just as worried about sounds as Orestes: *καὶ νῦν ἀπαλλαχθέντε τῶν μακρῶν λόγων / καὶ τῆς ἀπλήστου τῆσδε σὺν χαρᾷ βοῆς* (and now, leave off the long speeches and this insatiable shouting for joy, 1335-6). This intermediate figure, between sound source and sound destination, is familiar from other tragedies. In particular, the Phaidra of Euripides' *Hippolytos* is said to stand before the door (*παρὰ κλῆθρα*, Eur. *Hipp.* 577), where she listens to the sounds of the Nurse and Hippolytos' conversation. The chorus call on Phaidra to transmit those sounds, saying "that's your business, the reports sent from the house" (*σοὶ μέλει πομπίμα / φάτις δωμάτων*, 578-9).⁷⁷ The chorus force Phaidra to act as an aural go-between.

The staging of the murder of Klytaimnestra is a reversal of the Paidagogos' reentry. Sound, as in the prologue, moves onto stage from behind the façade rather than the movement from the stage to the façade seen during the Paidagogos' return. Moreover, this time Elektra is a watch-, or rather, an "ear-dog" onstage as she takes up an analogous position to the one the Paidagogos had before. She stands just before the door as the Paidagogos had stood just within the door; their positions are mirrored, a reflected duplication of each other on either side of the door. Her positioning is designed to allow her to deflect and weaken the blow of the sounds before they can reach the offstage Aigisthos. While Elektra is onstage keeping an ear out for Aigisthos, Orestes and Pylades are within. Klytaimnestra is about to be killed and begins shouting; Elektra, stationed at the door for this express purpose, hears her (*βοᾷ τις ἔνδον. οὐκ ἀκούετ', ὦ φίλαι*; 1406). She is physically and visually positioned deliberately so as to redirect the sounds of Klytaimnestra's death cries.⁷⁸ But, like Orestes before her, the heroine is struck by the sounds she hears from within the *skene* and reacts by questioning the source of the sounds and trying to share the act of hearing with the chorus onstage. Her words are likely accompanied by gestures, bodily acts that indicate where her attention has been drawn and likewise draw the attention of

⁷⁷ Cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 585-7: *ἴαν μὲν κλύω, σαφὲς δ' οὐκ ἔχω: / γεγώνει δ' οἶα / διὰ πύλας ἔμολεν / ἔμολε σοὶ βοά* (I hear a voice, it's not clear. What sort of cry makes itself heard, and comes, comes to you through the door).

⁷⁸ Cf. Lloyd 2005, who notes "[t]he overthrow of the usurpers is associated with a break-down of the boundary of inside and outside. This process begins with the Paedagogus listening from inside to the all-too-audible reunion of Orestes and Electra (1331-8). There is then the remarkable scene in which Electra stands at the door, and commentates on the murder of Clytemnestra taking place inside (1398-1421). Aegisthus throws open the door so that all the Mycenaeans and Argives can see what is within (1458-9). Finally, he is taken in to be killed, and the doors are closed once more" (63).

the chorus and the auditors to the façade. The chorus respond to Elektra by saying that they too hear the cries (ἤκουσ' ἀνήκουστα δύσ- / τανος, ὥστε φρῖξαι, 1406-7).⁷⁹ Unlike the Paidagogos and Orestes, they will not flee. Yet the sounds of her cries are described as ἀνήκουστα, “unhearable,” to them; the use of this term suggests that the chorus are and remain “unwilling auditors,” imposed upon by the ἀνήκουστα sounds of Klytaimnestra’s death.⁸⁰ And like the involuntary jump one makes at the sound of that car passing too close, the chorus too involuntarily shudder (φρῖξαι). At this point, Klytaimnestra cries out again and again Elektra responds: ἰδοὺ μάλ' αὖ θροεῖ τις (Look, someone cries out again! 1410). Elektra’s self-positioning on the stage as deflecting object is undermined by the fact that she draws our attention to the sound, helping it cross the threshold of the *skene* rather than opposing it. Instead of weakening the sounds, she amplifies them by drawing the audience’s attention to them. She is more akin to the “trumpet-mouth” (κώδων) of Empedokles, struck by soniferous air-waves and forced to oscillate, than a κενόν or deflecting object.⁸¹ She acts as a medium for sound, a medium that specifically enables sound to come from behind the visibly impenetrable façade of the *skene* outwards, not only along the *eisodoi* but also towards the seats in which the auditors listen.⁸² She is struck by the blow of the sound in much the way that Klytaimnestra is struck; and, being struck, she propels the sound from the innards of the stage, where the auditors have observed the impact of sound on both Elektra and the chorus, to the innards of the audience members’ bodies, whose attention she has directed to the sound the way our perceptive capabilities direct our attention to sudden noises.

Elektra not only directs herself to this sound, she responds, entering into an aural exchange with Klytaimnestra through the *skene*.⁸³ While Klytaimnestra is inside the house with Orestes, to

⁷⁹ Finglass (2007) notes that their “shuddering at Clytemnestra’s cry is...generically unexpected” (*ad* 1407).

⁸⁰ I will return to this oxymoron at p. 43.

⁸¹ On Empedokles’ theory of hearing, see p. 22.

⁸² Cf. above on the Phaidra of Euripides’ *Hippolytos*. We might also contrast the role of Elektra in Euripides’ *Orestes*. In this play, Elektra stations herself at the door to listen, but is unable to hear anything (οὐκ εἰσακούουσ', 1286). Instead, Elektra’s inability to hear the sounds of Helen’s death sparks a partly sung, partly spoken lament (1286-92).

⁸³ Contrast the use of offstage cries in other texts. For example, in the *Agamemnon*, the chorus deliberate ineffectually in response (1344 ff). As well, in the *Medeia*, the chorus note the sound (ἀκούεις βοῶν ἀκούεις τέκνων, 1273), and deliberate on entering the house in the following line but, ultimately, they choose this moment to

whom she is actually speaking, Elektra stands outside; but because the *skene* blocks Orestes from view and because he remains silent, it appears as though Klytaimnestra and Elektra are actually having an aural exchange and as though Elektra is directly involved in the matricide.⁸⁴ Here again we can witness the violence and intrusion of sound and the act of hearing. Despite the closed doors and the visual barrier of the façade, the sourceless sounds of Klytaimnestra's cries reach out to Elektra and produce several kinds of violence. Firstly, there is the externalized violence of Elektra's seeming murder of her mother. David Seale has pointed out the gruesome spectacle of this scene:

...it is not simply that we visualize the murder through the imagination of Elektra; she becomes involved in the off stage action, participates directly in the verbal exchange...on the auditory level the whole scene is enacted between Clytemnestra and Elektra along with the chorus, on the visual level we see only Elektra. The perpetrator of the deed is neither seen nor heard. This remarkable exploitation of the convention of off-stage violence breaks down the scenic compartments of interior and exterior with great effect.⁸⁵

Elektra becomes the murderer aurally. In hearing those cries, she calls on Orestes to kill their mother. When Klytaimnestra, in lines that echo the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, narrates a blow she has received (ὄμοι πέπληγμαί, 1415), Elektra commands that she be struck again (παῖσον, εἰ

compare Medea to Ino (1282-92). For a short discussion of the passage, see Arnott 1982: 39. On offstage cries in the *Eumenides* and *Hecuba*, see Flickinger 1939: 355-360.

⁸⁴ Cf. Ringer 1998: 200. This "conversation" between Elektra and her mother is all the more interesting because the roles of Orestes and Klytaimnestra would have been played by the same actor. With this detail in mind, the offstage cries of Klytaimnestra and Elektra's response to them gain an added strangeness. On the distribution of roles according to Ringer, cf. 131.

⁸⁵ Seale 1982: 74-75.

σθένεις, διπλῆν, 1415).⁸⁶ And, finally, Klytaimnestra, echoing the Aeschylean Agamemnon, cries out ὄμοι μάλ' αὐθις (1416).⁸⁷ Ringer points out:

Electra's order that Orestes strike a second blow, if he has the strength, suggests that Electra is empathizing so strongly with the act of murder that she almost believes herself to be striking the deadly blows. The actor playing Electra might well be performing a violent gesture to enact the offstage murder as a visual counterpoint to the sounds of the killing. In this way, the audience both "hears" and "sees" Electra killing her mother.⁸⁸

Nor is this perception created by word and action alone; the use of *antilabe*, as Goward has noted, "creates a tremendous immediacy" and the effect of Elektra's blow-by-blow narration to the chorus and dialogue with Klytaimnestra "makes her virtually 'in at the death'."⁸⁹ Moreover, the original entry of Elektra with her brother at 1383 in order to murder Elektra has already created the illusion that she will partake in the crime; the aural exchange merely enacts what the audience already expects: "[t]hus the phantom possibility of a matricide by Electra has proved in the end, in one sense, not such a phantom after all."⁹⁰

If Klytaimnestra is the one who cries out ὄμοι πέπληγμα (1415), still it is Elektra whom we see struck by the blow of sound. This is the second type of violence; for her entire being seems

⁸⁶ Cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 1343, 1345. Hogan (1991) notes that Klytaimnestra's lines are derived from Agamemnon's, but with a difference. He says that "the dying king is given two trimeters from offstage. Clytemnestra also speaks in iambics, but she is given more time to die, with half-lines which Electra picks up in response" (*El. ad* 1404). For an alternate reading of this line, see Linforth 1963: 109. See also Lloyd-Jones and Wilson (1990), who suggest that διπλῆν refers to a redoubling of strength rather than a second blow (*ad* 1415).

⁸⁷ These are the only well known linguistic parallels between the scenes in either play. There was ample opportunity for Sophokles to echo more, but he seems to go out of his way to find alternate phrasing (i.e. Aesch. *Ag.* 1344, σῖγα: τίς πληγὴν αὐτεῖ καιρίως οὐτασμένος; and Soph. *El.* 1406, βοᾷ τις ἔνδον. οὐκ ἀκούετ', ὃ φίλαι;).

⁸⁸ Ringer 1998: 201. Contrast, though, Kitzinger (1991), who says "...her words mime the action, become, as far as is possible, the action...yet they are so plainly removed from it that they are shockingly futile and empty" (326).

⁸⁹ Goward 1999: 34. Cf. Hamilton 1987: 594-5. He argues, by contrast, that "the possibility of an echo of one moment in one play diminishes" (594). Hamilton also suggests that the parallel between these scenes is mediated by the deaths of Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos in the *Choephoroi*: "[i]n terms of intentional echo, the most one can say is that the *Choephoroi* recalls the *Agamemnon*, Sophocles' *Electra* recalls the *Choephoroi*...[.] Only the *Agamemnon* plays 'quote' each other" (593). Whitman (1951), on the other hand, thinks it important that the *Elektra* quotes the *Agamemnon* here, as it reminds the audience of Klytaimnestra's crimes and implies that she must die and, thereby, adds a sense of justness and rightness to the death. I do not think this is the case (162). As I have argued, I think the echo implies a comparison of the characters of the respective plays.

⁹⁰ Sommerstein 2010: 247. We might also cf. the discussion of Nooter (2012), who says "Electra has become the ultimate interlocutor: Clytemnestra's final verbal foe, Orestes' decisive trigger" (122).

taken over the blows of sound and what they represent: violent murder. What impact do these blows have? In Euripides' *Hippolytos*, Phaidra is undone (ἐξαιργάσμεθα, 565) by the cries she hears within and overwhelmed by suffering (τῶν ἐμῶν παθημάτων, 570). She is the victim of the sounds she hears. But the relationship between Elektra and what she hears is more complex: Klytaimnestra's cries and Elektra's hearing are complicated by an inter-textual allusion. In the *Agamemnon*, the titular character cries out from behind the *skene* ὄμοι, πέπληγμαι καιρίαν πληγὴν ἔσω (1343) and, after being struck a second time, ὄμοι μάλ' αὔθις, δευτέραν πεπληγμένος (1345). Agamemnon's cries in Aischylos are clearly, though in truncated form, echoed in the *Elektra*.⁹¹ Both Agamemnon and Klytaimnestra cry out nearly the same words.⁹² There is, then, an obvious comparison to consider.⁹³ Klytaimnestra dies as Agamemnon died. But, more importantly, Orestes kills as Klytaimnestra killed. Or rather, Elektra, who is the "killer" we see, kills her mother as Klytaimnestra once killed her husband. By comparison, the Aischylean Klytaimnestra of the *Choephoroi* makes no sounds that can impinge upon the stage and affect the characters and audience beyond the *skene*.⁹⁴ Unlike the vocal murder of Aigisthos in the same play, any sound of the murder of Klytaimnestra appears to be covered by the onstage song of the chorus (935 ff). She makes no sound for Sophokles to echo in his *Elektra*. The death of Aigisthos is accompanied by sounds from behind the *skene*. Aegisthus appears briefly on the

⁹¹ Cf. Scodel 1984: 76. These lines are also echoed in the second offstage scream of Euripides' *Hekube*: ὄμοι μάλ' αὔθις, τέκνα, δυστήνου σφαγῆς (1037). For a discussion of the Euripidean intertext, see Marshall 1996: 85, 93; Arnott 1982: 40-1. Cf. Eur. *Cyc.* 663; *Antiope* 5.50b (Diggle 1998).

⁹² But I think that the acoustic context into which these cries escape is remarkably different. Where in the *Agamemnon* the chorus are silent and unable to express themselves for fear, the characters of the *Elektra* have a more fluid relationship with the acoustic space of the stage. There is no equivalent in Sophokles to Aischylos' overriding Klytaimnestra. The character that dominates the stage is Elektra; but she does not control it. I suggest this based on the aural dynamics of the play. Others have suggested that Elektra does control the verbal dynamics of the play, at least to start with. See Seale 1982: 63. Cf. Kitzinger 1991: 301-2, 305, 316-17, 320, 327 or Nooter 2012: 101-123, esp. 106-108, 111-112.

⁹³ See Revermann 2006b for a discussion of the competence of theatre audiences in the 5th BCE. He suggests that, while theatre generally presents a low-level of access for most playgoers, there simultaneously existed different, stratified levels of access to the material presented.

⁹⁴ In the *Elektra* of Euripides the playwright has Elektra married to a humble peasant. The death of Aigisthos is not heard on stage. However, after Klytaimnestra approaches and enters Elektra's house, the chorus narrate the death cries of Agamemnon: ὦ / σχέτλια: τί με, γύναι, φονεύσεις φίλαν / πατρίδα δεκέτεσι / σποραΐσιν ἐλθόντ' ἐμάν; (Callousness! Why do you murder me, wife, as I return to my dear fatherland in the tenth year? 1151-4). Thereafter, the death cries of Klytaimnestra are heard from within the *skene* (ὦ τέκνα, πρὸς θεῶν, μὴ κτάνητε μητέρα, 1165; ἰὸ μοί μοι, 1167). Not only are the cries of Agamemnon and Klytiamnestra different intratextually, they are also distinct intertextually from those in Aischylos' *Agamemnon*. For a short discussion of the passage, see Arnott 1982: 40.

stage and then enters the *skene* alone. His cries are heard through the *skene* (ἐξ, ὀτοτοτοῖ, 869). But there is no intertextual link here with Sophokles, who clearly creates a likeness between his Elektra and Aischylos' Klytaimnestra as killers.⁹⁵ While this parallel has been noticed, the aural dynamics that reinforce it have not.

Mother and daughter are both murderers and, perhaps, they are the same murderer. In a discussion of law and violence, Christopher Menke has argued that “revenge executes the law of like for like”:

It is precisely the equality of revenge, its justification, that includes its violence. The deed of avenging answers the deed avenged by repeating it...the avenging deed is like the avenged deed. Being equal to and thus justified by the first avenged deed, the second avenging deed is as partisan and violent as the first one was. Thus, for each avenging deed there must in turn be an answer that does to the avenger what he has done in avenging.⁹⁶

In taking revenge, the son and daughter of Klytaimnestra become like her because their revenge is similar. Hearing too, at least by some accounts, is a matter of like-by-like. As was noted, hearing in general is a process in which the sound waves in the air entered into the “pores” of the ear where the external air (like) meets the internal air of the ear (like) and causes perception. Both the act of revenge, perpetrated by Orestes and Elektra, and the process of hearing, by which our titular characters participate in the above act, operate “[a]ccording to the rule of like with like, [wherein] the murderer of the husband must suffer from the same violation as she has committed.”⁹⁷ We might extrapolate, then, that the echo of Agamemnon’s death, which hints at a disturbing similarity between Elektra and her mother, is reinforced by the aural interaction of

⁹⁵ Cf. Soph. *El.* 608-609. Elektra admits there a similarity between herself and her mother. For this passage, see Kitzinger (1991), who speaks of “...the task of condemning Clytemnestra forc[ing] Elektra to become a reflection of her mother” (316). See also Segal (1966, 499-500) who relates these lines to a line spoken by the Elektra of the *Choephoroi*: αὐτῆ τέ μοι δὸς σωφρονεστέραν πολὺ / μητρὸς γενέσθαι χεῖρά τ’ εὐσεβεστέραν (Grant that I be much more moderate than my mother and put my hand to more pious things, 140-1). These lines (608-9) both create a similarity with the Aischylean Klytaimnestra and a distance between the two Elektras. For a discussion of the murder cries themselves and the “likeness” engendered, cf. *ibid.*: 501, 507, 525-6. For a general discussion of their similarities, see Wright 2005: 182, 185-6; Cairns 1991: 25ff; Blundell 1989: 172.

⁹⁶ Menke 2010: 3.

⁹⁷ Menke 2010: 4.

Klytaimnestra and her daughter in the Sophoklean murder scene.⁹⁸ Perhaps Elektra hears the death cries, and hears them first, because she is like Klytaimnestra. Or perhaps, in hearing Klytaimnestra's screams Elektra is made like Klytaimnestra, forced to be "like" her mother as a result of hearing or in order to hear those ἀνήκουστα cries.

In either case, the fact that Elektra then directs the attention of both the chorus and the audience to these same cries and enables both to hear them too raises questions about what impact this will have on either. Does the fact that the audience or the chorus can hear those screams mean that they are both "like" Elektra and Klytaimnestra, violent murderers? Does the sound of death intrude upon both? Is it an act of violence that changes all auditors the way it changes Elektra? Are we, as Plato fears, left screaming and gesticulating in our mad mime of murder?⁹⁹ Perhaps, though, the chorus' oxymoronic description of their own act of hearing as "hearing the unhearable" (ἤκουσ' ἀνήκουστα, 1407) hints at a difference. Their response to the cries both acknowledges their perception of the impinging sound missiles and tries to deny those same sounds by referring to them as "unhearable" or "not to be heard" (ἀνήκουστα).¹⁰⁰ The Elektran chorus seem caught between hearing and not hearing because they do not want to hear; they do not want to be like Elektra or Klytaimnestra. Perhaps they are rejecting the impact of those cries and the act of hearing these cries, an act that could render them and the audience "like" the husband-slaying and mother-killing women of these plays. I don't particularly think there is an answer to any of these questions; I do, however, strongly feel that there is a place and an importance for this questioning.

⁹⁸ On the interaural echo of Aischylos in Sophokles' *Elektra*, see Finglass 2007: *ad* 1415-16. Finglass suggests that "the allusion encourages the audience to compare the two killings, and to confront the similarities and the differences that lie between them."

⁹⁹ Pl. *Resp.* 2.377a-383c; 10.595a-b; 10.597e; 10.605c-606b. The continued association of poetry and hearing is marked in the *Republic*. Upon dissecting the problem with painting as an art that represents, but at three removes from the true form, Plato queries: does the same problem apply to hearing, that is poetry? (πότερον, ἢν δ' ἐγώ, ἢ κατὰ τὴν ὄψιν μόνον, ἢ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀκοήν, ἢν δὴ ποιήσιν ὀνομάζομεν; 10.603b). Hearing and tragedy are virtually synonymous to Plato. He, however, shows concern over what is said to the listening youth οὐδὲ λεκτέον νέω ἀκούοντι (2.378b) and suggests that only what is best to hear with respect to *arête* should be heard by the young (ἂ πρῶτα ἀκούουσιν ὅτι κάλλιστα μεμυθολογημένα πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἀκούειν, 2.378e). The problem with tragedy and other types of poetry is that they are not the best to listen to for *arête* because they are not truth (10.595a-b; 10.597e) and because they corrupt the individual into mimicking bad behaviours (10.605c-606b). For Plato's objections to poetry, see Stanford 1973; Givens 1991; and Leszl 2006.

¹⁰⁰ Finglass (2007) notes how their response "markedly differs from Elektra's" (*ad* 1407).

I hope now to have sufficiently demonstrated the way that these two key moments, the entrance of Elektra and the death of Klytaimnestra, reverse standard associations of inside and outside by rendering the acting stage as the “innards,” the void, of the body and the characters variously the perceptive mind/soul, the deflecting object and the oscillating gong forwarding sound to the perceptive audience. But the metaphorical use of the stage as the void in which perception occurs is uniquely explicit in these key moments, which frame the rest of the play. For the majority of the tragedy, the relationship between inside and outside, in terms of the movement of sound into and out of the stage, is more fluid and complicated.

Before drawing this chapter to a close, therefore, I would like to reconsider the recognition between Orestes and Elektra. I have argued thus far that the acoustic space of the stage is a metaphor for the “innards” of the human body in hearing; but in this scene that metaphor is malleable. In the recognition scene, Elektra’s auralty becomes a threat to the conspiracy to kill Klytaimnestra: ὦ φίλ’, ἔκλυον / ἄν ἐγὼ οὐδ’ ἄν ἤλπισ’ αὐδάν. / <ἀλλ’ ὅμως ἐπ> ἔσχον ὀργάν ἄναυδον / οὐδὲ σὺν βοᾷ κλύουσα, (friends, I heard a voice that I never could have hoped for; but for all that I am trying to check my natural impulse and kept it silent and hear with no cry, 1281-4).¹⁰¹ Of course, she fails. She cannot shut up; she cannot, while *hearing* Orestes, maintain silence (οὐδὲ σὺν βοᾷ κλύουσα).¹⁰² Nooter, in *When Heroes Sing*, has made an interesting observation about Elektra’s inability to shut up:

[t]he emphasis on Pylades’ silence reminds the audience of the few efficacious words of the Aeschylean Pylades, whose task it was to recall for Orestes the command of Apollo (*Choeph.* 900-2). In the context of the present scene, however, the more obvious purpose of this command is to show Orestes quieting the silent Pylades instead of effectively quieting the loquacious Elektra. He cannot silence her, so he turns to silence the already silent Pylades.¹⁰³

Sophokles seems to go out of his way to point out Orestes’ inability to stop Elektra’s auralty. As a result, the aural relationship between brother and sister is reminiscent of the potential and lethal aural interactions found in the prologue and off-stage murder. In the former, Orestes is

¹⁰¹ For the difficulties in translating these lines, cf. Finglass 2007: *ad* 1282.

¹⁰² Cf. Soph. *El.* 1260-1: τίς ἀνταξίαν σοῦ γε πεφηνότος / μεταβάλοιτ’ ἄν ὧδε σιγὰν λόγων;

¹⁰³ Nooter 2012: 120.

struck by the violence of Elektra's laments and thrown off course momentarily; in the latter, Elektra reacts viscerally to the cries of her mother and speaks in return. Similarly, in the recognition scene, Elektra reacts aurally to her brother's own aural actions. For it is not that Orestes is alive and ready to avenge their father that engenders Elektra's response. It is listening to his voice (αὐδά).¹⁰⁴ Or rather, in listening to his voice, her own is sparked. Elektra heard Orestes; now Elektra is heard.

We can see the same reactive aurality at play in Orestes' own response to Elektra's cries during the previous urn scene. When Orestes hears Elektra's laments over his faked death, he becomes distraught: "[b]y means of the potent tropes of lamentation, Elektra...inadvertently overwhelm[s] the actual, onstage Orestes."¹⁰⁵ He wants to tell her the truth: φεῦ φεῦ. τί λέξω; ποῖ λόγων ἀμηχανῶν / ἔλθω; κρατεῖν γὰρ οὐκέτι γλώσσης σθένω (Ah, what shall I say? To what words can I have recourse? What good are they? I no longer have the strength to control my tongue! 1174-5). These scenes point up in dialogue the intrusive force of sounds on the character and also his or her body.¹⁰⁶ Elektra is so overcome by emotion at the sound of Orestes' ἄναυδον αὐδάν that she must shout in reply (βοᾷ). Orestes' body is impacted even more blatantly; he is ἀμηχανῶν

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *El.* 1225: ὦ φθέγγμ', ἀφίκου; Elektra's first response to Orestes highlights her focus on his voice. It is his φθέγγμα that stands in metonymically for him in her address, as it is his αὐδά that she longs for in the above passage. Interestingly, these passages suggest that it is Orestes' aural presence above all else that Elektra desires (on recognition based on voice, see Wille 2001: 234). For more on aural presence and absence, see ch. 2. Jebb also thinks that αὐδά refers to the "living presence" of Orestes (1892-1900: *ad* 1282). Ringer (1998) suggests that Jebb is wrong and that the referent is clearly his voice as divorced from his body, reflecting a fragmentation of the theatrical perceptions resulting from the previous deceptions, deceptions perpetrated by visual and aural means (192). As stated above, I think that Orestes' "living presence" is intimately connected to his aurality. He is an aural presence. While I don't disagree with the idea that this address may also indicate a fragmentation of voice from body, I see no reason that such a reading should negate Jebb's observation. On the other hand, Lloyd-Jones and Wilson (1990), following Kaibel, suggest that it refers to the "'unexpected' story of Orestes' death" (*ad* 1282).

¹⁰⁵ Nooter 2011: 410. Cf. Porter (2010: 310), who discusses a passage in which Dionysios of Halikarnassos ponders the effective power of Demosthenes' writings and suggests that hearing him in person must have been ὑπερφυές τι καὶ δεινὸν χρῆμα (*Dem.* 22).

¹⁰⁶ The alteration between Elektra's lyric meters and Orestes' prosaic iambs need not negate this reading of a "deeply" affected Orestes. On the one hand, Elektra has been affected to the point that her emotion has reached the fevered pitches of lyric. Orestes' responds to these lyric outbursts in spoken iambs in a manner similar to the chorus' earlier antiphonal and consolatory laments in an attempt to balance the acoustic violence of Elektra's lyrics. On the other hand, it will be shown that the effect Elektra has on Orestes is more of a physical nature, not producing lyrics but rather overcoming his tongue itself. For the presentation of the body and its connection to seeing and hearing as well as the greater tragic impact gained by the association between the former and the latter, see Janka 2009: 1-28.

and can no longer control his tongue (κρατεῖν...οὐκέτι γλώσσης σθένω).¹⁰⁷ His body, represented by his tongue, has literally been mastered by the sound of his sister's distress. And, as a result of Orestes' inability to "master his tongue," the recognition scene by the door, which the Paidagogos overhears and chastises, begins.

The inconsistency in this scene and with the previously addressed aural relationship of Elektra and Orestes to the space of the theatre arises from the fact that the sounds, the words she utters and the responses he makes, are able to precede Orestes and Pylades' physical bodies *into* the house (ἦν ἂν ὑμῖν ἐν δόμοις / τὰ δρώμεν' ὑμῶν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ σώματα, 1332-3). This is a reverse of the movement examined thus far. Yet, there is much to learn from the way that aurality is presented in this scene. It has often been noted that women in the *Elektra* are static; men take action.¹⁰⁸ Women stay on stage and engage in aural exchanges as Elektra does with the chorus, Chrysothemis and Klytaimnestra. Men enter and exit the stage. In the prologue, the Paidagogos prevented Orestes from hearing Elektra. He urged Orestes on by arguing that they would achieve mastery over their intended actions by leaving (ταῦτα γὰρ φέρειν / νίκην τέ φημι καὶ κράτος τῶν δρωμένων, 84-5).¹⁰⁹ Hearing presents a danger to their δρωμένα here in the same way that being overheard in the recognition scene would have meant that their δρωμένα preceded their σώματα into the inside space of the house and endangered their plans. Hearing is, in this way, an alternative to masculine action; the aural process is one that traps the body into inactivity and instead releases sound to travel in the body's place. But sound itself is a violently active force in the way that sounds not only move into a new space but invade, occupy and overtake the

¹⁰⁷ Nooter (2012) says of this that "[t]he depth of Orestes' brief *aporia* is almost Socratic: he recognizes that he is lost" (117). For a discussion of the alternate manuscript tradition on this line, see Finglass 2007: *ad* 1175.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Soph. *El.* 75-6: καιρὸς γάρ, ὅσπερ ἀνδράσιν / μέγιστος ἔργου παντός ἐστ' ἐπιστάτης (for it's the right time, which is the greatest overseer of every action). On καιρὸς in the *Elektra*, see Smith 1989-1990. This is part of the more general thematic tension between action (ἔργα) and words (λόγοι) identified by Woodard (1966), who associated the former with the masculine world and the latter with the feminine domain (125-45). See also Woodard 1964: 174 ff. Gellie (1972) gives a succinct summation of the polarity: "Man and Woman, action and word, immediacy and timelessness, thought and feeling, deception and truth, intrigue and tragedy, are the obvious black and white pieces of this stage game" (116). Cf. Ringer 1998: 148-9. But see Segal 1966: 531 ff.

¹⁰⁹ The polyptoton of κρατεῖν and κράτος reinforces the point. For the Paidagogos, action will lead them to κράτος; but inaction in the face of Elektra, by contrast, has left him without κράτος over his own tongue (κρατεῖν γὰρ οὐκέτι γλώσσης σθένω).

“innards” of the perceptive being in those spaces.¹¹⁰ Consequently, the danger presented is not simply the danger of the sounds preceding Orestes within, but of the violence associated with the “hearing” of these sounds. If the “impinging missiles” of his intended δρώμενα precede his σώματα into the house, his plot will be ruined and Klytaimnestra will kill him.

Ringer has suggested that Orestes’ fear ἦν ἂν ὑμῖν ἐν δόμοις / τὰ δρώμεν’ ὑμῶν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ σώματα “...presents a figure of speech that touches on the play’s fascination with dualities and the disconcerting separation of body and action, of inner and outer life.”¹¹¹ What is most interesting, though, is the novel way that inside and outside, body and other are interconnected. Whereas in the prologue and murder-scene the doors were the ear-like πόροι from an outer space behind the façade to the void-like innards on stage in which perception takes place, the threat posed by Elektra’s cries suggest something at least partly different. In this scene sound issues forth from the stage and threatens to intrude into the space behind the *skene* where Klytaimnestra awaits in the empty space behind the façade.¹¹² But, at the same time, the body threatened is Orestes’ own. As a result, the stage is both outside and inside. It is the outside space from which sound moves towards the “innards;” yet the stage is also the corporeal inside, threatened by the violent action associated with sound’s intrusive force. For, if the sounds can cross the visual boundary of the *skene* with the result that Klytaimnestra would learn the true identity of Orestes before he had committed the murder, she would, presumably, prepare to stop him and,

¹¹⁰ Foley (2001) argues that the traditional role of female lamentation was related to the vendetta because lamentation “aims to provoke revenge through the awakening of shared pain, through the blurring of boundaries between past and present injustice, between the living and the dead” (151). Cf. 152, 158, 159. Seremetakis (as cited in Foley 2001) is particularly insightful on the nature of hearing as active: “[t]he act of hearing carries the value of the soloist’s discourse. Hearing in the antiphonic relation is not external to speech but metonymical to it. *Hearing is the doubling of the other’s discourse*” (104). Foley suggests that it is in this way that female laments are active, “provoking revenge,” and that it is this way that Elektra’s laments should function but that the play pits male action against female lamentation rather than inter-developing them (157, 166). But she does not deal with the climactic cries of Klytaimnestra and Elektra’s response and what they may suggest about Elektra and Orestes’ respective roles in relation to both the verbal and aural side of lamentation. Cf. also Wheeler 2003: 379.

¹¹¹ Ringer 1998: 197.

¹¹² An interesting comparison would be Elektra’s description of her activity in Euripides’ *Orestes*: ἐν πύλαισι βάλω (1281). She, literally, throws her ability to hear towards the *skene*, in the hopes of hearing the sound of Helen’s death. To put it another way, in the absence of sound moving either on to or off of the stage (οὐκ εἰσακούουσ’, 1286), the Euripidean Elektra mobilizes her ἀκοή itself. The term ἀκοή is also interesting in that it indicates both “hearing” and the “sound heard.” For the term in fifth-century Athenian tragedy as a sense of hearing, see Soph. *El.* 30, *Phil.* 1412; Eur. *IT.* 1496, *Phoen.* 1480, *HF* 962. The sense of a “sound heard” is not well-known in fifth-century Athenian tragedy. For other genres, see *Od.* 2.308, 4.701; *Hdt.* 2.29, 148; *Pl. Ti.* 21a; *Pind. Pyth.* 1.84, 1.90, 9.78 etc. On the novelty of Helen’s offstage cries in Euripides, see Porter 1994: 210-11.

possibly, kill him. Perhaps the duality of inside and outside, body and action here stems from the duality of senses involved. Elektra and Orestes are onstage, in sight. In both the entrance of Elektra and the death of Klytaimnestra the source of the cries are offstage; consequently, there is no body to associate with the sounds. The sounds themselves are bodiless and even sourceless. By contrast, the cries of Elektra and the reactive pleas of Orestes stem from figures on stage. By their presence they embody their own auralty and, as a result, can be threatened by corporeal violence.

The car horn is an intrusion. It bursts onto the street and into the very body of the pedestrian. It inflicts itself. The body reacts, turning, questioning and perhaps even responding. Sound in the *Elektra*, especially the sound that arises behind the façade and penetrates into the stage, is equally intrusive. Elektra's opening cries invade the stage, a space analogous to the inner void where hearing occurs, and Orestes himself, the perceptive auditor; he is almost drawn in and away from his plans by those sounds. Klytaimnestra's cries, too, occupy the stage and the characters thereon. They engender such a visual and aural response in Elektra that they seem to take her over. Elektra is no longer Elektra, she is Klytaimnestra's cries and, perhaps, even Klytaimnestra herself. Sound is the violence of impinging missiles that threaten the perceptive being with bitter punishment of the body, forced exile of the body, and even death of the body. Sound strikes through the ears. In the next chapter, we will turn from the tragedy of Elektra to that of Philoktetes and also turn from a discussion of the very physical nature of sound and hearing to an examination of the more abstract qualities associated with hearing. Throughout that play, Philoktetes is drawn to hearing and sound, a desire that becomes hopelessly tangled up in his desire for friendship and a community to call home; and we shall see that, as a result, hearing becomes a way through which community itself is created.

Oh Dearest Sounds! Philoktetes and the Aural Community

Hearing is a mobile phenomenon; sound can disperse across broad spaces, bounce around objects, and escape from behind visually impenetrable facades like the *skene*. This mobility, this ability to connect people across boundaries that the eye or the mind creates, enables hearing to function as a cultural unifier. In this chapter, I explore the acoustic space of the *Philoktetes*, evaluating the aural connections shared between Neoptolemos and Philoktetes as well as those between Herakles and Philoktetes. This investigation will shed light on the controversial conclusion of the play by suggesting that, while each ending proposes a different course of action, both are the result of Philoktetes' desire for an aural connection, a theme evident in the entrances of characters on-stage.

Sophokles' *Philoktetes* dramatizes the retrieval from Lemnos to Troy of abandoned hero Philoktetes by Odysseus and Neoptolemos. As the play opens, Odysseus and Neoptolemos enter the stage and Odysseus explains their mission to the younger Neoptolemos: to bring Philoktetes and his bow, which he inherited from Herakles, to Troy. In the ensuing dialogue, Odysseus rejects the idea of persuading or forcing Philoktetes to come to Troy; instead, he explains that Neoptolemos must trick him in order to get his bow away from him. And this is what Neoptolemos does; he tricks Philoktetes into thinking he is a friend and handing over Herakles' bow. But Neoptolemos is unable to see the ruse through to the end and confesses his deception. Yet even in his remorse, he does not return the bow to Philoktetes. Instead, he exits with Odysseus and seemingly abandons Philoktetes again. Neoptolemos, however, suddenly returns to the stage to return the bow. He then attempts honestly and earnestly to convince Philoktetes to come with him to Troy so that they can sack the city and earn glory together. Philoktetes adamantly refuses. He demands that Neoptolemos take him away from Lemnos to his home in Greece. At this point, it seems as though the ending of Sophokles' *Philoktetes* is veering dramatically from the tradition in which he does return to Troy, kills Paris and helps sack the city. But the play does not end; instead, there is a *deus ex machina* in which Herakles commands and persuades Philoktetes to return to Troy with Neoptolemos. By comparing the interactions of

Neoptolemos and Philoktetes with those of Herakles and Philoktetes, I show that the false and final conclusion are not the product of two different narrative thrusts, rather they are tied together in the way in which they both engage with the idea of creating aural connections to an aural community.

One might suspect that this chapter is reacting to the long scholarly debate concerning the unity of the play and the legitimacy of the *deus ex machina* ending.¹ Nor is that suspicion too far off-base, as I hope that my argument will indirectly shed light on this topic. There are a number of “camps” regarding the epiphany of Herakles. One camp suggests that the ending is simply tacked onto the first and true ending in order to prevent a drastic rewriting of the tradition in which Philoktetes does go to Troy. For example, David Robinson compares the structure of the *Oidipous Tyrannos* and the *Philoktetes* and argues that:

[...] the second conclusion of the play does not do quite all that one might think it would. It is short, and in certain limited respects highly satisfactory to an audience already sympathetic to Philoktetes and admiring Neoptolemos. But beyond this limited reversal of future troubles it seems calculated to change as little as possible, and to add as little as possible to, any judgements the audience have already made for themselves.²

On the other hand, many scholars argue that Herakles’ intervention is appropriate and that Herakles saves Philoktetes from the disastrous consequences of his choices while still allowing him to heroically refuse to yield.³ This camp tends to focus on his role and why it is appropriate that he, rather than anyone else, arrives to save Philoktetes. They find support in the mythical

¹ This is the only one in Sophokles’ extant plays; though, there is a high probability that the now fragmentary *Tereus* (fr. 581 and 589 Radt) included a *deus ex machina*. See further Thévenet 2008: 37-65.

² Robinson 1969: 55. For most, the trouble with the ending is that it is psychologically inconsistent with Philoktetes’ character: Linforth 1956: 150-56; Gellie 1972: 156-58. For the ending as unimportant to Neoptolemos’ story, see Kitto (1961) who argues that “[a] tragedy like the *Tyrannus*, however real and self-contained it is, does prefigure a tragic idea such that the end of the action is also the climax of the idea; the two are one, and if the end of the play is not as it were apocalyptic it is an offence. This is no longer true. The mental and moral journey that Neoptolemos makes we are to follow for its own sake, not, as we follow Oedipus’, for its own sake and also with the feeling that we are apprehending something about Man himself. When the journey is finished we are satisfied; no catharsis is wanted and we do not wait with bated breath for some larger consummation. If it happens that part of the story is left over, that is a minor matter; a god can put it right, it being, in a real sense, ‘outside the play’” (320). Hawthorne (2006) suggests that the ending continues the theme of discourse, in which “[t]he *deus ex machina*...brings in an authoritative aristocratic discourse (muthos) that is superior even to democratic deliberation” (243).

³ See Knox 1964: 138; Easterling 1978: 137; Segal 1981: 348.

tradition wherein Philoktetes and Herakles were connected because Philoktetes kindled Herakles' funeral pyre.⁴ Therefore, they suggest that while no one else can persuade Philoktetes to go, Herakles can; for example, Kamerbeek comments that:

[u]p to a point he is a *deus ex machina*, but one so closely connected with Philoktetes' life and death that he is the sole figure whose pronouncements we may regard as acceptable—psychologically speaking—to Philoktetes, so that this man who has been pictured as indifferent (or nearly so) to any mortal's exhortations, even the most friendly and reasonable, now yields without protest.⁵

Unfortunately scholars of both camps feel that the epiphany is awkward and supersedes the action which leads up to the first conclusion: “[t]his first conclusion is in one sense false, since another conclusion does supervene; but in another sense it is true, for the whole play builds up to this conclusion, not to the second.”⁶ The *deus ex machina* of Herakles does arise from a theme that the whole play builds up: aural connections and the aural community. It is inaccurate, therefore, to say that “[f]or Philoktetes, Heracles provides a future which is at odds with his recent intentions”⁷ since Philoktetes responds so readily to Herakles because Herakles offers what Philoktetes has been seeking from his first entrance: an aural connection to an aural community. By focusing on the actions and words of Herakles rather than his personal connection with Philoktetes and comparing these with the earlier scene in which Philoktetes greets Neoptolemos, it becomes obvious that the epiphany is thematically and linguistically in line with the major theme of aural integration into the aural community as well as the especially aural nature of entrances and that the epiphany is the climax, though perhaps not a successful one, of the movement towards Philoktetes' aural reintegration in the aural community of Troy.

As discussed in the introduction, an aural community is “the real or imagined area in which hearing could have operated, that is, the broader social grouping in a defined—even if only loosely defined—geographical space in which ‘that which is heard’ was expected to move about.”⁸ I

⁴ See Soph. *Phil.* 727-29 for this connection between Philoktetes and Herakles.

⁵ Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 1409-12.

⁶ Robinson 1969: 51.

⁷ Roberts 1989: 173.

⁸ See p. 12. Cf. Anderson 2006. The definition of an “aural community” both here and there is inspired by Benedict Anderson's definition of a nation.

would like to approach the anxiety in the *Philoktetes* over inclusion in an aural community and the problems of achieving that indirectly by first demonstrating how Philoktetes' position as an outsider relative to the community of Greek heroes at Troy is expressed aurally and, therefore, why his reintegration into that community must happen aurally as well.

It is important here to note and elaborate on how Sophokles isolates Philoktetes. I specify Sophokles because the location of Sophokles' version of this play was unique. Both Aischylos and Euripides crafted tragedies on Philoktetes' return to Troy under the guidance of Odysseus.⁹ Though neither of their versions survives, there is an account of all three tragedians' works in Dio Chrysostom's *Fifty-Second Discourse*. Dio's discourse is an extended comparison of the three works. Regarding Sophokles' rendition, Dio reveals that the playwright was unique in his cast and the nature of the setting.¹⁰ Dio indicates that Sophokles completely isolates Philoktetes from human connections by making Lemnos deserted whereas Aischylos' and Euripides' versions featured a chorus of Lemnian natives. Philoktetes was even visited by an embassy of Trojans in Euripides' play.¹¹ Only in Sophokles is Philoktetes truly alone.

But Philoktetes' isolation is more than a physical separation of the hero from other people. It is a specifically aural seclusion. In the prologue Odysseus describes the reason that the Greeks left Philoktetes on Lemnos: his cries (10). Odysseus says that Philoktetes was abandoned because of his *δυσφημίαι* and the effect they had on the religious community (9-11). The term *δυσφημίαι* has meanings that range from ill language to curses and blasphemy and is composed from the elements *δυσ-*, meaning ill or bad, and *φήμη*, meaning utterance or even report and rumour.¹² But that does not mean that Odysseus is complaining about Philoktetes vocalizing ill-omened words. In an argument similar to the following, though one focused on Neoptolemos and his use

⁹ For further information, see Mitchell-Boyask 2000: 87-89; Scodel 1984: 100-101; Jebb 1892-1900: *Introduction*, esp. ix-xi, xiii, xv-xxvii, xxxii; Kamerbeek 1970: 2-6; Webster 1970: 3ff; Campbell 1879: 357. Of the isolation of Philoktetes, Campbell says that Lemnos need not be entirely uninhabited; it is enough that the Hermaian promontory is isolated (363).

¹⁰ The Greek is as follows: *καὶ τὸν χορὸν οὐχ ὥσπερ ὁ Αἰσχύλος καὶ Εὐριπίδης ἐκ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων πεποίηκεν, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἐν τῇ νηὶ συμπλέοντων τῷ Ὀδυσσεὶ καὶ τῷ Νεοπτολέμῳ* (Furthermore, he has not made his chorus locals, as Aischylos and Euripides do, but those who sailed in the ship along with Odysseus and Neoptolemos, 52.15). See also Dio Chrys. *Or.* 59 for a paraphrasing of the prologue of Euripides' *Philoktetes*. On Sophokles' creation of isolation through setting, see further Hose 2008: 27-39; Morin 2003: 386-417.

¹¹ Fr. 794ff (Kannicht).

¹² This is the one of only two instances of this word in Sophokles (Earp 1944: 50).

of false and true *logoi* rather than hearing, Anthony Podlecki has noted that “Philoctetes would have found it extremely difficult, if not impossible to communicate with [the Greeks at Troy], for, a good part of the time, Philoctetes’ pain makes him incapable of rational speech. Bestial cries, vocal embodiments of pain, are all he can utter.”¹³ J. Ceri Stephens argues that these cries are beyond the ability of a normal human being to tolerate unless that human being is inspired by some form of divine incentive, like the prophecy of Helenos.¹⁴ Thus it is hardly surprising that Odysseus’ words suggest that the *δυσφημῖαι* are not representative of human communication, but rather that they are something liminal when he describes them as *ἀγρίαί* (9).¹⁵

The term *ἄγριος*, literally meaning “living in the fields,” intimates savageness and animality; when it is used of men, it implies that they are living or behaving like animals.¹⁶ It is a common ethnographical term; it is used by Athena (in the guise of Mentos) to describe the men holding Odysseus (*Od.* 1.199) and is the name given by Hesiod to the son of Odysseus, who rules with his brothers over the Tyrsenians, whose location Hesiod describes as *μάλα τῆλε* or “very far off” (*Theog.* 1015). Finally, the term *ἄγριος* is used by Herodotos to describe the lands west of Eastern Libya. This last passage is probably the most interesting; Herodotos says the following:

ἡ μὲν γὰρ δὴ πρὸς τὴν ἠῶ τῆς Λιβύης, τὴν οἱ νομάδες νέμουσι, ἐστὶ ταπεινὴ τε καὶ
 ψαμμώδης μέχρι τοῦ Τρίτωνος ποταμοῦ, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τούτου τὸ πρὸς ἐσπέρης ἡ τῶν
 ἄροτήρων ὄρεινὴ τε κάρτα καὶ δασέα καὶ θηριώδης: καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄφιες οἱ ὑπερμεγάθεις

¹³ Podlecki 1966b: 234. His paper is focused on what the characters say and Philoktetes’ desire to connect with Neoptolemos as well as his bitter disappointment in Neoptolemos’ lies. He does, however, include a list of the terms indicating the theme of hearing in his addendum (249-50).

¹⁴ Stephens 1995: 165. His argument, meant to counter the negative depiction of Odysseus by modern scholars, uses the above basis to argue that the Greeks at Troy would not have been considered unreasonably cruel when they abandoned Philoktetes, to the Greek audience’s understanding; instead, their actions were prudent and acceptable (161-65). Cf. Biggs 1966, who says that “[t]he heroic diseases, though described in human, physical terms, are beyond mortal comparison or cure” (223). On his screams, in particular, Budelmann (2007) has argued that “[m]ore often than not we communicate our pain through words, and the same is true for Sophocles...In particular they draw on metaphors to give a sense of how their pain feels to them...Philoctetes and Heracles scream in trimeters and complex meters...Sophocles’ pain is a matter not of body or language, but body and language” (445). For a reading of Philoktetes’ cries and addresses to the landscape as efficacious, which I do not deny, though I focus on their isolating nature, see Nooter 2012: 130-132; 134-139.

¹⁵ On the connection between illness and a failure to communicate in the Hippocratic texts, see Montiglio 2000: 228-233. She, however, thinks that the tragic corpus takes this up in association with women rather than men.

¹⁶ Kamerbeek (1970) notes that “the concept of *ἄγριος* belongs to the motifs connected with Philoktetes: cf. 226, 265, 267, 1321” (*ad* 169-72). In particular, at 226 Philoktetes urges Neoptolemos and the chorus not to fear him because he looks wild or savage (*ἀπαγριόομαι*); and at 1321, Neoptolemos accuses Philoktetes of being wild in his relations with people (*ἀγριόω*).

καὶ οἱ λέοντες κατὰ τούτους εἰσὶ καὶ οἱ ἐλέφαντές τε καὶ ἄρκτοι καὶ ἀσπίδες τε καὶ ὄνοι οἱ τὰ κέρα ἔχοντες καὶ οἱ κυνοκέφαλοι καὶ οἱ ἀκέφαλοι οἱ ἐν τοῖσι στήθεσι τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες, ὡς δὴ λέγονται γε ὑπὸ Λιβύων, καὶ οἱ ἄγριοι ἄνδρες καὶ γυναῖκες ἄγριαὶ καὶ ἄλλα πλήθει πολλὰ θηρία ἀκατάψευστα (4.191).

For the land in the east of Libya, in which the nomads dwell, is low-lying and sandy up to the Triton river; but the land to the west of it, the plow-land, is very mountainous and wooded and infested with wild beasts. For there are great, huge snakes and lions throughout them, and the elephants and bears and asps, donkeys with horns, dog-headed men and headless men with eyes in their chests, so the Libyans say, and the wild men and wild women, as well as many other not so fabulous creatures.

The use of ἄγριοι to describe the type of people who dwell in a land primarily occupied by wild or even fabulous animals suggests a connection between non-agricultural people and wild nature.¹⁷ In the *Philoktetes* passage, the combination of ἀγρίαὶ and δυσφημία suggests that the hero's δυσφημία are wild and indicative of living on the fringes of society.

This idea is reinforced by Odysseus' description of Philoktetes in the same line as one who is βοῶν and ὑζών (11) rather than as one speaking.¹⁸ The similarity of this line to Sophokles' *Trachiniai*, verse 787, where βοῶν and ὑζών are paired and used to indicate Herakles' pain, suggests that this pairing is indicative of screams of pain as well as a certain liminality. The passage in the *Trachiniai* makes it clear that Herakles' shouts keep people at a distance: κούδεις ἐτόλμα τάνδρὸς ἀντίον μολεῖν. / ἐσπᾶτο γὰρ πέδονδε καὶ μετάρσιος, / βοῶν, ὑζών (and no one dared come face to face with the man. For he violently convulsed towards the ground and back high in the air, shouting, crying out, 785-7). The passage in the *Trachiniai* also reinforces the idea that the content of the shouting (βοῶν) ruptures the bonds of society in so far as Herakles' becomes isolated from the crowd in much the same way that Philoktetes has been isolated. Returning to Philoktetes, his inarticulate cries (δυσφημίαις, 11) prevent the army (κατεῖχ' ἀεὶ πᾶν στρατόπεδον, 10) from engaging in sacrificial activities (οὔτε λοιβῆς ἡμῖν οὔτε θυμάτων...προσθιγεῖν, 8-9). This is fitting given that the antonym of δυσφημία is εὐφημία(ι), a

¹⁷ Likewise, in *Od.* 8.294 ἀγριόφωνος (“of wild speech”) is used as a derogatory descriptor for the otherness of the Sintians of Lemnos (cf. Heath 2005: 64; Gera 2003: 2). Cf. Pseudo-Theoc. *Id.* 23.19 where the poet addresses his lover as the whelp of a lioness as well as ἄγριος (Ἀγριε παῖ καὶ στυγνέ, κακῶς ἀνάθρεμμα λεαίνας)

¹⁸ I follow the text of Lloyd-Jones and Wilson (1990) here, which reads ὑζών. Kamerbeek (1970) suggests that ὑζών (“to yell” or “cry out”) is a better reading than στενάζων (ad 9-11); Webster, however, prints στενάζων. For the incoherency of the content of βοῶν, we might also compare the pairing of οἰμωγῆ βοῶν at *Trach* 790. For more on οἰμωγή, see ch. 2 fn 30. On these cries as “wordless,” cf. Nooter 2012: 72.

term used to indicate ritual silence.¹⁹ The nature of Philoktetes' disease and his consequent cries bar him and anyone around him from a religious community. He is abandoned.

After Odysseus departs, the chorus describe Philoktetes' loneliness, caused by his inability to be integrated into the aural community of religion, and reiterate the association between Philoktetes and the liminal or wild.²⁰ They say that he shouts a far-sounding howl (βοᾶ̃ τηλωπὸν ἰω- / ἄν, 216-7) and that his cries are terrible (προβοᾶ̃ τι δεινόν, 218). The use of βοᾶ̃ echoes its use in Odysseus' opening description of Philoktetes. We are, then, reminded that what he shouts, his τηλωπὸν ἰωάν, ruptures connections. Nancy Worman draws attention to the combination of τηλωπός and ἰωή, suggesting that Philoktetes' "voice here become associated by [its] distance from the familiar significations that make for meaningful human converse."²¹ To paraphrase with an eye to auralty, they describe his isolation, the physical distance between him or his voice and other people, as resulting in an aural isolation wherein his cries are no longer even communicative, they are outside the connections of the human aural community; like his βοαί, his ἰωή shatters social bonds.²²

This aural isolation is reinforced by the chorus' description of Philoktetes' aural position in Lemnos: "but ever-babbling Echo answers from afar the heard sound of his bitter cries" (ἄ δ' ἄθυρόστομος / Ἄχῶ τηλεφανῆς πικραῖς / οἰμωγαῖς ὑπακούει, 188-190).²³ The echo is a powerful

¹⁹ Cf. Soph. *Trach.* 178; Ar. *Thesm.* 295, *Av.* 959; Eur. *IA* 1564.

²⁰ Aeolic metre, as we shall see, is frequently used to mark loneliness in this tragedy. See Buijs 1986: 126. He says that "...throughout the play, the aeolic metre is associated with the loneliness and misery of Philoktetes" (126). He points to lines 169-90, parts of 201-218, parts of 676-705, 706-729, parts of 1081-1168 and 1186-1195. The first is the chorus' description of Philoktetes listening to the echo, the second is the aurally marked entry of Philoktetes, the third is the comparison of Philoktetes and Ixion, the fourth is the following description of Philoktetes isolation and survival on Lemnos, the fifth is Philoktetes' address to the landscape and the last is a section in which Philoktetes complains about his foot to the chorus. There are a few connections between these passages aside from loneliness: (1) the chorus/choral odes and (2) auralty.

²¹ Worman 2000: 21. For a discussion of the etymology and visual aspects of the adjective τηλωπός, cf. Wille 2001: 320, fn. 1197.

²² On Philoktetes' separation from society, see Kott 1974: 169.

²³ This line has been much emended. This construction is from Auratos (for this reference, see Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 188-90), who is followed by Jebb (1892-1900). In particular, the term ὑπακούω is an emendation of the corrupted ὑπόκειται, which is rejected due to meaning and construction. Jebb calls "πικραῖς ἰοἰμωγαῖς ὑπακούει [...]" the best correction yet proposed for πικραῖς οἰμωγαῖς ὑπόκειται" (*ad* 189-91). For further readings, see Lane 2004: 442-3; Willink 2003: 84; and Lawson 1929.

symbol of physical isolation as it indicates a landscape devoid of human respondents.²⁴ According to Lucretius “[...] echo [is] an ‘in-between phenomenon’: the voice-constituting atoms do not fall directly into the ears nor are they dissipated in the air; they are precisely between a voice directly heard and a voice that completely fades away.”²⁵ The Lucretian echo is almost autonomous, separated from the body of speaker and hearer; it exists in-between the saying and the hearing since it is neither the beginning nor the end of the process but both in an indeterminate looping: voiced and unvoiced, heard and unheard. It requires no aural community, no receiver. The echo, then, brings back your own words to you.

Webster compares the use of echo in the *Philoktetes* to its use in Euripides’ *Andromeda*, where Echo is a character responding to Andromeda’s laments in the prologue.²⁶ While it is impossible to construct an argument solely from this fragmentary play, this reference can lend credence to the association of echo and loneliness. In particular, in fragment 118 Andromeda tells Echo to stop echoing her and let her lament with her friends (κλύεις ὄ)/; / προσαυδῶ σε τὰν ἐν ἄντροις, / ἀπόπασσον, ἔασσον, Ἀχοῖ, με σὺν / φίλαις γόου πόθον λαβεῖν). Andromeda opposes her current “communication” with Echo to her ideal communication with her friends (φίλοι). She rejects the loneliness implied by Echo’s presence in favour of integrating herself into an aural community of her φίλοι. There is no way to show that this is exactly what is happening since the play is fragmentary, but at the very least the possibility of this dynamic being at work does support the connection between echo and loneliness in the *Philoktetes*.

The use of the verb ὑπακούω in the *Philoktetes* is interesting in this context. ὑπακούω is a verb that reflects both the active and passive parts of listening—the spoken and heard word—because it often suggests not just listening but also responding.²⁷ The use of this verb in Sappho’s fragment 31 is revealing; the poet-narrator is upset that her rival is able to sit near by and

²⁴ For a catalogue of passages with echo, see Wille 2001: 290-1.

²⁵ Koenen 2004: 719. Cf. Lucr. *DRN* 4.563-614. This is in line with his atomist description of “[...] sounds and voices [as] groups of emitted atoms which become audible when they enter and strike upon someone's ears” (Koenen 2004: 699).

²⁶ Webster 1970: *ad* 189.

²⁷ It is used to indicate answering in *Od.* 4.283, 10.83; *Eur. Alc.* 400; *Ar. Vesp.* 273; *Theoc. Id.* 13.59; *Aeschin. In Tim.* 49; *Dem.* 19.266, 1.112 and in numerous other examples. It is used especially of porters to answer a knock at the door as in *Pl. Cri.* 43a, *Phd.* 59e; *Theophr. Char.* 4.9, 28.3; and *Xen. Symp.* 1.11.

reciprocate hearing (ὑπακούω) with the object of her affection.²⁸ By contrast, the poet-narrator's tongue has broken (ἄγνουμι) and her ears (ἄκουαι) make a buzzing sound (ἐπιρρομβέω) that makes hearing impossible.²⁹ The poet-narrator of Sappho is physically incapable of listening and responding (ὑπακούω) in the way that her rival can. The use of ὑπακούω, then, underscores the aural isolation of Philoktetes, who is alone with only himself to talk to. The landscape responds, but only by repeating Philoktetes' own words. It is the echoic reverberation of his own sounds rather than a true response, a real aural interchange. Therefore, Philoktetes' aural community has been reduced to one, which is no real community at all.

It is interesting, too, what exactly the echo is responding to: his sharp cries (πικραῖς οἰμωγαῖς, 189-90). This line bears comparison to Odysseus' description of Philoktetes' abandonment, wherein he identified Philoktetes' δυσφημίαι and the effect that they had on the community attempting to complete sacrifices (11). As I argued, Philoktetes' δυσφημίαι are wild and liminal; they are ἄγριος (11) and Philoktetes is one who shouts (βοῶν; ἰύζων, 12). When Philoktetes cries, he cries a τηλωπὸν ἰώαν (216) and he does so terribly (δεινόν, 218). The only other instance in the Sophoklean corpus of οἰμωγή is *Trachiniai* 790 (πολλὰ δ' οἰμωγῆ βοῶν), where Herakles too shouted terribly whilst he shouted a lamentation (οἰμωγή). This passage again pairs οἰμωγή with βοῶν and is again used to describe a figure distraught by pain. For both characters, the term οἰμωγή is used of shouting and the inarticulateness of wailing and lamentation.³⁰ The adjective πικρός generally indicates things that are “*bitter*, esp[ecially] of what yields pain instead of expected pleasure” but can also imply a harsh or angry vindictiveness not too far removed from savagery.³¹ Not only is Philoktetes' isolation emblemized by the echo, but the very content of the echo, shouting and bitter lamentation, is responsible for his disconnection from society.

²⁸ Sappho fr. 31.4 (Campbell).

²⁹ *Ibid.*: 31.9-12.

³⁰ The term οἰμωγή is frequently connected groaning and wailing diction like κωκυτός/κώκυμα with and στοναχή/στόνος/στεναγμός: for the former, see *Il.* 22.409, 22.447, Aesch. *Pers.* 426; For the latter, see *Il.* 24.696, Thuc. 7.71.6, Eur. *Heracl.* 833.

³¹ Philoktetes also uses πικρός of himself at line 254 (ὦ πικρός θεοῖς). For a good collation of the uses of πικρός combined with vocal diction, see Blaydes 1870: *ad* 189.

So it is not surprising when the chorus reiterate their depiction of Philoktetes' solitude as aural isolation in the following (first) *stasimon*.³² They reflect on Philoktetes' situation:

λόγω μὲν ἐξήκουσ', ὄπωπα δ' οὐ μάλα,
τὸν πελάταν
λέκτρων < σφετέρων> ποτέ
κατ' ἄμπυκα δὴ δρομάδ' < Ἄιδου>
δέσμιον ὡς ἔλαβεν
παγκρατῆς Κρόνου παῖς:
ἄλλον δ' οὔτιν' ἔγωγ' οἶδα κλύων οὐδ' ἐσιδὼν μοίρα
τοῦδ' ἐχθίονι συντυχόντα θνατῶν,
ὃς οὔτε τι ρέξας τιν', οὔτε νοσφίσας,
ἀλλ' ἴσος ὦν ἴσοις ἀνήρ,
ᾧλλυθ' ᾧδ' ἀναξίως.
τόδε < μὰν> θαῦμά μ' ἔχει,
πῶς ποτε πῶς ποτ' ἀμφιπλήκτων
ροθίων μόνος κλύων, πῶς
ἄρα πανδάκρυτον οὔτω
βιοτὰν κατέσχευ: (676-705).

I have heard of in story, though I have never seen, the man who drew near his marriage bed once, how the almighty son of Kronos took him and bound him on the whirling wheel of Hades. But I myself know of no other mortal either by hearsay or by sight who has met with a more hateful fate than this man here, who though he has done nothing to anyone nor robbed anyone of life, but has been fair among fair men, perishes in this way, unjustly. I wonder at this, how ever did he endure, listening alone to the breakers dashing on both sides, how did he endure such an utterly tearful life.

The chorus position themselves as part of a specifically aural community insofar as they have heard about Ixion but they have never seen him (λόγω μὲν ἐξήκουσ', ὄπωπα δ' οὐ μάλα, 676). Their connection with Ixion is based solely on hearing.³³ At the same time the sailors distance Philoktetes from a similarly aural inclusion in a community in two ways. First, they explicitly position him as someone who listens alone to the breakers (ἀμφιπλάκτων ροθίων μόνος κλύων, 687-8). As in their opening description of him as a man who hears only echoes—only the reverberation of his own voice in the barren landscape – there is no one else for him to listen to or to listen to him; there is just the landscape. This is reinforced just a few lines later when the

³² Nooter (2012: 126) also notes that “[t]he chorus, who have already done much to draw attention to the sound and voice of Philoktetes, do not stop there.” On the difficulties of the text of the first *stasimon*, see Diggle 1966: 262. On the aeolic metre, see ch. 2 fn 20.

³³ On Ixion and Philoktetes, see Daly 1982: 442.

chorus observe that there was “not any local, a bad neighbor, to whom he could weep aloud his blood-reeking, gnawing sickness with an echoing groan” (οὐδέ τιν’ ἐγ- / χώρων, κακογείτονα, / παρ’ ᾧ στόνον ἀντίτυπον <νό- / σον >βαρυβρῶτ’ ἀποκλαύ- / σειεν αίματηρόν, 692-5). The use of ἀντίτυπον here evokes the idea of an echoing landscape seen earlier. In addition, Sophokles uses this adjective to describe the echo of Philoktetes’ voice in the local mountains in the closing lines of the tragedy: φωνῆς τῆς ἡμετέρας / Ἑρμαῖον ὄρος παρέπεμψεν ἐμοὶ / στόνον ἀντίτυπον (the Hermaian mount sent an echoing groan back to me, 1459-60). I will return to this passage later. The physical isolation of the landscape and the recurring leitmotif of echo as a symptom of aural seclusion are intertwined.

Secondly, the chorus subtly situate Philoktetes as someone whose status bars him from the aural community when they allude to the fact that they have neither heard nor seen of anyone in worse conditions for worse reasons (ἄλλον δ’ οὔτιν’ ἔγωγ’ οἶδα κλύων οὐδ’ ἐσιδὼν μοίρα / τοῦδ’ ἐχθίονι συντυχόντα / θνατῶν, 680-1).³⁴ There is an implicit suggestion here that these are not the kinds of things people talk about. Philoktetes is not the kind of person they talk about; they talk about Ixion. It is interesting too what the sailors make explicit in this line. Their statement that they have never heard of anyone in a worse condition than Philoktetes renders Philoktetes’ aural isolation demonstrable in the very way he is spoken—and, consequently, heard—of. Philoktetes is outside the community of Greek heroes at Troy; he is aurally disconnected from them. Therefore, if he is to be reintegrated, we should expect this reintegration into the aural community of the Greeks at Troy to be aurally signposted.

Now it is time to turn to the first meeting of Neoptolemos and Philoktetes and their aural relationship, which I will subsequently compare to the entrance of Herakles in order to show that the epiphany arises from the theme of aural integration into the aural community as well as the especially aural nature of entrances. Thereafter, I will show how the *deus ex machina* can be considered the culmination of Philoktetes’ movement towards aural reintegration in the aural community of Troy. When Odysseus asks if the younger man has seen the cave and Philoktetes, Neoptolemos responds καὶ στίβου γ’ οὐδεὶς κτύπος (and of his footsteps, at least, there’s not a

³⁴ Wille (2001: 257), commenting on this line, connects both sound and loneliness: “[s]o gibt bei ihm der Chor seiner Verwunderung darüber Ausdruck, wie Philoktetes in seiner Einsamkeit mit der rauschenden See in den Ohren dieses Leben ertrug, und beim Abschied von der Insel und vom Hall der Klippen läßt Sophokles den Helden in tiefem Naturgefühl gerade an diese akustisch besondere Situation der Einsamkeit mit Hall und Echo denken.”

sound, 29). There is, though, some question over the legitimacy of the word κτύπος in the manuscripts.³⁵ While κτύπος is the reading of the Laurentian family (LA), the reading of the Roman family (GRQ) is split between κτύπος and τύπος, meaning “track.”³⁶ T.B.L. Webster, who follows the OCT by writing τύπος in his text but defends κτύπος in his commentary, argues that it makes no sense that there be no track (τύπος) of Philoktetes if in fact he lives there.³⁷ He continues by pointing out the logical inconsistency of looking for a τύπος on what is described as a rocky surface that would take no impress.³⁸ Finally, D.B. Robinson notes that “Neoptolemus can therefore hardly have earlier [at line 29] asserted the absence of footprints” if he subsequently points footprints out (δῆλον ἔμοιγ’ ὡς φορβῆς χρεία / στίβον ὀγμεύει τῆδε πέλας πον, 162-3).³⁹

On the other hand, the pairing of κτύπος with the genitive of στίβος, as Eva Inoue has noted, forces στίβος to take on the improbable meaning of “footfall.”⁴⁰ Often, in Sophokles, the term στίβος refers to a track or path.⁴¹ But the aural isolation of Philoktetes that has been stressed by Odysseus (9-11) and will be stressed by the chorus subsequently (189-90) contributes to the impression that the absence of Philoktetes is an aural absence. He is not there to make a sound (κτύπος). Thus, it is the same idea, this time that presence is an aural presence, that marks Philoktetes’ arrival when the chorus say that προῦφάνη κτύπος (a sound has appeared, 201).⁴²

³⁵ κτύπος is supported by Jebb (1892-1900) and Wunder (1855), but Hermann (1866) thinks it odd. See further Pearson 1926: 58; Hogan 1991: *ad* 26-30; Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 29; Kamerbeek 1979: 70; Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990: *ad* 29; Robinson 1969: 39; Wille 2001: 229. For a catalogue of fifth-century Athenian tragic connections between body parts, like the foot, and sound, see Wille 2001: 259-260.

³⁶ Easterling 1969: 61.

³⁷ Webster 1970: *ad* 29.

³⁸ In this line of argument, Webster follows Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 29. It should be noted, however, that the description of the place comes much later: ἕως γ’ ἂν ἧ μοι γῆς τόδ’ αἰπεινὸν βᾶθρον (1000); κρᾶτ’ ἐμὸν τόδ’ αὐτίκα / πέτρα πέτρας ἄνωθεν αἰμάξω πεσῶν (1001-2).

³⁹ Robinson 1969: 37.

⁴⁰ Inoue 1979: 218.

⁴¹ Soph. *Ant.* 773; *Phil.* 48, 157, 163, 206, 487; *Ichn.* 109. Obviously, the use of στίβος is concentrated in the *Philoktetes*. All but the uses in question seem to refer to a “track.” But the metaphorical extension from a “track” to a “planted footstep” is hardly outside consideration. στίβος does, after all, share a linguistic link with στείβω: “to tread.” See further Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 29.

⁴² Morris (1991) describes the aural nature of this entrance well and astutely notes that “we first meet Philoktetes only through his voice and through the words spoken about him” (251).

Eva Inoue, who prefers the reading of τύπος, argues that the scene at verse 29 is entirely visual, while the later verses are a complete shift from visual dominance to aural dominance.⁴³

[t]he choice in v. 29 is essentially a choice between a word of sight or visual impression τύπος, and a word of sound or auditory perception κτύπος. The use of τύπος in v. 29 avoids any distraction from the physical surroundings and belongings of Philoctetes to the anticipation of the sound of his lame walk which the use of κτύπος incurs.⁴⁴

By contrast, I suggest that not only does the return of κτύπος prove the veracity of the reading κτύπος instead of τύπος, but also corresponds to the way in which Philoktetes' aural isolation has been highlighted by both Odysseus and the chorus up to this point.⁴⁵ Moreover, in the following lines the chorus describes the suddenly appearing sound of his arrival as a φθογγά του στίβου κατ' ἀνάγ- / καν ἔρποντος (206-7); the combination of φθογγά and στίβου again reminds the auditor of the earlier passage and his aural absence and redirects the combination to indicate his newfound presence in a human aural community. Nooter has suggested that "[t]he noise... becomes ever more articulated, human, and characterized."⁴⁶ The sound of his footstep is more than that; his footstep is a step into reintegration into an aural community defined by the

⁴³ See further Robinson 1969: 39; Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 201-03.

⁴⁴ Inoue 1979: 24.

⁴⁵ There is considerable question about the visual dimension of the scene, particularly how Philoktetes enters the stage. In particular, see Robinson (1969), who argues "Philoctetes cannot make his exit through his cave, and must make several attempts at movement at later points in the play (notably to get to the rock from which he intends to throw himself at 1000, and to get into a position to shoot at Odysseus at 1299-1301)" (35). Craik (1990: 83) suggests an entry from the roof. In contrast, Woodhouse (1912) thought Philoktetes should enter from his cave because it would be difficult to have a lame figure entering slowly from the *eisodos* (243-4). A.M. Dale (1956) argued that Philoktetes should stand out on the stage in the centre and against the cave (104-6). I think it is particularly effective if Philoktetes' aural presence is highlighted by a visual absence, if the sound emerges from the cave before the sight. But even if Philoktetes enters from the *eisodos*, seen by the audience while unnoticed by the others on stage, the "text" highlights his aural presence first and thus signals to us that we should be paying attention to this theme. On this as an entrance-announcement that precedes the arrival of the character, see Poe 1992: 127. Wiles (1999: 138-139) has suggested that "[a]n entry in the left visual field (right brain) will be understood in relation to the status quo, the spatial given, while occupation of the right visual field will register in the dominant left hemisphere, associated with adaptability and the power to manipulate language" (139). It would be interesting, though impossible, to know whether Philoktetes might have entered from the right and been "associated with adaptability and the power to manipulate language" or not. Wiles draws attention to the fact that one of the *eisodoi* is unused within the play but becomes laden with meaning as the wild, uncivilized, space where the terrible snake lives and the sun sets (153-154).

⁴⁶ Nooter 2012: 126.

ability to communicate.⁴⁷ As one final point, it strengthens the aural arrival of Philoktetes, who suddenly becomes an aural rather than a visual presence on stage, if his aural absence has been signaled by the same word (κτύπος) that signals his presence as well. This is the first entrance of Philoktetes and it is a specifically aural entrance.

When Philoktetes fully arrives and is visually present in addition to aurally present, he clearly reaches out to his new visitors, Neoptolemos and the chorus of sailors, in an aural way. Specifically, he demands in his greeting that they engage aurally with him:

φωνῆς δ' ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι: καὶ μὴ μ' ὄκνω
δείσαντες ἐκπλαγῆτ' ἀπηγριωμένον,
ἀλλ' οἰκτίσαντες ἄνδρα δύστηνον, μόνον,
ἐρῆμον ὧδε κᾶφίλον κακούμενον,
φωνήσατ', εἴπερ ὡς φίλοι προσήκετε.
ἀλλ' ἀνταμείψασθ': οὐ γὰρ εἰκὸς οὔτ' ἐμὲ
ὑμῶν ἀμαρτεῖν τοῦτό γ' οὔθ' ὑμᾶς ἐμοῦ. (225-31).

But I want to hear your voice. And do not be struck by fear and trepidation at me and my savage looks. But take pity on this wretched man, alone, bereft so and friendless, treated evilly, speak, if you come as friends. Come, answer; for it's not fair that I fail to get this from you, nor you from me.

Philoktetes' emphasis on sound is set up by the chorus' ode and closing reference to echo, where his isolation is defined by his separation from the aural networks of other human beings, themselves foremost among them.⁴⁸ His request to hear from them and, indeed, his outright expression of pleasure at the prospect exposes Philoktetes for what he is, an aural outsider longing for an opportunity to recover his place in an aural community.⁴⁹ But, as Nooter has noted:

...his first response to them is not to them; it is, rather, his first apostrophe and is addressed to the uttering of his own lost and loved language: "O most beloved

⁴⁷ We might compare the discussion of Mastrorade (1979: 28-29) on half-heard dialogue as characters exit or enter. Mastrorade suggests that this half-heardness indicates incomplete contact. The fact that the sound of Philoktetes' footfall is the first heard must indicate that his connection begins aurally.

⁴⁸ See p. 55.

⁴⁹ See Montiglio 2000: 224. She notes that "his thirst for contact is translated into a thirst for words, spoken and heard" (224-5). She also suggests that this thirst can only be stated by the suppression of his cries, which she connects with silence.

voice” (ὃ φίλτατον φώνημα [234]). Philoktetes’ very character, then, is introduced as sound and voice, combined with the desperate desire for the voice of others.⁵⁰

That is why Philoktetes wants to *hear* Neoptolemos’ *voice* (φωνῆς δ’ ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι), and why, when Neoptolemos responds, Philoktetes is delighted at the sound of his voice (ὃ φίλτατον φώνημα).⁵¹ Though the term φώνημα suggests what is spoken, it is not necessarily what Neoptolemos says that delights Philoktetes. It is his voice. The repetition of the root φων- makes that evident: Philoktetes wants to hear his voice (φωνή); he commands Neoptolemos to speak (φωνέω), and he cherishes the sound (φώνημα). No longer is he only subject to the echoes of his own words. His longed-for interaction with a human aural network is starting. His entrance marks the beginning of that aural connection to the aural community, though he does not yet know that it is the aural community of the Greeks at Troy. Where Philoktetes has been ἄφιλος (228) before, Neoptolemos’ response creates a bond. And this bond is markedly aural. For it is not Neoptolemos who becomes φίλος; rather, it is his aural output, his φώνημα, that becomes φίλτατον (234).

I will now draw support for my focus on the aural nature of Philoktetes by examining the theme of aural entrances in the play. As the tragedy progresses, entrances are often marked aurally. As characters enter a scene, the stage convention frequently is such that a character onstage or the chorus highlight such arrivals verbally with an “entrance-announcement.”⁵² Of the eighty-three entrances in Sophokles, sixty-one are announced or drawn attention to by someone on stage (73.5 %).⁵³ What is not essential for stage convention but revealing for the theme of aural

⁵⁰ Nooter 2012: 127.

⁵¹ Kamerbeek (1970) says that this phrase “refers both to the fact that the utterance is in Greek and that they are Greeks” (*ad* 234-5).

⁵² Taplin (1978) observes that “[t]he measured pace and large-jointed construction of ancient tragedy means that there may be as few as five entrances (and hence five exits) in a whole play; and there are seldom as many as twenty. This throws even more weight onto the structural cruxes; and there are often prepared for repeatedly, sometimes hundreds of lines in advance, so that mere paces on stage become vital, focal events” (32). I believe that he also refers to one of these preparations when he refers to “the formality of the entrance-announcement,” and how such formalities can be broken for effect (41). On the entrances of *Philoktetes*, in particular, see *ibid.*: 46-9.

⁵³ By marked, I refer to references in the dialogue of the characters to the entrance of a new character; visual displays and stagecraft are not considered in these numbers. For a discussion of the addressees or lack thereof, see Poe 2003: 436-439. On entrance-announcements and their correlation to the actor’s movements, see Poe 1992. For the placement of entrance-announcements within the text and their relationship to choral odes and the number of characters currently on stage in Sophokles, see Hamilton 1978: 70 *et passim*. For entrance-announcements and speeches as mimetic devices, see Mastronarde 1979: 19-32.

inclusion and exclusion is the way that such entrances are frequently marked aurally.⁵⁴ These entrances are often aurally marked by Philoktetes himself. When Odysseus returns to the stage for the first time since the prologue, his arrival is marked by Philoktetes: οἴμοι, τίς ἀνήρ; ἄρ' Ὀδυσσέως κλύω; (Ah! Who is that? Is it Odysseus I hear? 976). Odysseus' voice is heard as he enters the stage rather than his body being seen.⁵⁵ Likewise, when Neoptolemos returns to the stage to give back the bow and confronts Odysseus, Philoktetes highlights his own re-entry as one sparked by hearing: τίς αὖ παρ' ἄντροις θόρυβος ἴσταται βοῆς; / τί μ' ἐκκαλεῖσθε; (What's this uproar of shouting that arises by my cave? Why do you call me out? 1263-4). In the following scene, Odysseus' second reentry is also marked aurally by the lonely hero: τέκνον, τίνος φώνημα, μῶν Ὀδυσσέως, / ἐπησθόμην; (Boy, whose voice was that? Surely I don't perceive Odysseus' voice? 1295-6). As in the opening of the play, when dearness of the φώνημα denotes the beginning of Philoktetes' renewed connection with the aural community, the manner in which he focuses on hearing the φώνημα of Odysseus underscores Philoktetes' desire to have an aural connection with people.

Let us return, now that we have briefly considered the continued theme of aural entrances in the play, to the first entrance of Philoktetes and his first meeting with Neoptolemos. There, too,

⁵⁴ Of those 61, 13 are aurally marked in terms of diction (21 %); In particular, 4/7 in the *Philoktetes* are aurally marked, which is 57%, as opposed to the six other plays of Sophokles where the percentage is much lower for aurally marked entrances: 1/11 in the *OC* (9%); 1/10 in the *Trach.* (10%); 0/13 in the *Ant.* (0%); 1/14 in the *OT* (7%); 2/11 in the *El.* (18%); and 4/16 in the *Aj.* (25%). On hearing and entrances generally, see Wille 2001: 204, 212.

⁵⁵ Alternatively, Odysseus may be seen eavesdropping by the audience and only heard first by Philoktetes, whose relationship to sound and communication is paramount in the play. On this possibility, see Taplin (1971): 27. Taplin points to the way that Odysseus echoes Neoptolemos and Philoktetes at lines 974 and 975. Taplin follows Jebb (1892-1900: *ad* 974), who comments “[f]rom a place of concealment close to the scene he has overheard the last part of the conversation, and now, at the critical moment, he springs forward. The abruptness of his entrance is marked by the divided verse (‘ἀντιλαβή’).” The idea that Odysseus eavesdrops on the conversations of Philoktetes and Neoptolemos is not universally accepted. Woodhouse (1912) makes no comment on this particular matter of staging (247-8). Webster says that he has not been concealed because “Sophocles would have told us if he had arrived earlier” (*ad* 974). Poe (1992) suggests that “[t]he actor merely hugged the retaining wall until his cue, then stepped forward into the orchestra” (128). The question of whether he did or did not eavesdrop is likely unanswerable. In terms of the argument of this chapter, the answer would have little appreciable impact. If, though, he did overhear Philoktetes and Neoptolemos, such a visual scene might have provided an interesting parallel to the description of Odysseus as: ἐξοῖδα γάρ νιν παντὸς ἄν λόγου κακοῦ / γλώσση θιγόντα καὶ πανουργίας (For I know that he'd touch with his tongue any wicked word and any knavery, 407-8). Odysseus would also be a man who would lend his ear to any undertaking. Consequently, he could be, literally, seen as a social—or rather aural—pariah. His actions would also be symbolic for his unsuccessful attempt to insinuate himself into Philoktetes' aural community in order to lead him back to Troy. Odysseus' ear, in essence, would represent the secretive and deceitful side of aural communities as his tongue represents the deceitful, rhetorical side of *logos*.

aural connection is the goal; Philoktetes wants more than just to hear people speak to him in Greek (φωνῆς δ' ἀκούσαι βούλομαι, 225), he wants more than a φίλτατον φώνημα. Philoktetes wants to create a connection and, as Nooter has argued, to "...drag listeners into his sphere of influence, whether he seems to be addressing someone capable of answering or not."⁵⁶ This is what Neoptolemos offers him when he arrives on Lemnos. But the first meeting of Neoptolemos and Philoktetes is highlighted by a lie. When Philoktetes asks whether or not Neoptolemos has heard of him (οὐδ' ὄνομ' <ἄρ'> οὐδὲ τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν κλέος / ἦσθου ποτ' οὐδέν, οἷς ἐγὼ διωλλύμην; 251-2), Neoptolemos lies and says no. Neoptolemos has in fact heard the story of Philoktetes' sickness, his κλέος, from Odysseus in the prologue of this very play (1-25).⁵⁷ The noun κλέος has meanings that slip between glory and rumour.⁵⁸ But a more accurate definition may be "what is heard said of you," since, as noted in the introduction, κλέος shares its root, *klu-*, with the verb κλύω, which means "to hear" or "to be called or spoken of."⁵⁹ κλέος, then, has the implicit connotation of "reputation" or "what other people will hear said of you." As such, Philoktetes' peculiar hope for a τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν κλέος underscores his longing for an aural connection. At the same time, the deceitful response of Neoptolemos highlights the false nature of the aural connection between the young man and Philoktetes. Philoktetes' expectation that Neoptolemos will have heard of his κλέος intimates that the abandoned hero hopes that, while he has remained disconnected from the aural community and unable to receive aural input like the φίλτατον φώνημα of Neoptolemos, his ὄνομα and his κλέος will have maintained a presence in the aural networks of the Greek society. He expects that his κλέος is vital and thus expects that he still has a connection to the aural community, one that has been held in suspense waiting for him to return and renew it. But Philoktetes is non-existent in the community because he is no longer heard of (250) as both Neoptolemos' false denial here and his earlier (honest) ignorance

⁵⁶ Nooter 2012: 134.

⁵⁷ There is much debate over how much Neoptolemos knows and does not know in the play. Much of this discussion revolves around the prophecy of Helenos and how much Neoptolemos knows about it. See especially Hinds 1967 and Gill 1980. Likewise, there has been a great deal of work on what parts are and are not lies in Neoptolemos' "lying story." I think, based on the internal evidence of the play, it is safe to say that Neoptolemos has lied about knowing about the evils of Philoktetes because he learns about them during the prologue. See, for example, Hamilton 1975 and Roberts 1989.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Il.* 4.195, 10.212, 23.280; *Od.* 7.333, 16.241, 19.108. Cf. ch. 3.

⁵⁹ This is especially the case in fifth-century Athenian tragedy. The oral equivalent, καλέω in the passive, is used to indicate "to be called or spoken of," as well. For an in depth look at the uses of κεκληῖσθαι and καλεῖσθαι in Sophocles, see Ruijgh 1976: 376-83.

regarding the hero demonstrates. As such, Philoktetes is truly aurally isolated; he has no κλέος and his connection with Neoptolemos is a false one, built upon deceit.

Since Philoktetes and Neoptolemos' aural connection is founded on a lie, we must assume that it can only last as long as the lie does. And yet, it does not even endure that long. Penelope Biggs argues that, in fact, the deceit sparks what can be seen as the first fracturing of Philoktetes' and Neoptolemos' aural connection: his cries of pain. She notes that the (fake) merchant, who was sent by Odysseus to aid Neoptolemos in the deception (126-29; 542ff), "brings[s] on the violent attack that takes up a hundred lines."⁶⁰ Biggs argues that:

[t]he one contribution of this seemingly superfluous character (he is hardly needed to supplement Neoptolemos' persuasion) is to tell Philoktetes what Neoptolemos could not let him know without the risk of arousing his suspicion: that he is needed, and can make an active, even the crucial, contribution to the Greek cause...the knowledge intensifies his poisonous hatred as Neoptolemos' reaffirmation of the Chiefs' injustice could not.⁶¹

But when the false messenger reveals that Odysseus is coming to force Philoktetes to return to Troy, Philoktetes lashes out at the thought: οὐ· θᾶσσον ἂν τῆς πλεῖστον ἐχθίστης ἐμοὶ / κλύοιμ' ἐχίδνης, ἢ μ' ἔθηκεν ὧδ' ἄπουν (No. I would sooner listen to the snake, most hateful by far, which made me without the use of my foot like this, 631-2). He does not want to hear (κλύω) Odysseus; he would rather hear from a viper (ἐχίδνη). The choice of viper is a powerful one.⁶² The viper rendered Philoktetes a cripple; it is the source of his pain, his cries and ultimately his isolation. It is the reason that his δυσφημῖαι were ἄγρια; the ἐχίδνη itself is ἄγρια, or at least has an ἄγριον χάραγμα (267) and causes an ἄγρια νόσος (265-6). As such, the ἐχίδνη is incapable of participating in an aural relationship, much as the landscape of the echo could not. So, by

⁶⁰ Biggs 1966: 234.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*: 234

⁶² We might compare the way that Polyphemos speaks to his ram in *Odyssey* 9.447 ff: κριε πέπον, τί μοι ὧδε διὰ σπέος ἔσσο μῆλων / ὕστατος;...εἰ δὴ ὁμοφρονέοις ποτιφωνήεις τε γένοιο / εἰπεῖν ὄπη κείνος ἐμὸν μένος ἤλασκάζει (my pet ram, why do you go like that through the cave, the last of the flock?...If only you had the same thoughts and could talk to me, to tell me where that guy is fleeing from my might, 447-8; 456-7). Heath (2005) says that "...the actual blurring of a hero with his animal analogue signals a dangerous loss of humanity" (46). That is to say, by communicating with his ram and desiring that his ram could communicate with him, Polyphemos "reveals a grotesque blurring of distinctions between the human and the bestial" (82). The same can be said for Philoktetes, who prefers to speak to animals and in doing so rejects the human community and makes himself 'like an animal.' Cf. Gera 2003: 11-15. On the comparison suggested by the play between Philoktetes and Polyphemos, see Levine 2003: 3-26.

preferring an unfulfilled aural connection with the ἐχίδνη, Philoktetes clearly rejects an aural connection with Odysseus and the Atreids.

We might already have expected Philoktetes' unwillingness to share an aural connection with Odysseus, for, when Philoktetes learns that Achilles, Aias and Patroklos are dead (331 ff), he is despondent that they cannot be part of any aural community with him. In their place there is Odysseus. Philoktetes, though, laments to hear that Odysseus is alive:

φεῦ φεῦ: τί δῆτα δεῖ σκοπεῖν, ὅθ' οἶδε μὲν
τεθνᾶσ', Ὀδυσσεὺς δ' ἔστιν αὖ κἀνταῦθ' ἵνα
χρῆν ἀντὶ τούτων αὐτὸν ἀδᾶσθαι νεκρόν; (428-30).

What should we look to, when these men have died, but Odysseus yet exists in this world, where he ought to be proclaimed as a corpse instead of them?

Of all the people at Troy with whom Philoktetes might have renewed an aural connection, Odysseus is not one. Philoktetes does not want to hear (ἀδᾶσθαι) that he is alive.⁶³ The greatest significance of the list of heroes is to fully demonstrate the isolation of Philoktetes.

His outrage that Odysseus still lives and his preference for even the viper that maimed him highlights that Philoktetes' poisonous hatred towards the Greeks at Troy is building and will soon culminate in the aforesaid attack (732 ff).⁶⁴ Liliane Weissberg relates his desire for aural connections to these cries, saying that:

Philoktetes urges Neoptolemus to speak (228), and describes his Greek as the "friendliest of tongues" (233); he identifies Odysseus by his voice (976). But the language's friendliness and the identifiable speech seems to be countered by a sound that does not have a home and country, that both structures and ruptures Sophocles' verse [here she quotes 745-46]. With Philoktetes' cries, Sophocles transforms the "friendliest of tongues" into a Greek that is apt, by its sound alone, to provoke the terror and pity of tragedy.⁶⁵

⁶³ Similarly, at Soph. *Phil.* 445 it is confirmed that Thersites is still alive and part of the aural community (οὐκ εἶδον αὐτόν, ἠσθόμην δ' ἔτ' ὄντα νῦν). On Neoptolemos saying that Thersites is alive in contradiction to the epic tradition, see Calder 1971: 159-60.

⁶⁴ According to Biggs (1966) "[i]t is easy to correlate the rankling wound with the festering grudge against the Greek chiefs, which Philoktetes has nursed for ten years on his lonely island" (231).

⁶⁵ Weissberg 1989: 557-8.

Weissberg is referring to the central scene of the tragedy when Philoktetes succumbs to his disease and his words degenerate into inarticulate cries: βρούκομαι, τέκνον: παπαῖ, / ἀπαπαπαῖ, παπᾶ παπᾶ παπᾶ παπαῖ (745-6).⁶⁶ These are the same type of screams that forced his exile upon him ten years earlier and now prevent an exit towards the ship and larger society. These incoherent screams represent a break with society in as much as society is dependent on language. In addition to these incoherent screams, Philoktetes is unable to share physical contact, as each time Neoptolemos reaches out for him he intensifies the cries. As in the prologue, when Philoktetes' ἀγρίαὶ δυσφημίαι as well as his βοῶν and ὑζῶν caused his break with the aural community of Trojan heroes, his inability to communicate once again isolates him from his new aural community: ἀλλ' ὅδε μὲν κλύει οὐδέν (he hears nothing, 839).⁶⁷ Philoktetes' sickness excludes him from the acoustic space.

Philoktetes' aural isolation is completed when Neoptolemos reveals his betrayal. Their aural connection is revealed as a sham. Thus, after Neoptolemos betrays Philoktetes, the again isolated hero addresses the landscape:

ὦ λιμένες, ὦ προβλήτες, ὦ ξυνουσίαι
 θηρῶν ὀρείων, ὦ καταρρῶγες πέτραι,
 ὑμῖν τάδ', οὐ γὰρ ἄλλον οἶδ' ὅτῳ λέγω,
 ἀνακλαίομαι παροῦσι τοῖς εἰωθόσιν,
 οἷ' ἔργ' ὁ παῖς μ' ἔδρασεν οὐξ Ἀχιλλέως (936-40).

O harbours and headlands, O wild animals of the mountains that have lived here with me, O jagged cliffs, to you—for I don't know anyone else to whom I can speak—to you I lament these things now, my usual attendants, such as the son of Achilles has done to me.

Philoktetes is cut off again from an aural community; he is reduced to echo as he was at the beginning.⁶⁸ But his isolation is not necessarily of his own choosing; he simply does not know anyone that he can connect with aurally (οὐ γὰρ ἄλλον οἶδ' ὅτῳ λέγω, 938).

⁶⁶ It is a *communis opinio* that the bow symbolizes or is in some way connected to Philoktetes' reintegration. I fully agree and feel that bow and hearing function together in this play. But the bow's symbolism seems to stem from the sensation of touch and, as such, I leave it aside. Cf. Kosak 1999.

⁶⁷ For a discussion of various passages connecting sleep and hearing, see Wille 2001: 232-3.

⁶⁸ Philoktetes' address of the landscape and, particularly, the wild creatures of the hills and the birds (ὦ πταναι θῆραι χαροπῶν τ' / ἔθνη θηρῶν, οὐς ὅδ' ἔχει / χῶρος οὐρεσιβώτας, / φυγᾶ μηκέτ' ἀπ' αὐλίων / ἐλάτ': οὐ γὰρ ἔχω

Neoptolemos will no longer listen to nor speak with him (τί φής; σιωπᾶς; 951).⁶⁹ Neoptolemos has chosen, or been forced to choose, to maintain a different aural connection: ἀλλ’ οὐχ οἶόν τε: τῶν γὰρ ἐν τέλει κλύειν / τό τ’ ἔνδικόν με καὶ τὸ συμφέρον ποεῖ (925-6). Neoptolemos is unable to maintain his aural connection with Philoktetes because it is in opposition to his choice to listen (κλύειν) to those in command (τῶν γὰρ ἐν τέλει). Oliver Taplin observed this; he noted how Odysseus verbally takes over for Neoptolemos.⁷⁰ Though Philoktetes appeals to Neoptolemos at line 981 (ἀπόδος, ἄφες μοι, παῖ, τὰ τόξα), it is Odysseus who responds: τοῦτο μὲν, / οὐδ’ ἦν θέλη, δράσει ποτ’ (981-2). Likewise, Philoktetes’ final appeal at line 1066-7 (ὦ σπέρμ’ Ἀχιλλέως, οὐδὲ σοῦ φωνῆς ἔτι / γενήσομαι προσφθεγκτός, ἀλλ’ οὕτως ἄπει;) is answered not by Neoptolemos but by Odysseus, who commands Neoptolemos to go to the ship: χώρει σύ (1068).⁷¹ Neoptolemos obeys; he listens (κλύειν) to his commander.⁷² Interestingly, Philoktetes’ final appeal is couched in aural terminology: φωνή, προσφθεγκτός. But Neoptolemos, as Taplin observes, “remains silent and dominated” by Odysseus.⁷³ Instead, Philoktetes is reduced to an aural connection with the inanimate and un-reciprocating landscape; in particular, he addresses his cave: ὦ σχῆμα πέτρας δίπυλον, αἰθις αἶ πάλιν / εἴσειμι πρὸς σὲ ψιλός, οὐκ ἔχων τροφήν (952-3).⁷⁴ Philoktetes is aurally isolated again and he retreats into the physical seclusion of his cave.

χεροῖν / τὰν πρόσθεν βελέων ἀλκάν, / ὦ δύστανος ἐγὼ τανῦν, / ἀλλ’ ἀνέδην, — ὅδε χολός ἐρύκομαι / οὐκέτι φοβητὸς ὑμῖν— / ἔρπετε: νῦν καλὸν / ἀντίφονον κορέσαι στόμα πρὸς χάριν / ἐμᾶς <γε> σαρκὸς αἰόλας, 1146-57) also blurs the distinctions between human and animal and renders Philoktetes part of the animal aural community rather than the human aural community he should belong to (see ch. 2 fn 62).

⁶⁹ Cf. Soph. *Phil.* 1065: μή μ’ ἀντιφώνει μηδέν. See also *ibid.* 1066-7: οὐδὲ σοῦ φωνῆς ἔτι / γενήσομαι προσφθεγκτός.

⁷⁰ Taplin 1971: 35.

⁷¹ On Neoptolemos’ silence, see Montiglio 2000: 225. She also points out that for Philoktetes at this point, the return of the bow must involve speech; this is different from the subsequent act, when Neoptolemos’ words are not enough (248).

⁷² On the use of verbs of hearing to indicate command and the importance of hearing generally in the play, see Wille 2001: 222-223.

⁷³ Taplin 1971: 35.

⁷⁴ Cf. Soph. *Phil.* 1081-94; 1146-63.

To review the argument thus far: (1) Philoktetes is aurally isolated on Lemnos when the play begins; this fact is reinforced by the way Odysseus and the chorus speak of him; (2) when Philoktetes arrives on stage, his entrance is marked aurally and this signals the beginning of an aural connection with Neoptolemos; (3) but the connection between Neoptolemos and Philoktetes is false and Philoktetes soon degenerates into connection-rupturing screams of pain; (4) once Neoptolemos reveals the truth, Philoktetes is again alone as he addresses the aurally unresponsive landscape. At this point, the aural connections are nullified. But the positions of the main persons, Philoktetes and Neoptolemos, are reversed. Philoktetes is alone in the cave while the chorus stand outside just as Neoptolemos and the chorus awaited Philoktetes' arrival in the opening of the play. Neoptolemos comes on stage and reaches out aurally to him, much as Philoktetes once reached out to Neoptolemos. But where before Philoktetes longed to *hear* his *voice* (φωνῆς δ' ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι, 225) and was thrilled at the sound of Neoptolemos' voice (ὦ φίλτατον φώνημα, 234), Philoktetes now considers the sound of Neoptolemos' φώνημα a θόρυβος...βοῆς (1263).

Now it is Neoptolemos who must try to create an aural connection with the recalcitrant Philoktetes. This point is accentuated by the way in which Neoptolemos attempts to reach Philoktetes aurally after returning with the bow to make amends for his betrayal. He first commands Philoktetes to hear him out: θάρσει: λόγους δ' ἄκουσον οὖς ἦκω φέρων (Take heart and listen to my words, 1267). He wants Philoktetes to share in the aural process with him; he needs Philoktetes to listen to him and he needs to hear from Philoktetes too: βούλομαι δέ σου κλύειν, / πότερα δέδοκταί σοι μένοντι καρτερεῖν, / ἢ πλεῖν μεθ' ἡμῶν; (I want to hear from you whether you are minded to obstinately stay here or to sail with us, 1273-5). This line echoes, with a slight difference, Philoktetes' opening address to Neoptolemos (φωνῆς δ' ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι, 225). Each man, as he enters the stage, wants to hear from the man already on stage. Neoptolemos is asking for a reciprocation of hearing and for an aural connection that will indicate that Philoktetes and he share in the same aural community. He even offers Philoktetes κλέος: καλὴ γὰρ ἡ 'πίκτησις, Ἑλλήνων ἕνα / κριθέντ' ἄριστον, τοῦτο μὲν παιωνίας / ἐς χεῖρας ἐλθεῖν, εἶτα τὴν πολύστονον / Τροίαν ἐλόντα κλέος ὑπέρτατον λαβεῖν (It's a noble gain to come to healing hands after being the one chosen by the Hellenes as the best and to get glory by sacking lofty, much groaning Troy, 1344-8). Unfortunately for him, Philoktetes has already rejected and will again reject the aural community at Troy.

Philoktetes responds to Neoptolemos' bid at persuasion and his offer of κλέος by questioning whom he could address or be addressed by, if in fact he has rejected the aural community there: τῷ προσήγορος; (To whom can I address myself? 1353).⁷⁵ He is afraid that he will have no one to speak with and he does not want to be seen among them. Philoktetes is incapable of imagining himself as part of the aural community, the acoustic space, of Troy. What began with a renewal for Philoktetes, the creation of an aural connection with the young Neoptolemos, and what promised to bring κλέος if only he reentered the aural community of Troy and men like Odysseus and the Atreids has come full circle to a different kind of aural isolation.

For Philoktetes does not reject Neoptolemos. Philoktetes greets Neoptolemos' return of the bow with the phrase ὦ φίλτατ' εἰπών, εἰ λέγεις ἐτήτυμα (O you who speak dear words—if you speak the truth! 1290); though, Jebb translates ὦ φίλτατ' εἰπών as “O welcome words,” the Greek is “O you who speak dear words.”⁷⁶ As earlier (234), the words are φίλτατα; but this time, Neoptolemos is included in Philoktetes' response for his role in speaking the “welcome words.” Moreover, Elizabeth Belfiore noted that “[a]fter the return of the bow, *phil-* words are used of the friendship between Neoptolemos and Philoktetes. Philoktetes now uses a *phil-* word of Neoptolemos for the first time, addressing him as ‘dearest child’ (φίλτατον τέκνον, 1301). Neoptolemos in turn refers to himself as the older man's *philos* (1375, 1385).”⁷⁷ When the play began, when Neoptolemos and Philoktetes made their first aural connection, it was Neoptolemos' φώνημα that was φίλτατον (234), now Neoptolemos himself has become “most dear.” Robert Newman argues that:

Philoktetes finally yield[s] to the gradually increasing feelings of friendship; he performs the one deed worthy of his own noble nature and corresponding to Neoptolemos' noble deed—he offers to use the bow of Heracles for Neoptolemos'

⁷⁵ This question is tied to the previous: εἴτα πῶς ὁ δύσμορος / εἰς φῶς τὰδ' ἔρξας εἶμι; (How, could I, ill-fated, come into public after doing that? 1352-3). The connection is elucidated by reference to line 580-1 (δεῖ δ' αὐτὸν λέγειν / εἰς φῶς ὁ λέξει). This line is spoken by Neoptolemos to the fake merchant and Philoktetes. The idea of “speaking openly” there is picked up later by Philoktetes who knows neither how to come into the open (εἰς φῶς ἵεναι) nor how to speak with anyone (προσήγορος). See further Webster 1970: *ad* 1353. Webster suggests that these two questions together mean “[w]hen I am in the open, ‘whom shall I be able to talk to?’—both as an outcast and still more as wronged” (*ad* 1353).

⁷⁶ Jebb 1892-1900.

⁷⁷ Belfiore 1994: 127.

defence.[...] He thus begins to establish, in his turn, a true community of *philia* with Neoptolemus.⁷⁸

For Newman, the *philia* developed here between the two, Neoptolemos and Philoktetes, represents a “...protosociety’ that...was, then, a necessary stepping stone to Philoktetes’ final reconciliation with the Greeks.”⁷⁹ But the opposite is the case. Philoktetes’ policy of exclusion has influenced Neoptolemos, whom he has now convinced not to go to Troy, and whom he has forced into isolation with the abandoned hero (1392-1408). Both men will forgo κλέος at Troy. Both men will forgo an aural relationship, or any relationship for that matter, with the warriors at Troy. Philoktetes has promised himself to Neoptolemos, offered continued friendship; but the aural community of these two men is hardly better than an echo.⁸⁰ Greece holds not the prospect of an alternative aural community but of continued aural isolation; as such, returning there is not part of the reintegration pattern, it is the opposite.

Why? If we were to consider Philoktetes’ relationship with his own father in the play, we would likely have some misgivings about the possibility of Philoktetes and Neoptolemos finding a ready-made aural community “at home.” For one thing, Philoktetes admits that his father may well be dead: πολλὰ γὰρ τοῖς ἰγμένοις / ἔστελλον αὐτὸν ἰκεσίους πέμπων λιτάς, / αὐτόστολον πλεύσαντα μ’ ἐκσῶσαι δόμους. / ἀλλ’ ἢ τέθνηκεν, ἢ τὰ τῶν διακόνων, / ὡς εἰκός, οἶμαι, τοῦμὸν ἐν μικρῷ μέρος / ποιούμενοι τὸν οἶκαδ’ ἤπειγον στόλον (For I have often dispatched and sent beseeching supplications to him through those who have come here, that he should sail by private ship to rescue me and bring me home. But he is either dead or, as is likely, the messengers’ job was neglected and they, paying little mind to my lot, have pressed on their trip home, 494-99).⁸¹ Philoktetes can no more rely on his father for an aural connection than he can on the dead heroes of Troy. This is underscored by the fact that Philoktetes has repeatedly attempted to create an aural connection with him (ἔστελλον αὐτὸν ἰκεσίους πέμπων λιτάς) by sending messengers, but he has never heard a reply. Of these messengers and their failure to

⁷⁸ Newman 1991: 307.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*: 307.

⁸⁰ Their friendship is also marked aurally in the way that the sound of Neoptolemos’ lines, formerly smooth and Odyssean with infrequent resolutions, begin to mirror Philoktetes’, which frequently resolve. See further Newman 1991: 308-10.

⁸¹ On the irregularities in the grammar of this line, see Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 497 ff.

report to Malis on Philoktetes' behalf, Kitto says that "[w]hen we remember the Hellenic desire to interfere shown by messengers in the *Tyrannos* and the *Trachiniai*, to say nothing of the reward which the Greek dramatists allowed their messengers to collect, this indifference is indeed unlikely."⁸² Kitto goes on to say that this "does not matter in the least."⁸³ Yet I think it essential to the creation of Philoktetes' aural isolation that even messengers fail to work for him. And it is crucial to the future isolation of Neoptolemos and Philoktetes, who will give up the aural community at Troy for nothing. For these two men, the aural community of two men offers no future.

It is generally accepted that, prior to the entrance of Herakles, Philoktetes and Neoptolemos have hit a dead end, and that the dramatic action has reverted to where it started.⁸⁴ But, like the aural renewal of Neoptolemos and Philoktetes, in which Neoptolemos must take on the role of Philoktetes as the one who seeks out an aural connection, the entrance of Herakles presents an aural restart: (1) Philoktetes and Neoptolemos are aurally isolated on their way back to Greece and away from the aural community at Troy; (2) when Herakles arrives on stage, his entrance is marked aurally and this signals the beginning of an aural connection, at least with Philoktetes; (3) finally, Philoktetes receives Herakles' voice and the aural connection it represents gladly.

H.D.F Kitto has remarked that Herakles "so badly needs something exciting to say."⁸⁵ Herakles commands Philoktetes that he can not leave with Neoptolemos: μήπω γε, πρὶν ἂν τῶν ἡμετέρων / ἀίης μύθων, παῖ Ποίαντος: / φάσκειν δ' αὐδὴν τὴν Ἡρακλέους / ἀκοῆ τε κλύειν λεύσσειν τ' ὄψιν (Not yet, not before you hear my words, son of Poias. Believe that you hear with your ears the voice of Herakles and you look on his visage, 1409-12). While Philoktetes may not be the one who underlines Herakles' entry, the aural nature of the entry is directed specifically at him. Herakles addresses the hero directly, telling Philoktetes he must first hear his command (ἀίης μύθων, 1410). Herakles does "say something exciting": the strength of αὐδή, ἀκοή and κλύω together, literally meaning "to hear with one's hearing the voice," is unparalleled within the rest

⁸² Kitto 1961: 318.

⁸³ *Ibid.*: 318.

⁸⁴ For a succinct representation of this generally accepted fact, see Greengard 1987: 31.

⁸⁵ Kitto 1956: 133.

of the tragedy.⁸⁶ Herakles “[...] uses the verb *äein*, 1410, not the familiar *akouein* or *klyein*. This verb, like its noun, occurs only in this part of the play and nowhere else.”⁸⁷ His diction and emphasis is emphatically aural. Herakles is reawakening the long dead aural connection.

Philoktetes responds in much the same way that he did to Neoptolemos: ὦ φθέγμα ποθεινὸν ἐμοὶ πέμψας (O you who’ve sent to me the desired voice, 1445).⁸⁸ Herakles’ voice (φθέγμα) is ποθεινός or desired; Neoptolemos’ voice (φώνημα) was φίλτατος.⁸⁹ Again, the aural connection with the voice is central. It is not Herakles himself, as it was not Neoptolemos, whom Philoktetes names dearest (φίλτατος) or desired (ποθεινός). But as Philoktetes started by acknowledging Neoptolemos’ role in speaking dear words (ὦ φίλτατ’ εἰπών, εἰ λέγεις ἐτήτυμα, 1290), Herakles, too, is included in Philoktetes’ reply for his role in sending the “desired words” (πέμψας). It is as though the action is starting over.⁹⁰ But this time Herakles will use persuasion rather than deception.⁹¹ The way that the aural connections begin anew with the reentrance of Neoptolemos and entrance of Herakles suggests that these scenes are parallel to each other in many ways; both arise out of the continued theme of aural entrances that is also demonstrated with the entrances of Odysseus discussed earlier. And all of these entrances, starting with the

⁸⁶ In 12 *dei ex machina* (Soph. *Phil.*, Eur. *Hipp.*, *Andr.*, *Hel.*, *Or.*, *IT*, *HF*, *El.*, *Ion*, *Rhes.*, *Supp.*, and *Med.*), 10 are marked by spoken dialogue; of these, 58.3% are marked by aural diction (ἄιης; ἀύδην; ἀκοῆ; κλύειν; ἐπακούσαι; ἀύδῶ etc.). But only Herakles’ entrance in Sophokles’ *Philoktetes* is marked by 4 terms/elements of aural diction; in contrast, 71% of the aurally marked *dei ex machina* are marked by just two terms. Cf. Wille 2001: 323. In addition to the strong diction, the entrance is also marked aurally by the metre. Hoppin (1990) notes that the shift from the trochaic human ending to the divine anapestic one is heightened by the fact that this seems to be the first time that Herakles’ divinity is being revealed, stressing the “shift from the human to the divine plane” (153). On the use of trochaic tetrameter, see Nooter 2012: 140-141.

⁸⁷ Segal 1981: 339.

⁸⁸ On the similarity between the two passages, see Segal 1981: 338, 344-5.

⁸⁹ Cf. Soph. *Phil.* 234.

⁹⁰ I believe this is mirroring effect is essential to the action of the ending. I also believe that the way in which it does mirror and complete the action of the rest of play provides an excellent reason to accept the validity of the ending, which has been rejected by some. For examples of this view, see Wilamowitz 1917: 312; Kitto 1956: 133; Linforth 1956: 150-6; Waldock 1966: 55; Robinson 1969: 55; and Adams 1957: 159. For the second conclusion as essential to the story, see Robinson 1969: 51 ff.

⁹¹ Though Philoktetes’ description of what sends him to Troy as the γνώμη τε φίλων χῶ πανδαμάτωρ / δαίμων (Soph. *Phil.* 1468-9) may suggest that Herakles uses force as much as persuasion. But that would require reading the generic term δαίμων as a stand-in for Heracles’ name. See Robinson 1969: 53. He says that “[...] Heracles does not, as is sometimes said, persuade Philoktetes to go; he commands him.”

first entrance of Philoktetes, develop from Philoktetes' persistent desire for an aural connection; from the beginning of the play to the end, Philoktetes wants to be part of an aural community.

One might think, then, that with the entrance of Herakles and his reawakening of their aural connection, the reintegration of Philoktetes into an aural community is restarting and that Philoktetes is moving away from the aural community of the Greeks at Troy he felt no connection with towards a different one. And, indeed, the aural community consisting of Herakles, Achilles, and even Nestor of Troy is the aural community to which Philoktetes longs to belong. But if, at the end of the tragedy, Philoktetes goes home to his father Poeas, he will still be isolated from that tradition.⁹² One could argue that Odysseus' threats suggest that Neoptolemos' home will become the locus of a new Troy, a new Iliad (οὐ τάρᾳ Τρωσίν, ἀλλὰ σοὶ μαχοῦμεθα, 1253).⁹³ But in this scenario, Neoptolemos and Philoktetes would be Trojan defenders and Neoptolemos' home the Troy to be destroyed.⁹⁴ While the Trojan heroes would be moving the *locus* of their aural community near to Philoktetes and Neoptolemos, their newfound position as enemies would continue to exclude them from the aural community of Greeks at Troy. But Herakles objects, arguing that his bow must not defend Skyros/Troy. His bow and, therefore Philoktetes, must be part of taking Troy again; that is their destiny. Therefore, Herakles does not actually offer Philoktetes an alternative aural community; rather Herakles commands Philoktetes to reconnect with the Atreids and Odysseus. Deborah Roberts sums this up well:

For Philoktetes, Heracles provides a future which is at odds with his recent intentions but neatly consistent with the more distant past. His own first mention of himself as the possessor of Heracles' bow will be completed by his offering of the spoils at the temple of Heracles; his initial willing presence on the expedition will be completed by his participation in the fall of Troy. Philoktetes will not only

⁹² See p. 72 for the improbability that Philoktetes and Neoptolemos will find a ready-made aural community back in Greece.

⁹³ Cf. Soph. *Phil.* 1241-3; 1250; 1255-6.

⁹⁴ Philoktetes is putting Neoptolemos in a terrible spot. As such, he is proving himself a bad *xenos*. On Philoktetes and *xenia*, see Belfiore 1994: 113-129. She argues throughout that he is selective and selfish, the absolute opposite of Odysseus' unrelenting drive to benefit his community. A true *xenos* ought to do what is in the best interest of his friend. But Philoktetes is a truly selfish figure, who shows no concern for his new *xenos*.

rejoin society, as many have noted, but will also rejoin the story from which he was dropped. What is more, he will bring about this story's end.⁹⁵

Philoktetes will rejoin the Trojan story, the aural community of the Greeks at Troy. This is the happy ending that many scholars find troubling.

But the ending is not unambiguous or totally positive if we consider the leitmotif of echoes. The recurrence of the echo raises questions about whether Philoktetes' reintegration into a human aural community is completed by the *deus ex machina*, whether all is resolved. This echo occurs in the finale of the tragedy when Philoktetes must say farewell to the island that has been his home for ten years:

φέρε νυν στείχων χώραν καλέσω.
χαῖρ', ὦ μέλαθρον ζύμφουρον ἐμοί,
Νύμφαι τ' ἔνυδροι λειμωνιάδες,
καὶ κτύπος ἄρσην πόντου προβολῆς,
οὗ πολλάκι δὴ τοῦμὸν ἐτέγχθη
κρᾶτ' ἐνδόμυχον πληγῆσι νότου,
πολλὰ δὲ φωνῆς τῆς ἡμετέρας
Ἑρμαῖον ὄρος παρέπεμψεν ἐμοὶ
στόνον ἀντίτυπον χειμαζομένῳ.
νῦν δ', ὦ κρῆναι Λύκιόν τε ποτόν,
λείπομεν ὑμᾶς, λείπομεν ἤδη,
δόξης οὐ ποτε τῆσδ' ἐπιβάντες.
χαῖρ', ὦ Λήμνου πέδον ἀμφιάλον,
καὶ μ' εὐπλοία πέμψον ἀμέμπτως,
ἔνθ' ἡ μεγάλη Μοῖρα κομίζει
γνώμη τε φίλων χῶ πανδαμάτωρ
δαίμων, ὅς ταῦτ' ἐπέκρανεν. (1453-69).

Come, now as I go, I wish to call on this land. Goodbye, roof that has kept watch with me, and nymphs of streams and meadows, and manly thud of the foreland jutting into the sea, where many times my head, though deep in the recesses, was wetted by the blows of the south wind, and many times the Hermaian mount sent an echoing groan back to me in a storm. But now, springs and Lycian fountain, I leave you, I am actually leaving you, though I never entertained such an expectation. Goodbye, Lemnian land surrounded by sea, and send me off without reproach on a fair voyage, where great Fate, the verdict of my friends, and the all-conquering *daimon* brings me.

⁹⁵ Roberts 1989: 173.

The address to the landscape has been a sign of aural isolation. So has the echo and, now at the end, the echo that signified his isolation is reiterated (στόνον ἀντίτυπον) within an address to the landscape. Why? Does this final address signal that he has left behind this natural world and been reintegrated into a human aural community? Charles Segal argues of this address that “Philoctetes does not forget the harshness of the sea surrounding Lemnos, the storms, the winds, the rocky setting of the cave where he sought refuge from the elements, the danger of exposure, the wild sounds. And yet he can also see his island as imbued with divinity.”⁹⁶ Meredith Clarke Hoppin expands upon this premise and argues that “Heracles’ epiphany [...] has reawakened Philoctetes’ awareness of the divine that infuses not only human endeavors and friendships but also the natural world and everyday objects.”⁹⁷ For Hoppin, Philoktetes’ relationship with Lemnos has changed, or at least his perception of Lemnos as a place of isolation.⁹⁸ Now it is invested with divine *presence*. The address to the landscape is now an address to an environment that is full of possibilities for aural connections. If Philoktetes can connect with the god Herakles, why couldn’t he connect with the divine presence(s) now investing Lemnos—like the nymphs?

Kamerbeek, however, looking at the same passage in his commentary, argues that “Philoctetes’ leave-taking recitative, except perhaps for the last three lines, could also serve for a play without Herakles’ intervention.”⁹⁹ There is some cause, then, to wonder if Herakles’ intervention has changed anything for Philoktetes, who has already indicated that he does not know how he will be able to communicate with the members of the aural community at Troy. Philoktetes listens to Herakles alone; even Neoptolemos is ignored. Philoktetes did not listen to his advice about returning to Troy to win κλέος. Yet it is the same argument that Herakles presents: ἐκ τῶν πόνων τῶνδ’ εὐκλεᾶ θέσθαι βίον (out from these labours you will make your life well-famed,

⁹⁶ Segal 1981: 353. For an alternate and interesting treatment of the landscape, especially in this scene, as feminized, see Greengard 1987: 40-48. She suggests that Philoktetes addresses “his island with the tenderness and nostalgia as one might speak to a gentle lover or a mother whom one is about to leave” (43). For a short catalogue and discussion of addresses to the landscape with respect to hearing, see Wille 2001: 238-9.

⁹⁷ Hoppin 1990: 158. For a similar argument, cf. Nooter 2012: 144-146.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*: 168.

⁹⁹ Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 1452-68.

1422).¹⁰⁰ And while Herakles commands Philoktetes and Neoptolemos to protect each other—*ἀλλ' ὡς λέοντες συννόμῳ φυλάσσετον / οὔτος σὲ καὶ σὺ τόνδ'* (But, as a pair of lions, feeding in the same pasture, guard each other, him you and you him, 1436-7)—the phrasing used, *ὡς λέοντες συννόμῳ*, makes it clear that no aural relationship will be required.¹⁰¹ They will not be companions as men are; Neoptolemos and Philoktetes will be bestial lions, as savage and as *ἄγριοι* as Philoktetes' cries. And his aural interactions will be as savage and uncivilized as his imagined conversation with the viper who crippled him. When this line is read together with the final address of Philoktetes and the echo, I cannot help but wonder what kind of aural connection Philoktetes will have there. I do not think that the *Philoktetes* offers a definitive answer to these questions; it merely raises them and allows the auditors to ponder them as it does with so many other questions raised by its dual ending.

To conclude, I focused initially on two passages: the speech of Odysseus (1-11) in which he suggests that Philoktetes' incoherent outbursts led to his abandonment because the community could no longer function; and Philoktetes' opening speech (219-231) wherein the outsider hero expresses his desire to reintegrate himself aurally into a Greek community by begging Neoptolemos to speak to him (230-1). I followed the theme of the latter passage throughout the entrances of characters and showed that being able to hear other people is an indicator of communal inclusion. Countering this theme of aural integration is that of the lonely echo of the outsider who can neither listen nor be listened to by other community members. Instead, the aural outsider is left to communicate with a natural setting that is unable to reciprocate. Nature

¹⁰⁰ The translation of *ἐκ τῶν πόνων τῶνδ'* as “through” is advocated by Jebb (1892-1900: *ad* 1421-3). I note that Herakles specifies the type of fame: *εὐκλεής*. I suggest that this is a counter to the kind of fame Philoktetes sought to keep before (*τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν κλέος*). As such, I do not feel that the causative sense of *ἐκ* (translated as “through”) is appropriate here. See for support, Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 1421, 2.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Segal 1981: 351. Segal notes that “[t]he word which expresses their bond in 1436, *synnomos*, means ‘feeding together’ and so suggests the continuation of the savage life on Lemnos, so often described in terms of eating or being eaten. The word also contains the root *nomos*, ‘custom-law,’ ‘social usage’; elsewhere in tragedy *synnomos* expresses intimate human relationship in civilized institutions, like that of the husband and wife (OC 340). At one level, then the simile of the joined lions brings the purely animal associations (*synousiai*, 936) of Philoktetes' life on Lemnos to a new stage, beyond savagery to the divinity of his past and the renewed humanity of his present and future.” But Segal argues as well that “at the same time, lions, though evocative of epic heroism and martial courage, are also paradigms in Homer and elsewhere of violence, wild rage, and destructiveness[...]. Restored to the army at Troy by divine command, he and his companion will remain at least partly marginal figures, something of their bond still in touch with the savagery of wild creatures suggested by the lion simile.” Segal sees in the lion simile at least a vestige of the savagery that has isolated Philoktetes and argues that this simile is reflective of the future state of Philoktetes in Troy.

can only echo, not listen. Finally, I turned to the re-entrance of Neoptolemos (1222 ff) and the entrance of Herakles at 1409, which is the most markedly aural entrance in the play. I showed that these scenes function as a sort of reset for the aural reintegration of Philoktetes and that they mirrored the first entrance of Philoktetes. I think that these observations contribute to the scholarship on the *Philoktetes* in two ways. First, they shed new light on the much-discussed *deus ex machina* of Herakles, by suggesting that this ending, thematically and linguistically in-line with the pattern of aural entrances, continues the idea of aural integration. Secondly, they enrich the *Philoktetes* with a set of connotations unnoticed so far: the aural nature of integration and exclusion into the community as well as the especially aural nature of entrances. So while some may say that “[...] not only frustrated exits but also renewed attempts to persuade a recalcitrant Philoktetes are the very stuff of this play” I would add that aural entrances, aural connections and aural communities are the “very stuff of this play.”¹⁰²

¹⁰² Hoppin 1990: 162.

Wandering Words:
 λόγος, κλέος and “Being Heard Of”
 in the *Trachiniai*

Sophokles’ *Trachiniai* is primarily a tragedy of stories and story-tellers. The opening line of the play is Λόγος μὲν ἔστ’ ἀρχαῖος ἀνθρώπων φανείς (There is an ancient *logos* appearing among men, 1).¹ These words have been oft-discussed for their relevance to the theme of storytelling within the play, particularly as it concerns truth, life, and ambiguity.² The unspoken corollary, though, is that the *Trachiniai* is a play about what people hear said. In this chapter, I intend to consider the topic of stories from an aural perspective in an attempt to shed light on how and why stories are ambiguous in this play. Yet the term stories is itself a little too vague; for reasons that will become apparent momentarily, I will use the turns of phrase “what is heard,” κλέος, and “what is said,” λόγοι. The heart of this approach is to examine the transition from λόγοι to κλέος with respect to the mobility of κλέος within an aural community.

The *Trachiniai*, I contend, examines the reliability of “what is heard” and its relationship to “what is said” in its representation of the shift from the personally-crafted λόγοι of Deianeira to the community-received κλέος. In particular, I argue that Deianeira uses λόγοι to try to preempt and control her κλέος. But the combination of hearing’s mobility and the aural community, an undefined space in which hearing can move, makes impossible any attempt to control “what is heard.” Therefore, I suggest that it is not λόγοι, “what is said,” that is ambiguous; rather, it is the reception of “what is said” as “what is heard,” as κλέος, that is ambiguous; with the separation of speaker from spoken, the reception of a κλέος is spread across the group and rendered uncertain. Consequently, Deianeira’s attempt to anticipate and limit her aural reputation is doomed to failure: judged both before and after death, her λόγος is divorced from her control as κλέος and

¹ The dating of the *Trachiniai* is difficult. For a good discussion, see Segal 1981: 28-9, ft 22. I follow Easterling (1982) and consider it relatively early; see her discussion (19-23). Cf. Scodel 1984: 30-33.

² On the nature of this prologue, see Hulton 1969: 49, 51, 52. He considers the prologue structurally unique among Sophoklean tragedies for the way that it introduces information. See further Seale 1982: 183; Heiden 1989: 21; Easterling 1982: *ad* 1-48. For ambiguity and the *Trachiniai*, see esp. Heiden, Carawan 2000; and Kraus 1991.

as part of the aural network, despite her best efforts to the contrary. But, more to the point, the ambiguity of her κλέος does not exist solely in reference to an external audience, but, in fact, an audience that includes Deianeira herself, who is unable to predict or control the final shape of her aural reputation.

My argument proceeds by a series of stages: first I define the key terms λόγοι and κλέος; second I describe the relationship between the two; following this, I review the scholarship on the ambiguity and uncontrollability of λόγοι within the play; with this background, it is possible to investigate Deianeira and her relationship with what she says for herself and what she hears about herself. At that point, a comparison with the figure of Herakles will be offered because Herakles is Deianeira's opposite in terms of his relationship to λόγοι and κλέος in the play.³ Where Deianeira is determined to control her κλέος through λόγοι; Herakles is present, aurally, only as uncontrolled κλέος until the end of the play. This status as autonomous κλέος effectively contrasts with his wife's vain struggles to limit her κλέος with λόγοι.

First, λόγοι must be defined. As noted above, the usual discussion around λόγοι within the play centres on the idea of stories and storytelling. I will return to this discussion in the review of scholarship. The term λόγοι implies either spoken or written accounts in this tragedy. Given the predominantly aural and oral nature of fifth-century Athenian tragedy – in which even written accounts must be spoken in order to be shared with the audience, as is the case with the prophecies (δέλτων, 47) Herakles left with his wife in this play – I will restrict this term to spoken action in the play; this is a suitable restriction for λόγοι, given that it is a “verbal noun of λέγω..., with senses corresponding to λέγω.”⁴ These λόγοι are tied to the action of speaking. Deianeira, Lichas, Hyllos and even Herakles all take action by telling stories. I propose to keep a strict adherence to this bond between speaking and λόγοι. Therefore, I define λόγοι as “what is spoken.”

³ I will not go beyond the entrance of Herakles in my comparison, since his relationship to his own κλέος shifts at this point, but the subject has been well studied by Nooter (2012: 63-81).

⁴ LSJ s.v. λόγος

The next key term to be discussed—and differentiated from λόγοι—is κλέος. Often translated as “rumour,” “tidings” or “glory,” the base of the word, *klu-*, is also the root of the verb κλύω.⁵ This verb has the meaning of “to hear.”⁶ In fifth-century Athenian tragedy, however, the verb more often means “to be called or spoken of.”⁷ Therefore, the concept of κλέος carries the implied meaning of “reputation” or “what other people will hear said of you.”⁸ In contrast to λόγοι, then, κλέος is the “story heard” rather than the “story told.”

The concept of κλέος may not seem immediately relevant to a study of tragedy. The term is more frequently associated with epic poetry, and in fact is never used in *Trachinai*.⁹ Even κλεινός, the adjectival equivalent of κλέος, is only used three times and always in association with Herakles (19, 750, 854).¹⁰ The association with Herakles is not surprising given that generally κλέος is considered a male prerogative.¹¹ And the importance of κλέος as a central concept in the play is

⁵ See *Intro.* fn 41. For a discussion of κλέος in the *Odyssey* and its relationship to “oral news,” see Petropoulos 2011: ch. 2. Petropoulos is looking at κλέος from an oral perspective, but his discussion of singers in the poems and their tendency to sing about relatively recent events is useful in consideration of the definition put forward here.

⁶ Georg Autenrieth, *A Homeric Dictionary for Schools and Colleges* s.v. κλέος.

⁷ LSJ s.v. κλέος.

⁸ My definition of κλέος is neutral, it demands that “what is heard” be neither positive nor negative. This is, perhaps, in contrast to many approaches to κλέος, which see the term as reflecting something positive to be earned from heroic endeavours (see esp. Nooter 2012: 58-96).

⁹ On the meaning of κλέος in the Homeric poems, see Bakker 1999: 17. Margalit Finkelberg states that “[i]t is generally agreed that in everything concerning the subject-matter of epic poetry the keyword is kleos—‘rumour’, ‘fame’, ‘glory’,” (1998: 74). The reason that κλέος is so vital is that it can also carry the meaning of glory derived from poetry (Nagy 1999:16-17; 1974: 246-52). In this sense, the poet creates κλέος by retelling the stories of the heroes and he controls it by deciding who to tell the stories of (*ibid.*). For κλέος and epic poetry, cf. Floyd 1980; Edgeworth 1988; M. Finkelberg 1986; Pucci 1998; Segal 1999; Volk 2002; Scodel 2008: ch. 1; Petropoulos 2011. For κλέος in other tragedies, see Meltzer 1994; Zeitlin 1995; Miguel Jover 1998. For a discussion of the poetic value of κλέος, for Herakles and Oidipous, in Sophokles’ *Trachiniai* and *OT*, see Nooter 2012: 56-98.

¹⁰ Cf. Soph. *Phil.*: ὁ κλεινὸς ἦλθε Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τε παῖς (19); ὅθ’ εἶρπε κλεινὴν Εὐρύτου πέρσας πόλιν (751); ἀναρσίων <ὑπ> οὐπω / <τοῦδε σῶμ> ἀγακλειτὸν / ἐπέμολεν πάθος οἰκτίσαι [an alternate reading of these lines includes Ἡρακλέους after οὐπω (853-5)]. Interestingly, all three references revolve around the figure of Herakles: he is announced as famous from the opening of the play, the city he sacks is famous and the pain he suffers is very famous (on the difficulties in this passage, cf. Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 853-5). We shall return to this in the final section of this chapter.

¹¹ One need look no farther than the Homeric poems for the male concern with κλέος: *Il.* 2.325, 5.3, 5.173, 5.532, 6.446, 7.91, 9.189, 9.413, 9.415, 10.212, 15.564, 17.16, 17.131, 17.231, 18.122; 23.280; *Od.* 1.298, 1.344, 3.78, 4.584, 4.726, 5.311, 8.74, 8.147, 9.20, 9.264, 16.241, 18.126, 19.333, 24.33, 24.94. Few women in the poems are connected to κλέος in this way; generally, women and family are opposed, by the male speakers, to κλέος (*Il.* 6.446, 18.122). Yet Penelope does earn κλέος within the *Odyssey*: μέγα μὲν κλέος αὐτῆ / ποιεῖτ’ (2.125-6). Penelope’s fame, however, in this and in other cases is dependent on her marital status; in the above passage she makes κλέος by being wooed by many suitors, but at *Od.* 18.255, 19.108, 19.128 and 24.196 her fame is dependent on Odysseus’ fame and return. That said, Thuc. 2.45.2 sums up the relationship between women and κλέος best: μεγάλη ἢ δόξα

certainly revealed in “the use of stories—τὰ κλέα ἀνδρῶν—to revise the story of Heracles ὁ κλεινός (19),” as Kraus notes.¹² Yet again, I think a discussion of Deianeira’s κλέος is both right and fruitful.¹³ On the one hand, as Wohl has noted, “tragedy allows women to want glory even if they don’t often get it, and thus invites us to imagine what a women’s *kleos* might be.”¹⁴ Gasti, too, notes and argues that the “externalized or social aspect of Deianiera’s morality, which Gasti defines as “the kind of morality [...] valid only in relation to society and other human beings,” is linked with a longing for εὐκλεία.¹⁵ But when taking up the study of κλέος in tragedy, we are faced with problems not necessarily pertinent to epic κλέος. In the movement from epic to tragedy, a generic tension opens up. In epic κλέος was ratified and authorized by the Muses, but there are no Muses in tragedy. The only authority present is the λόγος-teller, who creates and distributes the tale told. But this λόγος-speaker exists as part of an aural community, not above as the Muses seem to. Consequently, there is not even a hint of the fixed stability that the Muses make possible, or at least potential. Κλέος becomes unstable, adrift in the human world.¹⁶ A study of Deianeira presents us with an enlightening example of the inherent problems of this sort of world and this kind of κλέος from a unique perspective, a tragic woman’s and a λόγος-teller’s.

καὶ ἥς ἂν ἐπ’ ἐλάχιστον ἀρετῆς πέρι ἢ ψόγου ἐν τοῖς ἄρσεσι κλέος ἦ (the greatest reputation to will be of her for whomever there is the littlest κλέος about her ἀρετή among men). See ch. 3 fn. 16 on the term ἀρετή.

¹² Kraus 1991: 98. Nooter (2012: 56-98) discusses Herakles’ κλέος in the *Trachiniai* and Oidipous’ in the *OT*.

¹³ Cf. Nooter (2012: 67) who suggests that Herakles is the proper subject of κλέος, whilst “Deianira combines the onstage centrality of a protagonist with the linguistic characterization of a sidekick.”

¹⁴ Wohl 1998: 31.

¹⁵ Gasti 1993: 20.

¹⁶ Though the term κλέος seems to have lost its place in civic ideology of the fifth-century BC, it was still understandable and highly relevant to a figure such as Herakles. On the waning importance of κλέος in civic ideology, see Perikles’ funeral oration in Thukydides, where the term used predominantly is ἀρετή (2.35.1-46.2). It is this that allows the Athenians’ ancestors to hand down a free land to the present generation (Thuc. 2.36.1). So their ἀρετή is not itself a possession, but a part of their nature which allows them to acquire and bequeath acquisitions. In contrast to Hektor or Achilles’ focus on military κλέος, Perikles considers such a topic too common to dwell on. In fact, he prefers to point out the meaning and the results of the concepts upon which the Athenian constitution is pinned (2.36.4). He will show that it is based on philosophy and intelligence. But, there are certain parts of the *Historiai* that are geared towards military κλέος: the battles of Thermopylai and Plataia and the character of Leonidas (7.220.2). See further Bakker 2002:17-18.

Returning to the definitions of λόγοι and κλέος, it is important to consider the relationship and the difference between λόγοι and κλέος.¹⁷ If we define λόγοι as “what is spoken” and κλέος as “what is heard,” the difference comes from which end of the bipartite process of listening that the term is oriented towards. That is, within the spectrum of aurality λόγος is closer to the act of speaking and κλέος is closer to the act of hearing; λόγος is connected to the speaker and κλέος to the audience; λόγος concerns production and κλέος consumption. As such, λόγοι and κλέος are not truly different phenomena so much as the same phenomena as viewed from different perspectives.¹⁸ Moreover, both are within the spectrum of aurality.¹⁹

The concept of κλέος, as that which is heard, is an excellent example of the listening-to-ness whilst λόγος is the same for the heard-of-ness of Beck’s theory of aurality, which I have discussed: κλέος combines the passive recipient and active generative state of the listener awaiting *and* constructing the poet’s story; λόγος suggests the generative act of creating stories, the poet-speaker’s role in the generative listening process, as well as the speaker’s ultimate passivity as he or she must suffer being heard and interpreted.

There are two important consequences of this strict, though subtle, separation of λόγοι-speaker and κλέος-hearer: one the one hand, the close association of λόγοι and the speaker’s body renders λόγοι more personal and contributes to an illusion of control for the speaker; on the other hand, the distance between speaker and κλέος obliges this aural phenomenon to be more autonomous. I would like to consider each of these consequences in turn. In the first place,

¹⁷ Κλέος is also the thing spoken and the thing sung. Achilles sings (ἀείδω) of κλέα ἀνδρῶν in the *Iliad* (9.189) and Demodokos sings (ἀειδέμεναι) the κλέα ἀνδρῶν in the *Odyssey* (8.73).

¹⁸ The closest ancient Greek analogy can be found in Arist. *De an.*: εἰ δ' ἡ φωνὴ συμφωνία τις ἔστιν, ἢ δὲ φωνὴ καὶ ἡ ἀκοὴ ἔστιν ὡς ἓν ἔστι, [καὶ ἔστιν ὡς οὐχ ἓν τὸ αὐτό] λόγος δ' ἡ συμφωνία, ἀνάγκη καὶ τὴν ἀκοὴν λόγον τινὰ εἶναι (426a). Setting aside Aristotle’s discussion of ratio, I would like draw attention to his equation of voice and hearing. ἡ φωνὴ and ἡ ἀκοὴ are like one and the same thing.

¹⁹ We might compare the description of Wille: “Tragödie is Geschehen, ist Handlung, die sich nicht im Spielerischen erschöpft, sondern zur Verdichtung im Wort strebt. Die beiden Pole im Erfahrungs- und Meinungsaustausch, soweit er durch das Wort erfolgt, sind der Redende und der Hörende, und so ergibt sich gerade für das Hören ein ganz enger Bezug zum Wort in seinen verschiedenen Formen von Rede, Wechselrede und Gesangs-text. Das Hören ist das Passiv des Redens, und die Leichtigkeit, mit der die Sprache formal den Wechsel von Aktiv und Passiv meistert, begünstigt auch den stetigen Austausch zwischen Formen des Redens und solchen des Hörens. Es werden nun die Formen des Hörens, die eine Funktion im Gang der Rede erfüllen, erfaßt und als typisch herausgestellt. Hierbei zeigt es sich, daß sie vor allem Gliederungs- und Vorbereitungsfunktionen übernehmen” (2001: 202).

λόγοι are personal in that the voice issues from the body into space;²⁰ while the spoken word eventually becomes an external κλέος, in origin the voice is internal.²¹ As Murnaghan has noted, “...speech, though essentially disembodied, must nonetheless issue from a specific body.”²² Secondly, vocalization and self-expression through language has long been acknowledged as a very personal way of orienting the self and displaying individuality in fields such as sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology.²³ For example, linguistic anthropologist Barbara Johnstone has noted that language provides humans a variety of ways of “orient[ing] themselves as individuals, including ways of identifying themselves and others (such as names and terms for relationships), ways of evaluating themselves and their actions, and ways of displaying the continuity of their memories and physical beings, such as narrative.”²⁴ For both these reasons, λόγοι are closely connected to the speaker.

But how does speaking offer a sense or illusion of control? I argue that speaking offers a very specific type of control: the feeling that one controls one’s self-presentation.²⁵ In crafting λόγοι, the speaker creates and controls one’s self-image, or rather one’s aural reputation, and the aural reputation he or she wants to present to the broader community: “A ‘voice,’ in this view, is a

²⁰ We might compare a fragment in Euripides (Nauck: 509): τί δ’ ἄλλο; φωνή καὶ σκιὰ γέρον ἀνὴρ. The connection of φωνή and σκιά suggests a certain lack of corporeality for a voice and, perhaps, the connection with γέρον as well indicates a disassociation from body or at least bodily strength. We might also compare the tradition of “speaking objects” that seem to revivify the speaker when read; cf. Porter 2010: 330-332. By contrast, Porter (2010: 363) discusses the voice “as something bodily, physical, and material. It becomes ‘thingly,’ a pulsation of air...”. Porter, however, is not taking about the voice after it leaves the body but the connection between the voice and the body and the moment of utterance.

²¹ This is well evidenced in the medical texts, where the nature of the body’s illness is often revealed in the nature of the φωνή; eg. Hippoc. *Morb.* 2.49.4, 2.50.3, 3.16.107 *et passim*; *De Glandulis* 17.4. Cf. Porter 2010: 333.

²² Murnaghan 1987-1988: 28. She argues that speech represents a displacement of the body in fifth-century Athenian tragedy.

²³ Of course, both fields are more interested in variation of expression as affectations of individuality than a more general interest in the connection between person and language. Such will not be my interest.

²⁴ Johnstone 2000: 407. Similarly, studying a group of Texan women, she argued that “[t]hese Texans shape language to use as they shape individual identities in the social space defined by the axes of region, gender, vocation, ethnicity, and ideologies about talk, as well as by more particular axes of family, community, psychology, and the need for individuation” (1995: 199). Cf. Benveniste 1986; Carr 1986 and Linde 1993. For a discussion of using speeches to create identity in Sophokles’ *Trachinai* and *OT*, see Nooter 2012: 56-98.

²⁵ Plato’s discussion of φωνή is interesting; Socrates defines the term as follows: φωνή μὲν ἡμῖν ἐστὶ πού μία διὰ τοῦ στόματος ἰοῦσα, καὶ ἄπειρος ἀπὸ πλῆθει, πάντων τε καὶ ἐκάστου (*Phlb.* 17b). The sound comes individually from each person but is the same kind of sound for everyone, thus making it both shared and unshared. The context, a discussion of pitch and harmony makes this passage of less value to the immediate project, but the expression of φωνή as something individual in origin is still relevant, whilst the idea of a shared quality to φωνή is evocative.

strategically adopted way of sounding that a speaker designs and modifies as a result of analyzing the rhetorical or aesthetic task at hand.”²⁶ Bruce Heiden has already noted the constructive quality of Deianeira’s speeches.²⁷ Heiden maintains that when Deianeira deploys the ancient λόγος in the prologue, she does so as a strategy to derive “pleasure by creating the illusion that the pain, like the speech, is a production under the speaker’s control.”²⁸ Heiden then argues that this action further “alleviates her pain by preempting it.”²⁹ Deianeira’s λόγος is a strategy by which she engenders a sense of self-control and by which she avoids pain.³⁰ Her λόγοι are her, as Johnstone would have put it, “strategically adopted way of sounding.”

Κλέος, by contrast, is associated with the audience and often with the unseen spaces of the theatre and is, therefore, distanced and autonomous. As noted, the distancing arises from the orientation of κλέος towards the listening-audience and its mobility within that audience.³¹ I do not mean to say that λόγοι are fixed inside the speaker’s body. I merely wish to stress, in this chapter, the difference in type of movement created by the stronger association between the body of the speaker with “what is spoken” and the body or bodies of the audience with “what is heard.” Λόγοι exit from a specific body and are, consequently, more personal; one’s own λόγοι offer a—false—sense of control. That sense of control is false because, as I hope to show, λόγοι are essentially κλέος from a certain point of view and κλέος moves between the bodies and

²⁶ Johnstone 2000: 405. Johnstone also notes that “[k]nowledge of language is fundamentally private and individual, and it is impossible that two people could do things with language the same way” (*ibid.*: 411). Cf. Cherry 1998.

²⁷ See Heiden 1989: 22. Heiden tellingly expresses Deianeira’s position *vis-à-vis* control and her own λόγος as follows: “...as an actress, indeed as the poet of her speech, the character becomes the creator of her drama” (21).

²⁸ *Ibid.*: 22.

²⁹ *Ibid.*: 23.

³⁰ *Ibid.*: 22-23. Both aspects are intimately linked in Heiden’s argument, I think, since the one, pain, seems to engender the need for the other, control.

³¹ Already in the *Odyssey*, we find Telemachos searching for a broad ‘hearing’: κλέος εὐρὸν...ἦν που ἀκούσω (broad κλέος, if I might hear, 3.83). This phrase is highly suggestive of a spatial aspect to κλέος that has been well noted. See esp. Bakker 2002. A point of comparison can be found in Aischines’ description of φήμη (*In Tim.* 127-129), which he says wanders throughout the city (πλανᾶται φήμη κατὰ τὴν πόλιν, 127). But perhaps the best support can be found in Pindar (*Nem.* 5), where the song itself declares its mobility (στείχ’, 5) in contrast to a statues’ immobility (ἀγάλματ’ ἐπ’ αὐτᾶς βαθμίδος / ἔσταότ’) and ability to create an aural reputation (διαγγέλλοισ’, 5) for Pytheas.

spaces of the aural community, preventing any form of individual control.³² The sounds uttered, the κλέος, become separate and autonomous. In such a state, what is heard becomes something of a sonant object, with a separate existence from the physical body of the speaker.³³

Plot and setting in the *Trachiniai* conspire to reinforce and draw attention to the separation of speaker speaking and κλέος heard. To begin with, the constant entry of characters from offstage, whether that means from behind the façade or along the *eisodoi*, “telling stories” about events that have occurred offstage, certainly creates the impression that κλέος is something that moves from an undetermined outside space and then diffuses across the multiple bodies on stage and in the real audience. Next, Segal has rightly suggested that “[t]he *Trachiniae* is the only extant play of Sophocles in which a human community, the polis or the heroic society of warriors, does not exert strong pressure on the protagonists. Trachis is the vaguest of political entities... This is a play not of cities, but of wild landscapes.”³⁴ The distance and elusiveness of the “outside” spaces and people of the *Trachiniai* is in part negated by and in part necessitated by the audience-orientated nature of κλέος. In the absence of a distinct political community, κλέος creates an

³² On the mobility of the voice, consider either *Il.* 15.686 (φωνή δέ οἱ αἰθέρ’ ἴκανεν; cf. Hes. *Theog.* 685) or the phrase ἔπεα πτερόεντα (*Il.* 1.201, 2.7, 4.384, 4.312, 8.101, 10.163, etc.). We can also look to a more contemporary source in Aristophanes’ *Vespae*: ὥσπερ φωνή μέ τις ἐγκεκύκλωται (395). The φωνή here is not only mobile as it “circles” Bdelycleon, but is also the autonomous subject of the clause and is never pinpointed in space as the comedy quickly moves onto the next scene. Finally, we can consider the treatment of φωνή in the physiologists discussed at length in the Chp. 1 (but see especially Aristotle, *de Anima* 419a-421a, and Demokritos in Theophr. *Sens.* 56). Cf. Soph. *OT* 86 (τίν’ ἡμῖν ἦκεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ φήμην φέρων). Cf. Wille 2001: 279-285 for a catalogue of sounds and voices as flowing, pouring, filling space (though Wille argues that “... das überhaupt nur bis zu einem gewissen Maß der Entfernung möglich ist,” 285, he is not making an argument about κλέος so much as an argument about the physical ability to hear or not as dependent on closeness). We might contrast the later (c. 370 BCE) treatment of Aristoxenos, whose writings, as Barker (2005) argues, indicate that sound is not mobile in a physical space or place, but in the “space” of or range of pitch.

³³ On the voice as a sonant-object (generally sent forth), see *Od.* 19.521; Aesch. *Cho.* 563; Eur. *HF* 1295, *Phoen.* 1440; Soph. *OT* 324; Hdt. 4.23.7; Ar. *Vesp.* 555; Xen. *Cyn.* 3.5.2, 13.16.2; Pl. *Phdr.* 259d, *Leg.* 934d, *Resp.* 531a. Intriguingly, for Herodotos the voice is both a space you can enter (4.155.18) and an object that can be broken open in order to make it function (5.93.9; but see also Pherecrates 10—ὄσα ἄνερρωγεν τὸ φώνημ’ εὐθὺς ὄξυ καὶ μέγα, Demianczuk—and the Hippocratic corpus, eg. *De superfetatione* 15.7; *De Epid.* 7.1.77). A comparison to the way words are all but corporealized, placed on scales and weighed in Ar. *Ranae* (795-803) might be fitting as well. Finally, we might confer Porter’s (2010) discussion of the metaphor in Philodemos that words are glued together and in Ar. *Thesm.* that words are riveted together, which Porter describes as “[s]ounds made firm... likened to a body...” (270).

³⁴ Segal 1981: 62. He further proposes that *this* distancing from the communal elements of the polis plays a key role in the imagery and thematics of the play: *Logos*, knowledge, late-learning are all themes which have been connected to this opening sentiment. For *logos*, see especially Kraus 1991; Roberts 1989; Segal 1977; *ibid.* 1995: 43-4; Jebb 1892-1900: xlviii; and Reinhardt 1979: 37, 62. On late-learning, see esp. Whitman 1951: 103-121 for his chapter entitled, “Late Learning: The *Trachiniae*.” See also Segal 1981: 77. For knowledge, see esp. Seale 1982: 181-214 for his chapter on “*The Women of Trachis*: the Verge of Truth.”

aural one, existing in the space between people and tying them together by aural links. And by distancing both the polis and the aural community from Deianeira, the play highlights not only the mobility of “what is heard,” which is able to return to the stage along with the messenger characters, but also the unreliable yet autonomous and uncontrollable nature of an aural reputation.

There is one final contrast between λόγοι and κλέος that arises from the autonomous nature of the latter: κλέος is better suited to control the speaker than to be controlled by the speaker. Hunter’s work on “gossip” is particularly relevant. For her, gossip is a mode of oral communication that depends on close-knit, face-to-face groups “where private, even intimate, matters are transmitted through a common grapevine.”³⁵ The “common grapevine” is essentially an aural community and gossip is similar to κλέος, though at a lower register. Hunter argues that “[w]hile asserting the common values of the group, [gossip] holds up to criticism, ridicule, or abuse those who flout society’s or the community’s accepted rules. Thus gossip functions as a means of social control, ensuring, through its sanctions, conformity with those rules.”³⁶ The same could be said of κλέος. So, if speaking λόγοι gives the speaker the sense that they are controlling their own aural reputation, the social control engendered by κλέος, like gossip, shows that sense of control to be illusory. κλέος is a check or restraint upon the individual that suborns him or her to the aural community. Consequently, κλέος, unlike λόγοι, is outside of Deianeira’s personal control; try though she may, she can neither predict nor control the eventual shape of her aural reputation.

I hope by now to have clearly differentiated κλέος and λόγοι and to have laid some of the groundwork for a discussion of the inherent ambiguity of κλέος within the play. But before

³⁵ Hunter 1990: 300. In her study of this, Hunter “stress[es] community because gossip as a mode of oral communication flourishes where contact is close and experience shared and where private, even intimate, matters are transmitted through a common grapevine, of neighbours, for example” (*ibid.*). Though Hunter focuses on gossip as an oral mode of communication, it has been shown that verbal communication of any sort is aural as well. For other definitions of gossip, see Wert and Salovey (2004) who noted that “almost as many functions of gossip have been argued as writers to write about gossip” (p. 77). Though gossip is generally considered “small talk” or “idle talk,” it has been argued by various scientists that it has a fundamental role and purpose (Gluckman 1963; Goodman & Ben-Ze’ev 1994; Rosnow & Georgoudi 1985; Sabini & Silver 1982; Spitzberg & Cupach 1998). For example, gossip theoretically may have played an important role in the evolution of human intelligence and social life (Dunbar 2004; Davis & McLeod 2003).

³⁶ Hunter 1990: 300.

turning towards that discussion, it is crucial to review two key pieces of scholarship on λόγοι, both of which have argued for the connection between λόγοι and ambiguity. Christina Kraus' formulation of the way Deianeira uses personal narration in the play is acutely pertinent. Kraus argues that Deianeira uses stories to make judgments about her past and to justify her present actions;³⁷ however, Deianeira's actions fail, according to Kraus, because "[u]nless every item in the chain is fully narrated the meaning of the whole cannot be correctly read, and the missing information is invariably the locus of catastrophe."³⁸ Ambiguity, then, arises from "missing information" that leads to "catastrophe." Kraus' investigation of story telling and ambiguity makes no distinction between the personal act of telling a story and the group-oriented act of hearing a story, but instead considers this as an undifferentiated unit. My analysis complements and supplements Kraus' excellent study by focusing on the transition from spoken λόγος to heard κλέος; for it is only in that transition that we have the distancing necessary to create ambiguity. Unlike Kraus, I am arguing that it is not that the λόγος fails to communicate. Rather, the ambiguity is inherent in the very structure of λόγος as something that must be both created and received by an auditor and thereafter become a κλέος. That is, in contrast to the reception-oriented approach of Kraus, my interpretation focuses more on the production and processing of the λόγος. For a λόγος, from the point of view of the speaker, is not ambiguous; uncertainty arises due to the fact that the speaker and producer cannot predict the ultimate shape that their κλέος will take within the audience of his or her aural community.

Bruce Heiden, who also considered at length the speakers of the *Trachiniae* and their rhetorical strategies, similarly argued for the ambiguity of λόγοι. For Heiden, whose discussion of the how Deianeira positions herself through her speeches has already been noted, ambiguity occurs during the interpretative stage. He states that "for the *Trachiniae* there is no knowledge, only

³⁷ See, for example, her comments on Deianeira's account of the robe: "[i]n this story [about Nessos] as in the others she claims that an action is final and finalizing—the robe will provide a λύσις—and bases her decision to take that action on an interpretation of the past that she believes is stable. She is unsure about the outcome, but not about the past" (Kraus 1991: 89). Kraus makes a similar comment on the prologue: "[Deianeira] has endured dreadful terrors, but her vision of the past has so far needed consistent revision by present experience. The very rhetoric of her first speech with its alternation of security and worry subverts her attempt to confirm the present either through similarity or by contrast with the past. Deianeira begins this final day of her life by demonstrating an unhappy tendency not to learn from experience" (81).

³⁸ *Ibid.*: 76.

interpretation.”³⁹ The common link between Heiden’s and Kraus’ arguments is the focus on speech acts; Heiden and Kraus both consider *telling stories* a strategy, the former a rhetorical strategy and the latter a decision-making strategy. The different types of strategies envisioned result in a different location of ambiguity. For Kraus, ambiguity affects the λόγοι-producer Deianeira and her ability to make decisions; for Heiden, ambiguity stems from the fact that all λόγοι are a rhetorical strategy themselves. Therefore, ambiguity affects the audience’s ability to interpret Deianeira. The difference between my argument and Heiden’s is subtle. We see ambiguity as affecting the audience’s reception of a story. Heiden, however, sees ambiguity as a result of being unable to determine the speaker’s intentions in using a particular rhetorical strategy. Consequently, Deianeira is unable to be part of the audience or the ambiguity. By contrast, in consideration of the mobility of κλέος within the aural community and the distance between speaker and κλέος, I think Deianeira needs to be included in the audience. For me, the cause of uncertainty and ambiguity is the separation of speaker from any sort of control once her λόγοι exit the body and enter the aural community as a distanced and mobile κλέος: what is heard is indefinite for her just as much as for everyone else.

I would like to begin my discussion of the play by a brief examination of the entry of Lichas and his stories of Herakles in order to provide a more exemplary illustration of the relationship between λόγοι and κλέος as well as the difficulty in controlling “what is heard” in the play. The herald puts forth the following as Herakles’ reason for sacking Oichalia:⁴⁰ a slight (πολλὰ μὲν λόγοις / ἐπερρόθησε, πολλὰ δ’ ἀτηρᾶ φρενί, 263-4), a taunt (ἴφωνεῖ δὲ δοῦλος ἀνδρὸς ὡς ἐλευθέρου, 267) and a drunken disturbance (262-9). Lichas has left out a good chunk of the story because he does not want to upset Deianeira by revealing Herakles’ rumoured lust for

³⁹ Heiden 1989: 13.

⁴⁰ Kraus argues that he covers up the truth with not only lies but also framing: “[u]nlike Deianeira’s stories, however, which open out at the end with expressions of her anxiety about the future, Lichas’ λόγος is decisively marked as a final one by a framing repetition of τέλος...” (1991: 84). She goes on to note that: “Heracles offers the due sacrifices to Zeus Ceneus (τέλη 238), while Lichas performs his own duty (τελῶ 286). These τέλη, while each has a specialized meaning in context, look back to the τέλος so prominently featured in Deianeira’s last narrative and establish that this is indeed the καιρός and that Heracles has completed something, the narrative of which—the verbal reification, as it were—Lichas is now himself completing,” (*ibid.*). On the way that Lichas’ story is designed to create a positive aural reputation for Herakles, see further Heiden 1989: 13-23; Halleran 1986.

Iole.⁴¹ When Lichas is not forthcoming with the whole account, the Messenger decides to reveal the gap in his account of Herakles. First, the Messenger orders Deianeira to stay and “learn what she needs to and which she *has not heard*” (ὦν τ’ οὐδὲν εἰσήκουσας ἐκμάθησ’ ἃ δεῖ, 337). When she hesitates, he again orders her to *listen* (ἄκουσον, 340), reminding her that she *listened* to her own advantage earlier (οὐδὲ τὸν πάρος / μῦθον μάτην ἤκουσας, 340-1).⁴² The Messenger’s account is aural not only by definition but also by emphasis. The striking aural diction of this scene creates the perception that Lichas has been undone by his own λόγος or, more accurately, by how that λόγος circulated amidst the aural community and returned to the stage as a κλέος.

After finally telling her his story about Iole, the Messenger cites the community of Trachinians as witnesses: καὶ ταῦτα πολλοὶ πρὸς μέση Τραχινίων / ἀγορᾷ συνεξήκουον ὡσαύτως ἐμοί (And many others heard these things, just as I, in the public place of the Trachinians, 371-2). The Messenger’s emphasis on the shared quality of what *he has heard said* of Herakles is arresting. The Messenger heard *with* (συν-εξ-ακούω) many people (πολλοί). They heard altogether in the ἀγορά; the agora was a place for public speaking and for public listening. Heiden, on the two messages of Lichas, has noted that “the Messenger infers that one of the *logoi* must fail to correspond to reality,” but that “it doesn’t occur to him that neither account might be true.”⁴³ While this is an interesting point, I think an aural perspective of this scene very enlightening. The objective truth is no longer the point. Herakles’ κλέος has been publicized.⁴⁴ The Messenger

⁴¹ Though Lichas’ motivation, like Deianeira’s, may also stem from the desire to “hear well;” however, where Deianeira would hear well of herself, Lichas would have her rejoice in hearing his account: τοῦτο γὰρ λόγου / πολλοῦ καλῶς λεχθέντος ἥδιστον κλύειν (289-90). As a messenger, Lichas’ character revolves around his function as mediator of, essentially, κλέος. His relationship with κλέος is inverted. He is the storyteller who needs a good story. Deianeira is a woman in need of a good reputation. Similarly, Herakles exists in story, whilst Lichas exists for the story. But we are left once again to wonder about the stability of κλέος if the storyteller can blatantly lie about the story. Segal (1981) notes that “Lichas’ closing generalization on the ‘well-spoken tale’ underlines how ill-spoken it has been. Word and act are sharply at variance here.[...] The emphasis on speaking well ironically foreshadows the play’s massive perversion of language, of which Lichas’ report is itself the first instance” (66). But see Ormand (1999: 49), who suggests that one must take into account all of Herakles’ motivations for sacking Oichalia in both of Lichas’ accounts in order to understand the complexity of Herakles’ desire, which Ormand describes as “not single.”

⁴² One might wonder, however, if the first messenger’s original message was in vain after all; he did leave out an important portion of the λόγος. On the play between simple and compound verbs in this scene, see Longo 1968: *ad* 336-7.

⁴³ Heiden 1989: 68.

⁴⁴ Perhaps what Davies refers to as “the vivid ‘eyewitness’ imperfect” reinforces the Messenger’s authority in these lines, as he includes Deianeira in the original auditors who “heard together” (1991: *ad* 372-3]).

is an embodiment of that κλέος; he represents a generic deliverer of common gossip from the aural community.⁴⁵ On his first entrance, the Messenger told Deianeira that he has heard of Herakles in a meadow: ἐν βουθερεῖ λειμῶνι πρὸς πολλοὺς θροεῖ / Λίχας ὁ κῆρυξ ταῦτα: τοῦδ' ἐγὼ κλύων / ἀπῆξ' (In the summer pasture for the oxen, in the meadow, he, Lichas the herald, cries aloud to many those things. I heard him. And I darted away, 188-89).⁴⁶ This comment encapsulates the bipartite process of hearing and of creating κλέος that is the focus of this chapter. One member of the aural community hears an account and then forwards it to another, like gossip. Both members are involved in making decisions about what they hear and what they forward. This is the bipartite process that transforms what is said, again like gossip, into an aural reputation. Lichas endeavoured to cover (πᾶν σοι φράσω τᾶληθές οὐδὲ κρύψομαι [I will reveal everything to you, the whole truth, and I shall not cover it up, 474) a piece of information that he did not want to speak, that he did not wish to be heard. He failed. The λόγος of Herakles was no longer in his control; rather, the κλέος of Herakles was in the aural community.

Deianeira too, from the opening lines of the tragedy, is a λόγοι-speaker. And the prologue clearly demonstrates her desire to speak, to create the λόγοι that will determine and define her existence and αἰών:

Λόγος μὲν ἐστ' ἀρχαῖος ἀνθρώπων φανείς
ὡς οὐκ ἂν αἰῶν' ἐκμάθοις βροτῶν, πρὶν ἂν
θάνη τις, οὔτ' εἰ χρηστὸς οὔτ' εἶ τῳ κακός:
ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν ἐμόν, καὶ πρὶν εἰς Ἅιδου μολεῖν,
ἔξοιδ' ἔχουσα δυστυχή τε καὶ βαρύν. (1-5).

There is a story, made known long ago, among men that you cannot fully learn the life and lot of mortal men before they die, as to whether it was happy or wicked. But I know mine, even before I go to Hades, I know I have a ill-fortuned and heavy lot.

She does not wish to be judged, nor does she accept that anything could be heard about her. She delimits her κλέος with her own λόγοι: the ancient men were wrong; she knows the λόγοι of her

⁴⁵ A comparison with Barrett's (2002: 31-4, 39-40) discussion of omnipresence might provide a useful comparison. Barrett argues that, while the Messenger in the *Persians* sets his narrative up as an eyewitness report, the actual content presents an omnipresent view that derives from the poet's need to use the messenger as more than an eyewitness because "such an authority is inadequate" (40). Perhaps, in the *Trachiniai* at least, the Messenger's authority comes from the aural community, an omnipresent entity itself.

⁴⁶ On the reading of πολλοὺς rather than πρόσπολος, see Longo 1968: ad 188.

own life καὶ πρὶν εἰς Ἄιδου μολεῖν. No one need judge her life; no one need attach a κλέος after she dies, οὐτ' εἰ χρηστός οὐτ' εἶ τῷ κακός.⁴⁷ She can tell *you* her λόγος already; her life (αἰών, 2), or rather—to use a better phrase since Deianeira is referring to what people will say about her life—her life-story, is δυστυχῆς τε καὶ βαρύς. No further κλέος is required.

An interesting ancient comparison may be found in Manwell's discussion of Erinna. She argues that in the corpus of Erinna, the ability to vocalize oneself serves an important role in creating the poet's identity.⁴⁸ Manwell draws a contrast between the transgressive self-possession of the female poet and the silence of the submissive married woman.⁴⁹ This female use of a voice for the creation of self and also as an expression of transgressive independence offers an interesting parallel to the Deianeira's use of her voice to create her own aural self-image. Deianeira's words in the prologue create both a sense of authority over her λόγος and a disregard for external κλέος in that by claiming authority over the former she negates the need for, or at least removes the place of, the latter. She creates her own λόγος that is κακός (3), δυστυχῆς and βαρύς (5) and, in the process, seeks to delimit her κλέος to those same terms. In doing so, Deianeira for all practical purposes tries to supplant any potential future κλέος with her own λόγος about a difficult, unfortunate and heavy life.

But, like Lichas before her, Deianeira will find herself unable to control her own aural accounts and, as a result, her aural reputation. Lichas is threatened by an aural reputation that labels him as base: εἰ δ' αὐτὸς αὐτὸν ὧδε παιδεύεις, ὅταν / θέλῃς λεγέσθαι χρηστός, ὀφθήσῃ κακός. / ἀλλ' εἰπέ πᾶν τάληθές: ὡς ἐλευθέρω / ψευδεῖ καλεῖσθαι κῆρ πρόσεστιν οὐ καλή (But if are teaching yourself such ways, you shall be seen as base when you want to be called noble. No, speak the whole truth, it's an ignoble stain for a free man to be called a liar, 451-4).⁵⁰ The concern expressed is for what Lichas will be called (καλεῖσθαι); he should be called ἐλεύθερος (453), but could be called ψευδής (453). His actions may bring a blemish to his reputation, a κῆρ...οὐ καλή

⁴⁷ On the “undirected nature of this statement” and the mood of the verb ἐκμάθοις, see Nooter 2012: 68. She also argues that “[Deianeira's] voice, trapped in generalities and descriptions, neither engaged nor expected an audience” (74). Similarly, Nooter considers her speech a “self-isolating” act (70) where I consider it a reflection of the aural community and Deianeira's relationship to it.

⁴⁸ Manwell 2005: esp. 83, 87.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*: 83.

⁵⁰ On this passage, see Conacher 1997: 25.

(454).⁵¹ If we reconsider the prologue, we recognize the familiar terminology of χρηστός (452) and κακός (452). Lichas is threatened by the very judgment that Deianeira has sought to prevent.

Deianeira does seem to betray concern that a similarly negative aural reputation could attach itself to her in a dialogue with the chorus about her plans to anoint her husband's robe with an erotic charm. She asks the chorus to keep the secret of her plan to charm Herakles: μόνον παρ' ὑμῶν εἶ στεγοίμεθ': ὡς σκότῳ / κἄν αἰσχρὰ πράσσης, οὔποτ' αἰσχύνῃ πεσῆ (Only might I be covered well by you! When, in the dark, you take even shameful actions, you never will fall in shame, 596-7).⁵² Her words suggest that she herself will perform deeds that are αἰσχρά. But, as in the prologue, she tries to suppress an aural account of those actions with a counter-λόγος; by calling on the chorus to cover her actions (στέγω), she endeavours to nullify any aural reputation resulting from the aural community's hearing about her plans.⁵³ In effect, she tries to negate her own λόγος about her attempts at erotic charms with a second λόγος, a wish to be covered.⁵⁴ Interestingly, this expectation—expressed as a wish—that what she has told them and what she has done can remain in the dark (σκότος) demonstrates a certain disregard for the power of sound. Her terminology, both στέγω and σκότος, are visual and, as a result, deny the efficacy and role of hearing. Yet, while this λόγος is expressed in visual terms, its implications are aural. She expects her immediate audience, the chorus, to remain silent by covering her and preventing

⁵¹ See Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 454. He notes “κῆρ [is] a deadly thing (Ph. 42 Ph., 1166): πρόσεστιν, said of a quality or a repute which attaches to a man: Ai.1079 ‘δέος γὰρ ᾗ πρόσεστιν αἰσχύνῃ θ’ ὁμοῦ’: cp. ib. 521.” The LSJ suggests that κῆρ refers to an “unseemly disgrace” (LSJ s.v. κῆρ), but the more common translation is “[goddess of] doom” or “[goddess of] death” (see *Od.* 11.171; *Il.* 2.834, 8.73, 9.411, 12.326, 18.535, 23.79; Hes. *Theog.* 217; Aesch. *Sept.* 777, 1060; Soph. *OT* 472, *Trach.* 133; Eur. *El.* 1252, *HF* 87). The idea that Lichas' lies bring “κῆρ, a deadly thing” to the herald is far more appropriate to his fate and his actions (leading a woman to Trachis who will set in motion events leading to the deaths of Herakles and Deianeira).

⁵² Easterling (1982) notes the “ironical contrast with her long speech to Lichas” (*ad* 596-7). Kamerbeek (1970) rejects this reading of the text in favour of πράττειν, which he thinks refers “...to her being put to shame in the event of her attempt falling flat” (*ad* 596, 7). Cf. Antiphon frg. 44A 10-20 for a similar use. For a discussion on Antiphon's statement and Deianeira, see Gasti 1993.

⁵³ Contrast Heiden 1989: 91-2. He suggests that Deianeira “suppresses her anxiety about the outcome of her use of the drug by treating its potential failure as a danger merely to her reputation,” while I argue that Deianeira's constant concern is for her aural reputation.

⁵⁴ Cf. Heiden, who connects the constructive quality of Deianeira's λόγος intimately with the effective power of the φάρμακον. They are one and the same (1989: 88); her λόγος is a seductive tool the same way that the φάρμακον is. But both prove outside Deianeira's control. The destructive forces of the φάρμακον will come to bear in ways that she couldn't predict (89). And all λόγος within the play will fail to truly and accurately signify, as the characters want it too (cf. esp. 94, but also *passim*).

a κλέος of her plans from moving beyond the stage to the distant aural community.⁵⁵ On the one hand, there seems to be an implicit acknowledgement of the mobility of hearing in this since Deianeira wants to box up her words within the house, constrained like the evils of Pandora's *pithos*; but there is also a failure to recognize that what blocks the eye, like the *skene*, does not necessarily block the ear.⁵⁶ Somehow, as we saw in the *Elektra*, hearing deflects or passes beyond visual boundaries.

Nor does Deianeira's counter-λόγος prove effective in preventing a movement off-stage. Again, if we consider the inevitable mobility of sounds once they leave the sonant body, this is hardly surprising. For the Greek physiologists Alkmaeon, Empedokles and company, the bipartite process of hearing is defined by this movement from sonant body to "other" space.⁵⁷ The final destination of the sonant-object must be the space within the ear, brain, and soul. But, before reaching this internal space, the sonant stimulus travels through the air moving from one place to another.⁵⁸ It is during this phase that sound becomes the autonomous phenomena and sonant object capable of transmitting an aural reputation, a κλέος. Deianeira's attempt to control κλέος through λόγος is inherently flawed; λόγος becomes κλέος as a sonant object moves along the continuum of aurality from personal production to group consumption.

The pairing of aural with physical actions as well as objects further highlights the futility of trying to control aurality in the play. Deianeira asks the chorus to remain silent regarding her use of charms, but the charms are used. She smears the robe of her husband and sends the object with Lichas. The smearing of the robe is a real, physical action that Deianeira narrates to the

⁵⁵ On light and darkness imagery in this passage, see Holt 1987: 213. This is also reminiscent of the treatment of light and darkness in the *Elektra*, where darkness is associated with secrets and light with revelation. For more on light imagery in Sophokles, cf. Segal 1977: 141-146; 1981: 31; Seale 1982; Lawrence 1968; Mursillo 1967.

⁵⁶ See ch. 1.

⁵⁷ See 22 ff. We might also compare the discussion of Heiden, who argues that Deianeira's own version of the proverb in the prologue is a way of distancing her own self and pain. Heiden expresses this in visual terms: "...by lamenting her suffering Deianeira could adopt the role of a spectator and thus view it as an object, something apart from herself" (1989: 23). But taken in aural terms, Deianeira's speech becomes an object once it exits her body and becomes a κλέος. It is, then, only once spoken and transformed into an aural phenomenon that Deianeira's pain can be distanced and separated from her person. The problem, however, is that this externalized sonant-object will return as her κλέος, a κλέος that our heroine is unwilling to *hear*. That is, once externalized, the sonant object can become an aural attack, like Klytaimnestra's screams in the *Elektra*.

⁵⁸ For sound as a movement of air from the (individual) body, cf. Pl. *Ti.* 67b; Arist. *De an.* 420b; Archelaos *Testimonia* 1 (Diels & Kranz); Anaxagoras *Testimonia* 106 (Diels & Kranz); Ps.-Pl. *Definitiones* 414d.

chorus in an aural action; the robe itself is a physical object that Deianeira will send off-stage with Lichas along with an aural, sonant object: her words. She charges Lichas to tell Herakles (φράζ' ὅπως, 604) her directives regarding putting on the robe and adds the pretense:

οὕτω γὰρ ἠϋγμην, εἴ ποτ' αὐτὸν ἐς δόμους
ἴδοιμι σωθέντ' ἢ κλύοιμι, πανδίκως
στελεῖν χιτῶνι τῷδε, καὶ φανεῖν θεοῖς
θυτῆρα καινῶ καινὸν ἐν πεπλώματι (610-13).

For I swore that if I should ever see or hear that he had come safely home, I, according to my duty, would send him this robe and reveal him to the god as a new sacrificer in a new robe.

Her lie can again be read as a counter-λόγος. She seeks to control any aural account of her use of magic through her personal account. This account is entirely false, though; the robe is a charm that will burn the flesh. The robe itself and the resulting pain betrays Deianeira's λόγος. The sonant object of the lie is countered by the physical object of the robe; in the process, the robe also contradicts her plan and plea to be covered in darkness. The physical object is revealed to the sun and in the sun the robe reveals Deianeira's actions and engenders the aural reputation she sought to delimit. Both object and physical action are complicit in creating a κλέος that has nothing to do with her life being κακός (3), δυστυχής and βαρύς (5), rather it will be a κλέος of Deianeira the husband-slayer.

Her failed attempt to delimit “what is heard” is already familiar to the audience of Lichas' lies, which served as our illustration for the failure of a personally-constructed λόγος in the face of a community-received and accepted κλέος. Her creation of her own λόγος to counter the λόγος of ancient people, her narrative to the chorus about her attempt to use charms and her immediate suppression with a silencing command fail. Deianeira's actions and her lies cannot remain in the dark. Her motives and reasoning, both of which she explained to the chorus, can be covered by those members.⁵⁹ But they cannot contain the report of her actions themselves for the simple reason that these actions do not remain in the same place as the chorus. Deianeira sends her actions beyond the stage when she sends the robe with Lichas. When this happens, the robe is

⁵⁹ Kamerbeek (1970) suggests, following Mazon, that she means for the chorus to cover her and not the thing she has said (*ad* 596). It is, however, important to distinguish between her motives and her actions, both of which are a part of her and her characterization, but which are both separate in some ways.

not complicit with her lie; but, rather, the robe belies her. It provides tangible proof that her words are false and, thus, engenders an aural report on her actions that is completely different from her own personally shaped λόγος. This report is born in a place off-stage and is, therefore, as far removed from Deianeira's control as can be. Neither the heroine nor her confidants are in a spatial position to cover (στέγω) her actions and choices.⁶⁰ What is heard of Deianeira's actions is consequently outside her control. And these actions will create a κλέος outside her influence.

Actions, lies and a wicked κλέος return with her son to the stage's aural space. First, though, Deianeira will discover the tuft of wool and narrate the events to the chorus: She describes this crucial occurrence as a φάτις: εἶσω δ' ἀποστείχουσα δέρκομαι φάτιν / ἄφραστον, ἀξύμβλητον ἄνθρωπον μαθεῖν (On my way back in, I see an inexpressible saying, unintelligible as far as mankind's understanding is concerned, 693-4). In its entirety, this passage is reminiscent of the prologue: something is unforeseeable. We might suggest, then, that Deianeira has come face to face with what she refused to acknowledge there. But the difference in diction here is revealing. Where before Deianeira spoke of a λόγος, she now refers to a φάτις. This φάτις is a difficult term to interpret in this context. Jebb notes that “φάτιν is boldly used here, but appears sound. The harshness is modified by the context: i.e., the antithesis between uttering and comprehending has led the poet to strengthen ἄφραστον by a noun specially suited to it.”⁶¹ Holt suggests that “φάτιν ἄφραστον is a textbook example of an oxymoron, but δέρκομαι φάτιν is not so easily classified.”⁶² Holt considers the combination of δέρκομαι and φάτις problematic because φάτις is an aural term while δέρκομαι is a visual term.⁶³ A number of scholars have commented on the combination of ἄφραστον, φάτις, and δέρκομαι.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Cf. Soph. fr. 614: σύγγνωτε κἀνάσχεσθε σιγῶσαι: τὸ γὰρ / γυναιξίν αισχρὸν σὺν γυναῖκα δεῖ στέγειν (in Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 596-8).

⁶¹ Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 693-4.

⁶² Holt 1988: 487.

⁶³ For φάτις as rumour, the subject of rumour, cf. *Od.* 6.29, 21.323, 23.362; *Aesch. Ag.* 9, 276, 456, 611, *Supp.* 294; *Soph. Aj.* 186, 191, 850, *OT* 715, *Ant.* 700, 829; *Eur. Hipp.* 130, *IA* 794, *Hel.* 1, 251, *Ion* 225; *Lycoph.* 1051; *Hdt.* 1.60, 1.122, 2.102, 7.3, 7.189, 8.94, 9.84, *Heracl.* 34.

⁶⁴ E.g. Stanford 1936: 51; Tarrant 1960: 83; Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 693, 4; Segal 1977: 91-92.

Most endeavour to explain the use of δέρκομαι, “trying to explain the word that least needs explaining. Deianeira does, after all, see the wool withering in the sun, so δέρκομαι is quite appropriate. But why should the wool, a visible object, be called a φάτις, literally an ‘utterance’ or a ‘report’.”⁶⁵ According to the LSJ, φάτις is here used to indicate the subject of speech.⁶⁶ Holt, however, argues for a different interpretation: “φάτις also means ‘omen, portent’... It has the great merit of letting the troublesome word keep one of its usual meanings, and it carries some further implications which are quite appropriate to the passage.”⁶⁷ Holt is surely referring to the fact that “omen, portent” could refer to the fulfillment of any of the oracles about Herakles’ fate.⁶⁸ Yet I think that the LSJ has it right. As Kamerbeek points out, “...the uttering of the thing seen...replaces the thing itself.”⁶⁹ The phrase δέρκομαι φάτιν refers back to the αἰσχρά *things* done in the dark (σκότος).⁷⁰ There is no way her actions are going to stay quiet or covered. Even the light within her house (εἶσω...ἀποστείχω) *and under her roof* (στέγος) has revealed the truth about her actions; and the robe itself has gone out into the open air and light of Euboa and Cape Kanaïos. The sun will reveal her actions.⁷¹ The sun is showing her the report on her actions, the κλέος that is to come. So Deianeira sees the beginning of φάτις, of “talk” about herself.⁷² Or rather, she sees her own λόγος, the one she is speaking right now about the

⁶⁵ Holt 1988: 487.

⁶⁶ Cf. Easterling 1982: *ad* 693-4. Cf. also LSJ: *ad* φάτις. It is the “subject of a saying or report, Νέστορα καὶ Σαρπαδόν’, ἀνθρώπων φάτις themes of many a tale, Pi.P.3.112 (s. v. l.); δέρκομαι φάτιν ἄφραστον a thing unspeakable, S.Tr.693.”

⁶⁷ Holt 1988: 487-8.

⁶⁸ Though this is definitely one of the meanings that could present itself to the audience, it is by no means the only one. For φάτις as “voice from heaven,” cf. Soph. *OT* 151, 310, 1440; Aesch. *Ag.* 1132, *Pers.* 227, 521; Eur. *Supp.* 834; *Ar. Av.* 924.

⁶⁹ Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 596, 7.

⁷⁰ Holt does mention the meaning of “rumour, report,” but he is unclear in how this meaning applies.

⁷¹ Segal (1977) suggests that “the attention drawn to sight and light by the synaesthesia of 693 both derives strength from and contributes to [the] effectiveness” of the leitmotiv of the sun and its destructiveness in the play (92). On the sun and its meanings in this play, see Holt 1987: *passim*; Hoey 1972: esp. 143ff. On the synaesthesia in this line, cf. Longo 1968: *ad* 693-4. For a discussion of synaesthesia or the “intersensal metaphor” more generally in fifth-century Athenian tragedy, see Stanford 1936: 47-62. For other examples of “akustische Vision” with some discussion, see Wille 2001: 236-237.

⁷² This phrase may indicate fifth-century Athenian tragedy's own implication in the conversion of λόγος into κλέος through a combination of aural and visual means, since this is an aural process enacted visually. The same can be said about the robe, a physical and visual stage prop that is part of the aural process.

tuft of wool, now distanced and separated from her as a κλέος, something heard in an aural community by community members, including herself.⁷³

My reading of the phrase δέρκομαι φάτιν is borne out in the ensuing dialogue. Upon seeing the tuft of wool dissolve and realizing her error, the heroine comprehends that, if Herakles dies, she will acquire a wicked κλέος and says: ζῆν γὰρ κακῶς κλύουσαν οὐκ ἀνασχετόν, / ἥτις προτιμᾷ μὴ κακὴ πεφυκέναι (For it is unendurable for any woman who has a care not to appear as base, to go on living whilst hearing ill of herself, 721-2).⁷⁴ Once again, we find the repetition of the term κακός, familiar from the prologue and Deianeira's warning to Lichas (3; 452).⁷⁵ She, like Herakles' herald, is threatened by the very judgment she originally sought to avoid. Lichas has found and Deianeira will find that her λόγοι fail while an uncontrolled κακὸν κλέος flourishes instead. It should be noted here that consideration of the moral term κακός, which can refer to ethical substance or to the judgment of a person as *being* good or bad, is restricted to a κακός aural reputation.⁷⁶ As Naomi Rood, in her article "Four Silences in Sophocles' 'Trachiniae'," has noted "Deianeira laments the difference between what people will say she is (κακῶς

⁷³ The term φάτις is combined with εὐκλεής in Euripides (fr. 242 Nauck). In similar vein, the term is the object of κλύειν in Sophocles' *Aias*. A φάτις is something to be heard. In the *OT*, we find it referring to what Iocasta has heard about the death of Laios (715). Cf. Soph. *Ant*, 929 which uses the same kind of construction and meaning. In the *Antigone*, φάτις refers to the rumours that Haimon has heard among the townspeople: τοιάδ' ἐρεμνὴ σῖγ' ὑπέρχεται φάτις (700). Interestingly, this φάτις is specifically dark (ἐρεμνὴ) and oddly silent (σῖγα). Yet the characteristics of this φάτις are relative to Kreon; it is only to the tyrant that the φάτις is dark and silent. Haimon, at least, has heard. The term occurs twice in quick succession in the *Aias*. In both instances the φάτις is κακή. In the first, the chorus ask Zeus and Apollo to ward it off (ἀπερύκω) like a physical object (*Aj*. 185-86). In the second, it is something taken (αἶρω: this verb is often employed with κλέος) specifically because *Aias* is not there to stop people from talking: μὴ μὴ, ἄναξ, ἔθ' ὄδ' ἐφάλοισ κλισίαις / ἐμμένων κακὰν φάτιν ἄρη (191-2). An alternate reading of this line includes the term ὄμμα, which keeps the people from talking. Much is made of *Aias*' ὄμμα in this play; here it seems to indicate both his presence and his sanity. An interesting comparison from earlier in the play is again voiced by Deianeira: Deianeira rejoices at the eye of the voice (ἄελπτον ὄμμ' ἐμοὶ / φήμης, *Trach*. 203-4). She is referring to the news that Herakles is returning safely as delivered by the Messenger. The Messenger is the visual embodiment of the report (φήμη) on Herakles. On this passage and the theme of "eyes," see Segal 1995: 57.

⁷⁴ Jebb translates: "No woman could bear to live with a reputation for evil." The Greek is literally "hearing ill (about herself)" rather than "a reputation for evil," (1892-1900: *ad* 721-2).

⁷⁵ Heiden makes the interesting observation that "she does not utter a word of concern for Heracles..." (107). Her focus is entirely on her reputation.

⁷⁶ While this chapter is concerned with her morality, it is focused solely on the "externalized aspect" (for the phrasing, see Gasti 1993: 20) of her aural reputation for being good or bad rather than on making a judgment personally. On Deianeira's culpability and her intentions, see Ryzman 1991: esp. 391-5; Easterling 1982: *ad* 492-95; Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 494; Winnington-Ingram 1980: 78-81; Conacher 1997: esp. 30; Fowler 1999: 163; Scott 1995 and 1997; Carawan 2000.

κλύουσας) and what she is (μη κακή).”⁷⁷ What she intends by her act is irrelevant from this perspective. Kleos is objective, not subjective: it does not matter what she intended to do, but only what people have heard or said about what she has done: “[i]n Deianeira’s view, what people see (ὀφθήσει, 452; φανήσομαι, 666) or say or hear (κλύουσας, 721) about a person trumps what a person aims to be (θέλης γενέσθαι, 452; προτιμᾶ . . . πεφυκέναι, 722).”⁷⁸

When her λόγοι return, they will do so as κλέος. This κλέος is external; it is sound from without, from the aural community, moving in. And the sound of her κλέος, that is, what it heard said of her, reveals the truth about Deianeira. I do not mean to say that her aural reputation is her truth; rather her κλέος reveals the truth that she has no power to judge herself, she has no control over her fate or her reputation. There is no point in naming her life-story in a λόγος; that will be for others to do. She will be subjected to the definition and labeling of the aural community. Hyllos is the first to label her. As he returns to the stage to relate the destructive impact of her gift, he condemns her in the following way:

ὦ μήτηρ, ὡς ἂν ἐκ τριῶν σ’ ἐν εἰλόμην,
ἢ μηκέτ’ εἶναι ζῶσαν, ἢ σεσωσμένην
ἄλλου κεκλιῆσθαι μητέρ’, ἢ λώους φρένας
τῶν νῦν παρουσῶν τῶνδ’ ἀμείψασθαί ποθεν (734-8).

Mother, I wish I could choose one of three fates for you: either that you were dead, or that you lived but were called some else’s mother, or that you’d exchange your present heart for a better one from somewhere!

Her actions and her λόγοι have moved from the stage to a headland and back again to the stage as *what she hears* said of herself. As Hyllos returns to the stage he brings back an opinion of her, a judgment, born of his reception of her actions. He witnessed the damage that her robe has caused, the damage that her λόγοι cannot cover anymore because, like the robe, the damage too is physical. And he knows, thanks to Lichas’ report of Deianeira’s λόγος, that the robe was a gift from her (775-6). Sonant object and physical object together confirm her role in the death of Herakles and her κλέος grows from there.

⁷⁷ Rood 2010: 356.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*: 356. Note that Rood prefers the reading γενέσθαι over λέγεσθαι, which I prefer, following Lloyd-Jones and Wilson (1990).

Hyllos' angry condemnation, which contains the wish that she were not called his mother (ἄλλου κεκληῖσθαι μητέρ', 736), encapsulates his mother's aural reputation. The aural nature of this phrase points towards an attack on her aural reputation; her son is the first to deny her ability to control her κλέος. His complaint is not that she is his mother, but that she is called his mother.⁷⁹ Hyllos feels shame because he is attached aurally, by his κλέος, to her actions.⁸⁰ He is called her son. But Hyllos does not want to hear her called his mother; Deianeira does not want to hear ill (κακῶς) of herself. But, from the very opening of Hyllos' condemnations, the futility of his wish to "un-name" his mother is accentuated by the potential force of the ἄν; Hyllos expresses a wish that can only be described as a contrafactual. Unlike Deianeira, who has sought to control through λόγοι, Hyllos' λόγος implicitly accepts the openness of "what is heard." The conditional phrasing then, draws attention to the truth that Deianeira's κλέος, as well as her fate, is beyond the control of her λόγοι. On the one hand we might contrast the controlling force of her ἔξοιδα (5) with the conditional force of his ἄν...εἰλόμην. On the other hand, the mere act of aural remonstrance demonstrates the failure of her counter-λόγοι in the face of the open mobility of κλέος. A potential story Hyllos wishes he could have heard about her is realized and heard; and although his wish is never more than a wish, it becomes part of Deianeira's real aural reputation, distorting it and destroying her "strategically adopted way of sounding."⁸¹

This inability to control is confirmed during Hyllos' narration of Herakles at Cape Kanaion, when he recounts what he has *heard*: πολλὰ δ' οἰμωγῆ βοῶν, / τὸ δυσπάρεινον λέκτρον ἐνδατούμενος / σοῦ τῆς ταλαίνης, καὶ τὸν Οἰνέως γάμον / οἷον κατακτῆσαιτο λυμαντὴν βίου (shouting often with lamentation, dwelling on his ill-mated marriage to wretched you, and his marriage to Oineos' daughter, which, ruin of his life, he secured for himself, 790-3). This is the aural reputation of Deianeira.⁸² There are several layers in this κλέος. First, there is the surface

⁷⁹ Hyllos' three options for her are as follows: be dead, be unconnected to him aurally or be different than she is. The second option is impossible. Everyone, even Hyllos (*Trach.* 734), calls her his mother. The first option is the one she will seemingly take. The third option is more difficult. She does not appear to have intentionally killed Herakles, so that she does in fact have a different mindset than the one he thinks she does. But it is only in retrospect that Hyllos will learn this. On Deianeira's culpability and her intentions, see chp. 3, fn. 76.

⁸⁰ In fact, the scholion for the passage glosses "αἰσχρόνομαι γὰρ ἐπί σοί" (cf. Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 736).

⁸¹ See Johnstone, cited fn. 26.

⁸² The implicitly progressive sense of these verbs creates the suggestion that the aural reputation resulting from the judgment of Herakles and aural community will be continually present even after the death of the subject. As such,

layer: Deianeira is listening to Hyllos. This layer is the most revealing; for, like Hyllos' condemnation, this κλέος invades the stage, the locus of power of Deianeira, and betrays her illusions of control for what they are: illusions. In becoming an audience member rather than a speaker and a consumer rather than a producer, Deianeira bears witness to and is, in fact, part, though not a dominant part, of the creation of her own κλέος. This kleos has distanced itself, become autonomous in the community and, finally, brought her words and actions back to the stage in a way she never predicted or wanted. Secondly, there is the aural attack by Herakles on her that Hyllos refers to. Her son narrates that Herakles not only shouts (βοῶν) about their marriage, but he also “dwelled on” (ἐνδατούμενος) it. The range of meanings for this term includes both “fling insults” and “speak of in detail.”⁸³ The sense, then, is that Herakles gives a detailed condemnation of Deianeira. Everyone (ἅπας...λεώς, 783) present at the sacrifice hears. Deianeira's λόγος has both literally moved far enough from Deianeira and figuratively far enough along the continuum of aurality to become an independent κλέος κακόν not only in the distanced community of the ἅπας λεώς, but also onstage and in person. Her actions could not be covered in the dark. They are out there in the light for anyone to hear. Deianeira hears ill of herself *and* so does everyone else in the aural community.⁸⁴ I argue that this is the ambiguity of κλέος: κλέος distances itself, diffuses across a community so that even when you hear your own life-story, that story is not truly yours. Your κλέος does not belong to you, it represents you, but it is autonomous and uncertain.

I would like to follow Deianeira and her relationship a bit further and examine how she responds to her κλέος and why in order to fully appreciate the autonomous and distanced nature of her newly heard aural reputation. Deianeira's response to her son is silence: τί σῖγ' ἀφέρπεις; οὐ

what is said has evolved into an autonomous aural phenomenon, κλέος, capable of transmitting information and cementing “belongingness” to the aural community that the γνώμη refers to: among men.

⁸³ Kamerbeek (1970) supports “speak of in detail” because of the use of the accusative with the verb (*ad* 791). Cf. Easterling 1982: *ad* 791-3. Davies (1991: *ad* 791) thinks it means “revile” here, though he is uncertain how it came to mean this.

⁸⁴ According to Kraus the play dramatizes how hearing enables everyone tied to a subject via these aural links to make their judgment in the way that they tell stories about characters within the tragedy; “[t]elling a story is one way of making a judgment about the meaning of experience, since a story gives a shape—a beginning, middle, and end—to an action or series of actions.” (Kraus 1991: 76). Kraus, as noted, is interested in how the characters make choices based on the “stories” they have heard.

κάτοισθ' ὀθούνεκα / ξυνηγορεῖς σιγῶσα τῷ κατηγορῶ; (Why do you creep off in silence? Do you not understand that by being silent you bear witness for your accuser? 813-4). She says nothing in response; she will create no counter-λόγος this time. Deianeira seems, at first glance, to be following the advice of the chorus in this: σιγᾶν ἂν ἀρμόζοι σε τὸν πλείω λόγον / εἰ μή τι λέξεις παιδὶ τῷ σαντῆς (to silence any further account would suit you, unless you would speak something to your own son, 731).⁸⁵ Their words, at the very least, suggest that what is done in silence can still be kept silent (σιγᾶν). But, as noted, Deianeira learns that this is not the case; she hears a κλέος about herself from Hyllos. She hears that she is κακή, something she cannot endure (721).

Two things are occurring in Deianeira's silent exit: she is at once admitting her newly-heard κλέος as an open and uncontrollable phenomenon but also attempting to counter that κλέος with a new κλέος, rather than a new λόγος. On the one hand, she will add no defense, no new λόγος, to become hearsay. She has already witnessed the failure of her λόγοι. So she will leave her aural reputation as it is and kill herself away from the *theatron*. She will cover herself within the house as she sought to cover her actions in the house before. Rood, discussing this final silence, suggests that Deianeira "...chooses silence to make herself invisible—as a way to not be seen (666), heard (721), or talked about."⁸⁶ She argues that "one can be seen and talked about or surrounded by silence and invisible."⁸⁷ Yet the play does not entirely bear out this opposition between silence and "being heard of." Being unseen does not correlate with being unheard of. Herakles remains at a distance for much of the play, but he is constantly heard of. Actions cannot be covered, even under a roof. Like the aural accounts of Herakles that litter the tragedy or the account of Deianeira's charms, Deianeira's opening λόγος and all her λόγοι have more than failed, they have left her, distanced enough from her to become a new κλέος about her life and death. But, though her αἰών ends, it yet remains for the βροτοί of her aural community, both

⁸⁵ Though it is possible to argue that the chorus are not telling her to be quiet so much as elaborating on her options: either she can be quiet or tell her son the truth. For a similar line of argumentation on a different piece of choral advice, see Solmsen 1985: 490-96.

⁸⁶ Rood 2010: 356. Cf. Nooter 2012: 71. She argues that "Deianeira, then, does not speak out until she thinks that there is truly no one to hear her. It is only in the moment of becoming fully absent and thus objectified by the narrative, and only just before being conclusively silenced by death, that she also assumes several elements of a poetic voice. Her poeticity, the power of her voice, cannot be truly heard."

⁸⁷ Rood 2010: 357.

within and without the play, to label it, εἰ χρηστὸς ... εἴ...κακός. Both the distanced community of Trachinians and the audience members are left to name her based on aural reports: her κλέος. Her death is just another action that will become an aural account. And Deianeira has become a physical object, like the robe, capable of creating a strong countering κλέος without uttering a word. So she moves herself into the house as she sent the robe off the stage in the silent hope that the returning κλέος will be more to her tastes. The chorus are the first to hear of Deianeira's aural reputation: πότερον ἐγὼ μάταιος, ἢ κλύω τινὸς / οἴκτου δι' οἴκων ἀρτίως ὀρμωμένου; (Am I a fool or do I hear a piteous wailing rushing through the house just now? 863-4). There rings out (ἠχέω, 866) a lament (κωκυτόν, 867) and the roof (στέγη, 867) offers or makes something new (καινίζω, 867). Deianeira has maintained her silence, but nonetheless has become an aural object. The nurse and Hyllos are the ones who cry out. It is their noise that the roof cannot cover. But it is Deianeira's κλέος.

Before discussing the nature of the heroine's new κλέος, it is useful to point out how it moves offstage and back on. The movement off-stage is effected both by her exit at 813 and by Hyllos' subsequent exit.⁸⁸ There are two ways that the movement back onstage is achieved. First, the sound of lament reaches through the façade to the waiting auditors. Secondly, the Nurse reemerges from the house and relates the suicide to the chorus:

Τροφός: βέβηκε Δηάνειρα τὴν πανυστάτην
 ὁδῶν ἀπασῶν ἐξ ἀκινήτου ποδός.
Χορός: οὐ δὴ ποθ' ὡς θανοῦσα; *Τροφός:* πάντ' ἀκήκοας.
Χορός: τέθνηκεν ἢ τάλαινα; *Τροφός:* δεῦτερον κλύεις (874-7).

Nurse: Deianeira has gone now
 Along the last of all roads, without moving her feet.
Chorus: Surely you don't mean that she's dead?
Nurse: You've heard it all.
Chorus: The poor wretch is dead?
Nurse: You hear again.

⁸⁸ Presumably Hyllos leaves either somewhere at the beginning of or during the choral ode, since he has to return to the stage later (972).

The Nurse's phrasing is markedly aural.⁸⁹ She says that the auditors have heard everything (πάντ' ἀκήκοας).⁹⁰ The chorus also hear again (δεύτερον κλύεις).⁹¹ The story of Deianeira's final acts has become a κλέος despite, or perhaps because of, the heroine's ultimate silence. The perfective sense of the Nurse's ἀκήκοας might suggest an ending to Deianeira's story, but the immediate repetition and the following κλύεις with its progressive aspect immediately counters any sense of completion.⁹² Deianeira's κλέος is not nor can it be final.

In silently committing suicide, Deianeira is not truly resisting her λόγος' translation into a κλέος.⁹³ Rather, she is hastening it.⁹⁴ Ormand, in his book *Exchange and the Maiden*, has discussed the silent exit of Deianeira and suggested that it suits the unfinished nature of her marriage because both marriage and final words are left unfulfilled.⁹⁵ I think that one could posit a similar relationship between the silent exit and the unfulfilled κλέος of Deianeira; to paraphrase Ormand, "one of the reasons that [Deianeira] leave[s] the stage silently is that [her] silence is the correlative of [her] unresolved" aural position in terms of reputation, κλέος.⁹⁶ Ormand goes on to note that "[s]ilence cannot be resolved. It is unbounded."⁹⁷ An aural reputation is equally "unbounded" and irresolvable. There is always the possibility for new interpretations by the

⁸⁹ Though one should note that the remainder of her story is largely visual. For the visual dimension as representing her eyewitness status, see Barrett 2002: 76-81.

⁹⁰ This perfective use of ἀκούω is typical for messengers in Sophokles: *Phil.* 620, 1240; *Aj.* 480; and *OC* 896. On the confusion of storyteller and auditor in this passage, see Heiden 1989: 127-28.

⁹¹ Deianeira's story is told and retold already; on the way that hearing is used for confirmation, see Wille 2001: 211. But it will be short-lived, wiped out by Herakles' focus on Nessos. On the catechistic structure, see Alexiou 2002: 137-138.

⁹² We might compare the advice of Hesiod to his brother to avoid talk because it is hard to bear, difficult to get rid of, and never dies (ὦδ' ἔρδειν: δεινὴν δὲ βροτῶν ὑπαλέυεο φήμην. / φήμη γάρ τε κακὴ πέλεται, κούφη μὲν ἀεῖραι / ρεῖτα μάλ', ἀργαλέη δὲ φέρειν, χαλεπὴ δ' ἀποθέσθαι. / φήμη δ' οὐ τις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται, ἦντινα πολλοὶ / λαοὶ φημίξουσι: θεός νύ τις ἐστί καὶ αὐτή, *Op.* 760-764).

⁹³ Contrast Bowra 1944: 130. He contends that she maintains silence because she is *not* concerned with her aural reputation. Ryzman (1991) comments that "...it is difficult to gauge the importance of her reputation. At 721 her concern is evident, and yet her silence suggests that she is unconcerned with proving her innocence" (395). See Lawrence 1978: 299 for the silence motif. For silence as a way to suppress, mask and falsify information and the connection of those aspects to the emergence of Deianeira's character, see Garrison 1991: 31-37. For silence as Deianeira's way of imitating Aphrodite, see Rood 2003: 345-364.

⁹⁴ On the death scene and a woman's κλέος in death, see Wohl 1998: 35, 44.

⁹⁵ Ormand 1999:153-161.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*: 160.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*: 160.

aural community. Deianeira herself has been judged κακή by her son. But her entire life has not been judged yet. By ending her αἰών (2), which she called δυστυχῆς and βαρύς (5), she engenders the opportunity to craft new and newer judgments, to decide if she is κακός (3) or χρηστός (3). Is she a violent husband-slayer (Δηι-άνειρα) or an innocent pawn?⁹⁸ If, as is possible, Sophokles' depiction of Deianeira is unique and the audience was expecting a more violent and obviously κακή woman, such a depiction only reinforces the potential for competing κλέα about her.⁹⁹ Though Deianeira does try to engender a more positive aural reputation for herself through her silence and through the use of her own body in committing suicide, she is not in control. The auditors can still gossip and select out whatever they choose in their creation of her aural reputation. Herakles and Hyllos will play out this action in the following scenes.

Hyllos originally condemned his mother and tried to deny her right to the title “mother.” But, after he learns the truth about her intentions from the Nurse, Hyllos mourns for his mother (935f). He deems his own accusation of her κακός rather than Deianeira herself.¹⁰⁰ The entire shape of her story and the way that she chose to die with her husband rather than live in constant shame has had the desired effect. The κλέος that she will receive from her son will not be κακόν. In this way, we can see that her silent suicide is not “just an ending.”¹⁰¹ Instead, the end of her αἰών is the beginning of her new κλέος. But, while Hyllos has changed his tune, Herakles makes a counter judgment. He condemns her and longs to see her suffer.¹⁰² The hero dubs her ἄθεος (1036). The chorus shudder hearing (κλύουσ' ἔφριξα, 1044).¹⁰³ Her aural reputation from her husband induces tremors. Herakles also demands that his son cease to honour the name mother: ὦ παῖ, γενοῦ μοι παῖς ἐτήτυμος γεγώς, / καὶ μὴ τὸ μητρὸς ὄνομα πρεσβεύσης πλέον (Son, be my

⁹⁸ On her name, see Wohl 1998: chp 2, fn. 57; Hester 1980: 5, 7-8.

⁹⁹ Carawan 2000: 191-201.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *Trach.* 940: ὡς νιν ματαίως αἰτία βάλοι κακῆ (940).

¹⁰¹ Easterling 1982: 5. She contrasts the death of Herakles with the death of Deianeira and finds his death less of an ending than the heroine's. Cf. Segal (1995), who comments that Deianeira “experiences death that is an ending and nothing more. Heracles' death has a sense of a future” (66).

¹⁰² Cf. *Trach.* 1035-37: ὦ μ' ἐχόλωσεν / σὰ μάτηρ ἄθεος, τὰν ὧδ' ἐπίδοιμι πεσοῦσαν / αὐτῶς, ὧδ' αὐτῶς ὡς μ' ὄλεσεν.

¹⁰³ Easterling (1982) notes the similarity to Soph. *El.* 1407-8, where the chorus will shudder to hear the cries of Klytaimnestra (*ad* 1044-5).

trueborn son, and do not anymore put first the name of mother, 1064-5).¹⁰⁴ The aural reputation attached to Deianeira by Herakles is κακόν. He has taken the opportunity of her death to fashion a κακόν κλέος for a woman whom he has deemed to be κακή.

But Hyllos rejoins (ἀντιφωνέω, 1114) and commands his father to listen (σιγὴν παρασχὼν κλῆθί μου, 1115).¹⁰⁵ First, he calls her his mother (τῆς μητρὸς...τῆς ἐμῆς, 1122). This has two effects: he rejects Herakles' demands that he not honour the name mother and he corrects his own rejection of Deianeira, whom he wished to be called another's mother.¹⁰⁶ She should be called his mother. Hyllos also labels her οὐχ ἔκουσία. Both figures label her as she once labeled herself. Neither characters use the terms Deianeira preferred. But, it is clear that the power to label and define an aural reputation does not lie in her hands any more than it lies in either of their hands. For, once Herakles and Hyllos label, it is left to the auditors in the aural community of the theatre to again define her life and determine how she should be called and heard of. The power of κλέος is diffused across the group and enacted upon the individual. The point here, then, is that while Hyllos and Herakles name her and create a certain type of κλέος for her, their words are her κλέος only for each respectively. They are not the only audience that can judge her.¹⁰⁷ Sophokles presents those within and without the tragedy with the same opportunity that Deianeira's silent exit presents: a space for κλέος.

To recap, in the prologue Deianeira prevented the βροτοί of the implicit aural community from naming her αἰών as χρηστός or κακός by herself defining it as ill-fortuned and heavy. She again tried to supplant the need for a labeling, κλέος, and, finally, proliferation of that κλέος through repetition by controlling the λόγος of her witchcraft with a pair of alternative λόγοι that sought to engender silence about her use of charms. But Deianeira failed on both accounts, her λόγοι literally moved outside her control with the result that she is alive to hear (κλύουσα) people naming her κακή. That is, Deianeira created λόγοι onstage; onstage she controlled them and her

¹⁰⁴ Hyllos has in fact done this. He rejected the name mother in his accusation of Deianeira (*Trach.* 736) and has not used it since. On this request as representing the homosocial focus of Herakles, see Ormand 1999: 57.

¹⁰⁵ On the form κλῆθί and what it means for the relationship between Hyllos and Herakles, see Davies 1991: *ad* 1115.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *Trach.* 736: ἄλλου κεκλήσθαι μητέρ'. See p. 100.

¹⁰⁷ On the audience and its role as judge, see Roselli 2011: 29, 55-6.

own fate. But this control was an illusion. Her λόγοι issued from her body and left the stage, just as the physical object of the robe left with Lichas. When the report of her actions and the λόγοι she sent with them return, they do so as a thing heard, her κλέος. This aural reputation is external and uncontrolled. It exists both within individual members of the community who create labels for her and diffused across the entire group. Hence, her κλέος is entirely ambiguous, an autonomous and manifold entity that she could not predict or delimit.

I began the discussion of Deianeira and her relationship to κλέος and use of λόγοι with a comparison to Lichas and his problematic lies. I would like to close with a contrast to Herakles, who represents something of an anthesis to the figure of Deianeira.¹⁰⁸ There are two points to be made: (1) Herakles is virtually κλέος incarnate: open, uncontrolled and uncertain; and (2) Herakles is visually absent but aurally present.¹⁰⁹ So, whereas Deianeira, visually present on stage, seeks to manipulate her κλέος through λόγοι, Herakles, only aurally present, is no more than an uncontrolled κλέος; as a result, Herakles and his open relationship with κλέος can be examined as an instructive inversion of Deianeira's own and, ultimately, can provide a reason for her failure.

The very first reference to the hero is in aural terms: ὁ κλεινὸς ἦλθε Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τε παῖς (the glorious son of Zeus and Alkmena came, 19).¹¹⁰ The term κλεινός is a paronym of κλέος

¹⁰⁸ As Easterling (1982) remarks “it has often been noted that there is a striking difference in the way Deianeira and Heracles are handled” (6). Though, I think that there is a link in the way that both characters seem to be tethered to their aural reputations. For a selection of those authors who treat Deianeira and Herakles as interdependent and complimentary, see Segal 1981: 28 fn. 16.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Wille 2001: 219. He says “In den ‚Trachinierinnen‘ vollzeit sich eine stufenweise Enthüllung der Wahrheit über Herakles im Hören.”

¹¹⁰ But as the play progresses, I think that the way that κλέος attaches to Herakles shifts. From his lineage and divinity, the κλέος of the hero relocates to his actions: ὄθ' εἶρπε κλεινὴν Εὐρύτου πέρσας πόλιν (*Trach.* 750). By sacking the city of Eurytus, he made it κλεινός. Herakles, then, is not only a figure to be associated with aural fame, but also a figure that by association engenders aural fame. The final explicit reference to κλέος is also related to Herakles: ἀναρσίων <ὑπ'> οὐπῶ / <τοῦδε σώμ'> ἀγακλειτὸν / ἐπέμολεν πάθος οἰκτίσαι (853-5). This is a textually difficult line. If we take ἀγακλειτὸν with πάθος, then, interestingly, the suffering's fame is somehow more concentrated than Herakles' own. Nooter (2012: 66) refers to this adjective as “an *über* form of *kleinos*”. The hero was only famous (κλεινός); his πάθος is *very* famous (ἀγακλειτός). Perhaps because this πάθος overcomes the hero, it is more significant and worthy of talk. The city was just one city destroyed by the hero; but there is only one πάθος that can and will destroy Herakles. And again, the hero's κλέος would be spreading from the figure of Herakles. If we take ἀγακλειτὸν with τοῦδε σώμ', then Herakles' κλέος is reestablished within the character from its brief “out of body” experience. But this κλέος seems different from line 19 in so far as this κλέος is specifically his body's. We might wonder if there is still a separation of Herakles and his κλέος here in accordance with some

that suggests that an individual has “the quality of possessing κλέος.” Herakles is κλεινός, famous from the start.¹¹¹ He has destroyed terrible monsters. He is the glorious son of Zeus: ὁ κλεινὸς ἦλθε Ζητὸς Ἀλκμήνης τε παῖς (19); According to Nooter, “*Kleinos* is practically a substitute for Heracles’ name in *Trachiniae* from the very first time he is mentioned.”¹¹² Even his name, Ἡρα-κλῆς or Ἡρα-κλέ-ης, contains the phoneme ‘κλέ’ and indicates a type of glory; he practically is glory.¹¹³ This representation of Herakles as almost autonomous κλέος, then, makes a strong contrast to his wife’s futile efforts to constrain her own κλέος with λόγοι.

From the beginning, Deianeira describes Herakles as ἀκήρυκτος (45), “unheralded.”¹¹⁴ He is not described as visually or physically absent. He is, ironically, aurally absent. It is ironic because, in fact, Deianeira has just rendered Herakles aurally present in her opening prologue. Heiden terms this “the rhetoric of presence” and suggests that “that the report of Heracles has replaced Heracles himself as the object of Deianeira’s longing” because Deianeira’s focus on a report of Herakles is so great that she all but “...supplant[s] the absence of Heracles himself” with it.¹¹⁵ Out of an aural absence, a report itself would become his presence, just as a failure to report (ἀκήρυκτος) indicates the failure to be present. The irony, though, is that she has just fashioned

sort of separation of self and body, especially given that Herakles’ body, at this point of the play, is diseased, broken, and “unlike” the body that Herakles associates with his deeds and manliness.

¹¹¹ Kamerbeek (1970) refers to this line as “triumphant” in tone and indicating Deianeira’s “veneration” of her hero-husband (*ad* 19). Easterling (1982) cites Schiassi’s “in a halo of epic light” (*ad* 19).

¹¹² Nooter 2012: 58. While I agree with Nooter’s arguments that this play “...appear[s] to question the price of this notoriety, which humiliates and threatens to destroy its subjects and which may in fact require their material destruction by prematurely placing them in mythic time and subjecting them to outsized expectations,” I do not think that “[a]t the end of [the play], when [the hero has] fallen from the grace of *kleos*, Sophocles offers [him] a final recourse: poetic identity and the ability to sing of themselves through lyrics, poetic tropes, and near-prophetic insight” (61). It is not that I do not think that Sophocles’ lets Herakles sing of himself, but I do not think that one can fall from the grace of κλέος whilst still the subject/object of hearing. To sing of himself does not seem to me to be a recourse to falling from or to be opposite of κλέος.

¹¹³ See Slater 1968: 337-8. From the moment the Messenger arrives, we expect his arrival to be glorious. We are told that he will “appear with might that brings victory” (φανέντα σὺν κράτει νικηφόρω, 186). Like Philoktetes in the Sophoklean tragedy of the same name, Herakles is an aural presence in absence. He does not arrive to be seen until the end of the play.

¹¹⁴ Jebb (1892-1900) explains this term as follows: “No herald has come, either to announce his approach, or to give any tidings of him” (*ad* 44-46).

¹¹⁵ Heiden 1989: 32-33.

a κλέος and made the hero κλεινός in her λόγος about his battle with Nessos (19-27), his labours (35) and his murder of Iphitos (38). She has become his herald, aurally glorifying his life with her and their children by including details thereof in her λόγος (31-3). And because it is Deianeira's λόγος, Herakles' κλέος is necessarily distanced and outside his control. His κλέος is open to her reevaluation.¹¹⁶

Before leaving this contrast, I would like to point to one other key passage, which demonstrates the hero's open κλέος in the external and distanced aural community. When Deianeira tells Hyllos that he should learn where Herakles is, he responds: ἀλλ' οἶδα, μύθοις γ' εἴ τι πιστεύειν χρεών (But I do know, if one can trust the stories, 67). Hyllos knows from hearsay (μῦθοι). Deianeira's response makes the aural aspect of Hyllos' μῦθοι apparent: καὶ ποῦ κλύεις νιν, τέκνον, ἰδρῦσθαι χθονός; (And in what region, my child, do you hear that he has settled? 68). Kamerbeek has noted that the use of the genitive of person in these passages with the verbs κλύω, πυνθάνομαι, and ἀκούω indicates the person about whom something is heard.¹¹⁷ Herakles is not being addressed, he is being talked about. In fact, as Nooter has noted, Herakles is never a "you, but is always an object of narrative. Heracles is configured by his closest family members and observers as a mythical personage well before death, and his absence has played a large part in the formation of this image."¹¹⁸ Hyllos has heard (κλύω) the μῦθοι about Herakles; he has heard *what is said* about Herakles. In what follows, the phrasing used of Herakles supports the idea that the hero is someone spoken of and heard of, an object of hearing. First, Hyllos narrates how *people say* that Herakles served Omphale (τὸν μὲν παρελθόντ' ἄροτον ἐν μήκει χρόνου /

¹¹⁶ His existence is constantly judged. Already in the account of Hyllos there is an implicit indication of judgment: μύθοις εἴ τι πιστεύειν χρεών (*Trach.* 67). Hyllos knows only if he can trust the μῦθοι he has heard (μῦθος is a complicated term with a long history. See the volume edited by Wians 2009 for discussions of the term in various authors and works and the article by Fowler 2011). Hyllos' phrasing intimates that, while he has heard a κλέος about Herakles, it may not be the only or even the true one. In the remainder of the play, the auditors, especially Deianeira, will hear differing versions of these same events with the result that "[t]he essence [sic], surely, of the portrayal of Heracles is its ambiguity" (Easterling 1981: 60). Deianeira's response to the news that Herakles has been a woman's slave is revealing. She comments: πᾶν τοίνυν, εἰ καὶ τοῦτ' ἔτλη, κλύοι τις ἄν (If he endured even that, then one could hear just about anything at all about him, 71). Deianeira remarks on the nature of her husband's κλέος suggesting that it has a vastly different quality than her own; unlike the self-determined ending she has tried to place on her own life and κλέος, Herakles' κλέος is completely open.

¹¹⁷ Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 65.

¹¹⁸ Nooter 2012: 64.

Λυδῆ γυναικί φασί νιν λάτριν πονεῖν, 69-70).¹¹⁹ Secondly, the boy tells his mother that *people* say Herakles is planning to lay siege to Euboeia (Εὐβοΐδα χώραν φασίν, Εὐρύτου πόλιν, / ἐπιστρατεύειν αὐτὸν, ἢ μέλλειν ἔτι, 74-5). In both passages, the key term, φασί, is a generic one used to indicate an unknown or unnamed source;¹²⁰ consequently, there is no definite agency in these stories as agency is distributed over the generic people. These people, in turn, make up the aural community. They are, by and large, the same people that decide whether an αἰών is χρηστὸς or κακός. Deianeira has resisted being spoken of by “you” and instead has tried to put forth her own λόγος. Herakles, on the other hand, has an αἰών solely within the aural community in the opening scenes. They speak and he exists.

Deianeira’s attempts to control her aural reputation with a series of counter-λόγοι must be seen in light of the open and uncontrolled nature of κλέος that is displayed time and again in the figure of Herakles. Herakles’ open reputation is the backdrop and answer to why her attempts fail. He is the counter-example to her proactive self-determination. Yet, in her exit, she did finally show an acceptance of the nature of κλέος and the uncontrollable bipartite process that moves along the continuum of aurality from “what is said” to “what is heard.” For Deianeira this acceptance is the fatal culmination of a movement and a learning process wherein she must come to grips with her inability to delimit her own aural reputation by means of personally-controlled λόγοι.

The *Trachiniai* is a tragedy of stories and story-listeners. Λόγοι are a part of aurality in that they are “what is said.” This play may be considered, rather generally, as a reflection on fifth-century Athenian tragedy’s role in the production, circulation, control or lack of control, of κλέος. Λόγοι exit the personal body and move outwards into the space beyond the self, and beyond the self’s control. Κλέος is what λόγοι becomes when “stories” and speaker become separated and “what is heard” takes on an independent life within a larger community. There is no specific moment when this, for lack of a better word, transition occurs. In fact, one could easily imagine both “stages” coexisting. But the distancing and constant movement on and off-stage of speakers and stories, creates a harsher break between the two in the *Trachiniai*. Further, the play draws attention to the process and the consequences for its human agents in the plot. But, temporally

¹¹⁹ Hyllos continues to report the κλέος of his father in the ensuing conversation. He has heard (ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω, 72) that Herakles is no longer a slave. Deianeira responds in kind: ποῦ δῆτα νῦν ζῶν ἢ θανὼν ἀγγέλλεται (73).

¹²⁰ Kraus (1991:86) similarly points to the use of λέγω in Lichas’ report (*Trach.* 290, 253, 249, 351, 358).

distinct or not, conceptually κλέος and λόγοι are differentiated by orientation. κλέος is a matter of audience. Conversely, λόγοι are a matter of speaker. Deianeira is a λόγοι-speaker but also audience to her own κλέος. In her role as speaker, she endeavours to delimit a negative κλέος. But in her role as audience member, Deianeira bears witness to the inability to control the audience reception of “what is said” once it is diffused and mobilized within the aural community as κλέος. Whilst the movement of her stories is along the continuum of aurality from self to others, λόγοι to κλέος, the movement of the play, for Deianeira, is one towards an understanding of the openness of an aural reputation before her death. She is forced to back away from an attempt to engender and control a λόγος to an acceptance of an open form of κλέος, which is created and disseminated by the “you,” or rather the “us,” of her aural community.

In the final chapter of this dissertation, I turn to the figure of Oidipous in Sophokles’ *Oidipous Tyrannos*. In this play, the democratic aural community of Thebes comes into conflict with the tyrannical power of Oidipous, who tries and fails to control the acoustic world. We will see that Oidipous brings this fate upon himself by underestimating the power that the aural community can exercise over its members.

One Must Hear: The Power Dynamics of Hearing in the *Oidipous Tyrannos*

Oidipous Tyrannos. Originally this play was known simply as *Oidipous*.¹ But the need to distinguish between various same-titled plays as well as Sophokles' *Oidipous at Kolonos* resulted in the addition of *tyrannos* to Sophokles' version, now the only surviving Oidipous tragedy about the revelation of Oidipous' parricide and incest. Jebb notes that the choice of this descriptor for Oidipous is the result of the frequency of the term *tyrannos* within the play.² But for all that frequency, questions about the nature of *tyrannos* remain. This chapter aims to approach the question from a new perspective in an attempt to shed light on the nature of political power and tyranny in the play. The basis of this approach is to look at the power dynamics of the play in light of aural communication.

Control over sound and hearing is related to political control because both Athens and the theatre were aural communities in which hearing functioned as a means of unification and control. The *Oidipous Tyrannos*, I argue, examines the political aspects of hearing and questions the nature of the political aural community by probing how the relations between aural community and individual members functioned. In particular, I argue that a *tyrannos* and a democratic individual have mutually exclusive types of relationships to the aural community. Therefore, an attempt to combine a tyrannical and a democratic treatment of the aural community must inevitably fail. This, I argue, is exactly what Oidipous does and why he destroys himself by the end of the tragedy. He desires not only to listen to the community but also to control it and the result is tragedy for both him and his community. Moreover, I will argue that we can gain

¹ Aristotle calls it "The Oidipous," at *Poet.* 1452a24, 1453b7, and *passim*.

² Jebb 1892-1900: 4.

insight into the natures of political power and tyranny in the play by examining how power dynamics function through the medium of aurality, especially listening-to-ness.³

Action is a key concept, since it must be stressed that in fifth-century Athenian theatre hearing is a type of action. It is, simply put, the action of hearing that often, though not necessarily, elicits a verbal, emotional, physical or intellectual response. In particular, the *Oidipous Tyrannos* is replete with the action of hearing: hearing speeches, reports of things heard, oral evidence. Even Oidipous' arrival on the stage at the opening of the play points by its diction to the importance of speech hearing for this play: "deeming it not right to hear this from other messengers, my children, I have come myself to hear" (6-7). It is ἀκούειν that draws Oidipous onto the stage in the prologue and it is specifically through hearing (ἀκούειν) that he demands to *learn* the reason for the suppliants' presence. As the play progresses, aurality remains prominent: Oidipous listens to Kreon's talk about Delphi's oracle (87-131), to Teiresias' accusations (316-462), to the chorus beg for Kreon's life (649-68) and, then, to Jokasta's story about the death of her infant son (707-25). Oidipous listens to all of this; but then he stops listening. Or rather, he becomes fixated on a single point that he has heard: Laios was killed at a place where three roads meet (729-30).⁴ This aural information unravels Oidipous, who now fears that he killed Laios.⁵

Aurality also characterizes the latter stages of the play. For it is through hearing that Oidipous learns about his parentage, his current situation, and his impiety. In fact, listening to such information drives him from the stage in search of Jokasta (1182-5). While the text never says so, one might surmise that Oidipous wants to *hear* the truth from her too. But Jokasta is dead and so Oidipous can no longer hear her (1263-4). He can, however, hear the chorus within the acoustic space of the stage and he returns, inching blindly along towards the sound of their voices (1321-6). Finally Kreon arrives and forces Oidipous to leave the stage because it is not fitting for strangers to hear him (1429-31).⁶ The cycle is complete. Where Oidipous came into the acoustic space onstage specifically to hear the suppliants' cries and woes, he is now removed

³ Beck 2007: Section 5. Cf. 5.

⁴ On the crossroads, see Rusten 1996.

⁵ On this point, see Newton 1978.

⁶ Kreon also refers to sight, since he does not judge it fitting for strangers to see or hear.

from the public acoustic space of the *polis* into the private acoustic space of the palace-*oikos* in order that only family can hear his laments.

Listening and its reciprocal, speaking, are, as the genre necessitates, the most consistently maintained actions in the play. From the opening lines to the closing, hearing is an integral process by which the plot is advanced. Moreover, the action of speech hearing has political ramifications both in Sophokles' tragedy and in contemporary Athens. But what is the action of hearing? And how can it have ramifications for questions about political power and tyranny? My answer is that control over hearing is political because aurality itself is social by nature⁷ and political by extension.

First, what are the actions I am referring to: "listening-to-ness" and "heard-of-ness." As we may recall, "listening-to-ness" recognizes the role of the auditor as both passive recipient of sound and active constructor of meaning, while "heard-of-ness" acknowledges the role of the speaker as actively speaking and passively heard. Second, how are they political? Aurality creates belonging, as I discussed in the introduction and illustrated in the case of Philoktetes.⁸ In the theatre of fifth-century Athens, the personal sensation of hearing creates a sense of belonging through its sharedness, the fact that it occurs in a communal setting that encourages a level of identification from the collective experience of going to the theatre and listening to the play as a group rather than just as individuals. Hearing is also communal in the sense that it is the process by which individuals can participate in the aural community; without communication, of which hearing is an integral part, there is no community.

The role of hearing in communication also serves to explain why hearing is not only a social phenomenon but also a political one.⁹ Aural communication is essential to the kind of participatory democracy that existed in Athens. Democratic government in Athens depended on three main institutions: the *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία), the *boule* (βουλή), and the People's Court (δικαστήριον). While not all auditors would have been equally politically savvy, as the audience

⁷ See 12ff.

⁸ For the way that hearing creates belongingness for Philoktetes see ch. 2.

⁹ On audience competences, cf. *Intro.* fn 6.

was composed of various groups, still they were at least in part familiar with the processes of politics. And in all three institutions, listening and listening-to-ness are fundamental due to the need for the individual men involved to communicate and discuss issues and concerns; according to Aischines the assembly starts with the phrase τίς ἀγορεύειν βούλεται; (who wishes to speak?).¹⁰ Anyone could speak and everyone could listen.¹¹ Aural communication must be considered one of the prime means of political action in Athens.¹² Nor was it merely the fact of hearing that had political ramifications; *how* one listened also mattered, as it will for Oidipous. In Thudydides' Mytilenean debate, for example, Kleon condemns those Athenians who institute contests at the assembly (ἀγωνοθετέω, 3.38.4) and then become spectators (θεαταί, 3.38.4) and auditors (ἄκροαταί, 3.38.4). Kleon reinforces the idea by repetition: ἀπλῶς τε ἀκοῆς ἡδονῆ ἡσσωμένοι καὶ σοφιστῶν θεαταῖς εὐικότες καθημένοις μᾶλλον ἢ περὶ πόλεως βουλευομένοις (3.38.7). His argument is that the Athenians' tendency to want to keep hearing new and newer speeches, like auditors of a tragedy, has an adverse affect on their ability to function as city councilors. Because they not only listen avidly, but also allow themselves to be swayed by the *newness* and artifice of what they hear rather than the content of the speech and the implications for their city, their ability to lead the *polis* properly is impaired. The connection between politics, aurality and the theatre goes deeper as well. Roselli argues that “[i]n the social space of the Athenian theatre, the ways in which people interacted constituted a form of political action: audience space was a means of producing ideas about the community.”¹³ I take this, with an aural twist, to mean that the space an auditor was accorded to hear the tragedy was an important reflection of and enactment of his social and political positioning. The right to hear has political ramifications.

¹⁰ Aeschin. *In Tim.* 27.

¹¹ Though Aischines goes on at length concerning those whom law forbids to speak, the purpose of this description is to bolster his suit against Timarchos, whom Aischines counterattacked—when charged with high treason—by claiming Timarchos had no right to speak in the assembly because he had violated the laws cited. Timarchos is, then, heard originally. Aischines' speech is given after the fact.

¹² This is especially true of certain law courts. cf. Cohen 2003, whose examination of Aeschin. *In Eub.*, an arbitration concerning citizenship, shows that “reputation and communal knowledge, the media of an oral culture, [were] the ultimate arbiters of citizenship even where an administrative process and official records exist to provide formal, public answer to such questions” (88). In other words “the only reliable and definitive evidence of identity is what people are willing to say about one under oath” (87).

¹³ Roselli 2011: 63.

In my discussion of the actions of Oidipous, whom stage convention forces to define his position as ruler and take actions in relation to hearing, I will examine his aural-political actions in order to explicate the nature of political power and tyranny from the unique perspective of hearing. Aural communication is how Athenians took part in their community; and, because Athens was a participatory democracy, the social phenomenon of aural communication is also a political one. Thus control over hearing can be political in so far as hearing itself is a fundamental part of political action. In the *Oidipous Tyrannos*, the political aspects of Oidipous' relationship with the Thebans exist within the context of an aural community. And determining the nature of those relationships may provide an answer to the questions of how political power and tyranny work in the play.

Before it is possible to resolve uncertainties concerning how political power and tyranny function within the *Oidipous Tyrannos*, it is necessary to define *tyrannos*.¹⁴ To that end, we must determine what it would have meant to fifth-century Athenians to be a *tyrannos*. In the following, we will also discuss the concept of tyranny in "aural communities."

First, what is a *tyrannos* to the fifth-century Athenian audience of Sophokles?¹⁵ In Sophokles the term tends to denote "the unscrupulous pursuit of money and power...[and] an insensitive disregard for the opinions, wishes and liberties of others."¹⁶ A *tyrannos* has excessive personal freedom to do what he wants; thus a *tyrannos* was commonly considered to have the personal liberty to help friends and harm enemies.¹⁷ A focal point for many arguments about the nature

¹⁴ On the idea of *tyrannos*, which has been much discussed, see Podlecki 1993, Scodel 1982, Pope 1991, Brandenburg 2005, Edmunds 2006, Romer 2000 and Cuny 2004. For a discussion of the related terms *tyrannos*, *basileus* and *anax* in the *Septem*, see David-Guinard 2008. My own perspective coincides with Vernant, who describe the position of the *tyrannos* as a social institution, disregarding moral overtones (Vernant 1978).

¹⁵ In the Archaic period, where the word is first attested, *tyrannos* seems to be synonymous with *basileos* (Parker 1998: 149-54). Cf. Archil. fr. 19 (West). In this period it tends to distinguish a ruler who "is a usurper, who grasps power, someone who vaults himself to the pinnacle of the state" (156). The term remains a mere synonym with no pejorative sense until Alkaios of Lesbos, whose abuse of Pittakos contains the term *tyrannos* with a negative sense (fr. 163, Page).

¹⁶ Pope 1991: 158, fn. 5.

¹⁷ See McGlew 1993: esp. 26.

of *tyrannos* in Sophokles has been the moral connotations of the term.¹⁸ The focus of this chapter, by contrast, shall be the nature of the *tyrannos*' "excessive personal freedom" in terms of the political community.

This chapter, therefore, will adopt as its starting point a morally neutral definition of *tyrannos* in order to facilitate an unbiased reading of Oidipous as a political ruler. According to Rosivach, a tyrant, during the period of the Athenian democracy, was "the sole ruler who was responsible to no one other than himself."¹⁹ This is the definition adopted herein. Now, however, we must determine what it would have meant to be a *tyrannos* from the conceptual standpoint of an aural community. If, as Rosivach argues, a tyrant bore no responsibility to anyone other than himself, then, by extension, a *tyrannos* is an individual who is not responsible for listening to anyone other than himself. Before turning to an examination of the figure of Oidipous in this light, I will examine an external example of an aural tyrant: Deioke (Hdt. *Hist.* 1.96ff).²⁰

Herodotos says that Deioke "was infatuated with sovereignty, and so he set about gaining it" (οὗτος ὁ Δηϊόκης ἐρασθεὶς τυραννίδος ἐποίηε τοιάδε, 1.96.2).²¹ This would-be tyrant of the Medes manipulates the aural community by first making himself a judge of it:

¹⁸This is essentially part of the larger debate on Oidipous' guilt. Proponents of the two sides of the long-standing debate are traditionally called "pietists" and "hero worshippers" (for the terms, see Winnington-Ingram 1980). Whitman (1951) was the first to aggressively emphasize the isolation and admirability of the Sophoklean protagonist (but cf. Reinhardt 1979). The pietist approach is found in Knox (1998) and Lefèvre (2001). The view that Oidipous is a "bad" tyrant stems from Jebb. The crucial line that Jebb is commenting on is ὕβρις φουτεύει τύραννον (Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 873). Here, Jebb comments, "τύραννον here not 'a prince,' —nor even, in the normal Greek sense, an unconstitutionally absolute ruler (bad or good), —but, in our sense, 'a tyrant'." The emendation "tyranny begets hybris" is put forth by Blaydes (1859) and defended by Dawe (1982). But it is ignored by Jebb (1892-1900) and rejected by others (e.g. Segal 1995: 263, fn. 29). See the discussion on this line in Bollack (1990: *ad* 873). This view that *tyrannos* is perjorative has had great influence on later scholars. Minadeo has written "'tyrant' in its negative meaning not only fits the sense but is demanded of it" (Minadeo 1990: 261, fn. 28). A number of scholars have taken a median position too, noting that *Oidipous* is at the very least a potential *tyrannos* (e.g. Scodel 1982: 218-23; Bowra 1944: 165). For the view that Oidipous *as tyrant* reflects an Athenian view on Athens' own hegemony in Greece, see Knox 1954: esp.101.

¹⁹ Rosivach 1988: 43.

²⁰ There is a relationship between Herodotos and Sophokles, but it is beyond my discussion. For examples of the contacts, see Podlecki 1966a; West 1999.

²¹ Though rulers of the Medes were commonly conceived of as kings, Herodotos initially makes Deioke a tyrant. For more on the types of rule in this story, see Palomar 1987 and Meier *et al.* 2004.

κατοικημένων τῶν Μήδων κατὰ κώμας, ἐν τῇ ἐωυτοῦ ἐὼν καὶ πρότερον δόκιμος καὶ μᾶλλον τι καὶ προθυμότερον δικαιοσύνην ἐπιθέμενος ἤσκει: καὶ ταῦτα μέντοι ἐούσης ἀνομίης πολλῆς ἀνὰ πᾶσαν τὴν Μηδικὴν ἐποίηε, ἐπιστάμενος ὅτι τῷ δικαίῳ τὸ ἄδικον πολέμιον ἐστί. οἱ δ' ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς κώμης Μῆδοι ὀρῶντες αὐτοῦ τοὺς τρόπους δικαστὴν μιν ἐωυτῶν αἰρέοντο (1.96.2).

A well-respected man in his own village, at a time when the Medes were settled in scattered villages, Deiokes began to practice rather more and more eagerly the pursuit of justice; and he did these things despite the fact that there was much lawlessness throughout all the Medeian land, even knowing that injustice is the enemy of justice. But the Medes of the same town, upon seeing his habits, selected him as their judge.

Once Deiokes has established himself and his word—an important part of auralty—in the aural community as a judge, he sets out to dominate the community in this capacity:

ὁ δὲ δὴ, οἷα μνώμενος ἀρχὴν, ἰθύς τε καὶ δίκαιος ἦν, ποιέων τε ταῦτα ἔπαινον εἶχε οὐκ ὀλίγον πρὸς τῶν πολιητέων, οὕτω ὥστε πυνθανόμενοι οἱ ἐν τῆσι ἄλλησι κώμησι ὡς Δηϊόκης εἶη ἀνὴρ μῶνος κατὰ τὸ ὀρθὸν δικάζων, πρότερον περιπίπτοντες ἀδίκοισι γνώμησι, τότε ἐπεῖτε ἤκουσαν, ἄσμενοι ἐφοίτων παρὰ τὸν Δηϊόκεα καὶ αὐτοὶ δικασόμενοι, τέλος δὲ οὐδενὶ ἄλλῳ ἐπετράποντο (1.96.3).

And he, because he was wooing rule, was always just and straight, and doing these things he was praised, not just a little, by the citizens, so much so that men in other towns learned by hearing that Deiokes alone would judge rightly, and since unjust judgments had befallen them before, they then gladly came often before Deiokes, pleading their cases; in the end they turned to no one else.

Deiokes, when he sees that his influence dominates the Medeian community, withdraws (1.97.1).

The resulting lawlessness persuades the Medes to ask Deiokes to become king:

αὐτίκα δὲ προβαλλομένων ὄντινα στήσονται βασιλέα, ὁ Δηϊόκης ἦν πολλὸς ὑπὸ παντὸς ἀνδρὸς καὶ προβαλλόμενος καὶ αἰνεόμενος, ἐς ὃ τοῦτον καταινέουσι βασιλέα σφίσι εἶναι (1.98.1).

Straightaway they put forward the question of whom they should make king. Deiokes was put forward and praised often by every man, to the point that they agreed that he would be their king.

Deiokes earns the title of *tyrannos* of the Medes by a manipulation of the aural community.

As a judge he listens to the complaints of his fellow townsmen and makes decisions based on what he has heard (δικαστήν 1.96.2).²² In doing so Deiokes earns praise (ἔπαινον 196.3). This praise allows Deiokes to become a popular topic in the aural community; he is heard of throughout the Medeian towns (ἤκουσαν 1.96.3). As a result, he comes to dominate the aural community because τέλος δὲ οὐδενὶ ἄλλω ἐπετρέποντο (1.96.3). He is in control of all judgments concerning justice in the aural community. At this point, Deiokes manipulates the other members of the aural community into giving him sole power by withdrawing from it and forcing the Medes to make him king in return for his renewed participation in the aural community (1.97.1-3). In fact, the praise that he has built up by his contributions to the aural community (1.96.2) is reiterated and ultimately responsible for his election as king (1.97.1). But when he returns to the Median aural community he does so in a modified way.²³

Deiokes institutes that δι' ἀγγέλων δὲ πάντα χρᾶσθαι (1.99.1). His purpose in avoiding direct contact with the community is to secure his power (1.99.1). He further controls the aural community by employing external agents who report heard information back to him (κατήκοι 1.100.2).²⁴ He separates himself off from the audience and firmly entrenches himself above

²² We might also compare how the chorus in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* are called a listening δικαστής, a position that gives them a certain amount of power over a once dominant Klytaimnestra. On this line, see Fraenkel 1950: *ad* 1412. Klytaimnestra sees herself as under attack from chorus who want to conquer and rule her: λέγω δέ σοι / τοιαῦτ' ἀπειλεῖν, ὡς παρεσκευασμένης / ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων χειρὶ νικήσαντ' ἐμοῦ / ἄρχειν (Well, I warn you: threaten me so as one who is ready for you to rule, conditions equal, if you get the upper hand over me, 1421-4). Cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 1436-7. Now Klytaimnestra has to rely on an outside authority: Αἴγισθος, ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν εὖ φρονῶν ἐμοί. / οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἄσπις οὐ σμικρὰ θράσους. We might also compare lines 348 and 1660. In the first, Klytaimnestra ends her descriptions of Troy by putting a stamp of ownership, a *sphragis* (coda), on them: τοιαῦτά τοι γυναικὸς ἐξ ἐμοῦ κλύεις (348). Goldhill (1984: 36) has shown that her description of the beacons translates the visual symbol to a speaking one. He has also observed that it is this translation that the chorus responds to, rather than the former visual terms that it rejected (39). It is her control of saying and hearing that is complete. But when Klytaimnestra steps in between the chorus and Aigisthos in the closing lines of the play, there is a significant change: ὄδ' ἔχει λόγος γυναικός, εἴ τις ἀξιοῖ μαθεῖν (1660). Where before she put her stamp on the saying and the hearing, now she is unsure. On the combination of king and judge, see Tourraix 2006.

²³ Cf. Hdt. 1.100.1: καὶ τὰς τε δίκας γράφοντες ἔσω παρ' ἐκεῖνον ἐσπέμπεσκον, καὶ ἐκεῖνος διακρίνων τὰς ἐσφερομένας ἐκπέμπεσκε.

²⁴ Interestingly, Herodotos uses this, or a related adjective (κατήκοος), at 5.10.1 in the neuter to refer the subjugation of the coastal areas to Megabazos (τὰ παραθαλάσσια δ' ὧν αὐτῆς Μεγάβαζος Περσέων κατήκοα ἐποίηε). This term is associated with a certain subjugation that seems inherent in the listener, especially one who is κατα-. Cf. Hdt. 1.72.1, where the Syrians are said to have been subject to the Medes (ἦσαν δὲ οἱ Σύριοι οὗτοι τὸ μὲν πρότερον ἢ Πέρσας ἄρξαι Μήδων κατήκοοι); 1.141.1 (of Kroisos' subjugation); 1.141.3 (of Phoenician subjugation); 1.171.2 (of the Carians' subjugation); 3.88.1 (of all Asia' subjugation to Darios). This meaning of κατήκοος is ubiquitous in classical, post-classical, and especially late antique (Josephos, Konstantinos, Prokopios etc.) authors. But for Deiokes, that subjugation is both the subjugation of the spy to this master and the ones that are

hearing, using a subordinate figure to both hear and see for him. Deiokes exemplifies the definition of a tyrant suggested above; once he has acquired tyrannical power, he no longer has to listen to his subjects as he did before. He is able to remove himself from the aural community and control it from a distance by intermediaries such as messengers and spies.

Deiokes is an example of a successful aural tyrant. He is successful because his actions manipulate the aural community into subservience and create dependency on him and, specifically, on what he says. He is also, therefore, an example of how aural actions can have political ramifications. His willing participation in and subsequent withdrawal from the aural community are a series of aural actions designed to create political power. Finally, the example of Deiokes warns that direct participation in an aural community is not necessarily to the advantage of an established *tyrannos*; instead, the successful tyrant needs to distance himself from the aural community, interacting and manipulating it and its members through a combination of aural agents lest he end up like Deianeira, an auditor undone by hearing.

Oidipous does not share Deiokes' view on involvement in the aural community. He wants, rather than avoids, direct participation. In fact, when the tragic hero Oidipous arrives on stage, it is specifically because he wants to hear in person the suppliants' pleas, that is, to perform an act of speech-hearing:

ἀγὼ δικαιῶν μὴ παρ' ἀγγέλων, τέκνα,
ἄλλων ἀκούειν αὐτὸς ὧδ' ἐλήλυθα (7-8).

Deeming it not right hear from other messengers, my children,
I have come myself to hear.

The first and programmatic action of Oidipous is to listen to the problems that beset the Thebans. This is the beginning of Oidipous' self-definition as a leader.²⁵ Nooter has noted that "...though he has just been spoken to by a single individual (the priest), he chooses to address the entire

spied on to the one who is overhearing them from a distance. For this term used of spies, cf. Cass. Dio *Hist. Rom.* 42.17.2. There is also a political connection there since Caesar is using his ear-spies to control the mob in Rome and maintain his power there.

²⁵ See Bollack 1990: *ad* 6-8. Bollack comments that "Oedipe ne dit pas qui il est, mais quel est son pouvoir". Cf. Scodel 1984: 72.

crowd once again.”²⁶ He chooses to address everybody. He is not the kind of *tyrannos* who has no responsibility to listen to his people nor interest in listening. Rather he is a ruler who cares about his people and who maintains a physical presence with them by hearing them out in person. And by this action, Oidipous also defines his political relationship to hearing and the aural community: “for his speech is shaped by, and reveals, his identity as compulsively public.”²⁷ Unlike Deiokes, he is an actively engaged member of the aural community.

Yet, at the same time, he establishes himself by his diction in a position analogous to that of the *tyrannos*: the fifth-century Athenian father. The people of Thebes are his children (τέκνα). To the fifth-century BC Athenian, a father is the dominant member in his household and can expect loyalty and obedience from his subordinate “children.”²⁸ Oidipous places himself in the position of the father and the Thebans in the position of children with his diction and, consequently, he verbally and consciously places himself not only in a paternal relationship but also an authoritative one.

In establishing this hierarchical relationship, it is only natural that Oidipous the father and ruler of Thebes expect to be able to control the community, both socially and politically. Yet at the same time, Oidipous loosens his authoritative and tyrannical grip on the community of Thebes by allowing his people to speak and by *listening* to them. In fact, Oidipous imposes upon himself the responsibility of listening to his subjects. In the lines discussed above, Sophokles uses the verb δικαιοῦν, which means generally to hold or deem right, but also to claim or demand as a right.²⁹ Where the *tyrannos* has no responsibility to hear out his subjects, Oidipous has given himself that responsibility by demanding of himself the people’s right to be heard *by him*. Thus

²⁶ Nooter 2012: 84.

²⁷ *Ibid.*: 84. Nooter refers to Oidipous’ openness with the aural community as “[t]he publicizing quality of Oedipus’ speech” (85).

²⁸ On the figure of the father and the *oikos*, see Sourvinou-Inwood 1995 and Strauss 1990. Compare Soph. *Trach.* 1177-8. In the *Politics*, Aristotle defines a “father’s rule” over his τέκνα as kingly (ἡ δὲ τῶν τέκνων ἀρχὴ βασιλική: τὸ γὰρ γεννήσαν καὶ κατὰ φιλίαν ἄρχον καὶ κατὰ πρεσβείαν ἐστίν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ βασιλικῆς εἶδος ἀρχῆς, 1.1259b.10-13).

²⁹ See LSJ s.v. δικαιοῦν. Cf. Soph. *OT* 640; *Phil.* 781; *Trach.* 1244; *Aj.* 1072; *OC* 1642. The passage in the *OC* is enlightening; Sophokles sets θέμις (that which is established by a divine right) and δικαιοῦν (a personal sense of what is right) opposite one another: μηδ’ ἂ μὴ θέμις / λεύσσειν δικαιοῦν μηδὲ φονούντων κλύειν (1641-42). For a comparison of the character of Oidipous in the *OT* and *OC*, see Volpe Cacciatore 2010: 35-41.

he will not hear what the people want from messengers (μὴ παρ' ἀγγέλων... ἄλλων ἀκούειν); instead, Oidipous will listen personally (αὐτὸς). But can Oidipous allow the aural community the right to aurality, to speak, to listen and to be heard, as he does while still maintaining control of it? That is a question the play and this chapter seek to illuminate. On the answer to this hinges the very fate of Oidipous, whose interactions with the aural community will determine his future. Of course, Oidipous is unsuccessful. Everyone knows that before the play even begins. He will no longer be able to be ruler of Thebes by the end. But in approaching the question from the perspective of aural communities, I will show how he fails by allowing his tyrannical control over the aural community to be undercut by listening to others.

I argue that, when Oidipous comes on stage in order to ἀκούειν αὐτὸς, this self-imposed task of hearing out his subjects stands in tension with his role as a *tyrannos*; for a *tyrannos* is, virtually by definition, not responsible for listening to his subjects.³⁰ Equally, when Kreon returns from Delphi with news and suggests that he could relate the Delphic oracle inside the house (εἰ τῶνδε χρήζεις πλησιαζόντων κλύειν, / ἑτοῖμος εἰπεῖν, εἴτε καὶ στείχειν ἔσω, 91-2), and Oidipous happily tells Kreon to go ahead and tell him in front of the chorus, the *tyrannos* demonstrates his openness to listen not only to his people but also to outside influences such as Delphi or even the god Apollo. And Oidipous grants his subordinates the right to hear that information from outside sources as equals (ἐς πάντα ἀῶδα, 93). Wille has noted that Kreon “...erbietet sich, ins Haus zu gehen, das damit als eine zweite abgetrennte akustische Raumeinheit gesehen wird.”³¹ Oidipous was given the opportunity to listen to Kreon’s report within the confines of his house, which we can call a closed aural community – a community that would allow the *tyrannos* to control not only the information but also the right to listen to it. But Oidipous refuses to set up a private and personally controlled space within. Oidipous, instead, chooses to listen in front of the chorus. He creates an open aural community, one in which the act of listening is shared with the group rather than concentrated on and, therefore, controlled by a single man: the *tyrannos*. Yet, Oidipous reveals no apprehension that the repercussions of his actions might affect the control he exercises over the aural community of Thebes; in fact, this same response alludes directly to his position as

³⁰ See ch. 4 fn. 19.

³¹ Wille 2001: 226.

leader of Thebes.³² In addressing the suppliants Oidipous refers to the fact that though they all grieve, he grieves more for the chorus, who are citizens, than for himself (τῶνδε γὰρ πλέον φέρω / τὸ πένθος ἢ καὶ τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πέρι, 93-4). His stance is one of a man in charge of all those things, a *tyrannos*.

Oidipous, therefore, continues to expect obedience due to his authoritative rank despite the fact that he has given himself the responsibility to listen that is not required of him as a *tyrannos*. But Oidipous has destabilized the authority of his tyrannical self-positioning by undermining what makes him a *tyrannos*: his freedom from any responsibility to hear out the aural community. Instead, he permits external input into the aural community and, equally dangerously, he creates an equal setting for these aural interactions between himself and his subordinates.

One could argue that Oidipous' willingness to listen is actually a democratic trait rather than a tyrannical one:

The political actions which he carries out in the play are decidedly untyrannic. He rejects Creon's strong hint that the oracular response should be discussed in private, calls an assembly of the people of Thebes, and on a matter which he considers vital, the condemnation of Creon, he gives way to Jocasta and to the chorus which represents the people he has summoned in the opening scene. Thebes under Oedipus may be a *tyrannis*, but it works surprisingly like a democracy led by its most gifted and outstanding citizen.³³

Many of these actions have an especially aural nature: assembly, proclamation, and condemnation. Unlike a *tyrannos*, a democratic man must both speak and listen to a variety of different aural inputs from a variety of sources in many key democratic settings: the *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία), the *boule* (βουλή), and the People's Court (δικαστήριον).³⁴

³² Cf. Soph. *OT* 63-64 and 93-4. In the former (ἢ δ' ἐμὴ / ψυχὴ πόλιν τε κάμει καὶ σ' ὁμοῦ στένει) Oidipous defines himself in the opening scenes as a ruler who cares about his people. In the latter, while answering Kreon's query of whether or not they should discuss the oracle inside, Oidipous indirectly alludes to his previous sentiment and his position as ruler and its responsibilities and thereby reaffirms his self-definition as a ruler.

³³ Knox 1954: 99.

³⁴ See p. 115.

For Athenians, the equal setting in which fellow citizens heard each other out was linked to the idea of *parrhesia*: open and candid speech in both public and private life.³⁵ The term *parrhesia* is first attested in Euripides, a contemporary of Sophokles.³⁶ Foucault has said that:

Etymologically, “parrhesiazesthai” means “to say everything – from “pan” (everything) and “rhema” (that which is said). The one who uses parrhesia, the parrhesiastes, is someone who says everything he has in mind: he does not hide anything, but opens his heart and mind completely to other people through his discourse... The word “parrhesia” then, refers to a type of relationship between the speaker and what he says.³⁷

From the aural side, *parrhesia* is a relationship not only between the speaker and his words, but also between speaker and listener. In an aural community where *parrhesia* exists, the listener expects a certain kind of speech act from the *parrhesiastes*. According to Foucault, this speech activity is one imbued with truth and risk: “the ‘parrhesiastic game’ presupposes that the *parrhesiastes* is someone who has the moral qualities which are required, first, to know the truth, and secondly, to convey such truth to others.”³⁸ Consequently, the parrhesiastic act engenders a certain degree of trust in the listener in order to compensate for the danger of speaking what is generally contrary to public opinion.³⁹

And there *are* dangers in a democratic approach to the aural community. A common feature of democratic assemblies and public venues was the vociferousness of the crowd. They did not meekly accept whatever and whoever spoke; instead, they were more than willing to shout down and even have dragged off anyone they disagreed with.⁴⁰ The technical term for this was θόρυβος:

³⁵ Wallace 2004: 221. He also points to Pl. *Resp.* 557b as a source for the ancient connection between democracy and *parrhesia*. Cf. Saxonhouse 2006: 85-100.

³⁶ Cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 422; *Phoen.* 391; *Bacch.* 668; *El.* 1049, 1056; *Ion* 672, 675; *Or.* 905 (cf. Foucault 1983: lec. 2).

³⁷ Foucault 1983: lec. 1.

³⁸ *ibid.*: Lec. 1.

³⁹ See Dikaiopolis’ speech in Ar. *Ach.*: νῦν οὖν ἀτεχνῶς ἤκω παρεσκευασμένος / βοᾶν ὑποκρούειν λοιδορεῖν τοὺς ῥήτορας, / ἐάν τις ἄλλο πλὴν περὶ εἰρήνης λέγῃ (37-9).

⁴⁰ Cf. Pl. *Prt.* 319b-c. For the ecclesiastic θόρυβος, see Tacon 2001. She argues that “[t]hrough vocal interruptions, heckling, shouts, and cheers, the *demos* would be able to communicate its views *en masse*, constituting a key aspect

In the assembly, *thorubos* had the practical purpose of regulating debate. The Athenians set no official time limits for Assembly speeches. *Thorubos* was a negative vote by the people, constituting the fundamental power of the community to decide what it would listen to. All citizens could freely address the Assembly. No one could demand that the *dēmos* hear him out for as long as he wanted to speak.⁴¹

While a *tyrannos* need not listen to his subjects, in a democratic setting, his subjects need not listen to him. Therefore, a *tyrannos* who treats his aural community democratically risks losing control of that democratic community because in a *dēmokratia* aural as well as political *kratos* rests with the *dēmos*, and anyone who speaks to the *dēmos* has to recognize that power.

Oidipous slips from this position of control as a result of his opening actions. This causes him to realize that he cannot simultaneously treat the aural community as a democracy while completely controlling it, especially in his arguments with Teiresias and Kreon. In the scene with Teiresias, the prophet declaims εἰ καὶ τυραννεῖς, ἐξισωτέον τὸ γοῦν / ἴσ' ἀντιλέξαι: τοῦδε γὰρ κἀγὼ κρατῶ (Though you are tyrant, surely the right to reply must be the same for both: For over that too I have control, 408-409). Likewise, when Kreon attempts to clear his name he calls on Oidipous to ἀντὶ τῶν εἰρημένων / ἴσ' ἀντάκουσον (Listen in equal measure to my words in reply to yours, 542-43). Jebb translates ἴσα in Kreon's line as "fairly."⁴² But Kamerbeek is more accurate when he says "Creon claims the right of equal reply."⁴³ Yet one would be even more accurate to say that Kreon claims the right of equal hearing. Both men, in fact, claim the right to equal hearing; ἴσ' ἀντάκουσον and ἴσ' ἀντιλέξαι are roughly equivalent in the context of an aural community. Though the diction changes from verbs of hearing to those of speaking, both actions are part of the aural community. And in both verbs, the prefix ἀντ(ι) implies that while one is

of democratic behaviour" (180). She notes that we see a representation of this use of *thorubos* in the assembly debate of Euripides' *Orestes* (893ff).

⁴¹ Wallace 2004: 225. It should be noted that in tragedy, *thorubos* is clearly not a form of sanctioned audience behaviour, and that, while it happened and actors were even hissed off stage, it was exceptional. The point I would like to focus on, however, is the political use of sound so that the disruptive nature of unrestricted sounds in a political setting can be exposed.

⁴² Jebb 1892-1900: ad 543.

⁴³ Kamerbeek 1970: 126. Both Kamerbeek and Dawe (2006: 121) point to the similarity of Teiresias' plea at 408 and Kreon's at 543.

speaking the other is listening, combining both sides of the continuum of aurality. Furthermore, they are both parrhesiastic acts, engendering risks to the speakers and conveying truth to the listeners. While Kreon and Teiresias are unlikely representatives of a democratic aural community, being a divine spokesperson and a royal family member respectively, their diction and aural actions belong to a democratic setting or aural community rather than a tyrannical one. In the diction of both phrases, the idea of equality was conveyed by the term ἴσος, a staple of democracy. In fact, ἴσος was a common component in democratic terms.⁴⁴ In particular, the term ἰσονομία was used to describe both legal and political equality.⁴⁵ Raaflaub argues that, by the time of Herodotos and Thukydides, “the term... could almost be used as a synonym of *dēmokratia*.”⁴⁶ Kreon and Teiresias’ diction thus draws attention to their self-conceptions as members of a democratic rather than tyrannical aural community while also attempting to force upon Oidipous a responsibility to listen where his station as *tyrannos* does not.

In contrast, Teiresias’ reference to Oidipous’ status as *tyrannos* places Oidipous in opposition to the democratic aural community while still using the freedoms permitted to him by that same democratic setting. This scene dramatically demonstrates how Oidipous the *tyrannos* has failed to control his aural community, how he has allowed the aural community to become democratic and exercise a degree of authority over him as tyrant rather than the other way around. Oidipous’ democratic treatment of the aural community and his willingness to impose upon himself a responsibility to hear have created the expectation, for Teiresias and Kreon at least, that he will and even must hear out his citizens. He has invited a democratic openness that challenges his own authority and, as a result, his status as *tyrannos* is threatened both by his own democratically inclined actions and by Kreon and Teiresias’ outspokenness in reply.

⁴⁴ i.e. *isokratia*, Hdt.5.92; *isēgoria*, Hdt. 5.78.

⁴⁵ Hdt. 3.80; Thuc. 3.82, 4.78. On *isonomia* see Vlastos 1953; Pleket 1972; Sealey 1987: 99-100; Lengauer 1988.

⁴⁶ Raaflaub 1996: 143. Three scholars in particular inquire into the significance of *isonomia* thematically: Vlastos 1953, Ehrenberg 1950 and Ostwald 1969. Ehrenberg suggests that *isonomia* is neither a constitution nor a form of government; rather it is “the ideal form of community” (Ehrenberg 1950: 297) that is linked with democracy. Ostwald argues that “isonomia is not a name for a form of government but for the principle of political equality” (Ostwald 1969: 97); therefore it is more intimately associated with democracy than other forms of government, but *isonomia* is not limited to democracy nor is it identical to it (*ibid.*: 180). Finally, Vlastos argues that *isonomia* is not a synonym of *dēmokratia*, but is inseparably related to it (Vlastos 1953: 9).

Oidipous' accusations of conspiracy against the two men clearly demonstrate Oidipous' new awareness that he has created a politically dangerous situation and undercut his own authority (385-9; 513ff). He responds to Teiresias' words as a direct political attack by attempting to suborn to his will the power of hearing itself and, through hearing, the aural community that includes Teiresias. The motif of *misunderstanding*, or words that though spoken are not heard as intended, is a perfect example of the *tyrannos*' attempt to control the aural community.⁴⁷ As can be seen, Oidipous' inability to understand the truth is actually an inability to hear properly the truth that the blind seer tells him:

Τειρεσίας: ἄληθες; ἐννέπω σὲ τῷ κηρύγματι
 ὅπερ προεῖπας ἐμμένειν, κάφ' ἡμέρας
 τῆς νῦν προσαυδᾶν μήτε τοῦσδε μήτ' ἐμέ,
 ὡς ὄντι γῆς τῆσδ' ἀνοσίῳ μιάστορι

...
 Οἰδίπους: ποῖον λόγον; λέγ' αὐθις, ὡς μᾶλλον μάθω. (350-3, 359)

T.: The truth? I say that you ought to abide by the proclamation that you just made, and from this day forth speak neither to these men nor to me, as you are the profane, crime-stained polluter of this land.

...
 O.: What did you say? Say it again, so that I might learn better.

Oidipous' inability to understand Teiresias is an attempt to control the aural community by controlling not only what is said but also how it is heard.⁴⁸ Oidipous' response to the seer's claim that he has the right and the power to speak in reply is denied by Oidipous' refusal to hear what he says for what it is: the truth.

Oidipous' refusal to hear Teiresias as Teiresias intends himself to be heard only becomes more pronounced as the scene carries on:

⁴⁷ On the play between blindness and sight in this episode, which is central to the motif of misunderstanding, see Moscovici 1991 and Murray 1997.

⁴⁸ This is in contrast to what Bain (1979) refers to when he reviews previous approaches to Oidipous' conduct in this scene; he has remarked that some scholars suppose "that Oidipous does not hear-or hear properly-what Teiresias says to him. Asides are indeed possible, if not particularly frequent, on the Greek tragic stage, but there is no question of the Oidipous-Teiresias confrontation containing any. For one thing Teiresias' utterances are formally addressed to Oidipous: 'I say to you...' (350 ff., 362, 366 ff.). For another, Oidipous is depicted as reacting to them. To lines 350 ff. which contain the charge that he is the polluter of the land, he replies with an angry threat. Similarly he answers the explicit statement that he is the killer (362)..." (136). The argument of this chapter is not that he misunderstands, but that he actually will not to hear them as intended.

οὗτός ἐστιν ἐνθάδε,
 ξένος λόγῳ μέτοικος; εἶτα δ' ἐγγενῆς
 φανήσεται Θηβαῖος, οὐδ' ἠσθήσεται
 τῇ ξυμφορᾷ: τυφλὸς γὰρ ἐκ δεδορκότος
 καὶ πτωχὸς ἀντὶ πλουσίου ξένην ἔπι
 σκήπτρῳ προδεικνύς γαῖαν ἐμπορεύσεται.
 φανήσεται δὲ παισὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ ξυνῶν
 ἀδελφὸς αὐτὸς καὶ πατήρ, κάξ ἦς ἔφν
 γυναικὸς υἱὸς καὶ πόσις, καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς
 ὁμόσπορος τε καὶ φονεύς. (451-60)

This man is here, a stranger in name, a metic, but soon he will be revealed as a born Theban, nor will he delight in his luck; for blind from seeing, a beggar instead of a rich man, he'll go off to foreign lands feeling his way with a stick. And he will be revealed as being both brother and father to his own children, and son and husband to the woman he was born from, and of his father, fellow-sower and murderer.

Oidipous does not hear the truth that he is Laios' murderer. He refuses to hear out Teiresias, who has previously demanded equal hearing.⁴⁹ He becomes, in Teiresias' words and in a striking synesthesia, "blind in ears" (τυφλὸς τὰ τ' ὄτα, 371).⁵⁰ But he cannot completely deny hearing; Teiresias is only demanding what Oidipous has forced upon himself: the responsibility to hear. And Oidipous does hear; in fact, as soon as the seer mentions his parents, Oidipous reveals his keen interest in what he hears from the prophet (435-7). Moreover, his questioning of Kreon reveals that he heard not just what Teiresias said about his parents, but everything: ὀθούνεκ', εἰ μὴ σοὶ ξυνηῶλθε, τάσδ' ἐμάς / οὐκ ἄν ποτ' εἶπε Λαῖου διαφθοράς (That, if he had not banded together with you, he would not have said that the destruction of Laios was my doing, 572-3). Oidipous cannot, did not, block out what he heard from Teiresias.

Once Oidipous has acted democratically, the aural community itself takes on democratic qualities; it becomes equalized and open to multiple voices like Teiresias and Kreon's, who may not be the ideal members of a *dêmo-kratia*, but who are at least aligned with one. These men

⁴⁹ This passage is an interesting one for the possible rebuttal to Oidipous' own conception later in the play that he cannot block out his ears: ἀλλ' εἰ τῆς ἀκουούσης ἔτ' ἦν / πηγῆς δι' ὧτων φραγμός, οὐκ ἄν ἐσχόμην / τὸ μὴ ἀποκλῆσαι τοῦμόν ἄθλιον δέμας, / ἔν' ἦ τυφλὸς τε καὶ κλύων μηδέν (If there were yet a way to block the source of hearing, my ears, I would not have stopped myself from shutting up this wretched body so that I were both blind and heard nothing, 1386-9). See p. 135ff.

⁵⁰ Cf. Segal (1977: 88-89) for a discussion of the synesthesia in these lines. For the deafness in these lines as related to weakness or wickedness in character, see Wille 2001: 297-98 (So wird Taubheit zum Gleichnis für Ungehorsam, für Schlechtigkeit und für Verstandesschwäche).

oppose the *tyrannos*' power verbally by parrhesiastic acts; their opposition enters the aural community and destabilizes Oidipous' position as *tyrannos*. Oidipous loses control because the community is equal and in an equal aural community there is no stable leader. As a result, the aural community cannot only demand to be heard, but also speak, the reverse of hearing. Such was the case with both Teiresias and Kreon. It is also the case with the chorus—more genuinely *dêmo-kratic*—in the first *stasimon*. After Teiresias makes his final pronouncement and exits, Oidipous is given no chance to respond. Instead, the chorus deliver a choral ode in which they debate the possibility of Oidipous' guilt.⁵¹ While the chorus choose to support their king and not trust the seer, their attempt to understand what they have heard (463-72) demonstrates that they have claimed the democratic license granted by Oidipous to listen and judge (δεινὰ μὲν νῦν, δεινὰ ταρασσεί / σοφὸς οἰωνοθέτας / οὔτε δοκοῦντ' οὔτ' ἀποφάσκονθ', 484-5). Furthermore, the mere fact that they discuss the possibility of his guilt proves that the seer's words have been accepted into the aural community as something to be heard and talked about.⁵² This scene also physically shows Oidipous' removal from his position of authority over the aural community. While he leaves the stage, the chorus of citizens, speaking together and diffusing their words across the group, remains on stage as a visual representation of an unrestricted aural community. Oidipous is no more in control of the aural community than he was in control of his own hearing, which he could not block out.

Instead of responding by clamping down on aural communication, Oidipous continues to give a share of the power he has derived from his control over aural communication to others. When Jokasta has arrived on stage to stop Kreon and Oidipous from arguing, she asks what the cause of the disturbance is. The chorus choose not to say, though they suggest that Oidipous is at least partially to blame (681-6). Oidipous, however, will tell her. The *tyrannos* does this because he honours her more: σὲ γὰρ τῶνδ' ἐς πλεόν, γύναι, σέβω (700). While he does not specifically say so, it is clear that to some extent, at least, the Theban tyrant is giving Jokasta the right to hear. Unlike Kreon and Teiresias, who demanded equal rights, the queen is given a greater share (ἐς

⁵¹ On the chorus' faith, see Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 463-511. See also Harsh 1958: 251. His discussion of the implicit and explicit view of the chorus on Oidipous' guilt is well developed.

⁵² One could also say this about the second *stasimon*, if we read it as a comment on Oidipous, tyranny and hybris. For a survey of opinions on the second *stasimon*, see Bollack 1990: *ad* 532-39. See also Scodel 1982; Sidwell 1992; Winnington-Ingram 1971; Gellie 1964; and Carey 1986.

πλέον). Typically, women in fifth-century Athens were meant neither to speak nor be heard.⁵³ In Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, the titular character says that normally when women ask about what happened in the political arena of the assembly ('τί βεβούλευται περὶ τῶν σπονδῶν ἐν τῇ στήλῃ παραγράψαι / ἐν τῷ δήμῳ τήμερονύμῃν;' 'τίδὲ σοὶ ταῦτ'; 513-14), their husbands would respond by ordering them to shut up ('οὐ σιγήσει;' 515). The Athenian ideal was a woman's silence; yet *Lysistrata*'s speech is not an example of silence.⁵⁴ She voices herself and the men of the chorus listen: ἀκροῶ δὴ, / καὶ τὰς χεῖρας πειρῶ κατέχειν (503-4). As a result of *Lysistrata*'s auralty and the men's willingness to listen, she wields a political power capable of stopping a war. A woman's ability to hear and be heard could be potentially intimidating. Yet, it might be countered that the relationship between *Jokasta* and *Oidipous* represents one of aristocratic privilege shared between two elite persons and that her hearing, therefore, presented no danger. And that is to some extent true; yet, as Edith Hall has shown, fifth-century Athenian tragedy is a genre both ahead of its time and behind it because "the ideological content dominant in Athenian tragic drama is simultaneously challenged by the inclusion through its multivocal form of otherwise excluded viewpoints."⁵⁵ That is, fifth-century Athenian tragedy is ahead in how it incorporates multiple voices from people who wouldn't normally be heard—like *Jokasta*—and behind because it does so into a representation of archaic power structures—aristocracy. *Jokasta*'s shared status with *Oidipous* is at once an oligarchic, tyrannical and elite in its nature, a shared function between two elites over the masses, and simultaneously advanced. It is a democratic challenge by a female voice to the tyrannical power structure. Hall argues that the royal characters of fifth-century Athenian tragedy were "an abstraction, encoding the newly discovered political freedoms and aspirations of ordinary men in the symbolic language of pre-democratic political hierarchies."⁵⁶ But in this case, *Oidipous* chooses to honour her, although she is a woman (γύναι), more than the men of the chorus (τῶνδ'). While this is not an equalized democratic community *per se*, it is the beginnings of one for *Jokasta*, who will soon demand her own right to hear.

⁵³ Cf. Thuc. 2.45.2.

⁵⁴ On the hazards of women's talk, see Worman 2008: 55-60.

⁵⁵ Hall 1997: 93.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*: 98.

When Jokasta's attempt to relieve Oidipous of his fears fails, she demands to know why:

ἀξία δέ που μαθεῖν
κάγὼ τά γ' ἐν σοὶ δυσφόρως ἔχοντ', ἄναξ (769-70)

But I think that I too am worthy to learn what troubles you, my king.

Again, Oidipous will honour Jokasta and grant her the right to hear (τῷ γὰρ ἂν καὶ κρείσσονι / λέξαιμ' ἂν ἢ σοὶ διὰ τύχης τοιαῦσδ' ἰών; 772-3). But the difference between this passage and the former is decisive. Where formerly Oidipous, the *tyrannos*, without first being asked, voluntarily gave Jokasta the right to hear, now Jokasta demands it for herself and succeeds. She has achieved what Kreon and Teiresias wanted: an equal footing with the tyrant. What is even more noteworthy, Jokasta has succeeded as a woman and thus a relative outsider to the politics of Thebes. She has used aural access to achieve what should not have been possible for a female member of the *oikos*: equality with not only a man, but even the *tyrannos*. The fact that Jokasta, a woman, has achieved equality rather than Teiresias or Kreon actually inflicts more damage on Oidipous' claim to authority than the reverse. She should neither speak nor be heard from, but she has done both and her words have a profound effect on the aural community. For it is through Jokasta that Oidipous learns the truth about his role in the death of Laios. In the span of a hundred lines Jokasta has completely invalidated the tyrant's authority, a fact that will be reflected in Oidipous' response to Jokasta's story in this scene.

When Jokasta failed to calm Oidipous in the second episode with the story of her murdered infant son, Oidipous was struck by what he heard:⁵⁷

οἷόν μ' ἀκούσαντ' ἀρτίως ἔχει, γύναι,
ψυχῆς πλάνημα κἀνακίνησις φρενῶν (726-7)

What a restlessness of soul and stirred up mind grips me now as I listen, wife.

The act of hearing, in which Oidipous was involved, has literally rendered him an object, though not yet of hearing itself; but that will not be far off. For now, Oidipous is held as a listening

⁵⁷ Jokasta's story concerning her child can be considered a *parrhesiastic* act. She qualifies as "someone who says everything he has in mind: [s]he does not hide anything, but opens [her] heart and mind completely to other people through [her] discourse" (see ch. 4 fn 37). She also takes a risk in speaking against the gods or prophets. But because Jokasta is given her right to speak as well as be heard by Oidipous, her act does not challenge the tyrant in the same manner as Kreon and Teiresias' speeches.

object, no longer actively in control. Oidipous' position relative to both aurality and the aural community has been changed by Jokasta. The aural community is unrestricted, closer to a democratic one, and can no longer allow a tyrannical ruler. For the remainder of the play Oidipous is no longer in charge; instead, he is subject to and the subject of hearing. Jokasta explicitly relates this in the third episode. After Oidipous' growing fear triggered by Jokasta's story of Laios and the three roads causes the *tyrannos* to flee into the *oikos*, she re-enters the stage in order to make offerings to Apollo. Finding the chorus on stage, she relates to them the condition of Oidipous within the *oikos*: ἀλλ' ἐστὶ τοῦ λέγοντος, ἦν φόβους λέγει (But he is in the power of anyone speaking, if he speaks fearful things, 917). Her diction demonstrates to the chorus and audience that Oidipous is subjugated to the force of hearing. The phrase, as many commentators note, is similar to one in Aristophanes' *Knights*: ὦ δαιμόνιε μὴ τοῦ λέγοντος ἴσθι (sir, do not be in the power of the speaker! 860). In both cases, the phrase seems to denote that Oidipous and Demos are now at the mercy of the speaker.⁵⁸ Taken figuratively, it renders the image of a distraught Oidipous at the mercy of anyone who says anything frightening. Oidipous is a listening-object and everything he hears seems to have complete control over him rather than the opposite.⁵⁹ Oidipous' diction throughout the remainder of the play reveals his implicit awareness that he is not in control. In fact, it suggests that Oidipous is so far removed from authority that he is actually the subordinate of the aural community and, therefore, of hearing itself. Oidipous' position as *tyrannos* has been completely undercut, as he finds himself no longer an authoritative ruler, nor even an equal member of the aural community, but actually its object.

⁵⁸ R.D. Dawe 2006: 152; Kamerbeek 1970: 183. Jebb (1892-1900: *ad* 917) adds “Plat. Gorg. 508d ‘εἰμὶ δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ βουλομένῳ, ὡς περ οἱ ἄτιμοι τοῦ ἐθέλοντος, ἅντε τύπτειν βούληται, κ.τ.λ.’ —as outlaws are at the mercy of the first comer: Soph. OC 752 ‘τοῦπιόντος ἀρπάσαι’.” One might also compare the sentiment of Kleon in Thukydides (3.38.7), who refers to men who desire to hear debates in the assembly as ἀπλῶς τε ἀκοῆς ἡδονῇ ἡσώμενοι καὶ σοφιστῶν θεαταῖς ἐοικότες καθημένοις μᾶλλον ἢ περι πόλεως βουλευομένοις (plainly overcome by the pleasure of hearing and similar to the idly seated spectators of the sophist rather than councilors for the city); see ch. 4 fn. 11. While the situations are different, the result is similar: both Oidipous and these men, whom Thukydides refers to, are subject to the power of hearing and at the mercy of the speaker.

⁵⁹ Like the second *stasimon*, where Oidipous became a subject for the chorus to debate, Oidipous is again a subject for discussion. His condition is delivered to the chorus and external audience by a messenger, Jokasta, and thus the image rendered of the man is of one *at the mercy* of the one telling it, which ironically indicates that Oidipous is now an object of hearing. His story is being told.

Oidipous' new status as object may suggest a reason for the use of an impersonal verb of necessity when Oidipous questions the shepherd in the fourth episode:

Θεράπων: οἴμοι, πρὸς αὐτῷ γ' εἰμὶ τῷ δεινῷ λέγειν.
Οἰδίπους: κᾶγωγ' ἀκούειν: ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀκουστέον. (1169-70).⁶⁰

Th.: Ahh, I am at the point of saying the dreaded thing itself.
O.: And I of hearing; but nevertheless, it must be heard.

Seth Schein suggests:

[s]ometimes [...] the use of the verbal adjective expresses a special kind of necessity, grounded in a sense of shame, that helps make the hero what he is morally and existentially. More often, however, verbal adjectives and other, mostly impersonal, ways of expressing necessity are employed by characters to evade responsibility for their own words and actions and to manipulate others.⁶¹

I argue, however, that the impersonal nature of this construction, in this instance at least, points to Oidipous' subjugation to the external force of hearsay; now that Oidipous has begun the line of questions in an open acoustic space on stage and in the presence of the chorus, citizens of Thebes, he cannot simply stop.⁶² Csepregi says that “[i]ndeed, when sounds emanate from a resonating body, we can’t run away and, like schoolchildren in the classroom, must obey. The acoustic sphere entails an element of possessiveness; we are seized by sounds and delivered to their influence.”⁶³ Oidipous' position is the same as every human being's position.⁶⁴ Oidipous is seized by the sounds. He must hear. Oidipous does not possess the control over the aural

⁶⁰ We might wonder if Post's (1938) catalogue and classification of uses of the imperative in fifth-century Athenian tragedy might enlighten the point. Post argues that when “[f]acts are in control...[t]here is an appeal to, or at least no dissent from, existing facts, functions, obligations, laws of thought, or agreements. Present imperative” (37). Granted, there is no imperative here, but the use of the present infinitive ἀκούειν and the verbal adjective ἀκουστέον might be a close enough parallel. If so, then the present form of ἀκούειν might indicate that Oidipous is not in control, the facts, which are about to be heard, are in control.

⁶¹ Schein 1998: 305.

⁶² Cf. Straus (1966), who emphasized the semantic relationship between the German hören (to hear), horchen (to hearken) and gehorchen (to obey) in a phenomenological analysis of sounds. For the phrasing, see also Wille 2001: 213.

⁶³ Csepregi 2004: 172. For an interesting discussion of power that sound has to compel listening, see musicologist Peter Szendy's *Écoute: une histoire de nos oreilles* (2001), which discusses the obligations, responsibilities and rights of the listener (droit de l'auditeur) as he/she listens to music.

⁶⁴ An auditor can be distracted, look away, or shut his eyes, yet still, like Oidipous, hears the play going on before him.

community, or the distance from it that Deiokes had, that would enable him to stop what is going to be heard and therefore it is incumbent upon not only him, but also the chorus and the Corinthian messenger to hear what will follow.⁶⁵ Like Deianeira, Oidipous is left a helpless auditor to his own story. None of them can shut their “non-existent earlids.”⁶⁶

Oidipous’ subjugation to hearing becomes implicit in the very phrasing of his speech on his final return to the stage with blinded eyes in the *exodos*: πᾶ μοι / φθογγὰ διαπωτᾶται φοράδην; (To where is my voice borne along flying through the air? 1309-10). Jebb notes that the φοράδην, which he translates in his commentary as “in the manner of that which is carried,” is “...here correlative to φέρεσθαι as said of things which are swept onward by a tide or current: thus, of persons deficient in self-restraint” and that the use of φοράδην results from the fact that “he has newly lost the power of seeing those to whom he speaks. He feels as if his voice was *borne from him on the air* in a direction over which he has no control.”⁶⁷ Oidipous’ diction alludes to a conscious awareness that he has no power over where his voice will go and in doing so simultaneously hints at a cognizance of his inability to control hearing. For aurality entails both verbal and aural processes. It is both what is said and what is heard, and an admission that one cannot control saying can be seen as equivalent to an admission that one cannot control hearing or the aural community. He is now an object of hearing but cannot control how he is heard.

This brings us to one of the most famous and perplexing references to hearing in the *Oidipous Tyrannos*. After returning to the stage, Oidipous justifies his choice of blinding and comments on

⁶⁵ For lack of agency on Oidipous’ part, see also Bowra, 1944: ch. 5. For the converse, see Dodds, 1966: 37-49 (esp. 43).

⁶⁶ The phrase comes from David Burrows, a scholar on music, who has expressed this unique ability of sound to possess and permeate an individual and who deserves quotation: “[t]o see the bell I must turn towards it and focus on it, reach out myself and touch it with my attentions; and nothing would be easier than to withdraw my touch by shutting my eyes or looking away. The sound, like the touch of a hand moved by a will other than my own, is not so easily ignored: I cannot shut non-existent earlids. And sound goes beyond touch, which respects the perimeter of my skin and beyond its degree of intimacy in seeming to be going on within me as much as around me” (1990: 15-16).

⁶⁷ Jebb 1892-1900: *ad* 1310. One might also confer the construction ἄπτερος φάτις for “unspoken rumour” in Aesch. *Ag.* 278. Technically, ἄπτερος means “wingless”; thus the rumour that is unspoken is something that has not taken wing yet, not flown away from the speaker into the broader aural community. On the use of φοράδην, Wille (2001: 282) says that it “...verbirgt sich das Bild eines letzten Ausgeliefertsteins in der Form des Getragenwerdens zum unbekanntem Leeren, wofür das Verklingen im akustischen Medium der Luft als Symbol für die Verflüchtigung ins Wesenlose dient.” I do not think, however, that being carried away in the wind is necessarily a “symbol for the disappearance into nothingness;” rather it is emblematic of the mobility of sound.

his desire to deafen himself as well: ἀλλ' εἰ τῆς ἀκουούσης ἔτ' ἦν / πηγῆς δι' ὧτων φραγμός, οὐκ ἂν ἐσχόμην / τὸ μὴ ἀποκλιῆσαι τοῦμὸν ἄθλιον δέμας, / ἴν' ἦ τυφλός τε καὶ κλύων μηδέν (If there were yet a way to block the source of hearing, my ears, I would not have stopped myself from shutting up this wretched body so that I were both blind and heard nothing, 1386-9). For Oidipous, who is now incapable of visual perception, sight no longer holds any value; but while it is possible to prevent seeing, it is not possible to prevent hearing.⁶⁸ One might wonder why Oidipous is unable to make a φραγμός of the sources of his ears; Odysseus was certainly able to do so in order to protect his men from the destructive sounds of the sirens in the *Odyssey*: αἴψα δ' ἰαίνεται κηρός, ἐπεὶ κέλετο μεγάλη ἴς / Ἥελίου τ' ἀγῆ Ὑπεριονίδαο ἄνακτος; / ἐξείης δ' ἐτάροισιν ἐπ' οὔατα πᾶσιν ἄλειψα (and straightaway the wax warmed, since the great strength and light of Helios, son of Hyperion compelled it; and one after another I plastered the ears of all my comrades, 12.175-7). Perhaps the answer lies in the changes to how the Greeks thought about hearing by the fifth-century BC. Some Presocratics did not consider the ear an important site in the process of hearing. Demokritos, who believed that the sonant body produced sounds (φωναί) in the air that were similar in shape and size, theorized that the sound atoms were carried through air vacuums in the human body; Demokritos believed that, while the ear was the largest vacuum where the mobile atoms of sound could pass through into the body, the atoms also entered through all parts of the body.⁶⁹ The ears were only important in so far as they provided the largest vacuum for the atoms, the most unhindered access for the sounds to get to the soul.⁷⁰ In light of such views, it becomes quite impossible, as Oidipous notes, to actually block off sound.

On the other hand, most ancient acoustic theorists do recognize the importance of the ears. Alkmaion of Kroton argued that the hollow of the outer ear funneled sound that traveled on soniferous air-waves into the vacuum, κενόν, of the inner ear.⁷¹ Empedokles of Akragas also

⁶⁸ Sight seems limited, to the extent that it is within the power of the individual, who like a messenger, can choose what and how to relate of his “vision.” At the extreme, the individual can also choose to stop sight altogether by destroying his eyes as Oidipous has done. This is not a common theme in the ancient world, but perhaps the discussion of blocking the ears in Augustine *Conf.* VI. 8.13 by Mader (2000) and the connection of hearing and temptation hints at a broader context of the effective power of hearing.

⁶⁹ Theophr. *Sens.* 19.

⁷⁰ Beare 1906: 99

⁷¹ Cf. Diels *Dox.* 506 fragment 23, Theophr. *Sens.* 25, and Beare 1906: 93-4.

suggested that the ears were special πόροι (passages) by which sound entered the body.⁷² Diogenes of Apollonia, a fifth-century theorist, and Aristotle both indicate that the ear was central to the physiological process of hearing.⁷³ Finally, Plato, as M.F. Burnyeat has noted, theorized that one did not hear with but through the ears: “[t]he ears, for one, are naturally treated as apertures or orifices in the body through which sounds are heard and naturally described in terms which bring out the spatial force of the preposition dia-.”⁷⁴ Clearly, the reason that Oidipous cannot create a φραγμός of the sources of his ears will not be reasoned away medically.

But perhaps the reason is much simpler. Oidipous destroys his sight by maiming his eyes. His use of φραγμός, however, makes it evident that he does not consider the same process for his ears. He does not even imagine puncturing them to eliminate hearing. The ears are tunneled through already. The comic description by Euripides in Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazusiai* of how ears were created underscores this point; he says that Aether bore straight through a tunnel in the ears for hearing (ἀκοῆ δὲ χοάνην ὄτα διετετρήνατο, 18).⁷⁵ Oidipous cannot strike them (ἀράσσω, *OT* 1276) as he struck his eyeballs. As Padel has pointed out, in fifth-century Athenian tragedy, “hearing is intrusion from outside, through ears, into innards.”⁷⁶ She makes the same point for emotional suffering: “[e]motional suffering, like perception or disease, is due

⁷² Cf. Diels *Dox.* 501-2; Theophr. *Sens.* 9; Beare 1906: 95.

⁷³ Diogenes felt that the air in the ear was especially important because this air was the “[...] real agent in perception—being a tiny fragment of divinity” (Stratton 1917: 101-103. Cf. Theophr. *Sens.* 40-42). Diogenes also specified various characteristics in living beings, which suited them better to hearing: slender-veined, with a *meatus* or orifice of the ear that was short, slender and straight and with an ear itself that was large and erect (Beare 1906: 105). According to Aristotle, the shape of the ear was a crucial factor in one’s ability to hear; for example, certain breeds of dogs would hear things at a distance very well because their ears are long and projecting and because the interior of the their ear is also long and spiraling (Cf. *Gen. an.* 781b.13-16). A human being is worse at hearing because of the size of his body relative to his ears (*ibid.*: 17-22). Cf. Beare 1906: 121. Cf. Demokritos’ view on the skin of the auricle, which he felt should be tough (Stratton 1917: 115-117).

⁷⁴ Burnyeat 1976: 40. He goes on to note “a simple example [when] Plato [is] speaking of a flute pouring music into the soul through the ears as if through a funnel (Resp. 411 a; cf. Aesch. Cho. 56, 451, Soph. O.T. 1386-7, frag. 773 Nauck, Pl.Phdr. 235d, Soph. 234c)” (40). For the role of the ears in Plato, see Burnyeat 1976: 29, 33, 40, *et passim*.

⁷⁵ It should be noted that this scene is a caricature of Presocratic natural philosophies; yet the “funny part” here seems to reside in Mnesilochos’s response, who takes Euripides’ description to mean that he can’t hear on account of the funnel (διὰ τὴν χοάνην οὐκ ἀκούω, 19).

⁷⁶ Padel 1992: 64. See ch. 1 fn. 5.

to intrusion. It wounds like a weapon, flows inward like *esionta*.”⁷⁷ For Oidipous, hearing and emotional suffering are one and the same now. To hear of what he has done or to hear from his parents is a deadly, piercing blow. Hearing punctures him as it does Eurydike in Sophokles’ *Antigone*: με φθόγγος οικείου κακοῦ / βάλλει δι’ ὠτῶν (the sound of an evil for the house strikes me through my ear , 1187-8). As a result, Oidipous can never penetrate his ears to destroy hearing as he penetrates his eyes to destroy sight. For hearing itself penetrates; sounds intrude to make themselves heard. A piercing blow creates rather than destroys hearing.

That yet leaves the wax with which Odysseus thwarted the sirens. Padel notes that “[e]xternal influence, which enters through hearing, stirring and threatening the mind or self within, is realized in the Sirens.”⁷⁸ Odysseus had to face the allure of their music and overcome it. Oidipous, however, has consistently left himself open to hear anybody and, consequently, he cannot block the sound now. The words he will hear cannot be blocked out; they are too powerful as his fate is too powerful.⁷⁹ And Oidipous is within their power as he is within the power of his fate. Wax may have created a φραγμός to block the sounds of the Sirens; but such a device cannot stand up to the piercing power of the words that will be applied to Oidipous: murderer, patricide, incest.⁸⁰

Unlike the Teiresias scene of the first episode, where Oidipous thought he could control his hearing, he has now realized that hearing does not lie within his control in the Theban aural community. As we saw in the *Trachiniai*, once the voice leaves the body, it flies out, beyond the speaker’s control into the broader aural network where it, and its subject, will be at the mercy of any listener. Thus, the tyrant who saw himself as in control of hearing and tried to block out hearing, in the later stages of the tragedy begins to recognize his subjugation to hearing: one must hear (ἀκουστέον). One cannot block out the sources of the ears. And Oidipous, fittingly now that he can no longer be tyrant of Thebes, comes to accept a tenuous position in the aural

⁷⁷ Padel 1992: 63.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*: 65.

⁷⁹ Cf. Soph. *OT* 1455-7: καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ’ οἶδα, μήτε μ’ ἄν νόσον / μήτ’ ἄλλο πέρσαι μηδέν: οὐ γὰρ ἄν ποτε / θνήσκων ἐσώθην, μὴ πὶ τῷ δεινῷ κακῷ (And yet I know this much, that no sickness nor anything else can destroy me; for I would never have been saved from dying unless for some terrible evil).

⁸⁰ For these terms and their legal weight, see p. 34.

community in which he too will be subject to hearing: “[I]ike Kreon at the end of the *Antigone*, Oidipous no longer has *kratos* (‘authority’) and his voice has lost the power to command in the city and direct its future.”⁸¹

From the *tyrannos* who came on stage to demand to hear, he has become a passive listener, who is terrified of being thrown out of the aural community in accordance with his own curse.⁸² No one will be permitted to address him. Nor will he be a *tyrannos*, since he will no longer even be able to command people to listen to him or address him, since he has committed himself to listening to them. But it is never made explicit in the text that Oidipous understands, as Deianeira did, the connection between hearing and the community because Oidipous never entirely lets go of his desire to rule the community. And in demanding Kreon’s attention to Jokasta and his daughters, he forces a curt response from the new ruler of Thebes:

πάντα μὴ βούλου κρατεῖν:
καὶ γὰρ ἀκράτησας οὐ σοὶ τῷ βίῳ ξυνέσπετο (1522-3).

Do not have a mind to rule in all. For even what you have ruled before has not remained constant for you in your life.

Even in the dying moments of the play, Oidipous clings to vestiges of his status as *tyrannos*.⁸³ But Kreon is now *tyrannos* of Thebes.

In the opening of the tragedy, Oidipous adopted the stance of a *tyrannos* who, like a father over his children, had complete control over the polis and aural community. Yet, his actions betrayed a democratic leaning in his personality. Ultimately these actions betray Oidipous as well. His openness permits Teiresias and Kreon to openly confront and rebuke him. Though Oidipous tries to suborn their words to his tyrannical power by controlling the power of hearing itself, he fails. Moreover, his openness allows Jokasta to claim aural equality with the tyrant, which

⁸¹ Bushnell 1988: 83. For a similar treatment of the imperative mood in the *OT*, see Rydberg-Cox 1998-1999. He argues that one’s understanding of his or her own position in society correlates with his or her use of the imperative mood.

⁸² See Soph. *OT* 236-41 (τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἀπαυδῶ τοῦτον, ὅστις ἐστί, γῆς / τῆσδ’, ἧς ἐγὼ κράτη τε καὶ θρόνους νέμω, / μῆτ’ ἐσδέχεσθαι μῆτε προσφωνεῖν τινά, / μῆτ’ ἐν θεῶν εὐχαῖσι μῆτε θύμασιν / κοινὸν ποιεῖσθαι, μῆτε χέρνιβος νέμειν: / ὠθεῖν δ’ ἀπ’ οἴκων πάντας). It is interesting to note that he is in, in fact, the object spoken of in his own speech.

⁸³ On the genuineness of the ending, see Kovacs 2009 and Davies 1991.

results in tragedy as Oidipous learns the fateful knowledge of his role in Laios' death and begins to unravel the secrets of his past. Jokasta's aural equality, in turn, solidifies the democratic resistance of the aural community to tyrannical control. Oidipous, therefore, opened himself up to the demand to be heard by his fellow Thebans, a responsibility he gave himself in his self-definition as a leader. As such, by the end of the tragedy, Oidipous' position has reversed, not just from *tyrannos* to common man or beggar, but also from subject in control of hearing to object acted on by hearing.

The character of Kreon provides an illustrative counter-example. Both he and Oidipous relate to the action of hearing in a way that, at the very least, mirrors the way that they relate to the community.⁸⁴ From an initial subject of hearing, the one who performs and controls the act of hearing, Oidipous' position relative to hearing is steadily reversed, and he becomes object rather than subject. This mirrors the steady overturning of Oidipous' position as *tyrannos*. Kreon's relationship with hearing and the aural community is almost the reverse, mirroring his movement into a position of leadership. These movements and reversals are tied to the way each character treats the aural community. Oidipous operates as though he is a *tyrannos*, but one who chooses to give himself the responsibility to hear out his subordinates. Kreon, in turn, initially operates as an equal member of the community, but eventually tries to dominate the aural community.

From his first entry on stage, Kreon, unlike Oidipous, has seemed aware of the inability to combine a tyrannical and a democratic treatment of the aural community. As noted above, he wished to relate the oracle within the house (91-2). Kreon asked Oidipous to go inside because he understood the difficulty of controlling the aural community once it was permitted an equal footing with the *tyrannos*.

I propose that Kreon's awareness of this difficulty stems from his democratic self-positioning. When defending himself against the charge of conspiracy, Kreon argues that Oidipous should look out for Kreon as much as himself and rule fairly rather than simply rule (627-9). Oidipous responds with an apostrophe (629) to the city (ὦ πόλις πόλις). Kreon's response to this is particularly revealing about his own relationship to the aural community of the polis.⁸⁵ He says

⁸⁴ On Kreon as the counter-hero, see Jouan 1993.

⁸⁵ For his and Oidipous' arguments as revealing of their respective positions and morality, see Cuny 2004.

that he also has a share in the city: κάμοι πόλεως μέτεστιν, οὐχὶ σοὶ μόνω (630).⁸⁶ Unlike Oidipous, whose self-positioning as a *tyrannos* bars him from “sharing” in the community he is trying to dominate, Kreon’s self-positioning places him on an equal footing with other members of the community, even Oidipous. This becomes explicit in his appeal to Oidipous, in which he demands an equal (ἴσος) hearing (543).⁸⁷ The ἴσος of this appeal marks Kreon as democratic in the same way that his demand for an equal footing in the aural community was shown to have earlier.

As a result of this democratic tendency in his thinking and his relationship to the community, Kreon understands that if the aural community is democratic he can become its object. Therefore, when Oidipous charges him with treason, Kreon admits the power of such words: οὐ γὰρ εἰς ἀπλοῦν / ἢ ζημία μοι τοῦ λόγου τούτου φέρει, / ἀλλ’ ἐς μέγιστον, εἰ κακὸς μὲν ἐν πόλει, / κακὸς δὲ πρὸς σοῦ καὶ φίλων κεκλήσομαι (For the damage from what you say does not come to bear on me in a single way, but in the greatest, if I am to be called bad in the city, and bad in the eyes of you and of my *philoï*, 519-2). The focus of Kreon’s fear is “[t]he injury inflicted [upon him] by Oedipus’ accusation and its consequences in public rumour.”⁸⁸ Fearing “its consequences in public rumour,” Kreon shows an awareness of his inability to control a democratic aural community.

Ironically, however, as Kreon takes up the mantle of power, he also tries to place himself in control of the aural community and hearing, as Oidipous tried to do before. After first refusing to rebuke and mock Oidipous, he attempts to remove Oidipous to the house where only family can see him and hear his cries.⁸⁹

ἀλλ’ ὡς τάχιστ’ ἐς οἶκον ἐσκομίζετε:
τοῖς ἐν γένει γὰρ τὰγγενῆ μόνοις θ’ ὄραν

⁸⁶ For this common formula denoting political membership, see Aris. *Pol.* 1292a.

⁸⁷ See p. 126.

⁸⁸ Kamerbeek 1970: *ad* 519, 520.

⁸⁹ Wille (2001: 322-23), who suggests a connection between the individual and hearing, says of this line that “...ist das Verhältnis von Individuum und Welt gestört, wie in furchtbarer Weise bei Oidipus, so wird es auch für die Miterlebenden unerträglich zu hören und zu schauen.” There is a corruption of the bonds between individual and society that is reflected in the sphere of hearing; Wille was referring to Oidipous’ religious crimes; but Oidipous also errs in use of power, and this too is reflected in the realm of hearing.

μόνοις τ' ἀκούειν εὐσεβῶς ἔχει κακά (1429-31).

Quick as can be, take him in the house: it's in accord with religion that family alone see and alone hear a family's woes.

This mirrors the beginning when Kreon suggests that he could relate the Delphic oracle inside the house: εἰ τῶνδε χρήζεις πλησιαζόντων κλύειν, / ἔτοῖμος εἰπεῖν, εἴτε καὶ στείχειν ἔσω (If you want to hear these standing here to here, I am ready to speak: or we can go inside too, 91-92). This mirroring is crucial to the portrayal of Kreon as *tyrannos*. He once asked Oidipous to go inside because he knew that speaking in public would make anything he said public knowledge, and thereby, make himself and Oidipous subject to it. Oidipous did not fear the aural community, not understanding that he could not combine democratic actions with tyrannical control. But now Kreon is *tyrannos* and he attempts to forestall the power of hearing by relegating it to an area separate from the *demos* and *polis*.⁹⁰ But, Oidipous' fate is already public knowledge. All events have transpired before the chorus and the audience; those that occurred behind the façade have already become the object of the aural community in the messenger's speech. Kreon is attempting to control within a closed aural community a matter that has already presented itself to an open, democratic aural community under the rule of Oidipous.

Though Kreon seems to fear the influence of the aural community, as he demonstrates by attempting to bar Oidipous inside the *oikos*, he no longer acknowledges its autonomy as a democratic entity outside his tyrannical power. Consequently, there can be little doubt that Kreon too will come to realize the inability of any man to combine a tyrannical desire for control with a democratic treatment of the aural community. Once a ruler has opened the aural community to the multiple voices of the city and other characters in tragedy, it may no longer be possible to shut it down.⁹¹

⁹⁰ The figures of Kreon and Oidipous are characters whose actions and fates are bound up in resolving the problems of defining a *tyrannos* in an open aural community. We might find a parallel with Kreon's character in the *Antigone*, who is equally as concerned with his control over aural community. On the character of Kreon and *tyrannis* in the *Antigone*, see Bushnell 1987. For the consistency of Kreon's characterization across the Theban plays, see Halperin 1979-1980. For the opposite, see Peterkin 1929.

⁹¹ On fifth-century Athenian tragedy as a genre in which multiple voices--many of which are usually silent--can be heard, see Hall 1997.

Like Oidipous and Kreon, who both took up a median position between democracy and tyranny, the play itself takes an ambivalent position in the end. While acknowledging the inability to control an open, democratic aural community with tyrannical actions, the *Oidipous Tyrannos* also presents the dangers of a democratic aural community in the destruction of Oidipous. This warning does not go unheeded by Kreon, yet he is locked into the same mistakes by his previously democratic self-positioning. The nature of the democratic aural community forces men like Kreon and Oidipous to adopt tyrannical attitudes for self-preservation. Yet, at the same time it prevents them from succeeding in their attempts at control because the aural community already controls them.

The theatre of Athens and Athens itself constituted an aural community where hearing served as a social unifier and political force. The aural community has the force of a social control and this social control can affect one's political status, especially by means of rumour. In the social and political space opened up by aural communication as political acts in the aural community, the *Oidipous Tyrannos* examines the nature of power and the relations between it and individual characters. By the end of the tragedy we are shown the danger of treating the aural community democratically, since a democratic aural community has the power to destroy its members. But we are also shown the impossibility of controlling an open, democratic aural community, which can exercise control over even leading members of the *demos*. In the face of these two facts, Kreon and Oidipous try to act as *tyrannoi* over the democratic community only to find that impossible. The audience is then left with the knowledge of the dangers and difficulties of existence, survival, and leadership in the democratic aural community as well as the necessity of facing both the dangers and the difficulties in their own lives.

Earlids Some Final Thoughts

“Listening is the most dangerous thing of all, listening means knowing, finding out about something and knowing what’s going on, our ears don’t have lids that can instinctively close against the words uttered, they can’t hide from what they sense they’re about to hear, it’s always too late.”

~ Javier Marías, *A Heart So White*¹

There are two biologically driven questions that every auditor asks: where? And what? Where is that sound coming from? What is it? For the modern scholar, how we answer those questions is easy, or at least understood. Thanks to studies on the physics of the ear, we know that sound vibrations or fluctuations of pressure are caught and funneled by the pinnae into the ear canal where the frequency of the sound is amplified before it hits the tympanic membrane. There the lever-like movement of the tiniest bones in the human body, which are set in motion by the rebounding tympanic membrane, amplifies the energy further. This lever then bounces onto the oval window, transmitting the sound waves to the inner ear. Within the inner ear, cilia that are on the tops of inner hair cells are flexed by fluctuations in pressure and thereby provide information about frequency and intensity to the auditory nerve and the brain.

And thanks to the field of psychoacoustics, we understand how, in the brain, the neural signals resulting from the physiological process of hearing move up through a variety of processing structures that help determine tonotopic, temporal, and spatial aspects of the sound input.² The

¹ For the term earlids, see ch. 4 fn. 66.

² Studies in this field help to understand how the purely mechanical phenomenon of wave propagation, hearing, becomes sensory and perceptual event. Cf. Moore 2003. See also the collection gathered by Bigand and McAdams (1993). The works therein cover auditory scene analysis, perception of acoustic sequences, attention, auditory memory, and the abstract knowledge structures that enable the recognition of sound sources and events. For example, psychoacoustics studies how speech sounds are reprocessed in order to extract acoustic cues and phonetic information. There are a number of theories on how humans use acoustic cues and phonetic information to recognize speech. The brain can also group like sounds together by frequency, pitch, space and other factors in

ears and brain are a “...listening system [that] includes two ears together with the muscles for orienting them to a source of sound.”³ The ears and the muscles that move them help orient one towards sounds. Once the sounds enter the ears, the brain is able to process differences in when and in how strongly the sounds reach the ear in order to determine the spatial and temporal aspects of the sound.⁴ The ears are astonishing organs. Together, they gather up the sounds all around, even the ones whose source is outside the visual field, and then transform this mechanical information into neural action potential that the brain can interpret. Where? Ours ears pick that up. What? Our brain can figure that out.

But this dissertation has posed a different set of questions: how? In what way do we hear? The answers have been far ranging and far from biological; Elektra heard physically; Philoktetes communally; Deianeira publically; Oidipous politically. And in each case, the auditor of the tragedy was left to ponder what effect hearing had. For Oidipous, who destroyed his eyes by dashing them to pieces, the potential to hear about his crimes becomes an unstoppable blow that no φραγμός can block. When Orestes overhears Elektra on-the stage and then again as he listens to her lament, he is overwhelmed as the sound bores through to his innards and leaves him unable to control his own tongue (κρατεῖν...οὐκέτι γλώσσης σθένω). For Elektra too, positioned at the door trumpeting the murder of her mother to the chorus and audience, hearing those death cries is the equivalent of a blow (πέπληγμα), creating the impression that she both strikes and is struck like her mother. Like her mother, she becomes a murderer, aurally.

On the other side of the continuum, we find Philoktetes. Isolated and subjected to liminal cries and echoing responses, Philoktetes wants nothing more than to hear (ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι); and

order to determine the nature of and interpret sound events. According to the Fuzzy-Logical model of speech perception, people remember speech sounds in a probabilistic, or graded, way. They remember descriptions of the perceptual units of language or prototypes. Within each prototype various features may combine; these features are not simply true or false, but there is a fuzzy value corresponding to how probable it is that any sound belongs to a particular speech category. Consequently, when a person perceives a speech signal, the decision about what is heard is based on the relative correspondence between the stimulus and values of the prototype. Other models are the Motor Theory of Speech Perception (Liberman, Harris, Hoffman, & Griffith 1957); Direct Realist Theory of Speech Perception (Fowler 2003); Exemplar Theory (Fowler 2003).

³ Gibson 1966: 75.

⁴ Massaro 1989: 398-421.

when he does hear, he delights in the sound (φίλτατον φώνημα). Yet, even Philoktetes feels the destructive impact of hearing; listening to the story of the false messenger about Odysseus' intent to force him back to Troy brings his hatred to such a heightened pitch that he succumbs to spasm of pain, screaming παπαῖ, / ἀπαππαπαῖ, παπᾶ παπᾶ παπᾶ παπαῖ. Sounds are operative; listening to them affects the body, the mind, and the soul.

I have argued in this dissertation that the efficaciousness of sounds, which strike a blow through the ears, through hearing, arises from a certain inherent mobility in sound. "What is heard" travels. Sound can move within an acoustic space and between acoustic spaces. In the *Elektra*, the sound of Elektra's cries and Klytaimnestra's death wails move on and off stage through the *skene* doors. Their respective cries penetrate from an undefined outside acoustic space into the innards of the stage and recipient body of the auditor. But "what is heard" is far from unidirectional. Even in the *Elektra* itself, where the stage is most often symbolic for the κενόν where sound is interpreted, the sound of Elektra and Orestes' dialogue must be blocked and deflected by the Paidagogos lest their words precede their bodies past the *skene* and *into* both the house and the ears of Klytaimnestra. In the *Trachiniai*, it travels even farther, along the *eisodoi* into the wider world and back again to the acoustic space of the stage. "What is heard" is multidirectional.

One of the reasons that what we hear can be so mobile is that "hearings" can attach themselves to people and then move between them. In the *Trachiniai*, κλέος attaches itself to intermediaries like Hyllos, Lichas and even inanimate objects such as the robe and the δέλτον. In the end, even Deianeira's own body becomes a vehicle for κλέος. These instruments and the sounds carried by them are the only real link between Herakles and Deianeira, who are never on-stage together. Sounds and the act of listening to them create bonds between people. Hearing creates a bond for Philoktetes; hearing Neoptolemos becomes his reintegration into the social world of the Greeks. This community is not part of the scenery; it's not represented physically onstage any more than the Trachinian *agora* is in the *Trachiniai*. These spaces and groups of people are aurally created and the characters on stage are connected to them aurally; their belongingness is a function of hearing. These communities are aural communities. But sound can disrupt bonds too: Philoktetes is isolated on Lemnos because of the sound of his ἀγρία δυσφημία; Oidipous is forced away from the stage and eventually into exile because the sound of his κακά is not meant for public consumption.

This brings us back full circle to the effective power of hearing. To listen is to become a part of a society, to share and communicate, to create aural links. But in creating these links the individual body is left vulnerable to the destructive, effective power of aurality. The individual can become tongue-tied like Orestes, twisted and murderous like Elektra, led to an acceptance and silent suicide like Deianeira, or driven to self-mutilation and exile like Oedipus. Of all the tragedies examined, only the Philoktetes presents “the brighter side” of hearing, in so far as Philoktetes creates bonds and is restored to society through acts of aurality. But the isolated hero’s final echo and address to the landscape leave even this happy ending in doubt, aurally at least.

This dissertation adds to a growing body of literature on aurality in tragedy, ancient and modern, and has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of the interconnections between hearing, society, politics, and the individual. The results of this study indicate that hearing was omnipresent; aurality was a powerful force capable of affecting the individual and his relationship with the broader community, a community that was, by and large, created aurally. An area of uncertainty, left in need of investigation by this dissertation, is to what extent the aural community within the theatre or within the tragedy is the same as the aural community in the society outside of the theatre. I do not expect that they are exactly the same, but I believe that they would function in similar ways and that this allows all aural communities to be compared, especially ones that overlap as much as the different aural communities of Athens. These thoughts are quite preliminary. In regards to the results of this study and to what extent these findings are applicable to all of tragedy, or to other genres, this too remains to be seen. In particular, a future study investigating the role of aurality in rhetoric—an overwhelmingly aural genre, in which the power to listen or not resides in the auditor, but also in which the auditor is always at risk of being *stung* by the words of the speaker—would be very interesting.⁵ The purpose of this dissertation was to claim a place for aurality in the thematics and dynamics of Sophokles’ theatre; the main question raised was how or what way do his characters hear. The answer for these characters in these tragedies is: at one’s own risk. This dissertation presents the destructive impact of hearing in a world where everybody is an auditor, like the world of

⁵ Cf. ch. 1 fn 4. But see also Porter’s 1988 article on the orator and the aural dimension of oratory.

democratic Athens. “Listening is the most dangerous thing of all,” and there is no such thing as earlids to block it out.

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