

**THEATRE AND THE GREEKS**

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**T**HE EARLY GREEK PHILOSOPHER XENOPHANES once claimed that if horses had had gods, they would have made them look like horses. It was of course a perspicacious remark and one that should be particularly appreciated nowadays among the theorists. Nowhere has the observation been more true than of the way that those of us in the European tradition have created the Greeks and Romans in our own image. We are nowadays growingly conscious of these issues, but at the same time I would put it to you that if, through guilt or uncertainty, we are tempted to turn our backs on such inherited aspects of our past (and even to use the idea as an excuse to abandon the study and teaching of Classics), we are overly timid, and, to put it more strongly, too frightened of the pressures arising in the context of a petty nationalism on the one hand and anti-*élitist* bigotry on the other. In our haste to realise that the passage of time has made the Greeks an alien culture for us, and that we have no automatic understanding of them despite their fundamental position in the evolution of western culture, it seems short-sighted to fail to make the point, or even, as some would, deny that the inter-relationship between the modern western tradition and the ancient world has been a fruitful one. If, to take just one example, the liberalism of Gilbert Murray had not been imposed on the Greeks, the history of the study of Greek tragedy would have been much the poorer, just as what he drew from his study of the Greeks and their tragic theatre contributed in no small way to the formation of the League of Nations.<sup>2</sup>

In the study of Greek theatre, we have of course created something we wanted to see. Directly – and indirectly through the Roman tradition – the perception of ancient theatre has been a source of inspiration for more recent theatre, and only the most carping critics would agonise over the historical or archaeological accuracy of the activity. The present-day uses of ancient theatre are manifold, whether it is Peter Brook's staggering productions in London with their highly sophisticated use of masks,<sup>3</sup> or modern Greek productions in reconstructed ancient theatres which are at once aimed at the tourist dollars and at legitimating to an international audience as well as themselves the modern Greek ownership of Classical Greece, and all that flows from that.

All of this is fascinating and a subject of study in its own right, but what concerns me this evening is what we may reconstruct of the use the ancients made of their theatre.

Theatre as we know it began in Athens near the end of the sixth century BC. Some traditions tell us it began with Thespis in 534, but this is demonstrably wrong, or at least a major over-simplification. It is probably safer to suppose that it emerged in some formal way with the new democracy 20 years or so later. The link between theatre and democracy was perceived – in later times at least – to be an important one. There came to be something of an opposition between this new style of activity, which was created by and for the people, and the most famous older style of public performance, the recitation of Homer. The recitation of Homeric poetry had not only been organised for Athenians by a tyrant, Peisistratos (traditionally in 566 BC), but it clearly represented a conservative strand. After all the heroes of the Trojan War were ancestors of contemporary noble families, and to celebrate the one celebrated the other, and gave legitimacy to their would-be place in society. Such an observation also gives colour to the rather reactionary views of Plato who, in a well-known passage in the *Laws* (658C-D) of about the middle of the fourth century, offers an opinion on the question of what would please most in an open competition. He claims that, if the little children were the judges, they would award the prize to a man doing conjuring tricks, if the bigger boys, it would be a comedian; the educated women, the young men, and perhaps the general multitude would be for tragedy. More mature men, though, would give it to a good rhapsode doing recitations of Homer or Hesiod.<sup>4</sup> If we view it positively, Homeric poetry was a stable and largely unchanging element in Greek society and its performance was a re-affirmation of certain cultural values. Theatre, though, belonged to the people and was constantly evolving in response to the needs of its audience.

The fifth-century Athenian was able to see major theatrical performances twice a year, at a festival in January and at the major festival, the City Dionysia, in late March.<sup>5</sup> Earlier in the winter period, in December, were celebrations of the Rural Dionysia at local theatres around Attica. It is worth remembering that all three of these were held in the cooler times of year (indeed December and January are nowadays at least the rainy period), but the more important point is that December-January is not a very urgent period in the farmer's year. By late March he could also afford to take time off because the seed should be sown, and indeed coming through the ground.

These festivals were held in honour of the god Dionysos. At the City Dionysia, among other celebrations and processions, there were competitions between choral groups performing dithyrambic poetry (each representing one of the ten tribes of the Athenian community), and then the competitions between five comic playwrights (each presenting one play) and three tragic playwrights (each presenting a set of three tragedies and a satyr-play). This seems to have been the basic arrangement for much of the fifth century. In the fourth century and later, different combinations were developed in answer to changing taste, part of which included the performance of older plays that had come to be regarded as classics.<sup>6</sup>

What is immediately clear from these sorts of arrangements is that, unlike us, the Athenians, in the fifth century at least, were not invited or solicited by playwrights, producers or managers to attend the theatre. The contrary was the case: the Athenians themselves arranged command performances. Their agents, the magistrates, selected from the plays on offer those they wished to have performed at the festival. They provided sponsors to finance the performances. They offered inducements by way of prizes to writers and actors, as well as what may have been substantial honoraria to the writers. They as a community provided the numerous young men needed to sing and dance in the choruses, and, for many families, this must have been at some cost to the economy of the household, given the rehearsal time involved. By the mid-fourth century they also tried to ensure, by way of state subsidy through a fund called the *theorikon*, that no citizen was prevented from joining the celebration through extreme economic hardship.

It has become fashionable to emphasise some of the more obvious political aspects of Greek theatre in the fifth century. The City Dionysia was clearly an event of great state importance which involved processions, representatives of the so-called allied states presenting tribute, crowning of distinguished citizens and visitors, a parade of war-orphaned military cadets in their new armour which had been provided by the state. Factors such as the seating arrangement in the theatre, tribe by tribe, must also have had some effect on the way the Athenians looked at themselves and at the occasion. There is also the point that these were religious festivals in honour of Dionysos, with all that that implies about the state of heightened tension, excitement and awareness for the audience. For people who did not meet as a large group very often, there must have been an excitement in the very fact of meeting in this way, not least for those who had left home and travelled some distance, and who may well have slept in the sanctuary overnight in the company of the god.

We should remember too that all this took place in the open air but within the confines of a sanctuary where everyone had assembled for the purpose of honouring and celebrating the god. In so-called primitive or small-scale societies, the dividing line between audience and participant in ritual performances is quite regularly unclear.<sup>7</sup> Experts in some aspects of the performance such as dance, or particular categories of song or music-making, or knowledge of procedure, may be prominent at one point or another. So too may members of the community who have a special rôle in the context of the particular occasion because of their place in the social network of the community. In ancient Greece the dividing lines between performer and audience were only just being established, and there was probably a much greater sense of general involvement than we are used to. Dramatic performances were put on by and for the community, and although foreigners were allowed to attend the Great Dionysia, they were not involved in the other festivals, and direct participation in any case remained very strictly an Athenian prerogative.

In the performance of the type of song called dithyramb, the choral group was made up of representatives from each of the ten tribes which comprised the Athenian community in the Classical period. Something similar may well have been arranged for more formal drama. The suggestion that the choruses were made up of *ephebes*, young men who were fulfilling their so-called military service, and the idea that the choruses were therefore representative of the community in a further sense is not unattractive.<sup>8</sup> In either case, the audience could reasonably be supposed to have viewed the chorus as in some way representing themselves, perhaps in very specific fashion of identification with the tribal groups to which they belonged. The numbers involved at any given festival were not small. A thousand were involved in the choral singing of the dithyrambs. Comedy used a total of 120 chorusmen. Depending on how you calculate it, there were 45 or 180 chorusmen for the tragedies. Add to these the various trainers and organisers, the priests and state officials, the costumers and musicians (not to mention the actors and mask-makers involved in formal drama), and a noticeable proportion of the free adult male population (which you might want to number at about 30,000) would have been involved. It would have been difficult for any given member of the audience not to know at least one of those involved.

One tends to watch the people one knows or identifies with in a performance in a special way; doing so increases one's sense of participation in the proceedings and sharpens one's observation both of what is done and of the way it is done. In this respect, the size of the audience was irrelevant: it was the size of the total community that mattered. In Athens, the citizen community was small enough for one to stand some chance of knowing most of its prominent members at least on sight (as anyone who has ever lived in a comparatively small town will remember). It was also a participatory democracy, so that one came to know one's fellow citizens more actively than we are used to. And then, if one didn't actually know people personally, one would be able to identify them by hearsay and by their being related within a network of family or kinship groups. In the fifth century the writers often performed as actors in their works. So far as we can tell, the writers were members of prominent families (they were, after all, the ones who could afford the education, the freedom from work and the time to compose). As to the actors in general, it has been argued that although their faces were hidden by masks, one would have quickly come to know the voices and mannerisms of at least the more prominent ones. So although Athenians did not create the opportunities to see theatrical performances more than a few times a year, when they did see them it was with a keen participatory interest and with a degree of what they regarded as inside knowledge.

Formal drama as we know it was invented in Athens some time not very long before 500 BC. In the earliest years, each play had only one actor who exchanged song with the choral group and so the dramatic content must have been fairly limited. One of the things I always find amazing is that theatre was developed

so quickly. Our earliest surviving playwright, Aeschylus, had his first victory in the dramatic contests in 484 bc. Our earliest surviving tragedy dates to 472 bc. Sophocles and Euripides were dead by 405 bc. Classic tragedy was all over within the first century of its existence. Our surviving classical comedies are from a period of less than forty years. Aristophanes' *Acharnians* was produced in 425 bc, his *Plutus* in 388 bc. If we ask how it is that a style of drama which even now we regard as so sophisticated could have been created in so short a time, the answer must surely lie not simply in the genius of the playwrights involved, but, since playwrights create for their public, in the importance given to theatre, in its reception, in the rôle it had in Athenian society of this period.

We take theatrical performance for granted, and it is difficult for us to put ourselves in a mind-set that would see it as startlingly new. One element we tend to forget is what must have been the perceived realism of theatre as it emerged. Yet it was, if you think about it, an enormous and fundamental step in the ongoing and seemingly compulsive human process of mimetic creation. At a less significant level, we aware how audiences of our parents' generation were moved by the invention of cinema, and how they were stirred by the realism of what seem to us now the crude and brief silent motion pictures of those early days. The human propensity to be stirred by performance is evidenced by countless anecdotes in western tradition. William Calder has reminded us of an account of a performance of Shakespeare's *Othello* in Hamburg in 1776 which is said to have caused children to faint and women to have miscarriages.<sup>9</sup> The ancient *Life of Aeschylus* has a story, one supposes anecdotal, that the same thing happened at the entry of the chorus of Eumenides in his play of the same name.

There has rightly been a good deal of emphasis in recent scholarship on the performance aspect of early poetry, and therefore on the interpretation of that poetry in terms of the circumstances in which it was presented. But these lines of interpretation should not be allowed to obscure the existence of a critical difference between, say, tragedy and the public performance of earlier poetry. It was, of course, that the element of direct speech quickly emerged as more important than that of reported speech. This of itself must have seemed more realistic. Another factor was that the parts of the composition steadily came to be played by individuals with different styles and voices rather than by a single poet-figure. And, further and I think critically in the ancient context, by wearing masks, these individuals took on the appearance, and therefore more fully the character of the part played. The use of a mask also helped distance the performer from the writer, and in doing so gave the performance an authority of its own.

We have an interesting story of a precursor to dramatic performance preserved in Plutarch. It is in his *Life of Solon* (8, 1-2), in the passage where he is dealing with the Salamis crisis in the early years of the sixth century. He tells us that Solon appeared in the market-place in a traveller's cap, and he went and stood upon the Herald's Stone and delivered his poem beginning: "I come as a

herald from lovely Salamis . . .". He took on another persona, that of a herald.<sup>10</sup> A fascinating second element in the story is that, according to Plutarch's account, he pretended he had taken leave of his senses. There is a great deal of evidence that, in Greek society as in some others, the playing of a part was seen in a very real sense as the taking on of another persona, as becoming another person. It is a concept which was taken even further by the wearing of a mask.

We do not have the time to investigate this particular issue at all fully. Let me simply point out the way that in a number of scenes on pots, simply wearing the mask transforms the person into the part played. On a well-known vase in Boston (*Fig. 1*), datable not long after the middle of the fifth century, we see two young chorusmen getting ready to enter the theatre.<sup>11</sup> They are to take part in a chorus of maenads. One of them is still pulling on his boots, and his mask lies waiting on the ground. (It is, incidentally, a good representation of the shape of a Greek mask: it covered a great deal of the head.) The other has put his mask on, and he already becomes a maenad. We have a similar case on a vase in Sydney of about the end of the fifth century. Three chorusmen are about to join a satyr-play.<sup>12</sup> Two of them hold their masks and stand chatting. The other already wears his mask and so is shown as behaving like a dancing satyr. The important point for us, then, is that this was realistic performance of a new order.

At the same time, as others have pointed out, there is something frightening about a mask, and at at least two levels.<sup>13</sup> The first is its static nature. We as humans are trained from earliest childhood to recognise and to read first our mothers' and then others' faces, to read the constantly changing expressions and to judge their reactions to our own actions. It is our first step in interactive communication, and the importance of the process remains with us throughout our lives. A mask does not allow this reading and communication. It is something unreachable and therefore disquieting. It is for this reason that we see, as a quite common motif in art from the late fifth century BC onwards, a mask used as something to frighten children. The first clear example known to me in art is on a little Athenian jug of about 410 BC where a child scares another with a satyr mask.<sup>14</sup> The motif is picked up later, for example on Roman sarcophagi with scenes of cupids at play, and then it reappears in the Renaissance, as in a drawing of the later part of the 15th century AD which was in the recent London (but not New York) version of the Mantegna exhibition; it is after Mantegna, doubtless borrowing from the antique, but with an impact that was still understood in its own time. A putto wears a mask and adds to the frightening effect by poking his hand forward through the mouth, terrifying a companion who falls to the ground.<sup>15</sup>

That the ancients were very conscious of its worrisome aspect we know too from references to the sanctuary of Dionysos as the *mormolykeion*, the bogey place. This is where actors dedicated their masks after performance, where they left them hanging from the architrave of the temple, as may be seen in some fragments of a vase from the last years of the fifth century (*Fig. 2*).<sup>16</sup> Another

frightening aspect of masks is their function in the creation of otherness, the mysterious process by which other beings are conjured up, out of nowhere, and take on a hyper-reality. We should not, then, ignore the fact that in the fifth century the Athenians left these masks behind in the sanctuary of the god and did not take them out into the wider community.

This process of creating other beings was associated with the god Dionysos and he was also the god of wine. Wine too was a product, the mechanics of which were not understood, but which transported you to another state and also induced an otherness. Similarly, Dionysos was a god whose cult could induce trance-like, orgiastic conditions, especially among women. And you will remember the way in which many plays on the Lykourgos, the Pentheus and other such themes, not least among them Euripides' *Bacchae*, were concerned with this aspect of the worship of Dionysos and its qualities of addiction and possession.

And if we refer back to the observation that theatre stood for a democratic element in society, we may also notice that in these plays the wrong-doers, those who opposed Dionysos and his worship, were the ruler-kings.

We can also show how early tragedy was very much an exploration of the new medium. Even from our distance we can point to a growing range of presentation techniques and some deliberate testing of the limits of performance. One well-known example was that of the so-called Aeschylean silence.<sup>17</sup> He introduced the ploy of having the main character, whom one might naturally expect to carry the weight of the dialogue and action, stand or sit silent and unanswering for long periods, especially during the early part of the play. This was a deliberate tantalising of the audience and it was a technique which must have made these characters' utterances when they did eventually speak all the more compelling. In historical terms one might guess that it was evolved in reaction against the increase in the number of actors from one to two and then three, and so it was an overt and deliberately attention-getting rejection of what was seen as a recent advance. Our sources suggest that the audience certainly became conscious of it as a technique, almost to the point at which Aeschylus could be perceived as over-doing it. Our main evidence is Aristophanes' *Frogs* (905 ff.) of 405 bc. As a milestone in theatrical technique, these silences were still recalled more than a generation after their use. Achilles in *Phrygians or Ransom of Hector* and Niobe in *Niobe* were two notorious cases. We even have a Euripidean echo of the technique at the beginning of his *Trojan Women*. Hecuba is on stage from the beginning of the play, her presence is highlighted in the dialogue after some 36 lines, but she does not speak until she begins her lament at 98 ff.

We can trace a number of these interplays, echoes or reverberations. Perhaps the most exciting passage of Aeschylus' *Persians*, a play produced in 472 bc, is the raising of the dead king Darius. The chorus of Persians, in their total despair after their defeat by the Greeks, employ barbaric song and dance to raise from the dead their old and loved king Darius. It was a highpoint of the



play, coming after a sequence of strange, highly emotive song and dance from the chorus. It was a piece of spectacle. It is the only passage of its kind in extant tragedy, yet we have visual evidence of at least four other versions of the same theme from the preceding quarter century. The clearest example is to be found on a vase now in Basle of about 490 bc. (*Fig. 3*)<sup>18</sup> It has six youths dancing before a figure who rises behind or from a monument. The youths represent a chorus: they have identical dress, they dance with uniform step and uniform gestures, words are shown coming from their mouths, and the extension of the chin-line suggests that they are wearing masks as do the open mouths, not a normal feature of drawing at this period. The gesture with the arms reflects the movement in the dance of raising the dead hero. The monument is shown as a tomb by the sprays and sashes that have been placed on it. The hero also has a mask-like face with open mouth. As a piece of staging in a period when there was only one actor, this must have made brilliant theatre, particularly if one imagines the tensions built up in the song and the dance. A vase in Munich shows a less well-drawn scheme of the same kind, and a little oil-vase in Boston abbreviates it to a hero emerging from a tomb, his mask-mouth open.<sup>19</sup>

We have no idea who was the first playwright to introduce the idea, but it demonstrably goes back to the earliest years of theatre, let us say about 500 bc. Alternating song between the chorus and the single actor has the potential to become boring (and with hindsight one can readily see why a second actor was introduced). One way to cope must have been to have the actor come on and off stage in a variety of rôles; but, as a means of increasing tension, to have the chorus in distress, and then with particular forms of song prompt the appearance of the actor as a hero from the past must have been a staggeringly effective use of what were limited resources, so effective that writers could not let the idea disappear after one performance. This, then, is another very clear case in which the experience of theatrical performance had a cumulative effect, was for a while liked by the spectators, and was exploited, doubtless with variations, by a succession of writers.

This interplay tells us something quite important about the way Athenian theatre worked in the fifth century. An idea, once used, became common property and at the same time a challenge to others. So when a playwright re-uses the idea with improvements and variations, the audience was conscious of the process and appreciated the point. Indeed we can assume that their appreciation encouraged the practice. The same was quite likely true not only of ideas, like the raising of a dead and wise hero, or of play construction like having the key character remain silent, but in matters of staging.

One case – which I have dealt with elsewhere – is to be seen in the *Andromeda* of Sophocles, produced in the 440s, which, in a typically Sophoclean way, had stunning visual effect (*Fig. 4*).<sup>20</sup> He had her brought on stage by black slaves, itself something shocking given the prejudices of Athenian society, but then had her tied up to stakes on stage to be devoured or raped by a monster. The

image of a female tied up, frontal, arms apart, defenceless, was a shocking one for an audience which was protective of its women, and we see it reproduced on as many as five contemporary vases. When Euripides produced his *Andromeda* in 412 bc, he borrowed the motif, but showed her chained to a rock.<sup>21</sup> In the following year Aristophanes parodied Euripides' handling of the scene in *Thesmophoriazusae* by having a figure nailed to a plank in what was the contemporary Athenian version of crucifixion. Sophocles seems to have been skilled at exploiting the visual element. It has been argued that in another play he even brought Zeus on stage as a black.<sup>22</sup>

Issues concerning representation on stage are a difficult problem, not least because the images of ancient stage performance that survive are themselves static compositions. Nevertheless, Greek artists were perfectly capable of depicting movement, so that if they show us something which gives us the effect of a tableau, we must at least take it seriously. So the images of *Andromeda* like that in *Fig. 4*. One has the impression of set-pieces, designed perhaps to arrest the movement, to halt the course of events and thus to catch the audience by their static force.

Another possible case is that of Aeschylus' *Niobe* who stood unmoved and unmoving on her children's grave until she was turned to stone.<sup>23</sup>

A common image in art and apparently on the stage was that of a suppliant on an altar. In life an altar was a place of sanctuary, and a person sitting on it had asylum. This scene on a mid-fifth-century vase in the British Museum has long and with good reason been taken to reflect Aeschylus' *Telephus*, a lost play the detail of which is depressingly elusive (*Fig. 5*).<sup>24</sup> At this point of the play, Telephos, who was the son of Herakles and Auge, has come to the court of Agamemnon in Argos as a suppliant, and one may guess that he was rejected. He now sits on the altar, holding Agamemnon's son, the child Orestes, with him as part of the supplication process. This was doubtless striking enough in its day. *It certainly seems original in art of this period. In the following years Sophocles also wrote a play on the theme, as did Euripides and then the tragic playwright Agathon. All these plays were written within a relatively short space of time, as if they were deliberately reacting, one to another. Euripides' version was produced in 438 bc and it became famous, in part because it was parodied in at least two plays by Aristophanes. Not atypically, Euripides had raised the stakes, as it were, and Telephos not only holds the child with him on the altar but threatens his life. We have a number of vases which seem to reflect this version and they share a number of elements. One in Berlin (Fig. 6), which dates to the earlier part of the fourth century, very clearly makes the setting a sanctuary, for we have not only the altar but a tree with small votive plaques hanging from it, and Apollo, whose sanctuary it is, with his laurel branch.<sup>25</sup> Here as on the other vases that seem to reflect the play, there are hints of a scene of confusion, with the overturned basket for sacrificial objects, the strong and symbolic chiasmic composition of the figures of Telephos and the child Orestes in the centre of the*

scene on the altar, and then Agamemnon running up and threatening them with his spear. The threats to the child were not only shocking in themselves but led to vigorous action on stage, to a degree that seems to have made a strong impression on the audience.

In his surviving work, Aristophanes parodied the play first in his *Acharnians* of 425 BC and then in his *Thesmophoriazusae* of 411 BC. We are fortunate enough these days to have a depiction of a scene from the latter preserved, on a vase made in the Greek colony of Taranto in the years about 380-370 BC (*Fig. 7*).<sup>26</sup> It illustrates lines 689 ff. at which the character Mnesilochos snatches a woman's baby and seeks refuge at the altar, sword in hand and using the child as hostage. On being unwrapped, the baby turns out to be a wineskin, complete with Persian slippers. At line 753 Mnesilochos proceeds with the sacrifice of the 'infant' and (at 755, the moment shown here) the woman runs up with a bowl to catch the wine as it squirts out. That done, he finally gives her the empty skin back (which is also a means of getting it off stage). All this by-play takes a mere seven lines of text and is a good instance of the elaboration that takes place in performance. Indeed it is probably fair to suppose that Aristophanes had people (and not only Mikka) running around the stage in a way that was also meant to recall the confusion portrayed by Euripides.

The scene is a useful reminder that the humour of ancient comedy (like modern) rested in the staging as much as in the words. The anti-hero Mnesilochos is dressed as a male in woman's clothing (the skirt shorter than that of the real woman) and he wears a beardless mask that is grubby about the chin, a remnant of the shaving scene earlier in the play. What was less clear before we had the vase was the business with the woman. Her name, Mikka, is a familiar and diminutive one, doubtless implying someone young and likeable, even attractive. Earlier she had presumably hidden her face modestly with her veil as she held her 'child', but now she lets it loose in her eagerness to get to the wine she had lost, and so reveals what an ageing drink-sodden hag she is. The pose of Mnesilochos at the altar is a direct parody of the tradition of the scene in tragedy. The parody rested as much in the presentation and staging as in the words.

Suppliants on an altar was (or became) a specialised theme within a broader one: we know from contemporary terracotta figurines and slightly later vase-paintings that in comedy a favourite device was the slave seeking refuge on the altar, often with a valuable stolen object such as a purse full of money (as *Fig. 8*). Here again we have variations played on a favourite theme, in both tragedy and comedy, the writers in each genre conscious of the other. And this is really the main point I want to make here. A comic writer can make jokes about the treatment of a theme in tragedy, but it demands an audience that knows the tragedy. Indeed it is the sort of joke that works best with an audience which is watching the development of a theme as it occurs on stage, an audience which is conscious of the innovations and appreciates the variations. We are not

looking at a banal, uninventive process of imitation, but at a deliberate and self-conscious development and improvement of stage techniques. It is significant that they happened in a relatively small society and one which had a sense of possession of the process. What Aristophanes was mocking was the way that Euripides had treated the audience in putting on such a play for them.

Things were about to change, however, and the very fact that the vase we have been examining was made in Taranto in southern Italy is evidence of the evolving nature of theatre and its changing rôle in contemporary society. What was invented as performance at Athenian festivals and entertainment for Athenians quickly, about the turn of the fifth and fourth centuries, became popular throughout the Greek world. This was in part what made the comedy we call Old Comedy old-fashioned. It had used Athenian society and Athenian problems as its basis, and they, of course, were not always relevant to the wider world. Comedy had to become more general in its reference and to base itself on human activity in general. Similarly, a great deal of what we find the best classical tragedy revolved around problems that arose out of the rôle of the individual in a developing democracy like that of Athens. Fourth-century tragedy, of which we have nothing but bits preserved, shifted its emphasis to a more popular style which we might almost call melodrama. This was a period during which acting became a profession, and parts came to be written for and around the great actors of the time. The new kind of theatre became enormously popular. The best actors earned the sort of money that we give to pop stars, and it is worth remembering that it was for drama of this kind that the great theatres like that at Epidaurus, with their huge audience capacity, were constructed. We would call them entertainment centres.

The melodramatic style of tragedy in which crisis was resolved by a fortunate coincidence of events, by recognition scenes or divine intervention, had its influence on comedy, which in turn developed more complex plots *instead of series of episodes*. Comedy also developed a more telling social commentary, of the kind that we associate with Menander in the later years of the fourth century.

Once we reach Menander, Greek theatre has been under way for about 200 years and we have a style of theatre and especially comedy which, in its written version, is not really very distant from that of Shakespeare. The ancients saw Menander's comedy as naturalistic, to the degree that they saw life imitating his theatre as much as the stage imitating life. The one stood for the other. Yet in visual terms especially we would see it as conventional, and not simply because the actors wore masks.

One of the functions of theatre in any society is that of holding a mirror to itself, whether the mirror is considered to be a true or a distorting one. I am reminded of the comment of that very famous figure of French theatre, Louis Jouvet, when he claimed "*condamnés à expliquer le mystère de leur vie, les hommes ont inventés le théâtre*".<sup>27</sup> We tend to apply this notion of the function

and place of theatre to the aims and *mores* of a society, yet it is interesting to apply the idea in visual terms. Certainly many modern producers are conscious of the issue, particularly in so-called performance art, when they deliberately make the costume of the performer as neutral as possible. We all read the codes of dress and appearance in terms of the conventions of our society. So far as I know, no one has yet made a systematic attempt to disentangle these codes in the context of Greek theatre.<sup>28</sup>

The Greeks' view of themselves is a fascinating one, and one that always needs re-examination. No society displayed itself more spectacularly or more seductively than did the Athenians of the age of Sophocles when they created the Parthenon frieze. But it is reasonable to ask how many of them looked like this? Who are these beautiful people? Scholars still try to come to grips with the problem of clothing versus nudity in classical art, wondering if Athenians went round the streets naked. I make no comment except to say that somehow or other I do not believe that all Athenians looked like they do on the Parthenon, and any group with an eye for beauty would do something to hide the unbeautiful. But more to the point, I ask the question if it is fair to juxtapose them with similar iconic types from the Supplements to the Sunday papers with beautiful people wearing beautiful clothes?

For some purposes, the comparison is I think a fair one. It is a projection of how they wanted to see themselves, a classical ideal in that sense, just as the models in our advertisements promote us as we would be seen. In other senses, though, it doesn't work at all, because Greek art of this period was not self-conscious in this same way, concerned with deliberate choice and analysis of the appearance of society. Its practitioners were certainly not concerned with recording and analysing society and its habits in the sense that has become common in western art since the later nineteenth century. One could not argue that, for the fifth-century Athenian, the images created for the Parthenon were in any way more 'real' than the actors performing for the comedies of Aristophanes in the last 30 years of the fifth century. Indeed one could argue that comic actors were in some ways more real. Certainly, the contrast in the way Athenians perceived and then depicted tragedy and comedy were quite different.<sup>29</sup> The performance of tragedy involved the maintenance of dramatic illusion – the audience had, if you like, to believe in what they saw on stage. It was a re-creation of heroic events of the past. So in the vase-paintings we have been looking at, we never really see tragic actors acting. The vase-painter, as an ordinary member of the audience, creating images which he would try to sell to people who had also been members of the audience, made a picture of an excerpt of the story the playwright and actors were attempting to convey. They were concerned with a created or projected world. Comedy, by contrast, was seen for what it was, actors acting, and the attempt to maintain dramatic illusion was limited. Nevertheless these actors were also seen as representing Athenian ideals and counter-ideals, and there is little doubt that members of the audience –

which because of its very composition represented Athenian society in general – were able to identify with the aims and aspirations of some of the characters, and to recognise and reject others. These people were just as real for them, surely, as the figures on the Parthenon frieze. Both are creations of their society and the one is no more valid than the other.

From our perspective, we can see that these actors of later fifth-century comedy (*Fig. 8*), with their gross padding on the belly and backside, have an ancestry that goes back some 400 years, but contemporary Athenians of course didn't.<sup>30</sup> It was a natural and inherited part of the way one performed comedy. In the scripts written by Aristophanes, the phallos was funny and a constant source of jokes. Modern scholars have seen it as reflecting fertility rites and a primitive element, even if, given their prejudices, many of the generation of scholars before World War II found it difficult to accept that classical Athenians would have this kind of thing on stage.<sup>31</sup> In the terms of its own period, I think we have to take Aristophanes' word for it. We cannot assume that the Greek way of seeing things corresponded with ours.

As many scholars have observed, the Greeks normally depicted the male genitals as preternaturally small, the opposite, if you like, of what one observes on the comic stage. It is arguable that they are polar opposites. We may look for a moment at two or three vase-paintings of the early years of the fifth century. I have selected pieces by a single painter to avoid variables introduced by different personalities, but I insist that his view is not abnormal.<sup>32</sup> In a scene on the inside of a wine-cup (*Fig. 9*), a man is depicted with enlarged genitals.<sup>33</sup> He is vomiting after drinking too much wine. What we may describe as an ordinary young man stands by. The older man's genitals are enlarged because he is being gross, and they are by implication contrasted with those of the younger figure whose depiction is normal. The man being sick is deformed by his behaviour.

Another piece, by the same painter, may take us a step further (*Fig. 10*).<sup>34</sup> It shows the capture of Dolon the spy outside the walls of Troy. The young Trojan Dolon had tried to cross the Greek lines on a spying mission and disguised himself by wearing a wolf-skin. He was of course caught, as you can read in the tenth book of the *Iliad*. The rest of the story doesn't matter for us just now, but in this depiction one can in fact see his hand and his foot emerging from underneath the skin. It is a pity that the fragment showing his head has been lost, but from what remains it is clear that the painter has to some degree converted Dolon into an actual wolf, and this is symbolised or characterised by what is also evident, the hairy penis. That is the genitals again characterise the person and his behaviour.

For the gross man vomiting, it is tempting to compare the works of, say, Hogarth or, among the Dutch, Jan Steen, where a deliberate ugliness and coarseness of appearance echoes the behaviour of the participants. But this is a deliberate act by the painter who, in the case of Hogarth at least, is pandering to or exploiting a moralism among potential clients for his paintings. I don't

believe that at this period the Greeks were moralistic in our sense. In fact I think there is every reason to suppose that for the fifth-century Athenian there was a joke here. It is a picture you find at the bottom of your wine-cup (and remember it could readily hold half a litre), and you don't see it until you have drunk your cupful.

The figures on stage, in wearing the costume they do, with its distortion of the bodily form and especially the penis, are therefore larger than life, and, through their gross appearance, extra funny.

In comedy as distinct from tragedy, the creation of personalities as characters on stage – and thereby rôles for actors – was a development of the period of Aristophanes, the last third of the fifth century. From that point on, however, it developed quite rapidly even if within the framework of a series of conventional types set in what we would call situation comedy. The types are recognised, when they come on stage, through a series of rigidly conventionalised mask-types and costume that went with them. The way it was achieved is abundantly evident in the material remains, such as terracotta and bronze figurines (like *Fig. 8*) or scenes painted on vases (like *Fig. 7*). What, in the long view, is perhaps surprising is the growing refinement of the way in which these types were handled, but it goes hand in hand with broader developments in the way Greeks looked at themselves.

The emergence of physiognomic theory in the Aristotelian school in the later part of the fourth century seems to have had a remarkably widespread popularity.<sup>35</sup> Part of its importance lies in the fact that it went hand in hand with the development of related activities, such as the definition of personality types of the kind we see in Theophrastos' *Characters* where he defines the Officious Man, the Tactless Man, the Boring Man, and so on. It is also the period of the emergence of portraiture, a phenomenon which could not in fact have occurred without some acceptance of the kinds of more subtle distinctions and definitions of personality that we see reflected in Theophrastos, together with the notion that personality could be reflected in appearance. This last is of course an idea which has stayed with portraiture ever since, and it is something which persists in our own popular culture no matter how little basis it may have in scientific fact. The evolution of comic theatre went hand in hand with these developments, and so-called New Comedy, the comedy of Menander and his contemporaries, is essentially about the interplay of personalities in complex plots. It is significant that at this period we see a massive development in the range of mask-types, running to some number not far short of forty. They were developed in a fairly straightforward system of types and sub-types that the audience could readily recognise. We see it expressed in visual terms in the series of well-known reliefs showing Menander in the throes of writing a play.<sup>36</sup> He does not have writing materials, but he contemplates the real tools of his trade, the masks, and works out how one character will react with another. They remind us of the anecdote in which he was asked by a friend on one occasion if he had completed his play yet: he is said to have replied 'Oh yes, I've worked out the plot, there's only the

script to write'.<sup>37</sup> The audience recognised these masks and the personalities they represented to the extent that Menander was able to play the game of having characters behave in a manner against their expected personality.<sup>38</sup> If we glance briefly at reproductions of one or two of them in terracotta, it should be possible to see something of the variants and the range within which they are constructed.

A good piece of evidence is a small 10-centimetre-square plaque made in the lifetime of Menander (*Fig. 11*).<sup>39</sup> It was found in Amphipolis in North Greece, but there are good reasons to believe it may be Athenian, and in any case it has no sign of provinciality. The upper part has been restored and it should be reconstructed with a pale blue background like the rest. The masks all have blue eyes and red lips. To judge by other parallels, they should represent the cast of a play. On the upper left is a father, with orange-brown skin and yellow-gold hair and beard with touches of brown. He has a full straight beard and a roll of hair. His right brow is slightly raised and, in terms of the conventions, this seems to indicate an inquisitive and strong-minded character. Below is his son, with reddish pink skin and brown hair. The mask is that known in the literary sources as the Admirable Young Man, or the young man with perfect qualities. The raised brows indicate an out-going or extrovert personality. He is fairly lean and energetic and spends his time out of doors, as a man should. On the upper right is the family slave, also with fairly brown skin and a pointed beard. I say he is the family slave deliberately. We know it because he has the same hairstyle as the other two males, and it was a convention of the contemporary stage that males were grouped in this fashion. It must have been enormously useful for the audience in watching intrigue plays where the slave can take the side of his young master and plot and scheme for him to get his way in the teeth of the father, not to mention various other adult males.

It is also an interesting commentary on the Greek perception of self and the construction of their society. The 'family' connections are made through the creation of physical similarities between the males. The females fall outside this system.

Below the mask of the slave is the mask of a so-called old woman. She is not a nice person – as one might guess from the fact that she has a brown face. Nice women do not spend their time out of doors. And the point is demonstrated by the fact that prostitutes in antiquity used to whiten their faces artificially. She has a wrinkled brow and sunken cheeks. She is shrill according to the sources, and as you might in fact expect from the leanness of the face. She is a hard type. She is a procuress.

The two central women are perhaps the characters about whom the play revolved. Above is the mask of the girl called in Greek the *pseudokore*, a term which translates very badly as the False Virgin. She is in fact a virgin but she appears to be something else. She is the girl who is in the grip of that woman on the lower right. She has no family to protect her and is having to survive in a house of ill fame. The young man has fallen in love with her, he can't help it,



but father objects. How could his son marry a girl like that? She has white skin with a touch of pink on the cheeks. The hair is done up in a style fashionable for the period, in a double top-knot with bunches over the ears, more fashionable in fact than a nice girl in a proper family usually has.

Then we come to the mask bottom centre. It is the mask of a housewife and mother. If she looks comparatively young, it is because women were marrying young at this period. It was a period of declining population in Athens, and with that natural ebb and flow which one finds in so-called primitive societies, they were marrying younger than they did in a period of growing population, in this case often as young as 14. We can only guess at this young woman's rôle in the play, but it is perhaps not too outlandish to suppose that early on she had a daughter of whom she had to dispose. She left the child in a basket somewhere with some items which she hoped would persuade whoever found her to look after her. So they did, and now they will re-surface, and, with the help of the slave, be recognised. The *pseudokore* will turn out to be an Athenian after all. The boy will be able to marry her, and everyone will go off and celebrate.

I shall not lead you through all 34 other masks, but it is perhaps worth looking in passing at the types representing the *hetaira*, the companion girl, the girl from the escort agency. Leaving aside concubines and those retired from the active list, there are at least four types ranging from the more mature, extrovert, well-fed and happy type who enjoys a lot of gifts, to the cheeky, young, snub-nosed character of the kind that Eibl-Eibesfeldt in his books on Human Ethology claims is cross-culturally appealing.<sup>40</sup> One observation we ourselves may make about the series of girls ties across very interestingly to the ideals of the generation of our parents and earlier. The nicest girls, that is the virgin and to some extent the *pseudokorai*, have relatively small mouths which are not very wide open. Less proper women have their mouths open wider. It is a subtlety of prejudice which has been lost in our own lifetimes.

We may also note in passing that the snub-nose is also 'physically incorrect' in contemporary Athenian terms. Good Athenian citizen girls have straight noses, and so, we may remember, does the goddess Athena.<sup>41</sup>

Among the males, loose wavy hair (*Fig. 12*) means strong qualities.<sup>42</sup> In contemporary thinking, it was related to the mane of a lion, and the person having it was thought to have the same character. A category of young men's masks has wavy hair and this characteristic is employed on the mask often used for the young soldier. We see him commonly in terracotta figurines of the period of Menander where he wears the soldier's cloak. What is interesting is that the treatment of the hair corresponds very closely with that given to Alexander the Great in contemporary portraits (*Fig. 13*).<sup>43</sup> Alexander's image was endowed with these qualities. The face of course is different, and, with its deep-set eyes, it is trying to imply other things. And then if you wonder why it has what may seem to us a relatively thick neck, you should know that this was seen as a positive quality – in the words of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomika*:

A thick neck indicates a strong character, as in males, a thin neck weakness, as in females; a neck thick and full, fierce temper, as in bulls; a well-sized neck, not too thick, a proud soul, as in lions; a long thin neck, cowardice, as in deer; an unduly short neck, a treacherous disposition, as in wolves.<sup>44</sup>

You may remember that the Trojan spy, Dolon, dressed himself as a wolf, and to the vase-painter virtually became a wolf.

We have a line from Euripides' play *Alexandros* in which someone says "slaves are all belly".<sup>45</sup> It is a play which was lost to the literary tradition in later antiquity, but from the scraps which are preserved for us in other authors, it seems to have been concerned with the perceived differences between free-men and slaves. The theme is about someone who was at first thought to be a slave, but then turned out to be a son of the royal house. In comedy down to the late fourth century, all actors had padded bellies, as we have seen. Nonetheless, when, with the advent of New Comedy, other figures were portrayed as more couth, this perception of slaves as having gross figures survived, whether they were family slaves or working slaves, for example professional cooks. We see it in material reflecting stage production of the period of Menander. We see it in material of the Hellenistic and earlier Roman periods. We see it in a silver statuette of an actor as slave datable to the later part of the third century AD, a time when stage performance was strongly conventionalised and played in heavy rich costume, when Menander had been dead for 500 years and was classic theatre.<sup>46</sup> They all reflect a remarkably persistent view of the grossness of slaves and their 'physical incorrectness', and their lack of freedom being equated with a lack of quality.

It seems likely that, whatever the case in real life, most slaves in New Comedy were foreign (if their ethnicity was to be identified at all). This was another sign of their inferiority to the free characters in the play, and to the members of the audience. Again, part of the pleasure for the audience surely lay in the subconscious assumption that, whatever mischief slaves got up to in the course of the play, it lay within the bounds determined by their status, so that, in the final analysis, the norms of society could not and would not be upset. Physical appearance reinforced all this as it evolved on the stage.

There is a lot more work to be done on these issues, and on the Greek, and particularly Athenian, construction of their physical self-image. To some extent, clearly, the stage reflects the appearance, the views and prejudices of its society. But when Aristophanes of Byzantium, quite close to the time of Menander, came out with his famous dictum 'Oh Menander, Oh Life, which of you imitated the other?', he was not simply making a point about what was the perceived naturalism of contemporary comedy. It is quite possible, and indeed even likely, that theatre was to some degree driving the Athenians' view of themselves. And if we can admit that that was possible, it could drive both their mental view of themselves and their visual view of themselves. Indeed I don't think anyone would quibble these days with the concept of the propensity of life

to imitate art. What one may also observe is that, with the appearance of Menander's comedy, there was a sudden and massive increase in the range of masks used on stage, and in the subtlety of their differentiation, particularly among masks of the younger generation. Indeed the odd anecdote in the ancient sources suggests that his mistress Glykera had something to do with helping Menander design his masks. It seems to me quite possible, then, that in his own time Menander taught his audience, not only verbally but also visually, to see their fellow men and women with a greater degree of subtlety than they had done before. We should not worry that it was done through types – after all modern psychology had not yet been invented. Indeed it was by using types as a series of levers or fixed reference points that Menander was able to develop the observation of human behaviour. Evidence of his success is to be seen in the enormous impact he had on later generations.

## NOTES

- 1 I take the opportunity to express my gratitude to the Academy's President, Professor D.M. Schreuder, and to the conveners of the Symposium, Professors A.M. Gibbs and E.J. Jory, for their invitation and strong encouragement to give this, the 1993 Annual Lecture; also to many members of the audience for discussion afterwards. This written version differs from the original not least in the omission of a great deal of the visual evidence, and I hope that the argument remains reasonably clear. Since this paper will also appear in the Academy's publication of the Proceedings of the Symposium, *Masks of Time*, I have given this version the support of only limited references. A number of aspects of the earlier part of this lecture are explored in my *Theatre in Greek Society* (London, 1994); the latter also includes a fairly extensive bibliography to which the reader is referred.

### Abbreviations:

- ABV* = J.D. Beazley, *Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters* (Oxford 1956)
- ARV*<sup>2</sup> = J.D. Beazley, *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters* (2nd.ed. Oxford 1963)
- MNC*<sup>3</sup> = T.B.L. Webster, *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy* (third ed., rev. and enl. by J.R. Green and Axel Seeberg, *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* Suppl. 50, forthcoming)
- MTS*<sup>2</sup> = T.B.L. Webster, *Monuments Illustrating Tragedy and Satyr-Play*<sup>2</sup> (*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* Suppl. 20, 1967)
- 'Seeing & Depicting' = J.R. Green, 'On Seeing and Depicting the Theatre in Classical Athens', *Greek, Roman & Byzantine Studies* 32, 1991, 15–50

- 2 From a considerable list, note F. West, *Gilbert Murray, A Life* (London - New York 1984), and D. Wilson, *Gilbert Murray, OM, 1866-1957* (Oxford 1987).
- 3 See D. Williams, *Peter Brook. A Theatrical Casebook* (London 1988), although it does not of course contain reference to his more recent and very important work in this area.
- 4 See also Aristotle, *Poetics* 1448b34–8 and 1460a5–11.
- 5 A.W. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, second edition revised by J. Gould & D.M. Lewis (Oxford 1968), reissue with supplement and corrections (Oxford 1988).
- 6 On all this, the best source remains A.W. Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb, Tragedy and Comedy*, second edition revised by T.B.L. Webster (Oxford 1962).
- 7 I have of course learned a great deal from the writings of Victor Turner and his school, and from such books as *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York 1982) or such articles as 'Dramatic Ritual/ Ritual Drama: Performative and Reflexive Anthropology' (in) J. Ruby (ed.), *A Crack in the Mirror: Reflexive Perspectives in Anthropology* (Philadelphia 1982) 83-97, and 'Liminality and the Performative Genres', (in) J.J. MacAloon (ed.), *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle* (Philadelphia 1984); also from Richard Schechner, e.g., *Essays on Performance Theory* (New York 1977), or (with M. Schuman), *Ritual, Play and Performance* (New York 1976).
- 8 J.J. Winkler, 'The Ephebes' Song: *Tragoidia* and *Polis*', (in) J. J. Winkler and F. I. Zeitlin (eds.), *Nothing to Do with Dionysos? Athenian Drama in Its Social Context* (Princeton 1989) 20–62.
- 9 W.M. Calder III, 'Vita Aeschyli 9: Miscarriages in the Theatre of Dionysos', *Classical Quarterly* 38, 1988, 554–555.
- 10 See G.F. Else, *Hermes* 85, 1957, 35–36 and *The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965) 41.
- 11 Boston 98.883, from Cerveteri, *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1017, 46; *MTS*<sup>2</sup> 47, AV 20 (with refs.); J.H. Oakley, *The Phiale Painter* (Mainz 1990) 39, 73–74 no.46, pl. 6a.
- 12 Sydney, Nicholson Museum 47.05, e.g. *MTS*<sup>2</sup> TV 18; A.D. Trendall and T.B.L. Webster, *Illustrations of Greek Drama* (London 1970) II, 2; A.D. Trendall and A. Cambitoglou, *The Red-Figured Vases of Apulia*, i (Oxford 1978) no. 3/15.
- 13 E. Gombrich, 'The Mask and the Face. The Perception of Physiognomic Likeness in Life and in Art' (in) M. Mandelbaum (ed) *Art, Perception & Reality* (Baltimore 1972) 1–46. See further the ideas and important documentation in I. Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *Human Ethology* (New York 1989) esp. 666 ff. (trans. from *Die Biologie des menschlichen Verhaltens. Grundriss der Humanethologie* [Munich 1984]).
- 14 Eleusis, from tomb Theta 17, *MTS*<sup>2</sup> 49, AV 26; G. Mylonas, *To dytikon nekrotapheion tis Eleusinos* (Athens 1975) pl.362, no.726.
- 15 On Eros with mask, see the still valuable article by W. Deonna, 'Notes archéologiques. I. Eros jouant avec un masque de Silène', *Revue Archéologique* 1916, 74–97; also L. Hadermann-Misguisch, 'L'image

- antique, byzantine et moderne du putto au masque', *Rayonnement Grec. Hommages à Charles Delvoye* (Brussels 1982) 513–552. For the drawing in the manner of Mantegna, see J. Martineau (ed.), *Andrea Mantegna* (London - New York 1992) 457–458 no. 149 (colour ill.).
- 16 Samothrace 65.1041, *Revue Archéologique* 1982, 237–241, figs. 2–4, with further refs.
- 17 The best recent treatment is that by O. Taplin, 'Aeschylean Silences and Silences in Aeschylus', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 76, 1972, 57–97.
- 18 Basle, Antikenmuseum und Sammlung Ludwig, BS 415. M. Schmidt, 'Dionysien', *Antike Kunst* 10 (1967) 70, pl.19, 1–2; *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* (3) pl.6, 1–2, pl.7, 3–5 (with further refs.).
- 19 Munich 1871 (inv.6025), *ABV* 470, 103 (Cock Group); J. Boardman, *Greeks Overseas*<sup>3</sup> (London 1980) 151 fig.190 (and earlier editions); 'Seeing & Depicting' pl. 7b.  
Boston 13.169, *ARV*<sup>1</sup> 188, 59 (Tyszkiewicz Painter; but not in *ARV*<sup>2</sup>); *MTS*<sup>2</sup> 45, AV 4; 'Seeing & Depicting' pl. 7a.
- 20 Basle BS 403, *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1684, 15 bis, 1708 (Kleophon Painter); *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* (3) pl.10, 1–6 (with refs.); 'Seeing and Depicting' 43 no. 4, pl. 8.
- 21 We have just seen one example of Euripides' archaistic usage in his handling of Hecuba in *Trojan Women* and the creation of an 'Aeschylean' silence. *Bacchae* looks back to an archaic theme. It is quite likely that the chaining of Andromeda to a rock deliberately echoed the staging of *Prometheus Bound*.
- 22 S. West, 'Io and the Dark Stranger (Sophocles, *Inachus* F 269a)', *Classical Quarterly* 34, 292–302 1984.
- 23 For a fundamental discussion of the visual evidence, see A.D. Trendall, 'The Mourning Niobe', *Revue Archéologique* 1972, 309–316.
- 24 Recently, E.G. Csapo, 'Hikesia in the *Telephus* of Aeschylus', *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 34, 1990, 41–52, and, earlier, T.B.L. Webster, *MTS*<sup>2</sup> 145.
- 25 Berlin inv. 3974, *MTS*<sup>2</sup> 164; A.D. Trendall and T.B.L. Webster, *Illustrations of Greek Drama* (London 1970) III.3, 47.
- 26 Würzburg H 5697, *RVAp* i, 65 no. 4/4a; A. Kossatz-Deißmann, 'Telephos travestitus', in H.A. Cahn and E. Simon (eds.), *Taenia. Festschrift Roland Hampe* (Mainz 1980) 281–290; E. Csapo, "A Note on the Würzburg Bell-Crater H 5697 ('Telephus Travestitus')", *Phoenix* 40, 1986, 379–392.
- 27 *Témoignages sur le théâtre* (Paris 1952) 133. The *skene* = *bios* equation of course goes back to antiquity.
- 28 Closest comes D. Wiles, *The Masks of Menander. Sign and Meaning in Greek and Roman Performances* (Cambridge 1991).
- 29 I have explored these issues more fully in 'Seeing & Depicting'.
- 30 From left to right, New York 13.225.13, T.B.L. Webster, *Monuments Illustrating Old and Middle Comedy*<sup>3</sup> (rev. and enlarged by J.R. Green, *BICS* Suppl.39, 1978) AT 12a; New York 13.225.18, Webster-Green AT 20a; New York 13.225.19, Webster-Green AT 22a.

- 31 See even the post-war attitude of W. Beare in *Classical Quarterly* 4, 1954, 64–75, 7, 1957, 184–5, and 9, 1959, 126–7.
- 32 The painter is Onesimos, on whom see more recently B.A. Sparkes, in C.G. Boulter (ed.), *Greek Art. Archaic into Classical* (Leiden 1985) 18–39 (with refs.) and D. Williams, *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum* 5, 1991, 41–64.
- 33 Malibu, The J. Paul Getty Museum 86.AE.285, Williams, *op.cit.* 45 fig. 4. One may compare the scene on Malibu 86.AE.284, Williams, *op.cit.* 46 fig. 6, which has only a man vomiting, without the younger figure. He too has enlarged genitals.
- 34 Paris, Cabinet des Médailles 526 etc., Sparkes, *op.cit.* (n. 31) pl. 32. For the subject, see F. Lissarrague, 'Iconographie de Dolon le Loup', *Revue Archéologique* 1980, 3–30 (this vase p. 8, fig. 5) and *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* iii (Zurich-Munich 1986) 660–664, pl. 52–529 (D. Williams, with refs.) (this vase no. 11).
- 35 The fundamental article for our purposes is that by G. Krien, "Der Ausdruck der antiken Theatermasken nach Angaben im Polluxkatalog und in der pseudoaristotelischen 'Physiognomik'", *Jahreshefte des Oesterreichisches Archäologischen Instituts in Wien* 42, 1955, 84–117.
- 36 Vatican 9985 (ex Lateran), M. Bieber, *History of the Greek and Roman Theater*<sup>2</sup> (Princeton 1961) fig. 317; K. Schefold, *Bildnisse der antiken Dichter, Redner und Denker* (Basle 1943) 164, 216; *MNC*<sup>3</sup> 3AS 5a; Princeton 51–1 (ex coll. Stroganoff), F.F. Jones, *The Theater in Ancient Art* (Princeton 1951) no. 29 (ill.); Bieber, *op.cit.*, fig. 316; *MNC*<sup>3</sup> 3AS 5b.
- 37 Plutarch *Moralia* 347e.
- 38 See the good discussion by E.W. Handley, 'The Conventions of the Comic Stage and their Exploitation by Menander', (in) E.G. Turner (ed.), *Ménandre (EntrHardt xvi, Vandœuvres-Geneva 1970)* 1–42.
- 39 Kavalla 240 (E 489), from Amphipolis, e.g. T.B.L. Webster, *Hellenistic Art* (London 1966) 60, Appendix pl. 4; M.B. Sakellariou (ed.), *Macedonia. 4000 Years of Greek History and Civilization* (Athens 1983) 171 fig. 108 (colour); *MNC*<sup>3</sup> 1BT 5. For a systematic presentation of the literary and archaeological evidence for much of what is discussed in this section, see the chapter 'Costumes and Masks' in *MNC*<sup>3</sup>.
- 40 See n. 13.
- 41 It is worth noting that these masks depict their contemporaries as having blue eyes and brown hair – unlike the modern occupants of this region.
- 42 Copenhagen NM 7367, from Agrigento, N. Breitenstein, *Catalogue of Terracottas, Cypriote, Greek, Etrusco-Italian and Roman (Danish National Museum)* (Copenhagen, 1941) no. 720, pl. 86; *MNC*<sup>3</sup> 1AT 51a.
- 43 Paris, Louvre MA 436 (the Azara herm), G.M.A. Richter, *Portraits of the Greeks*, abridged and rev. by R.R.R. Smith (Oxford 1984) 225 no. (a), fig. 186; R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits* (Oxford 1988) 155 no. 1a, pl. 1, 1–3.
- 44 The translation is from T. Loveday and E.S. Forster, *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English. Vol. vi. Opuscula* (Oxford 1913), to 811a.
- 45 Fragment 33 Snell (= 49 Nauck).

- 46 Varna II-5801, from Odessos, *Arkheologia* 1981 45 ff., figs. 1–2 (Minchev); *Bull. du Musée National de Varna (Izvestia na Narodniya Muzei Varna)* 17:32 (1981) 64–74, pl. 2 (Minchev); *MNC*<sup>3</sup> 6DA 1. There is of course a massive bibliography on slavery in the ancient world, but virtually nothing of the ideology of slavery as set up in the theatre.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Athenian red-figure pelike, ca. 440-435 BC. Boston 98.883, from Cerveteri.
2. Fragments of an Athenian red-figure volute-krater, towards the end of the fifth century BC. Samothrace 65.1041, from Samothrace.
3. Athenian red-figure column-krater, ca. 490 BC. Basle BS 415.
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5. Athenian red-figure pelike, ca. 450 BC. London, British Museum 1836.2-24.28 (E 382).
6. Athenian red-figure calyx-krater, early fourth century BC. Berlin inv. 3974.
7. Tarentine red-figure bell-krater, ca. 380-370 BC. Würzburg H 5697.
8. Group of Athenian terracotta figurines, ca. 400 BC. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art 13.225.13, 18 and 19.
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10. Athenian red-figure kylix, ca. 490 BC. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles 526 etc.
11. Terracotta plaque, late fourth century BC. Kavalla 240 (E 489), from Amphipolis.
12. Terracotta mask of wavy-haired youth. Copenhagen, National Museum 7367.
13. Marble portrait of Alexander the Great (the Azara herm), Roman copy of an Early Hellenistic original. Paris, Louvre MA 436.





*Figure 1.*



Figure 2.

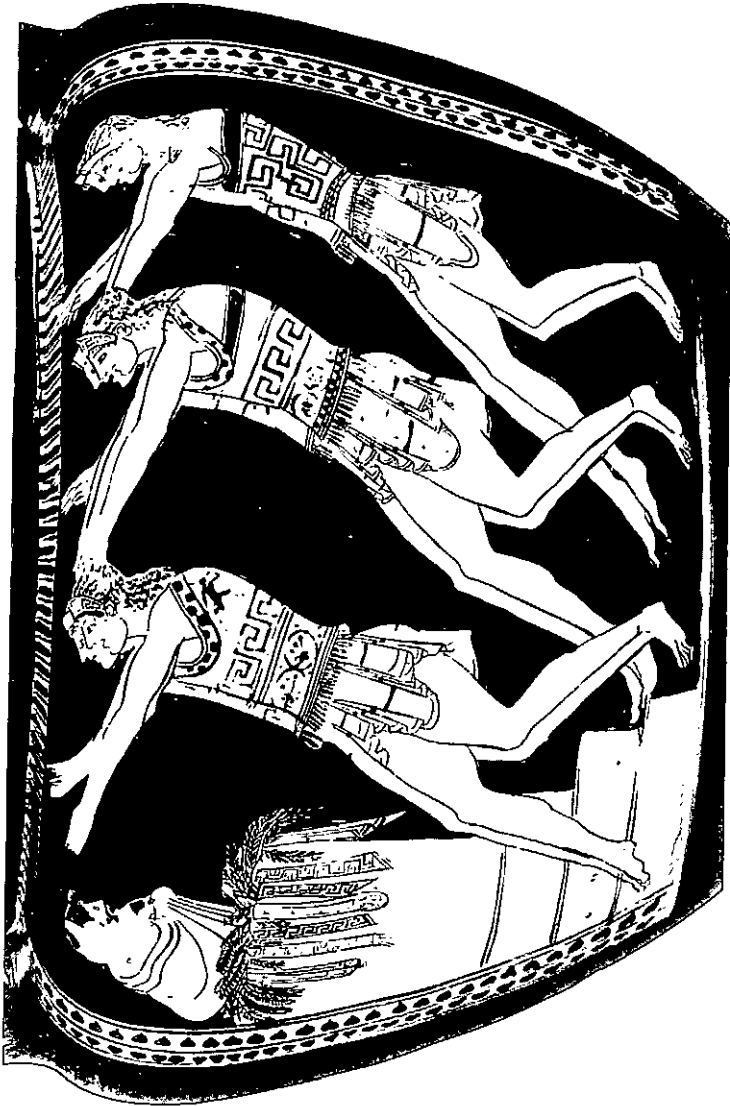


Figure 3.



Figure 4.



*Figure 5.*



*Figure 6.*



Figure 7.



*Figure 8.*





Figure 9.



Figure 10.



*Figure 11.*



*Figure 12.*



*Figure 13.*