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Sample Dissertation Chapter

Chapter Two: Iphigenia in France

Though Iphigenia had been studied across Western Europe during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it was in the seventeenth century and in France that she began to gain recognition as a popular figure of the public stage. Neoclassicism, the name that we, in later years, have given to France's particular brand of Greek revival movement, provided not only Iphigenia but many other figures of ancient tragedy with new stages to walk on after centuries of being largely confined to the library and the classroom. In this chapter, I examine neoclassicism's engagement with its classical sources through a study of the Iphigenia adaptations it produced, with an eye specifically to the cultural problems posed by incorporating Greek stories into the government-sponsored self-presentation of absolutist, colonial France.

This engagement with the classical part of French neoclassicism centers around the challenge it presents to binary thinking within a historical period notorious for its use of binarism. Binary thinking denotes a learned, culturally inherited way of thinking about the world that is founded on oppositional pairs, from constructions as innocuous as up/down or night/day; to somewhat more loaded categories such as inside/outside, forward/back, or light/dark; and extending to such problematic binary oppositions as man/woman, civilized/savage, good/evil, and true/false. Binary thinking has historically played a huge role in European culture[1] and

[1]Some scholars trace this preoccupation back to the influence of Manichaeism, a religion of the third and fourth centuries C. E., many of whose doctrines were absorbed into early Christianity especially via the writings of Augustine of Hippo, who was a Manichaean before converting to Catholicism. Although Augustine contested many of the tenets of his former faith, their oppositional frameworks of good/evil, light/dark, spirit/body had a major influence on his thinking and writing, and Augustine in turn remains one of the most influential Christian theologians to this day. On Manichaeism, its influence on early Christianity, and its involvement with the writings of St. Augustine, see J. Kevin Coyle, *Manichaeism and Its Legacy*, ed. Johannes van Oort and Einar Thomassen, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009).

especially in creating and maintaining divisions between 'Us' and 'Them,' insider and outsider, whether those divisions be based upon nationality, sexuality, religion, linguistic group, race, gender, physical or mental ability, or any other specific characteristic used to articulate difference. Such distinctions, in the case of Europe nearly always organized hierarchically (with difference automatically implying membership in a superior or inferior group) have repeatedly come under fire in academia, most often from within fields such as postcolonial studies, gender studies, and queer studies, where those populations most damaged by being labeled different and inferior serve as the object of study.[2] An emerging interest in the possibility and use of 'third terms,'—that is, new categories which do not fit into and therefore challenge binary oppositions—has been independently articulated by several scholars working within several disparate fields and subfields,[3] and informs much of the writing on categories of 'Us' vs. 'Them' being done in a multitude of disciplines.[4]

Such studies, focused on what has come to be known as the Self/Other dichotomy,[5] clearly demonstrate the ways in which this imaginary construct falls short of representing reality, and it is not my intention to merely re-draw those same conclusions here. Rather, I aim to show how the process of adaptation, in the context of French neoclassicism, has been used to create

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[2]Critiques of binary thinking have come from scholars and works as notable as Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994) and Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

[3]See, for example, Marjorie B. Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing & Cultural Anxiety* (New York: Routledge, 1992), writing from gender and queer studies; and VèVè A. Clark, "Developing Diaspora Literacy and Marasa Consciousness," *Theatre Survey* 50, no. 1 (2009), writing from postcolonial and performance studies. Both works take as their primary subject of interest the use of third terms to challenge binaries.

[4] Cross-cultural studies on the existence and operation of ‘third genders,’ especially, has done much to destabilize the Western binary with the most insistent claim to ‘naturalness,’ that of the dyadic male/female gender system. For a collection of studies surrounding this important contribution to the dismantling of binary thinking, see Gilbert Herdt, ed., *Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History* (New York: Zone Books, 1994).

[5]Tamise van Pelt traces the development and use of this phrase from Plato through such influential modern thinkers as Levinas, de Beauvoir, Kojève, Hegel, Heidegger, Sartre, Fanon, Bhabha, Butler, and most especially Lacan. See Tamise van Pelt, "Otherness," *Postmodern Culture: An Electronic Journal of Interdisciplinary Criticism* 10, no. 2 (2000).

and maintain the illusion that the Self/Other dichotomy *does* represent reality, and been used as a tool for erasing existing third terms which would otherwise present a challenge to binary thinking. The ancient Greeks, as a people who no longer existed but whose literary and ideological constructs had come down to modern France as a cultural inheritance, presented an ontological challenge to the Self/Other dichotomy in early modern French thought. Unlike France's definitively 'othered' colonial subjects (e.g. Native Americans) and international rivals (e.g. the English), the ideas of the long-vanished Greeks were incorporated into the French national character and held up as part of a carefully cultivated French cultural aesthetic.[6] Yet there were elements of Greek culture, traces of which are clearly present in their surviving texts,[7] which could not be incorporated into the French sense of 'Self' without profoundly altering that category and blurring the distinction between the French and various cultural 'Others.' The ancient Greeks were thus neither 'Self' nor 'Other' with respect to the early modern French, but a third term, the cultural ancestor, the 'Other-Self.' This, like all third terms, posed a danger to binary thinking, and thus could not be incorporated into dominant cultural formations without alteration. Specifically, the Greeks in an unmediated form as the 'Other-Self'—culturally different from the French 'Self'—could not be exposed to the (possibly) uneducated and impressionable masses who made up the audiences of the public theaters. While the original or translated texts of ancient Greek plays were studied by (primarily) male members of the educated elite, only heavily adapted versions of these plays were presented before the both gender- and class-mixed public. As a result, Greek plays destined for performance on the public stage and in the vernacular were subjected to a process of adaptation whose primary purpose seems to have been

[6]Greek influences being actively codified into the platforms of institutions whose job was specifically to standardize and promote French culture. See my discussion of the *Académie Française* below.

[7]For specifics, see my discussions of the case study plays below.

the erasure of all traces of real[8] cultural difference between ancient Greece and modern France: a process that would turn the ambiguous 'Other-Self' into an acceptable version of the wholly unambiguous 'Self' fit for presentation on the public stage.

In order to demonstrate this process, this chapter is broken into four sections. The first sets up the heavy cultural investment of the French nation (as represented and dictated by the power centered around its absolute monarchy) in incorporating Greek cultural output, and especially tragedy, into its national self-presentation. The second, third, and fourth sections each focus on a given adaptation of one of the Iphigenia plays, interrogating through a close reading of both Greek source text and French adaptation what alterations or erasures have been made and why. In the process, a picture emerges of those elements of Greek culture which were deemed unsuitable for the public stage, and how the threats presented by these elements were neutralized in the process of adaptation.

The 'Neo' and the 'Classical' in French Neoclassicism

The artistic movement that we now call neoclassicism, despite its beginnings in Renaissance Italy, began to gain international acclaim and recognition only when it met up with French absolutism as a form of Greek revival co-opted into France's project of national centralization and cultural domination. During the seventeenth century, France began a major shift in its governmental organization from a decentralized, semi-feudal system of relative provincial autonomy to a highly centralized, absolutist monarchy.[9] As a part of this shift, the

[8]I use the word 'real' here to distinguish differences in the organization and perception of reality from superficial or aesthetic cultural differences (in clothing, food, architecture, etc.) which do not present a fundamental threat to a modern French worldview. Polytheism, for example, as we will see below, was highly threatening to a monotheistic Christian worldview if engaged on its own terms—yet it could easily be disguised as a merely superficial difference by making it appear as if the various pagan deities of ancient Greece all agreed with one another and presented a single, unified divine will (functionally becoming a single, omnipotent being). See my discussion of Racine's *Iphigénie* below.

[9]For a long view of these developments, see G. R. R. Treasure, *Seventeenth Century France* (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1966). For a more detailed look at the concept of absolutism and both its strengths and

newly centralized government began to exert control over areas of national production which had previously been relatively unrestricted, including literary and dramatic output. In the case of literature and drama, such control was achieved through the founding of the *Académie Française* [French Academy], the first of several government-run academies set up to create and enforce a unified—and uniform—vision for French creative output. Within the borders of France, this unified vision served as one of many absolutist power structures, giving the centralized, monarchical government control over French language and literature in the same way it had control over such things as taxation and military might. Outside the borders of France, this standardized form of literary output created a distinct and recognizable 'French style' suitable for export that could be codified, admired, and imitated by others—including those 'Others' brought into the French fold by its colonial ambitions. France's colonial strategy at this time, in the Americas and elsewhere, was based largely on the idea of its own cultural superiority—native peoples, once exposed to the magnificence of the French language, food, literature, and lifestyle, would be so eager to adopt these things that they would willingly submit to French political rule.[10] This strategy, however, required that French culture be standardized to the point that it was easily recognized and grasped by cultural outsiders; the standardization of style created and enforced by the Academy was thus intimately connected with French nationalism as both a domestic and a colonial construct.

Yet in the case of drama, specifically, this 'French style' was openly founded on precepts drawn from ancient Greece. More than two thousand years, roughly two thousand miles, and a

shortcomings when applied to this historical period, see Nicholas Henshall, *The Myth of Absolutism: Change and Continuity in Early Modern European Monarchy* (London and New York: Longman, 1992).

[10]For a more detailed exploration of the links between the *Académie Française*, colonialism, and French culture as codified for export, see Sara E. Melzer, "'Voluntary Subjection': France's Theory of Colonization / Culture in the Seventeenth Century," in *Structures of Feeling in Seventeenth-Century Cultural Expression*, ed. Susan McClary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

great deal of cultural difference separates fifth-century B.C.E. Athens from seventeenth-century Paris, and yet, over the course of the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth, a form of tragedy based on the ancient Greek model was purposefully constructed and adopted by the intellectual and court circles surrounding the French monarch as one part of the project to standardize and export French culture. Taking primarily Aristotle's *Περὶ ποιητικῆς* [*Poetics*][11] and Horace's *Ars Poetica*[12] as a basis and joining a critical conversation begun in Italy,[13] French intellectuals such as La Mesnardière,[14] l'abbé d'Aubignac,[15] Boileau,[16] and La Bruyère[17] argued the proper structures, aims, and subjects of tragedy on the basis of imitation of *les anciens* **[**the ancients], an imaginary group comprised of all surviving authors from Homer (eighth-century B.C.E. Greek) to the poets of the last days of the Roman Empire (fifth century C.E.). The form of tragedy which emerged out of this debate—notably Greek-inspired yet far from identical to the tragic forms of ancient Athens—came to be hailed as a French achievement and, as a result, standardized and policed by the *Académie Française.*

This form of tragedy was centrally characterized by a series of rules hailed as deriving from 'the ancients' but in reality the new invention of absolutist France. Such rules included the 'three unities' (stipulating that the play must be unified in time, place, and action); '*vraisemblance*' [verisimilitude], the requirement that the action be plausible or credible (a

[11]Written in the fourth century B.C.E. in Greek.
[12]Written in the first century B.C.E. in Latin.
[13]Primarily by Castelvetro, whose *Poetica d'Aristotele vulgarizzata e sposta* [*Poetics of Aristotle Translated into the Vulgate and Explained*] *(*my thanks to Loredana Carletti for this translation) had an incalculable influence on the way that Aristotle was read and understood by subsequent Western European dramatic theorists. Aristotle and Lodovico Castelvetro, *Poetica d'Aristotele vulgarizzata e sposta* (Basel: Pietro de Sedabonis, 1576).
[14] Jules La Mesnardière, *La Poëtique* (Paris: Antoine de Sommaville, 1639), e-book.
[15]L'abbé d'Aubignac, *La Pratique du Théâtre*, (Amsterdam: Jean Frederic Bernard, 1715), http://books.google.com/books?id=5EvaydTjLQoC&pg=PP22&dq=d%27Aubignac+Pratique+du+th%C3%A9%C3%A2tre&hl=en&sa=X&ei=InRzVL39OIa0oQTMzoDACw&ved=0CB8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=d'Aubignac%20Pratique%20du%20th%C3%A9%C3%A2tre&f=false. e-book.
[16]Nicolas Boileau Despréaux, *L'Art poétique suivi de sa IX-e satire, et de son épitre à M. de Lamoignon* (Lyon: Tournachon-Molin, 1805).
[17]Jean de La Bruyère, *Les caracteres* (Paris: Laurent Prault, Libraire, 1768).

subcategory of which dictated that characters act in accordance with the characteristics 'naturally' accruing to their age, rank, and sex); and '*bienséance,*' the observance of propriety (which kept unsavory things like death off the stage).[18] These rules, despite being greatly expanded from the barest hints in Aristotle and Horace, were widely attributed to the wisdom of 'the ancients' and held up as models for modern playwrights to follow. To give just one example of this exaggerating process, the three unities were universally attributed to Aristotle but are not all found in his work. Aristotle discusses the idea that plays should follow the progress of a unified action,[19] makes some offhand mention of the reduced timescale of tragedy by comparison with epic verse,[20] and does not mention a unity of place. The first dramatic theorist to extrapolate from Aristotle and to lay the three unities out as rules was the Italian Lodovico Castelvetro, who was widely read and copied by successive waves of dramatic theorists all over Europe.[21] After his writing, the three unities were treated as though they were both truly Aristotelian and actual rules for the writing of classical drama, despite the fact that they were regularly broken by actual ancient dramatists. This process alone is an excellent example of the erasure of specificities and differences that characterized writing and thinking about 'the ancients' from the Renaissance through about the nineteenth century.

Moreover, unlike Aristotle and Horace, whose critical works on tragedy as a genre postdated the majority of the surviving plays they purported to address, French dramatic critics wrote consciously prescriptive works intended to be read and followed by the playwrights of

[18]For a thorough exploration of these 'rules,' their derivation from Aristotle and Horace, and the changes of interpretation they underwent as they moved from place to place and critic to critic, see Marvin A. Carlson, *Theories of the Theatre: A Historical and Critical Survey from the Greeks to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

[19]Aristotle *Poetics* VII. See Aristotle, "Poetics," in *Aristotle: Poetics, Longinus: On the Sublime, Demetrius: On Style*, ed. Stephen Halliwell, *Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[20]Aristotle *Poetics* V.

[21] See Aristotle and Castelvetro, *Poetica d'Aristotele vulgarizzata e sposta*. On the widespread influence of this text, see Carlson, *Theories of the Theatre: A Historical and Critical Survey from the Greeks to the Present*.

future dramas, making the neoclassical movement more rigid and formalized than the classical movement it supposedly aimed to imitate. The use of strict aesthetic rules in the composition of tragedy, then, was not precisely a recurrence of an ancient practice, though the rules themselves were ostensibly derived from ancient sources. Rather, these aesthetic principals and their strict enforcement were the effects of an absolutist, colonial government for whom standardization served both as a method of control and an effective strategy for cultural export.

Nor were these prescriptions as easily ignored as they might have been in other times, countries, or circles. During the period both before and during the establishment of the *Académie Française*, an active *salon* culture in Paris had worked to define a social circle of *Hommes de Lettres* **[**Men of Letters], aristocrats or aristocratic hangers-on whose speech, deportment, and *bon goût* **[**good taste] set them apart from the rabble and the provincial French. The *salons*, a series of private literary clubs hosted largely by aristocratic women in their own homes, were centers both for critique and for the presentation of new works by artists who aspired to gain favor from the most respected circles.[22] In order to gain and retain admittance to these exclusive groups, one had to cultivate an aesthetic sense in line with group ideas about 'good taste,' particularly with regard to artistic works—including plays, and that most supreme of theatrical arts, tragedy.[23] As Nicholas Hammond explores in his article "Highly Irregular: Defining Tragicomedy in Seventeenth-century France," this carefully cultivated valuation of tragedy among the Paris elite was in part a pushback against the popularity of the 'hybrid' form of

[22]The majority of the most famous and influential *salons* were founded by aristocratic women, including such celebrated names as the Marquise de Rambouillet, Mme. de Scudéry, and Mme. de La Fayette. The membership of the *salons*, however, was definitively co-educational, with many prominent men as regular participants. For an informative list of the *salons* and an exploration of their gender composition, social power, and differing ideologies, see Anne E. Duggan, *Salonnières, Furies, and Fairies: The Politics of Gender and Cultural Change in Absolutist France* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005).

[23]La Mesnardière, for example, refers to the genre of tragedy using glowing and superlative language throughout his *Poëtique*, referring to it in the very first section of his writing as "*la plus noble*" [the most noble] genre of poetry. See La Mesnardière, *La Poëtique*: 6.

tragicomedy popular all over Europe as the most commercially successful performance genre.[24] During the rise of the professional, public, and commercial theaters toward the end of the Renaissance, the need to generate revenue from all social classes simultaneously caused playwrights to mix the conventions of comedy (which focused on lower-class characters) with the conventions of tragedy (which focused on upper-class ones). Tragicomedy, having gotten its start in Italy where the earliest commercial theaters were established, was particularly associated in France with foreign theatrical practices (Italian, Spanish) and enjoyed more popularity in the provinces than in the capital. In the *salons*, where aristocrats convened specifically to cultivate a kind of 'good taste' different from that of provincials, foreigners, and the lower classes, a renewed interest in 'pure' tragedy—demarcated by a clearly-defined set of rules that set it apart from the more popular tragicomedy—became the order of the day. And what better way to define this more refined theatrical genre than by hearkening back to the ancients, who so resolutely separated comedy from tragedy?[25] The new, French tragedy, built upon a foundation of ancient philosophy and drama, allowed the Parisian aristocracy to create an image of French national artistry that might command the kind of respect afforded to the artists of Athens's Golden Age. It was this particular version of Frenchness (aristocratic, Parisian, conformist) that was to be held up and touted by governmental institutions like the *Académie Française* as that which was truly French and worthy of export to—and imitation by—foreign countries, not the heterogeneous mix of provincial dialects, customs, and theatrical styles that truly comprised France's reality.[26] When

[24] Nicholas Hammond, "Highly Irregular: Defining Tragicomedy in Seventeenth-Century France," in Subha Mukherji and Raphael Lyne, eds., *Early Modern Tragicomedy*, Studies in Renaissance Literature, vol. 22 (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007).

[25] As Hammond points out, only two ancient plays were ever tentatively put forward as ancient examples of tragicomedy (Euripides's *Κύκλωψ* [*Cyclops*], a satyr play from fifth-century B.C.E. Athens, and Plautus's *Amphitryon*, a comedy from the third-century B.C.E. Roman Republic), and even then, this designation was up for debate and hotly contested by some of the staunchest upholders of tragic supremacy, including the abbé d'Aubignac. See Ibid., 78-79.

[26] On the heterogeneity of French culture and the aristocratic project to override, centralize, and standardize it, see

a play or playwright stepped outside this narrow set of aesthetic criteria, threatening the standardization of French 'good taste,' both the members of the *salons* and the Academy lost no time in issuing harsh critiques to get the playwright back into line.

Nowhere was this more obvious than in the *Querelle du Cid* [Dispute over *le Cid*], which took place over the course of 1637 and into 1638, only a few short years after the Academy's initial founding.[27] This particular pamphlet war demonstrated the willingness of the Academy and its aristocratic supporters to harshly censure artists who did not follow its rules.[28] In this case, the artist was Pierre Corneille, one of the most celebrated (and subsequently canonized) playwrights of his time. His tragicomedy *le Cid*, adapted from a Spanish source play, was a popular success but—in addition to being a hybridized genre of foreign origin—broke with several rules on dramatic form as laid out by the Academy, primarily the three unities. The unities of time, place, and action dictated, respectively, that plays should take place within a timeframe of no more than twenty-four hours, at a single location, and should focus on one problem of dramatic magnitude (as opposed to a series of independent events). Despite the fact that these rules were not always observed by ancient dramatists—Aristotle having expressed his preference for them nearly a century after all of the surviving tragedies had already been written—the *Académie Française* made it clear in the Dispute over *le Cid* that it meant for neoclassical playwrights to follow them to the letter, popular opinion notwithstanding. The Academy's scathing critique, *Les sentiments de l'Académie Française sur la Tragi-Comédie du*

Treasure, *Seventeenth Century France*.

[27]The *Académie Française* was founded in 1635 and Corneille's *Le Cid* was written in 1637. Critiques in pamphlet form began to appear almost immediately, authored by members of both the *salons* and the Academy. The Academy's formal critique of the play was written the following year, capping the debate in 1638. See Jean Chapelain, *Les sentiments de l'Académie Française sur la Tragi-Comédie du Cid* (Jean Camusat: Paris, 1638).

[28]Readers interested in a more in-depth exploration of the *Querelle du Cid* and its role in establishing the authority of the Academy are encouraged to see “Chapter 1: Theater and Study in the Querelle du *Cid*” in Jessica N. Kamin, "Playwrights on the Threshold Between Stage and Study: Paratexts and Polemical Texts in Seventeenth Century French Theater" (dissertation, University of Washington, 2012), http://hdl.handle.net/1773/20540.

Cid [*The sentiments of the French Academy on the Tragicomedy* le Cid],[29] combined with the various pamphlet critiques of other playwrights, were enough to drive Corneille not only to issue revised versions of the play more in line with neoclassical rules (tellingly recategorized as a tragedy), but also to obey these rules scrupulously in all his subsequent dramatic works.[30] Through this early power struggle, the Academy established its dominance in theatrical matters: *it* would set the standards, *it* would enforce them, and the standards in question would be built upon an ancient (read: Aristotelian) foundation.

Even within this narrow and fairly unified set of criteria for what tragedy should be, however, there were factions and differences of opinion. The *salons*, the pioneers of this codifying movement, were informal, co-educational, and largely run by women, who wielded substantial cultural power through them as taste-makers despite barriers to their making direct and acknowledged contributions as playwrights or official censors. Their ideas, highly influential in the Parisian theater scene, were often adopted by official ministers of the state—most notably the absolutist minister Cardinal Richelieu and, later, Louis XIV—for the purpose of training young (male) artists in the proper execution of artworks. The process of codifying these unofficial cultural ideals into official French cultural products, however, always entailed some degree of change, and this change often centered around placing greater emphasis on the ancient contribution (competence in ancient languages being largely the domain of highly educated male government officials). Emerging out of the *salon* culture, the *Académie Française*, founded in 1634 on the orders of Cardinal Richelieu, took the aesthetic criteria already in circulation as exhibiting 'good taste' and raised them to the level of absolute commandments, placing an even greater emphasis on ancient models in the process. Whereas membership in the *salons* had been

[29]Chapelain, *Les sentiments de l'Académie Française sur la Tragi-Comédie du Cid*.
[30]See Pierre Corneille, *Corneille: théâtre complet* (Paris: Le Catalogue des Lettres, 1998).

composed of a mixture of individuals, some of whom had no training in classical languages (including most women), the Academy was made up exclusively of men with classical education, and its dedication to imitating the ancients in both form and (often) content was markedly stronger. These differences were a major contributing factor to the second famous dispute to rock French neoclassicism: the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* [Dispute of the Ancients and the Moderns].

This second dispute was in many ways an argument between the (formal, masculinized, erudite) Academy and its defenders and the (informal, feminized, less educated) *salons* and their defenders. In the process, this dispute figured the Academy as an institution that upheld the authority of ancient subjects and languages as well as ancient forms. Generally held to have begun in the 1680's with the publication of Charles Perrault's *Le siècle de Louis le Grand* [*The Century of Louis the Great*],[31] this debate ran hot throughout the 1690's and into the turn of the century, cooling somewhat but not completely dying out over the course of the eighteenth century. Though ultimately, the debate touched on a number of subjects in a variety of areas of life (science, technology, literature, art, religion, and gender roles, to name just a few), my area of interest is the part of the dispute surrounding literature generally and drama specifically. In brief, this dispute was over the continued utility of studying and recycling ancient subject matter. The 'Ancients'—that is, the defenders of the ancients[32]—argued for the supremacy of ancient Greek and Roman models and the value of imitating them, while the 'Moderns' rebelled against the idea that only those educated in ancient languages (that is, aristocratic men) were properly fit

[31]Charles Perrault, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* (Paris: J.B. Roguare, 1687). It should be noted, however, that the publication of this work is more likely to be evidence that the debate had already started than to be its starting point. For a work to be printed for public distribution, there must be some indication of a general interest in the topic already in existence.

[32]Throughout the remainder of this chapter, I refer to the 'Ancients' (capitalized) to mean the seventeenth-century defenders of ancient superiority and to 'the ancients' (lowercase) to indicate the Greek and Roman authors, of the second century C.E. and earlier, who were the objects of this defense.

to judge the value of art, claiming that the 'good taste' of modern France (a group expanded out to include aristocratic women and some middle-class men) was equal or superior to that of the ancients.[33] It was within the larger context of this debate that most adaptations of Greek tragedies were written.

Despite the seeming opposition between the positions of the two factions, much of the debate took as its starting premise the question of how France could best recreate the success of ancient Athens as a center of cultural refinement to which the whole world looked. As Sara Melzer so eloquently explores in her article "'Voluntary Subjection': France's Theory of Colonization/Culture in the Seventeenth Century,"[34] France, at this time, was on a mission to make itself the most magnetic culture in the world. The founding of the academies—and especially the *Académie Française*—was meant to promote and enhance the prestige of the French language and French culture, making France a model for others to imitate both in Europe and worldwide. This approach to cultural dominance, which Melzer calls alternately “soft colonization” and “voluntary subjection,” is in many ways an attempt to recreate the lasting cultural dominance of ancient Athens: though militarily conquered, first by Sparta and subsequently by Rome, Athens's cultural output remained so seductive that its conquerors continued to imitate and spread Athenian language, literature, and values long after the conquest. Though France certainly did not aspire to be conquered militarily (and indeed prided itself on its military dominance during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), it did aspire to be such a linguistic and social force that even those not directly under its political dominion would imitate

[33]For an in-depth look at this dispute and its discourses on both gender and education, see Elizabeth L. Berg, "Recognizing Differences: Perrault's Modernist Esthetic in *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes*," *Papers on French Seventeenth Century Literature* X, no. 18 (1983).
[34]Melzer, "'Voluntary Subjection': France's Theory of Colonization / Culture in the Seventeenth Century."

its customs—and ultimately, chose to put themselves under its political dominion, as well.[35] With this overarching national goal in mind, the Dispute of the Ancients and the Moderns was not necessarily a dispute over *whether* France should aspire to imitate the ancient Athenians, but rather *how* best to do so. The Ancients' position was basically that if Athenian culture had done it once, it could do it again; direct imitation of all that was best from antiquity (including, notably, its literatures and its restriction of public decision-making to the most highly educated men)[36] would turn France into Athens reborn. The Moderns' position held that what had made Athens so appealing was its dedication to fully expressing that which was Athenian—being true to its own national character. Therefore, the best way to successfully recreate its results was to express that which was most quintessentially French; writing new, French plots and creating new, French forms for literature, as well as extending jurisdiction over what constitutes 'good taste' to those who spoke only the vernacular (including most members of the *salons*).[37] This debate evinces the complexity and ambiguity of the French elite's relationship to ancient Greece. The very fact that such a dispute could exist—and garner so much attention—during this period testifies to the influence that reverence for 'the ancients' had in the powerful upper echelons and taste-makers of French society at this time.

Yet despite the official power wielded by the Ancients, despite the *Académie Française* and its prescriptions toward imitation of ancient literary forms, despite the fierce defense of ancient authors mounted by the Academy and its allies, when it came to the presentation of ancient tragedy on the stage a flourishing adaptive tradition—even among those who professed themselves defenders of 'the ancients'—gave the lie to a rhetoric predicated on the idea that the

[35]See Ibid.
[36]On the facet of this argument that attempts to restrict women's involvement in the public sphere, see Duggan, *Salonnières, Furies, and Fairies* and Berg, "Recognizing Differences."
[37]For an analysis of this argument, see Ibid.

ancients were superior, or even equal to, the French. Greek tragedy, when it made its way to the French stage, did so through several processes of change. Firstly, though all educated men could read and write Latin (Latin still being the language of international diplomacy and scholarship, although it was imminently to be replaced by French),[38] only a few of the highly educated could read Greek. Most Greek tragedy therefore passed through Latin translation before being read by its French adapters, and in some cases was translated from Greek to Latin to French (rather than straight from Greek to French) before being adapted by playwrights who read neither Latin nor Greek.[39] Once through these various processes of translation, tragedy, at a minimum, would have to be restaged, since the theatrical conventions were so different between the two performance contexts[40] and no record of the original Greek music or choreography existed. Scenery, costumes, and other visual elements would have to be reinvented, adapted to the conventions of the rectangular indoor theaters of modern France so different from the massive outdoor

[38]In 1714, French was used for the first time in a written peace treaty for the Treaty of Rastadt. See Treasure, *Seventeenth Century France*: 260.

[39]The first translation of *Iphigenia in Aulis* into Latin was done in 1506 by Erasmus; it was subsequently translated into French by both Thomas Sebillet and Jacques Amyot, both in the year 1549, then again in 1678 by Pierre Perrault. The first known translation of *Iphigenia in Tauris* into French was published by Nicolas de Malezieu in 1713. For an extensive look at the various versions and translations of the Iphigenia plays in circulation during this time, see Jean-Michel Gliksohn, *Iphigénie de la Grèce antique à l'Europe des Lumières* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1985). The translations listed above and in his work, however, are only the translations which were both published and survived long enough for us to know about them several centuries later. There were doubtless others in circulation both privately and publicly. Since it was not *de rigueur* for playwrights of the time to document the translation paths of the particular sources they consulted, we can only speculate on the translation trajectory that precedes any given adaptation—although such speculation has been done, and been done well, by Susanna Phillippo in her book *Hellenic Whispers: Modes of Greek Influence in Seventeenth-Century French Drama* (see Susanna Phillippo, *Hellenic Whispers: Modes of Greek Influence in Seventeenth-Century French Drama*, Medieval and Early Modern French Studies (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2013)). On the relative prevalence of Latin translation vs. education in Greek (and the resulting increase in probability that any given source will have passed through Latin), see "Chapter 5: Refugees and Publishers" in Robert Garland, *Surviving Greek Tragedy* (London: Duckworth, 2004).

[40]Such differences included the physical construction of theaters, costuming conventions, the use of masks, the composition of the audience, and the occasion of performance. For an excellent resource on the various aspects of production in the theater of fifth-century B.C.E. Athens, see P. E. Easterling, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). On the physical aspects of theatrical production in seventeenth-century C.E. France, see Peter D. Arnott, *An Introduction to the French Theatre* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977).

amphitheaters of ancient Greece.[41] The French actors, trained in an entirely different tradition and raised in a completely different culture, would certainly have interpreted and played their roles differently from their ancient Greek counterparts, not least because seventeenth century theater had long since dropped the use of masks and made the expressive human face a focal point of artistry in performance—a change that is bound to radically alter perceptions of character and emotion by audience and actors alike.[42] Yet despite the substantial opportunity for alteration presented by the processes of both translation and staging, Greek tragedy was virtually always subjected to an additional adaptive process in the form of a new and substantially altered playtext before it was deemed suitable for presentation before a public or even a court audience. The playwrights of this time did not merely transpose ancient playscripts in accordance with French language and staging conventions, they altered plots, added subplots, forced every script into a five-act structure, and did away with choruses entirely, replacing them with throngs of minor named characters who could serve as confidantes to the main ones. Moreover, the characterization of both protagonists and antagonists altered significantly, in most cases amounting to a wholesale Gallicization of the Greek characters, including conforming them to early modern ideas of Christian morality, theology, and 'natural' gender roles.

These changes become especially significant in light of the polarized terms of debate created by the Dispute of the Ancients and the Moderns. All of the playwrights I examine here

[41]On the physical construction of ancient Greek theaters, see Audrey Eunice Stanley, "Early Theatre Structures in Ancient Greece: A Survey of Archeological and Literary Records from the Minoan Period to 388 B.C." (Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1970). On the architectural design and constraints of early modern French theaters, see Arnott, *An Introduction to the French Theatre*.

[42]These differences form a fascinating subject in and of themselves, but lie outside the scope of my project here, which focuses primarily on textual forms of transformation. Luckily, other scholars have given this subject the attention it deserves. On the discomfort with masking traditions exhibited by most monotheistic cultures and the difference in acting styles necessitated by the wearing or discarding of masks, see David Wiles, "The Use of Masks in Modern Performances of Greek Drama," in *Dionysus Since 69: Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millenium*, ed. Edith Hall, Fiona Macintosh, and Amanda Wrigley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

have aligned themselves with the 'Ancients' merely by virtue of choosing to adapt Greek plays. Despite the rigidity of the Academy's rules on form, the subject matter of plays was a more open field, and adaptations of actual Greek dramas represented only a minority of new tragedies staged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[43] To choose a Greek subject, then, was to assert the continued value of Greek myth; yet to adapt it post-translation was to covertly point out its flaws, to point up what had to be changed in order to make it suitable for contemporary French audiences. The changes reveal this unacknowledged interplay of admiration and disgust, the whitewashing of those aspects of the cultural ancestor that do not fit with the 'natural order' as envisioned by a Christian Europe. As we will see, this whitewashing allows the 'Other-Self' to blend more easily into 'Self,' subtly hiding the fact that there is any kind of 'third term' in play at all.

It is to these alterations that I will turn in the discussions which follow, for it is in these that one can find the traces of what has been covered up in order to hide the threateningly high degree of cultural difference between Paris and Athens. In order to maintain the fiction that Paris *was* the new Athens, and that French culture was as powerful as Greek culture, these extraordinarily different cultural formations had to read as the same. The ancient Athenians, the cultural ancestors of the modern Parisians, had to appear unambiguously compatible with their distant descendants in every way if those descendants were to lay claim to the Athenian legacy of cultural dominance. Ironically, the French were to tout their similarity to the ancients via a process of *adaptive* change which erased any evidence of *cultural* change, ensuring that any version of a Greek tragedy staged in French, for a French-speaking audience, would be devoid of

[43]In his survey of French tragic output during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Geoffrey Brereton shows how Greek subjects competed for stage time with subjects drawn from Roman history, the Bible, medieval romances, French history, and popular novels—ultimately making up only a fraction of the total. See Geoffrey Brereton, *French Tragic Drama in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London: Methuen and Company, 1973).

that which was too Greek, too 'Other,' to be presented to the masses. In this way, neoclassical French tragedy could claim to play up the 'classical' and play down the 'neo' by in fact doing the opposite—suppressing elements which were truly classical and making that which was new appear timeless and universal. In this way, 'the ancients' could be marshaled in support of the cultural constructions of modern France, while simultaneously creating the illusion that those constructions were not modern at all, but truths as relevant to the ancient world as they were to the modern—and by extension, as relevant outside France as within it. Such illusory 'universals' formed the ideological foundation upon which much of European colonization—soft or otherwise—was built,[44] and helped to maintain the fictive binary by which the ancient Greeks could be wholly incorporated into the modern (cultivated, official) French 'Self' promoted by France's newly centralized absolutist government.

Racine's *Iphigénie*

Jean Racine, the most celebrated author of neoclassical French tragedy, was already in the process of being canonized in his own lifetime. His plays were presented at court and discussed in the *salons*; his scripts were both read and performed repeatedly in scholastic, public, and private contexts. Critics praised him, private diaries record excursions to see performances of his plays, and aristocratic patrons (including Louis XIV) saw to it that he received a salary for his writing even when budget shortages lowered the pay for other playwrights.[45]

In his own lifetime, *Iphigénie*, Racine's adaptation of the Iphigenia in Aulis story, was the playwright's most popular work.[46] It was first performed for the court at Versailles in an open-air

[44]On the role of universalism in the European colonial project, see Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power* (New York: New Press: Distributed by W.W. Norton, 2006).

[45]On Racine's continued pay, see Treasure, *Seventeenth Century France*: 482. For an informative series of studies on Racine's public and critical reception during his lifetime and shortly after his death, see Nicholas Cronk and Alain Viala, eds., *La réception de Racine à l'âge classique: de la scène au monument: études* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2005).

[46]On the status of *Iphigénie* as Racine's most popular work during his lifetime, see Phillippo, *Hellenic Whispers*,

performance in 1674 and was later revived to great success at the *Hôtel de Bourgogne*, one of the largest and most celebrated public theaters in Paris. Gaining international as well as local success, Racine's *Iphigénie* was subsequently translated into a number of other European languages,[47] and itself spawned several adaptations, three of which I will examine in the chapters that follow. Although in terms of his posthumous fame, *Iphigénie* has been eclipsed by others of Racine's works,[48] its extreme popularity in its own time ought to make us aware of the broad-based appeal of the Iphigenia in Aulis story in this particular adaptation at this precise historical moment. Examining the ways in which Racine adapted the story, then, gives us some clues as to what had to be altered about the Iphigenia in Aulis story in order to turn it into a popular success in late seventeenth-century Western Europe, pointing us toward what was likely considered unacceptable about ancient versions of the same.

Racine's major innovation, in his own opinion and others', was his inclusion of an "*autre Iphigénie*" [other Iphigenia], a second girl who is both the double and the opposite of the real Iphigenia.[49] Racine, however, staunchly on the side of the 'Ancients' in the Dispute of the Ancients and the Moderns, takes special care in his paratexts to disavow the novelty of this major change to Euripides's play, attempting to disguise what is new in his version by claiming it as old. Denying himself credit for this innovation, Racine claims instead to have 'found' (*trouver*) this second Iphigenia in the writings of "*Plusieurs auteurs*" [several authors] (by which he means

304; and John Cairncross, "Introduction to *Iphigenia*," in *Jean Racine: Iphigenia; Phaedra; Athaliah*, ed. John Cairncross (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), 33.

[47]These languages included Dutch, English, Italian, German, Russian, and Spanish, and made Racine's the most translated adaptation of the story after Euripides's own during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For a full list of the translations in question, see Gliksohn, *Iphigénie de la Grèce antique à l'Europe des Lumières*.

[48]Most notably *Phèdre* (1677). Jean Racine, "Phèdre," in *Oeuvres de Jean Racine*, ed. M. Luneau De Boisjermain, *Nabu Public Domain Reprints* (Paris: L'Imprimerie de Louis Cellot, 1768). On this play's rise in ascendency over *Iphigénie*, see Cairncross, "Introduction to *Iphigenia*."

[49]Jean Racine, "Préface de l'auteur à *Iphigénie*," in *Oeuvres de Jean Racine*, ed. M. Luneau De Boisjermain, *Nabu Public Domain Reprints* (Paris: L'Imprimerie de Louis Cellot, 1768), 26.

several *ancient* authors), of whom he mentions by name only Steisichorus, a lyric poet, and Pausanias, the author of an ancient travel guide.[50] This 'other' Iphigenia is given to be not the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, as she is in all surviving dramatic versions of the story,[51] but rather the daughter of Helen and Theseus. What Racine pointedly (and no doubt purposefully) fails to mention in this preface is that in all the recountings of this version found in ancient writings,[52] this daughter of Theseus and Helen is given to Clytemnestra to raise, and so comes to function in precisely the same way in the myth as she does when she is said to be the birth-daughter of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon. The "other Iphigenia" is thus, in the writings of the real 'ancients,' the *same* Iphigenia with an alternate parentage. Yet for Racine, who spends much of his preface professing himself a defender of the superiority of ancient authors,[53] the two versions open the door for him to split Iphigenia into two characters, allowing him to modify some of the more unsuitable elements which exist in Euripides's tragedy while *appearing* to exhibit the utmost fidelity to 'the ancients.'

The first of these unsuitable elements, acknowledged by Racine himself in his preface, is the miraculous *dénouement* in which Iphigenia, at the last second, is swapped for a deer by the goddess Artemis. As Racine writes,

> *Quelle apparence que j'eusse souillé la scene par le meurtre horrible d'une*

[50]Ibid., 24-26. This is a bit of a sleight-of-hand, as the Steisichorus reference is not extant. Rather, Pausanias himself cites Steisichorus as one of his own sources (Pausanias Ἑλλάδος περιήγησις [*Description of Greece*] 2.22.6, anthologized in David A. Campbell, ed. *Greek Lyric III: Stesichorus, Ibycus, Simonides, and Others*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991)). Racine is therefore taking one reference and dividing it out to two authors, in order to give himself more backup from 'the ancients.'

[51] This includes not only the two Iphigenia plays, but also the entire *Oresteia* of Aeschylus, Sophocles's *Electra*, and Euripides's *Electra* and *Orestes*. There is no reference to an alternate parentage of Iphigenia in any surviving Attic drama.

[52]These recountings include Pausanias (referenced above) and Antoninus Liberalis (13; *Metamorphoses* 27). See Ibid. and Antoninus Liberalis, "Collection of Metamorphoses," in *Anthology of Classical Myth: Primary Sources in Translation*, ed. Stephen M. Trzaskoma, R. Scott Smith, and Stephen Brunet (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004).

[53]See Racine, "Préface de l'auteur à *Iphigénie*," 27-31.

> *personne aussi vertueuse & aussi aimable qu'il falloit représenter Iphigénie? Et quelle apparence encore de dénouer ma tragédie par le secours d'une déesse & d'une machine, & par une métamorphose qui pouvoit bien trouver quelque créance du temps d'Euripide, mais qui seroit trop absurde & trop incroyable parmi nous?*
>
> [How would it have appeared if I had defiled the scene by the horrible murder of a person as virtuous and as loveable as it was necessary to represent Iphigenia? And how would it have appeared furthermore to end my tragedy with the help of a goddess and a machine, and with a metamorphosis which could well have found some credence in the time of Euripides, but which would be too absurd and too unbelievable among us?][54]

Two points are worth pulling out of this explanation. The most obvious, of course, is the comparison in which Racine finds the substitution unbelievable in his own day, while retroactively attributing credence of it to ancient audiences. Yet when one reads through Racine's own tragedy, one finds at least three instances of real prophecies,[55] in addition to an altered *dénouement* which avoids the deer substitution but which still includes a sudden thunderstorm (bringing with it the winds promised by the sacrifice), a self-lighting fire, and reports that one of the soldiers saw Diane (Artemis).[56] What, then, makes the substitution of a deer (and the accompanying removal of Iphigenia to Tauris) unacceptably unbelievable while prophecy,

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[54]Ibid., 25-26.

[55]These three instances are referenced in Act I, scene i; Act II, scene i; and Act V, scene vi. See Racine, "Iphigénie," in *Oeuvres de Jean Racine*, ed. M. Luneau De Boisjermain, *Nabu Public Domain Reprints* (Paris: L'Imprimerie de Louis Cellot, 1768), 41, 75, and 200-01. Because Racine's drama is not furnished with line numbers in most editions, yet exists in many versions, I will give both the page numbers from the particular edition I used and also act and scene numbers for all citations from this particular play.

[56]All of these phenomena are described in the final messenger speech in Act V, scene vi. See Ibid., 202-04. Interestingly, the Latin names of individual gods are frequently used in neoclassical French tragedy in place of the Greek ones, a remnant which testifies to the Greek texts' common path of reaching French by way of Latin.

visions, and divinely-inspired weather are not?

In order to answer this question, I will point to theological differences between fifth-century B.C.E. Athens and seventeenth-century France. While both had a concept of divine action affecting the affairs of humans, Greek myth frequently includes the direct intervention of specific gods into the events of the story—gods are constantly picking up humans and whisking them away; transforming them directly into plants, animals, and natural phenomena; and appearing to deliver their missives in person, especially at the end of plays.[57] Not only do the pagan gods of ancient Greece take an interventionist stance on human affairs, they also work at odds with one another, often taking opposite sides in conflicts.[58] In the tradition of Christian monotheism, however, God is presented as an invisible being who operates exclusively through intermediaries, including prophets (Moses, John the Baptist), visions of angels (like those experienced by Jacob and Mary), and the alteration of natural phenomena (the burning bush, the multiplication of loaves and fishes).[59] Looked at in this way, we can see that Racine has not removed the divine or supernatural elements as being 'unbelievable,' but rather has altered the behavior of Artemis to be in line with Christian conceptions of what the divine is and how it

[57]In fact, this occurs so regularly that there is a specific term for this phenomenon, ἀπὸ μηχανῆς θεός [god from the machine], which refers to the practice of suspending an actor dressed as a god above the action of the play by means of a crane. Even today, this phrase is still in common parlance in its Latin form, *deus ex machina*.

[58] The most famous example of this is to be found in Euripides's *Ἱππόλυτος* [*Hippolytus*], in which the title character's pious dedication to Artemis and his accompanying vow of chastity angers Aphrodite, whom he has scorned by this action. See Euripides, "Hippolytus" in *Euripides II: Children of Heracles, Hippolytus, Andromache, Hecuba*, ed. David Kovacs (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[59]On Moses, see the entire biblical book of Exodus; on John the Baptist, see Matthew 3, Mark 1, and Luke 3; on the vision of Jacob, see Genesis 32; on the vision of Mary, see Luke 1; on the burning bush, see Exodus 3; and on the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, see Matthew 14.13-21. Readers interested in the topic of biblical interpretation among the French humanists (a group to which all the playwrights examined here could reasonably be said to belong) are encouraged to see Erika Rummel, ed. *Biblical Humanism and Scholasticism in the Age of Erasmus*, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Leiden, the Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2008).

operates.[60] In Racine, she is welcome to speak so long as she does so through human voices;[61] she may appear, but only as a vision, not an actor;[62] and while she may control the weather and the fire, she may not directly transport humans and animals to different locations. Moreover, references to Artemis or to other individual Greek deities are significantly diminished in Racine; in their place come a flood of references to "*les Dieux*" **[**the gods] collectively, and even more to "*le Ciel*" **[**the sky/Heaven], tacitly covering up any possibility of disagreement between individual gods and indeed hiding any evidence of their individuality.[63] Thus, while Racine's *Iphigénie* nominally has a polytheistic setting, the net effect of all these references is to paint a picture of a unified divine will—the gods all work in tandem with one another, making their collective wishes known through the operations of a just (and heavily Christian) 'Heaven.'[64]

Fundamental differences in beliefs about the divine and its relationship to the human are reduced to mere aesthetic differences by this Christianization of the pagan gods. While the

[60]In the Biblical story of Abraham and Isaac, for example, which has many parallels with the sacrifice of Iphigenia, God speaks to Abraham through messengers (angels) but not directly, and causes a ram to wander into Abraham's path rather than enacting a direct substitution for Isaac. See Genesis 22:1-19.

[61]In this case, Calchas, who is reported to speak both prophesies as if directly transmitting the words of the goddess. See Act I, scene i and Act V, scene vi in Racine, "Iphigénie," 41, 200-01.

[62]This particular change is subtly executed through the replacement of a sacrifice in which "πᾶς τις" [everyone] saw the miracle (Euripides *Iphigenia in Aulis* line 1582) with one in which "*Le soldat étonné dit que, dans une nue, / Jusques sur le bûcher Diane est descendue*" [The soldier said that, in a cloud, / Diane descended as far as the pyre] (Act V, scene vi in Racine, "Iphigénie," 203). The subtle change between everyone seeing the miracle and one individual saying he saw it functionally changes Artemis from a real presence to a vision.

[63]The word "*Dieux*" [gods] appears roughly seventy times in the play, while only three individual gods are referred to by name (Diane, Jupiter, and Thetis). The Greek text, conversely, makes reference to sixteen individual gods—not counting references to named rivers, which are also the names of their respective river gods, or to gods whose names double as concepts (fate, victory, etc.)—and to three specific god groups: the Muses, the Nereids, and nymphs. All of these references are dropped except where the god in question has a direct bearing on the plot (Thetis and Zeus/Jupiter being ancestors of characters in the play while Artemis/Diane demands the sacrifice). "*Ciel*" [Heaven] likewise is referenced thirty-seven times in Racine despite meriting a grand total of one reference in Euripides (αἰθὴρ [the upper air], Euripides *Iphigenia in Aulis* line 365). Racine shares this tendency with both of the other French playwrights discussed in this chapter—in no instance does a French playwright retain all the mentions of individual gods found in Euripides, and in every instance references to "the gods" collectively and "Heaven" are added.

[64]It is worth noting that Racine was not only writing in a Christian society, but was himself a devout Jansenist—a reform branch of the Catholic church particularly active in France at this time. For a history of the Jansenist movement, its religious dogma, and its political significance, see Treasure, *Seventeenth Century France*.

Greeks inhabited a world where a series of capricious and demanding gods, often at odds with one another, could directly touch and shape human life, the Christian French inhabit and portray a world where the interpretation or misinterpretation of the (one) divine will as conveyed through signs is the fundamental concern of human religion. Racine's version of the Iphigenia in Aulis story, reflecting this altered conception of the divine, not only does away with direct intervention and true polytheism, but also makes misinterpretation of Artemis's will the central lynchpin of his plot: while the Greek oracle was never in doubt, confusion over which of the two Iphigenias the French oracle calls for drives the whole action of Racine's *Iphigénie*. In truth, the use of the "other Iphigenia" allows Racine to avoid too pagan a representation not merely by obviating the miraculous deer substitution, but more fundamentally by turning the play's central problem into a recognizably Christian one concerned with the correct interpretation of an obliquely delivered divine command.

The second major point of interest in Racine's own explanation of the "other Iphigenia" is that he felt it "necessary" to represent Iphigenia as "virtuous" and "loveable." Why? Why must Iphigenia be virtuous and lovable? And how does this characterization of her differ from Euripides's?

A search for the answers to these questions leads us to a plethora of tensions between the Greek and French dramatic traditions. Following Aristotle, the theorists of French dramatic form held that the aim of tragedy was to excite in its audience the emotions of pity and fear.[65] Writing about characterization in this context, La Mesnardière, the first French dramatic theorist to write an extensive treatise on Aristotle's *Poetics*, held that the heroes of tragedy had to be virtuous in order to be pitied—otherwise, the trials they faced would seem deserved and not excite the

[65]See Aristotle *Poetics* XIII, La Mesnardière, *La Poëtique*., and d'Aubignac, *La Pratique du Théâtre*.

proper emotional response in the audience.[66] Racine takes it as a given that Iphigenia should be virtuous, and since he was writing in a tradition shaped by La Mesnardière and others, it is easy to see why. If the audience is to pity Iphigenia, she must seem a virtuous maiden unfairly doomed to die. The tension of this apparent injustice drives the plot, while the revelation at the end makes clear that the guilty Eriphyle (the cover name for the "other Iphigenia"), not the innocent Iphigenia, is the one whose blood is demanded by 'the gods,' thereby allowing the play as a whole to excite pity without besmirching the divine will.

This delicate balancing act is executed within a number of 'givens' which are specific to seventeenth-century France and alien to ancient Athens. The idea that only the guilty are fit for sacrifice—or rather, for death, sacrifice not being a part of seventeenth-century French customs—while the innocent are not reflects both sacred and secular elements of France's (officially Catholic) culture, while being a diametric opposite to ancient Greek views on sacrifice. Religiously, Christianity builds upon the Biblical philosophy that "the wages of sin is death"[67] to create a theological worldview predicated on the idea that the wicked are punished and the virtuous rewarded—death and life being the ultimate expressions of the respective stick and carrot. Though in this case the death and life in question are literal, Biblically they are often figurative, as in the case of the eternal (after)life promised to believers in Heaven.[68] Literal life and death work in the same fashion, however. Death is often prescribed as a punishment for wickedness in the Bible, as in the commandment to execute adulterers,[69] whereas the continuation of life is frequently depicted as a reward for virtuous behavior (as in the sparing of

[66]La Mesnardière, *La Poëtique*. These sentiments are noted numerous times, but readers are referred especially "*Chapitre IV: Les Parties de la Tragedie, appellées de Qualité.*"
[67]Romans 6:23. This English phrase comes from the King James Bible (1611). This phrase appears in the Louis Segond French Bible as "*le salaire du péché, c'est la mort*" (Epître de Paul aux Romains 6:23), a translation which could hardly be closer to the English phrase quoted above.
[68]Also referenced in Romans 6:23, among others.
[69]Leviticus 20:10.

both Noah and Lot from the destruction of their respective wicked societies).[70] Religiously, the idea that death is the proper response to guilt and life the proper reward for virtue is habitually reinforced in scripture, and in an era when church and state were not even remotely separate, France's Catholic government also reinforced this pattern through its laws. The secular expression of this same philosophy was found in the use of capital punishment by the state, which enforced the law through the frequent—and often gruesome—public execution of criminals.[71] As Sarah Covington has argued, the practices of both public execution and mutilative punishments for crimes were intended to serve as visible evidence of criminality and guilt—if a person suffered bodily harm in the public eye, it was to mark them as guilty and therefore deserving of the torments they suffered.[72] Thus, while seventeenth-century France did not practice human sacrifice *per se*, the act of killing a human being in public was not unknown and had specific associations with guilt in the judicial sense of the term. That guilty Eriphyle should die at the end of the play is therefore in line with a French sense of justice, both divine and legal, and thus does not upset their cultural norms in the way that a divine demand on the innocent Iphigenia's life would.

While the ancient Greeks also did not actually practice human sacrifice,[73] they did

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[70]For the story of Noah's survival when God flooded the earth, see Genesis 6:5-8:22. For the story of Lot's survival when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, see Genesis 19:1-29.

[71]Katherine Ibbett examines the relationship between public executions and theatrical practices during this time in her study on politics and the roots of neoclassical theatrical conventions. See Katherine Ibbett, *The Style of the State in French Theater, 1630-1660: Neoclassicism and Government* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2009).

[72]Sarah Covington, "'Law's Bloody Inflictions': Judicial Wounding and Resistance in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Structures of Feeling in Seventeenth-Century Cultural Expression*, ed. Susan McClary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013). Although this particular article takes England as its case study, many of the beliefs and practices associated with public execution were held in common on both sides of the channel. In fact, as late as the eighteenth century, France was known for staging some of the most heinous and controversial public executions, including that of Robert-François Damiens, whose execution by drawing and quartering in the mid-eighteenth century sparked a significant debate over the morality of continuing to treat even criminals with such cruelty. On this debate and the explicit links drawn between capital punishment and human sacrifice during the Enlightenment, see Derek Hughes, *Culture and Sacrifice: Ritual Death in Literature and Opera* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[73]At least by the fifth century B.C.E.—there is a great deal of speculation and disagreement among scholars on

religiously practice the sacrifice of animals, and included this as part of the opening rituals for the theatrical festivals in which Euripides's play would have been presented.[74] In these animal sacrifices, the animal in question is a gift for a given deity, and as such must be pure and unblemished—to offer anything less than the best would be to insult the god one is attempting to honor.[75] In fact, in some versions of the Iphigenia in Aulis story (including its recap as it appears in Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris*) Iphigenia's sacrifice is demanded specifically because her father Agamemnon, being a pious man, promised Artemis a gift of the "κάλλιστον" **[**loveliest thing] his land produced during the year of her birth.[76] The idea that the sacrificial victim should be guilty or impure,[77] then, could not be more oppositional to the ancient Greek context of the sources on which Racine draws to create his adaptation; for them, it is Iphigenia's virtue which makes her *suitable* for sacrifice, not the other way around. The fundamental conflict in the Greek context, then, is over whether Agamemnon can bear to offer that which is most precious to him in trade for the conquest of Troy. Even when the miraculous deer substitution of the ending is taken into account, the ancient Greek Artemis *still takes Iphigenia* to be her living priestess if not

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whether human sacrifice was practiced in Greece's prehistory. For a thorough presentation of the debate and the evidence for and against, see Dennis D. Hughes, Human Sacrifice in Ancient Greece, (New York: Routledge, 1991), http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=FSnxxida5D0C&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=greek+sacrificial+practice&ots=SGCrTE8uaT&sig=PH7oolRIR3BTZ_4c0UPoeXu9lGA#v=onepage&q=greek%20sacrificial%20practice&f=false.

[74]For resources on animal sacrifice as a part of dramatic production in ancient Athens, see T. B. L. Webster, *Greek theatre production* (London: Methuen, 1956); Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge, John Gould, and David M. Lewis, *The dramatic festivals of Athens* (London: Oxford U.P., 1968); and Ruby Blondell et al., "Introduction," in *Women on the Edge: Four Plays by Euripides,* ed. Ruby Blondell, et al. (New York and London: Routledge, 1999).

[75]On the importance of this rule to the House of Atreus series of myths in particular (to which both Iphigenia myths belong), see Froma I. Zeitlin, "The Motif of the Corrupted Sacrifice in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 96(1965).

[76]Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* line 21. See Euripides, "Iphigenia Among the Taurians," in *Euripides IV: Trojan Women, Iphigenia Among the Taurians, Ion*, ed. David Kovacs, *Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

[77]There is a link in the Greek tradition between guilt and impurity—those who commit crimes (the guilty in the judicial sense) are held to be polluted by their act, and are considered to defile those with whom they come into contact. For a full treatment of this topic, see Robert Parker, *Miasma: Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

her burnt offering—the ancient Agamemnon always loses his daughter in this trade, whereas the modern Agamemnon always retains her.[78] In the French context, the conflict centers around belief or disbelief of the oracle demanding Iphigenia: it is a test of faith[79] rather than a proposed trade. Relations between the human and the divine in the ancient context are founded on reciprocity: 'I give you, you give me.' In the modern context, such relations are founded on obedience: humans, having faith that the divine will is ultimately just, should obey even when they can't see the big picture—all will eventually be revealed as perfectly in line with unalterable patterns of good and evil, innocence and guilt, reward and punishment.

The need for Racine's innovation in the form of Eriphyle is thus a direct product of the religious shift in cultural context from ancient Greece to seventeenth-century France. Moreover, the separation of the two Iphigenias is demanded by a further cultural schism between ancient Greece and modern France: their respective views on the concept of female virginity. Since both cultures acknowledged bilateral kinship structures and practiced the patrilineal inheritance of property, knowledge of paternity—and thus, control of female sexuality—was an important concern in both contexts.[80] In order to be certain about paternity in a time before such things could be tested genetically, each woman of childbearing age had to be restricted to exactly one male sexual partner: fewer, and she would produce no children; more, and the paternity of her children would be unknown. Women in this shared cultural context thus walk the knife's edge

[78]My use of the word “always” in this construction refers to the fact that this pattern is consistent across all known works for these two time periods, not just the plays of Euripides and Racine. For the ancient works, see “Chapter One: Iphigenia in Transit” above; for the modern works, see chapters three and four below.

[79]Such tests of faith are common in the Judeo-Christian context, and include both the sacrifice of Isaac referenced above and the entire book of Job.

[80]On kinship structures, the economics of kinship, and marriage practices in ancient Greece, see Beryl Rawson, ed. *A companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011). For an exploration of the same in early modern Western Europe, see David Warren Sabean, Simon Teuscher, and Jon Mathieu, eds., *Kinship in Europe: Approaches to Long-Term Developments (1300-1900)* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007).

between being too accessible and too inaccessible to men, and both extremes provide their fair share of negatively inflected cultural stereotypes.[81] Such stereotypes are employed as shaming mechanisms to encourage women to stay on the knife's edge, and—regardless of their real-life effectiveness[82]—the proper deployment of these mechanisms in fiction has been a major node of cultural anxiety for both ancient and modern dramatic critics, who are concerned that theatrical representation encourage the 'right' type of behavior in women spectators.[83] Yet despite these many commonalities, the specific stereotypes and beliefs surrounding this particular node of cultural anxiety differed greatly between the two contexts—ideas about the 'correct' depiction of female sexuality thus differing as well. The most flagrant difference, in this case, concerns which side of the knife's edge women were considered most likely to fall off: in ancient Greece, women

[81]These can be seen in our own culture in the dual phenomena of slut-shaming and the image of the frigid, man-hating feminist (who is frequently portrayed as a lesbian). For some explorations of these phenomena, see Rosalind Gill and Christina Scharff, eds., *New Femininities: Postfeminism, Neoliberalism, and Subjectivity* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); and Kristin J. Anderson, *Modern Misogyny: Anti-Feminism in a Post-Feminist Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). In early modern Western Europe, these phenomena had their rough equivalents in the whore and the coy beloved, who was frequently described as 'cruel' to the pining (male) lover on account of her reticence. See James Turner, ed. *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe: Institutions, Texts, Images* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Among the ancient Greeks, the adulterous wife and the independent, masculinized sworn virgin filled these roles. See Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975). For a generalized exploration of social stigmas surrounding female sexuality, see Edwin M. Schur, ed. *Labeling Women Deviant: Gender, Stigma, and Social Control* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984).

[82]Numerous studies take as their subject the gap between representation and reality on this and other issues. My concern here is with pure representation and the construction of ideas in the abstract, so I do not offer any historical data on the actual restrictions on or deployment of female sexuality in these periods. Readers interested in these topics are encouraged to consult Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves* on what we can reconstruct of sexual realities in ancient Greece; Matthew Gerber, *Bastards: Politics, Family, and Law in Early Modern France* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) on illegitimacy as evidence of illicit sexual behavior in early modern France; and John C. Fout, *Forbidden History: The State, Society, and the Regulation of Sexuality in Modern Europe: Essays from the Journal of the History of Sexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) for a look at the disparities between ideology and reality in the context of modern Europe more generally.

[83]See, for example, the accusations of misogyny leveled against Euripides in the ancient context because he made his female characters guilty of adultery (explored in Blondell et al., "Introduction," 80-83) and the critical discussions in France on *vraisemblance* which held that depictions of immodesty in females were unbelievable (see for example La Mesnardière, *La Poëtique*: 123-24). Additionally, for a look at concerns surrounding representations of female sexual behavior in the English context, see Jean I. Marsden, *Fatal Desire: Women, Sexuality, and the English Stage, 1660-1720* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006).

were considered the lustful sex, and were apt to practice indiscriminate sex with anyone if you let them;[84] while in early modern Western Europe, women were considered to be the 'passive' sex, needing to be wooed, lured, or cajoled into having sex with men.[85] As a result of this difference, female virgins of childbearing age—falling outside of the shared ideal for women's sexual behavior on the side of 'too few men'—invoked opposite impressions of their gendered identity and attributes. In a context where women were considered 'naturally' inclined toward sex (Greece), female virginity was a break with femininity and a denial of one's properly feminine nature. Greek virgins are therefore depicted as having qualities and concerns traditionally coded 'masculine' rather than 'feminine.'[86] In a context where female sexuality was dominantly depicted as characterized by passivity and inertia, conversely, the female virgin came to symbolize the embodiment of femininity: having been born a virgin, the passive woman remains in that state indefinitely unless acted upon by an outside force. The preservation of virginity in early modern Europe is therefore an inherently feminine act rather than a denial of femininity. Western European traditions hold up the female virgin as the most pure, innocent, and proper example of

[84]Numerous scholars of gender in the ancient world have analyzed this belief. Among others, see Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*; Froma I. Zeitlin, *Playing the Other: Gender and Society in Classical Greek Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Laura McClure, *Spoken Like a Woman: Speech and Gender in Athenian Drama* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); and Helene P. Foley, *Female Acts in Greek Tragedy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[85]Unlike its later and more famous manifestation in the nineteenth century, in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries this line of thinking did not necessarily imply that women didn't *enjoy* sex—rather, the belief in the fundamental *passivity* of female sexuality held that they wouldn't seek it out unless acted upon by an outside force. Even among those writers who attributed a natural lust to women, it was treated as a given that this natural lust must be awakened or kindled by some external catalyst, be it a man, a novel about love, or the passionate music of opera. For an analysis of several examples of this phenomenon, see “Chapter 4: Boileau and Perrault: The Public Sphere and Female Folly” in Duggan, *Salonnières, Furies, and Fairies*. For an exploration of this phenomenon as it was formulated during the Renaissance, see Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth, eds., *Renaissance Discourses of Desire* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993). For its subsequent mutation into beliefs about female frigidity and downright distaste for sex, see P. M. Cryle and Alison Moore, *Frigidity: An Intellectual History* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[86]See, for example, the discussion of virgin goddesses as the divine patrons of occupations typically reserved for men (such as war, justice, and hunting) in Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*: 8.

femaleness, with the religious image of the Virgin Mary as the crowning example.[87]

Writing in this context, then, Racine had another reason to represent Iphigenia as 'virtuous and loveable.' Starting from his inherited datum (Iphigenia is a παρθένος [unmarried woman / virgin]),[88] Racine inflected this point with his own culture's interpretation of it: Iphigenia = virgin = epitome of proper femininity = virtuous/right/good/praiseworthy = loveable.[89] In order to enact this cultural spin, however, he was compelled to change Iphigenia's character in ways designed to make her more 'feminine' in opposition to her Greek counterpart. Most notably, he changes Iphigenia's underlying motivation for agreeing to be sacrificed at Aulis. In Euripides's version, Iphigenia gives the play its most famous speech when she agrees to go willingly to the sacrifice; not for feminine reasons relating to home and family, but out of a desire for glory and martial honor which explicitly codes her as masculine:

> οἶα δ' εἰσῆλθέν μ', ἄκουσον, μῆτερ, ἐννοουμένην· κατθανεῖν μέν μοι δέδοκται·
> τοῦτο δ' αὐτὸ βούλομαι εὐκλεῶς πρᾶξαι, παρεῖσά γ' ἐκποδὼν τὸ δυσγενές. δεῦρο
> δὴ σκέψαι μεθ' ἡμῶν, μῆτερ, ὡς καλῶς λέγω· εἰς ἔμ' Ἑλλὰς ἡ μεγίστη πᾶσα νῦν
> ἀποβλέπει, κἀν ἐμοὶ πορθμός τε ναῶν καὶ Φρυγῶν κατασκαφαί, τάς γε μελλούσας

[87]On both the influence of the Virgin Mary and the twelfth-century transformation of the image of the virgin from fundamentally masculine to fundamentally feminine, see Anke Bernau, *Virgins: A Cultural History* (London: Granta, 2007).

[88]For some sources on attitudes toward virginity in seventeenth-century Western Europe, see Ibid.; Maud Burnett McInerney, *Eloquent Virgins from Thecla to Joan of Arc* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); and Marie H. Loughlin, *Hymeneutics: Interpreting Virginity on the Early Modern Stage* (Lewisburg, London, and Cranbury, NJ: Bucknell University Press; Associated University Presses, 1997).

[89]Notably, this same logic dictates that her guilty opposite, Eriphyle, must not be. And indeed, there are strong hints in the play that Eriphyle is not a virgin: in her speech to her confidante confessing her love for Achilles, she makes reference to "*les cruelles mains, par qui je fus ravie*" [the cruel hands by which I was ravished/abducted] and to "*me voyant presser d'un bras ensanglanté*" [seeing myself pressed by a bloody arm] (Racine, "Iphigénie," 80, Act II, scene I). While neither image is conclusive on the subject of Eriphyle's possible rape by Achilles, they are suggestive enough in the context of a speech about sexual desire to mark her as 'impure' by a standard in which virginity is characterized not only by lack of sexual experience, but also by maintaining a decorous mental distance from physical sexuality (on early modern depictions of the loss of virginity through impure thought, see Bernau, *Virgins: A Cultural History*). Iphigenia, although also in love with Achilles, limits her protestations of love to talk about marriage, duty, and the well-being of her beloved, in opposition to Eriphyle's carnal focus on body parts.

γυναῖκας μή τι δρῶσι βάρβαροι μηκέθ' ἁρπάζειν ἐᾶν τὰς ὀλβίας ἐξ Ἑλλὰδος, τὸν Ἑλένης τείσαντας ὄλεθρον, ἣν ἀνήρπασεν Πάρις. ταῦτα πάντα κατθανοῦσα ῥύσομαι, καί μου κλέος, Ἑλλάδ' ὡς ἠλευθέρωσα, μακάριον γενήσεται. . . . θύετ', ἐκπορθεῖτε Τροίαν· ταῦτα γὰρ μνημεῖά μου διὰ μακροῦ καὶ παῖδες οὗτοι καὶ γάμοι καὶ δόξ' ἐμή.

[Hear, mother, such things as came to me while ruminating: since it is given to me to die; I want to do this with renown, having indeed moved out of my way that which is low-minded. Consider that I speak well here between us, mother; toward me all of Greece the majestic now turns its gaze, and in my ferry [in my care] both the ships and the sacking of the Phrygians, that the barbarians may no longer do some great thing in thinking to steal women from prosperous Greece, having paid with ruin for Helen, whom Paris carried off. All of these things I will draw to myself in dying, and my renown, in having set Greece free, will become blessed. . . . Sacrifice, pillage Troy; for these things will long be my monument and these my children, my marriages, and my glory.][90]

To the ancient Greeks, who dictated that women should keep indoors and not be exposed to public view while specifically mandating their male citizens' participation in both public forums and war,[91] all of the triumphant desires expressed by Iphigenia in this speech are coded 'masculine'—her visibility before “all of Greece,” her personal power over the fate of the army, her bloodlust for the sacking of Troy, her desire for “glory” and “renown,” and her willingness to die in the cause of war. And indeed, much of this coding carries over to the French context,

[90]Euripides *Iphigenia in Aulis* lines 1374-99.

[91]For a study that focuses especially on this separation of gendered spheres as it relates to tragedy, see Zeitlin, *Playing the Other*.

where Racine swaps this speech for several in which Iphigenia professes her willingness to die out of filial duty instead. Speaking to Agamemnon for the first time since learning about the sacrifice, Iphigenia begins with the following lines:

Mon pere!

Cessez de vûus trûubler; vûus n'êtes pûint trahi.

Quand vous commanderez, vous serez obéi.

Ma vie est votre bien. Vous voulez le reprendre.

Vos ordres, sans détours, pouvoient se faire entendre.

D'un oeil aussi content, d'un coeur aussi soumis

Que j'acceptois l'époux que vous m'aviez promis,

Je sçaurai, s'il le faut, victime obéissante,

Tendre au fer de Calchas une tête innocente,

Et, respectant le coup par vous-même ordonné,

Vous rendre tout le sang que vous m'avez donné.

[My father!

Cease troubling yourself; you are not betrayed.

When you command, you will be obeyed.

My life is your property. You wish to take it back.

Your orders, without delay, could make themselves understood.

With an eye as pleased, with a heart as submissive

As when I accepted the spouse that you had promised me,

I will be capable, if it is necessary, obedient victim,

Of tendering to the sword of Calchas an innocent head,

And, respecting the blow ordered by you yourself,

Of rendering you all the blood which you have given me.][92]

For Racine's Iphigenia, war, glory, and Greek honor are matters of total indifference and barely worth a mention. The vast majority of her speeches, like that given above, frame her willingness instead as relating to the debt of life she owes to her father, and hence are driven by the markedly feminine virtue of domestic obedience to the male head-of-household. In the speech which comes closest to appropriating the concerns of the Euripidean Iphigenia, the Racinian Iphigenia does say that she is willing to die so that *Achilles* may win glory on the battlefield at Troy,[93] thus displacing a masculinized desire for her own war glory onto a male loved one, transforming her desire into a properly feminine concern for the well-being of family members.[94] In this way, the 'public' concerns of the masculinized Greek Iphigenia are replaced by properly feminine 'domestic' concerns of home and family, reflecting the gendered separation of the spheres common to both cultures while simultaneously masking their different portrayals of female virgins' gendered identities.

This change, too, has a religious dimension. In the new, Christian association of female virgins with the Marian tradition,[95] the female virgin through her definitional purity is closer to God. Religious virginity, especially in Catholic contexts like that of seventeenth century France,

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[92]Racine, "Iphigénie," 145-46. This speech appears in Act IV, scene iv.

[93]Ibid., 182-84. This speech appears in Act V, scene ii.

[94]While Achilles, in Euripides, is neither a loved one nor a family member to Iphigenia, Racine makes them (chaste) lovers who had been betrothed before the action of the play even starts. As with most other Racinian changes, this is a modern twist for which the author can claim ancient precedent—he has merely made the fictive betrothal of the ancient sources into a sincere one. For ancient sources on the false marriage to Achilles, see my discussion in “Chapter One: Iphigenia in Transit” above.

[95]In addition to the references on virginity given above, for the connection of virginity with the religious and moral traditions of Christian Europe see Laurence Lux-Sterritt and Carmen M. Mangion, eds., *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality: Women and the Roman Catholic Church in Britain and Europe, 1200-1900* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Laurence Lux-Sterritt, *Redefining Female Religious Life: French Ursulines and English Ladies in Seventeenth-Century Catholicism* (Aldershot, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); and Lieselotte Steinbrügge, *The Moral Sex: Woman's Nature in the French Enlightenment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

allows an individual to more closely imitate the semi-divine figures of Mary and Jesus, who counted virginity among their many other virtues of goodness, wisdom, charity, humility, and self-sacrifice.[96] While celibacy in the Catholic tradition is praised in both sexes, virginity (total inexperience) as distinct from celibacy (abstinence) is marked out for special comment and commendation in the case of women, for whom it constitutes a privileged identity—hence the common references to 'The Virgin Mary' and virtually none to 'The Virgin Jesus.' For a woman in this religious tradition, to bear the title of 'virgin' is to declare oneself obedient to a divine plan that assigns sexual passivity to females; God, in His divine wisdom, created the separation of the sexes and attributed different characteristics 'naturally' to each. By her virginity, a woman aligns herself with the chastity and modesty proper or 'naturally' adhering to her femaleness. Both an imitation of Mary and the most perfect expression of one of woman's 'natural' characteristics (sexual passivity), it follows that the female virgin—at least as she is fictionally represented—must exhibit other Marian and God-given female virtues: kindness, obedience, and nurture of the family among them.

True to form, Racine's Iphigenia does exhibit all of these characteristics, alongside the noble impulse of self-sacrifice. Unlike Euripides's Iphigenia, who initially begs to be spared[97] before ultimately acquiescing to the sacrifice,[98] Racine's Iphigenia professes her willingness and obedience from her very first speech on the topic.[99] In every part of the play, including the statements analyzed above, she makes family the centerpiece of her motivation—even when she professes her love for Achilles, she is careful to stipulate that this love is partly born out of obedience to the parental will: *"Sa gloire, son amour, mon pere, mon devoir, / Lui donnent sur*

[96]On the influence of Mary and Jesus on Christian perceptions of virginity, see Bernau, *Virgins: A Cultural History*.
[97]Euripides *Iphigenia in Aulis* lines 1211-52.
[98]Ibid. lines 1374-99 (quoted above).
[99]Act IV, scene iv of Racine, "Iphigénie," 145-46. (quoted above).

mon ame un trop juste pouvoir" [His glory, his love, my father, my duty / Give him too just a power over my soul].[100] In addition to these domestic virtues, she is repeatedly referred to as showing kindness to her enemy, Eriphyle. When we first meet Eriphyle, her confidante Doris (one of the many minor characters who replace the chorus) says to her: "*Maintenant tout vous rit; l'aimable Iphigénie / D'une amitié sincere avec v□us est unie*" [Now all laugh with you; the loveable Iphigenia / Is united to you by a sincere friendship],[101] and toward the end of the play, upon Eriphyle's death, we are told that "*La seule Iphigénie, / Dans ce commun bonheur, pleure son ennemie.*" [Only Iphigenia, / In this collective joy, weeps for her enemy].[102] Such an effusion of Christian charity well becomes a virgin in the Marian tradition, and lines up nicely with her obedience, domesticity, and nobility to create a picture of a character both "virtuous" and "loveable" by seventeenth-century French standards.

Not only does Racine's Iphigenia merely exhibit all these maidenly virtues, she takes them to extremes. Her commitment to obedience is so absolute that both Clytemnestra and Achilles at various moments in the play must appeal to it in order to try to talk her *out* of being obedient to Agamemnon.[103] This brief exchange between Iphigenia and Achilles, just after he has asked her to run away with him to escape death, is telling:

IPHIGÉNIE

Qui? Moi! Que, contre un pere osant me révolter,

Je mérite la mort que j'irois éviter!

Où seroit le respect, & ce devoir suprême . . . ?

ACHILLE

[100]Ibid., 34. Act II, scene iii.
[101]Ibid., 74. Act II, scene i.
[102]Ibid., 204. Act V, scene vi.
[103]Ibid., 159. (Act IV, scene iv) and Ibid., 185. (Act V, scene ii).

Vous suivrez un époux avoué par lui-même.

C'est un titre qu'en vain il prétend me voler.

Ne fait-il des serments que pour les violer?

Vous-même, que retient un devoir si sévere,

Quand il vous donne à moi, n'est-il point votre pere?

Suivez-vous seulement ses ordres absolus,

Quand il cesse de l'être, & ne vous connoît plus?

[IPHIGENIA

Who? Me! That, daring to revolt against a father,

Would merit the death that I went to evade!

Where would be the respect, and this supreme duty . . . ?

ACHILLES

You will be following a spouse avowed by he himself.

This is a title which he in vain attempts to rob me of.

Did he only make these vows in order to violate them?

You yourself, who keep to a duty so severe,

When he gave you to me, was he not your father?

Do you only follow his absolute orders

When he ceases to be so, and no longer knows you?][104]

Having already tried every other means at his disposal to keep Iphigenia from throwing her life away in obedience to Agamemnon's commands, Achilles must finally appeal to his own authority *as conferred by Agamemnon* to try and sway her into obeying him instead. Iphigenia is almost

[104]Ibid., 71-72. Act V, scene ii.

comically obedient and dedicated to family values, in addition to being the soul of kindness. In short, Racine's Iphigenia delivers the ultimate expression of femininity promised—in the Christian French context—by her identity as a female virgin, in line with 'nature' and the will of God. Gone is the masculinized, martial virgin of ancient Greece, the thinly veiled stand-in for the heroic soldier; in her place is the dutiful daughter, the sweet and innocent victim who forgives those who persecute her. No foreign, Greek conceptions of gender are allowed, here, to upset the neat French divisions of feminine/masculine, domestic/public, or obedient/dominant.

Racine's play made a number of other alterations to the Greek script: diminishing the role of Menelaus, expanding the role of Achilles and making him the lover[105] of Iphigenia, and adding Odysseus/Ulysses to the play, to name just a few. But the thing that he became known for, the thing that his later adaptors imitated, and the thing which he himself signaled out for comment in his preface to the play was the splitting of Iphigenia into Iphigenia *and* Eriphyle, good and evil, innocent and guilty. As the discussion above demonstrates, attempting to unravel even this one adaptive choice reveals a complex web of similarity and difference between the (pagan) Greek and (Christian) French contexts. It shows how, despite the protestations of Racine and others on the side of the 'Ancients' of their ancient forebearers' supremacy, even such ardent admirers found fault with the overtly foreign, pagan, inappropriate, and 'unnatural' elements of Greek culture clinging to the ancient texts. The adaptations which came out of their zeal, including Racine's *Iphigénie*, work hard to alter, erase, or cover up these elements before presenting the newly cleansed stories to a French Christian public. Their ardent rhetoric, praising the ancients and downplaying or denying their own adaptive contributions,[106] does equal but

[105]In the French context, this word (*amant*) is used to mean literally 'one who loves,' not to connote a sexual partner.

[106]See, for example, the famous paragraph from the preface to *Iphigénie* in which Racine, handing over to the ancients all praise for anything good in his tragedy, declares that "*Le goût de Paris s'est trouvé conforme à celui d'Athenes*" [The taste of Paris is found to conform to that of Athens], in spite of all the evidence to the contrary

opposite work in attempting to defuse the threat of cultural difference by insistently defining the cultural ancestor as 'still us,' even as the script covers any tracks which might lead an audience to define the cultural ancestor as 'them.'

De La Grange-Chancel's *Oreste et Pilade*

François-Joseph de la Grange-Chancel, although never canonized to the same extent as Racine, was quite famous in his own time.[107] An up-and-coming young writer in the literary and court scene at roughly the time when Racine was leaving it, De La Grange-Chancel's impressive scholastic success at a Jesuit school in Bordeaux landed him a position in the household of the Princesse de Conti, who subsequently introduced him to a number of famous names in the court and *salon* circles, including Racine. With the assistance and patronage of this famous playwright, De La Grange-Chancel presented his first tragedy, at the tender age of seventeen, to great success. Thereafter, De La Grange-Chancel made his career as a professional playwright, becoming one of the most well-known of his time. His time, however, happened to be classified in retrospect as the forgettable years between the '*Grand Siècle*' [Great Century] of the Sun King (roughly 1643 through the 1680's) and the '*Siècle des Lumières*' [Century of the Enlightened] (roughly the 1720's through 1789) which was to follow,[108] relegating him to obscurity in the long run despite his prominent position among his contemporaries.

Oreste et Pilade, one of the playwright's early triumphs, was first performed in 1697, when it ran for nineteen performances (an unusually high number for the time), and was reprised

given by his significant adaptive changes. Racine, "Préface de l'auteur à *Iphigénie*," 27-28.

[107]For a summary of De La Grange-Chancel's career and production history, see Jean-Noël Pascal, *L'Autre Iphigénie* (Perpignan: Presses universitaires de Perpignan, 1997). 12-26.

[108]There is some disagreement as to both when the *Grand Siècle* ended (upon the death of Louis XIV or the waning of his popularity?) and when the *Siècle des Lumières* can be reasonably said to have begun, given that it refers more to an intellectual movement than to a time period *per se*. However, for our theatrical purposes, it is a general truism that playwrights who were neither contemporaries of Racine nor of Voltaire are typically overlooked, meaning that even popular playwrights from roughly the 1690's through the 1720's are largely forgotten.

regularly right through the year 1738, amassing a grand total of forty-nine performances.[109] Some of its success may have been due to De La Grange-Chancel's status as the new voice in the scene, and some was also undoubtedly due to the play's own relationship to Racine's celebrated *Iphigénie*. De La Grange-Chancel, writing some twenty years after the success of *Iphigénie*, credits Racine with inspiring his adaptation of Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris*.[110] Moreover, the actress who created the role of Iphigenia in *Oreste et Pilade* was Marie Champmeslé, the same actress who had first played Iphigenia in Racine's *Iphigénie*. Now considerably older—and in fact, roughly the same amount older as the character of Iphigenia would be given the mythical timeline of the Trojan War plot[111]—La Champmeslé was a roaring success and gave De La Grange-Chancel's play the feel of a sequel to Racine's famous work.

The idea that *Oreste et Pilade* somehow rode Racine's coattails to success is written all over the play's paratexts as well as its reception history. De La Grange-Chancel's preface, written for a collection of his complete works compiled toward the end of the playwright's career, fairly drips with Racine. Mentioning that Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris* had been considered "*au nombre de ceux qui ne peuvent être traités*" **[**among those which cannot be treated] (that is, adapted sufficiently for public presentation),[112] De La Grange-Chancel attributes his boldness in

[109] These performance statistics can be found in Phillippo, *Hellenic Whispers*, 89.

[110] François-Joseph De La Grange-Chancel, "Oreste et Pilade," in *Oeuvres de Monsieur De La Grange-Chancel*, ed. François-Joseph De La Grange-Chancel (Paris: Les Libraires Associés, 1758), 87-89.

[111] Iphigenia was sacrificed at the beginning of the Trojan War. The Trojan War itself lasted ten years. It must have taken Agamemnon at least a year to get home, given that his slave-concubine Cassandra had already borne him twins in some accounts by the time he arrived back in Mycenae. After his murder, Clytemnestra and Aegisthus are commonly said to have ruled Mycenae for seven years before Orestes returned to murder them in turn. Thereafter, in order to be in accordance with all the things that the exposition of *Iphigenia in Tauris* says happened to him in between, Orestes must have had enough time to go to Athens for his trial, subsequently travel to consult the oracle at Delphi, and finally make the sea-voyage all the way to Tauris, for which let's assume at least one year; maybe two. This timeline would imply that 19-20 years have elapsed between the action of *Iphigenia in Aulis* and that of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, fitting perfectly with the twenty-year gap between the inaugural presentation of Racine's play and De La Grange-Chancel's.

[112] Ibid., 88. This assertion is probably based, at least in part, on the fact that the two previous attempts to adapt *Iphigenia in Tauris* for the French stage had been such colossal failures that, after running for less than a handful of performances each, neither was ever even printed for circulation in script form; consequently, these plays

daring to do so to Racine's Eriphyle innovation which, though having no direct bearing on the *Iphigenia in Tauris* story *per se*, had demonstrated that the miraculous intervention of gods in the Greek plays could be successfully replaced by other plot devices more '*vraisemblable*' [credible / seeming true].[113] And indeed, De La Grange-Chancel's replacement of divine intervention at the end of his play bears more than a passing resemblance to Racine's—where Euripides had the goddess Athena appear in person to speak,[114] De La Grange-Chancel has the death of a guilty individual cause a sudden and drastic change in the weather favorable to the innocent protagonists,[115] once again not excising the miraculous but merely bringing it into line with Christian theology. In Racine, Eriphyle's death had caused the wind to pick up and the sacrificial fire to light (both miracles based in natural phenomena rather than direct intervention by a corporeal god); in De La Grange-Chancel, the wind and sea are stormy and agitated until Thoas dies, at which point they instantly calm and the skies clear. These endings, similar in structure, both replace what had been *dea ex machina* endings in Euripides featuring the direct intervention of visible goddesses. De La Grange-Chancel's assertion that his replacement of unbelievable elements (the corporeal presence of a god) with credible ones (miracles in the Christian style) is modeled on Racine seems to bear out.

In reading his preface, one would think that the replacement of the *dea ex machina* was De La Grange-Chancel's major modification to *Iphigenia in Tauris*; it is certainly the only thing

have been lost to history. Additionally, Racine himself had written the first act of a Taurian Iphigenia play which he subsequently abandoned, deciding that the subject could not be made into a good French drama. De La Grange-Chancel, a pupil of Racine, was certainly aware of this as he states explicitly in his preface to *Oreste et Pilade* (Ibid.). In writing his own Taurian Iphigenia, then, De La Grange-Chancel is purposefully taking on a challenge attempted and failed by the great masters of the previous generation, making his own success all the more prestigious. On the failed production histories of the French *Iphigenia in Tauris* attempts prior to De La Grange-Chancel, see Phillippo, *Hellenic Whispers*, 74-88.

[113]De La Grange-Chancel, *Oreste et Pilade*, 88-89.

[114] Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* lines 1435-91.

[115]De La Grange-Chancel, *Oreste et Pilade*, 191.

that he feels compelled to explain. De La Grange-Chancel even goes so far as to say of Euripides's play: "*j'y vis des scenes intéressantes qui sembloient ne me devoir coûter que la peine de les traduire*" **[**I saw here interesting scenes which it seemed must cost me only the labor of translating them].[116] The clear implication of such a statement is that De La Grange-Chancel has put into French, but otherwise not significantly altered, the Euripidean text (with the exception of the aforementioned 'more believable' ending). This implication is misleading in the extreme. *Oreste et Pilade* represents a major restructuring of Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, not only altering the ending, but also grafting on a whole new plot, relegating the Euripidean plot practically to the status of sub-plot, and even within this reduction chopping the Euripidean plot in half and throwing out the whole latter portion. While Racine, De La Grange-Chancel's acknowledged model, functionally preserved the structure of the Euripidean play from which he worked while changing key details, De La Grange-Chancel's text is practically a testament to the idea which he refutes in his preface: that *Iphigenia in Tauris* is, in seventeenth-century France, unrepresentable.

While Euripides made Iphigenia's escape from Tauris the central dramatic action of his play, for De La Grange-Chancel it is the deposing of the tyrant, Thoas. This character, in Euripides's play the king of the Taurians from whom Iphigenia escapes, is no more than a minor obstacle in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, easily duped and only made a real threat by the intervention of the god Poseidon.[117] In *Oreste et Pilade*, by contrast, he is a major antagonist and practically the play's central character. Moreover, he is presented as the usurper of a throne to which he has no legal right, making the restoration of the rightful monarch, not Iphigenia's escape, the main goal

[116]Ibid., 87.

[117]Thoas immediately agrees to all of Iphigenia's demands (Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* lines 1160-1221) and when he discovers her deception, he is only able to pursue her because a sea swell prevents her flight (Ibid., lines 1411-19).

toward which the action of the play is directed.

De La Grange-Chancel's replacement of Athena, by his own admission in his preface,[118] comes in the form of this rightful monarch, the princess Thomiris, a character invented by De La Grange-Chancel. Following Racine, who credits ancient authors with creating Eriphyle who is really, by and large, his own invention, De La Grange-Chancel claims to have "*trouvai dans le sujet même le caractere du personnage que je cherchois*" **[**found in the subject itself the character of the person that I sought].[119] Where in the subject he found her, though, remains unspecified and is not readily obvious even to a close reader of Euripides's text—the name "Thomiris" never appears in Euripides, no female Taurian of any significance is ever even hinted at, and there is no implication that Thoas is anything other than the secure and acknowledged leader of the Taurians. The only hint of a Taurian queen in the adaptive tradition of the Iphigenia in Tauris story comes from the surviving cast list of a lost play, *Oreste*, written by the French playwrights Boyer and Leclerc in 1681, which lists an "ORITHIE, Reine de la Tauride" among its personages and which, tellingly, lists Thoas himself as "*tyran*" [tyrant] rather than "*roi*" [king].[120] When De La Grange-Chancel says he "found" Thomiris "in the subject itself," then, what he probably means is that he found her in an earlier and markedly less successful French adaptation—though, like Racine, he leaves this modern source unspecified and hushed even as he touts the genius of Euripides and disingenuously exclaims over how little he has had to change from the ancient original.

With the inclusion of Thomiris, *Oreste et Pilade*, despite its title, becomes primarily a play about the power struggle between Thoas and Thomiris, a Taurian succession drama in which

[118]De La Grange-Chancel, "Oreste et Pilade," 88-89.
[119]Ibid., 89.
[120] For this cast list and an analysis of its implications, see Phillippo, *Hellenic Whispers*, 85-88.

Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades are little more than pawns. Iphigenia serves as the catalyst for the conflict between the two; Thoas, who ascended the Taurian throne on the basis of a marriage contract with the female heir apparent, Thomiris, breaks the marriage contract once he has become king in order to marry Iphigenia (in whom he had no romantic interest in Euripides's version). Iphigenia resists the marriage. Meanwhile, Thoas has been informed by a prophecy (again pointing up the suitability of real prophecy even within the French rules of *vraisemblance*) that a Greek named Orestes will be his downfall (this prophecy, too, is De La Grange-Chancel's invention). When Orestes and Pylades are shipwrecked on his shores, Thoas orders Iphigenia to sacrifice them so that Orestes may die and he (Thoas) may avoid his prophesied downfall. Thomiris, on the other hand, wishing to bring Thoas's downfall about, works tirelessly to save the trio and help them escape, thereby depriving Thoas of both his security and his intended bride, while simultaneously serving the function of 'aid from a higher power' formerly fulfilled by Athena. Whether Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades escape, then, becomes primarily a matter of importance to others, their death or their freedom bearing more on the Taurian succession than on their own lives.

This increased emphasis on issues of rulership and succession has more than a little to do with the changed political contexts in which Euripides and De La Grange-Chancel respectively wrote. Thoas, despite the many differences in his characterization between the two plays, is a king and structurally the antagonist in both. Within the context of democratic Athens, where Euripides wrote and produced his version, there is no contradiction between these two aspects of Thoas's character—in fact, one of the common proofs of the inferiority of barbarians among the Athenians was their servile obedience to kings, in contrast to the free status of Athenian male

citizens.[121] The fact that Thoas is a king does not preclude him being an antagonist when presented before a people that defines itself in opposition to kingship. De La Grange-Chancel, however, writing near the end of the reign of Louis XIV, presented his play in a country and time where absolute monarchy was not only firmly established, but exercised direct control over the theater through the *Académie Française*. To retain Euripides's antagonist king would have been *literally* unrepresentable for De La Grange-Chancel—no theater would have touched his script, and even to circulate it in writing would draw the wrath of the Academy, if not worse.

To retain Thoas as antagonist, then, it became necessary to strip him of his kingship by making him an unlawful usurper; and subsequently, to make him both more threatening and more evil, so that he might serve as a proper warning against those who threaten the sanctity of true monarchy. In fact, De La Grange-Chancel's characterization of Thoas is almost perfectly in line with La Mesnardière's prescriptions in *La Poëtique* for how to treat a tyrant:

> *. . . que les perfections, s'il est vray qu'il en ait quelqu'une, soient toujours infectées en lui par la contagion d'un vice, & qu'il n'y ait rien de si pur, qu'on puisse dire avec raison qu'il soit digne de ce Thrône d'où il fait partir les miséres qui affligent tant de Peuples.*
>
> [. . . let his virtues, if it is true that he has any, be always infected in him by the contagion of a vice, and let there be nothing so pure, that one might reasonably say that he were deserving of the Throne from which he dispenses the miseries which afflict so many People.][122]

In one of the clearest examples of how neoclassical scripts followed dramatic theory during this time, this French Thoas fulfills this prescription to the letter, and is indeed more vicious than his

[121]On this and other stereotypes about barbarians, see Blondell et al., "Introduction," 22-23.
[122]La Mesnardière, *La Poëtique*: 121.

Greek counterpart. While the Greek Thoas oversees the sacrificial cult out of a genuine sense of religious duty, the French Thoas institutes the sacrifice of Greeks to ensure his personal safety in the face of a threatening prophesy. The Greek Thoas treats Iphigenia with the respect due to a priestess, while the French Thoas's unbridled lust for her causes him not only to try to force her into marriage, but also to break his own engagement and thereby usurp a throne that does not lawfully belong to him. De La Grange-Chancel, writing within a literary and political context that will not allow a king to be a villain, must consequently make his villain the opposite of a king: a vicious usurper. Moreover, the deposing of this tyrant, and the restoration of the rightful monarch, are plot elements which are rendered necessary by the very inclusion of a tyrant character—to depict a tyrant who unproblematically retains his throne (as Euripides's Thoas does) would violate the neoclassical sense of poetic justice which dictates that vice be punished and virtue rewarded at the end of every play.[123] The cumulative effect of all these logical steps (Thoas = antagonist = tyrant = vicious = deposed) is to greatly expand Thoas's role and importance in the absolutist French version of the Iphigenia in Tauris story, correspondingly shrinking the role of Euripides's central trio of Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades.

Within their much-reduced role, Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades do not even play out within the subplot the whole of Euripides's plot concerning them. In *Iphigenia in Tauris*, roughly the first half of the action concerns Iphigenia and Orestes meeting one another by chance and, through a series of discussion points, discovering one another's identities. The second half follows the concocting and execution of their plan for escape: Iphigenia tells Thoas that the pair cannot be sacrificed to Artemis as ordered because the crime of matricide has made them impure—they are not a suitable gift for the goddess.[124] In order to purify them (and the statue of

[123]Hence Racine's famous use of Iphigenia and Eriphyle. See my discussion above.
[124]Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* lines 1157-75.

Artemis, which their presence has defiled), she must perform a number of rituals involving washing them in seawater, for which she asks Thoas's permission.[125] Thoas agrees and, having made their way to the shore by this deception, Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades escape by ship with the help of Athena, stealing the statue of Artemis and bringing it back to Athens[126]—a dramatic rendition of the origin myth of the ancient Artemis-Iphigenia religious cult at Halae Araphenides, which maintained that their statue of the goddess had come from Tauris originally.[127]

In his version, De La Grange-Chancel scraps the entire second half of this plot. The plan for escape (and the theft of the statue) is conceived and executed by Thomiris, but entirely off-stage; she merely arrives in the fifth act to triumphantly announce what she has done.[128] In its place, De La Grange-Chancel extends the first half (the chance meeting of Iphigenia and Orestes/Pylades to the mutual recognition) out to the length of three acts, effecting the recognition only in Act IV, and additionally making that scene the last time that any of these three characters appears onstage. For Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades, the mutual recognition constitutes the fulfillment of their plot—once they know one another's identities, they can provide no more dramatic interest.

It is this excision of the second half of the plot which interests me most about De La Grange-Chancel's adaptation. De La Grange-Chancel goes to great lengths to avoid it, delaying the recognition between Iphigenia and Orestes through a number of verbal elisions and plot twists which strain credulity and seem to be unnecessary. In order to buy time for this truncated

[125]Ibid. lines 1176-1214.
[126]Ibid. lines 1198-1499.
[127]On this ancient cult, see M. Platnauer, "Introduction," in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, ed. M. Platnauer (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), vii-x.
[128]De La Grange-Chancel, "Oreste et Pilade," 183-86.

plot to span the entire play, De La Grange-Chancel has Orestes and Pylades become separated on their arrival in Tauris, so that each may take the time to lament the presumed death of the other before their joyful reunion,[129] in addition to each getting to meet with Iphigenia separately, thereby doubling the number of scenes before the final recognition. He has Thomiris, in an attempt to delay the sacrifice and thwart Thoas, instruct Orestes to hide his name from everyone, thereby ensuring that he will not reveal his identity to Iphigenia even as the conversation circles closer and closer to their shared birthplace and parentage.[130] Even with these various dramatic obstacles, De La Grange-Chancel cannot fill more than half the onstage time with these three characters talking past each other, and the Taurian succession plot is given so much stage time that it seems more like an attempt to fill the remaining space than a background to justify Thomiris's final actions in aiding the trio. Why spend so much time, effort, and care bending over backward to avoid adapting the second half of the play?

The obvious answer, at least from our own twenty-first century point of view, is that the second half of Euripides's play is too blatantly pagan. As the explanatory myth for a local religious cult, the whole point of this ancient Greek tragedy is the establishment of idol worship in an Athenian district—a subject obviously unsuited to presentation in a resolutely Christian country. However, this easy answer is tempting but unlikely for two reasons: firstly, De La Grange-Chancel does not actually excise references to the statue of Artemis from his script,[131]

[129] Phillippo traces this plot element back to a private entertainment in Latin given for the Hapsburg Emperor and Empress at a Jesuit college in Linz in 1680 (Phillippo, *Hellenic Whispers*, 83-84). De La Grange-Chancel was himself educated at Jesuit schools, though notably *not* the one at Linz, and moreover would have been only three years old at the time of this performance. Extensive program notes for the performance survive, however, including a plot summary, and De La Grange-Chancel might conceivably have read them as a part of his education. If so, this provides another example of an uncredited and obscure modern contribution to the play De La Grange-Chancel so resolutely paints as ancient.

[130] Thomiris's instructions are given in Act III, scene iv, and the exchanges between Orestes and Iphigenia occur in Act III, scene vi and Act IV, scene vi.

[131] See De La Grange-Chancel, "Oreste et Pilade," 183-86.

which one would expect if idol worship were the problem; and secondly, no one in the audience, aside from the most extraordinarily erudite and dedicated of Grecophiles, could reasonably be presumed to know anything about the cult of Artemis-Iphigenia at Halae Araphenides, making the religious point of Euripides's second half so obscure by default that no special measures are necessary to cover it up. Instead of jumping to the easy but unlikely religious explanation, then, I will offer up two other possible contributing factors to this decision.

The first, familiar from our discussion of Racine, is the different valuations of guilt and innocence in association with sacrifice or public death. In the ancient Greek plot, the whole premise for the trio's escape is the need to purify the guilty victims so that they will be fit for sacrifice. In the modern French context, which dictates that guilt and death accompany one another, this premise would never fly. In fact, in De La Grange-Chancel's version, by contrast, Iphigenia is initially reluctant to sacrifice Orestes *until she learns that he has murdered Clytemnestra*, at which point she becomes determined to go through with it, no matter the cost.[132] When confronted by her confidante Cyane (a minor character who serves as replacement for the chorus) as to her change of heart, she offers up Orestes's guilty status as making him deserving of sacrifice:

CYANE

La justice a t□uj□urs guidé v□s passi□ns;

De tous leurs mouvemens elle est inséparable:

Mais quand à l'un des grecs vous étiez favorable,

Quel sujet contre l'autre arme votre rigueur?

IPHIGÉNIE

[132]Ibid., 147.

Ah! ne rappelle point ce qui me fait horreur.

Contre lui mon courroux à chaque instant s'augmente.

Il a tué ma mere; il l'avue; il s'en vante;

Il me l'a dit, Cyane. A cette impiété,

Oses-tu m'accuser de trop de cruauté?

CYANE

Je demeure interdite & muette à ce crime:

Votre fureur est juste & sa mort légitime

[CYANE

Justice has always guided your passions;

It is inseparable from all their movements:

But when you are favorable to one of the Greeks,

What subject arms your severity towards the other?

IPHIGENIA

Ah! do not remind me of that which makes me feel horror.

Against him my wrath increases at every instant.

He has killed my mother; he has confessed it; he has boasted of it;

He said it to me, Cyane. At this impiety,

Do you dare to accuse me of too much cruelty?

CYANE

I stay dumbfounded and mute at this crime:

Your fury is just and his death legitimate][133]

[133]Ibid., 161-62.

In order for Orestes's death to be just, he must be guilty. This fact is self-evident to all the characters in the play, even the evil Thoas, who begins the play with a speech about the remorse he feels for having sacrificed other Greeks before Orestes who may have been innocent:

> *Que de sang a depuis arrosé son autel!*
>
> *Que d'innocens punis pour un seul criminel!*
>
> *Ces meurtres redoublés, ces sanglantes victimes,*
>
> *Sans adoucir mes maux multiplioient mes crimes.*
>
> **[**What blood has afterward watered her [Artemis/Diane's] altar!
>
> How many innocents punished for only one criminal!
>
> These redoubled murders, these bloody victims,
>
> Without lessening my sorrows, they multiply my crimes.][134]

Given this complete reversal of which characteristics are considered necessary in a proper sacrificial victim, it is difficult to imagine how De La Grange-Chancel could have gone about making Euripides's version of the escape plot palatable to a seventeenth-century French audience. Yet this, by itself, does not completely explain its absence from his adaptation—Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades might have come up with some other plan for escape entirely, and still retained the basic action of *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Instead, De La Grange-Chancel gives the duty of plotting the escape to Thomiris, and has it all happen behind the scenes. Why?

This question leads me to the second possible factor in this adaptive decision: Iphigenia's character. If Thoas, the antagonist king, must be converted into a vicious tyrant in order to maintain neoclassical French ideals about proper characterization, then Iphigenia, the virgin priestess, must be converted into a virtuous woman. This conversion is necessary because the

[134]Ibid., 97.

ancient Greek Iphigenia, as portrayed by Euripides, does not read as virtuous in the modern French context at all. In Euripides's text, Iphigenia—older than her Aulidic counterpart but still a masculinized virgin, and now the priestess of a fierce virgin goddess—invents a plan of escape completely inimical to seventeenth century ideals about the virtuous behavior of holy virgins. This plan requires her to lie: first, by claiming that Pylades is also tainted by the crime of matricide (he is not); second, by making up a story about the statue of the goddess turning away from her intended victims in horror (it didn't); and thirdly, by professing a false intention to Thoas (she claims she is going to the shore to purify them, while in fact she is going to escape).[135] All of these lies she speaks onstage without flinching. Later, we are told that she covered her flight by yelling loud prayers as though she were performing the purification rituals.[136] Moreover, she is a thief—she blatantly steals the statue of Artemis from the temple, a crime which she even acknowledges might be displeasing to the goddess by begging her forgiveness on two separate occasions.[137] She has thus betrayed not only Thoas, into whose care Artemis had entrusted her, but the goddess whom she was sworn to serve. Even before these actions, the Iphigenia of Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris* has shown herself to be pitiless: learning from Orestes the fates of the key players in her own aborted sacrifice at Aulis, she expresses repeated wishes that they die and suffer;[138] she cavalierly proposes a bargain to the two men in which she will spare one if he will carry a letter for her while declaring that the other must be killed, despite having just revealed her own power to spare victims;[139] and upon learning Orestes's identity, Iphigenia demands proof before treating him with anything other than aloof

[135]Eurpides *Iphigenia in Tauris* lines 1173, 1165, and 1191-1201.
[136]Ibid., lines 1336-38.
[137]Ibid., lines 1082-88 and 1398-1402.
[138]Ibid., lines 531-39.
[139]Ibid., lines 578-96.

coldness.[140] This Iphigenia—cold, calculating, intelligent, resourceful, and deceitful—is hardly a fitting heroine for a seventeenth-century play. Although an older Iphigenia might not bear the same ideological weight of innocence as the blushing maiden of Racine's Aulis play, as a virginal religious devotee (in Catholic France practically a stand-in for a nun) she must still be, minimally, a virtuous woman. To depict Euripides's deceitful Taurian Iphigenia on a French stage would violate standards of both propriety and *vraisemblance* in a world where to 'seem true' fiction must reflect ideology.

In deference to these concerns, De La Grange-Chancel's Iphigenia is practically the polar opposite of this ancient Greek iron maiden. The French Iphigenia retains only one vestige of Euripides's in that she falsely reports a vision of Artemis to Thoas, in which the goddess supposedly told her not to marry Thoas and to spare the life of her intended Greek victim. When confronted by her confidante about it, however, she defends herself as follows:

> *Si ma fierté se porte à des démarches vaines,*
>
> *C'est l'orgueil de ce sang qui coule dans mes veines.*
>
> *Voudrois-tu qu'un tyran souillât sa pureté?*
>
> *Et pourrois-je descendre à cette indignité?*
>
> *Pardonne aussi, Déesse, à la pieuse estime*
>
> *Que la pitié m'a fait prendre pour ta victime.*
>
> *L'appui de l'innocence est l'ouvrage des cieux,*
>
> *Et c'est une vertu que d'imiter les Dieux.*
>
> [If my dignity leads to vain approaches,
>
> It is the pride of this blood which flows in my veins.

[140]Ibid., lines 793-830.

Do you desire that a tyrant should defile its purity?

And could I descend to this indignity?

Pardon also, Goddess, the pious esteem

Which pity has made me to put upon your victim.

The support of innocence is the work of the heavens,

And it is a virtue which imitates the Gods.][141]

This speech contains two central points: that the lie was spoken to defend her (sexual) honor, which she knows the goddess holds dear; and that she devoutly believes what she reported to be the actual will of the goddess—or rather, "the heavens" or "the Gods," all of which ultimately equate to one another and to Artemis in the familiar monotheistic French construction of Greek religion. Her deception, therefore, is in service to—rather than in spite of—a higher power, and moreover was spoken to an unlawful tyrant who does not carry the mandate of Heaven. In this way, De La Grange-Chancel draws the teeth from Iphigenia's lies, making them devout and just, a claim they never carried in the ancient Greek version. De La Grange-Chancel's Iphigenia is also not a thief—the statue she carries away at the end is freely given to her by Thomiris, the rightful ruler of the Taurians.[142] Finally, far from being cold or unfeeling, De La Grange-Chancel's Iphigenia fairly overflows with pity, charity, and warm feeling, especially toward family.[143] Pity causes her to attempt to save the life of Pylades, even before she knows his identity *or* the fact that he comes from Argos and can aid in her desire to get home.[144] Even this desire, more vividly described than in the Greek version, is framed in terms of regaining warmth

[141]De La Grange-Chancel, *Oreste et Pilade*, 107.
[142]Ibid., 184.
[143]The care of family being the primary responsibility of women in both the ancient Greek and early modern French contexts. See Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*, and Steinbrügge, *The Moral Sex: Woman's Nature in the French Enlightenment*.
[144]De La Grange-Chancel, "Oreste et Pilade," 107-08.

and tenderness in the bosom of her family:

Je brûle de revoir la grece ma patrie,

D'admirer, d'adorer, couvert de tant d'exploits,

Ce grand Agamemn□n, chef des grecs, r□i des r□is;

D'entendre, d'embrasser Clitemnestre ma mere,

Les princesses mes soeurs, Oreste mon cher frere.

Quels transports à me voir ne sentiroient-ils pas?

Mon pere, qui long-tems a pleuré mon trépas,

Retrouvera sa joie à l'aspect d'une fille

Qui n'a point démenti son auguste famille

[I burn to see again Greece my fatherland,

To admire, to adore, covered with so many exploits,

This grand Agamemnon, chief among the Greeks, king of kings;

To hear, to embrace Clytemnestra my mother,

The princesses my sisters, Orestes my dear brother.

What transports would they not feel to see me?

My father, who for a long time has wept my death,

Will rediscover his joy in the sight of a daughter

Who has not at all denied her august family][145]

True to such strong family feelings, and in contrast to her ancient Greek counterpart, she not only immediately believes Orestes when she learns of his identity,[146] but also seems to have some instinctive knowledge of it beforehand. Upon first catching sight of each other, the siblings

[145]Ibid., 109.
[146]Ibid., 166-67.

proclaim their amazement and sense of familiarity and comfort with matching lines:

ORESTE

D'où vient, en la voyant, que ma fureur me quitte?

IPHIGENIE

D'où vient qu'à son aspect je me sens interdite?

[ORESTES

Whence comes it that, upon seeing her, my fury abandons me?

IPHIGENIA

Whence comes it that at the sight of him I feel speechless?][147]

In seventeenth-century France, the shared tenderness of kinship cannot be thwarted even by not knowing one's kin relationship to another; the heart knows even when the head does not.

In all of these ways, De La Grange-Chancel's Iphigenia shows herself to be the same virtuous and lovable—and now, also devout—feminine Iphigenia of Racine. Her character has extremely little in common with the calculating and masculinized Iphigenia of Euripides. Where the old Iphigenia was cerebral, the new Iphigenia is ruled by emotion; if the old Iphigenia was ruthless, the new Iphigenia weighs carefully the moral implications of every step she takes. To attribute the escape plot—even a new escape plot—to this new Iphigenia would be to associate her too strongly with her clever, but amoral,[148] antecedent. In order to remain the pure, feminine holy virgin of Christian France, Iphigenia must give up schemes and deception in favor of warm feeling and true faith in the divine plan.

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[147]Ibid., 141.

[148]Amoral in the French context only—to lie to, cheat, or steal from barbarians does not break the classical Greek moral code "τοὺς φίλους . . . εὖ ποιεῖν καὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς κακῶς δικαιοσύνην" [to do good to friends and punish enemies with harm] (for this quote and a more extensive discussion on this code, see book I of Plato's *Πολιτεία* [*The Republic*], Plato, *Republic*, ed. Jeffrey Henderson, trans. Chris Emlyn-Jones and William Preddy, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013). 18-25). It is only in the new, Christian morality that lying and stealing become wrong in absolute terms.

The extreme restructuring of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, most pointedly its deletion of the whole second half of the play, therefore belies De La Grange-Chancel's carefully constructed picture of how easy it was to modify this supposedly untreatable story for a seventeenth-century French audience. New cultural attitudes about the 'proper' characteristics pertaining to such ideologically loaded figures as kings and holy women have, in fact, rendered a substantial portion of this play dangerous or unbelievable. Had De La Grange-Chancel decided to represent a lawful king who supports human sacrifice, or a calculating, ruthless, and masculine Iphigenia who would only sacrifice the innocent, it could potentially have shattered the illusion that French ideas about the characteristics accruing to certain ranks and genders were universal, recognized in antiquity as well as modernity. The true depth of cultural difference between the cultural ancestor and 'us' would have been exposed, threatening the clear duality of the carefully constructed insider/outsider binary. De La Grange-Chancel's radical changes to his source material, far from arbitrary, serve to maintain dominant French cultural fictions by sanitizing Euripides's play before allowing it to be presented on the public stage; his disavowal of these changes, similarly calculated, maintains the illusion that the cultural ancestor was similar enough in the first place not to require such sanitization. This sleight-of-hand, moreover, would have been much harder for audiences of his time to catch than it is for the twenty-first-century scholar—the first known French translation of Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris* did not appear until 1713, sixteen years after De La Grange-Chancel's *Oreste et Pilade*.[149] To those who spoke only the vernacular, then, De La Grange-Chancel's claim to have closely followed Euripides would have been difficult to disprove. Once again, *adaptive* change is used to mask *cultural* change, and is carefully deployed in those contexts where the uneducated (who could be in the audiences of the public theaters)

[149]See Gliksohn, *Iphigénie de la Grèce antique à l'Europe des Lumières*.

might be exposed to Greek stories.

De La Touche's *Iphigénie en Tauride*

Claude Guymond De La Touche, unlike his predecessors in the French Iphigenia tradition, was not a professional playwright.[150] In fact, *Iphigénie en Tauride* was the only drama he ever wrote for public presentation, and though there are rumors that he might have written plays while in training to be a Jesuit priest (training he never completed), it is also the only known dramatic work by De La Touche. Instead, De La Touche made his living as a lawyer, merely dabbling in writing as a member of a *salon* run by Mme de Graffigny. It was through this *salon* that he met the actress Mlle Clairon, who championed his piece for presentation at the Théâtre Français, where it received its first production in 1757.[151] Despite the complete obscurity of its author, *Iphigénie en Tauride* was a smash hit. It was revived numerous times both in Paris and in the provinces, received several printings as a text to be read, and spawned a number of critical reviews, alongside its famous operatic adaptation by Guillard and Gluck[152] and a parody by Favart presented at the *Théâtre Italien*.[153]

De La Touche, writing a full sixty years after De La Grange-Chancel's adaptation, put forward for an eighteenth-century audience newly enthralled by the cult of sentiment[154] a version of the Iphigenia in Tauris story midway between Euripides and De La Grange-Chancel in terms

[150]For a short biography on De La Touche, see Pascal, *L'Autre Iphigénie*: 35-48.

[151]Interestingly, the final act of the piece was rewritten by De La Touche only a few hours before the first performance at the insistence of the actors and to their specifications, making *Iphigénie en Tauride* one of the playscripts which we know with certainty to have been influenced by the artistic contributions of actors during production. See Clairon et al., *Mémoires de Mlle. Clairon, de Lekain, de Préville, de Dazincourt, de Molé, de Garrick, de Goldoni* (Paris: F. Didot, 1857). 335.

[152]Discussed in “Chapter 4: Iphigenia in Music” below.

[153]These two adaptations, plus all of the known critical reviews, can be found anthologized in Pascal, *L'Autre Iphigénie*.

[154]De La Touche was writing alongside such contemporaries as Louis-Sébastien Mercier, a terrifically prolific playwright whose plays depicted the most virtuous of characters as the most emotional and the most capable of reforming vicious characters through the moral example of their tender feeling. See Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Théâtre complet* (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1970).

of influence. In the intervening time, French absolutism had weakened somewhat; the monarchs of France still ruled, but with the demise of the Sun King (Louis XIV), direct administrative control by the monarch himself over every aspect of life waned. France's colonial project continued, though somewhat less starry-eyed, as the magnetic culture strategy was no longer young and had not proven to be as effective in the colonies as hoped.[155] In the realm of art and literature, the publication of the Englishman Samuel Richardson's novel *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* in 1740 had popularized sentimental literature across Europe, and the theater was not slow in following suit—the plays of the eighteenth century, in France and elsewhere, made tender emotion and human feeling under the most dire of circumstances its central concern.[156] Showing the influence of all these changes, De La Touche's version of the Iphigenia in Tauris story is less concerned with kingship than was De La Grange-Chancel's, demonstrates greater colonial anxiety, and takes the modern French focus on emotion to new heights. Scrapping the Taurian succession plot so necessary in absolutist France, De La Touche makes his Thoas a truly barbarian king instead of an illegitimate one—a demonized stand-in for France's colonized 'Others.' The removal of this extra plotline, besides refiguring the character of Thoas, brings the play closer to its Euripidean source text, with a renewed focus on the characters who actually appear in the ancient Greek tragedy. Though De La Touche borrowed more and added less than De La Grange-Chancel with respect to Euripides's play, he too found the delayed recognition of brother and sister to be the most interesting part of the plot and stretched it out accordingly, actually giving the escape plot even *less* attention than De La Grange-Chancel by having his

[155]On the changes in French colonial approaches in the New World over time, see Olive Patricia Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas* (Edmonton, Alta., Canada: University of Alberta Press, 1984).

[156]On the sentimental movement in France, see Cecilia Feilla, *The Sentimental Theater of the French Revolution*, ed. Jane Milling and Kathryn Lowere, Performance in the Long Eighteenth Century: Studies in Theatre, Music, Dance (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013). For the novel that kicked off the movement, see Samuel Richardson, *Pamela; □r, Virtue Rewarded* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971).

protagonists overthrow Thoas rather than escape from him.[157] Unlike De La Grange-Chancel, however, De La Touche, thanks largely to the sentimentalist tradition in which he was writing, was able to make this family reunion the main focus of his play, and found no need to augment it with a Taurian succession plot or any other added story.

Sentimentalism, an aesthetic style primarily concerned with depicting the power of tender emotion, swept the theaters of Europe in the eighteenth century. Building upon preferences already present in the late seventeenth century for expressions of deep feeling and relationships founded on the purest human kindness, sentimentalist drama made the shedding of sympathetic tears the goal for both characters and audiences and depicted such emotions as the key to awakening the natural virtue of humankind.[158] In many ways the artistic arm of the greater project of the European Enlightenment, sentimentalism touted the ability of shared human feeling to advance people beyond backwards practices of barbarism and violence, into a harmonious and virtuous society based on empathy and reason.[159] Writing within this tradition, De La Touche was able to build on the foundation of tender feeling laid out for him by De La Grange-Chancel: the deep friendship of Orestes and Pylades, each fighting for the honor to die for the other; the instinctive recognition between brother and sister despite their long separation; and Iphigenia's virtuous opposition to the 'savage' tradition of human sacrifice are all elements added to the Iphigenia in Tauris story by De La Grange-Chancel and greatly expanded upon by De La Touche. These elements, which had been nods to French preferences about characterization in the seventeenth century, became points of dramatic interest in and of

[157]In the final scene of the play, Pylades simply rushes into the room and murders Thoas to general rejoicing. Claude Guymond De La Touche, *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Breinigsville, PA: Nabu Public Domain Reprints; repr., 2014). 76.

[158]On the importance of tears, see Feilla, *The Sentimental Theater of the French Revolution*.

[159]On overcoming violence and barbarism as a part of the Enlightenment project, see Dorinda Outram, "The Rise of Modern Paganism? Religion and the Enlightenment," in *The Enlightenment, New Approaches to European History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013; reprint, 2013).

themselves in the eighteenth, elevated by sentimentalism to the status of main plot. The recognition plot—half of Euripides's play and a mere sub-plot in De La Grange-Chancel—becomes the main focus here, and allows De La Touche to turn what was the foundation myth of a pagan cult into a sentimentalist family drama, complete with tears, sighs, self-sacrifice, expressions of the deepest love, and the triumph of virtue over vice. This struggle between virtue and vice, the forerunner of the 'good vs. evil' plot so familiar in our own day, has an explicitly colonial coding in *Iphigénie en Tauride*, with the virtuous Greek characters representing the enlightened civilizations of Europe and the vicious Taurians strongly associated with the sterotypic imagery of the colonial 'Other' in circulation at this time. De La Touche's version of the Iphigenia in Tauris story, therefore, blends the sentimentalist focus on virtue with colonial ideology to create an adaptation that is binary, clear-cut, and highly focused on the tensions of cultural insider/outsider—and to do so, of course, it must profoundly alter and erase the Greek 'third term.'

This alteration is achieved, in part, through a structural reworking of both De La Touche's source plays (*Iphigenia in Tauris* and *Oreste et Pilade*). In order to stretch the recognition plot out to the length of a full play, De La Touche largely manipulates entrances and exits. While Euripides effects the recognition in the form of two scenes between Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades, (separated by a third in which Iphigenia is absent)[160] De La Touche manages to make it span a full seventeen scenes by having the characters split up, for one reason or another, after every new significant bit of information is acquired—allowing them to analyze (and agonize over) it individually, in pairs, or with confidantes before coming back together to discover the

[160]Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* lines 456-1088. Although the Greek texts are not actually divided into scenes, for ease of comparison I count each entrance or exit as the start of a new scene, after the French tradition of dividing scenes in this manner.

next piece. While many of these interruptions are new to De La Touche's version, he also borrowed scenes De La Grange-Chancel. As in *Oreste et Pilade*, *Iphigénie en Tauride* has Orestes and Pylades arrive separately after a shipwreck rather than simply landing safely in Tauris as they do in Euripides, so that they may have individual scenes lamenting one another's loss and subsequently be reunited, both extending and adding more occasion for the expression of strong feelings to the beginning of the plot. Also following De La Grange-Chancel, he separates them again just before the point when Iphigenia entrusts her letter to Pylades,[161] thereby allowing the recognition to be delayed significantly beyond when it occurred in Euripides.

Indeed, it is the entrusting of this letter which effects the recognition in Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, lending the whole thing a vaguely comic tone. With Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades all present in the scene, Iphigenia addresses Pylades thus:

> ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ
>
> ἄγγελλ' Ὀρέστῃ, παιδὶ τἀγαμέμνονος· . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> ἡ 'ν Αὐλίδι σφαγεῖσ' ἐπιστέλλει τάδε
>
> ζῶσ' Ἰφιγένεια, τοῖς ἐκεῖ δ' οὐ ζῶσ' ἔτι· . . .
>
> ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
>
> ποῦ δ' ἔστ' ἐκείνη; κατθανοῦσ' ἥκει πάλιν;
>
> ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

[161]In De La Grange-Chancel, Pylades is the first to be captured in Tauris after being separated from Orestes by a storm—it is before Orestes too is found that Iphigenia attempts to charge him with her letter. See De La Grange-Chancel, "Oreste et Pilade," 124-28. In De La Touche, all three begin the business of the letter together, but Orestes is conducted off for sacrifice before Iphigenia gives Pylades the letter and tells him the intended recipient. See De La Touche, *Iphigénie en Tauride*: 44-49.

ἥδ' ἣν ὁρᾷς σύ·

. . . . . .

ΠΥΛΑΔΗΣ

ὦ ῥᾳδίοις ὅρκοισι περιβαλοῦσά με,

κάλλιστα δ' ὀμόσασ', οὐ πολὺν σχήσω χρόνον,

τὸν δ' ὅρκον ὃν κατώμοσ' ἐμπεδώσομεν.

ἰδού, φέρω σοι δέλτον ἀποδίδωμί τε,

Ὀρέστα, τῆσδε σῆς κασιγνήτης πάρα.

[IPHIGENIA

Report to Orestes, child of Agamemnon . . .

. . . . . .

The one sacrificed in Aulis sends these things by letter

Living Iphigenia, but yet not living to those in that place; . . .

ORESTES

But where is she? Having died, has she come back?

IPHIGENIA

She is the one that you see;

. . . . . .

PYLADES

O, you having invested me with easy oaths,

And I having sworn the best ones, I will not have them for long,

But instead let us fulfill the sworn oath.

Look, I bring a letter which I give to you,

Orestes, from this woman here, your sister.**]**[162]

This Greek version of the recognition scene was evidently not sufficiently serious or full of feeling for the French tragedians of either the seventeenth or the eighteenth centuries, who routinely prefer to have Iphigenia and Orestes intuit one another's identities, then circle closer and closer to having their suspicions confirmed as more and more conversational hints are dropped.[163] In this way, Iphigenia and Orestes have time to savor their hope, their wonderment, and ultimately their transports of familial love at leisure, making the reunion scene much more focused on the tenderness of human feeling than it is in its cerebral Greek version. The only way in which this can be reliably accomplished is to separate Orestes from Pylades, and to have Iphigenia entrust Pylades with the letter recipient's name only out of earshot and in circumstances which make it difficult for him to get back to Orestes. In the use of this and several other devices, De La Touche follows De La Grange-Chancel, managing to turn half of the Euripidean play into the whole of his own play and creating a result focused much more on emotion than on the practical details of escape.

Even chopping up and stretching out Euripides's first plot point cannot give De La Touche a whole five acts' worth of material, so, in a sentimentalist focus on Iphigenia's virtue that winds up closely associating goodness with colonial values, he fills the space with a number of lengthy passages by Iphigenia to one character or another, speculating on the morality and theology of the human sacrifices she is tasked with performing.[164] In a weirdly Roman twist on this Greek play,[165] De La Touche lends an oracular function to the sacrifices, having Thoas read

[162]Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* lines 769-794.

[163]See De La Grange-Chancel, "Oreste et Pilade," 141-47 and 64-66.; and De La Touche, *Iphigénie en Tauride*: 23-27, 34-35, and 57-62.

[164]To give just one example, this preoccupation makes up the majority of the dialogue in the entirety of Act I. See Ibid., 4-16.

[165]For an especially thorough and instructive look at the differences between Greek and Roman practices of animal sacrifice, including the Roman use of sacrificial entrails for divination, see Ingvild Saelid Gilhus, *Animals, Gods*

his future in the entrails of the victims.[166] Iphigenia spends much of the play expressing her horror at this concept; pointing out the barbarism of Thoas in the most xenophobic sense of the term; and insisting that, as her own rescue from the altar by a goddess has shown, the gods do not approve of human sacrifice.[167]

In this she expresses a sentiment common to both ancient Greece and early modern France, but one that is given much more discussion and weight in the French context and which, moreover, has gained a certain resonance with European depictions of the colonial 'Other.' The numerous descriptions of gruesome sacrifices, much more common in De La Touche than in either Euripides or De La Grange-Chancel, call to mind the horrific images of human sacrifice and cannibalism[168] circulated in the stereotypic imagery of (primarily) native American cultures in the xenophobic, colonial literatures of the time. In defending the practice of human sacrifice to Iphigenia, Thoas, the barbarian king, argues the following:

> *Quoi! les Peuples, armés du glaive de la guerre,*
>
> *De flots de sang humain pourront couvrir la terre!*
>
> *Leurs chefs ambitieux, au soin de leur grandeur,*
>
> *Pourront tout immoler dans leur aveugle ardeur!*
>
> *Nous-mêmes, dans le creux de nos antres sauvages,*

---

and Humans: Changing Attitudes to Animals in Greek, Roman and Early Christian Ideas (New York: Routledge, 2006). Whether De La Touche was conscious of this difference is debatable; like the Roman names for gods, this may be the unintentional fallout of writing in a tradition which lumped two linguistic groups and more than a thousand years' worth of writers into the unitary category of 'the ancients.'

[166]See De La Touche, *Iphigénie en Tauride*: 10-11, 28, 36, and 74.

[167]Ibid., 11-12.

[168]For a thorough history of the place occupied by the cannibalistic Other in the European imagination during the colonial period, see Frank Lestringant, *Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Colombus to Jules Verne* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997). On European associations of human sacrifice with the colonial 'Other,' specifically in the context of the New World, see Hughes, *Culture and Sacrifice*. For a study on the concept of savagery (which included these two characteristics, among others) in the French colonial context, see Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas.*

Nous pourrons subsister de meutre et de ravages!

Nous pourrons dévorer nos ennemis vivans,

Et nous désaltérer dans leurs crânes sanglans!

Et les Dieux en courroux, ces Dieux par qui nous sommes,

Ne pourront demander, pour victimes, des hommes?

[What! the People, armed with the sword of war,

With floods of human blood can cover the earth!

Their ambitious chiefs, to the care of their grandeur,

Can sacrifice all in their blind ardor!

We ourselves, in the hollow of our savage lairs,

Can subsist on murder and ravages!

We can devour our living enemies,

And quench our thirst in their bloody skulls!

And the Gods in wrath, these Gods from whom we exist,

Cannot demand, as victims, men?][169]

This short passage contains just a few of the many linguistic tropes associated with savagery, cannibalism, and the animalization of human beings (i.e. the use of the word "*antre*" [lair/den/cave]) used in conjunction with Thoas in particular and the Taurians in general. Taken together, these references paint a picture of the Taurians as a demonized and vividly colonial 'Other,' capable of the worst kind of violence—specifically, ritual murder and cannibalism, two kinds of violence which Christianity renders unnecessary through the mysteries of the

[169]De La Touche, *Iphigénie en Tauride*: 13.

crucifixion[170] and communion.[171] As Derek Hughes has explored in his thorough study of human sacrifice in European literature, Europeans during the colonial period marked their own difference from the colonial 'Other' partly in terms of the kinds of violence practiced: judicial and military violence were 'civilized,' while ritual murder—especially when accompanied by cannibalism, as in the case of Aztec human sacrifice—was 'savage' and horrific.[172] While human sacrifice is a staple element of both Iphigenia stories, references to cannibalism had never surfaced in them prior to De La Touche's version. The inclusion of this imagery, coupled with the increased emphasis on ritual and superstition lent to the sacrifices by their divinatory function (another new addition in De La Touche), marks this version of human sacrifice as specifically outside of both Christianity and civilization—while human sacrifice in Racine was a Christian test of faith and in De La Grange-Chancel the individual crime of a paranoid usurper, in De La Touche it is the barbaric custom of a savage people, the marker of an 'Othered' and inferior group.

This increased focus on the colonially inflected cruelty and barbarism of the Taurian cult creates a heightened contrast with the (sentimental) Christian kindness, sensitivity, and human feeling of the newly emotion-driven Greek protagonists, creating an opposition between savagery and civilization (encoded as 'vice' and 'virtue' respectively) only brought thematically into the forefront of the story by this adaptation. De La Touche, most clearly of any of the dramatists analyzed thus far, makes his story centrally concerned with setting up clear definitions between 'us' and 'them,' 'Self' and 'Other.' In order to properly manufacture this contrast,

[170]The one human sacrifice which was forgiven in the form of the resurrection and rendered all others unnecessary. See “Chapter 8: The New Testament and the Lamb of God” in Gilhus, *Animals, Gods and Humans*, 161-82.
[171]The ritual cannibalism of the body of Christ. See Roch A. Kereszty, *Wedding Feast of the Lamb: Eucharistic Theology from a Historical, Biblical, and Systematic Perspective* (Chicago: HillenbrandBooks, 2004).
[172]See “Chapter 4: The Discovery of America” in Hughes, *Culture and Sacrifice*.

however, he must alter the *Greek* portrayal of the main characters he has inherited from Euripides (as discussed above, cold, pragmatic, and cerebral) into warm, loyal, and passionate stand-ins for Christian France. Iphigenia, once again stripped of masculine traits, feels horror at the sight of the altars,[173] describes herself as "*timide*" [timid] on two occasions,[174] is centrally characterized by her pity and compassion for others,[175] and in this version even has the decency to faint dead away (twice!) when she learns of Orestes's identity.[176] Orestes and Pylades, during their disagreement over which of them should die, abandon their Euripidean arguments based on reputation and honor (each saying that it would be shameful to outlive the other)[177] in favor of passionate protestations from each that to outlive his dear friend would be a torment.[178] Such altered characterization in the case of all three protagonists works to replace the entirely too Greek motivations based on reasoned argument with newly sentimentalist French motivations springing from the heart.

The degree to which De La Touche must rewrite his (ostensibly) Greek protagonists in order to effectively set up the dual oppositions of Greek/Taurian, civilized/savage, virtuous/vicious is telling. The erasure of the third term in the Self/Other dichotomy is possibly more evident here than in any other play analyzed so far—the cultural ancestor, too alien to the morals, gender roles, and sentiments of the day, cannot serve as a proper stand-in for 'Self' in this binary cultural encounter without significant alteration. In the theological arguments over morality, immorality, and the divine will which provide much of the main action of the play,

[173]De La Touche, *Iphigénie en Tauride*: 4.
[174]Ibid., 7 and 9.
[175]To list only the instances in which Iphigenia herself refers to her pity (because a list encompassing all the times that other characters reference it as well would become unmanageable), see Ibid., 30-31, 34-35, 37-38, 47, and 49.
[176]Ibid., 60-61.
[177]Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* lines 674-92.
[178]De La Touche, *Iphigénie en Tauride*: 38-43.

Iphigenia and her fellow Greeks cannot stand in for 'good' in the divine battle of good and evil unless they are first sufficiently Gallicized. De La Touche, like his predecessors Racine and De La Grange-Chancel, must force the cultural ancestor to fit neatly into the category of 'Self' by erasing differences where they are too unpalatable, by strengthening similarities where they exist, and by manufacturing them where they do not. Adaptation, taking over at the point where even translation and performance cannot hide the differences, does the work of fully erasing the third term in the binary, thus defusing the threat that such 'third terms' present to a cosmology founded—theologically, morally, culturally, and socially—on binary opposition.

All three of the dramatists examined in this chapter used the adaptive process as a mechanism for erasing the third term and subsuming the cultural ancestor into the newly standardized ideas of Christian French national selfhood. As we will see in the next chapter, the need to remove the ‘foreign’ element of these ancient Greek characters and plots extended as the circulation of the stories did. As the plays of neoclassical France were taken up by imitators, translators, and adapters in other European nations, processes of adaptive change were similarly employed to conform these plays to local conventions—even to the point of attempting to erase the French contribution. In the coming chapter, we will see how the same localizing impulse that drove the processes of neoclassical French adaptation made those very plays unsuitable for import without alteration into other national theatrical traditions and contexts. The adaptations spawned by these adaptations were also to be employed in the service of a project of normalizing early modern cultural constructions, whether based in custom, science, religion, or the emergent nationalism that went hand-in-hand with European colonialism.

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