

3. Louise Routier-Guillemot

Andromache Ἀοιδός : Retelling the *Iliad* in Her Own Voice

ἐμπέφυκε γάρ
γυναιξὶ τέρψις τῶν παρεστώτων κακῶν
ἀνὰ στόμ' αἰεὶ καὶ διὰ γλώσσης ἔχειν
For deep-rooted in
Women is the delight to have our own present harms
Reach our mouth and cross our tongue
Euripides, *Andromache*, v. 93-5.

Euripides' *Andromache* sets a middle-aged woman (played by a male actor), a former princess reduced to slavery, compelled to share the bed of the son of the man who killed her husband. Such a change of the Homeric character who, in the mind of many Ancient and Modern spectators, embodied an ideal of feminine perfection and marital faith, has contributed to the mixed reception of the play. It is yet intrinsically part of Euripides' ποιήσις (and strength) to create a new version of well-known μῦθοι, inviting the spectator to reconsider, through the shift between ἔπος and drama, their views on the familiar figures and stories that build their imagery. In the *Andromache*, the poet (interested in 'typically female' subjects such as marriage and the status of women in the οἶκος), gives voice to a particularly eloquent heroin. In the prologue, Andromache recalls events that happened before and after the *Iliad*. Not only is she the guarantor of the coherence and intelligibility of the play : she reenacts the traumatic scene of her rapture in a deeply emotional sung part which offers us the only dactylic elegy preserved in Greek tragedy. She explicitly states that what we would characterize as a process of artistic sublimation belongs to women, doomed to survive the timespan of the ἔπος and to undergo perpetual gloryless hardships. We thus intend to explore the metapoetic dimension of Euripides' Andromache as a female ἀοιδός, speaking out her own experience in a first-person, fragmentary, agonistic counterpart to « Homer's » voice.

Bibliography

DIGGLE, James, *Euripides fabulae, vol. 1. Cyclops, Alcestis, Medea, Heraclidae, Hippolytus, Andromacha, Hecuba*, Oxford, Oxford Classical Texts, 1984.

ALEXIOU, Margaret, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1974.

DUÉ, Casey, « The Captive Woman in the House : Euripides' *Andromache* », in *The Captive Woman's Lament in Greek Tragedy*, Austin, 2006, p. 151-162.

FANTUZZI, Mario et PRETAGOSTINI, Roberto, *Struttura e storia dell'esametro greco*, Roma, Gruppo Editoriale Internazionale, 1995.

FOLEY, Helen P., *Female Acts in Greek Tragedy*, Princeton, 2001.

LORAU, Nicole, *La voix endeuillée. Essais sur la tragédie grecque*, Paris, Gallimard, 2000. NANCY, Claire, *Euripide et le parti des femmes*, Paris, Éditions Rue d'Ulm, 2016. SWIFT, Laura et CAREY, Chris, *Iambus and Elegy. New Approaches*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016.

BOWIE, Ewen L., « Lyric and Elegiac Poetry », p. 107-125.

LULLI, Laura, « Elegy and Epic. A Complex Relationship », p. 193-209.