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RECENSIONI

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Euripides and the Origins of Democratic «Anarchia»

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ABSTRACT: In this essay, I argue that the terms *anarchia* and *anarchos* had become associated with critiques of democracy before the final quarter of the fifth century BCE. I begin with a review of archaic and early classical uses of the term, with a particular focus on two instances in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. I then examine Euripides' two uses of *anarchia/anarchos*, one in *Hecuba* and the other in *Iphigenia at Aulis*. In each case, we see that the concept of anarchic behavior is associated with democratic bodies; that charges of *anarchia* are laid by characters who engage with critiques of democracy throughout the dramas; and that the term itself is embedded within discourses that are laden with the language and rhetoric of anti-democratic discourses found in Thucydides, Herodotus, and the Old Oligarch. Given that Euripidean references to *anarchia* are embedded within terminology that was already current in contemporary anti-democratic thought, I conclude that the concept of democracy's 'anarchic' tendencies had already been developed by the final quarter of the fifth century BCE.

KEYWORDS: Aeschylus; anarchy; anti-democratic rhetoric; democracy; Euripides – anarchia; democrazia; Eschilo; Euripide; retorica antidemocratica.

It has not been noticed that Euripides is the earliest author to invoke anarchy as a central argument against democracy – most scholars have suggested that Plato was the first to do so¹. But in fact, the manner in which Euripides handles the words *anarchos* and *anarchia* marks a radical shift in the meaning and application of these terms, and points to an early adoption of the notion of democratic 'anarchy'. Prior to Euripides, *anarchia* had been used almost strictly to refer to instances in which there was a literal absence of leadership, or to specific acts or general attitudes of insubordination. In Euripides, however, we see the term posited as a characteristic of democratic political bodies. Moreover, Euripides

¹ Gordon 2006, 86 traces the connection between democracy and anarchy back to Plato and Aristotle, while Schofield 2006, 130 argues that Plato's «insight into the pluralism of democracy and its potential for anarchy generates a powerful and original piece of socio-political analysis» (for a fuller discussion, see pp. 117-121).

embeds the term within discourses that are markedly and recognizably critical of democracy, and at times even oligarchic. This does not mean that Euripides himself coined the anti-democratic usage of the term, nor even that he endorsed those views². But the fact that he uses it in such rhetorically loaded contexts, and in such a casual manner, suggests that *anarchia* was already established as a code-word in anti-democratic discourse by the late fifth century BCE, anticipating by several decades Plato's discussion in the *Republic*.

1. ARCHAIC AND CLASSICAL DEFINITIONS OF «ANARCHIA»³

References to *anarchia* are rare in Greek literature prior to the fourth century. For the period before Euripides, the *TLG* finds only 10-12 appearances of either *anarchia* or its cognate *anarchos*. These instances show that it was used primarily to refer to a literal «lack of a leader» (*LSJ s.v. anarchia*) or «a condition in which the magisterial offices of the government are vacant»⁴. In the Catalogue of Ships, for example, Homer insists that Philoctetes' men «were not *anarchoi*» (*Il. II 726: οὐδ' οἱ ἄναρχοι ἔσαν*), since Medon had stepped up to fill in for the absent leader⁵. Similarly, Herodotus uses *anarchia* only once, and to refer to a band of Persian cavalry whose leader has fallen in battle (*Her. IX 23, 2*). More metaphorically, in Aeschylus' *Suppliants* (905-906), the Herald of Aegyptus reassures the chorus of Danaïdes that they will not have to complain of living in *anarchia*, for in fact they will have many rulers (*anaktes*)⁶. Outside of the literary realm, it was an Athenian custom to call periods without an eponymous Archon years of «*anarchia*»⁷, and

² For the sake of ease and variety, I use the terms 'anti-democratic' and 'oligarchic' more or less interchangeably in this paper. While this is to some extent an oversimplification – not all anti-democratic thought was oligarchic, nor was all oligarchic discourse anti-democratic – I follow Raaflaub's argument (1990, 38) that «democracy and oligarchy [...] could be perceived [in the fifth century] as two mutually exclusive partisan forms of government».

³ In delineating these definitions, I examine the usage of both *anarchia* and its cognate *anarchos* (i.e. that which is in a state of *anarchia*), and I limit my inquiry to sources that came before, during, or soon after Euripides' lifetime.

⁴ Ober 2008, 6.

⁵ Cf. also *Hom. Il. II 703*, in which Homer says precisely the same thing (οὐδ' οἱ ἄναρχοι ἔσαν) about the Phylaceans. These are the only two instances in which the *anarch-* root appears in Homer.

⁶ Along similar lines, cf. *Aesop. Fab. 1, 3* and *44, 1*.

⁷ See for example *Arist. Ath. Pol. 13, 1*. For a discussion of the nature of these «years of *anarchia*» in the early sixth century, see esp. Figueira 1984.

by the end of the fifth century, this status could be applied even to the «absence of any *properly constituted* office»⁸. Thus, despite the paucity of references in archaic and fifth-century sources, we may presume that the notion of institutional *anarchia* was nonetheless well established in the civic discourse of Euripides' audiences.

As early as the mid-fifth century, we also see *anarchia* used to describe the failure or refusal to obey the laws or officers of the state, or a more general situation of «lawlessness»⁹. The most famous example is Antigone's burial of Polyneices, which is referred to as *anarchia* by Creon in Sophocles' play (*Soph. Ant.* 672), and by Antigone herself in Aeschylus' *Septem* (1030)¹⁰. Thucydides uses *anarchia* to describe the disorder of the Syracusan army during its first engagement with the Athenians (VI 72, 4). Each of these anarchic moments (whether real or imagined) occur in direct opposition to the orders of some ruling party: Antigone violates Creon's decree that no one should bury Polyneices, while the *anarchia* in Thucydides takes place on the battlefield, and concerns the soldiers' response (or lack thereof) to their generals' commands¹¹. Nevertheless, in none of the above cases is it in any way evident that anarchic behavior is intrinsically related to democracy.

Two further Aeschylean references to *anarchia* have been related to democratic contexts, albeit not securely. In *Agamemnon*, Clytemnestra claims that she has sent Orestes away out of fear that some «*anarchia* of popular clamor¹² might overthrow the *boulē*» (*Ag.* 883-884: δημόθρους ἀναρχία / βουλήν καταρριψείεν). Aeschylus' characteristic vagueness thwarts easy interpretation of these lines, but *anarchia* emerges as a type of violent disobedience towards the *boulē*. And though it is not clear what this «*boulē*» represents, Beer has speculated that it is a subtle reference to the council of the Areopagus, which was «in imminent danger of a new attack» by radical democratic reformers (hence δημόθρους ἀναρχία)¹³. If this were the case, we would have a clear and early connec-

⁸ As defined by Lane 2017, 64 (italics in original).

⁹ This is the second definition provided by *LSJ*. Lane 2017 argues persuasively that the «lawlessness» of classical *anarchia* manifests itself strictly in relation to offices and officeholders.

¹⁰ The passage in *Septem* was likely a fourth century interpolation, and the unknown author's use of *anarchia* may – or may not – have been inspired by Sophocles. Cf. Hutchinson 1985, XLIII on the later authorship of vv. 1005-1078, and p. 214 on the uncertain relationship between this use of *anarchia* and that of Sophocles.

¹¹ I follow here in large part the arguments set forth by Lane 2017, 66.

¹² For the fundamentally untranslatable δημόθρους ἀναρχία, I use here a phrase suggested by Dodds 1973, 46.

¹³ Beer 1981, 65.

tion between *anarchia* and democracy, but in fact, there is little else in the text to suggest that Aeschylus is alluding to contemporary politics here¹⁴. Nevertheless, given that the *anarchia* is described as δημόθρους (literally, ‘*dēmos*-uttered’), we may at least say with certainty that Clytemnestra sees this sort of anarchy as people acting *en masse*, or as a *dēmos*. We thus see that by 458, Aeschylus can already use the terminology of *anarchia* to quickly suggest an idea of general and violent disobedience by a people within a *polis*.

Later in the trilogy, Athena advises the Athenians to honor that which is «neither anarchic nor despotic» (*Eum.* 696: τὸ μὴτ’ ἄναρχον μήτε δεσποτούμενον)¹⁵. While Athena does not specify what exactly she means by *anarchos* here, two things are explicit: it is a negative quality; and it is diametrically opposed to that which is «despotic» or tyrannical. Moreover, we may presume that the middle ground for which Athena advocates was in some way applicable to the Athenian democracy as it was constituted at that time¹⁶. Beyond this, little is certain. Lane has posited that «*to anarchon*» is not tied to any specific political context, but rather suggests «an absence of obedience to ruling officials»¹⁷. Marr reads these lines in the light of contemporary constitutional debates, with *anarchia* again representing the most «radical» democratic reforms that were (potentially) being proposed¹⁸. Dover, conversely, seems to take it for granted that Aeschylus was already using «*to anarchon*» as shorthand for «the oligarch’s description of democracy», but without elaborating further, nor providing any point of comparison besides Plato¹⁹. None of these interpretations are mutually exclusive, nor are they exhaustive; perhaps most importantly, each one is far from secure. The crucial point, however, is that the Aeschylean evidence is insufficient to prove with any certainty that ‘democratic *anarchia*’ was already current as a concept or code-word in anti-democratic discourse in the middle of the fifth cen-

¹⁴ And indeed most others have avoided ascribing to this *boulē* any specific reference to the Athenian institution, cf. e.g. Fartzoff 2017, 220 and Lane 2017, 66.

¹⁵ The chorus uses essentially the same formulation earlier in the play (*Eum.* 526-528), albeit in a less encouraging fashion.

¹⁶ Dover 1957, 233-235; Jones 1987, 75.

¹⁷ Lane 2017, 67. Accordingly, «tyranny is a kind of excrescence of ruling authority».

¹⁸ See Marr 1993, esp. 15-16. Dodds 1973 discusses the contemporary political context of the *Eumenides* more broadly, though not this specific line.

¹⁹ Dover 1957, 233. Dover seems to take it for granted that «*anarchia*» was already used as a critique of democracy in Aeschylus’ age, but he cites only Plato in conjunction with this statement, and he makes no further comment on the matter.

ture. What we can see, however, is that the seeds for a politicized and partisan use of the term had at least been planted.

2. «ANARCHIA» AMONG THE ACHAEANS: THE CASES OF EURIPIDEAN ANARCHY

In the entire Euripidean corpus, *anarchia/anarchos* can be found in only two instances, once in *Hecuba* (c. 424/3 BCE), and once in *Iphigenia at Aulis* (405 BCE). Given the rarity of the terminology, and the twenty years that separate its two appearances, it is surprising that the cases share so much in common: in both *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia at Aulis*, the accusations of anarchy are directed at the Achaean army; in each tragedy, the army had already been depicted as a democratic body, and at the very moment it is said to be anarchic, it is further specified that it is a naval army; and in both instances, the references to *anarchia* fall within a constellation of language or concepts that were typical of contemporary critiques of democracy. While the sample size is admittedly small, the striking similarities between Euripides' two uses of the term, and indeed the brevity with which he is able to make the point, suggest that he is drawing on a pre-existing concept of *anarchia* that saw it as a disorder of democratic societies.

I begin by discussing the similarities in context shared by *Hecuba* and *IA*, after which I examine each instance of Euripidean *anarchia* singly, focusing first on elements of the speakers' backgrounds, and then on the specific passages, that recall anti-democratic discourses. Both plays are set within the context of an Achaean military camp – what David Carter calls «the *polis*' military analogue»²⁰ – and in each case Euripides goes out of his way to paint the processes of these military camps as democratic. In *Hecuba*, we see early on, and at length, that the Achaeans decide to sacrifice Hecuba's daughter Polyxena by voting in what is undeniably a democratic «assembly» (*Hec.* 107: πλήρει ξυνόδῳ): different speakers take turns presenting different stances on the issue to the army, whose vote (cf. *Hec.* 196: ψήφῳ) is decisive²¹. Similarly, in *IA* we learn that the common soldiers (the *mesos*) have chosen Agamemnon as their general after he had conducted a veritable political campaign to win

²⁰ Carter 2010, 49.

²¹ For more on this scene and its democratic nature, see Carter 2013, 34-39. For a broader discussion of the democratic and «collectivist» nature of the Achaean army in *Hecuba*, and its importance for the framework of the play, see Kovacs 1987, 81-83.

that role (cf. *IA* 337-342), a process that would have been familiar to the Athenian audience²². In other words, in both *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia at Aulis*, Euripides ostentatiously replaces Homer's strict military hierarchy with an army that is fundamentally democratic.

3. ANARCHIA IN «HECUBA»

Upon hearing the report of Polyxena's sacrifice, Hecuba expresses concern for the safety of her daughter's corpse amidst an Achaean army with a penchant for anarchy. Just before she lays this charge, however, Hecuba emphasizes her particular worldview (*Hec.* 596-598):

ὁ μὲν πονηρὸς οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν κακός,
ὁ δ' ἐσθλὸς ἐσθλὸς οὐδὲ συμφορᾶς ὑπο
φύσιν διέφθειρ' ἀλλὰ χρηστός ἐστ' αἰεί
the worthless man is nothing if not bad,
the noble man is noble and always good;
his nature does not wilt when bad luck strikes²³

Here, Hecuba is trying to make sense of Polyxena's tremendous courage in the face of death, and to do so she directly relates the 'nobility' of Polyxena's behavior to that of her background. Moreover, she does so using specialized and indeed contentious vocabulary. The *esthlos/kakos* dichotomy had long been a hallmark of aristocratic discourse, with the two terms assuming connotations of both status (*esthlos* being aristocratic, *kakos* being lower-class) and moral value (*esthlos* being 'good'; *kakos* meaning 'bad')²⁴. By the time of *Hecuba*, the terms had become the subject of some debate: in Euripides' *Electra* (c. 420) for example, a character directly refutes the traditional links between class and moral status by stating that «there are many of noble birth who are *kakoi*»²⁵. Given her own status, it is implicit that Hecuba sees class and morality

²² We know all too little about how Athenian *stratēgoi* were chosen, beyond the fact that they were elected by the people annually. On the question in general, cf. Piérart 1974, Rhodes 1981, and Hamel 1998, 14-23. Regarding the possibility that Athenians held special elections in which they would choose one or more generals for specific expeditions, cf. *IG I³ 93b 2-3* (= Meiggs - Lewis 78b; cited by Rhodes 1981, 130), and Hamel 1998, 15-19.

²³ Unless otherwise noted, all Greek texts are taken from editions of Oxford Classical Texts, and all translations are by author.

²⁴ See esp. Cerri 1968 for a full analysis of these terms in Theognis and Pindar.

²⁵ Eur. *El.* 551: πολλοὶ γὰρ ὄντες εὐγενεῖς εἰσιν κακοί. See Donlan 1978, 102 on this passage, and *passim* on the evolution of «social vocabulary» in late fifth-century Athens.

as linked, but this is confirmed just a few lines later, when she avows that «noble upbringing contains the instruction of goodness [*esthlou*]»²⁶. Implicit in that reasoning, but explicit in the passage quoted above, is that the masses are of dubious ethical and moral quality. The fact that Hecuba's worldview is aristocratic becomes, at this point, quite obvious²⁷.

And it is at this very point that Hecuba raises her fear about the potential for *anarchia* among the Achaeans (*Hec.* 604-608):

σὺ δ' ἔλθε καὶ σήμηνον Ἀργείοις τάδε,
μὴ θιγγάνειν μοι μηδέν' ἀλλ' εἴργειν ὄχλον
τῆς παιδός. ἔν τοι μυρίῳ στρατεύματι
ἀκόλαστος ὄχλος ναυτικὴ τ' ἀναρχία
κρείσσων πυρός, κακὸς δ' ὁ μὴ τι δρῶν κακόν.

You then [Talthybius], go tell the Argives this:
no one is to touch her, and keep the mob away
from my daughter. For within a massive army
the mob is unbridled, the *anarchia* of sailors
greater than fire, and evil is he who does no evil.

Despite Talthybius' insistence that the Achaean army is essentially according Polyxena a hero's burial (*Hec.* 571-580)²⁸, Hecuba is clearly concerned that her daughter's corpse will be violated. As Michelini argues, this could be understood as a reaction to the highly eroticized description of Polyxena's death that Hecuba (and the audience) had just heard²⁹. But Hecuba does not articulate her fear in relation to the specifics that she has learned from Talthybius, but rather as a general concern that the mass of the army is incapable of behaving properly. In other words, very little within the text justifies this claim on Hecuba's part, and

²⁶ *Hec.* 600-601: ἔχει γε μέντοι καὶ τὸ θρεφθῆναι καλῶς / δίδαξιν ἐσθλοῦ.

²⁷ On this passage, see also Kovacs 1987, 97-98 and Stanton 1995, 15, who calls this «as bold a claim as one could seek that birth into a noble family should be expected to produce morally admirable behavior». On Hecuba's aristocratic ideals more generally, see Stanton 1995; Battezzato 2018, 9-14.

²⁸ On the burial, see Kovacs 1987, 97 and Gregory 1999, 114-115.

²⁹ Michelini 1987, 166-168. *Contra* see Kovacs 1987, 98, who merely notes that this «suspicion seems unjust, the less attractive side of [her] aristocratic code». Following Page 1934, 67, Mossman 1995, 246 actually argues for interpolation on the basis of this seemingly paradoxical statement. But this ignores the fact that Hecuba's characterization of the army here is entirely in keeping with the manner in which she understands the dynamics of power to function among the Achaeans, and that she makes remarks of a similar nature later in the play, esp. at 864-869 (discussed below).

it appears to be the result of pure bias on her part³⁰: as with her analysis of Polyxena's nobility, the general perspective in which Hecuba's *anarchia* is rooted is one that is hostile to the lower classes.

Moreover, Euripides signals that her notion of *anarchia* is not simply the product of an aristocratic viewpoint, but indeed an anti-democratic one, for he surrounds the term with very specific, and in some cases coded, language. Most obviously, Hecuba lends a veneer of democracy to the unruliness of the Achaean army by specifying that their *anarchia* is *nautikē* – related to the fact they are sailors. Regardless of how we understand the connection between the development of Athenian democracy and the increasing stature of the navy in the early fifth century³¹, it is clear that at least some of Euripides' contemporaries³² considered there to be a strong link (Ps.-Xen. *Ath. Pol.* 1, 2):

πρῶτον μὲν οὖν τοῦτο ἐρῶ, ὅτι δίκαιοι αὐτόθι καὶ οἱ πένητες καὶ ὁ δῆμος πλεόν ἔχειν τῶν γενναίων καὶ τῶν πλουσίων διὰ τόδε, ὅτι ὁ δῆμός ἐστιν ὁ ἐλαύνων τὰς ναῦς καὶ ὁ τὴν δύναμιν περιτιθεὶς τῇ πόλει.³³

First then I'll say this – that both the poor and the *dēmos* justifiably have more [at Athens] than the well-born and rich, for this reason: because it is the *dēmos* that works the ships and bestows power on the city.

The Old Oligarch is by no means a reliable reporter of prevailing sentiments in democratic Athens, but the controversial aspect of this statement is not that there is a relationship between the Athenian democracy and the naval manpower required to maintain the empire, but rather

³⁰ Indeed, as numerous commentators have noted, Hecuba is essentially voicing standard oligarchic complaints about the «indiscipline of the masses». Cf. Collard 1991, 163 (quoted here), but also Gregory 1999, 119 and Battezzato 2018, 153.

³¹ For different views on the precise nature of this connection, see Ober 2007, 99-101, Raaflaub 2007, 121-123 and (arguing against the existence of a historical relationship) Ceccarelli 1993. The lines of the debate generally revolve not only around whether a relationship existed between the expansion of the Athenian navy and the rise of democracy, but also whether the increasing importance of the navy had a causative effect on the advent of democracy, and to what extent.

³² A vast range of dates has been proposed for the Old Oligarch, but most fall within the second half of the fifth century BCE, an assessment with which I agree. For overviews of the question (and the answers provided), see Marr - Rhodes 2008, 3-6 and 31-32, and Tuci 2011, 35-41. For lengthier discussions, cf. Treu 1967, 1947-1959, Forrest 1970, and Tuci 2011, who establishes strong arguments in favor of a date between 425 and 413. *Contra* see for example Hornblower 2000, who argues that the document was in fact composed in the fourth century BCE by an author masquerading as a fifth-century oligarchic sympathizer. But even Hornblower's minority view would still suggest that fifth-century Athenians saw a connection between the navy and the existence of democracy, at least presuming that the impersonation was a competent one.

³³ I follow here the text printed in Marr - Rhodes 2008.

that this relationship ‘justifies’ the hegemony of the *dēmos*³⁴. Thus, it is likely that the navy and democracy were commonly seen as intrinsically connected, an inference that is further warranted by Aristotle’s repeated affirmation of the concept³⁵. Hecuba’s qualification of the Achaean army’s *anarchia* as «*nautikē*» thus reminds the audience of its democratic constitution, and is a subtle suggestion that the soldiers’ potential for unruly behavior is rooted therein.

In fact, Hecuba’s use of the word *anarchia* is only one element in a constellation of terms that were characteristic of anti-democratic rhetoric. Thus, she refers to the Achaean army as an *ochlos* twice in very short order (lines 605 and 607). The word was a relatively common one and could be used to refer to any large group, whether it be of people or (for example) ships. But by the second half of the fifth century it had become laden with negative connotations, taking on the meaning of ‘mob’³⁶. Thucydides’ use of *ochlos* is revealing. While it is not necessarily a derogatory term for the historian³⁷, we regularly see him place *ochlos* in the mouths of speakers advancing critiques of democracy, such as Alcibiades when he is disavowing his democratic past at Sparta³⁸, and at moments when he wishes to stress the mob mentality of democratic bodies³⁹. Thucydides even suggests that the oligarchs of 411 were specifically concerned about the mob-like qualities of an *ochlos* of sailors (VIII 72, 2):

δείσαντες μή, ὅπερ ἐγένετο, ναυτικός ὄχλος οὐτ’ αὐτὸς μένειν ἐν τῷ ὀλιγαρχικῷ κόσμῳ ἐθέλη, σφᾶς τε μὴ ἐκείθην ἀρξάμενου τοῦ κακοῦ μεταστήσωσιν.

[The leaders of the coup] feared that an *ochlos* of sailors would not wish to remain under an oligarchic order, and that after starting trouble there [i.e. at sea] they would overthrow them; and this was precisely what happened.

In the minds of the oligarchs, the very existence of a large groups of sailors portends trouble (*kakou*), an outlook that is signaled, just as in

³⁴ On this point, see Nakategawa 1995.

³⁵ Cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1274a, 12-15; 1304a, 21-24; and *Ath. Pol.* 27, 1.

³⁶ A secondary meaning of *ὄχλος* is, in fact, ‘annoyance’ or ‘trouble’, while derivatives such as *ὀχλέω*, *ὀχλησις*, *ὀχληρός*, etc., are used almost exclusively to convey that negative meaning. All this suggests that, even though the first secure case of *ὄχλος* meaning ‘mob’ does not occur before the second half of the fifth century, the word already contained negative connotations at a much earlier time.

³⁷ Saïd 2013, 202 and Lush 2015, 214 call it «pejorative», but my sense is that Thucydides uses it frequently enough in a neutral manner (e.g. I 80, 3 and III 87, 3) to suggest that it is not strictly derogatory.

³⁸ Thuc. VI 89, 5, on which more below, but see also Saïd 2013, 203.

³⁹ Thuc. IV 28, 3; VI 63, 2; VIII 86, 5. Cf. Hunter 1988, esp. 21-25.

Hecuba, by the use of the term *ochlos* to designate this group⁴⁰. Here, of course, the nature of the trouble is different – a (counter-)revolution rather than the defilement of a body – but it is the confluence of language and perspective that is most important.

At other times, Thucydides leans towards the use of *ochlos* in order to differentiate masses from elites, and to cast the former in an unflattering light. For example, in response to Alcibiades' claims that the Athenians could win the assistance of the Persians if they were to abolish the democracy and institute an oligarchy, Thucydides reports the following reactions among the elite and non-elite members of the fleet at Samos (Thuc. VIII 48, 1-3):

πολλὰς ἐλπίδας εἶχον αὐτοὶ θ' ἑαυτοῖς οἱ δυνατώτατοι τῶν πολιτῶν τὰ πράγματα, οἵπερ καὶ ταλαιπωροῦνται μάλιστα, ἐς ἑαυτοὺς περιποιήσιν καὶ τῶν πολεμίων ἐπικρατήσιν [...] καὶ ὁ μὲν ὄχλος, εἰ καὶ τι παραντίκα ἤχθετο τοῖς πρασσομένοις, διὰ τὸ εὐπορον τῆς ἐλπίδος τοῦ παρὰ βασιλέως μισθοῦ ἠσύχαζεν·

The most powerful citizens themselves, who had suffered the most, had high hopes that they could put these matters into their own hands and prevail over their enemies [...] and the *ochlos*, although at first it objected to the arrangements being made, ultimately was soothed by the hope of obtaining easy pay from the Persian King.

Here, *ochlos* is used to designate only the lower-class citizens who were not naturally inclined to support an oligarchy. And while the elites do not exactly emerge as beacons of ethical thought – their own political interests are obviously at stake – at least they are said to consider the broader implications on Athenian war policy. The *ochlos*, conversely, is moved only by the hope of a payout. Moreover, later in the passage, when Thucydides is presenting the views of allied states who would prefer for Athens to maintain a democracy, he refers to the masses not as an *ochlos* but as the *dēmos*, a decidedly more neutral term. *Ochlos* thus appears to be a word that Thucydides gravitates towards when giving voice to anti-democratic lines of thought.

In fact, a similar phenomenon is visible in Euripides as well. In *Suppliants*, performed around the same time as *Hecuba*, a famous debate takes place between Theseus, arguing on behalf of democracy, and a pro-monarchy Theban herald who sharply attacks it. Once again, we find a contrast in the use of vocabulary. While Theseus advocates for Athenian

⁴⁰ See also Saïd 2013, 203: «ὄχλος appears also twice in Book 8 [i.e. VIII 72, 2 and VIII 92, 11], in passages expressing the viewpoint of the Four Hundred and their contempt for the 'mob'».

democracy because «the *dēmos* rules by turns of annual successions», the Theban herald boasts that his city «is ruled by a single man, not by an *ochlos*»⁴¹. As in Thucydides, we see an alternation between «*ochlos*» and the more neutral «*dēmos*», and this time, the vocabulary exchange is performed in close proximity and by overtly partisan speakers. In other words, we see another selective use of *ochlos*, and we can thus begin to perceive a general tendency for anti-democratic speakers to lean towards the term when constructing their critiques.

In this light, Hecuba's use of *ochlos* to describe the Achaean army at *Hec.* 605 appears to be a loaded one. The fact that in the following instance (*Hec.* 607), she calls it an *akolastos ochlos* is even more significant. Indeed, the use of *akolasia* and *akolastos* in reference to large groups – whether it be a *dēmos* or an *ochlos* – appears to be a veritable hallmark of critiques of democracy⁴². In Herodotus, for example, the only mention of *akolasia* occurs in the famous constitutional debate⁴³, and it is voiced by Megabyzus, who promotes the oligarchic mode of government (*Her.* III 81, 1-2):

ὀμίλου γὰρ ἀχρηίου οὐδὲν ἐστὶ ἀξυνετώτερον οὐδὲ ὕβριστότερον. καίτοι τυράννου ὕβριν φεύγοντας ἄνδρας ἐς δήμου ἀκολάστου ὕβριν πεσεῖν ἐστὶ οὐδαμῶς ἀνασχετόν.

For nothing is more stupid and violent than a useless mob, and it would surely be utterly unbearable for men escaping the violence of a tyrant to succumb to the violence of an *akolastos dēmos*.

In order to argue in favor of oligarchy, Megabyzus must first rebut the previous speech in favor of democracy. Within this context, we learn that what is to be feared most is the *hubris* that results from the *akolasia* of the *dēmos*. On the most basic level, these words not only belong to an oligarchic critique of democracy, they are meant to be recognized as such by Herodotus' audience. The fact that Herodotus feels no need to have Megabyzus substantiate this claim suggests that the accusation is

⁴¹ Theseus at 406-407 (δῆμος δ' ἀνάσσει διαδοχαῖσιν ἐν μέρει / ἐνιαυσίαισιν) and the Theban at 411 (ἐνὸς πρὸς ἀνδρός, οὐκ ὄχλῳ κρατύνεται).

⁴² Dover 1965, 90, defines *akolasia* as «the opposite of *sōphrosunē* [and ...] a characteristic of democracy in the eyes of its critics», while Gregory 1999, 119 notes that in using it Hecuba is «voic[ing] the disdain of the undisciplined mob that was associated with the oligarchic point of view in fifth-century Athens».

⁴³ Even though this episode occurs in a Persian context, the discussion is steeped in language and ideas that «belong to the Greek intellectual world» (Evans 1981, 80). More recently, on the 'Greekness' of the arguments presented see Pelling 2002 (for a bibliography regarding this point see p. 125, n. 7).

one that would come (or be seen as coming) naturally to the mouth of an oligarch⁴⁴.

Thucydides' Alcibiades, in his speech to the Spartans following his defection from Athens in 415, also resorts to an overt critique of democracy⁴⁵, and he too does so by emphasizing the *akolasia* of the democratic body politic (Thuc. VI 89, 4-5):

τῆς πόλεως δημοκρατουμένης τὰ πολλὰ ἀνάγκη ἦν τοῖς παροῦσιν ἔπεσθαι. τῆς δὲ ὑπαρχούσης ἀκολασίας ἐπειρώμεθα μετριώτεροι ἐς τὰ πολιτικά εἶναι. ἄλλοι δ' ἦσαν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πάλαι καὶ νῦν οἱ ἐπὶ τὰ πονηρότερα ἐξῆγον τὸν ὄχλον· οἷπερ καὶ ἐμὲ ἐξήλασαν.

When the city had a democratic government, it was necessary to adapt to the situation in most respects. But in our political activity we attempted to be more moderate than the prevailing intemperance [*akolasia*]. There were those in early times and present who steered the crowd [*ochlos*] in evil directions, the same men who banished me.⁴⁶

Working to explain his prior relationship to the Athenian democracy, Alcibiades claims that his efforts had been directed at moderating the «prevailing *akolasia*»; in other words, to help the *dēmos* overcome a shortcoming. He then contrasts himself to his political rivals who had led the people in «evil directions». It is implicit that these «evil directions» are related to the people's *akolasia*: either the «prevailing *akolasia*» makes the Athenians easy prey for leaders who wish to lead them down the wrong path, or the people themselves prefer that path, and leaders less capable than Alcibiades indulge them. It is significant that it is at this very moment that Alcibiades deploys the term *ochlos*⁴⁷, as we thus find further confirmation of its anti-democratic connotations. And like Megabyzus, Alcibiades provides no evidence or examples of democratic *akolasia*; the term itself and the context in which it appears are sufficient to make the point. Indeed, the notion that a democratic body was *ako-*

⁴⁴ See e.g. Pelling 2002, 142: «Megabyzus' main function is to take out many of the more obvious points to make about democracy – its hybriistic capriciousness, for instance – and get them out of the way».

⁴⁵ Alcibiades even goes so far as to declare democracy an «acknowledged folly» (VI 89, 6: ὁμολογουμένης ἀνοίας). On the rhetorical ends and means of Alcibiades' proem, in which he mainly tries to qualify his relations with the Athenian democracy and to persuade the Spartans that they share common ground, see esp. Debnar 2001, 204-207.

⁴⁶ Tr. Lattimore 1999.

⁴⁷ At VI 89, 4, before embarking on his full-fledged critique of democracy, he had used *dēmos* and then *plēthos*. On these contrasts in Alcibiades' terminology, see Debnar 2001, 206, n. 14.

lastos simply appears to be a marker of anti-democratic rhetoric in the late fifth century.

To return to Hecuba's fear of the *anarchia* of the Achaean army, it is clear that it must be seen in this rhetorical context. By calling it an *anarchia nautikē*, she subtly but effectively links this disruptive behavior to the democratic nature of the Achaean army. The parallel declaration that the *ochlos* is *akolastos* confirms that her words hail from the realm of anti-democratic discourse. Finally, much like Alcibiades, Hecuba alludes to the possibility that the passions of the mob may be tempered when she orders Talthybius to tell the Argives to «keep the mob away» from Polyxena (*Hec.* 605). Hecuba sees the *ochlos/dēmos* as tending towards *akolasia*, and a concomitant necessity that its leaders restrain them or be «more measured». Both she and Alcibiades depict the same social dynamic and in strikingly similar terms, and we can see that Hecuba firmly embeds her charge of *anarchia* in anti-democratic language.

In the following episode, Hecuba moves beyond criticism of the democratic mass to a more comprehensive statement of hostility towards democracy. But after Agamemnon rejects her request to intercede against Polymestor on the grounds that he does not wish to be «reproached by the Achaeans» (*Hec.* 863: *Ἀχαιοὺς εἰ διαβληθήσομαι*), Hecuba returns to a (subtle) critique of democracy (*Hec.* 864-869):

οὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἔστ' ἐλεύθερος·
ἢ χρημάτων γὰρ δοῦλός ἐστιν ἢ τύχης
ἢ πλῆθος αὐτὸν πόλεος ἢ νόμων γραφαὶ
εἴργουσι χρῆσθαι μὴ κατὰ γνώμην τρόποις.
ἐπεὶ δὲ ταρβείς τῷ τ' ὄγλω πλέον νέμεις,
ἐγὼ σε θήσω τοῦδ' ἐλεύθερον φόβου.

There is no mortal who is free,
for he is a slave either to money or to fate,
or the city masses or written laws
bar him from using his own good judgment.
But since you tremble and cater so much to the mob,
I shall set you free of this fear.

Scholars have certainly recognized the «aristocratic» tenor of Hecuba's comments⁴⁸, but the extent to which Hecuba draws on oligarchic lines of thought has yet to be properly emphasized. On a general level, the argument that «no mortal is free» runs counter to the most basic of democratic ideals. And in order to defend her denial of freedom, Hecuba

⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. Gregory 1999, 148.

employs arguments⁴⁹ that were mobilized in the fifth century against the democratic attempt to monopolize the concept of *eleutheria*⁵⁰. In particular, the idea that an individual is not free because he is restrained by the masses mirrors Brasidas' description of democracy as «enslaving the minority to everyone»⁵¹. This reasoning was characteristic of the «oligarchic» perception that in a democracy, the elites, despite being «especially or even exclusively capable of governing [...] were 'enslaved' by the will of the whole polis»⁵².

Hecuba's suggestion that the «written laws» function as an oppressive force is, if anything, even more inflammatory. It is a deliberate jab at the democratic notion of *isonomia*, especially considering the fact that in one of the earliest extant defenses of democracy, Euripides himself stated that democratic *poleis* were based on these same «written laws»⁵³. Finally, by accusing Agamemnon of «cater[ing] so much to the mob», Hecuba essentially quotes (or vice-versa, perhaps) the Old Oligarch's complaint that the Athenians «deal out more [*pleon nemousi*] to the poor, wretched, and common people» than to the upper classes⁵⁴. In short, just as she did when accusing the Achaeans of anarchic behavior, when she suggests that Agamemnon is powerless Hecuba draws deeply on concepts and language familiar from anti-democratic discourses. All this suggests that Euripides has molded her as a character whose perspective is openly hostile to democracy.

To summarize, in the first half of *Hecuba* we find ample evidence that the Achaean army is conceived of as a democratic body, and that Hecuba's outlook is fundamentally anti-democratic. Given that she couches her reference to «*nautikē anarchia*» in language that is thoroughly elitist, it is clear that her concept of *anarchia* is rooted in these sentiments. This

⁴⁹ I set aside here Hecuba's first two points (slavery to money and to fate) insofar as they appear to be universal (Gregory 1999, 148 calls them «private»), and as such do not belong to any single form of discourse.

⁵⁰ On the democratic monopolization of the concept of 'freedom', see Raaflaub 1983, esp. 520-524.

⁵¹ Thuc. IV 86, 4: τὸ ἔλασσον τοῖς πᾶσι δουλώσασαι. This phrase has generated a variety of translations and some debate about its meaning – Raaflaub 1990, 38, for example, translates it as «enslavement [...] of the few to all». For an overview, see Hornblower 1996, 281-282.

⁵² Raaflaub 1983, 525; for a similar argument, see Raaflaub 1990, 38.

⁵³ Cf. Eur. *Supp.* 433-437. Collard 1975, 441, points out that this is the only «explicit» mention of «[w]ritten law as a guarantee of democracy» in the fifth century, but he also notes that the «[l]ack of direct evidence for this idea earlier is probably an accident».

⁵⁴ Ps.-Xen. *Ath. Pol.* 1, 4: πλεον νέμουσι τοῖς πονηροῖς καὶ πένησι καὶ δημοτικοῖς ἢ τοῖς χρηστοῖς.

does not mean that Euripides is constructing a critique of democracy. On the contrary, the Achaean army at no point confirms Hecuba's suspicions – indeed their behavior belies them. What we do see, however, is that Euripides is able to easily fit the term *anarchia* into the context of anti-democratic speech. Were this anomalous, we might not give it another thought. But the fact that he returns, later in his career, to the same formulation, suggests that he is in fact drawing on critiques of democracy that were current in Athens.

4. ANARCHIA AT AULIS

The other instance of Euripidean *anarchia* is, if anything, even bleaker in its exposition. As noted above, *Iphigenia at Aulis* creates a dramatic context that is strikingly similar to that of *Hecuba*. Once again, the action unfolds within an Achaean army camp whose processes are decidedly democratic – Agamemnon had campaigned for and been elected to his position at the head of the army (cf. *IA* 337-342)⁵⁵. And once again, the army's *anarchia* is mentioned by an aristocratic woman (Clytemnestra) pleading on behalf of her (this time living) daughter. Clytemnestra's subscription to aristocratic values is perhaps less explicit than Hecuba's, but it is nevertheless visible. Moreover, it is expressed within the context of considerable tensions between the aristocratic leaders and the mass of the army that are developed throughout the play.

Brian Lush has recently addressed at length the «drama's preoccupation with the power and influence of the Achaean army», particularly through the lens of the words and actions of its «aristocratic leaders»⁵⁶. These issues run throughout the play. Twice, Agamemnon suggests that he has no choice but to sacrifice Iphigenia because if he refuses, the army will simply kill him and his family (cf. *IA* 528-535, 1264-1268). When Achilles actually does try to prevent the sacrifice, the Achaean army rises up against him and threatens to stone him to death (cf. *IA* 1345-1367, on which more below). The only Achaean elite who appears to have any control over the army is Odysseus, but even his authority is tenuous: we

⁵⁵ The text of *IA* is notorious for the presence of numerous interpolations. Here I use as a guideline Diggle's subdivision of the text into four categories according to his estimation of their probabilities of authenticity (see Diggle 1994, 358). Specifically, unless otherwise noted, all the passages discussed in this paper will belong to the two categories Diggle believes most likely to be authentic («fortasse Euripidei» and «fortasse non Euripidei»).

⁵⁶ Lush 2015.

learn that he has been «chosen willingly» (*IA* 1364: αἰρεθεὶς ἐκόν) to lead the army in their quest to drag off Iphigenia, a phrase that suggests he is, at least on some level, beholden to the army⁵⁷. Finally, the army is constantly on the lips of the elites who appear on stage⁵⁸, with five references to the army as an *ochlos*, often in a manner that explicitly draws attention to its violent or repressive nature⁵⁹. Among these is one that is strikingly reminiscent of *Hecuba*, for like Hecuba before him, Menelaus rebukes Agamemnon because «one should not fear the army too much» (*IA* 517: οὔτοι χρῆ λίαν ταρβεῖν ὄχλον)⁶⁰. In short, throughout *IA*, anxieties about a democratic body politic abound.

As for Clytemnestra, her first act upon entering the stage is to bring up Achilles' noble lineage, a notion she expresses with the same loaded adjective (*esthlos*) that Hecuba does⁶¹. More compellingly, in her conversation with Achilles she follows Menelaus (and by extension Hecuba) by criticizing Agamemnon's excessive fear of the army (*IA* 1012: λίαν ταρβεῖ στρατόν – «he fears the army too much»). Finally, as the play draws to a close, Clytemnestra's succinct judgment of the army's attempt on Achilles' life is that «the multitude is a terrible evil» (*IA* 1357: τὸ πολὺ γὰρ δεινὸν κακόν). While she doesn't engage in the same lengthy, aristocratic rhetoric that Hecuba does, her hostility towards the masses is nonetheless evident, and in formulating it, she too draws on the language and concepts of contemporary critiques of democracy.

Such are the contexts in which we must understand Clytemnestra's attempt to persuade Achilles to intercede on Iphigenia's behalf. Here, even though Clytemnestra's presence among the Achaean *ochlos* is inherently uncomfortable⁶², she nevertheless feels the need to emphasize her plight by characterizing the army as *nautikos* and *anarchos* (*IA* 913-915):

⁵⁷ I follow in large part the conclusion in Lush 2015, 217 that «Odysseus has been granted his position [...] so that he may help to ensure the accomplishment of the army's demands».

⁵⁸ Lush 2015, 214 notes that «words for mass, army, or the assembled Greek force occur in *IA* in greater abundance than in any other extant tragedy».

⁵⁹ As when Agamemnon claims to be a «slave» to the *ochlos* at *IA* 450, but see also 517, 526, 1338.

⁶⁰ The formulation is not exactly the same as in *Hec.* 868 (ἐπεὶ δὲ ταρβεῖς τῷ τ' ὄχλῳ πλέον νέμεις), but both share the *tarbeō-ochlos* combination, and the sentiment is analogous.

⁶¹ Cf. *IA* 609 and 625. Even though the authenticity of that passage has been (justifiably) doubted, it is likely that the interpolator was drawing on other aspects of Clytemnestra's speech, and perhaps even appearance, that suggest this elite concern for lineage. Indeed, in the following episode she peppers Agamemnon with questions about Achilles' *genos* (*IA* 695-710).

⁶² *IA* 735: οὐ καλὸν ἐν ὄχλῳ σ' ἐξομιλεῖσθαι στρατοῦ.

ἀφῖγμαί δ', ὥσπερ εἰσορᾶς, γυνή
ναυτικὸν στράτευμ' ἀναρχὸν κἀπὶ τοῖς κακοῖς θρασύ,
χρήσιμον δ', ὅταν θέλωσιν.

As you see, I come as a woman
to a naval army that is *anarchos* and eager for wickedness,
though useful, whenever they wish to be.⁶³

These words and sentiments are, or course, remarkably similar to Hecuba's: each uses the coded «*nautikos*» to allude to the democratic make-up of the army; and each links the army's 'naval' nature to its tendency for *anarchia* and bad behavior. Indeed, a direct comparison of these lines with *Hec.* 606-608 shows that both speakers use the terms *strateuma*, *nautikos*, and a pithy *kakos*-formulation to suggest the army's predilection for villainy. And while Clytemnestra's statement is less loaded than Hecuba's – there is no mention of the *ochlos akolastos* – the play's constant ruminations about the Achaeans' capacity for violence lurk in the background. Above all, what we see here, just as in *Hecuba*, is that the term *anarchos* is capable of concisely conveying the notion that a democratic mass is inherently threatening.

Clytemnestra does grant a measure of redemption to this democratic army, stating that it can be useful (*chrēsimon*) when it wants to be. Despite the vaguely complimentary nature of the comment, this too ties into contemporary critiques of democracy. The Old Oligarch, for example, spends much of his essay showing how effective the Athenian *dēmos* is at accomplishing its aims, whether those be the provision of public baths (2, 10) or the insistence that allies travel to Athens to settle legal disputes (1, 16-18). This dynamic holds true even in the field of international relations: if the Athenians make an alliance that proves inconvenient, «the *dēmos* finds myriad excuses not to do anything they don't want» (2, 17: προφάσεις μυρίας ἐξήγρηκε τοῦ μὴ ποιεῖν ὅσα ἂν μὴ βούλωνται). Describing events contemporary to *IA*, and with a perspective that is similarly hostile to democracy, Xenophon states that «the multitude shouted that it would be terrible if someone were to forbid the *dēmos* from doing whatever it wanted»⁶⁴. Naturally, the will of the *dēmos* prevails in his narration. The Old Oligarch and Xenophon thus

⁶³ Diggle has doubts about the authenticity of 915 (he places it in the second-lowest level of likely authenticity), but Kovacs 2003, 90-91 believes that all three of these lines belonged to the original performance.

⁶⁴ Xen. *Hell.* I 7, 12: τὸ δὲ πλῆθος ἐβόα δεινὸν εἶναι εἰ μὴ τις ἑάσει τὸν δῆμον πράττειν ὃ ἂν βούληται. The context here is the debate, after the naval battle at Arginousae, over whether the *dēmos* would be allowed to summarily prosecute and execute all their generals.

state at length what Clytemnestra articulates in half a line, and while the latter's optimism does not match the cynicism of the first two, all three present the idea that a democratic mass will act effectively according to its desires.

Ultimately, and unlike in *Hecuba*, Clytemnestra's fears about the army's anarchic nature are realized. Achilles promises to intervene, but only if Clytemnestra cannot persuade Agamemnon to change his mind. And as the tragedy draws to a close, such an intervention becomes inevitable. When Achilles reappears, however, he reports that the Achaean soldiers have not been cooperative (IA 1346-1353):

Ach.: δεῖν' ἐν Ἀργείοις βοᾶται	Clyt.: τίς βοή; σήμαινέ μοι.
Ach.: ἀμφὶ σῆς παιδός [...]	Clyt.: πονηρῶν εἶπας οἰωνὸν λόγον.
Ach.: ὡς χρεῶν σφάζαι νιν.	Clyt.: †κούδεις ἐναντία λέγεις;†
Ach.: ἐς θόρυβον ἐγὼ τιν' αὐτὸς ἤλυθον [...]	Clyt.: τίν', ὦ ξένε;
Ach.: σῶμα λευσθῆναι πέτροισι.	Clyt.: μὲν κόρην σφάζων ἐμήν;
Ach.: αὐτὸ τοῦτο.	Clyt.: τίς δ' ἂν ἐτλη σώματος τοῦ σοῦ θγαῖν;
Ach.: πάντες Ἕλληγες.	Clyt.: στρατὸς δὲ Μυρμιδῶν οὐ σοι παρήν;
Ach.: πρῶτος ἦν ἐκεῖνος ἐχθρὸς.	
Ach.: The Argives are shouting terrible things.	Clyt.: Shouting what? Tell me!
Ach.: About your child.	Clyt.: The words you speak are an omen of evil.
Ach.: That they must slaughter her.	Clyt.: And no one speaks against this?
Ach.: I myself risked it against their uproar.	Clyt.: Risked what?
Ach.: Death by stoning.	Clyt.: For defending my child?
Ach.: Exactly that.	Clyt.: Who would dare lay their hands on you?
Ach.: All the Greeks.	Clyt.: And the Myrmidon army wasn't there for you?
Ach.: They were my first enemy.	

It is hard to imagine a more obvious and extreme example of 'disobedience to officials' – the type of «lawlessness» that Lane has identified as a marker of classical Greek *anarchia*⁶⁵. Indeed, although Achilles is their leader, even the Myrmidons have no intention of obeying him when he tries to prevent them from doing what they want. The fact they would go so far as to kill him in order to get their way confirms not only their willingness to disobey authority figures, but also Clytemnestra's earlier suggestion that a «naval army» is «eager for wickedness».

⁶⁵ Lane 2017, 66.

At the same time, in Achilles' description of the army's behavior we are reminded, yet again, of the army's democratic makeup. To begin, the mechanism by which the army's will is expressed – *thorubos* (the act of heckling or shouting down a public speaker) – was a practice that belonged primarily, if not exclusively, to democratic bodies⁶⁶. Even more striking is the specific threat to stone Achilles. The threat itself is not exceptional, as stoning was a commonly proposed sanction in the Greek literary tradition, especially in tragedy⁶⁷. But the situation in *IA* stands out because of the manner in which this course of action is decided: in nearly all other tragic instances in which a character risks being stoned, the sentence is delivered by a figure (or figures) in a legitimate position of power⁶⁸; here, conversely, the army appears to spontaneously decide to stone Achilles. This behavior is, of course, easily classified as mob violence (thus seeming to confirm the various references to *IA*'s army as an *ochlos*). More importantly, contemporary sources associate this type of stoning with democratic mobs in particular⁶⁹.

⁶⁶ This is implied by the fact that almost all fifth-century references to *thorubos* occur within the context of Athenian political practices. But confirmation of the fundamentally 'democratic' nature of *thorubos* may also be seen in its suppression during the oligarchic coups in Athens in 411 and 404, as is pointed out by Wallace 2004, 226. On the widespread practice of *thorubos* in democratic Athens in general, see Bers 1985; Tacon 2001; Balot 2004, 243-246; Wallace 2004; and Schwartzberg 2010, 461-465. Ober 1989, 325 goes so far as to claim that *thorubos* was a form of «collective *isôgoria*». *Contra* see Hansen 1990, 350: «*thorubos*, heckling, was ideologically to be avoided [...] it was only a tolerated and *not* an intentional part of Athenian political discourse» (emphasis in original). Hansen may be correct that Ober's argument for an «ideology» of *thorubos* is exaggerated, but his own argument suffers, in my view, from his implied insistence that there was a single ideology of «discourse» in Athens. This orthodoxy is belied by, among other things, the widespread existence of *thorubos* itself, particularly in the law-courts and the assembly. Even if an ideology of *thorubos* was not articulated as such, its widespread practice was certainly tolerated and probably even expected. Moreover, as is pointed out by Tuci 2013, 189-190, *thorubic* disruptions seem to have been used in an organized and intentional manner in order to influence votes within the assembly, a practice that suggests a broad recognition of the role that *thorubos* played in democratic political processes.

⁶⁷ On the literary tradition more generally, see esp. Steiner 1995.

⁶⁸ Either by a tribunal, as in Eur. *Or.* 49-50, or by a group's leader or leaders, as in Eur. *Ion* 1111-1112; *Bacch.* 355-357; *Soph. Ant.* 36; *Ajax* 251-255. The only exceptions are in Euripides' *IT* 240-339, in which a group of shepherds uses stones to attack Orestes and Pylades for killing their livestock, though this seems less an instance of 'justice' being sought through stoning than a group of people using the only weapons at their disposal to attack armed men; and Aesch. *Ag.* 1616, in which the chorus suggests that Aegisthus will eventually be stoned by the people of Argos.

⁶⁹ Gras 1984, 84-85 even claims that stoning was an «expression of democracy». Gras is followed, and at greater length, by Forsdyke 2008.

To be clear, stoning was not a common practice in archaic and classical Greece. It seems to have been deployed only rarely, and usually against deposed tyrants or army leaders who ran afoul of their soldiers⁷⁰. We are clearly dealing with the latter here, and one instance of stoning that Thucydides describes corresponds neatly to the situation in *IA*. In 418, contingents of Spartans and Argives (and their respective allies) had gathered in preparation for what would surely have been a memorable encounter⁷¹. Before the fighting could begin, the Spartan king Agis and the Argive general Thrasyllus brokered a truce, but they did so without consulting their armies or allies. The soldiers on both sides were unhappy with the accord, not least because it was struck without their input. The situation is thus akin to that which we see at Aulis, where Achilles faces the wrath of the Achaeans for single-handedly trying to stop the war against Troy.

At this point, however, Thucydides' account presents a notable contrast in the reactions of the Spartans and Argives (Thuc. V 60, 2; 4-6)⁷²:

οἱ δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ οἱ ζύμμαχοι εἶποντο μὲν ὡς ἡγεῖτο διὰ τὸν νόμον, ἐν αἰτία δ' εἶχον κατ' ἀλλήλους πολλῇ τὸν ἄγιν [...] τὸ μὲν οὖν στρατόπεδον οὕτως ἐν αἰτία ἔχοντες τὸν ἄγιν ἀνεχώρουν τε καὶ διελύθησαν ἐπ' οἴκου ἕκαστοι, Ἀργεῖοι δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔτι ἐν πολλῷ πλέονι αἰτία εἶχον τοὺς σπεισαμένους ἄνευ τοῦ πλήθους [...] τὸν τε Θράσυλον ἀναχωρήσαντες ἐν τῷ Χαράδρῳ, οὐπερ τὰς ἀπὸ στρατείας δίκας πρὶν ἐσιέναι κρίνουσιν, ἤρξαντο λεῦειν. ὁ δὲ καταφυγὼν ἐπὶ τὸν βωμὸν περιγίγνεται· τὰ μέντοι χρήματα ἐδήμειυσαν αὐτοῦ.

The Spartans and their allies followed [Agis'] lead out of respect for the law, but amongst themselves they blamed him loudly [for denying them certain victory ...] the army therefore withdrew blaming Agis, and returned to their respective homes. The Argives, on the other hand, were even louder in blaming those who had made the truce without consulting the people [...] and when they had withdrawn they began to stone [Thrasyllus] in the Charadrus, the very place they hold military trials before entering the city. He survived by fleeing to the altar; they, however, confiscated his property.⁷³

The differences in the behaviors of the two armies is highlighted by the fact that both sides consider their leaders to be «responsible» (*en aitiai*)

⁷⁰ Gras 1984, 83-85.

⁷¹ Thucydides calls the Spartan army «the finest Hellenic army that had ever been assembled» (V 60, 3).

⁷² The segments I have deleted from the Thucydidean passage merely relate the reasons the armies were upset (namely that each side fancied its chances). A second account of this incident is found in Diod. XII 78, 5-6, and it falls along the general lines of Thucydides' narration.

⁷³ I am indebted to Richard Crawley's translation for a number of these turns of phrase.

for costing them the battle. The Spartans and their allies return to their cities unhappy, but they do not rebel against or otherwise punish Agis⁷⁴. The Argives, on the other hand, look at Thrasyllus' action as a betrayal of their collective will – he acted «*aneu tou plēthous*» – and they react with incomparably greater severity by attempting to stone their leader to death.

The fact that this stoning took place in the normal venue for military trials lends a veneer of legitimacy to the Argives' actions, but reading between the lines we see that Thucydides suggests otherwise. To begin, he specifically emphasizes that the Spartans had maintained their collective cool «out of respect for the law»; no such explanation is supplied for the Argives' reaction, and we may thus infer that Thucydides sees the stoning as a deviation from legal standards. Moreover, had this stoning actually been mandated by the military tribunal (such as it may have been), it is unlikely that fleeing to an altar would have been sufficient to guarantee Thrasyllus' long-term survival. In fact, Diodorus tells us that it was not the altar that saved him, but a great deal of supplication (Diod. XII 78, 5: πολλῆς δεήσεως), and Forsdyke correctly points out that this amounts to an «emotional appeal [...] rather than a formal defence»⁷⁵. This in turn suggests that neither the stoning nor the pardon occurred within the context of a legal procedure. Finally, the fact that his property was subsequently confiscated implies that an actual legal ruling was made, and it regarded this confiscation. As such, the stoning of Thrasyllus appears to be an example of spontaneous and extra-legal activity, one that is enacted by an army that has little regard for the law.

Looking back to Aulis, Achilles' near-stoning experience is analogous in a few ways⁷⁶: it is attempted by a democratic military body; it is a backlash against a leader's unilateral decision *not* to go to war; and it falls well outside the bounds of any legal proceeding. In short, it is an act of *anarchia*, a refusal to obey one's leaders or to follow institutional guidelines. All this is not to say that Euripides modeled events at Aulis after those in Argos. Rather, we should see that both Thucydides and Euripides represent stoning as an extraordinary measure that is undertaken by

⁷⁴ Diodorus (XII 78, 6) says that the Spartans took legal action against Agis, but that he escaped punishment by promising to make up for his error.

⁷⁵ Forsdyke 2008, 30.

⁷⁶ Another intriguing parallel, which for the sake of space I do not discuss here, occurred some decades earlier during the wars against Persia: when an Athenian by the name of Lycides suggested that they bring terms of surrender offered by the Persians before the *dēmos* for consideration, he and his family were promptly stoned to death by his compatriots. On this episode, see esp. Her. IX 4-5, and Rosivach 1987.

a specific type of mob – one that is drawn from a democratic army. It is implicit in both cases that such behavior is not admirable, or even acceptable, but Clytemnestra's reaction to Achilles' narration is poignant: «the multitude is a terrible evil» (IA 1357: τὸ πολὺ γὰρ δεινὸν κακόν). Rather than condemn the action of this specific mob, Clytemnestra instead denounces the masses in general, as if this type of anarchic behavior is exactly what is to be expected.

5. CONCLUSIONS

We have seen a series of remarkable confluences that exist in Euripides' two uses of *anarch*- root terms. Both Hecuba and Clytemnestra level charges of anarchic behavior against an Achaean army that is portrayed as a democratic mass. Both use similar sets of vocabulary – on top of *anarchia/anarchos* we see the noun *strateuma* and the adjective *nautikos* to describe the army, and the verb *tarbeō* to describe Agamemnon's relationship to the army. Each character suggests that as a result of this penchant for *anarchia*, the army is capable of great acts of violence. Above all, the accusations of *anarchia* are delivered within contexts that recall classical critiques of democracy: Hecuba's use of *anarchia* falls within a constellation of terms with strong connections to oligarchic rhetoric, and throughout the play we see that her perspective is suffused with both aristocratic and anti-democratic ideologies; Clytemnestra's language is less overtly steeped in anti-democratic discourses, but she too is critical of the masses (and Agamemnon's relation to them), and her outlook is of a piece with the anti-democratic language and concepts that reverberate throughout *IA*.

Significantly, both Hecuba and Clytemnestra are able to express their concerns about the Achaeans' *anarchia* with little further elaboration: both women limit themselves to specifying the *type* of body that they are talking about (a 'naval' army; an *akolastos ochlos*), and a general statement about the bad (*kakos*) behavior that can be expected from such bodies. It thus appears that no other information is necessary to convey to the audience just what type of concerns they have, or why; the term *anarchia* in conjunction with the bad behavior of a democratic body suffices. But in fact, we might say that this other information is supplied by the general characterization that Euripides gives his speakers: Hecuba and Clytemnestra do not need to define what they mean by the *anarchia* of a naval army because their general hostility towards democratic bodies does so for them. All of this suggests that Euripides

is not so much developing an original meaning of *anarchia*, but that he is drawing on the thought and language of contemporary critiques of democracy.

At this point, we might look back to Aeschylus, who provides the only earlier uses of the language of anarchy with any possible links to democracy, and an illuminating contrast to Euripides. As mentioned above, it has been speculated that two Aeschylean uses of *anarchia/anarchos* are subtle references to radical democratic reforms that were being discussed at the time of the *Oresteia* (458): the δημόθρους ἀναρχία about which Clytemnestra pretends to fret in *Agamemnon*, and the *anarchos* constitution about which Athena warns in *Eumenides*. While these connections cannot, I believe, be confirmed, it is nevertheless meaningful that Aeschylus uses the language of *anarchia* in contexts that are explicitly political, which is to say in discussions that concern the order and functioning of a theoretical *polis*.

What Aeschylus does *not* do, however, is embed these *anarch*-terms within the language and ideas of oligarchic discourse, nor indeed within any consistent type of discourse. In fact, the two references are delivered in two very different contexts, and by two very different speakers: Clytemnestra, speaking as a tyrant who uses the concept of *anarchia* to describe her specious fear of a popular uprising against her rule; and Athena, who recommends a constitutional middle ground between ‘anarchy’ and tyranny. We can thus hypothesize that, in Aeschylus’ time, *anarchia* was a catch-all term that referred to a (negative) situation of political instability or violence, but that it had not yet acquired specific associations with one political order or another.

As for Euripides, we see that in the only two instances in which he uses *anarch*-terms, he places them in the mouths of oligarchic speakers, within contexts in which anti-democratic concepts are advanced, and at moments in which a concise and overt critique of democratic bodies is provided. In other words, by the time he is writing *Hecuba*, it was natural to turn to *anarchia* in the midst of an oligarchic discourse, and likely that many members of the audience would understand what was meant by the term, and its discursive source. All this suggests that at some point between the *Oresteia* and *Hecuba*, that is during the third quarter of the fifth century, the concept of democratic *anarchia* became a part of mainstream, oligarchic critiques of democracy.

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