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## Euripides' *Telephus*

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ABSTRACT: This paper offers a hypothetical reconstruction of Euripides' lost *Telephus*, burlesqued in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae*. It defends the position that Telephus defended the Trojans, and suggests that Telephus made two defence speeches: one in defence of the Trojans, another in defence of Telephus himself.

Whom did Telephus defend in *Telephus*? We know that he defended himself; fr. 710 proves that. It is widely, and I believe rightly, held that he defended the Trojans also; but this has been denied by some scholars, most recently by David Sansone in an article on the date of Herodotus' publication.<sup>1</sup> In the first part of this paper I shall comment on Sansone's arguments and offer a defence of the conventional view; I shall then make some rather speculative suggestions concerning the reconstruction of the play.

### I

Sansone tries to prove that the account of the origins of the war which Dicaeopolis gives in *Acharnians* 523-9 alludes to Herodotus 1.1-4; it would follow from this, obviously, that Herodotus had published that material before 425. To exclude the alternative view, favoured by Fornara,<sup>2</sup> that the motif of reciprocal abductions was taken (like so much else in this speech) from *Telephus*, Sansone begins by arguing that Telephus did not defend the Trojans in Euripides' play; he then offers two arguments which, he thinks, clinch the case for a Herodotean allusion.

(i) Telephus' main concern, Sansone argues, must have been to defend himself and the Mysians; a defence of Troy would be irrelevant to this self-defence, and would indeed damage his case, since any reference to Trojan guilt would detract from his argument that the Greeks were in the wrong. In Herodotus, however, and in Aristophanes the abductions are used to show, not only that the blame for the war was shared, but that it was foolish of the Greeks/Athenians to go to war over so trivial a cause; and that point could have been made just as well by Telephus as part of his attempt to discredit the Greek expedition which he had resisted. I do not think that this was in fact the way that Telephus argued—I shall propose a different view in due course; but it is a possibility which Sansone has done nothing to render implausible, and he has therefore failed to show that Telephus did not defend the Trojans.

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<sup>1</sup> D.Sansone, 'The date of Herodotus' publication', *ICS* 10 (1985), 1-9, a reply to C.W. Fornara, *JHS* 91 (1971), 25-34 (I should stress that I am not concerned here to adjudicate the question about Herodotus). The defence of Troy is rejected also by P. Rau, *Paratragodia* (*Zetemata* 45, Munich 1967), 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> Fornara (n.1) 28; cf. Starkie on *Ach.* 524ff., Rostagni, *RFIC* 5 (1927), 323-7.

(ii) Dicaeopolis' speech uses the transitional formula  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$   $\delta\eta$  (*Ach.* 523), an idiom uncharacteristic of Aristophanes, but which Sansone regards as 'characteristically and recognisably Herodotean'. It is certainly common in Herodotus; but Sansone's own evidence shows that it is not *distinctively* Herodotean. It is common enough in other historians, and is not unexampled in tragedy; perfectly good Euripidean parallels can be found in *Alc.* 156, *Hec.* 603, *Su.* 456. It is quite possible, therefore, that its occurrence in *Ach.* 523 is an echo of Telephus' speech. Without the support of (i), this point does nothing to further Sansone's case.

(iii) The motif of reciprocal abductions, Sansone claims, occurs only in Aristophanes and Herodotus. This claim could not, after the failure of (i), be maintained without question-begging. But consider also: where did Herodotus get the motif? Presumably not, as he claims, from the Persians. He might, of course, himself have been its originator; but it might have come from some contemporary sophist. In that case Aristophanes and might may have derived it from a common source.<sup>3</sup> But Euripides has a taste for sophistic argumentation; so it is also possible that the source was common to Herodotus and Euripides, and that Aristophanes derived it from the latter.

Sansone has therefore failed to exclude *Telephus* as Aristophanes' source, and has done nothing to show that Herodotus is a more probable source than *Telephus*.

That *Telephus* did use the motif of reciprocal abductions cannot be proved, but I think that this would be a reasonable inference from its use in *Acharnians* if we could establish that *Telephus* did include a defence of Troy in some form. A strong presumption does exist, however, in favour of that more general point. A defence of Telephus and the Mysians alone, however provocative to the Greeks in the play, would not have struck Euripides' audience as very paradoxical; yet the attractions which Telephus' arguments had for Aristophanes suggest that the original was something strikingly out of the ordinary. A defence of Troy would have offered Euripides an opportunity for just the kind of sophistic paradox which he relished, and which might have attracted the parodist's attention.

We may go further. There is no difficulty in seeing why Aristophanes chose *Telephus* as a model for *Thesmophoriazusae*; whether or not Telephus defended Troy, the disguised infiltration of the enemy camp is common to both plots and admirably motivates the burlesque. It is harder to see why Aristophanes should have chosen *Telephus* as a model for *Acharnians* if Telephus did not defend Troy. Plot-elements such as the disguise, integral to *Thesmophoriazusae*, have no intrinsic function in the plot of *Acharnians*; they are contrived to sustain the burlesque, which must therefore have been motivated by some other point of analogy. The most striking fact about Dicaeopolis is his willingness to defend the Athenian arch-enemy, Sparta; the need to defend himself is merely a consequence of that. A Telephus who defends only himself and his Mysian compatriots provides a rather tenuous analogy; a much better analogy, and so a more convincing motivation of the burlesque, is provided by a Telephus who also, and shockingly, defends the Greek arch-enemy, Troy. Even in *Thesmophoriazusae*, the relative's speech is not a self-defence but a defence of Euripides, the women's

<sup>3</sup> That the source is not extant is no objection; the idea might have circulated orally.

arch-enemy; again, the burlesque works better if Telephus defended Troy as well as defending himself.<sup>4</sup>

## II

I believe, therefore, that Telephus in Euripides' play defended Troy as well as himself; the need to motivate both themes of his defence provides an important constraint on the reconstruction of the play.

It is, as we have seen, not difficult to see how a defence of Troy could have been included in a speech concerned primarily to defend Telephus; it is less easy to see how a defence of Telephus could have been introduced into a speech primarily concerned to defend Troy. But this reveals a difficulty. It is generally agreed that the play's first episode began with a dispute between Menelaus and Agamemnon over the war against Troy; on the usual view Menelaus, eager to recover Helen, wants to make another attempt, while Agamemnon, discouraged (perhaps) by the Mysian fiasco, is inclined to abandon the expedition entirely. A different view has been proposed by Rau; he suggests that Agamemnon's inclination is to launch another raid on Mysia in reprisal for the previous reverse there.<sup>5</sup> But Agamemnon is frequently portrayed, in tragedy as in Homer, as a vacillating character, easily discouraged, and that is the interpretation suggested by fr. 722; 'I won't die for Helen—I am going to fight another war instead' is not a compellingly plausible reconstruction of Agamemnon's position. So we may presume that the conventional view is right; the brothers are arguing about whether to attack Troy or to abandon the expedition entirely. It is easy to see how that argument might prompt Telephus to defend the Trojans; but that, as we have seen, makes it difficult to work in his defence of himself. The defence of himself, which might plausibly include a defence of Troy, is not easily understood as a response to the brothers' argument.

This difficulty is illustrated by Jouan's reconstruction.<sup>6</sup> He suggests that Menelaus storms off in indignation at the end of the quarrel, to be replaced by Odysseus; Telephus makes his appeal for healing, using a cover-story that refers to the Mysian king; this evokes a tirade against Telephus from Odysseus, which in turn provokes Telephus to respond. This reconstruction leaves the quarrel between the brothers curiously inconsequential, a weakness emphasised by the departure of Menelaus and his replacement on stage by Odysseus; the shuffling of the characters seems rather awkward, especially when its sole function is to prefix to the action a dispute which itself has no apparent purpose. Jouan feels constrained to replace Menelaus with Odysseus by a scholion to Aelius Aristides, which

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<sup>4</sup> It should be stressed, in view of Rau (n.1) 22 n.11, that this argument is designed not merely to maximise the resemblance between Aristophanes' parody and the original, but to strengthen the motivation of the parody - to explain why it was that Aristophanes thought of parodying that play in that situation. Cf. E.W. Handley & J. Rea, *The Telephus of Euripides* (BICS Supplement 5, London 1956), 24: 'The hypothetical tragedy has only to account for what Aristophanes does with it, not to be like him.'

<sup>5</sup> Rau (n.1) 23, followed (apparently) by Sansone (n.1) 4. H. Strohm, *Gnomon* 32 (1960), 605, doubts the quarrel altogether; that seems excessively cautious.

<sup>6</sup> F. Jouan, *Euripide et les Légendes des Chants Cypriens* (Paris 1966), 232-3.

describes fr. 710 as a reply to Odysseus.<sup>7</sup> Handley assumes that the scholiast has made a mistake; and it must be allowed that this assumption is entirely plausible. But this leaves us still with the problem of how Telephus' self-defence is to arise out of the brothers' quarrel; Handley does not attempt explain this. He is, I think, right to reject the course taken by Jouan; but another possibility (mentioned by Handley, but passed over without discussion) is worth considering.<sup>8</sup> If we assume that Telephus made two separate speeches then we can save the credit of the Aristides scholion *and* remove any difficulty in motivating the two themes of Telephus' defence. In each case we may take the course of least resistance: Telephus does indeed respond to the brothers' quarrel by defending the Trojans; but we need no longer try to include the defence of Telephus himself in that speech—it will be motivated by a quite different context.

Let us speculate a little. Telephus' defence of the Trojans is counter-productive; although Agamemnon is reluctant to pursue the war further, he does not relish being told that he was wrong to start it, least of all by a beggar. The quarrel is therefore superseded by shared outrage against the intruder, and the episode ends on that note. (In a later scene Agamemnon will recruit Telephus' assistance in renewing the expedition. If his last word on the subject had been the flat refusal with which he confronted Menelaus in their quarrel, this change of position would perhaps be surprising; it is easier to assimilate if we have seen Agamemnon's opposition to the war compromised by Telephus' tactless intervention.<sup>9</sup>) After the stasimon Odysseus arrives with news of Telephus' infiltration; and Telephus is thus forced to produce his defence of Telephus in an attempt to avert the danger that now threatens him.

Is there anything that can be said against the supposition of two speeches? The hypothesis to *Acharnians* speaks of a parody of τὸν ἐκείνου (i.e. Telephus') λόγον; this might imply a single speech. But the point would be more compelling if we had τὴν ἐκείνου ῥῆσιν; λόγος is a less specific term—'reasoning', 'arguments', 'discourse'. That Dicaeopolis' speech would, on this view, be a conflation of two separate contexts of the original is no objection at all; one need only look at the treatment of *Helen* in *Thesmophoriazousae* to see how freely Aristophanes may treat the structure of his originals.<sup>10</sup> In fact, there are signs of conflation within the speech itself; the shift from 'they'—the Spartans,

<sup>7</sup> Jouan refers also to fr. 715, but that does not require Odysseus' presence (Handley & Rea [n.4] 34); one might even argue that αἴμυλος is a sufficiently uncomplimentary term to imply his absence.

<sup>8</sup> Handley & Rea (n.4) 34 (but the idea is entertained again on p.36); T.B.L. Webster, *The Tragedies of Euripides* (London 1967), 45-6, takes this view.

<sup>9</sup> The problem of motivating Agamemnon's change of mind is noted by Rau (n.1) 22. Of course, this problem would not arise if Agamemnon were worried only by the lack of a guide—a possibility which cannot be excluded; but it is reasonable to assume that the discouraging reverse in Mysia played a part. (I do not believe, as some critics have supposed, that the sacrifice of Iphigeneia was an issue in this play; there is no positive evidence, and it seems too grave a matter to be treated incidentally.) The arrangement of the scene adopted by Handley & Rea (n.4) 34, placing the anapaestic fragments of the quarrel after Telephus' intervention, leaves Agamemnon's change of mind unexplained.

<sup>10</sup> Handley & Rea (n.4) 23-25.

representing the Trojans of the original—to 'Telephus' at the end is a marked discontinuity. The relative's speech in *Thesmophoriazusae* ends, like Dicaeopolis' speech, by adapting a fragment of *Telephus*; but the fragment adapted is a different one, and it does not explicitly refer to Telephus himself. If 'Euripides' has here replaced the Trojans rather than Telephus in the original (and we have already noted that Euripides corresponds, as arch-enemy, to Sparta and Troy), it is an easy inference that this original conclusion to the defence of Troy has been displaced in *Acharnians* by contamination with a separate speech in defence of Telephus.

### III

Before we go on to develop these ideas in more—and more speculative—detail, there are some further preliminary points to be considered. As well as Telephus' defence the seizure of Orestes attracted Aristophanes' attention; what can we infer from that?

It is widely accepted now that the seizure was narrated in the original by a Messenger; I find that view wholly implausible. Aristophanes took the scene and twice produced an extensive visual burlesque—why, unless his audience had *seen* it on the stage? Reported, the abduction is not extraordinary by tragic standards; staged, it is a striking and exciting piece of theatre—and that, surely, is what attracted Aristophanes' attention to it.<sup>11</sup> If we assume, therefore, that the abduction was staged, various consequences follow. First, Clytaemnestra has to be on the stage for this scene, with the baby. It is generally, and plausibly, supposed that she and Telephus had met in the prologue, and that there was some collusion between them;<sup>12</sup> it is tempting to infer from this that Telephus, having come under suspicion, appeals to Clytaemnestra's protection, and that she appears on stage to be questioned about him. But why should she bring the baby with her in answer to such a summons? This would not present a problem if we saw her going somewhere with the baby (to a temple, for example) in the prologue; she would then be questioned on her return, and would naturally still have the child with her. (On this view she encounters Telephus as she leaves the palace on her own errand; there is therefore no need to supply a porter-scene, as many critics have done on the wholly inadequate grounds of *Ach.* 393ff., *Th.* 39ff.<sup>13</sup>)

I spoke of 'some collusion' between Telephus and Clytaemnestra; is it possible to be more specific? Certainly Telephus has no reason to trust Clytaemnestra, so he will not tell her the whole truth;<sup>14</sup> he gives her instead his cover-story as a Greek. Does that include an explanation that he has come seeking a cure? It seems best to assume that Telephus, as wary as Odysseus in his

<sup>11</sup> In favour of the Messenger: Handley & Rea (n.4) 36-7; Webster (n.8) 46-7; J. Gould, *JHS* 93 (1973), 101-3—who oddly takes no account of Aristophanes as evidence (I agree that the vases prove nothing). *Contra* Rau (n.1) 25, Jouan (n.6) 236-7, O. Taplin, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (Oxford 1977), 35 n.2.

<sup>12</sup> Handley & Rea (n.4) 30-1.

<sup>13</sup> Jouan (n.6) 229, Handley & Rea (n.4) 31 (cautious); there is no reason to suppose that those scenes are parodies of *Telephus*—*Clouds* 133ff. suggests, rather, a comic stereotype.

<sup>14</sup> Jouan (n.6) 229-30 supposes that he does.

disguises, would give as little as possible away about his intentions; the prudent course would, after all, be to find out as much as possible about the situation in the palace before making any move. What of Clytaemnestra's response? It is widely held that Clytaemnestra proposes the seizure of Orestes to him; Hyginus' *monitu Clytaemnestrae* certainly points to that. But there are objections to be weighed: the seizure would be dramatically more effective if it had not been anticipated; the very idea lacks adequate motivation until Telephus' first ploy, disguised infiltration, is on the verge of failure;<sup>15</sup> and it would, perhaps, be preferable to leave Clytaemnestra free for the role of horrified mother.<sup>16</sup> On this view, Clytaemnestra's 'collusion' would be limited to taking pity on a beggar and granting him some *locus standi* within the palace—perhaps (as some have inferred from Tzetzes on *Clouds* 922) making him door-keeper, or else simply giving him permission to beg in the palace and assuring him of her protection; Odysseus' experiences testify to a beggar's need of an influential patron and protector. A reconciliation of the two positions is, perhaps, possible if Clytaemnestra's proposal was similar to the advice which Admetus' wife gave to Themistocles (Thuc. 1.136.3). She could have suggested that he take the child to strengthen his plea for alms; the violence which Telephus subsequently threatens would then be his own idea, provoked by extreme danger, and horrifying to the mother. This would fit Hyginus' account while being less vulnerable to the objections mentioned above.

## IV

The reconstruction of a lost play is a hazardous business; however convincing each of us may find our own arguments, observers are more likely to react with derision to the tissue of hypotheses in which we clothe our ignorance: ὦ Ζεῦ διόπτα καὶ κατόπτα πανταχῆ. But the exercise may still be worthwhile. It is always possible that someone will, one day, find an argument that really proves something interesting; and in the meantime the rehearsal of varied hypotheses at least provides us with a salutary reminder of how little we really know. It will be obvious from what I have already said that our knowledge of *Telephus* is too slight to sustain any conclusive reconstruction; but having started on the hypothetical road, we may as well see where it leads us. What follows claims to be no more than a purely speculative development of the considerations that I have been advancing.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> A point made by M.T. Ditifeci, *Prometheus* 10 (1984), 211-3, who concludes that Clytaemnestra must make the suggestion at a later stage in the action.

<sup>16</sup> It is widely held that Clytaemnestra is motivated by hostility to Agamemnon because of the (actual or contemplated) sacrifice of Iphigeneia: Rau (n.1) 20 (giving fr. 727 to Clytaemnestra), Jouan (n.6) 230 (who however gives fr. 727 to Telephus in the abduction scene, p.239), Ditifeci (n.15) 213; but I am doubtful about this—see n.9 above. (If we could be sure of the construction of fr. 699, it might be decisive; but Nauck's repunctuation is very plausible.)

<sup>17</sup> For the fragments and papyri see C. Austin, *Nova Fragmenta Euripidea* (Berlin 1968), 66-82 (but Nauck-Snell is still necessary for the context in sources; for convenience I use Nauck numbers except where indicated); I do not believe that the Rylands papyrus (fr. 148 Austin) is from our play (see Jouan [n.6] 240-1). I think that the fragments of the Latin tragedians (most conveniently available in Handley & Rea, whose numeration I follow) should be treated with greater reserve than is usual: where they reproduce what we know from other sources they

**Prologue**

Telephus enters (side), disguised as a beggar. In an expository monologue he explains how, though born Greek, he became king of Mysia and ruled there until the Greek invasion: this much is preserved in a papyrus [fr. 102 Austin]. He presumably went on to explain how the Greeks arrived in Mysia in their attempt to reach Troy; the successful Mysian resistance, and the wound he suffered at Achilles' hands [?fr. 705a]; the oracle that he had been given concerning his cure; and, finally, the plan he has devised: he has left his royal prerogatives (what use were they to him? a healthy poor man's lot is better than that of a diseased rich man [?fr. 714, 701]) and come to Argos, disguising himself with beggar's rags as a protection [fr. 714, 698].

Clytaemnestra enters (from the palace), accompanied by a nurse, carrying the baby Orestes; she is on the way to make a sacrifice. Telephus approaches her and asks for help; he explains, in reply to her questions, that he is a Greek veteran, wounded in the raid on Mysia [fr. 705]. She offers encouragement [?fr. 702], and gives him permission to beg in the palace, promising him her protection; and she suggests that he should take the child to strengthen his appeal to Agamemnon for alms. She leaves (side), and Telephus sits down by the palace door.

**Parodos**

The Chorus enters—Greek soldiers?<sup>18</sup> There is no evidence for the content of their song; some have thought of a description of the mustering of the Greek contingents,<sup>19</sup> and one might envisage comment on the imminent clash between Menelaus and Agamemnon.

**Episode I**

Menelaus enters (side), expostulating indignantly on Agamemnon's reported change of mind about the expedition; the Chorus announces Agamemnon's entry (from the palace). He confirms and briefly justifies his attitude, reminding his brother of the reverse in Mysia and the difficulty of proceeding without a guide; the dispute between the two quickly develops into a heated anapaestic exchange [fr. 722-3 (Agamemnon); ?fr. 713 (Menelaus?); ?fr. 918; ?fr. 975 (Chorus)]. Telephus intervenes, suggesting that the Trojans were not wholly to blame; this is a shocking suggestion, and Agamemnon rebukes him. But Telephus insists on speaking - even if he has to lay his head on a block [fr.706]. So Telephus begins his defence of the Trojans:

Do not resent a beggar speaking in such exalted company [fr. 703]. I have as much reason as any to hate the Trojans—I, too, have suffered because of them [*Ach.* 509-12, *Th.* 469-70]. But we are among friends here, and may be frank [*Ach.* 513 (cf. 502-8), *Th.* 471-2]: why do we blame them [*Ach.* 514, *Th.* 473-4]? The provocation came from our side, and women have been abducted by both

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contribute nothing; where they do not we can never be sure that Euripides is the source - we must reckon with contamination and adaptation (see Handley & Rea [n.4] 25-7, Jouan [n.6] 224).

<sup>18</sup> This, or Argive elders, seems most likely; not, in view of Achilles' opening words in Episode IV, other Greek leaders (see Handley & Rea [n.4] 32, Rau [n.1] 21).

<sup>19</sup> Handley & Rea (n.4) 32, with an eye on Accius fr. II and inc. fr. XVIII.

sides [*Ach.* 515-27]; and it is absurd to fight a war for such a cause [*Ach.* 528-9]. You know that we have done such things; so why are we angry with the Trojans, who did to us no more than we have done ourselves [*Th.* 517-9, fr. 711]?

This is even more shocking than Telephus' audience had expected, and causes indignation. The Chorus (or Menelaus, perhaps?) comments disparagingly on his audacious sophistries [?fr. 715]; and there is general outrage [*Ach.* 557ff., *Th.* 520ff.; fr. 712 with *Ach.* 576-8].<sup>20</sup> Even Agamemnon, although he has reservations about the continuation of the war, resents being told—and by a beggar!—that the Greeks are as much to blame as the Trojans. The disagreement between the two brothers is temporarily forgotten as they join in warning the stranger to be watch his words; the two depart (Agamemnon to the palace, Menelaus side), leaving Telephus alone on stage.

### Stasimon I

No evidence; Trojan wickedness, perhaps.

### Episode II

Odysseus enters (side), saying that he has news for Agamemnon; Agamemnon enters (from the palace). Odysseus explains that he has heard that Telephus has infiltrated the city in disguise; a thorough search is ordered, reporting back to Agamemnon [*Poxy.* 2460 (fr. 147 Austin), fr. 1.1-6]; the Chorus consider how best to conduct the search [*POxy* fr. 1.7-11 and ?fr. 5, 14].<sup>21</sup> This is, for Telephus, an alarming development, and he ventures to suggest a less unfavourable view of Telephus:

Telephus does not deserve this degree of hatred; you attacked his territory, and it was natural for him to resist. You may say that there was no need [fr. 708, *Ach.* 540]; but if someone had made a landing here [fr. 708a, *Ach.* 541], you would not have done nothing [fr. 709, *Ach.* 543]. You know how would have reacted; do we suppose that Telephus is any different [fr. 710, *Ach.* 555-6]?

By this intervention Telephus merely draws attention to himself; Odysseus interrogates him about his knowledge of Telephus [fr. 704, ?fr. 707], and tries to establish his identity. As the threats escalate [?POxy fr. 6], Telephus claims to be under Clytaemnestra's protection; Agamemnon says that he must make the claim to her face [cf. Ennius fr. VIII]. Agamemnon and Odysseus leave (both to the palace), leaving him under the watchful eye of the Chorus [cf. *Th.* 652-3].

### Stasimon II

No evidence.

<sup>20</sup> In *Acharnians* Dicaeopolis' audience is divided in its response; but this is, I suspect, dictated by the plot of the comedy, which now leaves *Telephus* behind. In *Thesmophoriazusae*, which continues to exploit the tragedy, the relative's audience is uniformly hostile.

<sup>21</sup> Interpretation of these fragments after Handley & Rea (n.4) 35-6. Strohm (n.5) 604 and Rau (n.1) 24 doubt the search for a spy; the papyrus, with Aristophanes, seems to me sufficient evidence.

**Episode III**

Clytaemnestra returns (side), with Nurse and child; Agamemnon enters from the palace to meet her. Agamemnon says that she seems to have taken a bad man under her protection [fr. 721]; we have questioned him, but have been unable to establish his identity [?Accius fr. X, cf. *Th.* 614]. She explains what she knows; but this is insufficient to avert Agamemnon's anger. Suddenly Telephus snatches Orestes from the Nurse and runs to the altar, threatening to kill the child; Clytaemnestra exclaims in horror and the Chorus sings agitated dochmiacs [*Th.* 689ff.]. Agamemnon makes threats, but Telephus is defiant [*Th.* 728ff.], asserting his hatred of the child of such a father [fr. 727]. Agamemnon is in this way forced to listen to Telephus' demands, and Telephus reveals his identity and explains why he has come; negotiations ensue. The details are obscure—perhaps Agamemnon offers to help Telephus if he will guide the expedition to Troy, and Telephus, despite his reluctance to betray his father-in-law, agrees. But there is a difficulty in interpreting the oracle concerning his cure, which much be referred to Odysseus [POxy fr. 9-10];<sup>22</sup> Telephus, Agamemnon and Clytaemnestra enter the palace to find him.

**Stasimon III**

The Chorus reflect on Telephus' experiences, concluding with the agreement just reached [Pap.Berol. 9908 (= fr. 149 Austin) 1-10].

**Episode IV**

Achilles enters (side) and briskly greets Odysseus as he leaves the palace with Telephus [Pap.Berol. 11-13]. Odysseus tries to tell Achilles why his arrival is opportune [*ibid.* 14], but Achilles is too impatient with what he sees as needless delay to listen [*ibid.* 15-24]. Eventually Odysseus does manage to explain the situation, but Achilles is furious at the prospect of a having to follow a foreigner's leadership [fr. 719, ?fr. 717]; Odysseus tries to restrain him [fr. 718]. Telephus then makes an appeal to Achilles.<sup>23</sup> Achilles should not be stubborn [fr. 716]; Telephus himself is Greek and, despite appearances, noble. Achilles yields, but is perplexed by the oracle; Odysseus explains to him what needs to be done [fr. 724]. The three enter the palace.

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<sup>22</sup> See Handley & Rea (n.4) 37-8. Handley assumes that Odysseus must be present for this discussion; one might imagine Clytaemnestra being sent inside with instructions to summon Odysseus, Agamemnon feeling the need of his acumen. But I do not think this is necessary. Handley's inference is based on Hyginus' evidence that Odysseus explained Telephus' oracle; but Hyginus places that in a dialogue with Achilles after agreement has been reached over the guidance to Troy—i.e., in the next episode. (It is not clear to me why Handley thinks that the solution of the oracle concerning Telephus' leadership comes after the arrival of Achilles in Hyginus.)

<sup>23</sup> See Handley & Rea (n.4) 39.

**Stasimon IV**

The play could end at that point, but a finale is attractive; there would in that case be a fourth stasimon,<sup>24</sup> perhaps reflecting happily on Telephus' good fortune.

**Finale**

Telephus, healed and restored, enters from the palace, accompanied by Achilles and Odysseus or Agamemnon, and they depart (side, followed by the Chorus)<sup>25</sup> on the way to launch the fleet against Troy.

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<sup>24</sup> Four is the norm in Sophocles and Euripides; see M.Griffith, *The Authenticity of the Prometheus Bound* (Cambridge 1977), 127-8.

<sup>25</sup> An argument, perhaps, in favour of their being soldiers rather than elders (see n.18 above).