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Insights from the Tony Harrison Archive

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The nature of the archive

The Tony Harrison archive in Special Collections at the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, is a vast and rich resource,[1] whose surface scholarship has only scratched.[2] Classical Reception Studies scholars can view in action some processes of Harrison's reception of ancient texts, in translations and new works of reception alike.[3] I begin with the nature of the collection, to explore its significance for Reception Studies. I then focus on a dominant aspect of the notebooks for Harrison's *Oresteia*: the theme of 'sex wars', one of several lenses through which the poet-translator interrogates the Aeschylean text, and which he amplifies throughout his processes of reception and translation. I conclude with two contrasting observations from the archives of *The Labourers of Herakles*: first an example of the esoterica that Harrison the classicist earlier incorporated in his preparatory research (but not the finished play), which might have made *Labourers* even more exclusive for a non-

[1] 132 unboxed notebooks and 88 archival boxes, containing research material, drafts, and more, from every completed and incomplete project.

[2] In, for example, Taplin 1997 and 2005; Bower 2018; Copley 2018; Whale 2018; Hodkinson (forthcoming); and Brodie, Hall, Hodkinson, Latham, and Taplin in this volume.

[3] Of course there is no simple dichotomy of 'translation' *vs.* 'new works of reception' – Harrison's classically themed works contain a spectrum of kinds of reception – but it is instructive to consider the reception processes towards different ends of that spectrum, hence the *Oresteia* and *Labourers of Herakles* here.

classicist audience; then one of Harrison *not* privileging classical, 'Western' culture over other traditions, but using classical myths as an intervention to critique the receiving culture for its complicity in contemporary destructions of Islamic culture. The archive affords insights into all aspects of the reception processes involved (translation, adaptation, hybridisation of material from classical and non-classical sources, and others): not only by containing multiple, successive drafts, but by preserving Harrison's multiple dialogues with the same ancient text as reader, annotator, scholar and researcher.

Harrison's collection seems to have been created for archival researchers, so all-encompassing and well organised it appears. Notebooks for each project are labelled with title and volume number, with sequentially numbered pages; they contain countless cross-references between notebooks and other archive items, and sometimes even indices.[4] The contents of the notebooks and the rest of the archive have been described and discussed elsewhere:[5] I limit myself to some observations on reception processes we can observe in the kinds of 'composition' found in the notebooks' pages.[6]

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[4] E.g. *Oresteia* notebook 14, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/14, an incomplete beginning of Harrison's own attempt to index notebooks 1-13 of that series.

[5] See works cited in n. 2 above.

[6] I focus on the notebooks, since loose materials are less fruitful for establishing what other archive items or themes represented therein Harrison connected with them; the notebooks, by contrast, contain not only annotations, but varied paramaterials glued, drawn, and written on the same page/opening, sometimes layered over one another, then annotated and often cross-referenced to other items in the book/series. Therefore many items that might have remained loose in another creator's archive are in fact incorporated into the notebooks; we might infer that items that Harrison thought he would likely

Drafts are common to many authorial archives: what makes many of Harrison's special is the palimpsest-like presence of several layers of the same passage in successive drafts, glued (only on one edge) over one another, so that the earlier layers can be consulted. Most commonly, the first draft is handwritten, with subsequent drafts typewritten, then annotated by hand in places, so that researchers can easily see what is retained and what discarded from one draft to the next, and what alternatives were tried, alongside other ideas not part of the draft *per se*. These 'palimpsests' are revealing of both translation and poetic composition processes at work in the reception of ancient texts, in examples of translation such as the *Oresteia* (for original reception texts such as *Labourers*, only the composition processes). Frequently such layered drafts occupy every second page, the facing pages left blank for research into contexts, ideas for staging, and all manner of annotation. The poet-translator is seen commentating on his work-in-progress, presenting researchers with a wealth of paratexts (and other paramaterial) to the central text (the draft). Using text and paramaterials side by side, we can investigate not only processes of translation and composition, but also where in a text elements foreign to the original are first brought into the mix – and sometimes at what point in the reception process, when dated items (articles, correspondence, tickets) are included alongside drafts. Researchers can study other reception processes that went into the composition (e.g. hybridisation with non-classical materials; using the received text to create an intervention commenting on the receiving culture, which sometimes emerges as alluding to specific contemporary images or reportage), which are sometimes but not

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refer to frequently were glued into the notebooks for this purpose, where he could easily cross-reference them.

always equally discernible in the performance or published text. With translation, these 'palimpsests' also build on the work of annotating original texts described below. Such items reward close investigation for translation studies approaches, to discover equivalents that were considered and rejected, correspondences between ancient text and translation that were emphasised more or less at different stages, and the different positions along various axes (e.g. translation – version/adaptation; domestication – foreignisation) that an evolving translation moved between.

When working on ancient texts for translation or transplantation into a new work,[7] Harrison's copies of the original often resemble medieval manuscripts or incunabula with copious space left around the text. Every space on some pages is replete with paramaterial: marginal 'scholia' on interpretation, staging, historical context; interlinear glosses; typewritten, photocopied or handwritten extracts from modern scholarship; and '*cf.*'s to other passages in the same or another text, to published scholarship on the original, or other pages in Harrison's own substantial literary, historical, and comparative commentary constituted by the notebooks. Besides the above-mentioned approaches to the published Harrison texts, such rich paramaterial is also extremely valuable to researchers of the reception and history of scholarship on the text, and to would-be commentators on the text, even had the Harrison version never been completed.[8] In the same way that the value of many medieval copies of ancient texts lies more in their unique paratexts created by perceptive and well-read owners than the central text they were created to contain, Harrison's classical texts including paramaterials reward many kinds of research in their own right, not only to enhance research on published texts.

[7] For the latter, cf. the untranslated Greek quoted in *Labourers* (discussed below).

[8] Indeed, the archive contains notebooks for several incomplete projects

The *Oresteia*: sex wars and 'matriarchy theory'

Harrison's larger series of archive items like the *Oresteia* (fifteen books plus five archival boxes) can be overwhelming at this stage of their research usage, with little description or analysis published. An obvious strategy is to see what thematic or typological clusters of items predominate by volume or otherwise, since these might illuminate Harrison's preoccupations and what informed his choices during translation and reception processes, and identify some of the creative and research processes more clearly than the published text. One predominant theme for the *Oresteia* – both by volume and by standing out visually – is a cluster of sex-related concerns, including Harrison's exploration of 'sex wars' as central to the trilogy, and his research into feminist criticism and 'matriarchy theory'.[9] Sex and gender, like other recurring themes in Harrison's published work and archives (e.g. class, colonialism), have become central to work in Classical Reception since; as Hall (2017) observes, in many ways Harrison's work, explicitly informed from early in his career by contemporary critical discourses such as feminism, anticipated what would later become a more dominant, problematising mode of classical translation and reception.

[9] Here I must restrict myself to this pair of themes and to *Oresteia*; related themes and emerge in many parts of the archive, including *Trackers* and *Labourers* among those series that I have examined in detail.

Scholarship on Harrison's *Oresteia* has discussed these themes already (see Marshall 2010: 65-73),[10] since the finished product has striking features in this regard, including its all-male cast; also because Harrison himself mentions it in his introduction (Harrison 2002: 29-34); and, since Aeschylus' *Oresteia* is much analysed regarding similar themes,[11] scholars of its reception might well consider how Harrison's version responds. Although it is already apparent in the published play, it is even clearer from glancing through the *Oresteia* archive that these aspects were fundamental to Harrison's process throughout: the volume of material devoted to sex-related interpretations is vast.

One notable aspect of this material is the lack of separation between sub-themes in Harrison's reception processes (a scrapbook-like assembly of disparate materials into the same place, which would consequently be seen together often during drafting and revision of the translation). Repeatedly one sees juxtapositions of, e.g., classical scholarship on sex wars in Aeschylus and Greek myth; contemporary feminist and anthropological theory – both academic and as discussed in mainstream periodicals; newspaper reports on feminist demonstrations. This is typical of Harrison's eclectic reading and research processes while drafting,[12] which never appears systematic (if by that we mean exhaustively researching one theme or aspect before passing to another); he does not view antiquity as separate, his inclination being to treat modern and ancient 'sex wars' as moments in the same discourse, and

[10] Marshall is doubtless right (65-6) to see the impetus for a feminist version as coming first from Harrison and adopted by Peter Hall. See also Padley 2008.

[11] On Aeschylus: see esp. Zeitlin 1996: 87–122; Gagarin 1976: 83-105; and Penrose, Jr. 2016: 27-34 with references n. 22.

[12] *Cf.* Hodkinson (forthcoming) on the creation of *Labourers* as illustrated by the notebooks.

to place the classical and the contemporary in dialogue, to critique and interrogate one another.[13]

A good example of this is notebook 5, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/05: 1102-3. Alongside newspaper clippings showing two anti-patriarchy banners (sources unknown; one shows a hand-painted slogan reading 'EL FEMINISMO ES INTERNACIONAL PORQUE TODO GOBIERNO ES PATRIARCAL'; the other shows demonstrators outside a cinema or shop front advertising 'HARD PORN FILMS', with a placard in front reading 'SMASH SEXISM CASTRATE RAPISTS AN END TO MALE SUPREMACY'), Harrison types excerpts from Philip Slater's monograph *The Glory of Hera*,[14] on sex wars in Greek myth, analysing Apollo through a theory of patriarchy *vs*. matriarchy. Harrison underlines the statement that Apollo is 'the personification of anti-matriarchy', and again underlines and highlights with a marginal '!' the word 'dematrification', of Apollo. But he excerpts the whole surrounding context, including a quotation in Slater from Jane Harrison's *Themis*[15] to support an interpretation of Apollo according to sets of gendered binaries: Apollo identified with the heavenly, the light, and the rational (implicitly the male), opposing the earthly, the dark, and the irrational (implicitly the female) (Jane Harrison 1962: 389).[16] The later pages excerpted from Slater talk of Apollo symbolising 'the brittle

[13] Favourite themes throughout Harrison's classical works, e.g. *Medea: A Sex-War Opera*, *The Common Chorus*, *Aikin Mata*; see Marshall 2010: 97-8, 170-213, and 2008; Ioannidou 2017: 144-9, Bower 2018 and 2019; Macintosh 2019; and Padley 2008.

[14] Slater 1971: 137-8, 159-60; called 'pioneering, if controversial': Zeitlin 2002: 207.

[15] Jane Harrison was influenced by matriarchal theory: see e.g. Jane Harrison 1957: 257-321.

[16] These binaries come ultimately from Bachofen 1967. Harrison also photocopied a related table, 'Categories of Opposition in Matriarchy and Patriarchy' from Ochs 1977: 86-7. See Zeitlin 1978: n. 4; 151 and 2002: 207-8 on Slater as following Bachofen. Evaluating Slater, Zeitlin 2002: 208: 'Although

narcissism of the Greek male' and having a 'priggish and Draconian opposition to matriarchy [which] betrays this weakness and self-doubt'. Harrison relates this to Slater's comments on *Eumenides* 180-84 (Apollo's speech), gluing an excerpt from Slater's 159-60 where that passage is quoted and discussed, underneath that from Slater 137-8. Apollo's speech is characterised in the excerpt as 'bristl[ing] with phallic boastfulness and sexual contempt… swaggering display of virility'. This approach to Aeschylus' *Oresteia* stems from Bachofen's 1861 theory[17] that early patriarchal societies followed the overturning of prehistoric matriarchies; as Zeitlin says, 'it was no accident that for verification of his general theories of the origins of society [Bachofen] drew heavily on classical sources, including the *Oresteia.*'[18] This interpretation in turn influenced scholarship on Aeschylus employing psychoanalytic and, later, feminist theory, taking it as a mythologised dramatisation of the supposedly historical downfall of a prehistoric Greek matriarchy, supplanted by a new patriarchal, 'reason-based' world order and justice system represented by Apollo. Harrison's selection and juxtaposition of items using similar language from mass media about the 1970s feminist movement and matriarchy theory scholarship illustrates how

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Slater's psychoanalytic approach depends too heavily on anachronistic evidence from modern-day families and his Freudian approach is open to strong objections, he is often an excellent reader of mythological details.' NB this chapter is concerned only with documenting the reception and translation processes of Harrison (on which, Blakesley 2018; Balmer 2019) using archive evidence, not with the merits of the readings of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, Harrison's own or others he read, as Aeschylean scholarship.

[17] Bachofen 1967 (first published 1861). Harrison 2002: 30-34 references this research.

[18] Zeitlin 1978: 151; *passim*, for a good introduction to the theories of Bachofen and followers as applied to the *Oresteia* through the end of the 1970s, including the place in this mix of Freudian psychoanalysis and recent gender-centred additions to the debate like Slater's.

Harrison conceptualised both Apollo's character, and (as emerges from a wider view of the *Oresteia* notebooks) the gendered power dynamics of the *Oresteia* as constituting a 'sex war' from early on.[19]

These are not the only pages showing Harrison's research into matriarchy theory and his association of it with the combined issues of how to render the *Oresteia* into English, and what should be the central dynamic and tension in his version. The same notebook (978) is another case, containing a newspaper review (source unknown) of Merlin Stone's *The Paradise Papers* (1976), a 'classic' of feminist theory arguing that patriarchy deliberately and systematically destroyed images, tales and rites of a prehistoric matriarchal world order. The review states: 'Merlin Stone traces the Male Domination Conspiracy back to the ancient world when the worship of the Great Goddess was universally supplanted by new male religions and when, she believes, even the story of Adam and Eve was planted as propaganda to persuade Hebrew women to accept a patriarchal system.' A photograph of the Venus of Willendorf is pasted in from the same review; alongside this, handwritten: 'gender in Greek grammar [+ 1 word illegible]'. This points to the same interconnection of ideas noted above, Harrison conceiving of his choices of how to render idiosyncratically the Greek masculine and feminine nouns in a markedly gendered way throughout (he-gods, she-gods), and repeatedly reading about and incorporating contemporary feminist discourse built on theories such as Bachofen's matriarchy theory. Similarly, the same notebook includes (1139) another newspaper article in full, (*Guardian*, 20 March 1979: 9), entitled 'In the beginning was the

[19] Notebook 5, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/05. Harrison also annotates the title page of the Greek text of *Eumenides*: 'The main conflict in Eumenides between Apollo/Orestes and the Furies is a sexual one' Gagarin 1976: 101.

goddess'; it features similar photographs of artefacts labelled as goddesses (Babylonian and Maori), and the strapline states, 'Once there were many matriarchal societies. Liz Forgan reports that women's groups are not only finding them a fertile source for research, but are putting them forward as startling models for righting the wrongs of today.'[20] Harrison collects many examples like these, from academic studies to popular media, showing curiosity about the strong suggestive power of these discourses and ways of interpreting classical myth far beyond academic audiences and beyond questions of their 'historicity',[21] and perhaps drawn to them as offering a powerful dynamic for his version to focus on that would resonate with contemporary audiences.[22]

Harrison's sympathies in the ancient as in the modern sex-wars represented in the notebooks are with the anti-patriarchal side, and this shows in his version of the

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[20] Forgan 1979. Harrison mentions this briefly (2002: 29-30), but the piece he references there is, in fact Various 1979, a selection of letters responding to this Forgan piece, from the *Guardian* 29 March 1979, collected in notebook 2, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/02, 1141: Harrison underlines the phrase 'the essentially rational system of patriarchy' and adds a marginal '?' Such examples illustrate Harrison's own use of his notebooks later, for writing programme notes, introductions – precisely a repository of his memories about his work and its creation, as he stated.

[21] Which he is sceptical of: Harrison 2002: 30-31.

[22] See also notebook 5, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/05: 984: a diagram of a theatre audience divided by sex for Clytemnestra and Agamemnon's dialogue, she standing before the male audience, he the female. Annotations include: 'Suppose for the Oresteia we adopted the seating of men & women in separate sections. Wouldn't that electrify the attention and the play's sexual conflicts and polarities?'; 'Agamemnon + Clytemnestra dialogue through male & female support from audience??'; 'M/F double acts always divide audiences. Do so physically.' Briefly referred to in Harrison 2002: 34; discussed in Padley 2008.

equivalent passage as well as the conception of the whole.[23] The results of such research and thinking at the detailed level of Apollo's early speech in *Eumenides* emerge clearly in the finished translation (Harrison 2002: 149). He responds to the quoted description of its 'phallic boastfulness… swaggering… virility', with Apollo calling the Furies 'crones' and 'hags' – strongly gendered insults, easily comprehensible as such by the English audience, and without equivalents in the Greek text; this witch-like association is reinforced by the violent and bloody tone and vocabulary of the whole (fangbane, bat-snouts…), while the dark, earth(l)y and beastly imagery bears upon the gendered binaries we saw Harrison noting (from 1102-3), with his Furies even more partaking of that side than Aeschylus' (e.g. 'You hags should live in the beast dens in jungles. Dark lairs all larded with shit and chewed gristle'). In the following lines, Harrison adds a notion of 'society' absent in the Greek, which reflects the same notion that civilisation, order, and rationality are masculine and thus Apollo's, not the Furies':

> Your bat-snouts go snorting in society's bloodtroughs.

[23] See also notebook 5, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/05: 1007, where references to feminist titles including de Beauvoir 1953 and Millett 1970 appear alongside a short quotation from Gagarin 1976: 197: 'Clytemnestra probably resembles what many men today fear will be the ultimate result of women's liberation.' Obviously, inclusion in the notebooks does not itself prove Harrison's agreement, but the context of his published and unpublished materials strongly suggests it. On Harrison's feminism, see e.g. Rutter 1997: 140-41 (though problematised: 'Officially, of course, Tony Harrison is seriously pro-feminist'); Marshall 2010: 65-70; Hall 2017: 7-8, 12-15; Padley 2008 (including quote above, n. 27: Harrison defending the move to keep an all-male cast as justifiable on feminist grounds, not simply an 'archaeological' reconstruction of the performance conditions of the original; that he felt the need to make such a defence acknowledges the potential criticism that dramatising the original's misogyny to make a statement is still inevitably susceptible to being read as dramatising misogyny.

It's the food you get fat on makes you hated by he-gods.

Most translations render θεοῖς, *theois* (*Eum.* 191), simply as 'gods', since although it is grammatically masculine, in Greek that covers mixed-gender plurals too; and Apollo in the original is surely *not* opposing specifically male to female gods including the Furies, but delimiting the Olympian gods (male and female)[24] who, Apollo says, find the Furies disgusting because of their polluting punishments. By translating 'he-gods' here, Harrison imports a further element of the sex-wars and matriarchy readings that were a major focus in researching this passage and beyond.

The implications of Harrison's research and notes go beyond the finished translation of this specific passage, however. On 1102-3 Slater's compound label 'sky-god' is underlined by Harrison in the description of Apollo, 'the epitome of the sky-god', arguing that we can understand Greek gods through the binaries light-dark, male-female, Olympian/heavenly-earthly. By this usage Slater imposes categories and emphasises one structure for understanding the dynamics and distinctions among the gods (among *theoi*; as opposed, say, to emphasising distinctions between gods, semi-divine heroes, and spirits). Harrison's annotation on this line reads 'Olympians always as "sky-he-god"': an idea for a consistent approach to rendering *theoi*, which would similarly accentuate these distinctions and impose a structure for understanding the dynamics of the various deities in his translation – a structure following Slater's, and, via his, Bachofen's and others' readings of Aeschylus as essentially about sex-wars and the fall of matriarchy. This might document the starting point of, but is certainly among the early ideas for, the use of the gendered compounds 'he-god' and 'she-god' for the masculine and feminine forms of Greek *theoi*. As for the compound 'sky-he-

[24] Sommerstein 1989 *ad loc.*: '**θεοῖς** sc. Ὀλυμπίους'; cf. *Eum.* 109 with Sommerstein for the same contrast, Olympian gods as opposed to chthonic deities including the Furies.

god', far from 'always' being used in the finished version, it never appears. Tellingly, it is employed in the context of this same thematic set of binaries and description of the Furies (with vocabulary coinciding with Apollo's speech) in a 'gloss song' used for workshops with the actors (April 1979), discussed and quoted in the introduction to the translation: (Harrison 2002: 26-9).[25]

> Son of Earth-she-god GAIA
> and sky-he-god OURANOS, he,
> CHRONOS castrated his own sire
> …
> From Sky-he-god's sack of sperm
> …
> came the FURIES …
> Crone-kinder …
> she-things with one task to do
> snouts pressed to the spoor of shed blood.

Harrison adds 'As these early workshops included women, the sexual polarisation of the trilogy's matter was made brutally clear… the frank brutality behind the sex war of the *Oresteia* [emerged].' Thus we can see the progress from research, initial ideas, via workshops with actors, towards the National Theatre script. Harrison foregrounds these themes and this lens for viewing the dynamics of the *Oresteia*, which informs his version throughout, even if this specific word-form was not employed. 'He-god' and 'she-god', however, are used throughout, and the documented thought process,

[25] *Cf.* notebook 3, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/03: 802, toying with the formulations 'she-Fates' and 'she-Furies'.

with its marginal ‘always’, was part of the translation process leading to this consistent compound use.[26]

Another interesting detail in the *Oresteia* archive is the note beneath the first page of Greek text (Harrison *c.*1973, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/15), full of handwritten paratexts: ‘“The watchman is important since his loyalty to Agamemnon and misgivings about Clytemnestra's rule express the orthodox Greek beliefs about male supremacy and the unnaturalness of woman's dominance.” Brian Vickers 349’ (Vickers 1973). There are several annotations of this sort (though far oftener paratext is at a minuter level: glosses, underlining alliterations); but *this* quotation interpreting the drama in the same ‘sex wars’ light, being the first scholarly annotation on his Greek text, on its first page, further demonstrates Harrison’s reading Aeschylus in this context from the outset. I do not suggest that he transplants themes absent from the original into his version; rather, this amplification is a consistent choice throughout Harrison’s translation and reception processes: patriarchy *vs.* matriarchy, ‘male supremacy’ and ‘women’s dominance’, the focus of much (then) contemporary discourse about the *Oresteia* and its myth that Harrison was consuming avidly, predominate.

The continuity of sex wars, and the similarities of language and concinnities of theme and thought that Harrison the translator finds and juxtaposes in his ancient and modern sources on matriarchy, the Oresteian myth, and sex wars throughout the

[26] Incidentally on *Oresteia*’s ubiquitous Old English (thus Germanic) compounds, a pocket notebook Harrison appears to have used while watching the Burgtheater’s *Die Orestie* (1976) records several German compound words for possible adaptation, e.g. ‘Mutterblut. motherblood’ [n.p.] (cf. notebook 1, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/ORE/01, 380-1); ‘motherblood’ used in a ‘gloss song’, Harrison 2002: 29.

archive, can be seen as paving the way for this *Oresteia* as an intervention in the receiving society:[27] specifically, a critique of contemporary society still being oppressively patriarchal, despite the vast distances both from antiquity and from the clan-based societies of Old English and other Germanic sagas that Harrison's version evokes. That is, Harrison's intervention operates in part through the strong element of foreignisation in his version,[28] which further emphasises a setting in the distant and apparently more 'primitive' past for the National Theatre audience in 1981, while the archive demonstrates even more overtly than the play it shaped that modern feminist struggles against patriarchy were a constant reference point. But the direction of critical discourse is not only from ancient text to modern audience; rather, Harrison's version creates a true dialogue between receiving and received. So, at the broadest level, the Bachofenian reception history of the *Oresteia* and its wider mythical-historical contexts, which, being brought to bear on his translation and reception processes at all stages, serve to promote the sex wars theme as perhaps the central aspect of Aeschylus' trilogy, and to valorise matriarchy theory as having an essential kernel of truth that Aeschylus' original preserved.[29] At the other end of the spectrum,

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[27] This is supported by Harrison's statement on the all-male cast (quoted in Padley 2008): 'To have women play in our production would seem as if we in the twentieth century were smugly assuming that the sex war was over and that the oppression of the patriarchal code existed only in past times. The maleness of the piece is like a vacuum-sealed container keeping this ancient issue fresh.' (Emphasis mine.)

[28] On which, Taplin (2005).

[29] This is how Murray (1991: 270-1) reads it: 'This production of the *Oresteia* in Harrison's translation succeeded in demonstrating the truth of the old and often ridiculed Marxist interpretation of the *Oresteia*' (emphasis mine): that is, Aeschylus has been changed for us by Harrison, not 'simply' translated by him, but our understanding of the meaning of the original and the history of scholarship

minute details like rendering θεοῖς with 'he-gods' in *Eumenides* 191, a case where a more 'literal' rendering would include male *and female* Olympian gods, shows Harrison universally applying a translation chosen to amplify gender binaries at all points – inevitably more or less 'authentically' each time. The archive repeatedly shows this choice as emerging from Harrison's political and theoretical reading and research throughout the reception process, a policy that in this passage overwrites the original's battle of Olympian *vs.* chthonic deities with the 'battle of the sexes', so that the text of Aeschylus is adapted in places to embed Harrison's favoured thematic focus more thoroughly throughout his *Oresteia*.

Two notes on *The Labourers of Herakles*: i) classical esoterica, and ii) on *not* privileging 'the classics'

I conclude with two small details from the *Labourers of Herakles* archives: the first a few lines from a draft showing Harrison the 'scholar-poet'[30] pursuing research into the fragments of Phrynichus on which he partly based that play, but going further than his audience could follow him easily, and perhaps for that reason absent in the finished text. Harrison's well known class politics and commitment to the ideal that his own poetry and 'the Classics' alike should be accessible and speak directly to contemporary audiences means that many of his translations and adaptations might be seen as part of the 'democratic turn' in Classical Reception (*Trackers* most famously

thereon is recast by Harrison's version (to repurpose Martindale 1993: 6: 'Homer has been changed for us by Virgil and Milton, who have left their traces in his text, and thereby enabled new possibilities of meaning').

[30] As Macintosh 2019 aptly labels Harrison (in chapter title) in his classical translation work.

both thematises this ideal and attempts it); but there are a minority of works like *Labourers*, with its untranslated Greek fragments of Phrynichus, which apparently show far less concern for such considerations. It is striking then that for this play, perhaps (or in parts certainly) his least accessible to a non-classicist audience, the Archive shows that Harrison's drafts, not only his research, pursued esoteric avenues even further, but then retreated from them. Secondly, in tension with this, we have an example from the same play's archive showing further that the 'classical' is incorporated as *among* the world's great cultural goods for Harrison, not on a pedestal as *the* high point of culture. That he reaffirms his political commitment to not privileging the Graeco-Roman classics even in a play that is hardly inclusive to the non-classicist might be seen as paradoxical, but could equally be seen as quite calculated.

i) In *Labourers* the actors recite all the extant fragments of the tragedian Phrynichus, in the order of modern editions of Greek tragic fragments. There is little to go on, for researcher and poet alike: Herakles appears in one fragment (less than two lines), the *Sack of Miletus* only as a title, yet on these and research into their original contexts Harrison hangs virtually all the Phrynichus-related material.[31] Doubtless the minuteness of the extant remains encouraged extracting everything possible from them for a play centrally about Phrynichus in conception.[32] About one other fragment,

[31] Harrison's use of fragmentary material recalls *Trackers*: his receptions retain and thematise our necessarily incomplete picture of antiquity, and the destruction that leads to this, e.g. in *Labourers* that of the Library of Alexandria (see below).

[32] On its early centrality, shown by the contents of the first *Labourers* notebook, and its engagement with the fragments and their editions in the archive, see Hodkinson (forthcoming); an alternative title is

fr. 13, which passes without comment in the finished *Labourers*, Harrison's research into the source and context for its survival had suggested an expansion on that context (not on the fragment itself) in an earlier draft. The fragment reads:

λάμπει δ' ἐπὶ πορφυρέαις παρῇσι φῶς ἔρωτος: 'the light of desire gleams on purple cheeks'. The play, speaker, and surrounding context are unknown. In the first few pages of *Labourers* notebook 1 (BC MS 20c Harrison/03/HER/01), Harrison pasted a photocopy of Phrynichus' complete fragments. (Kannicht 1991: 40-9). On notebook page 15, containing fr. 13, he wrote alongside it 'quoted by Sophocles', which emerges from the text that preserves this fragment, Athenaeus 13.604 (the critical apparatus to the text gives the source). The passage, comparing heterosexual and pederastic love, includes the following:

> Sophocles liked boys, just as Euripides liked women… At any rate, Ion the poet in his work called *Visits* writes the following: 'I met Sophocles the poet on Chios…
>
> Since the slave boy pouring the wine standing by the fire <looked flushed>, Sophocles was evidently [text lacunose] and said, 'do you wish me to enjoy my drink?' And when the boy said that he did, Sophocles said, 'then bring and remove the cup slowly.' At this the boy's face became even redder and Sophocles said to the man sharing his couch: 'how well Phrynichus was composing when he said, "the light of desire gleams on purple cheeks."'
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> (Translation: Freer 2015)

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the Greek for 'the eyewitness testimony of Phrynichus' (see title page in Harrison 1996), and appears already in notebook 1, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/HER/01, 195, from a typescript draft: 'THE LABOURERS OF HERAKLES or η αυτοψία του Φρυνιχου' [*sic*: most diacritics missing because typewritten].

As most of Athenaeus' (3rd century CE) anecdotes from classical Greece, this must be taken with a large spoonful of salt. This wider context for the fragment's survival tells us little about Phrynichus, only portraying the younger Sophocles quoting a pioneer of his genre. Harrison's draft typescript pasted into notebook 1, 383, includes the following incomplete sets of lines:

> So though he [Phrynichus] shamed appeasers with Alosis Miletou
> for masking men as women I'd've banned him too!
>
> But I grant you that Aeschylus who also made men don
> the garbs of wailing women fought at Marathon…
>
> And as for Sophocles, well, Prhrynichos [*sic*]
> lampei d'epi porfureiais paeesi phos eroatos [transliteration of fr. 13]
> Well that one one fragemnst [*sic*] quite enough
> to tell that Sophocles was a puff !

The rough state of this, its lack of continuity, show that it was an earlier sketching of ideas, not nearly included in the final text. This material became part of Herakles' speech (125-8), in which the hypermasculine Herakles rails against the 'cross-dressing' and perceived effeminacy of ancient drama from Phrynichus onwards using male actors for female roles.[33] Harrison thus investigated all Phrynichus' fragments, all annotated variously at the beginning of this notebook, to discover all he could about them, as thoroughly as one embarking on writing a commentary on the

[33] Tradition that Phrynichus first included female roles in tragedy: Suda φ 762.

fragmentary Greek tragedies, and used that material in drafting *Labourers*. But unsurprisingly these ideas were ultimately omitted: it would be difficult to convey to all but an audience of classicists without an explanatory digression what relevance Sophocles has, since he is only (said to be) quoting Phrynichus; the fragmentary line from Phrynichus tells us nothing about him, certainly nothing pertinent to *Labourers*' developments upon the fragments' themes of the *Sack of Miletus* and Herakles. Ultimately, Harrison abandoned these references to Aeschylus and Sophocles. Likewise he decided against having Herakles be explicitly homophobic in his critique of theatrical 'effeminacy' – which would have been Harrison's invention (though one not out of place in the receiving society's frequent conflation of homosexuality with men 'donning the garb of women') – instead limiting the reference to male actors adopting women's costume and voices, with which the historical tradition credits Phrynichus.[34] Here is part of the closest position in the published speech to the quoted drafts, including two lines adopted in near-identical form (underlined):

> He, Phrynichos, the first
>
> to bring on wailing women, but what to me's the worst –
>
> it wasn't women sang the roles but dragged-up men.
>
> …
>
> <u>And though he shamed appeasers with *Halosis Miletou*,</u>
>
> <u>for masking men as women, I'd've had the poet banned too.</u>
>
> […]
>
> I believe that men dragged-up as women undermined

[34] As discussed above, all-male casts such as that thematised in *Labourers* also featured in *Oresteia*, and indeed in other Harrison dramatic translations; see Rutter (1997), criticising this decision in some cases (see further above n. 30).

the military effort, so I'd've had him fined. (126-7)

Ultimately, although *Labourers* is far from Harrison's most accessible work to non-classicists, perhaps he thought this Phrynichus-via 'Sophocles'-via Athenaeus too esoteric and difficult to elaborate in the context of his adoption and riffing on the fragments of Phrynichus: without a scholarly apparatus at the foot of the page in his own play, few besides scholars of Greek tragedy or Athenaeus would remember where and in what context fragment 13 is quoted, and understand the point of it. Instead, *Labourers* sticks to two traditions about Phrynichus: his innovations in tragedy and the Athenian audience reaction to his *Sack of Miletus*, fining and banning him;[35] these are hardly common knowledge, but are repeatedly mentioned and explained clearly throughout *Labourers*.

ii) On notebook 1 (BC MS 20c Harrison/03/HER/01) 391 Harrison pastes an article by Zlatko Dizdarevic,[36] (source unknown) entitled 'Why are you shocked?'. Harrison has yellow highlighted and red underlined the whole of this short paragraph:

> In a few days Srebrenica will have some other name. Maybe Mladicville, or something like that. And, of course, there'll be a nice, new parking lot since

[35] See Herodotus 6.21; Rosenbloom (1993) with references.

[36] Bosnian journalist and author who covered the conflict for many international papers and periodicals. The rest of the article laments the weakness of the UN's and NATO's response, which is also reflected later in the same speech: 'And officials with the suits and ties of Nessus on | walk the corridors of power in Washington and Bonn, | In London and in Paris, in New York at the UN.' For more on *Labourers* and Bosnia, see Hodkinson (forthcoming). The *Labourers* notebooks are a microcosm of the juxtapositions of diverse source materials in those for the *Oresteia* discussed above.

wherever the Serbs find old cemeteries, mosques and priceless cultural monuments, they usually build a big parking lot.

Compare *Labourers* 148:

Labourer 1/Herakles

From Ibn El Ass, who lit the fire that caused the loss
of millions of papyri, including Phrynichos,
in Alexandria's library, because nobody needs
so many different volumes, if he only reads
… the Koran,
to one today who mortars mosques and uses bulldozed blocks
to erect a hurried edifice that's strictly Orthodox,
cementing over cemeteries with centuries of dead,
and over sacred ancestors puts parking lots instead,
we've all been sent a garment of agony like this.

Here the archive shows Harrison drawing directly on finer details from contemporary reports, not just the headlines: a short paragraph from a page-length article. Elsewhere in *Labourers* he uses ancient conflicts to intervene on the wider Bosnian war; here he focuses on cultural destruction, and shocks with the mundanity of the replacement, 'parking lots.' Harrison combines the suggestion from this article with a classical theme in Herakles' speech: the destruction of classical, 'Western' culture in the library of Alexandria, in the name of religion (here Islam). Naturally, as poet and classicist, Harrison mourned the loss of so much classical literature, and could be

confident that the *Labourers* audience would too.[37] But by referring to that alongside the destruction of mosques and Islamic cemeteries in Srebrenica, Harrison does not allow the cultural privileging of the 'classics' in the sense of exclusively Graeco-Roman antiquity: any act of cultural destruction is abhorred and treated alike, from antiquity to the present, the perpetrators and victims reversed, just as elsewhere in *Labourers* acts of ethnic cleansing and annihilation of populations are compared from ancient Miletus to the Bosnian war via other wars in the region, with different victims on different occasions.[38] This stance is unsurprising to audiences familiar with Harrison's politics and humanitarianism; but it does de-privilege 'Western Culture' at a festival that in many ways trades on celebrating that construct. While Harrison could be sure of most of his audience's sympathy for classical Greek literary culture, he might have suspected that fewer of them would be sympathetic to his even-handed treatment of victims on all sides of the ancient and modern conflicts he represents. That *Labourers* is quite exclusive for a non-classicist audience, and, as seen in the previous section, might have turned out even more so, can be attributed to the very specific, one-off performance context and its audience; this collocation in the same play of a refusal to privilege Western lives and 'classical' culture cannot be read as pandering to that audience, and might even be read as a provocation to it.

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[37] *Labourers* was written for the Eighth International Meeting on Ancient Greek Drama at Delphi, Greece, staged on 23 August 1995, hosted by the European Cultural Centre of Delphi.

[38] The *Labourers* notebooks are full of newspaper and magazine reports and opinion pieces about the Bosnian war, some inevitably making comparisons and marking continuities with past wars. E.g. notebook 2, BC MS 20c Harrison/03/HER/02, 431 an article from the *Guardian* 17 August 1995 with the headline 'History replays itself as the Orthodox Serbs flee the 'genocide' of Krajina (Steele 1995)', comparing the citizens fleeing in 1690 with images in news media of the same phenomenon.

Conclusion

The Harrison archive offers a wealth of varied insights, which are only beginning to be explored. Two things emerge repeatedly: first, the depth and detail of Harrison's research, including but not only in classical texts, their editions, translations, and academic writings about them. Reading his copies of classical texts with their rich paramaterials (which would have been equally valuable as preparation for writing commentaries on as translations of them) naturally offers much to those interested in his translation and drafting processes, but also stand alone as valuable documents in their reception history. There is plentiful evidence for Harrison's wrestling with how to democratise and when to critique or de-privilege the 'classics', alongside his obvious relish for pursuing all avenues as a classical researcher before sometimes retreating from a perhaps too esoteric result.

Second, the great breadth (both thematic and qualitative) of materials collected in the archive, with evidence of the same curiosity about topics well outside Harrison's areas of expertise, and a great eclecticism regarding other cultural products and ideas that come into contact with 'classical' antiquity. Allied to this, the way materials are brought together on notebook pages especially – the product of a non-systematic approach to research – creates numerous suggestive between ideas in the collage-like juxtapositions of different media pasted alongside one another with handwritten paratext.[39] The effects are sometimes evident in finished plays, but the

[39] More on the 'collage'-like notebooks in Hodkinson (forthcoming), suggesting that the fragment-focused *Labourers*, and the creative and reception processes of its writing seen in the archive, lend themselves particularly to analysis in terms of collage and 'found poetry'.

particular ingredients found in the mix frequently prove illuminating in their own right. Harrison's early observations of similarities between contemporary and ancient discourses about the 'sex wars' are first preserved by juxtaposition, and thenceforth repeatedly reinforced by association where they are now glued in place alongside one another; sometimes layers of paratext are added at different times as the working archive is employed. This fosters the kinds of insightful connections between classical and contemporary, and the use of each to interrogate and critique the other, for which Tony Harrison's receptions are famous. Researchers can uncover numerous aspects of his reception processes (many of which were not retained or not foregrounded in published or performed versions) such as where and what specific non-classical materials and ideas were juxtaposed ancient texts, and what specific dynamics between them were considered – from using the ancient to intervene in the receiving culture or unsettle any easy assumptions of 'classical' status by an audience of classicists; to using its reception history to refocus or alter the meaning of the received text; to creating hybrids of ancient texts and the modern texts and media that became paramaterials to them in Harrison's notebooks.[40]

[40] I am extremely grateful to the editor for much encouragement and helpful feedback during the writing of this chapter; to Special Collections staff, especially Sarah Prescott; and to Tony Harrison for permission to quote the archive items.

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