

Second Lives: Textual and Other Resurrections in the ‘New Euripides’

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You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough

(M. West)

In a passage of the Platonic *Second Letter* (310e3–311b6) addressed to Dionysius the Younger of Syracuse, ‘Plato’ attempts to explain his relationship with the tyrant as typical of the fraught relationship between intellectual and political power (310e5–6):

By nature, practical wisdom and great power come together in the same place
(πέφυκε ξυνιέναι εἰς ταὐτὸ φρόνησίς τε καὶ δύναμις μεγάλη), and they always
pursue and seek each other and come to be together.¹

Observing that such partnerships have long exercised the human imagination, he adduces examples from history, poetry and myth before turning to the very diverse forms these relationships may assume (311a1–311b6):

For example, whenever human beings converse about Hiero and Pausanias the Lacedaemonian, they enjoy bringing up their intercourse with Simonides, what he did and said with regard to them. And they are wont to sing the praises of Periander the Corinthian and Thales the Milesian together, and of Pericles and Anaxagoras, and again of Croesus and Solon as wise and Cyrus as one in power. And the poets, imitating these things, bring together Creon and Teiresias,

¹ Translations (with minimal modifications) of the Second Platonic Letter are those of Helfer 2023.

Polyidos and Minos, Agamemnon, Nestor, Odysseus, and Palamedes—and as it seems to me, the first human beings brought together Prometheus and Zeus in the same way—and of these, they sing of some coming into conflict (εἰς διαφοράν) with each other, others into friendship (εἰς φιλίαν), and still others into friendship at one time and into conflict at another, being like-minded about some things and conflicting about others (τὰ μὲν ὁμονοοῦντας, τὰ δὲ διαφορομένους).

While the letter does not specify any sources, its pairing of Polyidos and Minos has been taken to refer specifically to Euripides' *Polyidos*,² a play which, on the evidence of its surviving fragments, was best remembered for staging a tense confrontation between the seer and the tyrant. In the *Letter*, 'Plato' leaves open which pairing corresponds to which type of relationship —φιλία, διαφορά, or φιλία turned sour—but it is clear both from the accounts of Polyidos' dealings with Minos in Hyginus and Apollodorus as well as the other testimonia for the play that there was little love lost between the two; at the very least, they were διαφερόμενοι at the dramatic climax of the story. It is all but certain that their dispute escalated over the question of whether or not Polyidos should revive Minos' son Glaukos, who had gone missing before his corpse was eventually found with the help of Polyidos' divinatory skills.

It is at this very point that another theme that is strongly associated with Euripides' play in the indirect transmission must have come into sight: Minos' request that Glaukos be brought back to life gave rise to a debate involving eschatological speculation. A case in point are the play's most famous lines (Euripides fr. 638):

² Carrara 2014 makes the most thorough case for the inclusion of this passage among the *testimonia* for Euripides' play (her Test. 6), see pp. 219 (with the earlier literature on the matter discussed in n. 6), 268–269, 301–303.

τίς δ' οἶδεν εἰ τὸ ζῆν μὲν ἔστι κατθανεῖν,
τὸ κατθανεῖν δὲ ζῆν κάτω νομίζεται;

Who knows if life is death, and if in the underworld death is considered life?

(text and transl. Collard/Cropp 2008)

The couplet had an exceptionally rich afterlife, not least in Aristophanes' *Frogs* and Plato's *Gorgias*, where Socrates quotes a version of it in a passage which is itself replete with eschatological ideas (492e6–493b2).³

These two themes long associated with the play—the clash of φρόνησις and δύναμις μεγάλη on the one hand, and philosophical reflection on life and death on the other—are prominently represented in the newly found lines of the *Polyidos* on P.Phil.Nec. 23v. As has been variously argued by the participants of the CHS conference in June 2024, the papyrus most likely preserves a set of excerpts,⁴ and the great majority of the lines from *Polyidos* are all but certainly utterances of the eponymous seer addressed to Minos (the probable speaker only of lines ii.1–7 and ii.17).⁵ If it is all but certain that we are not dealing with a continuous passage of the play, there is nevertheless a certain unity of thought and vision to the lines, and that unity hinges precisely on the co-presence and interaction of these two central themes. In

³ Fr. 638, which lives on, with more or less variation (and is occasionally perhaps conflated with the very similar fr. 833 of Euripides *Phrixos*), in the parodies of Aristophanes (most memorably at *Frogs* 1477–1478, cf. already 1082 with the respective scholia), in the scholia on Euripides *Hippolytos* 191, the philosophical tradition, anthologies etc., is among the most frequently quoted lines of Euripides in antiquity; see Carrara 2014, 326 and her as well as Kannicht's apparatus *ad loc.*

⁴ See the contribution of Donald Mastronarde in this volume.

⁵ The point is discussed at length in the editio princeps of Gehad/Gibert/Trnka-Amrhein 2024 and developed further in the illuminating contribution of Chiara Meccariello in this volume. Accordingly, my use of 'Polyidos' and 'Minos' for speaker or addressee in the excerpts of the 'New *Polyidos*' is thus always to be understood with the qualification 'most likely'.

the following, I propose a reading of the ‘New *Polyidos*’ that is based on the uncontroversial assumption that it forms part of a discussion revolving around Minos’ demand that Polyidos resurrect his dead son, no matter the cost. I focus first on two short passages, ii.15–16 and ii.26–30 respectively, and then gradually broaden the frame to illuminate the links between the ‘New *Polyidos*’ and reflections on nature (*physis*) and eschatology elsewhere in Greek poetry and Attic drama—above all in Aeschylus’ *Oresteia* and Euripides’ own *Alcestis*—as well as the numerous points of contact between the myths of Polyidos and Asclepius.

1. Repetition, compulsion: col. ii.15–16

At ii.15–16, Polyidos expresses anxiety that doing Minos a (particular?) favour once will establish a harmful precedent:⁶

—
 δέδοικα σ’ εὔδρων μὴ κακὰς εὖρω μονάς,
 παθὼν δ’ ἅπαξ εὔκαῦθις αὖ ζητῇ<ι>σ παθεῖν.

I fear that in helping you, I may incur wretched detentions,

And that you, having received a good turn once, may seek to do so again and again.

καῦθις αὖ is a familiar Euripidean *iunctura* (especially αὖθις αὖ, preceded by a word ending in a consonant) to mark the recovery of an earlier state: bliss after misery for many; renewed youth for old Iolaos; the eventual restoration of Helen’s reputation; and calm for Orestes after the storm.⁷ καῦθις αὖ ζητῇ<ι>σ παθεῖν could therefore just mean ‘that you will seek to receive

⁶ Unless otherwise noted, text and translation from P.Phil.Nec. 23v are from Gehad/Gibert/Trnka-Amrhein 2024 for which I occasionally use the shorthand ‘the editors’.

⁷ See Euripides *Ion* 1512–1514 (parallel noted in the ed. pr., comm. *ad loc.*) ὃ μεταβαλοῦσα μυρίους ἤδη βροτῶν/

[a/the favour] once more’. It is plausible, however, that the opposition with ἅπαξ ‘once’ here amplifies (κ)αὖθις αὖ to mean ‘again and again’, which is what the editors offer in their translation.⁸

Both in Hyginus and in Apollodorus’ accounts of the myth,⁹ Polyidos’ relationship with Minos is characterised by a series of favours he has to render to him, one following from the other.¹⁰ The editors take Polyidos’ reluctance to do Minos a favour at ii.15–16 to arise at a very particular stage of this series of demands, namely after the discovery of Glaukos’ lifeless body.¹¹ Although fear of “detentions” could be located at almost any stage of his interactions with Minos, it seems most likely that Polyidos expresses his reluctance precisely when asked to revive the child. For all its apparent vagueness, the language of εὖ δρᾶν τινα and εὖ πάσχειν

καὶ δυστυχεῖσαι καὖθις αὖ πράξει καλῶς/ τύχη, ..., and cf. *Children of Heracles* 796 νέος μεθέστηκεν ἐκ γέροντος αὖθις αὖ; *Orestes* 279 ἐκ κυμάτων γὰρ αὖθις αὖ γαλήνῃ ὄρω; *Helena* 932 πάλιν μ’ ἀνάξουσ’ ἐς τὸ σῶφρον αὖθις αὖ, cf. Kannicht 1969, 245 n. *ad loc.* “In dem doppelten Pleonasmus πάλιν ... αὖθις αὖ + ἀνάξουσι liegt der Anspruch, ‘endlich wieder’ rehabilitiert zu werden”, emphasis in the orig. The ‘single pleonasm’ αὖθις αὖ πάλιν also occurs at Sophocles *Philoctetes* 952–953 where it suggests the futility of an oft-repeated action: ὦ σχῆμα πέτρας δίπυλον, αὖθις αὖ πάλιν / εἴσειμι πρὸς σὲ ψιλός, οὐκ ἔχων τροφήν.

⁸ Gehad/Gibert/Trnka-Amrhein 2024 gloss καὖθις αὖ “once again” in their commentary (p. 26) but print “again and again” in their translation (p. 22).

⁹ Hyginus *Fabulae* 136 (= Euripides *Polyidos* T via Kannicht; Test. 3 Carrara); Apollodorus 3.17–20 (T ivb Kannicht; Aeschylus Test. 1 Carrara). The two accounts differ in various details; for discussion and interpretation of the variants see: Persson 1942, 9–24; Willetts 1962, 60–67, Muellner 1998.

¹⁰ Polyidos is asked to find an apt analogy for a portent (the ‘three-coloured’ cow); he finds the analogy (the mulberry or the bramble) and this qualifies him as the seer to be sent out to locate Minos’ missing child; with the help of bird signs, Polyidos finds the body of Glaukos, who has drowned in a vat of honey; Minos demands that Polyidos resuscitate him; despite his protestations that this cannot happen, Polyidos is shut in the tomb with Glaukos and, first observing and then imitating a resurrection of a snake performed by a fellow creature, eventually brings him back to life. Whereas in Hyginus Polyidos is then handsomely rewarded and sent home, Apollodorus’ Minos makes yet another demand, namely that Polyidos teach the boy divination; Polyidos complies, again, but asks the boy to spit in his mouth upon his departure, a process by which he takes back the gift of divination.

¹¹ Gehad/Gibert/Trnka-Amrhein 2024, n. on ii.15.

(ὕπό τινος) is used by Euripides for returning/being returned from the world of the dead, viz. in the *Heracles*, where we find the same sequence of expressions, as here in consecutive lines, in an exchange between the eponymous hero and Theseus, whose help Heracles is willing to accept because he had once brought Theseus back from the Underworld (1235–1236):¹²

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ἐπήνεσ' εὖ δρᾶσας δέ σ' οὐκ ἀναίνομαι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ ἐγὼ δὲ πάσχων εὖ τότ' οἰκτίρω σε νῦν.

More fundamentally, of all the tasks imposed upon Polyidos, resurrection is the one Minos would most likely ask him to repeat, possibly more than once.¹³ Elsewhere in Greek myth, too, the act of resurrection calls for repetition (I shall return to this in §5).

If, at ii.15–16, Polyidos explicitly expresses his fear (δέδοικα, ii.15) of Minos' reaction to “the good service”, he does so again at ii.34–36 (note δέδοικα at ii.36); at this point, however, he fears not Minos but calamity sent “from the gods” (δαιμόνων ὕπο, ii.35). Read against his reluctance to comply with Minos' request at ii.15–16, Polyidos' fear of divine retribution shows him caught between two forms of justice with their respective mechanisms of enforcement, that of the tyrant on the one hand and the gods on the other. This clash between two diverging ideas of power stands in stark contrast with a view expressed earlier in the papyrus,

¹² Here, the πάσχων εὖ is of course the one who was himself brought back from the dead, cf. *Heracles* 1222: ὅτ' ἐξέσωσάς μ' ἐς φάος νεκρῶν πάρα.

¹³ Of course, Polyidos could also be thought to be expressing fear that Minos would force him to find further analogies if he successfully does so once, or locate other missing people, but there is no way of knowing whether a need for finding an apt analogy or a missing person will ever arise again. What is known is that other people around Minos, even he himself, will die one day. A less pointed reading of ii.15–16 is also possible, whereby εὖ δρᾶν/ εὖ πάσχειν refer to the simple performing and benefiting from an unspecified favour; Euripides' characters using this language, however, typically do know precisely what kind of favours they have in mind, see, e.g., *Hypsipyle* fr. 757.73–74 (αἰ[σ]χρὸν γὰρ εὖ μὲν ἐξεπίστασθαι παθεῖν,/ δρᾶσαι δὲ μηδὲν εὖ παθόντα πρὸς σέθεν); *Andromache* 586 (δρᾶν <γ> εὖ, κακῶς δ' οὐ, μηδ' ἀποκτείνειν βίαι); *Hecuba* 252–253 (ὃς ἐξ ἑμοῦ μὲν ἔπαθες οἷα φῆις παθεῖν,/ δρᾶις δ' οὐδὲν ἡμᾶς εὖ, κακῶς δ' ὅσον δύναι;).

presumably by Minos himself, that tyrants (or, in his perhaps more restrained phrasing, “tyrannies”) are on earth what Zeus is in heaven (ii.5–6):

ἐν δ' οὐρανῷ<ι> Ζεὺς ἔν τε γῇ<ι> τυραννίδεσ
πλεῖστον δύνανται

Zeus has greatest sway in heaven, tyrannies on land

πλεῖστον δύνανται is a revealing syllepsis which underscores the tyrant’s implicit claim to a dominance approximating that of Zeus.¹⁴ Polyidos rejects such straightforward analogy between divine and mortal power and instead defines Minos’ demand that he resurrect the child as a transgression of divine law for which he himself would be liable; witness at ii.21:

ἀμαθὴς ἂν εἶην θεῶν ὑπερβαίνων νόμους

I would be a fool to transgress the laws of the gods

and, further below, now ‘redirected’ at Minos (ii.47–48):

ὅς τοὺς τεθέντας ἀνατρέπεις πάλιν νόμους
καὶ ξυνταράσσεις θέσμι' ἀμαθίας ὕπο –

you who are foolishly trying to overturn the established laws and throw the
rules into confusion

¹⁴ We might reasonably assume that Minos’ claim is grounded in the fact that he is a son of Zeus— a fact that, if Battezzato’s very attractive reading of ii.45 (... Ζητὸς οὐ φήσω σ’ ἐγώ) is correct, is at stake elsewhere in the play, when an enraged Polyidos flat-out denies Minos’ descent from Zeus, calling it a lie (ii.46), see Battezzato, this volume, pp.000–000.

For Polyidos, complying with the will of the tyrant and “seeking what must not be sought” (ζητῶν τὰ μὴ ζητητά, ii.35) is tantamount to transgressing divine law and running the danger of god-sent punishment. If this reconstruction is correct, the interactions between Polyidos and Minos are defined by a concatenation of demands which leads to Polyidos’ fearful expectation that successfully performing a resurrection will result in the compulsion to repeat it.¹⁵ The act of raising the dead itself, in turn, entails a form of repetition: at stake is the question of whether or not the one life apportioned to Glaukos can be extended or turned into two lives. It is here that the idea of contested repetition that defines the encounter between Minos and Polyidos acquires new urgency. The discussion surrounding Minos’ request constitutes a crisis of iterability.

2. Φύσις, life and death: col. ii.26–30

A dialectic between iterability and singularity, between change and fixity, runs like a red thread through the ‘New *Polyidos*’. It is precisely this contested boundary that, I suggest, comes under scrutiny in the difficult and dense lines ii.26–30, where the laws of φύσις ‘nature’ are set forth with certainty:

εὖ δ’ ἴσθ’, ὅς’ ἐκ γῆς ἐξακοντίζει φύσις
 δεῖ καὶ βιώσθαι καὶ θανεῖν· τὰ πάντα γὰρ
 χρόνω<ι> τε φύει καὶ μεθίσταται πάλιν.
 ἐξῆς δ’ ἕκαστος γί<γ>νεται νέος τ’ ἀνὴρ
 γ[έ]ρωγ τε καὶ ζῶν οὐδὲν ἄλλ’ ἅπαξ μόνον.

¹⁵ Cf. also Muellner 1989 who repeatedly emphasises the element of (repeated) compulsion in Apollodorus’ version of the myth in particular.

The editors translate:

Know well: whatever nature shoots up from the earth must live and die, for in time all things grow and change back. Each man becomes young and old in turn, living not twice, but just once.

The vehemence with which Polyidos has rejected Minos' wealth in the immediately preceding lines ("You're rich, but don't think you understand the rest ...", ii.23–25)¹⁶ carries on into this passage, where the seer lays down the law of nature.

The text is clearly not without problems. While it is not inconceivable that a line has dropped out (as Luigi Battezzato¹⁷ has indeed suggested), I shall follow the editors in attempting to explain the lines as they appear to be transmitted.

The statement that ὅς' ἐκ γῆς ἑξακοντίζει φύσις / δεῖ καὶ βιῶναι καὶ θανεῖν (ii.26–7) is explained (γάρ) and expanded on in the following sentence where "whatever nature shoots up from the earth" is replaced with "all things", τὰ πάντα. The specifics of this explanation and expansion, however, are far from clear—even less so, perhaps, than has been assumed to date:¹⁸ there seems to be a consensus that τὰ πάντα is the subject that governs φύει and μεθίσταται, which are both intransitive (sc. all things "grow" and "change back"). For μεθίσταται, a parallel may readily be adduced from Euripides,¹⁹ even though μεθίστασθαι + πάλιν—a generally rare

¹⁶ See further below p. 000–000.

¹⁷ This volume p. 000.

¹⁸ ii.26–28, and in particular the difficult forms φύει [υ long] and μεθίσταται, as well as the interlinear notes above them (suggesting φύεται [υ short] and καθίσταται as glosses or alternative readings) have already received ample discussion both in the *editio princeps* and in James Diggle's and Luigi Battezzato's contributions to the present volume, see p. 000–000, p. 000–000.

¹⁹ Cf. E. *Ion* 1106 μεθίσταται δὲ πνεύματα; (in *imesi*) *Hippolytus* 1109 μετὰ δ' ἵσταται ἀνδράσιν αἰῶν / πολυπλάνητος

iunctura—²⁰ does not occur elsewhere.²¹ For intransitive φύει, ‘it grows’, however, it is much harder to find convincing parallels.²²

An alternative that has, to my knowledge, not been discussed to date is to take the verbs φύει and μεθίσταται as *transitive* (which is more natural in the case of φύει,²³ and unattested but not impossible in the case of μεθίσταται²⁴) with τὰ πάντα as accusative object; the subject of the sentence would then be the abstract φύσις. This reading is supported both by the prominent position of φύσις at the end of line ii.26 and the pointed *figura etymologica* φύσις ... φύει thereby created. In this reconstruction, ii.27–28 may be seen to recall the opening couplet of the *Trugrede* in Sophocles’ *Ajax* (646–7):

αἰεὶ; *Aeolus* F 35 αἰὲ τὸ μὲν ζῆι, τὸ δὲ μεθίσταται κακόν,/ τὸ δ’ ἐκπέφηνεν αὖθις ἐξ ἀρχῆς νέον.

²⁰ There are, as far as I am aware, only two other attestations of the phrase in the fifth and fourth century; see below, p. 000,

²¹ Variants of the phrase, which use the active or passive voice, denote a repeated change of state beyond the subject’s control: Euripides, *Children of Heracles* 486–487: ἡμῖν δὲ δόξας εὖ προχωρῆσαι δρόμος/ πάλιν μεθέστηκ’ αὖθις ἐς τὰμήχανον; *Electra* 1201–1202 (chor.): πάλιν πάλιν φρόνημα σὸν/ μετεστάθη πρὸς αὔραν; *Ion* 582–584: σιγαῖς; τί πρὸς γῆν ὄμμα σὸν βαλὼν ἔχεις/ ἐς φροντίδας τ’ ἀπῆλθες, ἐκ δὲ χαρμονῆς/ πάλιν μεταστὰς δεῖμα προσβάλλεις πατρί;

²² This is discussed in Gehad/Gibert/Trnka-Amrhein 2024, p. 27 as well as Battezzato (this volume p. 000) who adduce possible parallels (but note that φύει in Glaukos’ famous simile at *Iliad* 6.149 is not a straightforward example of intransitive use, see Stoevesandt 2016, 65–66, nn. *ad loc.*). As Patzer 1993 [1939], 242 has suggested, however, the distinction between transitive and intransitive uses of φύειν may have been overstated, as both are irreducibly connected (“Das Formen, das ... in der Wurzel φυ- angesprochen ist, ist von der Art, daß Formendes und Geformtes eins sind.”); see also Buccheri 2024, 260.

²³ The form, with υ long rather than short, would have an exact parallel in *TrGF adespoton* F 454.2 Ἄβαντα φύει διάδοχον τυραννίδος, and the (regular) transitive use of present active φύειν could be paralleled in Euripides: *Ba.* 651: ὃς τὴν πολύβοτρυν ἄμπελον φύει βροτοῖς; inc. fr. 898.12 φύουσιν ἡμῖν πάντα καὶ τρέφουσ’ ἄμα (both *anceps*).

²⁴ Transitive use of μεθίστασθαι in the present tense is unparalleled; there are several attestations, however, of transitive uses for the middle voice of the first aorist in prose from Herodotus and Thucydides onwards, meaning ‘dismiss’, ‘remove’, ‘banish’, ‘depose’ *vel sim.*, see CGL μεθίστημι 2, 3, 4, 5.

ἅπανθ' ὁ μακρὸς κἀναρίθμητος χρόνος
 φύει τ' ἄδηλα καὶ φανέντα κρύπτεται·

All things long and uncountable time brings forth in darkness and hides when they
 have been revealed.

Whether or not these lines are purposefully reworked in the New *Polyidos*—with φύσις replacing χρόνος as the agent of the ‘creation of all things’ (ἅπανθ'... φύει ≈ τὰ πάντα ... φύει) though χρόνος is far from absent (χρόνω(ι), ii.28)—*Ajax* 647 is instructive for the parallel use of active and middle voice forms, both with active force: while there is no doubt that φύει and κρύπτεται are transitive here, we would have expected the active rather than the middle voice for κρύπτεται.²⁵ This potential parallel (or perhaps model) lends some plausibility to a transitive understanding of φύει καὶ μεθίσταται in our text.

The argument of ii.26–30 proceeds in at least three steps: what is said at ii.26–7 is explained (γάρ, 28) in the following sentence, which introduces, with χρόνω(ι), the dimension of time: βιῶναι and θανεῖν, presented at ii.26–27 in the timeless register of a gnomic utterance, are now recast as processes unfolding over time (φύει corresponding to βιῶναι, μεθίσταται πάλιν to θανεῖν). The text then turns attention from the general statement about ‘all things’ to the life of a human individual, specifying male human development ἐξῆς, i.e., ‘in a sequential order’, from young man to old.

If the explanatory thrust of ii.27–28 first suggested that μεθίσταται πάλιν corresponds to θανεῖν, as a euphemistic periphrasis of sorts (e.g. ‘removes again’²⁶ or, if taken as intransitive,

²⁵ See Finglass 2011, 330 n. *ad loc.*, who compares Sophocles, *Trachiniae* 474 (πᾶν σοι φράσω τάληθές οὐδὲ κρύψομαι).

²⁶ This translation works on the assumption that a transitive meaning of the middle voice in the present tense

perhaps ‘departs again’), we are now prompted to reconsider the semantic value of the phrase. Does μεθίσταται imply a form of repeated ‘change’, and if so, of what kind? Ageing, the process implied in the transition from young man to old man at ii.29–30, may be related with dying, but the two are not co-extensive. And this is indeed what I take the final words of the passage to emphasise, that ageing is a process that occurs within *one* lifetime. καὶ ζῶν οὐ δις ἀλλ’ ἅπαξ μόνον is perhaps best taken as concessive or limiting in force: ‘although he lives not twice but only once’.²⁷

An alternative translation of ii.26–30 might then be:

Know well: whatever nature shoots up from the earth must live and die, for in time she brings forth all things and changes them again (or, intransitive: for all things come into being and change again). Each man becomes young and old in sequence although he lives not twice but only once.

However we reconstruct the grammatical properties of the verbs in ii.27–28, the passage seems to raise the question of personal identity over time; it asks not only how much change a man can undergo before he is no longer considered the same but also how such change relates to death. The inherent difficulties of this dark text (the oracular language of a seer?) are

could assume meanings attested for the first aorist (as detailed in n. 23).

²⁷ As discussed in detail by Luigi Battezzato in this volume (see p. 000), the καὶ before ζῶν, left untranslated in the *editio princeps* (“living not twice, but just once”), is unusual as it follows immediately after τε, thus suggesting the iunctura τε καί, which would result in the impossible coordination of γί(γ)νεται and ζῶν. While Battezzato takes this as grounds to postulate a *lacuna*, I propose the conservative solution of keeping the preserved text unchanged but taking τε and καί as separate—with τε answering τ(ε) in the previous line (just as γ[έ]ρωγ answers νέος)—and καί, in the sense of καίπερ, followed by the participle ζῶν as concessive (see, Weir-Smyth §2083 who offers the example of Euripides *Andromeda* fr. 142.2 καὶ δοῦλος ὢν γὰρ τίμιος πλουτῶν ἀνὴρ and KG II, 85 Anm.8, 247; for a recent discussion and further examples see Jiménez Delgado 2016).

compounded by the awkwardness of the situation at hand: the addressee, after all, is a father unwilling to accept that his son died as a child, long before becoming an old man.

Further contextualisation within the Euripidean corpus may help bring some light into the dark. Already the use of φύσις (ii.26), in the sense of ‘nature’, deserves foregrounding: this usage is based on the transfer of ideas of generation and development from plants to other, and in particular human, life forms and marks a late stage in the word’s semantic evolution, gaining currency only towards the end of the 5th century.²⁸ Early instances have long been located in Euripides.²⁹

Best known to date has been the *makarismos*³⁰ of the inquisitive man in Euripides fr. 910:³¹

ὄλβιος ὅστις τῆς ἱστορίας

ἔσχε μάθησιν,

²⁸ Patzer 1993 [1939], 275–277.

²⁹ Φύσις in its various possible uses (including the developmentally earlier “nature”/“character” of something or someone, typically expressed +genitive or with a ‘limiting’ epithet) is generally an important term in Euripides (e.g. at *Polyidos* fr. 634: ὅστις νέμει κάλλιστα τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν,/ οὗτος σοφὸς πέφυκε πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον); his plays offer some of the earliest certain attestations in the—later—sense of “nature”, “the natural order of things”, “the natural world” (CGL s.v. 7 and 10). Müller 1978, 630 (review of Schmalzriedt 1970), for instance, points out that Euripides fr. 910 (on which see below p.000), *Trojan Women* 886 as well as Gorgias’ *Palamedes* (§1) offer the earliest attestations of φύσις in this sense but assumes an influence of the “junganaxagoreischen Kreis um den Athener Archelaos” on Euripides. For φύσις, ‘Allnatur’, in Euripides see also Egli 2003, 207–211; cf. 50 n.3, 86–88, 90, 286–287; according to her, φύσις in the sense of ‘nature ... to which all humans are equally subject’ (“... der sich alle Menschen gleichermassen unterwerfen müssen”, 207 n.3) only emerged among the Sophists in Athens in the 420s BCE within the developing discourse of the ‘νόμος-φύσις antithesis’ associated with Antiphon.

³⁰ On the use of ὄλβιος ὅστις in Euripides fr. 910.1, which is suggestive of the *makarismos* in mystery cult, and its similar use in Empedocles B132 DK, see Egli 2003, 286 with n. 3.

³¹ The lines, attributed by very many to Euripides’ *Antiope*, are quoted in Clement of Alexandria’s *Stromateis* 4.25.155.1 without any mention of author or title, but a paraphrase of lines 3–6 in Themistius, *Oration* 24.307d secures the attribution to Euripides; for discussions of the respective play’s title, see Kannicht’s note *ad loc.* The attribution to *Antiope* is all but taken for granted by Di Benedetto 2005, 102–104.

μήτε πολιτῶν ἐπὶ πημοσύνην
 μήτ' εἰς ἀδίκους πράξεις ὀρμῶν,
 ἀλλ' ἀθανάτου καθορῶν φύσεως
 κόσμον ἀγήρων, πῇι τε συνέστη
 καὶ ὅθεν καὶ ὅπως.
 τοῖς δὲ τοιούτοις οὐδέποτ' αἰσχυρῶν
 ἔργων μελέτημα προσίζει.

Happy the man who has gained knowledge through inquiry, not aiming to trouble his fellow citizens, nor to act unjustly, but observing eternal nature's ageless order, the way it was formed, and whence and how. Such men are never inclined to practise shameful deeds. (text and transl. Collard/Cropp 2008 I, 227)

The passage pairs μάθησις gained through inquiry and the observance of the order of *physis* with the ability to make ethically sound choices. We can compare and contrast our ii.21 and 47–48, which state that only an ἀμαθής would transgress the laws of the gods and that attempts at overturning the established laws arise ἀμαθίας ὕπο. The inquisitive man of fr. 910 has often been thought to be modelled on Anaxagoras,³² whose influence on Euripides was variously noted in ancient writers and crystallised in the idea of a teacher–pupil relationship.³³

³² See Valckenaer 1767, 26; Kannicht in *TrGF* V app. crit. on fr. 910.1–9. Diels/Kranz add the fragment to several anecdotal passages from Aristotle's *Nicomachean* and *Eudemian Ethics* s.v. testimonium 59 A30; as does Curd 2007. Laks/Most, on the other hand, feature fr. 910 in the Dramatic Appendix of Volume IX (*Sophists, Part II*), as Dram. T 43, without indicating any specific connection to Anaxagoras (contrast Laks/Most's placement of Euripides F 839, from *Chrysippus*, discussed in n.000).

³³ Valckenaer 1767, 25–57. For the testimonia regarding the personal relationship between Euripides and Anaxagoras see *TrGF* V.1, 69 and T 35–38d and cf. T 2 c.8, T 10b Kannicht; Dram. T 75–80 L/M). For modern studies on the relationship of Euripides and Anaxagoras, see Sider 2005, 9 n. 21.

Whether or not we accept such an identification, it is undeniable that Euripides' Polyidos is made to act and speak in a manner reminiscent of an intellectual such as Anaxagoras.³⁴

Another Euripidean fragment which is often claimed to reflect Anaxagorean thought is the famous 'reconstructed' fr. 839,³⁵ attributed to the *Chrysippus*.³⁶

Γαῖα μέγιστη καὶ Διὸς Αἰθήρ,
 ὁ μὲν ἀνθρώπων καὶ θεῶν γενέτωρ,
 ἢ δ' ὕγροβόλους σταγόνας νοτίας
 παραδεξαμένη τίκτει θνητούς,
 τίκτει βοτάνην φυλά τε θηρῶν· 5
 ὅθεν οὐκ ἀδίκως
 μήτηρ πάντων νενόμισται.
 χωρεῖ δ' ὀπίσω
 τὰ μὲν ἐκ γαίας φύντ' ἐς γαῖαν,
 τὰ δ' ἀπ' αἰθερίου βλαστόντα γονῆς 10

³⁴ We may compare Euripides' Teiresias in *Bacchae*, who speaks in the idiom of a 5th century intellectual, see Dodds 1960: 91 (n. on Scene i) and his nn. on *Bacchae* 185, 200, 201–203, 274–285, 284–285, 314–318; further, e.g., Roth 1984; Mastronarde 1986: 206–207; Santamaría 2012; Billings 2021: 203–213.

³⁵ Fr. 839 as such is a reconstruction undertaken by Grotius, who joined together lines 1–7 (quoted in Sextus Empiricus *Adv. mus.* = *mathem.* 6.17) and lines 8–14 (quoted in Philo, *De aeternitate mundi* 30) on the basis of the near-translation into Latin of Lucretius 2.991–1005 and the paraphrase in Vitruvius 8 *praefatio* (where Euripides is named). The verse sequences 8–11 and 12–14 are quoted in multiple sources, several of which also name Euripides as the author; Clement, who quotes lines 12–14, is the only one to give the title of the play, *Chrysippus* (*Stromateis* 6.2.24.4). See Kannicht's apparatus.

³⁶ Fr. 839 is edited as 59 A112 in Diels Kranz among the Testimonia for Anaxagoras. Laks and Most, on the other hand, feature it in the Dramatic Appendix to Volume IX of their *Early Greek Philosophy*, in the section 'Reflections of Anaxagoras (T 75–80)', as T 78. A resemblance between Euripides fr. 839.8–14 in particular and Anaxagoras 59 B17 DK = D15 L/M has often been noted; cf., e.g., Egli 2003, 95–97; Pucci 2005, 51, 67 n.15; see also Dillon 2004, 56–57.

εἰς οὐράνιον πάλιν ἦλθε πόλον·
 θνήϊσκει δ' οὐδὲν τῶν γιγνομένων,
 διακρινόμενον δ' ἄλλο πρὸς ἄλλου
 μορφὴν ἑτέραν ἀπέδειξεν.

Earth, greatest one, and Aether, realm of Zeus—he the begetter of humankind and gods, while she, receiving his damp moisture-spreading drops, bears mortals, bears vegetation and the families of beasts, and so is rightly considered mother of all. Those things that were born from earth return to earth, and those that grew from ethereal seed go back to the heavenly region. None of those things that come into being perishes, but one is separated from another and exhibits a different form. (Euripides fr. 839; text Diggle 1998, transl. Collard/Cropp 2008)

This passage, which again has close parallels elsewhere in Euripides,³⁷ gives a dominant role to Διὸς Αἰθήρ and the idea that the soul returns to Aither after death,³⁸ notions of which we see no trace in our 'New *Polyidos*'; nor does it explicitly name *physis*. It is, however, comparable for its idea of Earth as “the mother of all (πάντων)”—humans, plants, and animals alike (839.4–7; cf. ii.27 τὰ πάντα). Notable is the shift from the designation of humans as θνητοί (839.4) to the

³⁷ See Euripides *Antiope* 182a: Αἰθέρα καὶ Γαῖαν πάντων γενέτειραν αἰίδω . . .; *Wise Melanippe* F 484: κοῦκ ἐμὸς ὁ μῦθος, ἀλλ' ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάρα,/ ὡς οὐρανός τε γαῖα τ' ἦν μορφὴ μία,/ ἐπεὶ δ' ἐχωρίσθησαν ἀλλήλων δίχα,/ τίκτουσι πάντα κἀνέδωκαν εἰς φάος,/ δένδρη, πετεινά, θῆρας, οὓς θ' ἄλμη τρέφει,/ γένος τε θνητῶν; inc. fr. 898 (esp. 11–12 ὅταν δὲ συμμιχθῇτον ἐς ταῦτόν δύο [sc. γαῖα and οὐρανός]/ φύουσιν ἡμῖν πάντα καὶ τρέφουσ' ἅμα,/ δι' ὧν βρότειον ζῆι τε καὶ θάλλει γένος).

³⁸ According to Burkert (1972, 357–368, esp. 361), the idea is Pythagorean in origin but is later particularly associated with figures such as Anaxagoras, cf. n.000 above and n. 000 below, on D15. The idea is also well attested in epitaphs, notably in the famous Potidea inscription from 432 BCE (*IG* I² 945), suggesting that it entered “mainstream culture” already at an early stage.

emphatic denial of death (θνήσκει δ' οὐδὲν τῶν γιγνομένων, 839.12) as well as the claim that, rather than death, there is only separation and change of μορφή. Is this translation of death into a principle of metamorphosis (839.8–14) mirrored in our fragment which moves from θανεῖν to μεθίσταται πάλιν in ii.27–28?

Exact parallels for μεθίσταται πάλιν are, as noted above, sparse. Beyond Euripides, only two attestations from the fifth and fourth centuries BCE survive, one in Andocides, *On His Return*, in a remark on the changing fortunes of Athens,³⁹ and another in the Peripatetic treatise *On Colours*, in a chapter dealing with colour-changes accompanying processes of ripening, especially in plants; in both cases, μεθίσταται is intransitive. At *On Colours* 795b32–796a9, the colour-change in black fruits (τὰ μέλανα) is at issue, the majority of which

changing from their initial green redden and become tawny, but they soon change again from the red and become purple owing to the unmixed black which exists in them (κατ' ἀρχὰς μὲν ἐκ τοῦ ποώδους μεταβάλλοντες μικρὸν ἐπιφοινικίζουσι καὶ γίνονται πυρροί, ταχὺ δὲ μεθίστανται πάλιν ἐκ τοῦ πυρροῦ καὶ γίνονται κυανοειδεῖς ἀκράτου τοῦ μέλανος ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἐνυπάρχοντος; text and transl. Hett 1936).

Here, μεθίστασθαι πάλιν refers to a repeated change in the appearance of the same fruit over the course of its maturation. Should the expression at ii.28 have such a connotation, we might wonder about potential resonances with the famous first challenge Minos set Polyidos: he had to find an analogy for a portentous 'three-coloured cow'⁴⁰ and did so by comparing it to the

³⁹ Andocides *De reditu suo* 9.76 Dilts/Murphy: ὅτε δὴ προαγομένης μὲν τῆς πόλεως ἐπὶ ταύτας τὰς συμφοράς ... μεθισταμένης δὲ πάλιν εἰς τὸ ἀσφαλές...

⁴⁰ Versions differ as to the age and gender of the animal and the rhythm of the colour-change; Apollodorus 3.18 has a feminine βοῦς τριχρώματος; Hyginus *Fabulae* 136.2 a bull-calf (*uitulus*) that changes colour (from white to red

ripening mulberry which is first white, then red and eventually black. The ‘mulberry analogy’ was an integral element of the story as it was represented in Aeschylus’, Sophocles’ and Euripides’ plays on the myth.⁴¹ The analogy is drawn between colour changes in a plant species to that in an animal species. It is only one of several analogies, or connections, between different species in *Polyidos*. In their light, not only the notion of change thus expressed in μεθίττασθαι πάλιν but also the alignment of ‘each man’ with ‘whatever nature shoots forth from the earth’ at ii.26–30 gains additional significance.

Among the testimonia for the play is a note in Aelian, *De natura animalium* 5.2,⁴² on the γλαύξ/att. γλαῦξ, the Little Owl, the presence of which in *Polyidos* counts, alongside the ‘mulberry analogy’, among the few certain facts about the play.⁴³ Aelian notes that the γλαῦξ is not native to Crete and would die if brought there from the outside,⁴⁴ and goes on to criticise Euripides for having his Polyidos see a γλαῦξ and ‘infer from it’ (καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς τεκμηράμενον) ‘that he would find Glaukos, the dead son of Minos’ (ὅτι εὐρήσει τὸν Γλαῦκον τὸν τεθνεῶτα τοῦ Μίνω υἱόν). While we know of at least one earlier instance of ornithomancy in the play,⁴⁵ and

to black) ‘three times during the day, every four hours’.

⁴¹ See Hyginus *Fabulae* 136.3; Aeschylus fr. 116; Sophocles fr. 395. Carrara 2014, 217–218, counts the presence of the analogy among the few certain facts about Euripides’ *Polyidos*; it is attested in the scholia vRAMbr. (ed. Lenz 1964, p. 138) on Aelius Aristides *Oration* 3.664.

⁴² = Euripides *Polyidos* T iii Kannicht = Test. 5 Carrara.

⁴³ See Carrara 2014, 218.

⁴⁴ Other attestations for the absence of the γλαῦξ from Crete, as well as its inability to survive there, are listed in Arnott 2007: 85.

⁴⁵ In Euripides *Polyidos* fr. 636, the speaker (in all likelihood Polyidos) deduces from a sea-eagle’s position on the shore rather than over the water that ‘death has the boy on dry land’ (τὸν παῖδα χερσεύει μόρος, 3) and hence that he has not drowned in the sea; that the child is dead seems to be taken for granted already at this stage in the play.

there is, among the new lines of the play, a general pronouncement that “[the gods] invented bird-signs for men” as a means of communicating “what is divine and invisible” (ii.31–33), the assonance of γλαῦξ and Γλαῦκος draws the child and the bird into a suggestive proximity (as does, perhaps, the fact that neither of them can survive on Crete).⁴⁶

It has long been speculated that the myth of Glaukos, as represented in Apollodorus and Hyginus, encodes underlying ritual realities—ephebic initiation rites on Crete enacting the death and rebirth of the youthful initiand or Minoan or pre-Mycenean burial customs (in particular preservation of the dead in honey) etc.⁴⁷ Common to all these interpretations is an interest in the interspecies analogies that riddle the myth, as well as concept of time derived from vegetational cycles. Building on the analyses of the myth by Henri Jeanmaire and Axel Persson, Ronald Willetts claimed that there were “indications in the myth of Glaukos which recall the totemic cycle of birth and death” (1962: 63).⁴⁸ The newly found lines of *Polyidos*, and ii.27–28 in particular, may well breathe new life into such discussions.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ In his address to Polyidos at ii.1–7, Minos himself seems to use the seer’s *technē* in his self-serving analogising of the dolphin, the eagle, etc. (see above p.000) as the rulers of their respective realms. It is remarkable that he does not include any land animals beyond ‘tyrannies’; ironically, it is an animal closely associated with the earth—the snake reviving another snake—that in all likelihood brings about the play’s most momentous reversal. In this element of the story, too, several analogies across, and an interplay between, different species is created.

⁴⁷ Jeanmaire 1939, 444–450; Persson 1940, 12–14 *et passim*; see Muellner 1989 for an overview of the earlier discussions. Muellner himself reads the myth in the variant preserved in Apollodorus as an unsuccessful initiation, with Glaukos simply returned to the state from which he started and the seer ultimately refusing to initiate him.

⁴⁸ Willetts 1962, 60–67, and see already Willetts 1959.

⁴⁹ Willett’s conviction, for example, that the mulberry analogy had something to do with Glaukos, whose name signifies “that which gleams but is not coloured” and thus stands for an unqualified ‘white’ (1959: 26) and thus invites an analogy with the initial stage of the mulberry (as well as the cow/calf), seems much less far fetched now that we find Euripides’ Polyidos explicitly analogising all life forms, presumably in the face of the dead Glaukos. The same applies to a discussion such as that of Muellner 1989.

If ii.26–30 describes the natural cycle of perpetual change common to all living beings (τὰ πάντα), it also singles out the development of ‘each’ (ἕκαστος) male individual and articulates a remarkable limitation, namely that man undergoes change ‘although living not twice but only once’ (καὶ ζῶν οὐ δις ἀλλ’ ἅπαξ μόνον); the cyclical eternity (or the eternal cyclicity) of nature thus forms the background to the linear sequence of changes that constitutes the life of the human individual, a contrast encapsulated in the opposing adverbs πάλιν (ii.28) vs. ἅπαξ (ii.30).

3. Tragic eschatologies

The truism that ‘all men must die’ is a topos from Homer onwards,⁵⁰ and recurs in many variations in Euripides,⁵¹ often in consolations addressed to those bereaved of a child or spouse,⁵² much of it later reused in similar contexts of consolation.⁵³ The more specific claim, however—that everyone dies *once*, and only once—is less often stated outright, even though it

⁵⁰ Wankel 1983.

⁵¹ E.g., *Alexandros* fr. 43 (πάντων τὸ θανεῖν· τὸ δὲ κοινὸν ἄχος/ μετρίως ἀλγεῖν σοφία μελετᾷ; *Temenidae* fr. 733 τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποισι κατθανεῖν μένει,/ κοινὸν δ’ ἔχοντες αὐτὸ κοινὰ πάσχομεν/ πάντες τὸ γὰρ χρεῶν μείζον ἢ τὸ μὴ χρεῶν; see also *Alcestis* 419 and 782 (quoted below, n. xxx and see following n.).

⁵² E.g., *Hypsipyle* fr. 757.920–927 (ἂ δ’ αὖ παραινῶ, [ταῦτά μοι δέξαι, γύναι./ ἔφν μὲν οὐδεὶς ὅ[στις οὐ πονεῖ βροτῶν/ θάπτει τε τέκ[να χᾶτερά κτᾶται νέα,/ αὐτός τε θνήσκε[ι· καὶ τάδ’ ἄχθονται βροτοὶ/ εἰς γῆν φέροντες [γῆν. ἀναγκαίως δ’ ἔχει/ βίον θερίζειν ὥστε κάρπιμον στάχυν,/ καὶ τὸν μὲν εἶ[ναι, τὸν δὲ μή τί ταῦτα δεῖ/ στένειν ἅπε[ρ δεῖ κατὰ φύσιν διεκπερᾶν;), cf. *Merope*’s self-consolation at *Cresphontes* F 454: τεθνᾶσι παῖδες οὐκ ἔμοι μόνῃ βροτῶν/ οὐδ’ ἀνδρὸς ἑστερήμεθ’, ἀλλὰ μυρίαί/ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐξήντησαν ὡς ἐγὼ βίον; *Alcestis* 416–419: Ἄδμητ’, ἀνάγκη τάσδε συμφορὰς φέρειν/ οὐ γάρ τι πρῶτος οὐδὲ λοίσθιος βροτῶν/ γυναικὸς ἐσθλῆς ἤμπλακες γίγνωσκε δέ/ ὡς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν κατθανεῖν ὀφείλεται; *Andromache* 1270–1272: παῦσαι δὲ λύπης τῶν τεθνηκότων ὕπερ/ πᾶσιν γὰρ ἀνθρώποισιν ἦδε πρὸς θεῶν/ ψῆφος κέκρανται κατθανεῖν τ’ ὀφείλεται. For further passages see Karamanou 2017, commentary on *Alexandros* fr. 3 (=43 Kannicht, see previous n.).

⁵³ The lines from *Hypsipyle* and *Cresphontes* quoted in the previous note, for example, are both quoted in the Plutarchan *Consolation to Apollonius* (110f–111a, 110d).

is often implied in statements about death.⁵⁴ Rarer still is the idea that each human being only *lives* once, an idea articulated in our play (ii.30).⁵⁵

It is above all in tragedy that the singularity of life and death is asserted, and at times contested, perhaps nowhere more insistently than in Euripides. From his debut with *Peliades* in 455, where Medea misleads the daughters of Pelias into killing their father in a botched attempt to rejuvenate him, Euripides repeatedly presses uncomfortable questions about death and its (ir)reversibility. The theme dominates the *Alcestis* from beginning to end; in other plays, it surfaces at critical junctures. In *Supplices*, for example, a drama that has “as its real subject, or at least as its ostensible motive, the religious importance of the ritual burial” (Rohde 1925: 433), the old man Iphis whose daughter Evadne has just committed suicide begins his long and distraught *rhesis* with the impossible wish ‘for mortals to be twice young and twice old’; this would allow them to correct mistakes made first time around (1080–1086).⁵⁶ In their famous ‘praise of youth’ in the second stasimon of the *Heracles*, in turn, the chorus of old men fantasize about a second youth, not as an opportunity for righting wrongs but, on the contrary, as a divine recognition of those who were good the first time around (*Heracles* 655–666).⁵⁷

⁵⁴ See, for example, Sophocles *Acrisius* fr. 67: τὸ ζῆν γάρ, ὦ παῖ, παντὸς ἥδιον γέρας/ θανεῖν γὰρ οὐκ ἔξεστι τοῖς αὐτοῖσι δῖς.

⁵⁵ A rare point of comparison occurs in the *Iliad* where, at 21.569–70, having one life (ψυχή) is equated with being mortal; Agenor remarks on Achilles’ vulnerability: ἐν δὲ ἴα ψυχῇ, θνητὸν δὲ ἔφασ’ ἀνθρωποι/ ἔμμεναι; see Richardson 1993, 101 n. 568–570 on ἐν δὲ ἴα ψυχῇ: “[t]he sense is he has only *one* life”; in Euripides *Alcestis* 712, Pheres justifies his refusal to die in his son’s stead: ψυχῇ μιᾷ ζῆν, οὐ δυοῖν, ὀφείλομεν.

⁵⁶ *Supplices* 1080–1086: οἴμοι τί δὴ βροτοῖσιν οὐκ ἔστιν τόδε,/ νέους δῖς εἶναι καὶ γέροντας αὖ πάλιν;/ ἀλλ’ ἐν δόμοις μὲν ἦν τι μὴ καλῶς ἔχη/ γνώμαισιν ὑστέραισιν ἐξορθούμεθα,/ αἰῶνα δ’ οὐκ ἔξεστιν. εἰ δ’ ἤμεν νέοι/ δῖς καὶ γέροντες, εἴ τις ἐξημάρτανεν/ διπλοῦ βίου λαχόντες ἐξωρθούμεθ’ ἄν.

⁵⁷ *Heracles* 655–666: εἰ δὲ θεοῖς ἦν ζύνεσις/ καὶ σοφία κατ’ ἀνδρας,/ δίδυμον ἄν ἦβαν ἔφερον,/ φανερόν χαρακτηρισ’ ἀρετᾶς/ ὅσοισιν μέτα, καὶ θανόντες/ εἰς αὐγὰς πάλιν ἀλίου/ δισσοῦς ἄν ἔβαν διαύλους;/ ἃ δυσγένεια δ’ ἀπλοῦν

That the wish for a second youth is virtually synonymous with that for a second life emerges clearly from these passages. In her study of the tradition of Hesiod's famed 'age' and double youth,⁵⁸ Ruth Scodel (1980) traced a discourse which closely intertwines the paradigms of rejuvenation and resurrection with rebirth, metempsychosis and poetic immortality. In her discussion of the Euripidean fantasies of a second life in *Suppliants* and *Heracles*, she notes that "...in preference to the familiar ἀνά-compounds, the identifying terms are δῖς, αὖθις, αὖ and πάλιν."⁵⁹ Scodel's lexicographical observation is applicable to the 'New *Polyidos*', where we encounter several of these "identifying terms", in ii.15–16 and ii.26–30 in particular: καὖθις αὖ (16), πάλιν (28) and δῖς (30). Part and parcel of this story, in my view, is the twofold appearance of the adverb ἅπαξ in immediate proximity to these terms: it is opposed to καὖθις αὖ in (16) and emphatically cancels δῖς in line 30 (οὐ δὲ ἀλλ' ἅπαξ μόνον), while simultaneously countering the preceding πάλιν. Ἄπαξ is conspicuous for its rarity in Homer and the tragic corpus,⁶⁰ where it occurs, exclusively in epic and predominantly in tragedy, in eschatological contexts, typically when the fixity and finality of death is under contestation.

ἄν/ εἶχε ζῶας βίοντες,/ καὶ τῶιδ' ἄν τοὺς τε κακοὺς ἦν/ γινῶναι καὶ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς,/... As Godfrey Bond (1981: 232) notes, the chorus model their fantasy on Heracles; it is he who "pre-eminently possesses ἀρετή", has returned from the dead εἰς αὐγὰς πάλιν ἀλίου (661; cf. 271: καὶ τίς θανόντων ἦλθεν ἐξ Ἀΐδου πάλιν;) and will indeed have another period of life and eventually even marry Hēbē (see Bond 1981, 226, 637–654n.); what they wish for is an extension of such a reward "to all the good people (like themselves)".

⁵⁸ Sc. the proverbial Ἡσιόδειον γῆρας and the related epigram quoted at the end of Tzetzes' *Life of Hesiod* = Hesiod T 2 Most: χαῖρε δῖς ἡβήσας καὶ δῖς τάφου ἀντιβολήσας,/ Ἡσιόδ', ἀνθρώποις μέτρον ἔχων σοφίης.

⁵⁹ Note, however, that ἀνά-compounds can easily sit alongside Scodel's "identifying terms" in the relevant contexts, see, e.g., Theognis 1009–1011: ... οὐ γὰρ ἀνηβᾶν/ δῖς πέλεται πρὸς θεῶν, οὐδὲ λύσις θανάτου/ θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισι ...; Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1020–1021 (τίς ἄν/ πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαιτ' ..., cf. 1023 ἀνάγειν), 1361 ... τὸν θανόντ' ἀνίσταναι πάλιν (quoted below n. 000); Aristophanes, *Frogs* 177b ἀναβιώην νυν πάλιν.

⁶⁰ A survey of the occurrences of ἅπαξ in the tragic corpus suggests that the adverb is relatively rare (when compared to opposing adverbs such as πάλιν, αὖ, αὖθις or πόλλakis) and that it never recurs within the same play after so short an interval as in P.Phil.Nec. 23v (ii.16, 30), nor, in fact, in the same scene. Beyond the two new attestations of ἅπαξ, we find seven or eight in Euripides (*Cyclops* 167, 600; *Medea* 251; *Children of Heracles* 959;

4. Once, again: ἅπαξ (ii.16, 30)

Etymologically, ἅπαξ is a compound of ἅ, signifying the number ‘one’,⁶¹ and παξ, a derivate of πήγνυμι. According to Chantraine, the original sense of πήγνυμι is ‘to fix’, from where developed the meanings ‘to construct, to be solid, (to be) fixed’ (which, in turn, led to various uses, such as that of ‘trap’ (sc. πηκτίς, cf. LSJ s.v. I 3)) as well as ‘to coagulate, to congeal, to be cold’.⁶² That there are various connections between this semantic realm and dying/death is obvious. We may think, for example, of the slow stiffening and ‘freezing’ of limbs in Dionysus’ description of death by hemlock in Aristophanes *Frogs* (125–126: ψυχράν γε καὶ δυσχείμερον/ εὐθὺς γὰρ ἀποπήγνυσι τάντικνήμια), a passage eerily echoed in Plato’s *Phaedo* (118a: καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο αὐθις τὰς κνήμας καὶ ἐπανιών οὕτως ἡμῖν ἐπεδείκνυτο ὅτι ψύχοιτό τε καὶ πήγνυτο), the ‘blood ... congealing (πέπηγεν) as vengeful gore’ in Aeschylus *Choephoroi* 66–67,⁶³ or even the descriptions of deadly diseases in Hippocrates, where the cooling and congealing of the blood mark the patient’s death.⁶⁴ While this is, in and of itself, no reason to assume that the adverb

Andromache 81 (... οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον); *Iphigenia in Tauris* 528 (ὥς πάνθ’ ἅπαξ με συλλαβοῦς’ ἀνιστορεῖς); *Alexandros* F 62d.36; *Phoenissae* 723 [v.l. εἰσάπαξ]); 4 or 5 in Aeschylus (*Agamemnon* 873, 1019, 1322; *Eumenides* 648; [*Prometheus Vinctus* 209]); six in Sophocles (*King Oedipus* 690, 1275; *Trachiniae* 33; *Philoctetes* 1239; *Oedipus at Colonus* 1208; inc. fr. 860.1). In the remainder of the tragic corpus, it appears a single time (trag. adesp. 665.1). The existence of the adverb εἰσάπαξ (‘at once’, ‘once for all’) does not drastically change these figures: Euripides : 1 or 2 (*Andromache* 943, *Phoenissae* 723 [v.l., see above]); Aeschylus: 1 or 0 ([*Prometheus Vinctus* 750]); Sophocles: 3 (*Philoctetes* 122, 443; *Oedipus at Colonus* 1419); the Homeric *hapax* καθάπαξ (discussed below p. 000) is not attested in the tragic corpus to date.

⁶¹ ἅ/ἅ > idg. *sm̥ ‘one’, cf. Risch ²1974, §§ 77a.3, 81, cf. also §128a.

⁶² Chantraine, s.v. πήγνυμι: “S’il on considère le domaine sémantique, on constate que le sens originel de ‘fixer’, d’où ‘construire, être solide, fixe’, a conduit à des emplois très divers, celui de ‘piège’ et surtout de ‘coaguler, gèler, être froid’, etc.”

⁶³ *Choephoroi* 66–67 τὰ δ’ αἵματ’ ἐκποθένθ’ ὑπὸ Χθονὸς τροφοῦ/ τίτας φόνος πέπηγεν οὐ διαρρύδαν, see further below n. 000.

⁶⁴ See Hippocrates, *Diseases* 2.6 αἱ ὅταν ψυχθῇ παντάπασιν καὶ ἐκλίπη ἐξ αὐτοῦ τὸ θερμόν, πήγνυται καὶ κινηθῆναι οὐ δύναται, ἀλλ’ ἀποθνήσκει; 2.8 καὶ ἢν ἐξ τοῦτο ἐπιδῶι ψυχόμενον καὶ πηγνύμενον, πήγνυται [sc. τὸ αἷμα]

should share in these connotations, or that this modern etymology was thus understood in antiquity, we should not too readily dismiss the idea that ἄπαξ was felt to have a sinister sound to it, particularly in view of an abundance of words in -ξ for which such connotations have long been postulated.⁶⁵ As it happens, one example for such words is γλαῦξ,⁶⁶ the Little Owl so important in the Polyidos myth, which was considered “a bird of ill omen, portending death” (Arnott 2007: 85) in Athens as much as elsewhere.⁶⁷

παντελῶς καὶ ἐκψύχεται ὄνθρωπος καὶ ἀποθνήσκει; *De morbo sacro* 2.8: ἀλλ’ ἀποψύχεται καὶ πηγνυται τὸ αἶμα, καὶ οὕτως ἀποθνήσκει.

⁶⁵ Radermacher 1931 posited that φλόξ/Φλόξ at Euripides *Bacchae* 6–8 is to be added to a series of ancient monosyllabic “Wurzelwörter” on -ξ denoting daemonic creatures of a sinister kind (Νύξ, Στύξ, Σφίγξ etc.), with which he compared various names of ominous birds (γλαύξ, στρίγξ etc.) and terms for bodily afflictions (λύγξ ‘hiccup’, βήξ ‘cough’ or πνίξ ‘suffocation’). In his review of Radermacher’s article, Kretschmer (1934: 254) deemed it “possible that the formation of these words is to be seen in connection with the fact that so many terms used in an affective manner as well as imitations of sound end in -ξ” (“Möglich, daß die Bildung dieser Wörter damit zusammenhängt, daß so viele affektisch gebrauchte Wörter und Schallnachahmungen auf -ξ auslauten”), adducing a long list of examples, starting with πάξ ‘enough’—an exclamation with the same root as ἄπαξ (see Chantraine s.v. πάξ: “Certainement tiré du radical de πηγνυμι, ἐπάγην, voir ἄπαξ ...”)—and ending with the *Frogs*’ underworldly refrain βρεκεκεκεξ κοῦξ κοῦξ. If Radermacher and Kretschmer are right, there is reason to suppose that the compound ἄ + παξ resonated with these groups of words and invited its use in sinister contexts. That most of their examples are oxytones is unproblematic: the barytone accentuation of ἄπαξ is noted twice as an oddity in works ascribed to Herodian (Περὶ μονήρους λέξεως 3,2 p. 931 Lentz; cf. Περὶ Ἰλιακῆς προσωιδίας, p. 74) and, more fundamentally, differences in accentuation do not hinder the perception of assonance in Greek; take, for example, Heraclitus B 48 D/K: τῶι οὖν τόξωι ὄνομα βίος, ἔργον δὲ θάνατος. An important adverbial comparandum, finally, is the closely related διαμπάξ ‘(piercing) all the way through’ etc. (CGL s.v.), which appears in the grim refrain of the fourth stasimon in Euripides *Bacchae* (... φονεύου-/σα λαιμῶν διαμπάξ, 993–994 = 1012–1013), in the torture of Prometheus ([Aeschylus], *Prometheus Vincit* 65) and elsewhere for the deadly piercing through of limbs. On the etymology of διαμπάξ see Chantraine s.v.: “de διά, ἀνά, et *παξ de ἄπαξ”; cf. Brugmann 1910, 260–261; Schwyzler I 660.

⁶⁶ See above, p. 000.

⁶⁷ Cf., e.g., Menander inc. F 844.11 K/A: ... ἄν γλαῦξ ἀνακράγηι, δεδοίκαμεν; further passages in Arnott 2007: 85; cf. Carrara 2014: 300 n.31.

In Homeric epic, and indeed in the entire corpus of early Greek epic, ἅπαξ is a *dis legomenon*; both instances occur in reported direct speech of other characters⁶⁸ in book 12 of Odysseus' *Apologoi*. At *Od.* 12.21–22, Circe welcomes back Odysseus and his men who have returned from their journey to the Underworld:

σχέτλιοι, οἳ ζῶντες ὑπήλθετε δῶμ' Ἀΐδαο,
 δισθανέες, ὅτε τ' ἄλλοι ἅπαξ θνήσκουσ' ἄνθρωποι.

Circe's language is original not just for her use of ἅπαξ but, more obviously, the coinage of the *hapax* δισθανέες to which the 'fact' that all men die once and go to Hades to stay there—once for all—gives rise. Unsurprisingly, the need to state the fact that something happens “once”, ‘just once’, or ‘once for all’, often arises exactly when that fact has come under pressure (as in our ii. 30 καὶ ζῶν οὐ δις ἀλλ' ἅπαξ μόνον).

The *Odyssey*'s second ἅπαξ is uttered by one who is among those Circe addressed as δισθανέες: Odysseus' comrade Eurylochos, who already at the beginning of the Circe adventure has emerged as a potential 'leader of the opposition' against Odysseus.⁶⁹ Fearing starvation on Thrinakia, Eurylochos decides, with eyes wide open, to eat the forbidden cattle of Helios (*Od.* 12.340–351), irrespective of the consequences (350–351):

βούλομ' ἅπαξ πρὸς κῦμα χανὼν ἀπὸ θυμὸν ὀλέσσαι
 ἢ δηθὰ στρεύγεσθαι ἐὼν ἐν νήσῳ ἐρήμῃ.

Here, ἅπαξ is opposed to δηθά: dying at one stroke vs. dying over a long period of suffering. At the same time, Eurylochos' words resonate with Circe's; he wants to die as she said other men

⁶⁸ I.e. tertiary narrator-focalizers, in narratological parlance.

⁶⁹ See *Od.* 10.205, 429–448.

do: once—and once for all. It is Eurylochus’ note of resignation to Odysseus, whose *nostos* has already killed hundreds of the comrades.

The usage is mirrored in the Homeric *hapax καθάπαξ*, again in the *Odyssey*, when Telemachus, at the beginning of the contest of the bow, utters the cacophonous euphemism (21.348–349):

τῶν οὐ τίς μ’ ἀέκοντα βιήσεται, αἴ κ’ ἐθέλωμι
καὶ καθάπαξ ξείνῳ δόμεναι τάδε τόξα φέρεσθαι

The “ugly and unparalleled sound-clash” (Fernández-Galiano 1992, 190 n. *ad loc.*) of καθάπαξ ξείνῳ—⁷⁰ no doubt drowned out by the uproar of the raucous suitors—already insinuates what ‘giving the bow to Odysseus once for all’ means; that Telemachus first sends away Penelope and that the narrative then slows almost to a standstill can easily distract from what is actually happening: he now hands the bow to Eumaeus to place it in the hands of Odysseus, who will string it and begin the mass-slaughter. ἅπαξ and καθάπαξ, then, are high notes in the Odyssean soundtrack of death.

Aeschylus’ *Oresteia* picks up this thread and weaves it into a wider web of signification. ἅπαξ occurs three times in the *Agamemnon*, and once, in a pointed echo, in the *Eumenides*. In the third episode of *Agamemnon*, Clytemnestra describes the plight of the woman who is waiting at home for her husband and forced to rely on reports of others (861–873). “Had Agamemnon been killed as often as the stories claimed”, she says, “he’d have had to have three

⁷⁰ Such a clash of ξ-sounds is unique in Homer, and this was, according to Eustathius (Commentary on the *Odyssey* Vol. II p. 263.20–21 Stallbaum) already noted by οἱ παλαιοί, though it is not, as far as I can see, directly attested in the scholia. Moreover, an -ξ ξ- clash is almost unheard of in classical poetry, with the possible, and equally ill-omened, exception of ἄναξ Ξέρξης at Aeschylus *Persians* 5.

bodies—a second Geryon—and could boast that he had donned a threefold cloak of earth, having died once in each of his persons” (869–873; transl. Sommerstein 2008):

εἰ δ' ἦν τεθνηκώς, ὥς ἐπλήθουν λόγοι,
 τρισώματός τ' ἄν, Γηρυῶν ὁ δεύτερος,
 {πολλὴν ἄνωθεν, τὴν κάτω γὰρ οὐ λέγω}⁷¹
 χθονὸς τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξηύχει λαβών,
 ἅπαξ ἐκάστωι κατθανῶν μορφώματι.
 (text: Medda 2017)

If Circe coined *δισθανέες* to balance the fact that men die *ἅπαξ*, Clytemnestra takes her rhetorical strategy to a new level in creating the image of a second Geryon's threefold death.

The last occurrence of the adverb in the play again occurs in ominous circumstances; it is the first of Cassandra's last words (*Ag.* 1322–1323):

ἅπαξ ἔτ' εἰπεῖν ῥῆσιν ἢ θρῆνον θέλω
 ἐμὸν τὸν αὐτῆς

While uses of *ἅπαξ*—usually negated: οὐχ ἅπαξ (μόνον)—, occur in instances of emphatic or urgent speech making,⁷² Cassandra's knowingly funereal tone rather corresponds to contexts

⁷¹ I leave aside the troubled history of this line (on which see the analysis of Judet de la Combe 1994) as it does not affect the present argument.

⁷² In Euripides and the tragic corpus, see *Andromache* 81: καὶ μὴν ἔπεμψ' ἐπ' αὐτὸν οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον; 943 ... οὐ γὰρ εἰσάπαξ ἐρῶ; *Iphigenia in Tauris* 528: ὥς πάνθ' ἅπαξ με συλλαβοῦς' ἀνιστορεῖς; [Aeschylus] *Prometheus Vincit* 209–211 ἐμοὶ δὲ μήτηρ οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον ... / ... / τὸ μέλλον ἦι κραίνοιτο προυτεθεσπίκει; Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 690: ὦναξ, εἶπον μὲν οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον; cf. *Philoctetes* 122: σάφ' ἴσθ', ἐπεὶ περ εἰσάπαξ συνήνεσα, 743: ὅς οὐκ ἂν εἴλετ' εἰσάπαξ εἰπεῖν The only attested use of *ἅπαξ* in the entire corpus of archaic lyric known to date belongs here, too, Bacchylides fr. 1 Snell/Maehler, quoted in Stobaeus 3.10.14 (περὶ ἀδικίας), without any context: ὥς δ' ἅπαξ εἰπεῖν, φρένα καὶ πυκινάν/ κέρδος ἀνθρώπων βιάται.

of death or impending doom which is common to the vast majority of tragic uses of (οὐχ) ἅπαξ or εἰσάπαξ; e.g. the blinding of Polyphemus, the self-blinding of Oedipus, or Medea's ill-fated motherhood.⁷³ Cassandra will speak 'once more', voice the 'dirge on herself', and then fall silent.

Somewhat earlier in the play, in the third stasimon, it is the Chorus who use the adverb in their assertion that everybody dies once and there is no returning from death (*Agamemnon* 1018–24):

τὸ δ' ἐπὶ γᾶν πεσὼν ἅπαξ
 θανάσιμον πρόπαρ ἀνδρὸς
 μέλαν αἶμα τίς ἄν
 1020
 πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαιτ' ἐπαείδων;
 οὐδὲ τὸν ὀρθοδαῖ
 τῶν φθιμένων ἀνάγειν
 Ζεὺς ἀπέπαυσεν ἐπ' ἀβλαβείαι.

⁷³ Euripides, *Children of Heracles* 959–60: ... χρῆν γὰρ οὐχ ἅπαξ/ θνήσκειν σε πολλὰ πῆματ' ἐξεργασμένον (this is a type of hyperbolic expression which is later often found in forensic rhetoric and similar contexts; see, e.g., Lysias 12.37, 28.1; Demosthenes 19.16, 110; 21.118; Plato *Laws* 10.908e; Menander *Dyscolus* 289–94); Euripides *Cyclops* (164–167): ... ὥς ἐκπιεῖν κἄν κύλικα βουλοίμην μίαν,/ πάντων Κυκλώπων ἀντιδοὺς βοσκήματα,/ ῥῖψαι τ' ἐς ἄλμην Λευκάδος πέτρας ἄπο/ ἅπαξ μεθυσθεὶς καταβαλὼν τε τὰς ὀφρῦς, “Silenus’ statement amounts to ‘after just one drink of this wine I would die happy’” (Hunter/Laemmle 2020, 131–132 *ad loc.*); *Cyclops* 600: λαμπρὸν πυρώσας ὄμμ' ἀπαλλάχθηθ' ἅπαξ; *Alexandros* fr. 62d.36: the text here is very fragmentary, but see Karamanou 2017: 254 *ad loc.* (her fr. 18b.14–15): “if ἅπαξ is taken in conjunction with the reference to the act of murder in l. 14, it might denote ‘once and for all’ ...”; *Phoenissae* 723 πρὶν κίνδυνον εἰς ἅπαξ μολεῖν (v.l. εἰσάπαξ); Sophocles *Oedipus Tyrannus* 1275 τοιαῦτ' ἐφυμνῶν πολλάκις τε κοῦχ ἅπαξ/ ἥρασ' ἐπαίρων βλέφαρα. At [Aeschylus] *Prometheus Vinculus* 750–751, Io utters a tragic version of Eurylochos’ final words in *Odyssey* 12 (see above p. 000): ... κρεῖσσον γὰρ εἰσάπαξ θανεῖν/ ἢ τὰς ἀπάσας ἡμέρας πάσχειν κακῶς; Euripides *Medea* 250–251: ... ὥς τρίς ἄν παρ' ἀσπίδα/ στῆναι θέλοιμ' ἄν μᾶλλον ἢ τεκεῖν ἅπαξ, here perhaps in dialogue with passages where ἅπαξ is used with the language of begetting or coming into existence such as Sophocles, *Trachiniae* 31–33: κάφύσαμεν δὴ παῖδας, οὐς κείνός ποτε,/ γήιτης ὅπως ἄρουραν ἔκτοπον λαβὼν,/ σπεύρων μόνον προσεΐδε κάξαμῶν ἅπαξ; inc. fr. 860: ἅπαντα τὰ γέννητα πρῶτον ἦλθ' ἅπαξ.

(Text: Medda 2017)

For all the seeming bleakness of the chorus' words, ἄπαξ once again marks a moment of uncertainty and contestation: "But once the blood ... has fallen on the earth ..., who ... could summon it back again?" is a rhetorical question which takes for granted that death is irreversible and occurs only once.⁷⁴ Yet what follows on its heel is an allusion to Asclepius "who knew well how to bring [the deceased] back from the dead" and was killed for doing so by Zeus. It emerges that resurrection is not impossible, but against the will of Zeus.⁷⁵

This is reinforced by Asclepius' father Apollo in a passage of his petulant speech in *Eumenides* that unmistakably echoes *Agamemnon* 1018–24 (*Eumenides* 647–651):⁷⁶

ἄνδρὸς δ' ἐπειδὴν αἶμ' ἀνασπάσῃ κόνις
 ἄπαξ θανόντος, οὐτίς ἔστ' ἀνάστασις.
 τούτων ἐπωιδὰς οὐκ ἐποίησεν πατήρ
 οὐμός, τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω
 στρέφων τίθησιν οὐδὲν ἀσθμαίνων μένει.

⁷⁴ According to LSJ s.v. ἄπαξ II and Fraenkel 1950, n. on *Agamemnon* 1018ff, the use of ἄπαξ here and in the echo of the passage at *Eumenides* 647–648 (see below), is to be grouped with temporal or conditional constructions such as ἄν/ἤν ἄπαξ, εἴπερ ἄπαξ ('when once', 'if once'); I do not agree, however, with LSJ *ibid.* that ἄπαξ "after conditional and temporal particles, if once, when once ..." is "without any notion of number" (my emphasis). The first component of the word signifies the number one (ἀ/ἄ > idg. *sm̥ 'one', cf. Risch ²1974, §§ 77a.3, 81, 128a; on the etymology of ἄπαξ see above p.000), and the majority of 'if once', 'when once' constructions, too, is contingent on a one-time occurrence of an event.

⁷⁵ Cf. Shilo (2022: 62) who points out that the allusion to a resurrection achieved by Asclepius here "neatly reverses the meaning of the rhetorical question" and "opens up the continuing possibility of it recurring".

⁷⁶ The speech starts ὦ παντομισὴ κνώδαλα, στύγη θεῶν at *Eumenides* 644, prompting the note in Sommerstein 1989, 204 n. *ad loc.*: "The vulgarity of Apollo's reaction is without parallel in tragedy ...".

This echo has often been noted, as has the fact that the spilling of blood onto the earth is a theme that runs through the *Oresteia*, along with the idea that it cannot be retrieved and death not reversed.⁷⁷ At *Eumenides* 648, as at *Agamemnon* 1018, ἄπαξ is part of a conditional construction (‘when once’), but the chorus’ earlier rhetorical question τίς ἂν πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαιτ’ ἐπαείδων; (*Agamemnon* 1020–1021) is now replaced with Apollo’s resigned assertion that ‘there is no resurrection’. Apollo is trying to square the irreversibility of Agamemnon’s murder and thus the heinousness of the crime with an insistence on the might of Zeus.⁷⁸ He comes dangerously close to suggesting, as the *Agamemnon*’s chorus had done, that a raising of the dead may be unwanted but not impossible. Stating that Zeus created ‘no healing charms’ to raise the dead does not exclude that someone else might;⁷⁹ in fact, his words can also be understood to draw attention, with bitter sarcasm, to the fact that his own son Asclepius had done just that—and paid the price. Asclepius’ deeds and his punishment at the hands of Zeus, to which the third stasimon alludes, mark the contestation and ultimate reaffirmation of death’s irreversibility.

But some doubt seems to have lingered. When Apollo claims that Zeus ‘disposes all other things, turning them up or down (τὰ δ’ ἄλλα πάντ’ ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω/ στρέφων τίθησιν)’ his is, at the very least, a conspicuous choice of words for one insisting on the impossibility of ἀνάστασις.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ *Choephoroi* 48 τί γὰρ λύτρον πεσόντος αἵματος πέδωι; *Choephoroi* 66–67 (quoted above, n. 000); *Eumenides* 261–263: αἷμα μητρῶιον χαμαὶ/ δυσάγκομιστον, παπαῖ,/ τὸ διερὸν πέδωι χύμενον οἷχεται; cf. also *Eumenides* 980: μηδὲ πιούσα κόνις μέλαν αἷμα πολιτᾶν.

⁷⁸ See n. 000.

⁷⁹ Cf. the similarly uneasy ambiguity in the announcement of one of the chorus members at *Ag.* 1360–1361: καὶ γὰρ τοιοῦτός εἰμ’, ἐπεὶ δυσμηχανῶ/ λόγοισι τὸν θανόντ’ ἀνιστάναι πάλιν, ‘I agree, for I am unable to see a way of bringing the man back from the dead with words’. See Shilo 2022, 62 n. 34 (“an ironic echo”).

⁸⁰ Sommerstein translates ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω “this way and that”, in keeping with his note *ad loc.* in Sommerstein

5. Asclepius resurrected

The myth of Asclepius, which is so poignantly evoked in the *Oresteia* passages and to which our short lexicography of ἄπαξ has led us, is without any doubt an important model, or anti-model, for the myth of Polyidos and its representation in Euripides' play. In my analysis of ii.15–16 (above, §1), I suggested that Polyidos not only shows himself unwilling to bring Glaukos back to life but specifically expresses fear in two respects: that he might set a precedent inviting demands for resurrections in the future and that he would violate divine law and thus become liable to divine retribution. Irrespective of the details of this reconstruction, it is clear that Euripides' *Polyidos* touches on themes that also play a central role in the Asclepius myth and its instantiations on the dramatic stage: the hubristic attempts to overcome humankind's mortality, the divine retribution that ensues, as well as the lament of a father for the loss of his son.

It is worth taking a closer look. The story of Asclepius is a prominent point of reference in Euripides' *Alcestis*. His death at the hands of Zeus is mentioned at the outset, in his father Apollo's very opening lines of the play, and identified as what caused the action leading up to the present (*Alcestis* 3–4); in the parodos, the chorus invoke Asclepius as the only one who could return Alcestis from death, “if he still beheld the light of the sun with his eyes”, precisely because “he used to raise the dead” (δμαθέντας ... ἀνίστη, *Alcestis* 127). They go on to explain why Alcestis cannot—and why the dead must not—be resurrected: Asclepius used to raise the dead “until the Zeus-flung striking-weapon of thunderfire took him” (πρὶν αὐτὸν εἶλε δίοβολον/ πλῆκτρον πυρὸς κεραυνίου, 128–129).⁸¹

1989, 204 that “Apollo would not wish to present Zeus as a maker of chaos.” That may be true; but in a discussion of the impossibility of ἀνάστασις, ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω can hardly *not* evoke any notion of ‘up or downward’ turning.

⁸¹ Text and translations (where available) from the *Alcestis* here and in the following are taken from Parker 2007 nn. *ad locc.* The bolt of lightning is already mentioned in Apollo's delineation of the events about to unfold (3–4),

Accounts of Asclepius' raising of the dead abound. While they differ in the question of whom and how many he raised, they all agree that Zeus killed Asclepius for his attempts at defying death. Like Euripides, Pherecydes speaks of a plurality of beneficiaries and uses an imperfect denoting repeated action (fr. 35 Fowler: ἀνίστη γὰρ ἰώμενος τεθνεῶτας); the earliest known version of the tale, however, in Pindar's *Pythian* 3.54–58,⁸² states that Zeus killed Asclepius for resurrecting *one* man. These two versions are symptomatic of the situation in the testimonies where Asclepius is said either to have brought many persons back to life—to the point that Hades complained to Zeus about a shortage of deaths—⁸³ or, alternatively, a single person. Among the testimonies for the latter scenario,⁸⁴ however, we repeatedly find long lists with so many variants for the individual's identity,⁸⁵ that, arguably, the idea of multiple resurrections is re-introduced through the backdoor.⁸⁶

but it is only here, at 127–129, that we learn *why* Zeus killed Asclepius. Seeck 2008 is right to emphasise Apollo's silence on Zeus' reason for killing Asclepius, but I find it impossible to agree that the chorus, too, do not spell it out. He insistently repeats the argument that the *Alcestis* suppresses (“verschweigt”) the cause of Asclepius' death lest the fact that Heracles returns Alcestis from the dead in the end raise uncomfortable questions (Seeck 2008: 13, 19, 36 and nn. on *Alcestis* 4 and 122–129).

⁸² See below, p.000.

⁸³ Thus Diodorus Siculus 4.71.2, cf. Ovid *Metamorphoses* 15.535 (Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 I, T 4 and T 75); Diodorus himself reads the story of Asclepius' resurrections of the dead as an outgrowth of his reputation as a doctor who could heal the sick against all expectation, see 4.71.1.

⁸⁴ Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 I, TT 66–82, 84–86.

⁸⁵ Sextus Empiricus (*Adversus Mathematicos* I.260–262) uses such a list to exemplify his claim that “particular histories are both infinite, because of their great number, and without fixity, because the same facts are not recorded by all respecting the same person” (αἱ δέ γε κατὰ μέρος ἱστορίαι ἄπειροί τε διὰ τὸ πλῆθος εἰσι, καὶ οὐχ ἔστωσαι διὰ τὸ μὴ τὰ αὐτὰ περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ παρὰ πᾶσιν ἱστορεῖσθαι, I.260) and goes on to discredit the story of Asclepius resurrecting the dead: οὐ τοίνυν τῆς οὕτως ἀπὸ ψευδοῦς ὑποθέσεως ἀρχομένης καὶ ἀδιεξιτήτου κατὰ πλῆθος καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐκάστου προαίρεσιν μεταπλαττομένης γένοιτ' ἂν τις τεχνικὴ θεωρία (“Thus, of an assumption which begins with a falsehood and is so multiform that it cannot be checked, and changes its shape at each man's fancy, there can be no technical treatment”); transl. Bury 1949.

⁸⁶ All the scholia on Pindar *Pythian* 3.96 (BDEGQ) Drachmann (T 73 in Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 I), for example,

Notable in the present context is the testimony for the professed Eleusinian priest writing under the pseudonym Amelesagoras (5th c., *FGrH* 333 T 3)⁸⁷ who claimed that Asclepius had resurrected Glaucos, son of Minos. It is not the only instance where this is attributed to Asclepius rather than Polyidos.⁸⁸ Even if this is generally believed to be a later accretion to Asclepius' dubious anti-*aristeia*,⁸⁹ what very clearly emerges from this conflation is that the similarity of Polyidos' most famous deed to the workings of Asclepius was evident to several ancient writers; that Polyidos, according to Hyginus and Apollodorus, ultimately revives the child by imitating a snake, an animal very closely associated with Asclepius, may either have facilitated or been a product of the conflation.⁹⁰ It is also conceivable that the confinement of

start by identifying the resurrected man of Pindar's poem with Hippolytus: λέγεται δὲ ὁ Ἀσκληπιὸς χρυσῶι δελεασθεὶς ἀναστῆσαι Ἴππόλυτον τεθνηκότα; but the majority (BEGQ) go on to list alternative identifications: οἱ δὲ Τυνδάρεων, ἕτεροι Καπανεά, οἱ δὲ Γλαῦκον, οἱ δὲ Ὀρφικοὶ Ὑμέναιον, and eventually add to that list alternatives which themselves contain more than one person: Στησίχορος δὲ ἐπὶ Καπανεῖ καὶ Λυκούργωι· οἱ δὲ διὰ τὸ τὰς Προϊτίδας ἰάσασθαι, οἱ δὲ διὰ τὸν Ὠρίωνα· Φύλαρχος ὅτι τοὺς Φινείδας ἰάσατο, Φερεκύδης δὲ ὅτι τοὺς ἐν Δελφοῖς θνήσκοντας ἀναβιοῦν ἐποίησεν. The list in the scholia on Euripides *Alcestis* 1 (2.216.16–217.5 Schwartz), i.e. the play assuming a plurality of resurrections, starts from Pherecydes fr. 35 Fowler (see above p. 000), then also assembles testimonia for resurrections of specific individuals: Ἀπολλόδωρος δὲ φησι κεραυνωθῆναι τὸν Ἀσκληπιὸν ἐπὶ τῶι τὸν Ἴππόλυτον ἀναστῆσαι, Ἀμελησαγόρας δὲ ὅτι Γλαῦκον, Πανύασσις <δὲ> ὅτι Τυνδάρεων, οἱ δὲ Ὀρφικοὶ ὅτι Ὑμέναιον, before reverting to voices vouching for a plurality of resurrections: Στησίχορος δὲ ἐπὶ Καπανεῖ καὶ Λυκούργωι, Φερεκύδης δὲ ἐν τῇ τῶν Ἱστοριῶν <διὰ τὸ> τοὺς ἐν Δελφοῖς [φησι] θνήσκοντας αὐτὸν ἀναβιώσκειν, Φύλαρχος δὲ διὰ τοὺς Φινείδας, Τελέσαρχος δὲ δι' Ὠρίωνα, Πολύαρχος δὲ ὁ Κυρηναῖος διὰ τὸ τὰς Προΐτου θυγατέρας αὐτὸν ἰάσασθαι [κεραυνωθῆναί φησιν].

⁸⁷ Scholia on Euripides *Alcestis* 1, 2.216.17–18 Schwartz (see previous n.).

⁸⁸ E.g., schol. vet. BEGQ Pi. P. 3.96 (see above, n. 000); cf. further Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 I T 81 (Hyginus *Fabulae* 149), T 704a (Hyginus *Astronomica* II.14).

⁸⁹ See Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 II, 42 n.73, 47 n.87, 51 n.100 ("At any rate, the Glaucus story has no original relation with Asclepius.").

⁹⁰ Hyginus *Astronomica* II.14 has Asclepius observe and imitate the snake to revivify Glaucos. On the snake as Asclepius' attribute or even his identification with a snake see Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 II, 227–231 and Ogden 2013, ch. 9 (ibid. 345–346 on Glaucos' resurrection). Not mentioned in these accounts is Palaiphatos who in *De Incredibilibus* 26 rationalises the 'utterly ridiculous' (παγγέλοιος) myth about Polyidos revivifying Glaucos to the effect that Polyidos treated Glaucos (who had a bowel irritation from drinking honey) with a cure he had learned

Polyidos and the child in the tomb was interpreted as a form of incubation, a healing-method well attested for the cult of Asclepius.⁹¹

While few ancient writers agree as to whom and how many Asclepius brought back to life, there is an overwhelming consensus that it was Zeus who stopped him—smiting him with a bolt of lightning—,⁹² even though there is some variance as to Zeus’ motivation. As Ludwig Edelstein observed,⁹³ the explanation of why Zeus killed Asclepius changed over time and is closely connected with the question of the identity and number of those he resurrected. In earlier versions of the myth Asclepius was punished for raising a specific individual such as Hippolytus who had been slain by a god whose punishment Asclepius thus reversed; by the 5th century BCE, however, a “moralistic interpretation” prevailed: “Zeus, the lord of men and the preserver of the laws of nature, could not but punish him because he had violated the order of the universe” (Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 II, 46). It is here that we reach a crucial point of contact between the early discourse of Asclepius and the ‘New *Polyidos*’, where, as we have seen such concerns are articulated repeatedly (ii.21, 34–36, 47–48).

It is not just the relation of human knowledge and the divinely sanctioned laws of *physis* that plays a role in *Polyidos*, but equally the question of monetising that knowledge. As noted above, Euripides pits Minos’ tyranny and wealth against Polyidos’ *sophia* and *sunesis*; perhaps most acutely at ii.23–25:

from a doctor named Drakon.

⁹¹ See Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 I TT 441–442; II 145–158. An incubation of Polyidos, however not in connection with Glaukos’ revivification, is attested in Pindar *Olympian Ode* 13.74–76 (on which see Carrara 2014, 21–23).

⁹² See Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 I TT 105–115.

⁹³ See Edelstein&Edelstein 1945 II, 46–51.

—
 πλουτεῖς· τὰ δ' ἄλλα μὴ δόκει ξυνιέναι· (Polyidos fr. 641.1)

ἐν τῷ<ι> γὰρ ὄλβω<ι> φαυλότης ἐγγίγνεται, (~Polyidos fr. 641.2)

πενία δὲ σοφίαν ἔλαχε διὰ τὸ δυστυχές (Polyidos fr. 641.3)

You're rich, but don't think you understand the rest.

Ineptitude arises in prosperity,

whereas on account of disadvantage poverty has wisdom as its lot.

Variants of ii.25 circulated widely in antiquity, and, irrespective of its particular form,⁹⁴ it stands in pointed contrast to the gnomic line which heads the account of Asclepius' raising of a dead man in Pindar's third *Pythian*, an ode that probes the possibility of resurrecting the dead and exposes its limits (3.54–60):⁹⁵

ἀλλὰ κέρδει καὶ σοφία δέδεταί.

ἔτραπεν καὶ κεῖνον ἀγάνορι μισθῶι

χρυσὸς ἐν χερσὶν φανείς

ἄνδρ' ἐκ θανάτου κομίσαι

ἤδη ἀλωκότα· χερσὶ δ' ἄρα Κρονίων

ρίψαις δι' ἀμφοῖν ἀμπνοᾶν στέρνων κάθελεν

⁹⁴ The attractive variant found in Clement, *Stromateis* 4.5.24.4, with συγγενές/ξυγγενές in lieu of δυστυχές, is the preferred—and in my view still preferable—reading in most editions of the fragment to date, see Gehad/Gibert/Trnka-Amrhein 2024: 26–27, comm. *ad loc.* The reading συγγενές/ξυγγενές leads more naturally to the reflections on *physis* in the immediately following lines, ii.26–30. For the proverbial πενία δὲ σοφίαν ἔλαχε—an abbreviation of the Euripidean line according to Zenobios 5.72 (see *ibid.* κομματικῶς τοῦτο ἐκ τῶν Εὐριπίδου εἴλκυσται), see TrGF 5 app. *ad loc.*

⁹⁵ Text and translation: Race 2012. See the discussions of Young 1963, 27–68 and Pelliccia 1987.

ὥκέως, αἴθων δὲ κεραυνὸς ἐνέσκιμψεν μόρον.

χρὴ τὰ ἐοικότα παρ

δαιμόνων μαστευέμεν θναταῖς φρασίν

γνόντα τὸ παρ ποδός, οἷας εἰμὲν αἴσας.

But even wisdom is enthralled to gain.

Gold appearing in his hands

with its lordly wage

prompted even him to bring back from death a man

already carried off. But then, with a cast from his hands,

Cronus' son took the breath from both men's breasts

in an instant; the flash of lightning hurled down doom.

It is necessary to seek what is proper from the gods

with our mortal minds,

by knowing what lies at our feet and what kind of destiny is ours.

In Pindar's account, Asclepius is not just punished for raising a dead man, but for having accepted a bribe of gold to do so; the repetition of χρυσίν (gold in Asclepius', the thunderbolt in Zeus' hands) foregrounds the ill-fated exchange and points to the very different values at play in human economy on the one hand and the divinely sanctioned workings of nature on the other. As so often, the system of equivalence and interchangeability—itsself a form of analogising—on which any monetary economy is predicated poses a problem here.

Read against Pindar's account of the Asclepius myth, the lines of the 'New *Polyidos*' suggest that Euripides' Polyidos is determined to avoid any imitation of Asclepius, not least by

emphatically rejecting Minos' wealth and outspokenly dissociating it from any true knowledge and wisdom. An explicit rejection of "wealth" already occurs at ii.13–14:

μή μοι δίδου cὺ πλοῦτον ἀντὶ τῆς ἐμῆς
 ψυχῆς· κακὴ γὰρ κτῆσις ἀποδόσθαι βίον.

Don't offer me wealth in exchange for my
 life: to sell a life is a bad way to earn.

The editors may well be right not to put much weight on the difference between ψυχή and βίος in their translation—but what do the lines mean? In the first sentence, I take Polyidos to be telling Minos not to offer him wealth in exchange for an act he knows will kill him, i.e. that will come at the cost of his own ψυχή; we might compare Creon's accusation against the guard at Sophocles, *Antigone* 322:

καὶ ταῦτ' ἐπ' ἀργύρῳ γε τὴν ψυχὴν προδούς

and (you did) this (sc. let the forbidden burial happen), giving up your life for
 money.

Here, too, accepting money for committing a capital crime is termed a sale of one's ψυχή. In Euripides' *Alcestis*, in turn, we find the idea of the ψυχή as an object of trade when the Chorus say to Alcestis (461–462):

σὺ τὸν αὐτᾶς
 ἔτλας πόσιν ἀντὶ σᾶς ἀμεῖψαι
 ψυχᾶς ἐξ Ἀίδα

You dared to take from Hades your own husband in exchange for your life.⁹⁶

Related is the familiar thought, repeated more than once in the play, of death as a debt (to Hades/*Ploutōn*) we all have to pay.⁹⁷ Alcestis' dealings with Hades, however, consist in an exchange of one ψυχή for another ψυχή—her own for that of Admetus; Apollo's attempts at bringing money into the equation are emphatically rejected by Thanatos already at the beginning of the play.⁹⁸

In its gnomic generality, the New *Polyidos*' contrived κακή γὰρ κτήσις ἀποδόσθαι βίον (ii.14) is more widely applicable; it is either a generalised restatement of Polyidos' refusal to sell his own ψυχή or frames the reviving of Glaukos for money as a sale of a life, or both.

The new lines of the *Polyidos* strongly suggest that the myth of Asclepius looms in the background of the play and that the seer, faced with the task of bringing Glaukos back to life, is determined to distance himself from the action that earned Asclepius the wrath of Zeus. In all likelihood, however, he would end up performing it in the play, and with success: if Euripides' play ended as the mythographers would have us expect, Polyidos did bring the dead prince back to life. Not unlike the *Alcestis*, *Polyidos* thus seems to invoke the example of Asclepius to

⁹⁶ The expression ἀντί + possessive pronoun + ψυχῆς (again of Alcestis' ψυχή) also occurs at 282–284: ἐγὼ σε πρεσβεύουσα κἀντὶ τῆς ἐμῆς/ ψυχῆς καταστήσασα φῶς τόδ' εἰσορᾶν/ θνήσκω (“I, giving you precedence, and having, in preference to my own life, appointed you to see the light of day, am dying”); compare also 900–901, with a numeral in lieu of the (implied) possessive pronoun: δύο δ' ἀντὶ μιᾶς Ἀϊδης ψυχᾶς/ ... σὺν ἅν' ἔσχεν (“Hades would have had two souls together ..., instead of one”).

⁹⁷ *Alcestis* 418–9: ... γίγνωσκε δὲ/ ὥς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν κατθανεῖν ὀφείλεται; 782: βροτοῖς ἅπασι κατθανεῖν ὀφείλεται, cf. Euripides *Andromache* 1271–1272; F 10 (*Aegeus*); for further parallels: Wankel 1983: 147–149. Admetos' father Pheres offers a clever variation at *Alcestis* 712 (quoted above n.000).

⁹⁸ In the stichomythia of the prologue, Apollo attempts to convince Thanatos to let Alcestis live to old age, arguing that this will come with a rich burial (56 κἄν γραῦς ὄληται, πλουσίως ταφήσεται); Thanatos sharply replies that what Apollo is proposing is a law that benefits the rich (57 πρὸς τῶν ἐχόντων, Φοῖβε, τὸν νόμον τίθης), for “those with means could buy death at an old age” (59 ὠνοῖντ' ἅν' οἷς πάρεστι γηραιοὶ θανεῖν).

question, but ultimately reinforce, the singularity and irreversibility of death—only then to call it into question once more, as another person is wrestled from the grip of death.

It may be unsurprising that Asclepius plays an important role in discussions of the boundary between life and death, but his close association with eschatological speculations in poetry, and with their specific language traced here, is remarkable. Lucian of Samosata, never not a perceptive critic, seems to have picked up this association: in his *Alexander the False Prophet*, the eponymous impostor prophet declares a snake to be none other than the reborn Asclepius and addresses it as δις τεχθέντα, ὅτε ἄλλοι ἅπαξ τίκτοντ' ἄνθρωποι (14), a distorted echo of the Odyssean Circe's words which itself comments on death, (re)birth, singularity vs. repetition.

6. Some conclusions and an eschatological postscript

The reading of the 'New *Polyidos*' which I have proposed above will contribute, I hope, to our understanding of the new lines of *Polyidos* and help with the play's contextualisation in Attic drama and fifth-century philosophical discourse. In a close reading of two sections of the papyrus, col. ii.15–16 and col. ii.26–30, I have adduced an array of texts in order to show that the new lines of *Polyidos* reflect concerns with nature and human life and death that can be traced across Euripides' oeuvre.

Euripides is not a dogmatic thinker, and the reflections we find articulated by various characters in what remains of his plays—a corpus now significantly enriched by the tantalising verses of P.Phil.Nec. 23v—might not amount to any consistent or unified system of thought. Remarkably, however, the tension between what is fixed and stable and the dynamics of change that is at issue in the "New *Polyidos*" has been used to characterise Euripides' own position. In his discussion of this "lay poet's" beliefs regarding the soul, Erwin Rohde said (1925: 433):

“But it was not given to him to settle down in any fixed set of opinions, all his convictions were provisional, mere hypotheses adopted for the purpose of experiment ... When all convictions were involved together in a state of perpetual change and instability, the conception of the nature and being of the soul and its relation to the powers of life and death could not alone remain in fixed and dogmatic certainty.”⁹⁹

The varied ideas on human life and death I have traced in the *Polyidos* may also shed new light on the fundamental question of what, if any, thematic connection there might be between the two plays represented on P.Phil.Nec. 23v, a matter already raised in the *editio princeps*. Space does not permit me to offer any detailed arguments but I will sketch out a few suggestions in a brief eschatological postscript.

In the *editio princeps*, the editors note that what we have in the New Euripides papyrus are “two substantial excerpts from two Euripidean plays that do not represent an obvious type, formally or thematically”, all the while noting that both excerpts “prominently feature a tomb and both treat the topic of the proper pursuit and application of wealth” and suggesting that both excerpts might stem from “scenes of great tension” (Gehad/Gibert/Trnka-Amrhein 2024: 5). We may add that in either play, the tomb in question very likely holds the remains of a child, and that the great tension in either case arises among parents unwilling to accept the loss of their offspring.

There is good reason to bring what else we know of the respective plays into our consideration (as I have indeed done in the discussion of *Polyidos*). After all, to state the obvious in simplest terms, the papyrus as we have it must be a fragment from a larger “whole”:

⁹⁹ German original: Rohde ⁸1921: 248.

whoever wrote down these lines of *Ino* and *Polyidos* must have written more of them (the lines from *Ino* do not have a title corresponding to Πολυΐδου at i.38, and the final sentence, ii.49–50, is grammatically incomplete). In light of the ideas I have traced in *Polyidos*, it strikes me as remarkable that what we know as *Ino* fr. 415¹⁰⁰ contains a reflection on the vicissitudes of life that crucially hinges on comparison between humans and plants: the speaker not only claims that human life is governed by the same κύκλος as “earth’s fruitful plants (καρπίμοις τε γῆς φυτοῖς)” (3) but describes its end with the metaphor of “being harvested” (5).¹⁰¹ As Gibert/Trnka-Amrhein ((*Interpretation*) Year: p. xxx) point out, this latter expression may well be “echoed” in our papyrus, i.25 (= *Ino* fr. 419.4): ἀμᾶρθε τῶνδε δύστηνον θέρος (“reap these actions’ miserable harvest”).

Plutarch, in turn, in *On the Delays of Divine Vengeance*, offers a tragic quotation from a speech of “Ino regretting her deeds” which editors have long connected with Euripides’ eponymous play.¹⁰² The passage in question is worth considering in context (556a–b):¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ The 5 lines are quoted, with some variations, in Stobaeus 4.41.19, lines 3–5 are also found in a cluster of quotations in the Plutarchan *Consolation to Apollonius* 104a–b. The first two of these quotations (Euripides, *Phoenissae* 558 as well as *Ino* fr. 420.2–3) are presented as having been cited and discussed by Demetrius of Phalerum. *Ino* Fr. 415.3–5 immediately follows on from these and in its turn precedes a truncated version of Pindar *Pythian* 8.95–96 which omits the Pindaric ἐπάμεροι at the beginning line 95.

¹⁰¹ Euripides, *Ino* F 415: ἄνασσα, πολλοῖς ἔστιν ἀνθρώπων κακά,/ τοῖς δ’ ἄρτι λήγει, τοῖς δὲ κίνδυνος μολεῖν./ κύκλος γὰρ αὐτὸς καρπίμοις τε γῆς φυτοῖς/ θνητῶν τε γενεᾷ· τῶν μὲν αὖξεται βίος,/ τῶν δὲ φθίνει τε καὶ θερίζεται πάλιν.

¹⁰² The attribution was first suggested by Valckenaer 1767, 173; a thorough argument in favour of the attribution, which takes into account Plutarch’s acquaintance with the texts of Euripides more generally, is provided by Di Gregorio 1980, 59–60; see Kannicht *ad loc.*

¹⁰³ Text and translation: de Lacy/Einarson 1959.

ὥστε καθάπερ τῆς Ἰνουῦς ἀκούομεν ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις λεγούσης, ἐφ' οἷς ἔδρασε
μεταμελομένης,

φίλοι γυναῖκες, πῶς ἂν ἐξ ἀρχῆς δόμους
Ἀθάμαντος οἰκήσαιμι τῶν πεπραγμένων
δράσασα μηδέν; [Euripides, **fr. 399]

ταῦτα ἐκάστου τῶν πονηρῶν τὴν ψυχὴν ἀναπολεῖν ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ διαλογίζεσθαι,
πῶς ἂν ἐκβᾶσα τῆς μνήμης τῶν ἀδικημάτων καὶ τὸ συνειδὸς ἐξ ἑαυτῆς
ἐκβαλοῦσα καὶ καθαρὰ γενομένη βίον ἄλλον ἐξ ἀρχῆς βιώσειεν.

Hence, as we hear Ino say in the theatres, regretting her deed:

Oh, dearest women, would that once again
Within the halls of Athamas I dwelt
As one that had done nought of what is done!

so the thought that the soul of every wicked man revolves within itself and
dwells upon is this: how it might escape from the memory of its iniquities, drive
out of itself the consciousness of guilt, regain its purity, and begin its life anew.

Assuming that the lines are indeed from the *Ino*, I would not want to pass over the fact that Plutarch glosses them as an articulation of Ino's impossible wish "to live a second life from the start" (βίον ἄλλον ἐξ ἀρχῆς βιώσειεν). In other words, it is *not unthinkable* that the two plays represented on P.Phil.Nec. inv. 23v are in fact juxtaposed because they share an interest in human death and ways of reversing or averting it—or an interest in life and ways of extending or doubling it.

Many have felt an urge to connect the contents of the two plays, which both revolve, if in very different ways, around the death of children and the parents' reactions to their bereavement, with the findspot of our papyrus: a tomb containing the remains of a woman and a child. I shall resist the temptation to add to this. I will, however, simply point out that I learned, from Basem Gehad's presentation at the conference in June 2024, that another, still unpublished, papyrus from the same excavation in the Philadelphia necropolis, P.Phil. Nec. inv. 17, contains *Iliad* 11.666–73, from the speech by the old Nestor which features the famous *iteratum* εἴθ' ὥς ἠβώοιμι βίη δέ μοι ἔμπεδος εἴη (670).¹⁰⁴

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