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# The course of Phaedra's erotic passion in Euripides' Hippolytus

Λέξεις κλειδιά: *Euripides, Hippolytus, Homer, Phaedra, shame-culture*

**Vasileios Dimoglidis, Ph.D. Student (Ancient Greek and Latin Literature), Department of Classics – University of Cincinnati:**

## Zusammenfassung

Das Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es, den evolutionären Verlauf der erotischen Leidenschaft von Phaedra für ihren Stiefsohn Hippolytos, in Euripides' gleichnamiger Tragödie, zu präsentieren. Ein weiterer Punkt, der gleichzeitig diskutiert wird, ist die Bildung der Leidenschaft durch andere dramatische Personen, insbesondere die Amme und Hippolytos. Der Verlauf der erotischen Leidenschaft und ihre Transformation in andere Gefühle, wie die Tendenz zur Rache, sind die wichtigsten Fragen zu berücksichtigen. Euripides hat die Persönlichkeit von Phaedra durch diesen Entwicklungsverlauf der Leidenschaft gebildet. Der erotische Wahnsinn der Hauptdarstellerin wird auf verschiedene Weisen dargestellt. Am Anfang zeigt es sich als Delirium (v.208) und Krankheit, die Phaedra zu bezwingen versucht. Man bemerkt auch, dass ihre Leidenschaft ins Miasma (v.317) sich gestaltet. Ihr Übermaß der Grenzen ist ein Verhalten, das sie zur Schande bringt und ihrem öffentlichen Image in einer Zeit, wo δήμου φάτις (d.h. die Meinung, die die Leute über jemanden haben) eine vorherrschende Bedeutung hat, droht. Schließlich wird die erotische Leidenschaft der tragischen Darstellerin vernichtet und verwandelt sich in eine Neigung zur Rache von Hippolytos

The aim of this paper<sup>1</sup> is to present the evolutionary course of Phaedra's erotic passion for her stepson, Hippolytus, in Euripides' homonymous tragedy. Simultaneously, another point that will be discussed is the formation of passion by other dramatic persons, particularly the Nurse and Hippolytus.

In the Prologue of the play Venus states that it was she who inspired the erotic fury into Phaedra: καρδίαν κατέσχετο/ ἔρωτι δεινώι τοῖς ἑμοῖς βουλεύμασιν<sup>2</sup> (v.27-28). The phrase τὰ πολλὰ δὲ πάλαι προκόψασ', (v.22-3) which is expressed by the goddess reveals Phaedra's love and the use of the adverb πάλαι (= long since) shows the duration of this feeling. Halleran believes that the alliteration of -π- in these verses indicates how easily the goddess will get her revenge.<sup>3</sup> According to the aforesaid the source of heroine's passion is Venus. We are even aware of Aphrodite's motive, i.e. the cause that "triggered" the revenge-retribution of Venus.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented, in an early version, at the Second Annual Classics Conference held by the Association of Graduate Students and PhD Candidates of Philology Department at the University of Ioannina on Friday, 31 May 2013. I would like to thank the organizing committee of the Conference and the chairman Dr. Konstantinos Stefou for giving me the opportunity to present my paper. I am profoundly indebted to Dr. Efi Papadodima for her supervision and continuing assistance in this paper, and to Helen Gasti, Assistant Professor of Ancient Greek and Latin Literature at the University of Ioannina, for some meaningful suggestions.

<sup>2</sup> In this paper I quote from the edition of Diggle (1984, 207-71).

<sup>3</sup> Halleran (2000, 148).

Hippolytus is responsible, because he is totally and reverently devoted to the goddess Artemis and accuses Aphrodite that she: *κακίστην δαιμόνων πεφυκέναι* (v.13).<sup>4</sup>

Here is created on behalf of Venus a divine φθόνος (= envy, jealousy), which however was caused by a human φθόνον (that of Hippolytus to the goddess of love). We know already from Homer that gods are presented with some human characteristics (love, hatred, jealousy, sadness, and other passions). It is, therefore, logical for a goddess to feel φθόνον for someone who blames her.<sup>5</sup> Hippolytus initially, staying away from sex,<sup>6</sup> refusing an Aphrodite's feature and accusing her disturbs the balance and the distance between god and mortal.<sup>7</sup> The φθόνος of the goddess will come as a procedure of rehabilitation and wronged element's (= Venus's) compensation.<sup>8</sup> However, the causes should be traced back to the mythological - genealogical past of Phaedra.<sup>9</sup> We know that Venus cursed all generations of the Helios, because he revealed to Hephaestus her erotic union with Mars. Reference to the myth is made in (v.338-343), where Phaedra in a dialogue with the Nurse believes that her origin is responsible for her own misfortune:<sup>10</sup> *κεῖθεν ἡμεῖς, οὐ νεωστί, δυστυχεῖς* (v.343)<sup>11</sup> On account of the fact that were close family ties with the god Helios, Phaedra is condemned to experience something illegitimate -which partly acquits her.

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<sup>4</sup> For the use of the infinitive πεφυκέναι instead of the infinitive εἶναι see Halleran, (2000, 147), where the writer considers Besides, Perysinakis (1998, 164) mentions "because of their anthropomorphism is natural for gods to φθονεῖν their potential rivals, i.e. the people who reduce the distance between them". that the use of this infinitive emphasizes more strongly the Hippolytus' hubris to the goddess Venus.

<sup>5</sup> See also Conacher (1967, 27). See Winnington-Ingram (2003, 202), where Winnington- Ingram makes a comparison between Euripides' Hippolytus and Bacchae, and he concludes that in Hippolytus are punishable by death both he who suppresses his sex instincts (as Pentheus in Bacchae), and he who indulges in them (something that does not exist in Bacchae).

<sup>6</sup> See also Conacher (1967, 27). See Winnington-Ingram (2003, 202), where Winnington- Ingram makes a comparison between Euripides' Hippolytus and Bacchae, and he concludes that in Hippolytus are punishable by death both he who suppresses his sex instincts (as Pentheus in Bacchae), and he who indulges in them (something that does not exist in Bacchae).

<sup>7</sup> Furthermore Thornton (1997, 14) writes that Hippolytus does not accept Venus's power and hence alludes that he is something more than a mortal. Therefore Venus must destroy him.

<sup>8</sup> Perysinakis (1998, 164) searching the divine φθόνον and considering an Anaximander's fragment writes: "φθόνος somewhat brings into motion the process of rehabilitation and compensation of wronged element in the fragment B1 of Anaximander".

<sup>9</sup> Regarding Phaedra's genealogy see Halleran, (2000, 22-3), Roussos (1993, 164-5) and Raios (2011, 351-2).

<sup>10</sup> The tragic heroine seems to understand her mythological past. Besides, this is usual in the Euripidean tragedies. For Euripidean tragic heroes' self-conscious awareness of their own mythological frame and history see Wright (2005, 133 et seq). So we can talk about "metamythology" and according to Wright (2005, 135) "Metamythology may be defined as a type of discourse which arises when mythical characters (here, but not necessarily, in dramatic fiction) are made to talk about themselves and their own myths, or when myths are otherwise presented, in a deliberate and self-conscious manner".

<sup>11</sup> The ancient commentator writes about (v.343): *ἐκ τῆς καταγωγῆς τοῦ γένους δυστυχοῦμεν τὴν νόσον τοῦ ἔρωτος, ἀντὶ τοῦ προγονικὴν τινα δυστυχίαν δυστυχοῦντες τοῦτο πάσχομεν*. On *Scholia Vetera* see Schwartz (1887-1891, 46). Moreover in *Scholia Vetera* in Euripides' Hippolytus, the ancient commentator interpreting (v.47) refers to the mythological context where Aphrodite cursed all the generations of the god Helios because he revealed her adultery: see Schwartz (1887-1891, 11).

As far as the heroine's passion is concerned, we observe that the first reference occurs in the Prologue of the play. The playwright uses the noun νόσον (=disease) (v.40),<sup>12</sup> which is equated to her passion, because he wants to show that this feeling is so illicit and strong that threatens her reputation<sup>13</sup> at a period when δήμου φάτις (= people's opinion of someone) is predominant. This word *inter alia* refers to the pathology of Phaedra's erotic fury, which will soon become known.

Even the use of the participle κάκπεπληγμένη (v.38) reveals the influence of love upon Phaedra; and that love is so strong that convulses her. Additionally, the use of the passive voice deducts from the person the element of intention and responsibility.<sup>14</sup> The passive state and delusional disposal should be seen in the corresponding translation. James Morwood<sup>15</sup> translates the term as "maddened by the strings of love" and manages to keep both conceptual levels of the participle.<sup>16</sup> The use of the adverb ένταῦθα (= now), that is emphatically placed at the beginning of (v.38), the confirmatory particle δὴ (= surely), as well as the Perfect tense,<sup>17</sup> denote that Phaedra's disease is placed in the dramatic present.<sup>18</sup>

Few verses below (v.131-40, in the first Stasimon) the Chorus for the first time describes Phaedra's symptoms: she is sick, sad and she does not eat: *τριτάταν δέ νιν κλύω/ τάνδ' άβρωσία* (v.135-6). This Phaedra's three-day eating abstinence constitutes hubris, as our heroine seems to exceed the human limits. This voluntary starvation disturbs Aphrodite's plan as Phaedra will die before Aphrodite's revenge. Phaedra makes her first appearance on stage in the second episode and specifically in (v.198). The woman in love describes the symptoms of her illness. At this point we observe an intense contrast: Phaedra knows that she crosses the limits and she is possessed by self-consciousness, but she is not willing to put an end to her morbid passion.

The tragic poet uses a metaphor in (v.201) *βαρύ μοι κεφαλῆς επίκρανον ἔχειν*, which connects the weight caused by the emotional state with the weight of ornaments Phaedra bearing thereon. Moreover, the phrase *λέλυμαι μελέων σύνδεσμα φίλων* (v.199) refers to an adjective of Eros: *λυσιμελής*, and of course of Sleep, i.e. in *Odyssey*,<sup>19</sup> which is inextricably linked to death; so here is underlined the strength of love. Phaedra's passion takes the form of a delirium starting with the sigh *αἰᾶ* (= Oh, oh!) (v.208) and then she loses her control and desires to rush in the mountains and forests. However, she immediately "wakes up" (v.239) and is transferred

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<sup>12</sup> Dodds (1951, 186) uses Combarieu's opinion (1909, 66 et seq.) that "the primitive under the influence of strong passion considers himself as possessed, or ill, which for him is the same thing".

<sup>13</sup> See Halleran (2000, 46-9) in his introductory chapter "Passion and Reason", where he analyzes this concept.

<sup>14</sup> Also the fact that the agent absents indicates the inability to be expressed with active terms the content of the verb. For the use and importance of passive dimension of verbs see Humbert (<sup>3</sup>1960, 107-9 and more specifically 108). However, this argument applies if we consider the dative κέντροις (= strings) (v.39) as dative of the cause or the manner in verb *άπόλλυται* (= dies) (v.39). Otherwise this dative can act as agent to the participle.

<sup>15</sup> Morwood (1997, 40).

<sup>16</sup> Apart from the rendition of the two conceptual levels, it is indicative that he considers the dative κέντροις ἔρωτος (v.39) as agent to the participle.

<sup>17</sup> Present Perfect as tense demonstrates that an act, which has happened in the past, has visible its effects in the present, and, due to this, Present Perfect is considered an arctic tense. For the use of tenses see Schwyzer (1950, 258-66 and 263 for the Perfect tense).

<sup>18</sup> Halleran (<sup>2</sup>2000, 150). Moreover the denotation of the present notified by Present Perfect at this point is equivalent to the here and now of the performance.

<sup>19</sup> *Od.* 20. (v.74) and 23. (v.342-3).

into the realm of logic. To describe her passion she uses the verb ἐμάνην (= I was mad). The use of the first singular person indicates Phaedra's self-consciousness; Phaedra exceeds the limits and falls into a state of fury.

For what is happening to her Phaedra charges something supernatural, the ἄτη,<sup>20</sup> which was inspired by a god, and so she disclaims her responsibility (v.241). Both in Homer and in Hippolytus the interpretation given by Liddell-Scott to ἄτη as a bewilderment, infatuation, caused by blindness or delusion sent by the gods, mostly as the punishment of guilty rashness<sup>21</sup> cannot be implemented, because this ἄτη comes as revenge for Hippolytus' hubris and not for Phaedra's audacity, and as punishment for a "propatoric" sin committed by the Helios. We should also mention how strong the sense of shame is. More specifically, our heroine uses for the first time the verb αἰδούμεθα (= I am ashamed) (v.244) and the phrase ἐπ' αἰσχύνην ὄμμα τέτραπται (= my gaze is turned to shame) (v.246). At this point the motif of Phaedra's self-consciousness reappears as she realizes that she has exceeded the limits and now she feels ashamed.

All the aforementioned terms (αἰδούμεθα, ἐπ' αἰσχύνην ὄμμα τέτραπται) transfer us to the Shame-Culture of Homeric society, where "Homeric man's highest good is not the enjoyment of a quiet conscience, but the enjoyment of τιμή, public esteem."<sup>22</sup> Thus Phaedra is not so much concerned about her conscience but about the impact of her acts on her public image and the possibility of deprivation of her public respect.

In the space of (v.250-309) noticeable is the element of silence, which is an outcome of the shame that Phaedra feels. This verb (αἰδοῦμαι) and its derivatives indicate that Phaedra's acts are not socially acceptable in a period when δήμου φάτις (= people's opinion of someone) is prevailing. The αἰδώς (= the sense of shame) acts as a deterrent and Phaedra perhaps does not seem immodest prima facie.<sup>23</sup> "The internal struggle is unabated, and the fight to overcome her passion is unequal",<sup>24</sup> since Phaedra is confronted with a superior divine power.

In the second episode, we are informed from the Nurse that Phaedra does not confess the object of her erotic desire in spite of Nurse's continuous efforts (v.271 et seq.). Phaedra hoped being silent<sup>25</sup> and hiding her illness everything would be fine. The presence of the Nurse is important because she contributes to recollection of Hippolytus' name (v.309) and therefore to

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<sup>20</sup> See Halleran (2000, 170) where Halleran notes that ἄτη refers to the deception of the mind and also to the course of behavior afterwards. For the definition of the word ἄτη see Dodds (1951, 5).

<sup>21</sup> Liddell, & Scott (1996, 270) the word ἄτη, and for the inapplicability of that interpretation in Homer see Dodds (1951, 24).

<sup>22</sup> See Dodds (1951, 17). On the difference between Shame-Culture and Guilt-Culture see Dodds (1951, 28 et seq.) and Perysinakis (2012, 20 et seq.).

<sup>23</sup> See Merkouri (1997, 325), where Merkouri indicates the role of the αἰδώς in Phaedra in the homonymous Senecan tragedy. A significant difference between the two tragedies is that in Seneca "the sense of αἰδώς is original from the beginning up to the end (...) except that it is not directly tied to the honor and eukleia, i.e. to the praise of the social environment for the individual's moral integrity" (Merkouri 1997, 327). On the other hand Phaedra's αἰδώς in Euripides' Hippolytus is directly tied to the honor and eukleia.

<sup>24</sup> See Deligiorgis (2010, 64-7). Blundell (1995, 176) characterizes Phaedra as a victim and Hippolytus as a way for her to revenge him.

<sup>25</sup> For the dipole silence-speech see Knox (1968, 92), where he states: "The choice between speech and silence (...) makes an artistic unity of the play".

the emotional outburst of Phaedra. The mention of Hippolytus' name hurts the heroine, and she expresses that kind of pain and passion with οἴμοι (= woe's me).<sup>26</sup>

However, Phaedra avoids mentioning Hippolytus' name. Euripides wants at this point to protect Phaedra from social outcry. For this reason the tragedian does not mention the name of Hippolytus, because such a relationship constitutes an unlawful act that could lead to Phaedra's social outrage and moral decline in the eyes of society. Also Euripides fears that Phaedra, confessing herself and immediately Hippolytus' name, will provoke the spectators<sup>27</sup> and the play will be accused as ἀπρεπές καὶ κατηγορίας ἄξιον (improper and able to be accused);<sup>28</sup> our heroine as well.

When Phaedra confesses the name of her suppressed sexual desire, she will make a step towards her own destruction.<sup>29</sup> The tragic heroine is concerned about maintaining a good reputation and about her decent public image. Therefore she does not confess that name. On the other hand, as has been stressed by Mills, the Nurse's verbal "attack" in (v.353-61) is the key-element which leads Phaedra to reveal the name of Hippolytus.<sup>30]</sup>

Finally, announcing the name of her stepson, in the second episode, Phaedra recites a speech, which has concerned several scholars. In the fragment from (v.373 et seq.) the protagonist presents the course of her passion and the efforts she made in order to tame it. The sense of αἰδῶς (v.385) contributes to the eradication of Phaedra's erotic passion. In this paper we shall not discuss the reason Phaedra separates the αἰδῶς<sup>31</sup>[31] in good and bad.<sup>32</sup> The only thing we would point out is that αἰδῶς may constitute bad influence on Phaedra because "prevents her from fighting down her love as she knows she should."<sup>33</sup>

For our heroine the fact that she fell into this fault is not due to her lacking awareness of the right, but because of her inability to realize it.<sup>34</sup> This happens to Medea as well in the homonymous Euripides' tragedy.<sup>35</sup> For this reason Phaedra declares: τὰ χρήσι' ἐπιστάμεσθα καὶ

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<sup>26</sup> Roussos (1993, 164).

<sup>27</sup> Meyrowitz (1967, 532) stresses: "It is Phaedra's unnatural passion which both horrifies and fascinates the audience".

<sup>28</sup> We know that this is the second Hippolytus. The first one caused severe reactions to spectators and was vigorously disapproved. The ancient commentator actually writes in tragedy's hypothesis about the second Hippolytus: "...ἔστι δὲ οὗτος Ἴππόλυτος δεύτερος <ὁ> καὶ στεφανίας προσαγορευόμενος. ἐμφαίνεται δὲ ἕστερος γεγραμμένος. τὸ γὰρ ἀπρεπές καὶ κατηγορίας ἄξιον ἐν τούτῳ διώρθωται τῷ δράματι". On *Scholia Vetera* see Scharz (1887-1891, 2).

<sup>29</sup> Iacov (1982, 125) declares that in Hippolytus the revelation of Phaedra's secret coincides with the dramatic start.

<sup>30</sup> Mills (2002, 54).

<sup>31</sup> Several eminent scholars have dealt extensively with this issue. I quote some indicative references where the reader referring to them will be able to answer many questions about this issue: Kovacs (1980, 287-303), where the writer discusses Phaedra's *Aidos*; Dodds (1925, 102-4); Craik (1993, 45-59); Cairns (1993), where the writer researches the meaning of *Aidos* from Homer to Aristotle.

<sup>32</sup> Moreover Homer himself in *Il.* 24. (v.44) says that *Aidos* harms and benefits. *Aidos* is bad when someone due to fear of displeasing his/her friends hesitates to avoid something awful. This means that Phaedra, due to her shame, did not take preventions for her passion; for example she could request Hippolytus' removal or something similar. See Kontos (1940, 88).

<sup>33</sup> Kovacs (1980, 288). Kovacs cites Barrett's opinion.

<sup>34</sup> Mills (2002, 39).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Medea (v.1078-9): καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά,/ θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων. We see that Medea knows (μανθάνω) the right, socially acceptable, but the feeling of

γιγνώσκομεν,/ οὐκ ἐκπονοῦμεν δ'...(v.380-1). Here returns the motif of Phaedra's self-consciousness. Our heroine appears to be a woman who clearly understands the moral values and is ready to take drastic measures in order not to lose her honor.

Thereinafter, Phaedra herself presents the strong internal tension created between the choice to keep hidden and innermost her passion and the risk of a possible publication: *γλώσσηι γὰρ οὐδὲν πιστόν, ἢ θυραῖα μὲν φρονήματ' ἀνδρῶν νουθετεῖν ἐπίσταται, αὐτὴ δ' ὑφ' αὐτῆς πλεῖστα κέκτηται κακά* (v.395-7). Particularly the use of the term *θυραῖα* (= at the door) (v.395) indicates the transition from the private to the public life,<sup>36</sup> as the door was the one distinct partition between these two and coming out of it anything acquired public connotations. She recognizes that, once she has uttered outside the door the name of her lust, this shall take irreparably public character.

The crescendo of Phaedra's erotic illness is given in the phrase *κατθανεῖν ἔδοξέ μοι* (= I resolved on death) (v.401), where the heroine decides to commit suicide. The researchers are divided by Phaedra's statement. Some of them stress that she took this decision in order to salvage her honor by her own death. Other scholars declare that this is nothing more than a trick, i.e. Phaedra does not reveal her real motifs to her Nurse and seeks to get the latter on her side. However, this is not a trick because Phaedra feels she brings a miasma:<sup>37</sup> *φρῆν δ' ἔχει μίασμά τι* (v.317) from which she wants to be released at any cost and in any way, and as she knows the extreme power of love, she chooses the most extreme way for deliverance. Besides, as has been mentioned by Gasti,<sup>38</sup> "*death can bring a kind of purity*" from miasma. Additionally Euripides himself, remembering the failure of previous Phaedra's completely shameless presentation, attempts to break a potential horizon of expectations related to Phaedra's immoral image and not to exacerbate the spectators again.

Thereupon Phaedra herself evaluates her passion (v.405-6). Specifically she characterizes it shameful and sick: *τὸ δ' ἔργον ἤϊδη τὴν νόσον τε δυσκλεᾶ* (v.405). As previously mentioned, the νόσος (i.e. Phaedra's erotic passion, which actually is exceedance of the limits) makes the tragic heroine *δυσκλεῆ* (= infamous) and leads to Phaedra's social disapproval and denigration. The defamation and adultery do not correspond to her moral code. It is important to note that Phaedra is not anymore into delusions and seems to know the real situation in which she has involved herself. Even her comment *γυνή τε ... οὔσ'(α) .../ μίσημα πᾶσιν...* (v.406-7) can be corresponding to a previous Phaedra's character-presentation. It should be a playwright's comment concerning the image that spectators of ancient Greek tragedy had already formed about Phaedra.

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anger, which pervades her, does not allow her to "apply" it. Cf. also the above verses of Medea to (v.381-3) of Hippolytus, where Phaedra gives her explanation for people's inability to implement the right: *ἡδονή* or *ἀργία* in case of Phaedra, (*οἱ μὲν ἀργίας ὑπο,/ οἱ δ' ἡδονὴν προθέντες ἀντι τοῦ καλοῦ/ ἄλλην τιν'*) and *anger in Medea*.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Soph. *Electra* (v.518), where Clytemnestra responds to Electra: *μὴ τοι θυραῖαν γ' οὔσαν αἰσχύνειν φίλους* (= not to go out of the door and embarrass us). Clytemnestra accuses Electra because her lament, when the latter passes the limit of the door, takes public character and threatens Clytemnestra's public image. For Clytemnestra's interest in that image and external- public connotations of Electra's mourning see Gasti (2003, 122, n.11).

<sup>37</sup> More information about *Miasma* offers the article of Segal (1970, 317). Furthermore, about *Miasma* classical is still the book of Parker (<sup>2</sup>2001).

<sup>38</sup> Gasti (1993, 28). Also see Mitchell (1991, 97-122).



The heroine's passion seems to be even more moderated when she realizes the impact of her sin to her children's and her husband's honor (v.419-21). Once again the public assessment hampers everything illicit and illegal. We must notice the fact that the verb *αἰσχύνομαι* is used again in (v.420). Phaedra is not willing to give in to this powerful emotion, and the reason is the *kudos*/glory: *μητρὸς οὐνεκ' εὐκλεεῖς* (v.423). She believes that this illicit fury is capable of depriving the outspokenness of her children: *ἀλλ' ἐλεύθεροι/ παρρησίαι θάλλοντες...* (v.421-2). Phaedra believes that the social disapproval will have a hereditary continuity to her children. In the background of her thought lies the Athenians' attitude that the presence of women should be as limited as possible,<sup>39</sup> and the widespread belief that a man lacks his honor if disgrace touches the woman of his *oikos*.<sup>40</sup>

The Nurse in her effort to curb Phaedra goes to the other end. At first she considers the goddess of love as culpable: *ὄργαι δ' ἐς σ' ἀπέσκηψαν θεᾶς* (v.438), and then she equates Phaedra's passion to something normal, obscuring its exceptional character: *οὐ γὰρ περισσὸν οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἔξω λόγου/ πέπονθας...* (v.437-8). As Halleran emphasizes in the introduction of his *Hippolytus'* Commentary, Nurse's love and interest in Phaedra are the driving forces for her behavior.<sup>41</sup> On the other side, Nurse may fear that Venus will punish Phaedra if the latter does not give in what the goddess of love communicated to her, and she considers as impossible the resistance to this passion: *Κύπρις γὰρ οὐ φορητὸν ἦν πολλήρῳ ἦ/ ἢ τὸν μὲν εἶκονθ' ἡσυχῆι μετέρχεται* (v.443-4). It is notable that the Nurse is "designed" to save Phaedra's life.<sup>42</sup> Euripides uses the Nurse for the accomplishment of dramatic purposes, i.e. as a "vehicle" to advance the dramatic action.

While Hippolytus has already learned the truth from the Nurse and has strongly reacted, Phaedra reintroduces the issue of the shame (v.687-8). Now the public aspect of her passion is finite. She feels ashamed and she thinks she will die with a non-honorable name: *σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέσχου • τοιγὰρ οὐκέτ' εὐκλεεῖς/ θανούμεθ(α)*. Another point we need to comment on the above passage is the phrase *οὐκέτ' εὐκλεεῖς* (v.687). This designation is the last evaluative judgment for Phaedra's passion by herself. Also, the fact that she uses plural form instead of singular, and she could do it without disturbing the metric,<sup>43</sup> refers to the social disapproval of her children, due to her acts.

In (v.689-92) Phaedra fears that Hippolytus will speak and then the shame, due to her passion, will become enormous: *πλήσει τε πᾶσαν γαῖαν αἰσχίστων λόγων* (v.692). The *λόγοι* (=tales) will be *αἰσχιστοί* because they will stain our heroine's public image and her genus's. The reason why the protagonist is worried is Hippolytus' hints; specifically in (v.611-2),<sup>44</sup> in (v.658)<sup>45</sup> and in (v.660).<sup>46</sup> Hippolytus seems to intend to default the oath he gave to the Nurse inside the palace

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Thuc., 2.45.2.

<sup>40</sup> More specifically see Segal (1993, 91).

<sup>41</sup> Halleran (2000, 41).

<sup>42</sup> Knox (1968, 95).

<sup>43</sup> Indeed, if Euripides instead of *εὐκλεεῖς* wrote *εὐκλεής*, (= glory, honorable) there would be no metric disorder: - U- - U- *εὐκλεεῖς εὐκλεής*.

<sup>44</sup> Nurs. *ὦ τέκνον, ὄρκους μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσεις/ Hipp. ἡ γλῶσσ' ὁμώμοχ', ἡ δὲ φρήν ἀνώμοτος*. According to Bayliss (2014, 246), "This line ... seems on first reading to advocate the breaking of an oath". See also Lattimore (1962, 10): "the first fatal sentence made her sure that Hippolytus would break his oath".

<sup>45</sup> *οὐκ ἄν ποτ' ἔσχον μὴ οὐ τάδ' ἐξεπεῖν πατρί*.

<sup>46</sup> *Θησεύς, ἄπειμι, σῖγα δ' ἔξομεν στόμα*.

to keep secret what Nurse said to him. After these hints Phaedra feels threatened, as Lattimore<sup>47</sup> stresses in his article about Hippolytus.

The Hippolytus' bias towards women and the specific fear he creates are responsible for Phaedra's moral deterioration.<sup>48</sup> In the Roman version of the tragedy the pain and the dolor affect Phaedra physically and spiritually. According to Dupont, the pain awakes the heroine's desire for revenge. She wishes to punish the guilty in order to regain her lost identity.<sup>49</sup> In Euripides, however, there is the disruption of Phaedra's ideals,<sup>50</sup> and the circumvention of the pleasure of the public plaudit. This circumvention leads Phaedra to have the tendency to revenge Hippolytus.

Remarkable is Phaedra's phrase *δεῖ με δὴ καινῶν λόγων* (v.688). The term *λόγος* refers to tragic heroine's inciting. Phaedra will act immoral and we understand that it is the letter she will leave to Theseus, but this shamelessness is due to the internal battle between the Phaedra's original nature (indicators are identified in v.377-423) and the nature created by Venus.<sup>51</sup>

The passion has been eliminated and replaced by Phaedra's vindictive inclination. In (v.721) an ambiguity is observed. Phaedra announces she will never see Theseus again. In the next Phaedra's phrase: *αἰσχροῖς ἐπ' ἔργοις οὐνεκα ψυχῆς μιᾶς* (v.721) we do not really know to whom the term *ψυχῆς* refers. Possibly Phaedra hints Hippolytus' life<sup>52</sup> who will be punished -but of course she does not still know his exact punishment- by his own death. This is clear in a few verses below. In (v.728-31) the heroine says she will avenge Hippolytus. And according to Reckford,<sup>53</sup> Phaedra believes she will ensure a good reputation and gain the added benefit of her current enemy's destroying: *ἀτὰρ κακόν γε χιτῆρι γενήσομαι/ θανοῦσ', ἔν' εἰδῆι μὴ 'πι τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς/ ὑψηλὸς εἶναι...* (v.728-30).

At the end of the tragedy Hippolytus is transferred on stage minced by his horses after his father, misguided by Phaedra's letter, had cursed him. Then we have Artemis' divine appearance (v.1282), who acquits Phaedra: *γνώμηι δὲ νικᾶν τὴν Κύπριν πειρωμένη/ τροφοῦ διώλετ' οὐχ ἔκοῦσα μηχαναῖς* (v.1304-5). The goddess shares the responsibility between Venus and Nurse. And Venus' responsibility is repeated by Artemis: *ἐξηπατήθη δαίμονος βουλευμασιν* (v.1406). The fact that Euripides uses Artemis to seal Venus' responsibility and no way Phaedra's acts as a counterweight to the earlier Phaedra's shameless presentation in first Hippolytus.<sup>54</sup>

Conclusively this paper aimed to prove by presenting the course of heroine's erotic passion that Euripides did not "shape" a completely shameless Phaedra. Since the beginning of the play Venus announces to us that Phaedra will not miss her honor: *ἡ δ' εὐκλεῆς μὲν ἀλλ' ὄμως*

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<sup>47</sup> Lattimore (1962).

<sup>48</sup> See Reckford (1974, 307-28).

<sup>49</sup> See Dupont (2003, 229-30). Unfortunately we did not find the original French text of Dupont (1985). Therefore we used the Greek translation of her book.

<sup>50</sup> Kovacs (1987, 71) stresses that Hippolytus threatens to disturb Phaedra's values and ideals and that fact gives push to Venus, who this time will be based on Phaedra's real nature and not in this she breathed to our heroine, to use Phaedra as a way of filling punishment.

<sup>51</sup> For the distinction between the two natures see Lattimore (1962, 10-1).

<sup>52</sup> Iacov (1982, 179) states about (v.729) that this phrase is addressed to an opponent.

<sup>53</sup> Reckford (1974, 325 and 316).

<sup>54</sup> We know that Sophocles wrote a tragedy based on the same myth, which he named Phaedra, and that tragedy shows how he could handle in a different way the Euripidean theme of a woman's erotic passion. About this issue see Griffin (1990, 128-49).

ἀπόλλυται / Φαίδρα... (v.47-8).<sup>55</sup> It seems that the tragic heroine does not have the features for which Euripides was accused in the first Hippolytus.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> According to Fergusson (1984, 48) in this passage the word εὐκλεής is charged with irony as εὐκλεία is more closely intertwined with Artemis' virtues and not Venus'. Also different types of this word can be found in (v.405), (v.423), (v.489), (v.687), (v.717).

<sup>56</sup> Reckford (1974, 307).

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