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SOUNDS AND SUFFERING IN SOPHOCLES' *PHILOCTETES* AND GIDE'S *PHILOCTÈTE* [*]

Late in his career, at the end of the fifth century BC, Sophocles centered an entire play on a hero in pain: his *Philoctetes.* As I will show below, the representation of pain in the play focuses to a large degree on the portrayal of the different possible human responses to it. Within the limits of the present paper [1], I concentrate on the *parodos*, in which the Chorus provides a complex description of the sounds that Philoctetes makes in his suffering [2]. By contrasting the choral depiction with the one presented by Odysseus at the start of the play, I submit that Sophocles uses the sounds of Philoctetes' pain and the reactions that they elicit as a means of mapping and implicitly ranking the discrete ethical dispositions of those who witness his suffering according to their responses. In the following section of the paper, I turn to André Gide's adaptation of Sophocles' *Philoctetes* in his philosophical treatise, *Philoctète*. Specifically, I analyze how he reuses the Sophoclean "sound effects" (defined above) extensively, also in order to differentiate between his characters and their respective values. While the poetic tools that Gide uses are clearly borrowed from his Greek model, his adaptation ultimately invites

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[*] Throughout this paper, I follow Avezzù's text (Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003). My translation of passages from Sophocles' *Philoctetes* is largely based on Lloyd-Jones' (Lloyd-Jones 1994). I would like to thank all those present at the Sophocles conference at the University of Torino in October 2010 for providing me with valuable feedback when I presented them with an earlier, oral version of the present paper, and would like to give special thanks to the organizers, Giulio Guidorizzi, Lowell Edmunds, and Bob Wallace.

[1] I explore the role of sounds in portraying the social dimensions of the eponymous hero's suffering throughout *Philoctetes* more extensively in a forthcoming monograph.

[2] Inoue 1979 offers a short discussion of a sound word at the beginning of the *Philoctetes*; she does not consider the *parodos*.

its reader to reach an entirely different conclusion regarding what constitutes the ideal relationship of the individual to his community and to humanity as a whole.

The plot of the *Philoctetes* is well known: on the way to Troy, the nymph Chryse inflicted a serpent bite on the eponymous hero's foot because of an inadvertent transgression on his part [3]. The wound festered ceaselessly from that point on, tormenting him with intermittent bouts of intense pain [4]. Because the symptoms of his suffering were (allegedly) disruptive to the proper functioning of the rest of the community, the Greeks opted to abandon Philoctetes on nearby Lemnos while they continued on to Troy [5]. Subsequently, however, they hear from the Trojan seer Helenus that Priam's city will only fall if Philoctetes rejoins their ranks, equipped with the bow he has received from Heracles [6]. In response, Odysseus hatches the following plan: that Achilles' young son Neoptolemus should befriend and beguile the abandoned hero with a false account of his own betrayal at the hands of the Greeks, and thereby entice him to board his ship, under the pretense of providing him a safe journey to his home in Malis.

The eponymous character's shouts of agony in the central scene of the tragedy (lines 730 ff.) have received much attention [7]; yet his pain is actually voiced early on, in an indirect and unexpected manner. In the *parodos*, the Chorus of sailors and Achilles' son are standing by Philoctetes' cave in his absence [8]. They observe his environment and envision the desperately solitary life he has been forced to lead since being abandoned ten

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[3] See lines 191-200 and 260-267.

[4] Witness the scene of Philoctetes' climactic pain towards the middle of the play, lines 730-820.

[5] See lines 1-11 and 889-892.

[6] See lines 603-621. Lines 66-69 expressly state that Neoptolemus must have Philoctetes' bow in his possession, but the oracle is ambiguous regarding whether Philoctetes himself, or just his bow, are necessary for the Greeks to conquer Troy (see e.g., Gill 1980 and Roberts 1989).

[7] On Philoctetes' shouts and the depiction of his pain more broadly in that central scene, see for instance Segal 1981: 292-361, Blundell 1989, Worman 2000, Pucci in Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003: 245-253 *ad loc.*, Budelmann 2006, and Nooter 2012: 124-146.

[8] The *parodos* is a "shared *parodos*" (see Kitzinger 2008: 80 ff.): it consists of several exchanges between the Chorus (in sung stanzas) and Neoptolemus (in anapests). After convincing Achilles' son to enact his plan, Odysseus has exited the scene, for fear Philoctetes may recognize him.

years prior [9]. Neoptolemus is quick to dismiss Philoctetes' suffering at this early point in the play with the help of the hastily reached assumption that it must have been willed by the gods [10]. The Chorus members, on the other hand, experience a powerful emotional reaction in response to visual evidence of the wretched lifestyle that Philoctetes has been forced to lead [11]. Their emotion increases as they begin to hear his cries [12], at which point they launch into what Austin calls "the longest ode in all of Greek poetry dedicated to a single sound" [13]. I begin with the strophe (lines 201-209):

ΣΤΡ.
Χο. εὔστομ᾽ ἔχε, παῖ
Νε. τί τόδε; Χο. προὐφάνη κτύπος,
φωτὸς σύντροφος ὡς τειρομένου ⟨του⟩,
ἤ που τῇδ᾽ ἢ τῇδε τόπων.
βάλλει, βάλλει μ᾽ ἐτύμα φθογγά
του στίβον κατ᾽ ἀνάγκαν
ἕρποντος, οὐδέ με λάθει
βαρεῖα τηλόθεν αὐδὰ
τρυσάνωρ· διάσημα γὰρ θροεῖ [14].

Cho. Be quiet, boy.
Neo. What is it?
Cho. A sound appeared —
One that sounds like the companion of a man in distress —
this way, I think, or that.

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[9] See lines 150-200. Philoctetes' isolation is a central motif throughout the play; see e.g., Biggs 1966, Rose 1976, and Nussbaum 1999, Worman 2000, and Goldhill 2012 (esp. 124-125).

[10] I return to this below. Neoptolemus' reference to divine sanction (lines 191-200) is, perhaps, a sign that he is trying to stifle his scruples: see Kitto 1956: 111-112; Gardiner 1987: 18.

[11] See lines 150-200. The Chorus believes that Philoctetes' suffering is undeserved, and therefore worthy of its pity: see Kitzinger 2008:76, with a discussion of Aristotle *Rh.* 2.8, 1385b 13-16. Konstan offers an overview of Aristotle's views on pity and pain (Konstan 2001: 128-136); see also Konstan 2006: 201-218. Sandridge 2008 uses the convenient notion of "merit-based pity" in reference to the Aristotelian definition of pity, according to which the victim of a misfortune can only be pitied if she is undeserving of her fate.

[12] On the role of the senses, and sight and sound in particular, in eliciting pity, see note 16.

[13] Austin 2011: 86 ff.

[14] The variant θρηνεῖ ("he is singing a dirge") is adopted by some editions; see e.g., Lloyd-Jones, Wilson 1990.

> It strikes me, it strikes me! The true
> voice of one who treads along his path under constraint, and the burdensome cry from far off of a man in distress… it does not escape me:
> clearly he is uttering a lament.

While in the climactic pain scene at the center of the play, the protagonist's cries and physical collapse are what convey the extremity of his suffering to Neoptolemus and the audience [15], in this first encounter, Sophocles introduces Philoctetes' pain by steering the audience's attention toward his cries' effects on the internal audience. Neither the Chorus members nor the audience can see the hero at this point. While sight often plays the prominent role in eliciting pity (in tragedy as well as in other genres) [16], here, it is elicited primarily by sounds [17], as pity takes hold of the sailors before Philoctetes even comes on stage. We have no indication (such as stage directions or internal references made by the Chorus) enabling us to know whether any sounds were actually produced offstage for the audience to hear [18]. It is likely that the audience is presented with the Chorus's song itself, and no more [19].

Indirect though it is, this first impression of Philoctetes in his suffering is remarkably vivid. The Chorus members' description conveys the severity

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[15] See lines 730-820.

[16] The sailors express a nascent feeling of pity already a few lines earlier, on seeing the *visual* evidence of the miserable and isolated existence Philoctetes has been leading (see lines 169-190). While scholars have debated the sincerity of this pity, Kitzinger's arguments for taking the pity at face value are compelling (see Kitzinger 2008: 75 note 13). On the role of the senses, and sight in particular, in provoking pity, already pointed up by Aristotle (*Rh.* 2.8, 1386a 34), see Sternberg 2005: 25-43.

[17] In her discussion of the role of "hearing" alongside seeing in provoking pity, Sternberg uses "hearing" to refer to the pitier's perception of articulate and intelligible speech (*logos*) – not sounds and inarticulate cries, as we have here (Sternberg 2005: 25-36).

[18] On internal references to sounds offstage and onstage in Greek tragedy, see Edmunds 2002 (regarding Aeschylus' *Septem*). Seidensticker 2006: 106 ff. discusses the use of cries offstage and onstage in Greek tragedy as a means of depicting violent actions unfit for the stage.

[19] The production of cries offstage is not necessary and would likely detract from the Chorus's powerful words themselves. It is tempting to imagine that some form of musical accompaniment to the Chorus's song, by adopting a certain cadence or pitch, might have stood in for Philoctetes' cries; but this can only remain speculative.

of Philoctetes' pain as the sounds' impact on them is foregrounded. In so doing, they provide the audience with an emotional lens and guide through which the hero's pain is made apparent in all its harshness [20]. From κτύπος to φθογγά to αὐδά to θροεῖ, the succession of terms that the sailors use to describe what they hear simultaneously contributes to characterize the Chorus members as deeply compassionate, by reflecting their growing feeling of pity as Philoctetes draws nearer [21]. It is worth pausing to analyze the small but significant shift that each term introduces in relation to the one preceding it.

The choral description begins with a remarkable synaesthesia that conveys the sailors' surprise at what they hear (προὐφάνη κτύπος, "a sound *appeared*") – a twist almost unique in its metaphorical density [22]. The initial noun used here, κτύπος, typically designates any sound produced by an inanimate source (the beating of horses' hooves, a clap of thunder, the rumor of a brook, a knock on a door). A notable shift follows with the term φθογγά, whereby the sailors indicate that what they are hearing

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[20] For an overview of the use of the Chorus as internal audience and model for the external audience, in the context of a broader critical discussion of the political function of tragic performances in classical Athens, see Murnaghan 2012 (esp. 224-232), with relevant bibliography. On Sophoclean choruses and Sophocles' dramatic technique in general, see e.g., Burton 1980 and Gardiner 1987. The social, ethical, and political role of pity within Greek tragedy has been amply discussed; see e.g., Lada-Richards 1993, Sternberg 2005 and Visvardi 2007: 163-197, each with bibliography. The moral questions at the core of the *Philoctetes* are narrowly intertwined with the emotional process through which Neoptolemus is morally educated over the course of the play; see e.g., Knox 1964, Alt 1967: 122 ff., Whitman 1951: 175 ff., Nussbaum 1976, 1992, 1999, Blundell 1987, 1988, and 1989, Aultman-Moore 1994, Hawkins 1999, Worman 2000, Konstan 2001, Fulkerson 2006, Visvardi 2007, Apfel 2011, and Austin 2011.

[21] The Chorus does not continue in this sympathetic vein throughout the play, however. The very next time it sings, its song is a false oath designed to help trick Philoctetes into believing Neoptolemus' fabricated account of how Odysseus and the Atreids cheated him out of Achilles' armor (lines 391-402). Concerning the oath, see Bers 1981. On the Chorus's multiple identities and the related question of its share in the action of Sophocles' extant plays, see Murnaghan 2012: 220-235; on its shifting role in the *Philoctetes,* including as "a character" that highlights some important characteristics of the main actors, see Kitzinger 2008: 71-135.

[22] To my knowledge, there is only one other instance of synaesthesia to be found in Greek tragedy, in Aeschylus' *Septem.* It also occurs in the *parodos*. The Chorus, on hearing the shouts and clatter of armor of the Argive army, declares (line 103): κτύπον δέδορκα, "I see the clatter". For a discussion of the latter passage, see Edmunds 2002: 107 ff.

is, unmistakably, a voice (ἐτύμα φθογγά)[23] – that is, a sound uttered by a sentient being. It is a voice, moreover, that clearly communicates the pain of the one producing it (του στίβον κατ᾽ ἀνάγκαν ἕρποντος). The progression continues with αὐδά (βαρεῖα τηλόθεν αὐδὰ τρυσάνωρ), a term that is used strictly in reference to the *human* voice, and, on occasion, to song[24]. The shift from φθογγά to αὐδά marks the crucial moment in which the Chorus members perceive the human being behind the sounds they are hearing, even as they are reminded of their own vulnerability by his wretched condition[25].

Accompanying the progression in the terminology used by the sailors to describe Philoctetes' cries are semantic and metaphorical shifts that indicate their increasingly powerful impact. After the sound of his cries "appears" to them, his voice "strikes" them (βάλλει βάλλει μ᾽ ἐτύμα φθογγά)[26]. The web of metaphors has broadened. From sight and sound, it has expanded to include touch, with the emphatically positioned and

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[23] Φθογγά commonly designates sounds (including a voice) produced by *animate* beings, whether human or animal. Nooter also notes the gradual humanization of Philoctetes' voice here (Nooter 2012: 126-127).

[24] See Krapp 1964: 24 regarding the highly specific semantic range of αὐδή in Homeric poetry. Both Clay and Ford (Clay 1974: 131 ff.; Ford 1992: 174-179) note that the use of αὐδή in Homer is reserved for mortals; it distinguishes humanly intelligible utterances from animal noises and divine speeches alike. The use of the term αὐδή here points up the cries' ability to establish a form of communication between the sufferer and his witnesses, despite the fact that no articulate speech is perceived. Segal's observations regarding the scene of Philoctetes' onstage agony hold true for the present passage as well: his "broken cries imply a kind of natural language, reduced to the level of bestial howl but at least free of manipulative rationalism" that "in its very rawness and wildness … *can touch a chord of instinctive communication*" (Segal 1981: 333-335; italics mine for emphasis).

[25] Earlier, the Chorus explains that its pity is based on the understanding that the suffering of any mortal is (potentially) shared by all human beings, because of the vulnerability inherent to the human condition: see lines 177-179. On the pitier's perception of his own vulnerability in relation to the fate of the pitied, see Aristotle *Rh.* 2.8, 1385b 13-16. Cf. Johnson and Clapp: "Compassion … is premised on an understanding of the common inheritance of suffering shared by all human beings" (Johnson, Clapp 2005: 127). The Chorus's expression of pity for Philoctetes thus constitutes an acknowledgment of their shared humanity.

[26] On the ancient Greeks' conception of pity as an emotion that stems from an external source and "enters into" the pitier, see Sternberg (2005) 37-40; cf. Herder on the ability of a plaintive tone to "cut through the organs of [the listener's] body … like an arrow" (quoted below n. 27).

twice repeated verb βάλλει. The image (along with the alliteration in labial occlusives) contributes to give the otherwise invisible pain of the hero a concrete, almost tangible existence: by saying that the sound "strikes" them, the Chorus members make the audience picture the sound traveling from the sufferer to the sailors like a weapon [27]. The language suggests that the cries' impact is so powerful that it causes the witnesses to experience pain themselves in turn, metaphorically if not literally [28] – a most evocative expression of pity [29]. The audience's impression of the

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[27] In his *Essay on the Origin of Language* ("Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache", first published in 1772), the eighteenth-century German philosopher Herder questions the notion of a radical opposition between human language and primeval cries. (He has Greek tragedy in mind: *Philoctetes* is specifically mentioned at the beginning of his essay.) Herder places the inarticulate cry within the system of language precisely *because of its power to elicit strong emotions:* "Wer ists, dem bei einem zuckenden, wimmernden Gequälten, bei einem ächzenden Sterbenden, auch selbst bei einem stöhnenden Vieh, wenn seine ganze Maschine leidet, dies Ach nicht zu Herzen dringe?" ("Who is he who – in the presence of a convulsive whimpering victim of torment, at the bedside of a moaning fellow in the throes of death … when the entire machinery of his body suffers, does not feel how this Ah touches his heart?"). He goes on to challenge Diderot's allegation that the blind are less receptive to pain by emphasizing the power of sounds to elicit pity: "jeder Klageton geht ihm um so inniger und schärfer, wie ein Pfeil, zum Herzen! … Grausen und Schmerz fährt durch seine Glieder" ("… every plaintive tone, like an arrow, goes the more keenly, the more penetratingly to his heart! … Horror and pain cut through the organs of his body" (Herder 1987: esp. 260-261). For more on Herder's reflections and their relevance to *Philoctetes*, see Weissberg 1989, with bibliography.

[28] Compare the terms used by Philoctetes himself to describe the pain's progressive invasion of his body, which denote piercing, penetration, and violation of his physical integrity (see lines 742-746 and 785-792, and Worman 2000). Pucci in Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003: 187-188 *ad loc.* points up the etymological relationship between τείρω, the verb used to describe how the sufferer himself is "pierced" (τειρόμενος) with pain, and the epithet τρυσάνωρ (from τρύω) that describes his voice. The latter offers two potential meanings: a subjective one ("che dice il dolore di un uomo") and an objective one ("che addolora un uomo", which applies to the pain's effect on the Chorus).

[29] The line between sympathetic identification (the pitier experiencing just what the pitied is enduring) and pity as defined by Aristotle (which involves pain solely because of the expectation of harm to oneself) seems to me to be a very fine one here. On the above distinction (as established by Aristotle), see Konstan 2001: 128-136. Stanford's translation of the Greek concept of οἶκτος (which is the term used by the Chorus in this play, along with related verbs, when it expresses pity) as "compassionate grief" is more appropriate than our English term "pity", with its inadequately demeaning connotations (Stanford 1983: 24). On the various Greek words for pity, see also Burkert 1955. For a discussion of our modern notion of "pity" in relation to the

affective power of Philoctetes' cries reaches a culminating point at the close of the strophe when, though no actual words are articulated, the sailors come to perceive the sounds emitted by him as a quintessentially human song of suffering: what they are hearing, they say, is a distinct lament (διάσημα γὰρ θροεῖ) [30].

We see from the Chorus's description that Philoctetes' inarticulate cries are neither inhuman nor incapable of establishing communication ("infected" though he and his language may be by his disease [31]); rather, they are ambivalent, "so human yet so inhuman" [32]. His cries have the capacity to touch his fellow Greeks by "remind[ing] both character and audience … of Philoctetes' essential humanity" [33]. Whether they do so or not depends on who is listening to him. Odysseus' very different perception and portrayal of the same cries, to which I turn below, is a testament of the

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Greek words ἔλεος and οἶκτος, see Johnson 1980: 1-9, Konstan 2001, and Johnson, Clapp 2005: 154-155. Regarding pity and compassion in the *Philoctetes* in particular, see Konstan 2001: 51-54.

[30] The text here is disputed. Avezzù retains the manuscripts' γὰρ θροεῖ and Cerri translates, "è distinto il lamento" (for both, see Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003: 32, *ad* 209.) The variant θρηνεῖ (the poetical term for mourning, as noted by Nooter 2012: 126), adopted by Lloyd-Jones, Wilson following Dindorf's conjecture, also denotes a lament (see Lloyd-Jones, Wilson 1990: *ad loc.*). Θροεῖν appears as a variant for θρηνεῖν at *Aj.* 582.

[31] On the degree to which Philoctetes' disease "infects" his language, see Worman 2000. The Chorus's ability to distinguish his humanity marks a stark contrast to Odysseus' and Neoptolemus' descriptions of Philoctetes' living conditions, both of which include language that associates the sufferer with beasts: see lines 26-49 and Buxton 1982: 118-120. There is recurrent imagery throughout the *Philoctetes* that portrays the eponymous hero's disease as a beast that perpetually threatens his very humanity (see Worman 2000 and Terasse 2001), including in Philoctetes' own words (for example lines 785-788).

[32] Austin 2011: 87. I agree with Austin that the cries always contain a kernel of humanity. See also Segal's assessment of the power of Philoctetes' cries over Neoptolemus in the scene of his onstage agony, which applies to the present passage as well: "Those terrible bestial shrieks in fact are the first steps toward a genuine human communication. When he hears these cries, Neoptolemus must confront the reality of what he is doing to a fellow human being, never more human than when he lies … in agony" (Segal 1981: 335). Knox and Podlecki, on the other hand, lay too much stress on "the obliteration of all traces of humanity" in Philoctetes' cries in the same climactic pain scene (above quote from Knox 1964: 131; Podlecki 1966: 235).

[33] Nussbaum 1999: 268 (Nussbaum is making reference to Philoctetes' articulate language, however). Nooter discusses Philoctetes' growing poetic ability and lyricism as the play progresses: Nooter 2012: 124-146; my point here is to draw attention to the power of his inarticulate cries as well.

degree to which the cries' pitiable nature is determined by the perceiver, and makes the Chorus's compassionate disposition here all the more distinctive. With its song, the Chorus presents a model of humane and moral behavior that Neoptolemus will eventually follow at a later point in the play. His subsequent change of heart is of considerable importance, as it bears on Philoctetes' fate: it is Neoptolemus' pity for Philoctetes that eventually leads him to reveal the Greeks' plot to the hero and return the bow to him. This may explain Sophocles' choice to feature the sailors' compassionate response so prominently [34]. The more the Chorus members perceive the human component in the voice of the suffering hero, the more their song humanizes him in the audience's eyes [35]. At the same time, the more they reveal a growing feeling of pity toward him, the more their own humane disposition becomes manifest [36]. The depiction of the hero's pain thus also functions as an effective mode of characterization of the Chorus members themselves [37].

Throughout the *parodos*, the Chorus members are singing – even as they describe Philoctetes' cries as a form of song. When they feel his pain "striking" them, their song *about* pain becomes a song *of* pain; Philoctetes' lament (if not his actual suffering) becomes their own. As the Chorus becomes a mouthpiece for the sufferer and sings its "lamentation for Philoctetes' suffering" [38], the painful, and possibly even sympathetic nature of their emerging feeling of pity is reflected by the fact that their mode of expression is the same as his.

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[34] At this early point in the play, however, Neoptolemus remains under the influence of Odysseus, and continues to give priority to glory over honor (see Odysseus' seductive argumentation, lines 81-85 and 96-119).

[35] Nussbaum believes that by singing his misery, the sailors are "putting Philoctetes back into the human community" (Nussbaum 1999: 259). Though it experiences pity, the Chorus does not take any action as a result, in part because of its choral status: see Gardiner 1987: 18, Blundell 1989: 195, and Kitzinger 2008: 82. On pity and action, see Sternberg 2005.

[36] Aristotle emphasizes the evaluative dimension of pity, and points up the fact that it is characteristic of good people; see Konstan 2001: 128-133.

[37] I disagree with Burton's division of the *parodos*. According to his reading, lines 169-190 convey pity, while those that follow mark a "return to alert suspense" and "action" (Burton 1980: 227-231). The Chorus does regard Philoctetes with some wariness (see line 136, expressing distrust, and line 156, expressing dread at potential hostility); but there are constant variations in the Chorus's mood throughout the *parodos*, and pity dominates throughout the lines just examined.

[38] Austin 2011: 84.

In the antistrophe, Sophocles continues to make the sailors' perception of the sounds produced by Philoctetes in his pain a central point of focus (lines 210-218):

ANT.
Χο. ἀλλ᾽ ἔχε, τέκνον.
Νε. λέγ᾽ ὅ τι.

Χο. φροντίδας νέας·
ὡς οὐκ ἔξεδρος, ἀλλ᾽ ἔντοπος ἀνήρ,
οὐ μολπὰν σύριγγος ἔχων,
ὡς ποιμὴν ἀγροβάτας, ἀλλ᾽ ἤ
που πταίων ὑπ᾽ ἀνάγκας
βοᾷ τηλωπὸν ἰωάν,
ἢ ναὸς ἄξενον αὐγά-
ζων ὅρμον· προβοᾷ γὰρ αἴλινον[39].

ANT.
Cho. But take, my son….
Neo.What?! Tell me!
Cho. New counsels!
For he is not far from home; no, the man is in this very place -
not playing the music of Pan's pipe
as would a shepherd roaming the wild;
but stumbling, rather,
he cries out a far-sounding scream…
either under some sort of constraint,
or because he can see the harbor that is hostile to any ship's anchorage;
for he is crying out a dirge.

Here, the sailors attempt to define what they are hearing through a negative simile that describes what Philoctetes does *not* sound like: οὐ μολπὰν σύριγγος ἔχων, ὡς ποιμὴν ἀγροβάτας ("not playing the music of Pan's pipe, as would a shepherd roaming the wild"); rather, he is "crying

[39] The text of this line poses metrical problems: τι δεινόν does not offer exact responsion with the corresponding line in the strophe as it appears in the manuscripts (line 208, ending with θροεῖ). Avezzù follows Lachmann's emendation of the manuscripts' τι δεινόν in favor of αἴλινον: προβοᾷ γὰρ αἴλινον (Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003: 32). Others (see Lloyd-Jones, Wilson 1990: 183-184) prefer the alternative προβοᾷ τι δεινόν (or τι γὰρ δεινόν· Jebb 1898).

out a dirge/a terrible shout" (προβοᾷ γὰρ αἴλινον/ τι δεινόν) [40]. The purpose of the extended negative simile is not to compare the figure of the shepherd with that of the hero *per se*, but to contrast the different types of sounds that they produce. The cheerful music played by an errant shepherd (an early pastoral motif [41]) serves as a foil to the desperate note at the core of the suffering man's cries [42].

Lachmann's conjecture αἴλινον (line 218) is appealing: it contributes to portraying Philoctetes' tone as pathetic, while also continuing the motif introduced at the close of the preceding strophe, where the Chorus concludes that it is hearing a lament – that is, that Philoctetes' cries are a form of plaintive song [43]. If the conjecture αἴλινον is adopted, the strophe ends on a very different note from the one struck by the manuscripts' τι δεινόν. Such an ending would indicate an abrupt shift in the Chorus's stance, from pity for the sufferer to fear of him, and from a strong sense of identification with him to one of distance and alienation

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[40] On the problematic nature of the text here, see above. The rather enigmatic comparison has perplexed scholars. Some (e.g., Segal 1981: 297 ff. and Pucci in Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003: 188 *ad loc.*) take the description of the wanderer producing the "music of Pan's pipes" (μολπὰν σύριγγος) as separate from, and intended to form a contrast with, the following line (ὡς ποιμὴν ἀγροβάτας), which they believe is meant to underscore Philoctetes' wildness (ἀγροβάτας would be a reference to his savage allure and gait). It is true that Philoctetes has come to identify with his wild environment and its beasts (he lives among animals, lines 184-185) as a result of his loneliness and disease (on the sense of alienation and dehumanization that stems from this isolation, see Kamerbeek 1948, Biggs 1966: 232 ff., Knox 1964: 117 ff., Segal 1981: 292ff. and 470, and Taplin 1987); but lines 213 and 214 function together, and both designate the shepherd of the simile.

[41] In Homer already, the syrinx (or pan-pipe) is played by two shepherds (*Od.* XVIII.526).

[42] The insistence on the difficulty with which Philoctetes moves about, which is mentioned twice, corroborates the audience's sense of his deplorable condition (κατ' ἀνάγκαν ἕρποντος in the strophe, and πταίων ὑπ' ἀνάγκας βοᾷ in the antistrophe).

[43] In her discussion of the Linos song and of its connections with lament, Alexiou points to the fact that the αἴλινος is a cry of a dual nature: the term can refer to a cry of grief, or to one of joy and victory (Alexiou 2002: 57 and 218, note 10). Nooter notes that the epic term ἰωάν ιν the antistrophe (line 216) further characterizes Philoctetes' cry as "lament itself" (Nooter 2012: 126-127). Pucci's translation of the ending of both strophe and antistrophe reflects the thematic continuity that is maintained if the hypothesis αἴλινον is correct: διάσημα γάρ θροεῖ, "è distinto *il lamento*", and προβοᾷ γὰρ αἴλινον, "intona proprio un lamento!" (Pucci in Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003: 31-33, *ad loc.*).

from him – just before Philoctetes enters the stage [44]. The conjecture αἴλινον, on the other hand, emphasizes to the very end of the choral song the human note that the Chorus members perceive at the heart of Philoctetes' cries and the compassionate nature of their response. It is not to be excluded, however, that the Chorus's reaction to Philoctetes should in the end be ambivalent and injected with some degree of wariness at the key moment that precedes his entrance on stage. Though rapid, such a radical change would not be implausible given how inconstant the Chorus proves to be throughout the rest of the tragedy: see note 21. For more on the significance of δεινόν (if the choral ode does end in this way), see Austin 2011: 86-87. If there is such an evolution in the Chorus's perception of Philoctetes' cries, it would further emphasize the fickle nature of the sailors.

The description provided by the Chorus in the *parodos* stands in stark and telling contrast to Odysseus' earlier description of Philoctetes' cries in the opening lines of the play (lines 1-12):

> ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
> Ἀκτὴ μὲν ἥδε τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς
> Λήμνου, βροτοῖς ἄστιπτος οὐδ' οἰκουμένη,
> ἔνθ', ὦ κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἑλλήνων τραφεὶς
> Ἀχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε, τὸν Μηλιᾶ
> Ποίαντος υἱὸν ἐξέθηκ' ἐγώ ποτε-
> ταχθεὶς τόδ' ἔρδειν τῶν ἀνασσόντων ὕπο-
> νόσῳ καταστάζοντα διαβόρῳ πόδα·
> ὅτ' οὔτε λοιβῆς ἡμὶν οὔτε θυμάτων
> παρῆν ἐκήλοις προσθιγεῖν, ἀλλ' ἀγρίαις
> κατεῖχ' ἀεὶ πᾶν στρατόπεδον δυσφημίαις,
> βοῶν, ἰύζων. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τί δεῖ
> λέγειν;
>
> Odysseus:
> This is the shore of the sea-girt land of
> Lemnos, untrodden by mortals and uninhabited.
> Here it was, Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, you who were reared
> as the son of the noblest father among the Greeks, that I once

[44] If the Chorus is indeed expressing fear here, it is immediately proven wrong, if not ridiculed, by Philoctetes' warm enthusiasm as he greets his fellow Greeks (lines 219 ff.).

> put ashore the Malian, son of Poeas – I was ordered to do this by those in command – whose foot was oozing from a disease that was eating it away; for we could not pour libations nor sacrifice in peace: he filled the entire camp with savage, ill-omened cries, screaming and shouting. But why must I
> speak of these things?

Odysseus begins his account of the abandonment of Philoctetes with a rather idyllic description of the island (τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς Λήμνου, the sea-girt land of Lemnos) [45] before going on to portray the wound on Philoctetes' foot in terms that make it sound repulsive (it oozes, καταστάζοντα) and associate his disease, and hence the sufferer it afflicts, with the animal realm (διαβόρῳ: the disease "devours" him) [46]. Of particular interest to me here is his description of the sounds Philoctetes produced as a result of his wound. In his pain, he claims, Philoctetes voiced cries that were inhuman (ἀγρίαις, "savage") and unfavorable (δυσφημίαις). These noisy manifestations of Philoctetes' pain were, he says, unbearable and disruptive, to the point of making sacrifices to the gods impossible for his fellow Greeks [47]. Odysseus thus provides Neoptolemus with a plausible (albeit disputable and morally questionable [48]) reason for why the Greeks abandoned one of their own and continued on their expedition to Troy without him, despite his obvious, severe, and undeserved suffering [49].

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[45] The rosy depiction of Lemnos is intended to diminish Odysseus' and the other Greeks' culpability in the eyes of Neoptolemus; Nooter 2012: 125 notes the artificial nature of Odysseus' positive spin here.

[46] On Philoctetes' disease as a threat to his very identity, see nn. 31 and 40.

[47] It is revealing of how grossly exaggerated this claim is that, after Helenus' oracle has been pronounced (declaring Philoctetes and his bow essential to the taking of Troy, lines 603-621), Philoctetes' pain and his cries of suffering are no longer even mentioned as a hindrance to proper religious observances; see p. 26.

[48] Pucci in Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003: 157 *ad loc.* dismisses Odysseus' pseudo-religious excuses offhand and foregrounds the moral crime that abandoning Philoctetes actually represents – which is precisely what Odysseus is trying to cover up as best he can.

[49] Kitto points out that Odysseus glosses over some rather obvious, more humane alternatives: for instance, the Greeks could very well have sent Philoctetes home to Malis (Kitto 1956: 103-104). Pucci stresses the blameworthiness of Neoptolemus' complicit acceptance of Odysseus' facile explanation: the young man, he says, should raise more questions (and eyebrows): Pucci, Avezzù, Cerri 2003: 159 *ad loc.*

One might consider the possibility that Odysseus is providing a genuine account (in his own, warped view) of Philoctetes' abandonment, rather than crafting a tale destined to exculpate himself and his fellow Greeks in the eyes of Neoptolemus, if it weren't for his blatant eagerness to move on from the topic: ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τί δεῖ λέγειν; ("But why must I speak of these things?"). The intentional brevity of Odysseus' statement and his calculated *aposiopesis* are telling signs of unease and of some degree of disingenuousness on his part [50]. While the Chorus's words and song are revealing of its members' compassionate disposition, and of their ability to recognize the humanity and vulnerability that they share with Philoctetes, the way in which Odysseus describes the plight of a fellow Greek is consistent with his general conception of human beings (*philoi* though they may be) as mere tools [51]. This conception is what enables him to disregard Philoctetes' suffering and the Greeks' earlier betrayal of him, and to encourage Neoptolemus to do the same, in view of what he claims to be the greatest priority: the reason of state and collective victory at Troy [52], in the

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[50] For this reason, I do not believe, as Knox suggested (Knox 1964: 186, note 1), that Odysseus is "delicately" omitting to mention the stench of the hero's wound (which Philoctetes subsequently mentions himself, line 1032); the omission is more likely due to his desire to shift away from the incriminating account of the abandonment to another topic: his plan of deceit.

[51] Apfel 2011: 312-323 offers an overview of past scholarly discussions of Odysseus in the *Philoctetes* as the epitome of the hard-hearted, pragmatic politician and deceitful master of sophistic rhetoric; on his initially successful attempt to convert Neoptolemus to his utilitarian views, see the bibliography in note 20 on the moral education of the young man. Apfel herself proposes a more positive interpretation of Odysseus' character in the play, with which I cannot agree. Knox describes Odysseus in the *Philoctetes* as a "degenerate descendant of the Homeric hero", a stereotypical representative of cynical fifth-century (Athenian) politicians, well-versed in the sophistic manipulation of *logos*. On the ambiguous relationship between contemporary depictions of sophists and Odysseus' cunning use of *logos* in the *Philoctetes* to advance his agenda, see also Podlecki 1966, Segal 1981, Blundell 1987, 1988, 1989, and Worman 2000; also below, p. 26.

[52] On Odysseus' "instrumental view of human relations" (see lines 86-119) in contrast to Philoctetes', cf. Nussbaum 1976: 35 ff., who stresses Odysseus' inability "to make crucial distinctions between men and inanimate objects" and Segal 1981: 328-361; at 333-335, Segal describes how the arts of speech as Odysseus practices them "betray civilized values". Gardiner 1987: 20 contrasts the Chorus with Odysseus: "… the Chorus … clearly contrast with [Odysseus] in the humaneness of their consideration of

name of which he spurns any "standard of conduct of any kind" – for "he is for victory, by any and every means" (Knox 1964: 124).

Sophocles thus uses the different ways in which the sounds of Philoctetes' pain are perceived and depicted as a means of exposing to the audience Odysseus' and the Chorus's varying degrees of pity. The discrepancy in their respective experience of pity itself reflects a disparity in the values that each of them embraces. Despite Odysseus' claims to patriotic fervor and bombastic invocation of Neoptolemus' necessary self-sacrifice for the good of the community [53], his lack of emotional responsiveness to Philoctetes, made manifest in his refusal to acknowledge Philoctetes' profoundly human "song" (much less respond to it), is at cross purposes with the establishment of reliable social ties (φιλία) that form the basis of civic cohesion [54]. By contrast, the Chorus's predisposition to pity "sets the emotional tone" [55] for Neoptolemus, who will shake off Odysseus' cynical influence after the turning point of Philoctetes' onstage agony at the center of the play, and thereby create the conditions necessary for regaining Philoctetes' trust and reestablishing a relationship of φιλία with him on grounds that are not insincere [56].

Philoctetes' physical circumstances and their awareness that his existence must be a miserable one; there has been no such sign of humaneness in Odysseus". Cf. Austin: "… of suffering Odysseus had not a word to say" (Austin 2011: 84).

[53] See especially lines 96-122.

[54] On Odysseus' self-serving immorality masquerading as devotion to the public good, see especially Blundell 1989: 184 ff. A predisposition to pity is an emotional prerequisite for a strong community. See e.g., Visvardi 2007: 163-196, who offers a thorough analysis of the moral and social repercussions of the experience of pity as they are depicted in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* by highlighting the relation between the experience of pity and the values of those who experience it (the Chorus members and, subsequently, Neoptolemus), in opposition to those who do not (Odysseus, who embraces a different set of values entirely). By establishing and corroborating φιλία, she argues, pity is ultimately shown to constitute both "a constructive individual experience and an indispensable social value" (166). On the moral and practical outcomes of emotions, and pity in particular, see Lada-Richards 1993 and Hawkins 1999, as well as Sternberng 2005. On φιλία, and its role in Greek society and in Sophocles, see e.g., Blundell 1989: 31 ff. and Edmunds 1996: 117-128.

[55] Visvardi 2007: 170.

[56] On the Chorus's pity, Philoctetes' agony, and their respective roles in the progressive emotional and moral education of Neoptolemus, see above note 20.

The French novelist and man of letters André Gide was a close reader of Sophocles[57]. He too wrote about the wounded and abandoned hero Philoctetes, in an adaptation of Sophocles' play that he completed in 1898[58]. Gide made note of Sophocles' choice to focus on the witnesses to Philoctetes' pain, and appreciated the potential for nuanced characterization that lay in bringing these witnesses' reactions to the fore: he centers several scenes on his other characters' responses to Philoctetes' pain. Most strikingly, he even follows Sophocles closely in the way he exploits the potential for sounds – descriptions of sounds heard, that reflect divergent perceptions – to characterize his *dramatis personae* and point up the values that they embrace. These Sophoclean "sound effects" are, in fact, critical components that feature prominently in his play, and serve both to express some of the central themes pertaining to Philoctète's solitude, and to distinguish between the characters of Ulysse and Néoptolème in their relationship to the protagonist and to his suffering, as was the case in Sophocles.

The division of the work into five acts is non-theatrical: it is adopted by Gide because it serves his didactic purpose of pitting three conflicting moral attitudes against one other, espoused by Ulysse, Néoptolème, and Philoctète respectively[59]. These moral attitudes can be roughly summarized as follows: in the case of Ulysse, an intransigent patriotism, reminiscent of Sophocles' Odysseus; in that of Néoptolème, a strong sense

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[57] A journal entry from August 1892 confirms that Gide read Sophocles in (French) translation (see Pollard 1970: 370). In an earlier entry from his *Journal inédit* (7 février 1888), he proclaims his newfound love of the Greeks and expresses regret at not being able to read them in the original: "Oh! Si je pouvais lire cela dans le texte!" ("Oh! If only I could read it in the original!"); see Watson-Williams 1967: 2.

[58] Although Gide structured *Philoctète* like a play, he conceived it as a philosophical treatise (its subtitle is "Le Traité des Trois Morales"), which he never actually intended to be produced on stage. In his discussion of the reception of the figure of Odysseus in both Gide and Müller, Guidorizzi 2003 (esp. 407-412) sheds light on the personal and historical contexts in which the successive stages of writing of Gide's *Philoctète* took place (briefly discussed by Pollard 1970 as well). On the reception of Sophocles' *Philoctetes,* including in Gide, see also Budelmann 2007.

[59] On the three moral attitudes, their complexities, and Gide's use of the dramatic form to articulate them, see Watson-Williams 1967, Pollard 1970, and Guidorizzi 2003. For the sake of clarity, from here on I use the original French names (e.g., "Philoctète" rather than "Philoctetes") to refer to Gide's characters. All quotations and pagination refer to the Neuchâtel edition (Gide 1947). The translations are mine.

of solidarity and preoccupation with his duty toward his fellow Greeks, and particularly toward Philoctète, a father figure for whom he feels a childish sort of admiring affection [60]. The figure of Achilles looms large in Sophocles' play, and his influence *in absentia* on Neoptolemus' moral choices is considerable: see e.g., Avery 1965, and Blundell 1987, 1988, 1989. On the central role played by Neoptolemus' friendship (*philia)* with Philoctetes in the *Philoctetes*, and how it guides his subsequent decisions, see Belfiore 1993. Néoptolème's sense of shame at taking part in Ulysse's scheme is magnified by the fact that he feels a particular bond with Philoctète because he was a friend of his father's, as he makes clear from early on (Gide 1947: 151): "Mon père est mort, Ulysse; ne parle pas de lui; il est mort pour la Grèce. Ah! Pour elle lutter, souffrir, mourir, demande-moi ce que tu veux, mais pas trahir un ami de mon père!" ("My father is dead, Ulysse; do not speak of him; he died for Greece. Oh! To struggle, to suffer, to die for her, ask me what you will, but not to betray a friend of my father's!").

The third and final attitude is Philoctète's – a moral stance that is harder to define, in part because it evolves throughout the treatise [61]. Ultimately, he urges Néoptolème to pursue a form of individualistic self-realization that puts "individual Man above the idea of Greece" [62]: one that can only be fully achieved in complete isolation from the rest of humanity. As we shall see, all three moral stances are reflected in each of the characters' differing perceptions of Philoctète's cries.

In the first scene of act one of his treatise, Gide expands the succinct account of the Greeks' abandonment of Philoctetes that Odysseus gives at the beginning of Sophocles' play, and combines it with several important sound motifs from the *parodos* of his Greek model. He does away with the Chorus; instead, it is Ulysse himself who remains present at the young man's side as the two of them hear the hero coming toward them (act I, scene I) [63]:

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[60] The very first words Néoptolème addresses to Philoctète make clear his loving admiration for the one he views as a paternal substitute (Gide 1947: 164): "Philoctète! Enseigne-moi la vertu" ("Philoctetes! Teach me virtue").

[61] Its formulation evolves, at any rate.

[62] Pollard 1970: 371.

[63] Gide 1947: 153-154.

NÉOPTOLÈME Tout ce que tu disais avant, je l'approuvais; mais à présent je ne sais plus que dire, et même il me paraît …
ULYSSE Chut! Écoute … N'entends-tu rien?
NÉOPTOLÈME Si: le bruit de la mer.
ULYSSE Non. C'est lui! Ses cris affreux commencent de parvenir jusqu'à nous.
NÉOPTOLÈME Affreux? Ulysse, j'entends des chants mélodieux au contraire.
ULYSSE *prêtant l'oreille* C'est vrai qu'il chante. Il est bien bon! A présent qu'il est seul, il chante! Quand c'était près de nous, il criait.
NÉOPTOLÈME Que chante-t-il?
ULYSSE On ne peut encore distinguer les paroles. Écoute: il se rapproche cependant.

NÉOPTOLÈME I agreed with all that you were saying before; but now I don't know what to say anymore, and it even seems to me…
ULYSSE Shhh! Listen … Do you not hear anything?
NÉOPTOLÈME Yes: the noise of the sea.
ULYSSE No. It's him! His hideous cries are beginning to reach us.
NÉOPTOLÈME Hideous? Odysseus, on the contrary, those are melodious songs I hear.
ULYSSE *paying close attention* You're right, he *is* singing. That's a good one! Now that he is alone, he is singing! When he was among us, he was screaming.
NÉOPTOLÈME What is he singing?
ULYSSE The words are not clear enough yet. Listen: he is getting closer even as we speak.

Ulysse and Néoptolème are hearing the very same cries; yet according to Ulysse, Philoctète's cries are hideous ("ses cris affreux commencent de parvenir jusqu'à nous") – the very antithesis of the "melodious songs" ("j'entends des chants mélodieux au contraire") perceived by Néoptolème [64]. The Sophoclean Chorus in the *parodos* describe Philoctetes' cries as a lament; here, Néoptolème perceives the expression of Philoctète's pain to be made up of melodious strains, whose precise tone and nature will become clearer when Philoctète himself describes them [65]. Ulysse, on the other hand, much like the Odysseus of his Sophoclean model, describes the cries as extremely unpleasant. By having him subsequently acknowledge that it is indeed a song that he and

[64] GUIDORIZZI 2003: 409 notes the discrepancy.
[65] I turn to Philoctète's song below.

Neoptolemus are hearing ("C'est vrai qu'il chante"), however, Gide suggests to his reader that Ulysse's earlier perception ("ses cris affreux") was biased and inaccurate. The discrepancy between the two characters' divergent testimonials is deliberate, and its significance is further brought out in what follows.

Even if Philoctète *were* crying out rather than singing (he does, in fact, begin screaming again shortly thereafter on spotting the Greeks' tracks in the snow [66]), Ulysse's account of the nature of Philoctète's supposed cries is proven false, not only by Néoptolème's assessment, but also by a description that Ulysse himself offers up moments before the exchange quoted above. Ulysse recalls how, when the Greeks left him behind on Lemnos, Philoctète was crying out in pain [67]. His cries, he says, were wrenching – so much so that all the other members of the Greek expedition were deeply affected by them: "Lui, qui ne s'était jamais plaint, commença de lamentablement gémir. D'abord chacun s'empressait près de lui pour le consoler" ("He who had never complained before, began to groan pathetically. At first, each one of us hastened to his side to comfort him") [68].

Ulysse proceeds unabashedly (and with no small degree of ingenuity) to put the pitiable nature of these cries forward as the very reason for which the Greeks ultimately decided to leave Philoctète behind [69]: the wound was clearly irremediable, and his cries of pain were so heart-rending that they posed a threat to the Greek troops' morale, and thus to the successful completion of their mission. As Odysseus does in So-

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[66] See below p. 25.

[67] For Ulysse's full account of the abandonment, see Gide 1947: 147-149.

[68] Gide 1947: 148.

[69] The fact that Ulysse shapes his account in order to manipulate Néoptolème does not mean that he bears any personal hostility toward Philoctète, the way he does in the Sophoclean play. His careful choice of words is simply a means to an end: that the will of the gods and the good of the State should prevail at any cost. In fact, later on in the play, Ulysse is humbled by Philoctète's voluntary surrender of the bow (Gide 1947: 176-177): "Tu m'as vaincu, Philoctète, et je vois la vertu, maintenant; et je la sens si belle, que près de toi je n'ose plus agir. Mon devoir m'apparaît plus cruel que le tien, parce qu'il m'apparaît moins auguste" ("You have vanquished me, Philoctète, and now I see what virtue is: and it is so beautiful, I feel, that I dare not take action anymore, now that I am at your side. My duty appears more cruel to me than yours, because it is less admirable"). Regarding Ulysse's lack of animosity and eventual admiration for Philoctète, see Guidorizzi 2003: 410.

phocles, he makes the abandonment of a fellow Greek in excruciating pain on a deserted island sound like a gesture of dedicated patriotism, the necessary sacrifice of one for the sake of the community. The added twist here is that it is not the fact that the cries are disruptive, but their pitiable nature, and the Greeks' experience of pity in response, that Ulysse puts foward as the reason for abandoning their ailing compatriot: "… ses cris menaçaient d'affaiblir nos courages … devions-nous soumettre la vaillance d'une armée à la détresse, aux lamentations d'un seul homme?" ("His cries were threatening to weaken our courage … were we to subject an entire army's bravery to the despair, to the lamentations of a single man?") [70].

Despite Ulysse's best efforts, his shameless appeal to the pathos of Philoctète's cries as grounds for abandoning him contributes to make the morally questionable nature of the Greeks' decision even more glaringly obvious than in the Sophoclean original. Accordingly, Néoptolème voices strong indignation at his devious logic: "Quoi! Seul! Vous le laissâtes, Ulysse?" ("What! Alone! You abandoned him, Ulysse?") [71]. In disbelief, he then asks Ulysse to provide a more specific description of the cries: "Ses cris étaient-ils donc affreux?" ("Were his cries hideous then?"). There is no room for ambiguity in Ulysse's reply: there was, he says, nothing hideous about them – only a deeply pathetic, plaintive, and moving note at their core: "*Non, pas affreux*: plaintifs, humectant de pitié nos âmes" ("No, not hideous: plaintive, dampening our spirits with pity") [72]. Later on in the very same exchange, as we have seen, Ulysse contradicts this unwavering assertion when, as Philoctète approaches from afar, he declares, "j'entends des cris affreux". It is as though Gide were setting up his character for this incriminating inconsistency.

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[70] Gide 1947: 148-149.

[71] Gide 1947: 148.

[72] *Ibidem*; italics mine for emphasis. The two definitions provided by Littré make the strongly negative connotations of "affreux" that Ulysse is denying here very clear: "1. Qui excite une sorte de terreur, au sens physique et au sens moral. 2. Extrêmement désagréable, mauvais, détestable, laid" ("1. That which inspires a sort of terror, used both in a physical and in a moral sense. 2. Extremely unpleasant, bad, revolting, ugly"). The adjective *affreux* thus denotes either a frightful (1.) or an unpleasant (2.) quality, both of which are being denied by Ulysse here (Littré 1863-1877, s. v. "affreux").

And yet ten years have elapsed. Might not Philoctete's cries have become hideous after being pitiable at first? Philoctète himself later provides confirmation that they have indeed evolved. Far from the rest of humanity, he has not been bellowing hideous cries, however, but singing a song – one so beautiful that it has become a source of comfort to him: "Mais depuis que je ne m'en sers plus pour manifester ma souffrance, ma plainte est devenue très belle, à ce point que j'en suis consolé" ("But ever since I stopped using it to make my suffering known, my complaint has become so beautiful that I find comfort in it") [73]. Some have suggested that Ulysse may be describing Philoctète's melodious lament as "hideous" because he is so blinded by his preconceptions that his actual perception of the cries is skewed [74]. It is more likely that he is deliberately choosing the term "affreux" in order to foster some antipathy for the old man and thus rally Néoptolème to his side. It would be far easier to convince the youth to agree to hoodwink Philoctète if he first is able to make him believe that the man he must deceive is repulsive – a tactic borrowed from his Sophoclean model.

That Ulysse is intentionally trying to make Philoctète sound revolting becomes more evident from what follows. On seeing Néoptolème remain (understandably) skeptical toward the argument he has put forward (according to which it was precisely because of his pitiable nature that Philoctète had to be left behind), he hastily tacks on some additional reasons for which the Greeks made a choice that he continues to attempt to portray as necessary. He claims that Philoctète's stench was intolerable, and that his pain made him a useless member of the community because it prevented him from dedicating himself to the State: "Et puis je dois te dire, enfant: son pied pourri exhalait par tout le navire la plus intolérable puanteur… Puis il était absorbé par son mal, incapable à jamais de nouveau dévouement pour la Grèce…" ("And I must also tell you, child: his rotten foot filled the entire ship with the most unbearable stench… And he was absorbed by his pain, incapable

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[73] Gide 1947: 158. Néoptolème's comment offers an external witness's confirmation of this beauty ("Ulysse, j'entends des chants mélodieux au contraire").

[74] For this view, see Conacher 1955: 127.

of ever devoting himself to Greece again…")[75]. The authenticity of the latter arguments is largely discredited by the manner in which Ulysse introduces them *in extremis*. If the stench of Philoctète's foot and his allegedly unpatriotic self-involvement had truly been so threatening to the common good, one imagines that Ulysse would have stated these (somewhat more palatable) reasons first. Similarly, in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, the alleged stench also does not appear to have been the primary reason for leaving the hero on Lemnos. At any rate, it is not enough of an obstacle to prevent the Greeks from taking him along to Troy after the oracle decrees that this is necessary (ll. 603-621), and it is not dire enough of a memory for Odysseus to feature it prominently in his initial account of the abandonment (ll. 1-12), defensive though it is.

While in Sophocles Odysseus' disingenuousness was only subtly suggested by his account of Philoctetes' abandonment, Gide makes it conspicuously obvious: first, by juxtaposing Ulysse's response to Philoctète's pain with Néoptolème's, and having Ulysse recognize that his own perception is faulty[76]; then, by showing up the inconsistency between Ulysse's own two accounts of the sounds made by Philoctète in his suffering, which further exposes the character's duplicitous nature. In keeping with his Sophoclean model, Gide's Ulysse is a coldly pragmatic advocate who favors uncompromising allegiance to the State and puts its military success before duty to a friend and fellow human being. He shapes his statements in whichever way he deems necessary to move his plan forward. His manipulative use of language is revealing of his priorities[77]: human interactions are a means to an end rather than an end in itself, and truthfulness comes second to the persuasiveness that is required by the agenda of the moment[78].

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[75] Gide 1947: 149.

[76] "C'est vrai qu'il chante".

[77] Cf. *Philoctetes* lines 98-99: … ὁρῶ βροτοῖς | τὴν γλῶσσαν, οὐχὶ τἄργα, πάνθ' ἡγουμένην, "I see that it is the tongue, not deeds, that rules all things for mortals".

[78] Cf. *Philoctetes* line 111: ὅταν τι δρᾷς εἰς κέρδος, οὐκ ὀκνεῖν πρέπει ("When you are doing something to gain advantage, you should not hesitate"). Segal 1981: 328-361 discusses Odysseus' view of society as a system that relies on the subordination of the individual to the group, and how this bleeds into the way he goes about communicating with others.

When Philoctète sees his fellow Greeks' footsteps in the snow, he ceases to sing and begins to scream. He realizes that his blissful isolation has come to an end [79]:

NÉOPTOLÈME Il cesse de chanter. Il s'arrête. Il a vu nos pas sur la neige.
ULYSSE Et voilà qu'il recommence à crier. Ah! Philoctète!
NÉOPTOLÈME En effet, ses cris sont horribles.

NÉOPTOLÈME He is not singing anymore. He has stopped in his tracks. He has seen our footsteps in the snow.
ULYSSE And now he is beginning to scream again. Oh, Philoctetes!
NÉOPTOLÈME Yes, his cries are horrible.

As did their reactions to his song, Ulysse and Néoptolème's responses to Philoctète's screaming contribute to foreground the antithetical moral attitudes that each one of them embraces [80]. Ulysse depicts Philoctète's screams as a nuisance by displaying some exasperation ("Et voilà qu'il recommence à crier"), in keeping with his main objective: to distance himself from the sufferer and thereby alienate Néoptolème from him as well. The youth finds the cries horrible: "En effet, ses cris sont horribles". A look at the semantics of the French *horrible* is helpful to our understanding of his reply. Littré distinguishes between *affreux, hideux*, and *horrible* as follows: "Le sens de ces trois adjectifs est, qui blesse les sens ou l'âme. Mais une distinction y est manifeste: affreux indique ce qui fait peur; hideux, ce qui soulève le dégoût; horrible, ce qui fait frissonner" [81]. Néoptolème deems the cries horrible and shudders, not because he feels disgust (in which case he would use *hideux*) or afraid (in which case he would use *affreux*), but because he feels a sense of horror. This horror is directed at himself rather than at Philoctète [82]: it stems from a feeling of shame on hearing the very man

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[79] GIDE 1947: 154.

[80] POLLARD 1970: 369-372 discusses the opposition between Ulysse and Néoptolème and the way in which the contrast between the two is played up throughout the play.

[81] "The meaning of these three adjectives is, that which assaults the senses or the mind. But there is a clear distinction between them: *affreux* indicates that which inspires fear; *hideux,* that which provokes disgust; *horrible*, that which makes one shudder" (LITTRÉ 1863-1877, s. v. "affreux").

[82] Néoptolème's strong reluctance to accept the plan to trick Philoctète is evident from the start (GIDE 1947: 151): "Ulysse! Pourquoi m'as-tu choisi? Et qu'avais-tu besoin

whom he has just been enjoined to deceive [83] voice obvious signs of distress – a man who was, moreover, a dear friend of his father Achilles when the latter still lived [84]. This shame eventually becomes so acute that, when the young man is sent by Ulysse to seek out Philoctète and take his bow from him by ruse, Néoptolème actually cries out and nearly loses consciousness: "Philoctète! (*Il s'approche et, comme défaillant*) Ah! je suis malade … C'est toi qui m'as troublé" ("Philoctète! (*He comes closer to him and says, as though he were about to faint*) Ah! I feel sick… It is you – you have shaken me deeply") [85]. In Sophocles the youth's increasing moral agony is an important motif as well. The moment in which Neoptolemus experiences a climactic surge of "moral pain" is marked by a sound effect: his uttering of the cry παπαῖ (line 875), which echoes Philoctetes' earlier cry of pain, and expresses a complex combination of pity (for Philoctetes) and shame (at his own actions) [86].

Néoptolème's reaction – horror mixed with outrage – is in keeping with the value he places on friendship and interpersonal bonds, along with the loyalty that these entail [87]. Throughout the play, he is characterized by his desire to embrace a virtuous life ("la vertu"), which, he believes, involves the fulfillment of duties owed to other individuals, in "a spirit of love and devotion to [friendship]" (Pollard 1991: 325) [88]. His uncorrupted disposition is apparent in his ability to distinguish the beauty in Philoctète's song ("un chant mélodieux") when he first hears him, contrary to Ulysse, who (purportedly or, as some suggest, actually) hears screams ("des cris affreux"). Even after Philoctète changes his tone (and tune) on spotting the Greeks' tracks in the snow and begins to scream, the young man perceives the suffering Philoctète's cries as *horribles*, a reaction that is revealing of his empathetic and impressionable character, and of his predisposition to pity

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de moi pour cet acte que toute mon âme désapprouve?" ("Ulysse! Why did you choose me? And why did you need *me* to do something that every fiber of my soul condemns?").

[83] Gide 1947: 149-153.

[84] See above p. 21.

[85] Gide 1947: 167.

[86] See Aultman-Moore 1994 and Nussbaum 1999: 268.

[87] Shortly thereafter, when Ulysse asks him to lie to Philoctète, Néoptolème's disgust is more patent than ever (Gide 1947:150): "Ulysse, je te hais" ("Ulysse, I hate you").

[88] Regarding Néoptolème's purity of mind and the value he places on human solidarity, see Guidorizzi 2003: 410.

and friendship. His embrace of "humane cooperative values" [89] mirrors those of his Greek model Neoptolemus, who, once he reaches ethical maturity, chooses to honor interpersonal ties and the duties of *philia* above all else, even if it should cost him the loss of the community's approval [90].

I turn in closing to the two plays' endings, both of which bring to the fore the hero's relationship to the island, his solitude, and his own identity, by focusing on the sounds of nature and the hero's own voice. Throughout his play, Sophocles uses the sounds of Philoctetes' voice to call attention to the tremendous suffering that the hero's isolation has brought upon him [91]. The absence of any human presence to witness his pain [92] has been so painful that it stands on a par with the physical pain that has been plaguing him since he received the serpent bite to his foot [93]. In his initial exchange with Neoptolemus following the *parodos*, he repeatedly proclaims his overwhelming joy at hearing the mere sound of a human voice [94]. The Chorus members also turn to sounds to relay their understanding of the harrowing nature of his seclusion in the *parodos*, shortly before the passage we examined earlier, they express their pity for the very first time. Strikingly, they focus not just on Philoctetes' pain *per se*, but on the fact that he had to endure it entirely alone – a loneliness whose harrowing nature they evoke, in their collective song, through the personification of the disembodied Echo, "human sound dehumanized" [95], which must have sounded to him like a bitter, ironic acknowledgment of his cries (lines 169-173, 180-190):

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[89] The expression is used by Blundell 1988: 143 in reference to Neoptolemus in Sophocles' play.

[90] See Blundell 1988: 140 ff.

[91] Cf. Rose 1976: 60: "At a time when Euripides, Aristophanes, and perhaps others were exploring the idea of a life full of peaceful isolation from man in the friendly company of beasts, Sophocles seems to have been at pains to emphasize the horrors of real, total isolation from human society".

[92] Sophocles' choice to make Lemnos a deserted island has often been noted; both Aeschylus' and Euripides' tragic versions of the story include a chorus of Lemnians.

[93] See, for example, lines 169-173.

[94] See lines 219-235. Both Philoctetes and the Chorus underline the important role played by the social acknowledgment of an individual's pain in suggesting that any compassionate presence actually contributes to lessening the pain (it also makes more direct assistance possible in the form of some healing herbs: see lines 697-699).

[95] Austin 2011: 83.

Χο. οἰκτίρω νιν ἔγωγ', ὅπως,
μή του κηδομένου βροτῶν
μηδὲ σύντροφον ὄμμ' ἔχων,
δύστανος, μόνος αἰεί,
νοσεῖ μὲν νόσον ἀγρίαν,
...
οὗτος πρωτογόνων ἴσως
οἴκων οὐδενὸς ὕστερος,
πάντων ἄμμορος ἐν βίῳ
κεῖται μοῦνος ἀπ' ἄλλων
στικτῶν ἢ λασίων μέτα
θηρῶν, ἔν τ' ὀδύναις ὁμοῦ
λιμῷ τ' οἰκτρός, ἀνήκεστ' ἀμερίμνητά τ' ἔχων βάρη.
ἁ δ' ἀθυρόστομος
ἀχὼ τηλεφανὴς πικραῖς
οἰμωγαῖσιν ὑπαχεῖ.

I pity him, in that
with none among mortals to care for him
and *with no companion to look after him*[96],
miserable, always alone,
he suffers from a cruel sickness (…)
This man, inferior, perhaps,
to none of the houses of the first rank,
lies without a share of anything in life,
far from all others, with beasts dappled or hairy,
and pitiably in his pain and hunger he endures afflictions
incurable and uncared for. And she whose mouth has no bar,
Echo, appearing far off, responds to his bitter
cries of lamentation.

Toward the middle of the play, after Philoctetes and Neoptolemus disappear into the farmer's cave to fetch his bow, the Chorus members convey their understanding of Philoctetes' miserable condition by conjuring up the desolate soundscape that surrounded him for ten years (lines 687-690):

τόδε <μὰν> θαῦμά μ' ἔχει,
πῶς ποτε πῶς ποτ' ἀμφιπλήκτων

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[96] In line 171, the absence of a σύντροφον ὄμμ(α) does not signify that Philoctetes has "no companion to look on" (Lloyd-Jones); rather, I believe it signals the *absence of a friendly onlooker*: σύντροφον ὄμμ(α), "l'assenza di un occhio amico" (Pucci in Pucci-Avezzù-Cerri 2003:182 *ad loc*.

ῥοθίων **μόνος κλύων,** πῶς
ἄρα πανδάκρυτον οὕτω
βιοτὰν κατέσχεν·

But at this I wonder, how, *how did he listen alone to the waves that beat the shore around him*, and endure a life so full of tears?

In what follows, the Chorus members make reference to the sounds of Philoctetes' cries in such a way as to highlight the call for social acknowledgment that lay at their core (lines 692-695):

ἵν' αὐτὸς ἦν πρόσουρος, οὐκ ἔχων βάσιν,
οὐδέ τιν' ἐγχώρων
κακογείτονα,
παρ' ᾧ **στόνον ἀν-**
τίτυπον <τὸν> βαρυβρῶτ'
ἀποκλαύσειεν αἱματηρόν·

… where he himself was his only companion, with no one coming to him, not a single neighbor nearby for him in his troubles, to whom he might lament, *with groans inviting a response*, the sickness that devoured him, thirsty for blood [97].

The sounds and echoes of nature also surround Gide's abandoned hero, but they are not a dispiriting reminder of his isolation, nor of the lack of a human response to his cries of pain – quite the contrary in fact. While Sophocles' Philoctetes suffers not only from his physical wound, but also from the social isolation that he has been forced to bear, Gide's Philoctète, on the other hand, comes to revel in his solitude: virtue, he has discovered, can only be attained away from the morally corrupting presence of others [98]. In a striking reversal from his Greek model, Philoctète

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[97] Translators strive to render the powerful significance and range of the epithet ἀντίτυπος. Thus, Lloyd-Jones' "with groans inviting a response" emphasizes, not the fact that Philoctetes' groans *create* an echo, but that they are a *call for a response* – and receive none; cf. Jebb 1898: "with no one… near him while he suffered, in *whose ear he could pour forth the lament, awaking response*".

[98] See Gide 1947: 158-159: "Ulysse, ce n'est que depuis que je suis loin des autres que je comprends ce qu'on appelle la vertu. L'homme qui vit parmi les autres est incapable, incapable, crois-moi, d'une action pure, et vraiment désinteressée" ("Ulysse, it is only once I started living far from others that I came to understand what we call virtue.

does not seek out nor desire any form of response from his surroundings. Rather, he has come to see himself as a voice for the pain inherent in the world around him: "Et je pris lentement l'habitude de clamer la détresse plutôt des choses que la mienne; je trouvais cela mieux, comment te dire? D'ailleurs cette détresse était la même et j'étais autant consolé" ("With time I developed a habit of proclaiming the distress of things rather than my own; I found that better … how to put it? Their distress was, in fact, one and the same as my own, and I was all the more comforted as a result") [99]. Philoctète has come to accept that his cries will never be answered, and sees the expression of his suffering as an end in itself – an integral part of a process of self-discovery that makes the pursuit of true virtue ("la vertu") possible, unhindered by the detrimental presence of others.

Gide conveys Philoctète's serene detachment by foregrounding the aesthetic pleasure his character is able to take in the vocal expression of his own pain: "Je m'occupais aussi à me raconter mes douleurs, et, si la phrase était très belle, j'en étais d'autant consolé; parfois même j'oubliais ma tristesse, à la dire" ("I also worked on describing my pain to myself, and if the phrasing was quite beautiful, I found comfort in it; sometimes I would even forget my sadness, through the process of relaying it") [100]. Philoctète has continued to cry out in his solitude, not in the hopes of being heard or acknowledged by others, but merely for the sake of the process itself. His singing is a reflection of his changed relationship both to his suffering and to the desolate environment in which he has endured it. The beautiful sound of his own words resounding about the island and its beaches brings him contentment – a precise reversal of the στόνος ἀντίτυπος, or "groan iniviting a response", which the Chorus imagines Philoctetes to have uttered: "Je compris que les mots sont plus beaux dès qu'ils ne servent plus aux demandes. N'ayant plus, près de moi, d'oreilles ni de bouches, je n'employais que la beauté de mes paroles; je les criais à toute l'île, le long des plages" ("I came to understand that words are more beautiful from the time they cease to be a means of conveying a request. Since there no longer were any

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Whoever lives among others is incapable, incapable, believe me, of any action that is pure, and truly disinterested"); see also Pollard 1991: 326.

[99] Gide 1947: 161.

[100] Gide 1947: 160-161.

ears nor mouths near me, I resorted solely to the beauty of my own words; I cried them out to the entire island, along the beaches") [101].

As the play ends, Gide introduces a major plot twist that distinguishes his protagonist most clearly from his Greek model. In Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, the hero adamantly refuses to join the Greeks and leave the island after Neoptolemus reveals the trap that they had set for him – until he is ordered to do so by the divine Heracles [102]. In Gide's *Philoctète*, the eponymous hero also wishes to remain on the island – and he actually *does*, forsaking Troy after deliberately allowing the Greeks to take his bow. The heroes' final words in both plays reveal the starkly different relationship each one of them has to the island and to society, while they also point up some significant parallels and a clear filiation between Gide's hero and his Greek model.

At the end of the *Philoctetes*, Sophocles' hero ultimately espouses the common cause by rejoining the Greek expedition to Troy: there is even some "joy in his response to Heracles" [103]. Whether or not his being reunited with his peers is to be understood as a return to the civilized world [104], and whether his return is the result of "the divine impulse of Philoctetes himself" [105], or merely the god's will being imposed on him [106], it remains true that, by accepting a collaborative role in the taking of Troy, Philoctetes emphasizes the importance of "*philia,*

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[101] See *ibidem*. On the credo of individualism and self-realization that Philoctète embodies, see Watson-Williams 1967 (esp. 60-62). On this credo's place in the Symbolist movement, see Pollard 1970.

[102] See lines 1409-1444. The ending of Sophocles' *Philoctetes* is notoriously problematic: see Hawkins 1999 (esp. 356-357), Schein 2001, Jouanna 2003 and Hawthorne 2006, with bibliography. One possible interpretation of the ending is to see it as a positive depiction of the rightful reintegration of the hero into the community of his peers; however, the *deus ex machina* and Philoctetes' acceptance of Heracles' divine will can also be understood a falsely happy ending intended to stress just how little freedom mortals have in light of their necessary subservience to the desires of the gods. For an overview of both positions, see for instance Easterling 1978 and Kirkwood 1994, each with bibliography.

[103] Easterling 1978: 227, in reference to line 1445 in particular (ὦ φθέγμα ποθεινὸν ἐμοὶ πέμψας, "O you who have brought me a voice I have longed for!"). See also Hawkins 1999.

[104] There is great ambiguity throughout the play regarding which of the two worlds – Philoctetes' or the Greeks' – is the more "civilized": see Segal 1981.

[105] Whitman 1951: 188.

[106] See Easterling 1978: 222-228.

the virtue of collaboration, cooperation, and mutual benefit" [107]. His reintegration is divinely sanctioned: Heracles makes clear that by joining in the collective endeavor, he will bring about the conditions necessary for the healing of his malady [108]. The play's "happy ending" [109] thus appears designed to highlight the salutary benefits that stem from belonging to a civic community and devoting oneself to the common good.

Yet Philoctetes' acceptance comes at a cost to him. His final words include an ambivalent adieu to Lemnos, which mingles painful reminiscences of his past laments with some feeling toward the island that was, in effect, his sole companion for ten years (lines 1453-1460) [110]:

> χαῖρ', ὦ μέλαθρον ξύμφρουρον ἐμοί,
> Νύμφαι τ' ἔνυδροι λειμωνιάδες,
> καὶ κτύπος ἄρσην πόντου προβλής,
> οὗ πολλάκι δὴ τοὐμὸν ἐτέγχθη
> κρᾶτ' ἐνδόμυχον πληγῆσι νότου,
> πολλὰ δὲ φωνῆς τῆς ἠμετέρας
> Ἑρμαῖον ὄρος παρέπεμψεν ἐμοὶ
> στόνον ἀντίτυπον χειμαζομένῳ.
>
> Farewell, home that kept watch with me,
> And water nymphs of the meadows,
> And mighty sound of the sea against the jutting rock
> Where the beating of the wind often soaked my head,
> hiding deep within,
> And often the mountain of Hermes sent back to me
> The groan of my own voice, longing for a response,
> in the midst of the storm.

As he bids Lemnos farewell, Philoctetes evokes the sounds of the island, in a wistful reminiscence that spotlights for the last time the themes of solitude and isolation that lie at the core of the play. What this isolation has come to mean to Philoctetes, now that he is about to be reintegrated

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[107] Hawkins 1999: 356.

[108] See lines 1437-1438.

[109] I use quotes because of the difficulties of interpretation posed by the ending of the play: see above note 104.

[110] On the ambivalence of this adieu, see among others Knox 1964: 141-142, Whitman 1951: 189, Nussbaum 1976: 48-49, and most recently, Nooter 2012: 144-145.

into the community that betrayed him, is ambiguous. The blending of his voice with the echoes from the mountain of Hermes (φωνῆς τῆς ἡμετέρας, στόνον ἀντίτυπον) reflects the extent to which he now sees his own identity as inseparable from the island, and conveys the sense of loss and alienation that his departure entails. His words reveal his partial reluctance to leave behind Lemnos, which has come to be a "symbol of … his moral being" [111]. In rejoining the society of others, he is relinquishing a part of his own "uncompromising integrity" [112].

Thus, while Philoctetes uses the same noun-epithet combination στόνος ἀντίτυπος as the Chorus did [113] to describe the echoes that the island consistently sent back to his cries, this time the words are equivocal. The island and his sense of his own integrity have become so narrowly intertwined that he evokes the island's echoes of his own cries with a touch of melancholy, for he is no longer "deplor<ing> a lack of company, but … affirm<ing> a presence … and his sorrow at having to leave" [114] these sounds and echoes, because they have come to represent a part of himself.

Gide ends his play in a manner that also grants pride of place to the hero's final words – but we hear them only indirectly. Instead of having the hero speak, Gide tacks on additional stage directions in closing, which describe the sound of his voice. These describe, with the irrefutable authority of the poet [115], how "his voice has become extraordinarily soft and beautiful, as flowers spring up through the snow and birds from the

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[111] Whitman 1951: 189.

[112] Segal recognizes that "Philoctetes seems to acknowledge an emotional bond between himself and his deserted island. In clinging to it, he is not only taking refuge from human ties and social responsibilities, but also asserting his uncompromising integrity, his courage, his strength of will in the face of meanness, injustice, ignoble expediency" (Segal 1977: 155). On this strength of will as characteristic of the "heroic temper" of the Sophoclean hero, see Knox 1964. Knox argues that it is only because Philoctetes' "heroic stubbornness is … devoted to a false objective", in that it condemns him to play "the role of victim rather than hero", that he ultimately must rejoin his fellow warriors (Knox 1964: 140).

[113] Lines 690-695, quoted above.

[114] Quotations from Nooter 2012: 144-145, who interprets the passage as I do.

[115] The stage directions have authority insofar as they leave no room for the audience to suspect any subjectivity may be at hand (as is the case when a character speaks, as we have seen).

sky come down to feed him": *"Sa voix est devenue extraordinairement belle et douce; des fleurs autour de lui percent la neige, et les oiseaux du ciel descendent le nourrir"* [116]. Philoctète expresses his state of satisfaction at being definitively abandoned and excluded from the society of his peers by singing a song of great beauty [117]. In his mind, the Greeks are not abandoning him; they are giving free rein to his pursuit of virtue and Truth [118]. In his tranquil renunciation of any association with others, Gide's Philoctète promotes a different set of values entirely from his Greek model [119]. Yet he is putting forward a notion that was suggested, though not ultimately embraced, by the hero of Sophocles' *Philoctetes*: that the hero's sense of identity, along with his moral integrity, can only be maintained apart from the corrupting influences of human society and the compromises it requires.

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[116] Gide 1947: 180.

[117] It is not specifically said that Philoctète is singing at this point, but several elements make this certain. First, his voice is described as "extraordinarily beautiful and soft"; second, every reference to his contentment earlier in the play explicitly states that he sings when in a state of detached bliss.

[118] On the narrow association between the pursuit of virtue and that of Truth ("la Vérité"), see Gide 1947: 163.

[119] "In the *Philoctetes*, the hero is still necessary to his society" (Segal 1981: 331, where he compares Philoctetes with the eponymous hero of the *Ajax*, whose society "no longer has a place for [the hero's] kind of intransigence"). In the *Philoctetes,* Neoptolemus and Heracles serve a mediatory function that enables Philoctetes' inclusion among his fellow Greeks.

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