

Staging *Andromeda* in Euripides and Aristophanes  
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That the staging of Euripides' *Andromeda* was striking and unusual is certain even from meager remains, a few fragments (fr. 114-156) and Aristophanes' parody in the *Thesmophoriazousae* (1001-1135). Scholars have generally reconstructed the staging in ways that cause some unnecessary difficulties for the stage action so far as it is known (surveys in Collard, Crop and Gilbert 2004; Austin and Olsen 2004; cf. Revermann 2006). Simply moving *Andromeda* herself away from the center of the *skene* provides for less problematic and more powerful stage action based on all the available evidence.

Aristophanes' parody of the first two scenes of Euripides' play, whatever the distortions, provides two continuous scenes based on the placement and staging of the *Andromeda* character. The sequence begins with the Scythian placing Euripides' in-law bound up on stage, in need of rescue. Scholars generally assume that, here and in Euripides' original, *Andromeda/In-Law* is placed center stage. Such placement causes problems for the movement of other characters, however. The Scythian enters a stage door, acquires a mat, and then sleeps in some position to guard his prisoner. Echo appears and sings duets first with In-Law (now playing "Andromeda") and then with the Scythian. Euripides, as Perseus, must fly in, but the Scythian must be able to block him from setting "Andromeda" free. If *Andromeda* is fixed in the center, the movements of the Scythian, Echo and Euripides range from problematic to static.

If *Andromeda* is kept to one side, most obviously the side opposite where a character can enter in the crane, the action becomes easier to construe and more dynamic. Euripides can enter briefly, prompting the In-Law's gloss to the audience (1009-1012) and even fly around unhelpfully in the crane, prompting the In-Law's desperate follow-up (1013-1014). Now the parody of *Andromeda*'s lyric song begins, with the Scythian asleep nearby. Echo's odd appearance can take place far opposite of In-Law, and there is plenty of room for the movement implied by the Scythian waking, having some dialogue with Echo, and then pursuing her. When Euripides flies in on the crane as Perseus, he has room to maneuver and for his dialogue, but the Scythian has a logical position to take to keep Euripides from reaching "Andromeda." In the subsequent scene (after the parody of *Andromeda* is done, but in which In-Law remains in the same position), Euripides and his associates have reasonable space to lure away the Scythian (1160-1199) and in turn the Scythian will have many directions to go when buffeted by the chorus (1218-1224).

The same advantages accrue to reconstructing the stage action of the Euripidean original. The play begins with *Andromeda* already bound and she starts her lyric lament (fr. 114). Echo joins her and their duet ends with the *parodos* (fr. 118). While scholars mostly believe that Echo was not visible in Euripides but Aristophanes added her on stage, this disjunction is not necessary. A flanking duet between *Andromeda* and Echo in the original would have extra visual power and make more sense of Aristophanes' parody. Perseus' arrival, as in Aristophanes' parody, would have ample space, and, as some reconstructions have it, if Cepheus or other characters attempt to block Perseus, there is appropriate dramatic space available (as there is for the Scythian in the parody).

While there will never be certainty in such matters, the placement and movement posited here fits the available testimony most smoothly and fits the physical space of the Theater of Dionysus better than previous reconstructions.