

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE CHORUS  
IN THE PLAYS OF  
ROBERT GARNIER

by

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Conventions in Art are born rather than made: like most conventions the Greek Chorus is a beautiful accident, and like most accidents, it is not perfect. Superbly as its great dramatists adapt and modify this relic of primitive religion to serve their art, just as Greek sculptors adapt their groups with an added beauty to the arbitrary triangle of the temple-pediment, there are times when we feel the Chorus an encumbrance and wish it away. On the other hand, the dramatists early realized how many important uses this standing stage-army could be made to serve. It can expound the past, comment on the present, forebode the future. It provides the past with a mouthpiece and the spectator with a counterpart of himself. It forms a living foreground of common humanity above which the heroes tower: a living background of pure poetry which turns lamentation into music and horror into peace. It provides both a wall, as Schiller held, severing drama like a magic circle from the real world, and a bridge between the heroic figures of legend and the average humanity of the audience.\*

\*F. L. Lucas, Tragedy in Relation to Aristotle's Poetics, 6th ed. (London, 1928), p. 63.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. THE THEORY OF THE CHORUS PRIOR TO GARNIER. . .	5
III. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CHORUSES AND IMITATIONS . . . . .	16
IV. ANALYSIS OF THE CHORAL ELEMENTS IN THE PLAYS OF ROBERT GARNIER. . . . .	23
V. <u>LES JUIFVES</u> AND <u>OEDIPUS REX</u> . . . . .	55
VI. CONCLUSION . . . . .	66
NOTES. . . . .	70
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	75

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The chorus, as a dramatic and theatrical element in Tragedy, has never regained the all-important position that it held in the ancient Greek theater. There have been, however, many imitators of the original Greek chorus, as well as many innovators of unique choral techniques, who have attempted to re-establish the role of the chorus. One of the better examples from among those who followed the Greek tradition is found in the dramatic works of Robert Garnier, a French playwright of the sixteenth century.

Garnier (1544-1590)<sup>1</sup> was an erudite lawyer who apparently was thoroughly familiar with the literature of ancient Rome and Greece which was so widely translated and imitated during the period of the French Renaissance.<sup>2</sup> While studying law at Toulouse, he had proven himself a fine lyric poet, winning both first and second prizes in the Jeux Floraux. In 1568, he combined his knowledge of the classics, his gift for poetic expression, and his sincere interest in the misfortunes caused his nation and his people by civil strife to write his first tragedy, Porcie. Within twelve years he had written five more plays, each one containing a chorus. In 1582, he wrote his seventh play, Bradamante, in the Argument of which he

made this oft-quoted statement about the chorus:

Et parce qu'il n'y a point de Choeurs, comme aux tragédies précédentes, pour la distinction des actes, celui qui voudroit faire représenter cette Bradamante sera, s'il luy plaist, adverty d'user d'entremets, et les interposer entre les actes pour ne les confondre, et ne mettre en continuation de propos ce qui requiert quelque distance de temps.<sup>3</sup>

Despite this apparent disinterest in the chorus (considering it simply a means to separate acts),<sup>4</sup> Garnier used a chorus again in his last and his only truly original play, Les Juifves.

It is our intention to demonstrate that, though Garnier's own words (and this reference to the chorus in the Argument of Bradamante is the only known statement that he made regarding the chorus) seem to indicate he did not understand the full value of the chorus, his plays give much evidence in support of a contrary conclusion.

To help place us in the century and develop a plan of attack, let us consider these excerpts from Lanson's Esquisse d'une histoire de la tragédie française in which he outlines his remarks on the chorus in general in the sixteenth century:

Au début, on mit des chœurs, sans se soucier d'autre chose, parce qu'il y en avait chez les anciens. Parfois on n'en indique même pas la composition.

Peu à peu naît le souci d'adapter le chœur à la personne en scène et au lieu: d'où le parti de mettre plusieurs chœurs différemment composés. . . .

Liaison du chœur à l'action; chœurs chantants et chœurs parlants. Souvent aucune liaison.

Fonction du chœur: exprimer la moralité du fait tragique, en plaignant les victimes.

Autre fonction: séparer les actes; d'où pas de chœur, en règle générale, à la fin du V<sup>e</sup> acte; et au besoin séparer dans le cours d'un acte les scènes qui supposent un intervalle de temps, ou un changement de lieu.<sup>5</sup>

If we relate these remarks to Garnier we see that his use of the chorus follows a similar line of development. In the earlier plays, he seems to place choral odes between acts simply because there are choruses (though not usually the same ones) between acts in the plays he is imitating. That is, there are choral odes between the acts of Seneca's plays and there are choral odes used in the same way, though there is no formal division into acts, in the Greek plays. Later, as we shall see, Garnier clearly manages to relate the chorus to the persons on stage as well as to the central action of the play. In this way, he more nearly attains the level of the Greek plays than he did in the early imitations (which, in form, are more definitely influenced by Seneca than are the later plays) by integrating the chorus to the action and to the theme as he has envisioned it.

In order to evaluate Garnier's personal capability in utilizing the chorus we must not only state the functions, both technical and aesthetic, of the chorus in Greek drama (in order to compare the function of Garnier's choruses); we must also consider the use of the chorus by Seneca, whose influence on Garnier is generally

accepted.<sup>6</sup> We finally hope to establish that Garnier's skill in handling the chorus is not dependent upon his imitation of the Greeks or of Seneca, but rather on his understanding of the Greek presentation of the chorus.

We have, therefore, divided the body of our study into the following four parts. In Chapter II we have set down the results of our inspection of the choruses in the works of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Seneca, supporting our statements by reference to critics and scholars who have specialized in classical studies. In addition, we have presented the few notes to be gleaned from the theoretical material written in the sixteenth century regarding the theater. In Chapter III we have presented, in written and in tabular form, all the pertinent information related to the actual number of passages borrowed by Garnier from other authors, as well as the internal relationship between the choruses and the plays as a whole. This provides a point of reference for our remarks in Chapter IV, where we have discussed in detail the seven plays of Garnier in which there are choruses. In Chapter V, we have attempted to demonstrate the affinity of Garnier's handling of the chorus to that of the Greek tragedians by comparing Garnier's original play, Les Juifves, to a representative play, the well-known Oedipus Rex of Sophocles. In a concluding chapter we have attempted to sum up and present the results of our consideration of this subject.

## CHAPTER II

### THE THEORY OF THE CHORUS PRIOR TO GARNIER

Before discussing the individual authors who had some influence on Garnier's use of the chorus, let us consider the development of the chorus and its general characteristics in Greek drama. A chorus of singers and dancers was an integral part of the religious rites which were held in honor of Dionysus before the first known Greek tragedies were produced. "Tragedy" of a simple kind began when Thespis placed an impersonating actor on the stage with the chorus. Then Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides modified the chorus and actor(s) both by regulating the size of the chorus and the number of actors and by altering their respective dramatic importance. Each of these authors handled the chorus somewhat differently, but despite the increasing number of actors (though never allowing more than three on the stage at once) and despite the complication of action, none of them completely abandoned the form.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout these plays the chorus remains an integral part, or an indispensable "actor," whose functions quite nearly run the gamut of all dramatic functions, including some that an individual actor could not perform well and some, on the other hand, that an individual actor could conceivably perform with more ease and greater verisimilitude.



Because of the standard composition of the Greek Tragedy, the chorus, as well as being obliged to remain on stage throughout the performance, was forced to sing choral odes at various intervals. In this way it performed (purposefully or not) the function of an entr'acte or simply a curtain to show elapsed time.<sup>8</sup> In these choral odes, depending upon the skill of the poet, the chorus could perform any of the following functions: "utter emotions that can be expressed only in lyric poetry, . . . say things which the audience longs to have said, but which cannot be said by any character on the stage;"<sup>9</sup> "expound the past, comment on the present, forebode the future. . . [provide] the past with a mouthpiece and the spectator with a counterpart of himself;"<sup>10</sup> bring about the "creation of atmosphere, of contrast, of escape and relief,"<sup>11</sup> praise good and implore the gods. The weakest managing of these choral odes places before us a group of helpless spectators who frequently discuss irrelevant subjects; the best presents a group which, in the initial song, unites itself with the action and explains its relation to it, thereby aiding the general exposition, and which, throughout the play, develops atmosphere, relieves dramatic tension (while maintaining the train of thought), and reports new events.

The functions discussed in the last paragraph are of

such a nature that they would either not be normally as well managed by an individual character or would at least be well-suited to a chorus. The Greek poets, however, also used the chorus in situations where they might have more fittingly used an individual character. Certainly, it would seem strange to a modern audience to see a chorus of fifteen old men or young women in rapid-fire conversation with one of the actors.<sup>12</sup> Yet such conversations are repeatedly seen in the Greek Tragedy. The technical difficulty alone would seem enough to dissuade the poets from such constant use of the chorus in this way. The dividing of the chorus into two halves for short conversational passages seems a bit more plausible, but even in these cases one might well prefer to see two individuals present the material with greater freedom of gesture and ease of speech. Gestures and variations in intonation may be forgotten in lyric passages but they seem quite necessary (at least to this writer) in conversational passages. Dramatically speaking, it must be admitted that, on the whole, the choruses in the Greek tragedies were intimately concerned with the action and, therefore, forgetting the theatrical difficulties, we can see that they had sufficient motivation to engage in these conversations.<sup>13</sup>

THE CHORUS IN AESCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, AND EURIPIDES

Passing now to a consideration of the use of the chorus by the three great Greek tragedians and finally by Seneca, we are fortunate to find that their chronological order corresponds to the order of magnitude of their influence on Garnier from least to greatest.

Although Aeschylus apparently did not provide Garnier with any choral passages, it is worth noting that his choruses perform all the major functions performed by those of the later poets, who exerted a more direct influence on Garnier. Choruses enter into conversation, divide themselves into semi-choruses and, at one point, into fifteen individual speakers.<sup>14</sup> The most admirable characteristic of Aeschylus' choruses is that they are definitely and inextricably tied up with the intrigue and theme of each play. As a matter of fact, they are frequently the principal character, witness the titles, The Furies, The Persians, and, particularly, The Suppliants, in which the chorus is the protagonist.<sup>15</sup> In this latter play, the daughters of Danaus who form the chorus have come to Argos to claim refuge from the Egyptian men who have attempted illegal marriage with them. Their odes, well-spaced, are fitting and relevant to the action of the play, and their conversational passages are always well-justified, for, as they are so intimately connected with

the particular set of events, the spectator naturally is interested in their immediate reaction to each new development.<sup>15</sup> All of the choruses of Aeschylus are equally well-defined. This is an easier task for him than for our later dramatists since he has but one chorus in each play, and each chorus has a particular title, viz., "Chorus of aged Persians," "Chorus of Nymphs, daughters of Ocean," etc.

Sophocles, to whom Garnier turned only once for a choral passage, handles the chorus theatrically in much the same way as Aeschylus, with choral odes, conversations, and semi-choruses. As is true with each of the Greek dramatists, there is no formal division into acts, and, therefore, these choral odes serve to divide scenes or "acts," sometimes showing passage of time. In the odes of Sophocles, the choruses function particularly well, providing the necessary relief between scenes, yet remaining relevant and connecting themselves to either the preceding or the following speech by answering, questioning or commenting. Mendell suggests that the choral odes become more important with Sophocles as a result of the latter's interest in plot and character: odes mark a stage of plot development and do not disturb character development in the body of the play.<sup>17</sup> Again, as in Aeschylus, the conversational passages are justified by the relation-

ship of the chorus to the situations and are important in the further development of the action. Recalling our remarks about the theatrical difficulty of presenting the chorus in conversation, consider the problem raised when the chorus of Theban elders advances threateningly upon Creon as he orders his followers to abduct Antigone. Here the members of the chorus are unable to harm Creon, but apparently they attempt to do so and actually seize him, continuing, in the meantime, a rather heated conversation.

Many critics have questioned the skill of Euripides in handling the chorus. A typical remark is that of Emile Personneaux: "Enfin, dans les tragedies d'Euripede, le choeur n'est plus qu'un ornement exterieur, ses chants sont tout a fait episodiques et sans rapport avec l'action."<sup>18</sup> It would seem that such unfavorable judgments have their origin in this condemnation of Euripides' choruses made by Aristotle in his Poetics: "The chorus too should be regarded as one of the actors; it should be an integral part of the whole, and take a share in the action - that which it has in Sophocles rather than in Euripides."<sup>19</sup>

Much less critical of Euripides is Clarence Mendell, who writes:

The fact remains, however, that, on the whole, the odes of Euripides are relevant to the action of the play, and that, so far as the other functions of the chorus are concerned, he was not materially different from Sophocles.<sup>20</sup>

We are inclined to agree with Mendell's appraisal of Euripides, particularly since we feel that the few passages of Garnier's Troade derived from Euripides demonstrates a rather skillful use of the chorus (see our discussion of La Troade, Chapter IV). Admittedly, Euripides' chorus occasionally indulges in inane and unnecessary statements during pauses in a dialogue between two of the actors. As these interruptions usually add nothing to the action, nor to our edification, they may be the cause of Aristotle's and others' criticism of Euripides' chorus. On the other hand, however, the chorus in Euripides' plays frequently provides a good "finis" to the work, proposing a moral to be gained from the play or wishing bon voyage to the departing heroes. On occasions, too, Euripides' choruses make a statement worth remembering: "Les femmes entravent toujours les destinees des hommes et font obstacle a leur felicite."<sup>21</sup>

#### THE CHORUS IN SENECA

As we leave the Greek dramatists and pass to a discussion of the Roman, Seneca, who exerted the greatest single influence on Garnier, there are two points to be kept in mind. In the first place, Seneca was not writing for the stage; his drama is rhetorical in nature and purpose.<sup>22</sup> Secondly, the tendencies towards increasing

the complication of the plot and towards decreasing the relevance of the chorus to the action which began with Sophocles and Euripides become marked in Seneca. Considering this, it is not surprising that Seneca's use of the chorus is severely criticized: "After this [i.e. after the Greeks] it is only its bare dishevelled ghost that wails between the acts of the tragedies of Seneca."<sup>23</sup>

As is implied by the previous quotation, Seneca's major use of the chorus was to have it "wail" choral odes between the acts. These were sung at the end of the first four acts, not after the fifth act.<sup>24</sup> A few odes are found within the acts, filling in gaps rather artificially. After considering the subject matter of all the choral odes in Seneca's dramas, Mr. Mendell concludes that about half are relevant to the particular play and about half are irrelevant, and are usually long reflections on Stoic philosophy.<sup>25</sup> His conclusions are similar to those of Böhn.<sup>26</sup> Another important observation made by Mr. Mendell is that, though the choral odes do serve as breaks in dramatic recital, they do not fill natural intervals in the action. Not only is this true, but such choruses are frequently not clearly identified.

The faults mentioned above may be partially explained by the first point made earlier: that Seneca's drama is rhetorical in nature and purpose. As for further development of the second point (the decreasing relevancy of the

chorus to the action), a rather complete study of the plots of some representative plays would be necessary and, as Seneca is not our main concern, we rely upon the judgments of Mendell regarding the increasing lack of importance of the chorus in his plays, judgments which are substantially the same as those we reached in our own study. Our purposes are best served by this excellent summary of the tendencies of Seneca's choruses:

To summarize, the odes in the Senecan plays have not a natural and necessary function but are used almost exclusively to mark divisions between acts. They are not either choral or truly lyric in quality but use lyric meters and would probably have been designated as such if a Roman critic had tried to classify them. They develop the themes of current popular wisdom, dressing it up with a considerable amount of learning. They are rather an accessory to the play than an integral part of it.<sup>27</sup>

#### THE CHORUS IN SIXTEENTH CENTURY DRAMATIC THEORY

It is known that many translations and adaptations of Greek and Roman works of art were extant at the time that Garnier began to write.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, there was very little material (that is known today) on dramatic theory, particularly on the use of the chorus. Not only was there very little, but also, as Lanson says, neither the authority nor the diffusion of these theoretical works should be exaggerated.<sup>29</sup>

Bernage, in his Etude sur Robert Garnier, claims that Garnier follows Scaliger's Poétique for the structure of



his plays.<sup>30</sup> Regarding the chorus, Scaliger, whose work is an inaccurate paraphrase of Aristotle's Poetics,<sup>31</sup> tells his reader that the chorus was used to divide acts (though he does point out the lack of this formal division in Greek plays) and enters upon a complex discussion of the number of acts in reference to the number of choruses. One valuable statement that he makes is, "The subject matter of the chorus is to be derived from the nature of the plot, either of the play as a whole, or of the circumstances of place, person, and the like, in the immediate context."<sup>32</sup> He also mentions the possibility of using the chorus in conversation. Other sixteenth century theorists whose works might have been known by Garnier are Jean de la Taille, Jacques Peletier du Mans, and Jacques Grévin. The former simply points out the use of the chorus in singing choral odes between acts to comment on preceding action.<sup>33</sup> Peletier du Mans states that the chorus should be a mouthpiece for the author and advises dramatists to follow Sophocles and Euripides, and also Seneca, with discretion.<sup>34</sup> Grévin defends himself for not using a singing chorus in his tragedy, César. His reasoning, based on a naive notion of the necessity for realism, with no understanding of the dramatic value of a chorus, leads him to conclude that he can do without choruses because "entre les Francois il y a d'autres moyens

de ce faire sans interrompre le discours d'une histoire."<sup>35</sup>  
We believe that the reader will agree, after observing Garnier's use of the chorus as discussed in Chapter IV, that, though Garnier might have known these works, he did not adhere to them in deciding on the handling of his choruses. On the contrary, he found inspiration and guidance in the original classic works of the authors we have discussed in this chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CHORUSES AND IMITATIONS

Before proceeding to an analysis of Garnier's treatment of the chorus in individual plays, we should like to state what we feel is intimated by a statistical analysis of the plays and choruses, considering the number of passages and lines of choral speech in relation to the totals for the plays, the relative number of passages and lines borrowed, and the relative amount of conversational passages and odes uttered by the chorus. The following explanatory material and the charts at the end of this chapter are intended to guide the reader when references are made (in Chapter IV) to the various borrowings; they also present some specific material (along with that in Chapter IV) upon which to base our final judgments in Chapters V and VI.

As has been mentioned previously, Garnier was acquainted with Seneca, Euripides, Sophocles, and Aeschylus. He also knew other Latin and Greek poets. Restricting ourselves to his borrowings for use in his choruses, we find he has turned to Seneca most frequently; in sixteen cases for long choral odes to separate acts or scenes, in only two cases for conversational passages. He borrowed only three speeches from Euripides, grouped together at the

end of Act I of La Troade: the first two are conversational, the last an ode ending the act. From Sophocles he borrowed only one ode; to this might be added Garnier's indebtedness to Sophocles in developing the attitude of the chorus at the end of Antigone. Finally it is evident that Garnier imitated Horace in two odes.

We have developed our statistics from the notes to the Pinvert edition of Garnier's works and from our own examination of Greek and Latin works in translation. Considering the precise nature of Pinvert's notes and our own painstaking comparison of Garnier's works with those of previous authors, we feel justified in designating all passages for which sources have not been found as being, in all probability, original with Garnier.<sup>35</sup>

Garnier's total dramatic production contains 149 choral passages of varying numbers of lines, excluding those of "Les Roynes" in Les Juifves. Of all these passages, only twenty-seven have a direct source, twenty-five in other plays, two in lyric poems. Therefore, one might assume that the verses uttered by the majority of Garnier's choruses are original. However, the reader will note that, while very few conversational passages are copied from other dramatists, about half of the choral odes are copied from, or find their inspiration in, other authors. Out of a total of 108 conversational passages

only five are noted as having been borrowed from other authors; out of forty-one choral odes, twenty-two owe their words or inspiration to other authors. From the standpoint of the number of lines, our results show that, out of a total of 3527 lines there are 480 lines of conversation and 3047 lines of choral ode passages. Sixty-four lines of conversation are directly borrowed; 1426 lines of ode find their inspiration in other authors. This means that Garnier was indebted to his predecessors for 1490 lines out of 3527 or forty-two per cent of all choral lines.<sup>37</sup>

Concerning conversational choruses, it is not surprising that Garnier should be limited in his borrowings. Three factors affect the situation: (1) One play, Les Juives, is completely original with Garnier. There is no possible play outstanding as a source of conversation. (2) Three plays are based on Latin tragedies by Seneca, who used choruses in conversation very infrequently. Garnier, therefore, had difficulty in finding conversational passages in context in his models. (3) Garnier's three remaining plays (of those which contain any chorus at all), though Greek in subject, are also based for the most part upon Seneca's treatment of the subjects. Our dramatist was, therefore, faced with the same lack of conversational passages in context as he was in preceding

plays. Only once, apparently, did he solve this problem by turning to a Greek author for a conversational passage. Speaking of context, it is worth noting that, although half of the choral odes are imitations or translations of other authors, only two of them are taken from an equivalent context. In other words, Garnier chooses odes from the many plays at hand and modifies them to suit the particular context in which he places them. As we shall see in Chapter IV he steadily improves in his handling of these borrowed odes, as well as in creating original ones.

TABLE I  
SUMMARY OF DIRECT BORROWINGS  
FOR THE CHORUSES IN GARNIER

<u>Borrowed from:</u>	<u>For use in:</u>	<u>Lines:</u>	<u>Type:</u>
<u>SENECA</u>			
<u>Hippolyte</u>	<u>Porcie</u>	151-198	General ode
<u>Hippolyte</u>	<u>Porcie</u>	927-1,002	General ode
<u>Hercule sur</u> <u>Oeta</u>	<u>Cornélie</u>	551-622	General ode (idea only)
<u>Hercule sur</u> <u>Oeta</u>	<u>Cornélie</u>	1,236-1,301	Ode (idea only)
<u>Agamemnon</u>	<u>Marc-Antoine</u>	321-387	Ode (paraphrase)
<u>Hippolyte</u>	<u>Hippolyte</u>	285-380	Ode (loose)
<u>Hippolyte</u>	<u>Hippolyte</u>	875-976	Ode (loose)
<u>Les Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	125-156	Ode
<u>Les Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	181-188	Conversational
		213-230	235-256 Passages
<u>Les Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	1,136-1,232	Ode
<u>Les Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	1,283-1,284	Conversational Passage
<u>Les Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	1,321-1,373	Ode
<u>Medee</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	1,743-1,802	Ode
<u>Les Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	1,981-2,034	Ode
<u>Oedipe</u>	<u>Antigone</u>	402-466	Ode
<u>Oedipe</u>	<u>Antigone</u>	595-654	Ode
<u>Agamemnon</u>	<u>Antigone</u>	935-982	Ode
<u>Oedipe</u>	<u>Antigone</u>	1,455-1,514	Ode
<u>EURIPIDES:</u>			
<u>Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	273-275	Conversational
		277	passages
<u>Les Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	441-444	Conversational
			passage
<u>Les Troyennes</u>	<u>La Troade</u>	445-555	Ode
<u>SOPHOCLES</u>			
<u>Antigone</u>	<u>Antigone</u>	2,326-2,415	Ode
<u>HORACE</u>			
<u>Epode II</u>	<u>Porcie</u>	283-402	Ode
<u>Ode III:3</u>	<u>Porcie</u>	647-684	Ode

TABLE II

## COMPARISON OF CHORAL PASSAGES, BORROWED AND ORIGINAL

	<u>Porcie</u>	<u>Cornélie</u>	<u>Marc- Antoine</u>	<u>Hippo- lyte</u>	<u>Troade</u>	<u>Antigone</u>	<u>Juifves</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Passages in the play	203	214	191	208	350	365	397	1,928
Passages by the chorus	19	24	5	5	29	44	23	149
(Conversational)	13	19	xx	xx	23	36	17	108
(Odes)	6	5	5	5	6	8	6	41
Borrowed choral passages	4	2	1	2	13	5	xx	27
Percentage of choral passages in the play	10	11	03	02	08	12	06	08
Percentage of conversational passages in total choral passages	65	79	xx	xx	79	82	74	72
Percentage of choral odes in total choral passages	35	21	100	100	21	18	26	28



TABLE III

## COMPARISON OF CHORAL LINES, BORROWED AND ORIGINAL

	<u>Porcie</u>	<u>Cornélie</u>	<u>Marc- Antoine</u>	<u>Hippo- lyte</u>	<u>Troade</u>	<u>Antigone</u>	<u>Juifves</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Lines in the play	1,988	1,943	2,001	2,383	2,664	2,741	2,172	15,892
Lines by the chorus	489	428	450	400	629	608	523	3,527
(Conversational)	87	62	xxx	xxx	167	89	75	480
(Odes)	402	366	450	400	462	519	448	3,047
Choral lines borrowed	292	138	65	198	474	323	xxx	1,490
Percentage of choral lines in the play	25	22	22	17	24	22	24	xx
Percentage of conversational lines in total choral lines	18	14	xx	xx	27	15	14	xx
Percentage of lines of odes in total choral lines	82	86	100	100	73	85	86	xx

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE CHORAL ELEMENTS IN THE PLAYS OF ROBERT GARNIER

In preceding chapters we have discussed the technical and aesthetic functions of the chorus as used by the Greek tragedians and by Seneca, and have presented the results of our statistical analysis of Garnier's direct borrowings from these and other authors. Now we shall analyze the functions of the choruses in the individual plays of Garnier, attempting to demonstrate his increasing ability to make an individual chorus, as a character, an integral part of the play in which it is found, to make choral odes relevant to the subject matter of the play, and to make conversational passages fitting and necessary to a further development of the action. Because we feel that this improvement in his handling of the chorus is paralleled by a general improvement in his dramatic and theatrical technique, we shall include such general remarks about his technique as seem important for each group of plays. Finally, referring to Chapter III, we shall consider the possibilities of any direct influence on Garnier's handling of the chorus by the authors from whom he borrows the particular passages discussed.

In attempting to organize the plays themselves, we naturally find a number of possible ways to group them.

An obvious and convenient arrangement would be to divide them into three well-defined subject-matter groups which are nearly chronological. The first three, Porcie (1568), Cornélie (1574), and Marc-Antoine (1578) all deal with some Roman subject. The next three, Hippolyte (1573), La Troade (1579), and Antigone (1580) treat of topics of Greek origin. The last play, Les Juifves (1583), is original and based on Biblical history. We shall not discuss Bradamante in any detail since it does not contain a chorus.

Neither the latter grouping, however, nor a strictly chronological one would be suitable for a discussion of the development of Garnier's skill in handling the chorus, which is our primary interest. Examining the plays from this point of view (without going too far astray from the chronological order), we find they fall into the following categories: First, Porcie and Cornélie, plays in which choral odes of little relevancy are used to separate acts and scenes and in which there are conversational passages of some dramatic value uttered by the chorus. Second, we consider Marc-Antoine and Hippolyte, in which there are no conversational passages by the choruses but in which the choral odes (separating acts and scenes) show an increased specific relation to the action of the plays. Third, we return to two more plays, La Troade and Antigone, in which there are both choral odes to separate acts and

scenes, and also conversational passages. In these we see an improvement in the use of both forms of choral speech. Finally, we consider Les Juifves, a play containing a chorus used much as the last two, but one which is original and of different subject matter and, therefore, to be considered separately.

### CORNÉLIE AND PORCIE

Cornélie and Porcie are plays set in a Roman background whose themes reflect the author's early preoccupation with civil unrest in France. This should be remembered when considering the functions of the choral odes in relation to the central topics of the plays. We use the term "topics" rather than "actions" because there is literally no action in either play.

#### Integration of the Choruses with the Plays

Although both choral groups are merely superficially related to the outcome of the plays, there is a definite intimate relationship between each chorus and each central character. In Cornélie the women quite clearly take the role of a confidante, and in Porcie they have a similar, though not so clearly marked, position. In each case, Garnier's choice of a choral group was good, but he did not manage to maintain their intimacy throughout the plays and he did not treat them in such a way as to make their

fate dependent upon that of the central characters.

### Choral Odes

The first act of each play consists of a single long speech followed by a choral ode separating it from Act II. Neither the speeches nor the odes are relevant to the central topic, since they are more concerned with the general misfortune of Rome than with the fate of the central characters of the plays. In these odes the tone is thereby set for the majority of the following choruses and for much of the dialogue of the other characters.

In each play, Acts II, III, and IV are also ended (or separated from the following act) by choral odes. Garnier fails to make these more relevant to the central topics than the first odes were. The problem of the civil war and the resulting unhappiness of the Roman people and a constant restatement of unoriginal ideas about Fate's fickleness are the main subjects of these odes. The same is true of the one remaining ode in each play: used to separate scenes (within Act III in Porcie, within Act IV in Cornélie), they are not related closely to either the preceding or the following scenes. However, the one in Cornélie is related in part to the preceding discussion between Cassie and Décime Brute in which Cassie has stated his determination to prevent César's ascent to power. The chorus opens with a few words of praise for those who

brave the tyrant's wrath and then goes on to develop the hazards of being a tyrant, ending on a pastoral note with the remark that one is "better off" living the shepherd's life.

Among the odes sung between the acts there are some which have a similar partial relevancy. In Porcie, end of Act II, before commencing a general and somewhat unclear discussion of the power of Vertu over Fortune, the chorus states its hope that the news of defeat is not true. We are not further enlightened about the defeat, but on second reading of the play one feels they must have had early news about Brute's and Cassie's defeat and are making a weak attempt at foreshadowing. At the end of Act III, in the same play, it is the "Choeur de Soudars" which makes the break, instead of the simple "Choeur," and the soldiers relate their remarks to the previously revealed information that the war is over. They want their pay. Not satisfied with this comparatively relevant statement, however, they go on to deplore the shame of fighting against fellow Romans when so much greater glory can be gained fighting on foreign soil, recalling to the reader Garnier's interest in using these plays to point up the shame of civil war in France. The ode separating Acts IV and V of Cornélie is connected loosely to the preceding scene in which we have seen Cesar's better characteristics manifested in his

talk with Marc-Antoine. The chorus ("Choeur de Césariniens, not the simple "Choeur" seen elsewhere in the play) comes in on cue to pray for César's safety and to praise him for his justice and his military prowess. In other words, even those choral odes which may be considered partially relevant do not further the exposition or the development of the climax of the central topic of either play.

### Conversational Passages

The situation is different when we turn to the use of the chorus in conversation. In Cornélie and Porcie the amount of conversation is slight, but in each case the presence of the chorus can be justified. Each group consists of Roman women. In Porcie they are given the title, "Choeur de Romaines," and, in the Dramatis Personae, are listed separately from the simple "Choeur" used for odes. In Cornélie no distinction of this sort is made but we can be fairly certain that they, too, are Roman women, probably ladies-in-waiting to Cornélie. They serve, in Act V of Porcie, as the interrogator to whom La Nourrice recounts the final "tragic" act of the play: the self-inflicted death of Porcie. They increase their usefulness by helping La Nourrice to lament her mistress' death in an interesting kommos. La Nourrice, to finish things properly, returns to alexandrines for her final speech before killing herself. Acting as a confidante in Cornélie, Act III, the chorus

helps in revealing the general unhappiness of Cornélie as it converses with her, and together they present some foreshadowing of the final outcome. Again showing themselves to be intimately concerned with Cornélie, the Roman women are present in the final act doing their best to console her. Their remarks between the speeches of Cornélie and Le Messager recall those of some choruses in Euripides.

### Influence of Borrowed Choral Passages

We feel nothing definitive can be stated regarding any change in relevancy as being dependent on the sources of these choruses. In both plays the conversational passages are original.<sup>38</sup> In Cornélie, two choruses, the one ending Act II and the one separating scenes in Act IV, are based on ideas taken from Seneca's Hercule sur Oéta.<sup>39</sup> The slight relevancy of the latter, then, can be ascribed to Garnier's choosing and handling of the chorus rather than to Seneca's handling of same, since it is out of the original context in Garnier's play. In Porcie, of the four borrowed choruses, only one can be considered pertinent, the one closing Act II. It's relevancy, since it is taken out of context from Horace, Ode III:3,<sup>40</sup> can also be ascribed to Garnier's handling of it.



MARC-ANTOINE AND HIPPOLYTE

The two plays of Garnier in which the choruses are used only for choral odes, never for conversation, are Marc-Antoine and Hippolyte. Although they differ in their setting, the former belonging to the group of Roman plays and the latter to the Greek plays, these works are similar, not only in their use of the chorus, but also from the point of view of content and form. In both, the passion of love is the force which motivates the principal characters and initiates the tragic action. The action becomes clearer and more central than it was in Porcie and Cornélie, where the tragic sufferers were individual enough but not well developed. Their fate was not continually the central interest. Note, too, that we can use the term "action" for both of these plays. Of course, there are still long passages with apparently no action or business on stage during their recital, but there is at least a beginning of dramatic and theatrical technique in both plays. Hippolyte's body is brought on stage and Phèdre kills herself before the audience at the end of Hippolyte. In Marc-Antoine, the final act has two dramatic scenes: the farewell of Cléopâtre to her children and Cléopâtre's own suicide.

### Integration of the Choruses with the Plays

The choruses in each play are composed of groups not intimately concerned with the plot of the play, that is the fate of the principal characters. In Marc-Antoine, there are two choral groups, "Le Choeur d'Egyptiens" and "Le Choeur de soldars de César." The former is the one designated as the "Choeur" at the end of Acts I, II, III, and within Act II; the latter is clearly designated at the end of Act IV. There are also two choral groups in Hippolyte, a "Choeur de chasseurs" which presents the ode at the end of Act I and a "Choeur d'Athéniens" which sings the four remaining odes. None of these groups can be considered as personally involved with the outcome of the central action. From this point of view, then, the choruses show no improvement over those discussed above.

### Choral Odes

It is when we consider the words uttered by these groups that we see how Garnier has integrated the content of the choral odes with the action of the plays. Admittedly, the first three odes in Marc-Antoine are of a general nature, similar to those in preceding plays, but, separating Acts III and IV, there is an ode sung by the "Choeur" which is a statement of their approbation of suicide, a statement clearly related to the previous discussion between Marc-Antoine and Lucile. In fact, it becomes specific

at line 328 as the Egyptians state:

Heureux en son malheur Antoine,  
 Et bien heureuse nostre royne,  
 Qui vont leurs vies estouffer,  
 Pour frauder la dextre félonne  
 Du vainqueur qui les environne,  
 Si désireux de trionfer.

Not quite so specific, but equally supplementary to a preceding discussion (that of Agrippe and Cesar), is the fifth and last choral ode of the play, ending Act IV. The chorus generalizes at first about the unhappiness concerning the "guerre domestique," but then they recall César's words as they emphasize the importance of having one leader:

Mais désormais que la grand' Romme  
 Est sous le pouvoir d'un seul homme,  
 Qui régist sans débat d'aucun  
 Son empire remis en un,  
 Naguières sous la force égale  
 De trois, l'un de l'autre envieux,  
 Qui travailloyent la pauvre Itale  
 D'un triple joug pernicieux:41

Hippolyte offers three excellent examples of odes which are relevant and aid in the development and our understanding of the plot. It seems a shame, that, having taken this step to improve his chorus, Garnier should waste the initial chorus (end of Act I), that would be best used for expository purposes, on such a general subject as the "hunt." The first of the three examples redeems him, however. It is an ode at the end of Act II which, though somewhat repetitious, earns its raison d'être

by evoking the overpowering aspect of the passion of love, as it torments men under the control of the god of love and by recalling to us, in the final strophe, the particular problem of this play: Phèdre's incestuous love for Hippolyte:

Pourquoy encore espandez-vous  
 Vostre insatiable courroux  
 Sur ceste misérable dame,  
 Luy faisant par trop de rigueur  
 Rostir bourrellement le coeur  
 En une incestueuse flame?<sup>42</sup>

At the end of Acts III and IV also, Garnier inserts choral odes which are equally pertinent to the central action (and at the same time discourse upon the general subjects in an elevated tone). The ode at the end of Act III may be divided into three parts: 1. The chorus prays for the city and for their leader (lines 522 to 539). 2. It remarks upon the fury of an emotional woman (lines 540 to 602). 3. It voices its hope that the punishment of the gods will fall back on Phèdre, the plotter, rather than on Hippolyte (lines 603 to 610). Recalling to us the odes from Marc-Antoine discussed above, the ode ending Act IV is directly related to the preceding speeches of Thésée and of La Nourrice. Thésée has cursed Hippolyte upon believing the lie told him by Phèdre (that Hippolyte dishonored her) and has asked the god Neptune to punish him. La Nourrice, ashamed of her complicity, has cried out her contrition. The chorus chimes in on key and points

out that it is the gods who are and should be the final judges of good and evil and decide who is guilty of any evil act. They ask, using an apostrophe to Neptune, why he does not render this crime evident, and pray to him that he not listen to Thesee's words spoken in anger and haste. Some well-chosen general remarks on the danger of anger end the ode, one that shows a fine balance between the particular and the universal.

### Influence of Borrowed Passages

The only chorus in Marc-Antoine that is a paraphrase of another author's work is the ode separating scenes in Act II. This one is taken from Seneca's Agamemnon, and we observe, as we have before and shall again, that it is taken out of context for use in this play. Moreover, this is not one of the better odes from the point of view of pertinency to the action.

The first two odes in Hippolyte are borrowed, also from Seneca. In these cases they are taken from Seneca's play of the same name, but, as the notes to the Pinvert edition point out,<sup>43</sup> the first is but a free imitation of the Senecan chorus and the second simply finds its inspiration in the Roman's ode. Again, the first one is not relevant, and the second one is relevant only because of lines which are original with Garnier,<sup>44</sup> causing us to conclude that Garnier's imitation of these three odes for Marc-Antoine and Hippolyte has not fundamentally affected

his handling of the choruses.

### ANTIGONE AND LA TROADE

As is the case of the previous classifications, we have placed Antigone and La Troade together because we feel that their choruses are somewhat similar to each other and show another advance in the development of Garnier's technique. Moreover, these plays are similar generally in form by their comparatively greater length and their portrayal of more action on stage. Each play is, of course, concerned with a well-known Greek subject and Garnier treats each one thoroughly, filling in parts of the stories by choral odes with historical content and by expository dialogues. He manages, in each case, to develop a well-knit plot (though somewhat overloaded with details) by choosing parts from the works of various previous authors and adapting them for each play. Though Antigone is more original, less dependent upon one particular author than is La Troade, we would dispute the statement that La Troade is nothing but a copy of Seneca's play of the same name.

#### Integration of the Choruses with the Plays

The choruses in these plays are, as characters, much more intimately concerned with the outcome and/or with the central characters than those in the preceding plays. In La Troade, "Le Choeur de femmes troyennes," the only one,

is personally concerned with the decisions of the Greeks since it is composed of captives whose fate hangs in the balance, a fact which is frequently noted in the odes. They are also concerned with the central female characters and actively show their interest in Hécube on two occasions.<sup>45</sup> We consider them an integral part of this play. In Antigone, Garnier manages to make his chorus more intimately concerned with the action by making it plural: that is, by creating three separate choruses, one to fit each group of characters or to voice each type of emotion. "Le chœur de Thébains" is the basic one, voicing most of the choral odes, theirs being more general than the others, but in each case specific at some point in the ode, and engaging in conversation in Act V for the purpose of interrogating Le Messenger. The "Chœur de filles thébaines" is used for conversation with Antigone in Act IV and to intone at least one, possibly two, choral odes at the end of the Act. They are naturally a more fitting group than either of the other two to be with Antigone and to express their sorrow over her fate in the ode following her withdrawal into the tomb and preceding Hémon's grand entrance. The ode following Hémon's speech is designated simply "Chœur." We feel that from the point of view of content it might well be sung by any of the groups, but that technically it would be more convenient to have the "Chœur de

filles" sing it as they are already on stage. The "Choeur de Vieillards" is not so intimately concerned with the action, but its age and personality is very fitting for the words it must speak. It is apparently composed of men who are elders of the court: whose position causes them to side with Creon in general, but whose age and sense of justice make them feel sympathetic towards Antigone and Hemon. We feel it is they who sing the choral ode following their conversation with Créon, though the designation is again simply "Choeur." These three choruses, then, have personalities of their own and are somewhat concerned with the characters and the outcome.

### Choral Odes

As we have implied above, Garnier continues to increase the importance and relevancy of the content of the odes in these plays as he began to do in Marc-Antoine and Hippolyte. A closer observation of each ode will prove this.

The first ode in La Troade separates Act I from Act II, completing an act in which Garnier has exhibited his improved ability at exposition. Most of the particular problems of the play are already posed and it is therefore very fitting to have the chorus fill in the general background leading up to these problems as it does in relating the history of the Trojan Horse. This is vital information, given in a complete, clear and interesting fashion. The



next ode is an apostrophe to the sea. The chorus members want to know where they will be taken by the Greeks on the sea. Historical and mythical references tend to make the ode less coherent, but its words remain significant enough to justify its place between Acts II and III. Within Act III, following the scene in which Talthybie tells Hécube and the Choeur that Polyxène is to be sacrificed, the chorus discourses about the soul and its fate after death. This ode, related in mood to the previous scene, is interesting because, though based loosely on Seneca, it voices a Christian rather than a Pagan attitude toward the soul.<sup>46</sup> Again filling in historical background (as at the end of Act I and as we shall see again in Les Juifves), the choral ode at the end of Act III waxes philosophical about the result of the conquering of the sea by Man. It finally becomes specific and mentions Pâris whose sea voyage resulted in the abduction of Hélène, the Trojan War, and their present misfortune. The long plaint in Act IV is found between two scenes in which the deaths of Astyanax and of Polyxène respectively are announced and described. Thus its plaintive tone is very fitting. Moreover, as the chorus has remarked that misfortune is alleviated if those around us are equally troubled, its own "malheurs" are pointed up by contrast with the presence of the jubilant conquering fleet in the harbor. Conveying to us the unhappiness of the times and the degradation in

morals in that era, the final ode, closing Act IV, would be good even if it were not pertinent. The general reflections made upon the disappearance of faithfulness and its replacement by fraud are excellent. When the concrete example, related to the preceding scene, of Polymestor's treacherous killing of Polydore is given, the ode is made complete and pertinent to the action of the play. In sum, the odes in La Troade tend to contain more historical and mythical allusions than the preceding ones but each one is fitting in its place and each has some specific reference to the play itself.

Following another good expository dialogue, the ode separating the first act from the second in Antigone is in the form of a prayer to a god called "Père" or "Denys." The chorus tries to mollify him with remarks on his genealogy and his great deeds, and then pleads for his intercession to stop the war between the two brothers. This is excellent for setting the tone of the play without being too general. The chorus laments the harm done to Thebes by the ambitious desires of each brother in the ode following the scene in Act II in which a messenger tells Iocaste and Antigone that the battle is under way. Mythological references, again only loosely related to the play, make this ode a bit lengthy. But at the end of this last act there is an excellent ode to "make up" for the preceding.

Polynice has just told his mother, Iocaste, that he would let nothing stand in the way of his regaining the throne, and the chorus notes how this lust for power is so terrible that even fraternal love cannot dissuade a man from seeking a throne. They go on to remark how Fate is fickle, especially for those in elevated positions, and finally, recalling their own interest (the "Choeur de Thébains"), they point out that it is the people who suffer when thrones change hands by force. The battle over, the chorus ending Act III emphasizes the fact that neither side has actually won. Both sides have many dead, many left unburied. In this ode we learn that both Polynice and his brother Eteocle have been killed. In the next ode, found within Act IV, the Thebans point out that it is the gods who must be thanked for the victory Thebes has won. It is not an irrelevant ode, but it does seem to be more of a filler here than it might have been had it been placed elsewhere. Another ode separating scenes within Act IV proves to be much more relevant to the scene preceding it, as well as being an excellent work of poetry which might well be considered great even out of this context. The old men reflect upon Justice, a gift of the gods, and upon its misuse. As an example of such misuse, the old men point out that, in having Antigone killed, Créon is not justified, because of her station and the circumstances of her crime,

and because she was to be his daughter-in-law. The third ode, separating scenes in Act IV and sung by the "Choeur de filles," follows the farewell Antigone makes to them before entering her tomb. It is an appealing, well-placed lament. Finally, the ode ending Act IV is again excellent in itself, as well as being pertinent to the preceding action. In its general remarks on love it recalls the ode in Hippolyte, but the example here is quite different. In Hippolyte, the love was an incestuous desire and the primary cause of the tragedy; here we see a more pure emotion which leads Hémon to accept death with Antigone rather than to live without her. As in La Troade, these choruses have some faults such as unnecessary verbiage and irrelevant mythological allusions, but none, except possibly the first one in Act IV, is completely out of place or lacking in relevancy. Both of these plays, then, show a marked improvement over previous ones in the content and presentation of choral odes.

### Conversational Passages

Garnier has employed these choruses in conversation, returning to the same technique used in Cornélie and Porcie. We shall note, however, how far superior is Garnier's managing of this technique in the present plays. In each case they serve a clear and definite function.

In La Troade, we should first note the conversation

of the chorus with Hécube at the beginning of Act I. It is in the form of a kommos and follows the usual Greek pattern in content as well as in form: the chorus helps Hécube to lament. This excessive weeping is characteristic of both this play and Les Juifves. Immediately after this kommos, Hécube reverts to alexandrines and asks them to stop the lament. They have cried enough and, besides, Priam and Hector are now happy and rested, away from the misfortunes of life. The chorus continues in alexandrines for this normal conversational tone as it announces Talthybie's arrival. Before going into the ode ending Act I, the group of Trojan women voice their consternation as they see Hécube faint. They decide to carry her to her tent and then return for the ode. Again speaking with Hécube, to whom they are no doubt ladies-in-waiting, the chorus members, in Act III, question her about her nightmare, announce Talthybie and converse with him. Their final conversational speech in this act is analogous to that of Act I. They speak of entering the tent to comfort Hécube and then begin the ode about the fate of the soul. Next, in Act IV, performing a clearly dramatic function and doing it well, the chorus brings the body of Polydore on stage to Hécube and in the ensuing conversation recounts their finding of it and explains their suspicions of Polymestor, remarking that he is at Thebes at the moment. Hécube and

the chorus plan their revenge and the chorus leaves (after an ode ending the act) to lure Polymestor to Hecube's quarters. In the final set of conversational passages, Garnier shows a still more unique handling of the chorus as it recounts to the audience the action behind stage.<sup>47</sup> It is not, at first, in actual conversation with Hecube or Polymestor but rather speaking between the screams of horror of Polymestor as his sons are killed and his own eyes are gouged out. Then, as Polymestor makes his entrance on stage (exits from Hécube's tent), his eyes flowing black blood, and as he cries for vengeance, the chorus, in what must necessarily be a sarcastic tone, answers: "O pauvre infortune, que tu souffres d'angoisses!" In one final passage they add the moral lesson stating that Polymestor cannot complain about being harmed by one whom he harmed originally.

Perhaps we should have discussed the conversation in these plays in reverse order because, although Garnier's handling of same in Antigone is good, he never is quite so excellent as he is in the latter half of La Troade.

In Antigone, the interesting point is that we can see the distinction of personality of the various groups who present the conversational choruses. First it is the group of old men who converse in Act IV with Creon, then with Antigone and the guards when she is brought in after

committing her crime. They announce Ismene and answer Creon's question, "Ou est-elle?" with "Elle vient--,"<sup>48</sup> at the same time apparently pointing in the direction from which she is coming. After Hémon has left, they warn Créon that Hémon's soul is enflamed with love for Antigone and that Créon should be careful. Throughout these fourteen passages they are quite outspoken in their remarks to Créon. Their statements and questions are all relevant, are an aid in the advancement of the action and are fitting lines to be spoken by elders of the court. The second example is a conversation between the chorus of young ladies and Antigone in Act IV as Antigone is preparing to enter the tomb where she is doomed to die of starvation. They attempt to comfort her calmly in their first two speeches but in the third and last they give vent to their own sorrow at seeing her depart and to their own anger with Créon for his lack of mercy, finally praying for death for themselves. Their function in giving Antigone a listener as she enters the tomb and in helping create the general sorrowful atmosphere is well carried out. The final group of conversational passages, uttered by the "Choeur de Thébains," includes a quick conversation with a messenger through whom we learn of the suicide of Hémon, followed by that of Antigone. The old men continue their conversation with the messenger in a rather lamenting

tone as he describes the death of each of the lovers. In the meantime, Eurydice has entered, heard of her son's death and departed quickly. This causes the chorus and the messenger some anxiety and they discuss the possibility of her committing suicide. As they are about to go after her, Créon enters and they note his sadness. There follows a rather obvious, well-presented, foreshadowing of Eurydice's death. The next few passages by the chorus are spoken to Créon in a very bold, reproving way. They tell him that he has no right to complain, that he brought all on himself and that the only thing to do now is to bury the dead. For the first and only time in Garnier's works, the chorus has the final lines of the play to recite. Speaking to Créon, they formulate the moral of the story:

Vos pertes, vos malheurs que vous avez soufferts  
 Procèdent du mépris du grand dieu des Enfers:  
 Il le faut honorer, et tousjours avoir cure  
 De ne priver aucun du droict de sépulture.<sup>49</sup>

### Influence of Borrowed Passages

To complete this discussion of Antigone and La Troade, following the same plan as we have for the previous groups, let us consider to what degree Garnier's use of the chorus was affected by the authors from whom he borrowed ideas or translated and adapted passages.

One cannot deny the influence of Seneca on the mood and general statements (on Fate particularly) of the



choruses in both plays, and the facts show that the majority of the choral odes either have been borrowed from Seneca, Euripides or Sophocles, or have found inspiration in choruses written by these authors - more so, comparatively, than in any previous play. However, as we see that Garnier changes the content of the choruses slightly and places them in strategic positions in his own dramas, we feel that the fact that he borrowed some words and/or ideas does not notably affect his technique.

In Antigone, five out of the eight odes owe some part of their make-up to a previous author: four to Seneca, one to Sophocles. The former can be easily referred to as they are the first four odes in the play. The first two are adapted from Seneca's Oedipe, therefore, obviously not exactly the same, and used by Garnier out of context. The first parts of the third and fourth are "inspired by" odes from Seneca's Agamemnon and Oedipe respectively, again only somewhat similar, as well as being out of context. The ode borrowed from Sophocles is the one closing Act IV and is taken from his Antigone. It is quite similar but has been changed in position by Garnier. Aside from the fact that Garnier's technique with choral odes is not strongly influenced by his borrowings, there is the important point that apparently none of the conversational passages by choruses are copied from any of the

authors he usually follows. More will be said later on the general influence of these authors regarding the use of conversation, but suffice it to remark that there are very few conversational passages noted as being imitations.

All but one of the odes in La Troade (the last one ending Act IV) are partially based on other authors' works. The ode ending Act II, the one separating scenes in Act IV and the one separating scenes in Act III are taken from Seneca's Troade. For the latter, Garnier simply took the idea from Seneca and developed it in his own way. The other two are fairly close copies. They are placed differently by Garnier. The first is from a chorus at the end of Act III of Seneca's play. The ode between scenes in Act III of Garnier's work is taken from one used at the end of Act II of Seneca. It is well placed in Garnier. The ode between scenes in Act IV is taken from one ending Act IV of Seneca's Troade. In both instances the odes come after a report of sad news (in Seneca about Polyxène's fate, in Garnier about the death of Astyanax); in both the content, a discussion of the way in which misery is alleviated by the sight of others' suffering, is equally suitable in either position. Garnier is neither weaker nor stronger, then, in his use of this chorus than is Seneca. Another ode from Seneca is taken out of context from Médée. This is the one used

to end Act III. From Euripides' Troade Garnier takes one ode, that ending Act I.

Unlike Antigone, La Troade contains examples of conversational passages borrowed from other authors. The first four choral speeches of the play are taken from Seneca's Troade. The last speech in the second group of conversational passages in Act III is also taken from Seneca's Troade. Two conversational speeches are taken from Euripides' Troade. In these cases the close similarity between Garnier's and the other authors' use cannot be denied. There remain, however, fifteen passages of conversation, including the last two groups which we have discussed above, as examples of Garnier's excellent original handling of conversational passages. Thus once again, despite the general increase of borrowed material, we find that such examples of borrowing cannot be cited as proof of Garnier's dependence on Seneca or any other author for the development of his use of the chorus: rather, they are proof of his ability to adapt material at hand to his own advantage.

### LES JUIFVES

For each of the preceding plays, Garnier was able to find source material for the general plots in the number of authors, particularly Plutarch, and had at hand at least

one play from which he could extract various elements and fit them into his own arrangement of the action. For Les Juifves, he was forced to gather all of his source material from various books of the Old Testamen (though some scattered lines were taken from other sources), and he had no play as a model upon which to fashion his own. His motivation to write this play is similar to that of the previous works: a general desire to point up the evil of civil war by describing analogous wars in antiquity. In this play, he attempts to impress his audience with the ultimate dangers of being unfaithful to God, as he considers many of his contemporaries to be.

Although there actually is little further development of most of the particular dramatic techniques in this play beyond that achieved in the last two discussed, Les Juifves is rightfully considered the best of Garnier's dramas. The thread of the plot is picked up shortly before the accomplishment of the tragic action, with just enough time to create the atmosphere (mostly via the choral odes), develop the historical background and the setting (via the choral odes and the monologue of the prophet), and acquaint the audience with enough of the present circumstances to foreshadow the tragic finale and at the same time maintain suspense as to what the final outcome will be. Then, too, Garnier is more successful in

character development in this play and, even though there are not as many examples of increased physical action as there were in the last two plays, there is sufficient action shown on stage to keep the play moving.

### Integration of the Chorus with the Play

The reference to the chorus in the above discussion on the play in general might lead one to conclude that Garnier did not continue his improvement in the handling of the chorus. As will be seen, there is some basis for this conclusion if one appreciates most of the type of odes that are specifically pertinent to the scenes immediately surrounding them. However, just as the play is, considered as a whole, superior to preceding plays, so is the chorus, as a character, superior to all preceding choruses because it is well-integrated with the other characters and is clearly involved with the outcome of the action. This is not surprising when we note the title of the play. The Jewish women are definitely concerned with the action of the play throughout, even though the climactic act is the killing of the grand pontiff and the children of Sédécie, followed by the gouging-out of the latter's eyes, all of which affects the chorus only indirectly. As was the "Choeur de femmes troyennes" in La Troade, this group is composed of captives whose fate is dependent upon that of their masters and mistresses.

They are constantly with Amital to comfort her, weep with her and second her as she pleads with Nebuchodonosor's wife to intercede with him for them.

### Choral Odes

The involvement of the choruses is not so clearly seen in their choral odes as in their conversational passages, but the tone and content of the odes are in keeping with their character and their position in the play. The first ode, ending Act I, is very fitting after the speech of the prophet Jeremiah. The rhetorical question posed is: Why does God, Who made us imperfect, punish us for misdeeds? The chorus answers with a long passage of Biblical history, dwelling upon the story of the sin of Adam and Eve and of the Great Flood. Bringing us up to date and foreshadowing the tragic end of the play, they voice their fear that another flood is about to come upon them. In the following ode, separating scenes in Act II, the chorus relates more of the unhappy history of Israel, putting the blame for most of its misfortune on Egypt. They speak of the righteous anger of God, once appeased by Moses:

Mais l'Eternel, qui de la nue  
 Ces voix de blasphème entendit,  
 Eut l'ame de cholère émeue,  
 Et son bras vengeur étendit:  
 Si que, sans les pleurs de Moyse,  
 Qui appaisèrent son courroux,  
 Sa fureur, justement éprise,  
 Nous eust dès l'heure abysmez tous. 50

This ode is not closely related to the action of the play, but the words spoken are quite natural and to be expected from a group of women who, throughout their lives, have probably had Biblical history frequently recalled to them, and who now consider their misfortunes as just one more instance of the general unhappiness of their race. The ode ending this act should be considered in the same way. In this one, the women make their farewells to their own land and in doing so recall more of the history of Israel. Realizing they must accept the punishment due them, they voice their hope that they may not forget God and His infinite goodness. In the ode ending the third act, we finally find one which is somewhat related to the scene preceding it. Having been asked by Amital to sing in praise of God, they answer that they cannot. They are too overcome with grief. However, they reaffirm their faith and claim that they will not forget Sion. In Act IV, separating scenes, the women reveal their feminine attitude toward their own misfortune as they realize that they have no hope of ever again dressing well, wearing perfumes and jewelry, etc. Their men are nearly all dead and they are doomed to exile and captivity. When they say that they will finish their days weeping, the reader cannot help smilingly noting that they have "gotten off to a fast start." In a tone recalling that of many odes of Senecan influence, the women discuss Fate in the last

ode at the end of Act IV. Their approach is more positive than that of choruses based on Seneca's works: rather than simply pointing out that Fate is fickle, particularly for the aristocracy and political leaders, they admonish their listeners to be temperate about it. One should not become too elated when chance constantly and completely seems to be in his favor. Nor should he despair when all hope seems to be lost. To expand the latter bit of advice, and to relate their statements to the previous occurrences, the slaughter of the Pontiff and the children and the blinding of Sedecie, they state their belief that God will avenge them for these murders.

#### Conversational Passages

The purposes served by the conversations of the chorus are quite obvious. In Act III, their speech with Amital brings out more historical background and helps clarify their present sadness. At the end of this scene their conversation with their mistress continues in the form of a kommos. They then announce the arrival of the Royne (Nebuchodonosor's wife) and ask Amital to plead with her to intercede for Sédécie. After the Royne and Amital have spoken for a while, the chorus itself adds its plea. In Act IV, the Jewish women, in two short conversational passages, ask the Prévost what their fate will be and ask, without hope of an answer, when this will occur.



### Influence of Borrowed Passages

We have no reason in this section to discuss particular instances of how borrowings from other authors may have influenced Garnier's development of the chorus because there are no such borrowings in this original play.<sup>51</sup> We shall, however, in the following chapter, discuss how other authors generally affected Garnier's managing of the chorus in Les Juifves.

In summary, let us consider the development of some of the most important aspects of Garnier's handling of the chorus rather than restating the general development play by play. Regarding Garnier's ability to make the choruses intimately concerned with the action, there is a gradual development from Cornélie and Porcie, in which the relationships are superficial, to Les Juifves, in which Garnier has managed to unite them very closely to the action, even more so than in La Troade. The content of the odes becomes more relevant after the first two plays and actually we cannot see any noteworthy development after the improvement shown in the second group of plays, Marc-Antoine and Hippolyte. The dramatic quality of the conversational passages of the choruses is noticeably improved (with a complete lack of such passages in the second group) in the third group and remains on this high dramatic level in the last play.

## CHAPTER V

### LES JUIFVES AND OEDIPUS REX

We have stated above (in the introductory chapter) that we feel that Garnier's remarks regarding the lack of a chorus in Bradamante should not cause a critic of his dramatic works to infer that Garnier had only a rudimentary understanding of the chorus. We hope that the observations made in the preceding chapter have served to demonstrate our author's ability in handling various choral groups, but we realize, without agreeing, that it may be argued that this proves nothing about Garnier's personal ability and simply shows the result of his imitations of other dramatists. Leaving this question for further development in Chapter VI, we shall discuss here more fully the one play that cannot be labeled an outright imitation, his original creation, Les Juifves.

In attempting to demonstrate how Les Juifves reflects Garnier's fundamental understanding of the choral element in tragedy, we shall make some comparisons between the chorus of our play and that of Oedipus Rex of Sophocles. It will be agreed, as we recall earlier remarks and particularly the statement of Aristotle, that Sophocles understood the chorus rather well. Of course, the difference in subject matter will make some comparisons rather difficult, but this very difference in subject was one of the

factors determining our choice of Oedipus Rex (a fine play in its own right, with a well-integrated chorus) rather than Les Troyennes of Euripides or Seneca: we are attempting to establish the similarity of understanding of choral technique, not similarities that would naturally appear in plays dealing with analogous subject matter.

We must concede, however, the strength of comparisons developed from this latter point of view and feel that we should explain our attitude to them here. Let us consider, therefore, an article entitled, "Les imitations de R. Garnier dans sa tragédie des Juives,"<sup>52</sup> which, were we to agree with conclusions drawn therein, would have dissuaded us from making any comparison between Sophocles and Garnier. M. Georgin, the author of the article, makes three general claims that we should like to dispute: that in Les Juives (1) Biblical influence is very slight, (2) Seneca is imitated completely both in the plan and in the details, (3) there is absolutely no imitation of the Greeks.

After "proving" the lack of Biblical influence by showing how few quotes there are and how few imitations there are of Biblical imagery, he tells his reader: "Plus profonde et plus facile à marquer est l'influence du théâtre de Sénèque sur la tragédie des Juives."<sup>53</sup> We

shall readily agree that Seneca's influence is "plus facile a marquer" for one reading from a simply technical point of view. The similarities between Les Juifves and La Troade of Garnier and Les Troyennes of Seneca are quite obvious. However, the tone of Les Juifves is entirely different from that of Les Troyennes: it is quite close to that of the Old Testament. The theme is Biblical in nature, based on the Bible and the Antiquities of Flavius Josephus.<sup>54</sup> The central action, Sédécie's punishment (being blinded after seeing his children and chief aides massacred before him), is viewed as a just punishment wrought by God, using Nebuchodonosor as His instrument. Sédécie humbly accepts his due punishment as he and the prophet discuss his position and that of the Jewish race at the end of the play. Lebègue, in his notes on Les Juifves, definitively cites the aspects of Garnier's work which are affected by his reading of the Scriptures:

On voit dans les Juives combien le catholique Garnier pratiquait les Écritures; plusieurs passages ont cette couleur hébraïque qu'à la même époque le protestant d'Aubigné repandait dans ses Tragiques. . . . Les prières des personnages juifs et les chants du choeur sont animés des mêmes sentiments que les psaumes et les livres des prophètes. Les noms géographiques de la Judée, l'évocation des montagnes et des fleuves, les usages des Juifs, tout cela compose une couleur locale qui, pour l'époque, est très remarquable. Enfin, les metonymies, les périphrases, les comparaisons, les métaphores, les allégories et le parallélisme donnent au style une saveur hébraïque.<sup>55</sup>

We shall necessarily use some of the same arguments as are used above in pointing out how Garnier does not so slavishly imitate Seneca as is intimated by Georgin. True enough, he follows a similar plan, but this is not particularly noteworthy: rather it would have been remarkable had he not written Les Juifves in five acts as he had done with all previous plays. Moreover, though the general plan is similar, Georgin mistakenly attempts to go one step further and show a similarity of development of the plot and theme. He says:

Il est plus exact de dire que Garnier ouvre le deuxième acte de sa tragédie de la même façon que Sénèque ouvre dans toutes ses pièces son 2<sup>e</sup> acte. Il y fait paraître le personnage principal, celui qui provoque le catastrophe; ce personnage, Atrée, Médée, Clytemnestre, Déjanire ou Néron, expose ses sinistres projets que combat un personnage de second ordre, qui, parfois, après cette scène, ne reparait plus dans la pièce.<sup>56</sup>

It is Nebuchodonosor and Nabuzardan who are on stage at the opening of the second act of Les Juifves. We maintain that Sédécie, not Nebuchodonosor, is the central character: Garnier does not emphasize power, as Seneca would have done, but rather the acceptance of God's punishment as exemplified by Sédécie and Les Juifves, who share in his important rôle. We might state also that Nebuchodonosor does not expose his plans during this scene (a fact which Georgin mentions, but does not take into account in drawing his conclusions). As for

Georgin's remarks about Garnier's imitation of Seneca in various details, they are well-documented and provide substantial evidence of Garnier's knowledge of Seneca and his interest in Seneca's style, particularly in his use of maximes and sentences.<sup>57</sup> The importance of this statement fades as we note the frequency of imitation of such Biblical devices (already noted above) as périphrases, métaphores, etc. In sum, the influence of Seneca is one which has been over-exaggerated by most critics for all of Garnier's plays, as Witherspoon asserts:

. . . Garnier's indebtedness has been so generally misrepresented and exaggerated. This has come about, not so much from a deliberate intention to magnify his dependence on the Roman tragedies as from a tendency to rely on second-hand information rather than make a fresh examination of the facts.<sup>58</sup>

For some purposes, such as developing the functions of the chorus, Garnier copied the Greeks rather than Seneca. This leads us to a consideration of Georgin's third point -- that there is absolutely no imitation of the Greeks -- and returns us to the main subject of this chapter. First let us note the importance of the "Choeur des Juifves" as a character in the play.<sup>59</sup> As we have seen, this is a very important characteristic of the Greek choruses and one lacking in the choruses of Seneca. We have already mentioned that we consider Les Juifves as sharing Sédécie's position as the principal character.

Moreover, the chorus is intimately concerned with the other important characters, Amital and Les Roynes, and its fate will be decided along with theirs. Thus, Garnier, surveying the possible choral groups before him, realized the dramatic value of employing a group which could easily be linked to the action. Of course, the influence of his past work of imitation, La Troade, on this decision cannot be overlooked, but it can be over-emphasized. Another chorus, for example, which might as easily have influenced Garnier in its tone and its character is the one composed of the daughters of Danaus in The Suppliants, of Aeschylus. Speaking of the scene midway through Act II of Les Juifves, Faguet notes the similarity of tone in this statement:

Vour pouvez imaginer toute une mise en scène imposante, Amital au milieu du théâtre, ses brus et ses petits enfants formant, autour d'elle, un groupe central, autour d'eux le chœur jusqu'au fond de la scène - un épisode des Suppliants.<sup>60</sup>

But let us leave this argument concerned with influences in specific sections and in the general structure of the play, and attempt to view the chorus in Les Juifves in the light of the summary we made earlier of the functions of the chorus in the Greek Tragic Theater. First, we spoke of it as an indispensable actor, a point already discussed in this chapter. Then, quoting various critics of Classical literature, we listed some of the aesthetic

functions of the chorus in its presentation of choral odes. These include the uttering of certain emotions, giving historical background, commenting on actual happenings, foreboding the future, creating atmosphere and contrast, and praying to the gods. The choruses in Oedipus Rex and in Les Juifves, fulfill these functions.

Speaking for the audience, voicing its emotion on seeing the change of Fate of Oedipus, the Chorus of Theban Elders sings an appealing choral ode near the end of Sophocles' play. The theme, the fluctuations of Fate, is treated also (in fact, worn out) by Seneca but it will be noted that he does not usually relate his general statements to the particular action, as does Sophocles in this play: "Thine is a fate that warns me, -- thine, unhappy Oedipus -- to call no earthly creature blest."<sup>61</sup> Creating an equally strong emotion, but considering this problem of Fate from a Christian attitude, Les Juifves close Act IV of Garnier's play with a choral ode which is also related to the preceding action:

Sur nous vaincus elle vomist sa rage,  
 Et n'a, cruelle, horreur  
 De déployer sur le royal lignage  
 Sa brutale fureur.  
 Mais Dieu, qui juste a voulu nostre offense  
 Chastier par ses mains,  
 Ne laissera, bien que tard, sans vengeance  
 Ses meurtres inhumains.<sup>62</sup>

The first speech of the chorus in Oedipus Rex gives the general historical background leading up to the present



situation,<sup>63</sup> as does the first speech of the chorus in Les Juifves, in which it summarizes some outstanding events in Biblical history.<sup>64</sup> This improvement in exposition by the chorus recalls our earlier general remarks about Garnier's increasing ability in that respect. For comments on actual happenings, related to specific actions or characters in the play, we need simply glance at almost any Sophoclean chorus, for example, the chorus separating scenes early in Oedipus Rex which gives us the news that the murderer of Oedipus' father is being hunted.<sup>65</sup> There is no good example of the fulfillment of this function in the odes of Les Juifves. We might, however, cite these lines from the kommos found in Act II: "Qu'il veuille sauver nostre roy,/ Pour désormais vivre en sa loy."<sup>66</sup>

Examples of foreboding are found early in each play. In Oedipus Rex, an instance occurs in the ode that we have just mentioned, where the chorus says, before Oedipus has been accused of any crime:

Yet, until I see the word made good, never will I assent when men blame Oedipus. Before all eyes, the winged maiden came against him of old, and he was seen to be wise; he bore the test, in welcome service to our State; never, therefore, by the verdict of my heart shall he be adjudged guilty of any crime.<sup>67</sup>

In Les Juifves, we find comparable foreshadowing in this ode ending Act I:

Aussi tout périt dedans,  
 Fors ceux qui eurent, prudens,  
 L'arche de Dieu pour refuge:  
 Mais ores, que les forfaits  
 Sont plus nombreux que jamais,  
 Je crains un autre déluge.<sup>68</sup>

The Chorus of Theban elders creates atmosphere in a general way throughout the play, just as does the Chorus of Jewish captives, though Sophocles shows greater moderation: certainly it must be admitted that the plaintive tone is exaggerated in Garnier's play. There are better examples of prayers to the gods in other Sophoclean tragedies, but limiting ourselves to Oedipus Rex, we may mention the ode in which the chorus remarks that the worship of the gods is perishing.<sup>69</sup> Garnier's equivalent, in Les Juifves, is, of course, a prayer to God rather than to the gods. Of the possible examples of such an ode, perhaps the most beautiful is that based on Psalm CXXXVI,<sup>70</sup> found at the end of Act III.

As well as these aesthetic functions fulfilled by the choral odes, the Greek chorus also participated in conversations, for the purpose of announcing the arrival of new characters, making comments (possibly voicing the reaction of the spectator), questioning messengers to help in exposition, and acting as a confidant and advisor to a leading character. The few examples which follow will show that Garnier also employed his chorus

in Les Juifves in this way, although to a lesser extent than in some previous plays<sup>71</sup> (perhaps because the collective person, Les Roynes, assumes this conversational role rather frequently):

Announcing the arrival of a new character on the scene:

Madame, levons-nous, levons-nous, car voici  
La royne avec son train qui s'approche d'ici.<sup>72</sup>

Adding their own plea to that of Amital:

Suppliez-le pour nous, Madame; nous sçavons  
Que si vous le priez nos maris nous sauvons,  
Nous sauvons Sédécie.<sup>73</sup>

Questioning messengers, or other characters, to bring out information:

Le Choeur

Et nous autres captives?

Le Prevost

Vous reverrez bien tost vos paternelles rives.

Le Choeur

O vray Dieu! quand sera-ce? et quand viendra  
le jour,  
Le jour tant désiré de nostre heureux retour?<sup>74</sup>

Acting as a confidant:

Royne, mère des rois de l'antique Sion,  
Ores nostre campagne en dure affliction,  
Souspirez, larmoyez nos cruels infortunes:  
Comme ils nous sont communs, soyent nos  
larmes communes.<sup>75</sup>

We have thus shown that Garnier's chorus of Jewish captives is similar to the Greek choruses from the viewpoint

of its functions and its intimate relation to the central action. Far more learned critics than we have already pointed out Garnier's similarity to the Greek tragedians from the viewpoint of the tone of his language and the lyricism of his poetry, characteristics which are particularly noted in his choruses.<sup>76</sup> In contrast, we recall the criticism of Seneca, whose choruses "wailed between the acts,"<sup>77</sup> did not usually participate in conversation,<sup>78</sup> were not united to the action,<sup>79</sup> and were lacking in lyrical quality.<sup>80</sup> Considering these comparisons and contrasts, one is forced to acknowledge Garnier's affinity to the Greeks rather than to Seneca in his approach to the chorus in this play. In the concluding chapter we shall consider the development of Garnier's tendency, throughout his dramatic career, to turn to the Greeks as guides for choral technique.

We find it difficult to close this chapter without quoting at least a portion of this well-deserved praise given to Les Juifves by Emile Faguet.

"Avec plus de génie ce serait une tragédie comme les Grecs ont connu plus d'une. C'est là un rapprochement que l'on trouvera d'un louange excessive pour Garnier, mais où il me semble que tout nous ramène en cette pièce: ces tableaux pittoresques, et harmonieux, l'emploi des chœurs étroitement unis à l'action et faisant corps avec elle, le caractère religieux répandu dans toutes les parties de l'oeuvre et qui en est l'âme. On sent dans tout cela un grand effort, un grand progrès et une grande personne."<sup>81</sup>

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

It is unfortunate that we could not write "finis" to our work with the words of Emile Faguet closing Chapter V, but there remain some remarks to be made in summary which we feel are necessary to present concisely our viewpoint on Garnier's use of the chorus.

What general facts have thus far been established?

(1) Garnier turned to Seneca for the structure of his plays and for some details. In so doing he copied, adapted, or found the idea for many choral passages in the works of Seneca. (2) Garnier neither copied nor adapted many passages from the Greek writers. However, he did know the plays of these writers. (3) In his recognized chef d'oeuvre, Les Juifves, Garnier has demonstrated a use of the chorus which is clearly similar to that of the Greek dramatists.

In our earlier chapters, we have also summarized the purposes and functions of the chorus in the Greek theater and have later demonstrated how Garnier managed to develop an original chorus, the captive Jewish women in Les Juifves, which nearly attains the quality of a Greek chorus. It has been pointed out, moreover, that Seneca did not achieve comparable excellence in his handling of the choral elements.

Now let us dissect the choral element and attempt to present it as simply as possible, pointing out how the Greeks, Seneca and Garnier handled each aspect we shall discuss. A chorus is a group (in some modern dramas, just one person) composed of individuals who may or may not be related to the central action. Greek choruses, on the whole, were intimately related; Seneca's were only superficially so; Garnier's chorus in Les Juifves was intimately related and we may see beginnings of such close relationship in Antigone and La Troade. The chorus may serve the simple mechanical function of separating acts and scenes with choral odes. This is the basic, almost exclusive function of the chorus in Seneca, and is one of the several functions of the chorus in Greek works and in those of Garnier. In one very artificial sense, Garnier is closer to Seneca in structure; that is, choral odes are usually found separating "acts," a division unknown to the Greek writers, whose choral odes filled natural breaks in the action. Apart from the mechanical function served by such choral odes, there are also a number of dramatic and aesthetic functions, recognized as desirable in Greek tragedy and already listed twice in this paper. It has been also pointed out that the Greeks far outranked Seneca in this aspect of choral technique and that Garnier finally attained the Greek

standard with Les Juifves. Another mechanical functions of the chorus which can be dramatic if well-managed is that of joining in conversation for various purposes. This again is an aspect in which the Greeks excelled over Seneca (who used choruses in conversation very infrequently) and in which Garnier approached the Greek standard.

The net result is that, had Garnier imitated only Seneca, or rather, had he been inspired only by Seneca, his choruses would have been expected to fulfill only the simple mechanical function of a curtain between the acts. Fortunately, despite his substantial borrowings from Seneca, Garnier did not depend upon him primarily for inspiration for choral technique. Witherspoon correctly brings out this fact in discussing Hippolyte, which, in its general plan, is very similar to Seneca's drama of the same name: "It is the choruses in Hippolyte, as in all Garnier's plays, which show most readily the differences between the style of the two writers."<sup>82</sup>

Considering the fact that Garnier's predecessors and contemporaries in France followed Seneca even more closely than did he, we are left with the conclusion that, though he borrowed very little from the Greeks in the way of actual passages or even plot developments, he was inspired by them to create choruses that are truly

outstanding, so outstanding that they were one of the important influences on the Elizabethan drama in England:

The influence of Garnier is especially noticeable in the arrangement of the chorus. The most characteristic features of the plays which followed in the wake of the Countess of Penbroke's translation of Antonie are the universal use of rhyme in the choruses, the variety of verse and metrical forms employed, and the predominantly lyrical motives.<sup>83</sup>

Garnier's influence, however, was not felt for a very long period of time, since his works were hidden in the shadows cast by Corneille and Racine. He is remembered by some critics, however, for his faltering steps forward:

On nous pardonnera ces comparaisons incessantes et peut-etre forcées: elles n'ôtent rien à la gloire du grand tragique. Il [Racine] a, toujours et partout, corrigé par le goût exquis des Grecs, l'influence de Sénèque, prédominante jusqu'alors dans notre théâtre. Notre but est de montrer que Garnier avait déjà commencé à entrer dans cette voie, bien que son inexpérience l'empêchât d'appliquer une sage méthode à cette imitation.<sup>84</sup>

We trust that this study has shown that Garnier had indeed entered "dans cette voie" and had made some very definite advances in minimizing the influence of Seneca by turning to the Greeks for guidance in his handling of the chorus.



## NOTES

1. Biographical material taken from: Henri Chardon, Robert Garnier, sa Vie, ses Poésies inédites.
2. See Gustave Lanson, Esquisse d'une Histoire de la tragédie française, (N.Y., 1920), pp. 4-17. Also, Paul Van Tieghem, La Littérature latine de la Renaissance (Paris, 1944), pp. 143-176.
3. Robert Garnier, Oeuvres Complètes, ed. Lucien Pinvert (Paris, 1923), II, 311.
4. In partial explanation of the lack of a chorus in Bradamante, it may be noted that this play is a "Tragedy-comédie," whereas the others are "Tragédies."
5. Lanson, p. 19.
6. See Emile Faguet, Essai sur la Tragédie Française au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle (1550-1600) (Paris, 1883), pp. 200-212; also Alexander M. Witherspoon, The Influence of Robert Garnier on Elizabethan Drama, ed. A. S. Cook, Yale Studies in English LXV (New Haven, 1924), pp. 32-35, 54.
7. All general background material taken from: Roy C. Flickinger, The Greek Theater and its Drama (Chicago, 1918); T. D. Goodell, Athenian Tragedy: A Study in Popular Art (New Haven, 1920); F. L. Lucas, Tragedy in Relation to Aristotle's Poetics, 6th ed. (London, 1928).
8. It should be remembered, whenever reference is made to the use of choral odes as a curtain in the Greek plays, that there was no formal division into acts and that such choral odes filled natural breaks in the action. See Clarence W. Mendell, Our Seneca (New Haven, London, 1941), p. 135.
9. Flickinger, p. 149.
10. Lucas, p. 63.
11. Ibid, p. 65.
12. Flickinger, p. 134.

13. It has been pointed out that the leader of the chorus could detach himself from the group for conversations. See Goodell, p. 56. For consideration of this aspect in Garnier, see N. C. Giddings, The Chorus in French Tragedy from Jodelle to Voltaire (diss. Harvard U., 1938), p. 189.
14. Aeschylus, The Tragedies of Aeschylus, trans. Georges Burges (N.Y., 1856), p. 136.
15. Flickinger, p. 136.
16. See Mendell, p. 126 for a further discussion of The Suppliants.
17. Mendell, p. 127.
18. Euripède, Théâtre d'Euripède, trans. Emile Personneaux, Nouvelle Edition (Paris, 1874), I, x.
19. Aristotele, On the Art of Poetry, trans. Ingram Water (London, 1945), p. 65.
20. Mendell, p. 129.
21. Euripède, II, 235.
22. Mendell, p. 134.
23. Lucas, p. 66.
24. Dr. Karl Bühn, Beitrage zur Kenntnis des Einflusses Seneca's auf die französischen tragédien, Münchener beitrage zur romanischen und englischen Philologie, XXIV (Erlangen, 1902), pp. 129, 130.
25. Mendell, p. 135.
26. Bühn, pp. 29, 30, 133, 134.
27. Mendell, p. 138.
28. Lanson, pp. 7-10.
29. Lanson, p. 13.
30. M. S. Bernage, Etude sur Robert Garnier (Paris, 1880), p. 18.
31. Frederick West, ed., De l'Art de la Tragedie, by Jean de la Taille (London, 1939), p. 2 of the Introd.

32. F. M. Padelford, trans., Select Translations from Scaliger's Poetics, by Julius C. Scaliger, ed. A. S. Cook, Yale Studies in English, XXVI (N.Y., 1905), p. 63.
33. Jean de la Taille, De l'art de la Tragedie, ed. Frederick West (London, 1939), p. 27.
34. Jacques Peletier du Mans, L'Art poetique, ed. Andre Boulanger (Paris, 1930), pp. 190-192.
35. Jacques Grévin, "Brief Discours pour l'intelligence de ce théâtre," Théâtre complet et poesies choisies de Jacques Grevin, ed. Lucien Pinvert (Paris, 1922), p. 7.
36. As a matter of fact, Pinvert states that certain passages are original with Garnier. See Lucien Pinvert, ed., Oeuvres complètes, by Robert Garnier (Paris, 1923), p. 340, n. 157.
37. Some of these totals, particularly those concerned with the number of lines borrowed, are necessarily approximate: we have tended to approximate in favor of those imitated rather than in favor of Garnier.
38. Garnier, I, vii.
39. We have given this title in French because it refers to a French edition (published by Garnier Frères) used by Pinvert in compiling his notes. We shall consistently refer to plays in the language in which we have read them or in which they are cited by our sources.
40. Garnier, I, 328, n. 29.
41. Ibid., p. 229.
42. Ibid., p. 278.
43. Ibid., p. 339, notes 135, 144.
44. cf. Sénèque, Tragédies de Sénèque, trans. E. Greslou (Paris, no date), pp. 167-170, and Garnier, I, 276-278, particularly the last strophe.
45. Garnier, II, 23, 54.

46. Ibid, p. 443, n. 20.
47. See Goodell, p. 176, for a discussion of a similar use of the chorus by Euripides in his Media.
48. Garnier, II, 181.
49. Ibid, p. 214.
50. Ibid, p. 233.
51. That is, the only borrowings of more than one or two lines are from the Scriptures.
52. B. Georgin, "Les imitations de R. Garnier dans sa tragedie des Juives," RLR, LIII (1910), pp. 70-98.
53. Ibid, p. 77.
54. See Garnier's own reference in his Argument: Garnier, II, 219.
55. Raymond Lebègue, ed., Les Juifves, Bradamante, Poésie diverses, by Robert Garnier (Paris, 1949), p. 156.  
See also Joachim Rolland, La Tragédie française au XVIIe siècle: "Les Juifves" (Paris, 1911), pp. 72, 84, 85.
56. Georgin, p. 80.
57. Ibid, pp. 81-90.
58. Witherspoon, p. 33.
59. Bernage, p. 121.
60. Faguet, p. 240.
61. Sophocles, The Tragedies of Sophocles, trans. Sir Richard I. Jebb (London, 1925), p. 47.
62. Garnier, II, 293.
63. Sophocles, pp. 8-10.
64. Garnier, II, 223-226.
65. Sophocles, pp. 20, 21.
66. Garnier, II, 239.

67. Sophocles, p. 21.
68. Garnier, II, 226.
69. Sophocles, p. 33.
70. See Raymond Lebègue, ed.; Les Juifves, Bradamante, Poésies diverses, by Robert Garnier (Paris, 1949), p. 275, note to v. 1213.
71. See tables in Chapter III.
72. Garnier, II, 240.
73. Ibid., p. 243.
74. Ibid., p. 284.
75. Ibid., pp. 234, 235.
76. See Witherspoon, p. 14, Faguet, pp. 293, 305, and Bernage, p. 18.
77. Lucas, p. 66.
78. Böhn, p. 129.
79. Mendell, p. 132; Bernage, p. 6; Elsie Winifred Helmrich, The History of the Chorus in the German Drama (M.Y., 1912), p. 6.
80. Mendell, p. 138.
81. Faguet, pp. 252, 253.
82. Witherspoon, p. 55.
83. Ibid., p. 157.
84. Bernage, p. 183.

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