

At the Source of *Nausicaa*: The Conception of the Opera by Peggy Glanville-Hicks¹

Efrosini Gialidis

The opera *Nausicaa* by Peggy Glanville-Hicks (1912–90) is a multi-layered composition in terms of both musical style and narrative content. The present paper explores Glanville-Hicks' style, as crystallised in *Nausicaa*, using categories that were hinted at by the composer in her writing. I will firstly provide some brief historical background on *Nausicaa*'s conception, first performance and reception, then seek to pinpoint the opera's influences from diverse art forms such as modernist architecture, Greek folk music and ancient Greek drama, and identify the reasons that led Glanville-Hicks to her unusual choice of musical material.

Deborah Hayes has identified three periods in the work of Glanville-Hicks. In 1948 the composer was completing the first, developmental period of her compositional career. In the years 1950–54, she established an individual mature style influenced by non-western music, and from 1955 onwards, Glanville-Hicks' music became more 'romantic' or personally expressive.² *Nausicaa* falls into this last period, and can be considered a mature representation of Glanville-Hicks' style and compositional technique. The style of this work, and its shift from conventional operatic norms, vividly reflect a personal approach to the genre and reveal the strong impact that Glanville-Hicks' research into Greek culture had on her music.

Two experimental works were composed before *Nausicaa*: *Sonata for Piano and Percussion* (1951) and *Letters From Morocco* (1952).³ In the *Sonata*, Glanville Hicks experimented with how 'the battery alone could carry a whole structure' while with the latter composition she examined 'how a solo voice could relate to a monophonic melodic body or purely rhythmic accompaniment.'⁴ Both works share similarities with *Nausicaa* and it is worth noting some of them as they reveal the process of conception of the opera.

In the *Sonata* Glanville-Hicks applied different rhythmic figures characteristic to each movement which identify the character of each. There are also frequent changes of time signature, irregular metrical accents, many syncopations as well as economy of means and sparse textures. Finally, there is a wide range of percussion instruments in the *Sonata*, namely timpani, gongs, marimba, tom-tom, tambourines, cymbals, bass-drum, xylophone and piano. All these features are also found in *Nausicaa*. In *Letters from Morocco*, parallels can again be drawn with the opera. *Letters* is modal and the solo voice is accompanied by a chamber orchestra. The melodies are declamatory; phrases often start with a leap and the text is often accommodated to triplet motives (see Examples 1a and 1b overleaf).⁵ Moreover, there is use of a *parlando* style, using repeated notes to give the effect of recitation, with long melismata to place emphasis on important words, devices which reinforce the declamatory nature of the music. Again, these are also features of Glanville-Hicks' writing in *Nausicaa*.

¹ This article presents some issues that have been dealt with in my Honours thesis, 'The "Faces" of *Nausicaa*,' B.Mus.Hons U of Adelaide, 1997. Parts of this paper were also presented at a Musicological Society of Australia seminar held at The University of Adelaide on 30 June 1998.

² Deborah Hayes, *Peggy Glanville-Hicks: A Bio-Bibliography*, Bio-bibliographies in Music 27 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990) 7.

³ Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source,' *Opera News* 26 (16 Dec. 1961): 9.

⁴ Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source' 9.

⁵ Peggy Glanville-Hicks, *Letters from Morocco* (New York: Peters, [1953]). All musical examples have been reproduced by kind permission of the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer's Trust.

Example 1a: *Letters from Morocco*, bars 24–33, vocal line only.

Reproduced by kind permission of the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer's Trust.

The hu - man Voi - ces make the most beau-ti-ful
 sound of all When they chant the Muez-zin Es - pec - ially the
 one for Dawn

Example 1b: *Letters from Morocco*, bars 54–59, vocal line only.

Reproduced by kind permission of the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer's Trust.

When you have a hun-dred or more of these in - cre - di - bly
 high bird - like voi - ces Do - ing Fla - men -
 - co like runs in dif - - fe - rent keys from dif -
 - fer - rent

Nausicaa is an opera in three acts, composed in 1959 and 1960; the score is inscribed 'N.Y.C. Apr. 30, 1960.'⁶ The composition of *Nausicaa* was the outcome of research that the composer had been conducting on Greek folk music (*demotiki*) with the help of a Fulbright Research Fellowship.⁷ *Nausicaa* was commissioned by the management of the new Sydney Opera House,⁸ then under construction, and initially was planned to be performed there. As the composer testified, '[t]he opening of the Opera House was regarded as something of a joke in musical circles around the world... the assumption was that Australia had no composers of her own. The obvious thing was to open the Opera House with an Australian work if there was one.'⁹

However, the Opera House management relinquished its rights to present the first performance, due to delays in the completion of the building.¹⁰ *Nausicaa* therefore received its first performance in Athens on 19 August 1961 under conductor Carlos Surinach. The staging and choreography were by John Butler and the decor (stage designs and costumes) by Andreas Nomikos.¹¹ The production of *Nausicaa* was organised by Glanville-Hicks herself and then cost \$90,000.¹² The cast consisted of Greek-American singers in the leading roles, while the orchestra, chorus and dancers were Greek;¹³ hence the main parts were sung in English and the choral parts were sung in modern Greek.¹⁴ The leading role of *Nausicaa* was sung by the then young soprano, Teresa Stratas.¹⁵ *Nausicaa* received three performances in the open-air Herod Atticus Theatre at the base of the Acropolis, built in AD 161. Each night had a large audience of between 3,000 and 4,800 people,¹⁶ while the premiere ended with a standing ovation of twenty minutes.¹⁷

The libretto of *Nausicaa* was the outcome of a collaboration between Glanville-Hicks and Robert Graves and is based on Graves' novel *Homer's Daughter* (1955),¹⁸ which in turn was inspired by Samuel Butler's book *The Authoress of the Odyssey*.¹⁹ In this book Butler, who believed

⁶This inscription is at the bottom of the last page of the score p.153. The score used for the present study is a facsimile of the original manuscript of *Nausicaa* held in at the Australian Music Centre (New York: Franco ColomboRental Library). There is also a three-volume manuscript of the full score of *Nausicaa* printed in blue ink (New York: Circle Blue Print Co.), which is kept in the Glanville-Hicks collection at the LaTrobe Library, State Library of Victoria, PA 91/156.

The Glanville-Hicks collection consists of seven boxes which contain a wide range of information on *Nausicaa* as well as on other works by Peggy Glanville-Hicks, and includes press cuttings, letters and miscellaneous correspondence, programme notes and journals with articles on and by the composer. Apart from Hayes, Peggy Glanville-Hicks, a useful bibliographic reference is Joel Crotty, 'A Bibliographic Study of the Resources by and about Peggy Glanville-Hicks,' B.Soc.Sc. (Lib.) thesis, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, 1985.

⁷See Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source' 11.

⁸The exact date of the commission is not known.

⁹Quoted in Anna Murdoch, 'A Composer without Honour in Her Own Country,' *Age* [Melbourne] 15 June 1983: 14.

¹⁰Trudy Goth, 'The Odyssey of *Nausicaa*,' *Pictures from Greece* 57 (Oct. 1960): 28. The building of the Opera House was not completed until 1973, many years later than anticipated.

¹¹Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source' 12.

¹²Murdoch, 'A Composer' 14. For further information on the production of *Nausicaa* see Hayes, Peggy Glanville-Hicks 30.

¹³Jean Demos, '*Nausicaa*,' *Opera* 12 (Autumn 1961): 63.

¹⁴See Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source' 12.

¹⁵For more information on Teresa Stratas see 'The World Premiere of *Nausicaa*: A Real Triumph for the "Youth" Festival,' *Athens News* 20 Aug. 1961.

¹⁶Thérèse Radic, 'Peggy Glanville-Hicks,' *Sounds Australian* 37 (Autumn 1993): 18.

¹⁷Murdoch, 'A Composer' 14.

¹⁸See Alan Cohn, 'Glanville-Hicks's *Nausicaa* and Graves,' *Focus on Robert Graves* 4 (June 1974): 71-73. See also Deborah Hayes, 'Glanville-Hicks, *Nausicaa*, Graves and Reid,' *Focus on Robert Graves and his Contemporaries* 1.9 (May 1989): 11-14. This article is based on unpublished correspondence found in LaTrobe Library PA 91/156, and it confirms Cohn's hypothesis.

¹⁹Samuel Butler, *The Authoress of the Odyssey* (London: Fifeild, 1897).

that the *Odyssey* was not written by Homer but by a woman, claimed that the character of Nausicaa was a self-portrait of the authoress of the *Odyssey*, a young noblewoman from the Eryx district. Graves agreed with Butler's theories; in *Greek Myths* Graves wrote that '[t]he light, humorous naive, spirited touch of the *Odyssey* is almost certainly a woman's.'²⁰ The *Odyssey*, according to Butler's hypothesis, is interpreted as a voyage around Sicily, and it is interesting to note here that Glanville-Hicks' opera takes place in Sicily. 'Nausicaa,' in her story, localised in her native Sicily the legend of the semi-historical ship-wrecked Odysseus, and his allegorical adventures.

In relation to her collaboration with Graves, Glanville-Hicks said: 'One day, Robert Graves' novel *Homer's Daughter* came to hand; after an exchange of letters, I emerged from a summer in Mallorca with the first draft of a libretto for *Nausicaa*.'²¹ Graves had never worked on an opera before, and Alan Cohn speculates that Alastair Reid may have also collaborated with Graves and Glanville-Hicks on the *Nausicaa* libretto, even though Glanville-Hicks only named Graves. Cohn discovered some unexplained Graves manuscripts which he identified as early libretto drafts.²² Reid appears to have been an editor or critic, but not a literary figure himself.²³ Hence, Reid may have supervised and edited the libretto of *Nausicaa*; however, it seems unlikely that he contributed to the creative shaping of the plot.

Although the libretto of *Nausicaa* seems to have been influenced by the theories and writings of Butler and Graves, I am not convinced that the intention of the libretto was to support their theories. First, the plot involves a fusion of the characters of Nausicaa and Penelope, which has nothing to do with the above theories, but coincides with the dialectics of self-identification found in the poetics of Sappho, who was the subject of Glanville-Hicks' last opera, *Sappho* (1963). Furthermore, the libretto seems to follow Sappho's practice of representing scenes from Homer through a female perspective. Hence, it may be suggested that Sappho's poetics were responsible for the formation of the libretto, hinting at an even stronger relationship of the libretto to Glanville-Hicks' personal convictions and feminist inclinations. Glanville-Hicks presented a re-enactment of Homer through her own perspective, which is mainly reflected through the character of Nausicaa. Nausicaa struggles for recognition in the male-dominated bardic tradition and uses the character of the bard Phemius to disguise her ideas, just as Glanville-Hicks used the initials P. G.-H. to disguise her identity. This hypothesis suggests new possibilities regarding the authorship of *Nausicaa*'s libretto, and further research is now required to establish if and to what extent Glanville-Hicks was influenced by Sappho's poetics.

Nausicaa takes place in the eighth century BC, that is in Homer's own time instead of the time that the *Odyssey* is believed to be set, around 1080 BC. The opera centres around the princess Nausicaa (Butler's hypothetical author of the *Odyssey*), whose character is fused with that of the mythical Penelope. Nausicaa's re-enactment of Penelope's tale departs significantly from the version in the *Odyssey* and unfolds in a manner that vividly portrays a female perspective in which the male characters are relegated to a secondary position, and the story as a whole attains the dimensions of a quest journey for Nausicaa (see Table 1 for an outline of the plot). From the beginning of the opera she is confronted with the Homeric male-dominated myths of the bard Phemius, which she opposes. She expresses her desire to reinvent the myths so that they treat women with more respect, integrate female perceptions and reflect female

²⁰ See Robert Graves, *Greek Myths* (London: Cassell, 1955) 727.

²¹ Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source' 12. See also 'Robert Graves and Opera,' *Time* 1 Sept. 1961: 55. A much more detailed study of the primary sources and archival material will be needed to establish how the libretto came to be written.

²² Cohn, 'Glanville-Hicks's *Nausicaa*.'

²³ Reid wrote the introduction for a book *Seven Nights* (New York: New Directions, 1984) and edited the book *Radicalism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991).

achievements. In Act I her father, the King, embarks on a mission to find his missing young son. During his absence, Nausicaa plots against her suitors with the help of the ship-wrecked nobleman Aethon and the guidance of the goddess Athena. At the climax of the story, Nausicaa prevents Aethon from killing the bard along with the suitors and, in return, asks the bard to change his stories according to her desires:

I demand that in future it will be MY version of a faithful Penelope!
 MY story of this palace war, MY account of the part that women played, that you
 will sing; you will of course launch this poem as your own, or better still, as a
 work of Homer!
 For no one would listen to a poem by a woman's hand.
 [Nausicaa, Act III Scene 6, figs 174-77]

This suggests that the Penelope version we have today is actually a woman's and not Homer's, corroborating the theories of Butler and Graves regarding the true authorship of the *Odyssey*.

The *Nausicaa* premiere received substantial international press attention as the collection of numerous press clippings held in the State Library of Victoria demonstrates. Ten countries

Table 1: Outline of Plot of *Nausicaa*

Date and Place of Action

8th century BC, Drepanum (a town in western Sicily)

Characters (in order of appearance)

Phemius	<i>a bard</i>
Nausicaa	<i>the princess</i>
Alcinous	<i>Nausicaa's father, the King</i>
Arete	<i>Nausicaa's mother, the Queen</i>
Clytoneus	<i>Nausicaa's brother, the Prince</i>
Aethon	<i>a ship-wrecked nobleman</i>
Nausicaa's suitors	

Sections and Main Events

Prologue	Nausicaa disputes with Phemius about the legitimacy of the ancient myths
Act I	
Scene 1	Alcinous sets out on a mission to find his missing son Laodamous
Interlude 1	Nausicaa and Arete express their premonitions that Laodamous is dead
Scene 2	Nausicaa and Clytoneus overhear two noblemen plotting to overthrow the palace
Scene 3	Aethon seeks sanctuary with Nausicaa
Scene 4	The suitors are shown in wild revelry
Act II	
Interlude 2	Nausicaa reproaches Phemius for entertaining the suitors
Scene 5	Aethon declares his love for Nausicaa and together they plot against the suitors
Act III	
Interlude 3	Aethon and Nausicaa marry secretly
Scene 6	Aethon wins the bow-contest and kills the suitors. Meanwhile Alcinous returns, Nausicaa saves Phemius' life and there is general rejoicing.

sent critics, three of whom declared it a masterpiece.²⁴ The reviews however, often reveal a contradictory and puzzled reception. Audience and critics failed, to a large degree, to grasp the symbolic and philosophical dimensions of the opera and to relate it to the broader operatic framework of the time. The reviews reveal a tendency to take things too literally instead of unlocking the psychological and philosophical nature of the work, and they underline the need for a re-evaluation of this complex work.²⁵

One Greek review from 1961 characterised the libretto, from Act II to the end of the opera, as a 'literary joke' and claimed that 'the audience was understandably baffled.'²⁶ Another Greek reviewer, writing in *Le Figaro*, came to the conclusion that, 'the Greek public, naturally influenced by mythology, was astonished that the subject departed considerably from Homer's version of the *Odyssey*' but thought that 'the transposition was less debatable, to the foreigner.'²⁷ The staging of the opera also received some negative comments and the banquet of the suitors, as well as their execution, were characterised as being in 'absolutely bad taste' by the critic of the Greek newspaper *To Vima*.²⁸

Nor did the music escape criticism, especially its borrowing from folk material. *To Vima's* critic objected to the use of folk rhythms, declaring that the use of folkloric dance figures seemed foreign to the drama and often ill-suited to the evolution of its action. The same reviewer also characterised Glanville-Hicks' return from serialism to the known means of the national schools as 'unconvincing,' while elements such as simple orchestral accompaniment, restrained use of polyphony, unison and frequent triplet motives were said to bring the impression of monotony.²⁹

It is understandable that a work like *Nausicaa* would pose some problems of reception, especially since the work was presented to a rather traditional audience, much attached to its myths and national music. However, many aspects of *Nausicaa* that had been criticised, had been consciously employed in order to correlate with the broader philosophical dimensions of this opera. Furthermore, Greek dances, modes and folk rhythms were clearly integrated to reflect the belief that folk music (*demotiki*) preserves traces of ancient material. It has been argued that the popular panhellenic dances *kalamatianos* and *syrtos* (both in 7/8 metre), which were danced on the stage of *Nausicaa*, actually date from the Homeric period.³⁰

As Glanville-Hicks explained in 'At the Source,' the choice of new compositional procedures in *Nausicaa* was motivated by her attitudes to contemporary musical styles:

Some years ago, a dissatisfaction with the expressive limitations of our modern techniques caused me to make a critical reexamination of music's basic materials, and a conviction grew that in melody and rhythm we find perennial elements, but that in harmony—the western world's contribution to musical language—we had exhausted the vein and come to an impasse in our current total dissonance.³¹

Thus it was the reconsideration of these basic elements, due to a desire for effective means of expression, that led Glanville-Hicks to her source of inspiration, the culture of ancient Greece:

²⁴ Murdoch, 'A Composer' 14.

²⁵ See further Gialidis, 'The "Faces" of *Nausicaa*' 13–15.

²⁶ Demos, '*Nausicaa*' 63–64.

²⁷ Henry Gerson, 'Une inoubliable *Nausicaa*,' *Le Figaro* [Paris] 22 Aug. 1961: 10; rpt in '*Nausicaa*: Peggy Glanville-Hicks,' *American Composers Alliance Bulletin* 10.2 (1962): 4.

²⁸ Dion Giatras, '*Nausicaa*,' *To Vima* [Athens] 22 Aug. 1961: 3.

²⁹ Giatras, '*Nausicaa*' 2.

³⁰ M. Dounias, '*Nausicaa*,' *Kathimerini* [Athens] 22 Aug. 1961, rpt in '*Nausicaa*: Peggy Glanville-Hicks,' 4–5.

³¹ Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source' 9.

I began to collect Greek music and then the balloon went up, I knew I had found traces of what I was looking for, wonderful rhythms I found too. An organic melody rhythm. So I applied for a grant to travel to Greece for what I thought would be one year. I took with me a tape machine and recorded from everywhere, dance halls, dialogues, funny old instruments. I had struck gold. This was to form the basis for...*Nausicaa*.³²

Glanville-Hicks' desire for expressiveness consequently led her away from traditional tonality and musical forms. *Nausicaa* is based on rows derived from ancient Greek modes and establishes an operatic style that encompasses the subjective aesthetic of the composer. A detailed study of the modes used in the opera at dramatically significant events has revealed a consistent use of the ancient modal *ethos*.³³ The meaning of the text during some crucial moments that drive the plot or during emotionally charged events, coincides with the *ethos* attributed to the mode by ancient Greek theoreticians (see Table 2).³⁴

In her desire to approach archaic musical materials, Glanville-Hicks drew elements from Greek folk music because of the perceived links and continuity of ancient Greek musical practices with those of modern folk music. Referring to the relationship between Greek folk music and *Nausicaa*, Glanville-Hicks said 'the influence of this research will be felt...in its modes and metres...performers in Greece today still improvise in the ancient modes and metres and a given melody may be two years or it may be 2,000 years old.'³⁵

In seeking to identify the style that is crystallised in *Nausicaa*, special attention should be given to examining the structure of the opera. Glanville-Hicks believed that style did not emanate from the actual material but through the ways it was used and arranged. Musical material for Glanville-Hicks did not constitute an end but a means to an overall structural

Table 2: Use of Modes in *Nausicaa*

Mode	Modal <i>ethos</i> in ancient Greece	Function/ <i>ethos</i> in <i>Nausicaa</i>	Examples from <i>Nausicaa</i>
Dorian (E-E)/ Hypodorian (A-A)	manly, majestic, steadiest and masculine/ haughty, pompous, conceited, lofty, confident, majestic and steady	male perspective	Pemius (Prologue) Alcinous (Scene 1) The suitors (Scene 4)
Phrygian (D-D)	inspired, enthusiastic, exciting and emotional	love scenes	Aethon's arrival (Scene 3) Aethon & Nausicaa (Scene 5) The wedding (Interlude 3)
Mixolydian (B-B)	plaintive, restrained and lamenting	gravity, solemnity	Wedding announcement (Scene 5) Nausicaa's final request (Scene 6)
Lydian (C-C)/ Hypolydian (F-F)	mild and agreeable/ bacchic voluptuous and intoxicating	female perspective	Nausicaa and the Queen (Interlude 1)
Chromatic Genus	sweet, plaintive and passionate	female perspective	Nausicaa's aria (Interlude 1)

³² Quoted in Wendy Beckett, *Peggy Glanville-Hicks* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1992) 157.

³³ See Gialidis, 'The "Faces" of *Nausicaa*' 34-60.

³⁴ See further Gialidis, 'The "Faces" of *Nausicaa*' 34-60. See also Solo Michaelides, *The Music of Ancient Greece* (London: Faber, 1978) 111-12 for an outline of the ancient Greek modes and the *ethos* accommodated to each by ancient Greek theoreticians.

³⁵ Quoted in George Daniel, 'Our Greatest Woman Composer Receives Little Recognition Here,' *Sydney Morning Herald* 26 Mar. 1983: 41.

plan through which the personality of the composer sprang out: 'I don't believe in "style" as such, or "personalised" materials. Personality, if one has it, should be able to shine through neutral materials.'³⁶

The formal structure of *Nausicaa* is based on structural ideas borrowed from both modernist architecture and ancient Greek drama. Glanville-Hicks once wrote that 'music exists in time; architecture in space. The two arts, nonetheless, sometimes seem to run on parallel tracks, each illuminating the other.'³⁷ In articles such as 'Harmony in the House of Apollo'³⁸ and 'Music: How It's Built,' Glanville-Hicks made an interesting parallel between contemporary music and architecture. She associates particular musical movements from the twentieth century with architectural trends, in a metaphorical sense, according to which the tonal system is like the arch of classical architecture which, as found in medieval European cathedrals, rests firmly on the ground. Atonality, on the other hand, seemed like a 'cement building with no doors or windows' and 'blank walls.' Furthermore, neoclassicism consisted of 'pasting bits of glass and steel on the front of a good old brownstone building to make it look more odd.'³⁹ Finally, she associated her own melodic and rhythmic system with the cantilever of modern American architecture: 'somewhere in the interaction of these new factors—rhythm and dissonance—lies the cantilever of a new musical architecture which can cause sound to float, as it were, in space-time, apparently defying the laws of aural gravity.'⁴⁰ Moreover, Glanville-Hicks' theories on musical composition revolved around American architect Frank Lloyd Wright's belief that 'the form of any building should evolve directly from the nature of the materials employed.'⁴¹

The association of music with architecture had a number of implications for Glanville-Hicks' opera *Nausicaa*. In her 'musical cantilever,' the primary material is the modal row, which serves as the building block for music producing 'airborne' arias and recitatives; the composer applied 'ancient highly varied scales to the subtleties we have evolved from twelve-note row, so that it leaps, and we have a marvellously apt material for setting of words.'⁴² As these melodic lines are no longer controlled by harmony they develop freely according to their own equilibrium.⁴³ Melody becomes the most important element in Glanville-Hicks' music. Harmonic support is minimal, as in this extract from *Nausicaa*'s aria in Interlude 1 (see Example 2); combinations of pitched instruments are employed sparingly, while many percussion instruments are used in order to emphasise the rhythm.

In addition, the basic unit within the melodic line throughout the opera is the tetrachord. Victoria Field, in her thesis 'Ancient Greek Modes in Glanville-Hicks' *Nausicaa*,' concluded that it is possible to observe the application throughout the opera of the tetrachordal theories of Aristoxenus' Greater Perfect System—in which combinations of two conjunct tetrachords of different intervallic arrangements formed the seven diatonic modes—and that Glanville-

³⁶ Quoted in George Antheil, 'Peggy Glanville-Hicks,' *American Composers Alliance Bulletin* 4.1 (1954): 3.

³⁷ Peggy Glanville-Hicks, 'Music: How It's Built,' *Vogue* 1 Mar. 1966: 201. Trans. of 'I Mousiki san Arhitektoniki' ['Music as Architecture'], *Arhitektoniki* [*Architecture, Art and Decoration*] 27 (May–June 1961): 49–51.

³⁸ Quoted in Michael Shmith, 'Harmony in the House of Apollo,' *Age* [Melbourne] 22 Mar. 1986: 11.

³⁹ Shmith, 'Harmony' 11.

⁴⁰ Glanville-Hicks, 'Music: How It's Built' 200.

⁴¹ Glanville-Hicks, 'Music: How It's Built' 200. For further information on Lloyd Wright see Lewis Mumford, *Roots of Contemporary American Architecture: A Series of Thirty-Seven Essays dating from the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Present* (New York: Dover, [1972]) 435–36. Also see Frank Lloyd Wright, *In the Cause of Architecture* (New York: Architectural Record, c.1975).

⁴² Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source' 11.

⁴³ See Glanville-Hicks, 'Music: How It's Built' 200.

Hicks was pointedly using these theories when writing her opera.⁴⁴ It is linear principles, rather than harmonic ones, which determine the tonal equilibrium of the vocal lines, hence the composer's use of the term 'musical cantilever' to describe her musical architecture.

It may be readily observed that the plot of *Nausicaa*, as well as the vocal styles used, are influenced by Glanville-Hicks' perceptions of Greek drama, about which she wrote:

Example 2: *Nausicaa*, Act I Interlude 1, Nausicaa's aria, figures 93–95.

Reproduced by kind permission of the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer's Trust.

The musical score is presented in three systems. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "What do they mean", "these Au", and "gu - ries Strange signs at". The piano accompaniment features prominent triplet patterns in both hands. The score is marked with "3" for triplets and "Stgs" for staccato. The word "COR" is written in the bass line of the third system.

⁴⁴ Victoria Field, 'Ancient Greek Modes in Glanville-Hicks' *Nausicaa*,' BA (Hons) thesis Monash U [Melbourne], 1987, 30.

Once again I looked for a libretto...I turned first to ancient Greek drama; though these texts proved too wordy for librettos, their structure offered a revelation that began to condition my concept of form...I drew on many things from Greek drama: its dramatic recitative messengers, its antiphonal choruses keeping the men and women separate, above all the moment of choice as the crux of the story (this may be when Nausicaa decides to save Phemius).⁴⁵

Ancient Greek drama has its roots in the *dithyrambos*, the ancient religious celebrations in honour of the God of wine, Dionysus. The *dithyrambos* dates back to the seventh century BC and it involved dance, song and disguising of the participants as animals. As this practice evolved, it encouraged a conscious art of acting as well. By around the sixth century BC, instead of just narrating the myth about the god, the participants would actually present a re-enactment of the myth. This signalled the birth of drama and in the fifth century BC, Greek drama reached its final classical form. The evolved drama comprised re-enactment and action combined with dialogue and a fusion of elements from the two early forms, epic poetry (Homer) and lyric poetry (Sappho).⁴⁶

In its final form, ancient Greek drama comprised of the following parts: *prologos*; *parodos*; *episodia*; *stasima*; and *exodos*. The opening *prologos* consisted of a dialogue or a monologue, after which the chorus would enter the orchestra marching and singing (*parodos*) and then the plot would unfold in various *episodia*, interspersed with *stasima*. The *episodia* were the main dramatic sections of interaction between the actors, in which *monodies* or *dueta* would take place, while the *stasima* acted as interludes, where songs or *odes* were sung by the chorus. The play would end with the *exodos*, a final choral song. According to Aristotle's *Peri Peitikis* [*On Poetics*] of 350 BC, the typical structure of a play was:

prologos
parodos
 first *episodio* and first *stasimo*
 second *episodio* and second *stasimo*
 third *episodio* and third *stasimo*
*exodos*⁴⁷

In Glanville-Hicks' *Nausicaa*, we find a similar sectional organisation, although it is not always followed precisely:

Prologue
 Act I: Scene 1, Interlude 1, Scene 2, Scene 3, Scene 4
 Act II: Interlude 2, Scene 5
 Act III Interlude 3
 Scene 6: Finale

Each self-contained scene opens with an orchestral section, serving as an orchestral *stasimo*, which sets the mood of the scene through its rhythmic character. Finally, there is a *tutti* choral section similar to the idea of the *exodos*.

Nausicaa also seems to share similarities with Greek drama in terms of plot, presenting a re-enactment of an ancient myth, just as ancient drama did. The three important elements in Greek dramatic plots were:

⁴⁵ Glanville-Hicks, 'At the Source' 11.

⁴⁶ Georgosopoulos, *Dramatic Poetry* (Athens: Organisation of Educational Books, n.d.) 16. See also Peter Arnott, *An Introduction to Greek Theatre* (London: Macmillan, 1959).

⁴⁷ Quoted in Georgosopoulos, *Dramatic Poetry* 20.

ploki (succession and elaboration of dramatic events leading to a resolution)

peripetia (the hero's quest journey)

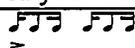
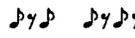
anagnorisi (state of enlightenment or recognition that comes at the end of the plot)⁴⁸

After the prologue of *Nausicaa*, there is a succession of scenes in which the main action takes place. The interludes, moving in parallel with the main plot, bring us closer to the mind and feelings of Nausicaa and therefore reinforce and justify her actions, which are presented during each scene.

The plot may be characterised as a quest journey (*peripetia*) for Nausicaa and each section has a significant purpose. In her initial encounter with the bard, we are confronted with the reasons for Nausicaa's quest: it is her relationship with the bard Phemius that proves to be the influential element in the unfolding of Nausicaa's spiritual journey. It is her awareness of the injustice of myth (as expressed in epic poetry) and a male-dominated society that drives the chain of decisions that follow. In Act I we observe her increasing desire for truth and participation in palace affairs, leading to Act II where Nausicaa pursues truth and takes action by plotting against her suitors. In Act III we experience the outcome of her journey, she saves the bard's life and asks in return that he sing her version of the Penelope story. This outcome has deep moral and philosophical implications for the observer to ponder.

Overall, Glanville-Hicks used an essentially expository technique in structuring her opera. Act I consists of three scenes, each of which introduces a new male figure in Nausicaa's life, representing the conventional network of relationships that identified a woman's role in ancient Greek society. Scene 1 introduces the King, her father, Scene 2 her brother Clytoneous and Scene 3 her lover and future husband Aethon. Furthermore, the character of each scene in Act I seems to be distinguished by the use of specific instrumental rhythmic groupings (see Table 3). However, these motives are not used consistently throughout the opera.

Table 3: Rhythmic Characters in *Nausicaa*, Act I

Scene	Character	Metre	Rhythmic motive
1	King	3/4	
2	Clytoneous	3/4	
3	Aethon	3/4	

The characteristic use of rhythm in *Nausicaa* which may be linked to the dramatic quality of the music, especially in places of narration, where it is a device that assists declamation. When changing the metre in order to fit the text, Glanville-Hicks used the natural rhythm of speech as a guide. In the opening prologue where the bard sings about the myth of Odysseus (see Example 3a), Glanville-Hicks emulates the declamatory style of Homeric epic poetry by constantly changing the time signature and subdivision of the beat, and by setting the text syllabically. On the other hand, when emotions are involved, as in the few arias, the vocal melody becomes the focal point of expression and the metre is more constant. An example is Nausicaa's aria in Interlude 1, 'When will I see the light,' which resembles in character and purpose the expressivity of Sapphic lyric poetry, and presents the character's emotional and psychological state (see Example 3b). Here the time signature remains constant, the vocal line contains long sustained notes and melismata, and the music unfolds chromatically; the effect is a languid solo that reflects Nausicaa's sense of desperation and desire for truth.

Finally, the choral sections, with their alternating time signatures and integration of *parlando* writing, enhance the dramatic character of the opera. They suggest vivid visual action and

⁴⁸ Georgosopoulos, *Dramatic Poetry* 21.

reinforce the main plot, as for example the chorus of the people around the King in Act I; this is a common technique of ancient Greek drama and Greek tragedy. The choral passages, sung during the suitors' banquet, resemble the nature of the *dithyrambos* as the men join, mostly in unison and octaves, or in heterophonic passages, in praising wine and male achievements (see Examples 4a and 4b).

Example 3a: *Nausicaa*, Prologue, Phemius' recitative, figures 8-9.

Reproduced by kind permission of the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer's Trust.

Musical score for the first system of Example 3a. The vocal line is in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are: "Men-e-laus passed wea-ry years in E-gypt Great A-ga-". The music includes triplets and slurs.

Musical score for the second system of Example 3a. The vocal line continues with lyrics: "mem-non though he reached My-ce-nae la-den with boo-ty". The piano accompaniment continues with triplets and slurs. The time signature changes to 2/4.

Musical score for the third system of Example 3a. The vocal line continues with lyrics: "lost his life to Cly-tem-nes-tra". The piano accompaniment continues with triplets and slurs. The time signature changes to 4/4.

Example 3b: *Nausicaa*, Act I Interlude 1, Nausicaa's aria, figures 104–6

Reproduced by kind permission of the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer's Trust.

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system includes a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics "[A]the - ne give me your light - in my eyes so I may" and a piano accompaniment in grand staff. The piano part features complex textures with triplets and trills. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics "see - clear - ly" and the piano accompaniment, which includes trills and sustained chords.

This paper has revealed how intimately *Nausicaa* relates to Glanville-Hicks's personal convictions and the conception of her opera. Glanville-Hicks' desire to move away from normative procedures led her to the creation of a linear musical organism based principally on the combination of melody and rhythm. This linearity coincided with the modernist architectural trends of the time, with which the composer drew parallels through her writings. *Nausicaa* has also been seen to be the result of borrowing from and moulding together of Greek musical and dramatic material. Through her opera, Glanville-Hicks managed to incorporate within a structure which resembles that of ancient Greek drama a musical idiom which is unique and original in its combination of ancient Greek modes, Greek folk rhythms, a variety of choral textures and elements from epic and lyric poetry. Furthermore, the libretto revisits an ancient myth, and in the process raises feminist issues. It is hoped that further readings of *Nausicaa* will reveal more of its deconstructive character and encourage its revival and inclusion in the operatic repertoire of the next century. As Glanville-Hicks said, 'I have always looked to the future, I have written for the future, thought for the future and cared for the future, above all when it came to music.'⁴⁹

⁴⁹ George Daniel, 'Our Greatest Woman Composer' 41.

Example 4b: *Nausicaa*, Act I Scene 1, figures 77-78.

Reproduced by kind permission of the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer's Trust.

S/A
In the fields of tem- ples, the fields of tem - ples we will

TEN
In the fields of tem- ples, the fields of tem - ples we will

BAR/BASS
e - ne- mies

The score consists of four staves. The top two staves are for Soprano/Alto (S/A) and Tenor (TEN), both in treble clef. The third staff is for Baritone/Bass (BAR/BASS) in bass clef. The bottom two staves are for piano accompaniment, with the right hand in treble clef and the left hand in bass clef. The music is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: "In the fields of temples, the fields of temples we will e - ne- mies".

pray for you and for your fast re - tur - n in

pray for you and for your fast re - tur - n in

The score consists of four staves. The top two staves are for vocal parts in treble clef. The third staff is for Baritone/Bass (BAR/BASS) in bass clef. The bottom two staves are for piano accompaniment, with the right hand in treble clef and the left hand in bass clef. The music is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: "pray for you and for your fast re - tur - n in".