causation that until this point has been so laboriously attached to it. This view is encouraged by Herakles' reference to theological speculation as a side issue (*parergon*) to his sufferings. While Hera's malevolence articulates and defines Herakles' tragedy, there is a sense in which Hera and her intrigues are as negligible to the human truth of this play as is Herakles' special status as god-related and supremely gifted hero. The superstructure of heroic relations to divinity, used to set off the problem of human suffering from complicating or trivializing factors, is later "kicked away," leaving behind only the universals shared by all human beings in the world of ordinary existence.[195]

Herakles, a specially gifted and divinely related human being who serves as our link to immortality, ideally expresses both the aspirations and dangers of humanity. Euripides' play forces to breaking point the contradictions inherent in this traditional Hellenic archetype, and it does this by attempting to formulate the archetype in Euripidean terms. The attempt breaks down, not once, but over and over again, each time generating more violent contradictions. The play uses the pathos and grandeur of a lowered and modernized *spoudaion*, the equivalent of Frye's low mimetic, to gain our acquiescence to a radical revision of heroic myth and of the tragic experience as a celebration of human identity. Yet at the very moment when Herakles' tragic experience reaches its moment of climax, the tensions between the human and the heroic views also reach a peak. Whomever we can believe Herakles to be at various stages in the play, the tragic insight of the ending reveals the untenability of his heroic identity: as Theseus says, "In your sickness, you are not the famous Herakles."[196] When the case of the hero receives its most extreme formulation, the paradoxical presence of godlike powers in a human being becomes identical with the traditional tragic paradox of divine purpose and human suffering.

195. See Chromik (1967, 122): the gods cease to be mentioned in the very end (except at line 1393) of the play. But cf. also Pucci (1980, 175–87), who points out that the repudiation of divine responsibility creates an even more irrational universe, in which doubt of Herakles himself must replace our anger at the gods.

196. 1414, accepting the persuasive emendation of U. v. Wilamowitz: ὁ κλεινὸς Ἡρακλῆς οὐκ εἶ νοσῶν.

9

Hippolytos: An Exceptional Play

The negative critical response to Euripides' work has produced the alternating postures of defense, apology, and attack that ran in a repetitive pattern through the first chapter of this book. But most critics have been willing to exempt a select minority of plays that seemed to lack the faults of the rest. The list has fluctuated. H. Patin, representing the orthodox French critical position for the nineteenth century, favored *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, evidently largely because of its associations with the Racinian version.[1] The prominent and fascinating personality of the heroine of the *Medeia* has often caused that play to be seen as a heroic drama of character and has thus prompted its inclusion in the canon of select Euripidean plays.[2] And those who study tragic form sometimes include *Herakles* among the plays answering the essential demands of the genre as established by Euripides' predecessors.[3]

But time and again two plays, *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai*, are chosen as the

1. See Patin ([1841–43] 1873, 1:42): *Iphigeneia at Aulis* and *Hippolytos* are, unlike other Euripidean plays, "parfaitement conformes à l'esprit de la tragédie antique," i.e., that of Sophokles and Aischylos.

2. See Kitto ([1939] 1961): *Medeia* and *Hippolytos* are contrasted with "war plays and social tragedies" (250) and both are later put into a group with *Bakchai* (372–73). Rivier ([1944] 1975, 30) selects five plays as "les plus achevés sous le rapport de l'unité dramatique," *Alkestis, Medeia, Hippolytos, Iphigeneia at Aulis, and Bakchai*. This selection is cited by Lesky (1956, 156).

3. Dawe (1968, 94) includes *Herakles* in a group of plays that match the formula of a noble person going to his doom; the other two are *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai*. See also Conacher (1967, 13–14), who places *Herakles* third, after the exceptional *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai*, but recognizes its differing approach to myth.

exemplars. Once installed in this special category they are separated from the other fifteen plays, while at the same time they are rather paradoxically allowed to represent Euripidean work as a whole.[4] Some critics have been frank about the basis for their selection: of all the Euripidean plays, these two seem to fit the general rule of tragedy best, to be, as Kitto puts it, "more regular."[5] It will be the purpose of this chapter to determine what in *Hippolytos* creates the impression of "regularity" and what this work's relation is to the general artistic stance that I have already established for Euripides. In taking this approach, I do not intend to diminish the artistic stature of what some feel to be the best Euripidean play. But understanding of the other plays and of *Hippolytos* has often been impeded by the imposition on this play of the role of archetype: an archetype that is also an exception is a dangerous critical tool.[6] The result has often been merely another attempt to fit Euripidean drama to the Sophoclean model.

Although *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai* do seem to belong together in their ability to "satisfy" some demands that we are accustomed to make of serious dramas, the plays are quite dissimilar, in structure and in technique.[7] *Bakchai,* it has often been pointed out, makes an archaic impression, first, because it features a very dominant chorus whose lyrics are closely connected with stage events,[8] and second, because the plot develops in a spare

4. See Conacher (1967, 14); Kitto ([1939] 1961, 370–71) lists the two along with *Medeia* as being "best constructed"; Lesky (1956, 201), on *Bakchai;* Pohlenz ([1930] 1954, 269) on *Hippolytos.* Verrall (1905, 167 n.2) suggests that these two plays may form an exception to his ironic rule, in that the appearances of the gods may not be intended to be shams; cf. Norwood (1908, 157). For parallels between the two plays, see Bellinger (1939, 26); Dodds (1944, xli); Merklin (1964, 12). A. W. Schlegel (1846, 171) praised *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai* for their unity and judged them the best of the plays.

5. (1939) 1961, 203, on *Hippolytos.* See Spranger (1927.1, 19): in contrast to other plays, in *Hippolytos* events follow "in correct dramatic order." Martin (1958, 276): *Hippolytos* is more perfect than the other plays and is "un tout achevé." Hooker (1960, 45): of all the Euripidean plays this play conforms most closely to Aristoteles' ideal of drama. Pohlenz ([1930] 1954, 269) remarks that "der äussere Aufbau" of *Hippolytos* resembles Sophoclean technique. See Kitto ([1939] 1961, 207): Euripides has reconciled his own form of composition "more nearly with the Sophoclean form of drama." The reasons why "more regular" should be synonymous with "more like Sophokles" have been laid out in the first two chapters of this book.

6. For an example of this tendency, see Merklin's dissertation (1964), a discussion of the role of the gods in Euripidean tragedy that essentially limited itself to *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai.* M. remarks that the great majority of interpreters have pointed to *Hippolytos* as the natural correlative to *Bakchai* (12), but he fails to see that two such similar plays are not likely to represent adequately the general Euripidean approach to divinities.

7. Their similarities, however, are sufficiently striking and will be discussed later in this chapter, Section IV.B.

8. Manning (1916, 21); Winnington-Ingram (1948, 2); Dodds' edition ([1944] 1960, xxxvi); Kitto ([1939] 1961, 380–81).

and linear fashion.[9] It seems plausible that Euripides is exaggerating in this play the archaizing tendencies that have always been a part of his style; and there are hints of very old models lost to us, perhaps of Aeschylean Dionysiac plays such as *Edonoi.*[10] *Hippolytos,* by contrast is dramatically complex, transferring interest between the plights of two protagonists who are kept separate; it features a female chorus of passive observers similar to that in other Euripidean plays;[11] and it deals with a theme, erotic love, that has been notoriously familiar as Euripidean. In what, then, does the "regularity" of *Hippolytos* consist?

Hippolytos has impressed critics as being "richer" in language play than other work by Euripides and thus as being more receptive to a literary analysis based on imagery.[12] The theme of speech, silence, and oath has received several treatments, the best being the earliest, an article by B. M. W. Knox.[13] The chains of imagery in the play, associated with nets and hunting, meadows and water, and the themes of the golden age, were traced by Charles Segal and others.[14] Certain passages were sensed as particularly significant, either because of richness of language, as in the case of Hippolytos' prayer to Artemis (73–87), or because of intellectual allusiveness and complexity, as in the case of Phaidra's formulations about virtue (373ff.); and these have been subjected to a variety of close examinations in recent critical literature.[15] The study of language has generally led to a better understanding

9. Murray (1913.1, 181–82); Kitto ([1939] 1961, 371–72).

10. See Krausse (1905, 160ff.); Lesky ([1956] 1972.1, 485); Dodds ([1944] 1960, xxviii-ix). See also a recent treatment by Aëlion (1983, 1:251ff.).

11. The chorus is passive, and—to a degree—more a hindrance than a help to the plot (see the discussion of the oath problem by Heldmann [1968, 93]).

12. For its greater linguistic complexity, see Rivier ([1944] 1975, 53): the play has "un dessin d'une grande richesse." Delebecque (1951, 95): it is "très travaillée." Winnington-Ingram (1958, 171): "The play is rich, complex, subtly-patterned (as are few of Euripides) . . ." Segal (1969, 297): Euripides is "attentive and skilful . . . in the handling of small details in this carefully structured work."

13. 1952, 12–16. See also Avery (1968); Segal (1972.1).

14. Segal (1965, 1979); Parry (1966); Frischer (1970, 88–89); Berns (1973, 165–69); Bremer (1975); Turato (1974); Pigeaud (1976, 3–7); Fowler (1978); Orban (1981.2, 194–97). (F. I. Zeitlin's article, "The Power of Aphrodite" [in Burian (1985, 52–111)] reached me too late to be incorporated in this chapter.) Segal's first article, a long and comprehensive study, was marred by the attempt to associate a sea theme with the "waters of ocean" referred to by the chorus as their washing place (1965, 122). (For the association of this spring with a real place on Troizen, see Barrett [1964, 184–85].) Segal's treatment of the themes of the golden age has been further developed by Turato (see also Pigeaud [4–7]), who shows the connection of this imagery with an aristocratic ideology in this play.

15. For Hippolytos' speech, see the references listed in the previous note, Frischer through Orban. For Phaidra's speech, see Snell (1948); Hathorn (1957); Merklin (1964, 82ff.); Willink (1968, 10–26); Claus (1972); Solmsen (1973); Turato (1974, 140 n.30); Pigeaud (1976, 7–24); A. Schmitt (1977, 31–39); Manuwald (1979); Orban (1981.1, 9–16); Irwin (1983, 183–91).

of Hippolytos' prayer than of Phaidra's philosophizing. In the case of the latter, the persistent tendency to interpret parts of the plays as authorial manifestos without aesthetic significance has led to predictable and familiar confusions.[16]

This chapter, to a greater extent than previous ones, will be able to build on considerable achievements in current criticism, an advantage that makes it possible to focus more concentratedly on the place of Euripidean work in its literary tradition. I will be arguing that the impression of "regularity" created by *Hippolytos* derives from the attitude that it takes toward its protagonists. *Hippolytos,* alone among the works of Euripides, maintains a high and fairly consistent level of identification with its major figures. The techniques used are in a sense the inversion of those in *Elektra:* both Phaidra and Hippolytos are permitted to be *spoudaioi. Hippolytos* marks a unique degree of relaxation in the Euripidean opposition to Sophoclean style, and in the ironic tensions that sustain the Euripidean antithesis. Techniques that manipulate our view of the characters and of the moral significance of their acts can be traced in this play, with the help of the principle of K. von Fritz that moral relations and moral judgments are basic to tragedy and to the persistent questions about "tragic guilt."

I. Tragic Morality

I.A. The Manipulation of "Dramatic Effect"

Tycho von Wilamowitz' examination of Sophoclean dramatic technique first revealed the extent to which dramatic reality is a formed or distorted reality, designed like a pedimental sculpture or the columns at the corners of a Doric building, to be apprehended from a certain aesthetically preconditioned viewpoint. If Wilamowitz could demonstrate these techniques in the work of Sophokles, whose plays have most powerfully impressed centuries of readers and audiences as an authentic mimesis of human nature, it should be no surprise to find Euripides, notoriously a facile master of stage technique, making use of them too. In *Orestes,* for instance, the almost unbearable tension of the closing scene is heightened by the convergence of a number of threats and challenges whose logical interrelation has proven very difficult to sort out.[17] At the end of the play everything seems to happen at

16. The most striking example is the work of Snell (1948; see also 1971, 60ff.); but cf. Irwin (1983, 195–97). For correction of this tendency, see Pigeaud (1976, 11) who remarks, "Bien autre chose qu'une thèse, il y a une démonstration"; and Turato (1974, 140 n.30), who argues as I would that the ethical problem discussed by Phaidra cannot be treated as extraneous to her dramatic character and situation. See also the valuable discussion of Segal (1970.1).

17. The plot develops out of a suicide plan that includes an attack on Helene (1098–99). Pylades a little later proposes that, if they fail, they should fire the house, ending with the bold motto of "dying nobly or being saved nobly" (1152). But in fact the plan for survival comes at

once: Hermione is threatened, Menelaos capitulates, Orestes triumphs, Pylades begins to torch the house, and Menelaos angrily summons the Argive population in arms to punish the matricide.[18] A similar area of vagueness in *Iphigeneia Among the Taurians* makes it impossible to reconstruct the sacrificial practices that the heroine has supervised.[19] In order for the audience to have the requisite feelings about the encounter between Orestes and his sister, they must be in some apprehension that Orestes may indeed become a sacrificial victim; but they must not be able to picture Iphigeneia as inured to the slaughter of Greeks. All these incongruities pass by without notice, because the interest of the audience has been firmly attached to Iphigeneia's feelings and to Orestes' peril, rather than to the sacrificial practices of the Taurians.

The point to be made here is not that dramatists are careless of verisimilitude but that the dramatic event, although mimetic, is not of the same order as the real event. When we watch the last scene of *Orestes,* our conviction that events have proceeded to an absolute impasse is much stronger and more vivid than it could be if the event that we are witnessing had been designed to be coherent in motivation. Maintenance of a powerful impression of tension or sympathy takes precedence over the imitation of real events and over the logic of human motivation. If this principle of dramatic construction is accepted in its broadest sense, it can reveal the dependency of the peculiar moral structure common to many tragedies upon the requirements of dramatic form in the mode of the *spoudaion.* In making this point, I follow the path laid out by K. von Fritz and T. C. W. Stinton, who have argued that the Aristotelian analysis of tragic responsibility must be understood in terms that are primarily literary and aesthetic.[20] Examination of the moral structure of *Hippolytos* will confirm the former's conclusion that, precisely because serious theater deals so intimately with moral problems and relations, it leaves behind no moral residue.

In a passage of the *Poetics* in which the tone of "advice for the

line 1177, when Elektra proposes that Hermione should be taken hostage. In Orestes' threats to Menelaos the theme of house burning reemerges, illogically juxtaposed with threats to the hostage's life (1594).

18. At the moment of Menelaos' capitulation ("You've got me [ἔχεις με]," 1617), Orestes both triumphs over his enemy and suddenly gives the command to set the house on fire. Menelaos promptly summons the Argives, in spite of the obvious danger to his daughter. Seeck (1969) tries to solve the inconcinnities by excising offending lines; while Steidle (1968, 115–16) and Erbse (1975, 451ff.) attempt a psychological exegesis. Cf. the discussion of Burkert (1974, 102 n.25).

19. Sansone (1978) details the meanderings of this motif through the play and draws appropriate dramaturgical conclusions. See also Brown (1978, 30 n.8).

20. See discussion of Fritz in Chap. 1, above. Stinton's article (1975) is particularly valuable.

professional'' is particularly notable,[21] Aristoteles remarks that certain kinds of dramatic action will fail to produce in the audience the required effect, which he has already defined as a blend of pity and fear.[22] The downfall of the wicked will satisfy ''human feeling'' (*to philanthrôpon*) but will be unlikely to arouse the requisite emotional involvement, while the misfortune of the truly good protagonist will produce, not pity, but indignation at the injustice of such an ''abominable'' (*miaron*) event.[23] This indignation is as likely to be directed against the author of the fiction as against the powers of fate. The tragic protagonist therefore, although he must be ''better rather than worse'' (1453a16), cannot be perfect; the source of his misfortune, which should come through a fault or error (*hamartia*) and not through vice (*kakia*), may or may not be traceable to this imperfect character.[24] The formula of the *Poetics* reflects, in the fertile imprecision of its language, especially the term *hamartia*, a complex interaction of ethical and artistic standards.[25] In tragedy the ''guilt'' of the protagonists, as critics have long recognized, is and apparently must be disproportionately small in relation to the

21. 1452b28–30: ''What one should aim at and what one should avoid in composing and the source of the effect proper to tragedy [καὶ πόθεν ἔσται τὸ τῆς τραγῳδίας ἔργον] are the topics that must follow what has preceded.'' See the commentary of Dupont-Roc and Lallot (1980, 238): ''L'analyse descriptive du *muthos* et de ses formes s'ordonne ici à une perspective nettement normative.''

22. On *eleos* and *phobos*, see the articles of Schadewaldt (1955) and Pohlenz (1956); the latter, while agreeing with Schadewaldt that *eleos* does not mean ''Mitleid,'' points out that it does posit a somewhat greater degree of personal involvement than other terms, e.g., *oiktos* (51–52). For the origins of this concept before Aristoteles, see Pohlenz (1920, 168–70).

23. See Stinton (1975, 238ff.).

24. It was the great service of Fritz to have made this point ([1955] 1962, 3–4); see also Stinton (1975, 238).

25. Much has recently been written on *hamartia*, but most of it has been impaired by the tendency to impose philosophical concepts on juridical ones and then to force poetry into conformity with the resulting mixture. (See the discussion of Vernant [1972, 23], who argues that tragic vocabulary must be analyzed internally.) H. Funke's dissertation (1963), which began by giving a precise and modern juridical definition to ''tragic guilt'' (*Schuld*), reached the conclusion that tragic figures possessed no such guilt, but only completely innocent errors (*hamartiai*). Cf. J. Bremer, who also defined *hamartia* as (entirely unconscious) error and was then forced to reimport the concept of guilt (1969, 139): *hamartia* ''does not contribute much to the understanding of the play unless it is integrated in the more comprehensive notion of *ate*'' (a concept B. had derived from Dawe [1968]). Saïd (1978) also tends to impose juridical distinctions where they have little relevance, e.g., in a discussion of human reaction to disaster in *Trachiniai*, a situation for which Antiphon's speeches provide little illumination (208–9). (Cf. the analysis of Stinton [1975, 245–46].) None of these three authors takes account of the well-known fact that distinguishing between conscious responsibility and accidental agency was difficult for early Greek ethic and that the term *hamartia* is useful precisely because it covers both areas (see the analysis of Latte [(1920) 1968, 17–21].) This being the case, it makes as much sense to ask whether *hamartia* refers to ''guilt'' or ''accidental error'' as it does to question whether a given phoneme in Japanese is an *L* or an *R*.

disaster that befalls them. This has nothing to do with ''poetic justice,'' and is in fact a recipe for poetic injustice.[26] This odd and illogical causal sequence, in which consequences must have causes, but the causes *must not fit*, is not a moral theory, but an aesthetic recipe for producing the desired effect from serious drama.

I.B. The *Spoudaion* and Human Feeling (*To Philanthropon*)

If we ask what factors would be most likely to produce the minimum of detachment in the spectators of a drama, we can list a series of elements that are most unlikely to appear together in real life. Some of these factors even work at cross-purposes: for instance, guiltless sufferers provoke more pity; but the events that produce their suffering may appear pointless, or even revolting (*miaron*), unless they occur in a causal and logical sequence. But, just as a contradictory treatment of events and motivations can heighten tension or sympathy, so tragic poets can manipulate potentially contradictory sources of audience involvement and sympathy for the protagonists.

The characteristic traits of leading figures in serious drama have been thoroughly analyzed by critics, who have often been puzzled by the paradoxical results. Tragic protagonists, we are told, must suffer something that seems special to themselves, whether or not what happens has a direct connection with the personality of the sufferer.[27] This suffering, although it may not end in death, inflicts irretrievable damage upon the protagonists and their prospects for the future.[28] Such sufferings must not fall upon figures that are resigned or helpless: tragic protagonists must struggle desperately, but of course vainly, against the tragic events.[29] When the catastrophe arrives,

26. See Dawe (1968, 95): tragic error must produce ''disastrous, and above all disproportionate, consequences.'' Among general books on tragedy, see Henn (1956, 62ff.); Raphael (1960, 65–66); Brereton (1968, 278–79). Segal (1970,2) cites Max Scheler (1923, 257) on the concept of ''unlocalized guilt,'' and applies this concept to *Hippolytos;* see also Crocker (1957, 239).

27. See Brereton (1968, 46) who suggests that there should be ''a cause connected in some way with the personality of the participants,'' or that there should at least be a *hamartia* that will ward off the sensation of predetermination, which is ''inimical to tragedy,'' an art form which ''requires a degree of uncertainty'' (269). See W. V. O'Connor's dismissal of a modern tragic protagonist (1943, 153): ''His problem was answerable, and therefore hardly tragic,'' and Henn (1956, 35ff.), on the ''illusion of liberty'' (40) that must accompany ''our sense of inevitability'' (34).

28. See Orr (1981, xii), ''irreparable loss''; Watts ([1955] 1963, 93–104): whereas comedy is cyclic, tragedy is linear and is concerned with the (irreversible) fate of an individual.

29. See Scheler (1923, 254): it is typical that ''das Übel . . . zu denen gehört, gegen die überhaupt ein Kampf aufzubieten ist, und dass ein solcher Kampf auch tatsächlich aufgeboten wird.'' Cf. the complaints that modern tragic figures are too passive (Heilman [1968, 249]); and Heilman's approving reference to the ''rasping or even quarrelsome tone'' of the hero in *Samson Agonistes* (252). This is the same tone that Knox has traced in Sophoclean protagonists (1964, 19–21). See also Kuhn (1942, 60–63).

however, it should find the protagonists neither able nor willing to slough off responsibility for the disaster. Finally, the tragic victim should somehow be aware of the significance of what has happened to him and should be able to articulate some response that indicates assimilation of the event.[30]

That these desiderata include a number of contradictory elements should be obvious. The potential for contradiction is perhaps best demonstrated by the play that Aristoteles and the critical tradition which he founded have used as a model for tragedy, *Oidipous Tyrannos*. What has happened to Oidipous is an arbitrary and unlikely concatenation of accidents; and there is manifestly no real connection between this terrible destiny and the protagonist's somewhat irascible and unreasonable behavior during the course of the play. But Oidipous' manner not only obviates any incongruity that would be apparent in the assignment of such a dreadful fate to a perfectly virtuous man; it also creates a sensation of energy and activity that prevents our seeing Oidipous as what in stern reality he is, a passive victim of outside forces.

The characteristics of tragic protagonists are designed to maximize audience involvement and sympathy. Disasters that are general and not peculiar to the individual dissipate the focus on a single fate; misfortunes that are retrievable cannot evoke the same concern as those that are not. The self-knowledge desired of tragic figures is a further contributor to the significance of the event that involves them, and to their own stature as participants. Resigned victims or manifest criminals cannot make us anxious over the outcome, since we might detach ourselves from the tragic sufferers by blaming them for their suffering, or by seeing them as mere hapless unfortunates, with whom we would rather not identify at all. The paradoxical conjunction of struggle and moral responsibility with an inevitable and extraneous disaster intensifies emotional attachment to the dramatic event: the plight of the protagonists, illogically but obviously, will involve us the most deeply, if it is *both* entailed by their actions *and* undeserved. And, while this odd situation may not match any actual human experience, it has a considerable correspondence to our confused perception of moral responsibility. The question of free will and predetermination was not yet isolated in Sophokles' day, but the problems of human responsibility and agency were perhaps better understood in their complexity before these unhelpful paradoxes came to be formulated.[31]

30. See W. V. O'Connor & M. A. O'Connor (1943, 124–25). Discussion of this tragic element occurs in the previous chapter on *Herakles*, Section IV.C.

31. Thomas Gould has discussed the question of "free will" in the context of the ancient term *aitios*, suggesting that it means something like "he acted in accordance with his own character" (1966, 482). See also Agard (1933), and the interesting discussion in Vernant & Vidal-Naquet (1972, 43ff.: "Ébauches de la volonté"). Gundert (1940) has shown similar mechanisms in the treatment of Homeric heroes; and see also the recent article of Rutherford (1982), on the parallelism between Sophoclean heroes and the Homeric Achilleus (146).

If we consider the way moral problems are presented in the dramatic work on which modern conceptions of tragic heroism are based, that of Sophokles, we find that the dramatic situation is manipulated in analogous ways in several plays. Euripidean alteration of traditional mythical material has often been noticed,[32] while less has been made of the mythic form of Sophoclean plays. But the difficulties of adapting myth to the conventions of the new high mimetic did not escape Aristoteles. In the *Poetics* he discusses the way to use traditional myths "well,"[33] and cites two modern methods of handling the myth, opposing these to the "old-fashioned" method (ὥσπερ οἱ παλαιοὶ ἐποίουν) of making the protagonists act in full knowledge (εἰδότας καὶ γιγνώσκοντας).[34] It was this older method that Euripides revived in *Medeia*, where the heroine explicitly tells us that she knows the magnitude of what she intends to do.[35] The modern method, however, comes in two forms, both of which depend on ignorance (*agnooüntas*, 1453b30) and a recognition that may either follow the irretrievable error (*hamartia*) or forestall it altogether. Dreadful acts (*deina*) are the subject matter of tragedy; but, in the more modern treatment, these *deina* are divorced from the will of the agents. Aristoteles suggests that the second of these forms, the forestalling of the *deina* by a recognition (*anagnôrisis*), may be the best (1454a4–5). It is notable that Euripides appears in two places in this analysis, both as the archaizer who uses the unreconstructed method of the self-aware protagonist, and as the innovator who devises the (presumably latest) method, threatening but not performing the act of violence.

Sophokles' *Oidipous* is mentioned as an example of the first improvement, the recognition that comes too late. In fact, several Sophoclean plays make a striking use of *agnoia* or ignorance to dissipate the responsibility of the tragic protagonist and maintain a stronger bond of audience identification. *Trachiniai* is the best extant example. The story of Deianeira, as the heroine's name suggests, is the tale of a revengeful woman who brought an end to

32. See G. Hermann (1837, 24–25): Euripides' radical alteration of the plot of the Oidipous myth is due to an attempt to differentiate his work from previous treatments. U. v. Wilamowitz (1875, 177ff.); Will (1959); Reckford (1968, 332).

33. 1453b22–26: τοὺς μὲν οὖν παρειλημμένους μύθους λύειν οὐκ ἔστιν . . . , αὐτὸν δὲ εὑρίσκειν δεῖ καὶ τοῖς παραδεδομένοις χρῆσθαι καλῶς. See the analysis of the different interpretations in Dupont-Roc & Lallot (1980, 255ff.). But I do not accept their reading of *chrêsthai* as dependent on *heuriskein:* the technique involves both invention and a "proper" utilization of traditional material. That is, it is the addition of the invented material that rescues the tradition.

34. Rostagni (1945, 78–79) suggests that the "old" dramatists are Sophokles and Aischylos; but Sophokles follows the "new" method.

35. 1453b29. For self-awareness in *Medeia*, see line 1078ff.

Herakles through her treachery.[36] But in Sophokles' version of this myth, Deianeira is explicitly deprived of any motivation deriving from jealousy or rage, and in fact she becomes a virtual paragon of marital tolerance and forgiveness.[37] In the Sophoclean version of the Hippolytos myth, Phaidra's culpability was lessened by her belief that Theseus, long absent in the underworld, was dead.[38] This twist could transform the traditional "Potiphar's wife" story of the older woman who attempts to use sexual coercion against a dependent male[39] into an instance of tragic "guiltless guilt." Phaidra's erotic susceptibility would be only mildly culpable, if she thought herself a widow; yet on the sudden return of her husband she would find herself caught in a painful and compromising situation that could plausibly lead to tragic consequences.

In both of these cases Sophokles has altered the myths in the direction pointed out by Aristoteles. As a result, instead of violent and sexually aggressive female protagonists, we have modest and decent women, betrayed by forgivable weaknesses into actions that they did not intend.[40] This is both a demonstration of the means by which sympathy can be purchased, and a confirmation of the suggestion in *Frogs* that it is the poet's job to censor myths that are indecent or improper.[41] In these cases it might seem that the whole point of the old myth has been sacrificed in adapting it to tragic form. In most Euripidean plays, however, particularly in the early period, the "real story"[42] is preferred to the modified and modernized one. But, as Aristoteles points out, it was also he who took the modification one step farther with plays like *Kresphontes,* in which the threatened mistake of identity, instead of leading to disaster, is forestalled by a timely recognition.[43] Only in *Hippolytos* does Euripides choose the middle or Sophoclean path.

36. See Errandonea (1927) on her mythic role as "man killer"; Schwinge (1962, 25 n.3).

37. For her explicit disavowal of jealousy, see lines 543, 552, 582ff. Solmsen (1932, 10–13) saw this as an allusive rejection of the Euripidean intrigue. At any rate, these denials underline in a marked fashion the emotions natural to Deianeira's role and the signal absence of these motivations in this version. On Deianeira as an example of female perfection, see Whitman (1958, 115, 118–19).

38. See the analysis in Barrett's edition (1964, 32); the fragments of the *Phaidra* are collected on pp. 22–26 of Barrett. Discussion of the Sophoclean version in Herter (1940, 283–86). The crucial fragment is 624 N2 in which an interlocutor expresses surprise to see Theseus return, when he had been thought to be dead.

39. For the widespread correlatives of this tale in foreign and in Greek myth, see Tschiedel (1969, 9–21).

40. See Webster's analysis (1968, 37).

41. 1053, ἀλλ' ἀποκρύπτειν χρὴ τὸ πονηρὸν τόν γε ποιητήν.

42. See Euripides' defense: was not the story of Phaidra "real" (ὄντα λόγον)? (*Frogs* 1052).

43. On *Kresphontes,* an early example of Euripidean inventiveness, see App. D. This sort of forestalled mistake is typical of the Menandrian comedy. The blameless and humane protagonists of New Comedy often seem to spend the first half of the play leaping to false conclusions and the second half in being happily disabused of them. On "uplift" in Menandros, see Post (1964, 100); there is a good discussion of the aesthetic role of moral values in Menandros in Arnott (1981.2, 215–16). See also Xanthakis-Karamanos (1979) on the decorous modifications introduced in fifth-century material by the versions of the fourth-century tragedians.

II. The Second *Hippolytos*

II.A. Revision

The Euripidean *Hippolytos* is the only play known to have been presented at the City Dionysia as a reworking of an earlier version, known as *Hippolytos Veiled.*[44] Evidence seems to indicate that tragic poets were little given to presenting alternate versions of the same story; and in view of the many productions they put on and the length of their creative careers, this suggests the workings of some unspoken etiquette. If the second *Hippolytos* broke with such a custom and was still awarded a first prize, that may indeed indicate that the play had, as the ancient editor's comment suggests, a palinodic function and was offered to the audience as a replacement for the first *Hippolytos.*[45] The reception of *Hippolytos Veiled* (*Kalyptomenos*) may have marked a point at which the touchy relationship between artist and audience (traced in Chapter Three) suffered a rupture. The danger was certainly not that the play would come in last in the competition, probably not an uncommon event for Euripidean work, but that the production would be interrupted by a public uproar (*thorybos*) that would spoil its effect or even prevent its completion. If anything could justify a second production, presumably, it would be the failure of the first to come off at all.[46] But this is speculation. Clearly the first *Hippolytos* presented a Phaidra who shocked and repelled the audience by her sexual aggressiveness, as we can tell both from Aristophanes' use of the play as a landmark and from the extant fragments, in which Phaidra boasts of her boldness (*thrasos* and *tolma*).[47]

The supposition that the first play included a scene in which Phaidra approached Hippolytos directly, prompting him to veil himself from shame, is a tempting one and is likely enough to be true. But, since it is virtually

44. The closest correlative would be *Clouds,* but there the second version may never have been put on in its present form; see Dover (1968, lxxxxff.), and A. Masaracchia (1972).

45. The shorter of the hypotheses probably is a fragment of Aristophanes of Byzantion's work. The author suggests that this play is likely to be later than *Hippolytos Veiled,* τὸ γὰρ ἀπρεπὲς καὶ κατηγορίας ἄξιον ἐν τούτῳ διώρθωται τῷ δράματι.

46. Pickard-Cambridge (1968, 99) suggests that only unsuccessful plays may have been so revised and points out that other double versions may reflect a revision for production outside Athens.

47. *Frogs* 1043. Fr. 430N2 = Barrett (1964, 18) fr. C.; as Barrett points out, the only eligible speaker of these lines is Phaidra herself, although we cannot be sure that they were directed at Hippolytos. They may have been spoken to another interlocutor, in this case probably a Nurse who would behave more like the Old Man in the first scene with Hippolytos; see Kalkmann (1881, 27).

unsupported by reliable evidence,[48] it must remain a supposition. A scene of open sexual confrontation might well have provoked an uproar, in spite of the attempt to mitigate the scandal through Hippolytos' modest and withdrawn attitude.[49] The behavior and manner that the first Phaidra would have displayed are easily supplied from the Helene of *Troiades*, or the Pasiphaë in the amazing fragment from *Cretan Men*, both glib and eloquent apologists for sexual deviation. Such a Phaidra would balance well with a Hippolytos not far removed from the extant one, giving us the kind of violent juxtaposition of male and female types that we find in *Medeia*, composed at about the same time.[50] As in other Euripidean plays, sympathy for either antagonist would be qualified by distaste for the repellent behavior of each.[51] A priggish and nonconformist Hippolytos would show at his worst in contrast with such a Phaidra, while he could effectively expose the unchastity and impudence of the queen.

In the extant version of *Hippolytos* Phaidra has been altered radically, and in a manner familiar from Sophoclean drama.[52] She surprises us as does the Sophoclean Deianeira by sternly rejecting what in the original story must have been the keystone of her character, in Phaidra's case the indulgence of sexual impulse. She displays a concern for modesty (*aidôs*) and reputation (*kleos*) that is quite in conformity with Hellenic moral norms for females;[53] but, unlike most other Euripidean "good" women, Phaidra speaks for conventional moral norms, presenting them in terms that are neither reformist nor modern. Her role as representative of social values is calculated to inspire sympathy and even respect, in spite of the improper nature of her dilemma. Confusions in evaluating Phaidra's moral level have derived from

48. Various scholars present this account of *Kalyptomenos* without any supporting evidence at all, e.g., Barrett (1964, 37 and n.1); Fauth (1958, 548). For other suppositions, none of which are persuasive, see Paratore (1972, 303ff.; 1952). For the use of veiling gestures in tragedy, see Shisler (1945, 385).

49. The reconstruction of *Kalyptomenos* has been marred by very careless assumptions about the usefulness of Seneca's *Phaedra* as a model for the first play; see the confident statements of W. H. Friedrich (1953, 112), a scholar ordinarily quite sophisticated in his study of influences. Barrett points out (1964, 16–17) that Seneca's plays often differ radically from Greek models, and Kalkmann long ago (1881, pt. II) made an interesting study of the modifications in the Alexandrian period of motifs from *Hippolytos*.

50. Zürcher (1947, 85) points out the presumable similarity of the first Phaidra to Medeia. On the alteration in Phaidra, see Winnington-Ingram (1958, 172); Kitto ([1939] 1961, 205–6).

51. See Fauth (1958, 560): in the case of the first *Hippolytos*, "Die äusserste Schamlosigkeit forderte die äusserste Tugendhaftigkeit als notwendiges Korrelat."

52. See discussion of the change between the two versions in Linforth (1914, 7); Herter (1940, 289ff.).

53. See Tschiedel (1969, 203 n.98). Kretz (1934, 58) remarks that the whole presentation of Phaidra's character seems designed to block accusations of shamelessness; and see Lattimore (1962, 7): Phaidra is "rehabilitated."

a modern value system in which concern for appearances and reputation ranks very low, whereas in traditional Hellenic terms this kind of *aidôs* was the prime guarantor of moral integrity.[54] As usual in Euripides the moral norms will not pass without question; but as usual in Euripides we must be able to make out where the norms lie, in order to understand the game at all.

Just as Phaidra's moral views are the reverse of what we would have expected, so her role in the slanderous destruction of Hippolytos is surrounded with qualifiers that are typical of the catastrophe brought about through ignorant error. Aphrodite herself informs us that Phaidra's passion has been forced on her, though she remains a woman of "good reputation" (*eukleês*).[55] The line's ambivalence expresses just the paradox of "tragic responsibility." Is Phaidra called *eukleês* because she has not yet yielded to her passion, or because she was formerly a woman of good reputation; or does the god really mean to imply that Phaidra's reputation should receive no stain from what is to follow?[56] Her action in slandering Hippolytos is extenuated by a number of factors: the ferocity with which he denounces her to the Nurse arouses fears that he intends to reveal the truth to Theseus, as does his impulsive repudiation of the oath of silence that the Nurse had extracted.[57] It is natural too that Phaidra's concern for reputation should lead her to attempt to achieve a death that will bequeath honor to her family.

Most suggestive in this connection is the moment at which Phaidra permits the Nurse to go in the house to find the medicine (*pharmakon*) that will cure her longing. As Barrett has shown, the language is exquisitely balanced to assure that the audience will suspect that the Nurse means to approach

54. See Willink (1968, 20) who believes that the audience will be shocked by the evidence that Phaidra is deterred from adultery only by the fear of discovery; similar views in Köhnken (1972, 187). For the coincidence of *aidôs* with female virtue, see Adkins (1960, 36–37 and 161–62): "No woman . . . must be found, however innocently, in a compromising situation, for it is reputation which counts above all."

55. 47: ἡ δ' εὐκλεὴς μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀπόλλυται.

56. The last is Barrett's interpretation (1964, 166).

57. Line 612, "My tongue swore, but my mind is unsworn." The arguments of W. D. Smith (1960.2) and Østerud (1970) that Phaidra does not overhear the speech and that the Nurse sings the lament at line 668 overlook the important structural necessity that the misunderstanding arise from Phaidra's misinterpretation of this speech. (There is also the awkwardness and bathos of having Phaidra, who has gone inside, presumably to commit suicide, pop out again unexpectedly to denounce the Nurse.) For the psychological significance of Phaidra's revengeful desire to bring Hippolytos down to her level, see Bonnard (1944, 9), who points out that it must be particularly galling for Phaidra to hear herself accused of all the traits she has so rigorously suppressed. W. H. Friedrich (1953, 146) found the disappearance of her love inexplicable; but of course it has not disappeared—see Lesky (1960, 21): it makes human sense "dass sie im Hasse und im Tod vereinen will, was ihre Liebe und das Leben nicht zusammenzufügen vermochten." See the similar view of Valgiglio (1957.1, 19 and n.23).

Hippolytos, while they also understand that Phaidra is being misled.[58] Yet the voicing of her suspicions by Phaidra shows that she too is not far from seeing through the Nurse. Arguments about her complicity or innocence have long raged.[59] In fact just this indeterminacy is the hinge upon which "tragic guilt" must turn. In order for Phaidra to be both involved in the proposal to Hippolytos and innocent of vile intent, both betrayed by the Nurse and shamed by the hideous results of her betrayal, we must remain unsure of her awareness. The question of what Deianeira could have been thinking about when she decided that the blood of Nessos would be the right charm for Herakles' love is exactly analogous to the question of what Phaidra thought the Nurse was planning.

II.B. *Êthos*

An essential technique of Euripidean theater is the use of incongruous elements to force a reevaluation of apparently admirable and sympathetic protagonists. The second *Hippolytos*, by contrast, introduces each of its major protagonists in scenes of leisurely beauty and emotive power that encourage sympathy, while making it possible for the audience to take a perspective on the inner state of the protagonists and to grasp their motivation in detail.[60] Euripidean prologues conventionally close with a scene in dialogue, usually marking the first movements of a vigorous and complex plot. In *Medeia* we hear that Kreon is exiling the already afflicted heroine; in *Herakleidai* the Theban herald assaults the suppliants; in *Andromache* the protagonist lays plans for her rescue. The dialogue portion of *Hippolytos* differs from all others in that it contributes nothing toward the forward motion of the drama. The hero's refusal to honor Aphrodite is without plot significance, since the god has already stated her determination to repay earlier slights by destroying Hippolytos. Because the activities and attitudes displayed in the scene are evidently habitual, what we see confirms Aphrodite's account of Hippolytos, while her statement that this day is his last (57) gives an intense

58. 1964, 252–53.

59. Extreme distrust by U. v. Wilamowitz ([1898] 1926.2, 112): the second Phaidra is barely an improvement over the first, although the former is more in conformity with tragic style. See also Grene (1939, 56–57); Fauth (1958, 536); Orban (1981.1, 5, 8–9, 16–17). She is defended by Kalkmann (1881, 15ff.) and in Barrett's commentary (1964). See also the refutation by Claus (1972, 224ff.) and others discussed below of the psychological interpretation that would make of Phaidra's references to leisure a confession of her own weaknesses.

60. W. H. Friedrich (1953, 117) remarks on the "Tendenz zum Schönen, zur Verschönung des Mythos." Norwood (1954, 94) imagines Euripides saying to his audience, "'Very well: you shall have an edifying and beautiful play.'"

pathos to the tranquillity and beauty of the scene, and to his prayer that he may end the course of his life as he began it.[61]

The scene functions primarily as a device to reveal Hippolytos to us.[62] He enters with a subchorus singing a hymn to Artemis; and the language of his prayer breathes the hypnotic charm of the best of Sappho, as he brings to Artemis a crown from the "uncut meadow" where no shepherds go and which the spring bee haunts.[63] The effect reaches a peak at line 78, where, in a metaphor that is strangely powerful in the matter-of-fact atmosphere of the trimeter, Hippolytos speaks of a personified Modesty (*Aidôs*) as the gardener of Artemis' meadow (ποταμίαισι κηπεύει δρόσοις). Recent detailed analyses have revealed many complex patterns of imagery in this single, concentrated passage.[64] The very decorativeness and lack of plot attachment contribute to the effect of special significance. We are being enthralled in this scene in a way that we seldom are in Euripidean theater; and the sympathy invested by the audience in the exclusive world of this eccentric figure[65] in turn increases the effect of pathos when Hippolytos rejects the old servant's warnings. It is not possible to stand aside and judge Hippolytos' behavior as folly, once we have been pulled into his world and have seen in it the moral and aesthetic beauty that he sees.

At the entry of the main chorus, with the charmingly low-life reference to gossip about Phaidra at the washing rocks, we seem to be on more familiar Euripidean ground. But the full and leisurely exposition of Phaidra's feelings that follows is unlike anything else in Euripides and strongly evokes Sophoclean models. The chorus begins by querying what may be going on in

61. 87: τέλος δὲ κάμψαιμ' ὥσπερ ἠρξάμην βίου. See Bonnard (1944, 17–18), who points to Hippolytos' rejection of the natural cycles of life. This notion was sidetracked for a time by arguments as to whether Hippolytos was an "Orphic" (refutation by D. W. Lucas [1946]); see the comments of Barrett (1964) on *Hipp* 952ff. For recent development of the theme, as a flight from reality into ideal and paradisal retreats, see Turato (1974, 142).

62. See Merklin (1964, 65), who points out that such scenes are more typical of Sophokles; and Fauth (1958, 522–23); Tschiedel (1969, 234).

63. On the language and its relation to lyric poetry, see Merklin (1964, 63), "poetischer Zauber"; Bremer (1975, 271), parallels to Sappho.

64. Pigeaud (1976, 3ff.) points to the lore about gardens, citing Detienne (1972), and their association with rootless and fruitless cultivation, a possible metaphor for Hippolytos' life, but also reminiscent paradoxically of the world of sexuality that Hippolytos rejects (see Rankin [1974, 84]). But the associations of the "meadow" are complex; see Bremer (1975, 275ff.). Turato (1974, 137) points to elements in the tradition that connect the meadow (*leimôn*) with the remote paradise of the blessed and with the age of gold.

65. For the eccentricity of Hippolytos' religious notions, particularly his emphasis on exclusivity, which emerges clearly in 79–81, lines strongly marked by exaggerated hyperbata, see Turato (1974, 150ff.); Barrett (1964, 172–73); Segal (1970.1, 279); Orban (1981.2, 198).

Phaidra's mind and body to create these disturbances.[66] As in *Aias*, there is an alternation among lyric outbursts by the agonized protagonist, lyric speculation about the protagonist by the chorus, and dialogue between the chorus and a sympathetic but baffled associate of the protagonist. But the progression from these modes to the actual self-expository speech of the protagonist is here greatly prolonged and is complicated by Phaidra's persistent refusal to reveal her real meaning.[67] The result of this suspense is a heightening of interest, but also a deeper involvement in Phaidra's subjective state. Unlike the Nurse and the chorus, the audience already knows what is wrong with Phaidra; but what they do not know is Phaidra's own response to her malady. Phaidra's reluctance even to speak of her passion makes it more likely that, when she does come to speak of modesty (*aidôs*), we will believe her and will not mistake her concern for a mere hypocritical show.

Euripidean plays ordinarily do not much explore the psychological roots of the characters' actions. *Medeia* is the play most often compared to *Hippolytos* for its exposition of the psychology of a woman; but the contrast is striking. Medeia's agonizing is limited to her offstage singing. When she does emerge from the house, she immediately begins her persuasive approach to the chorus. Even in the major opening speeches of the two women, similar as they are in their elaborate and somewhat opaque introductions, there is a strong contrast between the polished and disingenuous *captatio benevolentiae* of Medeia and the broodings of Phaidra, which, in spite of the formality of the trimeter rhesis, circle repetitively around the heroine's subjective reaction to her dilemma. It is true that later in the play we witness a debate between one part of Medeia's self and another. But there is no gradual exposition of her repinings; and, in the dreadful apotheosis at the end, her subjectivity disappears as suddenly as it had emerged.[68] This is another

66. Particularly interesting is the relation between the clothing (*pharea*) that the chorus were washing and the cloths (*pharê*, 132) that shade Phaidra's head as she keeps to her sickbed. When Phaidra enters, she casts off her head covering, and then, ashamed (243), "hides" it again: μαῖα, πάλιν μου κρύψον κεφαλήν, / αἰδούμεθα γὰρ τὰ λελεγμένα μοι / κρύπτε . . . ; cf. line 139. The theme of concealment and veiling is restated from the first play, but this time it is appropriately connected with the special world of women; see Ortkemper (1969, 79). The epode (161ff.), often dismissed as a simple reference to pregnancy (see Barrett [1964, 192]), evokes the secret troubles of women (cf. line 293ff.); Pigeaud (1976, 7–9) compares a section from a Hippocratic text on female diseases (8:126 Littré). For other themes in the parodos, see Segal (1965, 122–24).

67. For the complexity of the long scene (it extends over four hundred lines), see Barrett (1964, 210), who points out how the philosophizing of the Nurse at line 250ff. closes off the first, lyric part of the scene.

68. See Reinhardt (1957, 626).

dramatic style, less delicately shaded, less naturalistic, and much more in tune with that of other Euripidean plays.[69]

Elsewhere, we are not encouraged to penetrate much to the inner life of Euripidean characters, who usually appear not in a meditative and private mood[70] but at the last extremity, ready to confront verbal or physical threats that demand instant response. Such figures as Andromache and Hermione seem to start forth into action, fully formed and ready to oppose each other. It is most unlikely that *Cretan Men* featured much exploration of the subjective state of Pasiphaë; but whatever may have preceded must have been flattened by the polished polemic of her defensive speech.[71] Admetos' subjectivity is finely suggested by his response to a number of tests and trials; but that subjectivity is of little significance in comparison with the impossible, embarrassing, and contradictory situation in which Admetos finds himself. It is not necessary to divide this lack of introspection from other complementary aspects of Euripidean style: the rejection of the *spoudaion* mode of character implies a greater emphasis on event and situation.

Hippolytos is Sophoclean in its emphasis on *êthos* as a wellspring of action; but it remains Euripidean in its choice of material, thus providing us with a valuable test case for examining the contributions of the ironic mode to this dramatic style. The play is Euripidean in its preference for dividing attention among a number of protagonists, who arrange themselves in a familiar relation of balance and opposition. Audience sympathy is similarly divided. Because of Phaidra's association with a shameful kind of sexuality, it is easier to motivate the misunderstanding between the protagonists from Hippolytos' side than from hers. Her hostile counterreaction to his misogyny is in fact extenuated at the price of some sympathy for Hippolytos.[72]

Misogyny is a device very useful to the tragic poet in his manipulation of moral attitudes. The weakness in such a prejudice did not escape notice in a

69. Early analyses of *Hippolytos* saw Phaidra, like Medeia, as a passionate and culpable woman. (The rationalizing interpretation that dismisses the agency of the gods as unimportant supports this treatment of Phaidra—see Pohlenz [(1930) 1954, 269–73]; Winnington-Ingram [1958, 182–83].) But Phaidra is not really representative of demonic *Leidenschaft;* and Medeia's peculiar psychological style is reproduced in no other Euripidean play (see Schadewaldt [1926, 206]; Lesky [1960, 21]).

70. See Masqueray's remark on this scene: we seem to breathe the intimate atmosphere of the women's quarters, where no man comes (1908, 51).

71. See Strohm (1957, 28): it is one of the functions of the *agôn* to place the action on a more general and typical basis. For a parallel, consider *Orestes,* where touches of subjectivity are quickly submerged, as Orestes enters into conflict, first with Tyndareos and Menelaos, and then with the whole Argive populace—see Lanza (1961, 58–59); W. D. Smith (1967.2, 301).

72. Fauth (1958, 540–42) and Lattimore (1962, 15) see this change in Hippolytos as an error on the poet's part.

society that was increasingly fascinated by variations in local custom.[73] Yet the condemnation of women and female behavior played an important role in Greek society, enhancing male solidarity and helping to enforce the value system centering on *aretê*. Aischylos had used these contradictions most effectively in *Seven Against Thebes* to convey Eteokles' role as leader and as representative of the male warrior class of his community, while at the same time suggesting a potential distortion in his relation to religious and family tradition.[74] When Hippolytos denounces women, he is more in harmony with community values than at any other time in the play;[75] but there is a stylistic break between Hippolytos' character in the rest of the play and the impression that he makes in this scene.[76] As the rhetorical and polemical atmosphere of the first *Hippolytos* seems to move through the play, sympathy for Phaidra is increased, and the sympathetic Hippolytos moves somewhat out of focus. His speech is a gross distortion of what Phaidra has so carefully and thoughtfully examined; and, in saying what he does, Hippolytos frightens Phaidra into despair and guarantees his own fate. His *hamartia* is thus the complement to her own, based like hers in his inability to comprehend and appreciate his opposite. The shock that he has received and the conventionality of his views excuse what he says; but the slight effect of alienation makes us see him as Phaidra does for a chilling moment.

When Hippolytos appears again in the play, he is the dominant protagonist, since Phaidra is dead; and his posture in his encounter with Theseus is very different from that in his scene with the Nurse. Now it is Hippolytos who is misjudged and condemned without a hearing, while Theseus listens only to the self-serving rhythms of his own rhetoric.[77] The speech of Hippolytos himself is delivered with a tactlessness—or an honesty—that dooms it from the start. The conventional arguments given him serve only to reveal Hippolytos' fatal distance from others and to alienate him from his father.[78]

73. Early Amazon myths, such as that in the *Aithiopis*, indicate very early interest in the question of gender roles. On the interest in foreign cultures in the late fifth century, see Baldry (1965, 33ff.).

74. See Winnington-Ingram (1983, 27). Sophokles used the same device, less subtly and equivocally, in Kreon's rhetoric in *Antigone*. Vernant & Vidal-Naquet (1972, 33–34) point out the parallel.

75. For the assumption that the audience will see misogyny as a mark of deviance, see Tschiedel (1969, 237).

76. On his unsympathetic behavior, see Conacher (1967, 30, 33); Sale (1977, 35ff.)

77. Note his "rhetorical" questions, which take the place of a real answer to Hippolytos' queries, while the latter remarks on the inappropriateness of this play with words (923, 935). See Hippolytos' reply to the long speech, "There is matter for fine speeches [τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἔχον καλοὺς λόγους]; yet, if one opens it up, it is not fine" (985).

78. The argument—an intelligent man like me would have no reason to aim at rebellion—is traditionally assigned to the unjustly accused, the basic model being the *Palamedes* of Gorgias (DK 2:294–303 fr. 11B). On the conventionality of the piece, see J. Gould (1978, 57–58); Rivier (1958, 57). Antiphon defends himself by this means in Fr. 1a (Thalheim), his greatest

In the course of his appeal, Hippolytos depreciates monarchy to a monarch and the charms of Phaidra to her widower.[79] The warning of the servant in the prologue is confirmed, and we can see that Hippolytos' alienation from Aphrodite derives from the same trait of awkward honesty, or arrogance. He is unable to pay the lip service that piety or tact demands.[80]

The play's three main figures are joined in a perfectly balanced mating of error, misjudgment, and misunderstanding that derives in part from the character of each, but for which no one of them can be assigned an unequivocal responsibility. The combined anger and sympathy that we are made to feel for Phaidra and Hippolytos vary in measure, but never fall entirely out of proportion. Theseus is arbitrary and unfair, but we are unlikely to judge him as harshly as Artemis does.[81] In terms of the effect on the audience, however, her severity may be necessary to redirect Theseus' previously expressed rage and to put the king into a mood that will permit him to beg Hippolytos' forgiveness in the last scene. The resolution between father and son wipes out Theseus' culpability, while at the same time Hippolytos' ability to forgive puts the best light on his moral pretensions and obliterates the alienating note of rigidity in some earlier scenes.[82] Phaidra is exculpated by both goddesses: Aphrodite calls her *eukleês*, and Artemis terms her revenge on Hippolytos "lust—or a kind of nobility."[83] The equivalency between Phaidra at the play's opening and Hippolytos at its close[84] helps to divide our sympathies evenly, as we see that both are worthy of respect and understanding, even from Theseus, the representative of power and established authority.

speech (Plut. *Vit. Ant.*, 11.20 [833d]). Sophokles gave this same argument to another innocent, Kreon (*OT* 587–89). In the Sophoclean version the accused is less important to the play, nor is he characterized as an intellectual. Newton (1980) argues for the priority of this version; but searches for the "originators" of such commonplaces are unrewarding, since examples depend on an understood norm that may be constituted in full by no single member of the group.

79. See the analysis of Sale (1977, 48ff.).

80. Mensch (1976, 83).

81. See her extremely severe assessment: Theseus is shamed (*aischyntheis*, 1291) and no longer has a place among the noble (*en agathois andrasin* [1294]), a devastating rebuke in terms of Adkins' scale of values (1960).

82. As Stinton points out (1975, 240) tragic poets have other means besides the *hamartia* by which they can diminish "outrage" at the protagonist's downfall. In this case, Hippolytos' death seems less harsh because of Theseus' changed attitude. For the effect, see Knox (1952, 29–30).

83. 1300–1, οἶστρον ἢ τρόπον τινὰ / γενναιότητα. Barrett (1964, 399) points out the oxymoronic quality of the expression, which both defines and attempts to bridge over the gulf between the two possible views of Phaidra's conduct.

84. For this equivalency, see discussions by Segal (1965, 151–52; 1969, 300–4; and 1970.2, 137), who stresses the complementary reversals in their fates and behavior; see also Bremer (1975, 278). Strohm (1957, 69 and n.1) notes the "garland-like" structure that interweaves their appearances, while keeping them separate; note the similar effect of the dramatic arrangements of *Herakles*.

Hippolytos is as rigid and as idealistic as the youthful self-sacrificers that appear in many of the plays; but he is given a much more complex and subjectively oriented moral development. The treatment of his oath and his decision to keep it is typical of the play's complex and nonlogical balancing of audience sympathies. Hippolytos decides to keep to his oath partly because he is certain that he will not be believed anyway, and the effect of his last-minute wavering is to enhance audience identification in a crucial moment.[85] When a dramatic character retains moral norms where most of us would jettison them, his downfall begins to look like a result of his own perversity. Most of us, like most fifth-century Athenians, tend to place self-preservation before moral scruples; and the confusions in moral systems delineated by A. W. H. Adkins (1960) must have led to increased flexibility, or untrustworthiness, in adherence to norms of behavior. Hippolytos' momentary reconsideration of his oath naturalizes him; and Hippolytos the chaste, who sets rules for himself that have no meaning for other men, is a character particularly in need of humanizing and softening touches.

At the moment when he considers abandoning his oath, Hippolytos makes the kind of calculation that most of us would make at such a moment, and he comes to what is manifestly a wise decision. To break his oath would offend the gods, without convincing Theseus; and that would be the worst of bad bargains, especially for a man with such pride in his integrity.[86] Similarly, Hippolytos' first instinct to ignore the oath, in his earlier speech to the Nurse, has many extenuating circumstances in his feelings and in his shock at her immoral proposition. His distinction between the swearing of the "tongue" and that of the mind expresses Hippolytos' scorn for the mere surface of virtue; and the pride with which he boasts of his "unsworn mind" matches other refusals to be trammeled by the conditions of ordinary existence. The oath is presented throughout so that we can apprehend it in its human meaning to Hippolytos and so that it never becomes a mere abstraction. In the last scene Artemis naturally mentions none of these waverings and overtones:

> He, as was right, did not agree with [the Nurse's] words,
> nor, when he was maligned by you,

85. 1060ff. Against Hippolytos' morality, Orban (1981.2, 201 – 2). Valgiglio (1957.1, 7ff.) argues, as I do, that this touch humanizes Hippolytos and makes him a more eligible tragic hero. Crocker (1957, 246) formulates it thus: Hippolytos has "tragic guilt," but lacks "ethical guilt."

86. Orban (1981.2, 201 – 2) points out that the following tag by the chorus, which commends the reliability of Hippolytos' oath to Theseus, may also serve to underline for Hippolytos the importance of not breaking faith.

> did he take the seal of trust from his oaths,
> for he was pious (*eusebês*).[87]

The management of the oath makes it possible for the audience to appreciate Artemis' praise as the appropriate moral validation for Hippolytos, while still retaining their fellow feeling (*to philanthrôpon*) for this character.

III. Socratic Ideology

III.A. Phaidra's Speech

Hippolytos presents a most Euripidean pair of protagonists, a lovesick matron and a fanatic boy; but it expends the whole arsenal of Sophoclean dramatic devices to purchase approval and sympathy for these characters. Of all the plays, *Hippolytos* offers the least challenge to the generic norms of tragedy and of society. Two incompatible value systems are allowed to flourish in an ideal form, with a corresponding blurring of the ironic vision that reveals each side *as it appears to the other*. Phaidra and Hippolytos appear to us more nearly as they would see themselves; and the only irony is in the incompleteness and complementarity of their clashing life views.

Surely the greatest evidence of confusion in the traditional view of Euripidean poetry has been the persistent misinterpretation of the opening lines of Phaidra's long speech as a bald anti-Socratic polemic. It should always have been evident that, for this of all Euripidean plays, what is said by the speakers is made to correspond to a carefully developed *êthos*. Phaidra's values are traditional; and her speech, taken as a whole and without severing its introduction from its body, constitutes a masterly exposition of what we might call the fifth-century moral status quo. She arrives at no clear formulation, but since it is the contradictions in the convention that are being explored, clarity is not necessarily an asset. Because the speech reflects the limitations of Phaidra's personality and experience more than Euripides' speeches usually do, the values it presents are not so much analyzed as laid open to the *elenchos* of the play's action.

Hippolytos is not distant enough in time from *Erechtheus* or *Suppliants* or *Hekabe* for us to speak of an evolution in Euripides' rhetorical skills: the artist was certainly capable of his typically clear and logical style at this

87. 1307 – 9:

> ὃ δ', ὥσπερ οὖν δίκαιον, οὐκ ἐφέσπετο
> λόγοισιν, οὐδ' αὖ πρὸς σέθεν κακούμενος
> ὅρκων ἀφεῖλε πίστιν, εὐσεβὴς γεγώς.

For the text of line 1307, see Barrett (1964, 399).

period. Since the introduction to Phaidra's speech is a piece whose logical structure does not work, it makes sense to assume that the confusion is part of the discourse, rather than an "error" extraneous to it. Down to the middle of line 381, Phaidra's thought is limpid and perspicuous:[88] many people possess good sense enough (*eu phronein*); but, although having sufficient knowledge and experience to choose well, we choose badly from lack of effort, and from laziness.[89] Phaidra's points are even underlined neatly by touches of rhetorical didacticism;[90] but, as she begins to describe the nature and causes of the laziness (*argia*) that spoils human moral endeavors, her thought seems to become cloudy and to drift.

> We do not work it out, some through laziness,
> and some putting before the good
> some other pleasure.[91]

The passage seems to imply either that *argia* is some sort of pleasure, or, more likely, that some other sort of pleasure than that which normally accompanies the "good" (*kalon*) will prevent the completion of moral impulses.[92] Phaidra goes on to say that

88. The controversy over the "exact meaning" of *prassein kakion* in line 378 is meaningless: there is no distinction between "doing well" and "behaving well" at this point. (See Snell [1971, 67], who argues that it must be ethical in the strictest sense; and Claus [1972, 226].) Some of the parallel Platonic passages that illustrate this ambivalency are analyzed by Pigeaud (1976, 12–13).

89. 380–81:

> τὰ χρήστ' ἐπιστάμεσθα καὶ γιγνώσκομεν
> οὐκ ἐκπονοῦμεν δ', οἱ μὲν ἀργίας ὕπο . . .

See the interesting uses of *ekponein* in *Herakles*. Here, the strenuous approach, condemned by Megara as lacking in dignity and good sense, is commended by Phaidra as the only means of making actions match our knowledge of what is right. Both uses contain the same notion of an extra, will-directed effort, which may prove to be vain. Moline (1975, 54) argues with some plausibility that the double use of *epistamai* and *gignôskô* indicates a degree of philosophical precision for this speech. See also Irwin (1983, 190).

90. See the phrase in line 379, "But this is the way one should consider it [ἀλλὰ τῇδ' ἀρθρητέον τόδε.]." See Chap. 8, on the use of such instructive and pedantic tag lines in the rhetoric of Herakles and Amphitryon.

91. 382: οἱ δ' ἡδονὴν προθέντες ἀντὶ τοῦ καλοῦ / ἄλλην τιν' . . .

92. Barrett (1964, 229) interprets *allên tin'* to mean "something else [besides laziness], namely some pleasure." But Willinck (1968, 14) has shown that an emphatic *allos* such as this cannot take that interpretation; see also Claus (1972, 227).

> There are many pleasures in life,
> long talks and leisure, a baneful delight,
> and shame.[93]

There is no apparent source in Hellenic tradition for labeling "long talks and leisure"—an evident hendiadys—as evil. We would expect Phaidra to refer to the temptations of sexuality, not those of conversation. The phrase "baneful delight" (or "delightful evil," *terpnon kakon*) underlines this oddness, since it virtually forces a reference to *erôs*.[94] The most readily available gloss to this passage is Phaidra's reference to her own nightly ponderings,[95] but that seems illogical: how can a meditation on, or a conversation about moral failure itself lead to moral failure? Further ambiguity is contributed by the fact that the program of line 383 very clearly leads us to expect a catalogue of pleasures, and it is as puzzling to find "shame" ending the catalogue as it was to find leisurely conversations beginning it.[96] She continues:

> There are two; the one is not bad,
> the other is a burden to houses. If the mark (*kairos*)
> were clear,
> they would not be two things spelled with the
> same letters.[97]

93. 383–85:

> . . . εἰσὶ δ' ἡδοναὶ πολλαὶ βίου
> μακραί τε λέσχαι καὶ σχολή, τερπνὸν κακόν,
> αἰδώς τε . . .

94. See Claus (1972, 233 n.16). We might attempt to make a connection through Semonides' fear of sexual conversations (ἀφροδισίους λόγους, 7W.91) among married women. Interpretation in the direction of naturalistic psychology (Phaidra and women like her have too much time on their hands; see U. Wilamowitz [(1898) 1926.2, 112]; and Winnington-Ingram [1958, 176–77]) is certainly possible, but is not encouraged by the schematic and rhetorical form of the passage.

95. Note the repetition of "lengthy" (*makros*) in 375 and 384.

96. The doubled *te* that links *aidôs* and the other "pleasures" is a very strong indication of pairing. Barrett (1964, 230) is certainly not right to assume that the appending of *aidôs* is any ordinary sort of anacoluthon, since our intuitive interpretation of the passage will follow its logical form, not diverge from it. The problem is that the logical form does not seem to make any sense.

97. On *kairos*, see the discussion of Barrett (1964, 231); and Pigeaud (1976, 18–19). Willinck's interpretation (1968, 15ff.; that the "two" are not shames but pleasures) is supported by an attempt to make fine distinctions that have no basis in Greek ethics or in poetic style. Further, it is rhetorically unlikely that *dyo* could refer back to *hêdonai*, which are originally mentioned as being many (*pollai*), and would now have to be reformed into a single abstraction, and then split in half. For a long note on the bibliography of this controversy, see Orban (1981.1, 12–13 n.26). Early discussion in Dodds (1925, 103).

Phaidra drifts from her apparent theme—effort as a solution to moral failure—into musings on *aidôs*, ending this long *prooimion* on a note of inconsequence, since there is no resumption of the central topic to end the digression. What has happened to the main thought? Or rather, where is the main thought to be found? Since the passage is logically incoherent, it seems best to look for other sources of coherence. *Aidôs* (shame or modesty) is traditionally opposed to pleasure, rather than linked with it; but it does have many associations with inactivity, a theme which runs throughout the passage.[98] The general point is hard to miss: there is here a strong opposition between Phaidra's resolution to struggle with her inclinations and some principle of inertia, which may or may not be pleasurable. But the result is paradox, since the passage seems to undermine the prime support of morality in conventional Hellenic thought. We, from our perspective within the new ethic, can fill in the reasons why *aidôs* might be a seductive principle of inertia tending to moral collapse; but this perspective was not available to Euripides' audience. For them, in particular, this passage is a riddle without a solution.[99]

However unclear the connection of *aidôs* to pleasure (*hêdonê*) and inactivity (*argia*) may be, the trailing close has ended the introduction precisely upon the central topic of the rest of the rhesis. As Phaidra begins to apply her principle—and such an incoherent principle will prove predictably awkward to apply—and to move from generalizations to her own particular case, the problem of *aidôs* will be laid bare, not through an orderly analysis, but through the repetitive and spiraling desperation of her thoughts. It has rightly been pointed out that Phaidra does not intend her strictures against long conversations and other forms of *argia* to apply to herself, since she is embracing the tonic and active side and will "work out" (*ekponein*) her troubles.[100] But the very vagueness of her formulation leaves open the suggestion that there is more in her discourse than she can consciously embrace.[101]

98. See Barrett (1964, 230) and the tag from *Ion* 337. Müffelmann (1965, 28 and 51–52) discusses the link between *aidôs* and *argia* at some length, linking both to the inaction imposed by intellectual analysis (hence, the long conversations).

99. I have not raised the question of the two *aidôi* and what they might mean, because I have throughout tried to avoid over-precision in a passage that is designed to be imprecise and puzzling. However, a number of traditional passages, particularly in Hesiodos, do offer divisions between "good" and "bad" sides of moral principles, such as *aidôs* and conflict (*eris*, *WD* 17–19). See Barrett (1964, 230). One of the best discussions of the ethical values around *aidôs* is that of Segal (1970.1), although it is marred by the assumption that an "outer" and an "inner" *aidôs* can be distinguished here (293). That they cannot be distinguished is precisely the problem. But see Winnington-Ingram (1958, 183–84), who points to the fact that Phaidra's *aidôs* and *sôphrosynê* are maintained by custom (*nomôi*), while those of Hippolytos are rooted in nature (*physei*). On the confusions see Hathorn (1957, 214): "As long as words refer to natural objects . . . they are relatively manageable, but when we cross the border into the realm of human conduct, we find that they may slip, expand, and turn into their opposites."

She begins with a restatement of the resolute rhetoric of moral determination: she will not be corrupted by any poison so as to let her thought "fall backward" and reverse itself (τοὔμπαλιν πεσεῖν φρενῶν, 390). Like all will-power rhetoric, this contains the ominous germ of its own dissolution: to "fall" one need only relax, while to resist implies a continual struggle. Her first expedient was that normal to *aidôs*, silence and concealment of the "disease." In a movement of familiar Euripidean "inconsequence" Phaidra adds that speech, which knows how to advise others on their troubles, most often harms itself. A faint echo of the delightful evil (τερπνὸν κακόν) of leisurely speech can be heard. Can this speech that Phaidra is making be itself a self-harming discourse? Except for this single digression, the sequence of Phaidra's remedies for her passion is coldly and logically set forth: first, silence; second, self-control (*to sôphronein*); and finally, death, "strongest of plans—no one will deny it."[102]

But, when she begins to draw the moral from her three resolutions, Phaidra's thought flows into contradictory and self-revelatory patterns. She begins with a *gnômê* or maxim that sounds fairly conventional:

> I would not escape notice when doing good things (*kala*)
> nor, doing shameful (*aischra*) ones, have many witnesses.

On the surface this can be taken as a somewhat elaborate statement of the obvious, that shameful things must be concealed. Taken farther, it could explain Phaidra's decision to gain some honor by revealing her struggle before she ends her life, although in her predicament Phaidra can gain honor only by revealing her shame. The paradox is an illustration of the Thucydidean maxim that the woman with the best reputation (*doxa*) is the most unknown.[103] Pressed further yet, of course, this tag reveals the weakest point of the shame ethic: it is not what one really does that matters, but what one is seen or known to have done. Phaidra goes on to say that she knows that the "act" and the "disease" are a source of bad fame (*dysklea*): thus, as W. Barrett points out, not only the actual performance of adultery, but even

100. See Willinck (1968, 17); Claus (1972, 225ff.); Solmsen (1973). This confusion, however, persists in Irwin's discussion of Phaedra's "incontinence" (1983).

101. See Manuwald (1979).

102. Note *kratein* above (401); and see Turato (1974, 158) on this term and its use in Antiphon (58B).

103. She says to the Nurse, "You will destroy me. Yet the matter brings me honor [ὀλῇ. τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἐμοὶ τιμὴν φέρει]" (328). Cf. line 331, "Out of shameful matters [*aischrôn*] I am contriving noble ones [*esthla*]." Knox (1952, 9) partially anticipated this point.

the malady of *erôs* itself, brings shame to women.[104] This, of course, makes a mockery of Phaidra's earlier hope that revelation of her struggle would bring honor. For, as she goes on to say, only to be a woman is to incur loathing on all sides.[105] The mechanism of misogyny is such that any woman can bring shame to the rest, while the good woman, regarded as a rare exception, has no effect on the general fame of the sex.[106] The woman who first devised adultery thus indelibly blackened the reputation of the sex.

Adulterous women shame the secret marriage bed before outsiders (*thyraioi*, 409), exposing the household to ignominy. Yet it must have been from noble houses that this practice first derived, for when the noble (*esthloi*) decide upon shameful deeds, then such actions will certainly seem good (*kala*) to the low (*kakoi*). A major problem for ancient ethics is packed into Phaidra's words: since the terms for high social status in many cases are identical with those for moral goodness, there is a complete confusion of values when the "shameful" is condoned by those who are "noble."[107] Where is the sanction on which Phaidra can base her desperate resolution to master (*kratein*) her desires? The women that Phaidra hates, those who are decent (*sôphronas*) only in word, destroy the system of virtue based on *aidôs*. For if shame derives from what is known, the successful adulteress is not shamed; and what should be *aischron* can appear unchallenged as *kalon*. In desperation, Phaidra is thrown back upon a fantasy in which the house itself, the entity whose honor and secrets have been betrayed to the outsiders, cries out and denounces the offender. While this may seem to be the beginning of a sense of "guilt,"[108] the parable of the speaking house also expresses the impossibility of converting shame into guilt. Unless the woman can find some reason within herself to reject deceit, she is frightening herself with a meaningless imagination. "That is just what is killing me, my

104. 1964, 233–34.

105. Barrett's analysis of the phrase "an object of loathing to all [*misêma pasin*]" (1964, 234) makes distinctions where none will hold. The bad fame of women has its primary and—in such a context as this—its determining source in women's sexuality; *misêma*, "object of scorn/hatred" or "sexual deviant", therefore can hold its several meanings together and there is no need to eliminate any of them from the passage.

106. See the discussion between Agamemnon and Odysseus in the underworld: the evil deed of Klytaimestra brings bad fame and suspicion of evil doing to all women, even those as fine as Penelopeia (*Od.* 11.433–34). See Euripidean comments fr. 657 N2 (*Protesilaos*) and especially 493 (*Melanippe*): ἄλγιστόν ἐστι θῆλυ μισηθὲν γένος, which could serve as a gloss on our passage.

107. See Adkins (1960, 76ff.) on Theognis and the confusion introduced by disjunction between class standards and moral standards.

108. But see *Agamemnon* (37–38, cf. 1091ff.), where this same image also appears in a context of concealed adultery.

friends," Phaidra cries, "may I never be caught shaming my husband and children."

The most maddening feature of the shame ethic is the tremendous rewards available to successful hypocrisy, matched with the immense penalties ready for any failure, indeed for any suspicion of failure, since women, "objects of loathing," are assumed—as Hippolytos assumes—to have a natural bent to lewdness. Knowledge of their sexuality brings to women shame and self-hatred, leaving them with no inner principle to oppose to the temptations of secrecy. Women and their doings must simply be hidden, that is the only rule. When Phaidra tries to picture positively the values of a good reputation (421ff.), she moves in imagination out of the close atmosphere of the women's quarters into the open air of the public *polis*, where reputations are acquired by activity and where the individual's view of himself (γνώμη δικαία κἀγαθή) can provide support for the maintenance of honor. But, in Phaidra's world, where can such supports be found?[109]

We do not have long to wait before the contradictions in Phaidra's speech become overt. The rebuttal of the Nurse offers the perfect contemporary refutation for this tangle of moral confusions, revealing the folly of Phaidra's efforts to be "strong": "human beings should not struggle overmuch with life."[110] Phaidra's sense of a menace in the appeal of *logoi* was well founded: all the Nurse really has to do is place Phaidra's own arguments in a new context. Wise people, she reasons, keep hidden (or ignore, *lanthanein*) what is not honorable (*ta mê kala*, 465–66). Phaidra's own view, that virtue requires the exertion of tremendous moral effort, makes her vulnerable to the Nurse's ridicule of those who would set excessively high standards for themselves.[111] On the other hand, if one takes the shame standard in the "easy" way, as the Nurse does, it is no standard at all, but simply an etiquette for concealing what is better not seen.

Phaidra's response is to blame all mortal troubles on "excessively fine speeches" (*kaloi lian logoi*). The double meaning of *kalos*, aesthetically pleasing, and morally fine or noble, is in play throughout this dialogue. A moment later (499) she will call the Nurse's talk (*logous*), "most shameful/ugly" (*aischistous*), and then again at line 503 she will admit that the Nurse speaks ugly/shameful things (*aischra*) beautifully (*kalôs*).[112] Phaidra's "exhaustion" that leads her to acceed to the half-disguised plan of

109. See H. Parry's fine dissection of the imagery of concealment and openness, indoor (female) pollution and outdoor (male and asexual) purity (1966, 324ff.).

110. 467: οὐδ' ἐκπονεῖν τοι χρὴ βίον λίαν βροτούς.

111. Note her use of *perissos* at lines 237 and 445; at line 473ff. she even argues that it is mere *hybris* to attempt to surpass the gods in virtue.

112. Note that this riddle appears twice in four lines: εὖ λέγεις γὰρ, αἰσχρὰ δέ (503) and τἀσχρὰ δ' ἢν λέγῃς καλῶς (505).

the Nurse proceeds as much from the torment of these unresolved and unresolvable confusions as from her mental and physical weakness.[113] Her fear and suspicion of discourse seem justified by the verbal morass into which she has strayed.[114]

While in one sense Phaidra's failure is a demonstration that people who "know better" can still be weak, in another sense it reveals the seductiveness of the Socratic argument that nobody willingly commits a moral error,[115] since the collapse of her resistance evidently proceeds from the contradictions in her *logos*. Any attempt to suggest the relation of this speech to a positive Socratic "doctrine" would carry the implication that such a doctrine existed and that it can, in the absence of any writings by Sokrates, be recaptured from traces in Platon and elsewhere. But, like Antisthenes' denial of refutation and other paradoxical arguments attributed to Socratics and other Sophists, the argument that all moral errors are involuntary works better as a tool to expose contradictions than as the foundation for any sort of coherent theory.[116] In this passage, and in the passage of *Medeia* that recalls Socratic terms,[117] Euripides is giving free play to some of the problems that made this argument so interesting and so fertile for fifth-century thinkers.[118] Seen in that light, Phaidra's speech looks more like a tribute to Socratic influence than a "polemic" against the philosopher.

III.B. Hippolytos as Socratic Hero

The analysis of Phaidra's speech does not exhaust the Socratic associations of *Hippolytos*. The tendency of philosophers to study their field in terms of arguments and doctrines makes it difficult for them to approach most of the figures of the Sophistic movement, since these thinkers seem not to present systems so much as to play, often in a quite self-conscious and

113. Barrett (1964, 256) draws heavily on psychological extrapolation: Phaidra is weakened by her fast and is "too exhausted and bemused" to follow up the Nurse's ambiguous discourse.

114. See Pigeaud on the relation between the theme of disease and medicine and that of *logos* and rhetoric (1976, 17–18), a favorite metaphor of Gorgias.

115. Οὐδεὶς ἑκὼν ἁμαρτάνει, see *Prot.* 345e1, *Apol.* 37a5.

116. I disagree with Irwin (1977) about the existence of solid and fixed Socratic *dogmata* (hypostatized by I. under a set of acronyms, xv-xvii).

117. See Snell (1971, 55ff.).

118. Irwin (1983, 191–92) is certainly right in pointing out that the phrasing of the dilemmas in *Hippolytos* and especially in *Medeia* is designed to bring the problem of "incontinence" to the fore, in much the same form in which it would present itself to an abstract thinker, a philosopher. But distinctions that Irwin attempts to make, between an emotion that will "prevent someone from thinking straight" and one that "overwhelms someone with desire, even when he does think straight" (188), are psychologically unreal. "Incontinence" is a peculiarly philosophical way of dissecting a psychological phenomenon: *Medeia* opts for this mode of discourse, and much of the fascinating "absurdity" of that play derives from its presentation of Medeia as completely aware of two conflicting drives and sets of motivations at once.

ironic fashion, with words and concepts.[119] Although we know little of Sokrates' positive teachings, his impact on those who found in him a model for human conduct must have derived in part from his practice in philosophy and argument. If we limit our study of Sokrates to what we know about this social impact and if we take account of some of the stories about him, as I tried earlier to take account of some of the stories about Sophokles and Euripides, we can make out the outline of a human figure that has strong affinities with the reformist characters in Euripidean plays, and particularly with the hero of *Hippolytos*.[120]

As in the case of many legendary figures, the most important feature of the legend about Sokrates seems to have been the way he came to his death.[121] A number of versions of his defense speech were produced; and these, along with accounts of his courage in death, were important as proofs of Sokrates' special nature.[122] Although encouraged to go into exile, Sokrates insisted on remaining in Athens and, by refusing to propose his own penalty at the trial, virtually forced a sentence of death upon his jurors.[123] I have mentioned (in Chapter Three, above) the close parallels between the reasoning of such self-sacrificers as Polyxene, Makaria, and Menoikeus, and the Platonic Sokrates' explanation of his decision not to evade death. Like facing battle, a voluntary submission to death requires courage; but, unlike the warrior's death, the end of the self-sacrificer is marked by passivity. This new standard of *aretê* is directly entailed by the resolution of the conflict between "cooperative" and "competitive" virtues in the favor of the former. We can now admire the courage and public spirit of the sufferer, without having to admire aggression and self-aggrandizement. The tranquillity with which the Euripidean figures meet their end, and their refusal to

119. Magalhães-Vilhena's book *Le problème de Socrate* (1952, 113) contains a good discussion of the tendency to interpret the work of individuals from the inside, as a self-consistent system, and the results for intellectual history.

For the playful and ironic mode, see the work of Zenon of Elea, of whom H. Fränkel remarked ([1924] 1960, 236) that it is almost impossible to separate the lighter side of his art from the important ideas he presented. On the controversy over whether Zenon could be allowed these "Sophistic" traits and still be considered a philosopher, see Kerferd (1981, 61ff.)

120. The conventional methods of isolating historical "fact" and "truth" have entered into a paradoxical circle in the case of Sokrates, since nothing remains except the reception, elaboration, and interpretation of the Socratic thought and personality in the work of others. The most sophisticated discussion of this problem is that of Magalhães-Vilhena (1952, 110ff.).

121. See the legends surrounding the deaths of poets, discussed by G. Nagy (1979, 301ff.).

122. The range of writers on Sokrates moves from untalented but devoted disciples like Aischines of Sphettos through figures like Platon and Antisthenes who were thinkers in their own right to rhetors like Polykrates and Lysias, who picked up the theme of the defense or accusation of Sokrates, probably when it was already celebrated, as a likely subject for a display piece—see Gigon (1947, 23); Hirzel (1887).

123. For the extraordinary nature of Sokrates' trial and death sentence, see Dover (1976, 47).

repine against what they have accepted as the right course of action, are another mark of similarity to the Socratic myth.

In his idealism and his willingness to sacrifice life for principle, Hippolytos resembles the self-sacrificers. Most of them are girls or young women, who assimilate their death to a traditional model of courage. Like them, Hippolytos displays moral concerns that are somewhat inappropriate to his sex. Sexual continence was praised without being clearly prescribed for Greek males, except in the period of adolescence when boys were vulnerable to homosexual approaches.[124] In abstaining from heterosexual activity, Hippolytos brings male "modesty" (*aidôs*) into a role never envisaged by the culture; but the peculiar ideas of Hippolytos about sexuality have a considerable affinity to those of at least one member of the Socratic school. Antisthenes was famous for his hostility to all forms of *hêdonê* (pleasure), particularly the sexual.[125] Platon's account of Sokrates' views on sexuality appears to be strongly opposed to that of Antisthenes;[126] but, as in the case of Phaidra's remarks on responsibility and will power, it is more useful, at least for the purpose of understanding Euripidean drama, to note the common concerns of Socratic thinkers with certain key topics than to attempt to make fine distinctions between their doctrines. Just as we can detect, without being able to localize it, a pervasive concern with female roles and potential in the Socratic school,[127] so we can point to an intense involvement with the problems centering on self-control (*egkrateia*), pleasure, and *erôs*.[128] In spite of their disagreements, both Platon and Antisthenes deprecated the hedonic or appetitive element in human psychology.[129] Hippolytos, who despises the sexual act, is frequently surrounded by his age mates (*hêlikes*), who show their devotion by escorting him into exile;[130] and his association with Artemis also

124. See Dover (1978, 81ff.).

125. See the fragments in Caizzi (1966, 53–55) fr. 108a-109b: "I had rather be mad than have pleasure [μανείην μᾶλλον ἢ ἡσθείην]." Fr. 108e-f: "One should never move a finger for the sake of pleasure [μηδέποτε χάριν ἡδονῆς δάκτυλον ἐκτείνειν]." He described *erôs* as *kakia têsphyseôs* and asserted that he would (like Diomedes, *Il.*5.348ff.) take a shot at Aphrodite, if he saw her (fr. 109 a-b).

126. Antisthenes himself thought so: see the notorious sexual slur in the title of his antiplatonic tract, Caizzi (1966, fr. 18.32).

127. This is another obvious connection with the Euripidean plays. Note that Antisthenes apparently wrote about Aspasia to denounce her as a sexual creature, while Aischines, Xenophon (*Oec.* 3.14; *Mem.* 2.6.36), and Platon (*Menexenos*) mention her favorably, combining this with arguments in favor of female intellectual potential. For Aischines, see Humbert (1967, 226–27).

128. See Antisthenes' discussion of various *hêdonai* in Xenophon *Symp.* 4.39–41.

129. The latter apparently argued for a limited and utilitarian heterosexuality; see Xenophon *Symp.* 4.38.

130. 1102ff. Hippolytos is asexual, not homosexual; but these positions are not mutually exclusive. As Dover has shown (1978, 103 and n.88), Athenian society had an ambivalent view of the physical side of homosexual *erôs*.

Barrett's careful analysis of the evidence for a double chorus here (1964, 366–69), leads to

suggests close and intimate comradeship accompanied by a denial of sexuality.[131] There is strong evidence that a similar ideal of intimacy without physical sexuality emanated from the Socratic circle.

Sokrates' surface persona, his fabled ugliness, his primitive garb, and his comic behavior are the markers of a new morality, in which *to kalon* is located inside the individual, in his *psychê*, rather than in his outward attributes.[132] The fascination with Sokrates among young men of the most distinguished class, who were themselves the natural inheritors of traditional *aretê*, was an indication that, in some Athenian circles in the late fifth century, the definition of the *spoudaios* was undergoing radical change. Like the young aristocrats who were attracted to Sokrates, Hippolytos is devoted to the traditional standards and activities, in his case hunting and gymnastics,[133] of the gentleman (*kalos k'agathos*).[134] Like them, he is exclusive and snobbish, on both moral and political grounds.[135] As an audience for his oratory,

something of a *non liquet*. But Barrett may be too hasty in concluding that the escort cannot be doing the singing, since they must leave with the hero. It seems easiest to assume that the youths form two groups, one to accompany the chorus and the other to leave with Hippolytos, corresponding to the two commands to "address us [προσείπαθ' ἡμᾶς]" (1099) and "escort us [προπέμψατε]." See also later references to the huge throng following him (1179–80): μυρία δ' ὀπισθόπους / φίλων ἅμ' ἔστειχ' ἡλίκων ⟨θ'⟩ ὁμήγυρις

131. See the ambivalent use of ξυνεῖναι, a word that can also refer to sexual intercourse, to describe Hippolytos' comradeship with Artemis, "forever in intercourse with a virgin [παρθένῳ ξυνὼν ἀεὶ]" (17), a contradiction in terms (cf. lines 85, 949).

132. See *Symposion* 215b. Aristophanes, Xenophon (*Symp.* 4.19, see 5.6), and Platon are agreed on one trait of Sokrates, namely his personal oddity and singular ugliness. Sokrates cannot be the normal *spoudaios* because he has all the markers of the *geloios*, even down to the face of the ultimate *geloios*, the satyr. An obvious parallel in Euripides to this concern with inner worth would be the treatment of the role of the Autourgos in *Elektra*.

133. The hunting was obviously part of the story; but see his orders for the horses, which he intends to exercise after he has eaten (112), and his reference to the games as the arena in which he would wish to excel. Theseus taunts him that "You have trained yourself to worship yourself much more than to be just and pious toward your parents" (1080–81):

> πολλῷ γε μᾶλλον σαυτὸν ἤσκησας σέβειν
> ἢ τοὺς τεκόντας ὅσια δρᾶν δίκαιος ὤν.

The reference to training (*êskêsas*) ties together Hippolytos' special regimen of abstinence from sex with his references to games and athletic exercises.

134. Note that it is necessary, and quite appropriate, to distinguish Sokrates himself—a comic and plebeian figure—from the brilliant and aristocratic associates that he acquired and to the best of whom I would assimilate Hippolytos.

135. For the exclusivity of Hippolytos' religiosity, see discussion above, Section II.B. The picture given by Montuori (1974, 286ff.) of Sokrates' political position, though exaggerated, seems valid. For Hippolytos, see Turato (1974, 151ff.), Blomqvist (1982, 414). Knox (1952, 21) remarks that "most of the commonplaces of the aristocratic attitude are put into his mouth in the course of the play. But he is also an intellectual and a religious mystic." Turato (150ff.) sees him as a conformist aristocrat and a reproach to contemporary Sophistic youth; but Knox is closer to the truth.

he rejects the democratic mob (*ochlos*) and prefers the few (*oligoi*), who are wise (986–89). Hippolytos' rejection of tyranny is couched in the same political terms: one should wish to be first in the games, but second in the city, "and always to do well, with the best people as friends."[136]

Hippolytos' adherence to aristocratic standards is not in itself striking. His world is the heroic one; and the relative dearth of irony and of its concomitant anachronism in this play does not encourage the audience to look for contemporary social significance in his tastes. But the conjunction of non-conformist habits and attitudes with these aristocratic tastes is suggestive, as is the relationship between Hippolytos and his father. We do not see the two together before the breach between them, but the kind of abuse that Theseus gives Hippolytos implies that the supposed crime of his son has actualized a potential alienation of some long standing. Hippolytos' boasts (*kompoi*) of association with a god are now revealed as the vauntings of a quack.[137] Pretensions to divine favor, as well as to a special moral purity, bring upon the devotee of nonstandard ethics the accusation of being excessive or overnice (*perissos*), hence Theseus' unfair gibes about Orphic cults and vegetarianism.[138]

Hippolytos at times is treated as the sole and lonely devotee of Artemis, and indeed he is the only one who hears her voice. But he claims to have a circle of intimates who understand better what he means, when he speaks of *sôphrosynê*, than his father and the rest of the uninitiated are likely to. This split between the generations again has its parallel in the accusations by Sokrates' enemies that sons were alienated from fathers by his teachings.[139]

136. 1018, σὺν τοῖς ἀρίστοις εὐτυχεῖν ἀεὶ φίλοις. See Pindaros *Py.* 11.50ff.

137. See line 952, *auchei*, "boast away." Hippolytos is also called *semnos*, 957; and see lines 93 (and commentary by Köhnken [1972, 184–85]) and 1080–81. See the studies on *semnos* in this play by Segal (1965, 128) and Köhnken (185–86); the word exactly defines the difference between divine and human prerogatives: for a human being to be *semnos* is wrong (as Hippolytos admits [94]), while it is highly appropriate to a god.

138. 952–53. In spite of textual disturbance it is easy to make out what Theseus is saying: he tells his son, "Now go all the way and become a full-fledged cultist, since you've been caught out [ἐπεί ἐλήφθης, 955)] as a fraud." Cf. Kassandra's bitter account of the neglect of her prophetic powers at Troy (*Ag.* 1273–74): she was treated like any starveling oraclemonger. Note that Theseus also addresses Hippolytos with associated insulting terms at line 1038, "wizard" and "magician" (*epôidos, goês*). It is unnecessary to associate Hippolytos directly with any such cult; see Barrett (1964, 342–43). Yet there is an analogy between Hippolytos and others who have eccentric definitions of virtue. People who avoid eating meat are, in Hellenic terms, comparable to a male who practices a sexual continence demanded by no normal moral code. Cf. Tschiedel (1969, 240): there is a kernel of truth in Theseus' remarks.

139. Note the reflection of this in the accusation of the *katêgoros* (possibly the rhetorician Polykrates—see above) in Xenophon *Mem.* 1.2.49: τοὺς πατέρας προπηλακίζειν ἐδίδασκε. The best evidence is Aristophanes' *Clouds*, which captures the trauma of generational dislocation under the influence of the new education. For this "generation gap" see Mensch (1976); but M. associates the gap with the differences that separate Hippolytos from Phaidra as well, which somewhat diffuses his treatment.

While any training in the Sophistic could cause disruption between the trained and the untrained, training that had a positive ethical content may have been potentially more unsettling. Immoral youth is the oldest of saws, but young people who follow a code that is more strict and exacting than the one in which they were brought up seem to reverse the traditional relations between generations. Theseus' rage at his son implies some stored-up resentment at Hippolytos' past failure to defer appropriately to parental authority.

Theseus' treatment of Hippolytos has certain interesting parallels with the maligning of Sokrates in *Clouds;* there too we hear that Sokrates is a charlatan and a trickster.[140] He too is *semnos* and gives himself airs.[141] The danger of appearing to be overfine, to claim special dispensations, to have a private truth is the same for both. It has been noted that the strictures of the Nurse against those who have the arrogance to set special conditions for their lives apply best to Hippolytos,[142] since he has a morality based on interior rather than community standards. Hippolytos' special truth gives him the certainty that Phaidra lacks; but it exposes him to being misunderstood and misjudged. The element of narcissism and arrogance in the boy's words is instantly perceived by Theseus (1080); but the more sympathetic audience, knowing that Hippolytos is not a liar, will also sense pathos, when in a remarkable figure of speech he imagines standing opposite himself to weep for himself (1078–79).

Since he has been judged a *kakos* by his own father, Hippolytos has fallen outside the community standards of the shame culture. He is utterly alone.[143] Phaidra, who fears that the mirror of time will reveal to others what must be concealed, can find no inner principle to stiffen her resolve, while Hippolytos is shut up inside his integrity, unable to share this inner view with any other

140. Gelzer (1956, 76–77) points out that Aristophanes makes the same kind of jokes about Sokrates and uses the same kind of language as he does in lampoons of those traditional religious *alazones*, the begging priests. *Clouds* 102: S. and Chairephon are *alazones;* and note Sokrates' trick at line 178. See also Eupolis 9M (2:553, Sokrates as a trickster and thief) and 10M (S. is a beggar, *ptôchos*). For the prophetic or oracular quality of the *daimonion*, see Rist (1963, 15–20).

141. For his arrogant demeanor, see *Clouds* 362–63: *semnoprosôpeis*. See lines 226, 1400. See also the reproach to Euripides in *Frogs* (1491ff.): τὸ δ' ἐπὶ σεμνοῖσιν λόγοισι . . . διατριβὴν ἀργὸν ποιεῖσθαι. Kallias in *Pedetai* (12K) has someone ask an interlocutor (a poet?), "What do you give yourself such airs about? [τί δὴ σὺ σεμνοῖ]." The other replies, "Sokrates is responsible (αἴτιος)."

142. See Merklin (1964, 123–24); Segal (1965, 128); A. Schmitt (1977, 32 n.64).

143. See Merklin (1964, 123): his wish to observe himself is an indication of his total lack of social support. See also J. Gould (1978, 57).

person, since there is no witness to his nature, "such as I am myself."[144] Whereas Phaidra imagines herself denounced by the very rafters of her house, Hippolytos wishes that he could call this house to witness, for it alone could defend him.[145] Through these two moral strategies, the play explores the problem of Platon's *Republic;* how can we find a ground for virtue in the interior of the soul, rather than in the eyes of others?[146] Hippolytos' experience is that of the just man who learns what it truly means to be, and yet not to seem, *sôphrôn* and *agathos*. "Never having done wrong, let him have a reputation of the greatest wrongdoing, that he may be put to the test in regard to justice . . ."[147]

IV. The *Spoudaion* in *Hippolytos*

IV.A. Aristocratic Norms

The role of the Nurse in the second *Hippolytos* differs from those of servants in other plays, reflecting the changes that have been introduced into the usual Euripidean dramatic forms. Euripidean slaves almost always act "seriously," showing a grasp of moral issues and an authority that seems somewhat unlikely, given their low status in Hellenic society.[148] For relatively clear cases of "comic relief" in Greek tragedy we must usually look to Sophokles or Aischylos.[149] This Nurse, however, while she too can be a subtle as well as an unscrupulous moralizer, also has some comic traits, which are the more striking in the virtual absence of the ironic or ludicrous from the treatment of Phaidra. The long opening to the scene, during which Phaidra resists speaking, gives ample scope for us to observe the Nurse as well; and she, like other characters in the play, develops a fuller and more detailed *êthos* than is common in Euripidean drama.

144. See Pigeaud (1976, 14–15), who points out the necessity of mediation in getting a picture of the self. P. illuminates the curious metaphor of the mirror that closes Phaidra's speech at lines 428–30, connecting it with the "connaissance de soi" and the complexities of *aidôs*. While Pigeaud believes (23) that the mirror may reveal the approach of old age, surely what it reveals to the "young maid" (παρθένῳ νέᾳ) is her maturity, and thus the approach of that overwhelming and oppressive atmosphere of *aidôs* that conditions the lives of women.

145. 418, 1074–75.

146. See Winnington-Ingram (1958, 185); Segal (1970.1, 294); L. Bergson (1971, 78ff.).

147. Platon, *Rep.* 361c4: μηδὲν γὰρ ἀδικῶν, δόξαν ἐχέτω τὴν μέγιστην ἀδικίας, ἵνα ᾖ βεβασανισμένος εἰς δικαιοσύνην . . .

148. A mild example, suitable to the greater naturalism of this play, is the old servant who reproaches Hippolytos in the first scene.

149. Examples would be the Guard in *Antigone*, or the naive charm of the Watchman in *Agamemnon* and the Nurse in *Choephoroi*. See Petersen (1915, 12), who pointed out that in Sophokles and Aischylos realism is unsuitable for highborn characters, but suitable for lower ones.

The *êthos* of the Nurse is that suitable to her social role, which combines servile attentions with parental moralizing and advice.[150] Her officious bustling manner provides an amusing counterpoint to the feverish passion of Phaidra's opening lyric, as in her first anapaestic passage she complains of her hard life and the tedium of nursing an invalid who cannot make up her mind.[151] Such remarks serve to show the Nurse as operating on a different level of seriousness from that of her mistress: we sympathize with Phaidra, but we smile at her attendant. Immediately after these homely reflections, however, the Nurse shifts gears and moves into another aspect of her role, musing quite subtly on the persistence of human dreams and hopes.[152]

Similarly, at the close of the anapaestic interchange, the Nurse again moralizes, this time about the necessity for loose rather than tense attachments in life.[153] But in this passage the Nurse's function as moralizer merges with her *êthos* as comic figure; and she closes her generalizations by remarking, "Thus I approve excess less than moderation, and the wise will agree with me [καὶ ξυμφήσουσι σοφοί μοι]." [154] This oldest of Delphic commonplaces is presented with a naive self-satisfaction that renews the humorous impression of her first remarks. The Nurse's social function is prominent in the following trimeters, as she cajoles and threatens Phaidra into revealing the cause of her illness. Once she learns the truth, however, she displays enormous emotionality, closing off the dialogue with a violent outburst. Her lines are a virtual parody of tragic despair, as she indulges, all in trimeters, in the emotional repetitions usually found in the lyric dirge form, wishing and threatening to die and ending with "Farewell, I am no more!"[155] The Nurse utters here just one or two notes of pathos in excess of what our sympathies

150. See Knox (1952, 11): the Nurse treats Phaidra like a child.

151. The mode of course is that of Phoinix in *Il.* 9.490–95 and the reminiscences of Kilissa (*Cho.* 748ff.). These two are recalling the *ponoi* of nursing a (now grown) infant, and illness makes Phaidra a kind of infant. The Nurse grumbles that it is better to be sick than to do the nursing (186), since she gets both pain (*lypê*) and toil (*ponos*).

152. 191ff. "But whatever might be better than life / darkness hides and involves in mists / and we are revealed as unlucky lovers / of whatever this is that gleams here upon the earth."

> ἀλλ' ὅτι τοῦ ζῆν φίλτερον ἄλλο
> σκότος ἀμπίσχων κρύπτει νεφέλαις.
> δυσέρωτες δὴ φαινόμεθ' ὄντες
> τοῦδ' ὅτι τοῦτο στίλβει κατὰ γῆν . . .

153. 266. For this theme, see Knox (1952, 26), on images centering on tripping and nooses (*sphallein*), and Fowler (1978, 17ff.)

154. Or, "less than the [good old] 'nothing too much' [τοῦ μηδὲν ἄγαν]." Barrett (1964, 210) points out that the old proverb is treated grammatically in the Nurse's phrase as "a kind of indeclinable noun," such is its familiarity.

155. 354–55: οὐκ ἀνασχέτ' · οὐκ ἀνέξομαι / ζῶσ', ἐχθρὸν ἦμαρ, ἐχθρὸν εἰσορῶ φάος. / ῥίψω μεθήσω σῶμα. On repetition in the *thrênos*, see Kranz (1933, 188–89).

will bear. The bathetic effect is a caricature of Phaidra's earlier lyric; and indeed the Nurse is as quick to recover from her passion as Phaidra was retentive of hers.

The characterization of the Nurse is a blend of two potentially disparate elements. She is at one and the same time a comic servant and a parody Sophist. In attacking Phaidra's determination to die, the Nurse employs a celebrated argument in which the gods of traditional myth are used as a model for human behavior.[156] She derides the seriousness of Phaidra and her malady: love would indeed be a terrible thing, if all who experienced lust should have to die for it (441–42). Aphrodite, on the other hand, is great and powerful, a goddess who commands even the gods.[157] It is those who struggle against Kypris who are treated violently, not those who yield. If gods can endure *erôs*, so must mortals, "Unless your father sired you under special agreement!"[158] The joshing, hectoring tone suits the Nurse's vulgarity, while at the same time her arguments are plainly marked as deriving, not from her, but from certain learned iconoclasts, such as Euripides himself. "Those who have writings of the ancients and are themselves always among the Muses,"[159] claims the Nurse, know that gods like Zeus and Eos were subject to erotic vagaries. Euripides may mean the audience to understand himself by those who have libraries, but he must be understood to refer to

156. For this argument, see the discussion above, in Chap. 8, on *Herakles*, where Theseus uses it. It is less perfectly adapted to that locus, since Theseus' point is that we, like the gods, must accept suffering; the original purpose of this argument, as in *Clouds* 1080–82, is to provide a rationale for sexual license. See Knox (1952, 18–21) esp. p. 19: "The powerful speech . . . is easily recognizable as contemporary sophistic rhetoric at its cleverest and worst." See Turato (1974, 158–59); A. Schmitt (1977, 32 n.64).

157. Turato points out that a respect for Aphrodite is another mark of the Nurse's plebeian status (1974, 156–57; see also 159–60); see line 13.

158. 459ff.:

σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέξῃ χρῆν σ' ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς ἄρα
πατέρα φυτεύειν . . .

The phrase *epi rhêtois*, "under (special) conditions," caps the joke with a prosaic phrase. Though not very common (cf. Hdt. 5.57.2; Platon *Symp.* 213a.2; Thuc. 1.122.1; Andokides 3.22) the phrase always seems to imply a truce or treaty that contains concrete specifications about the behavior of the parties; for its tendency to acquire an ironic tone, see the Thukydides reference: it is rare for war to be conducted *epi rhêtois*.

159. 451–52:

ὅσοι μὲν οὖν γραφάς τε τῶν παλαιτέρων
ἔχουσιν αὐτοί τ' εἰσὶν ἐν μούσαις ἀεὶ . . .

The *graphai* may be pictures but are more likely to be texts (see Barrett [1964, 242]).

himself when the Muses come into it.[160] The passage invites us to treat the Nurse as a mouthpiece for, or a caricature of, these deviant intellectuals.

In a play where the protagonists are given such a sympathetic quality, the Nurse stands out in sharp contrast. There are obvious parallels with the role of Theseus in *Herakles*. Both characters are ironized more than the protagonists, to whom they form a foil. Both use the same argument to administer bracing therapy in a rather heavy-handed way to a friend who despairs of life.[161] Like the heroine of *Hekabe* or the Autourgos in *Elektra*, the Nurse appears both in her own character and as the mouthpiece of certain kinds of rhetoric and argumentation. Unlike Phaidra, she gives a well-organized and pointed speech, directed to a clearly defined rhetorical aim. Her pert and facile reasoning, along with the note of the ludicrous that she injects, recalls the ironic tone of *Andromache* or *Alkestis*, or the arguments of Iason in *Medeia*. But the Nurse is not posing as a heroic character,[162] so that in *Hippolytos* there is a contrast between parodic and idealized elements of the Sophistic, the thought of Phaidra and Hippolytos representing the aspects, later associated with Sokrates, that offer a more "serious" and less ironic approach to philosophical problems.

The devotion of the Nurse to Phaidra, though exaggerated and rendered amusing, is the central pillar of her motivation;[163] and, judged by this standard, the Nurse is a failure, since she loses both Phaidra's life and Phaidra's love. The harsh words with which the queen repudiates her servant (706–9), permit the audience to get as clear a moral bearing on the Nurse as they do on the other characters. In her eagerness for survival, both for herself and for her charge, the Nurse resembles many other Euripidean protagonists;[164] but she differs signally from Hippolytos, who may be said to choose death over dishonor, and from Phaidra, whose longing for death undergoes only a brief and disastrous remission under the Nurse's influence.[165] In this play the ironizing features that elsewhere thwart the development of an unqualified sympathy for the major protagonists are given to a figure that we would never mistake for a *spoudaios*. The morally questionable and undignified aspects

160. See Kretz (1934, 30ff.).

161. Unlike the Nurse, Theseus is admirable; he is also less deeply characterized, so that his use of an amoralist argument does less to affect our perception of him.

162. Knox (1952, 18): "The Nurse has no aristocratic code of conduct." See Merklin (1964, 72): she seems to represent an ordinary and common way of thinking, presented with pejorative overtones.

163. See her opening comments (186): the mental pain that she mentions (*lypê phrenôn*) can derive only from sympathy and concern for Phaidra. This theme appears again at lines 253–61 and 285–87.

164. Note the import of her beautiful anapaestic lines (191ff.), in which the attachment of mortals to life is called a vain *erôs* (δυσέρωτες δὴ φαινόμεθ' ὄντες).

165. Turato (1974, 161 n.44) emphasizes the Nurse's aim to save Phaidra's life.

of Phaidra's dilemma are purged by being visited on a lowborn scapegoat, whose dismissal leaves Phaidra alone in her sad and elevated status.

The function of social status in creating audience identification was discussed above in the chapter on *Elektra*. As F. Turato has pointed out, both protagonists in *Hippolytos* are alike in their dedication to the standards of the aristocracy.[166] Phaidra, a woman, embodies traditional concerns about the reputation and honor of the family for whose male inheritors she is the (endangered and polluted) source. Hippolytos, however, is a representative not of old standards, but of new and more demanding ones that create a new image of the *spoudaios*. Both come into conflict with the Nurse, and her speech of rebuttal is a polemic against both of these seekers after moral precision. But since neither protagonist can fit the traditional pattern of the *agathos*, the contrast with the Nurse seems to be necessary to stiffen the social distinctions that are inseparable from the effect of the *spoudaion*.[167]

In their use of class and social rank, the other plays analyzed above make a strong contrast to *Hippolytos*. In *Hekabe* the old queen is forced into the world of slavery, there to learn the trade of rhetor and the analogous trade of bawd; Polyxene, with her stern loyalty to aristocratic status and standards, remains a sentimentalized and somewhat unreal figure. In *Elektra* the lowborn Autourgos is the moral point of reference for all others in the play, with the result that heroic values are profoundly distorted. In *Herakles* the most aristocratic and most powerful of heroes is shown to be akin to the lowest common denominator of humanity, first in his love for family, and second in his weakness. These social configurations are reproduced in many other Euripidean plays.[168] The different effect of *Hippolytos* is caused by the conjunction of strong audience sympathy with class lines and class ideology. Combined with the dramaturgical mechanism of "guiltless guilt" analyzed above, the social factor gives a powerful momentum to audience sympathy and identification, directing them toward and focusing them upon the two protagonists.

In *Hippolytos* the strong flavors and dissonant charms of other Euripidean work are modified and rearranged into patterns that do not disrupt emotional

166. 1974, 150ff.

167. Knox (1952, 19) associates the Nurse with democratic styles and methods, characterized by relativism, expediency, flexibility. But note that these contrasts in political style are always paralleled and elaborated in literary and generic terms as well, e.g., in the contrast between Odysseus and Achilleus. Segal (1970.2) has discussed lines 1465–66, where Hippolytos is referred to as being one of the "great" (τῶν μεγάλων). Cf. the close of *Hippolytos Veiled*, in which Hippolytos is referred to as a *hêrôs* (446 N2).

168. There is a wide variety of tactics available. Plays in which women confront men (*Medeia*), slaves confront masters (*Andromache, Hypsipyle, Alexandros, Troiades, Hekabe*), or heroes are humiliated and lowered in the world (*Helene, Telephos* and *Bellerophon*) all contribute to the same effect.

participation. The play's indulgence in poetic richness and beautiful writing enhances identification, as it permits more unalloyed enjoyments; and the literary hedonist in each of us may regret that Euripides did not produce more plays of this sort.[169] That is a matter of taste; even those who have—as I do—a preference for the abrasive style of ironic drama may be moved by the appealing pathos of this play. But, if *Hippolytos* represents a Euripidean high mimetic, we can still note differences that sever it from Sophoclean art. The Sophoclean protagonists, in their lonely suffering, embody still the best values of the threatened community. But Hippolytos is too eccentric and Phaidra too closely enmeshed in community standards to have such paradigmatic or representative value; and in the end the touching death of Hippolytos lacks some of the heavier reverberations of the Sophoclean catastrophes. Instead, the play finds its best resolution, as most Euripidean plays do, in the interplay between the contrasting moralities exemplified by each of the dual protagonists.[170] Phaidra, who dies to change shame to honor, and Hippolytos, who endures shame for the sake of his personal conception of virtue, define between them a single human tragedy, just as the play is divided between two goddesses whose action and significance are really united.[171] The opposing value systems of Euripidean dualism have not been purged from *Hippolytos*. Instead they appear in balance, each with its representative, each with "a sort of nobility." The aetiological ritual founded by Artemis at the end merges them and their tragedies, assuring that Phaidra's love will not be kept silent[172] and that Hippolytos, his name forever linked with Phaidra's, will be honored by girls who are leaving the precinct of Artemis, in which he will remain.

IV.B. The Role of the Gods: *Hippolytos* and Other Plays

While it is true that *Bakchai* and *Hippolytos* are different in many ways, there are evident similarities that have led critics to associate the two in a

169. F. Schlegel well expressed the voluptuous satisfactions of art that gives us what we want (1979, 217): modern poetry leaves a sting in the heart and takes more than it gives. "*Befriedigung* findet sich nur in dem vollständigen Genuss, wo jede erregte Erwartung erfüllt, auch die kleinste Unruhe aufgelös't wird; wo alle Sehnsucht schweigt." (See also p. 219.) Schlegel also suggests the reasons why artists have difficulties satisfying these demands: the new becomes old; the rare, common; "und die Stachel des Reizenden werden stumpf" (223).

170. Turato has a long note on the controversy over which protagonist is the dominant one, and he notes that many psychological interpretations give Phaidra the place of importance (1974, 150 n.83). Interpretations that favor Hippolytos over Phaidra may tend to be oriented in the direction of the concept of (Sophoclean) tragic heroism; cf. Crocker (1957, 246).

171. See Knox (1952, 28–29), who points to similarity in the behavior of each goddess, as well as in the imagery related to each; see also Frischer (1970, 88ff.), on "imagistic confluence."

172. 1429–30: κ'οὐκ ἀνώνυμος πεσὼν / ἐρὼς ὁ Φαίδρας εἰς σὲ σιγηθήσεται. Note that Phaidra's whole aim throughout was to conceal this same *erôs*.

special category of the Euripidean oeuvre. The final step in assessing *Hippolytos* is to discuss what it shares with *Bakchai*, namely a particular treatment of divine roles. Aside from *Ion*, no other plays both begin and end with divine appearances. Both plays focus to some extent on the full relation between humans and gods, including the aspect of religious devotion or worship. The plays also share two other traits. In no other Euripidean plays but these do the central figures of the play end the drama in death. And, although it is difficult to get final agreement on general impressions, both these plays appear to be richer in sensuous imagery than the other works of this poet.[173] In *Hippolytos*, however, these traits are associated with the generation of strong audience involvement, while *Bakchai* makes a more typically Euripidean use of ironic or ludicrous elements.[174]

In all the plays except *Hippolytos*, *Bakchai*, and *Herakles*,[175] the divinities who appear on stage are benevolent ones, who intend to help, direct, exonerate, and comfort the human protagonists.[176] But only in *Orestes* does a divine protector come on stage to face human protagonists whose lives he has affected. When Athena alludes to Apollon's absence in *Ion*, the effect is to play upon this, evidently conventional, extenuation of divine responsibility. The reason for the taboo is evident when we see it broken. K. Reinhardt (1957) has shown the effect of absurdity and unreason created by the epiphany of *Orestes:* the resolution is unequal in weight to the dreadful events that preceded it, and the question of the god's responsibility intrudes too powerfully. In *Hippolytos*, *Bakchai*, and *Herakles*, by contrast, far from being benevolent and propitious, the gods behave in the style of old myth, as destroyers and tormentors of the protagonists.[177] In *Herakles* these powerful and malevolent deities work as in other plays through subordinate divine agents, but the absurdity introduced into the play by divine responsibility is

173. For *Bakchai* the very detailed analysis of Segal (1981, and see also the fine earlier book of Winnington-Ingram [1948]) is sufficient evidence, along with the extensive bibliography listed there.

174. For humor in the notorious scene between Kadmos and Tiresias, see Deichgräber (1935, 327). The strongest piece of irony, however, comes in the last scene, where indirect evidence indicates a grotesque reassemblage of Pentheus' body by his mother—see Kirchoff (1853, 83ff.); and Dodds ([1944] 1960, 57, 232). The centerpiece of the play, of course, the travesty of Pentheus, is itself a hideous piece of humor; see Boer (1967).

175. These plays were associated by Dawe (1968) with tragic catastrophes in the Aeschylean or Sophoclean manner. *Troiades* also is a special case: as O'Neill (1941, 289ff.) pointed out, the gods do not directly affect the fates of the protagonists, and their plans serve only as a foil to the main action (see also Albini [1970, 313]; and C. Friedrich [1955, 39]).

176. See Strohm (1949–50, 153) on the good intentions of the gods. I would not agree, however, with his supposition that things go wrong only because of human mistakes.

177. See Conacher's reference (1967, 28) to the "neo-Homeric primitivism" of the gods in *Hippolytos*.

driven to violent extremes. In *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai*, while the gods inspire anger with their cruelty and unfairness to human beings, there are compensating factors that prevent the absurdity of *Orestes* or *Herakles*.

Along with a vivid portrayal of divine malevolence, we also receive strong intimations of the possibility of religious connection with the gods. These intimations come in *Bakchai* from the magnificent choral odes and in *Hippolytos* from the opening scene and the hero's prayer to the goddess, a passage notable for its beauty of language and its hints of deeper significance. The absence of this kind of poetic style in other Euripidean dramas is explained by its effect in these plays, where our surrender to poetic beauty serves a precise dramatic purpose. In *Hippolytos* divine evil and divine beauty are divided between the "bad" Aphrodite and the "good" goddess, Artemis, with whom Hippolytos maintains a kind of mystical communion. But Aphrodite too is projected through the language and imagery of the play as powerful, mysterious, and *semnê*.[178] In *Bakchai* this paradox is more frontally presented, in that the beauty of Dionysiac worship coexists and is coextensive with the horror of Dionysiac violence.[179] Although the divine persona, as it directs human dooms without morality or understanding,[180] appears as empty and absurd as elsewhere in Euripides, we also feel the mystery of divine power that inspires worship. Since Greek divinities, at this deeper level, do seem to represent central aspects of human experience,[181] it is tempting to interpret the plays in a rationalizing or euhemerizing way.[182] But these gods also continue to represent with remarkable fidelity the motivations and behavior of Homeric divinities. The result is a dual focus, never entirely resolved, on divinity as the mysterious object of cult and worship, and divinity as anthropomorphic agent. This dual picture of the gods makes them seem at the same time both awesome and despicable.

The gods are problematic and have overtones of the absurd, not just in the plays where they appear as avengers, but even, or especially, in the plays where they are saviors. As we have seen in *Elektra*, their attempts to reassure and comfort human beings go awry, because of a hopeless discrepancy

178. See the analysis of Segal (1965).

179. See Segal (1982, 53, 232–40); Winnington-Ingram (1948, 11, 39, and 174ff.: the temptations in communal religious unity).

180. See Chromik (1967, 289–90): *dikê* may rule human affairs, but the gods have nothing to do with it.

181. See Chromik (1967, 76).

182. For an early example, see Dodds (1929, 102); cf. Conacher (1967, 29). More recently Blomqvist (1982, 410–11) has stated as an assumption that will be generally accepted that the Euripidean gods are only metaphors for something else.

between human and divine nature.[183] It is inevitable that the plays which show benevolent gods arranging everything for their favorites may make us feel most uneasy and uncertain, or that this careful providence coincides with an increasingly insistent emphasis on the randomness and meaninglessness of human life.[184] We are even more likely to be thrust back upon the baffling mystery of human experience, when the presiding deities themselves are seen to be of no help. Euripides found the use of divine actors such a wellspring of irony that, even with all the ethical safeguards that usually cushion the divine honor of the benevolent *dei ex machina,* the paradoxes of human suffering and divine responsibility still reverberate through the plays. When the device of divine impulsion is carried to its logical extreme, as it is in *Herakles,* the result is the oxymoronic combination of a powerful and moving human tragedy with a concentration of irony that seems to dissolve even the poetic fiction itself.

Perversely, but predictably, the relation between human and divinity in the exceptional plays, *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai,* is ameliorated by the final nature of the catastrophes. These are the only extant plays in which the central protagonists do not survive. In all the other plays, whether or not gods are involved, the necessity for survival and continued coping pulls the protagonists back down to everyday level and keeps them hopelessly involved in the compromises of life. *Herakles* is again the most extreme case: if life must be lived on, then the agency of the gods becomes less significant, and the help and comfort of other human beings become more important. But in their deaths, Hippolytos, Phaidra, and even Pentheus become timeless figures, in a permanent relationship to the gods who destroyed them.

In choosing to involve divine actors with dramatic events directly, Euripides returned, although with signal differences, to the model of Aeschylean drama. In *Hippolytos,* although he employs some Sophoclean devices to mitigate the responsibility of the protagonists, the use of Aphrodite as motivator leaves it possible to explore erotic passion directly. The Sophoclean method of exoneration goes a step farther: his Phaidra, thinking her husband dead, cannot experience the mental struggles of the Euripidean heroine; and in *Trachiniai* the experience of jealousy never really touches Deianeira at all. This difference between two forms of drama has been confused by the identification of the Euripidean model with specifically female and sexual passion (*Leidenschaft*). But other emotions can provoke violent deeds, as in the rage of Aias. In Sophokles' treatment the hero's passion is thrust outside the frame of the play, so that we concern ourselves, not with

183. See Fuqua (1976, 78): Euripides has separated gods and humans into "distinct entities, each with their own criteria of existence and normative standards." See also Hathorn (1957, 211): these are "two ill-yoked teams," providing a dual view of human experience.

184. See Strohm (1949–50, 152–53).

the motivation for Aias' attack on the Atreidai, but with the aftermath, his attempt to maintain his integrity in the face of overwhelming threats. For most Sophoclean plays the mechanism of exoneration and extenuation, through the ambivalent *hamartia* or through other devices, guarantees that it will *not* be the passions of the protagonists that motivate the action.[185] While in *Trachiniai* Herakles' passion for Iole does bring about his downfall, the focus of the action and the immediate cause of the catastrophe is not what Herakles does but the mistake that Deianeira makes. The Sophoclean Elektra and Philoktetes hate their enemies; but in the end it is the lonely defense of integrity that is the focus of their stories. Kreon in *Antigone* is one exception to this group,[186] in that he does commit an intentional act that leads to his doom. But Kreon is a foil for the protagonist; and his punishment is the final vindication of her integrity.[187] In *Hippolytos,* by contrast, a combined use of divine actors and the techniques of exoneration permits us to explore motivation and culpability, without a loss of sympathy.

J.-P. Vernant has argued that tragedy in the hands of Aischylos and Sophokles dealt with a crucial and intractable problem in the division between human and divine responsibility.[188] If Euripides does not make much use of the device of innocent error that we quite often find in Sophoclean plays, he also seldom employs the Aeschylean device in which a protagonist is presented with a hard choice, offering pain and guilt on both sides of the balance.[189] In both cases, the problems that tragedy chooses to emphasize are exotic ones, specially selected to present the dilemma of responsibility and fate in an intelligible way. Euripides' method, as usual, is both straightforward and subversive. In most of the plays his protagonists, faced with concrete and unambiguous threats, move into action with vigor and decision.[190] But this very obvious and natural way of building a plot does not "work" in terms of producing the effects proper to the tragic genre. As they attempt to act, Euripidean protagonists reveal the weakness of human integrity, instead of celebrating its power. Involved in the meshes of life by their sufferings and by their deeds, these figures are dissipated and used up by experience, eventually finding a place in wider landscapes that, without

185. Müffelmann (1965, 1) remarks that motivation is more important in Aischylos and Euripides than in Sophokles. On moral issues, see Stoessl (1966, 100): the Euripidean Palamedes drama reintroduces questions of guilt and responsibility that had been muted by Sophokles; and Matthaei (1918, 124), "misguided by Aristotelian tradition, the literary world has been a little inclined to gloss over . . . wickedness"; but Euripides is "profoundly courageous" in confronting this problem.

186. As Saïd has shown (1978, 398, 410).

187. See Stinton (1975, 240).

188. Vernant & Vidal-Naquet (1972, 35–40). See also the following article "Ébauches de la volonté," and discussion of the issue of "free will" above, Section I.B.

189. See Vernant & Vidal-Naquet (1972, 44ff.); Saïd (1978, 163–66).

190. See the schema delineated by Jaekel ("ΠΑΘΟΝΤΙ ΑΝΤΙΔΡΑΝ"; 1973, 28ff.).

transcending or erasing it, include human suffering as a lesser element. As exemplary figures Euripidean protagonists fail again and again, forcing us to confront the deep flaw, or paradox, or mystery for which tragedy exists. In *Hippolytos* and *Bakchai*, even though the tone is less ironic, the prominent intervention of the gods serves to keep this paradox in focus. At every moment in every play this various and shifting, yet constantly maintained, balance between reason and unreason threatens to collapse into absurdity. But, in its bold challenge to the enigma of tragedy, this "dance above the abyss" is as central and as germane to the tradition of the art form as is the work of Euripides' great predecessors and rivals.

Appendix A
Melodrama

The use of the critical term "melodrama" is a long-standing one. An early association with Euripidean drama was made by A. W. Verrall (1905, x), who remarks that *Helene*, an unserious play (47ff.), is commonly regarded as a "melodrama." The term developed out of popular French plays combining pantomime, music, ballet, and other excitements; and it was next associated with British popular drama of the nineteenth century. (See the historical analysis of J. L. Smith [1973, 1–6].)

The most extended treatment of a theme that runs through most modern treatments of tragedy is to be found in R. B. Heilman's *Tragedy and Melodrama* (1968), a book that makes a determined attempt to develop the concept of separate genres, only to fall continually into a severely normative and prescriptive stance. See particularly the ingenuous admission: "To take *melodrama*, which is usually a derogatory term that means popular, machine-made entertainments, and to apply it to a wide range of literature that includes much serious work . . . may seem capricious to the point of scandal" (75). (See the confirming analysis of J. L. Smith [1973, 7], who follows Heilman's categories, even while admitting that melodrama is used generally as "a blanket term of abuse and contempt.") Heilman points out that what recommends the distinction to him is the fact that "to most people melodrama and tragedy will seem mutually exclusive" (75 n.). While Heilman argues that the prescriptive and evaluative approach to melodrama is wrong (75, 228), in fact he severely faults plays that become "melodra-

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