

EURIPIDES, *MEDEA* 1021–1080¹

No speech in Attic tragedy has made a stronger impression on later generations than Medea's farewell to her children. Four changes of mind and two displays of maternal affection lay bare the depths of a tortured soul; 'there, in a short space, are love and hatred, firmness and hesitation, fierce joy and unfathomable sorrow'.²

A few words will suffice to describe the situation. Medea has imparted to the chorus her plan to kill the king's daughter by sending the children to her with a poisoned robe and crown, as though to beg for a reprieve from their sentence of exile (774–90); that done, she will kill the children and leave the country (791–7). The children are reprieved, the gifts accepted (1002–4); but Medea is overcome with anguish. The chorus and the audience watch with bated breath as the *παιδαγωγός* leaves her alone on the stage with the children (1019–20).

The first part of her speech (1021–55) falls into three sections, the first clearly broken off with *φεῦ φεῦ* (1040), the second with *καίτοι* (1049). In the first section she laments her separation from the children; in the second the looks and smiles of the children shake her determination; and in the third, recovering control and reproving herself for her weakness, she orders the children into the house:

1053 *χωρεῖτε, παῖδες, ἐς δόμους. ὅτω δὲ μὴ
θέμις παρῆναι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι θύμασιν,
αὐτῷ μελήσει. χεῖρα δ' οὐ διαφθερῶ.*

In the first section Medea had sustained the pretence that her children were staying in Corinth while she went abroad into exile; only the chorus and the audience could read a more sinister meaning into 1038–9:

*ὕμεις δὲ μητέρ' οὐκέτ' ὄμμασιν φίλοις
ὀψεσθ', ἐς ἄλλο σχῆμ' ἀποστάντες βίου.*

The merit of this section lies not least in its appropriateness both to the real

¹ In the original draft of this article the following works were referred to:

Murray's text (Oxford, 1902);
the scholia, ed. Schwartz, ii (Berlin, 1891),
198–9;

the commentaries of Lenting (Zutphen, 1819), Matthiae (Leipzig, 1821), Elmsley (Oxford, 1828), Paley² (London, 1872), Weil (Paris, 1879), Verrall (London, 1881), von Arnim² (Berlin, 1886), Wecklein⁴ (Leipzig and Berlin, 1909), and Page (Oxford, 1938);

Hermann in Elmsley's commentary, p. 535;
Stadtmüller, *Beiträge zur Texteskritik der Euripideischen Medea* (Heidelberg, 1876),
31 n. 1;

Kvíčala, *Denkschriften der Akad. Wien*, xxix (1879), 266–9;

Leo, *Hermes*, xv (1880), 319–20;

Wilamowitz, *ibid.* 494–5;

Bergk, *Griechische Literaturgeschichte*, iii (1884),
512 n. 140;

Bethe, *Ber. Sächs. Ges. Wiss.* lxx (1918), 8–16;

Schadewaldt, *Monolog und Selbstgespräch* (Berlin, 1926), 193–6;

Jachmann, *Nachr. Ges. Wiss. Gött.* i (1934–6),
193 n. 1, 214 n. 1.

Subsequent investigation revealed a large amount of literature later than Page's commentary (see pp. 56–9), but it seemed better to augment the original draft than to re-write it.

Mr. D. M. Bain and Mr. W. S. Barrett very kindly offered comments on some of the problems discussed in the article.

² Page, p. xviii.

and to the ostensible situation. In the second section Medea contemplates the only alternative to her *βουλευματα*: she will take the children with her (1045). In the third section she remembers the necessity of avenging her honour.

Three elementary points can therefore be made at this stage: Medea's changes of mind are sharply marked; the loving mother and the slighted wife are kept strictly apart; and the children are not meant to know the truth.

Now 1056–80, which require close study.

1056–8 *μὴ δῆτα, θυμέ, μὴ σύ γ' ἐργάσῃ τάδε·
ἔασον αὐτούς, ὦ τάλαν, φείσαι τέκνων·
ἐκεῖ μεθ' ἡμῶν ζῶντες εὐφρανοῦσί σε.*

Medea has changed her mind again: she must spare the children and let them gladden her heart 'there'. Where? *ἐν Ἀθήναις* says the scholiast, and modern commentators concur; but Medea last mentioned Athens in 771. More vaguely, in exile (1024)? In either case the audience must search their memories.¹

1059–61 *μὰ τοὺς παρ' Αἰδῆ νερτέρους ἀλάστορας,
οὗτοι ποτ' ἔσται τοῦθ' ὅπως ἐχθροῖς ἐγὼ
παῖδας παρήσω τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι.*

Has Medea changed her mind again or not? According to the scholiast, yes: *ὄρκῳ φρικωδεστάτῳ κατακλείει ἑαυτὴν πρὸς τὸ μηδὲν ἕτερον ἢ τὸν φόνον ἐξ ἅπαντος δρᾶσαι*. Hermann saw a difficulty: 'ut putet se abducere secum posse liberos, non aptum tamen argumentum adhibet ad refutandam hanc sententiam, quum statim dicit οὗτοι ποτ' ἔσται τοῦθ' ὅπως ἐχθροῖς ἐγὼ παῖδας παρήσω τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι. Nam hoc in manentes quadrat, non autem in abductos.' The same difficulty was clearly stated by Verrall, whose note on ἐκεῖ in 1058 reads as follows: 'i.e. at Athens; this however is inconsistent with 1060, 61, which imply that the possibility previously contemplated was that of leaving them in Corinth.' Weil and Bethe were also worried by the illogicality.² Psychological defences can be found in Wecklein and Page.

Bethe considered an alternative: '... 1059–61 werden mit 1058 verbunden und ergeben: dort „draußen werde ich meiner Kinder mich freuen, denn mit mir muß ich sie nehmen, da sie hier der Rache der Korinther verfallen wären“.' Only the language of the oath in 1059 can help the audience to exclude this alternative.

1062–3 *πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη καταθανεῖν. ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή,
ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν οὔπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν.*

Editorial opinion nowadays is unanimous in condemning these lines, though few discussions touch on the sense. If Bethe's interpretation of 1059–61 is accepted, Medea in these lines undergoes a sudden change of mind; but they are perfectly consistent with the usual interpretation of 1059–61.

1064 *πάντως {πέπρωται L
 {πέπρακται cett.} ταῦτα κοῦκ ἐκφεύζεται.*

¹ When ἐκεῖ elsewhere in Euripides stands a long way from what it refers to, the structure of the whole passage makes its reference clear (e.g. *Ion* 384, 645). At *Helen* 454 ἐκεῖ που naturally lacks a reference, and at

Medea 1117 ἐκεῖθεν was doubtless accompanied by a gesture.

² Weil on 1058: 'ἐκεῖ μεθ' ἡμῶν ζῶντες. Ces mots sont en contradiction flagrante avec les vers suivants ...'; Bethe, 9.

πέπρωται or πέπρακται? πέπρωται ‘nescio an uspiam de humanis consiliis adhibitum legatur’ (Lenting).¹ This point has not been met by anyone who reads πέπρωται.

Interpretations of πέπρακται ταῦτα differ. If the tense of πέπρακται is what it appears to be, ταῦτα must refer to the murder of the princess.² If, on the other hand, ταῦτα is to refer to the murder of the children, πέπρακται must be taken to stand for πεπράζεται; but recent commentators offer no parallels for this use of the perfect, and the few offered by older commentators are inadequate.³

Next, what is the subject of ἐκφεύεται? ‘She will not escape, ἡ τύραννος, not ταῦτα, which is meaningless, nor τέκνα, for in speaking of the children plural verbs are used throughout’ (Verrall). This succinct statement is linguistically unchallengeable;⁴ but to understand that the princess is the subject would surely have been even more difficult for the audience than to understand that πέπρακται ταῦτα refers to her murder.

A corollary of taking 1064 to refer to the murder of the princess is that 1062–3 cannot be removed,⁵ or else Medea will not have announced her intention of killing the children between the opposite announcement in 1056–8 and the parenthetic reference to killing them in 1068.

1065–6 καὶ δὴ ’πὶ κρατὶ στέφανος, ἐν πέπλοις δὲ
νύμφη τύραννος ὄλλυται, σάφ’ οἶδ’ ἐγώ.

These lines, together perhaps with 1064, apparently give a reason for the decision taken in 1062–3.

¹ Cf. Matthiae: ‘ut quod sentio dicam, πέπρωται de eo, quod homini fixum et constitutum est, usurpari non memini, quum de iis dicatur, quae divinitus vel fati necessitate destinata sunt.’ Wilamowitz (p. 494) is content with the usual sense, but fate has no place in Medea’s deliberations.

² ‘Anyway the thing is done—i.e. the murder of the princess with its inevitable consequences’ (Verrall). It should be added that ταῦτα must refer sideways to the situation outside the speech rather than forwards to 1065–6, from which it is cut off by καὶ δὴ.

³ On Hdt. 9. 111. 5 οὕτω τοι, Μασίστα, πέπρηκται, adduced by Lenting, see Stein. The passages collected by Matthiae are all of the apodotic kind illustrated by Kühner-Gerth § 384. 5, who say ‘die Beziehung auf die Zukunft geht entweder aus der Konstruktion des Satzes oder aus dem ganzen Zusammenhang der Rede hervor’. Verrall therefore stopped short of the truth when he called this interpretation of πέπρακται ‘forced’.

⁴ See the *Concordance* of Allen and Italie (California and Cambridge, 1954). Wilamowitz (p. 494) took the verb as passive, a use unattested in Attic.

⁵ Editors who remove 1062–3 and still

want ταῦτα to refer to the murder of the children are surely asking too much of the audience. If they dislike the repetition of πάντως, they would do better to delete 1064. Cf. Kvíčala, 269: ‘Retten lässt sich πέπρακται (und ἐκφεύεται) nur auf eine Weise, nämlich wenn man diesen Vers nach 1066 setzen würde. Dann würde sich πάντως πέπρακται ταῦτα auf das der Glauke von Medeia bereitete Schicksal beziehen und zu ἐκφεύεται wäre als Subject aus 1066 νύμφη τύραννος zu ergänzen. Doch sobald man an diese Möglichkeit denkt, dann stellt sich auch eine andere Möglichkeit heraus, nämlich dass V. 1064 von einem Interpolator an den Rand geschrieben wurde mit der Bestimmung nach 1066 eingeschoben zu werden, und dass er sodann in den Abschriften hinter 1063 gerieth.’

Valckenaer (on *Phoen.* 1286, 1282 in modern texts) removed 1240–1 (= 1062–3) but gave no reason beyond the repetition. He should be followed, because the lines merely repeat the content of the previous four. Cf. Leo: ‘Nur sollte man 1062.63 mit Valckenaer Porson Elmsley an ihrer Stelle lassen und die den Ton leidenschaftlicher Kürze in drängender Gefahr unterbrechenden Verse 1240.41 streichen’.

1067-8 ἄλλ', εἰμι γὰρ δὴ τλημονεστάτην ὁδὸν
καὶ τοῦσδε πέμψω τλημονεστέραν ἔτι,
παῖδας προσειπεῖν βούλομαι.

Where are the children? At 1053 they were ordered inside: have they gone or did they stay? According to Murray, 'redeunt a servis vocati Medae iussu (προσειπεῖν βούλομαι)'. What *servi*? Medea is alone on the stage with her children.

'It is safer to suppose that the children hesitate, seeing their mother's strange demeanour, and do not actually leave the stage at 1053' (Page). 'Daß diese Weisung Medeas an die Kinder unbeachtet bleibt, beweist v. 1069. Sie mag nicht in dem Tone gesprochen sein, welchem Kinder zu gehorchen pflegen' (von Arnim). Wecklein too assumed that they stay, but the idea did not appeal to him. It is indeed an unhappy idea: it imputes to the children greater obtuseness than is displayed anywhere else in tragedy by a character who is ordered off the stage,¹ and it allows them to hear of their impending death (1062-3; and 1057 and 1068 do not suggest an uneventful childhood in Corinth).

What possibility remains? That they went inside and Medea in 1069 raises her voice and shouts into the house? If so, she must then pause for some time, because they arrive before the next words are spoken.

1069-75 δότ', ὦ τέκνα,
δότ' ἀσπάσασθαι μητρὶ δεξιὰν χέρα.
ὦ φιλότατη χεῖρ, φίλτατον δέ μοι στόμα
καὶ σχῆμα καὶ πρόσωπον εὐγενὲς τέκνων.²
εὐδαιμονοῖτον, ἄλλ' ἐκεῖ· τὰ δ' ἐνθάδε
πατήρ ἀφείλετ'. ὦ γλυκεῖα προσβολή,
ὦ μαλθακὸς χρῶς πνεῦμά θ' ἥδιστον τέκνων.

Another ἐκεῖ (1073); λέγει δὲ εἰς Αἰδὴν (Σ).³ No doubt that is what it means to

¹ If he does not go, there is always a clear reason: sometimes, for instance, he refuses or resists (e.g. *Held.* 341, *Andr.* 433), sometimes he stays for a farewell (*Held.* 573, *IA* 678). Orders issued by gods *ex machina* are carried out when the actors leave the stage.

Three passages in Euripides are less straightforward. At *Med.* 89-105, the nurse orders the children inside (89) but goes on speaking to the *παιδαγωγός*, and before he can leave the stage with them Medea is heard moaning inside the palace (96-7); the nurse thereupon repeats the order with more urgency (100-5), and in they go. At *Phoen.* 1682, Creon orders Antigone out of the country and promptly leaves the stage himself while Antigone remains; but the absurdity must be laid at the door of an interpolator (see most recently Fraenkel, *Sitzungsberichte der bayerischen Akademie* 1963, Heft 1, 112-13). At *El.* 358, the *αὐτουργός* bids Orestes and Pylades enter his cottage, but before they comply in 393 Orestes holds

forth about *εὐανδρία*; at what length, editors disagree (369-72 *del.* Vitelli, 373-9 *del.* Wilamowitz, 383-90 'suspecti' Murray, 386-90 *del.* Wilamowitz; it can all go, and along with it 368 and 396-400, as will be argued elsewhere). At line 360 of the same passage, the *αὐτουργός* tells the *ὁπαδοί* of Orestes to take the *τεύχη* into the cottage, but they are still outside at 393-4, presumably awaiting an order from Orestes himself (another possibility, suggested by Mr. Barrett, will be discussed in connection with Orestes' speech).

² Editors all prefer a comma at the end of this line, but *χεῖρ*, *στόμα*, *σχῆμα* (whatever that is), and *πρόσωπον*, make a poor subject both logically and grammatically for *εὐδαιμονοῖτον*. No one has ever printed a comma at the end of 1075.

³ *εἰς Αἰδὴν* (rather than *ἐν Αἰδου*) looks more like a note on 1068, but the matter is trivial. Commentators all agree that Medea means *ἐν Αἰδου*.

Medea, but what does it mean to the children? ‘The children are to understand, in exile’ (Paley).¹ So the children think they are going into exile?

1076–7 χωρεῖτε χωρεῖτ’. οὐκέτ’ εἰμι προσβλέπειν
†οἷα τε πρὸς ὑμᾶς†, ἀλλὰ νικῶμαι κακοῖς.

A recognized crux. More interesting is κακοῖς: what exactly does it mean? Scarcely what it means in the following line.

1078–80 καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά,
θυμός δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων,
ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἴτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς.

Here it is that Medea ‘in gefaßter Klarheit das Problem ihres Wesens, das zugleich ihr Schicksal ist, in Worten formuliert, die sich der Nachwelt mit besonderer Kraft eingepägt haben (1079 f.)’ (Schadewaldt 197–8); ‘das Wesentliche an ihr ist, daß zwei polare psychische Potenzen, die Medea selbst als *θυμός* und *βουλευματα* bezeichnet, gegeneinander wirken und in jähem Wechsel das Handeln des Menschen zu bestimmen suchen’ (id. 198).

Medea has mentioned *βουλευματα* before (769, 772, 1044, 1048): she had planned to kill her children. These *βουλευματα* are evidently the product of her *θυμός*, which at one point she commands to spare her children (1056–7). Now, however, her *θυμός* has the upper hand over her *βουλευματα*, which must therefore mean something different. Is this ‘gefaßte Klarheit’?²

Another flaw in the final passage, 1067–80, is that it confuses two things that are kept strictly apart in 1021–55, the loving mother and the slighted wife. Whereas in 1021–55 her tenderness conflicts with her plans and has to be banished altogether before she can proceed (1051–2), here she is both tender and resolved at the same time. That may seem psychologically plausible in itself, but it is a different conception.

Bergk, troubled by an ‘auffallender Widerspruch’ between 1044 ff. and 1056 ff.,³ provisionally entertained a psychological explanation; ‘allein, wenn man genauer zusieht, wird man finden, daß der Schluß des Monologes der Medea (1056–80) nur die Gedanken wiederholt, welche schon vorher

¹ No other commentator even raises the question.

² The difficulty seems first to have been noticed by Stadtmüller: ‘Eine Ungereimtheit, welche den Herausgebern entgangen zu sein scheint, findet sich zum Schluss dieses Monologs, wenn Medea das Resultat des Kampfes zusammenfasst, den sich die widerstreitenden Empfindungen geliefert, v. 1079: *θυμός δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων*, ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἴτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς. Der erste der beiden Verse soll bedeuten: die Leidenschaft ist stärker als die bessere Einsicht, er bedeutet aber: die L. triumphirt über meine Entwürfe, sie zerstört also ihr eigenes Werk. Denn in Medeas Mund können die Worte *τὰ ἐμὰ βουλευματα* nichts anderes bedeuten als den von ihr ersonnenen Plan der Rache; dies beweisen die beiden Verse v. 769: *λιμὴν πέφανται τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων* und v. 772: *ἥδη δὲ πάντα τὰμά*

σοι βουλευματα λέξω, dies zeigt in unwiderlegbarer Weise die übereinstimmende Beziehung der Worte in v. 1044 und v. 1048, man müsste denn eine amphibolische Ausdrucksweise der Art für zulässig halten, dass dieselbe Person in einer Rede den nämlichen Ausdruck setze zur Bezeichnung der entgegengesetzten Motive, welche für und wider eine That sprechen.’ Stadtmüller’s solution is to read *καλῶν* for *ἐμῶν*.

³ ‘Zuerst denkt sie an die Möglichkeit, ihre Kinder durch die Flucht der Verfolgung der Feinde zu entziehen, nachher ist von diesem Auswege, der so nahe lag, nicht die Rede. Medea stellt die Lage so dar, als müßten die Kinder nothwendig schmachvoll den rachsüchtigen Gegnern erliegen, und deshalb sei es besser die Kinder selbst zu tödten.’ This inconsistency is essentially the same as the one observed by Hermann in 1056–61.

ausgesprochen waren; dies ist weit mehr geeignet den Eindruck abzuschwächen als zu steigern. Offenbar liegt uns diese Scene in doppelter Bearbeitung vor; aber welche Fassung dem ersten Entwurfe angehört, ist schwer zu entscheiden'.¹

Wecklein understood Bergk to have pronounced against 1056–80 and was inclined to agree.² Bethe, who had done more than anyone to expose the incoherence of the passage,³ nevertheless regarded it as a 'Prachtstück' that no one but Euripides could have written. After Wecklein, Bergk was supported only by Jachmann, whose remarks are worth quoting: 'auf diese Spottgeburt, eine lächerliche Travestie des in unserer Überlieferung vorausgehenden erhabenen Urbildes, gegen welche die entsprechende Medea-*ῥήσις* des Neophron, p. 730 N, noch sozusagen als Meisterwerk erscheint,⁴ passen die Goethe-verse „Es ist alles noch wie es war, Nur ist es verworrner geworden.“'

That was the state of the question when Page published his edition in 1938. Rather surprisingly, in view of their seriousness, Page ignored most of the difficulties raised in this article and made light of the others, and Bergk's conclusion is not mentioned either in the *apparatus* or in the commentary.

Grube in 1941⁵ discussed the difficulty of staging 1053–80 and proposed the strange solution that the children go in at 1020 and some figment is addressed in 1021–80. Dodds in 1952 allowed them to go in at 1053 but recalled them at 1069 by altering *δὸτ'*, *ὦ τέκνα* to *δεῦτ'*, *ὦ τέκνα*.⁶ Méridier in 1947⁷ returned to the incoherence of 1056–61: 'or Médée n'y indique même pas qu'elle revient soudain à ses projets de meurtre; elle donne seulement une raison nouvelle de tuer ses enfants. Avant le v. 1059 on attendrait quelques mots d'explication où elle indiquerait pourquoi elle renonce à emmener ses fils (nulle part elle ne s'explique là-dessus), en ajoutant qu'elle ne veut pas non plus les laisser

¹ If he had come down firmly against 1056–80, he might have decided that they were meant to replace not 1021–55 but 1040–55, or that they were simply an addition composed by someone who shared the taste of modern critics for frequent changes of mind.

² His reason was the one mentioned above on 1067–9.

³ He had also gone so far as to say 'als Schluß einer Medea-Rede kann ich mir 1049–55 etwa vorstellen, aber nicht mitten in dieser Rede' (p. 14).

⁴ As regards the rhetorical structure of the two Jachmann is right, but there is more poetry in *Medea* 1056–80 (1069–75). Admittedly it may be an accident of quotation that Medea in Neophron speaks no words to her children except the order to withdraw from her sight; but her hesitation is caused not by their looks and smiles but by the drab reflection that she is in danger of doing wrong and estranging her dearest ones (2–3).

'Daß Stob. den Monolog als ganzen ausgehoben hat, beweist v. 1 mit der Anrede an den *θυμός* und der Schluß', according to Diehl, *RE* s.v. 'Neophron' (1935) 2433; but the quotation comes from the chapter *περὶ*

Ὀργῆς, and the assertion that the address to her *θυμός* must have begun the speech is unfounded—and incompatible, moreover, with Diehl's own view of *Medea* 1056 (*Euripides Medea mit Scholien* [kleine Texte 89, Bonn, 1911]).

Von Arnim's onslaught on Neophron (pp. ix–x) could have been directed equally well at *Medea* 1056–80.

⁵ *The Drama of Euripides* (London, 1941), 160–2.

⁶ *Humanitas*, iv (1952), 14–15. This change makes the staging clear, but *δεῦτ'*, *ὦ τέκνα* is unduly peremptory (contrast 894–5 *ὦ τέκνα τέκνα*, *δεῦρο*, *λείπετε στέγας*, | *ἐξέλθετ'*, *Ἦε*. 171–3 *ὦ τέκνον*, *ὦ παῖ δυστανοτάτας μητέρος*, *ἐξελθ'* *ἐξελθ'* *οἴκων*, *Phoen.* 1264 and *Or.* 112 *ὦ τέκνον ἐξελθ'* *Ἀντιγόνη*/'*Ερμιόνη δόμων πάρος*), and in spite of Dodds's remarks *δεῦτε* is no word to import into tragedy by emendation. At the possibility considered above (p. 54), that Medea in 1069 raises her voice and shouts into the house, Dodds levels the fair objection that 'the words *παῖδας προσειπεῖν βούλομαι* are no instruction to invisible slaves, but an integral part of her soliloquy'.

⁷ *Euripide* i (Budé, Paris, 1947), 162 n. 2.

à Corinthe. Faut-il supposer une lacune après le v. 1058?'¹ According to Regenbogen in 1950,² 'die radikale Amputation, die THEODOR BERGK . . . vorschlug, . . . wird heute keiner besonderen Widerlegung mehr bedürfen'; but he pointed out the deficiencies of Page's commentary on 1056-64 and reiterated the logical objections of earlier scholars.

Then in 1951 came the most important treatment of the speech hitherto published, an article by Gerhard Müller³ that would have made this one unnecessary if due attention had been paid to it. Müller substantiated in detail the comprehensive indictment brought against 1056-80 by Jachmann; in doing so he anticipated most of the arguments set out above, but unfortunately he tried to prove too much⁴ and mixed bad arguments with good. It was largely at the inessential points that Voigtländer in 1957 directed an influential attack;⁵ nearly half his article, for instance, is devoted to the secondary question of Medea's 'tragische Größe', secondary not so much because Müller answered it to his own satisfaction in two sentences⁶ as because the answer depends in part on what the poet wrote in the passage under consideration.⁷ If the passage is incoherent, no amount of talk about Medea's 'Tragik' will restore coherence to it,⁸ and Voigtländer is therefore confessing to a fundamental error of method when he proclaims that his criticism of Müller 'beruht auf einer durchgehenden Interpretation der gesamten Tragödie'.⁹ The only way of demolishing Müller's case is to go through the speech line by line and dispose of each difficulty as it arises. Voigtländer comes round to this at the end of his article,¹⁰ but his arguments on the main points are without exception worthless, as a brief survey will show:

1053 and 1069: Voigtländer merely repeats Page's view at greater length and with psychological elaboration (pp. 230-1).

1059-61: 'Hier wird MÜLLERS rationalistische Betrachtungsweise vorzüglich greifbar: Wir haben nun einmal keine logische Deduktion vor uns, in der sich eins aus dem andern ergeben muß' (pp. 233-4).¹¹

¹ In fact he opts for a different escape (cf. p. 60 n. 3).

² *Eranos*, xlviii (1950), 44-5.

³ *SIFC* xxv (1951), 65-82.

⁴ e.g. that 1078-9 introduce a moral conflict out of keeping with Medea's attitude in the rest of the play (pp. 70-2) and that they must have been written after Plato (pp. 73-4). As Müller is aware (p. 74 n. 1), they cannot have been written much more than a century after Plato, because they were pressed into service by Chrysippus (Galen 5. 306-7, 408 Kühn; cf. Diog. 7. 180).

⁵ *Philologus*, ci (1957), 217-37.

⁶ p. 74.

⁷ Voigtländer admits as much: 'Die Frage nach Medeas Tragik spitzt sich am Ende in der Tat auf die Interpretation der Verse 1079-80 zu' (p. 219).

⁸ Pohlenz too maintains that Müller 'verkennt Medeas Tragik' (*Die griechische Tragödie*² [Göttingen, 1954], ii. 107). According to Lesky, however, he 'verkennt die Besonderheit dieser in den erhaltenen Tragödien

einzigartigen Partie' (*Die tragische Dichtung der Hellenen* [Göttingen, 1956], 164 n. 2).

⁹ To make this point is not to deny that the authenticity of some passages in tragedy depends on their relationship to the rest of the play. *Antigone* 904-20 is a notorious instance, except that some scholars are loath to ascribe one or two clumsy expressions to Sophocles.

¹⁰ pp. 228-37.

¹¹ If Voigtländer can appeal to Pohlenz in support of his doctrine that emotion is entitled to waive the laws of logic, appeal may also be made to Regenbogen: '... vermag ich nicht einzusehen, wie man einen solchen Widerspruch mit der Formel von den changes of temper [Page on 1058] abtun kann' (p. 47).

The general question is of considerable importance, affecting as it does a fair number of passages in a variety of authors. That Voigtländer's doctrine has a long history is shown by a wry comment of Ribbeck's on *Aen.* 4. 548-9: 'Scilicet acerrimo maeroris impetu correptam modo huc modo illuc

1062-3: Müller argued that the deletion of these lines is unwise, 'da dann der Gedanke der Tötung überhaupt nicht klar herauskäme' (p. 76). Voigtländer replies: 'Dieser Einwand ist nicht recht zu begreifen. Jedermann weiß doch, daß es in dem ganzen Monolog um den Gedanken der Tötung geht' (p. 235). This latter statement, 'daß es in dem ganzen Monolog um den Gedanken der Tötung geht', is a monstrous simplification and makes no allowance whatever for 1040-8 and 1056-8, in which Medea considers taking the children with her instead of killing them. If Medea is swaying to and fro, Müller has every right to insist that the audience should know at each moment exactly what is in her mind.

1064: 'Die Schwierigkeiten in 1064 sind erheblich', Voigtländer admits in a footnote (p. 224 n. 2); but his interpretation (the murder is done and will not escape, i.e. will be unavoidable) shows that he is unaware what the difficulties are.

1079: Voigtländer writes over two pages about this line (pp. 228-30), but it all boils down to one sentence: 'Da *βουλευματα* in der Bedeutung „Mordplan“ zum letztenmal 1049 vorkam, erscheint der Bedeutungswechsel nicht hart' (p. 228). Yet, as Voigtländer himself says (p. 228), 'Medeas Tragik zeigt sich in der Unversöhnlichkeit ihrer Triebe [sc. maternal affection and the desire for vengeance]. Wir erwarten folgerichtig anstelle der Gegenüberstellung von *θυμός* und *βουλευματα* (nicht das waren die Pole, zwischen denen die Rede sich spannte) eine Gegenüberstellung der beiden Triebe als Abschluß.'

Since Voigtländer's article there have been many contributions¹ and among

animo fluctuare docebunt elegantiores interpretes [e.g. Austin: 'Dido has forgotten all logic now'], atque id ipsum, quod sine ullis orationis tamquam compagibus et coagmentis singula membra sibi invicem ut Cyclopum saxa superfunduntur atque insiliunt, animi furentis et omnibus sanae rationis vinculis liberi tumultus ingeniosissime exprimi [read 'exprimere' or 'eo ipso' above] admirabuntur' (*Emendationes Vergilianae* [Berne, 1858], 5). The modern world is full of *elegantiores interpretes*, one of whom will perhaps favour the sceptical some day with a demonstration that calculated illogicality was a recognized device in ancient poetry; or were the poets themselves thrown off balance by the emotion of their characters?

¹ Rivier, *Entretiens VI Fondation Hardt* (Geneva, 1960), 60-8, 84-5;

Lesky, *ib.* 83, 139-42, and *Gymnasium*, lxxvii (1960), 18-19;

Christmann, *Bemerkungen zum Text der Medea des Euripides* (Heidelberg, 1962), 125-45;

Schwinge, *Die Stellung der Trachinierinnen im Werk des Sophocles* (Göttingen, 1962), 28 n. 4;

Schlesinger, *Hermes* xciv (1966), 28-32;

Diller, *ibid.* 267-75;

Steidle, *Studien zum antiken Drama* (Munich, 1968), 157-65;

Baumert, *ENIOI AΘETOYEIN* (Tübingen, 1968), 161-7, 190 n. 2;

Seeck, *GRBS* ix (1968), 291-307.

Voigtländer's article is invoked by Lesky and Schlesinger, and Diller is warm in its praise: 'vor allem hat H.-D. VOIGTLÄNDER eine durchweg überzeugende Widerlegung von MÜLLERS Gründen gegeben' (p. 268).

Schwinge is out of touch with the problems. Schlesinger commits the same error of method as Voigtländer (see p. 57): the monologue 'wird erst dann voll verständlich, wenn man ihn aus dem Stück als Ganzem und aus seiner Stellung in der Handlung erklärt. Dann verschwinden auch gewisse Anstöße der letzten zwanzig Verse' (p. 32). Steidle fancies he can circumvent the illogicality of 1056-66 by reading two gratuitous implications into 1060-1 (pp. 158-61). Baumert discovers a different implication in 1060-1 (p. 190 n. 2: 'Medea hat keinerlei Anspruch auf die Kinder; bei einer Scheidung fallen sie immer dem Vater zu . . . Da Medea so fremdes Eigentum mit sich führt, sind die Kinder in Athen tatsächlich gefährdet, wenn sich Aigeus auf einen formal-rechtlichen Standpunkt stellt. Vermutlich waren diese Rechtsverhältnisse den

them three departures from the beaten track, Christmann's substitution of a lacuna for 1062–3,¹ Diller's suggestion that *κρείσσω* in 1079 means 'in control of',² and Seeck's deletion of 1060–3.³

One question ignored by Müller and most commentators demands fuller treatment: what are the children supposed to make of Medea's remarks? To their ears 1021–39 can only bear one interpretation, but thereafter certain phrases may suggest that the situation is not what it purports to be:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1046–7 | πατέρα τῶνδε τοῖς τούτων κακοῖς
λυποῦσαν |
| 1050 | ἐχθροὺς μεθεῖσα τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἀζημίους |
| 1057 | ἔασον αὐτούς, ὦ τάλαν, φεῖσαι τέκνων |
| 1062–3 | πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν. ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή,
ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν οἷπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν |
| 1067–8 | ἀλλ', εἰμι γὰρ δὴ τλημονεστάτην ὁδὸν
καὶ τούσδε πέμψω τλημονεστέραν ἔτι |
| 1073–4 | εὐδαιμονοῖτον, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ· τὰ δ' ἐνθάδε
πατὴρ ἀφείλετ'. |

The three passages in brackets are perhaps spoken in the absence of the children; if not, 1062–3 give the game away completely, 1068 must raise grave doubts in their minds, and no interpretation of *φεῖσαι* in 1057 is consistent with 1021–39.⁴ Of the other three passages, 1073–4 is flatly inconsistent with 1021–39, whether or not they draw any uncomfortable conclusions from the inconsistency, and 1046–7 must be as disturbing as 1068 or 1057; 1050, on the other hand, could well be above their heads.

Athenern geläufig') and can also supply two unfulfilled orders in defence of 1053 + 1069 (*Phoen.* 986, no exception to the principle laid down above in p. 54 n. 1, and *Ion* 1266, an order of another kind but disobeyed for an equally good reason).

¹ In the lacuna stood something like 'werde ich nicht auf der Flucht mit meinen Kindern ergriffen werden, wenn die Braut durch meine *φάρμακα* stirbt?' (pp. 133–6). This idea is the most intelligent yet put forward by any champion of 1056–80, but it really requires a connecting particle in 1064. Christmann's treatment of the illogicality in 1056–66 (pp. 125–33) is lucid and exhaustive; amongst other things he shows that emending *ἐκεῖ* in 1058 (*κεῖ* μὴ Hermann, adopted with different articulation by Pohlenz, op. cit. ii. 106) merely transfers the inconsistency to 1045 (cf. p. 60 n. 3, and see also p. 55 n. 3).

² 'Medea stellt fest, daß die Leidenschaft Herr über ihre Pläne ist' (p. 274). Diller's case rests on *Med.* 443–5 *†τῶνδε† λέκτρων ἄλλα βασιλεία κρείσσω | δόμοισιν ἐπέστα*, where he accepts Elmsley's *τῶν τε* in preference to Porson's *σὼν τε* and takes *κρείσσω*

to mean *ἐγκρατής* ('eine andere, eine Königin kam als Herrin über dein Ehebett ins Haus'); but even if *τῶν τε* is right, there is nothing to stop the phrase meaning 'another queen superior to your bed' (*τῶν* can stand for *σὼν*, as indeed Diller makes it, because *σοί* begins the sentence). In general, anyone who is *κρείσσω* a thing is logically susceptible of being *ἡσσω* the same thing, which is not true of Diller's *θυμός*. Fr. 718 *ὦρα σε θυμοῦ κρείσσονα γνώμην ἔχειν*, cited by Steidle (p. 165 n. 180) in connection with Diller's suggestion, is another argument against it if any more were needed.

³ Seeck will have no truck with psychological defences of 1056–64 (see especially p. 294 n. 12), but his own approach is an extraordinary mixture of distinction-drawing (pp. 297–304) and distinction-blurring (p. 306 + n. 27). So far from solving the problems in 1064, the deletion of 1060–3 aggravates them.

⁴ They cannot take it to mean 'do not be so cruel as to leave the children here', because according to 1021–39 the pain of separation is Medea's and not theirs.

What then is Euripides' intention? 'Celat a liberis animi propositum, dolorisque, quem excitat venturi facinoris meditatio, caussam reddit satis probabilem. Postea clarius loquitur, sed pueri nihil audiunt, saltem nihil intelligunt' (Elmsley).¹ So it must be if Euripides wrote the whole speech: Medea must deliver some parts of it in such a way that the children can be supposed not to hear them.² She does indeed turn to the chorus at 1043, and apart from 1053 nothing between 1043 and 1069 is addressed to the children. 1073-4, however, they are bound to hear, for Medea is embracing them and bidding them farewell; she can hardly turn to the chorus just for the words ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ τὰ δ' ἐνθάδε | πατήρ ἀφείλετ'.

The conclusion is inescapable that 1073-4 were not written by the same poet as 1021-39. As for 1046-7, three possibilities exist: that the audience would not have expected them to give the game away to the children, that they are spoken in such a way that the children can be supposed not to hear them, and that they too were not written by the same poet as 1021-39.³ It would take some assurance to dismiss the first and second of these possibilities in favour of the third.

Finally a word about a question that has been prominent in discussions of the speech: why does Medea give two reasons for killing her children, the desire for revenge and a reluctance to leave them in the hands of her enemies? This question exercised Bethe more than any other, and Zürcher agrees that the two reasons 'stehen in psychologischer Hinsicht unausgeglichen nebeneinander'.⁴ In fact the only problem that arises is the one dealt with above on 1059-61;⁵ in themselves the two reasons are not inconsistent but could be used to support each other. 1236-50 present no problem either: Medea has decided to kill her children for the sake of revenge (1049-55), and here she decides to act ὡς τάχιστα (1236) so as not σχολήν ἄγουσαν ἐκδοῦναι τέκνα | ἀλλή φονεῦσαι δυσμενεστέρα χερί (1238-9).⁶

¹ 'Von dem, was sie vorhat, darf sie freilich nichts verraten, und unwillkürlich gibt sie sich selbst der Vorstellung hin, als gälte es nur eine Trennung hier auf Erden, als würden die Kinder fern der verbannten Mutter in Korinth weiterleben. Verständnislos [i.e. presumably 'not understanding the true situation'] lächeln sie die Kinder an' (Pohlenz, op. cit. i. 255; cf. ii. 106). He does not explain how the phrases discussed above square with this view. Verrall too no more than touches on the problem when he says: 'Medea in this speech, *where the children are present*, uses no such unmistakable language [as in 1062-3].' Grube goes a little further: 'Clearly, neither the children, nor any one besides the chorus, must hear these words [1062-3]. Both lines occur again at 1240-1, and are, therefore, usually omitted here as an actor's interpolation. That seems quite probable, but it does not solve the problem, for the whole passage (1056-69) is almost as clear' (160 n. 1).

² Elmsley apart, only Grube and Steidle seem to have considered this possibility.

Grube rejects it (p. 160 n. 1) and Steidle presses it further than 1053 permits (p. 163 n. 67: 'Von den Kindern ist von V. 1043 bis V. 1069 nur in der dritten Person die Rede'; cf. a later statement on the same page: 'Die Aufforderung an die Kinder, ins Haus zu gehen, kann . . . nur beiläufig gesagt sein, ohne oder höchstens mit einem kurzen Blick auf sie').

³ The only lines that editors have ever removed from this section are 1045 (*del.* Kvíčala, Nauck, Wecklein, Méridier) and 1048 (*del.* Kvíčala), but 1046-8 or 1045-8 could go if necessary. The deletion of 1045 is usually coupled with an alteration in 1058 (κεῖ μὴ Hermann, καὶ μὴ Barthold, *v. del.* Kvíčala) so that Medea considers no course except killing the children or leaving them in Corinth; but if 1056-80 are deleted, 1045 can stand (Wecklein's objection to τὰ πρόσθεν is captious). Cf. above, p. 59 n. 1.

⁴ *Die Darstellung des Menschen im Drama des Euripides* (Basel, 1947), 62. ⁵ p. 52.

⁶ The retention or deletion of 1240-1 (see p. 53 n. 1) makes no difference. Seeck, op. cit.

Doubts may remain about the interpretation of 1046-50, but otherwise the upshot of this article is plain: Müller's allegations against 1056-80 have been vindicated. A great deal of ink has flowed¹ since Bergk first suspected extensive interference in the speech, and a great deal of *Geistesgeschichte* has been erected on 1078-80.² Perhaps at last these imposing structures will be left to crumble and Euripides allowed to emerge from the ruins.

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304, anxious to eject 1062-3, correctly takes 1240-1 with the preceding lines (for a different view see Meissner, *Hermes*, xcvi [1968], 157) but is mistaken in holding that they are integral.

¹ Most of it has been used on 1056-80, next to none on 1021-55. Why?

² Particular mention may be made of the philosophical debate between Euripides and

Socrates that Snell has manufactured out of *Medea* 1078-80, *Hipp.* 377-83, and *Protagoras* 352 d (*Philologus*, xcvi [1948], 125-34, superseded by *Scenes from Greek Drama* [Berkeley, 1964], 47-69; in the more recent version Snell tries to meet the objections of Barrett, *Hippolytos* [Oxford, 1964], p. 229, but ignores Müller's assault on the foundations of his theory).