

## EURIPIDES, *ION* 1261–81

Ion enters in pursuit of Kreousa who following the advice of the chorus has just taken up position at the altar (1257 ff.). His speech on entering falls into five sections which L exhibits in the following order:

- (1) ὦ ταυρόμορφον ὄμμα Κηφισοῦ πατρός,  
οἶαν ἔχιδναν τήνδ' ἔφυσας ἢ πυρὸς  
δράκοντ' ἀναβλέποντα φοινίαν φλόγα,  
ἦι τόλμα πᾶσ' ἔνεστιν, οὐδ' ἥσσων ἔφυ  
Γοργοῦς σταλαγμῶν, οἷς ἔμελλέ με κτενεῖν.

1265
- (2) λάξυσθ', ὦν' αὐτῆς τοὺς ἀκηράτους πλόκους  
κόμης καταξήνωσι Παρνασοῦ πλάκες,  
ὅθεν πετραῖον ἄλμα δισκηθήσεται.
- (3) ἐσθλοῦ δ' ἔκυρσα δαίμονος, πρὶν ἐς πόλιν  
μολεῖν Ἀθηνῶν χυτὸ μητρυνῖαν πεσεῖν.  
ἐν συμμαχοῖς γὰρ ἀνεμετρησάμην φρένας  
τὰς σάς, ὅσον μοι πῆμα δυσμενῆς τ' ἔφυ·  
ἔσω γὰρ ἂν με περιβαλοῦσα δωμάτων  
ἄρδην ἂν ἐξέπεμψας εἰς Ἄιδου δόμους.

1270
- (4) ἀλλ' οὔτε βωμὸς οὔτ' Ἀπόλλωνος δόμος  
σώσει σ' · ὁ δ' οἶκτος ὁ σὸς ἐμοὶ κρείσσων πάρα  
καὶ μητρὶ τῇμῃ · καὶ γὰρ εἰ τὸ σῶμά μοι  
ἄπεστιν αὐτῆς, τοῦνομ' οὐκ ἄπεστί πω.

1275
- (5) ἴδεσθε τὴν πανοῦργον, ἐκ τέχνης τέχνην  
οἶαν ἐπλεξε · βωμὸν ἔπτηξεν θεοῦ,  
ὥς οὐ δίκην δώσουσα τῶν εἰργασμένων.

1280

Clearly all is not well here. It is nonsensical for section (4) to precede section (5). Accordingly Musgrave transposed it to follow (5) and his text was accepted by Wecklein (Murray, Wilamowitz, Grégoire, and Owen keep the order in L). More recently a different solution has been proposed. In a lucid and penetrating discussion which makes an unassailable case against the transmitted order of the passage (*PCPhS* N.S. (1974), 28 ff.) J. Diggle advocates as a cure deletion rather than transposition. Instead of interchanging (4) and (5) he removes (4) which he shows to be an ill-expressed and not very happy confection based on themes more lucidly presented elsewhere in the play. Does this deletion solve all the problems of the passage? I am inclined to think not and am forced to suggest further blood-letting. If what follows appears excessively violent, I can only say that something is violently wrong with the text as it stands.

Let us examine the text as Diggle interprets it, 1275–8 having been deleted:

- (1) Ion enters (with attendants). He begins by apostrophizing Kreousa's ancestor, the river Kephisos in 'a vigorous outburst against Kreousa's villainy' (Diggle).
- (2) 'He tells his men to seize her so that she may be thrown from the cliff top.'

- (3) 'He thanks heaven that he discovered her intentions while still at Delphi among friends; alone in the palace at Athens he would have been an easier victim.'
- (4) He sees that Kreousa has fled to the altar and draws his companions' attention to her further villainy in resorting to this trick.

Diggle (see p. 30 n. 2) believes that Ion is not aware of Kreousa's presence until 1279 which represents his first reaction to the sight of her. Most editors and commentators indeed share his assumption that it is some time before Ion sees Kreousa, though there is disagreement about when exactly he does see her: 'Ion spricht bis 1268 zu seinen Begleitern [better 'soliloquizes': only 1266–8 is addressed to them], noch ohne Kreusa zu bemerken . . . Dann sieht er sie' (Wilamowitz on 1261–81); 'nondum conspexit Ion ad aram confugisse Creusam: sed v. 1275 videt suos nihil facere, suspicit illam ad aras quasdam fugere velle: v. 1279 tandem rem intelligit' (Murray: something similar in Grégoire); 'after that [1269–74] he congratulates himself on his escape: then, noticing that Creusa is at the altar (1275–8), says that such sanctuary will not help her . . .' (Owen on 1261–81). Prolonged unawareness by a speaker of the presence of someone else on stage is not uncommon in Greek tragedy. Indeed it is a feature of the later plays of Euripides where we find several extended entrance monologues spoken in the presence of other actors (see D. Bain, *Actors and Audience*, Oxford, 1977, pp. 61–6 for references and bibliography)<sup>1</sup> so that at first sight the suggestion that Ion does not at first notice Kreousa is easy to accept. There are, however, some features of Ion's speech which raise doubts whether this convention of prolonged unawareness is operating and suggest that Bayfield and Anne Pippin Burnett (in her translation, Englewood Cliffs, 1970) may be right<sup>2</sup> in assuming that Ion sees Kreousa as soon as he enters. These are:

- (a) the deictic pronoun *τήνδ'* used of Kreousa in 1262.
- (b) the command to his attendants in 1266 *λάξυσθε*.
- (c) *τὰς σάς* (1272), *ἔφους* (1272) and *ἐξέπεμψας* (1274) all with reference to Kreousa.<sup>3</sup>

Ordinarily one would assume that a speaker who expressed himself thus was aware of the presence of the person to whom he was referring. Each point *can* be explained away if one wants to believe that in this case Ion was not. *τήνδ'* spoken on stage need not always refer to someone on stage (for instances of *ὅδε* thus used see H. Hunger, *WSt* 65 (1950–51), 19 ff., H. Lloyd-Jones, *CR* N.S. 15 (1965), 241, and R. Carden, *Papyrus Fragments of Sophocles* (Berlin,

<sup>1</sup> A very close formal parallel for the incensation suggested by Murray is provided by E. *Hel.* 1165 ff. where Theoklymenos' entrance speech begins with an apostrophe (*Hel.* 1165 ff. ~ *Ion* 126 ff.) which is followed first by a command addressed to attendants (*Hel.* 1169 f. ~ *Ion* 1266 f.) and then by soliloquy. Finally the speaker makes an observation about what is going on on stage

(*Hel.* 1177 ff. ~ *Ion* 1279 ff.).

<sup>2</sup> And that Wilamowitz was half right in making Ion aware of Kreousa from 1268. Obviously he found he could not regard (4) as apostrophe.

<sup>3</sup> If one accepts 1275–8, there are the additional second-person references *σ'*, *ὁ σός* (1276).

1974), p. 83). One can say that *λάξυσθε* in 1266 is simply ‘catch her’ (implying ‘as soon as you see her’) and that the second-person references in 1272 ff. imply nothing more than that Kreousa is vividly present in Ion’s mind. Yet taken separately and together these references to her produce a most peculiar scene, unlike anything else in tragedy and surely bound to puzzle an audience. When someone uses *ὅδε* of a person visible to an audience, the natural expectation is that he is aware of that person’s presence (one could imagine situations in comedy where this statement would not hold good, in, for example, eavesdropping scenes, but such scenes are not found in tragedy).<sup>4</sup> When someone interrupts his own train of thought to say ‘seize her’ one assumes that he has seen an opportunity for his command to be carried out (contrast the situation later in the play when Ion says *λάξυσθε* (1427) having observed that Kreousa has left the altar and compare also E. *Cretans* fr. 82. 46 Austin and [E.] *Rhes.* 877). Again it is odd to have to take 1272 ff. as an apostrophe to an imagined absent Kreousa when Kreousa is physically present. One might find it easier if there was a clear demarcation between the apostrophe of Kephisos (1261–5) and the alleged apostrophe of Kreousa that follows. Ion slips into an address of her with *τὰς σὰς* in 1272 after previously referring to her in the third person (1265).

What is it that leads scholars to override the obvious interpretation of *τῆνδ’*, *λάξυσθε*, and the three second-person references to Kreousa? First there is 1279–81 which looks like a first mention of Kreousa. Then, more compellingly, there is 1266–8. Can one accept these words spoken by an Ion fully aware of the presence of Kreousa and of where she is, at Apollo’s altar? Is it conceivable that the devout temple boy should instruct his attendants to drag a suppliant from the altar of the god who is his patron? Even allowing for his anger and allowing that characters in tragedy can express quite contradictory viewpoints over a short space of time,<sup>5</sup> I think not. Some highly unsympathetic not to say villainous characters in tragedy do not go as far as Ion would be going here. They respect sanctuary to the extent that they shrink before laying hands on a suppliant who is in physical contact with an altar or image of a god and try to get possession of their victims by finding other means of making them quit the sanctuary (on the tactics used in real life to get the better of suppliants which are often reflected in drama see J. Gould, *JHS* 93 (1973), 82 f.). Lykos in *Herakles* intends to smoke out the suppliants at the altar (E. *Her.* 240 ff.). Menelaos entices Andromache from the altar by producing her son and threatening to kill him if she does not leave (E. *Andr.* 309 ff.). This may be unsporting: it is not against the rules. Those who are prepared to break the rules and to drag the suppliant from sanctuary are significantly exceptional, the *barbarian* herald in Aeschylus’ *Supplikes* who has no respect for Greek deities (A. *Suppl.* 884, 893–4), the loathsome herald of Eurystheus in *Herakleidae* (E. *Hkld.* 63 ff.: note Demophon’s reactions on hearing of his behaviour, *καὶ μὴν στολήν γ’ Ἑλλήνα καὶ ῥυθμὸν πέπλων ἔχει, τὰ δ’*

<sup>4</sup> I mean that tragedy does not include scenes where eavesdroppers are visible to the audience and active; there are passages in tragedy where characters announce their intention of going into hiding and eavesdropping (see *Actors and Audience*, pp.

91 f.).

<sup>5</sup> Note the exchange in 1309–10 which is almost immediately followed by a reasoned speech whose starting-point is the impossibility of seizing Kreousa.

ἔργα βαρβάρου χερὸς τάδε E. *Hkld.* 130 f.), the (Diphilean) pimp Labrax (Plaut. *Rud.* 782 ff.—he also contemplates using fire, 761 ff.). Ion does not belong in such company.

It would seem then that those who assume prolonged or fairly prolonged unawareness (up to 1268 at any rate) of Kreousa's presence in this speech have in 1266–8 very solid support for their view. I suggest, however, that the lines are an interpolation. We have seen that the lines are somewhat lacking in point if given to an Ion who is unaware of Kreousa's presence<sup>6</sup> and out of character if he is aware. There are other grounds for suspecting the lines:

- (1) the punishment threatened in them, precipitation from the peaks of Delphi is not the one that was decreed for Kreousa and alluded to on three occasions in the play, stoning (1112, 1222,<sup>7</sup> 1237).
- (2) καταξήνῳσι Παρνασοῦ πλάκες, ὅθεν πετραῖον ἄλμα δισκηθήσεται 'πλάκες the uplands above the Phaedriades: but as the next line shows it was *from* here that she was to be hurled; πλάκες would be more appropriate of the place where she fell' (Owen ad. loc.).
- (3) τοὺς ἀκηράτους πλόκους κόμης: is this anything more than tasteless ornamentation?
- (4) 1266–8 disrupt the close connection between 1265 and 1269.<sup>8</sup>

If 1266–8 (section (2)) go, the only reason for denying Ion awareness of Kreousa from the start would be the position of section (5) 1279–81:

ἴδεσθε τὴν πανοῦργον, ἐκ τέχνης τέχνην  
οἶαν ἔπλεξε· βωμὸν ἔπτηξεν θεοῦ,  
ὥς οὐ δίκην δώσουσα τῶν εἰργασμένων.

The asyndetic opening makes it hard, if not quite impossible, to regard these lines as a further indignant comment continuing the train of thought of 1274: one would have expected then something like 'and now look at her!' Hence it is tempting to assume a clean break between 1274 and 1275 during which

<sup>6</sup> There is also the problem of the reaction of Ion's attendants. Are they supposed like Ion not to see Kreousa and as a result fail to carry out his order? Or are we to follow Murray in assuming that they do see her, but disobey the order because they respect the altar, an unnecessarily distracting piece of by-play?

<sup>7</sup> πετρορριψῇ there is ambiguous—Owen perhaps goes too far in claiming that the first part of the compound forces us to take it as 'pelted with stones' rather than 'thrown from a cliff' (the second part of the compound would suit either meaning, cf. E. *Bakch.* 1079, E. *Kykl.* 166 for both uses of *ρίπτω*) but an audience having already heard that stoning was the decreed punishment would be bound to take it in the former sense.

<sup>8</sup> Kirchhoff (followed by Wecklein) transposed 1266–8, placing it after 1278

and then (taking up Musgrave's transposition of 1275–8 to follow 1281) moving the two sections to follow 1281. Murray's suggestion that 1275–8, 1266–8 would go better after 1319 has the initial attraction that 1266–8 would give rise to the prophetess's *ἐπίσχες* (1320), but makes nonsense of Ion's speech of 1312 ff. Mrs. Burnett's stage direction after 1319 ('He raises his hand to seize Kreousa . . .') is likewise quite mistaken and is in complete contradiction to the text. One does not lament the iniquity of the wicked having the same facilities of sanctuary as the good and then go on without another word to violate sanctuary. If Ion was going to behave in so impious a manner he would have said so. I do not think it necessary to have the prophetess's *ἐπίσχες* refer to any particular action or threatened action of Ion's (cf. Bond on E. *Hyps.* fr. 60.22)

Ion notices Kreousa. Against this it may be said that *ἴδεσθε τήν πανούργον* is not the way a Euripidean speaker makes it clear that he has observed that he is not alone<sup>9</sup> and the force of the arguments adduced above against the view that Ion is supposed up to now to be unaware of Kreousa seem to me to outweigh the problem of the lack of connection. I think it possible, however, that 1279–81 may be out of place and that, if they are not also interpolated,<sup>10</sup> their proper place is at the beginning of Ion's speech:

*ἴδεσθε τήν πανούργον, ἐκ τέχνης τέχνην  
οἶαν ἐπλεξε· βωμόν ἔπηξεν θεοῦ,  
ὥς οὐ δίκην δώσουσα τῶν εἰργασμένων.  
ὦ ταυρόμορφον ὄμμα Κηφισοῦ πατρός,  
οἶαν ἔχιδναν τήνδ' ἔφυσας . . .*

With this arrangement Ion begins with an indignant exclamation on seeing Kreousa (for indignant *ἴδεσθε* . . . *οἶαν* cf. [E.] *Phoin.* 1676, Ar. *Kn.* 269, and see Bain, *CQ* N.S. 25 (1975), 21). His indignation leads him to apostrophize the Kephisos and in the course of the apostrophe he continues to speak of Kreousa in the third person (*τήνδ'* now has full deictic force), eventually slipping into direct address of her.

This transposition is put forward tentatively and with less conviction than was the deletion of 1266–8. *ὦ ταυρόμορφον ὄμμα κτλ.* is a good opening for a speech (cf. Ion's apostrophe to Tyche at 1512) and it is not apparent why 1279–81 should have been moved from its original context.<sup>11</sup> Even so the transposition seems to me in want of anything better a possible way of restoring coherence to an extremely incoherent passage and I do not think that many scholars would have been tempted to tamper with the text of 1266–81 I have suggested if it had been the one found in our manuscript.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> This is expressed either by *ἴα/ἴα τί χρῆμα*; 'I see (or something similar)' in E. *Suppl.* 87, E. *Her.* 525 f., E. *Hel.* 541, 1177 ff., E. fr. 125, or in less excited manner by *ἀλλ' ἐγγύς ἀλήκη* E. *Phoin.* 274 and *ἀτὰρ τόδ' ἄλλο θαῦμα* E. *Ba.* 248.

<sup>10</sup> Sections (5), (4), (2) taken together might be regarded as an alternative (melodramatic) entrance speech intended to replace a speech consisting of (1) and (3), but (5), (4), (2) is the order of Kirchhoff and Wecklein, not of L.

<sup>11</sup> Unless perhaps someone felt that Kreousa's first words after Ion's speech *ἀπενέπω σε μή κατακτείνεω ἐμέ* (1282)

ought to reply to a threat just uttered by Ion and that such a threat was implicit in *ὥς οὐ δίκην δώσουσα*, but this perhaps is demanding too much subtlety of the putative critic. At all events I do not think it necessary for there to be any explicit threat to evoke Kreousa's response. She is after all confronted by armed pursuers (N.B. *ἐφῆρες* 1258 and the words of the chorus in 1259 f. *τοῖς ἀποκτεवासί σε*).

<sup>12</sup> I am grateful to Professor H. D. Jocelyn and Dr. Oliver Taplin for helpful discussion of the passage. It is not to be assumed that they accept my conclusions.