

EURIPIDES' *HIPPOLYTUS* PLAYS: WHICH CAME FIRST?

Lines 25–30 of the hypothesis to Euripides' *Hippolytus* read as follows:

ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ δράματος ὑπόκειται ἐν τῇ θήβαι. ἐδιδάχθη ἐπὶ Ἐπαμείνονος ἀρχοντος Ὀλυμπιάδι πρῶτος δ' [429/8]. πρῶτος Εὐριπίδης, δεύτερος Ἰοφῶν, τρίτος Ἴων. ἔστι δὲ οὗτος Ἴππολύτος δεύτερος, <δ> καὶ στεφανίας προσαγορευόμενος. ἐμφαίνεται δὲ ὕστερος γεγραμμένος· τὸ γὰρ ἀπρεπὲς καὶ κατηγορίας ἄξιον ἐν τούτῳ διώρθωται τῷ δράματι. τὸ δὲ δρᾶμα τῶν πρώτων.

This passage is the most important evidence for the prevailing view that Euripides won first prize in 428 B.C.E. with *Hippolytus* and three other plays.¹ If this is true, *Hippolytus* is Euripides' only surviving play known to have won first prize during his lifetime.² But Euripides also wrote another *Hippolytus*, now lost, and the fragments show that this play covered the same story as the surviving one. As far as we know, this situation is unique—two tragedies by the same poet on the same segment of heroic saga.³ Why did Euripides do it? The usual answer first takes the notice in the hypothesis as a statement of fact and then adds more or less embellishment.⁴ Specifically, it is assumed that the words τὸ ἀπρεπὲς καὶ κατηγορίας ἄξιον refer to the character and behaviour of the lost Phaedra. This, along with certain passages of Aristophanes, earns her a place among Euripides' notorious 'bad women'.⁵ According to a widely accepted reconstruction, the original audience's response to

¹ Other evidence will be considered in due course. The fragments of the lost play are too few to permit a strong metrical argument. Although the rates of resolution in the trimeters are quite close, the slightly higher rate for the lost play would be consistent with a later date. Of greater interest is the fact that both rates are considerably lower than those of *Alcestis* (438) and *Medea* (431), so that on this basis either *Hippolytus* play could be dated arbitrarily early. See M. Cropp and G. Fick, *Resolutions and Chronology in Euripides: The Fragmentary Tragedies* (BICS supplement 43, 1985).

² First prize was also awarded to the posthumous production that included *Bacchae* and *Iphigenia in Aulis*: Σ Ar. Ran. 67 combined with Sud. ε 3695 (= TrGF Did. C 22). It is not known which plays were performed on the occasion of Euripides' three other victories.

³ Unless Euripides' two *Phrixus* plays provide another example, but that remains disputed.

⁴ The priority of the lost *Hippolytus* is to my knowledge universally accepted. We shall see that W. S. Barrett described the evidential value of the hypothesis accurately, but once he accepted the judgement it offers, he never turned back (*Euripides' Hippolytus*, edited with introduction and commentary [Oxford, 1964], p. 29; all references to Barrett are to this work). I know of only one scholar who expresses skepticism concerning the notice: J. Griffin, 'Characterization in Euripides: *Hippolytus* and *Iphigenia in Aulis*', in C. Pelling (ed.), *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 128–49, at 130 n. 7. In the end, however, Griffin accepts the standard chronology and merely shifts Euripides' motive for revision to an aesthetic plane. Moreover, he mentions only the order of production; he does not draw the necessary conclusion that a skeptical reading of the notice calls into question the connection of the extant play with the year 428 and thus its status as prize-winner as well. (My thanks to Micala Root for helping me put this matter in focus.)

⁵ T. B. L. Webster's use of this term has been influential, perhaps because his reconstructions of the lost plays, reckless though they often are, are easily accessible in *The Tragedies of Euripides* (London, 1967). Note, however, that in his scheme both Phaedras are 'bad women'; moreover, his distinction between bad women and unhappy women is not always happily drawn (e.g. Pasiphae in *Cretans* is an 'unhappy woman', but her famous self-justification was 'one of the great dangerous speeches', pp. 86, 148; Pasiphae's speech may be now consulted in C. Collard et al., *Euripides: Selected Fragmentary Plays* [Warminster, 1995], vol. 1, pp. 62–7). I use the term to

Phaedra caused the failure of the lost play; Euripides responded to this failure (and possibly the intervening success of Sophocles' *Phaedra*) by trying to win the prize with the extant play and its morally improved heroine.

In this paper I will show that the ancient scholar's statement regarding the order of production is almost certainly a mere guess. The theory he offers to support the statement is weak and bears a strong resemblance to ancient gossip of the worst sort. Finally, the comic passages provide no support whatsoever for the theory or the usual reconstruction. In my opinion, we do not know the date of either *Hippolytus*, nor why Euripides produced two versions of the same story. On these matters I aim only to replace dogma with appropriate skepticism; I do not advocate a new solution.⁶ This 'negative' project, however, has implications beyond the dating of theatrical productions. In the course of our study we shall encounter repeated assumptions about how Euripides represented female characters, how his audience responded to them, and how the poet responded in turn to the reception of his work. Such assumptions continue to play a prominent part in Euripidean interpretation. To some extent this is unavoidable, but that only heightens the need for us to be forthright about what we assume and to correlate it with sound ancient evidence wherever possible.

I. A DRAMATIC HYPOTHESIS

The prefaces found in our manuscripts of Greek drama have been well studied.⁷ Known collectively as 'hypotheses', a term that originally referred to the narrative presuppositions of the plot, they actually provide material of various kinds and from various sources; the quality varies widely. One usually identifiable subset, the fragments of prefaces by Aristophanes of Byzantium, is particularly valuable. Aristophanes, it seems, aimed to provide useful information, primarily for scholars. As is typical of the transmission of such work, little care was taken to preserve the exact form of his prefaces; they have been greatly altered by expansion, truncation, and dislocation. It is agreed, however, that Aristophanes presented several types of information in a set order. Here is Barrett's list (153): 'résumé of plot (in two or three lines); other plays on the same theme by the three major tragedians; scene; identity of chorus; opening speaker; number of play in chronological sequence of author's works; date; result of contest and names of the four plays with which the author competed; choregos; miscellaneous comment (if needed); critical judgement'. What makes Aristophanes' hypotheses so valuable is that the factual information about the original production ultimately derives from the best documentary source that ever

mean female characters in tragedy whose words and behaviour Old Comic poets could exploit, usually with a suggestion of immorality.

⁶ I have also not accepted the burden of refuting every claim that a feature of the surviving play can only be understood as a later variation of something that was in the lost one, though I return to one such consideration at the end of this paper. Because no one has doubted the hypothesis, most arguments along these lines have been made quite casually. The present study should considerably raise the threshold for considering them compelling.

⁷ See R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* (Oxford, 1968), vol. 1, pp. 192–6. A noteworthy study was made by G. Zuntz, *The Political Plays of Euripides* (Manchester, 1955), pp. 129–52, and the remarks of Wilamowitz have been influential (*Einleitung in die griechische Tragödie = Euripides' Herakles*, vol. 1, pp. 146–8, cited from the 1959 Darmstadt reprint). Among commentators, see especially D. L. Page on Euripides' *Medea* (Oxford, 1938), pp. liii–lv; A. M. Dale on *Alcestis* (Oxford, 1954), xxxviii–xl; and now N. Dunbar on Aristophanes' *Birds* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 31–5 and 127.

existed for it, namely Aristotle's *Διδασκαλῖαι*, compiled from official Athenian records. The portion of the hypothesis to *Hippolytus* which by virtue of its form and content is reasonably attributed to Aristophanes has already been given above; let us now look at it more closely.

First, textual corruption mars the indication of scene (ἐν †θήβαις†), but it occurs just where the manuscripts join the Aristophanic material to a hypothesis of the 'Tales from Euripides' variety. (MSS DE omit this sentence entirely.) The archon's name has been distorted, but this is a scribal error and not to be laid at Aristophanes' door. The record of the competition has been shortened to give only the year and the names and ranking of the three tragedians. The rest of the notice has two parts. The last words (τὸ δὲ δρᾶμα τῶν πρώτων) contain 'critical judgement'. This judgement, as far as we can tell from the few other examples, does not depend on the play's success or failure in the original competition.⁸ Finally, the words from ἐστὶ δὲ οὗτος τοῦ δρᾶματος provide 'miscellaneous comment', needed here because of the existence of two Euripidean plays on the same story.

Barrett treats this comment as an independent judgement made by Aristophanes of Byzantium with only the plays themselves and didascalic records at his disposal: 'presumably the *διδασκαλῖαι* gave him the dates of both plays but did not distinguish them, calling them both simply *Ἰππόλυτος*, and Aristophanes identified them on the strength of their content; we may trust his judgment. This is all we know . . .' (29). This is as close as Barrett comes to expressing doubt about which *Hippolytus* came first. By far the most important aspect of his reconstruction is the assumption that the *διδασκαλῖαι* carried no distinguishing epithets. By 'the *διδασκαλῖαι*' he must mean Aristotle's work by that name. To what extent, if any, Aristotle annotated his compilation of the archival records is disputed.⁹ There is no good evidence that distinguishing epithets were carried by the archives or reported by Aristotle's work in such a way that they could be thought to have the authority of the archives. (I consider below what authority other than didascalic records may have existed for Aristotle or anyone else to use in distinguishing the plays.) In a very small number of cases, the possibility that an epithet had Aristotle's authority cannot be ruled out. One such case is the hypothesis to Euripides' *Alcestis*, where an attempt to distinguish *Alcmeon* as ὁ διὰ Ψωφῖδος can be seen in the one MS that preserves traces of the production record. Another is the scholion to Aristophanes' *Frogs* 67, where confusion in the MSS seems to indicate two different attempts to distinguish *Iphigenia in Aulis* from the other *Iphigenia*, one of them involving an epithet, and possibly an epithet for

⁸ The other tragic examples occur in the hypotheses to Euripides' *Alcestis*, *Andromache*, and *Orestes*; cf. *Suppliant Women*. If the remark τὸ δρᾶμα τοῦτο τῶν ἄγων δυνατῶς πεποιημένων in hyp. I Ar. Av. reflects Alexandrian opinion, then the point is proven, for *Birds* won second prize. But the 'critical judgements' may all be late additions: see D. J. Mastronarde, *Euripides' Phoenissae* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 168 n. 2.

⁹ On the fragments, numbered 618–30 in V. Rose's edition (*Aristotelis Fragmenta*³ [Leipzig, 1886]; cf. *TrGF* DID C), see especially E. Reisch in *RE* 5 (1905), 394–401 (s.v. *Didaskaliai*); A. C. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, 2nd edn rev. J. Gould and D. M. Lewis (Oxford, 1968), pp. 70–4, 80; and R. Blum, 'Kallimachos und die Literaturverzeichnis bei den Griechen', *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* 18 (1977), 1–360, esp. 50–91 (translated by H. Wellisch as *Kallimachos: the Alexandrian Library and the Origins of Bibliography* [Madison, 1991]; I cite from the German). A. E. Haigh, *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks* (Oxford, 1896), pp. 395–402, though cited by O. Taplin as the best work on tragic titles, is misleading on the subject of distinguishing epithets. Against Haigh, Taplin concludes that they were never assigned by the poet and never used in the archives ('The Title of *Prometheus Desmotes*', *JHS* 95 [1975], 184–6, at 185 n. 4).

Alcmaeon (sc. ὁ διὰ Κορίνθου) as well. These epithets are probably post-Aristotelian additions, but the manner of citation does not allow this to be proven. On strictly formal grounds we must even concede the possibility that in these cases Aristotle conveyed epithets found in the archival record.

However that may be, the way the epithet *στεφανίας* is appended to our notice—<ὁ> *στεφανίας* *προσαγορευόμενος*—reveals that it was not part of the title of the play.¹⁰ It remains possible that Aristotle called our play *δεύτερος* (more probably in a note than in anything that presented itself as a transcript of the archival record). On general grounds, one might think that the existence of two *Hippolytus* plays is the kind of puzzle that would have earned a note in the *Διδασκαλῖαι*, but in fact evidence for such a view is vanishingly thin.¹¹ No surviving notice brings terms like *πρότερος* and *δεύτερος* anywhere near Aristotle's vicinity, and in several cases it is demonstrable that such distinctions were not made in his work.¹²

We may conclude, then, that neither *στεφανίας* nor *δεύτερος* had the authority of poet or archives. Nor is there any reason to attribute a distinction between *Hippolytus* plays to Aristotle, whether in the *Διδασκαλῖαι* or elsewhere. Since Aristotle does use some distinguishing epithets in the *Poetics*, however, let us leave open the possibility that he also distinguished *Hippolytus* plays in some work now lost and proceed to the two questions that follow if distinctions between plays did not derive from archival sources. First, what reliable tradition is likely to have existed for anyone who may have distinguished the plays, including Aristotle? If an explanation does not derive from didascalic records, it may yet be credible. A promising answer to this question may furnish a reason to believe in the traditional chronology. Second, what are the affinities of the notice as we have it? We must examine both its wording and its likely background in earlier work on Euripides. To be sure, these factors do not permit us to

¹⁰ Barrett saw this (10 n. 1) but did not pursue the implication that Aristophanes of Byzantium was familiar with at least one previous attempt to distinguish the plays. I add that, given the casual manner of citation, it is not likely that it was Aristotle who added the epithet.

¹¹ Fr. 629 (ὁ δὲ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν ταῖς διδασκαλίαις δύο [sc. poets named Kinesias] φησὶ γεγενῆναι) may mean only that there were two entries and that they assigned different patronymics or other incompatible characteristics to the poets in question. I see no evidence of similar notes. Fr. 630 (= Σ Ar. *Ran.* 404), on joint *choregia* beginning in 406/5, is not comparable since it was indispensable to explain the form of successive entries.

¹² Thus fr. 623 on *Ajax*: ἐν δὲ ταῖς διδασκαλίαις ψιλῶς ἀναγράφεται. Similarly, Eratosthenes speculated on whether the later of two entries recording a *Peace* of Aristophanes ὁμωνύμως, i.e. without epithet, referred to a revival or a second play (Arist. fr. 622). The author of the hypothesis to the surviving play thinks this issue resolved by the occurrence of the adjective *ἐτέρα* in a comment by the Pergamene scholar Crates. Clearly, then, the *Διδασκαλῖαι* did not even distinguish these plays as e.g. 'first' and 'second'. To take another example, 2^{fr} Ar. *Nub.* 552 (= Callimachus, fr. 454 Pf.) shows that no designation *πρότεροι* or *πρῶται* was found in the entry for that play (otherwise Callimachus would not have made the mistake corrected by Eratosthenes). Someone, however, has inserted *πρῶται* in the hypothesis (II in K. J. Dover's edition of *Clouds* [Oxford, 1968], pp. 1–2), in what otherwise looks exactly like other excerpts derived ultimately from Aristotle's work. (Naturally there can have been no distinction made in the archives since *Clouds II* was never produced [cf. n. 49 below]. But two texts were in circulation, and if we wish to evaluate the suggestion that Aristotle took an interest in such problems in notes to his *Διδασκαλῖαι*, then this example is important as a counter-argument.) We read *πρῶτος* and *δεύτερος* in the papyrus hypotheses (of the 'Tales of Euripides' variety) to Euripides' two *Phrixus* plays (P. Oxy. 2455 frs. 14 and 17), and similar designations (e.g. A' and B') have been restored by conjecture elsewhere. But even if Dicaearchus of Messene wrote these plot summaries (which I doubt) and distinguished between *Hippolytus* plays, this still does not take us back to Aristotle, and the impact on the present argument is accordingly nil. On the possibility that the anonymous *Life of Euripides* used *πρότερος* of a *Hippolytus* play, see below.

say that the notice *cannot* derive from an accurate source. But similarities to Old Comic scenarios and biographical gossip ought to count heavily against it, especially if there is no trace of a sound tradition.¹³

Before I take up these questions, a word about interpretations of the hypothesis is necessary. Barrett assumes that the words from *ἔστι δὲ τῷ δράματι* represent solely the judgement of Aristophanes of Byzantium. In other words, he concedes that the standard view rests on a theory concocted 200 years after the fact by a scholar who lacked external evidence. This may well be correct, but it is not the only reading possible. Aristophanes may first *report* (*ἔστι δὲ . . .*) the epithet *δεύτερος* and then *judge* (*ἐμφαίνεται δὲ . . .*) that this designation is corroborated by the plays' content.¹⁴ That no authority is cited could be due to alteration of what he wrote. This generous reading makes Aristophanes look less reckless, but it only alters the case if we grant that the unnamed source preserved a reliable tradition, and that, I shall argue, would be carrying generosity to a fault. Given the amount of work on Euripides that preceded Aristophanes of Byzantium, we may imagine any number of sources behind our notice. Given the unstable transmission of his prefaces and the haphazard inclusion of kindred material in many other hypotheses, it would also be proper to suspect that all or part of our 'miscellaneous comment' is a late insertion.¹⁵ What we *know* is that reliable traditions on fifth-century tragedy were already in short supply by Aristotle's time and that questionable assertions are often betrayed by phrases that remain remarkably consistent over time.¹⁶

Let us approach the question of reliable traditions by considering one of the rare certain examples of a sound independent record finding its way into a notice of the kind under discussion here. We learn from the combination of a sentence in the anonymous *Life of Aristophanes* (test. 1.35–9 Kassel–Austin) and the hypothesis to

¹³ On the sources and methods of ancient biography, see M. R. Lefkowitz, *The Lives of the Greek Poets* (Baltimore, 1981), *passim*, and for Euripides, D. Kovacs, *Euripides: Cyclops, Alcestitis, Medea* (vol. 1 of his edition and translation for the Loeb Classical Library [Harvard, 1994]), pp. 1–36. I emphasize that it is not only its similarity to suspect sources that discredits hyp. *Hipp.*, but this fact combined with the absence of any trace of a trustworthy source or reason to believe that trustworthy sources regularly existed for the kind of information it offers.

¹⁴ My thanks to Albert Henrichs for this suggestion. Like Griffin (n. 4), p. 130 n. 7, I take the meaning of *ἐμφαίνεται* here to be an emphatic 'it is clear', like *φαίνεται* and *δοκεῖ* in notices to be considered below (nn. 15 and 16). We know of course that what is said to be clear often is or may be disputed.

¹⁵ Because of *γάρ*, we must keep *τὸ γὰρ ἀπρεπὲς κτέ.* together with *ἐμφαίνεται δὲ ὕστερος γεγραμμένος*, but this comment as a whole could have entered the hypothesis tradition at almost any point, as indeed could any of the words from *ἔστι δὲ οὗτος* on. Such an insertion has probably been made in the portion of hyp. *O.T.* headed *διὰ τί τύραννος ἐπιγέγραπται*; As W. Luppe shows, *ἅπαντες* in the second sentence and *εἰς δὲ οἱ* in the third are inconsistent ('Dikaiarchos und der *ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ ΤΥΡΑΝΝΟΣ*', *Hermes* 119 [1991], 467–9; the rest of Luppe's argument does not concern us here). Professor Luppe informs me *per litteras* that he in fact believes that the statements *ἔστι δὲ κτέ.* and *ἐμφαίνεται δὲ κτέ.* belong to separate authors. The wording of our notice is closely paralleled by the end of *Σ Eur. Andr.* 445, where after comments indicating that two scholars had consulted Aristotle's *Διδασκαλία* directly, someone wrote *φαίνεται δὲ γεγραμμένον τὸ δράμα ἐν ἀρχαῖς τοῦ Πελοποννησιακοῦ πολέμου*. While Th. Bergk attributed the unhelpful addition to an anonymous imperial exegete, 'ein beschränkter Kopf' ('Philologische Paralipomena Theodor Bergks', *Hermes* 18 [1883], 487–510, at 489–91), P. T. Stevens felt compelled to admit that it may have some foundation (in his commentary on *Andromache* [Oxford, 1971], p. 16 n. 2). Cf. n. 16.

¹⁶ On *ἐμφαίνεται*, see n. 14 above. In hyp. *Eur. Med.*, for example, the phrase is *δοκεῖ ὑποβαλέσθαι* (cf. n. 23). In *Σ Eur. Andr.* 445 (previous n.), we have *φαίνεται γεγραμμένον*.

Frogs that because of the parabasis of that play Aristophanes was praised and honoured with a wreath of sacred olive, and the play was granted a second production. It has been argued that 'the ultimate source of the two notices was a state decree in Aristophanes' honour, which Dikaiarchos [mentioned in the hypothesis] was able to cite (quite possibly *in extenso*)'.¹⁷ What makes the argument convincing is the exact wording of the notices. Specifically, as Sommerstein shows, ἐπηνέθη is otiose in the *Life* but makes sense and is formulaic in decrees, and an olive wreath would not have been invented since, as the notice itself reveals, a gold one might have been expected.¹⁸ What occasion or context would have produced similarly reliable information regarding the chronological order of the *Hippolytus* plays? One possibility is allusions in comedies of known date, but there are no examples of the kind needed.¹⁹ Another is a record of a trial or other public event in which mention was made of a *Hippolytus* play in such a way that it could be dated, but again no surviving notice would lead one to conclude that such a record ever existed.²⁰ Finally, one may speculate about notices attached to very early copies of plays, but this must remain mere speculation, and I know of no case where we are forced or even encouraged to assume such a transmission of facts of theatrical history.²¹

I conclude that no good source for the order of Euripides' *Hippolytus* plays existed and that whoever first made the distinction reflected in our hypothesis was guessing. If this is right, it matters little who the originator of the theory was. It is worth reminding ourselves, however, of the amount and kind of Euripidean research done by early

¹⁷ A. H. Sommerstein, 'Kleophon and the Restaging of *Frogs*', in Sommerstein *et al.*, *Tragedy, Comedy and the Polis* (Bari, 1993), pp. 461–76, at 462. Sommerstein acknowledges G. Kaibel (ap. Kassel-Austin, *PCG* III.2, 2, on line 35 of the *Life*) for the idea of the decree, which is also accepted by K. J. Dover in his commentary on *Frogs* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 73–4.

¹⁸ Sommerstein also refers to the olive wreath attested in a related contemporary (403/2) context. As for his third argument, mention of the parabasis (the very feature that leads to the conclusion that the two notices derive from a common source), I am less sure that it would not have been invented if, as the opponents of Kaibel's idea propose, Dicaearchus merely had a didascalical entry attesting a second performance and made the rest up.

¹⁹ This is true even if one believes, against the arguments I shall offer below, that the mentions of an unspecified Phaedra in Aristophanes' comedies refer to the lost play.

²⁰ Aristotle does relate that one Hygiaenon challenged Euripides to an *antidosis* and, in the course of the proceedings, quoted *Hipp.* 612 against him (*Rhet.* 1416a28–35; cf. *Ar. Thesm.* 275; *Ran.* 101, 1471). Despite what Kovacs ([n. 13], 19) writes, the story does not imply a first prize for the extant *Hippolytus*. If anything, it suggests failure, though the point should not be pressed. Euripides says Hygiaenon should not bring theatrical decisions into court. If he won with the play his opponent uses to mock him, a more obvious retort would be, 'The Athenians approved of my *Hippolytus*'. This is not implied by the neutral *δεδοκέναι λόγον*, which is not even applied specifically to *Hippolytus*. More generally, whether the incident is historical or not, there is no reason to believe that there ever circulated an account of it with just the characteristics needed to pin down a date for *Hippolytus*. While Aristotle's use of the verb *κατηγορεῖν* here (cf. *κατηγορίας ἄξιον* in the hypothesis) is not technical (or at most blends technical and general meanings), we do find in Satyrus mention of a prosecution of Euripides by Cleon on a charge of *ἀέβεια* (fr. 39, col. x). A third-century C.E. list of rhetorical exercises on papyrus is the only other source to mention an impiety trial of Euripides, but as Kovacs notes, this does not imply knowledge of Satyrus' story (*Euripidea* [Leiden, 1994], pp. 62–3), nor would it make the story any more likely to be true if it did. In sum, to believe in a record of a public event that provided sound evidence for the date of *Hippolytus* is wishful thinking.

²¹ As Harvey Yunis and Walter Stockert point out to me, either a mere mention of companion plays or arrangement of texts by trilogy (or tetralogy) would have put the matter beyond doubt.

scholars.²² For one thing, their efforts show that progress beyond Aristotle's *Διδασκαλῖαι* was thought possible. For another, we get a sometimes unsettling glimpse of how such matters were discussed. For example, both the early Peripatetic author of the Aristotelian *Ὑπομνήματα* (Theophrastus?) and Dicaearchus credited the story that Euripides passed off Neophron's *Medea* as his own.²³ Dicaearchus also made other claims that modern scholars rightly treat with caution.²⁴ Aristoxenus claimed that 'practically all' of Plato's *Republic* was to be found in the *Antilogika* of Protagoras.²⁵ Callimachus blundered, presumably through haste, on *Clouds* (above, n. 12). Aristophanes of Byzantium handed on the story that Sophocles was elected general because of the popularity of his *Antigone*.²⁶ In the absence of any reason to believe that a reliable tradition survived regarding the order of Euripides' *Hippolytus* plays, we must evaluate our notice as we do these and similar ones. This only becomes possible when its structure of assumptions has been exposed.

²² Dicaearchus wrote *περὶ Διονυσιακῶν ἀγώνων*, reflected in several learned (if not always credible) notices in hypotheses and scholia (fr. 73–89 Wehrli; cf. Pfeiffer [n. 7], 193). Next to nothing is known of the Euripidean researches of other Peripatetics, but they are certainly or probably attested for Theophrastus, Heraclides Ponticus, and Aristoxenus (on whom cf. n. 25). Callimachus wrote, in addition to his comprehensive *πίνακες*, a *πίναξ καὶ ἀναγραφὴ τῶν κατὰ χρόνους καὶ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γενομένων διδασκάλων* (fr. 454–6 Pf.; cf. Blum [n. 7], 198–208). Eratosthenes' research on comedy naturally required occasional work on tragic *διδασκαλῖαι* (e.g. *Σ^{VE} Ran.* 1028; cf. Pfeiffer 162). As for Aristophanes of Byzantium, a late source, Choeroboscus ap. *Et. Mag.* 672.27 (included in Call. fr. 456 Pf.), reports that he wrote his dramatic hypotheses after chancing upon (*ἐντυχῶν*) the *πίνακες* (sic) of Callimachus. It is unclear to me why anyone would think that Aristophanes did not consult Aristotle's work directly, and the participle and the plural strike me as more than a little suspicious, but Pfeiffer accepts the report (193; cf. his comment on Call. fr. 453 dub.), as do Haigh, *The Attic Theatre* (Oxford, 1907), pp. 47–8, and Dale (n. 7), p. xxxix. It is rejected without argument by W. J. Slater on his *frag. spur.* 434 (*Aristophanis Byzantii Fragmenta* [Berlin, 1986], p. 172). Blum (55–6) reasonably suggests that Aristophanes may sometimes have used Callimachus' *πίναξ* as an index to Aristotle's *Διδασκαλῖαι* when its different arrangement was better suited to his purposes.

²³ *Hyp. Eur. Med.* = Arist. fr. 635 Rose = Dicaearchus, fr. 63 Wehrli. Obviously the information in Aristotle's *Διδασκαλῖαι* was not sufficient to settle the claim, which the hypothesis introduces with a non-committal *δοκεῖ*. After giving the story careful consideration, Page ([n. 7], xxx–xxxvi) concludes that incorrect attribution of a later play to the Neophron who preceded Euripides (*TrGF* 15) probably lies behind the story. Malice towards Euripides is naturally not excluded. For a different view, see E. Stemmlinger, *Das Plagiat in der griechischen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1912; repr. Hildesheim, 1990), pp. 20–1. Nothing is known of the Glaucus who made the similar claim that Aeschylus' *Persians* was plagiarized (*παρὰπεινῆσθαι*) from the *Phoenissae* of Phrynichus (*hyp. Pers.*).

²⁴ See e.g. fr. 77 and 86 Wehrli. We cannot tell how involved Dicaearchus was in controversy about *Rhesus* (*hyp. I. Rhes.*). A certain independence, not to say eccentricity, is attested for him in the matter of distinguishing epithets by the hypotheses to Sophocles' *Ajax* and *Oedipus Tyrannus* (if he is cited in the latter for more than the fact that Sophocles was second to Philocles).

²⁵ Diog. Laert. 3.37 = Aristoxenus, fr. 67 Wehrli = Protagoras, 80 B 5 DK. Aristoxenus wrote at least two books *περὶ τραγωιδιοποιῶν* (fr. 113–16 Wehrli). His claim (fr. 115 = *Vita Soph.* 1) that Sophocles' father was a carpenter or smith is unlikely to be well founded. If his name is not merely a mistake in fr. 116 (see Wehrli, *ad loc.*, and Radermacher and Dover on *Ar. Ran.* 1400), he solved a Euripidean *zetema* by blithely assuming a *διδρῶσις* of *Telephus*. (Someone, at any rate, made this suggestion.)

²⁶ For reasons including independent evidence for Sophocles' generalship, many scholars accept the story about *Antigone*, and it must at least have been chronologically consistent with the *Διδασκαλῖαι*. But it is apparent that it would have been difficult to *demonstrate* it, and Aristophanes, citing no authority, merely says *φασί*.

II. THE WHIFF OF SCANDAL

On Barrett's reconstruction, Aristophanes²⁷ judged first that the existence of two *Hippolytus* plays could be explained. Next, he judged that this unusual circumstance was best explained by the assumptions that the second play 'corrected' the first in an effort to win the Athenians' favour and that the effort succeeded.²⁸ He also assumed that on each occasion one aspect of one play was responsible for the outcome of the whole dramatic contest, that Euripides knew exactly what it was, and that he, Aristophanes, could also know it, simply by judging for himself which play revealed the supposed effort to gain favour. Finally, he judged that the extant play lacked a quality (τὸ ἀπρεπές καὶ κατηγορίας ἄξιον) that characterized the lost one and met the requirements of the situation as he imagined it. He therefore concluded that the extant play corrected the lost one; it came second and belonged to the prize-winning production.

Aristophanes' judgement was thus a tissue of assumptions, some of which depend on moralizing that we may or may not think likely to account for a tragic production's success or failure in competition.²⁹ Others are simply weak in themselves,³⁰ and still others savour strongly of the irresponsible gossip we often find in ancient biographies. I illustrate the last point with two ancient anecdotes whose structure closely resembles that of the theory in our hypothesis. Plutarch relates that Euripides revised the opening line of *Melanippe Sophe* for a second performance after causing an uproar with the original version.³¹ The fact to be explained is the supposed existence of two opening lines for the same play. Euripides changed the offending line to appease the

²⁷ For simplicity's sake, I now speak only of Aristophanes of Byzantium. The name of any earlier scholar could be substituted without altering the conclusions.

²⁸ This explanation strongly implies that Aristophanes (1) consulted two didascalical records of productions that included a *Hippolytus* and (2) found a victory in 429/8 and a poorer showing in the other year, which was earlier. Although neither point is quite susceptible of proof, both derive from reasonable assumptions and may be conceded here, for the theory of 'correction' remains speculative even in these circumstances. It must also be insisted that the other steps in the theory gain no support from the assumed second didascalical entry.

²⁹ To my knowledge, no one has ever doubted that what the ancient scholar deemed 'unseemly and worthy of accusation' was the character and behaviour of Phaedra (except that Griffin, while conceding that this was the Athenian verdict, attributes a rather different view to Euripides; above, n. 4). It is not a necessary assumption, of course.

³⁰ Consider, for example, what happens when we apply to the production of 438 the assumption that one aspect of one play determined the outcome of the contest. We know from hyp. *Alc.* that Euripides came in second to Sophocles on this occasion. Aerope of *Cretan Women* was a 'bad woman'. Was Euripides to conclude that she accounted for his 'failure'? If placing second to Sophocles needs to be explained at all, even our scanty information permits any number of alternative theories that are at least as convincing (*Telephus* degraded the art and became 'notorious' with the comedians, *Alcestis* was unconventionally substituted for a satyr play, and while abounding in unfilial, unpaternal, and unheroic sentiments, yet ended happily, etc.).

³¹ *Amator*. 756BC. My analysis follows Wilamowitz on Eur. *Her.* 1263; cf. *id.*, 'Melanippe', *SPAW* 1921, 63–80 (= *KS I*, 440–60), at 71 (= 449): the verse Ζεύς, <δοῦτος ὁ Ζεύς>, οὐ γὰρ οὔδα πλὴν λόγωνι was a comic conflation of Euripidean phrases, misidentified by someone as the first line of *Melanippe Sophe*. When a controversy arose because it was not found there, the story, with its manifest anti-Euripidean slant, was invented. I am not convinced by the arguments of W. Luppe, who tries to salvage the verse as the genuine opening of *Melanippe Desmotis* ('Plutarch über den Anfangsvers der 'Melanippe' des Euripides', *WJA* 9 [1983], 53–6); see now M. J. Cropp in Collard *et al.* (n. 5), 266. Strangely, P. Oxy. 2455 fr. 1 (first published in 1962) seems to have had a third version of the opening line. For the whole sequence as Wilamowitz reconstructs it, compare the theory attributed to Aristarchus or Aristoxenus concerning the mystery line Ar. *Ran.* 1400: Euripides revised *Telephus* to remove a scene that had given offence (above, n. 25).

crowd, and a second chance to perform the play is casually manufactured (μεταλαβὼν δὲ ἄλλον χορόν).³² On the first occasion, the crowd objected to a single line (the very first, no less) and caused a disturbance; clearly, then, Euripides knew what was the matter.³³ Finally, the story gives him a suspiciously circumstantial motive for persevering (ἐθάρρει ὡς εἴοικε τῷ δράματι γεγραμμένῳ πανηγυρικῶς καὶ περριττῶς). It depends, in other words, on an image of Euripides frustrated at Athenian inability to appreciate his art, and this image belongs to comedy and biographical gossip.³⁴

Similarly, a speaker in Satyrus' *Life of Euripides* cites lines from *Melanippe Desmotis* in praise of women to demonstrate that Euripides recanted his misogyny after the women plotted against him at the Thesmophoria.³⁵ This time the story is meant to explain the existence in Euripides' plays of contradictory opinions on the worth of women. Again Euripides tries to mollify his critics, whose complaint is specific and known to him. The tale makes good sense as a comic plot, worse than none as literary history.³⁶

If these two anecdotes show that the theory in our hypothesis resembles irresponsible and malicious gossip, a third, known only from the anonymous *Life*, associates the composition of *Hippolytus* itself with circumstances that point to Old Comedy:

³² I print Sauppe's correction of the MSS δ' ἱεχθροναλλον, tacitly accepted by Cropp in Collard *et al.* (n. 5), 266. H. J. Mette emphatically rejects this solution but offers no alternative ('Perithoos-Theseus-Herakles bei Euripides', *ZPE* 50 [1983] 13–19, at 15 n. 2).

³³ Compare the tales of audience reaction to Euripides' *Aeolus* (fr. 19; references to fragments of Euripides are to A. Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*² [Leipzig, 1889]), *Danae* (fr. 324), *Ixion* (p. 490 Nauck), and *Auge* (Diog. Laert. 2.33; cf. p. 437 Nauck). Two of these come from Plutarch. Aristarchus was willing to consider revision as an explanation of the controversy surrounding Ar. *Ran.* 1206–8 (said by some to be the opening of *Archelaus*, but not found there or anywhere in Euripides by Aristarchus), but he himself had no stake in the theory, and it receives no elaboration in our source (Σ ad loc.).

³⁴ Aristophanes' *Frogs* itself testifies to Euripides' popularity, if not his success at winning the prize, but during the contest with Aeschylus his confidence, e.g. in his prologues, is always comically misplaced. The biographical tradition makes much of the supposed fact that Euripides was better appreciated by Macedonians and Syracusans than Athenians, and someone in Satyrus explicitly makes him resent his rate of competitive failure (fr. 39, col. xv). A counter-tradition asserts that he was indifferent to his fellow citizens' faulty judgement. See the anonymous *Life*, 118–20 in the lineation of L. Méridier (*Euripide: Tome I* [Paris, 1926], pp. 1–5) = p. 3, 18–21 Schwartz (*Scholia in Euripidem* [Berlin, 1887–91], vol. 1, pp. 1–6). The point, of course, is that we do not know how Euripides responded to failure, and neither did the ancient scholars and biographers. I merely register here my opinion (shared with Griffin [n. 4], 130–1) that failure in competition would not have moved him to treat the same story a second time, something he apparently did on no other occasion.

³⁵ Fr. 39, cols. x and xi; two abbreviated versions are found in the anonymous *Life*, 77–8, 100–9 Méridier (= p. 5, 11–12; p. 6, 7–13 Schwartz). Explicit connection of the quoted lines with a pact between Euripides and the women depends on the *Life* alone, since it falls in the gap between columns in Satyrus. See G. Arrighetti, *Satiro: Vita di Euripide* (Pisa, 1964), pp. 126–9, and cf. Lefkowitz (n. 13), 33–4, 89–90.

³⁶ A clarification is necessary. Knowing that the story derives ultimately from comedy, we naturally say that it aims to get laughs, not to explain anything. If we had only the anonymous *Life*, we would assume that some dull-witted epigone misunderstood a reference to the comedy. The larger context in Satyrus, however, makes it virtually certain that the plot of the women was retailed as fact even by some who knew Aristophanes' play: so Wilamowitz (n. 31), 71–2 (= *KS I* 450–1), approved by Arrighetti (n. 35), 128. But in that case the narrative followed its own logic and pretended to explain something. Of course it was a pretence: the real aim was slander.

λέγουσι δὲ αὐτὸν γήμαντα τὴν Μνησιλόχου θυγατέρα Χοιρίλην καὶ νοήσαντα τὴν ἀκολασίαν αὐτῆς γράψαι πρῶτον τὸ δράμα τὸν Ἰππόλυτον ἐν ᾧ τὴν ἀναισχυντίαν θριαμβεύει τῶν γυναικῶν, ἔπειτα δὲ αὐτὴν ἀποπέμψασθαι.³⁷

We must first consider whether the text reflects an attempt to distinguish the two *Hippolytus* plays. Where Schwartz brought order to a confused MS tradition by reading πρῶτον τὸ δράμα τὸν Ἰππόλυτον, Kirchhoff preferred δράμα τὸν πρότερον Ἰππόλυτον.³⁸ Indeed, whereas πρῶτον is not transmitted, πρότερον occurs in three MSS, though in none of them does the text yield exactly the meaning Kirchhoff wants. Nevertheless, Schwartz is to be preferred: the passage contrasts what Euripides did first and what he did later (πρῶτον . . . ἔπειτα δέ).

Let us leave open the possibility that Kirchhoff's reading is correct, however, and see what follows from it. Elsewhere the *Life* and other sources tell of another wife of Euripides called Melito. The two wives are doublets, and Choerile, given her suggestive name, must be an Old Comic invention.³⁹ When Satyrus tells a similar story, he speaks only of 'Euripides' wife'.⁴⁰ Presumably someone later than Satyrus misunderstood whatever was said about 'Choerile' and attempted to reconcile her existence with that of Melito by doubling the adultery and inserting a divorce. If the comic context that accounts for the name did not itself suggest a link between marital trouble and a *Hippolytus*, then the originator of the story merely made this up, and whether he said *Hippolytus* or *First Hippolytus* there is absolutely no reason to believe him. Indeed, if the words τὴν ἀναισχυντίαν θριαμβεύει τῶν γυναικῶν are an attempt to prove a link with the lost play, they are an inept one, for quite clearly they could also be said of the surviving one.⁴¹

If, on the other hand, the comic context suggested a link with either *Hippolytus*, would it have made clear which play was meant? It is unlikely to have done so with a word like πρότερος, but the merest citation would have put the matter beyond doubt. Unfortunately, all we have (on this unlikely combination of unprovable assumptions) is someone's confident assertion that the play intended was the earlier one. Where the entire context is blatantly untrustworthy, it would be rash to believe this. The story in the *Life* has the familiar look of biographical incident fabricated out of the author's own work, perhaps prompted, as often, by a comic jest. On the most likely reading, it does not distinguish between *Hippolytus* plays and would have no authority if it did.

III. THOSE BAD WOMEN

I come now to the supposed 'correction' of the lost *Hippolytus* by the surviving one. As noted already, Aristophanes of Byzantium does not say what was 'unseemly and worthy of accusation' in the lost play, but the comment is always referred to the

³⁷ 68–72 Méridier (= p. 5, 4–7 Schwartz).

³⁸ Schwartz is followed by Barrett (26 with n. 2), Kirchhoff by Nauck (p. 491) and Méridier, whose text Kovacs now prints ([n. 20], 6) and approves ([n. 13], 3 and 19).

³⁹ So Wilamowitz (n. 7), 7 n. 12 (and already at *Analecta Euripidea* [Berlin, 1875], p. 148 n. 3), approved by e.g. Kovacs (n. 13), 19.

⁴⁰ Fr. 39 col. xii; cf. Arrighetti (n. 35), 130.

⁴¹ See n. 44 below. Both Barrett (31 n. 3) and Nauck (491) connect the story in the *Life* with the lost play, though they differ on the restoration of the text (above, n. 38). Nauck also links it to Ar. *Ran.* 1043 (see below).

character and behaviour of Phaedra.⁴² Passages from Aristophanes (the comic poet) have been cited as supporting evidence for a shocked reception of the lost play. They are nothing of the kind. The five passages that name Phaedra (three in *Thesmophoriazusae* and two in *Frogs*) are so general that they may refer to either Phaedra or to both. Phaedra may indeed occur in them not because she was especially bad, but precisely because she featured in two plays.⁴³ She was well known and could be regarded (with the justice expected of comedy) as an obsession of Euripides.

The first passage comes when the Kinsman, disguised as a woman, defends Euripides by saying that his rough treatment of Phaedra is unimportant: *εἰ δὲ Φαίδραν λοιδορεῖ, ἡμῖν τί τοῦτ' ἔσται*; (*Thesm.* 497–8). Some of Euripides' characters certainly 'reproach' Phaedra in the surviving *Hippolytus*; it is highly probable that this happened in the lost play as well.⁴⁴ The second and third instances occur at *Thesm.* 545–8. First, a woman expresses her anger at Euripides,

... ὅς ἡμᾶς πολλὰ κακὰ δέδρακεν,
ἐπίτηδες εὐρίσκων λόγους, ὅπου γυνὴ πονηρὰ
ἔγένετο, Μελανίππας ποιῶν Φαίδρας τε· Πηνελόπην δὲ
οὐπώποτ' ἐπόησε, ὅτι γυνὴ κόφρων ἔδοξεν εἶναι.

To this the Kinsman replies,

ἐγὼ γὰρ οἶδα ταῖτιον. μίαν γὰρ οὐκ ἂν εἴποις
τῶν νῦν γυναικῶν Πηνελόπην, Φαίδρας ἀπαξάπασας.

This example brings to mind the better-known passage from *Frogs* where Aeschylus pairs Phaedras with Sthenoboeas and calls them all whores, πόρναι (1043–4):

ἀλλ' οὐ μὰ Δί' οὐ Φαίδρας ἐποιοῦν πόρναις οὐδὲ Cθενεβοίας,
οὐδ' οἶδ' οὐδεὶς ἦντιν' ἐρώσαν πώποτ' ἐποίησα γυναῖκα.

Because the word πόρναι is so insulting, it is often claimed that this can only refer to the Phaedra of the lost play.⁴⁵ But this is to assume that Aristophanes meant his

⁴² Without questioning that this is the meaning of the hypothesis, some scholars wonder whether Phaedra was really so bad: thus O. Zwielerlein, *Senecas Phaedra und ihre Vorbilder* (Akad. d. Wiss. Mainz, 1987.5), pp. 24–5, noted by Griffin (n. 4), 129 n. 5, and B. Snell, *Scenes from Greek Drama* (Berkeley, 1964), pp. 33–46, among others. The question is not without interest, for we are forced to balance Aristophanes' judgement (since he could read the entire lost play) against the possibility that his theory derives from disreputable sources. I mention in passing that the epithet of the lost play (*καλυπτόμενος* or *κατακαλυπτόμενος*) can no longer be taken without argument to show that Phaedra's behaviour shocked the Athenians, or even the Alexandrians. According to a once nearly universal view, it referred to a scene in which Hippolytus veiled his head to avoid contact with Phaedra and her shameful proposals (e.g. Barrett 37), but this has now been questioned by W. Luppe, 'Die Hypothese zum ersten *Hippolytos*', *ZPE* 102 (1994), 23–39, at 29 n. 5, 37–8. (Doubtless Hippolytus disapproved of Phaedra; at issue is the epithet as evidence for a particular and powerful expression of 'shock'.) The strongest element in Luppe's argument is the existence in the papyrus of an aorist participial form of *καλύπτειν* in a context clearly unrelated to the traditional explanation of the play's epithet. If one judges that the use of this word in the narrative hypothesis—whatever the exact situation may be—must now be the starting-point of speculation as to the meaning of the epithet, then one no longer has any reason to believe in the scene of Hippolytus veiling himself.

⁴³ Perhaps Agathon portrayed her as well: cf. *Thesm.* 153, where she is merely the type of the 'bad' (desiring) woman.

⁴⁴ In the extant play, cf. especially Hippolytus' famous diatribe at 616–68; for the lost one, fr. 436, 439, and 440 possibly contain 'reproach'; fr. 429 and 430 could imply it.

⁴⁵ E.g. Barrett 30–1, Webster (n. 5), 65, but not Stanford or Dover ad loc. As far as I am aware, this use of πόρναι for adulteresses is unique in classical literature. Much later, *πορνεία* becomes

Aeschylus to be fair. The mere fact of Phaedra's immoral desire, common to both *Hippolytus* plays, is enough to account for Aeschylus' language. The same reasoning will account for the fifth mention (*Ran.* 1052) and τὸ πονηρόν in the reply of Aeschylus. Naturally, I do not claim that reference to the lost Phaedra is excluded, merely that the reference may include the surviving one. After all, from what we know of Euripides' *Melanippe* plays, it was no fairer to call *Melanippe* πονηρά (*Thesm.* 546–7) than it would be to call the surviving Phaedra πόρνη.⁴⁶

None of these mentions of Phaedra provides evidence of adverse reaction to the lost play, let alone a poor showing in the competition. But arguments linking them to the theory in our hypothesis require not only this, but that reference to the Phaedra of the surviving play be excluded, since *ex hypothesi* (so to speak) that play won the prize by virtue of its morally improved heroine. Inherently weak, this argument becomes even less attractive in view of the large presence of the surviving play in comic parody, including passages that insinuate impropriety on Phaedra's part.⁴⁷

Why did Euripides write two tragedies on the same mythical episode? After examining the didascalical record, searching for other evidence of the production and reception of the plays, and testing inferences from Old Comedy, we are no nearer an answer than we were before. Any theory will have at least two components: a guess as to which play came first, and a narrative to motivate the poet's reworking of the material. On the first point, it can be predicted that one consideration, now disentangled from the untrustworthy speculation of the ancient hypothesis, will for many tip the scales in favour of the traditional chronology. I refer to the opinion, presented most forcefully by Barrett, that the plot of the extant play is a sophisticated variation on the expected plot of a play on the 'Potiphar's Wife' situation, and that the variation cannot have preceded the (presumed) simpler treatment.⁴⁸ The arbitrariness of the latter assumption is evident; two further points both tell against the belief that

'fornication' and is interchangeable with μοιχεία in many contexts, as seen for example in several scholia to the extant *Hippolytus*. Σ^{RV} Ar. *Ran.* 849, explaining the phrase Κρητικὰς μονοιδίας, says that Apollonius asserted a possible reference to Aepore of Cretan Women, ἣν εἰσήγαγε (sc. Εὐριπίδης) πορνεύουσαν. What Apollonius (of Rhodes?) actually wrote is uncertain, since the active participle reveals the comment in this form to be late. This seems to be, as Webster says, the only other reference to a Euripidean heroine as πόρνη.

⁴⁶ It is usually assumed that *Thesm.* 546–7 alludes to the *rhesis* in *Melanippe Sophe* in which Melanippe, who bore twin sons to Poseidon and concealed them in a cattle shed, tried, after they were discovered and threatened with death, to defend them without revealing that she was their mother. Aristotle is likewise thought to have had this notoriously clever speech (parodied at Ar. *Lys.* 1125) in mind when he cited 'the speech of Melanippe' as an example of tragic ἥθος that is ἀπρεπές καὶ μὴ ἀρμόδιον (*Poet.* 15.1454a30–1). That is, if these assumptions are correct, Melanippe was thought too clever for a woman, and that is what the woman in *Thesmophoriazousae* means when she says that Euripides portrayed her as πονηρά.

⁴⁷ I hope to demonstrate this point more fully in the course of a reassessment of Aristophanes' use of Euripidean 'bad women'. For the present, a list of passages must suffice: *Hipp.* 219–22 (Ar. *Anagyros* F 53 KA), *Hipp.* 375–6 (Ar. *Eq.* 1290–4, *Ran.* 930–2), *Hipp.* 415–16 (Xenarch. *Pentathlos* F 4.21–2 KA), *Hipp.* 345 (Ar. *Eq.* 18), *Hipp.* 675–7 (Ar. *Thesm.* 715–16). P. Rau believes that Ar. *Vesp.* reflects *Hipp.* 215–16, 219, and 230, along with other Euripidean passages (*Paratragodia: Untersuchung einer komischen Form des Aristophanes* [Zetemata 45 Munich, 1967], 153–4). Finally, it is often thought that the προαγωγοί alluded to at Ar. *Ran.* 1079 include the Nurses of both *Sthenoboea* and the extant *Hippolytus* (the same pair, then, as at 1043). It is not known (pace Webster [n. 5], 71) whether the Nurse played a comparable role in the lost *Hippolytus*.

⁴⁸ Barrett 9, 11, and *passim*. Most often mentioned in this connection is the extant play's lack of the two 'high points' of the (simple) story: Phaedra attempting to seduce Hippolytus, and Phaedra denouncing Hippolytus to Theseus (e.g. Griffin [n. 4], 131–2).

it is necessary here and suggest the outlines of a conceivable alternative. First, the one contemporary revision about which we know something probably proceeded in the opposite direction. Aristophanes, who undoubtedly failed with his first *Clouds*, may for once have been serious when he had the chorus of the revised version (our *Clouds*) represent him as stung by this outcome, and as believing that the original play had been unusually clever and innovative (518–26). What did he do? Since we have only one of the versions, there is plenty of room for debate, but an attractive explanation has it that he (to use the current phrase) ‘dumbed down’ the second version. That is, he apparently reverted to coarse, formulaic scenes and jests.⁴⁹

The second point is that Euripides produced, besides the two *Hippolytus* plays, three other tragedies on the ‘Potiphar’s Wife’ situation.⁵⁰ Why not assume that the extant *Hippolytus* came in the middle of the series, as a clever variation on one of *those* plays? It then becomes possible that the simpler lost play (if such it was) was a return to a winning formula, for nothing prevents the assumption that ‘bad women’ had accounted for some of Euripides’ rare success.⁵¹ That would give us an answer to the question of motivation within the framework ‘desire for competitive success’. But Griffin is probably right when he says that it is misguided to seek such an answer. His own theory is not without merit, but it is again purely conjectural, and it does not explain why Euripides aimed at aesthetic improvement of an earlier play just this once. Euripides may have been moved by factors—political, cultic, competitive, aesthetic, personal—of which no traces have survived. Indeed, they almost never did.⁵²

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⁴⁹ Dover (n. 12), lxxx–lxxxi, shows that the proper inference from the remarks of Eratosthenes ap. Σ^E 552 is that *Clouds II* was not produced in Athens, and Aristophanes may never have completed the work of revision. For explanations along the lines indicated in the text, though with differences of detail, see Dover lxxx–xcviii; T. K. Hubbard, *The Mask of Comedy: Aristophanes and the Intertextual Parabasis* (Cornell, 1991), pp. 96–106; D. O’Regan, *Rhetoric, Comedy, and the Violence of Language in Aristophanes’ Clouds* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 67–79, 133–9.

⁵⁰ *Phoenix*, *Sthenoboea*, and *Peleus*. The statement of Webster (n. 5), 77, that ‘all belong to the first [i.e. Zielinski’s “severe”] period on metrical grounds’ is roughly borne out by Cropp and Fick (above, n. 1), but it has no bearing on our argument since that period extends down to the surviving *Hippolytus*. It is not even necessary to conclude that the *Hippolytus* produced in 428 came last in the series. Aristophanic parodies fix *Phoenix* before *Acharnians*, *Sthenoboea* before *Wasps*, and *Peleus* before *Clouds*.

⁵¹ Cf. above, n. 2. Webster (n. 5), 32, does not hesitate to assign both *Phoenix* and *Cretans* with their notorious women to the winning production (Euripides’ first) of 441, though that is admittedly nothing but a guess.

⁵² Besides those mentioned already, Michael Halleran and the editors and anonymous referee for *CQ* made helpful comments on this article. I thank them all, and especially Harvey Yunis.