

Concordia Discors and Characterization in Euripides' *Hippolytos*

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I

DESPITE the simplicity of the *opinio communis* on the problem, characterization remains a major difficulty facing a critic of the *Hippolytos*. According to most critics of the play, Phaidra and Hippolytos are simple polar opposites, and this polarity, or *discordia*, in the human frame is reflected and symbolically intensified in the divine frame by the corresponding opposition of Aphrodite and Artemis.¹ Recently, however, a few critics have argued that polarity, while certainly one factor at work in the characterization, is most important not within the two frames but between them.² Accordingly, these critics stress the similarity, or *concordia*, of the two human victims, and contrast this similarity to that of the two inhuman goddesses who either plot or permit human suffering. This interpretation has the advantage of introducing a more accurate complexity into the analysis of character—a complexity that is, after all, only to be expected from Euripides, who rarely created *dramatis personae* that more resembled personifications than persons. But, though these critics escape the danger of interpreting the play as if it were an allegory of personification (a danger many earlier critics failed to escape³), they nevertheless still give the play an inadequate and in-

¹ Cf. G. M. A. Grube, *The Drama of Euripides* (London 1941) 196; Max Pohlenz, *Die griechische Tragödie*² (Göttingen 1954) 266, 270f; H. D. F. Kitto, *Greek Tragedy* (Garden City [N.Y.] 1954) 212; H. J. Rose, *A Handbook of Greek Literature* (New York 1960) 182; William Arrowsmith, "Euripides' Theater of Ideas," in *Euripides, A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Erich Segal (Englewood Cliffs [N.J.] 1968) 20f. See H. Strohm's comments on characterization in his review of W. S. Barrett, ed. *Hippolytos* (Oxford 1964), in *Gnomon* 38 (1966) 750f.

² Bernard M. W. Knox, "The *Hippolytus* of Euripides," *YCS* 13 (1952) 3–31 (especially pp. 28–31); Charles P. Segal, "The Tragedy of the *Hippolytus*: The Waters of Ocean and the Untouched Meadow," *HSCP* 70 (1965) 154–59; H. Merklin, *Gott und Mensch im "Hippolytos" und den "Bakchen" des Euripides* (Diss. Freiburg 1964) *passim*.

³ Arrowsmith, *loc.cit.* (*supra* n.1), best represents this tendency toward over-allegorization.

accurate reading by failing to observe in characterization between frames the same principle of *concordia* they have already observed within each frame. This error has serious consequences for their understanding of the play's meaning, for by seeing only *discordia* between the frames they overemphasize the opposition of man and god in the play, just as earlier critics have overstressed the polarity of the characters within the frames by seeing only their differences.⁴

Miss Matthaei showed long ago that the characterization, at least in its ethical component, cannot be described well by any reading based wholly on *discordia*: the play is too complex to tolerate simple polarities.⁵ In this paper I will reexamine the characterization of the *Hippolytos* with the intention of showing that the characterization is controlled not by *discordia* alone, but by what might better be called *concordia discors*. This principle has already been observed implicitly within each frame, and I hope to show that it is also operant between the frames. But, since the operation of the principle within each frame has not yet received explicit treatment, I must first discuss its operation there before going on to the more difficult analysis of its operation in unifying the human and divine characters.

A study of *concordia discors* in the characterization of a play should begin with a definition of what the principle would mean when applied to dramatic characterization and then of how the principle is realized in the play. The phrase implies, on one hand, that each character has certain peculiar qualities which set him apart from all other characters in the play, and which set him in especial opposition to at least one other character, his polar opposite. This constitutes the *discordia* of the characterization. Because this aspect of the characterization in the *Hippolytos* is already a critical commonplace, it need not be discussed again here. *Concordia discors* implies, on the other hand, that, while each character stands alone as a unique individual, he still shares in and mirrors qualities of his opposite. It is this side of the principle which requires further elaboration and which will be the central concern of this paper.

In the *Hippolytos* such *concordia* is realized by means of three devices: a character is regularly associated with the same images as his

⁴ Thus Knox, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 31, speaks of the meaning of the play as "an affirmation of purely human values in an inhuman universe"; cf. Segal, *loc.cit.* (*supra* n.2).

⁵ L. E. Matthaei, *Studies in Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge 1918) 76-117; on page 99 she warns against reading the play as if it were "a morality play."

polar opposite; a character consistently repeats the words and deeds of his opposite; and the values which generate his actions, the laws which regulate them, and the qualities which they reveal are remarkably similar to the qualities, laws and values observable in the behavior of other characters in the play. Each of these harmonizing devices functions differently in the play.

The first device, which unlike the other two operates only within the divine frame, might be called imagistic confluence. That it is the only device to operate in just one frame seems significant. One major function of imagery in the play is to keep the two goddesses present in the mind of the audience during the large part of the play falling between the two epiphany scenes.⁶ It is almost as though this device were introduced to compensate for the relatively short period of time in which the goddesses are on stage, and hence for the considerably fewer opportunities the poet had to employ the other two devices, which unlike it depend entirely upon the actions and words that a character himself performs and not upon what is said about one character by another. The second device, which functions within but not between the frames, can be called reenactment, since it harmonizes characters by showing them doing and saying the same things.⁷ The third device, for which there is no convenient name, is closely related to this device, since it, too, functions within both frames and involves the behavior of the characters. But it differs from reenactment in two important respects: it also functions between the frames, and it does not involve action itself but the psychology of action and the character traits exhibited by action. What remains is to show the operation of the three devices throughout the play.

II

In the very first lines of the play Aphrodite speaks and defines the three realms in which she is "named" (1-4):⁸

⁶ Segal, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 117; D. J. Conacher, *Euripidean Drama: Myth, Theme and Structure* (Toronto 1967) 44.

⁷ Segal, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 152, briefly mentions the term reenactment, and observes that "Hippolytus' pitiful state at the end, his entrance among companions who bear his almost lifeless body, is vaguely parallel to Phaedra's entrance, in a state of collapse and near to death, at the beginning." I hope to show that there is a more than "vague" parallel between these two important scenes and that reenactment is employed in other scenes as well.

⁸ I cite the text of W. S. Barrett throughout this paper, *Hippolytos* (Oxford 1964).

Πολλὴ μὲν ἐν βροτοῖσι κοῦκ ἀνώνυμος
 θεὰ κέκλημαι Κύπρις, οὐρανοῦ τ' ἔσω·
 ὄσοι τε Πόντου θερμόνων τ' Ἀτλαντικῶν
 ναίουσιν εἴσω, φῶς ὀρῶντες ἡλίου. . .

These three realms, land, sea and air, function not only as settings for the action but also as suggestive sources for the play's imagery. Images drawn from the natural world fill the play, and it is almost always the two goddesses, Artemis and Aphrodite, who are associated with and, as a result, characterized by them. Because of this, it is particularly important that a comparative study of the two goddesses take the imagery into account.

As the range of these associations is studied, an unmistakable pattern emerges: both goddesses are time and again associated with the same image. Whenever two characters are associated with the same image (imagistic confluence) two interpretations are possible: either the confluent image functions ironically to heighten the difference between the characters, or it functions to suggest their similarity, at least with regard to the quality or qualities the image conveys. In the discussion which follows, and *mutatis mutandis* elsewhere in this paper, I have assumed that the basis for choosing between these two alternatives depends upon the particular pattern of imagery in the play. If the pattern is such that two characters are regularly associated with incompatible images, the tonality of a confluent image is always ambiguous: it may either reflect some single point of similarity against a background of nearly complete dissimilarity, or else, what is probably more frequently the case, it is to be understood ironically. On the other hand, if the pattern is such that confluent images are the rule and not the exception, then the tonality is unambiguous: no irony is to be felt; the characters involved should be viewed as similar in this respect as in other respects. If this assumption be granted, then it follows that the consistency of imagistic confluence in the *Hippolytos*, to be shown presently, is to be interpreted as unambiguously indicating the similarity of the two goddesses.

The richest cluster of land images centers about the "undefiled meadow" (73–77) from which Hippolytos wove his garland for Artemis. This meadow is perhaps more a mindscape than actual landscape, since "Αἰδώς tends it with his river waters" (78), and since only the *κόφρων* in nature may pluck garlands from it (79ff). But in lines

75–77 Euripides includes one element in this idyllic scene which later transforms it into something more ominous, for although in these lines Artemis is associated with the “busy bee,” symbolic of the meadow’s purity and the devotee’s contented toil for his goddess, later in the epiphany scene, as an angry bee, she will “sting” brutally (1313f).

But the bee and the meadow are not consistently associated with Artemis. Aphrodite, too, is bee-like, and like Artemis she has her own meadow. It is this meadow, now *κομήτης* not *ἀκήρατος*, which attracts Phaidra in verses 208–11. Besides the sexual implications of the word *κομήτης*,⁹ the shift in tone from the chaste meadow of Artemis is emphasized by Phaidra’s wish to rest, not toil, in this luxuriant grove (211). But just as Artemis stings Theseus, so Aphrodite can sting men with the bittersweet sting of Eros. Thus Artemis tells Theseus that Phaidra was “stung with love’s sting for your son” (1303), and the Chorus says of Aphrodite, “she pants upon all the living—with ruin, and flits about like a bee” (563f). It is thus only appropriate for the nurse to tell Phaidra, when Aphrodite’s plan is half accomplished, that the “sting” has overcome her judgement (696), and for Artemis to use the word *οἷτρος* in characterizing Phaidra’s actions (1300f), since *οἷτρος* literally means a sting.¹⁰ The metaphor of the bee is appropriate, too, as the imagistic equivalent of the nurse’s definition of love: “sweetest, but painful, too” (348),¹¹ but it may be used just as well to image the elusiveness of *σεμνή Ἄρτεμις* (713), who can be sweet—as in verses 165–69, where she relieves the pains of childbirth, or in verse 1392, where she momentarily heals the shattered body of Hippolytos—but viciously cruel, too.

The sky also has ambiguous associations in the play. Aphrodite rules all those who behold the light of the sun (4, cf. 1279), but so does Artemis, who in verses 59f and 166–68 is given the epithet *οὐρανία*. As “ouranian” powers their authority is represented by the weapons with which they strike their victims from the air. From the iconological tradition it is not surprising that Artemis is called “Mistress of the Bow” (168, 1422, 1451). But Aphrodite, too, “hurls” her anger at Hippolytos (1418), and, possessed by Aphrodite, Phaidra yearns “to

⁹ See Knox, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 6 n.8.

¹⁰ Cf. Wilamowitz’s comment on *Herakles* 20; Euripides, *Herakles* III (Darmstadt 1969) 12. See also Sim. (?), *PMG* 541.10 (Page)

¹¹ Cf. Wilamowitz, *Euripides, Hippolytos* (Berlin 1891), “Philologischer Anhang,” p.210.

put (her) hands on a spear" (221f). Through the agency of Eros, again following tradition, though it is apparently a younger and still vital tradition, Aphrodite can hurl her fatal shafts (530–34).¹² The Chorus, which in these lines sings the praises of Eros, "whose shafts neither fire nor the stars surpass," will soon witness the truth of its words. After Hippolytos is banished, it laments his fate and calls him the "brightest star of Athens" (1122). But even the brightest star cannot escape the shafts of Aphrodite. In this, too, the goddesses resemble each other. For if Artemis has not displayed her destructive side in this play, it is only because she has not had the opportunity. Her *βέλως* will be used just as mercilessly in the future against one of Aphrodite's favorites (1420–22), and if a comparison is made of her words in 1340f and Aphrodite's in 5f, Artemis appears the harsher of the two, for unlike Aphrodite her vengeance is not only on the evil-doer but on his family as well.

The last group of images to be considered is that connected with water. The miracle wave (1213) and the bull which it throws onto the strand (1214) result from the collaboration of the two traditional sea deities, Poseidon and Aphrodite. Poseidon is called "of the sea" three times (44, 1168, 1318) and Aphrodite twice (415, 522). But in a striking departure from tradition, Artemis, too, is given a similar epithet (145ff, 228).¹³ And, just as both goddesses are associated with the meadow, so, too, both are associated with the river that flows through the meadow. Artemis' meadow, we hear, "*Αἰδώς* tends with his river waters" (78), and it is these same nourishing waters that Phaidra longs to draw for herself from Aphrodite's spring (208f). But both goddesses can also be associated with destructive, violent rivers, like the "unbearable" river to which Aphrodite is compared in verse 443,¹⁴ or the "surging"¹⁵ river which Hippolytos hyperbolically claims he needs to purge his ear of the nurse's polluting words and which, because of its connection with purification and chastity, is to be associated with Artemis.

¹² Cf. Barrett, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.8) 260, for a discussion of the tradition in the fifth century.

¹³ I accept Barrett's arguments concerning the text at line 228, but I disagree with his interpretation of lines 148–50. See C. W. Willink, "Some Problems of Text and Interpretation in the *Hippolytus*," *CQ* 18 (1968) 38.

¹⁴ Segal, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 127, associates *ρῆή* with the flowing of the sea. But the word is properly used of the flowing of rivers (cf. *LSJ* *ῥέω* 1.1.c and Barrett, *op.cit.* [*supra* n.8] *ad loc.*).

¹⁵ See *LSJ* *κλύζω* 1 for the violent connotations of the word.

III

Imagistic confluence thus functions to suggest the similarity of the two goddesses. The second device, reenactment, reemphasizes the *concordia* in the divine frame, and also harmonizes Phaidra and Hippolytos in the human frame. Since neither goddess acts in the play, reenactment in the divine frame is limited to word repetitions alone, and in both epiphany scenes we find numerous examples of the goddesses using the same words and phrases. These verbal echoes have been noted by several critics, and, because Bernard Knox has so thoroughly collected them all, only the problem of reenactment in the human frame need be explored here.¹⁶

Just as imagistic confluence stressed the similarity of the two goddesses' natures, expressed in such epithets as "Mistress of the Sea" or "Mistress of the Bow," so reenactment functions, first of all, to stress the similarity of the natures of both human characters. At two important points in the play each recalls his parentage (cf. 337 and 1082).¹⁷ Both were born to mothers who engaged in illicit sexual relationships.¹⁸ Hippolytos is the "son of the Amazon" (10, 351, 582) and a bastard (309, 962, 1083; cf. 1455).¹⁹ Phaidra's mother is Pasiphae, and the importance of her heredity is stressed in verse 341, where she cries out, "I, the third, wretched, how I am destroyed!" Both are foreigners in Theseus' land. Phaidra is the *παῖ Κρητῖα* (372), and her Cretan origin is mentioned frequently (cf. 156, 719, 752, 759). Hippolytos is Phaidra's "foreign love" (32), and his rôle as intruder and potential usurper is something rarely forgotten (cf. 305ff, 1010ff, 1072f, 1080f). These qualities are reflected stylistically: Hippolytos' name is often suppressed until the end of a sentence or clause and placed in the stressed, first position of the line, so that when it finally is spoken, it is felt as a shock. Even if this is due primarily to *metrica causa*, it is undeniable that, especially in verses 310, 352 and 885, Euripides made necessity serve his dramatic and thematic ends.²⁰

¹⁶ See Knox, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 28f. Cf. Grube, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.1) 182 n.2; S. M. Adams, "Two Plays of Euripides," *CR* 49 (1935) 118 n.5.

¹⁷ Cf. R. P. Winnington-Ingram, "Hippolytus: A Study in Causation," in *Entretiens Hardt* VI (Vandœuvres-Genève 1960) 176.

¹⁸ Cf. W. B. Stanford, "The Hippolytus of Euripides," *Hermathena* 63 (1944) 13; Conacher, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.6) 33.

¹⁹ On the importance of the *νόθος*-theme in the play see Grube, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 184.

²⁰ Hippolytos' name appears in the first position of the line in the following verses: 11, 22, 53, 310, 352, 583, 885, 900, 1162, 1177, 1436. There are just two exceptions: 32 and 1151. Nine times the name gets even more stress by enjambement: 11, 22, 53, 310, 352, 583, 900,

A second function of reenactment is to show the similarity of the two human characters through their own actions—words and deeds—in the play. Perhaps the most striking case is the two sickness scenes,²¹ but reenactment is also at work elsewhere in the play. The appearance of each character at the beginning of the sickness scenes is heralded by a five-line choral speech (170–75²²=1342–46). In both speeches the Chorus first observes that someone is approaching (170=1342); then, once the approaching character is recognized, it reveals its own knowledge of the circumstances of his sickness: ignorance in Phaidra's case and an all too clear knowledge in Hippolytos' (173=1343f). At the end of the second speech the Chorus explicitly comments on the parallel fates: "what a double catastrophe the gods have sent upon the house" (1345f).

Both characters are next carried on stage at the point of death (176ff=1347ff), and both soon cry out about the pain they suffer (198ff=1347–52). Both ask to be lifted up (198=1361, 1445), and both order their nurses—Theseus now acting as Hippolytos' nurse—to cover their faces (243=1458). Each wishes to die as quickly as possible (599=1374–77), so that he might escape his agonizing pain (725ff=1385), for both consider death to be the only possible cure for their affliction (248f, 400f, 723=1373). For Hippolytos death is a "savior" (1373); for Phaidra the "co-worker" she sought in verse 676. Both blame their troubles on some ancient crime (336–40=1379ff).

The nurse is a suppliant to both, in Phaidra's case to provoke the fatal words about her love for Hippolytos, in Hippolytos' to insure his fatal silence about that love. Both are advised by servants to be expedient and give way to Aphrodite (443ff=88–107). When they refuse, both are accused of haughtiness (444–59, 490=93ff, 947ff). Each is accused of lubricity (Phaidra by Hippolytos in verses 651ff; Hippolytos by Theseus in verses 967ff). Both are presented in scenes empha-

1177, 1436. Of these nine occurrences, five are what G. S. Kirk, in his analysis of Homeric verse ("Verse-Structure and Sentence-Structure in Homer," *YCS* 20 [1966] 108–10), called "violent enjambements": 310, 352, 900, 1177, 1436. For other such violent enjambements of proper nouns in tragedy see Dietmar Korzeniewski, *Griechische Metrik* (Darmstadt 1968) 17, who cites similar cases in Aischylos (*Pers.* 198f, 362, 473, 487, 512) and Sophokles (*El.* 2), but none from Euripides. On the *hyperbata* in vv.51–53 and 308–10 see F. Dornseiff, *Pindars Stil* (Berlin 1921) 107f.

²¹ Cf. Grube, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.1) 193; Segal, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 152; Willink, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.13) 43; Wolf Steidle, *Studien zum antiken Drama* (München 1968) 16.

²² Deleting verse 172 with Murray, Solmsen (rev. of W. S. Barrett, ed. *Hippolytos* [Oxford 1964], in *A/P* 88 [1967] 91), and, most recently, Korzeniewski (*op.cit.* [*supra* n.20] 93).

sizing first their passionate nature (198–361=601–68)²³ and then their reasonability (373–524=902–1101).

But both scenes of passion have at least one moment of sanity amidst the madness (239f=654–60), and at the end of the scenes of self-control both yield to another's irrational will (516ff=1090ff).²⁴ Each claims to be *νώφρων* (399=995, 1013, 1100), and each feels he must teach the other to be *νώφρων* (728–31=667). The nobility or honor of each is nevertheless affirmed by others (47, 1034, 1300–05, 1404=1254, 1299f, 1402, 1454).²⁵ Both are destroyed by agents who will regret their actions (698f=1412). Both agents are told to die (682ff=1290–95).

Near death, both cry out in bitter recognition that it is Aphrodite who is responsible for their deaths (725–27=1401),²⁶ and both thus call upon Zeus to witness the injustice done to them (683=1363). Each is comforted by a promise of revenge just before his death: Phaidra will avenge herself on Hippolytos (719–21); Artemis will avenge Hippolytos by killing one of Aphrodite's favorites (1417–22). And so, by the end of the play, the nurse's wish, "to unite together one from two" (515), is realized, but the union is not one of *χάρις* but *νόσος* and death.²⁷

IV

Even such perceptive critics of the play as Knox and Segal, who have observed the similarity of the characters within each frame, insist on one final *discordia* in the play, that between man and god.²⁸ But can we not say of the gods, "(sie) sind keine Menschen, und sie sind doch nur zu menschlich" ?²⁹ And if so, may it not also be said of Phaidra

²³ That Hippolytos' state approaches madness here has been noted by Matthaei, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 94; G. Norwood, *Essays in Euripidean Drama* (Berkeley 1954) 76; Conacher, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.6) 41. Cf. Hippolytos' own assessment of his behavior in line 1034.

²⁴ Conacher, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.6) 33, first noted this pattern of scenes, but only in connection with Phaidra's shifting moods. Cf. A. Rivier, "L'élément démonique chez Euripide jusqu'en 428," in *Entretiens Hardt VI* (Vandœuvres-Genève 1960) 69.

²⁵ Matthaei, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 115–16.

²⁶ Cf. the scholiast's comments on line 47 in E. Schwartz, *Scholia in Euripidem II*² (Berlin 1891).

²⁷ On the *νόσος*-theme see Segal, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 138, and his latest article on the play, "Euripides, *Hippolytus* 108–112: Tragic Irony and Tragic Justice," *Hermes* 97 (1969) 304.

²⁸ Cf. n.4 above.

²⁹ U. von Wilamowitz, *Griechische Tragödien I* (Berlin 1903) "Zur Einführung" p.30; cf. Karl Reinhardt, "Die Sinneskrise bei Euripides," in *Tradition und Geist, Gesammelte Essays zur Dichtung* (Göttingen 1960) 234f.

and Hippolytos that, though human, they are tragic figures because they are “doch nur zu göttlich”? Throughout the play are present many of what Roloff³⁰ has identified as the traditional (that is, epic) forms of *δμοίωσις θεῶν*,³¹ and there is at least one major innovation in the traditional conception, which must be taken as added evidence for the importance of the theme in the play.

One traditional form of *δμοίωσις θεῶν* is the desire to win recognition for one's accomplishments from mankind.³² In the divine frame this value is expressed as reverence (Aphrodite 5–8; Artemis 1332f, 1402) and in the human frame as something exactly parallel, *εὐκλεία* (Phaidra 47, 423, 489, 687, 717; Hippolytos 1028, 1299). Reverence to the gods is shown through worship, “naming” the god (that is, acknowledging the existence and authority of the god; cf. lines 1–4), and this is why Hippolytos' offence is so serious to Aphrodite: his attempt to ignore her divinity throws the very validity of her claim to divinity into question. *εὐκλεία* also depends upon being named, and just as Aphrodite's motivation in the play may be traced to her desire for reverence, so, too, a fundamental motivation of Phaidra and Hippolytos is the desire to achieve *εὐκλεία*. Phaidra's words in verses 403–04 show that *εὐκλεία* is, at least in theory, one of her deepest values. Later, in verses 687–92 and 715–21, she shows herself willing in actual practice to act according to this value, even though that will mean she must die.

While it is true that Hippolytos highly values *σωφροσύνη*, this should not be considered his deepest value: it is only a means to an end, which is his desire for *εὐκλεία*. Thus when he swears to Theseus an oath which must convince in place of an actual witness, he asks to be destroyed *ἀνώνυμος* and *ἀκλεής* (1028) if he has done what he has been accused of doing. Here the two elements, *εὐκλεία* and being named, have come together to emphasize Hippolytos' seriousness and sincerity: the oath is an expression of Hippolytos' worst fear and, at the same time, of one of his deepest values. At the end of the play, when Phaidra and Hippolytos are apotheosized, the distinction between human *εὐκλεία* and divine reverence almost vanishes: both are to receive the fame they desired—they will be, like Aphrodite (1), *οὐκ ἀνώνυμος* (1429), and, like Phaethon (732–41), Hippolytos will be wor-

³⁰ D. Roloff, *Gottähnlichkeit, Vergöttlichung und Erhöhung zu seligem Leben: Untersuchungen zur Herkunft der platonischen Angleichung an Gott* (Berlin 1970).

³¹ The phrase first appears in *Pl. Th.* 176b.

³² Roloff, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.30) 64, and see (36) in the “Fundstellen.”

shipped by mourning maidens (1425–28) and will receive the sacrifices (1426) which are the proper due of gods (*cf.* 535–44).

Just as reverence is intimately tied to the validity of a god's claim to divinity, so human striving after *εὐκλεία* is ultimately linked to the desire to become divine, the epic hero's "höchster, aber unerfüllbarer Wunsch."³³ It is this wish which most profoundly motivates the actions of both human characters throughout the play. The nurse accuses Phaidra of attempting to surpass a paradigm of behavior observed even on Olympos (451–9, 474f), for Phaidra does not want to give in to her illicit love, even if mythology is replete with examples of gods doing just that. The nurse's advice is cynically realistic. Phaidra will answer and reject it by appealing not to realities but to ideals, not by justifying her action on the basis of the patterns established by the "real" gods of mythology, but by a justification based on ideal patterns of how things ought to be (488–89). She must do this because her real struggle is not against an illicit love but towards honor, and an honor so demanding and pure from the exigencies of reality that it necessarily implies a still deeper value: the struggle against all that is basely human, towards all that is truly divine. Phaidra cannot be moved by the nurse's accusation: it is not these gods that she is attempting to imitate. Hippolytos, too, will be accused of this crime in verses 91ff, only now Hippolytos will be the one to inject into the argument the realities of the gods he is advised to imitate (106), and again these realities will be rejected and higher values affirmed. It is such values that motivate Hippolytos and Phaidra throughout the play, and such values that the nurse—after she, too, has rejected the "vain myths" which only deceive men (197)—sees embodied momentarily in Aphrodite: "then Kypris is no god, but something greater, whatever that might be" (359–60).

But just as the bee has a dangerous duality, so, too, these characters are dangerous for themselves and for others because of what they are willing to do to realize their values. For there is always an ironic disjunction between the values a character professes to have and the qualities derivable from his actual deeds: the values come from the world of "ought to be" and are perhaps harmless if not noble and beautiful when viewed in isolation; the qualities, however, arise from the practical demands of transferring ideals into realities. And these qualities would seem to be worthy of anything but honor, reverence,

³³ Roloff, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.30) 63f.

or divinity. Each character is called haughty (*cf.* 103, 61, 490, 1064, 1364), and each demonstrates through deed or word that he deserves this ambiguous epithet.

Aphrodite displays her haughtiness throughout the prologue, and it may perhaps be seen most clearly in lines 5–6, where she states the quintessence of her philosophy: “those who honor me I honor; those who act arrogantly against me I overthrow.” Hippolytos, in verses 79–85, displays the same kind of intolerance against those who do not conform to his conception of *αἰδώς*, and he goes so far as to claim that he alone of mortals may properly hold communion with Artemis (84–86). A moment later, in the dialogue with his servant, Hippolytos will in effect accuse himself of haughtiness by refusing to pay homage to Aphrodite (88ff). It is this same self-righteousness which is most detestable to Theseus (1064) and which leads to his banishment and death. Thus, it is at once ironic and fitting for Hippolytos to call himself *κεμνός* in lines 1364f: ironic, because it was this very quality which caused his downfall; fitting, because it is uttered just moments before he will take his place in the pantheon of the gods. Phaidra displays an intolerance similar to that which Hippolytos displayed in lines 79–84. In verses 413–18 she addresses Kypris—just as before Hippolytos has addressed Artemis—and she condemns those who are *εὐφρων* in word but not deed, just as Hippolytos had condemned those who are reverent through nurture and not nature. And just as in lines 88ff Hippolytos has unknowingly condemned himself, so Phaidra’s words about false *εὐφροσύνη* will be used to condemn her in lines 661–68.

Each character is also vindictive and has destructive qualities. Aphrodite’s destructiveness is the subject of the chorus in lines 530–64 (*cf.* 443). She openly flaunts her vindictiveness in lines 21–22, where she says, “I will take vengeance on Hippolytos this very day.” Hippolytos’ destructive side is emphasized by Aphrodite in lines 17–19 and metaphorically by Theseus in lines 956–57. His own reaction to the servant’s friendly advice in verses 88ff reveals the same quality, the hunter’s bestiality (*cf.* 108–12),³⁴ and his vindictiveness is implicit in the tirade against Phaidra, especially in the climactic lines 661–65. If his vindictiveness in this passage is primarily psychological, Phaidra’s will be much more physically violent: in lines 682–84 she calls upon Zeus to blot out the nurse with his thunderbolt, and in verse 721 she promises

³⁴ *Cf.* Segal, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.27) 300.

to bring about Hippolytos' death, just as Artemis at the end of the play promises to reenact the wrath of Aphrodite by taking vengeance on some mortal whom Aphrodite loves (1420–22).

Thus far, Euripides has employed some of the traditional forms of *δμοίωσις θεῶν* to suggest that the motivations behind the actions of the human characters and the qualities arising from those actions compare closely with the motivations and qualities connected with the behavior of the gods in the play. There is, however, one other important aspect of behavior: the external restraints or laws which at least partially determine it. Traditionally, *δμοίωσις θεῶν* was never extended so completely as to encompass the *νόμοι*, to equate human with divine law, however natural such an extension might seem to us. As far as can be determined, it was Euripides who first conceived of this idea, probably not so much to innovate for the sake of innovation as to fulfill the technical task of suggesting the similarity of his human and divine characters in as thorough a way as possible.³⁵

In line 98 Hippolytos answers his servant's question with a conditional sentence: "yes, if the gods observe the same laws as men." What is here the protasis of a condition may also be taken as a kind of propositional statement to a hypothesis: "if the gods observe the same laws as men, then . . ." The play might then be viewed as the consequence of this supposition. But before the consequences can be considered the hypothesis itself must be proved. Certainly in this instance—whether a haughty man is as detestable in the eyes of the gods as in the eyes of men—the hypothesis will be confirmed. Aphrodite has already promised as much in the prologue (5–8), and the truth will be vividly demonstrated by the "double misfortune" of the haughty Phaidra and Hippolytos.

There are two other important laws of behavior which will be offered as proof of the hypothesis. The first law governing the behavior of mortals and gods has two forms. In the human frame it might be called the law of oath-keeping (*cf.* 611, 1033; 710–14, 804–05), and in the divine frame the law of non-intervention (*cf.* 1328–34).³⁶ Since the nature and effects of both forms are the same, they may be

³⁵ Pind. *fr.*169.1f (Schroeder) is probably not an earlier example, since *νόμος* there seems to mean 'custom', not 'law': see W. J. Slater, *Lexicon to Pindar* (Berlin 1969) *s.v.* *νόμος* 2. The closest parallel in traditional thought is probably the subordination of men and gods to *ἀνάγκη* (*cf.* H. W. Smyth, *Greek Melic Poets* [New York 1963] 316; H. Schrekenberg, *Ananke* [*Zetemata* 36, 1964] 72–81).

³⁶ Barrett's term, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.8) 401.

viewed as two manifestations of essentially the same law. In both frames the law binds a character to inaction. Hippolytos is sworn to an oath of secrecy before the nurse reveals to him the source of Phaidra's sickness, and Phaidra makes the Chorus swear a similar oath before she reveals her final plans. Both oaths will put the bound person or persons in the same position that Artemis is in during the course of the play: in possession of knowledge which, if revealed, could avert an otherwise inevitable disaster. So it is not surprising that in each case this law will be observed only with the greatest reluctance.³⁷ Hippolytos twice wavers (612, 1060–63), but each time he decides not to break the oath for the same reason that Artemis decides not to interfere: the consequences of breaking the law would cause more harm than good (cf. 656–58, 1062–63, 1331–34). This law has only disastrous results in the play, since it is a major cause of Theseus' blindness (cf. 1334ff).

The negative effects of the first law are counterbalanced by a second law, the law of reconciliation. Critics have pointed to the reconciliation of Hippolytos, Theseus and Phaidra near the end of the play, and have contrasted this with the seemingly unending, eternally unbreakable cycle of outrage and revenge that the gods appear to be caught up in.³⁸ It is important, however, to look closely at the way in which reconciliation is achieved in this scene, how Artemis maneuvers first Theseus and then Hippolytos to the point where their reconciliation is possible. Miss Matthaei thought that the method of reconciliation lay in a mutual recognition of the good of both conflicting parties.³⁹ But this, I think, is only a secondary cause. The first cause seems rather to lie in a mutual suffering of the same pain. This Artemis accomplishes in two dialogues, first with Theseus (1283–1341), where she "stings" him out of his painless blindness and makes him feel a mental anguish no less painful than Phaidra's or Hippolytos' physical suffering (cf. 1313, 1325, 1408, 1460), and then with Hippolytos (1389–1406),

³⁷ Because of the convention of choral oaths, the Chorus' oath is an exception and is kept without hesitation. See Barrett, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.8) 294.

³⁸ Cf. Knox, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 29ff, "we become aware of [the gods] as impersonal forces which act in a repetitive pattern, an eternal ordered dance of action and reaction. . . . From the law which governs their advance and retreat there can be no deviation . . . forgiveness is in fact unthinkable in such a context; it is possible only for human beings." Cf. Segal, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2) 154, "but the gods do not forgive, nor do they wish to be touched by human suffering . . . Artemis may provide the objective material out of which the humanity and forgiveness may grow, but in herself she is indifferent and remote . . ."

³⁹ Matthaei, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 105.

where she makes him appreciate the pain both Phaidra and Theseus have suffered (cf. 1403, 1407). So it should not be surprising that Artemis cannot yet be reconciled with Aphrodite: at present she can only surrender. For Artemis the tragedy is only half over; she is, so to speak, at the same stage at which Phaidra was when she decided to commit suicide and leave behind the fatal letter. Only after Aphrodite suffers the painful loss of one dear to her—if the gods observe the same laws as men—can reconciliation be possible, or even thinkable, for the two goddesses. Indeed, if we imagine for a moment that the goddesses had forgiven each other at the end of this play, I think we might then more properly speak of their impersonality, of their aloofness and remoteness from human suffering. As it is, though, the gods have followed the human pattern of reconciliation as far as is possible within the context of this play. Another play will be necessary to complete the pattern—just what Artemis has promised.

It would be wrong, too, to claim that Euripides could not think the “unthinkable” and depict more explicitly what is admittedly only implied in this play. In the prologue to the *Trojan Women*, for example, Athene appears on stage and sues Poseidon, her arch-enemy, for peace (lines 48–50).⁴⁰ This unexpected reconciliation is possible for the same reason that the reconciliation of the human characters was possible in the *Hippolytos*, because Athene, like Poseidon, has suffered pain at the hands of the Greeks: οὐκ οἶσθ' ὑβριθεῖσάν με καὶ ναοὺς ἐμούς; (69).

I stated at the beginning of this paper that a proper understanding of the play's portraiture has important implications for an interpretation of the meaning of the play. The question now naturally arises as

⁴⁰ John R. Wilson, “An Interpolation in the Prologue of Euripides' *Troades*,” *GRBS* 8 (1967) 205–23, believes that this part of the Prologue is an interpolation. Even if his technical arguments are sound, they do not imply that Euripides could not reverse his normal practice if the dramatic context would be better served. That the context is served better, or worse, by the scene is an interpretive problem which Wilson handles unconvincingly. E.-R. Schwinge, *Die Verwendung der Stichomythie in den Dramen des Euripides* (Heidelberg 1968) 112 n.97, is also unconvinced by Wilson's attack on the text. J. Fontenrose has contended Wilson's interpretation, and would keep the lines partly on the grounds that Poseidon and Athene were not enemies in the *Iliad* (“Poseidon in the *Troades*,” *ΑΓΩΝ* 1 [1967] 135–41). They were, however, traditional enemies in mythology, if not in the *Iliad*, so that it is not unthinkable for external reasons, and almost certain from the text itself, that the two gods are portrayed as arch-enemies in the play. On the traditional enmity of Poseidon and Athene see H. J. Rose, *A Handbook of Greek Mythology* (New York 1959) 68–69. In a series of “replies” and “responses to replies” the argument between Fontenrose and Wilson continues: Wilson, “Reply to ‘Poseidon in the *Troades*,’” *ΑΓΩΝ* 2 (1968) 66–68; Fontenrose, “A Response to Wilson's Reply on the *Troades*,” *ΑΓΩΝ* 2 (1968) 69–71.

to what those implications are. A detailed discussion of all implications would be out of place here, and is reserved for the future.⁴¹ At least this negative result can now be mentioned, that—if my interpretation of the characterization is correct—the meaning of the play is not to be found in an opposition of man and god.

The acceptance of my interpretation will depend in part on its plausibility, and so it is worthwhile to inquire briefly into the possible reason behind Euripides' employment of the principle of *concordia discors* in the *Hippolytos*. The principle has the advantage of solving two problems which Euripides faced in writing the play. The first problem, peculiar to the Hippolytos myth, was how to avoid an overly crude handling of the characters in the human frame, which would not only be distasteful to the audience but also preclude the possibility of real tragedy.⁴² By using the principle of *concordia discors*, Euripides could paint his characters with a complexity approaching reality, balanced enough not to suggest the personifications of a morality play. Secondly, the principle solves the problem of myth and reality, a general problem Euripides faced as a poet who always had to reconcile his materials, the traditional myths, with his own view of reality.⁴³ A major difficulty facing a poet of a realistic Greek tragedy was how to weave the gods into the play without disturbing the comprehensibility of the action in purely human terms. Euripides' solution to this problem was to parallel the motivations and laws of divine behavior with those controlling human behavior. As a result, though the gods are still not completely human, nor the humans completely divine, the difference between god and man in the play is at least quantitative rather than qualitative.⁴⁴

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⁴¹ The most important implication is the relationship of *concordia discors* to Peter Szondi's theory of *das Tragische*. See *Versuch über das Tragische* (Frankfurt/M. 1961), especially pp.60f ("Nur der Untergang ist tragisch, der aus der Einheit der Gegensätze, aus dem Umschlag des Einen in sein Gegenteil, aus der Selbstentzweiung erfolgt"). It was unfortunately impossible to develop the relationship in this paper, since that would have required a diachronic, not synchronic approach to the play.

⁴² See Barrett's excellent discussion of the dramatic advantages of the second *Hippolytos* over the first, in which Euripides apparently did not avoid this hazard; *op.cit.* (*supra* n.8) 14f.

⁴³ For a detailed discussion of the rôle of myth and reality in Euripides see J. C. Kamerbeek, "Mythe et réalité dans l'œuvre d'Euripide," *Entretiens Hardt* VI (Vandœuvres-Genève 1960) 1-25.

⁴⁴ Roloff, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.30) 17, makes this important distinction.