

The Order of Lines in *Hippolytus* 1452-56

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LINES 1452-57 stand thus in the manuscripts of the *Hippolytus*:

- 1452 ΘΗ. ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς γενναῖος ἐκφαίνει πατρί.
1453 ΙΠ. ὦ χαῖρε καὶ κύ, χαῖρε πολλά μοι πάτερ.
1454 ΘΗ. οἴμοι φρενὸς σῆς εὐσεβοῦς τε κάγαθῆς.
1455 ΙΠ. τοιῶνδε παίδων γνησίων εὐχου τυχεῖν.
1456 ΘΗ. μή νυν προδῶς με, τέκνον, ἀλλὰ καρτέρει.
1457 ΙΠ. κεκαρτέρηται τᾶμ' ὄλωλα γάρ, πάτερ.

Wilamowitz transposed 1454 and 1453 after 1455, giving the order 1452-5-4-3-6.¹ His reasons were (1) the ease of connection between *γενναῖος* and *γνήσιος*, (2) the naturalness of having Hippolytus' farewell of 1453 immediately precede Theseus' plea to Hippolytus not to die (1456), and (3) the difficulty, in the Ms. order, of having Theseus greet Hippolytus' announcement of his death with apparent approval (1454) and then of seeming to have Hippolytus revive in 1455 after the praise of 1454: "In tradito ordine cum alia absurda sint, tum Hippolyto mortem sibi instare significanti plaudit pater, filius ita laudatus paullulum reviviscit."² The transposition does indeed make the passage smoother, but it is not clear that smoothness was Euripides' aim, or that his taste was the same as Wilamowitz', especially as concerns points (2) and (3) above. Barrett regards the change as "certain," though he admits, "What caused the change is quite obscure." Like Wilamowitz, he is brief and dogmatic: "1453 ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σύ can follow only 1454, not 1452 (and ought to be Hipp.'s last utterance, save

¹ U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Analecta Euripidea* (Berlin 1875, repr. Hildesheim 1963) 220-21.

² *ibid.* 220.

for the final 1457–8); 1456 *μή νυν προδῶς με* belongs after 1453 not 1455; 1455 is better after 1452 (both concerned with behaviour towards Th.) than after 1454.”³

Though it may seem presumptuous to challenge the authority of scholars as distinguished as Wilamowitz and Barrett, it is worth remembering that no earlier editor, either ancient or modern, was troubled by the Ms. order of the lines. Kirchhoff, it is true, placed a lacuna of two lines after 1453, but his reason was the problem of the *χαῖρε καὶ κύ* of 1453 (see *infra*), not the order of the lines.⁴ Only a handful of editors have rejected Wilamowitz’ transposition;⁵ and now that it is enshrined in Barrett’s authoritative edition, it is likely to persist *plus uno saeclo*. Hence a reminder of the tenuity of the grounds for transposition is all the more in order.

One may easily grant that Wilamowitz’ transposition does indeed simplify the relation between 1452 and 1455. But is it as absolutely necessary as Wilamowitz and others have thought? The problem of *ὦ χαῖρε καὶ κύ* in 1453, with which many editors have grappled, is not lessened by the transposition *per se*, nor is Wilamowitz’ statement of the “absurdity” of the Ms. order entirely fair. *Οἴμοι* in 1454 hardly constitutes the action conveyed in Wilamowitz’ “plaudit.”⁶ As for the “revival” of Hippolytus (“paullulum reviviscit”), feeling on this point is a matter of taste. Surely it is not the praise which makes Hippolytus “revive,” as Wilamowitz’ scornful phrasing seems to imply. It is rather that Euripides has deliberately and painfully prolonged the death scene. Hippolytus (and the audience) must drain the bitter cup to the dregs. Not only is an innocent man to suffer, but he is to suffer a slow, drawn-out death. Lines 1454–55 (or 1453–54) could, in fact,

³ W. S. Barrett, *Euripides, Hippolytos* (Oxford 1964) *ad* 1453 (p.416).

⁴ A. Kirchhoff, *Euripidis Tragoediae* I (Berlin 1855). Valckenaer advocated the excision of 1454 because of its repetition of 1419 and 1452 (“Inprimis cum his eadem in eius laudem a patre suo loco [i.e. 1452] dicantur,” *Euripidis Tragoedia Hippolytus* [Leiden 1822] *ad loc.*).

⁵ These include A. Balsamo, *Euripides, Hippolytos* (Florence 1899–1900); A. Nauck (in the critical appendix of his Teubner ed. of Euripides, I³ [Leipzig 1876]); C. W. Willink, “Some Problems of Text and Interpretation in the *Hippolytus*,” *CQ* n.s. 18 (1968) 43 (who, however, emends 1453); and G. Ammendola in his school ed. of the play (Florence 1967), which I have been unable to consult. One may also mention I. H. Wheeler, *De Alcestidis et Hippolyti Euripidearum interpolationibus* (Diss. Bonn 1879) 62–63, who rejects the transposition, but excises 1453–54.

⁶ See Wheeler (preceding note) 63: “Sed magis etiam offendit me 1454. Num gaudii exclamatio est illud *οἴμοι*? An stuporis? Neutrum tolerari potest. Spurii sunt 1453, 1454, quibus expulsis omnia bene se habent.” Others, including myself, find nothing unnatural in the *οἴμοι*: see n.13 *infra*.

have been omitted entirely.⁷ But Euripides wrote them to give the knife one last twist in the wound and also (as we shall see) to ring one more change on the theme of Hippolytus' bastardy.

Line 1453, says Barrett (cited *supra*), "ought to be Hipp(olytus)' last utterance, save for the final 1457–8." But should a dying man know the exact moment at which he is going to expire? We have already noted the intensification of the pathos effected by the prolongation of Hippolytus' death agonies. These are stretched out for more than a hundred lines. Hippolytus states again and again that he is dead, and we do not feel that any of these remarks is exactly final. As early as 1397 he says that he no longer "exists." Just before our passage, in his very first line in the stichomythia, he declares that he "has perished" (ὄλωλα) and sees Hades' gates (1447). The verb is repeated in his penultimate line in the play (ὄλωλα γάρ, πάτερ, 1457), and the repetition provides a formal rounding off of the stichomythia: the short, intense exchange begins and ends with "I am dead" (ὄλωλα; cf. also 1408). The formal motif does not completely answer the arguments of Wilamowitz and Barrett, but it mitigates the necessity of regarding the farewell of 1453 as Hippolytus' closing remark in the stichomythia.

The Ms. placement of the line is also satisfactory for its relationship both to 1452 and 1454. It is not true that 1453 "can follow only 1454, not 1452" (Barrett, *supra*). Line 1452, ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς γενναῖος ἐκφαίνει πατρί, is enough of a laudatory farewell to motivate a corresponding farewell on Hippolytus' part and therefore to account for the καὶ κύ of 1453. Barrett remarks on 1453, "Here his [Theseus'] grief at losing Hipp(olytus) (1454) is near enough to a leave-taking for Hipp(olytus) to treat it as one." Barrett means, of course, 1453 as transposed immediately before 1456. But the statement is equally applicable to the Ms. order, for the same grief is reflected in 1452. Theseus recognizes in 1452 the greatness of his son, so nobly reflected in Hippolytus' final gesture of pardon (1449, 1451). To Hippolytus, long on the point of death, that recognition has the force of a farewell, a farewell which the father must be tactful of pronouncing as long as his son still has a spark of life in him. And let us recall that the gratitude expressed in 1452 refers to Hippolytus' absolution of his father from the stain of *his own death*. Theseus' words in 1452 are, by the very nature of the situation, a pronouncement on the final act of his son's life and are so understood by Hippolytus. Hippolytus, therefore, can naturally con-

⁷ As Wheeler (see preceding note) in fact maintained for 1453–54.

strue 1452 as the gesture of farewell that is expected but needs to be made very delicately. The lines in their preserved order indicate great tact and sensitivity on the part of the poet.

The problem of the *καί* of 1453 thus disappears, and we need not assume (with Barthold) that “you too” refers to Artemis,⁸ nor emend (with Nauck and others),⁹ nor posit a lacuna (with Kirchhoff). It remains possible, in fact likely, that there is also a reference to the formulas of funerary inscriptions, as Wilamowitz thought.¹⁰ But it is also clear, as Nauck, Barthold and Balsamo have pointed out, that Theseus cannot speak a formal farewell, for such a gesture would have the tactless effect of seeming to hurry the dying man on his way.¹¹ The Ms. order also suggests another touch of pathos in the juxtaposition of *χαίρε* and *οἴμοι*, the generous gesture of the dying and the keen grief of the survivor.

We perhaps like to think of death coming amid serenity and finding a man reconciled to his fate. Euripides’ Hippolytus disappoints our expectations. If we follow the Ms. order, his penultimate statement (omitting, that is, 1457–58) is not a gentle “Farewell, father, farewell,” (1453), but the somewhat embittered “Pray to find your legitimate sons such (as I)” (1455). This line, left in its original position, is an acknowledgment of Theseus’ praise of 1454, but an acknowledgment which also grasps the painful truth of the tragic waste of his present condition. It expresses a degree of incrimination of reality, not reconciliation with it; and such a gesture is also in keeping with the tone of the play as a whole.

There is another consideration, admittedly subjective, favoring the Ms. order of 1453–54. Theseus’ groan, *οἴμοι*, marks his sharpest, most

⁸ T. Barthold, *Ausgewählte Tragödien des Euripides IV, Hippolytus* (Berlin 1880) *ad* 1453. Barthold’s view is adequately refuted by Balsamo (*supra* n.5) *ad loc.*; and one may add that Hippolytus has already taken his farewell of Artemis in the *χαίρουσα καὶ σύ* of 1440, answering the goddess’ *καὶ χαίρε(ε)* of 1437.

⁹ See the conjectures collected in the critical appendix of Nauck’s ed. (*supra* n.5). To these may be added the transposition of words within 1453 suggested by Willink, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 43. For the problems involved see also Wheeler, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 62–63.

¹⁰ Wilamowitz, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.1) 220–21, and also in his commentary to his translation, *Euripides, Hippolytos*, griech. und deutsch (Berlin 1891) *ad loc.* (p.242): “Wer die grabsteine kennt, wird die antwort *ὦ χαίρε καὶ σύ* einfach und rührend finden.” Wilamowitz’ view is rejected, however, by Barthold (*supra* n.8) in his “Kritischer Anhang,” p.177.

¹¹ Barthold, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.8) *ad loc.*: “. . . Es würde so klingen, als könne der Vater den Moment des Abscheidens nicht erwarten . . .” Balsamo, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) *ad loc.*: “. . . Ma giustamente osservò il Nauck che non si diceva mai addio ad un morente, perchè questo era in qualche modo uno spingerlo ad andarsene.”

expressive moment of pain.¹² It should, therefore, be preceded by the line of Hippolytus most capable of evoking a direct emotional response. That line is 1453, with its *χαῖρε . . . χαῖρε*, words which underline the vividness of Hippolytus' imminent death.¹³

The Ms. order of 1454 and 1455 is also satisfactory as it stands. Since Hippolytus swore by Artemis a few lines before (1451) to free Theseus of the stain of blood, a reference to his piety in 1454 is in sufficiently close proximity to 1451 to be readily understandable. The initial *οἴμοι* of 1454 refers to the suggested imminence of Hippolytus' death in 1453, while the rest of the line refers back to 1451 and not (as Wilamowitz thought) to the rather arrogant 1455 transposed. Lines 1452 and 1454 in the Ms. order are thus parallel responses to Hippolytus' oath of 1451. The preceding scene offers a close analogy to this kind of parallel construction in stichomythia. Lines 1397 and 1399, like 1452 and 1454, both contain coordinate and equivalent statements of a single idea, even though a remark of the interlocutor, Artemis, has intervened.

We come next to the relation between 1455 and 1456. There is a dramatic consideration favoring the contiguity of 1455 and 1456 as they stand in the Mss., which transposition quite destroys. *Μή νυν προδῶς με* (1456) reflects a fairly common formula in death scenes, meaning, "Do not leave me" ("ne se deserat rogat [Theseus]," paraphrases Wilamowitz).¹⁴ But *προδίδωμι* in the proper sense of 'betray' has been an important word in the play (cf. 305, 590, 591, 595), and one may wonder whether it does not carry some of the meaning of actual 'betrayal' here. Theseus might well be uneasy about such 'betrayal', i.e. Hippolytus' breaking of his oath of 1449–51, and all the more so after Hippolytus' reference to "legitimate sons" in 1455. Legitimacy has been a delicate matter in the play and a subtle but significant point in Hippolytus' psychology: cf. 308–10, 926–63, 1010–18, 1082–83. It is worth quoting from Barrett's excellent note on the last passage: "This protest against his *νοθεία* is prompted by Th.'s reference to his filial duty . . . Dramatically, in fact, the outburst is unmotivated—the

¹² Compare *Alc.* 379–80 and *Hec.* 418–19.

¹³ Balsamo, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5), seems to have appreciated the relation of 1453–54: ". . . Bisogna lasciare il v. 1454 dopo il v. 1453, poichè *ὄμοι* [*sic*] è il grido del dolore, che deve seguire all'addio del v. 1453" (in his "Appendice critica ed esegetica," II.254).

¹⁴ Wilamowitz, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.1) 220; see also *Alc.* 202, 250, 275. But in the *Alcestis* too the theme of 'betrayal' and the verb *προδίδωμι* become important at the end: line 1096, *θάνομι' ἐκείνην καίπερ οὐκ οὔσαν προδούς*.

νοθεία is wholly irrelevant to the action of the play; presumably therefore Eur.'s purpose is to throw subtle light on Hipp.'s psychology for its own sake, to suggest this feeling of inferiority, of otherness, as what lies behind his urge to establish himself in compensation as a paragon of virtues that common man [*sic*] cannot share. No word again of the *νοθεία* till the very end: when this self-same feeling finds expression once more as he dies (1455)."¹⁵

It is possible, of course, that *μή νυν προδώς με* means only "Do not leave me" and nothing more. But, given the previously strained relations between father and son and the insecurity of Theseus reflected in 1448 and 1450, it is not implausible to detect a real concern about 'betrayal', or at least a hint at that concern, in 1456. In any event, there is a greater and more characteristically Euripidean emotional climax if Hippolytus nears his end with a line which calls up all the bitterness and resentment which the bastard son has felt all his life. And even if Theseus does mean only "Do not leave me," there is an ominous suggestiveness in having that statement come at just this point and in just this form. Euripides could have found a more neutral verb to express departure than *προδίδωμι*. Such considerations can hardly constitute proof, of course, but they perhaps point to dramatic possibilities in the existing Ms. order which Wilamowitz and his followers overlook.

There is another dramatic consideration in the connection between lines 1455–56 as they stand in the Mss., that is, the movement from Hippolytus' *παίδων γνησίων* to Theseus' *τέκνον*. This is a small but poignant touch. It stresses the strength of the blood tie and the filial bond despite the absence of the formal recognition of legitimacy. Hippolytus' *πάτερ* at the end of the next line (1457) continues this insistence on the basic bond of blood that the two men here rediscover.

The importance of the sequence 1455–6–7 becomes even clearer when we reflect on Euripides' careful presentation of the relationships between parents and children throughout the play. Phaedra's relation to her parents (337–43), Hippolytus' to his Amazon mother (1082), and Theseus' to Poseidon (1169–70) are foils to the central relationship between Theseus and Hippolytus. Just after and just before the news of Phaedra's death, Theseus expresses concern for his *τέκνα* (799, 847), as Phaedra had done at the critical moment for hers

¹⁵ Barrett, *ad loc.* (p.363). See also W. Schmid in Schmid-Stählin, *GGL* I.3 (Munich 1940) p.383 with n.2.

(717; *cf.* 308–10, 314–15). In the turbulent first scene between father and son Hippolytus had begun, naturally enough, with the address *πάτερ* (902). For almost forty lines, however, Theseus refuses to address him at all (909–46; *cf.* 1038–40). He refers to him only by the studied periphrasis, *ὅστις ἐξ ἐμοῦ γεγώς* (943). Similarly, at the news of Hippolytus' fatal mishap, Theseus speaks of his son merely as *ἀνδρὸς τοῦ πεπονθότος τάδε* (1257). Here, initially pleased at the news out of 'hatred' for the victim (1257), Theseus agrees to be neither pleased nor pained *οὐνεκ' ἔστιν ἐξ ἐμοῦ* (1259). In this last line, where the conviction of Hippolytus' alleged crime against his father is still firm, Theseus again refuses him any close term of kinship. It is only in the exodos, as father and son rediscover one another, that Theseus again calls Hippolytus *τέκνον*, now for the first time in the play (1408, 1446, 1456).¹⁶ To return to 1456, there is, therefore, a special point and a heightened pathos in the combination of legitimacy, 'betrayal', and the terms of address in the juxtaposition of 1455 and 1456.

There remains in favor of the transposition the word-play between *γενναῖος* and *γνησίων* in 1452 and 1455.¹⁷ Yet it is by no means certain that this should be the decisive criterion, for the word-play can still be operative, albeit less vividly, if two lines intervene. The chief advantages of the Ms. order which I have sought to defend are the juxtaposition of Hippolytus' farewell in 1453 with Theseus' cry of grief, *οἴμοι*, in 1454; the harsher, unreconciled, unsentimental tone of Hippolytus' last moments if 1455 stays where it is; the sequence of Hippolytus' reference to his illegitimacy and Theseus' uneasiness about 'betrayal' in 1455–56; and the emotionally taut and thematically significant movement between *παίδων γνησίων—τέκνον—πάτερ* in 1455–56–57.¹⁸ These considerations seem to me to outweigh the reasons hitherto advanced for changing the Ms. order of the lines.

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¹⁶ Note also Artemis' address to Theseus as *τέκνον Αἰγέως* in 1431, and the theme of destroying *τέκνα* in 1341.

¹⁷ Wilamowitz, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.10) 242, regarded the word play as the factor "welches übrigen die richtige ordnung der verse am deutlichsten zeigt."

¹⁸ To this point we may add another formalistic criterion: the symmetry between 1452 and 1453, each beginning with the interjection *ὦ* followed by a word of trochaic shape (*ὦ φίλταθ*, *ὦ χαῖρε* and ending with "father" (*πατρί, πάτερ*). On the other hand, those who accept the transposition could argue that Euripides was seeking to avoid such symmetry. In this stichomythia, given the close repetition between 1452 and 1454 and the echo *καρ-τέρει—κεκατέρηται* in 1457, such symmetry seems natural and appropriate.