

# Three Deletions in Euripides' *Ion*

Gunther Martin

THE TRIMETER SECTIONS in Euripides' *Ion*, as scholars have noted, may contain more spurious text than has yet been identified.<sup>1</sup> In what follows, I make three suggestions for deletion, partly anticipated long ago but rejected by the 20<sup>th</sup>-century editors, partly new (so far as I am aware).

## I. Lines 1398–1400

In the *exodos*, Creusa gives up her supplication after she has recognized the basket in which she had exposed her son. In the transmitted text she calls Ion her son and explains why she leaves her secure position at the altar:<sup>2</sup>

KP. τί δήτα φάσμα τῶν ἀνελπίστων ὄρω; 1395  
ΙΩΝ σίγα σύ· πῆμα καὶ πάροιθεν ἦσθά μοι.<sup>3</sup>  
KP. οὐκ ἐν σιωπῇ τὰμά· μή με νουθέτει.  
ὄρω γὰρ ἄγγος ᾧ ἔξέθηκ' ἐγὼ ποτε  
σέ γ', ᾧ τέκνον μοι, βρέφος ἔτ' ὄντα νήπιον,  
Κέκροπος ἐς ἄντρα καὶ Μακρὰς πετρηρεφείς. 1400

<sup>1</sup> M. D. Reeve, "Interpolation in Greek tragedy, III," *GRBS* 14 (1973) 145–171, at 151; D. L. Page, *Actors' Interpolations in Greek tragedy. Studied with special reference to Euripides' Iphigeneia in Aulis* (Oxford 1934) 72, expresses surprise that there should be relatively few histrionic interpolations in the play.

<sup>2</sup> The text I give is from Diggle's OCT (1981). I cite the following commentaries of the play (partly in *opera omnia*) by authors' names only: H. Grégoire (Paris 1923), K. H. Lee (Warminster 1997), A. S. Owen (Oxford 1939), U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (Berlin 1926).

<sup>3</sup> The text of this line is highly problematic and probably needs *crucis*. However, the content of the first half is sufficiently clear from 1397, and the rest can be left as Diggle gives it without much impact on the present question.

- λείψω δὲ βωμὸν τόνδε, κεῖ θανεῖν με χρή.  
 ΙΩΝ λάζυσθε τήνδε· θεομανῆς γὰρ ἦλατο  
 βωμοῦ λιποῦσα ξόανα· δεῖτε δ' ὠλένας.  
 CR. What unexpected sight is it that I am seeing?  
 ΙΩΝ Be quiet. You have already been a pain to me before.  
 CR. Silence is not what helps me now. Don't lecture me.  
 For I see the basket in which I once exposed none other  
 than you, my dear child, when you were still a small infant,  
 in the caves of Cecrops and the Makrai, roofed by rocks.  
 I will leave this altar, even if I have to die.  
 ΙΩΝ Arrest her. Driven by a god she has leapt away  
 and left the statues of the altar. Bind her arms.

1396 σίγα L. Dindorf, πῆμα Broadhead, ἦσθα Musgrave, σιγᾶν σύ  
 πολλὰ καὶ πάροιθεν οἶσθα μοι cod. 1398 ᾧ 'ξέθηκ' Barnes, ὃ 'ξέθηκ'  
 cod. 1399 del. Cobet 1400 del. Paley

Ion does not seem to realize what Creusa says in lines 1398–1400. In his first reaction in 1402 he mentions only the fact that Creusa is now no longer protected by the altar; her clear statement regarding their relationship does not cause him to express any astonishment. This cannot be explained as Ion concentrating on the business at hand. For shortly after this section it becomes clear that he is not just ignoring Creusa's claim to be his mother (be it part of *θεομανία* or not) but unaware of it:<sup>4</sup>

- ΚΡ. σοῖς φίλοισιν εὐρίσκη φίλος. 1406  
 ΙΩΝ ἐγὼ φίλος σός; κατὰ μ' ἔκτεινες λάθρα;  
 CR. You are found dear to those who are dear to you.  
 ΙΩΝ I dear to you? And then you tried stealthily to kill me?

Ion is surprised that Creusa calls herself “dear” (or “a friend”) to him and protests sharply—a strange contrast to his coolness when she uses the word *τέκνον* in 1399. Creusa explains the

<sup>4</sup> That the lines are an aside and not heard by Ion (Lee, similarly W. Biehl, “Textprobleme in Euripides' Ion. Bemerkungen zu Versumfang und Personenverteilung innerhalb der Sprechpartien,” *Philologus* 136 [1992] 14–30, at 29) can be ruled out because of the emphatic ᾧ *τέκνον μοι* and the declarative tone of 1397 and 1401.

use of the word “dear” by stating her relation to him. Now Ion’s reaction is prompt and determined:

- KP. *παῖς γ’, εἰ τόδ’ ἐστὶ τοῖς τεκοῦσι φίλτατον.*  
 ION *παῦσαι πλέκουσα – λήφομαί σ’ ἐγώ – πλοκάς.* 1410  
 CR. Yes, since you are my child—I guess that is what is most dear to one’s parents.  
 ION Stop weaving wiles—I’ll catch you out!

Not only is the double declaration (1399, 1409) of Creusa’s motherhood awkward; the different reactions on Ion’s part, total disregard versus immediate suspicion, are psychologically unconvincing. If Ion has heard Creusa use the word *τέκνον* and the statement that she was the one who exposed him, the sardonic scepticism following *φίλος* is implausible, for that would be a natural claim by a mother.

By contrast, no information or dramatic movement is lost if we delete the mention of Ion’s exposure in 1398–1400. In contrast to Ion, the audience has no problem following events on stage. Line 1395 shows that the first half of the mutual recognition has taken place and motivates Creusa’s action sufficiently: she has immediately realized that Ion is her son and so understands that silence is not the right response to the situation. Only Ion is puzzled by the sudden change in her behavior and attributes it to supernatural causes.

The deletion of all three lines thus restores a dramatically effective and coherent text—without any loss of information or necessary elements of the plot. It has the additional effect of removing lines that, although not obviously corrupt, have individually given rise to various objections.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For example, the transmitted text of 1398 (*ὃ ἐξέθηκε*) leaves *σέ* without a straightforward syntactical connection and has led to Cobet’s deletion. A possibility suggested by Biehl, *Philologus* 136 (1992) 29, is a dash after 1398: “das Gefäß—nein vielmehr dich selbst.” Similarly Grégoire translates: “Car je vois la corbeille où jadis j’exposai un enfant nouveau-né—ah! mon fils, c’était toi!,” producing a version by which the “correcting” *γε* (with *σέ*) precedes what it corrects (*βρέφος*). For this (not epexegetic!) use of *γε* in self-correction I find no parallel. Alternatives may be *μᾶλλον δέ γε* (e.g. Ar.

It also solves a problem later in the text: Creusa says ἀνθέξομαι / καὶ τῆσδε καὶ σοῦ τῶν τε σῶν κεκρυμμένων (1404–1405).<sup>6</sup> Most naturally, this is interpreted as a claim on the basket, the boy, and the recognition tokens, all of which belonged to Creusa when she abandoned her child. However, the word used for the basket at its last mention was ἄγγος in 1398. So no matter whether Creusa refers back to ἄγγος or uses a deictic without a specific antecedent, we would expect τοῦδε.<sup>7</sup> With 1398–1400 gone, the last reference to the basket is Ion's ἀντίπηγος εὐκύκλου in 1391. The pronoun then has the gender we would expect.

The deletion removes all the problems while leaving the action perfectly understandable. The interpolation should be regarded as one that makes the motive for Creusa's sudden surrender explicit and heightens the pathos by reminding the audience of the exposure of the infant.

## II. Line 647

After the first (false) recognition of the play Xuthus invites his newly found (putative) son to accompany him from Delphi to Athens. Ion at first rejects that offer stating that he will face hostility from various sides if he goes to Athens, while the sanctuary of Apollo provides him with the opportunity to lead an ideal, peaceful life. Ion sums up his argument and asks

*Vesp.* 1485) or καὶ σέ γε, cf. J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford 1954) 158. Diggle follows Barnes in substituting ᾤ, in parallel with 1413: σά γ' ἔνδυθ', οἷσί σ' ἐξέθηκ' ἐγώ ποτε. However, in 1398 the nature of the dative remains obscure, while 1413 can be explained, with Wilamowitz, as ἔνδυθ', οἷς <ἔνδυτον>.

<sup>6</sup> This is the text of the codex. Diggle adopts Tyrwhitt's τῶν τ' ἔσω, but this has no bearing on the problem as we agree upon the meaning of τῆσδε.

<sup>7</sup> C. H. Whitman, "Two Passages in the *Ion* of Euripides," *CP* 59 (1964) 257–259, tries to explain τῆσδε as the Pythia and translates "I will dispute the position, both with this woman and with you too, of those things" (γε for τε before σῶν). But he misinterprets his parallel *Ar. Av.* 1658, where the second genitive is possessive (if it is not replaced, as in recent editions, with a dative). The Pythia has left after καὶ χαῖρ' in 1363, and it may be hard for an audience to identify her as the female or feminine referred to.

Xuthus to allow him to stay in Delphi:

ταῦτα συννοούμενος

κρείσσω νομίζω τὰνθάδ' ἢ τὰκεῖ, πάτερ. 645  
 ἔα δέ μ' αὐτοῦ ζῆν· ἴση γὰρ ἡ χάρις  
 μεγάλοισι χαίρειν σμικρά θ' ἠδέως ἔχειν.

Taking all these points into consideration  
 I believe things here are better than in Athens, father.  
 Let me live here: it is equally pleasurable  
 to take delight in the big and to enjoy the small.

646 δέ μ' αὐτοῦ Badham, δ' ἐμαντῶ cod.

“Big” Athens with Xuthus’ riches and power is equated to the modesty of Ion’s current existence in Delphi.<sup>8</sup> The contrast to sentiments expressed earlier in the same speech is striking: the life of power and wealth has been described as full of terror, the opposite of delight (630–632), whereas life in Delphi has been characterized in terms that let it appear as pure *χάρις* (633–644). So the amount of pleasure to be expected in Athens is actually much smaller than in Delphi.

David Kovacs has deleted lines 621–632, which includes the horrid description of life as a tyrant and the additional inquietude that money brings with it. If we accept that deletion, there has been no reference to riches at all in this speech.<sup>9</sup> In that case the contrast in the last line introduces a new argument—the relative value money has for one’s happiness—in the briefest possible way, which does not allow it to gain persuasive force. In either case *ἴση χάρις* taken as “equal delight/pleasure” does not go well with *κρείσσω νομίζω τὰνθάδ' ἢ τὰκεῖ*, which also stresses the superiority of Delphi over Athens and makes the last line appear as undercutting Ion’s own argu-

<sup>8</sup> For the sentiment cf. Men. *PCG* 843.

<sup>9</sup> D. Kovacs, “Four Passages from Euripides’ *Ion*,” *TAPA* 109 (1979) 111–124, at 116–124; the same suggestion is made independently by K. Alt, “Ion und die Tyrannis. Zu Euripides *Ion* V. 621–632,” in Ch.-F. Collatz (ed.), *Dissertationunculae criticae. Festschrift für Günther Christian Hansen* (Würzburg 1998) 23–32.

ments. So the last sentence should be rejected.

However, the start of 646 is indispensable as conclusion and final appeal to Xuthus; that means that the second half of the line cannot be deleted without assuming a lacuna. But if the interpretation is changed, ἴση γὰρ ἢ χάρις can remain in the text: “the delight (χάρις) is the same” requires the explanatory infinitives, but “this is just as big a favor (χάρις)” does not. The sentence is then a close parallel to *Hipp.* 508, δευτέρα γὰρ ἢ χάρις: there a hierarchy of favors is established, whilst in the *Ion* it is denied. Line 647 is then a typical interpolated explanation, supposed to help the reader understand Euripides’ precise formulation but in reality altering the meaning.<sup>10</sup>

With 647 removed *Ion* appears as polite as at the start of the speech.<sup>11</sup> He does not discredit the father’s invitation as unwelcome or against his interest. Instead, he emphasizes that Xuthus would not be ungenerous if he left his son behind. Xuthus believes he is doing something good to his son by taking him to Athens and liberating him from slavery, but *Ion* makes it clear that he (*Ion*) would appreciate the permission (ἔα) to stay in Delphi and regard it as a favor.

The logic of γὰρ in 646 thus becomes more stringent: it is not the case that *Ion* asks to stay “because” staying is as good as living in Athens. Instead, the particle refers to ἔα μ’: allowing him to stay would be a favor; and that favor would be just as great as making him his son and giving him a home.

### III. Lines 612–620

Another passage earlier in the same speech may be worth considering as interpolation, as both the train of thought and

<sup>10</sup> Compare, for example, the undoubtedly interpolated *Or.* 916, 1024, or, syntactically more similar, *Hel.* 764, deleted by Kirchhoff, who is followed by Dale and Diggle.

<sup>11</sup> At the start *Ion* shows he is highly considerate towards Xuthus in his attempt not to offend his father while declining his invitation (587–589): ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν μὲν συμφορὰν ἀσπάζομαι, / πατέρα σ’ ἀνευρών· ὧν δὲ γιγνώσκω, πάτερ, / ἄκουσον.

the language are not beyond doubt. Lines 616–617 have long been disputed,<sup>12</sup> but there may be a case for more extended scrutiny. Ion has mentioned that—being a bastard son of a non-autochthonous Athenian—he will be derided as a nobody by the public. As to his stepmother Creusa, she will hate him:

ἔλθων δ' ἐς οἶκον ἀλλότριον ἔπηλυσ ὦν  
 γυναικά θ' ὡς ἄτεκνον, ἢ κοινουμένη  
 τῆς συμφορᾶς σοι πρόσθεν ἀπολαχοῦσα νῦν  
 αὐτὴ καθ' αὐτὴν τὴν τύχην οἴσει πικρῶς, 610  
 πῶς [δ'] οὐχ ὑπ' αὐτῆς εἰκότως μισήσομαι,  
 ὅταν παραστῶ σοι μὲν ἐγγύθεν ποδός,  
 ἢ δ' οὐσ' ἄτεκνος τὰ σὰ φίλ' εἴσορᾶ πικρῶς,  
 κατ' ἢ προδοῦς σύ μ' ἐς δάμαρτα σὴν βλέπῃς  
 ἢ τὰμὰ τιμῶν δῶμα συγχέας ἔχῃς; 615  
 ὅσας σφαγὰς δὴ φαρμάκων <τε> θανασίμων  
 γυναικες ἦϋρον ἀνδράσιν διαφθοράς.  
 ἄλλως τε τὴν σὴν ἄλοχον οἰκτίρω, πάτερ,  
 ἄπαιδα γηράσκουσιν· οὐ γὰρ ἀξία  
 πατέρων ἀπ' ἐσθλῶν οὐσ' ἀπαιδία νοσεῖν. 620

And when I come to the house of strangers, myself a foreigner,  
 and to your childless wife, who—previously sharing  
 her sorrow with you but now on her own with it—  
 will feel bitterly the fate she must bear by herself,  
 how will I not incur her hatred, and naturally so,  
 when I stand near you, right by your foot,  
 and she gives bitter looks to your dear son and when  
 you then either abandon me, having regard to your wife instead,  
 or honor me and thereby destroy your family?  
 How many ways of murdering and death by fatal poison  
 have women found for men!  
 Besides, I pity your wife, father,  
 when she ages in childlessness. She is undeserving,

<sup>12</sup> For the main arguments see W. Kraus, “Textkritische Erwägungen zu Euripides’ Ion,” *WS* 102 (1989) 35–110, at 62. The suspicion and hostile attitude in it contrast strangely with the sympathy towards Creusa in the rest of the passage.

because of her noble ancestry, to suffer from barrenness.

610 *αὐτῇ* Ald., *αὐτῆν* cod. 611 δ' del. Canter 612–613 *suspectos* habuit Nauck 614–615 del. Nauck 616–617 del. L. Dindorf, <τε> add. Heath/Tyrwhitt 620 del. Nauck; *ἀπαιδίᾳ* L. Dindorf, *ἀπαιδίαν* cod.

Before Xuthus discovered his son, Creusa did not have to cope with her childlessness all by herself. Instead she had her husband as a companion who halved her problem and suffering by sharing them. With the intruder in Creusa's house and Xuthus no longer in the same position she would be alone in her misery and (as a natural consequence) hate the person responsible for it.

Up through line 611 there are no difficulties. The text is syntactically complete and contains all the necessary information; the situation has been sufficiently described. Line 612 introduces another indication of time, parallel to *ἔλθῶν* in 608. This temporal clause, while seeming to repeat the idea of "entering into Creusa's house," takes that idea more literally than seems appropriate: *ἔλθῶν δ' ἐς οἶκον ἀλλότριον* does not mean "to enter the space strangers dwell in," but "to enter into strangers' household and family." This is in line with the emphasis on inheritance and racial purity in the rest of the speech and play and balances the thought that the Athenians will reject him as ignoble (592). This aspect of Creusa's hatred is forgotten in the *ὅταν*-clause, which focuses solely on Creusa's jealousy as she alone remains childless. The situation is narrowed down to her feelings when she sees Ion next to Xuthus.<sup>13</sup> This restriction turns out to be unnecessary, as Creusa reacts strongly when she hears of Xuthus' plans (cf. 864–865).

The sequence of events is also peculiar: first Ion stands next to his father, then Xuthus decides to back either Ion or Creusa, and only then does Creusa hate. The disruption of the house

<sup>13</sup> One might even wish to take the aorist in 612 as the description of a single action: the moment when Ion is introduced to Creusa. But at this moment in the play, Ion must assume that he is declared Xuthus' son even before he goes to Athens (that changes only in 654). So the situation envisaged would even contradict the situation in the play.



(being still part of the sub-clause) precedes Creusa's hatred, even though it should be its consequence. What is more, Creusa's hatred develops even in case Xuthus abandons Ion in her favor. In order to restore a more plausible sequence of thoughts we would need to bring lines 614–615 to the same syntactic level as 611, but the form ἔχῃς cannot be turned into a metrically fitting future tense.

The formulation παραστῶ σοὶ μὲν ἐγγύθεν ποδός is doubly unique in Euripides' tragedies: the poet employs the periphrasis “your foot” for “you,”<sup>14</sup> but the present usage does not seem to have parallels; instead we would expect an expression like ποδί σου. A second irregularity should prevent us from explaining the transmitted version as a free one-off formation by analogy: the use of ἐγγύθεν as a preposition<sup>15</sup> is not tragic, not even classical. In archaic poetry I find four, partly doubtful, instances.<sup>16</sup> In the other occurrences in fifth- and fourth-century literature, ἐγγύθεν is always used as an adverb, never as a preposition.<sup>17</sup> The Hellenistic poets revive the construction (e.g.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Cyc.* 6, *Hipp.* 661, *Or.* 1217, *IA* 627.

<sup>15</sup> I see no possibility of a different construction: adverbial ἐγγύθεν (in analogy with ἐγγύς παρεστώς in *Alc.* 1011) leaves ποδός without a syntactic connection.

<sup>16</sup> Hom. *Il.* 11.723, Simonides *Anth.Gr.* 16.26, Solon fr.28 W., and Theognis 1.943. The four-line epigram of Simonides is said by D. L. Page, *Further Greek Epigrams*<sup>2</sup> (Cambridge 1981) 189, to be of “indeterminable” date. There cannot be much more confidence about the authenticity of the later part of “Theognis” first book. The fragment of Solon consists of a single line (Νείλου ἐπὶ προχοῇσι Καναβίδος ἐγγύθεν ἀκτῆς), said by Plutarch to describe the poet's voyage to Egypt. Which poem this is from is unknown (but cf. M. R. Lefkowitz, *The Lives of the Greek Poets* [Baltimore 1981] 44).

<sup>17</sup> Of the instances of genitive in the proximity of ἐγγύθεν in tragedy, Aesch. *Sept.* 973 is corrupt, cf. G. O. Hutchinson, *Aeschylus: Septem contra Thebas* (Oxford 1985) ad loc.; M. L. West, *Studies in Aeschylus* (Stuttgart 1990) 123–124. In Eur. *Ion* 586 ἐγγύθεν is clearly an adverb. The same applies to Aesch. *Cho.* 852 εἴτ' αὐτὸς ἦν θνήσκοντος ἐγγύθεν παρών, “standing near as [genitive absolute] he was dying”; the adverbial ἐγγύθεν describes παρών, cf. Soph. *OT* 1259.

Theoc. *Id.* 7.112, Arat. *Phaen.* 181), perhaps regarding the single Homeric occurrence as an oddity worth copying.<sup>18</sup> A later interpolator, using Euripidean diction such as *ποῦς*, would thus not feel that he is writing something that is not in line with poetic diction. In any case, the formulation should be regarded as dubious on two independent grounds.

Deleting lines 612–617 would not only avoid these oddities and anomalies but yield additional advantages. Ion would not be uncourteous to Xuthus, as he is if the text is genuine: the periphrastic construction implies that Xuthus himself will cause the disruption of his family.<sup>19</sup> This straightforward imputation against Xuthus—reaffirmed by *προδοῦς*—would be untypical for Ion, who deals with his father in a highly polite manner (see above on 644–646). In addition, Ion's point is formulated much more forcefully if the sentence ends with the question rather than a long-winded and clumsy temporal clause.

This change would also agree well with the deletion of lines 595–606 by David Kovacs (in addition to the ones mentioned above). His objections are based on considerations of context and linguistic irregularities and should be accepted.<sup>20</sup> In that case, the sections in which Ion deals with the hostility of the autochthonous Athenian public and from Creusa move closer

<sup>18</sup> This instance is the only one of this construction in Homer as opposed to eight for *ἐγγύθεν* + dative in *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (and one in the *Hymn to Demeter*) and eleven for *ἐγγύθι* + genitive.

<sup>19</sup> W. J. Aerts, *Periphrastica. An Investigation into the Use of εἶναι and ἔχειν as Auxiliaries or Pseudo-auxiliaries in Greek from Homer up to the Present Day* (Amsterdam 1965) 144.

<sup>20</sup> The deletions have not met with the attention they deserve. Diggle does not seem to know them in his 1981 edition; Lee 225–226, 229–230, and K. Zacharia, *Converging Truths. Euripides' Ion and the Athenian Quest for Self-definition* (Leiden/Boston 2003) 23–24, defend the passages on rather general grounds, showing what seems reconcilable with the drama rather than explaining the linguistic problems (e.g. *τε* and the infinitive in 598, *λήψομαι* in 600, and the construction of *ἐκνικᾶν* in 629). These problems, however, as well as the inconsistency within the passage (Ion is envisaged first as a despised outsider, then as a democratic politician, and finally as a monarch) and with the rest of the scene need to be taken seriously.

together (which tightens Ion's argument). Moreover, *πῶς οὐχ ... μισησομαι* in 611 then corresponds with *κεκλήσομαι* at the end of the first section of the speech—and it may even be tempting to supplement <*πῶς οὐ τὸ*> *μηδὲν κούδένων κεκλήσομαι* in 594. In this way, both sections are of equal length and end on a sharp rhetorical question, further emphasized by homoeoteleuton: a very pointed formulation appropriate for the persuasive effect aimed at in the speech.

If these lines are rejected, then 618–620 presumably have to go, too. The loss would not be great. The introduction with *ἄλλως τε* signals an addition: another reason why Ion would prefer not to go to Athens.<sup>21</sup> But this is not what these lines give. Ion's sympathy with Creusa has been expressed, albeit implicitly, in 608–610: she was unhappy before as a consequence of her barrenness, but now she is left alone with her calamity. Her husband seems to react to this passage in 657–658: *καὶ γὰρ γυναῖκα τὴν ἐμὴν οὐ βούλομαι / λυπεῖν ἄτεκνον οὐσάν αὐτὸς εὐτυχῶν*. Lines 618–620, though more explicit, are not alluded to in a similar way. Ion has brought his point across by the earlier subtle remark. The idea that old age or Creusa's noble birth may aggravate the problem is not recalled by Xuthus and seems irrelevant.

Moreover, the connection of this passage with the next genuine one (633–646, if we follow Kovacs) is clearer without the three intervening lines 618–620. Ion has two arguments against living in Athens: public derision and private hatred. This is contrasted with the blessings of life in Delphi. If we retain the three lines, Ion's description of his wonderful life in Apollo's sanctuary (introduced in 633: *ἃ δ' ἐνθάδ' εἶχον ἀγάθ' ἄκουσόν μου, πάτερ*) follows the somber mention of his pity for the aging and lonely Creusa. If we reject the lines, Ion's blissful life at Delphi is directly juxtaposed with Creusa's prospective hatred.

Kovacs' deletions taken together with the ones proposed here

<sup>21</sup> For this use cf. Eur. *IA* 491, Soph. *OT* 1114.

result in the speech being less than half as long as the version transmitted in the manuscripts. Features that have influenced many interpretations of the play are taken away, but Ion's arguments are pruned to what contributes to his immediate purpose of persuasion. Ion himself is again the sensitive and thoughtful person devoted to Apollo and Delphi that we have encountered earlier in the play. The spirit of the argument is in harmony with his plea in lines 644–646: Ion does not say he will stay in Athens for the greater good of all, but because life in Delphi is so much preferable for him. That does not make him a disagreeable, self-centered person: he knows subtle ways of expressing his empathy with Creusa; and he presents his request to Xuthus in a way that does not offend his benefactor, but assures him of his gratitude.<sup>22</sup>

*November, 2009*

Lady Margaret Hall  
Oxford OX2 6QA, U.K.  
gunther.martin@lmh.ox.ac.uk

<sup>22</sup> I am indebted to Prof. Chris Collard and the anonymous readers, who gave generous advice even where they disagreed.