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Text and Transmission

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The modern reader may encounter the Greek text of Euripides' surviving plays in many forms: in print either in complete editions such as in the Oxford Classical Text series (Diggle (1981-1994)) or in the Loeb Classical Library (Kovacs (1994-2002)) or in separate editions of single plays published with translations or commentaries or both, and in digital form at well-known sites on the internet. Despite minor variations in wording and punctuation from one edition to another, modern versions follow certain conventions. The words are separated by spaces and provided with accents, breathing signs, and apostrophes as necessary. Proper nouns and adjectives are usually the only words to be capitalized. Phrases and sentences end in one of four punctuation marks (comma, high stop or Greek colon, period, and Greek question mark). Every time there is a change of speaker, an abbreviated name in the left margin indicates the speaker. Lyric passages are visually recognizable by labeling of stanzaic structure or by characteristic differences in line length. Line numbers are provided at intervals to facilitate reference to the text. In many editions variant readings are reported in an *apparatus criticus*, usually located at the foot of each page. In order to understand why the editions vary in some details and how confidently we can trust these details when analyzing the plays or extracting evidence from them for literary, scholarly, or pedagogical purposes, it is important to know something of the overall story of the transmission of Euripides' works over the course of the twenty-four centuries since his death.

1. The Earliest Copies

When Euripides composed his plays, he is most likely to have written on a papyrus roll, although for rough drafts of small sections he could have used wax tablets, loose papyrus sheets (perhaps even recycled ones), or pottery sherds. In order to produce and direct a play, he and probably the lead actor would have needed a full written copy. Part-scripts may have sufficed for the second and third actors and for the chorus-trainer, and an anecdote suggests that the chorus-members learned their lines by repeating after the trainer (Kannicht (2004) T 70 = Plutarch, *Mor.* 46B). We do not know whether poets had to submit a text to the archon in order to be granted a chorus or whether the archon would decide on the basis of an oral proposal or the recitation of some portion of the dramas. Most people will have known plays from attending productions and from hearing and learning recitations of popular selections, and only a few enthusiasts will have been interested in acquiring a written copy of an entire play (Aristophanes, *Frogs* 52-54). We have no papyrus rolls surviving from the period of Euripides' lifetime, but by extrapolating back from some of the earliest book roll fragments that do survive from the fourth century, we can guess that the fifth-century copies were written in mostly rectilinear letters similar to those of contemporary inscriptions on stone or of careful dipinti on vases, with no space between words and no diacritic marks, but perhaps with some sporadic use of interpuncts. The alphabet used was probably the Ionic, since in casual use Athenians had been writing Ionic letters from the middle of the fifth century. Change of speaker must have been indicated in the texts in some way, perhaps already in the way that is apparent in papyri more than a century later.

Whereas the iambic trimeters of tragic dialogue (as well as trochaic tetrameters and the rare dactylic hexameters) must each have occupied a single line even in the oldest texts, the treatment of the lyric passages has been disputed. The traditional view of modern scholarship has been that in the earliest texts of tragedy the lyrics were written in a prose-like fashion, in long continuous lines with divisions made between stanzas, in contrast to the later layout of lyrics in shorter metrical units known as ‘cola’ (limbs or members). In the past two decades, various arguments have been offered to support the view that musical notation and lyrics laid out in cola were transmitted continuously from the author’s copy to the Alexandrian tradition on which our medieval manuscripts ultimately depend (Kopff and Fleming (1992)). Many of these arguments do not withstand careful scrutiny, and the available evidence still favors the traditional view (Prauscello (2006) 7-121; a prose-like layout of the lyrics is found even in the second-century BCE papyrus of *Cresphontes*, P.Köln 10.398).

The century after Euripides’ death was immensely significant for the survival and transmission of his work, but evidence is scanty and indirect, and inferences from it very uncertain. At Euripides’ death, copies of some of his plays will have been retained by his family (we are told that a son or nephew named Euripides was responsible for producing the posthumous trilogy of *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Bacchae*, and *Archelaos*), some copies will have been in the possession of acting troupes, and some copies in public circulation among the few who used and collected books at this time. The use of books and private collections of books became more widespread in the fourth century, and fourth-century poets as well as Plato and Aristotle will have known many earlier poetic works from reading rather than performance (Aristotle in fact speaks of the potential of a well-

fashioned tragedy to have its characteristic emotional and intellectual impact through reading alone: *Poetics* 1450b18-20, 1453b3-7, 1462a11-13). With the explosive growth of dramatic performances throughout the Greek world in the fourth century, plays of Euripides were frequently reperformed and the actors' copies sometimes modified. Modern scholars agree that some of these 'actors' interpolations' have infiltrated into the manuscript tradition on which our texts depend (and more so in Euripides, because his plays were so popular in the theater after his death), but hold divergent views about the extent to which this has occurred. On one side it has been argued that the books used by readers were regularly derived from the actors' copies (Page (1934) 1-2), and on the other that readers' copies generally had a tradition separate from, but not immune to contamination with, the actors' texts (Mastronarde (1994) 39-49). An intriguing glimpse of the situation emerges from the so-called 'Lycurgus decree' (Kannicht (2004) T 218 = Plutarch, *Moralia* 841F). In the aftermath of the disastrous defeat at Chaeroneia in 338 BCE, which brought Macedonian domination to Greek affairs, the Athenian politician Lycurgus devoted his efforts not only to stabilizing the city's finances but also to restoring civic morale by reaffirming the preeminence of Athenian culture. He was able to highlight both the religious piety and the traditional poetic and intellectual excellence of Athens by measures he took in relation to theatrical performance (Scodel (2007)): he had the Theater of Dionysus rebuilt in stone on a grand scale, erected public statues of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides (thus equating them with political and military leaders as examples of patriotism and civic wisdom), and made a provision for official public copies of the plays of these three tragedians. The decree is reported in abbreviated form in Plutarch, and the text is slightly corrupt, but it appears to say that actors would

not be allowed to perform a script that did not match the official copy. We do not know from what sources the official copies were created and with what degree of scrutiny.

2. From Alexandria to Late Antiquity

Hellenistic Greek monarchs sought recognition and prestige by supporting artists, scholars, and scientists, and nowhere was such support stronger than in the Ptolemaic capital Alexandria. An anecdote in Galen (Radt (1977) T 157 = in Hipp. Epid. 3 Comm. 2,4) claims that the Athenian state copies created under Lycurgus were acquired by a Ptolemy (perhaps Ptolemy III Euergetes, 247-221) for the collection of the Alexandrian library (Fraser (1972) I.325; Battezzato (2003b)). For Euripides as for Aeschylus and Sophocles, Alexandrian scholars collected texts of as many plays as they could, comparing their titles to those known from the didascalical records assembled in the previous century. In some cases no copy could be found, since we have reports like that attached to *Medea*, noting that the satyr-play that was part of the same tetralogy produced in 431, *Theristae*, was not preserved. Similarly, if we accept that the *Rhesus* transmitted among the surviving plays of Euripides is actually a fourth-century drama, Euripides' own *Rhesus* did not reach Alexandria, leaving a gap into which the post-Euripidean play was inserted. The editing of tragedies and other poetic texts by Hellenistic scholars generally had the effect of promoting a more standard appearance of these texts. Just as 'wild' texts of Homer (those with many verbal variants, additional verses, or truncated passages) came to be replaced by more uniform texts under the influence of scholars who worked in the third and second centuries BCE, so too, it appears, did most tragic texts produced

from the second century BCE onward assume a more uniform shape. Although we may speculate that the scholars, when confronted with a radically different version of a play, did not carry forward some obvious interpolations or rewritings, their general editorial policy was to include well-attested lines even if they were not attested in all witnesses and to record their doubts about authenticity in separate commentaries, with marginal symbols accompanying the poetic text to signal to the existence of such comments. In the subsequent tradition such symbols were lost, but the annotations known as scholia, parts of which are ultimately derived from Hellenistic scholarly commentary, sometimes refer to such symbols (Σ Soph. *OC* 237), or mention uneven attestation of a line or passage (Mastronarde (1994) 254-255), or offer the opinion that a passage is not genuine (Σ *Or.* 640, Σ *Tro.* 975). The general uniformity of the colon-divisions in lyric passages of tragedy in papyri later than about 200 BCE and in the medieval manuscripts also appears to be the result of the editorial work of the Alexandrian scholars (the name of Aristophanes of Byzantium in particular is associated with this work).

From the third century BCE to the sixth century CE, we have firsthand evidence of the text of Euripides in dozens of remnants of ancient copies (for a catalogue and overview, see Carrara (2009)). Euripidean passages have been found on papyrus, parchment, pottery sherds, and wooden tablets (and even on inscriptions: Bousquet (1952) 107; Habicht (1952)). Some of these texts represent selections for use in schools at various levels (from writing practice to rhetorical training), but others are reasonably assumed to come from copies of entire plays. The quality of production varies widely. Some are carefully written by professional scribes, some are more informally or clumsily written by readers or scholars; some are bare of lectional aids or corrections, while others

have been provided with corrections, some accents and punctuation, or even brief annotations. We can observe in these texts a number of conventions. Although a speaker may be identified in the margin, especially at first appearance, the normal way to mark change of speaker is with a paragraphos (a horizontal line under the first letters of a line and usually extending somewhat into the left margin), positioned beneath the last line of a character's speech. If there is antilabe (change of speaker within a line, much rarer in tragedy than in comedy), a dicolon (and sometimes also extra space) within the line is used in addition to the paragraphos. As noted earlier, after about 200 BCE, lyrics are divided into shorter units for more convenient and attractive layout and to assist with the recognition of familiar rhythmical patterns within the longer units (metrical periods) that make up a stanza. Moreover, a system of indentation appears to have been common (Savignago (2008)): if the iambic trimeters are taken to provide the normal left margin of the column of writing, certain longer lines, like the trochaic tetrameters, will be written in ecthesis (starting farther to the left than the trimeters) and most lyrics, having been divided into shorter cola, will be written in eisthesis (starting farther to the right than the trimeters). Throughout this period, words are still written continuously, and lectional signs and punctuation are relatively uncommon. The system of accents and breathing signs is attributed to Aristophanes of Byzantium around 200 BCE, but these markings were more commonly added in texts of Homer and non-Attic/Ionic lyric poetry than in texts of the dramatists. When a large number of accents is found in an ancient copy of Euripides, this may suggest either a school exercise or a particularly learned user. Words that are printed as elided in modern editions are treated inconsistently in ancient copies (not only from one copy to another, but also often by the same scribe within a relatively

short section of surviving text): the elided vowel may be written out (*scriptio plena*) even though not intended to be pronounced, or it may be omitted, in which case an apostrophe may or may not be written.

The papyri also give us useful evidence for a change in the format of literary texts that had a significant effect on the transmission and survival (or loss) of many ancient Greek texts. Up until the time of the High Roman Empire of the second century CE, the standard form of literary texts was the bookroll or scroll made of papyrus. The visual representation of a bookroll on a tomb sculpture, a mummy portrait, or elsewhere could in fact serve as a sign that the individual portrayed was a well-educated member of the higher strata of society and a participant in the longstanding and widespread Greek cultural tradition. Rolls normally contained one drama only, and the papyri published so far show that in the Ptolemaic and early Roman eras readers in Egyptian cities and villages of modest size had access to about three dozen Euripidean titles. The codex form began to make inroads against the bookroll in connection with high-literary texts as early as the second century CE, and between the second and fourth centuries there is a shift from a preponderance of bookrolls to a preponderance of the codex-form, and by the sixth century the codex has entirely replaced the bookroll (Johnson (2009) 256-267). For Euripides, the earliest fragments of codices are P.Oxy. 47.3321 (*Phoenissae*) and BKT 5.2, pp. 73-79, inv. 13217 (*Cretans*), both of the end of second century or beginning of third. Early codices are usually made of sheets of papyrus, but by the fourth century a substantial minority are made from parchment, and the use of parchment increases until it is the predominant material in the seventh century. The significance of the codex form for the transmission of texts is at least twofold. First, it allowed or encouraged groupings of

texts by the same author in a single volume. While this made the survival of some groups of works more likely, it also exposed works that were not adopted into collections to a much greater risk of not surviving (Cavallo (1986)). Because we have such tattered remains of Euripidean codices from this period, it is impossible to reconstruct what combinations of plays were collected in these early codices, or whether any of these codices contained just one play. The striking fact is that of 29 or 30 codices from which fragments have so far been published, only three contain plays outside the Euripidean ‘selection’ (discussed below), namely *Cretans*, *Phaethon*, and probably *Melanippe Desmotis*. The plays attested in the other 26 or 27 codices are *Hecuba*, *Orestes*, *Phoenissae*, *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Andromache*, and *Bacchae*. We have evidence for the following combinations in the same codex (one codex for each pair): *Phoenissae* with *Medea*, *Orestes* with *Bacchae*, *Orestes* with *Medea*, *Medea* with *Bacchae*. The second effect of the switch to the codex was that this form often provided around each column of text ample margins that could accommodate annotations. Large-scale marginal annotations are attested for medical and juristic texts in late antiquity, and for a literary text there is the fascinating case of a sixth or seventh century codex of Callimachus (P.Oxy. 20.2258) with learned comments in the margins. It is thus possible that in this same period the bulk of the older Euripidean scholia were compiled in the margins of a codex of the select plays, but it cannot be ruled out that such compilation occurred instead in the ninth century (Wilson (1983b), McNamee (2007) 91-92, Maehler (1993), Montana (2014); for the scholia on Euripides see Schwartz (1887-1891), Mastronarde (2010)).

3. The Middle Ages

Although the papyrus rolls and early codices give us intriguing glimpses of the text of the Euripides up to the seventh century CE, the surviving complete plays depend on the medieval textual tradition, which began when copies written in majuscule script and created in late antiquity (or less probably in the culturally-impoverished period extending from the seventh century into the beginning of the ninth century) were used as the basis for one or more transliterations into the new minuscule script that came into use for literary texts in the first half of the ninth century. The nineteen surviving plays fall into two categories with different paths of preservation. Ten plays (*Hecuba*, *Orestes*, *Phoenissae*, *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Andromache*, *Alcestis*, *Troades* [*Trojan Women*], *Rhesus*, and *Bacchae*) are known as the ‘select’ plays of Euripides. Some have believed that this selection came about by a deliberate choice as early as the second century CE and was coordinated with the selection of seven plays of Aeschylus, seven of Sophocles, and eleven of Aristophanes. Any of these selections could have been compiled in a pair of codices or perhaps one massive codex. Two other scenarios seem more likely. Either this selection emerged around the fourth century CE and was the end result of the gradual narrowing of the repertoire of plays taught in schools and most often read and copied by cultured readers, plays that were also most likely to have elementary and mid-level (that is, not highly technical and scholarly) commentaries available. Or no single standard selection existed in late antiquity, and the group we call the select plays arose in the ninth century or later when surviving smaller sets were amalgamated. Many of the select plays already emerge as popular in Hellenistic times, as indicated by the proportion of their

appearance among the random sample of papyri published so far, and their prominence among the papyri grows in the first centuries of the Roman Empire and becomes overwhelming, though not absolute, in the codices of late antiquity. So the selection may be understood to have arisen from a combination of factors: popularity in the tradition of theatrical performance (whether of whole plays or of excerpts: Nervegna (2007), Gentili (1979)), popularity in the school curriculum, usefulness for rhetorical training, interest of the mythographic content for coverage of different areas of legend and for comparison with Homer and the other tragedians, and availability of suitable commentaries.

Within the selection, we may discern three subdivisions. Almost all medieval manuscripts earlier than about 1300 containing several plays have *Hecuba*, *Orestes*, and *Phoenissae* at the head of the collection (O, Laurentianus 31.10, has *Medea* before *Phoenissae*); these three plays have (with *Hippolytus*) the most extensive scholia and also are extant in far more manuscripts than the other plays. A large number of manuscripts dating from the second Byzantine (or Palaeologan) Renaissance (beginning ca. 1280) and later contain only this triad of plays, which were a staple of the late Byzantine curriculum in ancient poetry. This preference within the curriculum probably reflects practices that extend back much earlier than the thirteenth century, since we can already detect a higher proportion of witnesses of these plays among the papyri of the early Roman Empire and late antiquity. The second subdivision consists of the four plays that occur in varying combinations and varying orders in the major older manuscripts and occasionally are copied in manuscripts of the Palaeologan era and after: *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Andromache*, and *Alcestis*. The first three of these are also well attested in the papyri of late antiquity and have ample bodies of scholia (with *Hippolytus* actually surpassing *Hecuba* in density

of comment relative to length), while *Alcestis* has survived in fewer witnesses and with relatively scanty commentary. Finally, *Troades*, *Rhesus*, and *Bacchae* have survived much more precariously in few copies, and *Troades* and *Rhesus* have scholia that are even scantier than for *Alcestis*, while *Bacchae* now lacks scholia entirely. The earliest witness of *Rhesus* is O in the twelfth century; for *Troades* it is V, Vaticanus graecus 909, of ca. 1250-1280; and for *Bacchae* we have L, Laurentianus 32.2, (lines 1-755 only) and P, Vaticanus Palatinus graecus 287, both of the first quarter of the fourteenth century, and there is a major lacuna in the final scenes of the play.

The triad plays have the most abundant manuscript basis. In the nineteenth century, and even to a great extent in the work of Alexander Turyn in the mid-twentieth century (Turyn (1957)), the assumption was that there was a single transliteration of the select plays into minuscule script in the ninth or tenth century, and that this transliterated copy became the origin of all surviving copies in an essentially closed tradition. Scholars believed that unusual readings and even apparently correct readings that emerged only in copies from the later thirteenth century and beyond were recent innovations to be ascribed to the carelessness or misguided interventions of middle and late Byzantine scribes or (in the case of probable truth) to clever conjecture by a few of those scribes. Building on the enormous advance in knowledge of Euripidean manuscripts provided by Turyn, studies from the 1960s onward have produced a different picture (Barrett (1964), Zuntz (1965), Di Benedetto (1965), Matthiessen (1974), Mastronarde and Bremer (1982), Diggle (1991)). First of all, as suggested in general terms by Giorgio Pasquali several decades earlier (Pasquali (1952)), the evidence of the papyri (discovered and published since the 1890s) and quotations in other authors (known as the indirect tradition or

testimonia) often indicate that the variants found in later Byzantine manuscripts were already in existence in antiquity. Secondly, it was the habitual practice of some ancient readers/scholars and of some medieval copyists to compare copies of a work and to note alternative readings in the margin or place them in the text as corrections of what had first been written. Such intervention disrupts the process of vertical transmission diverging in distinct paths from a single source that is assumed in models of textual tradition that aim to reconstruct an earliest common ancestor or archetype manuscript (stemmatic theory, intended for what is called a closed tradition). For the triad plays (and also for the select plays with a fair number of witnesses surviving), it has been shown that the tradition is an open one, involving ‘horizontal contamination’.

The manuscripts of the triad plays can be classified in several groups. As for other Greek texts, one may distinguish between copies made before about 1280 (older, *veteres*) and after that date (younger, *recentiores*). The conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1205 caused a major disruption to Byzantine culture and political power. The imperial center was transferred to Nicaea for several decades until Constantinople was recaptured in 1261 and Michael VIII Palaeologus became sole emperor and founder of the dynasty of Palaeologi that ruled until the final fall of the empire in 1456. This political restoration was soon followed by a renaissance in the collecting, copying, and studying/teaching of classical Greek texts. For some texts, manuscripts copied during the Palaeologan renaissance (that is, during a period of a few decades starting about 1280) are now the oldest available copies, while for others, like Euripides, the younger witnesses bring in a number of variants not found in the extant older manuscripts. Probably, many older manuscripts were recovered at this time from outlying regions of the Byzantine Empire

over which the center had precarious control or which had been conquered outright by other powers (Browning (1960)). The *recentiores* of Euripides from time to time are alone in attesting a reading now accepted by editors as true, although they also attest many erroneous readings (often the substitution of glosses or other simplifications, but sometimes also errors that are already attested in papyri). Family groupings of the *recentiores* can be identified, but usually there is ample evidence of horizontal contamination as well, and a witness can change its affinities from one play to another or even within the text of a single play. Special mention should be made of the interesting manuscript V (Vatican graecus 909), which seems to have been produced around 1250-1280, that is, in the period just before the Palaeologan renaissance took hold. Although it is counted by editors as among the ‘older’ manuscripts, it already reflects the sort of philological ambition characterized by that era, for it contains nine plays of the selection (only *Bacchae* is absent), more than any other surviving witness earlier than 1300, and scholia on all nine plays, some of which are unique to this manuscript. The production of V represents an effort to recover or compile as much as possible from one or more earlier manuscripts, since there are passages in the scholia (e.g., $\Sigma Or.$ 285, 291) which were at first left blank and sometimes completed later, either by more painstaking study of the same exemplar or by consultation of another one.

In this same period of renewed study of classical texts, new sets of scholia were being composed on some of the basic poetic texts studied in the curriculum, which was aimed at those preparing to be teachers, government officials, or leaders in the church and at other members of the elite who were acquiring the cultural background traditional for their social status. In the decade 1290-1300 both Manuel Moschopulus (protégé of

Maximus Planudes, a learned scholar/teacher and an important collector of rare texts) in Constantinople and Thomas Magister in Thessalonika authored such scholia, which are mostly at an elementary to intermediate level. Turyn argued that these two scholars also produced editions of the text of the triad (two editions in Thomas' case), but subsequent studies have shown that most of the characteristic readings of the manuscripts that carry these scholia are not to be judged deliberate choices of Moschopulus and Thomas and that they did not pay sustained attention to the constitution of the text, although some spelling conventions and a few readings in the Moschopulean manuscripts may reflect scholarly teaching in the circle of Planudes. Thomas' student and successor Demetrius Triclinius was a different kind of scholar, and his importance for the text of Euripides will be treated further below. From 1350 to 1500, the Moschopulean set of scholia was especially popular, so there survive from this period many copies of the triad (or of the first two plays only) containing these scholia or portions of them, although the textual readings in such manuscripts may vary considerably from those in the earliest copies with Moschopulean scholia. These later manuscripts have not yet been fully explored, but are unlikely to add useful new information to what is now known from the *veteres* and *recentiores* and the earliest manuscripts connected to Moschopulus, Thomas, and Triclinius.

For the select plays outside the triad, family relationships among manuscripts can sometimes be detected with greater consistency. For *Hippolytus*, for instance, there are two major groupings, but V cannot be placed in either family. When very few witnesses survive, it is even possible to draw up a stemma with two branches, as Diggle does for *Troades* (Diggle (1981-1994) II.vii), and a similar bifurcated stemma applies to *Rhesus*.

The tenth select play, *Bacchae*, presents a special case. It has survived very precariously solely in L (lines 1-755 only) and P, the manuscripts that also carry the non-select plays of Euripides, to be discussed shortly. It also lacks scholia. Scholars believe that *Bacchae* was last in the collection and so especially subject to the damage and neglect that often befell the latter pages of codices; we can also observe how rarely *Troades* and *Rhesus* were copied and how much shorter their surviving scholia are than those of titles earlier in the collection. The evidence that *Bacchae* originally belonged to the selection and not to the non-select plays is as follows. First, it has both types of hypothesis or prefatory plot-summary (both a discursive epitome and a laconic version of the type ascribed to Aristophanes of Byzantium), which is elsewhere characteristic only of select plays. Second, *Bacchae* is, along with the other nine select plays, excerpted in a Vatican gnomology (Barberini gr. 4) that was evidently drawn from a lost manuscript containing ten plays with scholia (the gnomology is reported to carry a scholion on *Ba.* 344: Matthiessen (1965) 156 n. 5). Third, lines from *Bacchae* (as well as from other select plays) are borrowed (verbatim, or with slight modification) in the middle Byzantine (eleventh-century?) cento *Christus Patiens* (wrongly ascribed to the fourth-century church father Gregory of Nazianzus), whereas no line is ever borrowed from the non-select plays. Fourth, the non-select plays apparently derive from an alphabetically-arranged collection, and the title *Bacchae* does not fit the sequence.

The modern Euripidean corpus contains nineteen plays instead of only the ten of the selection because of a happy accident: a separate group of plays somehow survived to be transcribed into a codex in the middle ages if not already at the end of antiquity. These non-select plays are often called the ‘alphabetic’ plays because the titles come from an

alphabetic sequence covering part of epsilon (*Helen*), eta (*Heracles*, *Heraclidae*, *Electra*), iota (*Suppliants* [*Hiketides*], *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, *Ion*), and kappa (*Cyclops*). It is an attractive speculation that at some point part of a collected edition of bookrolls of Euripidean dramas arranged in alphabetical order, with five rolls each in two roll-cases, was noticed by a learned reader or scholar, who arranged for the plays to be copied into a codex (Snell (1935)). On this reconstruction, *Hecuba* would also have been part of the series, to make up a total of 10 plays alphabetic plays, but would not have had to be copied because it was already preserved as part of the selection. In any case, a manuscript of these plays did exist in the middle ages, and a very few Byzantine authors give evidence of having seen or read plays from this manuscript or a related one (Magnelli (2003)). One of those authors was Eustathius, the twelfth-century commentator on Homer and Pindar, who was also Bishop of Thessalonika for part of his career. It was possibly the same manuscript that Eustathius knew that attracted the interest of Demetrius Triclinius in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, for he is connected to the production of the two manuscripts of that period that proved essential to the preservation of the alphabetic plays to modern times.

These two manuscripts are the famous pair of L and P of Euripides from ca. 1300-1325. L, Laurentianus 32.2, is a less formal scholar's copy produced on paper, probably intended to contain all nineteen surviving plays of Euripides as copied from the source manuscript of the alphabetic plays as well as from sources for the select plays (but *Troades* is absent from L). P, now divided into two pieces, Laurentianus Conventi Soppressi 172 and Vaticanus Palatinus graecus 287, seems to have been intended as a deluxe copy, since it is written on parchment; it does contain all the plays. For over a

century scholars have disputed the relationship between L and P in the alphabetic plays, with some arguing that they were both copied from the same source manuscript and some arguing that P was copied from L. After the researches of Zuntz (and the telltale incident of the straw dot in L at *Helen* 95: Zuntz (1965) 13-15), the evidence seems overwhelming that P was copied from L. This relationship has been obscured by the fact that L was revised over a long period of time by Triclinius, who corrected metrical errors in the iambic trimeters, added sparse marginal notations identifying meters, and devoted much effort to restoring the lyrical passages to strophic responsion, because he was the first scholar for several centuries to understand that most of the lyrics in tragedy and comedy consist of pairs of stanzas having the same metrical pattern and same divisions of cola. Using the color of the ink of the corrections and sometimes the style of the writing, scholars have been able to recognize different stages of Triclinius' work and to see that P was copied from L after the first stage of his work but before the later stages. Because a sufficient number of instances of this situation are secure, it is justified to use the evidence of P to assign some of Triclinius' corrections to the first or later stages when the evidence of the ink in L is ambiguous. (Triclinius' repeated editorial efforts over a period of years, including use of different inks and some changes in writing style, have an exact parallel in his work on the Euripidean triad that survives in T, *Angelicus graecus* 14.) The consequence of accepting that P is a copy of L is that P need not be cited in an apparatus criticus of an alphabetic play except when it gives evidence for the earlier state of L (if that cannot be recovered from L) and when it (accidentally or deliberately) corrects an error of L. This view of L and P is reflected in the modern Oxford Classical Text and Loeb edition and in some of the more recent Teubner editions of individual plays

(whereas several Teubners of the 1960s and 1970s followed the theory of P's independence from L).

4. The Lost Plays

About seventy plays of Euripides never reached the medieval manuscript tradition. A few of these were lost very early, as noted above, but some of the lost plays could be read even in late antiquity. For these plays modern study depends on the indirect tradition (quotations in surviving Greek texts), the chance finds of papyri (including fragments both of the plays and of ancient plot summaries), and inferences made from artistic representations, mythographic sources, and allusions in later Greek literature. The evidence will keep growing, but we have an immensely valuable recent resource in Kannicht's 2004 edition of the fragments and testimonia, and even more recent is a fine Loeb edition by Collard and Cropp (2008), in which the fragments are all translated and the reconstruction of each play is carefully assessed.

5. Modern Editions

Given that our oldest manuscripts with complete plays are separated by at least 1400 years from the time of Euripides and that even the majority of the papyri (which carry only random passages, often tattered) are 500 years later than Euripides, and given the process of transmission described earlier, what exactly have scholars had to do to produce the edited Greek text that we read today?

(1) Line-numbering was introduced into editions in the second half of the sixteenth century, and because of different layouts of lyrics the numbers differed in different editions until editors began conforming (more or less) to a single convention from the later nineteenth century on. Some ancient copies were numbered at every hundredth line (stichometric numbering), but this seems to have been a record of how much work a professional scribe had done, to justify proper payment, and not any kind of aid to reference. (2) The separation of words is sporadically implied in ancient copies by punctuation or accents or is remarked on in scholia. Consistent separation of words does not occur until the medieval period (and the earliest minuscule manuscripts still lack it), and the separation may be erroneous and require editorial intervention: for example, in *Medea* 272 *Mēdeian eipon* is written in the manuscripts, but this is better redivided as *Mēdei' aneipon*. (3) Punctuation was either sporadic or inconsistent in ancient copies and many medieval manuscripts. Thus editors need to weigh carefully how to punctuate, deciding whether a line is a question or a statement or what phrases to take as parenthetical (Diggle (1994) 428-429). (4) Diacritic marks are absent or sporadic in ancient copies, but become universally applied shortly after the transition to minuscule writing. Modern editors may need to adjust the diacritics. For instance, many occurrences of the contracted reflexive *hautou* (*h* representing rough breathing over *au*) (< *heautou*) are written as *autou* (with smooth breathing over *au*) in the manuscripts, or the word *menei*, though accented by scribes with acute on the first syllable (present indicative), may need to be corrected by editors to future indicative by changing the accent to circumflex over the second syllable. (5) The ancient practice of *scriptio plena* where elision is implied sometimes misled scribes to believe there was a hiatus that needed to be removed, but the

consonant they introduced created a metrical fault (as in *IA* 68, where *didōsi* became *didōsin*, or in *Helen* 1660, where *hēssone* became *hēssones*). (6) Since the Greek language and conventions of spelling have changed gradually over time, editors attempt, with the help of inscriptions and other evidence, to restore a spelling that they believe late fifth-century Athenians would have used when writing in the Ionic alphabet. For instance, (a) iota adscript or subscript is always included in the so-called long diphthongs, though the iota is often absent in papyri and medieval manuscripts; (b) *gignomai* and *gignōskō* are printed instead of the postclassical forms *ginomai* and *ginōskō* that are common in the tradition; (c) the first-person singular imperfect ‘I was’ is printed as *ē* except where *ēn* is required to avoid hiatus, although manuscripts mostly carry the latter; (d) most editors print the preposition *es* except where meter requires *eis*, even though the latter is what is attested almost everywhere in papyri and manuscripts. (For more on orthographic restorations made by editors, see Mastronarde and Bremer (1982) 174-177, Mastronarde (1988) xxii-xxv, West (1990) xxxvi-liii, Finglass (2009).) (7) As noted earlier, changes of speaker were often marked in ancient copies with no more than a paragraphos, which could easily be omitted or slightly misplaced in copying. The identification of the speakers was even more precariously transmitted. Thus, editors need to consider what speaker changes to accept or reject (as in *Orestes* 271-284, where some or all manuscripts make Electra intervene several times in what we now accept is one continuous speech by Orestes; is *Medea* 945 a continuation of Jason’s 944, or the lead-in to Medea’s 946?) and to which speaker to assign particular lines (are *Hippolytus* 1389-90 spoken by Artemis or the chorus-leader?). (8) Editors may choose to divide the lyric cola somewhat differently from the manuscripts, either because they prefer a different metrical analysis or because

the division in the manuscripts seems to have been suffered some common forms of modification during transmission (Mastronarde and Bremer (1982) 151-155; Parker (2001)).

Written texts copied repeatedly over a long period of time are subject to various kinds of corruption of wording or physical damage. One goal of the editor of an ancient Greek text is to detect problems in the transmitted text or to decide between variants presented by the tradition. Texts of Euripides prepared by different editors present somewhat different versions because, despite certain shared principles of philological and editorial method, there is ample room for differing personal judgments about the contours and limits of grammatical and stylistic variation as well as about the degree of logic or consistency to be expected from a poet in dramatic construction or from a character in argumentation and self-presentation. Likewise, the line separating suspicions an editor feels need to be recorded for consideration in an apparatus criticus or commentary from textual alterations that in an editor's judgment deserve to be printed in the text will be placed at different points on a spectrum of possibilities. Such matters of editorial judgment include decisions about when and where to mark interpolations as well as which variant to favor and when and where to accept an emendation. In general it can be said that the more independent manuscripts survive for a play, the greater likelihood there is that an editor will often be able to adopt one of the transmitted variants and will less often have to resort to significant emendation; conversely, the fewer manuscripts survive, the greater the chance that the truth has been lost from the stream(s) of tradition we have. Accordingly, the alphabetic plays are in general more corrupt than the select plays (or especially than the first seven plays of the selection) and require more conjectural emendation. Editions also

differ because some may on principle leave the most difficult problems marked with the obelus as corrupt (possible solutions will usually appear in the apparatus), while others, in order to meet the needs of students or to express the personal preference of an editor, may use the obelus as little as possible and almost always accept in the text one emendation or another.

The modern publication history of Euripides begins around 1495 with the printing by Alopa in Florence of a volume containing the four plays *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Alcestis*, and *Andromache*. The first nearly complete edition emerged from the Aldine Press in Venice in 1503: its title page claims seventeen plays, but it actually contains eighteen, lacking only *Electra* (first printed in 1545). The earliest edition of Euripides to apply stemmatic theory and seek the evidence of the oldest known manuscripts was that of A. Kirchhoff (1855). As was usual in the nineteenth century, editors of Euripides went too far in assuming a closed tradition and discounting almost all later manuscripts. Minor improvements were made in the accuracy of reports of manuscript readings in some subsequent editions (especially in Prinz-Wecklein 1883-1902), but thorough knowledge of the complexity of the tradition did not come until the work of Turyn (1957) and of the scholars who followed up and reacted to his claims. Of the currently available complete editions the Oxford Classical Text of James Diggle (1981-1994) contains the fullest and most reliable apparatus criticus, although on some details advanced students will sometimes want to check the apparatus in one of the more recent Teubner editions of individual plays as well. Both Diggle and David Kovacs, editor of the Loeb edition (a valuable replacement for the embarrassing early twentieth-century Loeb), tend in the direction of a firm interventionism: they print more emendations and mark more lines as

inauthentic (and Diggle marks more uncured corruptions) than many other Euripidean scholars would do. An opposite tendency toward excessive confidence in the transmitted text can be observed in some of the older Teubner editions of single plays. Various gradations along the spectrum in between can be observed in commentated editions of individual plays in English, German, and Italian.

Effective consultation and exploitation of the text of Euripides by students and scholars thus require both an awareness of the often precarious course it has traveled since the author's day and a willingness to pay attention to the *apparatus criticus* and to consult commentaries and other editions in difficult or controversial passages.

Further Reading

For a general treatment of the history of tragic texts in antiquity and the role of scholars in their preservation and transmission, the classic treatment of Wilamowitz (1895) 121-220 is still deserving of attention. For a more recent treatment consult Griffith (1977) 226-234, and in general Pfeiffer (1968) and Reynolds and Wilson (2013). For more on the role of scholars of Byzantine times see Wilson (1983a). For a general introduction to textual criticism and editing of Greek and Latin texts see West (1973), and for some specific examples of textual criticism of Euripides see Diggle (1994). For descriptions of the nature and achievements of editions of Euripides from the early sixteenth century to modern times, see Diggle (1981-1994) I.v-xi; Kannicht (1969) I.119-129.

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