

Dicaearchus and the *Tales from Euripides*

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EVERY STUDENT of Euripides is by now aware that the plot summaries—as opposed to the didascalical ‘Aristophanic’ hypotheses,¹ and Byzantine elaborations—which precede most of the plays in mediaeval manuscripts were not originally composed for this purpose, but were taken from another book consisting solely of such texts. The existence of such a separate collection had been divined by Wilamowitz, who noted that the verbatim agreement in several summaries of Euripidean plots (mostly of plays no longer preserved) in the mythographers and various scholia was likely to be based on a common source.² Two years after Wilamowitz’s death the first certain fragments of this book were published.³ These and many others

¹ See R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* I (Oxford 1968) 192–96, and (for a discussion of all three types of hypotheses) G. ZUNTZ, *The Political Plays of Euripides* (Manchester 1955: hereafter ‘Zuntz’) 129ff. A. W. A. M. Budé, *De hypotheseis der griekse tragedies en komedies: een onderzoek naar de hypotheseis van Dicaearchus* (Diss. Nijmegen 1977), attempts a more comprehensive classification (including comic hypotheses also): (1) the hypotheses of Aristophanes of Byzantium, (2) the metrical hypotheses falsely ascribed to Aristophanes, (3) the *Tales from Euripides*, (4) *Periochae* to Menander, (5) narrative hypotheses to comedy, (6) historical hypotheses to comedy, (7) Byzantine reworkings of ancient hypotheses, (8) wholly Byzantine creations.

² *Analecta Euripidea* (Berlin 1875) 183–84. Several of the texts he cited must be discarded, but an impressive number of certain examples remain (see also Zuntz 135–37):

Hypoth. (LVBP) *Alc.* ~ schol. Pl. *Symp.* 179B ~ *P.Oxy.* XXVII 2457 (the papyrus summary is a fuller form of the hypothesis already known, see *infra* n.18).

Hypoth. *Antiope apud Hyg. Fab.* 8 ~ [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.5.5 (42) ~ schol. Ap. Rhod. 4.1090.

Hypoth. *Melanippe Sophe apud Greg. Cor. Comm. in Hermog. Meth.* VII 1313 Walz (p.509 Nauck) ~ Johannes Logothetes *Comm. in Hermog. Meth.* (H. Rabe, *RhM* 63 [1908] 145; von Arnim, *Supplementum Euripideum* [Bonn 1913] 25) ~ *P.Oxy.* 2455 fr.1–2.

Hypoth. *Stheneboia apud schol. Greg. Cor.* VII 1321 Walz (567 Nauck) ~ Joh. Logoth. 147 Rabe (43 von Arnim) ~ *P.Oxy.* 2455 fr.5–6.

Hypoth. *Skyrioi apud Hyg.* 96 ~ *PSI* XII 1286 (this correspondence was of course unknown to Wilamowitz).

It is probable that many other texts (especially in Hyginus, see Zuntz 141 n.6) preserve portions of this collection as well, but in each case it will have to be confirmed by the discovery of a parallel text on papyrus or elsewhere.

³ C. Gallavotti, “Nuove hypotheseis dei drammi euripidei,” *RivFC* 11 (1933) 177–88 (later republished as *PSI* 1286). *P.Oxy.* III 420 contains only one such summary, *Elec-*

which followed revealed the format of the collection: summaries were arranged alphabetically by the first letter of the title, each play being identified also by its first line.⁴ The narratives were meant solely to summarize the plot, and contained no critical comments or didascalic information;⁵ they were thus designed for readers who wished to be familiar with Euripidean plots without reading the plays themselves, and belonged not to scholarship but to mythography.⁶

Zuntz christened this book the *Tales from Euripides*,⁷ and in what follows I shall use that title to designate the collection of summaries to which the papyrus fragments belong. Yet almost every author who has dealt with them (beginning with Wilamowitz) has felt compelled to note certain items of evidence which point to a specific author for the *Tales*, viz. Dicaearchus of Messene, the pupil of Aristotle.⁸ Until recently, this possibility had been mentioned only to be discarded; but Michael Haslam has now argued persuasively that the *Tales* should be identified with a collection of Dicaearchan hypotheses described by several ancient sources.⁹ Although Haslam's demonstration has been widely accepted, one recent discussion returns to the

tra, whose heading is missing; it cannot therefore be established beyond doubt as part of a book of hypotheses (Zuntz 141 n.5 calls it a "rhetorical exercise").

⁴ The most extensive of these is *P.Oxy.* 2455. For a list see C. Austin, *Nova Fragmenta Euripidea in Papyris Reperta* (Berlin 1968) 88–103, subsequent to which have appeared fragments of the hypotheses of *Alexandros* and *Andromache* (R. A. Coles, *BICS* Suppl. 32 [1974]), *Auge* (L. Koenen, *ZPE* 4 [1968] 7–18), and possibly *Syleus* (H. J. Mette, *ZPE* 4 [1968] 173; identified by M. Haslam, "The Authenticity of Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1–2 and Sophocles, *Electra* 1," *GRBS* 16 [1975] 150 n.3, as belonging to the same roll as *P.Oxy.* 2455). On a possible new fragment of the hypothesis of *Temenos* or *Temenidai* see *ZPE* 40 (1980) 39–42. Further hypotheses from the Oxyrhynchus papyri are to be expected.

⁵ This is in contrast not only with the hypotheses usually attributed to Aristophanes of Byzantium (which may or may not have circulated in a separate collection), but also with those for Menander (C. Austin, *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta in Papyris Reperta* [Berlin 1973] fr.154–56) and Cratinus (fr.70 Austin), which were certainly part of separate books.

⁶ Their mythographic nature is emphasized by Wilamowitz, *Euripides, Herakles I: Einleitung in die griechische Tragödie* (Berlin 1889) 170; Zuntz 138. Budé (*supra* n.1) 48 explicitly compares the hypotheses with Pseudo-Apollodorus and Hyginus, and R. Hamilton, *AJP* 97 (1976) 67–70, shows that the hypotheses of the extant plays would be worthless for reconstructing their dramatic action.

⁷ 135. The analogy with the Lambs' *Tales from Shakespeare* was first suggested by Wilamowitz (*supra* n.6) 134 n.19, 170.

⁸ Wilamowitz (*supra* n.2) 184 (against Dicaearchan authorship), *Hermes* 17 (1882) 355 [*Kl.Schr.* I 100] (suggesting another Dicaearchus as the author), and (*supra* n.6) 134 n.19 (returning to his original view); Gallavotti (*supra* n.3) 188 (suggesting Dicaearchan authorship; but withdrawn in *PSI* 1286); Zuntz 143ff.

⁹ Haslam (*supra* n.4) 149–74 (150–55 on Dicaearchus and the *Tales*).

view that Dicaearchus cannot have written the *Tales*.¹⁰ It is this question which I wish to reopen here. As is often the case, the arguments on both sides merit respect; the unusual feature of the controversy over the *Tales*, as I shall try to show, is that both are correct.

Among the remains of Dicaearchus' works are many that relate to Greek poetry; in addition to discussions of musical contests (fr. 75, 85, 87–89 Wehrli), comedy (83–84), Homer (90–93), and a special work on Alcaeus (94–99), tragedy is well represented. As we would expect from a pupil of Aristotle, didascalical and critical notices predominate.¹¹ But a small group of fragments seems either to be consistent with or even to require the assumption of a book of tragic hypotheses:

(1) Sextus Empiricus *Adv. Math.* 3.3 (fr. 78 Wehrli) illustrates three common meanings of the word *ὑπόθεσις*, of which the first is: *ἡ δραματικὴ περιπέτεια, καθὸ καὶ τραγικὴν καὶ κωμικὴν ὑπόθεσιν εἶναι λέγομεν καὶ Δικαιάρχου τινὰς ὑποθέσεις τῶν Εὐριπίδου καὶ Σοφοκλέους μύθων, οὐκ ἄλλο τι καλοῦντες ὑπόθεσιν ἢ τὴν τοῦ δράματος περιπέτειαν*. Sextus' choice of Dicaearchus' work as an illustration indicates that it was well known in his day; the manner of his definition in turn suggests that these *ὑποθέσεις* were *solely* summaries of the plots (*μῦθοι*) of Euripidean and Sophoclean plays.¹² If we wish to join those who assume that the *Δικαιάρχου ὑποθέσεις* contained anything more than this (*e.g.*, didascalical information),¹³ we shall have to call Sextus' definition inaccurate or somehow distorted—not in itself an impossibility, but in the present case certainly very unlikely.¹⁴

¹⁰ Budé (*supra* n.1) 142, 195 n.2 (offering no arguments beyond a reference to Zuntz). On the other hand F. Sisti, "Su due ipotesiis papiracee," *BPEC* 27 (1979) 105–11 (on *Aeolus* and *Rhesus*), supports Gallavotti's initial arguments for Dicaearchus, but notes neither their later retraction (*supra* n.8) nor Haslam's study.

¹¹ Fr. 73 Wehrli (a general reference to Dicaearchus among authors *περὶ Ὀμήρου καὶ περὶ Εὐριπίδου*), 74 (including him as a writer *περὶ χορῶν καὶ διδασκαλιῶν κτλ.*), 63 (*TrGF* 15T2: on Neophron and Euripides' *Medea*), 76 (Soph. T98 Radt: on the introduction of the third actor [following *Poetics* 1449a18]), 80 (T39 Radt: *OT* defeated by Philocles), and 77 (Eur. fr. 969 Nauck: biographical interpretation of a Euripidean *γνώμη*).

¹² Haslam (*supra* n.4) 153. Of a collection of Sophoclean hypotheses analogous to the *Tales* there is no trace in the mediaeval manuscripts, and Wilamowitz (*supra* n.2) 183 had conjectured that no arguments to Sophocles or Aeschylus survived into late antiquity. If however a *Tales from Sophocles* did once exist, then *P.Oxy.* XLII 3013 (headed *Τηρέυς: ἡ ὑπόθεσις*, but not part of a collection; nor is the first line cited) is likely to be derived from it, as Haslam 154 noted (see also Radt's introduction to Sophocles' *Tereus*).

¹³ H. Schrader, *Quaestiones Peripateticae* (Hamburg 1884), followed by Wilamowitz (*supra* n.6) 134 n.19, and Wehrli on fr. 78 (*cf.* Budé [*supra* n.1] 188ff).

¹⁴ Zuntz 144 n.2; W. Ritchie, *The Authenticity of the Rhesus of Euripides* (Cambridge 1964) 8.

(2) Among the scholarly comments appended to the hypothesis of *Rhesus* is the following (81 Wehrli): πρόλογοι δὲ διττοὶ φέρονται. ὁ γοῦν Δικαίαρχος¹⁵ ἐκτιθεὶς τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τοῦ Ῥήσου γράφει κατὰ λέξιν οὕτως: νῦν εὐσέληνον φέγγος ἢ διφρήλατος (Eur. fr.1108 Nauck). καὶ ἐν ἐνίοις δὲ τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἕτερός τις φέρεται πρόλογος (leading to a quotation of 11 trimeters addressed by Hera to Athena, and attributed to an actors' interpolation [*TrGF* Adesp. f81 Kannicht/Snell]; neither prologue is found in the mediaeval manuscripts). Once again a Dicaearchan hypothesis is cited, and the words quoted from it are especially illuminating; they are not those of Dicaearchus himself (as their introduction—γράφει κατὰ λέξιν οὕτως— might lead one to expect),¹⁶ but the first line of the play. If therefore this text is to be trusted, the Dicaearchan hypothesis of *Rhesus* included a quotation of the play's first line, and almost certainly *only* the first line, as is shown by the incompleteness of the quotation here (in contrast to the second prologue, cited from *ἓνα τῶν ἀντιγράφων*).¹⁷

(3) The first hypothesis to *Alcestis* in the mediaeval manuscripts is now known to be a much condensed but basically similar version of the summary found in the *Tales*.¹⁸ In the manuscript L, after the words ὑπόθεσις Ἀλκήστιδος prefixed to this argument, Demetrius Triclinius added Δικαίαρχον.¹⁹

(4) In the mixture of plot summary, moralizing, and criticism that precedes Sophocles' *Ajax* in the mediaeval manuscripts is a brief discussion of the play's title, in which it is asserted (79 Wehrli): Δικαίαρχος δὲ Αἴαντος Θάνατον ἐπιγράφει. ἐν δὲ ταῖς διδασκαλίαις (Arist. fr.623 Rose) ψιλῶς Αἴας ἀναγέγραπται. It is quite possible that Dicae-

¹⁵ δικαίαν codd., corr. Nauck.

¹⁶ First seen by Ritchie (*supra* n.14) 32, followed by Haslam (*supra* n.4) 153–54. The emendations attempted by Wilamowitz and Schwartz (still reproduced by Kannicht/Snell) are therefore unnecessary. Cf. the incomplete ἀρχή of Phrynichus' *Phoenissae* (*TrGF* 3F8, quoted by Glaucus ἐν τοῖς περὶ Αἰσχύλου μύθοις *apud* hypoth. Aesch. *Pers.*); the *Tales* may also have given a variant first line for *Melanippe Sophe* (*P.Oxy.* 2455 fr.1–2, Austin [*supra* n.4] 90).

¹⁷ ἢ διφρήλατος might have been Nyx (on her chariot see L. Preller and C. Robert, *Griechische Mythologie*⁴ I [Berlin 1894] 437) or Eos (cf. *Rhesus* 534–35).

¹⁸ Turner (introd. to *P.Oxy.* 2457) refused to rule out that the “Dicaearchan” hypothesis of the mediaeval manuscripts might be a “different redaction” rather than an abbreviation of *P.Oxy.* 2457, but surely the striking verbal similarities between them are sufficient to do so (see his note on line 1 of the papyrus). Zuntz 144 had argued before the publication of the papyrus that there were two sets of plot summaries current in antiquity, and that the first hypothesis to *Alcestis* was derived from the one other than the *Tales* (see n.21 *infra*).

¹⁹ A. Turyn, *The Byzantine Manuscript Tradition of the Tragedies of Euripides* (Urbana 1957) 286, cf. Haslam (*supra* n.4) 152 and W. S. Barrett, *Euripides, Hippolytos* (Oxford 1964) 72.

archus' variant title for the play was taken from one of his critical or didascalic works, but it may also stem from a title found in a collection of hypotheses—that Dicaearchus wrote Sophoclean as well as Euripidean plot summaries is attested, as we have seen, by Sextus.

Of items 3 and 4 the most that can be said is that they are consistent with a Dicaearchan book of hypotheses similar to the *Tales*; Triclinius may for example have had no better authority for inserting Dicaearchus' name than the reference to him in the hypothesis to *Medea* (63 Wehrli, from the Βίος Ἑλλάδος),²⁰ and the exact source of the title Αἴαντος Θάνατος in item 4 is unknown. But the first two citations are unambiguous, and lead to the assumption that there was a Dicaearchan work known widely as ὑποθέσεις, containing solely plot summaries—without didascalic information—and identifying each play by its first line, a work well-known by the late second century after Christ. As Haslam argued, this is a perfect description of the *Tales* on papyrus; in fact, unless we agree that these Dicaearchan hypotheses and the *Tales* were identical, we shall be forced to conclude that there circulated in antiquity two sets of hypotheses to Euripides with precisely the same format: one of them by Dicaearchus, for which we would have several ancient testimonia but no fragments, the other the *Tales from Euripides*, for which we would have many fragments but no testimonia.²¹ This is very improbable indeed, and we should be grateful that Demetrius Triclinius—on whatever authority—has told us that it is not so. It seems that we should believe both him and Professor Haslam, and assume that the Dicaearchan hypotheses mentioned by Sextus and the *Tales from Euripides* are the same work.

So much for one side of the question; we must now turn to the other side, for the reasons why Dicaearchus cannot have written the *Tales* as we have them are equally strong. The first deals with our estimate of Dicaearchus himself; the second concerns the nature of tragic texts as they existed in the fourth century B.C.; the third involves a small detail in the format of the *Tales*, which is however a very strong argument against Dicaearchus as their author.

First on Dicaearchus himself: by the fourth century B.C. there was already great interest in the plots of classical tragedies, as shown by

²⁰ Suggested by Turyn (*supra* n.19) 286 n.286.

²¹ Zuntz had in fact assumed precisely this. One of his arguments was refuted by the appearance of *P.Oxy.* 2457 (see *supra* n.18); to refute the other (Zuntz 145), it is sufficient to note that not every narrative of a myth which happens to resemble a Euripidean plot (e.g., *Bibl.* 3.5.2 [36] or 3.13.8 [174]) is necessarily derived directly from a collection of hypotheses.

the existence of the *Τραγωδούμενα* of Asclepiades and similar works by Philochorus and (perhaps) Heracleides of Pontus.²² The idea of Euripidean plot summaries as such therefore suits Dicaearchus' age well. But the *Tales* as we have them are less suitable to the man himself. His fame in antiquity rested on his writings on the soul (fr.5–12 Wehrli), on *πολιτεῖαι* on the Aristotelian model and political theory (67–72), biographies, and a famous account of the origins of culture in a work called the *Life of Greece*, *Βίος Ἑλλάδος*.²³ Apart from the four testimonia on the hypotheses which we have just examined, his work on drama seems to have been concerned with literary history, as we should expect from a pupil of Aristotle. As we have seen, one fragment (80) informs us that Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* was defeated by Philocles, another (76) concerns the introduction of the third actor, and still another (74) attests to Dicaearchus as a writer of *διδασκαλία*. That a man with these historical interests in literature and elsewhere should compose plot summaries which pointedly exclude all such comments is not impossible, but it seems at least very unlikely. How, for example, could Dicaearchus have written the hypothesis to Euripides' *Medea* (which we know from the papyri to have been as simple and uncritical as the rest)²⁴ without even mentioning his famous view, repeated by three ancient sources, that this very plot was taken from Neophron?²⁵

²² Asclepiades *FGrHist* 12F1–15; Philochorus *Περὶ τῶν Σοφοκλέους μύθων* *FGrHist* 328T1 (Soph. T149 Radt); Heracleides fr.10 Wehrli (Haslam [*supra* n.4] 155 n.26), but cf. J. D. Denniston, *CQ* 21 (1927) 115.

²³ 47–66, cf. W. Spoerri, *Späthellenistische Berichte über Welt, Kultur und Götter* (Basel 1959) 69 n.26.

²⁴ M. Papatomopoulos, *Recherches de papyrologie* 3 (1964) 37–47: *P.Oxy.* 2455 fr.1; Austin (*supra* n.4) 90–92. (The brief plot summary found in the mediaeval manuscripts is unrelated.)

²⁵ *TrGF* 15T1–3, Dicaearchus 63 Wehrli. Whether the *style* of the *Tales* is compatible with Dicaearchan authorship I shall not attempt to judge. Wilamowitz (*supra* n.2) 184 found it *exilis*, while Haslam (*supra* n.4) 155 calls it “limpid.” Even the frequent anacolutha cannot necessarily eliminate Dicaearchus as author, since sub-literary texts like the *Tales* are especially subject to alteration in the course of transmission. W. S. Barrett, *CQ* n.s. 15 (1965) 61 n.2, 62 n.1, noted that the papyrus hypotheses appear to have been relatively strict in avoiding hiatus; this would not be surprising if, as I suspect, they were written in the early empire, when any narrative with literary pretensions (a class to which the *Tales*, with its occasionally precious vocabulary [Barrett 65–66; E. G. Turner, “Euripidean Hypotheses in a New Papyrus,” *Proceedings of the IX International Congress of Papyrology* (Oslo 1961) 9–10] and rhetorical arrangement, clearly belonged) would naturally avoid hiatus (W. Schmid, *Der Attizismus* II [Stuttgart 1889] 249, III [1893] 291–92). In any case, this observation speaks more against Dicaearchus as author than for him, since his practice was not as strict (of the verbatim quotations [19, 21, 39, 72] note especially 72).

Second, the *Tales from Euripides* could obviously have been written only on the basis of a collected edition of Euripides' tragedies (Zuntz 146). If we postulate that such an edition existed in Dicaearchus' day, *i.e.* the late fourth century, we must be prepared to discard generally accepted views of the history of tragic texts. The fourth century was after all the age of the greatest disorder in them thanks to actors' interpolations, which Lycurgus' law requiring an official city text was meant to prevent.²⁶ The didascalic researches of Aristotle and of Dicaearchus himself had at this time only begun the work that would be carried further in Alexandria; it was there that the first complete editions were produced, probably by Aristophanes of Byzantium.²⁷ It is therefore difficult to believe that a series of Hellenistic scholars worked so long on these plays if they had already been edited for more than a century. It is equally difficult to see why—if Dicaearchus produced such a collection himself—he is not remembered for it, but only for uncritical summaries he wrote of its contents.

The final argument against Dicaearchan authorship rests on the fact that the *Tales* are in alphabetical order. Now the introduction of this order in lists can be roughly dated:²⁸ the letters themselves always had their fixed order, and 'letter labels' using this begin to appear in early fourth-century Attic inscriptions,²⁹ but alphabetical lists of words are found first in glossaries of the third century B.C.,³⁰ and the earliest known alphabetical inscription is a list of names from Cos of the late third century B.C. which contains instructions for the alphabetization, as if it were a novelty.³¹ When we recall on the one hand how many unalphabetized lists of names are known from earlier inscrip-

²⁶ [Plut.] *Mor.* 841F, see D. L. Page, *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford 1934) 2–3, Pfeiffer (*supra* n.1) 82, and Wilamowitz (*supra* n.6) 132: "Vollends in diesem Staatsexemplar ein Werk diplomatischer Kritik zu sehen und es gar zu einer Art Archetypus für unsere Handschriften zu machen, ist ein recht unhistorischer Einfall der modernen."

²⁷ Wilamowitz (*supra* n.6) 145; Pfeiffer (*supra* n.1) 192.

²⁸ See in general L. Daly, *Contributions to a History of Alphabetization in Antiquity* (Coll.Latomus 90 [1967]) 15ff. In what follows I am of course speaking solely of alphabetization by first letter; more complete alphabetical order is characteristic only of later antiquity.

²⁹ L. Thraette, *The Grammar of the Attic Inscriptions I* (Berlin 1980) 117–18.

³⁰ *P.Hib.* II 175 (Pack² 2122), *P.Hib.* 1.5 + *P.Ryl.* 16a + *P.Heid.* 180 (Pack² 1220); Daly (*supra* n.28) 29. That Zenodotus' glosses were alphabetical is a likely inference from schol. *Od.* 3.444 (Pfeiffer [*supra* n.1] 115 n.2), but there is no evidence for earlier cases, and Philitas' γλώσσαι are explicitly said to have been ἀτακτοι (Pfeiffer 90). K. Alpers, *Gnomon* 47 (1975) 113–17, argues that it was Zenodotus himself who first brought alphabetization to Alexandria.

³¹ Paton/Hicks, *I.Cos* 368; Daly (*supra* n.28) 18–19.

tions, and on the other that alphabetic numerals seem to have become widespread about this time also,³² it seems reasonable to infer that alphabetization of lists was rare, if not unknown, before the third century. Why then should Dicaearchus, supposing that he wrote such plot summaries, have chosen to give them an innovative alphabetical arrangement, particularly since his interests in plots³³ and his didascalic researches³⁴ would have suggested a thematic or chronological order?

If then we accept Dicaearchus as the author of the *Tales from Euripides* we must be prepared to accept three improbabilities: (1) a peripatetic with much less ambition than his other fragments suggest; (2) a complete edition of Euripides in the late fourth century B.C.; and (3) alphabetical order at the same date. Given the limitations of our knowledge, the common opinion on any of these questions may well be wrong—I doubt however that it is wrong on all three of them. These arguments are therefore every bit as persuasive as those of Haslam, with which they appear to be in contradiction.

One attempt to resolve this difficulty involves the assumption that a more scholarly and less complete collection of hypotheses by Dicaearchus himself was later reworked into the book we know as the *Tales*.³⁵ It should however be obvious why this compromise is impossible—the four testimonia we have examined clearly describe the *Tales* as we have them on papyrus, not a distant ancestor.

But another solution comes to mind if we consider an unusual feature of the genre to which, as we have seen, the *Tales* belong—mythography. The best-known mythological handbook is ascribed to

³² Meisterhans/Schwyzler, *Grammatik der attischen Inschriften*³ (Berlin 1900) 11, were surely wrong to suggest that these were an invention of third-century Alexandria (see M. Tod, *BSA* 45 [1950] 137–38); yet they do not completely displace the old acro- phonic system until the Hellenistic or imperial period.

³³ See *supra* n.25 on Neophron and Euripides' *Medea*.

³⁴ See the fragments cited *supra* n.11. Wilamowitz (*supra* n.6) 151 suggested on the basis of *IG* II² 2363 (ca 100 B.C.) that Euripides' collected works were alphabetized by that time: cf. Barrett (*supra* n.19) 51 n.2.

³⁵ Pfeiffer (*supra* n.1) 193ff, cf. Sisti (*supra* n.10) 105 n.1 and the authors cited *supra* n.13. I can see no merit in the attempt of Budé (*supra* n.1) 173–202 to isolate a new type of “sage-hypotheses” and to trace these back (through an anonymous redactor) to Dicaearchus. Such a proposal attempts to exploit the coincidence that most citations of Dicaearchus on tragedy occur in mediaeval hypotheses, but the seven hypotheses named by Budé do not form a class at all: (1) only one of them (*Ajax*) shows all six of his postulated elements, and most of the rest show only two; (2) hypoth. *Alc.* is identical with that found in the *Tales* (pace Budé 149; see *supra* n.18) and, as we have just seen, the Dicaearchus citations in hypoth. *Rhes.* and *Ajax* probably go back to the *Tales* as well; (3) in hypoth. *Med.* Dicaearchus is cited from Βίος Ἑλλάδος (63 Wehrli), not from the Ὑποθέσεις.

Apollodorus; in the second century B.C. there lived a scholar, Apollodorus of Athens, who wrote among other things a treatise *Περὶ θεῶν*, which was famous in antiquity for its mythological learning. For many reasons, this man cannot have written the extant handbook called the *Library* (*Βιβλιοθήκη*), but it is ascribed quite clearly to him nonetheless, not only in the manuscripts but also by Photius and various scholia.³⁶ The case of the *Fabulae* of Hyginus is similar; C. Julius Hyginus was the scholar appointed by Augustus to be prefect of the Palatine library, but the simple and uncritical mythological handbook that bears his name is obviously not his own compilation.³⁷ Again, the achievements of Eratosthenes of Cyrene in literature and astronomy are well known, but it is easy to see that he is not the author of at least one work attributed to him, the *Καταστερισμοί*, myths of figures who became constellations.³⁸ Some mythological scholia on the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus are falsely attributed to Nonnus, the author of the *Dionysiaca*;³⁹ hypotheses to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are supposedly by Lactantius;⁴⁰ and an introductory epistle to the mythological romance of Dares even informs us that the Latin version was made by Cornelius Nepos and dedicated to Sallust!⁴¹

Obviously many works on mythology were falsely attributed to famous literary figures, especially scholars.⁴² On the motives for this we can only speculate—perhaps to gain greater popularity or respectability, or perhaps some of these books had in fact been distantly based on the more scholarly works of their purported authors. One

³⁶ Carl Robert, who first showed that Apollodorus of Athens could not have written the *Bibliotheca*, suggested that it was another man of the same name (*De Apollodori Bibliotheca* [Diss. Berlin 1873] 34); but both Photius (*Bibl.* 142a37ff, III 39 Henry) and the manuscripts of the *Bibliotheca* itself attribute it to Ἀπολλόδωρος Ἀθηναῖος Γραμματικός. Note also that the only first-person singular verb used in the work (*Bibl.* 3.10.3 [121]) is in a context ultimately derived from *Περὶ θεῶν* (*FGrHist* 244F139, cf. A. Henrichs, *Cronache Ercolanesi* 5 [1975] 8–10).

³⁷ H. J. Rose, *Hygini Fabulae* (Leiden 1933) iiiiff.

³⁸ Carl Robert, *Eratosthenis Catasterismorum Reliquiae* (Berlin 1878) 30–33, is again reluctant to assume a pseudepigraphic work, and suggests that the attribution arose because Eratosthenes may have been one of the sources of the *Catasterismoi*. Wilamowitz (*supra* n.6) 169 spoke with more justice of mythological compendia, “die wir freilich erst in sehr jungen Fassungen, unter den gleichgültigen, um der Berühmtheit ihrer längst vergessenen Träger gewählten Namen Eratosthenes Apollodoros Hyginus besitzen.”

³⁹ Sebastian Brock, *The Syriac Versions of the Pseudo-Nonnos Mythological Scholia* (Cambridge 1971), who however suggests (31 n.7) that the attribution does not pre-date the tenth century.

⁴⁰ Brooks Otis, “The *Argumenta* of the So-called Lactantius,” *HSCP* 47 (1936) 132.

⁴¹ W. Speyer, *Bücherfunde in der Glaubenswerbung der Antike* (Göttingen 1970) 133.

⁴² For a similar trend in historiography see R. Syme, “Fiction and Archaeology in the Fourth Century,” *RendLinc* 105 (1968) 23–30 [*Roman Papers* II 642–49].

firm conclusion may however be drawn: when we find a mythographic work credited to a famous scholar but otherwise uncharacteristic of him, we must be suspicious of the attribution.

With this in mind, we can look at the problem of the *Tales from Euripides* and their author in a new light. First, we saw that there is sufficient evidence that they were attributed to Dicaearchus by the late second century after Christ; second, we saw that Dicaearchus himself could not have written them. Both sets of evidence lead to a single conclusion: an anonymous set of Euripidean plot summaries was falsely attributed to this famous scholar, and became widely known under his name in antiquity. This procedure is well paralleled in works of mythography, as we have seen, and in Dicaearchus' fragments as well, where we find a geographical treatise falsely assigned to his works (117 Wehrli). That Dicaearchus should have been chosen as the supposed author of the *Tales* is especially natural; he seems to have been well known as a source for didascalical information. The same loose association brought it about that the metrical hypotheses to various comedies and tragedies were attributed to Aristophanes of Byzantium—an ascription we find already in the Bodmer codex of Menander of the third century after Christ.⁴³

We may conclude then that the papyrus fragments of the 'Υποθέσεις τῶν Εὐριπίδου μύθων—*Tales from Euripides* was convenient only so long as the real title was in doubt, and can now be discarded—represent a work of mythography masquerading as scholarship, falsely ascribed to Dicaearchus,⁴⁴ and probably composed in the first or second century after Christ.⁴⁵ This at least is when several other mythographic works, among them the *Bibliotheca*, are thought to

⁴³ See E. Handley, *The Dyscolus of Menander* (London 1965) 121.

⁴⁴ That the mediaeval hypotheses therefore cite both the real works of Dicaearchus (hypoth. *Med.*, *OT*) as well as the pseudepigraphic 'Υποθέσεις (hypoth. *Rhes.*, *Alc.*, *Aj.*) is no obstacle; the Homeric 'D-scholia' do the same with the genuine works of Apollodorus and *Bibliotheca* (M. van der Valk, *Researches on the Text and Scholia of the Iliad* I [Leiden 1963] 307–08).

⁴⁵ Some suggested dates are reviewed by Haslam (*supra* n.4) 152 n.12. The appearance of Homer-hypotheses on the *Tabulae Iliacae* of the late first century B.C. (see in general A. Sadurska, *Les tables iliaques* [Warsaw 1964]) shows only that *some* summaries existed for the *Iliad* by that date. It does not provide a *terminus ante quem* for the unrelated Homer-hypotheses known from the papyri (A. Henrichs, *ZPE* 12 [1973] 23ff, *P.Oxy* 3160), and certainly not for the *Tales*, as Pfeiffer (*supra* n.1) 195 (*cf.* Zuntz 139) appears to claim. Sisti (*supra* n.10) 111 claims that the possible adaptation of a phrase from the *Tales* in the 'Aristophanic' hypothesis to *Rhesus* proves that the former predate Aristophanes of Byzantium; this involves the unlikely assumption that, whereas the text of the *Tales* was freely altered in the course of transmission (as Sisti himself notes, 109), that of the Aristophanic hypotheses was inviolable.

have been written,⁴⁶ in the age which has also produced the earliest papyrus fragments of the *Tales*. These were after all the years, as we learn from Suetonius (*Tib.* 70), when even an emperor thought it important to keep up with his Greek mythology.⁴⁷

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⁴⁶ C. Wendel, *RE* 16 (1935) 1365–66 s.v. “Mythographie”; M. van der Valk, *REG* 71 (1958) 167.

⁴⁷ How embarrassing a faulty knowledge of myths could be in Roman society is well illustrated also by the cases of Calvisius Sabinus (*Sen. Ep.* 27.5–7) and Trimalchio (*Petron. Sat.* 50–52).

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