

Euripides' *Auge* and Menander's *Epitrepontes*

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EVER SINCE 1875, the general outline of Euripides' lost play *Auge* has been confidently restored by means of a late Armenian version of the myth attributed to Moses of Chorene. Ever since 1905, when the Cairo papyrus rescued for us most of the last scene of Menander's *Epitrepontes* and identified two known Euripidean lines as belonging specifically to *Auge*, the connection between the melodramatic late tragedy and this comedy has been assumed to be close and detailed. It seems to me that, as a matter of comic principle, Menander would and did play with his allusions to tragedy, regularly implying discrepancies between the genres in detail as well as in tone; and accordingly I would not expect a close relationship between the plots of the tragedy and comedy. I am, however, especially dubious about the reconstruction of *Auge* by means of Moses' curious account. Once that is questioned, then the hypothetical similarity with Menander's play loses credibility. In this paper, then, I shall attempt to question the prevailing opinion about the form of Euripides' *Auge* and about how it functions in the dénouement of Menander's *Epitrepontes*.

I. Euripides and Moses of Chorene

I give below two versions of *Auge's* story, and I wish to ask the question whether in fact they can be reconciled. The first comes from Strabo, who explicitly assigns it to Euripides, though not to a specific play. The second depends upon Moses, who derives it from some unnamed poet and work.

STRABO: Euripides says that *Auge*, with her child *Telephus*, was put by *Aleus*, her father, into a chest and submerged in the sea when he detected her ruin by *Heracles*, but that by the providence of *Athena* the chest was carried across the sea and cast ashore at the mouth of the *Caicus*, and that *Teuthras* rescued the pris-

oners, and treated the mother as his wife and the child as his own son.¹

MOSES: In a city of Arcadia, during ritual celebrations in honor of Athena, her priestess Auge participated in the dancing, part of the evening rites, and Heracles raped her. However, as witness to this misdeed he left her a ring. She became pregnant and bore Telephus, whose name arose from circumstances. When Auge's father discovered her disgrace, he became furious and ordered that Telephus be cast out in an uninhabited spot (where he was nursed by a doe), that Auge be drowned in the depths of the sea. Meanwhile, Heracles came wandering back to this region. Reminded by the ring of what he had done, he rescued his son and saved the mother from imminent danger of death. In accordance with the prophecy of Apollo, Teuthras took Auge for wife and Telephus as his son.²

Wilamowitz, who first argued for using Moses' version to reconstruct the Euripidean play, evaded the necessity of reconciling Strabo and Moses: he assigned Strabo's account to the prologue of Euripides' *Telephus*, of which in 1875 only six and a half lines were known.³ Shortly after Wilamowitz's death, however, in 1935, a new papyrus fragment was published that contained the first sixteen lines of *Telephus*' prologue and completely demolished the theory that Euripides in that play gave his audience such facts as we find in Strabo. Indeed, the new material contradicts some of Strabo's details. I shall return to that point. Since 1935, despite the fact that the collapse of a portion of Wilamowitz's argument might well invite a thorough reexamination of his entire thesis, scholars have continued to respect his conclusions and, implicitly or explicitly, assume that Strabo and Moses

¹ 13.1.69 (615). This is the translation of H. L. Jones in his Loeb edition of Strabo (London 1929).

² *Progymn.* 3.3. I have made this translation from the Latin text used by Wilamowitz and found also in Nauck (Euripides' *Auge*), but I have adjusted the text somewhat from the German translation of the Armenian provided by A. Baumgartner, *ZDMG* 40 (1886) 476f. The Latin translation is the work of J. Zohrab, who was the first to edit the Armenian work of Moses (Venice 1796). No complete translation of Moses' *Progymnasmata*, in any modern language, exists. Still another version, the fragmentary hypothesis of a play which may be Euripides' *Auge*, has been conjecturally restored from a shred of papyrus by L. Koenen, *ZPE* 4 (1969) 7-18. What survives deals only with background details and the rape, which perhaps should be located near a spring. This bears on Moses' first sentence, but not on the plot of Euripides' play, nor on such a key detail as the possible return of Heracles in the final act.

³ WILAMOWITZ, *Analecta Euripidea* (Berlin 1875) 189 [hereafter 'Wilamowitz']; he was following Jahn. For the text see Nauck 676. In accordance with prevailing opinion of 1929, H. L. Jones referred readers of the Strabo passage to this same fragment.

can be reconciled (for they concede that now Strabo's account must have *Auge* as its source).⁴

I find it impossible to square the details of the two accounts. Strabo's geographical preoccupation with Teuthrania in Asia Minor made him ignore the initial background of the festival of Athena at Tegea, so we may start a comparison from the agreement of both versions that Heracles raped Auge and she bore Telephus. Strabo says that Aleus put mother and child into a chest—the similarity to the plight of Danae and Perseus is obvious—with the clear intention of causing their deaths by drowning. Moses, on the contrary, declares that Aleus separated the fates of mother and child: he ordered the baby Telephus to be exposed in the wilds of Arcadia, but Auge to be drowned some distance away in the sea. Moses goes on to add the detail that the baby did not die of exposure because a doe nursed it; the obscure reference to the etymology of Telephus “from circumstances” probably applies to this miraculous nursing.⁵ Strabo says that Aleus carried out his punishment without interference, that the chest containing doomed mother and baby was put into the sea and disappeared out of sight across the Aegean, ultimately to be washed ashore at the mouth of the Caicus in Mysia. Moses, on the other hand, reports the chance return of Heracles, the recognition of the ring, and the happy and separate rescue of son from his dangers (among wild animals) and mother from peril of drowning. For Strabo, it was Athena (who would predictably be concerned for the fate of Heracles' son and her own reputation) who made sure that the chest arrived safely in Asia Minor and thus brought mother and son to their happy reception by Teuthras. For Moses, although Heracles has rescued the two and a recognition-scene has promoted a standard happy ending, nevertheless it is necessary to add a prophecy by Apollo that despatches mother and baby to Teuthras for the final domestic arrangements we find also in Strabo.

⁴ For the fuller text of the prologue, see D. L. Page, *Select Papyri* III (LCL 1950) 130–33; also E. W. Handley and John Rea, “The *Telephus* of Euripides,” *BICS* Suppl. 5 (1957). T. B. L. Webster, *The Tragedies of Euripides* (London 1967) 239, achieved his reconciliation as follows: “The end [of Moses' version] coincides with Strabo, who is only interested in what happened in Teuthrania. Herakles therefore saved his wife [*sic*] and child from death but not from being cast adrift (like Danae); a god must have foretold the future.” H. J. Mette, *Lustrum* 12 (1967) 89, discusses Strabo briefly and skeptically, insisting that his account does not square with the plot of Euripides' tragedy except for the reference to Auge's destiny to marry Teuthras.

⁵ So Wilamowitz 190 n.6, who suspected that the etymology was based on a combination of *θηλή* and *ἔλαφος*.

There are too many differences in crucial detail to permit a reconciliation between Moses' unassigned poetic version and the explicitly Euripidean version, necessarily from *Auge*, that Strabo selectively preserves. And I submit that Strabo should be given the preference. What he knew was a tragedy that had apparently come to its grim conclusion, the inevitable drowning of Auge and Telephus inside the chest somewhere at sea, when Athena, appearing *ex machina*, suddenly predicted a happy escape from danger: the ark would end up in Asia Minor, the two prisoners welcomed into the royal family of lonely old Teuthras. What Moses recounts is a tragedy (or comedy) where the rapist Heracles enters providentially to rescue his child and its mother and presumably transforms the angry Aleus into a contented grandfather by his revelations. How Apollo functions in that conclusion, why he is even necessary, remains obscure to me. Wilamowitz prudently, but somewhat illicitly, truncated Moses' account immediately after Heracles had performed his rescue, *before*, that is, the prophecy of Apollo.⁶ The different details add up to two quite distinct dramatic endings, of which Strabo's has, in my opinion, considerable melodramatic power and does more credit to the inventive Euripides than Moses' weaker, less coherent finale.

The lines recovered in 1935 for the Prologue of the *Telephus* have not only conclusively fixed the source of Strabo's version as *Auge*, but they have also revealed some interesting disparities between the details of the myth which Euripides used in his two tragedies. (Not that that should be surprising: there are as many as thirty years between *Telephus* in 438 and the late *Auge*.) The six and a half lines known up to 1935 represent Telephus' feelings as he sets foot on his native Greece, and they start to provide the audience the necessary background. When the fragment broke off, Telephus had only covered the circumstances of his birth as a son of Heracles, and scholars assumed that he would expand on his grandfather's wrath and the way he went across the Aegean to Teuthras. In fact, the additional lines say nothing more on this account. Telephus limits himself to declaring vaguely that he suffered much (8), as if to dismiss the myth of Auge. He goes on to state that he did not accompany his mother to Mysia but somehow at some time arrived (I infer that he was by then grown up) and became reunited with her in Teuthras' house. And he here adds that

⁶ The abbreviated text of Wilamowitz 189 may be compared with the fuller version of Nauck. From the complete German translation of Moses given by Baumgartner (*supra* n.2), it becomes apparent how ridiculous and immoral Moses regarded the story of Auge he told, and only told it to expose its inanities.

he acquired his name, not in Greece nor in connection with the miracle of the nursing doe, but from the Mysians, whose etymology ignores the inept connection with nursing and expressly signifies that he found his peace *far from* his original home (13). The *Telephus* had in the fifth century and continues to have in literary histories the reputation of a sensational drama. Nevertheless, in 438 Euripides did not use—perhaps had not yet invented—the exciting details of Telephus' romantic crossing of the Aegean to Mysia in a chest. He began on a calmer level and gradually progressed to the striking scenes that Aristophanes so enjoyed to parody. It is, however, also significant, I think, that his etymology for the name of Telephus disagrees totally with that suggested by Moses in connection with the doe and its miraculous nursing. Wilamowitz (190) used Moses' etymology as an argument for the Euripidean origin of the entire version, on the basis that such etymologizing was common in Euripides. The new lines of *Telephus* tend to weaken that argument, because they render Moses' etymology irrelevant to *Auge* and inconsistent with a known, if earlier, Euripidean explanation of Telephus' name.

It remains to examine the extant fragments of *Auge*, to see what lines agree with Moses' version or seem to acquire meaning only through his special details. As earlier scholars had already suggested before Wilamowitz, the fragments shed some light on the beginning of the tragedy. Auge, having given birth to her son in the shrine of Athena, confronted a series of agonizing crises, alone (except perhaps for a nurse) and desperate for help (277 Nauck). She had to defend herself against the anger of her patroness Athena, who, as Auge bitterly observed, took pleasure in the slaughter of battle but then strenuously objected to her baby's birth in the shrine (266). The city became afflicted by pollution (267), and presumably this resulted—as it does in some other versions—in the intervention of king Aleus, his discovery of his daughter's guilt, and his angry measures of punishment. These initial events occur after the baby's birth. Of these, Strabo, presumably because of his geographical focus on Teuthrania, ignores the anger of Athena, Auge's justification, and the widespread pollution in the city of Tegea. But Moses ignores them, too. Indeed, of the assigned fragments only one possibly agrees with Moses' story: it was the one which Wilamowitz seized upon as conclusive proof that Moses provided the unique epitome of the plot of Euripides' *Auge*. I refer to 265:

νοῦ δ' οἶνος ἐξέστησέ μ'· ὁμολογῶ δέ σε
ἀδικεῖν, τὸ δ' ἀδίκημ' ἐγένετ' οὐχ ἐκούσιον.

These are plainly the words of Heracles addressed to Auge, in which he declares that he drank too much and for that reason did her wrong (*i.e.*, raped her); but it was an involuntary crime. Wilamowitz took them as confirmation of Moses' account of Heracles' providential return, and so he assigned them to the scene of recognition and reconciliation among Heracles, Auge, and Aleus that Moses encourages us to imagine.⁷ No other fragments fit into such a scene (without desperate efforts); none refers to a ring, to baby Telephus and his rescue from the wilds, none to the danger and rescue of Auge. If Heracles is saving Auge from her angry father, why is he here talking to her instead of Aleus? Do these lines, in fact, oblige us to posit the melodramatic scene of recognition that Wilamowitz wanted; or do they not rather belong in an earlier episode of the myth, namely just after the rape? I suggest that they function to represent a sober and penitent Heracles who is about to take leave of his victim and capable of admitting himself wrong. Now, the economy of the drama requires that events nine months before the beginning of the play and the birth of Telephus cannot be staged, but only recalled by some character, in this case presumably Auge. Although it would be possible, I grant, for these lines to fit Moses' version of how Heracles left Auge his ring as proof of his rape, I prefer, for lack of any other confirmation about this ring⁸ and its function in a recognition by the returned Heracles (which, as we have seen, disagrees with Strabo), to believe that Auge recalls Heracles' words when she defends herself, whether to Athena or her father Aleus.⁹ The evidence, it seems to me, does

⁷ Wilamowitz 189; so also Webster (*supra* n.4). Wilamowitz, *Kleine Schriften* I 261, later (1893) tried to assign more lines to this context: he attributed fr. adespota 399, 402, and 570 (Kannicht-Snell) to Euripides' *Auge*.

⁸ There is no evidence that Euripides used the normal word for ring, *δακτύλιος*, anywhere in his plays, and hence we may doubt that it functioned as one of the trinkets in his recognition-scenes. By contrast, it appears as a key word and symbol in *Epitrepontes* from the second act on. Euripides refers once to the seal (*σφραγίς*) from a signet ring in *IA* 155, but that involves a letter. In this connection, it is probably significant that Aristotle also at *Poet.* 16.3 ignores rings as recognition-tokens: he cites only necklaces and the ark of Sophocles' *Tyro*.

⁹ It would be useful to be able to cite analogies in Euripides or other tragedians for the treatment that I hypothesize. Thus, in my view, Auge is quoting a first-person speech, which expresses an apology; but that operates only to produce pathos, not the rescue of the heroine. There are ample parallels for first-person quotation: *e.g.*, *IA* 1223–25 (Iphigenia recalls to Agamemnon what he said to her); *Bacch.* 1118–21 (Cadmus recalls what Pentheus once said to him); *IT* 364–71 (Iphigenia repeats what she said to Agamemnon); *Alc.* 163–69 and 177–81 (servant reports what Alcestis said when first addressing Hestia, then apostrophizing her bed). All these are couched in the 'I/you' form of the two lines in *Auge*. However, there is no parallel that I can discover for an apology of any sort in Euripides, not by god, hero, or ordinary human being. It follows that there is no analogue for an apology that produces no result. Al-

not warrant assigning to Heracles a rôle in Euripides' *Auge*, certainly not a melodramatic entrance to rescue son and mother in the nick of time at the end of the play. Nor need we credit Euripides as the source of the artistic versions of the myth which represent Heracles with baby Telephus.

II. Euripides' *Auge* and Menander

Thirty years after Wilamowitz had ingeniously invoked Moses' unique version in order to reconstruct a final exciting recognition-scene in *Auge* that featured a very special Heracles, the Cairo papyrus of Menander added another two lines to the fragmentary remains of the tragedy, to which it alluded in a way that most scholars, including of course Wilamowitz, took as final confirmation of Moses' data about Heracles, the ring, and the recognition.¹⁰ In the final act of *Epitrepontes*, old Smikrines storms up to the house where his daughter and son-in-law have just become reconciled, having recognized a foundling baby as their son: he had raped her before their marriage, drunk and unable to recognize her, himself unrecognizable because of the nocturnal Athenian festival of the Tauropolia where he committed his outrage. She had only managed to tear off his ring before he escaped, but that ring later proved the means of identifying the baby

though verb and noun for acting unjustly are very common in Euripides, this fragment appears to preserve the only sentence in which a character admits guilt. The conventional usage of these words would involve either a charge by someone that another person is wronging him/her or, on the other hand, an indignant question: How do I, did I, wrong you? Again fr. 265 is the sole instance of *ὁμολογῶ* in the first person in Euripides. Wilamowitz placed this passage in the final act, perhaps because he believed that apologies belonged there and led to results (such as Heracles' rescue of *Auge*). But if he supposed that Heracles was functioning similarly to the god from the machine (who often in Euripides must explain away an awkward paternity), it must first be noted that Heracles does not have the status of a god in this supposed plot, and so we have no precise parallel for the hero-rapist; and second, a god never apologizes either in Euripides or Sophocles, never calls his act of lust a 'wrong', and typically sends a subordinate deity in the machine to solve his embarrassment. Thus Athena puts things right for Apollo in *Ion*, and Hermes does the same for Zeus in *Hypsipyle*. In short, because Euripides does not use apologies or admissions of wrong by gods or heroes, we have no reason to expect that this speech proved pivotal in the action of *Auge*. The analogy of recollected 'I/you' speeches, which serve Euripides mainly to increase pathos, may be more appropriate.

¹⁰ E. Capps, *Four Plays of Menander* (Boston 1910), in his comment on his line 911, summarized Moses' version. So, too, F. G. Allinson in his Loeb edition of Menander (London 1921); F. H. Sandbach, in *Menander, A Commentary* (Oxford 1973) *ad* 1122; and W. G. Arnott on the same line in his recent Loeb edition (London 1979).

when it was rescued from exposure. Smikrines is now the only one ignorant of the happy news that the estranged couple has achieved a joyous reconciliation and that he himself is officially a grandfather. Because of his anger and his preoccupation with the dowry more than with his daughter, he becomes a target of impudence from the slaves. Onesimos, along with Sophrona, teases him with tantalizing details about what happened to his daughter and mocks him for being so slow to comprehend what is after all a typical New Comedy situation. Here are the crucial lines (1122–27):

SMIKRINES: τί φησιν, ἱερόσυλε γραῦ;
 SOPHRONA: “ἡ φύσις ἐβούλεθ’, ἧ νόμων οὐδὲν μέλει·
 γυνή δ’ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ τῶδ’ ἔφν.”
 SM.: τί μῶρος εἶ;
 SO: τραγικὴν ἐρῶ σοι ῥῆσιν ἐξ Αὐγῆς ὄλην,
 ἄν μή ποτ’ αἴσθη, Σμικρίνη.
 SM.: σύ μοι χολήν
 κινεῖς παθαινομένη· σὺ γὰρ σφόδρ’ οἶσθ’ ὅτι
 τέρας λέγει νῦν.

In the traditional interpretation of this passage, Smikrines indignantly asks the old nurse Sophrona, who accompanies him, what the impudent Onesimos means, and she picks up the disrespectful strain and starts quoting Euripides to him: “Nature willed this, and she cares nothing for morality: it is only natural that a woman comes to this very condition.” She refers thereby to woman’s so-called natural rôle as mother. Again, Smikrines sputters his angry incomprehension. She continues: “I’ll recite the whole tragic speech from *Auge* if you don’t get the point, Smikrines.” He can only rage: “You’re provoking my fury by your affected bombast.”¹¹ The question that faces us here is: How does Menander use his allusion to *Auge*? Not having much to go on, the first commentators on this new passage referred to Nauck and Wilamowitz’s reconstruction, and they rapidly agreed that Menander evoked the main outlines of the presumably familiar tragedy, because the comedy displayed a significant similarity on key points. In 1925, a half century after putting forward his theory about *Auge*, Wilamowitz published his excellent edition of *Epitrepontes*. In connection with the above passage, he noted the details in which Euripides apparently anticipated Menander: (1) A girl was raped during a nocturnal religious festival. (2) When her baby was born, she

¹¹ Sandbach (*ad* 1120ff) argues for assigning all the impudence exclusively to Onesimos and leaving Sophrona an excited but silent character. See also his discussion of this point in *PCPS* N.S. 13 (1967) 44–46.

had to expose it. (3) The guilty father had given her a ring, which she put out with the exposed baby. (4) That father later recognized his baby and assumed his responsibilities when he saw the ring.¹² Moreover, the first students of the papyrus had conjectured that this 'tragic speech', from which came the conventional sentiment about morality, nature, and woman's basic function as mother, originally appeared in the recognition-scene of *Auge* and was spoken by none other than Heracles.

The four points of similarity that I have listed agree in the main with the story told by Moses, with an important exception. In the third, Wilamowitz boldly imagined a disposition of the ring for which Moses offers no support. One might suspect that Wilamowitz, who had no such idea in 1875, conjectured that Auge had put out the ring with Telephus after the Cairo papyrus appeared and suggested the theory that the tragedy resembled the now-known comedy. In fact, we have no reason to believe that Auge did expose the ring with her baby, and it is not difficult, given Moses' vagueness, to conjecture other plausible scenarios for Heracles' recovery of his ring. Wilamowitz did concede one slight discrepancy, namely, that Auge exposed her baby at the command of her irate father, whereas Pamphila in *Epitrepontes* decided on her own to put her child out, so as to avoid the detection of her husband and save her marriage. There are, however, additional discrepancies that reduce the similarity of the two plots drastically and attenuate the likeness of the pairs Heracles/Charisios, Auge/Pamphila, and Aleus/Smikrines.

Charisios, though a rapist like Heracles, otherwise differs considerably from the mighty hero. Smikrines and Aleus resemble each other only in the superficial respect of the anger they express and act on, but they act very differently, and the quality of their anger diverges radically. Aleus is characterized by forceful, knowledgeable wrath, Smikrines by angry concern for a dowry and by total ignorance. Finally, while both Auge and Pamphila suffer rape at a nocturnal festival, they must be distinguished in background circumstances (princess and priestess vs innocent maiden), in their actions before the birth of the baby, their motives for exposing the child, and in their characters. For we can recover from the Euripidean fragments

¹² Wilamowitz, *Menander, Das Schiedsgericht* (Berlin 1925) 170: "In ihr [*i.e.*, *Auge*] war auch ein Mädchen an einem Nachtfest vergewaltigt, ihr Kind war zwar nicht von ihr, sondern ihrem Vater ausgesetzt . . . , und Herakles, der das Kind fand, erkannte sich als Vater durch den Ring, den er der Auge, sie dem Kinde mitgegeben hatte." It should be noted that Wilamowitz expressly refrained from urging any further similarities.

an Auge who is strong and aware of her strength despite misfortune (fr. 276), convinced enough of her integrity to stand up to her patroness Athena (266); and I would imagine, accordingly, that Euripides represented her as bravely facing death. Pamphila also possesses a noble character, but it is conditioned by her selfless devotion to Charisios and willingness to suffer bad treatment from him and still remain loyal. Therefore, I believe that Menander was *not* evoking the full plot of *Auge* when, at the end of *Epitrepontes*, he cited two lines and alluded to one speech from it. He was concentrating specifically on the flowery and inept sentiment about the 'natural rôle of women'. For a man as stupid and narrow as Smikrines, it may be enough to assert that a woman's function is to bear children, but the whole tendency of Menander's sensitive plot has led us to the realization that Pamphila is a woman of complex and valuable personality, a significant compound of moral and physical qualities. It is not enough to dismiss the act of rape, with the subsequent pregnancy, as a deed of overriding nature. We, then, recognize the irony in the citation from *Auge*, its inappropriateness for the emotional and ethical circumstances that we have witnessed in the comedy. And the bombastic speech that the slave threatens to inflict in full on Smikrines and us would have been even more infuriating for the old man, more inept to our ears. It is that very irony, I believe, not some hypothetical similarity, that Menander exploits.

Wilamowitz and those who follow him in using Moses' account assumed that fr. 265, in which Heracles confesses that he raped Auge involuntarily when drunk, was spoken by the returned hero during the scene of reconciliation at the end of the tragedy. And when the new references to the tragedy appeared in *Epitrepontes*, they, too, were attributed to Heracles in that hypothetical scene.¹³ But is it likely that Euripides would want to represent a Heracles so absurdly hypocritical, so 'chauvinistic' in the modern sense, as to admit his act of drunken rape and then to dismiss it sententiously with this casuistic generalization about nature and women? It is definitely *not* woman's natural function to be raped and to bear the child of her assailant, and even the notorious drunkard and rapist Heracles could not get away with such sophistry. I cannot imagine any man in these circumstances, least of all the rapist himself, daring to utter such sentiments. To be sure, Euripides does use the *nomos/physis* antithesis

¹³ See J. van Leeuwen, *Menandri quatuor fabularum fragmenta* (Leiden 1908), and E. Capps (*supra* n.10): both agree that Heracles spoke these lines on his return. See also Webster (*supra* n.4) 240. For his part, Wilamowitz (*supra* n.12) 114 assigned the lines to Auge in her defense before Athena, and Sandbach hesitantly follows him.

with devastating irony in other plays, but never, I believe, with the effrontery that this would constitute. And such effrontery would be particularly disturbing for the mood of Moses' version, because in the hypothetical scene that Moses enables us to imagine Heracles functions as a sympathetic character who restores order.

I would argue, accordingly, that Heracles could never have spoken these generalizations about woman's natural rôle in *Auge* and that they cannot be used to support a reconstructed scene for Heracles at the end of the tragedy. Taking the clue provided by Strabo, I suggest that such words belong with peculiar appropriateness to the special personality of goddess Athena. Her well-known sexlessness, her concern with masculine arts of war and government as well as with feminine domestic duties, and her interest in quick practical adjustments of moral messes all fit her to speak these words. Euripides used her to stop human prying questions and thus to close *Ion* on an ambiguous note. Strabo implies that she entered *ex machina* in *Auge*, too, to provide an explanation for Aleus and to assure the audience that the gods had after all intervened on behalf of innocent Auge. The words are ironic, of course, coming from a female deity who understands neither nature nor women and typically glosses over a male's outrage; but they are not hypocritical (as they would be in Heracles' mouth). And they presumably led to Athena's reassuring information that Aleus' murderous action against daughter and grandson would be miraculously frustrated, because the goddess did care for her banished priestess.

Wilamowitz suggested that these words about a woman's function were spoken by the woman Auge in her defense before Athena; and Sandbach has recently repeated the suggestion. But it seems to me that such ideas are no more appropriate to the rapist's victim than to the rapist himself. How could Auge seriously put forward that it was her rôle to mother a baby sired by rape? If there were some grounds for detecting a tone of bitter irony in the passage, Auge might be a valid spokesman. There remains one other possible candidate as speaker, another woman: Auge's nurse (to whom is assigned fr. 271, and who participates in the conversation indicated by 276 and 277). Reinhardt hesitantly proposed the nurse in 1974.¹⁴ In the nurse's mouth, it would have been uttered in all seriousness, but heard by Auge and the audience with utter disbelief, like the inept sententiousness of other everyday characters in Euripides. An added attrac-

¹⁴ Udo Reinhardt, *Mythologische Beispiele in der neuen Komödie (Menander, Plautus, Terenz)* (Diss. Mainz 1974) 146.

tion in assigning the passage to the nurse of Auge is that then, when Menander borrowed it, it gains in irony when assigned to a similar comic character, the old nurse of Pamphila, who quotes it mockingly at angry, uncomprehending Smikrines. Although I personally prefer my candidate Athena, Auge's nurse remains a strong rival, I concede. What must be emphasized here, though, is that neither Auge nor Heracles can be tolerated as the speaker of these lines.

Thus, the ethos of these lines in *any* context of rape, such as that of *Auge*, militates seriously against putting them in the mouth of the rapist. It is also worth considering whether, in *Epitrepontes*, they are more appropriately given to the maid Sophrona, as has been traditional since the discovery of the papyrus, or rather to the impudent Onesimos, as recently Sandbach has done. On behalf of Sophrona, we may say first that the dramatic sequence seems to prepare for her as speaker: in 1122 Smikrines angrily asks her what Onesimos means, and this would easily be her answer. Moreover, it is comically apt that she should utter this bombastic nonsense about a woman's natural function, for she knows full well that it is nonsense and hence deliberately uses it to tease Smikrines and to amuse Onesimos and us. As nurse of Pamphila, she above all other characters would be sympathetic with her mistress and share her physical, moral, and emotional anguish during these nine or ten months. Onesimos has been the one to suspect Pamphila of unchastity and to tell Charisios, and he has uttered anti-feminist remarks on other occasions, so it is difficult to credit him suddenly in Act V with a new attitude on women, with a full awareness of the irony of these Euripidean lines. On the other hand, much can be said for Sandbach's viewpoint. We do not need to assign any lines in this scene (the only one where she appears) to the elderly maid, and the dramatic pace gains if Onesimos, full at last of his mastery of facts and self-important, dominates the scene, interrupting any possible conversation between Smikrines and Sophrona, enjoying the momentary impunity over the angry grandfather that he possesses. (In *Aspis* 399ff, the brash slave's teasing manipulation of passages from tragedy shows up even more outrageously, when Davus teases another old, mercenary Smikrines.) Therefore, although I would have preferred this to be spoken by Pamphila's sympathetic maid if she had any lines to speak in this scene, I do not find convincing reasons to deny Sandbach's attribution to Onesimos.

In conclusion, I have marshalled, I trust, a series of arguments against the long-accepted, much-adapted theory of Wilamowitz that Euripides' *Auge* brought Heracles on stage at the end to solve the

problems of the melodrama and that Moses of Chorene alone preserves the outlines of that plot. Moses does not identify his source, and we can no longer dismiss Strabo's different version, which he specifically assigned to Euripides. For Strabo does not depend on the prologue of *Telephus*, as Jahn and Wilamowitz had postulated long before the recovery of a larger section of the prologue in 1935. Strabo's version rules out Heracles' providential return and instead uses a more typical Euripidean device, Athena *ex machina*, who both announces the preservation of heroine with baby and foretells her future happiness in marriage with Teuthras. Examination of the known fragments of *Auge* indicates that only one suggests a speech by Heracles, and that, because addressed to Auge and focused on the rape, seems to be a *reported* speech, made by Auge as she recounts what Heracles said after the rape (long before the time of the play). The new fragment identified for *Auge* thanks to the papyrus of *Epitrepontes* does not promote Wilamowitz's reconstruction either, for Menander does not use it to evoke the similarity of plot and final scenes in the two plays. Rather, he aims to exploit the comic discrepancy between the bombastic sophistry of the fifth-century tragedy and the emotional reality of Pamphila's anguish and Charisios' painful growth from drunken rapist to responsible husband. Nor does it seem at all likely that Heracles the rapist would have been made by Euripides to utter such hypocritical cant. The words belong rather in the mouth of Athena and so support a reconstruction from Strabo. If Moses was in fact using a dramatic source, it might be better to return to the older theory, that he employed one of the several mythological comedies that featured Auge.¹⁵

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¹⁵ Both Philyllios and Euboulos (Kock I 782, II 170) wrote comedies entitled *Auge*. Kock, in fact, cited Moses' version in connection with Philyllios' play: he ignored Wilamowitz's connection of Moses and Euripides and preferred to follow an earlier suggestion of Meineke (V 57).