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THE MEANING OF ἐπι τῆς σκηυῆς IN WRITERS OF THE
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THE MEANING OF ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς IN WRITERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

ROY C. FLICKINGER

THERE are several passages in Aristotle's *Poetics* that are of great importance to the student of scenic antiquities, whatever his opinion may be regarding a raised stage in the Greek theater of the fourth century before Christ. They were brought into the controversy long ago, but the adherents of each theory have contented themselves with merely stating their own interpretation of the isolated point at issue, in opposition to that of their opponents, without careful analysis of the entire context in each case. Consequently no progress toward the complete understanding of these passages has been made. They were first cited as having a bearing upon the stage question by Mr. H. Richards, in the *Classical Review*, Vol. V (1891), p. 97:

Before we accept Dr. Dörpfeld's theory that the actors in a Greek theater performed in the orchestra, and not on the stage, some explanation ought to be forthcoming of certain passages in the *Poetics* of Aristotle, in which the contrary seems to be implied. Aristotle several times uses ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς in a way very hard to reconcile with the new theory. . . . These passages (to which others of a similar kind could be added from later writers) appear to be decisive, unless any one will maintain that σκηνή came to be applied to the orchestra or some part of it. But is there any evidence for that? And, further, does not the word ἐπί imply something raised above the level?

In 1895¹ Mr. F. B. Jevons, in the Gardner-Jevons *Manual of Greek Antiquities*, p. 678, wrote: "Aristotle repeatedly uses the phrase ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς, in which σκηνή can scarcely mean the orchestra or any part of it, and ἐπί naturally means 'on' and implies elevation;" and M. Octave Navarre, in *Dionysos*, pp. 105 ff.: "Aristote dit que la tragédie ne peut pas représenter plusieurs événements à la fois, mais seulement 'la partie de l'action qui s'accomplit sur la scène et par les acteurs.' La scène est, on le voit, désignée de la façon la plus nette comme le lieu affecté aux acteurs." In the following year Dr. Emil Reisch,² in Dörpfeld-Reisch, *Das griechische Theater*, pp. 284 ff., published the following explanation:

Wie die Schauspieler ἀπὸ σκηνῆς kommen und sprechen, so bewegen sie sich in der Regel während des Spieles ἐπὶ σκηνῆς, in der Nähe der Skene, ja häufig genug bleiben sie auf den Stufen des Hauses oder in dem von den Paraskenien begrenzten Vorraum des Hauses. Daher können sie kurzweg als οἱ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς bezeichnet werden; doch ist zu bemerken, dass dieser Ausdruck niemals so wie οἱ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς im Gegensatz zum Chor gesagt wird, weil auch der Chor

¹In the *Revue critique*, Vol. XXVI (1892), p. 450, Mr. S. Reinach referred to Mr. Richards's argument with apparent approval. CHRIST, "Bedeutungswechsel einiger auf das griech. Theater bezüglichen Ausdrücke," *Jahrb. f. class. Phil.*, Vol. CIL (1894), p. 39, said: "Die vierte Bedeutung,

welche das Wort σκηνή auf das gedeelte podium, oder wenn man das nicht zugeben will, auf den Platz beschränkt, auf dem gespielt wurde," quoting Aristotle's use.

²Dr. Dörpfeld agrees with his collaborator in this; cf. *ibid.*, p. 348.

häufig in der Nähe der Skene zu thun hat. Es ist also damit durchaus nicht eine Scheidung der Schauspielpersonen beabsichtigt.

Allerdings würde der Ausdruck ἐπὶ σκηνῆς von den Schauspielern auch dann gebraucht werden können, wenn der Vorraum vor dem Hause durch eine Bühne gebildet würde. Aber bloss aus diesem Ausdruck heraus lässt sich das Vorhandensein einer Bühne nicht erschliessen. Denn es wäre natürlich ein arger Fehlschluss, wenn man aus den Worten ἐπὶ σκηνῆς und ἀπὸ σκηνῆς folgern wollte: σκηνή heisst "Bühne." . . . Nach dem, was wir über die Bedeutung von σκηνή auseinander gesetzt haben, können für ἐπὶ σκηνῆς in der erwähnten typischen Verwendung (οἱ oder τὰ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς) nur zwei Uebersetzungen in Betracht kommen: "auf dem Hause" und "bei dem Hause."

Die erstere Auffassung hätte selbst dann ihre Bedenken, wenn man in der Skene eine Bühne annehmen wollte, die wie die römische Bühne einen integrierenden Bestandteil des Schauspielhauses gebildet hätte. Denn dann wäre eher die Wendung ἐν σκηνῇ "in scaena" zu erwarten. Die zweite Auffassung dagegen hat alle sprachlichen Analogien für sich. Dass das Vorwort ἐπί (mit Genetiv, Dativ und Accusativ) nicht nur zur Bezeichnung von Höhenunterschieden, sondern auch zur Bezeichnung der Nachbarschaft zweier auf gleichem Boden befindlicher Dinge verwendet wird, dürfte wohl bekannt genug sein. Aber es ist vielleicht nicht überflüssig, darauf hinzuweisen, dass ἐπί gerade mit den Bezeichnungen des Hauses sehr häufig in diesem Sinne verbunden zu werden pflegt. . . . Die Beispiele dürften genügen, um zu der Annahme zu berechtigen, dass man die Wendung ἐπὶ σκηνῆς ursprünglich im Sinne von ἐπὶ οἰκίας "vor, bei dem Hause" gebraucht hat. Natürlich erhielt der Ausdruck dann sehr bald formelhafte Geltung und bezeichnet kurzweg: "auf dem (vor der Skene befindlichen) Spielplatz."

Mr. A. E. Haigh, in *The Attic Theatre* (2d ed., 1898), pp. 189 f., has said:

Aristotle in many places speaks of the songs of the actors as τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς, in opposition to the songs of the chorus, τὰ τοῦ χοροῦ. Further, he speaks of the actor's part as being played ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς. According to the usual interpretation of these passages, he means that the actors played their part "upon the stage," and sang their songs "from the stage." Dörpfeld, however, proposes in these cases to translate the word σκηνή as the "background," and not as the "stage." He supposes Aristotle to mean that the actors performed "at the background,"² and sang their songs "from the background." He denies that the two expressions imply the existence of a stage. Now, the translation that he suggests may be possible, as far as the Greek is concerned. But it is very difficult to believe that they are the right translations in these particular passages of Aristotle. Aristotle's words seem to clearly imply that there was some essential and conspicuous difference between the position of the actors and that of the chorus. But if, as Dörpfeld thinks, they all performed together in the orchestra, there would be no such distinguishing mark. It is true that the actors might, for the most part, be rather nearer the stage buildings; and the chorus might, for the most part, be rather more distant from them. But practically they would be standing in the same place; there would be no pronounced difference. Aristotle's words appear to be explicable only on the supposition that the actors appeared upon a stage, the chorus in the orchestra.

More recently Professor A. Müller, "Untersuchungen zu den Bühnenalterthümern," *Philologus*, Supplementband VII (1899), pp. 6–12, wrote:

Wir müssen derselben [*i. e.*, Reisch's view] jedoch unsere Zustimmung versagen, da wir uns verpflichtet fühlen, auf Grund der folgenden Erörterung das Vorhandensein einer Bühne im attischen Theater als sicher anzunehmen.

² It will be observed that Haigh's "at the background" by no means accurately reproduces the Dörpfeld-Reisch "auf dem Spielplatz."

Wir gehen davon aus, dass die Schauspieler ihren eigenthümlichen Standort in der Nähe des Spielhauses hatten, und dass dieser durch die im Druck hervorgehobenen Worte der folgenden Stellen des Aristoteles bezeichnet wird, zu dessen Zeiten noch ebenso im Theater gespielt wurde, wie im V. Jahrhundert (S. Dörpf., S. 379). . . . Giebt es nun Stellen, an denen Personen, welche sich von der Parodos aus zu dem gewöhnlichen Standorte der Schauspieler begeben, einen Aufstieg, oder solche, welche vom gewöhnlichen Standorte der Schauspieler zur Parodos gehen, einen Abstieg vornehmen müssen, so ist der Schluss geboten, dass jener Standort erhöht war. Und solche Stellen finden sich in den ältesten Komödien des Aristophanes.⁴ . . . Wenn nun die vorstehende unbefangene Erörterung einiger aristophanischer Stellen und Scholien das Ergebniss geliefert hat, dass der gewöhnliche Standort der Schauspieler erhöht war, und wenn bei Aristoteles die Schauspieler *οἱ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς* heissen, ihre Partie *τὸ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς* und ihre Lieder *τὰ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς* genannt werden, so ist der Schluss gerechtfertigt, dass dieser erhöhte Standort eben *σκηνή* hiess.

In the course of an investigation on the subject of the Greek theater and drama in the time of Plutarch I have found myself obliged to trace the history of the word *σκηνή* from the earliest times in order to determine, as precisely as possible, its exact meaning everywhere, and particularly in such phrases as *ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς*, *ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς*, and *ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ*, which occur with great frequency in the later literature. The subject itself is not a new one. The large collection of material brought together by Wieseler in 1870, in the *Ersch-Gruber Encyclopädie*, Vol. IV, pp. 159 ff., s. v. "Griechisches Theater," has furnished investigators in the field of scenic antiquities with a large proportion of their instances of the word's use. Notable among these scholars are Christ,⁵ Müller,⁶ and Reisch.⁷ The two former adhere, in the main, to the outline of the successive changes of meaning of *σκηνή* laid down by Wieseler, while the last-named adopts an explanation consistent with the Dorpfeld theory of the stage, eliminating the meaning "stage" for the classical period of Greek literature. All of these scholars have contributed to the solution of the perplexing problem in a greater or less degree, but nevertheless all have, in my opinion, been too prone to classify their material *en masse* under convenient rubrics largely determined by their own position in the stage controversy, instead of subjecting each separate instance or category to a discriminating scrutiny, testing first the context in which the word occurs and then ranging the instances appropriately in accordance with a strictly historical view of the development of the meanings of the word or the phrase. It so happens, therefore, that the same passage is often used by both parties to prove things exactly opposite, as is illustrated by the quotations given above concerning the Aristotelian usage.

In the course of my study I became convinced that Aristotle's use of the term,

⁴ Here follows a discussion of those passages in Aristophanes that involve the use of *ἀναβαίνειν* and similar expressions. This phase of the subject has been already sufficiently treated by WHITE, "The 'Stage' in Aristophanes," *Harvard Studies*, Vol. II (1891), pp. 164 ff.; CAPPS, "The Stage in the Greek Theater," *Trans. Am. Phil. Ass.*, Vol. XXII (1891), pp. 64 ff.; BODENSTEINER, "Szenische

Fragen," *Jahr. f. class. Phil.*, Supplementband XIX (1893), pp. 699 f., 721.

⁵ *Jahr. f. Phil.*, Vol. CIL (1894), pp. 38 ff.

⁶ *Bühnenalterthümer* (1886) and *Philologus*, Supplementband VII (1899), pp. 3 ff.

⁷ *Zeitschrift f. d. österr. Gymnasien*, Vol. XXXVIII (1887), pp. 276 ff., and *Das griechische Theater* (1896), pp. 283 ff.

so far as it extended, was quite consistent with that of Plutarch and his contemporaries; in fact, that only by gaining a correct idea of the meaning of the phrases in question in Aristotle could one secure the right point of departure for the interpretation of the idioms in Plutarch. The Aristotelian passages were first attacked in a discriminating way and made the basis of a general classification by Edward Capps, who, however, has published only an abstract of his conclusions.⁸ Approaching the subject originally from the point of view of Plutarch's usage, I have found myself in substantial agreement with Professor Capps's conclusions, and at his suggestion, and availing myself of his collections, with which he allowed me to supplement my own, and his constant criticism and advice, I have thought it well to state fully the case as far as concerns Aristotle, reserving for a later occasion the results of my studies in Plutarch and the later literature—except in so far as it may seem advisable to quote here later instances in illustration of the usage of the earlier period. I take this opportunity to acknowledge my obligations to all my predecessors in this field.

Before the middle of the fourth century the phrases ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς and ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς do not occur with reference to the theater. My excuse for restricting myself in the present paper to the consideration of the usage of a single period, the fourth century, is the overwhelming importance of that period for the stage question. From the fifth century we have a large number of extant plays, and practically no one now contends for the Vitruvian stage in that century.⁹ From later times theater ruins are numerous, but for the fourth century itself our evidence is comparatively scanty. But the opponents of the Dorpfeld theory insist upon identifying the proscenium with the Vitruvian stage, and the extant remains which give positive evidence of a proscenium happen not to be earlier than the latter half of the fourth century. At about this time, therefore, as Haigh,¹⁰ Bethe,¹¹ and others¹² maintain, the actors, who had before this performed upon a low platform, were elevated suddenly to the full height of the proscenium. This could have been accomplished only by the sacrifice of the chorus, as the advocates of the high stage now clearly see; and they accordingly take refuge in the current but doubtful tradition, to the effect that the chorus was either given up altogether or "its functions were merely those of the modern band" or "of mere interlude-singers." Exactly what changes in the drama this period witnessed has not yet been fully made out, and we cannot enter upon the chorus question here.¹³ However, even among those who accept Dr. Dorpfeld's theory for the fifth century,¹⁴ there is a

⁸ "Ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς and Similar Expressions," *Am. Jour. Arch.*, Vol. V (1901) p. 31.

⁹ Except PUCHSTEIN, *Die griechische Bühne*, who announces in his preface that he disregards all evidence from the literary sources. In his review of this book, *Classical Review*, Vol. XV (1901), pp. 470 ff., Haigh seems ready to abandon the position which he had consistently maintained from the beginning.

¹⁰ *The Attic Theater*², pp. 155 ff.

¹¹ *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters im Alterthum*, pp. 243 ff., and *Gött. gelehr. Anzeiger*, 1897, pp. 726 ff.

¹² CHRIST, *Sitzungsberichte der bayer. Akad. der Wissenschaften*, 1894, pp. 26 f.

¹³ For the evidence in favor of the existence beyond the limits of the fourth century of both the tragic and the comic chorus, see CAPPS, "The Chorus in the Late Greek Drama," *Am. Jour. Arch.*, Vol. X (1895), pp. 288 ff.; LEO, *Rhein. Museum*, Vol. LII (1897), pp. 509 ff.; A. KÖRTE, "Das Fortleben des Chors im griechischen Drama," *N. Jahrb. f. Phil.*, Vol. V (1900), pp. 81 ff.; REISCH, *Das griech. Theater*, pp. 258 ff., and in the Pauly-Wissowa *Real-Encyclopädie*, Vol. III, p. 2402, s. v. "Chor;" and CAPPS, *Trans. Am. Phil. Ass.*, Vol. XXXI (1900), pp. 133 f.

¹⁴ Cf. WHITE, *Harvard Studies*, Vol. II (1891), p. 167, note 1; and ROBERT, *Hermes*, Vol. XXXII (1897), p. 447, and in *Gött. gelehr. Anzeiger*, 1897, pp. 39 ff.

tendency to go over to Vitruvius for the period represented by the Lycurgus theater at Athens and by the theater at Epidaurus—the last quarter of the fourth century. In this dearth of evidence and abundance of conjecture anything bearing on the general question is of exceptional importance. But the subject of the present discussion is not merely important; though its bearing has been strangely overlooked, it is really fundamental. If *ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς* in Aristotle and his contemporaries means “on the stage,” and if *ἐπί* in this phrase necessarily “implies elevation,” we need no more evidence—the great question is decided.

For the subject under discussion much has been made of Plato,¹⁵ *Symposium*, 194 b: *ἐπιλήσμων μὲντ' ἂν εἶην, ὦ Ἀγάθων, εἰπεῖν τὸν Σωκράτην, εἰ ἰδὼν τὴν σὴν ἀνδρείαν καὶ μεγαλοφροσύνην ἀναβαίνοντος ἐπὶ τὸν ὀκρίβαντα μετὰ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν, καὶ βλέψαντος ἐναντία τοσοῦτω θεάτρῳ, μέλλοντος ἐπιδείξεσθαι σαντοῦ λόγους, καὶ οὐδ' ὅπωςτιοῦν ἐκπλαγῆτος, νῦν οἰηθείην σε θορυβηθήσεσθαι ἔνεκα ἡμῶν ὀλίγων ἀνθρώπων.*

I should be forgetful, Agathon, said Socrates, of the courage and spirit which you showed when your compositions were about to be exhibited, when you came upon the *ὀκρίβας* with the actors and faced the whole audience¹⁶ altogether undismayed, if I thought you would on the present occasion be disturbed by a small company of friends.

The scholiast on this passage, and Hesychius s. v. *ὀκρίβας*, give this explanation: *ὀκρίβας· τὸ λογεῖον, ἐφ' οὗ οἱ τραγωδοὶ ἡγωνίζοντο· τινὲς δὲ κιλλίβας τρισκελής, ἐφ' οὗ ἴσταντο οἱ ὑποκριταὶ καὶ τὰ ἐκ μετεώρου λέγουσιν, and Timaeus, *Lex. Plat.*, *ὀκρίβας· πῆγμα τὸ ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ τιθέμενον, ἐφ' οὗ ἴσταντο οἱ τὰ δημόσια λέγοντες.* Evidently these writers had no clear idea of the word's meaning. Moreover, the appearance of the poet with the actors shows that here we have to do, not with the *ἀγών*, but with the *προάγων*,¹⁷ and that was held, not in the theater, but in the odeum.¹⁸ The passage, then, whatever its precise interpretation may be, is not relevant to the present discussion. In the present unsatisfactory state of our information regarding the *προάγων*, therefore, we are scarcely warranted in drawing sweeping conclusions from Plato's reference to that ceremony.*

Aristotle uses the phrase *ἐπὶ (τῆς) σκηνῆς* four times in the *Poetics*, viz.: (1) XIII, 6, p. 1453a; (2) XVII, 1, p. 1455a; (3) XXIV, 4, p. 1459b; and (4) XXIV, 8, p. 1460a; and Demosthenes uses it once (5) in *Or.*, XIX, 337. I shall now consider these passages in turn.

1. XIII, 6, p. 1453 a: *διὸ καὶ οἱ Εὐριπίδῃ ἐγκαλοῦντες τοῦτ' αὐτὸ ἀμαρτάνουσιν, ὅτι τοῦτο δρᾶ ἐν ταῖς τραγωδαῖς καὶ πολλαὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς δυστυχίαν τελευτᾶσιν. τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν ὥσπερ εἴρηται ὀρθόν. σημεῖον δὲ μέγιστον· ἐπὶ γὰρ τῶν σκηνῶν καὶ τῶν ἀγῶνων*

¹⁵ Cf. A. MÜLLER, *Bühnenalt.*, p. 365, notes 3, 4, who gives a list of previous authorities; also WIESELER, *loc. cit.*, p. 206, note 20; OEHMICHEN, *Woch. f. klass. Phil.*, Vol. IX (1892), p. 1142; NAVARRE, *op. cit.*, p. 106, note 2; and MÜLLER, *Philologus*, Supplementband VII, p. 55.

¹⁶ Till the close of the fifth century the almost exclusive meaning of *θεῖτρον* was “audience;” cf. WILAMOWITZ-MÖLLENDORFF, *Hermes*, XXI (1886), pp. 602 f.

¹⁷ Other interpretations were reviewed and rejected by RHODE, *Rhein. Mus.*, Vol. XXXVIII (1883), pp. 253 ff. It is likely, too, that under the term *ὑποκριταί* all of Agathon's performers were included, chorus as well as actors. Cf. the story told in the *Vita Euripidis* of Sophocles and his chorus at the *προάγων* after the news of Euripides's death.

¹⁸ Cf. schol. Aeschines *Ctesiphon*. § 67.

τραγικώταται αἱ τοιαῦται φαίνονται, ἂν κατορθωθῶσιν, καὶ ὁ Εὐριπίδης εἰ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μὴ εὖ οἰκονομεῖ ἀλλὰ τραγικώτατός γε τῶν ποιητῶν φαίνεται.

Aristotle has been saying that a well-constructed plot should be simple, and should imitate actions which excite pity and fear—the pity that is aroused by unmerited misfortune, the fear that is stirred by the misfortune of a man like ourselves. The reversal of fortune should, therefore, be from good to bad. The practice of the stage, he adds, bears out our view (σημεῖον δὲ καὶ τὸ γιγνόμενον), for tragedies nowadays are founded on the story of a few heroes whose fortunes illustrate this principle. The earlier poets had treated any legend, whatever the nature of the issue. A perfect tragedy, however, should be so constructed. He then adds:

Hence they commit the same error [*i. e.*, as the earlier poets] who censure Euripides just because he follows this principle in his plays, many of which end unhappily. It is, as we have said, the right ending. The best proof is that on the stage and in dramatic competitions such plays, if they are well represented, are the most tragic in effect; and Euripides, faulty as he is in the general management of his subject, yet is felt to be the most tragic of the poets.¹⁹

In this chapter Aristotle finds confirmation of his statement of the principles of tragic composition in the practice of successful poets and in the effect that tragedies constructed according to his rules actually have upon the audiences. He appeals twice to the “practice of the stage,” as Butcher renders τὸ γιγνόμενον. The contrast is between plays which are technically perfect and those which, in spite of technical faults, do actually succeed in exciting the emotions of pity and fear. The test is the actual performance. There is no suggestion involving the work of the actors as opposed to that of the chorus. Assuming that they are well put on (ἂν κατορθωθῶσιν), the plays of Euripides, with all their faults, are most effective when actually produced (ἐπί τῶν σκηνῶν καὶ τῶν ἀγώνων). The combination of σκηνῶν with ἀγώνων shows that σκηνή has here the common meaning of “performance.” The phrase may be regarded as an example of hendiadys, and means nothing more or less than “at scenic contests.” This is precisely the meaning of the modern phrase employed by Butcher, “on the stage and in dramatic competition”; only we must not allow the modern connotation of “stage” as the actors’ platform to affect our interpretation of the Greek phrase, in which the work of the chorus is necessarily included. This point will be made clearer in the discussion of the other passages. In post-classical Greek another phrase is sometimes used in the same meaning—ἐπὶ θεάτρων, *e. g.*, schol. *Vesp.* 1291: ἐψηφίσατο ὁ Κλέων μηκέτι δεῖν κωμωδίας ἐπὶ θεάτρων²⁰ εἰσάγεσθαι. “Cleon had a bill passed that no more comedies should be exhibited at spectacles.” To express this thought Aristotle would probably have said ἐπὶ τὴν σκηνήν εἰσάγεσθαι.

2. XVII, 1, p. 1455a: δεῖ δὲ τοὺς μύθους συνιστάναι καὶ τῇ λέξει συναπεργάζεσθαι ὅτι μάλιστα πρὸ ὀμμάτων τιθέμενον· οὕτω γὰρ ἂν ἐναργέστατα [δ'] ὄρων ὥσπερ παρ' αὐτοῖς γιγνόμενος τοῖς πραττομένοις εὐρίσκοι τὸ πρέπον καὶ ἥκιστα ἂν λανθάνοι [τὸ] τὰ ὑπεναντία. σημεῖον δὲ τούτου ὁ ἐπετιμᾶτο Καρκίνω· ὁ γὰρ Ἀμφιάραος ἐξ ἱεροῦ ἀνῆει,

¹⁹ In translating the *Poetics* I have used Butcher's version (2d ed.) with slight adaptations.

²⁰ V, ἐπὶ θεάτρων· R, ἐπὶ καθρ; the others, ἐπὶ τῷ θεάτρῳ.

ὁ μὴ ὀρώωντ' ἀ(ὕ)τὸν [θεατῆν]²¹ ἐλάνθανεν, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς σκηνῆς ἐξέπεσεν δυσχερανάντων τοῦτο τῶν θεατῶν.

In constructing the plot and working it out with the proper diction, the poet should place the scene, as far as possible, before his eyes. In this way, seeing everything with the utmost vividness, as if he were a spectator of the action, he will discover what is in keeping with it, and be most unlikely to overlook inconsistencies. The need of such a rule is shown by the fault found in Carcinus. Amphiarus was on his way from the temple. This fact escaped the notice of the poet, who did not visualize the situation. On the stage, however, the piece failed, the audience being offended at the oversight.

Since we have no knowledge of the plot of the play, the hint given by Aristotle is necessarily obscure. But the inconsistency that Carcinus overlooked is, nevertheless, indicated with sufficient clearness. The poet had not, in constructing his plot, carefully worked out the language of his characters (τῇ λέξει συναπεργάζεσθαι. Butcher's "diction" is faulty) so that it should harmonize with their actions. Here Amphiarus was on his way back from the temple, whither he had previously departed, but on his reappearance speaks of having come from somewhere else.²² The contrast here is similar to that in the passage previously discussed—between the crucial test of the performance before spectators and the intrinsic merits of a play. There the practical success of Euripides is set over against defects in technique; here the practical failure of Carcinus against the (implied) merits of his drama. When writing the play the poet, by failing to visualize his plot, overlooked an inconsistency; but when the play was performed (ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς), it failed because of this small defect.²³ To introduce into the interpretation of this passage a reference to a stage for actors, as contrasted with the orchestra for the chorus, is to violate common sense and reason. Here also σκηνή stands for the theater itself; ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς is equivalent to the later ἐπὶ τοῦ θεάτρου, and means, by metonymy, "at the performance." An excellent parallel is found in Plutarch, *Moralia*, p. 845a: (Δημοσθένης) ἐκπεσὼν δέ ποτ' ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας.

3. XXIV, 3, 4, p. 1459 b: διαφέρει δὲ κατὰ τε τῆς συστάσεως τὸ μῆκος ἢ ἐποποιία

²¹ The emendation of Gomperz for ὀρώωντα τὸν θεατῆν of the manuscripts. A careful examination of the context shows that the poet, not the spectator, was blamed for overlooking the inconsistency. The phrase ὀρών . . . ἤκιστα λανθάνοι applies to him, and its echo, μὴ ὀρώωντα . . . ἐλάνθανεν, naturally does the same. Dacier saw the proper application, and read ποιητῆν for θεατῆν, which Susemihl adopted. Butcher brackets τὸν θεατῆν, but the passage then lacks the definite reference to Carcinus that is required. Vahlen's conjecture, ὀρώωντ' αὐν, though perhaps easiest to explain palaeographically, breaks down at the same point. Gomperz's emendation gives the evident meaning of the passage, and from it the present reading could easily have been derived by some scribe's writing τὸν θεατῆν between the lines as a comment on αὐτῶν, which he misunderstood.

²² This is better than to assign the error to faulty stage management, *e. g.*, that Amphiarus made his exit through one of the parodoi, and then on his return entered from the building represented by the proscenium. Susemihl, pp. 254, 162b (2d ed.), frankly confessed ignorance of the fault involved; WELCKER, *Die griechischen Tragödien*, Vol. III, p. 1065, brought nothing of value to the discussion.

H. DÜNTZER, *Rettung der Arist. Poetik*, p. 177, saw the point correctly, though vaguely, but found an impossible contrast between ἐξ ἱεροῦ and ἐπὶ σκηνῆς. TEICHMÜLLER, *Arist. Forschungen*, Vol. I, 104 f., read θεατῆν, and thought the spectators were offended because they did not see the return of Amphiarus from the temple actually represented before their eyes instead of being merely described. But that would not have involved a *ὑπεναντίον*. Gomperz in *Aristoteles Poetik* (1897), p. 111, suggests that the appearance in another rôle of the actor who played Amphiarus's part while he was supposed to be absent offended the audience. But this occurred in nearly every play.

²³ Euripides, on the contrary, is commended for his care in such details, *viz.*, for telling the audience whence a character comes and whither he is going. The opening line of the *Troades* is a case in point: Ἦκω λιπῶν Αἰγαίου ἄλμυρον βάθος, where the scholiast remarks: ὅλος ἐπὶ τοῦ θεάτρου ἔΕυριπίδης. "Euripides was wholly intent upon, *i. e.*, was ever thoughtful of, his audience." Cf. PLUTARCH, *Moralia*, p. 342b: (Alexander, entertaining the Persian ambassadors), οὐδὲν ἠρώατα παιδικόν, . . . ἀλλ' ὅλος ἐν τοῖς κυριωτάτοις ἦν τῆς ἡγεμονίας; and HORACE, *Sat.*, I., 9, 2: *totus in illis*.

καὶ τὸ μέτρον. τοῦ μὲν οὖν μήκους ὄρος ἰκανὸς ὁ εἰρημένος· δύνασθαι γὰρ δεῖ συνορᾶσθαι τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὸ τέλος. εἴη δ' ἂν τοῦτο, εἰ τῶν μὲν ἀρχαίων ἐλάττους αἱ συστάσεις εἴεν, πρὸς δὲ τὸ πλῆθος τραγωδιῶν τῶν εἰς μίαν ἀκρόασιν τιθεμένων παρήκοιεν. ἔχει δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἐπεκτείνεσθαι τὸ μέγεθος πολὺ τι ἢ ἐποποιία ἴδιον διὰ τὸ ἐν μὲν τῇ τραγωδίᾳ μὴ ἐνδέχεσθαι ἅμα πραττόμενα πολλὰ μέρη μιμῆσθαι ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν μέρος μόνον. ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐποποιίᾳ διὰ τὸ διήγησιν εἶναι ἔστι πολλὰ μέρη ἅμα ποιεῖν περαινόμενα.

Epic poetry differs from tragedy in the scale on which it is constructed, and in its metre. As regards scale or length, we have already laid down an adequate limit: the beginning and the end must be capable of being brought within a single view. This condition will be satisfied by poems on a smaller scale than the old epics, and answering in length to the group of tragedies presented at a single sitting. Epic poetry has, however, a special capacity for enlarging its dimensions, and we can see the reason. In tragedy we cannot imitate several actions carried on at one and the same time; we must confine ourselves to the action on the stage and the part taken by the players. But in epic poetry, owing to the narrative form, many events simultaneously transacted can be presented.

A tragic plot is restricted as to time and place, *i. e.*, it cannot represent more than one event at a time. Now to represent simultaneous events we need several groups of characters and as many places for their action. But tragedy can present but one group of characters at a time acting in but one place, *viz.*, that represented in the scenery of the theater. Whenever in a play the scene of action has once been localized, there it must remain, and no performers can be introduced inconsistent with this location. Now the chief cause of this restriction was the chorus. Its constant presence effectually prevented the tragic poet from shifting the scene of action, as the epic poet could readily do in his narrative, and as the modern dramatic poet, freed from this serious limitation, can do without violating the laws of his art. The fifth-century dramatists keenly felt the restraint put upon them and tried to gain a larger freedom. Æschylus in the *Eumenides*, Sophocles in the *Ajax*, Euripides in the *Alcestis*, Aristophanes in the *Thesmophoriazusae*, and the unknown author of the *Rhesus* succeeded in removing the chorus for a moment while the scene was changed; but they could not introduce a new set of characters in the new scene, because the traditions of the drama imposed upon the poet a single chorus for each piece. The utmost that the poets did in this direction was done in the early period of tragedy, when chorus and actors changed their characters between the longer episodes—an arrangement from which developed the group of four plays forming a tetralogy. Aristotle, of course, did not dream of a tragedy without a chorus, and in formulating the laws which govern this branch of the imitative art, accepting the chorus as an essential part of tragedy, simply defined the conditions which arise from its presence. It is evident, therefore, that under the term οἱ ὑποκριταί he had in mind all of the performers concerned in representing the action which the poet brings before our eyes, the chorus as well as the actors.²⁴ The restriction as to the performers which the

²⁴ Cf. Note 17 above, and Triclinius's scholium to the *Agamemnon*, quoted by WECHELEIN, "Studien zu Euripides," *Jahr. f. class. Phil.*, Vol. VII (1875), p. 432: πεντεκαίδεκα εἰσὶν οἱ τοῦ τραγικοῦ χοροῦ ὑποκριταί.

tragic poet can introduce into a given plot is, however, only an incident of the limitation — imposed by the constant presence of the chorus — as to *the place of action*. To this consideration, therefore, Aristotle properly gives the precedence — *δεῖ μμείσθαι τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς μέρος*. Out of the many actions going on at the same time which the epic poet may draw into his narrative, the tragic poet must select that one which takes place at the scene of action determined upon at the outset. To make clearer the necessity of the poet's confining himself to this one scene, Aristotle adds the second item — *καὶ τὸ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν μέρος*. We might properly render the sentence under consideration thus: "But he must confine himself to that portion of the story that is defined by the scene of action chosen and that falls to the performers appropriate to this scene." *Ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς* here again might have been replaced by the later phrase *ἐπὶ τοῦ θεάτρου*, and, far from referring to the place where the actors stood, manifestly embraces all who are concerned in the dramatic representation.

4. XXIV, 8, p. 1460 a: *δεῖ μὲν οὖν ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις ποιεῖν τὸ θαυμαστόν, μᾶλλον δ' ἐνδέχεται ἐν τῇ ἐποποιίᾳ τὸ ἄλογον, δι' ὃ συμβαίνει μάλιστα τὸ θαυμαστόν, διὰ τὸ μὴ ὄραν εἰς τὸν πράττουτα· ἐπεὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν Ἔκτορος δίωξιν ἐπὶ σκηνῆς ὄντα γελοῖα ἂν φανεῖη, οἱ μὲν ἐστῶτες καὶ οὐ διώκοντες, ὃ δ' ἀνανεύων, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἔπεσιν λαυθάνει.*

The element of the wonderful is admitted in tragedy. The irrational, on which the wonderful depends for its chief effects, has wider scope in epic poetry, because there the person acting is not seen. Thus, the pursuit of Hector would be ludicrous if placed upon the stage — the Greeks standing still and not joining in the pursuit and Achilles waving them back. But in the epic poem the absurdity passes unnoticed.

Aristotle is evidently thinking of *Iliad*, XXII, 205 f.:

*λαοῖσιν δ' ἀνένευε καρῆατι δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς,
οὐδ' ἔα ἰέμεναι ἐπὶ Ἔκτορι πικρὰ βέλεμνα,*

and is trying to show why a scene that was excellent in an epic could not be dramatized. In Homer there are two groups of characters: (a) Achilles and Hector, and (b) the Greek army. They are all *ὑποκριταί* ("performers") in the sense in which the author used that term in the preceding passage. In Aristotle's imaginary dramatization of this incident these groups represent the actors (*ὁ δέ*) and the chorus (*οἱ μὲν*) respectively. In the epic account of the pursuit the episode seems natural, for the picture placed before our eyes is on an heroic scale, and we do not find ourselves offended by minor picturesque, if incongruous, details; but "on the stage," "auf der Bühne," "sur la scène," *i. e.*, in dramatic representation, it appears ridiculous. The contrast is once more perfectly plain, and if we should try to restrict the meaning of *σκηνή* to an elevated "stage," a place for actors alone, we should then have to explain how both actors and chorus are here included under that phrase.

It is fortunate that so many fourth-century examples of the use of *ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς* are preserved by so careful and accurate a writer as Aristotle, and in passages that yield satisfactory results upon analysis. The sole instance of its occurrence in

Demosthenes is so colorless that any attempt at deriving from such a passage a satisfactory conception of the phrase's meaning would have been vain; yet, now that from other sources we have gained a suitable meaning, the usage there is found to accord with it. For the proper understanding of such passages, therefore, these Aristotelian examples are of inestimable worth.

5. Demosthenes, *Or.*, XIX, 337: καίτοι καὶ περὶ τῆς φωνῆς ἴσως εἰπεῖν ἀνάγκη. πάνυ γὰρ μέγα καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ φρονεῖν αὐτὸν ἀκούω, ὡς καθυποκρινόμενον ὑμᾶς. ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκεῖτ' ἀποπώτατον ἀπάντων ἂν ποιῆσαι, εἰ, ὅτε μὲν τὰ Θυέστου καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ Τροίᾳ κακὰ ἠγωνίζετο, ἐκεβάλλετ' αὐτὸν καὶ ἐξεσυρίττετ' ἐκ τῶν θεάτρων καὶ μόνον οὐ κατελεύεθ' οὕτως, ὥστε τελευτῶντα τοῦ τριταγωνιστεῖν ἀποστήναι, ἐπειδὴ δ' οὐκ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς κοινοῖς καὶ μεγίστοις τῆς πόλεως πράγμασι μύρι' εἴργασται κακὰ, τηνικαυθ' ὡς καλὸν φθειρομένῳ προσέχουτε.

And yet, perhaps, I must speak also about his voice, for I understand that he is very proud of that, too, presuming that he will overpower you by his acting. It appears to me, however, that it would be an act of extreme absurdity on your part, if, when he played the miseries of Thyestes and the heroes at Troy, you drove and hissed him from the theater and all but stoned him, so that he finally retired from playing his third-rate parts, yet now, when not merely in dramatic performances, but in public and most momentous affairs of the state, he has wrought endless miseries, you should pay attention to him as a fine speaker.

Demosthenes is calling attention to the different scenes of Æschines's failures, which were not confined to his theatrical efforts but extended to his public career as well. 'Ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς has no more definite application to his standing-place as an actor in the theater than ἐκ τῶν θεάτρων above, or than ἐν Διονύσου in *Or.*, V, 6, 7: πάλιν τοίνυν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, κατιδὼν Νεοπτόλεμον τὸν ὑποκριτὴν . . . κακὰ ἐργαζόμενον τὰ μέγιστα τὴν πόλιν . . . παρελθὼν εἶπον εἰς ὑμᾶς. . . . καὶ οὐκέτι ἐν τούτοις αἰτιάσομαι τοῖς ὑπὲρ Νεοπτολέμου λέγοντας ἀλλ' αὐτοὺς ὑμᾶς. εἰ γὰρ ἐν Διονύσου τραγωδοὺς ἐθέασασθε, ἀλλὰ μὴ περὶ σωτηρίας καὶ κοινῶν πραγμάτων ἦν ὁ λόγος, οὐκ ἂν οὕτως οὐτ' ἐκεῖνου πρὸς χάριν οὐτ' ἐμοῦ πρὸς ἀπέχθειαν ἠκούσατε; or than ἐν θεάτρῳ in Theophrastus, *Charact.*, XI: ὁ βδελυρὸς τοιοῦτος οἶος . . . ἐν θεάτρῳ κροτεῖν, ὅταν οἱ ἄλλοι παύωνται καὶ συρίττειν οὐς ἠδέως θεωροῦσιν οἱ λοιποί. Though ἐν Διονύσου and ἐν θεάτρῳ may include both performers and spectators, while ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς is restricted to the former, none involves specific reference to any particular part of the theater.

These are the only examples of the phrase in the extant literature of the fourth century. I add a few later instances which illustrate the same usage: schol. *Thesm.*, 101: μονωδεῖ ὁ Ἀγάθων ὡς πρὸς χορόν, οὐχ ὡς ἐπὶ σκηνῆς,²⁵ ἀλλ' ὡς ποιήματα συντιθεῖς. διὸ καὶ χορικὰ λέγει μέλη αὐτὸς πρὸς αὐτόν, ὡς χορικὰ δέ. "Agathon sings a solo as though he were addressing a chorus, not as if he were in the theater, but as composing verses [at home]. Accordingly, he says also the choral parts all to himself, though still as choral parts." Lucian, *Apol.*, 5: οὐ [i. e., tragic actors] ἐπὶ μὲν τῆς σκηνῆς Ἀγαμέμνων ἕκαστος ἢ Κρέων ἢ αὐτὸς Ἡρακλῆς εἰσιν, ἐξω δὲ Πῶλος ἢ Ἀριστόδημος . . . γίνονται. "At dramatic performances in the theater each of the tragic actors

²⁵ ὑπὸ σκηνῆς, the manuscripts.

is Agamemnon or Creon or Heracles himself, but outside of the theater he is simply himself." Arg. Eurip. *Orestes*: τὸ δρᾶμα τῶν ἐπὶ σκηνῆς εὐδοκιμούντων, χεῖριστον δὲ τοῖς ἥθεσι. The "staging" of a Greek play obviously included the place of the chorus as well as that of the actors. Plutarch, *Moralia*, p. 785b: Φιλήμωνα δὲ τὸν κωμικὸν καὶ Ἀλεξιν ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς ἀγωνιζομένους καὶ στεφανουμένους ὁ θάνατος κατέλαβε. "Death seized Philemon and Alexis while they strove successfully in the theater." Of course, in this instance there is no mention of actors at all, but of poets who were contestants in the theater with their plays. Libanius, *Praefat. ad Demosth.*, 2: ἰστόρηται γὰρ τινα Βάταλον Ἐφέσιον αὐλητὴν γενέσθαι, ὃς πρῶτος ὑποδήμασι γυναικείοις ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς ἐχρήσατο. "Batalus [as his effeminacy caused him to be nicknamed, though his name was really Tigranes; cf. schol. *Æschines*, I, 126], the Ephesian flute player, was the first to wear women's sandals at a performance in the theater." In the Greek theater flute players performed in the orchestra.²⁶ Though Libanius may have had in mind the custom of the Roman theater, more probably he was simply quoting the words of a much earlier writer. Plutarch, *Moralia*, p. 337e: ἀγωνιστῆ γὰρ ἡγεμονίας ὑποκριτὴν ἐπεισήγαγε, μᾶλλον δὲ ὡς ἐπὶ σκηνῆς τὸ διάδημα κωφὸν διεξῆλθε τῆς οἰκουμένης. "For he brought in against his opponent one to play the rôle of power, but as in a play a 'mute' took the part of ruler of the world." *Ibid.*, p. 709d: ἀλλὰ δεῖ σκοπεῖν πρῶτον τίς ὁ καλῶν ἐστίν. εἰ μὲν γὰρ οὐ σφόδρα συνήθης, ἀλλ' ἢ τῶν πλουσιῶν τις ἢ σατραπικῶν, ὡς ἐπὶ σκηνῆς δορυφορήματος λαμπροῦ δεόμενος ἢ πάνυ χαρίζεσθαι τῇ κλήσει πεπεισμένος καὶ τιμῶν, ἐπάγεται, παραιτητέος εὐθύς. "But it is necessary in the first place to see who gives the invitation. For if it is no one very intimate, but someone of either wealth or power—one who needs, as at a dramatic performance, a splendid suite, or is convinced that he is bestowing favor or honor by the invitation—one must ask at once to be excused." *Ibid.*, p. 791e: ὁ δ' ὡσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς δορυφόρημα κωφὸν ἦν ὄνομα βασιλέως. "As in a play, Aridaeus was a 'mute' escort of power, a nominal king."

Now ἀπό with the genitive is the counterpart of ἐπί with the genitive. Therefore, if ἐπί means "on top of," ἀπό means "from on top of;" but if ἐπί conveys no implication of elevation and means simply "at," then ἀπό denotes merely motion, or derivation, from.²⁷ Now in the phrase under discussion, ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς, we have found that σκηνή, which in its earlier usage meant a specific part of the theater structure, was used by metonymy for the whole performance-place. Meaning originally the booth used by the performers in dramatic exhibitions, then the structure that served not only as a dressing-room, but also as the scenic background (cf. the term σκηνογραφία, which occurs first in Aristotle), the enlarged, tropical meaning was a perfectly natural development when the "performance-place" to be designated was the place for dramatic exhibition. For any other kind of exhibition in the theater, for example the dithyramb, in which the σκηνή structure had no part, ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς would scarcely have been an appropriate designation of the place of the performance, but rather

²⁶ Cf. Phrynichus, RUTHERFORD, *New Phrynichus*, p. 250.

²⁷ An illustration, which happens to involve the word σκηνή, is found in THEOCRITUS, XV, 16: φύκος ἀπὸ σκανᾶς ἀγοράσδων. The φύκος was to be had ἐπὶ σκανᾶς, "at the shop."

ἐπὶ τῆς θυμέλης (*i. e.*, ὀρχήστρας). Consequently οἱ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς, or the later term, σκηνῖται, embraced all of the participants in a dramatic representation—ὑποκριταί, χορός, ποιητής, χορηγός, and διδάσκαλος—as did τραγωδοί at an earlier period. Now if it were desired to distinguish between the two kinds of dramatic performers, since οἱ ἐπὶ (or, from a different point of view, ἀπὸ) τῆς θυμέλης was already used of the dithyrambic chorus and could not possibly be applied to the actors, that term would naturally be used to designate the dramatic chorus as well, and οἱ ἐπὶ (ἀπὸ) τῆς σκηνῆς would be used in the restricted sense for the actors alone. It was thus, in my opinion, that the distinction arose between the two phrases, rather than because the σκηνή was the place *par excellence* for the actors, as is generally assumed on the basis of the dictum of Pollux. One would naturally expect that οἱ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς and οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς would assume the meaning “actors” contemporaneously, though, as a matter of fact, Aristotle uses only the latter in the new sense and retains the old meaning of the former. It is fortunate that this so happened, otherwise it would be impossible to trace the phrase’s history with any degree of certainty. Probably the fact that the σκηνή was thought of as the home of the actors, as Reisch has pointed out, accounts for the use of ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς in the new meaning before ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς. In the development of their meanings, and the differences between them at any particular time, these phrases are precisely paralleled by οἱ σκηνικοί and οἱ θυμελικοί. In other words, σκηνικός was first used to distinguish dramatic from other performers in the theater, and later, following the course of development above indicated for οἱ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς, came to be applied to actors alone. Of course, when a raised “stage” was introduced, such an application of these expressions was doubly appropriate,²⁸ because the local distinction was emphasized—not, however, because ἐπὶ implies elevation.

We are now in a position to estimate properly the phrase ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς in Aristotle. In two passages, which may be un-Aristotelian, ἀπὸ (τῆς) σκηνῆς is used of the lyrical utterances of actors. *Poetics*, XII, 1, 1452b: κοινὰ μὲν ἀπάντων ταῦτα, ἴδια δὲ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ κόμμοι. “These [*i. e.* prologue, episode, exodos, and choric song] are common to all plays, peculiar to some are the κόμμοι and the songs of the scenic performers.” *Ibid.*, XII, 2: κόμμος δὲ θρήνος κοινὸς χοροῦ καὶ <τῶν> ἀπὸ σκηνῆς. “A *kommos* is a dirge by both the chorus and the scenic performers.” *Cf.* also Aristotle’s *Problem.*, XV, 918b: τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ αἴτιον καὶ διότι τὰ μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς οὐκ ἀντίστροφα, τὰ δὲ τοῦ χοροῦ ἀντίστροφα; *ibid.*, XXX, 920a: διὰ τί οὐδὲ ὑποδωριστὶ οὐδὲ ὑποφρυγιστὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τραγωδίᾳ χορικόν; . . . ἀλλ’ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς, μιμητικὴ γάρ; *ibid.*, XLVIII, 922b: ταῦτα δὲ ἄμφω χορῶ μὲν ἀνάρμοστα, τοῖς δὲ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς οἰκειότερα· ἐκεῖνοι μὲν γὰρ ἠρώων μιμηταί. The use of χορός, χορικόν, etc., in these passages gives to the phrase ἀπὸ (τῆς) σκηνῆς the restricted meaning desired. As soon as the “choral” element is taken out, “scenic” must refer to the actors alone, although, strictly speaking, both chorus and actors were included in

²⁸ *Cf.* the recent controversy—arising from FRET’S dissertation, *De Certaminibus Thymelicis*, Basel, 1900—between Bethe and Dörpfeld in *Hermes*, Vol. XXXVI (1901), pp. 597 ff., and *ibid.*, Vol. XXXVII (1902), pp. 249 ff. and 483 ff.

the term "scenic." Cf. Demosthenes, XVIII, 180: (βούλει) σὲ δὲ μὴδ' ἦρω τὸν τυχόντα (θῶ): ἀλλὰ τούτων τινὰ τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς, Κρεσφόντην ἢ Κρέοντα ἢ ὃν ἐν Κολλυτῷ ποτε Οἰνάμαον κακῶς ὑποκρινόμενος ἐπέτριψας. "Do you want me to count you as no ordinary hero, but as one of these 'scenic' performers, Cresphontes or Creon or Œnomaus, whom once upon a time, at Collytus, you 'murdered' with your bad acting?" This fling was directed at Æschines, whose ill luck as an actor of tragic roles was notorious.

Finally, both those who insist that ἐπὶ with the genitive invariably "implies elevation," and their opponents who claim that it means "before," are equally led astray by the exigencies of the argument. Reisch, in the statement quoted above: "Dass das Vorwort ἐπὶ (mit Genetiv, Dativ und Accusativ) nicht nur zur Bezeichnung von Hohenunterschieden, sondern auch zur Bezeichnung der Nachbarschaft zweier auf gleichem Boden befindlicher Dinge verwendet wird, dürfte wohl bekannt genug sein," proposes to cut the Gordian knot of the most perplexing word in the language in a manner that will satisfy but few. Only a small proportion of the examples that he cites are of any value to the present discussion. Let us consider the following passages: In two instances σκηνή has its untechnical meaning of "tent": Plutarch, *Brutus*, 45: πληγαῖς κολασθέντας ἐπὶ σκηνῆς [before, or at, the commander's quarters] γυμνοὺς ἀποδοθῆναι τοῖς στρατηγοῖς τῶν πολεμίων; and Arg. Soph. *Ajax*: καταλαμβάνει Ἀθηνᾶ Ὀδυσσεῖα ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς διοπτεύοντα τί ποτε ἄρα πράττει. In three cases ἐπὶ is used in connection with the scenic background. Arg. Soph. *Antigone*: ὑπόκειται δὲ τὰ πράγματα ἐπὶ τῶν Κρέοντος βασιλείων; schol. Soph. *Trach.* 1275: ἐπ' οἴκων; and Arg. Aristoph. *Equites*: ἔοικε [sc. Δημοσθένης] ὡς ἐπὶ οἰκίας δεσποτικῆς ποιέσθαι τὸν λόγον. And in still two other instances it is used in connection with the spectators: schol. Eurip. *Troad.*, 1: ὄλος ἐπὶ τοῦ θεάτρου ὁ Εὐριπίδης, and schol. Eurip. *Hippol.*, 524: τὰ δὲ ἄλλα, ἂ φρονῶ, ἀρκέσει τοῖς ἔνδον διηγῆσασθαι φίλοις, ὅποιά ἐστι, καὶ μὴ ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ θεάτρου ταῦτα ἐκφέρειν. "The nature of my other plans it will suffice to relate to my friends within, and not to disclose them before the whole audience."

In dealing with this matter Professor Gildersleeve shrewdly observes:

In the vast majority of instances ἐπὶ with the genitive denotes characteristic superposition and it may still denote superposition in such standing expressions as ἐπὶ τέγου, ἐπ' οἰκῆματος. . . . Any form of superposition will answer the conditions — a rest in front, a step in the doorway. . . . Dr. Forman . . . adduces an interesting example, Demosthenes, LVIII., 40: ἐπὶ τῶν δικαστηρίων καὶ τοῦ βήματος, in which ἐπὶ retains enough literalness for the second member. But, whatever the local exigencies may be, the phraseological, the adjectival character of the combination is unmistakable. οἱ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς as a technical term is simply οἱ σκηνῖται, the "hutmen." The rarity of ἐπὶ with the genitive of mere proximity in the best period, the large possibilities of the "upon" element even then — all this is abundantly shown in Dr. Forman's dissertation. That ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς is more common than οἱ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς, a fact on which Reisch lays great stress, is a very simple matter. Ἀπὸ σκηνῆς is ἐπὶ σκηνῆς from a different point of view. Sporadic examples in which ἐπὶ with the genitive seems to mean "before" do not strengthen the σκηνῆ argument, which may quietly repose on the phraseological use of ἐπὶ. "On the playhouse

side" is all the theory demands, and the phrase was fixed long before the time of the earliest passage cited.²⁹

Ἐπί does not necessarily and always mean "upon." When σκηυή means "tent," ἐπὶ τῆς σκηυῆς means not "on the tent," but "near," "at," or "before" it. In its original theatrical use the phrase meant, as Professor Gildersleeve so aptly expresses it, "on the playhouse side," and referred to the space before and in the vicinity of the scene building. In its fourth-century usage it always pointed a contrast; in some cases it indubitably included the chorus in its application, while it never expressly excluded it. In fact, it had no more definiteness of reference than ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ. Those who translate the phrase by "on the stage" use a perfectly legitimate English expression that reproduces fairly well the original, but they violate their scholarship and their native tongue when they try to force into the ancient phrase a meaning that is incidental in the history of the modern expression.

²⁹Gildersleeve's notice of FORMAN's dissertation "On Used to Denote Superposition," *Am. Jour. Phil.*, Vol. XVIII (1897), p. 120.
the Difference between the Genitive and Dative with ἐπι